



# SUPPORTERS NEWS

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your support is  
transforming lives.

AUTUMN OCTOBER 2022

SCOTLAND'S NATIONAL CHILDREN'S CHARITY



How you're  
putting  
Children 1st

# Dear friends and supporters

As winter approaches Children 1st is working harder than ever. More than one in five children\* in Scotland are currently living in poverty, and hundreds of thousands of children in Scotland are at risk of experiencing a cold, dark and anxious winter, as the cost of living takes its toll on the families that have already been hardest hit by years of austerity, followed by the covid pandemic.

The families that are turning to us for support today are already stretched far too thin - as are many of the public services that should be there to support them. What we are hearing from children and families is alarming, and in the wake of the rise in the energy price cap, The Promise Scotland\*\* have warned that: "there is clear evidence that families driven into poverty are far more likely to have their children removed."

*\*Source: End Child Poverty Coalition  
This data is based on the DWP/HMRC statistics  
"Children in low income families: local area statistics" (March 2022).*

*\*\*The Promise Scotland is responsible for driving the work of change demanded by the findings of the Independent Care Review.*

In homes and communities across Scotland, Children 1st is doing everything in our power to keep children safe, loved and well together with their families. In communities like Aberdeen, Girvan and Midlothian our children and family teams offer practical help to alleviate children's immediate hardships alongside longer-term family support. Our local money advice teams are working with Children 1st Parentline to support families across the whole of Scotland.

And, as the Scottish Government and Parliament make the decisions that will be make-or-break for Scotland's children, we are using our voice and influence to ensure they prioritise children's safety, health and wellbeing.

We could not do this without you. Your support is making a difference for children, young people and families across Scotland.

Thank you.



**Mary Glasgow**  
Chief Executive



**Front cover:** Well done to everyone who took part in the Kiltwalk 2022 across Scotland and raised money for Children 1st. Over £10,646 was raised with donations still coming in. And with a 50% boost from Sir Tom Hunter, it will reach over £16,000!



## First Minister urged to deliver lifeline family support funding this winter

Children 1st has united with charities across Scotland in an open letter to the First Minister calling for emergency funding to help the most vulnerable families this winter.

Alongside Action for Children, Aberlour, Barnardo's Scotland, One Parent Families Scotland, Save the Children UK and Who Cares? Scotland, we are appealing to the Scottish Government to establish a much-needed Winter Support Fund, as it did in 2021, to address the worsening cost of living crisis.

The financial challenge ahead is as serious as the pandemic so, the level of support must match what has been delivered previously. Last year's £41m Scottish Government's Winter Support Fund provided

crucial support for struggling families and allowed charities including Children 1st to reach the most vulnerable children and families.

### One parent told us:

**"...the grant helped me to buy food and to pay bills that I was panicking about being unable to pay."**

We are already witnessing record requests for support that will inevitably increase as energy bills and food prices continue to soar.

Mary Glasgow, Children 1st Chief Executive said: "Families are beyond breaking point. They need action today. This is a national crisis which demands an emergency response to protect children now."



Making sure a family's basic needs are covered prevents families from reaching crisis, and means that they can concentrate on keeping their children safe, loved and well.

The Children 1st Girvan Food Pantry is just one of the many ways we support families in local communities across Scotland.

The Food Pantry opened on the 24 January 2022, as part of a partnership pilot to address food insecurity across South Ayrshire, where one in four children are living in poverty\*.

With soaring costs of living, only one supermarket in the area, and a local food bank open for four hours a week with limited choice of food, families were telling us they needed help.

Michelle Robertson, Children 1st Service Manager shared: "The Food Pantry has no criteria, no restrictions around joining and there is no referral process.

"Families can sign up for a yearly membership and each time they shop it costs £2.50. They can choose up to ten items, from fresh items to cans and packaged foods. This is different to a foodbank as they wouldn't be able to choose what they wanted. Families are coming into the Food Pantry and having a choice in what they eat. They are getting access to high quality fresh food which has made such a difference. One family told us that their £2.50 shop enabled them to make five healthy, balanced meals for dinner."

