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Leading local care, improving lives in Manchester, with you

Healthy Schools MANCHESTER

Mental Health Awareness

Parents and Carers

Support provided by Zain Iqbal

(Mental Health Lead)

Powered by:

NHS Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust

NHS Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust

MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

Manchester Health & Care Commissioning

THE MANCHESTER PRIMARY CARE PARTNERSHIP

Content of today's session

- Definitions of Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Mental Health as a spectrum
- Young people's mental health
- Common mental health issues
- Risk factors v Protective factors
- Support from School
- Supporting at home
- Talking to young people
- Five ways to wellbeing
- Self-care
- Further support

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Important to note…

There may be topics and case studies in today's session that may relate to your own experiences of mental health and wellbeing.

Some topics can lead to past experiences/trauma resurfacing.

Please feel free to take a break at any point.



Mental Health is a topic we all have experience in.

Whether this is managing our own Mental Health or supporting someone else's, we all have some understanding of it.

However, it can mean different things to different people as we view and perceive the world through our unique intersectional lens.

So what does Mental Health mean to you?



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The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines Mental Health as…

'A state of wellbeing in which the individual realises his or her abilities, can cope with the stresses of life, work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community'.

However, this is not an exhaustive definition and as we've just discussed, Mental Health and Wellbeing and our unique definitions of it need to be taken into consideration.

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Many people think of Mental Health as being binary or black and white.

Either you have good mental health and wellbeing or you have poor mental health and wellbeing.

However, this truly is not the case!

Mental Health is better seen as a spectrum/continuum and reflecting as to where we sit on this continuum at a given time allows us to understand how we are feeling and what we and others can do to support us.

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Healthy	Responding/ Reacting	Injured	Ill
• Normal mood fluctuations • Ability to take things in ones stride • A good sense of humour • Good performance • Feeling in control • Normal sleep patterns • Being physically well • Having good energy levels • Being physically and socially active • Self confident • Comfortable with others • Limited use of drugs/alcohol or gambling	• Irritable/Impatient • Nervousness, sadness and increased worrying • Procrastination/ forgetfulness • Trouble sleeping • Intrusive thoughts • Muscle tension and headaches • Low energy levels • Decreased activity or socialising • Less confident • Feeling uneasy around others • Regular but controlled used of drugs/alcohol or gambling	• Anger • Anxiety • Continuous sadness • Feelings of hopelessness • Negative attitude towards life • Poor performance or a workaholic • Poor concentration and decision making abilities • Restless or disturbed sleep • Increased aches and pains • Increased fatigue • Unconfident in tasks • Avoidance and withdrawal • Increased and hard to control use of drugs/alcohol	• Anger outburst or aggression • Exessive anxiety or panic attacks • Depression, self harm or suicidality • Excessive insubordination • Inability to perform duties, control behaviour or concentrate • Inability to fall asleep or stay asleep • Physical illness • Chronic fatigue • Complete isolation • Avoidance of tasks altogether • Drugs/Alcohol abuse and addiction • Gambling problems and addiction



Healthy	Responding/ Reacting	Injured	Ill

Take this opportunity to reflect and answer the following questions

1. As of this week/day/moment, where are you on this continuum?
2. How do you know this?
3. Has there been a time where you are further towards the “ill” side?
4. Can you identify why this may have been?
5. Is there a pattern or trend you can identify as to when your wellbeing is in decline?
6. What did you do to get yourself back towards the “healthy” side?

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What are the current Mental Health issues CYP are facing?

Low self-esteem

Managing emotions

Low resilience

Withdrawn/ disengaged

Stress management



Sleep issues

Bereavement

Anxiety

Self-harm

Disordered Eating

Low mood

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Spotting the signs and symptoms of common mental health difficulties

Anxiety



Fear, avoidance of (perceived) threat

Unable to regulate emotions

Social isolation

Overwhelmed easily

Trouble sleeping

Physical symptoms

Outbursts

Low mood



Loss, demotivation at core

Lack of motivation

Not enjoying things they used to

Withdrawn

Low self-esteem or feeling worthless

Social isolation

Feeling tearful and upset regularly

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Spotting the signs and symptoms of common mental health difficulties

Self-harm and **eating difficulties** are not a mental health problem in isolation.
These are commonly used as coping strategies for people to feel in control of something.
They are both often an indicator of an underlying problem.

