

THE COUNSELLING SPACE

ANNUAL REPORT
20-22



REPORT

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01. Delivery during Covid

Like many organisations, particularly of our size, The Counselling Space (TCS) faced difficult challenges when delivering much needed mental health support during the pandemic.

An increase in mental health support led to a higher demand of our services, new themes of trauma, loss, distress and breakdown of relationships reached a high peak in demand across members of the community and neighbouring boroughs.

The Counselling Space had trained and began to deliver a mix of in-person, online and telephone sessions at least two year previous to the pandemic, this was a significant strength in the delivery of our service as it supported our practice during COVID.

We delivered 414 free counselling sessions to individuals, couples, groups and community sessions both online and in-person.

414 Free counselling sessions delivered for the community during Covid

48 Individuals & couples over 16 years old accessed free therapy

122 Adults received free community group therapy



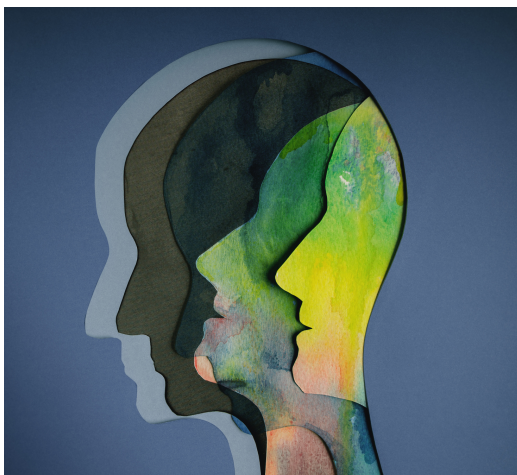
02. Challenges

The Counselling Space is a small growing project in the community that is quickly becoming a key service support for members of Hackney, wider communities and neighboring boroughs.

Space was a **key challenge** experienced during Covid due to social distancing. The challenges faced were a reflection of what had been emerging across the country as an issue for families, young people and communities of all ages : space and overcrowding

"31% of TCS users lived in overcrowded homes and/or homeless, they accessed their counselling sessions from car parks, bathrooms, parks, offices & coffee shops."

Achievements



The Counselling Space approached and managed support through delivery of collaborative work through the use of office space for weekly sessions in The Halley and group support sessions in The Crib, United Voices of the World and Independent Workers Great Britain trade unions.

03. Funding & Collaboration

112
sessions

Awards for All

TCS delivered 100 sessions funded by Awards for All to support members of the communities who experienced disadvantages and are unable to afford to access mental health support

"...I learnt to let go of things I can't change and heal my inner child.

"...Invaluable" isn't a strong enough word. Everyone deserves access to therapy and this project is a small step towards that. What the NHS offers is too formalised / stigmatised / institutionalised anyway, and it targets the more severe cases. This project fills such an important gap. I wouldn't have gone to therapy otherwise. (Wouldn't have chosen the NHS and wouldn't have been able to pay for private.)

03. Funding & Collaboration



KICKSTART
SCHEME



The London
Community
Foundation



**YOUTH
MUSIC**

— . ROSE
— LIPMAN
BUILDING

MILL
—
CO. —

03. Funding & Collaboration

40
sessions

**YOUTH
MUSIC**



The Crib- Youth Music

The Crib in partnership with KickStart and Youth Music funded therapeutic support for young people who started their career path as creative practitioners, this project, unique in its delivery, has offered young people ten free counselling support, to be accessed at point of need within the duration of the project.

The main objective of this partnership is to offer support for young people whilst starting their employment journey in what it is typically a highly competitive, creative and challenging sector. At TCS, between 40%-60% of clients have worked in the creative sector,

The young people accessing the project did not initially trust there could be free available support for them and expressed open scepticism, they asked what would the project 'get out of them' as 'that's what the system does'.

Data poverty and lack of privacy to access session during Covid was a recurring issue within delivery of counselling sessions.

The project supported young people to:

- Explore the challenges of the creative sector
- Explore their sense of an evolving identity from young person to adult worker, meaning of new identity
- Have a safe space to explore cycles of anxieties, stress, peer pressure
- Explore the impact of their employment status to family, partners and socio economic opportunities

03. Funding & Collaboration

190
sessions



The Crib- Victims Fund

In collaboration with youth charity The Crib, The Counselling Space offered free counselling support to young people, families who were referred to receive mental health support and who had participated in the London Community Foundation funded programme Victims Fund.

The funding also secured a further element of counselling provided for volunteers and outreach team as part of their supervision support provided by The Crib; this model of support stemmed from the need to secure access to prompt provision of mental health for people who would not otherwise be able to access it through their GP or local authority.

The Victims Fund enabled young people and adults who were victims of violence and/or abuse have a space where to receive support they had not access to or had been discontinued through local authority Victims support .

Similar to other projects, data poverty and the lack of a safe space and privacy to have their therapy session during Covid became a recurring issue within delivery of counselling sessions.

The project supported participants:

- Have a safe, non-judgemental space not otherwise available to them
- Support for victims of systemic abuse since childhood
- Offered a space to explore their relationship with the justice system, its impact and their reasons not to reoffend
- Supported ex-heroin addict and alcoholic addicts work towards identifying their source of their addiction
- Supported victims of domestic violence identify their abuser and work towards a life free from violence and abuse

4. What's next?

We seek to continue delivering free counselling support both online and in-person, we have had an incredibly busy time for our small team through the pandemic, however have achieved a lot and most importantly, those who needed the support were able to access mental health care during a very difficult time.

We look forward to securing extension of current funding to deliver our regular sessions as well as programmes we have developed through through evidence-based expertise:

Homelessness & Destitution

There are 274,000 people including families with children who are homeless or at risk of destitution, they often do not receive emotional support, their emotional distress often escalates.

We want to offer support without proof of address for those who have, or are homeless or at at risk or losing their home.

Young People & the Justice System

Our structured sessions programme will offer young people safe space to go through their stories and journey in the justice system, focusing on the power to heal life post crime and gang activities.

Cycles of Abuse & Violence

This emotional structured sessions programme focuses on supporting to identify patterns of abuse and violence, its source and daily impact. We will explore and aim to build boundaries, identify our flexible and core needs and the capacity to break free from abuse.



We want to say

~Thank you~

We want to say ~Thank You~ to every person who accessed our mental health services, for their courage, their light and gift of honesty brought to our project, thanks to their journeys we have been able to learn and grow as an organisation, delivering and shaping support according to what you have told us is important to your mental health.

We also want to say ~Thank You~ to all funders, partners, mental health organisations, local GPs, local authorities, trade unions, women support projects, youth charities and grassroots community organisations that have and continue to trust our work.

Finally, an immense ~Thank You~ to the MillCo Project and the Rose Lipman Building who since 2018 have offered us a home and have been instrumental in the delivery of our work, thanks to their support we have been able to maximise use of the space and funding helping us deliver hundreds of free counselling sessions for young people, adults, families, couples and groups, majority local members of the community in Hackney and neighbouring boroughs Tower Hamlets and Islington.

We look forward to continue to working with you all. We hope to secure funding for new collaborations, offering new models of support combining talking therapy with art, music, equine, and alternative therapy beneficial to those experiencing long-term trauma.

No one should incur into debt whilst looking after their emotional and mental health.

THE COUNSELLING SPACE



Free therapy for the community

Sessions by appointment only
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The Rose Lipman Building, Hackney

 thecounsellingspace.org
 [@counsellingspace](https://twitter.com/counsellingspace)