

Promoting mental health and wellbeing in schools: examining Youth Aware of Mental Health (YAM) and the Mental Health & High School Curriculum Guide (The Guide) in English secondary schools

Submission date 30/08/2018	Recruitment status No longer recruiting	☐ Prospectively registered ☒ Protocol
Registration date 05/09/2018	Overall study status Completed	☐ Statistical analysis plan ☐ Results
Last Edited 02/10/2023	Condition category Mental and Behavioural Disorders	☐ Individual participant data ☐ Record updated in last year

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims

The majority of mental health difficulties start before adulthood, and there is evidence to suggest these difficulties may be increasing. Schools are ideally situated to provide support; most young people attend school and there are opportunities for support without attending specialist mental health services. Recent programmes aimed at either improving mental health literacy, or raising awareness of and promotion of mental health, have been trialled abroad, but their effects are currently unknown in the UK population. The Department for Education has commissioned the Evidence Based Practice Unit and partners (University of Manchester, the University of Dundee, and London School of Economics) to evaluate the effectiveness of two programmes, YAM and the Guide, on mental health and wellbeing outcomes in schools.

Who can participate?

Secondary schools in one of four hubs: London and the South East; Manchester and the North West; Durham and the North East; Bath, Bristol and the South West. Schools will need to deliver interventions to at least 60 year nine students across three delivery groups.

What does this study involve?

This study involves pupils being randomly allocated to one of two interventions (YAM or the Guide) or continuing with usual provision. Youth Aware of Mental Health (YAM) is a universal, evidence-based and culturally sensitive intervention programme aimed at young people aged 14-17 with a focus on increasing awareness about mental health. Through group-based interactive lectures, dialogue and role-play, YAM seeks to enhance young people's knowledge on mental health issues such as depression, suicidal thoughts, and stress, while providing them with important skills on how to seek help and advice, and help others. YAM consists of five sessions and it is designed to be implemented in the classroom by YAM instructors who have been trained in its application. The Mental Health and High School Curriculum Guide (The Guide) aims

at enhancing the mental health literacy of students. Through classroom-ready lesson plans and activities, within a supportive, familiar environment, The Guide enhances pupils' knowledge on mental health and illness. It also helps them understand how to optimize and maintain good mental health, combat stigma, and enhances help-seeking efficacy in order to help themselves and/or others. The Guide is delivered during school hours by teachers who have been trained in its application (1-day training). It consists of six modules that are taught as in consecutive weeks and are each designed to fit into around 60 minutes of classroom time. The usual provision schools continue with their usual practice without being allocated to one of the two interventions mentioned above.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

This will help the government and researchers understand what interventions may help improve mental health and wellbeing in secondary schools. Pupils may experience a decrease in mental health difficulties or increase in wellbeing, but this is not guaranteed. Young people may become aware of their own mental health and wellbeing which could cause discomfort or distress.

Where is the study run from?

This study is being run by the Evidence Based Practice Unit, University of Manchester, the University of Dundee, and London School of Economics (UK)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?

September 2017 to March 2024

Who is funding the study?

Department for Education (UK)

Who is the main contact?

1. Dr Jessica Deighton
2. Tjasa Velikonja (Tjasa.Velikonja@annafreud.org)

Contact information

Type(s)

Scientific

Contact name

Dr Jessica Deighton

Contact details

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Type(s)

Public

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Additional identifiers**Protocol serial number**

EOR/SBU/2017/015

Study information**Scientific Title**

Approaches for Wellbeing and Mental Health literAcy: Research in Education (AWARE)

Acronym

AWARE

Study objectives

Current hypothesis as of 29/07/2019:

Aims:

1. To examine whether YAM is more effective than the usual school-based provision in reducing emotional difficulties in young people
2. To examine whether The Guide is more effective than the usual school-based provision in increasing help seeking of young people around mental health

Hypothesis:

H1: Young people receiving YAM will report a greater reduction in emotional difficulties at between 3–6 and 9-12 months follow-up than those who receive the usual school curriculum

H2: Young people receiving The Guide will report a greater increase in help seeking at between 3–6 and 9-12 months follow-up relative to those who receive the usual school curriculum

Previous hypothesis:

Aims:

1. To examine whether YAM is more effective than the usual school-based provision in reducing emotional difficulties in young people
2. To examine whether The Guide is more effective than the usual school-based provision in increasing help seeking of young people around mental health

Hypothesis:

H1: Young people receiving YAM will report a greater reduction in emotional difficulties from baseline to 6 and 12 months follow up than those who receive the usual school curriculum

H2: Young people receiving The Guide will report a greater increase in help seeking from baseline to 6 and 12 months follow up relative to those who receive the usual school curriculum

Ethics approval required

Old ethics approval format

Ethics approval(s)

University College London ethics committee, 20/02/2018, ref: 6735/009

Study design

Interventional multicentre cluster randomised trial

Primary study design

Interventional

Study type(s)

Prevention

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied

Mental health and wellbeing

Interventions

Current intervention as of 29/07/2019:

This study involves pupils being allocated to one of two interventions (YAM or the Guide) or continuing with usual provision. The method of randomisation is minimisation.

