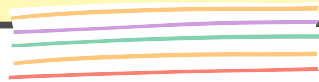




THE CHAMELEON



The Bedfordshire and Luton CAMHS magazine, created
by service users



THE SPRING

By
Jawad Chowdhury

Art by Jawad

Contents



What is it like to be in Participation?	3
What's going on in Participation?	4
Sizzle: App review	5
Tappy: App review	6
Overcoming Anxiety	7
Artwork by Young People	8-9
To Younger Me Poem	10
Luton Mental Health Strategy Event	11
Collages	12
Meet our Young Person Support Workers	13-14
Chameleon Music Playlist	15
Get to know CAMHS staff	16-17
Trans Social Group	18
CAMHS Updates	19
Get Involved	20-21



We have placed a number of hedgehogs throughout the magazine. Can you spot how many there are? This one is included. Answer is on the last page.

What is it like to be in Participation?

User Participation has helped me gain so much confidence and social skills. I have helped out with several interviews in person, which has gotten me used to social interaction with lots of new people and allowed me to step out of my comfort zone. Helping with interviews gives me a purpose and makes me feel like I am making a difference in the CAMHS service. I have also helped redesign the CAMHS website to make it more accessible and more helpful and informative, to improve the bridge between young people and CAMHS. I would definitely recommend others to get involved with User Participation as there is so much you can choose to be a part of and there is no pressure to do anything you are uncomfortable with. It really helps that everyone is so helpful and welcoming - it's a great community.

~Alyx

CAMHS Participation has really helped me as a great distraction from my mind and I think it can help others too. You get work experience whilst being supported by really kind and understanding other members. It's helped me get a stress free routine back into my life and it's great to get my brain engaging again. There's something for everyone with multiple projects and activities going on all the time and on interview panels.

~Aaron





What's going on in Participation?



Ongoing Projects

Sustainability

We are currently meeting on tuedays fortnightly to discuss our ideas for running a garden based group all about sustainability, gardening and life skills. If you would like to be involved, contact Aisling or Molly (info on last page).

Anti bullying

We are in the process of creating different resources all about anti-bullying. This includes filming videos, recording a series of podcasts and creating leaflets for use in schools. If you would like to get involved in any parts of this project please contact Marianne (info on last page)

Focus groups

We regularly hold focus groups, where we discuss specific topics and get your opinions to inform the ongoing work. This can be producing and reviewing resources from different CAMHS teams, getting your feedback of your experiences of different services and lots more. These are usually held online. There is no pressure and you are welcome to communicate in whatever way is most comfortable- use the chat, keep your camera off etc. To get involved, look out for messages in our group chat or emails from us.

If you have any ideas on what projects you'd like to see, contact one of the participation team (details on last page).

Recruitment/ Interview Panels

Young people are involved in all interview panels at CAMHS to ensure the right people are employed. If you would to participate in interview panels let us know so we can schedule recruitment training to prepare you for interview panels.

CAMHS Talk

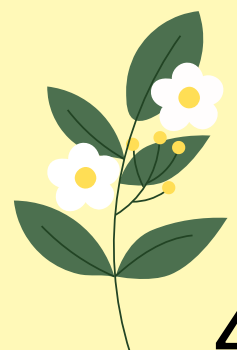
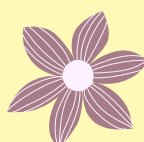
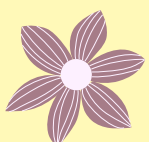
If you would like to have your voice heard on a podcast and discuss your experience and opinions of different topics contact us to join our CAMHS Talk podcast. Have a listen to our podcast by searching 'CAMHS Talk' on any podcast platform.

Better Days for BLMK

We have some exciting workshops coming up for you and maybe some friends to attend:

- Rolling Monthly Poetry Night at Green Earth Cafe in Bedford on Second Thursday of the month (18-25)

Search @betterdaysblmk on social media for more information. Look out for more workshops to announced soon.



Reviews

Sizzle : App review

Sizzle is an app which assists with revision for any subject.

While I am not one to normally review apps, I feel like this app deserves a review.

