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Poster



MIND CONNECT

EARLY SUPPORT. STRONGER FUTURES.
A DIGITAL & COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT HUB FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE UK
AN INNOVATIVE, ACCESSIBLE AND EVIDENCE-BASED SOLUTION TO IMPROVE THE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF YOUNG PEOPLE.



THE ISSUE: WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED

- About 1 in 6 children aged 5-16 in England has a probable mental disorder, up from 1 in 9 in 2017 (NHS Digital, 2023).
- Around 20% of adolescents experience a mental health problem in any given year (Mental Health Foundation, 2023).
- Around 50% of mental health problems start by age 14, and 75% by age 24 (Mental Health Foundation, 2023).
- Only about 42% of children with a probable mental health problem receive any contact with children and young people's mental health services (CYMHS) (Children's Commissioner, 2024).
- An estimated 70% of children and young people with mental health problems do not get the help they need early enough (Mental Health Foundation, 2023).
- Children living in material hardship are more likely to have mental health difficulties than their more affluent peers (NHS Digital, 2023).

OUR INNOVATION: MIND CONNECT

A 24/7 DIGITAL AND COMMUNITY-BASED HUB THAT PROVIDES EARLY, PERSONALISED AND CONFIDENTIAL MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE (11-25).



PEER COMMUNITY SUPPORT



QUICK ACCESS TO LOCAL SERVICES



MIND CONNECT
WE'RE NOT JUST ALONE, WE'RE SUPPORTED.



24/7 CHAT WITH TRAINED MENTAL NESTE PRACTITIONERS



SELF-HELP TOOLS & WELLBEING RESOURCES



MOOD TRACKING & PERSONALISED INSIGHT

TARGET AUDIENCE & IMPACT

WHO?



YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 11-25 ACROSS THE UK, WITH A FOCUS ON THOSE FACING BARRIERS TO TRADITIONAL MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

IMPACT

- ✓ EARLY ACCESS TO SUPPORT REDUCES CRISIS AND HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS, IMPROVED MENTAL WELLBEING, CONFIDENCE AND COPING SKILLS.
- ✓ EMPOWERS YOUNG PEOPLE TO TAKE CONTROL OF THEIR MENTAL HEALTH.
- ✓ REDUCES PRESSURE ON CAMHS AND OTHER SERVICES.
- ✓ BUILDS A HEALTHIER, MORE RESILIENT SOCIETY.

IMPLEMENTATION

WHERE:

SCHOOLS, COLLEGES, UNIVERSITIES, GP PRACTICES, YOUTH CENTRES AND COMMUNITY SETTINGS ACROSS THE UK.

BY WHOM:

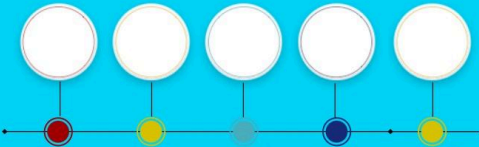
A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN NHS TRUSTS, LOCAL AUTHORITIES, MENTAL HEALTH CHARITIES AND TECHNOLOGY PROVIDERS.

HOW:

- CO-DESIGNED WITH YOUNG PEOPLE
- INTEGRATED INTO EXISTING SERVICES
- AVAILABLE VIA MOBILE APP AND WEB PLATFORM
- STAFFED BY TRAINED MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS AND VOLUNTEERS
- SAFEGUARDING AND ESCALATION PATHWAYS EMBEDDED

ACCESSIBLE. CONFIDENTIAL. NON-JUDGEMENTAL. ALWAYS THERE.

TIMELINE: DEVELOPMENT & ROLLOUT



PHASE 1: RESEARCH & CO-DESIGN
Month 1-3

- NEED ASSESSMENT
- ENGAGE YOUNG PEOPLE AND STAKEHOLDERS
- DEFINE FEATURES AND REQUIREMENTS

PHASE 2: DEVELOPMENT
Month 4-6

- BUILD DIGIT PLATFORM
- TEST CHAT SYSTEMS
- ENSURE SECURITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

PHASE 3: PILOT
Month 7-10

- PILOT IN SELECTED SCHOOLS AND AREAS
- GATHER FEEDBACK AND EVALUATE
- REFINE PLATFORM AND PROCESSES

PHASE 4: LAUNCH
Month 11-12

- OFFICIAL LAUNCH
- TRAINING FOR PROFESSIONALS
- MARKETING AND AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

PHASE 5: EXPANSION & EVOLUTION
Month 13+

- SCALE TO MORE REGIONS
- CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
- MEASURE LONG TERM IMPACT

DEVELOPMENT & REGULATIONS

GDPR & DATA PROTECTION ACT 2018:

ALL DATA ENCRYPTED, STORED SECURELY AND PROCESSED LAWFULLY.

CQC STANDARDS:

COMPLIES WITH CARE QUALITY COMMISSION STANDARDS FOR DIGITAL HEALTH SERVICES.

NICE GUIDELINES:

ALIGNED WITH NICE GUIDANCE ON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH (NG134, NG225).

SAFEGUARDING:

FOLLOWS WORKING TOGETHER TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN (2023) AND LOCAL SAFEGUARDING POLICIES.

