



# BREAK THE STIGMA

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Eve Tobe, Educational Psychologist  
Redbridge Mental Health Support Team in Educational Psychology Service

# PLAN

- Who are the MHST?
- Break the Stigma Campaign
- Collaboration with Redbridge Faith Forum

# REDBRIDGE'S MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT TEAM

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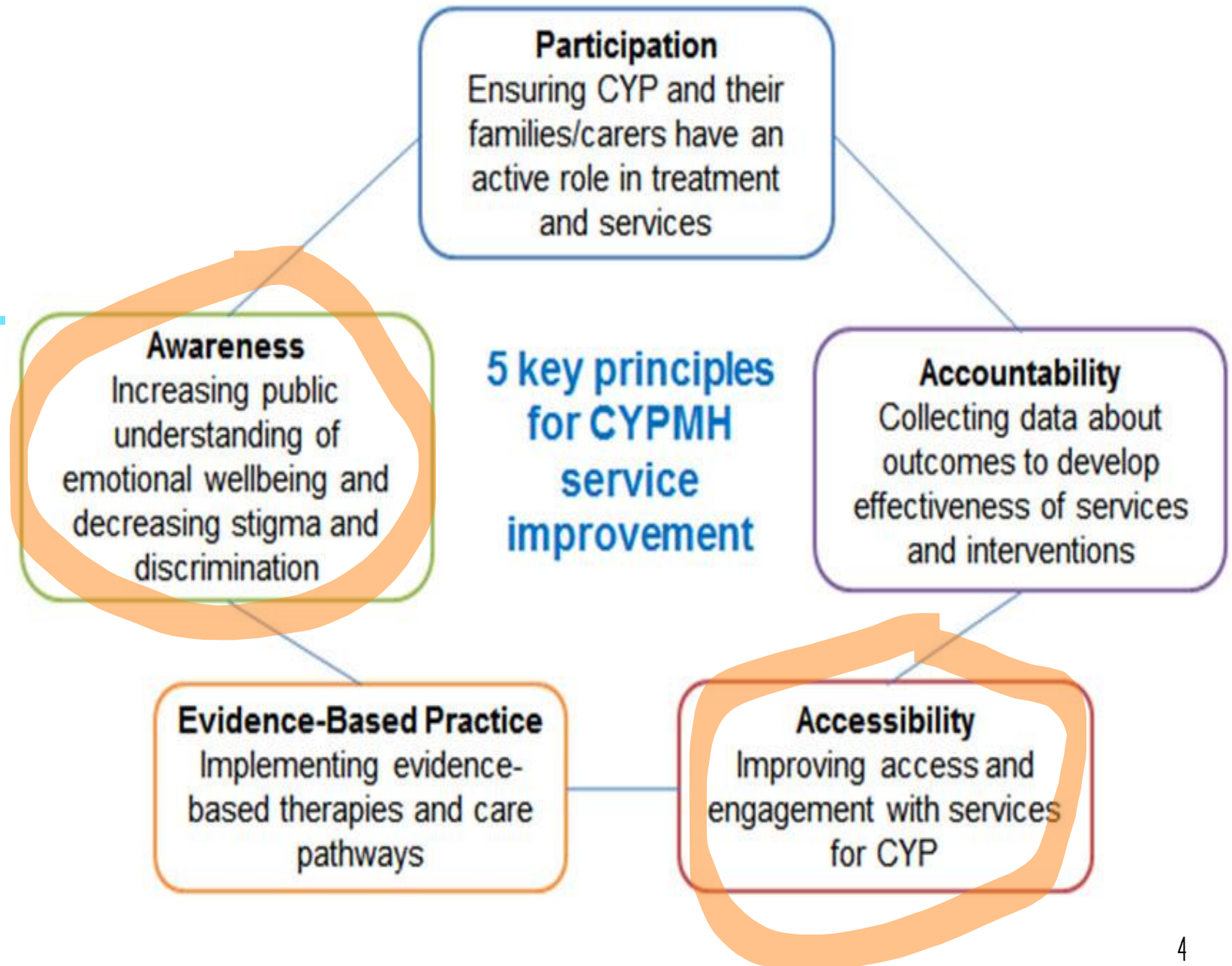
- Part of Redbridge Local Authority Children's Service in Access and Inclusion
- We sit in Redbridge Education Wellbeing Team (REWT) which is in the Educational Psychology Service
- We launched in January 2021
- We are award-winning - Redbridge Stars Making a Difference Team - and growing quickly!



