



# Listen to me



**#YoungVoices Matter**

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# Introduction

**This report focuses on young people’s mental health and sexual health. It provides an analysis of the responses we received from our survey and focus group discussions. We have highlighted the themes that have emerged as part of our analysis, in particular the similarities and differences from a gender perspective.**

Our report reflects comments from over 420 young people including experiences, opinions and aspirations for improvements within health structures and services in the local area.

Our research shows that embarrassment and lack of confidence is a barrier for young people wanting to access mental health and sexual health services. This causes problems and challenges when trying to engage with young people who are disconnected from services that have been designed to help and support them. It is vital to continue to provide young people with multi-agency and discrete access points where they can go for support.

Although there are services that can offer support such as Kooth<sup>1</sup> (a free online service that offers emotional and mental health support for children and young people) health and social care providers also need to have higher levels of emotional intelligence and professional skills to support young people.

Health and allied professionals that support young people provide valuable mental and sexual health services and are ideally placed to share informed experiences to improve services to support young people.

This report has been developed to communicate our findings informed by the experiences of young people - a seldom heard group. We believe that the findings provide a convincing case that young people need to have their voices heard.

## Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Leicestershire would like to thank all the young people who have taken part and shared their views. Thank you for making your voice count.

<sup>1</sup> Free online support for young people <https://www.kooth.com/>

# The Local Context

**Involving young people in improving services is an important element in building their confidence as it lets them know that their opinions will be listened to and acted upon.**

Locally, sexual health and mental health remains high on the agenda for Leicestershire. The implementation of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 subsequently created a fragmented service for sexual health resulting in various providers delivering different aspects of the service. This has led to the recent consultation of a new sexual health strategy for delivering sexual health services in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) from 2016-19.

In relation to mental health, following the publication of the Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Taskforce Future in Mind report<sup>2</sup> in March 2015, local areas have been asked to develop their Local Transformation Plans (LTP). The plans should set out ways to secure improvements in children and young people's (CYP) mental health outcomes and to release the additional funding that has been committed to CYP's mental health by The Department of Health.

In response to this national guidance, LLR through the Better Care Together (BCT) Programme has developed a multi agency transformational plan for mental health and

"I get the impression that my school and all the various services are well meaning. Talking to people has sometimes made me feel less alone and forgotten"

- Service user

wellbeing services for children and young people up to the age of 25<sup>3</sup>. This plan aims to provide access to the right help at the right time through all stages of emotional and mental health.

We want the findings from this report to be taken up by the different workstreams of the BCT strategy: Home Treatment & Crisis, Access to CAMHS, Early Help, Workforce Development and Building Resilience.

In Appendix A pg 30 we have referred to the vision of the BCT transformational plan for mental health and wellbeing services for children and young people and highlighted where our findings reflect the aspirations of the plan.

<sup>2</sup> Department of Health: Future in Mind; Promoting, protecting and improving our children and young people's mental health and wellbeing. [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/414024/Childrens\\_Mental\\_Health.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/414024/Childrens_Mental_Health.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Better Care Together (BCT) transformational plan for mental health and wellbeing services for children and young people 2015- 2020





# Our Approach

**In mid December 2015 we met with members of the Student Council at South Leicestershire College to gather insights to help shape and inform our work. We ran an interactive session to capture themes and issues of 40 students aged 16 to 19. We asked them what mattered most to them concerning their health and social care.**

Mental health and sexual health were the key topics that emerged.

In designing the survey, we wanted to provide young people with an opportunity to share their experiences and to discuss their aspirations for current and future mental and sexual health services.

The survey, titled 'Young Voices Matter', captured information on access, communications and improvements to services.

Prior to the launch of the survey, we shared a draft version with the Children and Families Services at Leicestershire County Council (LCC) and invited feedback on the questions in order to ensure the clarity and tone of the survey was appropriate for the specified ages.

To support the development of our survey and areas of focus we spoke with officers working in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and Sexual Health services.

The feedback provided a level of assurance that we were asking relevant questions. This feedback was then incorporated into the final version.

Professionals that support young people and deliver valuable mental and sexual health services are in a good position to share their experiences and help to develop a better support for young people, so we also included them.

We wanted to hear from professionals that work with young people so through our networks we reached out to workers within schools, colleges, voluntary sector, public and statutory sectors.

To incentivise young people to respond to the survey we offered them the opportunity to win £50 or £25 worth of high street vouchers. The prize draw took place at the Healthwatch Leicestershire Board meeting on 25 May 2016. All the 346 respondents that provided an email address were sent a copy of the final report and the winners will be notified.

The information we received includes suggestions and actions that commissioners and providers may want to consider. We plan to take these forward through channels other than this report in the near future.



346

Young people completed our survey



83

Young people attended interactive sessions



429

Total number of young people who took part

Partners and stakeholders were invited to help with the promotion of the survey. We developed an online promotional pack that included a set of resources to help promote the survey, directly to young people. This included:

- Prepared text that could be copied to their website
- A prepared 'Tweet' about the survey
- A hard and electronic copy of the survey including online link
- A hard and electronic copy of a flyer
- A hard and electronic copy of a poster

The promotional pack was shared with the following organisations:

Leicestershire County Council  
 West Leicestershire CCG  
 East Leicestershire CCG  
 East Midlands Ambulance Service  
 Leicester Partnership NHS Trust  
 University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust  
 Charnwood Borough Council  
 Harborough District Council  
 Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council  
 Melton Borough Council  
 North West Leicestershire District Council  
 Oadby and Wigston Borough Council  
 Blaby District Council

The Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board issued a request for all partners to proactively support the process and distribution of the survey.

Senior management in the Children and Families Services department at LCC also agreed to cascade the information across their department.

Promotional arrangements that were put in place to support the project are as follows:

- Inclusion in the Health and Wellbeing Chair's position statement 10 March 2016
- Children and Families to cascade the information through their networks. These include Youth Council, CYCLE group, The Jitty and Children in Care council
- Tweets from LCC and Health and Wellbeing accounts, colleges and Facebook posts
- Article on the LCC intranet
- Get Set project (voluntary work experience placements for 16-25 year olds across departments in LCC) and through their youth panel 'Be Unique'
- Head teacher's school newsletter.

We also issued a press release to promote the survey to local newspapers and used social media to cascade the survey far and wide and to connect with our target audience as well as mailing lists, which included the following:



# 1700

E-news subscribers



# 550

Homes receive the Newsletter



# 897

Twitter Followers



# Key Findings

The Listen to me #YoungVoicesMatter report highlights a number of experiences and insights into how young people feel about services.

Below are the main findings that emerge from the survey.

1. When young people were asked to choose how they would prefer to get information in relation to mental health and sexual health, the School Nurse was seen as the most trusted professional.
2. Both young men and young women broadly worry about the same issues all the time. The noticeable difference was young women worried about their homework, whereas young men worried about their relationships with others.
3. Both young men and young women had the least worries related to sexuality and smoking. Young women do not appear to worry at all about their sexuality whilst young men do not appear to worry at all about smoking.

## Mental health

Young people told us that there needs to be more awareness and support for individuals suffering from mental health issues.



**1 in 3** 113 / 297 of respondents said they suffer from mental health issues.



**73 / 181** young women said they suffer from mental health issues.



**30 / 86** young men said they suffer from mental health issues.

**51/297** were unsure if they had suffered from mental health issues.

**156/300** of respondents were unsure or didn't feel comfortable talking about mental health issues.

**146/297** would not know or were unsure who to talk to about their mental health concerns.

## Depression

A similar percentage of young women and men said that they had suffered from depression.



**24%**

of young people told us they suffer from depression.



