

bccc

news



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a children's charity for
Essex and East London



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Take A Minute

 to help **bccc** with your time, talents or donations


David Worsfold, Chair of the Marketing and Fundraising Committee shares his thoughts on our new campaign.

Last year we harnessed the celebration of the 35th anniversary of the charity to build our profile, spread the message about the vital work we do and raise the funds needed to support that. This year we are building on that momentum with our **'Take a Minute'** campaign which urges people to spend just a short while – no more than a minute – to consider how they can help **bccc** and there are many ways of doing that.

You could **Take a Minute** to consider joining our team of Trustees. The ideas that came together to make last year a wonderful celebration of our first 35 years and which have now been transformed into the 'Take a Minute' campaign, have depended on having trustees with the knowledge, skills and experience to support the professional staff of the charity. Currently we are seeking to appoint Trustees to help guide and support our work and ensure we continue to develop relevant, up-to-date services. Being a Trustee will involve attending meetings, but these are wonderful opportunities to engage with other people dedicated to delivering our mission of helping young people in need of support, guidance and care. If you feel you could offer us your time and expertise, please email Bernadette, our Director (bfisher@bccc.org.uk) who will be delighted to hear from you.

If you are active on social media, we would ask you to **Take a Minute** to like and share our posts on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. This will enable us to reach out to those young people and families who may need our specialist care and support.

You could **Take a Minute** and donate to support our work. If you receive your newsletter by post, you will find a small 'Take A Minute' envelope inside and we are asking that you consider donating to **bccc** if you can. Those who receive our newsletter by email, will also have been sent a link to our Virgin Money Giving 'Take a Minute' Appeal page. This has been set up so that we can make it easy for everyone to donate easily and securely in this digital age. If you would like to donate in this way, please also leave us a message telling us why you are supporting us.

With your help, we are hoping to raise £35,000 to support our work improving the emotional health and well-being of children and young people. Every £1 helps us to that target and every donation is gratefully received. By taking a minute to support our appeal, you will enable us to reach many more young people who most need our specialist care.

THE SEASON OF LENT – AN OPPORTUNITY TO REFLECT

At **bccc** we see Lent as an important time for us to reflect on our work and the impact we have had on children's lives over the past year. We use this time to pledge ourselves to continue to support these vulnerable young people by being there for them, by listening to them and by giving them hope of a future free from anxiety and worry.

We also use this time of preparation towards Easter to call on our community to help us in our endeavours. Whether you choose to pray for us, to donate to our work or simply to tell someone about what we do, your support really will change children's lives for the better.



#Take A Minute

www.bccc.org.uk

Amelia's Story

Amelia's mum contacted us as she noticed that her 15-year-old daughter's behaviour had changed, she had become very emotional and was crying on a regular basis for no apparent reason. Mum had already spoken to Amelia who told her that she didn't know why she felt so sad, she just did. She was unable to manage her sadness.

At our assessment mum disclosed that dad had passed away just before Amelia's 4th birthday and Amelia had received counselling at aged 8. More recently, Amelia had lost both her paternal grandparents: her grandad died unexpectedly in early December and her grandmother died from cancer on Christmas Eve. Amelia attended a joint funeral for both her grandparents but not the burial. A few months later her maternal great grandmother also died. Mum wasn't sure if this loss was connected to the anxiety and sadness Amelia was feeling now.

As we talked with mum it became apparent that Amelia had very high expectations of herself to achieve in both her forthcoming GCSEs and in life. We explored with mum where the high expectations came from and she explained that Amelia was clever and teachers regularly told her that she should be expecting to achieve top grades in her GCSEs whereas her mum told her she would be happy with lower pass grades.

One of our self-referral counsellors met with Amelia and began working to allow her to understand why she felt so sad and that it was ok to feel this way. Our work allowed Amelia to see that it was ok to talk about the deceased family members without worrying about upsetting her mum or younger brother. As her sessions continued, Amelia spoke to the counsellor about feeling less sad and emotional; mum also reported that she could see progress in Amelia being able to manage her emotions. We jointly decided to begin working towards a safe ending with Amelia. This took a few weeks as we wanted to ensure Amelia didn't feel a sense of loss when she finally stopped her sessions.

