

Free online counselling now available for children and young people across Greater Manchester

All children and young people in Greater Manchester can now access free online counselling and emotional well-being support. From Tuesday 14 April, the Kooth online counselling and emotional wellbeing platform will be available to any young person who may be struggling with their mental health – and particularly during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Kooth is for young people aged 11-18 and offers a variety of resources, including:

- A live chat function that allows young people to contact a qualified counsellor
- Chat forums with other young people
- Crisis information
- Self help resources

Kooth provides information and support along with treatment for children and young people with a range of mental health problems. Scheduled and drop in counselling sessions are available 365 days a year and include slots at evenings and weekends.

It has been available in Bolton, Manchester, Oldham, Trafford Rochdale and Wigan for some time and has now been rolled out to cover Bury, Salford, Tameside and Stockport. This expansion has been brought forward in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Warren Heppolette, executive lead for strategy and system development, Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership, said: “The outbreak of COVID-19 has brought rapid changes to all of our lives and it will be a stressful and anxious time for many. For children and young people, social distancing measures could make it harder to reach out to friends and many may find it hard to open up to close family members. Kooth offers a wealth of information and resources and, most importantly, a way to share fears and anxieties with peers as well as providing access to counselling if needed – all without leaving the house.”

To find out more visit <https://hub.gmhsc.org.uk/mental-health/kooth/>

To sign up to use Kooth, go to www.kooth.com.