

# HEADS UP

**A toolkit to help and support  
young people take action  
and campaign on mental  
health issues.**



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**A toolkit to help and support young people take action and campaign on local mental health issues.**

'Heads Up!' has been created by young people from the **Belfast Youth Forum**, **NI Youth Forum** and the **NICCY Youth Panel**.



It's a mental health toolkit made by young people for young people and will help you to run your own mental health projects where you live.

'Heads Up!' is part of two ongoing mental health projects. One is a campaign and the other is monitoring implementation of recommendations that our youth forums are involved in:



**You can find out more about these service reviews, campaigns and reports here:**

[www.belfastcity.gov.uk/youth](http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/youth)

[www.niyf.org](http://www.niyf.org)

<https://www.niccy.org/about-us/our-current-work/mental-health-review-still-waiting/still-waiting-a-rights-based-review-of-mental-health-services-and-support-for-children-and-young-people-in-northern-ireland/>



# CONTENTS

## SECTION 1: WHO WE ARE

Organisations involved in the development of this toolkit	4
Introduction to the 'Heads Up' Toolkit and how to use it	5-8

## SECTION 2: LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF

Self-care for campaigners	9-11
---------------------------	------

## SECTION 3: CAMPAIGNING

Step 1: EXPLORE: Identifying our campaign issue	12-15
Step 2: ORGANISE: Getting clear on our campaign ideas	16-19
Step 3: ACT: Running our campaign	20-23
Step 4: REVIEW: Evaluating our campaign	24

## SECTION 4: SUPPORT

Organisations that offer support to young people	25
Activities for those working with young people to promote positive wellbeing	26
Mental Health Facts	34

## 'HEADS UP' TOOLKIT TEMPLATES

36-45
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## SECTION 1: WHO WE ARE



### Belfast Youth Forum (BYF) is the Youth Council for Belfast City Council.

We're made up of 40 young people from communities across Belfast and all of our members are aged between 13-18 years old, or 21 if disabled or have just left care. We meet in Belfast City Hall twice a month and it's our job to make sure that decision makers within local and regional government hear what young people have to say about Belfast and the issues that shape our lives.

We created the Elephant in the Room mental health campaign to break the stigma of mental health and change how mental health support is delivered to young people.

### Northern Ireland Youth Forum (NIYF)

- NIYF was established in 1979 by the Department of Education.
- NIYF is Youth Led – run by Young People for Young People.
- The current Executive Committee is made up of 12 people 14 – 25 years.

#### Vision

A vibrant youth led organisation creating opportunities, empowering and supporting young people to have a voice and a role in building a just, fair and equal society.

#### Mission

The Northern Ireland Youth Forum is a youth led organisation that exists to inspire, motivate, empower and support young people to have a voice and effect change on personal; peer; community and societal levels! The NIYF is an independent regional movement of young activists that promotes the voice and positive influence of young people locally, nationally and internationally.



### Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY)

It is NICCY's role to safeguard and promote the rights and best interests of children and young people and to make sure Government does the same. All of NICCY's work is focused on making sure children and young people know about and have access to these rights in their day-to-day lives, so they have the best opportunity to reach their full potential.

The NICCY Youth Panel is there to help the Commissioner in her day-to-day work. The Youth Panel is made up of young people who share their experiences and thoughts with the Commissioner and her staff and help NICCY make decisions about issues that affect children and young people.

The Youth Panel were actively involved in NICCY's report 'Still Waiting'. This report is about children and young people's experiences of mental health services and support. A big focus of this report was to give young people with experience of mental health problems a chance to tell NICCY about their experiences of mental health support and services. This information will help government to understand what changes need to be made to make services better.

## What is Mental Health?

Our mental health includes our mental, emotional and social well-being. It is not only important when we are young, but at every stage of our life and it affects how we think, feel, and act.

Unfortunately, the term 'mental health' is too often confused with 'mental ill-health'.

According to the World Health Organisation however, mental health is "a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community."

So rather than being about 'what's the problem?' It's really about 'what's going well?'

**Good mental health is characterised by a person's ability to fulfil several key functions and activities including, the ability to....**

- *Learn*
- *Feel, express and manage a range of positive and negative emotions*
- *Form and maintain good relationships with others*
- *Cope with and manage change and uncertainty*

## Who is our toolkit for?

Our toolkit is for young people and youth groups who want to start their own mental health campaign and projects in their community.

If you're a young person and you want to do something about mental health in your community, but you're not sure what to do about it, then our toolkit will help you get started.

If you're a youth worker or a group leader, you can also use our toolkit with your group to encourage young people to work on mental health and facilitate ways to go about creating the changes young people would like to see.

## Mental health activist: What's the craic?

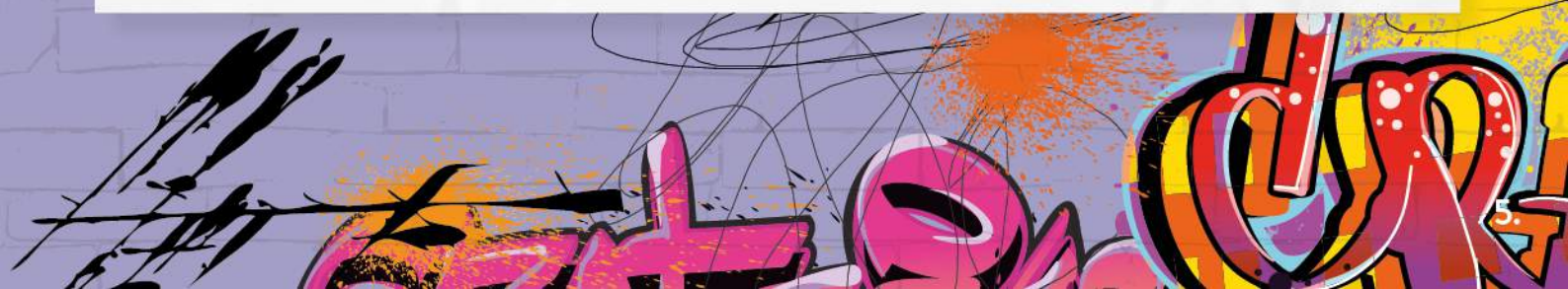
Activism is all about people taking action to influence change issues that matter to them.

Being a mental health activist is about having your voice heard when it comes to mental health support and services and addressing what needs to change.

It means exploring the underlying issues that cause poor mental health and doing something about these too.

And let's not forget, it's also about highlighting the positive and promoting good mental health in your community!

This toolkit will give you and other young people the skills and information you need to stand up, have your say and take action around mental health in your community.



# WHAT ABOUT CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S RIGHTS?

## What are rights?

Rights are a set of promises that our Government makes to all children and young people so that all of our needs are met. Rights are supposed to make sure that everybody is treated equally and fairly.

All of our rights are listed in a document called the 'United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child' or UNCRC. When it comes to young people's mental health and well-being, there are a few other Rights you should know about including:

### Article 2

Article 2 states that you should be protected from all kinds of discrimination. Health services and facilities should be provided for everyone, no matter what their age, gender, religion or disability. You shouldn't be discriminated against because you have a mental health condition or learning disability.

### Article 3

Article 3 says that adults should always do what is in your best interests. This should always be the main factor when they are acting on your behalf.

### Article 6

Article 6 says you have the right to be alive, survive and to develop through life. The Government must keep you safe from harm.

### Article 12

Article 12 says that young people have a right to speak out and be heard on issues that affect our lives and that our views should be taken seriously.

### Article 24

Article 24 states that all children and young people have a right to the best possible health care and that governments must provide good quality health care and education on health and well-being so that children can stay healthy. If you are ill, you must be given good healthcare services. You have the right to live in a safe, healthy environment and the Government has a responsibility to make sure everyone gets healthcare, including children and young people.

### Article 27

Article 27 says that the Government must make sure that you have a decent standard of living that allows you to develop fully – physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually and socially.

**ACT  
NOW FOR**

**OUR  
RIGHTS!**

Other rights may be impacted if a child or young person is not mentally healthy. Find out more about your rights at [www.niccy.org/yourrights](http://www.niccy.org/yourrights)

Your mental health is important - it can affect how you feel about yourself, how you get on in school and how you relate to your friends and family. You have a right to be as healthy as possible, and this includes your mental health.

There are loads of good things about being a young person, but we also know that we have challenges and face hard times in our lives like everyone else.

