



City Mental Health  
Alliance UK

# Impact of Children's Mental Health Crisis on Working Parents

A research report and guide for how businesses  
can respond to a hidden wellbeing challenge



In association with  
*MindForward*  
Alliance

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# Foreword



**Alison Unsted**  
CEO, [City Mental Health Alliance UK](#)

In 2022, the [CMHA](#), in partnership with businesses and children's mental health charities, launched [a toolkit for parents](#) who are supporting

children with mental health difficulties. We received an incredibly positive response to the toolkit, which also revealed the sense of urgency and need that parents are feeling.

We are now sharing research which reveals the scale and depth of the impact that the UK's children's mental health crisis is having on parents, with a focus on working parents. We found that concerns about their children's mental health is negatively impacting every aspect of a parents' life from their own mental health, to their

relationships and their performance at work. A small number of surveyed parents are even thinking about leaving the workplace because of challenges at home.

There are a significant number of parents in the UK workforce so this is a prevalent, yet relatively hidden, workplace wellbeing issue. The good news is that this report also points to positive action that businesses can take. To inspire businesses to take action, the CMHA has developed practical, business led and expert guided recommendations that relates to better awareness, flexibility, resources and mental health support.

The pandemic made it crystal clear that one way in which businesses can support the mental health of employees is by showing recognition that their family and work priorities can overlap and, at times, will clash. In the face of the children's mental health crisis, we are calling on businesses to recognise, understand and act with compassion, towards that overlap once again. Because

when businesses do this it will benefit employees, their children, the business and society as a whole.

Thank you to Morgan Stanley and PwC for your partnership and vision on this research report, and thanks to Place2Be, YoungMinds and the Pears Maudsley Centre for Children and Young People for your continued support.

In partnership with PwC and Morgan Stanley



Morgan Stanley

With thanks to Place2Be, Young Minds and Pears Maudsley Centre for Children and Young People



# Executive summary

The CMHA commissioned research, in partnership with PwC and Morgan Stanley, which reveals that the majority of parents are concerned about their children's mental health.

This will not come as a surprise. According to the latest NHS Digital figures, nearly one in five (18%) of children aged 7 – 16 and one in four (26%) of 17 - 19 year olds have a probable mental health disorder. Further, a parents' concerns about their children's mental health are not only driven by the presence of a diagnosed mental disorder, but also when they observe consistent worrying feelings and behaviour in their children, such as anxiety, stress and low mood. Just like physical health, mental health exists on a spectrum. The issues addressed in this study could fall at any point on the spectrum and are not limited to diagnosable mental health disorders.

## The Mental Health Spectrum



While we don't know for sure what exact combination of factors have caused high prevalence of poor mental health, experts cite a range of reasons such as the pandemic as a major contributor.

Our research reveals the clear link between the mental health crisis of children and the worsening wellbeing of their parents, and the significant impact this is having on workplaces. We found that:

- 68% of the working parents we surveyed are concerned about their child(ren)'s mental health. This, in turn, can be shown to impact on their own mental health and other aspects of their life.
- 48% of all working parents surveyed said their child(ren)'s mental health has impacted on their performance at work in some way – including an inability to concentrate.
- 12 per cent of concerned working parents surveyed had considered reducing working hours to support their child(ren), and 8% had considered quitting their job altogether.
- 78% of concerned parents are aged from 35-54, suggesting they are on the cusp of, or in, senior roles

Our research also shows that employers have an opportunity to support parents who are experiencing this challenge - 66% of concerned working parents said they would like their employers to support them in some way.

By acknowledging the issue and taking action, as part of an inclusive wellbeing strategy, businesses can play an active and positive role. They are more likely to prevent concerned parents feeling that they need to leave their jobs to focus on what is going on at home, while also directly contributing to addressing the poor mental health of their employees and their children.

## ABOUT THIS RESEARCH

The CMHA UK has partnered with Morgan Stanley and PwC to commission this research. All figures for the survey results, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 1,016 parents with children aged 9 -18 years old. Fieldwork was undertaken between 24th - 29th August 2022. The quantitative survey was carried out online. Qualitative interviews also took place with eight parents who had been concerned about the mental health and wellbeing of their child(ren). These interviews took place in September and October 2022, and we have included anonymous quotes from the interviews throughout this report.

## A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

Throughout this report, for the sake of brevity, we use the term "parent" to refer to an adult who has caring responsibility for a child(ren). However, we recognise that many children are cared for by people other than parents, including other family members, legal custodians, foster parents and people who are in loco parentis.

## Key findings

**68%**

More than two-thirds of parents surveyed are concerned about their child(ren)'s mental health

**60%**

of parents who are concerned about their child(ren)'s mental health say it negatively affects their own mental health

**48%**

of all working parents surveyed said their children's mental health has impacted on their performance at work in some way (e.g. regular disruptions or an inability to concentrate)

**8%**

had considered quitting their jobs altogether

**38%**

of parents surveyed who have been concerned said their employer did not support them in any way when their child(ren) were struggling

**12%**

of concerned working parents surveyed had considered reducing their working hours to support their child(ren)

**66%**

of concerned working parents would like their employers to support them in some way

**13%**

of concerned parents had not sought external support because they didn't know where to turn

