



**MAKING THE  
SERIOUS STUFF  
FUN!**



**Impact Report 2021-2022**

**0191 282 2000**

**[www.thechildrensfoundation.co.uk](http://www.thechildrensfoundation.co.uk)**

**The Children's  
FOUNDATION**  
Making Serious Stuff Fun!

Registered Charity Number 1000013



## Trustees

Dianne Winship, Chair  
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Dr Anne Dale\*

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To donate, please text **70085** with **TCFNE1** if you wanted to donate £1 or if you wish to donate £10 you can text **TCFNE10** as examples, any whole amount from £1 up to £20 can be used.

\*Dr Anne Dale was a consultant paediatrician at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Gateshead. Through her work, she believed that every child should have an equal start in life. This drew her to The Children's Foundation, where she became a Trustee in 2019. The Baby Box initiative embodied Anne's goals for all children in the North East. Anne sadly died on 16th January 2022 from Motor Neuron Disease.

## Patron

Bradley Creswick MBE

Thank you to all our wonderful Volunteers, Corporate supporters and Trusts and Foundations who have supported us over the last year. We could not what we do without you!



**The Children's Foundation is a North East child health charity, set up in 1990, with the vision of improving health and well-being services of Children and young people in the North East by making Serious Stuff Fun!**

Sir James Spence Institute, RVI, Queen Victoria Road,  
Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 4LP Reg. Charity No. 1000013



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# Note from our CEO

## 2021-2022 has been an amazing year for The Children's Foundation.

As a small independent North East child health charity we have directly supported 1035 Children and young people! A phenomenal effort for a team of 7! In addition, we have been working with Pilotlight as a Weston Award winner, reviewing and evaluating all aspects of the charity from top to bottom. The result has been the development of a new three year strategy with three core delivery themes focusing on:

**Early Years** – supporting first time parents and their babies to have a best start in life via our MaM Baby Box Project. Far too many North East children are born into poverty. Positive experiences early in life are closely associated with better performances at school, good emotional development, improved work outcomes and better lifelong health. Our baby boxes are unique and a first to take a developmental approach to the child. We want to remind new parents and families that they are cared for, and to promote a great start for all children born here in the North East.



**Mental Health** – Fuzzy Subjects, engaging Primary school children with mental health using puppets interactively. Therapeutic Horticulture (Roots to Health), creating Youth Work led gardening and green projects supporting children to achieve a Level 1 Award in Practical Horticulture.

**Physical Health** – Couch to 2K, supporting young people aged 8-18 to gain self-confidence, improve fitness, increase physical activity and have fun via weekly walking/jogging/running sessions. Surf

School, enabling young people to improve confidence and fitness via weekly surf sessions. Holiday activity projects, offering young people pop-up sports days in parks and green spaces in school holidays.

I want to thank all the staff, trustees, volunteers and supporters and look forward to another exciting year improving the health and well-being of children and young people by making serious stuff fun!

# Between April 2021 and March 2022 we directly supported 1035 children, young people and their families.



"Thank you for supporting my daughter, she has really enjoyed getting to take part in activities with other children"



"I found it fun and I think it helped the environment a lot. I feel we have really done something to help"



"It felt life changing"



"It was great and it made me feel more confident in my everyday life"

# What we do!

We are a small, local and independent child health charity. We support children, young people and their families through a range of projects providing opportunities that enhance their health and well-being, supporting the ups and downs of childhood. Our 3 core themes, Early Years, Mental Health and Physical Health aim to put children in the North East on the road to good health!

“It’s been really fun and helped me calm down when I was stressed”

## 1 Early Years

**MaM Baby Box Project. Supporting babies to have a best start in life through the simple every day!**



## The Make a Million (MaM) Baby Box project identifies first-time mums to be on one of three maternity pathways in Gateshead with a focus on those more vulnerable parents. New mums will receive their baby box at around 32 weeks of pregnancy.

The contents of the baby box include essential resources such as a sleeping bag, mattress, blanket and fitted sheets, providing a safe and comfortable place for babies to sleep. Other items include travel changing mat, hooded bath towel, bath mitt, digital thermometer, grooming set, feeding spoons, bath and room thermometer, baby milestone cards, and the little orange medical book to get families started with baby care. They will also include developmentally stimulating toys to promote the best start in life through a focus on laughing, playing, counting, singing and reading. These include books, stacking cups, bath toys, sensory toys, stacking rings, easy grasp ball, play mat and musical toys.



**“Through the MaM campaign, we want to remind parents, families, and carers that they are cared for, and to promote a great start for all children born here in the North East as childhood is a critical time for the development of later life outcomes”**

- Claire Allin, The Chronicle 2022

## Next Steps

We are currently in discussions with several other NHS local authority areas in the North East to roll out the project to other first-time parents and babies.

