

### Counselling for Children and Young People, 2013/14 (Experimental statistics)

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. The Welsh Government has responsibility for collection of this data and this informs the development of counselling services for children and young people in Wales.

This report constitutes the first time data have been presented on counselling services for children and young people in Wales. Since 2014 there has been a considerable amount of 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 are thus published as experimental statistics. The known quality issues are highlighted in Key Quality Information section and the end of the release.

#### Key Results for 2013/14

- **10,537** children or young people received counselling services in 2013/14.
- **School staff** was the most common form of referral, accounting for nearly half of all referrals (47%).
- Females accounted for **64<sup>0</sup>%** or 6,752 of the 10,537 children and young people who received counselling, compared to only 36% of males.
- The **Year 10** age group had the highest number of children and young people who received counselling, accounting for 21% of all children and young people who received counselling.
- **Family issues** were the most common form of presenting issue (23%) and predominant issue (25%) for children and young people who received counselling.
- **86<sup>0</sup>%** of children and young people did not require onward referral after completion of counselling sessions. The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) was the most common onward referral for those who were referred onwards (5%).

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**Next update:** February 2016 (provisional)

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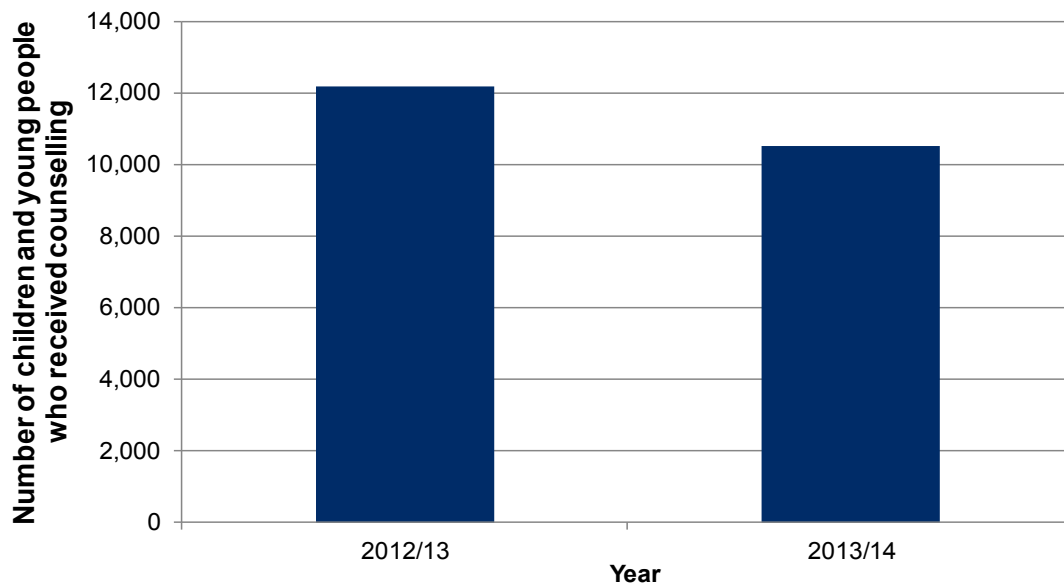
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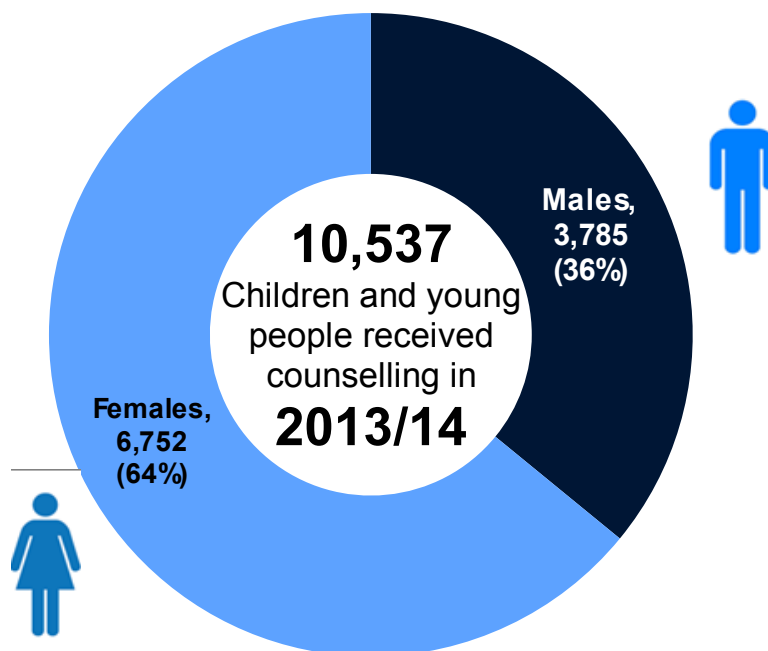
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**Chart 1: Number of children and young people who received counselling in Wales**



