

Summer 2023

Children's Health Scotland



**“A Magnificent Experience”
The Picnic
and Party of a
Lifetime!**

Pages 10 to 13

**‘Alina meets
the doctor’
OUT NOW
Pages 4 & 5**



**NOMINATIONS
NOW OPEN**



**Scottish
Children's
Health Awards –
nominations
close 14 July!**

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF CHILDREN'S HEALTH SCOTLAND

The 2023 Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Children's Health Scotland will take place via Zoom on Saturday 30th September 2023 at 11:00am.

The activities and finances of Children's Health Scotland from April 2022 to March 2023 will be discussed at the AGM, together with some of our key achievements over the past year. If you would like to attend our AGM please email events@childrenshealthscotland.org.



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It's your last chance to nominate someone special!



BEAR'S TEA PARTY



We're hosting Bear's Tea Party at the Balmoral Hotel to celebrate Scottish Children's Health Week.

We are so excited about our forthcoming Scottish Children's Health Week and hope you have a 'Save the Date' in your calendar for 4-11 September 2023. This year we are celebrating the week by hosting our inaugural Bear's Tea Party at the Balmoral Hotel on Saturday 26 August 2023. At this event we will present the Scottish Children's Health Awards, talk about the forthcoming activities for Scottish Children's Health Week and announce the launch of our My Health, My Rights Campaign.

Scottish Children's Health Week has been created to focus on the health and wellbeing of children and young people and their right to the best possible health. Bear's Tea Party will be a celebration of the week ahead and the work that many of the children and young people we support, and those

who love and care for them, put into self-managing their health condition(s) whilst defending, promoting, and protecting their healthcare rights.

We know and understand that our children and young people and their families have many barriers to building friendships and feeling socially included, so we work with them to develop the self-management skills they require to take care of themselves, gain control of their lives, and better

manage their health conditions. Part of this work involves bringing our families and carers together for fun events and activities to support their mental health and wellbeing, build friendships, and feel more socially included. So, at Bear's Tea Party we will be hosting children and young people with health conditions and their families alongside foster and kinship care families, with the aim of providing a magical afternoon of celebration, rights, play and of course fun.





Alina meets

Alina is twelve years old, has additional support needs, is 'non-speaking' and needs help to cope with going to the doctor. Alina is also the main character in our latest book to be released, entitled **Alina meets the doctor**.

"We are sending huge hugs and a big thank you to Alina who helped us to create a book through the eyes of a child that looks at ways to help children, young people, and those who love and care for them, to become more confident about going to the doctor," said Helen Forrest, Chief Executive of Children's Health Scotland.

"Through the use of health-related play, the book tells the story of how Alina worked through her anxieties to understand what was going on and to participate in decisions that affected her healthcare. This use of health-related play lies at the heart of a rights-based approach that helps children meet their healthcare rights. It recognises that play is essential to healthy

development from birth to adulthood, contributing to the capacity for learning, resilience, and the development of physical, cognitive, social, and emotional skills. The book also informs adults about these rights, helping to gain insights into ways of meeting them. It is always worth remembering that to a child, play is about having fun, but to society it is much more."

We partnered with Alina and Isobel Mair School and Family Centre to produce the book which supports children and young people with communication difficulties when they need to prepare for a visit to the doctor. The first part of the book is aimed at children, while the second part offers practical help and useful links for adults who are supporting these children. It aims to give an insight into behaviour and how we can use stories, play, breathing, and relaxation to calm and support a nervous child. A key to connecting with children and young people is using health-related play.



the doctor



The book costs £6.99 plus P&P and is now available to purchase by directly emailing enquiries@childrenshealthscotland.org.



Let's Celebrate our Volunteers for Volu

2023 marks the 39th year of **Volunteers' Week (1-7 June)**, a week when Children's Health Scotland joined thousands of charities recognising the contribution volunteers make across the UK. We are proud to support so many children and young people with health conditions and we feel honoured when anyone of any age and background volunteers and contributes to our work.

The contribution of 16.3m volunteers each year across the UK is often unseen by many, visible only through the incredible impact of their volunteering, so taking the time during Volunteers' Week to celebrate their efforts and all they contribute to our local communities, the voluntary sector and society as a whole, has never been more important.

Volunteering can be a great way for young people to learn and develop new skills, gain experience for their future and 'give back' to an organisation that has previously offered them support. At Children's Health Scotland, we value the contributions that young volunteers can make to our vision, which is for every child and young person in Scotland to realise their right to best quality healthcare. Not only do they offer their time, support, and skills, but they can also provide peer support, which can be invaluable.

