Public Health Agency

Evaluation of One Stop Shops

Reviewing the progress made following expansion

Final Report

14 September 2016

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1 Executive Summary

In February 2016, the Public Health Agency (the Agency) commissioned Social Market Research (www.socialmarketresearch.co.uk) to undertake an evaluation of the 'One Stop Shop' (OSS) Programme. This report presents the outcomes from this evaluation as well as points for consideration to support the further development of the programme beyond this period.

1.1 Policy Rationale

Supporting the health and social wellbeing of young people aged 11-25 is the key objective of the One Stop Shop Programme, with OSSs funded to provide a youth friendly, holistic health and well-being service in specific locations across Northern Ireland. The service has grown from an initial pilot of four OSSs in 2009 to eight currently. OSSs act as a hub where young people have opportunities to socialise in an alcohol and drug-free environment and avail of information, advice and support on a range of issues from relevant services both on-site and off-site, with the support of staff of the OSS.

1.2 Summary of Terms of Reference for Evaluation

In summary, the terms of reference for this evaluation required SMR to:

'To establish the value of OSS (i.e. their current model) with a particular focus on the views of young people and partner agencies'.

There were three main dimensions to this:

- **Establishing the value** of the OSS to young people and the partner **organisations;**
- **Assessing the effectiveness** of the OSSs – confirming what was working well and where there were gaps in provision;
- **Ascertaining the importance of 'informal chats / focused interventions'** – Specifically, how important do young people and partner agencies, respectively, consider these to be? And, how effective are they?

1.3 Summary of Methodology

This evaluation methodology was based on 4 stages (see Section 4: Methodology):

- Stage 1: Project Initiation (March 2016);
- Stage 2: Field Work (March – June 2016);
- Stage 3: OSS Manager Workshop (May 2016); and,
- Stage 4: Report (July 2016).

1.4 Key Findings (in relation to each of the Evaluation Objectives)

This evaluation required SMR to consider a series of specific research questions. In each case, these are set out below, along with a summary of the key findings and corresponding points for consideration.

It is clear (from Table 4.2 Section), that the vast majority of the research questions were *'put to'* the vast majority of segments / audiences to be consulted. As SMR began to analyse the responses, it was evident, from an early stage, that the vast majority of the responses to each specific question, across all of the audiences consulted, were very similar. Consequently, for clarity, and to avoid unnecessary repetition in this report, SMR aggregated the feedback from all consultees for each research question and then thematically analysed the aggregate. We set out below, by research question, the key points that emerged from this analysis.

As far as possible, we set out the positive findings first, followed by points for consideration.

Where discernible differences arose in the feedback from any one segment / audience compared with another, we have highlighted this below.

Whilst SMR is aware that each OSS has its own distinct brand, we have for clarity, referred to each of the OSSs in this report by the name of the town / area in which they are located. See Table 2.1 in Section 2 for details.

Please note that the survey findings are based on the responses of young people from seven of the eight OSS and, due to the difference in delivery set-up, cannot be extrapolated to the experience of young people at the Belfast OSS.

During the evaluation Bangor OSS and Belfast OSS experienced a change in provider which may have impacted on the recruitment of the focus groups.

Please note that when we refer below to 'qualitative research', we are referring, collectively, to the:

- Focus groups with young people;
- Case study interviews with young people and staff respectively; and,
- One to one interviews with representatives of OSS partner organisations.

Research Topic 1: Overall Value

Young people:

- **Explore young people's views on the value of the OSS**

Findings from the survey:

Service Meeting Need

- 94% said the service meets their needs;
- 96% would recommend the OSS service to other young people;
- 80% are satisfied with opening times;
- 32% said there are other places like the OSS in their area.

Overall Satisfaction with the OSS Service

- 95% are satisfied with the OSS service, with none dissatisfied and 5% answering 'don't know';

"Identify what attracts young people to OSS"

The findings suggest that there are several factors that attract young people to the OSSs in the first instance.

Reasons for Using OSSs

- 68% use OSSs to meet friends / socialise;
- 41% use OSSs to get advice and help with problems;

Main Benefit

- 32% identified the main benefit of the OSSs as being with friends / meeting new friends;

Other Benefits of OSSs

- Provides young people with an opportunity to meet others (88%);
- Provides young people with a place of safety (87%);
- Gets them out of the house (87%);
- Makes them feel better about themselves (81%);
- Helps them feel better about themselves (81%);
- Provides advice on how to avoid problems (79%).

Impact of Not Having a OSS

- Feeling lost, lonely and isolated (22%) was the most common impact of not having a OSS, with a loss of self-confidence cited by 14%;

Findings from the qualitative research:

- **Curiosity** – Various young people had witnessed high street premises being updated and wondered what was happening.
- **Charisma of OSS Staff** – Dynamism, warmth, openness and helpfulness of the staff.
- **Recreation/Hang out** –The fact of simply having a safe, comfortable and accessible place to 'be' informally with friends, chat and have fun.
- **Facilities** - Free Wi-Fi, coffee, Xbox, PlayStation, sports, trips etc.
- **Friends going** – The fact that some of their friends were already attending the OSS and had found it a very positive experience.

Points for consideration:

✓ Increase awareness of the existence of, and services offered by the OSSs

"Why do regular users of the service continue to attend?"

The findings suggest that there are several strong positive factors that keep young people coming back to the OSS.

Findings from the survey:

- Most young people said they would be sitting at home if they didn't have a OSS to go to;

Types of Support

- 41% got help with low self-esteem;
- 34% got help with depression;
- 31% got help with family problems;
- 30% got help with relationships;
- 27% got help with careers, 23% with further education and 23% with employment;
- Among those who received other forms of help from OSSs, friendships, socialising and improving self-confidence were most commonly mentioned;

Findings from the qualitative research:

- **Relationship with OSS Staff –** The young people were experiencing a strong sense of being valued. They expressed a real sense of belonging, of being understood. There were repeated references to the OSS as 'family'. It was clear that the strength of the friendships made here were based on the young people being facilitated to have empathy for one another's challenges and to provide the other with mutual support.

- **Access to life altering information, support and advocacy:** Many of the young people attend the OSS because they have challenges with their mental health including suicidal ideation, anxiety, depression, and anger. The OSS supports them, formally and informally, to access appropriate forms of support. There is tangible evidence that such support has prevented several young people from taking their own life. Young people also continue to attend because they receive practical help and emotional support to find, and keep, employment. This improves their self-esteem, sense of self-worth and helps build their confidence and sense of independence.

- **Space to talk openly; not judged** – The OSS is the only place where many of these young people can talk openly and not be judged. For the vast majority of these young people, this style of listening and quality of attention, which is fundamental to their future emotional development, is simply not available in their family of origin.

- **Diversity, inclusion** – Young people see and appreciate how everyone is included and welcomed in the OSS. They are actively protected from bullying and harassment while they attend the OSS.

- **Relevant / tailored** – All of the support on offer is tailored to the precise needs of the individual, at that point in their lives. The young person is not required to 'fit' into a 'pre-moulded service' that was designed for someone else.

- **Young person centred; Peer-led activities** – All activities are designed around the needs of the young people. In addition, the young people themselves are actively encouraged to, and appear to appreciate, being invited to take on responsibility for designing and implementing activities at the OSS. This creates a strong sense of ownership.

- **Recreation and expanded opportunities –** All of the OSS offer a range of recreational activities and opportunities that would not typically be available in the home, school or community of the young person e.g. trips abroad to develop leadership skills.

- **Their space** – The OSS feels like 'their' space – they have personally decorated it and / or informed the 'shape' /style of the décor; they determine the activities; they decide what is discussed; they are permitted to socialise in their own way at their own pace within the OSS.

Points for consideration:

- ✓ Review the opening hours of the OSS. More availability at weekends would appear to be beneficial.

- **Present case studies to illustrate how the OSSs have responded to the needs of their service users.**

  The key findings from the case study research suggest that:

  - **The OSS's are tailoring their services to the precise needs of the young people** – It is clear from the feedback that the OSSs provide appropriate support for issues as diverse as mental health through to employment.

  - **The trusting relationship with at least one OSS staff member is key –** This foundation of trust enables a vulnerable young person to ask for help.

  - **The skill and experience of OSS staff is crucial -** These are vital in both identifying the precise needs of the young people and facilitating the young person's access to the most appropriate support.

  - **The support from the OSS plays an important role in preventing issues from escalating** – For example, within the young people's case studies, the intervention of the OSS has helped to reduce social isolation, alleviate anxiety and depression, and averted long-term unemployment.

Points for consideration:

- ✓ The evidence suggests that there are a number of positive points to take into consideration in any future specification of OSS Services:

  - The OSS appear to be providing a range of services - formal and informal, structured and unstructured, planned and reactive - that fit the needs of the young people. This diversity is important.

  - Given the highly proactive and protective nature of it, ensure that any future specification for OSS provision places a sufficiently high value / emphasis on the provision of 'informal chats' / focused interventions.

  - The capacity to readily and seamlessly link in with specialist services providers is a crucial part of the OSS service model.

Partners:

- **"Explore the value of OSS from the perspective of partner agencies and OSS providers"**

  The findings suggest that partner organisations value the OSSs for a variety of reasons.

Findings from the survey:

Help from other Sources Prior to OSS

- 32% of those who had got help and support from a OSS had tried to get help from other sources before coming to the OSS, with counselling services the most common type of support sought;
  - ✓ 82% of those who managed to get help from other sources were satisfied with the help they received;
  - ✓ 89% were glad they came to the OSS to get help, with 85% saying staff were able to get them the help they needed;
  - ✓ 82% said they felt more comfortable coming to a OSS for help and support compared with other places, with 81% saying that coming to the OSS has helped them deal with their problems;
  - ✓ All of those who presented at the OSS, and who had got help and support from other services previously, were satisfied with the help and support they got at the OSS;
  - ✓ 82% said they are more comfortable talking to OSS staff than staff from other services;

Peripatetic Support

- 66% had attended talks or sessions provided by external service providers or partner agencies;
- 91% found peripatetic talks or sessions helpful, particularly in respect of providing them with information, advice and knowledge;

Findings from the qualitative research:

Advantages for partners

- **Impact** – It increases the impact of the partner's own work.
- **Reduces burden** – The OSSs meets low level needs, so easing the partner's case load burden.
- **Collaboration** - Joint working is strong and positive enabling the trialing of new approaches to supporting young people.

- **Venue** – OSS constitutes a youth friendly venue from which to work.

Effectiveness of referral

- **Improved accessibility** – OSS 'gateway' provides a very effective informal entry to services.

- **Improved attendance** – The OSS keeps young person engaged and ensures they attend appointments.

- **Combined support** – The OSS is very effective where more than one kind of help is needed to support a young person or their wider family, e.g. both emotional support and practical help; sign posting support for parents.

- **Elucidation** – OSS is considered very effective where young people don't know what their issues are. Helps identify hidden as well as obvious needs.

- **Empowering** – The OSS approach (support and advocacy) builds the confidence of young person to self-refer when they are able.

If OSS was not there?

- **Key player** - OSS is a key player in the service landscape. It was clear to a number of partner organisations how devastating and distressing it was to many vulnerable young people when two of the OSS did actually close down, quite abruptly, in Spring 2016. There was simply no obvious place where these young people could continue to access the particular type of support they needed. Moreover, vital relationships with trusted adults, that had taken a long time to build, were disrupted in an unplanned manner. The mental and emotional impact of this on a number of young OSS service users was profound.

- **Unique offering** – The services offered by the OSSs are unique. Consequently, partners found it impossible to find precisely the same kind of service offering readily available within any other organisation.

- *See also points below under, "Research Topic 2: Effectiveness. Views of Partners".*

Points for consideration:

- ✓ Continue with the current OSS model overall since the range of support on offer, according to partner organisations, appears to be adding real value, having a significant positive impact on the health and well-being of young people and uses public money in a highly economical and effective manner.

- ✓ Consider a collaborative exercise between PHA and the OSSs to carry out a formal risk assessment of the OSS services overall (and potentially within each OSS) to create contingency plans, that is capable of being enacted immediately (so as to support vulnerable young service users) should the services of a particular OSS becoming unavailable.

Research Topic 2: Effectiveness

Determine the effectiveness of the OSS in assisting young people in need of support to access appropriate services.

Findings from the survey:

- 93% said that the OSS is making a positive difference to their lives;
- 73% said that the OSS has helped them get in contact with other service providers;
- 81% said that going to the OSS has made it easier to get help and support from other services;

Findings from the qualitative research:

Views of young people:

- It was clear from the case studies and the focus groups with young people that young people were being provided with, and enabled to, access to appropriate services. This **effectiveness was especially evident** in how **different** they considered their life would have been **without** the support from the OSS. Specifically, without the OSS, young people indicated that they would (in no apparent order):

  - ✓ Struggled with self-confidence;
  - ✓ Have far fewer friends (be socially isolated);
  - ✓ Not know how to express themselves;
  - ✓ Have felt suicidal / be dead;
  - ✓ Have become depressed;
  - ✓ Be in jail; and / or,
  - ✓ Be an alcoholic.

Views of partners:

- **Very effective** – The partner agencies considered that their work would be less effective without the support that the OSSs provide (e.g. lower level emotional and practical support which enables the partners to focus on the higher level, specialist inputs).
- **Less pressure** – Partners considered that without the OSS there would be more pressure on their existing services (e.g. to provide low level supports which would not constitute an appropriate use of their skills and experience).
- **Could otherwise 'lose' young people** – Partners perceived that without the OSS very vulnerable young people, who typically lack the know-how and / or confidence to come forward for help, would simply not present for formal support from statutory services. Partners considered that, if this were to happen, that such young people would be likely to adopt destructive coping strategies e.g. misuse of alcohol / drugs, addiction, and could be at risk of poor emotional and mental health.

Points for consideration:

- ✓ As stated above, continue with the current OSS model overall since the range of support on offer, according to partner organisations, appears to be adding real value, having a significant positive impact on the health and well-being of young people. In addition, according to partners, the current model was also perceived to use public money in a highly economical and effective way.

Identify what works well, what could be improved and any gaps in the provision of services (particularly with regard to the range of issues that the OSS can address) from the perspective of the young people who use the services.

Findings from the survey:

Opportunities for Improvement

- 9% said there were downsides to the OSS service;
- 28% said that nothing needs to be changed;
- 11% called for longer opening hours;
- 10% called for more activities at OSSs;
- 8% called for more trips;

Social and Recreational Support

- 33% said the social and recreational space does not need improving;
- 11% called for more sports orientated activities;
- 9% called for more activities / events;
- 8% called for more outdoor trips;

Issues to be Given Increased Focus

- 10% listed depression;
- 6% cited self-esteem;
- 5% careers;
- 5% relationships;
- 5% drugs (including tobacco);

Findings from the qualitative research

What works well

- **Relationships** – Strong levels of trust built between young people and OSS staff;

- **Informal chats / focused interventions** – This is a highly skilled area and a central part of the value of the model;

- **Advocacy** – The fact that the level of advocacy is tailored to the needs of the young person, and is always offered with the goal of empowering the young person, is a significant asset;

- **Leadership and inclusion**– The style of leadership that is modelled in the OSS, whereby everyone's views are valued, different voices are encouraged and people take responsibility for their actions is an important example for young people to both witness and experience;

- **Personal growth / emotional development** – The evidence suggests that the young people who attend the OSSs are making considerable gains in both personal and emotional development as a direct result of attending the OSS;

- **Skill building** – The OSS provides considerable opportunities for young people to acquire new skills, e.g. writing CVs, cooking, outdoor pursuits, etc.;

- **Reduced isolation** – Participating in the OSS enables young people, and especially those who are particularly vulnerable, to make new friends, share experiences and thereby reduce social / emotional isolation;

- **Protection** – The OSS is one place where the young people will be actively protected from bullying and harassment. The information and support they receive here also empowers them to address this if this is happening in other parts of their life;

- **Opportunities** – Participating in the variety of activities expands the young peoples' perception of their own capacities and personal potential; and,

- **Outcomes** – It is clear that the OSS has had a very important and positive impact on the health and well-being of the young people who attend.

Points for consideration / suggestions for improvements / gaps:

Views of young people:

- ✓ Have a dedicated space (one OSS did not have fixed premises);

- ✓ Enable young people to maximise their role in 'shaping' the OSS space, e.g. whilst this is an active part of what many OSSs already do, there were a number of young people who wanted to do even more, e.g. painting, decorating, creating a garden / outdoor space;

- ✓ Encourage and enable young people to support / show regard for their local community, e.g. through active fund raising for local causes; have walks together where they pick up litter.

Views of partner agencies:

- ✓ Consider what more may be able to be done to:
    - Support young people whose first language is not English;
    - Support young people living in rural areas.

Research Topic 3: Focused interventions / 'informal chats'

Explore the usefulness of focused interventions provided by OSS staff (e.g. interactions with the young people that take the form of one to one chats, 'tea and talk' sessions) – here after referred to as 'informal chats' in preventing young people's problems from escalating.

The findings suggest that partner organisations value the OSSs for a variety of reasons.

Findings from the survey:

Informal Chats

- 78% had informal chats with staff either on a one-to-one (67%) or on a group (39%) basis;
- 93% found informal chats with staff helpful (72% very helpful and 21% saying they helped a little);
- Informal chats are valuable because they allow young people to talk through their problems, they feel comfortable, staff are willing to listen and they trust staff;

OSS Staff

- 96% agreed that OSS staff make them feel welcome;
- 96% said they are comfortable talking to OSS staff;
- 93% said staff give good advice;
- 93% said OSS staff understand them as a person;
- 94% said that overall they are satisfied with OSS staff, with none dissatisfied and 6% answering 'don't know';

Findings from the qualitative research:

Young peoples' views on 'informal chats'

It is clear from all of the feedback above (See 'Effectiveness' and 'Reasons for continuing to attend') that the young people highly value (a) the informal nature of the OSS (b) the opportunity to discuss a concern without being judged and (c) when they are 'ready'. The trust and confidence that the young person develops with the OSS staff is the foundation that enables all of this.

These focused interventions are a **vital mechanism** whereby young people can seek support from a trusted adult and thereby de-escalate issues. For a number of very vulnerable young people, such informal chats / focused interventions are literally a 'life line'.

Given that this quality of attention, attunement, empathy, understanding and active listening is generally not available in the young person's family of origin, (or other parts of their life (e.g. school, GP, or peers), the **centrality and protective effect** of these skilful and timely interventions by OSS staff **cannot be overstated.**

Partners views on 'informal chats'/ focused interventions

- **Best practice –** The use of 'informal chats' (focused interventions) is regarded as a good/ best practice approach in youth work.
- **Improves openness** – The OSS approach builds trust and confidence empowering young people to open up.
- **Engagement** - Creates more effective engagement with the young people.
- **Understanding** - Helps young people to understand what is going on in their lives.
- **'Voice'** - Helps young people to articulate their needs / find their 'voice'.
- **The 'informal chats' are an indispensable part of the OSS model** – It is often the case that when a young person's need for support is greatest they feel least empowered to ask for or access formal help. The ready availability of an 'informal chat' is a vital mechanism whereby the young person can reach out and /or the OSS staff member can 'reach in', without the young person being overwhelmed. These focused interventions have prevented issues, such as mental health, from escalating. SMR is aware that such 'informal chats' (focused interventions) are regarded as good / best practice when working with young people.

Points for consideration:

- ✓ Given the vital and protective nature of it, ensure that any future specification for OSS provision places a high value on the provision of 'informal chats' / focused interventions.

Conclusions

The collective evidence from this evaluation points clearly to a service meeting the needs of both young people and partner agencies. The OSS service, as currently configured, is providing valuable support to young people across a wide range of issues including building self-esteem, improving self-confidence, reducing isolation and providing support and direction for those experiencing depression and other mental health issues.

Young people themselves see their OSS as providing a safe space to allow them to address the issues and challenges they are facing, with OSS staff able to direct them to appropriate external services, if required. More than nine out of ten[1] young people report that the OSS service is meeting their needs, with a similar number saying the current service is making a positive difference to their lives.

The partner agencies have strongly endorsed the current OSS model, with the OSS service seen as vital in helping to make their services more accessible to young people, as well as increasing the impact of their work. The service is seen by partner agencies as collaborative, effective and unique in terms of its approach to engaging young people to help address their health and social care needs.

[1] Note that the survey findings are based on the views of young people who attended 7 out of the 8 OSSs

2. Background to the One Stop Shop Initiative

2.1 Response to Need

In August 2009[2], the Public Health Agency (PHA) conducted an analysis of need in relation to health and well-being services for young people on behalf of the Health Development Policy Branch within DHSSPSNI. This resulted in the Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety commissioning four pilot One Stop Shops (OSSs) to cater for the health improvement needs of children and young people aged 11-25 years.

The aim of the pilot OSSs was to provide a youth friendly, holistic health and well-being service. They were intended to be a hub where young people have opportunities to socialise in an alcohol and drug-free environment and avail of information, advice and support on a range of issues from relevant services both on-site and off-site, with the support of staff of the OSS.

The specific issues on which young people could avail of information, advice and support in the OSSs included:

- Mental and Emotional Health Issues: Depression, Low Self-Esteem, Self-harm, Family Problems, Educational (School) Problems;
- Wider Personal and Health Issues: Drugs and Alcohol (including tobacco), Relationships, Sexual Health, Healthy Eating;
- Social Welfare Issues: Benefits, Housing, Debts, Employment; and,
- Practical Issues: Further Education, Careers, Money Management, Independent Living Skills.

Each of these OSSs had a local identity and their specific provision was intended to be tailored to local need.

2.2 Developing the OSS Concept

Phase 1, or the pilot OSS programme was run over 18 months, with Social Market Research (SMR) commissioned to undertake an evaluation in 2011. Whilst the findings from this evaluation informed the specification for a more extensive service, the SMR evaluation also made several specific recommendations:

- Further clarify the concept of a OSS (e.g. focus, purpose);
- OSS to be actively encouraged and supported to share and document their experiences – to refine the collective understanding of what constitutes the most appropriate/effective model;
- PHA and providers to explore why certain OSS elements were most or least successful;

[2] Public Health Agency (2009): Analysis Of Need In Relation To 'One Stop Shop' Services For Young People In N Ireland

- PHA to set out clear protocols for OSS providers, particularly regarding the appropriateness of referrals and signposting young people to other services;

- Improve the key performance indicators: more focus on outputs and outcomes, clearly defined and specific, minimum standards, data guidelines, systems for data collection; and,

- Maintain a service focus on health improvement by providing specialist services, sign-posting and hosting peripatetic work.

Phase 2 of the OSS programme began with a procurement process for the OSS service. This was completed in 2013 and resulted in the establishment of 8 OSSs. Three of these had been in place since Phase 1, five were new. The Table below summarises the current 8 OSS service locations and providers.

Table 2.1: Profile of OSS Providers

Location	Provider	HSCT
Belfast	Extern	Belfast
Bangor (outreach: Ballywalter)	Extern	South Eastern
Carrickfergus	CYMCA	Northern
Ballymena (outreach: Ballycastle & Bushmills)	N-GAGE, Start 360	
Banbridge	REACT	Southern
Newry	YASIP	
Derry	Dove House	Western
Enniskillen	The Find	

In 2015 Social Market Research were again commissioned to undertake an evaluation to

> *'…establish what progress has been made in relation to the specifications and, in particular, to follow up on the recommended changes to function and processes of OSS'.*

This evaluation presented a number of key findings around:

- The concept of a OSS;
- A review of how well OSSs were operating based on monitoring data;
- Protocols for referring young people to partner organisations;
- Sharing experience and practice;
- The effectiveness of the OSS network;
- Specific issues for individual OSSs;
- Processes and procedures working effectively; and,
- Opportunities for improvement

2.3 Current Evaluation

This current evaluation builds upon previous evaluations and focuses specifically on the value of OSSs, with a particular focus on the views of young people and partner agencies.

3. Terms of Reference

3.1 Research Aim

The overall aim of this evaluation was to:

'To establish the value of OSS (i.e. their current model) with a particular focus on the views of young people and partner agencies'.

3.2 Research Objectives

In terms of specific research objectives, PHA required those appointed to:

1. To explore young people's views on the value of the OSS.

2. (i) to identify what works well, what could be improved and any gaps in the provision of services (particularly with regard to the range of issues that the OSS can address) from the perspective of the young people who use the services.

   (ii) to ascertain if there are differences in these responses by demographics (e.g. age, gender, education/work status, urban/rural background, etc.).

3. To identify what attracts young people to OSS and the reasons why regular users of the service continue to attend.

4. To explore the usefulness of lower level interventions provided by OSS staff (e.g. one to one chats, 'tea and talk' sessions, and other informal interventions) in preventing young people's problems from escalating.

5. To determine the effectiveness of the OSS in assisting young people in need of support to access appropriate services.

6. To explore the value of OSS from the perspective of partner agencies.

7. To present case studies that illustrate how the OSS have responded to the needs of their service users.

4 SMR's Methodology

4.1 Key Stages of the Research

The following methodology was agreed with the PHA and has already been detailed in SMR's proposal to the PHA (dated February 2016). In summary, the approach involved four key stages:

Table 4.1: Summary of Methodology

	Stage 1: Project Initiation **(March 2016)** ▪ Met Steering Group. ▪ Agreed methodology and timescales. ▪ Identified documentation and contacts etc.
	Stage 2: Field Work **(March - June 2016)** ▪ Survey of OSS service users (n=139) ▪ Focus group with young people at each OSS (8 Focus groups – Total n=80 attendees) ▪ Interviews with partners of OSS (n=31: 10 Face-to-Face; 21 By Telephone) ▪ Case study interviews (6 in total: 4 with young people; 2 with OSS staff members) A copy of the survey and all discussion schedules for each of the above segments of the research can be found in Appendix 1.
	Stage 3: OSS Managers Workshop **(May 2016)** ▪ Worked collaboratively with the key representatives of the Steering Group to design and deliver a one-day workshop session wherein the key preliminary findings from the evaluation – and points for further consideration - were shared with OSS Managers sought ahead of the evaluation report being finalised. (Further details in Appendix 2)
	Stage 4: Report **(July 2016)** ▪ Production of draft final report – June 2016 ▪ Feedback from Steering Group –Early July 2016 ▪ Final report produced – Late July 2016

4.2 Overview of Approach to Field Work

SMR's agreed approach to the fieldwork is summarised in Table 4.2 below. The topics agreed and the research method used for each (e.g. interviews, focus group, work etc.) with each segment/audience are clearly indicated.

Table 4.2: Matrix of Research Questions vs. Segments/Audiences Consulted

Research / Evaluation Topic / Framework	Consult Young people – Focus Groups	Consult Young people – Case Studies	Consult Young people – Survey	Interview partner organisations	Meeting with OSS Providers
VALUE Explore young people's views on the value of the OSS	✔	✔	✔	✔	
Identify what attracts young people to OSS and the reasons why regular users of the service continue to attend.	✔	✔	✔	✔	
Explore the value of OSS from the perspective of partner agencies and OSS providers				✔	✔
EFFECTIVENESS Explore the usefulness of lower level interventions provided by OSS staff (e.g. one to one chats, 'tea and talk' sessions and other informal interventions) in preventing young people's problems from escalating.	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Identify what works well, what could be improved and any gaps in the provision of services (particularly with regard to the range of issues that the OSS can address) from the perspective of the young people who use the services.	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Ascertain if there are differences in these responses by demographics (e.g. age, gender, education/work status, urban/rural background, etc.).			✔		
Determine the effectiveness of the OSS in assisting young people in need of support to access appropriate services.	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Present case studies that illustrate how the OSSs have responded to the needs of their service users.		✔			
FOCUSED INTERVENTIONS / INFORMAL CHATS Explore the usefulness of lower level interventions provided by OSS staff (e.g. one to one chats, 'tea and talk' sessions and other informal interventions) in preventing young people's problems from escalating.	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔

5 Survey

5.1 Overview

This section of the report presents the findings from a survey of young people using the One Stop Shop service. Each of the eight OSS service providers were invited to encourage their service users to take part in a survey. OSS staff explained the purpose of the survey to young people and that the survey was voluntary. OSS staff provided consent to take part on behalf of the young people. The survey questionnaire also set out in detail that the survey was private and confidential and that no young person could be identified from their responses.

The survey was hosted by Social Market Research (SMR) with young people able to access the survey through a portable tablet computer left with each OSS. The survey ran between 15 May and 24 June 2016. A total of 139 young people from seven of the eight OSS's participated in the survey (see Table 5.1).

5.2 Survey Aim and Topics Covered

The survey (copy attached as Appendix A) was aimed at quantifying the views of young people across a number of topic areas including:

- Demographic characteristics of young people;
- Reasons for using the OSSs;
- Help provided;
- Use of other services via the OSS;
- OSS staff and the benefits of informal chats;
- Value of OSSs to young people;
- Suggested improvements to OSSs; and,
- Overall satisfaction with OSSs.

5.3 Sample Profile

The following table presents a profile of those young people you took part in the survey.

Table 5.1: Sample Profile (n=139)			
		%	n
Age	11-16	14	20
	17-18	23	32
	19-21	43	60
	22+[3]	17	23
	Missing	3	4
Sex	Male	60	84
	Female	40	55
Status	Attend School	25	35
	Attend FE college	33	46
	University	2	3
	Working	17	23
	Unemployed	12	16
	Other[4]	6	8
	Missing	6	8
OSS Location	Ballymena	22	31
	Banbridge	4	5
	Carrickfergus	17	23
	Derry / Londonderry	16	22
	Enniskillen	15	21
	Newry	17	24
	Bangor	10	13
	Belfast[5]	-	-

[3]Two respondents were aged 25+ (one Ballymena respondent recorded their age as 27 [unemployed] and one Bangor respondent recorded their age as 28 [University]

[4] Includes: charity shop (n=1); course (n=1); European volunteer (n=1); recruitment centre (n=1); stay at home with parents (n=1); TFS (n=1); YMCA (n=1); and, work it programme (n=1).

[5] Note that this service provider changed during the evaluation and had no fixed premises to provide the service

5.4 Sample Profile

Analysis by provider organisation shows differences in user profile by age and status, with all Banbridge users (n=5) and nearly all Newry users (21 out of 23) aged 19 or older compared with 8 out of 23 Carrickfergus users.

Also in terms of status, the majority of young people attending the Carrickfergus (13 out of 23) and Enniskillen (11 out of 21) OSSs were attending school, compared with none of those attending the Banbridge OSS.

Table 5.2: User Sample Profile by Organisation (n=139)

		B'mena (n=31)	B'bridge (n=5)	C'fergus (n=23)	D/ L'derry (n=22)	E'skillen (n=21)	Newry (n=24)	Bangor (n=13)
		n	n	n	n	n	n	n
Sex	Male (n=84)	19	1	13	16	10	17	8
	Female (n=55)	12	4	10	6	11	7	5
Age	11-16 (n=20)	4	0	7	2	7	0	0
	17-18 (n=32)	3	0	8	10	6	2	3
	19-21 (n=60)	17	4	6	6	5	20	2
	22+ (n=23)	6	1	2	3	3	1	7
Status	School (n=35)	5	0	13	4	11	1	1
	FE College (n=49)	12	1	1	12	8	8	7
	Work (n=23)	6	1	2	0	2	10	2
	Other (n=34)	8	3	7	8	0	5	3

5.5 Awareness and Attendance at OSSs

Young people were asked how they first became aware of the OSS they attend. Figure 5.1 shows that friends (37%) was the most common source of awareness, with 22% saying they 'just knew it was there'. Nineteen percent of young people cited other sources[6].