**23/181**

young women said they suffer from depression.



**42/86**

young men said they suffer from depression.





## Self Harming

Young people recognised that they need more emotional support to deal with their self-harming.



**1 in 3** **102** young people told us they have self-harmed.



**69/181** young women said they have self-harmed.



**24/86** young men said they have self-harmed.

Our survey results reflect the national trend that more young women said that they have self-harmed than men.

## Anxiety

Almost a third of young people told us that they were unsure if they had ever suffered from anxiety.



**1 in 3**

**38%** young people surveyed told us they suffer from anxiety. Almost a third of all respondents saying they were unsure.



**69**

young women said they suffer from anxiety or depression.



**33**

young men said they suffer from anxiety or depression.

## Sexual health

Young people use sexual health services for a number of reasons which usually differ between young women and young men.



Young women access sexual health services mainly for contraception.



Young men mainly access sexual health services for STI testing and advice before having sex for the first time.

The 3 main barriers identified by young people to accessing sexual health services were:

- 01** Accessibility of sexual health services
- 02** Stigma and embarrassment
- 03** Confidentiality

All young people value confidentiality from staff and friendliness when accessing sexual health services.

See Appendix B on pages 32 & 33 for data tables for each of the above sections.



# Main Findings

## The main findings provide an overview of what young people told us concerning mental and sexual health.

There appear to be different triggers and factors which influence who accesses services, how they are accessed and the type of support that young men and young women want.

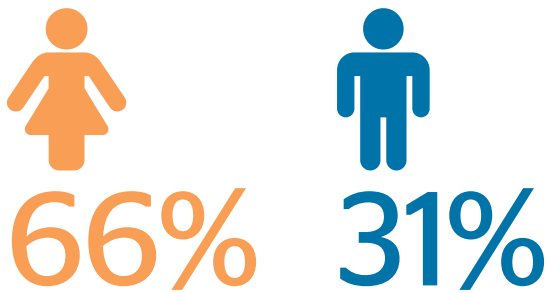
However, it is difficult to directly compare the responses across gender because the variation between the numbers of respondents in each group was quite large. To provide clarity we have included the number of respondents to each question.



Overall 346 online surveys were completed from young people of all ages between 13-25. The majority of our responses were from young people between the ages of 16-17 (137) and 20-25 (50).



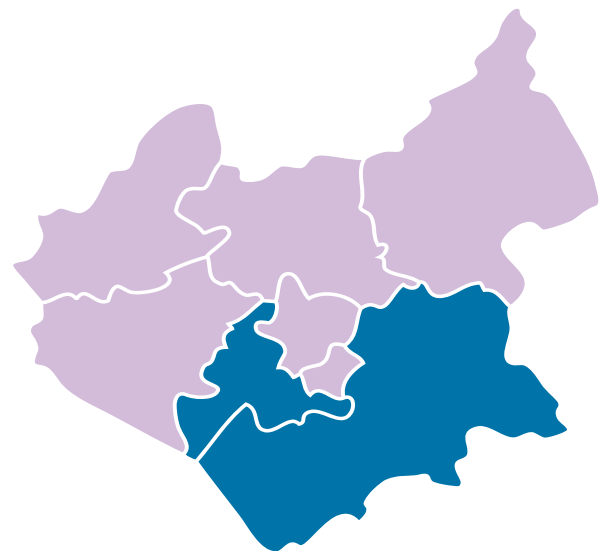
We were able to get responses from young people from a wide range of ethnicities however the majority of respondents were White English/Welsh/Scottish/Irish (207) and Indian (34).



Two-thirds of the overall responses were from young women and a one third from young men. The gender breakdown allowed us to see if there were any similarities and differences between young men and young women.



13% of our respondents said they have a disability.



We had a good response rate from young people from all over Leicestershire and Leicester City. The top 2 districts in the county were Blaby and Harborough.



## Local health services

We asked young people to prioritise their top 3 services to find out what was most important to them.

**344 young people stated their top 3 services:**

**Hospitals**



**GP's**



**Dentist**



Survey respondents were also given the opportunity to share with us any concerns or experiences they had. They told us that GPs need to communicate with them more effectively by providing a comfortable environment where they do not feel intimidated.

Two respondents also shared positive experiences of their GP.

**“My doctor is always very helpful and has helped me massively through many personal problems”**

- (Female, 18, Blaby)

**“When I tried to get help for mental health problems, my GP was very helpful. They referred me to a youth mental health service”**

- (Other, 18, Blaby)

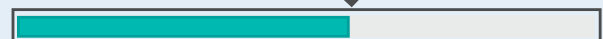
## GP Services

Access to GP services was a theme, which repeatedly appeared in the responses. Respondents were asked to rate how comfortable they felt getting support from their GP on a scale of 1 to 7 (1 being very uncomfortable and 7 being extremely comfortable);

4.4

Very uncomfortable

Extremely comfortable



63% of respondents rated above average.

## Methods of preferred communication

Respondents were asked to select from a pick list the top 2 methods of information sharing they preferred in relation to mental health.

The top 2 methods were at the GP surgery and by the School Nurse.



We asked the same question in relation to sexual health and the results were similar. The top 2 methods were during lesson time and from the School Nurse.

Analysing these responses also highlight that young people prefer face-to-face contact and trusted conversations with somebody who is knowledgeable and compassionate.



# Feedback on Mental Health

**Young people experiencing mental health issues affect the whole family in many different ways. If not diagnosed early, these issues can impact on the family and result in additional strains and pressures for the young person.**

The Department of Health's Task Force Report 'Future in Mind' offers a framework and resources to improve mental health wellbeing of all children. The LLR multi-agency transformational plan aims to improve the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people up to the age of 25.

The vision is that 'children will have access to the right help at the right time through all stages of their emotional and mental development.'

Many young people are dealing with difficulties such as anxiety, low mood, depression, conduct disorders and eating disorders, which can hinder them later in life. It is important for young people to feel that they can talk to somebody about their mental health and any issues and concerns they may have.

**We asked young people if they would feel comfortable talking openly about issues affecting their mental health.**

**48%** Nearly half of the respondents who answered this question said yes.

**62%** Said they were unsure or would not feel comfortable openly talking about mental health issues.



**47%**

Nearly half of young women felt comfortable openly talking about mental health.



**49%**

Nearly half of young men said they felt comfortable openly talking about mental health.

## What do young people worry about most?

Understanding what young people worry about most and how often they worry, can be useful when developing and providing responsive support services.

We asked young people how often they worried about specific issues such as; tests or exams, getting a job, their health, money, the way they look and sexuality.

Below we present the findings based on a total of **274** responses. **182** were from young women and **86** from young men. **5** respondents prefer not to say and **1** selected other. **72** young people did not specify a gender. We asked them what do you worry about 'all the time'. These responses are based on what young women and men selected the most.

### The top 5 issues young women worried about all the time were:



Tests or exams



The way you look including your weight



Money



Homework



Your health

### The top 5 issues young men worried about all the time were:



Tests or exams



Money



Your health



The way you look including your weight



Relationships with others

It is interesting to see that the majority of issues that young people worry about are shared between young men and women. There is a noticeable difference in that young women worried more about their homework in comparison to young men who worried more about their relationships with others.

We also looked at issues that young people did not worry about at all. The majority of young women (139) did 'not worry at all' about their sexuality and majority of young men (65) did 'not worry at all' about smoking. Further follow up to smoking may be required to explore if level of smoking is not a concern or if they do not smoke at all.



## Suffering with mental health issues

From the 297 young people who answered the mental health questions, over a third (113) of young people told us that they have suffered from mental health issues. 45% (133) said they have not and 17% (51) were unsure.

