

2022

ANNUAL REVIEW

Contents

From Our Patrons

From The Chair

From The CEO

Clinical Services

From Our Social Work Student

Client Quotes

Case Studies:

Meet the Team

Case Studies:

YCT's School Work

Meet the Board of Management

Group Work

The YCT Annual Lecture

The Lady Diana Kemp-Welch Award

YCT Stats and Impact Evaluation

Acknowledgements

From Our Patrons



Joe Thomas

Actor

As one of the patrons of YCT, I'd like to take this opportunity to stress the importance of good mental health for young people and indeed for all people. It is the foundation of everything. YCT has recently expanded to offer support to parents as well as to young people, which is a great development.

There is certainly no upper age limit to the possibility of suffering with your mental health. I am really pleased that there is less of a stigma around issues connected to mental health these days. For people who are suffering the problem isn't abstract or pretentious, it's the most real thing in their life. But with the help of other people it's incredible how much suffering can be alleviated. People are pretty good at helping each other out in my experience, if they just talk openly and honestly. But sometimes those suffering may find there isn't somebody around who they feel they can turn to, for all sorts of different reasons, in which case the only option is to speak to a professional like those at YCT. It takes a lot of bravery to seek out therapy or counselling, and it's really important that those who are willing to take that step have somebody available to talk to. Making these services available puts YCT right at the centre of what I hope we will see in years to come as a genuine revolution in understanding of mental health that has been going on for the last couple of decades. So much positive progress has been made and it's really important to keep that momentum going.

Professor Julie Hay

Chief Executive of Psychological Intelligence Foundation CIC
Chairperson of Institute of Developmental Transactional Analysis



Last year I wrote about what a strange year it had been for all of us – never realising that I might be writing something very similar this year!

So once again it has been inspiring to see how those at YCT have coped - with increased demand, with children and young people getting increasingly anxious as it seems like the world is never going to change back – and with changes in personnel at YCT, and with new services being offered - and most of them even found time to support those cycling 150 miles to raise funds. That is what I call commitment to the service!

From the Chair

Neil Frost



One of the issues of being a successful organisation is that there are a limited number of ways of describing that organisation's success! But it's important that we do and we hope that this 2022 Annual Review will show that we walk the walk as well as talk the talk.

YCT is in a very good place. We've taken on the challenges the pandemic has thrown at us and we've come through stronger than ever. Despite the various issues, the cancellations, the closures, the lock down, the uncertainties, YCT has overcome them all and continued to deliver its work. Impressively, as you will see later in this Annual Review.

As we say in our Recruitment Policy - people are YCT's most important asset. After all, we are a 'people' organisation. And what some amazing people we have!

The YCT Board, a hard-working group of Trustees who meet regularly to ensure oversight and support of YCT's operation, with Board members also devoting extra time to sitting on working groups, taking part in interviews and contributing their own skills and experience to specific areas of work. Our Treasurer ensures that we are financially sound.

Our core team of directly-employed staff, based at YCT House, but also working effectively and efficiently from home when the pandemic has required it. All credit to them, often working under immense pressure due to staff absences and vacancies. But very good news during this last year! Having ably delivered the role on an Interim basis the YCT Board has been delighted to appoint Katy Bradbury as our permanent CEO. Katy knows YCT well and is a perfect fit for the organisation as we move forward. We've added three employed therapists to the team, giving us the benefit of extra capacity and of being able to respond quickly to requests for our service. Now, after a long period of 'hanging on in' we have a full complement of staff, all working hard to deliver our work and ensuring that YCT's reputation as a professional, reliable, 'can do' organisation continues.

Much of the therapy we provide is delivered by self-employed therapists. Several have been with us for many years. We value them all and are always impressed when schools, for example, request a particular therapist or ask for extra hours as they are so pleased with the service YCT's therapist are providing.

We mustn't leave out a number of people who volunteer for us in a number of roles. Their contributions are very welcome and much-valued. This includes our social work student, volunteer admin staff and even the individual collating this review.

We have no shame in saying what a brilliant organisation YCT is! That's not just because we know it ourselves. It's because of the way others value us. For example, Commissioners of our services not only know that when they commission us we'll deliver, but also that they can come to us for advice and support. And to look at further work we can potentially support.

If you know us well, or are only just finding out about us, we hope that you enjoy reading this 2022 Annual Review.

Neil Frost Chair of the YCT Board



*Photos are for illustrative purposes only

From the CEO

Katy Bradbury



2021 was a year with pressure to deliver better times following the difficulties faced by everyone in 2020. Unfortunately, 2021 brought further lockdowns and as the pandemic continued the impact on children and young people's mental health was devastating. Children and young people who are anxious, depressed or self-harming were reaching out to overstretched CAMHS services and were often turned away. Anyone who has struggled to access social care, been concerned about their family, or is anxious about the unprecedented rise in the cost of living, will know that effective support is scarce but urgently needed.

It was clear from early in the year that demand for our services was not decreasing and although we returned to working remotely during the first quarter of the year this did not limit the amount of young people we were supporting.

Thankfully all employed, self-employed and volunteer staff, have remained devoted and hard working. Their unwavering support for YCT has been vital in helping us to work through this year of uncertainty ending with an increase of over 150% in service delivery and an eventual return to face to face work across our regions.

I am incredibly proud of the team and their ability to adapt to changes within the service due to increased need and general changes to our structure whilst working throughout this ever-evolving pandemic.

There are so many wonderful things that come to mind when I reflect back on 2021 at YCT, from returning to face to face work, hosting our first online annual lecture and first quiz night through to cheering on a wonderful team of supporters as they cycled 150 miles from Whitehaven to South Shields. 2021 is a year that deserves to be shouted about!

You will read later in this review about our fantastic school work and we were really pleased when in 2021 our Service Coordinator Emma Adams, agreed to take over the management of our rise in school contracts and her new role as School Coordinator has worked perfectly ensuring all our schools have an efficient service meeting their individual needs.

However, it was not just school services which were increasing and YCT's Board of

Management recognised the need to adapt to the rise in complex cases and volume of work being undertaken so in May we welcomed Andrea Holmes who took on the new role of Senior Therapist. Andrea has been a wonderful addition to the team and delivers 1-1 and group therapy and supports our safeguarding process managing clients presenting with increased risk.

In July, our Senior Administrator, Janice Wilson left YCT. We are grateful to Janice for all her hard work and support in helping YCT for several years and especially through a challenging 2020. Anyone who visited YCT house or attended one of our lectures will have met Janice and she is missed by staff and therapists alike and we wish her well in her new job.

In August 2021 YCT hosted its first quiz night, and raised over £2000 as a result of the generosity of the people in our local community. The quiz night was great fun and it allowed us to raise awareness of the impact lockdowns had on the mental health of young people and the importance of services such as YCT to support them. We plan to hold our second quiz night in 2022 so keep an eye on our website and social media.

In December we were joined by Pauly Smith our new Office Manager. Pauly's role is to ensure the smooth and effective running of every aspect of YCT's operations but she has quickly established herself as a wonderful support for all the staff at YCT House.

