

Summer 2021



# Children's Health Scotland



1-7  
JUNE

**VOLUNTEERS' WEEK**

A time to say thanks

Know an inspirational child,  
professional or team who would like to  
receive a very special teddy award?

**ENTER THEM NOW FOR  
A SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S  
HEALTH AWARD 2021!**





# SMS:CONNECT

**We recently ran a successful pilot programme, SMS:CONNECT Why Weight, in collaboration with NHS Forth Valley, to support young people living in the Forth Valley area who face weight challenges.**

This 6-week SMS:CONNECT Why Weight Programme is based on our existing SMS:CONNECT Programme for children and young people who are living with long-term health conditions. The content of the original sessions was adapted to reflect the challenges faced by the children and young people taking part, with a focus on creating positive routines and managing stress and anxiety.

Following the success of the Pilot Programme, we have now delivered a second Programme, supporting seven young people aged 13-17. The sessions were delivered by Izzie Turley, Coordinator for our Children's Health and Wellbeing Services, and Tracy Binnie, an Occupational Therapist at CAMHS, who is part of the Why Weight Team. In addition, we were joined by Ewan, who took part in the original Pilot Programme and who asked to volunteer in our Spring Programme as a Peer Mentor.

We asked Ewan to tell us about himself and his experience as a Peer Mentor on the SMS:CONNECT Why Weight Programme!

## What's Inside:

- 4** This year Volunteers' Week recognises the contribution of volunteers and communities during coronavirus. We would like to take time to thank Lucy and Ewan and all our other volunteers who make our work possible.
- 6** Dr Anne McFadyen writes a guest feature on Wellbeing for Wee Ones.
- 8** 1 in 4 of Scotland's 5-year-olds suffer from dental decay.
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- 18** A whopping big thank you to our funders.

### SPECIAL FEATURE

## SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S HEALTH AWARDS

Know an inspirational child, professional or team who would like to receive a very special teddy award? See our centre pages on the award categories for the forthcoming Scottish Children's Health Awards 2021.

**12-13**





# BECOMING A PEER MENTOR

**M**y name is Ewan, and I am 17 years old and studying at my last year at Larbert High School. This year I am doing National 5 RMPS and Psychology, Higher English, Music Technology and Work Experience. I enjoy writing, listening and learning about music - specifically 80's and 90's Hip Hop - and have even written my own novel! I also like History and learning about the First and Second World Wars. I live in a pretty busy house with my mum, my brother Craig, three cats called Mia, Buddy and Snoop (yes named after Snoop Dogg), and a very hyper Cocker Spaniel called Brodie!



I was introduced to the SMS:CONNECT group in 2020 by my CAMHS Occupational Therapist, Tracy Binnie, and I joined the Pilot Programme as one of the oldest in the group. In 2021, I became a Young Volunteer for Children's Health Scotland and a Peer Mentor for SMS:CONNECT Why Weight.

When I took part in the Pilot Programme, I enjoyed learning about the other young people and their hobbies and pastimes - it was also fun learning about Izzie's love for the Harry Potter franchise and the other group leaders as everyone felt included and the group games were centred around our hobbies and things we liked. It was also helpful learning about the short relaxation techniques like Star Breathing - we can do these anywhere and at any time as we always have our hands and our breath. I use these techniques if I am ever stressed in school or if me and my brother have an argument. A lot of the other kids in SMS:CONNECT found this helpful, which is really comforting to know.

I wanted to be a Peer Mentor because I wanted experience working with young people from a range of different backgrounds who are facing a variety of personal and health challenges. I also wanted to develop my confidence and presentation skills by delivering parts of the group sessions so that I can get a job working with children and

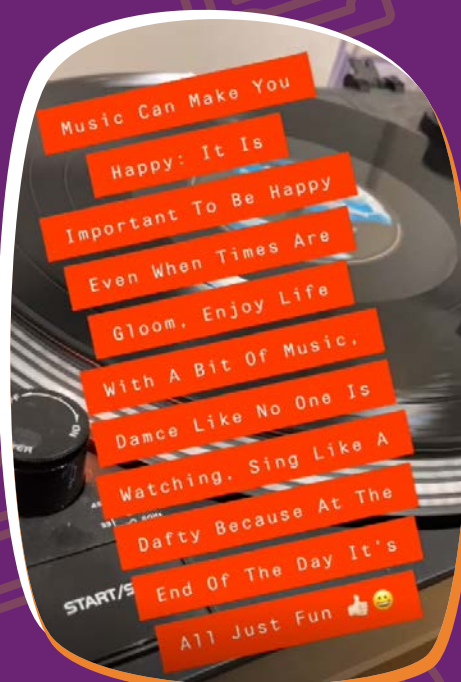
young people - SMS:CONNECT was so important for building my own confidence, so I was really keen to get involved again.

