

Impact Report 2023-24

Our vision is clear: we want to see a world where no young person feels alone with their mental health.

At YoungMinds, our focus this past year has been on reaching more young people and the adults around them: refreshing our brand, enhancing our services, and amplifying the voices of young people in the mental health conversation. We have also been focused on engaging young people who we have been less good at reaching; reviewing our own practices, experience and ways of working as an organisation to provide more culturally relevant, accessible and inclusive support, as well as doing more to call out the social, historical and economic context that shapes mental health experiences and outcomes.

Throughout this past year, we've also been focused on developing our next strategy, spending time understanding our impact to date and what we can build on, as well as where we may want to work differently. This has involved research, engagement and design work with young people, colleagues across YoungMinds and many of our partners and funders, the insight from which will form the foundation of our next strategy cycle.

This year, we have continued to grow our impact across our three strategic programmes, to support young people, their families, and the professionals who work with them.

Our mission is clear

For all young people to get the mental health support they need, when they need it, no matter what.

Doing so can prevent an emerging mental health need becoming a crisis.

Our theory of change

Young people's mental health needs are not supported early enough, and often only when they have reached crisis point.

This is the problem we want to solve and we aim to address this through our three strategic programmes:

Programme one: Never Alone

Helping young people look after their own mental health.

Programme two: Someone To Turn To

Making sure young people have adults around who can really help and support them.

Programme three: Powerful Young Voices

Making sure young people have the power to make change and ensure there is mental health support for anyone who needs it.

Through these programmes and by working with young people, our work will lead to these strategic outcomes:

- fewer young people need crisis or emergency support
- young people are able to get the help and support they need quickly and receive a high-quality service
- there's a reduction in things that lead to young people struggling with their mental health and needing support

These outcomes mean we can achieve our mission and ultimate goal.

Programme one: Never Alone

Helping young people to look after their mental health

- Our Help Finder tool for young people had 202,114 views.
- Over 1 million users visited our website.
- Our information and support pages for young people were viewed over 2 million times.
- 80% of young people said our guidance helped them to feel more hopeful about their situation.
- Our Instagram achieved 13 million impressions.
- Our blog for young people was visited over 600,000 times.

To ensure no young person feels alone with their mental health, we've grown our digital presence, with over a million users accessing our website. We've coproduced new web guides with young people and clinical specialists on topics including disability, neurodiversity, and cultural identity, which are raising understanding of the diversity of mental health impacts, with a particular focus on support in marginalised and minoritised communities.

Our blog posts and social media are giving a stronger platform for young people to connect with others and feel part of a community. This year, we handed the mic over to young people to share their story directly, in their own words, providing space and funding to support young creatives to produce content relating to their own mental health experience or reflect on themes in society more widely. We also earned a PIF TICK accreditation for our guides and resources this year, providing recognition that our content provides trustworthy, expert-informed advice and guidance.

Our strategic aims

- Every young person who needs us can find us quickly and easily.
- Every young person we engage with feels more hopeful about their mental health and can do something positive to improve their situation.

- Every young person who wants to be a source of support to their friends can come to us to gain the skills and confidence to do so.

Growing our information and support for young people

Over the last 12 months, we've continuously evolved the essential information and resources we provide to support young people's mental health.

Last year, over a million people (1,025,940 users) accessed information, support, and guidance through our website, with 80% of young people telling us our guidance helped them to feel more hopeful about their situation.

We've created new web guides on important topics like Disability and Mental Health, OCD, and Cultural Identity and Mental Health. Young people continue to tell us it's key they can trust where the content they see comes from, so we're proud that many guides earned the PIF TICK accreditation this year, showing we're a trusted source of mental health information in the UK.

Our blog and Writers Programme

The blog remains very popular, with 624,311 page views, giving our audience real-life stories to feel more connected to others. We had 13 young people graduating the first year of our Writer's Programme, and our blogger's pool and Writer's Programme created 14 new blogs.

