

We are a team aiming to support the **whole-school approach to wellbeing** in schools across **Swansea and Neath Port Talbot**.



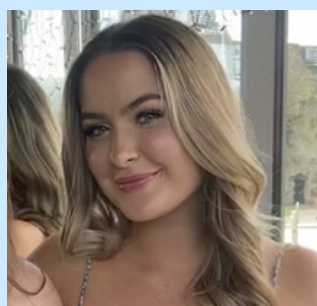
Each school has a named Emotional Health and Wellbeing Practitioner that can provide support to **staff, parents, children and young people**.

Our team has expanded!

Meet the new members of our team!



Hello I'm Ceri an Emotional Health and Well Being Practitioner. I'm passionate about Children's rights and their well-being. I've worked with children, young people and key adults for many years. My work has been helping and supporting them to manage their feelings, learn all about emotions and help them find ways to feel better. In my spare time I look after two rescue rabbits and have a cheeky sausage dog to play catch with.



My name is Ellen, I am one of the CAMHS School In reach practitioners, working in Swansea. I moved to Swansea 5 years ago, so I enjoy visiting my family and friends back home whenever I can. In my free time I like to attend different dance classes and teach dance at Swansea University whenever I get the chance. I graduated from my MSc in 2021 and have since worked in various services within the Learning Disability and Mental Health field.



I'm Angharad and I'm an Emotional Health and Wellbeing Practitioner. I'm excited to work with Welsh schools across NPT. I feel passionately about helping young people to recognise, understand and manage their emotions. In my spare time, I enjoy going for long, muddy/sandy walks with my husband, our baby boy and our chocolate labrador (who resembles a big brown bear). Whatever the weather, we love spending time outside as a family!



Hello, I'm Amy, an Emotional Health and Well-being Practitioner at CAMHS School In-reach. I have worked with children and young people for over 9 years, I have a degree in Inclusive Education and I have just finished my MSc in Psychology. I started working for School In-reach in September. I have really enjoyed meeting all my schools and getting to know the staff and pupils. I am passionate about supporting children, parents and school staff with children's emotional health and well-being needs. In my spare time, I enjoy spending time with my family and being outdoors.



Hello! My Name is Conor, I am one of the Emotional Health and Wellbeing Practitioners with the CAMHS School In-reach service, working with primary and secondary schools across both Swansea and Neath Port Talbot areas.

Prior to this role, I worked as a TA, HLTA and Wellbeing Officer (Pastoral) in a Swansea primary school. I have now worked with children in educational settings for 8 years! My academic background is Psychology and Counselling, I am very happy to be a member of the School In-reach Service and feel it is a great fit for me. I have been engaging with school staff and children across Swansea Bay, in this role, for five months so many of you may already know me.

I spend lots of my free time socialising with friends, seeing my family and enjoying a good TV series or film. I like to walk amongst nature or along the beach, I find the sea – whether I am by it or in it – is a calming influence. If you see me in your school, offer me a coffee and you will win me over. I look forward to continuing to work with school staff and children across the Swansea Bay area.

FOR STAFF

We feel strongly that all **staff should feel empowered to support CYPs' emotional wellbeing**. We offer a range of **information sessions** to support staff training, and we are also available for **case discussions** to offer advice and/or signposting. Schools often 'book' their practitioner in for a meeting where several CYP or themes of wellbeing needs are discussed. We also participate in **school cluster forums** which explore the emotional presentation of CYP. These forums take place on a termly basis and are an opportunity for 'joined-up' thinking in supporting CYP's wellbeing needs.

FOR PARENTS/CARERS

We offer a range of support for parents /carers depending on the needs of the family. We have **workshops** that are delivered both in person and online. Where appropriate, we offer appointments or phone calls to discuss the needs of their CYP. We are very much **responsive to the need of each school**.

FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

We may offer **group intervention** on a wide range of areas, such as self-esteem, anxiety, anger, and emotional regulation. Additionally, based on a **stepped approach** there may be occasions where individual sessions are required with the Practitioner or Clinical Nurse Specialist. This will be identified through case discussions.