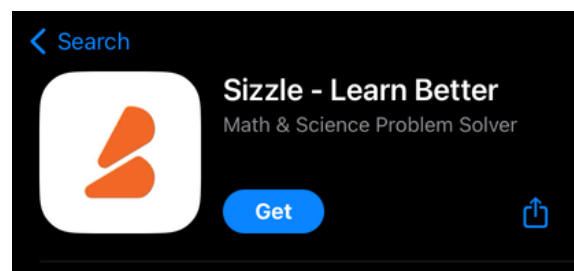
I came across this app via an advertisement and downloaded it, just expecting it to be like every other revision app. I was pleasantly surprised when I realised that it is 100% free. I was expecting to have to pay for some aspects of the app, but no.

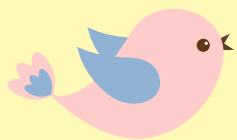
The app uses AI technology to create a series of questions based on your input of any subject. It asks you to write a summary of what it is you need to revise, and within a few seconds, loads of really helpful and relevant questions are created. It marks them then and there, explaining if you've made any errors.

The course that I'm doing has only been running for 3 years, yet this app was able to provide an excellent set of questions. I really didn't think it would provide for my course, but it really went the extra mile.

Another feature of this app is the ability for it to have a picture of a work sheet, and generate questions from that. You can also take photos of mathematical problems, and it will guide you through, step by step.

Whether you're doing GCSE, A level, T level or any other exam, I highly recommend this app.





Reviews



Tappy : App review

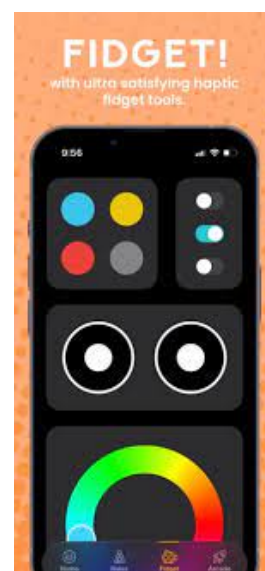
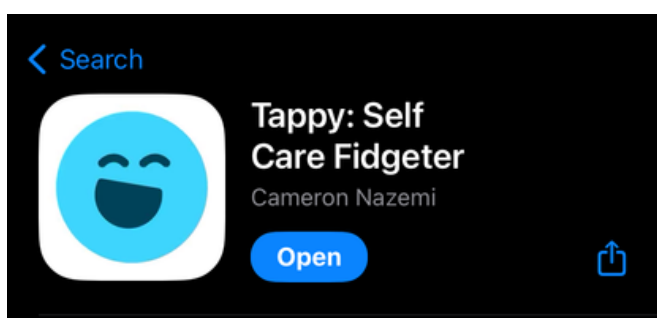
Tappy is a free self care app designed to help you relax and fidget. There are loads of fidget tools on the app, so there will be something for everyone. It also vibrates the phone when you touch certain tools.

I often forget my fidget toys but I almost always have my phone with me, so the app is always there when I need it. There's also relaxing sounds and meditation you can listen to.

There's a daily affirmation, which brightens my day. Also, there are guided meditations and calming sounds (e.g. rain and crashing waves sounds) to help with grounding.

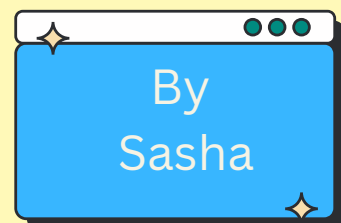
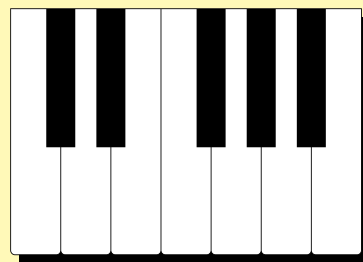
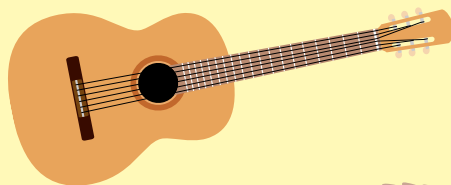
There's also a journal and mood tracker, however you have to pay for this.

Unfortunately, Tappy is only on IOS. You will be able to find similar apps on Android if you search 'fidget toy app'.



