



**REPORT**  
**OCTOBER**  
**2021**



Hello everyone!

We are the Jersey Youth Parliament Mental Health campaign group.

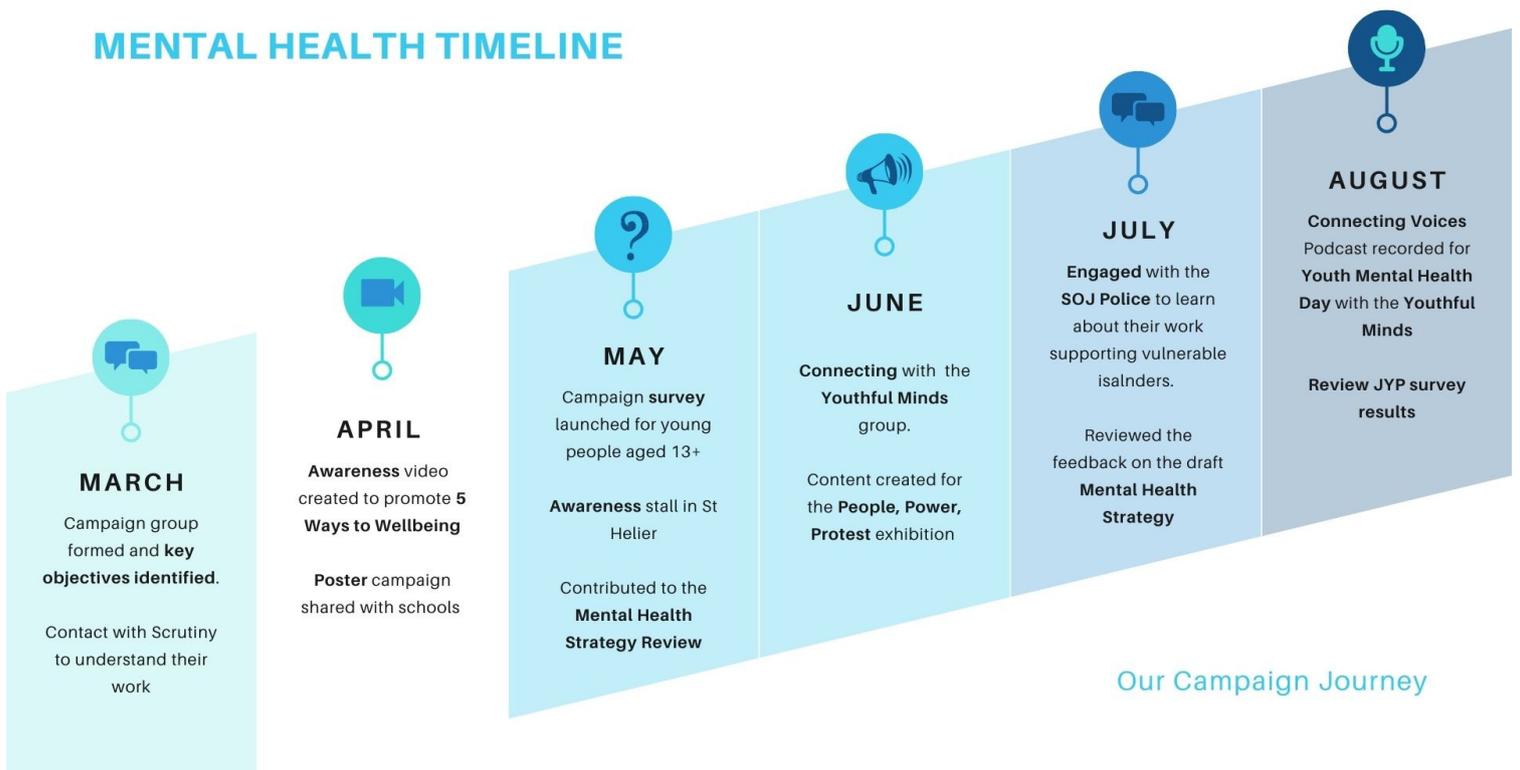
Our group, 'A step towards a better mind', is campaigning to improve mental health in Jersey and hope to:

- Improve mental health facilities
- Improve services and care
- Improve early prevention strategies
- Improve education and awareness in schools

## Our Campaign

We have been active for 6 months, meeting weekly to work on our campaign.

