

Tuesday, 29 April 2025

YOUTH SERVICES WORKING GROUP

To be held in the Council Chamber, Town Council Offices,
Wednesday 7th May 2025 at 7.00pm

Town Councillors are reminded that they have a duty to state a Declaration of Interest prior to the appropriate agenda item and to consider the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 s.17 when reaching a decision.

Working Group Members:

Quorum minimum of 3 elected members:

Cllr Chloe Gustard (Chair)	Cllr Catherine Daniell (Vice-Chair, Deputy Leader)
Cllr Libby Ancrum (Mayor, ex-officio)	Cllr Dr Merylyn Canet
Cllr Gareth Willis	

Co-opted Members:

Sevenoaks Youth Council: Harry King Madeleine Politzer	Sevenoaks District Council: Kelly Webb Maxine Quinton
Kent County Council: Vacant	West Kent Communities: Richard Dowling
Sevenoaks Area Youth Trust: Peter Robinson	National Trust: Amy Sabine

AGENDA

1	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE To receive and note apologies for absence.
2	REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS To consider written requests from Members which have previously been submitted to the Town Clerk to enable participation in discussion and voting on items for which the Member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest. (s.31 & s.33 of the Localism Act 2011).
3	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST To receive any declarations of interest from members in respect of items of business included in the agenda for this meeting.
4	MINUTES OF THE YOUTH SERVICES WORKING GROUP HELD ON 12th MARCH To receive, adopt and sign the minutes of the meeting of the Youth Services Working Group held on Wednesday 12th March 2025.
5	MINUTES OF THE YOUTH COUNCIL HELD ON 05th MARCH

	To receive and adopt the minutes of the Youth Council meeting held on Wednesday, 05th March 2025
6	HOUSE IN THE BASEMENT (HiTB) YOUTH CAFE To receive and discuss the following report:
6.1	HiTB Manager's Update Report
6.2	Finance Cost Centre Reports February
7	REPORTS FROM CO-OPTED PARTNERS
7.1	SDC- Community Safety Team
7.2	West Kent Communities Detached work overview- January- March report
7.3	SAYT
7.4	National Trust- Knole
8	SKATE PARK EVENT UPDATE To receive and note the update for the Greatness Skate Park event on the 25th of July 2025.
9	PRESS RELEASE To consider any agenda item, which would be appropriate for a press release.

Sevenoaks Town Council
Minutes of the Meeting of the Youth Services Working Group
Held on 12th March 2025 at the Town Council Offices

Meeting Commenced: 2.00 p.m.

Meeting Concluded: 2.48 p.m.

Present:

Cllr Chloe Gustard (Chair)	Present	Cllr Dr Marilyn Canet	Present
Cllr Catherine Daniell (Vice-Chair, Deputy-Leader)	Apologies	Cllr Gareth Willis	Apologies
Co-opted members			
Sevenoaks Youth Council: Harry King Madeleine Politzer	Apologies Apologies	Sevenoaks District Council: Maxine Quinton	Present
Kent County Council: Vacant	–	West Kent Communities: Richard Dowling	Apologies
Sevenoaks Area Youth Trust: Peter Robinson	Apologies	National Trust: Amy Sabine	Apologies

Substitute		For
Cllr Nigel Wightman (Leader)	Present	Cllr Catherine Daniell (Vice-Chair, Deputy-Leader)
Cllr Tony Clayton (Deputy Mayor)	Present	Cllr Gareth Willis

In attendance: Town Clerk, House in the Basement Youth Café Manager and Youth Committee Clerk.

343. Apologies for Absence: Received and accepted as noted above.

344. Requests for Dispensations: There were no requests for dispensations.

345. Declarations of Interest: There were no declarations of interest.

346. Minutes of Youth Services Committee held on 15th January 2025
It was agreed to receive and accept the minutes as a true record.

347. Minutes of Sevenoaks Youth Council meeting held on 15th January 2025
It was agreed to receive and accept the minutes as a true record

348. House in the Basement Youth Café (HitB)

348.1 Manager's Report

The Working Group heard from Daren Mountain that House in the Basement has been very well attended with the best figures since 2016. It was noted that there have been a lot of enquiries from young people looking to complete their bronze and silver volunteering for the Duke of Edinburgh with House in the Basement. Daren also mentioned that House in the Basement Staff has been carrying out training.

Daren reported that the Open Mic Nights have been going well with many young people attending these events. It was noted that many of the young

Sevenoaks Town Council
Minutes of the Meeting of the Youth Services Working Group
Held on 12th March 2025 at the Town Council Offices

people who attended these events have also since attended House in the Basement during their standard sessions.

It was noted that House in the Basement was creating a mural out of Lego for Britain in Bloom judging and was calling for donations of Lego flowers to help create the mural with some donations having already been received.

The Chair noted it is nice to know that House in the Basement is being so well used.

348.2 Finance Cost Centre Reports, January- February 2025

The Finance Cost Centre reports for the House in the Basement Youth Café for January- February 2025 were received and noted.

349. Grant Reports

It was noted that since the last meeting, the outstanding grants had been approved by the Community and Wellbeing Committee. It was noted that the remaining budget is £1,238.68.

RESOLVED: To CONSIDER the grant application request be awarded under the General Power of Competence (Localism Act 2011 Sections 1-8 refers) as follows:

Grant Ref No	Organisation Name & Charity Reg	Purpose of award	Grant Application	Grant approved
81	Eynsford Concert Band 277086	Cost of venue hire and ancillary costs to deliver one-day educational music workshop for young brass and woodwind players.	£500	£500
Total awarded				£500

350. Reports from Co-opted Partners

The following reports from Co-opted Partners were noted:

i) **Sevenoaks District Council, Community Safety**

Maxine Quinton reported that during the February half-term, there was an incident of anti-social behaviour at the multi-story car park, and the images taken via the CCTV cameras have been circulated to schools. It was noted that there had also been an issue at the train station with Kent police and British Transport Police being involved. The Working Group heard that there had been some damage to the Bat and Ball Station and the Community Safety team was currently investigating.

The Councillors noted that Sevenoaks District Council had provided free self-defence courses for Women and girls that started on Monday the 10th of March

Sevenoaks Town Council
Minutes of the Meeting of the Youth Services Working Group
Held on 12th March 2025 at the Town Council Offices

and were running for five weeks, Maxine reported it had previously had great success in Swanley.

ii) **West Kent Youth Services (WKYS)**

The Working Group received and noted the outreach report sent by Richard Dowling in his absence.

351. Current and Completed Matters

The Councillors received and noted the Current and Completed Matters report.

352. Youth Council Work Experience Website Page

The Councillors noted that the Work Experience page on the Youth Council Website is steadily growing with local businesses being added to the list.

353. Summer Music on the Bandstand- Children's Activities

The Councillors heard the Sevenoaks Town Council planned to make the Thursday summer bandstand events more family-orientated with the Sundays remaining for the traditional brass bands. They are looking at hiring a company to provide and host a free children's activity that would supplement the performance on the bandstand for over 6 weeks. It was noted that to fund the event we may need to look at Sponsorship.

RESOLVED: To proceed with additional facilities e.g. Bouncy Castle for 6 weeks at a cost of £1,718. Sponsorship is initially to be sought.

354. Youth Council Mental Health Survey Report

The Chair congratulated the Youth Council on all their hard work in obtaining responses from their friends and other students in their schools and on their hard work in compiling these responses into the report.

RESOLVED: The report be sent out to schools, Youth Organisations and Councillors to help raise awareness of young people's mental health.

355. Skateboard event for 2025

The Working Group heard that Sevenoaks Town Council plans to work with Kings Ramps to hold another Skateboard event again this year at Greatness Recreation Ground. It was noted that in the past these events have been extremely well attended. It was reported that the Youth Council had put £750 towards the funding of the event.

RESOLVED: To put the remaining Youth Outreach Budget of £738.68 towards the funding of the Skateboarding event for 2025.

Sevenoaks Town Council
Minutes of the Meeting of the Youth Services Working Group
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356. Press Release

The Councillors recommended the following to be issued as a press release:

- 1) To issue a press release on the Youth Council Mental Health Survey.
- 2) To issue a press release on the Youth Council Work Experience web page.

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting.

