

THE BIG QUESTIONS

What you told us
about what matters



THE BIG QUESTIONS is our bi-annual survey of young people from Foyers and supported accommodation services around the country.

Thank you to everyone who answered the survey and shared their thoughts. We received 124 responses from 22 Foyers: Aberdeen, Blackburn, Bodmin, Braintree, Bridge, Carn Brea, Coops, Crewe YMCA, ESYM, Heather Court, Isle of Wight, Liskeard, Monarch Court, Newhaven, Plymouth, Ravenhead, Swan House, Torbay, Verve Place, Wiltshire, YMCA Derbyshire and YMCA Milton Keynes.

Now we want to tell you what we learned from what you said, and what we're going to do with the information.

If you have any feedback or comments, let us know by emailing kate@foyer.net or texting 07904 662 046.



YOU SAID: "Mental health is the biggest challenge facing young people today."

When we asked questions about what's most important to young people today, mental health came out as the top answer over and over again.

66% said mental health is one of the top three causes that's most important to them

80% said mental health is the biggest challenge young people face today

72% said the pandemic has negatively affected their mental health

Lots of answers to the question 'what do you wish for young people in 2021?' focused on mental health too:

**"Better mental health services
- not on a downward spiral"**

**"for their mental health to
improve through this hard time"**

**"My wish would be for young people to
open up and talk more about mental health"**

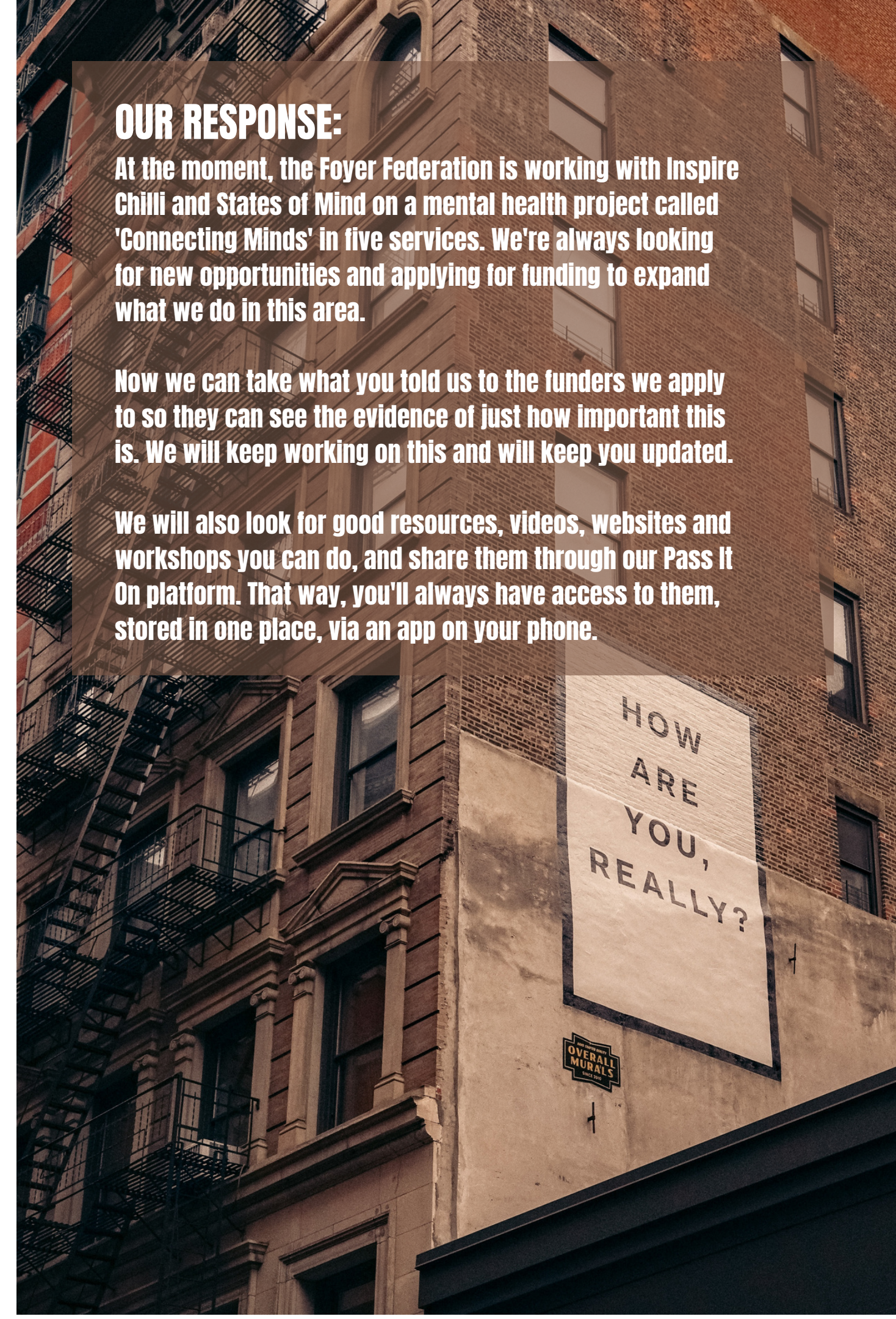
**"For everybody's mental
health to be OK"**

OUR RESPONSE:

At the moment, the Foyer Federation is working with Inspire Chilli and States of Mind on a mental health project called 'Connecting Minds' in five services. We're always looking for new opportunities and applying for funding to expand what we do in this area.