In addition to Andrea and Pauly, we were delighted to confirm Lucia Bradbury as our new Service Coordinator. We were also joined by Kathryn Gill our social work student and their support has been invaluable and helped YCT to deliver effective services throughout 2021.

I was pleased to be confirmed as YCT's permanent CEO and following my time as interim CEO I am now eager to continue to help YCT thrive in order to meet the needs of the young people in Essex and Hertfordshire. With new contracts secured with West Essex Clinical Commissioning Group and Hertfordshire CAMHS alongside grant funding from Children in Need and Harlow Council 2022 promises to be a year of expansion. With young people continuing to feel the impact of school closures and extended lockdowns I feel proud of the support we are able to offer not only them but their families and the professionals around them.

I'd like to offer my thanks to everyone who has taken the time to support YCT. Whether you are a Board member, a member of staff, a volunteer, a self-employed therapist, or one of our wonderful supporters, your support means so much to YCT and all the children and young people we work with. Without you, the work we do and the results we achieve, would not be possible.

Clinical report

At the start of 2021 our clinical delivery was increasingly face to face following a very difficult 2020. Unfortunately, due to another lockdown all work returned to remote delivery, and we are still working in a very different way than we were in 2019. We continue to offer a mixed service, mostly offering face to face sessions but a lot of our support is online via telephone or zoom. As a staff team we also spent the first half of 2021 working from home until we were able to safely return to office working in the summer of 2021. It was a great relief to finally be able to offer face to face counselling again as this has a number of benefits over online, or telephone. Despite the continued disruption, the work we have been able to offer has increased across West Essex and Hertfordshire.

Below you will see the increase in numbers of young people we are now supporting and what is clear is this has increased significantly from pre-pandemic times. Referrals have increased by 155% and you will also note safeguarding reports have also increased significantly.

	October – December 2019	October – December 2021
New Referrals	114	291
Young People Accessing Service	118	375
Sessions Offered	581	1582
Safeguarding reports submitted	15	74

F2F

When we began our phased return to face to face work, we started with our Play Therapy sessions at YCT house as we found our primary aged children struggled the most with accessing support online.

When returning to face to face, we had to make many practical changes and consider the appropriate measures to put in place, including a one-way system, mask wearing and no waiting room for parents. In line with government guidance, we have now been able to remove most of the previous measures.

Currently we are running sessions every day within YCT house, as well as face to face support in our outreach settings.

GROUPS

Throughout 2021 we have continued to provide groups in both Epping Forest and Uttlesford, as commissioned by Essex Youth services, around understanding, and managing anxiety.

Throughout the last year, the most common reason for referring has been due to anxiety, this has been the case every month, this has proven just how necessary these groups are.

We started the year offering groups remotely via zoom but have since been able to run groups face to face in Harlow and Loughton. Each group runs for six weeks, and we aim to have six young people within each group. We have found success in both online groups and face to face groups. You can read more about groups later in this review.

NEW THERAPISTS AND STAFF

Due to increasing numbers in both referrals and funding, we have increased our staff team and welcomed several new therapists. We have recently been joined by our new Lead therapist Julia and Senior Therapist Hannah to add to our very busy clinical staff team. Giving the increase in referrals we are seeing, it couldn't have come at a better time. They will be assisting the clinical team in making sure we are able to continue providing a smooth delivery of effective and ethical services.

REFERRALS

Throughout the past year we have noticed an increased baseline of safeguarding risk within our referrals. This is in part due to the demand on all mental health services following the pandemic, it is also very clear that young people's mental health has suffered immeasurably. Ultimately this has led to an increase in the complexity within the referrals we now receive. We frequently receive referrals for young people who are actively self-harming and, in most cases, also experiencing suicidal ideation.

We therefore had to review all of our safeguarding processes and work closely with other local services to make sure the appropriate support is in place. Demand is apparent across all services and often there is long waits for specialist support. This only increased the need for an effective process in YCT as we continue to monitor and support our most risky young people.

THE FUTURE

We will continue to work with a mixed model of both face-to-face and remote work and will evolve in response to the needs of the young people accessing our support. Increased group work for young people and a new family support group, Circle of Security Parenting, will enhance our service offer and ensure we can meet different needs.

I am incredibly proud of the team and their ability to adapt to changes within the service due to increased need and general changes to our structure whilst working throughout this ever-evolving new normal.

Meet our Social work student:

Each year YCT welcomes an undergraduate social work student from Anglia Ruskin University. Our social work students are a wonderful addition to our team and offer a wide range of support. YCT is able to offer frontline experience of working with children and their families. This year we have been joined by Kathryne Gill, a student from Saffron Walden, studying BA Social Work at Anglia Ruskin Cambridge.

“Is this your first placement?”

“Yes, this is my initial placement for my 2nd year of my BA Honours degree in social Work at the Cambridge Campus of Anglia Ruskin University. As this is my first placement it is 70 days.”

“So, what does each day at YCT include for you?”

“Each day is unique and only slightly follows a similar pattern, fortunately I like to be kept on my toes.”

“What is the mix of tasks you take on?”

“Typically, a Tuesday starts at Joyce Frankland Academy supporting with anxiety groups along with the therapist who facilitates them. I do really enjoy the groups as I have been able to strengthen my communication skills and use my theoretical knowledge in practice. Then I jump in the car and head back to YCT house where I attend and contribute to team meetings which has meant I have had the opportunity to build links with other members of the team. I also attend the safeguarding meetings and will check in with clients when asked to.”

“How has this placement helped you develop?”

“A large part of my role is to speak with parents and the clients about their referral to our service. My IT skills have improved immeasurably I have gone from only being able to use online shopping to being able to input data into a database. I also undertake assessments which supported me to develop





my communication skills and putting my learnt skills into practice. These assessments are essential as the information taken ensures we are aware of any risks and allows an appropriate counsellor to be allocated. I have also had the opportunity to contribute to local authority and CAMHS referrals.”

“What’s it been like working with the team at YCT?”

“I have had the opportunity to work with a very caring, thoughtful and knowledgeable team at YCT who have supported me amazingly through my first placement which very sadly is coming to an end soon.”

Client Quotes

What do you think would have happened if you had not received help from YCT?

My anxiety would have got worse

I think I would've struggled for much longer than I did, and felt a lot more alone.

I would just have been negative more and would get depressed

I'd have been struggling a lot more, both with my moods and feelings as well as being able to communicate them to my family. I may also have fallen back into my depression

I would have been stuck in the same headspace, routines and negative habits. not doing anything to help my mental health

I think YCT is

Amazing

Extremely helpful and well-organised

Amazing! Really really helped me see things from neutral stand points. It was lovely to speak with someone who just understood me!

A safe place when you feel comfortable to express your feelings

Supporting , understanding and a great service

YCT would be better if

I honestly don't know where they could make it better as it was good as it was

More people were aware of this service

There was a follow-up session/contact session to check in on your development and progress. You could do it every other week when you start to feel better rather than stopping completely

The waiting periods weren't so long, but I know there is very little that can be done about this. (This was the only improvement I could think of)

Any other comments

Thank you to all involved, especially our Counsellor

I wish it could have gone on longer but understand that others need the same help.

