



**Children and
Young People
Social Prescribing**

Believe in
children
 Barnardo's

Introduction to Barnardo's

Barnardo's is the UK's largest children's charity and one of the most comprehensive providers of integrated health and social care services for children and young people, bringing over 150 years' experience of supporting the most vulnerable.

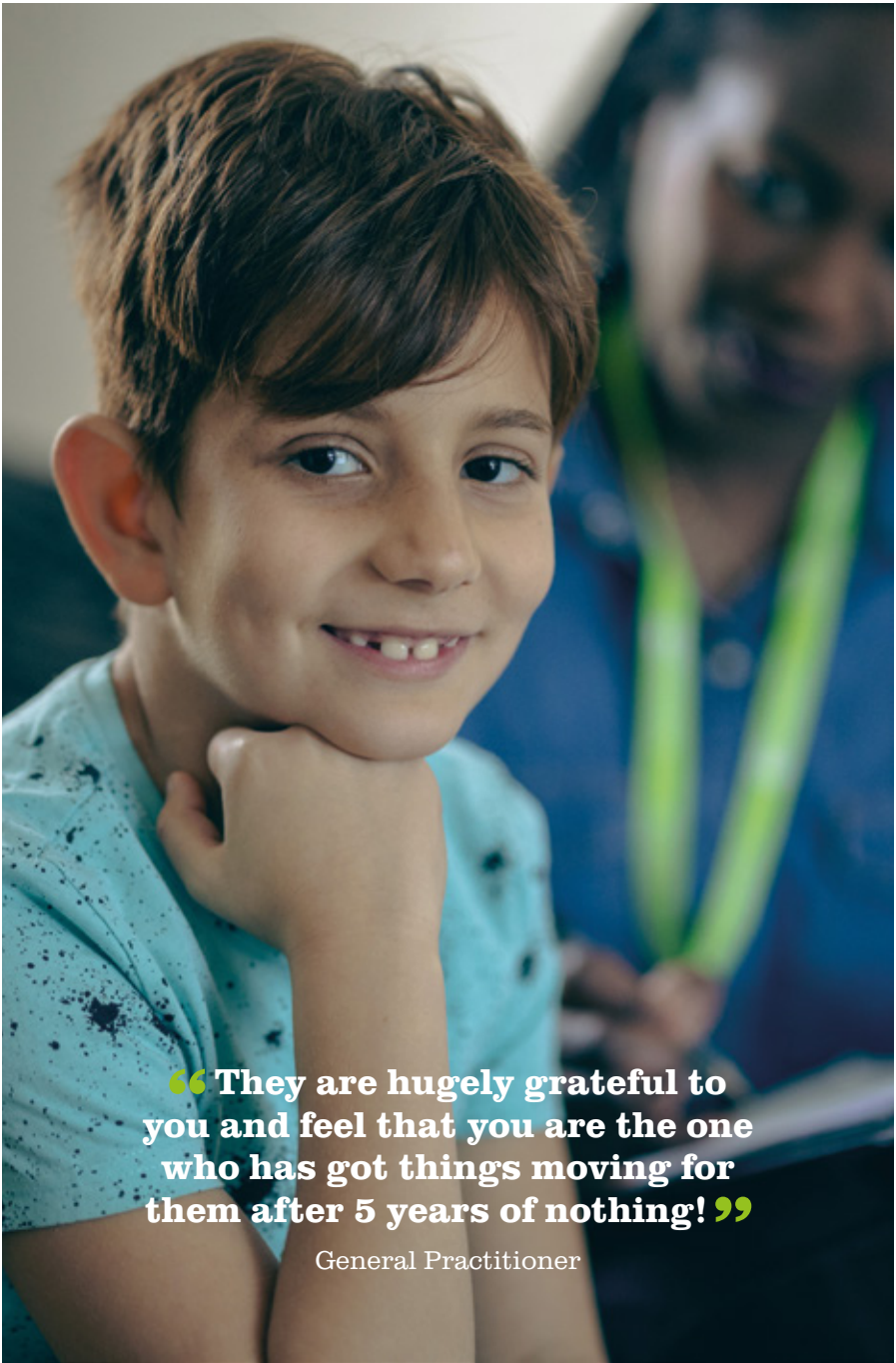
Promoting and improving child and family health and wellbeing is at the heart of our 800+ services. Since launching our first specialist counselling services 20 years ago, we now have 158 health services working in partnership with a range of commissioners including NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSEI), Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), Integrated Care Systems (ICSs), Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), Department for Education (DfE) and Local Authorities (LAs) to deliver cost-effective and innovative integrated health and wellbeing support.

