

BCCS



News

AUTUMN EDITION • 2024

Celebrating 40 years

**BCCS BEARS
MAKING A
PAW-SITIVE
IMPACT**

Ahead of the curve

Working with schools to
respond to current issues

Navigating the landscape

Understanding trends in
children's mental health



Welcome

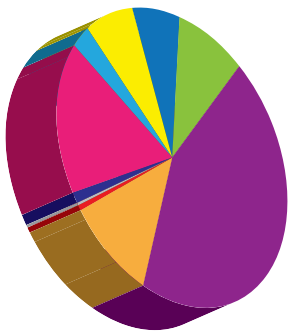
As we approach the start of a new school year, we reflect on and give thanks for the generosity of the BCCS community which continues to support our work both in schools and in-house via our Child and Family Counselling Services.

We are in our second year at our new head office and feeling very welcomed by the Billericay community. Our therapy rooms are busy, and we have doubled the number of counselling sessions on offer in the last six months.

Schools provide a safe, secure and nurturing environment and we work collaboratively with schools to support children through counselling/therapeutic sessions, group work and drop-in sessions. We also continue to help parents and carers by supporting them to understand and manage their child's feelings and behaviours.

Trends

You will be aware from the media that the demand for mental health provision is sky high and waiting lists are growing. As a service, we are currently supporting 675 children of which 166 are currently open to Social Care.



675 Cases

Peer Relationships - 61
Anxiety - 297
Divorce & Separation - 71
Eating Disorders - 5
Body Dysmorphia - 1
Chronic Conditions - 7
Other - 117
Child Protection - 21
Bereavement - 50
Self Harm - 45

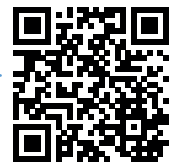
Our therapists are working tirelessly to ensure that they are offering support to children and young people. These children are struggling with many and varied issues such as:

- Self-harm
- Parental mental health and the impact on families
- Home dysfunction
- Domestic abuse
- Neglect and physical abuse
- Peer on peer abuse
- Anxiety
- Body dysmorphia
- Eating disorders

Our therapists are skilled, knowledgeable

Sometimes therapeutic interventions are not required and the BCCS Crisis Fund works to provide practical assistance for families experiencing financial hardship. Many families have complex needs and struggle to have a day out due to the severity of their children's additional needs. We work closely with school colleagues to identify these needs and to help make a difference. During the summer term we supported families with the cost of school trips, summer camps and activity days at local centres – all giving respite to exhausted parents and an enjoyable time to children. The generosity of the BCCS community enables this and we are truly grateful for your continued support and prayers for our work. If you would like to make a donation in celebration of our 40th anniversary, please click here. Thank you.

Bernadette Fisher
Director



and always determined to help. We are mindful we need to take care of them whilst they take care of our children and families. We are working hard to ensure that support forums are in place for them and we will never run out of energy when it comes to supporting the wellbeing of children, young people and their families.

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CASE STUDY

We are always striving to be ahead of the curve, and we believe that we are in the best possible position to identify themes in mental health given our presence in schools. Over the last couple of years, schools have begun approaching us with concerns about male students lacking in respect, and not understanding the importance of maintaining respectful boundaries around girls. We have also been aware of this increasing 'trend' within the therapy we provide to adolescent girls, who are struggling with some male-dominant interactions.

Whilst it would be easy to pinpoint male students and seek to encourage them to "behave" more respectfully, we wanted to get to the heart of the issue they are so clearly contending with and be their ally in it. The presence of powerful opposing voices on social media encouraging boys to "man up" and "take back control", is causing confusion for boys contending with narratives of "toxic masculinity" and misogyny. This has left boys feeling confused about what it means to be a man in today's society.

In addition to this, we are aware that boys rarely access therapy, and we wanted to change this. So, we did what we do best and created a programme to deliver directly to male students. We sought funding and have

Empowering change in the face of misogyny



been delivering workshops to groups of boys, in 6-week periods, to support them to understand the unique set of challenges they face. Secondary schools have jumped on board and have worked hard to identify groups of students, and have supported us within our delivery in schools.

We are currently providing safe, non-judgemental and supportive spaces in which boys are exploring the pressures and expectations on them and to think together about how they can navigate this new landscape. Our sessions offer opportunities to male pupils to think about the messages they receive from the language used about them, reflect on how they can express themselves,

explore ways to support one another, and learn to disagree respectfully, all while offering a safe space for any issues they may encounter.

The feedback we have had from boys has been encouraging. Our therapists have been amazed at how much they share - their openness to explore the burdens they are carrying is exactly what we had hoped for and we are keen to build on this. We are delighted to see that these groups have already been effective in ensuring that boys' first exposure to talking about their feelings has been a supportive, positive, and useful one. We are keen to continue rolling out these workshops in schools across the diocese and thank you for supporting us in our work.



Feelgood fundraising

Anniversary Mass

Our 40th Anniversary Mass was a fitting opportunity to celebrate the people who have made our work possible since 1984. Bishop Alan welcomed current and former staff members and trustees, clergy and religious from across the diocese, benefactors, supporters and volunteers all of whom came to rejoice in the work of BCCS across the years.

Our thanks to Fr Dan and the choirs and musicians of the Most Holy Redeemer, Billericay for supporting us so beautifully during our mass and to everyone who sent us kind messages and donations following our celebration.



Left to right: Monsignor John Armitage, Bishop Alan Williams, Maire Maisch (Chair of Trustees), Father Dan Mason, Bernadette Fisher (Director)

Anniversary Bear update

Over 100 BCCS Bears have been sent to homes, schools, clubs and groups helping us to increase our profile,



Every purchase counts!

Our anniversary draw takes place on Friday 20th December and every ticket bought will help to support our work with children's mental health. Enter today to have your chance of winning £500, £300 or £200!

celebrate our milestone year and raise some much-needed funds.

Thank you to everyone who has thought up a creative way of fundraising.

We have had teddy-bears' picnics, sponsored walks and holidays with mascots, guess-the-name scratchcards, schools' and groups fundraising pages.

We are delighted to report our bears have raised over £1700 so far. Well done to everyone involved.

Contact Charlotte for more information: cwalker@bccs.org.uk

Christmas Craft & Gift Fair

Sunday 3rd November from 10.30-4pm.

Mill Arts and Events Centre, Bellingham Lane, Rayleigh, SS6 7ED

Our stalls will be selling crafts and gifts so come along and pick up a few early Christmas presents.

For all enquiries contact Damian ddillon@bccs.org.uk

To find out more scan here

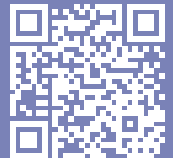


Our 2024 charity Christmas cards are now in stock!!

Choose from our 2024 selection of Christmas cards – there is something to suit everyone.

To order your cards, please complete and return our Christmas card order form or visit our webpage on-line.

To find out more scan here



Please place your order as soon as possible to ensure you have your first choices.

A collective effort

Thank you to everyone who has helped us through challenges and sponsorship, donations and goodwill during our anniversary year. This is how our year in numbers looks so far:

- 6 London Marathon runners
- 2 Skydivers
- 1 'Three Peaks' climber
- 352 young golfers in our Junior Golf Tournament
- 10 parish visits sharing our story with 4000+ parishioners
- 21 community visits
- 350 supporters attending our fundraising events

Your involvement is making a difference - thank you!