



Place2Be Scotland: Our Impact

Children's mental health charity, Place2Be, has been providing in-school support and expert training to improve the emotional wellbeing of pupils, families, teachers and school staff in Scottish primary and secondary schools since 2002.

Starting with an initial pilot in two Edinburgh primary schools, Place2Be Scotland now reaches over 22,000 pupils and their families in schools across Glasgow, Edinburgh, South Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire, Tayside and South Ayrshire.

“COVID-19 has intensified an already challenging situation for children’s mental health in Scotland. Tackling the crisis in children’s mental health must be central to our nation’s renewal and recovery and we welcome education and health colleagues’ prioritisation of mental health support. Place2Be has long championed a holistic approach to mental health, focused on early intervention, supporting children and young people, their families, schools and wider communities.”



Jacqueline Cassidy,
Director - Scotland, Place2Be

“Place2Be is offering a valuable service where teachers can both manage and improve their own mental health while gaining an understanding of how better to support children and young people. This is particularly important at this crucial time when teacher and pupil resilience will be tested. Building the skills of the education workforce in this area will provide lasting benefits to the entire school community.”



John Swinney MSP,
Deputy First Minister of Scotland

1 in 8

children and young people (5-19 years) have a diagnosable mental health condition.¹

Half

of those with lifetime mental health problems experienced symptoms by the age of 14.²

One third

of children and young people wait more than 18 weeks for treatment from CAMHS.³

¹ NHS Digital: 2018

² Kessler R and Wang P (2007) The descriptive epidemiology of commonly occurring mental disorders in the United States. Annual Review of Public Health 29: 115-129

³ Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service in Scotland: Waiting

The need for Place2Be Scotland

One in eight children have a diagnosable mental health condition such as anxiety or depression. Many of the children, young people and families that Place2Be Scotland supports lead difficult and complex lives.

Many of the communities we work with across Scotland face high levels of poverty and the children and families have complex needs. 43% of the pupils supported by Place2Be counselling receive free school meals. 91% have experienced at least one adverse childhood experience, 30% had four or more.

Focus on early intervention

Scotland's Mental Health Strategy⁵ is clear that prevention and early intervention should be the focus of activity and funding to minimise poor mental health and the severity and lifetime impact of mental disorders and mental illnesses.

In 2019, the Children and Young People's Task Force Recommendations⁶ highlighted a need for the Scottish Government and COSLA to prioritise investment in early intervention and prevention. Importantly, this also included building the skills and knowledge of staff who work with and support children and young people.

Reaching our most vulnerable

In 2017/18, 24% of children in Scotland were living in poverty⁷. Children from low income households are four times more likely to suffer mental health problems and have worse outcomes than their better off peers for school achievement and educational outcomes⁸.

With increasing poverty and a clear link between deprivation and emotional and behavioural problems⁹, the need for Place2Be's services is greater than ever.

⁵ Mental Health Strategy 2017-2027, Scottish Government (March 2017)

⁶ Children and Young People Mental Health Task Force Recommendations (2019)

⁷ Public Health Scotland – poverty overview

⁸ Public Health Scotland – impact of child poverty

⁹ Scottish Schools Adolescent Lifestyle and Substance Use Survey (SALSUS): mental wellbeing report 2018



“It’s made me more confident going into high school. If I didn’t have Place2Be, I don’t know where I’d be right now.”

13-YEAR-OLD BOY

How we help

We are committed to supporting the social, emotional and mental wellbeing of children and young people in the crucial formative years of their lives. Our expert teams provide pupils and their families with emotional and therapeutic support, as well as delivering training within school communities. All of our work is evidence-based, using tried and tested methods, backed by research.

1. We deliver an early-intervention, whole school approach to mental health in partnership with schools, including support services for pupils, their families and school staff.
2. Through our 'Mental Health Champions' programmes, we offer comprehensive training and support for school leaders and staff to build the capacity to create mentally healthy schools.
3. We provide accredited, professional qualifications for the counselling sector and offer supervised placements during training.
4. As part of Initial Teacher Education for student teachers at Edinburgh (Moray House School of Education and Sport) and Stirling Universities, we deliver training around mental health and building resilience.
5. We partner with others, to influence policymakers to make changes which positively impact children and young people's mental health.
6. We collect evidence and data about our work in schools and use it to measure our impact. This helps us to continually improve our services.



“It’s been so transformational for the lives of so many individuals and the impact on the general school ethos. It’s about the quality of the support Place2Be provides and it’s very responsive to the children’s needs.”

