



**Childhood
First**
healing
hurt
minds



**annual
review 2013**

welcome

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We hope that Childhood First's 2013 Annual Review will be of interest to you. At a time when everyone is preoccupied with a number of huge domestic and foreign policy issues, it would be easy for the needs of the relatively small number of children with whom we work to be overlooked. For the UK, that would be an expensive mistake. For the children and those who encounter them in the course of their life's journeys, it could lead to tragedy.



Stephen Blunden,
Chief Executive



John Harrison,
Chair of Trustees

The children we work with are amongst the most emotionally and psychologically troubled in the country. Untreated, their trauma, most often caused by abuse and neglect, is likely to lead to a lifetime's engagement with social, psychiatric and judicial services, and to be passed on to their own children.

Our pioneering expertise is in creating therapeutic environments within which our unique psychotherapeutic approach – Integrated Systemic Therapy – can heal the mind, emotions and capacity for healthy relationships of such children and young people. Our outcomes are outstanding. When they leave us, those who come to us as adolescents catch up with their education, go to college, even university, hold down jobs, live independently, and have healthy families of their own. Younger children will return to a family setting where possible, or progress to a less specialised facility, safe in the knowledge that they know how to make healthy relationships rather than to damage others or themselves, as the only way out of their emotional predicament.

During the past year we have developed a brand new residential therapeutic community and special education facility

at Gables House in Kent, for up to four children initially, and are continuing to build a therapeutic fostering service. Whilst there are still children who we have to turn away, we aim for the gradual development of additional capacity, and the continuing extension of our clinical and risk management skills, to encompass the needs of the children that, for lack of physical or clinical capacity, we are as yet unable to treat.

A specialist service such as ours, which is entirely dependent on the development of an expert staff group culture can only grow gradually. We now have five homes and two special schools with plans to extend capacity across the age range in the coming years. Whilst the operational costs of our core work are largely met by the state, the development of new homes, beds and schools and the refurbishment of existing ones, depends entirely on voluntary donations and trust grants. Every bed we create will be filled in perpetuity with children who desperately need our help. We are deeply grateful to all of our donors for joining us in this life-saving work.

key achievements

In addition to the complex and highly skilled care, education and treatment that is provided day-to-day in all five of our children's homes, our two special schools and our Integrated Therapeutic Fostering, the following developments were successfully completed or established in 2013:

Northampton

- Developing a Theatre programme for young people to help engage their education, learning, awareness of their environment and interest in the Arts. This has been so successful it is now being rolled out to our other residential communities.
- Our ongoing Leaving Care Programme, which this year worked with seven young people, leading to their successful return to mainstream life.

93% of our students who took their GCSEs successfully passed them.

Kent

- Opening a new residential community and education programme at Gables House. The community is based in Kent and can provide support for up to four children aged 10-14 years old.

100% of children and young people supported by our Placement and Family Support team have been enabled to return to their families.

Norfolk

- Partnering with AFA Fostering Agency to provide specialist Integrated Therapeutic Fostering (iTF), based on our unique Integrated Systemic Therapy (iST) approach.
- Refurbishing and extending our Merrywood House community so that it can now accommodate six children.

"Staff are reflective, thoughtful and responsive to young people giving them the confidence to trust staff, (and) develop constructive relationships." Ofsted

Nationally

- Childhood First has a workforce of 169 of which 74% are directly involved in the daily care, education and treatment of the children and young people with whom we work. We have committed staff many of whom have developed unique clinical insight and therapeutic skills for working with severely traumatised children. 75% of staff who work with the children have a degree or higher level qualification and all are involved with continuing professional development.
- Our unique Integrated Systemic Therapy (iST) approach is relationship-based and so we place great emphasis and value on therapeutic training, supervision and clinical support to staff. Whilst staff have different levels of training according to their role within Childhood First, all staff are qualified or on the way to qualifying for a Diploma or Advanced Diploma in Psychosocial Care, accredited by Middlesex University. 19 students completing accredited training in Integrated Systemic Therapy (iST), including eight graduating with Advanced Diplomas.

