



Priority area:
**Mental Health
and Wellbeing**

Core Priority Programme (CPP)
2018 -2021

**Believe in
children**
 **Barnardo's**



What?

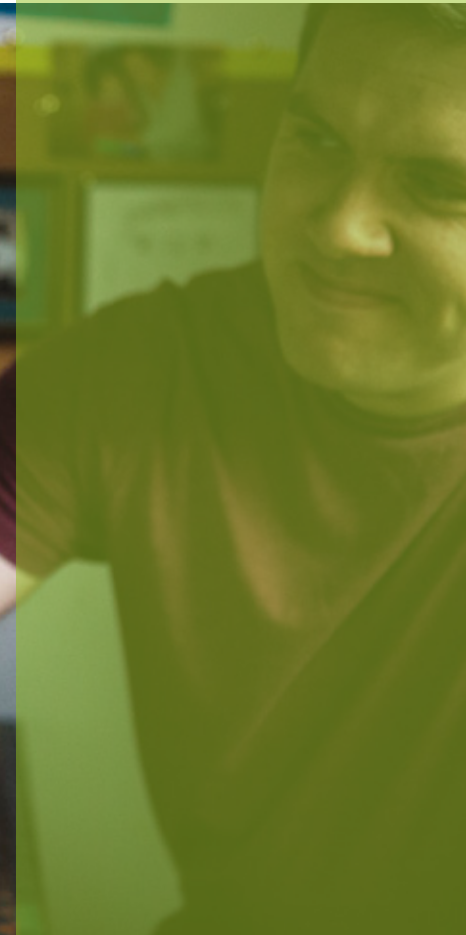
Mental Health and Wellbeing is one of the major public health challenges facing our generation. The number of children and young people with Mental Health and Wellbeing issues is increasing and services providing support are struggling to manage ever increasing referral numbers. An increasing number of children are being referred to services within a medical model of intervention. The bottleneck for access to these medical services means that children and young people can often wait longer for help. Barnardo's aims to shift the focus from a medical model to a social model by focusing on principles of Prevention and Early Intervention.

Barnardo's is setting out to work with partners to improve children and young people's Mental Health and Wellbeing through a whole systems approach.

We will do this by both improving children and young people's Mental Health and Wellbeing and by reducing the risks, so that all children and young people have improved life chances and potential.

This means we need to ensure:

- The determinants of Mental Health and Wellbeing are better understood and inform policy and practice.
- Children and young people are more resilient and equipped with coping strategies.
- Adults in children's lives are more resilient, better able to support Mental Health and Wellbeing, can identify issues early and are confident to offer early advice and support.
- Systems work better around the child or young person to provide joined up, easily accessible, appropriate support services for as long as needed.



Why?

Barnardo's has a long history of supporting vulnerable children, young people and families, with Mental Health and Wellbeing threading through all our work.

In 2016/17 we worked with 21,100 children and young people within our commissioned Mental Health and Wellbeing services such as counselling, bereavement support, therapeutic support, and school based social and emotional learning programmes.

We also supported many more children and young people's Mental Health and Wellbeing within our wide range of services such as family support, housing support, substance misuse, fostering and adoption, criminal justice etc.



Adversity, trauma and resilience

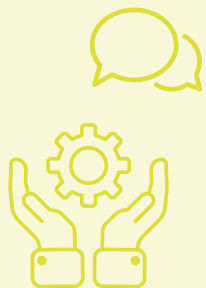
We know from our work with the most vulnerable children that one of the key determinants of poor Mental Health and Wellbeing is exposure to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). Our practical understanding is supported by compelling academic studies which show that exposure to physical, emotional and sexual abuse; physical and emotional neglect; parental separation; parental mental illness; parental imprisonment; domestic violence, and substance misuse in the family can have a significant effect on the developing brain and subsequently on mental health and wellbeing. Our services across the UK work with children experiencing all of these risk factors.

We also know from our commissioned services supporting children and young people's Mental Health and Wellbeing that there are many additional factors impacting on Mental Health and Wellbeing other than experience of adversity and developmental trauma.

Barnardo's has significant experience of working in a strength-based way with children, young people and their families and the systems around them to build on protective factors and increase resilience. We know relationships are vitally important. We will work using a whole systems approach promoting attachment-aware, trauma-informed, resilience-based support with a strong recovery focus.

Relationships are key

Positive relationships are so important in children and young people's lives. We will work to create a more compassionate, trauma informed society.



How?

Barnardo's understand the complexity and level of challenges ahead in what we have set out to do – our ten year strategy shows our level of commitment.

Our approach to whole systems change will be evidence based:

1 We'll listen to, and work with children and young people to utilise their expertise

Children, young people and families will be at the centre of our approach. – we'll recognise them as the experts. We'll embark on a journey of co-production – which means understanding that the strongest solutions will come from children and young people themselves.

Our approach is underpinned by an understanding that positive relationships can make a difference. Our campaigning and policy team will ensure that these expert voices are heard and influence the right audiences – in whatever places they need to be heard.



2 We'll draw on our wide range of services, building the corresponding capability to deliver, and develop new services where needed

Our service design experts will support children and young people and partners to co-produce the services and help that they need. This might mean our role is purely one of facilitation – working with partners in new ways where new solutions are needed – generating problem statements and rapidly testing out responses and iterating improvements. Or it might mean solutions also involve us in service delivery: using or adapting some of the many service delivery models we already provide across the UK.



3 We'll engage a full range of partners to help support children and young people within localities, learning with both those services and others

A wide range of services and agencies are required to make sure children and young people's Mental Health and Wellbeing is supported. In order to ensure our work is focused, we're going to build new types of partnerships with three Local Authority/NHS areas initially – ensuring we can measure the impact of our work – before going on to apply this learning as widely as possible in other areas.

Barnardo's has invested heavily over the last few years to ensure that our services are responding to the digital world, and what this means about the way children and young people grow up – with all of the new opportunities and challenges that this means.

We'll make significant investments in each of the three geographical areas – to drive the level of change and impact that our ten year strategy is committed to.



4 We'll make sure we understand local populations of children and young people – designing services which support prevention and early intervention

This approach is about joining up with Local Authorities/NHS areas and partners to begin a journey. We won't assume that we know what's needed, or that we already have the answers. Instead we will work closely with children, young people, families and partners through a process of discovery to look in new ways of working.

We will take a life course approach considering what impacts on mental health and wellbeing from pre-birth to 25 years and we will seek to work at whichever stages are identified locally as a priority.

This will mean working in new ways to provide support for children and young people's Mental Health and Wellbeing.



As the largest children's charity in the UK we have the scale, expertise and experience to enter into a new type of partnership with Local Authorities, the NHS, third sector and other partners to help make the changes that can make a real difference.



www.barnardos.org.uk