

SDR 18/2016

18 February 2016

Counselling for children and young people, 2014/15 (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.

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 are thus published as experimental statistics. The known quality issues are highlighted in the Key Quality Information section and the end of the release.

Key Results for 2014/15

- **11,567** children or young people received counselling in 2014/15.
- **School-based staff** was the most common form of referral, accounting for nearly half of all referrals (46%).
- Females accounted for **64%** or 7,364 of the 11,567 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 22% of all children and young people who received counselling.
- **Family issues** were the most common form of presenting issue (23%) and predominant issue (24%) for children and young people who received counselling.
- **89%** of children and young people did not require onward referral after completion of counselling.
- The average improvement in YP Core score (which is a measure of psychological distress) amongst children and young people who received counselling in Wales was **8.5**.

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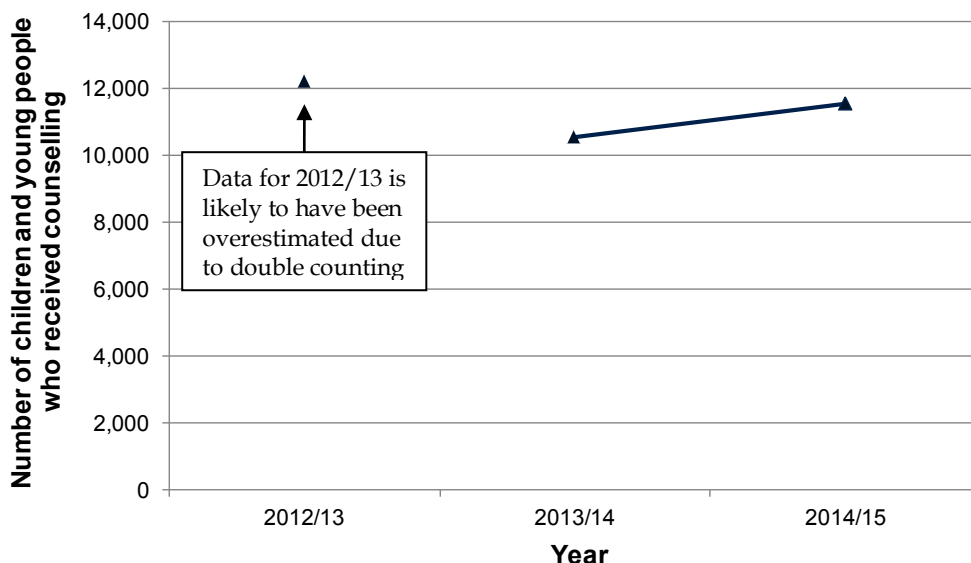
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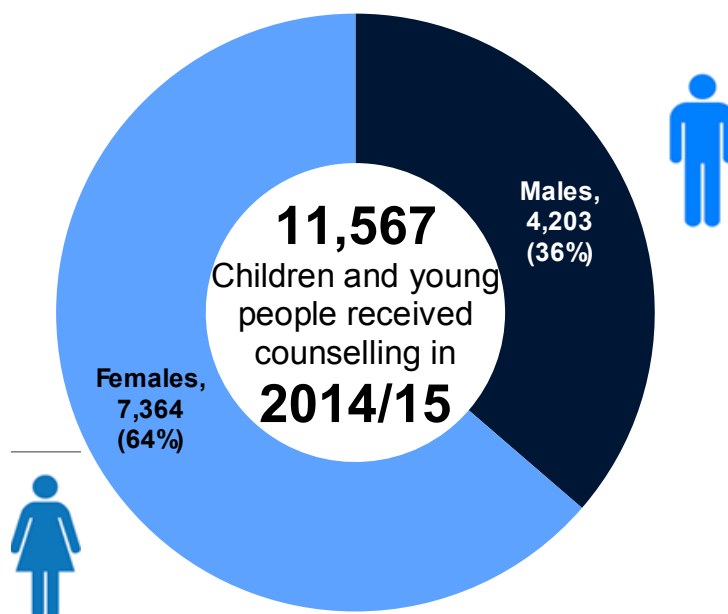
All charts and tables below relate to face to face counselling only, with the exception of Chart 4 which provides figures on online counselling that is offered by Cardiff and Powys local authorities.

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



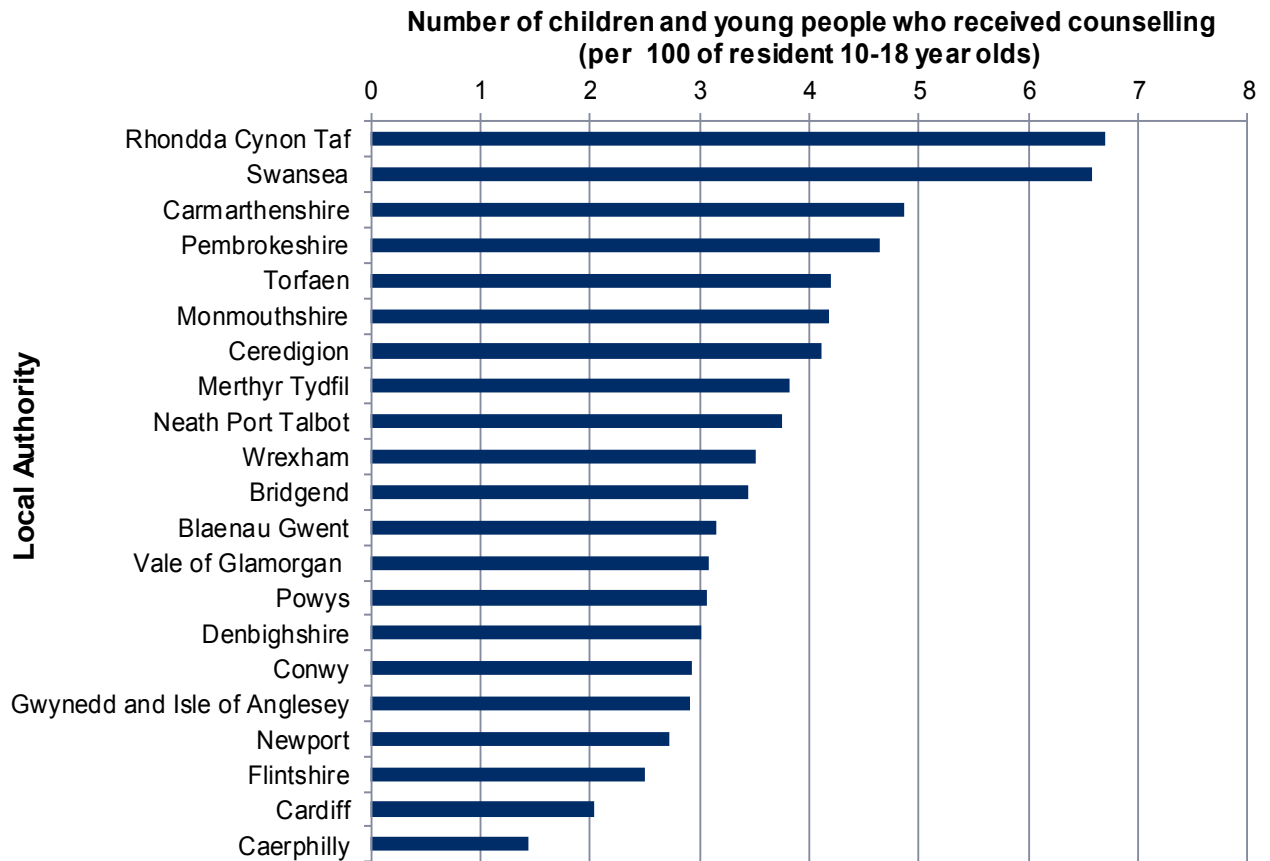
- Data in 2012/13 was collected for each term; therefore the annual figure for the number of children and young people who received counselling may have been overestimated due to double counting, if a child or young person completed episodes of counselling in more than one term. After 2012/13 data were 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 subsequent years.
- 11,567 children or young people received counselling services in 2014/15 (please note comparisons should be treated with considerable caution, as stated in the previous paragraph).