YCT has been great support and helped me

Thanks for everything!

Thank you I really enjoyed the sessions and found them helpful

Case Study One

Ashley was a sixteen-year-old young person who was seen by a YCT therapist through school. They were referred by their guidance manager, who described Ashley as struggling with the pressure of nearing exams and needing support. Being in year 11, the young person was facing a lot of change and anxiety around their upcoming exams and addressed this from the first session. With the help of the counsellor a stress and anxiety tool kit was built, looking at techniques that helped hold these emotions and work at looking at what was within their control and what was beyond it. This empowered Ashley to build resilience to these worries and look at them from a detached way without being overwhelmed.

As the therapeutic relationship developed there were themes of identity and sexuality and body image which surfaced and were explored through the arts in different ways. The art materials became an extension of Ashley's view of them self, working at first expressively to embody the confusion they felt around their identity. This was explored with paint, pastels and what they described as the messy materials to explore their messy emotions.

With time they began being able to name and identify these feelings of not being in control of their identity, being able to talk openly about their past trauma and experiences that had led them to feel like they didn't belong. Through using the art as an extension of themselves, Ashley began to be able to identify and verbalise who they felt they were, exploring the different pronouns that felt right for them and even being comfortable in the not knowing, describing it as part of their process.

During a particularly difficult week for Ashley, where they were undergoing mock exams in preparation for their GCSE's and faced a breakdown in their friendship group, Ashley attended the session and explained how they had struggled this week. However, they then went on to describe the different techniques we had explored in the beginning and how using them helped her manage their stress and anxiety. This led to them enforcing more boundaries for themselves that worked as protective factors and Ashley expressed that they felt better able to regulate themselves because they knew they had these techniques in place.

Meet the team

Katy Bradbury: Katy is YCT's CEO, Katy oversees the strategic delivery of YCT and all its services while managing the staff team.

Julia Gibson: Julia is YCT's lead therapist. Julia's role is wide ranging, from managing the clinical staff and therapists through to overseeing safeguarding and complex referrals. Julia also delivers therapy for some of the young people accessing YCT's services.

Emma Adams: Emma is YCT's School Coordinator, and she is the key contact for those outside agencies and schools buying in YCT's services.

Cathy Banks: Cathy is YCT's Finance Officer and her role within the team is to undertake all daily financial tasks, develop budgets, prepare financial reports and monitor income and expenditure.

Pauly Smith: Pauly is YCT's Office Manager and ensures everything runs smoothly at YCT House overseeing facility management. Pauly is also YCT's Data Protection and health and safety officer.

Lucia Bradbury: Lucia is YCT's Service Coordinator and is the first point of contact for all young people, families and professionals referring into our service. Lucia oversees the smooth delivery of all sessions delivered through the week.

Andrea Holmes: Andrea is a Senior Therapist at YCT. Alongside delivering 1-1 and group therapy in schools and community locations Andrea assists with safeguarding.

Hannah Howland: Hannah is a Senior Therapist at YCT. Hannah is a qualified Art Therapist and delivers 1-1 and group sessions for YCT in several local schools. Hannah is also in charge of our social media.



Case Study Two

Ella was a seven-year-old child referred to YCT for play therapy by her mother. Prior to the first national lockdown she had been a happy, outgoing child who performed well at school and enjoyed many out of school activities such as dancing and swimming. Ella's problems began in July following the long lockdown. She struggled to eat, refusing food and had panic attacks every time she had to leave the house. Sleep was frequently interrupted. School was seen as a place of safety, helped by the fact that mum worked there. During the parent session with the counsellor mum stated her wish to "get my old child back." On the Goodman Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire mum rated her emotional difficulties as 9/10.

The majority of the sessions took place via Zoom which the child accessed at school. Ella was able to tell the counsellor that she felt sad and angry. When using an online puppet show she selected a girl puppet who she said was angry and lonely. The interactive online resources, including a sand tray, doll's house and puppet show, proved valuable in engaging Ella and exploring her internal world. It was clear that whilst she wanted to be brave she was being crippled by fear and anxiety. The counsellor started by making a 'worry jar' with her to explore exactly what it was that she was anxious about. Personal safety was upmost on this list. She was scared of losing mum and dad or getting lost herself.

This was addressed by making safety plans with her for each of her main scenarios and, with her permission, telling mum this is what we had done so that they could work on them together. The work then progressed to visualising a 'worry monster' sitting on her shoulder putting these worries in her head. She drew him, named him, gave him character and detail. Next, she was encouraged to stand up to the monster, to shout back at him, to gain power and ownership over her worries. Gradually her anxiety lessened.

A school day trip was coming up and the counsellor herself felt very anxious as to how the child would cope. Together they addressed it, naming possible triggers and working on coping mechanisms.

The session following the trip the child was delighted to tell the counsellor that she had gone on the trip, and it had been great fun. The work continued with the counsellor empowering the child to take mastery of her anxiety. Together they practised superhero poses, helping the child to embody her growing confidence. Ella delighted in telling the counsellor at the beginning of her sessions every 'victory' over her worry monster and her pride was palpable.

With four sessions to go it was possible to move to face-to-face contact and the first session proved quite anxiety provoking for Ella. It was also clear from her parent's reaction that they too were anxious. However, by giving her some control in the form of her parent's phone number she was able to attend independently.

At the end of the session she remarked "It goes so quickly"! On ending Ella was able to reflect on the progress she had made and was very proud of herself. She was now able to take part in leisure and social activities away from the home and had even been able to fly abroad for a family holiday and stay with relatives by herself overnight with little or no anxiety.

She still used the model of a worry monster and enjoyed her new-found power over him. At the parent ending session the counsellor was able to provide parents with further tools to support Ella's emotional growth. Her scoring for emotional difficulties had now gone down to 4/10. They were delighted with the progress made and the positive impact on family life.

*Photos are for illustrative purposes only



Case Study 3

Mark, a 14-year-old boy, was referred for counselling by his school for anxiety and poor attendance. Mark presented as nervous and non-committal to counselling at first and his therapist worked hard to build trust between them. After three or four sessions, Mark started to disclose a history of childhood trauma, much of which he had never had the opportunity to discuss or process in any way. Some of the disclosures led to the therapist raising safeguarding concerns with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead, who was able to confirm that Mark had had some involvement with social care as a child.

As sessions progressed, Mark began to describe some disturbing thoughts and other concerning behaviour. Mark began to talk about things which he had been experiencing for many years but which he had never felt able to describe to an adult. The therapist was careful not to stigmatise Mark for these disclosures and worked hard to ensure that he did not feel judged or dismissed in any way. The therapist felt clear however, that Mark needed to have a psychiatric assessment as some of the concerning behaviour had begun to escalate. It took several further sessions before Mark felt able to agree to be referred to CAMHS and his therapist continued to work hard to retain his trust as other agencies became involved.

