Director of Public Health Annual Report 2024/2025:
Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing

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Aims and Objectives of the DPH Annual Report

Highlight a key public health issue in Oxfordshire, outlining the current situation compared to nationally.

Explore the drivers behind a key public health issue, and what we can do to tackle the problem

Advise and promote recommendations for partners and stakeholders

Why focus on mental health in children and young people (ages 0-25)?

NHS England

In 2023, about 1 in 5 children and young people aged 8 to 25 years had a probable mental disorder.

FINANCIAL TIMES

Why are a rising number of young Britons out of work?

A record 35% of people aged 18-24 were classed as 'inactive' this year, driven by a mental health crisis
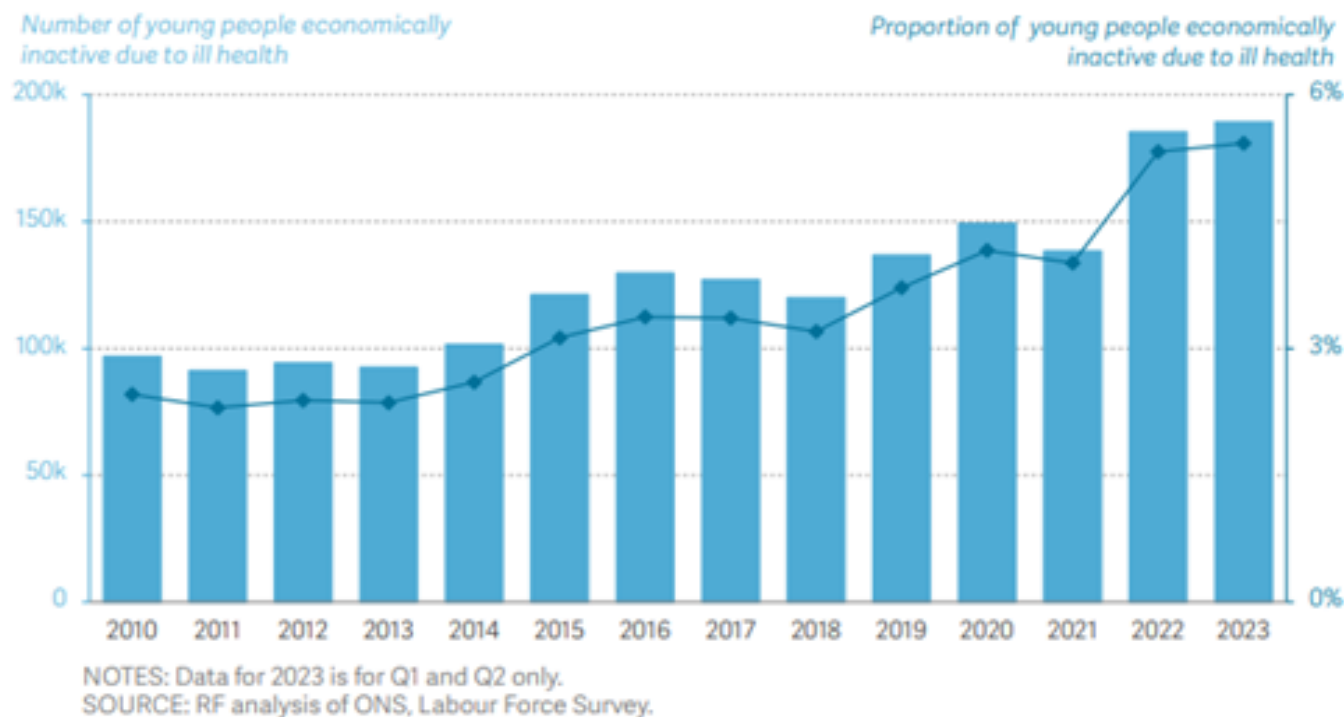
OCTOBER 10 2024

CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER

Over a quarter of a million children still waiting for mental health support

15 March 2024

BBC

Youth to get 'guaranteed' training in jobs overhaul

26 November 2024

Ill Health and Economic Activity

Number of young people economically inactive due to ill health

Proportion of young people economically inactive due to ill health

NOTES: Data for 2023 is for Q1 and Q2 only.
SOURCE: RF analysis of ONS, Labour Force Survey.

