



IMPACT REPORT 2022

For the period from **1 January - 31 December 2022**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

2022 OVERVIEW	01
INTRODUCTION	02
WHY WE EXIST	03
METHODOLOGY	05
CHILDREN WE SUPPORTED	07
OVER TIME	08
IMPACT FOR CHILDREN	11
OUR IMPACT STATISTICS	14
OUR MENTOR NETWORK	17
LOOKING TO THE FUTURE	19
THANK YOU	20

2022 OVERVIEW

456

children reached

216

children completed

240

new starters

53

school partners

8780

hours of
sessions delivered

5203

1-1 sessions completed

11

group
activities held

Programmes ran in:

Brent

Camden

Hackney

Lambeth

Hammersmith
and Fulham

Southwark

Islington

Westminster

INTRODUCTION

Our purpose

The Kids Network exists to support children to live the lives they deserve.

Every child deserves a happy childhood and positive future.

Our mission is to create meaningful connections across our communities, supporting children to feel happy and confident in themselves and their futures.

Our values

Fun, Connection, Diversity, Curiosity and Integrity.

Why we measure impact

The Kids Network exists to make positive impact for children and our wider communities.

We collect a range of impact data to deliver a high-quality programme that makes a difference to the lives of the children we support.

We are committed to learning from the experiences of our children, both on the programme and from the barriers they face in society. This guides us to develop the best programme and advocating for children to support wider social change.

The data this year will help us in improving and implementing learning to deliver our new strategy to ensure we enable children to live the lives they deserve.

What we do

The Kids Network delivers a number of carefully designed evidence based activities, intended to maximise the impact created through our programme. These are outlined in our Theory of Change.

We intervene in children's lives early, supporting children aged between 8 and 11, at a transitional period in their childhood before they start secondary school. The fundamental aspect of our programme involves matching each child to a volunteer mentor in the community who meet weekly for 1 year. These sessions are child-led and incorporate trauma informed principles.

Programme Structure



WHY WE EXIST

Childrens Mental Health

50% of mental health issues can be diagnosed before the age of 14.¹ In 2009, **8%** of children aged 10-15 years expressed concerns around mental health however this rose to 18% in 2019-21.² And according to NHS digital, around **1 in 6** children have experienced a mental health problem. Additionally, the number of children referred for specialist support increased by **134%** between 2019/20 to 2020/21.³ These statistics indicate an emerging need for children to access early intervention, providing them with the literacy, tools and coping mechanisms to live happy and healthy lives.

ACEs

It is well documented that the traumatic effects of adverse childhood experiences, such as bereavement, witnessing domestic violence or being a young carer, has significant impacts on children's childhoods and their future life chances.

Having experienced multiple ACEs increased exposure to health risks where the greatest ACE-attributable costs were for mental illness and cancer.⁴ It also is associated with health-harming behaviours such as problematic drinking or engaging in intravenous drug use.⁵

A study commissioned by the Violence Reduction Unit found that around half of Londoners are likely to have experienced one form of ACE in their childhood and around **10%** of Londoners are likely to have experienced four or more different types of ACE.⁶

A study by the Early Intervention Foundation in 2020 found that least **2.5%** of all children in England experienced one ACE and that this represents only a proportion since most child maltreatment cases are unreported.⁷

Whilst The Kids Network is unable to prevent these life events occurring, we are able to provide the critical factors that are essential to reducing the harm caused and lifelong negative outcomes.

¹ <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk>

² University of Essex, Institute for Social and Economic Research. (2022). Understanding Society: Waves 1-12, 2009-2021 and Harmonised BHPS: Waves 1-18, 1991-2009. [data collection]. 17th Edition. UK Data Service. SN: 6614, <http://doi.org/10.5255/UKDA-SN-6614-18>.

³ <https://www.barnardos.org.uk>

⁴ <https://bmjopen.bmj.com>

⁵ <https://www.eif.org.uk>

Poverty

London has one of the highest poverty rates in the country and is also one of the most expensive cities in the world. Around **39%** of children in London live in households with less than **60%** of the median income based on child poverty data from 2016-17 to 2018-19.⁸

This is also an adverse childhood experience, and the systemic and cyclical nature of poverty, unless broken, can continue across generations. Children from lower-income households have access to far fewer experience than their more affluent peers. The Kids Network seeks to address this through our child-led community based mentoring model.

