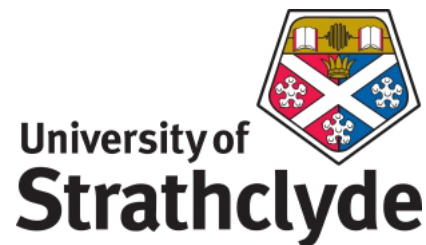


MEETING NEEDS ACROSS THE AGE RANGE:

Therapeutic counselling in UK
secondary schools --
A review of current research

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Current context

- ‘Significant revival’ in provision of therapeutic counselling in British secondary schools
- Around 75% of schools in England and Wales now provide such a service (Jenkins and Polat, 2005)
- Moves towards establishment of Counselling in Schools as universal service in:
 - Northern Ireland: counselling service available for all post-primary pupils
 - Scotland: all pupils required to have access by 2015
 - Wales: government plans to develop universal service
- **May soon be most accessed, accessible site of therapeutic provision in UK**
- *But*, limited evidence regarding efficacy, effectiveness and nature of such services

Aims

- Review available evidence regarding therapeutic counselling in schools (CiS):
 1. What are CiS services like?
 2. Who uses CiS services?
 3. What factors facilitate/inhibit attendance at CiS services?
 4. Are CiS services effective?
 5. What kind of changes do CiS services bring about?
 6. What is the impact of CiS on pupils' capacities to study and learn?
 7. What aspects of the counselling are helpful/unhelpful?
 8. In what ways can CiS services be improved?
 9. What is the 'added value' of CiS services to a school's pastoral care provisions?

Inclusion criteria

- Conducted post-1996
 - Based within secondary school
 - ‘Counselling’ (i.e., primarily relational therapy) as opposed to CBT or interpretative
 - Based within the United Kingdom (not US-based educational guidance)
 - Primarily one-to-one therapy
 - Some collection of quantitative data
 - Relatively rigorous data collection/analysis
- << Nine evaluation studies identified

1. What are
counselling in schools
services like?

	Dudley (Sherry 1999)	Aberdeen (Loynd 2003)	NSPCC (Fox and Butler 2003)	Glasgow Phase I (Cooper 2004)	East Ren. (Cooper 2006a)	Ulster (Adamson et al., 2006)	Airdrie (Bondi et al 2006)	Oban & Tobermory Hough (2006)	Glasgow Phase II (Cooper 2006b)	East Dumbartonshire (Freire unpub.)
Period	1998-9	2000-2	2001-3	2002-4	2003-5	2004-5	2004-6	2005-6	2005-6	2005-6
Location	Sch.	Sch.	Sch.	Sch.	Sch. & Com.	Sch.	Sch. (60%) Com.	Sch.	Sch.	Sch.
School level	S and P	S (67%) & P	S (≈50%) & P	S	S	S (≈60%) & P	S	S	S	S
N. of schools	16	1 S, 2 P	≈20	3	7	49	1	2	10	9
N. couns.	≈10	1	≈19	2	4	-	1	1	7	-
Pupils seen	459	446	-	197	115	512	44 (school)	42	308	182
Length (mins.)	40	40 (30 P)	≈30	45-60	50	-	-	-	45-60	-
Orient.	Hum.c	Hum. (TA)	Mainly PCA	PCA	<i>Mainly PCA (93%)</i>	-	PDT/inte grative	PCA	PCA	PCA
Forms of referral	<i>Mainly TC</i>	Mainly self, some TC	<i>Mainly self, some TC</i>	Mainly PTC (72%), few self (4%)	<i>Mainly TC, some self (13%)</i>	Mainly TC/schoo l (52%), some self (30%)	Mainly PTC (77%)	Mainly PTC (69%), few self (3%)	Mainly PTC (67%), some self (13%)	-

Note. Sch. = school, Com. = community. S = secondary school, P = primary school. PCA = person-centred approach, PDT = psychodynamic, TA = Transactional Analysis. TC = Teacher, PTC = Pastoral Care Teacher

**2. Who uses
counselling in school
services?**

	Dudley	Aberdeen	NSPCC	Glasgow I	East Ren.	Ulster	Airdrie	Oban/To b.	Glasgow II	East Dumb.
Mean sessions	≈9	-	7.63	5.62	9.88	Mode: 5-7	7.1	6.76	5.75	6.6
Attendance rates (%)	-	-	-	82	≈86	-	99	84.1	78	78
Gender (% female)	56%	51%	57%	55%	63	50	50% (school sample)	59.5%	53%	61.5
Ethnic origin	-	-	-	-	94% White (Brit./Eu)	-	-	-	85% Brit.	-
School year/age (most frequent, descend. order)	12 y. o. 13 y. o. 14 y. o.	S2 S1 S3	-	S3 S4 S2	S4 S3 S2	Mean: 12.07	S3 S4 S2	S2 S3 S4	S3 S2 S1	Mean: 14.15
Present. problems (most frequent, descend. order)	Sch. Family 'low' Relt. Physical abuse	Family Relt Anxiety Anger	Family Sch. Relt. Health	Family Beh. Anger Anxiety Academic	Family Anxiety Anger Relt. Sch.	Bullying Relt. Anxiety Bereave. Anger	Family Emotions	Anger Family Bullying Self-harm Depres. Self-worth	Family Anger Beh. Bereave. Stress Bullying	Family Beh. Relt Self-worth Anger Bullying

The 'average' client

- Slightly more likely to be female
- About 12-14 years old
- Most likely to present with:
 - Family, relationship and anxiety issues (particularly if female)
 - Behaviour, anger and school-related issues (particularly if male)
- Likely to attend for about 7 sessions

**3. What factors
facilitate/inhibit
attendance at
counselling in schools
services?**

Inhibiting factors

(Glasgow I school-wide survey, n = 578)