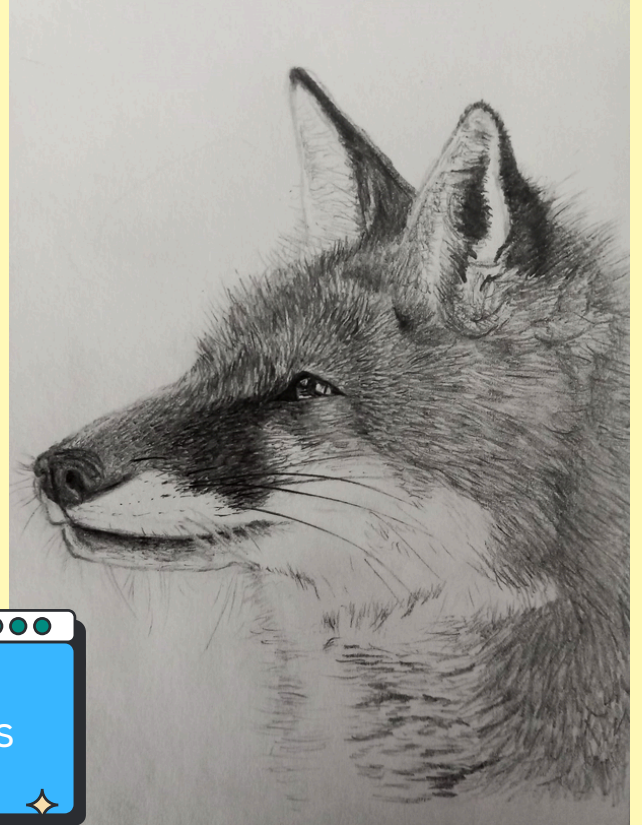
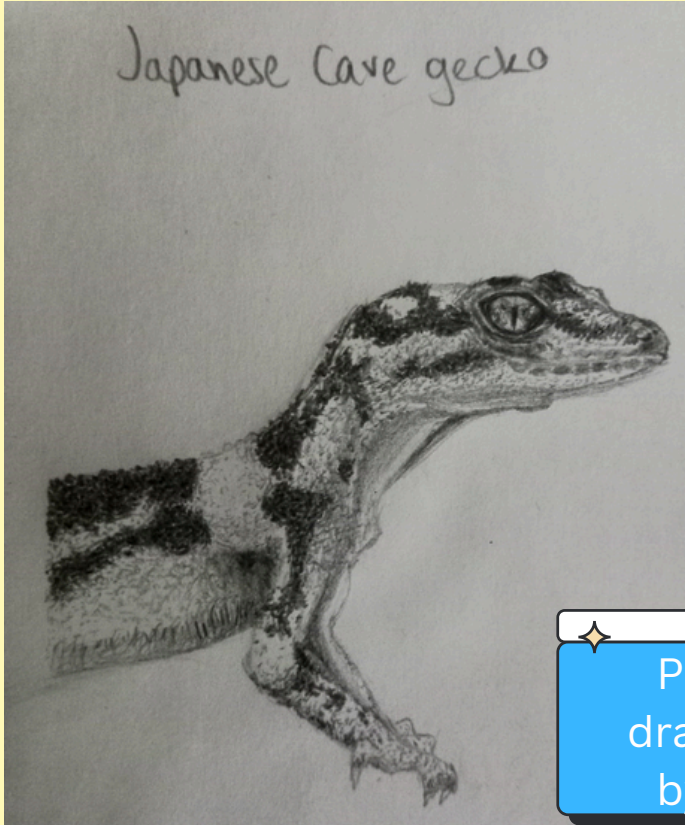
Overcoming Anxiety

My name is Sasha and for a very long time I had a fear of getting up on stage to sing because I thought people was going to judge me and not appreciate my singing but then one day I told myself that I can do it. I got up on stage and sand a song that I absolutely love and little did I know everyone started to record me and start to sing along. I have over come a big part of my anxiety and to this day I go up on stage all the time. I didn't believe in myself at all and now I can finally say I am happy and proud ❤️