Source: The Resolution Foundation

Working age population (millions) generating the bulk of government revenue

People living with major illness (millions)

+37%

+4%

2019

Additional in 2040 (projected)
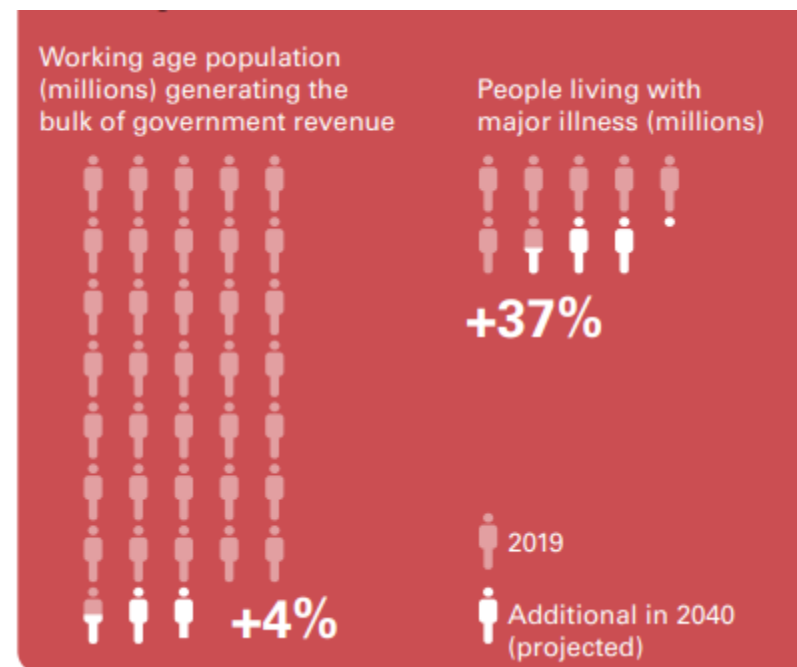
Source: Health in 2040: projected patterns of illness in England - The Health Foundation.