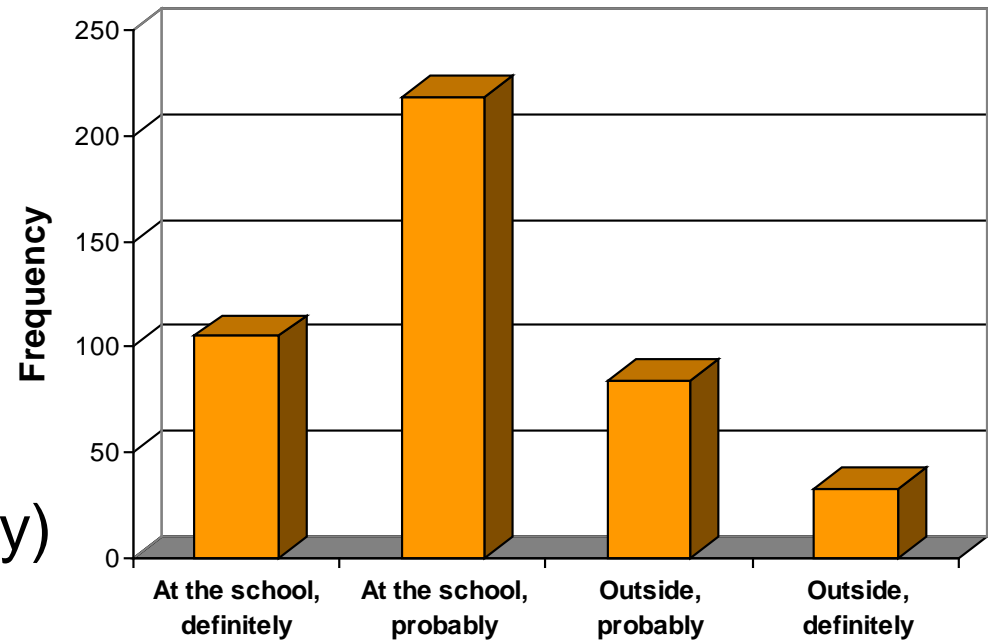
1. Feeling that there are other people you can talk to (mean = 2.05)
(2 = 'a moderate amount', 3 = 'quite a lot')
1. Worrying that other pupils might find out what you say (mean = 1.87) (esp. fem.)
2. Not wanting to talk to a stranger
(mean = 1.86)
1. Believing that you should be able to sort out your problems on your own
(mean = 1.78) (esp. male)
1. Worrying other pupils might find out that you are going (mean = 1.68) (esp. fem.)

Facilitative factors (Glasgow I survey)

1. 'Being able to contact the counsellor directly, without having to tell a teacher': mean = 2.40
2. 'Being able to see the counsellor on a drop-in basis': mean = 2.27
3. Being reassured that the counselling is confidential'
mean = 2.26

Preferred location of service

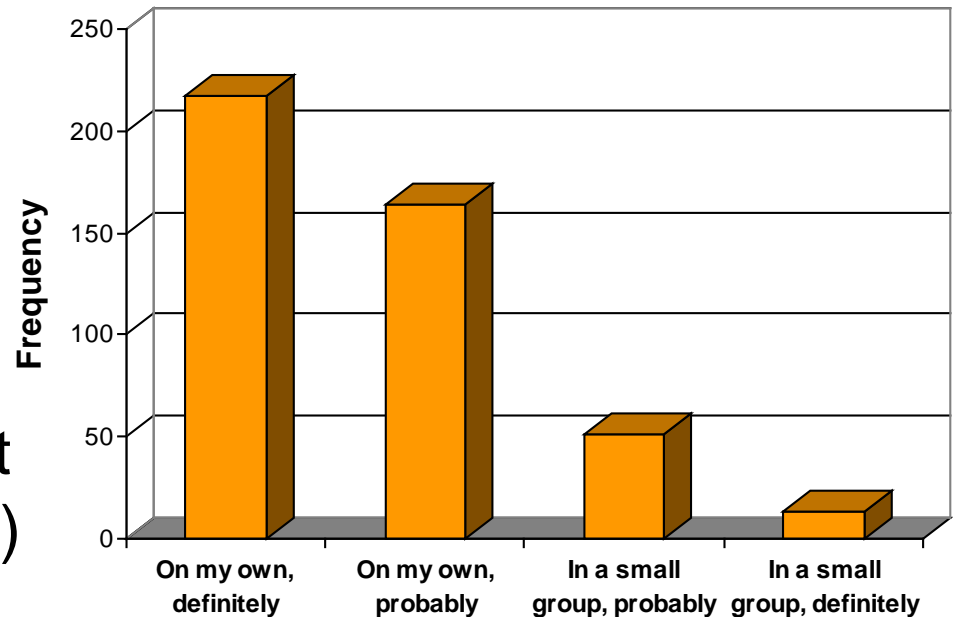
- 73.4% of pupils school-wide expressed preference for school-based location (Glasgow I survey)



- Glasgow I post-counselling interview:
 - 58% preferred in-school location
 - 37% expressed no overall preference
 - none expressed preference for community setting (e.g. youth club or surgery)

Preferred modality of service

- 86% of pupils school-wide expressed preference for individual, rather than group, format (Glasgow I survey)



- Glasgow I post-counselling interview:
 - 63% preferred one-to-one modality over group
 - 37% saw strengths and limitations of both
 - none expressed preference for group format

4. Are counselling in schools services effective?

Effectiveness

- Significant reductions in levels of psychological distress from pre- to post-counselling in all 6 studies using outcome measures
- Effect size (Cohen's d):
 - 0.88 NSPCC (Teen-CORE)
 - 0.73 Glasgow I (Teen-CORE)
 - 0.33 East Ren. (SDQ)
 - 0.75 Oban and Tobermory (YP-CORE)
 - 1.00 Glasgow II (YP-CORE)
 - 1.12 East Dumbartonshire (YP-CORE)

Mean prepost $d = 0.80$

= 79% of clients post-counselling are better off than average client pre-counselling

