

UNMASKING MASCULINITY

Exploring men's mental health and vulnerability, sponsored by



RESOURCE PACK

Thank you for attending the 'Unmasking Masculinity: Exploring Men's Mental Health and Vulnerability' event recently.

We are thrilled that the event was so well attended and that so many important conversations were had around men's mental health, vulnerability and the journey to dismantling stigma.

A podcast recorded at the event will be shared soon, and in the meantime, you can find below a range of resources, support links and information on the organisations that were involved in the event, as well as others that are here to help you and the men in your life.

A huge thank you to all of the panellists, host and compere who made the event so interesting and engaging. You can find out more about who they are below.

PANEL 1



Ed Richardson, YMCA

Works with boys and young men through the WiSE Project, focussing on trauma, exploitation, online safety and harmful sexual behaviour.



Nicholson Davids, AudioActive

Supports young people through access to music production facilities and workshops.



Dr Beccy Cooper, Labour MP

Public Health Doctor, Member of Parliament and mother to two sons, champions public health and tackles injustice and social inequality.



Ben Dew, Allsorts

Works with schools and businesses offering LGBTQIA+ and inclusion training across Sussex.

PANEL 2



Hatter, AudioActive

Senior Music Leader & Emerge Coordinator at AudioActive.



Matt Bannister, Personal Advisor

Delivers safeguarding training at educational facilities throughout Sussex.



Sue Hawker, West Sussex Mind

Chair of Trustees for local mental health charity.



Dan Flanagan, Dad La Soul

Works with fathers and male carers to tackle social isolation and promote positive mental health.

HOST



Adam Joolia, AudioActive

AudioActive CEO.

COMPERE



Richard Freeman, Always Possible

Strategist and consultant who works with local communities to help them thrive.

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT



West Sussex Mind provides a range of support services tailored to mental health and wellbeing across the county. They offer workshops, support groups, training and one-on-one support.

www.westsussexmind.org

Facebook: [@westsussexmind](https://www.facebook.com/westsussexmind)

Instagram: [@westsussexmind](https://www.instagram.com/westsussexmind)

Help Point: 0300 303 5652 (Monday to Friday, 10am -4pm)

Support request form - West Sussex Mind



This inclusive community is dedicated to supporting dads' mental health and wellbeing, helping fathers break the stigma and explore their emotions without judgment, through events, meet-ups, creative workshops and online support.

<https://www.dadlasoul.com>

Facebook: [@dadlasoul](https://www.facebook.com/dadlasoul)

Instagram: [@dadlasoul](https://www.instagram.com/dadlasoul)

AUDIOACTIVE

AudioActive offers programmes combining creativity, community and mental health, especially targeted at young men who want to express themselves and explore personal challenges through music. Using music production workshops, peer support groups and social events to offer support to young people from all backgrounds.

<https://audioactive.org.uk>

Facebook - [@audioactiveworthing](https://www.facebook.com/audioactiveworthing) / [@AudioActive](https://www.facebook.com/audioworthing)

Instagram - [@audioactiveworthing](https://www.instagram.com/audioactiveworthing) / [@audioactive](https://www.instagram.com/audioworthing)

allsorts youth project

Allsorts supports children and young people (under 26) who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans or are exploring their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

<https://www.allsortsyouth.org.uk/>

Instagram: [@allsortsyouthproject](https://www.instagram.com/allsortsyouthproject)



YMCA Downslink supports young people (16-24) from across Sussex and Surrey who are affected by homelessness, offering counselling, support and advice, mediation and youth work, so that all young people can belong, contribute and thrive.

<https://www.ymcadlg.org/>

Instagram: [@ymcadlg](https://www.instagram.com/ymcadlg)



CALM focuses on preventing male suicide, offering direct support through a helpline and online resources for those struggling with mental health.

<https://www.thecalmzone.net>

0800 58 58 58 (5pm–midnight 24/7)



Samaritans provides free, confidential support for anyone needing to talk, available 24/7.

<https://www.samaritans.org>

Helpline: 116 123 (24/7)

GRASSROOTS SUICIDE PREVENTION

Grassroots empower people to help save lives from suicide through educating, connecting and campaigning nationally.