CHAMPION

WE'RE SO PROUD OF YOU!

OUR WELLBEING WARRIOR

Maisie is our Wellbeing Warrior for NPT this term. Maisie has worked incredibly hard during school sessions with SIR and has amazing understanding of emotions and zones of regulation. Maisie loves yoga, movement and has fantastic creative skills and is really great at art. Maisie, we in SIR are super proud of you this term and I know your school are too! Da iawn Maisie, keep up your amazing work.



APP RECOMMENDATIONS

Three Good Things, 4+ years

An easy to use online gratitude journal that encourages children to jot down 3 things a day that made them happy. As time passes, they can reflect on the positive moments in their lives.

Mindful Powers, 7+ years

A holistic approach to helping young minds learn and practice mindfulness so that they can respond more positively and effectively to stressful situations through the power of play.



BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

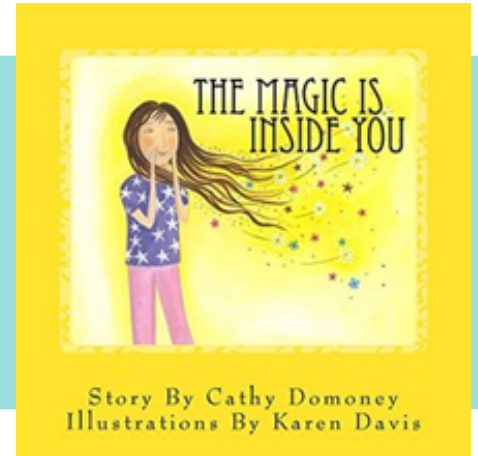


Incredible You, Rhys Brisenden, 4-8 yrs

A bright and beautiful book that brings a breath of fresh air filled with positivity, zest and energy. The book is ideal for helping children to develop self-confidence and empowering them.

The Magic is Inside You, Cathy Domoney, 6-12 yrs

A bright and beautiful book that brings a breath of fresh air filled with positivity, zest and energy. The book is ideal for helping children to develop self-confidence and empowering them.



You Are Awesome: Find Your Confidence and Dare to be Brilliant at (Almost) Anything, Matthew Syed, 8-14 yrs

A bright and beautiful book that brings a breath of fresh air filled with positivity, zest and energy. The book is ideal for helping children to develop self-confidence and empowering them.



Stuff That Sucks: Accepting what you can't change and committing to what you can, Ben Sedley, 12+

Stuff That Sucks encourages you to accept your emotions rather than struggling against them. It also shows how to reconnect with what is really important to you, giving you the tools to help clarify your personal values and take steps towards living a life where those values can guide you in your day-to-day behaviour.



DID YOU KNOW?

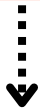


IT TAKES FIVE POSITIVE EXPERIENCES TO ONE NEGATIVE EXPERIENCE TO KEEP US POSITIVE! [1]

THAT MAY SEEM A LIKE A LOT OF POSITIVITY BUT DON'T WORRY, THESE POSITIVE EVENTS CAN BE AS SIMPLE AS A HAPPY THOUGHT, SOME YUMMY FOOD, A HUG FROM YOUR CARER, OR SHARING A LAUGH WITH A FRIEND – ANYTHING THAT MAKES YOU FEEL GOOD.



As humans, our brains lean towards a negative bias, this means we can slip into negative thinking automatically. We can blame this negative bias on our cave-men and -women ancestors, who needed to look out for dangers such as sabretooth tigers to keep ourselves alive. As cave-people we trained our brains to be alert to threats, over being positive and happy. Today, in the modern world, we are lucky that we do not need to look out for sabretooth tigers but our brains are still the same, always looking out for danger first!



