Supporting children of parents with a mental illness

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CEO, Our Time

Our Time

for children of parents
with a mental illness

Who are we?

Our Time is the **only UK charity** dedicated to supporting children who have a parent with a mental illness.

- Our Time is a **thought-leader** in parental mental illness, offering a **unique, evidence-based** approach
- We give these children the support they need, in their **families and in their schools**
- **We train professionals to identify and support** these children early on
- **We advocate** for these young people by urging the government to recognise that they have **specific needs, requiring specific support**

Why we're here

We help children and young people to:

- develop the confidence to come forward and ask for help
- build trust, form connections and develop a support network
- recognise stigma and myths around mental health and mental illness
- build greater self-esteem

One in three

children and young people live with a parent with **depression or anxiety**

1 in 10 live with an adult with **severe mental illness**

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Without support,
these children are

three times

more likely to develop
mental health problems
themselves

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Adverse childhood experiences

- Physical abuse
- Verbal abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional neglect
- A family member in prison
- Physical neglect
- Witnessing a mother being abused
- **A family member who is depressed or diagnosed with other mental illness**
- Losing a parent to separation, divorce or death
- A family member who's addicted to alcohol or another substance

£1.9 billion

is the estimated cost - in the case of those leaving primary school in **2022** who have a mother with depression - as a result of failed support

Why do they need support?

These children are:

- exposed to toxic stress, which has a long-term impact on physical and mental health
- facing unique challenges that impact their life chances
- likely to feel shame, stigma and social isolation
- often experiencing disrupted education - lateness, absenteeism, find it hard to focus

How Our Time helps

KidsTime Workshops

- Monthly, multifamily workshops
- Whole family, systemic approach
- Voluntary, active community
- Psycho-education
- Games, drama, de-stressing
- Supportive environment, no judgement
- Integration package – licence, manualised approach, trained local teams
- Community of practice

Our Time Schools

- Whole-school approach
- Creating compassionate, open school culture
- Staff training enables early identification and support
- PSHE programme (primary and secondary)
- Mental illness is normalised and destigmatised
- Pupils feel safe to come forward, staff are empowered to provide low-level support

Professional training

“At Our Time’s workshops you’re having fun. You’re being looked after and you’re not looking after others.”

(Amber, Age 13)

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Italy
US
village / town / city /
county / country?
SEE
humans?

Our impact

Families:

- Improved understanding of mental illness
- Improved ability to talk about it as a family
- Feeling less alone and socialising with others
- Improved confidence
- Improved family relationships

Schools (pupils completing PSHE course):

- 88% learned more about their mental health
- 94% would be able to support a friend when they feel sad or worried
- 81% knew that mental illness is not contagious

Making a difference

Our Strengths & Difficulties Questionnaire reveals children are:

- sharing more
- thinking before acting
- less restless
- less solitary, with improved peer relationships and social skills
- complaining less of sickness
- more able to see tasks through to the end and have improved concentration

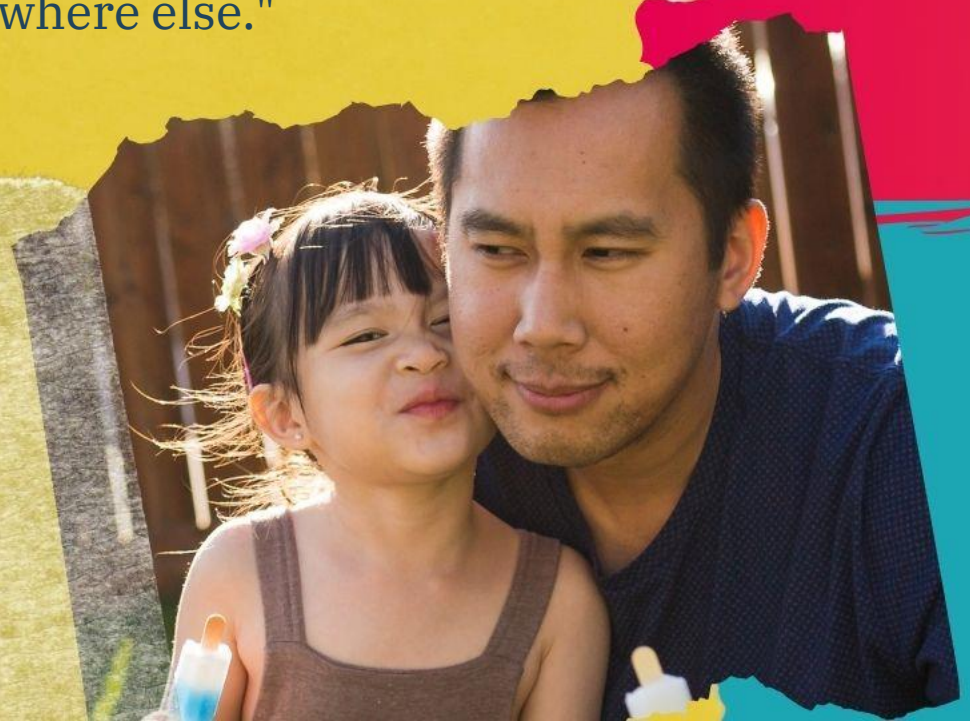
Meena says...

Age 8

"I normally worry about [Mum] quite a lot. I normally worry quite a lot about things, but coming to KidsTime, it just lets me open myself up, and I don't feel like I can do that anywhere else."

Jorge's story...

Parent



"KidsTime means a lot to me and my daughter. To be able to share in a safe place and not be judged, but to be welcomed and understood by staff and members is a great help."

Kaya says...

Age 14

"KidsTime is somewhere where you can go to be with somebody that you know understands how you feel, and they might have the same situation too, and they just cheer you up, so it's a great place to go."

Beverley's story...

Parent

"I no longer feel I need to be quiet and suffer and feel ashamed about what's going on in my head. KidsTime has taught me to speak out about my feelings, so that my daughter understands my mental health."

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Case study: Westminster City Council

"Parental mental illness is significantly represented in many of the cases being referred into Westminster Children's Services and we wanted our local offer to help address the needs of this cohort.

Our Time has worked with us closely, guiding us and sharing their learning and the learning from other areas, at every stage of our development of the KidsTime Workshops."

Early Help Service Manager