



'Your thoughts, feelings and help' project: young people's problems or difficulties and their sources of support

What was the project and why did it happen?

The aim of the research was to find out what problems or difficulties young people were facing in their daily lives and what coping strategies or sources of support they were using.



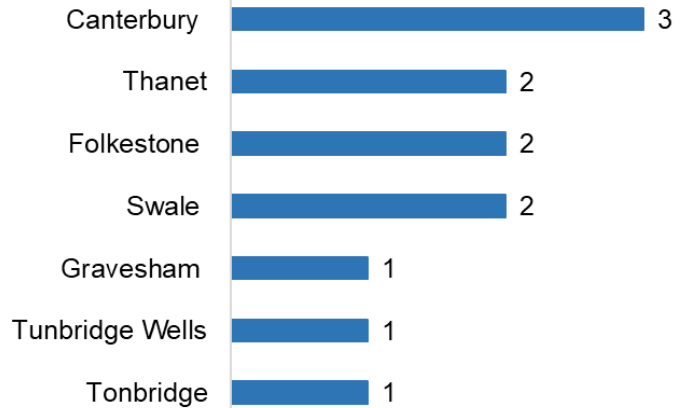
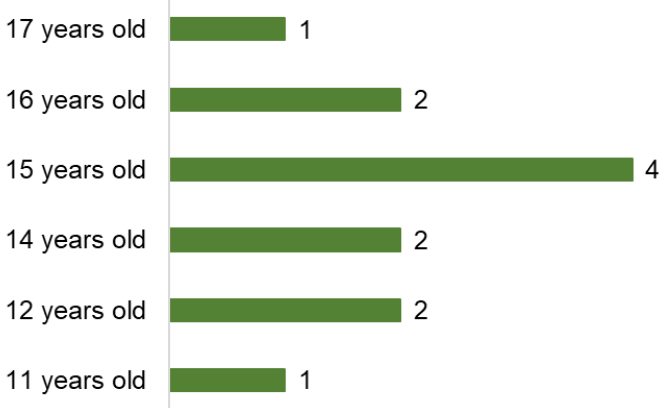
For two weeks, between Monday 23rd November and Sunday 6th December, twelve young people were asked how they were feeling, how their day went and what helped, or didn't help, with their feelings and emotions.

They were encouraged to be as creative as they wanted in response to the twice-daily messages they were sent. They responded using a variety of methods, from texts to voice notes, videos, emojis, GIFs and photos.

Who took part in the project?



- 6 attend mainstream schools
- 3 attend grammar schools
- 3 are in college or 6th form



Over half the young people were **not at school** and taking part in online learning due to Covid for either part or all of the two weeks

What questions were asked?

How are you feeling this morning?

How did you feel today?
What has (or hasn't) helped you with your feelings / emotions?
Why did (or didn't) that help you?

How was your day?
Was it good or bad?
Tell me why...

How was your day?
What did you do?
Where were you?
Who were you with?

What was the best thing about your day?
Why was that?
What was the worst thing about your day?
Why was that?

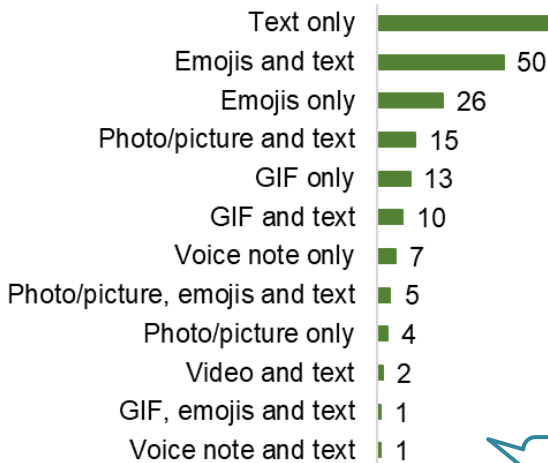
How did they respond?

336 messages sent



324 responses

96% of messages sent over the two weeks received a response

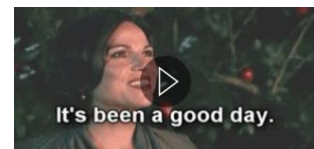


Texting was the most popular method of response

More than one method of response was often used to reply to an individual message

Some young people preferred to only use one or two methods to respond throughout the two weeks

I'm good thanks!



What made them happy and what were their sources of support?

All the young people spoke about **enjoying spending time with family and friends**. Friends were a source of emotional support to many.

...the best thing about my day was having a fun evening with my family

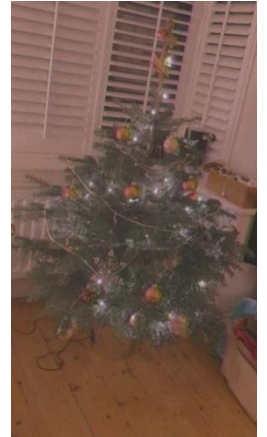
Today I was very happy...I spent time with my friends. [It] made me happy as I'm not alone and don't have to worry about things.



Many mentioned how **cooking with family members** or how having their favourite foods improved their mood.

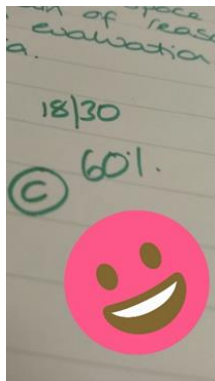
...Mum made my favourite meal for dinner, that has made my day much better!

There was lots of **excitement about Christmas**, especially putting up the decorations and shopping for presents for friends and family.



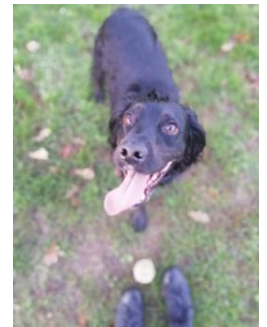
They were **happier when they had engaging lessons that they liked** or if they felt like they were **doing well at school**.

I had art at school today, it's really relaxing.



I'm feeling excited because we put up our tree and I finished getting all my friends presents.

Pets were a source of **comfort** to many.



Quite a few young people mentioned how they **enjoyed tidying their rooms**, so they were a pleasant place to spend time.

I rearranged my room. It looks so much better, so I feel great and my space is now so cosy...

Hobbies included:

- ❖ Listening to music
- ❖ Playing musical instruments
- ❖ Gaming
- ❖ Arts and crafts



Other sources of support included:

- ✓ Teachers providing encouragement or praise
- ✓ Watching TV or films to relax
- ✓ Being productive in the day as a distraction
- ✓ Taking time out for a walk to clear their heads

What did the young people feedback about the project?



Many of the young people that took part said that having daily messages asking them about their day **felt like a mindfulness exercise** and they **enjoyed taking the time to reflect on their emotions**.

Some have now **started to keep a diary to continue the activity going forward**.

I've also decided to start writing in my actual journal more frequently

Taking part boosted confidence a little...I feel proud of myself for taking part

It was actually quite nice to be prompted to reflect on my own emotional state twice a day, sort of like a mindfulness activity...

I enjoyed taking part as it helped me form a routine along with online school and I have started a diary now as I enjoyed reflecting on my day in the evening

This project helped me be more mindful of what I was feeling and why over the two-week period and has really helped me with managing my emotions

I really enjoyed the project as it gave me something to complete each day like a challenge or a game



Thank you to all the young people that took part for fully engaging with the project, being so open and honest about your feelings and for providing some great photos and videos!

A special thank you to those that helped to design the project at the beginning.



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