# WHAT DO WE DO?

We work into Redbridge schools to:

- Deliver low-intensity guided self-help to parents and teenagers to support with low mood, anxiety and behaviour
- Support the senior mental health lead in schools to deliver their whole school approach to mental health
- Signpost





# BREAK THE STIGMA CAMPAIGN

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- Inception in October 2021 to bring mental health professionals together on a borough-wide campaign to reduce stigma around mental health
- To increase public understanding of emotional wellbeing and decrease stigma and discrimination around mental health
- To include a catchy visual, strapline, and posters
- For all services and schools to use it in correspondence and promotion
- Theme for our ELSA & MH Lead conference
- All working together and singing from the same hymn sheet



# AIMS OF THE CAMPAIGN

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To understand stigma around mental health

- What is the stigma?
- Why is it there?

To generate strategies to tackle the stigma

- How do we break the stigma?
- How do we raise awareness around wellbeing and mental health?
- How can we ensure those who need help have access?.





# EIGHT CAMPAIGN STRANDS

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- CYP Competition
- Beal campaign launch
- Understanding stigma
- CYP's voice
- Parent voice
- School Staff & MH Professionals participation
- Community participation
- Strategies to tackle stigma



# 1. CYP COMPETITION

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- Our work is underpinned by Children's Rights
- We launched the Break The Stigma campaign with a children and young people's competition
- Redbridge CYP were invited to design a catchy logo to head up the campaign.

Redbridge Educational Wellbeing Team (REWT)

## COMPETITION TIME!

We are holding a competition, to remind everyone to think positively about mental health. It's ok to not be ok!

We want you to help us create a picture or logo to show this! The best logo will win, and be used all over Redbridge when we talk about positive mental health, for example on t-shirts, pens and notebooks!!



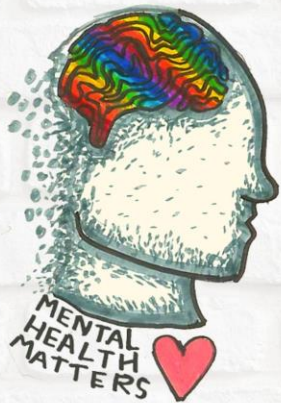
The winner will be announced at our RAISING MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS Event on the 12th of May at Beal High School where there are prizes to be won!!!

**DEADLINE: 25TH MARCH**  
**SEND ENTRIES TO:**  
**REW@REDBRIDGE.GOV.UK**





# #BREAK THE STIGMA



"Mental Health is not a destination but a process; it's about how you drive, not where you are going."

Together, let's break mental health taboos in Redbridge communities...

- [REWTF@REDBRIDGE.GOV.UK](mailto:REWTF@REDBRIDGE.GOV.UK)
- [MHST@REDBRIDGE.GOV.UK](mailto:MHST@REDBRIDGE.GOV.UK)



London Borough of  
**Redbridge**



## #BREAK THE STIGMA

TOGETHER,  
LET'S BREAK  
MENTAL HEALTH  
TABOOS IN  
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not a destination

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It's about how  
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# #BREAK THE STIGMA

Mental Health is not a destination but a process. It's about how you drive, not where you are going.

It's good to talk!

Asking for help is a sign of strength!



Together, let's break mental health taboos in Redbridge communities...



