



# CHRISTMAS CHALLENGE 2022 IMPACT REPORT



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Dear Friends,

The high cost of living in London continues to make life even more challenging for children experiencing poverty. Many families struggle to make ends meet, facing sub-standard living conditions, limited nutritious and affordable food options, and difficulty accessing essential healthcare services.

In response to these challenges, The Childhood Trust (TCT) ran The Christmas Challenge 2022 campaign to alleviate the impact of poverty on children living in London. Running from November 29th to December 6th, we raised £4.03 million, our highest Christmas total to date. This represents a notable 7% increase from the previous year's fundraising total of £3,688,142.

Helping to generate this total was The Childhood Trust's match fund of £881,874. This was granted to 89 charity delivery partners, to ensure 12 months of targeted projects, providing extensive reach and coverage through support for more than 130,054 children across all 32 London boroughs. A comprehensive range of interventions were delivered within the Trust's four impact areas of ensuring children are; healthy, resilient, confident and safe.

Without The Childhood Trust's Christmas Challenge 2022 campaign, and the support of our donors, 86% of the charitable projects would not have been able to deliver their services to children. 111,846 children would not have received the support they needed throughout 2023.

The Childhood Trust and our community of charity delivery partners were incredibly moved by the generous donations of supporters like you who were motivated to give at record levels to help alleviate some of the most challenging circumstances for London's children.

This impact report outlines the approaches taken to alleviate the significant issues facing children, and the measurable impact achieved through the outstanding efforts of our charity partner network.

With warmest regards,



Laurence Guinness  
Chief Executive



# KEY STATISTICS

## £4,034,390

raised in one week, a 7% increase on the 2021 Christmas Challenge Campaign  
TCT matched campaign funds granted = £868,610

### 89

charitable projects supported  
11 took part in the campaign for  
the first time

### 130,054

disadvantaged children supported from all London  
Boroughs

### 1,693,910

meals, food vouchers and parcels provided

### 8,035

sport and play sessions facilitated

### 2,857

employability, mentoring and  
confidence building sessions

### 104,165

academic support and soft skill sessions delivered



### 2,250

essential items provided



### 90%

of charity partners reported an increase in  
children's feelings of social inclusion

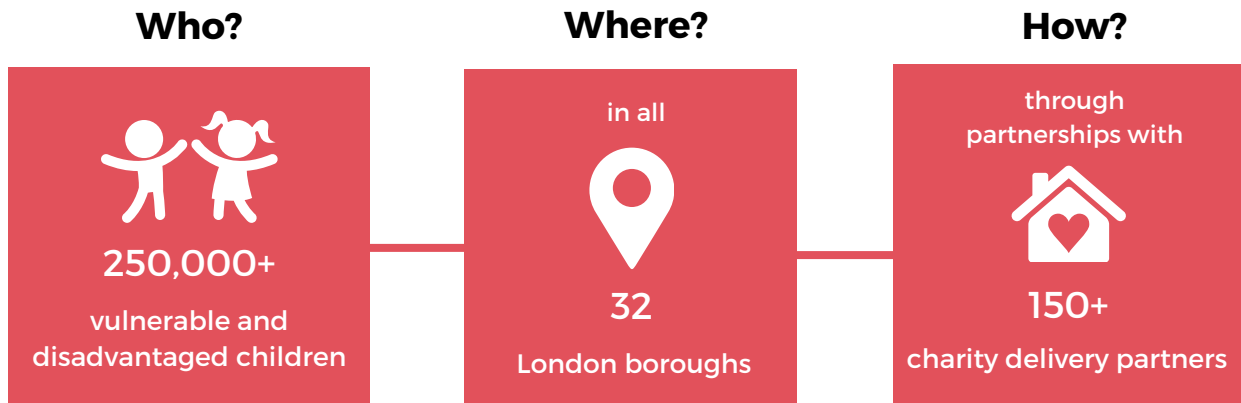
### 100%

of charity partners delivering mental health and wellbeing support reported that  
children showed increased hopefulness and optimism about the future

# ABOUT US

Founded in 2013, The Childhood Trust is London's child poverty charity, dedicated to providing a healthy, happy, and safe childhood, so that children are *Prepared for Life*.

## Annually, we support...



Our multifaceted approach encompasses matched-funding campaigns, which mobilise essential funds for community projects citywide, a dynamic volunteering programme that revitalizes community spaces and children's bedrooms, and a robust research and advocacy programme that amplifies the voices of children and young people disadvantaged by poverty.

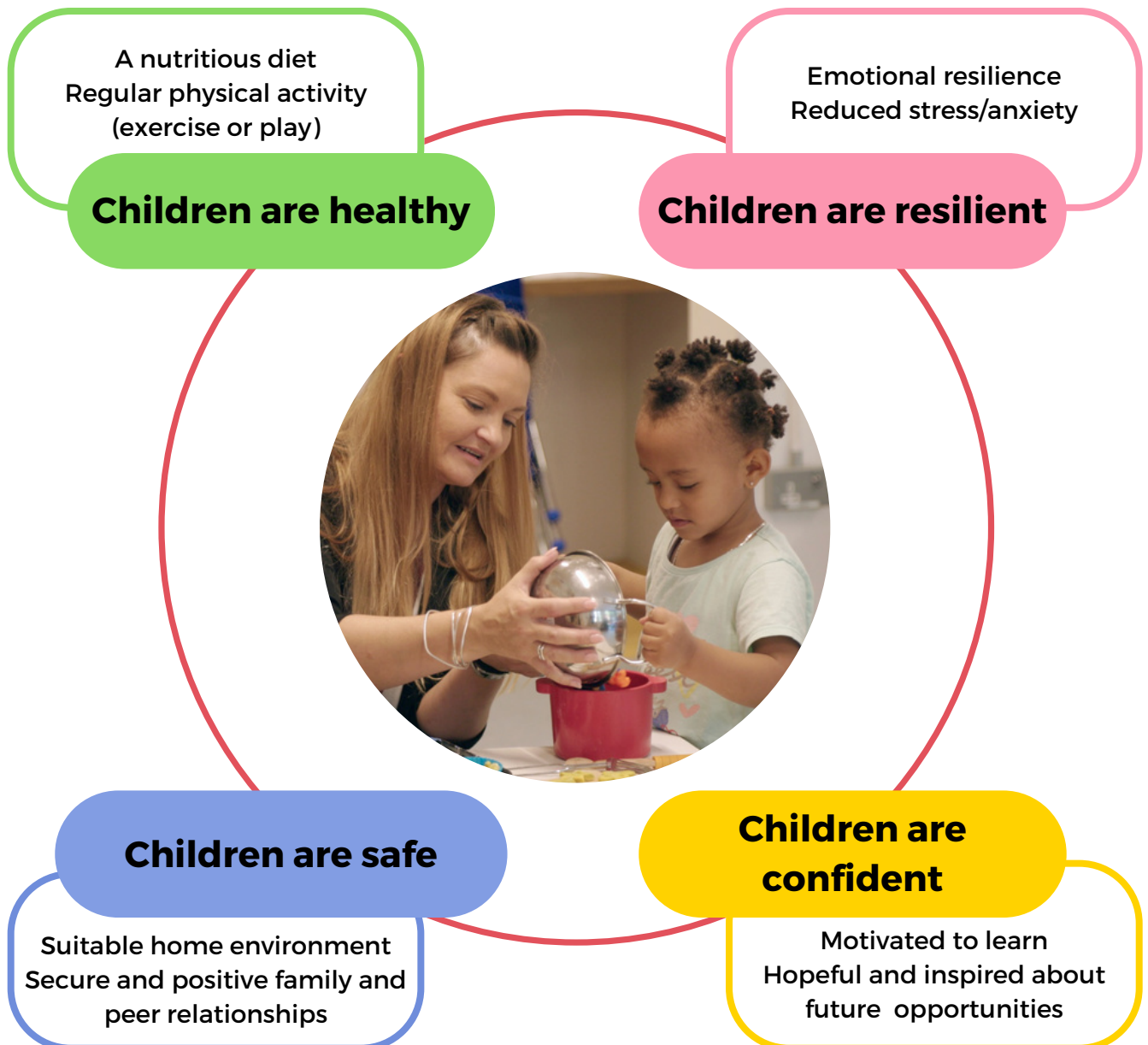


Our work raises awareness of child poverty and advocates for systemic change to create a brighter future for London's children.