1. Youth Aware of Mental Health (YAM): a universal, evidence-based and culturally sensitive intervention programme aimed at young people aged 14-17 with a focus on increasing awareness about mental health. Through group-based interactive lectures, dialogue and role-play, YAM seeks to enhance young people's knowledge on mental health issues such as depression, suicidal thoughts, and stress, while providing them with important skills on how to seek help and advice, and help others. YAM consists of five sessions and it is designed to be implemented in the classroom by YAM instructors who have been trained in its application.

2. The Mental Health and High School Curriculum Guide (The Guide), aims at enhancing the mental health literacy of students. Through classroom-ready lesson plans and activities, within a supportive, familiar environment, The Guide enhances pupils' knowledge on mental health and illness. It also helps them to understand how to optimize and maintain good mental health, combat stigma, and enhance help-seeking efficacy in order to help themselves and/or others. The Guide is delivered during school hours by teachers who have been trained in its application (1-day training). It consists of six modules that are taught as a block and are designed to each fit into 60 minutes of classroom time

3. Usual Provision (Control)

Schools will continue with usual practice without partaking in one of the above interventions.

Interventions will be for 5 weeks (YAM) and 6 weeks (the Guide). Follow up will happen approximately 3-6 and 9-12 months after intervention start.

The statistician undertaking analysis will be blind to the study conditions.

Previous intervention:

This study involves pupils being allocated to one of two interventions (YAM or the Guide) or continuing with usual provision. The method of randomisation is minimisation.

1. Youth Aware of Mental Health (YAM): a universal, evidence-based and culturally sensitive intervention programme aimed at young people aged 14-17 with a focus on increasing awareness about mental health. Through group-based interactive lectures, dialogue and role-play, YAM seeks to enhance young people's knowledge on mental health issues such as depression, suicidal thoughts, and stress, while providing them with important skills on how to seek help and advice, and help others. YAM consists of five sessions and it is designed to be implemented in the classroom by YAM instructors who have been trained in its application.

2. The Mental Health and High School Curriculum Guide (The Guide), aims at enhancing the mental health literacy of students. Through classroom-ready lesson plans and activities, within a supportive, familiar environment, The Guide enhances pupils' knowledge on mental health and illness. It also helps them to understand how to optimize and maintain good mental health, combat stigma, and enhance help-seeking efficacy in order to help themselves and/or others. The Guide is delivered during school hours by teachers who have been trained in its application (1-day training). It consists of six modules that are taught as a block and are designed to each fit into 60 minutes of classroom time

3. Usual Provision (Control)

Schools will continue with usual practice without partaking in one of the above interventions.

Interventions will be for 5 weeks (YAM) and 6 weeks (the Guide). Follow up will happen approximately 6 and 12 months after interventions start.

The statistician undertaking analysis will be blind to the study conditions.

Intervention Type

Behavioural

Primary outcome(s)

Current primary outcome measure as of 29/07/2019:

For YAM: Emotional difficulties on the Short Mood and Feelings questionnaire (SMFQ) (Angold, 1995) collected online and measured at baseline, 3-6 months and 9-12 months post intervention

For The Guide: Help seeking (Wilson et al., 2011) collected online and measured at baseline, 3-6 months and 9-12 months post intervention

Previous primary outcome measure:

For YAM: Emotional difficulties on the Short Mood and Feelings questionnaire (SMFQ) (Angold, 1995) collected online and measured at baseline, 6 months and 12 months post intervention

For The Guide: Help seeking (Wilson et al., 2011) collected online and measured at baseline, 6 months, and 12 months post intervention

Key secondary outcome(s)

Current secondary outcome measures as of 29/07/2019:

All measures will be collected online and measured at baseline, 3-6 months and 9-12 months post intervention:

Pupils:

1. Positive wellbeing (Hueber, 1991)
2. Behavioural problems (Deighton, 2013)
3. Support from School Staff (Sun and Stewart, 2007)

4. Attitudes Toward Mental Illness Questionnaire (Milin et al. 2016)
5. Pediatric Quality of Life (Stevens, 2009)
6. Service Use (Client Service Receipt Inventory)
7. Knowledge based stigma (Evans-Lacko et al., 2011)
8. Sigma related behaviour (Evans-Lacko et al., 2011)
9. Mental health first aid (Hart et al, 2015)
10. The Guide questions*
11. Emotional difficulties* : Short Mood and Feelings questionnaire (SMFQ)) (Angold, 1995)
12. Intended help seeking^ : General Help-Seeking Questionnaire (Wilson et al., 2011)

Teachers:

1. Mental health literacy (Fortier et al., 2017)
2. Mental health literacy (Jorm 1997)
3. Mental health literacy (Kutcher et al., 2015)
4. The Guide questions*

