

Potential New Service for young people in Edinburgh (April 2021) - findings from survey monkey questionnaire

A plan has been put together for a new service to support young people (aged 11-26) to improve their sexual, emotional and mental health. The service aims to be a Community Interest Company, which is a company developed and delivered solely for the benefit of a community. Our community is young people (aged 11-26) in Edinburgh and if successful we hope to offer services more broadly across Scotland. Any profits made by the company are put back into the company to be used to continue supporting young people in our local communities.

We wanted to know what young people and professionals who work with young people, think about the idea. We asked them to vote for a company name and to say which kinds of services they would like the company to deliver. We had an amazing response; 243 people completed our questionnaire and this report shows what young people and professionals said.

1. If you are a young person what is your age?

The table below shows the numbers of young people who ticked each age range.

Age range	Numbers of young people
11-14	91
15-18	120
19-26	12

2. If you are a young person what is your sex/gender?

We had consulted with a small number of young people before sending out the questionnaire. One young person said they would like us to include the term 'transgender' in this question. However, when we sent the survey round, one young person fed back that the inclusion of this term made them feel invalidated, so it was removed.

We had initially asked for people to identify their gender but a young person fed back that they did not think this was correct and so we added the term sex/gender.

The table below shows the numbers of young people who ticked each sex/gender.

Sex/gender	Numbers of young people
Female	108
Male	107
Intersex	1
Non-binary	6

3. If you are a professional working with young people, what is your role?

One person noted that they were a parent. The list below shows the job roles of professionals working with young people:

- Team Leader, Children and Families Social Work,
- Social Worker x 3,
- Social Work Manager,
- Youth worker,
- Pupil Support Leader x 3,
- Trainee Educational Psychologist,
- Youth and Community Development Officer (LGBTYS),
- Nurse,
- Teacher,
- Head Teacher,
- Deputy Head Teacher x 2,
- Project Worker,
- Sexual Health - condom distribution/C:Card Manager,
- Psychologist.

4. Please tick the agency name that you like best.

The suggested names came from brain-storming with young people and then checking to see if the names were available on Companies House. The table below shows the numbers of young people who voted for each name.

Agency name	Numbers of people
Hard Feelings	36
Young People Connect	53
Let's Talk	123
Other (please suggest an agency name that you think would be better).	10

Young people in the 19-26 age category and professionals seemed to prefer the name 'Young People Connect' but most young people in the younger age categories voted either for 'Hard Feelings' or 'Let's Talk'. 10 people suggested other names, some were funny although not suitable for an agency working with young people and one 'Youngstarsz' was good but had already been listed on Companies House. As a result our new agency name will be....drum roll.....

