

Brandon *Bulletin*

2025 Review

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Hello and Welcome

Happy New Year! And welcome to our newsletter looking back on 2025.

At Brandon Centre, we're starting the new year with a strong sense of pride, gratitude and determination for what lies ahead.

But as we enter 2026, I'd like to take a moment to reflect on all that we've achieved in the past year. I'm so pleased to share some of our exciting developments, successes and continued growth in this newsletter.

As you know, our core mental health services provide counselling & psychotherapy, systemic services and tailored support to young people and families.

Yet over the past year, we've continued to see a significant increase in demand and complexity of need, with more young people coming forward for help with anxiety, low mood, trauma, family pressures and the ongoing impact of the cost-of-living crisis.

Despite these pressures, our teams have continued to work tirelessly to offer safe, high-quality and accessible support.

At the same time, we know that demand now outstrips our current funding, and we're actively seeking additional investment and partnerships so that we can reduce waiting times, reach more young people and protect our free-at-the-point-of-access offer.

So, we're incredibly proud to have strengthened our local partnerships across Camden, Islington and neighbouring London boroughs.

One example of this is through our rewarding work with Kentish Town Connects, where we've worked closely with local young people and local authority, as well as health and community partners, to create meaningful, youth-led opportunities and co-produced service offers.

It is through collaborations like these that have enabled us to deepen our community connections and, most importantly, to see young people's leadership, confidence and voices truly flourish. See more on this in our 'Keeping it Kentish' article.

Throughout the rest of the newsletter, I am delighted to celebrate what has been a busy and inspiring year, from decorating cakes with the Deputy Mayor of London to talking at the Google headquarters, all while shining a light on the wide range of services and partnerships that we offer.

The start of this year has already been full of energy and growth as we renew our commitment to the young people, families and communities we serve.

If you or your organisation would be interested in supporting our work, whether through funding, partnerships, collaborations or events, we would be delighted to hear from you!

Together, we can explore how we can support even more young people and families in 2026 and beyond.

But for now, make yourself a cup of tea and enjoy reading what we've been up to.

With warm wishes,

Julia



Julia Brown
Chief Executive

Recognition for our SIT work

We'd like to open our winter newsletter with some exciting news...

We're delighted to share that our **Systemic Integrative Treatment (SIT)** service has been recognised by the London Children's Practice Spotlight!

For those who don't know, the Practice Spotlight shines a 'light' on the most innovative and impactful practices that transform the lives of children and families. And our SIT service has been highlighted as an example of best practice across London for children at the edge of care!

Through our work, we've helped improve outcomes for children with complex needs and kept young people safely at home by working with the trusted adults and systems that surround them.

A year-long treatment, SIT supports children experiencing persistent behavioural challenges by engaging with their families, carers, schools and other services to create lasting, positive change.

A quick snapshot of how impactful our SIT work has been:

88% of young people who had been placed in out-of-home care due to challenging behaviours, successfully returned back home to their families.

87% of young people were in full-time education by the end of treatment, despite starting with significant educational disengagement or attendance challenges.

84% of families reported their child attending school and actively participating after a six month follow-up.

100% of young people in SIT treatment had no further offences during SIT intervention.

Festive fundraising

The festive season was filled with merriment and charitable cheer, especially our annual Santa run, where we raised an incredible £4,000 - our best year yet!

Held on the 4th of December, our amazing Santa squad joined hundreds of others and ran 5km around the city, past iconic landmarks like St Paul's, Shakespeare's Globe and the Tate Modern, all in red suits and fluffy white beards.

A big thank you to our wonderful runners (a delightful mix of the Brandon Centre team, trustees, The Hive colleagues and supporters) and also to everyone who donated.

The extraordinary amount raised allows us to continue our work helping young people and their families. So thank you for putting money into the pot, lacing up the running shoes and making this Santa run our best one yet.

Ho! Ho! Ho!



Our Traitor-style Christmas party

Like many, we were obsessed with The Celebrity Traitors last year (still can't get over Nick's betrayal of Joe), so we knew we had to incorporate it somehow into our Christmas party.

Maya, Lucca and Lily created the perfect quiz, which obviously included a Traitors round...

We all got together at The Junction Tavern in Kentish Town on the 5th of December for three excellently-themed quiz rounds.

The first was a classic (and very cute), where we all had to match a baby photo to the right BC team member. The second was a murder mystery where everyone had to guess where Emma was murdered in the BC building and figure out who her killer was.