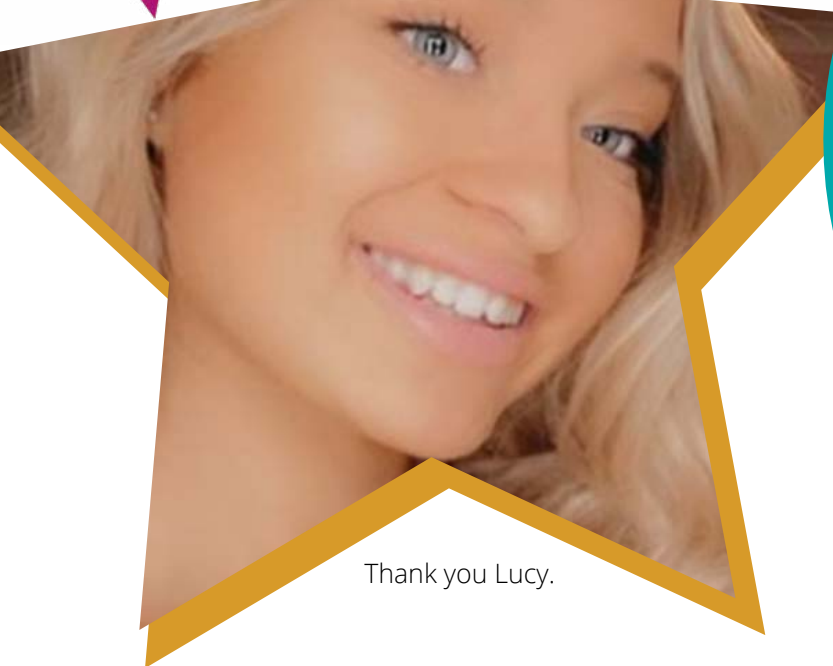
As a Peer Mentor, I have been working with Izzie and Tracy to deliver the SMS:CONNECT Why Weight sessions and have had a really positive experience. I have been able to lead games and discussions and create my own quizzes to present to the group! I have also been good at facilitating discussions with the young people in the group, making sure it isn't awkward and making sure no one feels under too much pressure - I like making others feel comfortable. It is really rewarding to see their

confidence improve since the beginning of the group, and how they are able to talk without prompting. I know that they have also made friends through the group as two of the boys now play football together at school!

I have learned many valuable skills through my experience as a Peer Mentor, such as team working, resilience and confidence - these are all things I worked on throughout the Programme. I have also learned to be patient as some of the young people need a bit more time to answer the questions and join in the games. This is something I had experienced before in my other volunteering in the ASD unit in my high school. I have also found my confidence has increased as the group have been excellent with me in that they try their hardest to answer all my wacky quizzes and questions. Having such a friendly and engaged group has really helped my confidence as it made the role of Peer Mentor that little bit less scary!

If you would like to find out more information about the services provided by the NHS Forth Valley Why Weight team, please contact them at: [fv.whyweight@nhs.scot](mailto:fv.whyweight@nhs.scot). To find out more about Children's Health Scotland's SMS:CONNECT Programme for children and young people with long-term health conditions, contact us at [sms@childrenshealthscotland.org](mailto:sms@childrenshealthscotland.org).





Thank you Lucy.

1-7  
JUNE

**VOLUNTEERS'**

**A time to**

**V**olunteers' Week, which runs from 1-7 June each year, is a time for charities to say thank you to all volunteers! Over the past exceptionally difficult year, people from all walks of life around the UK have taken the time to volunteer and in doing so have made a huge difference to people and their communities.

Commenting on Volunteers' Week 2021, Helen Forrest, Chief Executive of Children's Health Scotland said: "Children's Health Scotland wouldn't exist without volunteers who are integral to providing governance, helping us to support vulnerable children and young people, and enhancing the communities we live in. The act of volunteering itself is inspirational and a wish to support the communities in which we live. I would like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to all those who take the time to volunteer and make our communities better places."

Recently children and young people taking part in the services provided by Children's Health Scotland have asked if they can volunteer to support the charity.

"SMS:CONNECT was first launched in early 2020 as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic," says Dr Laura Smith, Head of Children's Health and Wellbeing Services at Children's Health Scotland. "We have now successfully run eight programmes, supporting over 80 children and young people across Scotland, some of whom have since volunteered with us to help others. One way they can do this is by sharing their Digital Story which is created in the final session of the programme. Their Digital Story can be about anything they like. For example, Lucy, who took part in our most recent Winter 2021 Programme, made an amazing Digital Story about her health conditions and what friends and family could do to support her. Following the programme Lucy then allowed us to share her story with others and has

now asked if she can volunteer with us, which is fantastic."

Lucy is a teenager living in East Lothian with long-term health conditions. Lucy was finding it hard to deal with her diagnoses and created her digital story to help her friends, family and teachers understand her conditions and how they affect her.

"I gained so much from taking part in the SMS:CONNECT Programme from not being confident about speaking about my health conditions to being able to be open and honest with the people in my life. The Programme gave me a sense of reassurance that I am not the only one. I have gained so much knowledge, for example learning about my health rights and how to cope when feeling stressed or anxious.

"I honestly don't think I would be where I am today without the Programme and the support that comes with it. I am hoping to fundraise for Children's Health Scotland over the Summer and



**Recognising  
the contribution  
of volunteers  
to communities  
during coronavirus**

# TEENAGE VOLUNTEERS' WEEK

## to say thanks



Thank you Ewan.

*also be a peer mentor to support younger children go through the Programme."*

The contribution of volunteers is often unseen and unrecognised by many, visible only through the incredible impact of their volunteering. However, the coronavirus pandemic has rightly raised the profile of volunteering and more people than ever are aware of the immense contribution being made every single day by Britain's volunteers.



**“ The Programme gave me a sense of reassurance that I am not the only one. ”**

LUCY



To find out more about Volunteers' Week visit <https://volunteersweek.org/>

There are several ways you can help as a volunteer with Children's Health Scotland.

- You could help in the running of our charity by joining our Executive Committee which meets every six to eight weeks in Edinburgh.
- You may be able to help publicise and promote our work by staffing stalls at conferences and other events.
- You may have experience of our healthcare system as a parent, patient or as a healthcare professional. We are often asked to provide the patient or parent perspective on local NHS committees and groups. You may be interested in representing us on one of these committees.
- You could help by raising funds for Children's Health Scotland, for example, by organising a coffee morning or by organising a local fundraising event.

If you would like to find out more about volunteering with Children's Health Scotland, please visit <https://www.childrenshealthscotland.org/how-you-can-help/become-a-volunteer/>





# Wellbeing for Developing infant mental health

by Dr Anne McFadyen, Infant Mental Health Lead of Perinatal Mental Health Network Scotland  
and Chair of Infant Mental Health Implementation and Advisory Group, Scottish Government



## What is infant mental health and why should we worry about it?

Many people find the term 'infant mental health' problematic, but how else are we to describe our growing awareness about how important the very early weeks, months, and years are to the development of babies' brains and minds? At this critical stage, babies' brains grow and make connections which support the development of empathy and

self-regulation, and the capacity to make and sustain relationships. This brain (and mind) development depends on close supportive early relationships. The absence of the right environment at this point can lead to later problems.

