

Zippy's Friends – Evaluation in Northamptonshire TaMHS Project

By Kathryn Davidson, Educational Psychologist (edited by Mike Simons)

Description of Zippy's Friends

Zippy's Friends is a comprehensive programme designed to promote mental health and wellbeing with pupils aged between 5 and 7 years. The aim of the intervention is to help children to learn better ways to cope with everyday problems. The programme provides straightforward materials and lesson plans to cover 24 weekly whole class sessions, each lasting approximately 45 – 50 minutes. The themes and content of the programme are linked together through a story which is appealing and appropriate to pupils in Key Stage 1. The sessions each focus on a certain aspect of the story, encouraging children to consider ways that characters can cope in the story before considering and developing their own coping skills.

The intervention is clearly structured and benefits from a progressive richness and complexity of skills and themes, where earlier ideas are reinforced and used as starting points for further sessions. It is therefore important that the programme is taught in its entirety. The 24 sessions are divided into 6 modules covering the topics – Feelings, Communication, Making and Breaking Relationships, Conflict Resolution, Dealing with Loss and Change and We Cope. New ideas are introduced using examples that would be familiar to most children aged 5 -7 years. Children are encouraged to evaluate the storyline and ways of coping with a wide range of situations before being encouraged to reflect on their own skills / solutions, benefiting from sharing ideas with peers and learning strategies to help them to decide if a „solution“ to a problem is a helpful or an unhelpful one. In this way their skills are enhanced on many levels and in many ways , for example their social and emotional skills, their speaking and listening skills, their ability to consider other views, their ability to analyse and evaluate suggestions and ways in which they can create and use a support network in a range of situations.

The programme was developed over a period of 7 years with the aim of increasing the coping skills, mental health and emotional wellbeing of young children. Monkeviciene et.al (2006) quote studies which have shown that *“the use of effective coping skills can help to overcome the negative effects of stressful life events”*.

Zippy's Friends therefore seeks to extend the range of coping skills that children can employ. Drawing on further research into coping led by Segal (1983) and Lazarus and Folkman (1984), Zippy's Friends has been designed to help children to find their own coping styles, rather than endorsing one particular approach. It recognizes that a variety of coping strategies can be helpful and that good coping skills can vary between individuals and situations.

Zippy's Friends works by developing children's repertoire of coping skills and their ability to adapt those coping skills to various situations. It integrates a range of skills including teaching problem solving skills, enhancing social skills and improving emotional understanding alongside clear messages about finding ways to „cope“ with everyday stresses and more complex situations. Crucially, as Monkeviciene points

out “Zippy’s Friends does not tell children what to do, nor does it indicate what is right or wrong. Instead, it encourages children to explore and think for themselves”.

The programme is published and managed by a UK based charity called [Partnership for Children](#). It has successfully introduced Zippy’s Friends to many countries worldwide (currently 19 different countries) as well as a growing number of counties in the UK.

In order to run Zippy’s Friends in a school the teacher who will be delivering the sessions needs to attend a one day training course run by Partnership For Children, or one of their approved trainers, and purchase the core materials (a set of posters, Teacher’s Notes, lesson plans for each module etc.) and consider which additional resources may be helpful to them. The county’s Zippy’s Friends Coordinator would then liaise with the school with regard to further support that might be helpful. It would be expected that one observation of a session and follow up consultation with a Zippy’s Friends trainer would be planned as a supportive measure and to ensure fidelity to the programme. Further support could be arranged through interest groups or links being established with a partner school.

Rationale for Including Zippy’s Friends in TaMHS Project

To date there have been three large scale studies of Zippy’s Friends, 2 conducted in Denmark and Lithuania by Mishara and Ystgaard (2006) and Monkeviciene, Mishara and Dufour (2006) and 1 in Ireland by Clarke and Barry (2010). Holmes and Faupel also evaluated the intervention in Southampton Schools between 2003 and 2006.

Mishara and Ystgaard studied 322 children in Danish schools and 314 in Lithuanian Schools who were undertaking the programme. They compared their performance with children in control classes in both countries (110 children in Denmark and 104 children in Lithuania). The short term effects of Zippy’s Friends were very positive.

Pupils who had received the programme used significantly more positive coping strategies (as measured by the Schoolagers Coping Strategies Inventory) and displayed significant improvements in social skills (as measured by the Social Skills Questionnaire, Student and Teacher Forms, Elementary Level) than control groups.