Self harm

Any form of hurt

Control

Under pressure



Can take many physical forms e.g. cutting, burning, bruising, scratching

Eating difficulties



Restricting, controlling, limiting

Low self-esteem

Way of coping with feeling of sadness, worry and stress

<u>When should you become concerned?</u>

- Behavioural outbursts and unstable moods
- Obsessive and compulsive behaviours
- Dramatic weight change
- Talking about suicide
- Suffering medical episodes (e.g. fainting)

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Things to remember…

It's incredibly important to remember a few things to help us understand mental health, support our children and rationalise our worries…

- Mental Health issues are common. They are more than likely a result of an acute period of adversity that the young person is going through

- With correct support, intervention and most importantly, protective factors, young people will bounce back to strong and stable mental health

- They are not made up, fictional and untrue. They are not attention seeking behaviours nor are they signs of weakness

- There is nothing to feel guilty about as a parent and there is no shame in your child struggling. It is common and happens to more young people than you may think (1 in 6)

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RISK FACTORS

Child

- Genetic influences
- Low IQ and learning disabilities
- Specific development delay
- Communication difficulties
- Difficult temperament
- Physical illness
- Academic failure
- Low self-esteem

Family

- Family disharmony, or break up
- Inconsistent discipline style
- Parent/s with mental illness
- Parental substance abuse, addiction or alcoholism
- Physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect
- Parental criminality
- Death and loss

School

- Bullying
- Discrimination
- Breakdown in, or lack of, positive friendships
- Deviant peer influences
- Peer pressure
- Poor pupil-to-teacher relationships

Community

- Socio-economic disadvantage
- Homelessness
- Disaster, accidents, war or other overwhelming events
- Discrimination
- Other significant life events
- Lack of access to support services

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Child

- Secure attachment experience
- Good communication skills
- Having a belief in control
- A positive attitude
- Experiences of success and achievement
- Capacity to reflect

Family

- Family harmony and stability
- Supportive parenting
- Strong family values
- Affection
- Clear, consistent discipline
- Support for education

School

- Positive school climate that enhances belonging and connectedness
- Clear policies on behaviour and bullying
- 'Open door' policy for children to raise problems
- A whole-school approach to promoting good mental health

Community

- Wider supportive network
- Good housing
- High standard of living
- Opportunities for valued social roles
- Range of sport/leisure activities

Support from school

Schools have a duty and work hard to support your young people with their mental health. It's important to remember that the school is never against you or your child.

They have a sense of duty and care, and will work hard to support you and your child if they are going through a difficult time.

Once again, there is no reason to feel shame or guilt if staff reach out to you saying they are concerned about your child's mental health. It is better to reframe our thinking from feelings of embarrassment into feelings of joy that the staff have picked up on this and are actively trying to help.

School's have direct access initiatives and programme that can provide further support and resources, but they often cannot do this if children are off school for long periods of time, or they do not have the support of parents and carers

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Support from school

Each school will have different support systems in place and it's important to speak to the right member of staff to understand what this might be. Broadly speaking there are normally three levels of support that young people receive

Universal

Half term or termly wellbeing surveys, Mental Health lessons, clubs and activities open to all to boost resiliency and skills, quite areas offered, etc

Targeted

Group work and interventions, explicit resiliency work, in school counselling services, extra provisions, action plan, weekly mental health check ins, designated members of staff to support, etc.

Specialised

School Nurse referral, CAMHS referral, parental consultations, adjusted timetable, 1:1 therapeutic work, daily mental health check ins, signposted to further help services, etc

Support at home

You know your child better than anyone else. More so than anyone, you are the most significant source of support and young person can have.

However, it can be really difficult to provide support to our own children as we can feel embarrassed, feel like they won't take us seriously or feel that they may push us away.

Opening up a conversation is the first step, but this needs to be done in a sensitive way.

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Talking to your child

Lots of children and young people find it easier to talk while doing an activity. This takes the pressure off because they don't have to sit still or make eye contact all the time, and because it makes pauses and silences more comfortable.

Having something to do with their hands, or something practical to focus on, can also make it easier for some children and young people to reflect or think more clearly.

Rather than feeling like a 'big chat', the conversation can start more naturally while you're both doing something you enjoy.

Consider how you're going to start the conversation. Is it going to be light hearted? Fun? General? Or would you prefer to talk about something serious quite soon?

