



Consultation Report

“Understanding the needs of young people in Barnsley around Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing”





Young people and mental health Barnsley consultation report 2016-17

Introduction

Chilypep has been funded by Barnsley Clinical Commissioning Group to support young people's involvement in Barnsley's Local Area Transformation Plan under Future in Mind. As part of this work Chilypep ran 'creative consultations' with young people across Barnsley aged 11 – 25 on their views and experiences relating to mental health and emotional wellbeing. This research will inform Barnsley's Local Area Transformation Plan through finding out what the key issues are affecting young people in the area and working with young people to put in place recommendations to improve mental health support and services for young people under Future in Mind. This document presents key findings and recommendations made by the young people we spoke with.

We would like to say a huge thank you to all the young people who shared their views with us, as well as to the organisations that were so supportive in enabling us to engage with their groups!

Methodology

From April 2016 to March 2017, Chilypep developed and facilitated 19 consultations reaching a total of 690 young people aged between 11 and 25. Due to the difference in location, number and age of participants who took part, the consultations fell into three main categories (youth groups, schools, sixth forms and colleges) with varying levels of involvement from young people.

1. **Youth group consultations** - Chilypep consulted with 120 young people across 12 community youth work settings using creative focus group methods. These sessions were developed to ask in depth questions covering all discussion points.
2. **Schools consultations** - Chilypep ran two creative focus groups with 32 young people in a local school, Kirk Balk Academy. As with the youth groups, Chilypep developed these longer sessions to ask in depth questions covering all discussion points.
3. **Barnsley College and Sixth Form consultations** - Through 5 college events, and mental health awareness raising workshops at Barnsley college sixth form, we were able to engage 538 young people in consultations. Due to the nature of these events we were unable to ask all the consultation questions, instead choosing to ask select questions in relation to mental health.

What we asked

The questions we asked all related to mental health and emotional wellbeing with regards to their own lives and the lives of those in their communities. We asked what the young people knew about mental health and any connotations they had with the word. We wanted to know what they thought were the main issues faced by young people that might impact on their mental health and when experiencing difficulties with this, where they would go for support. Building on this, we asked how easy it was to speak with people in their communities about mental health issues, and whether they had received any education around mental health in school. We were also interested to know what the young people thought was important for themselves and others when accessing mental health services, in order to improve the services available to them. Across some of the consultations, we asked the groups to prioritise what they thought was most important for young people accessing mental health services.

Key findings from consultations

1. Youth group consultations

During the course of the year Chilypep consulted with 120 young people through running creative consultations at 12 youth groups. This included consultation with young people accessing the Princes Trust, TADS, Barnsley YMCA, Barnsley Youth Council, Healthwatch Barnsley, Exodus, OASIS, and Barnsley College Peer Mentors.

Question 1: What is mental health?

Using a 'talking ball', we asked young people what mental health meant to them. The majority of the young people we spoke to did have an understanding around the meaning of mental health, recognizing that it 'comes in many forms', is 'not always easy to see' and 'effects a lot of people'. Just three young people (2.5%) said they did not know what it was.

Young people described mental health as being 'upsetting', 'your life', and a 'struggle'. Some young people referred to specific mental health conditions, most commonly citing anxiety (3), depression (4) and self-harm (2), feeling suicidal (1), anorexia (1) and schizophrenia (1). The majority of the young people we spoke to seemed to view mental health as something that was negative, although this was generally not in a stigmatizing way. Two young people described mental health as 'bad', with one young person saying it was 'bad stuff you were born with' and another saying that 'some people abuse it – they self-harm to try to be 'hard''.

Three young people identified more positive elements of mental health, such as 'all health is a good thing', is 'peace of mind', and 'it means who you are'. Two young people spoke about how mental health is 'on a spectrum' and can change depending on circumstances, describing mental health as 'the stability of someone's mind affected by different situations'.

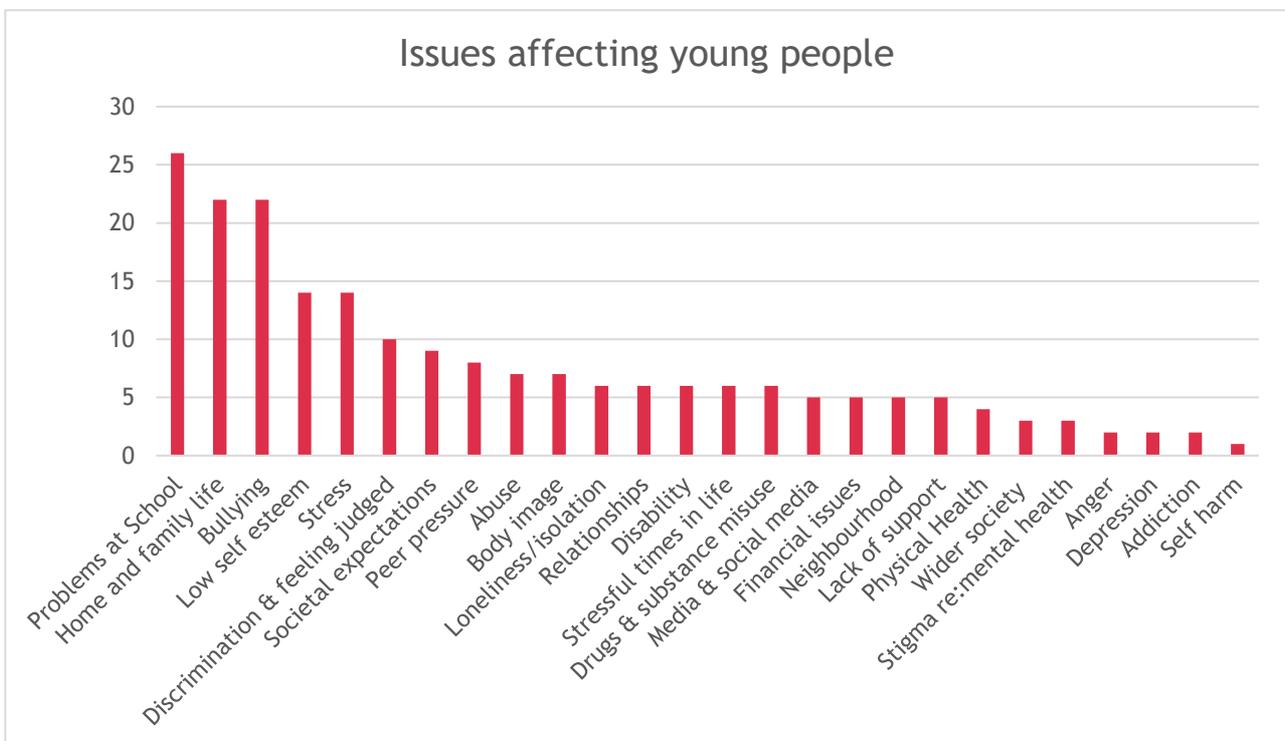
Some young people spoke about the stigma surrounding mental health, talking about how you might be bullied for having mental health problems, you could become isolated, and that

there was online abuse around people with mental health problems, with young people being told to 'go kill yourself'.

A few of the young people associated mental health with services such as counselling, whilst others referred to waiting lists in relation to services; 'to me mental health means being on a huge waiting list'.

Question 2: Difficulties and Issues faced that might impact on mental health.

Using a ball of wool we got young people exploring the different issues they felt might impact on young people’s mental health. From the 120 young people we consulted in the youth groups we received a total of 206 responses. The most common issues cited by young people related to school, home and family life, bullying and pressures placed on young people.



Educational pressures – The pressure placed on young people around achieving within education came up as the most common issue for young people across the consultations. Young people spoke about the pressures of exams, homework, and the pressures placed on them by teachers and family around achieving. With the older age range of young people we spoke to this pressure extended to college, with exams coming up as a large sources of stress for young people as well as pressures to get into university or choose a career. This linked into financial concerns that young people had, as well as anxieties about their not being enough opportunities available to young people and concerns for their 'future plans'.

Family life – Young people spoke of how family life could be a source of pressure, causing them difficulties. A number of responses mentioned parents not understanding and putting

pressure on their children, family change such as divorce, bereavements, domestic violence, being a young carer, and having had family members complete suicide.

Bullying and peer pressure - 22 respondents cited bullying as having a big impact on their mental health; of these two young people spoke of cyberbullying specifically. Peer pressure was also commonly cited, with young people feeling the pressure to 'fit in' whilst also finding their own identity. Young people also spoke of how uncertainty with relationships was an issue that affected them, as well as arguments with friends and losing friends.

Low Self Esteem – 14 young people spoke about how low self-esteem affected their mental health. This linked to a number of other responses such as peer pressure (8) and the need to 'fit in with people' (2) and body image concerns (7). Media (4) and social media (4) were mentioned by other young people as creating pressure to be 'perfect' and creating unrealistic expectations for their lives.

Pressure and stress – 14 young people identified stress as a key issue impacting on young people. Some young people spoke about how their own mental health problems were a source of stress to them, including mention of panic attacks (1), anxiety (2) and PTSD (2). Others spoke about particular stressful times in their lives, such as coping with bereavement (4) or illness (2) and also societal expectations. A common theme was young people's recognition of the unrealistic standards expected of them (3), 'pressure of having to be someone you're not' and the weight of making important life decisions at a young age (3). We also found that the young people were concerned about wider societal issues causing stress such as terrorism, world issues and politics (3).

Discrimination and feeling judged - ten young people highlighted discrimination as an issue affecting them. Some young people had experienced racist comments on the bus (3) and others reported that they had felt judged for various reasons including coming from poor backgrounds, being a young person, being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. There was also a recognition of the stigma attached to accessing mental health services, which could lead to a fear in accessing them (3).