Pupils who had received Zippy’s Friends showed higher increases in scores in the core social skill areas of „assertion“, „self-control“, „empathy“ and „cooperation“ than pupils in the control group.

To measure coping strategies Mishara and Ystgaard interviewed children using the Schoolagers Coping Strategies Inventory. They looked at „how often the strategy was used“ and „how helpful the strategy had been“ and found a significant improvement in strategies used by children who had received Zippy’s Friends when compared to control groups. Further analysis was undertaken by asking teachers to observe children and note coping strategies used. While there were some inconsistencies across countries in the number of observations that were carried out, results do suggest that in Denmark there was a significant increase in the number of coping strategies used by children who had completed the Zippy’s Friends programme, as observed by their teachers. Further analysis of the performance of the children in Lithuania also showed decreases in externalizing and hyperactive behaviours following the intervention.

Monkeviciene, Mishara and Dufour (2006) focused on exploring the benefits of Zippy’s Friends in supporting children transferring from Kindergarten to Elementary School in Lithuania (aged between 7 and 9 years). The study followed 140 children

who had received Zippy's Friends as part of their class curriculum the previous year. Monkeviciene et al compared the children's transition into school with a control group of 106 children. They found that the children who had completed the Zippy's Friends programme in their previous school year, adapted to school life better than the control group. Results showed that the Zippy's Friends children had fewer problems with self-regulation, learning and discipline and they used significantly more different coping strategies than children in the control group. The coping strategies used were rated as appropriate to the situation. In general, results show that the children who had studied the Zippy's Friends programme scored higher in behavioural and emotional adaptation to school and had more positive reactions to the new school environment.

In 2008 Zippy's Friends was introduced as a Social, Personal and Health Education intervention into 42 schools that had been designated as „disadvantaged“ primary schools in the West of Ireland. Clarke and Barry studied the progress of the pupils and assigned students into intervention groups (523 pupils in total) and control groups (207 pupils in total). They found that Zippy's Friends had a significant positive effect on children's emotional literacy skills (as measured by the Emotional Literacy Checklist). Teachers also observed improvements in children's social skills, verbal communication skills and their ability to manage their feelings and relationships with each other. Children in the Zippy's Friends groups had a wider range of vocabulary for articulating their feelings than children in the control groups.

Further results from the Clarke and Barry 2010 study show that children seemed to increase their repertoire of coping skills following the programme and their coping skills were aimed at directly addressing the problem. Teachers commented that they had a greater awareness of the children's wellbeing which helped their relationship to flourish with the children. Teachers felt that there should be a „whole school awareness“ of the programme to assist in a whole school approach to handling situations and to reinforce children's skills in a range of settings. A summary of the findings published on the Partnership for Children website notes that 77% of teachers who took part in the study felt that Zippy's Friends also had a beneficial impact on children's academic achievement.

In Southampton Zippy's Friends was introduced as part of a wellbeing initiative in 2003. In total 54 classes ran the intervention between 2003 and 2006. Results from a study of 59 pupils (23 in the control group and 36 in the experimental group where teachers in each class had been asked to select two pupils in their class who they considered to be within the average range for ability and emotional development) show a general increase in Emotional Literacy skills (as measured by the Emotional Literacy Checklist), with trends emerging for higher scores in „self awareness“ and „motivation“ in pupils, as rated by teachers following the intervention. Parent's responses on the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) showed a positive shift in the average scores for children following the intervention. Both children in the control and experimental groups made gains in the number of simple and complex feelings words they used, showing an increase in emotional vocabulary. The children in the Zippy's Friends groups made more progress than peers in the control groups. Finally, children in the Zippy's Friends groups made significant improvement in their performance on the Child Role Play Measure, a test which asks children what they would do in a range of situations and provides a score for the coping strategy they suggest. This finding implies that the children had a wider repertoire of coping skills to draw on following the intervention and a better ability to decide which approach might be most effective in different situations.

Provision of Training and Implementation of Zippy's Friends in TaMHS Project

Zippy's Friends was initially introduced into Northamptonshire in a formal way in February 2010 when Partnership For Children ran a one day training course for 2 members of staff from 6 schools and 13 members of the Educational Psychology Service. At the first training day schools were invited to attend who were part of the TaMHS project. At the end of the training day the schools were sufficiently trained and resourced to run the programme in their schools and the Educational Psychologists were trained to be trainers in the programme.

