

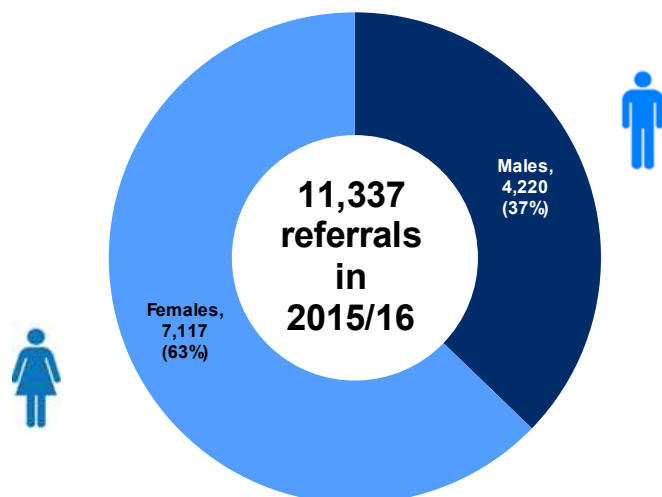
## Counselling for Children and Young People, 2015/16 (EXPERIMENTAL STATISTICS)

29 March 2017  
SFR 31/2017

Local authorities in Wales are required to make reasonable provision of independent counselling services for children and young people aged between 11 and 18 and pupils in Year 6 of primary school. Local authorities are required to provide anonymised information about their counselling services to the Welsh Government. This data informs the development of counselling services for children and young people in Wales.

Since 2014 there has been considerable work on guidance and definitions to ensure consistency between authorities, to clarify some known issues, and reflect current policy. For this reason increases or decreases from year to year should be interpreted with caution and these statistics are thus published as experimental. The known quality issues are highlighted in the Key Quality Information section at the end of the release.

**Chart 1: Number of children and young people who received counselling in Wales, by gender, 2015/16**



- 11,337 children or young people received counselling services in 2015/16.
- 63 per cent were female and 37 per cent were male.

### About this release

This release covers the counselling services provided by local authorities for children and young people.

Data are shown for Wales and at local authority level.

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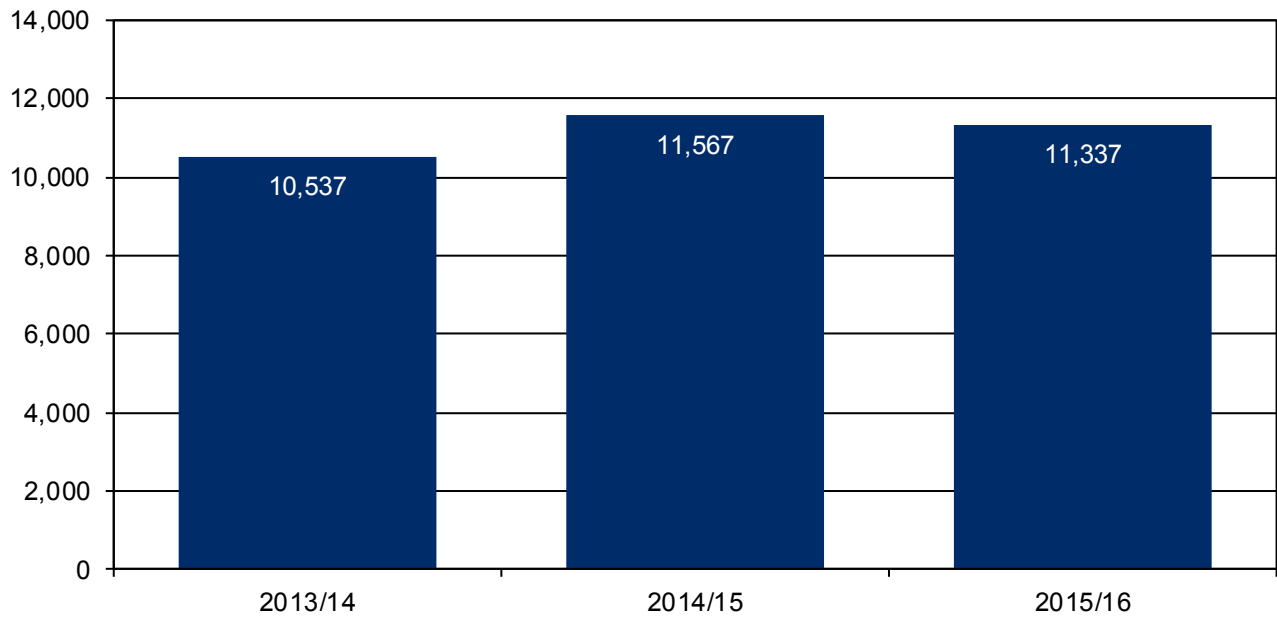
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All charts and tables below relate to face to face counselling only.

## Section 1: Children and young people receiving counselling by gender, local authority, form of referral, age group and ethnicity

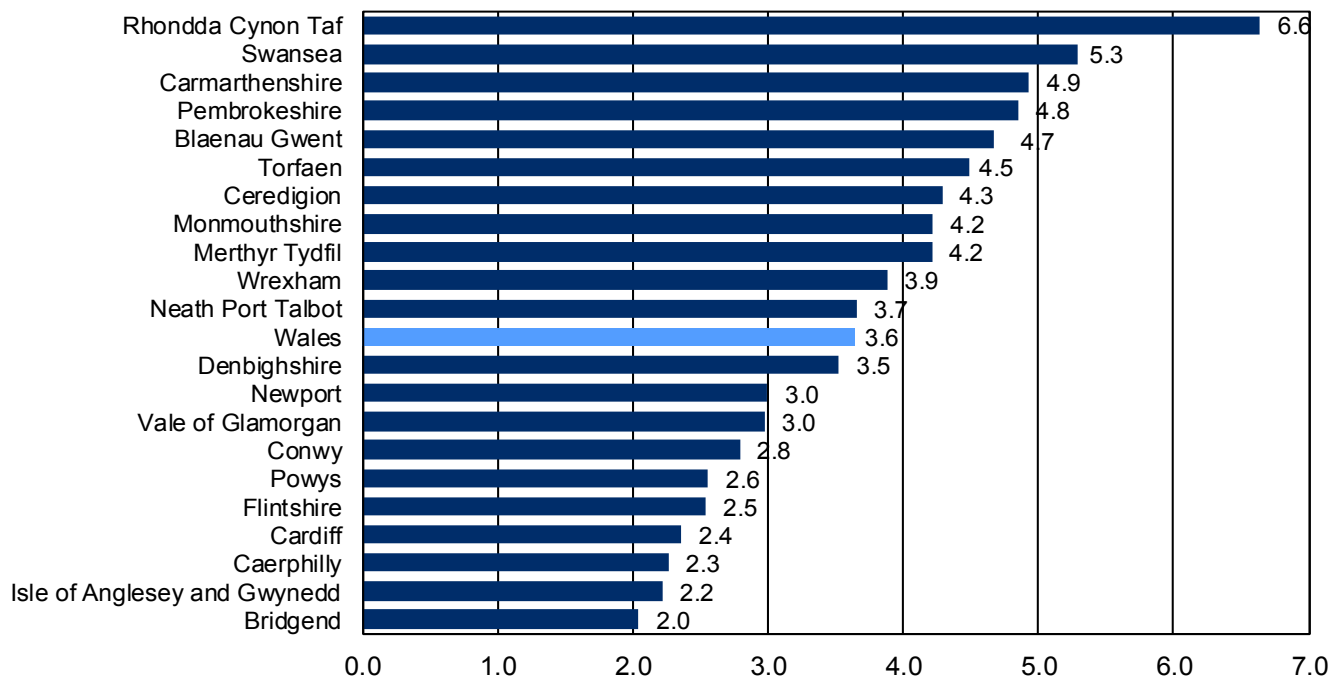
**Chart 2: Number of children and young people who received counselling in Wales**



