

Guide to 'London Young People Study' Evaluation - FAQs

This FAQ document has been compiled following the Your Choice Team's recent 'Guide to Evaluation Q&A sessions. It is designed to address the FAQs from those meetings as well as additional questions we have received directly. The document is split into the following three sections (you can click the hyperlinks to move to each section):

1. [Consent and eligibility](#)
2. [Data collection](#)
3. [Evaluation process](#)

1. Consent and eligibility

What is the London Young People Study and where does it fit with Your Choice?

The London Young People Study is the name used for the Randomised Control Trial (RCT) that is being piloted to explore the impact of the Your Choice Programme. To compare impact of the Your Choice programme with "practice as usual" across adolescent services, it is important that we have a control group that are not engaged on the Your Choice programme. That is why we have called the study 'The London Young People Study', as it will include young people engaged with a range of adolescent services and does not just include young people who are engaged with the Your Choice programme. If you want to find out more about the RCT then please [take a look at this video discussion](#), which explains it further.

I'm worried that this will involve additional work for busy practitioners and teams. What are the benefits of taking part?

Though CBT is a well tried and tested approach, the Your Choice enhanced approach to practice is not. We have a duty to ensure that services offered to young people have demonstrable positive impact. We know that this cohort are underrepresented within clinical services and in the evidence base too. If we work together to find a way to enable young people's engagement in the research study, then we have a real opportunity to change that.

We are also keen to maximise benefits for local authorities too. The inclusion of a control group provides a great opportunity to explore impact of "practice as usual" (sometimes referred to as business as usual) too. We are working with London Adolescent Safeguarding Oversight Board (LASOB) to ensure that we can maximise benefits of the collection of this data.

Who is eligible to take part?

There are 3 eligibility criteria that need to be met for young people to take part in the London Young People Study. This includes young people in the Your Choice (intervention) and control (practice as usual) group. These are:-

- Aged 11-17 years old
- Medium to high risk
- Discussed at multi agency panel within 30 days or risk rating validated by QA process within same period.

Are there any exclusion criteria for those people having extra therapeutic intervention?

Your Choice is not therapy, it is an enhanced approach to practice, so it would not conflict with another therapeutic intervention. As with all good practice it will be important for professionals to work together to ensure that there are joined up plans, so letting a young person's therapist know that they are taking part in Your Choice would be beneficial.

We would also ask that this is captured in the data spreadsheet.

What do we do if medium risk cases aren't discussed at panel. Do they still meet eligibility criteria?

These young people would still be eligible to take part in the evaluation. The important thing is that there is agreement about the risk rating and this has been quality assured or countersigned.

Do we have to get written consent for the RCT?

Young people will be consenting to share their information as part of the evaluation. Therefore, it is important that they understand what they are agreeing to and provide their written informed consent. Consent forms can be found on [the IFS website](#) and should be completed via the online link.

What happens if a YP wants to participate in the programme but not the evaluation?

They will be able to receive the service the local authority deems most appropriate to them. This might include Your Choice but they would not be part of the London Young People Study itself if they do not give their written consent.

What happens if the young person changes their mind about taking part in the Your Choice programme?

Your Choice is a consent based programme and young people have the right to withdraw from the programme at any time. Where this happens, it will be helpful for our learning to understand why but young people are not obliged to give a reason.

What happens if the young person changes their mind about taking part in the Study?

As above, young people have the right to withdraw from the study at any point without reason. However, because of the way in which young people's data is processed and stored, if they wish for their data to be deleted then the evaluators will need to know before the data is sent to the YEF archive, at the end of the study, no later than the 30th December 2022. This is

because young people's name and other identifying information will be deleted from their survey answers before the data is sent to the YEF archive. Once the information is in the YEF archive it will not be possible to delete young people's information because they won't be able to identify them from the pseudonymised data.

We are delivering Your Choice through Social worker in Schools, what happens if a young person stops attending school? Can they still take part in the Your Choice programme?

Yes but this is probably one for discussion with professionals around the young person, to consider how this fits with the wider plans to address non attendance. Arguably, this may be an important time to maintain contact with their coaches to help to understand their disengagement from school and the impact this may have on their goals.

2. Data collection

Is the monitoring the same as Home Office?

