

IMPACT REPORT 2023



Forewords

Every year, we look back with pride and admiration at the services our team at Muslim Youth Helpline provides. In a world surrounded by stigma around mental health, being able to provide a safe space for young Muslims in the UK remains at the core of our service. This year, we saw the demand for our space grow to new heights, with 15,113 young people reaching out for support on our helpline. We worked hard to meet this demand, focusing on talent, technology, and growth.

As our team grew to include a breadth of experienced members of our communities, we translated this variety onto the helpline, reaching more young people in their time of need. With expansion and growth came our need for new technologies to guide these changes. In 2023, we revolutionised our helpline with cutting-edge technology for faster, more effective interactions. This means that young people who access our helpline can find support and resources even if they cannot speak with a helpline worker.

We also worked to provide support to communities beyond the helpline. Our team provided talks, attended conferences, and spoke at panels to bring awareness to the mental health needs of young Muslims. Further, we partnered and collaborated with mainstream organisations to bring attention to young Muslim mental health beyond our typical audience.

Our 2023 impact report also shares some of our projects for the coming years, where our focus as community service providers expands to include 'support while you wait' resources and specific collaborations to ensure all organisations that work with young Muslims are providing the best support.

Of course, all this cannot be done without the continued support and dedication of time and resources from our team, donors, friends in the sector, and countless parents, guardians, and young people who centre young Muslim voices and help protect them.

We look forward to the significant impact we hope to make in 2024.

Kind Regards,



CEO and Head of Services

It is with great pleasure for us to contribute towards this year's impact report. This year has been a very special one for MYH. It has been one of strength and innovation, where we have focused on getting our core absolutely right, working hard on growth to meet the demand for our services, and embedding strong systems and technology to support our work and give our users the very best.

In our roles as Co-Chairs, we have had the incredible privilege of witnessing the immense potential of MYH to respond to the call of our young people, and we are committed to our mission and serving the Muslim Youth. Together, with the team, we have navigated challenges, celebrated triumphs, and embraced the responsibility of creating a lasting impact on the communities we serve. We are filled with an overwhelming sense of pride and gratitude, and humbled by the opportunity to serve you.

As we reflect upon the pages of this Impact Report, we are reminded of how important the work of MYH is, the unwavering dedication and collective efforts of our incredible team, partners, and supporters, the passion that drives us and how we continue to change lives. This report is more than just a compilation of statistics and figures; it is a testament to each project, initiative, and milestone outlined in these pages and represents a step forward in achieving our mission. We pride ourselves on being a unique, one of a kind service, and providing a non-judgemental safe space for young people to turn to. This drives everything we do, and we continue to remain as dedicated as ever to the young people and communities we serve.

I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to every individual who has played a role in our journey. Whether you are a volunteer, a staff member, a donor, or a community partner, your invaluable efforts have been pivotal in shaping the success of MYH. It is your dedication that propels us forward, and it is your shared belief in our mission that fuels our ambition.

As we celebrate the achievements highlighted in this report, let us also acknowledge that our work is far from complete. With recent challenging times, it is clear that the need for our work is greater. With the help of Allah, we will continue to strive and work harder to support our young people through these challenging times and to build the resilience necessary to support their mental wellbeing. Although the challenges ahead may be significant, we are confident that we will continue to make a meaningful impact with the same determination, innovation and compassion that has brought us thus far.

Thank you for your ongoing support and commitment to our shared vision, and for celebrating our successes with us. Together, let us inspire, empower, and continue to create lasting change.

Kind Regards,



Co-Chairs

Introduction

Muslim Youth Helpline is a listening service that supports young Muslims throughout the UK. Operating since 2001, MYH has worked diligently to decrease the stigma surrounding mental health while also ensuring young Muslims have a safe space to turn to for support with anything they are facing.

Our values are clear. We provide a non-directional, non-judgmental, and empowering service, putting the service user at the heart of every conversation and decision.

Our helpline is supported by a strong team of workers, volunteers, and donors that allow our helpline to operate from 4-10 pm, 365 days a year. Being able to run a service daily is essential and meets the growing need for a helpline like MYH. This year, we experienced a 22% growth compared to last year.

