



# Professionals Information Leaflet



- In 2023, about 1 in 5 children and young people aged 8-25 had a mental health difficulty.
- Half of all mental health conditions start before the age of 15, and 75% by the age of 18.
- Children are less likely to suffer from serious mental health conditions in later life if they receive support at an early age.
- Suicide is the most common cause of death for those aged 10-19.
- Mick Cooper's report 'School-Based Counselling in UK Secondary Schools: A Review and Critical Evaluation' highlighted that almost 70% of students would rather see a counsellor at their school than outside of the school environment.

## SERVICES WE OFFER

Safe Space provides quality assured counselling and arts therapy for 5-19 year olds across Hertfordshire. We also provide support for care leavers up to the age of 21.

Part of Hertfordshire County Council's Children's Services, with over 22 years of quality assured services, and a team of 28 therapists, Safe Space has a range of experience to draw upon.

### Safe Space offers:

Quality assured counselling

(some of our counsellors have play therapy skills allowing them to work with younger aged children)

Arts Therapy

Free CRISIS support

Group work (max. of 6 per group)

Reflective Supervision for staff

Bespoke training courses

### WHAT IS COUNSELLING?

Counselling offers a non-judgmental space to discuss issues that are affecting their everyday lives in a safe and confidential setting. Issues explored vary according to each individual but usually can be linked to stress, relationships, change, loss and distressing / traumatic events.

Our counsellors have a variety of creative mediums such as art materials, sand trays, puppets and games to engage with clients.

### WHAT IS ARTS THERAPY?

Arts Therapy offers a creative alternative to counselling. Art is used as the primary means of communication to allow an individual the opportunity to express their thoughts and feelings in a safe and confidential way.

It can be particularly helpful for those who find it hard to express themselves verbally.

## THE BENEFITS OF THERAPY



Often children and young people find it difficult to tell us their thoughts, ideas and feelings. As a result their behaviour can be the way they express themselves to try and get their needs met.

Therapy can be used very effectively as an early intervention strategy to prevent the deterioration of a child or young person's emotional health & wellbeing. It can enable them to cope more effectively in a school setting both socially and academically.

- Improved self-esteem
- Improvements in behaviour and / or attendance
- Better attainment / achievement
- Reduced risk of exclusion
- Improved peer relationships

This type of intervention is assessed positively by OFSTED.

## WHEN CAN IT HELP?

- When there is behavioural change such as becoming withdrawn or disruptive.
- When a young person is angry, erratic, shows mood swings or signs of depression.
- When parents are going through separation & there are signs of distress.
- Following the death of a family member or friend.
- Where there is knowledge or suspicion of some form of abuse or domestic violence.

- When there are difficulties with friendships or bullying.
- When a child or young person is new to the school or area and is having difficulty settling in or integrating.
- When there are identity issues i.e. gender or culture.
- Where there are health or disability issues such as life limiting illness.
- When a child or young person refuses to engage with specialist services.

### All Safe Space therapists...

- Have a valid Enhanced DBS check
- Regularly access Clinical Supervision
- Receive safeguarding training every 3 years
- Have professional indemnity insurance
- Counsellors are qualified to Diploma Level and beyond; Arts Therapists are qualified to Masters Level.
- Our counsellors are accredited or working towards accreditation with the BACP (British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy).
- Our Arts Therapists are members of an appropriate professional body.
- Undertake regular continuous professional development to enhance their practice.
- Work confidentially, except when a child or young person (or someone they know) is at significant risk or harm.

Sessions are 50 minutes long and take place on the same day and at the same time each week.

A fit for purpose room for delivering the therapy needs to be available for the sessions to take place in; e.g. one that is the same each week, comfortable and private with a door but not isolated.

The number of sessions provided is dependent on the funding available, but typically between 8-12 sessions are delivered.

## WHAT OUR SCHOOLS SAY

*"It gives us peace of mind knowing that we can easily approach the counsellor at any point to enable our students to get the support they need"*

*"We gained a good few ideas to use in the future to support the child when needed"*

*"Service provided is of a very high standard and has had a positive impact on the pupils involved."*

*"Referrals are easy, quick, and if I ever have any questions there is always someone at Safe space to answer."*

# WHAT CHILDREN/ YOUNG PEOPLE SAY

What do you think about having a Counsellor / Art Therapist in your school?

helpful especially for students who really need advice/  
help but don't want to talk to parents or teachers

My time with my counsellor/arts therapist helped me to...

Feeling more confident and open  
to tell people how I feel.

I like the time I spend with my therapist because...

She helps me with my  
worries and gets them out  
the way

What did you like most about counselling/arts therapy?

Being able to talk about my problems in a  
safe and confidential environment.

How has your time with your counsellor/arts therapist helped?

Helped with my behaviour and  
anger management. I think I would  
have been excluded if  
it wasn't for talking

Would you use the service again?

Yes  No



If you would like more information on our Service or to speak a member of the team you can contact us via:

Telephone: 01992 588796

Email: [safespacemailbox@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:safespacemailbox@hertfordshire.gov.uk)



Follow us!

Instagram: [@safespacehertfordshire](https://www.instagram.com/safespacehertfordshire)