

Evaluation of Cyrenians' Scottish Centre for Conflict Resolution



November 2024



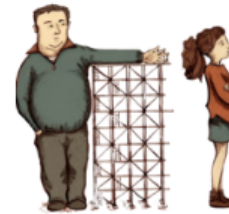
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Evaluation of the Cyrenians Scottish Centre for Conflict Resolution (SCCR)

The Scottish Centre for Conflict Resolution (SCCR), an initiative established by Cyrenians, supports families, young people, and professionals across Scotland by addressing conflict through training, events, and innovative resources.



An evaluation, conducted by Blake Stevenson Ltd, reviewed SCCR's progress from 2018 to 2024, with a focus on its adaptability during the COVID-19 pandemic and its ongoing impact on conflict resolution.

Key Achievements

Enhanced Outreach: SCCR delivered 85 events in 2023-24, reaching over 2,300 participants, with a balanced mix of digital and in-person offerings.

Digital Innovation: Online tools like "Monkey vs. Lizard" and "Meet Your Emotional Homunculus" gained substantial engagement, supporting diverse audiences during pandemic-related restrictions.

Professional Training: Over 90% of surveyed professionals reported increased confidence in managing family conflict after SCCR training.

Youth and Family Impact: 80% of young people attending SCCR events reported an improved understanding of conflict and strategies to manage it positively.

"Really good presentation which was informative and helpful. Great that it was a short bitesize session which is always easier to fit into your day."

"I now have the language and tools to support families in conflict before crisis is reached. I now understand the skills needed to scaffold and support the schools and families I work with in conflict resolution."



Areas for development

- 1. Accessibility:** Barriers such as geography, timing, and digital literacy impacted participation.
- 2. Resource Updates:** Feedback suggested the need for refreshed, interactive, and diverse materials to enhance engagement.
- 3. Awareness:** Limited public knowledge of mediation services and resources remains a key challenge which the SCCR may be able to help to improve.



Impact of events on participants



85% of participants said that they had increased knowledge and understanding of policy and practice related to youth homelessness and working with families experiencing conflict



95% of participants said that they would apply what they had learned, to positively change the negative impact conflict has on relationships, mental health and emotional wellbeing



91% of participants said that the event they had participated in had increased their confidence in their ability to support families to positively transform conflict and improve relationships



95% of participants said that they would use the SCCR online resources to positively change the negative impact conflict has on relationships, mental health & emotional wellbeing

Recommendations

- 1 Recommendation 1:** Continue to expand and refine digital resources, ensuring they remain accessible, particularly to users with diverse literacy levels and digital access needs. Including supplementary audio materials alongside slides may help users retain content effectively post-session and enable those who were not able to attend to access the content.
- 2 Recommendation 2:** Continue to explore targeted outreach strategies to encourage broader demographic participation, such as tailored marketing and specific sessions or resources designed to engage under-represented groups.
- 3 Recommendation 3:** Consider enhancing training offerings by expanding content mediation practices and integrating these themes more robustly into existing programmes. Providing more frequent refresher courses or advanced workshops could also support professional development goals. Charging a fee to attend some of these more advanced workshops may also require consideration if additional funding is not available.
- 4 Recommendation 4:** Maintain a balanced approach between digital and in-person events. Continue to offer flexible scheduling which is responsive to demand, such as offering sessions at varied times (e.g. early mornings or evenings), to accommodate diverse schedules and increase accessibility.
- 5 Recommendation 5:** Integrate youth voices into design and delivery of sessions where possible, either through guest speakers or facilitated discussions. This approach could provide a fuller understanding of family conflict dynamics and make sessions more engaging.
- 6 Recommendation 6:** Continue to build on efforts to raise awareness of support and mediation services through both digital and event-based channels. Collaborating further with local organisations could extend the SCCR's outreach and connect more families with useful resources.



SCCR has proven to be a vital resource for conflict resolution in Scotland, positively impacting individuals, families, and professionals. By addressing identified challenges and pursuing the outlined recommendations, SCCR can further its mission to build resilient communities and foster healthier relationships.



1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Scottish Centre for Conflict Resolution (SCCR), a Cyrenians initiative, plays a pivotal role in supporting young people, families, and professionals across Scotland to navigate and resolve conflict. By providing resources, training, and events, the SCCR equips individuals with the skills needed to foster healthier relationships and resilient communities.
- 1.2 This evaluation examines the SCCR's achievements and evolution from 2018 to 2024, spotlighting its adaptability amid challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic and its continued dedication to accessible, impactful support for those managing conflict. Through an analysis of engagement trends, participant feedback, and stakeholder insights, this report captures the SCCR's influence and offers recommendations for enhancing its ongoing work.

Overview

- 1.3 This report evaluates the key impacts, achievements, and challenges of the SCCR's work from 2018 to 2024, with a focus on its commitment to fostering conflict resolution skills and supporting vulnerable groups across Scotland. This assessment includes an analysis of digital engagement trends, participant demographics, event participation, and qualitative feedback gathered through interviews with and surveys of parents, carers, professionals, and organisational stakeholders.
- 1.4 In recent years, the SCCR has navigated shifting social dynamics, including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which reshaped its service delivery to focus heavily on digital platforms. These changes allowed the SCCR to extend its reach, offering online resources that achieved notable engagement among diverse audiences. Additionally, the SCCR maintained a steady programme of events, enabling it to continue delivering vital training and resources despite the challenges posed by lockdowns and social distancing requirements. Through this dual approach of digital and face-to-face engagements, the SCCR has reached a wide range of beneficiaries, including young people, parents, carers, and professionals across multiple sectors.
- 1.5 Stakeholder surveys provided further insight into the relevance and impact of SCCR's work, highlighting a need for continued professional development, particularly in mediation and trauma-informed practices. Respondents identified gaps in skills necessary for managing complex conflicts, particularly those linked to mental health and family dynamics, underscoring the importance of the SCCR's specialised training and accessible resources.
- 1.6 Overall, the SCCR has established itself as a critical resource in Scotland, offering tools that directly address the intersection of conflict and youth homelessness while fostering resilience within families and communities. This report synthesises the data collected to inform future strategies for the SCCR, emphasising opportunities to expand outreach,

enhance resource accessibility, and deepen partnerships with stakeholders for sustained impact.

Methodology

- 1.7 The methodology for evaluating the Scottish Centre for Conflict Resolution (SCCR) encompassed a multi-phase approach to assess both the breadth and depth of the SCCR's impact from 2018 to 2024. The evaluation used a combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection methods, ensuring a comprehensive analysis of the organisation's service delivery for diverse participant groups. Blake Stevenson conducted the evaluation, applying robust research tools and ethical protocols to capture the voices of young people, parents, carers, professionals, and stakeholder organisations who interact with the SCCR. This section outlines the three main stages of the evaluation: planning and development, data collection, and analysis.

Planning and Development

- 1.8 Initial Planning and Coordination: To establish a clear framework for the evaluation, an inception meeting was held with key SCCR staff. This meeting outlined objectives, refined the scope, and set timescales for key tasks. The collaborative planning ensured alignment with SCCR's goals for the evaluation, addressing any emerging issues early in the process.
- 1.9 Desk Review of Monitoring and Evaluation Data: To contextualise SCCR's ongoing work, an extensive review of existing monitoring and evaluation data was undertaken. This preliminary analysis focused on SCCR's digital engagement metrics, event attendance figures, and previously collected beneficiary feedback. Reviewing these datasets provided a baseline understanding of service patterns and informed the development of research tools tailored to SCCR's context.
- 1.10 Development of Research Tools: A number of research tools were crafted to support data collection, specifically tailored to the unique needs and experiences of the SCCR. The instruments included:
- **A survey for young people, parents, and carers:** Designed to capture individual experiences, conflict resolution knowledge, and the perceived impact of SCCR's services on personal relationships and wellbeing.
 - **A survey of partner organisations:** Structured to gain insights into organisational use of SCCR resources, event attendance, and the perceived value of SCCR's services within partner networks.
 - **Interview and focus group guides for staff, partner organisations and service users:** To gather holistic insights, interview guides were tailored to explore participant interactions with SCCR, short- and medium-term impacts, and perspectives on potential areas for service development.

