

Join the fightback

# WHAT DOES CAPITALISM HAVE TO DO WITH MENTAL HEALTH?



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Capitalism, and capitalist driven Tory austerity, are causing young people to suffer enormously in Britain. In one report published in September this year, it was found that a shocking 22% of girls aged 14 years old are self-harming, as well as 9% of boys the same age.

It's no wonder working class, middle class, and especially young people, are facing such a severe and life threatening level of mental health crisis. Cuts to support services for those with mental health illnesses, including swingeing real terms cuts to the NHS, which have left young people without counselling services, as well as cuts to jobs, benefits and living standards, and have all had a devastating cumulative effect.

### Austerity means misery

The number of NHS beds for mental health patients has been cut by 30%, while, according to the Care Quality Commission, a fifth of mental health services which do still manage to exist in the age of austerity provide substandard care.

The mental health crisis generally has become so drastic that the Tory government was forced to appoint a new 'mental health and suicide prevention minister' on World Mental Health Day. Yet the person appointed to the new post – Jackie Doyle-Price – has voted to cut welfare in Parliament a total of 91 times!

What a disgrace that the Tories think it appropriate to give those responsible for deepening the mental health crisis such massive power and authority. This is because

they're more interested in protecting the interests of the rich than they are protecting the wellbeing of the overwhelming majority in society – working, middle class and young people.

### Mental health on campus

There has been huge progress made in the fight against the stigma attached to mental health illness – but fighting stigma on its own will never be enough. At university, nearly five times as many students now disclose a mental health condition as compared to ten years ago. University in particular – with all the new experiences it brings, such as independent living, financial responsibility, not to mention the study and work many undertake to support themselves - is a hugely difficult time for many of us.

But encouraging students to talk about their problems is only the first step to assuring good mental health. The resources need to exist in order to support and treat students on campus who do come forward to report mental illness. While the demand for mental health support grows at university, we need to fight for the sufficient provisions for such services – but unfortunately the opposite is true on many campuses, as services, staff and students face swingeing funding cuts.

### Join us

This means a fight against austerity, and also the very system which demands it – capitalism. Come to this Socialist Students meeting to discuss how students can get organised to fight against cuts to mental health services on campus and beyond.