



**‘Someone To
Talk To’
Project Pack**

Little Lives UK

2020

About Us

Little Lives UK was founded in 2017 to support disabled, disadvantaged and vulnerable children across London. Our mission is to ease the stresses felt by children and those caring for them and enable them to reach their fullest potential. By allowing children to be carefree, we hope to see them grow into responsible, safe and happy adults, with the goal ultimately to break the cycle of child poverty and suffering.

As an organisation we operate at a local level alongside other social organisations. This allows us to have the greatest impact on the individuals and communities we work with.

Poverty affects individual families and communities by limiting access to quality resources often contributing to entrenched cycles of deprivation.

Charities such as ours are a crucial pillar for providing funding or expertise to those who cannot access traditional systems of support. Near 700,000 children in London live in poverty and this serves to amplify the challenges that arise when raising children.

The issues we seek to tackle are complex and interdependent and it is important in times like these to bear in mind that working on specific issues can support a holistic recovery. The ‘Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development’ have highlighted the detrimental impact that Covid-19 and the lock down have had child mental health. Directed by this research Little Lives UK will endeavor to support children who need mental health services, particularly as they may have reduced access to support during the crisis.



Our Ethos

With twelve years' experience working with children before getting into the charity sector, our founders identified that although large charities do amazing work, one cannot always rely on the money benefiting local communities. **Little Lives UK was founded to identify problems within our community and fund grassroots projects to tackle them.**

Creating a more personal connection with the families and children we help, giving them agency and empowering them for a bright future. This makes the outcomes of our projects sustainable, inclusive and positive.

Our commitment to this mission is evident throughout every project we have ran since our launch in 2017. **We have run over twenty-six small scale grassroots projects.** Spanning a broad range of issues including; providing specialist health equipment to families for children with disabilities, holistic services for a children's hospice and funding after school sports activities. These campaigns have enabled us to build strong and trusting relationships with our community. Throughout our previous works and in listening to our community we identified **a number of underlying systemic issues which exacerbated social immobility and greatly disadvantages many in our London community.**

There is a dual disadvantage in those who have serious additional mental health needs and are from low-income backgrounds.

Our 'Someone To Talk To' project targets these often intertwined issues through providing a free mental health service to those who need it most.



Background Statistics

- *1 in 10 children and young people aged between 5 and 15 years old have a diagnosable mental health disorder*
- *That's three in every school class, and more than 100,000 across London*
- *Between 1 in 12 and 1 in 15 children and young people deliberately self-harm – admissions have increased by 68% in 10 years*
- *Half of all adult mental illness starts before a child reaches the age of 14*
- *75% of lifetime mental health disorders have their first onset before 18 years of age*
- *Over 1 in 5 children with a disorder reported waiting more than 6 months for contact with a mental or physical health specialist (21%) or with educational support services (22%).*

What does all this mean?

From these statistics it is clear there is an overwhelming need in London for mental health therapies to become available for children. Both due to the number of cases and the reduced funding of the NHS.

As a charity we are aware this affects underprivileged and low-income households even harder. Such households do not have any option but to wait, unlike more fortunate children who may be able to access a private service. By making services like this available, mental health issues could be pre-empted before having negative effects (such as those detailed above) on the health and wellbeing of the child.

Poor mental wellbeing in childhood and youth increases the likelihood in later life of:

- *Poor educational attainment*
- *Antisocial behaviour*
- *Drug and alcohol misuse*
- *Teenage pregnancy*
- *Involvement in criminal activity*
- *Mental health problems*

At the end of July 2020 there were 275,344 people in contact with children and young people's mental health services in the UK

Public health funding, which funds school nurses and public mental health services, (which in turn funds children and adolescent mental health services, known as CAMHS) has been reduced by £600 million from 2015/16 to 2019/20.

(Data from Public Health England Mental health Guidance for children and young people; NHS Mental Health services Monthly Statistics; CAMHS; and Healthy London Partnership)

Project Aims

- *Provide a free and accessible mental health service for children and young people*
- *Create a safe space to enable children and young people to express themselves*
- *Prevent future negative effects of undiagnosed mental health issues*
- *Optimize future potential of children and young people (both in their education and employability)*
- *Aid children on their path towards healthy, happy and fulfilled lives*



Project Outline

'Someone To Talk To' will run on a network of schools, mental health services and charities to provide mental health care of some of London's most disadvantaged children.

