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## INTRODUCTION

KYS has been working since 1994 at developing a community based, accessible, professional counselling service to meet the needs of young people and their families in County Kildare. To this end, KYS, in partnership with the Health Service Executive Dublin Mid-Leinster and with additional funding from the Family Support Agency and the South West Regional Drugs Task Force have worked to develop a tailor-made service focussing directly on the kinds of supports which are often only accessible to people on a fee paying basis. A key to the popularity of the KYS Counselling Service is the fact that it is a free community based youth service staffed by qualified and registered counsellors<sup>1</sup> and offering a youth friendly and safe accessible environment for young people. Strong links exist to referral agents throughout the targeted communities.

In 2008 the service has been able to broaden the range of services provided in response to requests from the community. These include group work with post-primary school students and parenting courses, presentations to groups of young people and referral agents highlighting the work of the service.

Kildare Youth Counselling Service has seen strong trends in crises calls from across the community and calls relate that people seem to be having great difficulty accessing or finding adequate supports. Presenting concerns also show an increase in issues linked to alcohol and substance related problems. Large features of young peoples' difficulties are also showing a strong link to family stress and family separation and break-up.

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix 1

As part of the ongoing evaluation of the Counselling Service, feedback is received from the young people who attend the service. Here are a few of the comments contributed by young people during 2008:

***“I found it easier to talk to other people”***

***“Knowing that I could share my problems and in time possibly find a way to feel better”***

***“I had the feeling that I was going to be believed”***

***“It was easy to talk to my counsellor, to get things off my mind”***

***“I was able to talk about things that can't be talked about with anyone else”***

***“It was helpful, that I guided where the conversations were going and if I didn't want to talk about something it could be left for a while”***

***“Being listened to and not being patronised was really important for me”***

***“It helped me to get different ways to see my problems”***

***“For me, it was about looking at home I behave and other ways to behave”***

***“It was like coming out of fog”***

## **SECTION 1: OVERVIEW OF THE SERVICE**

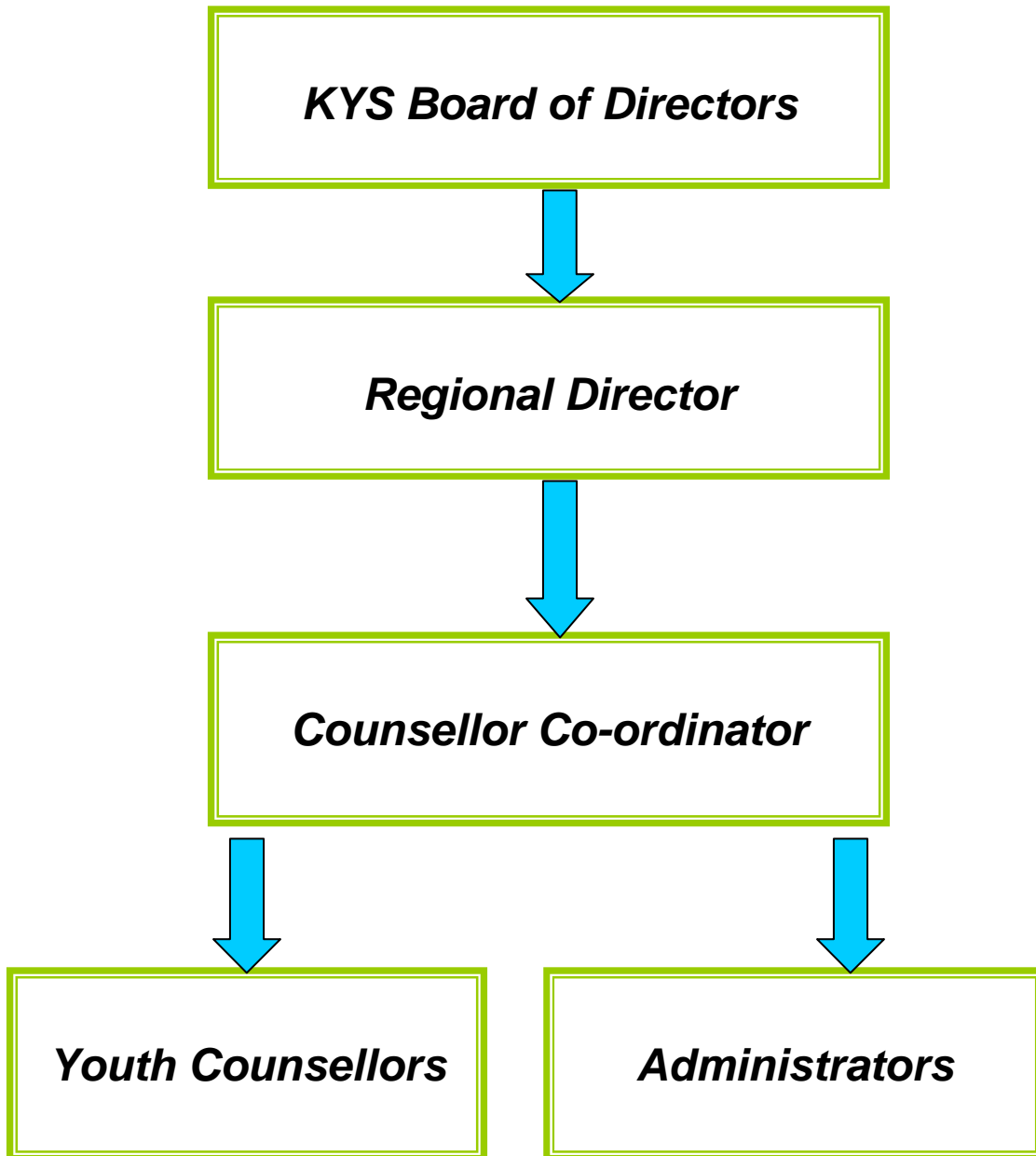
### **1.1 Public demand for the service**