Figure 5.1: How did you first find out about this One Stop Shop? (base=138)

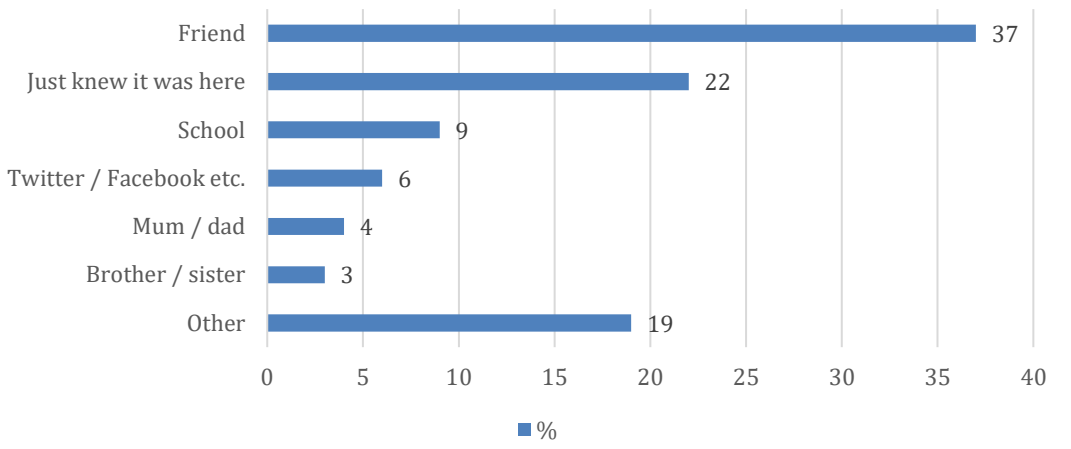
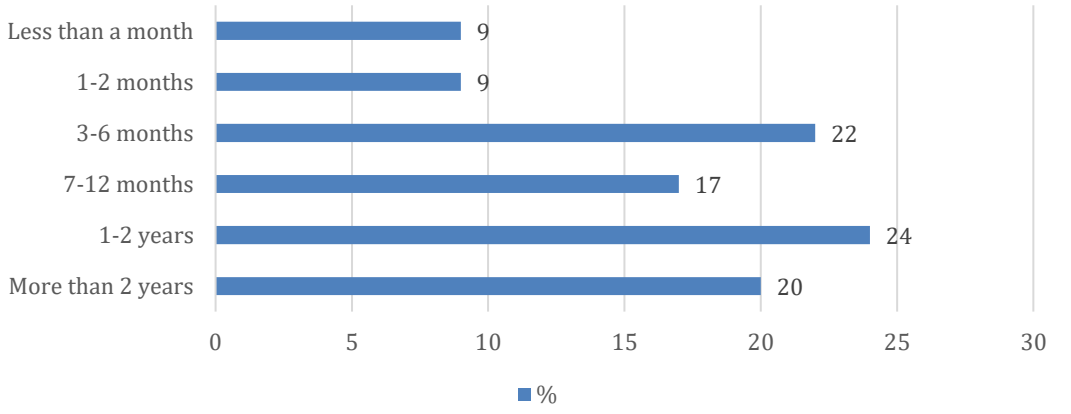


Figure 5.2 shows that a majority of young people said they had been coming to the OSS for longer than 6 months (61%), with 9% attending for less than one month.

Figure 5.2: How long have you been coming to this One Stop Shop? (base=139)



Those aged 19-21 were significantly more likely to say they had been coming to the OSS for more than 6 months (11-16, 60%; 17-18, 47%; 19-21, 73%; 22+, 48%, $p<=0.05$).

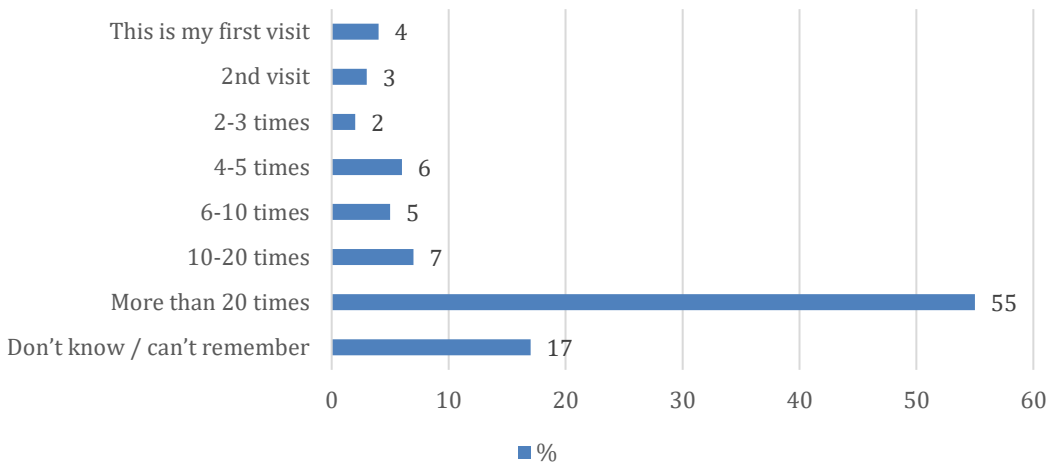
There were no significant differences in length of time coming to the OSSs by status (school, FE college etc.) or gender. However, those attending the Derry / Londonderry (73%) and Bangor (77%) OSSs were more likely to report doing so for

[6] Includes: Cedar Foundation (n=1); homecare assistant (n=1); local youth centre (n=3); leaflet (n=1); OSS co-ordinator (n=1); local paper (n=1); mentor (n=2); newspaper (n=1); regional college (n=1); OSS staff came to youth club (n=1); Turning Point (n=1); walked past (n=1); and, YMCA (n=4).

less than 6 months (Banbridge, 20%; Carrickfergus, 30%; Enniskillen, 48%; Newry, 21, p<=0.001).

Young people were also asked to say how many times they had visited their OSS, with just over half (55%) having done so 20 times or more. Just 4% reported that they were on their first visit at the time of the survey.

Figure 5.3: Approximately how many times have you visited this One Stop Shop? (base=139)



Young people attending the Banbridge OSS (80%) were more likely to have attended more than 20 times compared with other OSSs (Ballymena, 52%; Carrickfergus, 39%; D / Londonderry, 68%; Enniskillen, 52%; Newry, 71%; and, Bangor, 31%, p<=0.001).

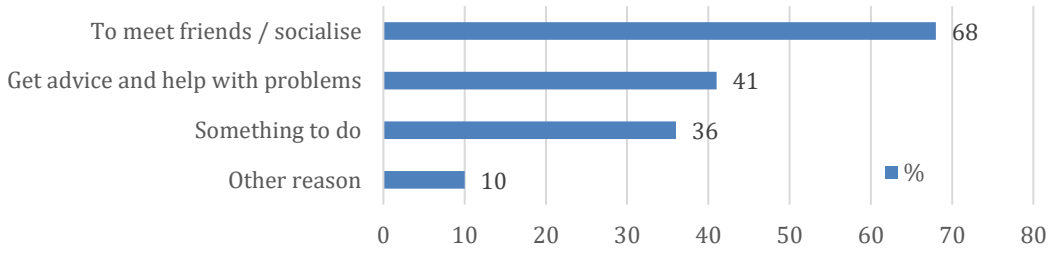
5.6 Reasons for Attending OSSs

The young people surveyed were invited to say why they attend the OSSs, with meeting friends and socialising their most common response (68%). Similar numbers attended to get advice and help with problems (41%), and for something to do (36%). Ten percent cited other reasons[7].

There were no significant differences in reasons for attending by age, gender, status or by OSS location.

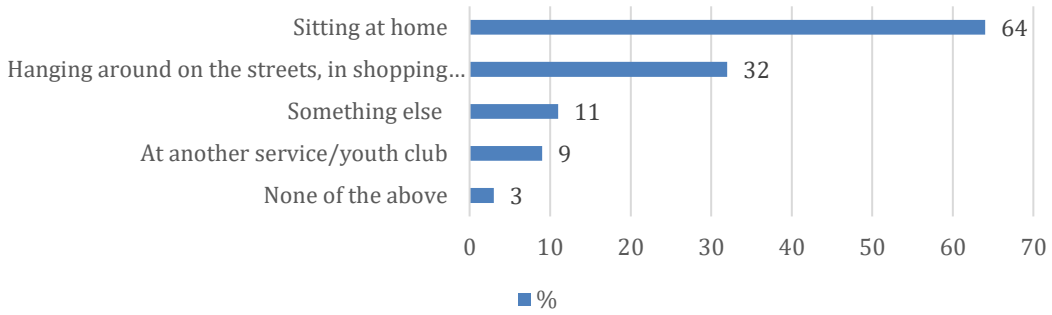
[7] Included: to become a youth worker and help others (n=1); further my career working with young people (n=1); knowledge (n=1); progress through music (n=1); volunteer (n=1); and, work placement (n=1).

Figure 5.4: Young people use this service for different reasons. Are any of the following reasons why you use this One Stop Shop service? (base=139)



Young people were asked what they would be doing if they didn't attend the OSS, with a majority (64%) saying they would be sitting at home, 32% saying they would be hanging around on the streets, in shopping centres etc., and 9% saying that they would be at another service or youth club. Eleven percent said they would be doing something else[8].

Figure 5.5: If you didn't come here to the One Stop Shop, what would you be doing? (base=139)



5.7 OSSs as a Source of Help

5.7.1 Help with Health Related Issues

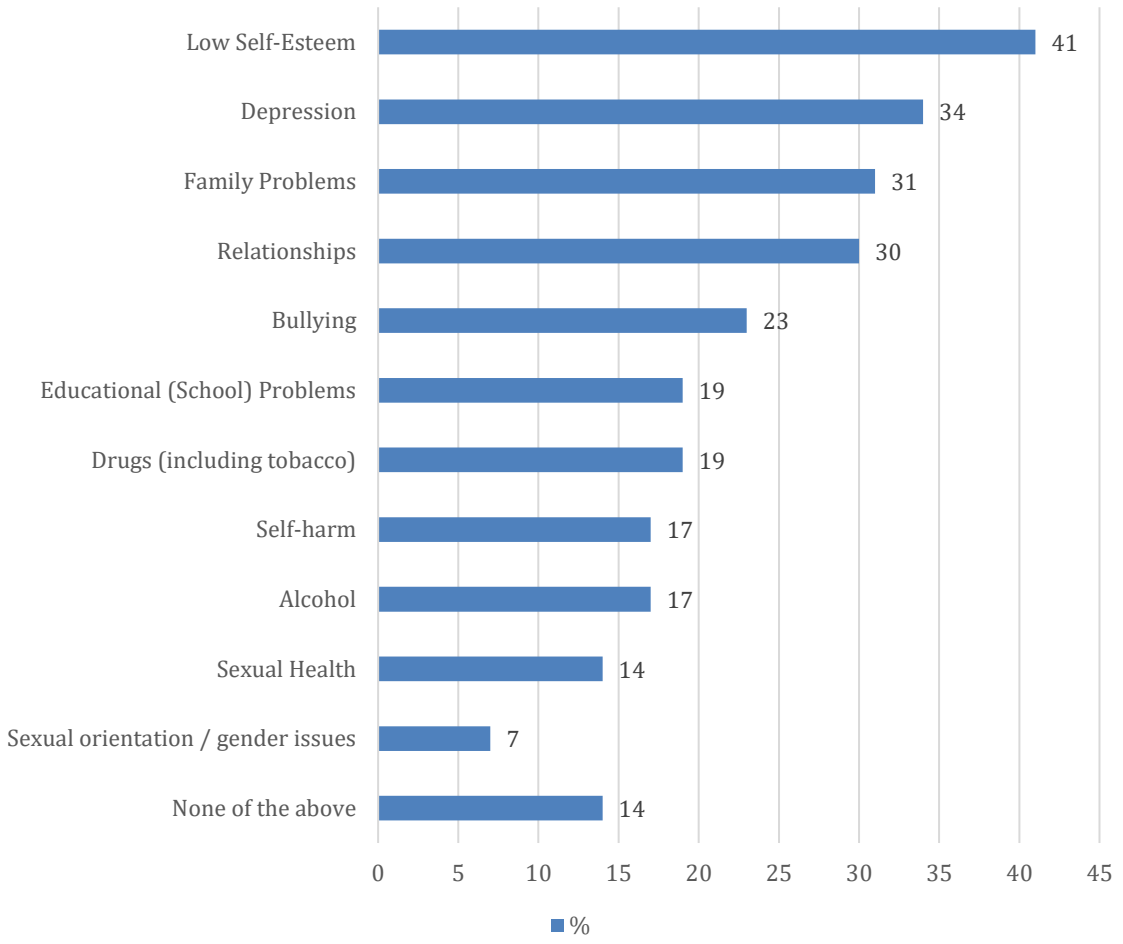
All young people in the survey were asked if the OSS had helped them with a range of health issues.

In response, 41% said that the OSS had helped them with low self-esteem, 34% with depression and 31% mentioning family problems and 30% relationships.

Overall, 86% of young people said that the OSS had helped them with at least one of the issues listed in Figure 5.6, with females more likely to report that the OSS had helped with at least one issue (96% vs. 80%, p<=0.01).

[8] Included: clubbing / partying and spending more time in Belfast (n=1); out with friends (n=1); skating (n=1); university (n=1); watching TV (n=1); drinking (n=1); friend's house (n=1); I would come for many reasons including the reasons listed above (n=1); and, working and studying (n=1).

Figure 5.6: Has this One Stop Shop service helped you with any of the following…? (base=137)



The response to this question was further analysed by age, gender, status and OSS:

- Males compared with females were more likely to report that the OSS had helped them with:
  - alcohol (23% vs. 7%, p<=0.05);
  - drugs including tobacco (23% vs. 7%, p<=0.05);
- Females compared with males were more likely to say that the OSS had helped them with:
  - OSS helped with bullying (33% vs. 17%, p<=0.05);
  - OSS helped with low self-esteem (54% vs. 33%, p<=0.05);
- Differences by age:
  - OSS helped with family problems (11-16, 15%; 17-18, 17%; **19-21, 45%;** 22+, 30%, p<=0.05);
  - OSS helped with sexual health problems (11-16, 0%; 17-18, 7%; 19-21, 18%; **22+, 26%,** p<=0.05);

- Differences by status:
  - OSS helped with alcohol problems (School, 6%; FE College, 17%; **work, 35%;** other, 16% p<=0.05);
  - OSS helped with drugs problems [including tobacco] (School, 3%; FE College, 19%; **work, 35%;** other, 25% p<=0.05);
  - OSS helped with family problems (School, 12%; FE College, 25%; **work, 61%;** other, 41% p<=0.001);
- Differences by OSS:
  - OSS helped with alcohol problems (Ballymena, 7%; Banbridge, 0%; Carrickfergus, 9%; D/Londonderry, 19%; Enniskillen, 0%; **Newry, 42%; Bangor, 39%**, p<=0.001);
  - OSS helped with problems associated with depression (Ballymena, 48%; **Banbridge, 60%**; Carrickfergus, 27%; D/Londonderry, 5%; Enniskillen, 29%; Newry, 54%; Bangor, 23%, p<=0.01);
  - OSS helped with family problems (Ballymena, 45%; **Banbridge, 60%;** Carrickfergus, 14%; D/Londonderry, 10%; Enniskillen, 14%; **Newry, 58%;** Bangor, 31%, p<=0.001);
  - OSS helped with sexual health problems (Ballymena, 13%; **Banbridge, 40%;** Carrickfergus, 0%; D/Londonderry, 5%; Enniskillen, 10%; **Newry, 38%;** Bangor, 8%, p<=0.01);

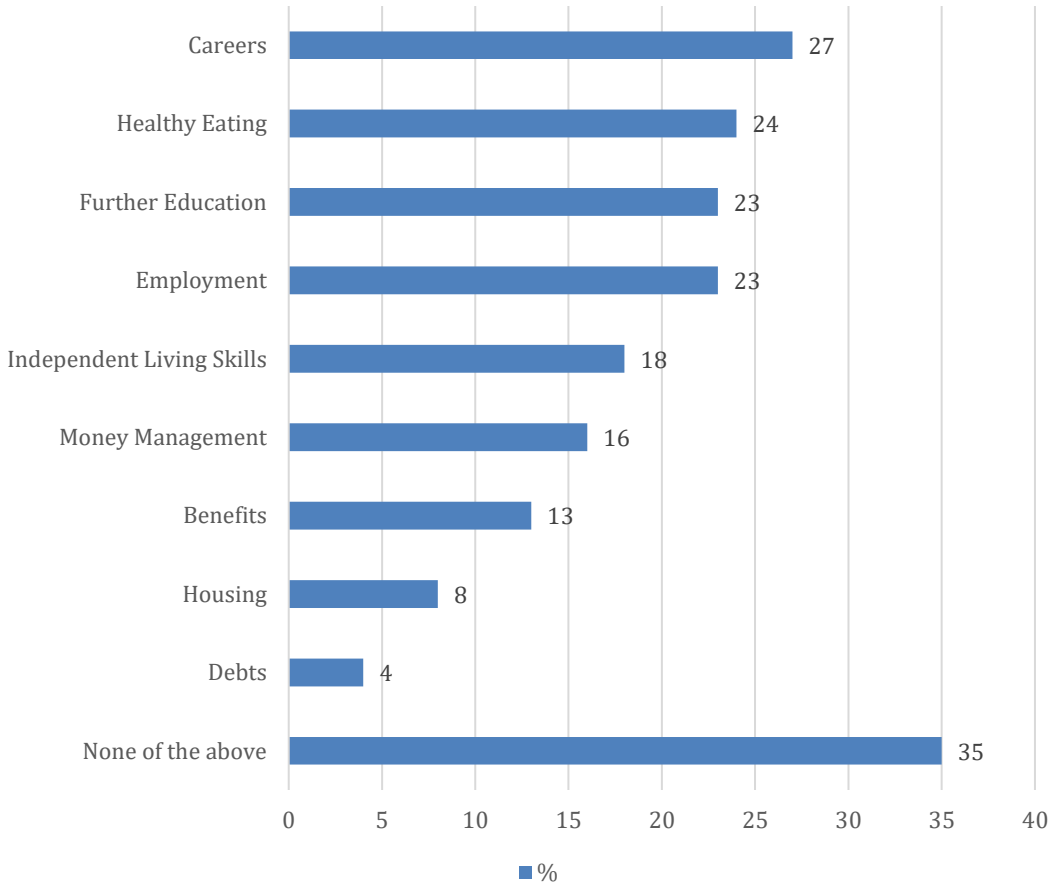
5.7.2 Help with Non-Health Related Issues

The survey also asked young people if the OSS service had helped them with a range of other non-health related issues.

Figure 5.7 shows that 27% of those surveyed reported that the OSS service had helped them with careers, with 24% getting support with healthy eating and 23% help with further education and employment.

Overall, 65% of all young people in the survey said the OSS service had provided them with help with at least one of the items listed in Figure 5.7.

Figure 5.7: And has this One Stop Shop service helped you with any of the following…?



The response to this question was further analysed by age, gender, status and OSS:

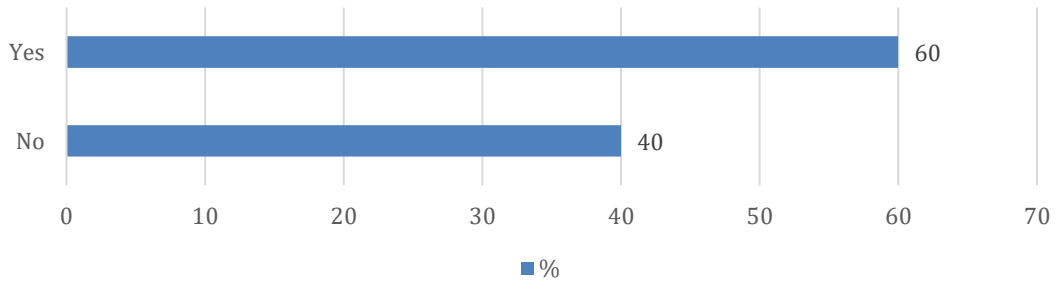
- Males compared with females were more likely to report that the OSS had helped them with:
  - employment (30% vs. 11%, p<=0.01);
- Older respondents were more likely to say that the OSS had helped them with:
  - employment (11-16, 0%; 17-18, 16%; 19-21, 27%; 22+, 44%, p<=0.01);

- Differences by status:
  - Help with benefits (School, 6%; FE College, 4%; **work, 22%**; **other, 25%** p<=0.05);
  - Help with employment (School, 3%; FE College, 23%; **work, 57%**; other, 19% p<=0.001);
  - Help with further education (School, 9%; **FE College, 40%;** work, 22%; other, 13% p<=0.05);
  - Help with housing (School, 0%; FE College, 4%; work, 9%; **other, 22%** p<=0.01);
  - Help with independent living skills (School, 15%; FE College, 8%; **work, 35%;** other, 25% p<=0.05);
- Differences by OSS:
  - Help with benefits (Ballymena, 13%; **Banbridge, 60%**; Carrickfergus, 14%; D/Londonderry, 5%; Enniskillen, 0%; Newry, 25%; Bangor, 23%, p<=0.01);
  - Help with healthy eating (Ballymena, 32%; Banbridge, **40%; Carrickfergus**, 19%; D/Londonderry, 9%; Enniskillen, 5%; **Newry, 46%;** Bangor, 15%, p<=0.05);
  - Help with housing (Ballymena, 7%; **Banbridge, 60%;** Carrickfergus, 5%; D/Londonderry, 9%; Enniskillen, 50%; Newry, 13%; Bangor, 0%, p<=0.05);
  - Help with money management (Ballymena, 7%; **Banbridge, 40%;** Carrickfergus, 19%; D/Londonderry, 5%; Enniskillen, 10%; Newry, **38%; Bangor**, 15%, p<=0.05);

5.7.3 Other Forms of Help Provided by OSSs

Overall, 60% of young people said that the OSS service had provided them with help in other ways.

Figure 5.8: Has the service provided here helped you in any other ways? (base=139)



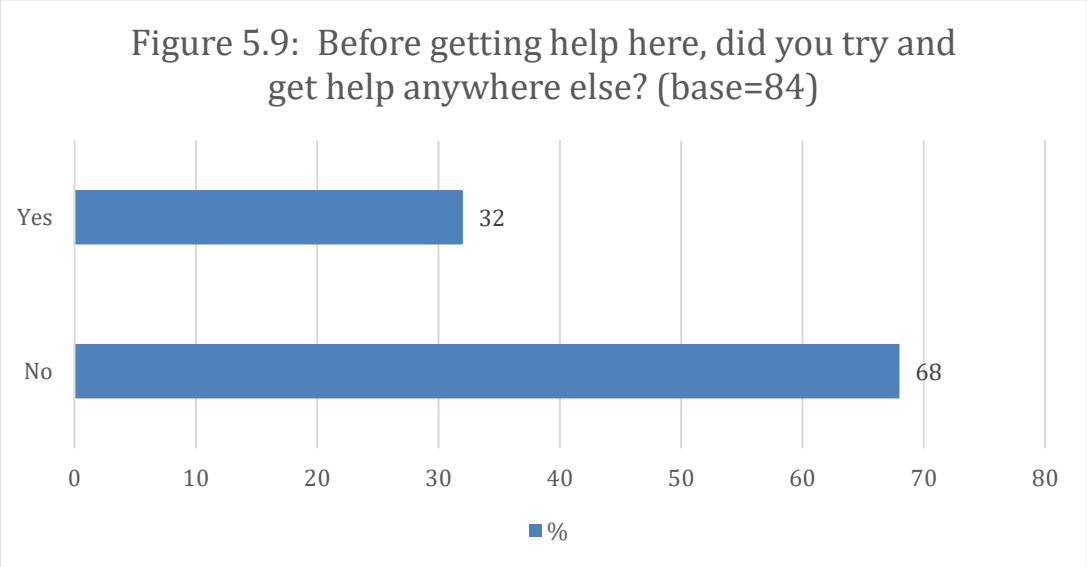
The different forms of additional help reported by young people (n=77) are listed in Table 5.3, with friendships (27%) and improving confidence (21%) the most commonly mentioned.

Table 5.3: Other forms of help provided by the OSS service (n=77).		
	%	n
Friendships / socialise	27	21
Improving confidence	21	16
Listening to me	4	3
Self-esteem	4	3
Relationships	4	3
Life choices / opportunities	5	4
Employment	4	3
Loneliness / Mental Health	4	3
Helped with personal problems	5	4
Help with anxiety / stress	3	2
Advice / Support	4	3
Find out what I want to do	3	2
Helped me get qualifications	1	1
Made me happy	1	1
Other	10	8

5.8 Help from Sources other than the OSSs

Respondents who had received help from the OSS service (n=84) were asked if they had tried getting help anywhere else before getting help from the OSS.

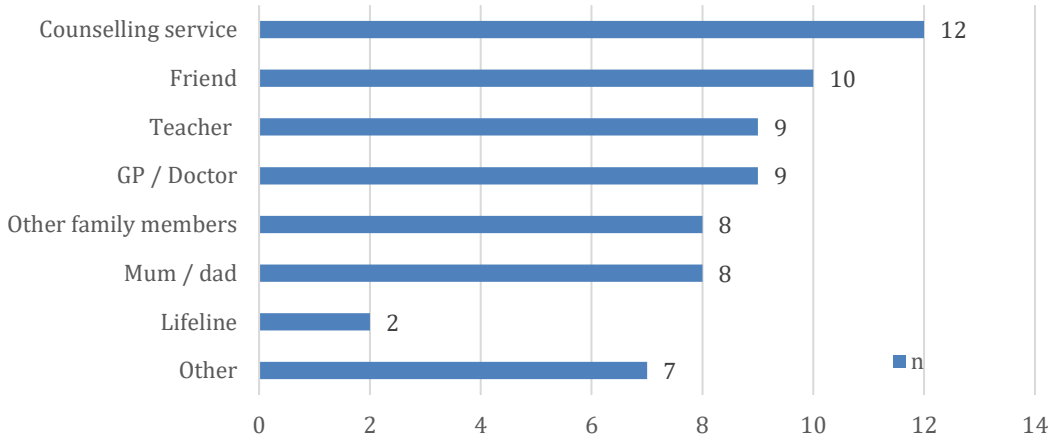
Approximately one in three (32%, n=27) young people said they had tried to get help from other sources.



Young people attending the Derry/Londonderry OSS were more likely to report having tried to get help elsewhere (Ballymena, 45%; Banbridge, 0%; Carrickfergus, 29%; Derry / Londonderry, 64%; Enniskillen, 33%; Newry, 14%; and, Bangor, 0%, p<=0.05). There were no significant differences by age, gender or status.

Among those who had tried to get help from other sources prior to getting help from the OSS service (n=27), 12 had sought help from a counselling service, 10 from a friend, and 9 from a teacher and a GP / Doctor. Seven young people cited other sources[9] of help.

Figure 5.10: Whom did you try and get help from? (base=27)

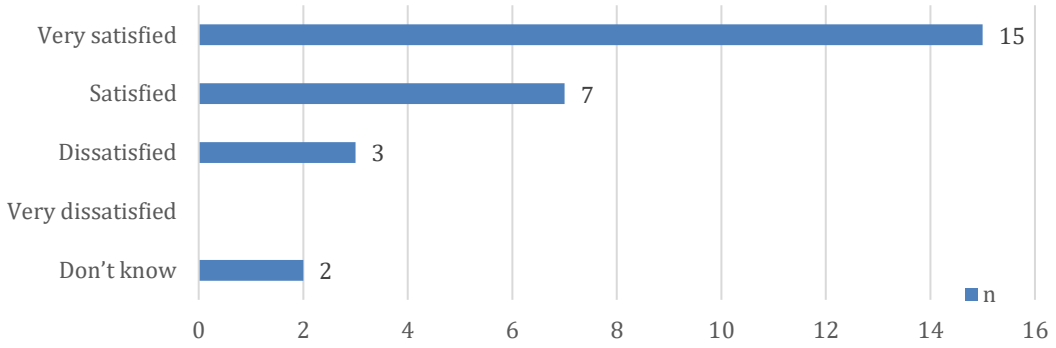


5.8.1 Satisfaction with Help from Sources other than the OSS

Respondents who had received help from other sources were asked to say how satisfied they were with the help received.

Figure 5.11 shows that of the 27 respondents who had received help, 22 were either very satisfied (15) or satisfied (7) with the help they received from other sources.

Figure 5.11: How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with this help you got? (base=27)



[9] Included: Cedar Foundation (n=1); key worker (n=1); other course (n=1); peer mentoring (n=1); programme for young people with learning difficulties (n=1); youth club (n=1); and, youth worker (n=1).

The reasons why three respondents were dissatisfied with the help they received from other sources included: 'not personal' (n=1); 'they did not encourage me to go to appointments' (n=1); and, 'was always let down or not taken seriously' (n=1).

5.9 How OSS Service Helped Young People Who Had Used Other Services

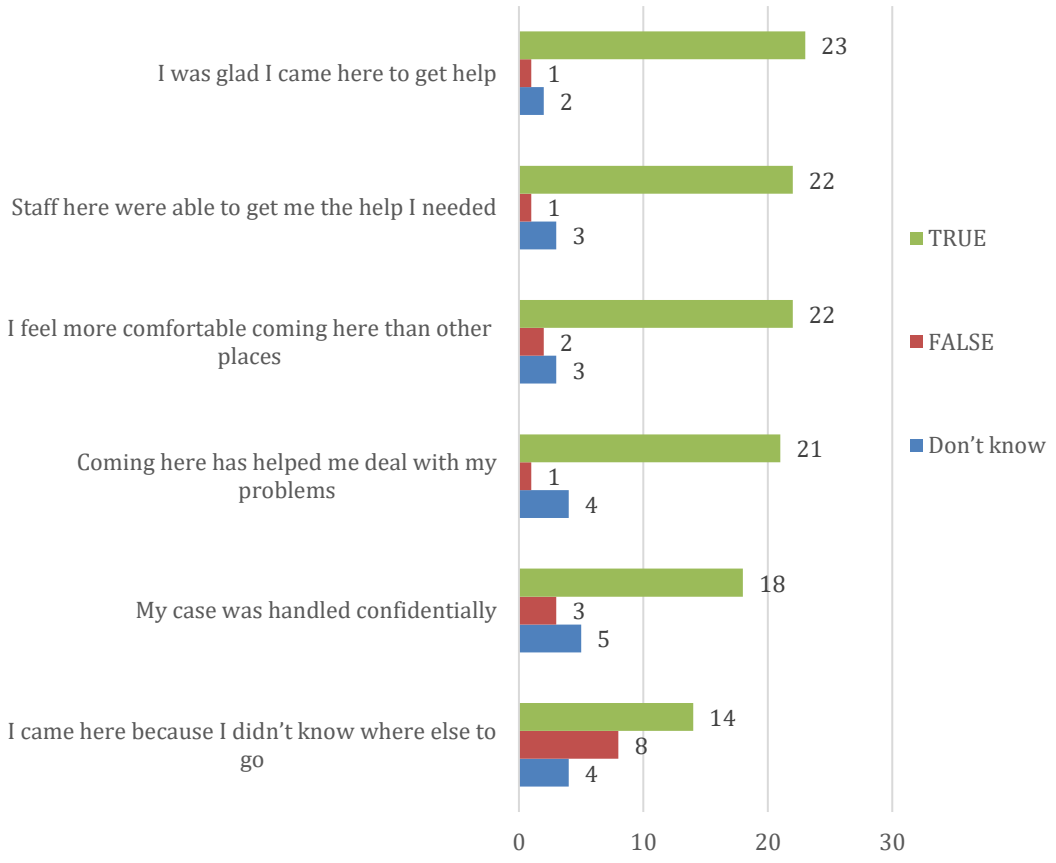
Young people who had used other services, prior to using the OSS service, were asked to answer true or false to a number of statements.