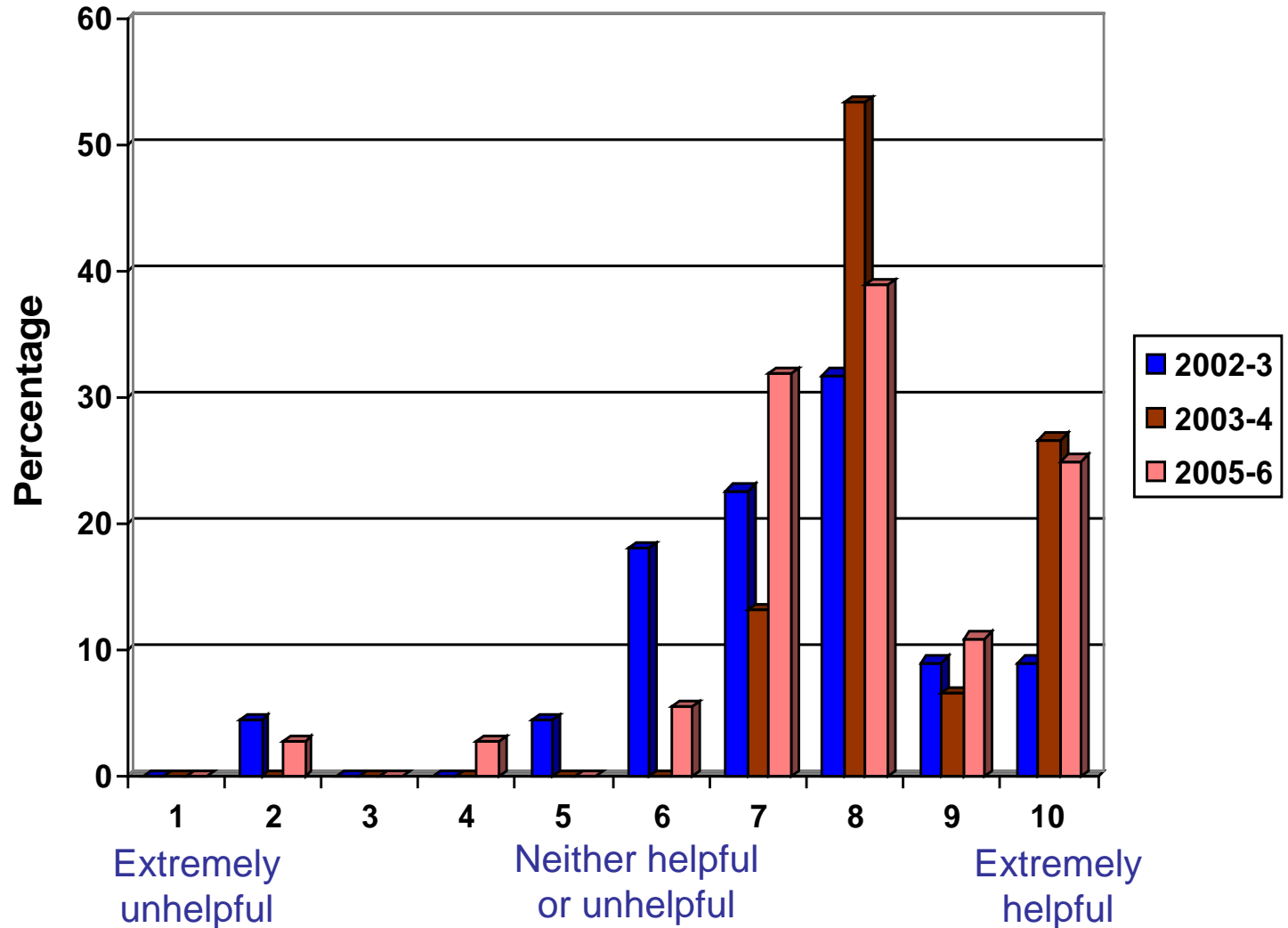
Effectiveness II

- Clinical improvement: 50-60% (Glasgow II)
- But, all studies uncontrolled (though Ulster study found statistically significant *deterioration* in 'quasi-control' group) >> need for randomised controlled trials (now being piloted by UoS/BACP)
- No significant differences in effectiveness across: gender, age, schools/counsellors, number of sessions

Self-reported helpfulness

- Helped 'A lot' or 'Quite a lot':
 - 54% (Dudley)
 - 74% (Glasgow I)
 - 73% (Oban and Tobermory)
 - 78% (Glasgow II)
 - 85% (East Dumb.)
- 'Very helpful' or 'Helpful'
 - 97% (Aberdeen)
- '6' or '7' on 7 point scale ('not at all helpful' to 'very helpful')
 - 67% (East Ren.)
- **Overall: around three-quarters of clients rate it as moderately to very helpful**
- Also rated as helpful by external observers and professionals, e.g.....

Pastoral care teachers' ratings of helpfulness (Glasgow I & II)



5. What kind of change does counselling in schools bring about?

SDQ subscale data (East Ren.)

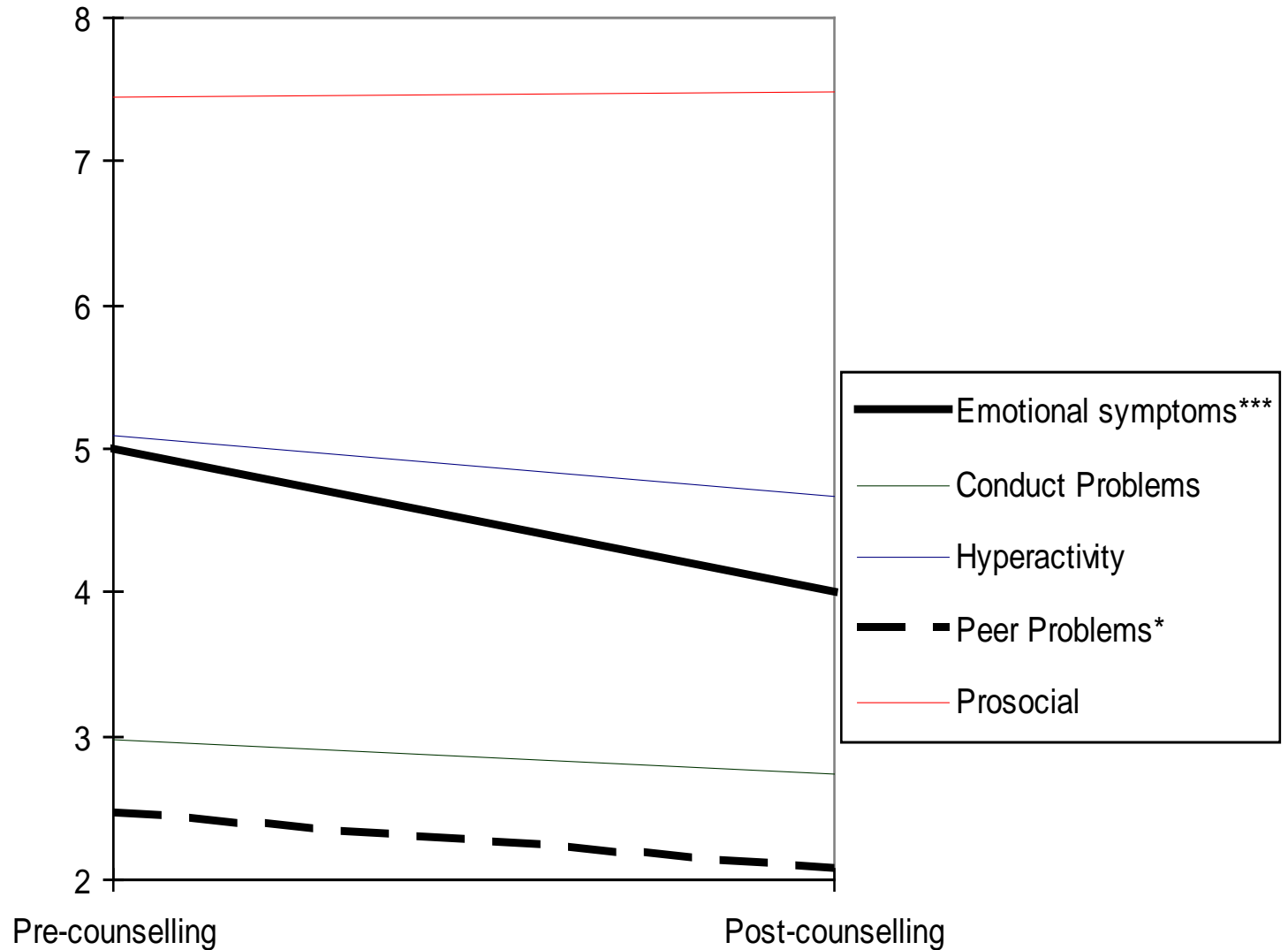


Table 8. Ranked reductions in levels of psychological distress on YP-CORE items (Glasgow II)

