

# A PLACE TO BELONG

Spring Edition 2024

**BARNARD'S**

Changing childhoods.  
Changing lives.



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TO THOSE IN POWER**

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## WELCOME TO A PLACE TO BELONG!

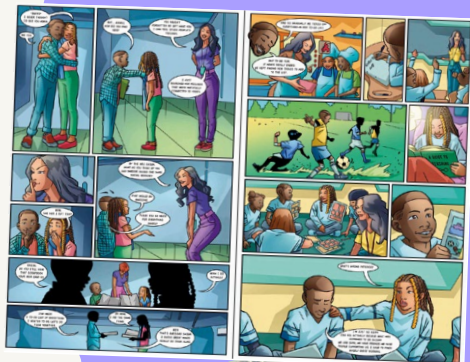
Hi, I'm Becca, and I am so excited to be introducing your new Barnardo's newsletter. You might notice this edition looks a little different – you can find out why on pages 10 and 11!

Inside, you'll hear from so many children and young people like me about the amazing things we have been doing to make future generations safer, happier, healthier and more hopeful. On **page 3**, Ashraf tells you about the incredible comic he's helped create for frightened children and young people arriving in the UK. On **page 12** Jamie shares his foster journey, and the impact of feeling loved for the first time. And on **page 14**, I talk about being a young carer, and how Barnardo's has amplified my voice giving me the recognition I need.

It's been a difficult few years for so many children and young people and it's so important that our voices are heard at the highest levels. A group of us even got to attend the party conferences last Autumn. We met MPs and decision makers and spoke up about child poverty and the cost-of-living crisis. On **pages 6 and 7**, Rita and Emrys tell you more about it!

You really do make incredible things happen for children and young people who haven't had the easiest start in life. I'd like to say a huge, huge thank you for believing in us!

Becca



# YOU'RE NOT ALONE

Arriving in the UK as an unaccompanied young person fleeing from war can be a frightening, lonely and often inhumane experience. Thanks to your support, a talented group of young people have shared their journey to safety in a truly creative way, offering comfort and kindness to other children in a similar position.

'The Hopeful Journey of Patience' comic book is the result of their hard work and is now being distributed to as many of our services as possible.

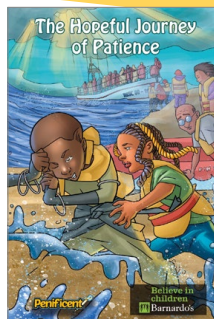
**ASHRAF, ONE OF THE COMIC CREATORS, WAS JUST 17 WHEN HE FLED HIS HOME COUNTRY AND ARRIVED IN THE UK ALONE.**

“

I helped make this comic because children, like myself, come here and feel completely lost. They may have left their country to flee war.

“

I have told my story in this comic. I came here to be safe but my journey was hard and scary. I'm very proud of the comic and I hope it helps all children who feel alone.



Scan the QR code or visit [www.barnardos.org.uk/patience](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/patience) to read 'The Hopeful Journey of Patience' in full.



*\*Name has been changed to protect the identities of the children we help.*





# YOU ARE CHANGING CHILDHOODS, EVERY SINGLE DAY

Supporters like you are amazing. During one of the most challenging years for children, young people and families, your helping hand changed more childhoods, and more lives, than ever before.

Whether you give a regular gift, one-off donations, play the lottery or raffle, shop or donate at our stores, give through your pay, raise money for us or have remembered us in your Will, you are helping create a world in which no child is turned away from the help they need.



You helped us support

**373,200**

children, young people,  
parents and carers.

That's more than  
ever before!

## THANK YOU!



Our fundraising  
activity, including  
legacies, raised

**£39.5M**



**arun  
estates**

Our partnership with

**ARUN ESTATE**  
raised

**£1,000,000**

That donation is providing  
10,400 children with food,  
support for fuel and other  
basic needs.



We're working with

**CO-OP**

to raise

**£5M**

over the next two years to support young people to access basic needs like food, manage their mental wellbeing, and connect with opportunities for their future. Following two successful fundraising weeks, we hit the £1 million milestone in September.



After calling on the Government to better protect children online, the **ONLINE SAFETY BILL**

became law last October which you can read more about on **page 8 and 9**.



Our brilliant volunteers continued to play a vital role in delivering our charity objectives, with

**16,924**

volunteers contributing

**1.8 MILLION**

hours of support to our work in 2022/23.



We presented our free school meals petition, signed by over

**32,000**

of you to 10 Downing Street, calling on the Government to introduce free school meals for all primary school children in England and do more to tackle hunger during the school holidays.