<https://prevent-suicide.org.uk/>

Instagram: [@grassrootssp](https://www.instagram.com/grassrootssp)

EVENT DATA

The following slides contain the questions that were posed to the audience, including their response.



How would you describe support and understanding of men's mental health right now?

61 responses

needs more promotion
needs more work
under-resourced
under funded
under funded
under resourced
not understanding
not sure where to look
evolving
hopeless
absent
expected
needs more
I have no idea
desperate
overdue
hidden
growing
lonely
small
pride
patchy
confused
misunderstood
stigma and assumptions
underestimated
non-specific
unsatisfactory
want to know more
absent
expected
needs more
hopeless
woeful
confusing
for
lacking
inadequate
reasonable
helpful
fragile
better
vital
partial
uneducated
demand
old fashioned
out of reach
addicted
challenging
awareness
urgent
under-resourced
not understanding
not sure where to look
evolving
stigma
under resourced
needs more promotion
needs more work

9 14 25



PANEL 1: Which early warning signs of declining mental health in men do you think need the most support in Worthing?

Demotivation (2), Increased irritability and anger (2), Physical health changes (3), Withdrawal from social activities (12), Political or religious extremism (2), Alcohol or drug abuse (7), Poor sleep health (0)

9 14 25



PANEL 1: What do you think would most encourage men to seek help for declining mental health?



PANEL 2: How effective is mental health support for the men in your life?





PANEL 2: What one change do you think would connect more men to local support?

More open conversations

Be the change you want to see

Amplifying voices

Activity, dont call it support

Cultural change

Fun social events

Word of mouth

Role models



PANEL 2: What one change do you think would connect more men to local support?

Normalising conversations so they happen naturally every day

Wider promotion

Communication

More support opportunities

Societal mentality

Funding

Variety of interests and activities

Meaningful workshops - making - and chat





PANEL 2: What one change do you think would connect more men to local support?

Promotion

knowing someone who has been through it and had a positive outcome

Advertising positive make
role models who talk
about emotions.

Building a strong network/community of people/businesses that talk about it and promote it within their circles and friends



The final question was a repeat of the first, but quite different response were recorded after the panel discussion.



How would you describe support and understanding of men's mental health right now?

40 responses



ADVICE AND TIPS FOR MEN'S MENTAL HEALTH

Breaking the stigma

- Recognise that seeking help is a strength, not a weakness. Society is shifting, and opening up about mental health is a powerful step.
- Support yourself by connecting with peers or joining support groups like Dad La Soul or local men's mental health meetups.

Building emotional awareness

- Practice identifying and naming your emotions. Labelling feelings like “stress,” “frustration,” or “loneliness” can make them easier to manage.
- Try journaling or creative outlets (like the ‘Room to Rant’ sessions offered by AudioActive) to express emotions that may feel hard to talk about directly.

Self-care and routine

- Prioritise sleep, physical activity and balanced nutrition. Small, consistent actions help stabilise mental health.
- Consider mindfulness or meditation practices, even just five minutes a day, to support clarity and reduce stress.

Find a healthy outlet

- Physical activities, creative pursuits, and hobbies can give an outlet for pent-up emotions. Organisations like West Sussex Mind and AudioActive allow men to express themselves through music and art.
- Regularly making time for interests is not just a distraction but a way to nourish your mental health.

Seek professional help when needed

- Mental health challenges don't need to be navigated alone. Reach out to West Sussex Mind or similar organisations for professional support.
- Therapy is a valuable tool and can be life changing. Local resources and online directories can help find therapists with experience in men's mental health.

SIGNPOSTING TO FURTHER RESOURCES

- Supported Self-Help: a free six-week course with support and guidance from a mental health professional. Eight pathways to choose from, including anxiety, grief, anger management, depression and stress.
- Every Mind Matters: an NHS resource with mental health advice tailored for men, including tools and symptom checkers.
- Movember: a global organisation raising awareness of men's mental health, offering resources and community programmes.
- Mind UK: national organisation offering mental health resources, support lines and online advice.
- Find a Therapist: directory for qualified therapists in the UK.

Thank you