

BIRMINGHAM CHILDREN'S TRUST NEWSLETTER

July 2022

Issue #3

GEARING UP FOR THE GAMES

Greetings to Councillors and others reading this, the third newsletter of the Children's Trust.

It is officially summertime, and we are all excited here in the Trust for the start of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, beginning later in July.

The Games are not just about sports, as we have been busy offering life skills activities and legacy events for children and young people as we build up to the main event.

For example, over 30 children and their families attended cooking classes at the Custard Factory in Birmingham, where they learnt about the Caribbean, how to cook recipes from Jamaica and were introduced to recipes from the Commonwealth to try at home.

We are also very proud to announce our very own Bfriends (our charity) co-chair, Abba Loughran, is one of the Commonwealth Games baton bearers.

Abba is pictured above right with 'Perry' the Birmingham 2022 official mascot.



Recruitment update

Birmingham Children's Trust will work with the Library of Birmingham to host an event to raise awareness of Trust recruitment activity.

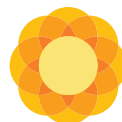
The event will take place on **24 September 2022**.

The outreach event will consist of four large stands, banners, and staff who will engage with the general public.

Staff will also encourage people to sign up to our talent pool, whilst taking details from interested parties.

Andy Couldrick

Chief Executive,
Birmingham Children's Trust.



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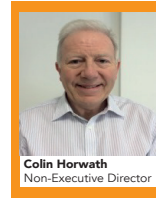
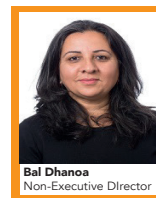
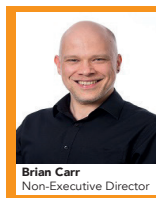
Our senior leadership team welcomes you

Children's Trust Board

Executive management team



Chair and non-executive directors



Company secretary



**BIRMINGHAM
CHILDREN'S TRUST**

Contact our Executive management team

Andy Couldrick - Chief Executive

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ADOPTION & FOSTERING SUMMER 22 UPDATE

TRUST FORMS REGIONAL ADOPTION AGENCY

Birmingham Children's Trust is joining the national Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) Programme.

We are delighted to announce that Birmingham Children's Trust is forming a Regional Adoption Agency (RAA). The Trust, with the full involvement and support of Birmingham City Council, is taking an innovative approach by partnering with a leading Voluntary Adoption Agency, Adoption Focus.

NEW NAME

On 13 June 2022 our Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) board met and approved the name **Adopt Birmingham** for our new regional adoption agency.

We are delighted to share this important milestone in the RAA's development.

The name demonstrates our commitment to the children of Birmingham, our home organisation - Birmingham Children's Trust - and our strong partnership with Birmingham City Council.

We expect to publicly launch the Adopt Birmingham brand in the new year.

In the first year, the Birmingham RAA will focus on increasing:

- the number of local adopters who can provide safe and loving families for Birmingham children.
- the number of children who are able to be placed in fostering for adoption placements, giving them more stability.

Birmingham Children's Trust Chief Executive, Andy Couldrick, said "I am so pleased that we have secured an RAA model that is different, that is innovative, that brings together the Children's Trust and a great VAA partner, Adoption Focus.

"This partnership will enable us to learn, grow and improve together, and to be the best we can be in linking children who need a loving, lifelong family, with families with the love, commitment and skill to offer these children.

Our RAA will be both efficient and effective, building on the considerable experience and complementary strengths of the two organisations."

HELP TO RECRUIT MORE FOSTER CARERS

As is the national picture, there is currently a shortage of foster families to look after the city's most vulnerable children.



Whilst Foster Birmingham has a comprehensive recruitment strategy, including bi-monthly information events both face-to-face and online, Foster Carer Recruitment Ambassadors, a 'Recommend a Friend' scheme, and an integrated advertising schedule to name but a few, we need your help!

Every fostering household recruited makes a real positive difference to the life of a child.

Therefore, we are asking you to please actively promote and support Birmingham Children's Trust's Fostering Agency, **Foster Birmingham** by:

- Positively promoting fostering in your local area via any communications with your constituents eg. newsletters, social media platforms etc. particularly our bi-monthly information events and any specific recruitment activity.
- Giving out Foster Birmingham literature.
- Liaising with the Fostering Marketing Manager about any opportunities for recruiting more foster carers ie. stalls / events in your local area etc. that the service can tap into.

Contact us

For more information on how you can help, and to discuss further, please contact Tracy or Pip.

Tracy Collins, Head of Service (Mainstream Fostering)

☎ 07592 586515

Tracy.Collins@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

Pip Gagliano, Marketing Manager (Fostering)

☎ 07510 369961

Philippa.Gagliano@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

We welcome any ideas you have and look forward to hearing from you!