Esther Bates, Marketing and Fundraising Assistant, said: "Each one of our fabulous fundraisers makes their own valuable contribution to the work of Children's Health Scotland. There are so many ways you can help us to support children and young people with health conditions, from our Young Volunteer Group who are helping guide the work of the charity and who also play a vital role at our many events, to our adult volunteers who really go the distance in running events to raise funds for us. We have over 30 volunteers who help us on a regular basis, as well as many people who contribute once and provide so much support. For Volunteers Week 2023, we would like to celebrate some of our amazing volunteers and hopefully inspire you to volunteer with Children's Health Scotland too!"



- We would like to say a huge thank you to our Young Volunteer Group who help guide our work and who are currently helping with our My Health, My Rights Campaign and our forthcoming Scottish Children's Health Week. This group was vital in helping to shape our conference which we held in September last year and our Bear's Royal Picnic which we hosted in May this year. Our young volunteers have previously completed one of our Self-Management Skills Programmes and then kindly volunteered their time to make our charity so much better by sharing their own thoughts and experiences.



1-7
JUNEVOLUNTEERS'
WEEK

Our Inspiring Volunteers Week 2023

- Thank you so much to Sienna, Erin, Edie, and Celia who chose Children's Health Scotland for their Youth Philanthropy Initiative (YPI) Project.



They delivered three amazing presentations and made it to the finals in their high schools YPI Programme. We are incredibly grateful for their hard work and look forward to how they will support us again in the future. If your school would like to support Children's Health Scotland as part of your Youth Philanthropy Initiative, please get in touch with Esther Bates at esther.bates@childrenshealthscotland.org

- Running a marathon is an amazing goal and a tremendous achievement, which is why we were so proud to have four fundraisers this year who entered the 2023 Edinburgh Marathon Festival on behalf of Children's Health Scotland, including Xin and Kyle (pictured). Together, they raised over £700 to support the health and wellbeing children and young people in Scotland.



CELEBRATE & INSPIRE This Volunteers' Week

#VolunteersWeekScot



- We would like to give a huge thank you to our ambassador Rory Crawford who gives so much of his time into creating the Story With Rory book series which you can find on our social media pages. We would also like to thank our volunteer video editor Joseph Hutchings who uses his amazing skills to make Rory and the stories he reads extra entertaining and engaging!

If you would like to volunteer for Children's Health Scotland or as regular volunteer or as a one-off fundraiser, please get in touch with us at enquiries@childrenshealthscotland.org





“If I am alright, then the kids will be too”

Self-Care for Carers

There are two special weeks that are marked in the calendar every year for our Care Experienced Children and Young People Services - Kinship Care Week in March and Foster Care Fortnight in May. This year was no exception, and we delivered our Kinship Care webinar on 14 March to Kinship Carers. The Foster Care webinar was the very first item to kick off Foster Care Fortnight at 10.00 am on Monday 15 May. Having the first slot was both a privilege and a pleasure.

Our inspiration for the topic of self-care came from David Trickey at the UK Trauma Council who we had heard giving a presentation on trauma. These were his words:

“Carers often say, *I’ll be alright if the kids are.*”

When actually it should be the other way round –

“If I am alright, then the kids will be too.”

David counselled carers to look after themselves first and attend to their needs so that they would be better able to support the children in their care. It’s often been likened to putting your own oxygen mask on first! The impact of looking after children and young people requires you to look after yourself but how do you keep in touch with your friends when you are toddler caring?

So, we started by asking carers to define what self-care meant to them and here is what they said:

- It’s being able to put yourself first.
- That might mean getting to your doctor’s appointment.
- Sometimes standing up for what is right and fighting for others is self-care.

We went onto explore the **5 Ways to Wellbeing**. It’s a bit like eating your 5 fruit and veg a day!

- 1 Connect
- 2 Be Active - dancing in the kitchen with the kids.
- 3 Take Notice
- 4 Keep Learning
- 5 Give



We asked them to think about what they would do to build these into their day/lives. Carers then shared this round the group. Here is one carer’s example for Be Active above.

As part of **Take Notice**, we did a quick Mindfulness activity using the 5 senses and the carers even made their own calming/self-soothe box - Young Minds Self-soothe Box: <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/blog/how-to-make-a-self-soothe-box/>

Contents included anything from dark chocolate to uplifting quotes to a fidget toy and a photo of a loved one. This is an activity you could do alongside your CYP and then compare your different boxes!

