

# TalkBack

January 2015

2014

Campaigning  
Project updates  
Survey feedback

2015

Mindfulness  
New projects  
And more...



mental  
health  
foundation



# Dear Supporter,

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for all of your support and for helping us to bring the most pressing mental health issues to public awareness in 2014.

In this issue, we celebrate achievements from 2014 - including campaigning successes and projects such as When I Grow Up and Creating Connections. We also highlight the positive impact we have had on the lives of people with mental illness and learning disabilities, as well as the incredible dedication of fundraisers like Miranda and Rose who make our work possible.

You can also read about our plans for the coming year which includes Mental Health Awareness Week and a new theme for 2015 - more about that on page 4. For those of you that kindly filled out our supporter survey - thank you. Responses to your feedback can be found on page 10.

We're here if you need information about mental health and we'll be campaigning for the necessary changes to achieve positive mental health and wellbeing in 2015 and beyond.

From all of us at the Mental Health Foundation we wish you the best for the year ahead.

Best wishes,

**Jenny Edwards CBE, Chief Executive**

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# A great year of campaigning for better mental health

**This year the Mental Health Foundation was represented at all the main party political conferences for the first time. With our colleagues in the sector, we talked about our manifesto for Better Mental Health - which calls on all the political parties to make improvements to people's lives, particularly in the areas of early years, education, and mental health services.**

When it comes to policy influencing, the process of change can be slow, but the results are all the more rewarding when they do eventually come. At the end of the conference season, we were delighted to hear the Deputy Prime Minister, Nick Clegg, announce the introduction of national mental health waiting time standards. This means that people will no longer have to wait months or years to access psychological therapies from the NHS.

From April next year, it is expected that 75 per cent of people referred for talking therapies (like psychotherapy and CBT) through the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies programme, will now start their treatment within six weeks with a maximum waiting time of 18 weeks for treatment.

Given that a recent report found that 1 in 10 people have been waiting for over a year to access psychological therapies, this announcement comes at a crucial time and with the potential to change people's lives.



This announcement on waiting times is part of a larger five year plan for mental health. Other commitments include investment for psychiatric liaison services and investment in in-patient beds for children.

We will continue to work with the Government to ensure they meet their commitments under the plan and in particular ensuring that waiting time standards are 'age inclusive' - meaning children, young people and older people have fair and equal access to mental health services.

# Mindfulness

## 2015

**Mindfulness is a stress management tool proven to help anxiety, depression and addictive behaviours. It can even have a positive effect on physical problems like hypertension, heart disease and chronic pain.**

In 2010 the Mental Health Foundation started talking about the benefits of Mindfulness in our Be Mindful campaign. In 2015, we want to shout about it. And shout loud.

We've recently joined the Mindfulness Initiative to launch their interim report *The Mindful Nation UK*. This is after a nine-month inquiry by the All Party Parliamentary Group on Mindfulness in education, health, workplace and criminal justice.

Our CEO Jenny Edwards joined Chris Ruane MP, Tracey Crouch MP, Lorely Burt MP, Lord Layard and Lord O'Donnell on the panel to discuss the report findings ahead of the full report's launch in June.

Next on the calendar is Mental Health Awareness Week (11-17 May), where we will be re-launching Be Mindful Online. You can help raise awareness by holding events in your communities and by sharing our messages through your networks during the week.

If you'd like to discuss any event ideas we'd love to hear them at:  
[marketing@mentalhealth.org.uk](mailto:marketing@mentalhealth.org.uk)

To receive updates of the campaign as it progresses please follow us on Facebook or visit the website.





# When I Grow Up

**The When I Grow Up project - now in its second year - has continued to raise the aspirations of young people with learning disabilities and has helped support them to find employment. We have already worked with three schools and run workshops, supported teachers to adapt the curriculum, and connected young people with local employers.**

At one of the schools - Castle School in Newbury - we forged a strong connection with supermarket retailer, Waitrose, who have now supported several young people with learning disabilities in work experience placements and, in some cases, paid Saturday jobs. Waitrose are keen to continue their involvement and encourage other local businesses to join the scheme too.

One young person on the When I Grow Up project has so far undertaken three different work placements: as a media support assistant who supports a person with a physical disability and also as a music class assistant. This young person has now been offered an interview at a local sports centre to see what opportunities there might be. We look forward to seeing

how this work develops in the three schools over the next two years. At the end of the project we will produce practical guidance that other schools can follow so that more people with learning disabilities may benefit from the same support.