This was mixed with a bit of Traitors action, where each team had a secret Traitor who had to throw people off from guessing correctly. Everyone got very into it, with every Traitor being successful... no one managed to solve that it was Lily who murdered Emma in the 'tiny toilet'!

And the third round was a Christmas film quiz, ending the game with a bit of festivity (and watching inspiration).

It was so much fun and the nicest way to celebrate the last month of the year together, as well as a chance to see if we would make excellent Traitors or Faithfuls.



Picnic in the park

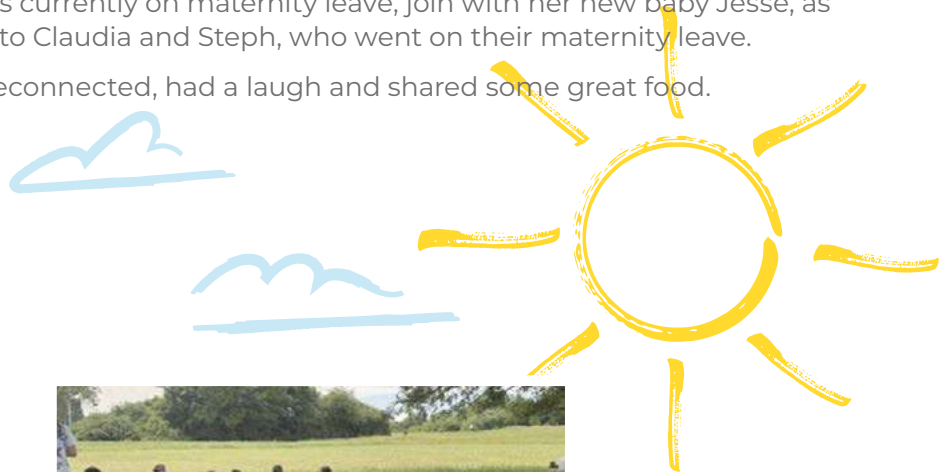
From winter to summer... our July get-together was on Hampstead Heath this year, the perfect setting for a picnic.

Sitting underneath the cool shade of the trees (it was a really hot one), we spent a lot of time chatting and catching up. Some of us even braved the heat and played a game of garden badminton.

In true BC style, we all brought lots of snacks and treats to add to the blanket. Luca made loads of pasta salads (who knew there was so much variety), Ellie brought a salad that included ingredients that she grew in her garden (extremely impressive), and Emily made a lemon blueberry cake that disappeared in seconds.

We also had Clare, one of our therapists currently on maternity leave, join with her new baby Jesse, as well as saying goodbye and good luck to Claudia and Steph, who went on their maternity leave.

It was a hot summer's day, where we reconnected, had a laugh and shared some great food.



BC at the Alma Street Fair

Every year in summer, Alma Street transforms into a buzzing and vibrant fair where the local community comes together to listen to live music, eat tasty street food and meet others from around the area.

On the 21st of June, we joined in on the fun and set up a stall so that we could connect with the locals, tell them a bit about ourselves and raise a little money.

A huge thank you to our team who volunteered on the day, and a special mention to helper and local resident Sami, who has lived in Kentish Town for 45 years and is one of our biggest supporters.

We met so many new and friendly faces, catching up with those we've said hi to before and introducing ourselves to those who haven't heard about us.

Getting to be out and about in Camden and showing our presence in the community was – and is – really valuable to us. And the bonus? We raised an amazing £350 for our services.

We're sure to be there next year, so if you're coming along, please pop over and say hi!



We raised
£350!



Opening up our historic house

On Saturday the 13th of September, we opened our doors and garden to the public as part of this year's London's Open House Festival.

The festival is an inspiring city-wide celebration of architecture, and a chance for Londoners and visitors alike to explore interesting buildings, homes and neighbourhoods.

And we were delighted to take part again!

Welcoming in local residents, curious passers-by, former colleagues, and even one lovely visitor who travelled all the way from Birmingham, we hosted tours of our historic Kentish Town building.

While taking in our cosy therapy rooms, light-filled kitchen or wandering around our peaceful garden, we got chatting to our visitors. Sharing the story of our legacy, from our remarkable founder Dr Faith Spicer, who set up our mission way back in 1969, to the reason why we're called Brandon Centre (after Brandon Cadbury from The Oakdale Trust, an organisation that supports small charities) and what we do today, we managed to connect with others on a deeper level.