With our helpline growing each year, we understand that a service like MYH, which provides culturally- and faith-sensitive support, is essential in the UK.

With a strong team working behind the scenes, MYH continues to meet the demand and works hard to support young Muslims daily.



Impact Points

1. Supporting our Users

- Providing a satisfactory service
- Meeting our Call Demand
- Supporting Young Muslims Regionally

2. Organisational Achievements

- Collaborations and Partnerships
- Training and Volunteering
- Introducing New Technology

Our Year at a Glance

Key Statistics



4900+

hours contributed by our helpline workers to support young people



54+

cities including Manchester, Nottingham, Bradford, Portsmouth, Birmingham, Nottingham, Leicester, & Leeds



10-69

with 35% of users between 10-19 and 45% between 20-29



92%

of users would use our helpline again



22%

Our helpline experienced a 22% growth in access in 2023

Top Concerns in 2023

1. Religious Advice, Faith, and Spirituality

Due to the nature of our helpline, we receive many enquiries from young people asking for religious advice, or experiencing concerns with their faith. They turn to us for a number of reasons, such as not knowing where to ask their questions, needing anonymity due to shame or fear of judgement, or feeling uncomfortable asking those around them. While we do not offer religious advice on our helpline, we focus on underlying issues these young people may experience, such as guilt and shame, while also signposting to trusted and qualified Islamic services who can answer their questions.

2. Family Issues

Family issues continue to be one of our top concerns annually. Young people may struggle with concerns such as parental separation and divorce, issues with siblings, or even navigating mental health in a home where it may be stigmatised.

3. Marriage

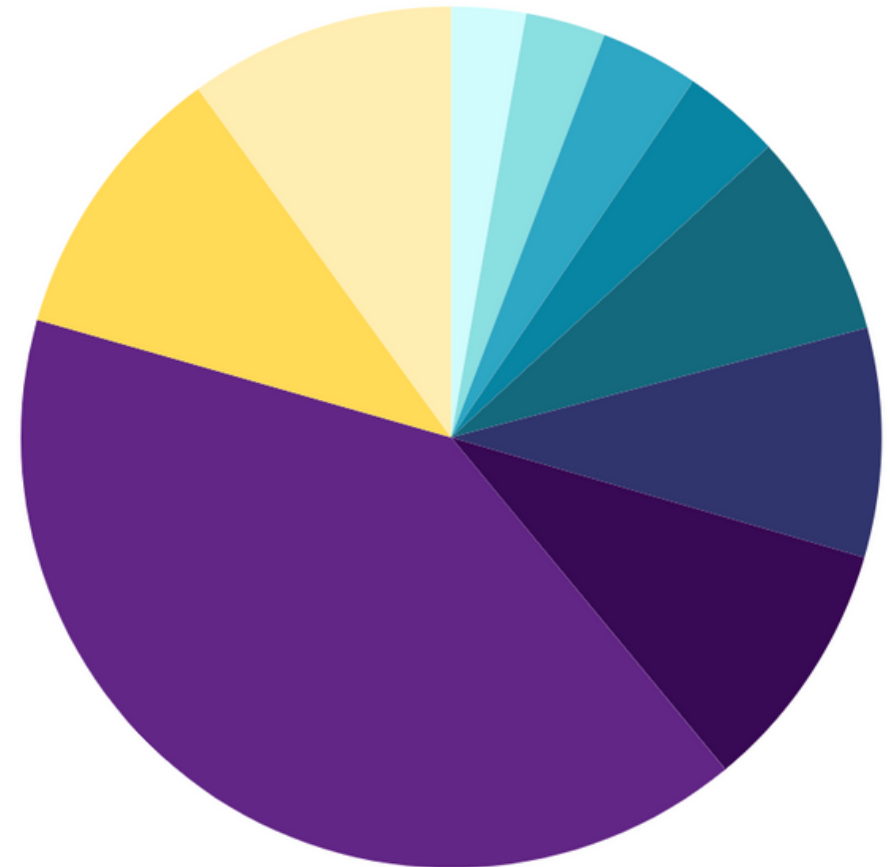
Marriage continues to be one of our top concerns, which we can often signpost to culturally sensitive family counselling and mediation services.

