

HOW DID THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IMPACT YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH AND WHAT CAN YOUNG PEOPLE DO?

The **CHOOSE study** – Children and young people psychiatric diagnoses before and during the COVID-19 pandemic

What impact did the COVID-19 pandemic have on young people's mental health?

We looked at the electronic health records of children and young people up to the age of 24 in the UK. These are records from UK primary care (such as GPs and nurses).

We looked at young people's:

- Mental health diagnoses
- Mental health prescriptions
- Mental health referrals

Would you like to shape mental health research?

Get involved here!

WHAT DID WE FIND?



Fewer young people sought help from their GPs at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.



There was an increase in the recording of eating disorders, self-harm and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in females during the pandemic in people's medical notes.



The number of young males seeking help from their GPs is lower than it was pre-pandemic.

WHAT CAN YOUNG PEOPLE DO?

Know how to access your GP, you can do this by:

- Calling up your local surgery
- Making an appointment via the surgery website
- Downloading the NHS app

8 young people with experience of mental health issues advised throughout this research

Know where else you can access support:

- Self-refer to NHS talking therapy services for mental health - this can be done without a GP appointment.
- Use charity helplines and chatrooms for support (see useful resources).
- Download supportive apps.
- Reach out through your school, university or college.



WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU GO TO YOUR GP:

- The GP will be able to give you guidance on how to help your mental health; the important thing is to take the first step and make an appointment.
- You can expect to have a short discussion around the topic you are struggling with, be shown resources about this, and get help to make a plan on how to support you going forward.
- There is support and resources available for you and you will not be taking this away from someone else. You are deserving of support.
- If you don't feel comfortable talking to a GP yet there are also online resources and helpful tips below!

USEFUL RESOURCES

[Free, safe and anonymous online support \(Kooth\)](#)

[Free digital and mental health wellbeing platform \(SilverCloud\)](#)

[NHS talking therapies](#)

[Advice and tips for seeing your GP](#)

[Wellbeing apps](#)

[More info about the CHOOSE study](#)

[CHOOSE BBC article](#)



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