

An orange speech bubble with a white drop shadow, containing the text "Look After Your Mate Campaign Guide".

Look After Your Mate

Campaign Guide

Introduction

Thank you for downloading the 'Look After Your Mate' campaign guide – it's fantastic that you're thinking of delivering the campaign on your campus!

Whatever the size or budget of your group or university, this guide will help you to plan a successful campaign by taking you step-by-step through the campaigns cycle.

Be sure to share the link to this guide with all of the relevant stakeholders on your campus, such as related student groups, the SU Welfare Officer, University Counselling Service and Mental Health Advisor. We'd also recommend that you arrange an early planning meeting. By working in partnership you'll avoid any unnecessary repetition, and with greater resources you'll be able to have a much bigger impact.

If you'd like to share your ideas or ask any questions about this campaign please do get in touch: campaigns@studentminds.org.uk.

Contents

- Step 1) Research
- Step 2) Analysing the Issue
- Step 3) Developing your Strategy
- Step 4) Planning your Activities
- Step 5) Monitoring and Evaluation



Step 1) Research

As with any campaign, we need to fully understand the issues before we can hope to have a positive impact on them. **So, what do we know about student mental health?**

Following a number of high profile reports, including the 2011 Royal College of Psychiatrists 'Mental Health of Students in Higher Education' paper, we know that the state of student mental health is a pressing issue:

- The uniqueness of the student lifestyle, which involves adjusting to new academic demands, choices about alcohol and drugs, making new friends and living without parents, makes the student population more vulnerable in some ways than other young people.
- The years when a young person is at university (18-25) coincide with the age of onset for various acute difficulties such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder.
- Student services report an increase in the severity and prevalence of troubles students are experiencing.

We also know that students' interactions with one another are the key to changing attitudes and behaviours...

- **Students rely on students:** Students are most likely to speak to friends when they are experiencing difficulties. [1] Day-to-day supervision most often falls on housemates. [2]
- **Students make a difference:** Good social networks and peer contacts have a protective influence against mental health difficulties. [3] Support from family and friends is found to be the most often cited reason for why students decided to remain in HE. [4]
- **Students are key to unpicking stigma:** In Student Minds' latest 'Grand Challenges' research, published in March 2014, several of the key 'Grand Challenges' identified by students relate to peer relationships and the impact of stigma (See Table 1).

[1] Student Minds, 'Mind the Gap' Report, 2011

[2] UCLAN, Papyrus, 'Responses and Prevention in Student Suicide', 2007

[3] Royal College of Psychiatrists, 'Mental Health of Students in Higher Education', 2011

[4] Thomas, L. *Building student engagement and belonging in higher education at a time of change: final report from the What Works? Student Retention and Success programme*, 2011

We are kindly supported by Comic Relief, the Welton Foundation, UnLtd, The Matthew Elvidge Trust, The Charlie Waller Memorial Trust, The James Wentworth-Stanley Memorial Fund and Student Hubs.

Top 10 Challenges

1	Fear of being judged
2	Stress
3	Finding the confidence to tell people you have a mental health problem or are struggling
4	Mental Health Problems are seen as a weakness
5	Loneliness
6	Finding the confidence to ask for help
7	Slow and difficult process of referring students to specialist services
8	Poor general understanding about mental health problems
9	Mental health problems have a substantive negative impact on concentration
10	There is a general reluctance to disclose mental health problems

Table 1: Top 10 challenges for student mental health, identified by Student Minds 'Grand Challenges' research, 2014. See: www.studentminds.org.uk/grand-challenges

Although there is already a strong evidence base for this 'friend-focussed' approach to student mental health campaigning, you may find it useful to conduct some local research.

This would give you a greater understanding of how your students currently think about mental health and could help shape the direction of your 'Look After Your Mate' campaign. It would also set you up to complete some follow up research after the campaign has been delivered to see whether you have seen a change in attitudes or behaviours.

If you'd like to conduct research at your university, speak to your Students' Union (Welfare Officer, Advice team or Campaigns staff) about the possibility of running a survey or focus groups.