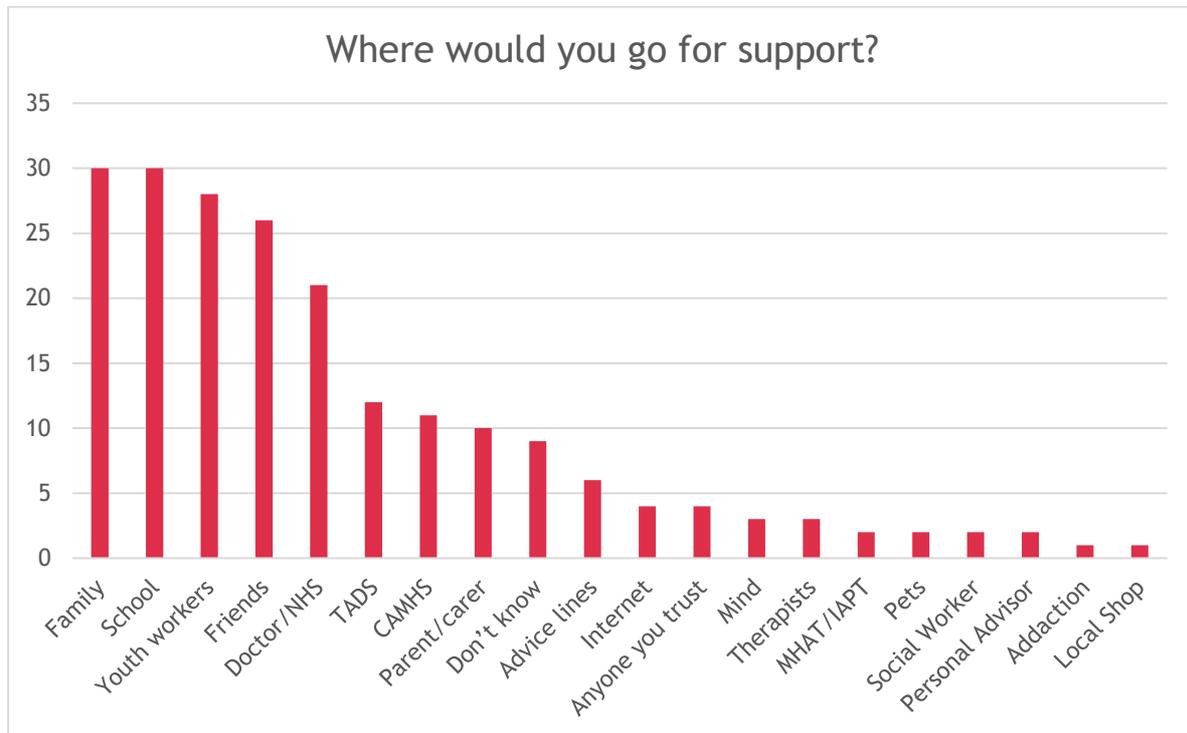
Abuse – Abuse was mentioned by seven young people; this included child abuse (2) and neglect (1).

Loneliness and isolation - was an issue for six of the young people, five more recognised there was a lack of support, with some saying that didn't feel understood.

Substance misuse – ten young people spoke about substance misuse being an issue in Barnsley. It wasn't clear if they young people were referring to themselves or other's in their community but 2 further respondents cited people smoking on the bus as creating a detrimental environment within their neighbourhoods.

Other issues mentioned were physical health, mental ill health, learning difficulties, anger, depression, self-harm, 'poor mental health services', racism, sexism, and addiction to gaming.

Question 3. If you were feeling low or thought you may be experiencing mental health difficulties would you know where to go? What support is available to you?



Whilst some of the young people referred to specific services they could access, the majority of the young people identified people within their lives that they would go to for support, such as family (30), friends (26), or their youth workers (28). 30 young people mentioned schools in relation to somewhere they could go to for support; 11 said they were comfortable talking to teachers but other feedback stated 12 were not comfortable speaking with teachers. Other school based services such as school counselling (2), school nurse (5), Barnsley College Health and Wellbeing Centre (3) and Barnsley College mentoring project (2) were also mentioned.

Some of the young people did come up with ideas around the types of services they could use if they were struggling with their mental health (34). Services such as CAMHS, TADS and Lifeline were cited by young people as somewhere they could go for support, as well as going to the Doctor or using 'NHS services'. Young people also cited different advice lines they knew; these were most commonly the Samaritans and Childline, with no other helplines identified by young people.

Nine young people said they didn't know anywhere they could go to for support and there was some reluctance by some young people to want to get support, with one young person saying, 'I don't know how to talk to people, I don't like doing it. If I'm around people I can't use the support as I feel like I'm being judged'. Similarly the internet was cited as somewhere people would go to to access support or find out where to go.

Question 4. On A Scale of 1 -10 would it be relatively easy or difficult for you to talk about mental health?

There was a large mix between people finding it reasonably easy to talk to people about their mental health to those finding it extremely difficult. This largely depended on *who* they had to speak to; for example some said that it would be more difficult to speak with friends, whereas others thought friends were the easiest group to talk to. Others said they would feel more comfortable speaking to a trusted professional in their life, such as youth workers, social workers or teachers. Some of the young people said they would talk to members of their family, but equally others felt they would not want their parents to know what was going on for them through fear of upsetting them, feeling uncomfortable talking to parents, or worries about how they would react. Most of those we spoke to said they would feel most comfortable talking to someone they had a good relationship with, but some felt there were not many people they could talk to:

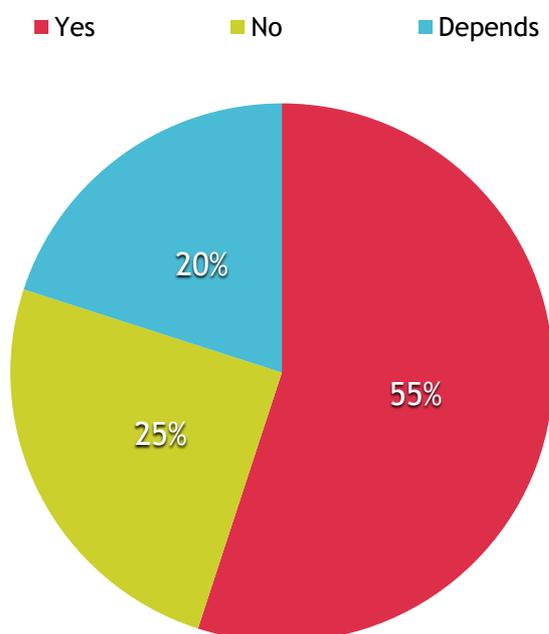
'I only have one or two people I can talk to about it'



Question 5. At School/College did your teachers ever mention mental health?

We asked this question to a total of 100 young people in the focus groups and they answered accordingly.

Whilst the majority of young people said mental health had been mentioned in school this was generally through PSHE as opposed to having had workshops around mental health, so young people said general awareness raising in school was quite low. Mental health was spoken about more with those of the older age range, with it being highlighted more in year 10-11 as opposed to with younger age ranges.



Some of the young people's comments included:

'It was only mentioned because I was involved in mental health services'

'Learnt about anorexia in social studies'

'We had a workshop in Barnsley College from Chilypep'

'We had an assembly at school around mental health'

'Was taught about it in Citizenship at school'

'Mental health was not spoken about at all, no posters around school'

'No, it has never been mentioned but might be in Y10 and Y11'

'It's case to case so only if a particular situation was happening like someone being badly bullied'

Question 6. What's 'tops' and what's 'pants' about services and support?

In order to find out what young people felt was good about any services or support they had received, as well as anything they felt could be better, we asked young people to write down anything that was 'tops' and 'pants' about services on tops and pants cut-outs and hang these on a washing line.

There were several key themes arising throughout the consultation; the responses have been categorized in relation to these.

What was 'tops' about services and support you have received?

Friends – Nine young people cited friends as being a good source of support, stating things such as 'my friends would never be judgmental' and 'most of them I can talk to'.

Youth Groups – Young people commonly cited their youth group as providing support to them that helped their overall wellbeing. This reflected question 3 in which young people identified their youth worker as being someone they would go to for support. Young people seemed to find the regularity of the youth groups useful, as well as the consistency of workers they encountered who would support them on an ongoing basis, highlighting the importance of forming trusting and unconditional relationships.

'My Youth worker helps me because she cheers me up and I can trust her'.

'Always checks up on me every week'.

'YMCA because I like this place'.

'Rock solid youth group'.

'TADS can be a great place to offload problems and worries'.

Young people benefitted from peer support and meeting other young people their age, with their youth group also acting as a navigator of other systems by referring young people for further support where needed.

'Understands most things and experiences and refers me to other things'.

'You can meet more people who understand the struggle at youth groups'

'Actual mental health support groups are really supportive for people'

'I have met a lot of friends at TADS'

Schools/Colleges – Young people felt it was 'tops' when there was support in place at school or college, however not everyone felt this was available. In particular young people highlighted the benefits of having dedicated mental health support within schools, such as 'school wellbeing', 'Barnsley College Health and Wellbeing Centre', and pastoral support.

Again the importance of having an identified person who you could talk to in schools and who you had a good relationship with came out as 'tops', with some young people saying

there were particular teachers they could go to for support. This varied from being heads of year, specific teachers, or support staff within schools/ colleges.

Specialist support – Young people cited the benefits of having specialist support when needed, including mental health provision. Young people seemed to be aware of national helplines, such as Childline (2), the Samaritans (2), NSPCC, and Mind, as well as more localised services. Seven young people said they had received good support with CAMHS, with one young person going on to say that ‘despite the long waiting times, CAMHS gave me the best therapy I had ever had in 14 years and have helped me control myself better’. Young people also said they had received good support from TADS, Lifeline, SYEDA and Longwood Counselling. Young people thought it was good that there were ‘free places for mental health’ and that there was support out there.

Other support services that young people referred to included the NHS, connexions, Doctors, dentists, A&A, hospitals and faith based organisations.

Social services – Social services were cited by four young people as having been helpful to them, with one young people saying :

‘I got a new social worker that I could talk to that was nice’.

Again the importance of having a good relationship with a given worker was a factor in ensuring social services were of benefit to young people. This was echoed by looked after children that took part in the consultation, with one young person emphasizing the importance of trust:

‘My carer helped me because she listened to me, never lied to me and I could trust her’.

Another young person wrote that it was important to have good carers and a ‘care mark’.

Family – Family was seen as an important source of support for many of the young people with 19 writing down family members as being ‘tops’.

‘Some family members want to help you with your struggle’

Self help – Many of the young people we spoke to came up with their own ideas of what good support they felt was available and many of these related to self-help strategies, including: socializing, being able to have break, trying to help other people, music, travelling, retail therapy, computer games and the sense of community that could come from the internet.

What was good about the help/support you received and what was important to you?

Where time allowed we asked young people to expand on what they thought was ‘tops’ in relation to support, asking them what was good about the support they received and what they felt was important when getting support.

