

# SAFEGUARDING FORUM & CPD FOR MEMBERS



# 2023

# Introduction

In March I was interviewed for an AoC podcast on supporting apprentices mental health & how trauma informed teaching & learning needs to be better understood and utilised across post-16 education. If you do not know about trauma informed support or want to find out more about how to further support your apprentices well-being, join our next forum and receive free CPD from Polly Harrow, the safeguarding guru for FE!



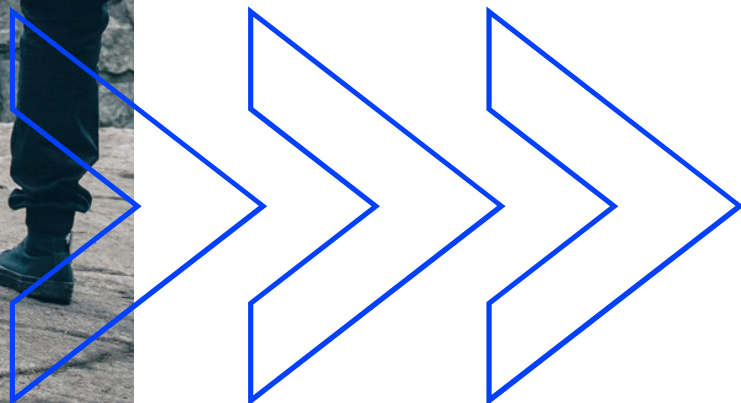
**Safeguarding & Prevent Forum,**  
**26.05.23, 12.30pm,**  
**Kirklees College**

# Supporting apprentices' mental health...

# ...and trauma informed teaching & learning



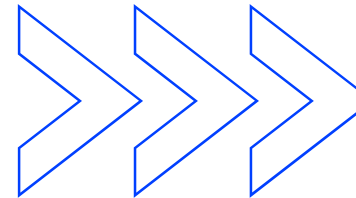
Since the pandemic apprenticeship providers have been inundated with the number of apprentices, of all ages, who require additional help, guidance, and support – with the vast majority of this being to support mental health & well-being. This is an area that many adult apprenticeship providers have not dealt with in big numbers before, and something they would often refer out for the support – however almost every provider I speak to post pandemic and even now, this week, states they have had to review & respond rapidly to their own internal knowledge & arrangements to better support their apprentices.



# Supporting apprentices' mental health...

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The type of students GFE & Apprenticeship providers are working with now, are very different to the ones of a few years ago and this is due to the very real and ongoing trauma caused by lockdowns, pandemic, social anxiety, social media, fake news and much more. All of these are causing toxic stress levels in young people and adults and a rise in the urgency of support placed on training organisations is an ongoing struggle.



Businesses often tell me, that they cannot recruit younger apprentices, as they do not have the skillset to support the plethora of needs surrounding mental health & well-being and, in some sectors like construction, businesses are struggling to utilise younger apprentices as they are nowhere near the standard of communication, teamwork, social skills needed for being on site.

