

BUILDING YOUNG FUTURES



Children Our Ultimate
Investment UK

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- Nearly one million 16–24 year olds in England are excluded from education or out of work (NEET - not in education, employment and training).
- Over a third of young people who leave school with no qualifications become NEET.
- It is the most “at-risk” young people - care leavers, children of teenage mothers and those disengaged from education - who are likely to become NEET
- They are also likely to be poor and become involved in crime, alcohol and drugs and be homeless: A young person living in poverty is ten times more likely to become a teenage parent.

How We Help

Children Our Ultimate Investment (UK) was founded in 2001 to address the social exclusion of disadvantaged young people. We now run a range of programmes, which are focused on giving disadvantaged young people the life skills, knowledge and self belief they need to keep them in school and to get the job and life they deserve. Our ultimate aim is to inspire young people to achieve their potential and to contribute to their communities.

We address the issues that lead young people to believe that dropping out and risky behaviour are their only options to escape poverty. These issues include no hope for the future, low self esteem, low educational attainment/disengagement from education, the breakdown of the family, a lack of role models and the temptations of drugs, alcohol and teen pregnancy.

The Department for Education (DfE) have highlighted that this is critical to change young lives: ***“Programmes which address young people’s needs in the round are more effective than those that are narrowly focused. For vulnerable young people, this means creating holistic, tailored packages of help and support which respond to the needs of the individual, rather than multiple sets of interventions each focused on a particular problem.”***

Our Programmes

Teens and Toddlers

Teens and Toddlers is a holistic youth development programme, which aims to increase the aspiration, interpersonal skills and educational attainment of young people. We help reduce the risk of young people becoming NEET and prevent risky behaviour. It works because we catch young people early, deal with the issues that cause them to drop out and so stop poverty continuing generation after generation.



- Raise educational attainment and aspirations in young people
- Support vulnerable young people to develop life skills, aspiration and new positive life goals
- Develop emotional literacy (self reflection, self management, awareness of others and social skills)
- Increase knowledge of relationships and sexual health
- Educate young people about impact of risky behaviour, such as the responsibilities of caring for a child to convey the importance of postponing pregnancy.

Over 93% of our graduates (16-18 yrs) remain in education, employment or training. On average, teachers rated the likelihood of participants remaining in education, employment or training as only 60% had there been no intervention

Every £1 spent on Teens and Toddlers saves society over £6

Teens and Toddlers is the only programme that pairs at risk teenagers with vulnerable children in a nursery setting to offer real-life experience of mentoring a small child and the challenges of parenthood. This innovative approach gives the young people a sense of responsibility and the opportunity to act as a role model. Teens and Toddlers is also the only youth development programme that provides a gateway to employment and qualifications with the opportunity to gain an Accredited Level 1 NCFE Award in Interpersonal skills.

Work experience in the nursery is combined with one-on-one coaching and classroom sessions to develop life skills, such as communication, to deal with issues such as bullying and assertiveness, and to address parenthood and relationships. It works because we provide a positive experience so teenagers can explore the issues that affect them and learn that they have choices. 92% of young people participating achieve a National Award in Interpersonal Skills (Level 1 NCFE), often their first qualification, which inspires them to progress to either NVQs or sixth-form college.

“This group taught me so much – that I can be whatever I want to be. It taught me that you have to know yourself to be what you want to be. We learnt that the world is your universe. And we taught the children how to accept other people. I wish all young people could experience that.”

Martine, 14, who is a carer for her five siblings.

Training Local Authorities to Help Reach More, Vulnerable Young People

The charity aims to ensure that the Teens and Toddlers programme is sustainable by training Local Authority Facilitators to continue running the project to “at-risk” teenagers in the local authority. As part of this 12-month training programme, local authority staff receive nine days of curriculum training in youth work and group facilitation accredited by the ABC (National Youth Agency) to achieve a Diploma in Youth Work Level 3 and many transferable skills. The programme also includes the delivery of two Teens and Toddlers projects, normally across four schools.

This enables the programme in future years to be delivered by the local authority with the potential to reach up to 480 “at-risk” young people a year. The local authority also has the option to expand this service further by using their trained facilitators to train more staff.