### So why act?

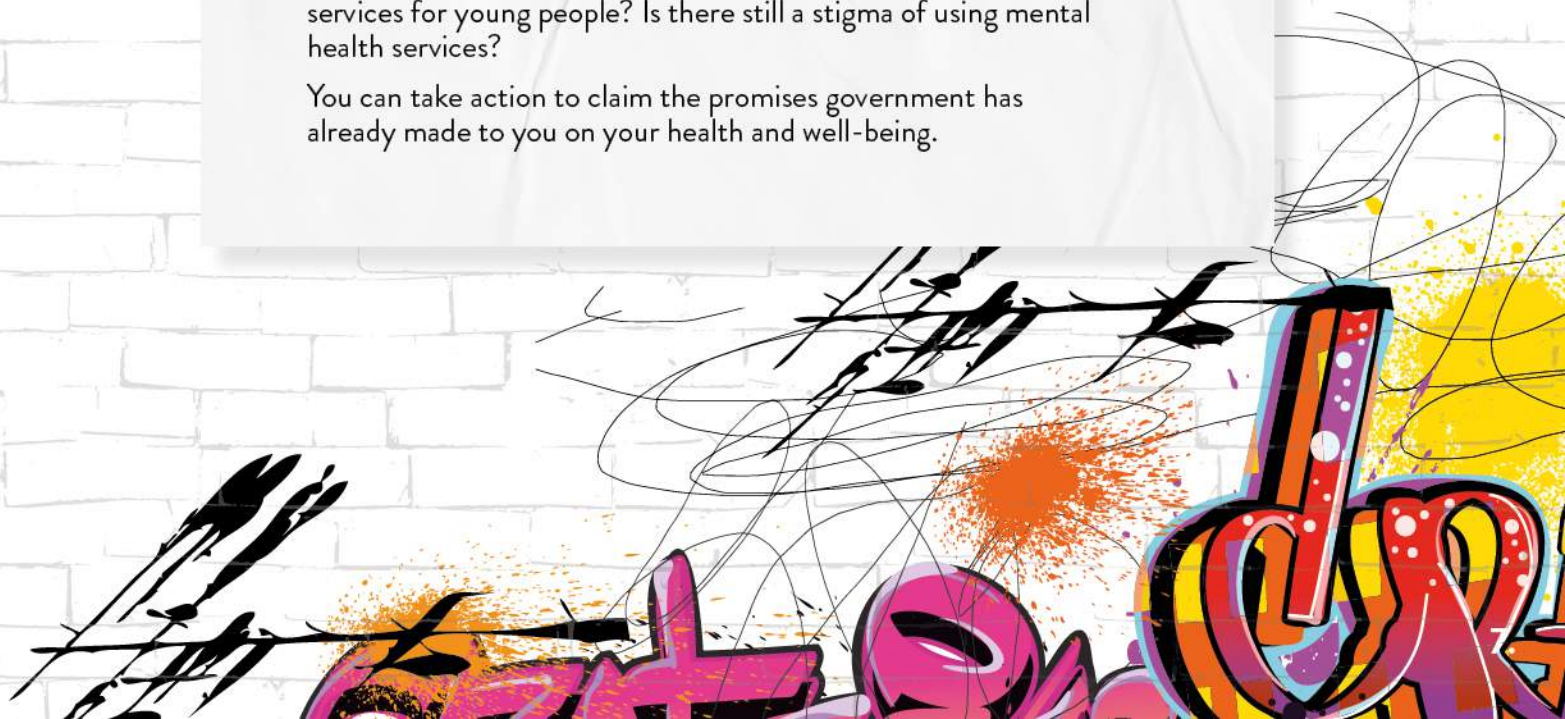
Before we act, or before we undertake a campaign, we need to know what are the issues? What rights are not being met or breached and how is this impacting our lives?

These can be in government policy, legislation (laws), practice or decisions impacting children's rights. We need to identify and assess the consequences on individuals, groups, institutions or society in general. The steps below will help you think about these:

1. Identify the issue and identify what rights are being breached
2. Gather information - what information is needed? What are the challenges in finding the information?
3. What are the consequences / impact on young people if the issue isn't addressed?
4. What are the possible solutions? This may include a campaign.

Do you have access to support services and information? Are these in the right place? Is there enough money being spent on services for young people? Is there still a stigma of using mental health services?

You can take action to claim the promises government has already made to you on your health and well-being.



# HOW SHOULD YOU USE OUR TOOLKIT?

Sometimes the best course of action could be to link in with an ongoing service review or consultation, do awareness raising, or take direct action such as fundraising. If a campaign is best, to help you organise a mental health campaign or project in your community, we've come up with 4 simple steps for you to follow. The best way to use our Toolkit is to work through each of the steps, this will help you to create an action plan for your campaign. The four steps are



## 1. EXPLORE

1. Know why we were motivated to act (identify the issues)
2. Know more about the issue/s
3. Know who else is doing what locally
4. What rights are not being met and the impact of this? What do you want changed?

## 2. ORGANISE

1. Know the change we want to make
2. Know the clear goals to make our change
3. Know the actions that will achieve our goals
4. Know who and how we need to influence and gather support from others to make our change happen

## 3. ACT

1. Develop key messages
2. Identify who we need to influence and reach out to them
3. Agree our campaign methods
4. Create a campaign action plan
5. Get Started!

## 4. REVIEW

1. What are the lessons for the future?
2. What were the challenges?
3. What can we do better?
4. How successful were we?



## SECTION 2: LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF

### SELF-CARE FOR ACTIVISTS

How will you look after **YOUR** mental, emotional and physical health while campaigning for better **mental health for others**?

Self-care is individual to **YOU** and happens when you deliberately take care of your well-being through restorative activities.

So, as you start your journey as a mental health activist it's important to firstly start the journey of looking after your own mental health and well-being.



### SOME HELPFUL TIPS FOR LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF:

#### PHYSICAL SELF-CARE

Activities that help you to stay fit and healthy, and with enough energy to get through your work/education and personal commitments.

- *Develop a regular sleep routine*
- *Eat a balanced diet*
- *Stay hydrated*
- *Move your body often – walk, dance, exercise*
- *Get enough rest*
- *Regular medical and dental care*

## PSYCHOLOGICAL SELF-CARE

Activities that help you to develop a clear mind and better able to respond to challenges.

- *Start everyday by making your bed – set a positive intention*
- *Focus on your strengths and what you are good at*
- *Take time to reflect*
- *Set healthy boundaries*
- *Prioritise your needs*
- *Learn to say ‘no’ and know that it is ok*
- *Spend time with those who bring out the best in you*
- *Make time for relaxation*
- *Practice an activity that helps you be in a state flow – in the zone*

## SPIRITUAL SELF-CARE

This involves having a sense of perspective beyond the day-to-day of life and seeking a meaningful connection with something bigger than yourself, which can result in positive emotions, such as peace, awe, contentment, gratitude, and acceptance.

- *Spend time in nature*
- *Engage in reflective practices, like meditation*
- *Go to church/mosque/temple*
- *Spend time with a mentor/guide*
- *Reflect with a close friend for support*
- *Practice non-judgement*
- *Practice acts compassion and kindness for others*

## WORKPLACE OR EDUCATION SELF-CARE

This involves developing a healthy balance between life and work/education.

- *Take time out for breaks and lunch*
- *Leave on time*
- *Set Study / Work Time so you properly switch off*
- *Make sure you check in with people who support you to reflect on what you are doing and what impact it might be having on your own well-being*
- *Set realistic goals*

## EMOTIONAL SELF-CARE

Allowing yourself to safely experience your full range of emotions and develop strategies to regulate them.

- *Acknowledge any emotional or physical stress you may be experiencing*
- *Check in with your thoughts and recognise how these impact on how you are feeling*
- *Develop mindfulness practice – being aware of what you’re doing while you’re doing it*
- *Bring awareness to your self-talk and recognise how this impacts on how you’re feeling*
- *Develop self-compassion and talk to yourself just as you would talk to someone you love*
- *Develop an increased sense of SELF and understand what triggers your limiting emotions*

## RELATIONSHIP SELF-CARE

This is about maintaining healthy, supportive relationships, and ensuring you have diversity in your relationships.

- *Develop a healthy relationship with yourself*
- *Prioritise close relationships in your life e.g. with partners, family and children*
- *Attend the special events of your family and friends*
- *Connect with those who inspire and support you to grow*
- *Maintain healthy boundaries, not falling into the habit of ‘fixing’ others*

## ACTIVITY

### CREATE YOUR OWN SELF-CARE WHEEL

For each category above, select at least one strategy or activity that you can undertake or create your own. You might notice areas of overlap between these categories. It is important to develop a self-care plan that is possible, holistic and individual to you.



Once you have created your self-care plan:

#### THINK ABOUT:

- *What might get in the way?*
- *What can you do to remove these barriers?*
- *If you can't remove them you might want to adjust your strategies.*

## SECTION 3: CAMPAIGNING

If like us, you are motivated to improve young people's mental health this section of the toolkit will help you to get started.

### WHAT IS A CAMPAIGN:

Campaigning is about creating a change; call it influencing, voice, advocacy or campaigning, but all these activities are about creating change.

The impact of a campaign is the difference it makes to people's lives or communities. Many of us may be able to think about a large campaign, fundraiser or appeal, but the vast majority of campaigns are small with local people taking action on issues that they believe in, and these are just as powerful.

Whether your campaign is big or small, if it is important to you and others and brings about positive change then it is worthwhile:

### SPECTRUM OF CAMPAIGNING:



### STEP 1: EXPLORE

#### CHECKLIST BY THE END OF STEP 1 WE WILL...

- Know why we were motivated to act (identify the issues)
- Know more about the issue/s
- Know who else is doing what locally
- Know what change we want to see

### IDENTIFYING OUR ISSUES – SHORT EXERCISE

What are my personal reasons for getting involved, why is this important to me?

As a team discuss our personal reasons with each other. Is this an issue for other young people in our community or even wider?

What do we agree are the issues that we will take action on?

### WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE ISSUE?

Now you have identified the issue or issues you want to campaign/act on, how much do you really know about it.