VANESSA THOMSON, HEAD TEACHER,
OAKWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL, GLASGOW



Watch a video about our work in Scottish schools

place2be.org.uk/scotland

Taking a whole school approach

Promoting good mental health is everyone's business. Our whole school approach provides in-school support for children and young people, their families and school staff. We facilitate supportive forums for education professionals to benefit their own wellbeing, and offer professional development opportunities for school leaders and teachers. Our teams connect with specialist services including NHS Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) to ensure children receive the right level of support.

In-school support

Place2Be's mental health practitioners currently work directly with over 90 school communities - supporting school leaders, school staff, children, young people and their families in some of Scotland's most deprived communities.

We build children and young people's resilience to face life's challenges through talking, creative work and play, enabling them to focus on their education and realise their full potential. We also support parents, carers and school staff to become more 'mentally healthy'.



"Place2Be is a service that permeates the whole of the school. It's not an add-on, it's not just counselling. Place2Be is unique. It's valued by students, staff and parents. Young people are happier, able to get on with their lives and access their education. That's what it's all about."

HAZEL KINNEAR, HEAD TEACHER, TYNECASTLE HIGH SCHOOL, EDINBURGH

Our approach is based on early intervention, which is vital, as half of all mental health problems are established by the age of 14. Our support is also universal and accessible to reduce stigma.

Our whole school approach includes:



Consultancy, advice and training (online and face-to-face) for school leaders and classroom teachers to create mentally healthy schools.



In-school specialist mental health support for pupils and families.



Self-referral sessions accessible to any child in the school.



Place2Think – individual or group based solution-focused forum for school and community professionals who work with children and their families.

"I'm a year, maybe two years past my counselling, and I still use the stuff that they taught me. For us as a family it was massive."

MUM WHO RECEIVED PARENT COUNSELLING FROM PLACE2BE

Over the past three years in Scotland, Place2Be has

Supported
1,150
pupils through
one-to-one weekly
sessions

Been there for
7,500
pupils who booked
their own appointment
to speak to us during a
lunch or breaktime

Held almost
6,000
Place2Think sessions
to support school
and community-
based staff

Welcomed
more than
70
school leaders to our
Mental Health
Champions
programme

Supported over
200
student teachers
through
Place2Think
reflective sessions

Provided our online
Mental Health
Champions –
Foundation programme to
950
teachers and student
teachers

Equipped
113
counsellors on placement
with new skills and
experience through our
programmes.

How we help

73% of children and young people with severe mental health difficulties had improved mental health after Place2Be counselling

60% of children's difficulties had less impact on their teacher or class

68% find it easier to have & keep friends

Mathew's story: Early support leads to long-term impact

Mathew, now 23 and working as an IT analyst, has first-hand experience of the power of early support for children's mental health. As a child, he received support from Place2Be in Scotland while at primary school. Now as one of our Youth Ambassadors, Mathew speaks out about the long-term impact of receiving this support from Place2Be:

"How I know Place2Be helped me personally is because when I left school my life got dramatically worse over the next 10 years, the one thing I always had was the strength to talk, the strength to find help because somewhere deep inside I knew I deserved it. And I believe it was Place2Be that gave me that internal strength."

 [Watch a video about Mathew's story](#)

place2be.org.uk/mathew

Development and support for Scotland's education workforce

Two thirds (66%) of teachers in Scotland feel they haven't received adequate training in mental health¹⁰ and 85% say that training would help them look after both their own emotional wellbeing and that of their pupils.¹¹

Our expert training programmes and consultancy support enable school leaders, teachers, wider school staff and student teachers to become mental health champions, helping support school communities to have a positive attitude towards mental health. This in turn builds the resilience of education professionals, helping them to stay and flourish in the profession.

Becoming a Mental Health Champion

Our Mental Health Champions programmes, delivered face to face and online, are endorsed by Education Scotland and focus on creating mentally healthy schools.

Our training for school leaders is embedded within Education Scotland's Excellence in Headship Programme and provides school leaders with the skills and confidence to action strategic change.

For classroom teachers, training outcomes include improved classroom management, enhanced stress management skills and improved access to learning for vulnerable children and young people.

Our Foundation programme, delivered online, enables teachers and school staff to gain a deeper understanding of mental health to better support them and the children they work with.

Supportive forums – a Place2Think

Our supportive forums allow school staff to reflect on their work. Facilitated by Place2Be clinicians, our Place2Think service provides a safe and supportive space for education professionals working with children and families to explore any issues or concerns and gain a broader understanding of children's mental health needs.

With the support of Scottish Government, over 350 school staff across Scotland will benefit from our Place2Think service in 2020/21.