### Key Findings



**40%** of young women reported that they have suffered from mental health issues.

**46%** said they have not and **14%** said they were unsure.

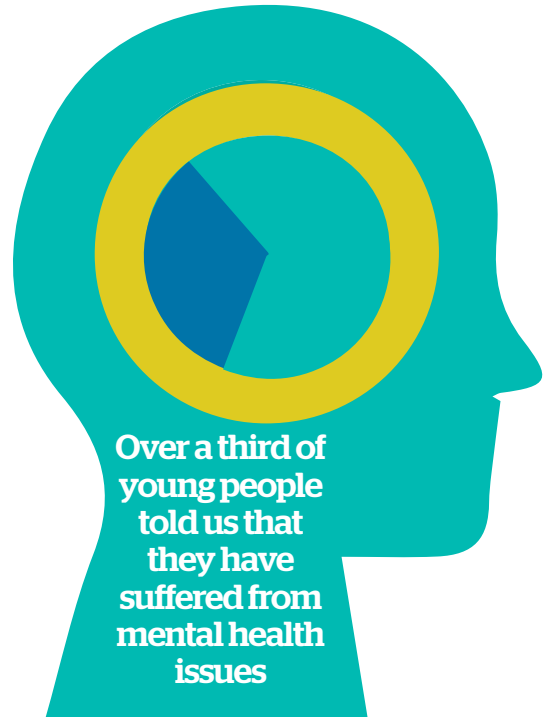


**35%** young men said they have suffered from mental health issues.

**43%** said they have not and **22%** were unsure.

Although there are no significant differences within the gender analysis for mental health our evidence suggests that many young people are suffering from mental health issues and telling us that there needs to be more support.

The findings also highlight that we cannot ignore the young men and young women who were 'unsure' if they had suffered from mental health issues. The figures are worrying as our findings show that from those who responded over 50% of young women (54%) and young men (57%) have suffered from mental health issues or were unsure.



“I think it would be good to see a reduced stigma when talking about mental health. Problems with this are so common that we shouldn't have to feel embarrassed about it any more!”

- Female, 20-25, Self-harmed, Charnwood

“From past experience and people I know, I definitely think that CAMHS needs to refer people quicker. People I know have had to go to the extreme of self harming just to be referred to CAMHS to receive the help they need, me being one of them”

- Male, 16, Self-harmed, Blaby

## Experience of Self-harming

**Over a third (102) of all young people who responded to the survey said that they have self-harmed.**

When looking at the data from a gender perspective we found that more young women than men said they had self-harmed. The following figures are based on 181 female responses and 86 male responses.

### Key Findings



# 69

young women said they had self-harmed



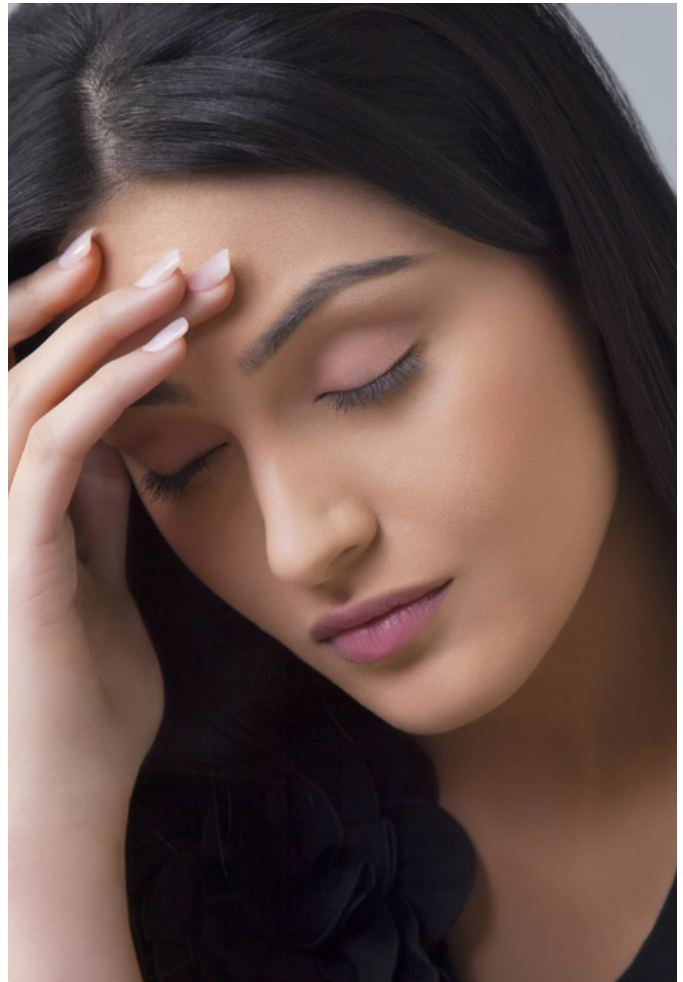
# 24

young men said they had self-harmed

Self-harm UK<sup>4</sup> has stated that girls are thought to be more likely to self-harm than boys, but that this could be because boys are more likely to engage in behaviours such as punching a wall, which is not always recognized as self-harm or does not come to the attention of hospitals. They also stated that in 2014, figures were published suggesting a 70% increase in 10-14 year olds attending A&E for self-harm.

To some extent our findings reflect the research by Selfharm UK which found that more young women self harm than young men. Our findings highlight that there appears to be different triggers for young women, such as worrying about the way they look, homework and exams or money.

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.selfharm.co.uk/get/facts/what\\_is\\_self-harm](https://www.selfharm.co.uk/get/facts/what_is_self-harm)



**“I think there ought to be a friendlier version of the Samaritans helpline but for younger people as the concept of them to someone such as myself is really daunting and they don’t feel like somewhere I could go to or ring without feeling “small” or unworthy of the help. There needs to be somewhere, a phone line just for 16-25 year olds or in my opinion from 14-25. Depression is scary enough as it is let alone when someone tells you to ring the Samaritans, it makes the situation a whole lot more terrifying. There needs to be a more approachable and specialised service for us.”**

Female, 20–25, Self-harmed, North West Leicestershire



## Experience of Depression

When we looked at the responses, the percentages are very similar for young women and young men who said that they had suffered from depression.

### Key Findings

Nearly a quarter of **296** respondents said they suffer from depression, **47%** said no and **29%** were unsure\*.



Nearly a quarter of **182** young women reported suffering from depression and **30%** said they were unsure.



Just over a quarter of the **86** young men who answered the question reported suffering from depression. **27%** were unsure.

\*31 respondents did not specify a gender.



“The school nurse is often forgotten about - I think lots of people silently struggle with mental health issues without getting any help, as they do not know who to turn to. I myself have struggled with anxiety and depression and have not known who to turn too”

- Female, 18, Suffer from Depression, Blaby

“I believe young people living with mental health issues or concerns need more acknowledgement because from personal experience I don't believe it is taken seriously and young people are left to suffer and it seems like it always has to be a “last resort” until something is done”

- Male, 20-25, Suffer from Depression, North West Leicestershire



## Experience of Anxiety

### Key Findings

Over a third **38%** of all 295 respondents said they suffer from anxiety. 34% said no and 28% said they were not sure\*.



# 69

young women reported suffering from anxiety, 60 said they do not and 52 were unsure. (181 young women answered this question)



# 33

young men reported suffering from anxiety, 30 said they do not and 23 said they were not sure. (86 young men answered this question)

\*28 people did not provide a gender.

There is a misconception that depression and anxiety is just a low mood or that it is a 'normal' part of growing up. These are serious conditions, which make it hard for people to cope from day to day. Often, feeling sad, miserable and anxious is a reaction to something that may cause an individual to feel these emotions. For example arguing with family or friends, a relationship break up or changing schools<sup>5</sup>.

