

Because You

Believe

Summer 2023

**Believe in
children
Barnardo's**



**You've helped
Dasha and Jake
make a change**

Children's voices

Experience the life of a young carer through their comic book

Page 3

Help make a difference this summer

Find out more about our campaign inside and sign the petition

Page 6

Amplifying the voice of young people

Sara fills us in on her voice and influence work

Page 12



Dasha



Jake

A warm welcome to your brand new summer edition of **Believe!**

Hi! I'm Dasha, a young carer, and I'm Jake, a care experienced young person.

This summer newsletter is filled with children and young people's voices speaking up for what they believe in and what they deserve. Thank you for listening, and for supporting them.

On page 8, read about our day at 10 Downing Street and find out about the free school meals petition we delivered. One in four children live in poverty, and everything is going up except for pay, so it's vital Barnardo's calls out the government on children going hungry. Thanks to all of you who signed.

Barnardo's summer appeal is super important because we need to make sure children who've been exploited get specialist help, which doesn't always happen. Many children are more at risk of being exploited in the summer holidays, away from school. Read more on pages 6 to 7.

Remember reading about Sara speaking truth to power on the internet's effect on children? Well she's back on pages 12 to 13, telling you more about her amazing voice and influence work.

That just leaves us to wish you a lovely summer – stay safe and enjoy your latest issue of *Believe*. We believe in your kindness and compassion – thank you for believing in young people like us!

Dasha & Jake 😊

Kapow! BOOM! BAM!

Young carers use comics to highlight their experience

Our Aberdeen Young Carers got together with staff from Aberdeen City Libraries and Magic Torch Comics to create the 'We Care' comic book. And we're sure you'll agree that it reads with a pow, zap, wham – showing not just the good times but all the challenges too.

"I enjoyed learning about how to properly make a comic book. You can potentially be an amazing author if you put your mind and heart into it!"

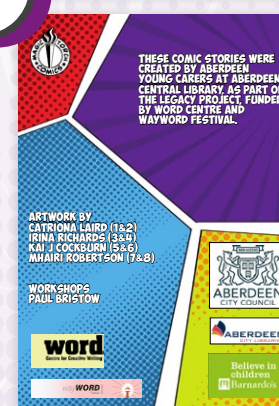
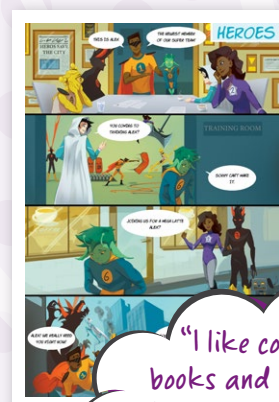
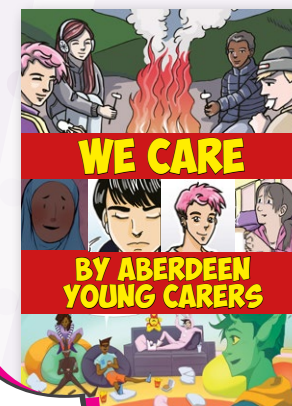
Dante, 14

"I like comic books and I enjoy drawing, so it was really good to take part"

Cameron, 12



Read the finished result for yourself at:
www.barnardos.org.uk/we-care-comic



We believe in

Olivia

We support young people to support themselves



Our Mental Health and Wellbeing service in Fife may only have launched 18 months ago, but it's already been accessed by 1,259 children, young people, parents and carers. Team Manager, Morgan Roth, says, "Things have already increased this year as more young people know that we're here."

Olivia, 13, has been supported by the service, and tells us about her experience.

"My mum emailed the service because I had depression and anger issues, which started after an abusive situation I'd been in. Laura, one of the Barnardo's workers, came to my house and asked why I wanted to get

support from the service. I explained how I was feeling and that I wanted to feel better.

"We then met at the Barnardo's office and I spent the first session explaining how I was feeling. I worked on breathing exercises and learning distraction tactics to occupy myself with things I enjoy, like drawing, when I got angry. It did help me to calm down.

"Whenever I was feeling down, I could text Laura and she'd take me out. She was always there at the end of the phone if I needed help, and we could meet up and go for a coffee and a chat."

After the support she received, Olivia is feeling better about life and is keen for

"Speak to someone about it and don't keep it bottled up – that just makes everything worse. I'm in a better place and not as stuck as I was before, being angry a lot of the time. I feel more confident."

others in the same position not to keep their feelings inside.

Thank you for supporting us in helping children and young people manage their own mental health and wellbeing so they can thrive and grow.

*Olivia's story is true, however the name and image have been changed in order to protect the privacy of the children we help.