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



- Females accounted for 64% or 7,364 of the 11,567 children and young people who received counselling in 2014/15, compared to only 36% or 4,203 of males.
- The gender split of 64% female, 36% male has been the same since 2012/13.

Chart 3: Number of children and young people (per 100 of resident 10-18 year olds) who received counselling in Wales by local authority¹



¹Population estimates obtained from 2014 Mid-year population estimates produced by the Office for National Statistics.

- 3.7 children and young people per 100 of resident 10-18 year olds received counselling in Wales in 2014/15.
- Rhondda Cynon Taf had the highest number of children and young people per 100 of resident 10-18 year olds who received counselling (6.7 children and young people per 100 of resident 10-18 year olds in 2014/15, Chart 3).
- Rhondda Cynon Taf also had the most children and young people who received counselling (1,627 in 2014/15, Table 1).
- Caerphilly had the lowest number of children and young people per 100 of resident 10-18 year olds who received counselling (1.4 children and young people per 100 of resident 10-18 year olds in 2014/15, Chart 3).
- Blaenau Gwent had the fewest children and young people who received counselling (218 in 2014/15, Table 1).
- Cardiff and Powys local authorities have also been offering online counselling for children and young people (Chart 4).

Chart 4: Number of children and young people who received online counselling in Wales

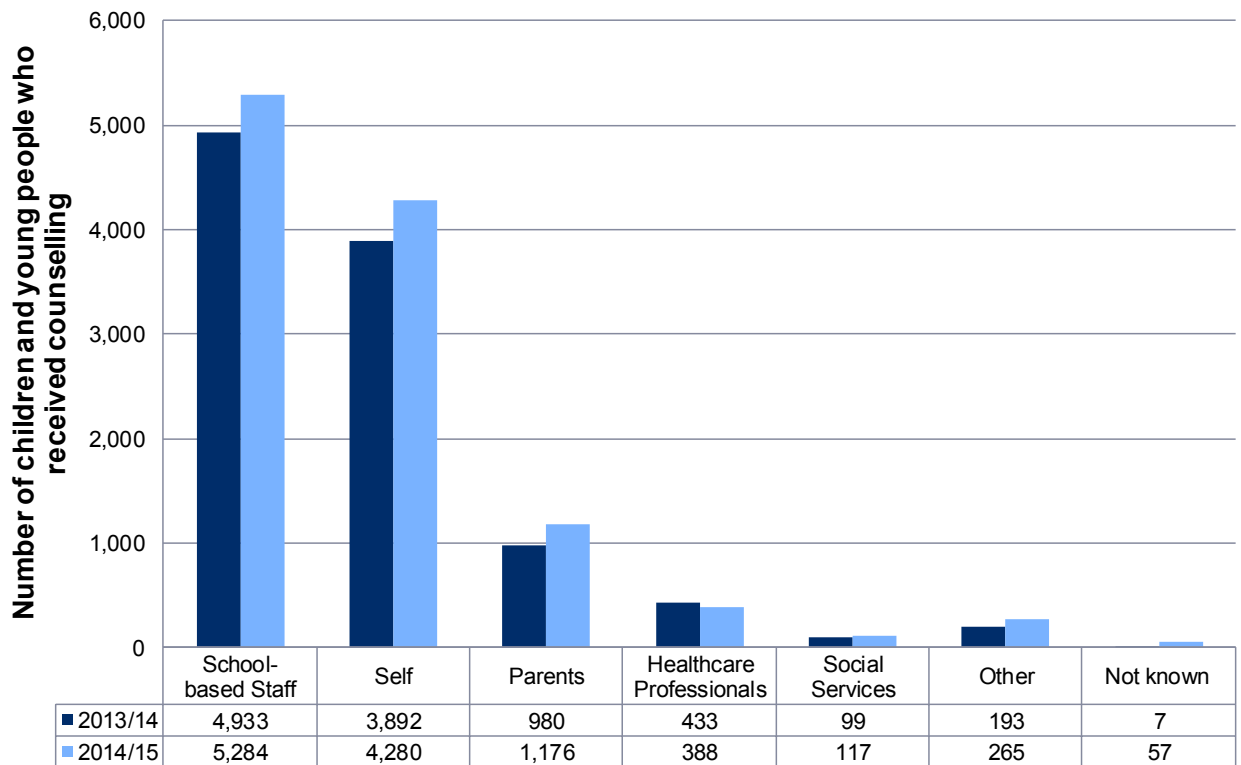


Table 1: Number of children and young people who received counselling (excluding online counselling) in Wales by local authority²

Local Authority	Male	Female	Total
Rhondda Cynon Taf	561	1,066	1,627
Swansea	597	972	1,569
Carmarthenshire	348	568	916
Cardiff	218	474	692
Pembrokeshire	192	399	591
Gwynedd and Isle of Anglesey	179	354	533
Neath Port Talbot	215	312	527
Bridgend	180	325	505
Wrexham	180	301	481
Newport	144	301	445
Vale of Glamorgan	170	254	424
Monmouthshire	139	275	414
Powys	144	270	414
Torfaen	139	262	401
Flintshire	152	245	397
Conwy	158	173	331
Denbighshire	102	191	293
Caerphilly	89	191	280
Ceredigion	112	165	277
Merthyr Tydfil	87	145	232
Blaenau Gwent	97	121	218
Wales	4,203	7,364	11,567

