

New research report calls for better support for graduates in the workplace

Moving into the workplace, can be a significant challenge for a young person's mental health. Over the last few months thousands of young people will have started new graduate jobs, many of whom feel unprepared during this major transition.

On this World Mental Health Day - 10th of October 2017 - the UK's student mental health charity, Student Minds, publish the first ever report to uncover the wellbeing of young graduates making the transition from university into the workforce.

The cost of stress to the workplace is substantive. The 2016 Labour Force Survey identified that 11.7 million days are lost to work related stress, depression or anxiety. Stress accounts for 45% of all working days lost due to ill health¹.

The report, based off a survey delivered with colleagues at King's College London and The City Mental Health Alliance, **summarises findings from a large survey of over 300 recent graduates**, and considers university preparation for the workplace, the transition into the workplace, stress and mental wellbeing. Four key findings, discussed in further detail in the report, stand out.

- **Universities could do more to prepare students for the transition out of university**
- **Graduate schemes are associated with a better graduate experience,**
- **Getting the transition into the workplace place right improves subsequent mental wellbeing and reduces subsequent stress.**
- **Work culture relates to graduate confidence in disclosing mental health difficulties**

¹ Health and Safety Executive (HSE). (2016). Labour Force Survey. Retrieved from www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/

Commenting on the findings, Rosie Tressler, CEO of Student Minds said:

“Employers and universities have an important role to play in supporting young people experiencing difficulties, and a real opportunity to promote and improve the wellbeing of their students and employees. Universities are increasingly making student mental health a strategic priority, encouraged by the recent Universities UK framework, but there has been a huge gap in research looking at the experiences of students as they leave university and enter the workplace. We’re proud to have worked with KCL and a range of employers to bring attention to this particular transition. We ought to commend people in their twenties for being so resilient in the face of a lot of challenges from housing costs to the job market, but much more can be done to ensure we thrive. We hope to see more universities and employers working together to review their strategy to support young graduates thrive in the workplace as a result.”

An anonymous graduate on a city graduate scheme added:

“An employer will never get the best from its graduates if they are unable to support them with their mental health difficulties. Starting a new job can be stressful at the best of times, let alone if it is your first “real” job, you are potentially in a new city with no support network, and you already struggle with mental illness.”

The report is available at www.studentminds.org.uk/graduate-wellbeing

Notes to Editors:

1. Student Minds is the UK’s student mental health charity. We empower students and members of the university community to develop the knowledge, confidence and skills to look after their own mental health, support others and create change. We train students and staff in universities across the UK to deliver student-led peer support interventions as well as research-driven campaigns and workshops. By working collaboratively across sectors, we share best practice and ensure that the student voice influences decisions about student mental health. Together we will transform the state of student mental health so that all in higher education can thrive.