



THE ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

Celebrating 40 years
1984-2024



**READY,
TEDDY, GO!**

Meet our new
anniversary bear on
Page 4 and see how
to work together
to support BCCS
this year.

Welcome



In this special anniversary year, I would like to take the opportunity to reflect on where it all began, look at where we are now, and share our commitment for the future.

BCCS was set up with an aim to give immediate and unconditional support and care to children and families in need and began in 1984 as a voluntary organisation with a few social workers in a small number of Essex and East London schools.

Forty years on, we have a presence in over 100 schools and employ 37 Child and Adolescent Therapists, Play Therapists, Art Psychotherapists and Social Workers. From a small voluntary organisation, BCCS has evolved into a contemporary, proactive, and responsive charity offering a wide range of services and effective interventions to schools, families, children and young people.

We offer a range of support to schools:

- Group support and process groups
- Family support
- Therapy and supervision for staff
- Training and workshops for staff and students alike
- Consultation to school staff around complex children and young people

At our lovely new home in Billericay, our Counselling Service has opened its doors to families and provides a welcoming space. Our fully refurbished rooms include a play therapy room, art therapy space, child and adolescent room and a large space to facilitate family workshops and school training. It is lovely to have children and young people in our building, they bring it to life.

Our working mission has not changed since the society began - it is the mainstay of our work:

- To provide a caring, professional response to the child and family in need, irrespective of race or religion
- To uphold the rights of the child and to ensure the protection and welfare of the child is paramount

BCCS is committed to supporting a future where children and young people have a voice that is heard, enabling them to access the best possible mental health support. We know how daunting it can feel for a child or family to ask for help and we work to ensure we respond quickly, with empathy, skill and professionalism. We are aware of the demand on statutory services, and proud that our dedicated team can provide the same support as these services, without waiting lists and thresholds becoming barriers.

As we look ahead to the next forty years, we are committed to ensuring that the well-being and dignity of the child continues to be at the heart of all we do. This guiding principle will drive and underpin our development as we look to the future of BCCS.

Bernadette Fisher
Director



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



OUR ANNIVERSARY PRAYER

Written by Beth Przybylska, Trustee



O Lord, as we celebrate 40 years of the Brentwood Catholic Children's Society, we thank you for the abundant blessings that you have given us.

We thank you for the children and young people, we pray that they know they are loved and cherished.

We thank you for all of the BCCS family, and all those who have contributed to our work with young people in our community.

We thank you for all our counsellors who have used their gifts of understanding and wisdom to be a safe space.

We thank you for all our schools and the teachers who guide their students with knowledge and insight.

We thank you for all our benefactors who through their generosity have enabled our work.

As we mark and celebrate 40 years of service, we ask you Lord to continue to guide us, to follow you, and to share your love with all those that we meet.

We ask you to bless our work with your grace as we continue to serve the children and young people in the Diocese of Brentwood.

ANNIVERSARY MASS INVITATION

We invite you all to join us at our Anniversary Mass celebrated by Bishop Alan on Friday 14th June 2024 at The Most Holy Redeemer Church, Billericay, 6.00pm.

Someone to talk to makes the difference

Sitting at my desk in a social services office after half a day answering emails, I realised this was not what I had envisioned when I qualified as a social worker.

Looking for inspiration as to the way forward, I noticed an advertisement in my parish newsletter for social workers to join the growing work force in the role of BCCS counsellors with the Brentwood Catholic Children's Society. It was quite literally heaven sent.

During an informal call to BCCS I asked what they could provide for families that social services weren't able to. It became clear that the majority of BCCS' service users would not meet the threshold for any sort of support from statutory agencies but there was clearly a need to support those children and their families.

The first child I spoke to told me that her dad hurts her mum. I knew then that the move was the right decision. That was in 2005. 18 years later, I still believe with a passion in what we do, and I know the simple act of talking and listening works. I have met many amazing children, parents, grandparents, carers, and school staff over the years; I tell children that I have the best job in the world because I get to spend all day talking and playing with children. I'm so glad I read the parish newsletter that week. Happy birthday BCCS, and many more to come!

By Elsie Carey,
Social Worker BCCS



I tell children that I have the best job in the world.







Bear-y good way to show your support!

In celebration of our 40th anniversary year, we have commissioned our very own 'Anniversary Bear' and are encouraging all our friends, family and supporters to get as creative as they can to raise money in support of our work.

By simply purchasing one of our anniversary bears for £10 and pledging to raise just £40 you will be supporting children, young people and families in your community.