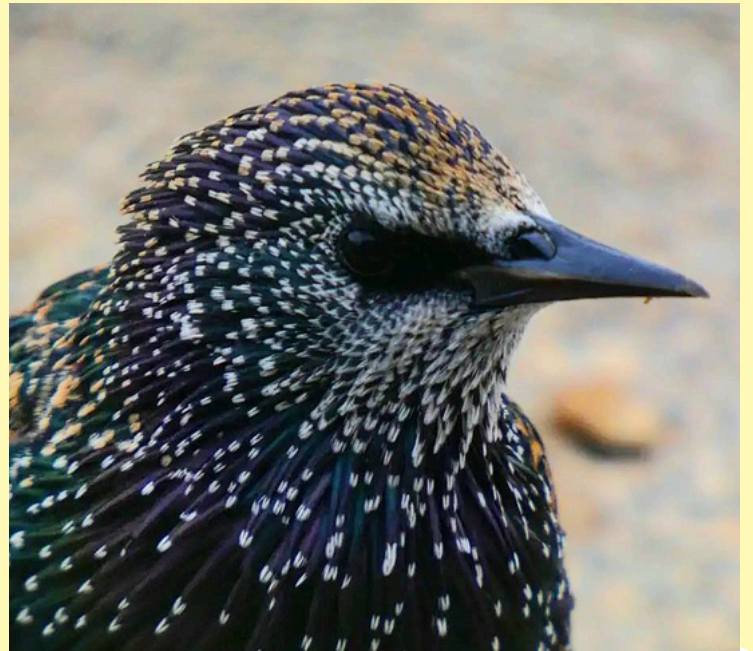




Artwork by Young People



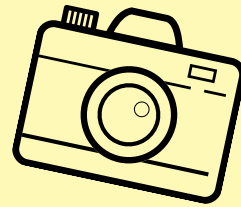
✦ Pencil drawings by Zoë ✦



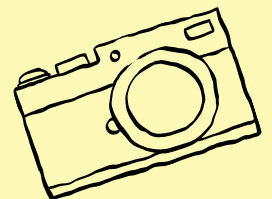
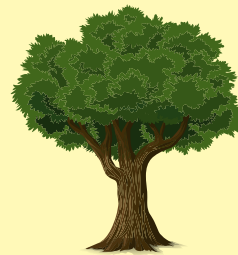
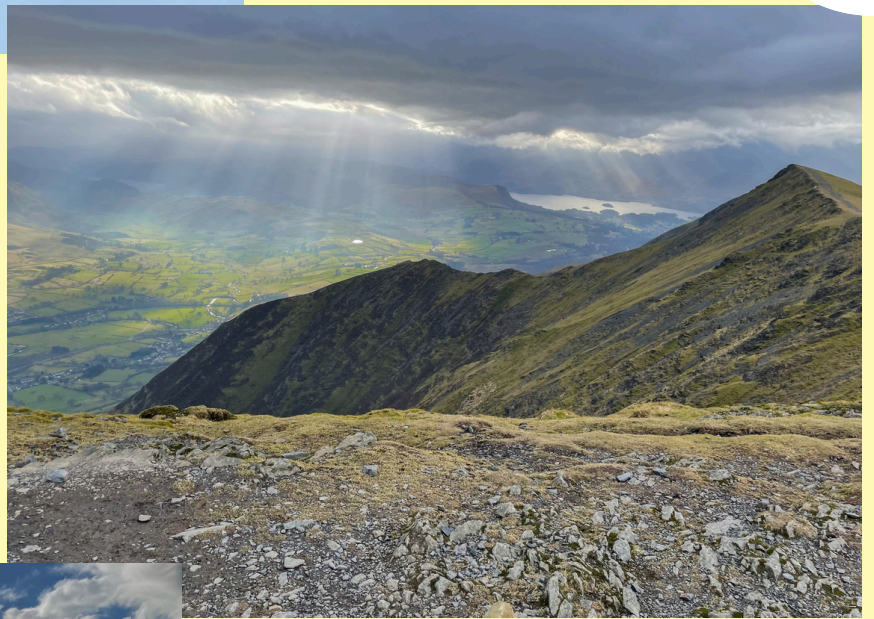
✦ Starling photo by Zoë ✦



Artwork by Young People



Photography
by Matthew



To Younger Me Poem

To Younger Me

You never realise,
That there is beauty in everything,
A darkness to everyone,
And there is always tomorrow.

