

IMPACT REPORT 2017

This report is an abridged version of the Mind and Body Programme Impact Report (Joiner, Roberts, Russell, Nice, Bowles, Bowes and Howe) available at www.addaction.org.uk/about-us/research

Who we are

Addaction is one of the UK's leading substance misuse and mental health treatment charities. We help people change their behaviour to become the very best that they can be.

Mind and Body helps young people to explore and better manage the thoughts and actions associated with self-harm. We support young people to improve their wellbeing.

Foreward by Mike Dixon, Chief Executive, Addaction

Anyone can be at risk of self-harm. As this important report shows, even the most outwardly confident and successful young people may be having frequent thoughts of harming themselves. This is an issue that matters a lot to young people; their parents, carers and families; and wider society. We need to get better at taking action early to prevent it.

At Addaction, we strive to make a positive difference to people's lives, offering the tools, support and tactics people need to be healthy. In our services across England and Scotland, we see every day how the right help at the right time can have a profound and lasting impact.

As resources get ever tighter, it's more important than ever to deliver effective services. That's why Addaction has been so pleased to work with the University of Bath to assess our Mind and Body programme. We want to know what works. We want to know what doesn't work. And we want to keep using the best possible evidence to improve our services.

I'm proud of the results shown here. They're a result of hard work; the imagination and dedication of project and case workers in Kent, Cornwall and Lancashire; and the detailed research and evaluation of the academic team. Behind each statistic is an individual person's life with hopes and fears, aspirations and a future.

We'll use the findings here to change what we do. But we hope that this report has a wider impact beyond improving Addaction's services. That's why we're making it public. Self-harm among young people is a problem that many different organisations can and should address better. So, we hope that the evidence and approaches set out in this report can also help those commissioning and evaluating services to make the best possible decisions. The more we all focus on the impact and outcomes of our work, and share lessons openly and transparently, the more effective we'll be together. And that means more young people will live healthy, happy lives, free from self-harm.

Our achievements in the last year

622 young people participated in **Mind and Body** programmes



of young people experienced a **decrease over time in self-harm thoughts** or did not think about self-harm at all while in the programme



of young people experienced a **decrease over time in self-harm actions** or did not engage in taking action at all while in the programme



of participants experienced an **increase in their mental wellbeing**

Survey and screening information was collected from **8,440** young people, all of whom **received information and advice about emotional wellbeing**

The screening process **identified a number of young people who were under the radar and who were not known to be at risk of harm**

As well as those completing Mind and Body, a further **612** young people received **one-to-one information, support and guidance from our practitioners**

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I am feeling happier within myself, sleeping and eating better. It has shown me there are better ways to cope other than using self-harm. Life changing.

Mind and Body participant from Lancashire

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Mind and Body has been an incredible intervention, needed more than we anticipated by our young people. The programme delivery is professional and the young person is always the priority. My experience has been exceptionally positive.

Safeguarding Lead at a Kent Academy

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The Mind and Body programme has provided a superb additional strand of support for a number of pupils. The programme has enabled pupils to explore and engage in strategies to manage emotions, anxieties and promote positive communication with others. The programme was easy to set up in a busy secondary school environment and delivered very professionally. I would recommend it to other schools.

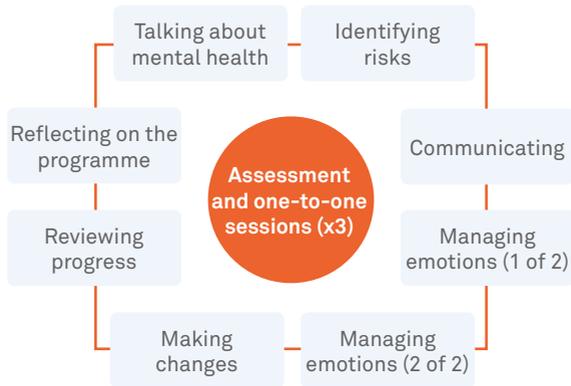
Learning Manager at a Lancashire Secondary School

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Programme summary

Mind and Body supports young people (aged 13-17) who are involved in or may be vulnerable to self-harming behaviours. The programme looks to support those who do not meet Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) thresholds but who could benefit from specialised input. Participants are identified using a short online screening survey¹ by school staff and through self-referrals to the programme. The programme comprises eight group sessions, accompanied by three one-to-one sessions with a practitioner for needs-based support.

Session themes:



Evaluation

Researchers at the University of Bath conducted an independent evaluation at three pilot sites in Kent, Cornwall and Lancashire. Two cohorts participated in the evaluation: young people who took part in Mind and Body, and stakeholder groups comprising practitioners, teachers, managers, pastoral staff and commissioners.