Figure 5.12 shows that 23 out of 26 said they were glad they came to the OSS shop for help, with 22 out of 26 saying that OSS staff were able to get them the help they needed.

Twenty-two out of 26 said they feel more comfortable coming to the OSS compared with other places, with a similar number (21/26) saying that coming to the OSS has helped them deal with their problems.

Eighteen out of 26 said their case had been treated confidentially, with just over half (14/26) saying they came to the OSS because they didn't know where else to go.

Figure 5.12: Thinking about when this service has helped you, please say if each of the following statements is true or false. (base=26)

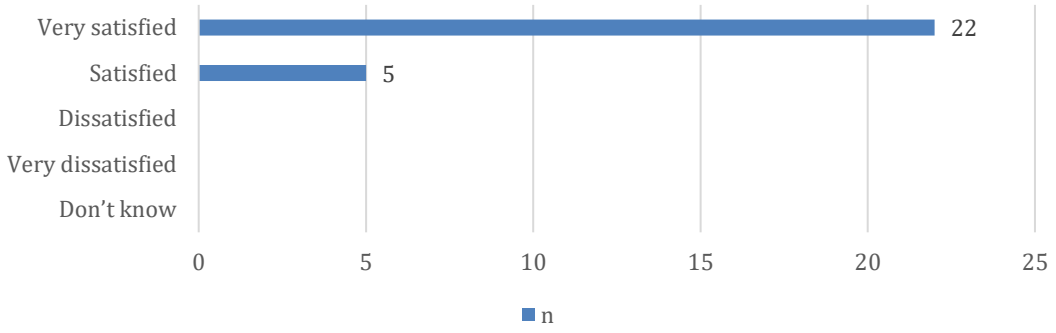


5.9.1 Satisfaction with Help from the OSS among those Using Other Services

Respondents who had received help from other sources prior to getting help from the OSS were asked to say how satisfied they were with the help received when they attended the OSS.

Figure 5.13 shows that of the 27 respondents who had received help from the OSS, all were either very satisfied (n=22) or satisfied (n=5) with the help they received.

Figure 5.13: Overall how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the help and support you got here? (base=27)

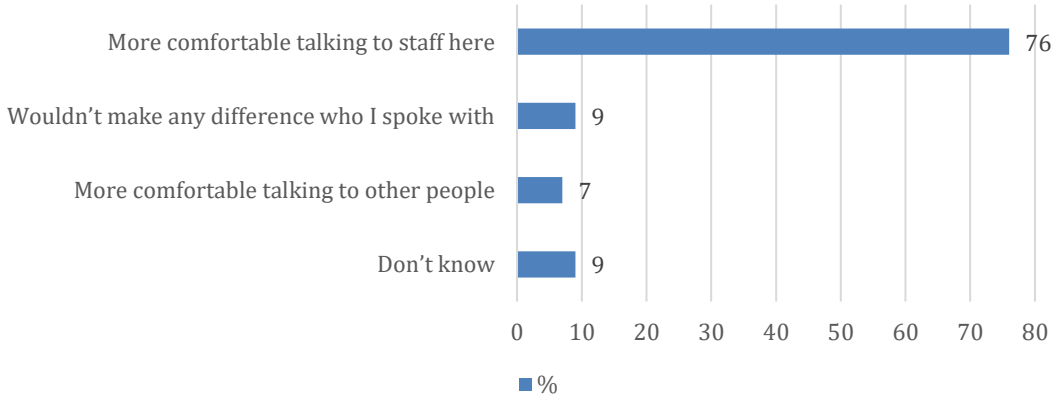


5.9.2 Talking to OSS Staff Compared with Staff from Other Service Providers

All young people were asked how comfortable they would be in talking to OSS staff to get help and advice compared with others (e.g. a school counsellor etc.).

Approximately three quarters (76%) said they would be *more* comfortable talking to staff at the OSSs.

Figure 5.14: Thinking about problems you may be experiencing, how comfortable would you be talking to the staff here to get help and advice, compared to other people who provide help and advice (e.g. a school counsellor etc.)? (base=138)



Those who said they would be more comfortable talking to staff at the OSSs (n=100) were asked to say why this is the case.

Table 5.4 shows that 22% of this group said they have good relationship with staff / easy to talk to / nice. Twenty-percent said that they are used to OSS staff, they know them, trust them and staff understood them.

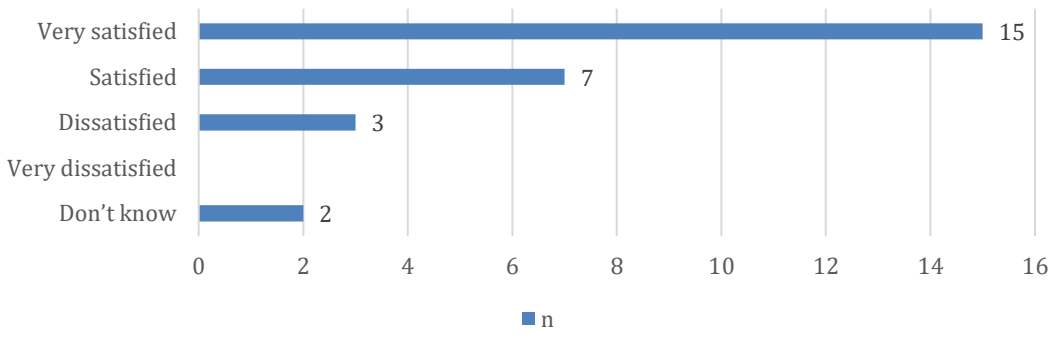
Table 5.4: Briefly say why you would be more comfortable using the OSS service? (n=100)

	%	n
Staff easy to talk to / good relationship / nice	22	22
Used to staff here / know them / trust them / understand me	20	20
More informal / friendly / helpful / welcoming	18	18
Friends more than staff *[i.e. see staff more as friends]*	12	12
Staff more time to listen / don't judge me	11	11
Confidential here	6	6
Confident around staff / safe environment	4	4
Unique place for support	2	2
Staff always available	1	1
Meeting new people / helping them	1	1
Leaders more experience in life	1	1
Staff young	1	1
Personal reason	1	1
Staff trained to do this	1	1
Staff close to me in a family communication way that I don't have at home	1	1

5.9.3 Satisfaction with Other Service Providers Referred to by OSS Staff

Overall, most (n=22) young people referred to other service providers by OSS staff (n=27) said they were either very satisfied (n=15) or satisfied (n=7) with the help and support they got from the other service providers. Three young people were dissatisfied, with two answering 'don't know'.

Figure 5.15: Overall how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the help and support you got? (base=27)



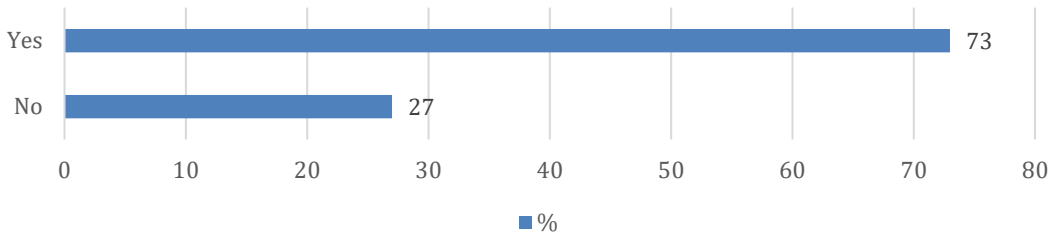
5.10 OSSs Helping in Getting Contact with Other Services

All respondents were asked if using the OSS service had helped them to get in contact with other services that provide help, support, advice or information.

Overall, 73% of young people surveyed said that using the OSS service had helped them get in contact with other services that provide help, support, advice or information.

There were no statistically significant differences in response in terms of age, gender, status or location of OSS.

Figure 5.16: Has using this service helped you get in contact with other services that provide help, support, advice or information? (base=139)

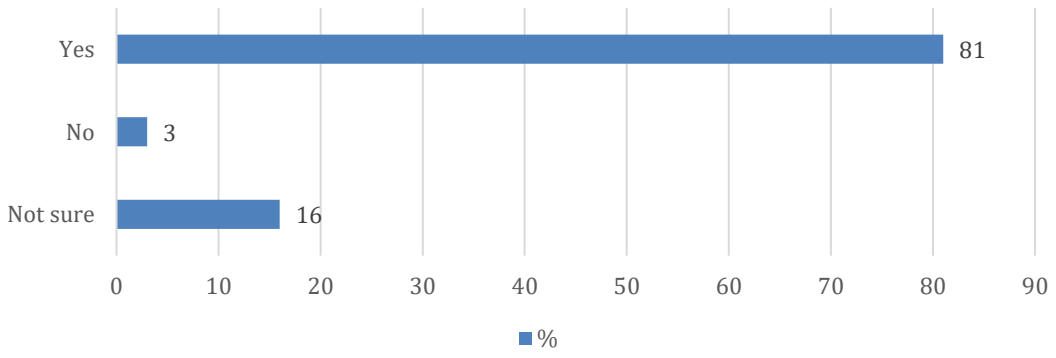


5.10.1 OSSs Made It Easier to Get Help from Other Services

Those who said that using the OSS service had helped them get in contact with other services that provide help (n=101) were asked if coming to the OSS had made it easier for them to get help from these other services.

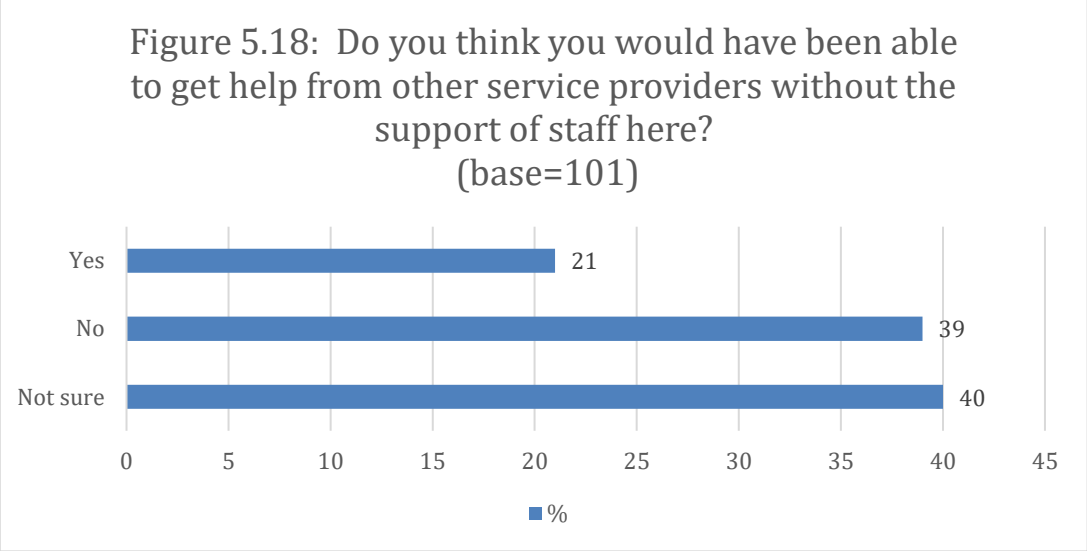
Among these respondents, 81% said that coming to the OSS had made it easier to get help from other services, 3% said no, and 16% were unsure.

Figure 5.17: Has coming here made it easier for you to get help from these other services? (base=101)



5.10.2 OSSs Staff Facilitating Access to Other Services

Among respondents (n=101) who said that using the OSS service had helped them get access to other services that provide help, support, advice or information, 39% said that they would not have been able to access these services without the help of OSS staff.



Respondents (n=39) who said they would not have been able to get help from other service providers without the support of OSS staff were asked to say why. Of these respondents, 36 commented with lack of awareness of how to get help the most common response (44%).

Table 5.5: Why would you not have been able to get help from other service providers without the help of the staff here? (n=36)

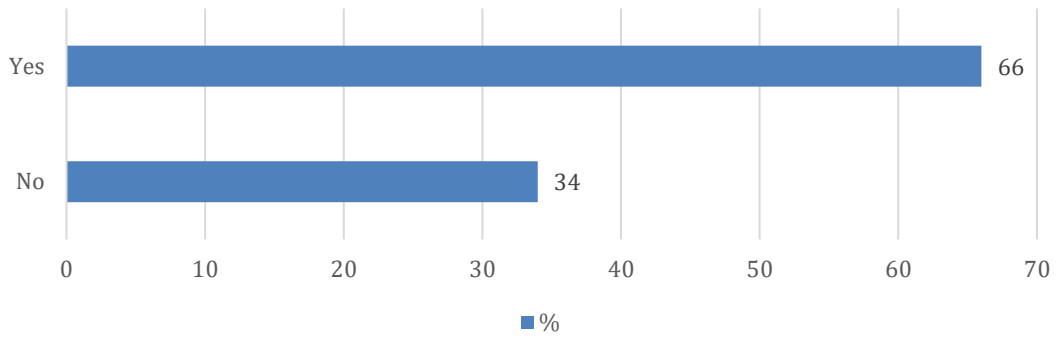
	%	n
Didn't know how to get help / other services	44	16
Didn't have the confidence	17	6
Find it hard to talk to people / wouldn't talk to anyone	6	2
Wouldn't have met the professionals I did	6	2
They tell you about other services	6	2
Low self-esteem	3	1
English is poor	3	1
Other services of poor quality	3	1
Trust	3	1
Phone issues	3	1
Just *[respondent offered no further explanation]*	3	1
Staff here push other services to help people on behalf of person in need maybe better than they would be able to do themselves	3	1
No motivation	3	1

5.11 Service Providers Attending OSSs

Respondents were asked if they had been to any talks or information sessions provided by external service providers at the OSS locations.

Overall, 66% of young people surveyed said that they had been to a talk or session provided on the OSS premises. There were no statistically significant differences in response in terms of age, gender, status or location of OSS.

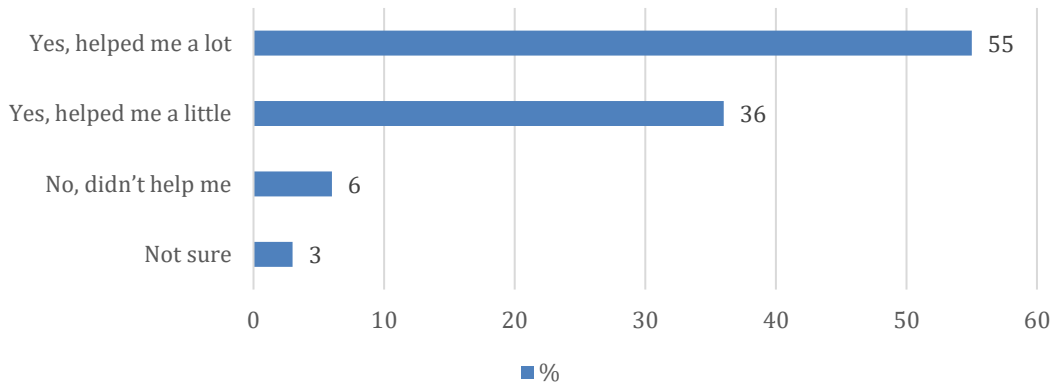
Figure 5.19: Sometimes other service providers from outside come here to give talks or provide information sessions. Have you ever been to one of these talks or sessions? (base=137)



5.11.1 Helpfulness of Talks / Information Sessions Provided by External Service Providers

In more than nine out of ten cases (91%), young people (n=89) who had been to a talk or session provided at the OSS by an external service provider said that the talk or session had either helped them a lot (55%) or a little (36%), with 6% finding these sessions unhelpful.

Figure 5.20: Did these talks or sessions [by external service providers] help you in anyway? (base=89)



Young people were invited to say how the talks or sessions provided by external stakeholders had helped them. Table 5.6 shows that the provision of information, advice and knowledge, was the most common (46%) way that talks and sessions helped young people.

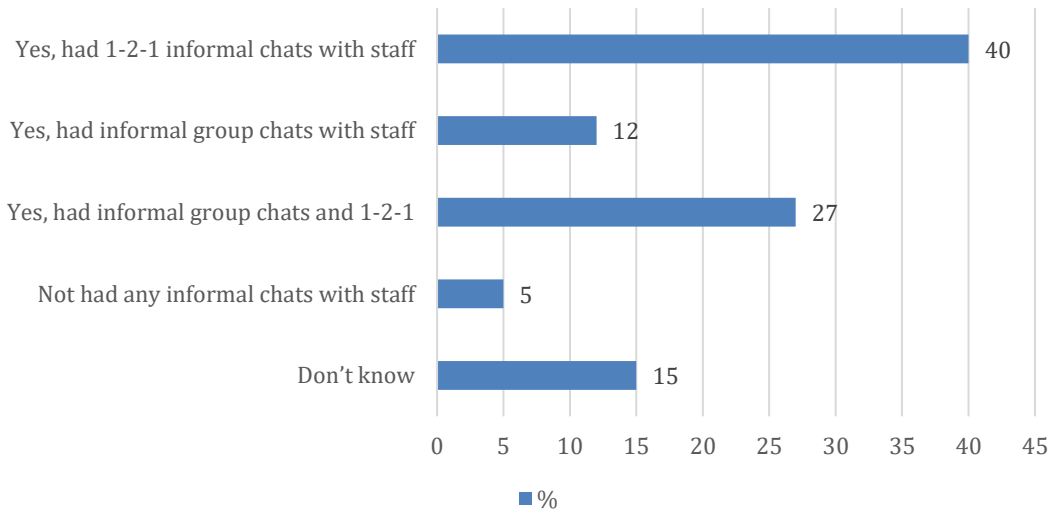
Table 5.6: How did these talks or sessions by other service providers help you? (n=72)

	%	n
Provide information / advice / knowledge / confidential	46	33
Helped me understand / risks	8	6
Confidence building	7	5
Internet safety	4	3
Impact of drugs	4	3
Helped with emotions / thinking	6	4
Helped me give others advice	4	3
Diet	3	2
How to be safe/ healthy	3	2
Be myself without being judged	3	2
Helped to talk about things	3	2
Aware of opportunities	3	2
Stopped drugs / gambling	1	1
Not to judge	1	1
Helped me quit smoking	3	2
Don't know	3	2

5.12 OSS Staff and Informal Chats

An important aspect of the service provided by OSSs is to provide young people with an opportunity to have informal chats with staff either on a one-to-one basis or in groups.

Figure 5.21: Have you had informal 1-2-1 or group chats with staff here? (base=137)



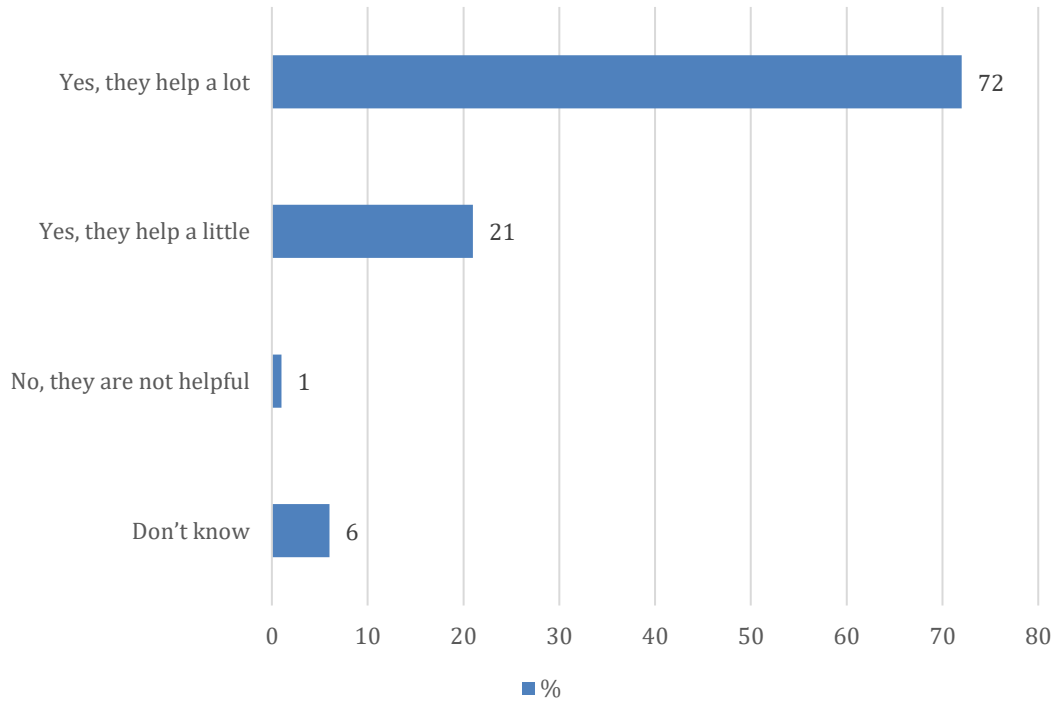
Among all young people in the survey, 67% had 1-2-1 informal chats with staff, with 39% having had informal group chats with staff. Just 5% said they did not have any informal chats with OSS staff with 15% unsure. Almost eight out of ten (78%) young people had informal 1-2-1 or informal group chats with OSS staff.

All of the young people using the Banbridge and Enniskillen OSSs reported having had informal chats (1-2-1 or group) with OSS staff (Ballymena, 71%; Banbridge, 100%; Carrickfergus, 74%; Derry / Londonderry, 59%; Enniskillen, 100%; Newry, 83%; and, Bangor, 85%, p<=0.05).

5.12.1 Helpfulness of Informal Chats

Respondents were asked if the informal chats with staff helped them in any way. Overall, 93% of those who had informal chats (n=107) found they either helped a lot (72%) or helped a little (21%), with 1% (i.e. one young person) finding them unhelpful.

Figure 5.22: Do these informal chats with staff help you in anyway? (base=107)



Respondents who found the informal chats with OSS staff helpful were asked to say why they found them helpful. Table 5.7 shows that the most common reason why respondents found the informal chats helpful was because they could address all areas of life/got a lot of help (44%) and they allowed them to talk through their problems / staff were willing to listen / they felt comfortable / trusted staff / truth (39%).

Table 5.7: What is the most important way that these informal chats with staff help you? (n=88)

	%	n
All areas of life / got a lot of help	44	39
Can talk through my problems / willing to listen / feel comfortable / trust them / truth	39	34
Friendly attitude / good relationship	16	14
Good to hear staff opinions / perspectives / life experience	14	12
Confidence	8	7
Career / new opportunities / courses	6	5
Feel better / relaxed / happier	6	5
Talking not made into a big deal / not judged	6	5
Confidential	3	3
Motivational	2	2
Knowing others have problems	2	2
To stop smoking cannabis	2	2
Calm me down	2	2
Less pressure than if in a group	2	2
To see if someone has checked up on me	2	2
Let's you break everything down so you can understand everything	1	1

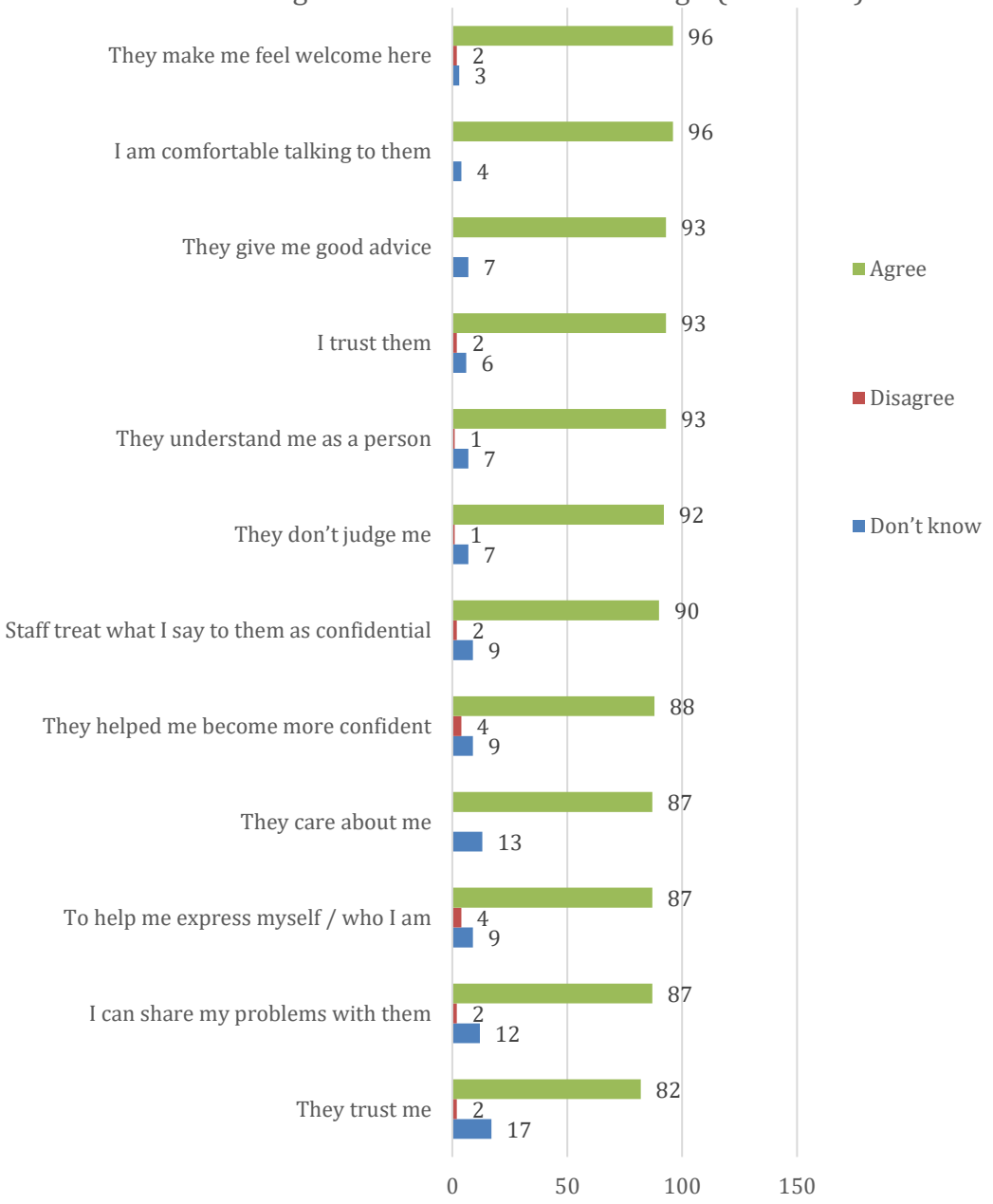
5.13 Views on OSS Staff

The survey sought to elicit young people's views on OSS staff, with respondents presented with a list of statements and asked if they agreed or disagreed with each.

Young people were overwhelmingly positive about OSS staff, with 96% agreeing with the statement '*they make me feel welcome here*'.

The lowest level of agreement, relative to the other items, was for the statement '*they trust me', which still was agreed with by 82% of* respondents [note that due to rounding some items may not sum to 100].

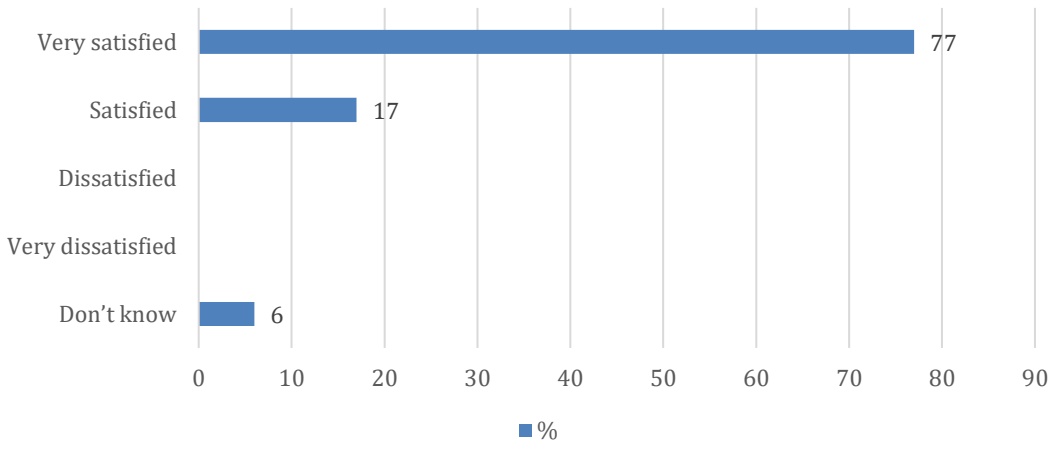
Figure 5.23: Thinking about the staff here, please say if you agree or disagree with each of the following.? (base=139)



5.14 Overall Satisfaction with OSS Staff

Overall, 94% of young people surveyed said they are satisfied with the service provided by OSS staff, with 77% very satisfied and 17% satisfied. Six percent answered 'don't know'. There were no significant variations in response to this question by age, gender, status or location of OSS.

Figure 5.24: Overall how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by the staff here? (base=139)



5.15 Value of OSSs

5.15.1 Main Benefit of OSSs

Respondents were asked to say what they feel is the main benefit of OSSs. These responses are listed in Table 5.8, with the most common being to be with friends and meet new people (31%).

