



# Safe and happy childhoods

One of the ways Action for Children raises vital funds is through events like Boycott your Bed. This is so we can continue our work to make life better for vulnerable children in the UK.

We believe that every child and young person should have a safe and happy childhood, and the foundations they need to thrive

We protect children and young people, providing practical and emotional care and support. We make sure their voices are heard. And we campaign to bring lasting improvements to their lives.

But we know more still needs to be done.

## The crisis

Life was hard for vulnerable children and their families even before coronavirus hit.

Funding for essential children's services, prevention and welfare support – as well as early help that stops children falling into crisis – has been drastically reduced over the past decade.

- **4.3 million** children are living in poverty, the equivalent of nine children in an average school class of 30.
- **75%** of these children are in families where at least one adult works.
- On average, **107 children** enter the care system every day because their home is no longer safe.
- **850,000** children and young people have had a diagnosable mental health condition. That's one child in ten.

## The impact of coronavirus

The pandemic has pushed many more children and families deeper into crisis. The number of families relying on Universal Credit has doubled. Households with children are twice as likely to have suffered financial hardship – like falling behind on bills or borrowing to pay for basics – because of coronavirus.

Poverty has a devastating impact on children – its effects can last a lifetime. But together we can change things.

In the last year, our Coronavirus Emergency Fund has provided essentials, like food and warm clothes, to around 20,000 children and young people. Our frontline key workers have kept 99% of services open. And Parent Talk, our online support service, has been a vital lifeline for more than 350,000 children and families seeking reassurance and advice.

**With your support, we can prevent poverty and the pandemic from scarring a generation.**

# A vital lifeline

Children are at the heart of everything we do. We work to improve their lives in lots of different ways. We build solid foundations, spot problems early and step in to take action. We're a vital lifeline for many children and families across the UK.

## Safe and loving homes

We help families before they reach crisis point and make sure children are safe at home. When this isn't possible, we find children a stable place to live, either with foster carers and adoptive families, or in modern permanent homes.

We also offer specialist, ongoing support to help them to overcome past experiences and build positive relationships.

Last year, we helped more than 44,000 children and young people to find a safe and loving home.



## Best start in life

The early years of a child's life have a big impact on their future. But parenting isn't easy and many of the families we meet face challenges that make it even harder, like not having enough money or a safe place to live.

We listen to what families tell us and run services that meet their needs.

Last year, we supported more than 64,000 children through our playgroups, children's centres and family hubs. We also supported hundreds of thousands of parents through our online advice and chat service, Parent Talk.



## Healthy, happy minds

Children today – particularly the most vulnerable – are under enormous pressure. Bullying and body image issues, as well as social media, are just some of the many challenges that fuel poor mental health.

We help children and young people to build resilience so they can cope with life's pressures. We offer one-to-one support and counselling, and run specialist courses, like The Blues Programme.

Last year, we helped more than 35,000 children and young people to improve their mental health.



But we can only do this – we can only be here for vulnerable UK children – with your support.

One way to get involved is by taking part in our virtual sleep out, Boycott your Bed. You'll join thousands of supporters for a night of entertainment before sleeping in the most unusual place you can think of.

Find out more by visiting: [boycottyourbed.co.uk/boards-registration](https://boycottyourbed.co.uk/boards-registration)

## Thank you so much.