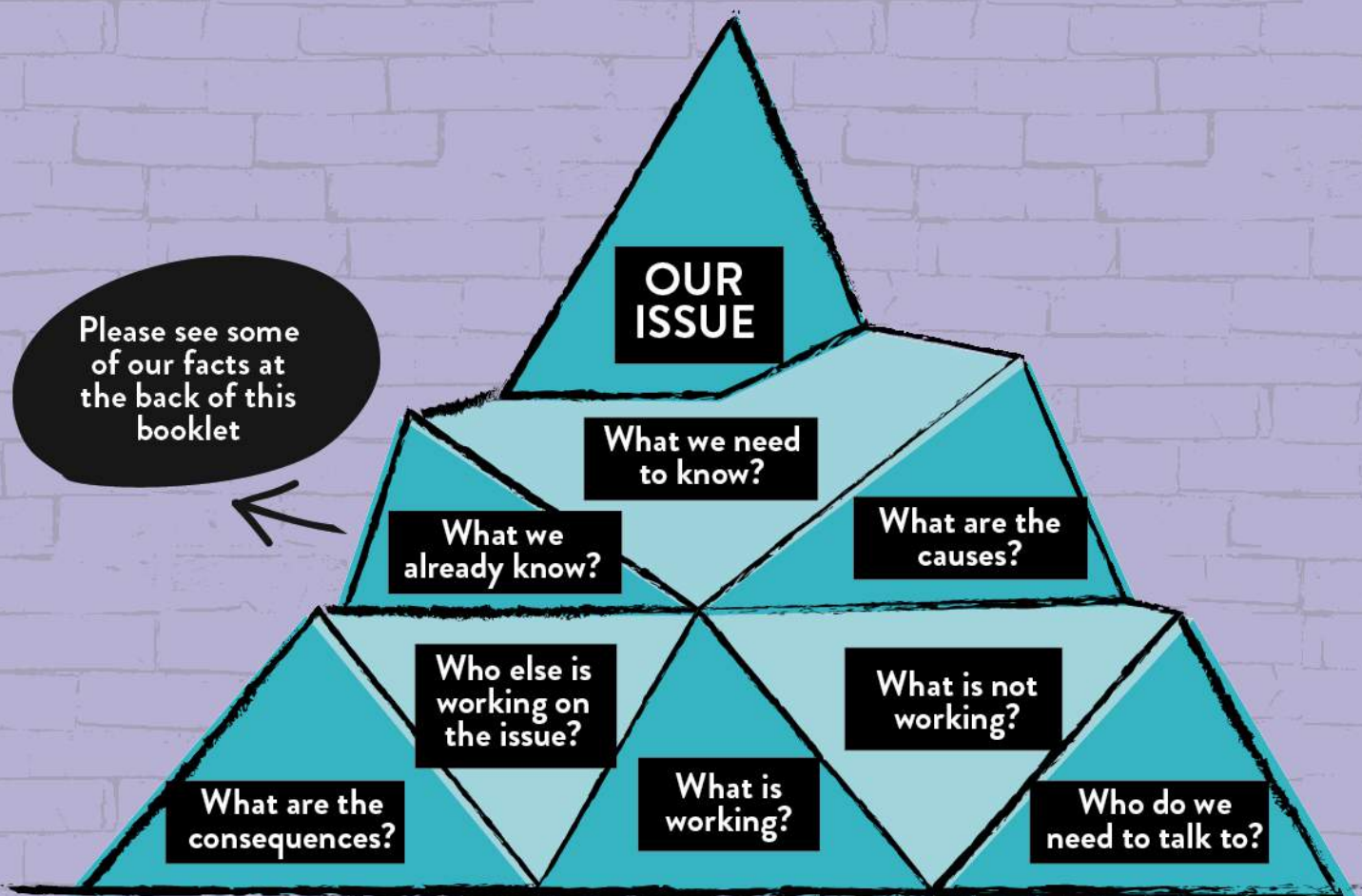
It is important to do some research before you start your campaign/action to find out more about it. Research is important because it tells you things you probably didn't know. You can use the research findings in your plans and as supporting evidence for your choice of action.

## METHODS YOU MAY USE TO FIND OUT MORE:

- *Sharing your own story / talking about your own experiences as a group.*
- *Talking to others in your community who may have been impacted by the same issue. This can be done via Case Studies/Online questionnaires/Surveys. Make use of social media platforms if necessary, as most young people are likely to engage this way.*
- *Talk to those adults in your community who may be working on this issue, or who have some knowledge of it.*
- *Carry out some research online: have there been recent articles, news stories or reports, etc on the issue.*
- *Seek opportunities to speak to local councillors and MLA's who may have some information from a political perspective.*
- *Are there reports that have been done locally or in similar areas.*

As you are carrying out your research or prior to commencing consider what lies below the iceberg and complete the series of questions.

## UNCOVERING THE ISSUE



Your research will hopefully enable you to have a deeper understanding of your issue, what some of the causes may be and what its impact is. When it comes to campaigning and gaining support from others, knowing your issue will enable young people, those with influence and decision makers to sit up and listen.

# METHODS YOU MAY USE TO FIND OUT MORE:

## OUR NEWS STORY:

To demonstrate your understanding of your issue, complete the Newspaper article as a group.

If your issue is a local issue it may be a community magazine or local paper, if it's a national issue it may be one of our larger papers.

## OUR NEWS STORY:

### NEWSPAPER HEADLINE:

This should be linked to your identified issue.

### THE INTRODUCTION:

An opportunity to highlight in a few sentences your issue and capture the reader.

### OPENING QUOTATION:

This could be a direct quote from someone impacted by the issue or one of the group.

### BODY OF THE STORY:

A chance to talk about the various elements that may have caused this issue (based on your research) and what the negative impact is.

### CLOSING QUOTATION

A direct quote from a member of your group, talking about your intention to make some positive change in relation to this issue.

## OUR MANIFESTO FOR CHANGE

You've decided on the problem or issue you want to change. Now it is important to have a clear vision/idea of the change you want to make.

### WRITE YOUR CAMPAIGN MANIFESTO:

A **manifesto** is a document that clearly states what needs to be done and how.

Before you write it, think again about what you want, in what way your community will be improved and how you might achieve your goals.

Be realistic about what you can achieve. Don't forget that raising awareness of something is the basic aim of most campaigns.

OUR ISSUE IS:

OUR VISION IS:

OUR COMMUNITY WILL BE IMPROVED BY THIS CHANGE BECAUSE:

WE WILL ACHIEVE OUR VISION BY:

1.

2.

3.

## STEP 2: ORGANISE

### CHECKLIST – BY THE END OF STEP 2 WE WILL ...

- Know the change we want to make
- Know the clear goals to make our change
- Know the actions that will achieve our goals
- Know who and how we need to influence and gather support from others to make our change happen

Earlier, you wrote an article about the issue/s you as a group of campaigners identified in your community. You may have written some of the causes of your issue and its impact on young people.

We want you now to repeat the newspaper article, this time we want you to imagine you are writing the article a year from now. Your campaign has been a success and you have made the changes you set out to.

This requires you to think positive and imagine the feelings of achievement, the local impact and the pride you would have in yourself and of each other. This exercise helps us to imagine the change and begin to then explore what steps we will need to take to make the change happen.

### OUR FUTURE NEWS STORY: A YEAR FROM NOW

### NEWSPAPER HEADLINE:

This maybe the result of your campaign/the change you set out to achieve

### THE INTRODUCTION:

An opportunity to highlight in a few sentences what you have done and capture the reader.

### OPENING QUOTATION:

This could be a direct quote from someone that has now been positively impacted by the change or by a local representative or a member of your group.

### BODY OF THE STORY:

A chance to talk about the various elements to your campaign, your effort and work and its positive results for young people in your local community.

### CLOSING QUOTATION

A direct quote from a member of your group, talking about the success of the campaign and your message for other young people.

