

## Data Protection Procedures and Evaluation

All information about counselling work undertaken by staff is securely kept by Mindspace Counselling Service, in line with current data protection regulations.

## Here are some comments by young people 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 me 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."

# Information for Parents and Carers about Counselling



For further information or to contact  
Mindspace Counselling Service  
you can write, telephone or email:

Mindspace Counselling Service  
51 York Place  
Perth  
PH2 8EH

Tel: 01738 631639  
Email: [info@mindspacepk.com](mailto:info@mindspacepk.com)

### What is counselling?

The opportunity to talk about things that are concerning us, in confidence, with a qualified counsellor. What is spoken about will depend on the individual, but common themes are stress, relationships, change, loss and distressing, traumatic events.

### What does a Counsellor do?

Counsellors are trained to listen without judging and to help people sort out their thoughts and feelings about whatever is concerning or confusing them.

### Who are the Counsellors?

They are professionally qualified counsellors who are experienced in working with children and young people.

### Why have a Counsellor for Young People?

Few of us are able to work well when we are stressed or unhappy. The impact of distressing or difficult situations can be felt even more acutely by young people than by adults. Our experience is that young people find counselling useful in the same way as adults. They also bring similar issues to counselling, with family, relationship, bullying and friendship difficulties occurring most frequently. Mindspace believes that if young people are able to receive emotional support from a qualified professional they will have greater opportunity to fulfil their potential.

### How long will counselling last?

Counselling may be for a few sessions, or longer term. It is reviewed regularly between counsellor and young person.

### When and where does counselling take place?

Usually, a small private room is made available during the day. Sessions will last 40 - 50 minutes. If your child is seen at school, appointment times can be varied so that time is not lost from any one subject.

### Is it confidential?

A key feature of our service is that information is treated confidentially. Counselling is a time when it's OK to talk about concerns without fear of them being discussed elsewhere. This includes not discussing the issues with parents unless the young person requests or gives consent for this. This can be hard for parents to accept at times, but ensuring the confidentiality of the work is crucial for establishing trust so that young people feel confident to speak openly and freely about what is concerning them.

However, if a young person is at risk of significant harm it may be appropriate to seek help from other agencies to keep them safe. The counsellor would discuss this first with the young person concerned.

All counsellors receive supervision of their work, to ensure quality of practice. These supervision sessions involve the anonymous presentation of casework.

### What if I don't want my child to receive counselling?

If a young person requests counselling and is able to understand what is involved in the process, then they have the right to access counselling. Parents and carers may not deny them this right. We would, however, prefer that we have your support for the work, and we are always happy to talk with you about any concerns that you may have about the idea of counselling.

### Can my child refuse to have counselling?

The decision about whether or not to take up counselling is entirely voluntary for young people, just as it would be for an adult.

### Can I support the counselling work?

Yes and we welcome this. Experience shows that the most helpful thing a parent can do is to show an acceptance of counselling as a normal and useful activity, and to show an interest if their son / daughter wishes to talk about it, while not pressing them if they don't. We acknowledge that this isn't an easy task, and it is quite natural for parents to feel anxious about what may be being said in the sessions. It is always our hope that talking to a counsellor will lead to greater openness with yourselves, but you may need to allow a little time for this to happen.

### If my child wants to see a counsellor does that mean I'm failing as a parent?

Absolutely not! We all experience occasions when it feels hard to speak to those closest to us about things which are bothering us. Often this can be because we don't want to worry those we love most, or because we want help thinking things through with someone unbiased. The Counsellor will not be judging you or your child, but looking to help them find his / her way through whatever is troubling them.

### How is counselling accessed?

Your child may request counselling themselves or requests may be made through another professional who knows your child well. Alternatively, you may support your child in his / her request for counselling. If a teacher, doctor or other professional makes the request we expect him / her to speak with the young person about why they think this is a good idea. If interest is shown they will then suggest that is discussed with you at home. Requests for counselling will only be accepted with the full knowledge of the young person involved.