



**Childhood
First**
healing
hurt
minds



**annual
review 2015**

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welcome

During the past year, our work has continued to develop. Our therapeutic communities and schools continue to offer effective therapeutic care, education and treatment for up to 47 children and young people with complex emotional and psychological needs.

Our newest home, Gables House, has established itself and we have plans to grow its capacity in stages. During the year, Earthsea House grew capacity by one bed.

Our growing Integrated Systemic Fostering service is expanding beyond Norfolk and will soon be operational in the South East and the East Midlands. We see many indications that the scale of need for our services is increasing, although the commissioning environment remains challenging due to financial constraints faced by local authorities.

Over the past two years we have recognised that, to mitigate regulatory risk, we must invest more in the extensive systems of recording that are required by Ofsted. We have established additional staff roles, systems and processes across the organisation to better record the work we do and the decisions we make throughout each day, in the format and level of detail now required. The Government has estimated that its regulatory systems



John Harrison,
Chair of Trustees



Stephen Blunden,
Chief Executive

are costing each provider £250,000 per year, diverted from the care of children and young people. We shall continue to monitor the costs and the impact on children's care of regulatory requirements, and to communicate these to Government.

Much clinical development has taken place during the year, with the establishment of integrated multi-disciplinary clinical assessments at referral and throughout placement, to inform treatment and the evaluation of our services as a whole. Our staff training was assessed by the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy and in April 2015 we were accepted as an Organisational Member, which means that staff who complete our training will be UKCP-accredited Child Psychotherapeutic Counsellors. This is a unique achievement nationally in residential childcare.

During the year we have developed plans to establish an Institute for

Integrated Systemic Therapy, the therapeutic approach which we have developed over half a century. The Institute will provide a professional, academic and clinical base for our training, research and development. We hope that it will attract the brightest and the best young people to train and work with us, and the most eminent clinicians to support us in promoting the needs of emotionally and psychologically disturbed children and young people. We aim to launch the Institute in the coming year.

Trustees and staff are proud of the therapeutic tradition that we have developed, first at Peper Harow and then across all Childhood First services. We are immensely grateful to all those who choose to share with us in this life-saving work, through the support of their donations and of grants, and by their expertise and influence.

case study

Staci was six and a half years old when she moved to Earthsea House. Staci had first come to the attention of her local authority when a referral was received from her school. Staci was frequently coming to school hungry and in a dishevelled state. Staci was also at times displaying aggressive behaviours towards other children in her class.

Staci was living with her mum and an elder step brother. Assessments carried out by a social worker identified that Staci's mum was very dependent on alcohol, and would frequently leave Staci in the care of her step-brother. Staci had to share a bedroom with her step-brother, with a mattress on the floor as her bed. Four months later Staci was taken into care. Over the course of the next nine months, Staci had a further three moves to other foster families, each one breaking down with carers struggling to manage her challenging behaviours.

For the first six months of her placement at Earthsea, Staci was very subdued and she seemed wary of making any attachments. She would also frequently refuse to attend school, which is located within the grounds.

During her first year at Earthsea, Staci went on holiday with the other children and staff. In the lead up to the holiday Staci was anxious and frequently commented that she never had been on holiday before. However, once on holiday Staci fully engaged in all the activities and thoroughly enjoyed the experience, wanting lots of photos to be taken so that she would not forget what she described as "the best days of my life".



During the last 18 months of Staci's placement she was able, with the support of our staff, to tell her mum how angry she was with her for not keeping her safe and looking after her. Although this was difficult for both Staci and her mum, it was a significant step in the healing process for Staci, as well as enabling their relationship to develop.

A couple of months after Staci's third anniversary at Earthsea, she moved to live with a foster family close to her primary school. This allowed her to continue attending her school and to remain in contact with her friends. Staci continued to adapt to living in foster care and has since moved to high school in the local town.

On the day that Staci left Earthsea, she said "I wish I came to Earthsea when I was a baby. When I first came here I did not like myself, now I know that I am a nice person."

Staci continues to visit Earthsea. When she visits she often comments that Earthsea was the best place she has ever lived, as being at Earthsea was the first time she had ever felt safe and cared for.

Integrated Therapeutic Fostering (iTF)

Our Integrated Therapeutic Fostering service was set up to enable children and young people in residential care to have opportunities to move to a family placement, where the carers would be given similar therapeutic training and support to that received by Therapeutic Care Workers in our residential homes.

