



**St Patrick's**  
Mental Health Services  
*Empowering recovery*

# Child and Adolescent Mental Health

**Paul Gilligan,  
CEO**

[www.StPatricks.ie](http://www.StPatricks.ie)



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Experience has taught us that we have only one enduring weapon in our struggle against mental illness: the emotional discovery and emotional acceptance of the truth in the individual and unique history of our childhood.



# Exercise: A good and bad experience from my school days and the impact they had





ability to understand and resolve emotions.



supports

EXPERIENCES



personality



# How might I spot difficulties

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- ⦿ Inappropriate or excessive worrying
  - ⦿ Overly self conscious,
  - ⦿ Physical problems , stomach aches
  - ⦿ Repeated school absence
  - ⦿ Impaired relationships with, withdrawal from friends
  - ⦿ Low self esteem
  - ⦿ Frequent sadness, tearfulness, crying
  - ⦿ Feelings of hopelessness
  - ⦿ Decreased energy, lack of motivation
  - ⦿ Changes in eating, sleeping habits
  - ⦿ Excessive aggression
  - ⦿ Hoarding, paranoia,
  - ⦿ Unrealistic fears, panic attacks, OCD behaviour
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# The Stats

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- 1 in 10 children and adolescents suffer from mental health disorders.
- 74% of 26 year olds experience mental illness prior to 18, 50% prior to 15
- By age 13, 1 in 3 have some type of mental health difficulty, by 24, 1 in 2
- 1 in 15 engage in deliberate self harm,
- By 24, 1 in 5 experience suicidal ideation
- Appears that Irish young people have higher rates than their European peers





# The Services

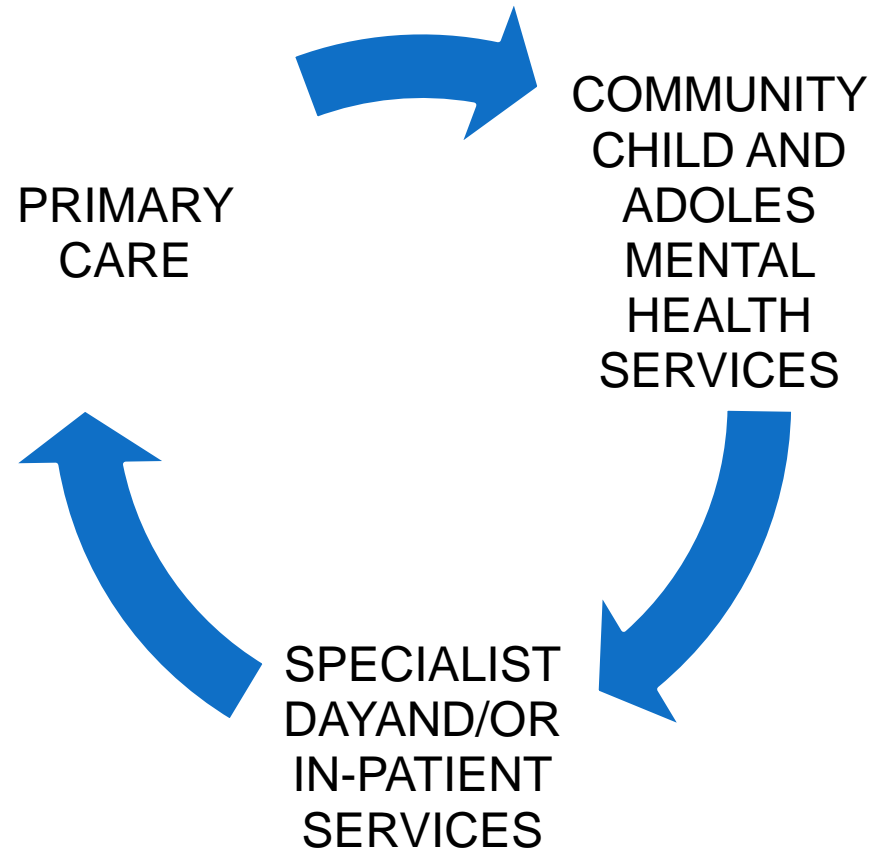
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- Community support and preventative services
- Community child and adolescent teams
- Day services
- In-patient services



