

YOUTH TALK

We're listening

Youth Talk's vision:
Every young person can
talk to someone who
can help with whatever's
worrying them

What we do...our work

At Youth Talk, we understand that every young person's experience is unique, which is why listening to their voices is at the heart of everything we do. We provide free, confidential counselling services to young people aged 13-25 in St Albans and the surrounding areas, helping them navigate life's challenges with the support they need. From dealing with anxiety, depression and self-esteem issues to overcoming trauma and navigating family relationships, our tailored approach ensures that each young person feels heard, supported and empowered to take control of their mental health.

As demand for mental health services among young people continues to rise, we are constantly evolving to meet this need. Over the past year, we delivered nearly **4,000** counselling sessions, with the average number of sessions per young person increasing. This speaks to the growing complexity of the issues our young clients face, as well as their need for long-term support. The fact that **100%** of our clients feel comfortable with their counsellor and **93%** feel they can speak openly is a testament to the safe, non-judgmental environment we strive to create. The positive impact of our work is clear: **84%** of clients report feeling clearer about their challenges after receiving support from Youth Talk.

As we move forward, we remain focused on our mission:

To provide the best possible mental health support to young people in St Albans and surrounding areas. Through the dedication of our team and the support of our community, we will continue to offer the highest level of care to those who need it, ensuring that every young person who walks through our doors feels valued, understood, and supported.

Gabriella's Story

Gabriella came to Youth Talk when she had been struggling with low mood and self-harming and needed to manage mental health concerns. When she became suicidal, Gabriella reached out for help. Counselling has helped her to understand herself and heal her relationships.

Worried for her life

“ I just felt like something had changed. I was constantly crying all the time. Something wasn't right, but I didn't know the reason behind it. It just got worse as time went on. I was suicidal and I used to self-harm. When it got to that point, I decided that I didn't want to feel that way anymore – either I got help or it was never going to get better.”

Gabriella was initially shy and anxious about sharing her feelings with a stranger. But she knew she had to try something. Youth Talk counselling offered tailored support to make her feel comfortable so she could start to heal. The counselling gave Gabriella a chance to talk in confidence about what was on her mind.

“At first, we were just talking, but somehow, I felt better. As time went on, we went into things in more detail. You wouldn't tell your parent's certain things, but with my counsellor it was different because I felt like I wasn't being judged, so I could say whatever was on my mind. The fact they weren't going to share - it was good. It was nice to have a space where I could just vent about everything.”

Gabriella's year of counselling sessions facilitated an in-depth exploration of her past so she could understand the reasons behind her feelings.

“We came to the conclusion that my parents' divorce three years earlier was one of the triggers for my low mood, alongside losing lots of friendships, which made me start to feel negative about myself. Back then I probably didn't express how I was feeling, so it bottled up and came out.”

Approaching difficult situations

Understanding her feelings has led Gabriella to develop healthier approaches to dealing with difficult situations. By healing herself, Gabriella was able to accept her parent's separation and strengthen her connections with them.

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A positive outlook

“ Most of the time my counselling was focused on trying to learn to love myself and to not blame myself for everything. It also enabled me to repair my relationship with my mum and to not be scared to build new friendships. It made me understand things more and realise things differently, so it made me want to fix things. I felt more like I could see it from a different perspective. ”

