

WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY 2021

Tackling The Issues that Perpetuate
Mental Health Inequalities.



World Mental Health Day

The theme for this year's World Mental Health Day is **Mental Health in an Unequal World**, as announced by the World Federation for Mental Health after a global vote of its members.

To support this theme, we're shining a light on the **issues that perpetuate mental health inequalities across the UK**, as well as the organisations, charities and changemakers working to tackle these issues.

The four main drivers of mental health inequality in the UK

We don't all start on a level playing field. Too many children already start on the backfoot when it comes to their journey towards good mental health. And too many adults face situations and circumstances beyond their control.

A report from The Mental Health Foundation into social inequalities that perpetuate mental health issues has found that there are **four main drivers of mental health inequality in the UK;**

1) economic, 2) relational, 3) health, disability and ageing, and 4) ecological.

1 Economic Influences

Those facing poverty or financial insecurity not only face the stress of dealing with these problems, which in themselves can lead to cases of poor mental health, but they also face an uphill battle towards positive mental health too.

Poverty and debt makes it harder for these individuals to access quality mental health support, but it also limits educational opportunities, which in turn, can limit employment opportunities. All this does is lead to a cumulative effect of financial difficulty and, subsequently, mental health difficulty.



2X more likely to suffer a mental health issue

The Health Survey for England found that those in the lowest socioeconomic class are at the highest risk of experiencing a mental health issue, while those that are unemployed are twice as likely to suffer a mental health issue compared to those who are employed (34% vs 16%).



Agents of change: Poverty & Unemployment

JRF

<https://www.jrf.org.uk/>

an independent social change organisation using research, policy and collaboration to fight for fairer living standards.



PSE

<https://www.poverty.ac.uk/>

a website housing research funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, which is the largest research ever conducted into poverty and social exclusion in the UK.



Agents of change:

Poverty & Unemployment

CSJ

<https://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/>

partnering with over 400 UK-based charities, as well as experts from all around the globe, the CSJ develops evidence-backed reforms that tackle poverty and social exclusion.

I

Impetus

<https://www.impetus.org.uk/youth-employment-group>

the Youth Employment Group, comprising over 200 member organisations, is the UK's largest coalition of youth employment experts.

Agents of change:

Debt



<https://www.moneyandmentalhealth.org/>

with Martin Lewis OBE at the helm, this organisation highlights the link between financial difficulty and mental health issues, running numerous national campaigns.



<https://www.stepchange.org/>

helping over 635,000 people every single year, StepChange is one of the UK's leading charities when it comes to helping people struggling with their finances.

Agents of change:

Education Level



<https://thebrilliantclub.org/>

only 1 in 50 disadvantaged students make it into a top university. The Brilliant Club is changing that, helping less advantaged students get places in the most competitive universities.

<https://www.multiverse.io/en-GB>

multiverse

combining work, training and community, Multiverse provides high-quality apprenticeships to create a group of diverse, future leaders.

<https://smbp.org.uk/>



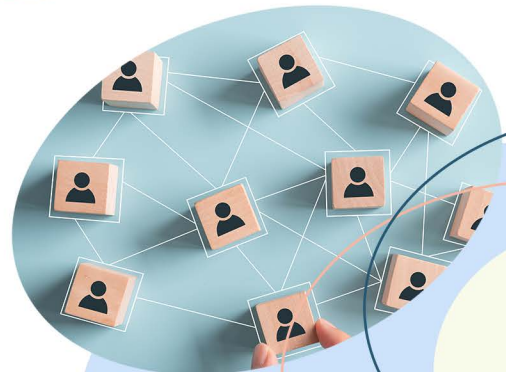
a collaboration of 150+ organisations, service firms and sports teams, the SMBP works across 18 cities to help Year 12 students from low-income backgrounds pursue careers in the world of business.



2 Relational Influences

Humans are physiologically wired to need human connection; it's in our very DNA. As such, a sense of social connection is critical to good mental health. It's why 18+ months of lockdown and isolation has hit people so hard.

And yet, being lumped into specific social groups brings its own mental health challenges with it; for example, those discriminated against and isolated due to race, immigration status, sexual orientation or gender identity. Even simply being female brings with it an increased chance of suffering from mental health issues, with roughly one in five women having a common mental health problem, compared to one in eight men.



Alongside this, adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are shown to account for almost one third of mental health issues in adults (29.8%), with those who have faced greater and more prolonged periods of ACEs much more at risk of developing a mental health issue.

Those who fall into prejudiced groups, such as those outlined above, often face ACEs throughout their life, and there is research to show that those who face adverse experiences in adulthood are also at greater risk of mental health issues.