The writers spent time with acclaimed writers and journalists, including Sarah Haque, Katie Goh, Ben Smoke, Ellen Scott and Cathy Newman and we've already recruited 20 young people for next year.

We're increasing our social media reach too.

Our Instagram community has grown 8% to over 180,000 followers, 13 million impressions and over 600,000 engagements and our TikTok channel isn't far behind, with 6% increase, over 17,000 followers and videos being viewed almost 290,000 times.

Launching a new campaign with young Black Disabled Creators

A critical part of our mission is to create authentic, meaningful mental health support for underrepresented communities of young people.

Our new campaign with young Black Disabled creators, disability specialist agency Purple Goat and The Triple Cripples consultancy, explored what young Black Disabled people really need from mental health support, and how to genuinely represent their experiences.

The campaign showed how meaningful it is when young people own the creative direction and share what they want to say on their terms. The creatives developed videos, blogs, poetry, rap, comics and more. Each piece brings to life their day-to-day experience and celebrates joy, creativity, community, and hope.

The project, funded by Nominet, has delivered new web pages highlighting the young creators' stories, and produced a web guide on mental health and Disability.

In the last year, we've commissioned staff training through Chronically Brown, focussing on Intersectionality, helping us produce guides on Creating Accessible and Inclusive Content, Design Best Practice and Writing About Disability, and completing an accessibility audit on our website through RNIB.

Developing a new, authentic, and relevant brand

This year, we worked with Livity, a specialist youth agency, and over 30 young people, with a focus on Black, minoritised and marginalised young people to establish our new brand direction. One that resonates with and reaches more diverse audiences, and provides practical, authentic mental health support.

The young people gave us valuable insights throughout the project. They told us of their frustration with empty promises and 'noise' from organisations and brands claiming to stand up for what young people believe, but who never delivered any meaningful change. The young people had a particularly low level of trust in organisations and establishments, including charities, leading them to quickly judge the information and content they find online.

The young people stressed they wanted to be confident the mental health information and advice they received was credible and informed by experts – whether that be individuals with lived experiences or professionals in the mental health field. They discussed the individual, nuanced, and unique nature of mental health experiences, and shared a deep need to feel seen and heard, rather than being given a one size-fits-all solution. It was clear there is also an urgent need for better and more authentic representations of diversity from organisations, truly reflecting the lives and experiences of young people.

Based on this insight, our new brand aims to bridge the trust gap between YoungMinds and young people. We're working to better represent the realities of what it's like to be young today. Our new brand positions us as a "facilitator" and "connector," amplifying the stories and demands for change from young people and connecting them with decision-makers and other young individuals creating positive change. This naturally shifts the brand away from focusing on YoungMinds as an organisation and brings young people's joy and power front and centre.

It's important to say that, despite the dark times, young people continue to show up for themselves and each other. We want to platform their belief in a hopeful future. A more positive future that we won't stop striving for until it's there for every young person.

Programme two: Someone To Turn To

Making sure young people have adults around them who can really help

- 86% of helpline users felt more confident supporting their young person's mental health after contacting us.
- 70% of helpline users said their child's mental health has got better since they contacted us.
- Our online information and advice pages for parents and carers were viewed 1,578,079 times.
- Our community support resources were viewed 215,479 times.
- We trained over 3,000 people through our in-house and open access training offer.
- We supported educators in 15 schools across England and Wales, through our pilot schools project.

We know that for young people, having supportive relationships with the adults around them is crucial for improving their mental health. Whether it's parents, teachers, educational professionals, coaches or youth workers, these adults play a vital role in supporting young people to get the help they need.

That's why our programme offers information and training to parents and adults who support young people, helping them gain confidence in providing crucial mental health support. Through our Parents Helpline, community outreach, and training, we aim to ensure all young people have someone to turn to when they need support, and that the adults they turn to can really make a difference.

Our strategic aims

Every young person has adults in their life who they can turn to

Every young person has adults in their life who they can turn to for help with their mental health, whether that's at home, at school or in their community.

Every adult who wants to help a young person, can

Every adult who wants to help a young person with their mental health can come to us to gain the skills and confidence to do so.

