YMCA EAST SURREY

Emotional Wellbeing & Mental Health Impact Report 2026











YMCA

Here for young people
Here for communities
Here for you

Proud to be part of
Mindworks Surrey
The children and young people's emotional wellbeing and mental health service

THE SURREY WELLBEING PARTNERSHIP

Introduction

YMCA East Surrey's Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health (EWMH) team has seen enormous growth over the past 20 years. Starting out as the Heads Together counselling service in 1994 with a team of volunteer Counsellors the service has diversified and expanded delivering one to one goal-based outcome therapeutic support, targeted group work, whole school approach delivery, training and development, parent/carer support, reflective practice and supervision.

In 2021 the YMCA played a key role in helping draw together twelve voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations, to create the Surrey Wellbeing Partnership and become part of Mindworks Surrey, working as an Alliance with NHS, local authority and education colleagues to meet the emotional wellbeing and mental health needs of young people aged 8 - 25 in Surrey.

The Mindworks Alliance recognises the vital support that the VCS brings to mental health with its relational approach, community partnerships, early intervention and prevention.

Nationally, through the 10-Year Health Plan for England, the expansion of Mental Health Support Teams in schools and the revised Health and Wellbeing Framework, there has emerged a clear recognition of the importance of early intervention and prevention.

Locally, Surrey's Health and Wellbeing Strategy saw the vital collaboration between the NHS, statutory sector, Police and VCS. The Health and Wellbeing Strategy established the Mental Health Investment Fund (MHIF) in 2022, a joint fund with Surrey Heartlands Integrated Care Board (ICB), focusing on prevention, empowering people to proactively improve their mental health and help remove barriers.

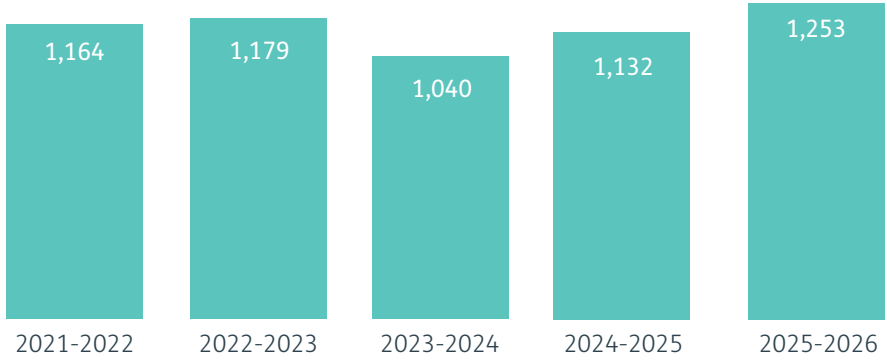
YMCA East Surrey's EWMH team was successful in achieving substantial MHIF funding to support the growth of its services. This included extending preventative support to primary as well as secondary schools, helping young adults by bridging the gap between children's and adult's mental health services and helping parent/carers to support their child's emotional wellbeing and build family resilience.

As Surrey moves to the formation of the two new unitary authorities in April 2027 and the completion of the merger of Surrey and Sussex ICBs, YMCA East Surrey's EWMH team stands in a strong, trusted and well-connected position to embrace the changes collaboratively continuing to support young people's emotional wellbeing, enabling them and their families to belong, contribute and thrive.

Demand

Since April 2021, targeted investment through the Surrey Wellbeing Partnership (SWP), Mindworks, the Mental Health Investment Fund, and the SWP Innovation Fund has driven substantial growth within YMCA East Surrey's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health (EWMH) Team. This funding has enabled the introduction of innovative support services, enhanced workforce capacity, and expanded access to evidence-informed emotional wellbeing and mental health interventions, supporting the demand reflected in the number of referrals received.

Number of referrals into EWMH team per financial year
1 April - 31 March





Meeting Need

Between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2026, funding investment enabled YMCA East Surrey's EWMH team to significantly expand the support available to local children and young people. During this period, the team supported an average of 1,151 unique young people each year and delivered an average of 8,008 one-to-one interventions annually, compared with 486 young people and 2,538 one-to-one interventions per year between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2021. This substantial increase demonstrates the positive impact of sustained funding on service capacity, accessibility, and the ability to meet growing levels of need.