Below are some comments by respondents who were 'unsure' if they suffered from depression or anxiety.

**“There needs to be more awareness on mental health and it needs to be easier for people to get help discreetly ... I have noticed an increase in mental health issues in young people, they are scared to do anything about it as well as not knowing what to do about it”**

- Female, 18, Leicester City

**“A teen drop in centre where any questions about sexual / mental health etc can be answered in one place”**

- Female, 17, Blaby

The number of respondents who were 'unsure' if they suffered from depression or anxiety is important. If young people are unaware that they are suffering from mental health issues they will not know what help and support is available or how to access it.

**“It would be nice if different services actually listened in depth and took seriously what you are saying to them without you going back several times saying the same thing”**

- Female, 16, Suffer from Anxiety, Oadby & Wigston

**“Based on personal experience, it would be nice to see some more anxiety/depression support as I know it is fairly common in my age group”**

- Male, 19, Suffer from Anxiety, Harborough

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/pages/low-mood-stress-anxiety.aspx>

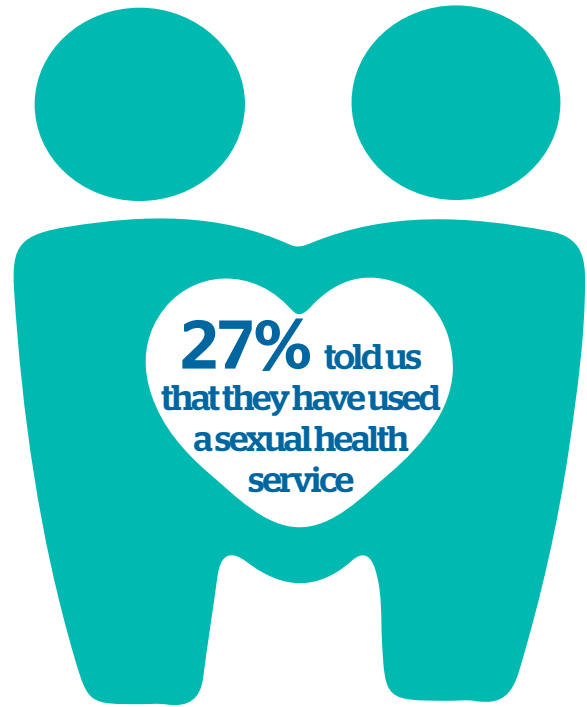


# Feedback on Sexual Health

**In March 2013 the Department of Health released a report ‘A Framework for Sexual Health Improvements in England’<sup>6</sup>, which set out the Governments vision to improve sexual health.**

The report aims to provide the information, evidence base and support tools to enable those involved in sexual health improvement to work together effectively and ensure that accessible high quality services and support are available to everyone.

**By speaking to young people, we aimed to gather some insight on how they access services and what their aspirations are for sexual health services.**



## Key Findings

**79** respondents from a total of 295 young people told us that they have used a sexual health service and **216** said no\*.



**61 out of 182** young women told us that they have used a sexual service.



**13 out of 85** young men told us that they have used a sexual health service.

\*28 did not specify a gender

## Access to sexual health services

From our survey findings, the percentage of young women using sexual health services was higher, in comparison to young men, however we are unable to draw direct conclusions from this. We found there may be a number of factors, which influence whether a young person might access a sexual health service such as their awareness of services and their confidence to use them.

## Support from a sexual health service

We provided a list of support areas based around sexual health and asked young people to choose the type of support that they would want from a service. The question allowed respondents to choose as many options as they wanted from a pick list.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-framework-for-sexual-health-improvement-in-england>

A total of 291 young people answered this question. The top areas of support were Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs).

**180 young women** answered this question and the top 3 areas of support they would want from a sexual health service are:

- Access to types of contraception
- STI testing and treatment
- Access to morning after (emergency) contraception



**83 young men** answered this question and the top 3 areas of support they would want from a sexual health service are:

- Advice about STIs
- STI testing and treatment
- Advice before having sex for the first time



The findings demonstrate that if and when young women access sexual health services they would do so mainly for contraception. On the other hand the areas of support that young men would want is based around advice on STIs. It is also interesting that they would use the service to seek advice before having sex for the first time.

## Expectations from staff within sexual health services

Understanding the expectations that young people may have of staff that work within sexual health services is equally as important as the support they require.

Respondents were asked to tell us what attributes they would want to see from staff working within a sexual health service. Confidentiality stood out above everything as most important, followed by friendly staff.

This finding reflects HWL's previous research report 'Patient Views on Quality of Services'.

"I think it should be more openly publicised because a lot of teenagers who are sexually active or not need to be given the information...you can't expect everyone to go looking for help because they may not feel comfortable doing so"

- Female, 18, Leicester City

(September, 2014)<sup>7</sup>, which found that young people valued caring, friendliness and confidentiality from a service and related those attributes to a good service.

Our findings highlight that confidentiality and friendly staff are important factors for young people when accessing sexual health services. It was also interesting to see that both factors were the most popular choice for both young women and young men.

## Barriers to accessing sexual health services

We asked young people to tell us what sort of issues would make it difficult for them to use a sexual health service. 189 young people answered this question.

This was an open-ended question with a text box giving the young person the opportunity to give a response and provide us with as much detail as they wanted.

From reviewing all the qualitative feedback we categorised the responses into emergent themes. The main themes were accessibility of:

- Sexual health services
- Stigma and embarrassment and
- Confidentiality.

<sup>7</sup> Healthwatch Leicestershire Patient Views on Quality of Services [http://www.healthwatchleicestershire.co.uk/sites/www.healthwatchleicestershire.co.uk/files/web\\_hw\\_quality\\_report.pdf](http://www.healthwatchleicestershire.co.uk/sites/www.healthwatchleicestershire.co.uk/files/web_hw_quality_report.pdf)



## Accessibility of sexual health services

Accessibility appears to be a key issue preventing young people from using and accessing sexual health services. It is important that young people know where the services are, opening times and how they can get there. It would also be beneficial for an out of hours sexual health service available for those young people who have after school or college commitments, such as jobs.

## Feelings of stigma and embarrassment

Respondents expressed concerns of being judged by others, as a barrier to accessing sexual health services. Young people spoke about a feeling of embarrassment using the service, including if their peers saw them or if their parents became aware that they were accessing sexual health services.

**“Getting there [to a sexual health clinic] without my parents knowing”**

- Female, 16, Harborough

**It is difficult to fit it in alongside work. The walk in clinics, mean it can take hours to be seen. Appointments at doctors surgery make it easier for people who work to take the time off and it also means less has to be explained to employers**

- Male, 20-25, Oadby & Wigston



**“Shame”**

- Female, 16, Oadby & Wigston

**“Embarrassed and worried about what people would think. There is still a lot of stigma attached to sexual health and STI’s”**

- Female, 20-25, Leicester City



**“Social embarrassment”**

- Male, 18, Harborough

**“The fear of others being aware (linking on to bullying)”**

- Male, 17, Blaby

**“The fear of judgement because of the stigma that young people are sexually irresponsible”**

- Female, 17, Leicester City

**6 Accessibility - lots of people cannot drive or have access to a bus routes, lots of people are scared of their parents being told**

- Female, 18, Blaby

## Importance of Confidentiality

Young people told us that there is a perception by many that the service is not completely confidential.

This uncertainty prevents young people from accessing sexual health services.