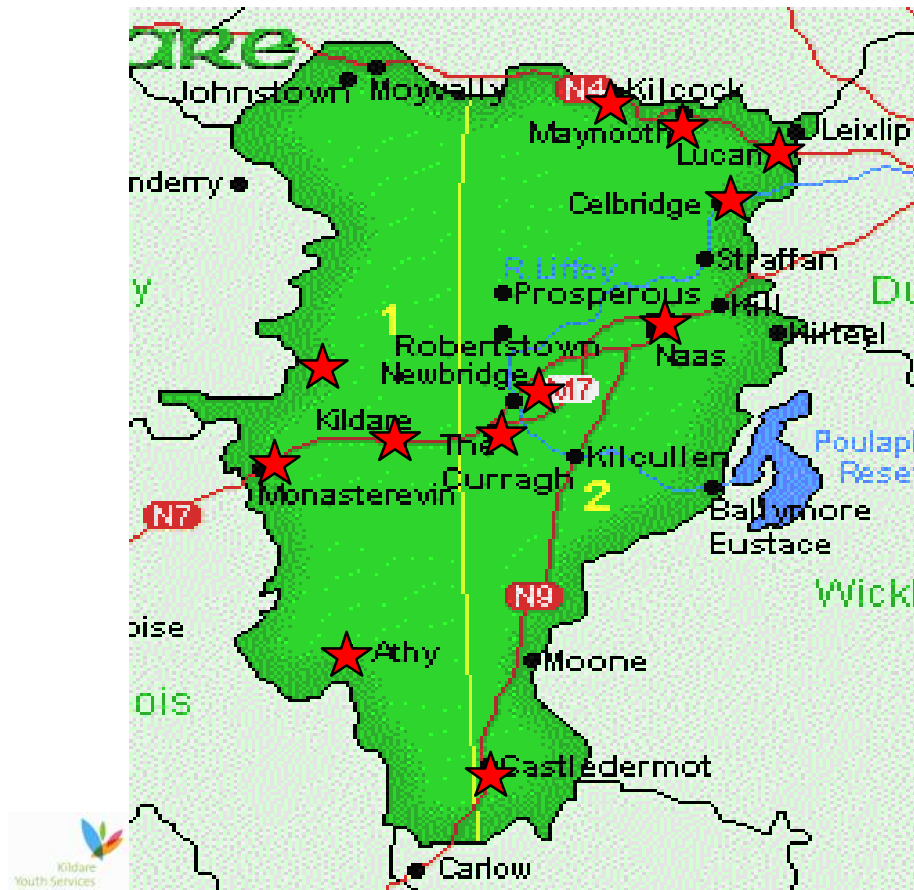
Throughout 2008 referrals and queries into the counselling service increased. Concerned teachers, social workers, youth workers, general practitioners, guidance counsellors, psychiatrists, parents, friends, young people directly and representatives from community and voluntary organisations continued to make referrals on a regular basis. Young people, parents and referral agents were written to, to inform them of their place on the waiting lists and to assure them that they would be contacted with an appointment as soon as one became available. Waiting lists exist in all the target areas of the service. For those wishing to contact a private counsellor the numbers of the IACP and the IAHIP and other relevant agencies are offered.

### **1.2 Counselling Service team**

The counselling service team comprised the Counsellor Co-ordinator, the Counselling Administrator, four full time and two part-time Counsellors. The team met on a weekly basis for on-going training, supervision and co-ordination of the target areas. They also attended management, peer and individual supervision on a regular basis. The varied backgrounds of the team provide an interesting and dynamic team environment and the strong focus on creative therapeutic approaches facilitates effective work with young people. All of the counsellors are accredited with one or more of the following counselling national bodies: Irish Association of Counselling Psychotherapy, Irish Federation Child & Adolescent Psychotherapy, or are registered counselling psychologists with the Psychological Society of Ireland.

**Figure 1: MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE OF THE KYS COUNSELLING SERVICE**



**Figure 2: THE COUNSELLING SERVICE IN COUNTY KILDARE**

The counselling service is available to young people in the following towns: Naas, Newbridge, Athy, Celbridge, Leixlip, Maynooth, Kildare Town and the Curragh. (see appendix 1). All the rooms used by the service have been selected due to their central community based location, their easy access and are young person friendly. Some of our services are located in the same building as the KYS Youth projects i.e. Naas, Athy, Leixlip and Kildare town. This promotes with the young person the concept of counselling as being another normal easily accessed support. All referrals and administration of the service are centrally managed through the KYS regional office in Naas

### **1.3 Health Service Executive Dublin Mid–Leinster**

The service continues to be mainly funded by the Health Service Executive Dublin Mid-Leinster. KYS looks forward to continuing the very positive working relationship developed between KYS and the Health Service Executive from the outset of this service. During 2008 direct referrals and a number of indirect referrals to the counselling service were received from HSE staff. Cross team meetings with the Health Service Executive were a feature of the year. This has resulted in increased referrals, case management and quality counselling with the client base in question.

### **1.4 Department of Social & Family Affairs/Family Support Agency**

The Family Support Agency continues also to part fund the KYS Counselling Service. KYS looks forward to continuing to liaise with the Family Support Agency and welcomes their support in enabling us to continue to develop this much needed service to the young people of County Kildare, especially relating to issues of bereavement and separation.