Refusal to talk

If your child doesn’t want to talk it’s important not to become defensive or take this personally. They may just not be ready to have the conversation yet, but you trying and showing them that you are there is a step in the right direction. If they don’t want to talk try saying one of the following –

•You can talk to me, I’m here for you.
•If you need to talk to someone else, that’s okay too.
•If you talk to me about what is worrying you, I can do my best to help.
•Even if I don’t understand, know that I want to.
•We’re going to get through this together

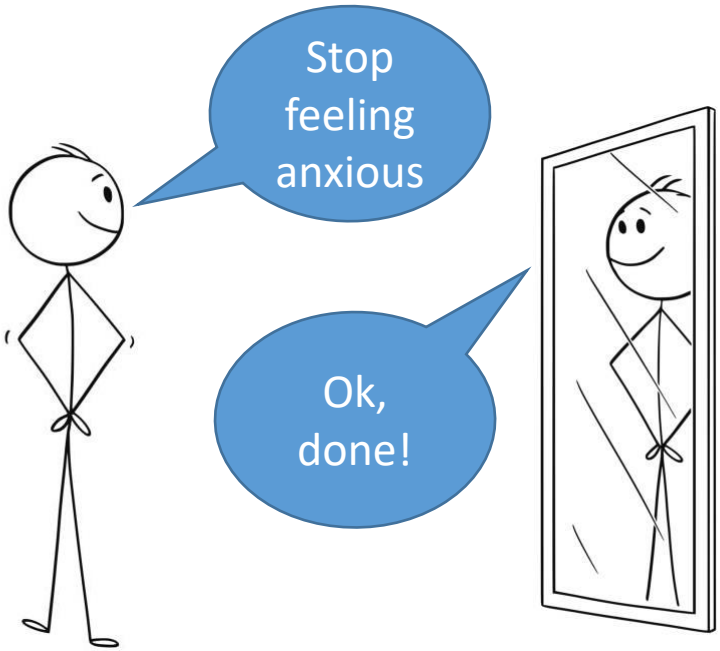
Remember that you know your child. You can tell when it isn't the right time or they aren’t in the mood to talk.

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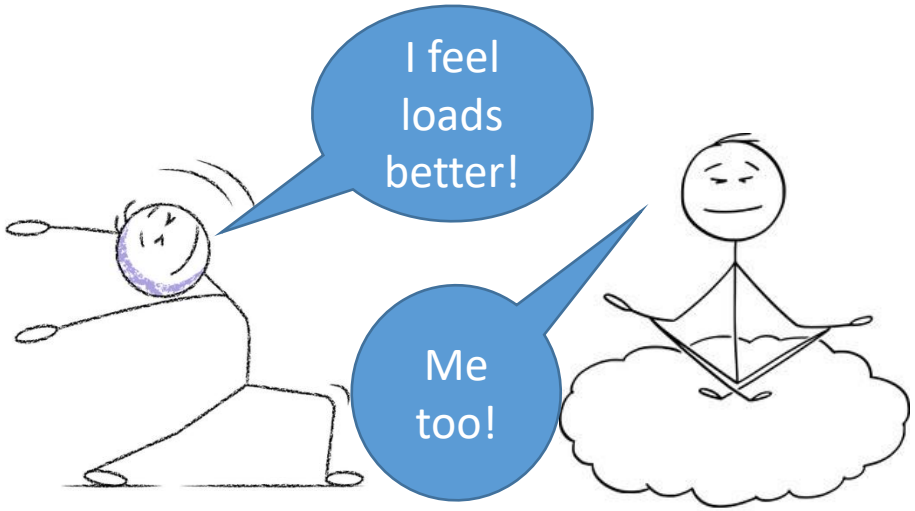
What to do if your child opens up

1. Validate their feelings. You could say ‘it’s really understandable that you’re feeling…’ to let them know that their feelings are okay.
2. Thank them for sharing what’s going on and be encouraging about the way they’ve opened up.
3. Let them know that you love them, you're there for them, they can talk to you whenever they need to, and you can help them get support if they need it.
4. Ask them if there's anything you could do that they would find particularly helpful.
5. Spend time together thinking about what’s making them feel this way. It could be something at home or school, a relationship with a friend or family member or something else.
6. Let your child know about the helplines, text lines and online chat services that are available - which you can find at the end of this guide. Young people can find it difficult to talk and worry about upsetting their parents, so reassure them that it’s okay to open up to other people.
7. Remind your child that this is temporary. Reassure them that things can change and they can feel better.
8. Avoid conversations at the height of distress. It's important to be there for them, but it can be more helpful to talk about the causes when things are feeling calmer

Breaking the cycle



Moving forward from your conversation, it's important that we break the cycle that anxiety, depression, low mood and other mental health conditions can get us into. It is not a case of simply stopping feeling a certain way.



