

The Go-To

For healthy minds in North Yorkshire



Not sure what to feel about what you're feeling?

Are you a young person, parent, carer or professional interested in promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing? You could be a **Go-To Champion**.



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Meet our Go-To Champions

Emma Allison



Hello, My name is Emma Allison and I work at The Bridge (formally the Pupil Referral Service). My role here is to help children recognise the way that they feel, so that they are able to use words to express themselves, instead of expressing it through their behaviour. Sometimes that's really challenging because understanding emotions can be difficult, especially when you're feeling cross, angry, anxious, or upset your body can't make the connections in your brain to make sense of things, so sometimes we do things irrationally, and make mistakes. Mistakes aren't always bad though... mistakes are our opportunity to try new paths, we wouldn't eat something again and again that tasted rotten would we? It's the same with a mistake, it becomes a bad choice if we repeat it, but an opportunity if we learn from it! In my class at school I will often say to the pupils – 'the decisions we make are only as good as the choices we have' we can't always get it right, especially when it comes to our own mental health.

Around 1 in every 8 pupils will have a diagnosed mental health disorder. This hugely limits the choices they are able to make every day. From leaving the house, to making eye contact, to eating in the school dining room, to putting their hand up to answer a question...the list is endless. These choices will reflect the decisions that they make, which is why it is ever so important in my role that I

am emotionally available to contain thoughts and feelings, attune to them and to empathise, soothe and nurture each pupil, regulating individuals by de-escalating potential decisions that may have become mistakes and to ensure those mistakes develop into opportunities. Remembering always that pupils are children, and relational trauma, always, always requires relational repair.

Beth Constantine



Hello, my name is Beth Constantine and I am currently studying an undergraduate sports coaching degree at University. I have had 10 years of anxiety myself, but I slowly found it harder to cope with my anxiety when I was in my halls of residence at the University. I found that being away from home was a big challenge for me, but pushed forwards and managed to complete the year. My anxiety started to get worse due to Covid-19, but I found people who supported me and helped me to cope. I sometimes have panic attacks that come on suddenly with no reason. Most of the time when I feel anxious or have panic attacks is usually on a night time. I feel there are a lot of thoughts running around my mind to the point where I feel I

cannot fall asleep on a night.

My tips for helping you to cope with your anxiety would be to take some deep breathes. I usually take 4 counts breathing in and then 4 counts breathing out and repeat that cycle until I start to feel calm. Another thing that has helped me is taking part in exercise. I take part in a lot of exercise, such as running, and this helps to give me a sense of accomplishment and pride in myself. I also like to write down how I am feeling. For example, I have a toy monster with a zip-up mouth and when ever I feel anxious, I write down my thoughts onto a post-it-note and then put it into the monsters mouth as if it was 'eating' my worries. Finally, I like to do yoga and listen to guided meditations on a night time. Both of these help me to feel calm and relaxed, allowing me to get to sleep on a night time.

My main message I would give to young people is to never give up and always be yourself. Although it might be hard at the time, you are never alone. There are always people out there who are supportive and there for you, no matter whether it is your parents or friends. I have a lot of great friends and family members who have helped me through the toughest times. Also, be there for other people because from my experience, helping other people helps me to cope with my own anxiety.

Finally, anxiety is not a weakness. For me, anxiety has helped me to be a better and stronger person. It has allowed me to overcome many challenges, which I never knew I could do. I want people to know that there is always light at the end of the tunnel, even if the road is long.

Bex Wainwright



Hello my name is Bex Wainwright and I am 23 years old. I have had mental health difficulties since around the age of 8 years old. It started off mainly with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder and anxiety. These were the two issues that I struggled with when I was younger. Once I started secondary school things got worse. I was bullied and on top of the two mental health problems I already had I became very depressed. I was referred to Child and Adolescents Mental Health Service. I was in this service from the age of 14 to 18. I found the service very useful. I know that it can seem scary to reach out for help but they are there to help so it's so important to let them and work with them.

When I reached the age of 18 I was discharged from CAMHS and moved to adult services. This transition can be so intimidating but it's not as bad as it may seem. I was discharged from adult services after a while as I was doing really well. I was working and enjoying life.

However, Covid 19 had a massive impact on me. The lockdown meant I was not working which has always been a big distraction for me and my usual routine was gone. This sent me spiralling and I ended up spending two weeks in a mental health hospital. Here I was diagnosed with Borderline Personality Disorder and later on Cyclothymia too. Things are much better now. I have been working with the community mental health team and making really good progress.

My advice for anyone struggling would be to please reach out and tell someone. It could be a friend, a parent, a teacher or a relative a doctor or just someone you trust. The sooner you reach out the sooner you can get the help needed to start feeling better. I know how it feels to think that there is no way out and that you will never be happy but that is so not true and I am living proof of that. Things really do get better with the right support and help.

A few things I have found useful over the years and that I still use today are a self soothe box. This is a box that you put things in that make you happy and relaxed. For me that's a candle, some bubble bath, some sensory things like play dough and some treats like chocolate. I also have found that writing a journal can be a really good outlet for how you are feeling especially if you don't feel like talking to someone. Also to talk to the people you love as they can be such good support and really help you through the dark times. So to anyone who is struggling please reach out, talk to someone and stay strong.