

What do we know about how much 'better' young people are after getting help?

CORC is a collaboration of mental health practitioners and researchers who try to answer: "What helps young people with mental health difficulties get better?"

- Therapists ask young people about how they are feeling and what difficulties they may have at the start, during and end of getting help.
- They may also ask family members and teachers to get a better idea of what's going on.
- CORC looks at these data to understand whether, how and why things change during treatment.
- CORC compares findings from across the country with published research to see what lessons can be learnt.

Deciding what counts as 'better' is not straightforward...

- 'Better' means different things to different people and can be measured in different ways.
- Different people may see things differently, for example young people may see a difficulty differently to their parents.
- We don't know what would have happened if no treatment was offered.
- CORC members have agreed ways of measuring 'better' using questionnaires completed by young people and their families.



Three indications of 'better'

Three ways CORC currently measures 'better' based on information from questionnaire scores at the end of treatment:

1. **Symptom free.** Many questionnaires have a threshold number. If a young person scores below the threshold they are called symptom free. Often young people fill in more than one type of questionnaire. Being symptom free on all measures at the end of treatment is one way to measure 'better'.

	0	1	2	3
1 I feel sad or empty	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
2 Nothing is much fun anymore	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
3 I have trouble sleeping	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
4 I have problems with my appetite	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
5 I have no energy for things	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
6 I am tired a lot	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
7 I cannot think clearly	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
8 I feel worthless	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
9 I feel like I don't want to move	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
10 I feel restless	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always

These scores represent a young person **above** the threshold

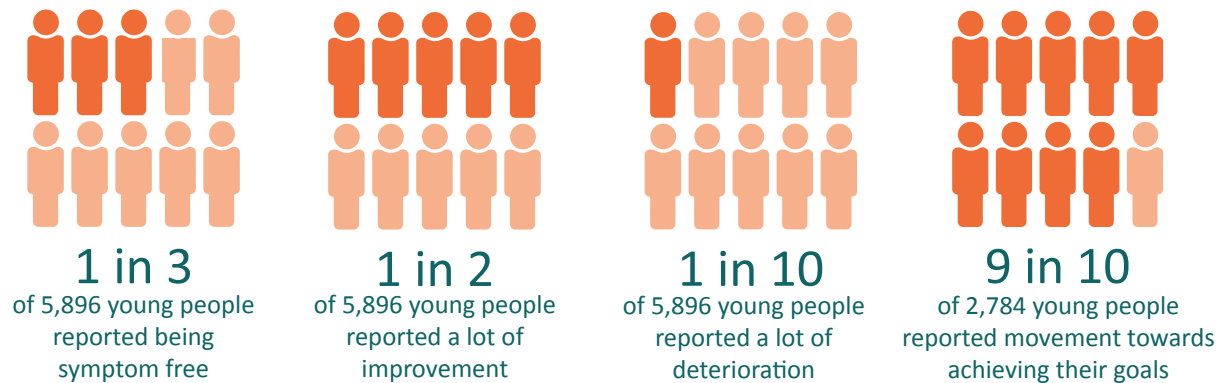
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2. **A lot of Improvement.** This is based on the amount of change in questionnaire scores between start and finish of treatment. Each questionnaire has its own rules as to what counts as a lot of change in improvement or deterioration scores.
3. **Movement towards goals.** When young people start treatment they may agree with their clinician what they are hoping to achieve and rate how close they are to achieving this on a scale of 0-10. At the end of treatment if a young people has moved even one point towards achieving their goal, this can be seen as being 'better'.

How much 'better' are young people when they have finished getting help?

- To answer this, we looked at information from 23,373 young people who had completed treatment with a mental health specialist between 2011 and 2015 across England.
- 5,896 young people had completed measures of how they were feeling at the start and end of treatment. We found that:



These findings should be treated with caution because of the flaws and limits in the data. We hope over time, with better quality information, we can be more sure about how much better young people are when they finish treatment.

To find out more about CORC and for the full report, visit www.corc.uk.net

CORC is the UK's leading membership organisation that collects and uses evidence to improve children and young people's mental health and wellbeing. Founded in 2002 by a group of mental health professionals, today our members include mental health service providers, schools, professional bodies and research institutions from across Europe and beyond.

What does this mean for young people who are seeking help?

1. Talk to your therapist about what 'better' means for you
2. Agree with your therapist about how you will measure 'better'
3. Discuss with your therapist about what is realistic to expect in terms of your agreed measure of 'better'