### **1.5 South West Regional Drugs Task Force**

KYS Counselling Service welcomed the additional supports that came on stream in 2008 to counsel young people that experience drug and alcohol misuse at an individual or familial level. KYS Counselling Service has worked at a preventative and interceptive level to assist the young person towards developing discrepancy and resolving ambivalence around own or a family members drug use. In 2008 the Counselling Service invested a considerable amount of time and energy in providing input to the creation of a Substance Misuse treatment agency for the U18's in the county.

## **1.6 On-going training of staff**

All the staff in the KYS Counselling Service are required to engage in Continued Professional Development in relation to the counselling of young people. To this end counsellors are required to attend professional workshops or conferences every year in order to develop their skills and knowledge.

The counselling team attend weekly case management meetings where new and existing client work is discussed, including relevant onward referral or cross agency work. The team also attend quarterly staff meetings with the wider KYS staff team/s. This allows time both for team building and also for relevant training for all team members. Staff with a particular expertise in areas relating to therapeutic work with young people provide workshops for other staff members and share with other members of the team.

Training/workshops attended by the counselling team in 2008 include:

- EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitising Reprocessing) (Trauma), Level 2
- Reality Choice Therapy
- Children First HSE
- What Works in Therapy – Embracing Strategies for Effective Clinical Practice
- Occupational First Aid
- Solution Focussed Brief Therapy
- Health & Safety Training
- Emotion Focused Training

## **1.7 Supervision**

*Clinical/Peer/Management supervision*

KYS Counselling Service require of the staff members to engage in frequent supervision for their work in the service. To this end a three-tier supervision is in place for all counsellors. This includes:

1. Group peer supervision – minimum 4 hours per month
2. External one-to-one clinical supervision – 1 hour per month
3. Management one-to-one supervision – 2 hours per month

As is standard practice in the Counselling Service, each counsellor attends for clinical supervision with an accredited supervisor on a monthly basis. Group peer supervision also takes place on a bi-monthly basis. The purposes of these varied types of supervision are to ensure that the counsellor evaluates his/her work on an on-going basis with the aim of providing the best possible professional service to young people.

Management supervision is ongoing between the counsellors and the Counselling Service co-ordinator and takes place at least once a month. These meetings are supported by monthly reports submitted by each counsellor out-lining the work in their target areas. The co-ordinator in turn reports back to the Regional Director/Line (or programme manager). This allows for review, development, planning and evaluation of each person's role within the service and is informed by the overall strategic development plan of KYS, thereby ensuring a quality professional service for young people and their families across County Kildare.

## **1.8 Evaluation of the counselling service**

### *Young person evaluation:*

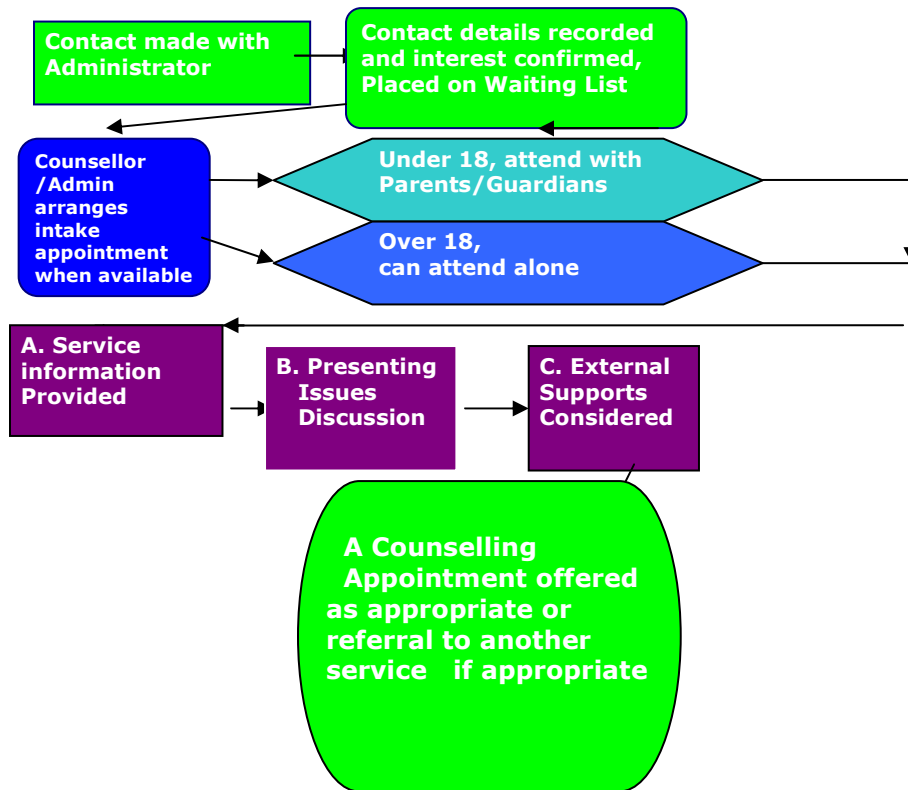
Evaluation is part of our continuing practice as KYS joins with young people and parents/guardians as they assess the service on an on-going basis, for e.g., at the end of a counselling session, but also at regular intervals as the counselling work progresses. Formal verbal and written evaluation is also part of the counselling process in the final session where young people are given the option of completing an evaluation form which provides feed-back on their experience of the counselling service.

## **1.9 Intake process**

A young person, relation or referral agent makes contact via telephone, letter, email or presents into the Counselling administration office. The young person wishing to see a counsellor is then put on a waiting list in the required area. A letter of confirmation is sent with information about the service, to a client, client's parents and/or referral agent (if referred by them) acknowledging that they are on the list.