Similarly, sustained investment has enabled the significant expansion of our targeted groupwork provision, increasing both reach and capacity across Surrey. The number of groupwork interventions delivered grew from 1,212 in 2021/22 to 3,856 in 2022/23, remaining high at 3,864 in 2023/24 before rising to 4,204 in 2024/25 and increasing substantially to 6,507 in 2025/26. This represents an overall increase of more than 430% since 2021/22, demonstrating how continued funding has strengthened our ability to deliver early intervention and targeted mental health support to increasing numbers of children and young people through evidence-based group programmes. The sustained growth in delivery reflects both rising demand and enhanced service capacity, enabling more young people to access timely support and build resilience before needs escalate.

We supported an average of

1,151



individual young people each year between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2026



We delivered an average of

8,008

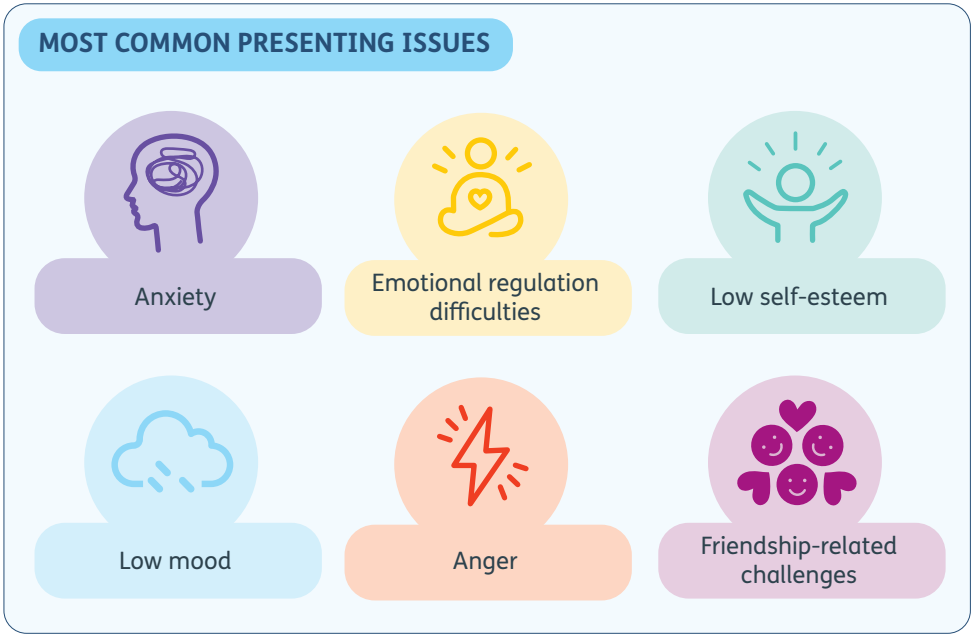
one-to-one interventions annually between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2026

The number of groupwork interventions delivered grew from

1,212 in 2021/22 to **6,507** in 2025/26

Presenting Issues and Correlating Concerns

Between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026, our one-to-one interventions identified a range of emotional and social challenges affecting young people.



These concerns reflect the significant emotional and social pressures experienced by the young people accessing our service and demonstrate the ongoing demand for targeted mental health and wellbeing support.

The risk and safeguarding concerns most frequently associated with these presenting issues were **self-harm, suicidal thoughts** and **suicide attempts**. The prevalence of these risks highlights the complexity of need within the young people we support and underscores the importance of providing timely, accessible interventions that enable early identification of risk, effective safeguarding responses, and ongoing support to improve emotional wellbeing, resilience, and safety outcomes.

