



Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 31 March 2023

(A company limited by guarantee)

Registered Charity number 1125291

Company number 6032858

Annual Report and Financial Statements

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The Parenting Project

Report of the Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees presents its report and audited financial statements for the year ended March 31st 2023.

Reference and Administrative Information

Charity Name	Parenting Project
Charity registration number	1125291
Company registration number	6032858
Registered Office and operational address:	St. John's Family & Wellbeing Centre Mortimer Road Kenilworth Warwickshire CV8 1FS

Board of Trustees

Mrs J M Williams	Chair
Mr A W J Sherratt	Treasurer
Mrs B J Ballinger	
Mrs A J Milton	
Sally Lightfoot	
Graham Lowther	Appointed 10.5.22
Mitchell Burns-Jackson	Appointed 28.11.22 (resigned 6.9.23)

Company Secretary

Ms E Johnston

Auditors: Cooper Adams Ltd, 12 Payton St, Stratford upon Avon, Warwickshire, CV37 6UA

Bank: Lloyds Bank, Stourbridge Business Centre, Lloyds Bank Commercial, PO Box 1000, BX1 1LT.

**Jane Williams Chair
Welcome to our Annual Report for financial year ending 2023**

As I present this year's report I am reflecting upon our greatest challenge to date. During the final quarter of our financial year we were facing a significant shortfall in funds. The reasons for this are varied and have been described as a 'perfect storm' that many charities are experiencing, whilst also coping with the 'tsunami' impact of the pandemic and the cost of living on families and individuals.

Earlier this year, the Charities Aid Foundation outlined the current pressures on charities and stated that an unprecedented number of charities are facing financial difficulties. They stated that 'unfortunately some gems will be lost this year'. We were at significant risk of being one of those gems.

During Covid, we took the difficult decision to continue to provide a full service for our beneficiaries, a third of whom were at risk of suicide or serious harm.

During 2020, the first year of the pandemic, a high number of funding bodies closed their doors to new funding applications due to the uncertainty of the global investment markets. This meant that we were unable to renew many of our grants so we began to draw on our reserves. Given the unprecedented circumstances families were coping with, this was the right thing to do. We had a duty to support families when they needed us the most.

Other factors have also impacted our financial position. As I have spoken of previously, funding streams are under enormous pressure as charities, like ourselves, require increased support to enable us to continue to deliver our services and meet demand. For some time we have recognised the pressure on the funding sector and the difficulties in raising funds to meet our core costs in particular.

With the help of some special people this year, we are determined to survive and, eventually thrive. Our newly created Community Interest Company, The Growth Pool, offers us the chance to become sustainable in the future. In the meantime we will continue to fight for our wonderful charity in order for us to serve the families who need us for many years to come.

The Board of Trustees and I wish to convey our sincere thanks to the Parenting Project employees, past and present and volunteers alike.

Jane Williams - Chair of Trustees

Signed: Date: ...25 October 2023.....

Objectives and Activities

Purpose and Aims

Our Charity's purpose, as set out in the objects contained in the company's memorandum of association, is to:

- Make a positive difference to the lives of families to improve outcomes for children by providing support at the earliest point of need.
- To be there to provide high quality parenting support by recognising that parents are key to making a difference to the lives of their children.

The aims of our charity are to support parents to do their best for their children to enable them to grow and develop well and to provide support and services for children 0-19 years (25 if SEND) to help them to secure positive outcomes in all aspects of their lives. We work directly with children as well as the parents themselves and our special projects have enabled us to work with a wider demographic throughout Warwickshire and Coventry.

Vision and Mission Statement

Our vision is that we will be there to improve lives for children, young people and their families when support is needed and continue to develop our range of services, programmes and projects in response to their needs.

Our Mission:

“To improve the life experiences and outcomes of children, young people and their families by providing services and support at a time when they are most needed”

Our Values:

Empathy: Carefully holding families so they can connect with the resources they have to move, in their own way, toward the goals they set for themselves.

Strengthening Relationships: Building trusting relationships with families and others well placed to support them, facilitating choice, confidence and self-belief.

Persistent Conviction: A sure and certain commitment to families, means we persevere to do what serves families and individuals best, even if it's not the easiest or usual thing to do.

Openness to Opportunity: Being ready and willing to evolve, adapt to conditions and explore the potential of the new.

Creative Collaboration: Working with others to spark individual or collective endeavour that can be strengthened and sustained.

Ensuring our work delivers our aims

We review our aims, objectives and activities each year. The review examines our achievements and the outcomes of our work over the previous 12 months. We look at the effectiveness of each key activity and assess the benefits of those activities and the difference they have made to the children and families we have supported. The review also helps us to ensure our aims, objectives and activities remain focused upon our stated purpose.

Our activities during this financial year became more limited due to our reduced income. Whilst we continued to focus upon our aims and objectives we needed to restrict our activities to only those we receive direct funding for. This has widened the gap in counselling and family wellbeing services further in the area we work.

The Focus of our Work

Mental ill health continues to be the focus of our work.

Parents experiencing mental ill health often request support and therapy in their endeavour to mitigate against the impact of their emotional health on their children and yet, it is well documented that such help and support is difficult to access and insufficient.

A range of research has suggested that children may experience a range of adverse consequences when living with parents with mental illness and poor emotional wellbeing.

Effects on children are described in the literature as mainly negative – including poor psycho-social development and attachments, compromised emotional and mental well-being and poor transitions into adulthood.

However, not all children will be adversely affected when parents have mental illness and positive outcomes have also been identified, including enhanced maturity and children's capacity to develop resilience and effective coping mechanisms.

These outcomes are more likely to occur when children and families are supported adequately and appropriately.

Key factors in ensuring children do not suffer adverse consequences of living with a parent who has mental illness are:

- Providing effective support to families.
- Listening to what children have to say about their experiences and needs in the context of parental mental illness.
- Providing children with age appropriate information about mental health conditions.
- Recognising that, alongside their own health needs, parents with mental illness may also have additional parenting needs. This is an important message for practitioners working with adults with mental health problems and their families.
(Jo Aldridge, 2012 Loughborough University)

Our objectives for 2022/23:

- To further develop and expand the Family Wellbeing Programme
- To continue to provide support for children 0-19 (25 if SEND) and their parents
- To work with the trading arm of the charity, The Growth Pool CIC, to enable the Parenting Project to become sustainable in the medium and long term
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Whilst we continued to deliver our full Family Wellbeing pathway of services, we were unable to continue to develop and expand our work this year. We met the other objectives and worked with The Growth Pool CIC to pilot their 'Well Supported Schools' Programme in the final quarter of this financial year.

How our activities deliver public benefit

Our main activities and those we aim to help are described below. All of our charitable activities focus upon improving the lives of children and their families and other beneficiaries within our special projects. They are undertaken to further our charitable purposes for public benefit.

Who used and benefitted from our services?

Our objects and funding limited the services we were able to provide to families this year, to Warwickshire. During this financial year at total of **820** families and **2,870** individuals benefitted from our support. Beneficiaries include children 0-19 (25 if SEND) and parents.

Our Focus on Mental Health

The continued increase in mental health issues continues to be widely accepted. Through this lens, many people, including children, are more likely to be living with poor mental health than ever before.

Social inequalities, poverty, and adverse childhood experiences are recognised as the main reasons for distress and suffering, and therefore make up the documented figure of 1 in 4 people experiencing mental ill-health at any one time. (Johnstone, Boyle, Cromby et al 2018).

Understanding mental health and emotional wellbeing in a medicalised context increases the risk of perpetuating dependency and marginalisation as services, that are quite often doing their best, can unwittingly emulate triggers and potentially reinforce childhood issues and past abusive relationships as experts try to help and advise families. A plan 'put in place' to engage families and increase their sense of agency can actually have the opposite effect due to the perceived power imbalances.

The trauma-informed approach is based on the recognition that people who use services have quite often experienced significant adversity. It is also noted that the key to recovery is when trusting relationships and validation are experienced (Johnstone, Boyle, Cromby et al 2018).

It may therefore be more helpful to make sense of emotional wellbeing and mental health through an individual's social and developmental context - in essence, their lived experience. Trauma-informed projects are running in service design, education, prisons, and public health (www.cestoohigh.com). Our counselling service and entire organisation adopts a Trauma Informed Approach.

Counselling, and in particular the therapeutic relationship, aims not to take the expert position but instead, listens non-judgmentally, conveys empathy and upholds respect for the client. Rather than tell the client what to do, it facilitates exploration so the client can arrive at their own choices, decisions and a sense of what is right for them. At its core is the Person Centred Approach.

The Person-Centred Approach is transferable and is recognised to work very well in allied helping professions, quite often we hear the phrase 'patient-centred care' in hospitals or child-centred approaches in schools to demonstrate how putting the person at the centre of any professional involvement seeks to empower individuals, facilitate independence and, in the case of parenting, improve outcomes for children.

The use of language is key to effective communication, using counselling skills is a simple yet effective way to facilitate insight and understanding.

Communities that adopt an approach which focuses on the strengths and abilities of those it seeks to support, can position themselves well to achieve better outcomes. They are

socially and economically robust where people play a part in the decisions that are important to them increasing a sense of self-agency and autonomy (Places: empowerment and investment for local communities, 2018).

Therefore to promote independence and resilience we continue to work in collaboration with those we are endeavouring to help and support to move forward, in their own way, towards the goals they set for themselves.

Family Wellbeing Pathway

The Family Wellbeing Pathway evolved over a number of years in response to family need, in particular, mental health. It offers a pathway of support and activities which aim to improve outcomes for families. Each family is assessed and offered support from the pathway activities as appropriate. For some families, dependent on need, this means they will access all or most of the activities within the pathway, whilst others may only need one or two elements, for example, counselling and signposting to other partner organisations. Importantly, all families will access the pathway which is appropriate for them to achieve improved outcomes and independence. Crucially, parents will choose the pathway most suitable for them to bring about changes in their lives.