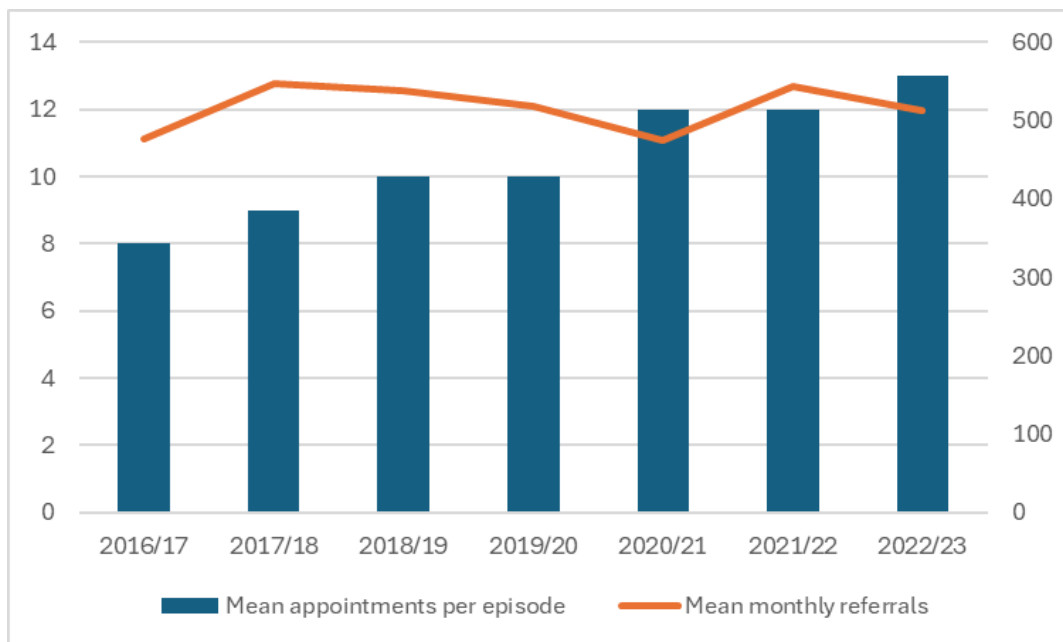
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National Picture
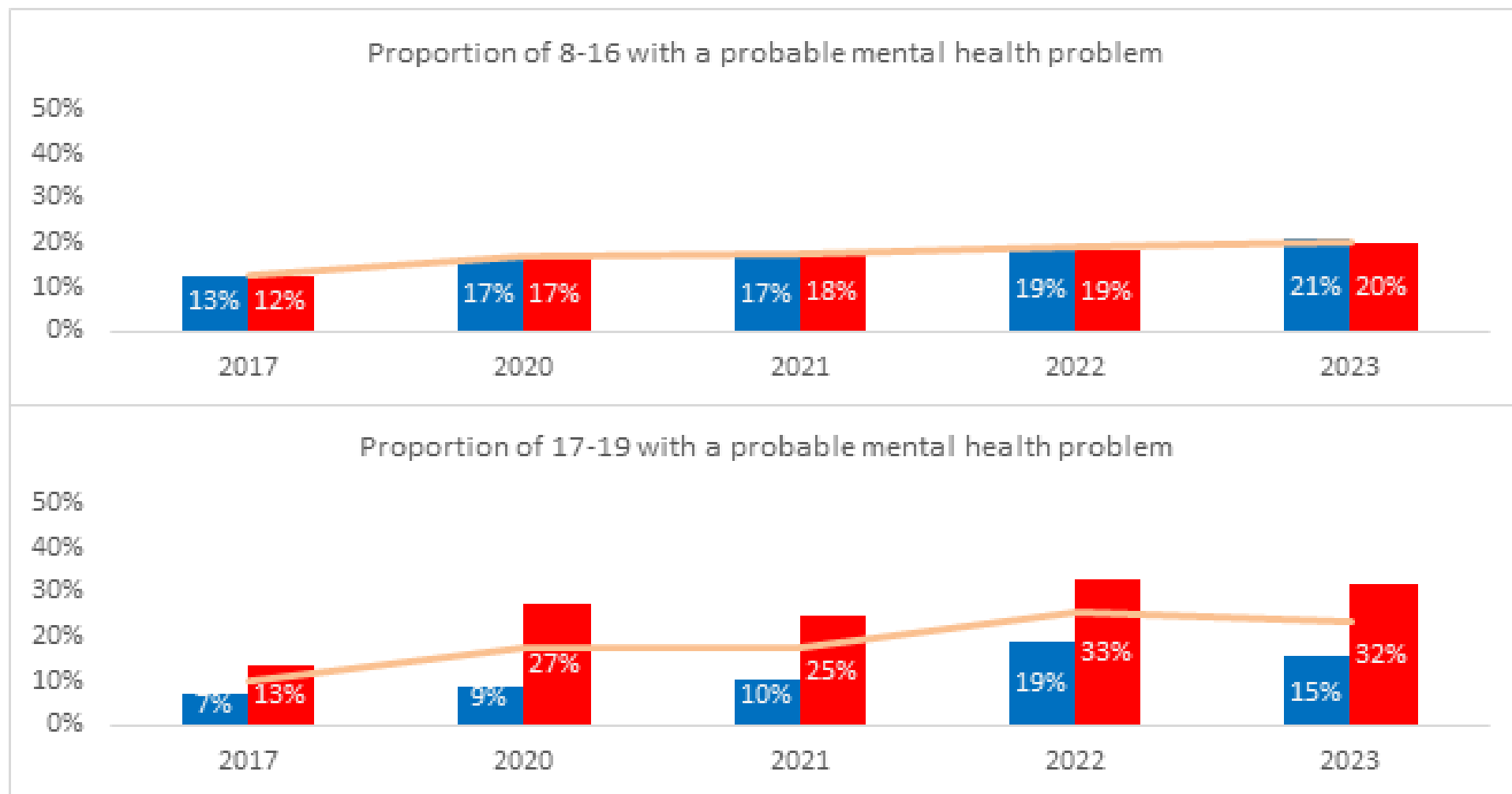
Source: *Mental Health of Children and Young People in England 2023 Survey.*
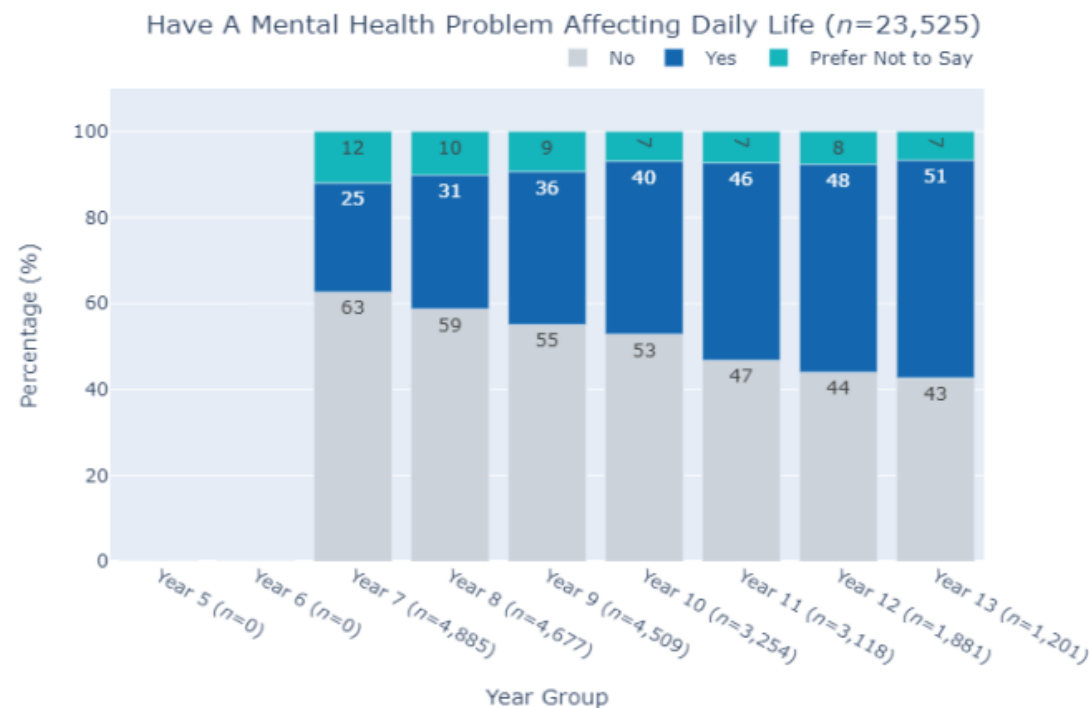
In Oxfordshire:

The number of referrals received (monthly average) by the Oxford Health CAMHS between 2016 – 2023, alongside the average number of appointments per episode. Source: Oxfordshire CAMHS Briefing 2023
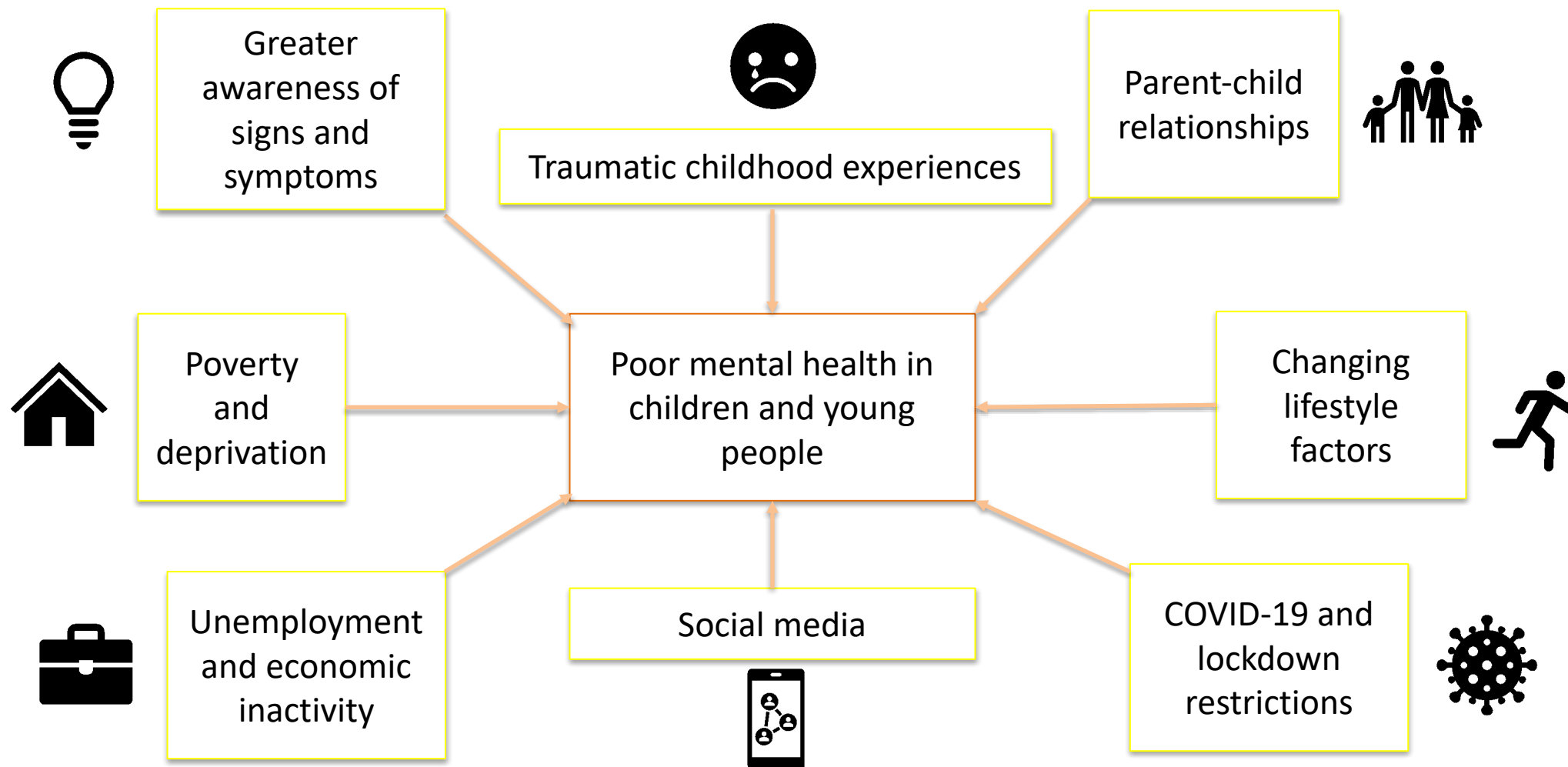

