



# Christmas Challenge 2021

**Impact Report:**  
**End of Programme**  
**December 2021 - December 2022**



# Christmas Challenge 2021

The Childhood Trust is London's child poverty charity, funding the delivery of charitable projects that support over 220,000 vulnerable and disadvantaged children annually throughout London. Without these projects, life for many thousands of children trapped in poverty in London would be dramatically worse.

Our Christmas Challenge 2021 campaign ran for one week, from 30th November - 7th December 2021, raising £3,688,142 through generous donations from the public and Childhood Trust supporters. The campaign funded a 12-month programme of support delivered throughout 2022 via 98 charitable projects that engaged children disadvantaged by poverty.

Our Christmas Challenge 2022 programme played a vital role in helping 160,929 children to stay safe, well-nourished and enjoy purposeful, fun activities that built resilience, developed confidence and encouraged children to make the most of their education, to break the cycle of poverty.

Without The Childhood Trust's Christmas Challenge 2021 campaign, and the support of our donors, **82% of the charitable projects would not have been able to fund the services offered to children. 149,216 children who would not have received the support they needed throughout 2022.**

Our innovative matched funding model means that donors maximise the impact of their donation. For every £1 donated to The Childhood Trust, we generate at least £4.50 in funding for projects through our supporters, partner pledges and from the general public during the campaign week.

We can only achieve this with the generous support of our donors who are committed to making a difference for children living in poverty in London.

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## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- The programme supported 160,929 children across all London boroughs
- 98 charitable projects delivered
- 512,947 meals provided for children
- £3,688,142\* raised
- £4.61 raised for every £1 donated via The Childhood Trust's 2021 campaign



# Cold, hungry and stressed:

The picture of child poverty in London in December 2021

Ahead of Christmas 2021, financial support from the British government including the Universal Credit uplift and furlough payments came to an end. The Omicron Coronavirus variant brought further uncertainty for parents on low or no income and the first surge in food and fuel prices hit families trying to plan for Christmas, marking the start of an impending series of crises that would push disadvantaged children and families to breaking point. Our research documented the grim reality for families struggling to 'heat or eat' during the cold winter months, highlighting that 250,000 children would go hungry by Christmas 2022 as a result of the deepening crises.

The current global conditions have only served to exacerbate the cost-of-living crisis over the last year, with high inflation continuing to outstrip wages and benefit increases. It is children in the most deprived areas of London who are disproportionately impacted by this crisis.

The Christmas Challenge 2021 campaign came at an important time for charities and the children they support. Only 12% of the charities we surveyed in November 2021 indicated that they had enough funding to meet the demand for their services, whilst 36% of charities said that they would only be able to meet demand if they received extra funding.

Whilst some of our programme funding was directed to supporting children during the holidays, most of the funding was spent throughout 2022, delivering projects that provide consistent support to transforms children's lives.



# Programme Impact

The Childhood Trust collects and aggregates data in two phases, firstly at the 6-month midway point of programme delivery, and secondly at the 12-month end point. The data provides insight into the outcomes, impact and operations of every project activity, as well as the needs of the children and young people who have been supported. Observations and informal feedback received from the children are also collected. This report summarises the impact of 83 of the 98 projects that utilised all the funding at the end of the 12-month period. Funds not utilised during this period will be utilised in 2023.



- 160,929 children were supported across all 32 London boroughs.
- This is a 62% increase from the estimated number of children we expected to be able to support at the start of the programme.

## KEY PROGRAMME OUTCOMES

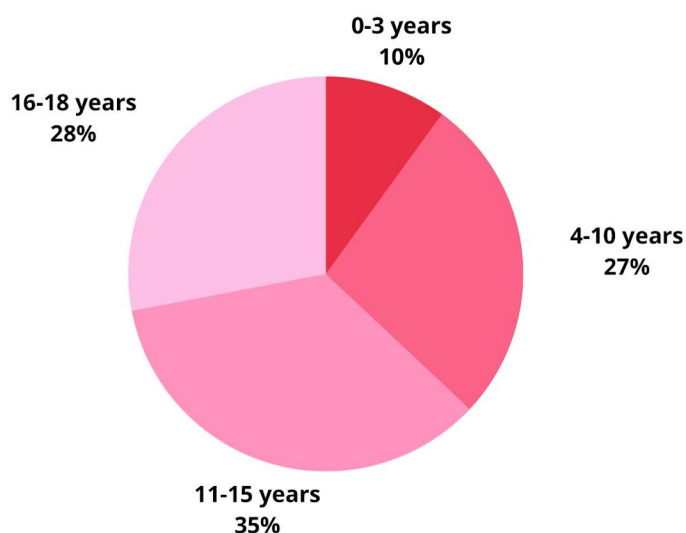
Charities funded by the programme reported back on the key outcomes achieved for children supported in 2022:

- Outcome 1** 86% of the charities that collected data on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's) reported improvements in children's ability to manage ACE's.
- Outcome 2** 93% of the charities reported that children experienced improved mental health, 56% reported improved physical health .
- Outcome 3** 512,947 nutritious meals and 7,367 snacks/refreshments for children were provided throughout 2022.
- Outcome 4** 89% of our charity partners reported that children experienced an improvement in their ability to cope with the impact of poverty.
- Outcome 5** 89% of the charities reported an improvement in children's communication skills.



# 1. Age, gender, ethnicity and SEND/disability

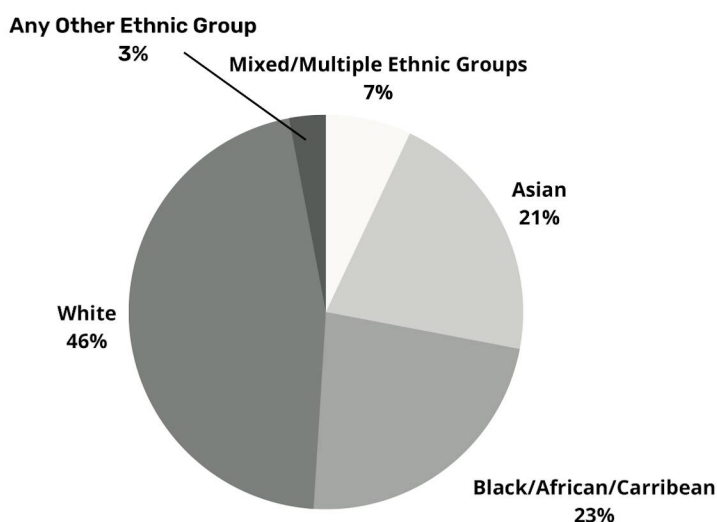
Of the charities taking part in the programme, 68% recorded data on gender demographics, and 57% on race/ethnicity.