Physically doing something (that we already know will be good for us) is the only way to break the cycle. It's important to think about ways we can break the cycle for young people and support them in doing so.

Five ways to wellbeing

Another helpful and low-level way to start breaking the cycle, elevating our mood and achieving mood is practicing one of the five ways to wellbeing.

These are five simple strategies that can add significant wellbeing into our lives which help us then feel motivated to do more and overcome our anxieties.



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Connect with friends, family and those that mean a lot to us. Talk to them, listen to them, be there and feel genuinely connected.



Exercise makes us feel good and improves health. Go for a walk, a jog or a run. Play a sport or go for a swim. Physical activity clears our head and helps our physical and mental health.



Try something new, maybe painting or drawing. Learn to play an instrument. Pick up a new language. Bake some bread. When you achieve something, it feels good and learning new things will make you confident to tackle challenges.



Give to others what you can. This could be a smile, a thank you, volunteering your time or if possible donating money. Seeing how you can make someone's day a bit better is very rewarding and makes you feel great for doing it.



Everything you do and experience is beautiful. Show gratitude in all that you do. Savour each moment, be aware of what's happening and the world around you. You will start to see the things that really matter.

Self-care

We must also prepare and support our children and young people to look after themselves. This is called self-care. It is an important part of building resilience and looking after mental health and challenging anxiety.

By giving young people the skills and ability to look after themselves, they can get through tough times by using strategies and initiatives they can do themselves. This could include any of the things from our five ways to wellbeing but here are some more examples…



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Self-Help

Similar to self-care, self-help is allowing children and young people find the help they need themselves. There are multiple ways to do this but here are some NHS approved apps and resources they can access.



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CALM HARM

A free app to help teenagers resist or manage the urge to self-harm



MOVE MOOD

A free app to help teenagers with low mood and depression

CLEAR FEAR



A free app to help children young people manage the symptoms of anxiety



WORTH WARRIOR

A free app to help young people manage low self-worth, poor body image and related eating disorders

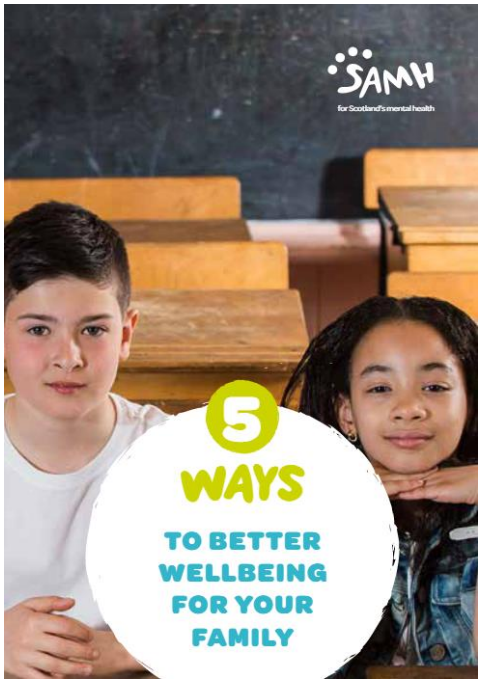
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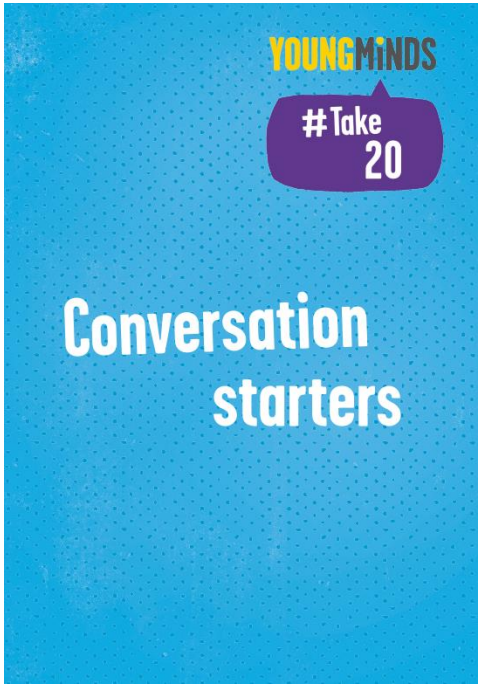
childline
ONLINE, ON THE PHONE, ANYTIME
childline.org.uk | 0800 1111