Signed
Chair

Dated



Sevenoaks Youth Council



MENTAL HEALTH SURVEY REPORT

Sevenoaks Youth Council Mental Health Survey Report

Introduction

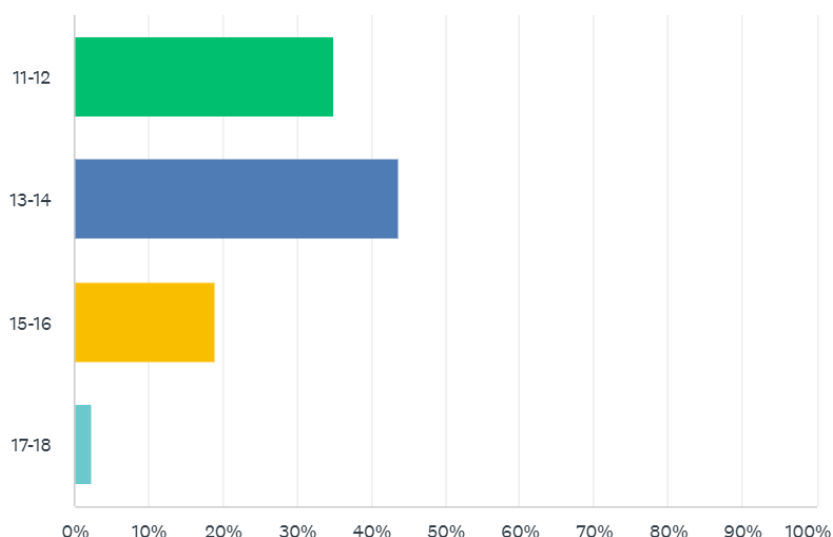
On September 9, 2024, the Sevenoaks Youth Council created and launched its Mental Health Survey targeting young people aged 11–18. This was distributed through local schools and youth organisations in the Sevenoaks town area, accompanied by posters signposting available support. The survey was designed to capture authentic, anonymous feedback about mental health from young people. It ran for two months, closing on November 13, 2024, having received 250 responses.

The largest age groups were 13–14 years (43.78%) and 11–12 years (34.94%), with smaller percentages for the older age brackets.

- **Response Count:** 250 responses (with minor variations across questions).
- **Age Distribution:**
 - 11–12 years: 34.94%
 - 13–14 years: 43.78%
 - 15–16 years: 18.88%
 - 17–18 years: 2.41%

Note: Some questions had slight variations in response numbers due to skipped items.

(Question 1) Age:



Questions 2 and 5 have been left out of this survey due to a data issue. These questions asked young people to rate their feelings on a scale from 1 to 5. However, the collected data was recorded on a scale from 1 to 100, with extreme variations. Some responses were also entered manually, making the data unreliable. As a result, these questions were not included. The questions were:

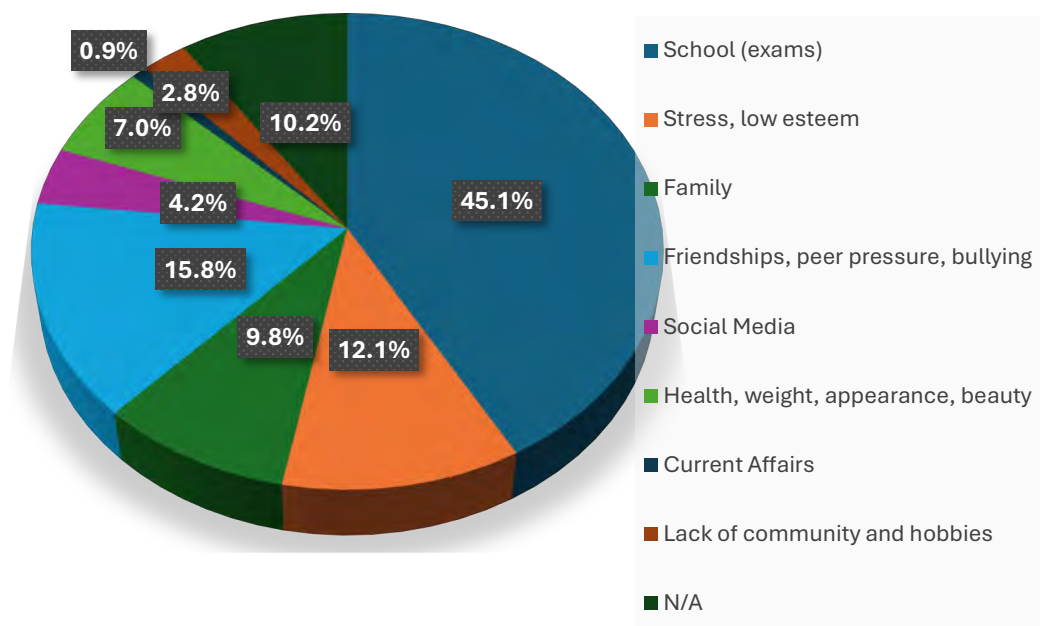
Sevenoaks Youth Council Mental Health Survey Report

- (Question 2) On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate your mental wellbeing currently? (1 being very poor and 5 being excellent)
- (Question 5) On a scale of 1 to 5 how stressed are you generally? (1 being not stressed at all and 5 being extremely stressed)

(Question 3) What are some factors that negatively impact your mental health?

A total of 215 young people responded to what they felt negatively impacted their mental health, while 35 skipped the question. Analysis of open-ended responses revealed several key themes:

- **School-Related Stress:**
45.1% mentioned school as a primary stressor citing factors such as exams and overall academic workload, and homework.
- **Stress and Self-Image:**
12.1% highlighted issues related to stress, anxiety, and self-esteem (including concerns about how others perceive them, mindset issues, and self-criticism), with 7% of respondents outlining that their health, weight, weight, appearance, and beauty as affecting their mental health.
- **Uncertainty:**
10.2% of responses indicated that they did not know.
- **Additional Factors:**
Other responses pointed to bullying, friendships and Peer pressure (15.8%), Family (9.8%), and negative experiences with social media (4.2%).



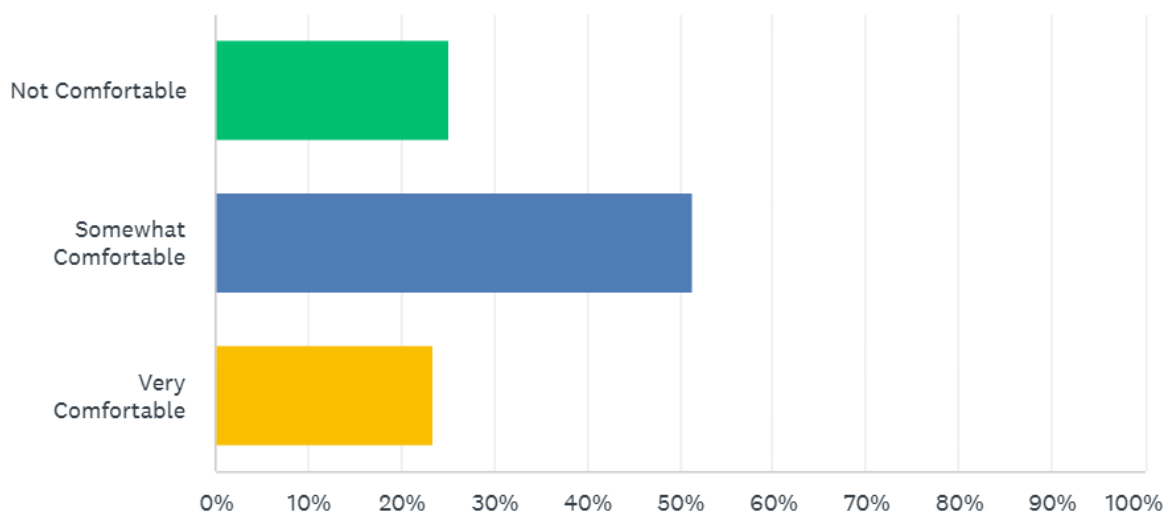
Sevenoaks Youth Council Mental Health Survey Report

(Question 4) How comfortable are you talking about youth Mental Health?

247 respondents (with three skipping) shared how comfortable they feel talking about their mental health:

- **Very Comfortable:** 23.48% (58 respondents)
- **Somewhat Comfortable:** 51.42% (127 respondents)
- **Not Comfortable:** 25.10% (62 respondents)

While more than 70% of young people reported feeling at least somewhat comfortable discussing mental health, nearly one in four remain reluctant to do so.

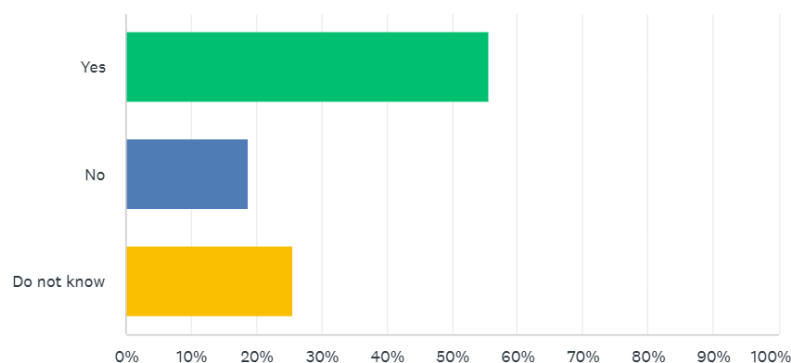


(Question 6) Do you feel you have a good school-life balance?

When asked about their school-life balance (with 246 responses):

- **Yes (Good Balance):** 61.90% (143 respondents)
- **No:** 6.93% (16 respondents)
- **Do Not Know:** 27.27% (63 respondents)

Although a majority believe they maintain a healthy balance, nearly one-third of respondents are either uncertain or feel that their balance could be improved.



