

Because You

Believe

Summer 2020

Believe in
children
 Barnardo's

You've helped
children like
Winners cope
with lockdown



Children's voices

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people's creativity
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Welcome to your latest issue of **Believe!**

Hi. I'm Marisa, I'm 16 and I live in East London. I'm really excited to have been asked to introduce this issue of *Believe*.

Barnardo's have been a big part of my life ever since I first came to their Young Carers Service in 2018. At the time, I was caring for my mum who has diabetes and uses a wheelchair. It was hard work. I was having breakdowns at school and struggling to keep up.

Usually, every Tuesday after school, I go to the Young Carers Club at the local Barnardo's Wellbeing Hub. I get a chance to do my homework and meet up with other young carers who have been going through the same as me. It makes me feel like I'm not alone. It's helped me a lot.

During lockdown, I haven't been able to go to the Young Carers Service as usual, but the project workers there have been checking in with me by phone every week. I'm coping OK – and I know they're always there for me.

In this copy of *Believe* you can read about some more young people that your generosity has helped, and find out how they have been finding lockdown. Harley, Winners, and Martin and David have a lot to thank you for – just like I do.

Thanks so much for making so much amazing work possible!

Marisa

Marisa went on radio to talk about being a young carer and was surprised by her idol, pop star Billie Eilish



You're helping children and young people to **express themselves**

Ren shared this picture of their amazing make-up skills and told us how Barnardo's has helped them during lockdown.

"Barnardo's have helped me with so much. I used to sleep on a broken sofa bed where the bed wouldn't pull out and I had to sleep more or less sitting up every night. Barnardo's helped me get a new bed at the start of lockdown. They also brought us food parcels and sanitary products.



Having Young Carers meeting calls every week during lockdown has been so helpful too! I'm able to see all of the wonderful people I've been lucky enough to make friends with this past year. Barnardo's encourages me to be me. Which is probably why I love them most to be honest.

Throughout lockdown, they've helped me continue with my love for makeup and fashion and have supported me throughout my experience of becoming and presenting as my true self."

This artwork was created by six-year old Summer during lockdown. She's supported by one of our fostering services. The service recruits, trains and supports foster carers so they can provide a safe, nurturing home environment for children and young people who can't be looked after by their own family.

Social distancing rules have been followed in the taking of all photos during lockdown.



We believe in Martin and David

In 2018 Martin and David met the twin brothers who had been in care since they were tiny babies and were soon to become their adoptive parents.

David shares how, with help from Barnardo's, he and Martin gave the twins the loving, stable home they needed:

"In the beginning the process felt very overwhelming and there were a lot of forms to complete, but the support workers guide you through it and Barnardo's provides three days of training where you get to meet other adoptive parents which is really useful and reassuring.

We saw the first photos of the boys in January 2018 and within five and half months we were able to have them move into our home. We were really lucky as it was a relatively fast process. It took a while for the boys to get used to us. They had been living with their foster carer

for 16 months and she had done a lot of work with the boys,

explaining to them about us through pictures and videos that we would be their 'forever family.'"

Martin continues:

"As a couple I think we both feel we have been really lucky. We have had the most amazing journey with Barnardo's and I am so grateful to them for everything they have done for us. Right from the first moment we contacted them, Barnardo's have given us the very best training and support.

"In the first few weeks it was emotionally difficult for the boys as they were so young when they came to us and didn't really understand what was happening. They are really attached to us and realise that the person who they were staying with was almost like a 'temporary parent', someone who was there to keep them safe but not their permanent parents.

"The boys are very lively and outgoing and have a lot of energy. They enjoy playing and we often take them to the nearby park. We do all the same things that any other family does together and we have never experienced any

negative words or comments from other people as same-sex parents.

"We became parents because we wanted to become dads – that was the most important thing, but I do think I am quite proud of also being a same-sex parent. But if you had said to the 16-year-old me that one day I would get married and become a father, I would never have believed it.

"Society has changed so much in recent years and I see it with the children at school. It's amazing to see the transformation and I think it's great that Barnardo's are able to help other same-sex couples realise their dreams of becoming parents.

Having the boys at home during the Coronavirus lockdown was initially challenging, but we were able to give them one-to-one support and they

have progressed well in their education. It was positive having them at home.

I feel we got to know them more and we would spend time playing in the local park. The extra time we were able to enjoy together as a family was very beneficial to their emotional health and wellbeing."

The number of
children needing foster
care has risen by

44%

during the pandemic while the number of people looking to become foster parents plummeted by nearly half compared to last year. If you want to find out more about fostering and adoption visit [barnardos.org.uk/what-we-do/fostering-and-adoption](https://www.barnardos.org.uk/what-we-do/fostering-and-adoption)

Martin and David were delighted to adopt the twins in 2018



Keeping on during crisis

With your help, we were able to keep so much vital work going during lockdown.

