

stormbreak® - Mentally Healthy Movement for Children



At *stormbreak* we improve children's mental health through movement, equipping them with sustainable, transferable skills and coping strategies to thrive during the complex demands of growth into adult life. We do this through our stormbreak activities - combining mentally healthy movement with conversations about resilience, relationships, self-care, self-worth and hope and optimism.

We strive to redefine movement and encourage a new perspective on physical activity, enabling adults and children alike to enjoy movement and appreciate the powerful connection between body and mind. Sport England's ten year vision 'Uniting the Movement' highlights the importance of positive experiences for children and young people. Experiences that feel fun, positive and give them a sense of confidence, are more likely to result in a desire to be active in the future¹.

Challenging common perceptions around physical activity and movement involves recognising that movement extends far beyond traditional notions of structured exercise like 'sports', running or going to the gym. Movement takes many forms — dancing, gardening, walking a dog, stretching — all of which contribute to physical and mental well-being. Expanding the definition of physical activity helps foster a more inclusive and sustainable approach to movement, encouraging individuals to find activities they enjoy and can integrate into their everyday lives. Stormbreak has developed a range of simple, accessible, fun movement based activities that range from more active, energetic movement types as well as calmer, more focussed activities.

Physical literacy is our relationship with movement and physical activity throughout life. We know that children, young people and adults have their own personal relationship with movement, which can strongly affect their desire or ability to move and be active throughout life. How we move, connect, think and feel during movement and physical activity plays a crucial role in shaping our physical literacy².



¹Sport England. (2021). Uniting the Movement: A 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity: **Strategy document**

²Hurter, L., Essiet, I., Duncan, M., Roberts, W.M., Lewis, K., Goss, H., Morris, J.L., Bingham, D.D., O'Brien, W., Barnett, L.M., Shearer, C., Daly-Smith, A. and Foweather, L. (2022). Physical Literacy Consensus for England: Evidence Review: **LJMU Research Online**

We understand the importance of boosting children's (but also trusted adults) physical literacy through our work, including expanding the definition of physical activity, encouraging movement together to build connections, valuing the experience and process of movement rather than the performance, and celebrating engagement and interaction where movement is simple, inclusive and accessible to all.

Stormbreak works with trusted adults who live with, work with or care for children, using our mentally healthy movement activities that we call 'stormbreaks'. Whether delivering a stormbreak directly, or joining in with a video activity on our website, the trusted adult is encouraged to take part alongside the child, helping to develop relational connection, role-modelling and allowing for conversation about emotional wellbeing.

Together with local communities, stormbreak works to design and implement movement for mental health into children's lives through education, health and social care. Our stormbreak Together programme, delivered by specialist social workers, collaborates with foster carers, kinship/connected carers and adoptive parents to use the stormbreak approach with the children currently in their care and for children who move into their homes in the future. It aims to provide carers with support and strategies to help them and their children develop their confidence to use movement to support their children's physical and mental wellbeing and cultivate happy, safe, valued environments for children to thrive.

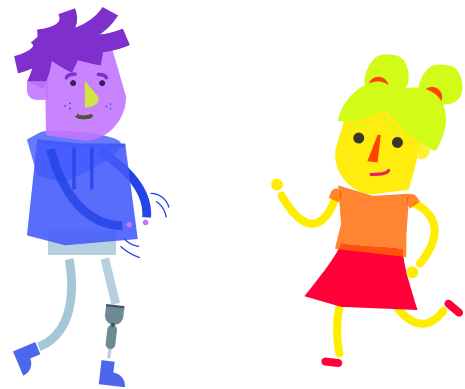
Independent research* has found that the stormbreak Together programme can lead to...

1. An increase in children's awareness of their feelings.

2. An increase in children's confidence to manage their own emotions.

3. An increase in children getting on well at home.

*Bournemouth University, 2024



Stormbreak Together partnerships

As part of the Together programme we seek partners with whom we can co-design programme resources to ensure our delivery materials are relevant and meet the needs of people where they are. Creating content collaboratively with young people with lived experience of care has the potential to reach other children and young people on their terms, in their spaces. You can see an example of a recent co-creation project with young people with care experience [here](#).



Please get in touch with us to find out how we can support children's emotional wellbeing needs in your area in education (primary schools), in health and in social care.

Please contact emma@stormbreak.org.uk or kate@stormbreak.org.uk for more details.

