



Working with and for young people across Europe to ensure happy and healthy futures

I feel, You feel

First ever Youth Mental Health event in Europe
9th October 2020



"We act in order to create a Europe that enables young people to access support and talk openly about their mental health and well-being. By encouraging collaboration across services, sharing of best-practice and ensuring that young people are empowered to have a voice in all matters that affect them around the promotion of mental health and preventing the impact of mental illness."

By Nicholas Morgan

Introduction

"I feel, you feel".

It's a play on words, to remind everyone that we all have mental health and thus encourage all young people, great and small, to join us. It's to learn, educate and be made more aware of the complexities around mental health.

"I feel, You feel" project resulted in the **1st ever** youth focused mental health event involving 170 young people from 30 countries of Europe. It was organised by us, Euro Youth Mental Health (EYMH), the only pan-European mental health focused youth organisation formed by volunteers of 30 European countries, making it the only of its kind.

The final event was designed and delivered by young people from across Europe who all volunteer their time with EYMH, taking place on the 9th of October of 2020, in an early celebration of the World Mental Health Day.

It consisted of 4 sessions, delivered in the 'Zoom' platform to which only the people who signed up had access, for safety, privacy and wellbeing reasons. Given its less sensitive nature, two of the sessions were live streamed through EYMH's Facebook page for the wider public.



Aims of "I feel, You feel"

- Create an European conversation about mental health in a safe and youth-friendly environment;

- Educate young people and youth professionals of different mental health related topics;
- Raise awareness and normalise conversations about mental health;
- Provide young people with experience of mental health problems with an opportunity to use their voice and feel connected with other people;
- Facilitate participants, guests and volunteers with an informal peer-learning opportunity;
- Advocate for better mental health for young people in Europe.

General Overview

The event gathered 170 sign-ups, from over 30 countries around the world.

In average, there were 40 participants in each session, striking a sensitive and appropriate balance between young people and youth professionals (See Appendix 1).

The sessions were co-organised by 9 volunteers, 4 guests and had an organic reach of more than 10000 people through our social media.

"I feel, you feel" was endorsed by three Members of the European Parliament, namely Ms. Maria Walsh (Ireland), Mr. Alex Aguis Saliba (Malta) and Mr. Tomas Zdechovsky (Czechia), who sent videos with messages of support. Their presence highly contributed to fulfill our advocacy goals as the MEPs shared encouragement and agreement with mental health needing to be higher on all institutions' priority lists.

The sessions

We delivered 4 sessions throughout the day.

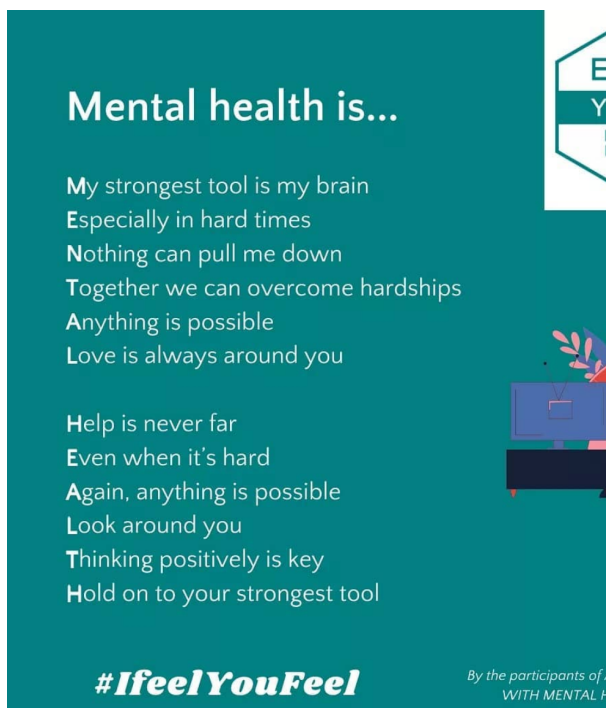
1. Acting out with mental health

At the start, we had a fun introduction session followed by a fun activity on using drama in therapy techniques, delivered by one of our volunteers, Ms. Anna Leyden.

We learnt, discussed and practiced some drama and learned how it can improve and impact our mental health. The conclusion was that participating in drama activities can help to reduce isolation and provide peer support by allowing you to work within a group of people with similar lives experiences or mixed experiences.

The activities and games within the workshop contributed to developing participants' self-confidence by allowing them to try something new.

Part of this session involved participants coming together to form a wellbeing poem from a strength word:



Mental health is...