Table 5.8: What do you feel is the main benefit to you of coming here…? (n=117)

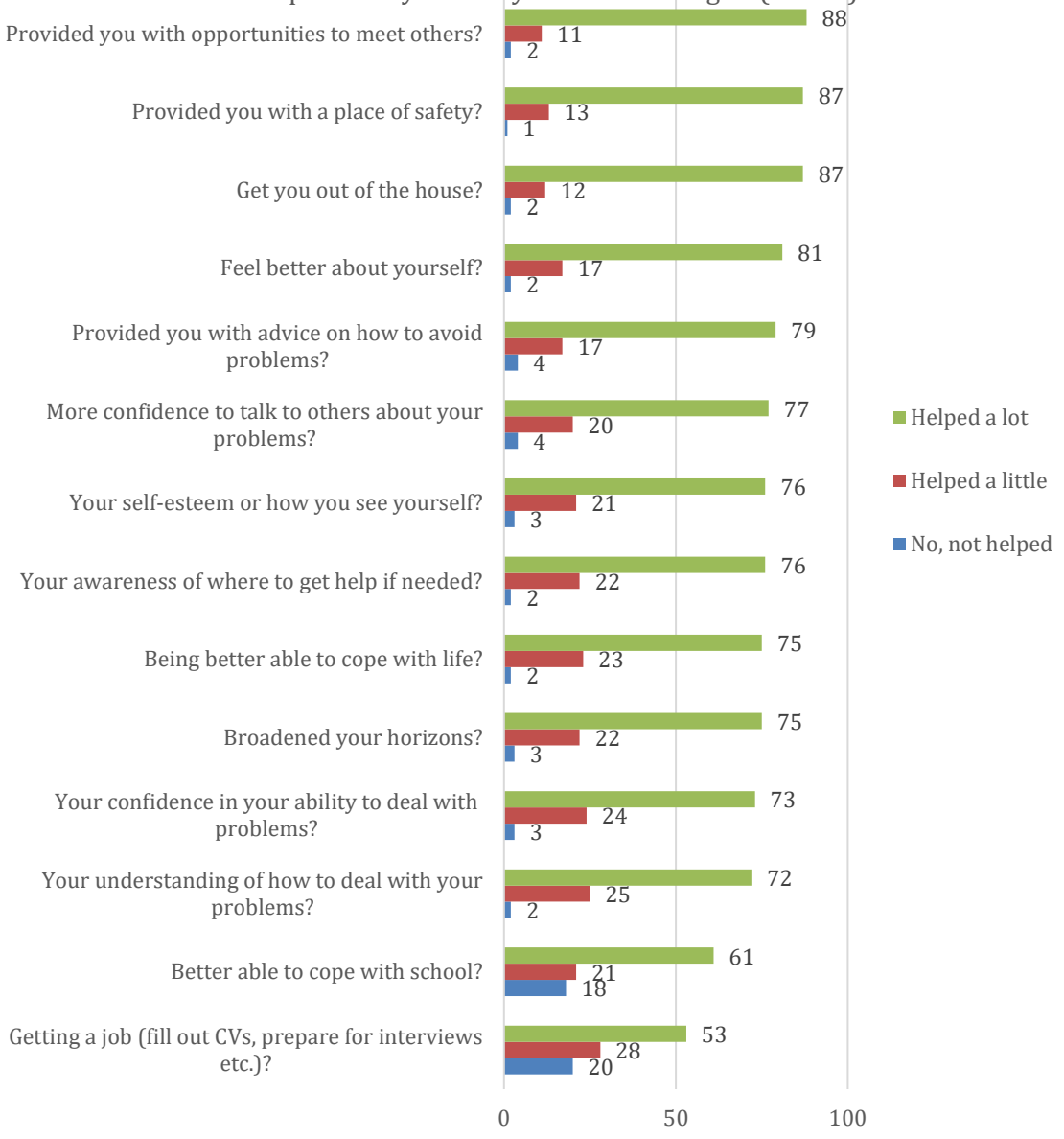
	%	n
Being with friends / meet new people	32	38
Advice / help / support	13	15
Socialise / friends	13	15
The staff	9	10
Build confidence	9	10
Safe place to hang out / off the streets	9	10
Welcoming / happy environment	5	6
Gives me an alternative / be myself	5	6
Further my career / CV / new opportunities	3	4
Chats	3	3

5.15.2 OSSs Supporting Young People in Specific Areas

All respondents were asked if the service provided by the OSSs had helped them personally in different ways. Figure 5.25 shows that relative to the other items measured, young people were more likely to say that the OSSs had helped (a lot or a little): provide opportunities to meet others (a lot 88%); provide a place of safety[10] (a lot 87%); and, got them out of the house (a lot 87%).

Conversely, and relative to the other items measured, fewer young people said the OSSs had helped them (a lot or a little): to get a job (a lot 53%); and, to be better able to cope at school (a lot 61%).

Figure 5.25: By using this service, do you feel that it has helped you personally with any of the following...? (n=139)



[10] Note that the term 'place of safety' has been answered from the young person's perspective (e.g. a place where they feel emotionally safe) and not necessarily from a child protection or social work practice perspective

There were a number of statistically significant differences:

Age

- Older respondents were less likely to report that the OSS had helped with their awareness of where to get help if needed (11-15, 100%; 16-17, 100%; 19-21, 100%; 22+, 91%, p<=0.05);

- Younger respondents were less likely to report that the OSS had helped them get a job [fill out CVs, prepare for interviews etc.] (11-15, 39%; 16-17, 86%; 19-21, 86%; 22+, 91%, p<=0.01);

- Older respondents were less likely to report that the OSS had helped them better cope with school (11-15, 94%; 16-17, 97%; 19-21, 83%; 22+, 50%, p<=0.001);

Status

- Those at school were less likely to say that the OSS had helped them get a job [fill out CVs, prepare for interviews etc. (school, 52%; FE Colleges / University, 90%; at work, 91%; and, other 89%, p<=0.001);

OSS

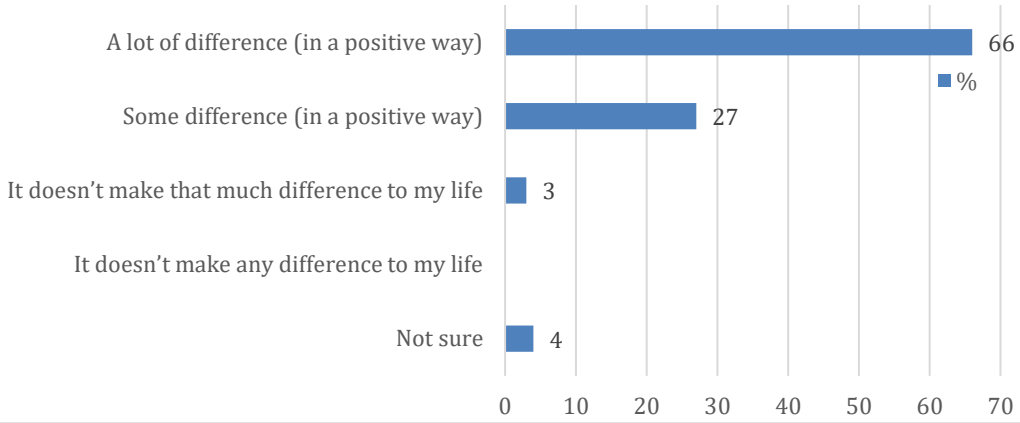
- Those attending the Bangor OSS were less likely to say that the OSS had helped their awareness of where to get help if needed (Ballymena, 100%; Banbridge, 100%; Carrickfergus, 100%; D / Londonderry, 95%; Enniskillen, 100%; Newry, 100%; and, Bangor, 85%, p<=0.05);

- Those attending the Banbridge and Extern Bangor OSSs were more likely to say that their OSS had helped them get a job (Ballymena, 70%; Banbridge, 100%; Carrickfergus, 83%; D / Londonderry, 78%; Enniskillen, 60%; Newry, 96%; and, Bangor, 100%, p<=0.05);

5.15.3 OSSs Making a Difference to Young People's Lives

The overwhelming majority (93%) of young people in the survey said that coming to the OSS made either a lot (66%) or some (27%) difference to their lives in a positive way. Three percent said coming to the OSS didn't make that much difference to their lives with 4% unsure.

Figure 5.26: How much difference does coming here make to your life…? (base=135)



5.15.4 Impact of Not Having a OSS

Young people were asked to say what impact, if any, there would be on them personally if the OSS service was not provided.

Table 5.9 shows that 22% of respondents who answered this question said that they would feel lost / lonely / stay inside / isolated. A further 14% each said that not having the service would negatively affect their self-confidence and would have a lot/bad impact on them.

Table 5.9: If this service wasn't here, what impact if any would this have on you personally? (n=115)

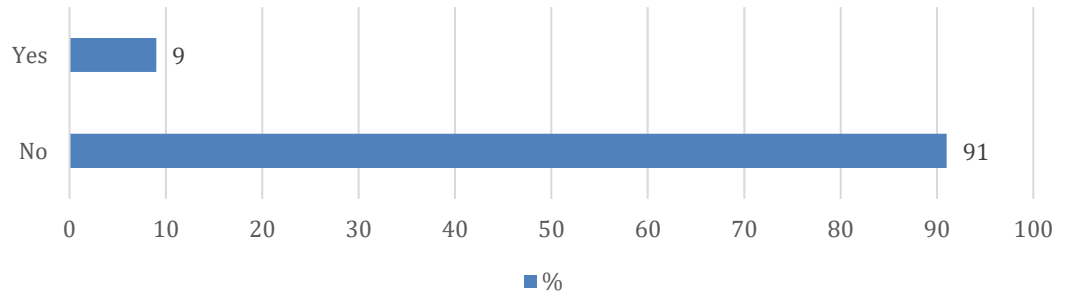
	%	n
Feel lost / lonely /stay inside / isolated	22	19
No confidence in myself / not as outgoing /not the same	14	12
A lot of impact / bad impact on me	14	12
Nowhere to go for support	9	8
Wouldn't have friends / social experience have now	7	6
On streets / doing bad things / drugs / getting into trouble	5	4
I would have nothing too do / bored	5	4
No impact	4	3
Dependent / miss staff	3	3
Not going to college as much	3	3
Depressed	2	2
Possibly wouldn't be alive	2	2
No safe place to meet	1	1
Would have to find something else	1	1
Continue drug abuse	1	1
Out of routine	1	1
Anxious meeting new people / friends	1	1
I would struggle to cope	1	1
Don't know / not sure	14	12

5.16 Downsides to Using the Service

Approximately one in ten (9%) young people felt there are downsides to using the OSS service.

Analysis by subgroup found that those in employment were more likely to say there are downsides to using the service (school, 3%; FE College, 6%; work 27%; and, other, 7%, p<=0.05).

Figure 5.27: Do you think there are any downsides to using this service? (base=133)



Those who said there are downsides to using the OSS service were asked to list the main downside. The following verbatim comments were listed:

- 'Not being able to meet and hangout with others in a safe environment' (n=1);
- 'Some staff don't make me feel comfortable and I feel belittled (n=1);
- 'Talking about other people's problems publicly' (n=1);
- 'The main downside is the fact that I found it very hard to connect with the certain clique of people that use the service just like I did having said that I would say they struggled to connect with myself. I just feel we were all too different. I'm an active, sporty, outgoing and social guy meanwhile they were very music, card game and indoor orientated. Having said this that is just them and that is that. I feel I struggled to connect with some members of staff and I don't believe these members made it a point to connect with me and other service users' (n=1);
- 'People take advantage' (n=1)
- 'No motivation' (n=1)
- 'Wish it was open every day 8-6' (n=1).

5.17 Suggestions for Making The OSS Service Better

Respondents were asked if they were in charge what one thing they would do to make the service even better for young people.

Table 5.10 shows that the most common response was to change nothing (28%), with 11% calling for longer opening times and 10% for more activities.

Table 5.10: If you were in charge of this service providing support for young people, what **one thing** would you do to make the service to young people even better? (n=101)

	%	n
Change nothing / keep it going	28	28
Longer hours / opening times	11	11
More activities	10	10
More trips / days' out	8	8
Sporting activities	5	5
More space / planning	4	4
Young people decide topics	2	2
Events / charity etc.	2	2
Reduce stress	2	2
More funding	2	2
Online service	1	1
Advertise / more open / welcoming	1	1
Different social group ranges	1	1
Drinks and snacks	1	1
Quiet room away from noise	1	1
More counselling	1	1
Staff helping out more	1	1
Talk more	1	1
Don't know / not sure	17	17

5.18 Suggestions for Improving the Social and Recreational Aspects of OSSs

Providing social and recreational space for young people is an important part of the OSS service. Given this, young people in the survey were asked to suggest one thing that could be done to improve the social and recreational aspects of OSSs.

Among those who responded to this question, 33% said they would do nothing as the service is fine as it is, with 11% calling for more sporting activities, 9% for more activities and events and, 8% for more outdoor trips.

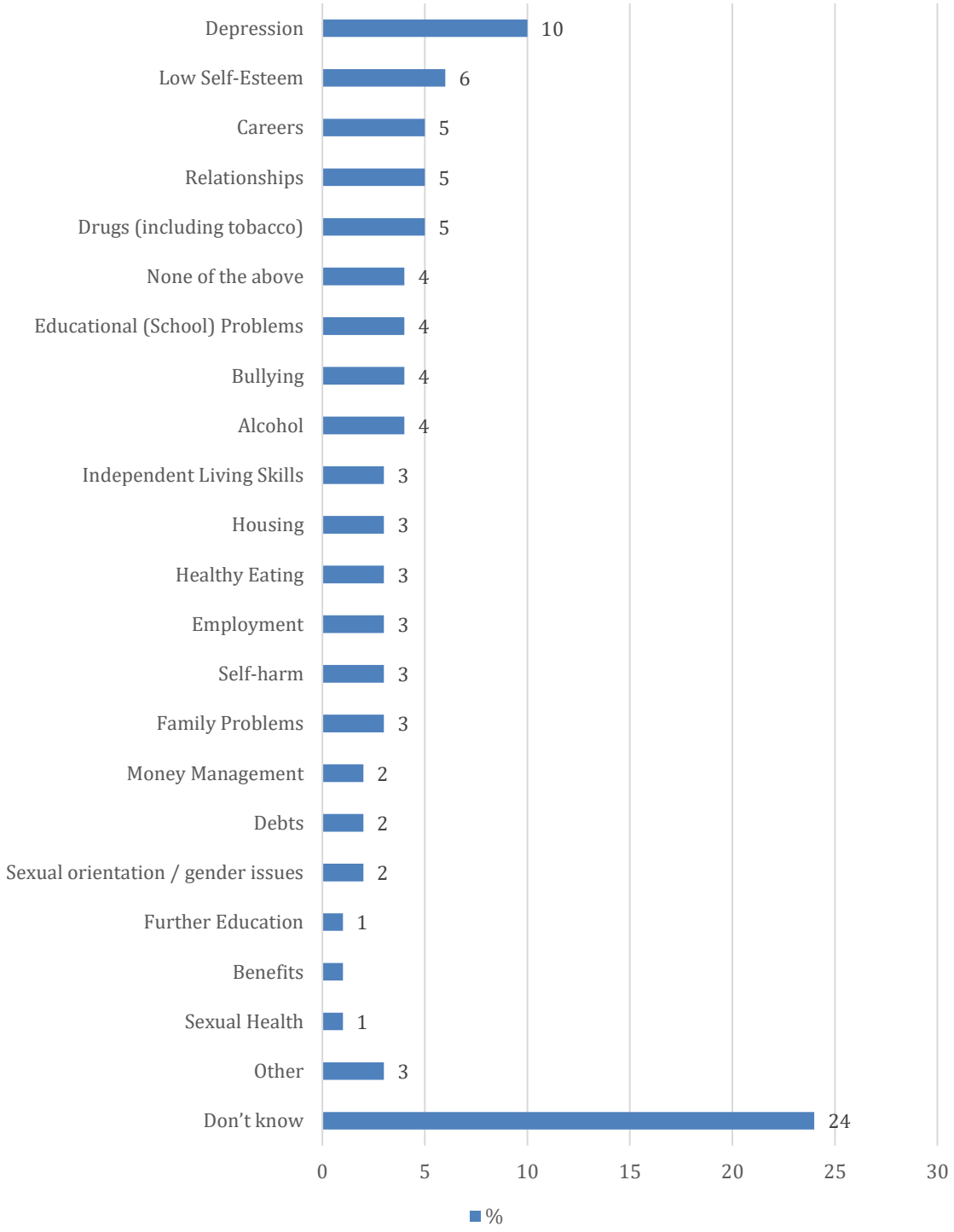
Table 5.11 Providing a social and recreational space for young people is an important part of this One Stop Shop. What **one thing** could be done to improve the social and recreational aspects of this One Stop Shop? (n=101)

	%	n
Nothing / fine as it is	33	33
More sports (bicycles, darts, pool)	11	11
More activities / events / games	9	9
Outdoor / trips / more funding	8	8
More people coming	4	4
Better facilities / more space	4	4
Opening hours / more time	2	2
More advertising	3	3
Attracting males and females	1	1
More things for girls	1	1
Encourage more people to talk	1	1
Increase age range	1	1
Role modelling / volunteering	1	1
Remove Wi-Fi	1	1
Ice breaker at opening to ease people into others company	1	1
Don't know	17	17

5.19 Issue OSSs should be Giving Greater Focus

Respondents were asked which single issue OSSs should be focusing more on. The issues most commonly mentioned were: depression (10%); low self-esteem (6%); careers (5%); relationships (5%); and, drugs (including tobacco) [5%].

Figure 5.28: If there was one issue that you feel this service should be focusing more on, what would this be? (n=135)



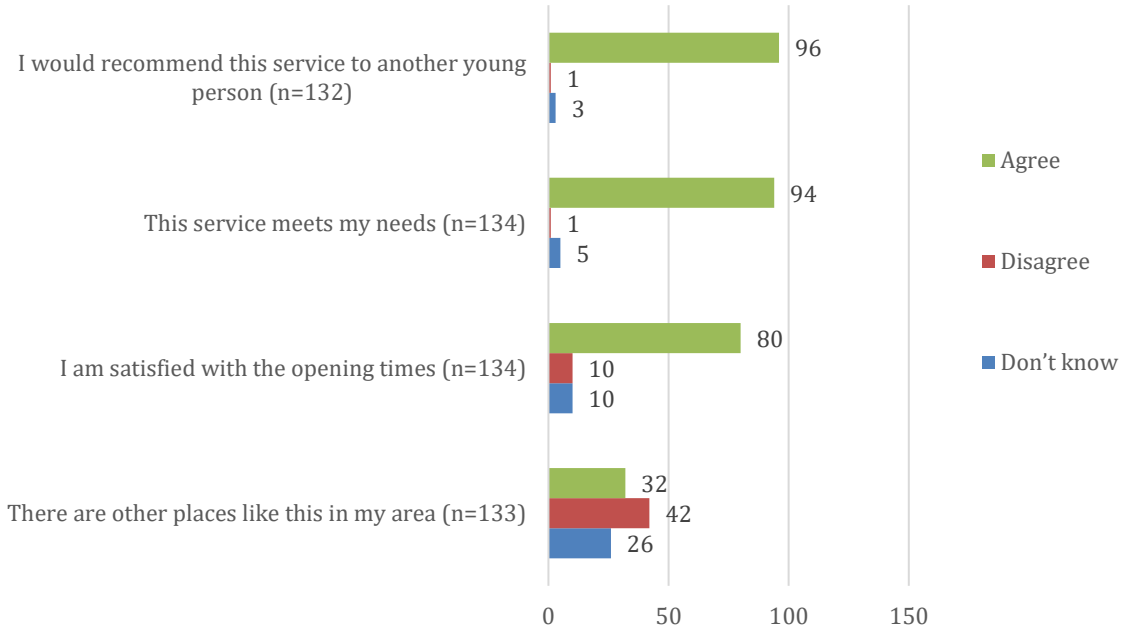
5.20 Other Aspects of Service Delivery

In relation to other aspects of service delivery, respondents were asked to say if they agreed or disagreed with a number of statements.

Overall, 96% said they would recommend the OSS service to another young person, with 94% agreeing that the service meets their needs. Eight out of ten (80%) were satisfied with the opening times, with approximately three out of ten (32%) agreeing that there are other places like the OSS in their area.

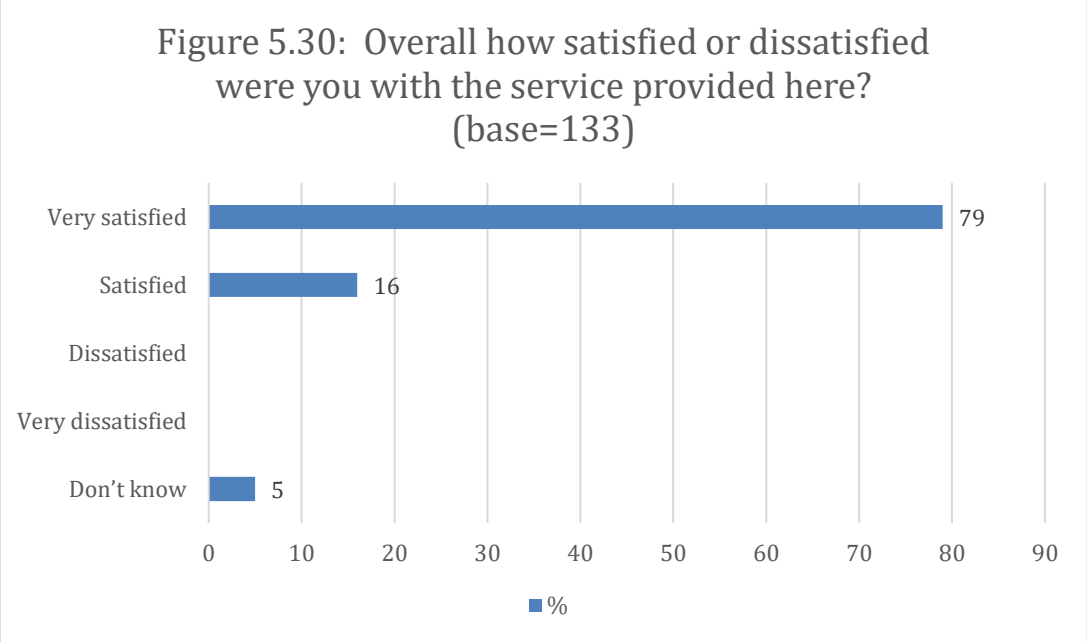
Analysis by different user groups found that those attending Ballymena, Banbridge and Enniskillen OSSs were less likely to agree that '*there are other places like this in my area*' [(Ballymena, 16%; Banbridge, 20%; Carrickfergus, 52%; D / Londonderry, 39%; Enniskillen, 10%; Newry, 44%; and, Bangor, 39%, p<=0.05);

Figure 5.29: Please say if you agree or disagree with each the following statements…?



5.21 Overall Satisfaction with OSSs

The overwhelmingly majority (95%) of young people in the survey said they were either very satisfied (79%) or satisfied (16%) with the service provided by the OSS, with 5% answering 'don't know'.



5.22 Additional Comments on the OSS Service

At the end of the survey, respondents were given an opportunity to make any further comments on the OSS service.

Among those who made additional comments (n=33), 21% said they had no additional comments, with 21% saying that the OSSs provide a good service.

Table 5.12 Please feel free to make any further comments on this service. (n=33)

	%	n
None	21	7
Good service	21	7
Friendly staff	15	5
Helped me	12	4
Love it	9	3
Keeps young people off the streets	3	1
Talking	3	1
Some staff belittle you	3	1
Gives me a social life	3	1
Good for my mental health	3	1

6 Focus Groups with Service Users

6.1 Design of Focus Groups and Profile of Participants

SMR conducted qualitative research in the form of 8 focus groups – one within each OSS. These were carried out during March – June 2016. The focus groups were deliberately designed to seek views from a selection of young people who had used the OSSs.

Staff from the OSSs supported SMR in the setup of each of these groups. Each group was held in the offices of the respective OSS. However, mindful that the discussions were taking place in a group setting, (as opposed to a one-to-one interview), SMR indicated to each of the OSSs that such an approach would be "*more suited to young people who are using the service for less sensitive issues and who would feel comfortable in a group setting*".[11] Hence, with the consent of the Steering Group, SMR gave each OSS control over whom they considered was suitable (a) to be invited and (b) to take part in the group. The express intent of this was to ensure that no young person with a sensitive issue would be placed in a group situation where they might feel uncomfortable.

Throughout each focus group, at least one key worker was in attendance as an observer.

Using a **balanced incomplete block design approach,** SMR maximised the amount of comparative information that could be gleaned from this set of focus groups by ensuring that, as far as possible[12], the focus group participants overall were balanced across a range of key variables including:

- Gender;
- Age;
- Type of issue young people first sought support with; and,
- Approximate time of first contact with OSS.

The profile of the participants who took part in the focus groups is set out in the Table overleaf.

[11] Source: Methodology Section of SMR's proposal to PHA (Dated 2nd February 2016)
[12] Bearing in mind that the final choice of participants was, for the reasons given above, made by the respective OSSs.

Table 6.1: Characteristics of young people taking part in the focus groups									
	Total	Ballymena	Carrick	Extern-Bangor	Extern-Belfast	Derry	Enniskillen	Banbridge	Newry
Total attendees	**80**	9	10	5	10	15	11	12	8
Gender									
Male	**41**	6	6	1	0	10	7	6	5
Female	**39**	3	4	4	10	5	4	6	3
Age Band									
11 - 15	**28**	5	6	0	0	1	11	5	0
16 - 20	**42**	2	1	5	10	12	0	5	7
21 - 25	**8**	0	3	0	0	2	0	2	1
Not specified	**2**	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 6.2: Type of issue young people first sought support with									
	Total	Ballymena	Carrick	Extern-Bangor	Extern-Belfast	Derry	Enniskillen	Banbridge	Newry
Social / Recreational	17					10	7		
Drugs and alcohol	5			3	1				1
Suicide and self-harm	4					2	2		
Mental health and well-being / Resilience	23	7	7	1	1	2		3	2
Coping with school / employment	21		6	1	10		2	2	
Relationship issues	15				9	1		1	4
Sexual health	5							5	
Other	2				2				
- Welfare / Legal	2							1	1
Not specified	2	2							
Note: Some young people presented with more than one issue									

Table 6.3: The quarter in which focus group participants first made contact with OSS

	Total	B'mena	CK	Extern-Bangor	Extern-Belfast	Derry	Enniskillen	Banbridge	Newry
October - December 2012	1								1
January - March 2013	3								3
April - June 2013	0								
July - September 2013	0								
October - December 2013	0								
January - March 2014	1		1						
April - June 2014	7	4							3
July - September 2014	15	1	2		10			1	1
October - December 2014	0								
January - March 2015	5	1	4						
April - June 2015	3			2				1	
July - September 2015	4	1	1	1				1	
October - December 2015	9		1				8		
January - March 2016	13		1				3	9	
April 2016	0								
Not specified	19	2		2		15			

6.2 Themes Covered

The specific issues explored in the focus groups are set out in detail in Appendix B.

Since there was a deliberate overlap in some of the questions asked in the discussion guide (e.g. between which aspects helpful and what encourages use; and what sorts of things could be improved [these questions were asked in all groups]), our analysis of the feedback is summarised under five main headings:

- **Part 1 – Before coming to the OSS**
- **Part 2 – Your experience of OSS informal chats**
- **Part 3 – OSS help in assisting access to appropriate services**
- **Part 4 – The value of the OSS**
- **Part 5 – Suggestions for improvements**

6.3 Analysis of the Focus Groups

The themes emerging from each of the focus groups were very similar. Therefore, to avoid repetition, we have thematically analysed the qualitative feedback from all of the focus groups together. There were no discernible differences in the feedback between the groups.

6.4 Findings from the Focus Groups

The findings from the focus groups are presented below.

6.4.1 Before Coming to the OSS

Before you came to the OSS, did you go anywhere else like this?

A few young people had attended youth clubs, or similar "organised" activity centres for young people. However, even these, seemed to no longer meet the needs as they grew older or were only open on certain days and at limited times:

- *"I went to a youth club when I was younger."*
- *"There was a youth club I went to, but, the older I got, they were wanting me to take on more responsibility, and I wasn't ready for that, so I stopped going".*
- *"Just the youth club and that is set times".*
- *"Just a club up the town once a week, nothing like this that is here all the time".*
- *"I took a [sports] course at university".*
- *"I went to an art club."*
- *"I went to an initial thing at my church… that would probably be the closest thing to this type of thing."*

- *"Nowhere, there is nowhere else like this"*

- *"I'm 20, so I can't exactly go to a youth cub, and there's nowhere else I can go like this where I can take my baby (4 month old XX who was present with his mum)".*

- *"There is nowhere else like this where we, the young people, have a big say in how it is run and what kinds of things we do".*

However, for the vast majority of the young people, there was either nowhere to go, or the places that they used to go to, before coming to the OSS, were primarily places that offered little to no potential to positively harness their talent and abilities. There was a distinct sense that these young people found such places deeply unsatisfying and unfulfilling:

- *"No."*

- *"The food court."*

- *"All there is to do, before here opened, was sit around the town, go to after-school clubs, or go home and stick your face in front of an Xbox or PlayStation for about 6 hours, and then go to bed."*

- *"If I wasn't coming here I would just be getting up out of my bed (4pm), better here doing something with myself."*

- *"It's better than walking about town. Nowhere else here [is] open in this town. This town's empty. There's nothing in it."*

- *"My life was that bad, I was actually in a choir. Apart from that, I went nowhere. The only after-school clubs I did was football and choir."*

- *"I never really went out anywhere after school. The only time I really done anything was during school hours. I was in the choir since 1st year till I left. I started coming out a bit more – socialising more – when M & D introduced me, and I've actually made a lot more friends than I have in High School, and they've opened my eyes to different opinions and views and things."*

- *"I don't even know what I was doing with my life before that. I was just... after school, I was just sitting at home, and that was it. Now this amazing place opened."*

Some of the young people suggested that, without the OSS, they would go to places or get involved in activities that might lead to anti-social behaviour.

- *"If I wasn't here I'd be hanging about on the street or up the town"*

- *"Just walk around the town if I wasn't coming here, it's much better to come here instead of getting into trouble it gives me a bit of structure"*

- *"I'd probably be lying stoned somewhere if I didn't come here. Coming here got me off everything."*

- *"This is a place to go during the day to do something with yourself instead of sitting drinking and doing drugs all the time."*

- *"[Coming here was an] alternative to counselling. I've had anger issues for basically all my life, and then my parents figured that coming here would help sort my anger out, and it definitely has."*

What prompted you to come to the OSS?

A number of factors prompted young people to come to the OSS. These included:

- Curiosity

  - *"I knew about the place the year before, and I was like 'I'm not too sure if I should go or not. It looks kind of mad'. Everybody looked younger to me, or not around my age, and then I thought 'No. I'll go in and give it a go'"*

  - *"I was walking up town one day, and this place [OSS] used to be an old…shop. I was like, 'What the hell's going on in here?', so I went in. I don't think it was ready to open at that time. They were still doing work to it. Then the first day it was opened, I came in, so I've been here for nearly 2 years now."*

  - *"I just walked in. At that time, there was a lot of people going just to see what it was like".*

  - *"Curiosity. I decided to wander in. Kinda got stuck ever since."*

  - *"One of my other youth club's band came here to play, and then I just found out what else they had on offer."*

- Friendship/ More Social Contact:

  - *"It was a friend. He just kept asking me to come down, and I was like, 'I'll give it a go'. Then I came down one day, and I was like 'Right. Yeah. I might come back some day', and then it took me 2 or 3 months before I actually started coming in and become a regular."*

  - *"Just came to make new friends. I'm not originally from [this area]."*

  - *"My ex-boyfriend! [came here]"*

  - *"I was asked to come by my brothers because they wanted me to get out more, coz I normally just say 'No. I don't want to go in. I want to stay in the house'.*

  - *"My mum's friend told me about [the OSS]. She wanted me to socialise more, coz I wasn't socialising as much."*

- *"The doctor's. [I was anxious and depressed, found it hard to socialise] I was introduced to [the OSS staff member]."*
- *"Seeing your friends more."*

- Facilities
  - *"I started coming here to do my homework. It looked quiet in here, and then I decided what I wanted to do was play the Xbox. I just walked in by myself, and then there was other people that I knew that started coming in after."*
  - *"Free coffee."*
  - *"The Wi-Fi."*
  - *"Something to look forward to."*
  - *"It's interesting. It's never the same. There's always something different."*
- Getting enthused and invited to be involved by the OSSs staff
  - *"It was [in OSS staff member]'s coming down to the tech, and he explained all about… [the OSS], and it was going to be a new place opening. We were all designing the logo, so we got really excited about it, and so we had sort of an idea what was gonna be in [the OSS] and what it was about."*

What is it about the OSS that keeps you coming here?

