



## Mental Health



This report is about 'Mental Health'. Just like physical health, everything connects together to make a system, and if that system gets damaged (e.g. break your leg) then you get it repaired as much as possible in a hospital. But mental health is a bit more complicated, because whilst this system in your brain relies more on your emotional wellbeing, it can still be caused by physical damages (e.g. head injuries), the environment you are brought up in (e.g. abusive) or an uncontrollable chemical imbalance in the brain. But right now, mental health is not always being treated. In this article we explore this invisible difference that affects such a large part of the UK population.

Mental health is a big problem at our age, with the pressure of exams and academic success in schools, students seem to be facing new pressures as we all enter a new age. This, combined with the pressures that the internet and the media, creates a world for young people where they're constantly comparing themselves with others. This does not help improve the younger population, but instead breaks down the self-esteem of so many that are exposed to the pressures of the twenty first century.

Although this seems like an issue that's probably far away from you and your life, you should know that 37% of girls are currently exhibiting mental health symptoms serious enough for a doctor to become involved right now, and if you go to school, then it is statistically likely that 3 people in that same class will have been diagnosed with a mental disorder ([www.yctsupport.com](http://www.yctsupport.com)).

We interviewed our head of P.S.E (Ms Taylor) to discuss mental health issues and what people are doing to help prevent them.

One of the points we discussed was physical activity and how it releases endorphins which make you feel happier and can give you a sense of self-worth, however when children reach the age of 7, the amount of physical activity dramatically decreases, especially in teen girls. There has been a push to increase the activity in teens particularly in schools therefore PE continues through all years for 2 hours a week instead of increasing GCSE lessons.

Another problem that came up was 'The fashion for self-diagnosis': 'I am organised therefore I have OCD'. Due to people becoming more knowledgeable and more interested in mental Health issues words like bipolar and schizophrenic are now just part of the 'lingua franca' which can be a good thing but not if people aren't taking them seriously. OCD is probably the most inaccurately self-diagnosed mental health issue. Due to the massive increase of use of social media in the past years, people have been able to recognise actual mental illnesses which can be helpful but can lead people to incorrect beliefs and diagnosis. If you believe you have a mental illness DON'T SELF DIAGNOSE, go to a doctor where you can be given specific help if it is needed.

But how are schools helping?

'I am confident that we are trying very hard, I cannot be confident that the school will stop you from becoming mentally ill in the same way that we can't stop you from getting the flu or breaking a leg' Ms Taylor says. As a school we are tackling the topic of mental health issues by making sure people are aware about it. In our P.S.E lessons it is being widely recognised. Workshops like 'Thrive' help children overcome problems and 'Next Move' supports students with their resilience and shows them that life is hard but it can be dealt with.

## Top 5 Tips to Keeping a Healthy Mind:

1. **Exercise:** Doing regular physical exercise releases endorphins in the brain which is a happy feel-good chemical that prevents worries and doubts in the brain.
2. **Meditation:** This is a very useful way to clear the mind and make yourself relax. You can do it anywhere at any time and it decreases stress and worry levels in the brain.
3. **Being with people you like to be around:** Being around people you like makes you happy and it takes your focus off of your worries as your energy focus is on your friends/ family. These people may also make you laugh, which is proven to make you feel good and happy.
4. **Eating Healthy and Staying Hydrated:** These help to make you feel good about yourself, keep your brain functioning well and make it less likely to overheat.
5. **Doing things you love:** Doing something you love radiates many positive emotions that all magnetize into the universe to bring you back more joy and happiness. You can learn through pain but why learn through pain when you can grow and learn through pleasure.

by Leila, Maezie and Marc