We asked what the benefits of self-care were:

- It allows you to be mindful of the children and in tune with them
- Allows the children to see a model of you in control.
- Rediscover me
- Recharge the batteries



and what advice they would give other carers:

- No guilt
- Arrange a babysitter – save up
- Join a support group
- TAKE time
- Do some meditation/mindfulness
- Breathing activities

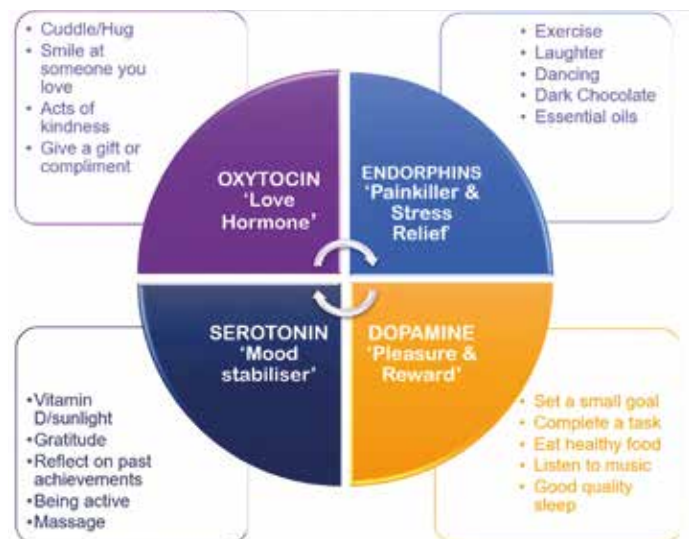
Foster Carers made a video for last year's Scottish Children's Health Week where they talk about their support groups, how to join or form one and most importantly the value of the groups. We used clips from their video through the webinar. Here is what they said:

- It allows you to vent off without being judged.
- You learn that it is normal to feel grief when a child moves away and to be kind to yourself.
- You get shared peer support that you can't get off a worker.

You can listen to the whole video here:

www.childrenshealthscotland.org/care-experienced-week-2022/

Did you know that you can hack your brain or retrain your brain? If you hug a pet, you can trigger your



brain to produce happy hormones. A workout or fast walking will produce endorphins and reflecting on past achievements will produce serotonin.

We finished by asking carers to list 3 positive things which had happened in the day just before they go to sleep. This will trigger a positive reset in the brain.

Carers owe it to themselves because they are worth it.



A RIGHTS RO

On Saturday 6 May 2023, families came together to celebrate Bear's Royal Picnic at Starbank Park in Edinburgh, which was a RIGHTS Royal occasion. Marking the coronation of King Charles III, families from our three children and young people services: Health Rights; Health and Wellbeing; and Care Experienced - joined together for a celebration of togetherness and rights. We had our biggest Health Rights Quiz ever and a massive scavenger hunt followed by a fabulous picnic with super yummy cakes. It was amazing to create lifelong memories and remember this historic event together, and here is what some of our families had to say about event:

What was your favourite part?

'Being part of a big event where everyone could come together. Being treated to lovely things. Often as a parent of a child with chronic conditions you want to make things all go away for them. This was a celebration that showed the young people you are all special and we can help you through your challenges.' Helen, mum of 15-year-old

'Colouring in the crowns, doing the interview, the young health quiz, and meeting everyone in person.'
Katie, 15 years old

'It truly was a magnificent experience'
- Foster carer

'I really loved the day out; it was so much fun, and I loved meeting everyone. Thank you so much for having the event and I love my teddy.'
Lianna, 11

#MyHealthMyRights

Every child has the right to the best possible



Royal Picnic!

'All of it! I love that by the end there was real bonding amongst the kids. We felt so cared for - it was a nice break not to have to worry about my kid, because you thought of everything and were respectful of her needs.' Mara, mum of 13-year-old



We'd like to give a huge THANK YOU to National Lottery Awards for All Scotland for funding Bear's Royal Picnic and Eurovision Party (overleaf). We'd also like to thank Starbank Park, the Broadcroft Hotel, and everyone else who made this event so special. Take a look at our scrapbook of memories from Bear's Royal Picnic!



Thank you for making a special day for my children and so much fun for our family on the Special Coronation Day.

Jane, Foster & Kinship carer





Bear's EUROVISION SONG C

On Wednesday 10 May 2023 we held Bear's Eurovision Party for our SMS:HUB, the monthly online social gathering for all SMS participants! Eurovision was last hosted by the UK was in 1998 (a whole 25 years ago!) so when we knew it was coming to Liverpool we wanted to celebrate! Thanks to the National Lottery Community fund we were able to come together, dress up in our best outfits and party. We held a Eurovision Quiz – learning that props only have 20 seconds to be moved for the next act during the grand final! We also listened to some of our favourite Eurovision songs (of course ABBA was included) and tried to figure out who we thought would win.