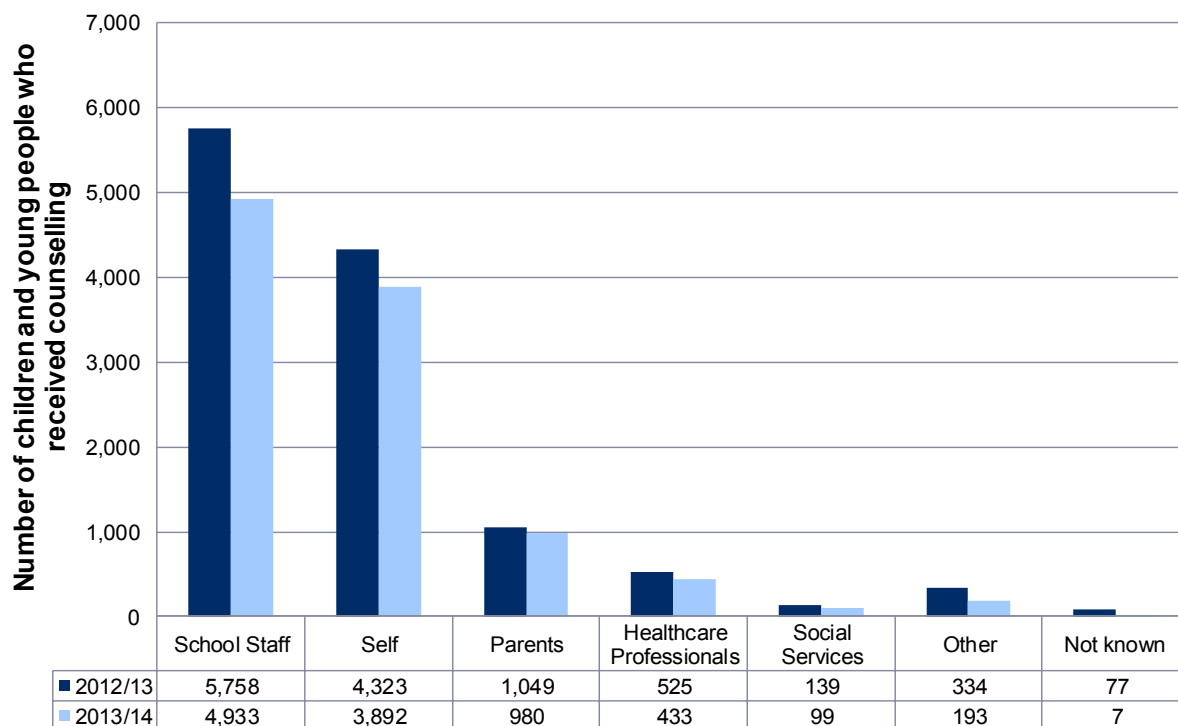
- Data in 2012/13 was collected for each term; therefore the annual figure for the number of children and young people who received counselling may have been overestimated due to double counting, if a child or young person received counselling in more than one term. In 2013/14 data were collected based on an annual submission, reducing the likelihood of double counting. Due to this change considerable caution should be used when comparing data between 2012/13 and 2013/14.
- 10,537 children or young people received counselling services in 2013/14 (please note this should be treated with considerable caution, as stated in the previous bullet point).

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



- Females accounted for 64% or 6,752 of the 10,537 children and young people who received counselling in 2013/14, compared to only 36% or 3,785 of males.
- The gender split of 64% female, 36% male was the same in both 2012/13 and 2013/14.

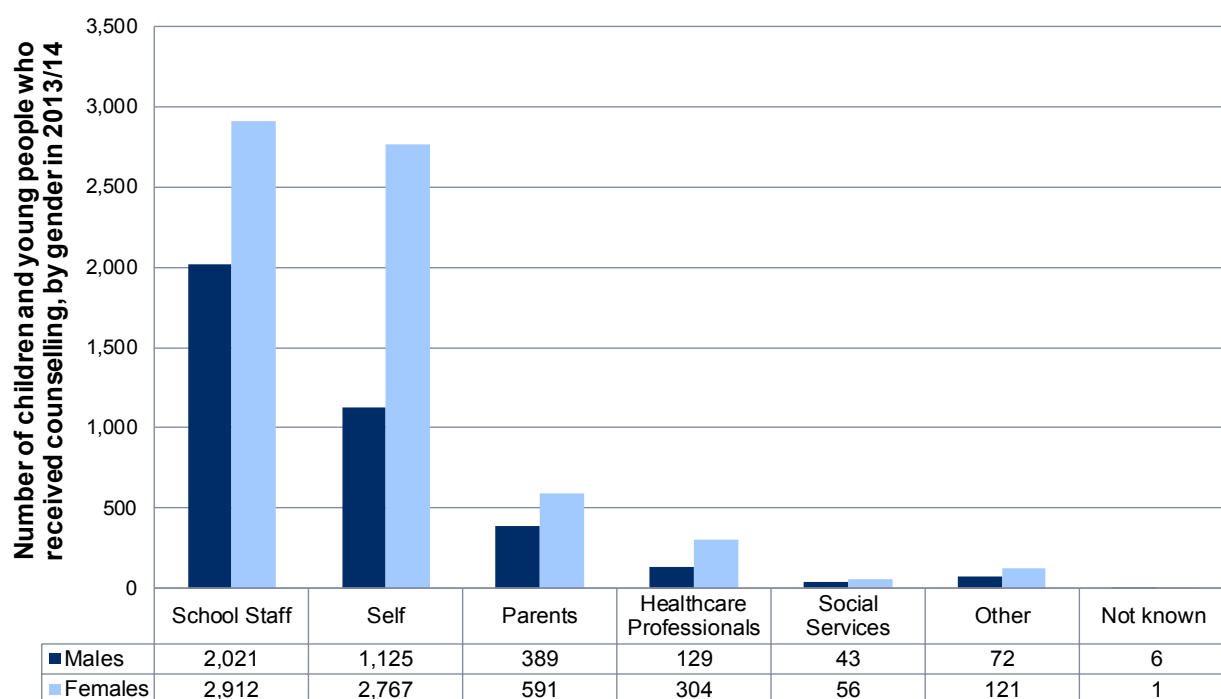
**Chart 3: Number of children and young people who received counselling in Wales by form of referral<sup>1</sup>**