TRUST STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS

HOWZAT ! - TRUST ASYE CELEBRATIONS

Birmingham Children's Trust hosted a celebration event for its newest social workers for the first time since the pandemic began.

Held at Edgbaston Stadium, over 100 social workers were invited to the event to celebrate their achievements, and to receive their certificates for **completing their assisted and supported year in employment (ASYE)**.

"Every person should be proud of their achievements, especially due to what they have achieved during a pandemic," said Mandy Braham, Team Manager for Fostering in Birmingham Children's Trust.

Adeeba Shah said: "I completed my ASYE in October 2021, starting the programme remotely and meeting my colleagues virtually.

"It has been great to come along to this event and celebrate with everyone face-to-face and also talk to others about my experience."

Sarah Tolan said: "It's nice to be able to celebrate and to see everyone again, I know a lot of people from my University course and it's great to catch up!"

The 12-month ASYE programme develops skills, knowledge and professional confidence to ensure social workers are prepared at the very start of their careers to support children, young people and families.

During the year, social workers have access to regular and focused support from experienced Team Managers.

The Trust's Practice Academy aspires to be the best place to practise social work and associated services with families and to make a real difference in the lives of the city's most vulnerable children.

To find out more about, visit:

www.birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk/practiceacademy



Caption: Celebrating our latest ASYE graduates

ACFP Awards Event Extravaganza

In addition to ASYE celebrations, we have also recognised Trust staff who have completed their Accredited Child and Family Practitioner (ACFP) qualification.

An event was held at Edgbaston Cricket Ground for those who are now ACFP recognised.

The event was opened by our Practice Manager, Sophie Gilbert, followed by speeches from Andy Couldrick, and Jenny Turnross, our Director of Practice.

Following a speech from our Principal Social Worker, Lara Timms, certificates were handed out by James O'Donoghue, Head of Social Work Accreditation and Development at the DfE, and Di Partridge, our Assistant Director of Practice.

Sirah Ali, from the Trust's Practice Educator Programme, spoke about next steps, and closing remarks were provided by Sophie Gilbert.



Well done Oluwafikayo Erinoso (with certificate)

TRUST STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS

DELAYED 2021 STAFF AWARDS EVENT

Huge congratulations to all of our finalists and our winners of the Staff Achievement Awards 2021. The awards event was postponed from 2021 until 8 June 2022, due to Covid-19.

The event was held in the IMAX cinema inside Millennium Point, with Andy Couldrick, our chief executive, and Andrew Christie, our chair, accompanied by actor and event host Sam Richards, handing out awards to the winners.

The awards opened with Andy Couldrick celebrating the life of former colleague, Muhammad Islam, who sadly died in 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic. Muhammad's widow Shakeela was able to accept a Special Tribute Award, and following tribute comments from Andy Couldrick, was able to share her own tribute to Muhammad.

Following the special tribute one of the recent 'Future You' films was shown, featuring care leaver Ze-Ze. Both Ze-Ze and Abba Loughran, co-chair of the Trust's charity Bfriends, spoke about their own care experiences and how important the Future You film project has been.

This was followed by the premiere of a short film about the Trust's resource hubs - a huge team effort from Trust staff and partners - to provide emergency resources to children, young people and families, who were adversely affected by two years of Covid-19 restrictions.

Andy Couldrick paid tribute to all those staff and partners who helped to source, supply and deliver resource packages over the past two years.

Jenny Turnross, director of practice, then spoke to say thanks to those ASYE and social work staff who took part in the recently broadcast news features on ITV Central, promoting the positive side of children's social work.

The awards ceremony then followed with six category winners and one 'panel recognition' award.



Janine Saleh (second from left) was the winner of the Trust 'Leader of the Year' staff award.

STAFF MARKETPLACE EVENT

Following two years of Microsoft Teams and Zoom meetings the Trust held its first ever Staff Marketplace (also held on 8 June).

Held at Millennium Point, the event saw over 30 staff teams and services hosting their own marketplace stall, where colleagues handed out information, provided home-baked goodies and ran prize-draw competitions.

It was estimated between 500 and 750 Trust staff attended the afternoon event.

Stalls were decorated with colourful information posters and display material, and for many staff it was the first time they had the opportunity to see colleagues in different services face-to-face.

The Practice Hub stall was the winner of the 'Best Stand'. Their staff wore hand-made graduation outfits and handed out information in the form of scrolls.



COUNTY LINES

What is County Lines?

County Lines is a form of Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) where gangs and organised crime networks will exploit children and use them to transport drugs. Perpetrators will use dedicated mobile phone 'Lines' to manage their criminal activity, taking place between different towns and cities.

Criminal exploitation has become increasingly common in recent years, with children as young as nine forced to run drugs.