Alongside a project worker, the Food Pantry is supported by local volunteers who are vital to its success. Having the Food Pantry based within a local school at the heart of the community helps to reduce any stigma that might be felt when asking for help.

Membership of the Food Pantry is growing every week. In August,



numbers had reached 277 members. As times get tougher, we expect membership levels to continue to rise.

We are so grateful to the local community and partners for their support:

- ♥ **Girvan Primary School**
- ♥ **Girvan Academy**
- ♥ **Fareshare**
- ♥ **Health and Social Care Partnership**
- ♥ **South Ayrshire Thriving Communities Team**
- ♥ **South Ayrshire Information and Advice Hub**
- ♥ **Home Energy Scotland and Assel Valley Wind Farm**

*\*Source: End Child Poverty Coalition  
This data is based on the DWP/HMRC statistics  
"Children in low income families: local area statistics" (March 2022).*

"With the cost of living rising and household finances being squeezed the pantry is a great help."

"The money saved helps go towards heating costs which have rocketed."

"The pantry makes a massive difference; it takes so much pressure off the financial difficulties that we are all going through."

Feedback from  
Food Pantry members

The Food Pantry is more than just a food bank. It is part of the Carrick Family Wellbeing Service, which gives the local community access to practical and emotional help through family support, money advice workshops and drop-in sessions and a childcare facility that provides emotional and developmental support for vulnerable children aged 0-3.



## Struggling to make ends meet

With thousands of families across Scotland worried about how to cover their essential living costs, Children 1st is growing its money advice team to support more families, in more parts of Scotland.

Between April 2021 and March 2022, the team collectively put an incredible total of £590,000 into 409 families' pockets and helped them to manage over £43,000 of debt. Since April this year, the team has already supported 320 families. And with more children at risk of going without the basics to stay warm, well and safe this winter, our local family wellbeing teams are now working with Children 1st Parentline to offer support to families in all parts of Scotland.

Our six money advisors work alongside our local children and family teams in Ayrshire, Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire and South Lanarkshire, Glasgow, Moray, Aberdeen and East Lothian.

Basing our money advice teams within Children 1st's local family wellbeing teams means that we can offer more than just money advice support. To access money advice support, families have to make an appointment and attend an office, bringing with them all of their financial papers and documentation. But for families who can't afford the bus fare to the office or already feel so anxious about their bills that the prospect of gathering them together is overwhelming, this type of money advice is out of reach.

Children 1st Senior Money Advisor, Lisa McNaughtan, explains:

“Our money advisors work with families in their own homes and communities, offering emotional support with the impact of money worries on families’ mental health as well as the practical aspects of applying for entitlements, managing debt and building financial resilience.

“Often, we’ll be right alongside a parent, or carer, helping them pull out the unopened bills that are hidden under the bed or at the bottom of a drawer, because the thought of opening them feels like it might drive them to breaking point. We’ll face those bills with them together, helping them to deal with the most pressing debts first to make sure they can keep their children and themselves well.

“Right now, that means dealing with any energy arrears to prevent families becoming disconnected, so that their children stay warm and that they can continue to cook hot meals, especially as it gets colder.

“Being based alongside our local family wellbeing teams means that we can double the impact we make to the lives of children and families. Families experiencing financial hardship are more likely to tell us they feel isolated and that they are struggling with their emotional wellbeing. Often, parents are more likely to have experienced adversity during their



own childhood. By connecting them to the wider support that our family wellbeing teams can offer, from activities that help families build friendships and their support networks to individual support to help them recover from traumatic experiences, we make a real difference to all aspects of their children’s lives.”

**Our national service, Children 1st Parentline, can support your family with urgent money worries. Call Children 1st Parentline free on 0800 28 22 33 or visit [www.children1st.org.uk/parentline](http://www.children1st.org.uk/parentline) for more information or to start a webchat.**



**LET  
THE  
KIDS  
WIN**

Children 1st



## **WHETHER YOU WANT TO RUN, JUMP, RIDE OR SWIM... IT'S TIME TO LET THE KIDS WIN!**

Children 1st has a range of challenge events for you to choose from, with places in some of the most exciting and prestigious events.