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HAZEL KINNEAR, HEAD TEACHER, TYNECASTLE HIGH SCHOOL, EDINBURGH



Find out more

Thanks to our generous funders, teachers and school staff can currently access Place2Be's Foundation programme for free. Visit place2be.org.uk/foundation

¹⁰ SAMH: Going to be well-trained, SAMH survey on school staff training in mental health, 2017

¹¹ Ravalier, J.M and Walsh, J (2017) Scotland's Teachers: Working Conditions and Wellbeing

93% of participants on the Mental Health Champions – Foundation programme have changed their actions, behaviour or attitude in the classroom as a result of something that they learned on the course.



"I would recommend this training, and have already recommended it to some of my colleagues. I now feel a lot more prepared to look out for signs. This training is also a useful tool that I can go back to look up information or get clarity on a particular type of mental health need. I haven't had that before and it's really helpful."

P1 TEACHER AND PARTICIPANT ON MENTAL HEALTH CHAMPIONS – FOUNDATION PROGRAMME

"Being able to reflect on your practice with someone in a neutral, compassionate and non-judgmental way who is able to offer guidance and advice is essential."

SCOTTISH STUDENT TEACHER AND PLACE2THINK PARTICIPANT



COVID-19 pandemic

The mental health impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on children, young people and their families is widely recognised.

An independent impact assessment report for the Children and Young People's Commissioner found that many more children and young people in Scotland will need additional mental health support because of measures taken to tackle the coronavirus crisis¹².

While schools were closed due to the pandemic, we adapted our usual model. Our teams rapidly moved to a phone-based service to continue providing high-quality mental health support for children, families and school staff. We also partnered with leading digital providers to provide safe ways for young people to access the support they needed.

During lockdown, we:

- continued to provide support for families remotely, delivering 2700+ phone sessions to children, young people and families and 250 remote support sessions for school staff (Place2Think).
- delivered our online Mental Health Champions – Foundation programme to 900 Scottish school staff.
- partnered with leading providers to offer digital support tools for young people, including an app to help reduce anxiety and access to an online community with wellbeing resources and counselling. These tools will continue to be available to the young people we work with, giving them greater choice and flexibility.

“Talking to Place2Be during lockdown helped me feel less worried and more calm.”

Nine-year-old girl, Renfrewshire

“It was so good to know you were there for that phone call each week, even through the chaos of lockdown. I had my parents to talk to, but they were going through their own stresses so knowing that there was someone who cared and would listen really helped me during that time.”

16-year-old boy, Renfrewshire

¹² Independent Children's Rights Impact Assessment on the response to Covid-19, The Observatory of Children's Human Rights Scotland, 2020.

The next five years

The needs of children and young people and the profile of mental wellbeing remain high on the public and political agenda. The proposed incorporation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) into Scots law will mean that every child will have the legal right to enjoy the highest attainable standard of health and facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health.

Encouragingly, there has been new government investment and support for children and young people's mental health in Scotland and an increased interest in teacher wellbeing and professional development. Education policy continues to evolve, with the Scottish Government making equity in education its highest priority. This presents opportunities for Place2Be in Scotland, within both direct school delivery and professional development of the education workforce: We are proud to have been commissioned by the Scottish Government to deliver our online support 'Place2Think' sessions to over 350 members of school staff across Scotland, as well as a series of webinars on topics such as recovery and self-care.

The mental health impact of COVID-19 is still unfolding. The onus on us as a society is to intervene early to reduce unhappiness, wasted opportunities and potential socio-economic costs of ignoring mental health problems. We want all children and young people to have the best start in life, prepared with the life-long skills to look after their emotional wellbeing, enabling them to be successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors to society and responsible citizens.

Over the next five years we will:

- 1 expand the number of schools we partner with throughout Scotland to work with up to 200 schools, reaching more children and young people
- 2 continue to build the knowledge and skills of school leaders, teachers and school staff in the area of children's mental health
- 3 expand our training of the children's mental health workforce, ensuring availability of experienced clinicians for children and young people
- 4 continue to develop digital services, to enable us to offer a range of support methods for children, families and schools
- 5 contribute to the national conversation on the role of schools in promoting mental health and wellbeing

Please support us

Place2Be can clearly demonstrate the positive impact of its work; and there is clear evidence of an increased need to support children's mental health.

The state sector cannot provide enough resources to meet this growing demand. With your help and support we can reach more children and young people early, to give them the best possible chance for their future.

By supporting the mental health of young people, we are investing in the future. For every £1 spent on Place2Be in Scotland, the benefit to society is £5.50¹³.

¹³ Pro Bono Economics evaluation of Place2Be's service in primary schools in Scotland

For more about us and the impact we make

place2be.org.uk/Scotland

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 [@Place2BeScot](https://twitter.com/Place2BeScot)

Royal Patron: HRH The Duchess of Cambridge

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