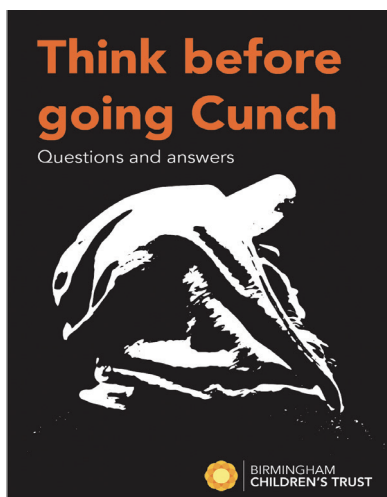
Explains Clair Graham, Head of the EMPOWER U Hub:

"To help raise greater awareness of County Lines, known to a number of young people as **'going cunch'**, we have worked directly with young people to understand the important questions they have about this form of criminal exploitation. We have listened, and turned this information into a leaflet for young people and parents/carers equipping them with hard realities of what County Lines is, the language used around it, its impact, and who to talk to if they have questions or concerns."

'Think before going Cunch' leaflet

- Please share the link below to the leaflet.
- Please use the link below to download the leaflet:

<https://bit.ly/3J5hUM8>



What is Private Fostering?

Private fostering is when a child under the age of 16 (under 18 if they have a disability) is cared for by someone who is not their parent or a close relative for 28 days or more. This is a private arrangement made between a parent and the child's carer.

Close relatives are:

- step-parents
- grandparents
- brothers and sisters
- uncles or aunts (whether by birth/adoption or marriage/civil partnership)

Great aunts/uncles, cousins and family friends are not considered to be close relatives and would need to be assessed as a private fostering arrangement..

Examples of private fostering

Private fostering covers a wide range of situations. Here are some examples:

- Teenagers living with friends or extended family following problems at home
- Children who stay with another family while their own parents are unable to care for them (due to hospital admission, prison sentence, or family crisis)
- Children sent to the UK for education or health care by birth parents living overseas

If you think a child in Birmingham is being privately fostered, you must contact Birmingham Children's Trust.

If you are not sure, please contact us anyway and we can talk it through.

Private Fostering - who to contact

Contact our Family and Friends team

Phone: 0121 303 2621

Email: SGOandConnectedPersonsManagers@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

NEVER EVER SHAKE A BABY CAMPAIGN

Recent statistics have shown that shaken babies and Abusive Head Trauma (AHT) feature year on year in West Midlands' infant hospital admissions and Serious Incident Notifications (SINs), which are triggered when a child is seriously harmed or killed where abuse or neglect is known or suspected.

The campaign, delivered by the Birmingham Safeguarding Children Partnership alongside Birmingham Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and Birmingham and Solihull Clinical Commissioning Group, launched on 9 June 2022, during Child Safety Week.

The campaign urges parents and carers to **never, ever shake a baby**, regardless of how overwhelmed or stressed they might feel, and has been endorsed by the Birmingham Children's Trust, West Midlands Police, Birmingham City Council and HM Prison and Probation Service.

It informs parents, and others with caring responsibilities, to be aware of the dangerous consequences of shaking babies and provides them with advice on how to cope in challenging situations when looking after an infant.

Birmingham Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and Birmingham and Solihull Clinical Commissioning Group have produced a set of two short films designed to raise awareness of the issue.

The 90 second videos depict how stress can build when looking after a crying baby, a significant trigger in shaken baby cases.

These powerful new videos are **primarily aimed at male caregivers**, as they are more likely to miss out on the vital support and guidance offered at appointments such as health visits or parent support groups.

Previous research has shown that **men are responsible for 70% of Abusive Head Trauma (AHT) or cases of shaken baby**.

Birmingham and Solihull CCG commissioned ICON, a national programme which helps parents and carers to cope when a baby is crying. The films effectively demonstrate how following the campaign's advice can help to avoid tragic outcomes and enable parents and carers to cope better in those situations.



The government's 2020-21 data on serious incident notifications showed that from April to September 2020, there was a 31% rise in incidents of death or serious harm to babies under one when compared with the same period in 2019.

Jo Early lost her son when he was 12 weeks old to Abusive Head Trauma. Joanne is now the CEO of SAMM National (Support after Murder and Manslaughter) and has offered her support to this campaign.

Jo said: "These videos show the horrific reality of what could happen when parents or carers act on thoughts of shaking a baby. They are so impactful they should be used to help prevent abusive head trauma in babies. Having lost my own son to Abusive Head Trauma 13 years ago, I wish these videos had been available at the time as I have no doubt they will make parents think twice about their actions and save lives."

Watch the videos

Use this link below to go to the videos:

<https://bit.ly/3bBbs3q>