



# Report of the Day 2024



# Welcome to the Big Mental Health Conversation 2024



226 young people got together for this year's Big Mental Health Conversation.

The event gave 13 to 16-year-olds the chance to share their experiences of mental health support in Kent and learn new skills to boost their health and wellbeing.

The event was hosted by Kent County Council, iThrive & Participation Team in collaboration with NHS Kent and Medway.



The event featured a fantastic interactive marketplace, that was supported by 34 organisations.

Providers ensured their stalls were creative, engaging and accessible.

This year small group accessed the marketplace.

This gave young people valuable opportunities to have meaningful engagement with service providers.



Eleven workshops were available and young people were able to attend up to three.

These included discussions, outdoor activities and classroom based sessions.



# Workshops

## Understanding Your Brain 🧠 ✨

- Creative session, helping young people learn how to understand themselves and their brain better.

## Healthy Relationships ❤️ 🤝

- What makes a relationship healthy and how to learn to spot the signs of abuse. Activities and strategies to support young people to have great relationships.

## Let's Talk About Bullying (Online Bullying) 📱 🚫

- Tackling online bullying in an interactive and fun way! Explore the effects of online bullying, and find solutions to make the internet a kinder place.

## The Benefits of Physical Activity 🏃 😊

- Discover how being active boosts your mood with Active Kent and Medway, designing physical activities, and sharing ideas on how to get everyone moving.

The Pets as Therapy dogs were available to spend one on one time with young people.

They joined the wellbeing walk and scavenger hunt workshop, with Kent Country Parks.

Young people learned how spending time outdoors can improve mental health.



# Workshops

## Exam anxiety 📖 😞

- Learn tips to handle exam stress with Place2Be. Gain new skills, access resources, and practice exercises to stay calm and confident during your exams.

## Let's Talk About Bullying (Sexting) 📱 ⚠️

- Learn about the risks of sexting through activities and discussions, understand the consequences and promote safe online behaviour.

## Managing Difficult Thoughts and Feelings 💬 🧠

- Support for managing tough thoughts and feelings with Mind and Body in Kent. Small group discussions to learn effective coping strategies to boost mental wellbeing.

The therapy ponies workshop was really popular throughout the day

Young people learned about the benefits of spending time with animals.

They also took part in mindfulness activities, led by Jamie from the KCC.



## Quotes from our Young Leaders and Volunteers

*“One of the standout aspects was just how much young people were involved, not just as attendees but as active contributors to the event's success.*

*The focus on breaking these stigmas of mental health, promoting understanding and empowering young people to take action in their own lives and communities was truly impactful.*

*It is clear that events like these really do make a real difference and I really hope to see even more events like this in the future!!”*

## Quotes from SEN school

*“My favourite part of the day was feeding the pug (therapy dog)”*

*“As soon as I heard there were freebies (in the marketplace) I was like YES!”*

*“The online safety session was good. I answered lots of questions”*

*“The people at the marketplace were friendly and easy to talk to”*

*“It was a nice break” –this quote was from a young person who was a wheelchair user and has communication differences, who agreed that the event was an opportunity to try something new and in a smaller group than they would usually do so.*

# *“What did young people share with you today that you think is important?”*



- *Didn't realise how much support was available*
- *Marketplace was amazing*
- *Enjoyed learning about the different free organisations who provide help. Workshops were engaging.*
- *Our students really enjoyed speaking to the stalls in the marketplace. They found the practical parts of the day most memorable.*



# Quotes from young people

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# Young people were asked 'what did you learn today that you think was helpful?'

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- Know how to spot red flags in relationships
- So many more helpful organisations for everything lots
- All the different organisations that help people
- That your mental health can affect your body in many ways
- Exam anxiety
- How to relax myself when I get stressed
- All the different help lines/how to write a report to the police
- How physical activities can improve physical and mental health
- I learnt about new resources to help mental health

- Lots of helpful signposting and opportunities to get involved
- How to tackle bullying online and sexting
- How to know which is healthy and unhealthy in a relationship
- How important exercise is for your wellbeing and the importance of boundaries in relationships
- That Kooth is very anonymous and you can always go there to chat



- How to cope with exam anxiety
- How to tackle mental health
- How to talk to new people
- Learnt about the law surrounding young relationships
- Talking isn't the only way to cope
- That there are a lot of people to help



# Quotes from Providers

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## Providers were asked

“What did young people share with you today that you think was important?”

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- How important it is to have someone to talk to.
- Lots of young people expressed how they have used Kooth and how helpful it was to them
- They shared their ‘Thought of the day’. We had lots of positive feedback about their attendance and how there is so much help available.
- There was a mixed bag of responses and opinions that may not be thought of from an adults perspective.
- How they found support systems and preferred methods of access
- Their views on mental health – open, honest and brave
- The importance of family and friends



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## Providers were asked

“What did young people share with you today that you think was important?”

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- An ability to talk to police without fear
- “I like the inclusivity of your activity. I have autism and can struggle at times”
- Listened to how young carers are supported within school and in other areas
- Lots of ideas about our consultation and how we can best support young people’s emotional wellbeing and mental health.
- All stressed about exams even though it’s only October
- Some ideas for services and work that I, as an adult had not idea of
- Their need for support around exam stress, relationships, friendships and feelings of anxiety



# Thank you to the following 24 schools for joining us on the day!

**The Archbishop's School**

**The Beacon School**

**Borden Grammar School**

**Dane Court School**

**Grange Park**

**Hadlow Rural Community School**

**Hill View School for Girls**

**Homewood School**

**Ifield School**

**John Wallis C of E Academy**

**Marsh Academy**

**Oakwood Park Grammar School**

**Rosewood School**

**Rowhill School**

**Sir Roger Manwood's**

**School of Science and Technology**

**St Johns Catholic Comprehensive**

**Tonbridge Grammar School**

**The Sittingbourne School**

**Wilmington Grammar School for**

**Boys**

**Wrotham School**

**Valence School**

**Valley Park School**

**The Wyvern School**



# Thank you to the following organisations for providing workshops and sessions on the day!

KCC – iThrive & Participation team

KCHFT

Kent Country Parks

NHS Kent and Medway - NELFT

Pets as Therapy dogs

Active Kent and Medway

We Are With You

Nelson Park Riding Centre

Tutsham Academy

Bullies Out

Salus – Hera Service

Place 2 Be



# Thank you to the following organisations for joining us on the day!

NHS Kent and Medway - ICB  
Active Kent and Medway  
Bullies Out  
Crossroads Young Carers  
Ellies Angels  
Emerge Advocacy  
Holding On, Letting Go  
Imago  
Involve Kent  
KCHFT  
Kent Country Parks  
Kent Police

Kent Youth County Council - KYCC  
Kooth  
KCC - Sibling Support Project  
KCC SEND Information Hub  
KCC Early Help  
KCC – Autism Education Trust training  
project  
Metro Charity  
Mid Kent Mind  
NHS Kent and Medway - NELFT

Nelson Park Riding Centre  
North Kent Mind  
Oasis Domestic Abuse  
Charity  
Pets as Therapy  
Place 2 Be  
Rising Sun  
Salus  
Tutsham Trust  
We Are With You – MAB  
West Kent Mind