Despite there being less than 24 weeks before the end of the academic school year 2009 – 2010, 4 schools decided that the intervention was too important to miss a cohort of children and so they began the programme straight away. Two interest groups were run by Educational Psychologists (EPs) who had attended the training to provide support, 1 operated in the South of the county and 1 in the North of the county. Schools were offered the possibility of an EP visiting one of the sessions to observe the lesson. Two schools in the North of the county accepted the support.

In September 2010, two further training days were run by Northamptonshire EPs who were trained as Zippy's Friends trainers (one in Wellingborough and one in Daventry). The trainers were supported by 2 core members of the Partnership For Children organisation in order to maintain the integrity of the training programme, to provide support to the trainers in order to develop their skills further so that they might then support others and to ensure best quality delivery of the materials and activities.

Between 1 and 2 members of staff from 14 schools attended the training alongside 9 further members of the Educational Psychology Service, 2 Specialist Teachers for Mental Health, 2 Specialist Teachers for Looked After Children and 2 BACIN Teachers. School staff who attended the training were given the core set of materials to enable them to begin the intervention in their school. The arrangement for receiving the free materials requested that the schools act as „partner“ or „lead“ schools to support colleagues who may be beginning to implement the programme following further training next academic year.

Evaluation forms from the training suggest that schools planned to begin Zippy's Friends during the autumn/ winter term 2010. Each school would be visited by a trained EP or Specialist Teacher for Mental Health who would observe a session and offer consultation on the implementation of the programme. Schools in the North of the county area requested an interest group meeting to talk with each other and share their views and experiences so far. A meeting subsequently took place in February 2011.

The EPs who attended the Autumn term 2010 training were invited to attend a further session to be trained as trainers in order to support the „roll-out“ of the programme to all Northamptonshire schools. There are currently 22 EPs or Trainee EPs and 2 Specialist Teachers for Mental Health who will be able to provide Zippy's Friends training from September 2011.

Evaluation of Zippy's Friends in Northamptonshire

Table 1 indicates the engagement levels for Zippy's Friends in Northamptonshire schools between February 2010 and December 2010.

	Number of Schools	Number of schools running the intervention	Number of children receiving the intervention	Number of EPs trained
Spring / Summer 2010	6 received the training	4	4 whole class groups	13
Autumn/ Winter 2010	14 received training	20	21 whole class groups	9

Of the 4 schools who ran the Zippy's Friends programme in the Spring /Summer 2010, 3 schools collected data from the class who received the Zippy's Friends sessions (the intervention group) and a control group (a parallel class who continued with their normal PHSE curriculum). 2 schools were able to collect data from parents of children in the intervention and control group and teachers from all 3 schools were able to complete checklists to measure the self esteem of the 7 or 8 most vulnerable pupils in the class.

Table 2 – Range of Quantitative Data Returned by Schools during the Project Phase of TaMHS to Evaluate Zippy's Friends

School	Insight Self Esteem		Parent SDQ	
	Experimental	Control	Experimental	Control
(A)	N = 8	N = 8	N= 5	
(B)	N=7 (N = 7 + 3 months)	N = 0 (N = 6 + 3 months)		
(C)	N = 8	N = 7	N= 2	

N = number of questionnaires returned

Two quantitative measures were used to gain an understanding of any improvement in the children's self esteem as perceived by their class teacher (using the Insight Primary Self-Esteem checklist) and any progress in core areas of their emotional skills and behaviour as rated by their parents (using the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire, SDQ). Results from the analysis of the SDQ are discussed in Section f).

The Insight Primary Self Esteem checklist provides an overall indication of a pupil's level of self-esteem. The overall score can then be broken into three core components – sense of self ("having a good idea about who you are....accepting [your] strengths and limitations" , Morris, p. 5), sense of belonging ("how comfortable you are about being in relationships with other people....it also involves having good friendship-making skills and an open, tolerant attitude towards other people" Morris, p. 5) and sense of personal power ("your inner knowledge of your ability to have an

impact on the world around you”, Morris, p.5). The checklist can be completed by the young person themselves working with a teaching professional, or, a teacher can complete it, giving their perspective of the child’s self-esteem. The checklist consists of 36 statements which can be rated as true „most of the time”, „quite often”, „occasionally” or „almost never”. It is designed to be used with pupils at primary school (4 – 11 years).

