



ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

2019-2020





- confident
- resilient
- secure



VISION

A world where children are confident, resilient and secure.

MISSION

Our mission is to engage and work with young people so they can reach their potential.

The young people we see have often experienced trauma or multiple adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). They hide their pain. Some issues we see are self-harm, panic, anxiety and depression. We support them to recover, engage and own their futures.

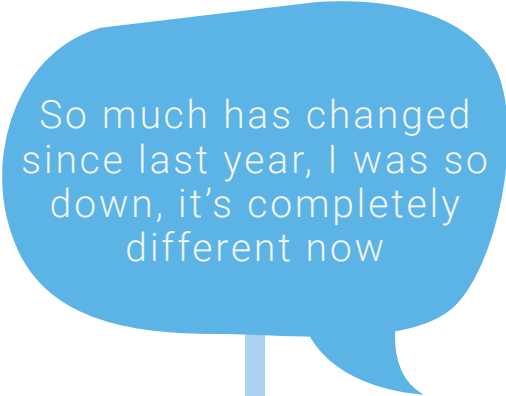
WHAT WE DO

We build trust by believing in young people. We deliver a long-term pioneering blend of tailored therapy, coaching and youth work.


Through these sessions we enable young people to acquire skills to manage their emotions, build and maintain confidence, learn how to be resilient and nurture their self-worth developing positive beliefs and values.



My anger is gone now and I'm way more confident socially



So much has changed since last year, I was so down, it's completely different now



I can look to the future now

WORDS FROM THE TEAM



WORDS FROM OUR CHAIR, EILIDH

As a youth mental health charity, providing therapeutic coaching, we cannot talk about the school year 2019/20 without addressing the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic. Our work with the amazing young people we support was well underway when lockdown hit.

In many cases, lockdown further heightened the pre-conditions of trauma:

- Isolation
- Immobilisation
- Disconnect
- Loss of predictability
- Loss of sense of purpose
- Loss of sense of time and space
- Loss of sense of safety

The conversation in youth mental health in recent years has focused on the importance of being trauma informed and ACEs aware.

At U-evolve we are also attachment aware and recognise that attachment and resilience go hand in hand. They are intrinsically connected and therefore vital in our work.

Research tells us that one secure healthy relationship in adolescence can heal the early attachment issues that have shaped a young person's outcomes and ability to relate to others for life. Adolescence is the time to help our young people to heal, recover, develop a secure base and flourish.

The young people we support have often experienced neglect, abuse or trauma and are working really hard to cope with stress, anxiety, self-loathing and learned worthlessness. Our work is to help them see their worth, their uniqueness and give them the skills to cope with the challenges they face and accept the opportunities they deserve.

The mental health issues our young people experience were amplified by the trauma of lockdown. We saw a marked increase in anxiety, depression, self-harm and suicidal crises. We supported families with suicide prevention plans and safeguarding.

The return to school will be challenging for some and we are helping school staff and youth workers to recognise that our young people are attachment seeking, not attention seeking.

We have faced acute challenges this year but the young people we support are experiencing reductions in anxiety, distress and increasing their coping skills and attainment for the fifth year in a row.

We have worked hard to be more creative to help us reach more young people:

- We launched our TALK Alcohol podcast series and are now regularly producing inspiring podcasts;
- We created distress tolerance skills videos for all social media channels to support our young people;
- We secured funds to overcome digital poverty and gave our young people who needed it the technology to stay in therapy throughout lockdown.

I am hugely grateful to our staff, board of trustees, our partners in north Edinburgh and most importantly, the young people we support, for their hard work in this most challenging of years.

I am very proud to be able to present this Report. It is full of hope and optimism, which is exactly what we want to give to our young people.

WORDS FROM THE TEAM

During 2020 we recruited Becky, our first Chief Executive Officer to oversee the day to day running of the organisation and to drive our ambitious strategy forward.

We adapted to the complexities and restrictions imposed on our society by the coronavirus pandemic, moving our services online. The pandemic and the restrictions were very traumatising and so it was vital that we were able to respond quickly and effectively in order to ensure the safety and wellbeing of those in our care.



