

INSPIRING YOUNG DREAMS



Children Our Ultimate
Investment UK

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Why We are Needed

- UK's teenage pregnancy rate is the highest in Europe and the second highest in the world
- It is the most "at-risk" young people - care leavers, children of teenage mothers and those disengaged from education - who are likely to become teen parents
- 15-25% of teen mothers are NEET (not in education, employment or training)
- Having a child while still in school reduces the chances of going into further education by 24%
- Teenage pregnancy is closely linked to poverty and disadvantage:
 - Four million children live in poverty in Britain today; that's four out of ten children in London
 - A young person living in poverty is ten times more likely to become a teenage parent

How We Help

Children Our Ultimate Investment UK was founded in 2001 to address high teenage pregnancy rates and social exclusion via the youth development initiative: Teens and Toddlers. We now run a range of programmes, which are focused on giving disadvantaged young people the life skills, knowledge and self belief they need to keep them in education, employment and training. Our ultimate aim is to inspire young people to achieve their potential and to be everything they can be.

Despite £280m investment, the government has not succeeded in its ten-year pledge to halve teenage pregnancy by 2010; since 1998, there has been a reduction of just 13%. Teenage pregnancy is a complex problem which goes beyond sex education. It is critical to address the issues that lead young people to believe that teenage pregnancy is their only option to escape, including low aspiration/self esteem, low educational attainment/disengagement from education, the breakdown of the family, a lack of role models and the temptations of drugs and alcohol.

The Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), who endorse our Teens and Toddlers' initiative, have highlighted that what is critical to success are programmes which are holistic, highlight positives and respond to individual needs: ***"Programmes which address young people's needs in the round are more effective than those that are narrowly focused. For vulnerable young people, this means creating holistic, tailored packages of help and support which respond to the needs of the individual, rather than multiple sets of interventions each focused on a particular problem."*** DCSF

Our Programmes

Teens and Toddlers

The Teens and Toddlers programme aims to increase the aspiration, interpersonal skills and educational attainment of young people. We help reduce the risk of young people becoming NEET and prevent teenage pregnancy through a holistic and effective intervention to break the cycle of poverty. The programme is endorsed by the Department for Children, Schools & Families (DCSF), Prime Minister's Strategy Unit, and the Department of Health.



The programme objectives are to:

- Raise educational attainment and aspirations in young people
- Support vulnerable young people to develop life skills, aspiration and new positive life goals
- Develop emotional literacy (self reflection, self management, awareness of others and social skills)
- Increase knowledge of sexual relationships and sexual health
- Educate young people about the responsibilities of caring for a child to convey the importance and value of postponing pregnancy.

92% of our graduates remain in education, employment or training

97% of graduates do not become pregnant under the age of 18

Teens and Toddlers is the only programme that pairs at risk teenagers with vulnerable children in a nursery setting to offer real-life experience of mentoring a small child and the challenges of parenthood. This innovative approach gives the young people a sense of responsibility and the opportunity to act as a role model. Teens and Toddlers is also the only youth development and teenage prevention intervention that provides a gateway to employment and qualifications with the opportunity to gain an Accredited Level 1 NCFE Award in Interpersonal skills.

Work experience in the nursery is combined with one-on-one coaching and classroom sessions to develop life skills, such as communication, to deal with issues such as bullying and assertiveness, and to address parenthood and sexual health. It works because we provide a safe environment where teenagers can explore the issues that affect them and show them that they have choices. 98% of young people participating achieve a National Award in Interpersonal Skills (Level 1 NCFE), often their first qualification, which inspires them to progress to either NVQs or sixth-form college.

“This group taught me so much – that I can be whatever I want to be. It taught me that you have to know yourself to be what you want to be. We learnt that the world is your universe. And we taught the children how to accept other people. I wish all young people could experience that.” Martine, 14

Training Local Authorities to Help Reach More Vulnerable Young People

The charity aims to ensure that the Teens and Toddlers programme is sustainable by training Local Authority Facilitators to continue running the project to “at-risk” teenagers in the local authority. As part of this 12-month training programme, local authority staff receive nine days of curriculum training in youth work and group facilitation accredited by the ABC (National Youth Agency) to achieve a Diploma in Youth Work Level 3 and many transferable skills. The programme also includes the delivery of two Teens and Toddlers projects, normally across four schools. The first project is facilitated by four Teens and Toddlers staff shadowed by eight local authority trainee facilitators. The second Teens and Toddlers project can then be delivered by the newly trained local authority facilitators supervised by Teens and Toddlers staff.