Further support

YOUNGMiNDS
fighting for young people's mental health

Parents' A-Z mental health guide







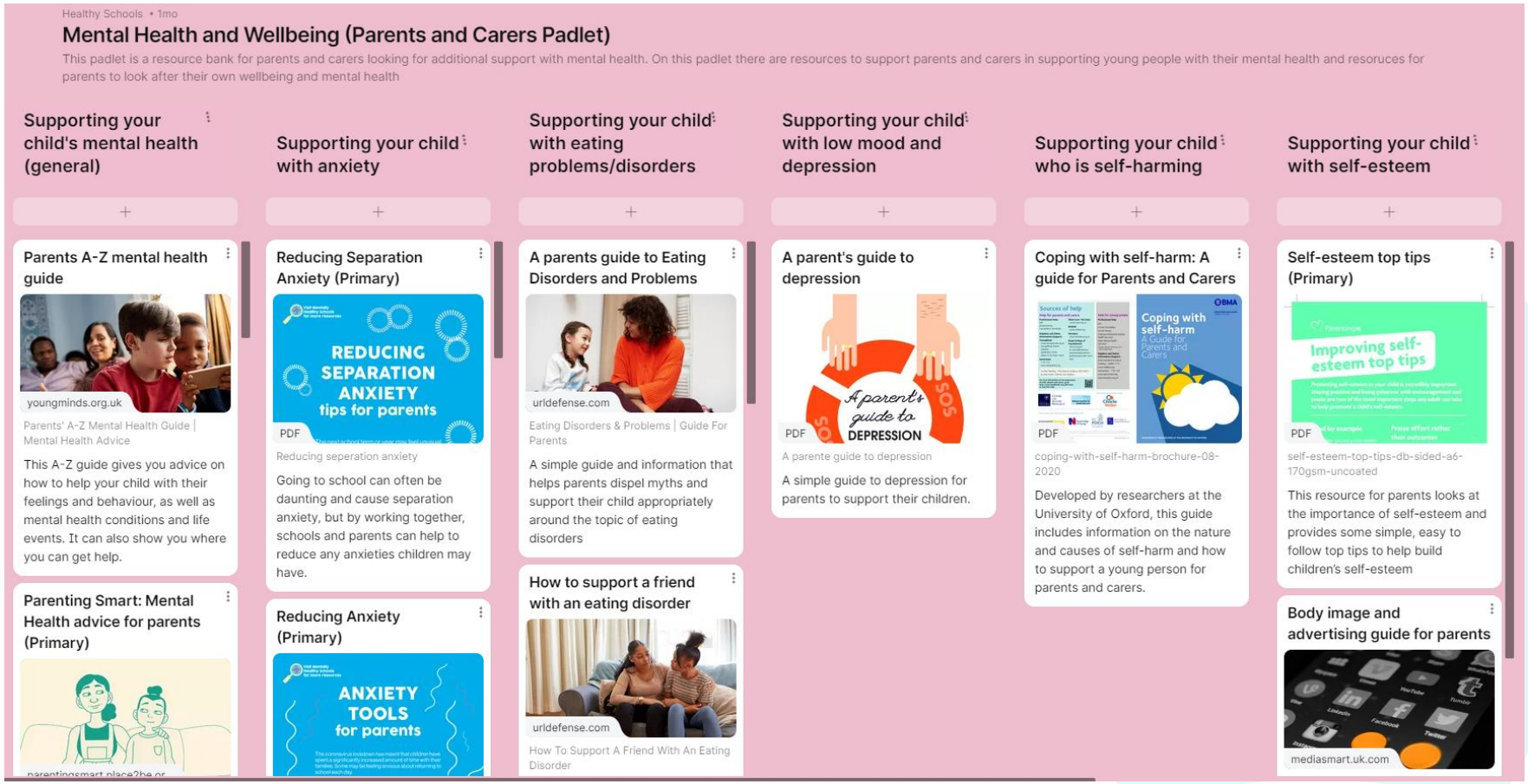
Place 2Be

Parenting Smart

Parenting advice from our child mental health experts

Practical tips to support children's wellbeing and behaviour

Further support



https://padlet.com/healthyschools/mental-health-and-wellbeing-parents-and-carers-padlet-vnqylifkyn01oh1i

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Further support

Manchester Parent Carer Forum works to represent the ‘voice’ of parents and carers of children and young people aged 0-25 with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

SPACE (Supporting Parents And Carers Endeavour) Group is a parent-led group that aims to offer unique support sessions for parents/carers of children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND).

Sessions are normally held at St George’s Community Centre (M40 7NY), 11am-1pm on a Friday (fortnightly during term-time).

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Thank you for listening and joining in!



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