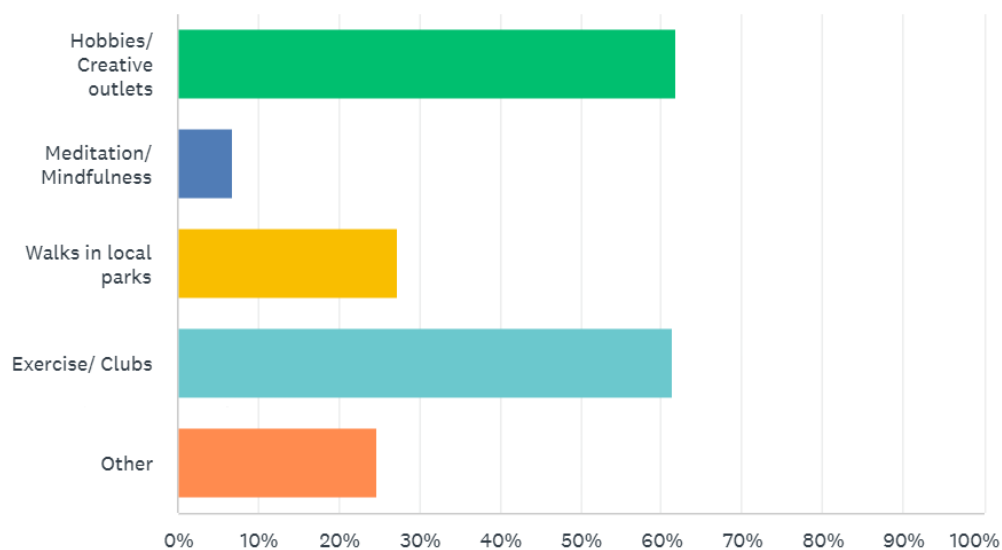
Sevenoaks Youth Council Mental Health Survey Report

(Question 7) Do you practice any of the following to cope with stress/ promote well-being?

Young people were asked about the strategies they use to cope with stress and promote well-being. Of the 231 respondents who answered this question (with 19 skipping), the recorded responses were as follows:

- **Hobbies/Creative Outlets:**
143 respondents (61.90%) reported relying on creative activities to cope with stress.
- **Meditation/Mindfulness:**
16 respondents (6.93%) indicated they practice meditation or mindfulness techniques.
- **Walks in Local Parks:**
63 respondents (27.27%) selected going on walks in local parks and green spaces.
- **Exercise/Clubs:**
142 respondents (61.47%) highlighted using exercise and or clubs to help cope with stress and general well-being.
- **Other:**

It should be noted that in the survey while there is an “other” option there was no prompt for young people who selected this to fill in how they coped with stress and well-being, 57 respondents (24.68%) selected this option.



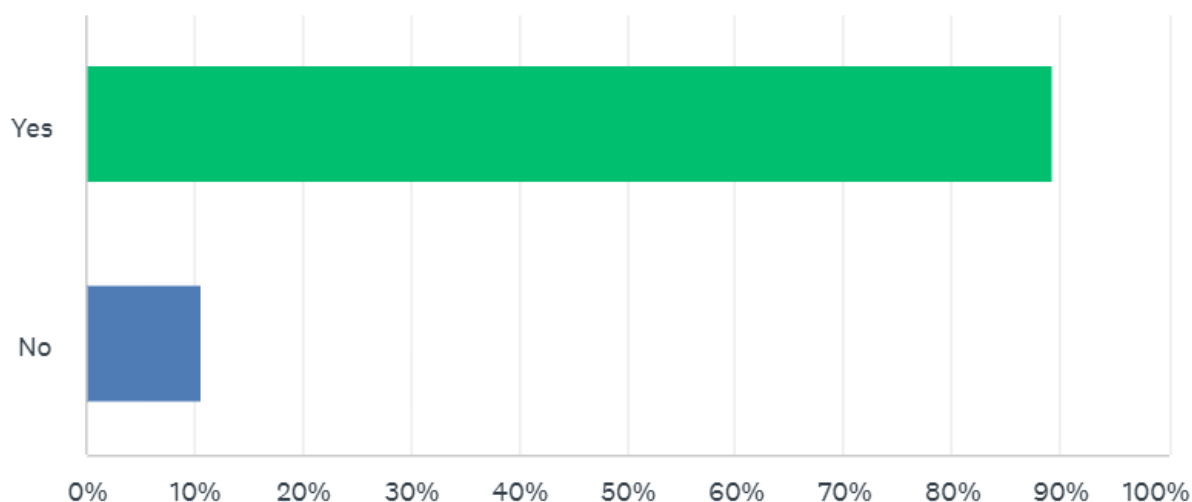
Sevenoaks Youth Council Mental Health Survey Report

(Question 8) Do you know where to go for help?

In this question, which seeks to gauge the level of awareness of where they can go to seek help, 246 of the respondents answered (with four skipping). This question was put to the young people as a yes or no question and yielded the following results:

- **Yes:** 89.43% (220 respondents) confirmed they are aware of support services.
- **No:** 10.57% (26 respondents) indicated they do not know where to seek help.

The high level of awareness is encouraging; however, the 10.57% who are uncertain demonstrate the need for enhanced signposting and communication about available mental health resources.



(Question 9) What could your school do to support student's mental well-being?

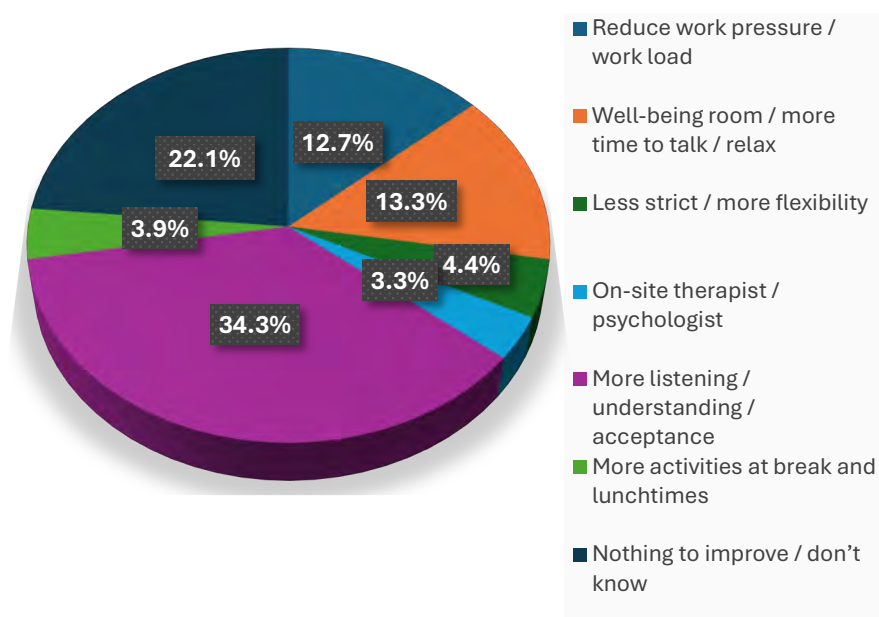
Key Findings:

181 of the 250 respondents provided insights into how their school could better support student mental health with 69 skipping this question. The responses reveal several recurring themes:

- **Dedicated Well-Being Spaces:**
13.3% of respondents proposed the establishment of designated “well-being spaces” within schools. These areas would offer students a quiet environment to relax, engage in mindfulness, or simply take a break from the daily pressures of school life.
- **Mental Health Awareness:**
34.3% of respondents requested that more understanding towards mental health was needed in schools with more listening and acceptance was needed. 3.3% of the respondents highlighted that more mental health support staff were needed for students to talk to. 12.7% of respondents suggested that a reduction in workload and pressure could help improve their mental well-being.

Sevenoaks Youth Council Mental Health Survey Report

It is important to note that 22.1% of the respondents reported that they are content with the current level of support offered by the schools or that they did not know how the school could improve.



(Question 10) What could be done in your community to raise awareness about mental health?