The importance of building trusting relationships, where young people could feel listened to in a non-judgmental way was clearly important to young people. They said they felt confidentiality was really key and wanted to be able to talk to someone without the service

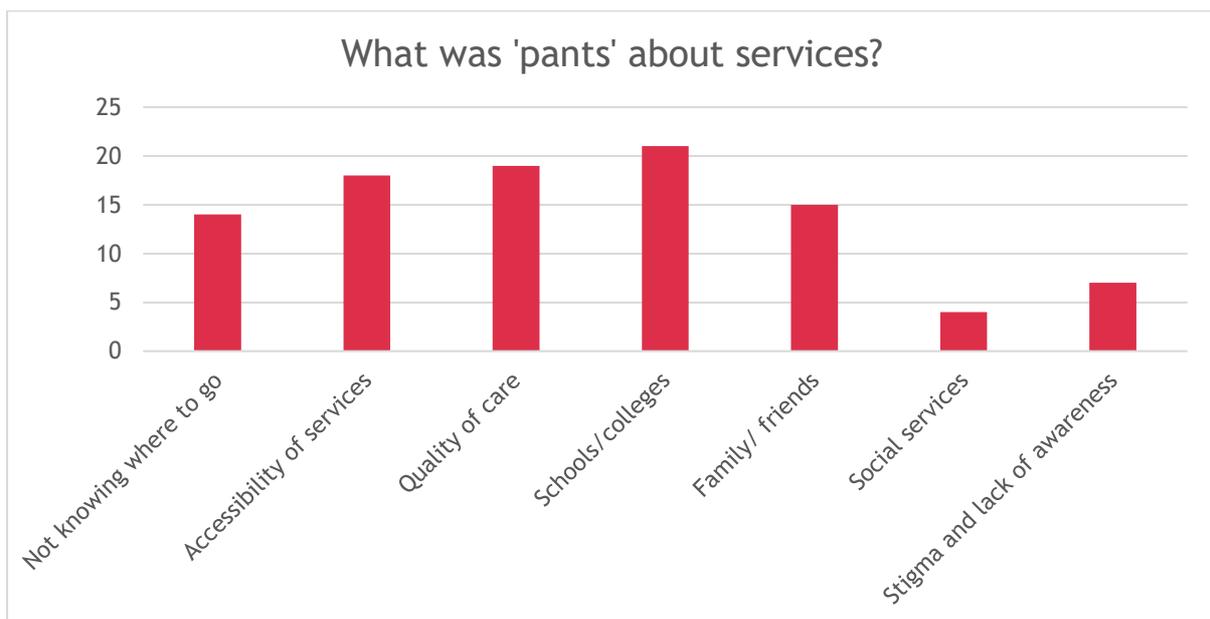
giving information to someone else. This was equally important amongst their family and friends, with young people saying they felt comfortable talking to certain people more than others due to the relationships they had with them. Stigma was linked into this with some of the young people saying they felt more comfortable talking to friends because the 'stigma is decreasing amongst young people'.

Accessibility and availability of support also came out as important to young people, with them saying that they wanted to get support early on and when they needed it rather than having to wait. They said there should be more services in Barnsley for people to access and these should be available in a variety of locations across the town. It was highlighted that these should be available to all who need them.

'It would be good if services were available; some towns in Barnsley have no opportunities or services available'

What was 'pants' about services and support you have received?

After we had asked young people what was 'tops' about services and support they received we used the same method to get them thinking about what was 'pants' or not very good. The graph below illustrates the most commonly cited issues for young people.



Not knowing where to go – 14 young people said they didn't know where to go for support, saying they were 'not sure what kind of services are out there', that they had 'not been told about services', and that 'services are not well promoted'.

Stigma and awareness – Seven young people cited a lack of awareness of mental health and stigma around mental health as being an issue faced. This included 'social stigma on mental health', there being a 'lack of national attention [around mental health]', and young people feeling like they were 'never told much about mental health'.

Accessibility of services – 18 young people spoke about accessibility issues in relation to mental health support. The main issues faced can be broken down into waiting times for

support (mentioned by 14 young people), location of services (mentioned by 3 young people), and the fact that 'not everyone can get the help they need'. Having to wait for support was the biggest issues raised by young people and was a common theme throughout the consultations. CAMHS was cited on 4 occasions as having a long waiting list, with one young person saying they had had to wait 8 months for an appointment and 'at that time I made a suicide attempt and needed support.' Similarly 1 young person spoke of AMHS and the fact that they were still on a waiting list and did not know when they would get to have an appointment.

Availability of support, and physical location of services, was also highlighted, with young people saying that there was not enough support within their locality and they would like there to be wider availability of mental health provision.

Quality of care – 19 young people raised issues relating to the quality of care they had received when accessing support. The main issues for young people were 'having to re-tell my story' and 'repeat things', finding it difficult to build a relationship with the person supporting them or 'feeling uncomfortable', being given incorrect information from services, and feeling that services were too 'corporate' and 'not young person friendly'. Some young people also raised the issue of confidentiality, saying that services would say things in front of their parents that they didn't feel comfortable with them knowing and this impacted on their experience of the service.

Cuts to services - funding cuts were mentioned on three occasions, with young people saying that:

'There aren't enough services to support mental health'

'There are not many youth clubs left with youth workers I can talk to.'

Schools/ colleges – 21 young people spoke about how school and college could impact on their mental health, both due to the pressures placed on them within educational settings, as well as feeling like teachers did not have the time to listen to them. Some felt there was therefore a lack of support in school, stating that:

'Teachers are not able to give the correct type of support to children'

'Teachers are too busy and bothered about other stuff'

'Teachers sometimes don't believe you and you don't get the support you need'

In addition to this some of the young people felt that education in its own right was a source of stress with two young people saying that they would welcome changes to the education system to include helping them prepare for adult life such as:

'Paying for bills, having children, and caring for them.'

Friends and Family – Friends and family were highlighted by 15 young people. The main issue was pressures placed on young people by their peers and family, but also feeling that they could not talk to friends or family and not being listened to.

'My friends would judge me'

'I'm not able to talk to half of my friends'

'Parents would either not care or care too much and make me do things I don't want to'

Social services – Social services was mentioned by 4 young people. The main issues were changes in workers, workers leaving, and not feeling listened to. Again this linked into the need to build strong, trusting relationships between young people and their workers.

'My social worker moved and never came back'

'Social care never listened to me to help me and lied to me'

Other areas mentioned – In addition to the key areas already highlighted some young people mentioned specific times when they had had difficulties or when things had impacted on their mental health. This included bereavements, such as 'my mum dying', 'my uncle committed suicide', as well as the feeling that there were not enough opportunities for young people and this could have a big impact on mental health and wellbeing. Doctors were also mentioned in relation to young people being worried about going to the GP, or feeling scared that they would tell their parents.

Question 7. In an ideal world, what support would you like to see for young people to help them with their mental health and what would this look like?

Using a large tablecloth and pens we asked young people to draw what their ideal support or service would look like. Several key themes came out from this consultation question.

Comfortable environment – young people wanted services to be less clinical and more young person friendly. They wanted services to feel welcoming, have 'rooms where you can calm down', have a mix of open spaces and private rooms, and for them to feel 'warm and colourful'. Young people said there should be a range of activities within services that you could do whilst waiting, such as books, colouring and creative activities. They said the environment needs to be young person friendly and welcoming, and came up with ideas such as 'having a fish tank' or 'nice pillows and chairs' to make the space feel more homely and friendly.

Range of interventions – young people wanted services to offer a range of therapeutic interventions. Some said they would want to have specialist therapies, whilst others wanted to be able to engage in more creative arts based activities, such as music therapy, aromatherapy, drama therapy, and pet therapy to support their mental health.

Accessibility – young people said that they would want to have the option of self-referring to services for support and said they would not want to have to wait on a long waiting list. Several said they would want to see mental health 'drop-ins' for young people, and would want services to open longer hours to suit young people, ideally there would be support available 'day and night'. Location of services was again raised – this varied between groups, with some wanting to have a central location that you could drop into, whilst others wanted

to have services based in a variety of locations closer to home. One young person said that they thought services should be 'discreet so people from school don't know you're going'.

Flexibility – young people felt flexibility and adaptability was important and wanted services to meet the needs of the individual young person as opposed to young people having to fit into services. Young people mentioned that they would want to see outreach services in place, as well as home visits were these wanted.

Awareness raising and signposting – young people said the services should be well advertised so young people knew where to go for support and what was on offer. Ideas around this included going out to schools to advertise services, and making sure there was more online information about where to go to for support. Some young people felt this should be done by youth workers as 'we can talk to them'. They said they would want schools, youth workers and others to be aware of services and help with signposting to them.

Peer support – the importance of peer support was highlighted by the majority of the groups engaging in the consultation. Young people said they wanted to 'meet young people in similar situations', and would like to have access to mentors who could support them. Young people from TADS specifically spoke about how being part of a group and meeting others with similar experiences had in its own right been very therapeutic for them and had improved their self-esteem, confidence and emotional wellbeing. Young people also highlighted the need for more online support, including mental health forums for young people that would be moderated for safety.

Being listened to – young people said they wanted 'to be asked our views' and felt that being listened to in relation to their care, but also service design was important. Several groups spoke about the importance of 'having a choice', both in relation to the support they received but also in regards who they worked with.

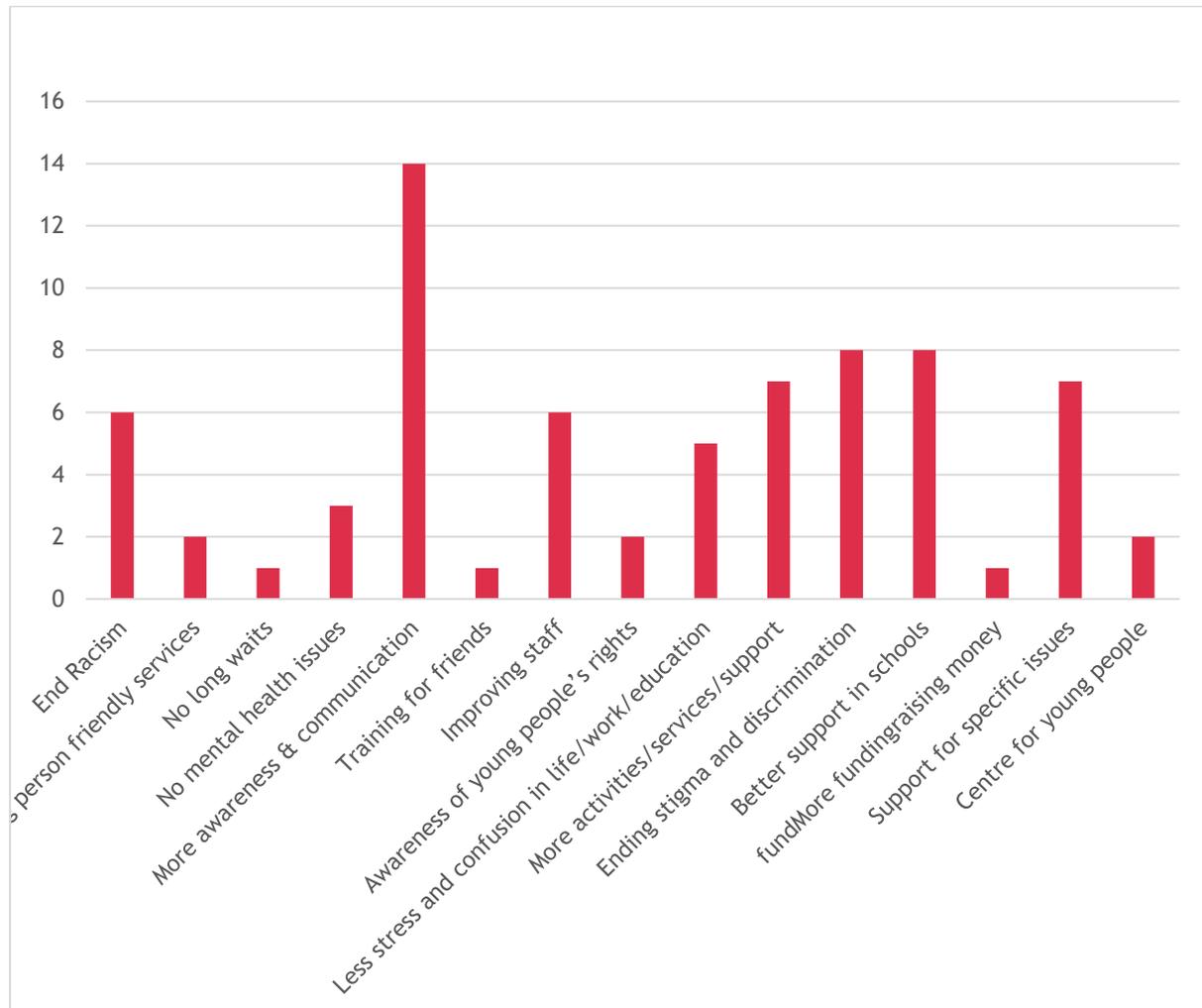
What would the ideal 'worker' look like to you?

