



Youth Focused On-Line Mental Health Service Review Newsletter

Project Title	Youth Focused On-line Mental Health Service Review Newsletter
Project Team Members	Pritika Desai and Kristian Goodacre
Date	December 2008

Please note: The Youth Minister's Round Table of Young Territorians is an independent advisory council. The views expressed in this report are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the Office of Youth Affairs or the Northern Territory Government.

Contents

Acknowledgements	3
Abbreviations	4
Executive Summary	5
Methodology	5
How Were Youth Involved?	6
Background Information	6
Consultations	7
Research	8
Findings	8
Conclusions	10
Recommendations	10
References and Bibliography	12
Evaluation	13
Appendix A – Review Template	14
Appendix B – Newsletter Draft	
18	

Acknowledgements

Team Uber would like to thank the following organisations and people for their support and guidance throughout the year. Without them, this project would not have been successful and the goals would not have been met.

The staff at the Office of Youth Affairs (Northern Territory Government) for taking the time to view drafts, answer questions and supporting the team in completing the project.

The Multicultural Youth of the Northern Territory for taking time to review websites.

2008 fellow Youth Minister's Round Table of Young Territorians Members for their support and assistance and similarly for helping to complete website reviews.

Mr Zac Rudge from Headspace for providing important information on how to make the project successful and helping in the planning stage of the project.

Abbreviations

MyNT	Multicultural Youth of the Northern Territory
NT	Northern Territory
NTG	Northern Territory Government
OYA	Office of Youth Affairs
Round Table	Youth Minister's Round Table of Young Territorians

Executive Summary

Mental illness and poor mental health affects many people of all ages, genders and nationalities. These days the number of online services available to people who are dealing with a mental illness or mental health issues are numerous. To a young person who is too scared or embarrassed to see a counsellor or consult a teacher or parent about their mental health issues, these on-line services can be essential in helping them deal with the symptoms associated with their illness as well as answering some important questions relating to mental health.

However, sometimes the number of services can be overwhelming and it is difficult for young people to know which on-line services would suit them and how many actually exist. This is why during 2008, as part of the Youth Minister's Round Table of Young Territorians (Round Table), in consultation with young people from Darwin, Palmerston and Darwin rural area, *Team Uber* developed a draft newsletter. This newsletter reviews online mental health services to inform young people of the youth friendly services available to them on the World Wide Web. It is hoped that this draft newsletter will encourage the Northern Territory Government (NTG) to support the development of a similar on-line mental health review newsletter.

Methodology

A number of steps were taken to develop this newsletter.

- Round Table members met four times during the year and *Team Uber* met almost every second week to design and plan the project.
- Mr Zac Rudge from Headspace (a mental health service in Palmerston) assisted by providing information on mental health, how to go about completing the project as well as giving useful information on how to conduct focus groups.
- Mental health websites for youth (many found from the Office of Youth Affairs website) were viewed for potential review. Eight were chosen to be reviewed because they targeted youth, were safe to use as they linked to credible organisations and they were all unique in the way they presented their information to young people.
- A focus group was conducted with a group of 10 young people from Multicultural Youth of the Northern Territory (MyNT), ranging from 15 to 26 years of age, (60% male, 40% female).
- A template was developed as a result of the focus group and then used by Round Table members and MyNT members to review the websites.
- The results from these review templates were collated to produce the final draft of the newsletter. The review template and draft newsletter are attached in the Appendices.

Through this, I gained a better understanding of mental illnesses and what young people look for in a mental health website and this knowledge formed the basis of producing the draft newsletter.

How Were Youth Involved?

This newsletter was developed solely by young people between the ages of 15 and 26 years, of different genders and nationalities, from the Round Table and the MyNT team. During the focus group and consultation stage youth made recommendations for the review template, provided comment on websites to include in the project and also regarding the content of the draft newsletter. The youth also undertook the website reviews. Lastly *Team Uber* as a group of young people designed the project and produced the draft newsletter.

Youth were involved in three main ways through focus groups, review template completion and newsletter development. It is suggested that if the Government pursues the development of a similar newsletter, these steps be taken again to partner with youth people.

Background Information

AIM: To develop a newsletter for youth, to help them find online mental health websites that suit them, so they can get useful information in relation to mental health issues.

Last year, the Round Table project team '*Mental Health Education*' (Nicolette Pearce, Nathan Frick, Karlie James and Siana Cork) conducted a survey of 631 young Territorians, including students. Their findings proved that young people found it difficult to get information about depression. Nearly 30% of people surveyed (189 young people) believed that depression is an issue among young people and 52% (328 young people) knew someone with a mental health issue.

