



Presentation to Fingal Well Being Road Show



The Traveller Counselling Service

TITLE

DATE

Traveller Mental Health - Some Facts

- ▶ At present Traveller mental health has developed to what has been described as a crisis
- ▶ Suicide seven times higher than national rate, in the last count which was in 2010
- ▶ Over reliance on prescribed medication for anxiety and depression
- ▶ Over representation of Travellers in the central mental hospital, 15%
- ▶ A strong stigma regarding Mental Health within the Traveller community
- ▶ A gap exists between mental health services and the Traveller community
- ▶ Lack of understanding and respect for Traveller culture
- ▶ The need for culturally competent and inclusive mental health services
- ▶ Lack of an ethnic identifier
- ▶ 11% of current deaths due to suicide, in more recent the times many Traveller children taking their own lives

Key areas of work we are involved in

Mental Health Support and Community Work

- ▶ The provision of one to one counselling to Individuals and couples across 6 locations in Leinster
- ▶ The provision of online and phone counselling to Travellers nationwide
- ▶ The provision of counselling and group work within the prison system, Dochas, Arbour Hill
- ▶ We supported the establishment and continue to support counselling in Offaly and Meath
- ▶ We established and support Mental Health Steering Groups in a variety of locations nationally
- ▶ We are in the process of establishing an emergency Helpline to respond to the increasing high rates of suicide within the community
- ▶ We are working collaboratively with Exchange House Ireland and Traveller Mediation Services to develop a multi stranded project to address conflict within the community – The Conflict Initiative
- ▶ We are key members of the National Traveller Mental Health Network
- ▶ Promotion of the counselling service is ongoing with information sessions on sites and group housing schemes, inputs at open days etc