Key Findings:

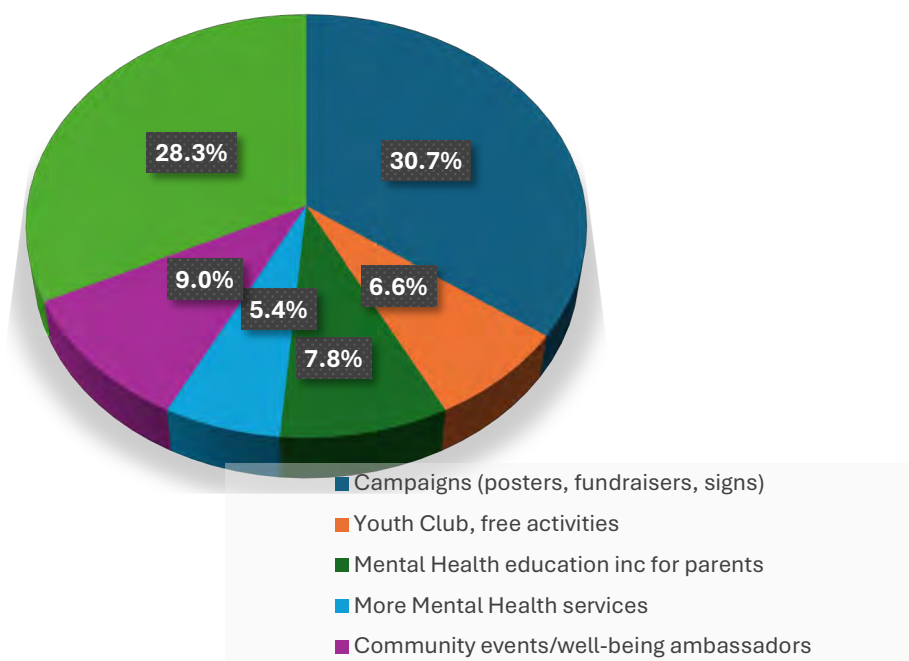
Responses to Section 10 with 166 contributions focused on what could be done in the community to enhance mental health awareness, it should be noted 84 skipped this question. The key recommendations include:

- Organised Events and Campaigns:**
 30.7% of respondents advocated for community-wide events, such as mental health awareness days and public campaigns. 6.6% requested more youth clubs, free activities and facilities within the town as well as more awareness of those facilities that already exist. One of the common requests under this heading was for a specific mental health awareness event.
- Enhanced Mental Health Education:**
 7.8% of respondents mentioned they would like to see more regular, structured sessions such as assemblies or workshops featuring mental health professionals. 5.4% of respondents highlighted that having someone they could go and talk to about how they were feeling outside of school could help.

28.3% of those who answered this question stated that they were unsure or did not know what could be done to raise awareness for mental health.

The responses indicate that young people see great value in proactive community initiatives that not only educate but also actively involve them in the dialogue around mental health.ⁱ

Sevenoaks Youth Council Mental Health Survey Report



Conclusion

The survey findings reveal that academic pressures, self-image concerns, and experiences of bullying are among the primary factors negatively impacting young people's mental health.

The majority of respondents reported having a good school-life balance and they are relying on positive coping strategies that were key to good mental well-being at school, most notably through creative outlets. However, a significant proportion of respondents feel uncomfortable discussing mental health and/or remain uncertain about where to seek the help required.

The diverse suggestions provided, particularly regarding reduced academic pressure and enhanced support mechanisms display that there are several ways to change school structures to benefit student's mental health as well as a number of additional supports that could be integrated within the local community.

Recommendations from Sevenoaks Youth Council:

- Encourage schools to create an internal young people's mentorship programme
- Promote via posters and digital information for students about where to get help if concerned about exam pressure
- Also via posters and digitally provide links to independent services for helping with mental health concerns
- More information talks at schools around *It is ok not to be ok* and *where to access help*
- Consider making available space for young people to meet up and share revision notes and techniques and/ or create groups e.g. informal language meet-ups.

Sevenoaks Youth Council Mental Health Survey Report

Acknowledgements

We extend our gratitude to all Youth Council members for their contribution and help in promoting the survey within their schools. Special thanks to Youth Councillor Riddley McDermott for his efforts in correlating data for questions 3, 9, and 10.

Simba Li- Chair	Lizzie Hunt
Rosie Blackmore- Vice-Chair	Cristian Hunter-Garcia
Harry King- Treasurer	Sharma Ishwar
Bianca Agarwal	Riddley McDermott
Aryanna Mahdavi Ardestani	Ayaan Motwani
Catherine Barden De Leon	John Ng
Rosie Blackmore	Madeleine Politzer
Dexter Buhmann	Elif Sabanci
Catherine Campbell-Pitt	Drago Schwalber-Janaway
Charlotte Doe	Jospeh Soanes
Elena-Teodora Dragoi	James Tang
Ayush Gautam	Ines Wang
Maya Goodrich	Aditya Vara
Bea Hayward	

ⁱ The data for questions 3, 9, and 10 were correlated by Youth Councillor Riddley McDermott, whose valuable contributions are gratefully acknowledged in this report.

Sevenoaks Youth Council

Sevenoaks Town Youth Councillors are elected to represent the views, issues and opinions of young people across Sevenoaks, to make a difference and change things for the better in Sevenoaks.

Youth Council meetings are held approximately every 6 weeks in the Town Council Chamber.

Since its conception in 2009 the Youth Council has become increasingly involved in initiating and developing events for young people.

All young people are welcome to attend and join the Youth Council.

For more information about Sevenoaks Youth Council please QR code below Or check out our Instagram: @sevenoaks_youthcouncilofficial



Minutes of the meeting of the Sevenoaks Youth Council
Held on 07th May 2025

at Town Council Offices, Bradbourne Vale Road, Sevenoaks, TN133QG,

Meeting Commenced: 6.00 p.m.

Meeting Concluded: 7.00 p.m.

Present:

Youth Council Members:

Simba Li- Chair	Present	Lizzie Hunt	Absent
Rosie Blackmore- Vice-Chair	Present	Cristian Hunter-Garcia	Absent
Harry King- Treasurer	Present	Sharma Ishwar	Present
Bianca Agarwal	Present	Riddley McDermott	Present
Aryanna Mahdavi Ardestani	Present	Ayaan Motwani	Present
Catherine Barden De Leon	Present	John Ng	Present
Rosie Blackmore	Present	Madeleine Politzer	Absent
Dexter Buhmann	Absent	Elif Sabanci	Absent
Catherine Campbell-Pitt	Present	Drago Schwalber-Janaway	Present
Charlotte Doe	Present	Jospeh Soanes	Present
Elena-Teodora Dragoi	Apologies	James Tang	Present
Ayush Gautam	Absent	Ines Wang	Absent
Maya Goodrich	Absent	Aditya Vara	Present
Bea Hayward	Absent		

In attendance: Linda Larter, Town Clerk and CEO of Sevenoaks Town Council; Holly Brazier, Deputy Manager of House in the Basement Youth Café; Ieuan Chandler-Wilson, Youth Committee Clerk.

1. Apologies for Absence

Received as shown above.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting of the Youth Council held on 05th March 2025

It was noted that during the last meeting, elections were held for a Social Media officer. Aryanna reported that since starting the Instagram page the youth council have posted four items, had 36 followers and was following 93 accounts. It was noted that many of these accounts were primarily businesses and organisations to help give the Youth Council a starting base.

It was suggested that to gain more followers they should post more regularly, with this in mind Aryanna asked for Youth Council members to come up with posts that they could put on the Instagram page. The Youth Council suggested:

- Putting a biography post on the Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer, and other Youth Councillors at a later date.
- Posting about what was agreed at the meetings,
- Continuing to promote events for Young People at House in the Basement.
- Agreed expenditure e.g. Purchase of the VR Headset with photo.

RESOLVED: 1) To receive and adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Youth Council

held on 05th March 2025.

2) To generate more Instagram posts.

3) All Youth Councillors were asked to follow and share the Instagram Account.

3. Finance Report

The Youth Council heard from Harry King that since the last Youth Council meeting the VR Headset for House in the Basement had been ordered. It was also noted that a further £500 would be received on the 1st of April.

RESOLVED: To note that the current balance for 2024/2025 was £1,850.37

4. Current Matters Report

RESOLVED: To accept the Current Matters Report.

5. House in the Basement Youth Café (HiTB), Managers report:

The Youth Council noted that the report from House in the Basement had not been attached to the agenda, we apologise that the information was missing from the agenda and have attached the report as an appendix to the minutes.

6. Re-Stringing Guitars at House in the Basement

The Youth Council heard that The Lewis Project has offered to re-string two guitars at House in the Basement and had been informed that it would cost around £80-£100.

RESOLVED: the Youth Council agreed to fund the re-stringing of the two guitars at £80-£100.

7. Skate Park Event

The Youth Council noted that over the summer holidays, Sevenoaks Town Council works with Kings Ramps to supply a Skate Park event for young people of all capabilities to enjoy. It was noted that Kings Ramps hosts the event and provides professional Skateboarders, BMX and Scooter riders who put on demonstrations throughout the day and provide sessions throughout the day for young people who want to learn new skills or simply start out in the sport.

It was noted that the event costs up to £2,000 to provide, with the sponsor's Logos for the event being placed on the promotional material such as Banners, Flyers and Posters.

The Youth Council noted that this would be a good way of promoting the Sevenoaks Youth Council, it was noted that they would also be interested in having a stand at the event and having their logo on promotional literature.

RESOLVED: The Youth Council agreed to provide £750 towards the event.

8. Climate Change Youth Forum

The Youth Council noted also that the Climate Change Youth Forum had previously been held by inviting schools during the school day to attend, while it had started well there were a number of logistical factors involved for the schools. The Youth Council suggested that the meetings could be held in tandem with the Youth Council as the Environment is one of their key priorities for their term.

It was noted that Sevenoaks Climate Action Network (SCAN) had invited the Youth Council to have a stall at their Climate Fair event that will be taking place on the Vine Gardens on Saturday the 3rd of May. The Youth Council came up with the following suggestions for their stall:

- Raffle,
- Bake sale,
- Leaflets and flyers made from seed paper,
- Information on where to recycle glass bottles and vapes.