### MENTAL HEALTH TIMELINE



## Meet the Group...

"A view shared by many people that we spoke to was that the key to tackling mental health issues is to listen to people."



Tom



Poppy



Kenan



Joel



Kim



Lucas

We are 'A step towards a better mind' and we are campaigning to improve mental health in Jersey."

"There is still a lot of room for improvement within mental health."

## Summary of our work

One of the first things we did as part of our campaign was to run a mental health **awareness stall** in town to let people know about us and to hear their opinions and experiences. Here we launched our survey for young people.

A view shared by many people that we spoke to was that the key to tackling mental health issues is to **listen to people**. We think this is an incredibly important message, so we have tried our best to listen to everyone and we hope that we are listened to.

We have met with the **Health and Social Services Scrutiny Panel**, online, in order to find out what politicians have been doing and to explore which areas we feel need more work. We also had a meeting with Daniela Raffio about plans to improve mental health provisions in the island. We were able to share our feedback and be involved in the conversation about the current services.

We met with the **Youthful Minds** and learnt about the '5 ways to Wellbeing'. In response, we created an awareness film which was shared with schools and youth groups. Our aim was to help **reduce the stigma** surrounding mental health issues and gave them a few tips for how to manage their mental wellbeing.



## Summary of our work

We were interested to gather the experiences of other young people living in Jersey. We launched a **survey** and shared it with students to gather data specific to Jersey. We wanted to understand how mental health is dealt with and taught about in and out of school and if young people access support.

We participated in creating the **People, Power and Protest** exhibition at the Jersey Museum with **Jersey Heritage**. We contributed campaign text, film and links to our online survey. We really enjoyed getting involved because we believe it is crucial that everyone's voice is heard.

We hosted a **Connecting Voices** podcast episode that focused on mental health. We invited members of the **Youthful Minds group** as our guests to discuss Youth Mental Health Day. Our aim was to raise awareness, reduce stigma about mental health and enable people to learn more about it.

Recently we looked at the feedback on the **Draft Mental Health Strategy for Children and Young People**. Whilst we felt that the action points set out were beneficial, we feel it is important to recognise that the majority (52%) of respondents were 26, or over, which may have swayed the data to be of greater use to an older audience. This may have led to the action points prioritising those over 25, misrepresenting the actual needs of young people.



## Survey Findings

**288** young people took part in our survey which gives us a snap shot of the varied experiences of young people aged 13 to 18. With support from all schools we could achieve a broader picture of the issues and trends.

**105**

Reported experiencing issues with poor mental health.

**47 chose not to comment**

**136**

Did not think that the support offered was adequate.

**60 chose not to comment**

**65**

Young people did not know where to access support for their mental health.

**24 chose not to comment**

**119**

Felt that Covid-19 had negatively affected their mental health.

**36 chose not to comment**

**127**

Thought that education and awareness was the most important area for the JYP to explore.

**116 supported improvements to facilities**

## Survey Findings

Young people who contributed to the survey suggested that they would like to see the following improvements in schools and in the community:

"Allow people more places to open up and more services such as drop-in lounges."

"More extra curricular activities."

"Talking to an expert in psychology."

"More PSHE lessons, more counsellors in schools, assemblies..."

" I believe it is important we de-stigmatize suffering with mental health issues by hearing from, and being taught by, individuals who have suffered with personal mental health struggles. In effort to increase relatability, and therefore improve the stigmatization."

"There needs to be more awareness about it and more awareness of who people can go to if they're struggling."

"How to be able to talk."

"Follow-ups would be helpful. If there is a problem, it won't be fixed immediately, which I feel needs to be recognised."

"The education and awareness on mental health in Jersey is atrocious, so little is done to help and to recognise the problems, more children need to be made aware of mental health issues and those with them must be helped effectively."

"Educate teachers."

## **What we are asking the States Assembly to do...**

From our surveys, conversations and wider research we have concluded that there is still a lot of room for improvement within mental health services and we need your help to change it.

We think it's unacceptable that, despite so much emphasis from organisations and charities for the need to change, there is still a lot to be done that hasn't been listened to.

Despite having a new budget to turn things around, we are concerned that it is going to be spent on the wrong things. We have shared our own personal experiences in the States Chamber and we urge you to help all of the other young people in crisis and give them the right support.