Rank	Item	n	Pre-cou ns. me an	Post-cou ns. me an	Pooled SD	Effect size (<i>d</i>)
1	Felt unhappy	204	2.43	1.40	1.17	0.88
2	Problems felt too much	205	2.15	1.08	1.26	0.85
3=	Able to cope	203	2.32	1.44	1.18	0.75
3=	Distressed	204	2.03	1.06	1.29	0.75
5	Can't stop thinking	203	2.31	1.35	1.32	0.73
6	Felt alone	204	1.57	0.76	1.11	0.72
7	Haven't felt like talking	200	1.72	0.93	1.17	0.68
8	Unwanted thoughts	204	2.26	1.39	1.37	0.63
9	Felt tired	202	2.17	1.44	1.29	0.57
10	Felt nervous	203	1.86	1.25	1.17	0.51
11	Others got on nerves	202	2.62	2.01	1.23	0.50
12	Felt can ask for help	203	1.83	1.19	1.35	0.47
13	Have done all wanted	204	2.66	2.08	1.30	0.45
14=	Self-harm	205	0.83	0.34	1.13	0.44
14=	Hard to sleep	203	1.85	1.34	1.46	0.35
16	Thought future good	204	1.78	1.33	1.28	0.35
17	No friends	203	0.85	0.51	1.16	0.29
18	Felt close to someone	204	1.35	1.15	1.34	0.15

Primary impact on *affect* consistent with findings from wider psychotherapy research field

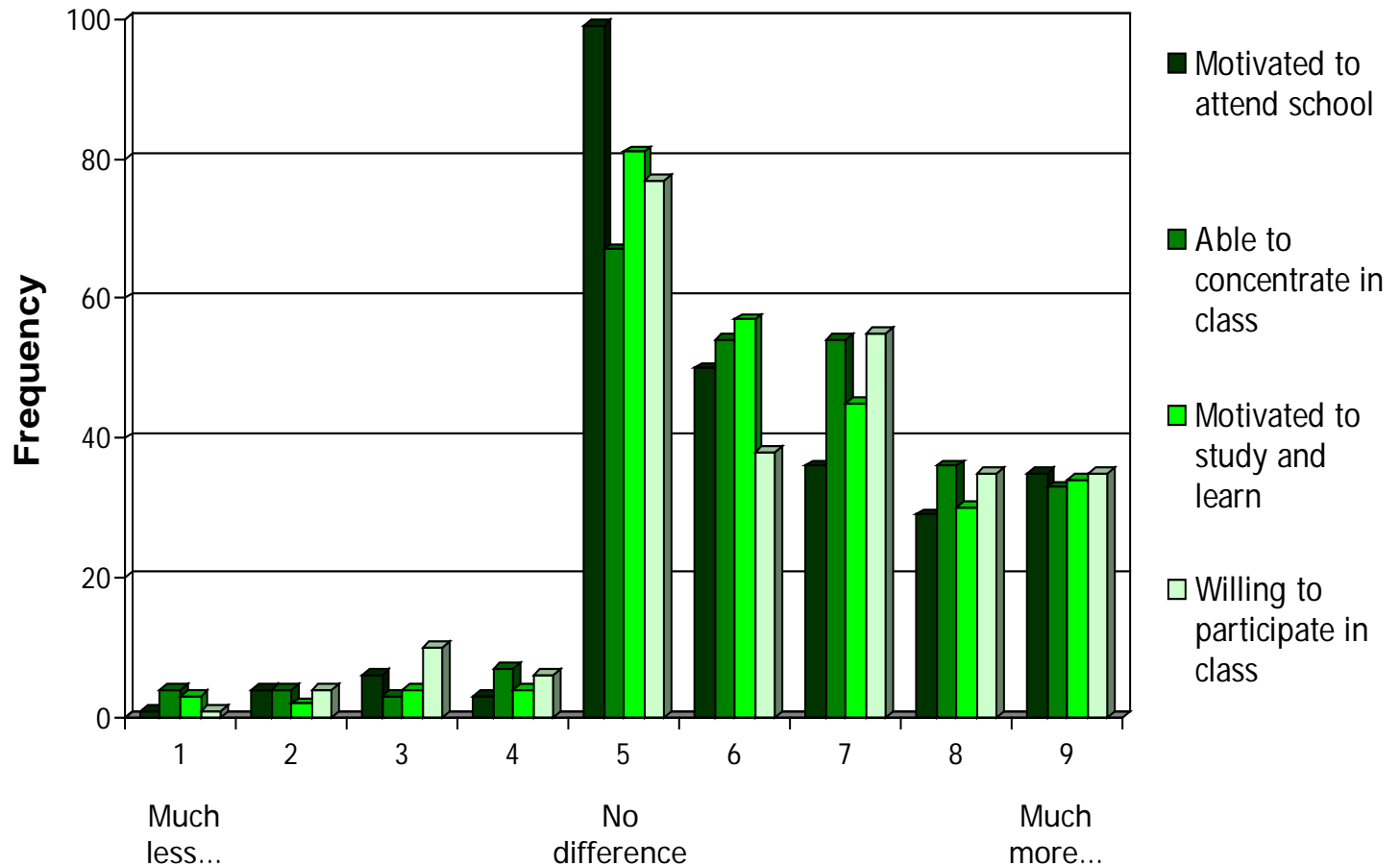
- Few studies on effectiveness or efficacy of PCT with C&YP ($\approx 2\%$ studies, Fonagy et al., 2002)
- But: some evidence that non-directive/counselling approach efficacious for mild to moderate *depression*:
 - Vostanis et al. (1996) non-focused intervention as effective as cognitive-behavioural
 - Birmaher et al. (2000): nondirective, supportive therapy as efficacious as CBT and systemic behavioural therapy in treating depression in long term