The Pathway:



The Family Wellbeing Programme

As with all of our support services, the Family Wellbeing Team have continued to adapt and deliver support in a flexible approach, adapting to ensure parents have continued to have access to support, either through face to face, zoom, phone calls or text messages. Over this period we have been able to fully return to delivering group work. In schools the team have delivered Brick Club and Friendship groups with primary aged children, Transition and Anxiety workshops with teenagers and their parents, we have also delivered the New Baby Programme with expectant and new parents.

During 2023, the team have experienced significant changes in staffing, the Team Lead left in January 2023, a number of key members of staff have also made the difficult decision to leave due to the uncertain financial position of the charity in early 2023.

We have restructured the Family Wellbeing Service, to have one lead who oversees and line manages the Family Wellbeing Facilitators and Parent Mentors. This has supported referral, triage, assessment and team allocation processes and has led to parents experiencing a streamlined process from referral to the identification of an appropriate pathway of support.

Despite these challenges, the team have continued to provide a consistent and high level of support for families and within the group work delivery.

In September 2022, we were successful with our tender for WCC Mental Health in School Children (MHISC) frame work, the tender was submitted jointly with Lifespace Trust, with the Parenting Project being the lead provider. Schools are able to refer children and young people who are within Early Help to access a group through Parenting Project or 1-1 mentoring through Lifespace.

Family Wellbeing Data Warwick

Through funding from Thomas Oken and Nicholas Eyffler Trust, we have delivered our pathway in Warwick for the third year in 2022/23.

We have provided 1-1 support for 25 Individual families within the Warwick Town area. Support was provided to support families experiencing difficulties with: finances, parenting, child's behaviour, mental health, schooling, accessing appropriate education, SEND, social isolation, relationship break downs, domestic abuse, housing, support to access CA and foodbank.

Number of referrals received April 2022 – March 2023 = 30

Numbers of families supported through a Family Wellbeing Facilitator = 25

Number of families signposted to other services / NFA = 5

Feedback from Parents

"Our FWF has not only helped my child within school but has always helped my child and our family with home life and supported us with decisions we have made to help my child. She has helped us with suitable routines and boundaries for my child due to his disabilities."

"Our FWF has been working with my family for a couple of months now and all I can say is how much I appreciate all the help and support she has given to me and my family. I've been at very low points and she's always takes the time for me even if it's just to talk to and get things off my chest. She has really supported and helped so much with moving things forward and with getting things in place and getting the support my oldest daughter needs. I really felt like giving up with all professionals at one point until the FWF came along, and showed me there is people out there that care and will help whenever they can. All I can say

really is if it wasn't for her and all the help and support she has given I wouldn't nowhere I would be right now it's a nice feeling to have someone on my side and support me and my family where we need it".

Group Work and 1-1 support in Warwick Schools

Group work and 1-1 support with children and young people was delivered in two Primary schools. Brick Club, Friendship and Craft groups were delivered, the focus of the sessions was to help with anxiety, friendships, emotions, resilience, behaviours and transitions.

We give 360 degree feedback following each session, to the class teacher and each child's parent. Sharing with them information on the topics covered and tools and resources used in the session. This has enabled parents not known to the team to have the opportunity to reach out for information, advice and signposting. Parents have also reported benefits of having the resources shared, for them to use at home, for example the breathing star.

Numbers of Young People:

30 at Heathcote Primary School

30 at Newburgh Primary School

Group work feedback and quotes:

"With aims geared towards improving social communication and interaction, the children accessing LEGO Therapy are increasing their knowledge and capability of turn taking, being clear in their communication and tolerance, and we are starting to notice this transferring into the classroom and their interactions with other children".

"The children in the Resilience and Emotions Group have also had a great opportunity to build strategies to try to enable them to manage their emotions and consider approaches for emotional regulation and resilience".

Group work and Volunteers

The Warwick groups were supported by two volunteers, who supported the Family Wellbeing Facilitators in the group work delivering, enabling additional sessions to be delivered.

Family Wellbeing Data Stratford upon Avon

Delivery of the Family Wellbeing Pathway across Stratford District was funded through Orbit Housing's Better Days Grant until September 2022, since then priority has been in Stratford upon Avon where the pathway is funded by Stratford Town Trust.

We have provided 1-1 support for 27 Individual families within the Stratford area. Support was provided to support families experiencing difficulties with: finances, parenting, child's behaviour, mental health, SEND, schooling, accessing appropriate education, social isolation, relationship break downs, domestic abuse, food, family welfare, health and safety within the home.

Number of referrals received April 22 – March 23 = 41

Number of families supported through a Family Wellbeing Facilitator = 27

Number of families signposted to other services / NFA = 14

Feedback from Parents

“I would like to say how grateful we are as a family for the help we have received from the parent project, as I have said many of time we honestly couldn’t have done it without the support of our FWF having a child with additional needs”

“Thank you again for your input, I only wish that there were more like you out there”

“Your support has been so valuable to our little family. I honestly feel like a different person after the short time we have known you. I'm much more confident about talking to the children about their Dad and other issues and they're responding well (most of the time 😊)”

Group Work and 1-1 support in Stratford District Schools

Group work and 1-1 support with children and young people was delivered in 8 schools across Stratford District:

Wellesbourne Primary School

Tredington Primary School

St Nicholas Primary, Alcester

St Lawrence Primary, Napton

Henley in Arden C of E Primary School

Stratford Primary School

Holy Trinity Primary School, Stratford upon Avon

Thomas Jolyffe Primary School

We delivered the following groups: Brick Club, Friendship and Craft groups were delivered, the focus of the sessions was to help with anxiety, friendships, emotions, resilience, behaviours and transitions.

We give 360 degree feedback following each session, to the class teacher and each child’s parent. Sharing with them information on the topics covered and tools and resources used in the session. This has enabled parents not known to the team to have the opportunity to reach out for information, advice and signposting. Parents have also reported benefits of having the resources shared, for them to use at home, for example the breathing star.

Feedback from Parents & Teachers

"I enjoy getting your updates each week and asking my son, how he is getting on – thank you".

"Interestingly when we were building with Lego together at the weekend (I'm the supplier), he was more creative / consistent with his language describing the pieces!"

"We are finding the Brick Club really beneficial to the children, they are really looking forward to the group each week."

"I am so grateful for the amazing support that you have provided through so many interventions (in school), but especially the commitment and passion you bring to your work. You have been an inspiration!"

Family Wellbeing Data Rugby

During 2023/23 we received funding from Rugby Benevolent Fund, which supported our delivery of the Family Wellbeing Pathway with a small number of families in the District. We have provided support for 15 individual families in Rugby, mainly through providing Counselling and Parent Mentor support.

MHISC

Since September 2022, we have been delivering support through the MHISC programme, we are also managing the referrals on behalf of Lifespace Trust, who are delivering 1-1 mentoring through the programme.

Parenting Project have received 14 referrals, and delivered 12 groups to date. The group work is developed around the referred child, we work with the child's school who identify other children to join the child in the group. We provide either Brick Club or Friendship / Craft Groups.

Brick Club:

These sessions are delivered by a qualified and experienced Lego Based Therapist. Lego based therapy aims to develop social communication skills in children, such as sharing, turn-taking, following rules, building confidence, self-esteem, and problem-solving.

Nurture/Friendship Groups:

Delivered by experienced and highly skilled Wellbeing Facilitators, Nurture/Friendship Groups focus on social and emotional development and building resilience. Delivery style and content is adapted to the needs of individual children. Common topics covered are: Friendships, bullying, feelings, worries and anxiety.

Feedback from Children

"I like Lego therapy because I love playing Lego, the rules are really good because they are really fair."

"I have enjoyed coming to Lego Club to be with my friends and I love Lego. I have learned to be good at teamwork."

Progress Programme

Progress is a specialised programme of support designed to help young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) to build foundations to overcome barriers to their route to education, training or work.

We delivered a contract through Ground Work UK to support NEET young people in Coventry and Warwickshire from September 2021 until 31st March 2023, when the project ceased. Our provision included 1-1 counselling and group work. Through the programme we delivered 21 groups, over 35 sessions which 96 young people attended. We received 56 referrals for counselling and 40 young people accessed the service.

Counselling was delivered over 18 sessions, face to face or via zoom/phone, all of the counsellors within the programme were qualified counsellors and provided trauma informed, person centred counselling.

Progress Counselling Feedback:

"Helped me to understand myself"

"Been a positive experience"

"Helped me to be more confident"

"Made me feel better, less weight on shoulders"

"Relieved my thoughts aren't invalid"

Group work offered the opportunity for young people to come together in small groups to explore topics which were important to them, for example: anxiety, confidence, communication. The sessions all included a topic and an activity, for example: Stone Mandala Painting, flip books, calming key rings. While undertaking the activity the lead facilitated discussions and shared ideas, resources that could be supportive for example: breathing techniques, Wim Hoff cold showers, signposting to tools and support.

Group Work Feedback from young People:

"I like these distraction techniques. I feel they will work if I start them before my anxiety cripples me, hopefully it will stop them from getting to that point."

“This was good. Thank you “

“I've really enjoyed these sessions and have learnt so much about myself “

“It's so important to understand your moods and your triggers. These sessions were great. They could help so many people “

“We managed to engage a good number of our more socially anxious participants on to these sessions and we have seen them increase in confidence significantly. Many participants who took part in these events have progressed into employment or education”.

Progress Plus

We are keen to continue to deliver the programme and have been successful with smaller pots of grant funding, through which we are planning to deliver 1-1 counselling and similar group work sessions for young people who are NEET or are at risk of becoming NEET.

Anxiety Workshops

This workshop discusses lots of different ideas/strategies and tools that may help deal with any anxiety or low mood people may be feeling. The ideas are all very varied so the person attending needs to decide what they feel will work for them. We are all different so have different needs. What works for one person won't work for another but what's important is the person feels they are taking control of their own mental health and how they want to move forward with it. If you attend one of the face to face workshops in one of the children centres then there will have lots of resources which can be explored.