# 1. Parental concern

**– parental worry over children's mental health**



# Parental concern

## High levels of concern

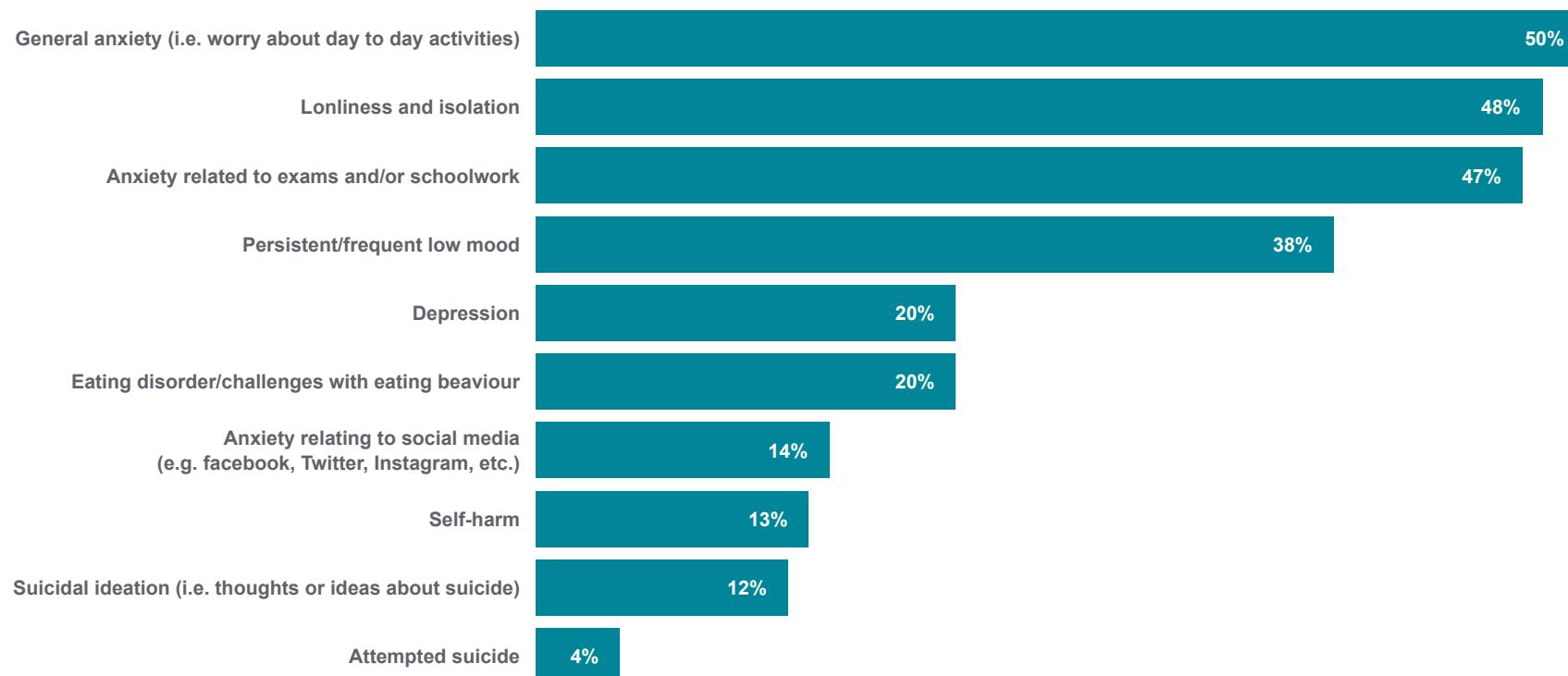
In our survey of 1,016 UK parents with children aged nine to 18 years, 68% reported feeling very (24%) or fairly (44%) concerned about one or more of their children's mental health and/or emotional wellbeing in the last two years. Of those parents expressing concern, 44% have

had concerns about the mental health of more than one of their children. Fewer than one in 10 of all parents surveyed said they were not at all concerned about their child(ren)'s mental health.

In interviews with parents, the stories we heard reflected this high prevalence of concern.

*"I've been very worried about the mental health of three of my four children. And I know that I am not alone in this, as I've heard of similar experiences from colleagues and friends – a spectrum of concerns and fears about the mental health of our children."*

### Which examples of poor mental health have concerned parents been worried about in relation to one or more of their children?



## The nature of the issues

The research pointed to anxiety as the most common reported issue. Half of concerned parents in our survey said one or more of their children had experienced general anxiety in the last 2 years. This is supported by data from YoungMinds, which shows that anxiety is one of their most commonly reported concerns across Parent Helpline services. For children aged over 12, anxiety about exams or schoolwork is significant – 58% of concerned parents saying that they are concerned about this.

Parental concerns about self-harm were reported by 13%, rising to 17% for concerned parents of children aged 12 and over. Incredibly worryingly, suicidal thoughts were an issue for children of 12% of all concerned parents surveyed. 4% were concerned that their child had attempted suicide.

A large proportion (87%) of parents with concerns about their child(ren)'s mental health reported being concerned about more than one mental health issue.

A mother of a 17-year-old shared the different ways in which her child's poor mental health manifested:

*"My daughter has had anxiety since she was 10. Things got better over the pandemic when she was at home. And she was ok when they had to go back to school. But then the pressure of GCSEs triggered her anxiety to return. This led to worrying behaviour around eating and self-harm, and she had panic attacks in her mock exams."*

## Seeking support

A sizeable number of concerned parents have sought external support for their child(ren) in the last two years. Nearly one-third had contacted a GP (30%) and a counsellor/therapist (31%).