Mark's therapist also felt that a referral needed to be made to social care so that the family could receive some additional support around their cramped living conditions, along with some parenting support to enable them to help keep Mark safe. With Mark's agreement, a referral was made but did not meet the threshold for social care involvement. Fortunately, CAMHS were able to conduct an initial assessment within four weeks, resulting in Mark being placed on a waiting list for treatment.

Mark's school were happy to extend the number of YCT counselling sessions provided for him, so that he could continue to be supported until CAMHS were able to start their work with him.

Case Study 4

Casey, a ten-year-old boy, was referred by his school for low self-esteem, emotional outbursts, difficulty with peer relationships, suicide ideation and self-harm. At the time of referral, he was the middle child of three, having a younger sister who had severe additional needs. On the Goodman Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire his teacher rating put him in severe difficulties, especially in the areas of emotions and hyperactivity.

Casey's first session was very tentative. He came with hood up, arms folded. He sat down low in his chair and his voice was hard to hear. He stated that he had problems with anger, 'too many feelings.' There was a transference of unfairness and underlying unworthiness. The second session saw a change in his demeanour. He was more open and removed his hood so that I could physically see him. He expressed feelings of 'not wanting to be here.' Following sessions saw him use resources to express his anger in a safe but physical way, much to his delight. He used a ghost figure regularly in his play and this led on to a discussion about death in an open and containing manner. What was beginning to emerge more clearly were his feelings about his sister and a soon to be born sibling. About this time, he stated a wish to move out from home and live with his father. Relationships with his mother and siblings were difficult. It was clearly hard for him to share mum's time. It felt as though there was no time for him. Feelings of unworthiness continued to dominate. He struggled with bouts of sickness that would spring from nowhere but seemed a physical manifestation of his emotions. The need to feel safe and cared for dominated our conversations and the play. He made a helmet to protect himself.

As sessions continued his play became lighter and more resilient. He was careful over what he made and withstood failure better. He fashioned a model from clay having first carefully drawn it out on paper. He was proud of his figure, nurturing and protective of it. He wanted to show friends but when he took it back to the classroom it broke. He immediately brought it back to me to mend for him. Wanting me to heal physically and emotionally. The following week he made another model the same but stronger and more resilient, reflecting his growth. He talked about his figure having five years of torture, his sister was five.

We were now working towards our ending, but he was finding that hard, referring to me 'leaving him'. However, with gentle support his play and mood continued to be lighter and more playful. He wanted to make a further model but there was little clay left. He could tolerate the disappointment however, 'that will have to do then, that's just right'. Our final session was difficult for us both, a strong attachment had been formed. I reflected on his progress and how well he had done in his sessions. I reminded him of other adults from whom he could get support and we made a first aid kit of support.

Final assessment showed a 17-point improvement on his teacher's SDQ score. He scored zero for emotional issues. He had not tried to self-harm or mentioned taking his own life for many weeks now. Emotional outbursts in class had disappeared as had the bouts of sickness. His attitude to learning was markedly changed. Casey had rarely been able to discuss his emotions openly, the work had been done through metaphorical play, attuned reflection and the power of the relationship.

YCT's School Services

Our work within schools has continued to grow throughout 2021, albeit with significant COVID-related disruptions. Not least of these was the closure of schools in the early part of the year. While we managed to deliver many sessions remotely, there were inevitable interruptions to our service. When schools reopened on the 8th March, it quickly became clear that the impact of repeated lockdowns and school closures had compounded many young peoples' mental health difficulties. Schools repeatedly told us that their onsite counselling had never felt so crucial.

YCT's school counsellors are all fully qualified and experienced therapists, with specialist skills in working with children. As young people have presented to us with increasingly complex needs and levels of risk continue to escalate, the need to have experienced and qualified counsellors on site has been more important than ever. The quality and experience of our therapists enables YCT to offer the 'value add' services that our schools now expect from us. These include the ability to highlight potential safeguarding concerns and work with third parties to keep young people safe, multi-agency working, attendance at TAFs, liaising with social care, meeting with parents as well as supporting referrals to other children's mental health services.

YCT now work with over 20 primary and secondary schools and colleges in Harlow and across West Essex. The majority of our work involves the delivery of 1-2-1 counselling and play therapy services to pupils aged 5-19, supporting with a range of issues. Our therapists have been working with young people suffering with a range of issues including very high levels of anxiety, depression, anger, family breakdowns, developmental trauma, academic stress, friendship concerns and gender identity issues. Schools have reported that many pupils are so anxious that they are not attending school. Numbers of pupils self-harming and/or experiencing suicidal ideation are very high with disordered eating and OCD type behaviours also on the increase. The long-term impact of COVID on young peoples' mental health is difficult to overstate. As children's mental health services face record numbers of referrals, the provision of school-based support has become even more important as a strategy to ease pressure on NHS services.

As well as our 1-2-1 individual work, YCT has also been involved in a number of specialist projects and other ad hoc work this year. For example, we were asked to provide some crisis counselling as part of a coordinated response to a significant school incident which had affected a small number of pupils within a secondary school. As well as having a major

impact on the emotional wellbeing and development of the pupils affected, the incident had safeguarding implications. YCT were able to offer a warm, non-judgemental, highly sensitive counselling service which we know had a positive impact for many of those involved.

Feedback

But don't just take our word for it. Here are some of the things that young people accessing our school services have said about us in the last 12 months:

What do you think would have happened if you had not received help from YCT?

- "I would be in a dark place mentally and I would have thought I was worthless."
- "I would still be the same as I was (struggling with anxiety)"
- "Suicidal thoughts would have increased, and I would have had zero help"
- "I would still get annoyed at the simplest of things and be trying to fight everyone."
- "I would probably be struggling to talk to people, wouldn't enjoy the stuff I do because of the thoughts going through my head"
- "I would not be trying to help myself and I wouldn't know what to do"

I think YCT is:

- "Very honest and professional"
- "Good and Helpful and trustworthy"
- "Good for helping to talk through what is going on"
- "Is good and I believe YCT cares deeply for their clients"
- "Helpful and understanding and easy to talk to and really great to talk about your problems with"
- "Good at helping younger people like me change and be happy"

YCT would be better if:

- “I could have sessions for longer”
- “It was in a better area than where I am as this room creeps me out”
- “Everyone had a counsellor like mine”
- “I don’t think it could be better.”

Testimonial 1

YCT have provided a consistently high level of Counselling therapists within our school. This service has become an integral part of our whole school Wellbeing offer, and our student’s value having experienced and caring practitioners to support their needs.

In my role overseeing the running of the service in school, I have always found our allocated counsellors great to work with. They are excellent in communicating with me around any concerns or difficulties. They fit easily into the ethos of our school by, for example, recognising that the logistics of student’s attendance in the sessions can at times be challenging and working around this, and they have always gone out of their way to ensure each student is supported in a way that reflects their need.

In the current climate where outside support for schools is so intermittent, our YCT Counsellors allow us to provide a very necessary intervention, and from the feedback I receive from our students, it is really appreciated.

