



17 May 2016

Press release issued on behalf of Suffolk County Council, 4YP and NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk and NHS West Suffolk clinical commissioning groups

Additional support for Suffolk's young people

More online resources are now available to support the emotional health and wellbeing of young people in Suffolk.

These resources are being highlighted during Mental Health Awareness Week (16 – 22 May) and follow the recent workshops with young people in Suffolk secondary schools who said they wanted to use technology and social media to access professional help and support.

Today (Tuesday 17 May) sees the official launch of a brand new online chat support service, *Ask the 4YP Expert*, with experienced youth workers from Suffolk charity 4YP offering confidential advice every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 5 – 7 p.m. until the end of summer. Anyone aged 12 – 25 years can go online and ask a 4YP expert about any issue that is affecting them.

The Suffolk-focused website *The Source* has been refreshed and is an invaluable guide for young people to help them with issues that matter to them, including anxiety, depression, self-harm and eating disorders. The site has been developed to provide clear explanations to address what concerns young people and signposts them to support and further help.

These additional support services for young people form an integral part of the county's five-year Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing Plan. This plan has been created by service users and their families, Suffolk County Council, NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk and NHS West Suffolk clinical commissioning groups and voluntary and community sector groups. The plan aims to deliver joined-up, family focused emotional wellbeing services which result in earlier help and better outcomes.

Dr John Hague, a GP in Ipswich and mental health lead for NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group said: "Our young people are our future which

is why it is so important their emotional health and wellbeing needs are properly addressed. By doing so we can deal with their issues early on and reduce the likelihood of them needing support later in life.

“These online resources are an important addition to the support services available. It is clear that young people prefer a technological approach to accessing help and advice on issues that matter to them and this way of working forms a big part of our five-year transformation plan.”

Tibbs Pinter, chief executive, Suffolk Young People's Health Project (4YP) said: "We're really proud to be the Ask the 4YP Expert and to be working with Suffolk Children and Young People's Service and the clinical commissioning groups, to offer such an innovative 1-1 service, developed in response to the support young people told us they need and want to use.

"We believe that by providing this online support we are removing some of the barriers that young people can face in times of need. With Ask the 4YP Expert young people from all over Suffolk, especially those in the rural communities, can access the quality professional support they require, while assuring them of confidentiality."

Suffolk County Council's Cabinet Member for Health, Councillor Tony Goldson said: "Finding the language to express how they are feeling, while overcoming the perceived stigma around mental health, are just two of the challenges facing young people today.

"We want to empower young people to identify what support is available and to feel confident when discussing the subject.”

Ends

Ask the 4YP expert at www.thesource.me.uk/home/ask-an-expert

Visit The Source website at www.thesource.me.uk and 4YP at www.4yp.org.uk

Read the Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing Plan www.healthysuffolk.org.uk/EWB2020

It may be possible to arrange media interview with some of the young people who participated in the workshops. Please contact us for more information.

Issued by The Communications Team on 01473 770014

NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group –
www.ipswichandeastsuffolkccg.nhs.uk

NHS West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group – www.westsuffolkccg.nhs.uk