Whether you have a challenge in mind, or just know you want to raise money, our team would love to hear from you. We can help secure places, offer advice on fundraising and provide the materials you need to make your next charity fundraising challenge a huge success.

For more information visit [children1st.org.uk/events](https://children1st.org.uk/events) or get in touch with our fundraising team by calling **0345 10 80 111** or emailing [fundraising@children1st.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@children1st.org.uk)

## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

### **19 NOVEMBER 2022**

The Terrace Podcast  
- Live from Hampden  
*In partnership with the Scottish Football Association (SFA)*

Join us, the Terrace Podcast boys and some special guests for an evening of fun, laughs and football chat the night before the World Cup kicks off.

### **3 DECEMBER 2022**

Step Into Christmas  
*In partnership with the SFA*  
Festive stair climb challenge at Hampden Park.

### **23 APRIL 2023**

London Marathon  
Secure a Gold Bond place by pledging to raise £1,500.

### **27/28 MAY 2023**

Edinburgh Marathon Festival  
Full or half marathon, 10K or 5K.

### **DATES TBC**

#### **Kiltwalk 2023**

Get in touch about joining our team for Scotland's favourite walking event.



**SCAN TO  
FIND OUT  
MORE**





## Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

Our partnership with the Dolly Parton's Imagination Library continues to go from strength to strength with over 560 children in Scotland aged between 0 and 5 now receiving a book every month.

Thanks to our kind supporters who give a monthly donation to the programme, these children get to experience the excitement of a special parcel, addressed to them, dropping through their letterbox.

As the cost of living crisis deepens this winter, we know that family budgets will be stretched like never before.

Families across Scotland will be forced to make difficult choices meaning it will be harder than ever to find money for little extras.

Children 1st and Dolly Parton's Imagination Library don't believe

that books are luxuries. Books help families build connections, create special moments together and are an essential part of childhood.

We want to make sure that the families we work with don't have to worry about how to provide books for their children.

If you would like make a regular donation to help more children receive a book every month, please get in touch with our Supporter Care Team on **0345 10 80 111** or by emailing **[fundraising@children1st.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@children1st.org.uk)**



**SCAN  
TO LEARN  
MORE**



## A family first approach

Sam is ten. He has significant sensory needs which made him feel anxious and uncomfortable – at home, at school and in his community. Sam found it difficult to make friends and school was not always a good experience for him.

His mum, Sarah, was worried about her ability as a single parent to meet Sam's needs and provide security for him. Family finances were causing additional strain at home.

Sam's school reached out to Fit Like? Aberdeen for support and Sarah was contacted by Jen from Children 1st within two weeks. Through discussions with Sarah, Sam and the existing team supporting Sam, it was agreed that Children 1st could make the biggest impact by providing whole family support.

Sam took part in the Summer Arts Programme, giving Sarah time to get one-to-one support from the Fit Like? team. Although Sam was anxious about the number of people at the Programme, he was able to manage it and enjoyed the events, increasing his confidence and self-esteem due to the trusting relationship he had formed with Jen.

Joining Sam at the summer programme let Sarah see him in a different setting. This changed her outlook about supporting Sam to take on challenges and has had a positive impact on his education and confidence. His anxiety at home is reduced and he is being helped to attend school through visual routine boards and other creative tools that have been developed by Sam alongside Jen, giving him a voice in shaping how

his needs are met.

Sarah has had time to reflect on her anxieties as a parent, build her confidence and get support to make changes in her own life. She feels more empowered and recognises the importance of making time for herself.

Lisa, from Children 1st's Money Advice Team, helped Sarah to understand her rights to financial support. Through practical guidance, she was enabled to renew her Disability Living Allowance and successfully claim exemption from bedroom tax, increasing their household income by £80 per month.

Sam and Sarah received practical and emotional support in the right way at the right time. As times get tougher for families in the coming months, support like this will become vital to stop them reaching crisis point.

The Fit Like? Aberdeen Family Wellbeing Hubs is an approach that involves seven partner organisations working together with children, young people and their families. The service aims to help families at the earliest point to improve whole family wellbeing and reduce mental



health needs.