The combination of friendship, the feeling of belonging, feeling respected, valued, heard and, when needed, helped and supported, are among the many reasons that keep young people coming back:

- Friendship
  - *"I started getting introduced to some of the people, and I actually liked some of the people, then I was like, 'I'll keep coming then'. You talk to people. Coz it was quite boring or it's getting a bit lonely at home, and I didn't do anything else."*
  - *"You know if you come up here, all your friends are all gonna be here"*
  - *"I come here to get counselling and to have fun with friends".*
- Supportive staff & supportive peer group
  - *"The staff is very good in here."*
  - *"Sense of security".*

- *"All the staff … were talking to me [i.e. taking an interest in the young person]. They just made me feel welcome. At that time, I had a lot of problems, and, without this place, I probably still would have had a lot of problems".*

- *"What keeps me coming here is the support of the staff, we [young people] have all had hard times at times and you just know they are always there and they treat you the same no matter what."*

- *"There's always somebody here you can turn to if you need advice."*

- *"It's helpful from the staff, but also the people that this place has introduced me to – like this group – they've helped me through a lot of stuff. So has the staff. Luckily, my curiosity got the better of me, and now I'm in a better place."*

- *"The people are really, really supportive, and they helped. All the people that are in it are lovely young people, so there's a lot of respect for the people that come in here, and there's respect for the staff."*

- *"It's a good place to get away from all your …problems."*

- *"It's been really good."*

- *"The staff are lovely, it's very friendly, not at all clinical"*

- *"It's relaxed, easy going you can just chill if you want, but the staff are always here to help or to talk with."*

- Sense of belonging to/being a member of a highly supportive 'family' / 'community'

  - *"The sense of community here. Everybody knows each other. There isn't that many people that don't talk. Everybody really tries to get to know each other, and the staff are always talking to us, and we feel really integrated together, and it's nice to come in to a place where everybody supports each other."*

  - *"It's like a little family on its own."*

  - *"It's kinda like at home, coz you can come in and make yourself a cup of tea and just hang about. Do whatever."*

  - *"All these people here are like my friends and part of the family, but – most important – the <u>staff</u> in here, a few of them I class as 'friends', as 'mates' I've known [OSS Manager] for nearly two years now, and that [person] helped me out more than half my own family has. [He/she] talked to me more and been there for me more than half my own family. Before I even knew any of these people here, I was always coming in and having a chat with [the OSS Manager]. [He/she] was always helping me out, calming me down, so I wouldn't think of [him/ her] as a 'member of staff'. I'd think of [him / her] as a mate, as a 'good friend' who's helped me out through a lot. And all these people [other young people in the focus group] are my friends. It's like one*

big family, but, without any of these people, I'd be in a lot darker place than I was – especially for [the OSS Manager], coz I basically owe a lot to [him/her] for helping me out. A lot."

- *"You can just come in and chill, if you need to talk to someone you can, there's no pressure and we are friendly with everyone here".*
- *"It's very comfortable here, we are all like one big family".*

- The opportunities to take part in fun activities and develop skills
  - *"It gives you a lot of opportunities as well to do stuff. [e.g.] music courses, health & fitness programmes, going out on trips, football, raft-building, ice-skating. Residential is coming up soon. They went to the Crumlin Gaol and the zombie walk. There's so much stuff to do which you wouldn't get to do normally, which is really good. Gets you away from Ballymena."*
  - *"During the summer, we were going fishing and stuff, and it was really good."*
  - *"They do cooking programmes and different activities that piques other people's interest."*
  - *"I come because there is always something interesting to do, like music"*
  - *"It's something to do, it's a rest from homework and get to chill out"*

- Safe, informal, inclusive, and non-sectarian space that becomes part of the young person's life style:
  - *"[It's] a place where I can hang out, instead of just having to go straight home and have nothing to look forward to."*
  - *"It just becomes a part of your life. It just becomes part of your schedule. You don't even think about it. You only realise whenever it's not open a day. You think, 'What am I gonna do today?'. You realise how bored you're gonna be, and what are you gonna do, whenever it's not there, coz it's normally what you do every day."*
  - "Everyone in here knows the drop-in times off by heart. They know when it's open, when the meetings are on, when everything's on, off by heart."
  - *"Over Christmas and stuff, whenever it's closed, you're just like 'Aw!'."*
  - *"I don't even know anybody's religion here, it's great you leave all that stuff at the door"*
  - *"The area here is comfortable for everybody, no matter what your religion is or where you come from"*
  - *"You meet people from all around the city and it gives you an idea of what other people's lives are like. Everybody shares and no political or sectarian stuff."*

- *"All kinds of people come here, it's great. You can be yourself. I would never have met all the kinds of people that come here if I didn't come here".*

6.4.2 Your Experience of OSS Informal Chats

The staff here sometimes have informal chats with young people either one-to-one or in groups. Do you have chats like this with any of the staff here?

All of the focus group participants had at least one experience of an informal chat with a member of staff. The frequency of these informal chats varied from one young person to another:

- *"More than once."*
- *"All the time."*

If so, what do you get out of these chats? Do the chats with staff help you in any way? Do you think these informal chats with staff are a good way of helping young people generally? If yes, why? If no, why not?

All of the focus group participants were unanimous and emphatic that these informal chats are invaluable to them:

- Gave young people a palpable experience of being cared for. This, in turn, promoted a strong sense of belonging and mutual support amongst those attending the OSS.
  - *"You're always respected."*
  - *"You're always welcomed."*
  - *"Whenever I was around 11, I didn't have anything like this to go to, and I would have loved to have had it coz then there would probably have been a lot of issues or things I've ever done that I was stupid about or was thinking about, I could have had somebody to speak to. Before I came here, I would keep things in completely. [Another focus group participant] witnessed me getting a wee bit depressed and losing my head / losing my cool. I think it's good. Kids should be entitled to this here. Young adults and 11 years olds, and whatever age, they're entitled to this I think, and they should continue to be entitled to it because it does help. It does work."*
  - *"I've seen the youngest kids coming in here and talking to somebody. I've seen this wee man [young teenage focus group participant]'s coming in here before, and he was all shaky and that. He was talking to one of the members of staff. He was fine the next couple of times after that, and I was like 'Right… It works. People need that..."*
  - *"Without informal chats, I don't think any of us would be sitting here able to open up like this, because the informal chats, in a way, gain trust. You have to gain trust with someone before you can open up to them. I'm not gonna go out there and tell everybody all my life business. You have to gain trust with them before you do that. That's what everyone has done. Everyone in*

here, I'd like to think, trusts each other. Everyone tells... [Each other things]. He tells me his gossip. I tell him mine. That's the way it is. Everyone trusts each other. So, without them informal chats, none of us would be here right now, sitting here opening up everything we are now, because chats and communicating and getting involved with each other, like this wee family is, and the whole place is like a family. It's like a Tracy Beaker home basically! We all have each other's trust in the fact that we're able to sit in rooms with people like yourself [reference to SMR facilitator] and able to open up about us and this place, so that's how much trust is gained through chats and communication, because, without that, this place probably still wouldn't be running and we wouldn't be here."

- *"We all discuss our problems with each other… [the staff member feels] like all our mate. If it was a really, really, really big problem, and I didn't want to rest the burden on my friends, I would let [named a specific staff member] know first coz [that staff member] would know exactly… [How to support me]. [This staff member) probably knows me more than some people here [other focus group participants]… probably knows me more than half my own family do. Like if I come in, and I've got a face on me… [he/she] just looks at me… [he/she] can tell. In Rio – they have that big… statue. That's the signature of Rio. [This staff member is] the signature of here. So, if you have a problem, (in this staff member is] the go-to [person]. [This staff member is] like [the parent]… of this place."*

- *"[Referring to the mutual trust amongst the young people]… we've all got each other's backs."*

- *"[The OSSs staff have] like made this place what it is. Both of them did, [named two members of staff who] have been here from the start…without them, this place wouldn't be what it is. There wouldn't be this many people coming. There wouldn't be as many people helped out. I know there's other professionals that are just as qualified as them, but [they're] the 2 main ones who care more about you than a lot more other people would do. To some people, it's just a 'job'. It's a 9 to 5. You go home. [But] they're always making sure you're all right, asking what you're doing. Without them, this place wouldn't be the way it is, and there wouldn't be this many people coming to it, and we wouldn't be as close as we all are right now without them."*

- *"Some of them even contact you when they're at home. They'd text you or something."*

- *"It's the] support. Just the support [that is so helpful]."*

- *"Absolutely, especially the one-to-one. If I didn't have (staff member named) I don't know what I would have done."*

- The informality and the sense that staff are always available to chat, combined with allowing the young person to dictate the pace of the discussion, facilitates the young people to open up as they become ready.

  - *"You can share things with (staff) they listen to you properly, not like in school".*

- *"I like to chat and get advice about stuff, we can go upstairs to the quiet room and be private."*
- *"They take it at your own pace."*
- *"One of the things I like best is being able to talk to (staff names) about stuff, face to face, one on one, they are always here and you can talk as long as you want to."*
- *"The way the leaders actually talk to you as well, they don't expect the whole kinda formal one-to-one conversation. They just talk. They're just ready to talk if you need to talk. Say it how you want to say it, and do it how you want to do it. They won't regard you as less if it's something really bad…They're fine with it [non-reactive, non-judgemental... It's just how it is."*
- *"They're always helpful, no matter what you're going through. There's times when you're going through something difficult, and they're always there."*
- *"Basically, they just care about you. They would sit you down and talk to you, ask you what's wrong, make you a cup of tea."*
- *"They'll also go the extra mile for you. Some people say they'll help you with this, and don't really do it. They always .. if they say they were gonna help you, they'll always go and help you. They won't just say. They'll do it."*
- *"You can trust them."*
- *"It's really informal and relatable. I think they understand where you're coming from, and know the issues. You don't feel like you're talking to some big scary figure like a school principal or a counsellor or something. You feel like you're talking to a friend, and I think that really helps. They're on your level."*
- *"They just feel like your friends. They're just there to talk."*
- *"We're part of a family."*
- *"Like a big happy family."*
- *"It's so great just to be able to chat to (staff member) about things that are worrying you, you can't always talk about everything to your family".*
- *"It's nice having somewhere to come in where you don't feel under pressure to talk, but you know if you wanted to you could and they (staff) are always there to listen to you".*
- *"I do talk to my parents, but there are things that they just don't understand. The staff here seem to get it, understand what is going on in our lives, so they are easier to talk to about certain stuff, which is way better for us".*
- *"It's the confidential part of its well (echoed by others around the room, "yeah", "oh yeah", "definitely")".*

- *"Sometimes family can be a bit judgemental, but not here, no-one judges you".*

- *"Sometimes, if we are doing something and something is bothering you, you can go to (staff member) and she is great at advising you or pointing you in the right direction and you know you can trust her, nothing is going to come back at you".*

- *"It's very informal here, you can sit down and relax and just talk. Not like in school where you are told what to do".*

- Greater insight, deeper understanding and new possibilities / new interpretations emerged from these interactions.

  - *"Wisdom."*

  - *"From so many talks I've had, and I've got so much out of it, coz every single time – and even if it's on the same subject – it just helps you and pushes that bit further to keep going, and just don't give up. Every single time. And I'm thankful for it. They just help you out that much. It's unbelievable."*

  - *"Knowledge and standard general knowledge as well. And wise up – actually maturing, becoming a proper man like I should be, rather than being some stupid eejit running around the town … I don't want to be that way. You want to be like a proper well-respected person. I'm not saying they're teachers as such, but they're <u>like</u> teachers. They just give you that push [encouragement], and they help you out. Better than the ones at [XXX] College anyway. They're more guardians, guardian angels. Mates. They're like guardian angels. They're there to look after you."*

  - *"They're mates [adults you can trust]"*

- Allows young people to express their identity and just be themselves without being judged

  - *"You get to express yourself, you feel free, you just know that no-one is going to jump at you or blame you for who you are or what you've been through."*

  - *"Chatting with people here, it helps you to express yourself, who you really are".*

  - *"You can be who you want to be here, nobody is going to laugh at you or make fun of you".*

- Allows young people to express anxieties, difficult emotions, be vulnerable whilst remaining safe. They feel heard:

  - *"A shoulder to cry on"*

- *"In here you can let loose here and people keep everything to themselves, at school everybody hears everything."*
- *"If you talk to people here they take you seriously, you can say what you want and nobody would make fun of you."*
- *"As soon as you come in here, all your worries, stress, all that stuff goes out the door. It stays outside."*
- *"[Helped] a lot. It's just helping to get a lot off my shoulders / get a lot off my chest. I wouldn't usually talk, coz usually I keep it to myself - just try and work it out by myself - but I just thought, 'No. I need to start getting help', so I came here and started getting help with it."*
- *"I've had a lot of wee chats with [staff members] …I talked to [particular staff member] actually quite often. They're very helpful. They're always able to give you advice. You'd actually be surprised the amount of advice they can give you. Just shocking."*
- *"It kind of changed me in a way. They just helped me out with whatever problems I had, and just helpful in general."*
- *"I've had one to ones here about managing anger and it really helped me a lot, I feel far, far better."*

Do you chat amongst each other about stuff when you are here?
(And if so,) do you find that helps you in any way with everyday life or other things?

All of the focus group participants indicated that they did chat amongst each other about other stuff while they attended the OSS. It was clear that being able to discuss issues with their friends, whilst remaining aware that the one-stop shop staff were always available, give them tremendous confidence to explore and solve the inevitable and unpredictable challenges that life would present to them.

- *"In everyday life, there's always gonna be a problem that comes up, one way or another, and you never know what it's gonna be. You don't know what tomorrow brings, so there's always gonna be something that pops up, and there's always gonna be somewhere here to talk to. I would talk to these 3 [reference to other focus group participants], and [OSS staff member] of course. Depending what it is, there's gonna be someone you can talk to about a certain issue. It just depends how you're feeling and what it's about, coz you don't know what's gonna come up. You can't predict tomorrow."*
- *"Sometimes we talked together about what made us drink so much and we helped each other and heard about the dangerous things we all did when we were drunk and now we are more drink aware."*
- *"You learn from chatting to other people here, you learn how to see things the way that they see them and you learn to treat everybody the same way and hear their issues and respect them."*
- *"We give each other advice sometimes, if you have experience of something you can share it and help your friends here".*

- *"It's opened my eyes to different things…"Yes. Before this, I wouldn't be really talkative. Now that I started coming here, I've learned... There's a saying: 'never judge a book by its cover'."*

- *"Sometimes you are talking and not even knowing that you are talking about problems or issues and then you stop and realise that you were and you get some advice or help without even having to ask for it. It just feels natural to talk to them (OSS staff), because you know them and it's not like talking to someone in school where they might go and tell the principal or something".*

- *"Even if you felt a bit awkward at first when you come in, you just get in and everyone makes you feel welcome."*

- *"I did find it quite hard when I first came here. It was hard to talk about my own stuff. So I just really listened to other people for a good while and I found out that most of the others, they all had the same kinds of issues, well not exactly the same, but similar to the kinds of things that were bothering me. So, after a while, I felt confident enough to talk about my own situation and people listened, nobody laughed or called me silly".*

- *"Here when you are chatting with the staff you feel as if you are talking to them, not talking up to them".*

Would you chat together anyway or does coming here make it easier for you to chat with each other?

There was a widespread view that coming to the one-stop shop, and developing friendships here, made it easier for the young people to trust one another, chat with one another and support one another. The healthy culture that appears to have become established amongst the young people is to talk to someone rather than hold onto worries or difficulties. The climate is one of mutual understanding, support and trust.

- *"This place is part of everyone's schedule, so you come here. If you have a problem, you talk to people, you sort it out, and you move on. In this place, we tend not to ponder on things in a way. If you have a problem, you talk to people about it, and they help you sort it, and that's it. There's no point worrying over it, coz it's not gonna make a difference any more, unless it's something serious… You come here and everyone sits down and they chat to each other about their problems, and they try and find a solution to help you out in a better way than what you were before. They try and find you a better solution to help your life better, and everyone else's."*

- *"Even if it's only advice you need. Someone here could just sit down with one of us. If they want to tell us something, then go ahead and feel free, coz no one's gonna say anything or tell anyone else. If we can give them a bit of advice about what's going on, then we will. Like if someone's been through the same situation I've been through, I can sit and tell them what would possibly be the best thing to do, because I've been through it."*

- *"It just all depends on the moment. It's all about your emotions and how you feel. It's on the moment, and whether you feel you're about to break down or not."*

- *"We have the wee one-to-one rooms that we can go into at any time."*

- *"It would be easier coming here because you know … there's gonna be … support … You can just go and talk to someone… It's definitely easier coming in here. Sometimes there will be some people that don't know me as well. Coming here [has]…made that a little bit better because, before coming here, I wouldn't have really spoken to many people at all about my problems. There would maybe only have been one or two people. Now that I've come here, [and] there's probably some of them here [in this focus group] – even although it's only been a short time – I'm getting to know them and their issues, and then they know my issues. That's actually made us closer as well. It's made me feel a little lighter. It's easier now to go around knowing that I know that, no matter what happens, I'm still gonna have people to speak to. Here, there's always gonna be someone here, no matter what."*

- *"Yeah, definitely, not all together in a group maybe, but we talk in small groups about stuff, we are all going through the same kind of stuff".*

- *"Yes definitely, not always about problems, we were having a great chat the other day about politics".*

- *"Sure, we talk about things, we laugh about it, we wind each other up about it (laughter), we sing about it, we dance about it".*

- *"In school everybody has to be in their own wee crowd and it's really difficult to know anybody outside that crowd. I came here and everybody talks to everybody and I felt really at ease with it. It's like a second home it's like having second parents, ones that you can tell anything to".*

- *"Definitely, I do get help from other people who come here. It's like you go to your friends here and say, `oh I don't know what to do' and someone says, 'oh I got help for that before', here's what you do".*

- *"We would maybe talk about something amongst ourselves first. Then somebody might say, 'oh yes, (staff name) helped me with that, I'll bring you along to her'. And then the next time you might be able to help somebody else that way".*

6.4.3 OSS Help in Assisting Access to Appropriate Services

We are interested in finding out if the OSS helps young people like yourselves to get in contact with outside organisations or get help from them if they need it.

Has coming here made it easier for you to get help or support from any other organisations outside of here?

All of the young people affirmed that getting help and support from other organisations had been made easier for them as a direct result of the encouragement, support and excellent signposting they had received at the one-stop shop:

- *"There is a lot more services [available to a young person] once you start coming here. We did a thing up in the bandstand with Turning Point. It was a suicide awareness day. See after that, I'd feel happy enough going over to Turning Point because you get to know them. It's great just being able to do other stuff with other organisations, but still be able to come here in the process. It's like it's not stopping you in any way. Even if you didn't do anything with a different organisation, but you still came here, you could still go. They [the other organisation] would make you feel welcome, being able to talk, sit down, see if there's any problems. It just basically helps you out so much. Your first day walking in, and you didn't know anyone here, and then you spot that one person you know, it's like 'Ah. This place is gonna be sweet'. There's always gonna be that face which'll make you feel welcome, and that's everyone in here."*

- *"There was a time at the end of last year when I was struggling quite a lot. Everyone in here is trying to give you the best advice, and try to help you sort everything out, but if there's something they can't help you with [the other services are available]. At the end of last year, I think it was [staff members name] I was talking to, and I was in a really bad state. I was crying, and [he/she] was talking to me. And [he/she] actually booked an appointment for me in Turning Point because [he/she] wasn't able to help me out [had reached the end of his/her skill set], but [he/she] knew they [Turning Point] would be able to. So even if people in here aren't able to help you, they will always pass the info to someone else outside to help you, so that's very good. Turning Point helped me find a job. They're very good."*

- *"I've been to the Hope Centre a couple of times for a scheme we're doing, and I had asked about possibly signing up to see what programmes they had to offer, and they basically told me 'No', coz they said, to sign up, their specialist [service] is drugs and alcohol stuff, so [you are only eligible for their services] if you've a drug problem or an alcohol problem. [Ok] maybe they might not have that funding [to accommodate me], but that's the difference between them type of places and this place. If you have a drug or alcohol problem in here, and they can't help you, they'll direct you towards other places, but – if they can help you – they will help you. And it's not just the staff that'll help you with problems like that. It's the young people. So this place is like Turning Point, Hope Centre, and all them rolled in to one, and, if they can't help you that much, or the people across the road – like the Councils and people from Start360 can't help you – they'll signpost you on to different organisations that*

will help you. In a way, this place is like all that turned in to one, because you can come in here .. You don't have to have issues, or you don't have to have a bad family, or you don't have to have anything! You can just come here and you can do what you need to do. You chill, you make friends, you relax, you talk to people. There's specialist people like that there [at the other organisation], but they won't let you in unless you have a problem in their special field, which makes this place even better because it's everything rolled in to one, and they'll try their hardest to help you, and, if they can't, they'll signpost you on to organisations that will."

- *"If you are uncomfortable to ring the person [/service yourself], they will ring the person [/service] while you are there,… [or] if you are uncomfortable ringing, they will do it for you."*

- *"They'll personally refer you to the person themselves."*

- *"They can ask if they can sit in, so you don't have to go by yourself to actually do it, and they can try and work it out so that people come in to here [Health Hub], so that then you're even more comfortable because you're somewhere where you've had friends and you're comfortable at."*

- *"I recently just got a job. It was simply because everyone here didn't force you to do it, but they encouraged you to keep at it and keep going and helping whenever you need help applying – like filling in the application forms. They would sit with you and help you fill it all out. I need to go off for my induction for my job this Saturday. Because I'd have no way of getting up, one of the leaders has said they'll come and give me a lift up. That's like what I said about going the extra mile."*

- *"Yes I have been helped in that way, but it's not just that I got signposted for help. This place builds up your confidence, helping to organise (things) and getting involved. So, yeah you do get signposted, but I would feel much more confident now in going myself to get help".*

Would you have been able to get that (advice/support/information) without the help of staff here? If not, why not?

There was a widespread and deeply held view that, without the help of the staff at the one-stop shop, getting advice/support/information from other services was a non-runner. Many of the young people consulted indicated clearly that, not only do they lack knowledge of what services are available, and who to approach for help, more importantly, when they were feeling confused, anxious, depressed and/or suicidal they are highly vulnerable and very emotionally depleted. In this condition, they lack the confidence to ask for help. Furthermore, the prospect of reaching out directly, to any party that they neither know nor trust is unthinkable. Consequently, and perhaps ironically, it seems that when young people are most in need of support, their capacity to access it by themselves is at its lowest. This effectively renders any potential external service inaccessible without the support from and intervention of a trusted adult at the one-stop shop.

- *"No! [Young people would not be able to get external advice/support/information without the help of the staff here]. They'd be too scared to. You come in here, you talk to [staff member], you talk to [another*

staff member], you talk to [another staff member] – whoever – and they would actually give you confidence going there and explain what they do. .. Whereas you are not going to walk in off the footpath [yourself]… you don't know what to do. Your head's puzzled, and you're trying to find, 'Is there anywhere I can go to help me?'. Say you're walking down [X] Street there. You see Turning Point. You look in the window. It's like, 'I don't know [if I should go in there, who is in there, will they really be able to help me?]. I don't know'. There'd be second thoughts. Whereas, you came here [to the one-stop shop], you spoke to someone, and they helped you go [told you about Turning Point and what they do and asked you if that would be helpful]. If this place wasn't here…, I don't know what… I [would] do? [I suppose I would] … try and find out information about it [Turning Point] by asking other people. [But] if they don't know, then you're just put off it… Whereas if … [you] get told [what Turning Point is like], [you]… might actually try it out to see how it is… [Also] if you can find someone who's been there [to Turning Point], and it's helped them, they can give you the good word [provide you with reassurance. Which is what the OSSs staff do)."

- *"I got counselling from [named children's service]. I wouldn't have got that help if I hadn't been coming here."*

- *"The staff here help you, they always ask when your appointment [with external service provider] is and if you don't feel comfortable going then come in here and have you got the bus fare and so on.*

- *"Depending what it was. I definitely wouldn't have been able to do it if I hadn't started coming here. I'd feel nowadays I could do that, but, back whenever I started – no. I probably wouldn't. Even if I had the number, even if I had this and that, I probably wouldn't have went for the help because I wouldn't have felt comfortable."*

- *"[No, not without help…]I had a really serious issue a couple o' months ago, and I would say that if I wasn't going to the [OSS], my way of dealing with the issue would have either been to attack someone or maybe suicide, but sitting down and talking it through with someone, they'll say to you 'Right. You can do this. If it gets out of hand... but until then, do this and everything'll be OK.', and it has."*

Have other organisations ever come into the OSS to give talks or provide information? How helpful did you find that?

A variety of organisations have given talks and provided information to young people at the OSSs. This includes talks on sexual health, mental/emotional health, smoking and alcohol, cyber-bullying, first aid and many other topics. Typically, the young people are invited to indicate what they would like information on and the OSS responds to this. The feedback from the focus group participants suggests that the young people really valued receiving information directly in person, especially one whose help they may need later on, at some point. Having a named individual, from a specific organisation, provide this information *in person* appears to give the information more credibility.

- *"We got great advice on sexual health and also on testicular cancer, how to test yourself and look after yourself."*
- *"We get talks from people who come here to see us. We had the police talking about online safety and another talk about drugs."*
- *"We had half a day when all the agencies came in and talked to us about what they do, you wouldn't get that anywhere else."*
- *"We got to go on courses to the fire station, for example and that helps you experience stuff that you couldn't get to otherwise."*
- *"It's better hearing it from another person, to guarantee [that it is accurate]."*
- *"Sometimes, stuff on the internet can be made up, and you're not 100% sure if it is the real deal."*
- *"I found them [external service provider talks] helpful."*
- *"They [external service provider talks] help you understand things better. Like the sexual health one… I understand it a bit more."*
- *"You don't think about it [i.e. the topic for a while perhaps], but you still have the information…it's in the back of your head [for when you may need it]."*
- *"I end up talking to people [about what I learn here at the OSS]. Whenever my mum's talking to her friends, I end up saying things that I've learned here, and they look at me as if I'm a counsellor or something! [in a positive way]. It [what I have learned here] kinda pops in to my head, and then I say it, and they look at me like, 'Where d'you learn that?!'; a 16-year old is giving them advice on <u>their</u> health and stuff!"*
- *"We had a young women's group come in to talk to us. It was good to hear from women just a few years older than ourselves, it kind of gave you hope".*
- *"We had some great sessions from "Cook It". Being a single mum and not having much money, that was brilliant, teaching you how to cook healthy meals but on a small budget".*
- *"We had people who talked about self-harm and the PSNI and the Fire Brigade too, you just wouldn't be able to hear all that stuff if you didn't come here".*
- *"Oh yes, and there were people from family planning and people talking about suicide prevention and Internet safety too."*
- *"Women's group came in and talked about relationships and what to expect and what you shouldn't put up with. Then Women's Aid came in too. You get loads of talks and things in here."*
- *"The cooking courses were the best courses ever. Massive craic, but you learned so much as well about nutrition".*

- *"Even if you want to have help on a particular topic, you go to (staff name) and they are able to organise somebody to come in and talk to the whole group".*

Would you have been able to get that (advice/ support/ information) without the OSS/ If not, why not?

As indicated above, the more a young person is in need of support, the less likely it is that they have the capacity to reach out and access that support at that moment. According to the focus group participants, lacking confidence and not having the capacity to communicate easily creates a barrier. This is when relying on the advice and signposting of a trusted advocate becomes not merely instrumental but essential.

- *"For [us young] people, it's all about confidence issues. To [for]a lot of us, it was [took] a lot of confidence just to even bother going through that front door [i.e. the OSS], never mind having confidence to talk to someone [else whom we did not know e.g. in an external service]. [Before I walked in here]… I thought, '… I'm gonna walk in here, everybody's gonna look at me, everyone's gonna judge me'...you might not have the confidence to go and talk to someone about it, [but the good thing is] they [the one-stop shop staff) are not gonna make you go to talk to someone about it… Over time, [though] you'll start to build trust, and you'll start to communicate, and then you'll start to loosen up coz you'll know someone. It's essentially like a family member. You start to trust them [staff in the one-stop shop] and you start to open up to them. So, essentially, whenever they've helped you as much as they can, the person that you trust [OSS Staff member] will just go, 'Look. This person [in an external service] is here. They're very good'. And you're gonna take their advice because you trust them…. [In contrast]…say I arrived in [town X] and I'd never been here before, and I saw on the internet there was a brilliant place called Turning Point [and I needed help like that], I wouldn't [on my own] have the balls to go through their front door or go anywhere near it. That's why you need confidence and communication because, without that there, you're not gonna get anywhere in life. You're just gonna doubt yourself. You're gonna doubt everything. You're gonna think, 'I'm not good enough for this. I'm not good enough for that'. With confidence and communication, you become a better person…then you start to go somewhere in life."*

- *"The internet thing: You can see all the information on the internet. The surveys are saying 'Oh, this is a great place. This is an amazing place'. That's their point of view. I would like to go to the places that I know…someone I trust has been … and [has] said it was a nice place or it's good. Plus, there's been times where it's been a great survey on the internet, saying that the places are brilliant, and you go in and it's actually poor…it's not what it [the survey] says it is."*

- *"If I didn't have help from here I wouldn't go for help elsewhere to the places they pointed me in the direction of. I wouldn't have the confidence or I might just forget about the appointment."*

- *"Without coming here I wouldn't have known where to go for help or advice on sexual things, or to get condoms or to protect yourself."*

6.4.4 The Value of the OSS

Is there anything else in this area that gives you the same kind of experience or help that the OSS does?

There was a widespread view amongst those consulted that there was nothing in their area that provided the same kind of experience (ie combination of care, understanding and support) as the OSS.[13] Many of the participants simply responded with a resolute "No":

- *"Not really, coz half the stuff in this town's shut or moved or just basically closed up. This town is dying a slow death, coz a lot of places have now closed down. Even the old Sportsbowl's now shut…years ago, you thought that was good because you would meet up with your mates there… [but] that's gone [now. Before this place opened – [there was nowhere to go], unless it was [Café] Nero or the food court, or the pub."*

- *"There's stuff that's similar, like youth club, but this isn't just a youth club. It gives us more, because it's support and stuff. You don't really get it anywhere else."*

Do you enjoy coming to the OSS? (what do you enjoy, what do you get out of it?) What are the best things about the OSS?

Those consulted valued the OSS for being a relaxing place, where they had someone to talk to, where they could socialise in comfortable surroundings and talk to someone about their concerns.

Although, at first glance, some of the answers seemed quite low level, it was evident that getting to do fun things was not always a part of normal life for many young people in the focus groups. So, having a space where normal everyday fun things were available <u>for them</u> made them feel valued, made them feel deserving.

- *"We get to do fun things, quizzes, drawing"*

- *"We are having a proper soccer tournament with prizes and everything, not just some wee kick-about"*

- *"The girls got to go on a pamper day, Wow, when would I ever have got to do that?!"*

- *"We went go-karting, it was great."*

The OSS clearly provides a non-judgemental space for young people where they can be themselves in an informal setting without having to stand on ceremony or pretend to be something that they are not. The importance for the OSS model is that this relaxed atmosphere generates the kind of trust where problems can be acknowledged and addressed.

- *"You don't have to impress anybody here, just be yourself."*

[13] This applied equally to Belfast as an urban centre as compared to small towns/rural areas despite having more activities on offer, yet not providing this experience.