Take a moment to watch the amazing achievements we've accomplished together by scanning the QR code or visiting [www.barnardos.org.uk/your-supports-impact](https://www.barnardos.org.uk/your-supports-impact)

# SPEAKING TRUTH TO [THOSE IN] POWER



Right now, more than 1 in 4 children in the UK are living in poverty. That's five children in every classroom whose families are struggling to put food on the table, heat their homes, or pay their bills.

If change is to happen, the voices of children and young people must be heard.

Rita and Emrys, share how they have spoken up about things like the cost-of-living crisis to leaders and decision makers. They have taken part in high level discussions and made sure that those in power understand what matters most.



## PUTTING CHILDREN AT THE HEART OF GOVERNMENT



Hi, I'm Emrys. I've been working on an amazing project with Barnardo's and four other charities, which together are called the Children's Charity Coalition. The coalition is calling on the next government to make an important commitment: to improve the lives of babies, children and young people, by putting children at the heart of policy making.

As part of this, I've been using my voice to tell decision makers about the realities of being a young person right now. Many childhoods aren't easy and there are so many barriers to children thriving. We need people in power to acknowledge the issues children face, and make changes to policy

so that children can be happier, healthier and safe. If enough of us stand together and make noise, change can happen.



If you haven't already, scan the QR code and **sign our petition** to ensure **children and young people** are seen and heard at the highest level.



## MAKING MY VOICE HEARD: RITA



**Last October, 19-year-old Rita joined the Barnardo's team at the Labour Party Conference, representing the voices of young people in discussions about child poverty.**

**How has the cost-of-living crisis impacted you?**

Prices of food and bills have gone up but we're not getting more money to help cover the price increase. Barnardo's have helped me to budget and to worry less as I know that they're there to support me.

**Why was it important to go to the party conference?**

I wanted politicians to learn about the challenges that young people like myself, and people living in poverty face – how they are unable to afford the basics and how this needs to change.

**What was it like taking part in the round table discussions?**

I liked having the opportunity to speak to big decision makers and MPs. It made me feel positive that they were listening to what young people are saying, and that they actually care and want to help.

**How did it feel to help shape the future for young people?**

I felt good because I got to experience something so powerful and work to create change for young people who are facing difficulties. It was good to work with others to figure out how we solve these problems.



Scan the QR code or visit out website at [www.barnardos.org.uk/party-conferences](https://www.barnardos.org.uk/party-conferences) to find out more about what happened at the Party Conferences.



# MAKING THE INTERNET A SAFER PLACE



**Lisa was just 10 when she was coerced into sending indecent images and videos of herself to men overseas. Thanks to you, project workers like Susan can give children like Lisa the specialist support they need, and tackle misconceptions about the victims of online abuse.**

## **Can you explain what happened to Lisa?**

The abuse started on a chat website where people are randomly paired in anonymous one-on-one chat sessions. The abuse then continued on two social media platforms for four months, until Lisa's mum Angela discovered what had been happening.

## **How did you support Lisa?**

Lisa and I met weekly. Understandably, she was really anxious about going online and becoming a victim of abuse again. She also felt a lot of shame. I helped her understand how grooming works, and that it wasn't her fault. This knowledge is very empowering, and helps children feel confident and positive again.

## **What did you do in your sessions?**

When we work with younger children like Lisa, it's really important to use fun activities so that sessions don't feel overwhelming. We used arts and crafts, games and videos to help us chat things through.

## **How did you help Lisa's mum?**

Parents can feel a lot of guilt too, so I helped Angela understand how perpetrators target children. I also supported Angela and Lisa through some difficult conversations so that Lisa could speak openly about what happened and feel ok about asking for help.

“

**I was embarrassed and felt very guilty about the conversations I had been in. And I felt trapped and was scared I would get in trouble.**

Lisa, 10-years-old





# A NEW LAW TO PROTECT CHILDREN LIKE LISA

We've been demanding that the Government makes the internet a safer place for children like Lisa. Thanks to those of you who've signed petitions, young people who have made their voices heard at party conferences, and the many who've taken part in days of action.

Six years later, the Online Safety Act finally became law in October 2023, enforcing vital changes that will help protect children from online harm.

*\*Name and image has been changed to protect the identities of the children we help.*

**THANK YOU  
SO MUCH**

for speaking up  
to keep more  
children safe.

## EXPLAINER: HOW WILL THE ONLINE SAFETY ACT PROTECT CHILDREN LIKE LISA?



- Compulsory age verification will stop children accessing sites and social media platforms that aren't meant for them, including pornography sites.
- Social media sites will have a duty to prevent illegal content being shared on their platform. This includes videos and images of child sexual abuse and exploitation.
- Online practices including sending unsolicited nude photos and encouraging self-harm will be criminal offences.