Little Lives UK is in a unique position to spearhead a cooperation of organizations to tackle this issue. Our previous works in our community has resulted in a high level of trust between us. We already have 'Queens Park School' committed to the program. We also have relationships with professional mental health centres, such as the London's Children's Practice, also keen to work on 'Someone To Talk To.' One of our Trustees is a trained children's counsellor and therefore, can provide professional insight on the project.

This project provides outreach to those who often otherwise will not have the access to mental health services, possible to children from different communities and higher income backgrounds. Not only can outreach be ran in schools, the therapy sessions and report on progress can all be undertaken in a safe space, in familiar surroundings. Bringing free mental health care to children and young people who are in despite need of help.

Secondary Schools

For older children and young people (11 to 16-year-olds) we will introduce online sessions.

These will be conducted using a high-quality desktop provided by Little Lives UK and a secured room in the school.

These sessions will be coordinated with the school and the center to ensure that it easily fits into the child's timetable.

Primary Schools

As we have been advised by children's therapy centers that primary school children will be too young for online therapies to be used effectively. Therefore, these sessions will need to take place in person.

Either the child will be asked to go to the clinic, or a child psychiatric specialist will come to the school.

These sessions would similarly take place in a secure room with additional supplies such as toys used to aid the therapy sessions.

This program can access beneficiaries from communities which are less likely to seek the hyper-medicalised mental health care through the NHS.

About London's Children's Practice

London Children's Practice is a **multi-disciplinary service that places the child and their family at the centre of the therapy process to see them reach their potential.** They provide speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, educational psychology, psychotherapy, art therapy, behaviour therapy as well as paediatric medicine

including diagnostics for ADHD/ASD/Dyspraxia/etc. They work together with families and schools across London as well as further afield nationally and internationally through online services and visits to set up local programmes for families.

Please see below specific information from their psychotherapist, Zara Kadir:

Zara works with **children, adolescents and often families** too. When working within a school system it's also common to include key teachers. **Having both the family and school system work together to create a consistent and safe environment for the children can help create positive change.**

London Children's Practice have worked with children aged 4-16. Regardless of the modality of therapy, first and foremost it is the relationship that is proven to have the biggest impact. When working face-to-face using art materials, sand tray, role play and traditional talking therapy are the most beneficial.

Many issues stem from attachment-based difficulties and having a therapist who is always where they say they will be when they say they'll be there can help to resolve some of these issues. Furthermore, a therapist is one of the few people in a child's life that won't ask anything from them and will simply be there to listen and learn more about the world as the client experiences it. **This one-to-one time often makes the child feel special and seen for the first time in their lives.**

There are children who have made **huge progress in as little as six sessions**, whilst others have needed much longer-term interventions. These positive changes range from better relationships with their classmates to better behaviour and performance academically. There are some occasions where perhaps the therapy alone isn't enough to create huge change but highlights the need for CAMHS or EdPsych support which, once established, can bring about enormous relief for children, parents and schools.

Being heard is something that children do not often experience as much as they would in an ideal world. **Therapy is about ensuring that those issues that may be trivialised by others are given the space and importance they deserve.**

Awareness Campaign

Alongside outreach and psycho-therapy sessions, we are additionally planning to run awareness raising campaigns in the schools taking part in the project. The propose title for the awareness campaign is “#LittleTruths.”

Initially this campaign will be launched on social media. Our PR team has come up with several ideas of ways to incorporate issues surrounding mental health and wellbeing as well as this campaign specifically (To see more specific details of these please see the next page).

Following this we plan to expand into creating greater awareness in schools. This will come in the form of speeches and assemblies, mental health workshops. Possibly taking this further to provide teacher training on supporting student’s mental health and how to identify worrying behaviors through the workshops.

*This will form a rounded, early intervention program. **Supporting children and young people with serious mental health needs through psycho-therapy sessions, whilst also working to destigmatise mental health and promote wellness in the wider community of young people in London.***



Promoting in Schools

Talks and Workshops

Our team is currently in contact with several organizations who specialize in holding such workshops and talks.