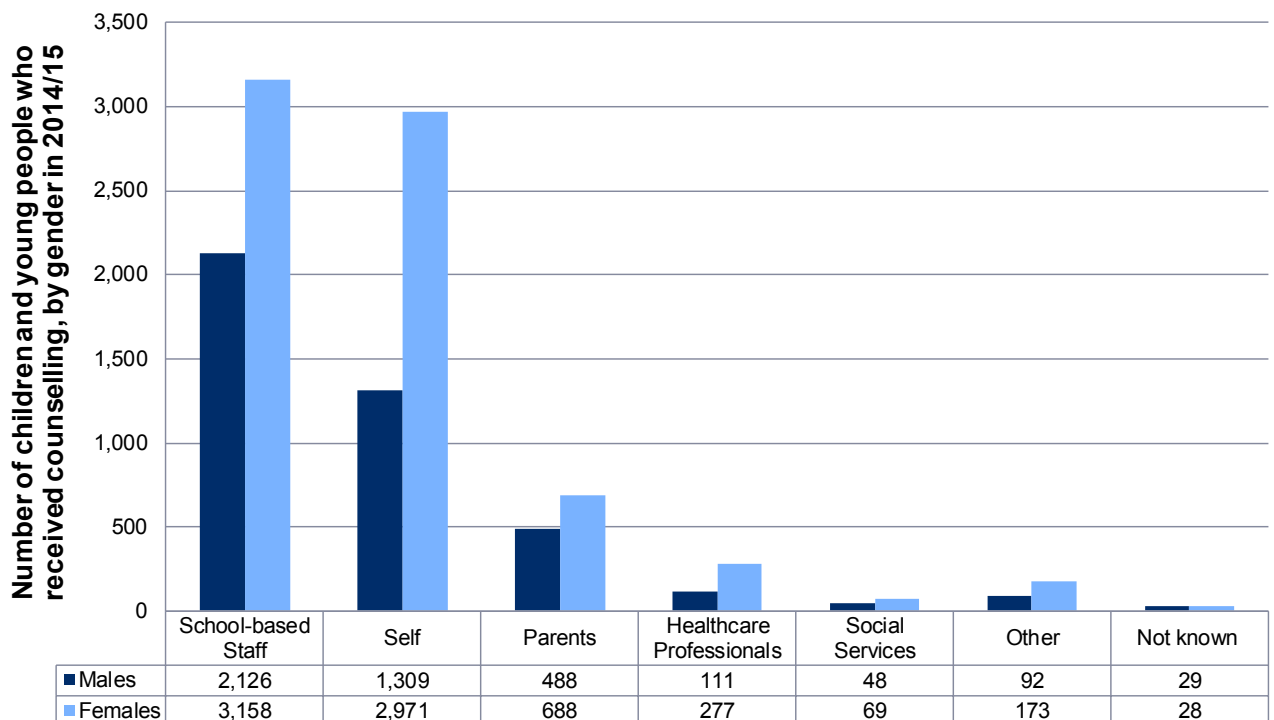
² Please note data for Conwy includes 32 children and young persons below Year 6.

Chart 5: Number of children and young people who received counselling in Wales by form of referral



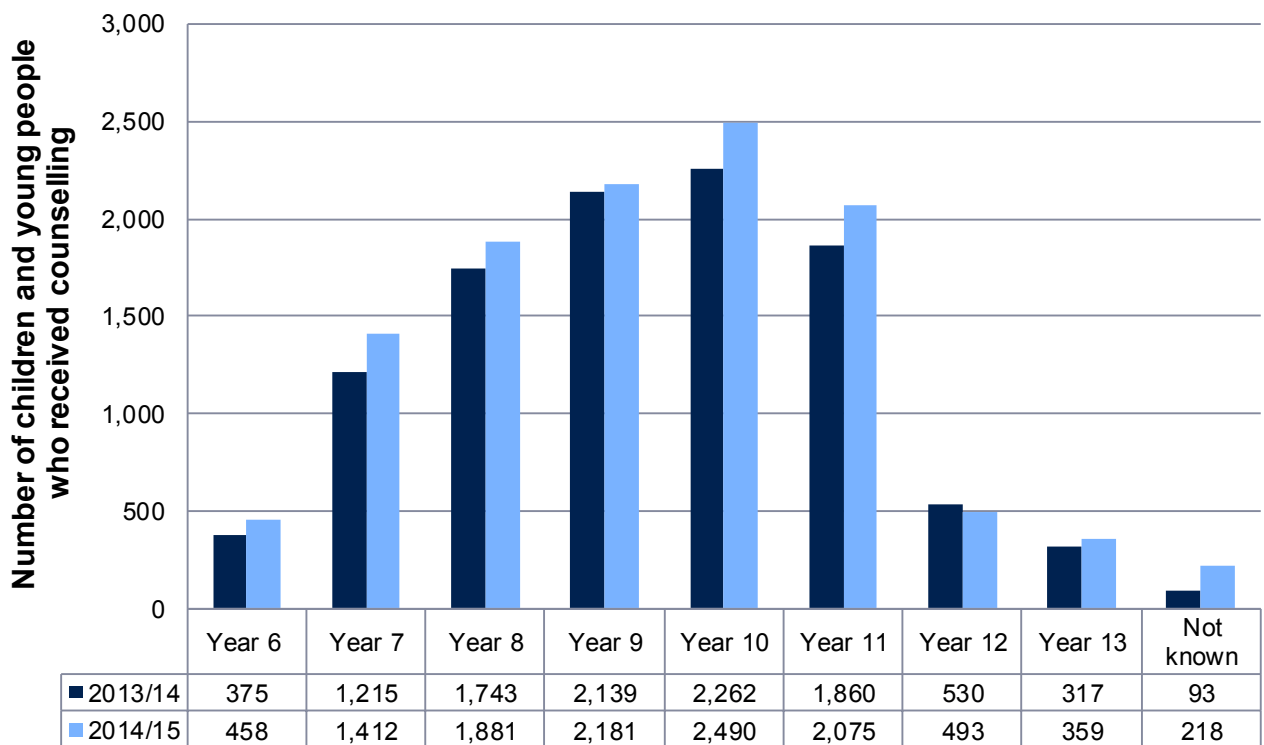
- The most common form of referral was by school-based staff (including teachers, support staff and school nurses), which accounted for nearly half of all referrals (46% in 2014/15). Self referral was the second most common form of referral (37% in 2014/15).
- The trend for different types of referrals was similar for both 2013/14 and 2014/15.

Chart 6: Form of referral of children and young people who received counselling by gender in 2014/15



- 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 staff (51% of all male referrals) compared to their female counterparts (43% of all female referrals).
- Conversely, females were more likely to refer themselves (40% of all female referrals) compared to their male counterparts (31% of all male referrals).

