



Open Door

ANNUAL REPORT



CHAIR & DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Adolescence and the transition to adulthood is a period of massive change and development – biological, social and psychological. For some, it is a time of excitement, self-exploration and expectation. For others it can be difficult, disheartening or even overwhelming. Statistics show that rates of mental ill health double in the adolescent years. However, young people seeking help often find mainstream services inaccessible, stigmatising and not in-tune with their particular needs. Over the past 37 years, thousands of young people have turned to Open Door for confidential, professional therapeutic help at critical moments in their development.

Young people come to Open Door with a huge range of concerns including problems at home, school, college or work; difficulties with relationships; problems with anger or violence; depression or anxiety; self-harming and suicidal behaviour; eating difficulties; drug and alcohol misuse and psychosis. Many have endured abuse, trauma, bullying, violence and family breakdown. Some are facing early pregnancy and parenthood; some are struggling to establish new lives as refugees and asylum seekers; others are striving to manage their adolescent development with the additional challenges of disability.

The current recession is making the lives of young people and their families even more difficult. Unemployment rates amongst under-25s are almost unprecedented; the cost of higher education continues to rise and public services are facing cutbacks.

Open Door is not immune from the effects of the economic downturn and our financial future looks extremely challenging. Cuts to our NHS and local government funding are occurring against

a backdrop of increased competition for charitable funding.

Despite these obstacles, Open Door remains committed to providing high quality services to young people and continues to meet each new challenge with energy and creativity. Over the past couple of years we have received significant support from a number of high profile funders including **Comic Relief, BBC Children in Need** and the **Big Lottery**.

Open Door's on-going commitment to improving access to more marginalised communities and harder to reach young people has led to our establishing services in a number of secondary schools and other community settings. 2013 will see us establishing an extended Service in Tottenham supported by Haringey Council's Voluntary Sector Investment Fund. Together with our Big Lottery funded service for parents in the Tottenham area, we are looking forward to expanding our much needed services to areas of significant need.

Our recent successes in fundraising are regrettably time limited, and we face an on-going struggle to build sustainability which we will be doing through the development of a social enterprise as well as continued applications for grant aid and appeals for donations.

This has been a time of significant change in Open Door's leadership and we are pleased to announce that we have both a new Chair of Trustees, Nicole Francis and Director, Julia Britton.

We would like to thank all the funders who have so generously supported our work and also the staff, volunteers and trustees who have worked so hard to maintain Open Door's excellent services.

*Nicole Francis, Chair of Trustees,
Julia Britton, Director*

YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE

We recognise that young people do not all experience emotional difficulties in the same way, nor do they all need or want the same kind of help. Open Door is committed to developing a service which can offer a range of effective, evidence based interventions to meet the needs of young people from early adolescence to young adulthood.

Young people are offered counselling, CBT or psychotherapy ranging from a few sessions to 2 years. More recently we have also been offering Mindfulness Based CBT and Dynamic Interpersonal Therapy (DIT) as well as key support and mentoring. Most of the work is undertaken on a one-to-one basis, but we also offer group therapy and family work.

Most young people who came to Open Door refer themselves but we also receive referrals from concerned parents and professionals. We are part of CAMHS Access, the single point of entry into local mental health services for under 18s, which accounts for about 20% of our referrals.

What young people have said about Open Door:

'Open Door is a wonderful organisation. It has been a balm and solace to me and I am happy I got a chance to experience this place. I always felt welcome here.'

A young person aged 19

'The service I received helped me to cope with my daily life so I thank you for the opportunity . . . saying good bye is not really my thing but you give me hope that I can handle any problem that is coming my way. A big thank you.'

A young person aged 16

We remain committed to our core principles of accessibility and confidentiality and strive to make the process of getting help as straightforward as possible. All a young person need do is pick up a phone, send an e-mail or walk-in.

We recognise that some harder to reach young people are only able to access services on an outreach basis and we have worked hard to establish therapeutic services for students, staff and parents in a number of local schools. We plan to expand this service in the coming years.

This year will see the further development of this outreach work and the realisation of a long standing ambition. With funding from **Haringey Council's Voluntary Sector Investment Fund** we are establishing an additional base in the heart of Tottenham at the 639 Enterprise Centre.

We continue to rely on key funders. Our core service is funded by the newly





formed **NHS Haringey CCG** and **Haringey Council**. A **Comic Relief** grant has enabled us to pilot an innovative service for depressed young people which offers a package of therapeutic interventions – Psychotherapy, CBT, Mindfulness and key support. **BBC Children in Need** is funding a therapeutic service for young people with disabilities with additional funding from **Help a Capital Child**.