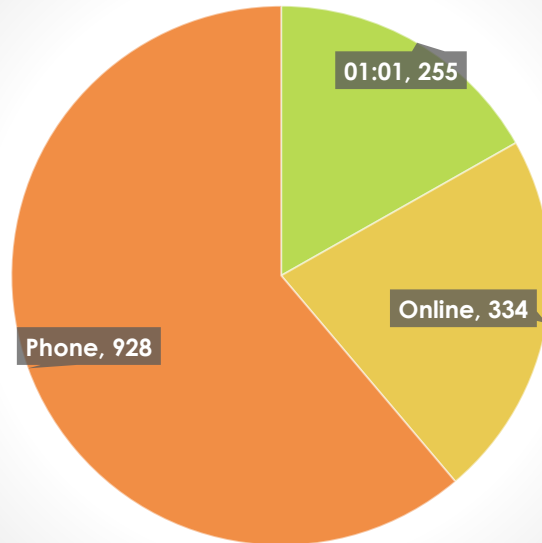
Some Counselling Statistics from 2021

Client Hours 2013 - 2021



Some Counselling Statistics 2021

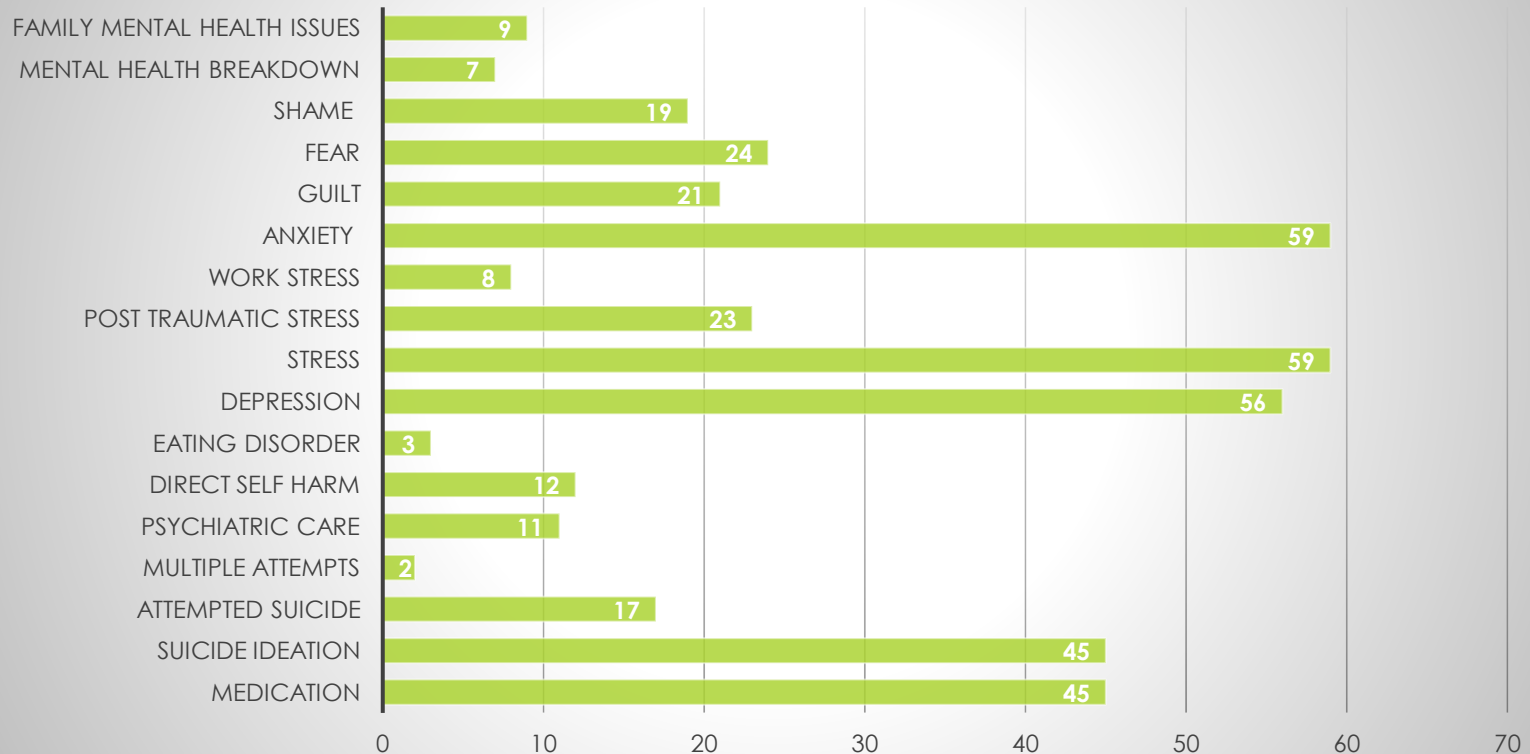
Client Hours by Format 2021



01:01 Online Phone

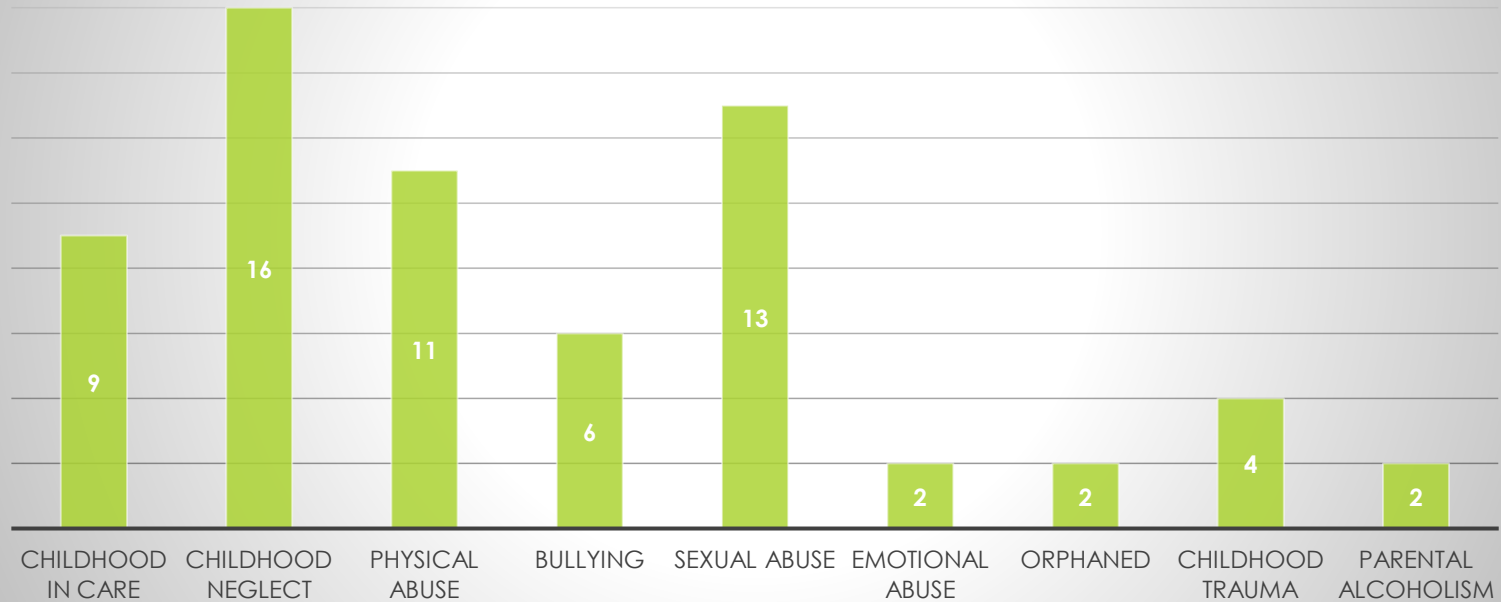
Some Counselling Statistics 2021

Mental Health 2021



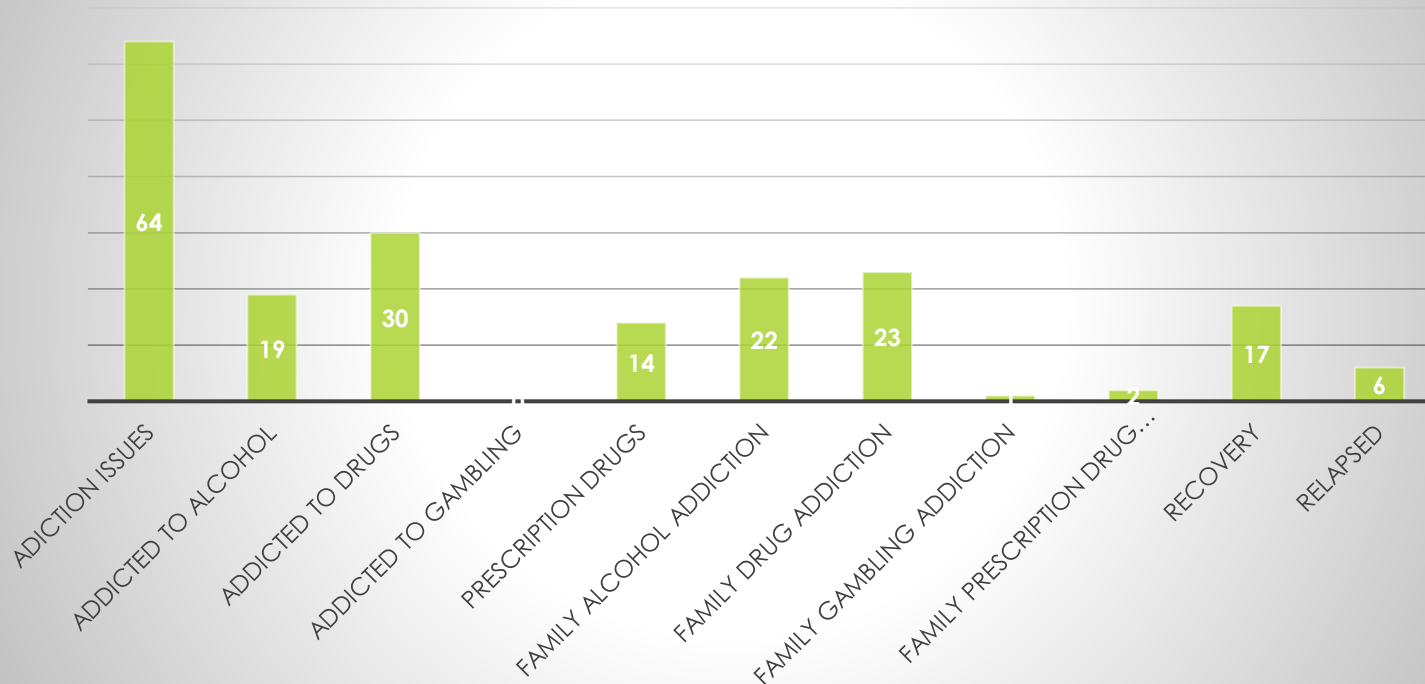
Some Counselling Statistics 2021

Childhood Experiences 2021



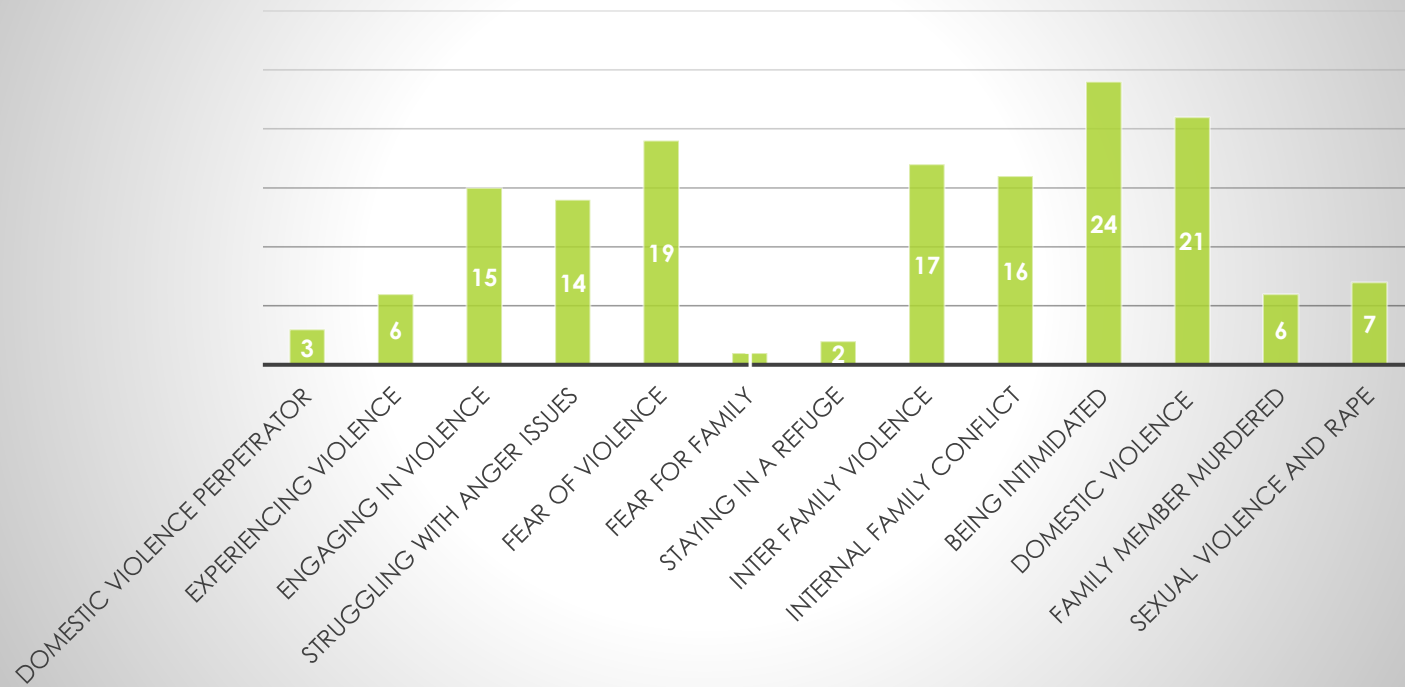
Some Counselling Statistics 2021

Addiction 2021



Some Counselling Statistics 2021

Violence 2021



Our Counselling Service

- ▶ Clients can contact our service in the following ways:-
 - ▶ Website, whereby clients contact the counsellor directly