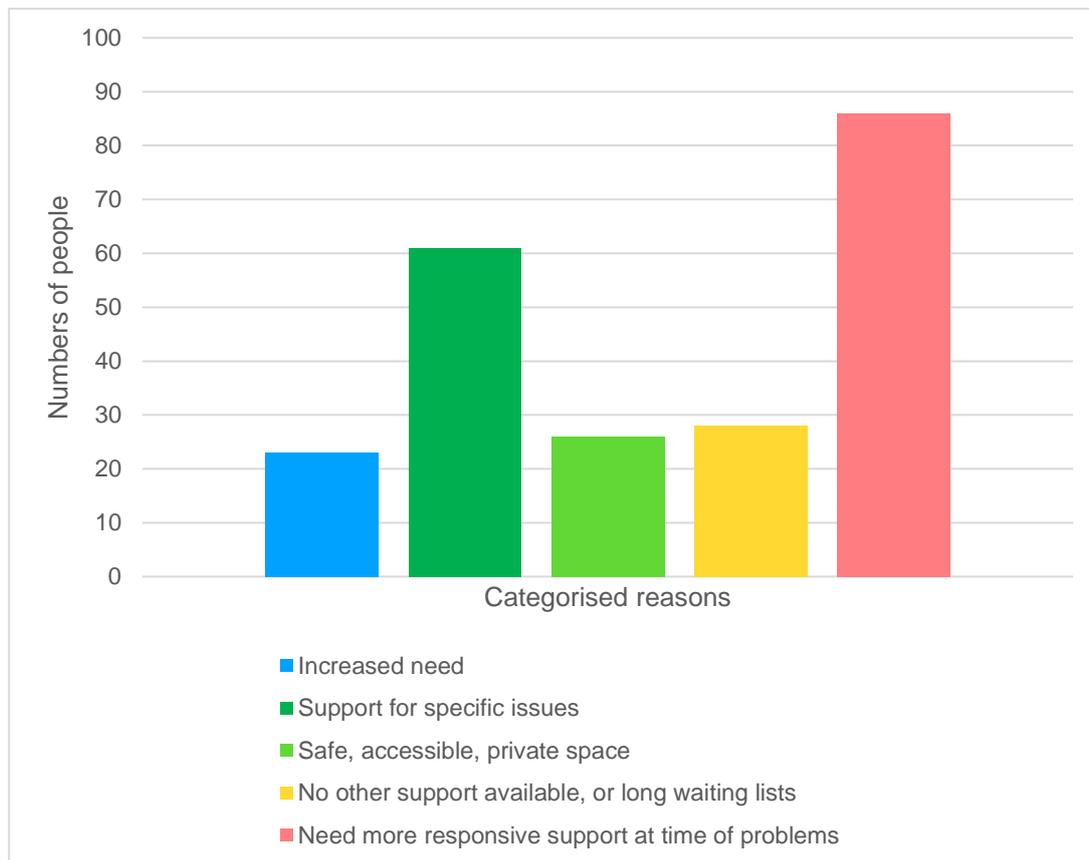


Let's Talk



5. Please say why this type of service is needed in your area.

There were 165 responses to this question and many people mentioned more than one type of need. We categorised the responses to provide an overview of the themes people identified. The graph below shows these categorised responses.



61 people felt that young people need support for specific issues including the following:

- Sexual, emotional, mental, social health,
- Physical health,
- Substance use, including alcohol,
- Suicide,
- Family,
- Relationships,
- Crime and violence,
- Homelessness,
- Sexuality and gender.

28 people felt there was no other support available, or that many young people didn't have anyone to talk to. Some people felt that there was a shortage of accessible services in their local communities which were aimed specifically at young people. 26 people talked about how young people need their own specific space away from school, friends and family. They felt that it was important that such a space was safe, accessible and private. 86 people felt that young people need support and someone to talk to at the time they are experiencing difficulties. The following quotes illustrate some of the points raised:

“People need to talk or they have more chance of committing suicide”.
(Male aged 11-14)

“Currently there is next to no help to support young people surrounding these issues unless you have a good chunk of change to pay for it. I have had mental health issues for 10+ years and feel so let down by the people that are supposed to help. Free counselling has only ever been 6 sessions after waiting 2 plus years. Camhs scarred me more than it helped. Doctors push medication and nothing else. All I want is someone to talk to and the only place I found that was private therapy for £80 an hour which is not affordable. I feel out of options and I can't even imagine how many more people my age or younger are feeling the exact same way with nowhere to go”.
(Female aged 19-26)

“Huge gap left by HOT at a time when youth services are more needed than ever and young peoples' sexual, emotional health and wellbeing is poorer due to covid/restrictions/lockdown. RSHP education for thousands of young people has been missed over the last year and that will have the biggest negative impact on our most deprived communities”.
(Sexual Health Professional).

“People who don't talk about themselves often end expressing themselves in negative ways which end up in possible casualties”.
(Male aged 11-14)