You going to get bruised, burnt,
And hurt,
You going to smile, laugh,
And be happy

You hate, you love,
You give up, you try again,
You lose people a,
And you find them.

But worst of all,
You lose your sparkle,
Under all the abuse and darkness,
All the trauma and harshness.

You become very ill,
Everything hurts you,
Including yourself,
You struggle with the memories,
And neglect your mental health.

But finally,
You made out alive,
A diamond made out to be coal,
A healthy loving person,
With a beautiful soul.

To younger me,
After a storm comes a rainbow,
You're finally becoming the star of
your own show!

By
Emily Rose

Luton Mental Health Strategy Event

I sat at an event on the 7th of March regarding mental health policies with many professionals and one other young person. Marianne and Sassie were there to facilitate, and as always, they did an amazing job helping me to feel very comfortable, like by seeing me out. This event was what I'd call formal-casual, but it was a really great experience, especially being able to get your ideas out there into meaningful work. (They also had free sandwiches!) The other people there were very kind but also genuinely engaged with me as a part of the discussion despite being a young person, which I thought quite great. For me, transport wasn't difficult as my mum was able to pick me up and drop me off, but I believe taxis were also arranged. I remember smiling leaving because the event was so collaborative and engaging even when having to listen to lots of other people talk.

In participation, we attend lots of events where young people get to voice their opinions. Some topics include mental health strategies like in this article, what living in certain areas is like, how services work together to provide the best support and lots more.



By
Jawad

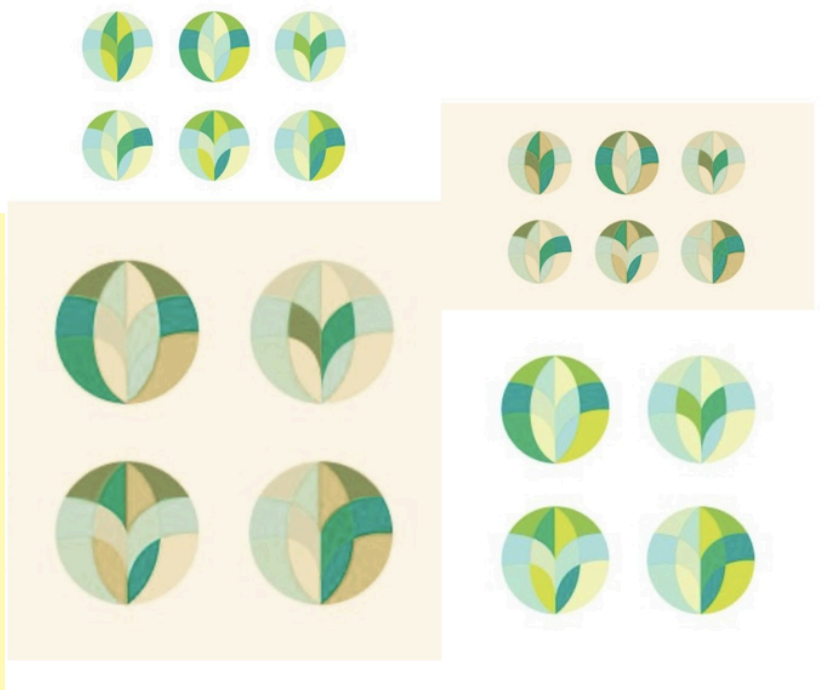
Collages



Funky shoes

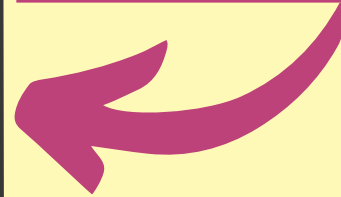


COLLAGE



Meet our Young Person Support Workers

Hi I'm Ocean. I am a Young Person Support Worker; I also work for the Discovery College. When I was younger, I struggled a lot with my mental health; I am still working through my recovery now. People Participation gave me a place to meet people who could relate to me and created something positive from some of my more negative experiences. I've known for a while that I wanted to work in mental health and people participation gave me a leg up. I will always remember being trained in interviewing and starting CAMHSTalk before Lockdown. Then later, when I applied for this job, being interviewed by someone like me, just as I had interviewed staff before! I went away and got my degree in Psychology but actually it's my life experiences that taught me the most. I think it was my time with People Participation that got me the Young Person Support Worker role. I have been involved in a lot of projects for example, recently I collaborated with other autistic people and staff to create a training video to show people what it is like from OUR perspective. I love my job because we use our own lived experience to improve services for young people so that they can have better experiences than I have had. I am working with Bedford Talking therapies to help people with social anxiety and figure out why some therapies aren't helping young people or people are dropping out. This way we can make therapy better for them. I think overall the best part of my job is that when I was in CAMHS myself I never thought I would make it this far, let alone do things I could be proud of and this job gives me the opportunity to do lots of things I am proud of.