 - ▶ Phonenumber, whereby clients contact our staff and are referred onto an available therapist
 - ▶ Referrals, from GP's, Prison Services, Local Groups, Homeless Services etc.
 - ▶ Local Groups, whereby clients are referred through their local Traveller Community Development Groups

Our Counselling Service

▶ Local Groups

- ▶ There are two ways that we engage with local groups:-
 - ▶ Local Groups refer clients and we invoice them for our service (they apply for funding for this service themselves)
 - ▶ Local Groups refer clients and we pay the counsellors from the THU/HSE funding

We propose that all payments be made directly to the TCS as this will allow for local groups that are not well established in terms of applying for funding themselves to avail of counselling also.

If funding is paid directly to the TCS, we can ensure that counselling is available across regions rather than focused in specific areas and thereby increase accessibility.

In the past, where funding ceased for local groups and counselling had been in place, the break in funding resulted in a disruption to counselling and loss of counselling in some areas.

Our Counselling Service

- ▶ **Policies and Procedures for Counselling**
 - ▶ We have highly developed policies and procedures in place regarding counselling
 - ▶ We see clients within three categories, a. long term clients (over 6 months), b. medium term clients (3 – 6 months), and c. short term clients (0 – 3 months)
 - ▶ We are in the process of moving to an automated data collection system whereby therapists will input their client data directly to the system (AACPI approved)
 - ▶ We are fully compliant in terms of governance and have excellent practices and procedures in place in terms of child protection, GDPR, client complaints, codes of conduct, client confidentiality etc.

Other Key Areas of Work

Training

- ▶ We have completed a very successful Mental Health Training Course for Travellers only. Follow on course being prepared for 2023
- ▶ We are developing a stand alone module on Cultural Competency for trained Travellers to deliver to service providers
- ▶ We continue to give inputs at conferences, lectures in universities nationwide and advice and support to local Traveller groups and mainstream service providers