### Text MAM to 70450 to donate £3

(Texts cost £3 plus one standard rate message. If you'd like to give £3 but do not wish to receive marketing communications, text MAMNOINFO 70450)



Scan me to find out more!



## 2 Mental Health

### Clown Doctors

The Clown Doctor Project is delivered in partnership with TIN Arts. It is an innovative way of providing children and young people from across the North East region access to vital therapeutic play and enriches the experience of each child's stay in the Great North Children's Hospital. The Clown Doctors visit in pairs and aim to build up a lasting and developing relationship with those children who are finding their time in hospital difficult and distressing. Performing arts such as storytelling, music and clowning are used to engage the children and to help them come to terms with their situation using humour and play.



**429** young people benefited from a visit

**39** young people improved their mental health and wellbeing

**29** young people improved their anxiety and fear

**105** referrals let children be children



**253**

young people benefited from a workshop

### Fuzzy Subjects

Engaging children and young people in primary schools around the subject of mental health and well-being. Through positive interactions with our puppets Coby & Febus at our wellbeing workshops in partnership with Life and Limb Puppets CIC, young people gain valuable experiences, increasing resilience and confidence.

**"The children were so enthusiastic after their workshop with Fuzzy and enjoyed talking to the puppets and particularly enjoyed taking the time to relax and loved the meditation and relaxation part"**

## Roots to Health

Therapeutic horticulture sessions at our allotment and in schools teach basic horticulture skills to 14-18 year olds who are struggling with mainstream education. They gain a Level 1 City & Guilds Award in Practical Horticulture Skills, whilst building confidence, self-esteem, physical health & resilience. The project supports young people to create a garden as a safe place to develop their ability to mix socially, make friends and learn new practical skills. An independent evaluation through the NIHR Applied Research Collaboration (ARC) North East and North Cumbria (NENC) by the University of Cumbria concluded a number of positive outcomes for young people. These focus primarily on personal agency, positive life experiences and health outcomes.



"I enjoy being at the allotment & being around nature because it's calming & relaxed"

## Green Mentor

The Green Influencers scheme encourages young people aged 10 to 14-years-old to create meaningful connections with the natural environment and implement positive, long-lasting change in their communities through environmental social action projects. Young people benefit from ongoing mentoring and expert advice from our Green Mentor to support in the design and delivery of impactful projects and contacting relevant community members.

To date our Green Mentor has enabled young people to secure

**£11,880**

to support their ideas and sustain their projects across schools and youth groups.

**120** young people, 80 from schools & 40 across youth groups have become Green Influencers

"Fun! I felt I was a part of something really special and was really proud"



"I found more confidence in putting my hand up. I found stuff more interesting and inspirational"

# 3 Physical Health

## Holiday Activities

In the summer holidays we ran a jam packed schedule of fun activities as part of the NBSE programme, including forest school, surfing, gardening & cookery sessions at Walker Workers Week.

**61** young people attended

**120** young people also attended WOW Week



“I want to take part so that I spend more time outside in nature”



## Couch to 2k

The Couch to 2K project is designed to increase the amount of physical activity that young people take part in; promotes being outside in nature, with all of the health benefits that it brings; whilst also having fun & meeting new people, in a fun and light-hearted manner.

“I’ve liked being able to see how many steps I do every day, so I know I’m doing more than I used too”