Children and young people across our residential communities experience a measurably significant improvement in their general wellbeing after the first six months of receiving support.

case study

Laura was six when she came to Childhood First. She was first placed into care at two years old due to her mum's substance abuse problems. At five years old she went through a failed adoption, with the placement breaking down after three months. This led to her developing violent and destructive behaviours, which it was felt would be best supported in therapeutic residential care.

When Laura arrived at Childhood First she was a very distressed little girl. She couldn't maintain relationships, couldn't play with other children, had big tantrums and would lash out and break things. She felt worthless, unloved and was reckless with her own safety – once breaking her arm by running at full speed into a wall.

Through our support Laura was able to start to understand and deal with the trauma in her past. She faced the difficult events of being taken into care and her adoption breakdown.

We also ensured she was receiving the right type of support; getting an ADHD diagnosis removed, and taking her off medication.

We worked with the Local Authority to develop a pathway plan for Laura and, at Laura's request, asked them to re-establish contact with her birth mother. When this happened we met with her birth mother to determine what her current situation was, and whether it would be suitable for Laura to have contact with her.

When it was decided that it would be appropriate, we supported both Laura and



her birth mother to address the incidents in their past, to develop their relationship and move forwards together.

As a result of our support, after three years in our care, Laura went back to live with her birth mother. Eight years on they are both doing really well – Laura has completed her GCSEs, is at sixth form, and her birth mother regularly writes to update us on her progress.

Childhood First provided a safe, supportive environment for Laura at a time of extreme distress, enabling her to process the difficult emotions she was experiencing and recover from the trauma she had been through; ultimately reuniting her with her birth mother, and putting in place the foundations for a brighter, happier, future.

"Through our support Laura was able to start to understand and deal with the trauma in her past."

financial results 2012/13

Income

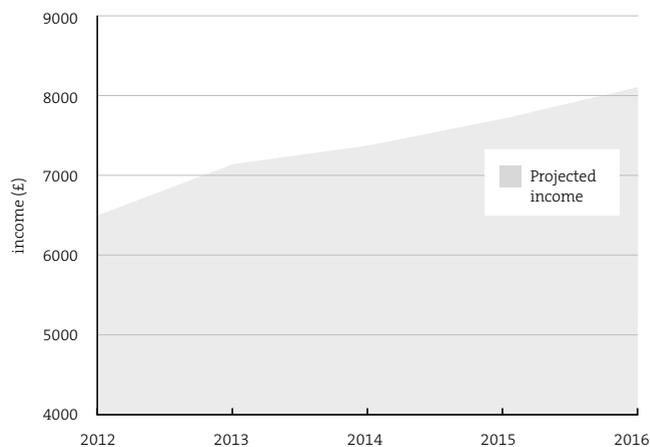
As a charitable organisation we recognise an obligation to grow in order to support more children and young people in desperate need of our support. Following the opening of our fifth children's home this year, **our income grew by 11%**. This included generous **donations of £217,832** towards our work. To develop new homes we intend to significantly grow our voluntary income. **Therefore next year will see the launch of a major capital appeal to raise £10 million over the next five years.**

	2012/13	2011/12
Income	£7.2m	£6.5m
Expenditure	£6.6m	£6.0m

Expenditure

97% of our expenditure was spent directly on charitable activities.

Plans to expand



Value For Money from Childhood First

Research shows that children and young people in care are:

- 50 times more likely to go to prison
- Seven times more likely to misuse drugs and alcohol
- 60 times more likely to be homeless than their peers
- The children referred to Childhood First are amongst those with the worst possible prognoses for life outcomes and therefore, costs to the state.