Four foster carers have been developing their therapeutic practice and embarked upon the first iTF training programme in January 2014/15.

Developments

In 2015, following a successful three year pilot scheme in Norfolk, in partnership with Anglia Fostering Agency, a package of three-year funding was agreed by the DD McPhail Trust to pay for iTF development principally in the East Midlands. An East Midlands office has now been established with a small but growing number of foster carers being accepted to take placements. Also in 2015 The Homefinding and Fostering Agency in Kent agreed to pursue a similar partnership with us in the Maidstone area of Kent, branching into significant areas of London.

It is intended to grow iTF nationally to meet the ever-increasing need for specialist therapeutic foster care and also in due course to produce packages of iTF training offered for local authority commissioners to develop improved stability as a means of mitigating the level of placement breakdowns currently experienced by so many fostered children who suffer from the effects of previous relationship traumas.



clinical development

In order to create a strategic step-change in our clinical offer, to respond to the needs of today's disturbed children and to retain our position as the class-leading clinical provider of therapeutic residential care and related services, Childhood First has undertaken a number of key clinical developments in 2015:

- a) become a Training Member Organisation of the UK Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP) in April 2015, so that all qualified staff are clinically licensed therapeutic professionals;
- b) introduced formal clinical assessment for all children and young people throughout their placements, via our Assessment, Planning, Treatment and Transition (APTT) framework;
- c) recruitment of key posts to an in-house team of specialist clinical roles, accountable to the Clinical Director and deployed across our communities and projects.

These developments build on:

- the establishment of our therapeutic staff training programme with Middlesex University about 15 years ago;
- the codification and standardisation of our clinical method as Integrated Systemic Therapy a decade ago;
- the establishment of a system for gathering clinical measures about the children, supported by the CAMHS Outcomes Research Consortium of which we are members;
- the appointment of a Clinical Director for the charity.

Together these developments represent a significant change in our therapeutic community model, from a traditional informal quasi-family approach with an oral tradition of expertise, to a contemporary professional multi-disciplinary clinical team. At a formal and institutional level, the charity and the communities will be at the same time providers of clinical Child Psychotherapeutic services to children, and providers of clinical Child Psychotherapy training to adults.

The current changes are expected to provide a range of benefits, including:

- improved integration across the clinical work and clinical training;
- improved clinical professionalism at all levels in the work and the training;
- increased senior clinical staff resources to deliver assessments, training, and research;
- extended clinical capabilities to meet the needs of more disturbed children and young people;
- a clearer and more compelling clinical offer for Commissioners;
- an improved recruitment offer to potential staff;
- improved career progression for staff;
- a more united organisation.



UKCP Accreditation

For Childhood First there has been a long journey towards successfully gaining United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP) accreditation for our unique Integrated Systemic Therapy (iST) clinical staff training. We set out on this road in 2010, and received news of our acceptance by the UKCP as a full training and accredited member in April 2015.

This is a unique achievement in residential child care in the UK, recognising our unmatched clinical capabilities in the treatment of children and young people who suffer the effects of severe relational trauma.

The experience of applying for accreditation and the process of preparation for assessment has offered a range of learning experiences for the staff training together with a clinical professionalization of the therapeutic services offered.

An assessment visit by the College of Child and Adolescence Psychotherapies (CCAP) alongside the UKCP regulation officer took place in January 2015 at the Earthsea and Merrywood communities. The day included visits to the houses, meetings with students, staff, managers and trustees culminating in an observation of teaching to students who were heading towards their final essay submissions for the Practitioners Diploma in iST.

Reflections from the assessors touched some staff deeply in terms of external professional recognition of the value of their contribution to the lives of the children who live within the communities of Childhood First.

The trustees of UKCP approved our accreditation in April 2015 and staff who have met the criteria will become professionally accredited Child Psychotherapeutic Counsellors (CPC). Our aim is that all of our therapeutic care staff will complete their training, thus enhancing the quality of care and clinical effectiveness of the treatment offered to our children and young people.

We believe that UKCP accreditation will attract many more potential staff of high calibre to work with us, so that they can complete this training. Our offer to trainees is unmatched nationally. We are providing a child psychotherapeutic training with all costs paid by the charity plus a salary. The training and the work is also more personally and professionally challenging than most other psychotherapeutic trainings available. Our aim is that many of our trainees will choose to continue their work with us, and many will choose to work elsewhere in children's services, thus spreading the iST approach far and wide to benefit as many children as possible.

