



Resources for Supporting Mental Health

Among Young People in Ukraine



Youth Leadership Programme

HOW TO NAVIGATE THIS RESOURCE GUIDE

Where to find support



Looking for resources to help yourself, a friend, or a family member? You can find various resources, such as helplines, organisations and websites here.



Key Insights



Curious about the mental health landscape in your country? Find out what young people actually need most and the biggest challenges to getting help.



Mental Health Context in Ukraine



What are local laws and support systems? Dive into the current mental health context in your country, see what's working, and, more importantly, what's still missing.



About the Project



Discover more about the Youth Leadership Programme, funded by the Rare Impact Fund, and how young leaders created this resource in partnership with Mental Health Europe.



This reference guide was developed by Youth Advocate Oleksandra Yepanova as a part of the Youth Leadership Programme. The document is a product of co-creation, researched and drafted by Youth Leaders with the guidance and editorial oversight of Mental Health Europe. The views and content expressed reflect the national perspectives, contributions, and lived experiences of these Youth Leaders.



YOU ARE NOT ALONE

Reaching out for help is not a weakness. Whether you prefer writing in a chat, speaking on the phone, or visiting a clinic in person, **there are people ready to listen and support you.**

Taking even one small step toward support can make a difference.

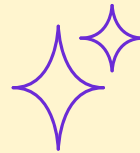
WHERE YOU CAN FIND SUPPORT

If you feel overwhelmed, anxious, lonely, or simply unsure where to turn, support is available. All of the resources listed below are free of charge and designed to be accessible, confidential, and youth-friendly.

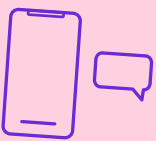
Disclaimer: The following links and helplines were gathered with the best care possible, however, as these are third-party services, we cannot guarantee their quality or that they remain accessible after the release of these documents.



Hotlines & Crisis Support



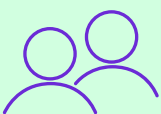
Other Programs for Young People



Digital Psychological Support Tools



Information and Self-Help Resources



Offline Support



Hotlines & Crisis Support

If you need immediate support, you can contact:



Telegram chatbot “Not Trivial Matters”

(10AM – 10PM)



Krisenchat Ukrainian

Anonymous 24/7 crisis chat support for children, young people, and adults

National hotline for the prevention of domestic violence

Anonymous and available 24/7

11 61 23

0 800 50 03 35



NPA helpline

Free professional psychological assistance for people in Ukraine and those temporarily abroad

0 800 10 01 02



Digital Psychological Support Tools



Safe Place

An app for children and young people experiencing anxiety, fear, or sadness. It offers calming and distraction exercises and was developed by Save the Children Sweden together with psychologists.



Free Choice

An organisation supporting war veterans and their families.



Confidence

Provides free individual online consultations with a psychologist or psychiatrist.



Mental Health and Wellbeing

Offers teenagers several free individual online psychological consultations.



Poruch

A psychological support project offering online support groups for children and teenagers, as well as individual consultations for young people aged 14-21.



Offline Support



Youth-Friendly Clinics (YFC)

Specialised institutions or departments that provide free, anonymous, and confidential medical, psychological, and social support to adolescents and young people (mainly aged 14–24). Their work is based on three principles: Accessibility, Voluntariness, and Friendliness.

You can find the address of the nearest Youth-Friendly Clinic online or contact your local Social Service Center for Families, Children, and Youth.



Other Programs for Young People



E-mpower Youth

A project by the NGO “Girls,” supported by International Child Development Initiatives and partners, aimed at strengthening the digital security of Ukrainian youth, especially internally displaced young people aged 12–18 in Ukraine, Poland, and the Netherlands.





Information and Self-Help Resources



“How are you?”

A nationwide mental health initiative launched in May 2022 by First Lady Olena Zelenska. The program works to destigmatize mental health care and strengthen psychosocial support systems during the war. The platform includes self-help materials, educational content, and links to professional services.