The Financial Costs of Poor Outcomes

The average **cost per prisoner, per year** in the UK is **£37,648**. This rises to as much as **£76,553 per prisoner, per year** for some youth offending institutions.¹

It is estimated that the **45% of children** who have mild or moderate conduct problems go on to commit half of all crime at an annual cost of **£37 billion**.²

The average cost of residential rehabilitation for people with drug and alcohol problems is **£600 per person, per week**. The average stay is 13 weeks, thus totalling **£8,000 per person, per year**.³

The average cost of providing temporary accommodation for homeless people ranges from **£87 to £334.95 per person, per week**. Over half of the people surveyed by Shelter had been in temporary accommodation for over a year, with 62% in London staying for over two years. **Costs per individual case of homelessness are therefore estimated to be between £17,417-£34,835**.⁴

The Childhood First Funding Multiplier Effect

Through Childhood First's support, children and young people at the very bottom of the care sector, with the most severe problems and the worst potential outcomes, receive the specialist support that they need.

Whilst the Government pays for the costs of the children in our care, we rely on charitable donations for expanding and developing our support.

We turn away more children than we take, hence we need to continue to grow.

We are confident that **every £5 donated will be turned into at least £100 of funding** for the most vulnerable group of children, with the most complex psychological needs, in the UK.

¹ MOJ National Offender Management Service Annual Report and Accounts 2011-12.

² Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health 2009.

³ National Treatment Agency For Substance Misuse – *The role of Residential Rehab in an Integrated Drug Treatment System*.

⁴ CIPFA Homelessness Actuals Dataset for 2007/08 updated with inflation. (Shelter 2010). Shelter-Mitchell, F et al. *Living in Limbo: Survey of Homeless Households Living in Temporary Accommodation*, Shelter, London, 2004.

thank you

Trusts

The J Paul Getty Jnr Charitable Trust has been generously supporting our Leaving Care programme at Thornby Hall for the past three years, with a yearly £20,000 donation towards the running costs. This has contributed towards the salaries of our Leaving Care Team, running costs of the semi-independent unit and after care support. With their help we have been able to provide dedicated support to all our young people at Thornby Hall who have transitioned to independent living over the last three years.

A massive thanks to all our supporters, including:

The Clover Trust
The Paget Trust
Whitegates Children's Trust
GC Gibson Charitable Trust
Jan & Belinda Pethick Charitable Trust
Inverforth Charitable Trust
Clarkson Jersey Charitable Trust
Elizabeth & Prince Zaiger Charitable Trust
The Dyer's Company Charitable Trust
Lyon Family Charity Trust
The Ada Green Charitable Trust

Corporate

This year Talbot Underwriting selected Childhood First as their charity of the year. So far they have raised over £35,000 through events such as the Arch to Arc challenge, an ultra-distance triathlon between London's Marble Arch and the Arc de Triomphe in Paris; their Band Night at Leadenhall Market in May; and a Christmas Raffle. Funds raised will go towards helping many projects, including the building of a separate Classroom Block for our newly opened community, Gables House, in Kent. We look forward to continuing our partnership over the next year.

Thank you so much to our other corporate supporters, including:

Covington and Burling
Aviva
House of Fraser Norwich
One Garden Court Family Law Chambers
J.M. Finn & Co



Friends Group

Thank you to our Friends Group Lead Committee:

Sarah Scarratt (Chair)
Catriona Prest (Secretary)
Deirdre Massey
Amanda Petch
Marylyn Bacon
Natacha Woods
Sarah Dean
Nikki Taylor

Challenge Events Fundraisers

Thank you to all our challenge events fundraisers – from running and swimming to cycling and skydiving:

Ginny Kearns	Lauren Veltom	Richard Byrne
Matt Ablott	Stephen Swioklo	Elizabeth Sim
Paloma Baeza	James Coldwell	Kevin Sim
Clive Bariana	Anna	Leon Nutt
Lawrence Bayliss	Sriskandarajah	Javena Johnson
Marc London	Robert Percival	Emma Aked
Laura Flaherty	Ben Percival	Chris Aked
Tina Fox	David Sparks	Barnaby Summers
Chris Gumery	Helen Rodden	Nataliya Chemerynska
Becky Hills	Laura Stout	Kerri White
Francessa Long	Sarah Ball	Andy Lamb
Anita Mohabeer	Kelly Bagshaw	Christian Brooks
Emily Roberts	Daniel Cavaglieri	Laura Matthews
David Smallwood	Anna Richards	Paula Webber
James Didlick	Rosie Micklewright	Connie Bedingfield
Sam Thomson	Paul Garland	Darren Abbs
Olivia Griffiths	Jason Lamb	Christine Culling
Coleen Whitehouse	Saeeda Yasmin	Chris Brooks
Richard Roy	Samantha Bonner	



plans for next year

Childhood First has ambitious plans for increasing the support that we offer to severely traumatised children and young people through the launch of a five year Capital Appeal. Below is some more specific information on our long term plans for each of our communities and what we hope to achieve over the next year.



Norfolk

We have been providing therapeutic support in Norfolk for fifteen years. In 1998 we opened our first residential community, Earthsea House, in partnership with Norfolk County Council, working with eight children aged 5-14 years old. In 2006, we opened a further residential community, Merrywood House, providing support to six children aged 11-16 years old. We opened Merrywood House in response to the need demonstrated for specialist therapeutic support for older children with severe emotional and behavioural problems and this need remains and has grown.

Plans for next year

We want to continue providing high quality, specialist support to children and young people who need us. We are therefore intending to expand the capacity of both of our residential communities, along with maintaining and developing our facilities, with plans to develop our outdoor space.

Plans for the future

We do not own the building and land that Merrywood House is currently accommodated in. We plan to purchase a new, specially customised, property to support up to 14 young people aged 11-16 years old, more than double what we can currently accommodate. We will also develop a semi-independence unit, similar to the one established at our Thornby Hall community, to help them with their transition to independence.

Kent

Our first therapeutic community in Kent is Greenfields House which provides support for up to ten children aged 5-13 years old. Kent is also home to our newest community Gables House, working with four children aged 10-14 years old, and in response to the increased number of referrals we were receiving for Greenfields House.

Plans for next year

We would like to purchase a separate educational classroom block for Gables House where our young people can focus on their education, away from the distractions of the residential community. This will also contain dedicated therapy rooms for 1:1 psychotherapy sessions.

Plans for the future

We would like to expand the support we offer to the older children at Gables House by extending our current facilities to accommodate a further six young people.



Northampton

Thornby Hall is the longest running and largest of all our residential communities, supporting up to 24 severely traumatised children and young people aged 12-19 years old.

We also have an on-site semi-independent unit and visitors flat to support the children and young people in our care with their transition to independence and the important contact and relationships with their families.

Plans for next year

We run a Leaving Care programme for the young people at Thornby Hall which we would like to find additional funding to formally evaluate, and continue developing. This will help us inform policy for children receiving residential support in leaving care, in addition to setting up programmes in our other communities.

We would also like to expand the Theatre programme we have been offering to the children at Thornby Hall so even more of them can benefit from the opportunity to see a Theatre production. Through our on-site school we would like to develop a Forest School programme, taking advantage of the extensive grounds that we have to educate the children in our care in a creative and engaging way.

Plans for the future

Our on-site school is in need of essential maintenance and refurbishment. We would also like to extend and adapt the current school buildings, located in the old stables, to offer the children in our care the highest quality educational facilities and environment.

National

Integrated Therapeutic Fostering (iTF)

Since 2012 we have been delivering, in Norfolk, Integrated Therapeutic Fostering, in partnership with AFA Fostering. Based on the Integrated Systemic Therapy (iST) model that we use in our residential communities, this has been adapted to a fostering environment, providing specialist fostering support to severely traumatised children and young people.

We currently offer five specialist placements in Norfolk – we would like to multiply this, as well as developing into new regions including the East and West Midlands. We also plan to conduct a full evaluation of the service and use the findings to inform and direct our future practice.