<sup>1</sup>Please note due to an error in data submission the total number of children and young people who received counselling by form of referral in 2012/13 does not add up exactly to the overall total.

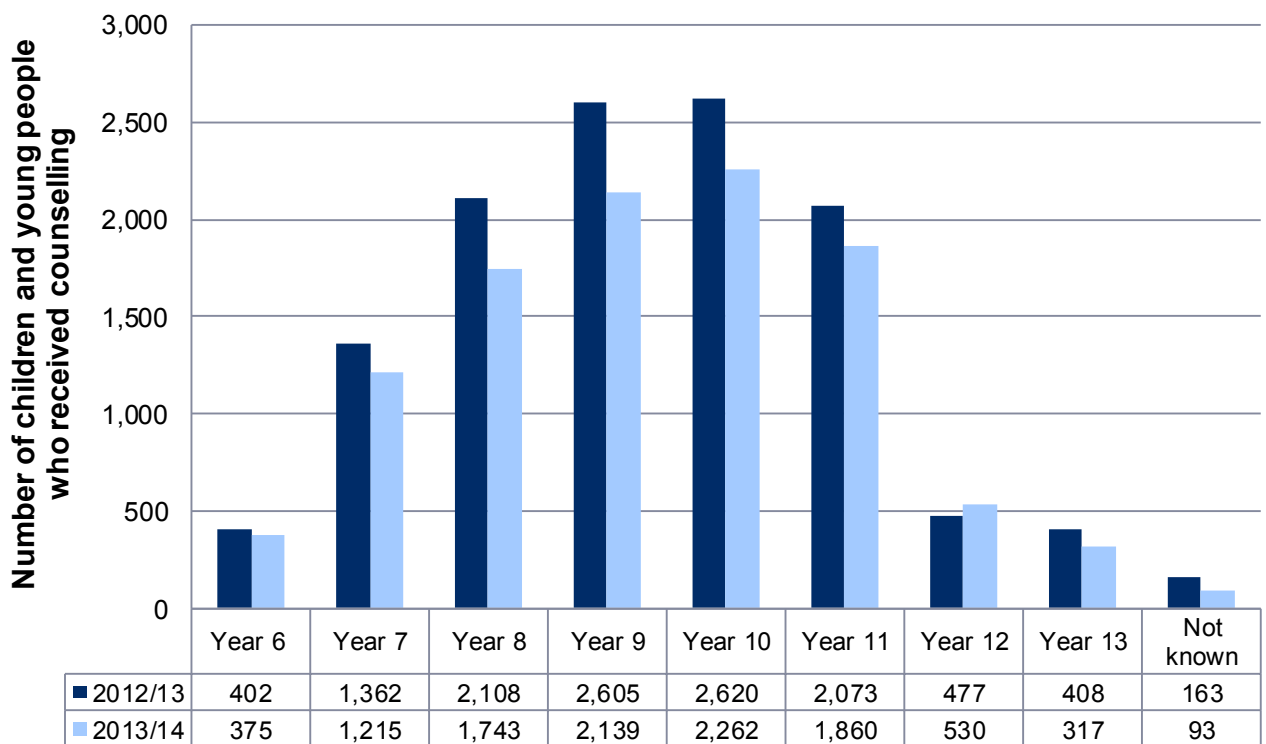
- The most common form of referral was by School staff (including teachers, support staff and school nurses), which accounted for nearly half of all referrals (47%) in 2013/14. Self referral was the second most common form of referral (37% in 2013/14).
- The trend for different types of referrals was similar for both 2012/13 and 2013/14.

**Chart 4: Form of referral of children and young people who received counselling by gender in 2013/14**



- Males and females attending counselling displayed a similar trend in their form of referral, with referral by School staff the most common (followed by Self referral) for both males and females.
- However, males were more likely to be referred by School staff (53% of all male referrals) compared to their female counterparts (43% of all female referrals).
- Conversely, females were more likely to refer themselves (41% of all female referrals) compared to their male counterparts (30% of all male referrals).