Sadly, lack of information and stigma is still a barrier to seeking support. 13% of concerned parents had not sought external support because they didn't know where to turn. 5% had not because they were nervous about their family being judged.

**13%**  
**of concerned parents had not sought external support because they didn't know where to turn.**

*Problems related to school have entered into our top 5 most common concerns that parents/carers share with us about their children. Through our conversations, we can see that adjusting to life post-pandemic and returning to education has been a difficult transition for many young people. For example, many preferred home learning, since the family home provided a safe space away from problems such as bullying, academic pressures or difficulties that neurodivergent children, or those with special educational needs, can face in the school environment. Also, we now have more young people who are worried for their future prospects because they have missed out on a lot of education in the past few years. So, exam stress and feeling behind is very common."*

**Stevie Goulding, Senior Manager of Parents and Carers Services, YoungMinds.**

# 2. The knock-on impact

**- how mental health difficulties in children affect parents' wellbeing**



# The knock-on impact

When children struggle with their mental health, parents struggle too.

## Widespread anxiety

Six in 10 (60%) of those parents surveyed who are concerned about their child(ren)'s mental health say that it negatively affects their own mental health.

One parent we interviewed was clear about the direct correlation: *"Put simply, I am only as happy as my unhappiest child."*

A recurring theme was the relentlessness of the stress and anxiety felt when parenting a child with mental health difficulties. Another parent we spoke to said:

*"This is a stressful experience that you cannot take a break from. It's the hardest challenge I've ever had – emotional, inescapable and relentless."*

Many of the parents also expressed feeling powerless to help their children who are struggling: *"It's not like when they were younger, and they would fall over and cut their knee, where a cuddle and a kiss make things better. I feel utter helplessness."*

The parents' worsening mental wellbeing due to concern over their children's mental health manifests itself in a number of ways. Difficulty sleeping was reported by 37% of concerned parents surveyed, while 20% reported withdrawing from social situations. 25% of concerned



parents surveyed say it has put a strain on the relationship with their partner.

Feeling mentally unwell makes life even more difficult at a time when parents need to draw on all their energy and resources to cope with the challenges that they face with their children.

## The impact of children's mental health on parents' working life

**Concern about a child's poor mental health, and the time and energy needed to manage this situation, can have wide-ranging and significant effects on how parents are at work.**

### A strain on the workforce

Of all the working parents we surveyed, nearly half (48%) say that their work life has been impacted by their child(ren)'s struggles with mental health. Of those working parents who were reporting concern about their child(ren)'s mental health in the past 2 years, 65% told us that it has impacted them at work in some way.

The most commonly reported impact on work were that concerned parents found it harder to concentrate (31%) and harder to manage the stresses of their job (30%).

*"I felt completely overwhelmed by the situation, which makes dealing with stresses at work harder."*

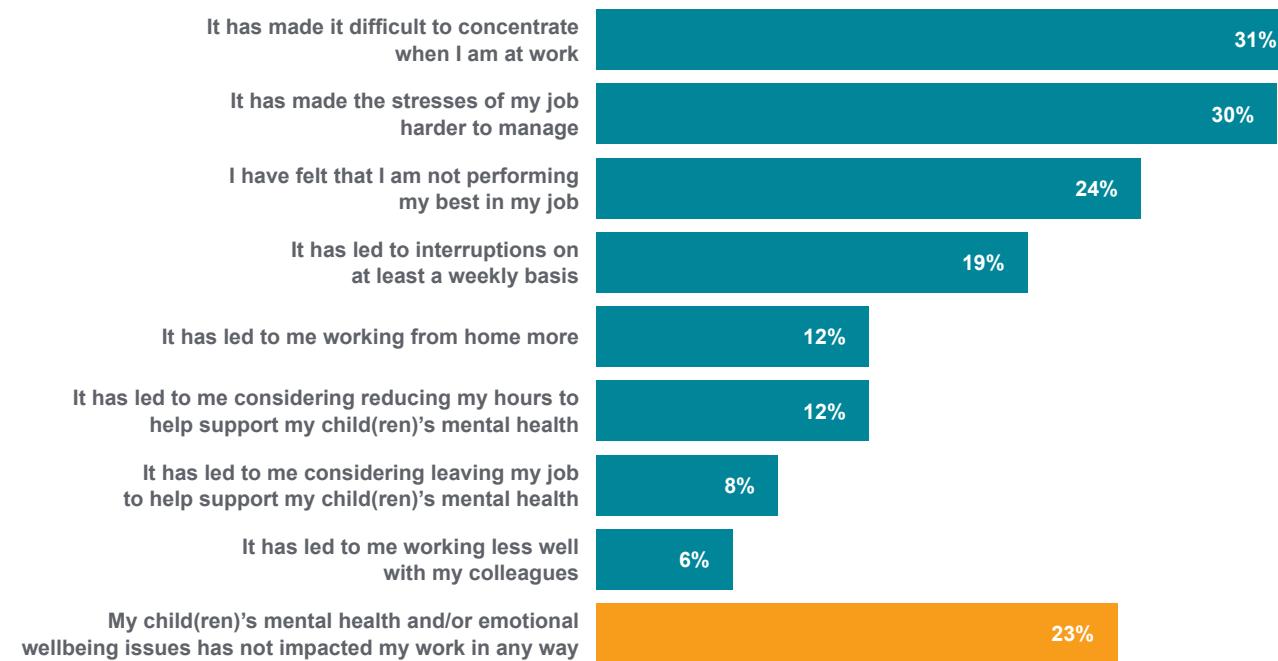
Many concerned parents surveyed who reported having been impacted at work said their child(ren)'s struggles cause daily (13%) or weekly (19%) interruptions in their work day. One in five (19%) say they have missed work on average at least once a month over the last 2 years to support their child(ren) with their mental health issues and/or emotional wellbeing challenges. 4% report missing work two or three times a week.