Source: Counselling for children and young people, Welsh Government

- 11,337 children or young people received counselling services in 2015/16 (please note comparisons should be treated with considerable caution, as stated on the front page).
- Females accounted for 63 per cent or 7,117 of the 11,337 children and young people who received counselling in 2015/16, compared to 37 per cent or 4,220 of males (Chart 1).
- The gender split of 63 per cent female, 37 per cent male is similar to the previous two years.

**Chart 3: Number of children and young people (per 100 of resident 10-18 year olds) who received counselling in Wales by local authority, 2015/16 (a)**



Source: Counselling for children and young people, Welsh Government

(a) Population estimates obtained from 2015 Mid-year population estimates produced by the Office for National Statistics.

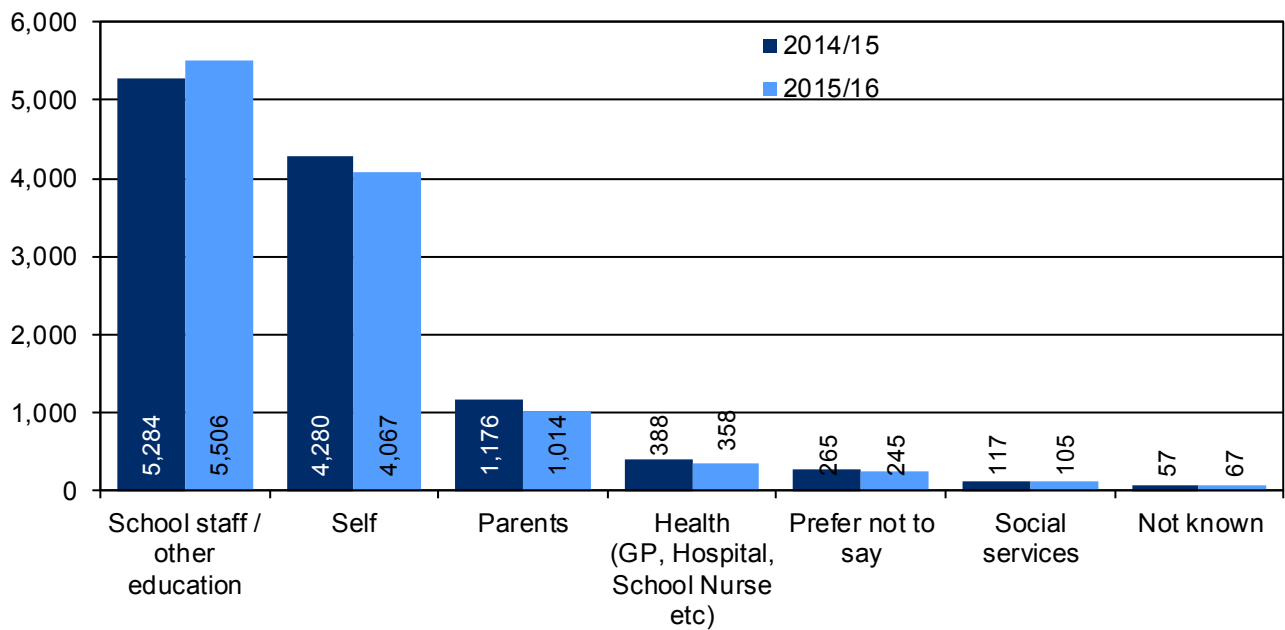
- 3.6 children and young people per 100 of resident 10-18 year olds received counselling in Wales in 2015/16.
- Rhondda Cynon Taf had the highest rate of children and young people per 100 of resident 10-18 year olds who received counselling (6.6 children and young people per 100 of resident 10-18 year olds in 2015/16, Chart 3).
- Rhondda Cynon Taf also had the most children and young people who received counselling (1,607 in 2015/16, Table 1).
- Bridgend had the lowest rate of children and young people per 100 of resident 10-18 year olds who received counselling (2.0 children and young people per 100 of resident 10-18 year olds in 2015/16, Chart 3).
- Merthyr Tydfil had the fewest children and young people who received counselling (252 in 2015/16, Table 1).

**Table 1: Number of children and young people who received counselling (excluding online counselling) in Wales, by local authority, 2015/16**

Local Authority	Male	Female	Total
Isle of Anglesey and Gwynedd	148	255	403
Conwy	147	162	309
Denbighshire	128	209	337
Flintshire	121	280	401
Wrexham	205	328	533
Powys	113	227	340
Ceredigion	100	185	285
Pembrokeshire	203	407	610
Carmarthenshire	359	557	916
Swansea	481	774	1,255
Neath Port Talbot	194	320	514
Bridgend	125	174	299
Vale of Glamorgan	147	258	405
Cardiff	277	521	798
Rhondda Cynon Taf	609	998	1,607
Merthyr Tydfil	94	158	252
Caerphilly	173	259	432
Blaenau Gwent	151	168	319
Torfaen	147	279	426
Monmouthshire	131	279	410
Newport	167	319	486
<b>Wales</b>	<b>4,220</b>	<b>7,117</b>	<b>11,337</b>

