Supporting Staff and Student Mental Health and Wellbeing

Overview

The session focused on the current landscape of mental health support within education settings focusing primarily on the relative training courses and research/support materials Edge Hill have been involved in.

Key points

Andy highlighted how this topic is not only important for retention but also for recruiting the future workforce.

Lots of programmes are out there to support staff and students, little have the right provision to carry it out though. See resources for link to Mind's Safe and Effective Practice guide.

There were discussions around the key challenges facing staff and students in delegates settings and how they relate to mental health. The main points were:

- Students
    - Huge increase of domestic violence in home setting
    - Lack of guardian at home taking responsibility/accountability
    - Increasing number of young carers
    - Low confidence with communication skills – making/answering phone calls or public speaking
    - Non-suicidal self-harm – giving students control over something when they don't have control over much else

- Staff
    - Volume & Capacity to support in a timely manner
    - There is little support for the top roles, e.g. heads of schools compared to similar leadership roles in clinical spaces. Who supports the supporters?

- Both
    - Lack of understanding of what is nerves vs anxiety, leading to low attendance and then support can't be given
    - Current curriculum isn't built to support key skills needed today

EHU have also seen the demand for mental health related provision – high application numbers for PGCE Primary Mental Health and Wellbeing specialist with little marketing.

The department are keen to partner with schools so get in touch with Smithand@edgehill.ac.uk to discuss it further.

Resources

Mental Health Support Network provided by Chasing the Stigma | Hub of hope

-Highlighted how the tool can be used to signpost and refer by postcode for specific support services
-The young people's focus was developed with young people focus groups to ensure services were relevant.

School-based suicide prevention strategies

-Written by Nina as part of PhD at EHU
-Nina travelled to Australia observing and pieced together a report on overcoming challenges.

[Three dads walking](#)

-3 dads, 3 daughters, 300 miles of hope
-Woven around personal diary entries and their own experiences of deep grief, this book, told in three distinct parts by each dad, grows into a beacon of hope for anyone struggling. It's about the power of speaking out, of friendship, laughter and courage (and blisters). The three dads bear a heavy load, but they walk on for us all, finding light on the path after the darkest times.

[Safe and effective practice](#)

-Mind – safe and effective practice report has evidenced based findings with what, where and who.

Support programmes

[Ahead of the Game](#)

- developed in Australia mostly for young men. Been translated it for UK context using sport as an anchor to open conversations up around mental health
-Seen good outcomes from involvement from literacy to seeking support

[Mental health | Sport England](#)

-EHU conducted a review on the use of sport interventions for children & young people with a diagnosed mental health condition.
-Results showed sport had positive effects, sport in groups even more so but what worked the best was activity with resistance exercises and moderate-to-high intensity.

[Improving Life Chances | Events | Edge Hill University](#)

- 2-day conference being held at EHU
- Our conference programme will be organised around our faculty themes:

- Early Years Education, Families, and Communities
- Inequalities, Health, and Wellbeing
- Philosophy, Values, Ethics, and World Views
- Teacher Education and Professional Learning
- Transformative Education

Q&A

- The marketing and branding of this specific support is interesting as sporty students may be all for it but bigger battle for non-sporty students to get involved, how do we get non-sporty students involved?

  - Delegate offered something that worked for a group in their school. [Vibe outdoors](#)- group based activity out on the lake in St Helens doing kayaking and other group activities which students really enjoyed. It got them engaged and outdoors with critical students in a safe environment.

- What are the stats of those that arrive with mental health needs and what they leave with? Does university help or make it worse?

    - numbers can't be clear because so many still don't declare it on their application but the earlier we know the more proactive we can be
    - mental health isn't fixed so it does fluctuate throughout their time at university
        - deadline/exam season will see spikes
    - having a good relationship with personal tutors is key and signposting students to correct services is really important