Mary works with families that have young children with severe developmental delay.

During lockdown, she couldn't see any families face to face but she provided essential support over the phone or using video chat: "You come off the phone from someone who says 'I feel a lot better now.' That makes a huge difference – and it impacts the children in those families because if the parents are not feeling supported and secure they can't pass that feeling onto the child. By supporting us, you are building brighter futures for people all across the UK. Thank you so much."



Thanks to our generous partner, IKEA, we delivered Life at Home packs to young people leaving care. These have helped young people feel more at home in their own space.

hello

To see more of the impact your support has had during lockdown visit barnardos.org.uk/because-you-believe



Our Employability, Training and Skills services had to adapt when lockdown started. Learners were at an immediate risk of dropping out of their classes when they were unable to physically attend. Our Crisis appeal paid for tablets and laptops that enabled them to connect online.

"I am so thankful for the tablet. I have used it to search for Care Assistant jobs and courses. It's helped me a lot." Shifa

Protecting mental health and wellbeing has been crucial. Along with regular check-ins from project workers, young people like Rebecca received items that would help during difficult months:

"You lot are seriously amazing, thank you so much. I've started on both colouring books and it's really helped me keep calm and given me focus."

Thank you

"I just want to say thank you for the board game and gym gloves. It helped my brother, sister and I spend time together – we've been playing the board game non stop since we got it!"

Bailey



This is Rhydian and his pack – he loves it!

Support from our Crisis appeal meant Sarah Rowe, team manager at one of our disability support services, and her team could put together mental health and wellbeing packs.

"We wanted them to be purposeful, reinforcing the advice we give to families; but also bespoke, with something special to suit each family and bring them together."

One of the parents thanked us: "Dylan said that when he coloured one of the pictures in the book it calmed him down from an angry state. They are so excited to get started. Thank you, this is so generous!"



Stronger families

We believe in

Winners

Your support is helping Winners cope with the demands of caring for his brother.

My name is Jon and I'm the manager of a Barnardo's Young Carers service. Let me tell you about one of the young carers we've been working with – 11-year old Winners.



Winners spends a lot of his time looking after Elliott, his nine-year old brother. Elliott is autistic, has Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, and needs a lot of care. That's why Winners helps his mum, Stella, with things like bathing, dressing and feeding Elliott.

Winners is one of more than 90 young people who are supported by my

team here at his local Barnardo's Young Carers service. Usually, Winners gets a break from the daily stresses and strains of caring for Elliott. He can spend time having fun with other young people who care for a loved one, and who know exactly what he's going through.

Winners told me: **"I like going to Young Carers because I meet young people with brothers and sisters with problems. Before I used to think I was the only person with a disabled brother."**

It's so good for Winners' wellbeing to know that he's not alone. But, best of all, he loves the trips and activities that we organise, which help him leave his troubles behind and just enjoy being a child.



During lockdown, Winners has been getting regular, one-to-one support over the phone from Claire, his project worker here at the service. It gives him a chance to talk about anything that may be worrying him during this tricky time.

That's really important because lockdown is not proving easy for

During lockdown Winner's mum, Stella, said:

"When the weather is good, we're able to get out into the garden but we can't go to our local park and being inside more has been hard on everyone. Although Young Carers can't meet at the moment, Winners has been given online resources to help him.

One of the activities he's been encouraged to do is cooking and Winners has enjoyed making cakes and pizzas. He's definitely getting better in the kitchen!"

Thanks to you the service has adapted so that it still provides essential support for Winners and other young people like him.

the family. Elliott doesn't understand why he can't go to school. He's been more anxious than normal and his behaviour even more unpredictable.

Being a young carer can have such a huge impact on a child or young person's social life, on their education and on their mental health. But, thanks to your support, Winners is getting the kind of help that can make all the difference.

A great start for marvellous little ones!

Have you ever noticed how inquisitive babies are? It's because they're forming a huge part of their understanding of the world. And a really important aspect of that is figuring out that they're an individual. It's an essential part of early learning.

Barnardo's has developed a programme called PEEP – Peer Early Education Partnership – which teaches parents and carers to help babies and toddlers develop their own identities through talking, playing, singing and sharing books and other activities.

Sarah, who runs PEEP at Starting Well Partnership – Wyre Forest Parenting & Community Team, told us: “A lot of our families who attend find it hard to come up with different play ideas for their children. Many of our parents have forgotten how to relax and play or maybe haven't ever been given the chance themselves so it doesn't come naturally. I love the fact that PEEP activities take it back to basics and create fun learning activities with very little cost and effort involved.”