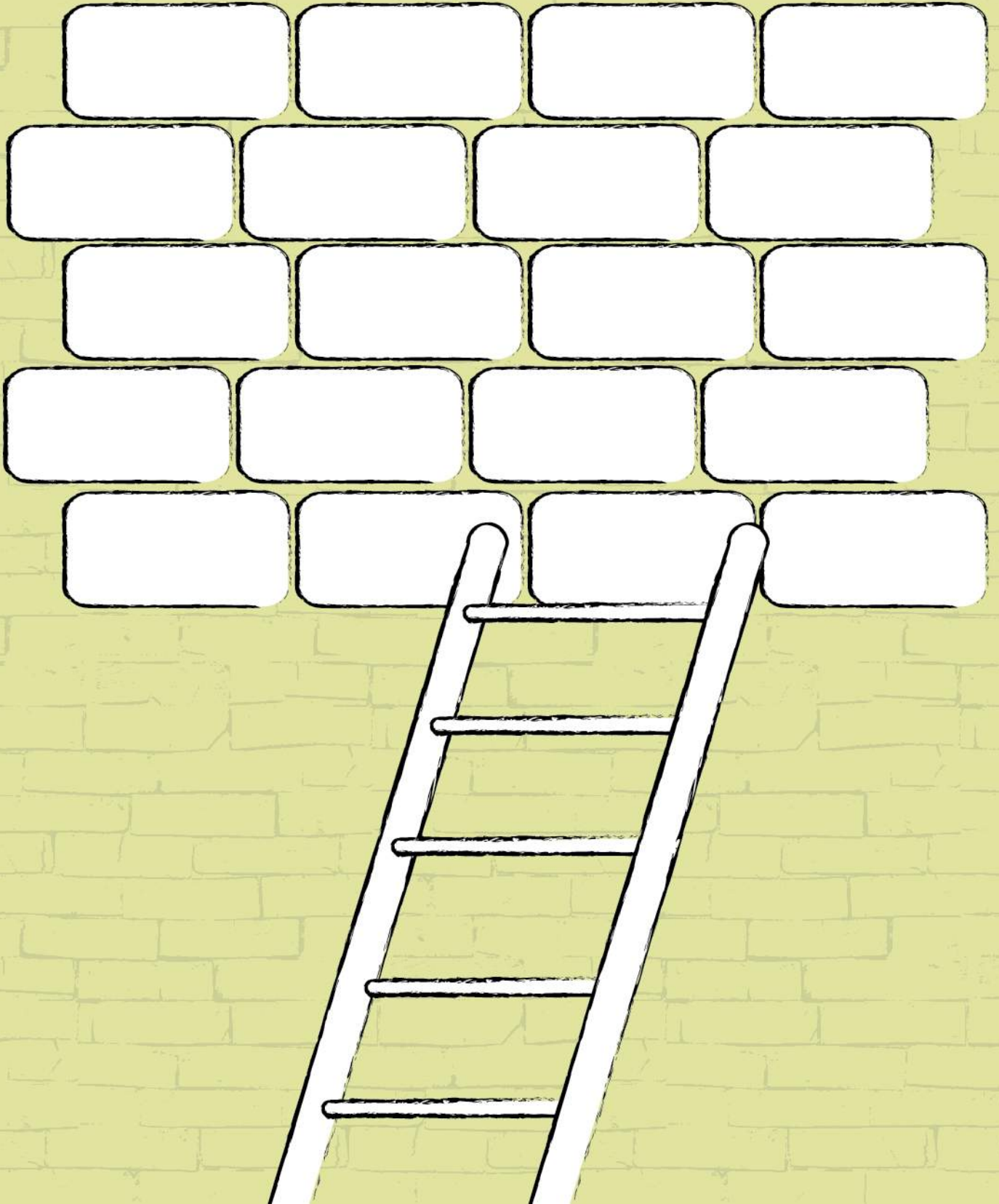


## BEFORE YOU GET STARTED:

Identify potential barriers to your campaign and what you may do to overcome them.

Barriers can sometimes feel like walls blocking our progress. Write on the wall some of the barriers you may face.

Once you have that done, now begin to think of the solutions as a ladder enabling us to simply climb over the wall. For every barrier you come up with, try and at write at least one solution on each run of the ladder.



## STEP 2: ORGANISE

Now that you had considered some challenges you may face and how these can be overcome, it is time to start organising and planning your campaign.

When planning for a successful campaign you will need to think about what needs to be done, who should do it and what the deadline should be. It might help to look back at your Manifesto, plans or intentions. Remember

that a good plan is specific about tasks and deadlines. It will be easier if you set smaller, achievable tasks.

Look again at your goals and check that they are SMART. If they are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Timely then there is a better chance that you can plan against them and they can be achieved.

**SPECIFIC**

**ATTAINABLE**

**TIMELY**

**SMART**

**MEASURABLE**

**RELEVANT**

# OUR CAMPAIGN PLAN

## OUR VISION:

*E.g. That young people in our community are hopeful for the future and support is there when they need it.*

GOAL 1			GOAL 2			GOAL 3		
<i>To ensure young people are aware of the support that is available to them.</i>								
<b>Action</b> <i>Research all the support that is currently available in our area</i>	<b>Action</b> <i>Plan an event for young people to hear about the various services that can offer support</i>	<b>Action</b> <i>Design a booklet or a simple poster promoting the various services</i>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Action</b>
Tony B	by who	by who	by who	by who	by who	by who	by who	by who
20/06/20	by when	by when	by when	by when	by when	by when	by when	by when

Resources we may need:

## OUR SUPPORTERS

Identify the people that may offer a helping hand

People that may have resources

Others Campaigning on the same issue



## STEP 3: ACT

Now to make your campaign a reality. Campaigns are about action, at their best they can be energetic, motivational, challenging, but always worthwhile and with a clear goal and change in mind.

To this point you have done a lot of thinking, exploring and organising. You are clear on the issues, carried out research and nailed down your plans and who is going to take various actions forward. This process can be timely but is critical to a successful campaign, but the success will now be determined by how you commit to your plans.

### CHECKLIST – BY THE END OF STEP 3 WE WILL.....

- Develop key messages*
- Identify who we need to influence and reach out to them*
- Agree our campaign methods*
- Create a campaign action plan and get started!*

### KEY MESSAGES:

Communicating clearly and concisely your key campaign messages, can be the most successful way of achieving your goals. If they are engaging, powerful and memorable then they are likely to reach people and make them take notice.

**To give you an example of a current youth led campaign, their own slogan and key messages see below:**

### March for Our Lives

Following the School shooting in Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in February 2018, where 17 people were killed. A group of students who survived the February 14 shooting initially started the #neveragain campaign, this was their message to end gun violence and lobby for stricter gun prevention policies.

'March for our Lives' was initially set up as a single day protest by young people across America to call for improved gun laws. It became the largest single day of protest against gun violence, with millions of people taking to major cities across America, demanding political leaders take action on the issue.

### March for Our Lives key message:

**'We demand Bold action to end the Gun violence epidemic'** and they had 3 calls to government:

- 1.** Pass a law to ban the assault weapons frequently used to carry out mass shootings
- 2.** Stop the sale of high-capacity magazines, restricting the amount of ammunition
- 3.** Close loopholes in America's background checks and implement laws that require background checks on every gun purchase, including those that occur online or at gun shows.

### Why It Worked:

'March for our lives' was established by the survivors of the School Shooting' they were deeply motivated and passionate about the subject. This connected with young people across America and indeed the world. The title is hugely strong, and emotive. They had simple, yet bold asks. Their Campaign captured the imagination of the general public and regardless of your view on Gun law's, the general public in America were all aware of the 'March for Our Lives' campaign.

# OUR CAMPAIGN PLAN

When considering writing your key messages, always remember the 3 H's:

## SPEAK TO THEIR HEAD



**The Head:** What is the issue, its impact on young people and what you are planning to do about it?

## SPEAK TO THEIR HEART



**The Heart:** How do you want people to feel? Tell them the stories, why this is important.

## SEEK THEIR HAND



**The Hand:** What you want them to do and what power they may have to do it?

## Other aspects to consider:

- *Is it believable? – Make sure your core message is supported by evidence, reality and facts.*
- *Is it easy to understand? – Make your language concise, professional, and to the point.*
- *Is it positive? – Be positive and focus on what will be better/improve/change.*
- *Keep it simple - Remember your key messages should be short and specific.*

## YOUR KEY MESSAGES:

**STEP 1:** Look back at the 3 goals you set in your campaign plan

**STEP 2:** Write a few key messages

**STEP 3:** Try them out with some of your supporters, family or friends and seek honest feedback. Adopt if necessary.

# INFLUENCING:

## Types of people you might influence:

### SCHOOLS

*Other pupils*  
*Parents*  
*Teachers*  
*Principles/Heads of Departments*  
*Board of Governors*

### COMMUNITIES

*Peers*  
*Youth Workers*  
*Parents*  
*Community Workers*

### POLITICALLY

*Local Councillors*  
*MLA's*  
*MP's*  
*Government officials*

Depending on what needs to be changed, and whether your campaign is within a school, local community, youth group or other there may be many different people who have the power to make a decision that will make a difference.

You need to identify these decision-makers and tell them why an issue is important, how they can support you, and encourage them to do so.

Often with campaigns, we might not have access to the person who has the power to make a decision or change something that we need. Therefore, we may need to think about who we can reach and who can influence those people.

For example, you might not be able to speak directly to the Minister for Education, but you could speak to your School Principal, Youth Leader or local MLA in order to reach the Minister.

### Things you might want them to do:

- *Agree to take action.*
- *Publicly support your issue in the media.*
- *Permit you to do something in a public space, school or community setting.*
- *Depending on the change you want, it may be helpful to have the support of your local representatives, who are elected to stand up for local people, including you.*

### Finding out who your local representatives are:

MPs can promote issues at both a national and local level - you can find your local MP by visiting [www.theyworkforyou.com/mp/](http://www.theyworkforyou.com/mp/)

Our local government consists of 90 MLA's, who are well placed to support community based initiatives. At the local Assembly you can also directly contact the Minister responsible for the issue you may be campaigning on. E.g. Minister for Health. Your local MLA and various Ministers can be reached on [www.niassembly.gov.uk/your-mlas/](http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/your-mlas/)

Councillors should help individuals with their problems and speak up on behalf of local community groups. You can find out who your local councillors are by telephoning your town hall or searching or via this link: [www.nidirect.gov.uk/services/online-register-local-councillors](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/services/online-register-local-councillors)

## HOW TO INFLUENCE:

You need to persuade them the issue is important – if you feel able to share personal experience of an issue or experiences from the research you may have done, this can be persuasive.

- *Explain the benefits of supporting the campaign – to young people in the local community.*
- *Give information about the campaign – how it will make a difference.*
- *Tell them what you want them to do and why – be specific.*

### WAYS TO INFLUENCE

- *Meet them in person – local politicians hold ‘surgeries’ you can attend.*
- *Send a petition – this shows other people support the issue.*
- *Invite them to an event – to engage with local young people.*

## TAKING ACTION!

### METHODS YOU MAY EMPLOY

- **GET CREATIVE** – *Plan an event, something that may engage young people in your community, e.g. a music event with a difference, a well-being day, by doing so you get people excited and they are more likely to get behind your campaign*
- **PLAN INFORMATION EVENTS** – *this enables local people to hear about it and get more informed.*
- **CONTACT LOCAL/NATIONAL MEDIA** – *invite your national/local newspaper, community magazine to cover any of your events, also send them a brief press release at the start of your campaign with your key messages.*
- **SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN** – *when trying to reach young people, this will be one of the easiest and most powerful ways of getting to them and getting your message across.*
- **PLAN A PETITION** – *this demonstrates clear support for your campaign and goes without saying that the more you have the stronger the support.*
- **WRITE LETTERS** – *to your targets and/or the people who influence them to explain your campaign issue and what you want them to do*
- **REQUEST MEETINGS** – *even if you can’t get face time with your targets or influencers, it’s a good idea to meet with people who are also working on your campaign issue so they know about your work*

## WHO ARE THE PEOPLE WE WANT TO INFLUENCE:



## STEP 4: REVIEW

### CHECKLIST – BY THE END OF STEP 4 WE WILL.....

- Know what lessons we have learnt for the future
- Know and understand the challenges we faced
- Know what we can do differently
- Know how successful we were in meeting our goals and making change

In campaigning where there is action, there is never failure, only success or feedback. It is important to know why things worked or didn't work. What will you use again and where do you need to develop?