Laura Anthony MA Ed.

**Specialist Leader in Education
Learning Manager - Coaching, Counselling & Mentoring,
& Mental Health Lead**

The Hertfordshire & Essex High School

Testimonial 2

Joyce Frankland Academy have been working with YCT since September 2021. From the start we have received exceptional service, from the initial site meeting to ascertain the right counsellors for the Academy demographic through to the ongoing weekly counselling sessions.

YCT provide us with two counsellors one of whom does individual work and the other small group sessions. We have found the services provided to be excellent. Pupils have engaged well and noticeably benefited from the counselling they have received. The approaches used have been both imaginative and flexible, very much tailored to the individual.

Melissa Garner

**Senior Safeguarding Officer
and Student Support Officer
Joyce Frankland Academy,
Newport**



Meet the Board of Management



Neil Frost
(Chair)

Neil has worked extensively with young people in formal and informal education in Hertfordshire, and worked in Essex as an Associate Director of Public Health. A longstanding YCT Trustee, Neil is also a Trustee of two other charities in Essex.



Julia Miles
(Vice Chair)

Julia has a background in HR recruitment & development, management and strategic planning. A qualified Psychodynamic Counsellor (MSc), Julia had her own practice and has been a volunteer addiction counsellor. She has previous experience on the Board of another charity and advises the YTC Board on personnel and clinical aspects.



Nigel Varnam
(Secretary)

Nigel is a long-standing Board member. His background is in Youth and Community work, having been a Senior Manager within the Essex Youth Service. He is now a trained advisor with Citizens Advice and a Justice of the Peace.



Claire Liggins
(Treasurer)

Claire is a trained Chartered Accountant and recently joined the board to assist with the Charity's financial affairs. Claire is also Treasurer for another local charity.



Councillor Sue Livings

Councillor Sue Livings has been a local councillor for over thirty years and works hard representing the people of Old Harlow. We are very pleased that Sue has returned to YCT's Board of management following her successful time with us in the early 2000's and joins us as Harlow Council's representative on the board.



Andrew Linton

With a wide range of experience in probation and social work, Andrew is currently a Lecturer in social work and MA convenor at Goldsmith's University of London. He is also Chair of the Board and Trustee of Ark Resettlement Services charity in Tottenham, London. Andrew advises and updates the staff and board on Safeguarding issues.



Mark Ingall

After thirty plus years of teaching in secondary schools and five years serving as a Harlow District Councillor, including three years as leader, Mark now works in the food logistics industry.



Lorraine Collins

Lorraine has a background in local authority prevention and early intervention services. She managed a number of teams including targeted youth services and the family information support service. She has experience of working with voluntary sector management groups and providing guidance and support to local authority commissioned services.

Groups

Group sessions provided by YCT offer a Young Person the opportunity to interact with other individuals who share the same goal of wanting to improve his/her/their emotional well-being.

An example of a group currently provided by YCT is the Understanding and Managing Anxiety Group whereby the main aims and objectives of the group are as follows:

‘For participants to gain a greater understanding of what anxiety is, develop an increased awareness of their own anxiety, and to learn ways to cope with and manage anxiety.’

Each group comprises of up to six young people aged between 13-19 years from the local community who have been referred by parents, schools, colleges, mental health professionals, or themselves.

During the group young people are provided with psycho-educational information as to what anxiety is, and this allows them to understand that anxiety is a normal human emotion, designed to help people naturally respond in certain situations such as a perceived ‘threat.’ This knowledge is often extremely empowering for young people who have maybe never understood that anxiety can be completely normal. During the process of building trust within the group, it often becomes apparent that a feeling of ‘belonging’ is present in a group, as individuals share similar experiences, and therefore no longer feel so ‘isolated.’ As the group progresses, individuals are able to learn how to develop relevant coping strategies and manage their anxiety which helps them gain a sense of autonomy and control over their overwhelming feelings.

During one exercise ‘reframing negative beliefs,’ young people learn to identify negative beliefs which impact his/her/their life and with support from group peers and the facilitators, can learn how to challenge the negative beliefs with an alternative and healthy perspective. ‘Grounding techniques’ are developed and practiced as a group which encourages each individual to focus on the ‘here and now,’ and these techniques can subsequently be practiced wherever and whenever the young person chooses to outside the group. Furthermore, it can be empowering for the individual to be able to adopt ways to alleviate their own anxiety. ‘Toolkits’ can be developed which help the individual create a number of resources to refer to when needed.

The sessions are really practical and help group members develop skills from the creative activities offered as they have the freedom to express their feelings freely and find new ways to manage their anxiety. Handouts and worksheets are provided to work through and complete both individually and as a group which illustrate how thoughts, feelings and behaviours

interrelate, and this, in turn helps the individual to identify repeated patterns and themes/ situations which may create or trigger anxiety.

In addition, young people are able to learn how to challenge their own unhelpful thinking patterns and adopt healthy new ways of thinking.

Above all, the key thing for them to understand is that they are not 'alone,' in a safe environment where trust of one another can be developed as the group sessions progress. The group allows young people to seek support from peers and equally to experience an increase in self-worth from being able to support their peers, as well as receive guidance and support from the group facilitators. While group work can be feared we often witness real transformation during the course of the sessions as young people build friendships and confidence.

Annual Lecture



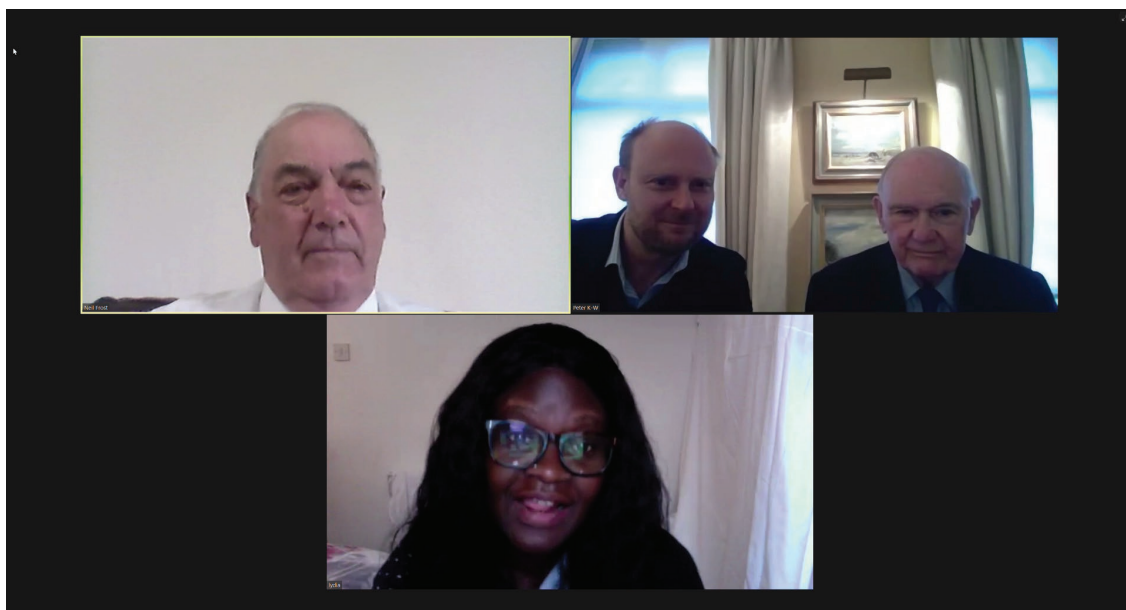
A key part of YCT's calendar each year is its annual lecture. These began in 2013 and have taken place every year since and are a key feature in many fellow professional's calendars. Each year expert speakers from a wide range of disciplines share their expertise with colleagues from, and associated with, YCT.

