



# AMAZON IMPACT REPORT

Kidsmas 2021



# INTRODUCTION FROM EMMA WHITCOMBE, DIRECTOR OF FUNDRAISING AND MARKETING



**2021 was an incredibly challenging year for the children, young people and families which Barnardo's supports.**

- 4 in 5 children with existing mental health difficulties experienced worsening mental health and wellbeing during the pandemic.
- Youth colleagues across Barnardo's services found that over a third of children and young people they interviewed reported significant isolation.
- We heard time and time again about the stories of young carers and care leavers feeling particularly lonely during this time – missing the support networks that others may have.

Barnardo's Kidsmas Campaign was therefore never as vital as during this Christmas, bringing hope, joy and festive cheer after such a difficult time.

Amazon's support allowed Barnardo's services to host Kidsmas parties across the UK, bringing our beneficiaries together to experience the magic of Christmas, and providing Christmas meals and presents to families who would have otherwise gone without.

Amazon's funding also helped fund Barnardo's wider work across the UK at Christmas, providing one to one tailored support for families struggling over the festive period, helping them to look towards the future with confidence.

Whilst lockdown restrictions are easing, we know that the challenges faced by our beneficiaries are not, and we are therefore incredibly grateful for Amazon's long term support, and are looking forward to working in partnership to support our local communities throughout 2022 and beyond.

**Thank you so much for everything, and we hope you feel proud reading our Kidsmas report and reflecting on what we have achieved together.**

**Yours,  
Emma Whitcombe**



# AMAZON'S KIDSMAS IMPACT

Amazon's Kidsmas donation provided grants to Barnardo's children's services to host Christmas activities across the UK, supporting vulnerable young people and families.

Amazon's donation also helped fund Barnardo's wider support with our beneficiaries during the festive season, bringing joy, hope and support for those feeling scared and alone.



## The Early Years Team at Atherstone Children and Family Centre would like to say a huge thank you for your donations from the Kidsmas Campaign with Amazon.

We purchased several sensory light items to help to create a child-safe Christmas Grotto atmosphere, which was set up for the last weeks session of every group before Christmas. This was set up as families wanted to take their children to see Father Christmas, unfortunately due to COVID and lots of restrictions families were not able to or felt comfortable to take their children anywhere.

As well as being used to create a Christmas atmosphere they have also been used for our sensory play sessions. Sensory items help to build up the nerve connections in a child's brain and enhance long-term cognitive development, helping children to develop the ability to complete more complex learning tasks, supporting language development, fine and gross motor skills, and problem-solving.

Our sensory sessions have become so popular we have needed to put three sessions on a week. We have received some lovely feedback from families. Once again thank you so much for your wonderful donations, these have been very much appreciated by staff and our families.



# KIDSMAS ACTIVITIES ACROSS THE UK

## North Warwickshire District Children and Family Centre

We purchased a number of sensory light items to help to create a 'child-safe' Christmas grotto atmosphere.

## Warwick District Children's and Family Centre

We made our last session before Christmas a celebration event, giving each child a gift to take home.

## Barnardo's Supported Lodgings (Midlands)

"We have used the money donated to our service to purchase a number of food vouchers (non-alcoholic) version, that have been shared between either families most in need (who have children on Child Protection Plans), or care leavers who had a particular need. Some of these care leavers may either have been moving into their own accommodation, others had a new baby to care for and so used the vouchers to buy essential items for themselves and baby.

"The rest of the money was used to purchase some smart Skull Candy headphones, and then given to young people as Christmas gifts. As a service we are always blessed with donations of gifts from other local organisations, but typically they are presents most sorted for younger children and older young people have been left with shower gels and a selection box! For that cohort of young people, such a lovely quality present will be very well received."

## Nuneaton District Children and Family Centre

We created a sensory area for parents and babies, providing a calming environment and encouraging close interaction at Christmas.

## Bristol Care Leavers

We hired an entertainer for our Christmas party event, and purchased food vouchers for young people to have a Christmas meal.



## Wiltshire Short Breaks

We purchased party food and toys for young people with disabilities at our clubs (fidget toys were very popular...)