Negative findings for counselling

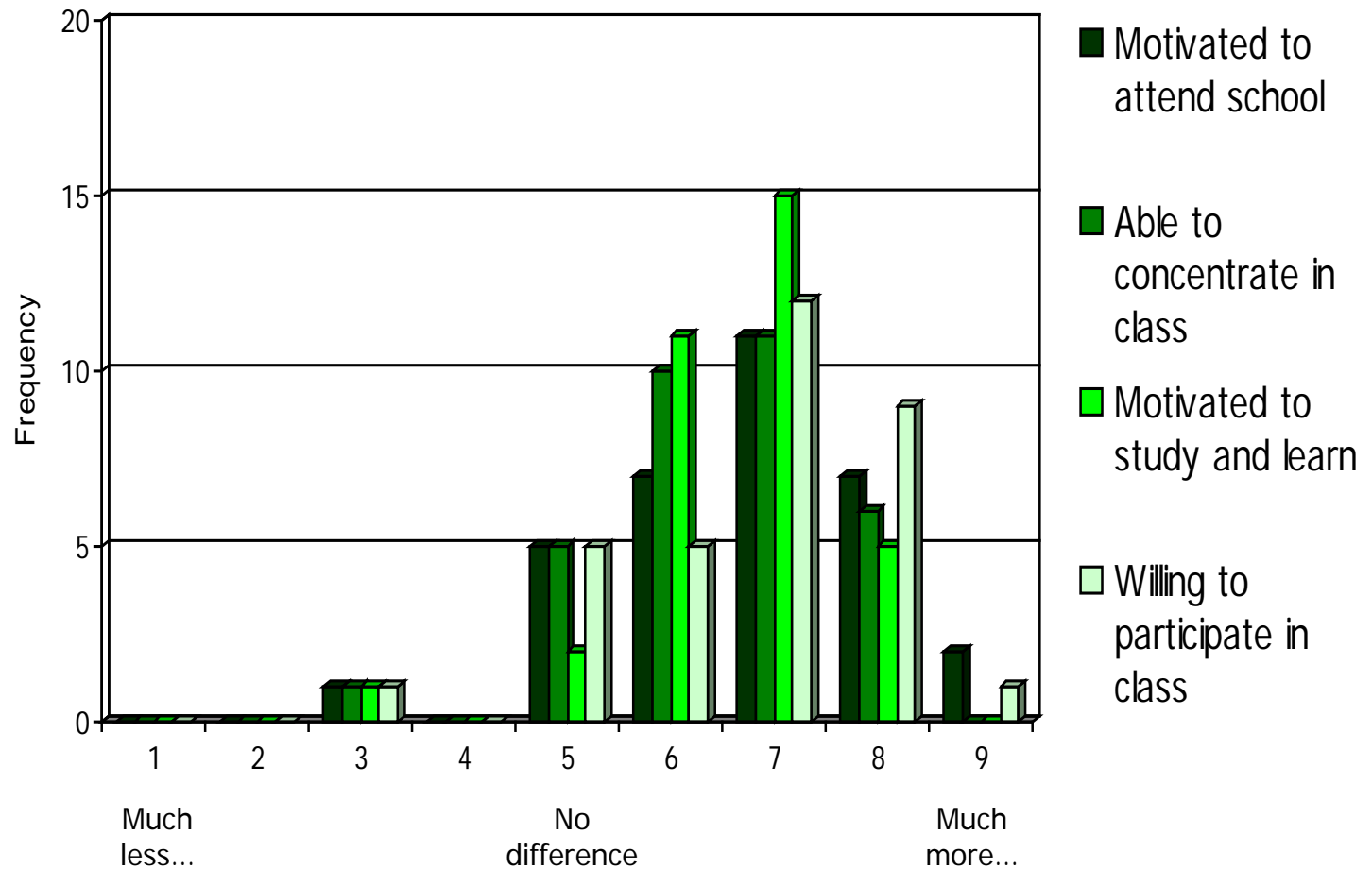
- Non-directive counselling not particularly efficacious for behavioural problems/disturbances of conduct/‘juvenile delinquency’ (e.g., Fonagy et al., 2002; Lipsey, 1995; McGuire & Priestley, 1995)
- Multimodal, highly structured, skills-orientated, CBT programs shown to be most effective

6. What is the impact of counselling in schools on pupils' capacities to study and learn?

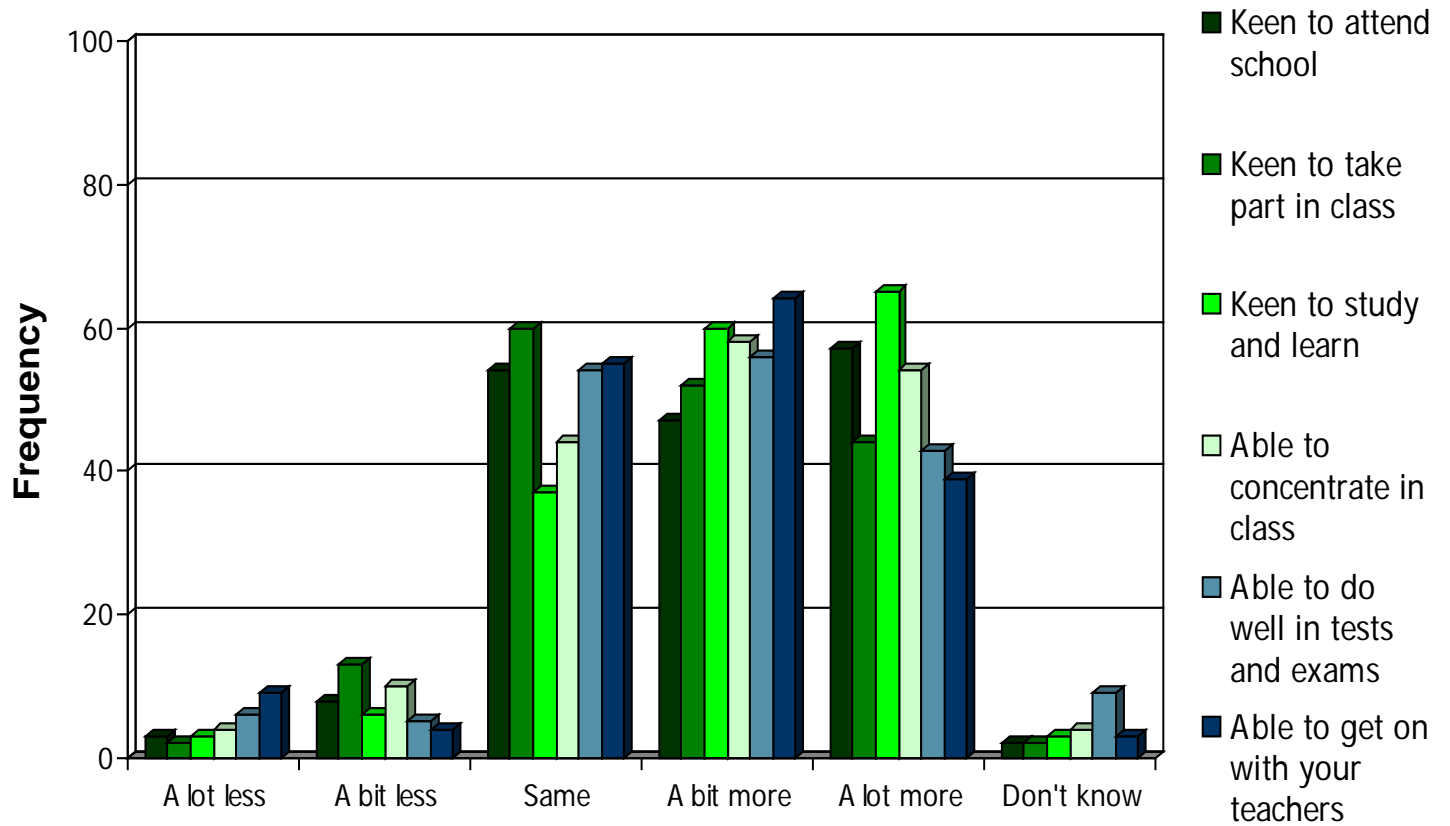
6 out of 10 *clients* said counselling helped them study and learn (Glasgow II)