Supporting parents and carers

Our Parents Helpline provides a lifeline for thousands of parents and carers. We quickly and easily connect parents with our trained advisors via phone and webchat. Our advisors offer support, information and practical advice, backed up by a dedicated email service and information and advice on our website.

Over the last year, we've transitioned to a new service model, which meant significant change for our parent and carer support systems. Although we narrowly missed our target of 15,000 parents and carers supported, we're confident in the improvements it will bring – helping us deliver higher quality support on a larger scale.

All of this would not have been possible without the loyal support of our funders - Prudence Trust, Garfield Weston Foundation, Pears Foundation, and Westminster Foundation.

This year:

- 86% of service users felt more confident to support their young person's mental health after contacting us
- over 83% of service users told us they had confidence in the information/advice provided, against a target of 70%
- 70% of parents/carers said their child's mental health was better since contacting the helpline
- 41% of service users said their relationship with their child had improved since contacting the helpline, a positive rise from 35% in 2022

Expanding our parent/carer engagement and outreach

We're taking our parent and carer engagement work even further this year by launching our new outreach programme. Through this, we will connect more widely with parents and carers, enabling us to gather more evidence and insights to shape and improve our services.

Reaching adults who support young people in the community

We're continuing to reach out to trusted adults in the community and education. We've unlocked funding that allows us to offer support free at the point of delivery, work in partnership to reach more trusted adults where they are, and provide shorter training and skills sessions for those who have limited time.

In the last year, we reached and trained over 3,000 individuals, through free training sessions funded by Peter Harrison Foundation, as well as our In House and Open Access trainings. We also developed and delivered training to M&S staff on being a trusted adult, understanding mental health and supporting younger colleagues with their wellbeing. This was completed by hundreds of M&S colleagues.

Working together with services

Over the last year, we have worked with a number of health, education, and local services. This has included:

- supporting Central Bedfordshire Council to deliver our whole school approach to mental health
- developing a young person's Expert by Experience forum with Cheshire & Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
- working with Humber and North Yorkshire HCP (NHS) to show professionals across the region the need for young people's participation in service and system design

Working with participation champions in Northwest London, we also created a series of recommendations for improving the reach, accessibility and effectiveness of Mental Health Support Teams. Suggested by young people, these will be invaluable to future service and system design. As well as being implemented by Northwest London Integrated Care Board, they have now been shared with NHS England.

Developing better training and resources

This year we completed a 'discovery' phase of our service design work, collaborating with Youth Advisors, youth workers and youth organisations leaders to better understand their experiences.

This connects with how we use our growing network of community organisations and partners to inform our service design, training, and information content development. We are making sure our work is led by the needs of young people, and the experiences of trusted adults supporting young people with their mental health.

We have continued to expand our resources, with new videos on self-harm, trauma and anger, new spotlight stories, and new web guides. These cover how to be a good listener, supporting a young person to get help, a quick guide to OCD in young people and a quick guide to ADHD in young people.

This year we've:

- received 215,479 views of our community support resources
- had 46,708 unique downloads of our resources
- heard that 87% of people who visited our community
- resources said it helped improve their confidence to support a young person with their mental health

Connecting with grassroots organisations

This year, we've learnt and evolved in our work through our connections with other grassroots organisations. We've:

- Created more Spotlight Stories together, and sharing stories of adults supporting young people.
- Partnered with community impact charity, Sported, to develop a funding bid focused on social prescribing.
- Connected with new community youth groups through the London Mayor's Fund, giving us a fantastic opportunity to discuss service design and share insight.
- Brought more lived experience front and centre. Through our
- commissioned work with Ambitious About Autism, we spoke with autistic young people about more effective support for their mental health. We also ran a survey with autistic young people, getting tips and advice on how best to support a young autistic person.

Supporting school communities

To support more educators, we completed our pilot schools project in 15 schools across England and Wales. The pilot has provided a successful proof of concept, leading to further funding from the Hodge

Foundation to enable us to work with 16 more schools in South Wales across 2024/25.

