



North herts Emotional Support in schools Service

Staff Support Forum - A guide

Aims:

- The aim of the group is to facilitate a meeting per half-term where staff from schools who are directly involved with supporting students with emotional issues can access support. Sometimes there may be more than one person in each school who directly supports young people in which case more than one member of staff may need to attend.
- The school can send a key member of staff to the meeting so that they can cascade information back to their school.
- The philosophy of the forums is to allow an informal safe place where school staff can form positive relationships with peers and access group support and peer learning as well as an opportunity to cascade current information.
- The group will take place in a school in the local area and will change school venue each time.
- The group usually meets for two hours.
- NESSie will introduce topics, arrange training for the first few sessions as well as invite key organisations. The group is encouraged to direct the topics once it is established.
- The group has a contract of confidentiality and respect that governs the running of the group.

Structure:

The group begins with each member staff 'checking in' saying how they are and if they have any 'burning' issues they would like to ideally discuss that meeting. Once everyone has had some time to check in the NESSie facilitator will help the group choose which issues are to be discussed. There is usually time for one full case. It is important to note that it doesn't matter which case is discussed as all members will learn from the key case.

The key case is shared by the person wishing to discuss it and the group listens without interruption. When the member of staff has finished the group take turns to ask useful questions and offer shared ideas etc - this can be quite informal and the NESSie facilitator tends not to interrupt but makes notes while allowing a fruitful and full discussion.

When the group have had time to discuss fully the NESSie facilitator summarises key points that they have heard and then can add to the discussion with their experiences of working with young people being clear that this is their own view - signpost clearly.

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Finally the member of staff who shared the key case is asked what they are choosing to take away. This is encouraging the person to own the advice and feel empowered by their choice.

COFFEE BREAK - CAKE IS IMPORTANT - the suggestion is that the host school supplies the refreshments

After the break and chat which can be an important part of the 'group forming' the NESSie facilitator will share important information, impart and training that has arisen and discuss the topic of the following session, date, venue and times etc.

TOPICS ARE:

1. The Working Alliance and confidentiality
2. Group lead session
3. Models of mentoring - The Gatekeeper / My Time
4. Group lead session
5. Self Harm
6. CAMHS referral pathway - Deborah Shepherd CAMHS
7. Bereavement - Stand By Me