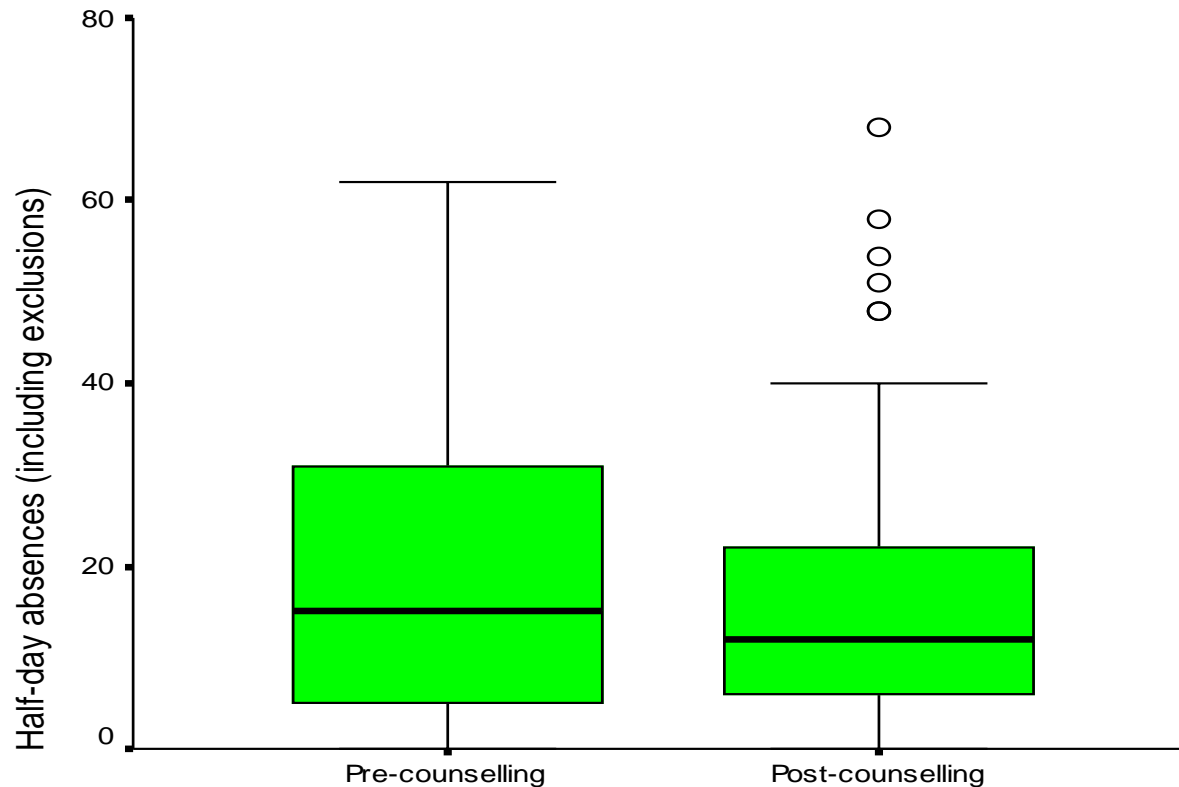
8 out of 10 *pastoral care teachers* also felt counselling helped pupils to study and learn (Glasgow II)



Most recent findings: simplified post-counselling questionnaire Glasgow post-Phase II