Data were collected from 299 participants on mental wellbeing and emotional behaviours before and after they had completed the programme. Bespoke measures were used to collect data about self-harm, particularly in relation to thoughts, actions and additional risk behaviours.

Examples of self-harm among participants included pinching, scratching, cutting, drinking toxic substances, burning, hair pulling and self-hitting. Thinking includes all thoughts and feelings about self-harm. Actions include any behaviours leading up to and including engaging in self-harm².

¹ The survey was developed in conjunction with The Training Effect. Information on their services can be found at www.thetrainingeffect.co.uk

² Details are descriptive to ensure the anonymity of participants is protected.

Our results: identification and screening

The Mind and Body programme resulted in efficient identification, referral and support for young people engaging in self-harm and/or risk-taking behaviour.

- The programme identified young people who were under the radar of being at-risk.
- Focus groups reported enthusiastically that the programme enabled young people's needs to be identified and addressed.

The screening survey and the initial assessment session identified some young people who were under the radar of being at-risk. In other words, these young people were not previously known to school staff or mental health services as being at-risk for engaging in self-harm behaviours.

Education professionals disclosed that they would never have realised those young people might need support. Similarly, some young people who had completed the screening survey, and disclosed that they were in-risk and engaging in self-harm behaviours were not known to schools or mental health services. Where relevant, young people were supported and referred directly to CAMHS services.

The healthy group dynamic and the increase in young people seeking support were positive and unanticipated outcomes of the pilot. Young people noted that everyone looked out for each other and they could share successes without a sense of competition.

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The identification of the students was surprising. It pulled out students who I would never have come across. They would never have got support. It was a real eye opener.

Pastoral Manager at a Lancashire Secondary School

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Our results: reduction in self-harm risk behaviours

Mind and Body had a positive impact on young people's awareness, thoughts, feelings and behaviours relating to self-harm and risk-taking.

- **81%** of young people experienced a decrease over time in self-harm thoughts or did not think about self-harm at all while in the programme.
- **91%** of young people experienced a decrease over time in self-harm actions or did not engage in taking action at all while in the programme.

In focus groups, we identified three themes as being important to the reduction in self-harm risk behaviours:

Increased awareness about self-harm: young people and school staff said Mind and Body had increased their knowledge about self-harm and mental health. This led to more open discussion within student groups, and between students and teachers, on what support is available and how to access it. Participants noted that the assemblies were an effective forum to begin these discussions.

Improved coping strategies: young people could point to examples of improved coping strategies, including: coded communication methods so that school staff would know when they were feeling vulnerable, use of programme resources at times of difficulty and stress, and increased support seeking from school staff and Mind and Body practitioners.

Reduced stigma: participants said taking part in Mind and Body reduced feelings of stigma. Young people said that they realised they were not alone in their experiences, having never previously disclosed thoughts or actions around self-harm. This helped to reduce stigma and combat stereotypes around mental health and self-harm. Improved confidence was common and identifiable in group and wider classroom participation.

These findings support the idea that **Mind and Body is both a preventative and a targeted early intervention in relation to self-harm.**

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I am definitely a lot happier. I have been able to see what needs to change, the programme is amazing. I don't know where I would be right now if I didn't have it.

Mind and Body participant
from Kent

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Very helpful. It's rare to have something like this and for the issues to be recognised.

Mind and Body participant
from Cornwall

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Our results: wellbeing and pro-social behaviours

Mind and Body had a positive impact on young people's mental wellbeing.

- Improved wellbeing: broadening of social networks has influenced positive thinking.
- Improved behaviour: attending and engaging with classroom contributions.
- Over the course of the programme **73%** of young people experienced an increase in their mental wellbeing.

Improved wellbeing: focus groups noted the increased confidence of young people who took part in Mind and Body. Participants cited improved communication skills and significantly higher rates of volunteering for school roles and participation in school activities. The broadening social networks improved positive thinking because young people were acknowledged and identified as significant contributors.

Improved behaviour: participants exhibited improved attitudes to learning and increased engagement in the classroom, and a reduction in behavioural incidents and emotional outbursts. A reduction in persistent absences and lateness was also noted.

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The programme has been great. It has allowed me to develop a greater understanding of the importance of a healthy mind and has enriched the students' curriculum in ways I would not have been able to.

Head of Year at a Kent Grammar School

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School staff consistently noted that improved communication and associated confidence was a major contributing factor in explaining the improved relationships young people reported with family members, friends, classroom peers and school staff.

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The picture shows us after the programme; feeling confident, supported, not alone, bonding as a group, joyful, being understood and being free to do what we want. We got inspired and we have a voice.

Mind and Body participants

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@_MindandBody

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