*For the Guide only

^ For YAM only

Previous secondary outcome measures:

All measures will be collected online and measured at baseline, 6 months and 12 months post intervention:

Pupils:

1. Positive wellbeing (Hueber, 1991)
2. Behavioural problems (Deighton, 2013)
3. Support from School Staff (Sun and Stewart, 2007)
4. Attitudes Toward Mental Illness Questionnaire (Milin et al. 2016)
5. Pediatric Quality of Life (Stevens, 2009)
6. Service Use (Client Service Receipt Inventory)
7. Knowledge based stigma (Evans-Lacko et al., 2011)
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9. Mental health first aid (Hart et al, 2015)
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4. The Guide questions*

*For the Guide only

^ For YAM only

Completion date

31/03/2024

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria

Current inclusion criteria as of 29/07/2019:

Schools:

1. Be willing to deliver/have an intervention delivered to around 60 year 9 pupils in three delivery classes
2. Are able to allocate 1 hour per week to deliver in the intervention for 6 weeks in the spring term of 2018 or 2019
3. Fall under one of the four hubs: London and the South East; Manchester and the North West; Durham and the North East; Bath, Bristol and the South West
4. For The Guide only, be able to send teachers of delivery groups to training after October half term 2018/2019
5. Sign a Memorandum of Understanding, data sharing agreement and provide pupil lists to the research team

Pupils:

1. Be in Year 9
2. Parental consent and young person assent

Previous inclusion criteria:

Schools:

1. Be willing to deliver/have an intervention delivered to around 60 year 9 pupils in three delivery classes
2. Are able to allocate one hour per week to deliver in the intervention for 6 weeks in the spring term of 2018 or 2019
3. Fall under one of the five hubs: 1) London, 2) Birmingham and the Midlands, 3) Bristol, Bath and Somerset, 4) Durham and the North East, 5) Manchester
4. For The Guide only, be able to send teachers of delivery groups to training after October half term 2018/2019
5. Sign a Memorandum of Understanding, data sharing agreement and provide pupil lists to the research team

Pupils:

1. Be in Year 9
2. Parental consent and young person assent

Participant type(s)

Other

Healthy volunteers allowed

No

Age group

Child

Lower age limit

13 years

Upper age limit

14 years

Sex

All

Key exclusion criteria

Current exclusion criteria as of 29/07/2019:

Schools:

1. Not able to deliver/have an intervention delivered to around 60 year 9 pupils in three delivery classes
2. Unable to allocate one hour per week to deliver in the intervention for six weeks in the spring term of 2018 or 2019
3. Fall outside one of the four hubs: London and the South East; Manchester and the North West; Durham and the North East; Bath, Bristol and the South West
4. For the Guide only, unable to send teachers of delivery groups to training after October half term 2018/2019
5. Unable to sign a MOU, data sharing agreement or provide pupil lists to the research team
6. Be a primary school or alternative provision (e.g. pupil referral unit)

Pupils:

1. Not in Year 9
2. Parental consent and young person assent not provided

Previous exclusion criteria:

Schools:

1. Not able to deliver/have an intervention delivered to around 60 year 9 pupils in three delivery classes
2. Unable to allocate one hour per week to deliver in the intervention for six weeks in the spring term of 2018 or 2019
3. Fall outside one of the five hubs: 1) London, 2) Birmingham and the Midlands, 3) Bristol, Bath and Somerset, 4) Durham and the North East, 5) Manchester
4. For the Guide only, unable to send teachers of delivery groups to training after October half term 2018/2019
5. Unable to sign a MOU, data sharing agreement or provide pupil lists to the research team
6. Be a primary school or alternative provision (e.g. pupil referral unit)

Pupils:

1. Not in Year 9
2. Parental consent and young person assent not provided

Date of first enrolment

01/03/2018

Date of final enrolment

31/07/2022

Locations

Countries of recruitment

United Kingdom

England

Scotland

Study participating centre

Evidence Based Practice Unit (EBPU). University College London and Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families.

4-8 Rodney Street

London

United Kingdom

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Study participating centre

Manchester Institute for Education

Ellen Wilkinson Building

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Study participating centre

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Study participating centre

University of Dundee

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Sponsor information

Organisation

University College London

ROR

<https://ror.org/02jx3x895>

Funder(s)

Funder type

Government

Funder Name

Department for Education

Alternative Name(s)

Department for Education (DfE), Department for Education, educationgovuk, DfE

Funding Body Type

Government organisation

Funding Body Subtype

National government

Location

United Kingdom

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

The trialists will provide an anonymised dataset with some variables removed if they would cause an individual to be identifiable (such as a looked after child with special educational needs). This will be undertaken with advice from the Department for Education.

IPD sharing plan summary

Available on request

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Protocol article	protocol	03/09/2019		Yes	No
Study website	Study website	11/11/2025	11/11/2025	No	Yes