



Strategic Partnership Boards
SAFETY SAFEGUARDING WELLBEING



Bitesize video guide: Mental wellbeing

Hello, my name is Carolyn Sellick and I am a local area coordinator which is a community support worker who works alongside people living with disabilities, mental health needs or older people and enables them to build supportive and inclusive communities where they stay connected, safe, resilient and independent.

I am going to talk to you today about the issue of mental wellbeing.

Mental wellbeing is about having a positive state of mind and body; you both feel good and function well in everyday life. You have a sense of happiness, connection with other people, communities and the wider environment and you can cope with life's ups and downs and be confident and resilient, taking responsibility for yourself and others.

As a practitioner you will be all too aware of how often the stresses of life can impact on a child's or adult's life and affect their mental wellbeing. For example, worries about their own or those close to them having issues with money, housing, physical health, employment, schooling etc. Getting the right support at the right time can really make a difference and enable someone to build back their resilience and wellbeing preventing their needs from increasing.

From our audit on children and adult cases about mental wellbeing we learnt about some of the good practice in the borough which included

- A person-centred approach used by a Local Area Coordinator (LAC) with a man who has mild learning difficulties. He was very anxious about dealing with statutory services, and his wishes were respected in how he wanted to engage with statutory services. The user, with the support of the LAC and a library staff member, joined a local walking group improving his health and wellbeing as he lost weight as well as reduced his smoking.
- A school working really creatively with a child and the family, accompanying the family to appointments with other services, meeting the child at the school gate when he was reluctant to come into school, etc, and the result was he achieved good educational attainment in his year six exams.
- A child focused early intervention multiagency response which resulted in a timely and effective intervention for a child around bullying and inappropriate

language, which resolved the situation in a constructive way that worked for all involved.

- There was evidence of good partnership networking and appropriate referrals/signposting made to various services. In one case of domestic abuse where the wife was a carer of her disabled husband, she had a history of depression and due to her cultural and language needs she was isolated. There was evidence of good, specialist knowledge in services and the Police were able to refer this user to an appropriate culturally specific voluntary sector group which resulted in the user feeling supported and able to engage socially with others.

The common themes from these good practice examples were early intervention, multi-agency approach, and the service user's needs and wishes influencing and directing the work.

One area we have learnt is not consistent from this and other audits is using a Think Family approach. Think Family is about recognising that families are a system and if we want to support them, intervention needs to be with the family as a whole. We need to be curious and interested as professionals and recognise how the needs and outcomes of each family member interconnect and impact on each other. When working with individuals we need to work with them and their families and communities to support them to build their resilience and own sense of self to make positive changes in their lives, using their families and communities for support where possible.

So, your three messages to take away are

1. Early intervention is key to support people to rebuild their resilience and support their mental wellbeing.
2. Think Family – be curious and interested in the family of the person you are working with, think about how all members interact and impact of each other. Build on people's resilience and support available in their families and communities.
3. The work should always be directed and influenced by the service user's wishes and feelings