



Rt Hon. Victoria Atkins MP
Secretary of State
Department for Health and Social Care
39 Victoria Street
London
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E: mb-sofs@dhsc.gov.uk

8th February 2024

Dear Secretary of State,

One in 5 children and young people face a probable mental health condition, a continuing rise.

A recent YouGov survey found that over 50% of children face barriers from seeking mental health support, despite struggling, because they are embarrassed, fearful or will not turn to someone they do not know.

Around half of mental health conditions develop by the age of 14, so supporting children early on is vital. Yet only 8% of NHS mental health spending goes on children's services.

The Government's school-based Mental Health Support Teams will only reach 50% of pupils by 2025.

Place2Be, alongside other leading organisations, has worked in schools and supported children for decades, providing them with a safe place to be themselves, where they can talk in confidence with a trusted, trained mental health professional. This equips them to manage their emotional challenges and feel connected. They are also more likely to stay in education.

It is not just children who benefit. School-based mental health support relieves pressure on parents, school staff and the NHS and is proven to be cost-effective.

This Children's Mental Health Week we must listen to young people and commit to long-term, sustainable investment in school-based support. Young people are counting on us.

Catherine Roche, CEO, Place2Be

place2be.org.uk

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HRH The Princess
of Wales

Registered Office: Place2Be, 175 St. John Street, Clerkenwell, London, EC1V 4LW. 020 7923 5500
Registered Charity in England and Wales (1040756) and in Scotland (SC038649)
Registered Company in England and Wales (02876150)





Signed by

Catherine Roche, CEO, Place2Be

Michael Samuel MBE, Chair, Anna Freud

Kathy Roberts, Chief Executive, Association of Mental Health Providers

Lynn Perry, CEO, Barnardos

Peter Leonard, Chief Executive, The Centre for Emotional Health

Amy Whitelock Gibbs, Chair, The Children and Young People's Mental Health Coalition

Jack Reynolds, Chief Executive, Football Beyond Borders

Julie Muir, Executive Director for Recovery, Forward Trust

Jacqui Dennafoord, Chief Officer, Joe's Buddy Line

Rebecca Gray, CEO, Maudsley Charity

Simon Blake, Chief Executive, Mental Health First Aid England

Victoria Hornby, CEO, Mental Health Innovations

Lea Milligan, CEO, MQ Mental Health Research

Brian Dow, Chief Executive, Mental Health UK

Dr Sarah Hughes, CEO, Mind

Alison Unsted, CEO, MindForward Alliance

Chris Martin, CEO, The Mix

Elise Temple, Principal & Director of Education and Skills, Nacro

Jyles Robillard-Day, CEO, National Counselling & Psychotherapy Society (NCPS)

Phil Anderson, Strategic Director of External Affairs, National Children's Bureau

Sir Peter Wanless, CEO, NSPCC

Dr Lade Smith CBE, President, Royal College of Psychiatrists

Marjorie Wallace CBE, Chief Executive, SANE

Tim Coulson, Chair, Schools Wellbeing Partnership

Cassie Oakeshott, CEO, UP-Unlocking Potential

Ndidi Okezie, CEO, UK Youth

Cassandra Harrison, CEO, Youth Access

Tom Madders, Director of Communications and Campaigns, YoungMinds

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