## Bays+ Leaving Care Service

We run a large service for care leavers, young people who are threatened with homelessness and young people estranged from their families and living in supported lodgings. This equates to over 300 service users.

Amazon's donation helped us reach as many service users as possible with 4 Christmas parties, including one for our young care leaver parents with their children. We also visited to Swansea's Winter Wonderland after the party.



## Fulbridge Child & Family Zone

We hosted a Christmas party celebration for 50 children who are attending or have attended our Healthy Activity and Food project (HAF), these children are in receipt of Free School Meals due to parent's low income.



## Rotherham Young Carers

We created Christmas Wellbeing packs for the young carers we work with across working with throughout Rotherham, Doncaster and Barnsley.

## Amazon Doncaster

We purchased gifts and vouchers for our families, which we distributed at our Christmas party.

## Priory Family Centre Sibling Support

We purchased tickets for local our local Christmas Pantomimes and took our families for a really special evening out before Christmas.

## Water Lane Children's Home

We decorated the service and provided a party for the children living within the Barnardo's residential services locally.

## Bow and Wetherall Nursery

"All the items we purchased, the Santa outfits and the elf, balloon arches a snowflake projector, balloons, Santa's post box ... the list goes on!"

"Thank you so much, the children and the staff had a great day, it would not have been as special without all the new decorations to make it so Christmassy!"

## Milton Keynes Short Breaks

Our service provides respite for children and young people with disabilities (around 100 access the service). We threw a Christmas party, including a sensory toy to take home as a gift, sensory toys can be expensive and unfortunately some families cannot afford them so it was really nice for us to do this.

## Broadwater Family Centre

We used the money for resource / activity packs for Children including Christmas gifts and hampers – thanks so much Amazon.

## Acorn Activities

We booked a venue for our party to provide a special experience for our families.

## Children and Parent Services, South Manchester

Amazon's donation helped fund our Big Manchester Winter Event (Christmas party).

## Action With Young Carers Wirral

We bought all our young carers a new pair of pyjamas for Christmas and to provide them with a gift voucher for them to purchase a small gift of their choosing. We also have some food only vouchers which we will also be providing to families.

## Salford Children's Rights Service

A Christmas party for looked after children and care leavers from Salford. The funds covered food, room hire, presents/ stockings and activities.

## Gresley Road Family Centre

We organised a Christmas party over 3 days for our service users, we funded party food/ games, decorations and presents for each of the children. We also hired a Father Christmas to hand out the presents for the children.



## Pause Durham

Many of our women will be alone at Christmas so made the lead up to Christmas as special as possible with a party.

## Newcastle Community Family Hub East Team

Christmas parties for children and families where SEND is a feature across the rural isolated district of Eden, Cumbria as well as those adversely impacted by COVID Hardship or more recently flooding.

## Liverpool Transition, Preparation and Moving On service

We organised Christmas party activities for the young people within the residential children's home.

## Bedford IV Service

In Bedford we have the Independent Visitor Service, this is a service for children living in care. We match the children with a volunteer adult so that they can build a positive trusting relationship and have fun together, there are around 40 young people that access the service. Their visits usually take place individually but Amazon's funding allowed us to host a Christmas event to invite them all along to together through bowling give them all a present of their choice too.

## The Base in North Tyneside

The donation enabled us to provide a Christmas 2021 'surviving and achieving' following Covid awards celebration and party. We recognised what the children and young people have been through during the pandemic and mark this Christmas in terms of what they have achieved throughout this most difficult time.



# KIDSMAS CASE STUDIES

## Warwick District Children and Family Centres

“We are very grateful of this donation for our families it has made such a difference.”

The generous donation from Amazon enabled us to offer Christmas themed events for each group we support on their last session before Christmas. These were multi-sensory events and we purchased rotating disco lights and Bluetooth speakers to play music.

All parents and Children received a small gift to take away, gifts for children were fun, sensory, educational toys to carry on their learning at home and parent’s gifts were centred around their wellbeing.

We recognise that things have been tough for parents and they need encouragement to take care of their wellbeing to provide the best care for their children. For some parents this will be the only gift they receive this Christmas.

