

Suicide Prevention Fund – Project Iris – Growing Hope

Referral criteria and Programme outline

September 2024



Criteria to apply

The Project Iris programme is divided over a 6 week period, during school hours, with young people attending at our green therapies and equine sites.

Each session will consist of 30 minutes of learning on a particular aspect of mental health and well-being, followed by green therapy (horticulture) linked to what they have learned.

The programme is offered to young people between 11 - 25 with each group containing between 4-6 young people.

Please note, this is a support and prevention programme seeking to support young people and combat the stigma surrounding suicide. **It is not treatment, intervention or crisis support.**

Placement is subject to risk assessment.

Placement Criteria

The project is designed to offer support and knowledge around suicide prevention. The criteria for attendance reflect the overall aims and objectives of the project. Those eligible for attendance include:

- **Expressing suicidal thoughts**
- **Concern raised from others that may be suicidal**
- **Self-harm – (please note, there must be no self-harming behaviours on site)**

Please remember, a young person does not need to be acting on suicidal thoughts to be considered, we offer these sessions in the hope to prevent such actions. Where a young person has expressed some thoughts of hopelessness, feeling a burden, not wanting to carry on or are self-harming, these young people are in distress and meet criteria for our support. We want to provide young people with coping strategies that they need now. We are not an 'instead of other support services or support within education', we are to be considered as well as, an alternative provision offering a psycho education support alongside green therapy activities.

- **Due to the need for everyone to be safe, we can not accept anyone who is likely to actively attempt any injurious behaviour during sessions. If we feel level of risk has escalated then attendance to the project may be re-assessed**
- **We strictly prohibit the use or consumption of drugs or alcohol whilst on site or anyone under the influence of illicit drugs or alcohol whilst attending the programme. Any attendee contravening this may be asked to leave the project.**
- **The School or referring agency must seek parental permission and consent to share student information**

Please complete and submit the application form to projectiris@inclusioneducation.org.uk

You will be notified to confirm if application successful with further details, dates of sessions and a project pack.

Please read the details of the project outlines for further information on the programme content.

- We offer a protected space outside of normal daily routine where a young person can utilise the space to decide how they would like to be, or share what they would like to share. Therefore adults are not invited to stay on site accompanying young people.
- Assisting adults are DBS checked, site and activities are risk assessed, these are available on request to projectiris@inclusioneducation.org.uk
- Any safeguarding concerns which arise would be handled by the project DSL, and reported appropriately

Project Iris – Programme Outline

Week 1 – Understanding suicide

- Introduction to the program and establishing group norms.
- Overview of suicide statistics, risk factors, and warning signs.
- Understanding the stigma surrounding suicide.
- Exploring personal attitudes and beliefs about suicide.
- Providing resources for immediate support.

The session will be supported by a green therapy session at Mencap Greenfingers therapy.

- activity – pots with messages

Week 2 – Building Resilience

- Understanding resilience and its role in suicide prevention.
- Identifying personal strengths and coping strategies.
- Stress management techniques.

The session will also include exploring healthy ways of dealing with difficult emotions and Introduction to mindfulness and relaxation techniques.

This will include a session of green therapy at Mencap Greenfingers where we will be planting quick grow plants to nurture across our sessions.

Project Iris – Programme Outline

Week 3 – Communication and Support

- **Effective communication skills in supporting someone at risk.**
- **Active listening techniques.**
- **How to ask directly about suicidal thoughts.**
- **Role-playing scenarios for practicing supportive conversations.**
- **Discussing boundaries and self-care when supporting others.**

This session will be supported by Greenfingers sessions and introduce our Peer Ambassadors

Week 4 – Mental Health and Help Seeking

- **Overview of common mental health disorders linked to suicide risk.**
- **Recognising signs of depression, anxiety, and other mental health issues.**
- **Navigating the mental health care system.**
- **Normalising help-seeking behavior.**
- **Exploring barriers to seeking help and strategies to overcome them.**

This will be supported by Greenfingers green therapy, exploring aromatics planting for mood and sensory support and relaxation.

Project Iris – Programme Outline

Week 5 – Safety Planning and Crisis Intervention

- Introduction to safety planning for individuals at risk of suicide.
- Collaboratively developing personalised safety plans.
- Identifying local crisis resources and hotlines.
- Crisis intervention strategies for supporting someone in immediate danger.
- Crisis scenarios and practicing appropriate responses.

This will be supported by Greenfingers green therapy

Week 6 – Community Support and Wrap Up

- Reviewing key learnings from the program.
- Identifying community resources and support networks.
- Discussing strategies for ongoing self-care and support.
- Creating a plan for staying connected and continuing personal growth.
- Closing ceremony and reflection on the journey through the program.

Throughout the sessions, it's crucial to create a safe and supportive environment where participants feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and experiences. Encourage open dialogue, respect confidentiality, and provide opportunities for peer support. Additionally, consider including guest speakers, testimonials from suicide attempt survivors, or interactive activities to enhance engagement and learning.

This session will be held at Greenfingers green therapy and groups will take their plants and box of seeds to continue growing and pass on

Please note, the activities may change or evolve depending on the needs of the learners.

Where do I go?

The project will be run in 6 week blocks – with young people attending one of the courses (so 2 hours a week for 6 weeks).

These will be divided into age appropriate cohorts, with content material and activities tailored for the age range.

The sessions will run throughout the year, either as a morning group from 10am – 12pm or an afternoon group from 1pm– 3pm.

The next groups will run:

Block 3 – 16th September – 21st October

Block 4 – 4th November – 9th December

Block 5 – 6th January – 10th February

Block 6 – 24th February – 24th March

Once a place has been agreed, you will be contacted with details of the group and session.

Before the start of the programme, you will receive details of the session dates and times and the cohort you will be joining. Dates may be subject to alternation due to the needs of the programme.

From September we will also be running sessions on the Monday that include Equine. Please specify preference in you initial email.

The sessions will be run at:

Greenfingers

Basingstoke Mencap

Elizabeth Road

Basingstoke

RG22 6AX

Equine:

Danny's Place

Watley Farm

Locks Lane

Sparsholt

SO21 2LU