Proportion of students who report a mental health problem affecting daily life in 2023. Source: OxWell School Survey 2023. [28]

Why is mental health worsening in children and young people?

Greater awareness of signs and symptoms

Traumatic childhood experiences

Parent-child relationships

Poverty and deprivation

Poor mental health in children and young people

Changing lifestyle factors

Unemployment and economic inactivity

Social media

COVID-19 and lockdown restrictions

What is the current mental health landscape for children and young people?

Proportion of children and young people reporting poor mental health has been increasing due to various factors e.g. childhood poverty

Growing demand for special education needs and disabilities support, and declining wellbeing in schools

Nationally, there has been a **66% increase of probable mental health disorders in 8–16-year-olds** and **more than a doubling in 17–19-year-olds** since 2017.[1]

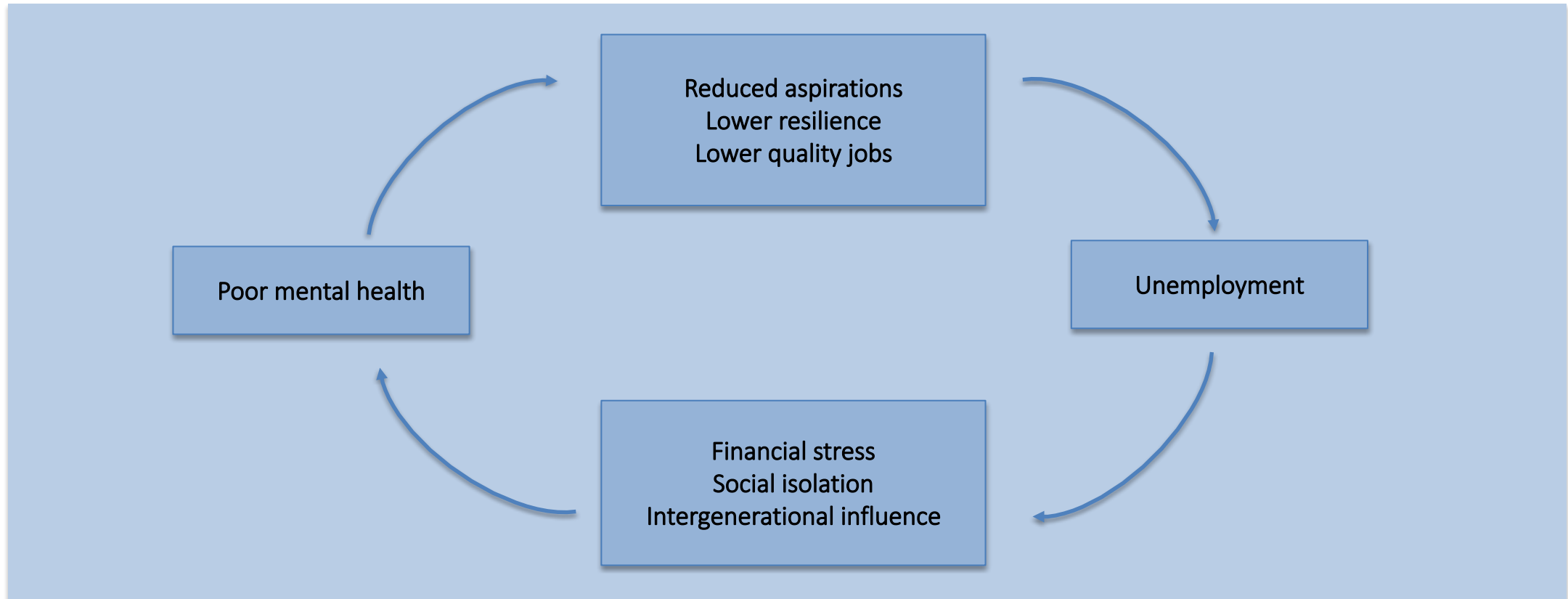From the 2023 OxWell survey, **18% of students reported feeling lonely, while 25% reported often or always feeling sad or empty.**[3]
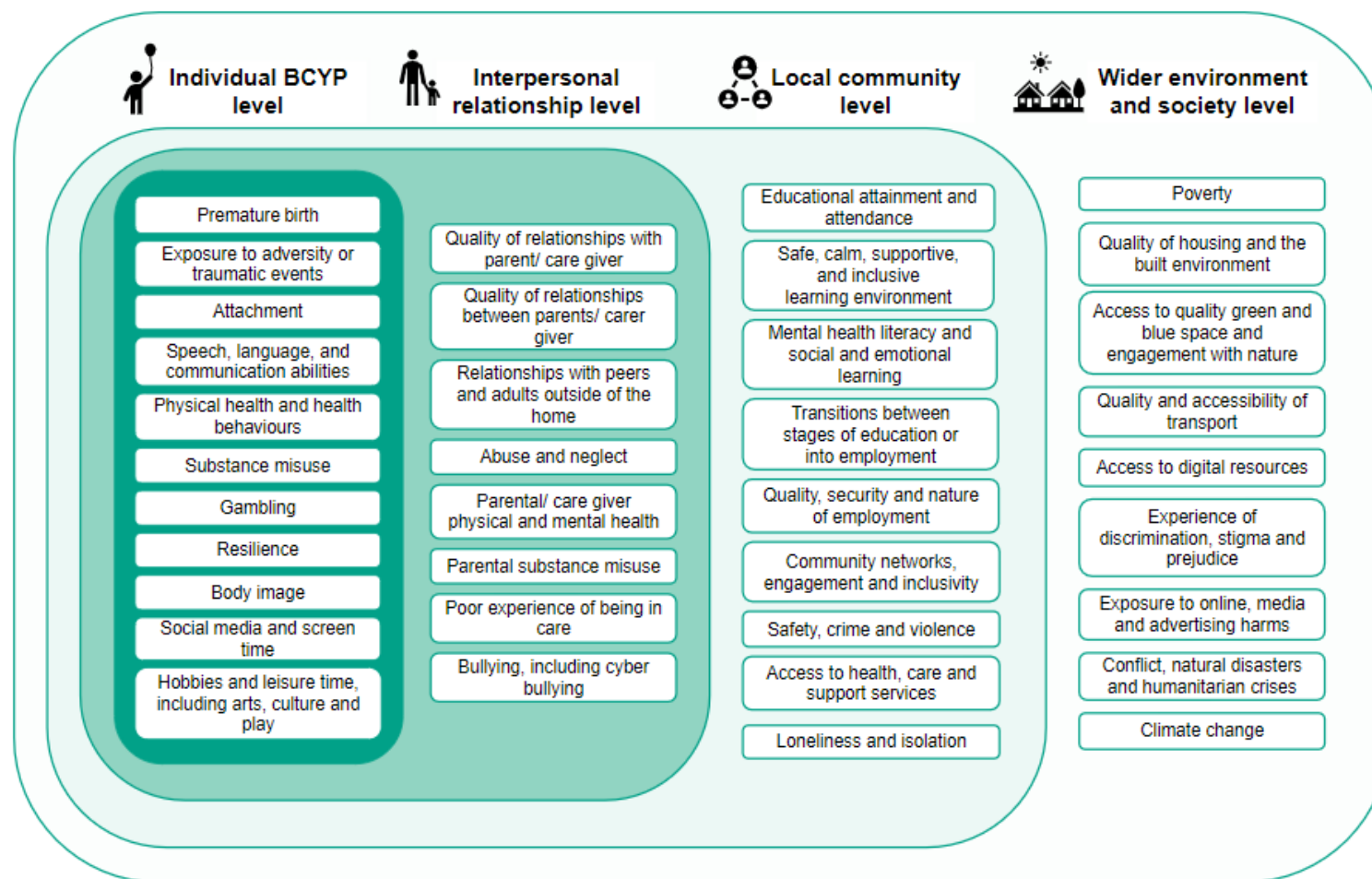
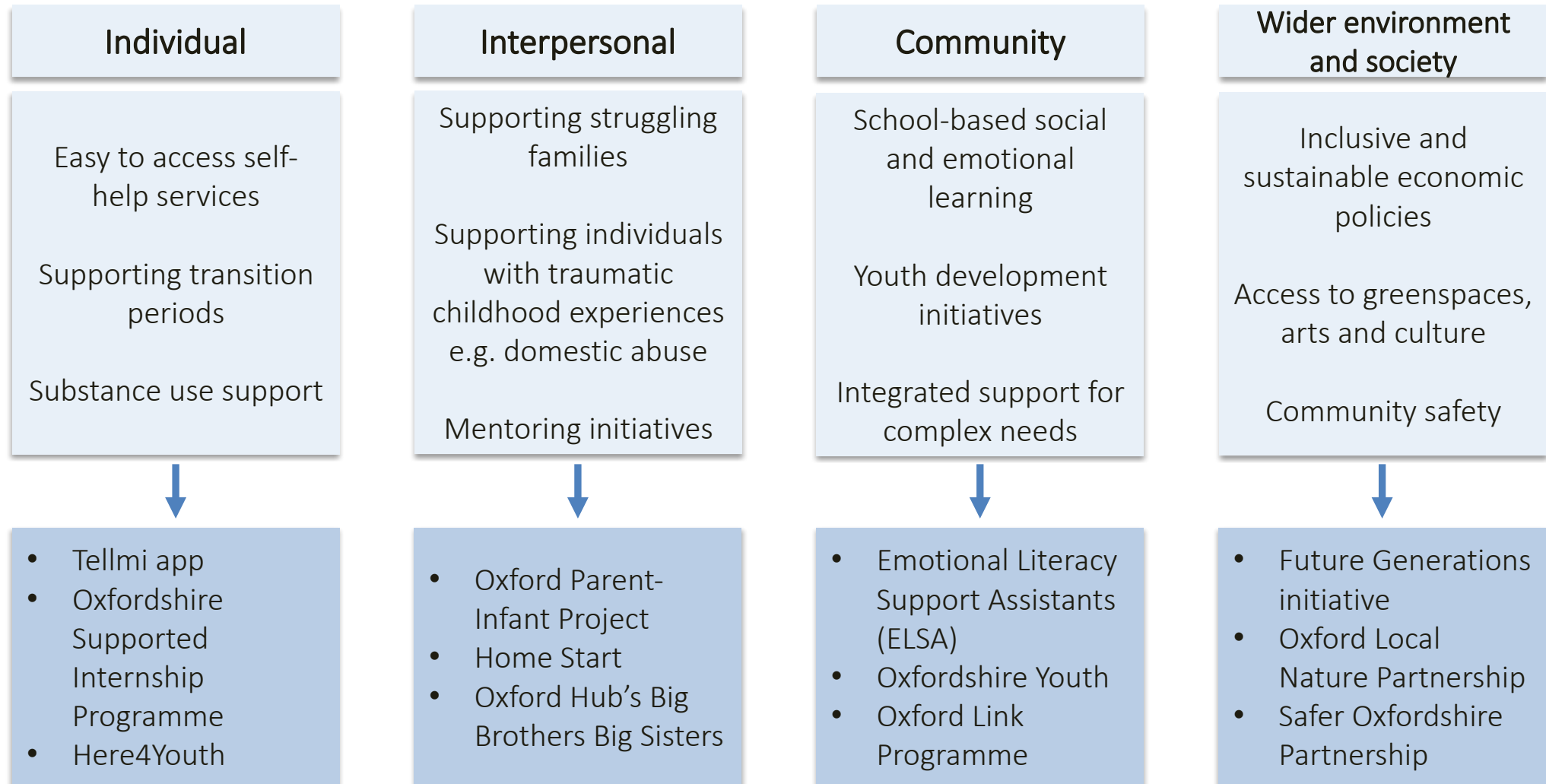# What is the link between mental health and unemployment?