When an appointment becomes available contact is made both by phone and letter offering appointment. A parental consent (if required) and confidentiality form is sent out with confirmation of appointment.

**Figure 3: Current Intake Process**



## SECTION 2: RESULTS SECTION

### 2.1 Statistical Evaluation

Evaluation of the Counselling Service is also done through a review of the statistical information recorded throughout the year<sup>2</sup>. Each counsellor keeps statistical records of each young person presenting to the service, this is done in a non-identifying way because of the confidential nature of the service provided. All telephone calls and queries to the counselling administration office are also recorded. These go some way towards outlining the progress and demands of the service.

In this section tables and figures presenting the results of these records are shown and discussed.

### 2.2 Key Statistics

A total number of 164 young people were seen in the service during 2008. Of these:

- 67 were transfer clients from 2008 to 2009
- In 2008 the KYS Strategic Plan to support parents in the Counselling Service was prioritised.
- 100 people attended presentations to adults, parents and young people within the context of raising awareness of KYS profile and counselling in secondary schools in the county.

**Table 1: Young people seen during 2008**

Population	11 – 17 years		18-25 years		TOTAL
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Young people in individual Counselling	72	65	15	29	164

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Appendix 2: KYS Counselling Service plans the introduction of CORE in 2009 to gather service level data and monitor client outcome.

**Table 2: Age Profile of clients\***

	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>
<b>11 years</b>	4	2	5	<b>4</b>
<b>12 years</b>	9	5	5	<b>11</b>
<b>13 years</b>	18	13	18	<b>16</b>
<b>14 years</b>	25	20	19	<b>18</b>
<b>15 years</b>	16	22	28	<b>14</b>
<b>16 years</b>	16	24	24	<b>11</b>
<b>17 years</b>	15	16	8	<b>13</b>
<b>18 years</b>	9	8	9	<b>7</b>
<b>19 years</b>	3	2	4	<b>3</b>
<b>20 years</b>	7	2	7	<b>3</b>
<b>21 years</b>	2	2	10	<b>6</b>
<b>22 years</b>	1	2	5	<b>2</b>
<b>23 years</b>	3	1	4	<b>3</b>
<b>24 years</b>	0	0	0	<b>2</b>
<b>25 years</b>	0	2	3	<b>1</b>
<b>Total clients</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>114</b>

\* Age range of **new** clients for individual counselling seen in 2008 (does not include transfers from 2007)

As it is evidenced from the above table that the majority of young people presenting to the service in 2008 were in the 13-16 years age group.

## 2.3 Presenting Problems

**Table 3: Combined Presenting Problems**

	2008	2007	2006	2005
Anxiety <sup>3</sup>	12			
Abortion	1			
Alcohol related problems	14	12	23	4
Adoption	6	3	3	1
Attention Deficit Disorder	2	2	4	2
Behavioural problems*	76	92	52	41
Bereavement	24	0	31	26
Bullying	16	20	10	5
Obsessive Compulsive Disorder	1	3	2	21
Depression	19	35	23	17
Disability	3	2	0	0
Eating Disorders	6	3	6	3
Emotional Abuse	4	13	0	0
Family member Alcohol Addiction Problems **	7	9	5	13
Family member of child sexual abuse	2	0	11	4
Family relationship problems	66	82	54	49
Foster care issues	3	6	0	4
Parental Separation	53	42	39	24
Parenting issues	20	20	14	20
Peer/romantic relationship problems	18	23	19	9
Physical abuse	3	4	2	4
Self esteem	37	42	46	38
Deliberate Self Harm	6	14	17	6
Sexual Abuse	3	5	7	12
Sexuality issues	2	2	9	6
Substance Abuse	5	14	17	0
Suicidal thoughts ***	4	13	12	12
Suicide attempt	4	1	4	11
Teenage pregnancy	1	1	1	1
Trauma	12			

*\*For ease of categorisation, Behavioural problems is identified as challenging behaviour by young people which is causing them or others concern e.g. anger management, attitude problems towards authority figures etc.*

*\*\*Family members with difficulties relating to alcohol and substance misuse refer to those specifically seeking support/counselling around a family members' lifestyle.*

*\*\*\*Suicidal thoughts refer to those young people who present as being at risk from themselves*

As is evident from the table above the highest categories of presenting problems for young people seen in 2008 were behavioural problems; issues around self esteem and family relationship problems. There was also a notable increase in the number of young people presenting with issues around deliberate self harm; alcohol related problems; and substance abuse. These figures go a long way towards illustrating the very serious nature of the issues with which young people present to the Service. They also serve to highlight the importance of the KYS Counselling Service in supporting young people through what are very trying and challenging life difficulties<sup>4</sup>.

**Table 4: Analysis of parenting support 2008**

Population		<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Parents/Guardians	Initial Session <sup>5</sup>	21	88	109
Parents/Guardians	Ongoing Attendance <sup>6</sup>	47	170	217
Parents/Guardians	<i>Parenting Your Teen</i> <sup>7</sup>	10	64	74
<b>Total</b>		<b>78</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>400</b>

## 2.4 Group work/Presentations 2008

In 2008 counsellors worked with other agencies in the delivery of group work and presentations.

- Parenting your Teen Courses
- Coláiste Lorcáin, Castledermot
- Maynooth Post Primary School

<sup>4</sup> See Appendix 3

<sup>5</sup> Initial session refers to those who came to their young person's first counselling session only.

<sup>6</sup> During the young person's counselling process

<sup>7</sup> STEP Teen Parenting Course: See Appendix 4

## 2.5 Parenting Course

### STEP Teen Parenting Programme: Systematic Training for Effective Parenting

January 2007 saw the launch of an additional service offered by the KYS counselling team, facilitating Parenting course designed specifically for Parents of Teenagers. This was also seen as an opportunity to offer further support to families of young people who currently engage in the service along with targeting the wider community and highlighting the counselling service. The counselling service recognised the need for acknowledging the importance of Parental contribution and involvement in their children's growth, development and welfare.

