

1000 Calderdale Children and Young People's Voices Mental Health Survey Report



Introduction

In February 2020, we, the young people's Tough Times Reference Group created a survey to gather the views and opinions of our peers, aged 9-25, about mental health and emotional wellbeing.

This report, which includes the key findings, will be shared with the providers of mental health and emotional wellbeing services in Calderdale. It will also be shared with Calderdale's Emotional Health and Wellbeing Taskforce and the Open Minds Partnership Steering Group. The findings will accompany the results from the electronic Health Needs Assessment (eHNA) that year 5, 6, 7 and 10 students complete in school. The results collectively help to shape service improvement for the children and young people accessing the emotional health and wellbeing support they need.

The survey included general questions on emotions, who children and young people talk to and where they go for support; as well as more specific questions focusing on using local services and how much that service helped better their state of mind.

Methodology

It was agreed that we would use the online survey platform 'You Can Say', as unlike other online surveys we felt that this platform allowed us to conduct our survey in the best way we could, allowing the user to answer flowing questions and skip ones that weren't applicable.

For the purpose of collating the answers we decided that we would ask closed questions only, where people could answer by placing a tick in the tick-box that was most relevant to them.

We as a group of young people, all whom have been affected by mental health at some stage in our lives, developed the questions seeking advice and approval from relevant adults.

We distributed the survey electronically to every Primary, Secondary School and the College, as well as youth organisations with a written email asking for staff support with the distribution. We as members of the Tough Times Reference Group also encouraged our own schools, 6th forms and colleges to take part in the survey. We placed posters in places around Calderdale which we believed young people would visit. Additionally, one Saturday afternoon in Halifax Town Centre, we gave passers-by bookmarks that we created with an illustrator which had a QR code on that could be scanned with a phone and automatically directed to the online survey. These were received well.

With the help from a local illustrator, we created a visual image that we used in the hope that it would be recognised for the survey. This was used on all the publicity including posters and bookmarks that we had printed out and displayed across Calderdale and across the various social media platforms.

The questions that were asked

- Are you in education or employment?
- Do you feel comfortable talking about your emotions/ mental health?
- Who do you feel most comfortable talking to about your emotions/ mental health?
- If no, what is the main reason why you do not feel comfortable talking about your emotions/ mental health?
- Do you think there are enough services, in Calderdale to support children and young people with their emotions/ mental health?
- Have you had support from any of the following services (listed in the table below) in the last 12 months that help children and young people with their emotions/ mental health?
- Please tell us about the support you received from your main support service
 - Was it easy to access?
 - Did they treat you well?
 - Was the support helpful?
 - Would you recommend this service to another person?
- Choose your preferred way (listed in the table below) you would like/want to find out about services that help children and young people with their emotions/mental health?

Results

The survey received the views and opinions of 1,876 children and young people with the majority responders aged 10-16 years (72%). 56% identified as female, 39% male, 2% transgender with the remaining 3% preferring not to say. When asked how you describe your ethnicity 62% said white, 34% BAME with 4% identifying as other.

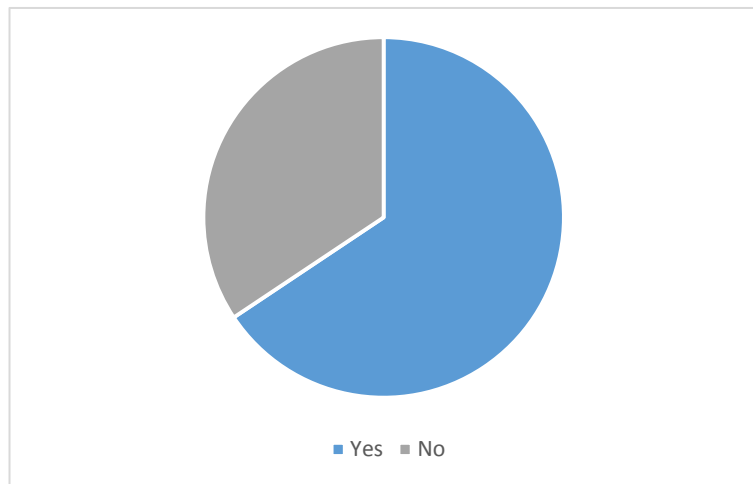
100 (5%) children and young people identified themselves as having a disability and out of those, 39 children and young people said that they had experienced a barrier in accessing services, due to their disability in one form or another.

Question 1: Are you in education or employment?

The results showed that 49% of participants attend secondary school with the remaining 51% either attending a different form of education, employment or currently unemployed.

