



Senior Mental Health Lead Program



ACCESS TO DEDICATED MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING EXPERTS



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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION APPROVED PROVIDER



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Contents

This comprehensive course guide is designed to give you an understanding of the entire package of support available to equip a Senior Mental Health Lead offered by Connex Academy.

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[Click here to download our FAQs](#)

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Enquiries@connex-academy.com

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What is our Senior Mental Health Lead program?

Our Senior Mental Health Lead (SMHL) program is built in response to the Department of Education (DfE) grant initiative to support state-funded schools and colleges in England to train Senior Mental Health Leads within schools.

Most schools are eligible to apply for a grant to pay for this program.

Whilst this training is not compulsory for schools, it is part of the government's commitment to prioritise Mental Health and Wellbeing training so that each school has a trained Senior Mental Health Lead to develop and implement a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing and, in turn, drastically improve the mental health and wellbeing of all of those within our school communities.

As an approved provider of the training, Connex Academy builds upon the DfEs Learning Outcomes for the role of a SMHL within schools in a way that is informative, practical and supportive. Details of the Learning Outcomes can be found in the **Program Content and Delivery** section of this guide.



This program will provide learners with a package of professional development, access to resources, material, experts, and knowledge that will explore **all aspects of Mental Health and Wellbeing** within a school setting and beyond. It will also provide guidance on how they can implement changes within their own school and develop a **Transformation Roadmap** to apply within their school environment. They will also receive one-to-one coaching support to ensure they are able to become a role model and drive through initiatives to impact the **mental health and wellbeing culture** within their school.

Connex Academy also recognises that for SMHLs to drive through change to a whole school's approach to mental health and wellbeing, they will require a variety of **stakeholders** and **ambassadors** to support them with their initiative. We, therefore, have provided access to additional professional development for their colleagues, including **Awareness of Learner Wellbeing** which is available for their whole school workforce.



Who is this program for?

This program is designed to support anyone potentially taking on the role of a **Senior Mental Health Lead** within a school context.

As an approved DfE provider, eligible schools are able to use their grant to access this training for one SMHL from their faculty who would be most suitable and have the capacity to complete the learning and implement the whole school mental health and wellbeing initiative in their community.

Further information about the SMHL funding is available [here](#) and **Appendix One**.

Settings not meeting the requirements to access the grant or schools looking to access training for an additional member of staff are welcome to **self-fund the training**. Connex Academy also welcomes applications from self-funding individuals as well.

Selecting a suitable SMHL

It is anticipated that the SMHL role will become as significant as that of DSLs in schools and colleges over time. Their commitment and time required cannot be underestimated. Schools and colleges can decide who is best placed to take on the role of SMHL and undertake the training with us, as every setting's circumstances are different.

Training could be for your:

- Headteacher
- Deputy headteacher
- Member of the senior leadership team (SLT)
- If not a senior leader, an appropriate member of staff, working with colleagues, who is empowered to develop and oversee your setting's whole school or college approach to mental health and wellbeing.

6 SENIOR MENTAL HEALTH LEAD

The role requires the individual to have the **authority, capacity and support to influence and lead strategic change** within the setting. Any school using their grant to access this training must demonstrate a commitment to this strategic whole school change.

Existing Mental Health Leads within schools, those who have previously completed training in this area or a Mental Health Support Team coordinator may make an excellent SMHL but, equally, there is no prior experience in this area required.

Settings not meeting the requirements to access the grant or schools looking to access training for an additional member of staff are welcome to **self-fund the training**. Connex Academy also welcomes applications from self-funding individuals as well.



What are the Program Learning outcomes?

The SMHL Program is designed to give SMHLs access to everything they need to successfully lead their school communities in adopting a strategic, whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing.

After program completion SMHLs will be able to confidently support their schools, with the help of ambassadors and stakeholders, to practically implement the knowledge and tools that they have gained through the training.

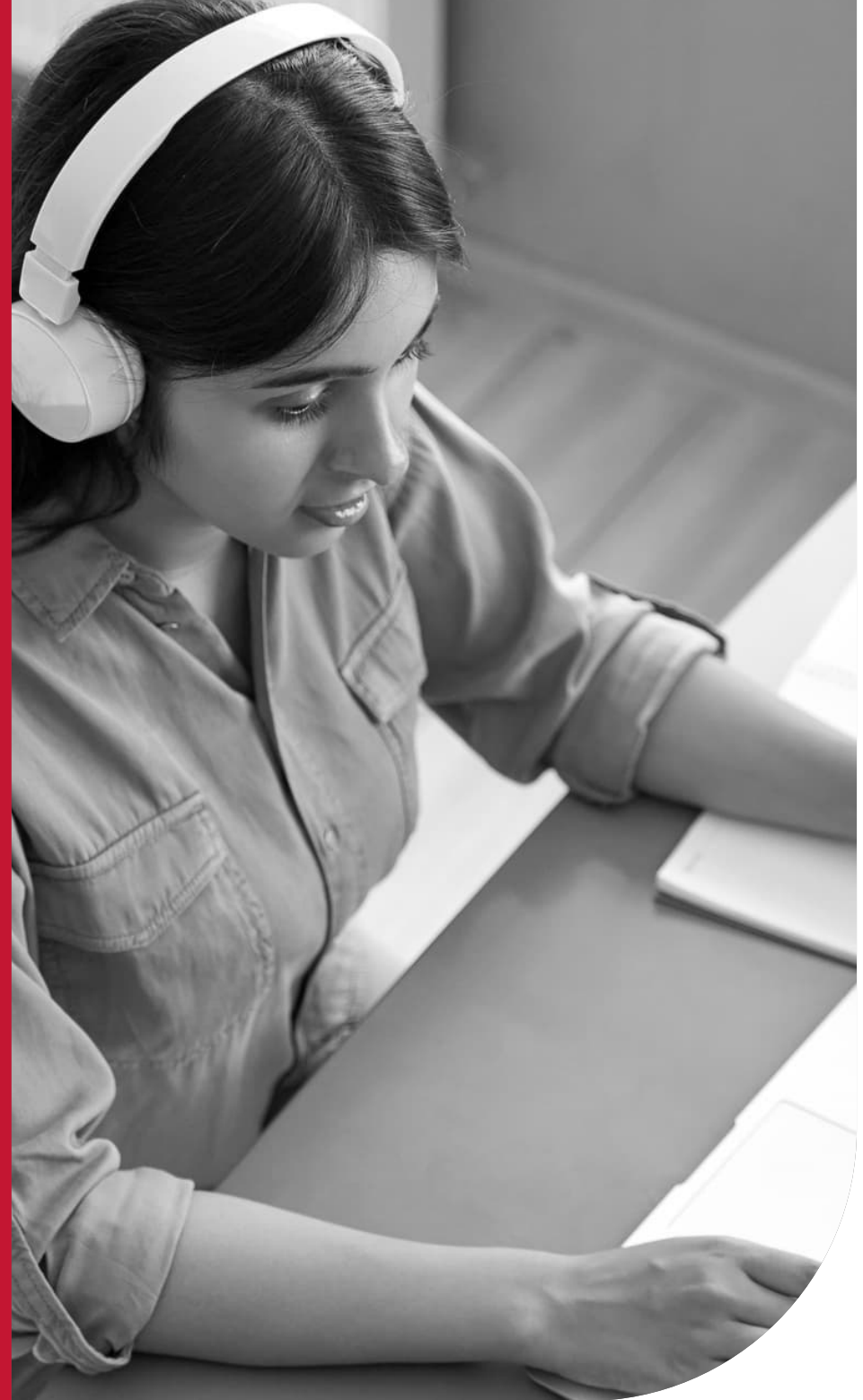
They will know how to:

- Promote wellbeing and organise professional mental health support
- Regularly reflect in order to evaluate what works and what needs change
- Build a school community to support the change initiative
- Lead change mindfully and with confidence
- Create dialogue and buy-in in their community
- Offer targeted learning for teachers, students, parents
- Access appropriate data tools to monitor and measure the impact of any initiatives
- Take swift action when effective care is needed
- Improve and adapt the action plan for lasting change
- Develop a **Transformation Roadmap**



What's included?

The SMHL Program has a wide breadth of resources available including learning modules available on-demand expert videos, alongside Go Live insight sessions, and a SMHL online Community Hub (Appendix Two) allowing SMHLs to access wider reading, additional programs, resources, book one to one coaching sessions, and connect with one another to share best practices.



Connex Academy is proud to provide supplementary resources to support SMHLs in their roles including:



Access to the Senior Mental Health Lead SMHL Community Hub (Appendix Two)



Free one-to-one coaching sessions with an expert available on request



Free access to our Awareness of Learner Wellbeing program



Free access to the entire Connex Academy Platform for your school with over 100 programs available.



Go-live sessions and module wider reading



Free Senior Mental Health Lead Podcast



Mindful Moments

Free Mindfulness Moments Audios



Free Create Positive Fundamentals of Wellbeing program

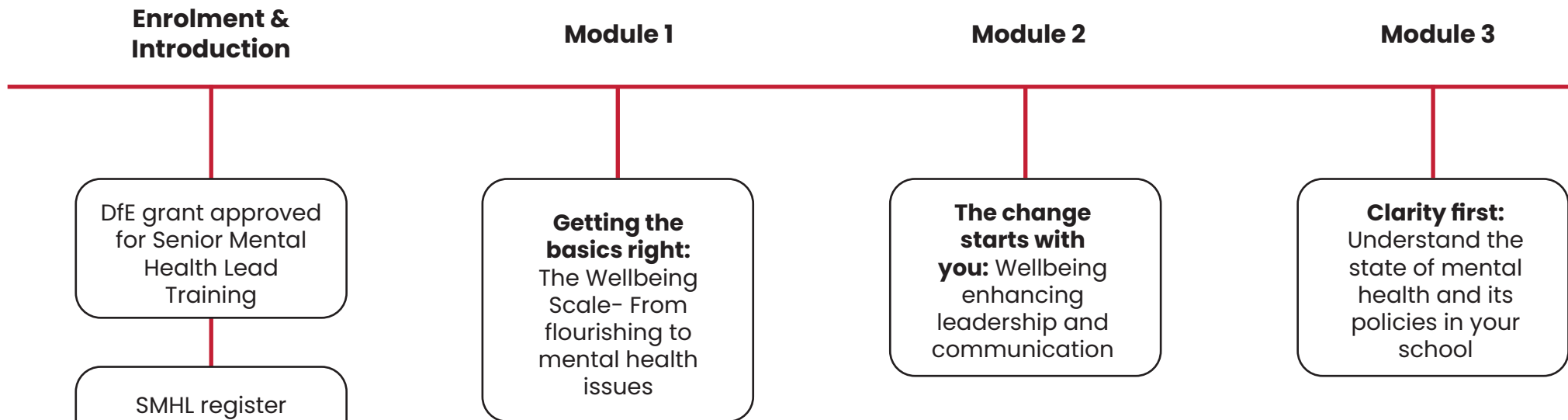


Free Create Positive Strengths in the Classroom



Wider recommended reading and regular insights published

User Journey



Key Programme Characteristics



Action

Modular activities to build strategic action plan which supports positive whole-school change



Individual

One to one coaching, mentoring or supervision between our experts and the senior leads



Alumni

Previous successful Connex Academy SMHL remain members for continued access & ongoing support



Connect

SMHL Community Platform- connect with other SMHL access to ongoing expert & peer support, coaching & networking

Module 4

Module 5

Module 6

Module 7

Next Steps

Reach for effective care:
Mental health issue awareness identification, referrals

Better Together:
Co-creating a wellbeing community and ethos and student voice

Learn and Grow:
Up-skilling staff, self care, student self care, curricular frameworks

Moving Forward:
Evaluate, adapt, optimise and find support - stay with us

Develop whole school change action plan

End assessment to enable certificate completion and CPD credits

Receive certificate of completion & CPD credits



Peer

Group coaching, mentoring or supervision between our experts and multiple senior leads



Reflect

Modular resources, activities, reflection, and expansion of concepts through playbook to support each module



Flex

Modular self-paced on-demand sessions which are accessible at your convenience



Recognition

Modular knowledge tests and end assessment to enable certificate completion and CPD credits



Live

Regular live engagement group sessions, expert presenters-experts in both adult and childhood mental health and wellbeing education with Q&A to support each module

Program Content and Delivery

As an approved DfE training provider, our program builds upon the Learning Outcomes that have been identified for this role. Full details of these can be found [here](#) but these cover the following areas;

- Leadership and management
- Identifying need and monitoring impact of interventions
- Targeted support and appropriate referrals
- Staff development
- Creating and ethos and environment
- Enabling Student Voice
- Working with Parents, Families and Careers
- Curriculum, teaching and learning

Our guided exploration of these topics will enable the SMHL to implement and sustain an effective whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing in their setting, aligning to the governments [promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing](#).

Our DfE approved program is modular and flexible and offers a mix of on-demand, video instruction, directed reflection, Go Live sessions and one-to one coaching to best suit your SMHLs professional development needs.