London Borough of  
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## 2. BEAL MENTAL HEALTH EVENT THURS 12<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2022 - CAMPAIGN LAUNCH



Announcement of CYP competition winners



Panel of speakers aimed at CYP



15 different professionals had a stall



Goody bags for CYP



Attended by 120 students across the local authority



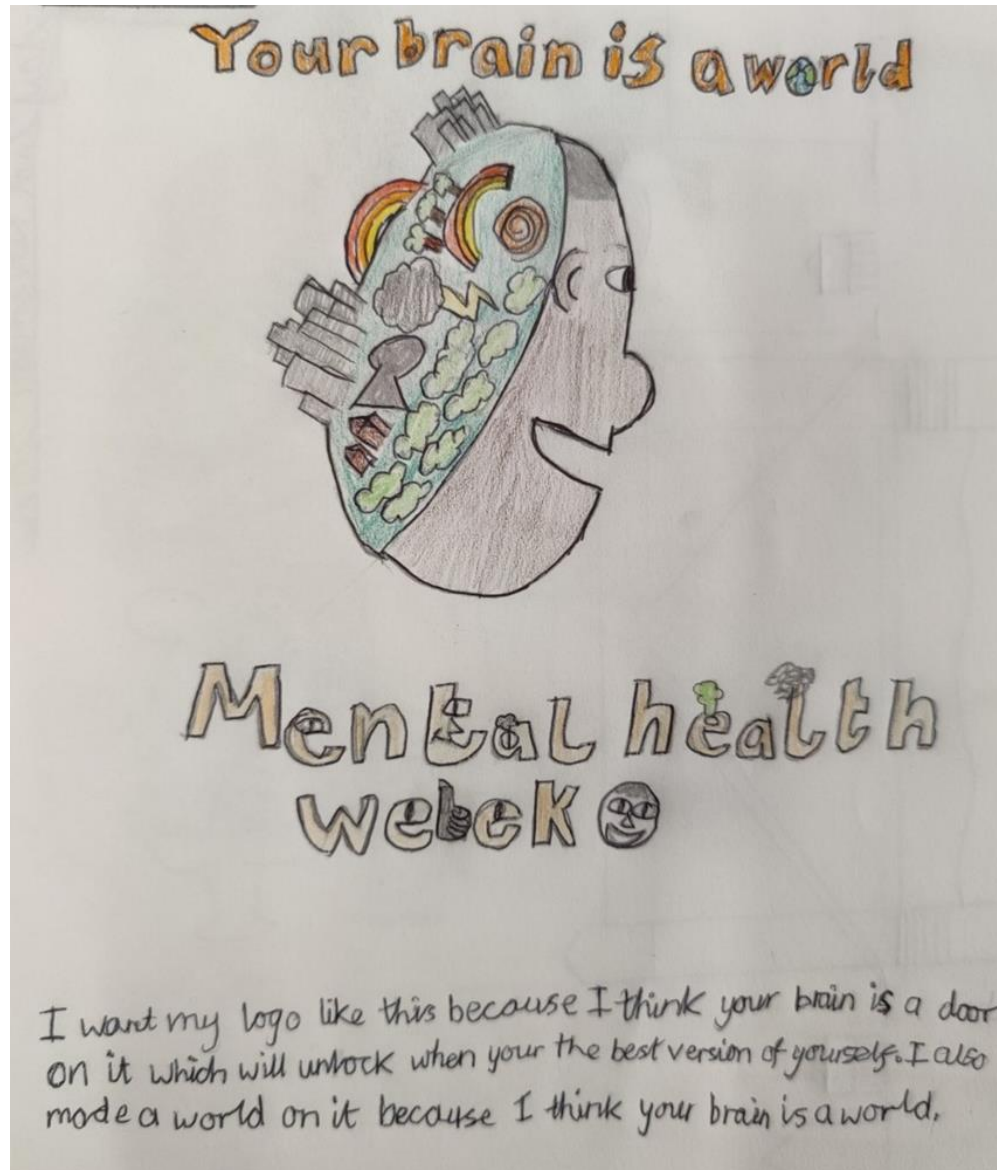
Students' choice to name the campaign. Chose Break The Stigma

# 3. UNDERSTANDING STIGMA

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- Stigma has been identified as the primary obstacle to seeking help for common mental health problems
- Research indicates two forms of stigma:
  - Self stigma - Self-stigma is a belief held by an individual that they are socially flawed and therefore unacceptable
  - Perceived public stigma - Perceived public stigma is the rejection from society based on notable characteristics or behaviours that may be considered dangerous or threatening
- Vogel et al., (2007) found self-stigma (alongside attitudes) to be a mediator for perceived stigma and willingness to seek help
- Self-compassion can moderate self-stigma and perceived public stigma. Individuals with high perceived public stigma and high self-compassion report lower self-stigma than those with low self-compassion