## Age and gender

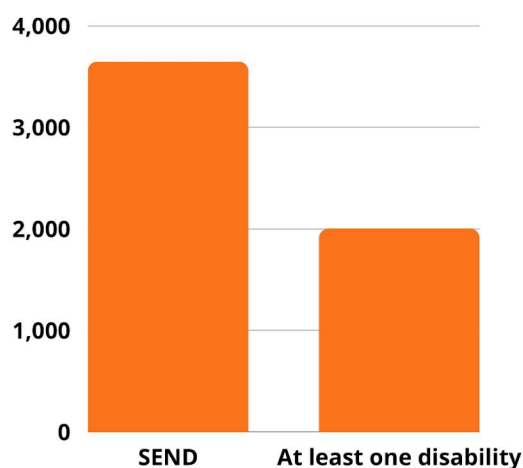
Over a third of children supported by the programme were aged between 11-15, followed by ages 16-18 (28%), 4-10 (27%) and 0-3 (10%). This data suggests that the Christmas Challenge 2021 programme has had a far-reaching impact across the entire spectrum of childhood.

An estimate of 53% (40,010) of the children supported by the programme were girls, and 46% boys (34,751).



## Ethnicity

Children identified as white comprised the largest proportion of children supported, equivalent to 46%/54,273 children, followed by; Black/African/Caribbean 23%/27,069 children, Asian 21%/24,141 children, Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups 7%/8,030 children, and Any Other Ethnic Group 3%/3846 children.



## Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND)

59% of charities recorded data on SEND and 53% on disability\*. Of these charities, 3,644 children were reported to have SEND, and 2,000 experience at least one form of disability.

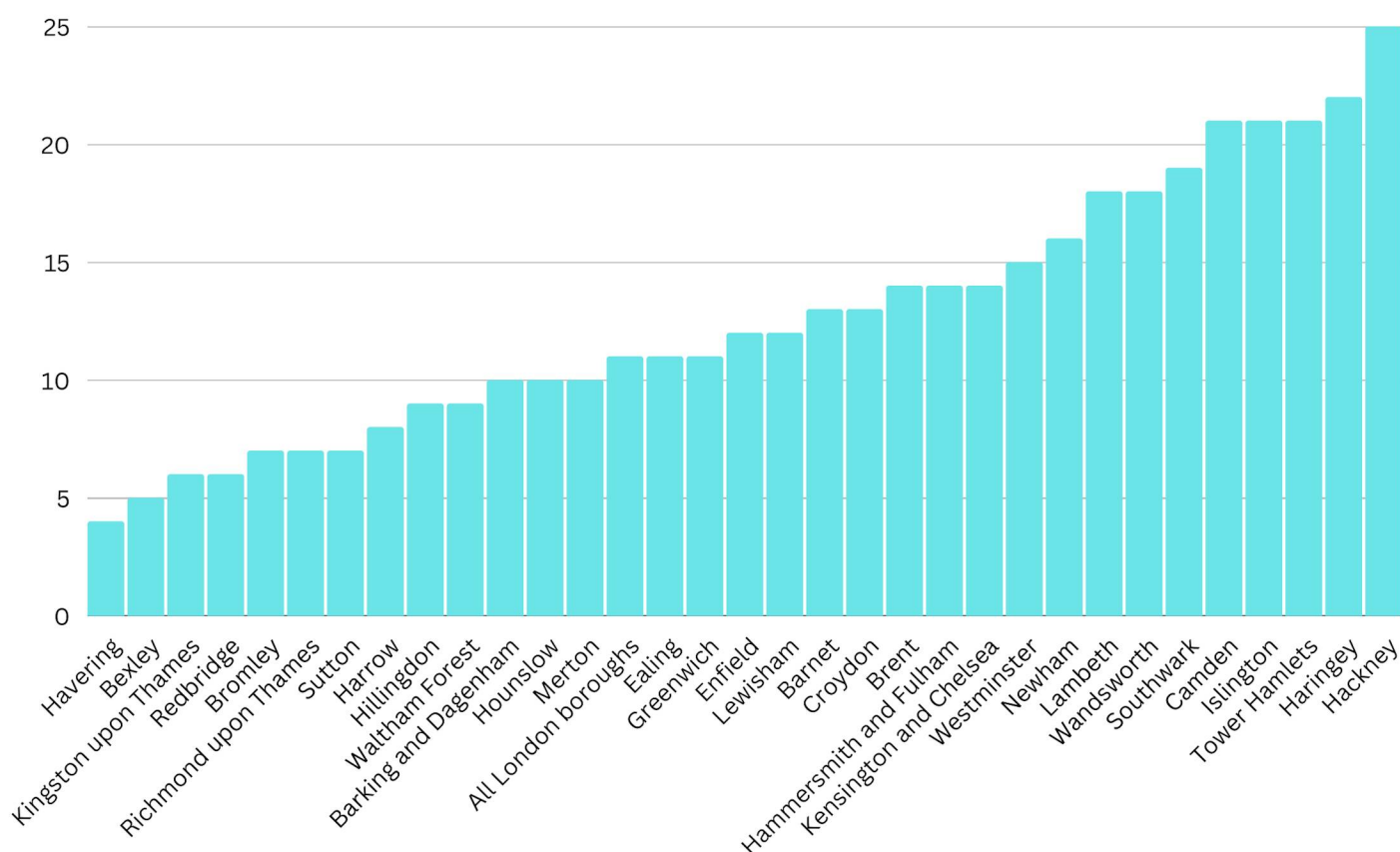
\*49 charities reported SEND, 44 charities reported just disability

## 2. Support across the capital

The children supported by the programme lived in all 32 London boroughs with the highest proportions living in Hackney, Haringey, Tower Hamlets, Islington and Camden.