The training will cover the following seven modules:

- ✓ **Getting the basics right**
Learn the wellbeing scale from flourishing to mental health issues.
- ✓ **The change starts with you**
Become a role model by using wellbeing inducing leadership skills
- ✓ **Clarity first**
Evaluate the state of mental health and its policies in your school
- ✓ **Better together**
Co-create your schools' wellbeing vision for a transformative and inclusive environment.
- ✓ **Learn and grow**
Focus on up-skilling multi-stakeholders alongside curricular frameworks for key culture change.
- ✓ **Reach for effective care**
Identify indicators for swift mental health interventions, including students' voices.
- ✓ **Moving forward**
Evaluate and optimise all changes for wellbeing sustainability

Each of these modules is designed to engage SMHLs in a range of ways as they develop the knowledge, insights and tools to lead and influence the strategic approach within their schools.

Each module consists of:



On demand Expert Videos

These are the framework to reflect on practices in school that will allow the SMHL to complete **Module Activities** and in the final module their **Roadmap** as they go.



Downloadable PDF resources

These will accompany each of the training videos to ensure SMHLs have clear tools for reflection and planning.



Module Activities

Where additional resources such as recommended reading can be found.



A Mindfulness Moment audio

A treat to support the SMHL as they become a role model for wellbeing within school.



Wider reading and resources

Via the SMHL Community Hub (**Appendix Two**)

Throughout the program learners are asked to complete a series of **Module Activities**, review a number of case studies and make notes of their reflections within a **Thought Journal**. In the final module, they will then use their previous **Module Activities** to build their **Roadmap** for change.

In addition to these prescribed activities on our Platform, our experts are on hand within the **SMHL Community Hub (Appendix Two)** to direct learners towards additional resources, encourage discussions and answer any questions to ensure each learner has the dedicated support they require.

This is also a space where SMHLs are able to connect with one another to share best practices and grow a supportive community of other professionals looking to change the face of mental health and well-being within their schools, something we actively encourage.

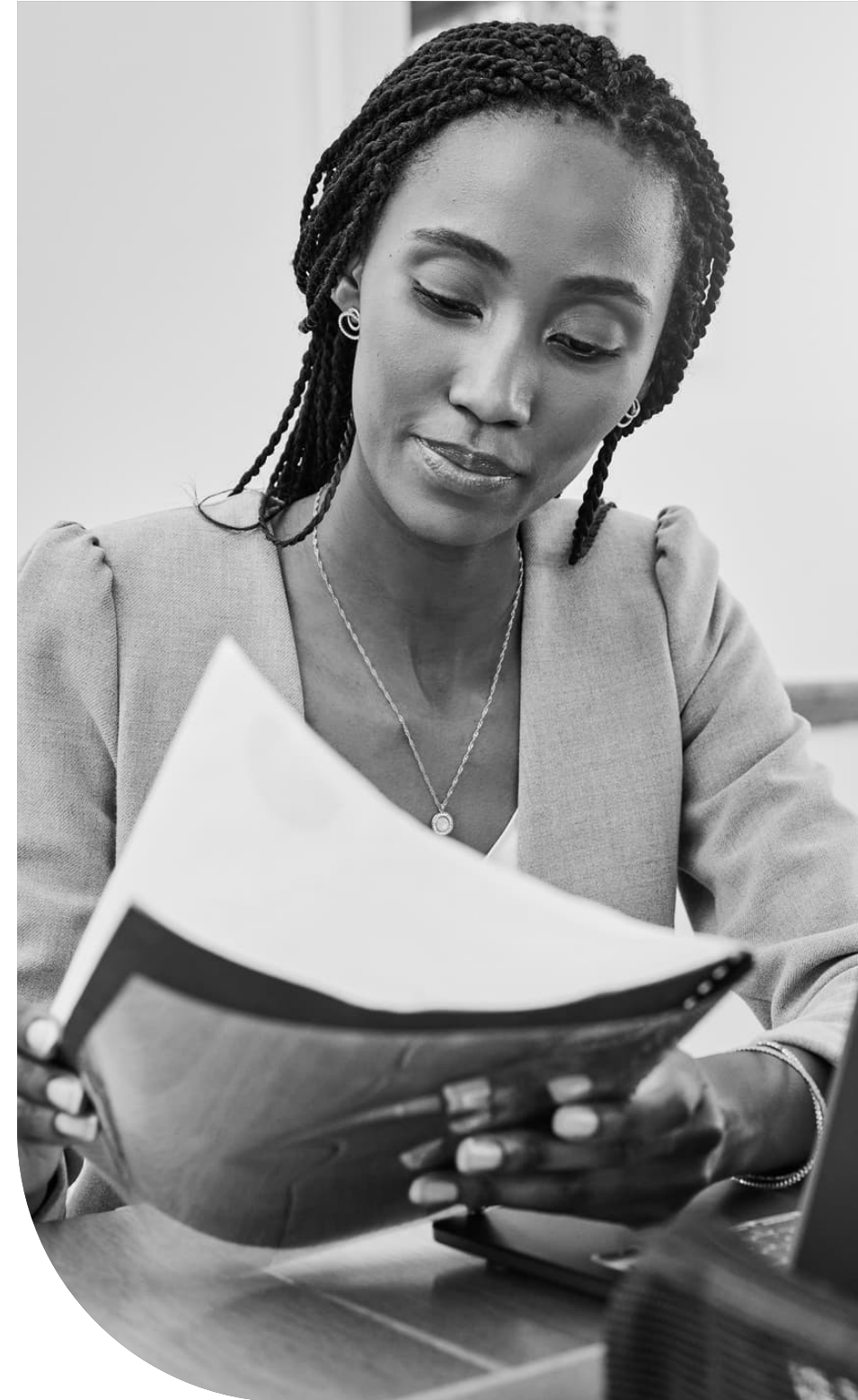
Optional Go Live sessions with our experts at different points throughout the duration of the training are available to attend.

Program Time Commitment

Whilst the core program is self-paced and on demand, each module has a suggested learning time of 1.5 hours to complete the program and various Module Activities.

The **on-demand Expert videos** will guide learners as they build their **Module Activities** and **Roadmap** which they will go on to implement within their schools. SMHLs are encouraged to engage in discussions and reflections with others within the **SMHL Community Hub (Appendix Two)**, attend the **Go Live Sessions**, extend their learning with additional reading, and draw upon the additional support available including one to one coaching sessions. SMHLs are encouraged and supported to find ways to prioritise their own mental health and wellbeing in order to become a role model who is able to confidently lead and influence change within their school communities.

It's tough at the top! Connex Academy recognise this and have provided additional professional development and support tools as part of this package to support the individual SMHLs wellbeing needs.