## WHAT THE RESEARCH TELLS US

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*What are the barriers, facilitators and interventions targeting help-seeking behaviours for common mental health problems in adolescents? A systematic review* (Aguirre Velasco et al., 2020)

- Twenty-five studies referred to stigma as the primary obstacle
- The second most mentioned barrier was associated to adolescents' family beliefs toward mental health services and treatment
- Almost one-third of the articles referred to problems related to mental health literacy as a significant barrier
- Mental health literacy and prior mental health care were the most cited facilitators for help-seeking for mental health problems
- Timely access to mental health was facilitated by having a previous positive experience with mental health services or help-seeking, being familiar with the sources of help, and good symptom and problem recognition



# SOUTH ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH AUGUST 2022

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- Sabriha Ali and Faryal Baig, psychological wellbeing practitioners from Redbridge Talking Therapies presented a webinar to raise awareness
- Stigma surrounding mental health can be common in South Asian communities. It stems from a lack of understanding and feeling shameful, leading to failure to seek help. Some feel afraid to open up to friends and family about how they are feeling. People may worry about being talked about or judged by others. This can lead to worsening of the symptoms and mental state. Older generations may not be educated on the subject at all, meaning unless they had physical symptoms, mental health issues were not understood. However, now it is finally being talked about and it is much more open now compared to before.
- Studies have shown that South Asian immigrants in Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom experience high rates of mental health issues, sometimes higher than their peers. Some of the reasons include intergenerational conflict or the stress of adapting into western society. Mental health can be deeply stigmatized in South Asian communities and symptoms can be trivialized. Children of South Asian immigrants may face challenges associated with the pressure of straddling two different worlds. While trying to fit into a western society that prides itself on individual expression, they may find themselves navigating a culture at home where personal boundaries are blurred, and self-identity is determined by the validation of their family and community.
- The collectivist nature can feel comforting and supportive with close-knit family ties and a sense of connection to something larger than the self. However, some individuals can feel pressure to sacrifice their personal desires for the expectations of family. Pursuing goals that are different from the expectations of the family and community is perceived to be selfish. There can be higher levels of psychological stress and interference with the identity formation process. Family conflict can occur when adolescents and young adults wish to start dating or pursue a career that is seen to be unacceptable by the parents. This creates an internal struggle among those who have been socialized with family loyalty and commitment. Some may still follow through with their desires in secrecy, but live in a constant fear of being found out. Others may comply with the expectations required of them, but at the cost of losing their sense of self, their self-concept. In both scenarios, mental health and resiliency is compromised in the long term.

# 4. CYP VOICE

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Pupil voice in schools means a whole-school commitment to listening to young people's views, wishes and experiences.

Based on suggestions from student councils, we collected student voice by administering a questionnaire for pupils to answer containing eight questions around what mental health means to them, and in what ways stigma exists around it

Three secondary schools were involved

Completed questionnaires over the Summer and Autumn terms of 2022



# RESULTS OF CYP QUESTIONNAIRES

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- Students demonstrated a good understanding of what mental health is.
- They are more likely to seek support for physical health when compared to mental health issues. Schools had average likelihood scores of 7/10 for physical health and 3.5/10 for mental health.
- Some school's responses were higher for the items on the perceived public stigma scale. Suggests that some students are concerned with being negatively perceived for seeking counselling services.
- Interestingly, *not wanting family to know* was the most rated barrier to seeking support for female students. Whereas male students responded that they wouldn't want their friends to know their emotional/personal issue. Pupils spoke about judgement, shame and embarrassment associated with having mental health needs. They also spoke of how mental health needs are seen as culturally taboo and can be seen as weak or cowardly.
- 'Friends' was the most selected response for groups they could talk to for mental health issues. Others selected 'parents'.
- Conversely, pupils identified friends and family as barriers to seeking support. The third highest barrier was a mistrust of professionals keeping their information confidential. Another barrier was not thinking it's helpful to disclose personal information.