Source: Counselling for children and young people, Welsh Government

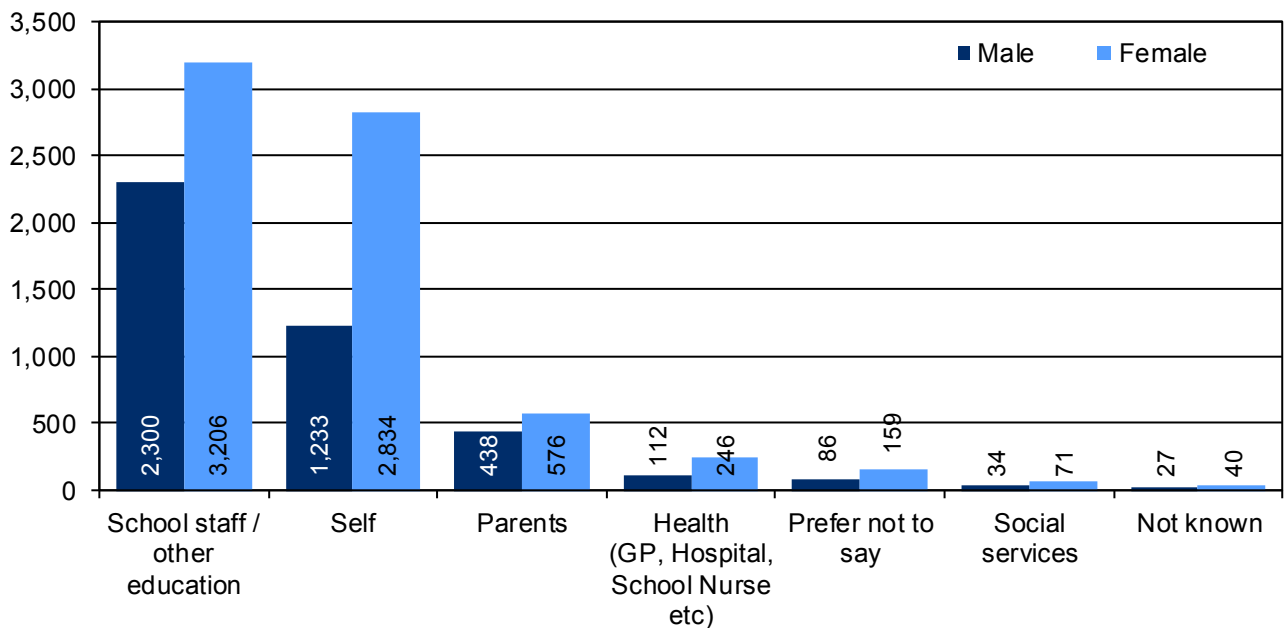
**Chart 4: Number of children and young people who received counselling in Wales by form of referral**



Source: Counselling for children and young people, Welsh Government

- The most common form of referral was by school-based and other education staff, which accounted for nearly half of all referrals (49 per cent) in 2015/16. Self referral was the second most common form of referral (36 per cent) in 2015/16, followed by parents (9 per cent).
- The trend for different types of referrals was similar for both 2014/15 and 2015/16.

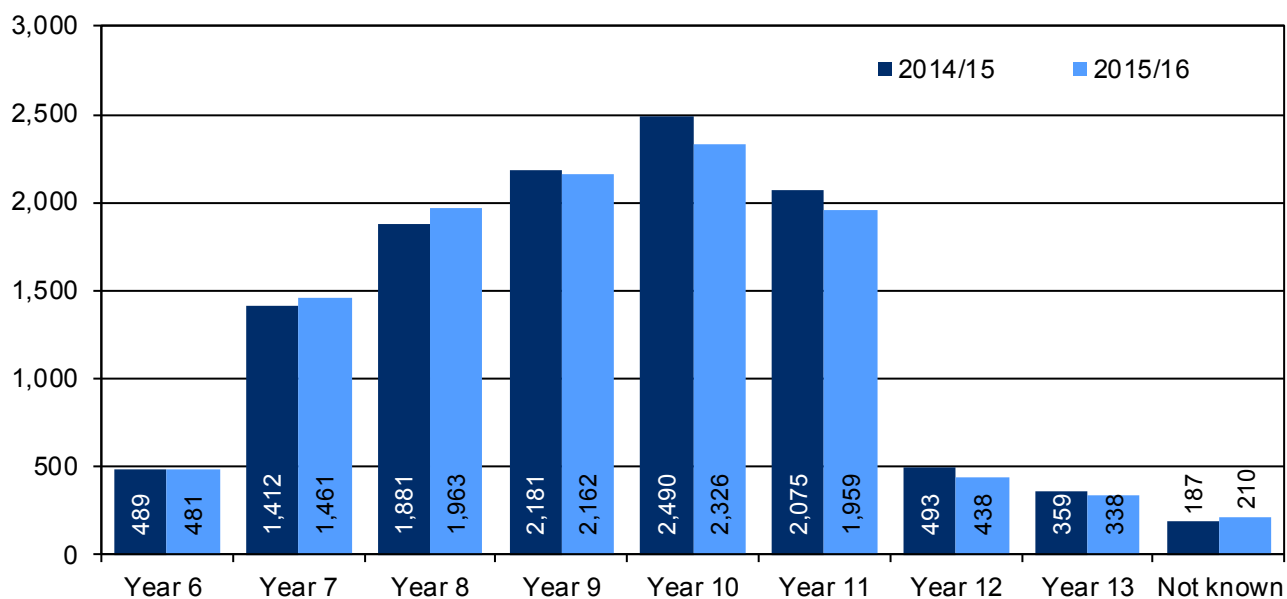
**Chart 5: Form of referral of children and young people who received counselling by gender in 2015/16**



Source: Counselling for children and young people, Welsh Government

- Males and females attending counselling displayed a similar trend in their form of referral, with referral by school-based staff the most common, followed by self referral for both males and females.
- However, males were more likely to be referred by school-based and other education staff (54 per cent of all male referrals) compared to their female counterparts (45 per cent of all female referrals).
- Conversely, females were more likely to refer themselves (40 per cent of all female referrals) compared to their male counterparts (29 per cent of all male referrals).

**Chart 6: Number of children and young people who received counselling in Wales by school year age group (r)**



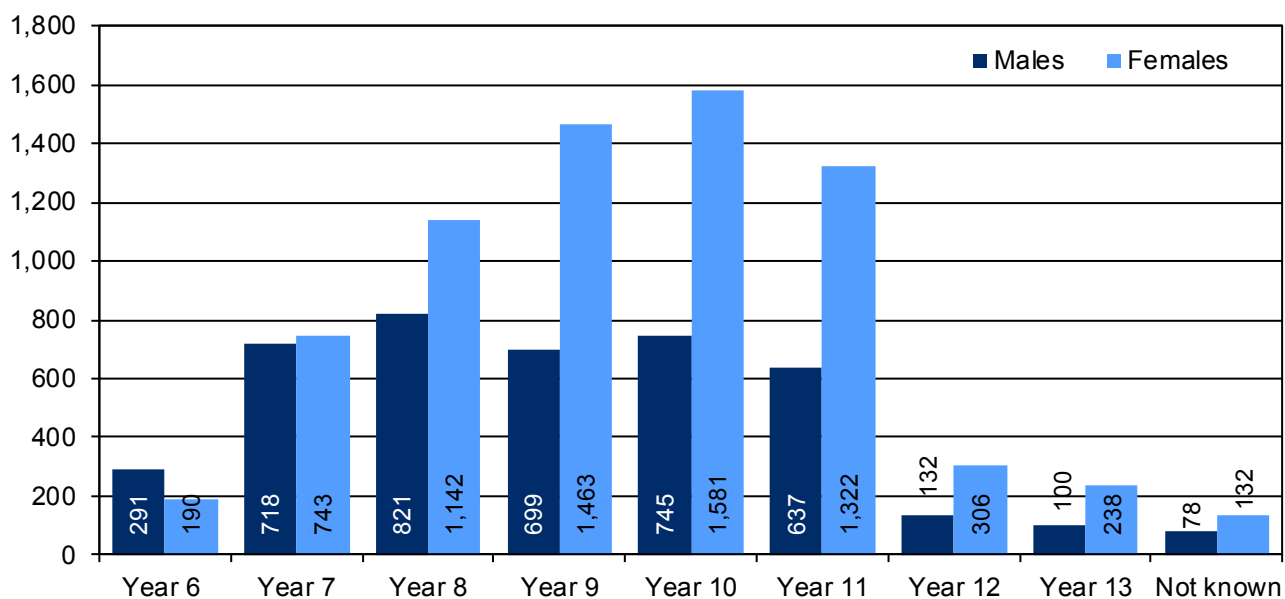
Source: Counselling for children and young people, Welsh Government

(r) 2014/15 data for Year 6 and Not Known has been revised following a correction from a local authority.