**“The school nurse isn’t very confidential as everyone sees you go to the area they’re in”**

- Female, 16, Blaby

**“Staff who are acquaintances with you or family - No confidentiality”**

- Female, 16, Blaby

**“Confidentiality and privacy”**

- Male, 14, Blaby

**“Lack of confidentiality”**

- Female, 20-25, Oadby & Wigston

**“Others knowing of my need of the service”**

- Male, 16, Harborough



# Call for Service Change

**We gave young people the opportunity to share with us one thing they would like to change about services for young people.**

Respondents mentioned several times that services need to be more accessible and need to be promoted more widely. They also spoke about their concerns about confidentiality and embarrassment if others found out they were using mental or sexual health services and for this reason the services should be discreet.

**“I know most people don’t even know such services exist and hence don’t know where to go for help when they need it. So exposure of the service to young people. Give them the knowledge of how to contact the services, who to contact, where”**

- Female, 18, Leicester City

**“Make it easier for young people to get appointments or access facilities”**

- Male, 20-25, Harborough

**“Increased privacy such as not placing a sexual health clinic where anyone can see you enter”**

- Male, 16, Harborough

**“I think it is very important to get the services across. This would be through schools; assemblies and lesson times, through posters and leaflets. I think that social media would be a good way to get information across, as young people use it every day and it would become known about”**

- Female, 15, Blaby

**“As someone who has anxiety, I find the process of making an appointment at places like doctors and dentists quite intimidating. I think that there should be an option to book an appointment online”**

- Female, 16, Blaby



Respondents also told us that they would want to be treated the way adults are treated and be taken more seriously. Young people do not want to be judged and a fear of this prevents them from accessing services. Respondents also feel that if younger people worked in the services they would be able to relate and feel more comfortable in approaching and accessing services.

“For anxiety and depression in younger men and women to be seen/treated the same way as an older adult - with no pre conceptions”

- Female, 20-25, Melton

“Put an emphasis on using younger staff who can better relate to younger people”

- Male, 18, Melton

“To be taken more seriously, just because we are young doesn't mean we don't know when something is wrong. we need more support”

- Female, 20-25, North West Leicestershire

“I wish more gay people worked in such services, which I think would make gay people more likely to visit sexual health clinics / counsellors, due to being able to relate and a lack of judgement”

- Male, 18, Harborough

“School Sexual Health Services could be located out of the school as young people may be afraid to attend if they are on school grounds in case they are seen”

- Female, 20-25, Blaby

“That people with mental health issues get taken seriously straight away, and are listened too”

- Female, 18, Oadby & Wigston



# Engaging with Young People

**Talking to young people face to face was as important as the online survey. To complement this we met with different groups across the County.**

We identified the groups by working with Leicestershire County Council and our contacts within voluntary and community groups. As a result we met with a diverse range of young people to gather their insights and experience. The groups we visited are as follows:

- Loughborough University
- South Leicestershire College
- Children in Care Council
- County Youth Council for Leicestershire
- TwentyTwenty

We held interactive sessions at each of the groups with questions relating to our survey themes - mental health and sexual health. We designed four questions that could be answered as part of a group discussion or individually.

The questions that we asked were as follows:

- What sort of things would make it difficult to access mental health or sexual health services?
- How do you think that people with mental health issues feel?
- Do you believe that your college provides enough information about mental health?
- How often do you worry about the following? (Which included list of various themes, i.e. getting a job and health).

Overall, we spoke to **83 young people** and collated the responses to understand what young people were telling us. We compared the results from group engagement to the emerging findings from the 346 online survey responses.

The underlying messages from engagement with the groups mirrored some of the findings from the main survey. One of the common threads to emerge is that many young people regularly worry about their appearance, as well as worrying about tests and exams at school, college or university. These were the top two areas in both the survey and the engagement in terms of things that young people would worry about.

The groups also spoke about better promotion of mental health services and in some cases spoke very passionately about this issue. Again, this desire to improve the visibility of services emerged very strongly in the survey findings.

There was also a confidence issue that came through from the group feedback. Young people told us that they did not have the confidence to openly access sexual health services for fear of being judged; and that a barrier to accessing mental health services is being stigmatised. The group also felt that there should be more education to reduce the stigma around mental health.

We have taken the findings from each group to create a composite young person profile to highlight the key issues.





The profiles on the following pages are for illustrative purposes to generate discussion and to promote dialogue, they do not reflect an individual response.

## We visited Loughborough University University Mental Health Day on 9 March 2016 alongside various stalls and stakeholders present to engage and provide information to students.

As part of our engagement, we spoke to 30 students to gather feedback around mental health.

26 out of 30 students told us that they thought their university provided enough information about mental health. However, there was an overwhelming call for better promotion of information so that more students were made aware of services and any support that is currently on offer.

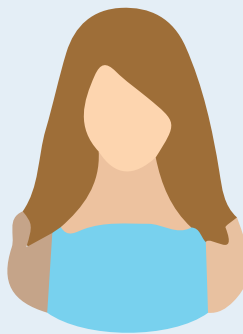
It was also said that there is an importance to provide parents with appropriate support as well as young people. If parents know where they can get support for their child and themselves, it can help the whole family.

From the 30 young people that we spoke to we found that 22 of them worried about their personal appearance at least 'once a week' or 'all the time'.

Another area that was noticeably high is relationships with others. 20 out of 30 young people also worried about this at least once a week or all the time.

## Loughborough University 9 March 2016 Mental Health Day

### Profile

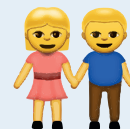


<b>Name</b>	Joanne
<b>Age</b>	20
<b>Hobbies</b>	Enjoys sports, arts and has an interest in health
<b>Education</b>	Studying Sports Management
<b>Status</b>	Single
<b>Area</b>	Loughborough
<b>Job</b>	Not working

### What worries Joanne



Her personal appearance almost all the time



Relationships with friends and partners



Finding a job whilst at university and afterwards



Her exams and final year

### What matters most to Joanne

There should be a greater effort made to promote mental health services so that students that are in need of services know where they can access support.

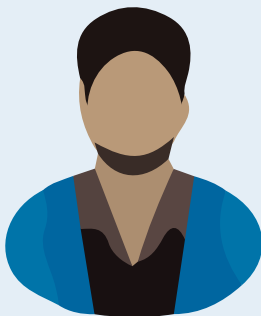
Joanne believes that people must feel frustrated and isolated when dealing with mental health issues and that stereotypes and stigma should be addressed more in education.



## South Leicestershire College 21 March 2016

We spoke to 22 students about mental health services. Almost half (9 out of 22) told us their college didn't provide enough information about mental health.

### Profile



Name	Kiran
Age	16
Hobbies	Enjoys football
Education	Studying mechanics
Status	Single
Area	Wigston
Job	Weekend job

### What worries Kiran



His personal appearance almost all the time



Worried about general health regularly and also about his relationships at home



Always worried about finding a job after he is qualified



Worried occasionally about his homework.

### Barriers for Kiran to access services

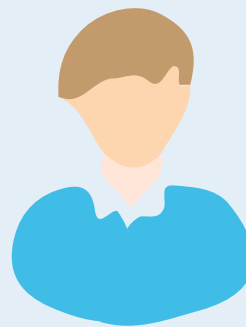
Kiran does not always have the confidence to access services and feels slightly uncomfortable doing so, which means inevitably he would choose not to go.

Kiran believes people must feel stressed and misunderstood when dealing with mental health issues and that confidence is a major barrier to accessing mental and sexual health services.

## Leicestershire Children in Care Council for children aged 14 + 20 April 2016

We spoke to 12 students. The majority of young people within the group told us that they suffered from anxiety. When we asked what they worried about most, tests and exams, being bullied and personnel appearance were the most common themes.