Given the range and severity of many of the difficulties presented by our users, Open Door recognises the importance of maintaining a highly professional and well supported team of therapists, all of whom are professionally accredited. When necessary we work in partnership with NHS Child, Adolescent and Adult Mental Health Services, social services and voluntary sector agencies, to ensure the best possible care for our service users.

We are committed to establishing an evidence based service responsive to the needs of young people. We are constantly reviewing our therapeutic interventions in the light of clinical evaluation, audit, research and user feed-back.

Last year, the Young People's Service offered over 3,000 appointments to more than 250 young people aged 11-24 as well as over 100 consultations to professionals.

Kyra came to Open Door at the age of 16 feeling depressed, anxious and experiencing panic attacks. She read about Open Door in a local youth magazine and thought that she might benefit from speaking to someone.

Kyra lived with her mother, a single parent with a serious mental health diagnosis whom she had cared for from a young age. Her mother's mental health fluctuated and Kyra was often left to look after herself and to manage her anxieties alone. She had no contact with her father, was socially isolated and struggled to form meaningful relationships. She was drawn into liaisons with older men through the internet exposing herself to potentially dangerous and abusive situations. Kyra hardly attended school and was predicted poor grades in her GCSEs.

Kyra engaged tentatively in her psychotherapy, but over time built a trusting relationship with her therapist, developed a greater sense of herself and made plans for her future. Kyra worked with her therapist towards an understanding of her difficult history and its impact on her transition to adulthood.

Kyra also attended a series of Mindfulness Groups alongside psychotherapy and was helped to manage her feelings of anxiety and panic as well as to meet other young people experiencing similar difficulties. By the end of her therapy, Kyra had enrolled in college to re-take her GCSEs and was feeling optimistic that a new relationship with a young man would go on developing in a positive direction.

PARENTING TEENAGERS PROJECT

Open Door's Parenting Teenagers Project has been helping parents for more than 13 years. The service has grown out of the recognition that parents have an essential role to play in the lives of their teenagers and young adults. We recognise that parenting adolescents presents particular challenges and that many parents can benefit from the opportunity to talk to an experienced and qualified professional about their worries in private and in confidence.

Our experienced and specifically trained staff can offer parents an understanding of what teenagers are facing as they develop towards maturity as well as practical advice on how to manage challenging behaviour, moodiness and non-communication. Our therapists are also able to offer help and advice to parents whose teenage children are experiencing serious mental health difficulties, substance misuse or are engaging in risky or delinquent behaviour.

Many adolescents causing real concern are reluctant or unwilling to access support for themselves and parents are left to manage as best they can. Unlike most other services, we are able to offer help and support to parents entirely independent of their child's involvement. We work with parents of 12-21 year olds London-wide.

The Parenting Teenagers Project has been funded for a further 4 years by the Big Lottery to develop its work with parents from more marginalised communities. For the past 12 months we have been working to build up a service for parents in the Northumberland Park area of Tottenham where the challenges of disadvantage and deprivation are amongst the highest in the country. The opening of Open Door Tottenham will

What parents have said about the Parenting Teenagers Project:

'I really valued having someone to talk to about my concerns, who already understood more than I did about teenage behaviour and who was 'neutral' ie not a friend or relative.'

Mother of a 13 year old

'I was challenged to think about my own responses to my children and supported to realise that there are similar problems for other parents.'

Father of a 14 and 17 year old



Ms Richards contacted the Parenting Teenagers Project feeling desperate for help with her 14 year old son Dahn. He had become increasingly angry at home and aggressive towards her and his younger sister. He was struggling academically and had been permanently excluded from school after a series of violent incidents. Ms Richards said she could not cope with his mounting aggression; was at a loss about how to manage his school difficulties and was concerned that his new friends might be part of a local gang.

Dahn's parents separated when he was 10. He lived with his mother and younger sister and had little contact with his father who had a new partner and family.

Ms Richards felt blamed by Dahn for the marital separation and his difficulties at school.

Dahn's parents were invited to attend sessions together in the hope that they could reach a shared understanding of his difficulties and how they might co-operate as parents. Later, Dahn was invited to attend with his parents and though reluctant eventually agreed. He said it was unusual to have both his parents together talking about him and expressed how much he missed the time when they all lived together. He felt that they had both stopped having time for him. They said they had not heard Dahn talk like this before and agreed to work together to support him. As communication improved, so did the situation at home. Dahn resumed his GCSE studies in a new school and established new friendships.



give us a solid base from which to further develop this important work.