We recently have had the pleasure to recruit some of our young people into bank positions. This means they can get involved in lots of different projects and share their experiences. Please have a read through their introductions to get to know them better :)

Meet our Young Person Support Workers



Hi, I'm Suzie and I'm a bank young person support worker. I love fun facts so a little fun fact about me is I have always grown up with exotic pets, I found out about the job after working in the user participation group for a really long time. And to start off with I was really scared to go into the role but from being in this role it has improved my self-esteem and confidence. It has been one of the best things I've ever done and I'm so happy I took it. So just a little message to take home is to go for it no matter how nervous you are or scared go for it because it can change your life for the better?




Hi! My name is Leah and I'm a young person support worker for CAMHS. I am also training to be an Oliver McGowan co trainer. I enjoy working for CAMHS as I feel I am helping improve the service for current and future service users. I get involved in projects such as: developing e-learning modules, sustainability projects and SEND projects. I feel honoured to have the opportunity to engage in these kinds of projects and drives me to keep improving for myself and others ツ



Chameleon Music Playlist

A mix of our favourite songs that we reccomend you check out!



Lovebomb- Nessa Barrett

◀◀ || ▶▶



Letter to the rich-
Johnny Dukane, Powfu

◀◀ || ▶▶



Close to you- PinkPantheSS

◀◀ || ▶▶




Tongue Tied- GROUPLOVE

◀◀ || ▶▶



Iris- The Goo Goo Dolls

◀◀ || ▶▶



Good looking-
Suki Waterhouse

◀◀ || ▶▶



Get to know CAMHS staff



There are so many wonderful people that work in CAMHS. Let's get to know some of them better with questions asked by young people.



My name is Sarah. I work with the Discovery College in CAMHS. We work with young people in the community and in schools and colleges across Beds & Luton, delivering workshops around mental health and wellbeing, personal growth, life skills, healthy relationships and creativity. My role is Peer Support Champion - I am involved in coproduction of our workshops with Peer Mentors, delivery of wellbeing sessions and designing and producing the workshops and promotional materials.

My background is in education; I was a teacher for 20+ years and I also have qualifications in counselling. I have two young children and three cats! I love singing and reading and having coffee with friends.

Do you have a party trick?
Yes, I can wiggle my ears!



What do you want to do for the rest of your life?

Keep discovering myself and my purpose

What's your favourite bird?

I love robins.



What's your favourite animal?

Cats...and sloths! Do you notice a theme?

What's your favourite thing about yourself?

That I care deeply about other people.

What's your favourite book?

Jennie by Paul Galico

Why did you want to work with CAMHS?

I have a passion for mental health and wellbeing and empowering people to grow and develop in a way that's best for them. Working with CAMHS means I get to work alongside young people with a wealth of experience and knowledge in this area, which I can then implement in our work in the community to help other young people.

What's your favourite holiday destination?

Thailand - I hope to go back there sometime. I fell in love with the blue sea, the limestone cliffs and the beautiful sandy beaches.



Get to know CAMHS staff

There are so many wonderful people that work in CAMHS. Let's get to know some of them better with questions asked by young people.



My name is Tamsyn Parrish and I am a Specialist CAMHS Practitioner. I am a Social Worker by profession. I have worked in mental health services since 2004 and been with CAMHS since 2021. I work in the SPOE team and we assess young people for their mental health and wellbeing needs. I enjoy my job helping putting young people in touch with the right support.

I have a small farm where I keep my 7 horses, pigs, sheep, chickens, turkeys, ducks and other animals. I love to grow vegetables too and flowers for the bees and butterflies. I also like eating the fruit I grow and love to munch on raspberries.