These items were enjoyed by all and will enable us to continue to provide multi sensory environments as an ongoing activity throughout the year so the enjoyment and impact will be long term in our centres.



Comments received included:

“AWW HOW LOVELY. YOU EVEN THOUGHT OF ME. THANK YOU, I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!”

“WOW THIS IS LOVELY OF YOU GUYS, THANK YOU VERY MUCH. I BET IT WILL BE OPENED BEFORE CHRISTMAS.”

“NOW I CAN DO THE THINGS WITH HER THAT WE DO IN THE SESSION THAT SHE LOVES!”

“THE PRESENTS WERE VERY THOUGHTFUL AND COVERED MANY LEARNING DEVELOPMENT AREAS FOR THE CHILDREN. THE ADULT PRESENT WAS A LOVELY IDEA TOO.”

“WOW HOW THOUGHTFUL! WE LOVE THIS BOOK!”

“THIS WILL REALLY HELP WITH TUMMY TIME!”

“THAT'S SO KIND, I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU THOUGHT OF MUMS AS WELL!”

All of the resources purchased will enable us to add value to further activities and sessions for more families attending our groups in the future. The families had lots of fun and are able to continue their learning at home with lots of ideas. Thanks so much Amazon for your donation.



# KIDSMAS CASE STUDIES

## Liverpool Transition, Preparation and Moving On service

“All our Young People had a terrific time taking part in all the listed activities. It was great to see them having fun, laughing and building on their relationships together as well as them seeing staff having fun with them. We also bought extra Christmas decorations for the home as it is quite a large home with 2 lounges, a large hallway and 3 floors to fill.”

“The young people were all given £30.00 each out of the money to buy presents for their family members, all were very excited about it as they had never been given that much before to buy presents for family members. The kids said it was the best Christmas they had as it was jam packed with activities and they got to experience things they had not before like the Christmas panto and theatres, plus ice skating which has been on their hit list for a while.”

“It was lovely to see the young people just being kids having fun.”

## Fulbridge Child and Family Zone

“We hosted a Christmas party for 50 of our beneficiaries, with party games including pass the parcel and a magician who entertained the children for over an hour. Every child received a £15 gift (average cost) each child got a box of fidget toys.”



“The children loved the games and magician. When being given their presents by the elf (Santa was isolating ready to give out the presents to all the children over the world), they were observed to say ‘Really is this all for us’ ‘this is the best Christmas ever’. When asked what could have been better the response from many of the children was ‘nothing’. When asked if they enjoyed themselves every child put their hand up for yes. The children smiled, danced and played for the whole party.”

“The children didn’t appear to want to leave as they were very happy playing. The children were mesmerised by the magician who was really engaging with all the children (and adults); the children were following the magician out of the door! The response to the presents (fidget toys) was deafening. The excitement was palpable. It was lovely to see the joy of all the children.”

“The staff were unanimous when one of them commented that ‘this is what it is all about and it makes all the hard work worthwhile’.”





# THANK YOU!

**We hope you feel really proud reading this report of the impact we have achieved together, and the joy we have brought for children, young people and families across the UK this Christmas.**

In the meantime, we will leave you with the words of Sarah Rowe, our service manager for Barnardo's Bridgend Disability Support Service in Swansea, who says, "We would like to thank you for your kind donation. With your help, we were able to treat our young people to some fun festivities and give them some lovely gifts.

"We organised a Christmas party for the young people to enjoy food and get involved in some arts and crafts in making their own Christmas decorations. We were able to plan a trip to Swansea's Waterfront Winterland. They really had fun on the rides, tasted some amazing food to gliding on ice. A comment from one of the girls was "You guys don't realise how much this means to us, we don't really get opportunities to do fun things like this, thank you guys".

**"OUR YOUNG PEOPLE WERE GIVEN A CHRISTMAS GIFT BAG WITH CHOCOLATES AND SOME GOODIES TO WISH THEM A MERRY CHRISTMAS. THANK YOU AMAZON FOR YOUR KINDNESS AND GENEROSITY, WE REALLY APPRECIATE IT."**

