

Connect Ed

Mental Health Services for Schools

What is counselling /therapy?



A guide for parents /carers

What is counselling / therapy?

Counselling and therapy give children and young people a regular and private space to talk about worries or problems they are experiencing.

Talking things through in a private setting, with regular appointments over a period of time, can often help young people look at things differently. This can lead to changes in how they feel about themselves, their relationships with others, their thinking and their behaviour – both in and out of school.

If my child wants to see a counsellor /therapist does that mean I am failing as a parent /carer?

Not at all. Sometimes it's difficult to speak to those we're closest to about the things that are troubling us. This can be for various reasons, such as not wanting to cause worry to those we love or not wanting to hurt their feelings.

The counsellor/therapist will not be judging you or the young person, but will be someone neutral who can help the young person find their own way through whatever is troubling them.

How can the counsellor /therapist help?

The counsellor/therapist is a qualified and experienced professional who is trained to listen without judging.

What young people talk about varies and may include issues such as:

- Friendships
- Bullying
- School work
- Low self-esteem
- Bereavement
- Anxiety and stress
- Divorce and separation
- Exam stress
- Self-harm
- SEN and Disabilities

The role of the counsellor/therapist does not include giving advice or telling young people what to do – instead they help young people to make their own choices to support personal growth and self-awareness.



What are Creative Arts Therapies?

Creative art therapies are particularly beneficial for young children who may struggle to express themselves verbally.

Using play, drama, art or music, our therapist will interact with and observe the child to gain a good understanding of the issues which are affecting their wellbeing.

Will the counsellor /therapist speak to other people?

In order for young people to feel safe and trust the counsellor/therapist, what is discussed in the session remains private. This supports the young person to be honest about some of the more difficult behaviours and feelings such as sadness, anxiety, fear, shame or anger.

However, on some occasions the counsellor/therapist may discuss the young person's problems with other people and agencies in order to get them the help they need. This is usually done with the young person's knowledge. For children of primary age, parents/carers can also expect regular reviews to discuss progress and to think with the counsellor/therapist about the needs of the child. A review is not a therapy session.

The counsellor/therapist must share information with another professional if they are concerned that a child is being harmed, is hurting others or themselves.

Can I support the counselling /therapy?

We welcome your support. Our experience shows that the best way you can support the young person is by showing an acceptance of counselling/therapy. It also helps to show an interest if they want to talk to you about it without pushing if they prefer not to.

Where will the counselling /therapy be?

The counselling/therapy sessions will take place at school during school time in a place that is safe and familiar. The number of sessions may vary according to what the young person wants to explore.



For further information about this service please contact your school counsellor / therapist.

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Email: info@ccsconnected.org.uk

www.ccsconnected.org.uk

73 St Charles Square, London. W10 6EJ.

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