Perinatal Mental Health Network Scotland has focussed on developing systems to support babies' wellbeing

when their mother is mentally unwell. We know that severe mental health problems can affect the baby and the developing relationship profoundly. The publication of 'Delivering Effective Services' by the network in 2019, led to the Scottish Government making a commitment to develop perinatal and infant mental health services.



# For Wee Ones

## health services in Scotland



A Programme Board was set up to do this and was asked to oversee the development of infant mental health services in line with the Programme for Government (2019-20):

*'Implement and fund a Scotland wide model of infant mental health provision. These infant mental health services aim to meet the needs of families experiencing significant adversity, including infant developmental difficulties, parental mental illness, parental substance misuse, domestic abuse and trauma.'*

This wider aim is to develop services from conception to three years of age which address the needs of families whose parents may not have access to formal mental health services. Many are supported by third sector organisations, but some have no supports at all.

Health promotion and the prevention of individual and

relationship problems should be universal, with early intervention being offered to those identified as in need. Well targeted prevention and early intervention programmes can substantially reduce the risk of future mental health difficulties, and ultimately improve the health and wellbeing of Scotland's children and young people, and parents. These infant mental health systems must involve all agencies both statutory services (health and local authority) and third sector, and must include parents in thinking about their design and delivery. Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) principles will be at the heart of this development.

The 2020-21 Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Delivery Plan was launched on 3 July 2020. Its action points for Infant Mental Health include Leadership and Coproduction, Raising awareness

and promoting understanding, Developing a framework and model for Infant Mental Health services, Training and workforce development and retention, Evaluation and Innovation.

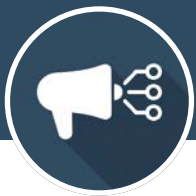
One of our actions refers specifically to the development of services to support neonates with complex needs in the context of prematurity, congenital abnormalities or other health challenges who are returning to their home area after a period of inpatient specialist interventions.

Funds have been allocated to begin this exciting journey, with all health boards in Scotland planning to develop their perinatal services including infant services, and some beginning to develop good multiagency IMH services. Close links with health visitors and family nurses are key, and systems will also include social work, early years and third sector services. They are working together to develop care pathways for babies and their carers in order to promote infants' wellbeing.

ParentClub recently launched 'Wellbeing for Wee Ones,' a web resource where everyone can learn about why infant mental health is important, and where parents and carers can go for guidance. Visit <https://www.parentclub.scot/topics/health/wellbeing> to find out more.

**Parent Club**  
Perinatal Mental Health Network Scotland  
National Managed Clinical Network





# 1 in 4 of Scotland's 5-year-olds suffer from dental decay

**The British Dental Association for Scotland is calling for the fluoridation of the water supply in Scotland to improve the dental health of children and prevent root caries. It is an initiative that Children's Health Scotland believes is long overdue and one that will have a significant impact of the health and wellbeing of children and young people.**

Commenting on the fluoridation of the water supply in Scotland, Professor Richard Olver, Chair of Children's Health Scotland said: "Children's Health Scotland has written to the Minister for Public Health and Sport in support of the recommendation made by the British Dental Association Scotland for the fluoridation of our water supply. It is nothing short of a public health scandal that more than 1 in 4 of Scotland's 5-year-olds suffer from dental decay and that dental extractions remain by far the most common reason for

*admission for general anaesthesia and surgery amongst Scotland's children. Something needs to be done now to protect the future health of our children."*

In a recent feature published by Scottish Dental magazine, Dr Robert Donald, Chair of the British Dental Association's Scottish Council was reported as saying that: "The public health crisis caused by the pandemic – and the resulting long-term pressure on health services – means that investment in prevention is now essential. My view is that fluoridation of the water supply in Scotland is no longer a subject for debate. The evidence is clear that it is both safe and effective. With the disruption to Childsmile during the pandemic – fluoridation, which is complementary to Childsmile and not a replacement for it, would still have been benefitting our children. It could also benefit the dental health of not only children, but the rest of the population, adolescents, working age people, and also the elderly by preventing root caries."



**“Children and young people cope better emotionally with medical and dental treatment if they know what to expect.”**

PROFESSOR RICHARD OLVER



Children's Health Scotland







Dental procedures can be highly uncomfortable and distressing for children and young people, as well as costly for the NHS. Fluoridation of water supply as a method to prevent tooth decay has been implemented in many countries, including the Republic of Ireland, Australia and Brazil. It has seen great success over its 50-year history of use, where communities with fluoridated water show a substantial decrease in tooth

decay. Despite the overwhelming oral health benefits proven for water fluoridation it still hasn't been implemented in Scotland.

*"It is the mission of Children's Health Scotland to enable every child and young person to exercise their rights to healthcare and to have these rights upheld, and their healthcare needs met,"* added Helen Forrest, Chief Executive of Children's Health Scotland. *"This includes oral health, an area in which we have particular expertise and knowledge having, until November 2016, provided the Special Smiles workshops for children with additional needs, their carers and teaching professionals. Since 2016, when Special Smiles and the associated Dental Playbox were incorporated*

*into Childsmile, CHS has worked in partnership with NHS Education for Scotland to deliver training, 'A Rights-based Approach to Dental Care'. We wholeheartedly support the call by the British Dental Association Scotland for the fluoridation of our water supply."*

Children and young people cope better emotionally with medical and dental treatment if they know what to expect. Therefore, Children's Health Scotland recommends that parents/carers and healthcare professionals should help children understand and prepare for dental procedures and treatments by using child-friendly language, toys, books and other resources, keeping in mind the child's age and level of understanding.