- The Year 10 age group (for the most part, these are children aged 14-15 who are just starting to study for GCSEs) had the highest number of children and young people who received counselling, followed by the Year 9 age group in 2015/16. The Year 13 age group (that is, those young people in sixth form or having left school) had the lowest number.
- The Year 10 age group accounted for 21 per cent of all children and young people who received counselling in 2015/16.
- Three quarters of all children and young people who received counselling were between the Year 8 and Year 11 age groups in 2015/16, although this is primarily driven by trends across age in counselling for females as illustrated in the following section.



**Chart 7: Number of children and young people who received counselling in Wales by gender and school year age group in 2015/16**



Source: Counselling for children and young people, Welsh Government

- There were more females than males who received counselling in all year groups, with the exception of the Year 6 age group.
- From Year 7 to Year 11 the number of males attending counselling remained relatively steady at around 700. However the number of females increased considerably year on year compared to their male counterparts, to a peak in Year 10 of 1,581 females.

**Table 2: Number and percentage of children and young people who received counselling in Wales, by ethnic background**

Ethnic Background	2014/15		2015/16	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
White	11,028	95.3	10,827	95.5
Mixed Race	198	1.7	217	1.9
Asian or Asian British	86	0.7	94	0.8
Black or Black British	43	0.4	47	0.4
Chinese or Chinese British	13	0.1	13	0.1
Any other ethnic background	74	0.6	71	0.6
Not known	125	1.1	68	0.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,567</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>11,337</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Counselling for children and young people, Welsh Government

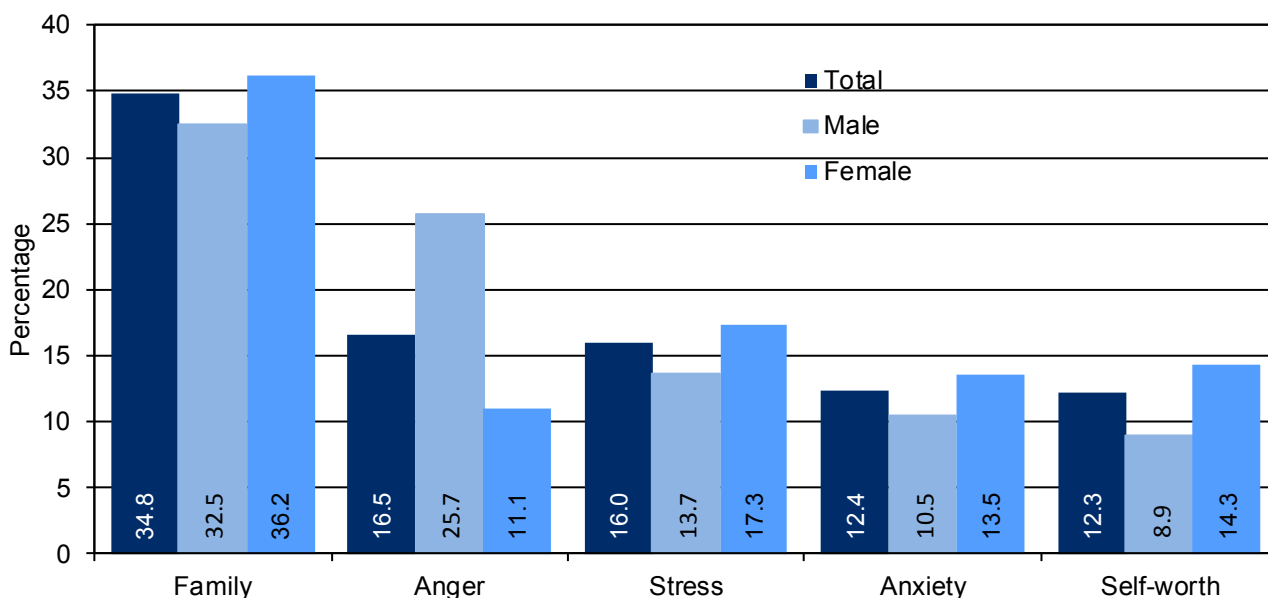
- The majority (96 per cent) of children and young people who received counselling classified themselves as white in 2015/16. The distribution seen in Table 2 is broadly representative of the distribution of young people in the wider school population.

## Section 2: Presenting and predominant issues

**Chart 8: Main presenting issues for children and young people who received counselling in Wales in 2015/16**

A presenting issue is the reason that a client self-refers or is referred to a counsellor. Local authorities are asked to record up to three presenting issues per child or young person. The chart below shows the percentage of children and young people who received counselling with each of the five most common presenting issues.

Note that the presentation of data in this section has changed from previous releases to capture the prevalence of each presenting issue amongst those receiving counselling. Previous editions analysed the distribution of presenting issues, which is less easy to interpret due to the fact that multiple issues can be presented by each child or young person.



Source: Counselling for children and young people, Welsh Government

**Table 3: All presenting issues for children and young people who received counselling in Wales in 2015/16 (a)**

Presenting issues on referral	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Family	1,373	32.5	2,576	36.2	3,949	34.8
Anger	1,085	25.7	787	11.1	1,872	16.5
Stress	577	13.7	1,234	17.3	1,811	16.0
Anxiety	444	10.5	964	13.5	1,408	12.4
Self-worth	376	8.9	1,015	14.3	1,391	12.3
Behaviour related	726	17.2	416	5.8	1,142	10.1
Relationships other	300	7.1	782	11.0	1,082	9.5
Depression	323	7.7	716	10.1	1,039	9.2
Bereavement	382	9.1	583	8.2	965	8.5
Bullying	320	7.6	546	7.7	866	7.6
Self-harm	156	3.7	710	10.0	866	7.6
Academic	157	3.7	277	3.9	434	3.8
Suicide	107	2.5	203	2.9	310	2.7
Abuse (including sexual)	61	1.4	203	2.9	264	2.3
Relationships with teachers	110	2.6	115	1.6	225	2.0
Sexual (including orientation)	59	1.4	116	1.6	175	1.5
Domestic abuse	63	1.5	108	1.5	171	1.5
Eating disorders	19	0.5	149	2.1	168	1.5
Relationship with boyfriend/girlfriend	33	0.8	87	1.2	120	1.1
Illness	38	0.9	66	0.9	104	0.9
Caring responsibility	22	0.5	53	0.7	75	0.7
Substance misuse	29	0.7	29	0.4	58	0.5
Financial concerns/poverty	13	0.3	27	0.4	40	0.4
Transgender issues	20	0.5	18	0.3	38	0.3
Cyber safety (including cyber-bullying and sexting)	4	0.1	25	0.4	29	0.3
Offending	4	0.1	15	0.2	19	0.2
Other	271	6.4	432	6.1	703	6.2
Not known	25	0.6	32	0.4	57	0.5

Source: Counselling for children and young people, Welsh Government

(a) Local authorities can record up to three presenting issues per child or young person. This table shows the number and percentage of children and young people with each issue. Therefore the percentages do not add up to 100.