Clinical Assessment

Childhood First has developed a framework for the multi-faceted clinical assessment of each child who lives with us, and this now includes assessment on arrival with a regular six monthly review of key areas of outcomes for each child throughout their placement. The framework includes the use of standard clinical measures, widely used in children's mental health services, but also our own expert qualitative relational assessments of our children's emotional and psychological health.

We have developed systems for collection and collation of measures indicating the outcomes for each child, for each community and also for the organisation as a whole. We believe that such multi-faceted assessment will enable us to improve the effectiveness of treatment, both for individual children, but also at each home and across the organisation.



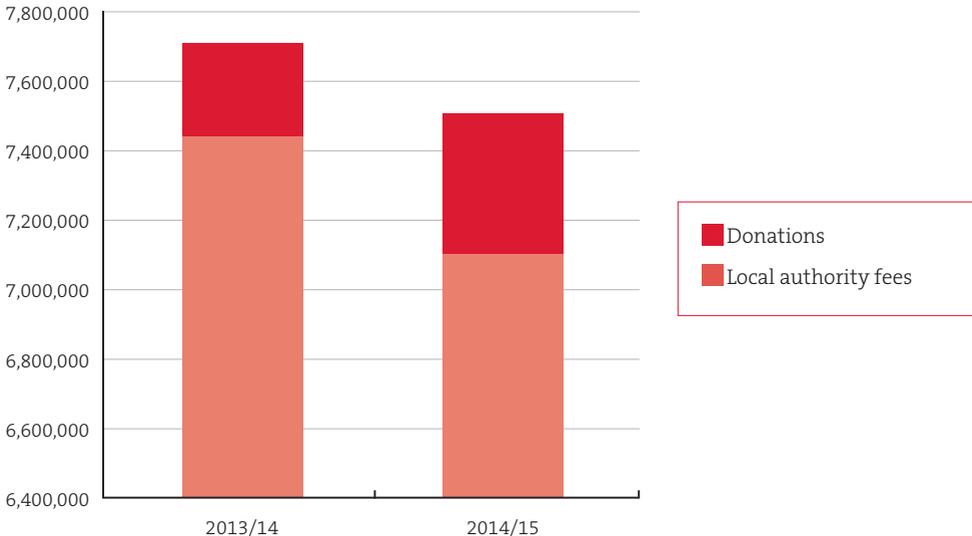
financial results 2014/15

Income

	2014/15	2013/14
Income	£7.5m	£7.7m
Expenditure	£7.4m	£7.1m

Childhood First has been steadily increasing our assets to ensure we can reach out to more and more children and young people who desperately need our help and continue to support those who are already benefiting from our care. For the year ended 31 March 2015, we broadly broke even, but ended the year with net assets of £6,160k thanks to our investments delivering a return of over 8%. Although our overall income has fallen by 3%, donations received increased by 35%.

Year on year comparison of income



twelve years of steady growth

Service quality

We spend 96% of our funds on Therapeutic Residential Care. This includes around £200k in additional resources to improve our ability to meet increasingly stringent statutory compliance standards. Through this investment we have been able to achieve Good or Outstanding ratings for all our homes and schools.

Infra-structure

During the year we invested over £400k in expanding our residential property. This includes the purchase of the remaining 50% of Earthsea House in Norfolk. This investment meant we were able to increase the capacity from eight to nine placements. We also constructed a therapy suite and classroom for the children in Greenfields and Gables in Kent. We have also upgraded our IT systems with faster connections for our remote sites and also new software to better track the children's progress.

Longer term view

As a long-established charity we have a record of prudent development since most of our investment comes from surplus funds.

A review of our income over the past twelve years shows a steady growth as we expand our services and deliver help to more children. It has allowed us to build sufficient reserves to meet times of difficulty and to be confident of sustaining our work in the longer term.

We have plans to deliver further growth. We plan to expand our provision at the Gables from four to eight beds. This key development will be supported by our fundraising initiative.

We will extend Childhood First's capacity and reputation for clinical excellence. Pivotal will be the recognition of the charity for its training and development capacity by the establishment of The Institute for Integrated Systemic Therapy.

