

Information for Children and Young People about Counselling

'Talking things through that matter to you'

What's counselling about?

Sometimes we all have problems that are worrying. Think of a confusing jigsaw when all the pieces are difficult to match together. Talking about a problem in counselling is like sorting out all the pieces so we can begin to build a picture that makes more sense to us.

Sometimes it's difficult to talk to parents, friends or teachers about things that are making us anxious. A counsellor is someone who you can talk to in a different way, someone who will listen to you very carefully, who will not judge you or tell you what to do.

Counselling is about helping you to work things out for yourself making decisions and choices and helping you to look at things differently. it can help you to feel better about yourself.

What kind of things do people talk about in counselling?

Whatever matters to them. Whatever is worrying for them.

It could be about lots of different things. Here are some examples of problems and some thoughts, questions and feelings that you may have.

Parents separating

Is it my fault? Their breaking up is breaking me up too.

Chaos at home

I want to go out with my mates and make my own decisions. I'm arguing with parents all the time. They never listen to me why should I listen to them???

Making friends/keeping friends

Everyone else seems to have loads of friends. I haven't. What's wrong with me?

I'm feeling angry but! don't know why

I'm worried because / keep feeling that I want to lash out at people. / can't control myself. I'm always in trouble at home and at school because of it.

Bullies are about

I don't want to come to school. Bullies bug me every day and it's getting worse.

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A tough time at school.

The work is piling up. I'm getting more and more behind. I can't seem to get on with it. The longer that this goes on the worse I feel.

Death of someone special.

I miss this person so much. I'll never get through this. It'll be like this forever.

Nobody understands how bad I'm feeling.

Feelings about myself

Sometimes I don't understand how I feel or why / feel like I do.

Remember, your problem may be completely different. The counsellor is there to listen to whatever is worrying you.

How will I know if Counselling is right for me?

You can meet the counsellor for one or more sessions to find out for yourself. You can ask questions, see how you feel.

The counsellor will talk to you about where and when to come and how long it can last.

Counselling is voluntary. You have the choice to come or not. Whatever you decide will be OK.

My problems and worries are private. Will other people know what I have talked about?

No. What you talk about is confidential. That means it's between you and the counsellor. It's your time and your space to be with someone who is there for you and nobody else.

If you are at risk of harm the counsellor may need to talk to someone else to help keep you safe but would talk with you about this first.

Will anything be written about me?

Keeping information about people safe and confidential is very important to the counsellor.

The counsellor will make some notes about what has been talked about in the session. These are kept safely by the counselling service.

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A counsellor presents their work to a counselling supervisor regularly. This person checks the counsellor is working well with you. Neither your name, nor your school is mentioned.

How do I get to see the Counsellor?

Someone may have suggested it to you, or you can begin by talking to a member of staff that you trust. This may be your form tutor or the Pastoral Head in the School.

They will fill in a referral form and give it to the Counsellor who will see you when they have a space. The school will usually contact your parents! carers. It's still possible to come to counselling without parents being informed, but this needs to be specially arranged and it is important to talk to the member of staff or the counsellor about your wishes.

After you have finished your counselling you will be sent an evaluation form that you can complete. This form is anonymous, unless you choose to put your name on it. The feedback you give will let us know how well we are helping the children and young people that we see. If you have any complaints you are welcome either speak with your counsellor or to contact the Head of the Counselling Service who will try to sort things out.

Here are some comments made by pupils who have been to counselling.

'Having counselling has helped me a lot. I have been able to discuss my problems instead of locking them away, which is what I used to do. It has been a very big help to me.'

'The counselling helped so much because I could talk and not have to worry about anyone else finding out.'

'It was good to talk to someone I didn't really know.'

If you want any further information you can ask to speak with the counsellor, otherwise you can contact -