At least 51% of children in Tower Hamlets live poverty\*, followed by 45% in Hackney, 38% in Islington, 37% in Haringey and 32% in Camden (Trust for London, London's Poverty Profile 2022).

**The number of projects funded in each borough**





# 3. Programme Outcomes

The following data report on how the programme funding has met the goals of The Childhood Trust as outlined by our Theory of Change (see Appendix). The following thematic areas demonstrate where children supported by the programme have experienced improved health and wellbeing and improved socioeconomic prospects as a result of programme funding. These are areas where the inequalities that exist for children experiencing poverty can affect their life trajectory.

## 1. REDUCING ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (ACES)

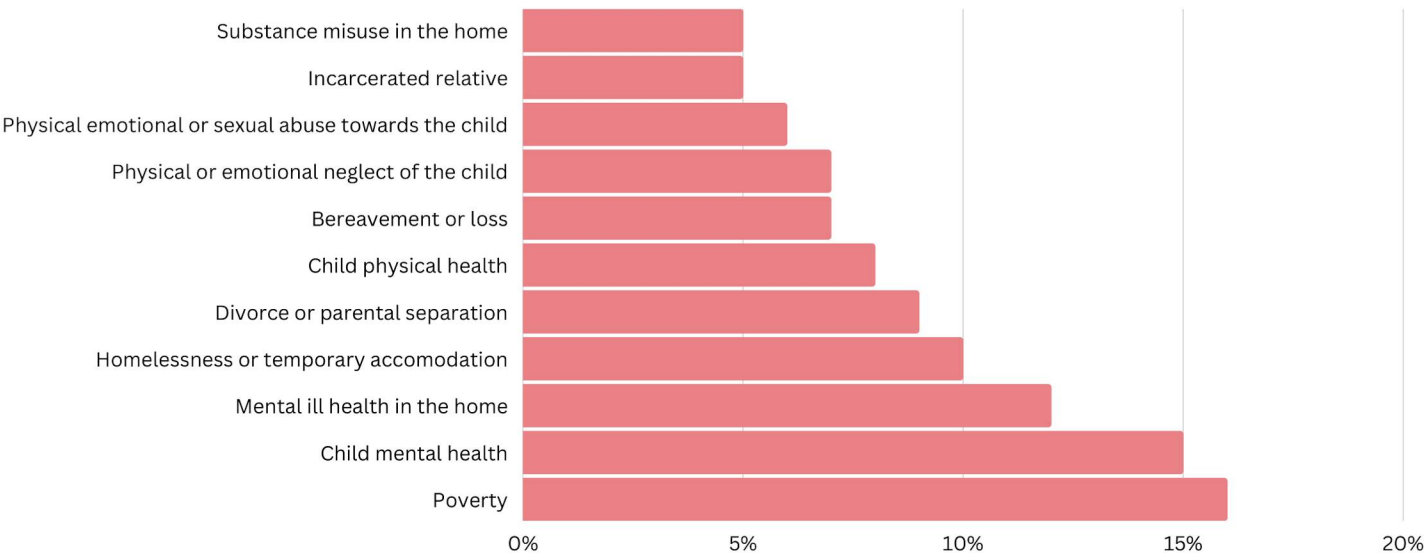
ACEs are potentially traumatic events that occur in childhood. They can include violence, abuse, and growing up in a family with mental health or substance misuse problems. Toxic stress resulting from ACEs can impact on a child's brain development and affect how the body responds to stress. ACEs are linked to chronic health problems, mental illness and substance misuse in adulthood. ACEs can, however, be prevented.

Preventing ACEs can help children thrive and potentially improve education and employment potential; lower the risk for conditions like depression, asthma, cancer, and diabetes in adulthood; and stop ACEs from being experienced from one generation to the next

At The Childhood Trust, we believe every child should have a healthy, happy and safe childhood so that all children are well prepared for life, breaking the cycle of poverty. A fundamental part of achieving this is ensuring that the impact of ACEs are reduced.

Sixty-one percent of charities reported data on ACEs affecting the children benefitting from the programme. Poverty is a strong exacerbating factor for many of the ACEs listed, with 16% of the charities reporting poverty as an ACE affecting the children, followed by mental health issues (15%) and mental ill health in the home (12%).

% of Projects Reporting Children's Exposure to ACE's (by type)







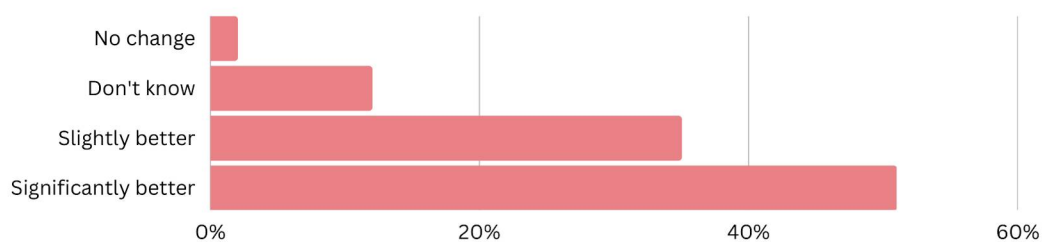
Solace Women's Aid is grateful to The Childhood Trust. **Your support had a huge impact on homeless children** living in our temporary accomodation who have experienced domestic violence and abuse, supporting our efforts to guide them in their journey towards recovery. Your support allowed us to **reduce pressure** on the organisation in a moment when, giving the rising demand for services, **we were most needed by women and children** across London.





86% of the charities that collected data on ACEs reported improvements in the ability of the children to manage ACEs.

