ISRCTN77941736 https://doi.org/10.1186/ISRCTN77941736

Coping during COVID-19: Peer-delivered training to improve adolescent wellbeing

Submission date
12/11/2020

Recruitment status
No longer recruiting

Registration date
23/11/2020

Overall study status
Completed

Last Edited
30/06/2025

Condition category
Mental and Behavioural Disorders

[ ] Prospectively registered
[ ] Protocol
[ ] Statistical analysis plan
[X] Results
[ ] Individual participant data

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims
COVID-19 presents significant and diverse challenges for young people, and many report feelings of anxiety, loneliness, and a lack of control. Consequently, there is an urgent need for digital tools to support young people's mental health and wellbeing during this period. Young people often turn to their peers for support and express a preference for peer-to-peer support above other types of support, but currently, there is a lack of evidence-based peer-to-peer interventions.

An online peer support training programme designed to help equip young people with the skills and confidence to provide support to their peers during the COVID-19 pandemic has recently been evaluated. The findings from this indicated that peer support training increased young people's ability to help others and their perceived ability for civic engagement, as well as their own sense of wellbeing. Following this, the study team worked together with a group of young people who completed this peer support training, and the partner charity Youth Era, to co-design a 'Coping during COVID-19' online training course for adolescents.

The 'Coping during COVID-19' online training course is aimed at youth who have been particularly affected by the pandemic and is designed to help motivate, empower, and support them to build coping skills and resilience. The course will be delivered online to a class of 60, with small group activities facilitated by young people trained in providing peer support.

This study will evaluate whether this online training course improves young people's wellbeing, connectedness, perceived coping skills, self-esteem, and sense of purpose and meaning, relative to a wait-list control group. The study will also explore the young people's experiences of receiving the training and self-reported impacts, and the experiences of the youth who deliver the training.

Who can participate?
Young people aged 16-18 years who live in the UK

What does the study involve?
Participants will be randomly allocated to either a training group or a wait-list group.

Participants allocated to the training group will complete the online training course, ‘Coping during COVID-19’, delivered over a period of 5 days. The course will be delivered to a total class of 60, and participants will work in small groups of 7, guided by a young person trained in peer support. Participants' wellbeing will be assessed 1 week and 2 weeks later. After the 2-week assessment, the wait-list group will be eligible to receive the training.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?
Participants will take part in a co-produced ‘Coping during COVID-19’ online training programme. The programme is designed to help motivate, empower, and support youth to build coping skills and resilience, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. There are no known risks of participating in the training.

Where is the study run from?
The University of Oxford, Department of Psychiatry (UK). Training will be delivered online. YouthEra (UK) will provide training materials.

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
From October 2020 to March 2021

Who is funding the study?
Westminster Foundation (UK)

Who is the main contact?
Dr Gabriela Pavarini
gabriela.pavarini@psych.ox.ac.uk

Contact information

Type(s)
Scientific

Contact name
Dr Gabriela Pavarini

ORCID ID
https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5574-4021

Contact details
University of Oxford
Department of Psychiatry
Warneford Hospital
Oxford
United Kingdom
OX3 7JX
+44 (0)7599480095
gabriela.pavarini@ethox.ox.ac.uk

Additional identifiers

Study information

Scientific Title
Peer-delivered training to improve adolescent wellbeing during the COVID-19 outbreak: a randomised controlled trial

Study objectives
Does peer delivered training improve adolescents' wellbeing during the COVID-19 outbreak, relative to a wait-list?

Ethics approval required
Old ethics approval format

Ethics approval(s)
Approved 10/11/2020, University of Oxford, Medical Sciences Interdivisional Research Ethics Committee (Research Services, University of Oxford, Wellington Square, Oxford, OX1 2JD, UK; +44 (0)1865 616577; ethics@medsci.ox.ac.uk), ref: R69810/RE001

Primary study design
Interventional

Study design
Randomized controlled trial

Study type(s)
Quality of life

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied
Adolescent mental wellbeing during COVID-19

Interventions
Current intervention as of 04/12/2020:
After providing consent and completing baseline measures, an independent researcher will randomise participants to either receive training or to the wait-list using randomisation software. Participants allocated to the training arm will complete an online training course, of 14 h total, delivered over a period of 5 days. Outcomes for both arms will be assessed 1 and 2 weeks.

———

Previous intervention:
After providing consent and completing baseline measures, an independent researcher will randomise participants to either receive training or to the wait-list using randomisation software. Participants allocated to the training arm will complete an online training course, of 14 h total, delivered over a period of 5 days. Outcomes for both arms will be assessed 1 and 3 weeks post-randomisation.

Intervention Type
Behavioural

Primary outcome(s)
1. Mental wellbeing measured using the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale at 1 week

Key secondary outcome(s)
Current secondary outcome measures as of 04/12/2020:
1. Connectedness measured using the Social Connectedness Scale at 1 and 2 weeks
2. Perceived coping skills measured using items adapted from the COVID-19 Adolescent Symptom & Psychological Experience Questionnaire at 1 and 2 weeks
3. Self compassion measured using the Compassionate Engagement and Action Scales-Self-Compassion Scale at 1 and 2 weeks
4. Self-esteem measured using the Self-esteem Scale at 1 and 2 weeks
5. Sense of purpose measured using the Claremont Purpose Scale at 1 and 2 weeks
6. Mental wellbeing measured using the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale at 2 weeks

———

Previous secondary outcome measures:
1. Connectedness measured using the Social Connectedness Scale at 1 and 3 weeks
2. Perceived coping skills measured using items adapted from the COVID-19 Adolescent Symptom & Psychological Experience Questionnaire at 1 week and 3
3. Self compassion measured using the Compassionate Engagement and Action Scales-Self-Compassion Scale at 1 and 3 weeks
4. Self-esteem measured using the Self-esteem Scale at 1 and 3 weeks post-randomisation
5. Sense of purpose measured using the Claremont Purpose Scale at 1 and 3 weeks
6. Mental wellbeing measured using the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale at 3 weeks

Completion date
30/03/2021

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria
1. Aged between 16 and 18 years
2. UK resident
3. Sufficient English level to be able to take the course
4. Able to complete training and measures independently
5. Access to Wi-Fi for the duration of the course
6. Access to a computer, camera, and speakers for the duration of the course
7. Happy to be randomly assigned to one of two iterations of the training course
8. Consent to participate (this includes those aged 16 or 17 who are considered ‘competent youths’ as per best practice guidance 04) and provided baseline measures

Participant type(s)
Healthy volunteer

Healthy volunteers allowed
No

Age group
Child

Lower age limit
16 Years

Upper age limit
18 Years

Sex
All

Total final enrolment
100

Key exclusion criteria
Does not meet inclusion criteria

Date of first enrolment
14/11/2020

Date of final enrolment
03/12/2020

Locations

Countries of recruitment
United Kingdom

England

Study participating centre
University of Oxford, Department of Psychiatry
Warneford Hospital
Oxford
United Kingdom
OX3 7JX

Sponsor information

Organisation
University of Oxford

ROR
https://ror.org/052gg0110

Funder(s)

Funder type

Charity

Funder Name
Westminster Foundation

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan
The data-sharing plans for the current study are unknown and will be made available at a later date.

IPD sharing plan summary
Data sharing statement to be made available at a later date

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Results article	Adolescents' emotional support skills, mental health and agency	17/02/2022	31/10/2022	Yes	No
Results article	Adolescent wellbeing	18/03/2024	30/06/2025	Yes	No
Participant information sheet	Participant information sheet	11/11/2025	11/11/2025	No	Yes
Study website	Study website	11/11/2025	11/11/2025	No	Yes