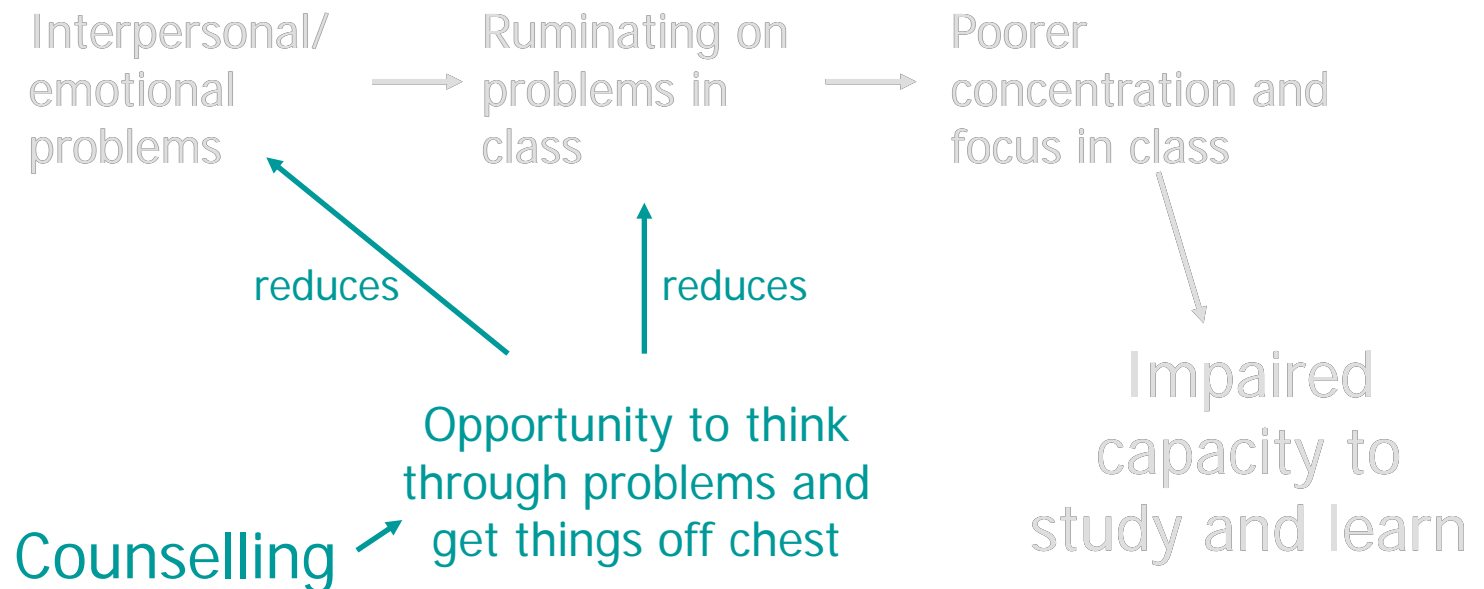


Trend toward reduced absences and exclusions following counselling (Glasgow II)

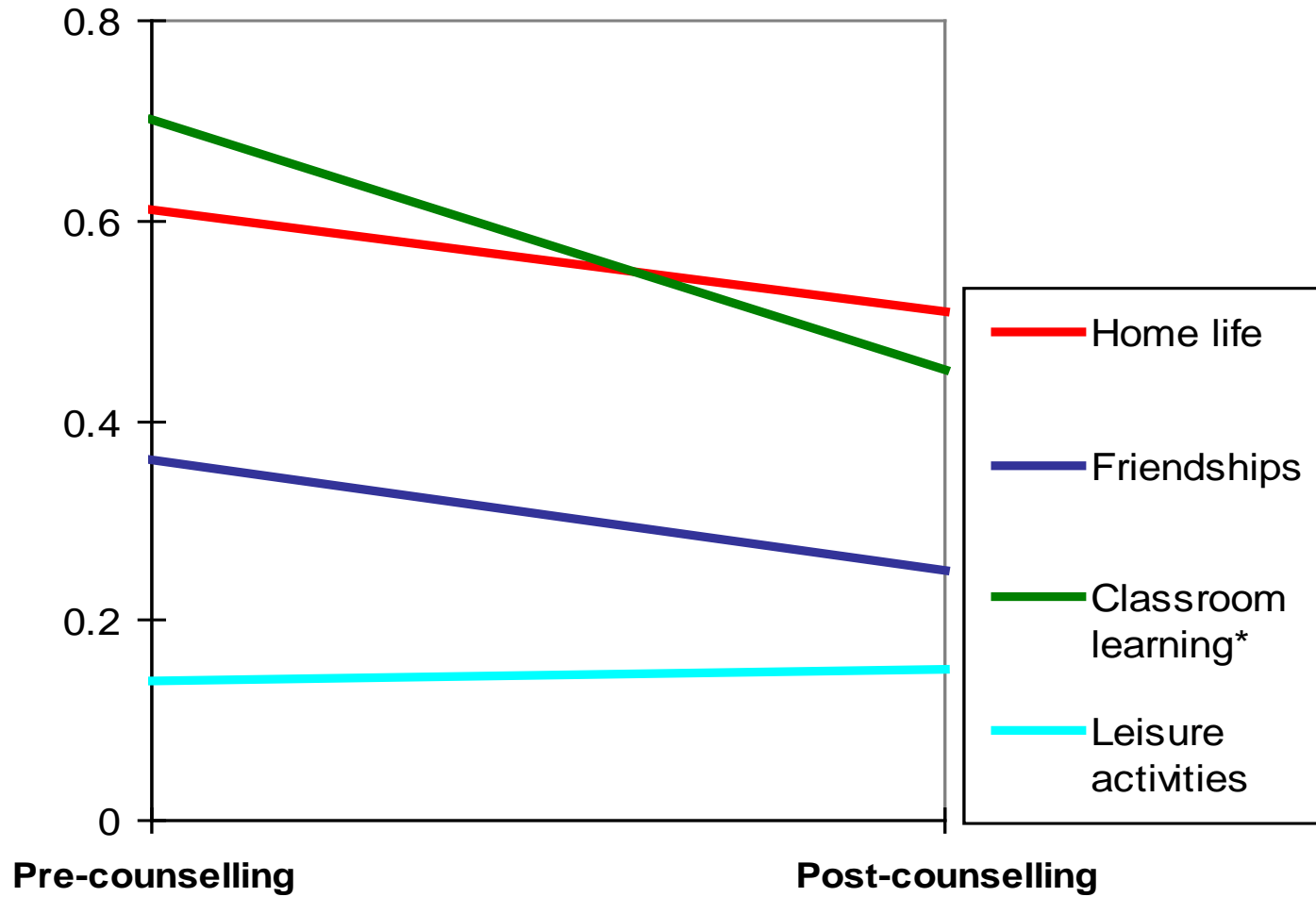


Principle change pathway

Client interviews, Glasgow II



Primary impact of counselling on classroom learning (East Renf.: SDQ impact supplement)