Data Collection

- 1.11 Surveys of Service Users and Organisations: Two primary surveys were distributed: one targeting individual beneficiaries, including young people, parents, and carers, and another for partner organisations and professionals who accessed SCCR's services. The surveys were distributed through Snap Surveys, an online tool enabling secure collection and storage of responses. Using Snap allowed for data to be gathered on various devices, maximising accessibility and participation. The surveys addressed experiences with SCCR events and resources, confidence in conflict resolution skills, and any perceived changes in relationships or wellbeing following engagement with SCCR. The surveys also sought to understand the role of SCCR's resources in professional settings, including respondents' use of digital materials, such as the "Monkey vs Lizard" and "Meet Your Emotional Homunculus" resources, and their views on the efficacy of these materials.
- 1.12 Interviews with Partner Organisations and Stakeholders: In addition to service users, interviews were conducted with representatives of partner organisations. These interviews aimed to understand SCCR's value from a professional perspective, the impact of SCCR resources on organisational practices, and suggestions for future collaboration. Partner insights were instrumental in assessing SCCR's position within the broader landscape of support services across Scotland and highlighting areas for strategic development.
- 1.13 Focus Groups and Interviews with Service Users: two focus groups were conducted with service users, and one interview.

Data Analysis and Reporting

- 1.14 Quantitative Data Analysis: Survey data were processed and analysed to identify key trends and patterns. Using Snap Surveys' analytic capabilities, responses were categorised and compared across demographics, resource usage, and engagement levels. The analysis provided an understanding of SCCR's reach, event attendance patterns, digital engagement trends, and demographic-specific needs. This quantitative data served as a foundation for assessing SCCR's performance against targets, such as attendance and engagement metrics.
- 1.15 Qualitative Data Analysis: All qualitative data, including case studies and open-ended survey responses, were thematically analysed. Using a framework approach, recurring themes were identified, with particular attention to areas such as mental health support, conflict resolution skills, and mediation training. Responses were then cross-referenced to ensure accuracy, with findings validated through an internal team workshop. The qualitative insights were essential in contextualising the quantitative findings and understanding the personal impact of SCCR's work on service users and professionals.
- 1.16 Reporting: The final report presents findings thematically, integrating quantitative and qualitative data to provide a comprehensive view of SCCR's impact. Findings were structured to highlight SCCR's digital engagement trends, event reach, beneficiary

outcomes, and stakeholder feedback on SCCR's services and resources. The report concludes with evidence-based recommendations to inform SCCR's future strategy, focusing on expanding resource accessibility, enhancing service delivery, and reinforcing partnerships with organisations across Scotland.

Ethical Considerations and Quality Assurance

- 1.17 To ensure high ethical standards, all research tools and methods were designed to be trauma-informed and respectful of participants' lived experiences. Consent was obtained from all interview and focus group participants, with safeguards in place to protect privacy and confidentiality.
- 1.18 The structured approach to evaluation enabled us to capture a comprehensive and reliable picture of SCCR's work, strengths, and areas for development.



2. Context and demand for services

2.1 In this chapter we assess the demand for the services offered through the SCCR. We draw on secondary survey data gathered by SCCR in 2022 from professionals and from parents and carers.

SCCR Professional/Practitioner Survey (2022)

2.2 The SCCR Professional/Practitioner Survey collected feedback from professionals working with young people and families. The survey provides valuable data on the challenges faced by practitioners in managing conflict within families, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their work, and their perceptions of SCCR's resources and services.

2.3 Respondents were primarily from the voluntary sector (38%), youth and family services (24.1%), and education (20.3%), reflecting SCCR's reach across key sectors working with young people and families. Nearly all respondents (96.7%) reported that conflict is a regular occurrence within the families they support, underscoring the crucial role of conflict resolution in their work.

2.4 In our survey of professionals, 78.5% of respondents reported that they work with young people or families who have experienced homelessness or sofa surfing, which reinforces SCCR's focus on youth homelessness as a critical area of support. This issue was also identified in SCCR's 2022 Professional/Practitioner Survey, which highlighted the connection between conflict, homelessness, and the need for conflict resolution services.

2.5 COVID-19 exacerbated family conflicts, with 78.7% of respondents to the SCCR Professional/Practitioner Survey noting a negative effect on families and 85.2% reporting worsened mental health among those they served. These figures mirror the significant stress also reported in the Parent/Carer Survey. While 70.5% of professionals felt confident in managing conflict, 21.3% were unsure and expressed a strong interest in further training on conflict resolution, emotional regulation, and high-stress family dynamics. Both professionals and parents/carers highlighted a need for more skills to manage conflict effectively. During the pandemic, 31.7% of professionals identified a need for additional resources. Awareness of mediation services was mixed, with 46.8% aware of local services but 38.3% unaware, indicating a need for better communication around available resources.

2.6 Training emerged as a top priority, with 65.9% attending SCCR events and 74.1% participating online. All attendees reported increased understanding of conflict policy and practice, with further interest in topics such as trauma, brain development, and communication. This aligns with parents/carers' interest in similar subjects, underscoring the value of SCCR's continued training efforts.

2.7 The survey underscores SCCR's essential role in equipping professionals with skills to manage family conflicts. While professionals feel somewhat prepared, there is a shared need among both professionals and families for additional training, resources, and

awareness of support services. By enhancing training and communication, SCCR can further support professionals and, in turn, the families they work with.

- 2.8 The demand for ongoing professional development, as highlighted by 70.5% of professionals responding to the Practitioner/Professional Survey, positions SCCR to further expand its training offerings. Data provided by Cyrenians suggests opportunities for SCCR to continue leveraging its successful digital platforms to offer online training and refresher courses, ensuring that practitioners across Scotland are equipped to support families effectively.

SCCR Parent/Carer Survey (2022)

- 2.9 The 2022 SCCR Parent/Carer Survey 2022 offers insights into the experiences, challenges, and needs of parents and carers across Scotland. This section consolidates key findings from the survey, focusing on demographics, family conflicts, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and participants' access to support services.
- 2.10 The survey included parents (49.2%), single parents (21.3%), adoptive parents (13.1%), grandparents (13.1%), and foster carers (11.5%) from various regions, with Edinburgh (23.8%) and Glasgow (7.9%) as the most represented. Regular family conflicts were common, with 41.1% experiencing weekly disagreements and 21.43% reporting daily conflicts. Causes included responsibility (42.9%), respect (33.9%), control (33.9%), and financial issues (28.6%).
- 2.11 The pandemic negatively impacted family dynamics for 50% of respondents, intensifying conflicts and stress. 46.4% reported increased family conflicts, citing routine disruptions and isolation as significant challenges. There was limited awareness of support services, with 63.8% unaware of mediation services for families. However, 81.25% expressed willingness to seek help if available, indicating strong demand for resources like SCCR's. The pandemic worsened mental health for 69.64%, with respondents feeling exhausted (57.1%), stressed (51.8%), and guilty (37.5%). Some felt isolated, with 21.4% reporting they had no support network to turn to. Interest in learning resources was high, with demand for conflict resolution skills (57.8%) and mental health guidance (44.4%). Respondents also valued SCCR's resources, with 77.8% applying digital content in family settings.
- 2.12 The survey underscores the ongoing stress and challenges families face, particularly post-pandemic. The sustained engagement with SCCR's resources among young people and parents/carers suggests a lasting need for support in managing family conflict and mental health challenges. SCCR's ongoing focus on psychoeducational resources, like the "Meet your Emotional Homunculus" project, will remain critical in helping young people and families navigate complex emotional landscapes.
- 2.13 The findings from these two surveys reinforce the findings of our survey of professionals conducted as part of this evaluation. 83% of respondents to the survey reported that conflict is a regular occurrence for the young people and families they work with, underscoring the ongoing need for SCCR's conflict resolution resources. This mirrors

findings from SCCR's other surveys, which demonstrates the importance of equipping professionals with conflict management skills. Additionally, respondents working with marginalised communities noted the pervasive nature of conflict, with one respondent describing conflict and violence as an everyday occurrence for many young people, which can make addressing these issues particularly challenging.

"I often feel there is such a difference in the world I live in and the world my young people do. Conflict and violence are everyday occurrences so it's very hard to call out or change behaviours that are causing such disharmony to their lives but are so normal they can't see it."

Blake Stevenson survey of professionals

- 2.14 As part of the evaluation, we conducted a survey of organisations who have engaged with the SCCR in some capacity. We received responses from 65 representatives of organisations across various sectors, including the third sector, local authorities, and education. Their insight provides invaluable feedback on the reach, impact, and areas for improvement of SCCR's services. The qualitative responses offer a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of professionals using SCCR's resources and attending events.
- 2.15 While 83% of respondents felt confident in their ability to manage conflict, 17% indicated that they lacked the necessary skills. Some of their qualitative feedback suggested gaps in mental health and family mediation training. Comments included:
- "A lot of mental health difficulties that I do not have training for."
 - "I have some skills but when the systemic family therapist joins me I see how much better she is at helping families navigate conversations in ways that stimulate curiosity and empathy"
 - "Difficult because some young people attend without parent/care givers who they have conflict with Opposing views, blame each other for conflict/behaviour-hard to understand/unpick".
- 2.16 These responses highlight key areas where further training could be beneficial, such as mental health support, mediation techniques, and systemic family therapy. These responses echo a recurring theme in the survey responses: the need for continued professional development in areas like trauma-informed practice and family mediation.
- 2.17 A resounding 79% of respondents indicated that SCCR events and resources should be used for both initial and continuous professional development, emphasising the ongoing need for skills development in conflict resolution. This finding aligns with previous SCCR surveys, which identified a similar demand for continued training.