Other Key Areas of Work C'ntd

Advocacy – National

National Policy and Advisory Structures

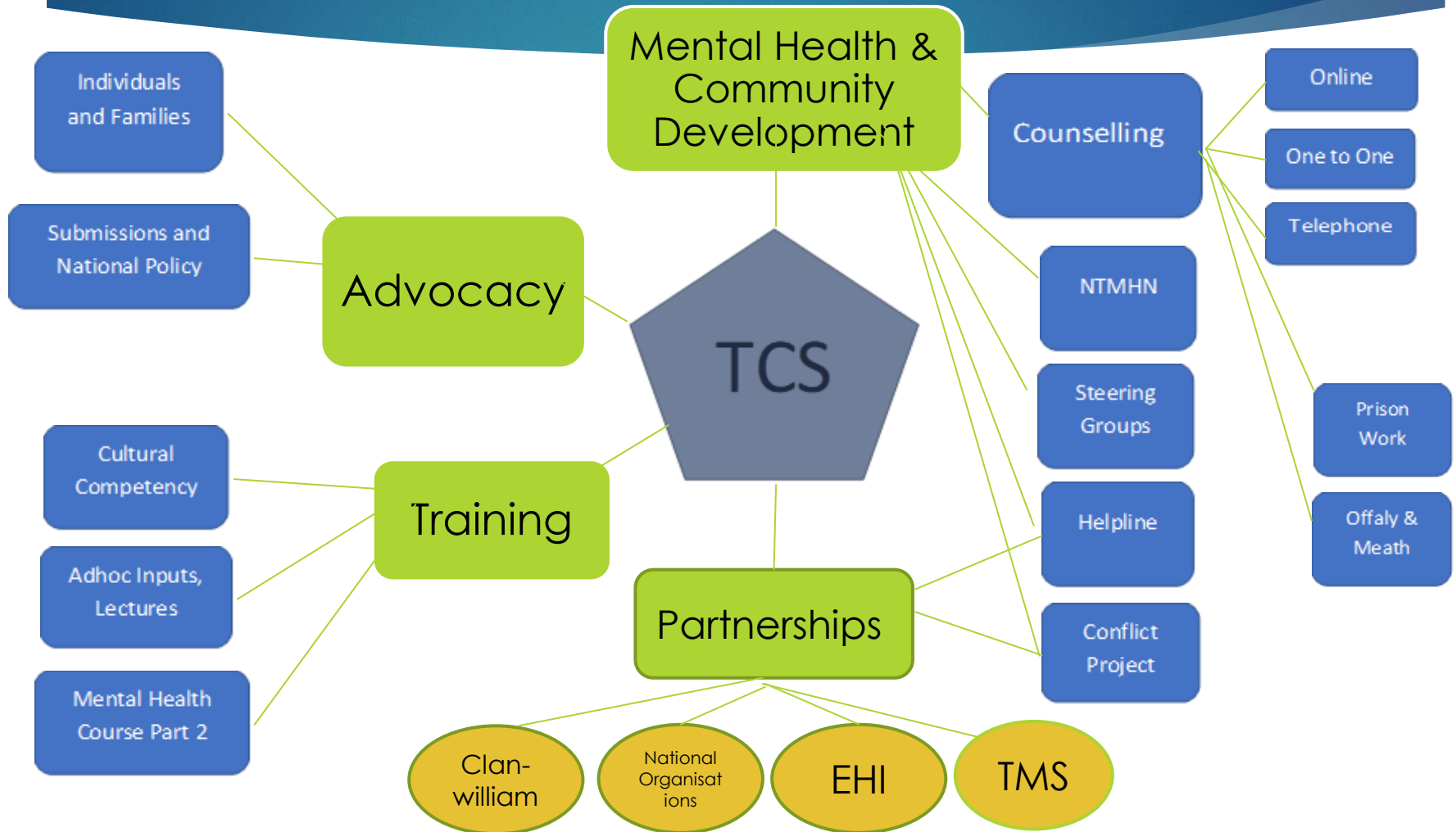
- ▶ We are active members of a number of policy and advisory structures
- ▶ We are members of NTRIS where we feed into working groups and to the national committee
- ▶ We are an active member of the National Garda Traveller Advisory committee
- ▶ We are active members of the Wheel, Mental Health Reform Ireland, AACPI, NTWF and the ITM
- ▶ We are also active members and support the development of the National Traveller Mental Health Network

Other Key Areas of Work

Advocacy – Individuals and Families

- ▶ We have just recruited an advocacy worker to support individual Travellers and Traveller families to advocate for their rights in terms of mental health as many of our clients and Travellers who contact the service require advocacy support
- ▶ We continue to engage and collaborate with other national Traveller organisations with regard to developing submissions and shaping national policies that impact Traveller Mental Health.
- ▶ Policy and Advisory Structures (previous slide)

What we do



The Operational Structure of our Service