Altogether, one-third of concerned parents surveyed, who said the situation with their child(ren)'s mental health impacted them at work, felt like they were not performing at their best in their jobs. One parent said in conversation:

*"I have a challenging job, which requires deep resilience. But when my resilience was low, and when things weren't going well at home it impacted my performance. At one point I almost asked my line manager not to do my performance review as I knew I hadn't performed as I would have wanted, and I didn't want to hear negative feedback."*

In some cases, working parents are considering taking a step away from their job. Twelve per cent of concerned parents surveyed had considered reducing their working hours to support their child(ren) and 8% had considered quitting altogether.

### How has your child(ren)'s struggles with their mental health impacted you at work?



A significant majority (78%) of the parents surveyed who reported being concerned about their child(ren)'s mental health were aged between 35 and 54. This suggests that this issue is particularly prevalent for those employees who may be on the cusp of, or already in, senior roles. Without support and understanding, these parents may not fulfil their professional potential and the business will lose out on their experience and skill.

## Women more affected

It is important to note that more of the surveyed parents who are women reported being affected at work by their child's mental health difficulties than men. More than one-third (34%) of women who are concerned about their child(ren) said it was harder to manage the stresses of their job, compared to 25% of men. 16% and 11% of concerned women surveyed have considered reducing their working hours or leaving their job, respectively, to support their child(ren), compared to 7% and 5% of men. This suggests that the poor mental health of employees' children is an inclusion issue and is an important consideration for a business's focus on gender equality.



# 3. How employers can help



# How employers can help

Parents want flexibility, openness, literacy training and resources from their employer to help them to look after their own mental health and be in a better position to support their children.

## The role of the workplace

Our research reveals that parents are looking to their employers to provide support and understanding during these tough times: 66% of survey respondents said they would like support from their employer if their child(ren) were struggling with mental health and/or emotional wellbeing issues. 10% answered “don’t know” if they’d like and only 10% of concerned parents said they wouldn’t like any support from their employer.

Our research suggests that many businesses are getting it right, but many still have more to do. Unfortunately, 38% of parents who have been concerned about their child(ren)'s mental health and/or emotional wellbeing issues in the last two years reported that their employer did not support them in any way when their child(ren) was/were struggling.

There are a range of ways in which parents would like employers to support them, according to our research.

### Support for parents' own mental health

In an interview, one parent recognised how important it was to manage their own mental health in order to support their struggling child:

*“My son cannot afford for me to become very unwell – it’s critical that I hold myself together so that I can be there for him. So I make sure I take care of myself. It’s like putting your oxygen mask on first before helping others.”*

One-quarter (25%) of concerned parents surveyed said they would like an employer to provide them with access to mental health and wellbeing interventions to support themselves, such as an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), counsellor or medical insurance. A similar proportion (26%) would like their employer to provide tools and resources to help them understand and manage their own mental health.

Many of the parents we talked to expressed how powerful it can be to connect or talk to others who are going through a similar experience.

*“Bringing parents together who are going through the same thing is very helpful. There’s nothing like talking to another person who is going through something similar.”*

However, while 13% said they would like their employer to provide this kind of opportunity, only 2% of parents surveyed reported having had access to this kind of peer support through work.

### Support for their children's mental health

We know that NHS mental health services are under very significant pressure. YoungMinds say that the threshold for referral to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) has risen to extreme levels in parts of the country. Therefore, there is a gap in provision that employers can help to fill with, e.g., private medical insurance. Indeed, 24% of concerned parents surveyed said they would like their employer to provide their child(ren) with access to external mental health support, such as through an EAP or medical insurance.

One parent said that she was grateful that they were able to access a child psychiatrist through work insurance, although she commented that the pathways for accessing that support were very difficult compared to access for an adult. This experience with complicated pathways was echoed by other parents we interviewed.

**Many of the parents we talked to expressed how powerful it can be to connect or talk to others who are going through a similar experience.**

## Flexibility, understanding and compassion

The most common type of support that parents surveyed experience from their workplace – reported by one-quarter (25%) of concerned parents – was flexibility and adjustments in how they work. This is a good starting point; flexibility was the form of support most commonly desired by concerned parents (49%).

The value to parents of flexibility came through strongly in our interviews.