### Profile



Name	Mark
Age	14
Hobbies	Enjoys reading
Personality	Shy
Status	Single
Area	Lives in a children's care home

### What worries Mark



Mark suffers from anxiety and worries all the time about being bullied and his personnel appearance. He also worries about exams and getting a job quite regularly.



Mark believes people must feel like no one listens or that no one believes in them when dealing with mental health issues.

### Barriers for Mark to access services

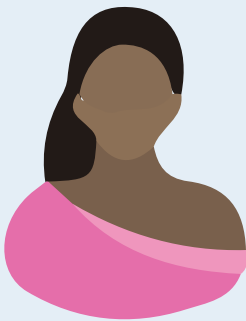
A key theme for Mark is mental health services and CAMHS.

Mark thinks that the waiting times to get in to CAMHS is considerable and that this process should be made easier and quicker for those in need of support.

## County Youth Council for Leicestershire (CYCLe)

### 25 April 2016

### Profile



<b>Name</b>	Cassie
<b>Age</b>	16
<b>Hobbies</b>	Enjoys Politics Active, Likes to read, Enjoys films
<b>Personality</b>	Outgoing
<b>Status</b>	In a relationship
<b>Area</b>	Harborough

### What worries Cassie



The thing that Cassie worries about most is her relationships at home.



This worry also spreads to relationships with others including being bullied.



This has had an affect on Cassie and she has now started to worry about her appearance.

### Barriers for Cassie to access services

The key themes for Cassie are mainly based around confidence and limited information. Cassie is slightly embarrassed to access certain services and has a perception that the staff may not understand her situation. If she had more information to make her feel at ease about using services, it would help. More visible ways to access support including email, phone and face-to-face would also help.

Cassie is a firm believer that there should be more information and guidance in college about mental health illnesses and how to deal with them.

CYCLe is the County Youth Council for Leicestershire. This is the place where young people from lots of different forums come to discuss the issues that are important to them. CYCLe held a meeting on 25 April 2016 where they had a conversation about mental health and sexual health.

We asked the group of **10** young people if their school or college provided enough information about mental health. The group agreed that more information should be shared and raised the following points:

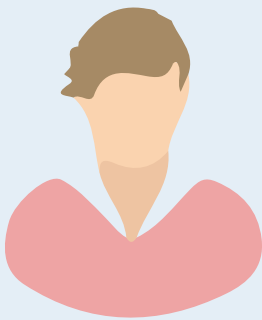
- There should be more guidance to young people on symptoms of mental health illness and tips on positive mental health
- There should be various visible ways to access support including email, phone and face-to-face
- More information on anxiety and depression is needed
- One to one counselling should be more available
- The group felt that mental health is a taboo subject and often avoided
- More support in general to be offered in schools and colleges to support people with poor mental health



## TwentyTwenty 9 May 2016

We spoke to 9 people. We visited TwentyTwenty (an organisation set up to help disadvantaged and disengaged young people) to gather feedback around mental health and sexual health.

### Profile



Name	Peter
Age	18
Hobbies	Enjoys the gym, Likes to watch football & Enjoys going out with friends
Personality	
Status	In a relationship
Area	Loughborough

### What worries Peter



Peter worries very often about tests and exams, but his main worry is about getting a job when he is out of education.



Even though Peter only lives with one parent, he has a brilliant relationship at home.

### Barriers for Peter to access services

The key barriers that would stop Peter from accessing services is compassion and care. He thinks that patient care could be improved to make him feel more comfortable when using sexual health services. Peter also feels slightly concerned about being judged for using services such as mental and sexual health.

Comments that the group made are as follows:

### I think that patient care could be improved to make someone feel comfortable

"I would like to see more GP appointments available"

"More information and explanation about health"

### I feel rushed when I go to see my GP

"I would like to see better communication from consultants and GPs towards me"

"Hospital waiting rooms and area's are not very nice"

"Don't feel listened too"

### Every staff member plays a part not just doctors. We need them all to be doing their job for things to improve

# Conclusion and Next Steps

**The report highlights the need for improved awareness and better access to services for young people. There is a need to promote behaviour change of young people so they are able to better manage their own health and care. We believe that these three outcomes can be met through a number of recommendations.**

## 1. Information and Education

Worryingly, a high number of young people reported that they have mental health issues and that there is a case for better-targeted information and education on promoting mental health awareness especially in relation to depression and self-harming.

## 2. Overcoming Barriers

Access to discrete services is important to ensure young people feel comfortable to seek timely advice, guidance and counselling when it comes to their mental and sexual health.

## 3. Communication and Behaviours

Understanding the issues and concerns that matter to young men and young women are important to ensure that services and health professionals are responsive and address their needs sensitively and with empathy.

Our findings reflect and echo experiences that young people have in many conversations already taking place within different spheres in health and social care.

HWL conducted an Enter and View visit to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Unit at Coalville Community Hospital in February 2016.

We found that at the time of our visit, the CAMHS Unit provides a very good standard of care, with young people confirming that they have a positive relationship with staff<sup>8</sup>.

Our conclusion from the findings of this report is that young people want services that are accessible, equitable, age-appropriate and responsive to their needs. Mainstream services offering a generic type of care are less effective than those that seek to engage and provide for specific targets.

We would encourage commissioners and providers to continue to explore innovations across health and social care, involving young people.

The report also shows that young people would like health and social care professionals who are friendly, empathetic and non-judgemental. We ask that commissioners and providers take on board the findings to inform workforce training around active listening, issues facing young people and good communication across all health and care services. This could improve interactions between young patients and professionals, and give them the confidence to take control of their health and care.

We strongly encourage commissioners and providers within health and social care to take on board the findings of this report to make changes.

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.healthwatchleicestershire.co.uk/sites/www.healthwatchleicestershire.co.uk/files/Healthwatch\\_Leicestershire\\_Enter\\_and\\_View\\_CAMHS\\_Report\\_Final\\_0.pdf](http://www.healthwatchleicestershire.co.uk/sites/www.healthwatchleicestershire.co.uk/files/Healthwatch_Leicestershire_Enter_and_View_CAMHS_Report_Final_0.pdf)



# Appendix A

Better Care Together (BCT) Transformational Plan for mental health and wellbeing services for children and young people

We undertook an exercise to cross-reference our findings to the vision of the BCT Plan for mental health and wellbeing services for children and young people.

**The highlighted vision statements** within Tables A and B indicate where our findings reflect the aspirational statements within the vision of the BCT plan.

The vision focuses on self-care and prevention, early help and primary care, specialist care and Urgent care and crisis response. By 2020 the vision states that every child and young person in Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland will be able to confirm each of the statements in Table A and Table B shows the vision of how services will be shaped by 2020.

**Table A: Vision statements confirmed by every CYP**

Self-care and prevention	Early help and primary care	Specialist care	Urgent care and crisis response
My family and I are able to look after my emotional and mental wellbeing and development day to day.	We can get high quality support to help me overcome emotional and mental health challenges quickly and locally, without being stigmatised.	I will be helped by a specialist team quickly if my mental health problems are serious.	I can access intensive support from a range of organisations working together.
I learn about mental health and how to protect myself at school or college.	I will be able to make informed choices about the kind of help I would like.	I will receive support, which is safe, reliable and tested.	I will be seen promptly if I attend the Emergency Department
We can access trusted self-care advice when and where we like including websites, education settings, GPs and children's centres.	I and those who care for me will be listened to.	I will be involved in setting my own treatment goals and deciding if I am getting better.	I will not be judged by staff for my mental health problems.
My parents / carers have access to support and guidance.	I will be supported to become resilient and independent.	With my consent, services will work together with me and my family to give us the best support.	I will be kept as safe as possible during a crisis.
I am confident in talking about issues, which affect my mental health.	I and my carers will be helped to navigate the system and services.	I will be involved in decisions to transfer or reduce my care.	I will be able to access a bed within a reasonable distance from home.
	I am involved in peer support groups and community networks in my area.	My views and experience will help to improve care for others	I will be supported to return home safely as soon as possible.