As well as asking young people about what they felt services should look like, we also asked them about what the ideal 'worker' would be. Young people highlighted within the consultations that they would want to be supported by someone they felt comfortable with, and this was generally someone who was non-judgmental, who was relaxed and friendly, knowledgeable, would listen to them and seemed to care. Building the trust of the young person and being compassionate in their nature came up as key to having a good relationship with a worker.



Question 8. If you could ask for one thing to happen to help improve things for young people around their mental health what would this be?

At the end of the consultation we asked young people to write down on a label *one* thing they would want to see happen to help improve young people’s mental health as a way of establishing their priorities.



'I would make it so that every young person is aware there is help out there'

'No prejudice about mental health'

'To not have mental health issues at all'

'Create a central place that is big and useable for young people with mental health problems to walk in'

'Stop bullying and discrimination'

'Awareness about young people’s rights – we don’t know what we have a right to'

'Make Chilypep nationwide'

'Making work less stressful and confusing for people'

'Someone obvious to talk to'

'Less stigma and more positive promotion'

'Talk in schools about mental health issues and give out more info about services that can help'

'More activities offered to teenagers to get us off the streets'

'No racism'

'The RIGHT support'

'Make services known to young people'

'A group where you can talk to people the same age going through similar situations'

'More people to talk to about how you feel and better support networks'

'Feel as if I am not believed because I am a young person'

'Treat me with respect'

'Youth workers to be in place in mental health services'

'Ask if you want a male or female worker'

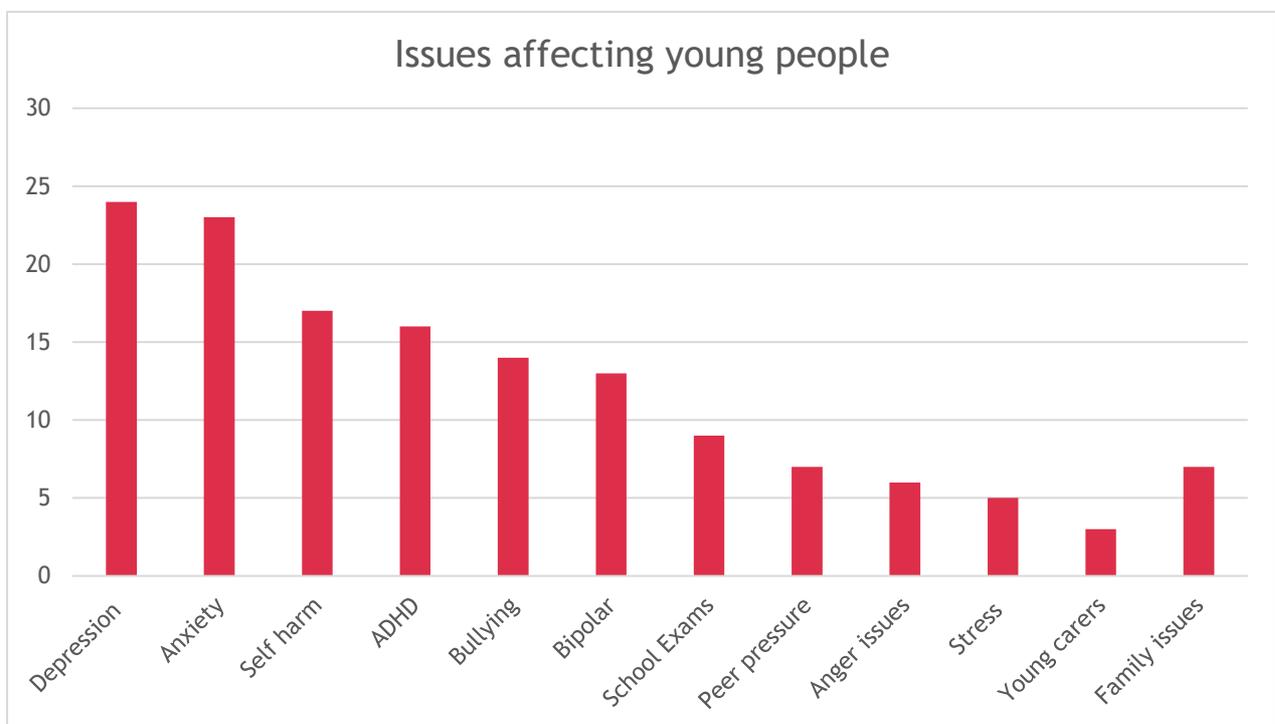
'Improve waiting times – more staff in place'

2. Schools consultations

In February 2017 Chilypep ran two awareness raising assemblies for young people from Kirk Balk Academy around mental health and emotional wellbeing. Following the assemblies we ran creative consultations with 32 young people. The consultations followed a similar format to the consultations run within youth groups, consulting with young people using interactive and creative methods to find out what issues were facing young people, and what support they would like to see in place around youth mental health.

Question 1. What sorts of issues and difficulties do you think young people face in Barnsley that might impact on their mental health? Where would you go to for support?

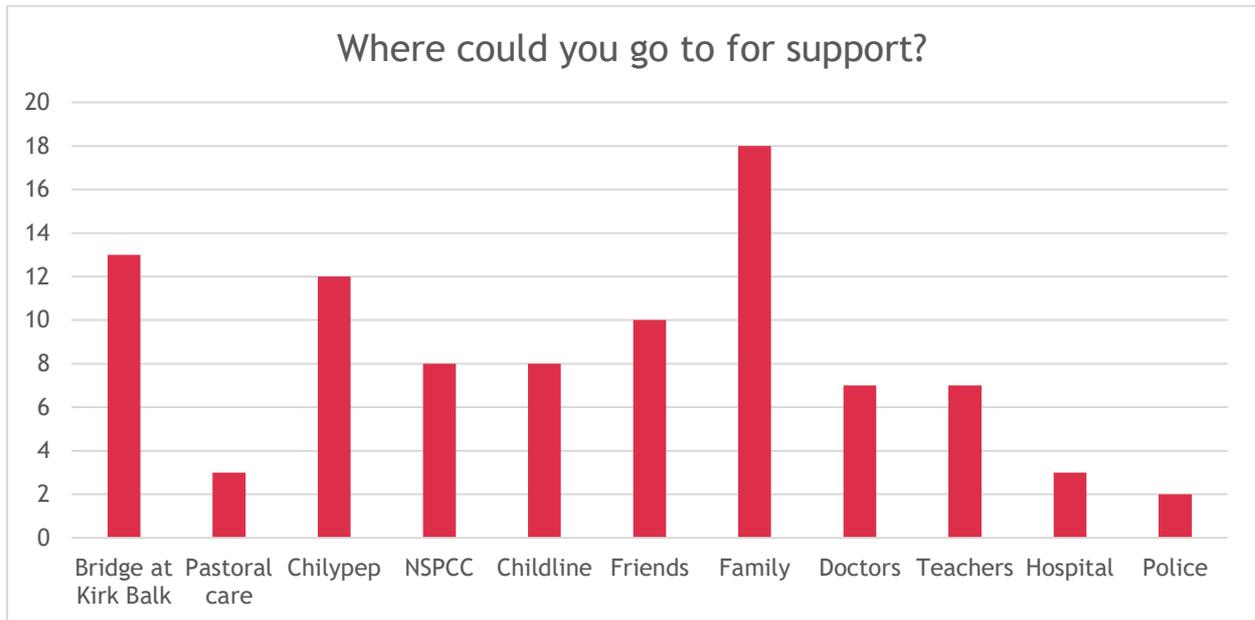
On cut out people we asked young people to write down on one side all the sorts of issues they felt young people faced around their mental health, and on the other side where they thought they could go to for support.



In addition to this young people spoke about more specific issues they might face, such as coming to terms with their gender identity/sexuality, abuse, feelings of rejection or isolation, and feelings of self-hatred or feeling self-conscious. Drugs and alcohol issues were also raised by some of the young people, as well as young people stating that there was not many activities or opportunities for young people. Young people referred to specific mental health problems they felt young people might experience, including talking about self-harm that was mentioned by 17 out of 32 of the young people.