The cost-of-living crisis

The stark inequalities of wealth and opportunity in London were exacerbated by the economic crisis in 2022. With fuel poverty increasing as well as the cost of other essential items including food, poverty in London increased. Rising food prices have caused the greatest percentage increase in Consumer Prices Index.⁹ This is especially concerning given that households with less disposable income spend a higher proportion of their household expenditure on essentials. In April 2022, **17.2%** of households with children faced food insecurity however this increased to **25.8%** by September 2022.

Many children within our network have found themselves in unstable housing, going without meals and experience an increase in household stress while hard working families try to make ends meet. This has led to a spike in safeguarding concerns for us as an organisation as we look to support children through these unprecedented times.

How we support our children?

It is proven that better emotional wellbeing, improved behaviour and more positive friendships at age 10 are associated with greater engagement in school in later years and more positive outcomes in later life.

Through our trauma informed mentoring programme, we aim to act as a preventative measure and support our children through these barriers.

⁶ Bullock, M. (2020) Adverse Childhood Experiences in London. Investigating ways that Adverse childhood experiences and related concepts of vulnerability can help us to understand and improve Londoners' health. Public Health Specialty Registrar Greater London Authority, 2019

⁷ Asmussen, K., Fischer, F. Drayton, E. and McBride, T (2020). Adverse childhood experiences, what we know, what we don't know, and what should happen next. <https://www.eif.org.uk>

⁸ <https://www.gov.uk>

⁹ <https://www.ons.gov.uk>

METHODOLOGY

How we gather our impact data

Our impact information is gathered at various points during our mentee and mentors' journeys with us at The Kids Network. We evidence our impact through data collections using mixed methods of surveys, visuals and storytelling.

We aim to collect information at baseline, and twelve month points of our programme, involving different stakeholders to triangulate the data received.

Our main sources of information

1. Data collection forms

Questions are asked at the start and end of a child's journey.

Questions include:

- Stirling wellbeing scale questions

This scale is a series of questions developed by the educational psychology service to measure the emotional wellbeing of children aged between 8 and 15 years old.

- Questions related to other programme outcomes

These have been created from our Theory of Change, looking to measure our outcome pillars. Alongside increased wellbeing measured by the Stirling questions, we also look at indicators for children developing tools for the future and social and emotional capabilities.

- Questions about their experience on the programme

We also want to ensure that children are having a consistent experience on the programme and the fundamental quality markers of delivery are in place to generate the impact from the activities we have set out.

¹⁰ <https://www.schoolfoodmatters.org>

2. Story collection

We capture the experiences and impact for our children through their storytelling. This gives us insight into the individual challenges they face and shows how we can support the unique needs of each child, and how our programme has enabled them to build towards brighter futures.

3. Session reports

After each mentoring session, our mentors must complete a report of the time spent. These summarise the activities, themes of conversation, mood, as well as highlight safeguarding concerns to act upon. This data provides insight into the specific support and developments made during each session.