Step 2: Analyse the Issues

Considering the research above, and any local evidence you have collected, the next step in the campaigns cycle is to identify:

- What is/are the issue(s)?
- What measurable change needs to be achieved to see an impact?

Taking all of the research available into account, we are aiming to have a measurable impact on the following two issues during this campaign:

- Behavioural Change: More students across the UK need to be equipped to look out for their friends.
- Institutional Change: More universities across the UK should adopt a student-led, engaging approach to mental health promotion.

Through your own discussions there may be a number of additional issues and some long term changes that you will identify and want to address in the future. We'd suggest that in delivering this specific campaign you focus on addressing the changes identified above, but if you do come up with additional wider aims we'd love to hear them! Do get in touch: campaigns@studentminds.org.uk.



We are kindly supported by Comic Relief, the Welton Foundation, UnLtd, The Matthew Elvidge Trust, The Charlie Waller Memorial Trust, The James Wentworth-Stanley Memorial Fund and Student Hubs.

Student Minds is a charitable company registered with Companies House, no. 7493445 and the Charities Commission, no. 1142783

Step 3: Develop a Strategy

The next step is to consider what impact you want to have on the issue. Here your team should look to create a campaign strategy, which involves taking the changes you want to see as identified in Step 2, and setting a clearly defined overall aim and objectives for the campaign.

Nationally, our aim for this campaign is that...

'More students across the UK will have the knowledge, confidence, and skills to talk to their friends about mental health.'

You might want to adopt the same aim for your campaign, but make it specific to your university. If your plan is to target a certain group of students e.g. medical students, you might set an even more specific aim. For example: 'More medical students at St George's University will have the knowledge, confidence and skills to talk to their friends about mental health'.

In terms of setting objectives, these are the stepping-stones that will help you to reach your overall aim. They break your aim down into manageable, easily understood chunks.

To make your objectives as useful as possible, you might like to use the **SMART** framework:

- **Specific:** Each objective should specify exactly what you want to achieve
- **Measurable:** Have targets with which to measure whether you have met your objectives
- **Achievable:** Ensure the objectives are attainable and achievable
- **Resourced:** Ensure that you have the resources available to meet them
- **Time Bound:** Have a clear timeframe and deadlines for meeting your objectives

These objectives will depend on the exact activities you decide to implement (coming later in this guide), but to give you an idea of how to make your objectives 'SMART', the objectives you select to help you meet the overall aim might include any of the following:

student minds

- To receive 1,000 views of our 'Look After Your Mate' video by the end of the exam period.
- To ensure the Look After Your Mate 'friends guide' is easily accessible through the SU and university website by July 2014.
- To see an increase in students' skills at the Student Minds 'Look After Your Mate' Workshop (through analysing feedback forms before and after the workshop).
- To receive positive feedback forms from at least 80% of all attendees at our social contact event.



Step 4: Planning Your Activities

The next stage involves deciding exactly what tactics you are going to use to meet the campaign objectives and to inspire students at your university to take notice and get involved.

A number of Student Minds groups have run effective planning sessions; open to any students or staff to attend. It might be an idea to host one of these as a kick-start to the campaign to get as much student engagement as possible.

We are kindly supported by Comic Relief, the Welton Foundation, UnLtd, The Matthew Elvidge Trust, The Charlie Waller Memorial Trust, The James Wentworth-Stanley Memorial Fund and Student Hubs.