## SUSAN, HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE ONLINE SAFETY ACT BECOMING LAW?

It's a really positive step forward in making the UK a safer place for children to be online. Children are spending more time online and there are many unregulated and very accessible websites. It's vital they can enjoy age-appropriate spaces without fear or harm. **I'd like to thank our supporters for standing up for children – their actions really do lead to change.**



To find out more about how you can make your voice heard for children and young people, scan the QR code or visit [www.barnardos.org.uk/your-voice](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/your-voice)

BARNARDO'SChanging childhoods.  
Changing lives.

# OUR NEW BRAND AND STRATEGY



## CHANGING CHILDHOODS. CHANGING LIVES.

### What is it really like growing up in 2024?

Childhoods today are being shaped by the cost-of-living crisis, the lasting effects of the pandemic and the fact that life is increasingly taking place online. More children and young people are socially isolated, anxious about the world they live in, and growing up disadvantaged than ever before.

We believe children, young people and families should feel safe, happy, healthy and hopeful – whatever their background or circumstances, and we know you believe this too. We need to be bold and be seen so that we can really be there for the people who need us. And make sure everyone has somewhere they can belong, grow and thrive.

### You might've noticed that a few things have changed

We're here to support children, young people and families, because we know that when you change a childhood, you change a life. To do that, we needed to become a part of their world. Our new look has been co-created with young people so whether they already know us or not, they can see themselves in our community and feel like it's somewhere they belong.

When life gets tough or it feels like there's nowhere to turn, Barnardo's is here.

Thanks to supporters like you, we can make sure children and young people feel safer, happier, healthier and more hopeful, by directly supporting





## SHE HELPED ME COME OUT OF MY SHELL

We know that when you feel safe, heard and like you belong somewhere, it really does have a life-changing impact. Particularly when you're young.



Watch our new TV ad here by scanning the QR code.



them and their families with specialist services across the UK, raising awareness and campaigning to change the way the system works for the better.

We've been changing childhoods and changing lives for over 150 years, and

we'll be here for as long as we're needed. Thank you for your continued support – with you by our side, we can achieve so much more for the children, young people and families who need us.



## 'MY SUPPORT WORKER MADE ME FEEL LIKE I BELONGED'

"I first started coming to Barnardo's ten years ago", explains Charlotte a young mum supported by Barnardo's. "My eldest son is ten and I have two girls aged two and eight. All of them have been coming to Barnardo's for as long as they can remember. The first service I started using was Baby and Me. I was able to get support and advice to prepare for the arrival of my son. At the time I was feeling very anxious, but Barnardo's were able to put me at ease. Mary, my support worker, made me feel like I belonged. She's a friendly and trusted person who I can turn to when I have a problem or feel stuck.

There's a real sense of family and friendship at the children's centre.

Over the years Barnardo's has supported me in lots of different ways. The kids have been able to enjoy the different programmes where they can improve their language and speech skills by taking part in various play activities. I've also been able to use the various support groups for parents and make new friends.

I feel so much more confident compared to where I was ten years ago. I hope to go to university and study nursing. It's not something I previously would have the confidence to do. Life remains a challenge but through Barnardo's I've been able to come out of my shell and I feel more hopeful for the future. Getting support from Barnardo's is the best thing I've ever done."

*\*Name has been changed to protect the identities of the families we help.*



# WEATHERING THE STORM, **TOGETHER**

Every child deserves a safe and loving home. With more than 100 years of experience in fostering, we find and support foster carers, so they can transform the lives of young people like Jamie.



“

It gives me a sense of joy inside when I speak about Barnardo's and a warm feeling of love and care. Barnardo's went through the storm with me and I went through the storm with them.

There's currently a national

**SHORTAGE  
OF FOSTER  
CARERS.**



# MY FOSTER JOURNEY

*by Jamie, 25 years old*

**My early life was very chaotic. Unfortunately, my mum was struggling with addiction, and we moved houses a lot. I was put into the care system, and when I was about 12 and a half, I got a placement through Barnardo's.**

At the start, I found it challenging. I didn't really understand what being loved and cared for was. But foster care made me the man I am today. It was life changing.

My first foster carers taught me so many life skills, like how to make a bed and how to wash my clothes. My second placement was the one that really educated me. I felt so well loved and welcome, which I never thought was possible. I never thought I'd feel like I belonged.

I then moved to my third placement, and my Barnardo's foster carers completely changed my life. They were the two people I would call 'Mum and Dad'. How far I have come in life now is down to them. They helped me to dream that I could be anything I wanted to be. I eventually left their care when I was 22 years of age.