For more information, please visit our website  
**[www.childrenshealthscotland.org](http://www.childrenshealthscotland.org)**.





# Campaigning and advocating for the healthcare rights of young people during the COVID-19 pandemic

**We have a strong reputation for delivering training to a variety of organisations, including further and higher education establishments, professional bodies, and parent/carer groups.**

We are regularly asked to deliver CPD (continued professional development) sessions to oral health professionals through our Special Smiles Programme. This training was commissioned by NHS Education Scotland (NES) and through this partnership we also jointly created and delivered 'Smile Big and Sparkle'; oral health and health-related play training to third sector organisations who have oral health as part of their remit. We also have regular training commitments with Kinship Carer and Foster Carer organisations.

When the pandemic struck, we could no longer deliver any training sessions in person. Like many organisations, we responded quickly, staff upskilled their IT capabilities and soon we were able to offer virtual training sessions via Zoom and/or Microsoft Teams. We surprised ourselves at how well these sessions went and one clear advantage

became apparent very quickly. We were able to 'meet' more people, as they didn't need to travel to attend a training session. Instead, they could join in from the comfort of their home and from anywhere in the country.

Our new online training sessions were delivered in pairs: one person delivering the session with technical support from another colleague whose job it was to keep an eye on the 'chat-box' and ensure that active participation and interaction was still possible. Our talks and training sessions included:

- Speaking to the Patient Advisory Group of the Office For Rare Conditions, Glasgow which addressed mainly parents of children and young people with rare conditions.
- A series of talks to staff, volunteers and parents of 'Homestart Glasgow North'. Topics included children's healthcare rights (the EACH Charter), Key Oral Health Messages and Health-related Play.
- Talking to First Year adult nursing students at Glasgow University about children and young people's healthcare rights and transitions to adult services.
- Speaking to social work students at Napier University.
- Kinship care workshops.
- The delivery of our SMS:CONNECT and SMS:CONNECT Why Weight Programmes.



**“I feel empowered now to explore further and to gain more knowledge so that I may signpost young people and their families where appropriate. I feel very passionate about this.”**

STUDENT AT GLASGOW UNIVERSITY

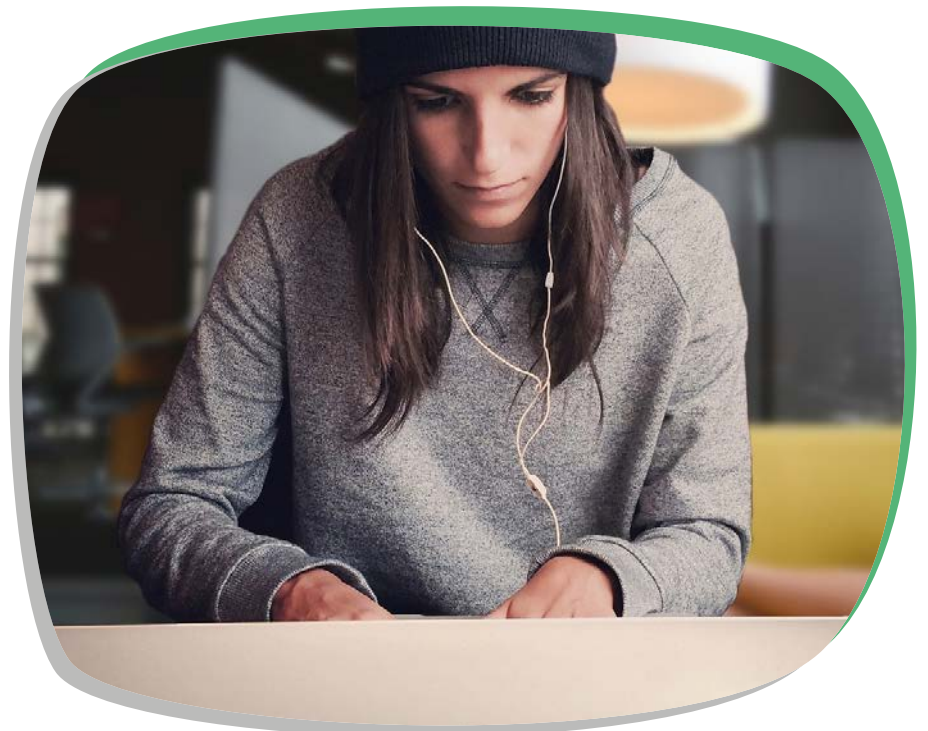




# Advocating for the children and young OVID-19 Pandemic

Despite the training and presentations being virtual, we always made sure that there was enough time for discussion and questions and normally send the presentations to participants so that they can follow up on links to other organisations, useful information and complete our e-learning resource. Topics that have been of particular interest recently when delivering our training include:

- Empowering adult nurses to be aware of young people's needs and advocate for them.
- Raising awareness of the impact of adverse childhood experiences.
- Encouraging oral health professionals to access our e-learning resource.
- Workshop about key oral health messages.
- Demonstrating how learning through play works.



**“ Thank you to the presenters for both the information delivered and the participation in our group discussion afterward. Both speakers were very approachable and friendly, which helped group members to be confident enough to take part in the conversation. ”**

PARTICIPANT AT PRESENTATION TO HOMESTART







# Know an inspirational child, professional or team who would like to receive a very special teddy award?

**T**he trophies have been lovingly crafted and now receiving their final polish in preparation for the Scottish Children's Health Awards 2021. We are proud to announce our partnership with Royal Selangor, the world's foremost name in quality pewter and a brand synonymous with design and craftsmanship, to produce these magnificent awards.