Do you have a party trick?
Sadly no, but I'm not bad on karaoke



What do you want to do for the rest of your life?

I want to be more self-sufficient and continue to help people

What's your favourite bird?

Robins, their song is beautiful and I like it when they come where I am digging to eat the worms

What's your favourite animal?
Horses

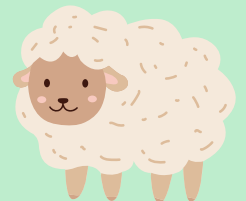
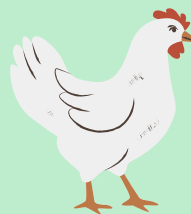


What's your favourite thing about yourself?
My sense of humour, I like to bring a bit of fun

What's your favourite book?
Christine by Stephen King

Why did you want to work with CAMHS?
To help young people to have better mental health and to champion those who are neurodivergent.

What's your favourite holiday destination?
I love camping at my farm



Trans Social Group

A safe space for trans and gender questioning service users to connect with other people and get support

A safe space

We know how important safe spaces are for members of the trans community. It can feel really isolating at times, and quite scary too.

We wanted to create a space for you to meet other people like you, where you can just feel relaxed and be yourself



Trans Rights

You're not alone

The groups will be a mix of different activities from crafts, quizzes and games to discussions and advice on living as a trans person.

Facilitated by staff with lived experience, we just want to create somewhere you can feel accepted, understood and connected



When and Where?

First Monday of the month: online (zoom)
Third Thursday of the month: Rush Court
(Bedford CAMHS)
4.30-5.30pm

For more info, contact:

Jay - He/Him - jay.worthington1@nhs.net
Sassie - They/Them - saskia.lawrence1@nhs.net
or speak to your clinician

CAMHS Updates



CAMHS Talk

CAMHS Talk is produced by the staff and service users of Bedfordshire and Luton CAMHS. Listen to conversations about CAMHS, other services that support young people with their mental health and things we can do to support ourselves. Our latest episode discusses living with dyspraxia.

Rainbow Bedfordshire

Rainbow Bedfordshire has set up trans inclusive LGBTQ+ swimming sessions. It is a safe space where you won't be judged, where you can enjoy having a swim and meeting people. The details are in the flyer on the right, or you can get in touch with us for more information.

Elft.rainbowbedfordshire@nhs.net



The Discovery College

The Discovery College aims towards improving well-being and positive outcomes for all young people in Beds and Luton. The workshops and courses are educational, co-produced in a cultural sensitive way on themes like Healthy Relationships, Life Skills, Creativity, Mental Health and Well-being and Personal Growth. There are will be community workshops, the schools' wellbeing sessions and various projects with other NHS services and third-sector organisations.



Get Involved

CAMHS is changing and developing all the time, and learning from young people and their parents experience is more important than ever. You can have your say in how CAMHS develops, make new friends, take part in our podcast or write articles for future editions of the Chameleon by getting in touch using our participation inbox: elft.blcamhsparticipation@nhs.net or use the details below:



Niki Scott
Service User Participation Lead
Nicola.scott24@nhs.net
07896 303 294



Aisling Callaghan
Service User Participation Lead
aisling.callaghan@nhs.net
07827 937182

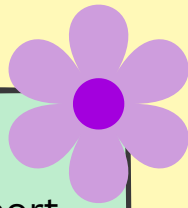


Marianne Bahadur
Service User Participation Coordinator
Marianne.bahader@nhs.net
07551 675 938

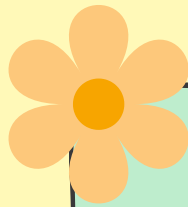


Jay Worthington
Service User Participation Support Worker
jay.worthington1@nhs.net
07901 655414

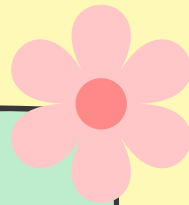
Get Involved



Molly Burton
Service User Participation Support
Worker
Molly.burton1@nhs.net



Kim Johnson
Peer Support Champion &
Participation Lead for Autism
07918 445981
kim.johnson20@nhs.net



Sassie Lawrence
Digital Participation &
Suicide Prevention Lead
Saskia.lawrence1@nhs.net



There were...
13 hedgehogs!
Did you get it??