*"It is great that I am able to work from home more, especially around my daughter's self-harm episodes."*

*"The demands are intense: being there for my child, speaking to school about what is going on, securing a diagnosis, navigating the pathways for accessing care – it is hugely time and brain intensive. I rely on the flexibility at work to help me get through this. If I didn't have that, I would definitely need to leave my job."*

*"Flexibility and understanding is so important. You don't get to choose when your children's medical appointments are – when you get one, you just need to prioritise that above all else, including work. Whilst an appointment may only be an hour, there needs to be additional allowances for time in travelling back and forth to the appointment, as well as time afterwards to deal with the emotional turmoil that often follows."*

The good news is that nearly two thirds (64%) of concerned parents surveyed said that they would feel very or fairly comfortable asking their employer for working adjustments – such as flexible working – to support their child(ren). However, stigma is still a challenge – one-third of parents (33%) said they wouldn't feel comfortable asking (2% said they didn't know).

## Understanding and communication

Our research shows that that an open culture combined with supportive behaviour and attitudes from the business, especially from line managers, are very helpful. Nearly one-quarter (24%) of concerned parents surveyed said they would like the opportunity to talk openly to their line manager and/or colleagues about what is going on in their life, yet just 18% of concerned parents said that they had been given the opportunity.

The value parents put on understanding line managers shone through in our interviews:

*"My line manager is really understanding and 'gets it'. "I can be flexible when I need to be, so that I can be there for my children, without having to explain what is going on in detail."*

*"After my child's suicide attempt, my team couldn't have been more supportive. They allowed me the space and time be at home with my family and to focus on my child. With my consent, my manager spoke to the team to share what had happened which meant I didn't have to think about that or worry about what to say. The messages of support from the team meant so much to me and was a great source of strength and comfort. It also made it easier to settle back into work when the time was right for my me and my family."*

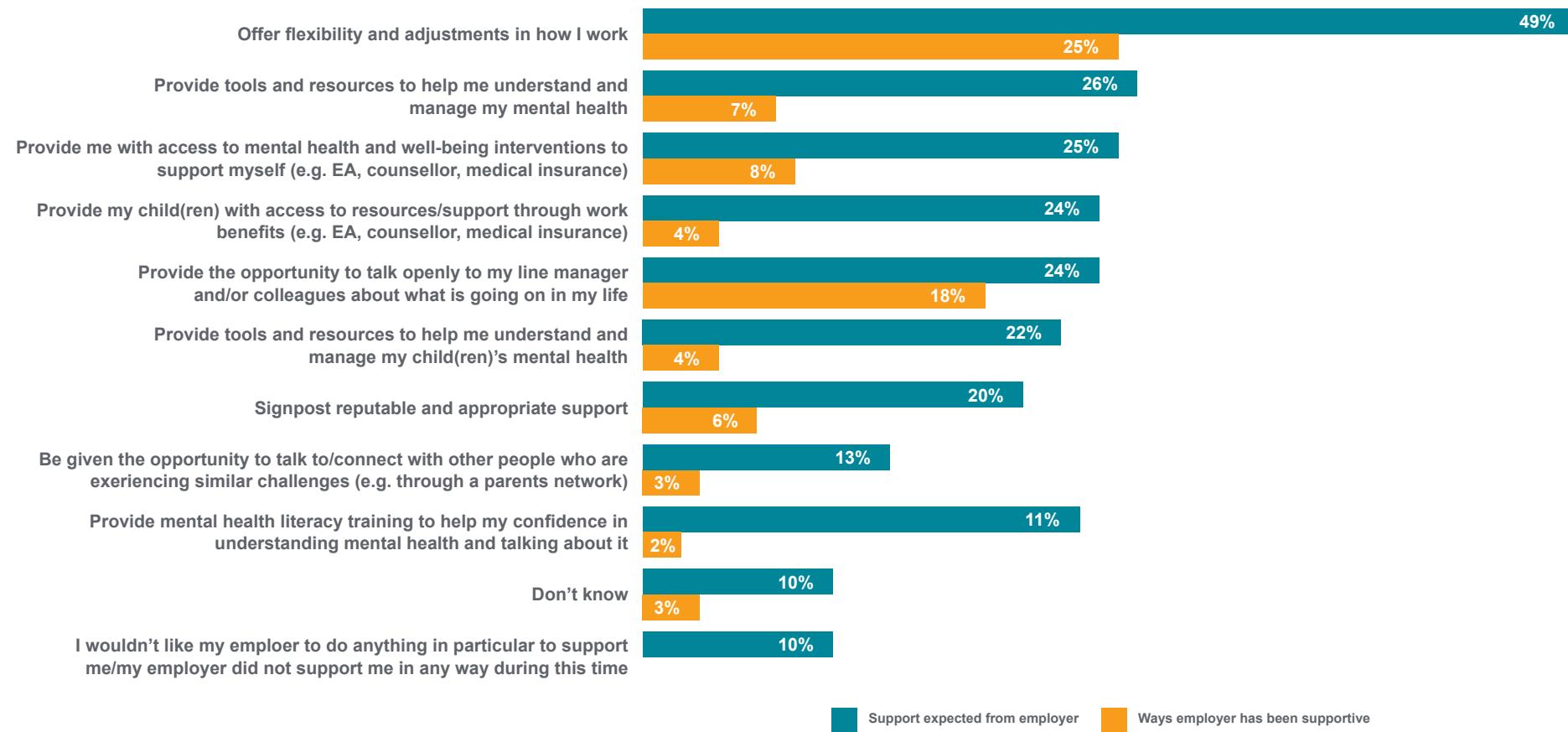
## Support mental health literacy

A large number of parents don't feel comfortable talking to their child(ren) about mental health – 35% of parents who have been concerned about their child(ren)'s mental health and/or emotional wellbeing issues in the last 2 years reported that they would find it difficult to have conversations about it.