Awareness of services

- 2.18 The 2022 surveys of professionals and of parents and carers indicated a significant lack of awareness of local mediation services among families and professionals. While awareness of support services remains low, parents and carers are highly receptive to resources that could help them manage conflicts and strengthen relationships. SCCR's role in promoting accessible resources and services is crucial to supporting families across Scotland.
- 2.19 SCCR's services are well positioned to continue addressing this gap by offering accessible information and support. By promoting awareness of mediation and conflict resolution services through both digital and event-based channels, SCCR can help more families access the support they need before crises escalate.

3. Uptake of SCCR Services

Overview of the SCCR

- 3.1 The Scottish Centre for Conflict Resolution (SCCR), was established by Cyrenians in 2014 and serves as a National Resource Centre dedicated to best practice in conflict resolution, mediation, and early intervention, with a strong focus on supporting young people and families across Scotland. Based in Edinburgh, the SCCR operates with the core mission of transforming relationships and lives through accessible, high-quality training and resources that address the roots of conflict in family dynamics.
- 3.2 Since launching in 2014, SCCR has played a key strategic role in developing a progressive model of earlier intervention. Initially funded under Scottish Government's Third Sector Early Intervention Fund (2013–2016) and currently funded by Scottish Government's Children, Young People and Families Early Intervention Fund & Adult Learning and Empowering Communities Fund (2016–2025) their work encourages and enables young people, families and professionals, practitioners, and volunteers who support them to address conflict and access knowledge, understanding and life skills, to create healthy, safe and loving relationships and a more resilient and flourishing society.
- 3.3 The SCCR has five members of staff (F/T and FTE): a Service Manager, a Digital Media and Content Manager, an Events Organiser, an Emotional Health and Wellbeing Lead and a recently appointed Knowledge Facilitator. The Centre's work is overseen by the Cyrenians' Senior Families Manager and the organisation's Chief Executive.
- 3.4 In April 2024, Cyrenians launched its new three-year strategy which takes a public health approach to homelessness prevention. With its focus on providing a universal service that is accessible to anyone and its prevention approach, the work of the SCCR is underpinned by this strategy.
- 3.5 This evaluation is timeous as this new strategy, and recent changes in staffing, provide an opportunity to review and refresh the services offered by the SCCR.

The SCCR's Target Audiences

- 3.6 SCCR provides support to young people, families and professionals:
- 3.7 **Young People and Families:** Resources are designed to address common areas of family tension, such as communication breakdowns, differing expectations, and mental health challenges. Family members can access tools to navigate conflicts constructively, fostering more positive interactions.
- 3.8 **Professionals:** The SCCR supports professionals in sectors like education, social services, and healthcare, where family conflict is a frequent issue. In 2022, 96.7% of surveyed practitioners reported encountering regular family conflicts, highlighting the essential role of SCCR's resources in their work.

Services

- 3.9 Conflict often arises when there are disagreements over views, values, or actions, and when interests or needs go unmet. The SCCR approaches conflict not only as a challenge but as an opportunity for positive change, equipping individuals and professionals with tools to manage and transform conflict constructively.
- 3.10 SCCR's offerings are comprehensive, aimed at meeting the needs of individuals and professionals alike. Up until the pandemic in 2020, the SCCR delivered all of its support in person. From 2018 to 2024, SCCR demonstrated adaptability in response to changing social conditions, particularly the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. With a heightened focus on digital delivery, the SCCR expanded its reach, enabling broader access to resources and support.
- 3.11 Up until two years ago, all the services offered by the SCCR were universal. The SCCR has shifted its approach more recently and now some 20% of its services are targeted at specific organisations. These include undertaking targeted work with service users from Scottish Families Affected by Drugs, and Families Outside.
- 3.12 The SCCR offers a range of different types of support. These are described in the next section.

Free Training and Public Events

- 3.13 The SCCR organises a wide range of workshops, online training sessions, and public events. These accessible programs focus on developing essential skills in conflict resolution, emotional regulation, and understanding the psychological factors that drive conflict. These workshops and events are at the heart of the services that the SCCR delivers. Prior to the pandemic, all of these events took place in person. The pandemic saw a shift to online delivery, and delivery has been predominantly online since. However, more recently, SCCR has shift back to an emphasis on in-person delivery (where appropriate) in response to feedback from participants.
- 3.14 In response to the significant need to widen awareness of mental health and wellbeing within schools to support young people, in May 2023 SCCR designed and launched a new series of psycho-educational workshops with a workbook for young people, a school pack for teachers, and new digital resources that will platform work developed and tested in schools. The educational content is split across four lessons pertaining to four broad topics: 1) My brain, 2) My emotions, 3) My wellbeing, and 4) Our relationships. By addressing the underlying factors behind destructive conflict, the workshops empower participants to develop their emotional regulation skills and build healthier, more resilient relationships.

Untangling the Knots

- 3.15 SCCR's three-day skills course 'Untangling the Knots' assists practitioners working with young people and families to further develop their knowledge and skills in conflict

resolution with a particular focus on assisting families to manage difficult relationships. Topics include conflict response styles, dynamics of conflict, effective communications, reactive or reflective, brain and body connection, encouraging a better understanding, anger and the brain, the anger cycle, conflict resolution. The course is mapped to the National Performance Framework– National Outcomes: Health, Education Communities & Children & Young People.

Digital Resources

- 3.16 The SCCR has developed a suite of award-winning interactive digital resources, including tools like "Monkey vs. Lizard" and "Meet Your Emotional Homunculus", which simplify complex emotional and psychological concepts. During the COVID-19 pandemic, these resources became a vital support tool as the SCCR adapted its services to digital formats.

Psycho-educational Workshops

- 3.17 SCCR's workshops explore the emotional and cognitive aspects of conflict, providing valuable insights into the role of emotions and unmet needs in driving conflict. By addressing these underlying factors, the workshops empower participants to build healthier, more resilient relationships.

Annual conferences and receptions

- 3.18 Each year, the SCCR delivers a number of conferences and receptions, both online and in person. These tend to be day or multi-day events with invited speakers.

Accredited Conflict Resolution Training

- 3.19 In addition to the services outlined above, the SCCR has also delivered Mediator and a Mediation Skills Training course accredited by Scottish Mediation, which provides participants with the latest mediation theory and practical skills in a supportive environment. This course is separate to the services delivered through the Scottish Government grant and is funded through the levying of a fee to participants (which covers running costs only). This course is particularly valuable for professionals seeking formal credentials in mediation, equipping them to handle complex conflicts effectively.

Uptake of services

- 3.20 During the most recent reporting period, 2023-24, the SCCR delivered 85 events which were attended by 2342 people. A breakdown of participants is provided in Figure 1 that follows:

Figure 1: Event participants

Type of participant	Number of participants attending events
Professionals/Practitioners/Volunteers	1568
Young people	609
Parents/carers	165

- 3.21 Of the events that were delivered, 29 (34%) of these were delivered in person, and the remaining 56 (66%) were delivered online. This is a significant achievement for a small team with limited resources.
- 3.22 The target for 2024 is to deliver 80 events with 1,200 attendees. To date, the SCCR has delivered 46 events with 741 individuals attending these, which indicates that they are making good progress towards reaching their targets.
- 3.23 In addition, the SCCR engaged with a range of external organisations in the 2023/24 period, as illustrated in Figure 2 that follows:

Figure 2: Engagement with organisations 2023/24

Type of organisation engaged with	Number engaged with
Total number of agencies/organisations engaged with	339
Number of new agencies/organisations engaged with	209
Number of Scottish local authorities engaged	32
Number of countries outside Scotland that have engaged with the SCCR	14

4. Key Findings

- 4.1 This section outlines the primary insights from our evaluation, drawing on data from secondary data provided by Cyrenians, our surveys of young people and families and of professionals, digital engagement metrics, case studies, and participant and stakeholder feedback provided through interviews.
- 4.2 The findings explore participants' experiences of taking part in SCCR events, barriers to participation, the impact of participation on professionals and young people and families, experiences of using SCCR resources, SCCR's digital offer, areas for development, partnership arrangements, and the promotion of services.
- 4.3 The findings highlight SCCR's vital role in supporting families, young people, and professionals across Scotland in managing and resolving conflicts. Key themes include the prevalence of conflict within families, the increased demand for accessible online resources, and the significant impact of SCCR's training and digital tools in fostering conflict resolution skills.