These days, our brains' negative bias helps keep an eye out on dangers such as a car coming down the road or keeping away from dangerous heights; however, our brains use their negative bias when picking up modern worries, such as in our social relations when in school, work or while shopping in a crowded place. This is why worrying is very normal, our negative bias is there to protect us but in modern times it can protect us a little too well.

HOW CAN WE CHALLENGE OUR NEGATIVE BIASED BRAIN?

The good news is that psychologists, therapists and brain scientist have figured this out – but it takes practice and time to wire our brain from worries to positivity [2].



[1] John M. Gottman
[2] BARBRA FREDRICKSON

This is where positivity can save you!

In particular - mindfully noticing when you feel positive in that very moment, such as when laughing with friends, notice how this feels and tell yourself this is good - then when you have a falling out with a friend, remind yourself of that positive moment and tell yourself that you can be a good friend.



Seeking positivity by spending time with people who make you feel good, while avoiding those who bring negativity - plan activities that you enjoy and make you feel good: exercise, football, gymnastics, socialising, knitting, cooking, spending time with family.

Acting kindly and helping others with random acts of kindness, make connections with people by giving them a compliment, help your mum out with cleaning, pick someone a flower, send someone a nice message. Could you give someone a random act of kindness today?



Showing gratitude for the small things, such as: having friends, family, food to eat at home, living by the beach, the sun shining on your face. Can you think of something that you are grateful for?
Practicing positive self-talk, remind yourself of your good qualities and the things that you are good at; notice your negative thoughts before challenging them with positivity. Can you tell yourself something you admire about yourself?

Worrying is normal but if we actively, and mindfully, practice positive thinking we can train our brain to automatically think more positively and the quicker we can 'bounce back' from a negative experience. This is called resilience - experiencing a negative event, or thought, with reduced harm to our emotional state or positive perceptions of ourself.

CHRISTMAS TREE

YOU WILL NEED:

Cardboard

Glue

An adult to help you
Card, a pencil and a pen

Paint and paintbrush

Scissors



DIRECTIONS

1. Cut your cardboard tubes into approximately 5cm lengths.
2. Paint and decorate your cardboard tubes any way you like, you could paint it all green or make it bright and colourful.
3. Once the paint is dry, glue your cardboard tubes together into a tree shape.
4. When the glue has dried, place your tree on some paper or card. Draw around it and cut out the shape. This can be glued to the back of your tree.
5. You can number each tube and use it to count down until the holidays.
6. Go exploring!! Every day hunt for something you can add to your tree to mark that day. It can be leaves, shells, pebbles, pinecones, feathers or seeds.



POMPOM GARLAND

YOU WILL NEED:

Card

Wool

Scissors

Pencil/pen



DIRECTIONS

1. Draw around a mug/cup to create 2 identical circles. Draw a smaller circle in the middle and cut them out.
2. Place your cardboard circles together and begin to wrap your wool all the way around. You can make your pom-pom thicker by adding more wool.
3. Once you are done, carefully trim between the 2 pieces of cardboard.
4. Cut a length of wool approximately 20cm long and keep to one side. Using the length of wool, carefully slide between the circles and secure tightly with a knot.
5. Then you can remove the cardboard circles from your pom-pom. Repeat this until you have enough pom-poms for your garland.
6. Thread your pom-poms onto a length of wool to create your garland.

TIP - YOU CAN CHANGE THE SIZE OF YOUR POMPOM BY MAKING THE CARDBOARD CIRCLES BIGGER OR SMALLER.