Ordinarily, courses like PEEP are taught in a group. Coronavirus made that impossible – but we worked hard to adapt the program so that families can still do as much as they can to get their children off to a good start, in these vital early months and years.

We are giving parents ongoing support with sessions over the phone and have

prepared special packs crammed full of resources and ideas to help them. These include photographs taken during previous sessions and plenty of ideas for creating an 'All About Me' booklet that children can use as a memory book and a scrapbook for future lessons.

It's just one of the ways you're allowing us to help families who really need us during these unprecedented times.

The *Marvellous Me* kit is just one of the ways they can do this. Children are encouraged to fill a box with photographs, drawings, favourite toys and other special items they treasure. They can then explore the contents together with their grown-up and, in doing so, celebrate 'Becoming Me.' It's a lovely way of helping a very young child understand their own individuality. Find out more at barnardos.org.uk/because-you-believe



Remembering childhood

My twin brother Ian and I grew up in Barnardo's care and I want to share our story with you.

We were just six months old when we were taken in by Barnardo's. For those first few years, we were looked after by a young Barnardo's nursery nurse called Miss Bourne. She was the first family we knew.

As we grew up, Barnardo's was always there for us – and so was Miss Bourne.

As children, she'd visit and take us out for the day. And as she got older, we did

the same for her – right up until she died at the age of 95.

People ask why I don't just forget about Barnardo's. But how can I? Barnardo's were my childhood. That's why I've remembered them in my Will, so that more children like us are not forgotten.

A gift in your Will is a special way to mark the experiences that shape you – and pass on the gift of childhood to future generations.

Remembering loved ones during unprecedented times

The pandemic has presented challenges and worries for all of us. Psychologists believe that what we've experienced as a community is close to grief: for the freedom to live our lives as we once did, for being suddenly isolated from friends and loved ones, and for dealing with an uncertain future.

However, anyone coping with those feelings while also having to process the death of a loved one will have experienced a different kind of turmoil.

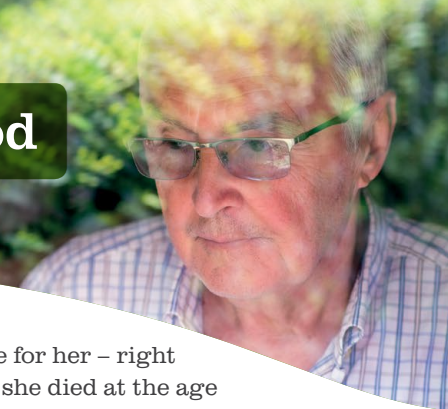
If you lost someone recently or had an anniversary of losing someone, being

able to grieve and celebrate the life of your loved one might have been harder during lockdown.

Setting up a **Tribute Fund** in honour of someone you have lost is a wonderful way of creating a special space filled with memories of your loved one. It can easily be set up, and allows friends and family to come together to share pictures, stories and memories.

It's a very special way of supporting vital work that meant so much to a departed loved one – and a fitting tribute to their memory.

To find out more about setting up your own Tribute Fund for a loved one, visit muchloved.com/CreateMemorial



We believe in

Harley

18-year old Harley from Birmingham went into care with her two younger sisters when she was just six years old. Right now, she's about to leave care.

She told us about some of her hopes for the future and how she's working with Barnardo's to help make life better for other young care leavers.

Q: Hi Harley, can you tell us what your experience of growing up in care has been like?

A: I've been with my current foster carers for the past 10 years and they have been amazing – the best carers I could have asked for. They offered me stability, love and support.

Q: Is there anything about leaving care that you are worried about?

A: I'm ready to leave the care system now and want to have my own independence. However I think the biggest challenge or worry for me – and perhaps other care leavers – is the loneliness. Other people take company for granted. Care leavers often struggle financially and can't always afford the transport costs to visit their mates. It can be lonely for them sat alone in their flat without real human contact.

And lockdown has made it even harder for a lot of care leavers like me who were already feeling isolated.

Q: How did you cope on your own during lockdown?

A: It was a bit difficult with money to begin with because I was at home the whole time so I had to spend more money on electricity and that kind of thing. But, in general, after that it's been the new norm really. My foster parents have been helping me so it's been alright. I also got a laptop with support from Barnardo's, so now I can do my college work. Lockdown is okay.

Q: What are your plans for the future?

A: The experiences I had when I was younger have helped me become who I am today. And that's why I want to be a foster carer for Barnardo's. I want to support other young people the way I was supported through everything.

