

Project CREATE

Creating Research Ecologies to Advance Transdisciplinary Learning (CREATE): A Study of Adolescent Loneliness

Science, art & young people each have unique knowledge about adolescent mental health. We can improve research by working together more. We do this in Project CREATE by coming together to understand loneliness and mental health.

HOW DOES THE PROJECT HELP RESEARCH ON ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH?

Young people, social scientists & arts researchers have different ways of understanding and studying mental health. We can learn a lot more by working together more closely - but there are barriers. Project Create will tackle some of these barriers so research into adolescent mental health can benefit from our combined knowledge.

WHAT BARRIERS WILL THE PROJECT ADDRESS?

Barrier 1 is that scientists, artists & young people often use different words and ideas. This can be helpful but it can mean we do not understand each other very well.

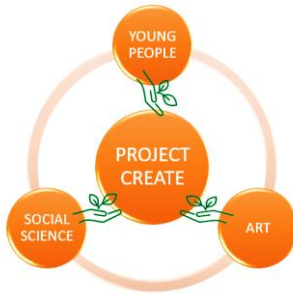
Barrier 2 is about knowing *how well* and *why* creative approaches work. Some young people's mental health can be helped by creative approaches and some young people use them to share their experience of mental health. BUT we don't have good methods to find out *how effective* creative approaches are for different mental health problems. And we don't have methods to investigate *why* they help youth mental health. This means the 'data' we get is poor and it is holding us back.

Barrier 3 is that young people, scientists & artists find it hard to agree about how to *interpret* the art that young people create and what they want us to learn about their mental health from it.

Barrier 4 is that arts researchers, young people & scientists have different ideas about questionnaires that 'measure' mental health.

WHAT WILL THE PROJECT DO?

We have four work streams. Each has a REVIEW of important information about each barrier and possible research solutions. We will then have a LIVING LAB in each workstream to learn from young people and researchers about the possible solutions and how to improve them. To improve methods, we focus on the topic of **adolescent loneliness** but the methods will apply to lots of areas of mental health.



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WHAT
NEW
RESEARCH
METHODS
WILL BE
PRODUCED?

A large website **resource centre** to help young people, scientists and arts researchers to research adolescent mental health together. It will include:

- Interactive **dictionary and map** of terms, concepts and values of young people, arts researchers and social scientists to help us *communicate* in research
- **Guidance** on ways to *interpret* the creative things that young people produce to tell us about their mental health.
- **Theories and frameworks** to study *how* creative practices are helping adolescents' mental health.
- Helpful ways to **sensitively use** and interpret measures of mental health when arts and social researchers work together

HOW ARE
YOUNG
PEOPLE
INVOLVED
AND HOW
WILL THE
PROJECT
BENEFIT
ADOLESCENTS?

Young people are in every strand of Project Create and are central participants in each LIVING LAB. We bring youth experience and voice into communication with arts researchers and social scientists. Young people are supported throughout and will be involved in project governance and communication, in creating resources and in dissemination. **Young people in the project** will benefit as their experience and insight will be valued equally as those of researchers; they can explore loneliness and try new creative approaches that may help their well-being, and they have new opportunities and meet new young people. **Longer-term**, the project will help adolescent mental health as we will have better methods to use and understand creative methods that young people like. We will also use measures of mental health in more sensitive and youth-informed ways.

Words we use: 'The Arts' refers to creative things like drawing/painting, dance, music, theatre etc. We use the word **Ecology** to mean a place of growth where we can learn more about teenage mental health by working together. A **Living Lab** is a space where people with different skills and backgrounds can work together and which often uses peoples experiences (lived experience) as part of the research. **Transdisciplinary** means different areas of study, like medicine, science, social science and the arts. We want to build an **ecology** where young people can work with researchers from the art and social science