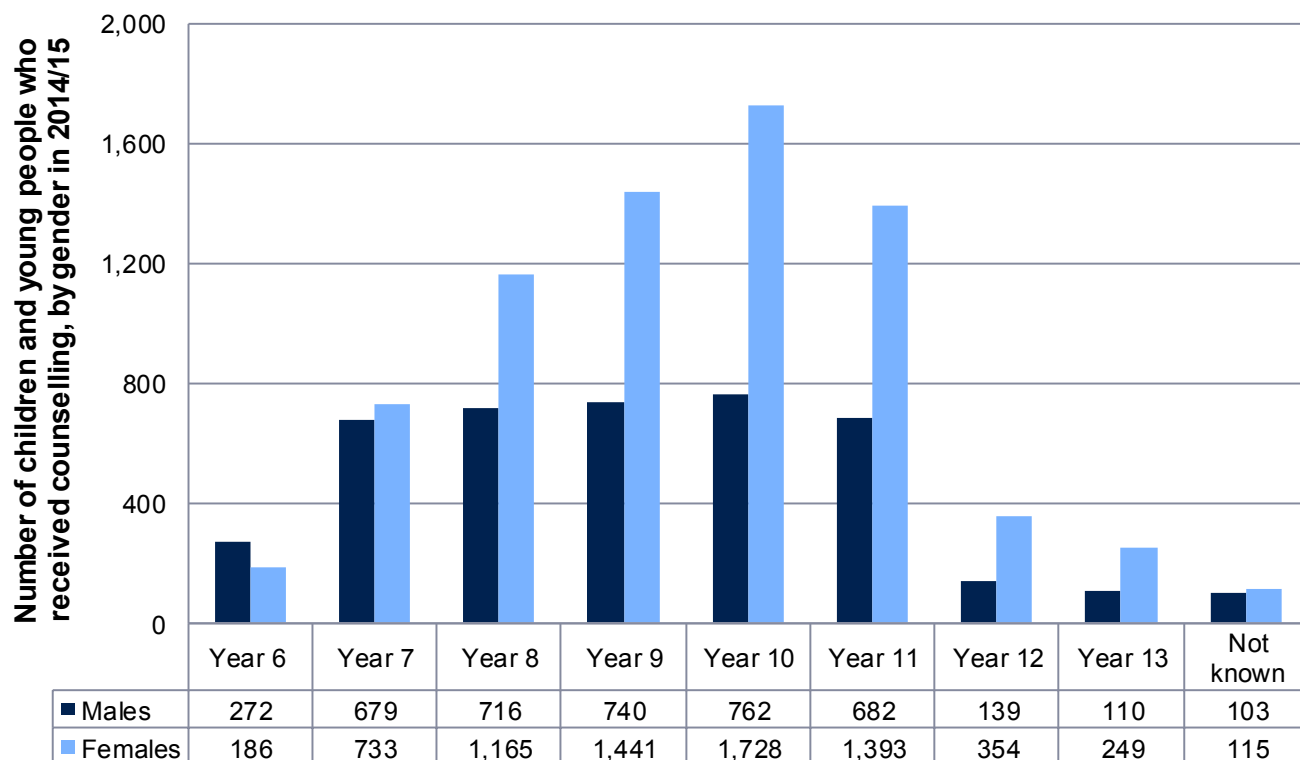
Chart 7: Number of children and young people who received counselling in Wales by school year age group³



³ Please note the “Not known” category includes 32 children and young persons below Year 6 in 2014/15

- 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 2014/15.
- The Year 10 age group accounted for 22% of all children and young people who received counselling in 2014/15.
- Three quarters of all children and young people who received counselling were between the Year 8 and Year 11 age groups in 2014/15.

Chart 8: Number of children and young people who received counselling in Wales by gender and school year age group in 2014/15³



- 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 (1,728 females).

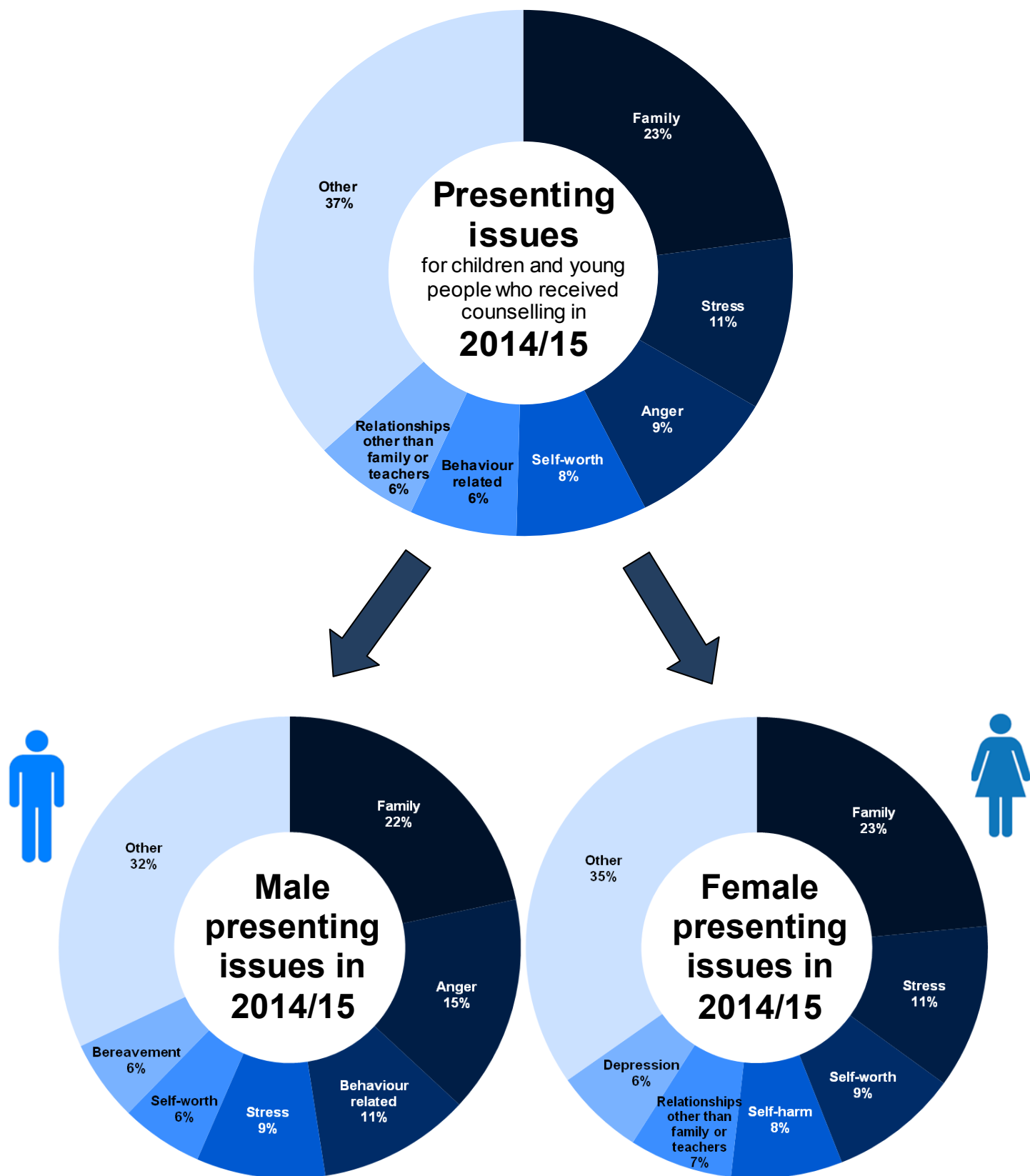
Table 2: Number and percentage of children and young people who received counselling in Wales, by ethnic background for 2014/15