ACCESSIBILITY:

MEETS EQUALITY ACT 2010 AND WCAG 2.1 ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS.

CONCLUSION

MIND CONNECT PROVIDES A MODERN, ACCESSIBLE AND COMPASSIONATE APPROACH TO MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE UK. BY COMBINING TECHNOLOGY, COMMUNITY AND EARLY INTERVENTION, WE CAN BUILD A FUTURE WHERE EVERY YOUNG MIND HAS THE SUPPORT THEY DESERVE.

YOU'RE NOT ALONE. WE'RE HERE FOR YOU.





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Mind Connect Pitch: Early Support for Stronger Futures

Mental health challenges among young people in the United Kingdom have reached a critical point, with increasing demand for services placing significant strain on existing systems. Mind Connect is an innovative response to this growing concern, offering a hybrid model of digital and community-based support designed specifically for young people aged 11–25. Building on the key themes presented in the poster, this pitch outlines the need for intervention, the proposed solution, its impact, and the policy and professional frameworks that support its implementation.

Young people today face a unique combination of pressures, including academic stress, social media exposure, economic uncertainty, and post-pandemic recovery challenges. According to NHS Digital (2023), one in five children and young people aged 8–25 in England has a probable mental health disorder, a significant increase from previous years. Despite this, access to timely and appropriate support remains inconsistent. Waiting times for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) can be lengthy, and many young people do not meet the threshold for specialist intervention, leaving them without support during early stages of distress.

Mind Connect addresses this gap by focusing on early intervention and accessibility. The platform integrates a 24/7 digital hub with local, community-based services, ensuring that support is available when and where it is needed. This includes live chat access to trained mental health practitioners, self-help resources, mood tracking tools, and signposting to local services. By combining technology with human connection, Mind Connect ensures that support is both immediate and relational.

The target demographic for this initiative includes young people aged 11–25 across the UK, with particular attention to those experiencing anxiety, depression, social isolation, or barriers to accessing traditional services. This group is especially vulnerable due to developmental transitions, identity formation, and increased exposure to risk factors. Research by YoungMinds (2022) highlights that many young people delay seeking help due to stigma, lack of awareness, or fear of being judged. Mind Connect directly addresses these barriers by offering a confidential, non-judgemental space that prioritises user autonomy and ease of access.

The anticipated impact of Mind Connect is both preventative and transformative. Early intervention has been shown to significantly reduce the severity and duration of mental health issues (Department of Health and Social Care, 2017). By providing support before crises escalate, Mind Connect can reduce the burden on emergency and specialist services, while improving long-term outcomes for young people. Additionally, the integration of community resources fosters a sense of belonging and social connection, which are key protective factors for mental wellbeing (WHO, 2021).

An example of how Mind Connect might operate in practice can be seen in the case of a 16-year-old experiencing anxiety related to school pressures. Rather than waiting weeks for a referral, they can immediately access the platform, speak to a trained practitioner via live chat, and receive guidance tailored to their needs. They may also be directed to a local youth support group or school-based wellbeing service, creating a continuum of care that bridges digital and in-person support.

The implementation of Mind Connect aligns closely with current UK policy and legislation. The NHS Long Term Plan (2019) emphasises the importance of early intervention and increased access to mental health services for children and young people. Similarly, NICE guidelines (NG134, NG225) provide evidence-based recommendations for the identification and management of mental health conditions in this demographic. Mind Connect adheres to these standards by offering structured, clinically informed support pathways.

Data protection and safeguarding are central to the design of the platform. Mind Connect complies with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018, ensuring that all user data is securely stored and processed. Safeguarding protocols are informed by the “Working Together to Safeguard Children” (HM Government, 2023) framework, with clear procedures for risk assessment and escalation where necessary. This ensures that users are protected while maintaining their trust in the service.

Accessibility is another key consideration. Mind Connect is designed to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1), ensuring that the platform is inclusive for users with disabilities or additional needs.

Features such as multilingual support, adjustable text sizes, and user-friendly navigation enhance usability and engagement.

Professional collaboration is essential to the success of this initiative. Mind Connect works alongside existing services, including CAMHS, schools, social workers, and voluntary organisations. This integrated approach ensures continuity of care and avoids duplication of services. For social workers and educators, the platform provides an additional tool to support young people, enabling early identification and intervention within their professional roles.

Public involvement is crucial in driving the success and sustainability of Mind Connect. The campaign encourages individuals, families, and communities to engage with the initiative by promoting awareness, reducing stigma, and supporting young people in accessing help. Community ambassadors, social media campaigns, and partnerships with schools and youth organisations can amplify the reach of the platform. By fostering a culture of openness and support, Mind Connect empowers communities to take an active role in mental health promotion.

Furthermore, co-production with young people is embedded in the development of the platform. This ensures that the service remains relevant, user-centred, and responsive to evolving needs. Young people are not just beneficiaries but active contributors, shaping the design, content, and delivery of the service.

In conclusion, Mind Connect represents a forward-thinking, compassionate approach to mental health support for young people in the UK. By combining digital innovation with community engagement and evidence-based practice, it addresses critical gaps in current provision. With strong alignment to policy, robust safeguarding measures, and a clear focus on early intervention, Mind Connect has the potential to significantly improve mental health outcomes and build a more resilient generation.

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