



IMPACT REPORT

August 2026



Help the Parent, Help the Child

Flourish's innovative "Nurturing Families" project in Stanhope, Ashford, Kent, has completed its first year. It's growing fast. The service provides counselling and other support to parents struggling with both mental health issues and the challenges of socio-economic disadvantage. And we think that's the best way to help children's emotional well-being. Here's our first Impact Report.



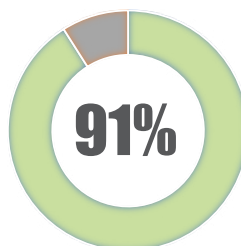
Some numbers first...

45 high-need families referred
referred by schools and other partner organisations, and self-referrals.

11 days: the average waiting time
between referral and the first session.

340 counselling sessions delivered
of which 11% were provided to couples. Most parents seen are single parents.

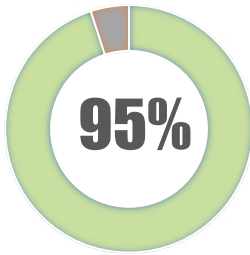
11 life challenges affecting mental health tackled
using advocacy, coaching and/or problem-solving.



of parents referred engaged in counselling
that is they attended four or more sessions



of those completing counselling were "very satisfied"



**of parents who engaged with counselling
achieved important outcomes**
see below for some examples



**of referrers said that they noticed a
positive change in children's wellbeing**



**of parents asked said that they would
recommend our service to others**



How our clients put it...

"I feel such a relief when I enter the room and after a session. The closed door I like, because I know this is our safe space and that means everything to me"

"I am so much more confident, I carry myself differently now, I don't hide."

"I [now] know that I am not just a mum. I'm important too. I feel my mental health has hugely improved."

"I feel I can manage even when difficulties come now."

"Never found any therapy as helpful as this, [this] has been brilliant. This has helped me think differently."

"It opened my eyes."

"I lost confidence in myself. It was hard being consistent with my kids. I gave in or shouted. It's much better now. They listen."

"I thought I did everything wrong; my ex told me I did. I don't think that's true now."

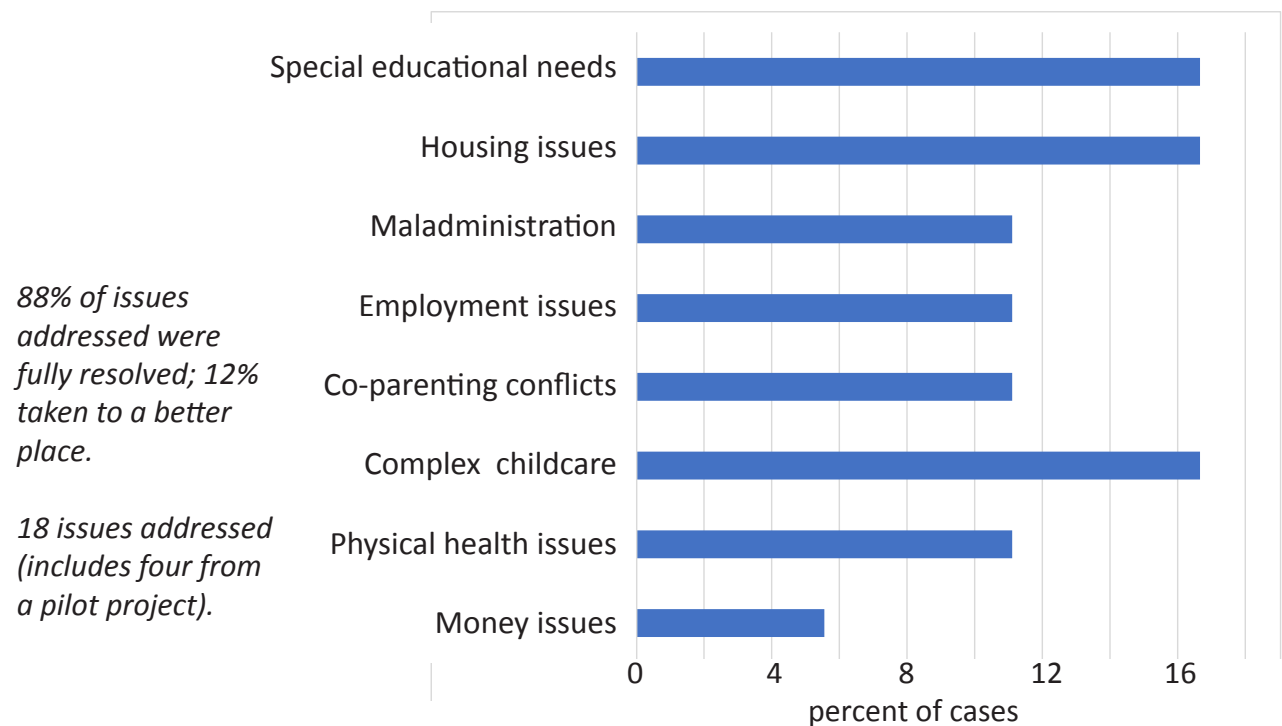
"Flourish has helped me. Having someone to talk to is helpful. I didn't need to wait. You saw me quickly and that made a big difference."