These adverse experiences can include serious illness, job loss, bereavement, and loneliness.



Agents of change:

Cultural/Social Group Status (BAME, LGBTQ+, Refugee/ Asylum seekers)



<https://www.blackmindsmatteruk.com/>

an organisation looking to make mental health topics more relevant and accessible to Black people in the UK by connecting Black people with free mental health services.



<https://www.baatn.org.uk/>

the UK's largest independent organisation that specialises in working psychologically with people who identify as Black, African, South Asian and Caribbean.

Agents of change: Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)



<https://www.wavetrust.org/>

an international charity, WAVE is dedicated to making the world safer by targeting the root causes of child violence.

NSPCC

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

with over 130 years experience, the NSPCC is the UK's leading children's charity.

Agents of change: Adverse Adult Experiences

<https://www.aftertrauma.org/>

After**Trauma**

an online community that helps to connect and support survivors of traumatic injury, as well as their families.

<https://www.ptsduk.org/>



PTSD UK takes a holistic approach to tackling PTSD, raising awareness of the causes, symptoms and treatments for PTSD. It's currently the only charity in the UK raising awareness for PTSD regardless of cause.

Agents of change: Loneliness

The logo for the Campaign to End Loneliness, featuring the text "Campaign to" in white and "EndLoneliness" in green on a black rectangular background.

Campaign to
EndLoneliness

<https://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/>

using research and evidence, this charity publicly campaigns for change, while creating a community to connect those experiencing loneliness. A film they created, The Loneliness Project, has been seen over 85 million times.



THE JO COX
FOUNDATION

<https://www.jocoxfoundation.org/loneliness>

as a cross-party charity, the Jo Cox Foundation works at both a local and national level. One of the key areas of their work is tackling loneliness.

3 Health, Disability & Ageing

Physical health and mental health are so inextricably linked that often, it's easier just to refer to them together as “health”. Those with physical health problems are at greater risk of suffering from mental health problems, and vice versa.

Those with long-term health problems are 2-3 times more likely to suffer from mental health issues. And those who are experiencing severe and prolonged mental health issues die, on average, 15-20 years earlier than the rest of the population.



Alongside this, those who experience some form of disability find themselves facing stigma, discrimination and prejudice which, as we know from the previous section on Relational Influences, further increases the likelihood that someone will experience poor mental health.

Children with learning disabilities are over 4x more likely to experience a mental health issue than those children without (36% vs 8%). Our own People and Legal Director, Kelly Harris, shared her first-hand experience of the challenges that children with these disabilities can face.

Finally, age and loneliness can go hand-in-hand. Age UK has found that there are 1.4 million chronically lonely elderly people living in the UK.



Agents of change:

Disabilities

<https://www.scope.org.uk/>

SCOPE

fighting for a world where all disabled people are treated equally, SCOPE provides a number of services, programmes, communities and support structures.

<https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/>



Disability Rights UK works with organisations and governments to influence local and national policy that impact the lives of those who are disabled.

Agents of change: Learning disabilities



<https://respond.org.uk/#>

founded in 1991, Respond helps to support those with learning disabilities through therapy, specialist support services and training & development.



<https://www.mencap.org.uk/>

teaming up with over 300 local groups, Mencap helps to improve the lives of those with learning disabilities, as well as their families.

Agents of change: Age



<https://www.fote.org.uk/>

Friends of the Elderly, with support from the Royal Family, has been supporting elderly people for over 100 years.



<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/>

an international charity, Age UK provide a number of different services to the elderly, from health and wellbeing support to information and advice.

4 Ecological Influences

The places and environments in which people spend their lives, both inside and outside of work, impact their mental health. Whether it's transport options, suitable housing, the neighbourhood, or connection to nature, there are many ways that our environment around us can affect our mental health, both positively and negatively.

We need to feel safe and secure in a suitable home. Those without this, whether that's through homelessness, poor-quality housing, conflict or lack of connection in the local community, high urbanisation, or general neighbourhood discomfort, are all at a higher risk of a mental health problem.

For example, a study from 2014 found that 80% of homeless people in England said that they had a mental health issue. And naturally, it's much, much harder for them to access the support that they need.



Agents of change:

Homelessness

<https://beam.org/>



an award winning social-impact business which marries together charities, government and companies to help put homeless people back into work.



<https://www.crisis.org.uk/>

Crisis is one of the UK's leading charities for those who are homeless. With over 12,000 volunteers, they run numerous campaigns, and in 2018/19, helped 1000 people find a new stable home.

Agents of change: Housing



<https://www.shelter.org.uk/>

as well as campaigning for housing justice, Shelter also provides a range of support services to those facing a housing crisis, with services such as legal support and a free emergency phone line.