The multiagency provision means that wraparound support can be delivered based on the families changing needs, it means no waiting lists, it allows families to get the right support at the right time.

*To protect the confidentiality of the people involved, identifying information has been changed.*

**“Fit Like?” is a typical Doric greeting in the North East of the country, meaning “how are you?”**

In partnership with





“

When I had to talk to the police about my dad, I was taken away to a police station away from home and had to talk to two people in a small room with a camera. I wasn't allowed my mum or anyone I trusted. I felt really scared.

Girl, aged 12

”

## Bairns Hoose:

## Sharing stories for change



Take a moment to consider how as a child, you might feel if you had been a victim of violence or you had seen a crime happen. How might you feel? Scared? Unsafe? Traumatized?

You talk to the Police, to social workers, to doctors and nurses, to those who are trying to help. This means reliving what happened over and over again.

Alongside Victim Support Scotland, the University of Edinburgh and Children England, and thanks to funding from players of the People's Postcode Lottery through the Dream Fund, Children 1st is working to bring the first Bairns Hoose to Scotland.

For Scotland's first Bairns Hoose to be the best that it can be for children, we wanted to understand what the process is like. Through our Sharing Stories for Change project, we listened to the stories of 28 children and young people (aged six to 20 years old) and seven supportive parents. These brave young people and parents shared their views about whether they felt heard, respected, and supported in child protection and justice processes once a crime had been reported.

They shared views on the places that they had been interviewed, medically examined, and had given evidence for court processes.

They said that the place where ‘talking’ about the crime happened was very important to them and had an impact on whether they felt able to speak about what they had been through or seen.

Court was often described as a frightening experience. A young person who had been sexually assaulted had to give evidence at High Court and said that her experience of being cross-examined was highly traumatic.

The young people also described kindness and emotional support as being very important for their recovery. Feeling safe, being listened to, and feeling in control were especially beneficial.

We asked the young people what the Bairns Hoose should look like. They drew pictures of houses with gardens. Comfortable, quiet and “like a home” were examples of the sort of place where they could talk. Their ideas included comforting furnishings (pillows, cushions, blankets, beanbags), something to drink and eat, as well as toys and drawing materials. One ten-year-old girl said it would have helped her to talk if she had her teddy with her and her Mum. She said, “teddies make me feel safe”.

The learning from Sharing Stories for Change has been, and will continue to be, at the heart of the development of Bairns Hoose.



Children and families must be respected and supported at all stages and their rights upheld so they can recover from hurt and harm with dignity and respect.

For more information visit [www.children1st.org.uk/bairnshoose](http://www.children1st.org.uk/bairnshoose)

# Supporting children across Scotland



Children 1st is here for children and families across Scotland. Anyone can access support through our national or local services. Every penny raised, every campaign championed, every service supported helps to keep every child and young person in Scotland safe, loved and well.



Call for free on **08000 28 22 33**, browse our website for advice and support, or start a webchat. You can talk to us seven days a week: Mon-Fri, 9am to 9pm Sat-Sun, 9am to noon.

**T: 08000 28 22 33**  
**[children1st.org.uk/parentline](https://children1st.org.uk/parentline)**

Supported by



If you have concerns about a child in a sport setting you can contact us. We also provide advice, consultancy, resources and training for any sports organisation working with children.

**T: 0141 419 1156**  
**E: [safeguardingsport@children1st.org.uk](mailto:safeguardingsport@children1st.org.uk)**  
**[children1st.org.uk/safeguardingsport](https://children1st.org.uk/safeguardingsport)**

In partnership with





## Keeping in touch

You are an important part of the Children 1st family.

Your passion, generosity and determination help to change children's lives for the better.

We want to let you know about how you are improving the lives of children and families. We may also call you from time to time, to let you know the difference you make, to tell you about other fundraising activities and to ask for your feedback.

We will contact you by post, unless you tell us otherwise. We will send you news, campaigns and fundraising appeals.

No thank you, I would rather not receive post from Children 1st

For more information on how we collect, use and store your personal information in line with data protection laws, please see our Privacy Policy at [children1st.org.uk/privacy](http://children1st.org.uk/privacy).

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