The ways you might have fun and raise funds is endless:

-  Hold your very own teddy bears' picnic to support BCCS
-  Set up a fundraising page and ask all your friends and family to donate
-  Take a bear on your travels and get him sponsored for the journey
-  If you are a member of a club or group, what about club mascot for the year?

Our Head of Voluntary Income, Julie and her friends have decided to name their bear Columbus after the famous adventurer and will be challenging it to travel 40,000 miles around the world during the year. By setting up an online fundraising page they hope to raise £400!

You can have as much fun and be as creative as you like but make sure you let us know what your bear has been up to. We will have a little update on all your bear activities in our newsletters this year.



To request one of our furry friends please email communications@bccs.org.uk



 Or scan here



CASE STUDY

Taylor, aged 8

Taylor was referred to play therapy by her mum as she needed some support. Her parents had separated and, whilst Taylor was usually “ok”, she was having emotional meltdowns with increasing frequency.

When I met Taylor, she struck me as mature for her age, and confident. She was open as to what was going on for her and happily talked about her friends, school, her likes and hobbies.

During a session where Taylor was unusually subdued, she told me she wasn’t feeling well today and that her tummy and her head felt “funny”. I explored this with her a little and Taylor told me she was getting told off at home, and that school was “being annoying”. She struggled, however, to elaborate or make sense of this.

I suggested Taylor create a body map of the things she was feeling and suggested it would help work things out. Taylor created a life size drawing of herself using art and on it drew pictures and used colour and shape to symbolise different feelings, like feeling sick or having a headache. Through discussion and exploration, Taylor was able to reflect that perhaps her stomach was hurting because she

Body mapping helped articulate anger issues

Image courtesy of <https://mypoppet.com.au/>



Mum could immediately see what her daughter was experiencing internally and understand why she might experience those feelings externally as anger outbursts.

missed her dad, or that her head hurt because she felt angry about things. Once we identified this, Taylor embraced the concept of the body mapping. By thinking about these things in a creative way it made them easier for Taylor to understand, and more able to

express herself. At the end of our time together, we had a chat with Taylor’s mum about her therapy. Mum shared how she noticed Taylor was more able to regulate herself and articulate how she was feeling rather than get angry about it. Taylor wanted to show mum the body map which was a lovely experience for them to share. Mum could immediately see what her daughter was experiencing internally and understand why she might experience those feelings externally as angry outbursts or defiance. It invited clearer lines of communication between them.



Counselling skills for teaching staff

For so many vulnerable children, school is their secure base: the place in which they can blossom and thrive. Unfortunately, for lots of children, home life is the place that causes them stress and distress. The result of this is stressed, burdened, anxious children who feel isolated. There is a reprieve for some of them within the sanctity of school, its structure, predictability, expectation of them, and support in all areas.

It is a lot to ask, however, of teachers and support staff alike to support troubled children. The current mental health climate is positive in that the issue of mental health and wellbeing is front and foremost in so many forums.

The reality, however, is that

We have created a new 6-week counselling skills course, and the first one has sold out! Why?

lots of professionals (aside from therapists) are expected to provide support in areas in which they do not have enough knowledge. This is de-skilling for staff and can feel insufficient for a child on the end of a well-intentioned listening ear.

We felt we needed to do something to support, and our support often comes in this third-party way: whether it be via parental therapy, consultation for staff about a challenging child, or via this new workshop. Whichever way we offer it, a vulnerable child is at the centre of our thinking.

These workshops have been written by two of our most experienced Child

and Adolescent Therapists and we are sure they will be a success!

We will work with attendees for six weeks to share the theory behind therapy; the things that cloud our ability to listen properly; to guide them as to how to (and how not to) respond to children when they are brave enough to say, "I feel..." We want staff to feel empowered and equipped. We also want to acknowledge the fact that they are supporting children in such a vital way, and we'd like to support them in that.

READY, TEDDY, GO!

Why not adopt a bear as your school/class mascot?



Feelgood fundraising

40th Anniversary Sponsored Walks

Our sponsored walks have always been important to us and this year will be no different with the launch of our 'Anniversary Sponsored Walks'.

In 2024, our dear friend Margaret Munson will be completing her twentieth walk for BCCS, and we asked her to tell us a little bit about why she got involved:

"It all began when I heard a passionate parish appeal and I felt compelled to support BCCS through the sponsored walk from Ilford to Brentwood Cathedral.

