

# NEWS



**Our last Walking With You parent support group took place on Friday 29th April, and our topic was based on parents/carers supporting children and young people with self-harm. Eleanor Roswell, Head of psychological therapies, CAMHS consultant clinical psychologist and Chris Gach, crisis team CAMHS, came along to present, support and answer questions.**

Chris explained the following points:

- The intervention of the crisis team is there to assess risk and to support the child/young person (c/yp), until they are able to engage.
- This process may include elements of other therapies.
- The crisis team, work in conjunction with schools, police, hospital staff and social workers to complete a full history assessment. This will also include family and other involved relatives.
- A question surrounds why a c/yp self-harms; a stress hormone is released when self-harm occurs, this however decreases overtime.
- It is very important in the process of supporting a c/yp who self-harms, that a formulation of understanding is achieved.
- A chain analysis is a process which can help to piece together what was happening before and after the self-harm has occurred.
- Finding the trigger for the self-harm can be critical in recovery, however the reasons for self-harming are vast and personal to the individual. Equipping the c/yp with skills to help them when they are feeling like they will self-harm and Involving them in a preventative plan, can help them to feel they are not alone.
- It is important to remember that c/yp's are not self-harming because they want to.
- Any plans put in place should be regularly reviewed to keep them relevant with what is happening with the c/yp, in terms of progress made or set backs.

**Safety plan** – Work with the c/yp on putting a safety plan in place for when they feel they may or are planning to self-harm. Anticipating is really helpful before they get into a fight or flight mode. Plan ahead to manage the situation. Suggestion: Limit how quickly a c/yp person can gain access to the item they intend to self-harm with, maybe wrap the item up although this is not always possible.

### **BASH (Beating Adolescent Self-Harm)**

– research trial. Blueice app 12-17 yrs. Blueice is a prescribed evidence-based app to help young people manage their emotions and to reduce urges to self-harm. It includes a mood diary, toolbox of evidence based techniques to reduce distress and automatic routing to emergency numbers if urges to harm continue. Blueice was developed by Paul Stallard from Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust and co-produced by young people with lived experience of self-harm. Blue Ice is available for iOS and Android.

### **Seed wellness – Workshop for parents**

Teenage wellbeing: supporting Tweens and Teens through the secondary school years.

Thursday 19th May 7.30-9.30pm, Beaconsfield Town Hall

[info@seedwellness.co.uk](mailto:info@seedwellness.co.uk)

**Parent question:** yp self-harming with pencil sharpeners. Do you remove the pencil sharpeners?

**Response:** Pencil sharpeners are easily replaced, even if they were removed from the yp's pencil case. Maybe try an ice dive or use a timer system.

Sophie from Article 12, Barnardo's youth forum who has been in recovery for two years, explained that she found both of these techniques very useful. Running her hands under cold water (at school) placing her head in a bucket of ice water (at home) until the urge had passed. She also found setting a timer to delay the urge, waiting it out, and then moving forward by increasing the timer delay. Sophie mentioned having a self-soothe box at school, which was in the safe keeping of a trusted teacher. She filled the box with her their favourite things. This could be a photo of their pet or cherished friend/family member, or something they enjoy holding (small toy). Physical items can also help to distract such as ice packs, heat packs or favourite chocolate. If the urge begins to take hold they can take some quiet time having their favourite, feel good things at hand.

#### **Sophie's top tips:**

- Keep busy
- Remember the bigger picture
- Turn it on its head - bad if you do, bad if you don't (is it going to help?)

#### **What helped to recover:**

- Distraction
- Ice dives – regulating body temperature (DBT) Dialectical Behaviour Skills, (CBT) Cognitive Behavioural Therapy
- Being kind to herself
- Talking about it with her parent/carer so they understood how she was feeling
- Time delay
- Staying in control
- Working with the school so they understood what she needed from them
- Mindscape and calmharm apps

#### **Dialectical Behaviour skills:**

- Self-soothing – Mindfulness/breathing techniques, self-soothe box, slowing the mind and body down
- Improving the stressful situation – manage the impulses, distress tolerance, emotional regulation, communication
- Thinking of the pros and cons of the situation – Is it going to help?
- Distraction – Keeping busy can distract from unhelpful thoughts (Ice Dive, splash cold water on the face, or run hands under the cold tap cooling the body down)
- Finding an alternative coping mechanism to self-harm, choosing different ways to handle emotions

## Single Point Access - Referral?

CAMHS is contactable through our SPA (Single Point Access). You can simply fill in an online parent/carer referral via the CAMHS website or get some advice over the phone.

e-mail: [oxfordhealth.bucksCAMHSSPA@nhs.net](mailto:oxfordhealth.bucksCAMHSSPA@nhs.net)

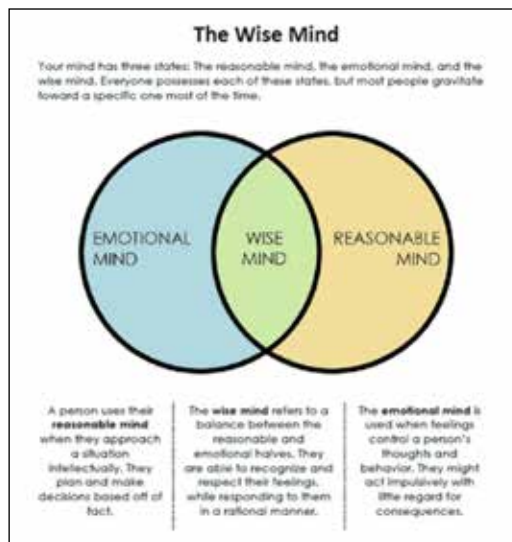
Tel: 01865 901951

Once referred, keep in contact if things get worse or you can call 111 for emergency mental health support/crisis team.

## Cognitive Behavioural Therapy: (CBT)

Is a talking therapy which helps a young person identify what their triggers are:

### The wise mind



### Safe environments:

Chris explained that it is not possible to make an environment completely safe as unsafe behaviour happens in safe places. However, depending on the c/yp's needs it may be necessary to remove certain items such as knives, medication or belts. He went on to say that it is about finding a balance and that not one size fits all in finding the right plan for a c/yp. If knives are removed, maybe they are made available for meal times as this can impact on a c/yp's well being.

**Parent question:** c/yp uses the threat of self-harm to control what they are allowed to do.

**Suggestion:** Try to set realistic boundaries of what you feel is acceptable for them to do and what you don't, (such as something that could endanger them). If it is something that is relatively unimportant then maybe allow it. Try to be flexible, choose your battles!

**Nanna question:** how do I talk to them about it?

**Suggestion:** recognise when it is the right time to communicate with them, react as necessary if they shut down.

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Please note: workshops and other supporting groups included in this newsletter are not endorsed by CAMHS.

Next meeting: Friday 27th May 10-11.30am – Safe use of social media