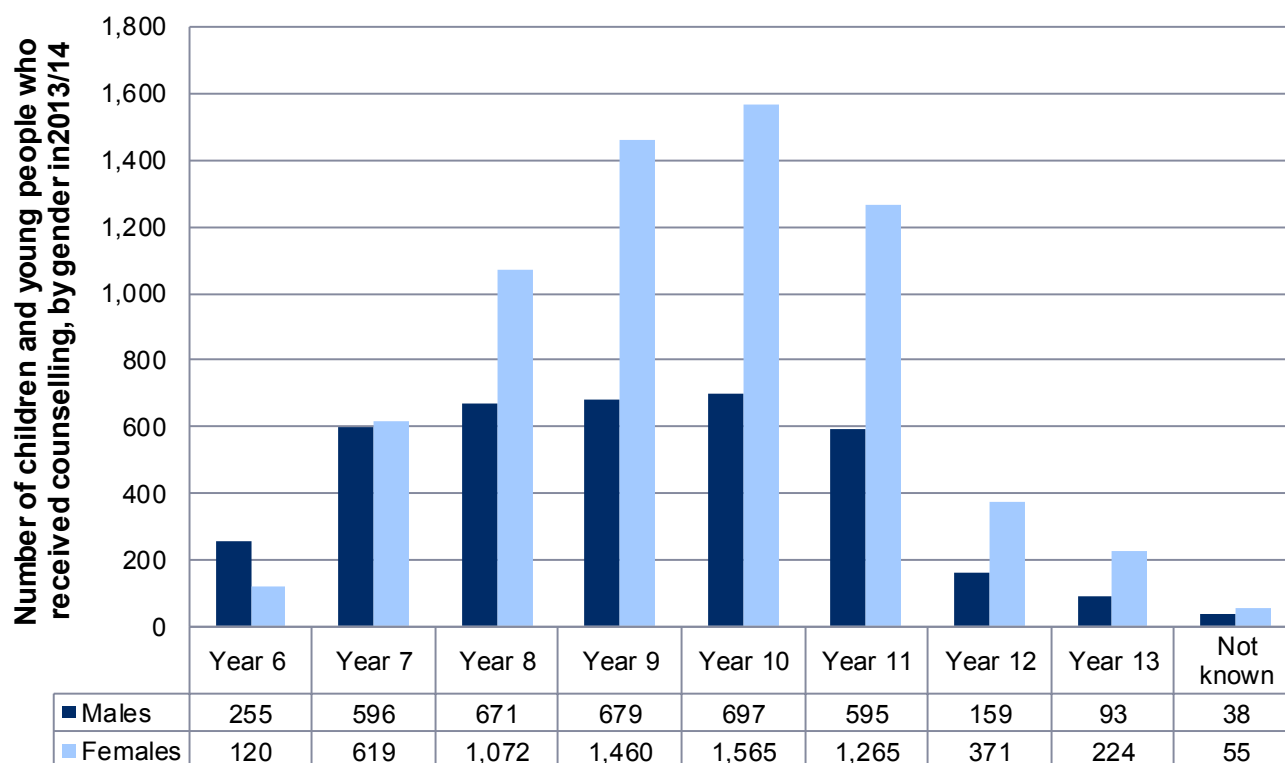
**Chart 5: Number of children and young people who received counselling in Wales by school year age group<sup>2</sup>**



<sup>2</sup>Please note due to an error in data submission the total number of children and young people who received counselling by school year does not add up exactly to the overall total.

- The Year 10 age group had the highest number of children and young people who received counselling, followed by the Year 9 age group in both 2012/13 and 2013/14.
- The Year 10 age group accounted for 21% of all children and young people who received counselling in both 2012/13 and 2013/14.
- Over three quarters of all children and young people who received counselling were between the Year 8 and Year 11 age groups in both 2012/13 and 2013/14.

**Chart 6: Number of children and young people who received counselling in Wales by gender and school year age group in 2013/14<sup>2</sup>**



- There were more females than males who received counselling in all year groups, with the exception of the Year 6 age group.
- The number of females who received counselling increased in each year group from Year 6 (120 females) to the peak in Year 10 (1,565 females).
- From Year 7 to Year 11 the number of males attending counselling remained relatively steady at around 600-700 males.