Our services operate right across the spectrum of prevention, early intervention, targeted and specialist support in a variety of place-based settings across geographical footprints.

Our offer

Barnardo's delivers one of the largest children and young people social prescribing services in England. This service in Cumbria, called LINK, has supported over 320 children and young people aged 5 to 19 since March 2020. It is funded by three Primary Care Networks (PCNs) and meets a growing need for children's mental health services in primary care.

Social prescribing for children and young people is about developing non-medical solutions that improve wellbeing, mental health, physical health and connects children and young people to their family, friends and peers. Many of the young people we see through our service want support for low mood, anxiety, emotional wellbeing, peer pressure, self-esteem, weight management and relationships. 96% of our referrals are accepted.



“ They are hugely grateful to you and feel that you are the one who has got things moving for them after 5 years of nothing! ”

General Practitioner

Recent research shows that over 40% of GP appointments are for children and young people¹ and 21% of A&E admissions for children are classed as non-urgent². Social prescribing is an early intervention offer and, as a system solution, it can prevent escalation to CAMHS through meeting the child's needs much earlier on.

The support we provide is delivered over several 1:1 and group sessions. These are run by trained Children's Social Prescribing Link Workers who guide and listen using a range of support interventions. We use assessment tools using the signs of wellbeing and run drop-in sessions across a variety of settings as well as signposting onward. Importantly, we embed ourselves within the community and maximise relationships across our clinical partners and grassroots voluntary sector organisations. Social prescribing is an offer we can deliver across primary, secondary and acute care services.

The term "social prescribing" is used to describe the provision of workers to help children and young people socially connect to local well-being boosting services within their local communities.

Outcomes

Outcomes achieved by children and young people in Cumbria LINK service, after the support intervention³:



88%

**feel less
isolated**



78%


**have increased self-
awareness and feel able
to manage emotions**



66%

**experience positive
relationships with
friends and family**

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- 1 Healthy London Partnership Children and Young People's Programme (December 2016) Social Prescribing for Children, Young People and Families: A Guide for Commissioners Driving consistency in outcomes across the capital <https://www.healthyhondon.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/HLP-CYP-Social-Prescribing-for-CYP-Dec-2016.pdf>
 - 2 Simpson, R.M; O'Keefe, C; Jacques, R.M; Stone, T; Hassan, A; Mason S.M (2021) Non-urgent emergency department attendances in children: a retrospective observational analysis Emergency Medicine Journal 0:1-6 doi:10.1136/emered-2021-211431 <https://emj.bmj.com/content/early/2021/10/27/emered-2021-211431>
 - 3 Outcomes have been externally evaluated



“I was so angry at everyone... I was kicking off at school and at home and then we were all in lockdown and I was just stuck in my room refusing to talk to anyone without it ending up in shouting and screaming. Talking to LINK helped me work out what I was really angry about and also how to try different ways of talking to my family. It didn’t always work but things are so much better now, and I can even sit and eat with my brother again.”

Leah, aged 15



Young person, Age 13



Case study

We started working with the young person in February 2021 and completed 6 virtual sessions over 8 weeks. The young person chose virtual over face-to-face.

This referral was made to us because the young person was struggling with bereavement after Gran died and had experienced bullying at school. The young person wanted support as they felt anxious when being alone, or walking alone, as they were afraid of being kidnapped. They also had not slept in their own bed for several years due to anxiety, and not feeling comfortable when alone.

We helped the young person set themselves two goals:

GOAL 1: To be able to walk into the village alone

GOAL 2: To be able to sleep in my own bed

We explored with the young person what was working well in their life, their achievements and what needed to happen to meet their goals. We focused on building strong, trusting connections with the young person. Through our sessions we set short-term, manageable activities and created a positivity toolkit. At the end of the support sessions, the young person was sleeping in their own bed every night (for just over two months when we finished) and was comfortable walking into the village alone and was doing this daily.

To find out more

We'd love to hear from you. Please get in touch via healthteam@barnardos.org.uk if you would like more information.

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