The sessions can be attended by the young person on their own, they can bring a family member or a parent/ carer could come on their behalf.

We have delivered the sessions on several dates and various locations in South Warwickshire and also online. The anxiety workshop is a standalone one off session.

We arranged 6 zoom workshops and 4 Face to face using both Alcester and Stratford Children's centres

The Zoom sessions were better attended than the Face to face with 15 people attending in total (not including professionals) with 4 professionals also attending.

Next Steps

For the Young People that struggle with low mood or nervousness to explore and discover different strategies they can use to help them move forward in a positive way in their lives

Feedback from Young People and Parents:

"I really enjoyed the workshop. There were lots of tips to help with anxiety and I think every person will use one or other depending on their likes. I realised while listening which ones could work for me and my daughter."

"The sessions lead was great, very professional and comforting"

"Felt it was very welcoming and easy to understand and follow"

"I found the workshop more informative and beneficial than the suggestions my mental health team give me."

"It was a very nice environment to be in especially with it being an anxiety workshop. It would have been useful to take away a list of all the elements of the course that were covered for memory/reflect what was covered later on. The session lead was lovely and very chatty and it was nice at times to listen to her."

Feedback from Professionals:

"That was really good. They interacted so well and I can see they will use these ideas to help them in the future."

"Thank you very much for the time and effort you put into organising such an interesting session."

"This is so good, even if they don't use these ideas straightaway they will have them to use in the future."

New baby Programme

A workshop aimed antenatally and for parents with new-borns up to about 4 months. It's written to help, support and guide parents to understand their baby and their own emotions and feelings antenatally and up to the age of 2.

The first 1001 days of life, from conception to the age of 2 are considered to be critical developmental days. The New Baby Workshop will help, guide and discover ways to understand and support babies, during the antenatal period, through to age 2 and beyond.

We explore the following plus much more:

- Brain development & how you can support it.
- Baby cues and the 7 sleep/wake states

- The impact of a caregiver's mental health on your developing child and what support is out there to help you.
- Developing your child's self-awareness.
- The Solihull Approach using concepts called Containment, Reciprocity and Behaviour Management.
- How to use play and sensory play to boost both your child's physical and emotional development.
- Dads role
- The crying baby program

The sessions have been delivered over 2 zoom workshops and 3 face to face workshops using Stratford and Alcester children's centres

The Zoom sessions were better attended with a total of 15 attendees

Feedback from Parents

"That was interesting. I liked the baby sensory ideas "

Thank you this is good I learnt a lot "

"I have so much to think about now "

"I will definitely do some of the play ideas "

"The presenters were fantastic and really knowledgeable."

Parent Mentoring

Our successful Parent Mentor service is delivered across South Warwickshire and in the town of Rugby, for parents who are struggling with their role as a parent and would benefit from emotional and/or practical support from a Parent Mentor volunteer. The Parent Mentor spends time with the family on a weekly basis for up to 2 hours, for 3-6 months.

Parents decide on the type of support they want in order to make progress as a parent and an individual. The goal of the Parent Mentoring Programme is to facilitate an outcome of confidence, wellbeing and independence for the parent which has a positive impact on the whole family.

Parent Mentors are recruited rigorously from often professional backgrounds, it is a volunteer role for which mentors receive comprehensive training and induction including safeguarding. They also receive individual and group supervision and on call support. Current and previous Parent Mentors have found the role valuable in terms of their own

learning and development and rewarding as they support parents to make positive and lasting changes in their lives.

All parents identified as suitable for the programme are assessed and matched to an appropriate Parent Mentor.

In October 2022, The Parent Mentors were nominated for Warwickshire CAVA Volunteer award and they received the special recognition award for health and wellbeing. This is a fabulous recognition for the contribution the volunteers in supporting the health and wellbeing of families they mentor.

Earlier in 2023, the Parent Mentor Lead left the charity, we were sad to see her leave and thank her for her dedication in extending the service and growing the programme across South Warwickshire.

Within our restructure we have one experienced and qualified Family Wellbeing Lead, who is overseeing and managing the Parent Mentor Programme.

Between April 2022 and March 2023

Number of referrals = 60

Number of families supported = 55

Number of Volunteer Parent Mentors over the period = 21 Parent Mentors

Number of families signposted to other services / NFA = 5

Referrals Received from:

Nurseries and pre-schools, schools, children's teams, strengthening families, FIS, Early Help, Home Start, NCT Parent in Mind, self-referrals

Feedback from Parents

"The mentor was so kind and thoughtful, always there to help and listen to whatever is going on"

"The mentor gave me a shoulder to lean on"

"It gave me someone impartial to talk about issues going on in my life when they caused me to be conflicted, I feel Parent Mentoring is a valuable resource"

"I think my issues are bigger than my mentor experiences. We did have good conversations and she helped me take actions and reassured me about things which are now helpful, I am now accessing parenting project counselling service, I think it will make a big difference."

Parent Mentor Process:

On receipt of a referral, the families are all contacted by the Family Wellbeing Lead and are either visited in their home or have a telephone conversation. The Lead gathers appropriate information and supports the parent in completing a set of questions, based on Warwickshire Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS). The questions are a good indicator of how the parent is feeling at that time and it gives the Lead an insight into what is happening for that family. The parent is asked to score themselves on the challenges of parenting, emotional wellbeing, and level of confidence, aspirations, isolation and loneliness.

There is a chance for parents to express how they feel about the chance of having a mentor and what their hope are from being able to benefit from the service. A risk assessment is also completed around visiting the home. If at this point specialist services are needed then the Lead will refer on as required, for example to: domestic abuse, drug/alcohol support or social services. The Lead is a designated person for safeguarding and is fully trained and experienced.

Once the information is gathered about the family circumstances then the parent can be matched to a mentor. This process is thought about carefully as each mentor has a unique background, specialist skills and personal attributes.

The Lead makes a joint home visit with the Parent Mentor to introduce them to the parent, during this visit, the Parent and the Mentor are able to explore and agree how the sessions will initially be used.

The Parent Mentor Volunteers:

The mentors receive six weekly supervision, either as a group face to face or 1-1 virtually. The sessions help them explore possibilities and options and enable them to share experiences. Supervision also plays an important role with safeguarding families and volunteers.

Parent Mentors are also invited to two social events a year, through which we are able to highlight the difference they are making and thank them for their support.

Our Counselling Service

The Parenting Project counselling service is an organisational member of the BACP

Overview of the Service and Delivery

The Parenting Project Counselling Service predominantly works with adults aged 18+. We have been providing a small Child and Young Person Counselling Service (11-18 year olds) in targeted areas linked to specific projects.

Service delivery has been impacted in the final quarter of the reporting period due to financial constraints experienced by the Charity.

Therapeutic Context

We provide a safe, highly ethical and confidential service to parents/carers of children, from pregnancy through to 19 (25 SEND). We offer up to 18 weekly sessions using either Person Centred or Integrative counselling/psychotherapy.

Our service considers Trauma informed approaches in our therapeutic relationships and reflects on the ACES (adverse childhood experiences) when working with adults in counselling.

We work with clients experiencing different and varied issues, these can be multiple and complex. Studies show childhood experiences can have a profound effect on our adult well-being, both physical and psychological. As a result of these studies, and our own emerging data, we remain aware of the impact of adversity in childhood and work with parents to achieve better outcomes, not only for themselves but also their children. By holding the sentiment '*It is not what is wrong with you, but what has happened to you*' at the core of our work we learn that being 'Trauma informed' in our relationship with clients can facilitate better outcomes and help avoid the stigma which often comes when experiencing mental health problems.

As a service we believe that the client is the expert in their own world, as such we do not have counsellors that specialise in particular areas or presenting issues. We prize the notion that a client can explore and work through their experiences, from their own perspective, drawing upon their own resources without the need for an external expert. As a service we find that when thoughts and realisations come from *within* this can allow for shifts and change.

Our counsellors are trained to facilitate the 'making sense' of thoughts, feelings and emotions and to support people to manage the external influences upon them. This enables individuals to grow their awareness and build their internal resources to improve confidence, self-esteem and emotional resilience. This awareness promotes an ability to make choices and therefore there is the potential for change. The experience of counselling can promote autonomy, agency and self-power which become internal resources integrated into our way of being; these shifts and changes are lasting.

The therapeutic relationship facilitates, and allows for, the experiencing of self and the other in a way that is accepted, valued and met with empathy. This relationship is one of depth, equality, compassion and acceptance; which can be unfamiliar to some. Being able to build awareness of self within the therapeutic relationship allows for this to be

translated to relationships outside the therapy room. In an empathic environment, where *it is ok not to be ok*, we can begin to connect to, acknowledge, accept and value our emotions and support ourselves to develop self-regulation and self-soothing abilities. When this is not facilitated we can internalise our emotions, creating internal struggles and conflicts, which can lead to such coping mechanisms as self-harm or risky behaviours. If we are able to access a place where we can express our fears, hopes and struggles, and that these are accepted, then emotional resilience can grow.

Adult Service

As a service we offer face to face, telephone and online counselling. The remote service was initially created as a response to the pandemic when we were required to close our face to face service. Feedback from clients highlighted how valuable the remote service had been to them, for some people this way of delivery had allowed them to access a service that they would not have been able to access previously. Re-building the face to face service took considerable time, with careful planning and preparation to ensure ethical working. During this reporting year we were able to grow this service to deliver face to face sessions in 10 Children and Family centres across Warwickshire.