No. The information collected via the data spreadsheet will be sent directly from LA's to the evaluators.

The central team will continue to use monthly monitoring to collect information on focus areas, gather feedback and ensure the fidelity of the Your Choice programme. This will also provide an opportunity to share case studies- for both young people and practitioners.

What are the expectations about the data reporting for those already trained during the Home Office phase?

For those trained and engaged on the Your Choice programme, during the Home Office phase, you will continue to report figures through YC Monthly monitoring. This is because their data will not be included in the pilot evaluation.

Do young people from the Home Office phase need to complete the questionnaires?

No. Young people from the Home Office phase will have now completed or be nearing completion and would have completed the SDQ with their practitioners at the beginning and the end of the programme.

What about young people who want to take part who are working with coaches that were trained during the Home Office phase?

Young people working with coaches who were trained during the Home Office phase, but who were recruited to the Your Choice programme during the pilot evaluation, will be asked to take part in the study. Therefore, they will need to provide written consent to take part and will be asked to complete the questionnaires via the IFS website.

How long will young person's data be tracked for?

Please see the updated information sheet and in particular the privacy notice which confirms that the IFS will hold personal data securely for a minimum of 10 years, and that the secure archive at YEF will hold *pseudonymised* data indefinitely. The pseudonymisation process means that it is highly unlikely that a young person could be identified because the YEF archive is a highly secure environment and it is illegal to re-identify a young person following the pseudonymisation process.

In terms of data protection, how is the data handled?

We are in the process of finalising details in relation to data sharing arrangements. In the meantime, LA's are asked to capture the relevant data via the data spreadsheet and **store locally**. There will be a DPIA's in place for each LA to enable the sharing of information between LA's and evaluators. These are currently being developed in collaboration with the Information Governance for London group. Please keep an eye out for correspondence in relation to this and do **NOT** share identifiable information until formal arrangements have been finalised.

How are we managing the data governance?

Data about a young person will only be collected if the young person consents. All data collection is compliant with GDPR. The main legal basis for collecting the data is legitimate interest. We are also collecting special category data and there is a particular clause in the GDPR which provides a right to collect and process this data for research and statistical purposes. The lawful basis for this is Archiving, research and statistics.

What is your definition of a safeguarding incident and why do we need to share this with YEF?

There is a requirement from our funders (YEF) to report significant safeguarding incidents. YEF is a charity, accountable to the charities commission and need to demonstrate that they are following due process and policy, to ensure that young people attending their projects are appropriately safeguarded and that they are aware of significant safeguarding incidents.

Furthermore, whilst we do not anticipate any harmful effects of the programme, it is important to monitor this in real time. Therefore, a safeguarding incident report must be completed if a young person participating in the Your Choice programme is identified as perpetrator or victim in any of the following significant safeguarding incidents;

- attempted murder
- murder
- rape
- an incident against a member of staff.

This safeguarding incident form can be found on the [practitioners' page](#).

Don't we need consent from the young person to share safeguarding incidents?

It is an anonymous form and the name of the young person would never be included. The information from safeguarding incidents goes directly to the funders (YEF).

I've heard that the Anna Freud Centre will be collecting additional qualitative data. How will they do this?

Our colleagues from the Anna Freud Centre (AFC) will be supporting the collection of qualitative data to hear about young people and practitioners' experiences. They would also be keen to talk with supervisors and managers if possible. Young people will be invited to meet with a peer researcher working with AFC and will be rewarded with a gift voucher as a thank you for their time. It is likely that practitioners will support young people's attendance and arrange for a suitable time to attend a Microsoft Teams meeting or arranged phone call.

Will practitioners need to log sessions onto the spreadsheets?

We are asking practitioners (from both the Your Choice and control group) to capture basic information about each session. For convenience, we have produced a simple form for practitioners to complete after each session. This can be found [on the IFS website](#) entitled "Session Form".

If you have any ideas about how we can improve things, please continue to share your feedback to ensure that we are able to capture the required information in the most efficient, user friendly way.

Where can I find the session recording form?

This can be found on the [IFS website](#).

Where can we find the link for the questionnaires?

We are asking young people from the Your Choice (intervention) group and the control group to complete questionnaires at the start of the study and at the end of Your Choice (for those in the intervention group) and between 16 and 20 weeks since the start for the control group.

