



'We Can Talk' Children and Young People's Mental Health Core Competencies

Understanding

- Understand what is meant by the terms 'mental well-being', 'mental health' and 'mental ill-health' [6] (1.1.a)
- Know common types of MH problems in CYP [6] (1.2.a)
- Be aware of the prevalence of individuals who may experience MH problems in the UK [6] (1.1.b)
- Understand stigma & discrimination people with MH problems face [1]
- Understand the importance of the emotional wellbeing of CYP alongside their physical health [6] (9.1.a)
- Be aware of barriers that may exist for different cultural groups accessing services [6] (1.1.w)
- Have knowledge of normal development in CYP and awareness of behaviours, emotions and MH problems outside the normal range for age, gender and culture [2] (1.1.1)
- Understand and recognize risk and protective factors for MH in CYP ([6] 9.1.c&d, [4]) Understand suicidal behaviour [6] (5.2.c & d) versus self-harm
- Have knowledge of MH promotion activities appropriate to CYP within current role [2]
- Understand importance of supporting parents and carers when supporting CYP who experience MH problems [6] (9.2.e)
- Be able to describe and record the early signs and symptoms of a MH problem in a child or young person and know how to report or refer this to the appropriate service [2,3]
- Be able to identify immediate symptoms of possible MH crisis [1]
- Be aware of signs & symptoms that may indicate the individual with a MH problem may also be misusing drugs and or alcohol [6]
- Be able to communicate clearly, sensitively and effectively both verbally and in writing [1]
- Understand the importance of effective communication when supporting individuals who experience a MH problem including communication with family and carers [6]
- Be aware that an individual's behaviour may be a form of non-verbal communication [6]
- Understand how an individual's feelings and perception may affect their behaviour [6]
- Be self-aware of impact of one's own behaviour, language & body language on others, including people with MH problems [1]
- Develop and maintain communication with CYP and others about difficult matters and/or in difficult situations [5]



- Communicate at a developmentally appropriate level and considering culture, learning or communication difficulties [3]
- Understand ways in which acute illness and the emotions caused by it can affect communication with an individual [6] (2.2.e)
- Understand and not reduce all behaviours only to MH
- Be able to build respectful, trusting, non-judgemental relationship by actively listening and avoiding assumptions [6] (2.2.a)
- Communicates effectively with other practitioners and professionals in multi-disciplinary and multi-agency collaborative environments [2]
- Understand the importance of the CYP, and the child's parents, participating as fully as possible in decisions, and being provided with information and support necessary to enable participation in those decisions [6] (9.2.f)

Support

- Be aware of support available for CYP who experience MH problems and their parents/carers [6] (9.2.o) and be able to appropriately refer to specialist services and support networks [6] (11.2.j)
- Have knowledge and ability to signpost people experiencing a MH crisis to appropriate sources of help and support [1]
- Understand & be able to demonstrate empathy, respect, a non-judgemental attitude & a holistic approach working with others [1]
- Be able to use basic coaching techniques in supporting an individual who may be in mental distress [6] (1.1.l)
- Be aware of models of care and support for individuals in need of MH emergency care or experiencing crisis including: techniques of distraction, reducing stress, problem solving [6] (1.2.e)
- Be able to support the individual experiencing a MH problem to develop some simple coping strategies [6] (2.2.d)
- Be able to support a person to identify their own short term and longer term recovery goals [6] (2.2.i)
- Be able to take appropriate actions to maintain calmness and safety and enable individuals to find alternative ways of expressing their feelings such as: de-escalation and diversion [6] (3.3.j)
- Understand concepts of risk, risk assessment, and risk management [1]
- Be aware of the concept of MH crisis, and potential impact on people's behaviour, feelings and perceptions when experiencing a crisis [1]
- Be able to apply own MH awareness and knowledge in real-life situations, and to identify whether this knowledge was adequate [1]
- Be able to recognise distressed behaviour & provide range of responses to reassure the individual experiencing a MH problem [6] (2.2.c)
- Recognise that good quality care is vital to reduce risk



- Be willing to take responsibility for positively addressing a situation where somebody with mental health problems needs support [1]
- Exhibit non-discriminatory behaviour towards people with MH problems [1]
- Understand legal and organisational requirements which protect CYP who experience mental health problems including parental rights, responsibility and consent [6] (9.2.h)
- Know what to do if neglect, abusive or exploitative practice is suspected, including how to raise and escalate concerns within local safeguarding or whistle blowing procedures [6] (16.2.j)
- Show respect for ethical principles and professional accountability and responsibility, with regard to safe and effective care of CYP [2]
- Have knowledge of relevant professional and organisational policies and how these should inform and guide the assessment and management of risk [2]

Frameworks referenced:

[1] London Health Programmes & OPM (2013) London mental health models of care - competency framework. <http://www.opm.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/LondonMentalHealthModelsOfCare1.pdf>

[2] Northern Ireland Practice and Education Council for Nursing and Midwifery (2010) A Competency Profile for Nurses & Midwives: promoting the mental health and well-being of children and young people. http://www.nipec.ni.nhs.uk/Image/SitePDFS/Nipec_Comp_Profile.pdf

[3] Nursing & Midwifery Council (2014) Standards for competence for registered nurses. <https://www.nmc.org.uk/standards/additional-standards/standards-for-competence-for-registered-nurses/>

[4] Royal College of Nursing (2014) Mental health in children and young people: An RCN toolkit for nurses who are not mental health specialists. https://www2.rcn.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/596451/RCNGuidance_CYPmental_health_WEB.pdf

[5] Royal College of Nursing (2012) Core competences for nursing children and young people. <https://scadmin.rcn.org.uk/professional-development/publications/pub-004202>

[6] Skills for Health, Health Education England and Skills for Care (2017) Mental Health Core Skills Education and Training Framework. <http://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/services/item/525-mental-health-download>