2021's lecture was a first for YCT as our annual lecture was forced online due to ongoing COVID-19 restrictions. We were fortunate to be joined by Professor Sean Duggan, Chief Executive, of Mental Health Network and was well attended even as an online event. Sean spoke about his time in the mental health field from starting out as a mental health nurse in 1979, right up to his most recent projects leading the Mental Health Network and the Nurse Directors Networks 'aspiring nurse director programme.'

Sean spoke of the importance in influencing politicians, policy makers and heads of public sector organisations and other key stakeholders to deliver evidence-based interventions with a sound economic basis. He shared with attendees about influencing health policy on a national level; through his membership of the Five Year Forward View oversight group, chairing of the Mental Health Act Review's addressing Rising Detention Rates Topic Group and NHS Long Term Plan Steering Group.

Mental health within the criminal justice system was also a priority for Sean and he spoke about his time at the Sainsbury's Centre for Mental Health as director of the Criminal Justice Programme, before becoming Chief Executive. He led on several health economic studies, many of which were eventually included in the NHS Long Term Plan and widely accepted by the Treasury.

The lecture, was much appreciated by members of the audience and alongside the presentation of our annual awards by Sir John Kemp-Welch our first online lecture was most definitely a success.





The Lady Diana Kemp-Welch Award



Nothing YCT does today would have been possible without the input and dedication of one of its founders, the late Lady Diana Kemp-Welch. Both Lady Diana and her family have continued to be keen supporters of YCT over the years, ensuring that her legacy continues and the all the expertise and advice she brought to the organisation is still meeting the needs of young people across East Herts and West Essex.

Following her death in December 2013, YCT wanted to ensure that Lady Diana's significant input into the organisation was acknowledged and remembered. With the support of Lady Diana's family, and thanks to a generous anonymous donation (meaning that funds are not taken away from service-delivery) a number of Awards are made each year.

Nominations for the Lady Diana Kemp-Welch Award can be submitted by anyone who has referred a young person to the service in the last year and equally recognised the significant progress made in the life of the young person through the course of their involvement with YCT.

YCT is extremely pleased to announce that in 2022
the Lady Diana Kemp-Welch Award will be presented to:

Poppy Mansfield-Salmon

Charlie Brown

Xander Kemp

Ella-Louise Aldred

Impact and Evaluation

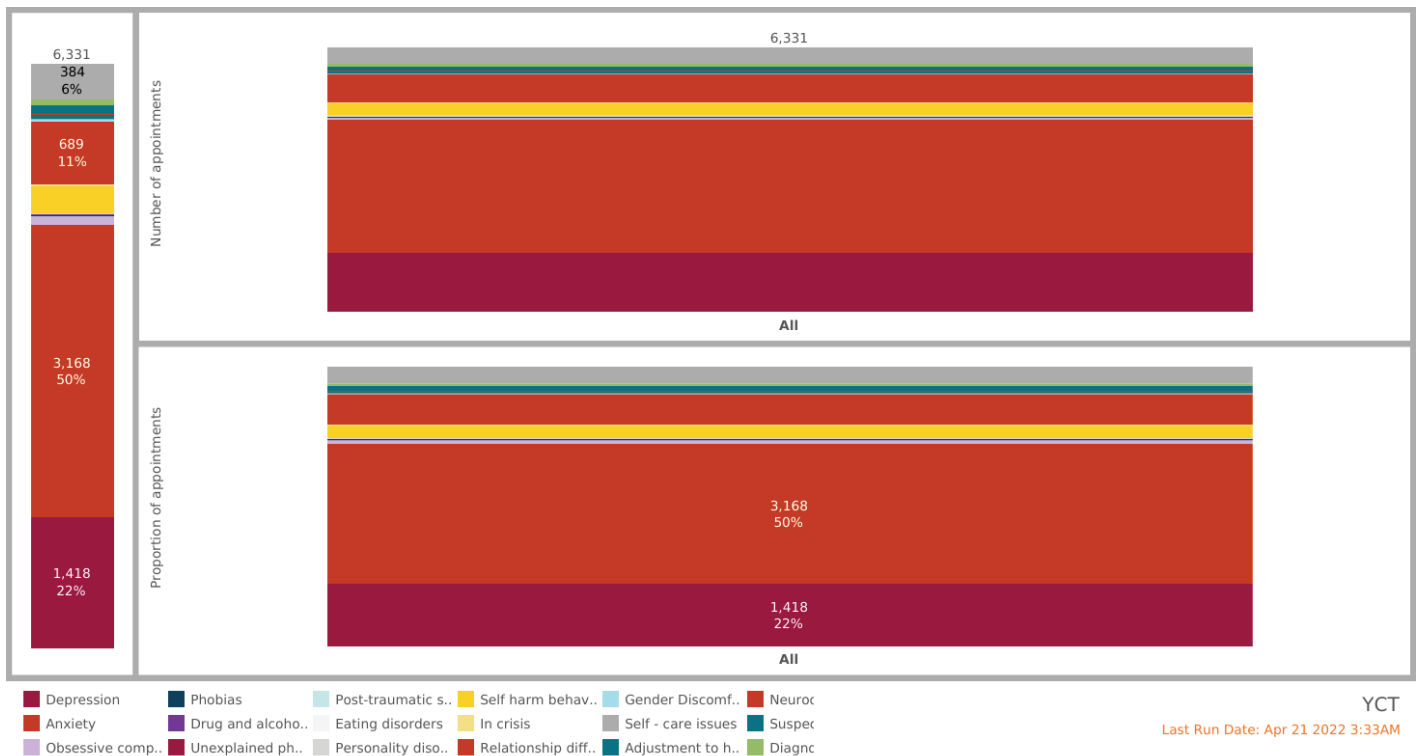
In 2021 YCT provided 10,546 counselling sessions and while it is good to see we have increased the number of sessions available it is important to be able to accurately assess our impact and monitor outcomes for the young people accessing our service.

Below are a series of visual aids to demonstrate the range of clients we are seeing and the impact of our work.