Ethnic Background	2013/14		2014/15	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
White	10,181	96.6	11,028	95.3
Mixed Race	176	1.7	198	1.7
Asian or Asian British	78	0.7	86	0.7
Black or Black British	33	0.3	43	0.4
Chinese or Chinese British	11	0.1	13	0.1
Any other ethnic background	41	0.4	74	0.6
Not known	17	0.2	125	1.1
Total	10,537	100.0	11,567	100.0

- The majority (95%) of children and young people who received counselling classified themselves as white in 2014/15. The distribution seen in Table 2 is broadly representative of the distribution of young people in the wider population.

Chart 9: Main presenting issues for children and young people who received counselling in Wales in 2014/15⁴

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.



⁴Please note percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Table 3: All presenting issues for children and young people who received counselling in Wales in 2014/15

Presenting Issues on Referral	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Family	1,460	21.7	2,930	23.5	4,390	22.9
Stress	608	9.0	1,434	11.5	2,042	10.6
Anger	1,027	15.2	713	5.7	1,740	9.1
Self-worth	388	5.8	1,123	9.0	1,511	7.9
Behaviour related	717	10.6	520	4.2	1,237	6.4
Relationships other than family or teachers	324	4.8	902	7.2	1,226	6.4
Self-harm	180	2.7	971	7.8	1,151	6.0
Depression	308	4.6	780	6.3	1,088	5.7
Bullying	376	5.6	617	4.9	993	5.2
Bereavement	383	5.7	587	4.7	970	5.0
Academic	153	2.3	230	1.8	383	2.0
Abuse	78	1.2	233	1.9	311	1.6
Suicide	77	1.1	205	1.6	282	1.5
Eating disorders	23	0.3	184	1.5	207	1.1
Domestic Abuse	60	0.9	138	1.1	198	1.0
Relationships with teachers	89	1.3	103	0.8	192	1.0
Sexual	82	1.2	98	0.8	180	0.9
Substance misuse	47	0.7	56	0.4	103	0.5
Financial concerns / poverty	11	0.2	31	0.2	42	0.2
Other	309	4.6	546	4.4	855	4.5
Not known	41	0.6	69	0.6	110	0.6
Total	6,741	100.0	12,470	100.0	19,211	100.0

- 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 presenting issues (23%) in 2014/15. Stress issues were the second most common form of presenting issue on referral (11% in 2014/15).
- 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 stress, self-harm or self-worth issues than their male counterparts.

Chart 10: Main predominant issues for children and young people who received counselling in Wales in 2014/15⁴

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.

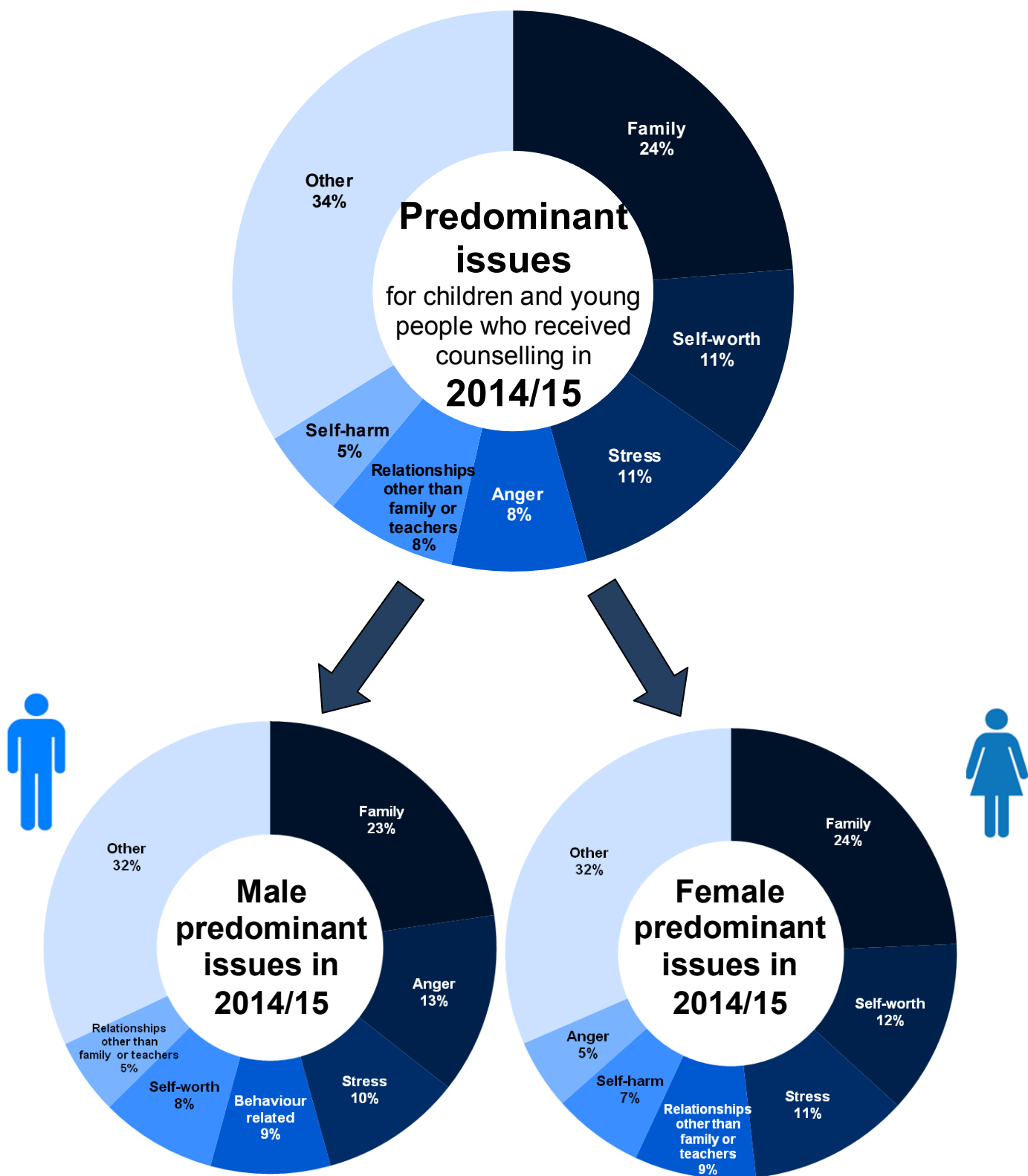


Table 4: All predominant issues of children and young people who received counselling in Wales in 2014/15