We are also asking practitioners to complete a short questionnaire about the young person's perceived risky behaviour at the same intervals. These forms can be found on [the online portal](#) for practitioners.

Besides from the questionnaires, what other data do we need to collect?

We are collecting additional information about young people in the treatment and control group via the [LA data spreadsheet](#). This includes background information about the young people such as DOB, ethnicity, why YP receiving intervention and what interventions they are receiving from the LA at time of recruitment.

We are also asking practitioners to complete session recording forms after each session for young people in both the Your Choice (intervention) and control groups.

In the '[Guide to Evaluation](#)' video you mentioned using tablets to complete the questionnaires, but we don't have tablets available in our LA, what do you suggest?

The questionnaires are available to download on the [practitioner's page](#). This can be accessed via a device with internet connection including phones and laptops but please ensure that you refer to local guidance to ensure secure information on any such device remains protected.

What are the pre and post surveys measuring?

As before, we are looking to measure impact of the Your Choice Programme using pre and post measures. We will do this by comparing a young person's pre (baseline) and post (endline) score on the SDQ and a newly developed Risky Behaviour measure. At the end of the programme (or between 16 and 20 weeks for the control group) we will also be looking to see if there is a difference between the Your Choice (intervention) and control group scores on other measures including social connectedness, self regulation, self efficacy and wellbeing.

Downloadable PDF versions of the questionnaires will be available shortly for you to review on the IFS website.

More broadly, what are you measuring to understand impact?

In addition to the information from the questionnaires, the evaluators are interested in measuring short and longer term progress in other areas of the young people's lives. For example, their ETE status and incidents and type of offending (if applicable). They will do this by collecting data (as explained in information sheet and the privacy notice) from the DfE and the MoJ.

Practitioners will also be invited to take part in interviews with the Anna Freud Centre to talk about their experiences as part of the study.

I'm worried that the young people may find it intrusive to collect data about them from local authorities, the DfE and the MoJ?

It is important that we are upfront with the young people about what they are signing up to. To do this practitioners involved in the recruitment of young people will need to be familiar with the details included in the privacy notice and be ready to talk this through with young people. It is worth noting that the DfE and MoJ only get sent names, addresses and dates of birth not questionnaire data or any other information from the study. The data that is used for research by anyone outside the research team is pseudonymised which means that the young person would not be easily identifiable and it would be illegal to do so. In addition, it is

against the law for any of the data to be used for anything other than the purposes of the study (i.e. the data cannot be used for law enforcement purposes by the police or Home Office).

However, we appreciate that young people might be concerned and if they express their reluctance, then it will be important to capture as much detail about this and share via the data spreadsheet.

I'm worried that getting young people to complete forms will put them off?

Unfortunately, there is limited scope for you to be creative as the evaluators want to ensure that the young people complete the questionnaires with minimal influence from others.

We are keen to identify and overcome barriers that you identify and have the benefit of the pilot to work through some of these challenges. The important thing is that you are able to capture as much feedback as possible from the young people. Please ensure that you record reasons for non engagement on the LA data spreadsheet. If you or your young people have ideas about how we could overcome some of the barriers that they identify, then please talk to us so that we can troubleshoot together.

I'm concerned that a 12 week programme (for the Your Choice intervention group) isn't a long enough time to work with the complex issues in these young people's lives?

We are asking you to work differently for the duration of the programme. From the outset coaches are encouraged to think about life after Your Choice with young people and Clinical Leads will work to support step up and step down plans for each young person. However, ongoing support and plans for each young person will be governed by the local authorities based on the young person, their level of need and or statutory requirements.

3. Evaluation process

Are the requirements for HO and YEF the same?

No. The focus during the pilot phase is to understand and test out the mechanics of the evaluation methodology. Therefore, the target numbers for the Your Choice programme (intervention group) are reduced. Your target numbers are half what was expected in the Home Office phase, so for Tier 1 local authorities your target number of young people receiving Your Choice during the pilot is 10 young people. For Tier 2 local authorities your target number is 5 young people.

