

# Kingswood Young Homeless Project

71 High St, Kingswood, Bristol, BS15 4AD Tel: 0117 9352881 Fax: 0117 9077370  
E-Mail: [kyhp@kyhp.co.uk](mailto:kyhp@kyhp.co.uk) web [www.kyhp.co.uk](http://www.kyhp.co.uk) Charity No: 298777 Reg'd Co Number: 2060534

## PRESS RELEASE

***"..... I took an overdose because things just got too bad. Nobody was helping me. I had no help whatsoever. I just felt so on my own that nobody wanted to help. They just wanted to fob me off with 'oh come back next week'."***

Kingswood Young Homeless Project has just published the report of its two-year study of homeless young people with mental health needs.

There is growing evidence indicating that homeless young people are more likely to experience problematic mental health needs and that these needs tend to precede and contribute to homelessness. There is also research to suggest that homeless young people fail to benefit fully from appropriate health & social care services.

The findings of the study undertaken by KYHP indicate that, although mental health needs amongst homeless youth locally appear significant, services are failing to acknowledge and assess these needs fully and to intervene appropriately. The young people interviewed wanted 'someone to notice' that they were struggling with their mental health. They also wanted assistance to be provided in a sensitive, non-judgemental way. Homeless young people appeared to turn to those closest for help with their mental health (commonly front-line workers across a range of young people's services). Where young people had tried to access help from statutory mental health services, their experiences tended to be characterised by disappointment, suspicion, confusion and mistrust.

The study identifies a number of gaps in current service provision and makes the argument for improved and extended mental health services for homeless young people.

***"This research provides plenty of pointers as to how we can improve assessments and ensure the acceptability of services."***

Kim Smith, Partnership Officer, on behalf on the South Gloucestershire CAMHS Planning Group.

**'Watching cars go past: a study of homeless young people's experiences of accessing mental health services in South Gloucestershire'** was funded by local Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and is available to download for free from <http://home.btconnect.com/kyhp/pages/research.html>

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If you would like further information or to discuss the possibility of the findings being presented to your organisation, please contact Mark at KYHP on 01179352881 or by email at [kyhpresearch@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:kyhpresearch@yahoo.co.uk)

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