In 2008 4 courses were delivered by KYS in Naas, Leixlip (Two courses) and Newbridge. The demand and uptake for these courses were considerable, 74 parents attended the courses and the feedback from them was very positive.

Here are some of the evaluation comments that participants made at the end of the course.

- *“On the opening night of our ‘Parenting your Teen’ programme the conversation started on chapter 1 of the Step Teen book. When I read it, I thought, that’s me! I could have written that myself.”*
- *We quickly came to a consensus that we were aiming to be ‘good enough’ mothers, fathers, sons or daughters.*
- *One participant put it to her son, ‘you are a teen for the first time, I’m a parent for the first time, we are both new to this.’*

Comparing survey results before and after the programme we found that after the programme parents identified they were more likely to:

- *Identify reasons for teens behaviour;*
- *Talk about solutions with teens;*
- *Know which approach or response to use when disciplining teens*

Some of the participants' stories really brought the programme to life. Here is a sample of those stories:

*One Mum used **reflective listening** with her son who had been through a bad day at school. She said she let him know she was proud of him for not acting on his bad feelings. Sometimes affirming feelings is more important than trying to solve problems.*

*One Dad by **exploring alternatives** said he finds it useful to stop and remind himself, 'I don't have to answer now, I can think it through first.' This helped him avoid reactive responses.*

*Another example of a calm non-reactive response came from a Mum by **using alternatives** to her angry son by calmly inviting him to write all the insults he wanted to say on paper and she offered to read them out loud or have him read them, reassured him that insults would not work on her, this diffused the situation.*

*A mum received a report of her daughter's misbehaviour at school. Normally this resulted in Mum having a big reaction. She decided to handle it differently. She showed her daughter she wanted to understand through **reflective listening**.*

*One Dad then retold a story he had heard from a psychologist about a compliant, 12 year-old daughter, who changed overnight, her parents lost all control. The counsellor pointed out that she was still doing what she was being told, only now it was her peers, not her parents that she was being compliant to. This highlighted the need to **give choices** from an early age and **foster their independence and responsibility***

**Figure 4: Parents who attended one of the Parenting Your Teen Programmes in 2008**



## **2.6 Newsletter: “Take 5” – A psycho-educational newsletter for young people**

Two *Take 5* newsletters were published in 2008, titled- *Love Doesn't Have to Hurt*' and *'Loitering with Intent?!* The topics covered included: The experiences of Being a Teenager in Today's Society and How to Avoid Abusive Relationships. These newsletters were distributed to young people through secondary schools and youth clubs, as well as being available on the KYS website. The service was prompted towards implementing this wider reaching psycho-educational intervention as the counsellors have witnessed the many struggles that young people, as a group, experience. The issues which present in counselling sessions are often generalisable to many young people beyond those who will be seen in the service. Thus there is a keen advocacy role within the KYS Counselling Service<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> See Appendix 5

## 2.7 Waiting Lists

As is evident from the graph below, a total of 294 young people went on the waiting list in 2008, distributed in the target areas listed below.

**Table 5: 2008 Waiting List by Area**

Athy	Celbridge	Curragh	Kildare Town	Leixlip	Naas	Newbridge	Maynooth	Monasterevin	Rathangan
30	50	15	30	28	68	46	13	7	7

**Table 6: Breakdown of waiting list by area**

	Athy	Celbridge	Curragh	Kildare	Leixlip	Maynooth	Naas	Newbridge	Monasterevin	Rathangan
2005	26	49	17	26	14	n/a	50	38		
2006	40	53	13	29	16	17	54	33		
2007	45	60	29	19	20	11	76	50		
2008	30	50	15	30	28	13	68	46	7	7

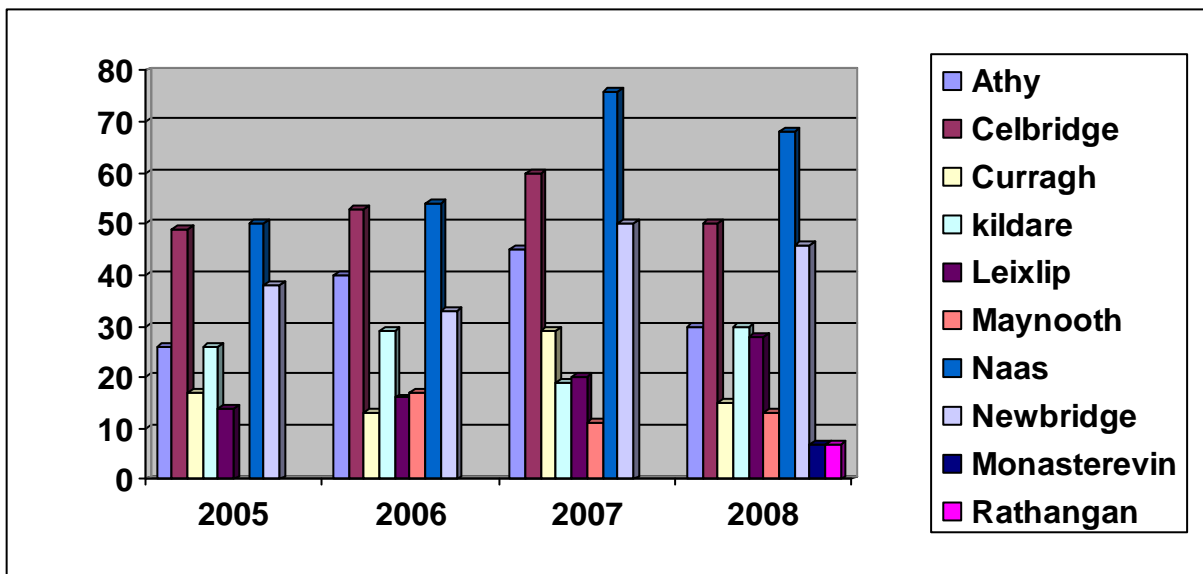
The graph below shows how the waiting lists have been growing in the target areas as the Counselling Service becomes more established.