Program Schedule

Module	Description	Date	Location
Introduction & Module 1: Getting the basics right	Remote activity & community hub contributions to the relevant topic area. Module activities.	WEEK 1	Platform for Course Community Hub for wider reading and topics
Module 2: The change starts with you	Remote activity & community hub contributions to the relevant topic area. Module activities.	WEEK 3	Platform for Course Community Hub for wider reading and topics
Module 3: Clarity first	Remote activity & community hub contributions to the relevant topic area. Module activities.	WEEK 5	Platform for Course Community Hub for wider reading and topics
Module 4: Reach for effective care	Remote activity & community hub contributions to the relevant topic area. Module activities.	WEEK 7	Platform for Course Community Hub for wider reading and topics
Module 5: Better together	Remote activity & community hub contributions to the relevant topic area. Module activities.	WEEK 9	Platform for Course Community Hub for wider reading and topics

Module 6: Learn & grow	Remote activity & community hub contributions to the relevant topic area. Module activities.	WEEK 11	Platform for Course Community Hub for wider reading and topics
Module 7: Moving forward	Remote activity & community hub contributions to the relevant topic area. Module activities.	WEEK 13	Platform for Course Community Hub for wider reading and topics
Book a one-to-one coaching session with one of our experts via the community hub to review your action plan		WEEK 15	Community Hub link
Create your own School Transformational Roadmap and submit for review with your expert.		WEEK 16	Submit your Roadmap by email to SMHL@connex-academy.com
Feedback from our expert on your Roadmap will be given to you within 30 days of Roadmap submission			Via Email
Receive your certificate of completion and CPD Credits		WEEK 20	Via Email
Optional: Book a one-to-one coaching session with one of our experts via the community hub at any time during the course			Community Hub link
Optional Go Live Monthly Sessions focusing on one of the modules or expert insights. These are advertised on the community hub and available to anyone to attend.			Community Hub link

Assessment Process

Assessment of the SMHLs achievement of the learning outcomes takes place during module seven when the program focuses on the **development of a Transformational Roadmap**. This will have been built over the program through completion of the **Module Activities** and reflections in a **Thought Journal**.

The **Roadmap** once submitted is reviewed by our **experts** who will be able to provide detailed support and feedback.

A one-to-one session will be booked between our **expert** and **learner** to walk through and sign off their **Roadmap**.

Alumni from the SMHL program will have continued access to our SMHL Community Hub to connect with others in this role and continue to receive additional reading and updates.



On Successful Completion

SMHLs successfully completing the training will receive:



A certificate to confirm their achievement.



Evidence of their 18 CPD hours.



A one-to-one session with our experts.



Downloadable module activities, strategies, and actions to enable them to lead on a whole school cultural shift for positive mental health and wellbeing in their communities.



A Transformation Roadmap to enable them to implement a mental health and wellbeing initiative within their school.



| Meet the Experts

Our experts have a wealth of experience and invested significant time to ensure the program content gives SMHLs the tools they need to lead a Whole School Change Program. Learners are able to book one-to-one coaching with our experts at any time providing a dedicated coach to help ensure they are able to draw upon the learning they have covered in the training in a way that will allow them to successfully implement change within their school setting.



**Dr Elke
Paul**

Dr. Elke Paul, is co-founder of CreatePositive, a professional learning ecosystem to advance mental wellbeing and human skills. She is an international education and mental wellbeing consultant, content developer, facilitator, and speaker.

She is passionate about Wellbeing Transformation Programs and has experienced them turn schools into empowered flourishing organisations. She believes wellbeing education needs to sit at the core of any school education alongside academic knowledge development. Dedicated leadership and staff up skilling and community participation are crucial levers for success. As a board member of the Spirituality and Meaning Division at the International Positive Psychology Association she is convinced, the art of slowing down, mindfulness, and developing a healthy relationship with oneself are additional drivers for a positive change in schools.

Given current global challenges, and with teachers and students specifically, wellbeing education needs to get to schools directly and more professionally. Through CreatePositive Elke has been able to support and empower other educators with strategies, tools and knowledge to enable them to bring about whole-school wellbeing change within their school communities.



**Ella
Savell-Boss**

Ella is an NSPCC accredited safeguarding trainer and has over 17 years' experience of working with children and families in education and safeguarding. Her roles have included working across the whole school community with children, families, staff, governors, and external agencies. Ella led her previous school in achieving Optimus Education and Children's Society Wellbeing Award and has supported and advised other schools working towards this award.

Ella has worked as a front line lead for safeguarding, emotional health, and wellbeing across a Multi-Academy Trust in a highly deprived area and has experience on leading staff and community in developing new ways to increase learning, understanding, monitoring and evaluation.

Understanding school safeguarding management, challenges, pressures, and barriers posed, gives her the depth of understanding to support future Senior Mental Health Leads to overcome these. Ella is passionate about ensuring adequate wrap-around support is provided to staff holding these key roles and foundation for bringing about whole school change.

Ella has seen the growing need for a Senior Mental Health role to be established within schools and this makes her an ideal expert support for the Connex Academy SMHL programme.



Dave Guard

Dave Guard works with Ella, one of the program leaders. He has helped put the SMHL program together and is delighted to offer 30 minute one to one meetings with him. He is a professionally qualified youth worker and CYP-IAPT practitioner and has worked with young people for a little over 20 years. For the last 7 years he has worked in young people's mental health, the most recent of these years working directly with young people in schools.



All SMHLs accessing this training program also receive access to an additional training program - **The Fundamentals of Wellbeing** - which has been created with our partners, Create Positive - co founded by Elke Paul.

We hope you have found this Course Guide useful and have a sense of the entire package available to equip a Senior Mental Health Lead offered by Connex Academy. Still not sure you can find out further information here:



Register your interest [here](#)



Post a question to Info@connex-academy.com



You can book a call to discuss further via Enquiries@connex-academy.com



Download our FAQs [here](#)

A woman with short dark hair, wearing a light-colored long-sleeved top and dark pants, stands on the left side of the frame, facing right. She is gesturing with her hands as if presenting. In the background, several people are seated in a meeting room, looking towards her. The room has large windows and a whiteboard. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent red filter.

Appendix One

How to apply for the grant

Schools can apply for a Senior Mental Health Lead training grant following these steps:

1. Identify a senior lead who will access the training during the 2022-2023 academic year. (See below for details of how to select a suitable lead)
2. Eligible settings should complete the **first stage of the application process** to reserve a grant. In this form, your eligibility will be checked by the DfE and you will be asked to make a series of declarations as described in the **conditions of grant.**
3. You will receive confirmation that the DfE have successfully received your application and that your eligibility has been confirmed. This will enable you to book the training program, to start by 31 March 2024. Keep evidence of your booking, as you will need this to claim your grant.
4. You must submit the **second stage of your application** to the DfE – providing acceptable evidence (evidence can be a scanned copy, screenshot or photograph of your confirmation email or invoice from your booking with us) – by 31 March 2024.
5. The grant will then be paid to the bank details provided by the school.