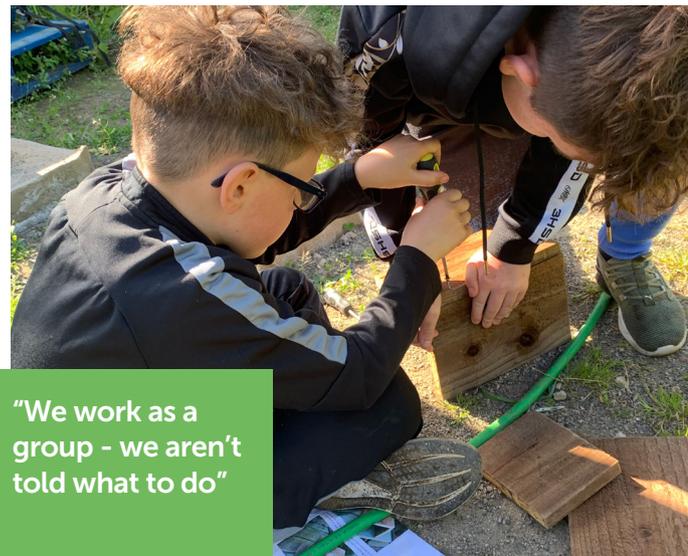
**17** participants

**100%** completed the course

## Allotment

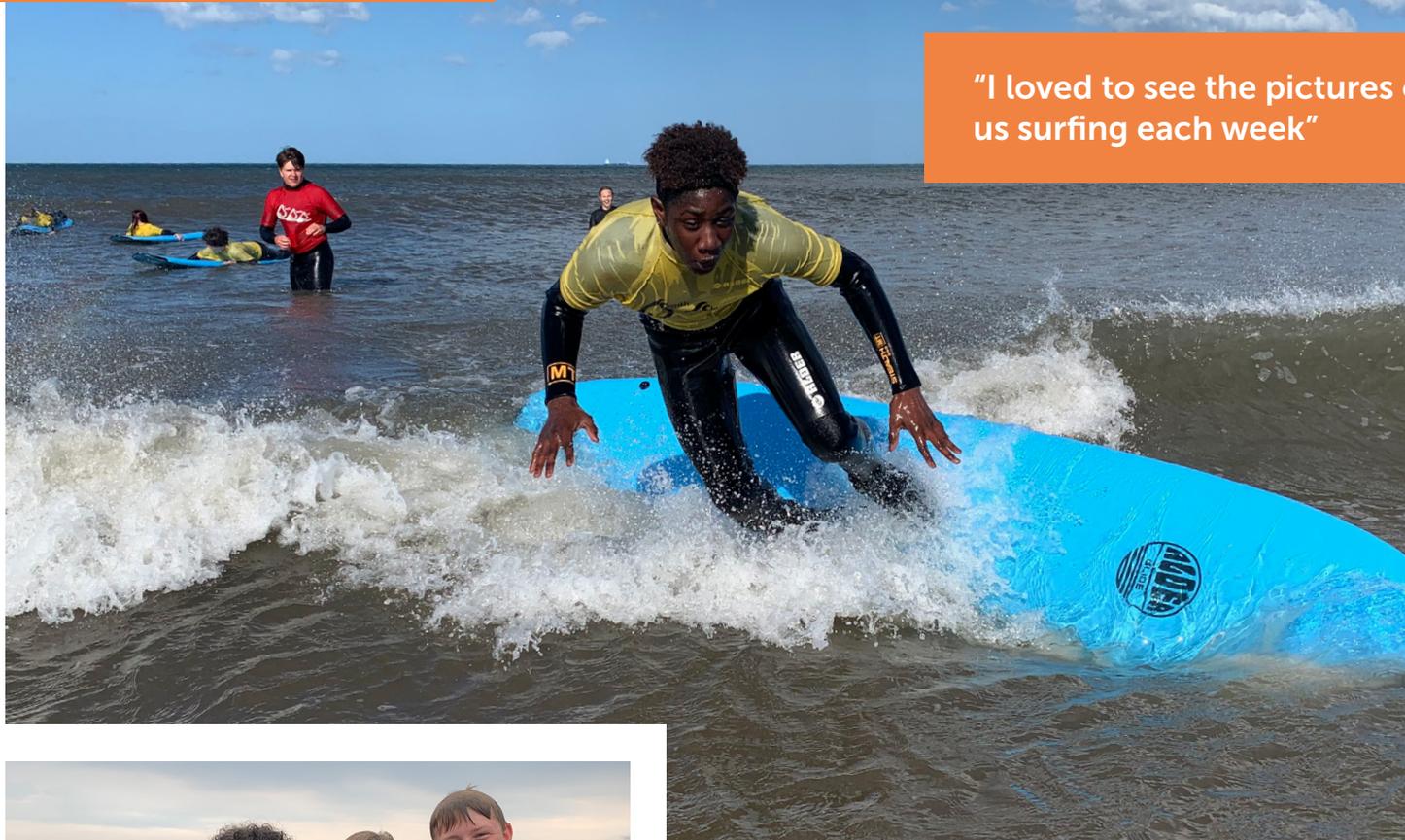
Our allotment provides young people with an engaging communal space to improve their social and emotional well-being. Young people are encouraged to work together and think creatively to improve this outdoor space, allowing them to create lasting and meaningful connections with the natural environment.

**14** young people take part in the allotment



“We work as a group - we aren’t told what to do”

"It's cool to try something I've never done before"



"I loved to see the pictures of us surfing each week"



## Surfing

Surfing takes place as part of the summer and Easter activities as well as a six week after school programme. These sessions help to increase confidence, overcome fears, learn new skills & develop lasting relationships.

Number of young people to take part in Surfing

**16**

in partnership with South Shields Surf School



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