Workplaces have a clear opportunity to support, in a wide variety of ways. Twenty-two percent of concerned parents surveyed said they would like their employer to provide tools and resources to help them understand and manage their child(ren)'s mental health. While 11% would like mental health literacy training to help build confidence in understanding mental health and talking about it.

**35% of parents don't feel comfortable talking to their child(ren) about mental health**

**Comparison of what support parents would like from their employer if their child was struggling, and how employers have actually been supportive**



## The role of business

It is clear that working parents want and need support from their employers to help them understand, protect and support the mental health of themselves and their children. If businesses can get this right, it can make a real and positive difference to their employees, their employees' children and the business. As one parent said in conversation:

*"I know three relatively senior, and very talented, people would have left my team because of what they were going through with their children's mental health, had it not been for the flexibility and compassion from the organisation that enabled them to cope."*

We know that recovery from poor mental health, and the opportunity to thrive is very possible. One study recently found that about two thirds (67%) of people with any mental illness in their lifetime met symptomatic recovery, meaning they no longer met the diagnostic criteria for a particular illness.

The following section explores how businesses can help employees, and their families, move towards this.



# 4. Recommendations for business



# Recommendations for business

The CMHA has worked with experts and businesses to develop recommendations to help guide employers to support parents who have children with mental health difficulties. These recommendations can be grouped under three pillars.

## 1 Create a culture of wellbeing and psychological safety

Businesses should work to create environments that de-stigmatise mental health difficulties for all employees. This should include ensuring that parents feel that they are able to speak up if their children are experiencing poor mental health. Employers can make it clear that they recognise the wellbeing of employees' families as a priority, so that parents feel comfortable to ask for support or adjustments in times of family difficulty.

## 2 Develop a mentally healthy working environment

It is important to create a work environment in which, and design jobs so that, people are able to balance their priorities at home with their work, especially at times of urgency. And this includes parents who are supporting a child with mental health difficulties. Your organisation can achieve this very practical day-to-day support through offering flexibility, autonomy, compassion and by increasing the mental health literacy and knowledge of line managers and leadership.

## 3 Provide and signpost to accessible resources, tools and support

Ensure that appropriate resources and support that helps employees who are parents and, where possible, their children, are readily available.

*“Parents have a crucial influence on children’s experiences, achievements and wellbeing. Therefore, it is important to support parents to build their own resilience, so that they feel able to support their children with any difficulties they might be facing. Employers can play a key role in creating workplaces that support employees to thrive, both in their role as a parent/carer and in their career.”*

**Cecilia Corbetta, Place2Be’s Clinical Lead for London and West**



## Suggested actions

In this section we include some suggestions for actions that a business could take to put these three recommendations into practice.

From page 22 you can find some examples of what other businesses have already done. However, as ever, what works for one company may not be quite right for your business, culture and people. Always consult your workforce on what they need, and engage them in the roll-out. Your wellbeing or mental health staff network and/or parenting networks – if you have one – would be a good place to start.

For more guidance on how to introduce evidence-based wellbeing strategies, download the [CMHA Thriving At Work UK Guide](#). If you have any questions, please contact cmha@citymha.org.uk

### 1. Actions towards creating a culture of wellbeing and psychological safety

#### Learning events

Raise awareness and challenge stigma around mental health by hosting learning events for employees. This could include opening an event by sharing some of the insight from this research. You may want to have an expert speaker, or – if people are willing to share – hear from parents in your workforce who have had children with mental health difficulties. It is particularly powerful, in shaping culture, when senior leaders contribute to these events. Events could coincide with national or global awareness campaigns such as Children's Mental Health Week, Mental Health Awareness Week or World Mental Health Day.

#### Reference parents in mental health strategy

Recognise and address the challenge of parenting a child with mental health difficulties in your organisation's strategy / approach to mental health. This ensures that there will be a continued commitment to this, and that it will also be measured. Consult with parents who have lived experience of the issues to clearly understand what would be helpful.

#### Show your commitment externally

Publicly communicate your organisational commitment to the wellbeing of parents, and that your business has a culture that allows parents to prioritise their families, such as in career literature, job interviews and social media.

### 2. Actions towards developing a mentally healthy working environment

#### Increase awareness and skills in key groups

Build understanding of the prevalence of this challenge, and how it can impact parents in your business, by including the topic of parenting a child with mental health difficulties in your standard mental health literacy training programme, or by running a CPD session. Prioritise training for groups who are most likely to engage with your working parents, such as line managers, HR teams and wellbeing champions (or equivalent).

#### Offer flexibility and autonomy in how people work

As your business evolves its ways of working post-pandemic and updates people policies and ways of working, ensure there are mechanisms to offer an appropriate flexible working arrangement for parents who find themselves in this situation. This could include putting in place a leave / time off policy for parents to attend appointments with their child.



#### Audit HR policies

Review the policies that are relevant to parents to ensure that they are inclusive of children's mental health and signpost to support.