After moving to Shoeburyness in 2008, I continued to walk with the Southend KSC along Southend seafront. The highest total sponsorship I raised

from any one walk was around £1,000 but mostly, sponsorship reached around £500 for each walk completed and I am

enormously proud that I have been able to raise this money and support the work of BCCS."

Our Community Engagement Officer, Damian, would be delighted to hear from you if you would like to walk for BCCS this year ddillon@bccs.org.uk



Looking to challenge yourself in 2024 or do you already have a challenge in mind? We would love to hear from you - communications@bccs.org.uk

Birthday Donations

In celebration of our 40th birthday, we are inviting our supporters to 'donate' their birthday to us by asking friends and family if they can make a small donation to us in lieu of birthday presents.

By asking for donations instead of giving presents they will be making a real difference to the mental health and emotional wellbeing of children and young people.

Join our Special Friends 40 Club

We call our regular givers our 'Special Friends' for a reason: regular giving is a commitment from our supporters, an acknowledgement that they understand our need and are there for us and we are grateful to them all.

This year, we are hoping to grow our club of regular givers and add a further forty people to our Special Friends' Club. Could you commit to donating £40 to us a year – giving monthly/quarterly or annually? To find out more visit www.bccs.org.uk/ways-donate/regular-giving/

Or scan here



40th Anniversary Prize Draw

Our 40th anniversary draw is here and with the help of our great supporters Kilnbridge Construction, we have three fantastic prizes of £500, £300 and £200 to be won. Our draw takes place on Friday 20th December 2024 and every ticket bought will help to support our work with children's mental health. So please support as best you can, and if you are able to sell tickets on our behalf amongst your friends and families then please contact Damian ddillon@bccs.org.uk

Snowdon? No problem!



Thank you to Darren and the team at Rumour Hair Salon, Chelmsford, and to all their generous donors who sponsored their October challenge on Snowdon.

The group braved some very wet weather conditions as they climbed but managed to raise over £500 for our work.

Fundraising Calendar

40 ways to give support and get involved with BCCS in our 40th year



JANUARY

- 1 Enter our anniversary prize draw
- 2 Read our newsletter and pass on to a friend
- 3 Doing a challenge this year? Could we be your chosen charity?



FEBRUARY

- 4 Give something up for Lent and donate to BCCS
- 5 Donate during Children's Mental Health Week



MARCH

- 6 Purchase one of our anniversary bears and get creative with your fundraising
- 7 Book tickets for one of our anniversary events



APRIL

- 8 Could you volunteer with us?
- 9 Become a Special Friend by setting up a regular standing order for whatever you can afford



MAY

- 10 Join in with our anniversary walks during the summer months
- 11 Volunteer at our summer fundraising events
- 12 Do a Charity Skydive or Wing Walk

JUNE

- 13 **Friday 21st June** Come to our Ascot Ladies' Lunch
- 14 Explore our 'How we help' website section and read about our work
- 15 **14th June** Attend our Anniversary Mass
- 16 Set your own Summer Challenge with a '40' theme



JULY

- 17 Birthday or anniversary? Ask for donations in lieu of gifts
- 18 For our younger supporters - how about a sponsored summer read?
- 19 Host a summer BBQ and ask for donations
- 20 Encourage your business or place of work to get involved



AUGUST

- 21 Sell Anniversary Prize Draw tickets to family, friends, and colleagues
- 22 Ask permission to place a collection tin at work/gym
- 23 Explore the 'Get involved' section of our website
- 24 Register at [easyfundraising.org.uk](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk), and raise funds shopping online at no extra cost to you

SEPTEMBER

- 25 Join in with the Fun Walk
- 26 Host a charity quiz for us
- 27 Donate some handmade gifts for our Craft Fair
- 28 Are you a member of a group or society? Enquire about having a talk about BCCS at a meeting



OCTOBER

- 29 Buy some BCCS Christmas cards
- 30 Follow, share and like our social media posts
- 31 Organise a 'Cake & Celebrate' birthday bake sale
- 32 Sell unwanted items online and donate the income



NOVEMBER

- 33 **Sunday 3rd November 2024** Come along to our Christmas Craft and Gift Fair
- 34 Light an Angel for a loved on our online Tree of Angels
- 35 Share our Anti-Bullying Week posts on social media
- 36 Spread the word about BCCS

DECEMBER

- 37 Join us for Christmas Ladies' Lunch
- 38 Have a Mass said for our intentions
- 39 Sing carols or attend a carol service raising funds for us
- 40 Donate to BCCS at your parish crib scene



For more details about all our 40th Anniversary events please visit www.bccs.org.uk/40th-anniversary/

Or scan here