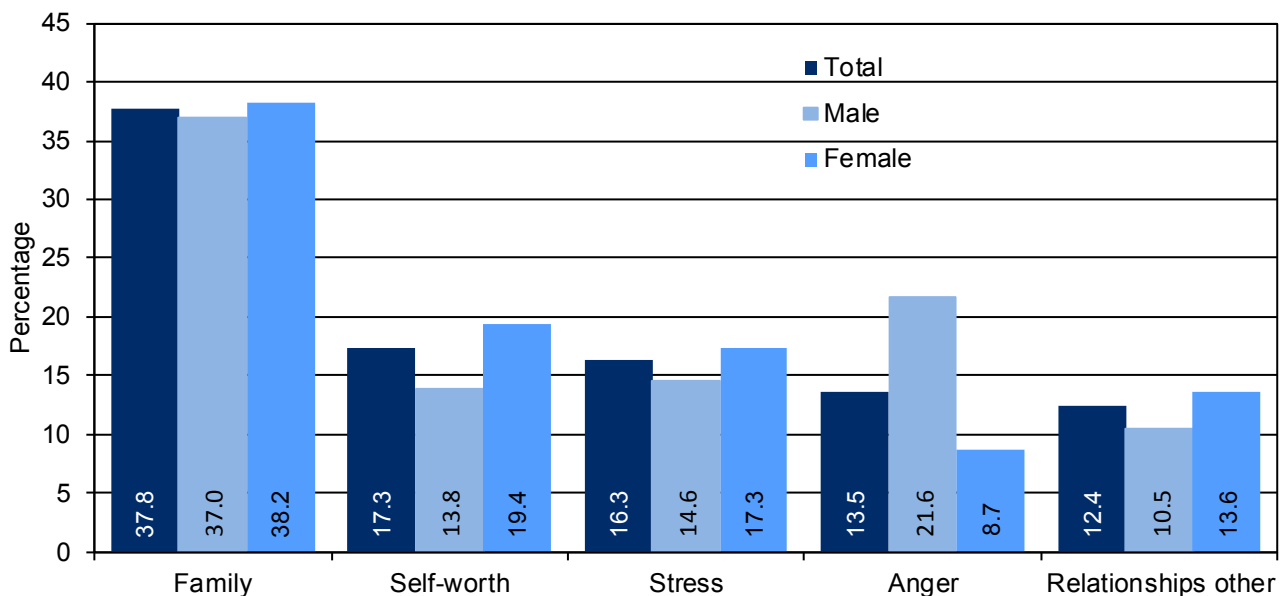
- Presenting issues were recorded for each child and young person who received counselling services in Wales. The most common form of presenting issue on referral was family issues which was an issue for roughly one third (35 per cent) of all children and young people who received counselling services in 2015/16. Anger issues were the second most common form of presenting issue on referral (17 per cent in 2015/16).

- The most common form of presenting issue on referral for both males and females was family issues. However males were more likely to be referred due to anger or behaviour related issues and females were more likely to be referred due to self-worth or self-harm issues than their male counterparts.

**Chart 9: Main predominant issues for children and young people who received counselling in Wales in 2015/16**

A predominant issue is the underlying issue(s) that is identified during the counselling process. For example, a young person’s presenting issue may be anger, but through the counselling process, he/she may come to realise that the predominant issue is family relationships. Local authorities are asked to record up to three predominant issues per child or young person. The chart below shows the percentage of children and young people who received counselling with each of the five most common predominant issues.

Note that the presentation of data in this section has changed from previous releases to capture the prevalence of each predominant issue amongst those receiving counselling. Previous editions analysed the distribution of predominant issues, which is less easy to interpret due to the fact that multiple issues can be predominant for each child or young person.



Source: Counselling for children and young people, Welsh Government

**Table 4: All predominant issues of children and young people who received counselling in Wales in 2015/16**

Predominant issues	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Family	1,562	37.0	2,719	38.2	4,281	37.8
Self-worth	584	13.8	1,380	19.4	1,964	17.3
Stress	616	14.6	1,234	17.3	1,850	16.3
Anger	913	21.6	621	8.7	1,534	13.5
Relationships other	441	10.5	967	13.6	1,408	12.4
Anxiety	466	11.0	914	12.8	1,380	12.2
Bereavement	394	9.3	608	8.5	1,002	8.8
Behaviour related	597	14.1	375	5.3	972	8.6
Depression	294	7.0	641	9.0	935	8.2
Bullying	338	8.0	547	7.7	885	7.8
Self-harm	140	3.3	653	9.2	793	7.0
Academic	191	4.5	258	3.6	449	4.0
Relationships with teachers	141	3.3	166	2.3	307	2.7
Suicide	103	2.4	204	2.9	307	2.7
Abuse (including sexual)	61	1.4	213	3.0	274	2.4
Relationship with boyfriend/girlfriend	62	1.5	154	2.2	216	1.9
Sexual (including orientation)	71	1.7	129	1.8	200	1.8
Domestic abuse	67	1.6	122	1.7	189	1.7
Eating disorders	19	0.5	158	2.2	177	1.6
Illness	42	1.0	64	0.9	106	0.9
Substance misuse	40	0.9	47	0.7	87	0.8
Caring responsibility	29	0.7	48	0.7	77	0.7
Financial concerns/poverty	32	0.8	42	0.6	74	0.7
Transgender issues	21	0.5	29	0.4	50	0.4
Cyber safety (including cyber-bullying and sexting)	6	0.1	36	0.5	42	0.4
Offending	6	0.1	3	0.0	9	0.1
Other	277	6.6	429	6.0	706	6.2
Not Known	21	0.5	38	0.5	59	0.5

