



Bury's exciting new Advice & Signposting Offer

The Greater Manchester (GM) i-THRIVE programme team spoke to Marina Nixon, the senior commissioning manager in Bury about the new Advice and Signposting offer.

Background

Although an advice and signposting offer did exist in Bury it was not fit for purpose. The offer was a document that captured the services across the THRIVE quadrants which was uploaded to Bury Directory. However, the information was often outdated, and the platform was not user friendly or easily accessible for children and young people. As a result, children, young people, and their families were not using it.

In 2022, Mental Health Leads identified a need to update the current Advice and Signposting offer though it felt counterintuitive to update something that wasn't fit for purpose. For this reason, a decision was made to redevelop the current offer. A Task and Finish Group was set up to discuss the future vision for an Advice and Signposting offer, which included Children and Adult Mental Health Commissioners, a communications lead, and members of Public Health and the education sector. Alongside this, Bury Youth Cabinet agreed to co-produce the new offer. They told us that they prefer to access information on their mobile phones. Continuing discussions and acknowledging the Youth Cabinets feedback, the digital information was developed using the Padlet platform.

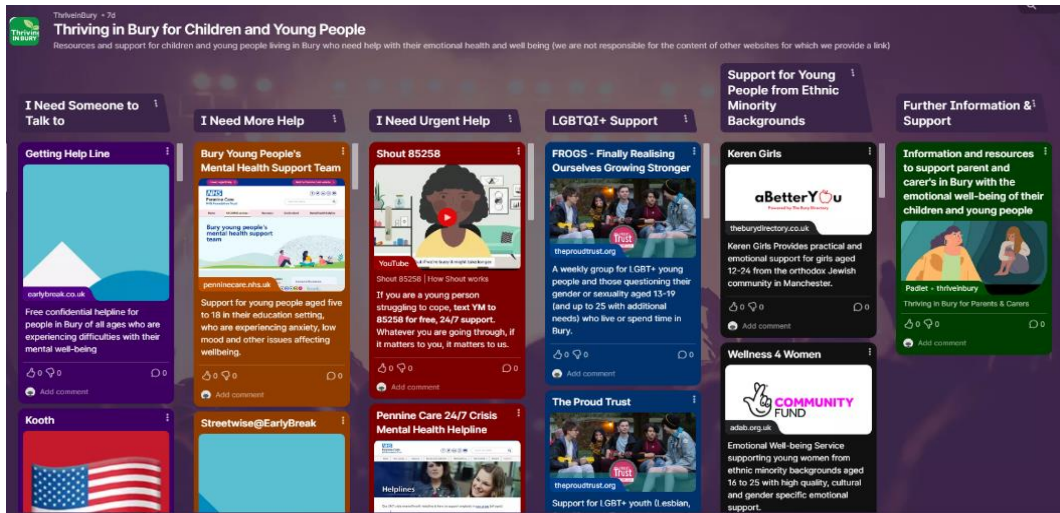
What is the new offer?

The Thriving in Bury Padlets are a digital platform where you can host multiple digital noticeboards. It allows information to be easily shared and viewed via digital post-it notes which are pinned to the relevant noticeboard.

The aim was to align the information on the noticeboards to the THRIVE needs-based groupings (Thriving, Advice & Signposting, Getting Help, Getting More Help & Getting Risk Support). The headings were developed by the Youth Cabinet, so they were easily understandable by young people. Each section providing information is titled as follows: 'I Need Information', 'I Need Someone to Talk to', 'I Need More Help', 'I Need Urgent Help' & then extra columns including 'LGBTQI+ Support', 'Support for Young People from Ethnic Minority Backgrounds' & 'Further Information Support'.

The categories are easy to understand, there are links to self-help websites and resources, videos, national helplines, and lots more for children, young people, and their families to access. Currently, there are four PADLETS; one for children and young people, one for parents & carers, one for the education sector and one for health professionals.