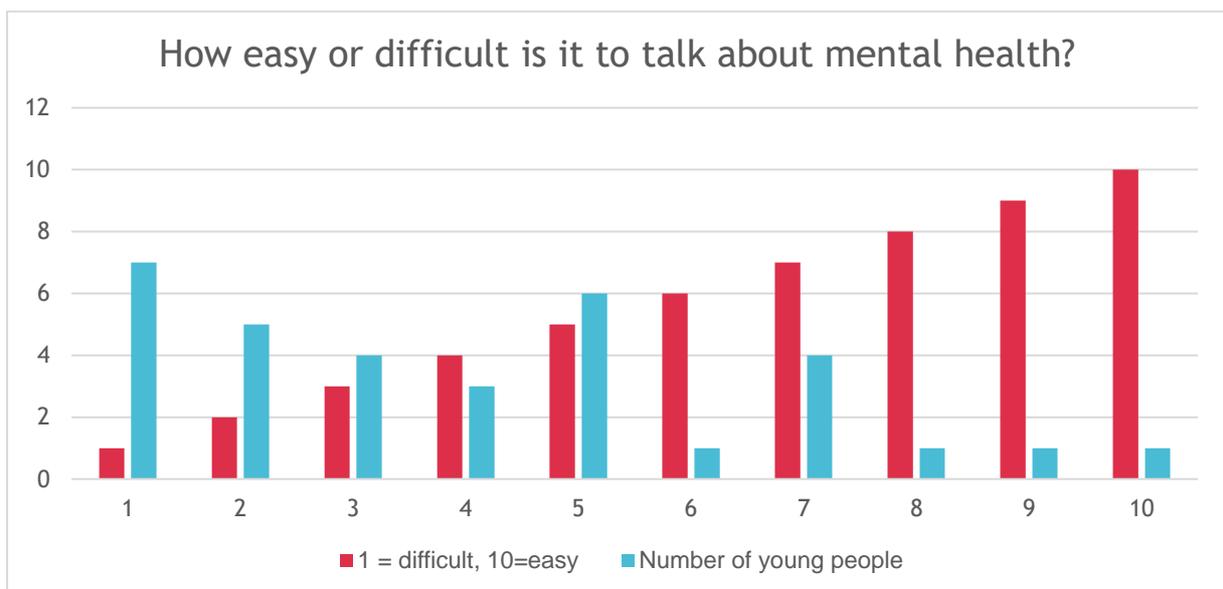
When we asked young people to think about where they might go to for support if they were experiencing mental health problems, they generally came up with formalized support routes, such as charities, mental health services and school support. Other places included,

'a happy place', 'church', 'therapists', 'looking at websites to see how people cope'. One young person wrote 'I don't know where to go'.



Question 2: On a scale of 1-10 how easy or difficult would it be for you to talk to someone about your mental health and who would you talk to?

We asked young people to write down on card a number 1-10 relating to how comfortable they would feel talking to someone about their mental health. We then asked them to explain who they would talk to. Much like with the youth group consultations this generated a great deal of discussion around the fact that it depended who you spoke to as to how easy/difficult this was.



Some of the reasons why young people found it hard to talk about their mental health or issues affecting them included finding it difficult to speak to people in general and wanting to keep things to themselves:

'I like to keep stuff to myself'

'I don't like telling people how I am feeling'

'Sometimes you just don't want to talk'

Others said they had low self-confidence and were worried about being judged if they spoke out:

'I'm scared of other people judging me so I just keep it on the inside'

'I feel like they would judge me and say something that would hurt me'.

Several young people seemed to say they would find it easier to talk when anonymity was involved and therefore preferred to talk to people online:

'I feel uncomfortable and embarrassed – it's ok to talk to people on the internet with similar experiences'.

Embarrassment was a common theme preventing young people from 'speaking out'.

Some people said they could talk to family members, whilst others were worried about upsetting them, stating:

'I would probably try and tell my mum but it would be really hard for me to tell her – not because I don't trust her but because it would hurt her inside'.

It was evident that many did not know how to talk about mental health primarily due to not having had conversations around mental health, but also due to low confidence in relation to talking about feelings.

Some of the young people did feel confident to talk, stating:

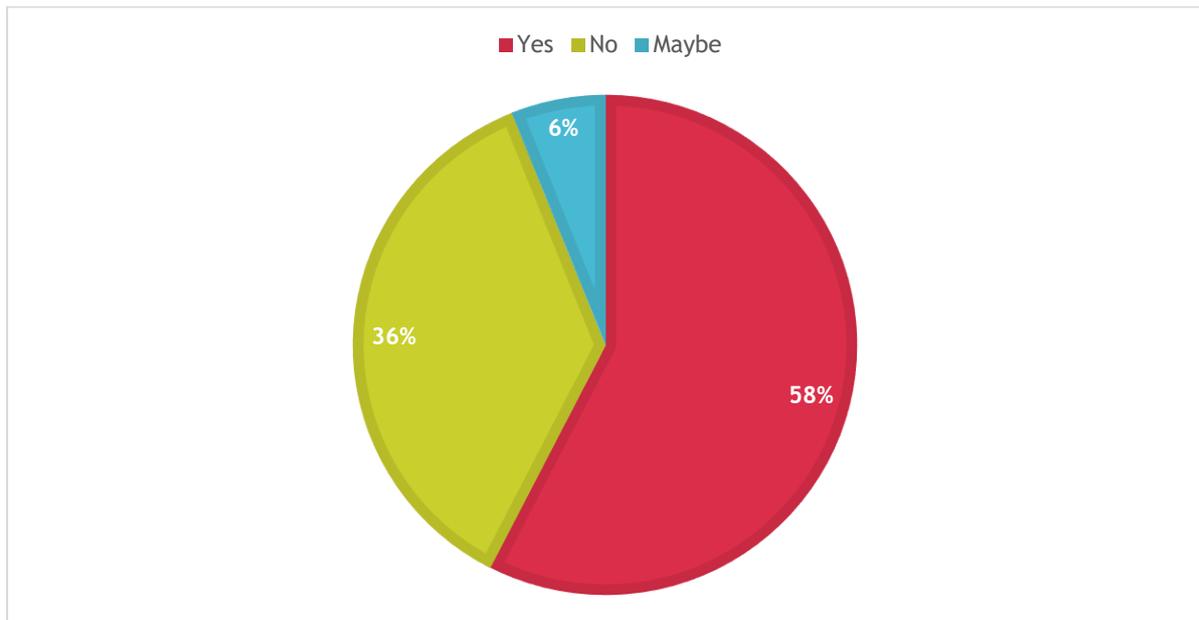
'I can talk to anyone about anything'.

Others found there were only specific people they could talk to, for example certain friends:

'I feel like I can't breathe because I can't talk but I can talk to one friend'

'I really struggle talking to people about how I feel. I could talk to one friend and internet friends but I'm unable to talk to anyone else. I've had recent incidents that make me upset but I wouldn't be able to talk'

Question 3: At school did you teachers ever mention mental health?

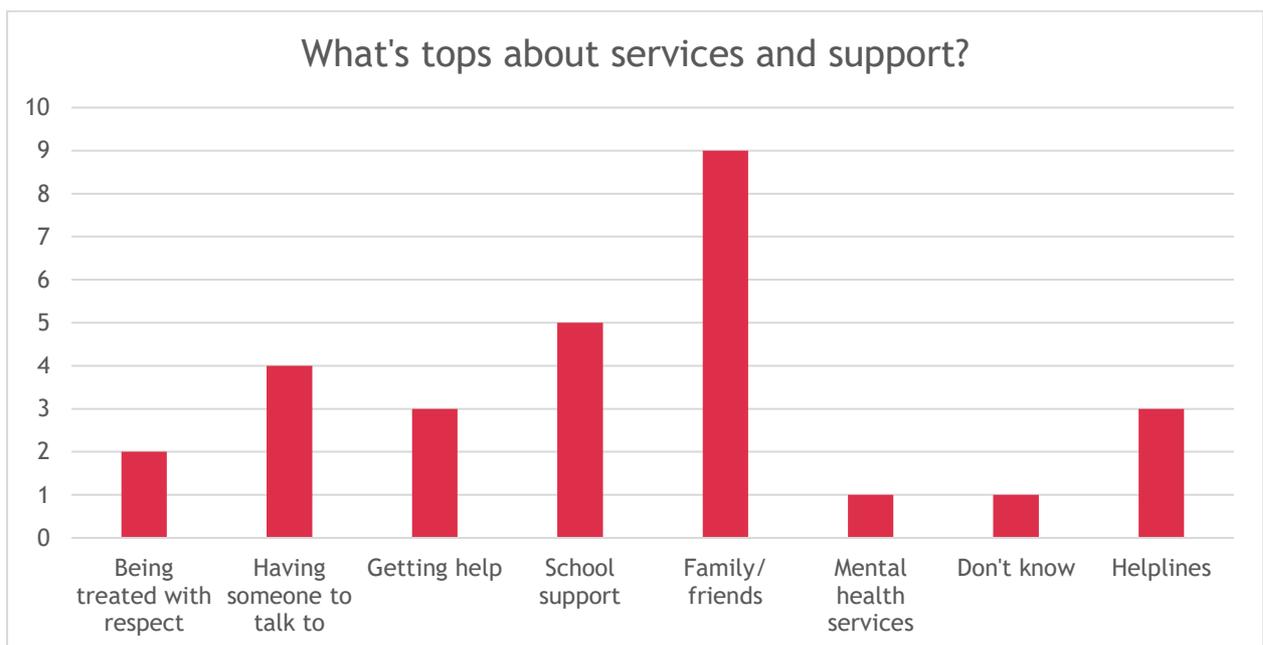


Those who said mental health had been mentioned at school said they had learnt a bit about mental health in PSHE, as well as others saying that they had not heard of it before the assembly Chilypep ran.

Those who had not heard about mental health in school said thing such as 'nobody talked about those things in school', 'I have not learnt about mental health until today', 'we learnt about safety risks but not mental health'.

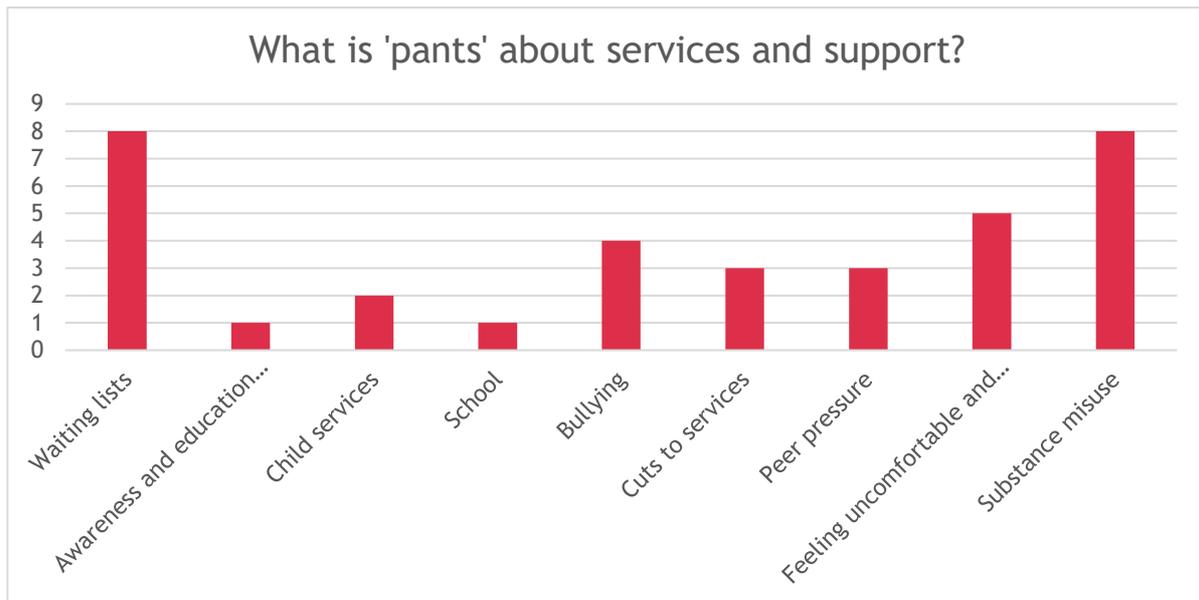
Question 4: What do you think is 'tops' and 'pants' about services?