Further to this we will be:

- fully implementing our Integrated Systemic Therapy staff training programme, so that all qualified therapeutic staff are clinically licensed
- developing rigorous clinical evaluation and research.

The Multiplier effect

Through Childhood First's support, children and young people suffering the most severe emotional and psychological problems and the worst potential outcomes in the UK, receive the specialist support that they need. Whilst the Government pays for the daily care, education and treatment 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 government funding** for the most vulnerable group of children, with the most complex psychological needs, in the UK.

thank you

Trusts & Corporates

A massive thanks to all our supporters, including:

The Ellerdale Trust;
The Royal Masonic Trust for Girls and Boys;
The Clover Trust;
The Fitzmaurice Trust;
The Equitable Charitable Trust;
The Miss W E Lawrence Charitable Trust;
The Pennycress Trust;
The R.C. Snelling Charitable Trust;
The Clothworkers' Foundation;
The Peter Storrs Trust;
The Red Hill Charitable Trust;
The Educational Foundation of Alderman John Norman;
The Whitegates Children's Trust;
The Inverforth Charitable Trust;
The Frederick and Phyllis Cann Charitable Trust;
The J Paul Getty Jnr Charitable Trust;
The 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust;
The Ranworth Trust;
Sir James Roll Charitable Trust;
Elizabeth and Prince Zaiger Charitable Trust;
Paget Trust;
The Dyers' Company Charitable Trust;
The Raymond and Blanche Lawson Charitable Trust.

Friends Groups

Thank you to all our Friends Group lead Committee Members:

Sarah Scarratt (Chair), Kent
Catriona Prest (Secretary) Kent
Deirdre Massey, Kent
Amanda Petch, Kent
Marylyn Bacon, Kent
Natacha Woods, Kent
Sarah Dean, Kent
Nikki Taylor, Kent
Trish Phillips (Chair) Norfolk
Holly Rawkins (Chair) Norfolk
Dina Hambro, Norfolk

what your help can 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.

£2,500 towards the costs of developing outdoor activities – providing the benefits of exercise and time playing together.

£3,000 towards the cost of refurbishing playrooms, supporting the important role that play has in therapeutic support.

£5,000 Purchase therapeutic toys for the younger children that live in 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 Offering all age-appropriate young people the opportunity to take driving lessons to increase confidence and support transition to independence.

£15,000 Continuation of Placement & Family support work across all of our communities.

£25,000 Purchase a robust 4x4 vehicle to support young people in outward bound activities.

£30,000 Contribute to temporary respite facility, to provide emergency care for those young people experiencing imminent placement breakdown.

£50,000 Refurbish our Leaving Care Semi Independence unit at Thornby Hall, where young people get their first experience of independence, with support from our staff.

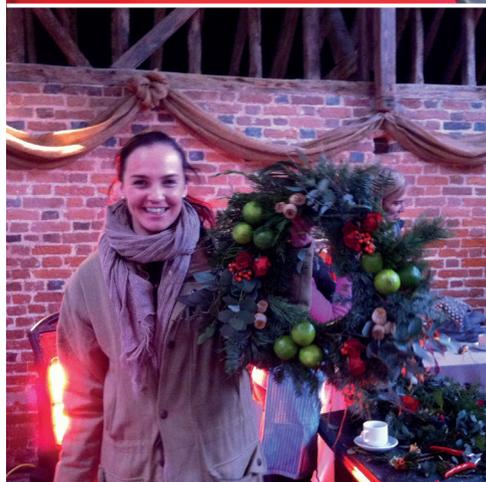
Ways to participate in our work

- 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 in making the case for therapeutic work with troubled and troubling children
- Get your company involved by taking part in events, volunteering or nominating us as your charity of the year trek.

Challenge events fundraisers

Thank you to all our challenge events fundraisers – from running and swimming, to cycling and trekking. Including:

Abi Bowling, Gillian Hill, Lee Barnes, Carmel Blackburne, Hannah Bryan, Annabel Bunch, James Coldwell, Cédric Fontanille, Jodie Elston, Joe Glover, Elizabeth Laycock, Beverley Paton, Icaro Rebolledo, James Savage, Kathryn Waters, Dawn Bartlett, Rick Gill, Scott Grant, Jason Lamb, Nick Strong, Andy Strudwick, Annabel Davies, Clara Pearce, Alex Walker, Cat Hughston, Rod Mearing, Katie Ford and Michelle Dray.



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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