### Change in how children manage ACEs



Children supported to manage the impact of adverse experiences are more likely to improve educational and employment outcomes, have reduced levels of toxic stress, and as such, lower risk of chronic conditions such as cancer, depression, asthma and diabetes during adulthood.



## 2. HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Health and wellbeing encapsulates a broad dimension of sub-themes that correlate with the overall health outcomes of children. These include changes in resilience, communication skills and self-esteem, improvements in positive and peer and/or family relationships, and whether children are eating nutritious meals.

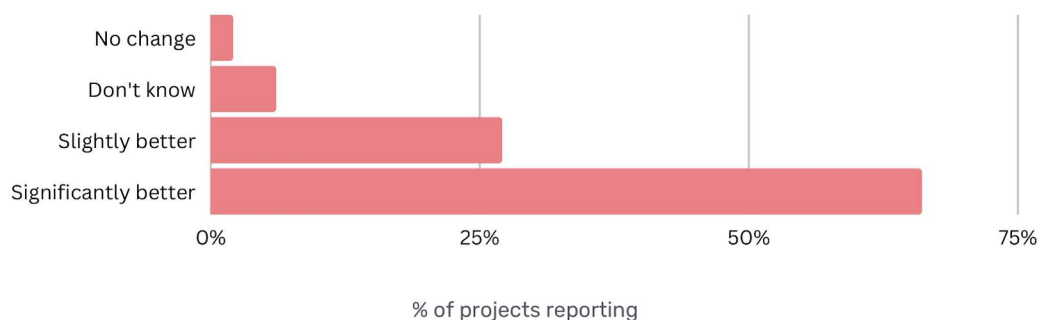
Overall, the Christmas Challenge 2021 programme has led to sizeable improvements in overall health and wellbeing outcomes for children supported by programme, with many charities reporting improvements in their mental and physical wellbeing. Many of the projects utilised programme funds to provide meals, snacks or refreshments, ensuring that children received the nourishment required to stay active, strong and healthy.

### Mental and physical health

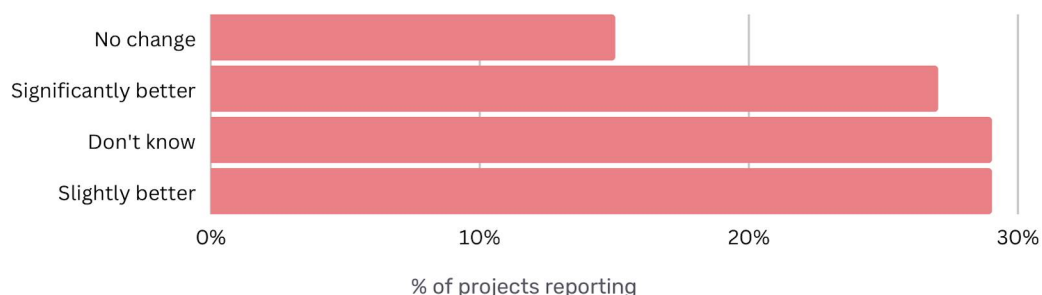
77% of the charities that participated in the programme recorded data on health and wellbeing outcomes.

- 93% reported that children experienced improved mental health as a result of engaging with their services.
- 56% of charities reported that children's physical health improved as a result of engaging with their services.

#### Change in mental health of children



#### Change in physical health of children





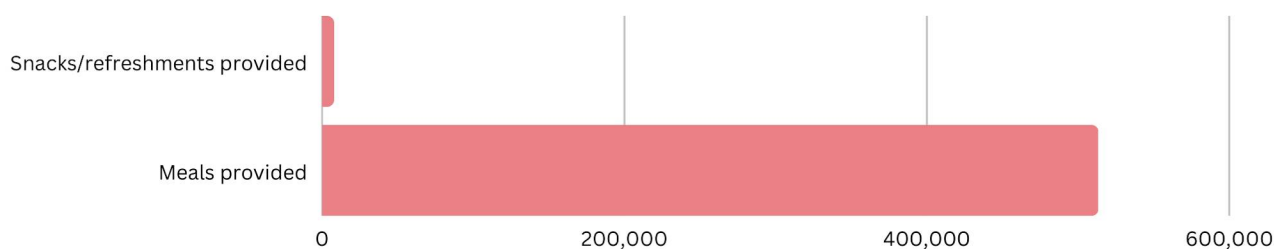
## Meals, snacks and refreshments

Our research towards the end of 2022 found that food insecurity has reached crisis levels amongst school aged children living in London. Forty percent of the children we spoke to told us they were missing multiple meals each month, equivalent to 426,500 children living in London. According to the Food Foundation, food prices were recorded at their highest level in decades in September 2022, and rising rapidly, with necessities such as milk costing as much as 40% more in 2022 than they did in 2021.

The food insecurity crisis in London has affected the mental wellbeing and physical health of children. In our survey, 8% of the children reported feeling embarrassed or ashamed about the methods they or their families used to get food; 4% experienced this many times, and 4% 1 or 2 times. Ten percent of the children affected reported being unhappy, with 17% of the children additionally reporting often feeling hungry, but not eating, because their families did not have enough food.

- 34% percent of the charities provided nutritional support for children.
- 512,947 nutritious meals and 7,367 snacks/refreshments for children were provided throughout 2022.

### Total number of meals, snacks or refreshments provided



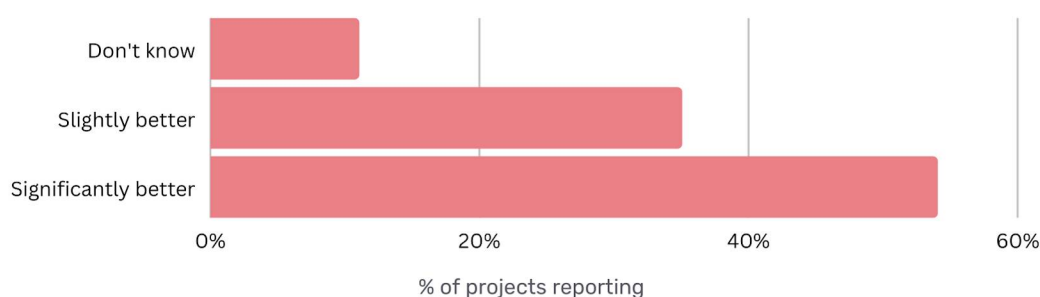
## Resilience

65% of the charities that participated in the programme recorded data on the resilience of children supported.

