

# PROJECT REPORT



**OUR  
VOICES**

## Background

Our Voices was set up in 2022 as the youth advisory group for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough's Children and Young People's mental health and wellbeing service - YOUnited. Our Voices provides an opportunity for local young people to have their say about the mental health and wellbeing issues that matter to them, including the development of their local services.

The work of the group is overseen by a steering group made up of professionals from across the local children and young people's mental health and wellbeing sector, and parent/carers.

The project is managed by Fullscope and co-chaired by Ormiston Families.

This report covers the period from April 2022 - April 2023

## IMPACT SNAPSHOT

8

Online meetings held with Young People

1

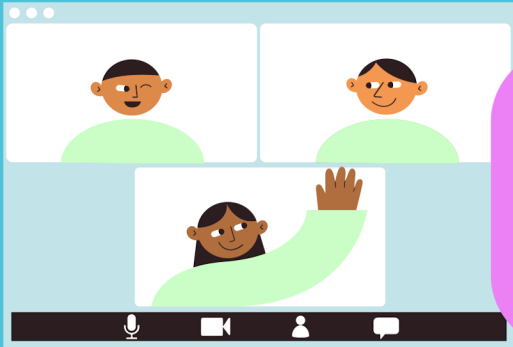
In person event with Young People

3

Steering group meetings

# YOUNG PEOPLE'S ACTIVITY

## Online meetings



The young advisors meet monthly on Teams, supported by co-chairs Katie (Fullscope) and Amber (Ormiston Families). Each meeting begins with a wellbeing themed ice-breaker.

 MONTH	 ATTENDEES	 TOPICS
<b>JULY 2022</b>	1 YP-R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discussion: Communicating with YP about Our Voices/mental health opportunities in C&amp;P</li><li>• Planning: new YP Instagram account</li></ul>
<b>SEPT 2022</b>	2 YP-R, YP-H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discussion: wellbeing comms</li><li>• Activity: posts for Instagram, incl. World Mental Health Day</li></ul>
<b>OCT 2022</b>	2 YP-H, YP-L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discussion: Our Voices meeting format</li><li>• Planning: initial ideas for an in-person drop-in event</li></ul>
<b>NOV 2022</b>	3 YP-H, YP-L, YP-K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consultation: YOUnited waiting list letters</li></ul>
<b>DEC 2022</b>	3 YP-H, YP-L, YP-K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Update: YOUnited letters consultation</li><li>• Activity: Mental health quiz</li><li>• Planning for in-person event</li></ul>
<b>JAN 2023</b>	3 YP-H, YP-L, YP-K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Activity: creating a checklist for organisations who approach Our Voices for consultation</li><li>• Planning: in-person event.</li></ul>
<b>FEB 2023</b>	2 YP-H, YP-K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Activity: review/sign off new Our Voices website</li><li>• Discussion: mental health in schools: what next.</li></ul>
<b>MAR 2023</b>	3 YP-H, YP-L, YP-K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consultation: YOUnited comms with YP about single session format</li><li>• Planning: April in-person event.</li></ul>

**In return for attending Our Voices monthly meetings, advisors receive: £10 voucher of their choice (e.g. Amazon), references on request for UCAS/jobs/placements, and training opportunities.**



1

day

8

Young People

## In-person events

### JANUARY 2023

The first in-person event took place in the Centre 33 hub in Peterborough and included **wellbeing games, activities** led by YOUNITED/Centre 33 clinical lead Carolin Reisert, **presentations** by a group member about her ADHD diagnosis and by **Youth MP for Peterborough** Eva Woods about her campaign work, a **group discussion** about peer support and a **consultation exercise** on the language used to communicate with YP on the YOUNITED waiting list.

*It's so important to talk in groups! There are always so many ideas waiting to be tapped into!*

### Group discussion: peer mental health support

Young people are mental health advocates in their schools & colleges

The young people involved in Our Voices are proactive in their schools around mental health and wellbeing issues. Examples of young people-led initiatives:

- Acting in an official Student Mental Health lead capacity
- Setting up and running a student wellbeing 'chat group'
- Advocating for Mental Health First Aid Training for students
- Making requests for talks in schools on topics such as self-harm and suicide.