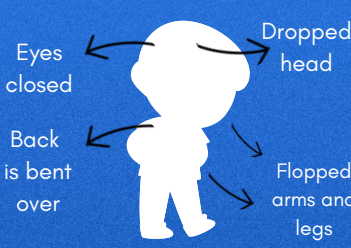
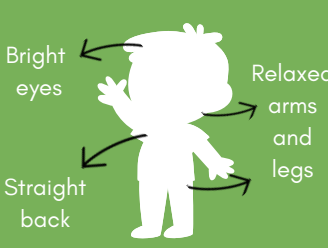
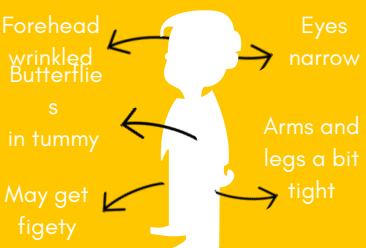
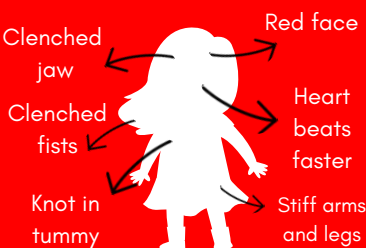
EMOTION REGULATION



Emotion regulation is the ability to control our emotions. How we are feeling is influenced by our thoughts and what's happening around us. Everyone struggles to control their emotions at some point in their lives. Feelings are signals from our body that helps us to make good decisions. Feeling fear when crossing a busy road is useful as it helps us to stay safe. The first step to successful emotional regulation is being able to recognise emotions in yourself and others. Think about what is happening to your body when you feel different emotions. Is your heart beating faster or do you feel sleepy? Is your body tense or relaxed? Do you have butterflies in your stomach or do you feel calm? Once you are able to recognise the feeling, you can name the emotion. For example, you might feel your fists and jaw clenching and you realise that you're starting to feel angry. Identifying the emotion means you are more able to choose an appropriate way of reacting. There is no right or wrong answer when it comes to emotions. Everyone reacts to situations differently. However, it's important for children to know that when feeling angry, frustrated or sad, it's not appropriate to hurt others, hurt yourself or damage property.

We can organise our emotions into colour groups otherwise known as the "Zones of Regulation." This is an easy to use tool which helps children to manage their emotions in an appropriate way. Children are assured that it is fine to be in any of the zones but as we tend to feel good in the green zone, we would aim to spend more time there. By identifying what colour zone they are in, children can look at strategies that will help to get them back into the green. Whatever colour zone a child is in, it is important to encourage them to talk to someone about how they are feeling.

THE ZONES OF REGULATION

<p>BLUE ZONE</p> <p>How this may feel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sad Miserable Sick Tired Teary <p>What happens in your body?</p>  <p>What can you do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go for a walk Stretch Stand up Close your eyes Talk to someone 	<p>GREEN ZONE</p> <p>How this may feel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Happy Quiet Okay Concentrated <p>What happens in your body?</p>  <p>What can you do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep doing what you're doing! 	<p>YELLOW ZONE</p> <p>How this may feel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worried Silly Excited Confused <p>What happens in your body?</p>  <p>What can you do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Count to 10 Take deep breaths Draw a picture Squeeze something Talk to someone 	<p>RED ZONE</p> <p>How this may feel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anrgy Mad Furious Mean <p>What happens in your body?</p>  <p>What can you do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take deep breaths Walk away Find a safe space Ask for help Talk to someone
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FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Thoughts are not facts!

- It's easy to get trapped in a cycle of negative thinking about us, other people, and the future when we are feeling low.
- Consider whether there is any solid evidence to support your negative thoughts.
- Bear in mind that not everything you think is true!

Try to follow a plan not a feeling

- It's common to lack energy and avoid doing things, even the things we enjoy become difficult when feeling low.
- This can be a no win situation, as the more we avoid things the more isolated and exhausted we end up feeling.
- To combat this, its helpful to make a plan such as 'easy win' activities, even if we don't feel like doing them.

Healing isn't linear

- Healing from low moods can be messy and can bring up lots of difficult thoughts, feelings and memories.
- People often report feeling worse before feeling better.
- Remember you are not doing anything wrong – its all part of the process.

Shame is a poor motivator for change

- If bullying and shaming yourself was an effective way of changing your mood, surely you'd be feeling better by now?
- Shaming ourselves only makes things feel worse.
- Try to speak to yourself with kindness, like you would to a friend.