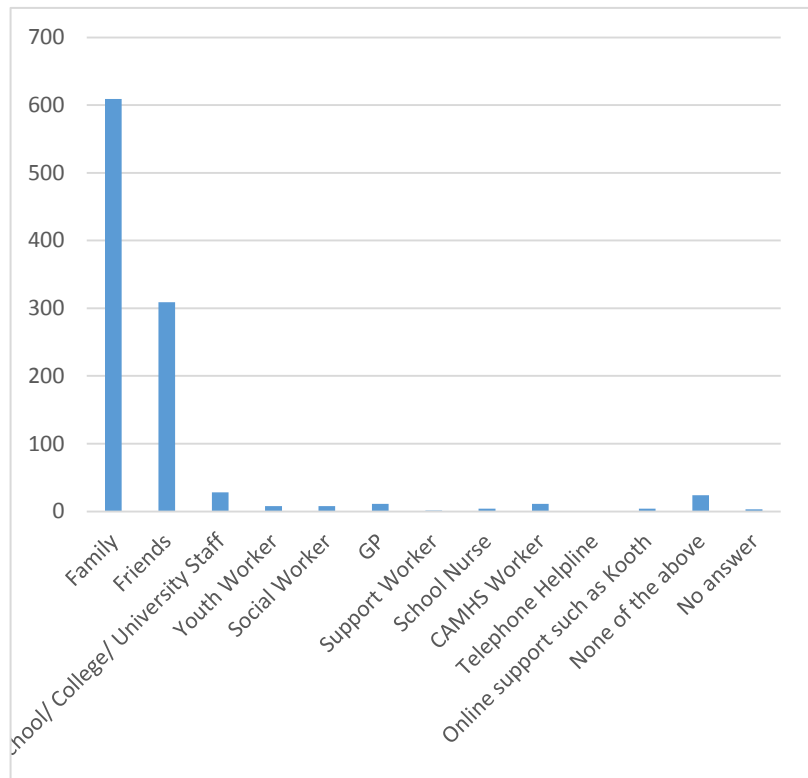
Question 2: Do you feel comfortable talking about your emotions/ mental health?

65% of the participants who answered this question said that they are comfortable talking about their emotions/ mental health. Whereas the remaining 35% said that they weren't and went onto answering question 4.



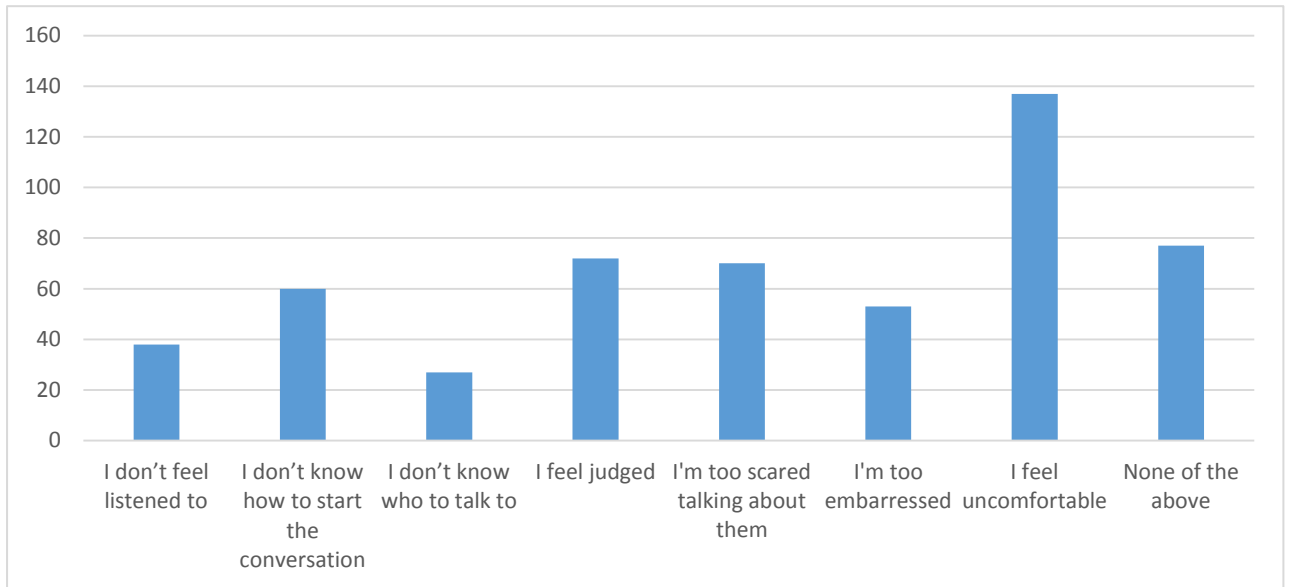
Question 3: Who do you feel most comfortable talking to about your emotions / mental health?