# IMPLICATIONS FOR SERVICES

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1

Normalize support seeking to encourage pupils to feel more comfortable approaching school staff

2

Ensure transparency when clarifying matters of confidentiality to ensure we build trust with students engaging in our service

3

Enrich peer support in students revealed they are likely to turn to friends for support

4

Increase visibility

5

Reduce self-stigma to mediate affects of perceived stigma on likelihood to seek help - perhaps by supporting schools to instil self-compassion





"I felt very comfortable talking to my EMHP because I felt like she really understood me and what I was going through and she gave me good advice on things to work on to help how I was feeling."

"Mental health is not a destination but a process. It's about how you drive, not where you are going"

# Storytelling

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We ask students who have benefitted from the MHST service to describe how it helped and what is different now. We plan to make posters showing service users' voices, to encourage others to seek help.

# STUDENT CHARITY WALK FOR MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

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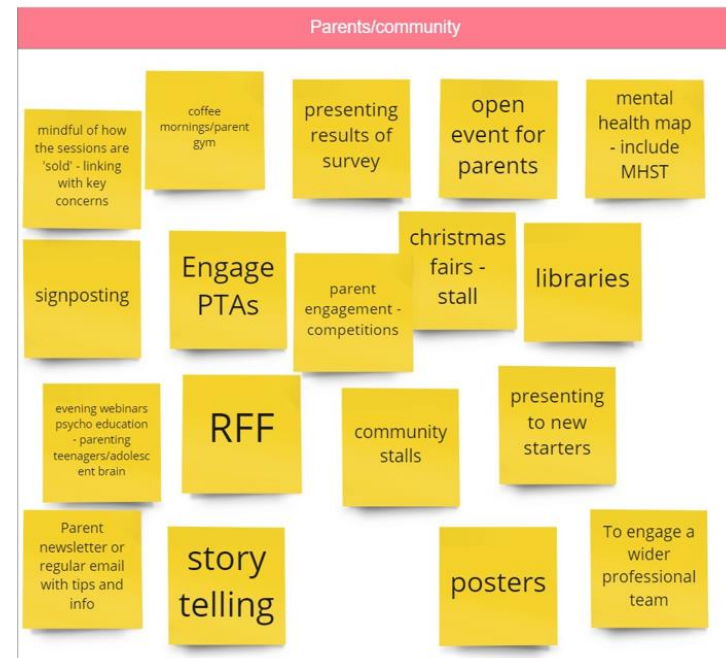
Students organised a wellness walk during Mental Health Awareness Week 2022. They came up with the idea themselves and raised money for a Mental Health charity.



# 5. PARENT VOICE

Currently in planning stage. We aim to raise awareness of campaign strands with parents through:

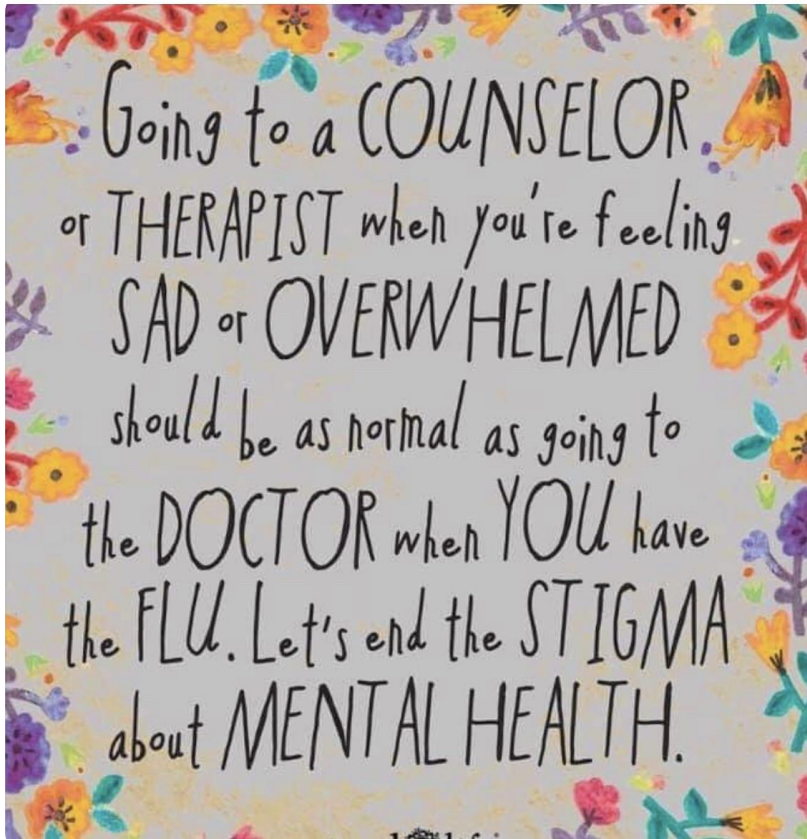
- Mentioning Break the Stigma campaign in all our Parent Week webinars (November 2022)
- Attend parent's evenings and open evenings
- Appear in parent Newsletters
- Launch an 'agony aunt' column on website and newsletters
- Improve our website and share link. Use QR codes
- Create a psycho-educational, signposting video for parents
- Continue running EPS parent help-line