Small things add up

- Often it is a build up of small seemingly insignificant changes that have the biggest impact on mood.
- Basic things such as eating regularly, getting out of the house for a short walk, meeting friends, a good nights sleep and bed time routine works well.





FOR PARENTS

Giving yourself, permission to spend small frequent amounts of time to re-charge your batteries will allow you to meet your own emotional wellbeing needs and that of others. If you are finding it difficult to make time for self-care, some helpful tips are; set a date with yourself, schedule this on your calendar, set a reminder on your phone or do frequent, small acts of self-care.

As we move from parenting our children during a pandemic to resuming a bit of normality it is only natural to feel that we have been swept with the flow of life again. We know that meeting our own emotional wellbeing needs is important to be able to fulfil our children's but how many of us do this consistently, without guilt and worry.



Think of your emotional energy as like a cup of water. During the day, you give out emotional energy in many ways and even by lunchtime, the cup can be running on low! You cannot pour from an empty cup, it must be refilled otherwise you will start to feel overwhelmed and life may become stressful. Factor in small amounts of time doing something that you enjoy, achieving something for you, feeling closeness or connection to someone or just being alone and having your own space. Even just 10 minutes every day will help to re-fill your emotional cup.



Remember, while practicing compassion, kindness and love towards our children and others it's also essential that we direct some of the same towards ourselves.



Click here for more hints and tips from the Anna Freud Centre.

SPOTLIGHT

THE CYNNYDD PROJECT



What is Cynnydd?

Cynnydd is a £35 million project part funded by the European Social Fund (ESF). The project launched in September 2016 and has recently had an extension approved which will run until December 2022.

The project falls within Specific Objective 2 of the Operational Programme for the European Social Fund for West Wales and the Valleys which sounds fancy but what does it actually mean?

It means that this project was put forward to address the increasing number of young people (aged 11 to 24 years old) at risk of becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training). The project aims to support 7,500 young people across West Wales.

Cynnydd is led by Pembrokeshire County Council and delivered in partnership with local authorities and FE Colleges along with Careers Wales in Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire, Swansea and Neath Port Talbot. Private and third sector training providers are also involved.

The purpose of the project is not to duplicate services but to offer support in addition to what the schools and colleges currently provide.

What does the project look like in Neath Port Talbot (NPT)?

Each partner's project differs in terms of structure and delivery to meet the needs of the young people within that area. NPT has 12 Cynnydd engagement workers in its structure and each worker is based full time within a secondary school. As a partner we were allocated £4 million over 6 years to work with over 1,000 young people.

How are young people referred to Cynnydd?

The Cynnydd engagement workers will be involved in meetings and discussions with school and other professionals regarding concerns around young people's attendance, behaviour and attainment. They will also take into account current social and family situations, additional learning needs, safeguarding and mental health and wellbeing. A Cynnydd referral form will then be completed by the school and the Cynnydd engagement worker can start working with the young person.

How does NPT support young people at risk of becoming NEET?

A person centred approach is embedded from start to finish. This means that the young person is involved in and are encouraged to make decisions on how best they can be supported.

SPOTLIGHT

THE CYNNYDD PROJECT



Is Cynnydd working in NPT?

90% of young people who have completed Cynnydd are at reduced risk of becoming NEET.

This means that 90% have improved in their attendance, attainment, behaviour or have a positive destination (progressed onto further education, work based learning or employment) along with an increase in wellbeing.

So yes, the data looks good, but what does Cynnydd mean to the young people, schools, families etc?

“(The Cynnydd worker) has made me realise that school can be fun. I can’t believe I never used to come to school before Cynnydd.” - Young Person

“(The Cynnydd worker) has encouraged my son to help with the graffiti project, supported him whilst doing the project. He includes my son in all activities as he is usually left out of things. This kind of support will enable my son and other children like him to thrive. I thank (the Cynnydd worker) for his kindness and support.” - Parent

“Thank you so much for sorting out the gym, it’s vital to help me keep off drugs” - Young Person

“Her behaviour in school and home has improved. She looks forward to the activities and enjoys being part of something which engages her. Thank you.” - Parent

“The Cynnydd Workers provide a service to both staff and pupils which ensure that key needs are met on a daily basis. Their understanding of the challenges that young people have to face is excellent and their ability to provide support and guidance on so many levels is priceless. I couldn’t imagine the school running as effectively without their vision, creativity and enthusiasm.” - Head Teacher

What is next for Cynnydd?

