

BCCS



News

SUMMER EDITION • 2024

Celebrating 40 years

EVERY BEAR COUNTS

Help us celebrate
our anniversary with
a special bear
fundraiser

Betty's Story

The power of connection

Blooming Wellness

Introducing Charlie's Cabin



Welcome

As we move into the spring and summer, the celebrations of our forty years working with children, families and schools continue and give us the perfect opportunity to give thanks to all in our community.

In February we made further connections in our local area during Children's Mental Health Week when we gave out awareness leaflets and held a bucket collection at Waitrose in Billericay. This was followed in April by a series of open days when business representatives, individuals and families popped in to find out more about us and to have a look around.

Our heartfelt thanks to Bishop Alan and our wonderful supporters who joined us for afternoon tea at the Roslin Beach Hotel in April. Their presence and generosity made the event truly memorable. You will find

a list of dates of other events happening throughout the year on the enclosed flyer; please do consider joining us and help us raise vital funds to support our work.

Alongside our direct work with children and families, we continue to tailor our training to match the evolving educational and mental health landscape. Recent workshops we have delivered have tackled the themes of self-harm, anger, anxiety and toxic masculinity – all of which have been welcomed by our schools.

We are privileged to work with over 800 children and young people, in over 100 schools. Thank you for your continued support and prayers, enabling our important work with families to continue.

Bernadette Fisher
Director

Finding Peace in our Garden

With the help of Essex Community Foundation, we were delighted to secure funding from the Charlie Watkins Foundation to adapt a garden room to use for therapy, enabling us to offer a safe, warm and friendly environment in our lovely courtyard garden.

With the arrival of the better weather, our own Charlie's Cabin will allow us to meet teenagers for talking therapy, parents and carers for initial consultations and school staff for supervision in a comfortable outside room with a garden view.

We look forward to seeing how this little cabin is used and enjoyed by our staff and clients throughout the summer and we thank members of the ECF and the Charlie Watkins Foundation for making this possible for us.

We are so lucky to have a new outdoor room to offer our clients as a safe space to talk. Looking out over our lovely courtyard garden during a therapy session provides a completely new dimension to our offering. We feel sure that this will be a very valuable space for staff and families alike.



Brentwood Catholic Children's Society
133 High Street,
Billericay, Essex, CM12 9AB
01277 712022
headoffice@bccs.org.uk





CASE STUDY

Betty, aged 7

When it comes to supporting children to talk about their feelings, we are used to being creative and child focussed. So much can be said without words, and we use all kinds of materials to help children express themselves through play, arts and crafts, sand trays and so much more. But children don't always need therapy: there are times when parents or carers are the most powerful people to support their child. We wanted to tell you about how we recently supported a family and used one of our anniversary bears to help their communication.

A mother contacted us, desperate for help, because her daughter aged 7 (who we will call Betty), was "ruling the roost" and struggling to recover from emotional outbursts which could go on for hours at a time; it was exhausting for them all. Betty was regularly biting, scratching, kicking, hiding and her parents had tried every trick in the book without any success.

We knew we could help, and we worked with Betty's parents to formulate a plan to invite communication and connection when their daughter showed signs of emotional distress. It is so vital to model to children that we can manage their big feelings: we are unconsciously telling them - if I can manage them, they are manageable, and therefore so can you.

Paws for Thought: The power of connection



We invited Betty's parents to introduce her to our bear. As they did this, they talked with her about her big feelings and how she doesn't need to sit with them, ignore them, let them build, or explode. They offered her the bear and invited her to put it in a special place in the house when she was beginning to feel upset, angry, or irritated. Betty chose the shelf in the kitchen to be the place where she would put her bear (whom she named Beatrice), when she was beginning to feel overwhelmed. The idea was that her parents would

see Beatrice and know to look for Betty to check if she was okay. This is known as pre-emptive containment. What they were saying to Betty is: "you will feel things" and then, "when you do, acknowledge it" and then, "find me and I will help".

Some weeks later, Beatrice now sits on Betty's bed, in a special place should she ever be needed again. The household is a calmer, more emotionally literate one, something which is a credit to Betty, her parents, and of course to Beatrice, the BCCS Bear.



Feelgood fundraising

Joint Schools' Concert

Earlier this year, Bernadette was delighted to receive a cheque raised at the annual Joint Colchester Schools' Concert which took place last December. She passed on her grateful thanks to pupils, families and staff at St Teresa's and St Thomas More's in Colchester, St Joseph's in Harwich and St Clare's in Clacton. We were delighted to hand over some of our anniversary bears to pupils from each school.



Schools' fundraising is so important to us, and we are very grateful for every pound raised to support our work. Thank you to every school who has chosen to fundraise for us during this academic year and particularly to those who are using our anniversary bears to fundraise – we look forward to hearing how you are getting on.



ABBA Tribute Night

Join us and ABBA Chique on Friday 12th July at Mill Arts and Events Centre, Rayleigh from 7.30pm

Book here



A bear-y good time had by all!

St Peter's Primary School in Billericay became the first school to adopt one of our anniversary bears.

They held a **Bring A Bear to Work Day** and asked pupils and staff to donate £1 to take part.

Children could also bring a photograph of their bear showing a gospel value for the chance to win a BCCS bear - fabulous!

In the parishes...

Thank you to all the parish priests who have invited us to come and share our story this year. We have thoroughly enjoyed chatting to parishioners after mass or during refreshments and have taken the opportunity to sell some of our Anniversary Prize Draw tickets.

Our Anniversary Prize Draw will run until Friday 20th December 2024; if you think you could sell some tickets for us, please contact Damian ddillon@bccs.org.uk

Special Friends 40 Club

Welcome to our new regular givers who have signed up to our Special Friends 40 Club; we are delighted to have you as part of our special band of donors who have committed to giving regularly to us this year.

There are still some places to fill to reach our target of adding forty new people to our Special Friends' Club during our 40th anniversary year. Please get in touch with us if you think you could donate £40 to us this year.

To find out more scan here



A new member of the fundraising team!



We are delighted to welcome Charlotte Walker to the team as our Fundraising and Partnerships Officer. Charlotte got the year off to an exciting start with the launch of the BCCS anniversary bears who are making their way into homes, schools, parishes and community groups.