### Figure 5: Changes in the waiting lists

In Kildare and Leixlip in particular there has been a significant increase in the numbers on the waiting list. This could be as a result the parenting courses in Leixlip and the greater profile of KYS in the Kildare Town area. The demand for the service is still very high. Waiting list times are a concern for KYS and a strategy is being tested in 2009 to try and combat that.

Some possible explanations for an increase in Waiting lists include a growing awareness of the existence of the service, through, for example, the Parenting Your Teens Programmes and recommendations by those who have utilised the service. The high demand for the service has resulted in KYS Counselling Service proactively attempting to implement a waiting list system which reduces wait times in 2009.

**Figure 5: Numbers of clients on Waiting Lists From 2005 - 2008**



Note: There was a reduction in service of equivalent of a half counselling post due to a cut in RDTF funding in 200

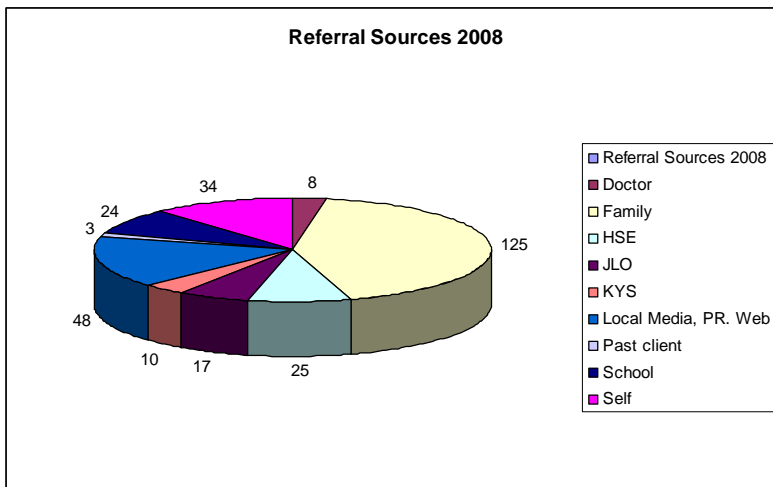
## 2.9 Referrals to the Counselling Service

In 2008 the Counselling Service received 294 referrals from a wide variety of sources. As can be seen from the graph below, approximately 36% of overall referrals came directly from a referral agent acting on behalf of the young person. The other percentage of referrals came directly from young people themselves or from a family member acting on their behalf. A referral is defined as a request received by KYS Counselling Service for counselling to be provided to a young person. This request can be made by a young person themselves, or by a concerned family member or service provider acting on their behalf and with their consent. Arising out of one referral a number of members of the family may become clients of the Counselling Service.

**Table 7: Referral Sources 2008**

Schools	24
Doctor/GP Service	8
Juvenile Liaison Officer	17
Past client	3
Health Service Executive	25
KYS Projects	10
Family	125
Self	34
Local Media/PR/Website	48
<b>Total</b>	<b>294</b>

**Figure 6: Breakdown of Referral Sources**



**Table 8: Third-party supports for self / family referrals**

School	11
Health Service Executive	21
Local Media/PR/Website	48
Doctor/GP Service	25
KYS Projects	13
Citizen's Information Centre	3
Past Client	3
Friend	5

**Figure 7: Family and self referrals supported by referral agents**

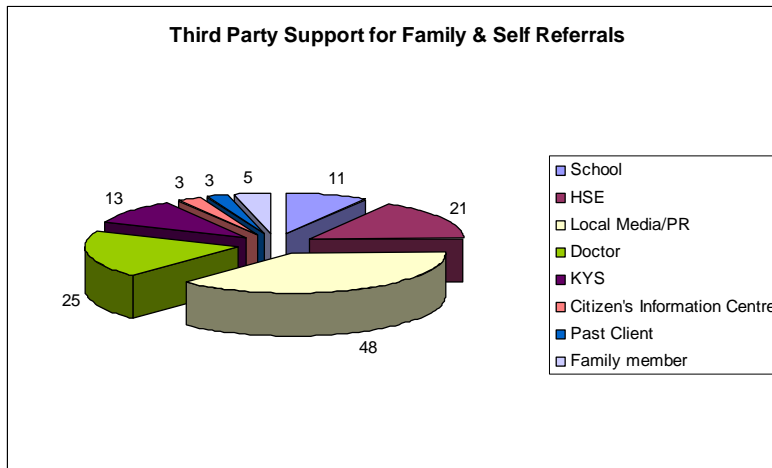


Figure 7 shows that many of the family referrals were supported by third party referral agents who assisted the young person or parent in making direct contact with the KYS Counselling Service. This is a very welcome trend, highlighting the accessibility of the KYS counselling service.

