

Impact Report 2023-2024

Welcome to the *Off The Record Bristol* 2023-24 Impact Report!

In this report, we will reflect on our achievements, developments and learning from the past year.

We try not to use jargon when speaking about our work, but in case anything needs further explanation, the OTR glossary of terms may help!



Word from our Chair

"We have continued to create new offers, evolve existing ones, sustain and develop new partnerships to provide a rich offer of services to support young people's mental health. In 2023-24, OTR reached and supported over 17,000 young people across Bristol, South Gloucestershire, and North Somerset. This includes young people engaging in structured therapeutic interventions, but also those taking part in groups led by our Zazi and Freedom teams and in our hubs.

2023-24 has been yet another challenging year though, internally for OTR as we navigated our way through leadership changes in the organisation, and more importantly, for many young people and families, as they navigated the cost-of-living and energy cost crisis. Young people are still coming to terms with the impacts of lockdown, many still not back at school, and as a result, we have seen young people present with more complex needs and are working hard – alongside partners across the region – to offer the best possible support to respond to this. We have been blown away by young people's strength, compassion, and the insightful ways they approach conversations about mental health in the context of the wider world.'

Jacob Diggle - Chair of the Board

Headlines from 2023-24

- **Creating intentional relationships and organisational collaboration -**

This year, OTR has had a particular focus on the curation of long lasting relationships at both the organisational and individual level. We have focused on building positive relationships with organisations in order to improve services, increase awareness and learn new skills.

By deepening our connections through these partnerships, we have been able to develop our understanding of the needs of young people across a wider range of resources. We have used this knowledge to reflect and grow how we function for young people and improved our relationships within the community - paving the way for greater reach in the coming years.

- **Building relationships with individuals in their pathway through our projects -**

As well as focusing on developing relationships with organisations, we have honed in and refined how we help individuals, centering our ethos of holistic mental health support. This has meant focusing on relationships with existing service users to understand how we can better support them throughout their mental health journey, linking in to OTR and partner services as opposed to limiting our contact to the length of a specific project.

Our **Community Outreach** projects represent this - for example, our **Freedom** project delivers open access groups for both young people aged 11-14 and young people aged 11-18. These open access groups support LGBTQ+ young people in the contacting, exploration and embodiment of their magnificence. Those who attend these groups regularly, and over an extended period of time, experience a feeling of community and friendship that they may not be able to access elsewhere. This open access format allows for the longer term development of understanding and young person centred delivery.

Project Zazi also facilitated open-access groups for young people racialised as Black and Brown through partnering with the Full Circle Project in St Pauls to join their "olderz" sessions on Wednesdays to provide informal mental health support and signposting to young people of colour who may want to access services, but are unsure where to go to gain support. Team Zazi also facilitated open access support to young people across East and Central Bristol who had been impacted by a range of community tragedies in the summer of 2023.

Our **North Somerset** team are also incredibly active and present across their localities, offering drop in support within their hub deliveries, attending community outreach days such as Avon and Fire Service Wellbeing day and working with several schools across the locality such as Worle Community School, Broadoak Academy, Gordano school and the Priors school to name a few! The team also offered young people aged 18-25 the opportunity to attend wellbeing walks to encourage movement and reflection for young

people who may spend a lot of time indoors or simply want to connect with other young people in the area .

This type of work highlights the importance of building partnerships not just with services, but also the young people who access these services. Our duty is to calibrate care that reflects the experiences of those we serve and we cannot do this without consulting the most important people relating to this matter - young people!

- **Building community collaboration -**

In order to build communities, we have increased our community outreach work, through attending various events or visiting other local organisations. Some community partners include *CoExist kitchen, Docklands, Aspiration Creation Elevation (ACE), Wild Place, Bristol Tree Craft, Papatango, Bristol Pride, Bristol Hate Crime Discrimination Service (BHCDS)*. This puts us in a position to develop relationships and impacts across a range of services and deliveries.

The work of our ***Community Partnerships Team*** has been pivotal in developing and nurturing these communal relationships; their commitment to community centred, collaboration focused and young people led work typifies what we represent as a charity.