"lovely welcome, lovely house"



This feeling was reflected in the thoughtful comments left by our visitors. One person wrote, "Thank you for helping so many young people and continuing to do such important work" and another, "I loved the open day and speaking to the therapists, they were so friendly and approachable" and simply, "lovely welcome, lovely house".

These kind words mean the world to us and capture what makes Brandon Centre so special.

We'd like to give a huge thank you to Sam Weston, Lucca Hunt and Sue Sowerby for giving up their Saturday to help run the event. We're also grateful to our talented gardener, Kitty Clarke who keeps our outdoor space looking beautiful and ecologically sustainable. Our wonderful garden was a highlight for many on the day!

It was a joy to be part of the Open House Festival and we're already looking forward to the next one. Thank you to everyone who stopped by and helped make the day so special!

Our evening with Deputy Mayor of London

Cupcakes, affirmations and stress balls.

It's not everyday that you spend an evening with Joanne McCartney, the Deputy Mayor of London, sharing cake, but our Islington girls did just that.

Since we started the She is Supported (or SIS) project a year and a half ago, we've done lots of different things to empower and support girls' wellbeing in the local community.

Funded by the Mayor of London and in collaboration with Highbury Roundhouse, Mary's Youth Club and Prospex, we've hosted qualified youth worker activities, personalised 1-2-1 mentoring, therapy sessions and even annual retreats, but this evening in July was particularly special.

With our other collaborators, we put together a sensory evening and invited 40 girls from the ages of 10 to 24 to decorate and ice cupcakes, create their own squishy stress balls, paint art across their arms, and write down affirmations before sticking them to a tree.

For us, it was a chance to get together with the other organisations and work closely to provide a fun evening. And as we were joined by the Deputy Mayors of London, Islington Councillors and The Greater London Authority, we had the opportunity to highlight the important work that we do for 500 local girls.

It was a great evening, and we hope it'll boost funding so we can continue providing an inspiring, supportive network.



Voices Unlocked at Linklaters

On the 26th of June, we visited the global law firm Linklaters to share our findings from our latest project, Voices Unlocked.



But before we tell you about that, let's rewind a little bit...

Earlier this year, we were funded by Linklaters to listen to the voices of young people from diverse backgrounds, so that we can better understand their experiences in accessing mental health services.

In order to do this, we set about three focus groups with ten young ambassadors who had previously used our services. Coming from a range of diverse backgrounds, we spoke to people who were Asian, Asian Chinese, Mixed White and Asian, Latin American, and Asian Bangladeshi.

We wanted to get their opinions on mental health as a whole, hear their experiences accessing services and if they faced any barriers, and also what they thought about Brandon Centre.

We discovered that stigma and negative perceptions around mental health in these young people's communities act as a major barrier to accessing mental health services.

Often dismissed by their families, mental health was described as a "weakness", something to be "ashamed" of, and not spoken about "freely" amongst communities, making it particularly difficult for these young people to seek the help that they might need.

We're already working on increasing the awareness and diversity in the psychological workforce to combat this, and we're starting to see that opinions are shifting. However, we've recognised that there's a need to continue this work as well as strengthen our partnerships with other organisations so that we can help as many diverse young people as we can.

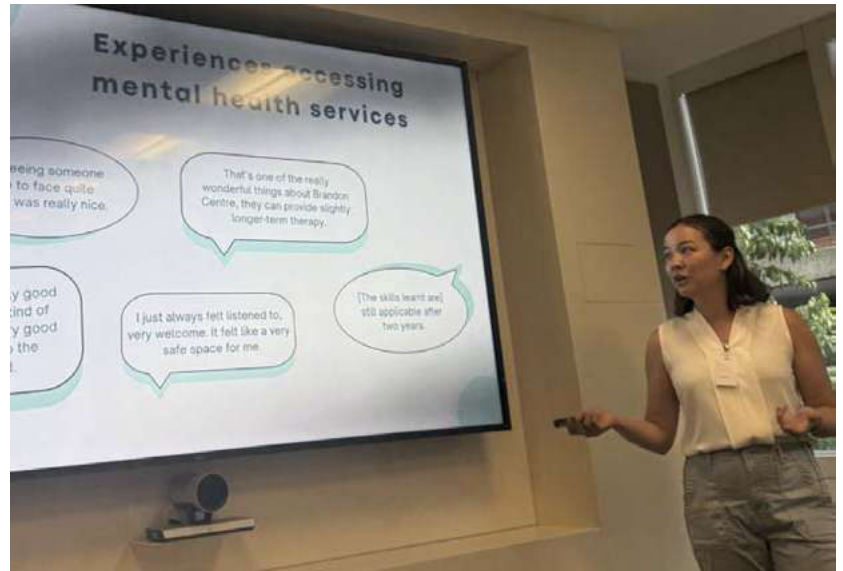
Voices Unlocked at Linklaters

Despite this, those we spoke to said that their experience at Brandon Centre was overwhelmingly positive. They praised our flexibility and our non-judgmental, friendly staff as well as appreciating the length of therapy we provide in comparison to other services.

