

Health and wellbeing of Children and Adolescents in Tower Hamlets

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Session scope



- Overview of:
 - Public Health division's Children and Adolescents programme
 - Health and wellbeing of children aged 5-19 years in the borough
 - Public Health services for this age group
- School Health & Wellbeing Service and Safe East



Children and Adolescents public health programme



Core Values

The enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the **fundamental rights** without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition (WHO Constitution, 1946)

Children have the right to the best health care possible, clean water to drink, healthy food and a clean and safe environment to live in. All adults and children should have information about how to stay safe and healthy.

(UN Convention on Rights of the Child)

What matters to residents (principles)

- Resources to support health should go to those who most need
- Connection and inclusion should be understood to be as the heart of wellbeing
- Being treated equally, respectfully and without discrimination should be the norm
- Health and wellbeing information, advice should be simple and clear
- People should feel they have equal power in developing programmes affecting their health and wellbeing
- We should all work together to use and build assets for wellbeing

(Tower Hamlets Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-25)



Children and Adolescents public health programme



Aspirations for all children and adolescents

- Life skills for health and wellbeing through critical life stages e.g. puberty, developing identity, building positive relationships, transitioning to adulthood
- Good emotional health and resilience with foundations for lifelong mental wellbeing
- Sustainable habits building physical activity, healthy eating and good oral health into everyday life
- Freedom from behaviours harmful to health including tobacco, alcohol and substance misuse
- Good outcomes through early identification of need and access to early help
- Freedom from abuse and neglect

Applying public health skills:

- Intelligence and insight
- Strategy and partners
- Delivery
- Communications and engagement
- Research and evaluation



JSNA headlines for children & adolescents

11 **Childhood obesity** rates have continued to increase. There are now more children in year 6 who are overweight or obese than are a healthy weight.

12 The **oral health** of children in Tower Hamlets is significantly worse than the rest of London, with two in every five children in Reception having visually obvious dental decay.

13 A quarter of children in the borough grow up in relative **low-income** families, the highest rate in London.

16 **Fewer children 'feel happy about life at the moment'** compared to before

the pandemic. At primary school, the proportion of children reporting they are happy has fallen from 75 to 68%, and over half say they don't have anyone to talk to when they are worried. At secondary age, only 4 in 10 children said they were happy about life at the moment, with top concerns being money, options after year 11 and being a healthy weight.

14 Children in Tower Hamlets have been **less ready for school** than their national peers for many years, but this gap has doubled over the pandemic. In 2022, 4 in 10 Tower Hamlets children did not have a good level of development at Reception age compared to 3 in 10 in 2019.

15 Despite this, once in school Tower Hamlets children generally achieve **better results** than the national average in KS1, KS2 and at GCSE level.

17 Although above the London average, Tower Hamlets is **falling short of the 'herd immunity' targets** for childhood immunisations, and the trend has worsened in recent years.

18 **Poor air quality** has been shown to impact on the lung development of children and air quality in Tower Hamlets is worse than the London average.

19 **Decline in reported level of happiness** - percentage of primary pupil who say they feel happy about life has gone down from 75% to 68% while in secondary pupils who say they feel happy about life has gone from 65% to 43%



Young people's views



- Unsure of confidentiality of health services
- Don't know about services available to them
- Would like more healthy relationships education
- Would like more services available in schools
- Mental health services could be more culturally sensitive
- Healthy weight status should be shared with families
- Unhealthy weight is a leading cause of unhappiness, and concerned about unhealthy environment in the borough
- Drug use and smoking is widespread within the borough making them feel unsafe



Applying public health skills



- Strategy & partnerships:
 - Working with children, families and children's professionals and partners to develop programmes and strategies to improve child health and wellbeing
 - Healthy weight
 - Immunisations
 - Health promotion & medical conditions in schools
 - Health in the Youth Justice system
 - Mental health
 - Family Hubs
- Research & evaluation: Act Early partnership
- Communications and engagement:
 - Strategy development
 - Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNAs)
 - Healthy Families parent ambassadors
 - Youth health ambassadors



Children & Adolescents public health delivery



To meet the needs of children and adolescents, we commission a range of services to address the needs of our residents. These include

1. **School Health & Wellbeing service** – the healthy child programme: the early intervention and prevention public health programme describing a universal progressive service for children.
2. **Integrated Young People's Health & Wellbeing service (Safe East)** - offers universal, targeted and specialist sexual health and substance misuse prevention and treatment services that are non-judgemental, evidence-based, prevention-focused, and age-appropriate to young people aged 10-19 years.
3. **Healthy Teeth in Schools** - aims to reduce tooth decay in children through the application of fluoride varnish to teeth in primary school and includes awareness sessions for parents and carers.