A woman with curly hair is smiling and looking back over her shoulder. She is sitting at a desk with a laptop. In the background, another person is gesturing with their hands. The entire image has a red overlay.

Appendix Two

SMHL Community Hub

Mighty Networks is a platform that puts community at the centre of online programs. Connex Academy has created a dedicated space here for those completing the SMHL program to connect with one another and access all of the tools, resources and additional development to complete their program.

Learners can download the Mighty Networks app and access the SMHL community on the go and on any device. This also means that they are able to connect with their network 24/7 should they wish, providing a convenient way for them to complete this self-paced training.

Within the community, SMHLs are encouraged to share their learnings, contribute to discussions, and connect with others in a way that will deepen and enrich their training experience.



How to access your Senior Mental Health Community Hub

An element of our program is for members and our wider Senior Mental Health Lead community to be able to connect, share best practice and experiences with others in similar roles.

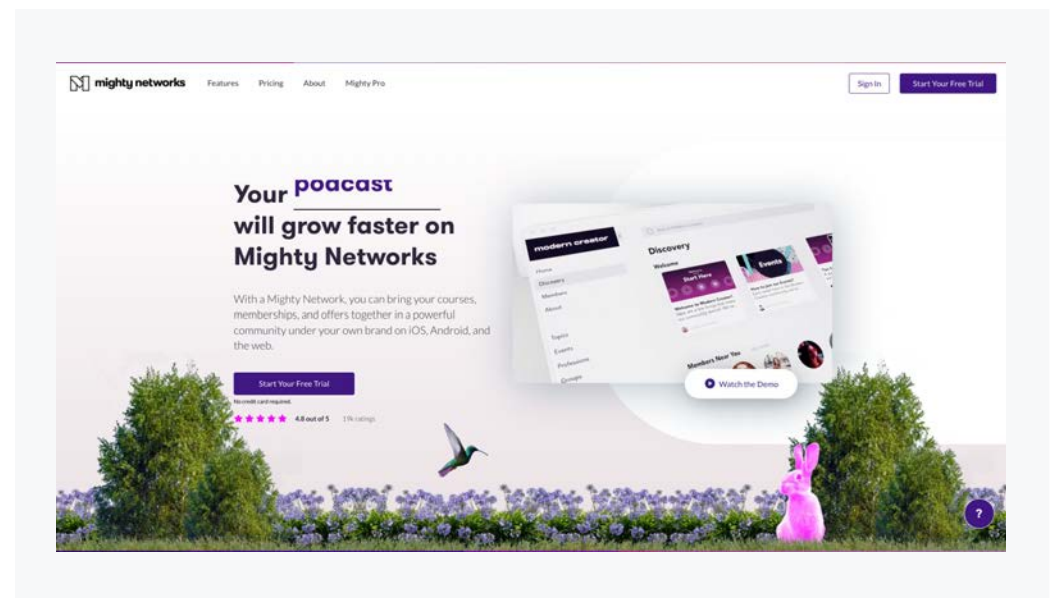
To enable this we have set up our own private Senior Mental Health Lead community hub through Mighty Networks. This is a secure platform just available to those going through our program to connect and engage with the course content. Each delegate will receive a personal login to the general community as well. We hope over time that alumni of our SMHL courses will remain on the hub to support and connect with new and previous colleagues.

To sign up please see the next few steps.

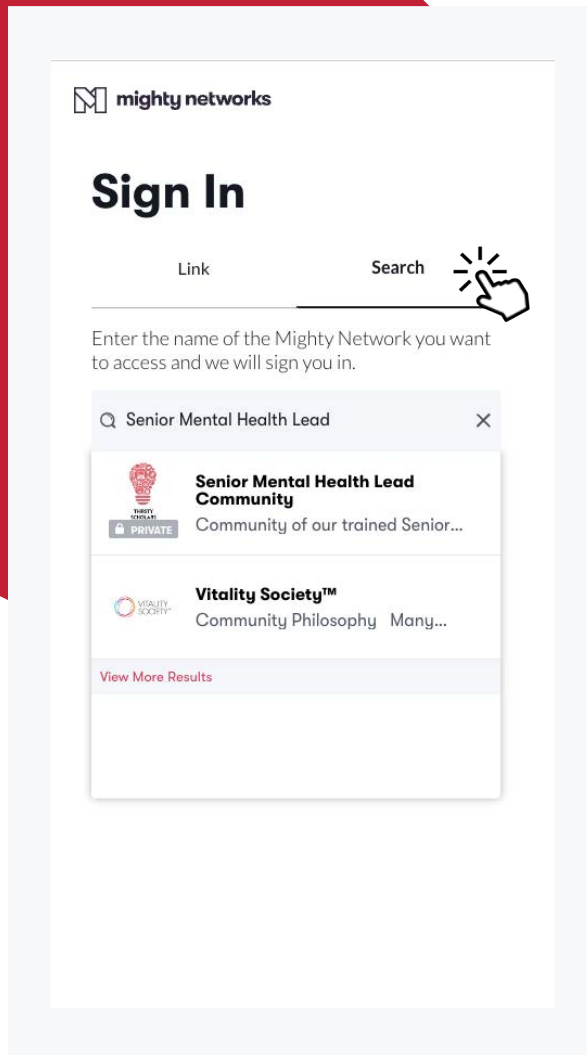
Desktop Sign Up

1. Please visit the Mighty Networks website and press sign up.

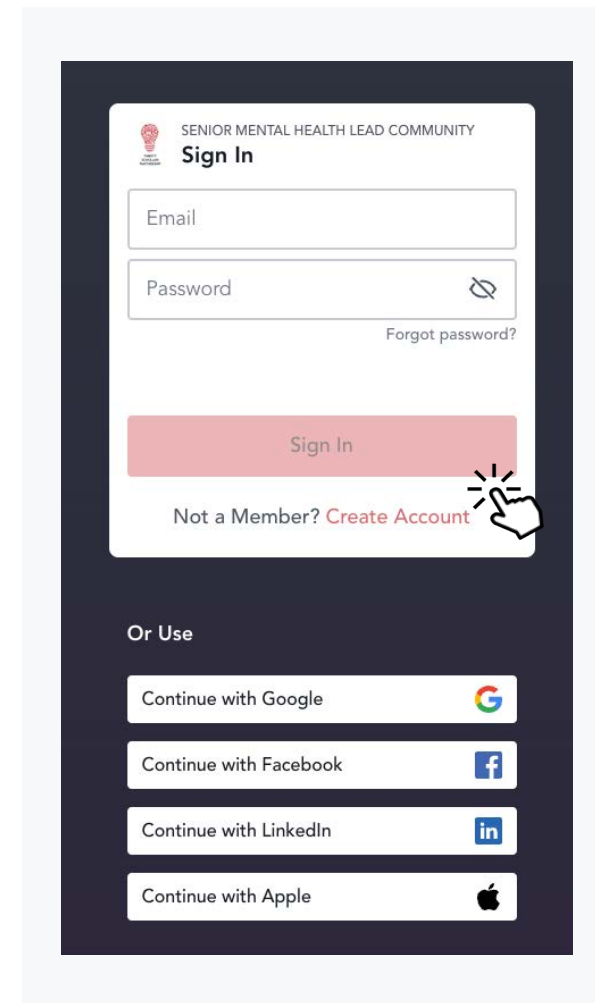
[Go to site >](#)



