

Working with Muslims CYPMHS group

Bulletin 6 (June 2024)



Dear colleagues,

Welcome to the last **Working with Muslims** bulletin from Reflection Network. There has been quite a gap since the last bulletin, so this will be a bumper issue packed with resources and research to support your work with Muslim children, young people and families.

We are thrilled to announce the registration by the Charity Commission of **The Reflection Project**, which will gradually take over Reflection Network activities. The next WWM bulletin will therefore come to you from The Reflection Project - please keep an eye on your spam folder.

GDPR Update

You have received this email because you have asked to join the Working with Muslims CYPMHS group. I am keeping a list of members' contact details for the purpose of WWM CYPMHS group communication and Bulletin distribution only. Contact details will not be shared or used for other purposes without explicit permission. If you would like to remove your name from the list, or change your contact details, please let me know on info@reflectionnetwork.org

RESOURCES

Mental health advice for young Muslims

This collaboration between Young Minds and Muslim Youth Helpline includes a mental health guide and a self-care guide for young Muslims, advice about Islamophobia and mental health, and a video ("Young Muslims Talk Mental Health"). The self-care guide gives faith-friendly advice and tips to help young people take positive steps towards looking after themselves. The guide is shaped by young Muslim voices, and looks at self-care in the context of Islamic faith and culture.

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/coping-with-life/muslim-mental-health/>

Muslim Mental Health in Schools report and toolkit

Muslim Mind Collaborative have launched a key and insightful report on faith sensitivity, cultural awareness and mental health. In the context of young Muslims, this is especially important given the statistical weight they hold in the British education system, comparatively poorer mental well-being and access to treatment, and the growing stigmatisation of Muslim identity and its impact. This report looks at all these contextual factors, and asks school leaders probing questions about creating truly inclusive environments. The report accompanies a toolkit that is designed to aid schools in that process.

Report and toolkits can be downloaded from: <https://muslimmindcollaborative.co.uk/edu/>

Muslim mental health fact sheet 2023 (determinants, access, experience and outcomes, with references), in relation to research project (publication due 2024)

Research suggests that Muslims face some of the greatest mental health inequalities, yet too many encounter significant barriers to support. Muslims are more likely than the general population to be exposed to a range of social and economic risk factors and determinants for poor mental health, including poverty, financial precarity and inadequate housing. 40% of the Muslim population in England live in the most deprived local areas, a third live in overcrowded homes. When seeking support, Muslims can face stigma, discrimination and a lack of faith sensitive services. Only 2.6% of Muslims referred to NHS Talking Therapies completed their treatment course in 2021-2022. Muslims also experienced lower recovery rates than other religious groups.

This fact sheet, developed in partnership with the Centre for Mental Health, brings together the latest available evidence on Muslim mental health across the life course. It highlights the urgent need to tackle the stark inequalities in Muslims' access to, experience of and outcomes from mental health services. This will require the NHS working closely with community groups to roll out more culturally and faith sensitive mental health support, and better data collection to improve our understanding of the challenges and progress in this area.

<https://www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/assets/news-entry-featured-image/MuslimMHFactsheet.pdf>

Mindful Muslim Podcast

The Mindful Muslim podcast is produced by Inspired Minds, an Islamic grassroots charity that raises awareness and provides support and hope to those affected by mental health challenges. The podcast hosts raw, open, and honest conversations on various topics within the sphere of mental health, psychology, Islam and spirituality. Their episode with board-certified psychiatrist, Harvard-trained trauma expert Omar Reda, and founder of Healing Trauma Institute, and author of many books is highly recommended.

Listen to the podcast here: <https://inspiredminds.org.uk/2023/04/22/the-mindful-muslim-podcast-49-trauma-caregiving-islam-with-dr-omar-reda/>

Understanding identity with minoritised children and young people

Researchers at Coventry University, led by Sariya Cheruvallil-Contractor, were commissioned by the Nuffield Foundation to understand the layered identities of minoritised children and young people in care. They worked with Research in Practice to [produce resources](#) for child and family social care practitioners, based on findings from their research. Their findings have also been explored in a new Research in Practice [podcast](#). The discussion focuses on the dynamic nature of identity and how practitioners can explore what ethnicity and religion means to children and young people.