Therapeutic training

We provide accredited training to all therapeutic staff, through our Diploma in Integrated Systemic Therapy. We would like to continue offering this course to all our staff and support them to continue their learning to Masters level.

Through our clinical team we would like to develop this model, adapting the course and evaluating its effectiveness. We also want to continue to adapt the course for a fostering environment for our Integrated Therapeutic Fostering (iTF) programme.



case study

Anton's mother and father separated when he was a baby and his father gradually withdrew from his life.

As he grew, Anton was also emotionally and physically rejected by his mother. His bedroom was a tiny room with no windows, little more than a cupboard. He received no love, warmth or care. Humiliatingly, school had to provide him with breakfast, a shower and fresh clothes every morning.

Anton started getting into trouble of escalating seriousness, as a result of which he was taken into care when he was 13. Because he was so troubled, he came straight to us. Our experience of him was that he was angry and destructive. He could show no emotional warmth and was cut off from his peers.

We focused initially on providing a safe, emotionally containing home, full of the warmth and love he had never known. Only an expert therapeutic home can safely offer such a disturbed and disturbing child the attention and warmth which every child needs.

Therapy began more specifically to address the trauma of Anton's neglect. Together with the warmth and containment of home life and the relationships he began to develop with others, Anton began to feel that he might matter to other people. This allowed Anton to begin to feel that his life might also matter to him.



Anton's violence and destruction decreased. He developed the ability to enjoy and communicate a wider range of emotions. He began to attend education in our therapeutic school. Education was always a struggle but Anton eventually completed his GCSEs, and went on to college to study mechanical engineering.

When he left us at 17, Anton went into semi-independent accommodation and completed his college course and further studies. He is now working, enjoying life and is independent.

He knows how proud we are of him, and is in regular touch.

“Anton began to feel that he might matter to other people.”

what your support can help us to buy

£250 Purchase a Leaving Care starter pack for the young people supported by our Leaving Care project, helping them with their transition to independence.

£500 Contribute towards the costs of running our Theatre Programme, enabling children to go on Theatre outings, providing them with new and exciting opportunities, and contributing to their education.

£1,000 Contribute towards the costs of one family receiving support from our Placement Family Support Team; helping them while the child or young person is in our care, including with visits, planning and review meetings, and understanding and managing their behaviour, along with preparing them when the child is ready to leave and return back to them.

£2,000 Refurbish our visitors flat at Thornby Hall, where family can spend time with the child or young person in care and staff can work with family to facilitate the young person or child's progress.

£3,000 Purchase a Bike trail to encourage fitness and allow the children to have fun.

£5,000 Purchase therapeutic toys for the younger children that live at our residential communities, for use in therapeutic play, allowing them to confront and process the trauma they have faced in a safe, non threatening way.

£7,500 Fund one member of staff studying an MA or equivalent to ensure we have the highest level of knowledgeable staff in the area of child care.

£15,000 Contribute towards the purchase of a Classroom block for our newly opened community, Gables House; providing the young people with a separate space in which to focus on their education.

£20,000-£100,000 Contribute to our £10m Capital Appeal to fund:

- the re-development of Thornby Hall School
- the extension of Gables House
- a new facility for seriously troubled adolescents in Norfolk
- an assessment and respite facility for children in crisis.

Ways to participate in our work

- Donate online or by post
- Leave us a legacy
- Take part in a challenge
- Join one of our Friends Groups
- Join one of our London or regional Capital Appeal groups
- Become a Trustee or Honorary Patron
- Lend your influence or support to making the case for therapeutic support for troubled and troubling children.



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Ways to contact us

Phone: 020 7928 7388

Email: chiefexecutive@childhoodfirst.org.uk

Visit: www.childhoodfirst.org.uk

Childhood First

210 Borough High Street

London SE1 1JX

Registered charity no: 286909