The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) provides information across a range of categories e.g. emotional skills, pro-social behaviour, conduct issues, hyperactivity and difficulties with peers. It can be used as a screening tool to identify vulnerable children, or, as in this study, a method of measuring progress before and after an intervention. In the current study parents were asked to complete the SDQ before and after the intervention to ascertain parent’s perceptions of any changes following the intervention.

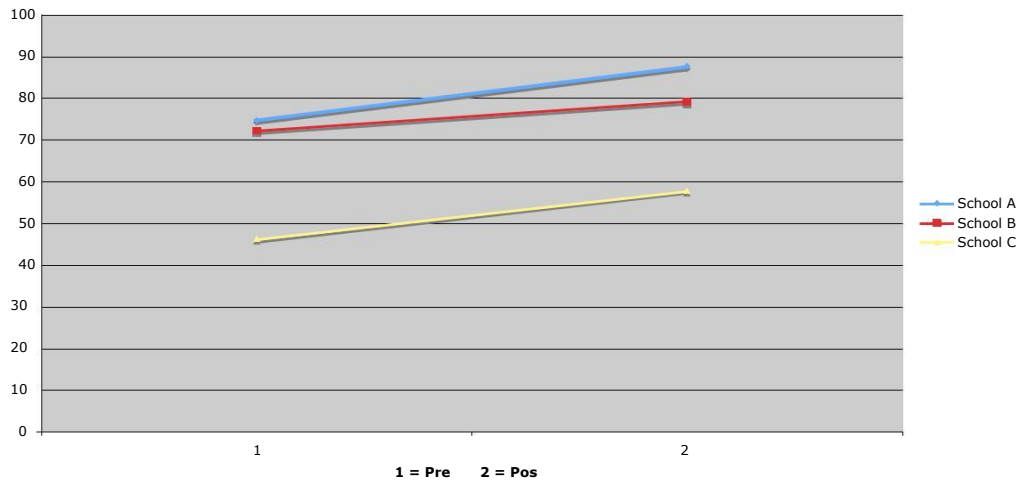
A range of qualitative data has been gathered including: structured interviews with two teachers regarding the intervention; completion of a qualitative evaluation questionnaire by 1 teacher; a session run by an Educational Psychologist to gain pupils’ views in two schools; evaluation of the programme at „interest group” meetings led by EPs; and observation of a Zippy’s Friends session in 2 schools by an Educational Psychologist.

Evaluation Results from Quantitative Data

Overall it would appear that pupils in all three Zippy’s Friends classes made gains in their levels of self esteem, as rated by their class teachers using the Insight Self Esteem Indicator. Results for vulnerable pupils in School A showed a significant increase in levels of self esteem ($p < 0.05$). In the Zippy’s Friends classes in all 3 schools, out of the 23 pupils selected as being among the most vulnerable in their class, 15 pupils remained in the same descriptive category (e.g. high, good, vulnerable or very low) as before the intervention, 5 pupils (21%) moved up one category description and 3 (13%) made a jump of two category bandings. In two schools pupils from the Zippy’s Friends classes made more progress with their self esteem than pupils in the Control groups (in one case the difference between the two groups was statistically significant). The school that was able to provide data at the three month follow up stage showed that, although self esteem was rated lower than it had been immediately following the intervention, some progress appeared to have been maintained and clear discrepancies existed between the control group and the children who had received Zippy’s Friends.

Graph 1

A Line Graph to Show Progress in Insight Self Esteem Scores Given to Vulnerable Pupils in Each Class by Class Teachers Before and After Zippy'



In School A parents of 5 of the children identified as being the most vulnerable in the class completed the SDQ before and after the Zippy's Friends programme. In general there was little variation in their scores before and after the intervention. Overall SDQ scores (without the prosocial measure) remained the same for 3 pupils, 1 pupil gained 2 points and 1 pupil lost a point. All scores, both before and after the intervention fell within the „Normal“ range.

In School C, the SDQ was completed by 2 parents of children who had been identified by the teachers as vulnerable before and after the intervention. Both pupils were in the Zippy's Friends receiving class. Both pupils showed progress following the intervention. Pupil 1 seemed to make progress with her emotional symptoms and hyperactivity score (moving from a „borderline“ to a „normal“ score for hyperactivity). Her overall score moved from „abnormal“ to „borderline“. Pupil 2 also made progress in hyperactivity, moving from an „abnormal“ to a „normal“ score. His emotional symptoms and peer problems scores improved, moving from „borderline“ to „normal“ scores. However his overall score remained in the „abnormal“ range both before and after the programme. Both pupils appeared to experience more conduct problems following the intervention (Pupil 2 remained in the „abnormal“ category and Pupil 1 moved from „normal“ to „abnormal“).