Listen to the podcast here: https://www.researchinpractice.org.uk/children/content-pages/podcasts/identity-needs-of-minoritised-children-and-young-people-in-care/?trk=article-ssr-frontend-pulse_little-text-block

Talking Across Difference: Islamic and Jewish Experiences in the Counselling World

What are the intersections of faith, culture and counselling? Myira Khan and Mick Cooper - with Nicola Blunden as Chair - explore their personal identities as a Muslim woman and Jewish man, and how these intersect with their professional training and identities. They discuss how global events shape their clinical practice and the unique perspectives they bring to the therapeutic space through their faith and cultural identities. A recording of the discussion is available at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZBD8Qa41IEg

IM WELL HEALTH

IM WELL HEALTH offers specialist advice, consultation, supervision and training to clients, practitioners and services on Islam and mental health. Previous examples of trainings they have delivered include: Islam and Mindfulness, Depression within the Muslim Community and Parenting and Islam. <http://imwellhealth.co.uk/>

Strategies for eradicating Islamophobia in the UK

The Anti-Islamophobia Working Group (AIWG) is an apolitical coalition of civil society organisations and experts who raise awareness and urge change to tackle Islamophobia in the UK. They have recently published an analysis of Islamophobia in Britain, a strategy to eradicate this prejudice and a call to action. It aims to seek dialogue, understanding and change to create a more inclusive and fairer society for all. With a sharp rise in Islamophobia and against a backdrop of political division and polarisation, it could not have come at a more timely moment.

A report can be downloaded from this link: <https://www.aiwg.co.uk/our-report>

Muraqabah: How I adapted mindfulness to work for Muslim patients

Junaid Shabi is an Assistant Psychologist who works on two male acute inpatient units for Birmingham and Solihull NHS Mental Health Foundation Trust. He developed a way for his Muslim patients to benefit from mindfulness, using muraqabah, a type of meditation in Islam. He provides details about facilitating such interventions in inpatient wards in his article for The British Psychological Society.

<https://www.bps.org.uk/psychologist/muraqabah-how-i-adapted-mindfulness-work-muslim-patients>

In development - Emotional wellbeing books for Muslim children

Child mental health charity The Reflection Project is developing a series of children's books aimed at helping Muslim children cope with difficult emotions/experiences and to help parents support their children with these feelings. The aim is to help parents understand and respond when their children communicate overwhelming feelings.

You can help by sharing our parent/carer survey as widely as possible. For further information, please contact info@reflectionnetwork.org

RESEARCH

A perspective on Islamophobia and racism concerning the therapeutic frame: What Muslims bring and what they leave

Maynard, S. A. (2023). The racism you know is not the racism we experience: A perspective on Islamophobia and racism concerning the therapeutic frame: What Muslims bring and what they leave behind. *Psychotherapy & Politics International*, 21(3 & 4), 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.24135/ppi.v21i3and4.03>

This article articulates some of the complexities of the interrelationship of Islamophobia and racism that are present in life and therapeutic work with Muslim clients. It addresses the political context of the intersectionality these factors bring to Muslim mental health and therapeutic work with Muslims, contextualising their mental health inequalities in Western hegemony in the UK. In this, it explores the choices diverse Muslim clients make as to what they bring to the therapeutic relationship in the context of the above. It further suggests that counsellors and therapists of colour may use their awareness of intersectionality to work to develop rapport with diverse Muslim clients in this context.

Ethnicity, Religion, and Muslim Education in a Changing World: Navigating Contemporary Perspectives on Multicultural Schooling in the UK

Iqbal, K. And Abbas, T. (Eds) (2024) Full table of contents: <https://www.routledge.com/Ethnicity-Religion-and-Muslim-Education-in-a-Changing-World-Navigating-Contemporary-Perspectives-on-Multicultural-Schooling-in-the-UK/Iqbal-Abbas/p/book/9781032364834>

This novel and contemporary anthology brings important topics about race, religion, and identity to the foreground to address the challenges facing Muslim schoolchildren today. Through interviews and case studies, the chapters explore topics such as multiethnic education, teacher diversity, and culturally responsive pedagogy, providing insights into necessary changes and ways to enhance schools. Taking into account cultural touchstones such as the Black Lives Matter movement and the Trojan Horse affair, the book argues for an urgent, transformative accommodation of Muslims to take place within schooling in order to improve the educational standards of Muslim children within the United Kingdom, including several chapters that focus on Muslim education in locations such as Yorkshire, Peterborough, High Wycombe, and Tower Hamlets, and further afield. This book will be of importance to scholars, researchers, and postgraduate students studying religious education, secondary education, and multicultural education more broadly. Policymakers interested in education policy and politics, as well as race and ethnicity in educational contexts, may potentially benefit from the volume.