But the most important thing to us was that these young people reported long-term, positive impacts on their mental health through accessing our services.

With this knowledge, we shared our findings to Linklaters at their offices, and alongside our young ambassadors, we opened up the floor to questions, helping to guide others to our services as well as answering queries from the project.

Whilst we were there, Linklaters also kindly ran a careers panel for our young ambassadors, hearing the amazing stories and voices of Yewande Akeju, Avani Agarwal and Lizzie Harker-Noor to understand the different inspiring careers and pathways at Linklaters.



It was a truly insightful experience, and we learnt and took away a lot. But if we had to pick one quote that highlights what we do best...

"I just always felt very listened to, very welcome. It felt like a very safe space for me."

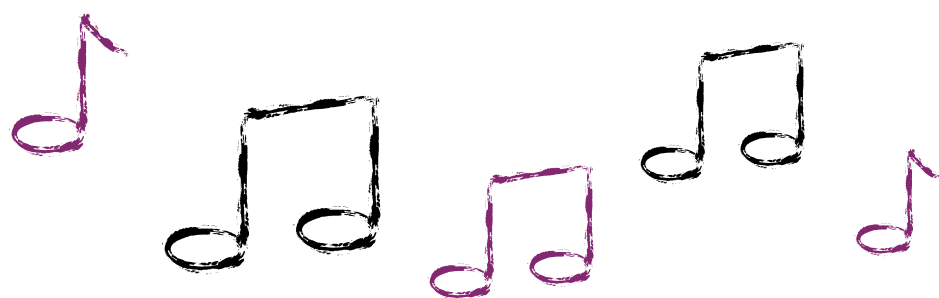
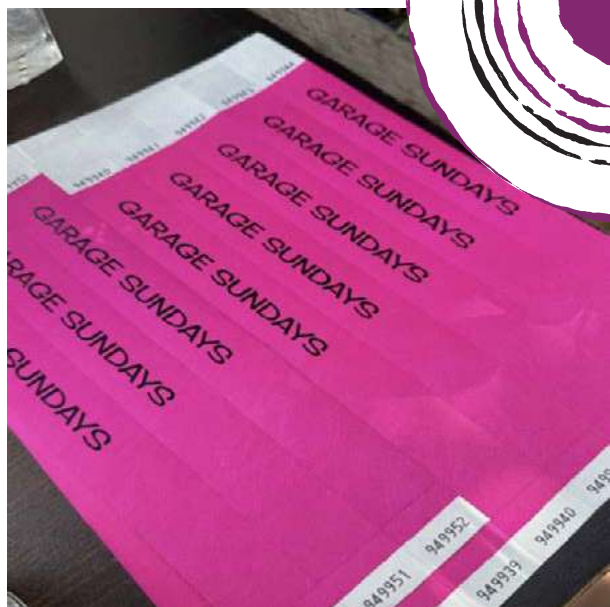
Garage Sundays, good vibes and a bit of fundraising

Music brings people together. And nowhere was this more evident than at a daytime rave, organised by Chloe K, on Sunday the 10th August, where dancers, DJs and donors got together to help fundraise for Brandon Centre.

Bringing high-energy sets to the Lock Inn in Camden, a lineup of local DJs, MCs and live performance artists played the best UK garage sounds. From old school to recent mixes, the atmosphere was electric and drew a buzzing crowd with good vibes, drinks and nonstop music.

Chloe K, Kentish Town's own DJ, put the whole fundraising event on for us and also performed a curated garage set. Known for her unique blends of classic house music with garage rhythms, Chloe K always gets the dance floor jumping. And that Sunday was no exception!

The event was a success, as we raised £200 with 100% of ticket proceeds going directly to our cause. But it was also a chance to bring people together and show how powerful community and music can be when combined.



A winning partnership

Arsenal Football Club has long been known for its excellence on the pitch, but they also have a commitment to making a difference off it too.