Depression is one of the main forms of mental health conditions affecting youth according to 77 people surveyed (12%). 90% (567 young people) had never heard of the *Mind Matters* program proving that more education is needed on depression, especially since 309 young people (50%) responded that they are not often taught about mental health in school.

The newsletter will be successful, because it will provide students with information that will help them learn more about depression as well as about other mental illnesses. 179 respondents (28%) believed there should be more mental health education in schools, supporting this view further and 54% said if mental health education were to be made compulsory in schools they would feel comfortable participating in this education. Therefore it is hoped that most students will support this newsletter as a tool used by schools to educate them about mental health.

2007 'Mental Health Education' Team's Recommendation:

A pamphlet and poster series is developed collaboratively with relevant agencies to show young people the avenues of assistance available for youth suffering from mental illness

- Youth stakeholders within the Northern Territory to come together and develop an edgy and informative marketing campaign with short pamphlets and well-designed media to educate and engage young people.
- This media could be accessed through the Internet, school library, or school counselor. Depending on design, such information could also be incorporated into school newsletters and even rural and remote news services.

The above recommendations from last year's project helped to develop the idea for this project. The concept of the collation of 'avenues of assistance available for youth suffering from mental illnesses' was explored. The MyNT focus group further supported the idea that information should be accessible through the internet, school library or school counselor and incorporated into school newsletters and rural and remote news services.

Therefore this year, *Team Uber* decided to pursue a project to design a newsletter, with the help of MyNT as a 'one stop' resource for high school students to find out more about mental health and illnesses and where they can access information on-line.

Consultations

a) Focus groups:

AIM- To determine what young people would want to find in an on-line service focusing on youth mental health and illness and to brainstorm ideas on the layout of a newsletter.

A focus group was conducted with members of MyNT a group of 10 young people of different nationalities, ages and genders. Things that were discussed included what layout would make young people attracted to a website, how would it be easier to navigate around a website and what content should be in the website.

b) Feedback:

The feedback from the young people was important in ensuring the newsletter appeals to young people. The feedback from the focus group was made into

a set of questions for the review template. This review template allowed collation of the information to form the basis of the newsletter.

c) Review template:

AIM- To provide a template to assist the young people reviewing the websites. Review templates included the points brought up during the focus group. The MyNT members were required to tick the appropriate boxes that reflect the website such as its appeal to youth and how relevant its content was. These comments were used in the newsletter content.

Research

a) Websites- A large number of mental health websites were viewed in order to obtain the eight reviewed in the newsletter. The websites reviewed were:

- DepressioNet
- Reach Out
- Youth Beyond Blue
- Multicultural Mental Health Australia
- Its All Right
- Headspace
- Mood Gym
- Mind your Mind - Canada

b) Literature Review - a collection of newsletters, web reviews, game reviews and mental health brochures were viewed to understand how to write reviews in a newsletter format and how to make them appeal to young people.

Findings

The draft newsletter attached is made up of reviews by young people and contact information for mental health services. The information from the review templates was collated by adding quotes, opinions and ratings given by the young people into the newsletter.

This newsletter is beneficial to young people as it directs them to very helpful youth mental health websites, which suit their needs. The target audience for this newsletter could vary, however it was developed with the intention of providing it to high school students.

The focus group made suggestions on what they would want to find on a mental health website and what the newsletter should look like.

Key suggestions for mental health websites included:

- On-line mentors;
- On-line quizzes;
- A mental health certificate once a person has
- completed the quizzes etc on the website;
- An Emotion Quotient (EQ) test;

- Links for carers and families;
- Colours should have symbols (for example, blue for depression);
- Should be simple to operate;
- Have graphics and designs;
- Video blogs;
- Networking through blogs/forums;
- Games;
- Real pictures rather than cartoons;
- Search engine on the site;
- Headings and subheadings;
- Symbols and icons;
- Tabs that allow easy access to various parts of the website;
- Links;
- Information on the symptoms and causes;
- No logins;
- List of issues, cures/treatment;
- Mission statements;
- Summaries;
- Statistics;
- Music;
- Contact hotlines; and
- Not too much text.

Key ideas on the newsletter's layout and how it should be distributed included:

- Targeting year sevens;
- Two to three font styles;
- More than three colours;
- Summary at the end of the newsletter.
- Reviewing the positives and negatives of each site;
- Distribution to schools;
- Email and;
- Internet;
- Events and statistics.

