



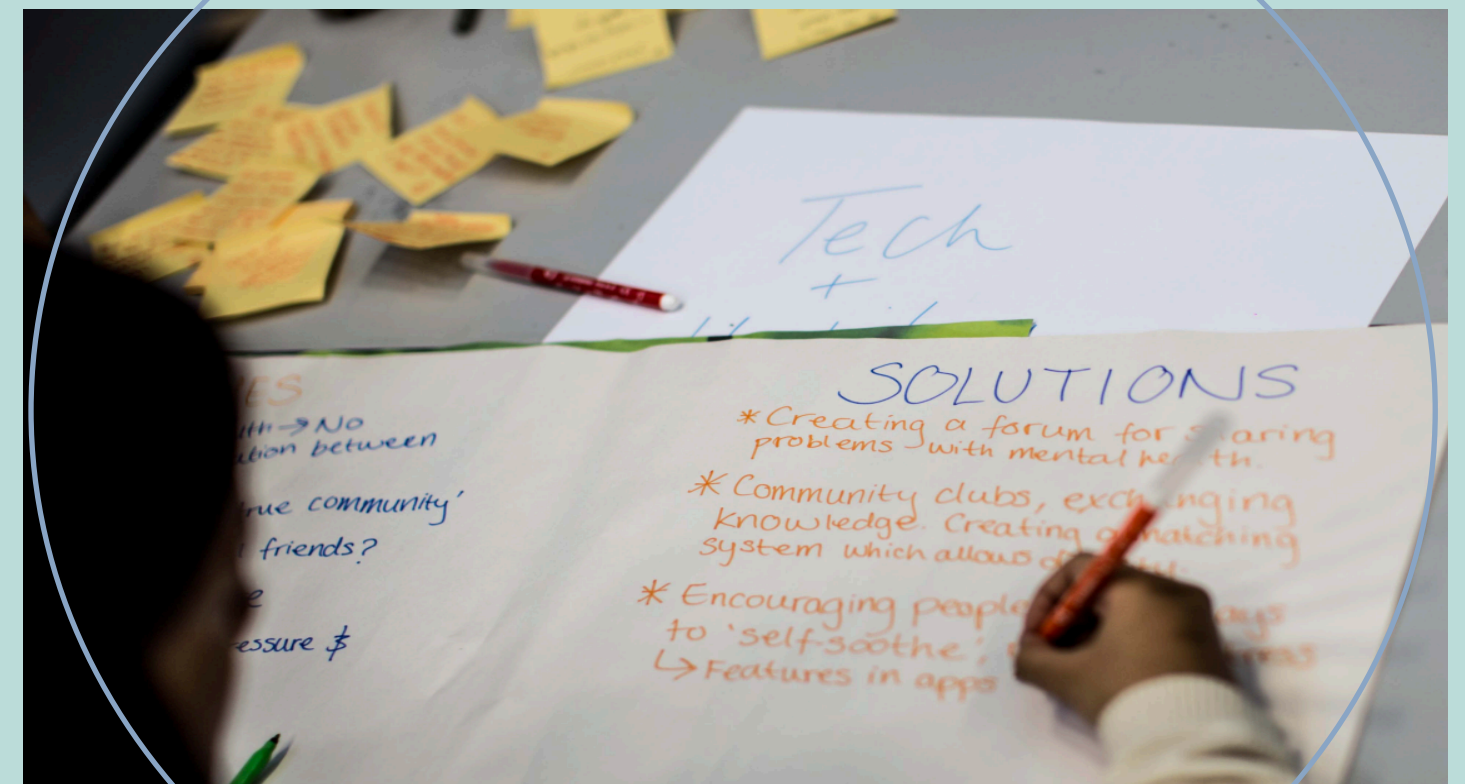
Wellbeing Ambassadors Programme

A whole school approach to wellbeing.

About States of Mind

States of Mind is a social enterprise that delivers psychoeducation and early intervention programmes in schools.

The organisation empowers students to take a leading role in actively identifying and addressing the issues that are contributing to poor mental in their school.



The Wellbeing Ambassadors Programme

Background

In 2019, States of Mind was commissioned by Newham Local Authority to develop an early intervention programme for up to 8 colleges in Newham Borough. The Wellbeing Ambassadors Programme enables schools to actively involve students in assessing the effectiveness of their current wellbeing provision while developing tailored, student-led solutions that address the underlying issues impacting student mental health.

The 10 week programme provides schools with a methodology to:


- Understand the key mental health challenges faced by students.
- Identify the main issues impacting young people's mental health and wellbeing.
- Develop up to 3 targeted, evidence-based interventions per year.

Why Now?