Many charities reported significant improvements in the resilience of children supported, with changes experienced as better stress management, improved capacity to manage change and greater levels of engagement with staff members.

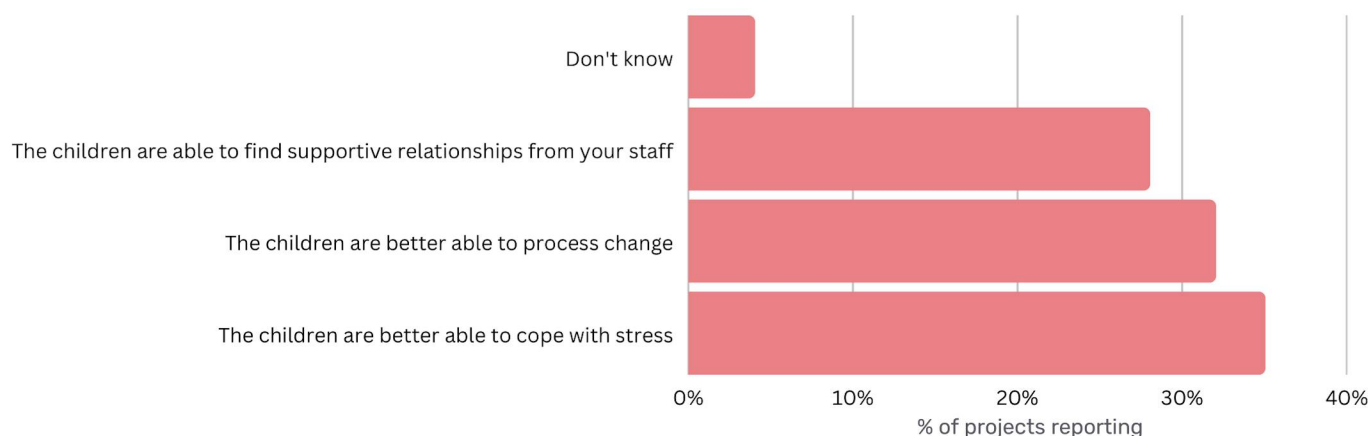
- 89% of our charity partners reported that children experienced an improvement in their ability to cope with the impact of poverty.

### Change in resilience of children supported



- 35% attributed this improvement to the ability of the children to cope with stress.
- 32% attributed this improvement with the ability to process change.
- 28% attributed this improvement with the capacity to find more supportive relationships from charity staff members.

### Characteristics of change in resilience



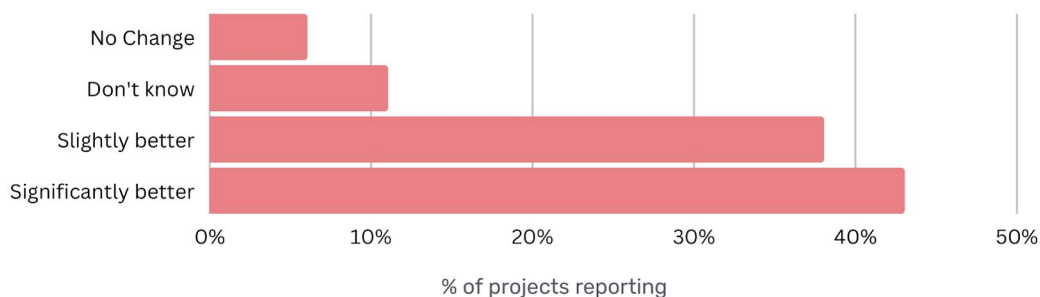


### Positive and/or family peer relationships

64% of the charities that participated recorded data on changes to the peer/and or family relationships of the children supported by the programme.

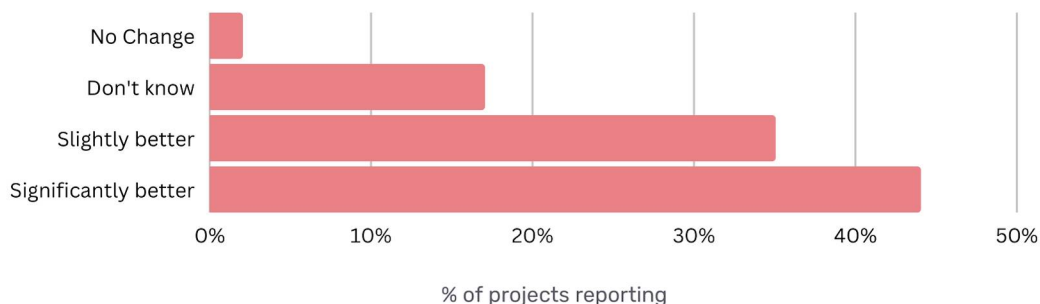
- 81% of charities reported that children experienced an improvement in peer and/or family relationships.

#### Change in peer and/or family relationships



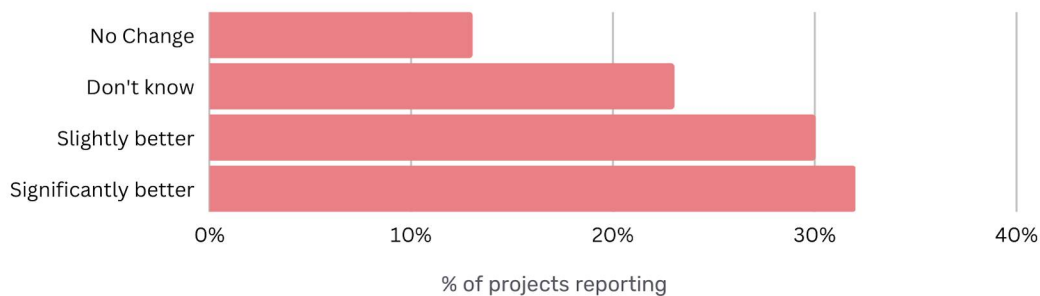
- 79% of the charities reported greater feelings of social inclusion for the children as a result of engaging with their services.

