

HOW

ACTION FOR CHILDREN

IS WORKING WITH

The **Methodist** Church 



Synod Report

Autumn 2018

Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire District

Introduction

It is my pleasure to send you this report, which contains news about some exciting breakthrough initiatives that will enable Action for Children to support many more children and their families. We would appreciate your prayers or thanksgiving and support as we explore what works for children.



I am delighted to say that we welcomed our new Chief Executive, Julie Bentley in August. Julie brings immense experience of working with children and young people. Her passion to see them reach their potential, and for social justice and equal opportunity have been evident in her previous roles, from youth worker to her last post as CEO of Girlguiding UK. We are confident that Action for Children will also benefit from her leadership.

I thank God for our selfless supporters throughout the Methodist Church that partner with us as 'good neighbours' to others in need and challenge injustice. Thank you very much.

Blessings,

Karis Kolawole

Head of Faith Partnerships

karis.kolawole@actionforchildren.org.uk

By making an impact nationally

Annual Report and reach figures published

We published our Annual Report on 7 August, which shows that through our work we reached 301,000 children, young people and families around the UK in 2017/2018.

Sadly, due to crippling government funding cuts, local authorities have been forced to close some Action for Children services, which offered parenting support and advice to prevent family problems from spiralling out of control. We know

these services are still desperately needed, so we are finding innovative ways to provide this support.

To download an English or Welsh copy of the report, visit actionforchildren.org.uk/what-we-do/about-us/our-organisation/our-annual-report/.

ONE Interns celebrated

We have been blessed to have two remarkable ONE interns working with us since September 2017.



Dean Pettipher and Hannah John have spent a year exploring their faith alongside a paid placement. While doing important work, they have grown in confidence and gained many new skills that place them in good stead for gleaming careers ahead. A special service at Wesley Chapel, London, in July celebrated their achievements and marked the end of their internship.

This September, we will welcome two new interns. Ruth Yardy and Abigail Farley will take up the Policy and Practice Improvement, and the Communications and People internships respectively. Please join us in wishing the outgoing and new interns well and in praying for fulfilling careers.

Joining the dots for parents



We are testing new digital services, to see how effective they are in meeting the needs of children and young people, and carers. One of such innovative services is Dots, a website where parents of under-fives across the UK can find non-judgemental, reassuring advice.

Through Dots, our Early Years team help parents get the information they need quickly and easily from various sources in a single place, making it

easier to navigate the overwhelming parenting advice landscape. They also signpost them to recommended organisations and information from across the web.

The website, dots.actionforchildren.org.uk, is live; we will continue improve it based on parents' needs.

1869 opens in Norwich

We are always seeking new ways to raise money to support our vision. So, when retail space in Castle Mall Norwich was donated to us, our Retail and Partnerships team took the opportunity to open our first pop-up retail store, called '1869' - first of a series of temporary retail stores, which will be 'popping-up' across the UK.



Named after the year we were founded, the shop was opened by Deputy Lord Mayor Roger Ryan (pictured with Lisa Nicholson, Senior Partnerships and Retail Manager).

As well as all the stock, styling and retail space being donated, 1869 Norwich is staffed entirely by volunteers. Most of them have been regular users of the 20+ children's centres that we run in the Norwich area. All profits from 1869 will go towards helping vulnerable children across the UK.

Bringing back children's residential homes

We always look forward to attending the Methodist Conference; this year was no different. Many of our supporters came to our market stall bringing great encouragement and interesting news about how their churches are supporting us locally.

This year, our fringe event focused on our plans to introduce residential homes for children and young people with complex and challenging needs, including disability. Lee Furniss, Operations Director for Children's Services, shared alarming facts and figures about children in care - about 25% of the prison population have been in care, and 33% of care leavers are not in education, employment or training.

With the rising numbers (currently about 73,000) and needs of children in care, it is important that Action for Children does something innovative to improve the lives of the most vulnerable children and young people. High quality children's homes would enable us to provide them with safe, stable and loving homes from where they can thrive.

We already have acquired some homes in the Midlands, and are seeking to grow our portfolio in across UK.

By telling you about local news and fundraising events

As you can see Action for Children have been very busy in Norwich opening our first pop up store which has so far raised over £9,000. Thank you to everyone locally that has visited and supported the shop.

Locally Action for Children have over 25 children services in the region if you would like to learn more about these please get in touch with your local fundraiser who would be happy to visit your Church and update your members about what Action for Children does locally.

Thank you to everyone that held an Action for Children Sunday service. We are deeply grateful to everyone who played one role or the other.

There are a number of fundraising events and activities lined up, including:

- **3 Peaks Challenge** various dates in 2019
- **Letchworth to Cambridge cycle ride (29 miles or 58 miles ride)** taking place in on 5th May 2019.

A new fundraising guide is now available online with just about everything you need to know to organise your own brilliant fundraising activity. actionforchildren.org.uk/media/10654/your-fundraising-guide.pdf

Anyone who would like to continue to receive information from us should let us know how they want us to keep in contact. If you opt out of all contact, then that includes hearing from your local Fundraiser.

Contact Details

Your local fundraiser is: Holly Canham

holly.canham@actionforchildren.org.uk
07738502120

Action for Children
The Officers' Mess Business Centre
Royston Road
Duxford
CB22 4QH

actionforchildren.org.uk



actnforchildren



actionforchildren



actionforchildrenUK