What's 'tops' about services and support?



When asked what was tops about support and services many young people referenced the support they received from friends and family as being really important to them. They said they wanted to be 'treated like an adult' and 'treated with respect' and felt that 'having someone to talk to who understands' was really important. Young people cited helplines, such as childline, as offering support, with just one young person saying they didn't know what good support or services would look like.

What's 'pants' about services and support?



Waiting lists for services came up as a big issue affecting young people in relation to how they rated services and support. Several said they felt judged in relation to their mental health and so found it hard to speak out. This was in part due to not feeling comfortable when talking to people from services, as well as anxieties about the stigma they might face were they to talk to friends.

Question 5: What would your ideal mental health support or service look like?

Using a large tablecloth and pens we asked young people to draw what their ideal support or service would look like. Several key themes came out from this consultation question:

Comfortable Environment – young people wanted a comfortable, less 'clinical' space to go to for support. They wanted rooms to be 'quiet' and 'peaceful' and to have spaces where 'you can relax and be on your own' and 'not have to worry'. One young person asked for a 'compliment room', where all around the room there would be positive quotes on the wall to 'make you happy'.

Range of informal interventions – young people asked for a range of different interventions to be available, including 'fun activities for letting off steam' such as a planetarium, sports (such as football, ice-skating, a pool table and a trampoline). Guided meditation, mindfulness and animal therapy were also mentioned as different types of therapeutic interventions.

Awareness raising/Signposting – young people highlighted the need for ‘more education on mental health’ and an increase in awareness to ‘enable people to know how it feels’.

Supportive workers – young people mentioned the need for ‘trustworthy staff who want to help’ so that they could open up and ‘talk about how they truly feel’. They also wanted staff who were available all the time, in a 24 hour service.

Peer support – a number of young people mentioned the importance of peer support. For example, one young person said it would be beneficial to speak to someone who ‘suffered the same disorder but who believed in himself/herself’.

Question 6: If you could ask for one thing to happen to improve young people’s mental health what would this be?

Finally we asked young people if there was one thing that could happen to help improve young people’s mental health what that would be. The most common response related to young people being listened to (4), with young people saying they wanted ‘adults to listen to children more so they can understand what we are going through’. Young people also expressed concerns about global issues (5), raising issues such as global warming, racism and discrimination, and conflict as impacting on young people’s mental health. Six young people said they would want bullying to end and for people not to ‘be mean’ or ‘harm’ one another. Similarly they wanted to have healthy relationships and not to be ‘messed around’. They called for services that were accessible to all and were open 24/7 to enable young people to get support when they needed it.

3. Barnsley College and Sixth Form Consultations

Throughout the year, Chilypep have attended and had stalls or presentations at six college events at which we have undertaken consultations around mental health. We consulted with a total of **538 students**.

- FutureFest (35)
- Welcome Event (75)
- Men's Health Week (46)
- Party Hard Week (31)
- Sixth Form consultation (329)
- Spring into Wellbeing (22)

FutureFest

On 25th August 2016, Chilypep ran a stall at Barnsley Future Fest, a college open day. We asked 35 young people what would help or support them and others with their mental health and emotional wellbeing in college and their communities.

We received 34 responses with the most frequent responses relating to:

- 12 young people wanted more information, awareness and signposting about what is already available to them
- 8 young people saw the importance of friendships and peer groups, including 3 young people who thought the college should be involved in developing peer support projects.
- 4 young people would seek support from teachers and existing support within school.
- 4 young people thought more support groups and services were needed
- 2 young people said they would speak with their family or foster carer

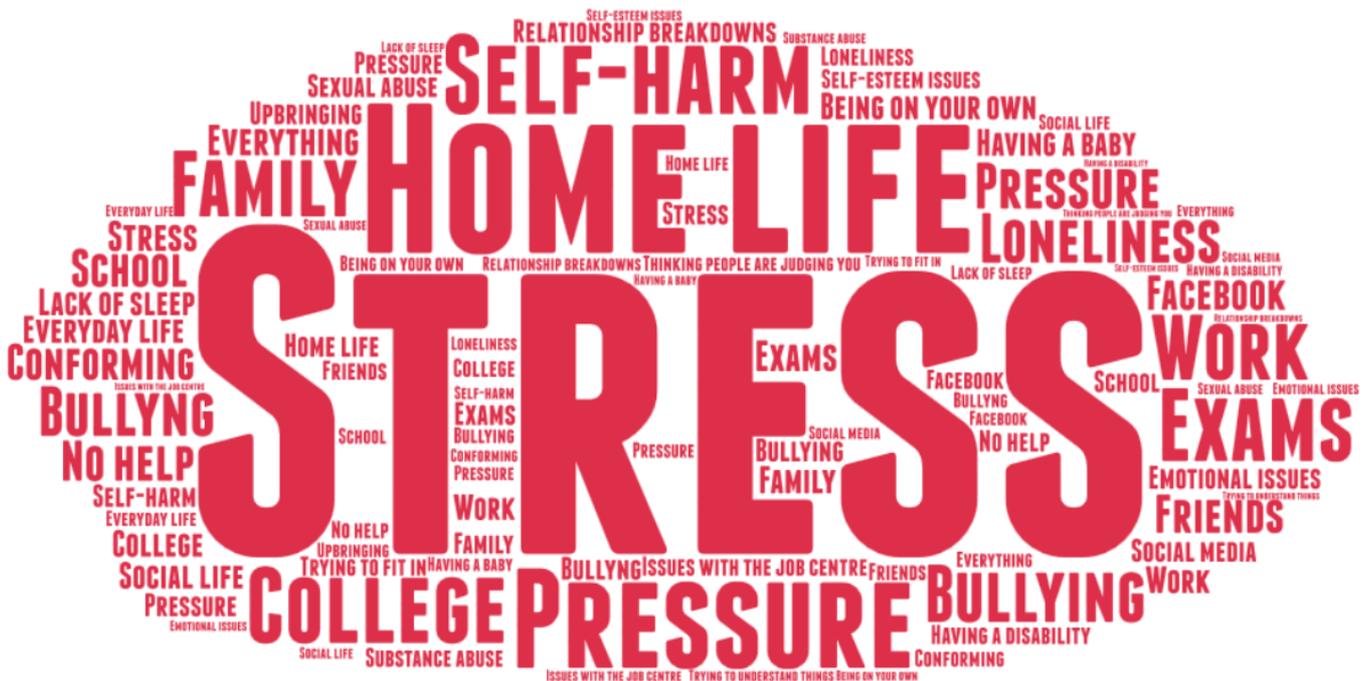


2. What sort of issues do you think young people face that might affect their mental health?

As before, this question was asked using a tablecloth consultation, where students could come and write their answers on a tablecloth using coloured pens. There were 63 responses given to this question and 33 original responses. The most frequent responses were:

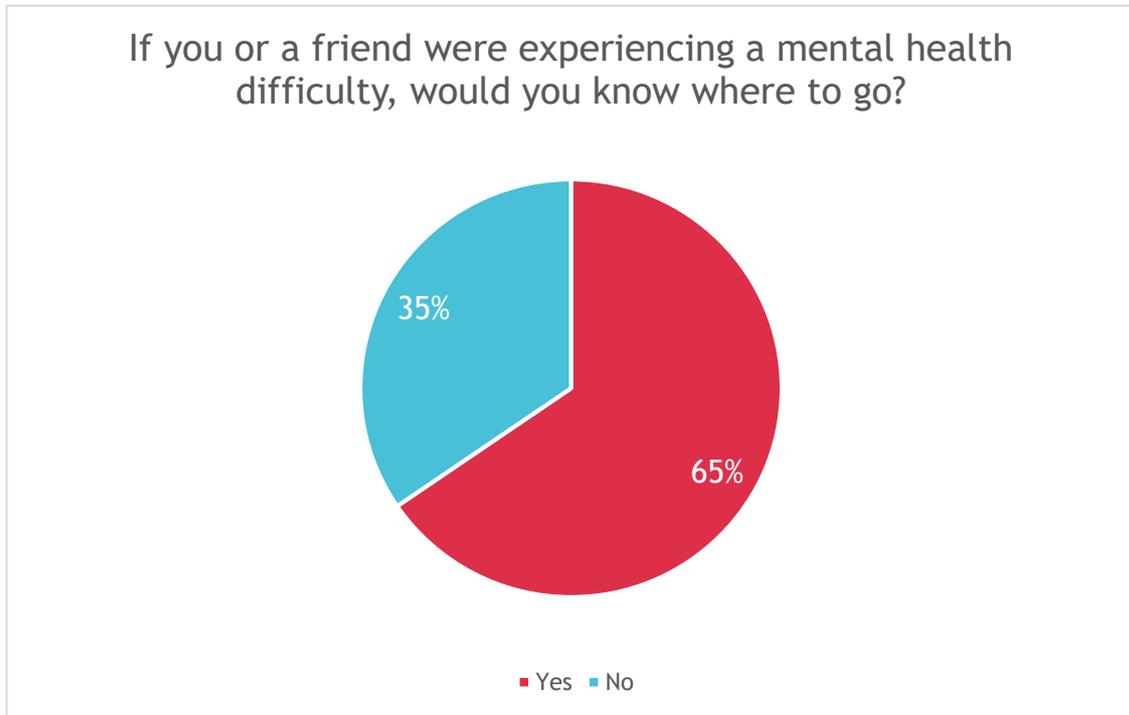
- Stress (x 7)
- Pressure (x 6)
- Home life (x 5)
- College (x4)
- Self-harm (x 4)
- Bullying (x 3)
- Loneliness (x 3)
- No Help (x 2)
- Relationship breakdowns (x 2)
- Social life (x 2)
- Work (x 2)

The Word Cloud below shows the other responses given by students:

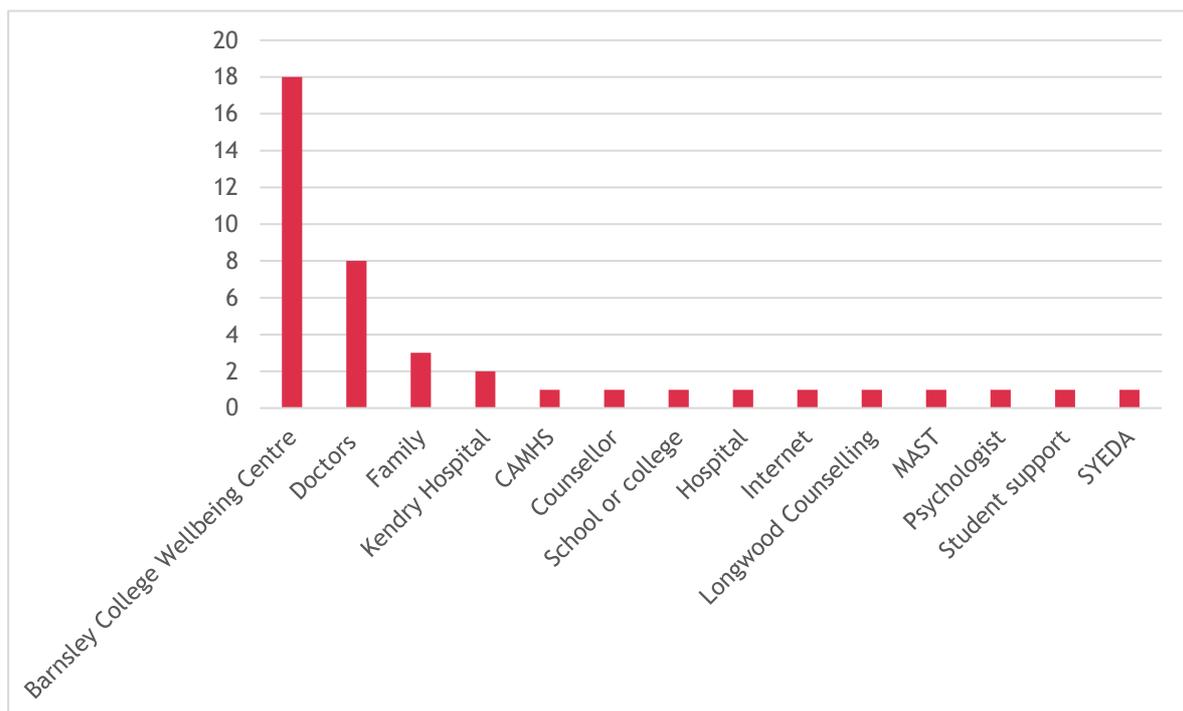


3. If you or a friend were feeling low or experiencing a mental health difficulty, would you know where to go?

For this question, we used a 'ball-o-meter' voting system, where students placed ball-pit balls into one of two dustbins, marked 'yes' and 'no'. 55 students answered this question; with 36 saying they did know and 19 saying they did not.

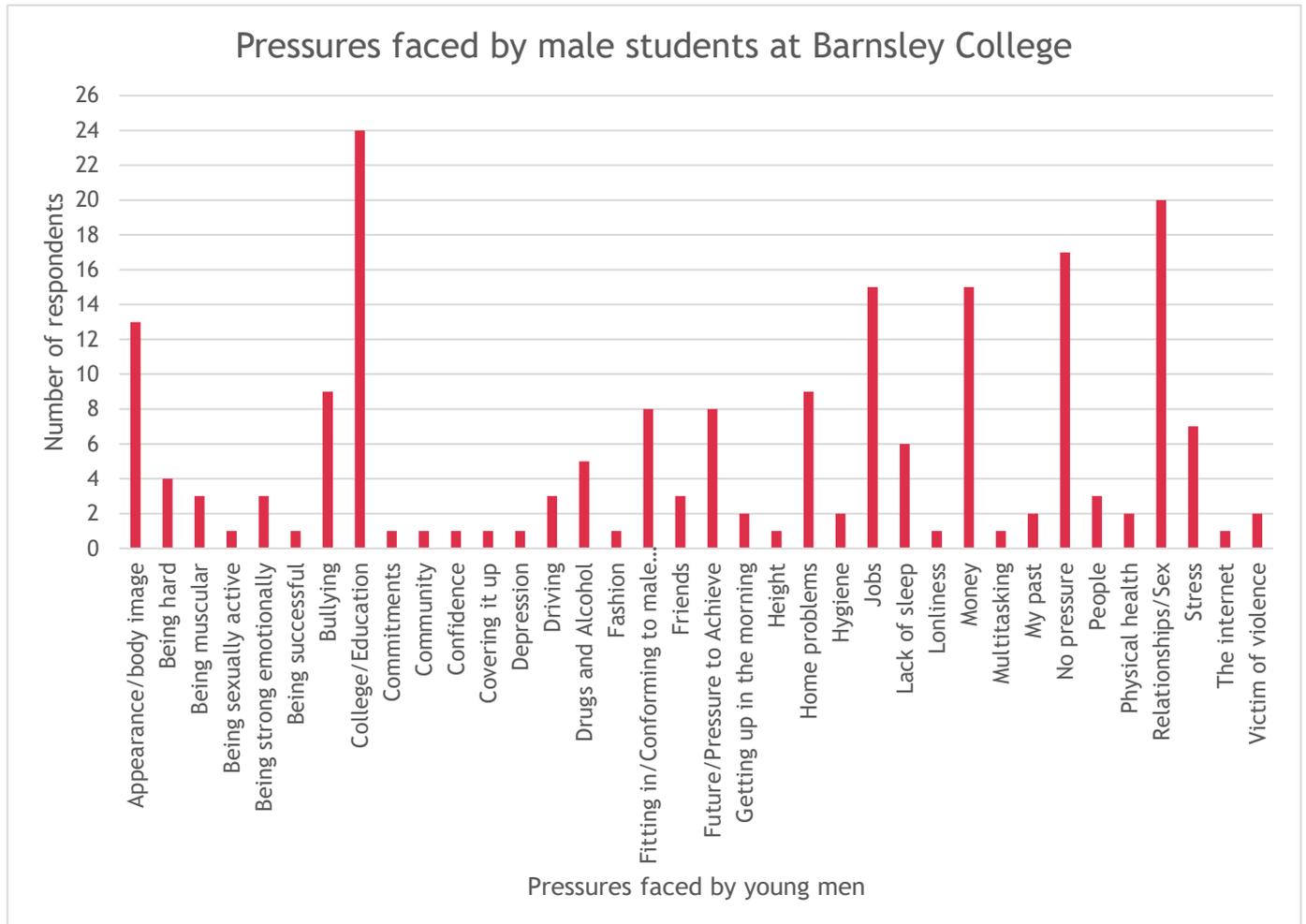


Students who said they would know where to go were asked to write on a sticky label where that would be. Here are the responses we received:



Men's Health Week

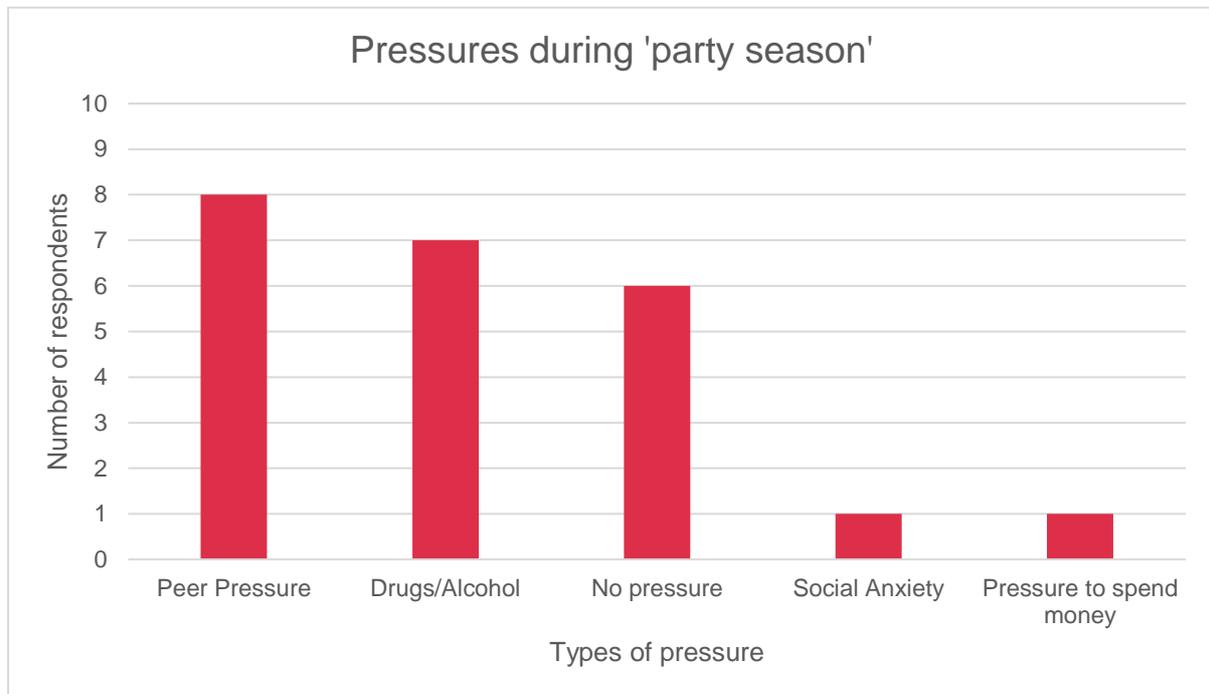
On Tuesday 8th November, Chilypep ran a stall at Barnsley College's Men's Health Week event at which we engaged with **46** male students. Using our '*Pressured To Be*' post-box, we asked male students to anonymously write down what pressures they felt they faced as young men in Barnsley. Male students who took part in the mental health tutorials throughout men's health week were also asked to answer this question, and we received a total of **175** responses, which can be seen in the bar chart below:



The most common pressures the young men said they had were college and education in general (24), pressures to be in a relationship/have sex (20), having a job (15), having money troubles (15), and pressure to look a certain way (13). Some students specified they felt pressure to be 'muscular', to be 'big' and to have 'a big penis'. One respondent said he felt 'pressure to be as buff as they are on TV'. 20 respondents said that they felt no pressure at all.