SCCR Events

- 4.4 The delivery of events is a major element of the work undertaken by the SCCR. As described earlier, some 99 events were delivered in the 2023/24 reporting period, and the SCCR is on track to deliver a further 80 events to March 2025. These events ranged in size and offered information across a range of conflict resolution-related topics.
- 4.5 Through the evaluation we sought to understand people's experiences of attending these events (both online and face-to-face) and the impact they had on them. We explored this through the surveys we conducted of professionals and individuals/families, and through interviews with organisations and individuals. We also drew on secondary data provided by Cyrenians.
- 4.6 Overall, the feedback was very positive, with some suggestions made for improvements to delivery and promotion. The findings are explored further below.
- 4.7 85% of respondents to our survey of professionals had attended SCCR events, with online training being the most frequently attended:
 - 73% had attended online training
 - 44% had attended face-to-face training
 - 18% had attended online seminars
- 4.8 83% of respondents to our survey of young people and families had also attended events:
 - 60% had attended face-to-face sessions
 - 50% had attended online sessions
 - 30% had attended a face-to-face seminar

- 20% had attended an in-person conference

4.9 The response to the events was very positive, with most people indicating that there were no barriers to attending.

“Thank you, I cannot wait to incorporate what I have learned and put it in to practice whilst accessing resources from the SCCR Website. Thank you all. – Untangling the Knots Course (online) – May 2024”

“Really good presentation which was informative and helpful. Great that it was a short bitesize session which is always easier to fit into your day. – Online Conflict Resolution Series Session – Professional – May 2024”

“No barriers, the online resources I've been able to access have been great. A number of in person offerings sounded like they would have been really strong and perhaps could be offered in an online – or recorded/webcast version after the fact for those of us unable to attend in person.”

“I now have the language and tools to support families in conflict before crisis is reached. I now understand the skills needed to scaffold and support the schools and families I work with in conflict resolution – In person 1 day training – Professional – (understand, communicate and resolve), September 2024”

“Really manageable being able to join during the day online, otherwise probably wouldn't have the time to attend a course in person. Much more efficient this way to have small courses/workshops – Conflict Resolution Series Online Session – Parent/Carer – May 2024”

4.10 Despite this strong engagement, some barriers to attendance were noted in responses to our surveys:

- 40% of professionals and 25% of families cited geography as a barrier
- 35% of professionals and 42% of families found the timing of events challenging

4.11 In addition, a number of other barriers were cited:

- Challenges accessing face-to-face events due to living in a different part of the UK or overseas (their ability to do so is however not within the scope of their Scottish Government funding)
- Lack of awareness
- Lack of internet/digital connectivity
- Finding the time to attend (carers were highlighted as one group that would find this particularly challenging)

4.12 It is important to note that the SCCR has trialled various approaches to ensure that attendance is maximised – for example offering both breakfast sessions and evening

sessions, however these trials demonstrated that the lunchtime sessions were most frequently attended and these have remained at the core of their offer.

- 4.13 A few research participants commented on the quality of delivery and content of the online sessions. For example, one person highlighted the limitations of online sessions, expressing a preference for more dynamic and interactive content, and another person was concerned about the language and terminology used in sessions for young people and families.
- 4.14 While the majority of research participants were very positive about the events delivered by the SCCR, the recent recruitment of new staff to deliver online and face-to-face sessions may be an opportunity to refresh the approach to delivery. Areas of focus for these changes might include taking a more dynamic approach to the presentation of issues and a more interactive approach that engages the audience more actively.

Impact of events on participants

- 4.15 The vast majority of evaluation participants were very positive about the impact of the work of the SCCR. SCCR was recognised to be a leader in its field, offering support that was not available through other organisations. Evaluation participants articulated a range of impacts they had experienced as a result of taking part in SCCR events.
- 4.16 Amongst the professionals surveyed, 78% of respondents who had attended events reported increased confidence in their ability to transform conflict and improve relationships. Half of respondents (49%) indicated that they had applied what they learned at SCCR events to positively change the negative impact of conflict on relationships, mental health, and emotional wellbeing.
- 4.17 This resonates with SCCR’s own evaluation data (received from 495/1568 participants in their events) in Figure 3 below which shows the following outcomes for professionals, practitioners and volunteers across all events:

Figure 3: Impact of events on professionals, practitioners and volunteers

Outcome	Percentage of professionals, practitioners and volunteers who experienced this impact in 2023/24
OUTCOME 1.1 This event increased my knowledge & understanding of policy & practice related to youth homelessness & working with families experiencing conflict	85%
OUTCOME 1.2. This event has increased confidence in my ability to support families to positively transform conflict and improve relationships	91%

OUTCOME 1.3. I will apply what I have learnt, to positively change the negative impact conflict has on relationships, mental health and emotional wellbeing	96%
OUTCOME 1.3. I will use the SCCR online resources to positively change the negative impact conflict has on relationships, mental health & emotional wellbeing	95%

4.18 Those individuals and families who responded to our survey reported that they had gained the following benefits from attending SCCR events:

- 80% had a better understanding of conflict
- 70% had increased their understanding of the emotional and physical impact of conflict on their development
- 60% had learned new information and skills
- 60% had increased their understanding of their actions that drive family conflict and affect relationships
- 40% had increased confidence to seek help when they needed to do so
- 30% now know what support is available to them
- 30% indicated that they are now able to manage conflict in positive ways
- 30% had increased skills to develop positive relationships
- 30% indicated they had the SCCR digital resources to help them to manage relationship conflict and overall wellbeing

4.19 SCCR has collected evaluation data from young people and from parents and carers which shows a similarly positive picture in relation to impact.

4.20 Figure 4 below provides impact data from events attended by young people. It is based on 206/609 young people who completed an evaluation form following participation in an event.

Figure 4: Impact of events on young people

Outcome	Percentage of young people who experienced this impact in 2023/24
OUTCOME 3.1. -- I have a better understanding of conflict	91%

OUTCOME 3.1 -- I now know what support is available to me	72%
OUTCOME 3.1 -- I have increased in confidence to seek help when I need to do so	59%
OUTCOME 3.2. -- I have learned new information and skills;	85%
OUTCOME 3.2. -- I have increased my understanding of the emotional and physical impact of conflict on my development	83%
OUTCOME 3.2. -- I have increased my understanding of my actions that drive family conflict and affect relationships	73%
OUTCOME 3.3. -- I am now able to manage conflict in positive ways	80%
OUTCOME 3.3. -- I have increased skills to develop positive relationships	79%
OUTCOME 3.3 -- I now have the SCCR digital resources to help me manage relationship conflict and overall wellbeing	67%

4.21 Figure 5 below shows the impact of events on parents and carers. The data is based on 76/165 parents and carers who completed evaluation forms following participation in an event.

Figure 5: Impact of events on parents and carers

Outcome	Percentage of parents/carers who experienced this impact in 2023/24
OUTCOME 2.1. -- I am better informed and able to access the support required to resolve conflict and nurture relationships with my children/young people	71%
OUTCOME 2.2 -- I have an increased understanding of how teenagers and the brain develops	76%
OUTCOME 2.2 -- I now have the ability and SCCR digital resources to manage conflict, anger and emotions in positive ways	82%
OUTCOME 2.3 -- I am now more aware of the negative impact of conflict and links to youth homelessness	75%

OUTCOME 2.3 -- I know where to access the support I need before the point of crisis	64%
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- 4.22 Across the board, for all target groups, these impacts are substantive, particularly since many participants may only have attended one event. It suggests that the content and format of the events is well-suited to meeting the needs of the various target audiences.
- 4.23 Impact data is available for a range of other purposes. For example, SCCR collects data on the impact of its conferences, seminars, and Untangling the Knots sessions. These outcomes have not been included in this report, but on examination it is clear that a high percentage of outcomes are also being delivered through these mechanisms.