As well as young people in the Your Choice (intervention) group you will also be recruiting young people to the control group. There isn't a specified target number for this group, but we would ask you to introduce all eligible young people to the study (in the treatment and control teams) and try to get as many young people to sign up as possible. This will help to determine whether we can proceed to the efficacy trail (phase 3).

What happens if staff leave?

If the young person is in the Your Choice (treatment) group, then it is hoped that the young person will be able to continue with the programme by working with another trained coach from the team. If the young person is in the control group, then this should be flagged via the data spreadsheet.

I'm worried about cross contamination. For example, what if a young person moves from a control team to a Your Choice team or vice versa?

Essentially, this is a concern for the evaluators and something that they are keen to explore during the pilot. All participating young people will be tracked via the data spreadsheets; therefore, this would be evident to the evaluators.

If a young person moves from a Your Choice team to a control team then it is hoped that the LA would be able to support the continuation of the programme and maintain recording as part of the intervention group.

If we can't achieve the target numbers, will this mean we cannot get our funding?

No, the funding is not dependent on the target numbers. However, we would strongly encourage you to try to meet the target numbers as this will make transition to phase 3 (the full efficacy trial) more likely.

If you are able to identify differences between the Your Choice and control group, how will you know that it isn't another intervention that the young person has benefitted from and contributed to the differences seen?

We know that young people are likely to be subject to various interventions that might contribute to any differences observed. That is why we are asking you to capture so much information in the data spreadsheet about both the Your Choice and control group, so that the evaluators will be able to take this into account as part of their analysis.

I'm worried that our Your Choice (intervention group) is too different from our control group to draw comparisons?

When you selected teams for the randomisation, you will have included teams where there were young people who met the eligibility criteria, so there should be representation of young people aged 11-17, assessed at medium to high risk in both the Your Choice (intervention) and control groups. And, don't forget, this is a pan London programme, therefore the intervention and control groups will include participating young people from different services across London, not just your respective local authority.

But rest assured, during the pilot, the evaluators are particularly interesting in understanding whether young people from the intervention and control group are similar enough to draw comparisons and will be crunching the data accordingly.

When is the last date to recruit young people for this cohort?

Practitioners need enough time to work through the 12-18-week programme with the target number of young people. Delivery of the programme needs to be complete by 15th November for all young people so young people will need to have enrolled by the 15th August 2022 at the latest.

How many practitioners do we need to train?

This is up to the local authority to decide; you can choose how many practitioners you train within the team which has been selected via the randomisation. The important thing here is that only practitioners from the team randomised by the evaluators, into the Your Choice (intervention) group are trained during the pilot phase and that there is sufficient capacity for clinical supervision.

Is there scope to do group work as part of the intervention?

Practitioners are encouraged to draw on their professional expertise and match the type of intervention to the young person's risks and need. If some groupwork activity would be safe and beneficial for the young person, then this could be incorporated in the Your Choice programme.

What needs to happen for the full efficacy trial to go ahead?

In order to progress to phase 3, the full efficacy phase there are a number of factors that the evaluators will be paying close attention to. They will want to see the following;

- Delivery is taking place as expected- so teams that were randomised to the Your Choice (intervention) group have been trained and delivery the Your Choice programme and those that were randomised to the control group continue with "practice as usual".
- Data is being logged as it should be via the questionnaire links, data spreadsheet and session recording forms
- Data can be accessed by the evaluators- so, there is appropriate information governance infrastructure in place
- Methodology works in practice- including as above that the intervention and control groups are similar enough to draw comparisons.

If the evaluators are satisfied that the progression criteria is met then we will proceed to the full efficacy trial, where we will be able to rigorously test and understand the impact of the Your Choice programme.

Where can I find out more?

You find out more about the London Young People Study on the IFS [website](#). We also have a series of videos that we hope will be helpful for you. You can take a look by clicking on the links below:

Pilot evaluation
FAQ v1.0

[Randomised control trial- expert discussion](#)

[London Young People Study- A step by step guide for practitioners](#)

[London Young People Study- A guide to filling out your Study Workbook](#) (sometimes referred to as data spreadsheet).

[London Young People Study – tips for practitioners to help young people complete questionnaires](#)

Who can I speak to if I still have questions?

The project team are keen to support you the best that we can. Any queries, reflections or feedback please get in touch with us at yourchoice@londoncouncils.gov.uk