The Youth Council heard that Falmouth Town Council have produced a reusable party kit that is free for the community to hire as part of their Plastic-Free Pledge. It was noted STC staff were trying to find out more information about the kits.

RESOLVED: 1) For the Climate Change Youth Forum to be merged with the Youth Council.

2) For the Sevenoaks Youth Council to have a stall at the Climate Fair, STC staff to purchase seed paper for printing flyers and leaflets for the Youth Council to give out at the event.

9. Mental Health Survey Report

A summary of the report had been circulated with the agenda.

The Youth Council heard from Ridley that he had complied with the individual responses received from the Mental Health Survey in Questions 3, 9 and 10. Riddley expressed that given that the survey was done within schools, another wider-reaching survey could be done for young people who are home-schooled. The Chair thought it was best currently to concentrate on the School Survey.

Riddley noted that the most common answers that appeared when compiling the data were exams/tests and homework. The chair asked what council members thought could be done to help support those who were struggling with exams and homework. The youth council suggest the following:

- Talking to Teachers, Parents or an individual outside of the home such as a Youth Worker.
- Advertising where to get advice within schools,
- Provide links and posters to organisations like Kooth where young people can go to get help,
- Hold informal revision sessions and/or language sessions at a venue like House in the Basement.

RESOLVED: To include parts of Riddley's report in the Mental Health Report for schools and other Youth Organisations.

10. Sevenoaks School Triathlon- Volunteer Opportunity

The Youth Council heard that the Knight Frank Schools Triathlon had been in contact asking if any youth councillors would like to volunteer during the event on the 11th of May to greet the triathletes as they arrive, Steward triathletes along the course and hand out medals.

RESOLVED: For representatives of the Youth Council to attend the event via the poster previously circulated.

11. Date of Next Meeting

RESOLVED:

- Wednesday 7th of May at The Town Council Chamber, TN13 3QG,
- **TBC-** at Annual Council Meeting (Mayor Making) held on 12th May 2025 at 7 pm in The Town Council Chamber.

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting.

Sevenoaks Town Council
Youth Services Working Group- Wednesday 12th March 2025



**House in the Basement Youth Café Manager:
January 2025 report:**

During January we saw 223 young people attend House in the Basement Youth Café, 23 of those were new to House in the Basement. We were open for 17 days throughout the month with 4 SEN sessions that saw 24 Young people attending.

We held an Open Mic Night on the 31st of January with 20 young people attending. We are holding another two Open Mic Nights on Friday 28th of March & on Friday 16th of May.

We are extremely pleased to announce that one of the Young People who have been doing Duke of Edinburgh with us has completed their bronze award.

We have begun creating a LEGO mural for House in the Basement as part of Sevenoaks Town Council's Britain in Bloom entry. To bring this design to life, we welcome any donations of spare or old LEGO flowers, should anyone wish to contribute.

We have also been extremely Busy Bees printing, painting and knitting bees for Sevenoaks in Bloom.



**Sevenoaks Town Council
Youth Services Working Group- Wednesday 12th March 2025**

February 2025 Report:

Over February we saw 240 young people and 36 SEN. 14 of these were new to House in the Basement, we were open on 15 occasions and 4 SEN sessions. We also carried out 3 detached sessions.

During the February Half Term, we held a few different sessions including a Photography session on Wednesday 19th of February and a trial gaming workshop hosted by Home and Away Gaming on Friday 21st of February. The gaming workshop was very well attended.





Sevenoaks Youth Council



MENTAL HEALTH SURVEY REPORT

Sevenoaks Youth Council Mental Health Survey Report

Introduction

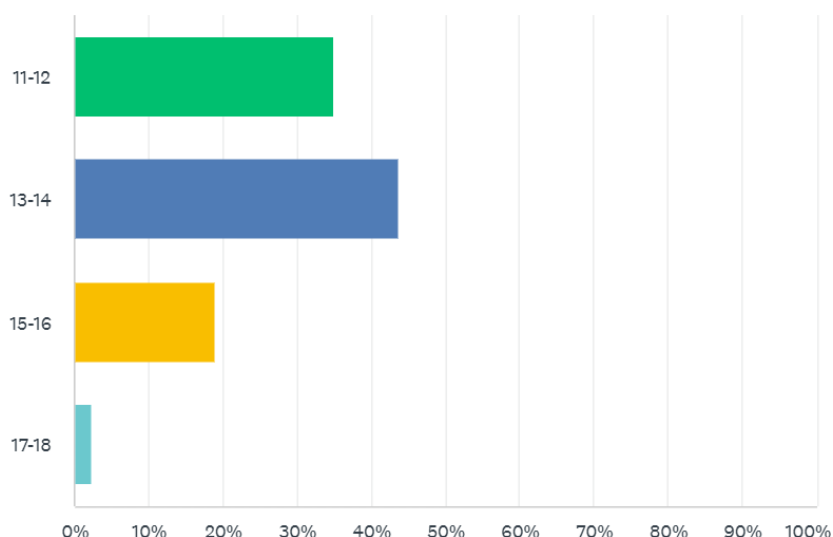
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Note: Some questions had slight variations in response numbers due to skipped items.

(Question 1) Age:



Questions 2 and 5 have been left out of this survey due to a data issue. These questions asked young people to rate their feelings on a scale from 1 to 5. However, the collected data was recorded on a scale from 1 to 100, with extreme variations. Some responses were also entered manually, making the data unreliable. As a result, these questions were not included. The questions were:

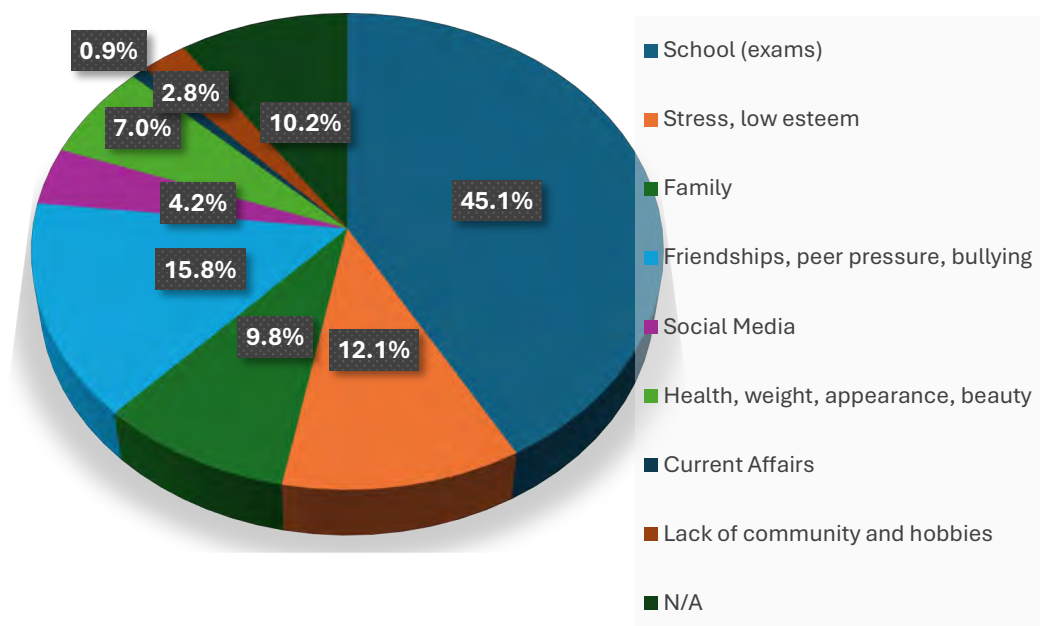
Sevenoaks Youth Council Mental Health Survey Report

- (Question 2) On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate your mental wellbeing currently? (1 being very poor and 5 being excellent)
- (Question 5) On a scale of 1 to 5 how stressed are you generally? (1 being not stressed at all and 5 being extremely stressed)

(Question 3) What are some factors that negatively impact your mental health?

A total of 215 young people responded to what they felt negatively impacted their mental health, while 35 skipped the question. Analysis of open-ended responses revealed several key themes:

- **School-Related Stress:**
45.1% mentioned school as a primary stressor citing factors such as exams and overall academic workload, and homework.
- **Stress and Self-Image:**
12.1% highlighted issues related to stress, anxiety, and self-esteem (including concerns about how others perceive them, mindset issues, and self-criticism), with 7% of respondents outlining that their health, weight, weight, appearance, and beauty as affecting their mental health.
- **Uncertainty:**
10.2% of responses indicated that they did not know.
- **Additional Factors:**
Other responses pointed to bullying, friendships and Peer pressure (15.8%), Family (9.8%), and negative experiences with social media (4.2%).