4. Relationships

Relationships can encompass romantic relationships, familial relationships, platonic relationships, and professional relationships amongst others. Young people may feel they have no one to turn to when speaking about intimate relationships or private experiences, so they often value the anonymity our helpline can provide.

5. Mental Health

Many young people access our helpline when they are struggling with their mental health. They may not have a formal diagnosis, or may be on a waiting list. We are able to provide support while they wait,



6. Financial Support

With the ongoing cost of living crisis, young people may be feeling the effects for the first time in their lives. Whether it is the struggle with finding a job, or noticing changes in their households as their parents adapt to rising costs, young people are becoming aware of struggles with finances, and often don't know where to turn.

7. Depression

Depression was our top mental health concern in 2023. Young people may be unaware how to deal with their diagnosis, how to relay this to their loved ones, or may be living with difficult symptoms. Our helpline officers are able to provide emotional support, while also signposting them to specialist services that can support them with their depression.

8. Anxiety

Anxiety is another top concern young people bring to MYH. This anxiety can make it difficult for them to form new social connections, interfere with their daily routines, or create excessive worry around events like exams. Our helpline team can provide resources dealing with anxiety, while also signposting when necessary.

9. Abuse

Abuse in its many forms is another top concern on our helpline. Young people may be dealing with verbal abuse, physical abuse, and neglect amongst other forms. Our helpline staff are trained in safeguarding, while also prioritising the wellbeing of the young people who contact us.

10. Addiction

Young people who contact our helpline may be facing different types of addiction, such as illicit substances, pornography, or gambling. They value having a helpline where they can remain anonymous, as they may worry about the negative reactions they may receive from those around them. Our helpline always remains a non-judgemental, safe space.



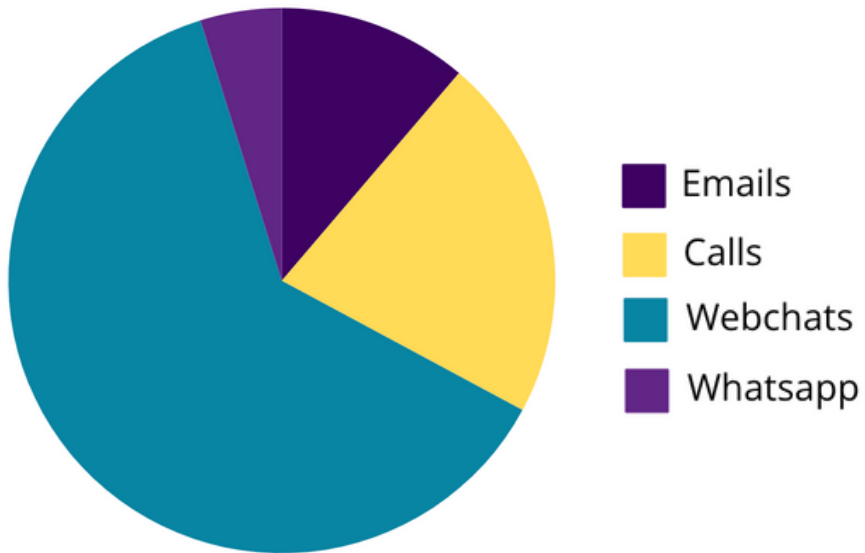
Supporting Our Users

At Muslim Youth Helpline, we want to ensure our service users get the best support possible. Our helpline team works hard to meet the demand while also adapting and improving our helpline to ensure that demand is met satisfactorily.

1. Meeting our Call Demand

Our helpline continued to grow in 2023, with a 22% growth compared to last year. This was a new record for us, with a total of 15,113 total enquiries.

We worked hard to meet this demand by growing our team. We grew our volunteer base more than ever before, with more than 50 new volunteers joining our helpline in 2023. With our expanding team, we were able to answer more than 80% of enquiries during helpline time.



We continue to work hard to meet our helpline users' needs by keeping up with trends on the helpline, while also ensuring our helpline workers are well-equipped to provide a non-judgmental, non-directional, and empowering safe space.