Evaluation Results from Qualitative Data

Pupils Views re Zippy's Friends

An Educational Psychologist met with 24 children in a Year 1 class in School B and 25 children in a Year 1/2 class in School C. When asked „does Zippy's Friends help you? Tell me a number between 1 and 10 where 1 is no help at all and 10 is helps me a lot“, children in School C all responded „10“ with the exception of 3 pupils who gave it a 5, 7 and 9 respectively. In School B the children were asked a slightly different question – „do you like learning about Zippy's Friends? Tell me a number between 1 and 10 where 1 means you don't like it at all, 10 means you like it a lot and 5 means it is ok“. Out of 24 children, 16 rated it as 10, 2 gave it a 9 – 10 rating, 2

said 9 and 1 child each gave it a rating of 8, 5, 2 and 1. Overall it would therefore seem that children like learning about Zippy and they find the programme helpful.

Children in both classes were then asked „How does Zippy’s Friends help you?“ There are several themes that emerge from the children’s responses, as displayed in Table 3.

Table 3. Themes that emerged from children’s comments when asked

‘How does Zippy’s Friends help you?’.

Rank order	Theme	Example
1	To know how to cope with bullying [4]	“when you are bullied you can tell somebody”
2	To talk to someone if you have a problem [3]	“talk to my friends when I’m angry”
2	To know a „helpful“ thing to do [3]	“it helps me learn so I don’t hurt other people _ I just think about Zippy- and just say...and walk off” “when I think about it on the playground”
4	To keep friends [2]	

[N] = number of responses linked to the theme out of a possible 17 comments

Staff Views re Zippy’s Friends

Staff evaluation of the programme is equally positive. Teachers who have delivered Zippy’s Friends comment that they have seen clear and marked changes in children’s social and emotional skills throughout the programme. Two types of qualitative feedback have been sought from staff delivering the programme. A summative questionnaire was completed by staff from 3 schools at the end of the programme. 5 schools have also attended interest group meetings where comments were recorded regarding Zippy’s Friends.

Strengths of the programme that have been identified by staff include:

- Progress in children’s ability to “use more feelings words to describe their moods and understand that the feelings are not „right or wrong“ they are just feelings”
- Progress in children’s ability to manage problems they face in every day situations e.g. in the playground. Their social problem solving / solution finding skills improve. They are applying the skills well, sometimes with a reminder such as “what would Zippy do?”
- Progress in children’s ability to resolve conflict after falling-out with friends. Children seem to have adopted the strategy to „talk about it“ and are using it independently and successfully
- Progress in children’s ability to share thoughts and feelings. Even children who were initially reluctant to join in became more comfortable over the series of sessions and participated fully as the programme continued
- Excellent stories – with good continuity and progression through each module. Children related well to the characters in the story
- Children engage well with the programme and enjoy the activities. Some teachers report enjoying it too!

- Easy to use materials with minimal preparation, good structure and order of sessions
- Good pace of work set
- Easy for children of all abilities to access
- The programme helps teachers to gain a greater understanding of the children and it can bring teachers and pupils closer together
- Evaluation sheets are really helpful allowing children to reflect on their feelings and giving staff an insight into children's responses
- Module 5 – Saying Goodbye – Changes and Coping with Death, Learning from Change and Loss. Issues covered more thoroughly than in SEAL. Children are able to talk about losses and parents can talk to teachers about issues affecting their children more easily

In general there has been a motivating sense of enthusiasm emanating from staff teaching the programme, for example, one teacher commented "Zippy's Friends is fantastic and I would recommend it is used in every Year 2 class. All the children loved Zippy and enjoyed the sessions" Other comments have included "One of the best interventions ever introduced. You really get to know your class and help them develop lifelong coping strategies", "it is invaluable" and "As a parent, I would want my child to experience Zippy's friends to enable him to cope with life's challenges".