The number of children in care in the UK now sits at a record high of  
**100,000.**

**40%** of adults believe they're too old to foster – actually, there's no upper age limit to fostering.

Life is great now. I've got an amazing partner, Sarah, and I'm working away on my career. I'm looking forward to what's to come.

Barnardo's is incredible. I had one worker, called Jackie, for my whole time at Barnardo's, and she changed my life. If I ever have a child, Jackie will be one of the first people that I tell. When I get married, she will be invited to the wedding. She stuck with me when I was going through such a difficult time in my life.

It gives me a sense of joy inside when I speak about Barnardo's and a warm feeling of love and care. Barnardo's went through the storm with me and I went through the storm with them.

Fostering children can be one of the most rewarding things you can do. We offer an average financial package of £495 per week, 24/7 support from experts and all the training needed to help make a positive difference to a child's life.



To find out more please visit our website at [www.barnardos.org.uk/foster](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/foster), scan the QR code or call our team on 0800 0277 280.

# BARNARDO'S GAVE ME SUPPORT AND SOMEWHERE I CAN BELONG



**Becca helps look after her older sister, who has serious medical conditions. Thanks to amazing supporters like you, Becca is now getting the support she needs, and is demanding change for other young carers like her.**

**Can you tell us about how you got involved with Barnardo's?**

I first came into contact with Barnardo's through my college. I spoke with my college tutor about how I helped look after my sister. But she picked up that I was doing more than a sister should and that I was actually a carer for her. So, I got in contact with Barnardo's and I've been supported by the Young Adult Carers service ever since.

**What difference has Barnardo's made for you?**

The Young Adult Carers group gives me a chance to see people who are in the

same situation as me. It's really nice to have other people who can relate to the issues I'm having. Adele, my project worker, supported me when I was applying for carers allowance. I can help support my sister better now. And just knowing I've got someone I can talk to when it gets difficult is a massive help.

**What changes do the Government need to make?**

We need more awareness about what it means to be a carer. I couldn't get a part time job when I was in school because I'd come home and I'd look after my sister. But I didn't get paid for it. And I couldn't claim for it because I was in education. That just seems so messed up to me.

**Can you tell us about the recent campaigning work you've been involved with?**

I attended the Labour party conference, and took part in round table discussions about child poverty. It was really nice to just be heard about the issues people like us are facing, like the cost-of-living crisis. There were some MPs there – they were listening and actually engaging with what we were saying, which was really nice.





# REMEMBERING CHILDHOOD

35-year-old Iain looks back on his childhood, and how a Barnardo's project worker helped him turn his life around. Iain shares his memories and his recent decision to remember Barnardo's in his Will.



*Hi, my name is Iain,*

As a teenager, I often felt alone. I had a lot of behavioural problems because I hadn't yet been diagnosed with ADHD. I also wasn't sure about my sexuality. After a big fight, my mum and her partner said I couldn't live with them anymore. I had just turned 17 and had nowhere to stay. Thankfully I was introduced to Fiona, a Barnardo's project worker.

Fiona helped me with everything – not just getting somewhere to live really quickly, but she was someone I could talk to, and rely on. Now, I feel so privileged with where I am in my life. I have a stable job and I'm more comfortable in myself. I feel like I owe so much to Barnardo's – who knows what would have happened if Fiona wasn't there to support me?

My partner and I just bought a house. We don't have kids, so we know there's going to be something left. And we just thought, Barnardo's offer a free Will-writing service and you can do it online, why not?

I've chosen to leave a gift in my Will too, because there are so many young people who need support from Barnardo's. My life could have so easily turned out differently.

*Thanks for reading,  
Iain*



Writing a Will can be quick and easy with Barnardo's free Will-writing service. To find out more, scan the QR code above or take a look at the leaflet enclosed with your newsletter.

# TAKE ON A CHALLENGE IN 2024!

**Join Team Barnardo's and help us give children  
happier, healthier, and more hopeful futures.**

**Want to make a real difference for children?**

Join Team Barnardo's and take on one of our fantastic challenges and help support children, young people and their families across the UK.

You can run, walk, trek or complete your own challenge. Whatever your distance or activity, we've got an event for you!



**SAVE THE DATE:  
8TH SEPTEMBER 2024**

**GREAT  
NORTH RUN**



**SAVE THE DATE:  
6TH OCTOBER 2024**

**CARDIFF HALF  
MARATHON**

**SAVE THE DATE:  
10TH - 16TH JUNE 2024**

**THE  
BIG TODDLE**



**SKYDIVE  
ACROSS THE UK  
ALL YEAR ROUND.**



Visit [www.barnardos.org.uk/challenges-for-you](https://www.barnardos.org.uk/challenges-for-you) or scan the QR code to find out more about the exciting events we have across the UK.

**BARNARDOS**

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