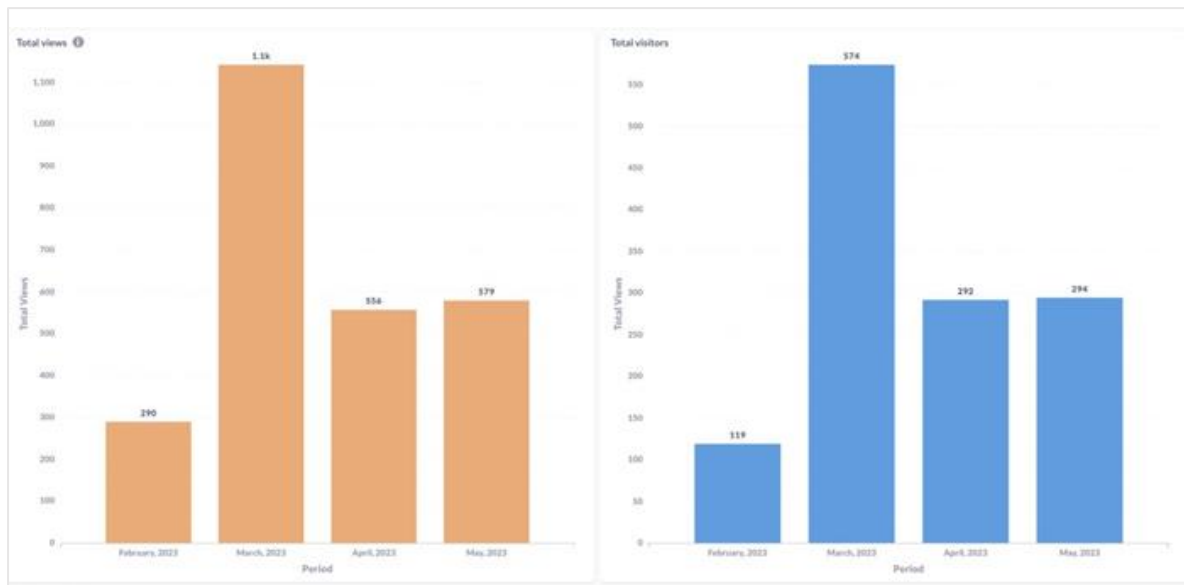
Below is an image of the Thriving in Bury Children and Young people's Padlet.



To promote access to the new digital resources a promotional campaign has taken place across education settings. Over 100 promotional packs consisting of banners, posters, leaflets, and business cards have been distributed to schools, colleges, service providers and GP practices. In addition, mental health service providers have included the Padlet QR code on their service user letters.

What impact has it had?

Early evaluation shows that the Thriving in Bury Padlets and promotional campaign are proving successful. The resources and campaign have generated significant interest since their launch across Greater Manchester, and the project team have been nominated for an award and are providing support to other localities with implementation.



Since its launch in March the digital resource has had **693** visitors and **1341** views <https://padlet.com/ThriveinBury/YoungPeople>, the parent and carer resource **461** visitors and **717** views <https://padlet.com/ThriveinBury/ParentandCarers>. The new Bury Directory information page has had **276** visitors <https://theburydirectory.co.uk/thriving-in-bury>

Feedback from Bury Youth Cabinet who helped to design the platform has been positive:

“These new digital mental health resources for children and young people are great as they are easy to access and understand. We were really pleased to be asked to co-produce the resources because they are aimed specifically at children and young people, and we were able to offer valuable insight into how best to engage with other people of a similar age. We would advise everyone to have a look at the new resources especially those who would benefit from some emotional help and support”.

Were there any challenges?

Firstly, obtaining the Padlet license was a challenge. Secondly, co-production with the Education Sector was difficult as there was no dedicated time and/or resource for them to be involved in the project group. We overcame this by tapping into existing groups. Though co-production with education professionals was difficult we were able to manage and achieve the goal in the end.

Once the Padlets were set up and QR codes were generated, we worked to promote the offer across services in Bury. Though we made great progress, contacting over 100 schools and delivering promotional packs across Bury was challenging. Whilst it has been a lot of work and there have been challenges along the way, it is an invaluable project.

How is it aligned to the THRIVE framework and/or principles

The Padlets provide an excellent service for the ‘Getting Advice and Signposting’ needs-based grouping of the THRIVE framework. Across Bury every young person and their families can access appropriate information, videos, self-help resources and further support all in the one place. In addition, this Advice and Signposting offer will help healthcare professionals and the education sector effectively signpost Children, Young People, and their Families to the most appropriate services.

Common language is a principle we worked hard to embed as we worked directly with the Youth Council. Upon showing the Youth Council the proposed headings, it was clear these were difficult for them to understand and so we worked with them to change the language so it could be understood.

It is definitely a proactive prevention and promotion approach as it helps to empower children and young people and their families to find the best way to support their own mental health. In addition, it has supported health professionals and the education sector in becoming much more aware of Bury’s Advice and Signposting offer, which

in turn has led to them communicating and sharing this with Children, Young People, and their Families. Providing this information along with pathways to support it truly supports the early help and prevention agenda.

Including and keeping up to date all available services across Bury within the Padlets has instilled the principle of 'partnership working'. Health Professionals are now more aware of all available offers and can now make links and connections with these services.

Do you have any plans for further development

The Padlets are continually kept updated by the children's commissioners as new information, resources and services become available.

There has been a lot of interest from other Greater Manchester localities who are keen to adopt the Padlets

Despite the successful creation of the Padlets it is important that we work to promote to ensure as many people are aware of it and begin to use it. The Youth Cabinet provided a valuable message that 'there must be constant messages and reminders' otherwise it risks being developed and never mentioned or used'. For this reason, we will continue to promote the resources; we will use banners, posters, QR codes and social media campaigns to spread awareness along with a presentation developed by the Youth Cabinet that will be sent to schools to deliver in assemblies.