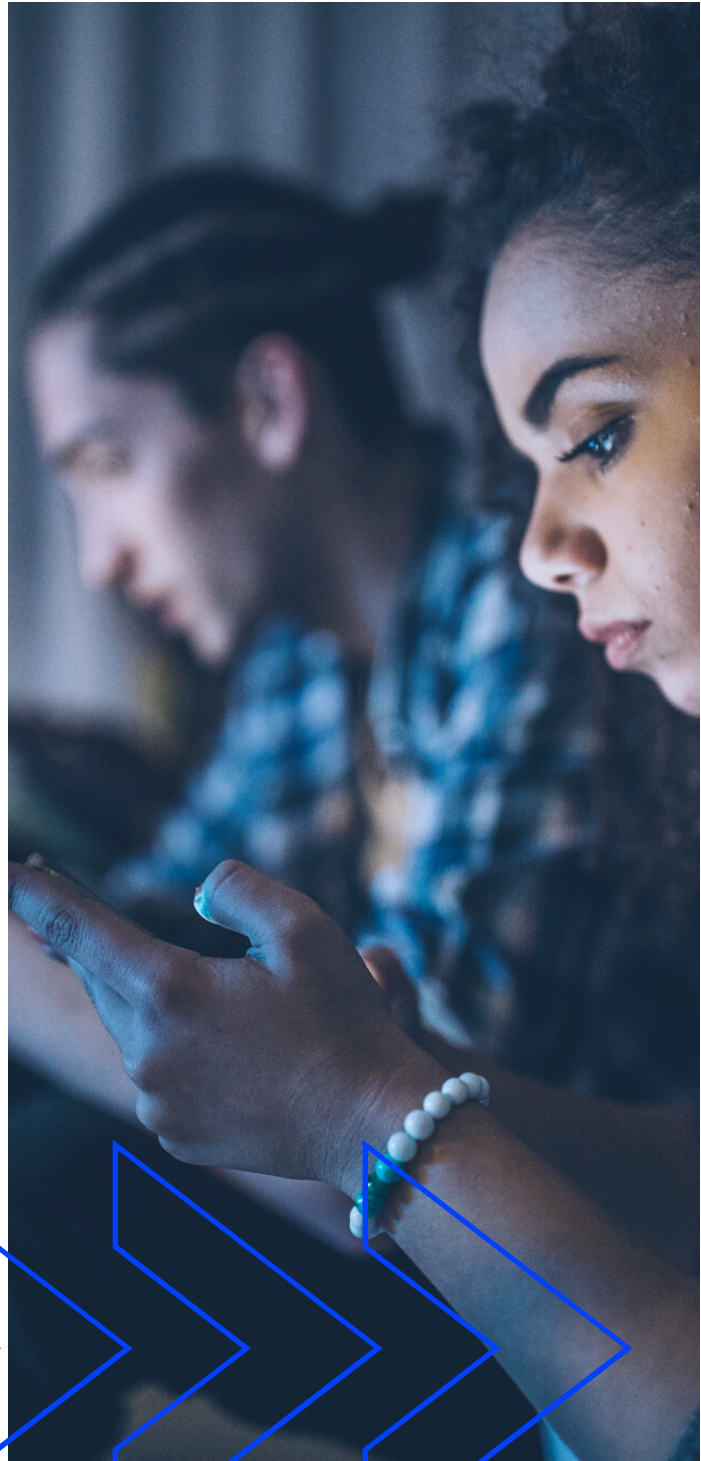
Training organisations have at least 6 months of pre-work to complete with many apprentices to support their transition, at no extra cost!



# Supporting apprentices' mental health...

# ...and trauma informed teaching & learning

Across Yorkshire, we have set up a dedicated Safeguarding & Prevent forum for providers who deliver apprenticeships, to provide support, advice, guidance and sharing practice of how we can better support our apprentices and employers. Dedicated & contextualised resource & guidance for apprenticeship providers in the field of safeguarding has been a long-standing issue across the FE sector, with many LADO's or even DfE not recognising the important work of apprenticeship providers as a priority for support and with the vast majority of resource being aimed at schools and colleges where classroom learning for young people is core.



# Supporting apprentices' mental health...

# ...and trauma informed teaching & learning



During our last forum, I polled the members to see what their primary challenge was in relation to support for apprentices with their mental health & well-being – some of the responses include –

- Understanding the age-appropriate support needed
- When do I step in if over the age of 19
- Understanding vulnerable adults – recognition, support & changes
- Remote teaching – how to support
- Knowing the correct procedures with the employer and their HR rules or knowledge
- Appropriate referral channels for adults' apprentices
- Embedding MH & Wellbeing subjects into the curriculum – apprentices often find this pointless, and employers do not always support.
- Online harms and how to protect access when in the workplace.
- Timely identified of burnout for apprentices and how to inform the employers.
- How support can help, but not trigger re-traumatisation