Presenting Issues and Correlating Concerns

Between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026 we recorded:



98

Concerns relating to self-harm



93

Concerns relating to suicidal thoughts



10

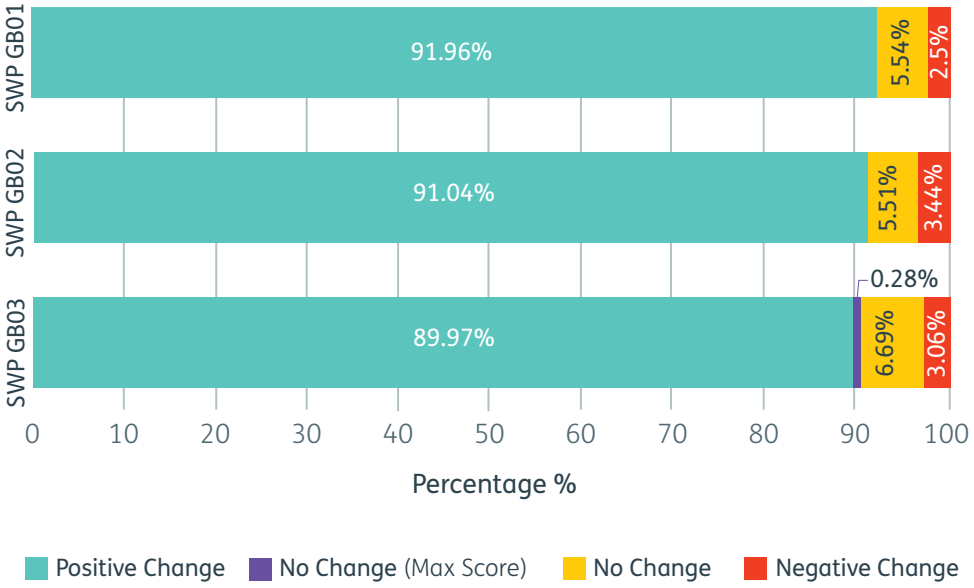
Concerns relating to a suicide attempt

Goal Based Outcomes

Using Goal Based Outcomes (GBOs), we work collaboratively with young people to identify and track meaningful goals that reflect the changes they want to achieve.

Between April 2021 and March 2026, under our Surrey Wellbeing Partnership and Mindworks contract, **1,463 young people** engaged with the GBO process, setting a total of **2,511 personalised goals**. Importantly, **1,284 young people (88%)** had paired outcome measures recorded, enabling us to evidence progress over time and demonstrate the impact of support provided.

The high proportion of paired outcomes, coupled with the high percentage of positive change, reflects strong engagement with outcome monitoring and ensures that young people's voices remain central to assessing the effectiveness of interventions. This data demonstrates both the scale of support delivered and our commitment to measuring outcomes that matter most to the young people we support.



Goal Based Outcomes - Key Themes

The key themes that emerge from our GBO data are that young people most frequently sought support to improve emotional regulation and reduce anxiety, alongside strengthening relationships and engagement in education. Confidence-building emerged as a common underlying need across multiple goal areas, highlighting the importance of interventions that develop coping skills, resilience, communication, and self-belief.



Emotional Regulation & Anxiety
The most common goals focused on managing anxiety, worry, anger, frustration, and developing healthier coping strategies.



Relationships & Social Connection
Many young people aimed to improve friendships, family relationships, social confidence, and communication skills.



Education & School Engagement
A significant proportion of goals related to attendance, classroom participation, concentration, and confidence in education.



Confidence & Self-Esteem
Building self-confidence, self-worth, resilience, and positive self-image was a recurring theme across cases.



Mood, Wellbeing & Sleep
Smaller but important groups of goals centred on improving mood, emotional wellbeing, and establishing healthier sleep routines.

Community Wellbeing Team

What We Do:

The team provides holistic, goal-based emotional wellbeing and mental health support to children and young people aged 8-18 living, attending school or registered with a GP in one of the following boroughs: Epsom & Ewell, Reigate & Banstead, and Tandridge. The team also supports parents and carers of children and young people struggling with their emotional health; helping them understand how to support their child's needs by offering psycho-education alongside practical tools and strategies. Since the team's inception in 2021, it has doubled in size and expanded its offer of support.

When working one to one with children and young people, the sessions are young person-led, with the practitioner adapting the content, pace and tools according to the young person's needs and goals. The voice of the young person is kept at the heart of support. Offering sessions in school or within the community, allows flexibility to choose where they would like to be supported.