IAN, THERAPEUTIC COACH

My first year with U-evolve has been interesting to say the least. I have helped more than 25 young people build their confidence and manage stress, anger, low mood and grief through our 1:1 therapeutic coaching sessions. Many of them have exceeded their own expectations and are managing their school and home life much better.

An important factor in the successes this year are the relationships we created with the families, carers and professionals involved in the support and development of our young people. I work closely with families and other professionals to help them gain better understanding and compassion for their young people when they are faced with challenging behaviours or situations. Building these relationships has been vital to the progress of the young people and keeping them safe from harm. Working with others this way aligns closely with both my personal beliefs and the ethos of U-evolve because, to best support young people's progress, it is essential that everybody involved in their care is operating the same way, and giving the same messages of support.



TOLGA, THERAPEUTIC COACH

I would like to thank all our young people who have showed determination, flexibility and courage to cope and adapt with all the changes life has thrown at them this year. Their ability to look for help when they need it and deal with adversity has been incredible to witness.

It's been an extremely challenging year, full of change to varying degrees, for us all. In turbulent times there is often the opportunity for learning, growth and a greater togetherness. 2020 has been a reminder of our capacity to climb and eventually thrive through adversity. Our young people have been an exemplar in this regard. It is a privilege to continue facilitating their journey into further understanding and prosperity.

WHAT DO WE DO

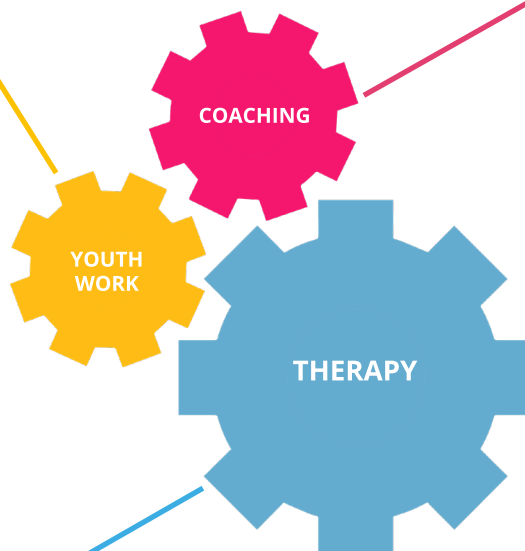
Some young people face challenges in their lives. Many of the young people we support have endured adverse childhood experiences.

SERVICES

**1-2-1
THERAPEUTIC
COACHING**

**GROUP
MENTAL HEALTH
AWARENESS**

To build trust, we have fun together, for example by playing basketball, football or doing arts and crafts. We take an active interest in a young person's hobbies.



To enable young people to own their futures, we coach them in areas such as their future aspirations, goals and targets. We find their pre-existing strengths and help translate these into all areas of their lives.

To build resilience and self-confidence, we help young people let go of their limiting beliefs and trapped emotions. We use evidence-based therapeutic methods to dislodge negative patterns, allowing the young person to move forwards.

THIS YEAR WE'VE DELIVERED

1:1 therapeutic coaching sessions with 68 young people

'Raise it Up' workshops to over 400 young people

4 Training sessions to frontline staff

CASE STUDIES



TIM

When Tim first started working with U-evolve he reported feeling anxious and depressed. He said, “when I feels sad, I shuts off from my emotions and begin to think and feel empty and that there is no point.” He also said that he would get really nervous and panicky in groups of people to the point where his heart would start thumping and he would need to go home.

We worked with Tim on these feelings, reassuring him that as scary and difficult that these feelings and thoughts were, he could get through them and we would work together to help him move beyond this stage of his life. We taught him about what was going on in his body when he had these feelings, the chemicals that were behind anxiety and depressive disassociation. We also worked with Tim to understand and embrace sadness as a necessary emotion, and revisited the traumas of his past that lead to such intense thoughts and feelings.

Thanks to his hard work with U-evolve, Tim now has strategies that help him manage his anxiety and reframing techniques to manage his thoughts. Tim started to understand that he was not his thoughts or his feelings and that these were things that always pass and change, even the most difficult ones. He is feeling much more positive these days and loves socialising. He is also working part time. He said, “I really felt understood and supported and that helped me to trust enough to open up and move forward”.