### 3. Actions towards providing and signposting to accessible resources, tools and support

#### Peer support

Sharing difficult experiences with peers who are going through, or have got through, similar situations can be very helpful, and is relatively simple and cost-effective to organise. Facilitate this by establishing parent and carer networks, and hosting specific sessions on this subject. Children's Mental Health Week, Mental Health Awareness Week, Parental Mental Health Awareness Week or World Mental Health Day are potential calendar hooks for convening these peer support groups. Try to ensure the presence of a trained Mental Health First Aider, Wellbeing Champion or equivalent to support anyone who may be upset.

## Support first steps to recovery

Navigating the healthcare system to secure a child's mental health diagnosis, from where treatment can then follow, can be challenging and drawn out. Employers could provide employees with the opportunity to speak with clinicians to help to speed up this part of the journey.

## Review company benefits

Review benefits such as health insurance and Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) to ensure that there is appropriate support available to employees who have children with mental health difficulties. Stress test pathways to check that they are not over-complicated and make sure your benefits will support a young age range

of dependents. Also check that multi-channel support is being offered. For example, it may not be possible to speak to a helpline when at home with a child in distress, so alternatives such as apps or online chat are important.

## Regularly signpost to wellbeing support

Regularly signpost mental health support and resources to all employees and, where possible, pinpoint those that are available to parents who may have children with mental health difficulties. Flag external support as well as internal, so that people have the choice to speak to someone outside of work. For examples of external support, go to the resources section on page 25.



## Share the CMHA toolkit



Share the *Mental Health Difficulties in Children and Young People: A Toolkit for Parents* with employees. It is particularly relevant for parents and mental health networks. This free resource, which the CMHA created by working with businesses and children's mental health charities, can help parents to:

- understand good mental health and mental health difficulties in children and young people
- be aware of why and when difficulties can arise and what to look out for
- know how to help your child if they are struggling
- know when and how to get professional help
- understand that you need to look after yourself, too
- find further information on the topic from trusted sources.

[Link to toolkit here](#)

**“** Research and scientific developments are on the cusp of making a transformational difference. Intervening early with the right support can help young people find ways to manage challenges such as depression, anxiety, eating disorders, OCD, self-harm – and ensure they don't carry these problems into adult life. Helping parents understand how they can best support their children's mental wellbeing is also vital. At the Maudsley we have seen the huge benefit of peer to peer support for parents who can share their own experiences of caring for and supporting their children to get better.”

**Dr Bruce Clark, CAMHS Clinical Director and Consultant Psychiatrist at South London & Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust**

## Examples of what businesses are doing

**With a 6.5% increase in the number of families in the UK from 2011, the Bank of England understands parents/guardians are an ever-growing population that require their own wellbeing resources for themselves and children, specifically around mental health.**

The Bank has four in-house counsellors, who provide support for all staff, including parental/guardian mental health. Alongside this, it has an Employee Assistance Programme offering a network of more than 1300 counsellors within a 15 mile radius of home. A range of counselling is available through both services, including Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), Eye Movement Desensitisation Reprocessing (EMDR) and bibliotherapy.

Another key supportive measure is the adding of children to the Private Medical Insurance offered as a benefit in the Bank; parents can access mental health support and treatment for their children through this. This guidance was informed by our award-winning Parents Network. The Parents Network supported the Bank's review of its ways of working on how the return to work



BANK OF ENGLAND

would impact not only pragmatically on parents and children, but also mentally. The network has 801 members across the Bank and has worked alongside the Mental Health Network to provide sessions on enhancing children's mental health.

Moreover, via a key partner, City Mental Health Alliance, we have shared their 'Supporting the Mental Health of Children and Young People' guide. Their Parents Toolkit, a piece of work the Bank fed into, is also widely available in the Bank and as well as signposting, this provides explanation as to how the brain and mental health develops. Another partner, Bank Workers Charity, provides signposting for children and young adults, with the Kooth app being a popular feature.

## Morgan Stanley

**Morgan Stanley prioritises creating a healthy, inclusive culture and approach to mental health for employees. It focuses on three key pillars:**

**Awareness** – Address stigma by educating, raising awareness and encouraging literacy around mental health and wellbeing through training and knowledge share

**Prevention** – Encourage a healthy, engaged and productive workforce via a curated global calendar

**Access** – Provide best-in-class access to resources and treatment – supporting and encouraging utilisation

Around 40% of Morgan Stanley employees in the UK are parents, so its wellbeing strategy recognises their needs and the challenges they face. Inclusive benefits and initiatives include:

**1. Morgan Stanley's Family Networks in EMEA** – have around 1,600 members, and proactively support the wellbeing of members by running a topical calendar of education, peer support and networking opportunities.

**2. Morgan Stanley's Global Wellbeing Boards and Influencer Network** – operate to help shape strategy, open up the conversation around mental health and wellbeing, sponsor initiatives and amplify communications and resources.

**3. Mental Health Awareness Training** – the organisation recognises that compassionate leadership and psychological safety are critical for all employees, including their population of parents who might need to support a child through a difficult time. To support managers and employees, they are implementing a global mental health awareness program called “Open Minds”, providing education to recognise when employees may need support. As part of this initiative, a “start the conversation” toolkit was recently launched, to help employees signal when they might need support and giving managers helpful and appropriate ways to support

and have conversations. Open Minds complements the longstanding Mental Health First Aid training programme in the UK.

**4. Parents Toolkit** – partnered with the City Mental Health Alliance to create the toolkit which is shared across the Family Network.