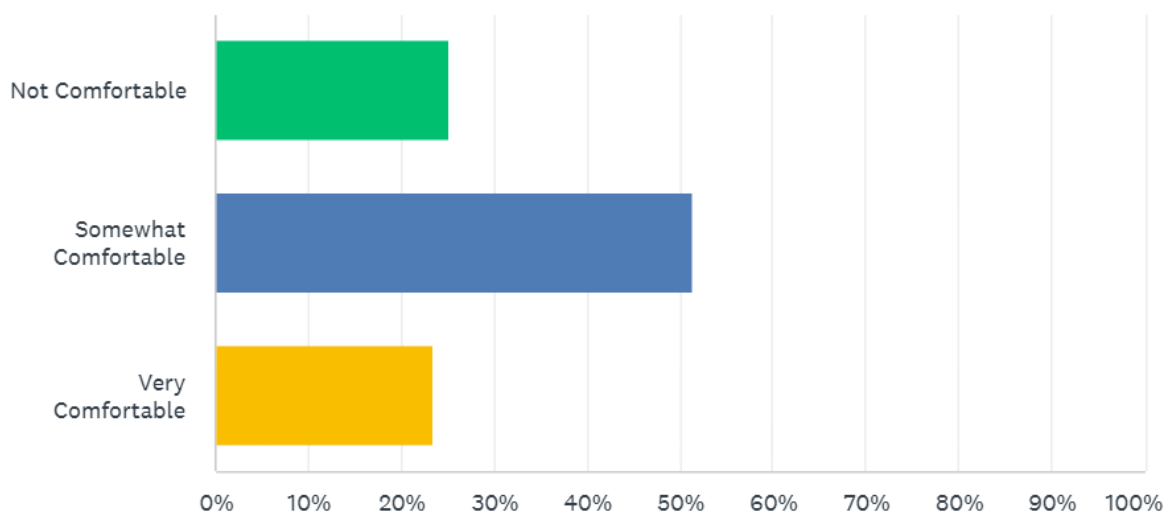
Sevenoaks Youth Council Mental Health Survey Report

(Question 4) How comfortable are you talking about youth Mental Health?

247 respondents (with three skipping) shared how comfortable they feel talking about their mental health:

- **Very Comfortable:** 23.48% (58 respondents)
- **Somewhat Comfortable:** 51.42% (127 respondents)
- **Not Comfortable:** 25.10% (62 respondents)

While more than 70% of young people reported feeling at least somewhat comfortable discussing mental health, nearly one in four remain reluctant to do so.

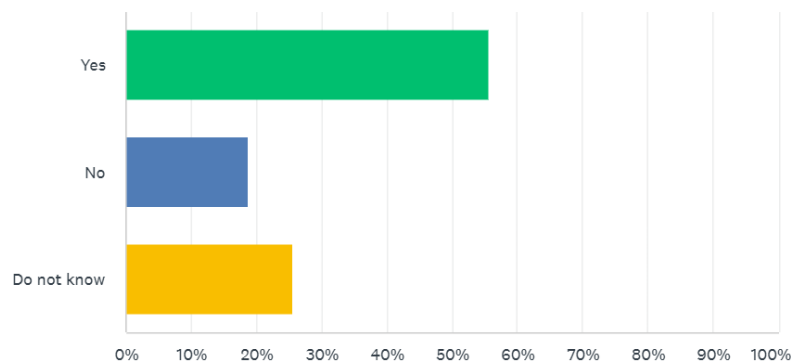


(Question 6) Do you feel you have a good school-life balance?

When asked about their school-life balance (with 246 responses):

- **Yes (Good Balance):** 61.90% (143 respondents)
- **No:** 6.93% (16 respondents)
- **Do Not Know:** 27.27% (63 respondents)

Although a majority believe they maintain a healthy balance, nearly one-third of respondents are either uncertain or feel that their balance could be improved.



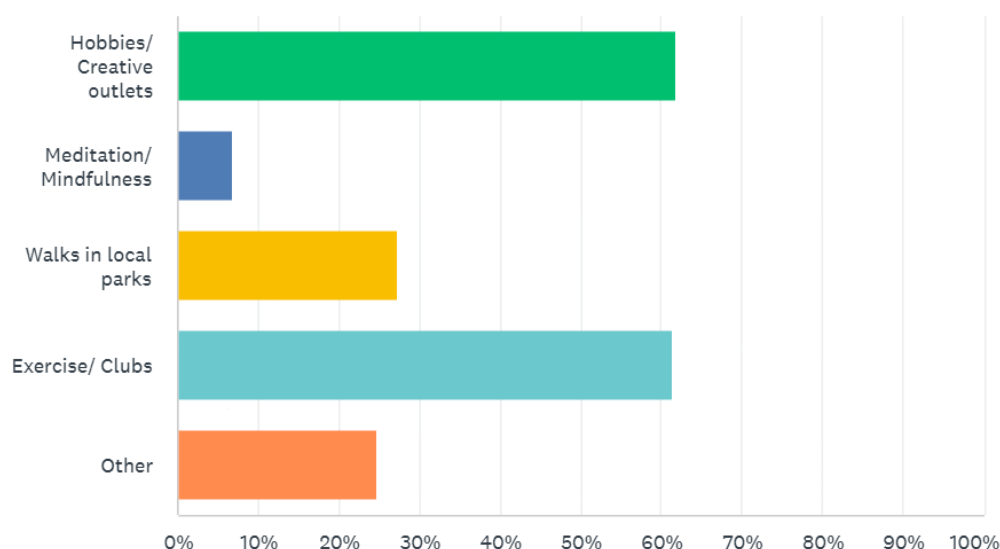
Sevenoaks Youth Council Mental Health Survey Report

(Question 7) Do you practice any of the following to cope with stress/ promote well-being?

Young people were asked about the strategies they use to cope with stress and promote well-being. Of the 231 respondents who answered this question (with 19 skipping), the recorded responses were as follows:

- **Hobbies/Creative Outlets:**
143 respondents (61.90%) reported relying on creative activities to cope with stress.
- **Meditation/Mindfulness:**
16 respondents (6.93%) indicated they practice meditation or mindfulness techniques.
- **Walks in Local Parks:**
63 respondents (27.27%) selected going on walks in local parks and green spaces.
- **Exercise/Clubs:**
142 respondents (61.47%) highlighted using exercise and or clubs to help cope with stress and general well-being.
- **Other:**

It should be noted that in the survey while there is an “other” option there was no prompt for young people who selected this to fill in how they coped with stress and well-being, 57 respondents (24.68%) selected this option.



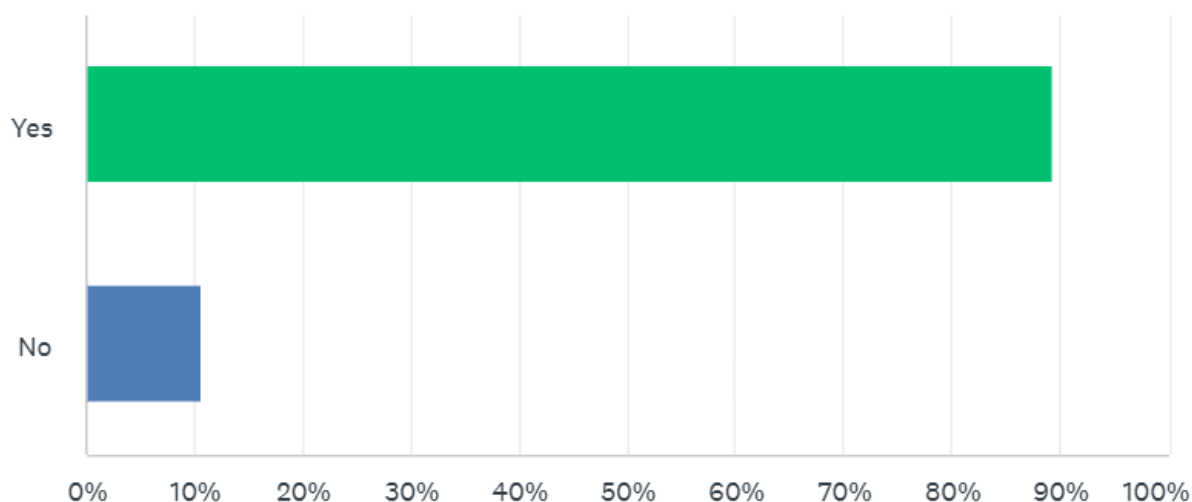
Sevenoaks Youth Council Mental Health Survey Report

(Question 8) Do you know where to go for help?

In this question, which seeks to gauge the level of awareness of where they can go to seek help, 246 of the respondents answered (with four skipping). This question was put to the young people as a yes or no question and yielded the following results:

- **Yes:** 89.43% (220 respondents) confirmed they are aware of support services.
- **No:** 10.57% (26 respondents) indicated they do not know where to seek help.

The high level of awareness is encouraging; however, the 10.57% who are uncertain demonstrate the need for enhanced signposting and communication about available mental health resources.



(Question 9) What could your school do to support student's mental well-being?