For too long, mental health provision has been reactive and has failed to engage students in designing more effective and appropriate forms of mental health support.

Young people do not have a sense of agency or an ability to impact the systems that they are apart of.

Schools want to design a whole school approach but do not have the processes in place to work alongside students in a collaborative and solution focused way.



Over the last two years, we asked more than 1500 students what challenges they were facing. The top three issues they have shared are:

1. Academic Distress:

Pressure & expectations

2. Anxiety:

Fear & Self questioning

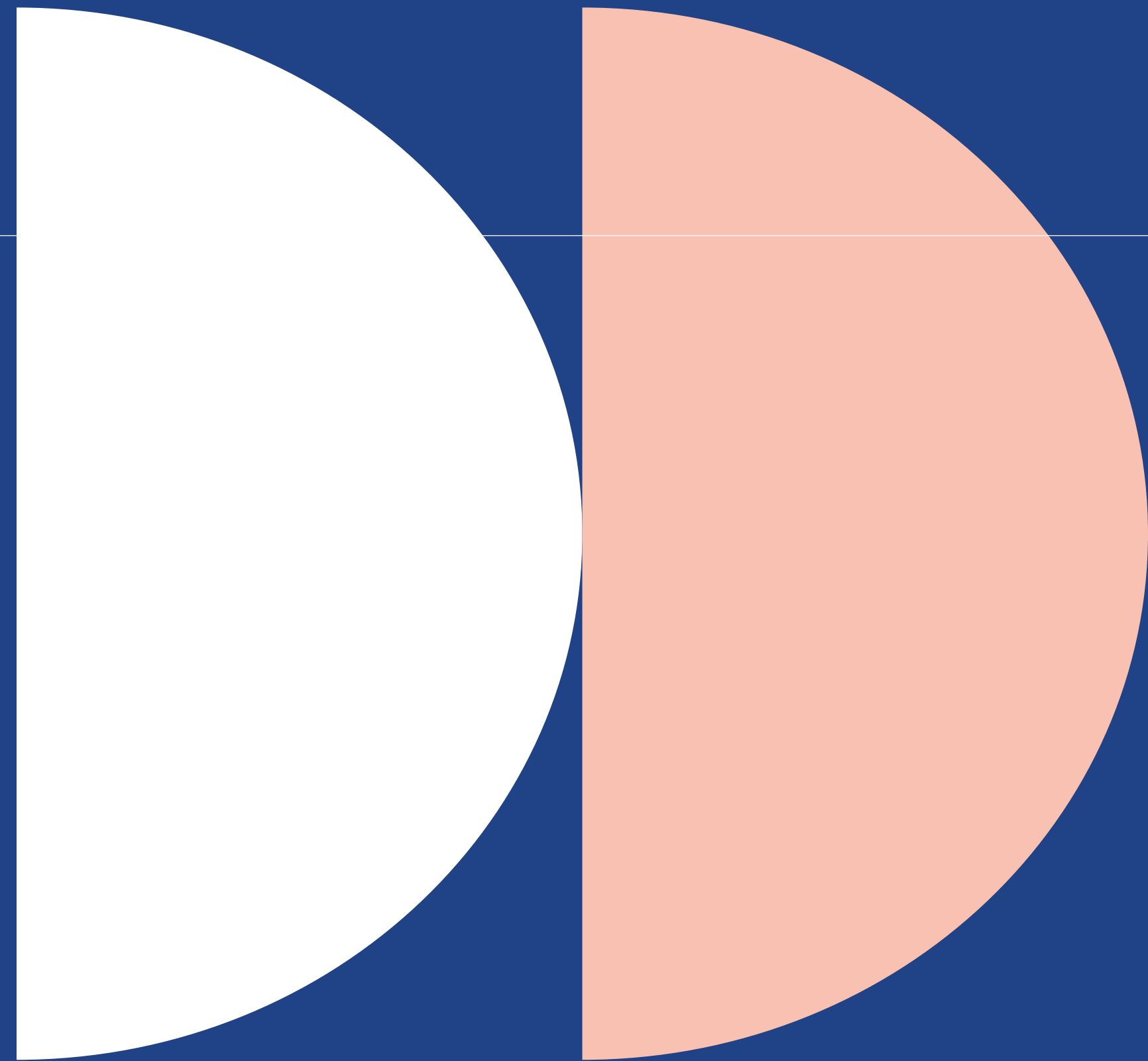
3. Depression:

Disconnection from self &
a loss of meaning

Why Now?