#### Change in feeling of social inclusion



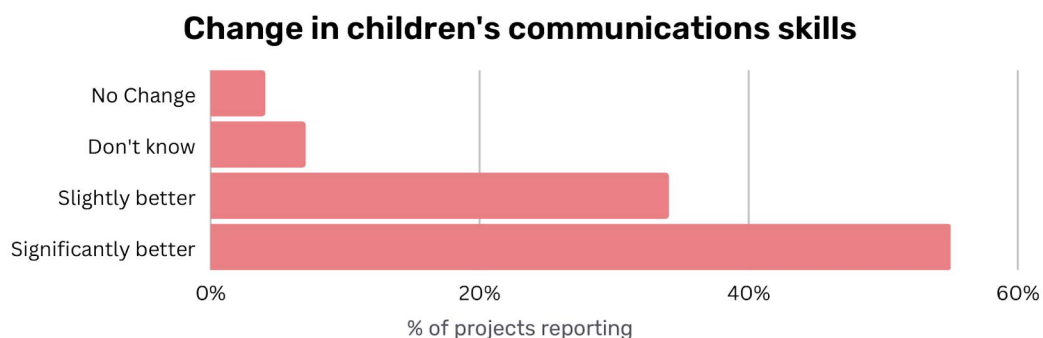
- 62% reported an improvement in the ability of the children to engage in social and community issues.

#### Change in children's engagement in social & community issues



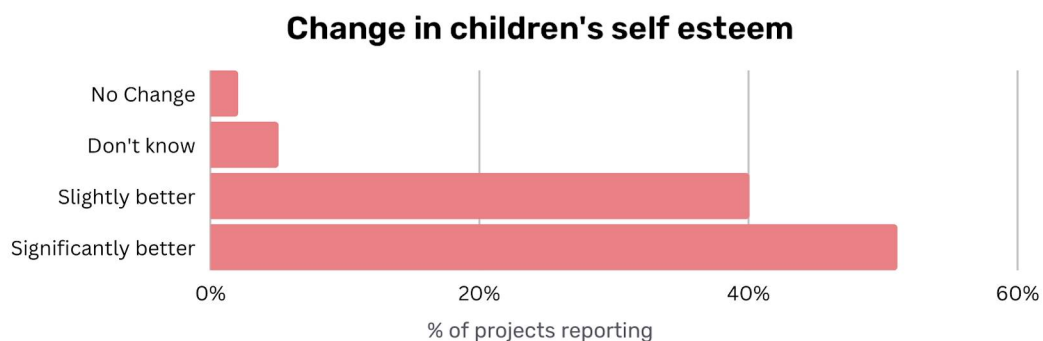
## Communication skills

- 89% of the charities reported an improvement in the ability of the children to communicate more skilfully.



## Self-esteem

- 91% reported an increase in children's self-esteem.



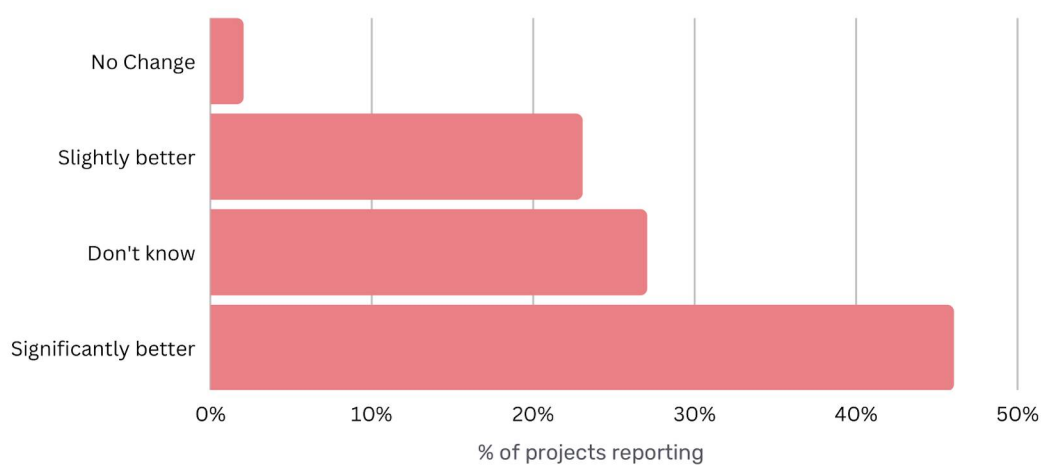


### 3. EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION

The Christmas Challenge 2021 programme has helped to provide educational support to children. Charities reported significant improvements in the ability of children to make the most of their education as a consequence of the mentoring, training and skills sessions provided.

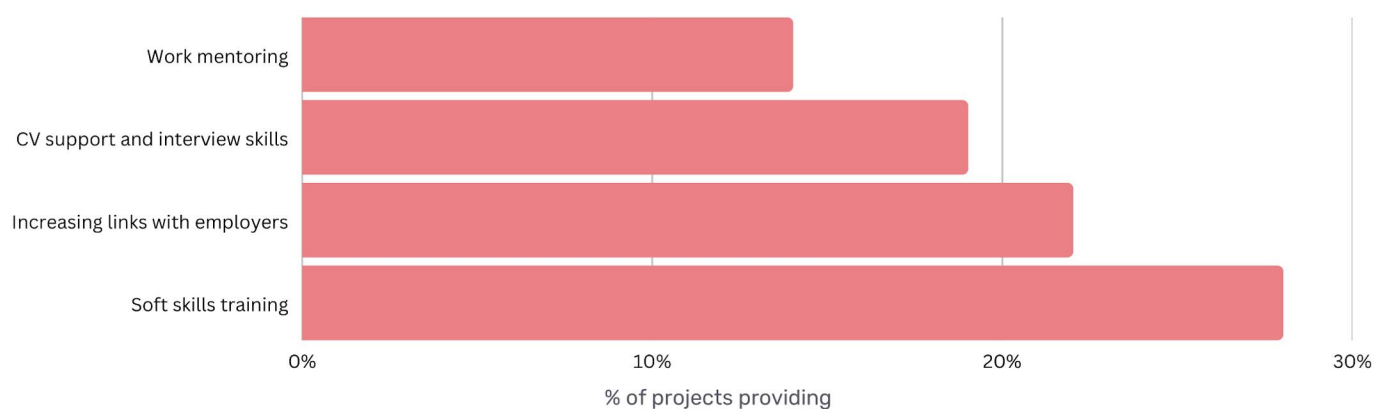
- 69% of charities reported an improvement in the ability of the children to get the most out of their education.

