

A Confidential Support Service for Teaching Professionals



BYOB.
Bring Your Own Bother
#dontbottleitup

A confidential initiative
for Teaching Professionals

brought to you by


the **talking**rooms
Counselling, CBT & Psychotherapy

Why Bring Your Own Bother?

It's likely that your teachers will be interacting with young people who have experienced significant trauma in their lives. They need a safe way to explore the impact of that work on their own mental health. Barnardo's Scotland have been working in schools across Scotland and identified the lack of professional mental health support as a key issue affecting both teachers and head teachers. This was of particular concern when schools became involved in child protection matters. They carried out a survey and found that 79% of teachers felt that more needed to be done to help schools recognise and respond to trauma and childhood adversity. The Education Support Partnership's Teacher Wellbeing Index indicated that 67% of education professionals considered themselves to be under stress, with 65% feeling unable to raise the issue with their leadership team.

When a young person is experiencing mental health issues or needs protecting, it's often their teacher who notices first. They've built a relationship through day to day contact. That doesn't just put them in a position to identify potential issues, it also means that they're the person who provides the closest support. It comes with a level of stress and pressure that isn't always recognised. When a school becomes involved in a child protection conference it's often the teacher who has the greatest level of contact with the young person. Yet research shows teachers can receive the lowest level of assistance.

It's almost taken for granted that teaching is a stressful profession. Teachers strive to provide their pupils with positive educational experiences that also build their social skills and mental resilience. But this takes effort that has a psychological cost. You may even have asked teachers at interview how they practice self-care outside work. We think the question should be 'what are we putting in place to take care of our teachers?' Offering teachers the opportunity to reflect and take time for regular psychological support and training is essential. It doesn't just enable them to take care of their own mental health. It allows them to offer more robust assistance to the young people in their care.

What can we do?

We believe that there needs to be a fundamental shift in the way that schools support their staff. More and more, the burden of providing support to young people in crisis is falling on school staff. The stress that causes doesn't just impact on the teachers themselves – it potentially affects the outcome for the young person as well. **Teachers need to be trained and supported in looking after their own mental health.**

We believe that one of the best ways to support teachers is to provide confidential support from professional therapists. **B.Y.O.B. initiative gives teachers time and space to explore their own wellbeing** and ways in which they can best support the young people in their care, particularly those with complex needs. Each member of staff is different which means that support should be tailored to the individual. Some will already have good stress management skills whilst others struggle with their workload. Some need encouragement to take action and others will require support to slow down and reflect. Team dynamics and social distancing can also have a significant impact on the professional support provided to each individual. Of course, B.Y.O.B. initiative isn't just available for teachers. Managers supporting staff also experience significant stress. **Reflective practice and not bottling it up allows everyone in the team to take care of their own wellbeing. #dontbottleitup**

How the Talking Rooms can help!

The Talking Rooms counsellors are trained, experienced professionals providing Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) to help our clients effectively deal with trauma and improve their mental health.

We provide evidence based care which is tailored to each individual's needs. That starts with an assessment to allow us to learn about their stresses and the coping mechanisms that they already have in place. Every school is different and our B.Y.O.B. Support Service is designed to reflect that. In our experience, regular, structured session is vital. This allows teaching staff to understand their own feelings and how they affect their work and relationships with pupils.

If you've ever been approached by a teacher in distress and wondered where to send them, or if you need support in providing your team with the assistance they need, we can help. We offer professional support based on sound psychological principles. What's more, we're an independent listening ear. With us, you and your team can speak freely, safe in the knowledge that everything they tell us is completely confidential. Your teachers can build relationships with our counsellors, which allows us to identify areas where they may be struggling. It's not enough to have teachers trained in mental health; if their own cup is empty how can we expect them to fill up their pupils?

With our help, you can support your staff in looking after their mental health and overall wellbeing. This allows them to forge relationships with young people that will enable them to deal with trauma and build a brighter future.

Ready to talk?

Do you want to find out more about how our confidential service for teachers, Bring Your Own Bother, can help your school? Book an appointment today to discuss how you can support the mental wellbeing of your staff.