# Appendix A

**Table B: A Vision for Services shaped by 2020**

Self-care and prevention	Early help and primary care	Specialist care	Urgent care and crisis response
All schools and colleges educate about mental health, tackling stigma and building resilience.	Early joint assessment for children and young people who might need extra support	High quality therapeutic and medical support provided by experienced and qualified staff.	Services work together to provide intensive out of hours support for children, young people and families at risk of crisis.
Information about children and young people's mental health is provided through a range of formats including websites, social media, and publications.	High quality low intervention services delivered locally across LLR by range of organisations.	Organisations share information and work together to support the child, young person and their family.	Services work swiftly together to support anyone admitted to the Emergency department.
Front line staff have access to training and support on mental health issues amongst children and young people.	Care navigators who can support children, young people and cares make informed choices to find the right service for them.	Specialist services for children and young people with eating disorders.	Specialist hospital beds are available for those that need them.
All services provide equality of access and support to all children and young people.	Outcome measures are used to assess individual improvements and to plan the development of services.	Specialist services for vulnerable children and young people such as young offenders, Looked After Children and those with learning disabilities.	
		Young people's views inform the improvement of services.	



# Appendix B

## Infographics / Data tables

The following summary of graphics support the evidence discussed within the main body of the report.

### The top 5 issues young women worried about all the time were:

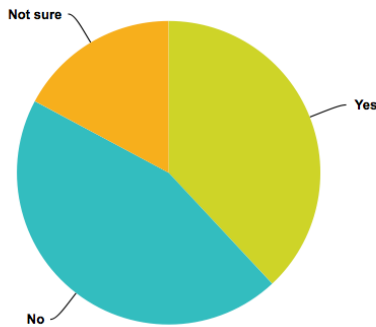
- 101 Tests or exams
- 99 The way you look including your weight
- 79 Money
- 73 Homework
- 57 Your health

### The top 5 issues young men worried about all the time were:

- 37 Tests or exams
- 31 Money
- 25 Your health
- 22 The way you look including your weight
- 18 Relationships with others

#### Have you suffered from mental health issues?

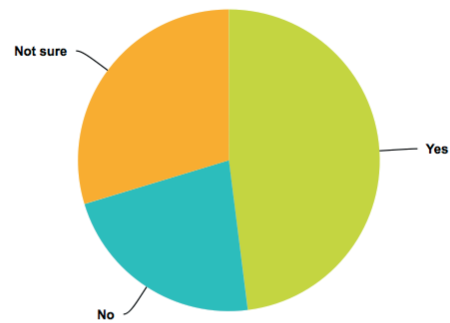
Answered: 297 Skipped: 49



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	38.05%	113
No	44.78%	133
Not sure	17.17%	51
Total		297

#### Would you feel comfortable talking openly about issues that affect your mental health?

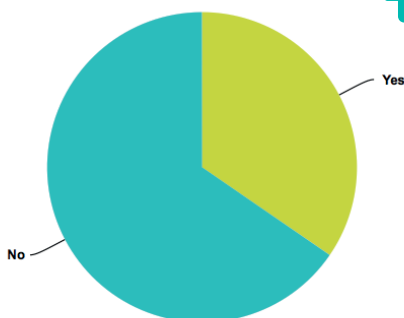
Answered: 300 Skipped: 46



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	48.00%	144
No	22.33%	67
Not sure	29.67%	89
Total		300

#### Have you ever self-harmed?

Answered: 295 Skipped: 51



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	34.58%	102
No	65.42%	193
Total		295

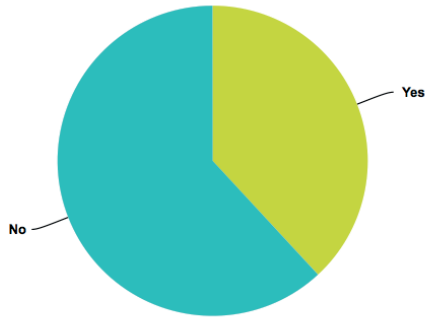
All infographics and data tables correspond only to the key findings section on pages 8 and 9.





Have you ever self-harmed?

Answered: 181 Skipped: 1

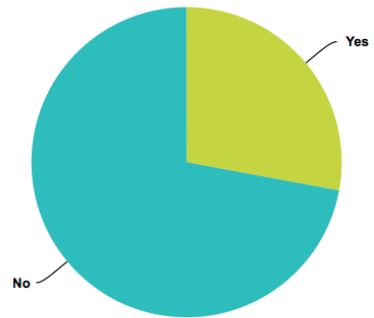


Answer Choices	Responses	Total
Yes	38.12%	69
No	61.88%	112
Total		181



Have you ever self-harmed?

Answered: 86 Skipped: 0

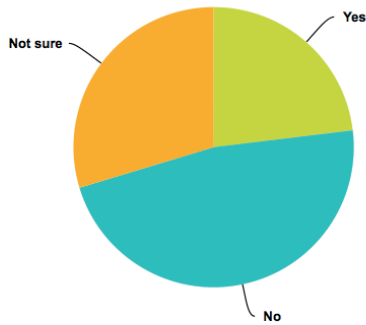


Answer Choices	Responses	Total
Yes	27.91%	24
No	72.09%	62
Total		86



Do you suffer with depression?

Answered: 182 Skipped: 0

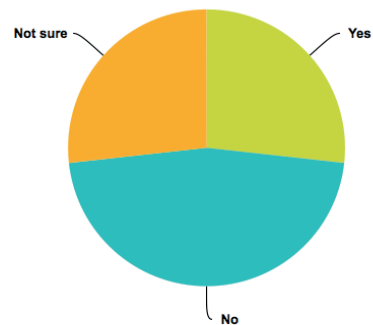


Answer Choices	Responses	Total
Yes	23.08%	42
No	47.25%	86
Not sure	29.67%	54
Total		182



Do you suffer with depression?

Answered: 86 Skipped: 0

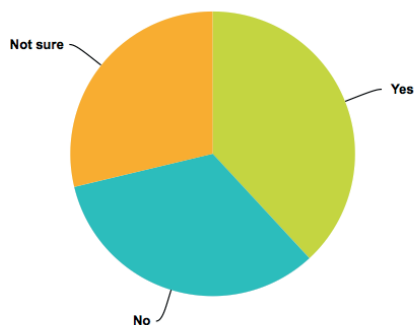


Answer Choices	Responses	Total
Yes	26.74%	23
No	46.51%	40
Not sure	26.74%	23
Total		86



Do you suffer from anxiety?

Answered: 181 Skipped: 1

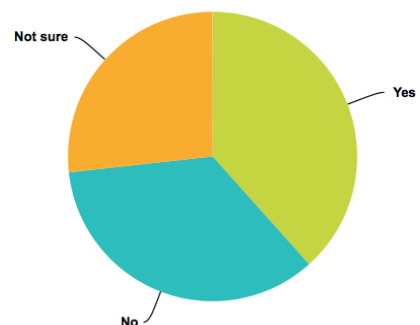


Answer Choices	Responses	Total
Yes	38.12%	69
No	33.15%	60
Not sure	28.73%	52
Total		181



Do you suffer from anxiety?