We have represented young people and attended events alongside young people including Bristol Pride and Forwards festival. We also showcased a range of young people's work and projects at the Trinity Centre in March to reflect our ongoing commitment to platforming and encouraging the dissemination and empowerment of young people's voices who access our services. These events have allowed us to make people aware of OTR and given us the opportunity to spark conversations.

- **Organisational reflection and growth -**

OTR have continued to reflect and move forward our anti-oppressive and anti-racist work. Our training with BRAP included the Allies and Disruptors of Racism programme as well as two full days of full organisational training on anti-racism and anti-discrimination.

- **Leading and holding space for pertinent cultural conversations-**

One of OTR's focuses across 2023-34 was remaining at the forefront of pertinent cultural conversations. Our work is situated across several areas including but not limited to masculinity, misogyny, sexism, race and LGBTQIA experiences. These conversations have taken place across schools, colleges, universities and community organisations, placing young people at the centre of our work. In a world where young people are constantly in reference to constantly changing, at times polarising and often triggering, ensuring that we are able to support and where necessary advocate for our young people is incredibly important to us.

- **Beyond Bristol -**

We are incredibly excited to see that our work has garnered international acclaim, with Black Bristol reaching 65 countries in 2023-24! We were also published in the University of Buckingham's Journal, highlighting and sharing the great work that we have been doing in Bristol. We also created and curated a lot of new strands of work that have disrupted the local and national ecosystem of young engagement and advocacy.

For example, our **Routes** project saw a Girl Talk and Masculinities group work together for the first time ever! These young people embarked on a three month journey of creating and curating an event at the Watershed that sought to center their experiences and ideas of masculinity, femininity, race, culture and faith. This work collated their experiences into tangible, applicable suggestions for educational establishments to take on board and implement across their school cultures. Not only was this work embracing and showcasing of their experiences as young people Racialised as Black and Brown, it was a social action initiative utilized to disrupt the local ecosystem of educational service providers. We are so proud of the young people and their joy, expertise and desire to drive change.

- Our **Diffusion programme** designed and delivered a new training for senior mental health leads in schools, focusing on developing a whole-school approach to mental health that meets the needs of pupils, staff, and parents and carers. They collaborated with our wonderful peer reps to design two youth-led training packages; one exploring existing online and the other exploring support for young people beyond traditional mental health services. We also continue to deliver popular trainings like *Working Confidently with Gender and Sexuality* and *Introduction to Adolescent Mental Health* to a range of professionals working with young people.

Our Impact

Total number of young people reached including via online support:

17,913

Breakdown across our services

- Young people in a Structured Intervention *(Total number of young people signed up to a regular or recurring OTR project)*
140
- Young people attending a Resilience Lab *(Interactive workshops designed around self care)*
833
- Young People attending an OTR drop-in hub
5,318
- Young People attending OTR Led assemblies
3,575
- Young People supported via the MHST *(referrals)*
1,153
- The majority of young people we supported were aged between **11 - 16**, but we also supported young people ranging from **8 - 25**.

Engagement with our projects *(number of young people engaged with the project)*

- ZAZI - 814
- Freedom - 101
- Book Club - 24
- Natureworks - 162
- Artworks - 79
- Sportworks - 32
- Youth Moves Partnership - 190
- Youth Transition Workers - 110
- CAMHS Intensive Outreach Workers - 54

- We recruited **27** Peer Navigators, **8** Peer Reps and **1** Research volunteer, as well as **5** Young Advisors.
- We spoke to **378** parents and carers session parents/carers at our Hubs/Pop-ups.
- Our Diffusion training reached **397** professionals from **72** organisations, through **85** individual sessions.

Outcomes

71.69% of young people reported improved outcomes at the end of treatment

Young people and partners also said....