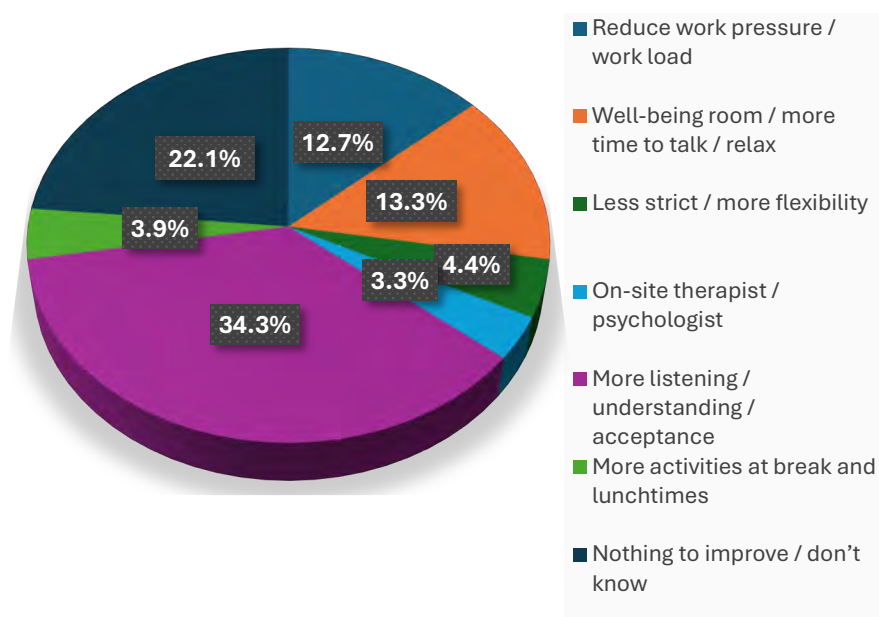
Key Findings:

181 of the 250 respondents provided insights into how their school could better support student mental health with 69 skipping this question. The responses reveal several recurring themes:

- **Dedicated Well-Being Spaces:**
13.3% of respondents proposed the establishment of designated “well-being spaces” within schools. These areas would offer students a quiet environment to relax, engage in mindfulness, or simply take a break from the daily pressures of school life.
- **Mental Health Awareness:**
34.3% of respondents requested that more understanding towards mental health was needed in schools with more listening and acceptance was needed. 3.3% of the respondents highlighted that more mental health support staff were needed for students to talk to. 12.7% of respondents suggested that a reduction in workload and pressure could help improve their mental well-being.

Sevenoaks Youth Council Mental Health Survey Report

It is important to note that 22.1% of the respondents reported that they are content with the current level of support offered by the schools or that they did not know how the school could improve.



(Question 10) What could be done in your community to raise awareness about mental health?

Key Findings:

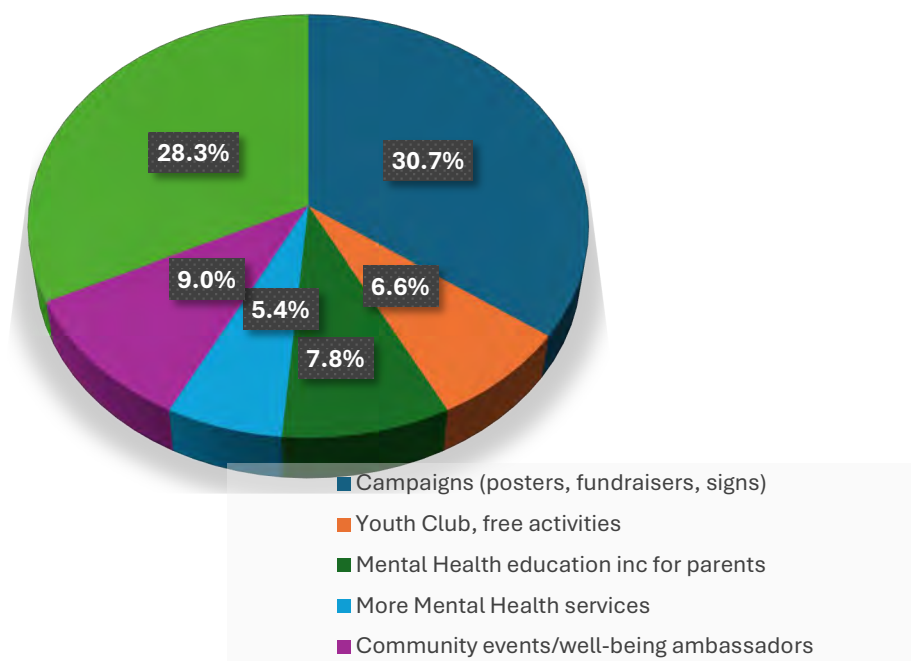
Responses to Section 10 with 166 contributions focused on what could be done in the community to enhance mental health awareness, it should be noted 84 skipped this question. The key recommendations include:

- Organised Events and Campaigns:**
 30.7% of respondents advocated for community-wide events, such as mental health awareness days and public campaigns. 6.6% requested more youth clubs, free activities and facilities within the town as well as more awareness of those facilities that already exist. One of the common requests under this heading was for a specific mental health awareness event.
- Enhanced Mental Health Education:**
 7.8% of respondents mentioned they would like to see more regular, structured sessions such as assemblies or workshops featuring mental health professionals. 5.4% of respondents highlighted that having someone they could go and talk to about how they were feeling outside of school could help.

28.3% of those who answered this question stated that they were unsure or did not know what could be done to raise awareness for mental health.

The responses indicate that young people see great value in proactive community initiatives that not only educate but also actively involve them in the dialogue around mental health.ⁱ

Sevenoaks Youth Council Mental Health Survey Report



Conclusion

The survey findings reveal that academic pressures, self-image concerns, and experiences of bullying are among the primary factors negatively impacting young people's mental health.

The majority of respondents reported having a good school-life balance and they are relying on positive coping strategies that were key to good mental well-being at school, most notably through creative outlets. However, a significant proportion of respondents feel uncomfortable discussing mental health and/or remain uncertain about where to seek the help required.

The diverse suggestions provided, particularly regarding reduced academic pressure and enhanced support mechanisms display that there are several ways to change school structures to benefit student's mental health as well as a number of additional supports that could be integrated within the local community.

Recommendations from Sevenoaks Youth Council:

- Encourage schools to create an internal young people's mentorship programme
- Promote via posters and digital information for students about where to get help if concerned about exam pressure
- Also via posters and digitally provide links to independent services for helping with mental health concerns
- More information talks at schools around *It is ok not to be ok* and *where to access help*
- Consider making available space for young people to meet up and share revision notes and techniques and/ or create groups e.g. informal language meet-ups.

Sevenoaks Youth Council Mental Health Survey Report

Acknowledgements

We extend our gratitude to all Youth Council members for their contribution and help in promoting the survey within their schools. Special thanks to Youth Councillor Riddley McDermott for his efforts in correlating data for questions 3, 9, and 10.

Simba Li- Chair	Lizzie Hunt
Rosie Blackmore- Vice-Chair	Cristian Hunter-Garcia
Harry King- Treasurer	Sharma Ishwar
Bianca Agarwal	Riddley McDermott
Aryanna Mahdavi Ardestani	Ayaan Motwani
Catherine Barden De Leon	John Ng
Rosie Blackmore	Madeleine Politzer
Dexter Buhmann	Elif Sabanci
Catherine Campbell-Pitt	Drago Schwalber-Janaway
Charlotte Doe	Jospeh Soanes
Elena-Teodora Dragoi	James Tang
Ayush Gautam	Ines Wang
Maya Goodrich	Aditya Vara
Bea Hayward	

ⁱ The data for questions 3, 9, and 10 were correlated by Youth Councillor Riddley McDermott, whose valuable contributions are gratefully acknowledged in this report.

Sevenoaks Youth Council

Sevenoaks Town Youth Councillors are elected to represent the views, issues and opinions of young people across Sevenoaks, to make a difference and change things for the better in Sevenoaks.

Youth Council meetings are held approximately every 6 weeks in the Town Council Chamber.

Since its conception in 2009 the Youth Council has become increasingly involved in initiating and developing events for young people.

All young people are welcome to attend and join the Youth Council.

For more information about Sevenoaks Youth Council please QR code below Or check out our Instagram: @sevenoaks_youthcouncilofficial



Sevenoaks Town Council
Youth Services Working Group- Wednesday 12th March 2025



**House in the Basement Youth Café Manager:
March 2025 report:**

During March, we saw 232 young people; 32 of these had not visited the House in the Basement before. We were open for 15 sessions across the month. We also had 3 SEN sessions where we saw 23 young people. We also, during the course of the month, carried out 3 detached sessions.

Since the last meeting, House in the Basement Staff attended the International Women's Day Lunch and carried out the first Rail Safety visit to the Bat and Ball Station with The Granville Primary School, talking to 22 Year 6 pupils. As part of the session, they created some amazing Rail Safety posters, as well as hearing a talk from Daren about the History of the Bat and Ball Station.

House in the Basement also hosted another successful open Mic night on the 28th of March with 32 Young people attending the event.



