

Just One Question Insights – December 2024

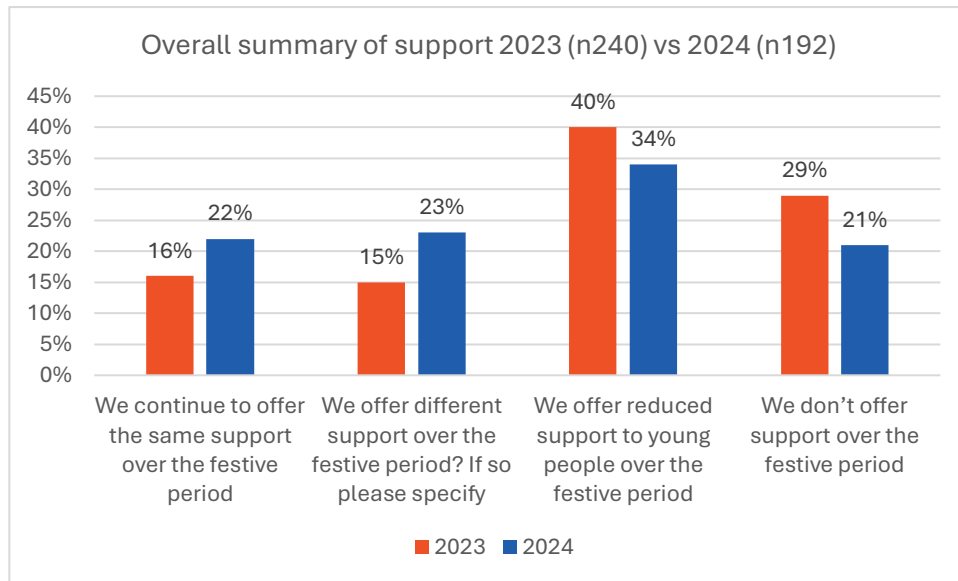
This month we asked: How does your organisation support young people over the festive period?

We had: 192 responses

Key Message: There has been a slight overall improvement in the availability and flexibility of support for young people and their families during the festive period between 2023 and 2024.

Key Findings

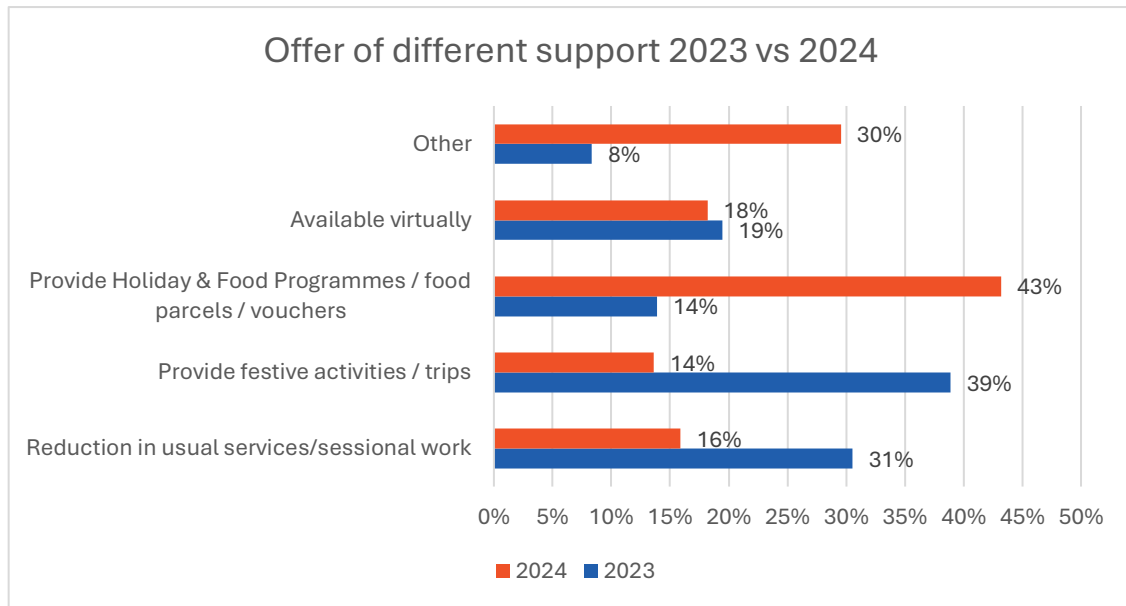
- There was slight increase in organisations, continuing to offer the same level of support during the festive period from 16% in 2023 to 22% in 2024.
- Practitioners reporting that they do not offer any support dropped from 29% in 2023 to 21% in 2024.
- The offer of providing different types of support over the festive period increased from 15% in 2023 to 23% in 2024. This raise suggests there is a continued effort to tailor services to meet the evolving needs of young people / families during the festive season.
- There have been predominant shifts towards food and financial support
- The number of organisations offering reduced support decreased from 40% in 2023 to 34% in 2024.
- Workforce retention remain challenging over the festive period *“Staff shortages and operational closures remain a significant barrier for organisations providing full-scale support”*.
- Organisations provided alternative support over the festive period, including communication via phone and WhatsApp, temporary housing, creative resources like e-books, and ongoing support for partner organisations to ensure young people had access to essential support.



** As the sample of respondents may vary between 2023 and 2024, the graph shows average increases and decreases rather than changes in practices by specific organisations."*

Specific support offered during the festive break

- More organisations are maintaining their usual levels of support during the festive period which shows the continuity of services.
- The increase in organisations offering different forms of support highlights flexibility and shows organisations are listening to and responding to the festive challenges that were previously presented.
- There have been predominant shifts towards food and financial support in 2023 this support was at 14% and this increased dramatically to 43% in 2024. This demonstrates the continued economic challenges which are being faced by young people and their families.
- Other forms of alternative support provided was targeted activities or holiday programmes which increased significantly from 8% in 2023 to 30% in 2024, which highlighted additional approaches to meeting young people's needs.



Alternative support outside of core youth services and programmes

- Several organisations ensured ongoing communicative support throughout the festive period despite office closures. Methods varied from email, phone, text being available and use the popular use of WhatsApp to communicate instantly.
- In response to other challenges that young people face, there was also temporary solutions for housing, that can prove difficult for young people during this time. An organisation responded *"We will be offering short term accommodation for homeless young people"*
- Creative tools such as e-books were developed to offer guidance and support. e.g. ['The Unstoppable Girls Guide to the Festive Period'](#).
- There is a clear focus on ensuring young people have access to practical and emotional resources during the festive period, despite service limitations.
- Some responses did show that there was also a continued commitment to support partner organisations working with young people during this time *'We continue to support the organisations that serve our young people, especially those that are delivering HAF contracts. Our direct delivery with young people reduces over this time'*