**Children and Young People’s Emotional Health & Wellbeing Parents and Carers Survey Report 2021**

**October 2021**

**Introduction**

The voice of parents and carers in Calderdaleisneeded so that services offer the right kind of support at the right time to children and young people. The results from this survey will help steer and shape local services, ensuring they meet the needs of all children, young people and their families.

The 2021 parents and carers survey about their children’s emotional health and wellbeing gathered 1,078 feelings, views and thoughts over a 6-week period. It was launched on the 1st February, which was also the first day of Children’s Mental Health Awareness Week 2021.

The survey asked parents and carers to share their experiences and views anonymously on their children’s emotional health and wellbeing and the local support services that their child may have used.

**Method**

This survey was co-produced by parents and carers, mental health practitioners and commissioning colleagues.

In partnership we:

* agreed the wording for each question
* agreed the sequence of the questions
* chose to use the online survey platform *‘You Can Say’* because it allowed us to conduct the survey in the best way possible
* collated the responses which are outlined in this report.

In total the survey asked 13 questions. However, those parents and carers whose child hadn’t used a support service, answered 9 questions. To help collate the answers the questions asked were closed, so parents and carers could answer by placing a tick in the tick-box that was most relevant to them and their child/young person. The survey also allowed parents and carers to select more than one option on some of the questions and skip ones that were not applicable. There was also an option to ‘tell us more information’ if they wanted to.

The survey was distributed in a variety of ways to reach as many parents and carers as possible, which included the use of social media platforms such as Facebook, electronic bulletins such as the schools messaging service and the monthly

Emotional Health and Wellbeing 5 Key Updates. Schools and voluntary and community sector services such as Family Voice Calderdale played a vital role in sharing the online link with parents and carers they are in contact with. Whilst this survey was live, Calderdale were in a local lockdown with schools and services communicating with parents and carers via their online means.

**Results**

The survey received the views and opinions of 1,078 parents and carers with the majority of their children being of school age (5-16 years). The number of children aged between 5-10 years was 542 (50%). The number of children aged between 11-16 was 467 (43%) with the remaining 7% being between the ages of 17-25 years.

When asked how parents and carers describe their child’s ethnicity, 88% said White or White British, 11% said BAME (Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic) with 1% identified as ‘other’.

When asked to describe their child’s gender, 51% selected female, 47% male, 1% transgender and 1% selected ‘prefer not to say’.

When asked where they lived, the majority (29%) answered in HX3 area followed by 19% living in HX2, 8% in HX6 and 6% living in HD6, HX1 and HX7 the remaining 26% lived across other areas of Calderdale.

15% (167) parents and carers identified their child to have a special educational need and/or a disability. Out of the 15%, 45% (75) parents and carers said their child had experienced a barrier in accessing mental healthservices, due to their special educational need and/or disability.

**Question 1:** **Do you feel comfortable talking to your child about their emotional health and wellbeing?**

**Question 2: Which of these would help you feel more comfortable talking to your child about their emotional health and wellbeing?**

**Question 3:** **I feel I have enough knowledge and understanding** **about my child’s emotional health and wellbeing?**

**Question 4:** **Which of these would help you feel more knowledgeable and gain more understanding about your child’s emotional health and wellbeing?**

**Question 5:** **Where would you look for information or get advice about your child’s emotional health and wellbeing?**

**Question 6:** **Have you ever accessed information and advice to support your child’s emotional health and wellbeing?**

**Question 7: Are you aware of Calderdale’s Emotional Health and Wellbeing website, Open Minds** [**www.openmindscalderdale.org.uk**](http://www.openmindscalderdale.org.uk) **?**

**Question 8:** **What future support would be most helpful to you as a parent/carer?**

**Question 9: Has your child accessed any services to support their emotional health & wellbeing?**

|  |
| --- |
| At this point in the survey the parents and carers who said no, or they didn’t know if their child had used a service to support their emotional health and wellbeing, skipped the following 4 questions  **N.B. The results for the next four questions are from 243 parent carers, NOT 1,078.** |

**Question 10:** **What was the main service your child accessed to support their emotional health & wellbeing?**

**\*\*\*Other included**: Young Carers, The Noah’s Ark Centre, Invictus Wellbeing, Barnardo’s Positive Identities Service, homeopath, Bee Quirky, private consultant, Sure Start, Crisis Team, A&E and School Nurse.

**Question 11: What referral route was taken for your child to access this support?**

**\*\*\*Other included**: Private, Police, Online, Social Services, Paediatrician, Hospital staff.

**Question 12: What could have been better about the service they received?**

**\*\*\*other included:** nothing,professionals listening, long term support, less stigma about the service, parallel parent group, continuation of same practitioner and clinician.

**Question 13: I would recommend my child's main support service to a friend?**

.

**Conclusion**

It’s important to be reminded that when this survey was conducted, Calderdale was in a local lockdown, with schools and most services paused from face-to-face delivery, therefore we had to rely on social media platforms and our colleagues in Education, the Council, NHS, and the Voluntary and Community Sector to help distribute the link virtually to parents and carers they were in contact with. We feel that without face-to-face guidance and a full explanation on why parents and carers were being asked to participate in this survey the overall reach and number of responses we received has been impacted.

The survey results indicate that 947 parents and carers feel either comfortable, or very comfortable talking to their child about emotional health and wellbeing. However, we need to be reminded that 43 parents and carers said they felt uncomfortable, or very uncomfortable. It is particularly important that parents and carers feel comfortable talking to their child about emotional health and wellbeing, as in the 2021 Children and Young People’s Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Survey, children and young people said that they are most likely to go to a parent or carer when they need help or someone to talk to about their mental health.

It has been highlighted in this survey that parents and carers would feel more comfortable and gain more knowledge and understanding on children’s emotional health and wellbeing if they had access to age-appropriate tips. In total 690 parents and carers told us this is a resource they would like to have available to them. 550 parents and carers said they would like clear signposting on where to find support for their children.

This survey results confirms that the majority of 873 parents and carers who took part in this survey would look online for support for their child’s emotional health and wellbeing, followed by asking a GP or teacher. This highlights the importance of having clear, accessible online information about local emotional health and wellbeing support services. It also highlights the importance of ensuring emotional health and wellbeing support services continue to work in partnership with GP’s and Schools to help equip them with the skill set and resources needed.

**Next Steps**

* This report will be shared with parents and carers, schools, service providers in Calderdale, and the Open Minds Partnership and will be posted on the Open Minds Calderdale website in the parents and carers section.

**Recommendations**

* For the Open Minds Partnership to launch a publicity campaign to promote the Open Minds Calderdale website. This website provides advice, information, support and signposting on local and national emotional health and wellbeing services that help children, young people and families who are going through a difficult time.
* For the Open Minds Partnership to look and respond to the comments made by parents and carers who identified that their child faced a barrier in accessing services due to their special educational need and/or disability.
* For the Open Minds Partnership to establish a small task and finish group to look at key themes and develop an action plan to address the areas raised by parents and carers.

**Written by Parents and Carers and the Commissioning Engagement Officer.**

For further information about this survey please contact [Joanna.marshall@calderdale.gov.uk](mailto:Joanna.marshall@calderdale.gov.uk) Commissioning Engagement Officer, Integrated Commissioning, Contract and Quality Team, CMBC.