## EXAMPLE SLIDE IN PRESENTATIONS:

#BEKIND #BREAKTHESTIGMA #IT'SOKNOTTOBEOK

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- If you broke your leg, you'd get specialist help. If you don't feel well emotionally, there is help for you in your school
- Be kind to yourself - everyone deserves to be happy
- Self-compassion matters
- Asking for help is a sign of strength
- If you don't need help now, that's OK. Be there for your school mates and friends
- Our service is confidential
- Encourage others and be supportive
- We are all in this together
- Remember to be kind to everyone. We don't know what people are going through



# 6. SCHOOL STAFF AND PROFESSIONALS' PARTICIPATION

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Currently in planning stage. We aim to raise awareness of campaign strands and work with staff through:

- Attending head teacher forums
- Signposting for wellbeing and support
- Delivering staff wellbeing sessions in schools
- Designing a new workshop named "Understanding cultural barriers to Mental Health" for SMHLs
- Launching a staff competition
- Running a wellness festival in Summer Term 2023



# 7. COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

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We aim to raise awareness of campaign strands with our community through:

- Setting up stalls in Ilford town centre and talk to the people on the street
- Linking with Redbridge Faith Forum - website, webinar, community drop-ins



# POP-UP STALLS IN ILFORD

REWT & MHST ran a Pop-up stall in Ilford Town Centre to get the views of the community for two days. Each day c. 40 visitors to the stall. Many themes identified from people's stories and conversations.

Addiction

Custody / Family  
support

Support for men  
("big boys don't cry")

Early childhood  
trauma

Internet and social media  
(missing opportunities for  
meaningful interactions)

Christianity and faith

Support for the  
elderly

Teachers as a bridge  
to building positive  
relationships

Parenting classes should be  
mandatory (help them to  
understand children's  
emotions)