Evaluation, audit and research are at the heart of what we do and has led to our developing a distinctive evidence-based model of brief work with the parents of adolescents. In the months ahead, we will be publishing a manual and undertaking training with other professionals.

As with all of Open Door's services, the Parenting Teenagers Project is having to operate in an increasingly difficult economic environment. In addition to applications to charitable trusts, we have established a social enterprise with the aim of maintaining this valuable and much needed service.

'It helped relieve our daughter of feeling she was carrying our emotional troubles and provided us all with insight into her feelings and needs.'

Parents of a 16 year old

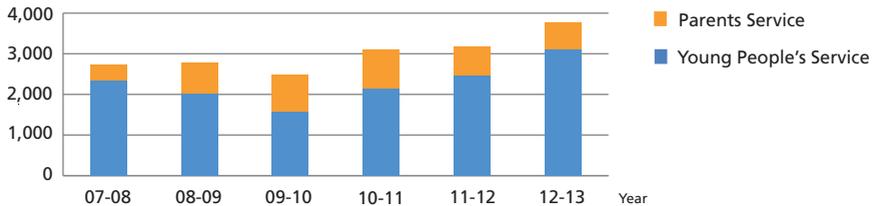
Profile of young people using our services

The young people who come to Open Door present a broad range of problems and emotional difficulties. These include:

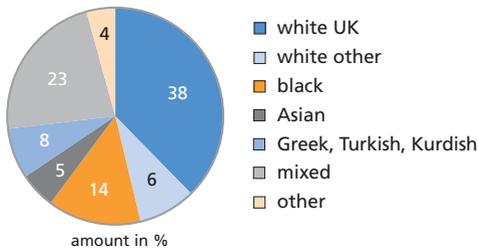
| Problems presented (%) | |
|---------------------------|-----|
| depression or anxiety | 95% |
| family problems | 94% |
| education / work problems | 68% |
| anger / aggression | 62% |
| developmental issues | 56% |
| behaviour issues | 50% |
| sleep disturbance | 42% |
| self harm | 41% |

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| relationships / peer problems | 35% |
| somatic symptoms | 30% |
| domestic violence | 27% |
| sexual issues | 20% |
| eating problems | 19% |
| cultural identity issues | 15% |
| bereavement | 15% |
| drug / alcohol / solvent misuse | 14% |
| sexual abuse / assault | 12% |

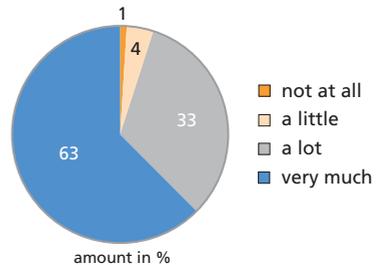
The number of appointments we offer to young people & parents



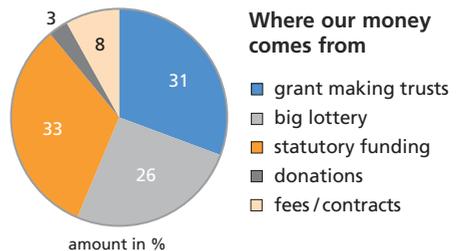
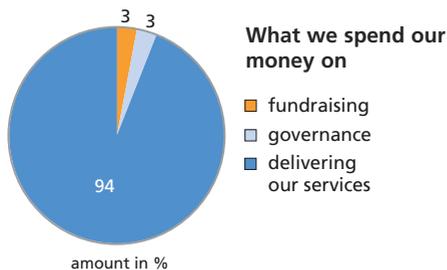
Ethnicity – young people



Would you recommend the Parenting Teenagers Project to other parents?



2012 Our Finances



A full set of examined accounts is available on request



LOTTERY FUNDED



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Open Door is grateful to the following for their support:

Statutory bodies

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Trusts and charities

AB Charitable Trust
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BBC Children in Need
The City Bridge Trust
Comic Relief
Coutts Charitable Trust
Help a Capital Child
Hornsey Parochial Charities
Trusthouse Charitable Foundation

Corporate

Waitrose Ltd, KPMG

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Highgate Wood School
Hornsey School for Girls
Woodside High School
Graveney PTA
Dunraven School
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pro bono legal advice

Morgan, Lewis & Bockius

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