Our Impact:

With an increase in anxiety-related school challenges, including emotionally-based school non-attendance, transitions, exam stress, neurodevelopmental needs, and peer relationships, the service has strengthened relationships with schools and Mental Health Support Teams. One-to-one sessions and workshops throughout the summer holidays have been well attended and seek to support children and their families with the transition from primary to secondary school.

Working within the community and often being a key point of contact for families and other professionals, such as Family Centre colleagues, practitioners often facilitate wrap around support for children and young people through the identification and building of wider support networks and linking in with other community offers. Working holistically can help prevent re-referral and reduce the need for clinical or statutory intervention.

How to access support:
www.ymcaeastsurrey.org.uk/services/cyp/ewmh/community-wellbeing-team/



Community Wellbeing Team Data

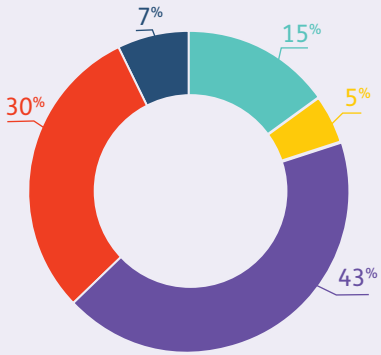
1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026

373
Referrals received

2,755
Sessions delivered

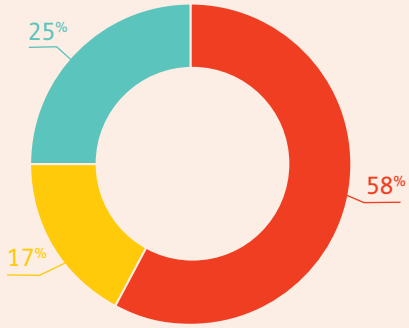
Most common session issues identified by young people:

- Anxiety/panic
- Low mood
- Emotional regulation
- Friendships
- Anger
- Family problems
- Self-esteem
- Education



Location of referred clients into Community Wellbeing Team 2025-26

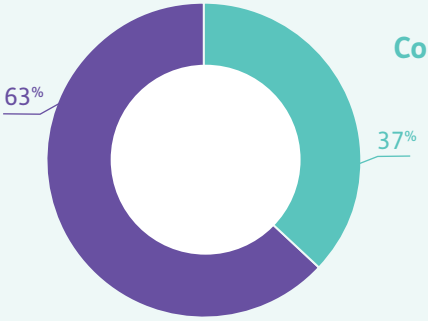
- Epsom & Ewell - **15%**
- Mole Valley - **5%**
- Reigate & Banstead - **43%**
- Tandridge - **30%**
- Other - **7%**



Age of clients referred into Community Wellbeing Team 2025-26

- 0-13 - **58%**
- 14-17 - **17%**
- 18+- **25%**

(18+ referrals are for Family Service supporting parents/carers)



Gender of clients referred into Community Wellbeing Team - 2025-26

- Male - **37%**
- Female - **63%**

Community Wellbeing Team Feedback

"Our child really benefitted from the one-to-one sessions and enjoyed them largely due to the relational approach used by the practitioner."

"XX made me feel more confident and to believe in myself."

"You are the best and in general you have made me come out of my shell and feel more confident and helped me manage my friends and make new ones."

"The communication between XX and myself made for an excellent partnership in order to support my child, without breaking her confidentiality. XX really tuned into my child's needs and successfully built a trusting professional relationship and supported her needs."

"The sessions were a positive experience for my daughter, and she was happy to attend. Since starting, she has seemed less reluctant to go to school, which has been a really positive change. Communication with the coordinator was clear and helpful throughout."

"I liked making bracelets. I enjoyed talking about anger and friendship. XX was very friendly, kind and helpful. I would recommend the sessions to others."

"XX went above and beyond to support my child within the college environment. She offered advice and support on myself and made suggestions to the college on how they could support my daughter."

"My daughter felt supported and heard, the sessions were flexible when needed. She came away with clear strategies to help her."

"I enjoyed that XX checked in on me if I was OK and if I was understanding it. I enjoyed having discussions. I liked the games."

"My daughter gelled very well with XX and looked forward to her sessions despite initially being nervous about them, XX made her feel comfortable and was a safe space for her to talk."

