

# TALKBACK

Your supporter magazine from the Mental Health Foundation

June 2017



## Mental Health Awareness Week 2017



Mental Health  
Foundation

and much  
more...



# Dear Supporter,

We have had a busy few months at the Mental Health Foundation. This year's Mental Health Awareness Week (MHAW) in May was a fantastic time for the Foundation. We have been hosting the Week since May 2000. Each year, we come up with themes which are in the public interest or on the political agenda. This year, the theme for MHAW was *Surviving or Thriving?*. We wanted to change the focus from looking at why so many of us experience mental health problems to why so few of us are thriving in life with good mental health. Read more about our MHAW successes on pages 3-7.

A group of friends who joined our Standing Together Project have written a book about their life experiences throughout the decades. They call themselves the Rotherhithe Babes after the area they live in London. The Babes launched their book 'Our Ups and Downs, Growing Up and Getting on with the Rotherhithe Babes' during MHAW. See page 10.

We held a Parliamentary reception in March for our programme for young people with learning disabilities 'When I Grow Up' at the House of Commons. The two local MPs for the schools who had been involved kindly hosted the event, Rt Hon Iain Duncan Smith and Wes Streeting MP. The wonderful afternoon celebrated the hard work, commitment and achievements of the young people involved in the project, the staff at their schools and colleges, working to prepare young people for work as they come towards the end of their formal education. We heard inspiring stories from young people about their career aspirations, work placements and the new skills they were learning. One young man wants to be an MP and as a result of the day was offered a placement in the House of Commons. See page 11.

I would like to thank you all very warmly for supporting the work of the Mental Health Foundation which reaches out and touches so many lives.

**Jenny Edwards CBE, Chief Executive**

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**Mental Health  
Foundation**

Mental Health Foundation  
1st Floor  
Colechurch House  
1 London Bridge Walk  
London SE1 2SX

**020 7803 1121**  
**supporter@mentalhealth.org.uk**  
**mentalhealth.org.uk**

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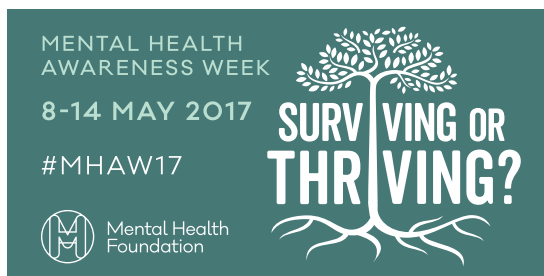
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# Our most successful Mental Health Awareness Week so far...

**This Mental Health Awareness Week (MHAW) was one of the busiest yet for the Mental Health Foundation. We have been hosting MHAW for the last 17 years. This year's theme was 'Surviving or Thriving?' which resonated with the general public and the media received support throughout the week and beyond.**

## **Mental Health Awareness Week had coverage across local and national media.**

- We launched our ground-breaking report – '*Surviving or Thriving?*' The state of the UK's mental health.'
- Throughout the week, there were 253 articles in print and online that mentioned the Mental Health Foundation and MHAW compared to 135 during last year's campaign.
- We conducted an online survey that enabled people to gauge their own positive mental health.
- We held a number of events throughout the week including one at the Royal Society of Arts that featured Sir Michael Marmot, as the keynote speaker. Also, at the Brunel Museum we held the launch of the Rotherhithe Babes book. Read about these outstanding ladies on Page 10.
- The hashtag #MHAW17 had a social reach of over 25 million.
- Our social media campaign across Facebook and Twitter was supported with a Thunderclap, with a social reach of over 6.5 million.
- Our media campaign focused on the key findings of the '*Surviving or Thriving?* The state of the UK's mental health' report – that two in three people report experiencing a mental health problem in their lifetime.



**Throughout MHAW there were nearly 100 million opportunities to read or hear about the Mental Health Foundation and our work. The extensive media interest will lead to more people being aware of mental health and how to thrive in life.**

# Surviving or Thriving?

## The state of the UK's mental health report

During Mental Health Awareness Week the Mental Health Foundation launched a ground-breaking report – '*Surviving or Thriving? The state of the UK's mental health*'.

In March 2017, commissioned by the Mental Health Foundation, NetCan conducted a survey amongst its panel members. The aim of the survey was to understand the prevalence of self-reported mental health problems, level of positive and negative mental health in the population and how people manage their stress. 2,290 people completed the survey.

