



MHNE Reach Out NE

Issue 6 • Winter 2020

The team talk about changes at home, school and in the wider world affecting children and young people



This issue has been written and edited by young people and children for other young people and children, let their voices be heard too!

Reach us by emailing: lyn.boyd@mhne.co.uk





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Welcome to Issue 6

Reach Out North East Newsletter

Produced and distributed online!

Children and young people of all ages continue to be affected by the pandemic.

Uncertainty over education and ability to see friends and relatives in the usual ways, with closures and alternating good and bad news from the media adding to their concerns for the future.

Once again a huge thank-you and to teachers and school staff who thoroughly deserve their Christmas break. They have kept children safe and helped to reassure them in challenging times for mental wellbeing. We welcome content ideas from schools.

Reach Out is an opportunity for young people to have their say, to let off some steam and give older people an idea how they are coping with things.

Reach Out North East is an ever changing team of MHNE volunteers and contributors aged 3-19.

If you would like to contribute to future issues of Reach Out, our contact details are at the back.



Meet the Editor



Connor



Reach Out

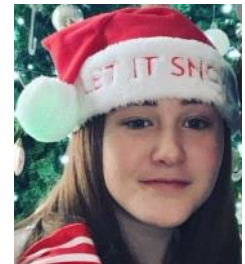


Pixel Artist credit: JollyBoi

And our MHNE REACH OUT Team



Young people from the North East aged 3-19 have sent in items to Connor for this issue!



Images credit: clipartpanda.com



Co-ordinated at MHNE by Lyn Boyd and Gareth Cooper



All about my big brother Jack R (15)

by Freya (3)

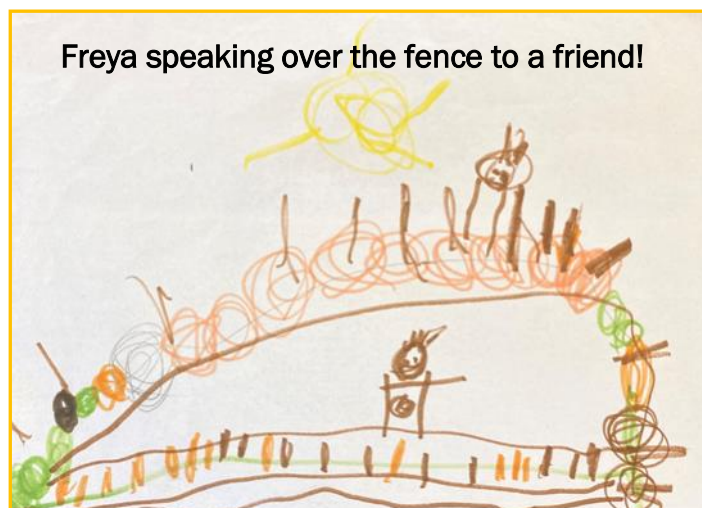
Jack is grumpy and funny, hes always wearing his coat and headphones around the house. He picks me up and chases me, and helps me to do treasure hunts around the garden with my toys.

He sits on the trampoline talking to his friends who keep him company playing games over the phone. Even on cold dry days he sits out there to talk to them!

I don't see him every day as he lives in Sunderland but I do always give him a big hug when he comes to stay here on a weekend. He is so tall he looks like a giant to me!

Both Jack and me have had to isolate from school and nursery recently, we were not allowed out of our house for so long. We both missed our friends though Jack got to sleep longer than usual!

I made him a Christmas card last weekend and he said he liked it, that made me happy!





Oh! Doing the School Hokey Cokey

by Amber M

When I went back to school in September after the lockdown, it was a massive change from being at home with family hardly doing any work at all, to being around loads of people and doing crazy amounts of work to catch up with what we have missed.

Going back to school again meant seeing my friends again, (which I was really excited about). I hadn't seen them all in months. The extra thing is that, when I went back to school I got really close with Hannah (my best friend) and a load of my other friends because I'm in a class with most of them.



Baubles: Photo by Tim Mossholder on Unsplash



When the school sent us home because one of our teachers tested positive, it honestly felt like everything was starting all over. But we finally went back to school and I got to see everyone, but, as I write this, we've been asked to go home to isolate once again.

I am doing okay with my schoolwork at home. So is Hannah, and so is some of my other friends that I have been texting over the past few days. Overall, everytime we get sent home or get put in another lockdown it feels like it is starting all over again.

Thank you to all my friends for keeping me occupied during the lockdowns. Also, my family (Mam, Linzi and my Grandma). I love mine and Hannah's laugh attacks, during most of them I can't breathe.





My Lockdown Story—Abbey Times!