**If you would like to know more about this project, please see our website or contact Jill Davies [jdavies@fpld.org.uk](mailto:jdavies@fpld.org.uk)**

**“The pupils involved in the project have gained a great deal from the experience so far. Participating in workshops run by the Mental Health Foundation and completing work experience, has allowed these young people to apply what they are learning to a practical context. The pupils have grown in confidence and self esteem, and can see real value in work - aside from the bonus of getting paid! This project has had a wholly positive affect on our pupils’ abilities and attitudes to work”.**

Lisa Boorman, teacher at Castle School



# Self-Help extended

Following our successful Self-Help and Dementia project in 2012-13, we have received funding from the Big Lottery Fund to extend the project to create 25 facilitated peer support groups in Sheltered and Extra Care housing in Greater London.

This will enable 375 lonely and isolated older tenants to build social networks, improve their wellbeing and increase their ability to maintain independent living.

These aren't traditional groups where participants are passive recipients of information, or watching a performance, but innovative groups fostering an active spirit of mutual support and interdependency, and sharing wisdom.

This project expands the original reach to include people struggling with loneliness but without a diagnosis of dementia. This has the added benefit of helping reduce the stigma felt by people with dementia.



# Young Mums Together

**Following a successful pilot project in Hackney between 2011 and 2013, we have now secured funding from the Big Lottery Fund to extend our Young Mums Together project this year.**

Young Mums Together runs facilitated peer support groups for young mothers aged 16 to 25. Women who took part in our pilot project reported increased awareness of mental health issues and decreased isolation, thanks to support from peers who shared similar experiences and challenges.

They were more likely to seek help from professionals and their peers for mental health problems, and many took steps towards re-training or gaining employment.

Thanks to your support, we will create 15 new peer support groups in the London boroughs of Haringey, Hackney, and Islington in March of this year.



We will be able to provide support to 300 young mothers who are socially isolated and at risk of developing mental ill health, low self-esteem and post-natal depression.



Hi, I am Iris. I started at the Foundation as our Head of Policy and Research at the end of 2014.

My job is to work with colleagues across the Foundation, around the UK and internationally to develop relevant and vibrant research that can inform, influence and impact mental health across the UK. We will be using this evidence to inspire politicians, services and the public to contribute to change.

At the centre of our work will be promoting social justice, human rights and equality. This is an exciting time to come into the Foundation - its election year at Westminster and we are already preparing for the Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish elections in 2016.



# Creating Connections

**The Creating Connections project - a self-management training programme for single parents based in Cardiff and Newport - has now been up and running for nine months. Jackie Fisher, project coordinator, gives an update:**

“Becoming a single parent was one of the most traumatic experiences of my life. It all happened over twenty years ago but I still clearly remember the emotional turmoil of that time and can still measure the impact of single parenthood on my mental health today.

“If the Creating Connections project had been available to me then, I am sure it would have made a big difference to the way I coped with the challenges of parenting alone.”

“Creating Connections is all about not having to manage alone. The aim of the project is to develop skills, strategies and networks that help meet the challenges of single parenthood and build towards a positive future. The approach involves setting personal goals, problem solving, decision-making and managing change. It all takes place in small supportive groups of single parents who share similar experiences. The trainers and facilitators have also been single parents and know well the issues that are faced.”



**The self-management course helps single parents to build SMART goals which are more specific and focused on their own health and wellbeing.**

Examples are:

- To do voluntary work to improve CV and job prospects
- Learn to drive and save money for a car to take the children out in
- Apply to university
- Set up an online network of support for single parents of children with learning disabilities

“Although it is early days yet, Creating Connections is already having an impact on single parents’ lives. Some examples of changes individuals have made include; taking driving lessons; applying to the Princes Trust Young Enterprise scheme to start a decorating business; and seven single parents have attended facilitator training to help run the self-management courses.”

“The single parents have gained the confidence and skills to start their own friendship (peer support) groups which will offer ongoing support to them and other single parents living in their communities.”

### **What single parents hoped to achieve from Creating Connections:**

- Gain Confidence
- Ability to talk openly in a group
- To find a job
- To “work towards a brighter future for me and the children”
- Go on holiday
- Make progress towards making their disabled child independent
- Eat three meals per day and take better care of their emotional and physical well-being



# We're listening

Thank you so much to those who responded to the 'Tell us about yourself' survey that was featured in October's issue of TalkBack. We had over 400 responses, and your views were much appreciated. We have taken your feedback on board, and look forward to improving the Foundation to ensure we can continue to support everyone's mental wellbeing. Some recurring themes from your feedback:

- You would like more information on Schizophrenia, so we've included key facts which you'll find on the opposite page. Further information can be found on our website [www.mentalhealth.org.uk/schizophrenia](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/schizophrenia). Feel free to download our Schizophrenia factsheet via our website or request a printed factsheet via the supporter line.
- Several of you thought more celebrities and public figures with lived experience of mental health issues would be useful in our work. We totally agree with this: the more people talk openly about mental illness, the less stigma people will face.
- More information on policy and informing policy, was a popular theme amongst our readers. On page 3, you'll find information on the great campaigning successes of 2014 and plans for the future.
- You also thought we should raise our profile and work more with the media. This is important for us too, and we continue to work hard to raise public awareness of the Mental Health Foundation, in spite of a small promotional budget, unlike larger charities. 2014 was a very successful media year for us including appearances on BBC TV and radio, and coverage in a wide variety of national, mental health and learning disability press. This year we will welcome a new Head of Media to extend this work and ensure that we have greater presence in 2015.
- A few people said they'd prefer to receive TalkBack via email. We produce a digital version of TalkBack and share this via the e-newsletter which you can sign up for via [www.mentalhealth.org.uk/newsletter](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/newsletter). We also took on board that a digital version of the survey would be useful and will offer an online option for this year's survey.



You can email feedback to us at any time on [supporter@mentalhealth.org.uk](mailto:supporter@mentalhealth.org.uk). We are extremely grateful for all your support and always interested to hear your views. Congratulations to the lucky winners of the £200 high street vouchers and the Kindle eBook reader! The winners have been notified and we hope they enjoy their prizes.



# Schizophrenia: the facts

**Schizophrenia is a diagnosis given to some people who have severely disrupted beliefs and experiences.**

During an episode of schizophrenia, a person's understanding and interpretation of the outside world is disrupted - they may:

- lose touch with reality
- see or hear things that are not there
- hold irrational or unfounded beliefs
- appear to act strangely because they are responding to these delusions and hallucinations.

An episode of schizophrenia can last for several weeks and can be very frightening. About one in 100 people will have one episode of schizophrenia, and two thirds of these will go on to have further episodes.

There is more media misinformation about schizophrenia than about any other type

of mental health problem. A diagnosis of schizophrenia does not mean 'split personality,' or indicate that someone will be calm one minute and then be 'out of control' the next.

Sensational stories in the media tend to present people with schizophrenia as dangerous, even though most people diagnosed with schizophrenia don't commit violent crimes.

If you, or someone you care for, are experiencing the symptoms of schizophrenia you may wish to contact your GP. If you need urgent support or you feel like harming or hurting yourself or anyone else, call **999** or go to the nearest hospital accident and emergency department.

If your need is less urgent, you can contact the **NHS Direct helpline on 111**, which is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year or the **Samaritans 08457 909090**.

# Seeing things differently



**This year we will be launching an original, creative, short film to raise awareness of mental health. The film features a contemporary dancer and her 'shadow' as a metaphor for her mental health.**

The film aims to represent mental health in an original, visual way to connect with people who may find it easier to associate their feelings visually rather than verbally.

In November 2014 we held a workshop with six volunteers who all have lived experience of mental health issues. The choreography in the film was based on the experience and expression of feelings of the volunteers.

We are extremely grateful to Suzi Bird Photography, Lionhouse Creative, Kinamo Production, the dancers and the workshop volunteers, without whom the project would not be possible.

Please follow us on facebook [www.facebook.com/mentalhealthfoundation](http://www.facebook.com/mentalhealthfoundation) and like us on twitter [@MHF\\_Tweets](https://twitter.com/MHF_Tweets) to be updated on the launch plans for the film.



# Miranda and Rose's story



**In October, twin sisters Miranda and Rose took part in the Royal Parks Foundation Half Marathon for the Mental Health Foundation.**

“It is 5 years since our little sister Imogen committed suicide. We’ve found these years really tough and neither of us has been able or ready to actually do anything very public about it till now. But this year, together, this felt right and so we raised money for the fantastic Mental Health Foundation, which helps people who suffer from the kind of psychotic depression which took Imogen away from us. She loved running and we think she would approve.

“The half itself was hard both emotionally and physically but so worth doing. Looking back at it we see it as both an achievement and as a monument to Imogen. We both find grief is hard, physically draining and overwhelming and it actually feels right to have marked her anniversary with something that was also hard, physically draining and overwhelming rather than something very restrained and quiet. We know Imogen would be proud of us and we are really proud of ourselves.”

**Miranda and Rose raised over £4000 from their run to help others survive, recover from and prevent mental health problems.**

## Why not sign up for your own event in 2015?

Here are our some of our favourite events taking place in 2015:

- **Bupa London 10,000** - 25th May
- **Great North Run** - 13th September
- **Royal Parks Foundation Half Marathon** - 11th October

[www.mentalhealth.org.uk/get-involved](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/get-involved)



# Thanks to you



## Put your unwanted Christmas gifts to good use this year

We hope you got everything you wanted for Christmas. But if you got multiple copies of that DVD you wanted or one pair of socks too many why not head to Ebay. You can sell your items and choose the percentage of the sale to benefit the Mental Health Foundation.