Morgan Roth, Team Manager
Fife Health and Wellbeing

"We're an early intervention service designed by and for young people aged five to 26. We're about educating, upskilling and supporting young people struggling with their mental health and wellbeing. What the young people told us is they want to do it for themselves.

What makes us different is that young people can get in touch with us directly – it doesn't need to be an adult, parent or teacher. And they don't need a diagnosis – we're here to help any child or young person experiencing anxiety, depression, trauma or issues with relationships or bereavement."



Want to learn more about the service?
Head over to www.barnardos.org.uk/wbffe
or use this QR code



No child should be left to cope alone after being exploited this summer

For many children, the summer holidays are a wonderful time where memories are made with family and friends. However, we're concerned some children could be at increased risk of sexual and criminal exploitation during the school holidays at a time when it's harder to spot.

As they spend less time with trusted adults and professionals, children become invisible – meaning the abuse is less likely to be reported. And the cost-of-living crisis leaves even more children exposed to exploitation, as many families struggle to afford the basics. Organised crime groups can use these as opportunities to contact, groom and exploit children.

Jess Edwards, Senior Policy Adviser at Barnardo's, says, "A seemingly simple offer of gifts, food or drink at a time of need can quickly be leveraged by criminals into a cycle of debt or exploitation."

Exploitation can have a devastating effect on a child. And, without expert support and protection, children who've been exploited can be targeted and harmed again. Specialist support is crucial to help them recover from this kind of trauma and rebuild their lives. Worryingly, though, children are going unsupported due to a lack of specialist services nationwide.

No child should be left to cope alone after being exploited. That's why we're calling on the government to invest in nationwide specialist support services, such as therapy and counselling, for all children experiencing exploitation.

In a recent poll of children, parents and carers:



60%

of parents think child exploitation is a significant issue in the UK.



36%

1 in 3 children are worried about not having money for activities this summer.



26%

1 in 4 parents say that they will struggle to afford activities such as childcare and holiday clubs.

Read more here

www.barnardos.org.uk/invisible-children



Clary's Story

Clary was supported by one of our child sexual exploitation services. It became the safe space she needed to openly speak about the way she's been feeling, and to feel understood.

Clary says, "My trans female identity has been part of me for as long as I can remember, but it was never something that was explained. When you have a gap in your understanding and no one to ask for advice, that's when you're vulnerable. I was primarily groomed online through social media sites, but I was also exploited in social settings."

Things changed when Clary was referred to Barnardo's.

"When I'm at Barnardo's, I know I'm in a safe and welcoming place. The project workers at Barnardo's don't

see you as a victim, but as a person with potential, hopes and dreams. The sessions are about moving forward, being heard and learning together."

*Clary's story is true, however certain visual and descriptive elements have been anonymised to protect the identities of the young people we help.



Join us in helping children recover and build their lives after devastating trauma. Please sign today.
www.barnardos.org.uk/sign-petition

14,000 of us have already signed the petition. Will you be next?

Young people take free school meals petition to 10 Downing Street



We called on the government to roll out free school meals for all primary school pupils in England – and **32,000** of you signed our petition! A big thank you – we couldn't have done it without you – or Dasha and Jake who took the petition to 10 Downing Street. We speak to them about the day.

What was taking the petition to 10 Downing Street like?

Jake: **Surreal – it was also an amazing experience to help make a difference to the lives of children and young people.**

More than **1 in 4** children in the UK (3.9 million) live in poverty (DWP, 2022.)

Why is it important to you?

Dasha: **It's sad kids have to worry if they're going to eat when they should be having fun with their friends. I felt proud to be a part of it because it's an important issue that affects a lot of children.**

Jake: **It was already hard to afford food – it's even harder now. Waking up as a child, I didn't know if I was going to get breakfast. Going to school**

knowing I had food there, and that might be the only meal I had that day, gave me something to look forward to. And some hope.

26% of parents said their child's mental health has worsened due to the situation (YouGov, 2022.)

What would you say to the Prime Minister?

Dasha: **There isn't enough support for low-income families and all children should have equal opportunities to be successful and achieve things. Free school meals is a step in the right direction to achieving that.**

The Mayor of London has committed to providing free school meals to primary school children in the 2023/24 school year, which is a positive step in ensuring that every child has at least one hot and healthy meal a day.



Watch Dasha and Jake hand in our free school meals petition at 10 Downing Street. www.barnardos.org.uk/jake-dasha

Working with businesses to support children and young people

Firecracker Ball fires up Yorkshire supporters

We're thrilled to announce the Firecracker Ball will once again be raising vital funds for the children we support.

Held at Ridding Park in Harrogate, the ball's supported by Yorkshire businesses and individuals, many of whom return every year. (And a big thank you to all of you!) This year's Firecracker Ball will be held on 11 November 2023.