I liked not being able to go to school but I did miss my friends. We were given our school work that I did everyday on my lap top before I could play. I so liked sitting in the house playing on my PS4 and I could invite my friends to join me online.

During lockdown I went on lots of walks with my mam and dad and my sister Sophie. One day we went to Gibside for a picnic and we saw a cat in the greenhouse. He was all black but had white paws and the man said he lives in the greenhouse. Me and my sister played lots of games and climbed trees and I played football with my daddy. We also went to one of my favourite places Finchale Abbey and I was really looking forward to playing in the river but because of all the rain it was very full and we had to keep well away from it, we were very disappointed.

Photo: Finchale Abbey by John Thurm



Mam and Dad played lots of games with us and tried to make lockdown fun but I didn't like not being able to play with my friends. I also missed seeing my nanas and grandad and was so sad about that.

Sometimes I had to wear a mask and didn't like that as I felt it was difficult to breathe. Lots of places were closed and we couldn't go to our groups and activities like swimming and I really missed not being able to stay at Nana Jane's in her big bed.



I am very happy now as my nannas and grandad are in our bubble so we can see them again.

by Aaron B (8 years)

Moving to a New House During COVID-19



My name is Michael and I am 8 years old. Covid has been a sad time, I missed swimming and the cinema. I did like being at home and doing fun stuff with my family and doing my schoolwork in the house. However, just as we went back to school my dad needed to move to a bigger house in a new place. When he said we were going to have to move I was happy because I was excited about living with my new step-mum's fish and cats and getting new posters for my walls. I was sad as I knew I would miss my old house. I was worried about having a bedroom all to myself after always sharing with my big brother.



If I am feeling sad, I like to give my mam and step-dad and dad and stepmam lots of hugs. I think that having pets can also cheer you up when you are feeling sad. It is important to get plenty of sleep as that always helps me to feel calmer.

It is also important to share when you are happy as well as sad. When I am happy, I like to jump and shout and wave my arms all around. It is important to share being happy or sad so people can be there with you sharing it. I think it will take a while to get used to my dad's new house and living with my new stepmum and step brother (who we call 'cousin') but I think it will be great and it is good to know that I can stay at the same school and that my mum and stepdad will be in their usual house so some things are staying the same.

Michael — age 8





One Call a Week

Lockdown and isolation make things harder But asking for help really helps!

Hello my name is Spencer and wanted to write about my personal journey through lockdown.

During lockdown I did not feel right. Everything I would be doing on a daily basis was becoming harder and harder to do. Eventually I didn't want to get up on a morning. I couldn't get my head around why I was feeling the way I did or how to make myself feel better. I couldn't speak to my mam and dad at first, I thought they always just want me to be happy and it would break my heart for them to think I wasn't. I spoke to my Head of Year at school and he started to put things in place for me. He spoke to my mam, he told her to make an appointment with my Doctor. The Doctor then referred me to CAMHS and I received one call a week with Adele who I spoke to very honestly.

On my first session with Adele we got down to what was the trigger that was making me feel like this and she explained to me that it was depression.

Before lockdown a family friend took his own life, he was just 19 years old. This hit me very hard, I've only had experience of older people dying and was angry that this had happened. Adele has helped me understand why I was feeling the way I was, and we have explored different things to put in place to help me cope.



Lockdown magnified how I was feeling and If there's one lesson I have learnt it is to speak out and tell someone. I still have set backs but I now know that I can talk to my mam and dad, I notice the signs and can put things into place to stop it getting as bad as it was.

Its ok not to be ok – just reaching out may seem like the hardest thing in the world to do but it's the best thing I did.

by Spencer age 16

Shaun's Favourite Xmas Things by Shaun of Dipton aged 8 years



Xmas Song – Jingle Bells

Xmas Films – Christmas Chronicles

Best Ever Xmas Present – X-Box

Favourite thing on Xmas Day – Opening presents!

Worst Xmas ever would be - having no presents and my mam not being there. Some children have no homes and hardly any food in some parts of the world – that makes me sad.

Best Xmas Ever – Going away on holiday with my family

Xmas Wish – When I am big I want to buy my mam and dad a car



Turtle Cake Recipe

by Connor

Chocolate turtle cake with White chocolate “icing”

We made this gorgeous cake using this recipe:

[The Most Amazing Chocolate Cake](#)

We changed the layer filling to be jaffa cakes and a chocolate spread. The topping was melted Milky Bars (white chocolate) with choc raisins, smarties and chocolate eggs pressed into it as it cooled and hardened.

More jaffa cakes for head and flippers!

Yum!



Spooky Quiz

I wasn't able to do my usual trick or treating with friends back at Halloween this year, but I did create this fun spooky quiz instead.