What We Do:

The Heads Together Counselling service provides a safe, confidential and young-person-centred space for children and young people aged 11-25 where individuals can explore their experiences and develop coping strategies.

We offer up to 8 weeks of short-term counselling for young people aged 11-17 and up to 12 weeks of short-term counselling for young people aged 18-25. Counselling supports a wide range of presenting issues, including emotional wellbeing difficulties, anxiety, low mood, stress, self-esteem, relationships, loss, life changes, periods of transition and other mental health concerns. The service works collaboratively with young people, ensuring that their voice determines the therapeutic goals that are agreed at the beginning of counselling and that can help young people understand their emotions, manage difficult thoughts and feelings, develop coping strategies and build confidence in dealing with future challenges.

Our Impact:

As an early intervention service, we offer timely support before emotional wellbeing difficulties escalate and become more complex. This reflects the national focus on prevention and early intervention in children and young people's mental health services. The service contributes to the wider system of early help available to children and young people and can complement support provided by schools, colleges, GPs, NHS services, voluntary organisations and Mental Health Support Teams. It provides community-based counselling for young people who may benefit from early intervention but do not require specialist or crisis services.

How to access support:
www.ymcaeastsurrey.org.uk/services/cyp/ewmh/heads-together-counselling/



Counselling Data

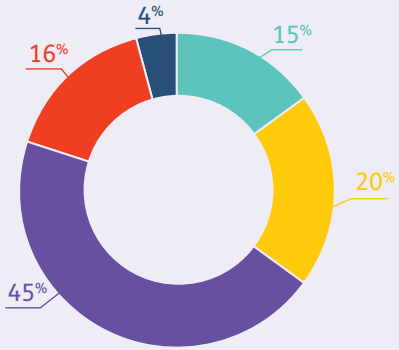
1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026

634 Referrals received

3,381 Sessions delivered

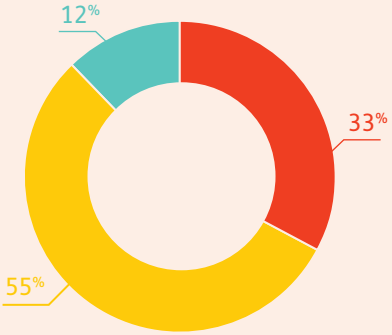
Most common session issues identified by young people:

- Anxiety/panic
- Low mood
- Self-esteem
- Family problems
- Emotional regulation
- Anger
- Education
- Friendships



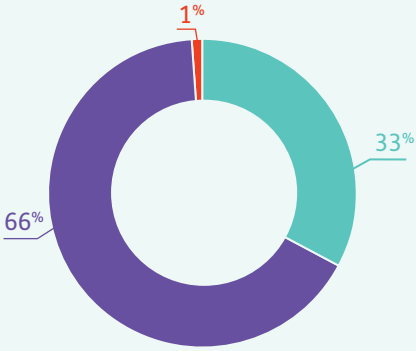
Location of referred clients into Counselling Services 2025-26

- Epsom & Ewell - **15%**
- Mole Valley - **20%**
- Reigate & Banstead - **45%**
- Tandridge - **16%**
- Other - **4%**



Age of clients referred into Counselling Services 2025-26

- 0-13 - **33%**
- 14-17 - **55%**
- 18+- **12%**



Gender of clients referred into Counselling Services - 2025-26

- Male - **33%**
- Female - **66%**
- Non Binary/ Transgender - **1%**

Counselling Feedback

"I love how it's like a safe space to sit and talk about feelings without being judged and learning about myself and how I feel."

"I had the best possible experience, I felt extremely understood and heard."

"I felt like for once I had been put onto someone who knew what they were doing for my child."

"I just want to give thanks...as XX was very hesitant to attend sessions but XX really helped her relax and engage with her and she really feels the sessions have been helpful."

"We can't thank you enough for the sessions so far. We are over the moon with it. It has been brilliant, and we see such a big, big difference."

"It was so good to speak to someone I felt comfortable with and who made an effort to make me feel comfortable. There was no judgment so I could relax and be myself."