Predominant Issues	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Family	1,575	22.7	3,122	24.3	4,697	23.8
Self-worth	577	8.3	1,600	12.5	2,177	11.0
Stress	701	10.1	1,469	11.4	2,170	11.0
Anger	893	12.9	646	5.0	1,539	7.8
Relationships other than family or teachers	377	5.4	1,118	8.7	1,495	7.6
Self-harm	171	2.5	835	6.5	1,006	5.1
Behaviour related	593	8.5	410	3.2	1,003	5.1
Bereavement	375	5.4	574	4.5	949	4.8
Bullying	343	4.9	577	4.5	920	4.7
Depression	255	3.7	622	4.8	877	4.4
Academic	156	2.2	254	2.0	410	2.1
Abuse	73	1.1	204	1.6	277	1.4
Suicide	70	1.0	174	1.4	244	1.2
Relationships with teachers	119	1.7	99	0.8	218	1.1
Sexual	86	1.2	112	0.9	198	1.0
Domestic Abuse	57	0.8	137	1.1	194	1.0
Eating disorders	16	0.2	176	1.4	192	1.0
Substance misuse	50	0.7	59	0.5	109	0.6
Financial concerns / poverty	28	0.4	56	0.4	84	0.4
Other	373	5.4	530	4.1	903	4.6
Not known	48	0.7	63	0.5	111	0.6
Total	6,936	100.0	12,837	100.0	19,773	100.0

- The most common form of predominant issue was family issues which accounted for nearly a quarter of all predominant issues (24% in 2014/15). Self-worth and Stress issues were the next most common forms of predominant issue (11% in 2014/15).
- The top 6 most common forms of predominant issues were the same as the top 6 most common forms of presenting issues on referral, with the exception of self-harm which replaced behaviour related 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 11: Average YP Core score for children and young people who received counselling in Wales in 2014/15

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: http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/counselling/documents/yp_core.pdf

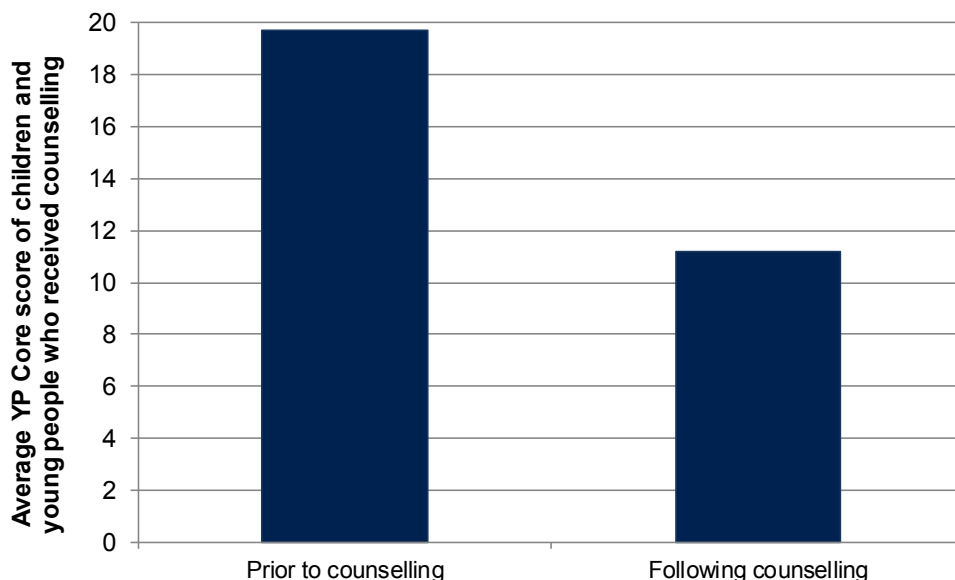


Chart 12: Average improvement in YP Core score for children and young people who received counselling in Wales by local authority in 2014/15