# PREPARED FOR LIFE IMPACT STRATEGY

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Our *Prepared for Life* impact strategy focuses on four key impact areas that can transform a disadvantaged child's life: addressing children's immediate health needs as well as promoting long-term resilience, creating safety and community cohesion, and building confidence for education and employment, so children do not fail.



Our community projects are often children's only lifeline, providing hot and nutritious meals, educational programmes in warm and safe spaces, social and physical activities, mental health support, and so much more. And their impact on children's lives is considerable:

# THE CAMPAIGN

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The cost-of-living crisis continued to make life difficult for low-income families in the UK. Inflation had increased by 10.1% in the 12 months from March 2022-2023 [1]. As living costs rose and wages remained stagnant, many families were struggling to make ends meet.

Inflation increased  
**10.1%**  
from March 2022-2023

Our research report on food insecurity, published in November 2022, documented the harsh realities for children and their families facing fuel and food poverty during the cold winter months. Many of our charity partners reported facing new challenges such as increased requests for support, increased cost of delivering services and high staff turnover, attributing the cost-of-living crisis as the main cause. Despite these challenges, we were delighted that we were able to help our charity partners to achieve their fundraising and service delivery goals through the campaign.

While this campaign provided immediate relief for many children during the Christmas school holidays, the majority of the support was delivered over the following 12 months (January 2023 – December 2023), providing consistent availability of services and support to transform children's lives. Our projects ensured that children experiencing poverty stayed safe, were well nourished and enjoyed purposeful and fun activities.

1. Office for National Statistics. (2023). Consumer Price Inflation, UK: March 2023. Retrieved from <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/bulletins/consumerpriceinflation/march2023>

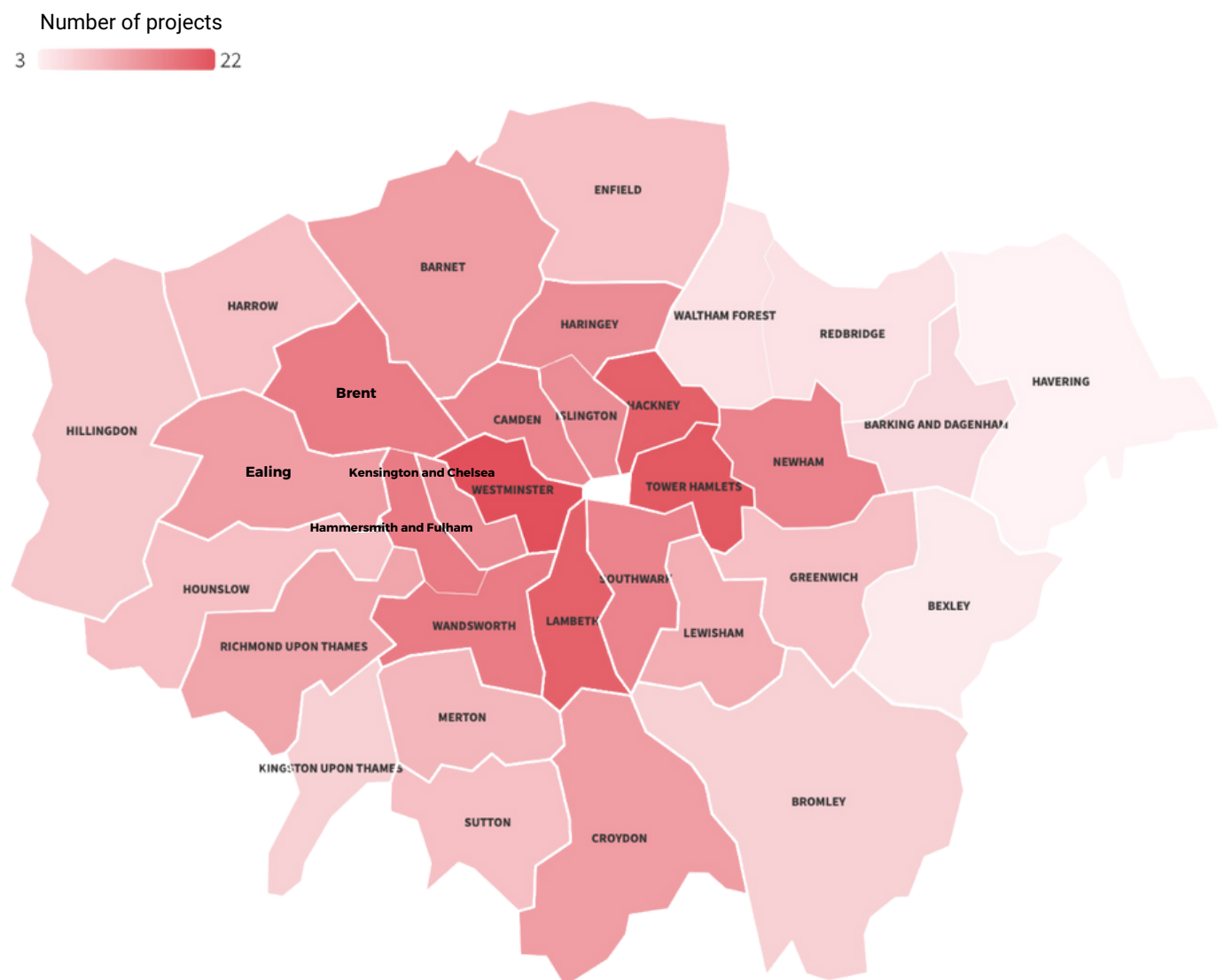


# CHILDREN WE SUPPORTED

Our comprehensive approach to tackling child poverty spans across many communities within the city and ensures that the initiatives funded by The Childhood Trust are tailored to meet the specific needs of all London's children living in poverty.

The campaign had far-reaching impact, supporting 130,054 children experiencing poverty, across 32 London boroughs.

## Geographical reach



Source: [Office for National Statistics \(Boundaries\)](#), [Simple maps \(Points\)](#)

This heat map represents the number of projects our charity partners delivered per borough. Westminster received the most amount of projects where 31% of its children live in poverty [1].

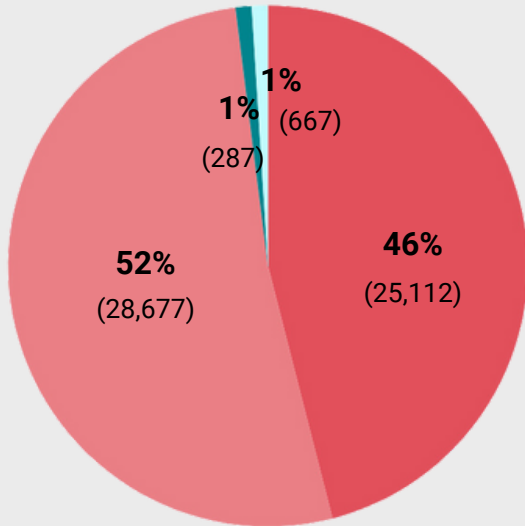
1. Trust for London, London's Poverty Profile 2022



# DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

## By children's gender

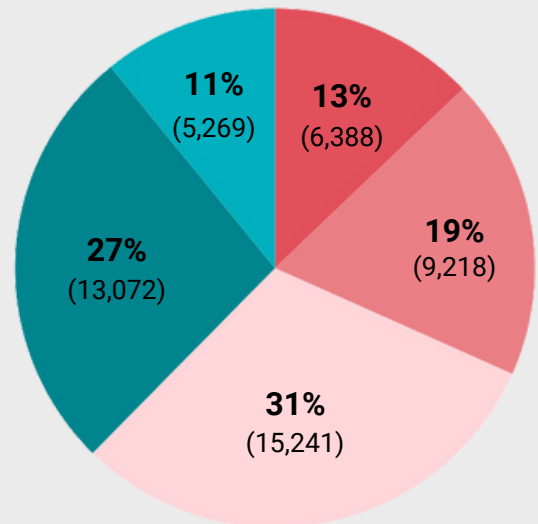
57% of our delivery partners reported gender data.  
Of those who reported this data:



- Girls
- Non-binary
- Boys
- Other

## By children's ethnicity

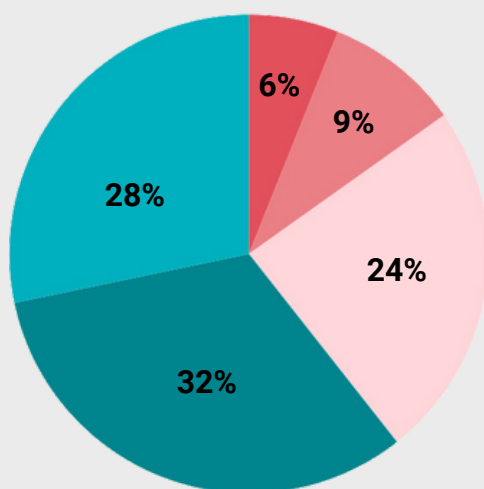
52% of our delivery partners reported race/ethnicity data.  
Of those who reported this data:



- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups
- White
- Asian or Asian British
- Any other Ethnic Group
- Black, Black British, African, or Caribbean

## By children's age

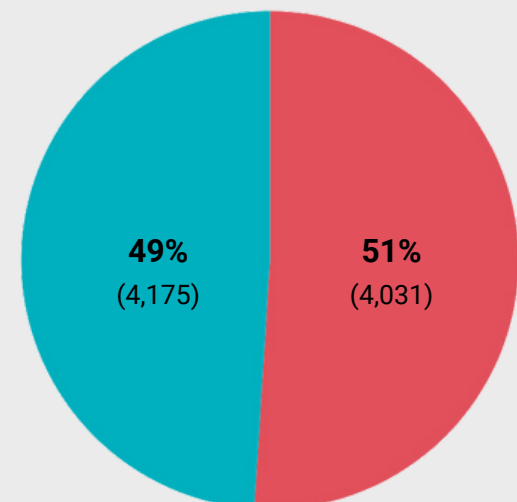
100% of our delivery partners reported age data.



- 0 - 1 yrs
- 10 - 14 yrs
- 2 - 4 yrs
- 15 - 17 yrs
- 5 - 9 yrs

## Children with SEND

51% of our delivery partners record the additional needs of their beneficiaries.  
Of those who reported this data:



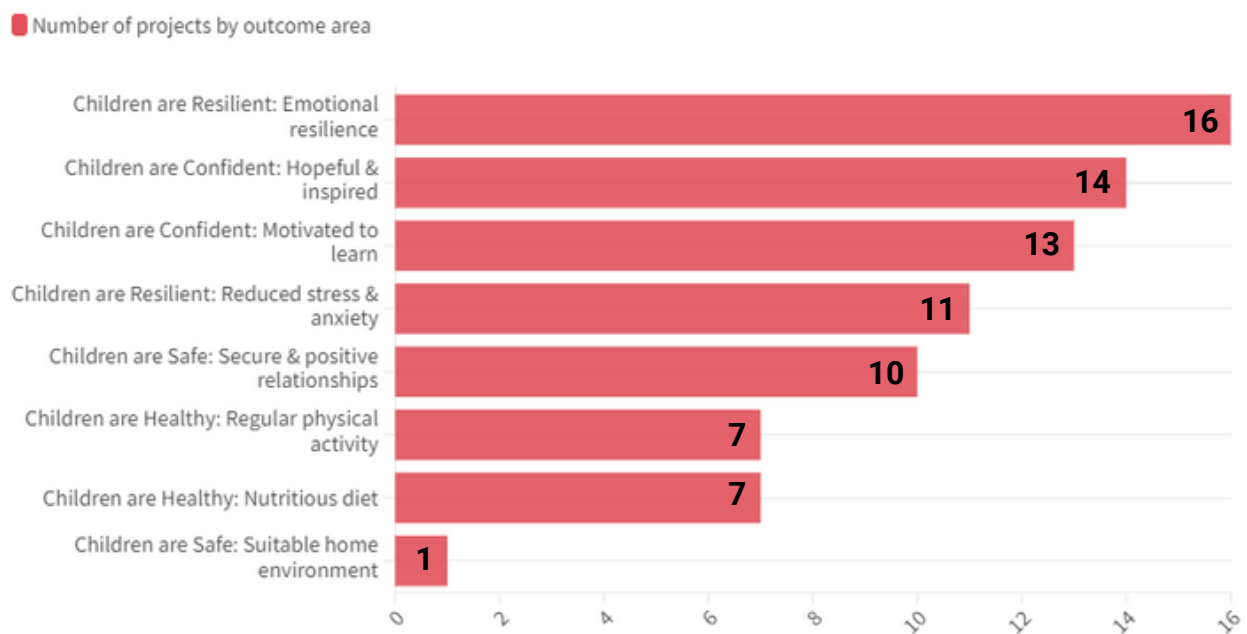
- Children with special educational needs supported
- Children with disabilities

# CHARITY DELIVERY PARTNERS

Our network of charity delivery partners has responded to the challenges posed by the high cost of living and its detrimental impact on London's most vulnerable children by intensifying their services. They have extended their reach and opened their doors to support more children facing heightened risks due to economic hardship.

Several partners reported receiving a higher number of referrals driven in part by desperate economic conditions and destitution, resulting in behavioural issues exacerbated by poor mental health and wellbeing.

## Number of projects per outcome area



# EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

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As child poverty rates continue to rise, measuring the impact of the projects we fund effectively becomes increasingly crucial. This ensures that our funding is directed towards projects that will effectively alleviate the impact of poverty on children in London. Our evaluation framework aligns with our *Prepared for Life* impact strategy goals and outcomes. It is designed to facilitate rigorous, tailored, and flexible monitoring and evaluation processes. This framework was developed through a facilitated Theory of Change process, a review of available evidence for assessing outcomes, and incorporating partner feedback on their current evaluation practices.



The evaluation framework assesses eight outcomes, two for each of the impact goals. Charities partners choose one relevant outcome area to report against.



Charity partners participating in the Christmas Challenge provided demographic information regarding the children benefiting from their work, along with impact goal-specific details about their progress against selected outcomes.



The data in this report represents 79 out of 83 projects that utilised all their funding at the end of the 12 months. The data demonstrates how the programme funding has met the goals of The Childhood Trust as outlined by our Theory of Change (see Appendix 2).



The following thematic areas demonstrate where the children supported by the programme have experienced improved health and wellbeing and improved socioeconomic prospects as a direct result of programme funding. These are areas where the inequalities that exist for children experiencing poverty can influence their life trajectory.





## Children are healthy: physical exercise

*Coach has helped me work on my game and has pushed for me to get experience and add skills to my arsenal.*

*I want to play professional basketball and possibly become a coach, but on a smaller scale I first want to win games and pass my exams.*

Timothy, 14, Greenhouse Sports



# Children are healthy

*Fighting food insecurity, malnutrition and health inequalities*

### Children are healthy

Outcome	Projects delivered	Children reached	Interventions delivered
A nutritious diet	7	91,249	1,693,903
Regular physical activity	7	9,083	8,035



# Outcome One: Nutritious Diet

Our survey exploring child food insecurity in schools across London found that the issue is pervasive and widespread. Of the 280 children aged between 7-16 randomly surveyed, 40% (112 children) have experienced food insecurity within the last month. This is equivalent to approximately 426,500 children living in London. [1]

This is higher than the levels found in similar, national research by the Food Foundation, which found that, as of September 2022, 25% of households with children have experienced food insecurity. This suggests that, although child food insecurity is an issue throughout the UK, the problem is particularly acute in London.

# 40%

of children we surveyed have experienced food insecurity

which is equivalent to

# 426,5000

children in London regularly going hungry

## Our intervention



Seven charity partners delivered almost £1.7m food-related interventions to over 90,000 children. The significant scale of the efforts undertaken by these charity partners highlights the proactive approach to tackling the issue of food insecurity in the communities they serve.

The different food provisions provided by charities to beneficiaries comply with the UK Government's Eat Well Guide, which include vegetables, dairy, fruit and protein options.



1,644,403  
meals provided



43,125  
food vouchers



6375  
food parcels

1. The Childhood Trust (2022). A report on food insecurity impacting school aged children in London UK: November 2022.



**86%**

of charity partners reported that children improved their physical health



**85%**

of charity partners reported that children had improved nutritional intake

**58%**

of charity partners attest to the lasting impact of interventions aimed at addressing food insecurity and malnutrition on children's health surpassing the 12 month period



**72%**

of charity partners reported that children had increased their nutritional awareness



**72%**

of charity partners reported improved mental health



The reported 85% improvement in nutritional intake indicates that the initiatives are successful in providing children with access to nutritious food. This is a crucial aspect of addressing food insecurity and promoting overall health and well-being among children.