Student Minds is a charitable company registered with Companies House, no. 7493445 and the Charities Commission, no. 1142783

Before you get your thinking caps on, take a look at the various campaign resources we have developed for you, and think about how you are going to use them to the best effect:

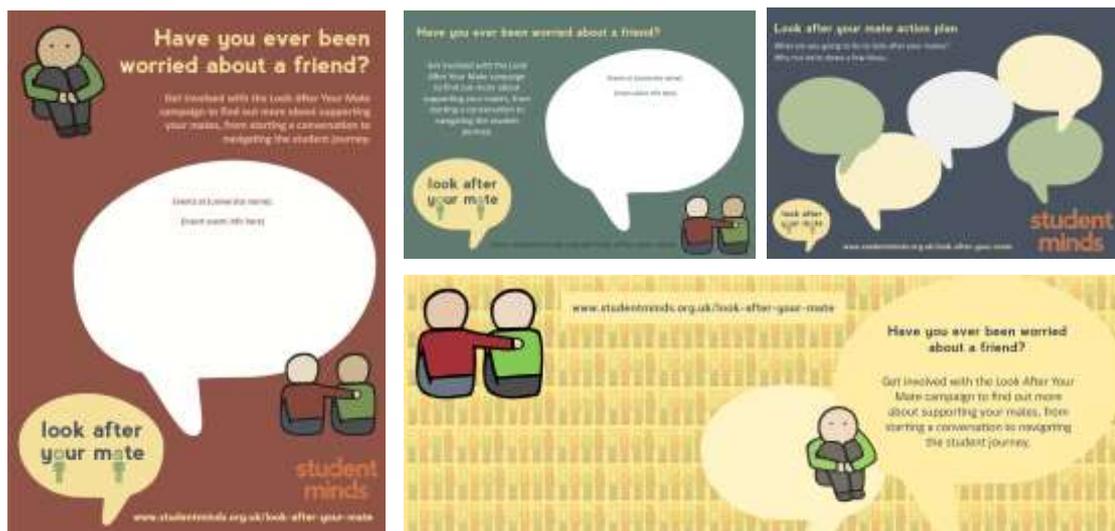
- **Online 'Friends Guide':** Shaped by students' own experiences, this guide has been compiled to support students to look out for their mates. Your team should decide how they are going to ensure links to this guide are best embedded into the university, SU and student groups' websites so your students can benefit from this resource:



www.studentminds.org.uk/guide-for-friends

- **Promotional materials:** Images for social media, campaign postcards and template posters are available in a range of colours to download and use as you wish:

www.studentminds.org.uk/mates-campaign-resources



We are kindly supported by Comic Relief, the Welton Foundation, UnLtd, The Matthew Elvidge Trust, The Charlie Waller Memorial Trust, The James Wentworth-Stanley Memorial Fund and Student Hubs.

Student Minds is a charitable company registered with Companies House, no. 7493445 and the Charities Commission, no. 1142783

- **'Look After Your Mate' Workshop:** Delivered by our staff team, the 'Look After Your Mate' workshop covers key practical tips for supporting a friend and aims to kick-start further action:

www.studentminds.org.uk/look-after-your-mate-workshop

Planning your on-campus activities

Students have thousands of messages thrown at them every day so yours need to stand out and be relevant to your target audience. Further to our workshop, we've put together a list of event ideas and we're excited to add your suggestions over time!

- **'Look after your mate' stall / day:** A tried-and-tested, easy way to engage students. Collect students' tips for how they look out for their mates. All you need is a stall in your Students' Union, a large board, post-its and coloured pens! Make sure you share photos of the tips you've collected online too! Alternatively, hand out our campaign postcards and ask students to fill out an action plan (see postcard design online [here](#)).
- **'Bring a mate' activities:** Work with other student groups to run taster sessions where someone can bring a mate at a cheaper rate. This could work well with yoga, film screenings or a picnic in the park.
- **University social contact events:** Social contact is where someone with experience of mental health problems shares this with someone without. This is regarded as one of the most promising ways of reducing stigma & discrimination, and hearing from fellow students has been recorded as a key preference from students themselves for combatting stigma (Think Positive, Breaking the Silence Report, 2011). A number of Student Minds groups have run successful social contact events and as part of the 'Look After Your Mate' campaign we'd love to see these events run with a 'mates' theme on campuses. It is really important that these are organised in a considerate way and that any speakers are properly briefed and supported. As such, Student Minds have worked with volunteers to pull together guidance on delivering these events effectively. If you are considering running a social contact events please get in touch and we will provide you with the guidelines.