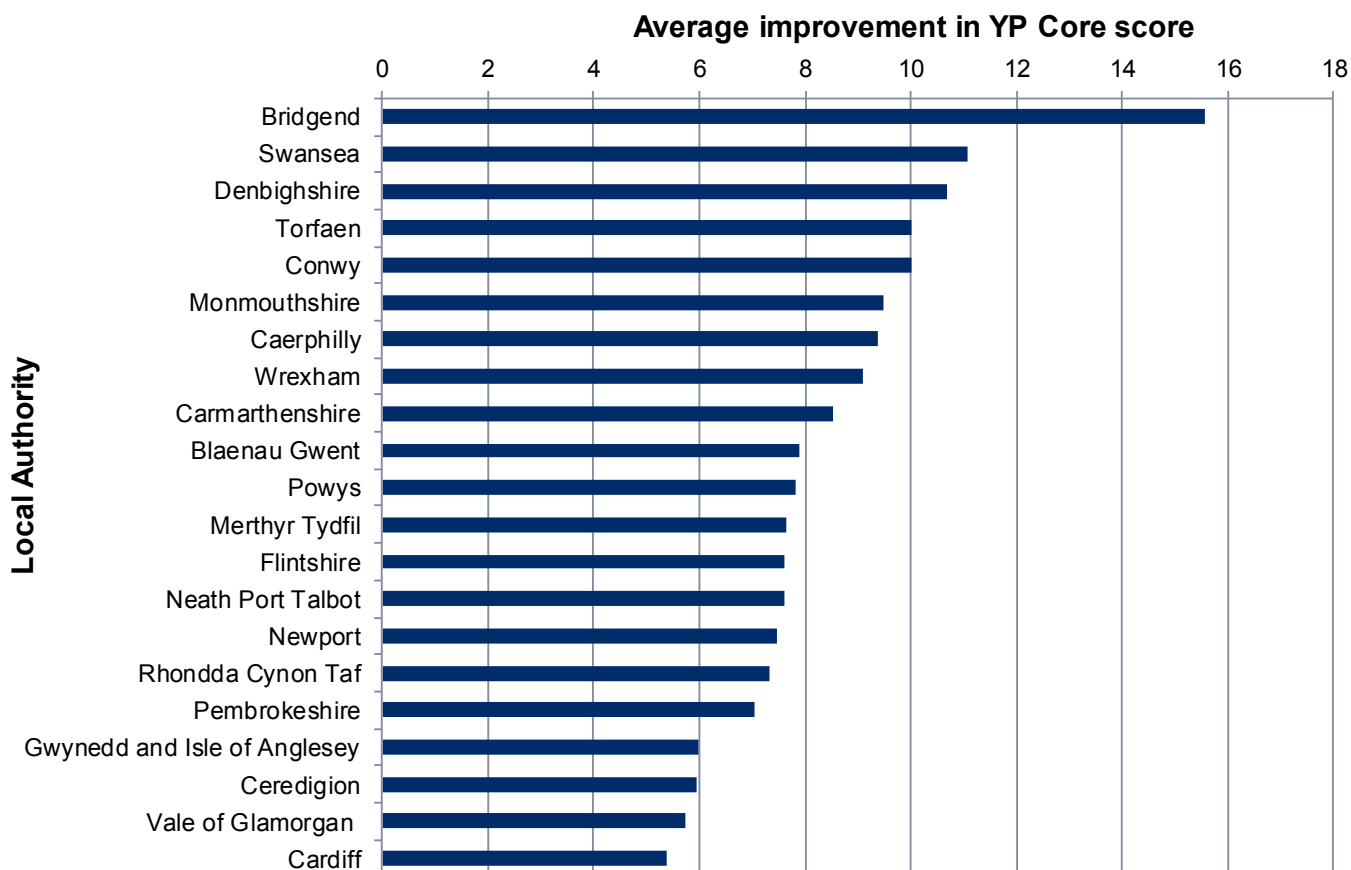
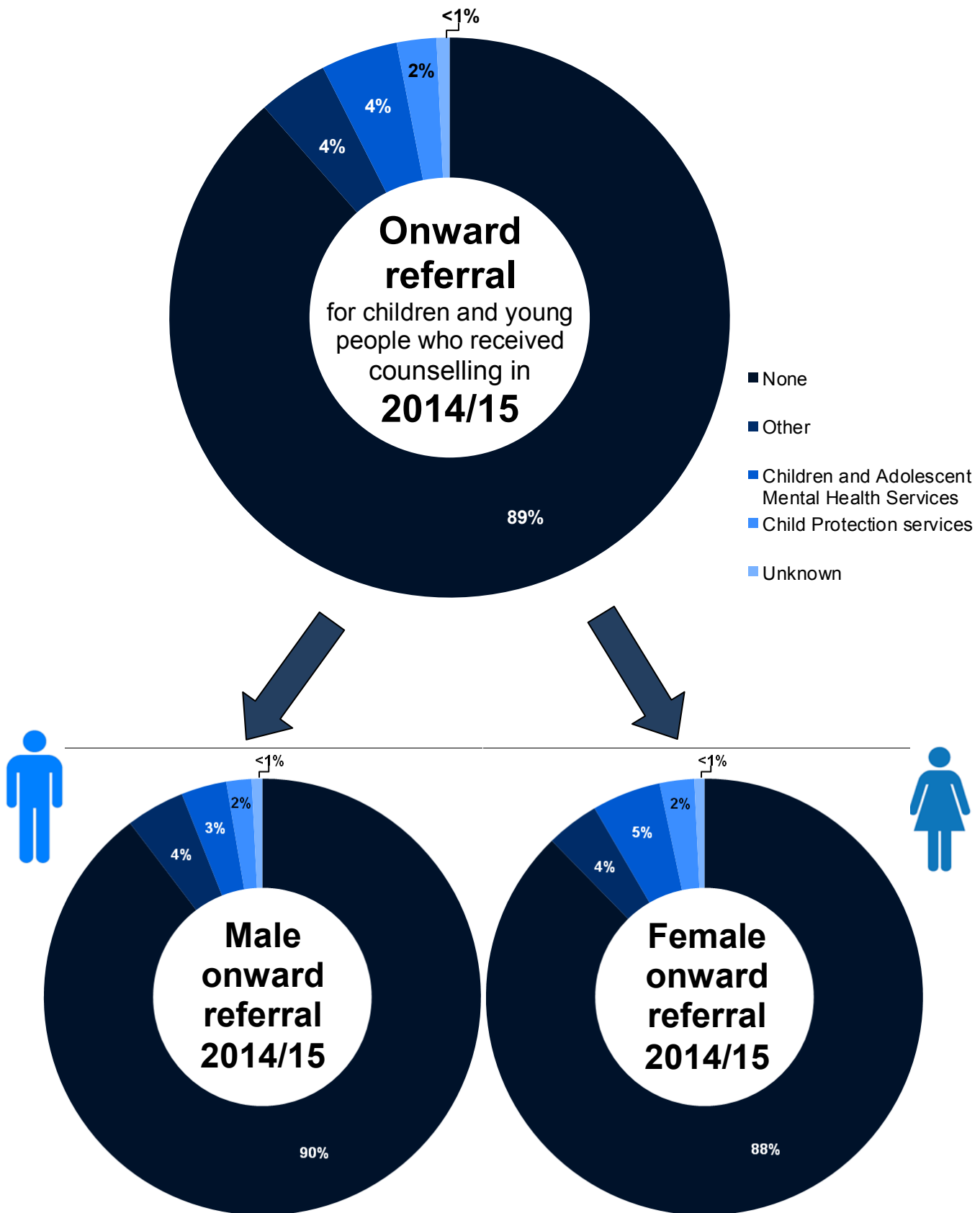


Table 5: Average YP Core score for children and young people who received counselling in Wales by local authority in 2014/15

Local Authority	Average score at start	Average score at end	Average improvement in score
Bridgend	22.8	7.3	15.6
Swansea	20.5	9.4	11.1
Denbighshire	21.2	10.5	10.7
Torfaen	21.0	11.0	10.0
Conwy	21.0	11.0	10.0
Monmouthshire	24.5	15.0	9.5
Caerphilly	16.8	7.4	9.4
Wrexham	21.2	12.1	9.1
Carmarthenshire	20.0	11.5	8.5
Blaenau Gwent	18.5	10.6	7.9
Powys	18.1	10.3	7.8
Merthyr Tydfil	18.3	10.6	7.7
Flintshire	17.3	9.7	7.6
Neath Port Talbot	15.9	8.3	7.6
Newport	19.0	11.5	7.5
Rhondda Cynon Taf	19.8	12.5	7.3
Pembrokeshire	19.1	12.0	7.0
Gwynedd and Isle of Anglesey	17.0	11.0	6.0
Ceredigion	17.9	11.9	5.9
Vale of Glamorgan	19.5	13.8	5.7
Cardiff	20.4	15.0	5.4
Wales	19.7	11.2	8.5

