

Dear CYPMHS colleague,

Welcome to the third bulletin of the Working with Muslims group (changing to CPYMHS rather than CAMHS, although it doesn't roll off the tongue quite as well). This is the last bulletin before the summer break, but will resume in September. Meanwhile, we will ensure that past bulletins are available via the Reflection Network website reflectionnetwork.org so that you can access the links easily.

FEEDBACK

We have had some great feedback from group members, thank you!

“The **Psychological Professions Network (PPN) London** is delighted to support Reflection Network and its mission to share mental health resources to Muslim children across the capital and beyond. The vision of the PPN is to allow communities to thrive. This is achieved by working with communities to make psychological services transparent, accessible and responsive. Our values include:

- recognising wider social factors such as poverty, discrimination, inequality and trauma that can impact emotional distress
- addressing national and local disparities and access to and experiences of psychological healthcare for ethnic minority communities

These values align with the work of Reflection Network and we look forward to what can be achieved together.”



“Thank you very much for sharing your newsletter with me, it is a very valuable resource for Muslim individuals, families and professionals. I will be sure to share it and keep it to hand. I also like your easy to follow website.”

Kenyah Nyameche, Family & Systemic Psychotherapist and NHS public governor

NEWS

Al-Manaar Children's Therapy Service

A new service developed by Al-Manaar Muslim Cultural Heritage Centre in North Kensington, London, in partnership with Reflection Network. This pioneering project offers in-person psychotherapy for Muslim children and young people from the local community. The service will expand in September 2022, when two Assistant Therapists will join the team to offer after-school and weekend appointments.

Al-Manaar MCHC has been actively involved in fostering community resilience in the wake of the Grenfell fire. The impact of that trauma continues to resonate, including in the younger generation, often exacerbated by lockdown. Demand for therapeutic support has dramatically increased post-pandemic, as parents have become more aware of their children's mental health, and are increasingly reaching out to Al-Manaar for help. They prefer their children to be seen by a professional of the same faith background, and are often reluctant to go through the GP/CAMHS due to fear of judgement and stereotyping. <https://www.reflectionnetwork.org/projects>

Muslim Mind Collaborative responded to the Government's call for evidence (for a new 10 year plan to improve mental health) with an open letter highlighting the need to support communities at greatest risk:

http://bcbn.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/MMC_Open_Letter_7th_July_2022.pdf

RESOURCES

Muslim Youth Helpline 0808 808 2008

This faith and culturally sensitive helpline service was created over 20 years ago, in response to an absence of such support services from mainstream providers, and the culture of taboo and condemnation surrounding youth issues in the Muslim community. As their mission statement says,

“For too many young British Muslims, the feeling of never quite belonging and having to meet conflicting social expectations, creates despair during the formative years of adolescence. In a community where most social issues are a cultural taboo, increasing numbers of young people are resorting to self-harm and substance abuse for escape, and mental health problems appear disproportionately higher.”

MYH advice is anonymous, confidential and free, and aims to be non-judgemental, non-directional and empowering. <https://myh.org.uk/>

Social Worker Reflective Discussion Space

My Adoption Family, in partnership with Reflection Network, is offering a series of free reflective discussion spaces for social workers in the adoption sector who work with Muslim heritage and Black, Asian or other minority ethnicity adopters/potential adopters. The programme consists of 6 x 90-minute online sessions running between July 2022 and March 2023. Social workers signing up for the programme will be expected to commit to all six sessions. Although the first session has already taken place, the next is on August 22nd and there are still places left, so it is not too late to join. For further details please see bit.ly/swreflct or <https://myadoptionfamily.org.uk/events/social-worker-reflective-discussion-space/>

Video: How Muslim Scholars Understood Mental Illness 1000 Years Ago

by Dr Rania Award (2020), Stanford Muslim Mental Health Lab

A 12-minute video (part of the “Holistic Healing” series) exploring how early Muslim scholars understood the complexities of mental health.