**The report revealed some startling findings...**



# Just 13%

of Britons are living with high levels of positive mental health.

# 65%

of Britons say they have experienced a mental health problem at some point in their life.



People aged 55 and above are most likely to take positive steps to better deal with everyday life – including spending time with friends and family, going for a walk, spending time on hobbies, getting enough sleep, eating healthily and learning new things.

# 42%

of us have experienced depression.



There were notable differences between household income and economic activity. Nearly 3 in 4 people living in the lowest household income brackets (less than £1,200 per month) report having experienced a mental health problem; compared to 6 in 10 of the highest household income bracket (over £3,701 per month).

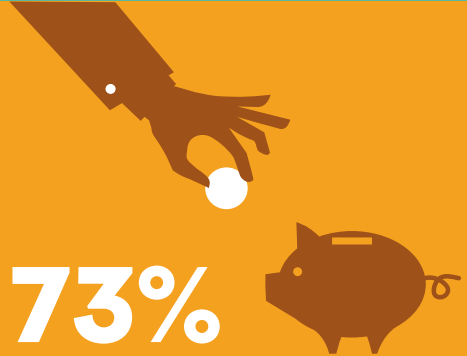
# 70%

of women have experienced a mental health problem.



# 73%

of people on the lowest incomes have experienced a mental health problem.



To download for free the full report and find out your good mental health score visit [mentalhealth.org.uk](http://mentalhealth.org.uk)

# Mental Health Aware



## SURVIVING OR THRIVING?



# Business Week in pictures



**2 in 3**  
**by men**  
**problem**  
Younger adults most

BY STEPHEN WHITE  
TWO in three adults say they have suffered mental health problems, a study has revealed.

Those in the youngest age brackets were most likely to suffer, compared to 58% of those over 65.

Women are more likely than men to have experienced problems.

James Harris, chief executive of charity the Mental Health Foundation, which carried out the research of 2,000 adults, said: "Our report has shown the sheer

**CITY AM** Report  
**BUSINESS WITH PERSONALITY**  
HOW INCORPORATING YOUR VALUES INTO YOUR BUSINESS CAN BENEFIT YOU

Two in three adults admit difficulties at some point. Experts call for awareness and focus on particular

**VICTORY FOR MACRO**  
POLICE AND BUSINESS LEADERS TO VOTE TO DEFEAT THE BRITISH LEF

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**City ramps up efforts to shift attitudes on mental health**

**Mental problem 'hit two in three'**

TWO in three adults have experienced mental health issues at some point, a study has revealed.

A total of 65 per cent of British adults have been affected by conditions ranging from panic attacks - in which a person suffers from a sudden surge of intense anxiety, including heart palpitations,

...of positive in a quarter of people (around a peak of ... that they ... appreciate at the ... don't, that they

BY DANIEL WINDY



Programmes Update: your generosity has made it possible for the Mental Health Foundation to develop and manage a number of programmes.



Creating Connections certification ceremony

# Creating Connections

**Creating Connections, a peer-led self-management programme for single parents had a conference in Cardiff this February. The conference was attended by a diverse audience of practitioners, academics, policymakers and single parents.**

Creating Connections supports and encourages single parents to share their personal experiences, develop coping strategies and raise awareness on how to maintain positive mental health. Single parents attending the course were encouraged to make personal goals that were important to them; the goals varied, from having a regular breakfast, to establishing their own business and

returning to full-time education. Over 83% of the single parents surveyed had achieved their primary goals within six months.

The single parents attending the self-management courses and peer support groups felt more confident and better connected to their peers and to their communities which has helped them to feel less isolated and improved their wellbeing.



## One of many success stories from the Creating Connections Programme is Debbie....

We are delighted that our Creating Connections Project has reached the finals of the National Lottery Awards.

To help us win, you can vote for the Mental Health Foundation and Creating Connections at [www.lotterygoodcauses.org.uk/awards](http://www.lotterygoodcauses.org.uk/awards)

Award winning projects receive a £3,000 prize as well as being part of a BBC One Awards Ceremony.

