

Driving Positive Change for Young People: The Mix 2021-22 Impact Summary

For the year ended 30 June 2022



THE MIX
Essential support for young people

STRATEGIC OVERVIEW

WHO WE ARE:

The Mix is the UK's leading digital charity for under 25s, reaching over 6 million young people each year. Whatever issue a young person is facing, The Mix is always there for them - via our website, over the phone or via social media. Our support is free, confidential and anonymous and can be accessed wherever young people are. We connect young people to experts and their peers to talk about everything from money to mental health, homelessness to jobs, break-ups to drugs and more. No topic is out of bounds, and we are completely non-judgemental.

OUR MISSION:

To be the first place any young person turns to drive positive change in their lives and the world around them.



WE EXIST BECAUSE...

Today's young people - more than any previous generation - face an uncertain future. We have always supported young people when they face challenges, but now, we must do more both to **drive personal change** in those affected and to **challenge the societal barriers** that prevent young people from achieving their full potential.



OUR AIM FOR THE FUTURE:

We want to **drive positive change** in young people, not only by giving all young people the support they need when they need it **but also through youth voice and data**. We want to empower young people to create a world in which they are supported, represented and able to thrive.



HOW DO WE MAKE CHANGE HAPPEN? OUR STRATEGY FOR 2021-22



We will improve our services.

We will provide young people with the **best available support, resources, and signposting** online. We will **expand our reach** through our website and social media to over **5 million** young people and offer more virtual 1 to 1 support. We'll **improve the quality and effectiveness** of our interventions.



We will grow awareness of our work.

We'll grow our brand; online, in schools and in the media; to reach and engage more young people and influence policy. We'll publish more data to offer insights into issues impacting young people.



We will amplify the voice of the youth.

We will create platforms for youth opportunity and advocacy. We'll work to **place young people even more firmly at the heart of what we do in governance roles, strategic development and fronting our media** work. We'll **amplify** young people's **voices** with data collected from their peers and ensure young people lead our campaigns.



We will build a healthy charity.

We will focus on ensuring the long-term future of The Mix. We will achieve this by **investing in our staff's well-being and diversity**. We will ensure we implement working conditions that support the health and well-being of staff.

OUR VALUES



Empowering:

We support young people to speak out, take part and take control of their lives



Non-judgemental:

We are open-minded; we do not criticise or blame.



Inclusive:

We welcome all young people from all backgrounds and circumstances.



Brave:

We talk about everything to reflect the real lives of young people.



Collaborative:

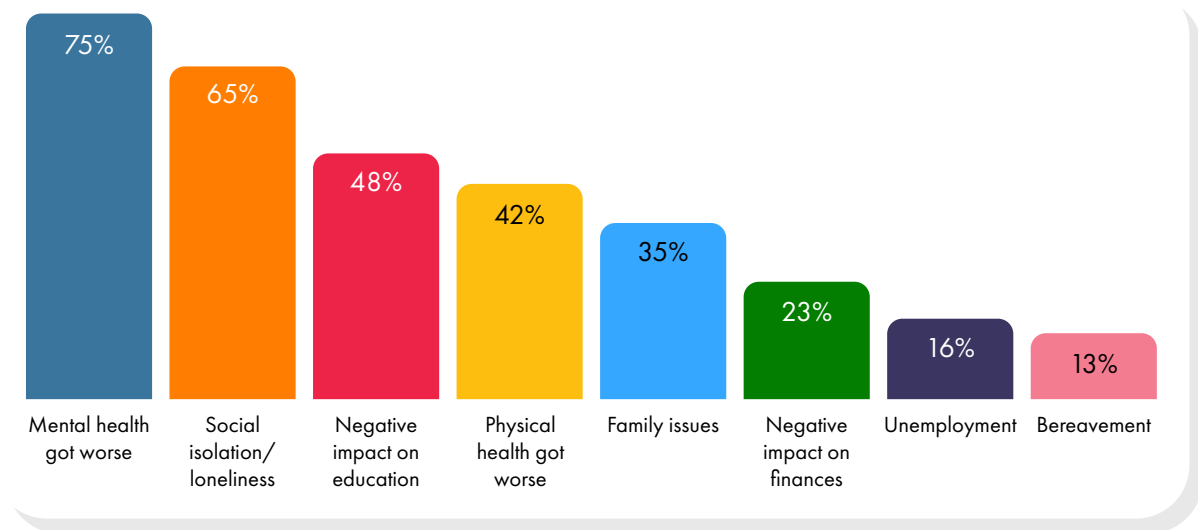
We work with others to achieve the best outcomes.

WE KNOW WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE ARE FACING

We understand the personal and societal issues young people are concerned about. These shape our content and support. We know that key concerns include **mental health, the cost-of-living crisis, body image, family and relationships, loneliness, the future, education, global warming and coronavirus.**



The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on young people using The Mix



IMPACT OF COVID-19

Since 2020, life has been even more challenging for many young people, and particularly for those **disproportionately affected by the impact of the pandemic, such as young people with disabilities, those from ethnic minority groups, LGBTQIA+ communities or young people from disadvantaged backgrounds**. For this reason, in 2021-22 we particularly focused on better reaching, engaging, and improving our services and information for these groups.

This summary report summarises our impact¹ for the past year (July 2021 to June 2022).



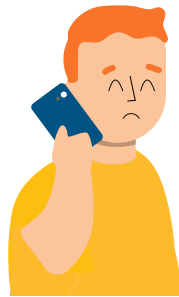
¹ The figures on outcomes and the impact of Covid-19 pandemic in this report come from The Mix annual survey 2021, completed by 1,013 respondents.