Source: Counselling for children and young people, Welsh Government

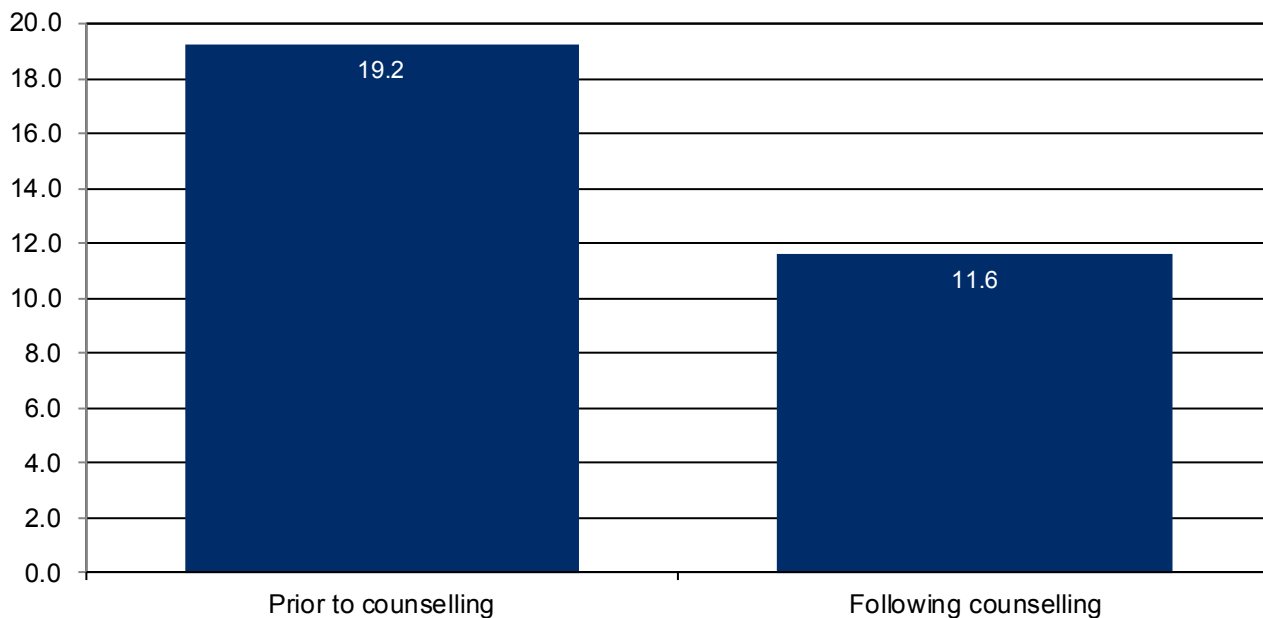
(a) Local authorities can record up to three presenting issues per child or young person. This table shows the number and percentage of children and young people with each issue. Therefore the percentages do not add up to 100.

- The most common form of predominant issue was family issues which was an issue for nearly four in ten (38 per cent) of all children and young people who received counselling services in 2015/16. Self-worth (17 per cent) and Stress (16 per cent) issues were the next most common forms of predominant issue in 2015/16.
- Similarly to presenting issues, the most common form of predominant issue for both males and females was family issues and once again males were more likely to have anger or behaviour related issues, with females more likely to have self-worth or self-harm issues than their male counterparts.

### Section 3: Average YP Core scores

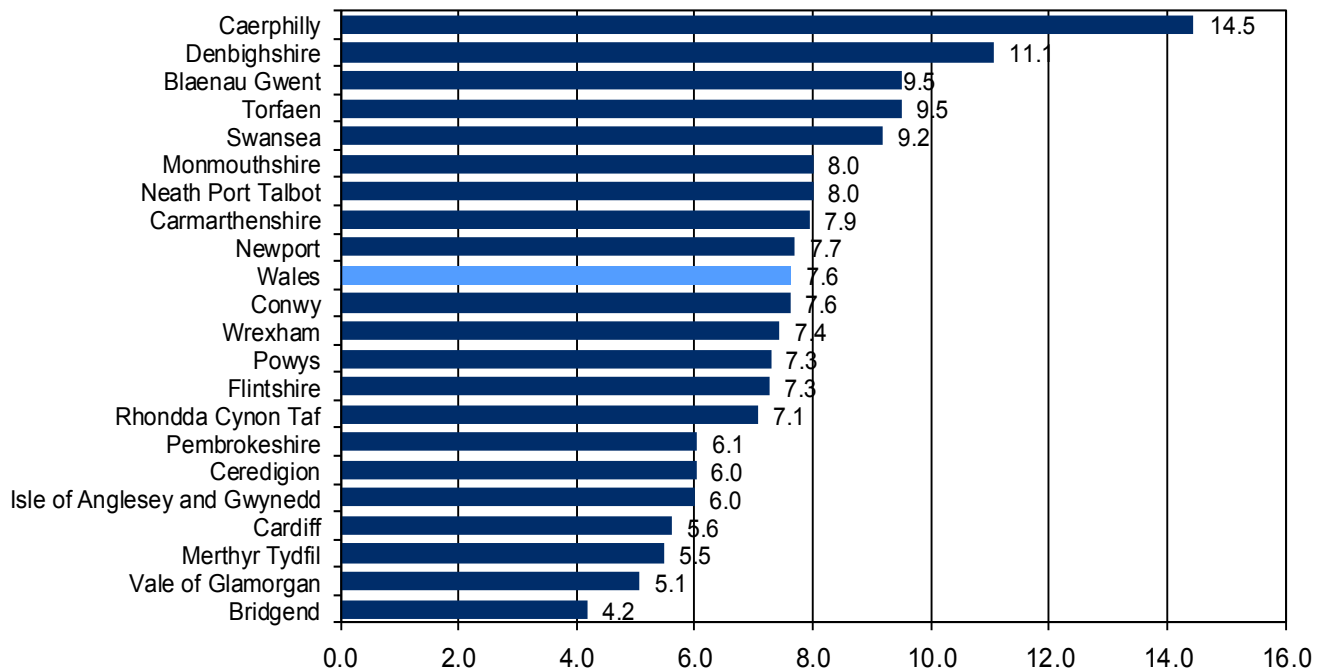
**Chart 10: Average YP Core score for children and young people who received counselling in Wales in 2015/16**

YP Core is a measure of psychological distress reported by young people, both before and after counselling. For further information on the form completed by young people please refer to the following link: [Form](#)



Source: Counselling for children and young people, Welsh Government

**Chart 11: Average improvement in YP Core score for children and young people who received counselling in Wales by local authority in 2015/16**



Source: Counselling for children and young people, Welsh Government

- In 2015/16 the average YP Core score for children and young people who received counselling in Wales was 19.2 prior to counselling, this average score reduced to 11.6 after counselling and is an improvement of 7.6 in the average YP Core score (Table 5).
- Caerphilly had the biggest average improvement in YP Core score amongst children and young people who received counselling in 2015/16 (an improvement in YP Core score of 14.5, Chart 11).
- Bridgend had the smallest average improvement in YP Core score amongst children and young people who received counselling in 2015/16 (an improvement in average YP Core score of 4.2, Chart 11).

**Table 5: Average YP Core score for children and young people who received counselling in Wales by local authority in 2015/16**