Over this reporting period we continued to observe a rise in referrals and a higher demand for the service along with a growing level, and complexity, of need for clients. Complexity is seen within clients' stories, life experiences, presenting issues and identified risk. The number of referrals from statutory services has increased during this time due to statutory services being overwhelmed and their restricted service thresholds. There continues to be a significant change in the landscape; previously we worked predominantly within early intervention, we now find ourselves working at crisis level as the impact on society, and the ever increasing demand on services, intensifies and influences the level of support needed. Over this reporting period 42% of clients who attended an assessment were identified as experiencing current or historical risk. This was in the form of self-harm, suicidal ideation and attempts on life. 25% of clients disclosed during assessment they had experienced childhood trauma in the form of abuse and/or neglect.

The growing complexity and need within society is being reflected in the increasing number of safeguarding discussions and referrals that we notice in our service. This in turn leads to a greater level of support needed by counsellors and the staff team. The average number of sessions that clients are accessing has generally increased over the past few years to 14 sessions. This increase could be due to a number of reasons including; the complexity of need for clients; the ease of remote counselling sessions and the added impact of the pandemic and other world events.

As mentioned above the level and complexity of need, both on a societal and individual level, is demonstrated in a higher demand for the service and an increase in the number of

sessions accessed compared to previous years. This has put a considerable strain on our capacity and waiting lists and we made the difficult decision to close our referrals on two separate occasions over the past year to support us in alleviating our waiting lists. This decision was not made lightly; finding the balance between offering a service to those in need, managing expectations, ensuring ethical working and waiting times, and meeting funders requirements is a delicate balancing act. Through discussion with other agencies and organisations this seems to be reflected across the county and highlights the level of need within the community.

The counselling service is predominantly a placement agency in which students who are in training join our counselling team to obtain their placement hours and to bring theory into practice. As a placement agency we value the importance of building relationships with the students. We pride ourselves in taking time to work alongside the student, to provide the structure around them and to support them whilst they navigate their training and placement requirements. This in turn ensures that they have an ethical safe space within which to meet their clients and a rich environment to become autonomous practitioners. We facilitate regular team meetings for counsellors which provide a space for reflection, exploration and sharing of experience. Students benefit from 1:1 Placement Check ins with members of the counselling staff team, who are qualified counsellors. The support provided to students is both practical administration and therapeutic. This holding of the process is respected by the training organisations and we have received valuable feedback from students about their time on placement and the student experience.

Placement Student Feedback

'THANK YOU to everyone involved. I feel you have given me a fantastic entry into life as a psychotherapist, it allowed me to take my theory into practice and explore my own process as a therapist. [I've learnt] The importance of process, patience, curiosity, care and consideration. I felt the placement went above and beyond what was expected from a placement and demonstrated to me that they held my best interests along with those of the clients and the system. I feel the care, consideration, flexibility, availability and experience of the mentoring and mentors was exceptional. The carefully considered systems and boundaries, which held me and the clients safely, allowed me to feel safe enough to practice as a novice and develop my practical skills and personal therapeutic style'

We have good links and relationships with Universities and course providers which is important to ensure that we remain up to date with ever changing course expectations and requirements and to reflect back to trainers. Attending student placement fairs provides a great opportunity for us to meet with those on training and to share the values and ethos of our service. Recruitment of students is a cyclical and ongoing process. Due to the uncertainty around the future of the Charity, we postponed our February intake of new students.

Alongside our student counsellors we sourced some limited funding which enabled us to continue our associate model, which was piloted in the previous year. Associate counsellors are qualified and therefore have more experience to work with clients that may have complexity within their experiences and/or present with risk. The associate counsellors are previous students who were on placement with us during their training. We would like to continue to grow this model to support counsellors as they transition from trainee to qualified therapist. Being able to offer such a service puts Parenting Project in good stead with other organisations and means we are able to support and add to the counselling and psychotherapy profession as a whole.

The associate model has been vital in supporting us to deliver counselling in response to the increasing challenges of need and complexity that we may not otherwise have been able to meet. We rely on future funding to continue to support this model so that we are not forced to re-evaluate our criteria for accessing the service, in turn not meeting the needs of clients who have already been refused by statutory services.

Child and Young Person Service

Over the past year we have continued to provide one to one remote counselling for school aged children between 11-18 years old who are deemed to be Gillick Competent. Children and young people were offered up to 12 sessions of counselling, with a qualified counsellor who had gone on to complete further training in child and young person counselling. Towards the end of the reporting year we gradually closed the Child and Young Person service as the funding we received to support this work had ended by March 2023.

Our values, ethos and therapeutic intention comes from the same place no matter the age of the client. We hold in mind that the adult we are working with was once a child bringing with them all that has gone before and all their experiences of life. In a similar vein we approach the child in a way that values and honours the adult they are to become; in essence we hold both the adult and child services within the same therapeutic framework.

Adult Service

Referrals and Assessments Overview

We have received 449 referrals into our service over the year and have completed 179 client assessments. 247 people have accessed a course of counselling with us.

As mentioned above, referrals were paused on two occasions in 2022 and the number of assessments completed was reduced in order to alleviate our waiting lists and to support capacity within the service.

Referrals and assessments were paused from 7th February 2023 onwards in order to plan ethical endings due to the potential funding constraints within the Charity.

As we collate data at different stages, and individual clients can transcend across reporting periods, it can be challenging to pinpoint exactly how many people we have processed within the year. From referral to completing counselling, clients can be in the service for 6 months.

We use an encrypted online platform, Sgioba, to generate appointments and assessments for clients. Referrals are made to us through the system by using the counselling service's online referral link. The system uses email as the preferred method of communication however we still offer text and phone calls should this be stipulated in the referral. Not all referrals result in counselling. This can be for various reasons, for example a change of mind or circumstances and childcare issues can create barriers to access. One way of attempting to address these barriers has been to offer more appointments, in turn reaching more parents who may have restricted availability or childcare issues.

Sometimes the act of making a referral is *enough* for a client at that moment in time, through experience we have seen that if a client is held by the service through the referral process this can give confidence to engage when the time is right. On occasion, the opportunity to attend an in depth assessment, with a counsellor who is trained to listen, can be all that is needed. For others the chance to attend up to 18 sessions of therapy feels essential.

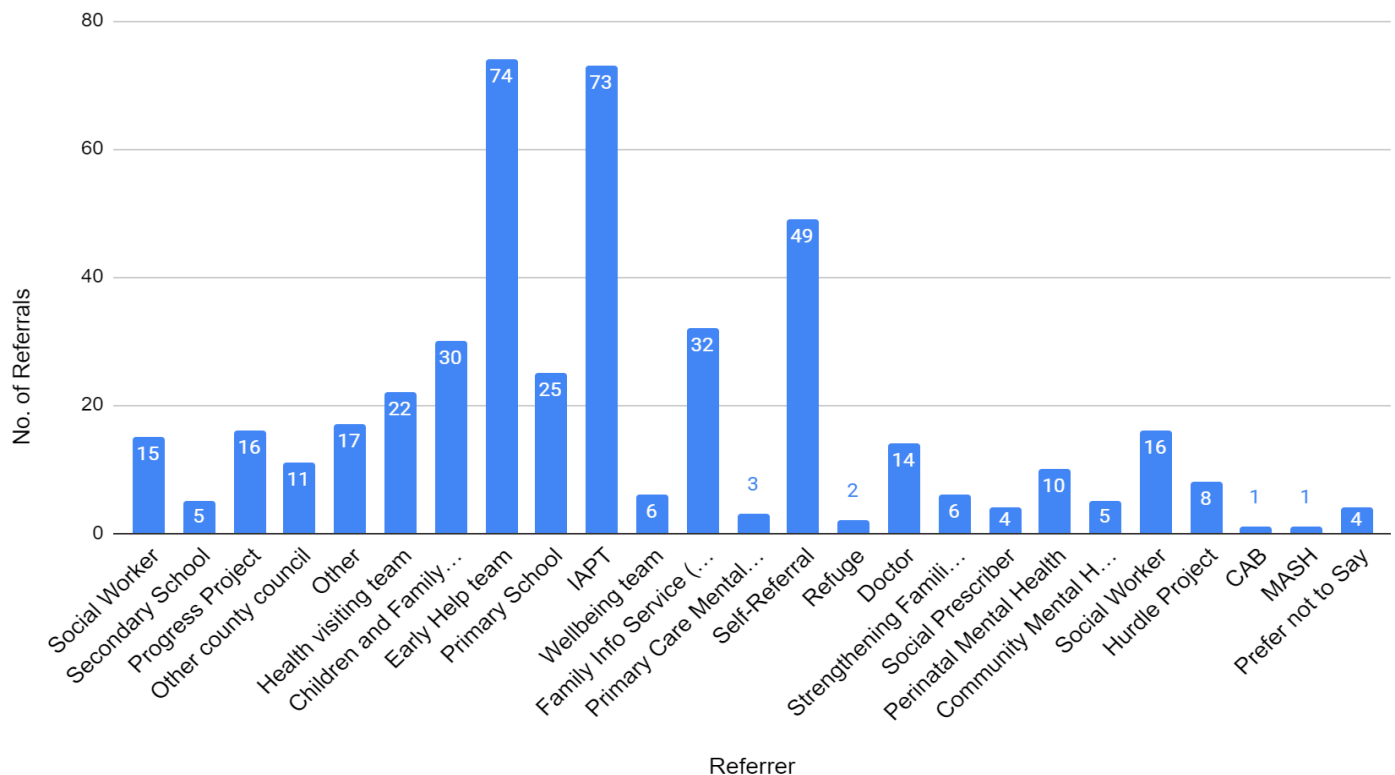
Data is taken at each point of contact with clients. This gives us a clear picture of who is referring in to the service, the type of issues people are seeking help for and other pertinent information which is useful to report on. We also collate data during therapy and at the last session to evaluate the service.

Referrers and Reasons for Referrals

The counselling service is well known to local services; it has a good reputation that has allowed for relationships to develop with *regular referrers*. This in turn helps us effectively meet the needs of parents who do not meet statutory services criteria, such as IAPT, where difficulties may be rooted in childhood trauma or relational issues. A high proportion of referrals into our service come from statutory services predominantly the Early Help Team.