The review templates provided useful information on the websites too, and this can be seen in the newsletter (Appendix B). This information will be helpful for Mental Health organisations in the development of their own Mental Health websites. Some quotes from the review template are bellow:

“Interesting idea having blog for each character” (Its all right)

“The bright Christmas cards advertised actually detract from other information” (DepressionNet)

“The site is very informative in the sense that it gives a lot of personal accounts and experiences” (Headspace)

“Canadian specific, though basic info relevant to Australian youth. Would be awesome to have an Australian website like this (Australian celebrity section instead of Canadian)” (Mind your Mind)

“Too many photos of happy people, makes me feel trapped. Just need more images.” (Multicultural Mental Health Australia)

“This site has got nothing but boring old text. Boring old black and white text. And the quizzes go forever.” (mood gym)

“Give many perspectives by sharing other people’s stories” (Reach Out)

“Getting support for dealing with depression and anxiety from a counselor or psychologist is so expensive that it is not an affordable option for many young people. If a website can provide an affordable and comfortable option where people (of all ages) can find support and someone to talk to then it definitely needs to be promoted.” (Youth Beyond Blue)

Conclusions

The newsletter is a creative way of getting the message across on the services available to young people, and its audience’s age group can vary from young children to young adults.

If a similar newsletter is developed by the Government it will be able to help many young people gain information, safely and confidentially, on mental health, helping them deal with their mental health issues.

It will engage and make young people aware of some of the online services on mental health, which focus on them as young people.

Final Recommendations

Recommendation 1

The Department of Health and Families, Mental Health Unit support the further development of the newsletter content into an edgy design with assistance from graphic designers and direct input from young people.

Recommendation 2

The newsletter should be distributed by email, internet, and through schools and youth events held across the Northern Territory. These are areas where the majority of young people can be targeted. Chain emails especially have become a popular way of passing information to people across the world and this tool can be used to promote and distribute the newsletter. The newsletter should also be provided to school counsellors as they have a high level of access to those who would need the information from the newsletter most.

Recommendation 3

Many of the young people involved in the project believed the review templates were too long and took too much time to complete, even though the review template’s purpose was to help them do the reviews more easily. Therefore,

future review templates should only focus on the important factors that make a good website that focuses on youth mental health. Any other suggestions can be added in a comment box when further content is developed.

Recommendation 4

The content of the websites are continuously being modified and more information added. Therefore, to ensure that the newsletter remains up-to-date, new websites should be reviewed, and the content of those that have already been reviewed should be revisited.

In the project, eight websites were reviewed and although not all these reviews were used in the draft newsletter, they provide a collection of different reviews which can be used in future newsletters. The feedback from the websites show that the opinions on the websites are unique, and each website is very unique in how they present the information, so new reviews should be done several times a year ensure young people in the Northern Territory are exposed to all the types of on-line mental health services that focus on youth.

Recommendation 5

Like the group of young people from the Youth Minister's Round Table of Young Territorians and MyNT, a Mental Health Advocacy Group should take the idea of this newsletter and reproduce it. The group should consist of young people who can design and write reviews as well as edit and distribute the newsletter.

Bibliography and References

EASA-Training and Development on Facilitation Skills

Sally Williamson

www.esa.org.au

DepressioNet- Youth Mental Health Initiative

<http://www.depressionet.com.au/>

Headspace- Australian Government National Youth Mental Health Initiative

<http://www.headspace.org.au>

It's All Right- Australian Government National Youth Mental Health Initiative

<http://www.itsallright.org/>

Mind Your Mind- Canadian Youth Mental Health Initiative

<http://www.mindyourmind.ca/>

Mood Gym- Australian National University Mental Health Initiative

<http://moodgym.anu.edu.au/welcome>

Multicultural Mental Health Australia- Australian Government National
Multicultural Mental Health Initiative

<http://www.mmha.org.au/>

OYA: Office of Youth Affairs; Previous Years Round Table Reports

Reach out!- An Inspire Foundation Initiative

<http://www.reachout.com.au/default.asp?ti=43>

Youth beyond blue- National Youth Mental Health Initiative

<http://www.beyondblue.org.au/ybblue/>

Evaluation

This project was enjoyable and allowed me to make networks with many young people living in the Northern Territory. I feel the end product reflected the original goal, to produce a youth friendly on-line youth mental health service review newsletter. Although some of the results from the reviews were unexpected, and though I did not expect only three of the eight reviews could be used in the newsletter because of the amount of information gathered. I feel the newsletter is still successful in promoting on-line youth mental health services to young people in the Northern Territory.