While improvements in nutritional intake are significant, the reported 43% improvement in physical and mental health suggests that these initiatives are having broader positive impacts on children beyond just addressing hunger.





# Outcome Two: Physical Activity

For children, the UK Chief Medical Officer (CMO) advises a minimum of 60 minutes of physical activity per day, distributed across the week. These activities aim to enhance movement skills, muscular fitness, and bone strength, vital components of overall well-being.

A third of children leaving primary school are overweight or obese with rates of obesity rising for disadvantaged children (NHS 2023)

## Our intervention

Over the course of 12 months, our seven charity delivery partners delivered 8,035 physical activity sessions tailored for children. In total, these interventions amounted to 15,033 hours of physical activity provision across the 12-month period, equivalent to an impressive 41 hours of provision per day. These figures significantly surpass the minimum recommended amount of physical activity stipulated by the CMO.



**260 team sport sessions**  
averaging 1.72 hours per session



**5,802 after school sessions**  
averaging 1.67 hours per session




**1,566 dance and movement sessions**  
averaging 1.95 hours per session



**407 play sessions**  
averaging 4.51 hours per session



**100%**  
of charity partners reported that children improved their physical health



**100%**  
of charity partners reported that children socialised with people they would not have met otherwise



**100%**  
of charity partners reported improved mental health



**85%**  
of charity partners reported that children increased their monthly physical activities

The overall impact on children's health is exceptionally positive, with all charity partners reporting improvements across all measures, many of which indicate significant progress. Particularly notable improvements were observed in areas such as socialising with new people, as well as in improved physical and mental health. These achievements demonstrate the effectiveness of charity partner initiatives in delivering activities that promote positive social, physical and mental well-being and encourage children to lead active and healthy lifestyles.

**86%**  
of charity partners attest to the lasting impact of interventions aimed at addressing health inequalities on children's health, surpassing the 12-month funding period



# Rose Vouchers for Fruit & Veg Project

## Alexandra Rose



Synergy Partner



72,000



207 Children



Hackney, Hammersmith and Fulham, Lambeth, Southwark and Tower Hamlets

### From three mouths to four

Last year, Sandra, a devoted mum of two children Johan and Eunice, relocated to Lambeth to care for her mother. Now paying bills for a four-person household, feeding an additional mouth, and managing Eunice's frequent illnesses, Sandra struggled to make ends meet. Johan and Eunice became two of the 426,500 children who experienced food insecurity in the last 12 months.

The financial strain caused increased stress for the whole family, but luckily for them, Alexandra Rose's *Rose Vouchers for Fruit and Veg Project* became their lifeline.

### A Christmas Miracle

On hearing about the project, Sandra registered for Rose Vouchers and started receiving 32 vouchers a month, the equivalent to £32.

She could now buy nutritional fruit and vegetables of her choice at the West Norwood market. Not only is this a local, affordable market and community, but Sandra recalls getting even bigger portions compared to her normal overpriced supermarket.

### From stress, to secure

12 months on and vegetables, once the first to sacrifice on the shopping list, are now a cherished, nutritious staple in every meal for the family. Sandra can now feed Johan and Eunice their favourite vegetables, whilst also encouraging them to try something new, expanding their nutritional intake. Johan and Eunice have a new love for fruit and they have more energy than ever, much to Sandra's delight as a parent. Eunice didn't get ill once during the winter and Sandra puts this down to her improved diet.

The Rose Vouchers have ultimately added a sense of security the family had never experienced before. The once overwhelming pressure of providing nutritious meals has eased and been replaced by the assurance that Sandra can provide nourishing meals that her Johan and Eunice, and every child, deserve.

*"Rose Vouchers have helped us to have fruit and veg every day. Vegetables would be the first thing we could cut out on the occasions we couldn't afford to buy them, but now we can put veg in every meal." - Sandra, Mum of two, Alexandra Rose*





**Children are resilient:  
reduced stress and  
anxiety**

*This is my thing.  
This is something I can  
do!*

Young beneficiary,  
Music Masters



# Children are resilient

*Addressing children's mental health & emotional wellbeing*

## Children are resilient

Outcome	Projects delivered	Children reached
Emotional resilience	16	3,366
Reduced stress/anxiety	11	7,412



# Outcome Three: Emotional Resilience

Children exposed to both persistent poverty and poor caregiver mental health are at markedly increased risk of socioemotional behavioural problems, mental health problems and cognitive disability. It has been estimated that 40% of socioemotional behavioural problems at the age of 17 were attributable to persistent parental caregivers' mental health problems and poverty. [1]

# 40%

of socioemotional behavioural problems at the age of 17 were attributable to persistent parental caregivers' mental health problems and poverty

## Our intervention

Over the course of 12 months, our 16 charity delivery partners supported 3,366 vulnerable children improve their emotional resilience.



# 100%

of charity partners reported that children were better able to cope with setbacks



# 88%

of charity partners reported that children were better able to complete a task they had started



# 88%

of charity partners reported that children were better able to focus



# 100%

of charity partners agreed that their intervention had a positive effect on children's resilience



1. Impact of parental mental health and poverty on the health of the next generation: A multi-trajectory analysis using the UK Millennium Cohort Study, 2023



## Outcome Four: Reduced Anxiety and Stress

### Our intervention

Over the course of 12 months, our 11 charity delivery partners supported 7,412 vulnerable children reduced their stress and anxiety.



**100%**

of charity partners reported that children were more hopeful / optimistic about the future



**91%**

of charity partners reported that children were better able to deal with problems



**90%**

of charity partners reported that children had less stress and anxiety levels



**81%**

of charity partners agreed that their intervention had a positive impact on children's mental health

The overall impact on children's mental health is overwhelmingly positive, with all charity partners reporting notable improvements across various measures. These improvements are particularly evident in children's outlook for the future, with 100% of charity partners reporting increased hope and optimism. This not only indicates that interventions are effectively addressing immediate challenges but also instilling a sense of possibility and resilience among children.

Overall, the data suggests that interventions implemented by charity partners are making significant strides in promoting positive mental health outcomes among children, as evidenced by the high percentages reported across various indicators of mental well-being. These findings underscore the effectiveness of interventions in addressing mental health challenges and fostering resilience and optimism among children.





## Inspiring young patients in poverty

### Renaissance Foundation



Synergy Partner



112,312.50



55 children



Barking and Dagenham, Barnet, Croydon, Ealing, Enfield, Hackney, Harrow, Islington, Lambeth, Lewisham, Merton, Newham, Southwark, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest, Westminster

#### A young patient's reality

Alexis, 16, navigates the complex roles many young patients face. She is a supportive big sister to her two younger siblings, whilst also a fighter in her battle against an autoimmune disease. Juggling frequent hospital visits, sometimes up to three times a day, the strain on her physical and mental health is not new to Alexis, and it often results in missed school days, impacting her education, and depriving her of the typical social experiences of a teenager. But this is a reality for young patients, particularly those in impoverished circumstances.

It can lead to emotional challenges and limited opportunities. Our recent research found that 86% of social workers reported that providing timely mental health support has become much more difficult to achieve, which is why it's important we work with charity partners such as the Renaissance Foundation (RF).

#### A break between appointments

Facilitating regular educational workshops, drop-in sessions and personalised mentoring, the Renaissance Foundation is a safe community for young patients like

Alexis to build their resilience, life skills and friendships, essential for navigating life's challenges.

Despite bouts of acute ill health interrupting Alexis's attendance, RF provided consistent support and communication to ensure Alexis felt confident when stepping back into her favourite activities.

#### From ill, to inspired

From voicing Captain Hook during their visit to Audible Head-Quarters, to performing piano in the talent show, the transformative impact the RF community has had on Alexis' confidence and well-being over the last 12 months is clear. She even inspired her friend Jonny to join RF who has similar lived experiences.

Looking ahead, Alexis doesn't just foresee her medical challenges but envisions a future in the property industry, a goal supported by RF's personalised approach. Her confidence has flourished and with her school life and health thriving. Alexis has fostered a new resilience and self-belief she wouldn't have had without RF.