On the 1st of October, during their match against Olympiacos, Brandon Centre was proudly featured in their match day programme, highlighting the work being delivered through our partnership with Arsenal in the Community.

From therapeutic outreach sessions at The Arsenal Hub for young men to football sessions with a sports psychologist for young girls at Arsenal Girls' Kicks, together we've delivered services to help young people access and engage with mental health services that they might not otherwise.

To celebrate our collaboration, Arsenal very kindly donated match day tickets, which we gladly accepted!

It was a great day with Arsenal winning 2-0, but also to see our partnership and our shared commitment to support local young people's mental health in action.



Arsenal vs Olympiacos

Keeping it Kentish

On the 1st of November, Yoyo, our Brandon Centre young ambassador, worked alongside fellow young local leaders Iyas, Maryam, Olay and Moes to deliver 'Keeping it Kentish', a youth-led community take-over at Civic Action Lab.

The event was part of a pilot project delivered by the Youth Action Group, a partnership between Apex Project, Better Leisure, Creative Health Camden and us, to put the power, budget and decision-making into the hands of five local young people.

Alongside mentorship, the young leaders were all paid to create a community event with a budget of £1,000, while gaining experience in leadership, marketing, project planning, communication and teamwork.

Over one weekend, the team hosted three fully-booked creative workshops that centred around music production, crafting and storytelling, alongside a celebratory dinner the next day.

Welcoming in 45 local residents, the young leaders also hosted a raffle which featured coveted prizes from local businesses like Earth Natural Foods, Owl Bookshop and Gail's.

Reflecting on the experience, one young leader said, *"I got involved in this project because I wanted to improve my communication skills... It's made me feel a lot more confident in doing things like this."*

It was such a positive experience for everyone involved and we're now exploring new streams of funding in order to continue this work and continue growing our partnerships across Kentish Town.



Brandon Centre at Google

On the 28th of November, we joined Google's Community Training Day to lead a conversation around looking after the wellbeing of staff in the voluntary sector.



Our team - Pavlos, Julia, Frederike and Emma - explored what wellbeing really means for voluntary staff supporting young people. Especially around the need to feel emotionally supported, psychologically safe and having the ability to seek help.

But the limited resources, rising demand and financial pressures make this hard to achieve.

So we shared three actionable points on how organisations can actively build resilience.

These were:

- Reliable supervision and dependable structures
- Compassionate leadership
- Trust, openness and a no-blame learning culture

Crucially, we highlighted that seeking support shouldn't come with guilt or the belief that others' needs are more important. People thrive when support is structured, proactive and built into organisational culture.

That's why we created Ground Up - to help charities and organisations strengthen their staff's wellbeing by offering our external, expert support.

It was a huge honour to host this important session at Google, with special thanks to Islington Giving and Camden Giving for bringing us together!



Highgate Health and Wellbeing

Also on the same day, we were at the Highgate Health and Wellbeing Event at the beautiful Lauderdale House.

Hosted by Mind in Camden, the event brought together residents and local organisations over live music, fun activities and delicious food to celebrate healthy living, mental wellbeing and community support.

We really enjoyed meeting everyone and the opportunity to explain more about our services for young people and their families. There was such a good energy in the room and it was really great to connect with the local residents in person.

It was also amazing to meet other local organisations and services, something we hope to collaborate with more in the future.

A big thank you to Nessrin, Claire and Julia for showing up and representing us on the day!



An invitation into our Away Day

We do things a bit differently at Brandon Centre, and our away days are no exception.

Held at our local community centre in Kentish Town (connecting us both to the area and our work), the wonderful Tracy and Adam from Tapestry hosted our team for the day.

With cups of coffee in hand, we started off strong with Daisy from the Young Camden Foundation giving context on the challenges the youth sector is facing in the borough today, alongside all the great work that's happening to combat that.

Her openness was the perfect introduction to invite us to share our stories and explain to each other what it means to be a part of BC and the difference we're making in the lives of young people and families in the community.

We got to understand our strengths and learn from one another as we brainstormed solutions to the challenges we might face in the future, as well as coming up with ideas on how to continue sharing our stories both within the wider team and externally.

And as the day progressed, our bond as a team deepened, realising that time together is really important. Something that we want to continue prioritising going into 2026.

This connection was encouraged by Adam, who held a space in the agenda to get more in touch with our bodies through gentle movement and breath work. A welcome break for our minds!