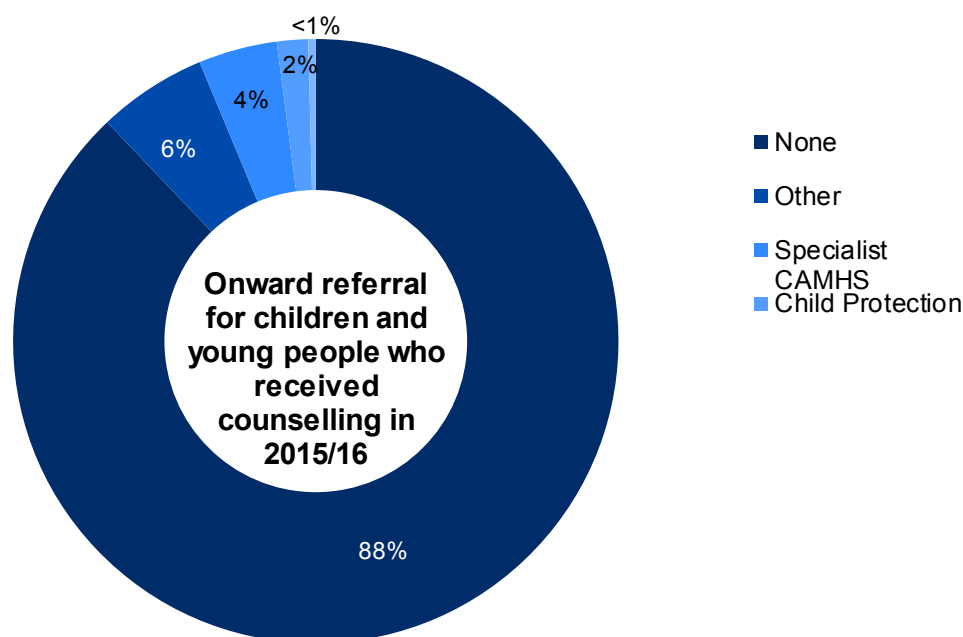
Local Authority	Average score at start	Average score at end	Average improvement in score
Isle of Anglesey and Gwynedd	16.5	10.5	6.0
Conwy	18.4	10.8	7.6
Denbighshire	20.6	9.5	11.1
Flintshire	16.6	9.3	7.3
Wrexham	19.1	11.6	7.4
Powys	18.9	11.6	7.3
Ceredigion	17.4	11.4	6.0
Pembrokeshire	18.7	12.7	6.1
Carmarthenshire	19.8	11.9	7.9
Swansea	20.5	11.3	9.2
Neath Port Talbot	18.3	10.3	8.0
Bridgend	16.6	12.5	4.2
Vale of Glamorgan	18.5	13.4	5.1
Cardiff	19.0	13.4	5.6
Rhondda Cynon Taf	18.9	11.8	7.1
Merthyr Tydfil	17.1	11.6	5.5
Caerphilly	23.8	9.4	14.5
Blaenau Gwent	20.1	10.6	9.5
Torfaen	21.0	11.5	9.5
Monmouthshire	23.5	15.5	8.0
Newport	20.9	13.2	7.7
<b>Wales</b>	<b>19.2</b>	<b>11.6</b>	<b>7.6</b>

Source: Counselling for children and young people, Welsh Government



## Section 4: Onward referrals

**Chart 12: Onward referrals of children and young people who received counselling in Wales in 2015/16**



Source: Counselling for children and young people, Welsh Government

- Onward referral information was collected for children and young people who received counselling. The majority of children and young people who received counselling did not require any form of onward referral once counselling sessions had been completed (88 per cent in 2015/16).(Chart 12)
- Of those children and young people who were referred onwards, referrals to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) (4.2 per cent in 2015/16) were the most common.
- The majority of both males and females did not require any form of onward referral once counselling sessions had been completed. However females were more likely to be referred onwards (13 per cent in 2015/16) following the completion of counselling than their male counterparts (11 per cent in 2015/16).
- 4.6 per cent of females were referred onwards to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service compared to 3.5 per cent of males in 2015/16.

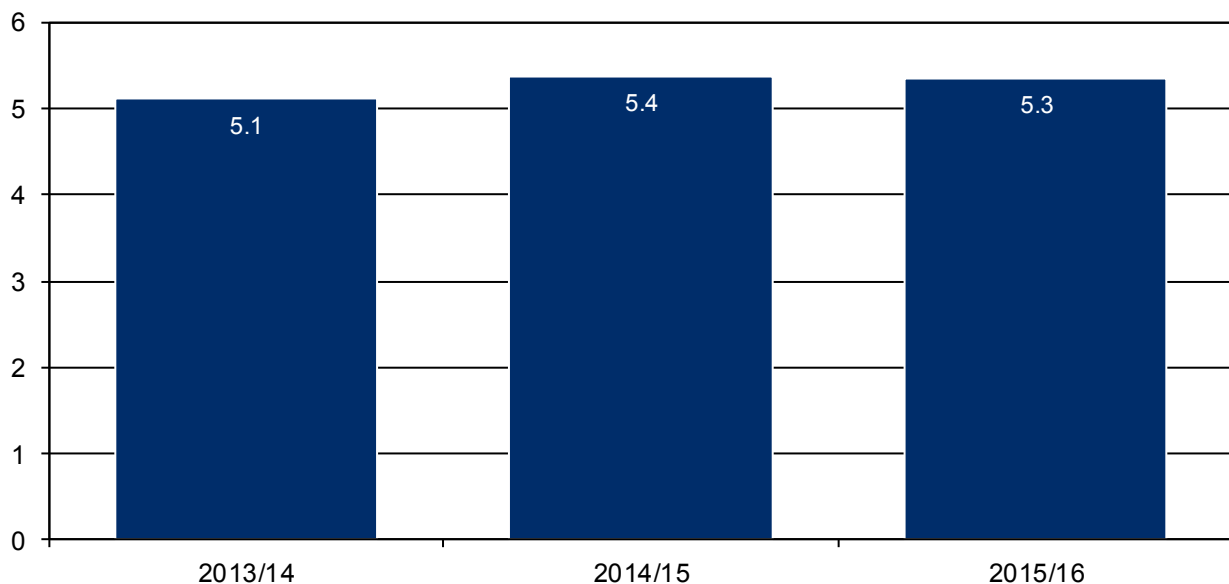
**Table 6: Onward referrals of children and young people who received counselling in Wales in 2015/16**

Onward Referral	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Specialist CAMHS	123	3.5	278	4.6	401	4.2
Child Protection	54	1.5	105	1.8	159	1.7
Other	188	5.3	368	6.2	556	5.8
None	3,176	89.4	5,206	87.0	8,382	87.9
Not known	12	0.3	26	0.4	38	0.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,553</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>5,983</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>9,536</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Counselling for children and young people, Welsh Government

## Section 5: Counselling sessions attended

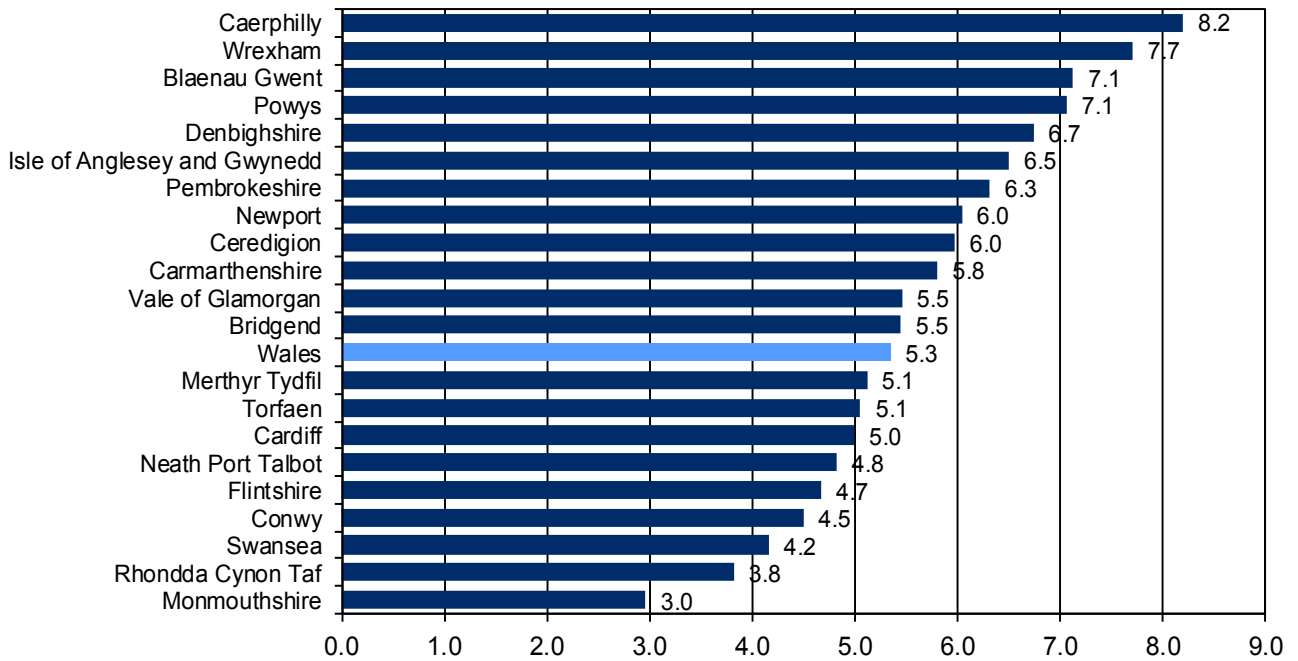
**Chart 13: Average number of counselling sessions attended by children and young people in Wales who received counselling**



