



# Implementing mental health support in schools faces many challenges

By Dr. Jessica Edwards

*Child and Adolescent Mental Health* recently published a review compiled by Briony Gee and colleagues on the factors that affect the delivery of mental health support within schools. The researchers identified 50 studies that reported barriers or facilitators to implementing interventions for adolescent emotional disorders delivered in educational settings. They found several important factors, including barriers of practical and logistical problems, and facilitators of quality training and supervision.

Gee *et al.* make a series of recommendations. First, young people and education professionals should contribute to select school-based interventions that can be practically delivered. Second, suitable procedures should be developed to identify those who would most benefit from the interventions. Third, continuous, high-quality training and support must be available. Fourth, plans should be made to deal with logistical challenges of the school routine and environment. Fifth, a senior-level champion in the school should promote a school culture that prioritises mental well-being. Sixth, health

and education policy should promote a shared focus on young people's mental health.

This review was limited to studies conducted in high-income countries. Studies that aim to understand the factors that impact the delivery of mental health support in schools in low and middle-income countries are also warranted. In addition, more studies on how psychological interventions are implemented in sixth form and further education colleges are needed.

## Referring to:

Gee, B., Wilson, J., Clarke, T., Farthing, S., Carroll, B., Jackson, C., King, K., Murdoch, J., Fonagy, P. & Notley, C. (2020), *Review: Delivering mental health support within schools and colleges – a thematic synthesis of barriers and facilitators to implementation of indicated psychological interventions for adolescents*. *Child Adolesc. Ment. Health*. doi: 10.1111/camh.12381.