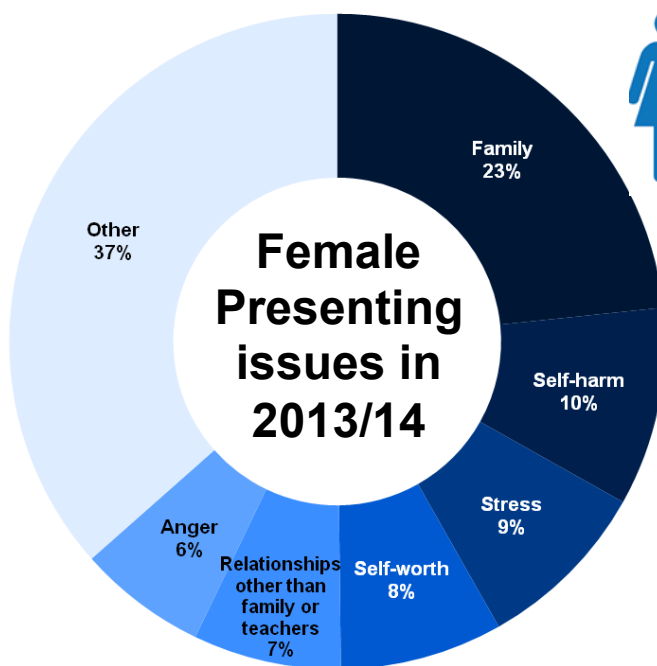
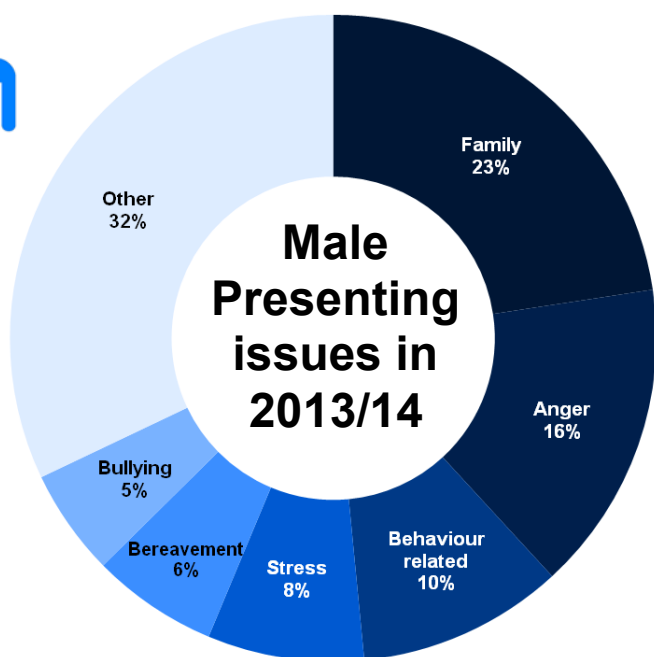
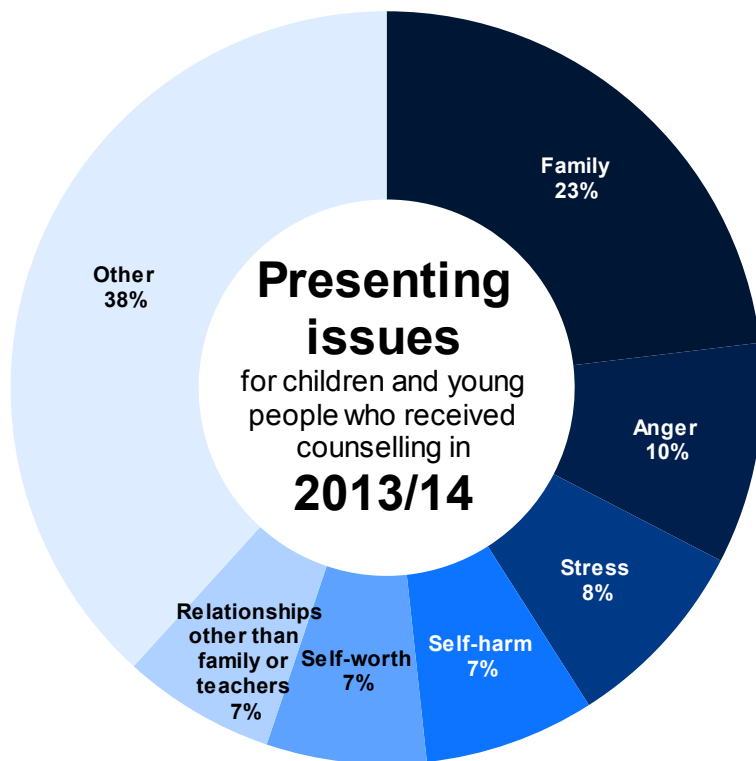
**Table 1: Number and percentage of children and young people who received counselling in Wales, by ethnic background for 2012/13 and 2013/14**

Ethnic Background	2012/13		2013/14	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
White	11,777	96.4	10,181	96.6
Mixed Race	191	1.6	176	1.7
Asian or Asian British	76	0.6	78	0.7
Black or Black British	27	0.2	33	0.3
Chinese or Chinese British	13	0.1	11	0.1
Any other ethnic background	37	0.3	41	0.4
Not known	96	0.8	17	0.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,217</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>10,537</b>	<b>100.0</b>

- The majority (96.4%) of children and young people who received counselling classified themselves as white in both 2012/13 and 2013/14.

**Chart 7: Main presenting issues for children and young people who received counselling in Wales in 2013/14**

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.