Source: Counselling for children and young people, Welsh Government

- The average number of counselling sessions attended by children and young people who received counselling in Wales was 5.3 in 2015/16. A slight decrease on the average of 5.4 sessions in 2014/15.

**Chart 14: Average number of counselling sessions attended by children and young people in Wales who received counselling in Wales by local authority in 2015/16**



Source: Counselling for children and young people, Welsh Government

- Caerphilly had the highest number of average sessions attended amongst children and young people who received counselling in 2015/16 (an average of 8.2 sessions).
- Monmouthshire had the lowest number of average sessions attended amongst children and young people who received counselling in 2015/16 (an average of 3.0 sessions).

## **Key Quality Information**

### **Relevance**

#### **Who are the key users of this data?**

1. These statistics are used widely both within and outside the Welsh Government. Some of the key users are:
  - Ministers and the Members Research Service in the National Assembly for Wales;
  - Other government departments;
  - Local authorities;
  - Local Health Boards including Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
  - The Department for Education and Skills in the Welsh Government;
  - Other areas of the Welsh Government;
  - The research community;
  - Students, academics and universities;
  - Individual citizens and private companies.

#### **What are the data used for?**

2. These statistics are used in a variety of ways. Some examples of these are:
  - Advice to Ministers;
  - To inform the education policy decision-making process in Wales;
  - To assist in research in counselling for children and young people.
  - To monitor and evaluate counselling services in Wales, at a local level and at a national level. Local authorities can use the data they collect to monitor and evaluate the counselling services provided in their area, in order to drive service improvement.
  - To identify key issues and concerns for children and young people which can impinge on their mental health.

## School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013

3. The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 became law in Wales on 4 March 2013. The purpose of the Act sets out proposals to strengthen school standards, enhance local determination and reduce complexity. Under Section 92 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, local authorities are required to make reasonable provision of independent counselling services for children and young people aged between 11 and 18 and pupils in Year 6 of primary school. Under Section 93 local authorities are required to provide anonymised information about these counselling services to the Welsh Government, in compliance with a direction issued by the Welsh Ministers under Section 93 of the 2013 Act.

Where a local authority has arranged for a person to provide an independent counselling service on its behalf, the authority must give the person a copy of the Welsh Ministers' direction and that person must compile the information necessary for compliance with the direction and submit it to the local authority.

Further information on the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 is available by following the link below:

[School Standards and Organisation \(Wales\) Act 2013](#)

### Accuracy

4. Our statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference.
5. Please note these statistics are published as experimental statistics as the quality of the data collected through this survey continues to develop and centrally we improve the validation, guidance and definitions used within the survey.
6. The local authorities Isle of Anglesey and Gwynedd provide a joint data collection return, therefore the data for these local authorities cannot be shown separately.
7. In 2015/16, Wrexham recorded more than one referral per child for the data underpinning Charts 4 and 5. Therefore the Wales total for these charts does not match the Wales total in Table 1.
8. In 2015/16, Merthyr Tydfil recorded one extra person for the data underpinning Charts 6 and 7. Therefore the Wales total for these charts does not match the Wales total in Table 1.
9. Prior to the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, local authorities provided the Welsh Government with anonymised demographic and outcome data on children and young people accessing counselling under the terms and conditions of the school-based counselling grant.

10. Figures are based on the numbers of children and young people who have received face to face counselling and have finished their episode(s) of counselling during the period.
11. The age group of those children and young people who received counselling is based on their school year rather than actual age. Please note not all the children and young people who receive counselling are school pupils. Where this occurs these children and young people are included in the school year age group they would typically attend if they were in school.
12. Due to the sensitivity of the data it must be transferred to the Welsh Government via a secure medium and also held in a secure environment. The secure medium for transferring the data is the Data Exchange Wales Initiative (DEWi).
13. The local authority, or the person who provides the counselling service, must not provide information about an identified individual or provide information in such a way (either by itself or combined with other information) that it identifies an individual or enables an individual to be identified.
14. Further information on the data requirements is available in 'Statutory guidance to Welsh local authorities on the provision of independent counselling services', available via the link below:

[Statutory guidance to Welsh local authorities on the provision of independent counselling services.](#)

### **Timeliness and punctuality**

15. Local authorities, and their counselling providers where applicable, compile aggregated data on children and young people accessing counselling and submit that data to the Welsh Government. Information compiled for each academic school year is required to be provided by 31 October following the end of the academic school year. The returns are then validated by the Welsh Government and published in a statistical release in February/March.

### **Accessibility and clarity**

16. This Statistical First Release is pre-announced and then published on the Statistics and Research section of the Welsh Government website. It is accompanied by more detailed tables on [StatsWales](#), a free to use service that allows visitors to view, manipulate, create and download data.

## Comparability and coherence

17. There are no official statistics published by other UK countries on counselling for children and young people.
18. Since 2014 there has been a considerable amount of work on guidance and definitions to ensure a consistent approach between authorities, to clarify some known issues with earlier surveys, and to reflect current policy.

## Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act puts in place seven well-being goals for Wales. These are for a more equal, prosperous, resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Under section (10)(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers must (a) publish indicators (“national indicators”) that must be applied for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the Well-being goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before the National Assembly. The 46 national indicators were laid in March 2016.

Information on indicators and associated technical information - [How do you measure a nation's progress? - National Indicators](#)

Further information on the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#).

The statistics included in this release could also provide supporting narrative to the national indicators and be used by public services boards in relation to their local well-being assessments and local well-being plans.

## **Further details**

The document is available at:

<http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/counselling-children-and-young-people>

## **Next update**

March 2018 (provisional)

## **We want your feedback**

This is the third edition of this release; we would therefore welcome comments from users of our publication on the content and presentation of this publication. If you have any comments or require further information, please contact us.

We welcome any feedback on any aspect of these statistics which can be provided by email to [school.stats@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:school.stats@wales.gsi.gov.uk).

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