Now we can take what you told us to the funders we apply to so they can see the evidence of just how important this is. We will keep working on this and will keep you updated.

We will also look for good resources, videos, websites and workshops you can do, and share them through our Pass It On platform. That way, you'll always have access to them, stored in one place, via an app on your phone.



YOU SAID: "We don't know what our employment options will be."

Responders said that employment was the second-biggest challenge facing young people today (59%), after mental health. When we asked what's worrying for young people today, employment was the third most regularly mentioned thing, with only Covid-19 and mental health scoring higher. Lots of people talked about being worried about the impact of the pandemic and Brexit on the job market, and 51.5% said Covid-19 has negatively affected their employment.

One of the positive things we saw was how much ambition there is among young people living in Foyers. 34% talked about their goals for getting a job, and more still about getting into education or going to university.

Here's what young people said when we asked about their ambitions:

"To become a chef"

"To become a lawyer, go to university, become involved in representing different people in my community making the dollars"

"Having a good job, living comfortable and being able to do what interests me"

"to have a job that i like doing but also pays well"

OUR RESPONSE:

Nobody can be quite sure how the job market is going to look when we come out of the pandemic, but positive things are happening, such as the Kickstart scheme which boosts jobs for young people aged 16-24 on Universal Credit.

As the Foyer Federation, we will focus our attention on creating and getting funded new programmes that focus on employment. We're currently working on bringing in a new member of staff to build up relationships with businesses to connect talented young people to employers.

We'll keep seeking funding for our talent bonds, which can help you to start your own business, get clothes for interviews or pay for qualifications to help you find work, like the CSCS course.

You can also find employment-related content and workshops with employers through the Pass It On platform.

"Find a much better job"

"I want to be a rap artist"

"I am looking forward to starting my apprenticeship"

"Go self-employed"

"I am going to university this year to complete an animal behaviour degree. I hope to become a feline behaviourist"

YOU SAID: "We want to be involved in making change happen."

A MASSIVE 81% of people who responded said they're interested in contributing their ideas for the Foyer in some way, and 48% want to be involved in decision making, take on a specific responsibility or in working together with a leadership group of other young people.

We asked 'how would you most like to make your voice heard or offer help in your Foyer?' - the result was:

Talking to staff - 34.5%

Surveys - 12.5%

Resident rep meetings - 11.5%

An online forum or app - 10.5%

Suggestion boxes - 10%

Open door sessions by managers - 9%

Speaking to a resident rep - 6%

Emailing staff - 6%

Is there anything missing from this list that you'd like to see as an option? How would you like to be heard, influence change or offer help? Let us know by emailing kate@foyer.net or texting 07904 662 046 with your ideas.

OUR RESPONSE:

One of the Foyer Federation's big focuses for the next three years is working with young people and Foyers to increase young people's power and influence over the way the services are run.

We're working with our Power Up Youth group ([click here to find out more](#)) to find out what already exists in different services, like resident rep groups, young people interviewing staff and communication processes, and we'll work out what the next steps are from what we learn. As part of this, there will be plenty of opportunities to contribute your knowledge and experience, and even more ways to get involved.

We'll also be running a youth-led campaign to raise awareness of youth voice and power opportunities in supported housing, and will be looking for young people's input.

Find out more about how you can get involved right now on the next page.



WANNA GET INVOLVED?

We want young people's voices and experiences to influence everything we do at the Foyer Federation. Responding to our surveys is one way you can do that. We share the results (anonymously) with the decision-makers in the charity, and with the managers and staff in your services so they can respond locally.

You can also talk to your service staff about getting involved with Pass It On. This is an app that connects young people at your service to others around the country and keeps you up to date with all the opportunities the Foyer Federation has going on, plus helpful links, videos, content and workshops you might want to go to.

If you're ready to start making change happen, either in your local service or raising the voices of young people with experience of homelessness around the country, you can join our Power Up Youth group. This group has access to leadership training, community organising training, campaigning opportunities and regular meet-ups where young people set the direction.

This year, we released our Youth Influence and Involvement strategy which goes through our plans to become more youth led. We're working on creating new and different ways to involve young people in the charity's work, and we'd like to hear your ideas for how we can do this better. Email your thoughts to kate@foyer.net, or text them to 07904 662 046.