Detailed Income & Expenditure by Phased Budget Heading 27/03/2025

Month No: 11

Cost Centre Report

	Current Month Actual	Current Month Budget	Current Month Variance	Year To Date Actual	Year To Date Budget	Year To Date Variance	Total Annual Budget	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
<u>50 Youth Cafe</u>											
1022 Letting & Hire of Facilities	337	258	(79)	4,757	2,838	(1,919)	3,100			153.5%	
1211 Sale of Goods	457	167	(290)	2,749	1,837	(912)	2,000			137.5%	
1213 Event catering	0	0	0	125	0	(125)	0			0.0%	
1350 Revenue Grant income	0	0	0	19,612	0	(19,612)	0			0.0%	
1990 Other Income	0	0	0	3,378	0	(3,378)	0			0.0%	18
Youth Cafe :- Income	794	425	(369)	30,621	4,675	(25,946)	5,100			600.4%	18
4010 Gross Pay	7,592	4,342	(3,250)	67,383	47,762	(19,621)	52,100		(15,283)	129.3%	
4012 Expenses	0	0	0	819	0	(819)	0		(819)	0.0%	
4270 Employers Pension Contribution	290	158	(132)	2,615	1,738	(877)	1,900		(715)	137.6%	
5410 Repairs & General Maintenance	16	83	67	489	913	424	1,000		511	48.9%	
5500 Equipment Hired and New	38	42	4	5,638	4,686	(952)	4,724		(914)	119.4%	315
6010 Light Heat & Cleaning	38	17	(21)	276	187	(89)	200		(76)	137.8%	
6101 Telephone	51	58	7	501	638	137	700		199	71.5%	
6105 Broadband wi-fi service	65	0	(65)	374	200	(174)	200		(174)	187.0%	
6200 Printing & Stationery	55	17	(38)	770	187	(583)	200		(570)	384.9%	
6210 Postage & Courier	0	0	0	28	0	(28)	0		(28)	0.0%	
6240 Computer/ Data Base/WP's	0	25	25	2,471	275	(2,196)	300		(2,171)	823.7%	
6241 Website Costs	12	0	(12)	192	200	8	200		8	96.0%	
6281 Furnishings,Furniture/Eqpt	0	0	0	0	375	375	500		500	0.0%	
6320 Staff Training	80	0	(80)	160	100	(60)	100		(60)	160.0%	
6340 Staff Uniforms	0	0	0	328	150	(178)	200		(128)	163.9%	
6460 Publicity & Democratic notices	0	0	0	35	0	(35)	0		(35)	0.0%	

Continued over page

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Phased Budget Heading 27/03/2025

Month No: 11

Cost Centre Report

		Current Month Actual	Current Month Budget	Current Month Variance	Year To Date Actual	Year To Date Budget	Year To Date Variance	Total Annual Budget	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
6500	Goods for Resale	264	167	(97)	2,929	1,837	(1,092)	2,000		(929)	146.5%	
6505	Cafe consumables	18	0	(18)	37	0	(37)	0		(37)	0.0%	
6635	Professional Fees Licensing	0	0	0	302	450	148	450		148	67.1%	
6730	Subscriptions	0	0	0	2,000	0	(2,000)	0		(2,000)	0.0%	
6900	Sundry Expenses	0	33	33	192	363	171	400		208	47.9%	
6922	Health&Safety/Risk Assessments	0	0	0	1,131	999	(132)	1,000		(131)	113.1%	
6935	Waste Bin Disposal-Waste Bins	0	0	0	120	0	(120)	0		(120)	0.0%	
	Youth Cafe :- Indirect Expenditure	8,519	4,942	(3,577)	88,788	61,060	(27,728)	66,174	0	(22,614)	134.2%	315
	Net Income over Expenditure	(7,725)	(4,517)	3,208	(58,167)	(56,385)	1,782	(61,074)				
8001	plus Transfer from EMR	0	0	0	315	0	(315)	0				
8002	less Transfer to EMR	0	0	0	18	0	(18)	0				
	Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(7,725)	(4,517)	3,208	(57,870)	(56,385)	1,449	(61,074)				
<hr/>												
	Grand Totals:- Income	794	425	(369)	30,621	4,675	(25,946)	5,100			600.4%	
	Expenditure	8,519	4,942	(3,577)	88,788	61,060	(27,728)	66,174	0	(22,614)	134.2%	
	Net Income over Expenditure	(7,725)	(4,517)	3,208	(58,167)	(56,385)	1,782	(61,074)				
	plus Transfer from EMR	0	0	0	315	0	(315)	0				
	less Transfer to EMR	0	0	0	18	0	(18)	0				
	Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(7,725)	(4,517)	3,208	(57,870)	(56,385)	1,485	(61,074)				

Detached youth work project - quarterly report

Period: January 2025 to March 2025

This our Final Report for Detached and Outreach work.

If you would like to discuss anything from this report, please e-mail Richard Dowling (Community Development Manager): richard.dowling@wkha.org.uk

1. Overview

We are still delivering detached on the roster below. We altered a few of our sessions due to Ben Reynolds being absent from work and West Kent Delivering the detached work using other staff. During October and Christmas School Holidays we sometimes delivered detached sessions earlier in the day, or occasionally on a different day of the week.

Monday: Swanley
Tuesday: Sevenoaks
Wednesday: Edenbridge
Thursday: Sevenoaks/Swanley (Delivered by 2 different teams)

In this quarter we have engaged with 129 young people across all areas.

Below is a summary of our overall work for the past quarter in each area.

2. Area reports

Swanley

Street based Work

60 engagements with young people. (14 sessions)

Our detached route continues to include the following areas regularly: Asda and the surrounding shops, the skatepark, St Mary's estate, leisure centre, Whiteoak estate and Barn Park. We occasionally change the route responding to issues that are highlighted to us. We have met most of the young people in the parks in the town.

Individual Support

Whenever we engage with young people, we will always check on their well-being. This is done through conversations and observations. Whenever needed we will do an immediate intervention with the young person. This involves listening to their current issues and concerns, such as friendships, home life and school. We support them to produce a mini action plan.

When the needs of the young people outweigh our knowledge or ability, we will signpost the young person to the most appropriate service for their needs.

We have seen a number of Young People at the new McDonalds site this quarter. Also some young people have been asking about the equipment that is missing from the cherry Avenue Park. When will it be replaced.

Sevenoaks

Street based Work

40 engagements with young people (9 sessions)

Our detached work continues to visit the following areas: Greatness Park and estate, Bradbourne lakes, the Vine, Hollybush, the high street, and the leisure centre. We consistently visit these areas on a regular basis.

With the weather in January being not being so good we have found it difficult to do detached, so most of the engagements were in February and March.

Individual Support

Whenever we engage with young people, we will always check on their well-being. This is done through conversations and observations. Whenever needed we will do an immediate intervention with the young person. This involves listening to their current issues and concerns, such as friendships, home life and school. We support them to produce a mini action plan.

When the needs of the young people outweigh our knowledge or ability, we will signpost the young person to the most appropriate service for their needs.

In Sevenoaks, we sometimes refer young people to HOUSE in the Basement, Sevenoaks Area Youth Trust or the next step project. We can also refer young people to the Compass project, either in Swanley or Edenbridge.

Edenbridge

Street based Work

29 engagements with young people. (10 sessions)

We regularly deliver detached work with Anthony Shipwright from the Eden Christian Trust. We regularly visit the high street, the skatepark, the recreation ground, the leisure centre, Stangrove estate, and Spitals Cross. As the two key youth organisations in the town, we know many young people and parents that we meet. This is a good opportunity to catch up with any young people we haven't seen in a while and introduce ourselves and services to any new young people.

Individual Support

Whenever we engage with young people, we will always check on their well-being. This is done through conversations and observations. Whenever needed we will do an immediate intervention with the young person. This involves listening to their current issues and concerns, such as friendships, home life and school. We support them to produce a mini action plan.

When the needs of the young people outweigh our knowledge or ability, we will signpost the young person to the most appropriate service for their needs.

In Edenbridge we can refer to HOUSE, Eden Christian Trust, the Family Hub, and the Biz.

Some young people have been asking about lights at the Skate so they can skate longer.

Wider Local Partnership Work

We meet with partners at the monthly DCSM and MARAC meetings, to discuss how we can work together for the benefit of young people brought up to the meeting. These partners include KCC, SDC, VRU, Kent police, BTP, Family Hub, Southeastern rail.

**Sevenoaks Town Council
Youth Services Working Group- Wednesday 07th March 2025**

Skate Park Event

Sevenoaks Town Council and Kings Ramps will be hosting a Skateboarding, BMX and Scooter event at the skate Park at Greatness Recreation Ground again this year, the event is set to take place on the 25th of July. Sevenoaks Town Council have also arranged for the following additions at the event: Kent Fire and Rescue service, a vendor with tea, coffee and ice cream and Barclays Bank, to talk to young people about banking. Sevenoaks Town Council have currently received the following funding towards the event:

- £750 Youth Council, 7th of March 2025
- £738.68 Youth Services Working Group, 12th of March 2025.
- £20 pitch fee for vendor to do teas, coffees and ice cream.

This leaves a remaining cost of £500 to find for the event.

Since these meetings, Sevenoaks Town Council have been talking to the District Council who would like to host a series of Skateboarding Sessions. It has been proposed that these could happen in the lead-up to the skateboarding event.

These sessions would cost £215 per Session with the idea there would 2 hr sessions that take place every Thursday for 5 weeks in the lead-up to the event.

The Cost for these sessions would be £1,075.