1. What is a zombie's favourite food?

- A - flesh
- B - pizza
- C - wood

2. How many bones in the adult human body?

- A - 106
- B - 206
- C - 306

3. Which of these is a famous ghost ship?

- A - The Pink Unicorn
- B - The Titanic
- C - The Flying Dutchman

4. When do werewolves turn into wolves?

- A - Midnight
- B - Full moon
- C - After a good breakfast

5. In the popular movie "Hotel Transylvania" who owns the famous monster hotel?

- A - Count Dracula
- B - Frankenstein's Monster
- C - The Wolf Man

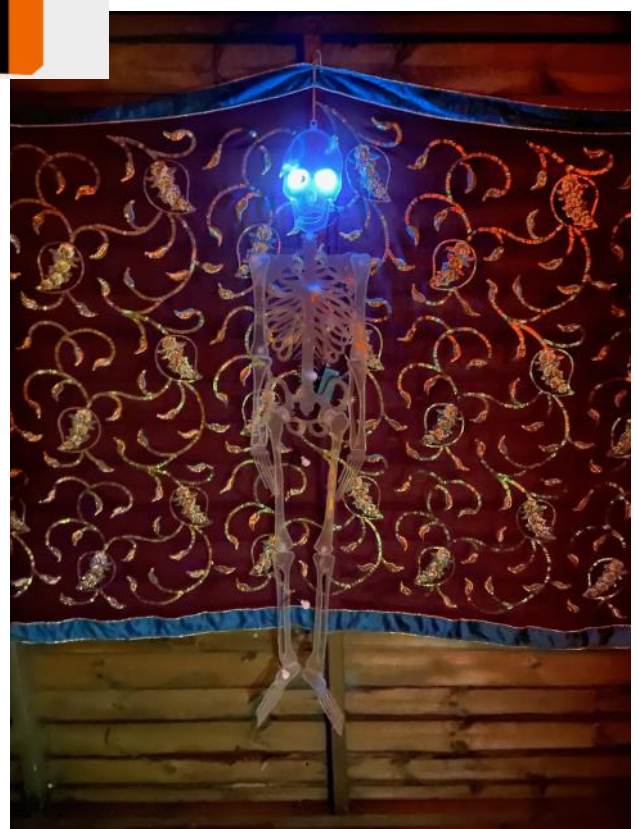
Hi, I'm Michael - can you get 5/5 on this spooky quiz I made?



ANSWERS: 1=A, 2=B, 3=C, 4=B, 5=A

Halloween 2020 at Muddy Boots

We didn't need to make this year any more scary, but some of our young team took these photos around Muddy Boots which was all made up for Halloween.





Interview with my Human

by Lucy the Cat (13 years)

with Jake (10 years) assisted by Jack aged 70 plus!

Sequel to “Interviewed by my Cat” from our Summer issue!

Lucy - I was a kitten when Jake first came into our house. I was a bit disappointed as I had thought he might have fur all over like me but he just had a little bit on his head. I have taught him everything he knows but it has been an up hill struggle at times!

The Interview

Lucy - Can't see the point of school myself, never went and didn't do me any harm but Jake has been forced to go since his kitten stage and therefore will ask the question anyway. How has school been after your long holiday?

Jake - It would have been much better if the teachers had left us alone, but they were concerned about our safety.

Lucy - This second lock down is a bit different from the first, you can go to school and I get a bit decent sleep and peace from Jake harrasing me all day.





Jake - when i get back i will be all over you, Like a hawk

Lucy - you are 10 now, isn't it time you left that school place and started to go out hunting .

Jake. Lucy, you are so thick i just go to Asda

Lucy - Xmas soon and we will have a holiday, food treats and presents. What is your biggest wish for Xmas?

Jake - What i want is the latest X-box to come on sale, yippee!

Lucy - You have been pretty well behaved lately and so here is a bed time story about my latest adventure which ended up with me being pretty ill!

During that last storm i was attacked by a penguin which had escaped from Craghead Zoo, where they keep all creatures, great and small, the penguin stood on my tail and and pecked me rapidly.

I decided to run up a tree to escape. I was met by Herby the giant grey squirell who attacked me but i fought back and we both fell off the tree and were knocked out. Jimmy the hedgehog saw me and covered me with leaves and moss. The next thing i knew i was looking at Jake with a cat medkit in his hand.

Happy Days – I knew Jake would come in useful one day!



COVID and me

by Jack D (age 15)

When COVID first struck I was enjoying a lovely meal, tucking into my friend's gorgeous birthday cake in the pub, little did I know it would be the last - for a while at least!

Breaking news! Boris Johnson has just made an announcement!