*"It's nice to be together with people that actually understand where you're coming from" - Alexis, Renaissance Foundation*



**Children are confident: motivated to learn**

*I'm prepared, and now, with goals, I'm more focused and thinking about my future.*

Young beneficiary, Aldbridge Foundation



## **Children are confident**

*Reducing educational inequalities supporting life and work-readiness*

### **Children are confident**

Outcome	Projects delivered	Children reached
Motivated to Learn	13	7,859
Hopeful and Inspired	14	5,714



# Outcome Five: Motivated to Learn

London hosts a very high proportion of England’s disadvantaged students, with over a sixth of pupils qualifying for free school meals (FSM).

There is a gap of 15% at GCSE level between the poorest and the best-off pupils in London. London’s children have one of the lowest acceptance rates to Oxbridge and Russell Group universities, and just 17% of the city’s professional jobs are occupied by people from low-income backgrounds, compared to 30% nationally. [1]

London's GCSE results show a

# 15% gap

between its poorest and wealthiest students, highlighting significant educational inequities

## Our intervention

Over the course of 12 months, our 13 charity delivery partners delivered 104,165 learning sessions tailored for children.



**216 homework clubs**

*averaging 2 hours per session*



**786 soft skills activity sessions**

*averaging 92 hours per session*



**17 academic mentoring sessions**

*averaging 6 hours per session*



**Interventions mounted to 86,666 hours of provision**

*equivalent of 237 hours a day*



# 100%

of charity partners reported that children were more likely to have a go at challenging tasks



# 100%

of charity partners reported that children expressed more enthusiasm / interest for what they were learning



# 77%

of charity partners reported that children made an effort to learn from mistakes they had made in their learning



# 100%

of charity partners reported that children were more engaged in their learning

100% of charity partners agreed that the interventions they delivered increased children’s expressed motivation for learning.

1. Reconnect London, 2022



# Outcome Six: Hopeful and Inspired

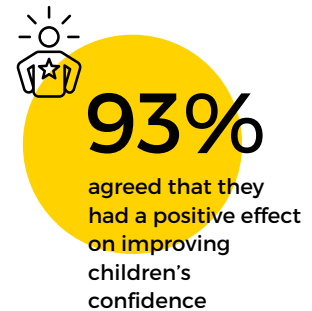
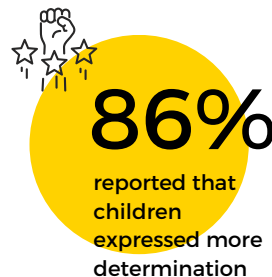
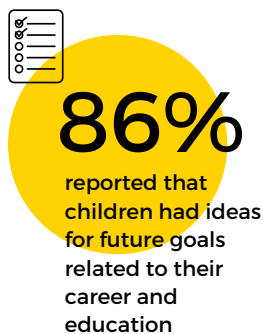
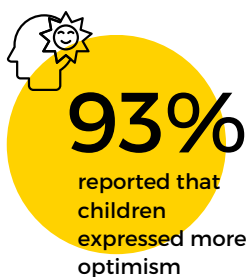
Confidence is a crucial aspect of children's socio-emotional development, influencing their willingness to take on challenges, engage in learning activities, and interact with others. Therefore, interventions that contribute to enhancing children's confidence can have far-reaching positive effects on their overall well-being and success.

# 17%

of the City's professional jobs are held by people from low-income backgrounds (Reconnect London, 2022)

## Our intervention

Over the course of 12 months, our 14 charity delivery partners delivered 7,120 sessions aimed to increase children's hopefulness about the future.



The results highlight a universally positive impact of interventions on various facets of children's learning experiences and their optimism regarding future prospects. Specifically, the data reveals that 100% of charity partners observed children displaying increased resilience and a greater readiness to tackle challenging tasks.

This suggests a notable improvement in children's capacity to overcome obstacles, indicating the effectiveness of interventions designed to promote resilience. The consensus among charity partners underscores the impact of these interventions in cultivating enthusiasm and curiosity for learning, affirming the effectiveness of these projects.



# Transform the lives of young refugees in the UK

## Hope for Young



Grassroot



£11,245



14



All London Boroughs

### A refugee reality

Not every child is born into safety and in 2021, 4,081 unaccompanied children arrived in the UK looking for security and a place to call home [1], children like Fatmata. Fleeing Sierra Leone alone at just 16, Fatmata was ambitious for her future, but she was greeted by the many barriers young refugees face including adapting to a new school environment, navigating daily life in a new country and financial hardship. Instead of feeling safe, she was left feeling isolated. But thankfully for Fatmata, our charity partner Hope for Young was there to put some 'hope' back into her heart.

### Driven by hope

Referred by her social worker, Fatmata joined Hope for Young's Mentoring Programme, where she met Niki. Together, they focused on enhancing Fatmata's organisational skills, using different technologies to help her navigate her new city with confidence, platforms like Google Maps and Google Calendars. All whilst working tirelessly to support Fatmata's academic aspirations, breaking down the school system barriers and financial constraints facing asylum seekers.

### Empowered independence

With newfound confidence, the once transport-shy Fatmata has now travelled all the way to Glasgow by herself to visit a friend and even joined a dance and theatre group. Hoping to become a paediatric nurse, Fatmata has now completed her GCSEs and is studying health and social care at college, whilst juggling a part-time job and living in semi-independent housing all managed by herself.

Fatmata's journey isn't over, but it's a testament to the transformative power of mentorship. Through Hope for Young, she has not only overcome the challenges many refugees face, but also unlocked her full potential, building resilience and hope for a brighter future.

1. (No date) About Us - hope for the young. Available at: <https://hopefortheyoung.org.uk/about-us/> (Accessed: 20 February 2024).

***"Mentoring helped me out a lot. I learn how to open up more to people and make new friends, like in drama groups. I built my confidence and self-esteem."***  
Fatmata, Hope for Young





**Children are safe:  
suitable home  
enviornment**

*After that first visit, I went home that night and slept brilliantly for the first time in ages. Knowing I had really good quality things that I needed for my baby was such a blessing.*

Tanisha, Little Village



# Children are safe

*Reducing educational inequalities supporting life and work-readiness*

Children are safe		
Outcome	Projects delivered	Children reached
Suitable home enviornment	1	3,750
Secure and positive family and peer relationships	10	1,621



## Outcome Seven: Suitable Home Environment

Positive changes to a child's home environment can improve mental health (UCL, 2020)

**74,000 children**

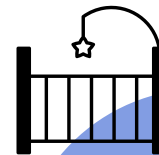
are homeless in London, with many families living in unsafe, insecure or unaffordable homes (Shelter 2023)

### Our intervention

One charity delivery partner reported on the impact outcome related to creating a suitable home environment. Their intervention aimed to support beneficiaries with multiple needs. Within their beneficiary group, 39% (1463) of the children lacked dedicated spaces for studying or sleeping, and 9% (338) had parents who were not adequately attending to their basic needs.

The charity delivery partner distributed 2,250 £20 vouchers to assist 3,750 children under the age of five living in poverty across London. This initiative was provided alongside their primary services, which included clothing and essential items such as nappies, wipes, and season-appropriate clothing.

As a result of their intervention the children experienced improvements in their home environment, as well as in their mental and physical health. The charity partner believed that the improvements made would be sustained beyond the funding period.



**2,250  
vouchers**

to provide basic  
essential items to  
3,750 children

The charity partner agreed that the quality of their beneficiaries home environments have directly improved, and as a result so has there mental and physical health.



## Outcome Eight: Secure and Positive Family Relationships

Since 2011 more than 600 full-time youth worker jobs have been cut by London councils, reducing the average provision per borough from 48 youth workers to just 15. Community cohesion and a sense of belonging requires safe supervised places for children to socialise and play.

### Our intervention

Over the course of 12 months, our 10 charity delivery partners supported 1,621 children to help secure and improve positive peer and family relationships.



**90%**

reported a notable improvement in children's feelings of social inclusion



**80%**

reported that children were better able to make friends



**80%**

reported a notable improvement in the children's family/peer relationships



**90%**

reported a notable improvement in children's self esteem



**80%**

reported that children were more engaged in helping or supporting their peer, family members or community



**80%**

reported that children were better able to communicate with others

The data underscores the benefit of interventions that keep children safe, highlighting a positive impact on children's social development and well-being. By promoting social inclusion, self-esteem, empathy, communication, and positive relationships, these interventions are empowering children in poverty to thrive and participate actively in their communities.