Young people talk to each other about mental health – and want more support for this

The young people told us that they are all having conversations with their friends about mental health issues, and they want more support from their schools and colleges to be able to do this well. They told us:

- School/college staff seem unwilling to engage with young people in conversations about mental health/wellbeing, unless it is to refer on to mental health services.

*"We're having these conversations anyway, help us do it well."*

Young people want their PSHE lessons to be more practical

The young people told us that their school/college PSHE lessons about mental health:

- Focus too much on the signs and symptoms of diagnosable mental health conditions
- Don't do enough to equip young people with practical tips and guidance for their wellbeing
- Don't spend enough time tackling difficult issues like self-harm, suicide and disordered eating.

*It was amazing to learn how valued young people's opinions and views are!*

# OUR VOICES STEERING GROUP

The professional steering group meets quarterly and oversees the work of the youth advisory group.

## Membership

Representatives from Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Foundation Trust (CAMHS, YOUnited, Involvement); parent/carers, Centre 33, Ormiston Families, Cambridgeshire Community Services, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Integrated Care System, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Public Health, Primary Care Network GP representative and Early Help.

## Meetings

### JULY 2022



Update on recent YP meeting



Explored promotion options: helping YOUnited staff understand what Our Voices does, and recruiting more YP into Our Voices.

Action: promotion of Our Voices by all YOUnited partners

- Partners to receive and display hard copies of Our Voices fliers and posters
- Clinicians to receive information about the work of Our Voices and how/when to refer YP to join the group.

### Nov 2022



Update on recent YP meetings.  
1 Our Voices YP in attendance.



Overview of YP Instagram account, recent promotion opportunities and event planning.

*How can we ensure YP can have a meaningful voice and impact?*

Action:

- Linking up communications opportunities with other service social media channels
- Sharing CPD opportunities with YP.

### Feb 2023



Update on recent YP meetings and in-person event.  
1 Our Voices YP in attendance.



Overview of YP Instagram account, recent promotion opportunities, event planning. Sign off of new Our Voices website.

Explored MHFA/peer support training for YP, mental health toolkits, the value of Our Voices to the wider MH/wellbeing sector in Cambridgeshire & Peterborough.

Action:

- Public Health support for YP mental health toolkit and wider development of Our Voices.
- Further exploration of Mental Health First Aid/peer support training.

# COMMUNICATIONS & PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITY

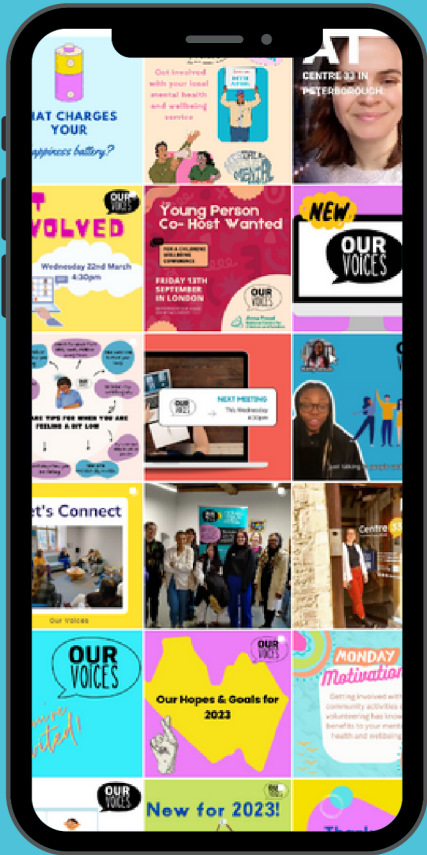
## INSTAGRAM

 [our\\_voices\\_yp](https://www.instagram.com/our_voices_yp)

The young people decided that Instagram would be the most effective communication tool to reach more young people locally.

The purpose of the Our Voices Instagram account is to spread the word about the group's activities, provide information about YOUined and wider mental health and wellbeing services, and to provide helpful tips and guidance for young people in support of their wellbeing.