The States Assembly can help us by changing the compulsory curriculum within schools to include more about mental health and make it certain that all young people are aware of the new changes.

### **Don't let it happen to anyone else.**

We would like the Ministers and the States Assembly to;

- Listen to what people have to say
- Put a lot of time, effort and funds into mental health facilities
- Focus on initiatives to reduce stigma and raise awareness
- Consider the actual needs of young people

## Questions in the States Chamber...

Whilst presenting our campaign work in the States Chamber, on **September 28th 2021**, we were asked additional questions by the Ministers in response to our findings.

**Deputy Poynton** was concerned that staff on Robin Ward are not dedicated CAMHS staff. There is no facility available at present for CAMHS staff to get in to assist these people. There will be a new unit in the new Hospital that will provide this facility. When addressing the suitability of Orchard House as a space for young people, Deputy Pointin explained that Covid-19 had prevented some young people struggling with mental health from travelling to the UK and so more than usual were placed in Orchard House. Dedicated provision will be provided in the new hospital for young people in crisis. He and his Department want to improve matters considerably.

**Deputy Wickenden** explained that £168,000 per year was being put into psychological support. There will be a mental health audit in every school to look at what provision is provided within the schools.

The JYP questioned why there hasn't been provision for these facilities previously. The JYP highlighted the fact that not all young people experience crisis points between 9 and 5 pm. Suicide attempts have increased and this is not acceptable. Members raised concerns of mental health problems rising and demand for services increasing.

**Deputy Poynton** informed the JYP that there will be a new unit at Saint Saviour's Hospital, for young people, on a limited basis from March 2022. There is also a crisis intervention team for young people in the community. Demand last year rose exponentially. £950,000 has been put into increasing staff to support this followed by £2.5 million allocated each year to support young people with this facility.

The JYP suggested that this demand could increase in the future.

## Questions in the States Chamber...

**Deputy Poynton** agreed that there are better approaches than keeping people in a closed environment but sometimes these facilities are required. Our plan is to support families and individuals in the community as much as possible. He explained that support is also being made available in schools and by the Jersey Youth Service. The Ministers want to address this issue so that the rise in cases is stemmed.

**Deputy Young** questioned if there might be a connection between social media and pressures on young people. Did the JYP think that government should do anything to assist in this area?

The JYP felt that there is definitely a problem and young people need to be advised so that they can seek help where mental health problems are connected to social media. Issues connected to social media can include bullying and the JYP think that all young people should be safe at home but this is not the case. The JYP felt it important not to blame social media. It's not a cause of people's behaviour but it can be a catalyst. Social media enables negative behaviour towards others. There will come a point where we will have to consider whether the risks of social media outweigh the benefits. The JYP feel that during Covid- 19 lockdowns social media could have increased the number of mental health problems experienced by young people. Should the JYP consider that there are alternative means of allowing young people to communicate?

The JYP also highlighted the time it takes for doctors to train and the need for mental health practitioners to be equally prepared for their roles.

Young people experience pressure from a young age, from fears of climate change, career choices, poor job prospects, competing for places at university etc. There are so many issues that young people have to face.

The JYP wondered if it is possible to put out messages which act subconsciously to persuade people to seek assistance and mental wellbeing.

## Questions in the States Chamber...

**Deputy Wickenden** confirmed that using social media and other means of bullying do you not just happen during school time and therefore our services must be able to react out of school time. We are setting up facilities to deal with young people in crisis. He asked if our PSHE curriculum is doing enough to help young people identify their responsibilities as well as their rights?

This area was further explored by the **JYP Education Campaign Group** and details can be found in their Campaign Report, October 2021.

This group explored how the current Education system could be redesigned to better suit the needs of young people moving from school into the workplace. The call was for broader life skills for the future and for education that tackles discrimination.



## What do we want to do next?

- Improve education and awareness about mental health for young islanders
- Work with other JYP groups where campaign work overlaps.
- Feedback to young people on the island about our campaign.
- Engage with the Mental Health Strategy team
- Have a presence on the Jersey Mental Health Strategy Strategic Advisory Panel
- Identify and promote accessible, sustainable activities for young people to improve or maintain their well being
- Tackle the causes of poor mental health
- Share mental wellbeing tips
- Explore preventative measures
- Share knowledge of where other young people can seek help
- Explore 'Identity'

## Acknowledgements

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JYP Volunteers