Referral reasons

Unsurprisingly our two most common reason for referral to our service were anxiety and depression

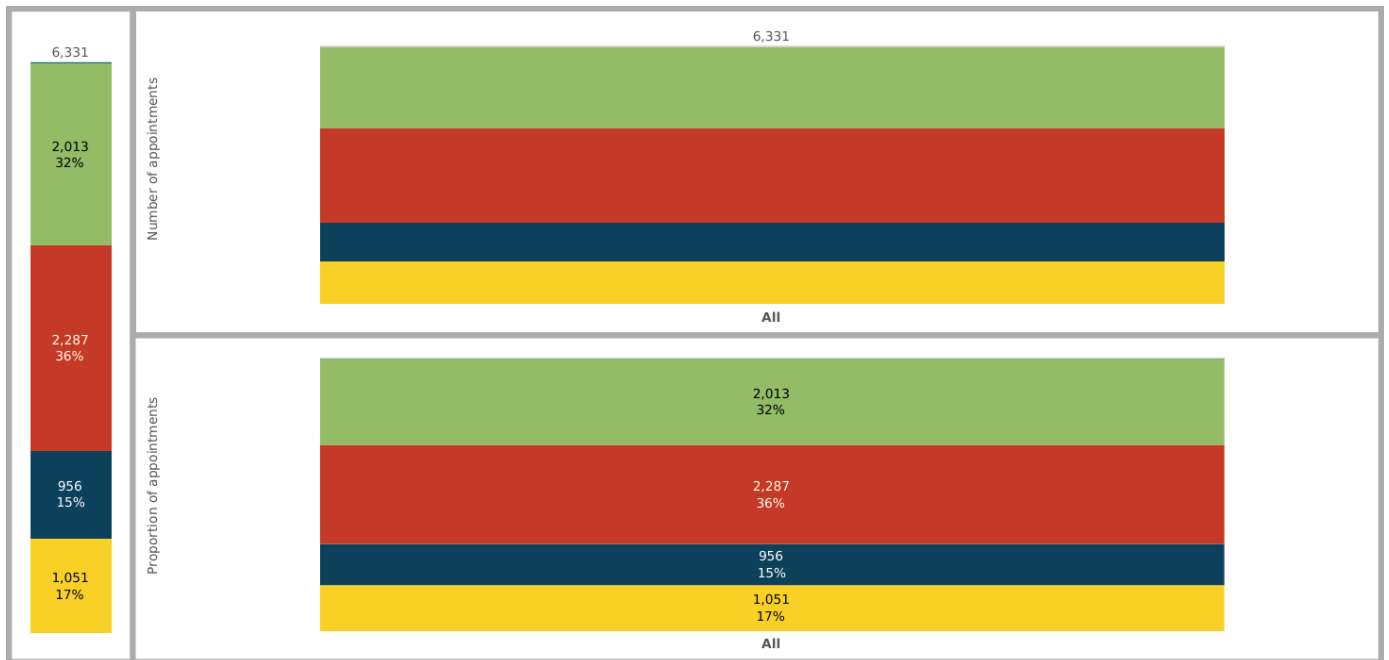
Anxiety accounted for 50% of our referrals while depression covered 22% of the reasons young people required support. In 2021 we saw 11% of our new referrals state relationship difficulties as a reason for referral and this could have been influenced by the repeated lockdowns and uncertainty during the year.



Gender

Our breakdown of gender across our community clients was as follows:

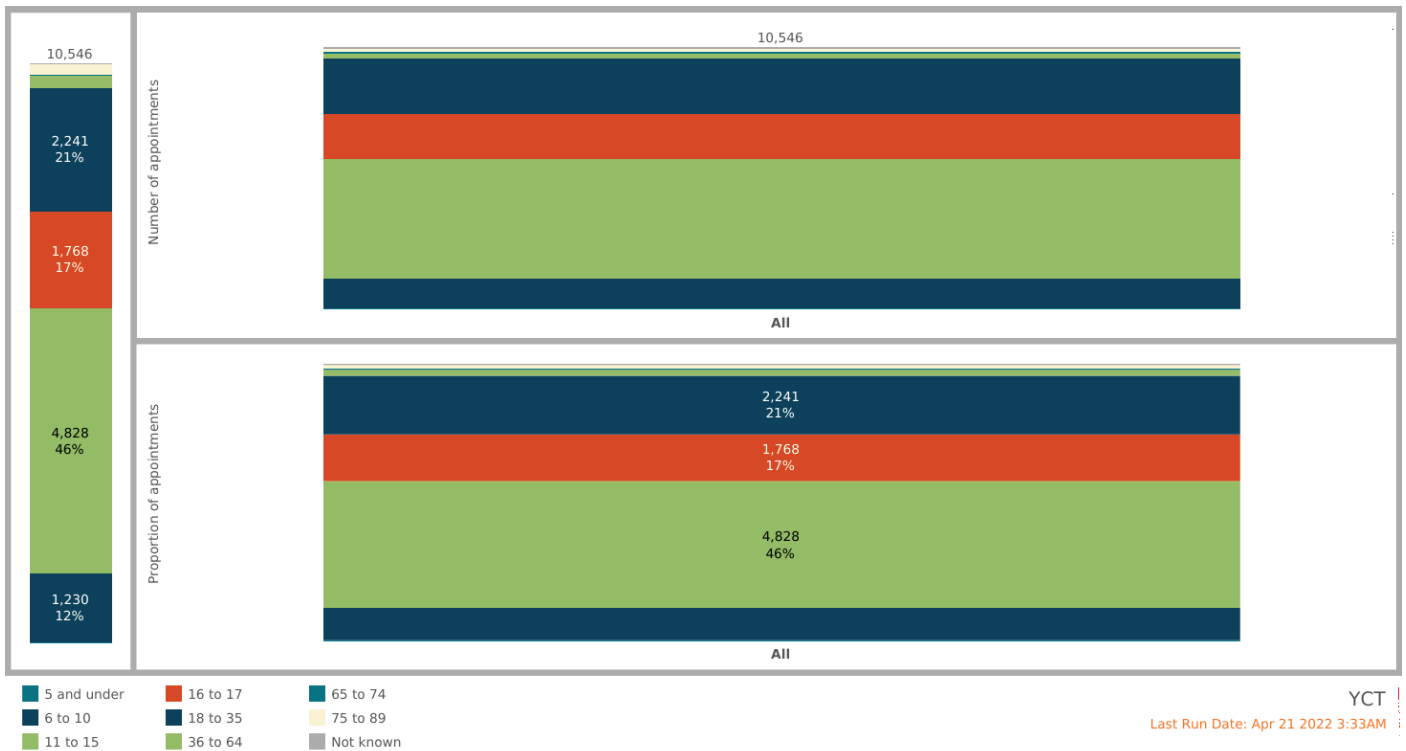
Female including trans female	65%
Male including trans male	32%
Non-Binary	2%
Not Stated	1%



■ Male (including .. ■ Female
■ Male ■ Non-binary
■ Female (includi.. ■ Not Stated (pers..