Party Hard Week

On Tuesday 22nd November, Chilypep ran a stall at Barnsley College's 'Party Hard' week, primarily around drugs and alcohol but also consulting with students around any additional pressures they face during "party season." We engaged with 31 students. Their responses can be seen in the chart below:



Students felt that there was definitely an element of peer pressure during the 'party season', particularly when it came to drinking or taking drugs. Here are a few quotes from young people:

"Everyone is going out and my friends want me to follow them"

-

"I'm definitely pressured to drink"

-

"There's a "social" aspect to legal highs in Barnsley – they have cool nicknames like Spice and Black Mamba to make them more appealing"

Quite a large proportion of young people also said they felt no more pressure than the rest of the year, for example one young person said:

"I'd rather just stay in with a few mates, play Fifa and chill out"

Sixth-Form Consultation

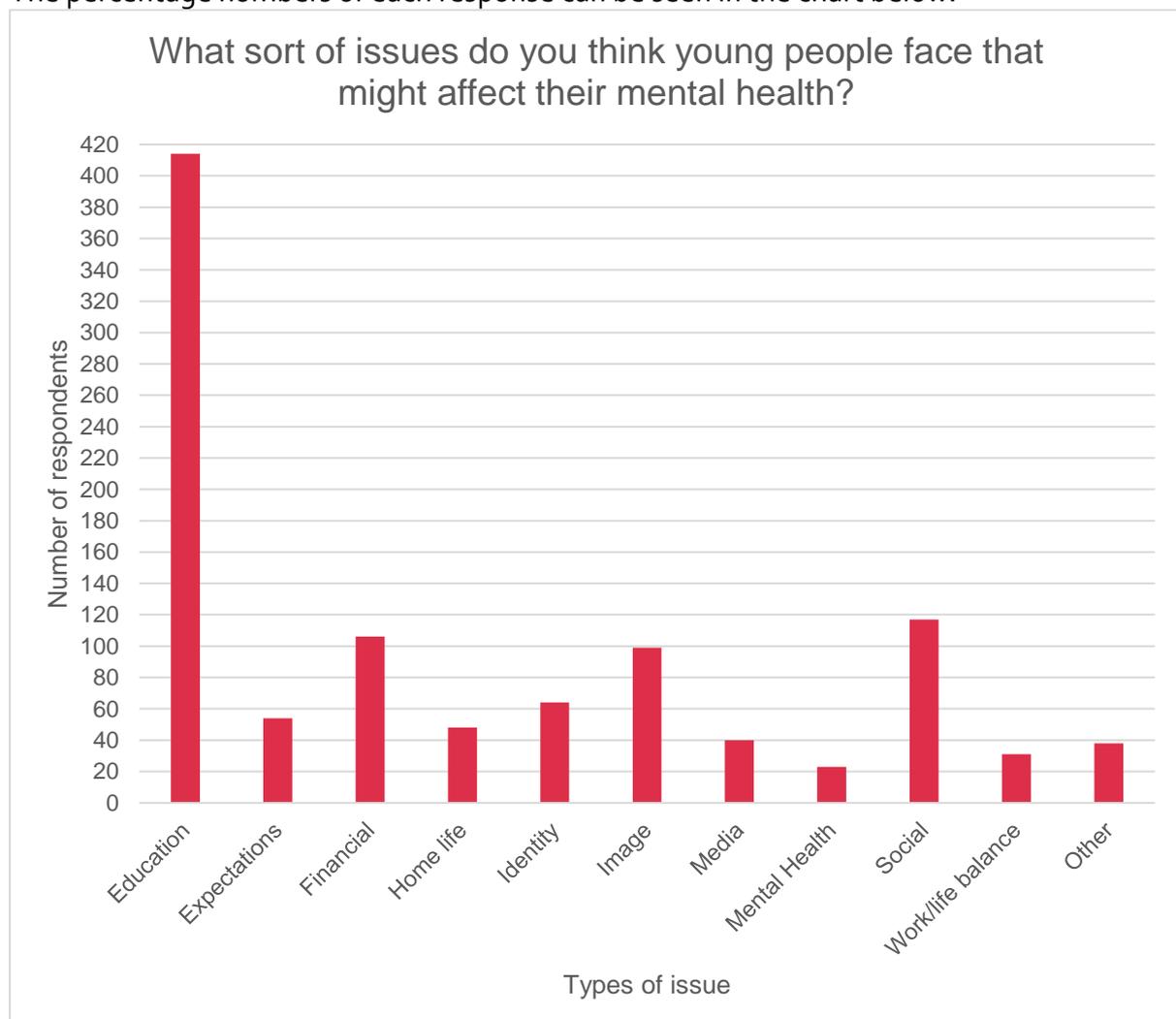
As part of the mental health awareness workshops delivered at Barnsley College Sixth-Form on 16th January 2017 we consulted with 329 students on the question:

"What sort of issues do you think young people face that might affect their mental health?"

Students were asked to write down responses on post-its and post them anonymously into a box. There were 1094 responses to this question. These can be broadly put into the following 13 categories:

- Education
- Expectations
- Finances
- Fitting in
- Future
- Home Life
- Other
- Identity
- Image
- Media
- Mental Health
- Social
- Work/Life Balance

The percentage numbers of each response can be seen in the chart below:



As can be seen from this chart, by far the biggest issue affecting young people's mental health is *education*, with 414 students saying this. This covered an array of issues, including; exams, getting good grades, coursework, deadlines and the pressure to succeed academically. Young people also felt there was a lot of pressure coming from their social lives, with 117 students saying this. This included specific issues such as; friends, relationships, being popular and peer pressure. Money and finances were also a key point of stress, with 106 students saying this.

Spring into Wellbeing

On Tuesday 28th March 2017, Chilypep ran a stall at Barnsley College's "Spring into Wellbeing" event at which we engaged with 22 young people. On this stall we ran a number of therapeutic interventions, including making Glitter Jars, mindfulness colouring and angel cards. The questions we asked were:

1. What affects your mental health?
2. If you could ask for one thing to improve mental health for young people what would it be?

1. What affects your mental health?

We asked this question using a 't-shirt consultation' method, where a worker wore a t-shirt with this question written on it and students answered by writing on our backs. The responses to this question were:

- Environment
- Bullying
- Personality
- The media
- Social media (x 2)
- People always getting on at you
- Drugs
- Body image
- Living up to expectations
- Stress about everything
- People's opinions about mental health
- Self-worth
- Debt

2. If you could ask for one thing to improve mental health for young people what would it be?

Again, we used the 't-shirt consultation' method to ask this question. The responses were:

- Give them advice and positive things for them to be distracted by
- More awareness
- Talk about it more in school
- Reduce stigma

- More opportunities for counselling and workshops
- Professionals to believe what you say
- Easier it get help
- Strong friendships
- Services to not give up on you
- Talk more about it
- More education around it

Key findings and Recommendations

From our consultations around mental health and emotional wellbeing with 690 young people in Barnsley aged 11-25, a number of key points emerged that have informed the following recommendations.

1. Raise awareness of mental health in schools and colleges

Whilst approximately 50% of those we spoke to had heard about mental health within schools, this was not routinely implemented across all settings. It is therefore recommended that there be more of a focus on mental health education within schools and colleges. This could include assemblies around mental health, workshops, peer-led sessions and talks from external organisations/ mental health providers, and those with lived experience of mental ill health. Young people said they would want this to start in primary school. This would enable young people to understand more about managing their emotions and signs of mental ill health and where to go for support earlier on and prevent issues from escalating at a later age.

2. Improve signposting and information

Whilst some of the young people did refer to mental health provision and services available locally, the majority of these had experience of such services; there was lesser awareness about services amongst the general population. This highlights the need to raise awareness more widely amongst the general population of what services and support is available to young people who may be in need of mental health support. Young people said they would like to see the development of an 'online directory' of services so they could know where to go to for support and what was available to them. They would also like to know more about their rights in relation to mental health and the services available to them.

3. Put in place peer support programmes for young people

The majority of young people spoke of the value of friendships, citing their friends as a key source of support. Young people involved in groups said that by meeting people of a similar age, with similar experiences, their confidence had improved as well as their general wellbeing. This highlights the need for peer support in relation to mental health and it is recommended that peer support models be developed, as well as therapeutic groupwork activities, to support young people's emotional wellbeing and mental health.

4. Involve young people in service design and evaluation

Young people showed a desire to be involved in shaping the services and support they received, coming up with a multitude of ideas in relation to service design throughout the consultations. Young people are the experts in their own experiences and in the services and support they would like to receive and it is recommended that there be opportunities for young people to influence service design at all levels to ensure that services best meet the needs of the young people using them. This could include

involving young people in the recruitment of staff, in the design of new services, and in evaluating and reviewing services.

Young people said they wanted to be able to have a choice in the interventions they received and wanted to have more of a range of services and support available to them. It is recommended that commissioners and services work with young people to develop a range of interventions to suit individual needs, based on the views of young people.

5. Make it easier for young people to navigate services, and ensure they receive timely, appropriate support

It can be very difficult to navigate services and support, particularly when you are experiencing mental ill health. In addition to ensuring young people know about where to go to for support, and what their rights are, we need to ensure that young people are at the centre of services and are able to receive timely and appropriate support. Waiting lists came up several times throughout the consultation as a barrier for young people, and they said they would like to get help early on to prevent their mental health from getting worse before it can get better. Young people said they wanted to have services available to them 24/7 and wanted to see more online support for young people. They wanted the spaces they went to to feel 'less clinical' and more 'young person friendly'.

6. Put in place training around mental health for professionals, and communities, supporting young people

The majority of the young people we spoke to said they would go to friends, family, youth workers, or school/ college for support. It is therefore recommended that there be more training and support in place for these so that they can feel confident to support young people around their mental health. This could include a training offer for youth workers and schools staff, as well as more awareness aimed at parents around engaging their children in conversations around mental health. As friends were an often cited source of support we would recommend working with young people around 'how you could support a friend' to enable them to feel confident in having conversations around mental health and supporting their friends to get the right support.

7. Take time to build relationships with young people

Relationships came out as a really important factor in young people feeling comfortable to be able to speak out about their mental health, as well as in how well they engaged with services. Young people said they did not want to have to keep repeating their story, but would instead like to build up a relationship with a worker who could support them consistently over a period of time. They said they wanted to have access to a range of interventions to support their wellbeing, including more informal interventions, and for services to be flexible in meeting their needs.

8. Support young people to manage stress and pressure

Pressure came up consistently as the main issue impacting on young people's mental health. A large majority of young people spoke about educational pressures, including exams, and pressure to achieve. Young people also felt wider societal pressures, such as

pressure from the media to 'be a certain way', pressures around their identity and their futures, and peer pressure and discrimination. Whilst it might not be possible to eliminate the pressures young people face it is recommended that young people be supported to develop coping strategies to deal with the pressures they face and to prevent this from having a negative and lasting impact on their mental health.

For more information about young people's involvement in Future in Mind, or information detailed in this report please contact Chilypep:

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