- *"You don't have to dress up or anything to come here."*

- *"There's nowhere else to go like this, you can relax and be yourself here."*
- *"You feel welcome here, not embarrassed or awkward."*

- *"It is great to know that there is help here if you need it."*

- *"There are all kinds here. You can be who you are and no one is going to judge you".*

- *"There is no pressure here to fit in here or be afraid about what you might say. Sometimes if you have to be goody-goody in places and can't be yourself, you might just go home and shout at your parents to get things off your chest. But if you come here, you can just relax and be yourself, you can get everything off your chest here without having to shout".*

Just coming to the OSS, essentially to relax with friends, but all the while knowing that help and activities are on hand, instils a sense of confidence and well-being in young people

- *"I have a lot more confidence about myself from coming here."*

- *"I feel more confident about everything since I have been coming here."*

- *"It helps you to feel good about yourself."*

- *"Playing the music here gives you great confidence and self-esteem. I wouldn't get the chance to do that anywhere else."*

- *"If you're getting stressed coming up to the exams, you'd always have someone to talk to – whether it is the workers or just one of your mates."*

- *"It's just a good place. Chilled."*

The OSS has an entirely different focus and 'feel' for young people compared with school. The OSS guides and supports rather than being directive; the approach is about understanding not judgement. Consequently, for the young people, there is a strong sense of ownership, belonging combined with a palpable experience of being involved. All of these facets are especially important for young people who, for whatever reason, have had negative experiences of teachers / school:

- *"It's opening your eyes. You're learning more <u>here</u> than you normally would in school. In our school, we'll try and do one-hour workshops on the stuff we have done here, but I've learned more here than I have at those. It [the OSS] is preparing you for life while giving you a good time."*

- *"In school, the teachers are formal, but in here you can be <u>informal</u> with the people. You could actually have a chat with them. If you were off here [the OSS] for a week, they'd be asking 'Where were you? Are you OK?', but in school they'd [simply] be like 'You missed this work…You need to catch up', [perceived as punitive] and you get stressed out. When you come here, it's just more relaxed and you feel more like talking to people more."*

- *"My school places a lot of emphasis – maybe too much – on the academic side of things, and literally none on preparing you for the future and giving you options. It's all just, 'You have to do this. You have to get good grades or else your life is gonna be a mess', and, after coming here, I realise that's not true. It's total rubbish."*

- *"The 15 years that I went to school, I got nothing out of it, but in the space of one year being here, I've learned a lot more – confidence mainly. Wouldn't have got confidence in school. You get put down in school."*

- *"It's not just like we [just] come in [to the OSS, we take part. [OSS Staff member] actually gets everyone involved in small ways in the start, and then it tends to progress to more. [He / she] lets us all get involved in running [things]. It's not just [that he /she] puts on these things, or organises them, and we all just join in. It's more interactive. We're more involved."*

Is the OSS special in any way? If so how?
If you had never been here to the OSS do you think that things in your life would be different in any way?

These two questions were effectively answered together. It is clear from the responses below that the OSS has had a massive positive influence in the lives of those consulted. It has been an empowering experience for the young people consulted. This empowerment, growth and development has radically changed how they view themselves and their potential. The young people report that OSS staff are highly attuned and attentive to their needs and emotional states. Such attunement was literally, life-saving' for several young people who openly spoke about how the support they had received from OSS personnel had either prevented them from considering taking their own life and / or helped them to recover from an attempt to take their own life.

The OSS in general follows the needs of young people, rather than having a prescribed programme. In some OSSs these needs emerge from the informal chats and in other cases there is a formal structure that enables the young people to have a say in how the OSS is run.

- *"We have a management committee and we elect young people to it each year. We all get a chance to stand, we all get a chance to vote. The people elected then get the chance to say what kinds of things the young people need and we get a chance to help organise them".*

- *"I organised and ran a group myself in here. We just used to pick a topic and discuss it and debate it. That's now developed and run by the members themselves here".*

The comments below describe how different life might have been for them without the OSS:

- *"In the 3 years that I have been coming here, if I hadn't been here I wouldn't have been out of the house. I feel safe at home, but I feel more safe here".*

- *"Worse. I wouldn't be able to deal with all the problems on my own, and I wouldn't get help from anywhere else. Literally, this [the OSS] is it."*

- *"If I'd never come here I wouldn't have got the advice I needed, I wouldn't get it anywhere else."*
- *"I wouldn't have the balls to go somewhere else to ask for help. If you come in here, they [the OSS staff] always notice whether there's something wrong with you. [Named staff member] always notices. You'd come in, and… would know that there's something wrong…would keep asking you until you would tell…what's wrong, then…would help you out…would try to anyway…knows us very well."*

- *"[Named staff member] knows there's something wrong in our body language; how you walk through, and you look, [named staff member] knows straight away."*

- *"They [the OSS staff] know you inside out."*

- *"It helps you get it all out."*

- *"It's great place to come if you need to talk, if you're having problems or stuff you can talk to the staff here."*

- *"You get to know the people here and share experiences."*

- *"Gets me out the house."*

- *"It's somewhere to go. It's somewhere you feel comfortable to be. Just get away from things."*

- *"It's like my second home. I've been coming here so long. I consider the whole place a family, and, if I stopped coming, I'd be bored all the time."*

- *"I don't think I could cook."*

- *"I wouldn't have a job."*

- *"I'd have still been alcoholic."*

- *"It's life-changing."*

- *"Being truthfully honest, I probably thought I'd either be dead or in jail."*

- *"If I wasn't here, I probably could have been dead or probably could have been really, really down."*

- *"I probably would be either sitting alone somewhere with everyone against me, or I'd be in jail for having killed someone. I say that with all seriousness, and it really disturbs me to say that, but – yeah – if [OSS] hadn't been here, I would have killed someone."*

- *"I wouldn't have had as much confidence. I wouldn't have been able to talk to all these guys. [Before coming to the OSS] These [fellow service users] wouldn't be the sort of people I'd talk to."*

- *"I was very, very quiet in Primary School. Teachers didn't even notice I was in the room. I would have spent most of my time at home, so I wouldn't have had as many friends. I'd still be very confident, coz I always was. I just never really talked because, if I talked, I was being mean. My mum taught me not to say anything when I was being mean. I just didn't really know how to express myself without shouting, coz I'm from a big family so, if you don't shout or talk loudly, you're not heard, so you have to talk quick and loud."*

- *"I wouldn't have the confidence that I have nowadays."*

- *"I would just have been inside the house 24/7. Apart from the school, that probably would have been the only time I would have been out."*

- *"They [OSS staff] are friendly. When I first came down, I didn't really want to come because I was kind of more nervous. When I first walked in, I thought, 'I'm gonna be the one that no-one's gonna be friends with me'. When I came down, it was just straight, 'Hello and welcome to the YMCA' and stuff. That's how I got my confidence built up, so I'm not nervous about coming down. I'm just more chilled and more talking to people."*

- *"The first thing that [OSS Staff member] taught me was that words have the power to build you up, but they also have the power to bring you down as well. I was going through bullying at the time, so we have all that sorted now."*

- *"I don't open up that much, but, when I do, I do. What's happened with me this year, if I hadn't come here, I would probably be sitting right now suicidal. Not joking. I would be in a darker place. Coming here as well, and seeing other people's problems, started to make me open up on my own, and then realising mines weren't so bad. Before that, I used to think I had problems, and I didn't want to go and talk to anybody or see anybody. And then I just kept coming here and I started to interact with people and talking to people. …Some of them were telling me what was wrong with them, or you'd go to see them, and then you were like, 'Right. My life isn't so bad'. And then sh*t happened, and it got pretty bad, and then I just got depressed and started to [try to] deal with it. Now I'm building myself back up. Without here, I probably wouldn't be able to do that."*

- *"I was in his same boat. A couple of Saturday nights ago, I basically tried to commit suicide after drinking and stuff like that… bad memories. At that time, I felt nobody was there for me, and I thought I was Rocky Balboa trying to headbutt Policemen and everything…at that time, I thought, 'No one even cares about me', and all this stuff. [But I was wrong, because] by the time I looked around, there was about 15 people there, standing, that had all ran after me – looking after me [They cared about me]. And there was a little fella sitting out there, [another OSS service user] and there was a boy…When they found me, I was hanging. . If they hadn't found me .. If they had been a minute late, I wouldn't be sitting in front of you now. If they hadn't found me in the time they did, I wouldn't be sitting here right now. I basically, for*

*about 3 weeks, I had only been up the town twice, and that was to see my girlfriend, and I never socialised with anybody here, and these [the OSS service users] are my closest people…Today is the first day I've been out of the house from that incident. Everyone was wondering where the f*ck I was at. Most of the time, I just couldn't bring myself to leave because I thought [if] everyone saw me in that mental state, 'What are they gonna think of me? How are they gonna react? Are they gonna call me stupid?'. At that time, I was…thinking about my past and stuff like that, and of course alcohol and stuff had to do with it, but, without these people here, I would have been gone a long time ago. There was a night me and [another OSS Service user] were both going through a very, very hard time, and me and him sat up all night just talking to each other about it, and trying to get through it."*

- *"For me, it's helped me turn my life around. Before I came here, I had a rough life. I took an overdose of drugs, alcohol. All that stuff. And then I came here. It just more or less saved my life coming here, because I've actually got the chance to go on a [3 week] exchange project. [Soon] we're going to [European country] for a week all to learn about work skills and stuff like that, which is getting me more involved and respecting what I'm doing now. Confidence-building is one thing. Before I came here, I didn't know what to do [with wee kids]. Now, I can go out and do anything with them. I didn't really have people skills / proper communication skills, but now I don't care who I'm talking to. I can go in and just [talk] away."*

- *"I think most people here would probably agree with that. You're saying about getting social skills and stuff, so it definitely does help."*

- *"I came over and started feeling more confident about myself, then I started feeling happy"*

- *"There is just nothing else like this in Banbridge or Gilford, nothing at all. We would be lost without the Loft".*

- *"My life would be rubbish if I didn't come here, it would be rubbish, yeah. I wouldn't have anyone to talk to, anyone who would take me seriously, it would be sad. I do have my family, but that's not the same, I can't talk to them about stuff especially as some of the stuff is about them, not real bad stuff, but just things they wouldn't understand".*

- *"I do talk to my family, but sometime they, well they judge you, but here no-one judges you at all, that's what is so different about it".*

- *"You know here that it is always confidential. You can't trust people at school and there are things I don't want just everybody to know. Here it is special, people keep your trust, I feel safe talking to people here, nowhere else".*

- *"Why is it special here? People listen to you; I mean really listen to you. If I tried to talk to someone in my family, they would just shrug it off and tell you it's your problem not mine".*

- *"It sounds like a small thing, but it is just very welcoming. That might sound like a small thing to some people, but when you don't feel welcome anywhere*

else, like nowhere else at all, feeling welcome when you come here, it, like, well it means everything".

- *"For me what is special here is very simple. There is always someone on your side. That's what I feel anyway, there is always someone here to help, to be on my side, to listen. There is not any other place where I feel that".*

6.4.5 Suggestions for Improvements

Just for a moment, I'd like you to imagine that you are in charge of this place providing support for young people like you.

What more could the OSS do for young people? (what could it do that it is not doing already?) What improvements could be made?

There was a palpable pride amongst the young people about their OSS. It very much felt like 'their space'; they had shaped it, they had invested themselves in it and it had clearly supported them.

There was also a palpable sense that the OSS was so important in the young people's lives that they almost dared not criticise it for fear of it being taken away,

- *"We are already in charge of this place!!"*
- *"You might hear us say `don't change anything', but in fact this place is changing constantly. We all think it is pretty perfect as it is right now, but it will evolve. Because we help to decide it's direction, we will help it evolve".*
- *"If it was different, it wouldn't be the same as it is now."*
- *"I just like it like this."*
- *"I wouldn't change <u>anything</u>."*
- *"I wouldn't change anything, please don't change it"*
- *"Please just keep it the way it is and don't muck about with it!"*
- *"This is just perfect, don't do anything to change it, it's a lifeline for most of the people who come here."*
- *"This is just brilliant, please, please don't change it"*
- *"Everything here is perfect. I wouldn't change I for anything."*

As the feedback continued, the young people expressed heartfelt gratitude for what they already perceived as a phenomenal service/facility:

- *"It's already amazing. It's been amazing from the start. It's gonna be amazing till the end. It's gonna stay that way. Every single day I've walked in, I know that there's always gonna be something…that's gonna go wrong. But you come in here and it's just gonna be right again. This place has just given me so many opportunities and so much things to look forward to in life. I've basically got my*

life set in front of me now because I came here, because I got support, and I've got friends. Actually, you're 'family'. You're not 'friends'. They're closer than 'friends'. They're like family. I know if I come in here, and, say there's a row [e.g. at home], I'm always gonna have at least one person behind me, or I'm always gonna have the majority of them behind me; even if it's between friends. You just develop that much of a strong bond, you just don't wanna leave it [that bond] in here. It's that good. Between the people that come here, and the leaders, we're all one big family, and it's always been that way since the start. Even the ones who first started coming here, who maybe aren't coming here anymore, they're always gonna be remembered for coming here, as a part of the family. Even when they die, they're always gonna be known as part of the [OSS] family. You get your induction to the [OSS] family. It's perfect the way it is, and it's not gonna change."

On further discussion, a number of the young people suggested that the following changes would be beneficial:

- Raise awareness of OSS amongst young people
  - *"Advertise it more."*
- Longer opening hours
  - *"I think they should be open more often because, on the days whenever it's not open for drop-in, we don't know what to do with ourselves. We could be sitting here with our family instead."*
  - *"I just wish it would be open a bit more, but that's not totally practical because this place has to facilitate means and stuff, and a lot of people coming here. But it would be good if they had been open more, but it's not good for the staff because they have so far to travel."*
  - *"We can only come here, just sometimes, there is nothing in Gilford at all, just sit at the bus stop in the freezing cold. We need better transport to get into Banbridge".*
  - *"Have it open longer, we need it open at the weekends, you are on your own at the weekends".*
- Additional facilities
  - *"Get an indoor swimming pool!"*
  - *"Expand to maybe another room. Get more funding to help with that. That would improve it."*
- More outings
  - *"More trips out. Maybe go ice-skating."*
  - *"Having more team-building / residentials."*
  - *"We do do trips on occasion, but we don't do anything that's team-building wise."*

- Find ways to enable young people to contribute to their community
  - *"Charity work."*
  - *"Starting charity events: raising money."*
  - *"Do sponsored walks or a sale. Set up stalls."*
  - *"My mum has MS, so I've always wanted to try and get involved with raising money for her. Hopefully I can try and get started here."*
  - *"Do a car wash [to raise funds for the OSS or for charity]."*
  - *"[Community service] We could do just cleaning the place up. Go round beaches, picking up some of the rubbish and making it look cleaner."*
- Provide a dedicated area for smokers
  - *"I wish we had our own smoking area. I am sick and tired of sitting outside [local shop] with people staring at you [while you smoke].... Some eejit walks past you, starts mouthing off. I'm sick of it. You're all happy whenever you first came in [to the OSS]. You went out for a smoke, you come back, and you're so ticked off you just want to break stuff. That's why we need our own smoking area, so that we can actually keep this place happy."*
  - *"Even if they were allowed to smoke out the back, it would be a better picture [public image] for [the OSS] because people that are walking by wouldn't be only seeing people standing outside smoking."*
- Involve young people in any improvement works
  - *"Maybe if we get a group of people and clear the back – just do a good tidy. Maybe do something with it. You can do a garden. Grow your own veg and flowers."*
  - *"I think it would mean more to this place if the young people helped build it [garden] because then you can think, 'I did that'. If anything needs to be knocked down, or anything needs to be moved, or we need manual labour to lift things, I wanna do it… I wanna lift stuff. I wanna help things. We contribute with the builders, to help. We volunteer our own time to come in and help those that are doing that project to do it, so then it'll mean more to this place so that we know that we have a satisfaction / we have contributed to this place because we helped do this, we helped do that. Plus it'll be cheaper."*

7 Case Studies

7.1 Overview

As part of this evaluation, PHA required SMR to assemble "*six [summary, circa 1 x A4 page] case studies.* PHA indicated that, "*these should reflect the diversity of service users attending OSSs*". In addition, SMR understood that, "*all case studies [were to] be anonymous and should be established with information provided by the OSS providers and partner agencies and, if possible, input from the young person*".

PHA subsequently requested that SMR assemble 4 case studies describing the experiences and views of services users of the OSS and 2 case studies summarising the experiences and opinions of staff in relation to 'informal chats'. SMR subsequently worked with the OSS Managers and PHA to agree the sample and respective discussion schedules for the case studies.

It was agreed that there would be one case study interview conducted in each of the 6 OSSs. In addition, the following typology was agreed:

Case Study Number	Characteristics of Case Study Candidates
1	Not referred on - Male
2	Not referred on - Female
3	Referred on - Male
4	Referred on - Female
5	Staff Member
6	Staff Member

The discussion schedules used for staff and the service user case study interviews respectively are set out in Appendix C. All of the case study interviews were carried out in April 2016 and were conducted face-to-face at each of the OSSs.

Case Study 1:
Not referred on/Male

"I come to here to create my life, to make my life very better… I <u>want</u> my life."

Profile: This young man travelled from Eastern Europe (in August 2015) to live in Northern Ireland. He and his mother left because of violence. He arrived in Northern Ireland with virtually no English and no social circle. Whilst he has met a few young people at the OSS since then, his social circle remains limited, "*I know just [the OSS staff member] in Northern Ireland*". This young man currently lives with his mother. She has serious physical health issues. His father and siblings are still in Eastern Europe. The OSS staff consider that this young man could have autism.

Did you try to get help from anywhere else before coming to the OSS?
Before attending the OSS, the only places this young man went were, "into the shops to buy food…[or] the library". However, neither of these places were set up to meet his needs below. They don't help because it's not possible [for them]."

What first prompted you to come to the OSS? *"The homecare assistant…. My mum talked with [her], and [she] find address of the [OSS], because I don't know what is the [OSS], but the homecare assistant find [found] the address, and I came here…"*

How has coming here helped you? Attending this OSS has enabled this young man to:

- Improve his English -*"My language is better. Before I come here, my language is not very good, but now it's better because I speak more English, and better."*

- Access education – *"I come to here [NI and the OSS] to find education, [and through this] to improve my life."*

- Explore finding a job – *"I want to work…I want to find a job…to buy mum a house, like other peoples… to build a life and to create families."*

- Improve his nutrition – Since coming to the OSS he has been *"eating very tasty food"*

- Have opportunities to socialise with people of his own age – *""She [OSS staff member] help [me] find friends… [there were trips] [we]…go places… have a very good centre [where there was] jumping, climbing. Very good time, very fun"*

- Link into locally based activities that match his main interests and create further opportunities to socialise and make friends.

    - Dance: *"The [OSS] help me find the dance studio because I don't know what [where] is the studio... After one month [of attending the dance studio], I make a performance to public. I have 4 lines to say."* Participating in this performance is important to this young man; there is a sense of being included, belonging to something, an opportunity to socialise.

    - Exercise: *"She [OSS staff member] helped me find a gym here [locally]."*

- Share his concerns / difficulties, experience understanding/receive emotional support - *"I talk about [Eastern European] situation, and my family situation. We're very bad situation in my family…Yesterday, I talked with my brother and father. [He was criticised for 'leaving' the country] …terrible [upsetting] words. He said 'You*

leave brother. You leave a lot of people'. My father, my brother, my grandmothers, grandfathers [are] in [Eastern Europe]… [Eastern Europe] in economic is very bad, and [Eastern Europe] peoples is very angry [civil unrest], and a lot of politics is old, and young politics is too little."

- Express his ambitions / aspirations - *"I have an interest in politics. [I am] very interest[ed] in human rights…"*

Any suggestions for improvements?
His only suggestion was to have more trips / opportunities to socialise / have fun / meet peers.

Overall outcome
"[Staff at the OSS] very helped me…help find friends…I believe the [OSS], 100%, they helped."

Case Study 2:

Not referred on/female

"You learn from what you go through. [I've learned to] not block myself out from everybody [but] to actually go and talk to somebody about it."

Profile: This young woman had experienced social isolation and depression.

Did you try to get help from anywhere else before coming to the OSS?
Before attending the OSS, she had presented at her GP on a number of occasions seeking help for depression, "*The first time I went to the doctor's, in June [2015], they told me to ring Lifeline myself. I didn't feel confident enough to ring them and explain everything that was going on, again* [i.e. having already just explained it to the GP]. *When I went back [to the GP Practice], it was a different doctor. The doctor told me that, coz I hadn't tried [i.e. hadn't phoned Lifeline], he wasn't willing to help me, so that put me off for a while. But then, in December [2015], I had to go to the same doctor I'd seen the first time, then she helped me. She got me sorted with the Women's Forum, and I met [OSS Manager]."*

What first prompted you to come to the OSS? "…"
"The doctor referred me to the Women's Forum. The counsellor there, she introduced me to [member of staff at OSS], and got me started in here [OSS]."

How has coming here helped you? Attending this OSS has enabled this young person to:

- Become confident to speak up -*"[Since coming to the OSS], I'm confident about talking about anything really."*

- Make new friends, have regular access to a safe and welcoming setting and thereby become less isolated, be amongst people who understand how she feels and as a result, feel happier - *"It's people my age [come to the OSS]…not people younger than me. It's nice to interact with people the same age as me, [Also]…I know [two OSS staff] and the guys [and girls] who do the cookery…and I've been introduced to some of the other ones [service users] too… If I'm feeling down, I can come down here whenever I want, and it's always laid back and a nice atmosphere…If you want to join a conversation, you just join it!...There's a lot of 'cliques' in work. You don't really fit in as much. It's good the way everyone's just in it together [at the OSS]… [Also, the young people at the OSS] they've kind of gone through the same thing as I'm going through, so it's nice to just be around them kind of people [for mutual support and understanding]."*

- Talk through difficulties she may be having at any particular time - *"I'm having trouble with my friends at the minute…I wouldn't really openly talk to [the other young people at the OSS about my worries / problems], but I would talk to the likes of [OSS staff member] first – until I build my confidence up with the rest of them [other service users]. But general conversations I would have with them, like what you're doing during the day. It's nice to just talk about something else!"*

- Receive support on managing work-related stress – *"Work and stuff – how it's hard at the minute – but I can talk to them [OSS staff] about it and get advice. I work in …2 jobs. It's a struggle."*

- Get help, support and encouragement to apply for other jobs - *"They [OSS] bring people in to help us. They had someone in a few weeks ago…talking about the job*

opportunities and what questions to ask, and how to make your CV look good as well…I'm getting job interviews and stuff, so they'll [OSS staff] give me advice on what to say, examples of general questions you'll get, and trying to make yourself sound good! Just general advice…build [your] confidence."

- Have fun learning a new skill – Such as cookery… *"The first thing [I].. got involved in was the cookery classes, which is something I've always wanted to do…[learning to cook is] getting me up and doing stuff at the same time as meeting new people….We learned to make pizza from scratch. I've never done that before. We made wraps… they were lovely! We made fish, and then we made goujons, but made the batter from scratch – which is something I've never done before either. Everyone gets to eat it. It's good because whenever I'm in my house trying to cook, my mum can't leave me alone. She just likes to do it herself. [Now], she's starting to let me do it…I'm planning to make the chicken goujons next week, so it'll be funny to see how they turn out on my own!"*

Any suggestions for improvements?

- Extend the opening hours - *"It'd be nice if it was open all the time: in the evening, and during the day over the weekend"; and,*

- Increase public awareness - *"I was told about [the OSS] through the counsellor. It would have been good to have more advertisement for it."*

Overall outcome

"[The issue I came here with initially is] mostly resolved. Just need to work on getting a different job, so I need to get out of the Secondary School and get some experience in a daycare. I would like to open my own daycare… [The outcome for me has been] good [Service user scored it 9 out 10 for satisfaction]. You learn from what you go through. [I've learned to] not block myself out from everybody [but] to actually go and talk to somebody about it."

Case Study 3:

Referred on/Male

"Three years ago, I was unemployed, and I was just one o' them lazy ones – just lying about the house, doing nothing. Would never have thought I would see myself studying, never thought I would have a full-time job...I actually like".

Profile: This young man was experiencing low self-esteem and low self-confidence. He had repeatedly tried, via Job Seekers, to get a job. He had been repeatedly unsuccessful. Just before he joined the OSS, he had been experiencing the job seeking process as immensely disorientating, degrading and demoralising. This was further damaging his already fragile self-esteem and self-confidence, making it even harder to get motivated. Through the OSS, he was referred on to a training course which further lead to an education trip abroad. This proved invaluable in terms of changing his self-image, increasing his self-confidence and self-esteem and, ultimately securing a placement that makes excellent use of his talents and abilities.

Did you try to get help from anywhere else before coming to the OSS?
"I was on the Jobseekers. They [pre-employment scheme] were trying….but they were just like, 'You should apply for this, apply for this, apply for this' - I didn't know … 'How do I apply?'. [Basically, the [pre-employment scheme] says, 'Here's the page of jobs. Go apply for it'. They could be like the worst jobs in the world, and you go, 'I don't want to apply for them'.

What first prompted you to come to the OSS? *"At first, I was speaking to a youth leader, and I was currently unemployed at the time, and I didn't have a CV done, so she put me on to [OSS staff member]. I was introduced to [OSS staff member], and, from there, we worked on my CV, and I just started applying for jobs. That's really how I first became aware of One Stop."*

How has coming here helped you? Attending this OSS has enabled this young man to:

- Identify appropriate courses - *"I had interest in youth work, and then they pointed me to me the right course on youth work, and [since then] I've done a couple of OCNs in youth work and support work qualifications".*

- Gain experience – *"From then, they helped me to start doing volunteer hours within the school, from the old premises next door to it. I started working in there".*

- Get to university – *"The next step then was they helped me get in to university – a certificate course. I'm currently still doing that".*

- Get appointed to a position that makes good use of his interests and abilities and enhances his self-esteem and self-confidence – *"Lucky enough, now, I'm actually in placement within a youth club, so big change."*

- See a map; a positive, practical, achievable path for his future - *If I had tried it myself [alone], I would have been, 'Oh no. Where do I go from here?', but they [OSS] were just like guidance…The youth sector, I didn't know much about it. I didn't know what sort of qualifications you needed, what roles you had to do. I didn't know you had to volunteer beforehand. They were all like, 'This is how you step into it'. They gave me the stepping stones. They provided the path. I didn't have the confidence within myself as well. With them [saying], 'You do it like this', they provided the confidence I*

needed. They got the confidence out of me, which is hard to do. They provided the actual guidance and the right way of doing it."

- Travel abroad, develop new skills, expand his horizons - *"They [OSS] received an email about [a youth leadership course], and they thought I would be the most suitable for it. It was like a peace study, so we went to study peace and conflict within Palestine and Israel, and there was 10 youth leaders from the Protestant and 10 leaders from the Catholic, but they were all from all over the north and the south, so it was really worthwhile. It was an eye-opener…I travel[led] to Palestine just with their [OSS] help. I was never on a plane until 2 years ago!... [Now] I'm running a refugee course within the club. A friend of mine's coming. He's a refugee from Palestine, but he's actually studying there at the minute, so he's coming …to talk with the young ones to give them his experience."*

- Build and sustain his self-confidence / self-belief - *"[They, OSS] had confidence in me, but I had no confidence in myself. They believed I could do it, but I was like, 'Hmm. No. I'm not too sure if I could'. But they just kept at me and made sure I.. done the work…the application stuff in time, so it was really them that pushed [encouraged] me… it wasn't overpowering. They were directing [guiding] me… helping me out… I had to make [the main] decision myself, 'Did I want to do it [apply for this job]?'… 'It's up to you', [OSS staff said], so they gave me the freedom to choose*

Any suggestions for improvements?
His only suggestion was to have more trips and activities to help build up the trusting relationships quicker - *"I probably could have got here quicker if I had opened up quicker. I was reserved. I was one of them ones: 'Oh. I don't know what to do'… If you're reserved, then it's going to be harder work…[However]…if you don't build a relationship with them first, you won't get to know them. Hence, [maybe more] trips and stuff would probably get the relationships built up quicker for the young people. You'd probably break down a lot more barriers [faster]".*

Overall outcome
This young person has found a structure and a new sense of purpose in his life. *"I'm [in] a more happier place…I'm willing to get out of bed now in the mornings. I know I have to get out of bed, coz [otherwise I'm]…not gonna get the work done!"*

He has found it personally very rewarding to be challenged. He is now doing work that he finds fulfilling, "I'm actually at the minute bombarded with work, and I'm at university. University – I'm doing my Youth Work Certificate so that I can apply a Leader's job within the youth organisations…I'm [also] doing facilitation work in other youth clubs as an art facilitator. It's another path I was drawn in to…[My confidence] was very low at the start, but now it's very high. I've achieved a lot more in the last few years than I have in the previous five years. I never thought I'd be sitting here in the position I would be able to apply for jobs and have the right qualifications and the right background and the right confidence to do it…Three years ago, I was unemployed, and I was just one o' them lazy ones – just lying about the house, doing nothing. Would never have thought I would see myself studying, never thought I would have a full-time job where I actually like it. Usually it's only bar work I would do. Beforehand, I would have had a boundary. I would have put myself in this mindset 'No. I'm not capable for university', but now I'm going to university and actually achieving good grades…It's opened my eyes really. If you have more confidence and are willing to work, there's probably nothing can stand in your way."

Case Study 4:

Not referred on/Female

"I'm just so glad I took that step to talk to her. They've really helped me out with a lot of stuff to do with home and the past…it was really helpful to get a lot of stuff off my chest"

Profile: Before coming to the OSS, this young woman (aged 19) had suffered repeated episodes of depression related to *"stuff that had happened to me in the past, and it was starting to just come back."*

Did you try to get help from anywhere else before coming to the OSS?
"A few times, I had tried to get counselling from teachers. I never spoke to a teacher about what was actually happening with me at the time. Generally, I got this kind of 'Oh yes. We'll get you sorted', and then never heard anything about it afterwards. Nothing happened, or the tutor went off and then didn't see me, and then had forgotten about it by the time they'd got back. It was really hard to bring that up again. I think I did that about twice, and then I just kinda give up talking about it or trying to get it through teachers and things. In High School, I did not trust any of my teachers at all. I really did not like any of them, and I wouldn't have told them anything at all. I wasn't up for putting myself out there again to those people. You're getting nowhere. It just felt like you were hitting the wall every time."

"I [also] asked at the doctor's office, but they couldn't refer me on to any specific counselling. I don't know why that was, but it was something to do with I was turning 18, and there was an issue because they couldn't put me in to child one, and then, whenever I'm 18, I have to go get it myself. They just gave me a Lifeline number, and I was like, 'I'm never gonna ring that number'."

"After telling the doctor, I had to go on the phone to somebody that I can't even see, and tell them all this stuff about myself, and I was just like, 'No. I'm not doing that just to try and get counselling.'. I don't know that person. I don't wanna talk to someone I didn't know. I'm sure the people on the other end of the phone might be really nice, and they're trained and all the rest of it, but I just don't feel OK without talking to somebody in person about things like that. I wouldn't feel great talking about it over the phone. It's not something I've ever done, ever! It's not real enough."

What first prompted you to come to the OSS? *"[OSS] actually come to the Tec where I go to school, and they told us all about One Stop Shop, and we were part of making the logo for the place, so we were all very excited and then we really wanted to go in and see the space and then just start using it there and then because all of our friends already knew about it, so it was just easy to just come in and just start hanging out... [The OSS Manager]…was really lovely, and…was one of the first people we ever met. [OSS Manager] was very energetic about [OSS], and that really helped everybody really want to go and see it."*

How has coming here helped you? Attending this OSS has enabled this young woman to:

- Trust an adult enough to open up and ask for help – *"In the past, with schools and things, I've usually had a bit of a blockage with connections with teachers and adults and people who are looking after you or supervising you. I would generally not have as much of a connection, but, [in OSS], I really do. It was just they made it easier. I could talk to them… I have real struggle with depression. I was speaking to [OSS staff*

member], and I just sat down and told her everything. And she told me that I wasn't on my own, and that she would help me if I ever needed anything. And she told me about all these other things that I could do and that I could go to".