# Steps

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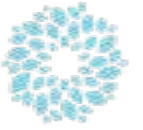




## The numbers presenting to community services, Oct 12-Sep 13

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- 9616 new cases seen 2012 (8671 in 2012)
- 50% seen within 1 month of referral (45%)
- 71% within 3 months (66%)
- 9% within 3-6 months (10%)
- 5% between 6-12months (7%)
- 4% had waited more than a year (5%)
- 2541 were waiting to be seen at time of publication of HSE Annual Report (2056)





# The Law

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- ⦿ **Constitution**
- ⦿ **Child Care Act 1991**
- ⦿ **Children Act 2001**
- ⦿ **Child Care Amendment Bill 2009**
- ⦿ **Mental Health Act 2001**
- ⦿ **UNCRC**
- ⦿ **UNCRPD**



# Using the Services

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- Where a child/adolescent first interacts with the services is crucial.
- System is designed to make access, particularly to in-patient care as difficult as possible.
- Statutory services are catchment area based
- Waiting times in statutory funded services are unacceptably long



# What can we do

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- **Seek to build every child's emotional health and psychological resilience**
- **Create a mentally healthy environment, (UNCRC, Child centred ethos)**
- **Support a child as best we can if they develop mental health problems**





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# Creating a mentally healthy environment

- Making a child feel safe in all they do
  - Protecting their physical and emotional safety
  - Valuing and respecting them
  - Arming them with the skills to identify and cope with danger and risk
  - Keeping risk in perspective
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# Creating emotionally healthy children

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## Connecting with your inner parent

### Teaching a child how to be happy

- Promoting individualism
- Helping a child know and understand themselves
- Helping them develop the ability to recognise and deal with emotions
- Shaping their thinking and behaviour

### Teaching a child to feel good about themselves

- ◆ Expressing positivity about them
  - ◆ Spending time with each of them
  - ◆ Listening and communicating
  - ◆ Building strong self esteem
  - ◆ Teaching positive discipline
  - ◆ Teaching beliefs
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# The Personal Journey

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Connecting with our inner parent

Clarifying our attitudes to Mental Health

- Pull yourself together
- Mental Illness is not treatable
- Social Factors are the Cause
- Runs in the family

Facing up to and addressing our own mental health issues

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## 2013 Survey Findings

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- Only 54% hold the view that Irish people would willingly accept someone with a mental health problem as a close friend.
- 15% were uncertain as to whether a person with a prior history of mental health issues should have children. (5% should not)
- 20% were uncertain as to whether they would want to live next door to someone who previously had a mental health problem (6% would'nt)
- 65% felt that being treated for a mental health problem is viewed by Irish Society as a sign of failure



# 2013 Survey Findings

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- **44% of respondents reported that a close member of their family (parent, child, brother, sister) has been treated for a mental health difficulty**
- **63% stated that close friends had been treated**
- **53% confirmed that they have worked with someone who has been treated for emotional or mental health problems**



# Cyber Bullying

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- Internet enables access to vast unregulated stores of information
- International research indicates 20% young people report experiencing cyber bullying
- 20% say they have engaged in cyber bullying
- 35% say they have viewed pornography on line
- Ombudsman and special rapporteur - cyber and homophobic bullying are two of the most prevalent forms
- This form of bullying is continuous, widespread, can't escape
- Oireachtas Committee- stricter age restrictions, best practice on preventing misuse of SIMs, Educating parents, teachers, children



# Empowering Recovery

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# Awareness Campaign

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If you have concerns about your mental health  
don't wait before seeking help and support.  
Talk to your GP today or call St Patrick's support  
and information line on **01249 3333**

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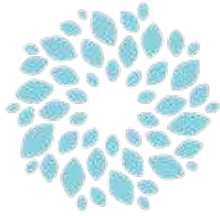




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# References

- **Keeping your Child Safe, Paul Gilligan, Gill & McMillan 2008**
- **Creating Emotionally Healthy Children Veritas (due march 2015)**



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Thank you for  
your time this  
evening

[info@stpatsmail.com](mailto:info@stpatsmail.com)