<https://www.resolutionfoundation.org/our-work>

an independent think tank, the Resolution Foundation is focused on improving living standards for those that are on low to middle incomes. They help to inform public debate and influence government policy.

Agents of change: Gangs



<https://www.growingagainstviolence.org.uk/>

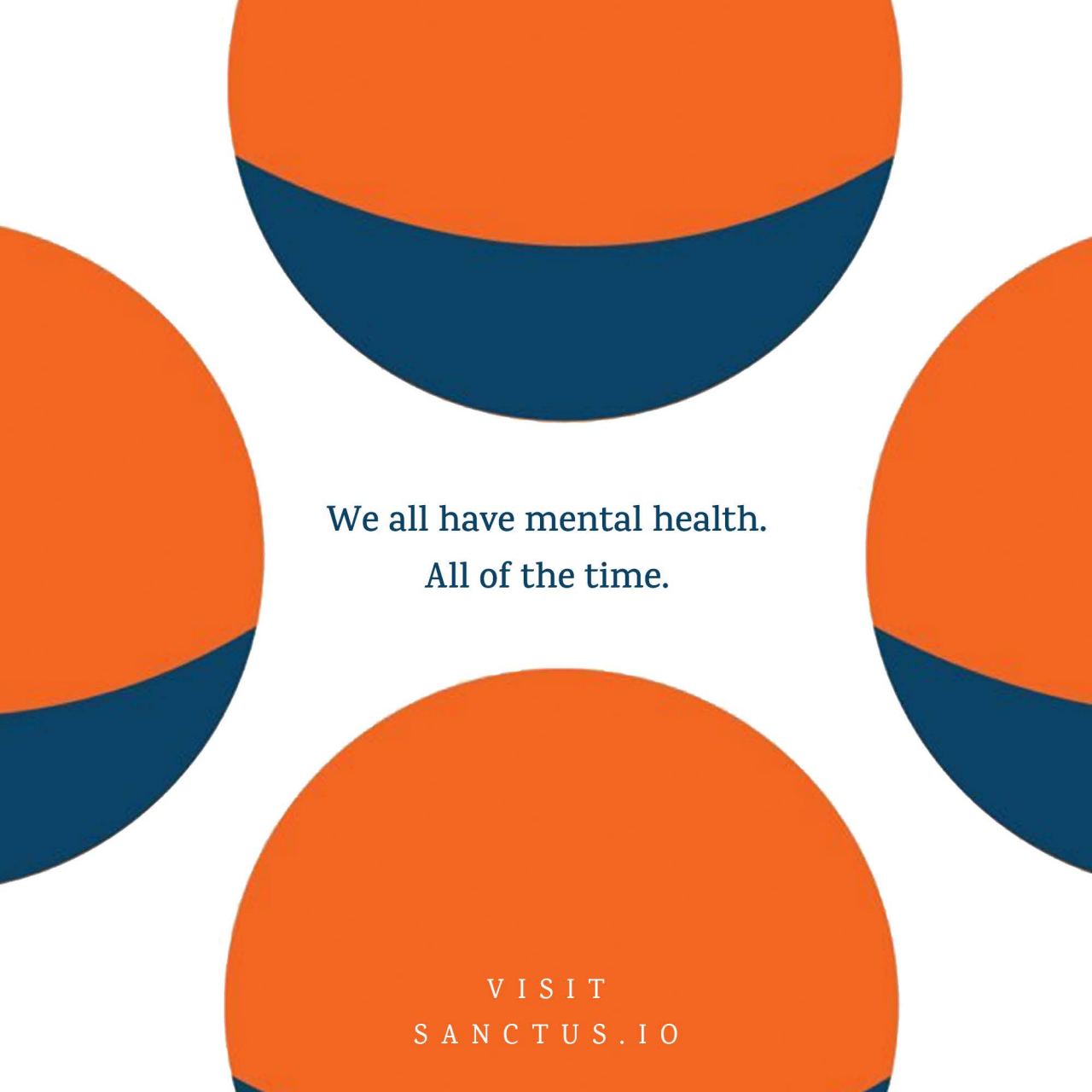
GAV works to protect young people from peer-to-peer violence, and has been partnered with London's Met Police since 2008. They've delivered workshops to almost 200,000 young people in almost 1000 schools across the UK.



**St
Giles**

<https://www.stgilestrust.org.uk/what-we-do/child-criminal-exploitation/>

St Giles is a charity tackling inequality, and a large focus of their work is helping young, vulnerable people who have been exploited by gangs.



We all have mental health.
All of the time.

VISIT
[SANCTUS.IO](https://sanctus.io)