

**Counselling in Schools****Date**

2002-2004

**Location**

2 schools in Glasgow and one in East Dunbartonshire

**Key Partners**NHS Greater Glasgow  
The Counselling Unit,  
University of Strathclyde**Contact**Mick Cooper, Ph.D.,  
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[mick.cooper@strath.ac.uk](mailto:mick.cooper@strath.ac.uk)**Summary of project and achievements**

An evaluation of the Counselling in Schools Project, funded by NHS Greater Glasgow and managed by the Counselling Unit, University of Strathclyde was conducted, using a multi-method, pluralistic design.

- Indications from a range of sources indicate that the counselling service was beneficial to the young people involved:
  - pre- and post-counselling psychometric tests show a significant reduction in levels of psychological distress following counselling;
  - 88% of respondents wrote that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the counselling service, 73.6% said that the counselling had helped them 'a lot' or 'quite a lot', and 91% said that they would 'definitely' or 'probably' use the counselling service again;
  - 78.9% of clients, interviewed in depth, reported that the counselling had been either helpful or very helpful, 21.1% said that it had been of some help, and none said that it had been predominantly unhelpful;
  - guidance teachers gave the counselling service an average rating of 7.34 in the first year, and 8.47 in the second year, on a one-to-ten scale indicating how helpful or unhelpful they felt the counselling service had been to their students (1 = 'extremely unhelpful', 10 = 'extremely helpful');
  - guidance coordinators at each of the three secondary schools stated that they felt the counselling service was of substantial benefit to those students involved, as did both counsellors involved in the service.
- Clients, teachers and pupils across the three schools judged it as important to have a counsellor in their school, with means of 8.64, 7.47 and 6.08 respectively on a zero to ten scale from 'not at all important' to 'essential'.

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**Counselling in Schools (continued)**

- Clients and other pupils stated that an opportunity to be listened and to 'get things off their chest' was the predominant reason why they valued the existence of a counselling service; though many also valued the opportunity to receive suggestions and guidance from an experienced professional.
- A strong preference for locating the counselling service within the school environment was expressed by both clients and pupils from across the schools, with 73.4% of the latter group expressing a preference for this arrangement.
- A strong preference for one-to-one work, as opposed to group-counselling, was expressed by both clients and pupils from across the schools, with 85.6% of the latter group expressing a preference for this arrangement.
- In terms of the development of the Project, the main issue that emerged was the need for greater communication between counsellors and guidance staff – particularly at the commencement of the service. Other issues for development included:
  - increasing the profile of the counselling service;
  - increasing the availability of the counselling service;
  - greater involvement of the counsellors with extra-counselling activities.