- 2.** Click the search tab and search for Senior Mental Health Lead.

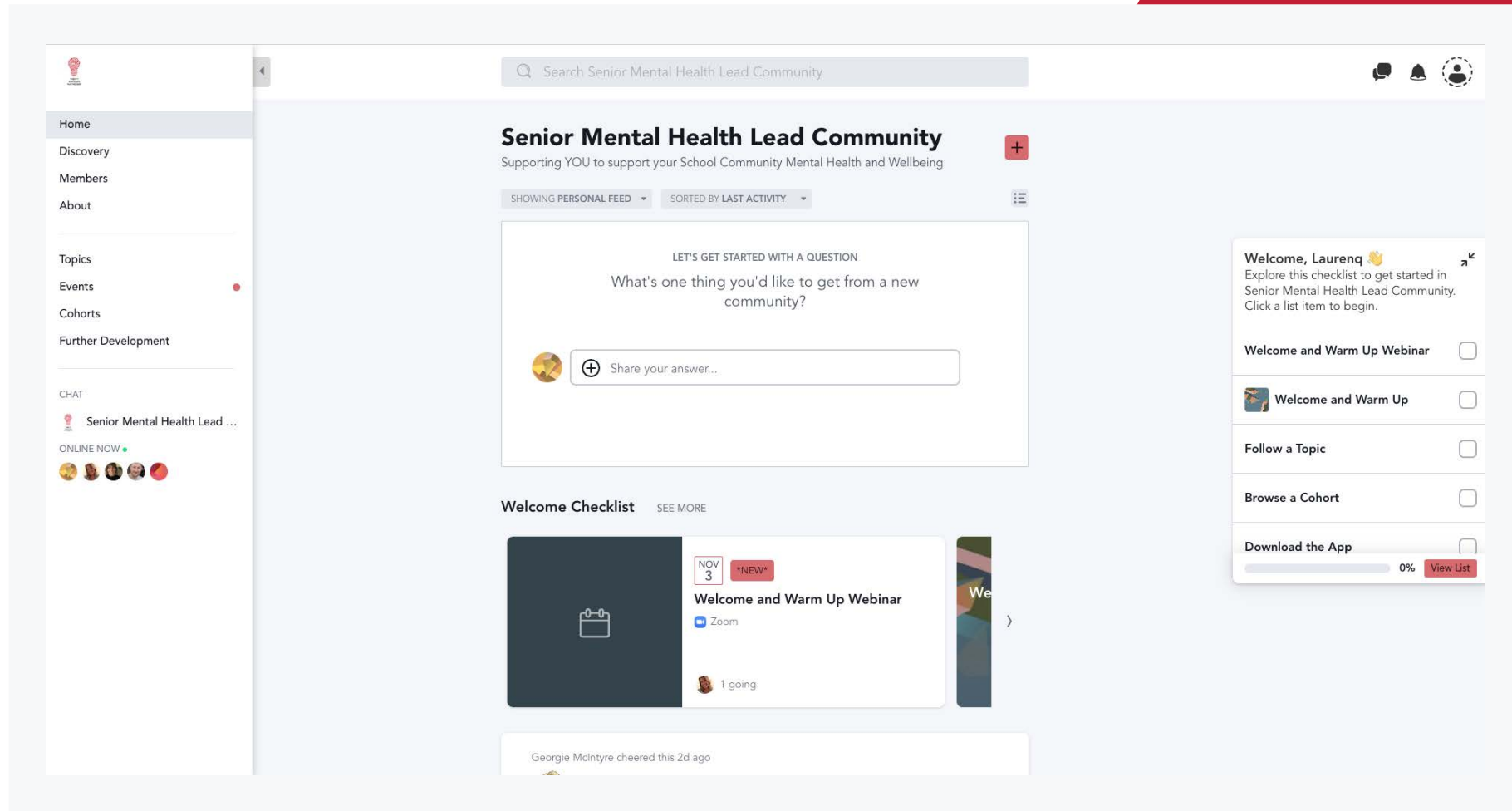


- 3.** On this page create an account using the Create Account or use either the Google, Facebook, LinkedIn or Apple buttons to sign up.



4.

Welcome to our community hub where you can access your specific group, which you will have received an invite to.



5.