#### Change in children being able to make the most of their education



- This was achieved through various methods, such as enhancing soft skills training (28%), increasing links with employers (22%), to improving CV support and mentoring skills (19%), as well as work mentoring (14%).

#### Work readiness support by type of support provided





“**They give us a lot of  
support emotionally.**

Lara, supported by Cardinal Hume Centre





## Case study: Lara's family

Lara\* has been coming to Cardinal Hume centre with her children for almost 10 years. Her youngest child is three and has autism. The centre supports families and young people facing poverty and homelessness through tailored advice and support, aimed to prevent the root causes of poverty at a young age. Through the centre Lara and her children have been able access practical and emotional support that has made a huge difference to their lives.

On the team at Cardinal Hume, Lara says they are '*brilliant*'; understanding her sons needs and making adjustments so the whole family can join trips and activities at the centre, as well as providing much needed emotional support.

*We don't have outdoor space at home, so (my son) uses the garden quite a lot. That's something that is really helping us, because he needs a lot of stimulation from being outdoors with plants and fresh air. They give us a lot of support emotionally as well because we all need it, especially during this time.*

*My children have used the homework club here, and in school holidays there are trips that we join when we can. For a visit to London Zoo, our Family Services Manager knew my son can get overwhelmed being with loads of people, so arranged for us to visit at different time - and it was just a perfect time. Most other baby groups and charities they don't adjust to you like that, but here they did. It was a really good trip, stress-free, and my son loved it - he was happy. Those small things you appreciate, as they make everything easier.*

*People think you've just got to think about admission for days out, but it's the travel, food, and if something goes wrong, what do you do? It's a lot of money. There are things that are free yes, but there's other things that the kids see other children go to and do with their families, and it's just all money. Everything is money. There's not a lot of free places to go to. And if there are many people there you can't really enjoy it because of the space.*

*If we didn't come to here and have the support of the centre, we'd have to go to the park. There's nowhere else we could go. We'd have to spend the days in the park, nothing else. Everything is quite far to go to and you have to be living in the borough for example. So (without this) the parks are really the only thing I could probably do with my children.*

*I'd just like to thank everybody for helping families like mine. It's really helped and made a difference with my children and me.*





*I like training at Carney's and get on well with the staff and some of the young people. Since being here I am a lot more social.*

*It's a good atmosphere and they don't let you be lazy. **They always push me to be the best.***





# Appendix

Projects Funded	Total funding raised	Number of children supported
Alexandra Rose Charity	£62,415	
All Hallows Bow*	£12,094	54
Ambition, Aspire, Achieve	£27,184	
Apollo Music Projects	£26,211	1,543
Awards for Young Musicians	£76,682	58
Behind Every Kick	£21,275	30
Best Beginnings	£116,165	66,386
Bexley Snap	£13,300	38
Bookmark Reading Charity	£111,212	
Camden Music Trust*	£19,515	
Cardinal Hume Centre	£109,813	130
CARIS Islington*	£3,075	
Carney's Community	£15,582	556
Caspari Foundation	£7,449	
Chickenshed	£48,492	585
Christian International Peace Service (CHIPS)	£17,856	25
City Gateway*	£4,248	84
ECPAT UK (Every Child Protected Against Trafficking)	£6,742	15
Embrace Child Victims of Crime	£12,783	
Fitzrovia Youth in Action	£20,257	
Greenhouse Sports Limited	£103,851	5,067
Grief Encounter	£42,529	34
Growing Hope King's Cross	£27,094	32
Hackney Empire Limited	£17,948	2,000
Haringey Play Association*	£10,843	142
Harlington Hospice Association Limited	£1,819	
Harrow Club W10	£102,826	130
Headliners (UK)*	£2,717	36
Hestia	£26,334.22	150
Home-Start Richmond, Kingston and Hounslow	£18,973	38
Home-Start Wandsworth*	£5,073	
Jamal Edwards Delve*	£5,363	40
Jamie's Farm	£110,115	2,250
KEEN London	£8,814	100
Khulisa	£17,353	158
Lewisham Music*	£5,890	28
Little Village*	£92,567	5,900
LIVE UNLIMITED	£22,226	37
London Music Fund	£31,474	7
London Youth Choirs	£109,375	418
Loughborough Junction Action Group*	£24,411	200
Love 146	£8,454	
Lyric Hammersmith	£44,255	
Magic Breakfast	£122,667	2,600
MAN&BOY*	£17,397	36
Mayor's Fund for London	£100,354	40,000
Montage Theatre Arts	£12,961	82
Mousetrap Theatre Projects	£85,567	1,863
My AFK (formerly Action For Kids)*	£25,534	14
New Hackney Education Business Partnership	£10,702	
Paiwand*	£7,147	69
People, Potential, Possibilities	£53,042	933
Pimlico Musical Foundation	£17,162	98
Place2Be	£52,146	728
Polka Theatre	£27,366	2,157
Power2	£80,273	91
ReachOut	£11,154	16
Renaissance Foundation	£106,882	101
Restore The Music UK	£67,548	3,500
Richard House Children's Hospice*	£4,392	
Royal Academy of Dramatic Art	£72,140	958
Safe Families for Children	£47,278	153
School-Home Support (SHS)	£32,825	5,888