One of our goals with these talks is not only to make the students aware of the assistance that we provide but also to create more conversations in schools. Creating a more positive atmosphere around mental health will reduce the anxiety or associated shame in reaching out for help.

To contribute to this positive atmosphere and aid in de-stigmatizing mental health challenges we are also hoping to get influential members of the community to agree to speak at these events briefly.

Posters and Promotional Materials

Upon the launch of the campaign we will also be providing schools with leaflets and posters to distribute to students.

In Primary schools this will be limited to mainly posters and visual resources. Leaflets here will be specifically used to go out to parents to give them more information when they give their consent for the child to use the service.

But, for secondary schools we believe it is appropriate for the young people looking to use the service to have access to the information if they want it. So, we will be providing young people in secondary schools.

Please take a look at an exemplar poster on the following page.

Schools and the Social media campaign

Upon going into schools, we will of course make them aware of the hashtag whether that be through posters or the talks themselves.

Of course, it is likely that children will not want to publicly post that they are accessing the service. Thus, for school children we will focus on suggesting that they look at the videos and posts on social media to find out about the campaign. This will have the added benefit of opening conversations in schools and providing them with valuable information, so no shame or negativity is attached to the project.

We will encourage them to interact with the challenge or to post about the launch of the project. Past this we do not and would not want a child to feel pressured to reveal their private information.

Poster Example



DO YOU NEED 'SOMEONE TO TALK TO'?

1

DON'T HESITATE

If you are going through something don't be silent. Speak out and get the assistance you need.

2

GET IN CONTACT

Our service can be accessed completely anonymously by using the drop box in your school reception.

3

CHECK YOUR EMAILS

A link to the online sessions will be sent to your email. So make sure you keep an eye on your inbox.

4

ATTEND YOUR SESSIONS

Once you have your slot all that's left to do is attend your session with one of our professionals.

REMEMBER TO FOLLOW @LITTLELIVESUK

LITTLELIVES.ORG.UK

Social Media Strategy

Initially we plan to launch “#LittleTruths” on social media.

By having this initial launch on social media this allows the hashtag to gain awareness across London not just in the schools that are specifically receiving the service.

As a grassroots based charity this outreach is central to our ethos.

Not only does launching in this act to provide outreach in the community but also may create potential avenues to expand or progress with the project.

Twitter

As twitter is a key platform for hashtags. Therefore, we would initially hope to launch the hashtag here.

Our aim would be to encourage re-tweets and individuals to share their stories or mental health care that they have received.

Initial posts from our Little Lives UK account would likely include statistics such as those included earlier in this document.

We also plan to encourage recent partners from our previous projects to retweet or use the hashtag themselves.

Of course, we will also be interacting with any post using the hashtag to encourage more of a conversation.

As we are in the process of contacting influential members of the community, we would hope that they as well as any companies that may work with us to promote the project would also use the hashtag to promote the project

Instagram

Our PR team is currently working on ideas to create an Instagram challenge to encourage the use of the hashtag on the platform.

Other than creating this challenge our strategy for Instagram will be to post graphics with mental health statistics.

We also plan to utilize our Instagram story to post a daily wellness and positivity quote as well as re-posting information regarding the challenge.

In conjunction with the launch of the talks and workshops in schools we have also considered live streaming these on the platform to encourage further interactions.

TikTok and YouTube

For these video-based platforms there will be several different posts that we will create.

Before the formal launch of the hashtag and corresponding Instagram challenge we will take short videos with some of the practitioners from the London’s Children’s Practice to introduce the idea of the sessions.

We also plan to get testimonials from teachers once the campaign has been launched.

Selected clips from the talks and workshops will also be able to be added to these platforms.

Since we are also aiming to create links with companies and local organizations, we would hope that they too would post on their own platforms’ videos using the hashtag or agree to be filmed for a testimonial for our pages.

Contact Information

If you require any additional information regarding this project, please contact Little Lives using the information below and your request will be forwarded to the relevant member of staff.

Email:

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LITTLE LIVES UK
CHILDREN'S CHARITY

