



Edge Hill University earned the Outstanding Contribution to the Local Community Award for a partnership with Everton Football Club's charity, supporting schools and young carer groups that work with mentally ill children and young people.

Tackling the Blues, an early intervention programme for 6- to 16-year-olds launched by Edge Hill and Everton in the Community, supports nine schools and two young carer groups in Sefton and Southport in the North West.

Tackling the Blues was launched in light of concern about mental health problems among children and young people.

The programme has delivered more than 300 sessions using interactive activities, provided weekly to 286 children and young people. They include mental health-themed sport and physical activity sessions, educational workshops on topics such as emotions via "emoji bingo" tasks, and peer-mentoring activities addressing communication and conflict resolution.

The sessions, designed and delivered by staff and students in Edge Hill's department of sport and physical activity and its Faculty of Education, have contributed to participants reporting improvements in mental wellbeing, their quantity and quality of social relationships, and engagement in academic study.

The judges said the programme has "in the view of educational and health professionals, made a positive contribution in this challenging area".

More than 95 per cent of participants have stuck with the programme over 15 months. The judges said that this was "remarkable" and noted that the programme "has been selected as a national case exemplar".