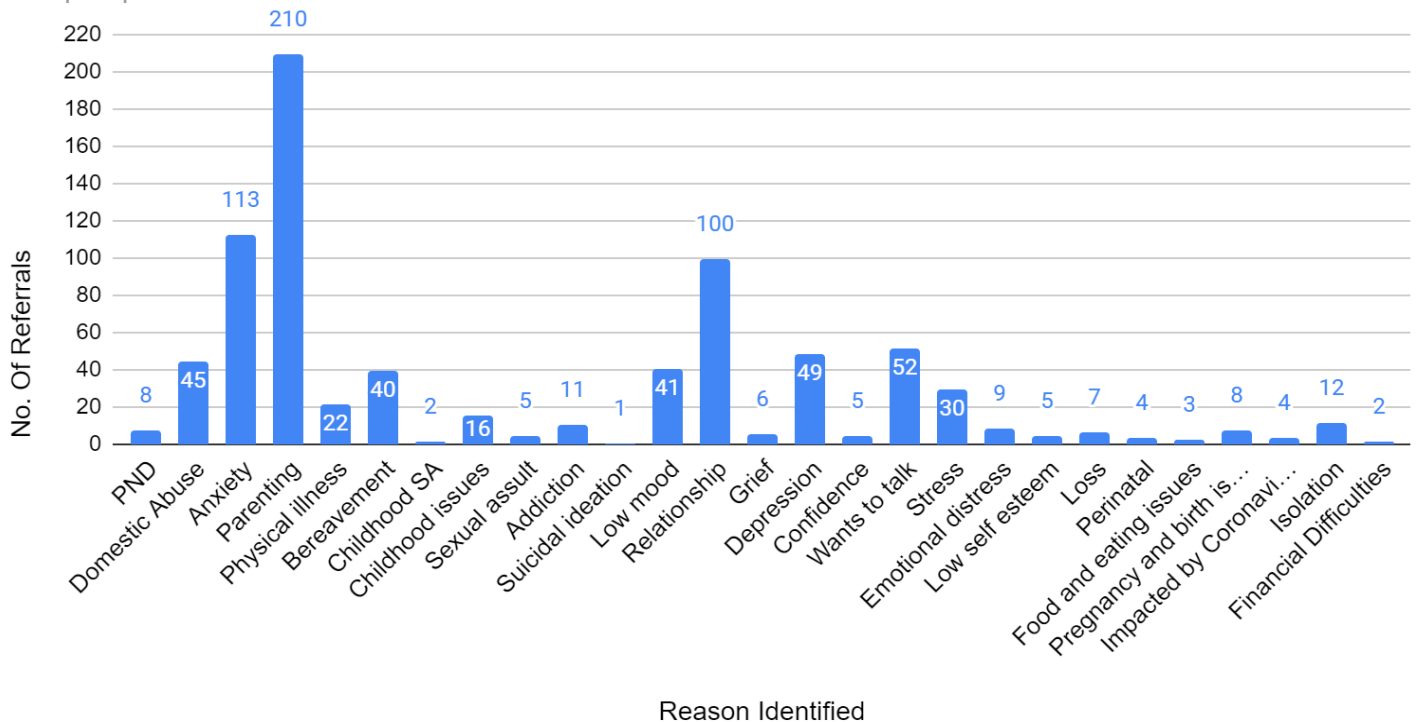
The following graph shows the referrers we have noted over this past year;
Reasons for referrals for 449 clients referred during this reporting period;

Referrers; 449 Referrals



Reason For Referral

Multiple options can be selected



Statistics

Gender

Of the 449 referrals we received over the reporting year we note approximately 82% of referrals identified as female and 18% as male. We notice an increase in males accessing the service from previous years.

	Number of referrals
Male	83
Female	366

Ethnicity

Of the 449 referrals we received over the reporting year we observe that a high percentage were White British.

	Number of Referrals
White	409
Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi	1
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	3
Asian or Asian British - Indian	4
Black or Black British - Caribbean	7
Black or Black British - African	4
Mixed - White and Black Caribbean	3
Mixed - White and Asian	4
Chinese	2
Gypsy or Traveller	1
Other White background	4
Other Asian background	3
Other mixed background	1
Other ethnic background	3

Assessment data

Of the 179 clients were assessed over the past year and shared their sexuality, the following was identified during the assessment

Sexuality

	Number of Clients
Heterosexual	168
Bisexual	5
Gay	1
Lesbian	1
Prefer not to say	4

Risk

75 clients (42%) shared either current or historical risk. Risk can be identified through discussion and exploration within assessment. Risk encompasses current self-harm, current suicidal ideation, previous attempts on life, previous suicidal ideation or previous self-harm.

Trauma, abuse and neglect and its impact on the next generation

As an organisation that is trauma informed, we look to make sense of distress and suffering by paying attention to intergenerational and social contexts. This is in line with current research which aligns with the social model of mental health rather than the medical one. In essence, this allows us to think about what has happened to a person and then how they have gone on to develop, the coping strategies they have put in place, the relationships they form and how this may influence their parenting. We think about their life stress and how this has impacted them.

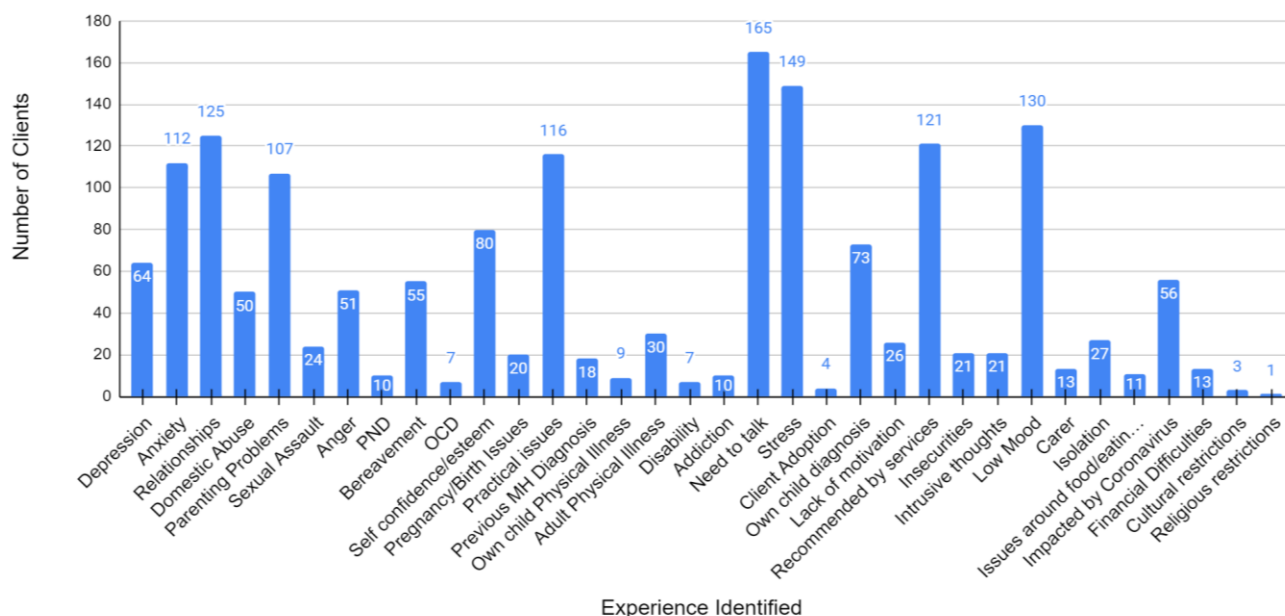
45 clients who were assessed disclosed during their assessment that they had experienced trauma, abuse or neglect in their own childhood. This was in the form of physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect, or a combination of experiences.

Life Experiences of Clients

Whilst clients may refer for a specific issue, through our assessment process we actually see that clients' distress and experience is multi-layered, complex and often intergenerational