Mum reported back to us after GCSEs that the exams had gone well and that Amelia had not shown any of the previous signs of anxiety. She had achieved excellent results and had decided to move to a different school for her Sixth Form.

Mum was so grateful for the support **bccs** had provided and was amazed at how well Amelia was now coping with her new school and life in general. Amelia has settled in her new school and made lots of new friends.



Why we use Play in Therapy

If we think of play as the natural means of communication for the child, their natural language essential for growth and development, it is understandable that play can be used as a natural and non-threatening way for self-expression.

It is when there are difficulties or disruption within the child's world such as upsetting events, sleep or eating difficulties, separation or loss that prevent a child from reaching their full potential that play in therapy can be a useful intervention. For the child who is unable to speak, play can facilitate expression without the need for verbal explanations.

Play in therapy uses the therapeutic relationship as a means to enable the child's story to be told, at their own pace. The therapist's role is in facilitating a process enabling the child to express themselves through a variety of carefully chosen media including sand, clay, objects, toys animals, art and sensory materials, role play, music etc. Thoughts, feelings and fantasies following traumatic experiences can be played out using the child's imagination, symbolism and metaphor. Events and past experiences can be re-enacted and repeated without the child feeling overwhelmed, or harming themselves, or others.

By providing an optimal psychological environment, play in therapy can help the child through easing communication, in repairing relationships, in building resilience, confidence and a sense of mastery. It can help the child gain a fuller sense of themselves, understanding their emotions and past experiences better. This is just one of the ways in which a **bccs** worker can engage with a child and help them to overcome their anxieties.

Katherine Parker, headteacher of St Peter's Catholic Primary School in Billericay writes about the impact our work is having on the school community:



bccs is an integral part of St Peter's Billericay and has been an exceptional source of support for both children and staff for many years. During this time the role of **bccs** has evolved and adapted to the changing needs of our school community. When first involved,

a therapist would visit the school on a weekly basis working in a largely autonomous fashion with children identified by the school but with more liaison with parents than staff.

In recent years, the role played by **bccs** in the school has expanded and diversified considerably. Our visiting counsellor now not only meets weekly with senior staff, but also regularly works with the class teachers of the children the counsellor is seeing to enable a cohesive approach to the support of the child throughout the school day.

In addition to using the services of **bccs** for individual counselling, the whole staff has now been offered the opportunity to receive training from their specialists. This has allowed us to provide a consistent approach to supporting children who may be experiencing a wide range of difficulties and trauma. As with many schools, we have become aware of an escalation in the need for support with emotional and mental health issues. At the same time, we are seeing a significant decrease in the availability of statutory provision, with parents left with no option but lengthy waiting lists. **bccs** has given us another support route and is now our first port of call when a need arises.

During our Ofsted inspection last year, we were very grateful for the input and support of **bccs** in articulating to inspectors the ways in which they felt our partnership worked; their input contributed to a very positive outcome for the school.

Fundraising has always been a very important part of our ethos at St Peter's and the children are always encouraged to be mindful of those in our community who are dependent on a range of charities and organisations. In the past our fundraising for **bccs** has included concerts and presentations for parents and last December the weary commuters of Billericay were uplifted by the children's enthusiastic carol singing as they arrived onto the station platform!

The professional staff of **bccs** are very much part of our school community and it is immensely reassuring to know that their expertise is so close, ready to help us support and respond quickly to the needs of our children and families.

Farewell to Hans

In January, we were very sad to hear that our dear friend and loyal supporter Hans de Vrind had passed away. Hans was a true champion of **bccs** and over the years had undertaken many challenges for us including the Prudential Ride London, and the London to Brighton, Paris, and Amsterdam cycle rides.

There was no one quite like Hans and we will miss his unfailing optimism and the positivity which seemed to follow him into a room; we loved his visits when he 'popped over' on his bike for a cuppa and a chat.