I am most proud of the newsletter as it reflects the hard work the reviewers had put into reviewing the websites. The integrated quotes ensure it is non-biased as it is the views of many young people, not just mine.

There were two key problems which arose during the implementation of this project. One was the time constraints. Although we had the year to complete this project, school and other commitments distracted me from the project. I did not anticipate that my original focus groups would cancel our sessions and that the reviewers required more time than was allocated for them to complete the surveys. This meant I lost a lot of valuable time. Another problem was that so much information was in the surveys that the reviews became too long. Because of this only three reviews were used in the draft newsletter, however I believe this is sufficient in ensuring those who read it stay interested through till the end of the newsletter.

The results of these actions are shown in the newsletter and review template. Time and hard work from not only members of *Team Uber* but others too, meant that this project was completed on time and was the best it could be.

Through this project I have learnt so much, including the level of commitment I need and others provide to make the community better for youth. I will take these things I have learnt throughout my life, through my career and social life.

We need the support of the whole community to achieve the goals of the Round Table. But through this project and the opportunity the Northern Territory Government has provided through the Round Table, we are that much closer to achieving these goals.

APPENDIX A - Review Template

Name:

Age:

APPEAL

Does it contain	Animations Photographs Comics Other graphics Please specify: Comment:
Is its symbol/ logo	Easy to remember Attractive to you, as a young person Reflect the websites key purpose Disengage you Other Please specify: Comment:
Do the pictures/ comics/ photographs/ other graphics	Make a mockery of the issue Attract you to the websites contents Keep you engaged Give you a different perspective on the issue Help you understand the issue better Other Please specify: Comment:
Does the website have	Music Sounds Moving images Other Please specify: Comment:
Does this	Engage you Make you feel uncomfortable Make it seem like a youth specific site Help you understand the issue better Other Please specify: Comment:
Do the colours	Attract you to certain areas on the site Make you interested in the site Disengage you There are no colours (except black and white) Other Please specify:

	Comment:
Are the colours	Dark Bold Boring Calming Sad Comforting Interesting Other Please specify: Comment:
Do you require a login	Yes: _____ No: _____ Comment:
Does it have	Video blogs Forums Written blogs/ stories Other Please specify: Comment:
Does the site in your opinion target	Youth 8-12 year olds (primary school) 12-15 year olds (middle school) 16- 18 year olds (senior/ secondary school) 18- 25 year olds 26 and older All age groups Students in general University students specifically
Does it have a mission statement and do you think	Yes _____ No: _____ It helps young people understand what the service does Does not appeal to young people Help people find comfort in the website Other Please specify: Comment:
Which website is most interesting and appeals to you as a young person (Pick one of the four that had been assigned to you)	Reach out Headspace Mind your mind Its all right Ybblue DepressioNet Mmha Mood Gym Its rating out of 10: /10

GAMES

Are there	Games
------------------	-------

	<p>Quizzes Crosswords/ word finds Other interactive tools None Other please specify: Comment:</p>
Do you think	<p>These games etc are- fun</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - boring - informative - appealing - other please specify: - comment <p>If there are no games please comment on what impression this makes on you.</p>
Which website provides the best games etc	<p>Reach out Headspace Mind your mind Its all right Ybblue DepressioNet Mmha Mood Gym Its rating out of 10: /10</p>

NAVIGATION

Does it	<p>Provide further links to other helpful sites Give headlines/ subheadings/ links to other parts of the website Enable you to easily find the information you are looking for Direct you to places where you can go for help Provide a search engine to help you find information and other services</p>
Is it simple to operate	<p>Yes: _____ No: _____</p>
Which website is the most easy to navigate	<p>Reach out Headspace Mind your mind Its all right Ybblue DepressioNet Mmha Mood Gym Its rating out of 10: /10</p>

INFORMATION

Does it provide information on	What a mental illness is Who is considered to have a mental illness Why people have a mental illness Symptoms Prevention/ treatment Causes All issues eg, depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder etc other websites Where to get help Help for carers/ friends/ teachers etc who would like to help a young person deal with a mental illness
Does it provide	A contact list Hot line numbers Statistics Online mentors Links for carers and families specifically An opportunity to make networks with other young people and provide a safe, youth friendly place to learn and deal with a mental illness
Which website do you believe is most informative	Reach out Headspace Mind your mind Its all right Ybblue DepressioNet Mmha Mood Gym Its rating out of 10: /10

Overall: rate each out of ten

Reach out

Ybblue

Headspace

DepressioNet

Mind your mind

Mmha

Its all right

Mood Gym

other comments:

APPENDIX B - Newsletter Draft