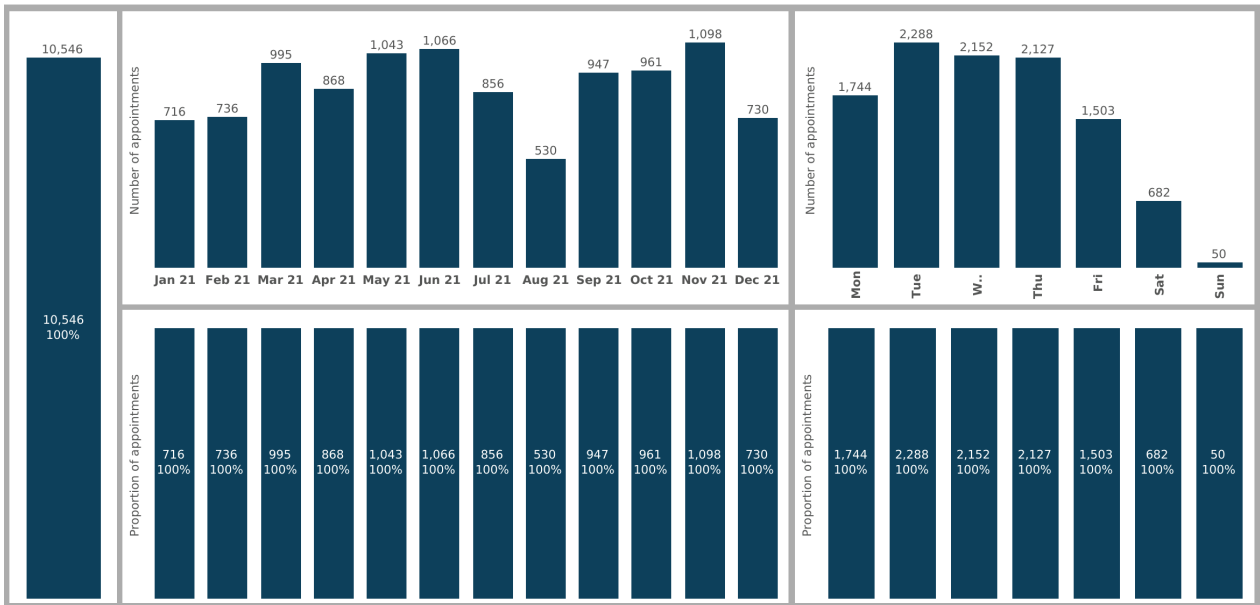
Age

Most young people we provide counselling for are aged 11+ but with the introduction of play therapy in 2020 12% of our clients in 2021 were 10 and under.



Attendance

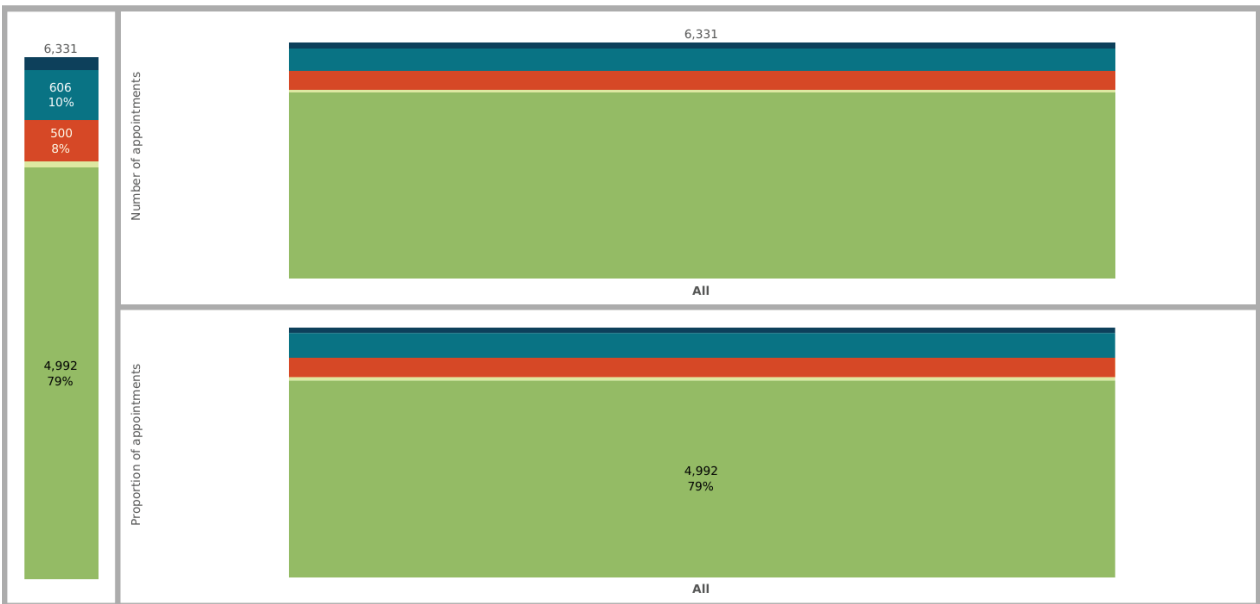
You will see from the image below that our service was busy across the year with a slight reduction during the summer due to school holidays and no lockdowns! We continue to be pleased to see high rates of attendance and recorded an average attendance rate of 79%



■ All

YCT

Last Run Date: Apr 14 2022 3:06AM



■ Attended on time
 ■ Appt cancelled ..
 ■ Arrived late but ..
 ■ Appt cancelled ..
 ■ DNA

YCT

Last Run Date: Apr 21 2022 3:33AM

Outcome Measures

For YCT to assess meaningful improvement over the course of therapy, two numeric changes are essential. Reliable change and clinically significant change

- Reliable change is change that exceeds that which might be expected by chance alone or measurement error and for the CORE outcome measures this is represented by a change of 5 or more in the clinical score
- Clinically significant change is indicated when a client's CORE score moves from the clinical to the non-clinical population (ie. Client scores above 10 during the first session and below 10 at the end of therapy.)

We use CORE forms within sessions and have seen an average pre-treatment score of 18 and post treatment score of 10.

This means an average reduction of 8 and with the reliable change index standing at 5 these outcomes are positive.



Board Members

Neil Frost – Chair and Company Director

Julia Miles- Vice Chair

Nigel Varnam – Company Secretary

Claire Liggins – Treasurer

Mark Ingall

Andrew Linton

Lorraine Collins

Sue Livings

Staff

Katy Bradbury- Chief Executive Officer

Julia Gibson- Lead Therapist

Emma Adams – School Coordinator

Lucia Bradbury – Service Coordinator

Andrea Holmes - Senior Therapist

Hannah Howland- Senior Therapist

Cathy Banks – Finance Officer

Pauly Smith- Office Manager

33 Contracted Therapists

Volunteers

Barbara Gaskell – Therapist

Pat Sealey – Administrator

Di Smith – HR Advisor

Doug Brown – Annual Review

Josh Bradbury - IT Support

Contracted Consultants

Counselling and Supervision – BACP

Mayden - Iaptus Client Management System

Customers, Funders and Partners

YCT has a diverse range of customers, funders, partner agencies, private sector companies and supporters that make our work possible and we would like to say thank you to all.



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