And what was causing them:

- 1.** Pressure to conform to preconceived notions of success
- 2.** Not having space for personal experiences to feel accepted and heard
- 3.** Not feeling prepared to handle the complexity of life



What young people say

65%

say the education system
isn't responsive to their
individual needs

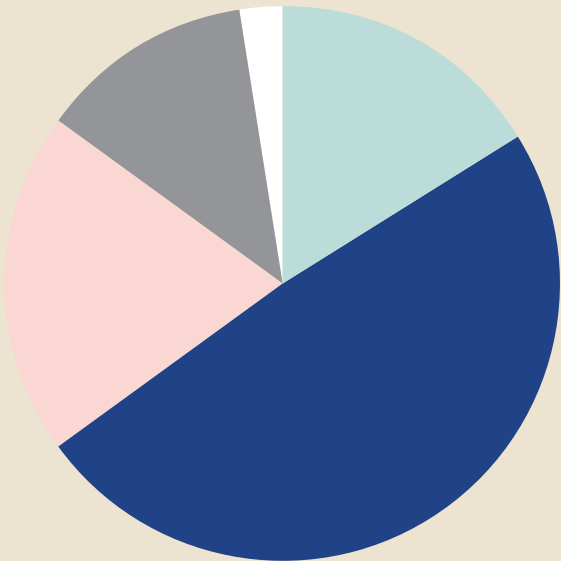
58%

say schools don't support
their mental health and
wellbeing

Without a space to work through their challenges and feel heard, young people can't learn effectively or meet their full potential. Schools need help, to ensure every student has access to help when they need it.

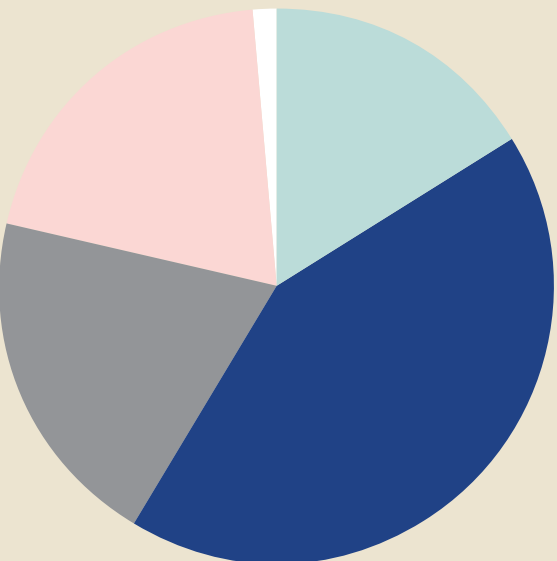
* Research conducted by States of Mind.

The education system responds well
to the individual needs of students



- 49% Disagree
- 16% Strongly Disagree
- 20% Not Sure
- 20% Agree
- 20% Strongly Agree

Mental health and wellbeing are
supported by the education system



- 43% Disagree
- 16% Strongly Disagree
- 20% Not Sure
- 20% Agree
- 1.25% Strongly Agree

How it works

Student leaders are recruited at the beginning of the academic year for the role of Wellbeing Ambassador. Ambassadors then participate in a series of supervised sessions for up to 12 weeks.

During this time they research, design, test and evaluate new ways to improve student mental health.

The products and services that are developed in Year 1 are iterated by new cohorts of Wellbeing Ambassadors who join the programme in the next academic year.

The Wellbeing Ambassadors Programme helps schools to develop evidence based initiatives that address the underlying causes of poor mental health for students in schools. while developing student leadership.

All initiatives are based on research conducted within the school and projects respond to the unique needs of the institution. The programme enables schools to develop an in-depth understanding of their student’s needs, while engaging a team of students to help to design more effective solutions within the school.

How the Programme works

A Wellbeing Questionnaire is sent to students in the school before the programme begins, exploring:



- | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| 1.
The key challenges that students are facing | 2.
The causes of any mental health concerns students may be experiencing | 3.
Existing support that students find helpful | 4.
Barriers to help seeking | 5.
Ideas for how to improve wellbeing support in the school | 6.
Ideas for how students and teachers can collaborate to improve mental health provision |
|--|--|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|

Ambassadors then work together, under the supervision of psychologists or school staff to:

- 1.**

Analyse the data using thematic analysis and draw out 3 key issues faced by students and produce a report detailing findings of the wellbeing questionnaire.
- 2.**

Use the research findings to explore the underlying causes of the top 3 issues
- 3.**

Develop up to 3 ideas for how to address the key issues affecting students' mental health
- 4.**

Prototype solutions to be tested
- 5.**

Pitch final prototypes and ideas to SLT for review before developing
- 6.**

Select project/s to be delivered and develop evaluation measures
- 7.**

Engage students and other stakeholders to test and evaluate the idea
- 8.**

Evaluate and develop the idea for further delivery
- 9.**

Produce a final report summarising the project's impact, learning and recommendations for future iterations
- 10.**

A new cohort of Ambassadors build on the work and initiatives developed by students year after year.