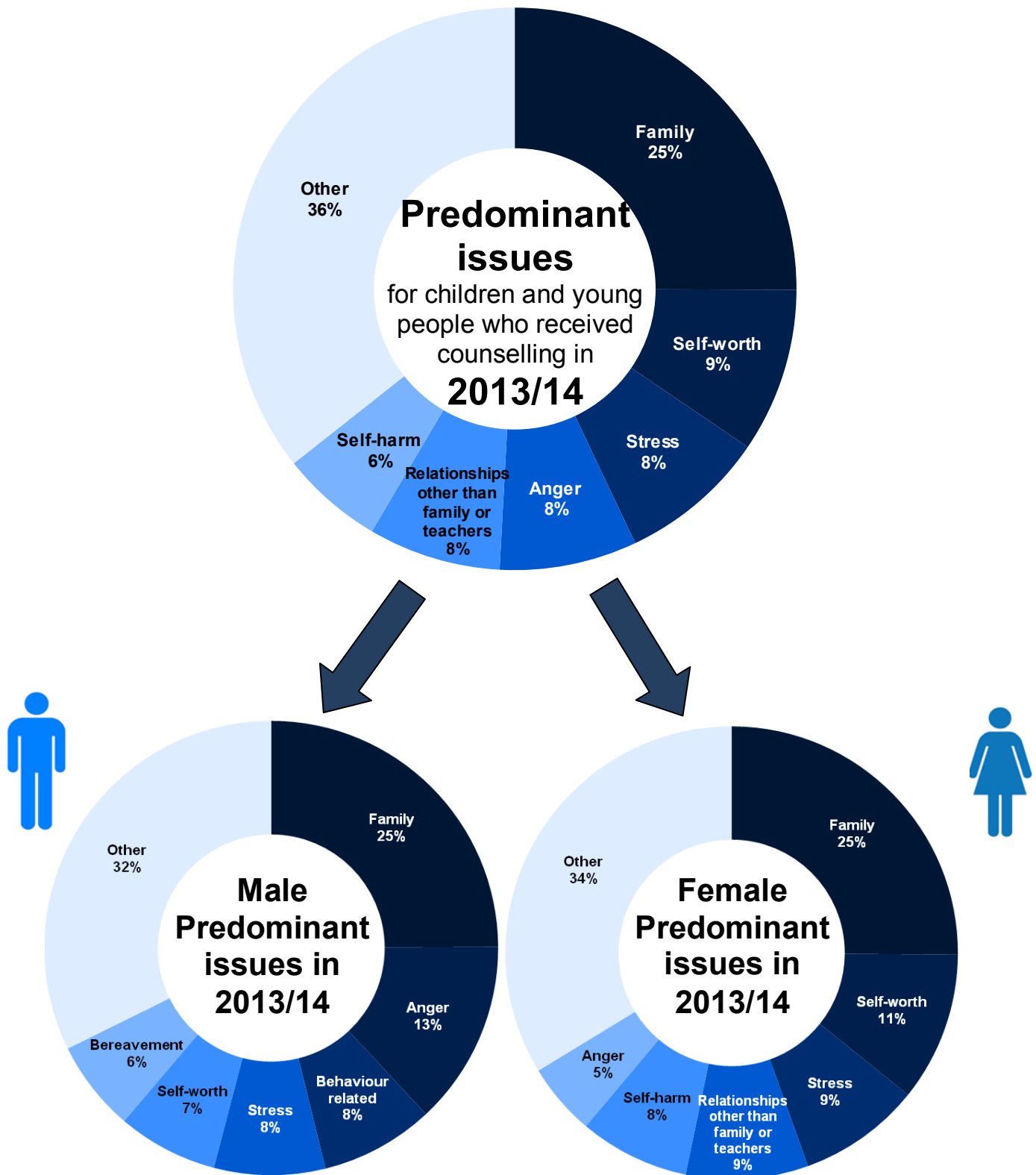
**Table 2: All presenting issues for children and young people who received counselling in Wales in 2013/14**

Presenting Issues on Referral	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Family	1,480	22.6	2,941	23.4	4,421	23.1
Anger	1,019	15.6	800	6.4	1,819	9.5
Stress	513	7.8	1,089	8.6	1,602	8.4
Self-harm	169	2.6	1,234	9.8	1,403	7.3
Self-worth	305	4.7	1,011	8.0	1,316	6.9
Relationships other than family or teachers	340	5.2	919	7.3	1,259	6.6
Behaviour related	675	10.3	482	3.8	1,157	6.0
Bereavement	413	6.3	666	5.3	1,079	5.6
Bullying	349	5.3	715	5.7	1,064	5.6
Depression	250	3.8	765	6.1	1,015	5.3
Academic	206	3.1	281	2.2	487	2.5
Abuse	73	1.1	260	2.1	333	1.7
Suicide	87	1.3	220	1.7	307	1.6
Eating disorders	40	0.6	198	1.6	238	1.2
Relationships with teachers	110	1.7	120	1.0	230	1.2
Sexual	65	1.0	101	0.8	166	0.9
Domestic Abuse	57	0.9	102	0.8	159	0.8
Substance misuse	48	0.7	63	0.5	111	0.6
Financial concerns / poverty	26	0.4	39	0.3	65	0.3
Other	280	4.3	542	4.3	822	4.3
Not known	44	0.7	47	0.4	91	0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,549</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>12,595</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>19,144</b>	<b>100.0</b>

- 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 accounted for nearly a quarter of all referrals (23%) in 2013/14. Anger issues were the second most common form of presenting issue on referral (10% in 2013/14).
- The top 6 presenting issues on referral were the same in 2012/13 as in 2013/14, with the exception of Bereavement issues which replaced Relationships other than family or teachers issues.
- 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-harm or self-worth issues than their male counterparts.