"I stand up for myself and like myself. This is new."

"Thank you lovely, for your help with this. I usually forget what I want to say. I mix my words. Thank you."

Life challenges

About a quarter of our families have benefitted from us helping to tackle their life challenges. Action areas include the following:



What our referrers say...

"From all the referrals I have made to date, I have had very positive feedback about your counsellors and your service – so huge thanks."

"Thank you for being so fab!"

"I have had a message from one of my families who have asked to be referred to you as their friend has been singing [name]'s praises, as well as yours and your colleagues!"

"Thanks again for your on-going support for our school community, it's greatly appreciated."

"...[Flourish] has been effective for those families, increasing the confidence of children, instilling new insight and skill for the parents, and helping the families build a stronger support network in their community. The Flourish team's professionalism has been exceptional."

What professionals have said about a parent-centred approach

"I find that, if you work to support the adults and meet their needs, then the children will thrive."

Former Secondary School Headteacher and Education Consultant.

"We have seen mental health interventions help children, but as soon as they finish, they go back to where they were at the start - because nothing has changed at home."

School Family Liaison Officer

"Unless we see a change in the parents, we don't see the change in the child."

Primary School Headteacher.

"It doesn't matter how good the support in schools is, if the home environment doesn't change then the following morning at school is a reset – back to square one."

Teaching Assistant.



Help the Parent, Help the Child



**John Bowlby
(1907-1990)
pioneer of Attachment
Theory.**

***"If we value our
children, we must
cherish their parents."***

On parenting: what two counsellors notice

Jamie Hardy writes:

By the time parents come to counselling, many are already involved with statutory services, all trying to support the family, but not always with the same perspective. I have seen how this can leave the parent feeling lost and less confident in their ability to parent. Counselling generates a sense of trust-in-self - this leads to trusting their own sense of what their family needs. In turn, their children feel more secure at home..

Della Austin writes:

When working with parents, what they share often reflects an understanding that they want things to be different for their own children. I have noticed how the counselling space offers an opportunity for parents to make sense of their own childhood experiences and recognise how these can shape relationships with their children. With greater understanding comes space to pause, respond differently and create calmer, more connected moments in their relationships.

If you would like to know more, please contact us

If it's about the Stanhope Project, please contact the Project Leader, Jamie Hardy (centre), on jamie@flourish.org.uk or phone 07503 808536.

For more about Flourish's ethos and approach, contact our Clinical Lead, Della Austin (right), on della@flourish.org.uk

Or if it's about Flourish as an organisation, you can contact the Chair, Andrew Garman (left), on andrew@flourish.org.uk