The event has raised £3 million to help change children's lives over the past 21 years, last year alone making £210,000. Yorkshire businesses can promote their brand at a sparkling champagne reception, three-course dinner and spectacular evening's entertainment, all while raising funds for the children we support.



Tickets are available to groups of friends, corporates and individuals. Find out more, make a donation or buy tickets at www.thefirecrackerball.co.uk



Cooperating with Co-op



We couldn't be more excited about our new partnership with Co-op to bring about positive

change for children and young people UK-wide.

Co-op conducted research that found that over a third of young people feel the odds are stacked against them.

They want to address this by bringing communities together to raise £5 million for young people.



Want to get involved? Hop over to www.coop.co.uk/supportyoungpeople

Lynn Perry, Barnardo's CEO, says, **"Together, we're aiming to help young people access basic needs, like food, improve their mental wellbeing and create better opportunities for their future."**

We believe in Blake

Thank you for putting young people's mental health and wellbeing front and centre.



At Barnardo's, we're determined to address the mental health crisis among our children and young people. And, thanks to you, we can be there with the support they need and want. We speak to Blake, 14, who has been supported by our LINK Cumbria service.

Q: What has been your experience of mental health?

A: I first had anxiety when I was nine. A couple of years ago it got even worse, and I was worrying about body image. I had low mood and low self-esteem, I was in a dark place and seeing a future was difficult. I didn't do much and stayed in bed a lot, only leaving the house occasionally to go to school.

Q: What happened next?

A: My mum spoke to my GP, who suggested LINK Cumbria get in touch with her. She said that when Lucy from LINK first phoned she was like her guardian angel!

Q: How did LINK Cumbria help you?

A: My LINK worker was brilliant. She worked with me on a wellbeing plan to show up my strengths, and helped me understand what was going on so I could deal with the issues that were troubling me. She got other services to do things to help too.

78%

have increased self-awareness about the issues that affect their emotional wellbeing.

Q: Which other services were those?

A: She supported me in accessing LGBTQ+ youth provision and referred me to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAHMS). They've now given me an appointment.

Q: Has your life changed since you started working with LINK?

A: Yes! I've taken part in a dance show, which Mum was thrilled about. I go to school a lot more – it's definitely more enjoyable now. And Mum and I are going to meet the school to plan a part-time timetable. If it wasn't for the LINK service, I'd still be trying to hide myself away from the world. Now I can see my life, aspirations and things I might want to do.

66%

have better relationships with family and peers.

88%
of young people we worked with feel less isolated

What is LINK Cumbria?

LINK Cumbria is an emotional wellbeing service for children and young people aged five to 19 that works alongside GP practice teams. Each child works with their own LINK worker to discover what's important to them and find a solution that suits them as an individual. Since 2020, we've worked with over 500 children and young people.

If you'd like to get in touch, email us at linkcumbria@barnardos.org.uk or you can follow us on Instagram @LINKCumbria



*Blake's story is true, however the name and image have been changed in order to protect the privacy of the children we help.

1 in 6

young people in the UK have a probable mental health disorder (NHS Digital)

We believe in

Sara

We amplify, magnify
and turn up young
people's voices.

Sara is a care experienced young person who's been supported by Barnardo's for 12 years. She's deeply involved in our voice and influence work and started an internship role at the Ministry of Justice this July. Stories like Sara's are only possible with your support – thank you.

I first accessed the Barnardo's leaving care service when I was 17. They started by making sure I had life plans, from college onwards, and helped me develop general life skills. There were times I just needed checking in on, others when I needed weekly support. Now I call up as and when I need it.

So many people have been there for me

Emma was my leaving care worker – when I wasn't looking after myself, she was. When I was struggling with eating, she would eat a snack with me, as well being good with practical support, everything really. She's amazing.

Thank you for being there for young people like Sara – your support means they can meet their potential and lead fulfilling lives full of purpose.

Joanne from the care experienced team actively involves me. Recently, she set up a webpage about leaving care and asked for my opinions before publishing it – we edited it together.

Getting stuck into voice and influence

I've been involved in B-Amplified – the youth forum across all Barnardo's services – since last October. It's taken me all over the UK and I've met loads of people, all with different stories on how Barnardo's has supported us.

I was asked to take part in a couple of Barnardo's events with B-Amplified because, apparently, I'm good at speaking my opinions! I've been to parliament to get signatures for a care leaver pledge and the Conservative Party Conference to speak about the Online Safety Bill. I told them what I think needs to be included to protect children.

A new role

Jenny, who manages the Voice and Influence programme at Barnardo's, went to the Conference with me. When we were there, she found out about an internship at the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and sent me the link to apply.



