# Childline reports 6% rise in anger-related counselling as social media pressures mount



Childline has reported a concerning increase in the number of young people reaching out for help with anger issues, amidst a backdrop of rising emotional challenges faced by youths today. In the year 2024/25, the charity conducted 2,895 counselling sessions specifically addressing anger, marking a six per cent rise from the previous year. This issue has emerged as one of the top ten mental health concerns among children, particularly notable among boys, where it ranks sixth, and among girls, at tenth.

The sessions have unearthed recurring themes surrounding anger, often directed at parents, friends, and most troublingly, at themselves. Young people expressed feelings of inadequacy through negative self-talk, articulating sentiments like wishing they were "smarter" or "less useless." One poignant example comes from a 15-year-old boy who revealed, “For months I’ve been struggling with my anger. I started punching the wall, but I had to stop because it was messing up my knuckles.” Similarly, a nine-year-old girl shared, “I feel so angry all the time; shouting is just how I express myself.” These testimonials bring to light the profound emotional struggles that many young individuals face in today’s complex societal landscape.

Shaun Friel, the director of Childline, commented on these alarming trends, stating, “The fact that children are reaching out for help about their anger issues reflects the growing emotional challenges young people face in today's complex world.” He noted that the pressures from home, school, online forums, and community settings significantly impact children’s abilities to manage their emotions effectively.

Significantly, the rise of digital interaction and social media has been scrutinised as a potential contributor to these emotional challenges. Research has increasingly indicated that excessive social media use—which the American Academy of Family Physicians classifies as over three hours a day—can significantly elevate the risks of experiencing depression and anxiety. A study from Johns Hopkins Medicine corroborates this, highlighting that while social media can offer connection and support, its overuse is directly linked to declining mental health among adolescents.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services further underscores this message, stating that youth spending extended hours on social platforms not only double their chances of encountering mental health issues but also suffer from reduced real-life interactions. The compounded effects of online bullying and social comparison foster an environment where self-worth takes a hit, often manifesting as anger or aggression.

Moreover, contributing factors such as financial strain on families due to the escalating cost of living and the stress associated with academic pressures further exacerbate the mental health crisis. Childline has urged parents to be vigilant about recognising signs of emotional distress in their children, including changes in sleeping patterns, appetite, social withdrawal, and increased irritability. Establishing a normalisation around seeking help through therapy and counselling is essential.

Childline's insight into this growing problem serves as a critical call to action, not only for parents to foster supportive home environments but also for society at large to engage in discussions about mental health. The findings highlight the urgent need for community strategies that effectively balance the benefits of social media while mitigating its risks. Such efforts might involve collaboration among policymakers, technology firms, families, and mental health professionals to create an ecosystem that supports young individuals in navigating their emotional landscapes.

In conclusion, as the landscape for young people's mental health continues to shift under the pressures of modern life, the importance of addressing anger and emotional wellbeing cannot be overstated. Building resilience in children through open dialogue about their feelings and experiences, especially in relation to social media, will be essential in forging a path toward healthier emotional development.

**Reference Map**1. Paragraph 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 2. Paragraph 5 3. Paragraph 5 4. Paragraph 5 5. Paragraph 5 6. Paragraph 5 7. Paragraph 6

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

* <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14700517/Anger-children-emotional-challenges-social-media.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
* <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/social-media-and-mental-health-in-children-and-teens> - This article from Johns Hopkins Medicine discusses the impact of social media on children's mental health, highlighting both positive and negative effects. It notes that while social media can provide access to information and support, excessive use is linked to increased rates of depression and anxiety among teens. The article emphasizes the importance of balancing social media use and suggests that spending more than three hours a day on these platforms can double the risk of mental health problems.
* <https://www.aafp.org/about/policies/all/youth-mental-health.html> - The American Academy of Family Physicians' policy statement examines the impact of social media on youth mental health. It highlights that individuals who spend three or more hours per day on social media are at a higher risk of experiencing symptoms of depression and anxiety. The statement also discusses how passive use of social media can lead to negative social comparisons, while active use may have positive effects. It underscores the need for balanced engagement and parental guidance.
* <https://www.hhs.gov/surgeongeneral/reports-and-publications/youth-mental-health/social-media/index.html> - The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' report addresses the risks and benefits of social media for youth. It states that children and adolescents who spend more than three hours a day on social media face double the risk of mental health problems, including depression and anxiety. The report calls for a multifaceted effort to maximize benefits and reduce risks, involving children, policymakers, technology companies, researchers, and families.
* <https://www.mdpi.com/2227-9032/12/23/2391> - This systematic scoping review published in the journal 'Healthcare' examines the impact of social media on children's mental health. It finds that frequent use is associated with lower self-esteem, depressive symptoms, and anxiety. The review also notes that moderate use can facilitate social interactions and emotional expression, which may positively influence mental health. It emphasizes the importance of balancing social media use and ensuring adequate family and social support.
* <https://www.massgeneralbrigham.org/en/about/newsroom/articles/kids-social-media-mental-health> - An article from Mass General Brigham discusses how social media affects children's mental health. It highlights that social media use has been linked to increased rates of anxiety, depression, and eating disorders, especially in teens. The article outlines key reasons for these effects, including reduced face-to-face interactions, increased exposure to comparison, and cyberbullying. It emphasizes the need for parents to help children build healthier habits and reduce potential harm.
* <https://www.clinical-partners.co.uk/insights-and-news/child-and-teen-mental-health/what-is-the-impact-of-social-media-on-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health> - This blog post from Clinical Partners explores the impact of social media on children's mental health. It discusses both negative and positive effects, noting that excessive use can lead to depression, anxiety, sleep disruption, and exposure to harmful content. The article also highlights positive aspects, such as access to support and information. It provides guidance for parents on managing social media risks and emphasizes the importance of monitoring and setting boundaries.