**You should think about evaluation right at the start. Here are some important questions to ask yourself at the beginning:**

- What will count as success?
- How will you measure the success of your actions?
- How will you get feedback from the people you worked with, in your group and in the community?
- How will you celebrate and publicise the achievements of your actions?

At the end of the campaign, as a group discuss the following questions.

QUESTION	GROUP RESPONSE	MY CONTRIBUTION
Did the social action go to plan?		
What went well?		
What didn't go so well?		
What would we do differently next time?		
What have we learnt?		
Has the campaign brought about any change? - How do we know?		
What shall we do next?		
Why is it needed?		



## SECTION 4: SUPPORT

In this section you will find:

- *Details for other organisations*
- *Activities that can be used by adults who maybe supporting campaigners.*
- *Some facts on Mental Health*
- *Templates referenced within the booklet*

### SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS

#### Campaigning and participation:

- *Belfast City Council Youth Forum: 028 9032 0202*
- *NI Youth Forum (NIYF): 028 9033 1990*
- *NI Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY): 028 9031 1616*
- *Children's Law Centre: 028 9024 5704*
- *Children in N. Ireland (CINI): 028 9040 1290*

#### Mental Health Support for young people:

- *Young Minds: 0800 018 2138 - a parents' information service.*
- *Family Lives Parentline: 0808 800 2222 - provides help and information*
- *EXTERN: 028 9084 0555 Providing crisis response services, counselling and mentoring*
- *Lighthouse: 028 9075 5070 Providing training, counselling , family support and therapies*
- *PIPs: 028 90805850 Providing counselling and complimentary therapies*
- *AWARE: 028 9035 7820 Training, support groups and advice*
- *Start 360: 028 9043 5810 Protect life team provide mentoring support*
- *School/college counsellor or local GP*
- *[www.mindingyourhead.info](http://www.mindingyourhead.info)*

#### Emergency support:

- *Lifeline 0808 808 8000*
- *ChildLine on 0800 1111 - offers help to young people in trouble or danger*
- *Samaritans 0845 790 9090*
- *Emergency Services: 999*



## WORKSHOP 1: WELLNESS BALL ACTIVITY

**GOAL:** To show young people the importance of self-care, boundaries, and setting limits when they are supporting others.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

- Ask the group to stand in a circle, in an area clear of drinks and food, bags etc.
- The activity facilitator has 3 or 4 similar small balls (depending on size of the group), 2 larger beach or footballs, and one, special ball near them.
- Tell the group to **“raise one hand, and leave that hand up until you have been passed a ball. We need to remember who threw the ball to us, and who we passed the ball to. Throw the ball softly and remember this isn’t a race.”**
- Once the group have the hang of the activity, add another small ball and have them “go through the same pattern with this ball.”
- When all 3 or 4 small balls are in rotation, add a large ball which will start at the facilitator and move around the circle, passed side to side.
- After a couple of rotations of that large ball, add the other large ball, going side to side the other direction. You may need to ask young people to slow down or concentrate on the activity if balls are flying or dropping often.
- After a couple more rotations of all those balls, pause the game. Ask the group to **“stop and hold the balls”**, explain the last ball, **“the most important ball, the one that cannot be dropped, this ball will follow the same rotation as the other small balls, OK, now GO!”**
- After a couple more minutes end the activity and ask the group to sit down where they are standing to debrief.

### DEBRIEF:

- What did you think of the activity?
- What did it remind you of? Stress, life, anxiety.
- What did the little balls represent? Everyday stressors.
- The bigger balls? Events that come along once in a while that you can’t foresee, like death in the family, break ups, etc.
- The special ball you weren’t allowed to drop? You, the most important and special thing there is.
- What helped you catch the most balls, and not to drop everything? Help from others, cooperation, saying “STOP!”, or using people’s names before you threw it etc.

**IMPORTANT NOTES:** “This game can represent our lives, how we can support ourselves and each other, and how sometimes we need to drop some parts of our lives to take care of ourselves, like volunteering, a shift at work, or even a class in school. We need to have limits and boundaries, we might not be able to ask our teachers to postpone a big test we aren’t prepared for, but we can ask for help if we need it. If we drop ourselves, we aren’t able to be good supports to those around us, it is important to take care of ourselves to be great supports, or friends, or partners.”

## WORKSHOP 2: POSITIVE GOALS DIARY

This activity is for young people to begin to think about goals they may have for the future and how they may go about achieving these.

This activity is initially carried out individually on a worksheet, booklet, or blank piece of paper. Young people can then be invited to share their diaries with each other if this is deemed suitable by the worker.

### WHAT TO DO:

The activity is divided into three sections – ‘Setting goals’, ‘Obstructions’ and ‘Strategies’.

- Under the first section, ask young people to write the goals they want to achieve in the next few days, next one month, one year and the coming five years.
- In the next section, ask the young people to write down some of the barriers that they may face in achieving these goals
- Finally, ask the young people to think about what will help in overcoming these and enable them to meet their goals.
- Staff/volunteers should be on hand to offer support if young people need it.
- Encourage young people to share their diaries, if they are comfortable to do so and only share what they are comfortable with. This can be hugely beneficial as it may encourage honest discussion and it will allow you and group members the opportunity to help those presenting, identify possible solutions to barriers and problems.

Setting goals and building plans and strategies to achieve them can help to give young people a sense of purpose, also help in creating a more hopeful and optimistic outlook. This activity can help to overcome barriers that may be causing inaction.

### SETTING GOALS

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### OBSTRUCTIONS

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### STRATEGIES

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## WORKSHOP 3: GRATITUDE JOURNAL

Keeping a journal of the things you're grateful for has been shown to have a powerful effect on mental well-being. Among other benefits, journaling about gratitude reduces stress, increases happiness, and improves self-esteem.

*NB: In advance of meeting with young people, the facilitator takes responsibility for purchasing or designing journals for each of their group.*

**Instructions:** The facilitator invites young people to take a journal each and asks them to complete it twice a week. They are asked to write a detailed entry about one thing they are grateful for. This could be a person, something they are involved in, a great meal with friends, or anything else that comes to mind.

### Tips for young people:

- Don't rush to write down the first thing that comes to your mind. Take time to truly think about what you're grateful for. Expect each entry to take between 10-20 minutes.
- Writing about the people who you're grateful for tends to be more powerful than writing about things.
- Explain, in detail, why you're grateful. For example, if you're grateful for a friend who is nice, describe what they do that's nice, and why that makes you grateful.
- Aim for two solid entries each week. Keep your journal somewhere you'll see it, and plan when you can write. Set an alarm on your phone if you might forget.

### Group debrief:

Journaling is an individual activity, but within your own group it may be an idea to ask young people if they are comfortable sharing how they feel about it. Some prompt questions to stimulate discussion:

- How have you got on keeping the journal? Did you start? Did you maintain it?
- What have you noticed about the things your grateful for?  
Are there any themes?
- Have you noticed any change or benefit in completing the journal? Would you continue it?

### BENEFITS OF A GRATITUDE JOURNAL

1. Lower stress levels.
2. Feel calm at night.
3. Gain a new perspective of what is important to you and what you truly appreciate in your life.
4. By noting what you are grateful for, you will gain clarity on what you want to have more of in your life, and what you can cut from your life.
5. Helps you focus on what really matters.
6. Keeping a gratitude journal helps you learn more about yourself and become more self-aware.
7. Your gratitude journal is a safe zone for your eyes only, so you can write anything you feel without judgment.
8. On days when you feel blue, read back through your gratitude journal to readjust your attitude and remember that you have great people and things in your life.

## WORKSHOP 4: I'M GREAT BECAUSE...

**Explanation:** This is a short introductory workshop that can be completed with young people on an individual or group basis.

This can be done at the start of a programme as a baseline and completed again at the end to see if there are changes in the responses and why this may be. It can also be used as a one off to engage young people in more positive thoughts, language and reflection on themselves.

**Step 1:** Young people take as much time as required to complete the worksheet.

**Step 2:** Invite young people if they feel comfortable enough to share as much or as little of their worksheet within the group.

**Step 3:** Debrief with the whole group the following questions:

- *How did you find completing the worksheet? Was it natural? Challenging?*
- *How often do you take the time to think about what you have done well, what you are good at and what you are thankful for?*
- *How might you better notice the positive things you have done/that you are doing and what is good about you? What is stopping you?*
- *If you found it really challenging? Why do you think that was? How might this change?*

I really admire myself for...

My future goals are...

I know I can achieve them because I'm...

I'm naturally gifted at...

Others often praise my...

It makes me feel good when I...

I have succeeded before at...

Something that makes me laugh is...

