

Welcome to our second Let's Connect South Lanarkshire newsletter!

You will hopefully already have already heard about Let's Connect but as a reminder our project aims to increase the mental health knowledge of children, young people, and the adults around them, including parents, carers and staff. Our project only started in April this year and we have already connected with more than 3,500 children, young people and adults. This newsletter is full of useful information about the Let's Connect project, and we really hope that you can get involved in our upcoming activity.

Did you know that Let's Connect is delivered by SAMH? Since our last newsletter our organisation has gone through a rebrand. We are still SAMH but we are now Scottish Action for Mental Health, because action is what is needed for Scotland's mental health today, tomorrow and in the future. Click the link to find out more about our [SAMH rebrand](#).

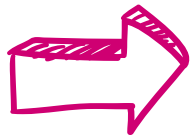
Parent & Carer Workshops


The Let's Connect team are continuing to deliver free workshops to parents and carers across South Lanarkshire both online and face to face. The workshops that are available for parents and carers include [Mental Health Awareness](#), [Understanding and Managing Stress & Anxiety](#), [Managing My Wellbeing](#) and [Listening to & Supporting My Child](#).




We have workshops running in your area so please scan these QR codes to find out what workshops are coming up and get booked in.

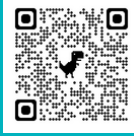
Parents and carers scan me!







Hamilton






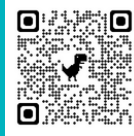
Camglen






East Kilbride





Clydesdale



Let's Connect



Our **Let's Connect staff** each deliver within a South Lanarkshire locality, so if you are a school or community group and would like workshops for children, young people, staff or parents/carers then please email us below to find out more, and to book a slot.

- Catherine, Let's Connect Team Leader (Hamilton & Camglen) catherine.knox@samh.org.uk
- Heather, Let's Connect Officer (Clydesdale/Lanark) heather.mccartney@samh.org.uk
- Iona, Let's Connect Officer (East Kilbride) iona.macwhirter-harley@samh.org.uk

Let's Connect Peer Supporters Programme



Our Let's Connect workshops help parents, carers and staff consider how they can support the wellbeing of a child or young person. Children and young people want the support of adults but sometimes they also want to talk to a peer.

That's why we are running our Peer Supporters programme in selected schools across South Lanarkshire. Last term we trained Peer Supporters in Biggar, Holycross, Calderglen and Trinity High School. This term we are training young people in Lesmagahow, Stathaven and St John Ogilvie High Schools. We are very proud of our Peer Supporters and in each Let's Connect Newsletter we'll tell you a little more about how they are getting on.

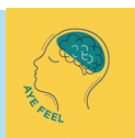
Trinity High School Peer Supporters

We were delighted to hear that Peer Supporters at Trinity High had hosted their first 'Feel Good Friday' this month, to promote Anti Bullying Week. During this event pupils were able to select a song and make a donation to Mental Health charities.

The Peer Supporters have developed a mental health podcast. Called 'Trinity Talks' and you can access it on [Spotify](#) here. It's available on Apple Music too.



Our Peer Supporters at Trinity High during their first 'Feel Good Friday' event



Young Scot has lots of useful information to support children and young people's emotional wellbeing. Parents and carers may find it helpful too!

Peer Supporters meet First Minister for Q&A on Mental Health



In October, Scotland's First Minister, Humza Yousaf met with 20 young people to answer their questions on mental health support in Scotland. Amongst the young people involved were five Let's Connect Peer Supporters that had completed their Peer Supporters training this term.

The conversation covered a wide variety of topics, including waiting times for specialist services, how to tackle youth suicide, and support for neurodivergent young people.

First Minister Humza Yousaf said: "I'd like to commend the absolutely vital work of SAMH in its centenary year. The organisation has a long history of supporting people and families with their mental health, and has continued to evolve in order to ensure it provides expert and targeted support.

He later added, "I was inspired to hear from the young people, who spoke so passionately about mental health. The work that SAMH does to tackle mental health stigma, to stand up for the rights of those who need more support, and to champion better mental health care has never been more important.

The Scottish Government will make sure we are doing everything we can to make Scotland a place where every young person can grow up loved, safe, nurtured, and respected."

Keeping Well This Winter

Winter can take its toll on our mental health and wellbeing. From managing the cold weather and dark nights, having to spend more time with family, and worrying about money, it's no wonder that many of us struggle at this time of year. In fact, there is a specific mental health condition that is influenced by the seasonal changes called SAD (Seasonal Affective Disorder). Find out more about SAD by clicking on this link [For more information and top tips click the link Mind-SAD.](#)

There are however lots of things that you can do to look after yourself. Even knowing what supports are available can make winter a little easier to manage.

Get outdoors – Even in the chilly weather getting some fresh air and going for a walk, even if only around the block, can give your mood a boost.

The RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch will be back in January 2024. Register to take part at www.rspb.org.uk. This is a great way to get to know the wildlife and is a lovely mindful exercise while you sit and watch the birds go about their day. You could even make this a family activity by spotting birds and drawing what you see.

Try something new – Pick up a new hobby, join a new class at the gym, get inspired by craft videos on Youtube or why not suggest a family bake off.

Connect - There are so many occasions to get together over winter, and even meeting a friend for a coffee and a laugh is perfect for a bit of self-care. If you can't meet up face to face, why not try connecting with an old friend or family member over the phone or FaceTime.

Enjoy time indoors - The cold weather means you might spend less time outside. Enjoy time to relax at home, watch your favourite movie or have a relaxing bath. Or you could put your devices away and enjoy playing board games with the family. Reading is also good for your mental health research shows that reading for as little as 6 minutes per day can reduce stress levels by 60%. Here are some of Let's Connect team's recommendations.

- Young Teen – Heart stopper by Alica Oseman (Also on Netflix)
- Adult - Good Vibes Good Life - Vex King
- Easy Quick Reads – 'Found in Translation: 100 of the Finest Short Stories Ever Translated' by Frank Wynne



If you are worried about energy bills and the cost of living this winter, the Citizens Advice network can help. To access support, please click this link [Citizens Advice](#)

If you are needing help with food please click this link [South Lanarkshire Foodbanks](#)

Are you an adult with a question about mental health? SAMH can help.

Whether you're seeking support, are looking for more information for you or someone you love, or if you just want to have chat about mental health, we're here to help.

Available: 9am to 6pm, Monday to Friday (except bank holidays). Calls charged at local rates, charges from mobile telephones vary considerably.

Tel: **0344 800 0550** Email: info@samh.org.uk

Visit: samh.org.uk/information-service



If you need to speak to someone urgently:

Visit [Breathing Space](#) - telephone support to anyone, over the age of 16 years, who is feeling low, anxious or depressed. Tel: 0800 83 85 87 (Freephone 24 hours at weekends, 6pm to 2am on weekdays (Monday - Thursday))

[Samaritans](#) - 24-hour helpline offering emotional support for anyone feeling down, distressed or struggling to cope. Tel: 116 123 Email: jo@samaritans.org

[NHS 24](#) - If you're feeling distressed, in a state of despair, suicidal or in need of emotional support you can phone NHS 24 on 111