

Short-term psychoanalytic psychotherapy

Information for parents and carers

annafreud.org



Anna Freud
National Centre for
Children and Families

Overview

Short-term psychoanalytic psychotherapy (STPP) is offered to young people who are depressed and have been troubled by quite serious worries and unhappiness for some time. In the last few years the availability of STPP has been growing in the light of research studies which have indicated how helpful it can be. Many NHS clinics now offer this treatment to depressed young people.

What is said in the sessions is kept confidential between the young person and their therapist. The only exception to this arises if the therapist thinks they are at risk (from themselves or someone else) or are a risk to someone else. In such a situation there will be a discussion between therapist and young person about who else in the family or community might need to know to help in keeping things safe.

How long will it last?

Your son or daughter will be offered 28 sessions with their therapist, each one lasting 50 minutes. Sessions take place each week at a regular time. There are breaks for holiday periods and depending on the starting date, there are likely to be two of these holiday periods in the course of the therapy, which will last overall between 8 and 9 months. The day and time of the session is negotiated between the therapist and the young person and is arranged as far as possible to take account of the demands of school, college and/or work and family circumstances.

How we help

There is an opportunity at the start for the young person to decide with your support whether they feel this sort of help is what they want. In psychoanalytic therapy, there is no set agenda. Instead, people are encouraged to talk about what is on their mind. This can often be difficult for young people who are depressed and the therapist will try to help them to find a way to express themselves. Sometimes drawing or other ways of getting things across can be helpful, but it is important to know that psychotherapists are experienced in helping young people to convey their problems in whatever way is right for them.

Sharing upsetting memories, thoughts and feelings can be a relief in itself, but the therapist will also aim to help them understand themselves better, and to start to

able to think about difficult aspects of their experience rather than be overwhelmed by feelings.

Alongside your son or daughter's session, you will be offered some sessions usually up to 7) with another therapist. These are to help you to understand their behaviour and feelings and to think about your difficulties in helping them. If the young person is 16 or over, they can decide whether or not they want their parents or carers to be involved. A link to school or college may sometimes be helpful and will be arranged if appropriate with the young person's permission.

The relationship with therapists can become an important part of people's lives during therapy. Therapy evokes all sorts of feelings, but because there is a regular pattern of sessions, there is a trustworthy space in which to think about how people feel about their therapy. The young person can explore how they manage relationships with others and discuss how they are dealing with the process of becoming gradually more independent and more responsible for themselves. You, too, will have a chance to think over the complexities of parenting an adolescent

Ending therapy

Towards the end of the therapy, there will be time to review what has been achieved. A meeting a few months later is also usually offered to the young person and to their parents. One of the features of STPP is that changes in how people see things may continue to evolve after the therapy has ended. This is because the therapy can help people become more aware themselves of their strengths and vulnerabilities, and better at managing the ups and downs which are always part of adolescence and of living with adolescents.

Out of hours or emergency contacts

The Centre does not offer any out of hours or emergency services for children, young people and families. If you require urgent assistance please contact your GP or visit your local A&E department.

Other languages and formats

If you would like this leaflet in a different language or format please ask at reception or contact us at:

Email: referrals@annafreud.org

Telephone: +44 (0)20 7794 2313

Address:

Anna Freud Centre, 4-8 Rodney Street,
London N1 9JH

How to find us

Buses:

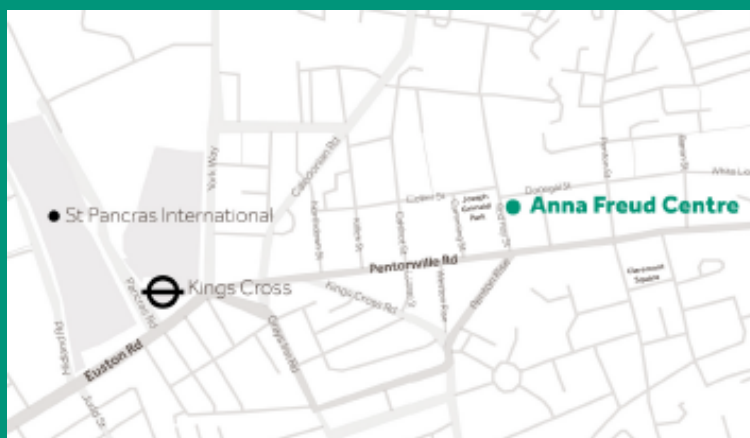
- No. 17, 45, 46, 63, 259

Underground:

- Kings Cross - Circle, Piccadilly, Hammersmith and City, Northern, Metropolitan, Victoria and National Rail
- Angel - Northern Line

Overground:

- Caledonian Road & Barnsbury



The Anna Freud Centre is a company limited by guarantee Registered in England number 3819888 Registered office: [Kantor Centre of Excellence, 4-8 Rodney Street, N1 9JH](https://www.annafreud.org/centre) Registered charity number 1077106