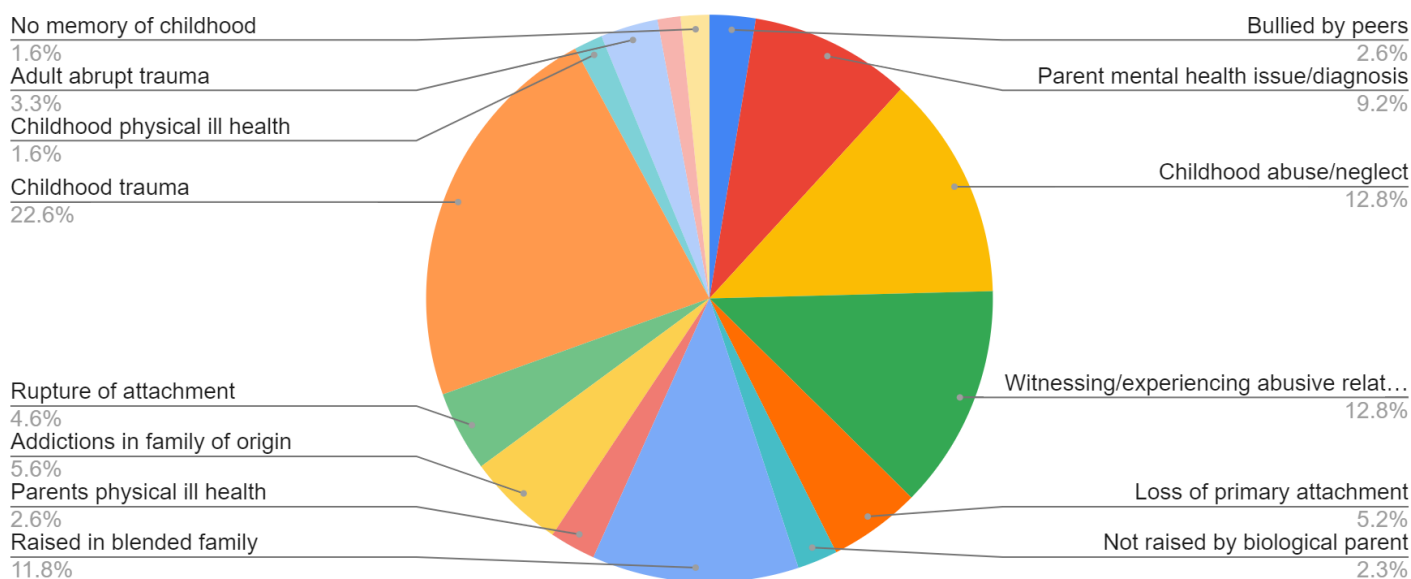
Experiences present in assessment

Multiple experiences can be identified



Life Experiences of Clients

179 Assessed Clients

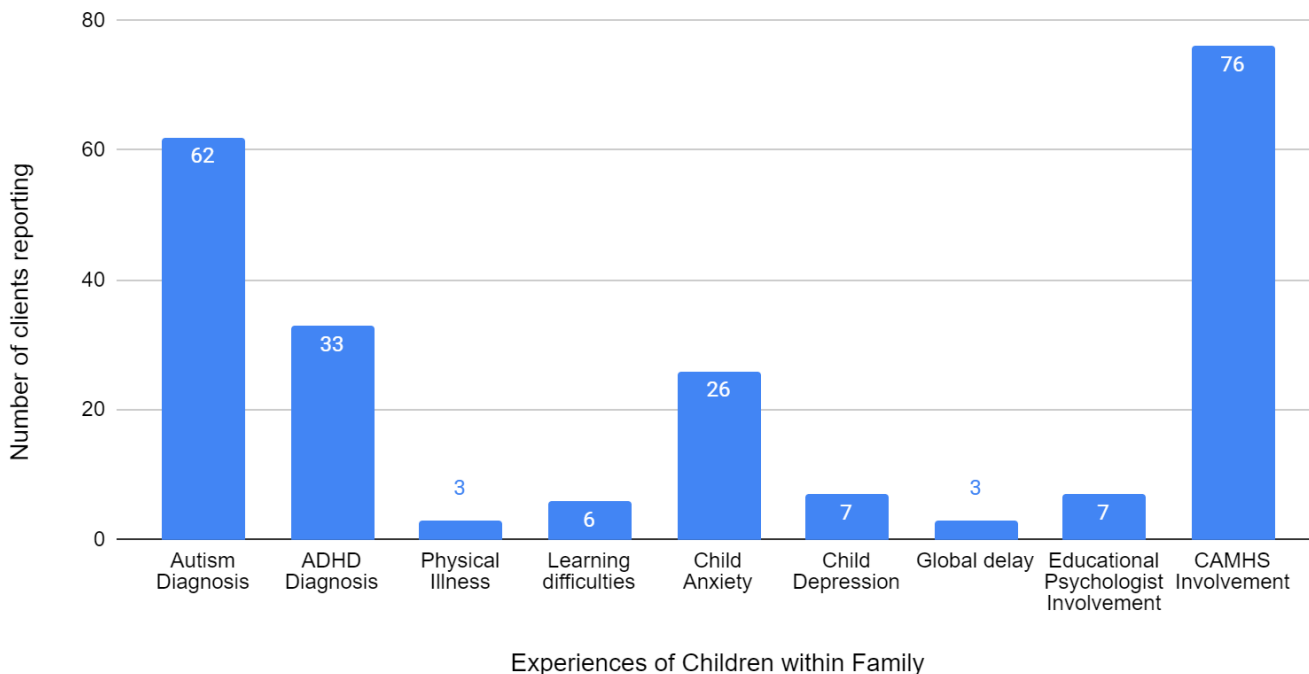


During an assessment clients are invited to talk about their own children; 66% of assessed clients shared that their own child/ren experienced mental health difficulties.

76 clients shared that Children and Mental Health Services were supporting their famili

Experiences of Children

As shared by 179 Clients



Client Outcomes

We use the Core-34 outcome measures to evaluate the service. This allows us to measure a client's Functioning, Problems, Wellbeing and Risk at various stages throughout their counselling. The questionnaire stipulates the client reflects on how they have been over the last week rather than over a wider time frame. The aim is to achieve a lower score over the duration of the counselling, this would indicate an improvement to overall mental health.

Over this year 85% of clients showed an improvement in their scores at the end of therapy. It is important to remember that different clients will react and behave differently to the questions on the form. Some may feel overwhelmed and this may signify a higher score. Others may internalise emotions and therefore minimise their needs. Others may, through the process of counselling, have a greater awareness of their emotions that may not have been present at the beginning of counselling. Counselling can also raise issues, so it is not uncommon for clients to experience more unrest whilst they go through this process. Clients are able to refer back into the service should they feel more sessions would be of benefit.

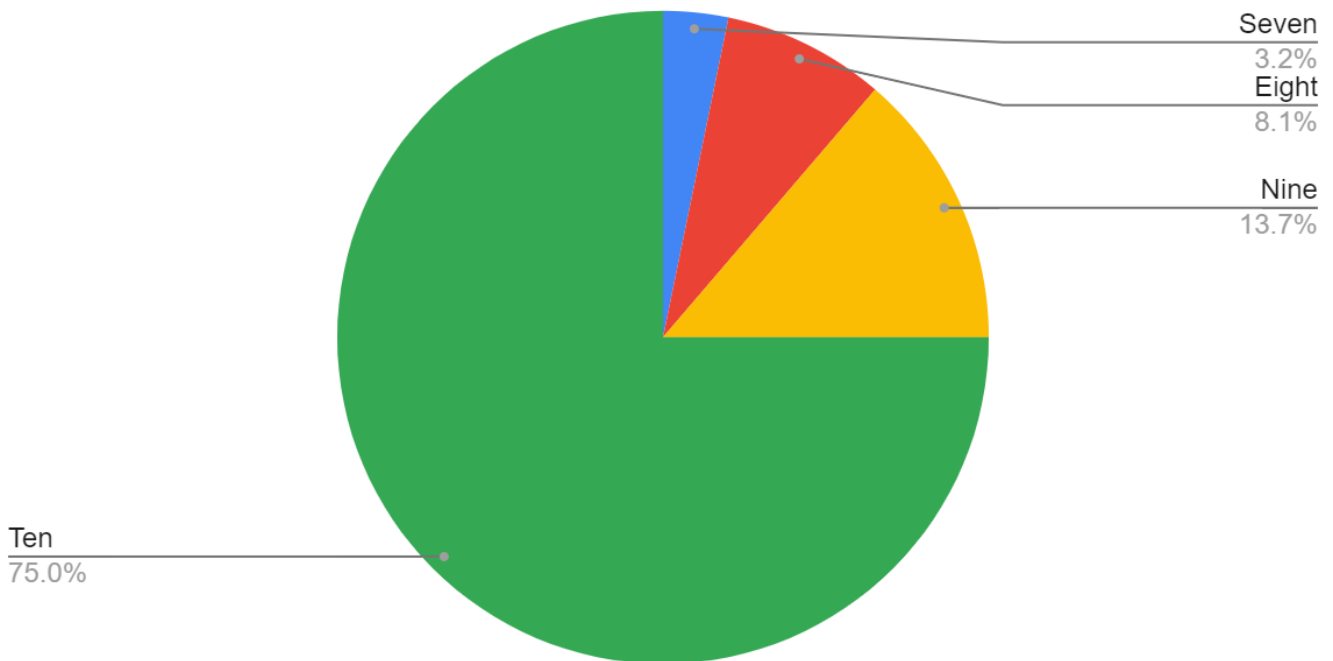
Client Feedback

Clients can comment on the counselling they have received. This enables us to evaluate the service and make improvements along the way. It is also helpful to see how the service helps those who access it.

For those that gave feedback the following chart shows how clients rated their overall experience of the service;

Client Satisfaction rating for service

Scale of 1-10; 10 being most helpful



Through an evaluation form clients can share how counselling has helped them. The below list gives an example of the areas in which clients felt they had experienced change due to their counselling experience;

Helped me to make personal changes

Better relationships

Helped me to be more confident

See abusive behaviours in others

Had a positive effect on my parenting

Helped me to understand myself

Been a positive experience

Helped me to understand my child better

Helped me to understand my own childhood better

Helped me to have better relationships

Helped me to consider work and education for my future

Comments from Clients

Whilst we acknowledge the usefulness of such wellbeing measures as the CORE-34 form, as a service we value the voices of clients in order to really hear their experience of counselling and the impact that this has had on their lives.

*[Counselling has] Taught me not to blame myself for previous experiences
Counselling has helped me feel not alone.*

I feel incredibly privileged to have been given 18 sessions and I feel that this length of time has allowed me to really explore where I was stuck and how I could move forward.

My counsellor has been patient

[Counselling] has really helped me through a very difficult and traumatic period in my life. It has helped me make better decisions

I have found the counselling extremely helpful. I have had a very traumatic experience over the last 2 years because of my son's self-harming. Counselling has helped me process bad memories and come to terms with them so that they no longer keep on re-surfacing. I feel much more positive about my parenting and the future.

*Has helped highlight changes to my life and realise what I need to do for myself
Great to have the opportunity to talk to someone when struggling. Great to have this service available to access. This has been a very positive experience and has helped me move forward in my life.*

I found counselling scary at the beginning but this was only for the first few minutes then I noticed after meeting my counsellor I felt comfortable enough to explore my thoughts and feelings. I noticed that what I was holding onto from the past was impacting on my parenting and feel that having a place to process these feelings enabled me to move forward.

I didn't know what to expect as I had never done counselling before and felt very apprehensive. I worried what people would think of me needing counselling but realise now that it isn't just for people with serious mental health problems and would encourage anyone to go to counselling if they are struggling. I notice that my whole outlook has changed.

