

Do schools do enough about mental health?

By Molly Cox and Corinne Dart

A growing number of young people are experiencing mental health issues and around 50% of these are established before the age of 15. Some claim that a lack of understanding and support within schools can cause these issues to worsen.

87% of those within schools said that teachers need to be more educated and better at spotting the signs of someone experiencing mental health issues.

One of the students interviewed said, “I feel that the teachers definitely need more training on mental health and everyone should know about it, not just the specialised teachers. Now it seems as though the students know more about mental health than the adults.”

Even the teachers claimed that anything they knew about mental health was learnt outside of school and that they did little to improve their awareness.

95% of those within the education system said that they would prefer to have a professional, designated councillor in school instead of a teacher with little training.

Furthermore, many believe that the pressure on young people to succeed in exams is overwhelming. The majority understand that homework is important but the amount they get given is too much and can lead to high stress levels. This can damage their performance in school. As well as this, the advice that students received whilst choosing their GCSE options was what some described as “sparse” and “useless”.

Although in many schools there are support groups to help manage stress and mental illness, they are not widely known about. In one particular school, the students were not aware of any groups therefore they could not access the support offered.

All those interviewed agreed that even though schools have become better at managing these issues in the past years, there is still a lot of room for improvement and that more mental health care workers are needed.