This enables the programme in future years to be delivered by the local authority driven with the potential to reach up to 480 “at-risk” young people a year. The local authority also has the option to expand this service further by using their trained facilitators to train more staff.

Young Leaders

The responsibility of the charity to help support and develop young people does not stop with Teens and Toddlers. We continue communicating with our graduates and, through our Young Leaders programme, the charity encourages the development of youth-led projects that will teach new skills to gain employment, such as team building, IT, filming and communications. Projects delivered so far include a youth magazine and a drama performance to educate peers about sexual health. We are now developing this further with a Young Leaders in the Community programme across four boroughs, two of these in London. This initiative was developed to build on the transformation we see in young people through the Teens and Toddlers programme. It has been created after consulting with our Youth Leadership Panel (a group of 20 Teens and Toddlers graduates) regarding their needs and aspirations beyond Teens and Toddlers. This will:

Allow vulnerable young people to practice leadership skills developing and implementing community-oriented projects around such issues as drugs.

Enable young people to gain an NCFE Level 2 qualification in interpersonal skills and mentoring

Provide young people with the practical experience of work-related skills including team working, project management, peer mentoring, working to deadlines and communications skills

Enable young people to make a difference in their local community as leaders and peer mentors.



Who We Help

Launched 2001 in Greenwich, to date we have helped nearly 3000 young people throughout 20 Local Authorities (eleven in London and nine countrywide). We focus on young people most at risk of leaving education early, teenage pregnancy and social exclusion as selected by the schools through a DCSF-approved “at-risk” selection tool. The programme is targeted at geographical areas with high levels of deprivation and teenage pregnancy rates (around 50-70+ conceptions in 1000). It is these areas which also have the most vulnerable young people - looked after children, care leavers, young offenders and children of teenage mothers and where teenage pregnancy is an inter-generational problem.

Teenagers on Teens and Toddlers range from 14-17 years old, with most aged 14-15. Young Leaders can range up to their twenties. The nursery children, aged 3-5 years old, have included refugees, autistic children and elective mutes, and are chosen based on who will benefit from 40 hours of one-to-one mentoring from the teen. Our programmes are open to both male and female participants, with approximately three times as many females. Our latest research showed that 32% of the teenagers were Black, 11% ‘Mixed’, 8% Asian, 2% Chinese and 47% White.

Future Plans

The charity's overall aim over the next three years is to raise £2.5 million to reach 10,548 vulnerable teens and children across the UK and to be working with 33 Local Authorities. This will include:

- Development of a Young Leaders in the Community programme across four boroughs
- Expanding our Teens and Toddlers sustainability and stand-alone packages
- Development of a Regional Hub focused in the North West, where there are high levels of teenage pregnancy
- An Intensive Blitz focused on areas of deprivation such as Lambeth

Why Support Us?

Our programmes are proven to work:

Children Our Ultimate Investment (UK) has monitored and evaluated programmes annually since 2001. We track participants in Teens and Toddlers through surveys before and after each programme and up to the age of 20 with a retrospective study. This gives us qualitative and quantitative data, providing concrete evidence that young people value our programmes and that they change their lives, behaviour, attitude and aspirations.

- 92% say that they learnt that having a good education can give more choices in life
- 88% say that doing Teens and Toddlers made them more determined to achieve their goals
- 91% say that it helped them understand the need to have financial security and a stable relationship before having a child
- 87% say "20 or above "would be the right age to become a parent"
- 82% say that they feel more confident in themselves
- 97% of graduates from Teens and Toddlers programmes do not become pregnant under the age of 18 years. The conception rate for vulnerable teens has been recorded as up to 45%.
- 92% of T&T graduates remain in education, employment or training



We are supported and recognised by leading organisations throughout government and the Third Sector:

Teens and Toddlers is endorsed by the Department for Children, Schools & Families (DCSF), Prime Minister's Strategy Unit, the Department of Health and the Social Exclusion Unit. To further prove the positive outcomes of the Teens and Toddlers programme, the DCSF is also investing in "the highest quality evaluation design (RCT) ever associated with a UK programme of this type". Our other funders include Impetus, ARK and Esmee Fairbairn.

Our beneficiaries and their families tell us that we change their lives:

"How do you thank someone for giving you back your family? Every school in the U.K should have the opportunity of offering their troubled teens the chance to turn their lives around and start again. I am just an ordinary mum with an ordinary family, but we are a lot stronger now. The programme not only gave us back our daughter, but it has changed her life with dramatic effect. She is now enrolled into college to do an NVQ level qualification so that she can work with children who need a helping hand, just like she did." Sue, a Mum from Brent