Although the ESF funding is coming to an end, the positive outcomes delivered by the project have been recognised and it is set to continue until March 2024. Discussions and consultations are underway with regards to future funding and the focus of the team moving forward. For now the team will continue to support our most vulnerable young people in schools across NPT.

WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO...



This term has been a busy! we're now based in Primary and Secondary schools. We've been running staff training, parent workshops and group work with young people to support their wellbeing.

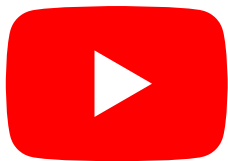
TRAINING



As a team we are used to lone working, but for one training event we came together to offer a school cluster carousel approach where support staff got to experience different themed training to support the wellbeing of children. The final part of the training brought all staff together for a guided meditation to ensure everyone's wellbeing is looked after. You can't pour from an empty cup.

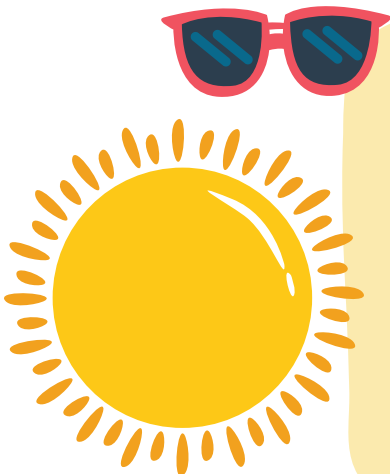
WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY

The School In Reach Team became YouTube stars! It was the day we launched our YouTube channel promoting the Power of Positivity. All year groups had access to their own age-appropriate video giving the young people information, advice and activities on how to gain a more positive outlook. This will be something we will be continuing to develop and expand on, so watch this space!



SCAN ME!

SUMMER GROUPS

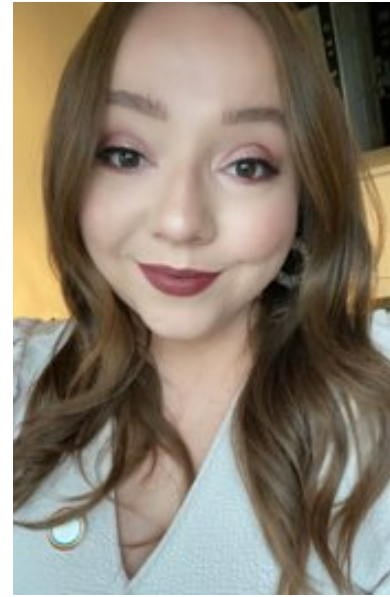


For 4 weeks over the summer holidays, School In Reach Practitioners facilitated summer group sessions for some of the children and families known to us from Swansea, Neath and Port Talbot. The sessions took place at Platform HQ, which was a comfortable and friendly environment - huge thanks to Platform for hosting us! Children and their families explored the importance of emotional literacy, expressing feelings and how to adopt positive coping strategies together. There were many opportunities for fun, painting, games and connecting with others. Thank you to all of the families that attended, we had lots of fun too!

GOODBYE AND THANK YOU!



ABI



JEZ

Congratulations to Abi and Jez who've been offered new roles in the Assessment and Treatment Team in CAMHS. We know that they will be an amazing addition to the team, and we wish them the best of luck. A huge thank you for all their work supporting the development of the service, and for the incredible support they've provided for children, parents and staff throughout their time in the School In-Reach team. You'll both be really missed. ♥

merry
CHRISTMAS
FROM