CHILDREN WE SUPPORTED

A summary of the 456 children reached across 2022

71%

were of the
global majority

68%

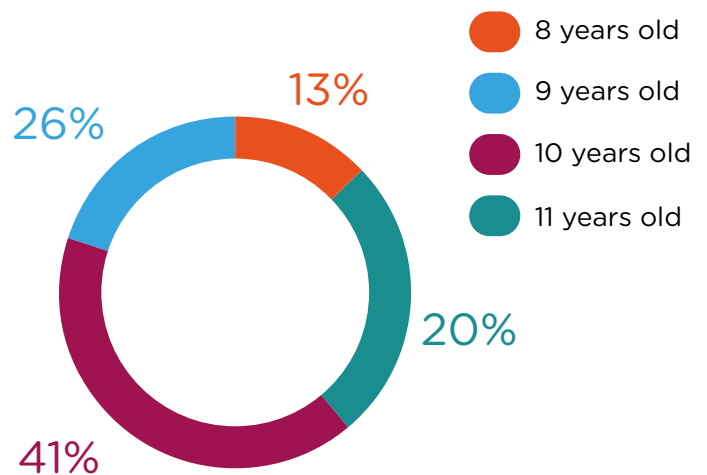
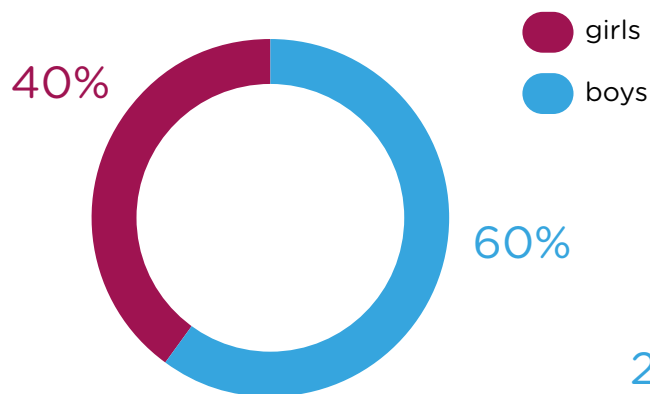
were eligible for
free school meals

29%

with medical needs

23%

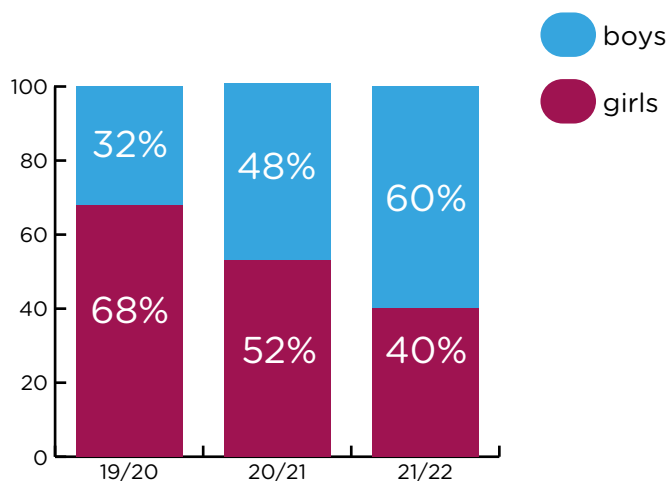
were identified
with SEN



OVER TIME

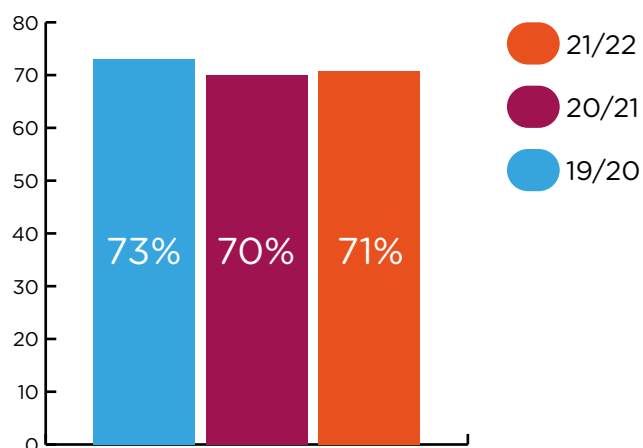
Children start the programme in one school year and finish in another, meaning most receive support over their school transition period. Therefore, we track impact by cohorts based on the year children start the programme and the year they finish. Looking at the breakdown of our mentee cohorts over recent years shows the change in needs.

Percentage breakdown of how children identified their gender by programme cycle



2022 was the first year we supported more male mentees than female.