We are kindly supported by Comic Relief, the Welton Foundation, UnLtd, The Matthew Elvidge Trust, The Charlie Waller Memorial Trust, The James Wentworth-Stanley Memorial Fund and Student Hubs.

- **'Treat a friend' fundraiser:** Encourage students to buy something from your stall for their friend. You could sell cakes, friendship bracelets, handmade cards, flowers or run a lucky dip. For information on how to donate the raised funds to Student Minds visit our [website](#).
- **Commercial deals:** If you are working closely with the Students' Union and university there may be some scope to run some deals in the SU shop or the on-campus cafes in support of the campaign such as 'buy one coffee get one free for a friend'.



Planning your online presence

There are lots of ways that you can get creative with your social media presence. By sharing what you're doing online, you'll be part of a national conversation on mental health at university and the role of friends.

Tweet **@StudentMindsOrg** or tag 'Student Minds' in Facebook posts during your campaign, and don't forget the hashtag: **#LookAfterYourMate**

Blogging and video

For the 'Look After Your Mate' campaign, we're encouraging students across the UK to submit content to our national blog, film a video blog and engage with student media. Personal stories can be incredibly powerful and we'd love to hear from any students wishing to share their story. We also want to make sure that anyone who wants to do so is supported and has carefully considered whether this is the right thing for them to do right now. If you are thinking of encouraging your students to share their stories please do get in touch and bear in mind that if content is uploaded to the Student Minds national blog you will have a far greater reach. Full details and guidelines can be found here: www.studentminds.org.uk/laym-digital-campaigning.

As well as social media channels, there are plenty of other ways you can reach more of your students, so make the most of the existing networks where you are. Could you get departments to send out emails for you? Can the university promote what you're doing via their website and newsletters? Can societies share it too?

We are kindly supported by Comic Relief, the Welton Foundation, UnLtd, The Matthew Elvidge Trust, The Charlie Waller Memorial Trust, The James Wentworth-Stanley Memorial Fund and Student Hubs.

Student Minds groups: Don't forget to access our 'Crash Course on Social Media' resource on the internal section of our website for additional advice on getting your messages out there!



Step 5: Monitor and Evaluate

Whilst your campaign is being delivered, make sure you monitor the progress and don't be afraid to change tactics if something isn't working – not everything is going to work when we're testing out new ideas! Monitoring your campaign could take many forms:

- For any activities you run, collect feedback. Numerical evidence, photographs and testimonials from students can also be very useful when putting together funding bids for future work at your university to support student wellbeing.
- During the strategy step you should set yourself targets for the number of views you'd like to have of your video blog or numbers at events, as a way of measuring success. If you don't meet the targets it doesn't mean you've failed – it is simply an opportunity to think about how you can get numbers up next time.
- Depending on the type of activities you are running it is also well worth asking attendees to complete a short questionnaire before and after the event to establish the impact on the attendees' knowledge, skills and

We are kindly supported by Comic Relief, the Welton Foundation, UnLtd, The Matthew Elvidge Trust, The Charlie Waller Memorial Trust, The James Wentworth-Stanley Memorial Fund and Student Hubs.



confidence on this issue. For support with this you can contact Student Minds: campaigns@studentminds.org.uk.

When it comes to evaluation, Student Minds will provide you with a short evaluation form to help you build up a picture of what worked, what didn't and the extent to which you met your campaign objectives. We can support you in answering the question of how close have you come to reaching the overall aim and we'll help you to start thinking about the next steps.

Finally, after the evaluation, be sure to tell your members and students what you have achieved - even if you do not feel it was a total success, it's important to look at the positive outcomes and what you've learnt from this campaign to help shape your future activities.

Next Steps: Register Your Campaign

Now that you have had a chance to look through this guide, make sure you register with Student Minds. We can then provide you with additional support, help with measuring the impact of your work and publicity for your campaign through the charity's national communication channels:

<http://www.studentminds.org.uk/register-your-campaign>

We look forward to hearing from you!