OUR SERVICES



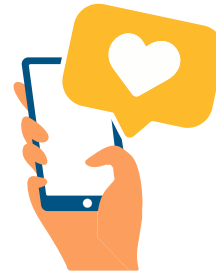
Our **website** provides over 2,000 pieces of content developed with young people and experts.

Our **helpline** service, available via phone, email and webchat, offers non-judgemental listening and emotional support, information and signposting to over 16,000 organisations across the UK.



Our **free phone and webchat counselling** provides support by listening to young people's problems and helping them **find ways to cope in a confidential, safe space.**

The Mix's social media provides essential support on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and TikTok.



Our **discussion boards** are an online moderated peer community designed to help young people to work through issues and support resilience.

Moderated live group chats, where young people receive support from their peers, provide a safe space to talk through problems or just hang out.



Crisis Messenger text service provides free, 24/7 crisis support across the UK.

2021-22: OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS



1.4 million young people visited The Mix website

We delivered over 4,600 counselling sessions to around 1,000 young people




Over 16,100 conversations answered via Crisis Messenger



We responded to 11,000 contacts from young people via our multi-channel helpline

159,600 young people visited discussion boards



Over 5 million young people reached via social media

OUR IMPACT

1,100,000

1,100,000 young people feel more able to cope with their situation and 1,045,000 young people formed a plan to make a positive change to their situation as a result of using The Mix website.

3.5 million young people are more likely to seek support when they need it as a result of seeing The Mix's social media content.

**3.5
million**

107,000

107,000 young people feel better able to form a plan to cope with life's challenges as a result of using The Mix's discussion boards.

4,440 young people feel more able to cope with their situation as a result of using the helpline.

4,440

660

660 young people have better coping strategies so they can manage problems on a day-to-day basis better due to their counselling sessions.

Over 5,000 young people who used Crisis Messenger found the conversation helpful.

5,000



The Mix helpline signposted me to multiple services that could help me with my self-harm and to their website providing various articles on self-harm. They offered me also counselling support. I liked that in my email conversations with The Mix agents I was being commended for seeking help. It made me feel like I was not overreacting, and I felt listened to.

I also used The Mix website, which was a huge relief. I read many articles about self-harming. It significantly impacted my life and my ability to cope with circumstances in my life. I realised I was not the only one experiencing self-harm; other young people of my age were also experiencing it. The articles also provided me with different practical strategies and mechanisms to cope with my feelings and the environment around me. I have not self-harmed in the last three years. Now, I am in a totally different space than I was at the time.

One thing I like about The Mix is that their support is tailored specifically towards young people. They understand the pressures we face as young people, and there is nothing you cannot seek support for.

Helpline user



The Mix counselling sessions gave me strategies to feel better and find myself again. Walking through the weekly sessions with my counsellor helped me reflect on who I am without my ex-boyfriend, what I needed in my life and what was useful to me. It enabled me to create a different picture of myself and helped me "find myself back". My counsellor made me feel better as she listened to me without judging and understood what I was going through. It made me feel my feelings were being validated.

Every Monday, I looked forward to the counselling sessions from The Mix, and I began to have a positive view of myself and everything. In my next relationship, I will always remember what my counsellor said. I now know my self-worth and will never allow myself to go through the same feelings again.

Counselling user



...Working with The Mix has also allowed my critical thinking and communication skills to flourish. ...I am most proud of the work I have done surrounding self-harm, because this is a very personal topic and something which I used to have difficulty talking about. However, I feel that by campaigning for increased awareness and encouraging open conversation, I have reduced the shame about self-harm I felt previously....

I feel like I am constantly learning, not just about issues affecting young people, but also discovering more about myself. With each opportunity I gain a little more confidence and feel like I am contributing to a worthwhile cause. Working with The Mix also gives me the chance for my views to be heard and listened to. If you think you'd like to get involved, sign-up! The work is so personally rewarding yet gives you the chance to help others at the same time. As well, it is a great way to learn more about yourself and what you are really passionate about.

Reflection from The Mix ambassador

LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE

As we continue into an increasingly unpredictable and uncertain period, providing the right support for young people is more crucial than ever. The Mix is here to ensure that young people are supported to overcome their day-to-day challenges before they grow into more complex problems or a full-blown crisis. The Mix is also dedicated to ensuring that young people who are harder to engage or face more barriers to support also benefit from our services.



In the next year, we will focus on:



Improving our services

We will complete our new website that is better optimised for mobile devices, has a high prevalence of video content and offers personalised support journeys to expert sector partners. Volunteers are the life blood of our services; following the deployment of our new volunteer platform, we will build on its e-learning capacity to create an end-to-end virtual volunteering journey that allows us to recruit, assess, train and support volunteers entirely online.



Growing awareness of our work

Growing The Mix brand is crucial to engaging young people, influencing policy and attracting supporters. We will continue to build our profile online through social media, deploying The Mix Connect to schools across the UK, focussing on search engine optimisation, and publishing our data to offer insight into the issues faced by young people.



Amplifying the voice of youth

We will work to place young people even more firmly at the heart of what we do in governance roles, strategic development and fronting our media work. Will amplify their voices with data collected from their peers. We will launch a new Youth Advisory Panel that work directly with our Board and SMT to ensure strategic guidance from young people at the highest level of governance.



Building a health charity

The effect of COVID-19 and -in particular- any associated financial recession means that our sector will face a challenging funding environment over the next 18 months. We will seek to deliver an income target of £2 million via a balanced portfolio of support drawn from trusts and foundations, corporate supporters, individual giving and trading of our services.

Furthermore, we cannot care for others unless we care for ourselves. We will continue to invest in the wellbeing and support of wonderful, dedicated team of Mixers.