59% of participants felt most comfortable talking to their family. 30% said friends. The remaining percent of participants felt most comfortable discussing their emotions/ mental health with either staff at school or someone who works in the mental health profession.



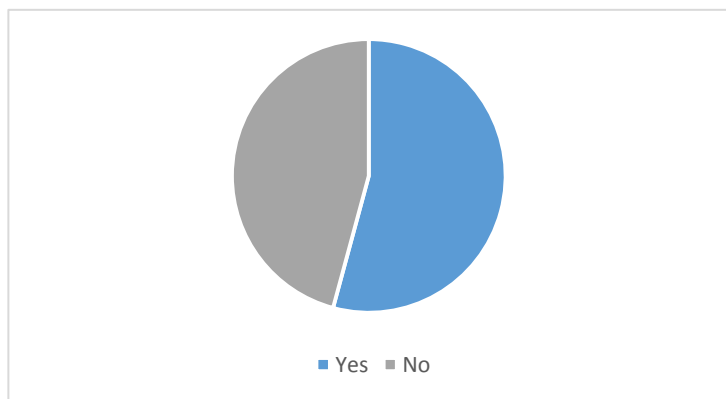
Question 4: What is the main reason why you do not feel comfortable talking about your emotions/ mental health?

From the 35% of young people who answered no to question 2, 25% of those participants said that their reasoning was they feel uncomfortable. The next 6 responses vary from 7% to 14% with feeling scared and judged being quite high. 5% of participants said that they do not know who to talk to.



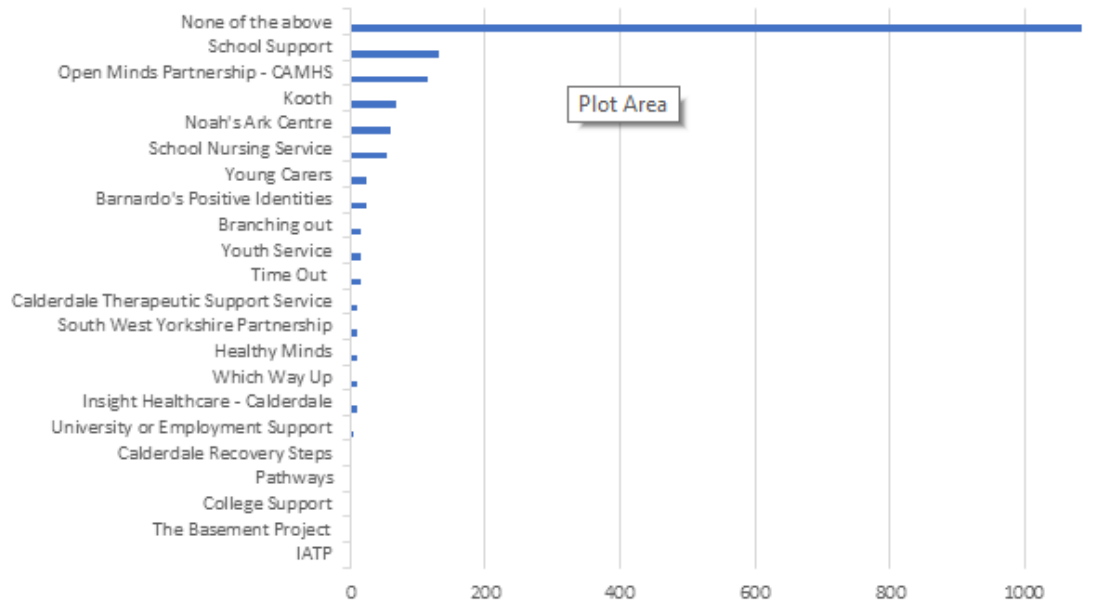
Question 5: Do you think there are enough services in Calderdale to support children and young people with their emotions/ mental health?

54% of the participants believe that there are enough services in Calderdale whereas 46% believe that there are not.



Question 6: Have you had any support from any services in the last 12 months that help children and young people with their emotions/ mental health?

74% of participants said that they had not used a service to help them with their emotions and mental health within the last 12 months so therefore they didn't complete question 7-11 as the survey took them straight to question 12. The remaining 26% of participants said that they received their main support from school, followed closely by Open Minds (CAMHS).



Question 7-11: Please tell us about the support you received from your main support service.

Was it easy to access?

75% of participants said the support that they received was easy to access.

Did they treat you well?

91% of participants felt positively about how they were treated by the member of staff.

Was the support helpful?