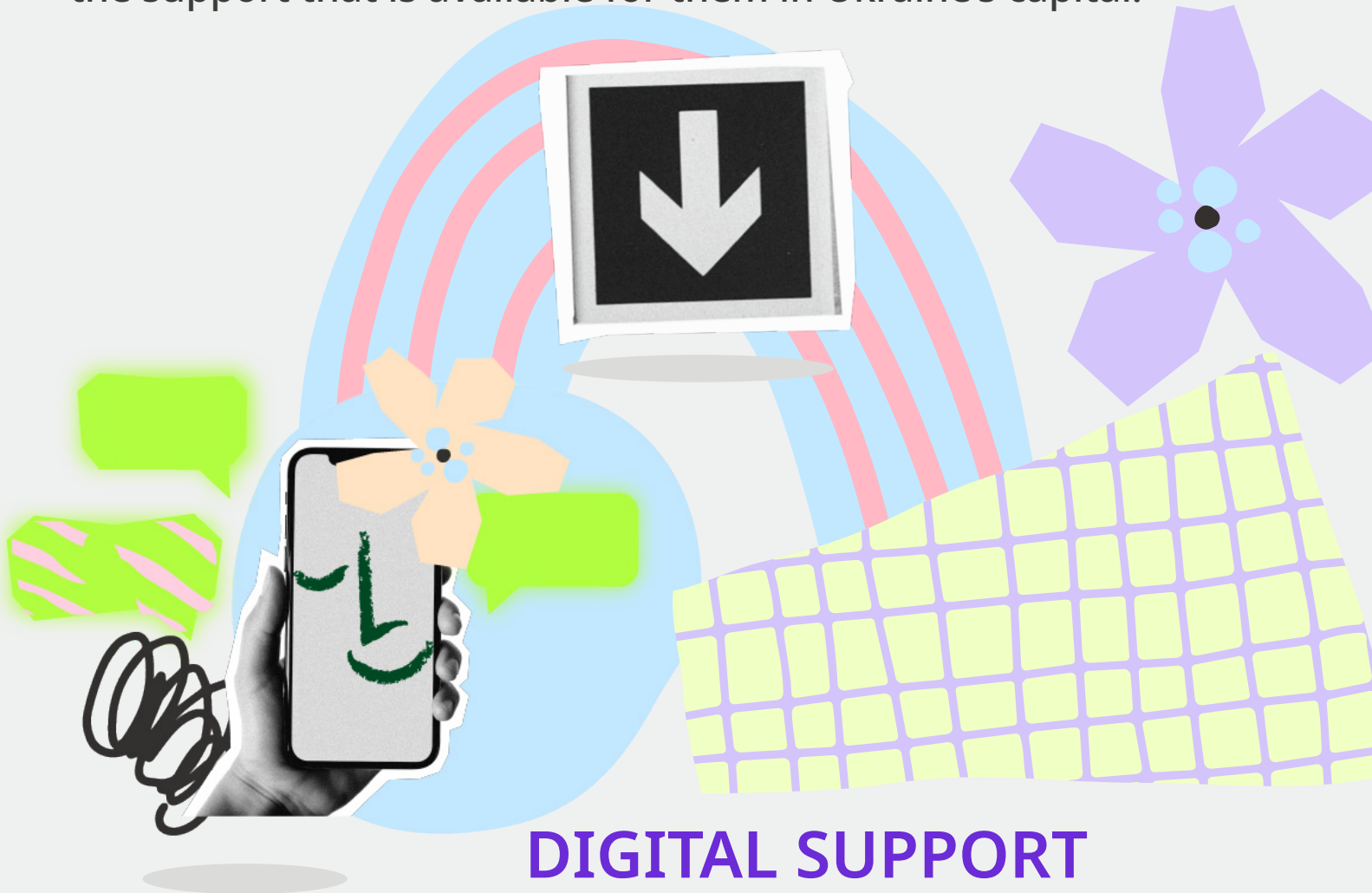
MH4U (Mental Health for Ukraine)

A Ukrainian-Swiss project supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. It provides educational content on mental health and psychological support. The project also runs an ambassador program where people with lived experience share their stories to reduce stigma and sometimes lead support groups.