## 2.10 Telephone calls to the Counselling Service

There were a total of 1437 calls to the Counselling Service in 2008. There were 480 calls from referral agents including parents and family members and 168 general counselling queries. Many of these callers went on to refer young people to the service. It is important to note that there is a marked increase in crisis calls with families and young people seeking crisis counselling and family support often relating high levels of stress and strong indicators of families under pressure. These totalled 89 and, where appropriate, were given the numbers of the IACP, IAHIP, agencies. All crises calls were advised to attend their GP or if out of hours A&E services. This highlights the need for more immediate interventions to be made available to young people and their families, particularly crisis counselling and family psycho-therapy services.

**Table 9: Requests for counselling outside the target areas 2008**

Allenwood	1
Ballitore	1
Ballymore Eustace	1
Baltinglass	2
Blessington	3
Calverstown	1
Carbury	3
Clane	5
Coill Dubh	1
Donadea	3
Dunlavin	0
Enfield	2
Kilcock	6
Kilcullen	1
kildangan	4
Kilmeague	4
Longwood	1
Narraghmore	1
Nurney	1
Portlaoise	2
Prosperous	4
Rathcoffey	2
Rathmore	2
Robertstown	4
Stradbally	1
Summerhill	2
Straffan	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60</b>

Figures for requests for counselling from outside the target areas again reflect that the demand for the Counselling Service continues to increase right across county Kildare. This is the case despite the fact that KYS Counselling Service profile raising has been limited only to agencies and organisations within our target area.

## **CONCLUSION**

2008 has been another busy, exciting and progressive year for the KYS Counselling Service. The service has again widened its target areas to include Monasterevin and Rathangan and is now available to many more young people and their families. As well as continuing to provide one-to-one counselling and family support, the service has broadened its approach to working with young people, through group work, and interactive school based outreach sessions.

The plan for 2009 is to continue to develop the service and promote counselling in a youth friendly and creative way. The Service envisages that in 2009 KYS will continue to visit with more schools and projects throughout the county to build on and expand existing links and spend time talking with young people about the supports offered by KYS. The Service will also continue to offer further group projects and presentations to young people while continuing to assess the best ways to move forward on this.

The KYS Counselling Service continues to place great emphasis and importance on our relationship with our referral agents. To this end KYS will continue to meet with them at least once a year while maintaining regular phone and written contact with them.

The approaches which our counsellors have found to be most effective in engaging young people in counselling are multi-faceted. Firstly offering a safe, respectful and non-threatening encounter through clear explanations and supportive procedures has proved invaluable in building trusting relationships with our young people. Our emphasis on parental involvement where possible, has served to give parents and young people a safe space to work on the difficulties and strengths in their relationships.

The counselling team takes in a broad range of skills and professional expertise that in turn allows a creative approach to their work and can offer young people a variety of ways to express themselves. KYS looks to an individualised approach in helping address each young persons concerns as they present.

The issue of self-care for each counsellor is recognised as very important in being able to deliver effective counselling to our young people. To this end, the team support, personal therapy and our commitment to ongoing training and supervision are crucial in ensuring of the healthy and continued professional development of this service. The learning gained by everybody involved in this service to date is both exciting and challenging and KYS look forward with great anticipation as the Counselling Service continues to grow and progress. The developments seen during 2008 hopefully represent another step forward in the wide-scale provision of this much needed free, professional service to young people and their families in County Kildare.

**Appendix 1: Names and locations of the KYS Counselling Service team**

Nora Martin (Co-ordinator)*	Naas, Celbridge
Joanne Kavanagh (Counsellor)	Athy, Naas, Celbridge
Kathleen McGlynn (P/T Administrator)	Naas
Caroline McWilliams (P/T Administrator)	Naas
Tommy Hunt (Counsellor)	Athy, Newbridge, Monasterevin, Rathangan
Joanne Parker (Counsellor)**	Curragh, Kildare Town, Naas
Dermot Coonan (Counsellor)	Celbridge, Newbridge
David Burke (Counsellor)**	Celbridge, Maynooth, Leixlip
Karen Nugent (Counsellor)**	Naas, Celbridge, Athy
Paul Clancy (Counsellor)	Naas, Newbridge, Curragh

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\* The current Counselling Co-Ordinator is Lorraine Shortt

\*\* The above therapists are no longer part of the KYS Counselling Team

## **Appendix 2**

### **KYS Counselling Service adopts new data collection system: CORE**

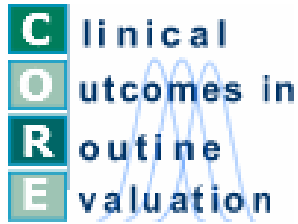
The counselling service has been exploring ways of providing more comprehensive data on the clients who attend the service. CORE (Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation) is an established system for collecting data on counselling/psychotherapy clients, as well as giving feedback on whether counselling was of benefit to them. CORE has been in existence for over 10 years and is used by many counselling services throughout Ireland and the UK.

Prior to CORE many services developed their own ways of collecting data and evaluating the work they were doing. Having an agreed way of doing this, in the form of the CORE, allows services to compare themselves with similar services as well as against established benchmarks.

The benefits of CORE included the following:

- 1) Information is stored electronically
- 2) CORE has its own software which allows for multiple ways of analyzing the data that has been collected
- 3) CORE is completed for every client by every practitioner, thus the forms help assure comprehensive profiling of service throughput
- 4) The forms collect data on routine audit items (e.g. waiting times, appropriateness of referral, non-attendance rates) to help inform and enhance service efficiency
- 5) The forms collect data on presenting and emerging problems/concerns via a categorisation framework
- 6) CORE allows the service to rate the distress of clients as they enter counselling as well as during counselling and upon completing counselling. This allows the service to chart the progress of clients and to determine whether counselling was beneficial to the client.

The first data to be produced from CORE will be available in the next annual report. The hope is that this richer stream of data will inform all future annual reports and the overall service development, so watch this space!