The Our Voices advisors also have a private message group in which they can share ideas with each other and we can communicate information to them. This is moderated by Fullscope and Ormiston Families.



### REACH

Dec 29 - Mar 28

599

Accounts reached

76

Accounts engaged

157

Total followers

## PRINT MATERIALS



We have invested in Our Voices materials for young people including fliers, posters, postcards and a roller banner for events.

We have a simple information sheet available for any adults working with young people about how/when to refer a young person to get involved with Our Voices.

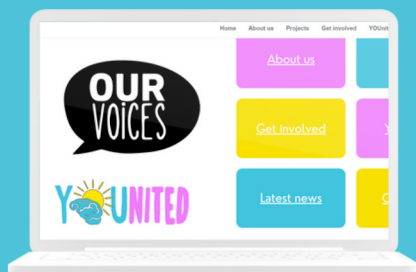
## LUNCH & LEARN

In October we held a 'Lunch & Learn' session for anyone working in the mental health/wellbeing or youth sector locally, as well as for school staff and young people.

We plan to hold another one this summer, and will work with the young people to present their work at the sessions.

## ONLINE

[www.ourvoices.org.uk](http://www.ourvoices.org.uk)



Our Voices now has its own website, produced in consultation with the young advisors and the steering group.

Activities are also promoted on Fullscope and Ormiston Families' Twitter and LinkedIn accounts.

# PROJECT OUTCOMES



Our Voices was set up as part of YOUUnited's commitment to working in partnership to ensure children, young people and their families are actively involved in decisions about their support and influence at all levels of service delivery, service development, innovation and governance. Its foundations are in the work of the co-production workstream during the design stage of YOUUnited.

## I-STATEMENTS

*'Nothing about us, without us'*

The I-Statement outcome framework was developed following a consultation survey with Cambridgeshire & Peterborough children and young people.

Some of our young advisors find the opportunity to be involved with Our Voices supportive to their wellbeing.

*"Beneficial to help me personally"* – YP feedback on our January in-person event.

Our Voices Instagram provides signposting to services supporting mental health, including information about YOUUnited and other local services.

I will know where to go to get help with my mental health

I will get help easily, simply and at the point I need it, which is convenient and local to me

I will be offered choice of how I will be supported and helped

I will get help in a place where I feel safe, from people who are; kind, who really listen, take me seriously, and do not judge me.

I will get introduced to other services if I need them by the people who are helping me.

I will only need to ask once for help, and I will then be offered the right kind of help for me.

I want services that work together so I can get the support I need.

I will know that my family have been supported to help me manage my well-being and mental health needs

### Consultation sessions with YOUUnited staff resulted in:

YOUUnited referral letters are now more gentle in tone, explain the process more clearly and provide quick access to self-help options while young people are waiting.

YOUUnited communications with young people about single session thinking will clearly explain the first contact and the process, in a language and format that young people feel is appropriate.

# FUTURE PLANS: 2023/24

Based on our young advisor's discussions during 2022/23, and the discussions of the steering group, our plans for the coming year include:

-  Further consultation opportunities to support YOUnited and the wider local mental health and wellbeing system.
-  Exploring opportunities for young people to be supported to have mental health and wellbeing conversations with their peers, including a schools' toolkit.
-  Exploring opportunities for the further development of our social media and digital options for co-production, participation and communicating with local CYP.
-  Scoping an in-person event in the summer holidays, including activities, talks and training opportunities.
-  Two Our Voices advisors have been selected to be youth co-hosts of the Anna Freud Children's Wellbeing Practitioner conference in London in September.
-  Exploring local opportunities to engage in person with young people, such as the Healthy Schools' conference.
-  Hold another Lunch and Lunch this summer for mental health, wellbeing, youth sector and education professionals, as well as a session for young people.



**THANK YOU TO ALL OUR YOUNG ADVISORS AND TO EVERYONE WHO HAS SUPPORTED OUR VOICES THIS YEAR**

 [getinvolved@fullscopecollaboration.org.uk](mailto:getinvolved@fullscopecollaboration.org.uk)

 [www.ourvoices.org.uk](http://www.ourvoices.org.uk)

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Changing systems,  
improving young lives