"It was so good to speak to someone who appeared to be on my level. I never felt judged and being fortunate to have 12 sessions together gave me time to really look at my anxiety and a timeline of some of the events that have contributed to the way I see myself."

"Heads Together have been amazing in being responsive and timely in the correspondence which was really appreciated."

"XX was very supportive and flexible in her work with our daughter. We really appreciated her approach and noticed positive changes in our daughter's emotional wellbeing."

What We Do:

We offer one-to-one interventions, group sessions, and whole-class or whole-school emotional wellbeing activities across Reigate & Banstead, Epsom & Ewell, and Tandridge. Our work is underpinned by evidence-based and research-informed practice, drawing on the Ecosystem Model, Resilience Ball Framework, Attachment theory, neuroscience, and relational approaches. This enables us to take a holistic approach that considers the wider factors influencing a young person's wellbeing and provide flexible support Teams to build trusted relationships, identify needs, and support sustainable change. Alongside our work with children and young people, we also provide information sessions and resources for parents and carers.

Our Impact:

We have established strong and trusted relationships with schools that have enabled us to become valued partners in supporting student wellbeing, delivering training, consultation, whole-school activities, parent and carer sessions, and targeted group programmes developed in response to emerging needs. We collaborate with Mindworks Alliance colleagues to support a whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing. Through this work, we have supported lasting change across school communities and strengthened schools' capacity to respond to the emotional wellbeing needs of children and young people. Providing support within schools enables children and young people to access help at an earlier stage and address difficulties before they escalate into more complex needs requiring more intensive intervention.

Student feedback highlights increased feelings of being listened to and taken seriously, alongside improved emotional regulation, confidence and sense of belonging. Schools report improvements in behaviour, engagement and relationships and decrease in negative behaviour points and suspensions following targeted interventions, demonstrating the value of providing a safe, trusted space and early support within the school environment.

How to access support: via school



School-Based Needs Data

1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026

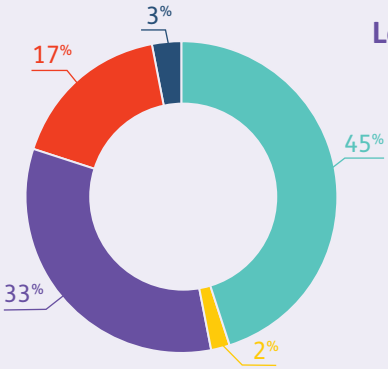
246
Referrals received

2,202
Sessions delivered

Most common session issues identified by young people:

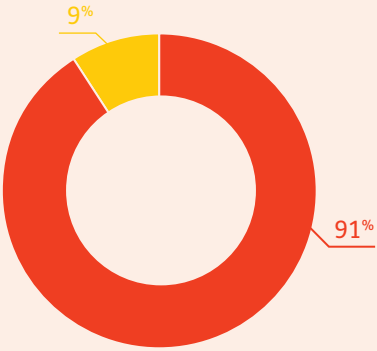
- Emotional regulation
- Autism
- Self-esteem
- Anger
- Anxiety/panic
- Emotionally Based School Non Attendance (EBSNA)
- Friendships
- Family problems

Location of referred clients into School Based Needs Team 2025-26



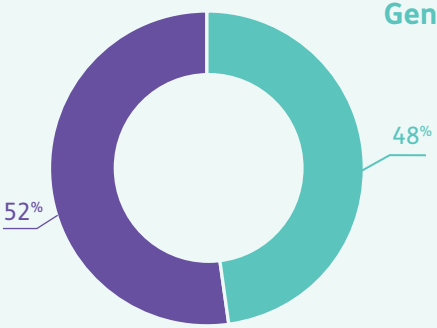
- Epsom & Ewell - **45%**
- Mole Valley - **2%**
- Reigate & Banstead - **33%**
- Tandridge - **17%**
- Other - **3%**

Age of referrals into School Based Needs Team 2025-26



- 0-13 - **91%**
- 14-17 - **9%**

Gender of referrals into School Based Needs Team 2025-26



- Male - **48%**
- Female - **52%**

Young Person Voice

You did well because my attendance went up by a lot.

Thank you for helping me to open up, asking for help from the class teachers and make better friendship.

I learned new ways to cope with my anxiety.