School Outcomes

To date, over 12 projects have been successfully designed by Wellbeing Ambassador Teams across Newham borough.

Previous student initiatives include:

- Ditox

○————○

A wellbeing App to reduce social media use
- Talking Groups

○————○

Peer-led support groups
- Wellbeing Journals

○————○

Adapted school planners to improve wellbeing
- Careers Bulletin

○————○

A new careers service to address anxiety about the future
- The Buddy System

○————○

Mutual aid sessions in form time
- Student led Mentoring programme for wellbeing

○————○

Year 12 - Year 9 Mentoring Programme



Student Outcomes

The Wellbeing Ambassadors Programme has been shown to have a positive impact on the personal development of participating students and wellbeing provision of participating schools.

Student self report developing the following skills as a result of participation:

- 1.Critical Thinking
- 2.Leadership
- 3.Creativity
- 4.Empathy
- 5.Teamwork and Communication
- 6.Problem-solving
- 7.Planning and Budgeting
- 8.Listening Skills



What young people say:

"We improved upon existing projects that attempted to target wellbeing but were fundamentally flawed as they felt structured and disingenuous; we made it more authentic and tailored to each individual student. I loved seeing people benefit from changes we directly implemented as a team."

"The programme is incredibly fun and you get the chance to make a difference in your school. You also learn important skills such as organisation, leadership and communication skills."

"Having an active roll in improving mental health for young people just like me, was really exciting and something that I'm grateful I took part in. If I could continue participating in this programme I 100% would! I recommend it to everyone - you acquire problem-solving, communication and analytical skills as well as developing deeper insights into the nature of mental health."

What teachers & educators say:

“The States of Mind Wellbeing Ambassadors Project has been a transformative experience for our students and had a huge impact on the culture of student led wellbeing at our Sixth Form. The design principles employed in the programme ensure that students develop their knowledge, but also their ability to empathise and understand the impact of wellbeing needs on the whole school community.

The student-led approach places the responsibility for identifying and addressing the most pertinent concerns firmly in the students’ hands, ensuring the response is a tailored fit for their peers. It is such a refreshing and empowering approach compared to the top down, directive curricula and resources I have seen used elsewhere. I cannot recommend States of Mind highly enough.”

Alex Henderson, Deputy Head of Sixth
form, School 21

What teachers & educators say:

“It has been a wonderful experience for our students to take part in the Mental Wellbeing Programme offered by States of Mind. The process which States of Mind has developed is rigorous and has benefits on several levels.

Firstly, the survey which is sent to the student body is an excellent way of collating student voice and identifying areas of concern within the student body. This information can be used not only by the team of student mental wellbeing ambassadors, but also by the Year Leaders and SLT to inform future practice across the institution.

Secondly, the students involved in the project are exposed to research methodologies and project development skills. They are required to analyse data, identify trends and key areas of focus, ideate and propose several possible actions, evaluate their own ideas and then develop a project to address the area of focus they selected.

Thirdly, it goes without saying that the students' projects have the potential to make a very positive impact on the wider student body.”

Olga Markoulides, Vice Principal
The NCS

What teachers & educators say:

We have had the pleasure of working with States of Mind since 2019. The Wellbeing Ambassador scheme has provide a unique wellbeing programme within our sixth form that has had a demonstrable positive impact on the awareness of mental health issues within the school and the empowerment of students to produce a research based action plan that is implemented and evaluated on an annual basis.

The Wellbeing Ambassadors learn a great deal from their training, including a sophisticated understanding of mental health but also on research skills, conducting a school wide audit of mental health and the project management skills of creating meaningful and sustainable solutions that are evaluated, with the learnings feeding into the actions for the following year.

Our students who participated in the project were able to use their experience to support medical related university pathways in addition to improving the wellbeing of their peers. We would highly recommend that schools participate in this unique and proven wellbeing intervention.

Ben Webster, Deputy Head,
London Academy of Excellence

Training and Costs

States of Mind is now offering training for school staff and psychologists who would like to deliver the Wellbeing Ambassadors Programme in their school or educational setting.

Our 6 hour Training is led by Bea Herbert, Founder of States of Mind. It includes a 3 hour introductory training and 3 hour follow up training mid-programme to support learning and professional development.

Attendees will learn how to deliver the full programme and receive resources to support programme delivery.

Price Per person: £500

Supervision sessions and consultations can be booked on completion of the training.

For more information or to arrange training dates
[please contact: bea@statesofmind.org](mailto:bea@statesofmind.org)