Digital engagement

- 4.24 The SCCR invests significant capacity in its digital engagement offer. All of its resources are freely available digitally and digital platforms are also widely used to raise awareness of its services. In this section, we explore the extent of digital engagement and the effectiveness of this engagement in supporting the SCCR to achieve its aims.
- 4.25 Between 2018 and 2024, the SCCR experienced significant fluctuations in its digital engagement, reflecting broader social and environmental changes such as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. By examining key digital metrics – such as website visits, page views, and social media engagement – we can observe clear patterns in how SCCR’s online presence has evolved to support delivery of its outcomes.
- 4.26 Pre-COVID (2018–2020): In the two years before the pandemic, SCCR’s digital engagement was strong, with 17,701 total sessions in 2018–2019, exceeding the target by 36%. Unique traffic to the Parents/Carers page (886 users, 36% above the target) and the Young People page (1,017 users, 45% above the target) also surpassed expectations, highlighting an early and sustained interest from these key audiences. Engagement with digital films was particularly notable, with 3,604 total sessions, achieving 200% of the target, and 517 new subscribers signed up for the e-newsletter (103%).
- 4.27 However, engagement on Twitter lagged behind other metrics, with 420 new followers, only 42% of the target. This suggests that while other digital channels were thriving, social media engagement required further focus.
- 4.28 In 2019–2020, while still positive, the numbers saw a slight decline. Total sessions dropped to 17,115 (88% of the target), with 116,286 page views (98% of the target). Engagement with the Parents/Carers page (714 users, 73%) and Young People page (1,100 users, 98%) slightly reduced, though Professional page traffic increased to 529 users, surpassing the target by 110%. The number of new Twitter followers continued to fall, reaching just 272 (27% of the target).

- 4.29 COVID Years (2020–2022): The COVID–19 pandemic created a shift towards digital platforms, and SCCR responded effectively. In 2020–2021, digital engagement surged. Total sessions rose to 24,167, achieving 128% of the target, and 138,792 page views represented 109% of the target. Traffic to key resource pages—such as the Parents/Carers page (1,165 users, 48% above the target) and Young People page (1,763 users, 46% above the target)—highlighted the increased reliance on digital resources during lockdowns.
- 4.30 Despite this growth, there were some challenges. The number of new subscribers to the e–newsletter fell to 216 (43% of the target), and Twitter followers dropped to 232 (23% of the target). While digital films remained popular, with 3,950 total views (95% over the target), social media engagement did not match the growth seen in other areas.
- 4.31 In 2021–2022, the impact of the pandemic began to wane, and digital engagement reflected this. Total sessions dropped to 18,050 (95% of the target), and page views decreased significantly to 50% below the target. Traffic to the Parents/Carers page (36% of the target) and the Young People page (59% of the target) also fell. However, there was a significant rise in newsletter subscribers, which increased to 654 (31% above the target), suggesting renewed interest in more direct forms of communication.
- 4.32 **Post–COVID Period (2022–2024):** In the two years following the pandemic, SCCR’s digital engagement began to stabilise, though some fluctuations persisted. In 2022–2023, total sessions increased to 20,190 (6% above the target), and page views rose to 100,075 (19% above the target), signalling a recovery in website traffic. Unique visits to the Parents/Carers page were lower than pre–pandemic levels at 303 users (60% of the target), but traffic to the Young People page (1,469 users, 17% above the target) showed significant growth. Similarly, digital film sessions reached 5,006 views (23% above the target), reflecting strong engagement with multimedia content.
- 4.33 In the period 2023/24 SCCR recorded 11,414 unique users of their website. In this period, total sessions fell to 12,480 (66% of the target), and page views declined further to 52,638 (48%). However, engagement with specific resources showed remarkable growth. The Parents/Carers page saw 1,015 unique visitors (205% above the target), while the Professionals page attracted 634 users (226% above the target). Traffic to the Young People page continued to exceed expectations with 2,645 visitors (64% above the target), and digital film sessions remained strong at 5,177 views (3% above the target).
- 4.34 Social media engagement also saw a significant uptick in 2023–2024, with 770 new e–newsletter subscribers (54% above the target) and 128 new Twitter followers (28% above the target), suggesting a renewed focus on social media outreach and direct communication strategies.
- 4.35 The digital engagement data from 2018 to 2024 demonstrates SCCR’s adaptability in responding to external factors, such as the pandemic. While overall traffic to the website has fluctuated, engagement with key pages, digital films, and social media has shown

strong and sustained growth, particularly among parents, professionals, and young people.

SCCR Resources

Use of resources

- 4.36 As previously described, the SCCR has produced a wealth of resources which are available online. Overall, the resources are very well received and feedback is positive from both professionals and from young people and families. Evaluation participants spoke positively about the content of the resources and their accessibility. Frequently, people also highlighted how unique the resources are:

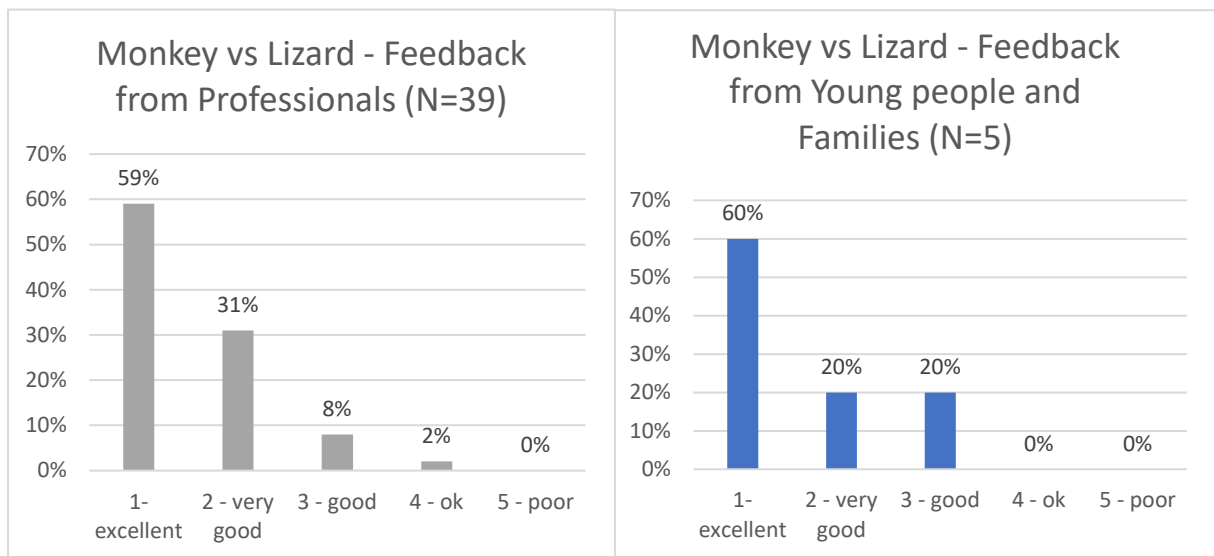
“I constantly use them. Maybe there are others out there but I don’t know of them.” (NHS representative)

- 4.37 Through the evaluation, we specifically examined the effectiveness of the following resources:

- Monkey vs. Lizard
- Keep the Heid
- Meet Your Emotional Homunculus and the Brain’s Amazing Drugs Cabinet
- The Three Brains
- Films and animations
- Training resources
- The Learning Zone

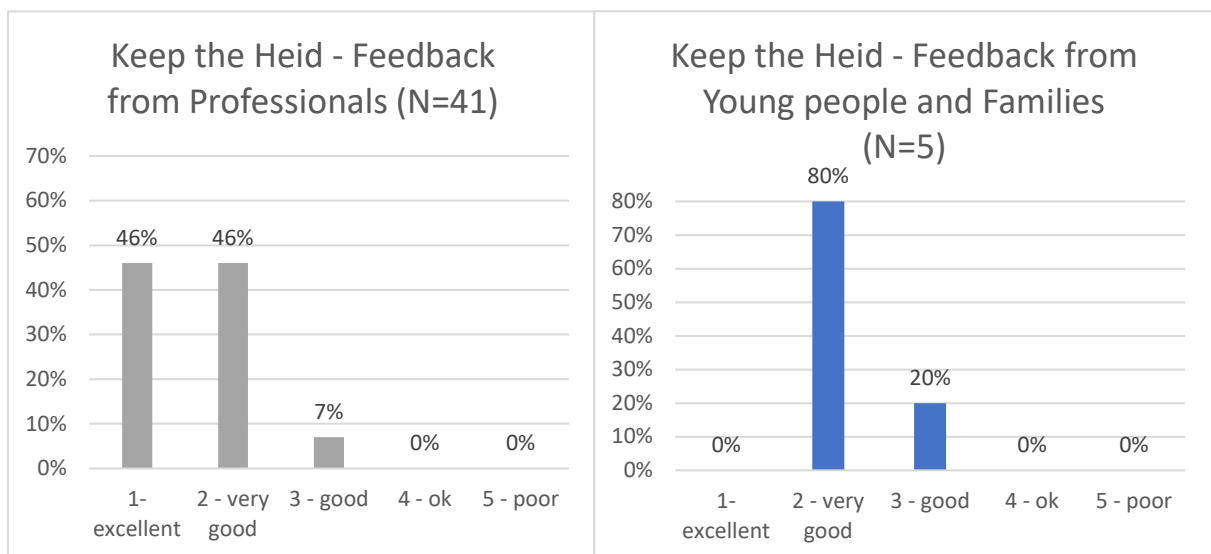
- 4.38 In the next section we provide an overview of survey feedback on each of the resources. This feedback was gathered through the surveys of professionals and young people and their families. The response rate to the survey of professionals was 39, which gave us a good range of views to draw on. The response rate to the survey of young people and families was much lower (5) and these results cannot be regarded as representative of a wider view. They do however give a snapshot of views which was mirrored in the views of participants we interviewed.