As well as gaining a very positive final evaluation report from QA Research for our work, we've had very positive feedback from participants.

"We have seen huge changes in staff and pupils. Our SEN SEMH need has reduced from 50% to 25%."

"Children in the playground have someone to talk to if they are feeling negative about something."

Programme three: Powerful Young Voices

Growing a youth-led movement to make sure support is there for all who need it

- Our Youth Panel offered senior-level strategic input and advice through 40 activities.
- Our Activists each took part in eight activities over the last year.
- Our Youth Advisors engaged over 100 supporters at our flagship Bank of England event.
- Across all our youth programmes, 62% felt they made a positive contribution to young people's mental health.
- 81% of young people across our programmes felt that making a contribution had a positive impact on themselves.
- 96% of young people rated their programme as 'excellent' or 'very good'.

Alongside the work we've been doing externally, we have been focused on building a strong sense of community within YoungMinds – both with each other as colleagues and with young people. Our Youth Panel have worked alongside the Senior Leadership team and Trustee board to guide decisions and helped to make sure we are listening to and involving young people throughout our work. Our Youth Advisors have been involved in directing projects from recruitment to hosting events to campaigns to brand development. We keep striving to improve and help everyone at YoungMinds, both young people and staff, to feel welcome, valued, able to participate and listened to. Right now, there's no expectation that things are going to get easier. We face a national emergency in terms of young people's mental health, and too many young people can't get support when they need it. There has never been a more urgent time for our work. Yet we face this challenge with optimism and open hearts. We see the passion, dedication and creativity in the young people and partners we work alongside to imagine and create a better future. Every young person we provide a platform for, every adult we help feel more confident,

and every individual who no longer feels alone with their mental health moves us in the right direction.

Our strategic aims

Every young person who wants to can influence the decisions that affect their mental health.

Every young person who needs support - whether from the NHS, from local services or online - can get it.

Some of the key factors behind the rise in young people's mental health needs are reduced.

Young people lead the way at YoungMinds

Youth Panel

YoungMinds' Youth Panel is a diverse group of 13 young people who get involved in the strategic decision-making of the organisation, bringing a youth perspective to the big decisions we make and challenging the leadership on our direction of travel.

The Panel participated in 40 activities this year, comprising of 238 individual actions. Among many activities, they recruited two new Directors, reviewed, and helped write our safeguarding and ethical fundraising policies, shaped our campaigning direction, and helped with the setup of key projects, and created a Theory of Change for our AJEDI Campaign. We're so grateful for the commitment of our Panel and the huge role they've played in the successes we've achieved this year.

Activists

Our Activist Programme is where young people with lived experience of mental ill health come together to join our campaigns, shape our content, and speak out in the media and in parliament. They play an absolutely crucial role in keeping youth mental health high on the agenda, campaigning for change and making sure young people are authentically represented in our work.

Forty-five young people took part in at least one activity in the last 12 months, and on average, Activists took part in an impressive eight activities each. These included meeting MPs, telling their stories on national broadcast and print media, co-designing our Never Alone content, and coming together to help us write our new policy agenda.

Youth Advisors

Our Youth Advisory Group entered its second year and went from strength to strength. This is a paid programme, where a team of young people join staff teams as direct collaborators on key projects. They got involved in our strategy development, our movement building project, our Never Alone work and much, more. A key highlight was the

group designing, producing, and speaking at our flagship event at the Bank of England to engage over 100 supporters and raise awareness of YoungMinds.

Across our youth programmes:

- 62% felt they made a positive contribution to young people's mental health.
- 81% of those young people felt that making that contribution had had a positive impact on themselves.
- 96% rated their programme as 'excellent' or 'very good'.

Huge breakthrough for our Fund the Hubs campaign

When a young person is struggling with their mental health early support is vital. In fact, the earlier they can get support, the more effective that support usually is. But of the hundreds of thousands of young people affected by their mental health, most do not get support when they first need it.