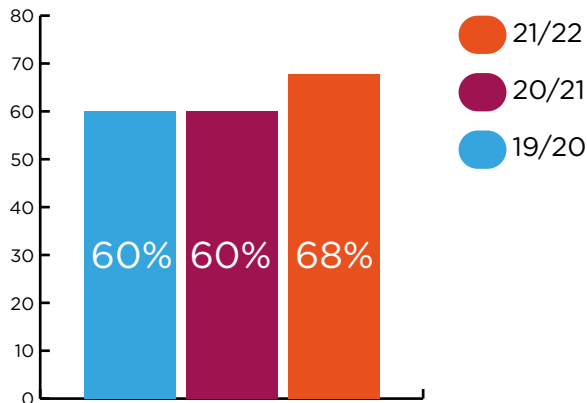
Percentage of children of the global majority by programme cycle



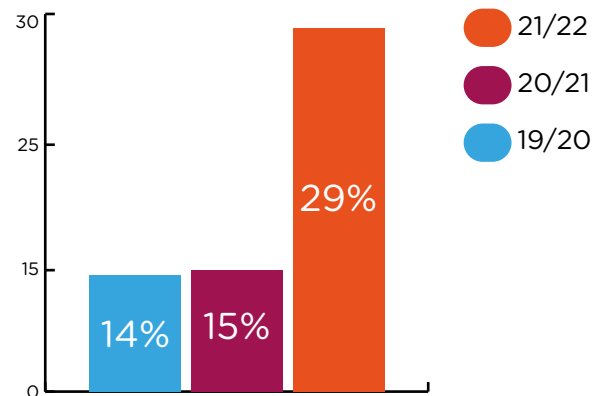
We are consistently seeing the majority of the children we work with are of the global majority.

Children identified with the following experiences by programme cycle

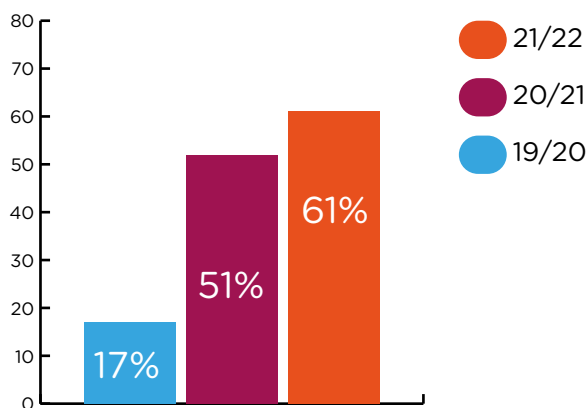
FSM



Medical Needs



Adverse Childhood Experiences



In 2022 we found an increase in the percentage of our children eligible for free school meals and children who have experienced adverse childhood experiences.

This is most likely caused by the increased cost of living. We are seeing the needs of the children we are supporting become more complex and individual when working with referral partners.

Whilst we recognise free school meals is one measure of low-income, families on Universal Credit earning over £7,400 a year (after tax and national insurance) are no longer eligible.¹¹ With the soaring cost of living, this does not capture the full extent of families struggling.

¹¹ <https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk>

Barriers our children face

Most of the 456 children, who needed early intervention support, were referred to us for more than one reason.

85% faced social and emotional barriers such as:

- **57%** Low confidence
- **51%** Difficulty managing feelings
- **36%** Low resilience
- **34%** difficulty maintaining and relationships
- **18%** Aspirations
- **17%** Mental health

48% faced home based barriers such as:

- **11%** Accommodation problems
- **8%** Bereavement
- **22%** Family Breakdown
- **3%** Foster care
- **1%** Domestic violence

46% faced school based barriers such as:

- **26%** attainment
- **27%** SEN
- **12%** Attendance
- **5%** Bullying
- **2%** Gang grooming

61% of children have experienced 1 or more adverse childhood experiences

54% of our children had no other services involved in their lives despite their challenges



IMPACT FOR CHILDREN

The Kids Network provides positive experiences with children who are experiencing barriers that have the potential to limit their positive development towards teen and adult life.

Our programme is centred around fun and play. The programme is child-led to allow each child to make the programme unique to them and their needs whilst also developing key skills for the future.

Together with their mentors, our mentees decide the activities they do and manage an allocated budget to complete them.

Structuring the programme in this way, we aim to see the following themes of outcomes during each child's journey with us:

1. Wellbeing

- Mental health
- Self-esteem and identity
- Aspirations

2. Social and emotional capabilities

- Emotional literacy
- Ability to build positive relationships

3. Tools for the future

- Prepared for secondary school
- Unlocked aspirations and goal setting





”

“I kind of felt nervous at first – actually I’ve never been with someone that I don’t know, that hasn’t been my family”.