My strongest tool is my brain
Especially in hard times
Nothing can pull me down
Together we can overcome hardships
Anything is possible
Love is always around you

Help is never far
Even when it's hard
Again, anything is possible
Look around you
Thinking positively is key
Hold on to your strongest tool

#IfeelYouFeel

By the participants of
WITH MENTAL H

2. Suicide prevention & Helping your friends

This sensitive session, by Mr. Nicholas Morgan, a facilitator highly experienced in the topic and EYMH's Director, aimed to address the current pandemic of young people dying by suicide and what we can do to help.

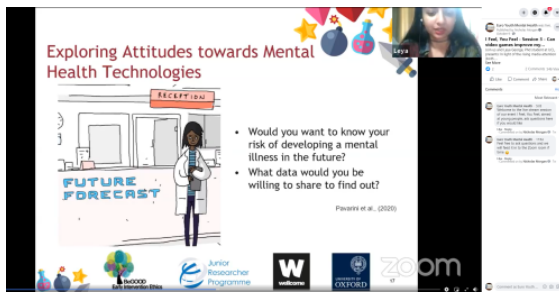
What words, or short sentences come to mind when you think of suicide? Mentimeter



We debunked myths, such as talking about suicide encourages people to attempt it, and discussed and promoted correct language and interacted to promote suicide awareness and share tip on how we can approach a friend we may be worried about. All of this was done in a safe, private and trigger-aware environment.

3. Can video games improve my wellbeing?

For this session, we were very lucky to be joined by Ms. Leya George, Phd student at UCL, who delivered a session in light of the rising media attention (both positive and negative) on video games and wellbeing and an ever-increasing player base, we had, what we felt, was a timely session outlining the various ways that gaming and mental health intersect with examples from research and industry. What does this field have to offer us; how can games be a force for good?



4. Introducing tete-a-tete - a discussion between a therapist and young person, delivering and receiving mental health support during Covid

This final session involved an honest and open discussion with an adolescent therapist from the Netherlands and a young expert by experience from Serbia.

They discussed the ups and downs of therapy during covid and what this meant for the future. After this, participants had the opportunity to share some of their experiences and ask the questions.

Some questions that were asked were: how has covid19 impacted therapy?; What innovation has come out of us having to go online?; What impact could this pandemic have for young people's health in the future?; leading to very interesting responses and ideas.

This session is still available to watch on our [Facebook page here](#).

Closing

The event ended with encouraging words and a general feeling of hope for a future where taking care of your mental health is as normal as looking after your physical health, and also accessible to them.

All the volunteers gathered after the event to celebrate and share, creating an important and enjoyable team-building moment, according to EYMH's values and volunteers'

way of work, that always includes looking after ourselves and our mental health.

Summary

I feel, you feel **OCTOBER 9TH**

First ever European - wide event on mental health for young people

Suicide Prevention & how you can help
1:30pm - 2:30pm

This sensitive session will aim to address the current pandemic of young people dying by suicide.

An interactive session to correct the myths and learn we can help our friends and others we may be concerned with

#WMHD2020

SIGN UP ON OUR WEBSITE

EURO YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

One of the things that made it unique was that it was entirely designed and delivered by enthusiastic young volunteers from all over Europe who all have a connection to mental health, whether it is through personal experience or secondary (friend or family member). Creating and running represented a learning opportunity for all but also a chance for the volunteers to connect, get to know each other and enjoy time together.

Besides the "I feel, you feel" project, which aims to become a yearly event, EYMH develops several activities, research, events, training and others, to promote mental health for young people and bring it to the table in a youth-friendly, inclusive and intercultural way. Believing this is an issue that needs to be prioritized by European institutions' workstreams, we develop consistent and continuous advocacy, and

actively contribute, as an organisation, to European Parliament's initiatives such as the European Youth Event and Youth EP Network.

EYMH is currently in conversations with MEPs about securing funding for the 2nd edition of this event, which hopefully would happen face to face in 2021.



What picks you up when you're down?

Mentimeter

Listening to music	Music	theatre
My dof	Nature	seeing friends
walk&talk in nature with a friend	Cycling	Talk to a friend



Recommendations/Learning Outcomes

- We want to increase the ratio of young people and professionals to learn more towards young people. The event is FOR young people, so we need to be clearer with this in our marketing next time and possibly create a stipulation that professionals can only join if they have brought professionals.
- There are potentially better platforms to be used other than Zoom and Facebook and believe we should be reviewing these.
- To start promotion and build up from earlier in the year in order to attract more people to the event and to the session itself.

More photos below

You can read the original blog post of the [event here](#) and the follow-up blog from one of the Young volunteer Activists who Co-delivered the sessions [here](#).

If interested in hearing more about our work, what we can offer, engage us in youth mental health activities or specifically want us to come and run some workshops with a group of young people internationally, nationally or locally, get in touch with us through our website or social media pages.

Website: www.eymh.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/EuroyouthMH/>

Twitter: www.twitter.com/euroyouthmh

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