Each of our young people received a pack with dressing up goodies, which included Eurovision Scoring paddles, design your own flag kits, make your own tambourine kits, and to top off the look a blow-up microphone. It was so much fun and made Eurovision very memorable for our young people!

For our March 2023 SMS:HUB we made Windchimes and spoke about how nice they are for relaxation and calming ourselves down. Our SMS:HUB loves crafts, and the pictures show some of the crafts we've made!

Thank you! I had so much fun! I just love Eurovision and I can't wait to watch it and use my paddles. I can't wait for our next SMS:HUB!
Alyssa, 16

I like the SMS:HUB because it is on Zoom and it is also sociable and this is enough for me. I also think that you and the people who run the session are nice and I also like the craft items that you send out
Marley, 14



Eurovision Party

CONTEST



We are now really excited for our forthcoming **BUBBLE-TASTIC:HUB** when the Glasgow Science Centre will be joining us to teach us all about the Science of Bubbles! Look out for the update in our next magazine.



COMMUNITY FUND

We'd once again like to give a huge THANK YOU to National Lottery Awards for All Scotland for funding Bear's Royal Picnic and Eurovision Party.





Relaxation and Outdoor Fun delivered through the FLOURISH Programme

Health, rights, responsibilities, play, and parenting were once again topics for activities and discussion during our most recent FLOURISH Programme, which we deliver in partnership with the Dundee International Women's Centre (DIWC).

FLOURISH seeks to engage, educate, and empower women from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds and Michelle Wilson, Head of our Children and Young People Health and Wellbeing Services teamed with Salma Hanif Gani, the Family Learning Project worker at DIWC, to deliver the latest Programme. Michelle tells us more about a couple of the fantastic activities she delivered at the most recent Programme.

"We have been running FLOURISH successfully for years and one of the things the mums asked if we could do this time was around helping to relax and calm their children at times when they might be feeling overwhelmed. I picked the Butterfly Body Scan as it is a crafty activity as well as focusing on relaxation. The children loved playing with the paint to make handprints, and it gave the mums time to ask questions. I was able to explain what relaxation does to our bodies and brains and the benefits of having strategies to help children relax.

To get ready for the Butterfly Body Scan, we made some fabulous butterflies with paint and googly eyes. During the activity, the mums would read out the butterfly visualisation and the children were able to say where the butterfly would land to help them relax. The mums now have something that can signify when it is time to relax and can confidently use it because we practised together.



On another week, we held our own fabulous picnic, to tie in with Bear's Royal Picnic (read more on pages 10 and 11). We went to Baxter Park as it was only a 10-minute walk from the DIWC. The children loved the adventure of getting to the park and playing our games such as the Scavenger Hunt which I set up for the mums and children. They had a great time running round the park together collecting the different coloured cards. We blew bubbles, played on the swings, and had lots of fun running and playing chase. Before the picnic itself, we all sat around on our picnic blankets and played 'If you are happy and you know it' on Kazoos. We were laughing so hard it was next to impossible to finish the song!

Next, it was time to eat. The picnic was a celebration of our different cultures so all the mums brought picnic food from their home countries so we could all share and experience a little bit of each other's cultures. For me the most memorable food was in fact a drink, Moroccan tea, made with Mint and Honey (I now make it every Saturday morning). My Scottish shortbread seems boring in comparison! Overall, it was a truly wonderful time."



We'd like to give a huge **THANK YOU** to the St Katharine's Trust for funding the **FLOURISH** Programme.

We asked Michelle why she thinks the FLOURISH Programme is so important for the mums and children who it supports:

"I think one of the real benefits of the FLOURISH Programme is that it provides a comfortable space which is culturally sensitive to different needs, helping to break down barriers to participation. I am there to work with the group, listen to them, and hear their thoughts and feelings about health and wellbeing. The Programme mixes relaxation time for parents with information around healthy living, health and wellbeing, and development through play."

"Often some of the women who come to the centre are feeling isolated, English is often their second language, and it can be hard to communicate with their children's school or health professionals. By attending the FLOURISH Programme, they benefit from an extended social circle, more confidence in knowing health and wellbeing rights, and knowing the right questions to ask different people. I also learn a lot about how health services work in other countries and am able to take the time to explain the differences here in Scotland and how services work here."

If you would like to find out more about the FLOURISH Programme then please contact Michelle Wilson,
michelle.wilson@childrenshealthscotland.org.