Visit [www.mentalhealth.org.uk/ebay](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/ebay)



## Tea & Talk

We want to say a great big thank you so everyone who held a Tea & Talk event for us in 2014! Since October we have raised an incredible £6,500 - not bad for having a cup of tea and a natter with your friends!

It's not too late to hold your own Tea & Talk event and help us raise even more to support people affected by mental ill health in 2015. How about Tea & Talk & Pancakes for Shrove Tuesday, or share some tea and cake with those you love on February 14th?

Whatever time of year you hold your Tea & Talk you'll receive your fundraising pack filled with ideas to get you started, and remember the events team is always here to answer any questions you may have.

Give us a call on 020 7803 1123  
(Mon-Fri 9am-5pm)  
or email [events@mentalhealth.org.uk](mailto:events@mentalhealth.org.uk)  
[www.mentalhealth.org.uk/tea](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/tea)

Inspired? Email [events@mentalhealth.org.uk](mailto:events@mentalhealth.org.uk) or call 020 7803 1123



## Thank you for a fabulous 2014

Over 340 amazing people ran, trekked, cycled or held a Tea & Talk for us in 2014. We would like to say a great big THANK YOU to everyone who supported us last year. Every single fabulous fundraiser has done something incredible in 2014 to support people affected by mental ill health and with learning disabilities.

We hope you'll continue to help us fight stigma, fund research projects and campaign for change in 2015 and beyond. Thank you for being amazing!

## Trek to the roof of Africa!

Take on Kilimanjaro this year and make 2015 a year you'll never forget. Over 10 days this October you could trek through deep forest and spectacular wildlife habitats to heights of over 5,500 metres and Kilimanjaro's snow-capped highest point, Uhuru. This is a chance to see the very best views across all of Tanzanian landscape, a once in a life time trip, and one well worth taking.

**Call 020 7803 1123 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm) or email [events@mentalhealth.org.uk](mailto:events@mentalhealth.org.uk) to sign up or find out more.**



Hi, I'm Megan, the Events and Community Manager at the Mental Health Foundation. My job is to help all our fantastic fundraisers raise as much as they can to fund our work. Every day is different, from supporting fundraisers with their ideas, cheering at the London Marathon or promoting Tea & Talk there's never a dull moment! The best bit of my job is speaking to passionate fundraisers and working with them to raise money and achieve their goals.

**If you fancy running a race, tackling a trek or holding a bake sale for the Mental Health Foundation, just give the Events team a call on 020 7803 1123 - we're always happy to help.**



# A lasting legacy

**In 2011 we received a generous legacy from the estate of Patricia Collen which has enabled completion of several different projects;**

- The Babies in Mind initial pilot project promoting positive parent/child attachment with vulnerable families is complete and is now expanding to further locations and benefitting more families



The FRIENDS for Life - Learning Disabilities Development project adapted the internationally recognised FRIENDS for Life programme to make it accessible for children and young people with

learning disabilities. A downloadable guide for practitioners was produced as a result of this development project available at [www.learningdisabilities.org.uk/Friendsforlife](http://www.learningdisabilities.org.uk/Friendsforlife)

- The Growing Older Evaluation toolkit was developed to ensure people with learning disabilities are being provided

with the appropriate support, as they get older, to enable them to lead active, full and meaningful lives. The toolkit is now available as an interactive pdf at [www.learningdisabilities.org.uk/growingolder](http://www.learningdisabilities.org.uk/growingolder)

Patricia Collen's family are regularly updated on the progress of the projects funded by the legacy. They are really pleased by the positive impact the legacy funding has been able to provide for a wide range of people.

We rely on people leaving a gift for us in their will to continue helping people live mentally healthier, more fulfilling lives. To leave a gift in your will to the Mental Health Foundation, or to let us know you have already done so please contact us on **020 7803 1121** or email [legacy@mentalhealth.org.uk](mailto:legacy@mentalhealth.org.uk). For more information see [www.mentalhealth.org.uk/legacy](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/legacy)

If you would like to make a gift towards our work, please go to [www.mentalhealth.org.uk/talkbackdonate](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/talkbackdonate)

Alternatively you can call **020 7803 1121**, or to donate by text, simply text the word MHFP11 followed by the amount you wish to donate (between £1 and £10) to 70070.

For regular updates on our work via email, please sign up to our e-newsletter at [www.mentalhealth.org.uk/newsletter](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/newsletter)