PAUL

When Paul first began his journey with U-evolve he said that he really lacked motivation to do anything. He was starting to get involved with the ‘wrong crowds’ and getting into fights. He told us, “I’m really confused and bored. I want more from life but don’t know how to go about it”. We started working with Paul to understand what triggers his loss of motivation and the events surrounding that. With our support Paul looked at times where he did get really motivated and what activities excited him about life. He loves football, craft, design, technology, feeling part of a team and creating something with his hands.

We explored opportunities in the community for Paul, activities he could get involved in that allowed him to keep doing what he loved.

With our support Paul mapped different future career paths that would allow him to feel like he had a purpose and that he was creating a lifestyle he was really enthusiastic about.

Week by week, Paul’s confidence grew. He is now attending college three times a week, has a part time job, and is working towards his dream of travelling and living abroad. Paul says he feels like a new person, and he understands much more what he wants from life. Even if this changes, Paul now knows he is the master of his own future.

*name changed to maintain confidentiality

CHRIS

Chris first started working with U-evolve during lockdown. He was really struggling with isolation and trying to work and study from home. Chris was experiencing increasing levels of low mood, worry and stress and his sleep was severely affected as a result. He told me that he was taking the government recommendations very seriously but would become very angry and hateful when observing others breaking the guidelines. This affected him negatively for long periods at a time.

We started working with Chris on focussing his mind on what was within his control. We taught him about his circle of influence, and becoming aware of when he would stray into worrying about the things he was unable to change. In doing so, Chris was able to prevent himself from becoming over involved in situations he had no control over and instead, focus his energy on the things that he could. The things that would send Chris into spells of stress, anger and frustration started to reduce as he began using his time and energy more effectively.

We supported Chris to set achievable goals and outcomes. We worked together on forming healthy habits to support his physical and mental wellbeing, such as a daily morning yoga session before work. This allowed him time to both exercise and calm his thoughts before starting his day. Week on week, Chris appeared to be coping better and after a short time together, managed to rectify his sleeping troubles. Chris no longer becomes as upset and stressed when thinking and dealing with other people and he has managed to achieve his goal of being a positive and uplifting person to others. Chris said, "the difference in how I was feeling before to how I'm feeling now is night and day. I feel capable of handling anything now, I know I have the tools and the experience to thrive through the adversity of a global pandemic!".



FEEDBACK

QUOTES FROM YOUNG PEOPLE WE'VE SUPPORTED

- Having suicidal thoughts every night was really hard but now I'm getting help and feeling a lot better.
- I couldn't speak to anyone about how I felt before working with U-evolve. Now I can talk about how I'm doing with my family.
- I was really struggling through lockdown but now I am able to focus on what I have control over and I'm doing so much better.
- U-evolve has helped me a lot. To be honest, I don't know where I'd be if it wasn't for U-evolve. They have made such an impression on my life which is going to be there forever.
- Thank you for making me feel so much better, the things you've taught me have helped me so much already.
- I feel like I've come so far since seeing you, it's helped me loads.
- I fought almost every day before I talked to U-evolve. Now I don't get in any fights and am in much less trouble.
- I feel you're really down to earth and easy to talk to already. I feel comfortable sharing what's on my mind with you already.



QUOTES FROM PARENTS & TEACHERS

- Jemma* was getting sent out of a lot of classes before but now she is able to stay in class and her behaviour is much better.
- Having U-evolve supporting our pupils at Craigroyston High School is making it possible for pupils to engage in their learning and achieve.
- I can honestly say that without the support from U-evolve, we would not be able to provide the appropriate intervention support to meet all our pupils needs.
- The 1:1 service that U-evolve offers, allows some of our most vulnerable students a safe and nurturing environment to be themselves without fear of judgment, disappointment or upset.
- Many of our young people are highly anxious but look forward to, and often rely heavily upon, their sessions with their worker to help them feel at ease.
- There is a noticeable difference with U-evolve seeing our pupils and I can clearly see the changes in them.

U-evolve has been a fantastic support to Jane over a sustained period of time. Jane has struggled early on at high school with mental health concerns and being socially isolated at times. U-evolve has most definitely provided more confidence into Jane and belief in herself. Jane has never been particularly willing to communicate her concerns, but whilst working with U-evolve has managed to do so and learn to understand herself and how to respond to situations more positively.