- Access appropriate counselling -*"[OSS staff member] recommended that I go and get counselling from my Tec. I did [that], and I [now] go to counselling…I find it really, really helpful… I'm just so glad I took that step to talk to her. They've really helped me out with a lot of stuff to do with home and the past…it was really helpful to get a lot of stuff off my chest coz it was stuff that I had been keeping in for quite a while, and I've never told anybody who was in a professional environment like this before. It just felt really good to have somebody,…an adult, that's taking you seriously and they're listening to you. Whereas, sometimes at home, maybe adults aren't listening to you… It's nice to have somebody really take you seriously, and to know…they're gonna help you..."*

- Receive ongoing emotional support – *"Even if you're just in [to the OSS] for a wee chat…you have a crappy day, you just go in and you tell everybody. It's just a nice environment to be in."*

Any suggestions for improvements?
This young person said, "*I feel like she [OSS staff member] went above and beyond. Compared to the responses I've had before, from teachers and things, that was so much better, and she covered everything that I could do, and I thought it was really informative, so I'm not sure if there is anything else that she could have done. I have never had an experience where it was better, so I don't have anything else to go off [compare it with]. The only thing that would have made it just slightly better – although this doesn't apply to the particular situation, because there was nobody else around – but it was just the idea if somebody had been on the other side of the door, they might have heard. Just need maybe a quieter space, away from everybody, coz I know sometimes it would be quite hard to talk about things [when] there's loads of people about. You're not completely separated. You might be in a wee room. The walls are thin."*

Overall outcome
"It's maybe not been 'resolved', because it's more to do with mental illness, but since then I've been going to counselling now for a good number of weeks, and I find [it's]…really helpful, and I've just been constantly going to [OSS] coz I've found it's a great support, rather than sitting at home on my own and being upset. Just to have people around you can really help. I've really perked up, and I've really made good connections with ones in there now, and it's just so much better."

Case Study 5:

Staff Member

"We get to know the young people… their character… triggers. We built that relationship…we know their background. If they're coming in and they're not acting their norm, then we'd tune in."

OSS staffs' experience and perception of the value / importance of informal chats to young people.

Profile: This was a female OSS staff member who had extensive experience of conducting informal chats with the young people at their OSS.

What is happening at this OSS re informal chats?

Form – One to one sessions and group informal chats take place. These can be scheduled or unscheduled, "*An informal chat could be when they're [young people] having a game of pool, Xbox or FIFA. A lot of the times, it's that non-eye-contact that you get a more honest, more fluid conversation going… We also do [scheduled and on the spot] group conversations…*[for example] *they [the young people] start [talking] about what's happening over the weekend…we would stop the conversation if it was about [a relevant topic[e.g.] drink…bullying… we would open a conversation about that, and then we'd get their feedback…it would be a case of us [OSS staff feeding in positive things, or challenging some of whatever they [young people] are saying…*

Sometimes, if it's my colleague who's speaking with them, I might sit in the background just as a listening ear, and then I would draw a poster. Then, when they see me doing the poster, then other people will come in and actually get involved in the poster, and then I put that on the board. Then, when they're playing air hockey, you actually can see them reading it. There's no names or anything on it, and they can read it, and then it encourages further conversation on the topics, which is great…

We [can also] do [informal chats]…on a one-to-one basis if we get to know the young people. We know their character. We know their triggers. We built that relationship up, so we know their background. If they're coming in and they're not acting their norm, then we'd tune in to that, and that's where we would take a different format, and that might be a more personal one-to-one – a quiet 'Just checking in. Is everything OK?' – and if they want you to ask further, then you would do so. If not, then it literally is 'I'm just checking. I'm here if you want me.', and then you'd kind of back off. If they want to come back, they will come back to you. The point is you're noticing, they're important… you have a relationship, and you are giving [being available for] that moment when they could say 'Yes. I want to talk'."

Topics – A very wide variety of topics are covered, largely prompted by or explicitly selected by the young people themselves, including, "*Drugs, relationships, the law, texting/sexting texting… bullying, mental health…absolutely anything that's significant for them [the young people]… "It's very contemporary. It's in the moment. We move with the times. We deal with what's going on in their world at that time. It changes all the time".*

Staff time – Whilst very difficult to quantify precisely, this staff member estimated that around 50% of staffs' time was devoted to informal chats.

Preference for specific staff members –"*Dynamically, it's very important to have a male and a female member of staff [available] because boys really need that male relationship. They will come and they'll talk to me [female member of staff], but it's more on like a 'mothering' kind of role, and more of a personal, more of a 'I've hurt my finger. Can you bandage it?' It's that female kind of thing. With the male role, it could be that kind of male bond. They definitely need their male person to help them with the other issues, but, on a personal ground, they do prefer to come to myself – the female person.*"

Importance of informal chats

General - "*Paramount...Inside all of these things, you're helping build this young person's resilience, their sense of personality, some sense of right and wrong, the structure to give them that space to have the freedom to talk, to say 'It's OK for me to be myself', or a positive role model to say, 'You know what? That wasn't cool. In that act, you didn't act correctly.'*"

When are informal chats especially important? - "*When that relationship is built and formed, you'll know by each person. I can't specifically say when that point is, but there will become a point in that young person's life, and then we'll be able to help or intervene or to promote…Informal chats…and open communication is always important because it builds up that line of relationship and bridges [so]… when there is a turning point in their life…you recognise it or they recognise it… it gives them a platform and an open person to go and say 'What's going on?'.*"

What would happen if there were no informal chats? – "*You're taking away that space that allows them [young people]to grow…ask questions…gain knowledge…build resilience…build…their own identity…personality, and help them form positive relationships, to identify negative relationships…That turning point… is significant in their life, you're taking away that person that can tune in to it, that can help, that can investigate, that can be a positive…You're taking all [of that]…If they're [young people] not gonna get it from this space, do they keep it inside and then become introverted, or look for something else? [manifest their dysregulation in other ways]*"

Case Study 6:

Staff Member

"Sometimes young people just need to know that you're there, [it's like], 'Even though I don't need anything at this present time, I know you're there and I know that I can go to you if I need you'."

OSS staffs' experience and perception of the value / importance of informal chats to young people.

Profile: This was also a female OSS staff member who had extensive experience of conducting informal chats with the young people at their OSS.

What is happening at this OSS re informal chats?

Form – It can take a number of forms, "*Drop-in and social recreational time. Just having an everyday conversation. Young people realise that they can come through the door, and they know that that door is open to walk through and come over and speak to us. It's on their terms. They are there because they want to be there.*"

"*Doing outreach work, or taking young people on a trip, or going on a residential. You tend to be having general conversation, and, before you know it, you're actually having a really good in-depth conversation with a young person, or even with a small group of young people. If you don't force it, it comes naturally.*"

These can take different forms – on the spot of scheduled, "*Informally, if you're working with a small or a large group, you may have set out a specific session plan that you want to do with the group, but maybe if something has already happened within the group, or something has happened with a specific young person, or maybe something within the community, that needs to be addressed before the group can continue.*"

"*[There is also] a set hour within the week where young people come in. For that set hour, they take the time to sit down and listen to each other. They set the agenda in terms of what issue they want to discuss. It was very much in and around their communication skills / their listening skills / their social skills: being able to have the confidence to say something out in a group. It was never forced. You can just come in and sit and listen…It is this very informal open space, but there is that wee bit of a structure on the end that you actually sit and listen to each other. Sometimes, whatever they have discussed within that hour, they're happy with what they've done. Other times, you need to follow on. There may be one young person could come to you the day after and say, 'I didn't understand what was meant by that', or they need further clarification on something.*"

Topics – A wide variety of topics have been discussed. The young people take the lead in determining these. Examples include, ""*Current affairs…The horsemeat scandal…The price of bread…Whether or not Playstation is better than Xbox…Gay marriage…Voting and Stormont.*"

Staff time – This activity typically occupies about "*40 – 50%*" of staff time.

Preference for specific staff members - "*Each of the staff within the centre, definitely, you have a relationship. You know who you have your relationships with. Every youth worker will be the same. For some young people, I still have that relationship with them. You feel that they're constantly coming back to you. I think that's good and that's healthy… If it's*

an LGBT issue, it could be if the young person identifies with the worker who works for the LGBT group".

Importance of informal chats

General – "*Informal chats is absolutely massive[ly important]. Fundamental…Sometimes young people just need to know that you're there, [like,]'Even though I don't need anything at this present time, I know you're there and I know that I can go to you if I need you'…That's part of our role for what we have to do within the One Stop Shops, that you need constantly [to be] observant and self-aware with young people. Maybe that's just the more you get to know young people, and the relationship you have with them; you know whenever something's wrong. That's…down to skills as well."*

When are informal chats especially important? – *"[During] relationship breakdown, bereavement, [problems] with drug / alcohol – they know that '… I can go to [OSS staff Member(s)], and I can touch base with them'."*

What would happen if there were no informal chats? – *"I dread to think what would happen!... For a lot of the young people, specifically those who are very, very vulnerable, they would use negative coping strategies [e.g.] self-harm, alcohol misuse, engage in anti-social behaviour / violence…Sometimes that's all the young people need… just to have that chat informally with somebody…. Young people, they won't speak to a GP [or] even a teacher, and they don't always want to speak to somebody they don't know. Sometimes that can be a barrier... You [OSS staff member] are meeting them on their terms. If it was coming from a teacher's perspective, or a doctor's perspective, the teacher would be very formal… "If you're engaged with young people who've disengaged with society, or are already in trouble with the law, and have nothing to do with the formal education sector, there's no way they're going to engage with a teacher…Some young people would panic phoning Lifeline because they don't know who's on the other end of the phone… If you're coming to the One Stop Shop, you just come in and there's no paperwork. It's very much just having that conversation with them…It can be 20 minutes on their lunch break, and do whatever they need to do, or say whatever they need to say. The convenience of it…We [are]… not judgemental…you're not 'judged' on who you are. You're just 'judged' on what you need to talk about and what you need to discuss that day…Who else do they speak to if the One Stop Shop's not here to allow them to do that? "*

8 Partner Interviews

8.1 Design of Partner Interviews

SMR conducted qualitative research in the form of one-to-one interviews with a variety of OSS partners.

A sizeable and diverse sample of partners were identified to take part in one to one interviews with SMR. (See discussion schedules in Appendix D). All interviews were conducted between May and June 2016.

In summary:

- Up to 4 partner interviews were completed for each OSS;
- Across the sample as a whole, and as far as possible within each sample, partners were drawn from the statutory, community, voluntary and private sectors respectively;
- The total number of interviews completed overall was 31:
    - 10 face to face;
    - 21 by telephone;

A wide range of organisations were consulted and a wide range of job roles were included in the sample. (See Appendix E for details)

8.2 Key Findings

What is the nature of the relationship between partner agencies and the OSS?

There were a number of different types of relationships between partner agencies and the OSS. Some of the agencies referred their clients to the OSS for health related advice and signposting. This was usually by agencies that identified a need in a young person that was outside their own specific remit.

- *"When I work with my own client groups, sometimes they express needs for help that are beyond my brief. So I can say, yes, phone the OSS and they will be able to signpost you to what you need".*
- *"We refer or send our young people to the OSS for issues like drug use, things that they won't, or feel they can't, tell me about".*

Others received referrals to their own projects from the OSS.

- *"We have people referred to us from the OSS whom we would help to get into employment".*
- *"Young people from the OSS can be referred to our service for specific help on issues such as gender, bullying, pressure at school, exams, popularity, family*

issues, parenting, separation, divorce of parents".

Some both referred to the OSS and received referrals from them. Whichever of these was the case, it was clear that each OSS performed an integral and central role within the landscape of agencies in its locale.

- *"We are part of the local partnership as is the OSS. The OSS can refer young people into our projects, for example into employability projects. In turn, if we were working with a young person and there appeared to be a health or relationship issue, we would refer the young person to the OSS for advice or help. Each of us would physically take the young person along and help them through the first encounter. It works much better than just giving someone a phone number".*

- *"OSS refer to the Work4U programme and vice-versa. Work4U might refer a young person to OSS if there are issues (sexuality, drugs, alcohol) that are more appropriately handled by OSS. Going in the other direction, OSS refer to Work4U if young people want to move on and where they need help in education for work. We help to fill each other's gaps".*

The OSS cannot refer young people directly to most statutory agencies, because these referrals have to come through a GP or other professional. However, some agencies are happy to engage with a young person signposted from the OSS and then arrange for a formal referral afterwards. Although formal referral is still required, the signposting from the OSS saves the young person from having to make that initial contact with the GP or mental health team by themselves.

- *"The OSS signposts young people to us if they have drugs or mental health problems. If the OSS signpost to us, we give them a "show-around" and, if they are interested, then we get them a formal referral from the mental health team".*

Some partner agencies were running joint projects with the local OSS. These often arose because the OSS was acting as a hub for a range of partners either through inviting them in to give talks or by offering OSS premises for the agency's work. When those partners or their workers come into contact through the OSS they are likely to discuss the needs of the local young people and to develop new projects to meet those needs.

- *"We have developed a range of programmes with the OSS including summer schemes, drama groups and awareness programmes on drugs and alcohol. These are all co-created programmes".*

- *"Because the OSS is used by so many groups and agencies, partnership working and co-creating programmes happens very naturally".*

Why do you think young people go to the OSS?

Partner agencies were not always privy to the relationships between young people and the OSS. However, some did have opinions on why young people go to the OSS. Some felt that it was just a relaxed place for young people to go, a place where they were out of harm's way, where nothing was demanded from them.

Other partners recognised the value of reaching out to young people and meeting them "where they are at". They viewed this OSS approach as being grounded in good practice".

- *"They are just very comfortable going to the OSS, it is a safe space, there is no pressure to take part in anything. They are more likely to turn up if they don't feel any pressure to turn up".*

- *"You have to meet young people where they are at, so you need to offer them a draw like a pool table or music or whatever and attract them in, then you can start to work with them".*

- *"It is friendly, they don't have to have a problem to come in, they don't have to pay for it, they don't even have to talk if they don't want to, they don't get told what to do, yet they are in a safe environment where they can meet people and get some support if they need it. That is a good practice approach, creating the conditions for the young person's needs to emerge".*

Partners also said that the youth friendly nature of the OSS was a big draw. The relaxed informal atmosphere and the relationships that young people build up with the staff were said to be the unique draw of the OSS. The atmosphere was described by more than one partner as being akin to an extended family where trust and confidentiality were available from a responsible adult.

- *"It's in the middle of the town, it's drop in and relaxed and it follows what the young people want, it is young people led".*

- *"I think they feel that they can get any kind of help that they might need at the OSS and have the opportunity just to talk through things in a friendly way. At the same time, they can just hang out and chill with their friends".*

- *"The good relationships keep them going. The staff keep it very relaxed. The drop in nature makes it attractive, young people can go there and just chill and join in as much or as little as they want without having to go and be talked at".*

- *"The OSS almost performs the function of the stereotypical old fashioned extended family where there was always an aunt or uncle or someone to whom you could talk, who wouldn't condemn or judge you and who wouldn't run off and tell your parents".*

What do you consider is the added value (if any) to you and OSS working together?

Advantages for the Partner Agency

The chief advantage for the partner agency is being able to work with the OSS to deliver a broader range of services to clients, thereby supporting the young person across a wider range of domains and increasing the impact of the partner's own work.

- *"Our service to young people finding jobs can be much more effective when the young person is also getting help from the OSS that boosts their confidence or is dealing with health issues that might be preventing them from working. It is*

very complementary to our work".

- *"When we would be facilitating a group, where some of the young people have anxiety problems, for example, some of them might feel the need to take some time out. Because we are in the OSS, the staff there can take them and sit chatting to them, supporting them while we get on with our session. It means that the young person has a chance to calm down in a supported environment without disturbing the flow of our own session".*

- *"The OSS can spend time with some of our young people to help them with things that are outside our brief, for example a young woman with autism and anxiety issues needed a lot of help preparing a personal statement during the transition year. The comfort level with the OSS meant that she could get the help that she needed. There would have been nowhere else for her to get that kind of help".*

- *"The OSS probably works to help the effect of CAMHS last longer in the sense that they provide support and a kind of rehabilitation. So our young people may not need to come back through the swinging door of mental health care again or at least not so quickly. Conversely, the OSS may also encourage some young people who do need our services again to come back more quickly, at a time that is more appropriate for effective intervention".*

The OSS can also provide follow up to a partner's work by providing ongoing support after the partner agency's intervention has ended.

- *"We can work with young people's mental health to a point where they can maybe manage by themselves. They still need a bit of extra support just to get back into society again and the OSS is a great informal place for them to go to get this kind of help, getting back into meeting peers, getting interested in things and where they can talk to someone if issues arise again".*

- *"We can be in and out of a young person's life quite quickly, whereas the OSS can be there over a longer period of time to help them embed the help that they got from us".*

The OSS can provide a level of service that may be sufficient to meet the young person's needs without them ever having to resort to formal or statutory help. This can help to ease the case load burden upon statutory agencies and other support services.

- *"The OSS may provide enough preventative help or information to stop the young person ever having to be referred to the Mental Health Service. It may be dealing with the low-level issues very well and it may be stopping mental health problems from escalating to a point where more formal care or support is required".*

- *"The OSS can often give advice and guidance to young people which is enough to meet their needs without them having to be referred into a more formal situation or to a statutory agency".*

When a young person in the OSS does need to be referred on, the referral can be done much more quickly and in a manner that supports the young person during the "handover" period.

- *"We can do "internal referrals", i.e. between OSS and the partners both informally and quickly creating a continuous flow of support for the young person".*

- *"When the young person has been in the OSS, referrals can come to us much more quickly, without people sitting on a waiting list. We can get our intervention in much more quickly avoiding things escalating or getting worse. For example, if there are problems at home and the young person is affected, we can get in early and not only address the original issue, but help to stop things escalating, for example, into truanting or anti-social behaviour".*

Partners and the OSS can reach each other's client groups or reach a wider part of a client's family or social world. This helps to attract more young people into the partner's programmes.

- *"Working together means we can attract more young people into our own programmes".*

- *"Sharing of information through the hubs that OSS provide helps us to get to clients or to the parents or children of other agencies clients".*

- *"It enables us to reach young people who we would not otherwise be in contact with".*

Partners working with the OSS find that relationships grow to a point that encourages joint working, trying out new approaches or trialling new programmes.

- *"The community sector sometimes works in silos, but the OSS encourages joint working and joint knowledge about each other".*

- *"It enables us to co-create programmes through which we can get our messages across, for example on drugs and alcohol".*

- *"PHA have been flexible enough to allow new approaches to be tested out and tried. That's how you find the things that really work with young people. It is so valuable and so rare to have that kind of opportunity".*

The ability of the OSS to host other organisations' work gives partners a youth friendly venue to work from. This enables them to work more effectively and to overcome the barriers that young people might perceive, e.g., the stigma attached to attending a mental health clinic. It also enables the partner's clients to broaden their own circle and develop peer support.

- *"It is a massive advantage to us working with the OSS. It means we have a youth friendly venue for our own mental health work and work with drugs and legal highs. Our main premises are not as youth friendly. It means that young people can link into a mental health service without feeling that they are doing so, to them they are just going to the OSS".*

- *"We have a key worker role and referring people formally is too much pressure for the young people. Whereas they can come here and say the same things that they might say to a drug addiction team, but in a more relaxed and non-judgemental space. So, what I am saying is that if I have someone to refer on for help, the OSS often provides more accessible or more effective help because it is so relaxed and kind of "opt-in".*

- *"The friendships definitely build up between the OSS group and our own group, leading to a wider social experience and peer support".*

- *"Also it helps our young people from sitting in their flat on their own and being isolated. There is nowhere else in Derry where there is a drop-in like the OSS".*

Advantages for Young People

OSS and partners working together also brings advantages to the young people. One of these is providing and unthreatening pathway into statutory or other agency help, as one partner put it, "*a kind of gentle slope towards our agency rather than having to climb the mountain all at once*". Some partners gave examples of young people who had found help from their agency only because they had been to the OSS first.

- *"A young woman who had lost confidence after exam failure and who had been rarely out of the house for 2 years went into the OSS for a look around. She obviously felt comfortable and started to go back. The OSS were able to offer initial support and counselling. This young woman had originally come up to our main building which is not very youth friendly and she was very intimidated by the place. It was only because she was able to access us through the informality and youth friendly atmosphere of the OSS that she got the help she needed. Now she is at the local college on a childcare course".*

- *"A young man who had good qualification, but who suffered from a lot of social anxiety came to us through the OSS. He came back over a period of 6 months or so and now he is working in an architect's office. He would not have had the confidence to come to a mental health team through the normal channels, but he felt able to approach us gradually through the OSS".*

Young people can access the partner agency through the OSS without feeling the stigma that they might if they had to approach the partner directly.

- *"Our work is in mental health. Some young people don't want to become involved because of a perceived stigma. The OSS is a very informal and friendly forum, without that stigma where young people feel more confident to come forward with mental health problems".*

Joint working between OSS and partners also leads to faster response to the young person's needs.

- *"They can just drop in off the street when they want to or need to, whereas to come to us they would need to go to their GP and then wait for a referral. So the OSS can be more responsive and quicker to act. When they need to come to us, they can get a referral whilst still receiving the support of the OSS".*

The relationships between the OSS and partners also permits a degree of hand-holding as the young person moves towards the help of a statutory or other agency.

- *"Young people get support from OSS, e.g., OSS staff may come along for the first session or first part of the session".*

- *"There is a good continuity for the young person when the OSS can support the young person through the early stages of counselling".*

- *Our partnership working gives a better buy-in when referrals come from OSS because the young person themselves has trust in the OSS and is engaged in the process of referral. With referrals from "statutories", the young person has often been told to come and is not engaged or never turns up.*

The continuity of support as the young person transits from the OSS to statutory agency (or vice versa) means that the trust that has been built up transfers from one professional arena to the other. This transfer of trust also makes it more likely that the young person will keep their appointments and continue to receive help from the partner agency.

- *"The way we work with the OSS means that the trust that the young person has with us transfers to the OSS and vice versa".*

- *"The hand holding that they get from the OSS is reassuring for young people at the start of a referral process, it gives them confidence to come to the first meeting and to trust us because they know that the OSS staff trust us".*

How would you rate the effectiveness of the OSS in assisting young people in need of support to access services?

Partners said that the OSS is very effective for those young people who need a gentle and informal entry to services or those who lack the confidence to approach their GP directly.

- *"The key thing is that the young people don't need to go directly to a service. They can come here and gradually gain enough confidence to get help from more formal services, through the OSS".*

- *"That is so essential, it provides a kind of net that stops people becoming progressively worse. For them to have to make a phone call to a GP, that would be a humongous step and would carry a stigma. To be able to come into the OSS and say things where they know they will never be judged, it provides a window of prevention".*

- *"OSS is very beneficial to young people who need to become engaged with more formal help, especially in rural areas where there is very little of that kind of "informal entry" into the system".*

Partners said that the OSS helps young people to get help straight away and to gain temporary support during the wait for a referral appointment. This helps to keep the young person engaged and committed to accessing services for their issue. It also helps to ensure that the young person takes up the first referral

appointment when the times comes around.

- *"Sometimes the OSS can arrange for some temporary support to keep the young person going until their appointment comes around.*

- *"If young people are referred through more "normal" processes, by the time their appointment comes around they have forgotten or have lost the resolve to go through with it. If they are in the OSS, then the staff will try to keep on top of when the appointments are coming up and helps to ensure that the young person actually goes to the appointment".*

The OSS was said to be particularly effective where a young person needs more than one kind of help or is unsure what their issues are or what kind of help they need.

- *The OSS is very effective, because where else would you go to get help with stopping smoking and your mental health? Where else could you go to talk at your own pace about your issues and find out what is the most appropriate service to help you?"*

When the OSS brings external agencies in to give talks or to share information, this helps to build up a confidence and trust between the young people and the agency. This can then lead to young people being confident enough to self-refer to the outside agency or to ask the OSS for help in getting a referral.

- *"The OSS will often bring in speakers, for example, the nurse to talk about sexual health. So that works on two levels. Firstly, the service comes to the young people in a way that it wouldn't otherwise. Secondly, because the nurse comes into the OSS regularly, the young people build up confidence in her and are able to self-refer to her with their sexual health needs".*

No organisation or system is perfect. What works best between [partner agency] and OSS? What could be improved?

OSS could provide emergency cover or crisis intervention where a young person needs immediate support or where there are multiple issues that need to be dealt with in sequence.

- *"Brief intervention, emergency cover or stabilising the situation with young people while you get them their first referral appointment. This can take around 6 weeks, but also much longer at times, by which time the young person's resolve might have weakened or their circumstances may have changed. You need the capacity to keep things stabilised while they are waiting and to keep their resolve to engage with help (like the lifeline model) If you don't manage this period then the window of opportunity to get a young person engaged can close".*

- *"Sometimes the emergency cover or stabilising does get covered, but more by accident than by design because workers or professionals know each other. It would be good to have a crisis intervention officer who would do this by default instead of leaving it to chance".*

Whilst the OSS premises are generally open at times when the young people need them most, it was suggested that there could be even more flexibility in the times that the service is available.

- *"The OSS need to be open at times when young people need them most and that can mean weekends and late at night or just when the demand is there. It is difficult to be 24/7, but the young people need to feel that the support is there when they need it. And also they should not be closed unexpectedly or in an ad hoc way as has happened, they need to be open when they are supposed to be open".*

One partner commented that not all the staff in the local OSS were trained in youth work. She felt that youth work training should be a prerequisite for working at the OSS *[this respondent gave no indication as to why she held this view]*.

- *"All the OSS staff need to be trained in youth work and I am not sure that they all are".*

More needs to be done in rural areas either by offering the OSS service in more locations or by providing transport to bring young people into the towns where the OSS exists.

- *"There could be a lot more done in rural areas, where provision is thin".*

- *"There is proportionately over-provision in Belfast at the expense of rural areas. Rural towns should be resourced to be bigger and better hubs providing the kind of drop in informal work that the OSS's do".*

- *"A city centre location works well for many but not for all. Many young people have very limited territory within which they live and are willing to travel, so there could be more locations for OSSs that would make help available to young people within their own "micro-areas".*

- *"Working in rural communities just outside the town, transport is a big issue. It's very difficult to get the young people into Banbridge to get to the OSS. Generally, it might be true that young people in more rural areas are losing out on the OSS experience".*

Finally, one partner said that there was not enough provision for young people whose first language is not English. This is especially true because these young people are at a particularly high risk of social isolation

- *"More needs to be done to expand the OSS service to cover young people whose first language is not English. They often have issues like social isolation that the OSS is good at dealing with".*

OSS staff sometimes work one-to-one or in groups with young people, just chatting informally. Are you aware of this?

Most partners commented that getting to know the young people first is the best way to build up to a level of trust and confidence that empowers young people to open up. It is also a good practice approach in youth work that encourages the service to be led by the needs of the client group.

- *"It is the participative approach; it is coming from them. This is a good practice approach in youth work, to take the time to build up trust and, with help, to allow them to self-define their needs".*

- *"Informal chatting is the core of youth work. If you are working properly with youth you need to begin informally, you need to gain their confidence, you need to allow them to get comfortable and build up trust".*

- *"Although the OSS is a health project it uses a youth work approach so it should be led by youth work principles and be led by the needs of the young people".*

The time investment in chatting with young people, in order to gain their trust and build up an understanding of them, pays dividends. Once the OSS staff have built trust they can begin to work more effectively with the young people with an expectation that they will open up and engage.

- *"If you don't work with young people to build up a relationship they are never going to open up to you about what is going on".*

- *"You can't just jump in with youth work. If you are doing proper youth work you need to meet the young people where they are at, give them time, let them find the confidence to talk about their needs".*

- *"It takes time, but once you have invested that time, the work is so much easier".*

- *"I wish we had the time to work one-to-one informally with our young people. Sometimes at the end of a session we have a short time for a chat and that is when you find out what the young people's issues really are. It's the best way to go about it, then you can help them specifically according to their individual needs".*

Informal chatting gives young people the confidence to engage with referral agencies.

- *"One of the guys who was referred to me, he had been getting a lot of one-to-one support from the OSS team and it helped to give him the confidence and to get him referred to wider agencies".*

- *"The young people don't feel threatened or intimidated talking to the OSS staff and will do so where they wouldn't go to their GP. So it is a good informal start where the young person has a problem".*

The informal sessions in the OSS may be the only opportunities that the young people have to talk informally to a responsible adult.

- *"That really is the difference between the OSS and other organisations. If you get to know the young people, then you can meet their needs much more easily. The OSS staff may be, for some, the only responsible adult that they can talk to".*

- *"So often the young people that we work with and refer to OSS don't have a significant adult in their lives that they can talk to. It is a big step for a young person to go and ask for help".*

- *"I think it is fantastic, these are conversations that they might not be able to have with any other adult in their lives. They can chat here without being grilled or shouted at, as a parent might do, and just gently and easily they can be steered towards help".*

The informal chatting also helps the young people to understand what is going on in their lives, to place it in the context of other young people's experience and to articulate their own history and needs, possibly for the first time.

- *"The informal chatting is also about giving young people the space to get to know what they think, to try to articulate what they mean, not only for the worker, but for themselves".*

- *"Once they realise that there is no pressure, that they can join in as they want. Once they know that there is a dependable adult there who can advise and support them, then they will go and they will find the confidence to say eventually what is on their mind".*

Chatting between OSS staff and young people not only allows the OSS to identify needs, it helps to find the group norms and to establish where their current levels of understanding are.

- *"It lets you find where they are at as a group, the young people might not be as advanced as you think or may have misconceptions about an issue, so chatting helps you to get their "baseline" so that you can plan interventions more appropriately".*

How would things change for you [partner agency] if the OSS was not there?

Given the key role that most partners saw the OSS as filling in the landscape of youth services, most said that it would be difficult to find the same kind of partner to work with if the OSS did not exist. There does not appear to be any other project or service like the OSS that offers a youth friendly and unthreatening space, that provides help and support itself and is linked into other services through signposting, referral and joint working.

- "We would have to find another partner who could provide the same kind of help and I am not sure that such a thing exists".

- "It would be a disaster for me and the programmes that I run here. I don't know where else I could find the right unthreatening, youth friendly atmosphere to carry on my work".

- "We would have difficulty finding a new partner which was as inclusive both in terms of the location and the way that the staff work".

- "In the Trust building where we carry on our adult mental health work, there would also be young people in the building seeing their probation officer. In the OSS that doesn't happen and that is a big bonus for us, we don't want to be doing our mental health work with young people in the same premises as the probation service".

Indeed, a number of the partners that were interviewed had recent, practical experience of a particular OSS not being available for a period and the impact on them and on very vulnerable young people had been profoundly adverse emotionally and psychologically.

Without the OSS, some partners said that the work of their own agency would be much less effective.

- *"It would make it much more difficult for us to make early interventions and, consequently, the young people would suffer. When another service would get involved later, the problem may have escalated and be more difficult to deal with".*

- *"It would limit the kind of work that we do with vulnerable young people, particularly the ones who lack confidence to come forward and talk about their issues. If it wasn't there what would you put the money into that would give as good a return"?*

- *"We would be lost to know where to send young people for their general health needs. The remits of other organisations are very different, so the OSS is covering a unique set of services".*

- *"It would reduce the availability of post CAMHS care. It would take a lifeline away from the young people".*

If the OSS did not exist, there would be much more pressure on existing services.

