



Department  
for Education

# **Young people's call for evidence**

**Help us to learn more about how peer  
support can help support emotional  
wellbeing**

**Launch date 17 February 2016**

**Respond by 24 March 2016**

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## Introduction

This call for evidence is to ask you what you think about using peer support to help your friends, what experiences you have had of it, your thoughts on how helpful it can be, and what you think a good programme to support your friends emotionally would look like.

We would like more young people to be able to feel confident in giving their friends and peers help, advice and support but we know that for this to be successful you need to know how you can do it in the best way. We also want young people not to worry about being judged if they need to ask for help.

You might be interested to know that peer support was also a key recommendation in the recent report into young people's mental health by the Youth Select Committee<sup>1</sup>, which is part of the [British Youth Council](#).

## Who this is for

This call for evidence is open to any who would like to respond. Let us know your views, whether or not you have personal experience of peer support.

It may also be useful for young adults who have previous experience of providing support, or being supported, through a peer support programme.

Alternatively you may wish to respond through the call for evidence document for those involved in running peer support programmes.

## Sending us your response

Please use the online system wherever possible. If you can't for any reason then you can email us your views at: [PeerSupport.Consultation@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:PeerSupport.Consultation@education.gsi.gov.uk) or post them to:

Sameea Ahmed / George Christian  
Department for Education  
Sanctuary Buildings, 2nd Floor  
Great Smith Street  
London  
SW1P 3BT

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<sup>1</sup> [Youth Select Committee report into mental health \(2015\)](#)

This call for evidence was launched on Wednesday 17 February 2016 and we need your response in by **5pm** on **Thursday 24 March 2016**.

## Our response to you

The results of the call for evidence and the Department's response to what you have told us will be [published on GOV.UK](#) in spring 2016.

## Enquiries

If you have any questions about this document then you can contact the team on:

- 02476 660260 and ask for Sarah Carter; or
- 0207 783 8011 and ask for Sameea Ahmed (Monday - Wednesday); or
- 0207 340 7739 and ask for George Christian (Wednesday-Friday)

or email [PeerSupport.CONSULTATION@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:PeerSupport.CONSULTATION@education.gsi.gov.uk)

If you have comments about the e-consultation website or the consultation process in general you can contact the DfE Ministerial and Public Communications Division by email: [consultation.unit@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:consultation.unit@education.gsi.gov.uk) or by telephone: 0370 000 2288

# Peer support for emotional wellbeing

## Why we need your help

We know that having good emotional wellbeing is extremely important. Emotional wellbeing is when you feel happy, confident, are able to take part in school, college, or work, and other activities, and have good self-esteem. The results from this survey will help us better understand what good peer support looks like, what the key features are and how it works differently in different places. You know better than anyone about the pressures you and your peers face so we have launched survey to find out more about your knowledge and experiences. The survey should take 5 - 10 minutes to complete.

Thank you for your help.

## Questions

### Your experience of peer support programmes

These questions ask about your experiences of peer support for any type of issue such as moving schools, bullying or friendship issues. Or you might already be part of a programme that is specifically about supporting emotional wellbeing.

Peer support can be a variety of things - from helping a friend to discuss their problems, through buddying and befriending schemes, to one-to-one and group support sessions. It can happen face to face or be online. When we say 'peers' we mean your friends or other young people, including those who may be older. For example, older young pupils in secondary school who provide support to Year 7 students as they come up from primary school.

We are interested in any type of peer support that you might have had either in school, through an out-of -school club or group or from an online setting / app. We would like you to tell us which ones were good and why. We would also like to know where things could have been better.

1. Have you ever been involved in any type of peer support (tick all that apply)?
  - a. Yes – as a peer supporter
  - b. Yes – receiving support
  - c. No - I haven't been involved in any peer support schemes
2. If you have been involved in peer support, please tell us about it:
  - a) What was the peer support for?;
  - b) What was good about it?; and
  - c) What could have been better?

### **Helping others with their emotional wellbeing**

We are interested to know if you would be interested in being a peer supporter that helps others with their emotional wellbeing. This could be within a programme run at school, by an out-of-school club or group or in an online setting.

3. Would you be interested in being a peer supporter to help others with their emotional wellbeing?
  - a. I am already a peer supporter for emotional wellbeing
  - b. Yes, I would be interested in doing this
  - c. I don't know enough about emotional wellbeing to decide
  - d. No, I wouldn't want to do this
4. If not, can you tell us why not? (please tick all that apply)
  - a. I don't know enough about emotional wellbeing
  - b. I don't feel confident supporting my peers
  - c. I'm just not interested/it's not for me
  - d. I'm worried about what my friends might say
  - e. I'm dealing with my own issues around wellbeing
  - f. I'm not interested now, but might be in the future
  - g. I don't have the time
  - h. Any other reasons (please specify)

### **Getting support for emotional wellbeing**

We are interested to know if you would be interested in having peer support if you had any emotional wellbeing concerns. This could be in a programme run at school, by an out-of-school club or group or in an online setting.