Helped me have a safe space to think.

I am so thankful to have had this service. I would not have achieved and grown so much without it. Thank you so much.

I have had counselling before and maybe due to cultural difficulties it didn't work for me previously. This counselling was different and I found a very strong connection with my counsellor which has supported me and enabled me to explore some difficult issues.

It was so much better than NHS IAPT. I felt there was no "agenda" or targets it was just about me and positive outcomes.

Let me hear my own voice.

Child and Young Person Counselling Service

Referrals have been made through specific projects such as the Progress Programme, the Men and Boys Project in Bedworth and a high school in Warwickshire through our Children In Need funding.

We have received 13 referrals into our Child and Young people's (CYP) Counselling Service this year. We have received referrals from 8 males and 5 females.

13 assessments were completed and 15 clients accessed a course of counselling with us.

At the beginning, mid-point and end of counselling children and young people complete a Core-10 Outcomes Measures questionnaire which enables us to monitor their progression with respect to; Subjective Wellbeing, Problems/Symptoms, Life Functioning and Risk/harm.

82% of clients showed improvement in their overall wellbeing by the end of their counselling.

To promote autonomy in the children we work with, we ask them to reflect on their sessions periodically to ensure they are finding them helpful and to share feedback. See below some comments from clients;

At times it was a difficult experience but it was worth it to come out happier and better end goals

It has helped me improve how I communicate my feelings to my parents.

I feel more confident to challenge myself and am very pleased when I overcome my fears

I feel better

Quite a good experience, had good conversations. I don't think I'd have made links on my own

Counselling has been helpful in letting it out

I feel like counselling has showed me the broader view on the situation I'm in and where to start on getting myself out of it and in a better situation mentally and physically

Counselling has helped me in more ways I could ever have imagined. I am very grateful the opportunity was given to me.

Reflections

Being reflexive in our way of leading the service has allowed us to adjust to the changing landscape within society, the Charity and within the service itself. We have faced periods of both challenge and growth over the past few years; this year we have been met with an ever increasing strain on our capacity, as a response to societal constraints, and towards the end of this reporting year the funding issues within the organisation. The service has experienced growth, a pause, strain, uncertainty and endings. Being able to turn to the values, principles and ethos embedded within the service has ensured a safe and ethical service to continue. Staying grounded and safe helped us to remain observant, and responsive, to the changing needs of the service, whilst continually holding the best interests of clients, counsellors and the whole service at the core of what we do. We feel incredibly proud of what we have been able to achieve over the past year.

We are anticipating, and concerned for, how the continual increase in demand on services, charities and organisations will be impacted by the effects and aftermath of the cost of living crisis. The BACP completed a member survey (September, 2022) and found that 60% of private therapists were seeing clients cutting back on therapy sessions due to money concerns and 47% reported clients pausing or cancelling sessions as they could no longer afford them (Cost of Living Crisis: Survey shows impact on mental health, BACP, September 2022). This is of concern for us as a third sector counselling service; if people can no longer afford private therapy and NHS waitlists for mental health care are increasing exponentially, with narrow thresholds for criteria for support, then the impact on charities and individuals could be overwhelming. The level of need possibly outweighing service provision.

Our data shows that 66% of clients who were assessed shared that their own children were struggling. It was reported in the Guardian earlier this year that NHS treatment referral figures show that 'the number of children in England needing treatment for serious mental health problems has risen by 39% in a year' (Andrew Gregory, *Guardian*, 3rd January 23). Within this article Dr. Lockhart (Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist at the Royal College of Psychiatrists) shared that part of this increase is due to the impacts of the pandemic "children themselves feeling very untethered from the day-to-day life that supports them... but also seeing their own parents struggle, and then that collective heightened sense of anxiety and loss of control we all had really affected children." We would suggest that this not only relates to recent world events, such as the pandemic

and the war in Ukraine, but also to children's lives and experiences as a whole. The impact of children witnessing parental distress is reflected in the intergenerational patterns we see in our service every day.

We are thankful to our funders who have supported us in being able to offer this service within the community. There are many people that have had the opportunity to be heard; their comments and feedback are powerful indicators of the impact that this service has had on both theirs and their children's lives. Thank you.

Structure, Governance and Management

Statement of Trustee's Responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Annual Accounts in accordance with applicable law and regulations. The trustees are also Directors of the Parenting Project for the purpose of company law. Under that law the trustees have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the UK generally accepted accounting practice (UK Accounting Standards and applicable law). Under company law the trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and of the profit or loss of the company for that period.

In preparing the financial statements, the directors were required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- Make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time, the financial position of the company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. The trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statements of Recommended Practice (SORP).

Statement as to Disclosure of Information to Auditors

So far as the trustees are aware, there is no relevant audit information (as defined by section 418 of the 2006 Companies Act) of which the company's auditors are unaware, and each trustee has taken all the steps that he or she ought to have taken as a trustee in order to make himself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditors are aware of that information. Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements that give a true and fair view of the state of

affairs of the charity at the end of the financial year and of its surplus or deficit for the financial year.

How we are Organised

The Parenting Project recognises that in order to deliver its strategic aims, objectives and priorities successfully, it needs sound corporate governance arrangements in place. Our Governance Handbook sets out the roles, responsibilities and procedures for the effective and efficient conduct of its business. It also provides new trustees with a handbook of good governance structures and practice.

Legal Status

The Parenting Project is a Private Limited Liability Company, also known as an Unincorporated Association, which is registered with Companies House and The Charity Commission. The Parenting Project is governed by a Board of Trustees and supported by sub-committees if considered appropriate.

The Parenting Project governing documents are:

- Memorandum of Association
- Articles of Association

The Articles of Association specify that the board is comprised of not less than five, but not limited. New trustees are appointed by the board from a wide range of backgrounds to bring balance and expertise to the Parenting Project. The board consists of a chair, deputy chair and trustees who are responsible for its governance and strategy. The day to day management and operation of the Parenting Project is designated to the Chief Officer.

Management and Governance

The Parenting Project operates under the Good Governance Code for the voluntary and community sector. The code clarifies the roles and responsibilities of the trustees and provides guidance in ensuring effective decision-making and accountability. The code is not mandatory but the Parenting Project is making a clear statement about our commitment to high standards of governance by operating within the code.

We currently have 6 trustees. As part of our commitment to effective governance we have improved the accountability between the Children's Centre Advisory Board and the Board of Trustees by ensuring a trustee attends each Advisory Board meeting when possible. We also continue to audit our governance functions to ensure continual improvement.

The board meets formally at least four times a year and, in addition, hosts an Annual General Meeting to discuss publicly the previous year's performance and look ahead to

future priorities. The board has a schedule of business which details the essential business items which trustees are required to consider throughout the year.

Safeguarding Children

We continue to set safeguarding as a priority for the Parenting Project. We have a clear structure of responsibility for keeping children safe with a minimum of 6 fully trained Designated Safeguarding Leads who are responsible for all aspects of our Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

Our Safeguarding Policy is thoroughly reviewed annually to bring it in line with the most recent government guidelines included in the document 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'. (HM Government, 2015) and the new Warwickshire Integrated Front Door, which replaced Safeguarding Children Board new Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) in September 2022.

We are confident in our ability to safeguard children and adhere to all legal requirements in this regard. In addition, and equally important, we continue to foster a strong safeguarding culture based on effective communication, inquiry, regular training inspiring confidence in our team and a focus on the wellbeing of children.

Plans for Future Periods

Our single goal for the next 2 years is to continue to do everything we can to secure the future of the charity by ensuring we are not only solvent but we can begin to replace our reserves and recover fully from the financial impact of Covid, the cost of living crisis and the reduction in available grants. Diversifying our income streams has always been a priority for us but it has become urgent this year. We need to continue to save lives – the lives of parents and therefore, the lives of their children.

Financial Review

Analysis of Results for the Year

As our Chair stated in her address, this has been our most challenging year to date. In the last half of this financial year we were facing the predicted reality of a depleted income, which reflects the current state of the charity sector, particularly for medium sized organisations like ourselves. In a survey in May this year (Markel UK, 2023) it was found that 24.5% of charities said they were not confident in their organisation's financial health for the forthcoming year. Two thirds of charities said they had seen a drop in revenue over the last 12 months. The factor we are most aware of is that we are 95% dependent upon grants, most of which are for 12 months only. This does not enable us to plan effectively for the growth and development of our services, which are relied upon by statutory services, who make 87% of our referrals. We are working hard to change our situation but our future is still at risk as we write this report. We continue to aim to diversify our funding streams by applying for potential contracts, secure donations, continue to increase partnership work and progress our CIC The Growth Pool.

Thank You to our Funders this Year

FAMILY WELLBEING PROGRAMME	DONATIONS
Thomas Oken & Nicholas Eyfler Trust	Robert Waley-Cohen
Stratford Town Trust	
Leamington Town Council	
Dudley Lodge	
CWCDA Accelerate	
L&Q Placemakers Fund	
PARENT MENTORING PROGRAMME	
Municipal	
WCC Carers	
Heart of England Grant	
WPH	
Kenilworth Town Council	
MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMME	
Kenilworth Town Council	
Nuneaton & Bedford CC Funded by Barnardos	
King Henry V111 Fund Warwick	
Warwickshire PCC	
BBC Children in Need	
Warwickshire Police Crime Commissioner MOJ Fund	
National Lottery Reaching Communities Fund	
Progress Groundwork Programme	
Warwickshire County Councils Grants	

Our total income for this year amounted to £420,890 and our total expenditure was £567,106.

Reserves Policy

The Parenting Project is keenly aware of the need to secure its viability beyond the immediate future. To provide reliable services over the longer term, the project must be able to absorb setbacks and to take advantage of change and opportunity. The Parenting Project aims to provide for this by putting aside, when it can afford it, some unrestricted income as a reserve against future uncertainties. Should one of the Parenting Project funding streams be withdrawn, the Parenting Project would need to find alternative methods of funding, preferably without depleting existing unrestricted reserves. However, reserves are required in case this cannot happen.