Figure 6: Monkey vs Lizard Resource



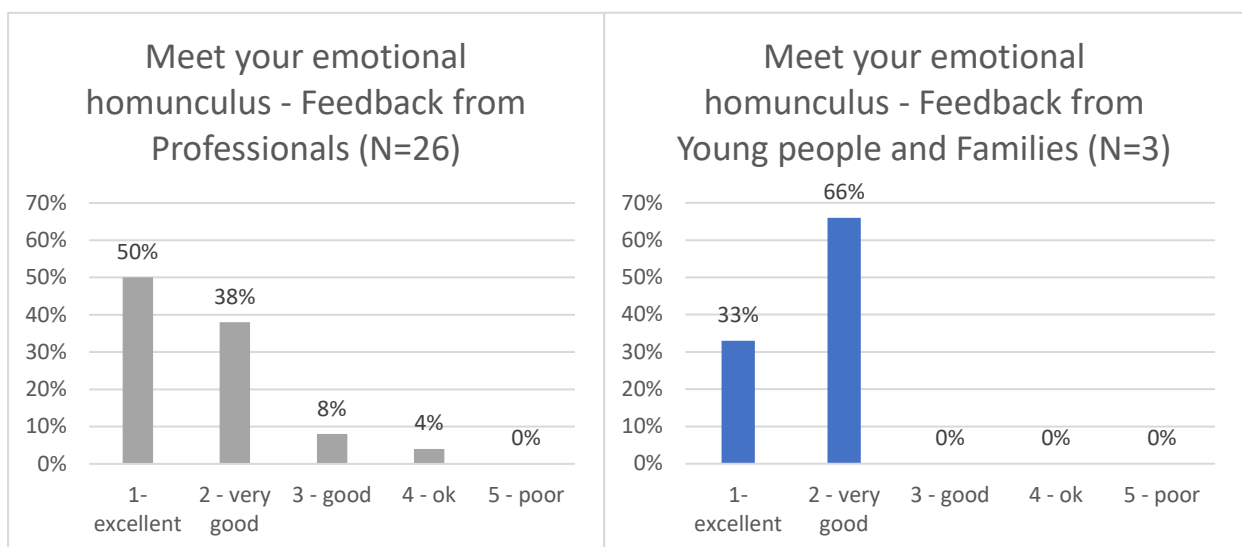
4.39 For Monkey vs Lizard, both professionals and young people and families provided overwhelmingly positive ratings, with the majority marking it as either "excellent" or "very good." Amongst organisations, 59% rated it as "excellent" and 31% as "very good", indicating strong professional endorsement, likely reflecting frequent usage and relevance in their settings. Young people and families also showed high approval, with 60% rating it as "excellent" and an additional 20% as "very good." Although this group had a smaller sample size (n=5), there was a clear consensus that the resource is effective and engaging, with no respondents rating it below "good."

Figure 7: Keep the Heid Resource



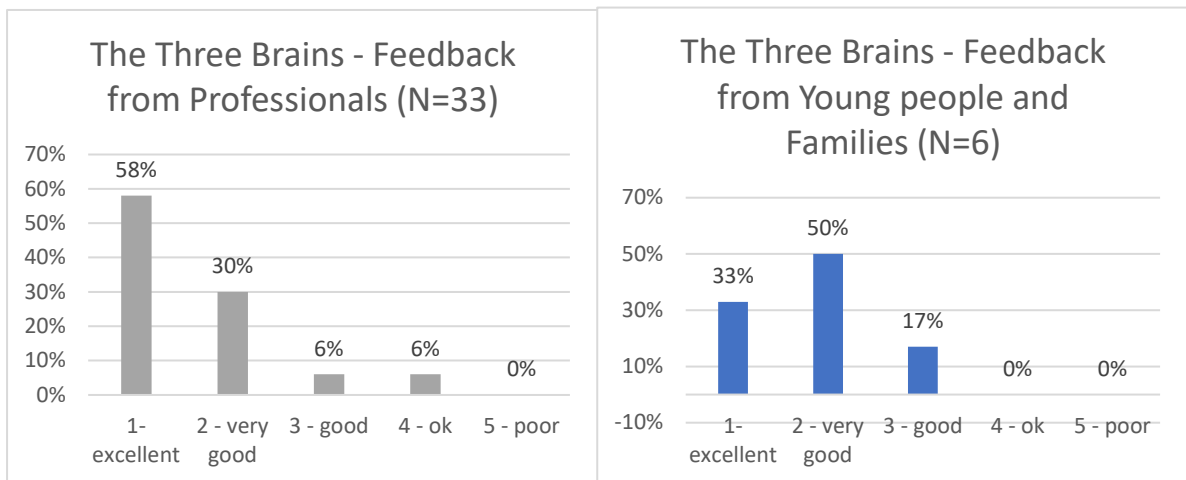
4.40 The "Keep the Heid" programme received strong support from professionals, with 46% rating it as "excellent" and another 46% as "very good." This near-unanimous endorsement from professionals highlights the programme's value and relevance within organisational settings, with no respondents giving it a rating lower than "good." In contrast, the feedback from young people and families, while still positive, was slightly more reserved, with 80% rating it as "very good" and 20% as "good." Although no respondents rated it as "excellent," the absence of lower ratings suggests that while the resource is appreciated, it may resonate more strongly with professionals than with the young people and families themselves.

Figure 8: Meet Your Emotional Homunculus Resource



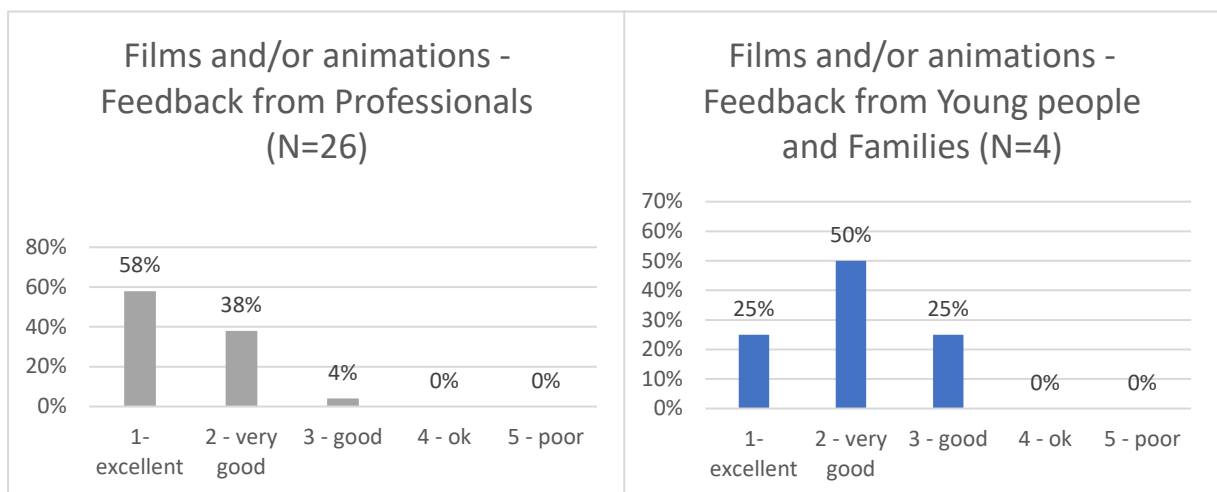
4.41 The Meet your Emotional Homunculus resource received strong feedback from both groups. Among professionals, 50% rated it as "excellent" and 38% as "very good," with minimal lower ratings, indicating broad professional approval. Young people and families were similarly positive, with 33% rating it as "excellent" and 66% as "very good," showing consistent appreciation across both respondent groups.