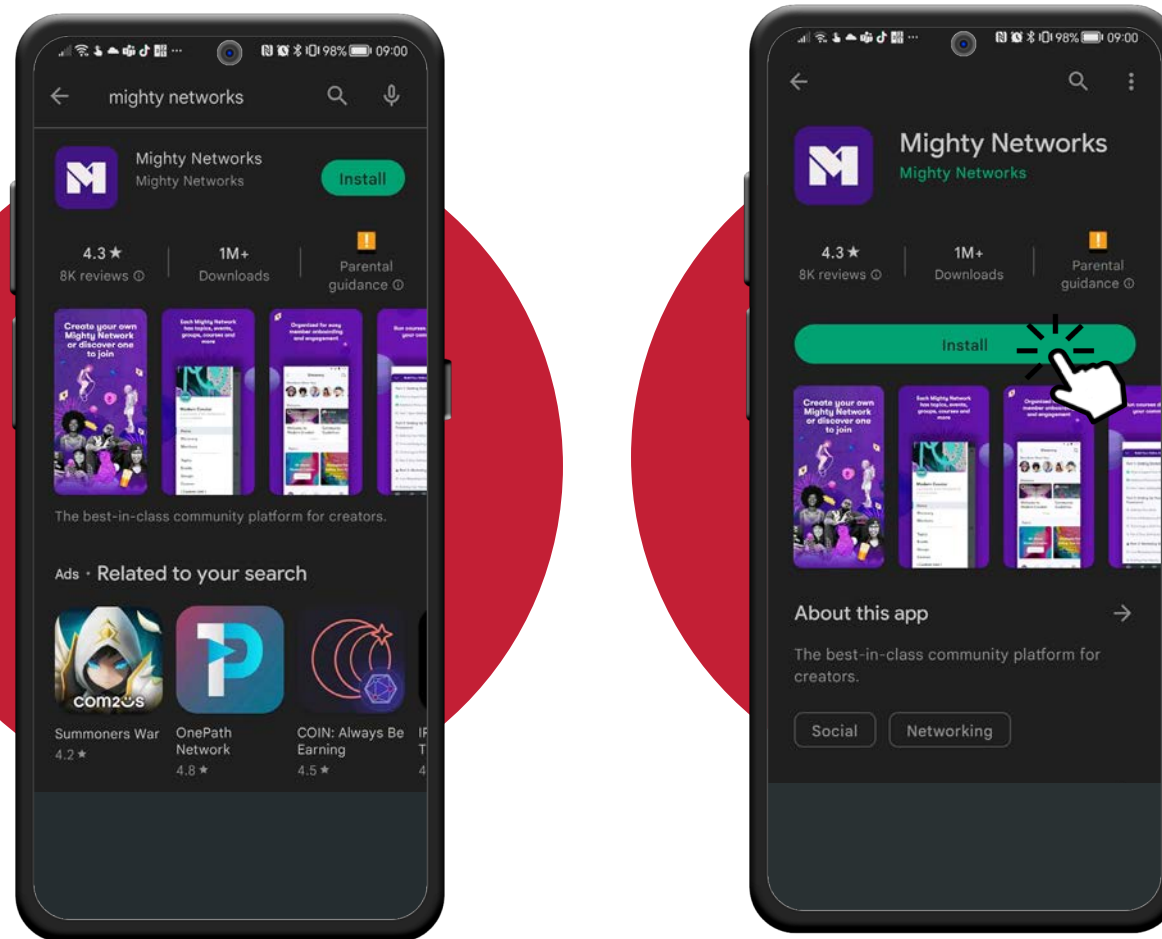
Using the menu bar on the left you can discover members near you, top posts and topics we will be discussing during the on-demand programme. You will regularly be asked to post your responses in this area during the programme so we recommend you bookmark your link for this page.

6.

Please feel free to explore, we will be posting helpful resources, articles and links and our aim is to grow this community even after your programme finishes to enable you to have a network to connect with.