Improving the mental health of babies, children and young people framework[1]

Current actions in Oxfordshire

Individual	Interpersonal	Community	Wider environment and society
Easy to access self-help services Supporting transition periods Substance use support	Supporting struggling families Supporting individuals with traumatic childhood experiences e.g. domestic abuse Mentoring initiatives	School-based social and emotional learning Youth development initiatives Integrated support for complex needs	Inclusive and sustainable economic policies Access to greenspaces, arts and culture Community safety
• Tellmi app • Oxfordshire Supported Internship Programme • Here4Youth	• Oxford Parent-Infant Project • Home Start • Oxford Hub's Big Brothers Big Sisters	• Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSA) • Oxfordshire Youth • Oxford Link Programme	• Future Generations initiative • Oxford Local Nature Partnership • Safer Oxfordshire Partnership

Examples of data and input from…

Recommendations

Strive to reduce mental health problems by addressing wider factors	**Prioritise opportunity, activity, independence, and community**	**Prioritising early and effective intervention**	**Ensuring diverse career and training opportunities are available for all young people**

Environment and Society
- Marmot County

Community
- Empower and support local communities
- Work with local organisations including schools, faith based groups and parish and town councils

Environment and Society
- Transport and reduced barriers to access

Community
- Support for community spaces and activities.
- Strengthen youth communities.

Individual
- Targeted schemes to reduce barriers

Environment and Society
- Expand early intervention to include social, activity based or nature based activities

Community
- Empower mental health leads in schools

Interpersonal
- Improve mental health skills training for those working with young people.

Individual
- Expand mental health support options.

Envronment and Society
- Oxfordshire Local Inclusive Economies Partnership

Community
- Work with local businesses to support youth employment.

Interpersonal
- Mentorship programmes to engage young people and foster resilience.

Individual
- Ensuring mental health support and career advice is available, especially during transitions.

Key Messages

Mental health problems in children and young people are on the rise, with significant implications on the individual, their families, communities and wider society.

Mental health is impacted by a range of individual and broader factors including at the economic, social and environmental level.

Tackling mental health issues in children therefore requires an integrated, systems approach with collaboration between all sectors.

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