Figure 9: The Three Brains resource



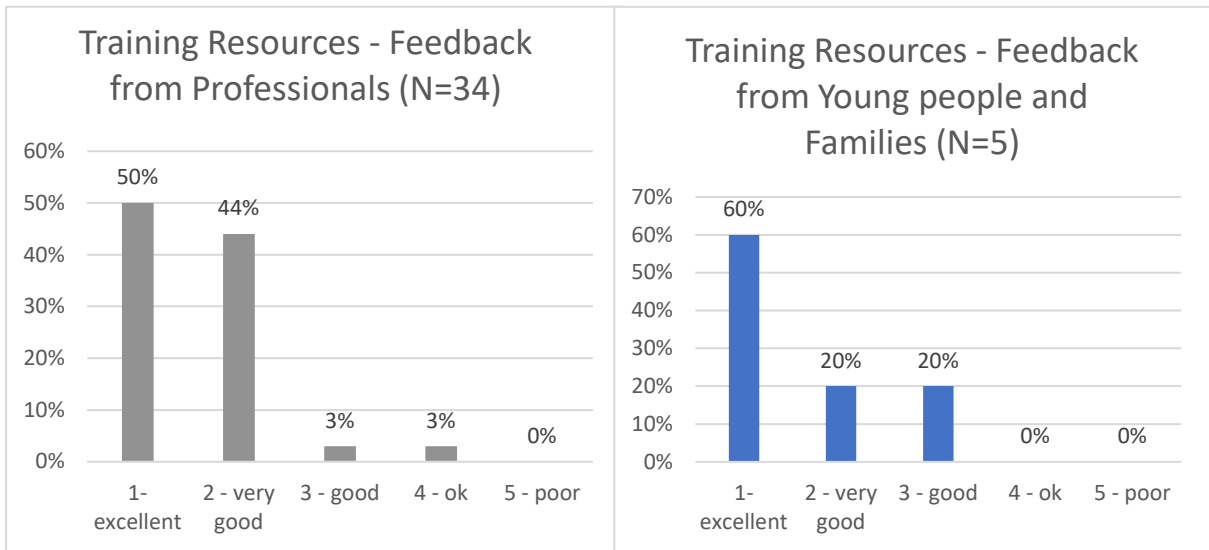
4.42 Three Brains received positive feedback from both professionals and families, though the levels of enthusiasm varied. Among professionals, 58% rated it as "excellent" and 30% as "very good," indicating strong approval with minimal lower ratings. Families were also favourable, with 33% rating it as "excellent" and 50% as "very good," though with a slightly more reserved response.

Figure 10: Films and/or Animations



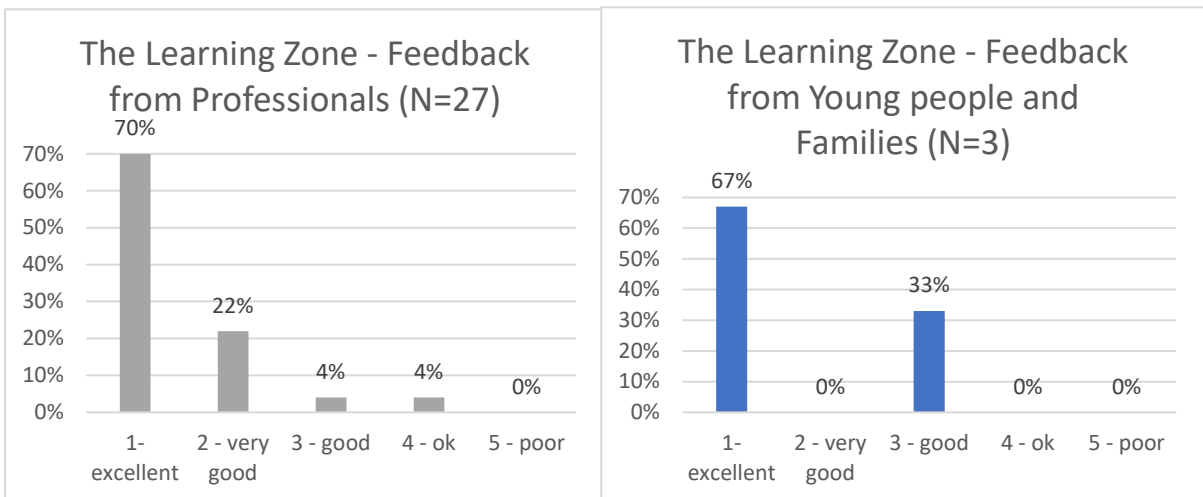
4.43 Films and Animations were rated favourably by both professionals and families, though with some variation in enthusiasm. Among professionals, 58% rated it as "excellent" and 38% as "very good," reflecting a strong preference for this resource with only 4% rating it as "good." Families also provided positive feedback, with 50% rating it as "very good" and 25% each for "excellent" and "good."

Figure 11: Training Resources



4.44 Training Resources received highly positive feedback from both professionals and families. Among professionals, 50% rated them as "excellent" and 44% as "very good,"; families also showed strong support, with the majority rating them as "excellent". No respondents from either group rated the resources below "good," suggesting they are well-regarded across different respondents.

Figure 12: The Learning Zone



4.45 The Learning Zone was also rated highly by both professionals and families, with 70% of professionals and 67% of families rating it as "excellent."

- 4.46 As can be seen in Figure 12 above, resources such as "Monkey vs Lizard" and "Keep the Heid" were particularly well received, with over 89% of professional respondents rating them as excellent or very good. The feedback indicated that these resources are widely used in professional settings, with one respondent noting, "I have used them for my own knowledge and during practice to help increase client knowledge."
- 4.47 It is clear from the responses to our surveys and the discussions in interviews that the resources are being used in a wide range of ways. Respondents indicated having used the resources for general education; to support clients; for self-reflection and personal use; with pupils in schools; when training other practitioners; to signpost parents and teachers to the resources; and to use them as a visual aid to support young people.

"We have used these [resources] within mainstream and ASN classes and with young people in PSE."

"I use them every day in CAMHS, and parents who attended my recent ADHD workshop loved them."

Potential improvements to resources

- 4.48 While the vast majority of people felt that the resources were good quality and engaging, some respondents suggested ways in which the resources could be enhanced. This included:

- improving the visuals within the resources and making them less clinical
- refreshing the quiz questions and co-designing these with families
- simplifying the language, especially for young people and people with literacy difficulties
- making the materials more diverse with a wider range of content scenarios
- making the resources more family-friendly

"Some I felt were a bit dark but the information was clear"

"It would be better if the resources weren't all in the same style. It makes it hard for young people to see we are using a different resource and not moan that they have done this already. Once using the resources they got on board but visually they found them samey"

- 4.49 Evaluation participants also made several suggestions for new content and training topics:

- Trauma-informed and mediation training: respondents asked for more content focused on trauma, non-violent communication, and professional mediation.

- Lived experience: Participants expressed a desire for more training that incorporates lived experiences, such as case studies or personal stories shared by individuals who have dealt with conflict first-hand stating, "[I] really enjoyed Kevin Neary sharing his lived experience. More of that please! Lived experience is so powerful."

4.50 Research participants highlighted a number of other areas where further training could be beneficial, including mental health support, mediation techniques, and systemic family therapy. These responses echo a recurring theme throughout the research: the need for continued professional development in areas like trauma-informed practice and family mediation. While some of these could be offered through the SCCR, some may be better outsourced to partner organisations (as already happens in some cases).

Barriers to Using Resources

4.51 While most respondents did not report significant barriers to using SCCR's resources, a few highlighted access issues related to digital exclusion, literacy skills, and visual impairments. One survey respondent noted, "They are digitised, and not everyone has access to digital media," while another mentioned that the font used in some materials could be hard to read for individuals with literacy challenges. Cyrenians do already have hard copy resources available for professionals and families which can also be issued by email. This feedback suggests there may be a need to ensure more participants are aware of this option.

Partnerships with external organisations

4.52 Partnership is at the core of the SCCR's work and Cyrenians and the SCCR have long-established relationships with a wide range of organisations across various sectors. This positions them well to engage with a wide range of audiences and has led to the introduction of some of their recent more targeted interventions. Some examples of this partnership working that they have been involved in includes:

- SCCR works with Education Scotland and individual schools to provide them with resources and events to support young people and their families to resolve conflict. The SCCR worked with Education Scotland to develop lesson materials and teaching notes which were piloted in a small number of schools and led to the development of a downloadable facilitators' pack for use in schools.
- In their work with the Addiewell Visitors' Centre, Cyrenians has been able to offer bite-size sessions to families of prisoners via email and Microsoft Teams. In addition, they undertake training with new prison officers on trauma-informed approaches, and are hoping to go into prison establishments to deliver bite-size sessions on conflict resolution.
- SCCR ran face-to-face events through Kinship Scotland for kinship carers on conflict. They have continued to offer sessions online to kinship carers annually. These are

seen as a crucial part of the offer to kinship carers who are often dealing with challenging family situations and children who have experienced trauma, making them conflict averse. The SCCR's "Having Difficult Conversations" module has been a key part of supporting kinship carers to address these challenges.

4.53 Feedback from partners is overwhelmingly positive, and all of the partners we consulted during the evaluation were keen to continue to partner with the SCCR in future.

"For the funding they get, Cyrenians do marvellously."

"The experience we have had has been very positive. They are very flexible in their approach."