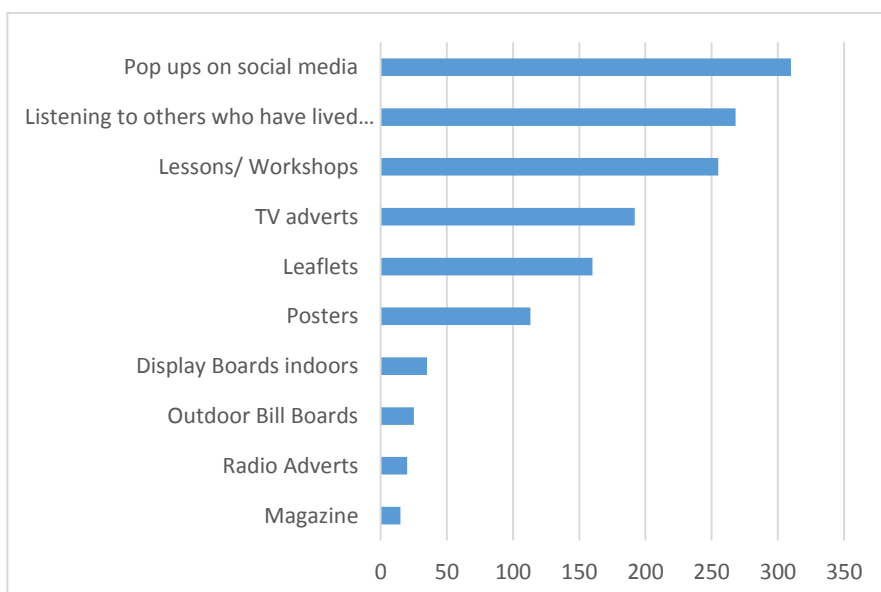
76% of participants thought the support they received was helpful.

Would you recommend this service to another person?

77% of participants say that they would recommend their main support service to another person.

Question 12: Choose your preferred way you would like/ want to find out about services that help children and young people with their emotions/ mental health?

The results show that 22% of participants would prefer to find out about services through social media. This was closely followed with 19% of participants who said they would like to find out about services by listening to others experiences. Finally, 18% of participants said that they would like to find out about services through workshops.



Conclusion

Compared to last year's annual survey we have reached more children and young people this year than we did previously, with a 1,254 rise in participants. This is important to highlight as when we are talking about percentages and the views and opinions of children and young people throughout this report we can demonstrate a stronger voice on what children and young people think and feel about services in Calderdale.

In conclusion the survey results indicate that 35% of children and young people do not feel comfortable discussing their emotions and mental health. We believe this is something that we should all work on together striving for mental health and emotional wellbeing to be seen as less of a taboo subject and something that everyone feels comfortable talking about.

This survey shows that most participants (76%) felt that the support they received from a mental health and emotional wellbeing service in Calderdale was helpful. Therefore services need to bridge a gap for those who don't feel that the support was helpful to ensure everyone benefits from the services provided. A real positive that has been highlighted in this report is that 91% of those who have accessed a service felt positively about how they were treated by the member of staff.

This survey confirms the impact the role of schools continues to have within mental health and emotional wellbeing support for their students with it having the highest percent when asked where participants had received their main support within the last 12 months. This is something that can be continuously improved upon with services supporting schools to address and teach mental health and emotional wellbeing in lessons. We feel that this may also help those children and young people who said they didn't feel comfortable talking about their emotions and mental health due to feeling scared, judged and not knowing how to start a conversation on this subject. Listening to people's lived experience was also a strong opinion and in lessons/workshops, we feel that this could be incorporated within training being taught in schools as this is where the majority of children and young people are on a day to day basis.

The survey also demonstrates the need for more focus and support to be given to parents/carers and family members as the last two survey results show that children and young people are most likely to go to them when they need help or someone to talk to.

Pop ups on social media have been highlighted as a good place for advertisements of services. We believe an action could be put into place to begin advertising useful sites such as Calderdale's emotional health and wellbeing website, Open Minds www.openmindscalderdale.org.uk to be shared on social media platforms with most young people saying this is their preferred way to find out about services.

As a group of young people we still passionately believe in doing this survey yearly to compensate for progressing opinions. This will also bring insight to managers and staff as to whether service improvements that have been made are having a positive

impact or not. We hope next year's survey will continue to grow and we manage to get more children and young people's voices on this important subject.

Next Steps

- The young people's Tough Times Reference Group will work with organisations to create an action plan to help improve services for children and young people.
- This report will be shared with children and young people, schools and service providers in Calderdale and will be posted on the Open Minds website.
- A letter will be sent out to the individual organisations with feedback comments received about their personal service. This will include both the good comments and any recommendations to help improve the future of the service.

Written by Calderdale Tough Times Reference Group 1st July 2020