'You mean the transition from bhai to akhi?': How Bengali and Arabic intersect in the lives of British Bangladeshi Muslims in the East End of London

Rajina, F. (2024) *Journal of Muslims in Europe* (2024) 1-21

Abstract: In this paper, the way religious identity is constructed via languages, with a particular focus on Arabic and Bengali terms originating from Persian, will be explored. It is vital to comprehend how Bengali Muslims create this constellation of languages, recognising that religion also has its linguistic demands, as language assists with making identities (Jaspal and Coyle 2010). The two languages will provide traces of how Muslimness is managed in the East End and consider how historically, the role of these languages have shifted. For example, the Persian-origin terms analysed are crucial in understanding Persian's influence in constructing a particular South Asian Muslim/Islamic expression. I critically examine how Arabic and Bengali intermingle while asserting different socio-religio-positionings. The claims-making qua a religious identity is morphed through various political junctures, particularly while forging a religious identity with other Muslims and how Arabic has become the dominant language in Bengali Muslims' lives.

Mental health and conflict: a pilot of an online eye movement desensitisation and reprocessing (EMDR) intervention for forcibly displaced Syrian women

Hamid A, Williams ACdC, Albakri M, Scior K, Morgan S, Kayal H, Wilcockson M, Drouish Alkaja R, Alsayed S, Logie R, Farrand S and Abdul-Hamid W (2024) Mental health and conflict: a pilot of an online eye movement desensitisation and reprocessing (EMDR) intervention for forcibly displaced Syrian women. *Front. Public Health.* 12:1295033.

The Syrian conflict has been ongoing since 2011. Practical and scalable solutions are urgently needed to meet an increase in need for specialised psychological support for post-traumatic stress disorder given limited availability of clinicians. Training forcibly displaced Syrians with a mental health background to remotely deliver specialised interventions increases the availability of evidence based psychological support. Little is known about the effectiveness of online therapy for forcibly displaced Syrian women provided by forcibly displaced Syrian women therapists. In this pilot study up to 12 sessions of online EMDR were associated with reductions in PTSD, anxiety and depression symptoms in Syrian women affected by the Syrian conflict.

British-Bangladeshi Muslim men: removing barriers to mental health support and effectively supporting our community

Alam S. British-Bangladeshi Muslim men: removing barriers to mental health support and effectively supporting our community. *The Cognitive Behaviour Therapist.* 2023;16:e38. doi:10.1017/S1754470X2300034X

In England, Bangladeshi men are amongst the lowest number of people referred to primary care NHS Talking Therapies services and amongst the most likely to have deteriorated (NHS Digital, 2020). Factors related to culture, religion and gender influence stigma and help-seeking (Robinson *et al.*, 2011). The aim of this research study was to qualitatively explore stigma and help-seeking for mental health difficulties, within British-Bangladeshi Muslim men in London. Many factors were highlighted as barriers accessing support, such as stigma and trust in services. Key practice implications are highlighted for services and practitioners. Professionals must understand the factors which impact the wellbeing of Bangladeshi men, how to better meet the needs of the community, and remove barriers to help. Participants also suggested initiatives to raise mental health

awareness and reduce stigma, as an inclusive approach is needed with greater listening to communities and partnerships with local authorities.

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

Faith and Cultural Sensitivity: Young British Muslims' Experiences of Engaging with CAMHS

This study explores the significance of culture and faith in young British Muslims' engagement with services and therapy. It focuses on young people aged 18-25. For further information please contact Latife Eskisan, trainee Clinical Psychologist:

l.eskisan@surrey.ac.uk

Muslim People's Experience of Spiritual Abuse

There is little to no research on Muslims' experiences of spiritual abuse. This Clinical Psychology trainee is aiming to improve our understanding of this important topic. Please share widely and for more information, contact Fatima Elashry:

f.elashry300@canterbury.ac.uk

With best wishes,

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I also work in the NHS (Tavistock and Portman) as an Associate Lecturer, Psychological Therapies with Children, Young People and Families (M34), and Visiting Lecturer, Psychoanalytic Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy (M80)

The Working with Muslims CYPMHS bulletin began in 2022 as a group for practitioners interested in thinking about their work with Muslim heritage children and families. It is compiled by Reflection Network (soon to be transferring operations to The Reflection Project), a UK charity supporting the mental health of Muslim children and young people.

The aims of the bulletin include:

- Supporting conversations about how to improve the way we work with Muslim heritage children and families
- Signposting to resources which support thinking in this area
- Sharing news of local initiatives in CYPMHS clinics and ideas for best practice
- Sharing news of initiatives taking place outside CYPMHS so that you can get involved
- Responding to questions about Muslim practices and cultures, including their relation to mental and emotional health
- Sharing research
- Developing training and CPD events