

#LEVELUPMENTALHEALTH



# SOCK MONKEY LEVEL UP PROFILE PIECE

AS SOCKMONKEY STUDIOS GROWS WE CONTINUE TO BE COMMITTED TO THE HAPPINESS AND WELLBEING OF OUR STAFF.

Having a 'people first' approach to working, we've always been sensitive to what individuals are going through. Since the pandemic we have been working on ways to further champion the importance of mental health in the studio.

Over the past year, we have been striving to introduce more initiatives to help promote good mental health within the studio.

We have recently signed up to OptiMe, an award winning North East based workplace health and wellbeing specialist which provides support through monthly workshops and free therapy sessions for each team member should they want it.

Recently, five members of the studio have undergone 'Level 2 Emergency Response for Mental Health' training and are available to offer confidential support for those may need it.

By offering this first point of contact we are better able to provide guidance to members of the team, whether this is by offering immediate aid, or helping illustrate avenues for further help in times of crisis.

SockMonkey Studios is working to battle the stigma surrounding mental health. It's not enough for there to simply be systems in place, there needs to be a mindful approach to mental health and mental health initiatives across the entire studio.

As the studio grows, we realise the importance of regularly scheduled catch-ups with team members to ensure that they are feeling happy and fulfilled at the studio, and if not then to discuss how we can help.

## CHALLENGES

As all studios, the pandemic over the past couple of years brought many challenges, including some relating to mental health.

With some of our team members living alone and at times being totally isolated it was imperative for SockMonkey Studios to incorporate measures into the everyday running of the studio to help alleviate some of the strains of lockdown life. This included small offerings such as little care packages delivered to people's homes, as well as organising COVID safe ways to socialise both in and out of work.

During the week we encouraged team members to get away from working at their desks and leaving their house, going for a walk or exercise, even if this fell during work hours. As we adopted Teams into our everyday, we also set up an 'open mic' channel where anybody could drop in to chat and regain some of the office atmosphere while still maintaining social distancing.

Outside of work there were steps put in place to facilitate as much social interaction as possible during lockdown, by putting on quizzes, game nights and virtual parties.