- I have more knowledge about mental health (74% rated 4 or 5 out of 5)
- I learned practical skills, strategies and tools that I can use (84 rated 4 or 5 out of 5)
- I feel better able to support others to improve their mental health and wellbeing (82% rated 4 or 5 out of 5)
- I will make change in my practice and/or organisation (87% rated 4 or 5 out of 5)
- Overall how would you rate the training? (94% rated 4 or 5 out of 5)
- How likely is it that you would recommend this training to others? (95% rated 4 or 5 out of 5)

Our Online Reach

- 7,024 total e-newsletter subscribers
- 15,651 social media followers comprising:
 - Instagram - 6,410
 - Facebook - 6,019
 - LinkedIn - 3,000
 - YouTube - 222

Case studies

“Sarah is 18 yrs old and at the beginning of our sessions, was not in school or employment and was struggling to leave the house due to anxiety. At her first session Sarah appeared nervous, her hands were trembling and she found it hard to maintain eye contact. We agreed that the goal of our sessions was for her to explore the experience of anxiety she feels when not in the safety of her own home. Sarah shared this was her first experience of therapy, therefore she struggled to verbalize how she felt or reflect on what she may need in order to build inner resilience. The creative process in therapy can offer young people a way into exploring their feelings and thoughts, as well as fostering self-awareness and creating a pathway for a change of perspective.

I invited Sarah to draw her anxiety as an animal. Sarah spent the next few sessions developing the character of a mouse, identifying strengths and triggers in feeling dysregulated. Sarah engaged with the process with a sense of curiosity and care and thus her relationship to her anxiety and herself.

During the final session Sarah reflected that the therapy sessions at OTR helped her 'workout feelings and process things a bit more'. She consistently attended all sessions and expressed that the sessions provided her with motivation to keep leaving the house. Sarah expressed that she had realised that she has a choice in spending time alone and identified she has an inner 'strength' and 'creativity' that she wishes to develop. Sarah shared that she had managed to secure a job as a nursery assistant and signed up for OTR weekly creative drop-in group."

Katie - Therapist

"I feel very lucky to have been able to take part in this event. It gave me something to look forward to each week, I don't let myself look forward to anything because I'm afraid it won't be what I think it will be, but I could let myself look forward to this. I am grateful to Isla (OTR) for listening so gently and supporting me. I was surprised to hear from her before the event started and started to look forward to it, and for coming forward to talk to me when I was alone. I was also grateful to Ralph (BSO) for noticing when I couldn't keep up with everyone's movements and then gently teaching me. I especially enjoyed singing with him. I love singing so much. Before this, I had always dreamed of having someone to sing harmony with. Singing with him made me feel as if the notes had become a new language, it was beautiful, like writing a letter in the wind with a song and then receiving a letter back. Everyone was supportive, friendly and inclusive, always encouraging and appreciating each other. I'm grateful and sad when it was over." Anonymous participant on a project with BSO

"I found a leaflet in the doctor's surgery and saw the OTR sign, which seemed familiar to me - I scanned the QR code and looked at the program - it seemed like something I needed. I started attending the sessions - it was really friendly and more relaxed than I expected, the workshops give you the tools you need in a fun way. It teaches you what your brain does and how to combat it. You can explore things and feel safe. Coming to Res Lab has given me the language to understand how I feel, and it shows you are not on your own with this. You can get the skills you need in a social way and in a way you cannot research on your own. Now I am better at going through what I have learnt and using it - I now ask myself, 'What can I do and use here?' I feel I have grown and connected socially by coming to Res Labs I'm just really grateful and glad that I came." Jed - young person

"I attended the Resilient Labs for parents. I honestly feel really emotional! I didn't know what to expect from the sessions, and I almost didn't join, but I needed it more than I realised. It's transformative hearing from other parents of teens with similar worries and struggles. I feel hopeful, and for that, I am so grateful. Thank you so much." Parent

"Bristol Tree Craft partners with OTR to deliver woodworking sessions with groups of young people, driven by a shared set of organisational aims and values. OTR and BTC are supportive and proactive partners, working together to provide the best possible service and benefits to young people. We greatly value the insights the partnership brings" Hugh - Bristol Tree Craft.