*"We are so delighted to have joined with Royal Selangor to produce such prestigious trophies that truly reflect the ethos of the Scottish Children's Health Awards," said Helen Forrest, Chief Executive of Children's Health Scotland. "The awards are amazingly unique and have been created to celebrate courageous children and young people and those who are making a difference to their health and wellbeing. Nominations are currently open. So, if you know of someone special who you think deserves one of the bespoke awards then I would encourage you to please go online and enter today. Without doubt, receiving one of these awards will really brighten their day."*



The closing date for entries to the

awards is Friday 23 July 2021 and we are delighted that once again Journalist and TV Presenter Catriona Shearer will help us to virtually present the awards and interview all the winners.



**If you know a child who deserves some special recognition for the great determination they have shown when it might have been so much easier to give up, or a health professional/team whose work is inspirational then please go online and enter now. The awards are easy to enter and FREE.**





The award categories are as follows:

## CHILDREN'S CHOICE

Relationships shape the way we see the world and affect all areas of our learning and development. This award has been created to give a child/young person the chance to say 'thank you' to someone special in their life who is making or has made a significant difference to their world. We are looking for someone special whose care really stood out whilst they were undergoing treatment.

## HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Children are precious and so is their health and wellbeing. When parents leave their children in the care of practitioners, they also hand over responsibility for their health and wellbeing. This award celebrates an individual or team who are making a difference to the health and wellbeing of children through their treatment or advocacy.

## HEALTHCARE RIGHTS

All children and young people have human and healthcare rights. For example, children have the right to the best health possible and to medical care and the right to play and education in hospital. These rights are articulated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the European Association for Children in Hospital (EACH) Charter. This award acknowledges the extraordinary steps taken by a nominee to advance the healthcare rights of children and young people.

## HEALTH-RELATED PLAY

Health-related play is more than just a chance to have fun - it is a serious business when it comes to children's health and wellbeing. It can help children physically, mentally and emotionally and is an essential part of treatment that can help to speed up recovery either in hospital or at home. For this award we are looking for someone special, or a special team, making a significant difference to a child's life through health-related play.

## IMPROVING LIFE EXPERIENCES

Through this award we want to recognise the commitment and expertise of a nominee or team making a significant difference to improving life experiences of a child or young person undergoing treatment. We are looking for a nominee making a difference to the confidence and resilience of a child or young person, so they are better able to deal with their current difficulties. The nominee may also have helped children and young people develop basic skills and habits to help them deal with challenges later in their life.

## YOUNG ACHIEVER

This category has two trophies to award to two individual children who have shown great determination and kept going, when it might have been so much easier to give up. We are seeking a female and a male child or young person who has gone above and beyond, showing enormous courage in their life and never giving up.

PLEASE GO ONLINE AT  
**WWW.CHILDRENSHEALTHSCOTLAND.ORG/EVENTS/AWARDS** TO FIND OUT  
 MORE INFORMATION ON EACH AWARD AND TO MAKE YOUR NOMINATION





# Understanding Trauma and Helping Recovery

**Anne Wilson, our Head of Development, lifts the lid on trauma.**

**In our workshops, Foster and Kinship Carers often tell us their greatest challenge is knowing how to manage children's extreme behaviours (as a result of trauma) and help them recover.**

A trauma is a psychologically distressing event that is outside the range of usual human experience. It often involves a sense of intense fear, terror, or helplessness. A child or a young person can be traumatised by one overpowering event or many events over time.

## Where does it come from?

It can help to understand that trauma may go back to adverse experiences in early childhood, and that something in the present has triggered the trauma memory. Children often cannot remember the details. A seemingly benign event in the present (such as a perfume smell or a voice) can trigger

trauma memories. When this happens, children may experience emotional and physiological responses similar to those experienced when the trauma first occurred, such as flashbacks or sudden panic attacks. The behaviour is a reaction to the trauma memory and is often referred to as resurfacing trauma.

## How does Trauma show itself?

Trauma often emerges through behaviours, some of which can be extreme.

Carers may see behaviours which are far outside the normal range displayed by their child and disproportionate to what has happened. It may not always be possible to know the trigger. Carers may also find it hard to understand their children's behaviours - running away, locking themselves in their rooms, becoming violent (especially just now in lockdown when they may be more pronounced).





## Trauma Workshops

**At Children's Health Scotland our Trauma Workshops look at practical approaches to support those affected by trauma, including Kinship Carers themselves. They have been designed to help you understand what trauma is, how it is caused and what the impact can be on the health and wellbeing of the children and young people in your care.**

It can help carers to understand the needs and rights of children and young people in care, whilst helping them to gain the necessary skills and knowledge to support healing and recovery. We take the time to look past behaviours to see and understand the whole picture. We regard children affected by trauma as in need of help and ask the question: What's happened to you? rather than What's wrong with you?

**Our workshops explore many of the following in greater detail:**

### 1. Comfort, compliments hugs and smiles

Sometimes in the confusion of family life and especially if there is tension or challenge of any sort, it can be difficult to practise some of these. With COVID-19 restrictions lifting now is the time to hug and smile and give comfort where you can.

### 2. Blankets and hankies

Blankets can wrap a child up tight so that they feel held, safe and comforted - as do babies when they are wrapped up. You can even buy heavier, weighted blankets to promote sensory integration. Hankies could be given to a child as they leave you to go to school as a transitional object. It reminds them of you until you are reunited.

### 3. Partings and reunions

These are always important so make a thing of them and celebrate when you get back together again.

### 4. Balloons

After a bereavement, launch a helium balloon with a little ticket attached to the string with a message to the loved one on it.

### 5. Mindfulness

Mindfulness is the basic human ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we're doing, and not overly reactive or overwhelmed by what's going on around us. While mindfulness is something we all naturally possess, it's more readily available to us when we practise on a daily basis.

### 6. Breathing

Just taking a few deep, calm, breaths can have a good calming effect. Look at our spring 2021 magazine for more ideas on breathing exercises.

