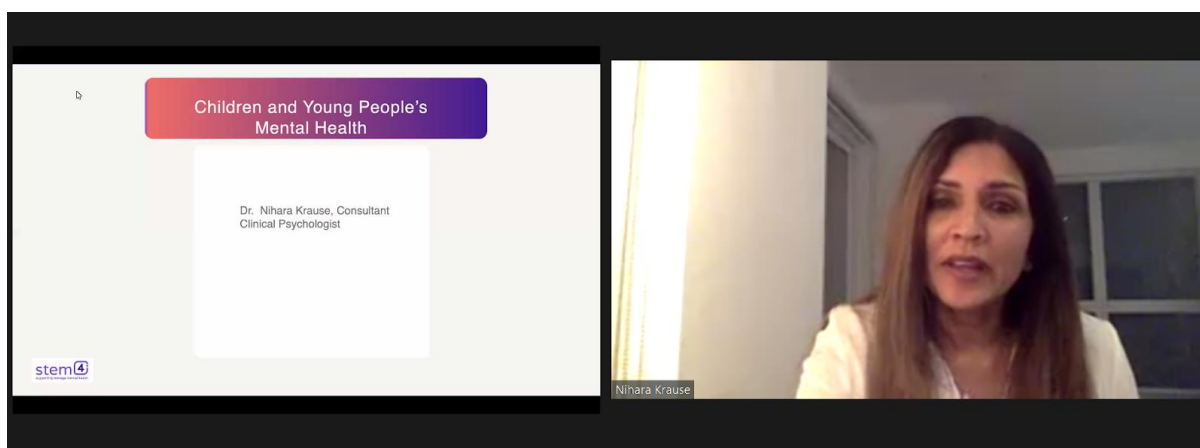


stem4, Teenage Mental Health Charity, Transform the Lives of London Families with Vital Parents/Carers Mental Health Conference Amidst COVID-19

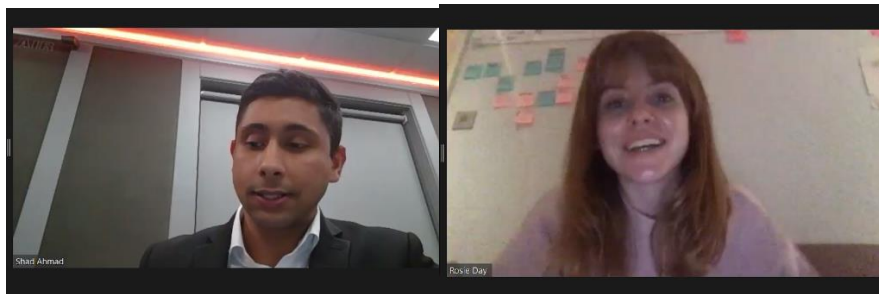
19 NOVEMBER, LONDON: With levels of mental disorders in children on the rise* and a second lockdown providing further disruption to the already turbulent lives of young people this year, stem4 hosted an inspiring and highly informative virtual mental health conference for families in Harrow and Brent. The event saw over 200 registrations from the boroughs in North West London, with attendees learning from both a clinical and lived experience perspective how to identify and manage mental ill health conditions, in the current pandemic context and beyond. The virtual conference was hosted with the help of Queens Park Community School and supported by the Comic Relief Emergency COVID-19 Recovery Fund. The evening was the second of two conferences, the first of which took place for parents/carers in Merton and Wandsworth.

stem4 Founder and CEO Dr Nihara Krause, gave the opening keynote speech of the evening, providing valuable information for struggling parents and carers on how to look after their children's mental health in the pandemic setting. As an expert clinical psychologist, Dr Krause was able to equip the families in attendance with tools to help their young people thrive through building resilience, identifying signs of mental ill health, and managing the impact of such mental ill health through early intervention.



Dr Nihara Krause gives a highly informative talk, helping parents/carers to maximise the mental health of the children & young people in their lives.

Parents and carers were also given some real-life insights into coping with mental health struggle through stem4 ambassadors Shad Ahmad and Rosie Day, who both told inspiring stories of their own lives and encounters with mental ill-health. Coming from a very demanding background with high expectations, Shad found himself looking for happiness and himself in the wrong places. However, after opening up to the right support, he found happiness again. Hearing Shad tell his personal story allowed parents/carers to understand the affect a family can have on a child's mental health, as well as gain insight into what their child might be thinking and feeling when experiencing mental ill-health. Rosie Day, the award-winning young actress, gave an equally honest and touching talk, giving a sibling's perspective of a family dealing with mental health issues. Her story demonstrated to parents how everyone in the family can be impacted differently.



stem4 ambassadors Shad Ahmad and Rosie Day offer their own personal experiences of family and mental ill-health to provide real life lessons to the families attending.

Dr Krause said, 'The pandemic has placed a huge strain on many children, young people, and their families. At a time like this, it is important not just for young people to understand positive mental health, but for the entire family to work together to achieve it. We are therefore delighted to be able to offer so many parents and carers in London vital advice and inspirational stories that will help them to communicate with their children about mental health, understand the signs and risks, and seek help and support when needed. Together, we can help give young people a positive future.'

The virtual conference was free for all attendees, thanks to the support of the Comic Relief Emergency COVID-19 Recovery Fund. Further to the conference, the fund has allowed stem4 to focus on providing extra resources to the BAME community at this difficult time.

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About stem4: Founded by Clinical Psychologist Dr Nihara Krause, stem4 is an award-winning charity aimed at supporting the positive mental health in teenagers. With 1 in 8 children and young people aged between 5-19 presenting with at least one diagnosable mental health condition*, stem4 works to enhance early understanding of mental illness and signpost towards prompt action and intervention.

In order to carry out this mission, the charity educates individuals, parents, teachers and communities through the provision of interactive conferences, digital educational resources such as 'Head Ed' and a comprehensive website. Further, the charity has identified the widespread use of mobile phones as a potential means for change, resulting in the development of apps such as 'Calm Harm' for dealing with urges of self harm, 'Clear Fear' to help with anxiety and 'Combined Minds' for family and friends of those dealing with mental ill health. stem4 are also founders of Youth Mental Health Day, an annual campaign that encourages understanding and awareness of mental health in young people, enabling them to live happy and healthy lives all year round.
*(NHS Digital 2017)

Website: Please see website for more information www.stem4.org.uk

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***Sources:** [NHS Digital](#) report → *Information from NHS Digital in 2017 on the rates of probable mental disorders in children and young people from 5-16 years was one in nine. Data released in July 2020 by NHS Digital indicated that this had increased to one in six in the same age group.*