The trustees have examined the company's requirements for reserves. It is acknowledged that the reserves of the charity have become depleted for the reasons outlined by the Chair. As outlined above, the Trustees recognise that it is prudent to

ensure that there are sufficient reserves to provide financial flexibility in the case of external challenges. The trustees therefore consider that the ideal level of reserves, as at March 31st 2023, would be £150,000 representing 6 months core expenditure. However, like many charities we have been unable to achieve this level of reserves this year. As stated above, it is our aim to replenish our reserves in the medium term.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice:

Accounting and Reporting by Charities (issued in March 2005) and in accordance with the special provisions of Part VII of the Companies Act 1985 relating to small entities.

Approved by the Management Committee on 25th October 2023 and signed on its behalf by:

Jane Williams

Chair of Trustees

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE PARENTING PROJECT

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Parenting Project (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Statement of Financial Position, the Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland'.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland'; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our Report of the Independent Auditors thereon.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Report of the Trustees for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Report of the Trustees has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE PARENTING PROJECT

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Report of the Trustees.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to take advantage of the small companies exemption from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report or in preparing the Report of the Trustees.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a Report of the Independent Auditors that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Report of the Independent Auditors.

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE PARENTING PROJECT

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

David Cooper FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Cooper Adams Ltd
Chartered Accountants
and Statutory Auditors
12 Payton Street
Stratford upon Avon
Warwickshire
CV37 6UA

25 October 2023

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted fund £	2023 Total funds £	2022 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	2	6,442	414,392	420,834	432,940
Investment income	3	56	-	56	6
Total		<u>6,498</u>	<u>414,392</u>	<u>420,890</u>	<u>432,946</u>
EXPENDITURE ON					
Charitable activities	4				
Provision of services		72,791	486,030	558,821	409,330
Support costs		8,285	-	8,285	7,134
Total		<u>81,076</u>	<u>486,030</u>	<u>567,106</u>	<u>416,464</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		(74,578)	(71,638)	(146,216)	16,482
Transfers between funds	12	<u>(5,730)</u>	<u>5,730</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net movement in funds		(80,308)	(65,908)	(146,216)	16,482
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		80,553	99,434	179,987	163,505
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u><u>245</u></u>	<u><u>33,526</u></u>	<u><u>33,771</u></u>	<u><u>179,987</u></u>

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
31 March 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted fund £	2023 Total funds £	2022 Total funds £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	9	2,985	-	2,985	7,487
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	10	-	11,594	11,594	70
Cash at bank and in hand		10,993	29,444	40,437	189,315
		<u>10,993</u>	<u>41,038</u>	<u>52,031</u>	<u>189,385</u>
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	11	(13,733)	(7,512)	(21,245)	(16,885)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>(2,740)</u>	<u>33,526</u>	<u>30,786</u>	<u>172,500</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		245	33,526	33,771	179,987
NET ASSETS		<u>245</u>	<u>33,526</u>	<u>33,771</u>	<u>179,987</u>
FUNDS	12				
Unrestricted funds				245	80,553
Restricted funds				<u>33,526</u>	<u>99,434</u>
TOTAL FUNDS				<u>33,771</u>	<u>179,987</u>

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 25 October 2023 and were signed on its behalf by:

J M L Williams - Trustee

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Cash generated from operations	1	(148,256)	34,746
Net cash (used in)/provided by operating activities		<u>(148,256)</u>	<u>34,746</u>
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(678)	(7,600)
Interest received		56	6
Net cash used in investing activities		<u>(622)</u>	<u>(7,594)</u>
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		<u>(148,878)</u>	<u>27,152</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		<u>189,315</u>	<u>162,163</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period		<u><u>40,437</u></u>	<u><u>189,315</u></u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

NOTES TO THE STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

1. RECONCILIATION OF NET (EXPENDITURE)/INCOME TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	2023 £	2022 £
Net (expenditure)/income for the reporting period (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)	(146,216)	16,482
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	5,180	4,954
Interest received	(56)	(6)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(11,524)	21,196
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	4,360	(7,880)
Net cash (used in)/provided by operations	<u>(148,256)</u>	<u>34,746</u>

2. ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET FUNDS

	At 1.4.22 £	Cash flow £	At 31.3.23 £
Net cash			
Cash at bank and in hand	189,315	(148,878)	40,437
	<u>189,315</u>	<u>(148,878)</u>	<u>40,437</u>
Total	<u>189,315</u>	<u>(148,878)</u>	<u>40,437</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Computer equipment - 33% on reducing balance

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charitable company's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	2023	2022
	£	£
Donations	63,942	54,560
Grants	270,321	335,095
Lottery Reaching Communities	86,571	43,285
	<u>420,834</u>	<u>432,940</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

3. INVESTMENT INCOME

	2023	2022
	£	£
Deposit account interest	56	6
	<u>56</u>	<u>6</u>

4. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

Provision of Services

	2023	2022
	£	£
Staff salaries	397,549	306,727
Social security	23,853	19,899
Pensions	19,847	15,419
Costs of volunteers	868	800
Activities costs	2,991	1,214
Activities equipment and resources	3,009	1,449
Cleaning	1,957	2,678
Travelling and subsistence	6,848	1,301
Employee expenses	573	652
Staff training	6,502	1,868
Publicity	1,702	5,987
Insurance	2,893	3,058
Postage and delivery	55	381
Printing and stationery	2,021	2,607
Rent	9,956	7,892
Telephone and internet	4,737	7,084
Computer and software expenses	4,792	6,255
Bank charges	152	125
Depreciation of computer equipment	5,180	4,954
	<u>495,485</u>	<u>390,350</u>

5. SUPPORT COSTS

	2023	2022
	£	£
Trustees' expenses	-	53
Professional fees	5,855	4,801
Auditors' remuneration	2,430	2,280
	<u>8,285</u>	<u>7,134</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

6. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

	2023 £	2022 £
Depreciation - owned assets	5,180	4,951
Fees payable to auditor for:		
- audit	2,430	2,280
- other services	2,430	2,280
	<u>2,430</u>	<u>2,280</u>

7. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2023 nor for the year ended 31 March 2022.

Trustees' expenses

Trustees were reimbursed expenses of £nil (2022: £53).

8. STAFF COSTS

	2023 £	2022 £
Wages and salaries	397,549	306,727
Social security costs	23,853	19,899
Other pension costs	19,847	15,419
	<u>441,249</u>	<u>342,045</u>

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	2023	2022
Employees	<u>19</u>	<u>15</u>

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

9. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Computer equipment £
COST	
At 1 April 2022	14,862
Additions	678
At 31 March 2023	<u>15,540</u>
DEPRECIATION	
At 1 April 2022	7,375
Charge for year	5,180
At 31 March 2023	<u>12,555</u>
NET BOOK VALUE	
At 31 March 2023	<u>2,985</u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>7,487</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

9. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS - continued

10. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2023 £	2022 £
Other debtors	11,594	70

11. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade creditors	3,762	7,851
Social security and other taxes	7,110	2,405
Other creditors	1,763	2,069
Deferred income	3,750	-
Accrued expenses	4,860	4,560
	<u>21,245</u>	<u>16,885</u>

12. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	2022 £	Incoming Resources £	Resources Expended £	Transfers	2023 £
Unrestricted funds					
General funds	80,553	6,498	(81,076)	(5,730)	245
Restricted funds					
Family Wellbeing Programme	15,993	79,282	(84,054)	(8,211)	3,010
Parent Mentoring Programme	724	23,400	(24,124)	-	-
Mental Health Programme	30,779	299,710	(334,800)	16,255	11,944
Trading Arm Development	12,500	12,000	(24,500)	-	-
WCC Dad's Matter Programme	39,438	-	(18,552)	(2,314)	18,572
Total Restricted Funds	<u>99,434</u>	<u>414,392</u>	<u>(486,030)</u>	<u>5,730</u>	<u>33,526</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>179,987</u>	<u>420,890</u>	<u>(567,106)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>33,771</u>

During the year an amount of £30,340 was transferred from restricted funds to the unrestricted general funds. This represents the agreed management fee for the year. Also, an amount of £36,070 was transferred from unrestricted funds to restricted funds, being the rectification of Lottery Reaching Communities funding.

Family Wellbeing Programme

This offers 4 services to beneficiaries. They are able to access one or all of the services to meet their needs. The services are Family Wellbeing Support; Parent Mentoring; Counselling and Therapeutic Group Work.

Parent Mentoring Programme

We provide experienced volunteers who provide informal support and guidance in a non-judgmental way. They can support anyone who has a parental role for 2-3 hours per week for up to 6 months.

Mental Health Programme

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

12. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Addresses the need for therapy, therefore we offer up to 18 sessions of trauma-informed counselling. This helps with many issues, for example stress, family difficulties, childhood trauma, phobias, eating problems, abuse, self-confidence, anger issues, parenting issues. The National Lottery Community Fund – Strengthened Families funding is our main contributor to the cost of our counselling service.

Trading Arm Development

Two years ago we took the step to set up a trading arm of The Parenting Project to generate funds to provide a sustainable income for us and received a grant to employ a Business Development Manager. Consequently, we set up a 'Community Interest Company', The Growth Pool, which was registered with Companies House on 14th April 2022. It began trading in January 2023 providing a programme called 'Well Supported Schools', which provides coaching, family support work, therapeutic group work and child counselling.

WCC Dad's Matter Programme

A national programme, which supports new fathers during the ante-natal and post-natal periods. We received a one year grant, which The Parenting Project administered as we were best placed to apply for the grant as a member of the Dad Matter's consortium in Warwickshire. Members: Barnardos, Home Start South Warwickshire, The Parenting Project and By Your Side.

13. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 March 2023.