5. If you had concerns or problems that were affecting your emotional wellbeing, would you be interested in getting help through peer support?
  - a. I already have peer support for my emotional wellbeing
  - b. Yes, I would be interested in this
  - c. I don't know enough about emotional wellbeing to decide
  - d. No, I wouldn't be interested in having peer support for this
6. If not, can you tell us why not? (please tick all that apply)
  - a. I don't think peer support would help me
  - b. I don't need peer support
  - c. I don't feel confident that things I say would be kept private
  - d. I'm worried about what my friends might say
  - e. I don't have time
  - f. I'd prefer to be a peer supporter myself
  - g. I'm getting support somewhere else
  - h. Any other reasons (please specify)

## **Getting it right**

We would like to know what you think are the most important things to get right in order for a peer support programme about emotional wellbeing to be successful. We would like you to choose at least one, but you can choose up to 5. You also have the option to suggest things that we might not have thought of that you think are really important.

7. What do you think the most important features of a peer support programme are? (select up to 5 features)
- a. The peer supporters are friendly and approachable
  - b. Peer supporters are well trained and knowledgeable about wellbeing
  - c. There is a choice of times to have peer support
  - d. Peer support is available in school
  - e. Peer support is available out of school
  - f. Peer support is available online
  - g. Those giving and receiving support are friends
  - h. Those giving support are of a different age/friendship group
  - i. Peer supporters have personal experience of the issues
  - j. You can see your peer supporter every week
  - k. You can see your peer supporter as and when you need them
  - l. There is an adult to talk to if there are any serious problems
  - m. Information is available about other types of wellbeing support
  - n. Information is available about the peer support process/rules
8. Are there any other features of peer support that you think are important?

## **Online peer support**

There are lots of ways young people can offer one another peer support online, especially using apps and social media. We would like you to tell us about any you might have already used that help to support emotional wellbeing.

We want to know what you think are the most important features that online support needs to provide. We would like you tick at least one box, but you can choose up to 3. You also have the option to suggest things that we might not have thought of that you think are really important.

9. What do you think are the most important features of online peer support programmes? (please select up to 3 features)
- a. My friends like it
  - b. Other people say it's good
  - c. A teacher or other adult tells me it's good
  - d. Other people with the same worries as me use it
  - e. What I say will be kept private and not shared with anyone else

- f. It's a safe place to get advice
- g. It's anonymous
- h. There professionals providing the advice
- i. Negative comments are well managed
- j. It has an award or seal of approval that shows it's safe to use
- k. Any other reasons (please specify)

10. If you have used them, please list any websites or apps that you have used for peer support for any worries, problems or issues.

### **Support, training and recognition**

These questions are about the support and training that you think peer supporters for emotional wellbeing should have. We also want to know if you think they should get recognition for the help that they are giving.

11. What support or training do you think peer supporters should get? Tick as many as apply

- a. No support or training is needed
- b. Training before they begin
- c. Ongoing training
- d. Emotional support if they are upset/worried by what they hear
- e. Able to refer difficult issues to a trained adult
- f. Rules on confidentiality etc.
- g. Training on safeguarding/keeping people safe
- h. Opportunity to talk to other people offering peer support
- i. Any other comments

12. What recognition do you think peer supporters should get? Tick as many as apply

- a. It's not important to get recognition for this
- b. A badge or award from your school/college
- c. Be part of an existing award e.g. Duke or Edinburgh's Award
- d. Being able to put peer support on your CV / UCAS form
- e. An award from a recognised wellbeing organisation
- f. Any other comments



## All about you

Please tell us about yourself so we can make sure that we have heard from young people of all ages and circumstances.

13. How old are you?

- Up to 11
- 12-16
- 17 and over

14. How would you describe your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Other/prefer not to say

15. Who do you live with?

- Parents/carers
- Other relatives
- In foster care
- Alone
- With friends
- Other

16. Are you in:

- School
- College
- Training
- College and training
- Work
- None of the above

17. Do you get one-to-one or small group support in school or college from a teaching assistant?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know / would prefer not to say

Thank you for filling in this survey. The results will be used to help us better understand what good peer support looks like.

Do you have any further comments or views that you would like to share with us?

Please contact us at: [PeerSupport.CONULTATION@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:PeerSupport.CONULTATION@education.gsi.gov.uk)



Department  
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