The characteristics I'm most proud of in myself are...

My greatest talent is...

I am at peace when...

I like who I am because...

I'm super at...

I feel good about my...

My friends think I have an awesome...

Somewhere I feel happy is...

I mean a lot to...

Others reckon I'm a great...

Something I really enjoy is...

## WORKSHOP 5: MINDFULNESS

At its simplest, mindfulness means being aware of what you are doing while you are doing it. Mindfulness involves taking your attention away from the past and future and instead becoming aware of what is going on right now.

### MINDFUL BODY SCAN

Invite the group to sit in a circle and begin reading the script aloud.

When finished, ask the group to reflect on the following questions:

- *What were you aware of during the body scan?*
- *What did you notice about yourself?*
- *Did you manage to keep your attention focused throughout, or did your mind wander?*
- *Did you notice any marked differences between sensations in different parts of your body or on different sides of your body?*
- *Can you make any other observations about this experience?*



## BODY SCAN SCRIPT

Begin by making yourself comfortable. Sit in a chair and allow your back to be straight, but not stiff, with your feet on the ground.

Your hands could be resting gently in your lap or at your side. Allow your eyes to close, or lower your gaze.

Take several long, slow, deep breaths. Breathing in fully and exhaling slowly. Breathe in through your nose and out through your nose or mouth. Feel your stomach expand on an inhale and relax and let go as you exhale.

Begin to let go of noises around you. Begin to shift your attention from outside to inside yourself. If you are distracted by sounds in the room, simply notice this and bring your focus back to your breathing.

Now slowly bring your attention down to your feet. Begin observing sensations in your feet. You might want to wiggle your toes a little, feeling your toes against your socks or shoes. Just notice, without judgment. You might imagine sending your breath down to your feet, as if the breath is traveling through the nose to the lungs and through the abdomen all the way down to your feet. And then back up again out through your nose and lungs. Perhaps you don't feel anything at all. That is fine, too.

When you are ready, allow your feet to dissolve in your mind's eye and move your attention up to your ankles, calves, knees and thighs. Observe the sensations you are experiencing throughout your legs. Breathe into and breathe out of the legs. If your mind begins to wander during this exercise, gently notice this without judgment and bring your mind back to noticing the sensations in your legs.

If you notice any discomfort, pain or stiffness, don't judge this. Just simply notice it. Observe how all sensations rise and fall, shift and change moment to moment. Notice how no sensation is permanent. Just observe and allow the sensations to be in the moment, just as they are. Breathe into and out from the legs. Then on the next out breath, allow the legs to dissolve in your mind.

And now, bring your awareness to your lower back and pelvis. Softening and releasing as you breathe in and out. Slowly move your attention up to your mid back and upper back. Become curious about the sensations here. You may become aware of sensations in the muscle, temperature or points of contact with the chair.

With each outbreath, you may let go of tension you are carrying.

And then very gently shift your focus to your stomach. Perhaps you notice the feeling of your clothing, or the belly rising or falling with each breath. If you notice opinions arising about these areas, gently let these go and return to noticing sensations.

As you continue to breathe, bring your awareness to the chest and heart region and just notice your heartbeat. Observe how the chest rises as you breathe in and how the chest falls as you breathe out. Let go of any judgments that may arise.

## BODY SCAN SCRIPT

On the next outbreath, shift the focus to your hands and fingertips. See if you can channel your breathing into and out of this area as if you are breathing into and out from your hands.

If your mind wanders, gently bring it back to the sensations in your hands. And then, on the next outbreath, shift the focus and bring your awareness up into your arms. Observe the sensations or lack of sensations that may be occurring there. You might notice some difference between the left arm and the right arm – no need to judge this. As you exhale, you may experience the arm soften and release tensions.

Continue to breathe and shift focus to the neck, shoulder and throat region. This is an area where we often have tension. Be with the sensations here. It could be tightness or stiffness. You may notice the shoulders moving along with the breath. Let go of any thoughts or stories you are telling about this area. As you breathe, you may feel tension rolling off your shoulders.

On the next outbreath, shift your focus and direct your attention to the scalp, head and face. Observe all of the sensations occurring there. Notice the movement of the air as you breathe into or out of your nose or mouth. As you exhale, you might notice the softening of any tension you may be holding.

And now, let your attention to expand out to include the entire body as a whole. Bring into your awareness the top of your head down to the bottom of your toes. Feel the gentle rhythm of the breath as it moves through the body.

As you come to the end of this practice, take a full, deep breath, taking in all the energy of this practice. Exhale fully. And when you are ready, slowly open your eyes and return your attention to the present moment. As you become fully alert and awake, consider setting the intention that this practice of building awareness will benefit everyone you come in contact with today.





## WORKSHOP 6: MINDFUL EATING EXERCISE

Check with the group members re: food allergies before facilitating the exercise.

You will need one sweet/chocolate/raisin per person.

Invite the group to approach the exercise with an open mind and a gentle curiosity. There is no right or wrong.

Please read the script aloud, each step at a time.

**When finished, ask the group to reflect on the following questions:**

- *What were you aware of during the mindful eating exercise?*
- *What did you notice about yourself?*
- *What surprised you?*
- *What challenged you?*

### MINDFUL EATING SCRIPT

1. Take the sweet/chocolate/raisin and hold it in the palm of your hand or between your finger and thumb. Focus on it; imagine that you've never seen an object like this before in your life.
2. Take a good look. Let your eyes explore every part of it, examining the highlights where the light shines, the darker hollows, the folds and ridges, and any unique features.
3. Explore how it feels in your hand. Turn it over between your fingers, exploring its texture, maybe with your eyes closed if that enhances your sense of touch.
4. Smell it, holding it beneath your nose, with each inhalation drink in any smell, aroma, or fragrance that may arise, noticing as you do this anything interesting that may be happening in your mouth or stomach.
5. Place it in your mouth without chewing. Spend a few moments exploring the sensations of having it in your mouth, exploring it with your tongue.
6. Taste it. When you are ready, prepare to chew the sweet/chocolate/raisin, noticing how and where it needs to be for chewing. Then, very consciously, take one or two bites into it and notice what happens, experiencing any waves of taste that come from it as you continue chewing. Without swallowing yet, notice the sensations of taste and texture in the mouth and how these may change over time, moment by moment, as well as any changes in the object itself.
7. Swallow the sweet/chocolate/raisin. Focus on the sensation. Is there a lingering taste? How do you feel physically and emotionally? Take a little while to consider the experience.



There has never been a study of the prevalence of poor mental health in Northern Ireland. It is estimated that more than 20% of young people are suffering significant mental health problems by the time they reach 18 and 1 in 6 young people have a mental health need at any time.<sup>(i)</sup> However, a study has been commissioned and is due to report in Spring 2020.


Suicide rates in NI are higher than any other part of Ireland and the UK.<sup>(ii)</sup>

# WHAT WE KNOW

The mental health system in NI is struggling to meet the growing scale and complexity of need within children and young people.<sup>(v)</sup> During 2017-18, 25% of young people referred to Step 3 CAMHS were not accepted (regional average).<sup>(vi)</sup> There has also been an increase in breaches of the 9-week target to access CAMHS with a leap from 201 to 629 in the year following publication of 'Still Waiting'. This increase has been attributed to increase in demand and complexity and workforce issues.

In one local study young people said they felt uncomfortable about seeking help due to the stigma associated with poor mental health or because of lack of adult awareness of mental health issues.

Less than 1p in every pound of the overall health budget in NI is invested in children's emotional well-being and mental health services.<sup>(iii)</sup> This is despite almost 25% of Northern Ireland's population, adolescence being peak years of onset of mental health problems and prevalence of poor mental health 25% greater than other parts of the UK.<sup>(iv)</sup>



People Who feel connected to nature have lower levels of anxiety.

One study done by the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health found that running for 15 minutes a day or walking for an hour could reduce the risk of major depression by 26%, which is considerable.

Always look on the bright side: Being an optimist, being positive, can help you live longer.

# THE GOOD NEWS

A study in the journal Royal Society Open Science found that happiness can basically be contagious. Basically, being around happier people can make you feel happier.

Recent studies show that practicing meditation at least 4 times a week, can significantly reduce levels of stress and anxiety, aid sleeping and brain function.

## TEMPLATE:

### CREATE YOUR OWN SELF-CARE WHEEL

For each category above, select at least one strategy or activity that you can undertake or create your own. You might notice areas of overlap between these categories. It is important to develop a self-care plan that is possible, holistic and individual to you.



Once you have created your self-care plan:

#### THINK ABOUT:

- What might get in the way?
- What can you do to remove these barriers?
- If you can't remove them you might want to adjust your strategies.