Young Leaders

The responsibility of the charity to help support and develop young people does not stop with Teens and Toddlers. We continue communicating with our graduates and, through our Young Leaders programme, the charity encourages the development of youth-led projects that will teach new skills to gain employment, such as team building, IT, filming and communications. Projects delivered so far include a youth magazine and a drama performance to educate peers about sexual health. We are now developing this further with a Level Two Community and Enterprise Skills Award, accredited by the NCFE, because 50% of young people without a Level Two Qualification are NEET. This new initiative was developed to build on the

transformation we see through the Teens and Toddlers programme. It has been created after consulting with our Youth Leadership Panel (a group of 20 Teens and Toddlers graduates) regarding their needs and aspirations beyond Teens and Toddlers. This will:

- Encourage positive learning about enterprise skills and working with money in order to achieve a Level 2 qualification
- Teach through participation, the skills involved in developing, designing, planning, implementing and evaluating an enterprise project
- Develop interpersonal, team and leadership skills to improve the young person's personal development, emotional literacy, aspirations in life and a sense of identity in the workplace.
- Develop greater self-esteem, confidence and motivation, through creating a positive experience that empowers students to learn about managing risk and opportunity, in order to direct their lives more effectively.
- Develop skills for living and contributing to communities and society and to build an empowered sense of choice and options for the future.

Who We Help

Launched in 2001 in Greenwich, to date we have helped over 7000 young people and vulnerable children in 27 Local Authorities (half in London). We focus on young people most at risk of leaving education early, teenage pregnancy and social exclusion as selected by the schools through a DfE-approved "at-risk" selection tool. The programme is targeted at geographical areas with high levels of deprivation, which also have the most vulnerable young people - looked after children, care leavers, children struggling with poverty, young offenders and children of teenage mothers.

Teenagers on Teens and Toddlers range from 14-17 years old, with most aged 14-15. Young Leaders can range up to their twenties. The nursery children, aged 3-5 years old, have included refugees, autistic children and elective mutes, and are chosen based on who will benefit from 40 hours of one-to-one mentoring from the teen. Our research shows that mentoring by the teen helps the children improve their social, communication and personal skills. We have even seen elective mutes speak for the first time to the teen when they will not communicate with the nursery school staff.



Our programmes are open to both male and female participants, with approximately three times as many females. Our latest research showed that 32% of the teenagers were Black, 11% 'Mixed', 8% Asian, 2% Chinese and 47% White. In London over 80% are BME.

Future Plans

Working with venture capital partner, Impetus, the charity has developed a three-year strategy to fundraise £2.4 million to reach nearly 10,000 vulnerable teens and children across the UK and to be working with 37 Local Authorities. This will include:

- Development of a Young Leaders programme across four boroughs
- Expanding Teens and Toddlers to eight boroughs a year
- Development of a Regional Hub to share local authority resources, focused in the North West, where there are high levels of poverty
- And, longer term, an Intensive Blitz to reach more young people, focused on areas of deprivation such as Lambeth

Why Support Us?

- **Our programmes are proven to work:**

The charity has monitored and evaluated programmes annually since 2001. We track participants in Teens and Toddlers through surveys before and after each programme and up to the age of 20 with a retrospective study. This gives us qualitative and quantitative data, providing concrete evidence that young people value our programmes and that they change their lives, behaviour, attitude and aspirations.

- 93% of our graduates 16-18 are in education, employment or training
- The average grade obtained at GCSE level was 6, A-C grades
- 88% want to go on to further education
- 87% felt more motivated to get a job
- 92% achieve the National Award in Interpersonal Skills
- 97% of our graduates do not become pregnant
- 86% say that doing Teens and Toddlers made them more determined to achieve their goals
- 92% say they are more likely to stay away from people who might get them into trouble
- 84% say that they feel more confident in themselves



- **Cost effective and good value:**

The Centre of Excellence in Outcomes, a government body who endorse best practice programmes, found that **for every £1 spent on Teens and Toddlers, £6.2 would be saved** over five years (Social Return on Investment). Teens and Toddlers is also funded by the Department for Education. Our other partners include Impetus, ARK, JP Morgan, J Paul Getty and Esmee Fairbairn.

- **Our beneficiaries and their families tell us that we change their lives:**

“How do you thank someone for giving you back your family? Every school in the U.K should have the opportunity of offering their troubled teens the chance to turn their lives around and start again. I am just an ordinary mum with an ordinary family, but we are a lot stronger now. The programme not only gave us back our daughter, but it has changed her life with dramatic effect. She is now enrolled into college to do an NVQ level qualification so that she can work with children who need a helping hand, just like she did.” Sue, a Mum from Brent

Tiana: ‘I did Teens and Toddlers as a little girl, but they saw something special in me that I didn’t see. The charity has continued to support me and to help me to become a person who can give back to others. I want to do so much to change the world and to help my community, and I’m so thankful to them.’ Tiana was identified by her school as being at risk of permanent exclusion due to her intimidating behaviour towards her peers and teachers. Tiana has joined our Young Leaders Programme and is now at University and training to be a Teens and Toddlers facilitator. (name changed)



Thank you for considering supporting young people and helping them to fulfil their potential and achieve the life they deserve.