KEY INSIGHTS

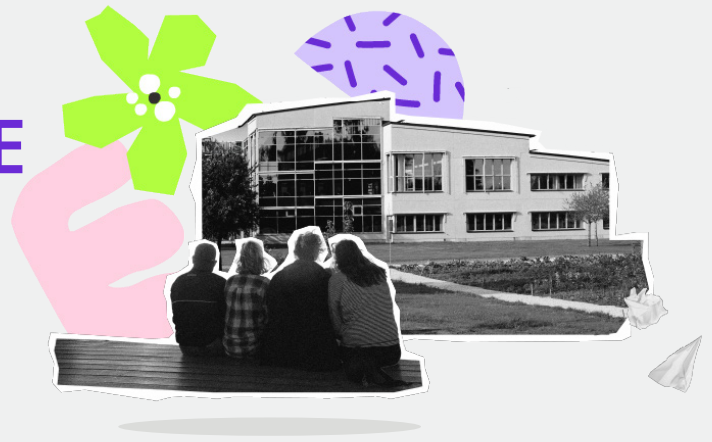
These insights were developed as a result of expert interviews in Kyiv providing an overview on young people's mental health and the support that is available for them in Ukraine's capital.



DIGITAL SUPPORT AND ANONYMITY

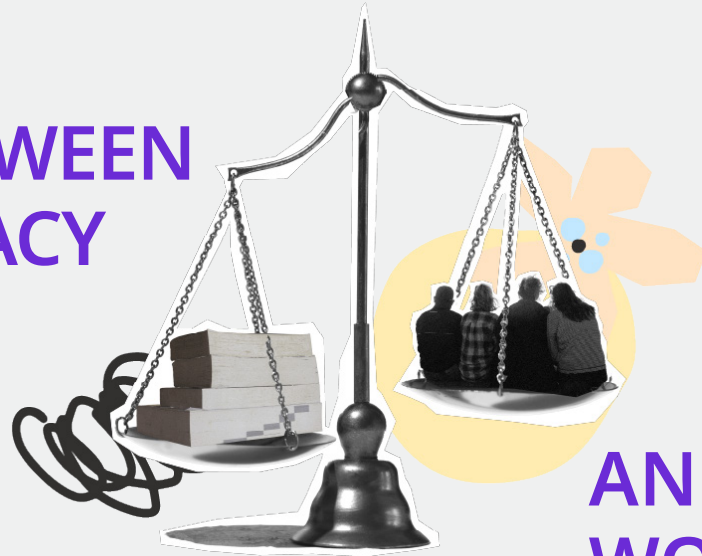
For many young people, online chats are “the safest entry point” to the support system. Writing about their problems often feels easier than calling a hotline or meeting someone in person. The anonymity of digital platforms provides protection from judgment and creates a sense of safety. Through chat conversations, specialists help teenagers put their feelings into words, especially, when they feel overwhelmed or unwell but cannot clearly explain why.

SCHOOL AS A SAFE SPACE AND A SOURCE OF “LIVE” HELP



School plays a crucial role not only in education but also in emotional support. It should be a safe environment where students feel supported, heard, and understood. Feeling part of a caring community is especially important for teenagers, particularly during times of uncertainty and stress, including anxiety related to the war. Many students seek help for everyday fatigue, emotional distress, or challenges in their relationships, and having accessible support within school makes it easier for them to reach out.

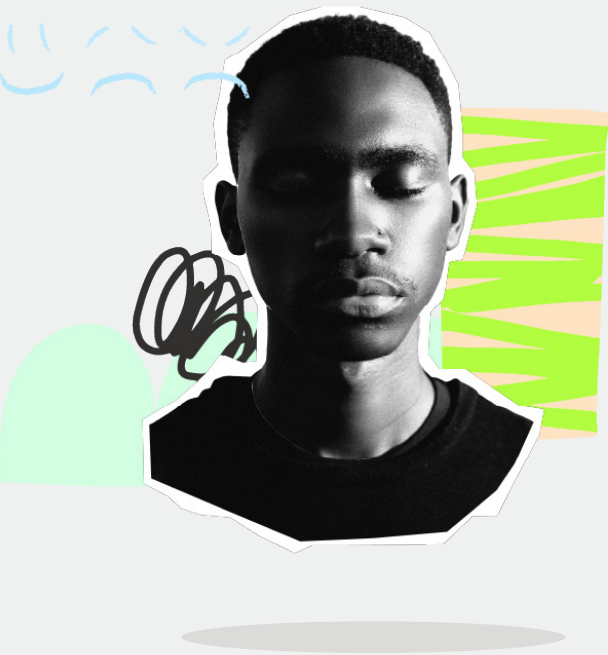
BALANCE BETWEEN BUREAUCRACY



AND REAL WORK

A key systemic challenge is the heavy workload and administrative pressure placed on school specialists. Excessive bureaucracy reduces the time available for direct contact with students. Prioritising live interaction with children over paperwork is essential to ensure meaningful psychological support. At the same time, schools need more psychologists so that one specialist is not required to combine multiple roles. Increasing staff capacity would allow more time and resources to be dedicated to students who need support.