2.. Providing a Satisfactory Service

At Muslim Youth Helpline, we keep our service users at the heart of everything we do. We understand that young people who access us may be feeling extremely vulnerable, so we ensure that we prioritise quality in every interaction on our helpline. Our survey results show that:



of users felt helped and understood by the end of their conversation with MYH



of users would use our helpline again

User Feedback:

"Exceptionally friendly staff. I would definitely recommend it to my friends and family."

"SubhanAllah. I got teary eyed and shivers down my spine speaking to the operator on the other end. Thank you for your services and may Allah reward each and every one of you for the services you offer."

"Thanks a lot. I feel better and I can trust the people I'm talking to here."

3. Supporting Young Muslims Regionally

Our big goal for 2023 was to ensure we met all users' expectations from the helpline. We noticed a gap in the support we were providing: we didn't have enough resources for young Muslims calling from different corners of the UK. To rectify this, we worked hard to expand our signposting list by identifying the top regions and the top concerns that reached out to us. Based on this, we expanded our signposting list to 35 organisations.

We also worked with many organisations spread throughout the UK. We delivered talks to schools in areas such as Luton and connected with youth groups up and down the UK.

The Association of Muslim Schools, with 200 Muslim schools under its umbrella, has promoted the services of MYH to all young people.



We also were able to take part in events such as:

Bristol Muslim Conference

The Muslim community in Bristol invited us to share our work at MYH and interact with many young Muslims and parents in the Bristol Region to help us understand their needs.

Managing Chaplains Conference

MYH contributed to the resource fair at the conference. It was a chance for the team to share learnings and experiences from the helpline to guide Prison Chaplains supporting young Muslims.

Muslim Charities Convention

MYH spoke on the reality of the emotional and social needs of young people post-pandemic and barriers to social mobility.

Ramadan Tent Project's Ramadan Inauguration

In 2023, MYH was part of a panel discussion on Spirituality and Ramadan with a focus on why mental health and wellbeing in Ramadan and our drive to reap the real best out of the month with the resources we have.



Organisational Achievements

1. Top Campaigns

Muslim Youth Helpline worked collaboratively with several organisations in 2023 and successfully delivered many campaigns.

Most notably, we worked with Young Minds to deliver a national campaign highlighting the mental health of young Muslims. Working alongside a team from Young Minds, we ran several focus groups with young Muslims, which would inform the content we published. Utilising this information, we published a successful video and several written resources and guides on both Young Minds and Muslim Youth Helpline's website and social media.

These guides included:

- [Self-Care for Young Muslims](#)
- [Setting Boundaries](#)
- [Talking About Your Feelings](#)

We worked closely with Barnardos in 2023 on the 'Support While You Wait' program. MYH supports young people at many different stages of their support needs. For Barnardo's program, MYH were focused on supporting young people who needed our listening ear while waiting to be seen by the NHS services. At MYH, we recognise the importance of immediate support and understand wait times can harm young people's health.

Camp ONEder is a summer camp for young Muslims with an Islamic ethos launched in 2023. MYH partnered with the team to push for support from parents and get young people to join the camp.

2. Training and Volunteering

In 2023, one of our top priorities was increasing our workforce to meet our call demand. With the support of our dedicated volunteer coordinator, we were able to train more than 50 new volunteers to join our helpline. Our volunteers were trained in basic counselling skills, mental health, abuse, relationships, and safeguarding.

Our helpline team also took part in the Helplines Partnership Suicide Prevention Training, and were able to gain skills such as creating safety plans for calls related to suicide.

Finally, MYH also had the opportunity to provide training to other groups and organisations. This included providing basic counselling training to the team at Islamophobia Response Unit, and mental health awareness training to students at Jamiatul-Uloom Luton.

3. New Technology

One of our biggest projects for 2023 was getting new technology on our helpline, in order for our helpline to work as efficiently as possible. With this, we are able to provide a better user experience by having a bot which is able to direct users and provide resources before even connecting with a helpline worker. This allows us to prioritise safeguarding calls, while also providing quicker response times for our users.

We also are able to share our new survey with every interaction in order to gain a better understanding of how our helpline can improve, while also ensuring each interaction adheres to our organisation's values and commitment to quality.



Partnerships in 2023



New Referrals in 2023



myh muslim
YOUTH
helpline