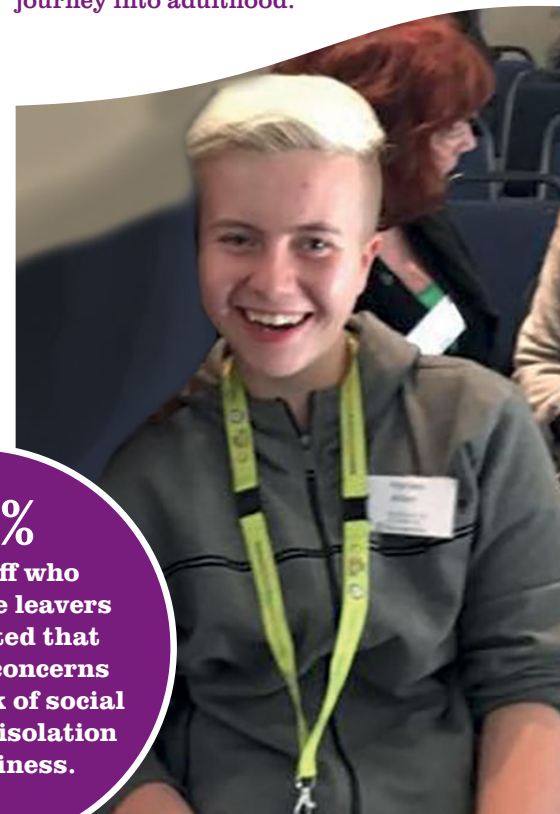
Q: Can you tell us about the work you're doing with Barnardo's?

A: There used to be youth centres for care leavers in Birmingham but I don't think there is a single one left now. As part of a care leaver project with Barnardo's, I'm hoping to change that. I'm also going to be training Barnardo's staff so they can better understand LGBTQ+ issues.

Q: Do you have any other personal ambitions or dreams?

A: As well as being a foster carer I want to also join the Royal Navy as a reservist. I've always wanted to join one of the Armed Forces and I chose the Navy because I absolutely love the sea. I also love cooking so I'd love to be a chef on a submarine.

Thanks to your wonderful support, Barnardo's is there for young people like Harley all over the UK who are leaving care and beginning their journey into adulthood.



38%
of our staff who support care leavers have reported that their main concerns are their lack of social interaction, isolation and loneliness.

Our Stay at Home Heroes made the best of lockdown!

Throughout the crisis, our supporters inspire us every single day with their dedication and commitment to Barnardo's.



Jamie runs 10k a day!

Before lockdown, Jamie was a volunteer at our Portlethen Charity Shop. He told us:

"Since the shop has had to temporarily close and therefore is unable to receive

donations and raise money, I thought it would be a great idea to set up my own fundraiser to try to help out."

That's why, during lockdown, Jamie ran 10k **every day** for 21 days to raise vital funds for Barnardo's. So far, he's raised over £500.

"I am really pleased that friends and family want to support my fundraiser and the great work that Barnardo's do."

Thank you Jamie – you're a hero!

Sapphira finishes her triathlon!

Sapphira works with young people living in our supported accommodation. Recently, she decided to take part in Barnardo's **iTRI** challenge, which is a long-distance triathlon participants can do in their own time over the course of a month. When her young people heard about it, several of them were inspired to give it a go as well. Sapphira was delighted because she knows how good exercise can be for self-esteem and mental health.

"For me and the young people I support, doing a triathlon is something we never

thought was possible to achieve, but by doing it over a month we could adapt it so we could all participate.

I was at the gym most nights. But then lockdown happened! The gym and the pools were all closed. I had to walk the remaining miles I had for all three categories. I'd come this far and wasn't going to let lockdown stop me.

Well done Sapphira – we're so proud of you!



Wendy swims 40 miles – in a hot tub!

As an athlete who swam solo across the English Channel in 2003, Wendy is used to swimming long distances. She had been in training to swim the length of Lake Windermere in September, but when lockdown happened, she wasn't able to train in the pool or in the sea as usual.

So she decided to do something quite unusual and set up a harness in her hot tub so she could swim there instead. Then she decided to swim a mile a day in the tub – and swam 40 miles in aid of Barnardo's.

"I thought I'd set this up to try and raise some money through my exploits for children who are suffering additional hardship during this awful time."

Great idea Wendy!

The Big Toddle

Sophie's big walk!

2-year old Sophie has a rare condition and, when she was born, doctors said she might not be able to walk. But Sophie's a very determined little girl! This spring she took part in Barnardo's **Big Toddle** and did a sponsored walk around her village to raise money for Barnardo's.



You're amazing Sophie!

To find out how you can raise vital funds for Barnardo's, go to barnardos.org.uk/get-involved

KIDSMAS

It's all about children

KIDSMAS WILL BE BACK IN 2020!

Visit **kidsmas.barnardos.org.uk** to register your interest and be the first to hear exciting news about Kidsmas 2020! This year Christmas will be different for all of us but we're here to make sure the festive season still is all about children.

HOPE YOU JOIN US!



Believe in
children



Barnardo's

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