Since 2019 we've been campaigning with partners in the Fund the Hubs coalition to make sure there's an early support hub in every community in the UK. And we've seen excellent progress over the last 12 months. 15,000 YoungMinds campaigners signed a letter to the Chancellor, asking him to invest in the roll out of these hubs. Our Activists have also been actively engaging MPs and Ministers, bringing their real experiences to the heart of Government.

Our campaign has led to a commitment from the government to commit £5 million to fund a pilot of 24 early support hubs, with a view to a full roll out. We also secured a commitment from the Labour party that, should they form the next Government, they would commit to a full national roll out. We are delighted to have made these breakthroughs on a long-standing priority for our campaigning.

Increasing the mental health support available in schools

A key ask of our End the Wait campaign is to get a mental health support team (MHST) in every school in the country. Again, we secured a major breakthrough, getting the Government to increase their target

from 35% to 50% by 2027. The change in Government provides a key opportunity to push for more as we secured a pre-election commitment from Labour that they will roll these out across all schools.

Shining a light on the issue

Fight for Young Lives

This year, our media team and young Activists worked with mental health activist and media star Roman Kemp to produce an authentic look into the mental health crisis experienced by young people in the UK today. The documentary for BBC has given a phenomenally wide exposure and a unique insight into the problems faced by young people, treatments, and support available and the political solutions being offered.

Developing a bold new agenda for change

The crisis in young people's mental health has been getting worse each year, with prevalence rates hitting record levels last year. We believe that Governments have spent too long tinkering with a system that needs fundamental reform – and that fresh thinking is needed to bring the kind of change that will actually turn things around for young people.

We've been working with a group of 15 young people from our Activist programme to develop a bold, ambitious new policy agenda that we can bring to the new Government, so that we have the ideas and vision for a new way to tackle the mental health emergency. We are really proud of the work the young people have done, alongside our team, and excited to bring this to decision-makers this year.

Thank you to our funders, partners and fundraisers

We give thanks to our funders who enable us to do the vital work we do to make sure no young person feels alone with their mental health.

- Our total income was £6.5 million.
- M&S customers and staff supporters raised £1.7 million in the first six months of our new partnership.
- We raised £272,218.04 in support of young people's mental health through #HelloYellow from 4,442 schools, companies and individuals.

Our partnership with M&S

We are thrilled to have been chosen as M&S' first headline national charity partner, launching our 'Together, we've got this' partnership in October 2023. By partnering with one of the UK's most well known and trusted retail brands, we aim to raise £5million over the next three years – these funds will support even more young people and connect thousands more families to our resources and support.

In the first six months of the partnership, we raised an incredible £1.7million, through customer and staff fundraising and a £1million corporate donation from M&S. We look forward to sharing more on what we achieve together, as the partnership evolves.

Hello Yellow

Hello Yellow is our annual, big, bright and very yellow campaign to show children and young people they're not alone with their mental health. Thousands of schools, communities and companies across the country come together to make World Mental Health Day that little bit brighter by wearing something yellow and donating to support our work.

It's more than just a fundraiser - it's a national moment where the country shows solidarity, love and support to young people who are struggling with their mental health - and it makes all the difference.

This year was our eighth year of Hello Yellow and once again we were blown away by the support of so many people across the nation. 4,442 schools, companies and individuals came together to wear yellow on the day, raising over £270,000 to support young people's mental health.

We want to say a huge thank you for your support.

Thank you for your kindness and support

The difference we make is only possible thanks to the incredible generosity of our supporters and funders. We want to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to everyone who believed in us and helped us through the year.

Your support has meant that we could be there for young people when they needed us most and has given us the platform to be even more ambitious for young people in the coming years.

Thank you

- M&S
- Paul Hamlyn Foundation
- Prudence Trust
- The Oak Foundation
- Garfield Weston Foundation
- Hollyhock Charitable Foundation
- Westminster Foundation
- National Lottery Fund
- The 3 Ts Charitable Trust
- Pears Foundation
- St James's Place Charitable Foundation
- Aim Foundation