Kyla, age 11, was struggling with her self-esteem and forming positive relationships with her peers, causing her issues in school. With the transition from primary to secondary school fast approaching, her school referred her to The Kids Network knowing that we could support her emotional development and help her build a positive self-image.

The nerves did not last for long though, as Kyla and her mentor Adele began building trust and exploring new activities available in the community, visiting local parks, exploring museums and art exhibitions, and trying ice skating. Kyla has since grown in confidence, confidently ordering in cafes, choosing the activities she wants to spend time on and improve at, and now proudly aspiring to work in fashion. When asked for three words to describe her mentoring experience and what she has learnt, Kyla said

“Fun, exciting – and you just feel free. You should go outside and explore new things and not just stay at home, because I normally would stay at home”.

Such is the effect of levelling the playing field for London’s children and providing them access to the opportunities that they all deserve. Adele’s support has allowed Kyla to build a positive relationship, find her interests and passions, and most importantly, have fun. It is vital that children everywhere are supported early to kickstart a brighter future.

With Kyla’s improved self-confidence and newfound interests and aspirations, she is prepared to take the transition to secondary school in her stride.



OUR IMPACT STATISTICS

TKN success factors

To ensure our programme is successful, we invest in a number of key activities to ensure a high quality programme. This includes establishing strong relationships between mentors and mentees, ensuring the programme is child-led, achieving goals specifically set by mentees and matching identity markers that are important to the children.

Most importantly, we want children to have fun and enjoy their time and with 95% of our children reported they had fun on their TKN journey, we are so pleased that children, who have often engaged with no other services, were able to express this with us.

The statements below, indicate the high quality programme delivered which enable us to create impact under our outcomes framework.

- **100%** of our children reported they had things in common with their mentors
- **93%** of our children said they did things they have never tried before
- **98%** of our children achieved the goals they set at the start with their mentors
- **84%** of our children said they have things to be proud of after finishing the programme
- **88%** of our children said they chose the activities they did with their mentor
- **86%** of our children said they achieved what they had hoped from completing the programme
- **97%** of our children said they really enjoyed the time they spent with their mentor
- **95%** of our children said they really trusted their mentor

Wellbeing

- **87%** I've been feeling calm
- **87%** I've been in a good mood
- **86%** I am good at some things
- **86%** I've been feeling cheerful

From these statistics, we have been really pleased to see our children develop coping strategies to help them move forward, with **76%** of children reporting that they now know what to do when sad.

Wellbeing is so integral to all facets of our lives, particularly for children who are developing through adversity in their short lives.

”

‘He often quotes our motto: We never give up’

Mentor

83%

of mentees reported having **positive wellbeing** at the end of their TKN journey

”

‘I feel amazing and confident and like the special girl in the world’

Mentee

”

‘I like it because you can just free your mind and relax, you can talk to a person and just feel calm and happy.’

Mentee

98%

of mentors agreed the experience had a **positive effect** on their mentee’s happiness

”

‘Now, he can fully explain and express what he needs and wants.’

Mentor

90%

of caregivers agreed their child left the programme in a **good mood**

”

‘The time he has spent with his mentor has aided his growth and overall joy.’

Caregiver

We are so proud to deliver this impact for children throughout such challenge.

Social and Emotional development

- **86%** felt there were things they were proud of
- **85%** had been feeling relaxed
- **83%** could find fun things to do
- **83%** had been getting on with people
- **82%** felt people cared about them

Building a healthy and positive relationships is essential for children who are struggling to cope. Of our mentees in 2022, **82%** of our children reported they are now able to get on well with people after our programme.

'He is able to let go of his negative emotions more easily' – school

Tools for the future

- **82%** felt good things would happen in their life
- **77%** knew what to do when they felt sad
- **64%** could make choices easily
- **61%** felt prepared for their SATS

Having transitionary support for children who are already facing multiple challenges in their lives is crucial. We are pleased to report that after taking part in our programme for a year, 73% of caregivers said their child is now feels ready to start secondary school.