Funding contributions to council children's services:

1. **Universal free school meals**
2. **Healthy Lives** - supports schools across all areas of Healthy Eating, Oral Health, Physical Activity, Mental Health and Resilience, Drug Education and Relationships and Sex Education.
3. **Health Families** - a healthy lifestyles programme delivered by practitioners to parents in the form of group sessions and/or 1:1 support with the purpose of delivering positive behaviour change. Also supports parents to become volunteer parent ambassadors and offer peer support services.



School Health & Wellbeing service



- Delivered by [GP Care Group](#) since 2018
- Contract ends on 31st July 2024
- Delivery of the Healthy Child Programme for children aged 5-19 focusing on six high-impact areas:
 1. Building resilience and improving emotional health and wellbeing
 2. Keeping safe, managing risk, and reducing harm – including child sexual abuse and exploitation
 3. Healthy lifestyles – including reducing childhood obesity and increasing physical activity
 4. Maximising achievement and learning – help children to realise their potential and reducing inequalities
 5. Supporting additional health needs – supporting Special Education Needs and Disability reforms
 6. Transition and preparing for adulthood
- 2022 [CQC report](#) rated service ‘good’ overall



What do School Health deliver



- School management plans (support plans) for short-term health conditions e.g. continence issues, healthy weight, emotional wellbeing
- Health needs assessments - holistic assessments at drop-ins, for new starters or for safeguarding purposes
- Support to ensure individual Health Care Plans for long-term conditions are in place where needed

As well as :

- School entry health screening questionnaires
- National Child Measurement Programme (YR and Y6)
- Hearing and vision screening (YR)
- Drop in clinics
- Health needs training
- Health and wellbeing sessions

But not:

- Immunisations (Vaccination UK)
- Specialist School Nursing Team (Barts)



Integrated Young People's Health & Wellbeing Service (Safe East)



- Delivered by [Compass](#) since 2018
- Contract ends on 31st July 2024
- Offers universal, targeted and specialist sexual health and substance misuse prevention and treatment services that are non-judgemental, evidence-based, prevention-focused, and age-appropriate to young people aged 10-19 years. The core offer extends to those 19-25 years old with SEND.
- Delivered at the 'hub' and 'spokes' at other youth centres, schools and young-people-friendly settings around the borough.
- 2022 [CQC report](#) rated service 'good' overall



Safe East delivery



- Outreach sessions – e.g. youth centres
- Workshops on SRE, D&A, tobacco cessation
- Hub & Spoke model incl. clinics at Health Spot
- 1 x days a week in Youth Justice Service
- Brief interventions – sexual health/substance misuse
- Professional training on sexual health & substance misuse
- C-Card scheme management
- You're Welcome validation scheme (YP-Friendly settings)
- Contraception, chlamydia screening, STI testing, TOP referrals
- Tier 3 substance misuse treatment
- Smoking cessation support



Case study – Safe East



Introduction & Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Referral was received from school (via student support worker) into Safe East for a 15-year-old male using cannabis and its impact on his wellbeing and attendance.• Client lives with mother and younger siblings.
Health intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safe East Health met with client and started the engagement process; discussed consent and confidentiality and when this would be broken, completed a holistic needs assessment and created a risk assessment and tailored care plan to address need for harm reduction.• The health and wellbeing practitioner used their professional curiosity to explore what client meant by staying out smoking cannabis. Client reported he stayed out late on several occasions so he could 'make money and smoke cannabis for free'.• Safe East discussed held a meeting with the school to explore safeguarding concerns around exploitation.• It was agreed in the meeting that the concerns would be discussed and explained to Client. School felt they was best placed to complete the MASH referral as they had already had discussions with client's mother around low attendance and had more history that would add value to the referral.
Outcomes achieved/Difference made	Client was informed and understood the concerns of staff and why the referrals were being made Social Worker in the school assigned to client who has been working with Safe East to reduce harm and keep safe.
Summary and Next Steps	Safe East Health, the client and social worker meet regularly for ongoing support.



Programme plan 2023/24



- Improve training offer to schools & children's services on medical conditions (e.g. asthma, allergy)
- Strengthen health promotion role of school nurses
- National Child Measurement Programme improvement plan
- Strengthen service pathways (e.g. youth justice service, speech & language)
- School nurse staff shortages – long-term plan
- Integration with other services & Family Hubs
 - e.g. mental health, primary care, sexual health services, paediatrics, community teams
- Peer-led and volunteering opportunities
- Data-sharing



Thank you