Answered: 86 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses	Total
Yes	38.37%	33
No	34.88%	30
Not sure	26.74%	23
Total		86



# Resources

## Leicester Sexual Health

Free, confidential services for those in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland providing all your sexual health needs including:

- STI testing including HIV tests
- A full range of contraception including IUD/ IUS and implants
- Management of complex contraception, including missing threads and other IUD/ IUS/Implant problems
- Emergency contraception
- Pregnancy testing and onward referral
- Psychosexual services
- Post Exposure HIV Prophylaxis – PEP/PEPSE
- Free condoms and lubricants

**Open 6 days a week offering queue and wait service or you can book appointments.**

**For more information please call:  
0300 124 0102 / 0800 318 908**

**Alternatively you can visit:  
[Leicestersexualhealth.nhs.uk](http://Leicestersexualhealth.nhs.uk)**

## Local Clinics - City

- **Beaumont Leys Health Centre**, 1 Littlewood Close, LE4 0UZ
- **Belgrave Health Centre**, 52 Brandon Street, LE4 6AW
- **Charles Berry House**, Bond Street, Leicester, LE1 4SX
- **St. Peter's Health Centre (GUM Service)**, Sparkenhoe Street, LE2 0TA
- **Westcotes Health Centre**, Fosse Road South, Leicester, LE3 0LP

## Local Clinics - County

- **Coalville Community Hospital**, Bromleys Road, Coalville, LE67 4DE
- **Hinckley Health Centre**, Hill Street, Hinckley, LE10 1DS

- **Loughborough Health Centre (GUM Service)**, Pinfold Gate, Loughborough, LE11 1DQ
- **Market Harborough District Hospital**, Coventry Road, Market Harborough, LE16 9DD
- **Rutland Memorial Hospital**, Oakham, Rutland, LE15 6NT
- **St. Mary's Hospital**, Melton Mowbray, Thrope Road, LE13 1SJ

## SHACC Clinics

SHACC (sexual health and contraceptive clinics) is an integrated, networked, NHS sexual health service in Leicester. It provides contraception and early pregnancy advice as well as investigation and treatment for sexually transmitted infections from GP practices.

Appointments take place at ordinary surgeries, which will help to preserve your confidentiality. However, be aware that at some SHACC clinics notes of your visit or consultation may be added to your GP medical notes.

You do not need to be registered at a SHACC practice to get an appointment. The service is however restricted to those registered with a GP in Leicester City, Leicestershire or Rutland.

**For the most up to date practice and appointment information visit [www.shacc.co.uk](http://www.shacc.co.uk)**

**For information or to book an appointment, please contact 0800 7566 277 or visit : [www.shacc.co.uk](http://www.shacc.co.uk)**

## Mind

Promotes the views and needs for people with mental health problems

**For more information call: 0300 123 3393 (Monday-Friday 9am-6pm)  
Alternatively you can visit: [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)**



# Resources

## YoungMinds

YoungMinds is the UK's leading charity committed to improving the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people.

**For more information please call: 0808 802 5544 (Monday-Friday 9.30am-4pm)**

**Alternatively you can visit: [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)**

## Rethink mental illness

Rethink Mental Illness has a number of helpline and advice services, which offer practical and emotional support and signposting to those experiencing severe mental illness, their carers and relatives.

**For more information please call: 0300 5000 927 (Monday-Friday 10am-2pm)**

**Alternatively you can visit: [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org)**

## Samaritans

Confidential support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair

**For more information please call: 116 123 (24-hour free helpline)**

**Alternatively you can visit: [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)**

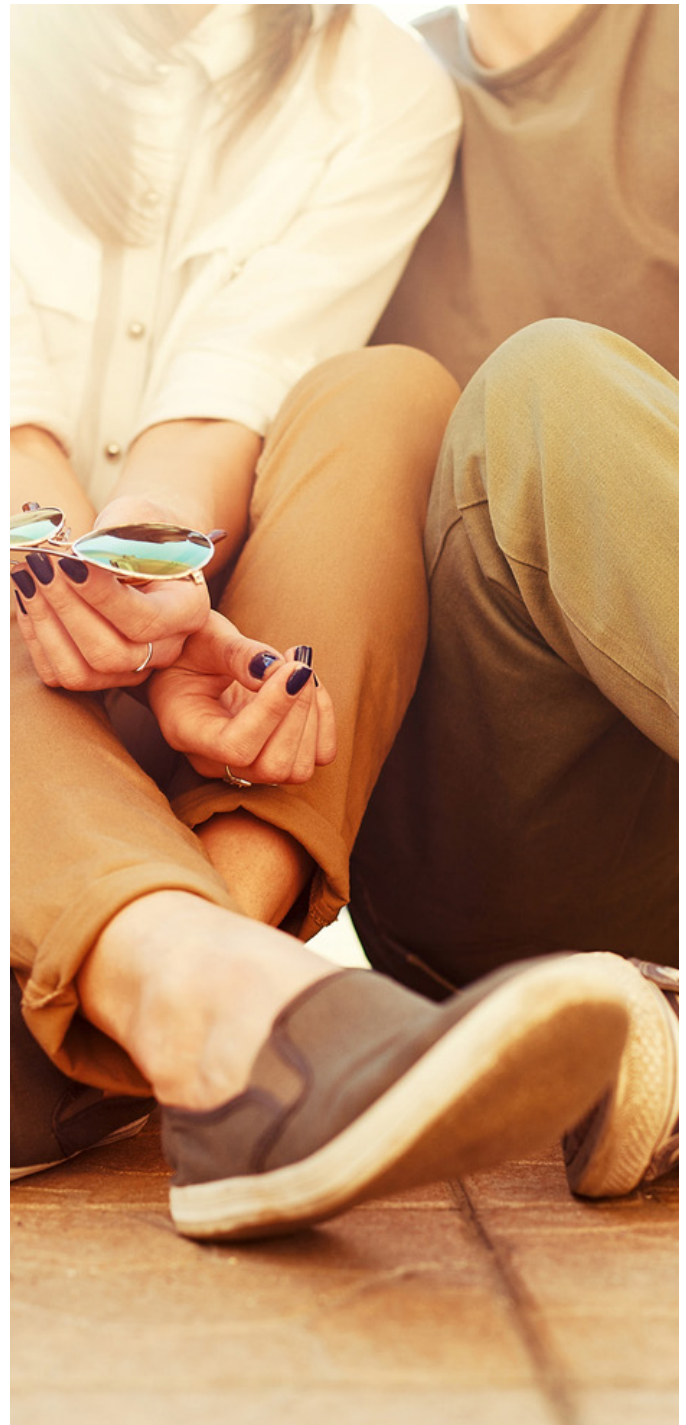
## Healthwatch Leicestershire

### Information and signposting

Find local services to help resolve your health and social care issues.

**For more information please call: 0116 257 4999**

**Alternatively you can visit: [www.healthwatchleicestershire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchleicestershire.co.uk)**



**“I like that when I go to a health service, staff address me, and I am respected as an individual, and don't feel uncomfortable talking about issues”**

- Female, 15, Blaby



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[http://www.healthwatchleicestershire.co.uk/sites/www.healthwatchleicestershire.co.uk/files/Healthwatch\\_Leicestershire\\_Enter\\_and\\_View\\_CAMHS\\_Report\\_Final\\_O.pdf](http://www.healthwatchleicestershire.co.uk/sites/www.healthwatchleicestershire.co.uk/files/Healthwatch_Leicestershire_Enter_and_View_CAMHS_Report_Final_O.pdf)

## News articles of interest May 2016

### **Mental Health support 'denied to Children'**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-36398247>

### **Children in care 'too often denied mental health treatment'**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-36138750>

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