## Debbie's story

Debbie became a single parent soon after her son was born. Two years later, she was diagnosed with breast cancer. Her world came crashing down. She felt helpless, as she was a single parent with no family living nearby and no support network. She struggled with anxiety and depression due to her situation. Then, a friend introduced her to the Creating Connections Programme.

Creating Connections helped Debbie to turn her life around. It taught her practical steps towards good mental health, more importantly, it allowed her to dream and plan for a better future. Debbie, is now actively living life to the full and working on a number of personal ventures.

She also plans to return to nursing, and has recently attended a recruitment open day to look at her options.

**Watch Debbie's video and read her personal story at [mentalhealth.org.uk](http://mentalhealth.org.uk) - search 'Debbie'.**



# Our Ups and Downs, Growing Up and Getting On

**The Mental Health Foundation's Standing Together Project launched its book: 'Our Ups and Downs, Growing Up and Getting On with the Rotherhithe Babes' during Mental Health Awareness Week.**

The book chronicles the stories of seven extraordinary women – Doris, Doll, Eileen, Kathy, Maureen, Theresa and Sheila, how their lives and Rotherhithe has changed through the decades. Some of the Rotherhithe Babes have known each other for over 50 years, whilst others met when they moved into the same assisted living accommodation. They all quickly became good friends because they share similar life experiences.

The Babes' share their unique memories of growing up in Rotherhithe, hopping on the moored barges on the River Thames when Rotherhithe had a working dock, making clubhouses from bombed out and abandoned pubs and leaving school at 14 to work in factories. They tell their stories about working class life in



London, childhood experiences, family life, community, great loves and losses, eccentric characters and mischief – all told with brutal honesty and humour.

The Rotherhithe, this group of friends knew when they were growing up has changed. The pubs, pie and mash shops, and the bathhouses that the Rotherhithe Babes once frequented have long gone, along with the dance halls, picture houses and the familiar community they grew up in. These changes have left the Rotherhithe Babes feeling disconnected from the 'new' communities now living in Rotherhithe.

The book launch event was an evening of celebration of the Babes and their lives, and the success of this project.

To download a copy of the book for free visit [mentalhealth.org.uk](http://mentalhealth.org.uk) - search 'Babes'.





Rayyan and Rt Hon Iain Duncan Smith

# 'When I Grow Up' House of Commons launch

**The Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities with the Right Honourable Iain Duncan Smith and Wes Streeting, MP held a reception at the Houses of Commons to launch the 'When I Grow Up' Programme in March.**

The 'When I Grow Up' launch event highlighted the objectives of the programme, namely, to raise the aspirations and employment prospects of young people with learning disabilities, to celebrate their achievements as well as to change attitudes towards learning disabilities and employment.

Students from Castle School; Little Heath School; Redbridge College and Milestone Academy shared their inspiring stories about their career aspirations, their current jobs and the new skills they acquired to improve their confidence and employability.

Rayyan, a student from Little Heath School, saw an opportunity to share his

dream to be a MP with the audience; *'At the WIGU launch in the House of Commons I met two MPs and was very excited at being in there.'*

*My dream is to be an MP when I leave school.*

*At the WIGU launch I met Wes Streeting MP and Iain Duncan Smith MP. I was promised a work placement or internship at the House of Commons. I am so excited knowing that one day I will be able to work there and learn so much which will help me when I become an MP.'*

Little Heath School are currently working with Iain Duncan Smith's office to arrange for Rayyan to start his internship in the House of Commons.



# Young Mums Together Programme

**Our Young Mums Together Programme enhances young mothers' mental health through providing peer support and an environment where they can express themselves through creative activities. The Programme operates an informal weekly drop in session for the young mothers and their children.**

The Young Mums Together Programme continues to expand. We have developed four new peer support groups this year. To date, almost 180 young mothers have accessed our peer support programme, delivered in partnership with Children's Centres, One Housing and SkyWay.

Young mothers often face many challenges while adjusting to the significant life changes that come with motherhood. Our Young Mums Together groups provide a network of supportive friendships based on positive shared experiences. The young mothers also have access to information,

expert guidance, community events and learning opportunities.