Fun and relaxing watercolour latest Celebration Session

We would like to congratulate our most recent participants on our SMS:CONNECT Programme for completing the programme!

Throughout the 6-week Programme, our children and young people joined us online to learn about self-management skills - taking positive steps towards improving their health and wellbeing. We know that joining a new group with new people isn't easy, but once again, our children and young people have persevered and had a great time doing it!

To celebrate the end of each programme, we hold a 'Celebration Session' for everyone who has participated in it. For our February/March SMS:CONNECT Programme, this meant inviting the amazing team from 'Over the Wall' to come along and offer us some fun activities. 'Over The Wall' is a UK based charity which offers children and young people with health challenges and disabilities opportunities to discover a world of mischief and magic. In their work, they provide a safe place to step outside of comfort zones, establish friendships, and build confidence through meaningful and exciting activities. They understand that children and young people with health conditions have unique and special challenges in life and can offer camp experiences in person and online which cater to children and young people with more than 130 different conditions.

"Our team were incredibly excited when 'Over the Wall' offered to partner with us for a Watercolour Activity to our SMS:CONNECT Celebration Session," said Michelle Wilson, Head of Service. "We knew this would be a lovely way to round up the Programme and celebrate the achievements of the children and young people who took part. When the day came, we joined our session as normal through our safe and secure platform, Digital Bricks. The children and young people had already received their watercolour packs and they all joined ready to get started. It was easy to see the sense of accomplishment in the group as they joined their last session, knowing what they had



achieved throughout the 6-week Programme and also understanding the steps it took to get there and we are so proud of them all."

The Celebration Session began, as it always does, with a scavenger hunt! This time, the children and young people were asked to find things they would need to

Our young people mix together in our session for SMS:CONNECT



take part in the watercolour activity; a cup of water, kitchen roll or a tissue, and something colourful, just for fun!

The 'Over the Wall' watercolour pack came with paper, brushes, beautiful paints, and instructions on the activity. We started with watercolour techniques and followed along as 'Over the Wall' demonstrated each brush stroke. The children and young people learned how to blend, fade, and block colour on their paper before we began our masterpieces!

The activity itself was described by the young people as "fun", "relaxing" and "calm".

We used special tape to section off our paper into cool geometric designs and patterns. Once we were happy with how the tape was positioned, we began painting

each section using the techniques we had practised and even some of our own!

The children and young people chose some of their favourite colours to create beautiful watercolour paintings, and we finished off by writing a happy, calm, or inspiring quote or song lyric in one of our sections. One of the quotes chosen was – "When it rains look for rainbows".

Congratulations to the children and young people who attended this programme, and thank you to Over the Wall for the perfect celebration session.

We would like to thank The National Lottery and BBC Children in Need for providing funding for SMS:HUB activities.





VOICE

Nominations now open for the Scottish Children's Health Awards 2023

Do you know someone special who deserves a very exclusive teddy award?

The Scottish Children's Health Awards exist to celebrate courageous children and young people, and those who are making a difference to their health and wellbeing.

Nominations are now open, and you have until 5.00pm on Friday 14 July 2023 to nominate someone special. The award categories are shown on the opposite page. We also have a **Lifetime Achievement Award** which isn't listed as this award is not open to public nominations. The award will be presented to a health professional who, in the judges' opinions, has made outstanding contributions to the health and wellbeing of children and young people.

We are delighted that once again Journalist and TV Presenter, Catriona Shearer, will interview all the winners to share their stories whilst helping us to present their awards. The winners will be



revealed during Scottish Children's Health Week on 4 - 10 September 2023, so save the date! So, do you know someone who deserves one of these coveted teddy awards? Then go online and enter now.

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 a trophy for a child or young person who has shown great determination and kept going, when it might have been so much easier to give up. We are seeking any 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





Children's
Health Scotland

Alina meets the doctor



12-year-old Alina has additional support needs, is non-verbal and needs help to cope with going to the doctor.

Our new story book tells how Alina worked through her anxieties by familiarising herself with medical equipment, playing about different procedures and by understanding her rights to play, to be informed, and to participate in decision making.

Using health-related play, Alina was then able to visit the doctor who gave her control and respect in exploring a place that was new to her. Alina is now able to go to the doctor and we're so proud that she has been able to overcome her worries.



The second half of 'Alina meets the doctor' contains information and ideas to help adults communicate with children, how to create a personalised story and includes links to helpful downloads.

'Alina meets the doctor' is now available to buy from Children's Health Scotland for £6.99.

Please email
enquiries@childrenshealthscotland.org
to get yours!

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Find us on:



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