THE RIGHT TO EMOTIONS AND COMBATING STIGMA



Self-care begins with openness. Crying, calming yourself through breathing, or expressing fear are normal and healthy reactions. Challenging the stereotype that emotions should be hidden is an important step toward improving mental wellbeing. Acknowledging feelings in a safe space is often the first and most important step toward restoring mental peace.

WHY DOES THIS MATTER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE?

Your experiences, whether fatigue, loneliness, fear, or confusion, are valid and recognised. Professionals are actively working to make schools and online spaces more supportive and accessible.

Knowing that these efforts exist can make reaching out feel easier and less intimidating. In the next sections, you can explore the current situation of mental health in Ukraine and specific resources where trained specialists are available to support young people.

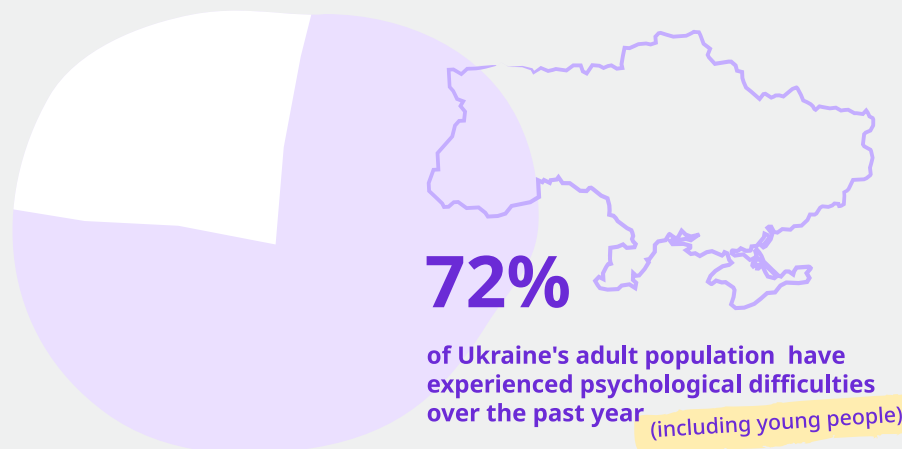
MENTAL HEALTH CONTEXT IN UKRAINE



CURRENT LEGISLATION AND POLICY

As of 2026, Ukrainian legislation defines mental health as a priority area of state policy, regulated by the “Mental Health Care System” law. Mental health centers and resilience centers operate on the basis of hospitals and communities, providing free psychosocial assistance. Mental health support services are also integrated into the primary health care system and the educational process. Citizens have access to state hotlines and online platforms that provide confidential counseling in crisis situations.

THE MENTAL HEALTH OF YOUNG PEOPLE: CHALLENGES AND TRENDS



The full-scale war has placed an unprecedented strain on the mental health of young people: about 72% of Ukraine's adult population (including young people) have experienced psychological difficulties over the past year. Studies show high levels of anxiety, depression, and PTSD symptoms, which directly affect learning and socialization. Teenagers are the most vulnerable, as the chronic stress of war compounds natural age-related crises, which without proper support can have long-term health consequences.

ATTITUDES TOWARD HELP AND OVERCOMING STIGMA:

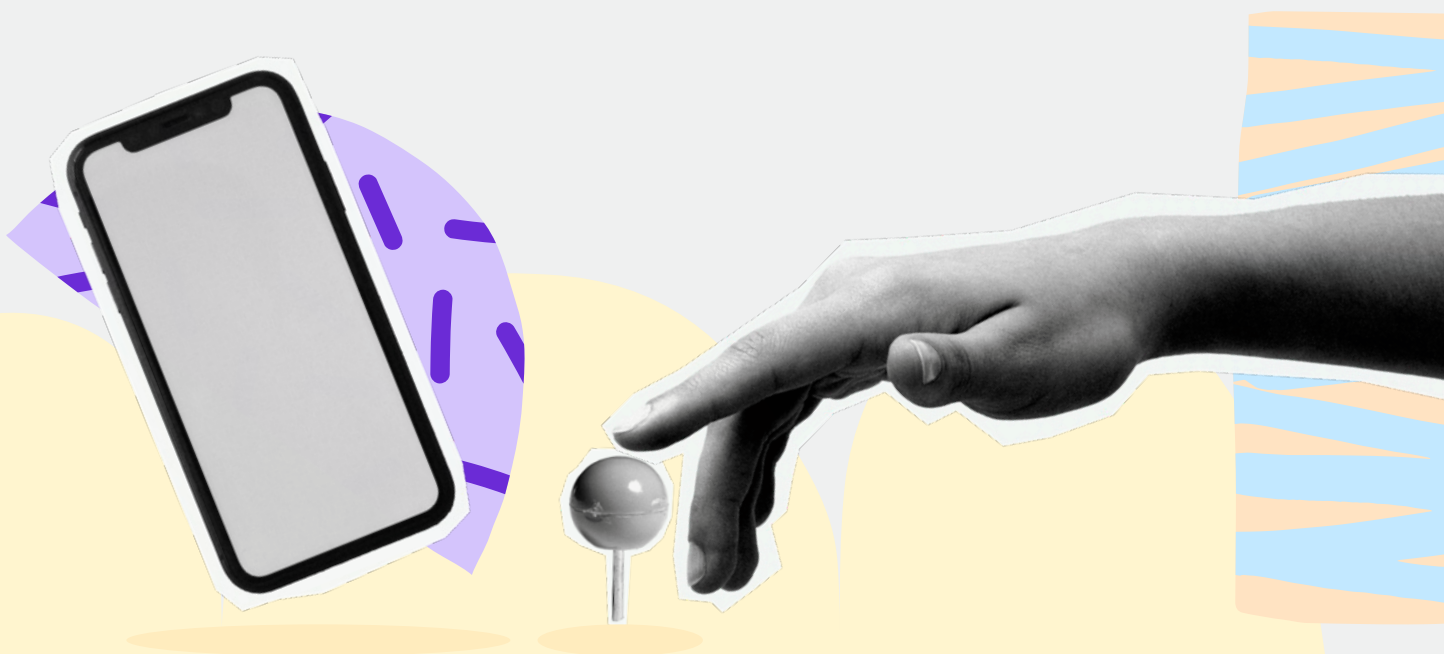
In recent years, Ukrainian society has undergone significant changes: people have become less inclined to judge or dictate how those with mental health issues should behave. Instead, there is a growing willingness to support and understand one another. At the same time, there is still a certain lack of knowledge about how to help oneself or where to seek medical attention, which sometimes prevents young people from visiting a specialist in a timely manner.

To overcome these barriers, the state is implementing universal training programs that prepare teachers and social workers to recognize signs of stress and provide first psychological aid directly in educational institutions.

ACCESSIBILITY OF SUPPORT AND KEY DECISIONS:

The 2026 state policy focuses on creating “entry points” to the support system where young people spend most of their time: in schools, universities, and youth centers. Special attention is paid to rural residents and internally displaced persons (IDPs), for whom the networks of Resilience Centers and mobile multidisciplinary teams are being expanded.

New legislation integrates mental health services into primary care, making anonymous and free counseling available in most communities through family doctors or specialized online platforms.



ABOUT THE PROJECT

The Youth Leadership Programme is funded by **Rare Impact Fund** to amplify the voice of young people within Mental Health Europe and beyond, fostering a movement of young leaders who drive cultural and social change. By transforming the narrative around mental health, young leaders will challenge stigma and advocate for tangible support in schools, care settings, and the wider community.

Active participation of young people in policy development and sociopolitical processes is essential for building a just and equitable society where everyone's mental health can thrive. For 2025–2026, the project will focus on implementing various engagement activities led by youth leaders at both European and local levels, with the goal of supporting the mental health of children and young people aged 12–25.

This infosheet is part of the Youth Leadership Programme and focuses specifically on Ukraine. It aims to map youth-friendly, low-barrier (peer and community) mental health support offers, helping young people find services that feel accessible, non-judgemental, and easy to reach - especially during moments when life feels overwhelming or too difficult to manage alone.



@mentalhealthyouthleadership

rare impact fund



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