School staff considered limitations and areas for improvement for the programme. They said:

- Activities can sometimes be repetitive. It can be helpful to include role play rather than some of the reading activities
- Feedback sheets can be too rigid and may benefit from a more creative approach
- Some sessions appear shorter than others (notably sessions 2 and 3 in each module), but the time required often depends on the relevance of the issue to the children
- It is helpful for the class teacher to run the sessions so that ideas can be reinforced and applied to situations throughout the week
- Helpful for children to sit on chairs rather than the floor due to the length of time some of the discussions/ activities take
- It will be important to follow up and build on their learning in future years
- Advice may be helpful from professionals on ways to deal with children/ parents who might become very upset when death is covered in the programme
- It can be difficult to implement the programme without first going on the one day training course

Observations of Zippy's Friends sessions have been carried out by Educational Psychologists in 3 schools for consideration as part of the evaluative process. Further observations have been conducted with a separate focus of providing support for the school in implementing Zippy's Friends. Observation records indicate some themes across the observations.

Core themes include:

- Children are very engaged in the sessions
- Children seem relaxed and able to participate in discussions, even when the focus is on more negative emotions

- Children seem to find the activities fun – they appear to be relevant and appropriate for the age range
- Children are benefitting socially, emotionally and in thinking about what to do when problems arise
- It is helpful when teachers accept and praise answers given by the children, showing that all ideas are worth considering. This seems instrumental in motivating children to make lots of suggestions
- It is helpful when a clear outline of the session and objectives to be learned is given.
- Bringing in the children’s own experiences helped to bring the ideas being taught to life and gave the learning points greater meaning for the children
- Higher level thinking skills are encouraged when considering whether strategies are helpful / unhelpful and how they may be used in different situations
- A high level of reinforcement of learning points helped the children to understand the ideas and apply them to their own situations
- It is helpful to follow the published teachers’ notes very closely in terms of structure and content of the session to preserve fidelity to the programme.
- The rules are very helpful, especially revising children’s understanding of them at the beginning of each session
- Vulnerable children are able to access the activities alongside peers
- It may be helpful to consider working in smaller groups, including paired work throughout the session to maximize the engagement of all the children and reduce „whole class listening” time
- The A4 size pictures may be a little small to use as a visual aid for the whole class. It may be beneficial to make use of the images available on the resource CD to project them onto a large screen
- Class displays can be very helpful in emphasising key themes and serving as a memory aid for children
- Evaluation activities at the end of the sessions are valued and staff follow up on any concerns raised

Overall Impact Ratings for Zippy’s Friends

" Where 10 is very highly useful and 1 is not at all useful, on a scale of 1-10, how useful do you think the following TaMHS interventions were/are	Overall Impact Ratings of Zippy’s Friends, according to senior staff from 4 project schools			
	Average	Median	Mode	Range
a) For children who are vulnerable to experiencing difficulties with Mental Health or who are already experiencing such difficulties	8.8	9	10	7 to 10
b) Overall to the school	7	8	8	2 to 10

A comment made by a Headteacher alongside these overall ratings included that Zippy's Friends was effective with the vulnerable group of pupils within the whole class.

Capacity Building for Zippy's Friends

All 4 schools that ran Zippy's Friends in Spring/Summer 2010 have built the programme into their PHSE curriculum for Key Stage 1 and continue to deliver the intervention during the 2010-2011 academic year. One particular school re-wrote their entire PHSE policy around the themes in Zippy's Friends, to introduce children to the key concepts in a cyclical manner as they progress through the school to help them to maximize the benefits of the Zippy's Friends programme.

Each school currently trained in Zippy's Friends has agreed to support colleagues with the approach and become a „partner“ school to provide an additional means of liaison, expertise, experience and support to staff embarking on the programme for the first time.

The Northamptonshire EPS (Educational Psychology Service) currently has 22 EPs and 2 Specialist Teachers for Mental Health trained to deliver Zippy's Friends training to school staff and others. The implementation of Zippy's Friends in the county is managed by a County Coordinator, Mike Simons, Lead TaMHS Educational Psychologist in consultation with Partnership for Children. Activities to ensure effective roll out of the intervention include:

1. November 2010 – Easter 2011, Zippy's Friends – trained EPs and Specialist Teachers for Mental Health visiting nominated school staff who have undertaken initial training to provide support and observe a session.
2. TaMHS conference workshop in January 2011 was run by Kathryn Davidson, TaMHS Educational Psychologist summarising Zippy's Friends and its benefits. Of all interventions presented at the conference, Zippy's Friends was the training/intervention identified by 48 participants as most likely to be purchased by their school. Zippy's Friends was the top rated training/intervention identified in this way.
3. Zippy's Friends will be among a range of interventions recommended to schools by their TaMHS link EP. Arrangements for accessing training / materials will be clarified for schools during the Summer Term 2011.
4. Trained Zippy's Friends EPs and Specialist Teachers for Mental Health will meet together to support each other to be trainers and to develop courses to be run in the Autumn Term 2011.
5. It is planned that 4 one day courses will be run across the county for school staff to attend to become trained in Zippy's Friends in Autumn 2011.
6. Each school attending the courses run in autumn 2011 will be linked with a partner school. They will receive a visit from a Zippy's Friends trained EP to observe a session and to discuss the intervention. They will also all be invited to interest group meetings.
7. Roll out of the programme, quality assurance and maintenance of fidelity of the intervention will be managed by the Zippy's Friends county-wide coordinator

Conclusion

There is compelling evidence that Zippy’s Friends can be introduced successfully into Northamptonshire schools with a positive impact on children who are vulnerable to experiencing difficulties with Mental Health or who are already experiencing such difficulties, and on the school overall.

In particular, children benefit in terms of their self-esteem and coping skills. School staff find the programme accessible and straightforward to deliver and report marked changes in their pupils’ social and emotional skills, which they attribute to the programme.

Key aspects for making implementation of Zippy’s Friends successful include ensuring that staff who deliver the programme first experience the 1-day training and that they engage in follow-up support activities.

Capacity has been built for further implementation of Zippy’s Friends in more Northamptonshire schools in a way that is sustainable and promotes fidelity to the programme.

Because of the evidence of the importance to children’s mental health of Zippy’s Friends, this programme has been included in the Building Blocks of Provision for Building Mentally Healthy Schools in Northamptonshire at the Wave 1 / Universal level, as a recommended provision for all schools with KS1 pupils, as shown below.

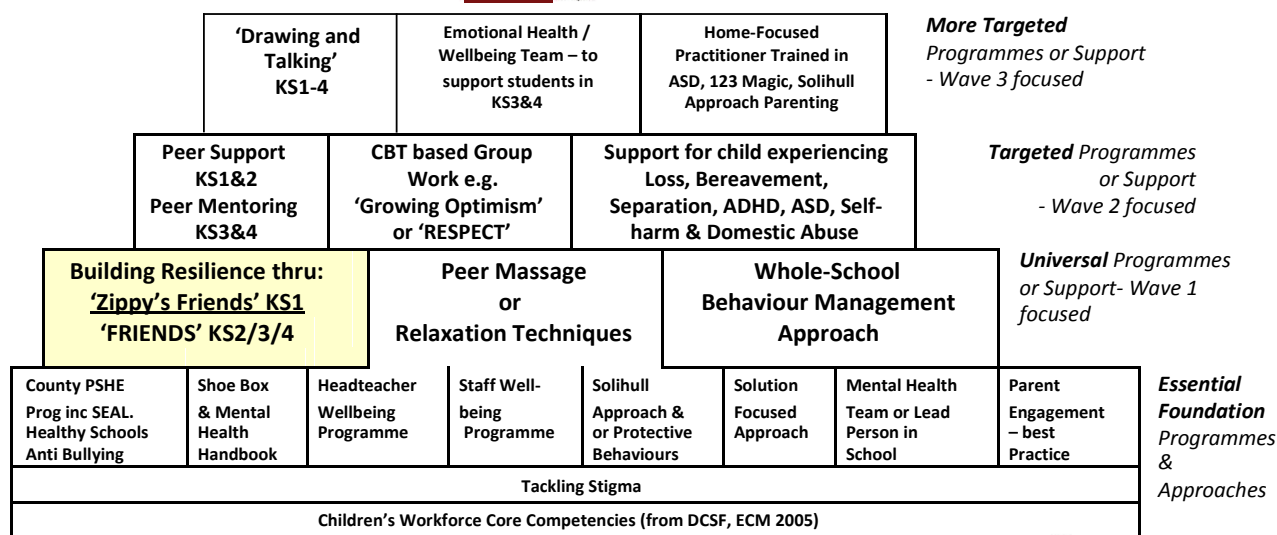
Building-Blocks of Provision for Building Mentally Healthy Schools in Northamptonshire



As informed by Northamptonshire

TaMHS

Targeted Mental Health in Schools



May 2011

Essential Underpinnings for work with children

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For training opportunities re Zippy’s Friends and other interventions, please see www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/tamhs