In his memory, a team of **bccs** staff and trustees will **Take A Minute** to 'Be More Hans' and undertake the Colourthon Walk on Saturday 4th July in Southend. We would be delighted if you would like to join 'Team Hans' and walk with us.

Simply log onto www.colourthon.org and register to walk making sure you select Brentwood Catholic Children's Society as your chosen charity.



Paperless Acknowledgments

We are always very grateful to receive donations from our supporters and aim to acknowledge donations over £25 as soon as possible following receipt. In order to save both money and paper, we have recently taken the decision to send out our acknowledgments by email. However, for many of our supporters we do not hold an email address. If you are sending us a donation and would like us to send your 'thank you' via email, then please provide us with an email address. You can update your communication preferences at any time by emailing us at headoffice@bccs.org.uk.

COMMUNITY CORNER

Perfectly Purple Piggies

You may remember that as part of our 35th anniversary celebrations we invited our supporters to adopt a piggy and save their pennies for us. During the course of last year, we managed to re-home over 100 of our piggy banks to new homes in Essex, East London and beyond. Our purple piggy amnesty is now in full swing with donations already being received from last year's early adopters.

If your piggy is feeling full, email Libby lphillips@bccs.org.uk to arrange collection or transfer of contents.

Thank you to all our purple piggy families – keep saving for us and keep in touch!



The Priests Charity Concert

Saturday 3rd October 2020 - Brentwood Cathedral - 7pm



Following on from our hugely successful anniversary concert last year, we are delighted to announce that **The Priests** will be returning to Brentwood Cathedral on Saturday 3rd October to once again perform in a charity concert to raise funds for **bccs**. Tickets can be purchased from www.eventbrite.co.uk and as we expect this concert to sell out, we would encourage you to purchase your tickets early in order to avoid disappointment.

The Priests are a classical musical trio, made up of three Roman Catholic priests, brothers Fr. Eugene and Fr. Martin O'Hagan and Fr. David Delargy from the Diocese of Down and Connor, N. Ireland. The trio have been singing together since they were students at St MacNissi's College, County Antrim in the 1970s.

Ladies' Ascot Luncheon

This year we will be hosting our ever-popular Ascot Luncheon on **Friday 19th June** at the Rayleigh Golf & Country Club. Ladies are encouraged to dust off their best hats or fascinators and enter the spirit of 'A Day at the Races'.

If you haven't been to one of our Ladies' Lunches before, why not **Take a Minute** to join us this year? – we would love to have some new ladies join our popular lunch club!

For tickets please contact Libby: lphillips@bccs.org.uk / 01268 784544.

Could you challenge yourself for children's mental health?

This year we have lots of people going above and beyond to support the emotional wellbeing of children and families in our community. Fr Marek Pabis is running the London Marathon in April and Fr Dominic Howarth is using this year to cycle 5,000 km on a static bike with bccs being one of his chosen charities. Additionally, our trustee Deacon Richard Cerson is planning to walk over 900km between the pilgrimage sites of Lourdes and Santiago de Compostela to raise awareness of our work. We have other supporters undertaking the London Marathon and London Vitality 10K and we even have someone trekking the Sahara Dessert to raise funds for bccs! We are so grateful to them all for challenging themselves for us this year.

We know that walking part of the Camino de Santiago has become a popular past-time for many people who choose to follow its routes as a form of spiritual retreat or pilgrimage for growth, or because they enjoy walking and want to mark an important milestone. If you are thinking of walking one of the ways towards Santiago de Compostela this year, would you consider raising some sponsorship for **bccs** as you go?

Please do talk to us about this – or any other challenge you are thinking of undertaking during 2020 – we would love to hear from you! Contact Julie on jabbott@bccs.org.uk

For further information on these events or help and support on hosting your own fundraising event, please contact Julie Abbott on 01268 784 544 or jabbott@bccs.org.uk

Brentwood Catholic Children's Society, Childcare House, Little Wheatley Chase, Rayleigh, Essex SS6 9EH.

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