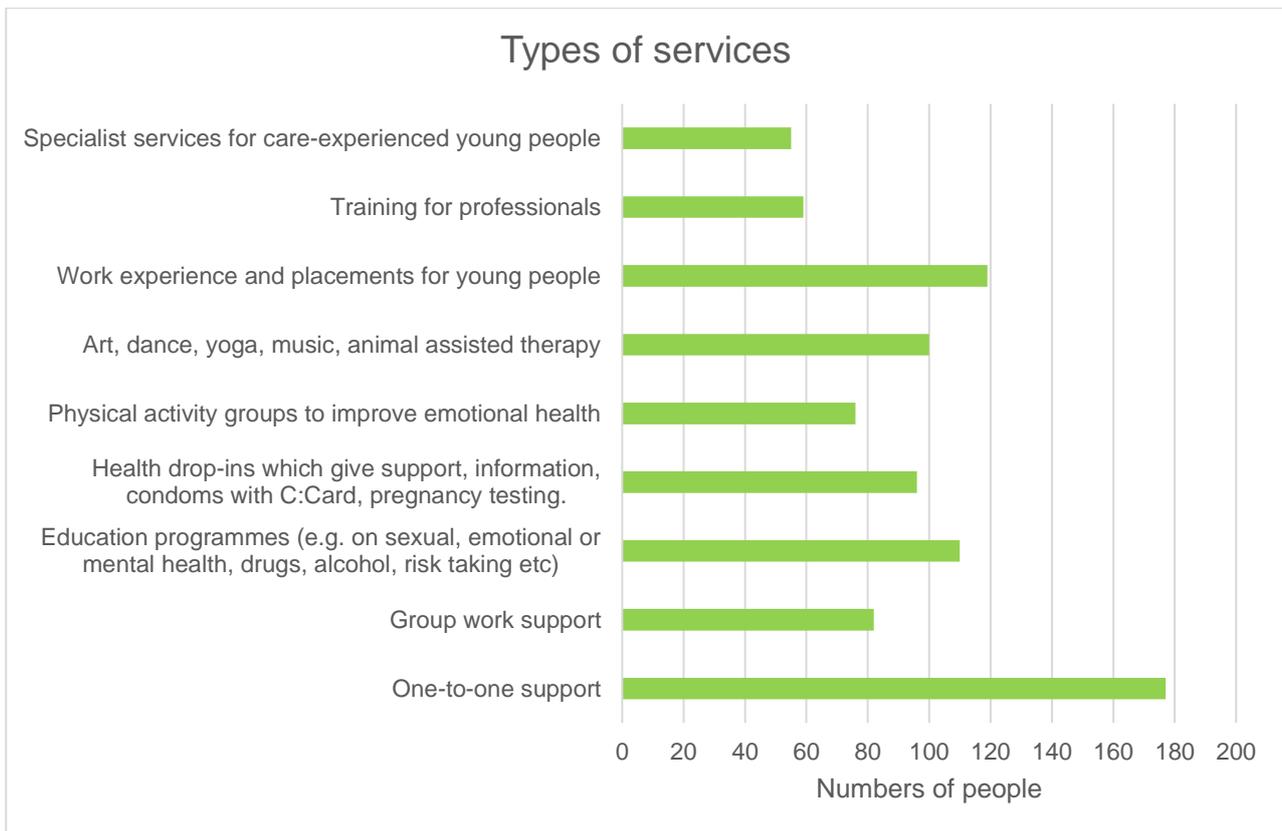
“There isn't really anything like it that seems accessible. Young people tend to avoid talking about things surrounding sexual and emotional well-being due to stigma, and there needs to be a place that they can go to talk openly, as sexuality is a massive thing at this age, and learning how to process the emotions surrounding this is so important”.
(Female aged 19-26)

“Because there are Young People who need a safe space to go to in order to chat or get help for various issues, such as mental health, family issues, substance use or sex and relationships (just to name a few) and it's important that such places exist and are readily accessible and welcoming so that they can have the best effect”.
(Male aged 19-26)

“There are many young people struggling with mental health issues and do not receive help and it leads to heart breaking choices”.
(Female aged 11-14)

6. What kind of services do you think would be useful for young people?

We provided a range of service ideas based on feedback during our initial discussions with young people and we asked for any additional ideas. The table below shows the service types that people felt would be most useful.



The graph shows that the majority of people felt that one-to-one support would be the most useful service to support young people with their sexual, emotional and mental health. This is followed by the suggestion for volunteer and work experience placements for young people. We also aim to provide support for our most vulnerable young people to increase their confidence to attend interviews and deal with any health issue that may impact on them participating in productive or positive destinations. Educational services, drop-in services and a broader range of more trauma responsive services (like art, dance, music or animal assisted therapy and yoga) were also popular which backs up our aim to provide a broader range of supports to young people who are experiencing sexual, emotional or mental health difficulties.

What now?

As a result of such a positive response from young people and professionals, Let's Talk have officially formed as a company. We have a very small pot of funding to start the ball rolling and will be seeking further funding to take forward the ideas that young people and professionals have voted for here.

The BoD from Health Opportunities Team (HOT) have made available materials and approaches that were developed at HOT and Let's Talk have been working on adapting them to broaden their scope for support around specific issues and to ensure they are responsive for young people who may have experienced trauma, disrupted attachment or early adversity. We are keen to work in partnership to develop ideas based on the feedback we have received and to be involved in sexual, emotional and mental health work across Edinburgh and beyond. If you would like to work with us or be involved, please don't hesitate to contact us. We be setting up our website and social media soon – so keep a look out for our news and updates. Thank you to everyone who took the time to fill in our questionnaire 😊.

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