I pondered what the mysterious COVID had affected now. 'Boris Johnson decided GCSE exams won't take place this year' my friend shouted. We all sit in disbelief, as if we had just won the golden ticket. We couldn't believe it. This shocked us all as none of us had realised the massive impact COVID would have.

On the flip side, the announcement soon became sad news. We all felt like we had worked a great deal for nothing. In addition, all students wouldn't be able to experience the year 11 leavers and prom. The event was usually the final chance for students to come together as a community and celebrate our hard work. This also brought forward a few tears from my friends, realising they had spent a fortune on makeup, hair, dresses and suits all for nothing. Luckily I hadn't bought my suit yet!



Photo by Oliver Hale on Unsplash

This day was a very surreal one, full of mixed emotions and priorities. Due to the monstrous COVID, the next day would be our last day at school ever. Knowing that the day would be the last day I would see my peers and teachers was an awful feeling, especially due to this occurring three months prior to what we had anticipated.

Not a dry eye in the room as we all walked out the school gates for the last time.

The second unfortunate run in I faced with the not so lovely covid was in the early weeks of may. First of all my dad fell ill, suffering from a bad cough and temperature. Then disaster struck, little old me spent a day stuck on the sofa riddled with COVID. Unfortunately the illness struck me a few days before my brother's birthday, leaving me feeling washed out. Experiencing a bad head and a funny temperature, the days before my brother's birthday were not the best to say the least. Fortunately, none of us became seriously ill due to the virus just a little bit shaken up. We spent the day guzzling birthday cake saddened by the fact we could not taste the delight but also slightly grateful for the lack of taste as my Grandma made the cake!

My advice to anyone who is struggling with fears relating to COVID is to stay safe and wear a mask. However, if you're struggling with mental health please do indulge in a socially distanced walk or activity with a friend to get some release from these oppressive times.

Stay optimistic and keep in touch with your friends! Please do not hesitate to seek out the MHNE website for mental health advice and help if you or a friend are struggling with current events.



Photo by Ignacio R on Unsplash



Winter Wordsearch

Find 10 words!



a	s	c	e	l	o	o	w	c	r
r	q	u	a	c	t	i	e	r	s
k	w	n	e	r	n	f	n	e	m
d	h	h	o	t	e	e	i	h	e
f	a	c	e	m	a	s	k	c	a
a	t	r	m	d	t	t	l	a	p
h	s	r	e	f	n	i	r	e	l
d	a	w	f	j	i	v	b	t	n
w	p	u	r	p	l	e	l	y	x
l	p	v	s	n	u	g	g	l	e

cares

facemask

festive

purple

snuggle

teacher

tiers

warm

whatsapp

winter



The solution to this wordsearch can be found at the end of this issue.

Where to go for help ...



Here are some places to go for help if you or someone close to you are struggling...

Single Points of Access around the North East

If you are a child or young person aged between 0-18 years old, or a parent or carer of a child, you can self refer:

County Durham and Darlington has a single point of access for referrals and self-referrals to CAMHS services. To contact the team please email tewv.camhscountydurhamdarlington@nhs.net or call 0300 123 9296.

You can contact the Newcastle-Gateshead single point of access on 0303 123 1147 or email NGSPA@nhs.net

National Self Harm Network

Self Harm Support—0800 6226000

Childline Messageboards and Online Chat for free, confidential help. Helpline 24hours —0800 1111

Kooth Articles, Forums and Message Boards.

The Samaritans You do not have to be suicidal to contact them. There are branches based in Durham, Sunderland & Newcastle. For the nearest one to you (phone support and more):

08457 90 90 90 (24 hours) or visit www.samaritans.org/branches

Papyrus

Hopeline UK—0800 068 4141 or text 07786209697



The Young People's support pages on the MHNE website have more information about who to contact.

Always ring 999 in an emergency.

Wordsearch solution

a	s	c	e	l	o	o	w	c	r
r	q	u	a	c	t	i	e	r	s
k	w	n	e	r	n	f	n	e	m
d	h	h	o	t	e	e	i	h	e
f	a	c	e	m	a	s	k	c	a
a	t	r	m	d	t	t	l	a	p
h	s	r	e	f	n	i	r	e	l
d	a	w	f	j	i	v	b	t	n
w	p	u	r	p	l	e	l	y	x
l	p	v	s	n	u	g	g	l	e



MHNE

Mental Health North East

Charity No: 1119652

Company No: 5552172

- To find out more information
- To comment on this newsletter
- To join the Reach Out North East team or
- To include something in a future newsletter...

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Mental Health North East (MHNE) is an charity that supports voluntary and community organisations whose work involves mental health.

Reach Out North East newsletter is part of MHNE's Young People and Mental Health Project.