**Chart 8: Main predominant issues for children and young people who received counselling in Wales in 2013/14<sup>3</sup>**

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



<sup>3</sup>Please note percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

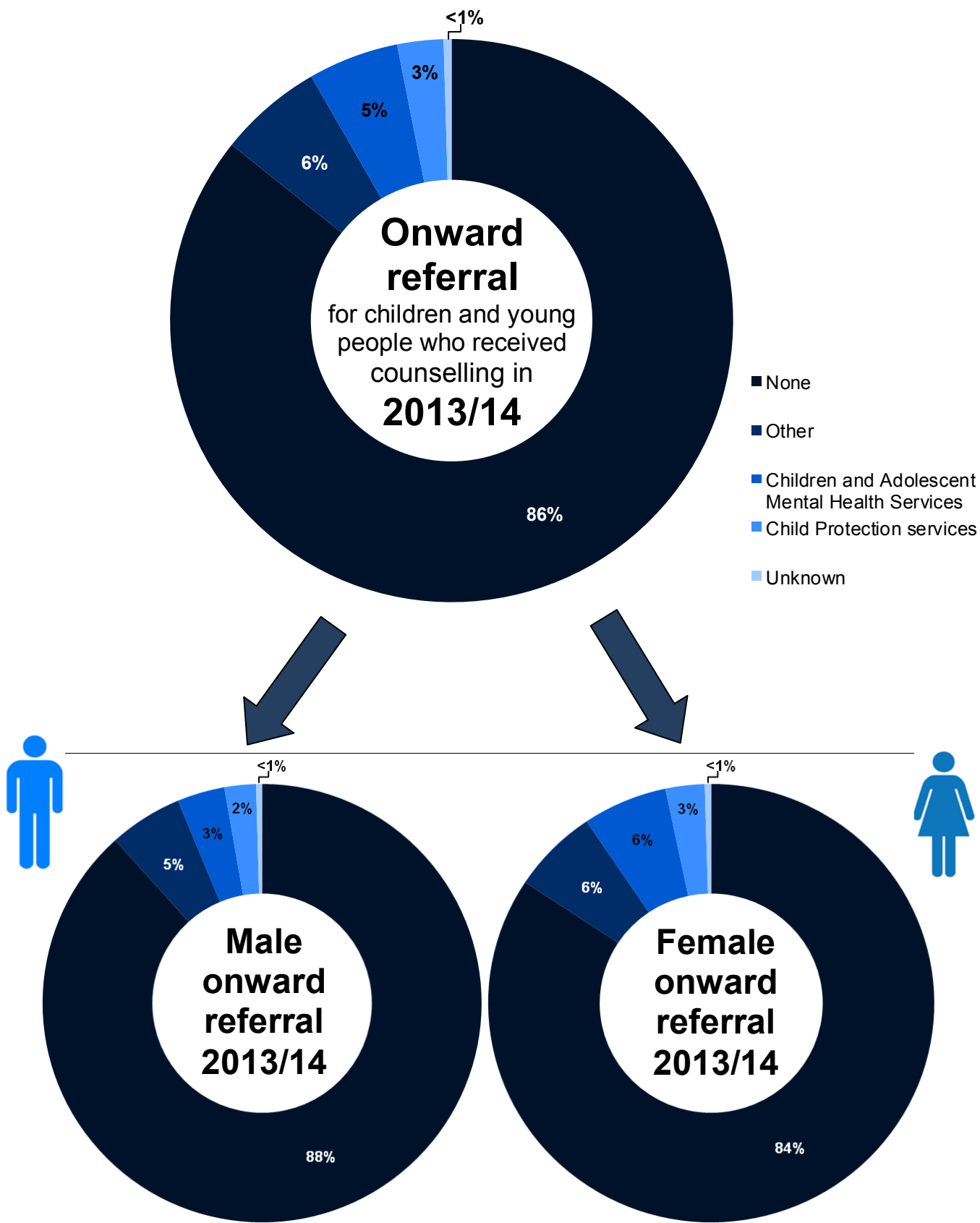


**Table 3: All predominant issues of children and young people who received counselling in Wales in 2013/14**

Predominant Issues	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Family	1,623	24.9	3,142	25.1	4,765	25.0
Self-worth	466	7.2	1,333	10.7	1,799	9.5
Stress	516	7.9	1,094	8.7	1,610	8.5
Anger	856	13.1	645	5.2	1,501	7.9
Relationships other than family or teachers	353	5.4	1,094	8.7	1,447	7.6
Self-harm	134	2.1	985	7.9	1,119	5.9
Bereavement	422	6.5	633	5.1	1,055	5.5
Bullying	323	5.0	607	4.9	930	4.9
Behaviour related	528	8.1	363	2.9	891	4.7
Depression	208	3.2	621	5.0	829	4.4
Academic	204	3.1	268	2.1	472	2.5
Relationships with teachers	136	2.1	181	1.4	317	1.7
Abuse	69	1.1	231	1.8	300	1.6
Suicide	71	1.1	198	1.6	269	1.4
Domestic Abuse	80	1.2	115	0.9	195	1.0
Eating disorders	30	0.5	165	1.3	195	1.0
Sexual	72	1.1	121	1.0	193	1.0
Substance misuse	56	0.9	56	0.4	112	0.6
Financial concerns / poverty	34	0.5	52	0.4	86	0.5
Other	285	4.4	535	4.3	820	4.3
Not known	49	0.8	69	0.6	118	0.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,515</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>12,508</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>19,023</b>	<b>100.0</b>