7. What aspects of the counselling service are helpful/unhelpful?

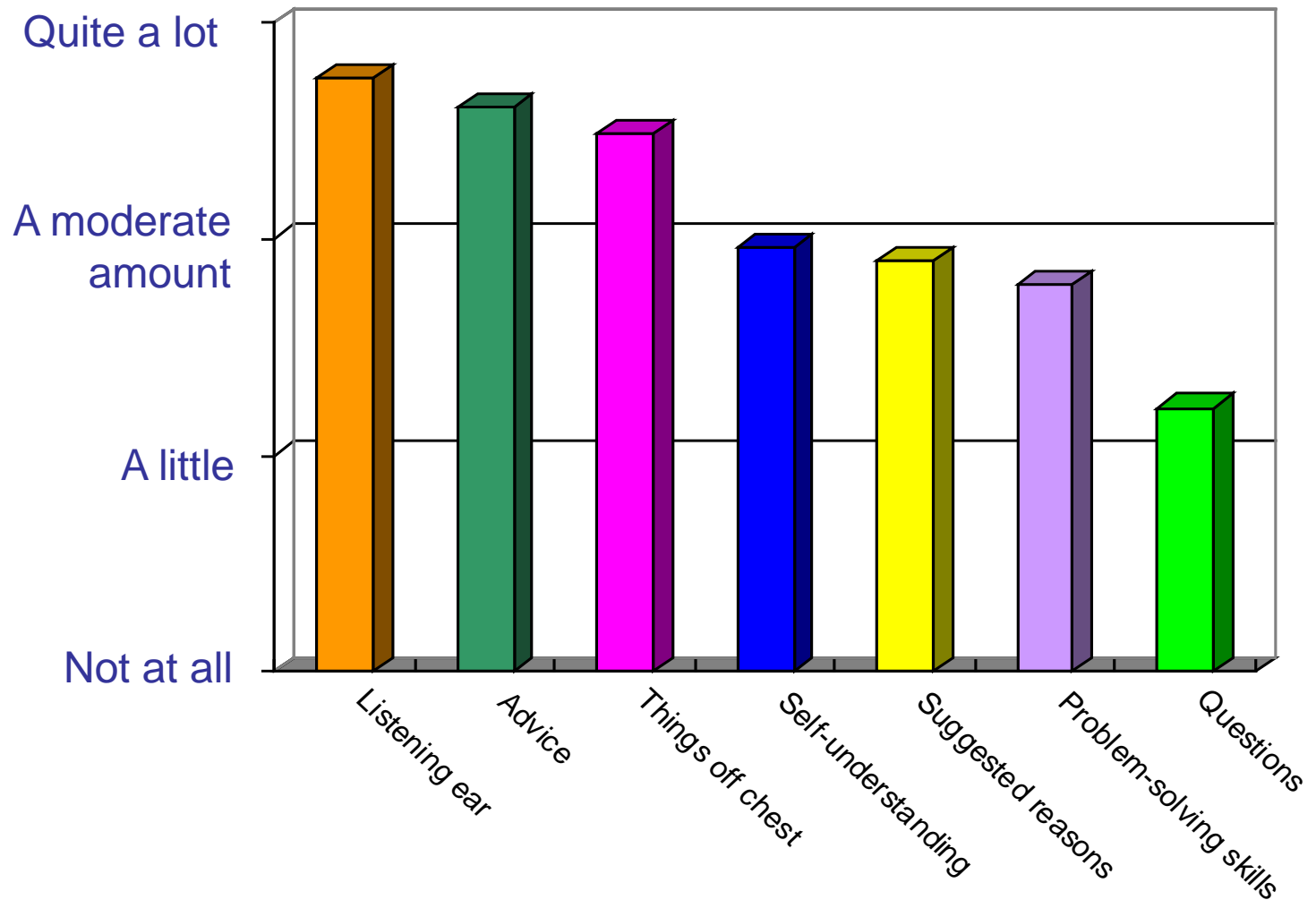
Glasgow I INT	NSPCC INT	Airdrie INT	Glasgow I OQ	East Ren. OQ	Dudley OQ	Glasgow II OQ	Oban CQ	East Dumb. CQ
Opportunity to talk (95%)	Getting things off chest ('some')	Counsellor's personal qualities: warmth, naturalness	Talking and being listened to (28%)	Talking and being listened to (59%)	Talking more openly (6%)	Talking and being listened to (21%)	Talking to someone who listens (2.41)	Talking to someone who listens (2.45)
Confidentiality (63%)	Empathy (13%)	Range of creative activities (e.g., mask-making)	Specific improvements (24%)	Guidance and advice (14%)	Being understood (3%)	Getting things off one's chest (4%)	Getting things off chest (2.40)	Getting things off chest (2.29)
Suggestions /advice (58%)	Problem-solving ('some')	Suggestions /advice	Getting things off chest (16%)	Misc. (9%)	Specific improvements (3%)	Independence of counsellor (3%)	Confidentiality (2.11)	Confidentiality (2.26)
Reflection on feelings (47%)	-	Responsivity and flexibility	Guidance /advice (8%)	Confidentiality (8%)	Confidentiality (2%)	-	Suggestions /advice (2.03)	Suggestions /advice (1.88)
Being asked questions (53%)	-	-	Confidentiality (8%)	Everything (6%)	-	-	Insight and understanding (1.96)	Being asked questions (1.79)
Getting things off chest (42%)	-	-	-	Specific improvements (6%)	-	-	Working out new behaviours (1.67)	Insight and understanding (1.69)

Note. INT = interviews, OQ = post-counselling open-ended questionnaire responses, CQ = post-counselling closed-ended rating rated responses

Overall ranking of helpful factors

1. Talking and being listened to
2. Getting things off one's chest
3. Guidance and advice
4. Confidentiality

What might pupils want from a counsellor (Glasgow I survey)



Unhelpful aspects of counselling

- Few aspects identified
 - E.g. East Renf. study: 91% of responses coded as ‘nothing’
- Few commonalities, except:
 - insufficient confidentiality (Glasgow I, Dudley, NSPCC)
 - Lack of input and direction: 16 percent (Glasgow I interviews)

8. In what ways can counselling in schools services be improved?

Areas for improvement

1. Extended services (esp. more days)
(70% PTC interviews, Glasgow II)
2. Better information exchange between counsellors, pastoral care staff and multi-agency professionals:
 - esp. more feedback on progress that clients are making

(NSPCC, Glasgow I & II, Aberdeen)
3. Clearer protocols at start of project
(Glasgow I & II)
4. Greater promotion/higher profile of service (Glasgow I & II)

9. What is the 'added value' of a counselling service to a school's pastoral care provisions?

Pastoral care teachers' interviews (Glasgow II)

1. Capacity to work with young people for extended time periods
2. Expertise in counselling skills
3. Highly confidential environment
4. Independence from school
5. Non-directive

Added value II

6. More accessible than other external agencies
7. Less stigma than psychology/psychiatry
8. Provides particular support for 'troubled' young people
9. Relief for pastoral care teachers to know that additional support available

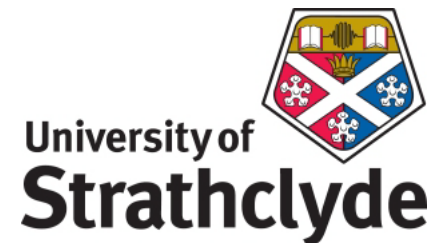
Summary

1. Growing number of counselling in schools services in UK, supported by governmental policy initiatives
2. Used by range of boys and girls, typically 12-14, often presenting with family issues. Average attendance about 7 sessions
3. Primary factors which inhibit young people from attending counselling are anxieties about talking to strangers and not wanting other pupils to find out. General preference for school-based, individual therapy
4. Counselling associated with significant improvements in mental health and well-being: ES from pre- to post-counselling ≈ 0.8

5. Improvements primarily at affective, rather than behavioural, level
6. Indications that counselling can facilitate studying and learning, through helping pupils concentrate more fully in class
7. Talking and getting things off chest most helpful aspects of counselling, but advice and guidance also valued. Confidentiality important for many clients.
8. Primary area for improvement is clearer communication and protocols between counsellors and pastoral care staff
9. Good evidence that CiS services add value to a school's pastoral care provisions

Thank you

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