<https://yaqeeninstitute.org/rania-awaad/how-muslim-scholars-understood-mental-illness-a-thousand-years-ago-holistic-healing-series>

RESEARCH

Hina Dadabhoy (2018) Islamophobia: Psychological Correlates and Impact on Young Muslim Identity Development

D. Clin.Psy. Thesis (Volume 1) 2018 University College London

This thesis explores the experiences of Muslim people living in the Western world. Part 1 is a systematic review of the literature examining the impact of Islamophobia on Muslim people in Western countries. Findings suggest high rates of Islamophobia, often operationalised as ‘religious discrimination’. Islamophobia was found to operate at multiple levels including work place discrimination, profiling at airports, feeling part of a ‘suspect community’, negative media stereotyping and street level harassment. Several effects such as an increase in symptoms of depression or anxiety were reported, as were feelings of unsafety. Some positive coping responses such as reaching out to others were also noted. Part 2 is an empirical study exploring identity development in young Muslims in Britain. Qualitative interviews were used to find out how participants construct their identity and define themselves. Both the benefits and challenges of identifying as a Muslim were explored. Participants were asked about experiences of Islamophobia and how they cope with or resist these adverse experiences. Participants expressed a strong and integral identity as Muslims unrelated to religious practice.

Consistent with the literature review, Islamophobia was reported to operate in multiple contexts and had profound influences on the participants sense of self. A need for community, belonging and finding tactical ways to respond to Islamophobia were also identified. Part 3 is a critical appraisal reflecting on the experience of conducting the empirical paper and ethical challenges that arose. It focuses primarily on the challenges experienced being a Muslim researcher examining Islamophobia.

https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10057163/8/Dadabhoy_10057163_thesis_sig_removed.pdf

Rachel Abedi (2020) **How do clinicians respond to the faith identity of young Muslims in a London Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) clinical context? An interpretative phenomenological analysis.** Prof Doc thesis, Psychoanalytic Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy (Tavistock & Portman NHS Trust) 2020 University of Essex

This research project explores how a multi-disciplinary group of CAMHS clinicians in a diverse London borough think about the faith identity of their Muslim patients, and how this might affect the therapeutic relationship. The researcher focuses on what the clinician brings to the room, both consciously and unconsciously, rather than locating issues of difference solely in the patient. This is important because the clinician is a participant in an inter-subjective process, rather than a neutral, objective observer. The researcher acknowledges the impact of her own identity as a Muslim on the research process. Following a literature review bringing together relevant papers from psychoanalytic literature and beyond, the researcher notes the lack of qualitative and quantitative research in this area. The researcher argues that CAMHS engagement with Muslims deserves further thought, particularly in the current socio-political climate, and discusses why the area of faith identity in general, and Muslim faith identity in particular, might be difficult to explore in the therapy room. In order to reflect the concerns of young Muslims in the interview schedule, the researcher consulted focus groups (Advisory Groups) of Muslim adolescents. The data from the subsequent interviews with clinicians, analysed using IPA, is presented here. Three overarching themes are selected for detailed exploration: what difference stirs up, the clinician as 'other', and tension around knowledge. The researcher seeks to understand how far clinicians' responses are specific to working with Muslim patients, or reflect wider tensions around working with difference, in the context of the relationship between generalities and specificities in clinical work. The eventual objective of this research is to contribute to enhanced engagement with Muslim families and young people in CAMHS. Possible areas for improvement in training and service delivery are suggested, and potential areas for further research.

<http://repository.essex.ac.uk/30361/1/Rachel%20Abedi%20ProfDoc%20thesis%2014.5.21.pdf>

QUESTIONS

Please send your questions to me at rabedi@tavi-port.nhs.uk and I will consult with others to find answers in time for the next bulletin. Any questions welcomed about Muslim practices and cultures, including their relation to mental and emotional health.

Requests and suggestions also welcome. I also look forward to hearing from you about initiatives in your service and local area. Please do share so that we can all learn.

Best wishes,

Rachel

Dr Rachel Abedi

Child and Adolescent Psychoanalytic Psychotherapist

Director, Reflection Network

reflectionnetwork.org

I also work in the NHS as a Lead Therapist, Tavistock Outreach in Primary Schools (TOPS), and teach at the Tavistock and Portman (Psychological Therapies with Children, Young People and Families M34, and Child and Adolescent Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy M80)

About the Working with Muslims CYPMHS group

The group is for CYPMHS practitioners who are interested in thinking further about their work with Muslim heritage children and families. It is being run in association with UK charity Reflection Network (reflectionnetwork.org). Reflection Network supports the mental and emotional health of Muslim children by:

- Making mainstream services more accessible
- Working with Muslim communities to improve child mental health outcomes

The aims of the group include:

- Having a conversation 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 your service 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

GDPR

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 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 rabedi@tavi-port.nhs.uk