- The most common form of predominant issue was family issues which accounted for a quarter of all referrals (25%) in 2013/14. Self-worth issues were the second most common form of predominant issue (10% in 2013/14).
- The top 6 most common forms of predominant issues were the same as the top 6 most common forms of presenting issues on referral.
- The top 6 predominant issues were the same in 2012/13 as in 2013/14, with the exception of bereavement issues which replaced self-harm issues.
- 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-harm or self-worth issues than their male counterparts.

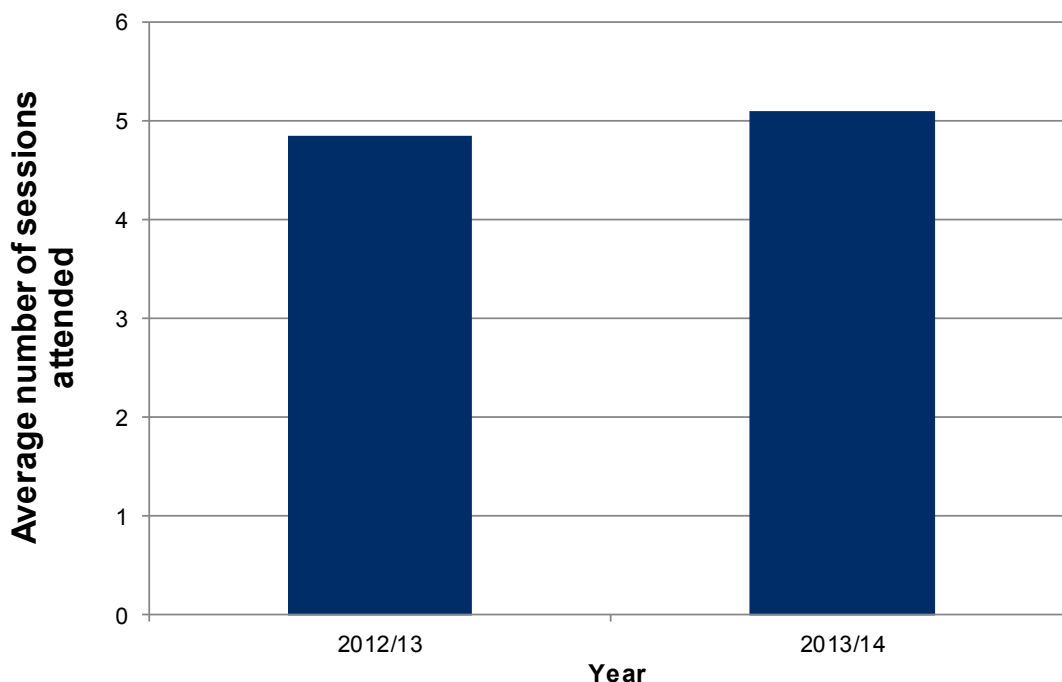
**Chart 9: Onward referrals of children and young people who received counselling in Wales in 2013/14<sup>4</sup>**



<sup>4</sup> Please note due to an error in data collection in 2013/14, 2,195 children and young people who received counselling were not assigned any onward referral information, therefore this data should be interpreted with caution. Please note percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

- 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 (86%).
- Of those children and young people who were referred onwards, referral to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) was the most common (5%) followed by the Child Protection service (3%).
- The overall trend for onward referral was the same in both 2012/13 and 2013/14.
- 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 (15% in 2013/14) following the completion of counselling than their male counterparts (11% in 2013/14).
- 6% of females were referred onwards to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service compared to 3% of males in 2013/14.

**Chart 10: Average number of counselling sessions attended by children and young people in Wales who received counselling**



- The average number of counselling sessions attended by children and young people who received counselling in Wales was 5.1 in 2013/14. A slight increase on the average of 4.9 sessions in 2012/13.

## Key Quality Information

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.

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. 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.

This is intended to be an annual release; however data for the period 2014/15 is expected to be published in February 2016.

## School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013

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:

<http://www.senedd.assembly.wales/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?Id=3633>

## Methodology

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 the period 1 April 2013 to 31 August 2013 was required to be provided by 31 October 2013 and information compiled for each academic school year after 31 August 2013 is required to be provided by 31 October following the end of each academic school year.

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.

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.

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.

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).

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.

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: <http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/130611-independent-counselling-services-en.pdf>

### **Users and uses of these statistics**

We believe the key users of statistics on counselling services for children and young people are:

- Ministers, Assembly Members and the Members Research Service in the National Assembly for Wales
- Other areas of the Welsh Government
- Other government departments
- Local authorities
- Local Health Boards including Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Students, academics and universities
- Individual citizens and private companies.

The statistics are used in a variety of ways. Some examples of the uses include:

- Advice to Ministers
- To inform debate in the National Assembly for Wales and beyond
- 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.

### **User feedback**

This is the first 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.

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