### 7. Music

Sally Magnusson developed the concept of a play list of favourite tracks or ones which had special meaning for people who had lost their memory. Try making your own play list which has a special meaning for you.

### 8. Imagery

Images have the power to bring back memories or take you back to a favourite place. Try making a photograph album with your own special images.

### 9. Memories

You may have heard of a Memory Box. It does not have to be for someone who has died and can in fact be for a missing parent or anyone else and can contain anything from a football ticket to a photograph of a person - any object which reminds you of them.

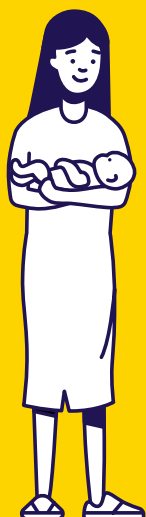
### 10. Kindness Jars

You can put kindness suggestions in a jar. For example, make tea, clear up, go shopping. Family members take it in turns to pick a card from the jar and either request that or offer to do that for someone in the family.

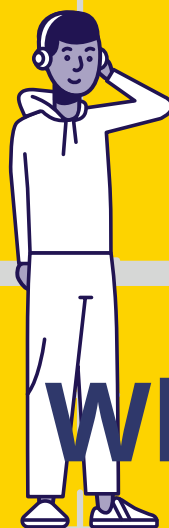
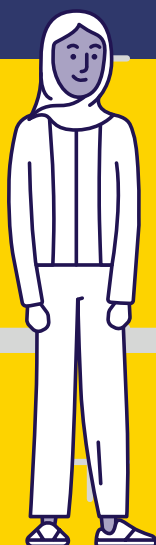


For more information or to arrange a training session, please contact: Anne Wilson, Head of Development at Children's Health Scotland. Telephone 07485 462 435 or email: [anne.wilson@childrenshealthscotland.org](mailto:anne.wilson@childrenshealthscotland.org).

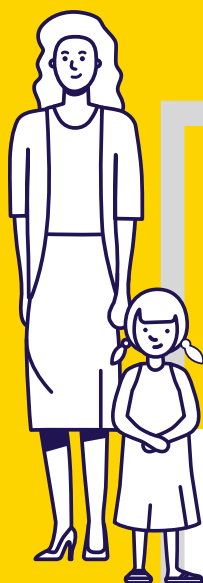
**Children's Health Scotland delivered and Understanding Trauma and Helping Recovery Webinar as part of the KC Week box set! Follow this link to find out more. <https://kinship.scot/kinship-care-week-2021/>**



# #WhyWeCare



thefostering



## Why we care

**T**he lives of children and young people in care are transformed through fostering and Foster Care Fortnight (10-23 May) is the UK's biggest foster care celebration, delivered by leading fostering charity, The Fostering Network. As Children's Health Scotland provides information and training directly to Foster Carers on the healthcare needs and rights of children and young people, this is one event that we really care about supporting.

Commenting on the recent event, Helen Forrest, Chief Executive of Children's Health Scotland said: *"We work with foster carers to deliver information and training that covers topics such as mental health and emotional wellbeing and health-related play techniques to help cope with dental, medical or hospital treatment and pain. We care enormously about helping foster carers transform the lives of children and young people and together we care about their health and wellbeing. Thousands of new foster families are needed to care for children so this year we asked our partners and friends to join us to celebrate the work of foster carers and show #whywecare."*

This year the Fostering Network wanted the whole fostering community, from foster carers to fostering services and care experienced children and young people, from fundraisers to campaigners, and everyone in between who cares about the lives of children in care to step up and tell the world #WhyWeCare.

Talking about how Children's Health Scotland supported Foster Care Fortnight 2021, Anne Wilson, Head of Development said: *"To complement the information and training we provide to foster carers, I delivered a webinar on Understanding Trauma and Helping Recovery. At this event I showcased #whywecare about foster carers*



are

# Foster Care Fortnight

The Fostering Network

[thefosteringnetwork.org.uk/fcf](https://thefosteringnetwork.org.uk/fcf)

## about fostering



*and the children and young people they care for and really enjoyed connecting online with those who attended."*

The information and training provided by Children's Health Scotland has been developed to support foster carers with their vital work with children and young people. The charity also designs bespoke sessions to suit specific needs and interests. Training is delivered FREE OF CHARGE at point of delivery as we are funded by the Scottish Government and other trusts and foundations.

Despite the challenges the past year has thrown at all of us, the love and support that foster carers provide to children and young people has never wavered. Without doubt, the impact of school closures, social isolation and reduction in services has been challenging, but foster carers have continued to support the children in their care, demonstrating immense passion and determination. Thousands of new foster families are needed every year

to care for children, with the greatest need being for foster carers for older children, sibling groups, disabled children, and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

**In relation to Foster Care in Scotland (information obtained from <https://www.gov.scot/publications/childrens-social-work-statistics-2019-20/>):**

- 14,458 children were looked after as of 31 July 2020, which is an increase of 196 (1%) from 2019.
- 4,744 children living with foster families as of 31 July 2020.
- There was an increase in the proportion of children placed with foster carers – up from 30% in 2010 to 33% in 2020 – and this remains the most common accommodation type for looked after children.
- There are approximately 4,000 foster families in Scotland.

To find out more about foster care visit The Fostering Network <https://www.thefosteringnetwork.org.uk/>

To find out more about the information and training available from Children's Health Scotland please visit <https://www.childrenshealthscotland.org/service/children-and-young-people-in-and-leaving-care/>



# WHOOHOO AND A WHOPPING BIG THANK YOU

**We** are delighted to announce that our Self-Management Service and SMS:CONNECT have received funding to continue vital work with children and young people throughout 2021 and into 2022. The three main differences we aim achieve through our SMS work are that children and young people with long-term health conditions:

- experience increased confidence and self-esteem.
- feel more socially included.
- have increased communication skills and ability to talk about their condition.