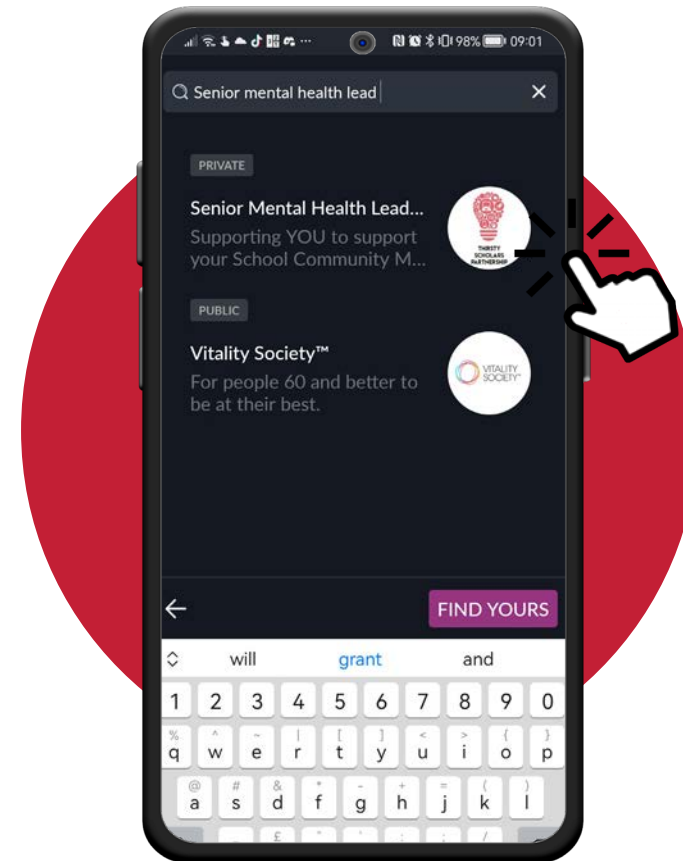
Mobile Sign Up

1. Download the Mighty Networks App on either your iPhone or android device.

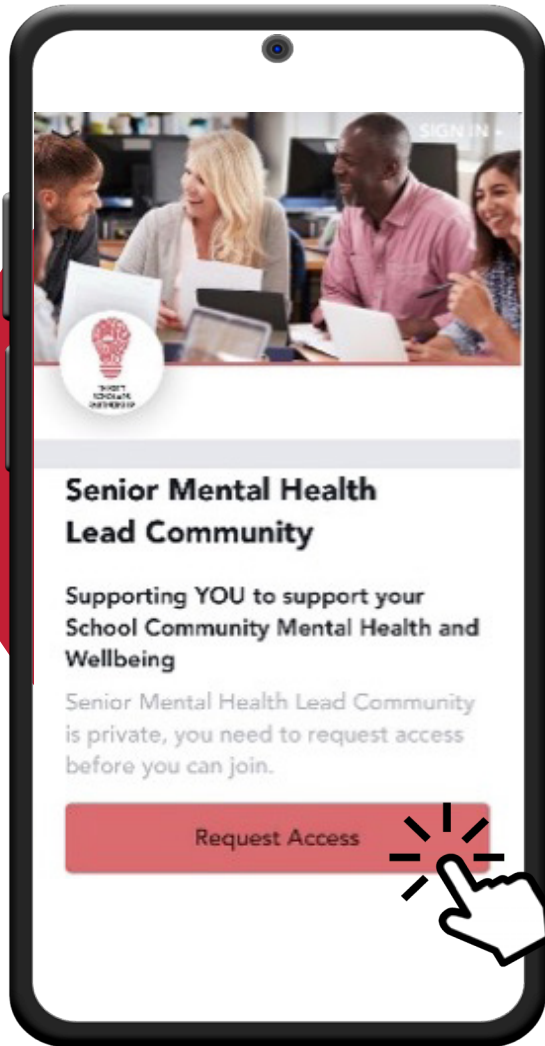


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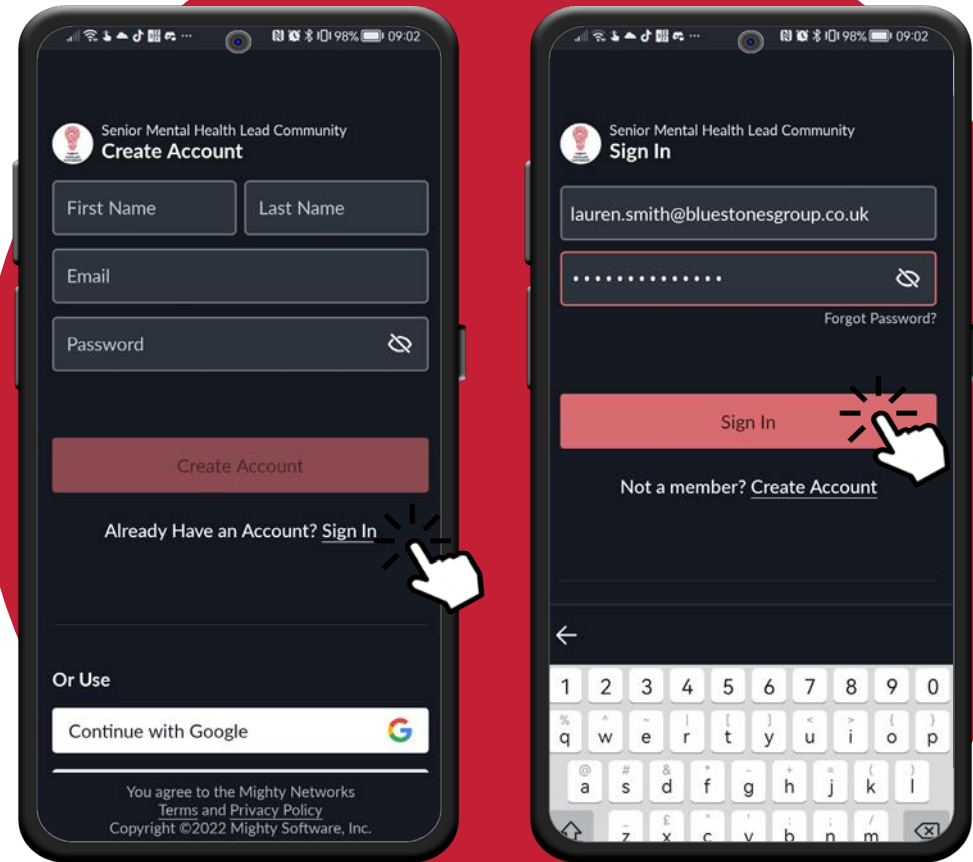
Click on "Find a Mighty Network and search for "Senior Mental Health Lead".



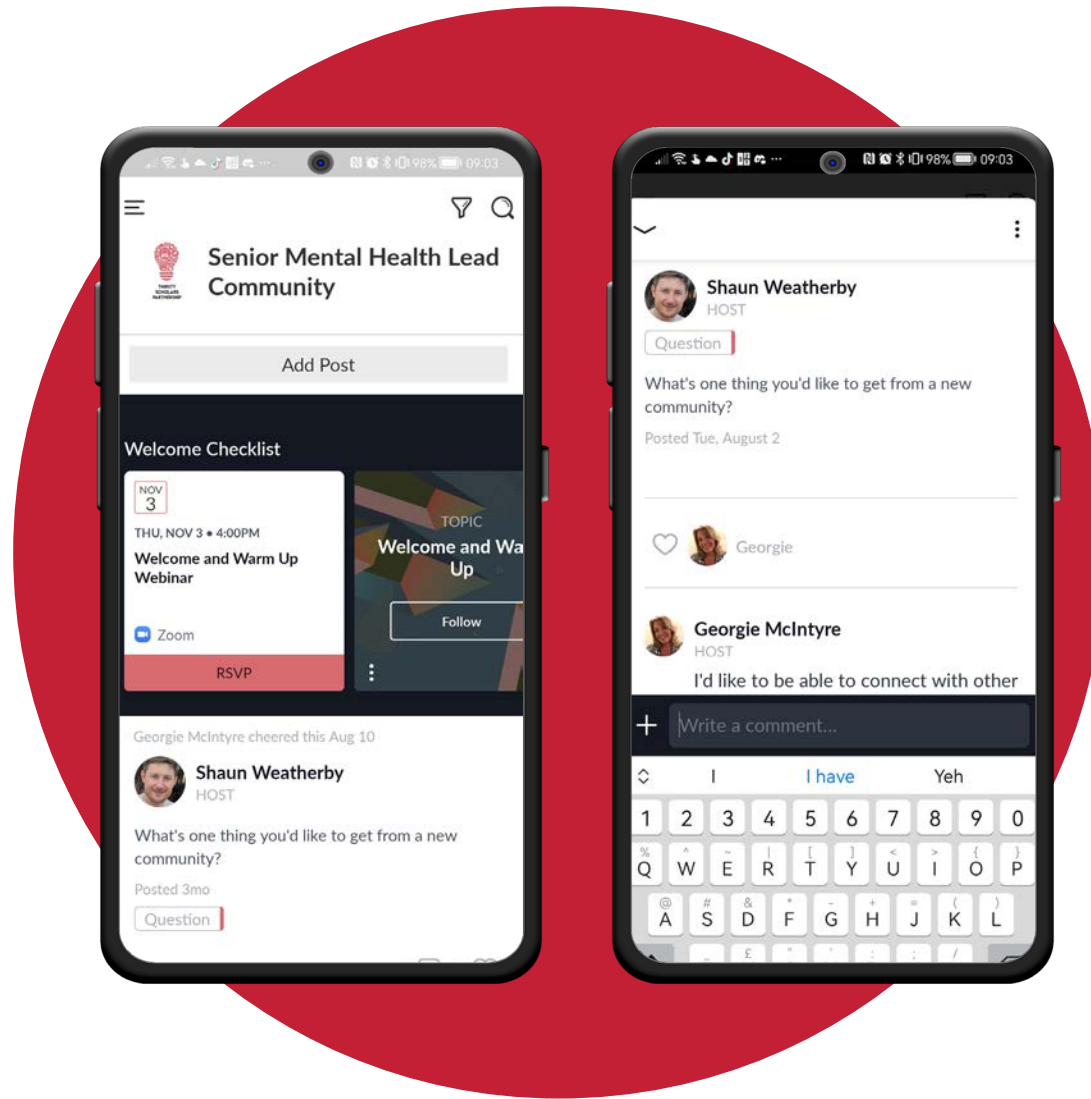
3. Click the request access button.



4. Sign in if you have already registered on a desktop or sign up directly.



5. Welcome to our community hub where you can access your specific group, which you will have received an invite to. You can go directly to the home area by clicking on the menu icon and scrolling down.



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EDUCATION
ACADEMY**



If you need more help, please get in touch. We're more than happy to assist you!



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