## Children are Safe: Secure and Positive Family/Peer Relationships

# Support the SEND Community

## Skylarks



Grassroot



22,887.75



506 children



Croydon, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Hounslow, Kensington and Chelsea  
Kingston upon Thames, Merton, Richmond upon Thames, Sutton and  
Wandsworth

### Living with autism in poverty

Emily, a 9-year-old with autism and a physical disability, had struggled with mainstream school since birth. Her family tried to navigate the challenges of raising a child with special educational needs, but with English not being their first language, they were often left feeling isolated and overwhelmed trying to manage it on top of their financial hardship. When Emily's school repeatedly called them to pick her up because their staff couldn't support her needs, the family were hesitant to apply for an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP), as they didn't fully understand what this required.

Like the 60% of children with SEND reported in our Summer 2023 research paper, they felt like they were not seen as worthy to receive support. They were stuck, and they needed a lifeline to instil hope for their family's future, our charity partner Skylarks became that lifeline.

### Breaking barriers together

Skylarks welcomed Emily into their inclusive after-school play session, whilst their SEND Advice Service provided Emily's family with expert guidance on the EHCP process. With Skylark's support, the family gained the confidence to advocate for Emily's needs, initiating their journey through the intricate educational system and its paperwork.

Despite the initial setbacks, including the Local Authority's rejection of their EHCP request, Skylarks remained that foundation of support for Emily's family and after mediating with the Local Authority, Emily started her first day at her new Special Needs School in September 2023.

### Becoming a unified family

Emily now receives tailored support from a dedicated team of professionals, including speech and language therapists, educational psychologists, and occupational therapists. With the smaller class sizes and one-on-one assistance, Emily is flourishing both academically and emotionally.

As a family, they no longer wrestle the stresses and uncertainty for all their futures. Thanks to Skylarks, they can finally breathe and embrace feeling hopeful and safe. Every child deserves the opportunity to thrive, and Skylarks has made this a reality for Emily and her family, highlighting the profound impact that targeted assistance can have on impoverished families and children with SEND.

*"Skylarks gave us what we needed when we did not know what to do. Emily is now at a school that understands her and is happy, meaning our whole family is happy"* - Emily's Mum, Skylarks

# SUPPORTING OUR CHARITY PARTNERS

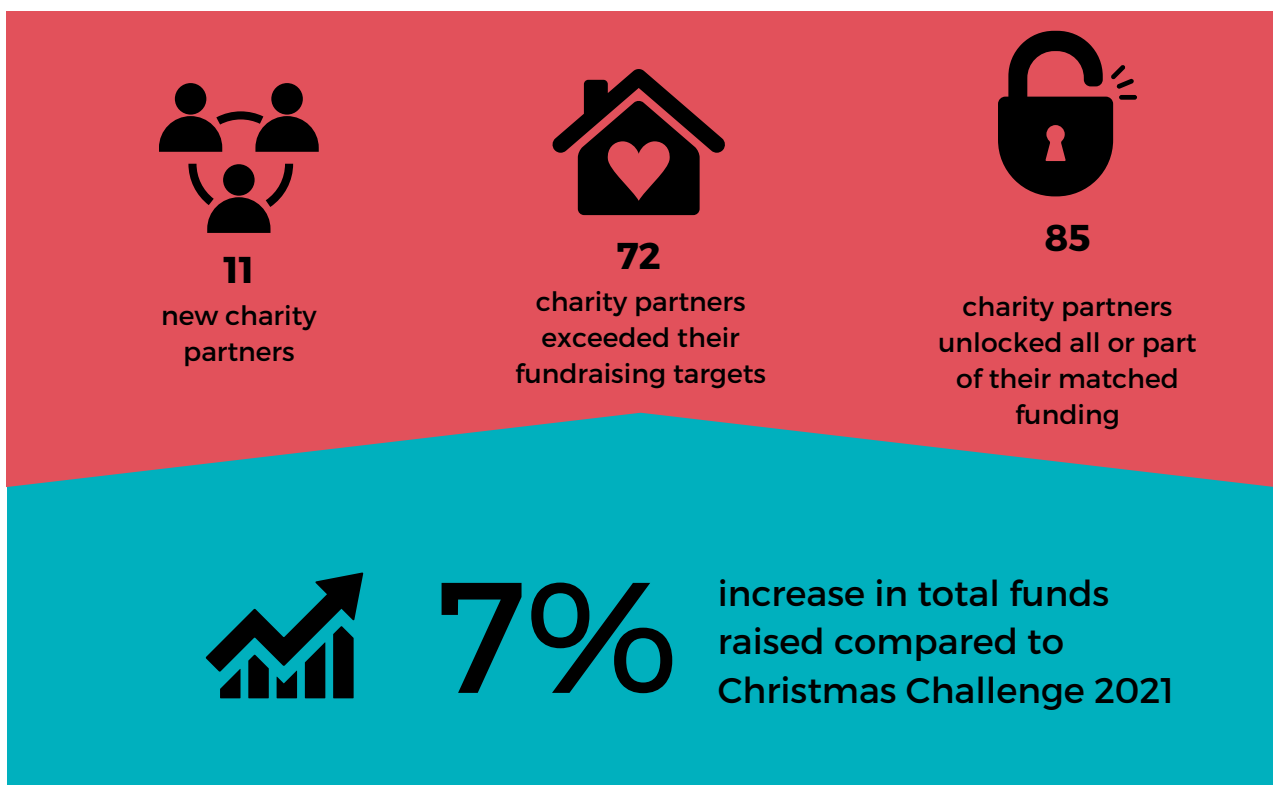
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## Building capacity for London's child poverty sector

Our ambition is to increase the overall capacity of the children's charity sector in London. We achieve this by helping them to diversify and increase their income streams resulting in a sector that is more sustainable. Our overarching objective is to ensure that all children experiencing poverty can access the services and support they need to be prepared for life.

## Increasing funds for our charity partners

Our Christmas Challenge 2022 campaign, achieved record-breaking levels of fundraising with our charity delivery partners, culminating in a remarkable 7% increase in funds raised compared to the previous year.



Out of the eleven new charity partners, nine exceeded their fundraising targets, with one surpassing their original goal by raising over 200%. Numerous partners expressed their astonishment at the success achieved during the campaign.

# CAPACITY BUILDING

## Our value-add

Our proven matched funding model meant that every £1 invested by our donors in our Christmas Challenge generated at least £4.50 in programme funding. See Appendix 1 for our model explained. In total, £881,874 of grant funding was unlocked by our charity delivery partners.

In addition to providing matched funds, The Childhood Trust builds charities' capacity in numerous ways, by: delivering workshops on how to run successful fundraising campaigns; offering personalised one-to-one support throughout the campaign and beyond; facilitating connections with other child poverty charities working with children and young people across London; and enhancing profile and visibility through broader campaigns, events, and other activities aimed at raising awareness of child poverty issues and directing support to these charities.



**86%**

of reporting charity delivery partners would not have been able to cover the costs of their activities without funding from the campaign.



**62%**

of charity delivery partners reported that The Childhood Trust had helped them improve their fundraising capacity in the last 12 months. Here's how:

**72%**

of charity delivery partners increased their individual donor base

**55%**

improved their digital fundraising capabilities

**41%**

of charity delivery partners saw an increase in major donors

**27%**

of charity partners secured additional funds from trusts and foundations

**31%**

of charity delivery partners increased their corporate donor base

# CONCLUSION

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Our response to the challenges posed by the high cost of living on London's most vulnerable children has been comprehensive, addressing immediate needs while also tackling systemic issues to foster a more inclusive society.

The impact of our charity delivery partners' interventions has been substantial, particularly in enhancing mental health and resilience, with all projects delivering positive outcomes in this regard. Additionally, improvements in physical and nutritional health were evident, with over 1.6 million nutritious meals provided and physical activity sessions exceeding recommended levels. These initiatives address fundamental needs, mitigating the harmful effects of poverty like food insecurity and a lack of opportunity to exercise or play.

Furthermore, interventions promoted learning, work readiness, and hopefulness, leading to increased engagement in education and improved problem-solving skills. The reported boosts in confidence, socialisation, and determination underscore the transformative potential of these initiatives, empowering children to overcome the socioeconomic barriers posed by poverty in order to thrive independently.

Despite this progress, the combined impact of austerity measures, the pandemic, and the ongoing cost-of-living crisis have exacerbated child poverty in London, leading to an increase in the number of children living below the poverty line. As it stands, 33%, some 700,000 children in the capital live in poverty. The cycle of poverty is perpetuated by the fact that most children living in poverty tend to remain in poverty, underscoring the need for targeted and sustained interventions to break this cycle.