Cutbacks in Mental  
health services

Mental Health =  
Invisible / easy to  
judge

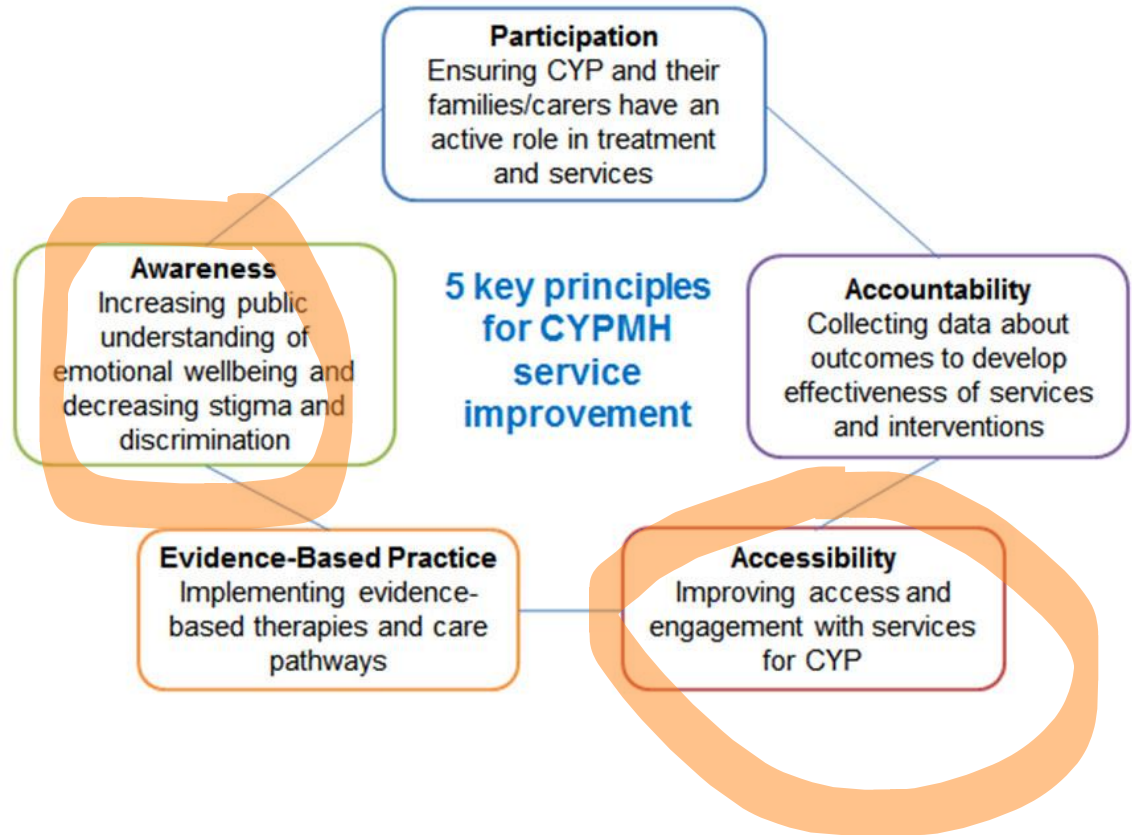
Depression

# 8. STRATEGIES TO TACKLE STIGMA

Faith and spirituality are protective factors for mental health e.g. through community, rituals and teachings. Cultural barriers, mistrust of services, and a lack of awareness surrounding mental health are some issues that we face. We value your ideas today.

- How can we work together to raise awareness around emotional wellbeing and mental health?
- How do we Break The Stigma around mental health in Redbridge?
- How do we improve access to services?

Break out Rooms and Feedback





# REDBRIDGE FAITH FORUM MEMBERS SUGGEST:

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- Notices and signposting in parks, libraries and sports centres in Redbridge where parents go with children
- Assurance of privacy when engaging with clients
- Teacher training around mental health - not just the specialist teachers
- Raising awareness for identification - what is normal and when is help needed?
- More safe spaces in the community including in faith-based spaces
- Links to mental health support that could be faith-based
- Consideration to overcoming language barriers



# SIGNPOSTING/ REFERENCES

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- <https://www.talkingtherapies.nelft.nhs.uk/redbridge/>
- [www.mind.org.uk/workplace/mental-health-at-work/taking-care-of-yourself/five-ways-to-wellbeing/](http://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/mental-health-at-work/taking-care-of-yourself/five-ways-to-wellbeing/)
- [www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/improve-mental-wellbeing/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/improve-mental-wellbeing/)
- [www.actionforhappiness.org/10-keys-to-happier-living](http://www.actionforhappiness.org/10-keys-to-happier-living)
- [www.5lovelanguages.com/](http://www.5lovelanguages.com/)
- [www.samaritans.org/](http://www.samaritans.org/)

- [Young minds.org.uk](http://Youngminds.org.uk)
- [Kooth.com](http://Kooth.com)
- [Childline.org.uk](http://Childline.org.uk)
- Redbridge Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Service (EWMHS)
- Your GP

## Helplines

- Samaritans: 116 123
- Childline: 0800 1111
- Young Minds Crisis Messenger - text YM to 85258, 24/7, free



# THANK YOU



Eve Tobe, Educational Psychologist  
Eve.tobe@redbridge.gov.uk

REWT/MHST

"Nurturing mental health and resilience in Redbridge school communities"

We provide safe and nurturing spaces to talk and learn about mental health and psychology. We empower people to live their best life, working in partnership with our school communities. We strive to reduce stigma, raise awareness and enhance emotional wellbeing and resilience for all.

We look forward to working with you to support children and young people