## What do the young mums think?

*"I like to come to the group. It's important for my son, he's playing with other children. I'm happy to meet new mums, we're talking about a lot of ideas."* Dara

*"I've been attending the young mums group since last October and I truly believe it made a difference to my confidence and my self-esteem as a young mum."* Michelle



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# I ran the London Marathon for my son

**Suzy tells her story of why she decided to run the London Marathon on behalf of the Mental Health Foundation.**

**My name is Suzy. I ran the Marathon mainly for my son.** I nearly lost him last year when he was hospitalised through severe depression and anxiety. I'm pleased to say he is now out of hospital and back at work. He is still in therapy.



The information and support from the Mental Health Foundation, helped us to start living again as individuals and a family.

I started running using the Couch to 5k app. I also joined my local running club. When I completed my first mile, it was amazing! Then I started going to my local parkrun, which I still love to do.

**My goal was always the London Marathon.**

And now I've done it! I still can't believe it. It was an amazing experience. I will always remember the crowd cheering. I did a samba in Canary Wharf, danced to Rick Astley and hugged a marshal. What amazing memories.

To see my family and the Mental Health Foundation on the side-lines cheering me and others along was a fantastic boost.

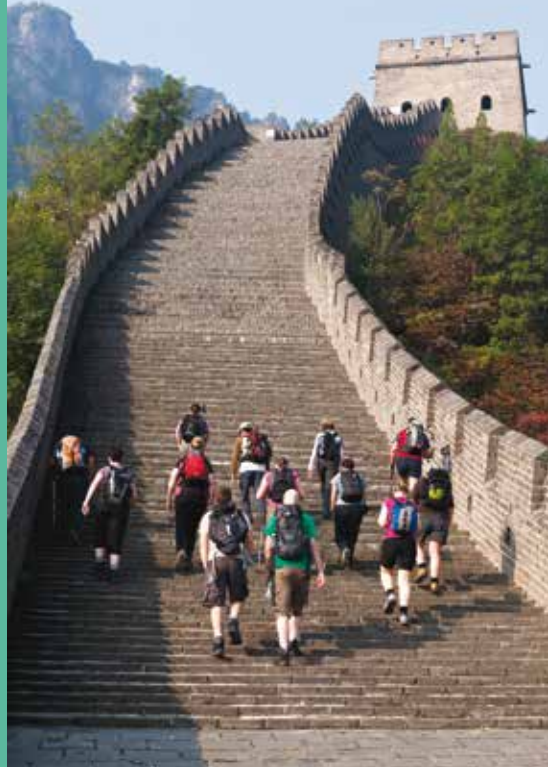
**I was overwhelmed by the generosity of people.** I held a quiz night, a raffle, a cake sale and the money just kept coming in from family, friends, colleagues and those who supported my events.

It's been a privilege to run for an amazing charity who work very hard to prevent mental health problems.

**Suzy ran the marathon for the Mental Health Foundation in 2017 and raised nearly £3,000. Thank you!**

# Trek across the Great Wall of China

We're excited to announce that from 13-22 October 2018 we're offering a ten day trek on the Great Wall of China, exclusive to supporters of the Mental Health Foundation. Now, you can trek through the breath-taking Chinese landscape, along the historic Great Wall accompanied by 19 other people passionate about making a difference to everyone's mental health.



On this incredible adventure you'll explore some of the best sites the wall has to offer, stay with locals in rural mountain villages and have the chance to explore the bustling city of Beijing.

Sign up with a £299 registration fee and pledge to raise £3,150; this will cover your all-inclusive trip costs and make a big contribution to the Mental Health Foundation, and good mental health for all.

Our dedicated Events Team will be on hand every step of the way to give you advice and support; to make sure you hit your target and have an incredible time on your trip.

**If you are interested in trekking across the Great Wall of China or any other event you can email [events@mentalhealth.org.uk](mailto:events@mentalhealth.org.uk) or call 020 7803 1123 or to find out more visit [mentalhealth.org.uk/get-involved](http://mentalhealth.org.uk/get-involved)**



# Mental Health Foundation

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**Email: [info@mentalhealth.org.uk](mailto:info@mentalhealth.org.uk)**

London Office:

Mental Health Foundation  
Colechurch House  
1 London Bridge Walk  
London SE1 2SX

020 7803 1100

Glasgow Office:

Mental Health Foundation  
Merchants House  
30 George Square  
Glasgow G2 1EG

0141 572 0125

Cardiff Office:

Mental Health Foundation  
Castle Court  
6 Cathedral Road  
Cardiff, CF11 9LJ

02921 679 400