"Marie (OTR) created a welcoming space for our young people to speak freely and openly about their worries and concerns. We especially enjoyed the practical game of Jenga, it was a great way for them to understand the importance of balance, identifying our feelings and managing them in a healthy way. We really look forward to having OTR back for our future cohorts." Tatiana Powell - Fairshare

It's been very helpful and I have learned a lot about how to talk to people- Res Labs Young Person

[I've learned] how to avoid certain reactions and responses in some cases - Year 10, Chipping Sodbury School

I feel like I am better at categorising things I can and can't control - Yate Academy Sixth Form Student

It was nice to be able to give my feelings words so I can better understand them. - Res Lab Young Person

I've learned ways to calm down and how to breathe in stressful situations -Mangotsfield School - Young Person

"Both trainers provided a welcoming and open space to share experiences. It felt like there was a real atmosphere for growth and challenge, without feeling scared to say the wrong thing." - Diffusion training participant

Money

Income **£3,393,936**

Expenditure **£3,414,124**

Grants and Donations total: **£239,838**

We'd like to take a moment to thank all of our amazing supporters who have embarked upon a variety of events and challenges for OTR. From bingo, to climbing the 3 Peaks; from half marathons to bake sales and Pride events we have seen an array of motivating and inspiring fundraising events in aid of our services.

Additionally to individuals and schools who fundraise for us and we have seen a real increase in support from local businesses. Many have signed up to partner with OTR, fundraising and organising events, volunteering their expertise and donating their time or products.

If you would like to find out more about how you can support OTR, please see our [website](#) or get in touch with grants@otrbristol.org.uk

Funders

We'd particularly like to say a huge thank you to funders who have worked with OTR in the last year and made our work possible, including:

- **Bristol City Council:** funding for a social action coordinator working with black young people and young people of colour in Bristol.
- **North Somerset Council:** OTR wellbeing practitioner to deliver Mind Aid/Shameless.
- **Yate Town Council:** a grant to support OTR's delivery of therapies and 1-1 support in South Glos.
- **BBC Children in Need:** funding to support the delivery of our zazi project which supports black young people and young people of colour to explore their identities and connect to others in their community.
- **Big Lottery Youth Moves:** funding for our zazi project which focuses on creating opportunities, building aspirations and empowering young black people and young people of colour.
- **Co-op Foundation:** funding to continue providing our safe, joyful and supportive space for young people ages 11-25 who are LGBTQIA+ or are exploring their gender and sexuality.
- **Prudence Trust:** grant to embed and develop the excellent work of OTRs community partnerships team which delivers preventative activities based therapeutic support across three areas, sports, art and nature.
- **Game Changer (Uni Hospital Southampton):** £27k grant, unrestricted
- **Nisbet Trust:** funding a volunteer coordinator to recruit and support our young volunteers (peer navigators)

- **Innox Foundation:** a grant to offer young people a wide range of empowering and holistic mental health support.
- **Garfield Weston:** funding for our Freedom programme supporting young LGBT+ people.
- **Wesport:** Funding for an assistant to support delivery of our sports works activities across bristol and south gloucestershire, and a small grant for the team to deliver a skateboarding project in south gloucestershire.
- **Aquilla Charitable Trust:** to support work with young black people and young people of colour through our Zazi project
- **Next Link:** Counselling services embedded into Next Link for CYP affected by domestic violence.
- **Ridge LLP:** Charity of the Year Partner

NHS Contracts

We are very pleased to work in partnership with the NHS and integrate the OTR approach to essential services to support young people's mental health, under contracts commissioned by Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust:

- We manage four Mental Health Schools Teams across Bristol, South Gloucestershire and North Somerset as part of the national initiative to provide low intensity interventions in schools.
- OTR teams collaborate to co-deliver the running of a CAMHS Intensive Outreach Service.
- We support transition work for young people moving from support delivered by Children's Services to Adult Services.

Other contracts included North Somerset Council – funding for mental health support to specified schools across North Somerset and the NHSE Winter Access Fund which was a contract funding a Young Persons Mental Health support worker to deliver services collaboratively with the Bristol Inner City Primary Care Network.

And finally...

We'd like to express our gratitude to every individual, organisation, funder and partner who continue to support, promote and talk to OTR. We listen to all feedback and strive to be the most collaborative, relevant and young person-led organisation possible.

We continue to exist in a challenging societal and political climate which makes the landscape difficult for young people, and are incredibly proud to have supported over 17,000 young people in 2023/24 in this difficult climate. As always, we continue to be amazed by the young people we support and their strength and resilience is inspiring. We look forward to working with more young people in 2024/25 and thank you for your continued support of Off The Record Bristol.