## This year we have received:



£40,000 from the National Lottery

Community Fund which gives grants to organisations in the UK to help improve their communities.



£10,000 awarded from BBC Children in Need Small

Grants 2020 Programme over three years. Their programme supports children and young people aged 18 years and under experiencing disadvantage through: Illness, distress, abuse or neglect; any kind of disability; behavioural or psychological difficulties; or living in poverty or situations of deprivation.



**Foundation Scotland**

£4,997 from the Coronavirus

Response, Recovery, and Resilience Fund that it is administered by Foundation Scotland. The fund enabled organisations to continue their operations in the 'new normal', and to re-establish or re-design their activities to comply with new regulations.



Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport

£9,995 from the #ShiftThePower Coronavirus

Response Fund delivered by the Corra Foundation working as an intermediary partner with Comic Relief in Scotland and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport.

**TESCO**

**Bags of Help**

£1,000 from Tesco Bags of Help

administered by Tesco Community Grants which supports local good causes that focus on helping children and families.



£5,000 from the Chance to Connect

fund administered by the Scottish Children's Lottery that has been set up with the primary objective of educating Scottish children about citizenship and developing their communities. It's their mission to ensure that those at a disadvantage early in life – whether through financial hardship, ill health or disability – feel a sense of belonging.

*"This funding makes such a huge difference, and I would like to thank the trusts and foundations who support our work," said Dr Laura Smith, Head of Children's Health and Wellbeing Services at Children's Health Scotland. "Their support now allows us to focus on what matters the most – the children and young people we support. Our national online group programmes, which we have delivered*

*over the past year for children and young people living with long-term health conditions, have helped reduce their social isolation, increase their confidence and develop techniques so that they can cope with health challenges. We are hoping that our face-to-face programmes will return later in the year, so going forward we will offer both face-to-face and online group programmes, to children and young people."*

# The Robertson Trust gives a five-year commitment to support our work with children and young people

**C**hildren's Health Scotland needs funding and donations from trusts and foundations to deliver our services across Scotland. So, we were absolutely delighted to receive the news that The Robertson Trust would like to continue to fund us and particularly help support our running costs over the next five years.

Helen Forrest, Chief Executive of Children's Health Scotland said: "We are absolutely thrilled to receive on-going funding from the Robertson Trust. The unrestricted funding towards the cost of running our charity and the day-to-day services we provide is absolutely amazing. This type of

*funding allows our staff to focus on what they do best – deliver health and wellbeing services for children and young people, especially those with long-term health conditions. A big thank you to all the team at The Robertson Trust for their long-standing kindness and support of our charity over many years."*

The Robertson Trust is currently the largest independent grant-making trust in Scotland. Inspired by the example of its founders, the Robertson Sisters, it has a vision for a fair and compassionate Scotland where everyone is valued and able to flourish. For more information, please visit [www.therobertsontrust.org.uk](http://www.therobertsontrust.org.uk)



## Do you shop on Amazon?

**W**e've joined Amazon Smile, an initiative that donates a percentage (0.5%) of a customer's eligible purchases to a charity of their choice. Amazon Smile features the same products at the same prices as the standard Amazon website and there are millions of eligible products available. Just look out for 'Eligible for smile.amazon.co.uk' on the product's details page.

To start donating to Children's Health Scotland, simply log in to your usual Amazon account through the AmazonSmile website, select <https://smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/SC006016> as your charitable organisation and shop as normal!

Helen Forrest, Chief Executive of Children's Health Scotland, explains: "This is a great way to raise money for our charity. Anyone can use AmazonSmile, so please encourage your friends and family to do so. Just ensure that they log in through the AmazonSmile website address, choose Children's Health Scotland as their charitable organisation, and then shop as normal."



**smile.amazon.co.uk**

# Royal Hospital Children, Glasgow

**A**nn MacLennan, Assistant Coordinator with the Hospital Education Service at the Royal Hospital for Children (RHC) in Glasgow, gives us a little insight into adapting their work during a COVID-19 pandemic.

## Education during COVID-19

Glasgow's Hospital Education Service provides schooling for our young inpatients at the Royal Hospital for Children. We currently have five teaching staff, both primary and secondary. Usually, we teach either on a 1:1 basis at the bedside or, for patients who can leave their ward, we have classrooms available for individual or group lessons. Unfortunately, since the onset of COVID-19, teaching has taken on a new dimension. Scottish schools all closed from March 2020 and teachers had to adapt to remote teaching. All lessons and meetings are now held remotely, and staff can link in with patients through GLOW email.

## Resources

Glasgow City Council has now provided all Glasgow teachers with iPads which have been invaluable in maintaining links with patients on the wards. This has meant that all meetings with teachers, schools, and NHS staff could be held remotely on Microsoft Teams; a year ago no one had ever heard of Teams let alone used it daily. We have also joined live school lessons with patients and their own school as well as organising social video calls for patients with their school peers. This has been invaluable for patients keeping in touch and still being part of their own school community.



## Adapting

School teachers did return in person to the hospital at the start of the term in August 2020, complying with strict infection control procedures throughout the hospital. Social distancing was maintained, limited numbers of people were permitted in rooms, as

well as wearing the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). For some patients, teachers could enter their rooms kitted out in aprons & masks. For others, full PPE had to be worn: apron, two pairs of gloves, fitted mask and visor. Male teachers had to be clean shaven, and teachers were tested weekly for COVID-19.



Everyone cooperated to make sure we were able to visit and teach the patients, most of whom were now confined to their hospital rooms. Patients were no longer permitted to travel through the hospital to attend the classrooms in Clinic 12 and had to be taught within rooms. Restrictions within RHC meant no visitors or non-essential staff could visit patients, and patients reported feeling isolated; so the education interventions were important opportunities for additional contact.