**5. Family Caregiver Leave** – this global benefit demonstrates Morgan Stanley’s commitment to supporting employees who are caregivers (for either children or older members of the family). The family caregiver leave gives employees up to 4 weeks of paid leave to care for a family member with a serious health condition, including mental health. The approach ensures employees have financial support if they need to step away from work for family priorities.

**6. Healthcare Provision** – Morgan Stanley provides employees and their families with a number of health benefits including an employee assistance programme, a mindfulness app, virtual GP and private healthcare.

Morgan Stanley is also using its power as a large business to bring about positive change at a societal level. **The Morgan Stanley Alliance for Children's Mental Health** convenes leaders in the children's mental health space. It brings together the knowledge and experience of organisations, such as Place2Be in the UK and the Child Mind Institute in the USA, along with the resources and reach of Morgan Stanley. Since launching in February 2020, the Alliance has benefited over 25 million students, families and educators globally.

The Alliance focuses on raising awareness and destigmatising mental health globally. This work includes funding and publishing research, white papers, articles and toolkits; hosting events on topics including the COVID-19 impact on mental health, problematic internet usage, and exploring the metaverse and mental health; as well as media and speaking engagements. These resources and events are widely available, and Morgan Stanley employees are encouraged to make use of these resources and toolkits and become advocates in their own communities for mental health.



**PwC has long focused on supporting employees who have parenting and caring responsibilities. And, like many workplaces, the circumstances of the pandemic allowed the business to review and evolve existing support mechanisms, whilst also signposting employees to the established support already available.**

At PwC, the opportunity for more flexible working has been one prominent example of how employees are supported to balance their priorities at work with those at home. PwC has an Empowered Flexibility policy, which supports hybrid ways of working, and has been thoughtfully designed to empower employees to work in a way that can be tailored to their personal, team and clients' needs. As a result, parents and carers can work in a way that allows them to support their children and work in a way that suits them best.

As well as structural, policy-based support, the practical routes to assistance have been central to PwC's approach to a wellbeing programme considerate of the needs of parents. Examples include:

- PwC's Employee Assistance Programme - although like most EAPs it will not directly support under 16s, it can provide advice and guidance to the parents themselves when faced with a difficult situation, aiming to support their mental health to ensure they are best able to in turn support their children.

- In 2020, PwC also launched a virtual GP service. This has had a great impact allowing members of the workforce and their family members to make appointments very quickly, often on the same day.
- PwC's health insurance also offers the option to add dependents under 22 onto the policy, providing access to private healthcare.
- PwC has established a 'PwC Work and Family' portal which includes access to resources such as the CMHA Parents Toolkit, which we know parents and carers have found very helpful

PwC recognises that culture is important too. Recognising the challenges facing parents and carers, challenging stigma and offering space to talk has helped to create an open culture. This has been achieved through the establishment of the SPACE network (Supporting Parents, Carers & Everyone else), the provision of a message platform where colleagues can share and seek support, and regular events hosted by the network which provide a platform for hearing the experiences of colleagues and knowledge from experts.

# Useful resources

## Sources of support for concerned parents and their children

- The CMHA resource - [Mental Health Difficulties in Children and Young People: A Toolkit for Parents](#) has been created to provide an overview of the key topics, signpost to further information from trusted sources, and share insights from parents and young people who have been through it.
- The [YoungMinds Parent's Helpline](#) offers free advice to parents/carers who are concerned about their child's mental health, from the ages of 0-25. You can contact them via their telephone helpline, webchat and email service.
- Place2Be offers parents practical tips for parents to support wellbeing and behaviour: Place2Be: Parenting Smart: Articles
- The [Jaag](#) platform gives answers on mental health from world leading experts and those with lived experience.

### Helplines

- Anyone under 19 can contact [Childline](#) about any problem big or small. They provide support via phone online chat or email. They can provide a BSL interpreter if your child is deaf or hearing-impaired. Call 0800 11 11.
- [The Mix](#) offers support on the phone or online to anyone under 25 about anything that's troubling them. Call 0808 808 4994.
- [No Panic](#) is a specialist youth helpline for people aged 13-20 who experience panic attacks. Call 01952 680835 for a recorded breathing exercise to help you through a panic attack. Or call 0330 606 1174 for their helpline.
- Whatever your child is going through, they can contact [Samaritans](#). Call 116 123.

### Textlines

- [YoungMinds Textline](#) provides free, 24/7 text support for young people experiencing a mental health crisis. Text YM to 85258.

### Communities

- [Kooth](#) has discussion boards, live chat, and an online community.
- [MeeToo](#) is a moderated peer support app, where people of similar age or experience can talk about their concerns or difficulties.

### Support for suicidal thoughts

- [Papyrus](#) offers advice and support for young people struggling with suicidal thoughts.

### About the City Mental Health Alliance

- To find out more about the CMHA, including how to become a member and our training, go [here](#).

In partnership with and thanks to:



Morgan Stanley

With thanks to:



Place2Be is a children's mental health charity that provides counselling and mental health support and training in UK schools.



The Pears Maudsley Centre for Children and Young People is a partnership between The South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust, Maudsley Charity and King's College London, working to transform the understanding, treatment and prevention of young people's mental ill health.



YoungMinds is a mental health charity for children, young people and their parents, making sure all young people get the mental health support they need.



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