- *"It would put a lot more pressure on existing services, which, themselves are already under pressure".*

- *"Our work would go on, of course, but we couldn't cope with extra pressure to try to fill the OSS gap. Anyway, we would not be able to give young people the depth and breadth of help and support that the OSS can do".*

Those partners who had recent direct experience of the abrupt cessation of a OSS service, endorsed this.

How would things change for young people in the area if OSS was not there?

Many young people simply do not know what kind of help is available. In turn, many young people are below the radar of the statutory services. Without the OSS to make the link, to offer support and create the signposting opportunities, these young people would have nowhere to turn for help. (See also comments above).

- *"There are so many people who need help that is just below the radar of the statutory service, where young people would not ever think of referring themselves to, where the OSS can provide a gentle nudge in the right direction or start them thinking about the kinds of issues that they have and what can be done about them".*

Without the OSS, partners said that young people would have nowhere to go that is so informal and unthreatening where they can get help and support. With nowhere to go for the same kind of help, advice and support, many young people will be displaced onto the street and drawn towards risky or antisocial behaviour.

- *"The young people would be on the streets, on the back lanes, drinking or taking drugs. There is nothing else like this for them".*

- *"Young people would just have nowhere to go that is so informal and unthreatening where they can get help and support".*

Access to signposting would cease. The informal, trusted, source of help and advice would disappear without anything to fill its place. This would lead to negative impacts on health and wellbeing.

- *"The young ones that I work with would have no access to signposting on drugs or sexual health. The consequences of not being able to access contraception is going to be an increase in teenage pregnancy, alcohol dependency and the mental health problems that arise from social isolation".*

- *"It would leave many vulnerable young people, particularly the ones who lack confidence to come forward and talk about their issues without any help or support. It would leave them stuck with their issues. There is nowhere else like the OSS to go and many of these young people would not know how to get help or referral without the OSS".*

- *"There is one person I have been working with to find a job and he never really had acceptance by his family. From the OSS he has been getting a lot of reinforcement about his self-worth and about hope for the future. Where would someone like that go if there was no OSS".*

- *"If you took the OSS away, young people won't refer themselves for formal help. They are quite willing to come to the OSS and join in and talk to the staff about things and then get referred for help. That would stop, the young people would lose that informal link into formal services".*

Again, the feedback from those partners who had recent direct experience of the abrupt cessation of a specific OSS service, concurred with this.

Appendices

Appendix A: Survey of Young People

One Stop Shops

Survey of Young People Using OSSs

15 April 2016

FINAL

Why are we doing this survey?

As one of the young people who use this One Stop Shop we want to hear what you think of the service.

We want to make sure that the service provided by this One Stop Shop is meeting your needs and the needs of other young people throughout Northern Ireland.

This is not a test or an exam. There are no right or wrong answers. It is simply whatever you think or feel. There are 5 other One Stop Shops in Northern Ireland participating in the survey (there are 8 One Stop Shops in total in Northern Ireland) and everyone is being asked the same questions.

How do I complete the survey?

For each question, please select your response or type your answer in the text box.

Confidentiality

Your answers are private and confidential and you cannot be identified in anyway. Please be as honest as possible in your answers as the results will be used to try and make sure the One Stop Shop becomes even better at helping and supporting you and other young people in Northern Ireland.

A big 'thank you' for taking part in the survey!

Section A: About You

A1. First of all, are you male or female…?

Male	1
Female	2
Other (please specify)	3

A2. What age are you…?

A3. Are you…? **Select one only**

At school	1
Attending an FE College	2
Attending a University	3
Work	4
Other (please specify)	5

A4. Which area do you live? **Select one only**

Antrim	1
Banbridge	2
Carrickfergus	3
Derry / Londonderry	4
Enniskillen	5
Newry	6

A5. How did you first find out about this One Stop Shop? **Select one only**

Brother / sister	1
Friend	2
Just knew it was here	3
Mum / dad	4
School	5
Twitter / Facebook etc.	6
Other (specify)	7

A6. How long have you been coming to this One Stop Shop? **Select one only**

Less than a month	1
1-2 months	2
3-6 months	3
7-12 months	4
1-2 years	5
More than 2 years	6

A7. Approximately how many times have you visited this One Stop Shop? **Select one only**

This is my first visit	1
2nd visit	2
2-3 times	3
4-5 times	4
6-10 times	5
10-20 times	6
More than 20 times	7
Don't know / can't remember	8

Section B: Reasons for Coming to this One Stop Shop

B1. Young people use this service for different reasons. Are any of the following reasons why you use this One Stop Shop service? **Select all that apply**

To meet friends / socialise	1
Something to do	2
Get advice and help with problems	3
Other reason (please specify)	4

B2. If you didn't come here to the One Stop Shop, what would you be doing? **Select all that apply**

At another service/youth club	1
Sitting at home	2
Hanging around on the streets, in shopping centres, etc.	3
Something else (please say what this is)	4
None of the above	5

B3. Has this One Stop Shop service helped you with any of the following…? **Select all that apply**

Alcohol	1
Bullying	2
Depression	3
Drugs (including tobacco)	4
Educational (School) Problems	5
Family Problems	6
Low Self-Esteem	7
Relationships	8
Self-harm	9
Sexual Health	10
Sexual orientation / gender issues	11
None of the above	12

B4. And has this One Stop Shop service helped you with any of the following…? **Select all that apply**

Benefits	1
Careers	2
Debts	3
Employment	4
Further Education	5
Healthy Eating	6
Housing	7
Independent Living Skills	8
Money Management	9
None of the above	10

B5. Has the service provided here helped you in any other ways? **Select one only**

Yes	1	➔ Go to B6
No	2	➔ If B3 = 12 and b4 =10 go to B14 else go to B7

B6. What other ways has this service helped you? **Please type your answer**

B7. Before getting help here, did you try and get help anywhere else? **Select one only**

Yes	1	➔ Go to B8
No	2	➔ Go to B14

B8. Whom did you try and get help from? **Select all that apply**

Counselling service	1
Friend	2
GP / Doctor	3
Lifeline	4
Mum / dad	5
Other family members	6
Teacher	7
Other (please specify)	8

B9. How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with this help you got? **Select one only**

Very satisfied	1	➔ Go to B11
Satisfied	2	➔ Go to B11
Dissatisfied	3	➔ Go to B10
Very dissatisfied	4	➔ Go to B10
Don't know	5	➔ Go to B11

B10. Why were you dissatisfied? **Please type your answer**

B11. Thinking about when this service has helped you, please say if each of the following statements is true or false. **Answer for each statement.**

	True	False	Don't know
I came here because I didn't know where else to go	1	2	3
Staff here were able to get me the help I needed	1	2	3
I was glad I came here to get help	1	2	3
My case was handled confidentially	1	2	3
Coming here has helped me deal with my problems	1	2	3
I feel more comfortable coming here than other places	1	2	3

B12. Overall how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the help and support you got here?
Select one only

Very satisfied	1	➔ Go to B14
Satisfied	2	➔ Go to B14
Dissatisfied	3	➔ Go to B13
Very dissatisfied	4	➔ Go to B13
Don't know	5	➔ Go to B14

B13. Why were you dissatisfied? **Please type your answer**

B14. Thinking about problems you may be experiencing, how comfortable would you be talking to the staff here to get help and advice, compared to other people who provide help and advice (e.g. a school counsellor etc.)? **Select one only**

More comfortable talking to staff here	1	➔ Go to B15
Wouldn't make any difference who I spoke with	2	➔ Go to Section C
More comfortable talking to other people	3	➔ Go to Section C
Don't know	4	➔ Go to Section C

B15. Briefly say why you would be more comfortable using this One Stop Shop?
Please type your answer

Section C: Using other Services

C1. Has using this service helped you get in contact with other services that provide help, support, advice or information? **Select one only**

Yes	1	➔ Go to C2
No	2	➔ Go to C6

C2. Has coming here made it easier for you to get help from these other services?
Select one only

Yes	1
No	2
Not sure	3

C3. Do you think you would have been able to get help from other service providers without the support of staff here? **Select one only**

Yes	1	➔ Go to C5
No	2	➔ Go to C4
Not sure	3	➔ Go to C5

C4. Why would you not have been able to get help from other service providers without the help of the staff here? **Please type your answer**

C5. How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the help and support you got from these other service providers to whom the staff here referred you? **Select one only**

Very satisfied	1
Satisfied	2
Dissatisfied	3
Very dissatisfied	4
Don't know	5

C6. Sometimes other service providers from outside come here to give talks or provide information sessions. Have you ever been to one of these talks or sessions?
Select one only

Yes	1	➔ Go to C7
No	2	➔ Go to Section D

C7. Did these talks or sessions help you in anyway? **Select one only**

Yes, helped me a lot	1	➔ Go to C8
Yes, helped me a little	2	➔ Go to C8
No, didn't help me	3	➔ Go to Section D
Not sure	4	➔ Go to Section D

C8. How did these talks or sessions by other service providers help you? **Please type your answer**

Section D: Staff and Informal Chats

D1. An important aspect of the service here is to provide young people with an opportunity to have informal chats with staff either on a one-to-one basis or in groups. Have you had informal 1-2-1 or group chats with staff here? **Select one only**

Yes, had 1-2-1 informal chats with staff	1	➔ Go to D2
Yes, had informal group chats with staff	2	➔ Go to D2
Yes, had both informal 1-2-1 and group chats	3	➔ Go to D2
Not had any informal chats with staff	4	➔ Go to D4
Don't know	5	➔ Go to D4

D2. Do these informal chats with staff help you in anyway? **Select one only**

Yes, they help a lot	1	➔ Go to D3
Yes, they help a little	2	➔ Go to D3
No, they are not helpful	3	➔ Go to D4
Don't know	4	➔ Go to D4

D3. What is the most important way that these informal chats with staff help you? **Please type your answer**

D4. Thinking about the staff here, please say if you agree or disagree with each of the following.? **Answer for each statement.**

	Agree	Disagree	Don't know
They understand me as a person	1	2	3
I am comfortable talking to them	1	2	3
I can share my problems with them	1	2	3
They don't judge me	1	2	3
They trust me	1	2	3
I trust them	1	2	3
They make me feel welcome here	1	2	3
They helped me become more confident	1	2	3
They care about me	1	2	3
They give me good advice	1	2	3
To help me express myself / who I am	1	2	3
Staff treat what I say to them as confidential	1	2	3

D5. Overall how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by the staff here?
Select one only

Very satisfied	1
Satisfied	2
Dissatisfied	3
Very dissatisfied	4
Don't know	5

Section E: Value of One Stop Shops

E1. What do you feel is the main benefit to you of coming here…? **Please type your answer**

E2. By using this service, do you feel that it has helped you personally with any of the following…? **Answer for each**

	Helped a lot	Helped a little	No, not helped
Your awareness of where to get help if needed?	1	2	3
Your self-esteem or how you see yourself?	1	2	3
Your confidence in your ability to deal with problems?	1	2	3
Your understanding of how to deal with your problems?	1	2	3
More confidence to talk to others about your problems?	1	2	3
Getting a job (fill out CVs, prepare for interviews etc.)?	1	2	3
Better able to cope with school?	1	2	3
Feel better about yourself?	1	2	3
Get you out of the house?	1	2	3
Provided you with opportunities to meet others?	1	2	3
Broadened your horizons?	1	2	3
Provided you with advice on how to avoid problems?	1	2	3
Being better able to cope with life?	1	2	3
Provided you with a place of safety?	1	2	3

E3. How much difference does coming here make to your life…? **Select one only**

A lot of difference (in a positive way)	1
Some difference (in a positive way)	2
It doesn't make that much difference to my life	3
It doesn't make any difference to my life	4
Not sure	5

E4. If this service wasn't here, what impact if any would this have on you personally? **Please type your answer**

E5. Do you think there are any downsides to using this service? **Select one only**

Yes	1	➔ Go to E6
No	2	➔ Go to E7

E6. What do you think is the main downside? **Please type your answer**

E7. If you were in charge of this service providing support for young people, what **one thing** would you do to make the service to young people even better? **Please type your answer**

E8. Providing a social and recreational space for young people is an important part of this One Stop Shop. What **one thing** could be done to improve the social and recreational aspects of this One Stop Shop? **Please type your answer**

E9. If there was one issue that you feel this service should be focusing more on, what would this be? **Select one only**

Alcohol	1
Bullying	2
Depression	3
Drugs (including tobacco)	4
Educational (School) Problems	5
Family Problems	6
Low Self-Esteem	7
Relationships	8
Self-harm	9
Sexual Health	10
Sexual orientation / gender issues	11
Benefits	12
Careers	13
Debts	14
Employment	15
Further Education	16
Healthy Eating	17
Housing	18
Independent Living Skills	19
Money Management	20
Other (please specify)	21
None of the above	22
Don't know	23

E10. Please say if you agree or disagree with each the following statements…?
Answer for each statement

	Agree	Disagree	Don't know
This service meets my needs	1	2	3
I am satisfied with the opening times	1	2	3
There are other places like this in my area	1	2	3
I would recommend this service to another young person	1	2	3

E11. Overall how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the service provided here?
Select one only

Very satisfied	1
Satisfied	2
Dissatisfied	3
Very dissatisfied	4
Don't know	5

E12. Please feel free to make any further comments on this service. **Please type your answer**

THANK AND CLOSE

Appendix B: Focus Groups with Young People

Public Health Agency

FOCUS GROUP AGENDA

Standard Pre-amble

(10 mins)

- Introductions;
- Background to the research
- Purpose for the focus group;
- Explain how people have been selected and why (outline of process and criteria and used)
- Explain that we will NOT be going into their particular subject/situation or why they came to the OSS, the discussion is more about how the OSS met or did not meet their needs / expectations
- Explain what we will cover during the focus group and the structure of the session overall;
- Standard focus group guidelines;
- Explain that it is their own personal views / experiences we are looking for – not what they think people in general would say
- Confidentiality and anonymity
  - What is spoken about in this room stays here;
  - No-body's name gets mentioned in our report;
- Permission to voice record the session

Key info (supplied by Project Manager in Advance). Note this is a summary of the group characteristics, anonymous, not by individual. It will only be used by us to write up the general characteristics of each focus group

Gender split of group: Male / female	MALE	FEMALE
Age Bands:	11 to 16	17 to 24
A brief summary of the kind of subject / situation(s) they sought support with		
An indication of when they first made contact with OSS		

PART 1 – BEFORE COMING TO THE OSS

(5 mins)

Before you came to [xxxx], did you go anywhere else like this?

What prompted you to come here to [xxxx]?

What is it about [xxxx] that keeps you coming here?

PART 2 – YOUR EXPERIENCE OF OSS INFORMAL CHATS

(15 mins)

The staff here sometimes have informal chats with young people either one-to-one or in groups.

Do you have chats like this with any of the staff here?

- What do you get out of these chats?
- Do the chats with staff help you in any way?
- Do you think these informal chats with staff are a good way of helping young people generally? If yes, why? If no, why not?

Do you chat amongst each other about stuff when you are here?

- Do you find that helps you in any way with everyday life or other things?
- Would you chat together anyway or does coming here make it easier for you to chat with each other?

BREAK for 5 mins….

PART 3 – OSS HELP IN ASSISTING ACCESS TO APPROPRIATE SERVICES

(15 mins)

We are interested in finding out if [xxxx] helps young people like yourselves to get in contact with outside organisations or get help from them if they need it.

- Has coming here made it easier for you to get help or support from any other organisations outside of here?
    - Possible prompts: - maybe staff organised for you to see someone from another organisation - or helped you to get information about things that are important to you?
- Would you have been able to get that (advice/support/information) without the help of staff here? If not, why not?
- Have other organisations ever come into [xxxx] to give talks or provide information?
    - How helpful did you find that?
    - Would you have been able to get that (advice/ support/ information) without the [xxxx]/ If not, why not?

PART 4 – THE VALUE OF OSS

(15 mins)

Is there anything else in this area that gives you the same kind of experience or help that [xxxx] does?

Do you enjoy coming to [xxxx]? (what do you enjoy, what do you get out of it?)

What are the best things about [xxxx]?

Is [xxxx] special in any way? If so how?

If you had never been here to [xxxx] do you think that things in your life would be different in any way?

BREAK for 5 mins….

PART 5 – SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS

(15 mins)

Just for a moment, I'd like you to imagine that you are in charge of this place providing support for young people like you.

- What *more* could [xxxx]? do for young people? (what could it do that it is not doing already?
- (if not covered in answer to the above) are there any gaps in the what [xxxx] provides, for young people?
- What improvements could be made *(If not mentioned, prompt with words like… 'the building', 'information' , 'staff', ' 'transport', 'comfort', 'opening times', 'amount of time')*

PART 6 – CONCLUSION

(5 mins)

- Summarise the key points raised and the suggestions made.
- Remind participants of how their feedback will be used, when report will be completed and what will happen next.
- Thank participants and close.

Process & QA

To ensure a complete and accurate record of the proceedings and subject to the consent of the participants, a digital voice recording (confidential to SMR) will also be made of each focus group.

Appendix C: Case Studies with Young People

Case Study Interview with Young Person

1. **Client summary** – Key features of client selected (e.g. age, gender, key issue(s))

2. **Motivation** - What first prompted you to come to <Name of OSS>
   a. (Prompt if required social/recreational reasons / support/help)

3. **Topic(s)** - Since you have been coming here, what kinds of things have you been able to talk over with staff here?

4. **Help /support you received** - Was there any particular topic where talking to the staff here was especially helpful to you?

   (Would you be able to tell me a bit more about that? Describe situation / understand)

5. **How** did the staff here help you with that?

   (Prompts: What did they do? say? help with? refer you to?
   What did OSS do for you to help with your problem(s)?
   Did they link you in with other services?)

6. **Looking back**, is there any further help you would have liked from the staff here?

7 **Alternative(s)?** Before you started coming here, had you tried to get help from anyone else about this?
If so, how did that work out for you?
(Probe for positive and negative aspects of this experience. What are the catalysts and barriers?

8 If not, had you considered approaching anyone else or maybe another service?
(Probe for rationale behind this 'alternative' source of support approach. What are the catalysts and barriers?)

9 **Outcome** - How are things for you (in relation to the above subject) now? / Has your problem(s) been resolved?

10 **Overall Satisfaction**
Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the outcome for you?
How important or unimportant would you say the help and support you received at <Name of OSS> was in helping you with <topic>?

Case Study Interviews: Staff

The focus on the two staff case studies to be on staff's experience and perception of the value / importance of informal chats to young people.

What…

What is happening at this OSS re informal chats? Nature and scale.

- What form(s) do they take? one to one? groups? both?

- When do the forms differ?
- What sorts of topics have been covered in the last 12 months in informal chats?
- What proportion of staff time does this typically occupy?
- Do the young people seem to prefer to chat informally to specific staff members rather than others?
- If so, how come? (probe for listening skills / other skills / disposition etc)

Importance…

- How important are these informal chats?
- When are they especially important?
- What do you think would happen if there were no informal chats?

Appendix D: Interviews with Partner Agencies

Evaluation of the Value of One Stop Shops
Public Health Agency, 2016

Interviews: Partner Agencies (Face to Face / Telephone)

Duration: Circa 30 mins

1 What is the nature of the relationship between [partner agency] and the OSS?

2 Why do you think young people go to the OSS?
- what are they looking for and
- what do they get out of it?

3 What do you consider is the added value (if any) to you and OSS working together
- Added value for [partner agency]
- Added value for OSS
- Added value for the young person

4 How would you rate the effectiveness of the OSS in assisting young people in need of support to access services? Give reasons for your rating.

5 No organisation or system is perfect.
a) What works best between [partner agency] and OSS?
b) What could be improved?

6 OSS staff sometimes work one-to-one or in groups with young people, just chatting informally. Are you aware of this?

If so:

a) what do you think is the value of those informal interactions?

b) to what extent do you think those informal chats can help a young person problems from escalating?

8 How would things change for you [partner agency] if the OSS was not there?

9 How would things change for young people in the area if OSS was not there?

Appendix E: Partner Organisations Interviewed & Job Roles

Range of organisations consulted:	Range of job roles of interviewees:
▪ Action Mental Health ▪ Bangor Academy ▪ Breakthru, Action Mental Mealth ▪ CAMHS WH&SCT ▪ Carrickfergus College ▪ Carrickfergus Womens Forum ▪ Castle Tower School ▪ CEDAR Foundation ▪ Downshire School ▪ Education Authority NI ▪ ETHOS Family Hub ▪ Gilford Community Forum ▪ Hazelwood Integrated College ▪ Kilcooley School ▪ Network Personnel ▪ Newry and Mourne Enterprise Agency ▪ Oriel Training ▪ People Plus NI ▪ Pregnancy Resource Centre ▪ Reed in Partnership, Workroutes ▪ RELATE ▪ SH&SCT ▪ Start360 ▪ STEPS Training for Business ▪ Strand Foyer ▪ The Link ▪ Youth Action NI.	▪ Careers Guidance Counsellor ▪ Counsellor ▪ Facilitator ▪ facilitator / project worker ▪ Family Liaison Officer ▪ Family Support coordinator ▪ Health and Wellbeing Officer ▪ Housing Manager ▪ Key Worker ▪ Life Tutor ▪ Mental Health Coordinator ▪ Mental Health worker ▪ Pastoral Care / Teacher ▪ Programme Manager ▪ School Nurse ▪ Senior Health Promotion Officer ▪ Senior Youth Worker ▪ Skills Co-Ordinator ▪ Smoking cessation officer ▪ Teacher ▪ Team Leader ▪ Youth Officer ▪ Youth Worker.

Appendix F: Workshop with OSS Managers and Senior PHA Personnel

HSC Public Health Agency

Evaluation of One Stop Shops 2016

Workshop

23rd May 2016

Purpose of Event / Opening Remarks

Welcome!

HSC Public Health Agency

Research Led by…

Donal McDade
Managing Director, Social Market Research
www.socialmarketresearch.co.uk

Eileen Beamish
Director

Dennis McCoy
Director

Thank you for all your support!

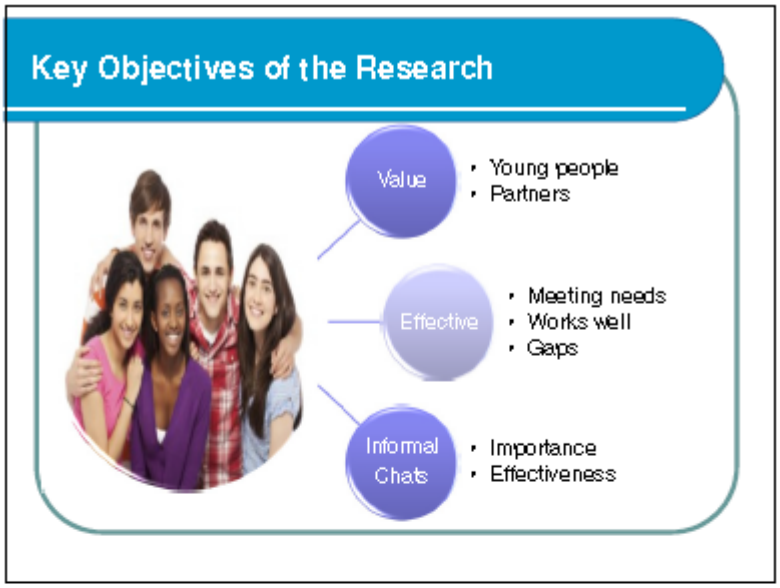
'Moving-forward-together' ethos…

- Share what we've learned so far, plus preliminary conclusions
- Listen to your comments, views and suggestions
- Explore and deliberate issues together
- Diverse views are welcome
- Prioritise where possible

Overall Aim of the Research

The 'Value' of OSS (2016)…

'To establish the value of OSS (i.e. their current model) with a particular focus on the views of young people and partner agencies'.


Key Objectives of the Research
Value
Young people
Partners
Effective
Meeting needs
Works well
Gaps
Informal Chats
Importance
Effectiveness

Summary of Our Approach & Work to Date
Project Initiation
Consulted young people
Focus groups
Case studies
Survey
Interviewed partner agencies
Design/conduct OSS Network Workshop
Produce research report

Proposed format of workshop…

- 10:45 – 11:15 Presentation: SMR – What we found…
- 11:15 – 11:30 Open forum - Any more key points?

11.30 – 11.45 Break

Group Discussions…

- 11.45 – 12.30 Question 1: What 'makes' a OSS?
- 12:30 – 1.15 Question 2: What does an 'effective' OSS look like?
- 1:15 Closing remarks and next steps –PHA

1:30 – 2 Lunch & network

What we found…

Value: Young People: FGs & Case Studies

Initial attraction…
- ✓Curiosity
- ✓Charisma of OSS Staff
- ✓Recreation/Hang out
- ✓Facilities
- ✓Friends going

Why they keep coming…
- ✓Relationship with OSS Staff, valued, sense of belonging, 'family', friends
- ✓Life altering info, support and advocacy: Mental health, employment, esteem
- ✓Space to talk openly; Not judged
- ✓Diversity, inclusion
- ✓Relevant / tailored
- ✓Young person centred; Peer-led activities
- ✓Recreation and expanded opportunities
- ✓Their space

Comment
- Opening hours

Value: Partners 1

Advantages for partners
- ✓Increases the impact of the partner's own work.
- ✓Meets low level needs, so eases partner's case load burden
- ✓Joint working, trying out new approaches
- ✓Youth friendly venue to work from

Effectiveness of referral
- ✓Very effective informal entry to services
- ✓Keeps young person engaged and ensures they attend appointment
- ✓Very effective where more than one kind of help needed
- ✓Very effective where young people don't know what their issues are
- ✓Builds confidence to self-refer

Comment: More provision needed where English is not first language?

Value: Partners 2

Partners views on chatting

- ✓Builds trust and confidence empowering young people to open up.
- ✓Good/ best practice approach in youth work
- ✓Creates more effective engagement with the young people
- ✓Helps young people to understand what is going on in their lives
- ✓Helps young people to articulate their needs

If OSS was not there?

- ✓OSS is a key player in the service landscape
- ✓Difficult to find the same kind of partner to work with
- ✓Partner agencies work would be less effective
- ✓Would put more pressure on existing services
- ✓Would lose young people below the radar of the statutory services.

Comment: More provision needed for rural areas?

Effectiveness

Getting access…

- ✓Highly effective
- ✓Provide an indispensable bridge
- ✓Most need help when least able to ask / engage

What works well…

- ✓Skilled, experienced and attuned staff
- ✓Informal chats
- ✓Partner networks
- ✓Flexible advocacy

Differences in effectiveness…?

- ✓None discernible
- ✓Await survey data

Informal chats

Comprises
- ✓Approx 50% staff time
- ✓Group and individual
- ✓Planned and one the spot
- ✓Variety of topics

Essential
- ✓Life altering
- ✓Life affirming
- ✓Intervention/Preventention
- ✓Precursor to referral
- ✓Safe space
- ✓Reduce isolation
- ✓Hope
- ✓Practical, timely, competent support

Comment
- More trips to encourage opening up

Preliminary survey findings

Key findings
- ✓68% use OSS to meet friends / socialise
- ✓45% to get advice and help
- ✓Helped with:
  - ✓ low self-esteem (39%)
  - ✓ Depression (39%)
  - ✓ Relationships (29%)
  - ✓ Bullying (25%
- ✓83% more comfortable talking to OSS staff
- ✓74% OSS helped contact other serv. Providers
- ✓83% satisfied with help from other serv. Providers

Preliminary survey findings

Key findings

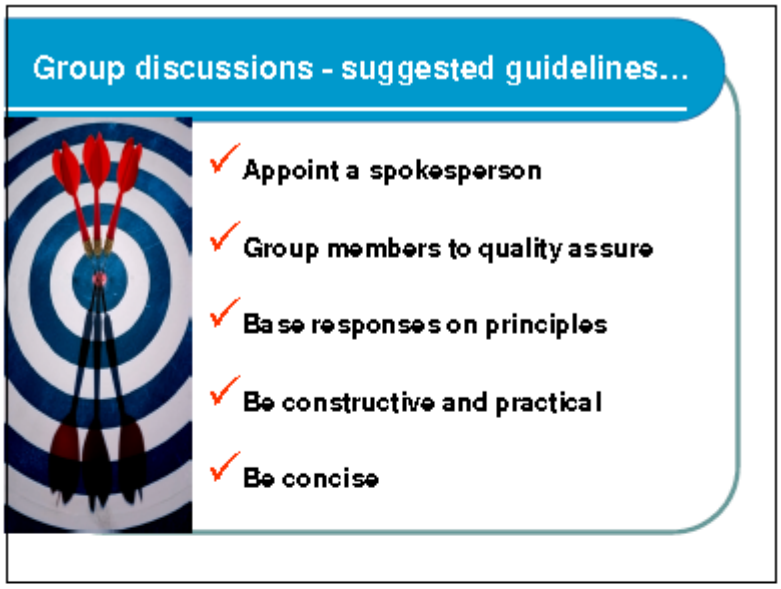
- ✓82% have had informal chats with staff
- ✓96% say chats helpful
  - ✓ 98% comfortable talking to staff
  - ✓ 97% said staff welcoming
  - ✓ 94% said staff care about them
- ✓94% satisfied with OSS staff
- ✓Value of OSS
  - ✓ Place of safety (89%)
  - ✓ Opportunity to meet others (89%)
  - ✓ Feel better about yourself (81%)
  - ✓ More confidence to talk to others re: problems (78%)
  - ✓ Awareness of where to get help (75%)

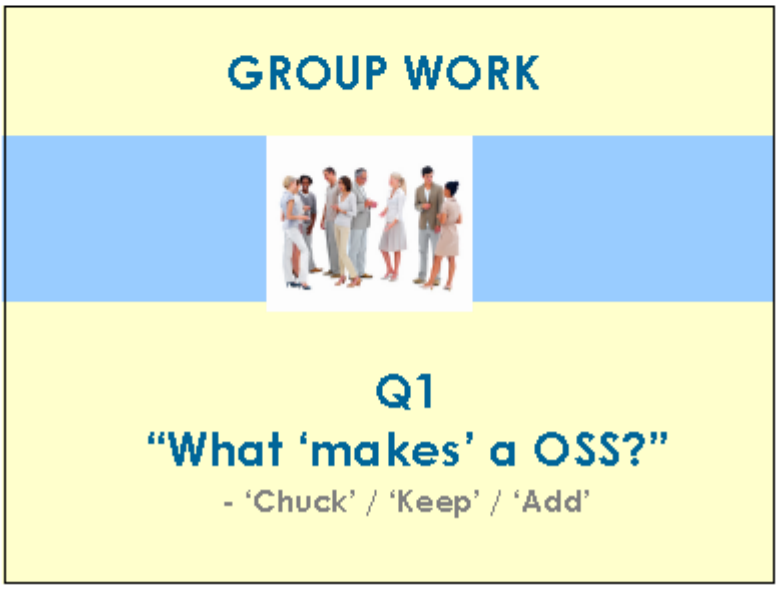
- ✓96% said makes positive difference to their life
- ✓92% - service meets their needs
- ✓22% - other places like OSS in their area
- ✓94% satisfied with OSS service (6% don't know)

OPEN FORUM

social market research SMR

Any more key points?


Group discussions - suggested guidelines...
Appoint a spokesperson
Group members to quality assure
Base responses on principles
Be constructive and practical
Be concise


GROUP WORK
Q1
"What 'makes' a OSS?"
- 'Chuck' / 'Keep' / 'Add'

GROUP WORK

Q2

"What does an 'effective' OSS look like?

Ethos / Activities / Outcomes

Closing remarks and next steps...

HSC Public Health Agency