As such, it's clear that addressing child poverty requires a unified approach for all organisations in London's child poverty charity sector. Our commitment lies in providing strategic funding to targeted interventions aligned with our four impact areas, with a keen focus on sustainability and long-term impact. This emphasis is crucial for ensuring lasting improvements in health, education, and the socio-economic empowerment of children, thereby better preparing them for life.

Central to our approach is the encouragement of collaboration and shared learning within the sector. By facilitating connections between larger, better-resourced charity partners and smaller grassroots organisations, we aim to harness collective expertise and resources to tackle the multifaceted challenges of child poverty more effectively. Equally, we are able to connect donors to our wide network of local grassroots organisations with the added reassurance of our extensive due diligence checks and detailed monitoring and evaluation through our impact framework.

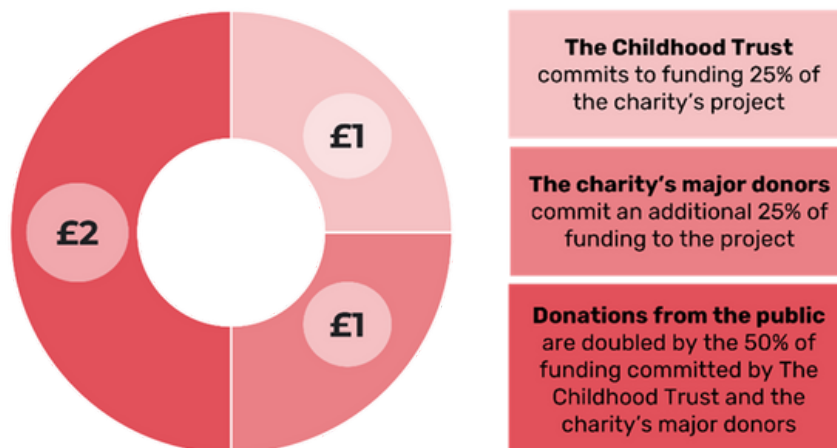
We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the generous donors and funders whose contributions have enabled us to transform the lives of London's most vulnerable children throughout 2023 and beyond. Additionally, we express our deep appreciation to the children, charity partners, and families who have generously shared their insights on the positive impact that our work has on their everyday lives.

# APPENDIX

## Appendix 1. Matched funding model

The Christmas Challenge is a matched fundraising campaign that doubles individual donations made via an online portal operated by our digital platform partner, The Big Give. The matched fund (50%) is comprised of funds from The Childhood Trust (25%) and from the participating organisations' major donors (25%). This creates 50% of each charity's target fund. The other 50% of the target is raised in campaign week by the public via the campaign's online donation portal.

The Childhood Trust provides support and advice to the charities participating in the campaign by hosting workshops and webinars on digital marketing, online fundraising, and campaign strategy. Additionally, we work with our online matched fundraising platform partner, the Big Give, to provide helpful tools and resources to the charities throughout campaign planning. Following our campaigns, The Childhood Trust continues to offer support and advice as partner projects are delivered.



## Appendix 2. Prepared for Life strategy and Theory of Change

Our 2023-26 *Prepared for Life* Impact Strategy outlines how we will work towards breaking the cycle of childhood poverty in London. This strategy was developed in consultation with ImpactEd, our board of trustees, our executive team, and other key stakeholders. We wanted an evaluation framework that would be rigorous, yet tailored and flexible for our charity partners.

From 2023-2026, our strategic objectives for this new framework include; developing partnerships with eligible charities supporting projects that transform the lives of the most disadvantaged children in London; delivering a two-track partner funding programme, building sector capacity and fostering collaboration; robust impact reporting, with emphasis on shared learning and CYP datasets; amplifying the voices of children, low-income families and charity staff to ensure their stories and experiences are heard.



# APPENDIX

Our overarching Theory of Change defines four priority areas in which we will focus our support, facilitating our four primary impact goals:

## Prepared for Life: 2023-26 impact strategy

Impact Goals	Area of Work	Children will benefit from:	TCT Outcomes	TCT Impact
<b>Children are healthy</b>	Physical health	Nutritious food & meals. Physical activity including play, sports and recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A healthy diet</li> <li>Regular exercise / play</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved health and wellbeing</li> <li>Improved socio-economic prospects</li> <li>Improved Quality of Life</li> </ul>
<b>Children are resilient</b>	Mental health and well-being	Services that support, promote, protect and restore children's mental health and emotional wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greater mental &amp; emotional resilience</li> <li>Reduced stress / anxiety</li> </ul>	
<b>Children are safe</b>	Home and community environment / Citizenship and community	Services that improve children's quality of life and sense of belonging through better living conditions; Environments that promote community cohesion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure and suitable home environment</li> <li>Positive family and peer relationships</li> </ul>	
<b>Children are confident</b>	Employment, training and education	Services that enhance life and work-readiness by raising confidence, aspiration, ambition and a passion for learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ready and able to learn</li> <li>Motivated and better prepared for future work / careers</li> </ul>	

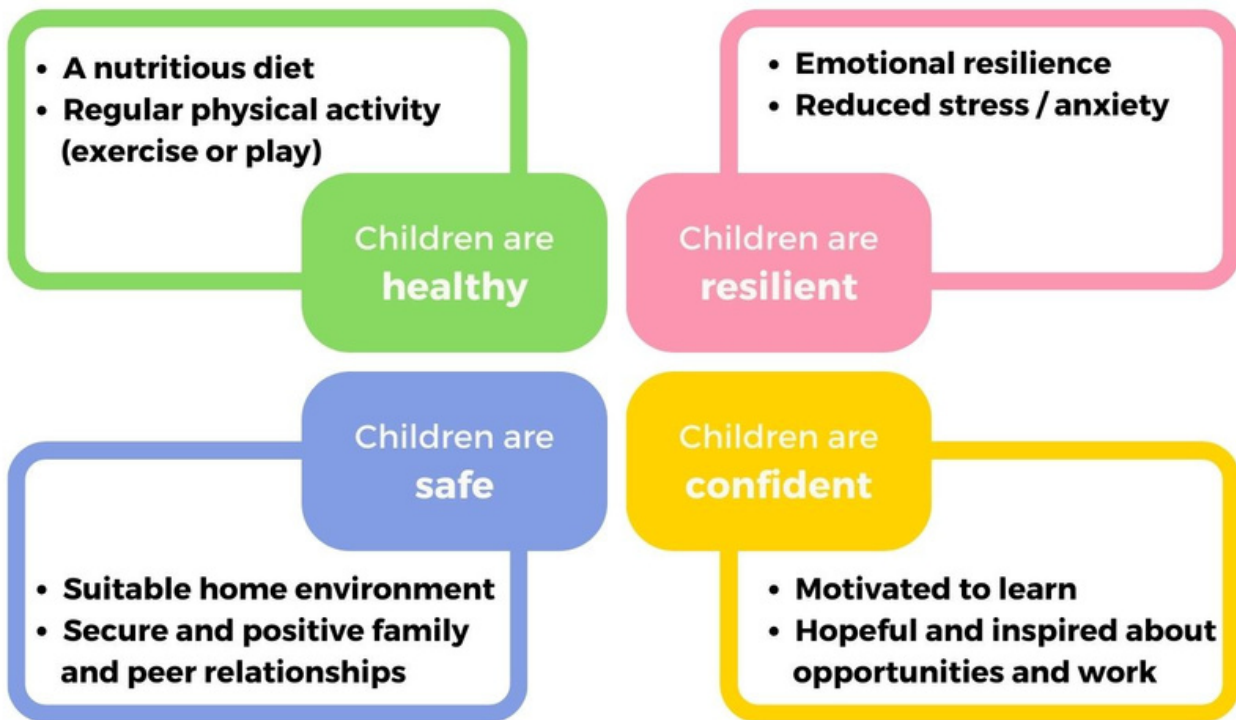
### Appendix 3. Prepared for Life Evaluation Framework

To align the impact strategy with our monitoring and evaluation plans, we engaged ImpactEd Evaluation as an external partner to develop an evaluation framework that would aim to be:

- Rigorous – working towards a high quality evaluation of our impact, enabling the charity to work towards the most rigorous forms of evidence where possible
- Tailored – the evaluation would be focused on our outcomes, and avoid collecting data that isn't directly related to those outcomes
- Flexible – while over time we are keen to support more charities in engaging with high-quality evaluation methods, we also recognise that different charity partners will have different levels of internal capability for collecting and reporting on data.