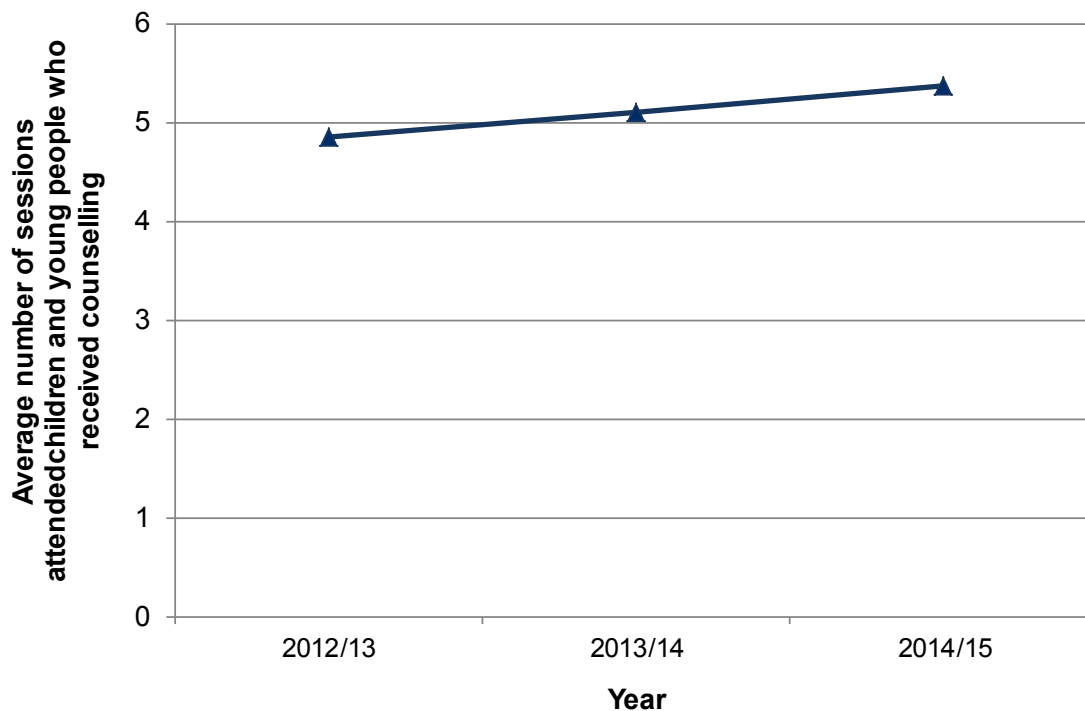
- In 2014/15 the average YP Core score for children and young people who received counselling in Wales was 19.7 prior to counselling, this average score reduced to 11.2 after counselling and is an improvement of 8.5 in the average YP Core score (Chart 11).
- Bridgend had the biggest average improvement in YP Core score amongst children and young people who received counselling in 2014/15 (an improvement in YP Core score of 15.6, Chart 12).
- Cardiff had the smallest average improvement in YP Core score amongst children and young people who received counselling in 2014/15 (an improvement in average YP Core score of 5.4, Chart 12).

Chart 13: Onward referrals of children and young people who received counselling in Wales in 2014/15



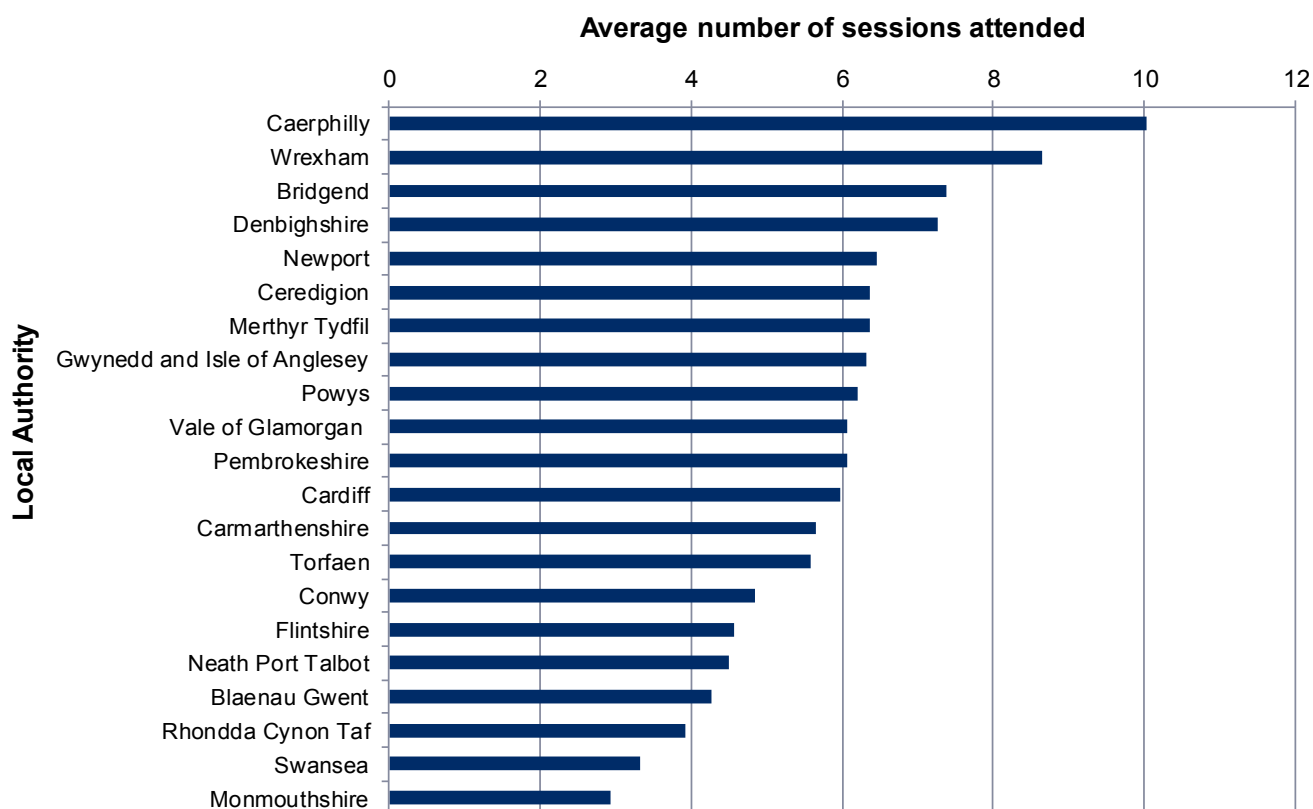
- Onward referral information was collected for children and young people who received counselling. The majority of children and young people who received counselling did not require any form of onward referral once counselling sessions had been completed (89% in 2014/15).
- Of those children and young people who were referred onwards, referrals to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) (4% in 2014/15) and the Child Protection service (4% in 2014/15) 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 (12% in 2014/15) following the completion of counselling than their male counterparts (9% in 2014/15).
- 5% of females were referred onwards to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service compared to 3% of males in 2014/15.

Chart 14: 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 5.4 in 2014/15. A slight increase on the average of 5.1 sessions in 2013/14.

Chart 15: Average number of counselling sessions attended by children and young people in Wales who received counselling in Wales by local authority in 2014/15



- Caerphilly had the highest number of average sessions attended amongst children and young people who received counselling in 2014/15 (an average of 10 sessions, Chart 15).
- Monmouthshire had the lowest number of average sessions attended amongst children and young people who received counselling in 2014/15 (an average of 3 sessions, Chart 15).

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.

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. Online counselling information is set out solely in Chart 4.

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 second 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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