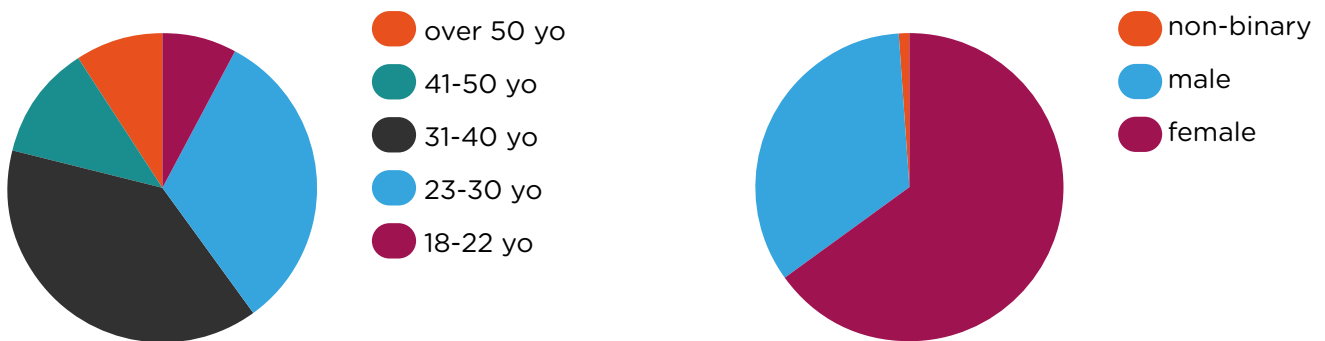
'He has grown over their time together and has made a good transition to secondary school' - caregiver



OUR MENTOR NETWORK

41%

of our mentors were
of the global majority



We value and celebrate the fact that our community reflects the breadth of experiences and identities that make London great. Our children's identity characteristics inform our mentor recruitment.

Our cohort of mentor volunteers also go on their own journeys through the programme.

We provide training and 121s to build mentoring skills and ensure they are well equipped to support our little Londoners.

Our mentors also learn a lot from our mentees directly. Connecting pairs with similar interests but often different lived experiences builds an understanding of their communities.

18

Mentor Meet-Ups

11

Group Activities

15

Training Sessions

Impact for Mentors

Alongside the children, the programme that we design trains, supports and upskills mentors also and creates an impact in their lives.

Some of our key statistics that we are particularly proud of are:

- **86%** felt a positive effect on their wellbeing
- **86%** said the programme increased their belief in their ability to create positive change in their community
- **81%** said the programme made them consider new ways of thinking
- **66%** said the programme helped them improve their communication skills
- **60%** said the programme helped them build their resilience
- **57%** said the programme helped them progress in their career
- **85%** of mentors would recommend being a TKN mentor



LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

2023 and beyond brings with it a new organisational strategy and a need to revise our Impact Strategy alongside this.

With renewed capacity we hope to integrate the learnings from this report into strategic and operational change.

Key areas of focus for us as an organisation will be to:

- Revisit and launch a new Theory of Change
- Develop a three year Impact Strategy with plans for external evaluation in year 3
- Look to embed trauma-informed principles into methodology and collection
- Automate, where possible data collection and streamline processes
- Review our activities, and introduce an internal quality framework that aligns to our Theory of Change
- Hold quarterly reflection sessions internally which look at distance travelled for our stakeholders

In the five short years that we have been in operation, The Kids Network has delivered incredible impact for little Londoners, but we know, the needs are only increasing and the case for support and our work has never been greater.

We look forward to stepping up to this challenge and fulfilling the support needs in our communities to more impact, and to continue to connect London for change.



THANK YOU

Thank you to all our supporters and partners. Together, we have a lasting impact and support our children.

Our partners include:



National Lottery



Kusuma Trust



William Wates
Memorial Trust



YHFF



Walcot Foundation



Guinness



Camden Council's
Community Impacts
Resilience Fund



NCIL



John Lyon's Charity



YHFF / SYNC (tender)



Quintessentially



Edward Gostling



Criseren



Betsy Foundation



L&Q



Henry Smith



Garfield Weston



Shaftesbury Young
People Trust



Brent Cross
Bursary Scheme



St Olave's
Foundation Fund



The Daisy Trust