# APPENDIX

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The evaluation framework assesses eight outcomes, two for each of the impact goals. Charities can choose the relevant outcome areas to report against.

Our long-term ambition is for all data to be available using the recommended survey scale (e.g., SWEMBWS). When implementing this new impact strategy, we recognise that some of our projects may have data to submit from alternative scales and/or be unable to collect CYP direct data. Where this is the case, during the pilot stage, data will be collected through a bespoke tool where charity partners will be able to answer indirectly on behalf of the children with custom surveys created from the appropriate validated scales, only for the impact goal or outcome they are reporting against.

For each impact goal, we aim to collect data for at least 1,000 children or 10% of the children supported to ensure adequate representation. Alongside quantitative data, qualitative case studies from selected partners will be used to supplement impact data and enquire into areas of particular interest. Where validated scales are used, benchmarking against national data will help to establish the level of impact achieved through our funding.

# APPENDIX

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## **Appendix 4. Choosing our charity partners**

We select and partner with grassroots charities and larger organisations (annual income between £25,000 and £10 million) who work with communities in London's 32 boroughs, and whose primary beneficiaries are children (under the age of 18) who are experiencing poverty.

Our support is directed towards organisations that provide services aimed at alleviating the impact of child poverty, with a priority given to those whose efforts align most closely with our four impact goals: ensuring children are healthy, resilient, safe, and confident.

We cultivate strong relationships with our charity partners by offering unrestricted funding, fostering a deep understanding of their work, and promoting a culture of shared learning.

# APPENDIX

## Appendix 5. Total raised by charity partner

Charity Name	Project Name	Total raised
Aldridge Foundation	Bright Futures	£42,223
Alexandra Rose Charity	Rose Vouchers for Fruit & Veg Project	£75,837
Ambition, Aspire, Achieve	Big Days Out - Ambition Aspire Achieve	£36,600
Apollo Music Projects	Inspiring children and improving wellbeing	£27,341
Artichoke Trust	Changing Young Lives Through Outdoor Art	£6,830
Awards for Young Musicians	Give young people the chance of a musical life.	£90,711
Behind Every Kick	The Winning Mindset	£34,421
Bexley Snap	Snap into it' drama club	£5,135
Bookmark Reading Charity	Give the gift of reading to children in London	£110,007
Cardinal Hume Centre	Cardinal Hume Centre's Christmas Appeal	£119,776
Carney's Community	Carney's Youth Crime Prevention Programme	£29,945
Children Ahead Ltd	Mental Health Support for the Entire Family	£82,182
Christian International Peace Service (CHIPS)	Peacemaking to end serious youth violence	£19,192
City Gateway	Coaching disadvantaged young people to employment	£9,612
City Harvest	Feed A London Child This Christmas	£121,347
Dalgarno Trust	Dalgarno Trust's Festive Foodbank Fundraiser	£27,981
ECPAT UK (Every Child Protected against Trafficking)	ECPAT UK Festive Giving & Hampers	£10,334
ELHAP (Every Life Has A Purpose)	Adventure Play for All 2022	£22,170
Fitzrovia Youth in Action	25 Years of Youth Action in The Community	£21,632
Future Talent	Helping young musicians from low-income families	£64,924
Go Live Theatre Projects (Mousetrap Theatre Projects)	Changing young lives through theatre	£104,654

Charity Name	Project Name	Total raised
Greenhouse Sports	Unlocking the magic of a sports coach and mentor	£108,926
Grief Encounter	1:1 counselling for bereaved children	£65,370
Growing Hope Brockley	Free Therapy Support in Brockley	£17,405
Growing Hope King's Cross	Therapy Support - Growing Hope King's Cross	£29,350
Harrow Club W10	Support children to stay in mainstream education	£106,379
Hestia	First Christmas in safety	£29,888
Hope For The Young Limited	Transform the lives of young refugees in the UK	£11,245
Jamal Edwards Delve	Jamal Edwards Delve (Youth Centres)	£4,096
Jamie's Farm	Enabling disadvantaged young people to thrive	£108,075
KEEN London	At KEEN we can!	£17,915
Learn To Love To Read	Helping children learn to love to read	£11,121
Little Village	Merry Little Christmas	£121,992
LMK (Let Me Know)	Preventing Abuse in Young People	£16,161
London Early Years Foundation (LEYF)	Give children in poverty the food to grow & learn	£5,220
London Music Fund	London Music Fund Scholarship Programme 2022	£36,487
London Youth Choirs	Creating Community Through Choir	£107,759
Lyric Hammersmith	MORE LYRIC -Helping more Young People in more ways	£44,500
Magic Breakfast	Big Give Christmas Challenge 2022 Magic Breakfast	£108,500
Mayor's Fund for London	HELP US SUPPORT DISADVANTAGED YOUNG LONDONERS	£60,902
People, Potential, Possibilities (The Rugby Portobello Trust)	The Rugby Portobello Trust 2022	£54,880
Pimlico Musical Foundation	Sing for Success	£20,560
Polka Theatre	Curtain Up!	£34,523

Charity Name	Project Name	Total raised
Power2	21 Years of Teens and Toddlers	£103,791
Renaissance Foundation	Inspiring young carers and hospital patients	£112,313
Restore the Music UK	RESTORE THE MUSIC UK: It's All About The Kids !	£68,303
Richard House Children's Hospice	Caring For London's Life-Limited Children	£9,690
Royal Academy Of Dance	RAD - Inspiring the world to dance	£29,953
Safe Families for Children	Safe Families - Supporting Isolated Families 2022	£52,929
School-Home Support (SHS)	School-Home Support's Christmas Challenge 2022	£32,554
Shooting Star Children's Hospices	Bereavement Support for the whole family	£74,919
Sir Hubert Von Herkomer Arts Foundation	THE MUSIC MENTORING PROJECT	£22,751
Skylarks	Supporting the SEND Community	£22,888
Spark Inside	New hope and opportunities for young prisoners.	£76,445
Spear Islington Trust	Helping vulnerable young people into work	£63,454
Spitalfields Music	New Young Voice Collective	£23,298
Spring Community Hub	Christmas with all the trimmings for every child!	£24,658
St Andrew's Club	Giving Members Memorable Residentials.	£11,935
Step By Step London	Play and Learn Together	£104,034
The Adnan Jaffery Education Trust	One Degree Mentoring	£35,574
The Akshaya Patra Foundation	Beat Hunger With Nutrition This Christmas	£87,269
The Archer Academy	Building Student Wellbeing, Resilience & Self Care	£11,481
The Arts Depot Trust Limited	Festive Food & Fun	£8,925
The Ben Kinsella Trust	Tackling Knife Crime and its Devastating Impact	£55,439
The Caxton Youth Organisation	Empowering disabled young people in Westminster	£4,470

Charity Name	Project Name	Total raised
The Chicken Shed Theatre Trust (Chickenshed)	Voices and Choices	£45,520
The Foundation for Young Musicians	Young at Heart supporting future young musicians	£10,996
The Foundling Museum	Families at the Foundling	£32,490
The Gallions Music Trust	Bring children in Newham the joy of music	£5,195
The Katherine Low Settlement Limited	KLS' Love to Learn leadership fundraising appeal	£80,523
The Kids Network	The Kids Network Mentoring Programme	£3,412
The Little Angel Theatre	Puppets for All	£15,299
The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama	Scholarships and Bursaries for Central students	£87,393
The Voices Foundation	Voices Foundation Singing Schools, Nationwide	£25,329
Toynbee Hall	Abundance Blooms in East London	£22,665
UK Music Masters Ltd. (formerly London Music Masters)	Music Masters	£54,776
UK Youth	Mental health and unemployment of young people.	£24,125
Unicorn Theatre	Transforming Young Lives Through Theatre	£26,375
Up 'N Away	A Weekend away	£10,883
UP - UNLOCKING POTENTIAL	Supporting Positive Mental Health in Schools	£112,743
West London Action for Children	Children and Young People Programme	£44,750
West London Zone	Personalised support for every child	£101,005
World Literacy Foundation	Turning the page on childhood illiteracy...	£3,037
Young Roots	Youth Development - support young refugees	£10,662

## Christmas Challenge 2022 Impact Report

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