I have knowledge of how to reframe my thoughts and speak kindly to myself.

Talked me through my goals and made my mental health better.

Listened and helped solve problems and helped me understand things I didn't understand before like things to do to help myself calm down.

Parent Voice

The mornings are much easier now and our daughter is happier than she was before.

I was helped as a parent and given valuable resources.

School Voice

XX is the ultimate professional who compliments our pastoral support and makes it stronger.

She builds a trusted safe space for the students to speak to her.

WAVES Youth Group

What We Do:

WAVES is a term-time emotional wellbeing youth club delivered from our Young People and Family Centre in Horley. The group is open to young people from school year 7 up to age 17 and provides a safe, welcoming space where they can relax, build friendships and be themselves. Alongside fun activities such as games and cooking, young people have access to support from an Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Practitioner.

Sessions are shaped by the interests and feedback of the young people who attend, ensuring that the provision remains engaging and responsive to their needs. The ongoing development of the service will continue to be informed by participant feedback and lived experience.

Our Impact:

WAVES offers opportunities for connection, positive experiences and meaningful conversations, helping young people feel supported within their local community. The group provides a valuable source of support outside the school environment, creating a space where young people can develop confidence, social skills and a sense of belonging. The group encourages positive peer relationships and helps reduce feelings of isolation through regular social interaction and structured activities. The group also provides opportunities for psycho-education and informal discussions around emotional wellbeing and mental health topics that matter most to participants, helping to increase understanding, resilience and self-awareness.

Our friendly staff and WAVES participants enjoy welcoming new young people to the group.

To find out more please visit our webpage:
www.ymcaeastsurrey.org.uk/services/cyp/ewmh/waves/



Step Forward

What We Do:

Step Forward is a free support and activity programme for young adults aged 17–30 with mental health and emotional wellbeing needs. The service brings young people together in a friendly, inclusive and relaxed environment, providing opportunities to socialise, participate in activities and access support with their emotional wellbeing.

Activities are developed in consultation with attendees and may range from creative and social activities to games and physical activities, with emotional wellbeing support and advice also available. Step Forward aims to provide opportunities for young adults to build connections, increase confidence and take positive steps towards supporting their emotional wellbeing.

Our Impact:

For many young adults, the greatest impact of Step Forward is connection. Young adults tell us that the service helps them to feel less isolated and more connected to others, while providing a safe and accepting space where they can be themselves. This sense of acceptance and belonging can be particularly meaningful for those who may struggle to find spaces where they feel understood. By creating opportunities for genuine social connection, Step Forward helps young adults build relationships, grow in confidence and feel that they have a place where they belong.

To find out more please visit our webpage:
www.ymcaeastsurrey.org.uk/services/cyp/ewmh/step-forward/



"I think Step Forward has a huge part to play in my 5-year mental health recovery! The group has helped me SO much since I joined it one and a half years ago!! I'm so grateful. Genuinely so grateful to have access to amazing support for my mental health! This should be recognised because you guys do an amazing job! And I'm so thankful for the support I've had from all the staff team."

"When do you feel like you are winning at life. When I am hanging out with my friends at Step Forward."

"I enjoy Step Forward as I've met lots of people I click with really well and it helps me to get out the house especially when I need to, I have seen people thrive and truly enjoy themselves with step forward as a member that is awesome, I am able to be my true self within the group, each staff member looks after everyone so well, and they even catch onto when someone needs help even when they don't necessarily say it, they know us very well and it shows."

"I enjoy socialising with people of a similar age. I found Step Forward through ATLAS/ Surrey Voice. I enjoy the chilled/relaxed environment. I like that most people here have additional needs so it is a lot easier not to mask."

Find out more

To find out more about our Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health services and how we can support you, please get in touch.

T 01737 378481 | **E** headstog@ymcaeastsurrey.org.uk

www.ymcaeastsurrey.org.uk

YMCAEastSurrey

YMCA EAST SURREY

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Registered Company No: 03716594
Registered Charity No: 1075028

YMCA

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Here for communities
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Proud to be part of
Mindworks Surrey
The children and young people's emotional wellbeing and mental health service

The Surrey Wellbeing Partnership