# Supporting apprentices' mental health...

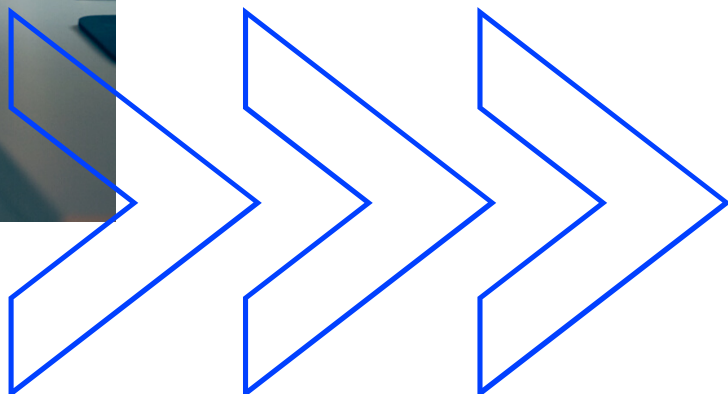
# ...and trauma informed teaching & learning

Some of the harms that apprenticeship providers are facing daily –

- Self-harm
- Burnout
- Anxiety and stress
- Increased poverty issues
- Social anxiety
- Communication barriers
- Missed / lost learning from school
- Neurodiversity
- Increased crime levels in local area or with peers



Apprenticeship providers, at their own cost, are putting in measures for earlier detection and intervention – but in most cases the apprenticeship funding does not support this level of support and additional funds do not support these types of scenarios. There is also a risk level to claiming more funding with the ESFA, as claw back of funding in this area is commonplace.



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There is also a rise in the number of apprentices dropping off their programs, many of which cite stress or mental health as their reasons so a better supported apprenticeship offer for training organisations would help reduce drop off rates & ensure our apprenticeships are inclusive and supportive environments for young people and adults to flourish. There needs to be better support for apprenticeship providers in their response to understanding & implementing trauma informed teaching and resources – such as dedicated training, implementation time and commitment.

Businesses also need to be compassionate to apprentices, and their circumstances and to better support the training organisations with their approach. Too many employers see the support for mental health and well-being being the providers responsibility – this needs to be a much more robust collaborative approach.

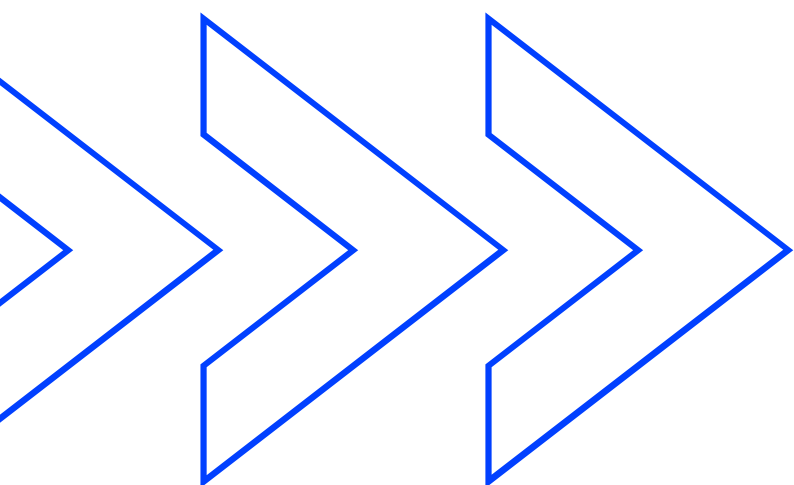


# Conclusion

New Tutors / trainers to apprenticeship delivery and the teaching standards in general should be better prepared with the level of mental health support now being provided across post-16 education and should include aspects of trauma informed support. All apprenticeship training providers need to further explore their culture of safeguarding for all aged apprentices and there are still some that feel if they deliver to adult apprentices, they do not have to “do” safeguarding or pastoral support.

To support the apprenticeship sector, we need –

- A greater understanding of challenges faced by all age apprentices.
- Improved resources to support learning and emotional well-being.
- Greater confidence and ability to address young people’s adverse behaviours
- Effective implementation within a whole provider approach and committed leadership.
- Greater collaboration and partnership working with other organisations
- Better exploration of mental health support for apprentices



# Acknowledgements

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Our forum is dedicated to providing the above, and for more information on any of the above, attend our next forum or contact [alex.miles@wylp.org.uk](mailto:alex.miles@wylp.org.uk)

We thank you for your continued support in our efforts to contribute towards Safeguarding & Prevent in FE.

## Contact

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