## All change

Unfortunately, after the Christmas holidays, school return in January 2021 was postponed across Scotland due to an increase in COVID-19 infection rate. Teachers and patients were back to online and remote teaching and learning. Thankfully by this time we were better skilled at using iPads. At RHC we teach children from across Scotland, coordinating with their base schools to provide relevant work and activities for pupils to access on their devices.





# tal for asgow

**NHS**  
Greater Glasgow  
and Clyde



## What next?

Laptops, iPads, tablets, mobile phones, even PlayStations and XBoxes are all used by our patients to access schoolwork and keep in touch with hospital teachers as well as their own schools and peers. Thank goodness for technology and as we all know, young people are the experts with IT!

We are hopeful that teachers will be permitted to return to RHC and face-to-face teaching in the near future as COVID-19 restrictions are eased. We miss seeing all our patients and their families.

A huge thank you must go to the wonderful NHS staff who support our teaching and assist patients with their schoolwork. **Every day is a school day 😊**

“ **Glasgow City Council has now provided all Glasgow teachers with iPads which have been invaluable in maintaining links with patients on the wards.** ”



# MICHELLE HEI STUDENT REG

**Michelle Wilson is our Children's Health and Wellbeing Officer based in Tayside and her role is very varied. One day she can be supporting a young child to explore, through health-related play, their first procedure at the dentist and the next a young person with their mental health and wellbeing. In this feature Michelle tells us more about her one-to-one work with Sam (we have changed the name of the student to maintain privacy and confidentiality), who was struggling with their mental health and wellbeing following a return to school and news that grades would be awarded based on the assessments of teachers.**

**S**am is one of the young people I am currently supporting, who originally attended SMS:CONNECT which is our new online Self-Management Service for children and young people living with long-term health conditions. SMS:CONNECT has been hugely beneficial for Sam and, after speaking with mum about mental health and wellbeing, help was requested at a monthly check-in. The problem facing Sam were feelings of being overwhelmed - stressed and anxious over the many unexpected assessments at school. As part of the Children's Health and Wellbeing Service, I started providing one-to-one support.

Sam had found home schooling difficult, or to be exact, dreadful. The amount of work being given was 'overwhelming' with no consistency between teachers on how this was to be done. Sam also felt rather

isolated and not supported by the school, who never really seemed to be in contact to find out how Sam was getting on. As a result, Sam continually fell behind with schoolwork, which made it impossible to catch up as more just kept coming. On reflection, online classes were a little better, but cameras were turned off and it was just talking. If Sam missed a class, the teacher would try and telephone via TEAMS but if there was no answer there was no follow up.

## One-to-one support

The pressure started to build through not having all the schoolwork done, and then discovering that when school restarted there would be tests for all subjects. The feelings of struggling to cope, stress and anxiety took over which is when we started our one-to-one sessions. These sessions focused on self-care, grounding techniques, visualisations, and lots of breathing exercises.

Our weekly sessions provided the opportunity to plan and discuss how and when to complete different pieces of schoolwork and how to study so that Sam felt back in control. Support was needed for Sam to work out a way to fit in everything to help reduce the feeling of being overwhelmed and not knowing where to start. At our sessions we also spoke about how difficult it had been for many schools and teachers to offer individual support during lock down. With some encouragement, and setting small and achievable goals, Sam gained the courage to be able to speak to one teacher to explain how difficult it had been to stay on top of schoolwork. They both chatted at length about how it felt to be really behind with schoolwork which in turn had caused Sam so much stress and anxiety.



# HELPS YOUNG GAIN CONTROL

## Building confidence

Once Sam had done this, and received such a positive response, the confidence was gained to speak with all the teachers. In doing so, Sam soon discovered there were after school study sessions at school, and support within class times, to help with revision. The feelings of being overwhelmed, stressed, and anxious started to alleviate which enabled us to use our time together to look other ways of maintaining good mental health and wellbeing. We were able to discuss how anxiety felt, identify some triggers, and learn different grounding techniques.

## 54321 technique

One of the ones that worked the best for us was the 54321 technique as Sam felt it was great both at home and school. This technique uses all your five senses to help get you back to the present. It starts with sitting comfortably, closing your eyes, and taking a couple of deep breaths. In through your nose (count to three), and out through your mouth (to the count of three). Now open your eyes and look around you.

### Name out loud:

- 5 Things you can see. Look within the room or out of the window.
- 4 Things you can feel like the silkiness of your skin, or the texture of the material on your chair. What does your hair feel like? What is in front of you that you can touch? A table perhaps?
- 3 Things you can hear like traffic noise or birds outside. When you are quiet and actually listening, things in your room constantly make a noise but typically we don't hear them.
- 2 Things you can smell and hopefully it's nothing awful!
- 1 Thing you can taste which is often just whatever you last ate or drank.

**Now, take a deep breath to end.**

## Being kind

We also spent time learning about self-care and being kind to ourselves. Sam was brilliant at coming up with lots of things such as a long bath, listening to music or getting out in the fields near home and spending time having fun with family and friends.

These are all great self-care activities that we can all try. We learned that it helps our mental health and wellbeing when we make sure we

include some of these each day. Another really helpful activity we talked about was starting to write things down in a special book. Things that bring a sense of happiness or a smile. This activity may start slowly but as the weeks go on it gets easier to write three or four things each day. For Sam and me, it was uplifting to look back through the book and see all the things that had created happiness and I'm really pleased that

Sam is now on well on the way to feeling in control and experiencing better mental health and wellbeing.







Children's  
Health Scotland



# SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S HEALTH WEEK 2021

#feelinghopeful

SAVE  
THE DATE

6-12  
SEPT  
2021

Building on the success of last year we are now well into preparations for Scottish Children's Health Week 2021. Save the date in your calendar and join us once again as we showcase the tremendous amount of work and activities that focus on the health and wellbeing of children and young people in Scotland.



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