Sara starts her internship role at the Ministry of Justice in July.



Before my interview, we had a call. I was stressed and close to withdrawing the application. Jenny was just like, no! She told me she believed in me, which was awesome to hear!

As an administrative officer in the Office of the Public Guardian at the MoJ, I'll be doing general admin, arranging meetings and filing. I feel a bit nervous but mostly I'm looking forward to it!

Voice and influence work gives you confidence. I've met and interviewed Lynn Perry MBE, Barnardo's CEO.

I've been on interview panels, having a say about whether people are a good fit for Barnardo's – I feel quite powerful when that happens!

Services spotlight



Spotlight on supporting children and young people with disabilities

Each issue, we take a look at one of the children's services your incredible support makes possible. This time, it's the turn of Brighton and Hove Link Plus. The service links children with physical and or learning disabilities with individuals and families in their communities to give them opportunities for new experiences, and their parents some downtime. We speak to Vicky Lloyd, Deputy Project Leader.



"Looking after a disabled child takes up lots of energy. All parents need a break at times, and a chance to recharge their batteries. But, for a lot of our families, it's not always easy to get informal arrangements in place. That's why we're here, and have been since 1998.

A break from the routine

We 'link' families in need of regular breaks with local people who can be part of a team around the child. And we're also on hand with child-centred fostering and short breaks for children and young people with a disability.

It's not just a way of supporting parents, of course, but gives children the chance to take part in fun activities they'd otherwise be excluded from. They get to share new experiences, such as paddle-boarding, cycling or going to the park – and socialise away from home.

Support inside the home

We also offer support in the child's own home, with children enjoying opportunities to experience new friendships, enrich their lives and feel included in their wider communities.



Crucially, parents have a chance to rest, catch up on household chores and spend one-on-one time with their other children.

We're always on the look-out for carers – it's a chance to give a little and gain a lot, and we'll carefully match you with a child and family to suit your lifestyle and commitments.



If you're based in the South East and would like to find out more, head over to www.barnardoslinkplus.co.uk or ring us for an informal chat on **01273 411767**.



Albie's story

Albie, 16, has a progressive neurological condition that affects his balance and impairs his vision, so he finds simple physical tasks such as tying shoelaces or reading text very challenging. He's been able to benefit from a Link Plus home support worker, Scott, and spends time with him at weekends.

Albie says, "**Scott is really fun and helps me participate in activities which I otherwise would struggle to do alone.**"

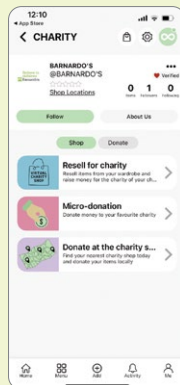
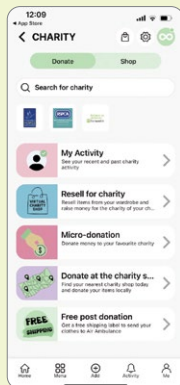
Scott adds, "**I think a lot of people assume they need to have parental experience and ideally children of their own to work with young people. It's far more important to possess universal human skills and be able to relate and communicate effectively.**"



We're so pleased to offer services like these to young people like Albie, and grateful to you for making it happen. Read more of Albie and Scott's story at www.barnardos.org.uk/albie-scott



Are you in the loop?



Did you know you can support Barnardo's by digitalising your unworn clothes and donating them to our virtual charity shop on Loop?

Sell in just one click and help raise vital funds for the children and young people we support. In return, you'll get benefits, discount coupons and other

rewards. You can also make micro-donations to us or find our addresses listed on the app, locate your local Barnardo's shop and donate to or shop with us directly.

Download via Android and App Store or visit www.loopdigitalwardrobe.com



The race is on!

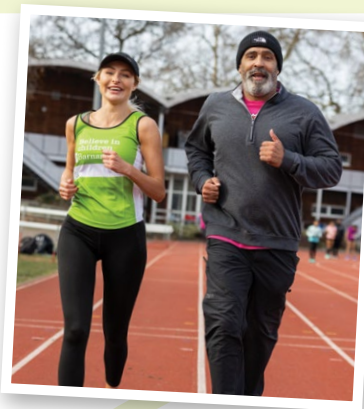
Special thanks to our amazing event fundraisers.

Mary ran the 2023 TCS London Marathon for Barnardo's, in memory of her granddad who'd spent time in Barnardo's care as a child.

"The support was fantastic. We had training sessions with Barnardo's ambassador, Olympic gold medallist Daley Thompson CBE."



Find out more and apply for one of our London Marathon places today at www.barnardos.org.uk/ldn-marathon



Believe in children



Barnardo's