### Appendix 3

#### Practicing Skills of Dealing with the Challenges of your Teenager

##### JEN - A TYPICAL CASE STUDY

Fourteen year old Jen came to counselling feeling angry and discouraged. Upon being heard with respect and empathy in her counselling sessions, she began to soften to her grief.

Her parents are separating and this has come as a shock as she didn't think it would come to that. She worries she won't see her Da again as she, with her mother and siblings, have moved to another area. She's had to move school and get used to a different social scene which she feels she's not able for. She fears she'll be bullied and has already been slagged by a girl, the leader in Jen's class.

She misses her friends and a boyfriend who lives near her old estate. Though she keeps in contact with them through texting and Bebo, she says it's not the same.

The counsellor's first response was to mirror/reflect back an understanding of all that Jen has been going through. This included naming all the events of loss Jen has been experiencing, as part of the counsellor's empathic meeting of Jen where it hurts.

The counsellor asked a few questions to clarify dimensions of the different life situations (familial, social, school) and to allow Jen to take a breather from the pain. This models how one can go in and also leave the contact with pain.

The counsellor asked her to name those she can count on for support, both near and farther away. Are they aware of Jen's feelings about all these changes? She said that she hasn't felt like telling them. The counsellor stressed the importance of having support outside of counselling and asked her to consider thinking about this. Since Jen had sometimes spoken of her friends' problems, the counsellor showed how Jen is there to support her friends. True friends share their troubles. Jen agreed to think about this.

Jen was offered a choice of which difficulty she'd like to address first and this difficulty was discussed from a holistic perspective including from its emotional significance to possible practical solutions. Each of the other difficulties was addressed in much the same holistic way. Every week, Jen re-visited each of the difficulties and the counsellor reflected back what s/he picked up from Jen in terms of progress and challenges to that

progress. Jen was invited to take in an appreciation of the changes she'd made and to explore ways around the challenges she was still facing. Jen's self esteem was growing through this process of struggle and empowerment. She gained greater clarity about and distance from her problems as well as an array of coping skills she didn't have before or that she never knew she'd been using all along.

For example, Jen saw that she was able to stay out of her parents' rows and not allow herself to be dragged into participating in them. She is working on her relationship with each of them separately. And she has begun to share her thoughts and feelings with a few friends she most trusts and feels less isolated.

Jen engaged well in counselling. Although the counsellor met with the parents in the first meeting, Jen preferred to have her space in one-to-one counselling. She was confident that she could and would address concerns with her parents herself. Jen attended regularly for slightly over 6 months and finished her counselling through a last session which highlighted her struggles and her gains in dealing with the presenting issues.

## Appendix 4

### STEP Teen Parenting Programme

This year KYS facilitated four STEP Teen Parenting programmes in three locations throughout the county, Naas, Newbridge and Leixlip, which covered Maynooth and Celbridge. The uptake was quite successful in that the counselling team facilitated the programme to over sixty parents.

The parents of young people who were on the waiting list to avail of counselling were invited to participate on the course, but unfortunately as places were limited to sixteen per course, some parents had to wait for future courses to be organised.

The counselling service recognised the importance of an enhanced relationship between parents and their teens and the course offered to attain this over the seven week programme,

This was also seen as an opportunity to offer further support to families of young people who currently engage in the service along with targeting the wider community and highlighting the counselling service.

The programme, which is skills based, directly addresses the core skills necessary in the task of parenting teenagers. The Step Teen ethos aspires to equal respect, equal dignity and equal human worth for both parents and teens. This is in line with preferred working practices with the Kildare Youth Service Counselling Service.

The relevant topics which were covered on the course included:

- Understanding yourself and your Teenager,
- Changing your Response to your Teen,
- Communicating Respect and Encouragement,
- Encouraging Cooperation and Solving Problems,
- Using Consequences to Build Responsibility,
- Practicing Skills of Dealing with the Challenges of your Teenager.

Some of the learning's relayed by the parents included; **stopping and listening**, **better communication** with the teen, **identifying the problem** and dealing with it more appropriately. Some parents said that they appreciated the support from other members in the group; this came about from the encouragement of shared learning.

The demand for the course is ongoing from parents in other locations around the county and KYS have compiled a waiting list of those who wish to participate in the course with the intentions of facilitating further programmes in 2009. KYS views this parenting programme as a valuable contribution and accompaniment to creating a healthier relationship between parents and their teens and we look forward to facilitating more programmes over the next year.

## **Appendix 5**

### **Take 5 Newsletter**

*The KYS Counselling Service Newsletter for young people*

The first issues of Take 5 were produced in 2007. In 2008, the counselling service produced 2 more newsletters that were distributed to schools throughout the county as well as libraries and other youth centres.

The first 2008 newsletter, ('Love Doesn't Have to Hurt') focused on the issue of abusive relationships in the teenage years. An important issue here is simply being able to recognise certain behaviours as abusive. For example, oftentimes a possessive partner will claim that their controlling behaviour is an expression of love. Other abusive behaviours include: being yelled at, being slapped, being controlled or being forced to have sex. The newsletter also looked at what to do if you are in an abusive relationship or how to help a friend that may be in an abusive relationship.

The second 2008 newsletter, ('Loitering with Intent') was based on the opinions of young people and their views about hanging out with friends, the spaces available to them for doing so, and the negative reactions they experience when they are often just spending time with friends. The newsletter highlighted the importance and value that they attached to spending time with their friends.

The aim of these newsletters is to reflect the concerns of young people as well as giving voice to their experience.

Copies of these newsletters and previous ones are available from the counselling service 045-856968 or from the website [www.kys.ie/counselling](http://www.kys.ie/counselling).