Shakespeare Schools Foundation	£81,102	1,225
Sinfonietta Productions Limited*	£12,551	1,912
Sir Hubert Von Herkomer Arts Foundation	£27,262	55
Skylarks	£41,960	
Solace Women's Aid	£22,481	112
Spark Inside	£58,642	11
Spear Islington Trust	£59,302	28
Spitalfields Music	£21,168	550
Spring Community Hub	£20,186	549
St Andrew's Club	£8,578	68
Step by Step London	£101,302	130
Strength and Learning Through Horses*	£4,726	13
Tall Ships Youth Trust	£24,615	32
The Adnan Jaffery Educational Trust	£31,276	74
The Akshaya Patra Foundation	£109,233	
The Archer Academy*	£11,671	
The Baytree Centre	£23,857	254
The Ben Kinsella Trust*	£52,596	5,115
The Foundling Museum	£31,068	43
The Gallions Music Trust	£7,961	112
The Horse Rangers Association Ltd (Hampton Court)*	£8,372	2
The Katherine Low Settlement Limited	£58,956	340
The Kids Network	£10,342	
The Little Angel Theatre	£11,411	
The Mix*	£7,683	1,609
ThinkForward (UK)	£55,505	917
Toynbee Hall	£25,895	440
UK Music Masters	£57,068	1,000
UK Youth	£22,102	67
Unicorn Theatre	£23,327	90
UP - Unlocking Potential	£49,648	336
West London Action for Children	£44,173	220
West London Zone	£43,220	58
Westminster Befriend a Family	£3,396	
Young Music Makers London Limited	£11,593	
	<b>£3,688,142.64</b>	<b>160,929</b>

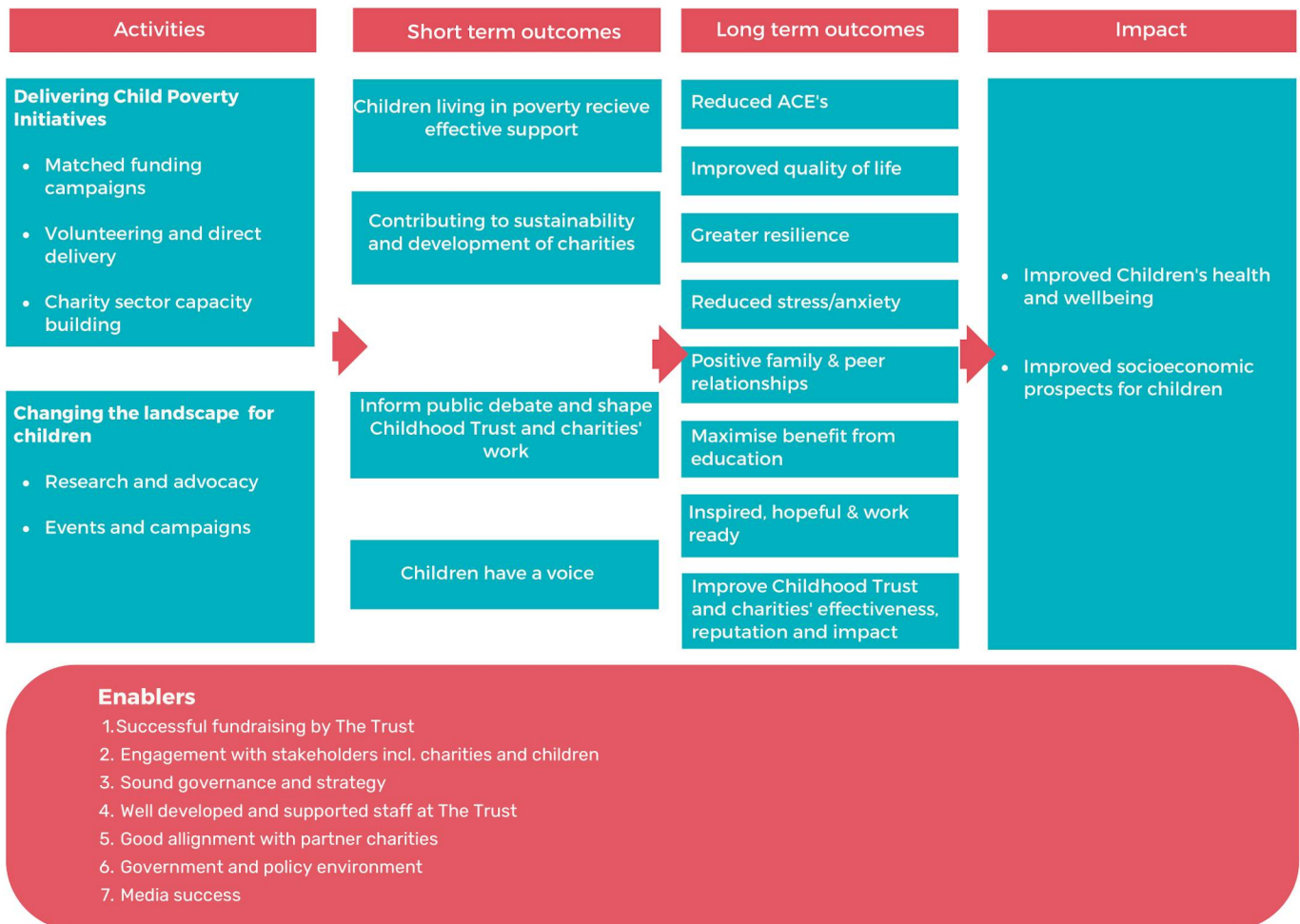
**\* New charities to The Childhood Trust in 2021**

Charities with a blank cell for the number of children supported, do not provide data. These charities have been granted reporting deadline extensions for not spending 100% of Christmas Challenge 2021 programme funds.



# Theory of Change

## The Childhood Trust's - Theory of Change (2021)





Charity Registration No. 1154032  
[www.childhoodtrust.org.uk](http://www.childhoodtrust.org.uk)