

Young People's Counselling – Information for Parents and Guardians

Counselling can support young people to build emotional resilience, explore their feelings, and develop a more positive sense of self. It offers them a safe space to talk, reflect and grow - at their own pace, in their own way.

What Counselling Is (and Isn't)

Counselling **does not** involve telling young people what to do, preaching, or giving advice. It's not about meeting anyone else's expectations.

Instead, it helps young people:

- Understand and manage their feelings
- Identify their strengths
- Build confidence in expressing themselves

Common issues young people bring to counselling include:

- Family or step-family / blended relationships
- Bullying (in person or online)
- Anxiety, low mood, or behavioural difficulties
- Experiences of jealousy, rejection, grief, or loss
- Academic or learning challenges (e.g. literacy or numeracy difficulties)

This is not an exhaustive list — anything troubling a young person emotionally or socially can be explored in counselling.

How Counselling Works:

1. A Safe Space

Counselling begins by creating a safe, confidential space. If sessions are online or by phone, it's important that the young person has somewhere quiet, private and free from interruptions or fear of being overheard.

2. Their Agenda, Not Yours

Sessions focus on what the young person chooses to bring, this may or may not be what parents or guardians think is most important. Respecting this helps build trust and makes the work more effective.

3. Confidentiality

Sessions are private. What's discussed will not be shared with parents or carers unless the young person wants it to be (and we've explored and agreed to this).

There are a few exceptions, which are always explained clearly before counselling begins.

Confidentiality may be broken if:

- There's a safeguarding concern (e.g. risk of serious harm to them or someone else)
- The young person gives consent to share information for their benefit (discussed and agreed).

What You Can Do to Help

- Accept counselling as a normal and useful activity
- Show interest, but don't pressure your child to share what was discussed
- Allow them space to reflect, some young people talk straight away, others take time

It can be difficult not knowing what's happening in the sessions, but giving your child the space to talk when they're ready is one of the best ways you can support them.

What Counselling May Look Like

Counselling doesn't always involve just talking. Depending on the young person's preferences and needs, sessions might include:

- Creative activities (e.g. drawing, art, using objects or stones to express emotions)
- Metaphor, play, games or storytelling
- Conversations and reflection

The approach is flexible and led by what feels most helpful and comfortable for them on that day.

The First Session

The first meeting is an assessment and getting-to-know-you session. Counselling only continues if the young person agrees. At the end of the first session, they are asked: "Would you like to come back?" If they say no, that decision is fully respected. If they change their mind later, they're always welcome to return.

Ongoing Sessions

If the young person agrees to continue counselling or, at least have another session then we will explore whether 30 minutes or nearly a full hour would be ok or too much. Once we have discussed this, we'll let you know why we are suggesting the option we are.

It can be helpful for me to know and share with the young person how many sessions the young person will be having and whenever possible I like to have two final sessions where we can reflect on the work we have done and to re-cap or cover any gaps or explore options, next steps if this is on their mind.

Payment is due in advance to confirm the session is required for that coming week.

It is not usually beneficial for the young person to know how much the counselling costs.

Practical Information

- **Premises:** If sessions are in person, they take place in a dedicated counselling room that is **up a flight of stairs**. There is **no waiting room**. Parents/carers are welcome to come in, briefly, at the start of the first session, but they're then expected to leave and return (without knocking) at least five minutes before the session ends - waiting outside.
- **Website:** For the full counselling agreement, current session fees, and more details, please visit www.1to1counselling.co.uk.
- **Contact:** You're welcome to call for an informal, no-obligation chat if you have any questions – 01928 718044 or email enquiries@1to1counselling.co.uk