4.54 Some partners also noted the value of Cyrenians "clout" within government and their ability to influence – "They have the scale to do work with people in local and national government, and the clout, and willing, to influence cross-party."

4.55 Many of them highlighted the importance of the service being free, and were keen to see this type of resource continue to be provided free of charge to the public and third sector in future.

4.56 Partners indicated a few areas for potential developments of the SCCR which included:

- More extensive awareness raising to ensure as much uptake as possible
- Consolidation of current resources rather than creation of new resources
- Mediation training for staff in schools to deal with challenges with conflict – a "train the trainer" approach could be taken
- Further engagement with HSCPs and CSSPs

Promotion

4.57 As demonstrated earlier in this report, the SCCR has a wide reach, including beyond Scotland's borders. They have good engagement with both face-to-face and online events. Many evaluation participants felt that their approach to promotion was effective, and there is evidence of good engagement, outlined earlier in this report, across social media and more traditional promotional routes.

4.58 Evaluation participants provided a number of suggestions for other ways of promoting services including:

- Awareness raising with CAMHS teams (clinical and service leads)
- Provide information in medical waiting rooms
- Target sexual health clinics
- Films at bus shelters

- Create Young People ambassadors to share awareness about the resources and events

Experiences of participating in an SCCR event

Conflict Resolution Series: Family Conflict Triggers



As part of SCCR's ongoing efforts to provide accessible conflict resolution resources, an online event was held on Family Conflict Triggers which was attended by 11 people. Following the main session, a small focus group was conducted with participants who stayed on to provide in-depth feedback on their experiences. This case study captures key insights from the focus group, highlighting the perceived value of SCCR's resources, feedback on event delivery, and suggestions for improvement.

Participant Motivation: Participants were asked how they first learned about SCCR's work. Responses indicated a mix of direct communication (email outreach) and personal referrals from friends, demonstrating SCCR's reach across both formal and informal networks. The primary motivations for attending the event included using the material in both professional and personal contexts. One attendee, a mediator working with struggling youth, shared that they apply SCCR resources in their practice and personal life, while another attendee stated they joined primarily to gain strategies for managing conflict within their own family.

Event Experience and Feedback: Participants expressed appreciation for the structure and delivery of the session, particularly noting the following positive aspects:

- **Concise Format:** The session's short duration was seen as a positive, making it easier to fit into busy schedules.
- **Visual and Relatable Content:** The use of visual slides and a video demonstrating a real-life parent-child conflict scenario resonated well with attendees, helping them connect with the material on a personal level.
- **Experienced Trainers:** The trainer was described as experienced and knowledgeable, adding depth to the session with his insights into conflict triggers.

While participants generally found the session useful, they did suggest improvements to enhance future events. One suggestion was to include voice recordings with slide materials for post-session review, as attendees sometimes struggled to recall specific details when revisiting the slides alone. Participants also identified scheduling as a potential barrier, noting that the lunchtime slot could be challenging for some attendees. They suggested alternative timings, such as early morning (e.g. 8:30 a.m.) or late evening slots, to accommodate a wider audience. Additionally, participants recommended concluding sessions with a recap of key concepts to avoid information overload, helping attendees retain the content.

Familiarity with SCCR Resources and Format Preferences: Participants were familiar with SCCR's offerings, having attended multiple online events and one participant attending in-person day training events, which they described as particularly impactful. Participants praised the accessibility of SCCR's online resources, though they suggested that SCCR consider strategies to broaden its demographic appeal. One male participant observed that event attendance seemed predominantly female and suggested SCCR explore ways to encourage greater male participation, highlighting the importance of involving both parents in conflict resolution discussions.

Future Directions: A recurring theme was the desire for more dynamic and engaging events. One participant suggested increasing session attendance and incorporating youth perspectives, noting that hearing from young people directly could add depth to discussions on family conflict. This case study illustrates the strengths of SCCR's event format—namely, its accessible content—while also identifying areas for improvement, such as session timing, additional post-session resources, and strategies to engage a broader demographic. These insights offer valuable guidance for SCCR as it continues to refine its conflict resolution offerings.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

- 5.1 This evaluation of the Scottish Centre for Conflict Resolution (SCCR) highlights its crucial role in supporting families, young people, and professionals across Scotland. Through accessible resources, tailored training, and a growing digital presence, SCCR has provided essential conflict resolution skills and emotional support, particularly as societal needs have evolved in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 5.2 In the year 2023/24, the SCCR exceeded all of its ambitious target KPIs and is making good progress towards achieving those targets set for 2024/25.
- 5.3 Evaluation participants provided valuable feedback on SCCR's effectiveness in supporting professionals and families dealing with conflict. Partner organisations spoke highly of the resources and training that the SCCR delivers, and the important role they play in influencing the policy landscape. Young people, families and carers appreciated the high-quality tools which supported them to deal with family conflict effectively.
- 5.4 A small number of areas for improvement were identified. Some research participants highlighted the need for more varied, interactive, and inclusive resources that cater to different audiences, including those with low literacy and younger children. In addition, there was some sense that the opportunity of a refresh of presentation style with the employment of two new members of the team would be welcomed by some of those who had attended events.

Future Goals

- 5.5 The SCCR continues to work towards promoting a cultural shift in how conflict is perceived and managed in Scotland, advocating for conflict resolution as a skill that benefits individuals, families, and communities alike. By expanding its outreach, enhancing resource accessibility, and deepening partnerships, the SCCR aspires to create lasting societal change. Its ongoing goals include raising awareness of the available resources, increasing the accessibility of its digital and in-person services, and fostering partnerships to strengthen its role as a key support service in Scotland's social landscape.
- 5.6 The evaluation provides clear evidence that the SCCR is well-placed to deliver on these goals. Through its diverse services, the SCCR continues to support vulnerable groups and professionals, equipping them with essential skills and insights to manage conflict constructively and build stronger, more resilient communities across Scotland. Participant feedback shows that these services are delivered in a way that is engaging and appropriate for the target audience.
- 5.7 This evaluation has confirmed the demand for these services from organisations and families who expressed a strong need for access to the high-quality resources and training that the SCCR offers.

Key Findings and Recommendations

Increased Demand for Accessible Digital Resources

- 5.8 The pandemic underscored the importance of digital resources, with SCCR's online engagement recovering strongly in areas like resources for parents, young people, and professionals.

Recommendation 1: Continue to expand and refine digital resources, ensuring they remain accessible, particularly to users with diverse literacy levels and digital access needs. Including supplementary audio materials alongside slides may help users retain content effectively post-session and enable those who were not able to attend to access the content.

Diverse Audience Reach and Engagement

- 5.9 SCCR's reach spans across multiple demographics; however, feedback indicates a need to continue to broaden its target audience, for example, ensuring a balance of female/male participants and under-represented groups.

Recommendation 2: Continue to explore targeted outreach strategies to encourage broader demographic participation, such as tailored marketing and specific sessions or resources designed to engage under-represented groups.

Professional Development and Continued Training Needs

- 5.10 Both survey and case study data indicate a high demand for ongoing professional development, especially in mediation skills. Many professionals also expressed interest in further training on mental health support.

Recommendation 3: Consider enhancing training offerings by expanding the mediation practice content and integrating these themes more robustly into existing programmes. Providing more frequent refresher courses or advanced workshops could also support professional development goals. Charging a fee to attend some of these more advanced workshops may also require consideration if additional funding is not available.

Balancing Digital and In-Person Offerings

- 5.11 SCCR's online sessions have been highly valued, but many research participants also appreciated the unique benefits of in-person training. The SCCR is already beginning to re-introduce more face-to-face training opportunities and this is welcomed and should be built upon.

Recommendation 4: Maintain a balanced approach between digital and in-person events. Continue to offer flexible scheduling which is responsive to demand, such as offering sessions at varied times (e.g. early mornings or evenings), to accommodate diverse schedules and increase accessibility.

Youth Involvement in Events

- 5.12 Participants suggested incorporating more perspectives from young people to enrich discussions on family conflict and ensure both generational viewpoints are represented.

Recommendation 5: Integrate youth voices into design and delivery of sessions where possible, either through guest speakers or facilitated discussions. This approach could provide a fuller understanding of family conflict dynamics and make sessions more engaging.

Enhance Awareness of Support Services

- 5.13 There remains a gap in awareness about local mediation services, with families and professionals alike unaware of available support. This is an ongoing challenge which Cyrenians have discussed with Scottish Government in the past. While a full-scale mapping of services is not practical or necessarily helpful (as such a mapping is often out of date before it is even completed), additional awareness raising may be beneficial.

Recommendation 6: Continue to build on efforts to raise awareness of support and mediation services through both digital and event-based channels. Collaborating further with local organisations could extend the SCCR's outreach and connect more families with useful resources.