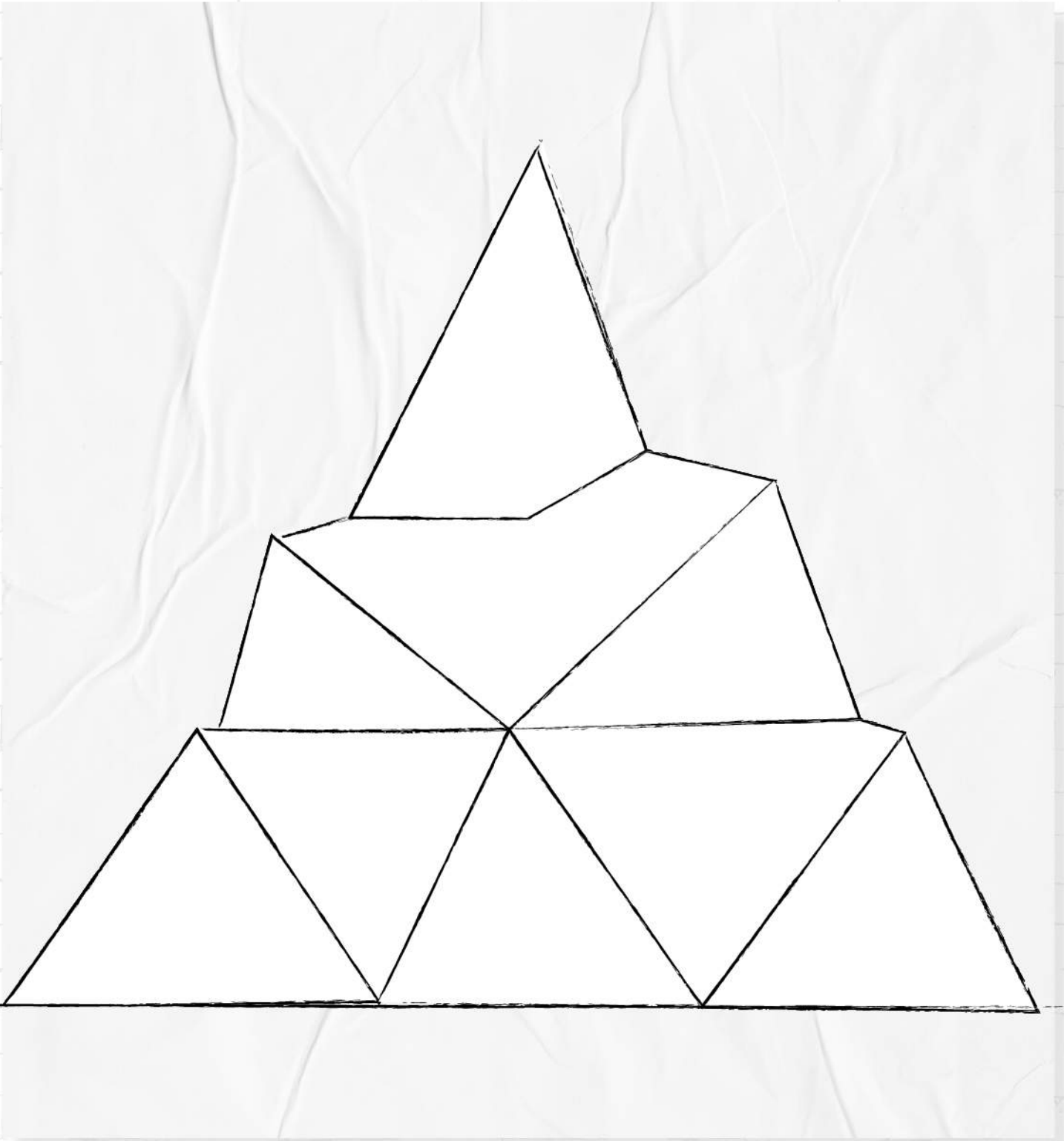
## IDENTIFYING OUR ISSUES – SHORT EXERCISE

Box 1: What are my personal reasons for getting involved, why is this important to me?

Box 2: As a team discuss our personal reasons with each other. Is this an issue for other young people in our community or even wider?

Box 3: What do we agree are the issues that we will take action on?

# THE ICEBERG TASK



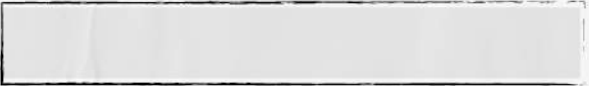
**NEWSPAPER TEMPLATE**



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## OUR MANIFESTO

OUR ISSUE IS:

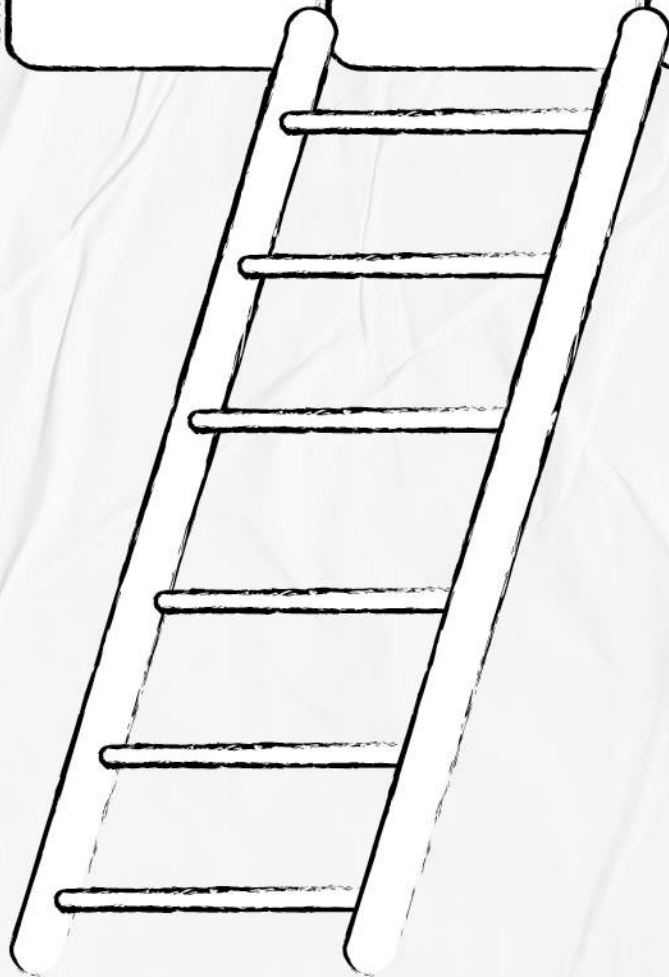
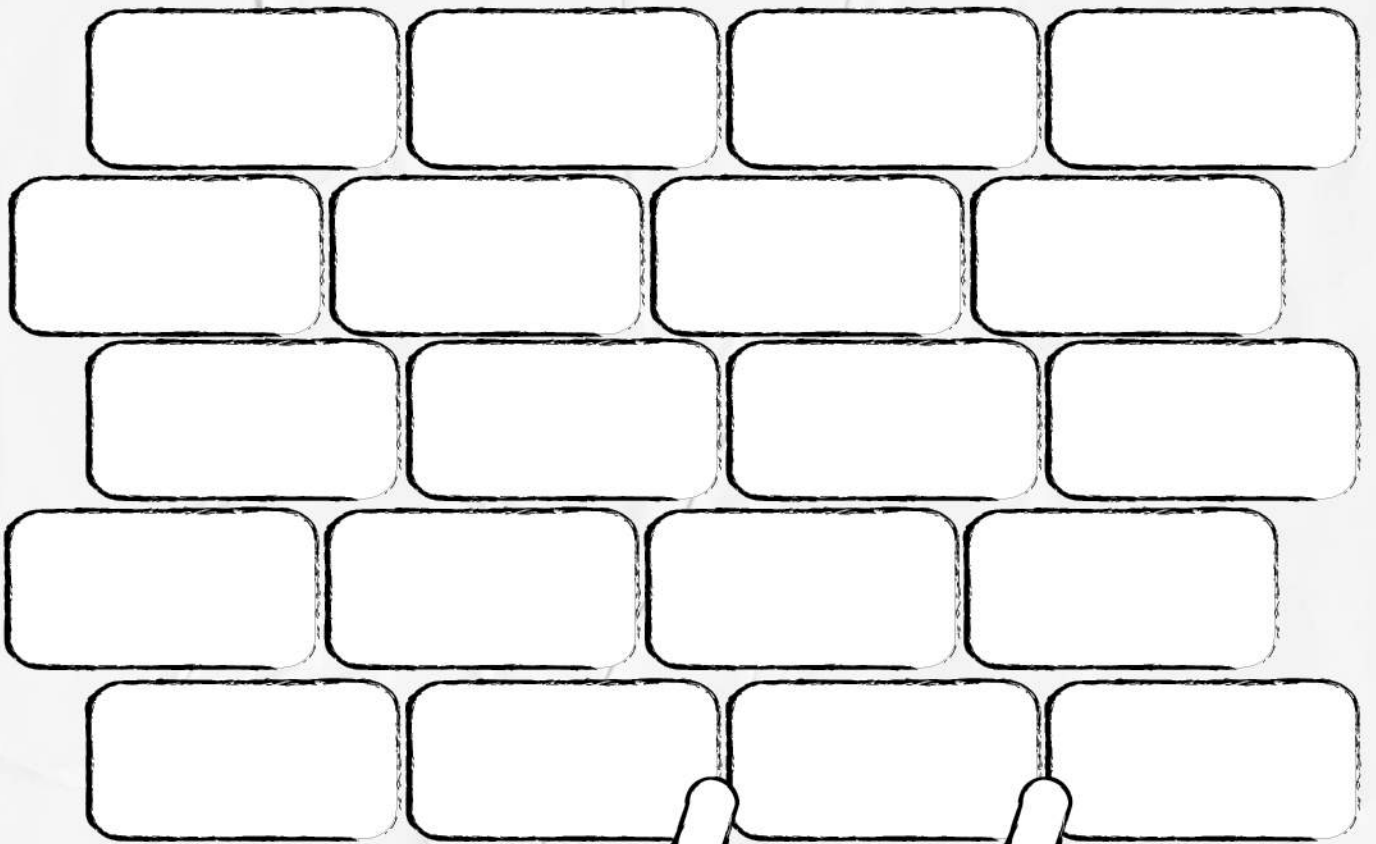
OUR VISION IS:

OUR COMMUNITY WILL BE IMPROVED BY THIS CHANGE BECAUSE:

WE WILL ACHIEVE OUR VISION BY:



**BARRIERS TEMPLATE**



# OUR CAMPAIGN PLAN

OUR VISION:

GOAL 1

GOAL 2

GOAL 3

Action

Action

Action

Action

Action

Action

Action

Action

Action

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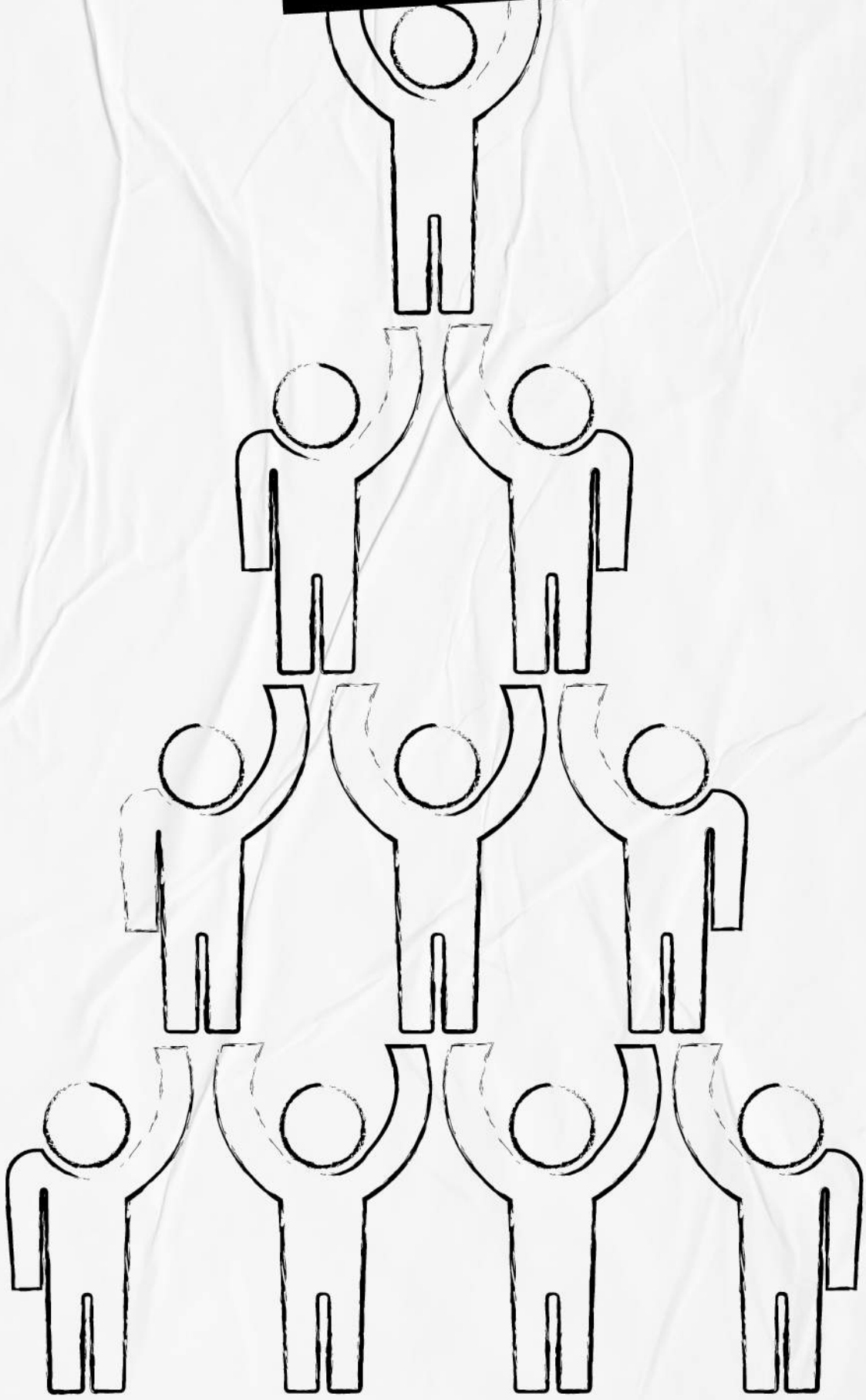
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Resources we may need:

**OUR SUPPORTERS**



**WHO ARE THE  
PEOPLE  
WE WANT TO  
INFLUENCE:**



QUESTION	GROUP RESPONSE	MY CONTRIBUTION
Did the social action go to plan?		
What went well?		
What didn't go so well?		
What would we do differently next time?		
What have we learnt?		
Has the campaign brought about any change? - How do we know?		
What shall we do next?		
Why is it needed?		

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- vi. CAMHS Update to NI Commissioner for Children and Young People, HSCB, Oct 2017. [https://www.niccy.org/media/3111/20171106\\_camhs-updatefinalhscb.pdf](https://www.niccy.org/media/3111/20171106_camhs-updatefinalhscb.pdf) and HSCB Performance Report December 2019

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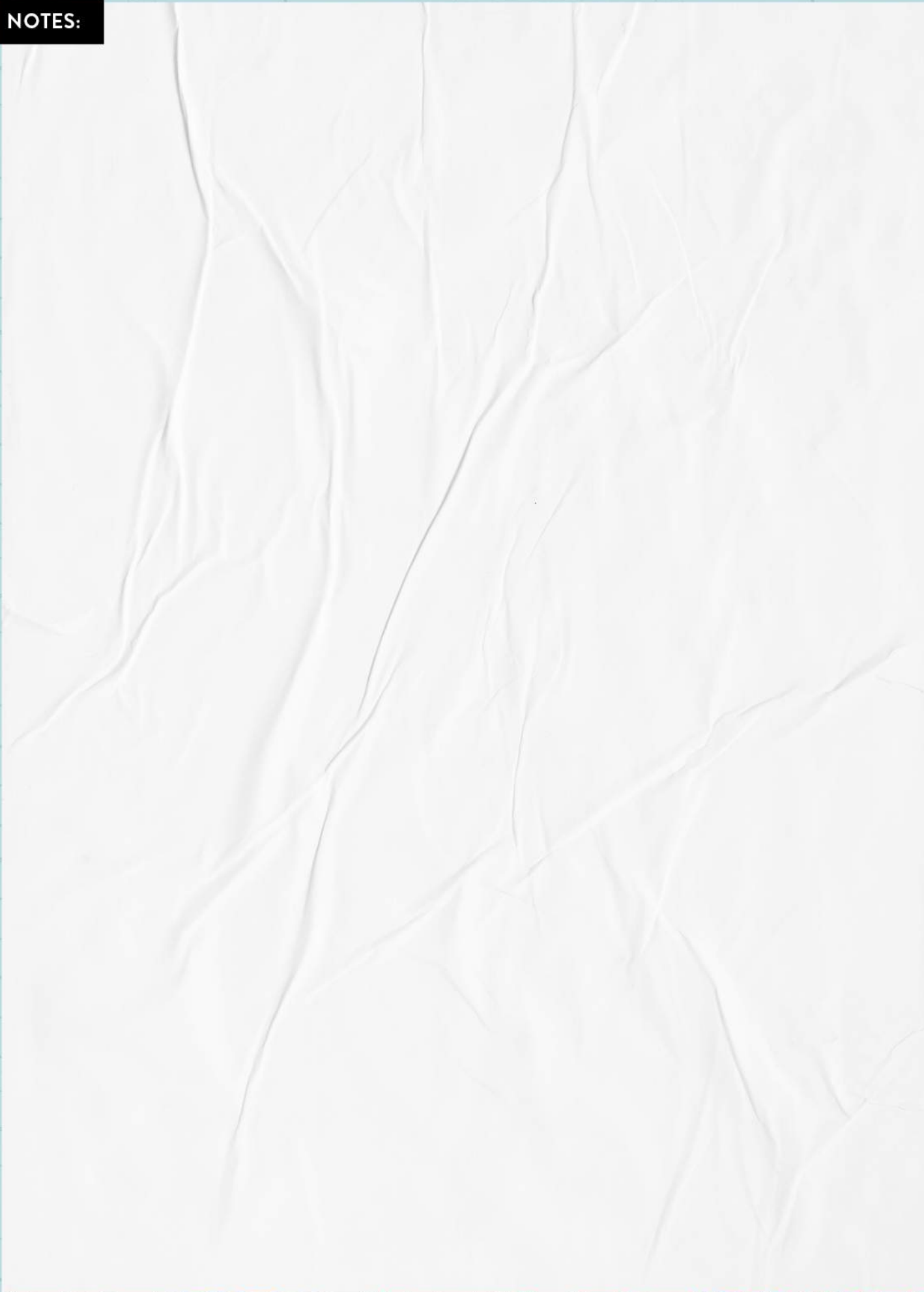
Patricia Martyn<sup>1</sup>, Eric Brymer<sup>2</sup><sup>1</sup> Queensland University of Technology, Australia <sup>2</sup> Manchester Metropolitan University, UK

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- *James H Fowler, Nicholas A Christakis. Dynamic spread of happiness in a large social network: longitudinal analysis over 20 years in the Framingham Heart Study. British Medical Journal, December 4, 2008*
- *Mindfulness meditation-based pain relief: a mechanistic account* Fadel Zeidan and David Vago: Author information Copyright and License information Disclaimer

SUPPORTED BY



NOTES:



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