Sarah can be quite explosive. Her S1 was terrible, she was argumentative and refused to talk. Now she is more able to discuss her feelings and talk about why she feels the way she does. She is making relationships with staff and is working harder in the classroom. She has been completing most of the home learning set by her teachers.

Steve always seems lighter and refreshed after his U-evolve sessions. He worries about everything which leads to exhaustion. He often enters his sessions deflated and leaves with a bounce in his step.

Chris was very unhappy when she started work with U-evolve, this had been ongoing for 2 years. She had completely refused any support with her mental health and only met with U-evolve initially on the basis if she didn't like it she didn't have to go back. Fortunately, she found it very useful and has kept engaging. Her biggest anxiety is leaving the house, and this has been minimal over lockdown. It is, however, a huge positive that she has engaged with the programme.



QUOTES ON WORKSHOPS

U-evolve have delivered really informative sessions to our S2 PSE groups on mental health. The sessions have been relevant, timely and empathetic.

I see things differently now, and handling things in different scenarios

There's lots I'll take away, like attachment seeking, not attention seeking

I really liked doing this as a team, and reflecting together. I felt very supported, it was nice

A space for us to evaluate exactly what we're doing and identifying what more we can give to young people

FINANCIAL REPORT



TOTAL INCOME
£76,780



TOTAL EXPENDITURE
£89,578

Full results for year-end 31 March 2020 are provided in our financial accounts and are available on our website.

In addition, we are delighted to be working in partnership with the Spartans Community Football Academy, Craigroyston Community High School and Broughton High School. We continue to seek fundraising opportunities through our own events and through private sector sponsorship.

As a grassroots charity with the majority of our funding coming from grants, we have to constantly strive to maintain resources for the continuation of staff posts. The trustees continue to seek sources of funding to cover staffing and resource costs to meet our charitable objectives.

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

U-evolve has an active board of trustees who meet regularly and are responsible for the overall strategic direction, development and governance of the organisation. Day to day responsibility for the provision of services is delegated to the staff team.

The staff are regularly supported through clinical supervision and regular one to ones. The trustees will continue to seek sources of funding to increase the staff team to support the waiting list of referrals for young people.

Thanks to a National Lottery award from The National Lottery Community Fund, later this year we will launch our TALK hub, a secure virtual space for young people, their families and frontline professionals to access resources and support to build good mental health and resilience.

We'll also be exploring new partnerships within Edinburgh to help us to achieve our vision of a world where children are confident, resilient and secure.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our funders, supporters and partners.

OUR FUNDERS

***Muirhouse Housing
Association***

***City of Edinburgh
Council Communities
and Families Grant***

Robertson Trust

***Pilkington Charitable
Trust***

Henry Duncan Grants

***Hospital Saturday
Fund***

Stafford Trust

***Spartans Community
Football Academy***

The Bruce Trust

Amazon

Bank of Scotland

Charities Trust

Waitrose & Partners

Kiltwalk

***Baillie Gifford /
Foundation
Scotland***

Broughton High School

***Craigroyston
Community High
School***

James Sim Trust

The Corra Foundation

***Edinburgh Lothian
Trust***

Leather Sellers

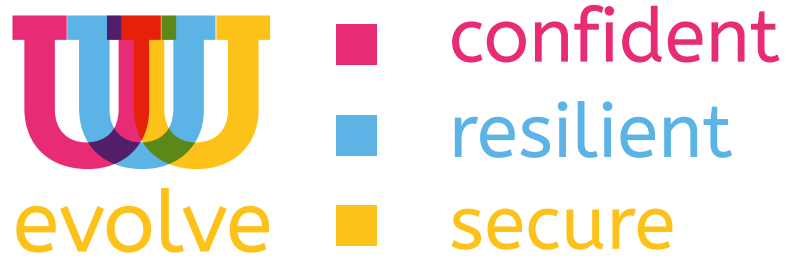
Gannochy Trust

***Woodland Charity
Trust***

***National Lottery -
Awards for All***

The Schuh Foundation

The Whisky Society



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Charity Number SC04586