We also had a low stakes rock, paper, scissors championship throughout the day, with our intake manager Matt, winning. It was a nice reminder to have some fun sometimes, even amongst the seriousness.

Our away day was a chance to gather our thoughts and take a moment before creating a rich tapestry made up of the fibres from what we shared, what we learnt and what we taught each other.





*Here's to more
team gatherings
in 2026!*



Thanks to our donors

We'd like to say a big thank you to the following organisations and individuals for continuing to support us and the young people we work with:

NHS and Local Authorities

- ♥ Camden and Islington NHS Foundation Trust
- ♥ London Borough of Camden
- ♥ London Borough of Islington
- ♥ NHS North Central London Integrated Care Board – Barnet/Camden/Enfield/Haringey/Islington
- ♥ Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust
- ♥ London Borough of Enfield
- ♥ London Borough of Barnet
- ♥ Camden and Islington Mental Health Trust
- ♥ NCEL CAMHS Provider Collaborative

Trusts, Foundations and Individuals

- | | |
|---|--|
| ♥ Comic Relief | ♥ The Portal Trust |
| ♥ Compass Wellbeing | ♥ Propel |
| ♥ The City Bridge Trust | ♥ River of Hope |
| ♥ The Hampstead Wells and Campden Trust | ♥ The Sir Mark and Lady Turner Charitable Settlement |
| ♥ The Henry Smith Foundation | ♥ The Talent Fund |
| ♥ Islington Giving | ♥ Tavistock and Portman |
| ♥ Linklaters | ♥ University College London |
| ♥ London Marathon Foundation | ♥ University of East London |
| ♥ London Youth | ♥ University of Hertfordshire |
| ♥ Mind in Enfield and Barnet | ♥ The Vandervell Foundation |
| ♥ The Mayor of London | ♥ Young Camden Foundation |
| ♥ The Oakdale Trust | |
| ♥ The Pixel Fund | |

We'd also like to thank our anonymous donor who has supported our young people's counselling services over the next two years with a very generous donation.



Help make a difference in your community

A high percentage of lifetime mental illness is first experienced before the age of 20. Support from our donors means we can tackle poor mental health as soon as it appears, giving young people every chance of a life free from mental illness.

By keeping young people in education, building their resilience, and keeping families together, we're helping to build a positive future for our community.

Get involved and help change a young person's life.

- ◆ Make a one-off or regular donation
- ◆ Donate to a specific project
- ◆ Support us through Payroll Giving
- ◆ Volunteer with us for a day
- ◆ Choose us as your 'Charity of the Year'
- ◆ Take on a challenge and donate your sponsorship
- ◆ Donate as a gift

Donate via our website: <https://brandon-centre.org.uk/donate-now>

Call us to find out more on 020 7267 4792 or email us at reception@brandoncentre.org.uk A big thank you to all our supporters who are helping us give more young people a promising future.

A big thank you to all our supporters

How to get in touch

General Enquiries

Telephone: **020 7267 4792**

Mental Health Services

Email: counselling@brandoncentre.org.uk | Telephone: **020 7267 4792** | Text: **07520 633477**

Systemic Integrative Treatment

Email for professionals: deancharlery@brandoncentre.org.uk or familyservice@brandoncentre.org.uk

Telephone: **020 7267 4792**

Parenting Groups

Love and Limits group and ADHD parent support group

Email for parents: familyservice@brandoncentre.org.uk

Email for professionals: deancharlery@brandoncentre.org.uk

Families, Food and Feelings

Email for parents and professionals: brandoncentre.healthyliving@nhs.net

Parent support group for CAMHS waiting list

Email for parents and professionals: parentsupport@brandoncentre.org.uk

Training for professionals

Email: training@brandoncentre.org.uk

C-Card Scheme

Free condoms for 13-24 year olds in Camden (C-Card Scheme)

Online registration: <https://comecorrect.org.uk/camden/>

Telephone: **020 7267 4792**

Email: reception@brandoncentre.org.uk



Brandon Centre for Counselling and Psychotherapy for Young People | 26 Prince of Wales Road, London NW5 3LG
www.brandon-centre.org.uk | Registered Charity No.: 290118 | A company limited by guarantee.

*Thank you for your interest
in our special charity*

The logo for Brandon Centre is a dark blue, rounded rectangular shape with a white border. Inside the shape, the text "Brandon Centre" is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font. Below this, the tagline "Here for Young People" is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font.

**Brandon
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Here for Young People

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