

# Save the Children

## Our work in Wales



**Save the Children**  
Achub y Plant

[savethechildren.org.uk](https://savethechildren.org.uk)

Registered Charity No. England & Wales (213890) Scotland (SC039570) and Isle of Man (199)

*Our Privacy Policy can be found [here](#). Do take the time to read through the details on how we collect, use and protect your information. Please contact me at any time if you would like to change the way we contact you or if you would like to stop hearing from us altogether.*



Registered with  
**FUNDRAISING  
REGULATOR**

# SAVE THE CHILDREN CYMRU

We believe that every child has the right to a safe, healthy and happy childhood.

The early years of a child's life shapes their personality and skills and forms the foundation for their future. This is the time which offers the greatest opportunities for learning and development, helping to shape the kind of people we grow up to be. However, poverty can put tremendous pressure on families and make it harder for parents to play and learn with their children and provide all that they need to grow up happy and healthy.

Poverty is on the rise across the UK and Wales has the highest level of child poverty compared to all other nations, with nearly 1 in 3 children growing up in its grip. The deepening tragedy of child poverty in the UK has been intensified by the COVID-19 pandemic and cost of living crisis. It has left the most vulnerable children and their families facing increasing hardship.

We all need to work together to address these challenges. Over the coming years through our work, we will strive to reduce the number of children growing up in poverty in Wales by working in partnership with others, listening to the latest evidence, and most importantly listening to the voices of children and families.

## HOW WE WORK

At Save the Children Cymru we base our work on the following guiding principles:

- We bring people together and hold children at the centre of what we do.
- We build collaborative, trusted relationships with established partners in communities.
- We listen to the lived experience of poverty of children and families.
- We raise the voices of children and families through our relationships with local and national government, and the wider public through our work in the media.

**“Through our programme work, community collaboration, children’s participation, and advocacy we will create innovative and sustainable change to ensure all children have equal opportunities and enjoy the best start in life,”** Melanie Simmonds, Head of Save the Children Cymru



Photo: Hana Adcock/ Save the Children

[savethechildren.org.uk](https://savethechildren.org.uk)

Registered Charity No. England & Wales (213890) Scotland (SC039570) and Isle of Man (199)

Our Privacy Policy can be found [here](#). Do take the time to read through the details on how we collect, use and protect your information. Please contact me at any time if you would like to change the way we contact you or if you would like to stop hearing from us altogether.



Registered with  
**FUNDRAISING  
REGULATOR**

# SUPPORT THEIR FUTURE



## WHAT WE DO

### Working together to help children

We know that relationships matter and that working with professionals can lead to positive changes for families. Together with our partners we have been working in communities across Wales to support families during their children's crucial early years. We are particularly interested in exploring approaches in areas of higher deprivation where we know that children and families face greater challenges.

### Bettws Early Learning Community

Our Early Learning Communities programme in the UK aims to improve early learning outcomes for children growing up in poverty in Wales. In these communities we're exploring how working together through a whole system approach – the joining up and strengthening of services that already exist – can change the way children growing up in poverty within a community, are supported to learn and develop.

The Bettws Early Learning Community (BELC) is a partnership of local professionals, community groups, organisations, schools, and local families working together to support children living in the area. Bettws is in the northwest of Newport and is an area with one of the highest rates of poverty in Wales. It also has a strong sense of community.

[savethechildren.org.uk](https://www.savethechildren.org.uk)

Registered Charity No. England & Wales (213890) Scotland (SC039570) and Isle of Man (199)

Our Privacy Policy can be found [here](#). Do take the time to read through the details on how we collect, use and protect your information. Please contact me at any time if you would like to change the way we contact you or if you would like to stop hearing from us altogether.



The BELC programme began in 2019 and since then we have been able to respond to families' needs during the COVID-19 pandemic and have learned a lot about how to work together to support families facing challenges such as the current cost of living crisis. We listen to the need and work together to deliver programmes to address the issues, testing new approaches and ways of working and sharing our learning as widely as we can to increase our impact beyond Bettws.

**“BELC has enhanced collaborative working across the early years system in Bettws and made a real difference for parents. For example, we’ve been able to work more closely with Health so parents can use services more effectively. We’ve accessed support for our staff to understand complex mental health issues and to give them the tools they need to support families”- BELC partner**



Photo: Francesca Jones / Save the Children

### Starting strong: Preparing children for primary school

Starting school is an exciting time for children and their parents. But often it comes with a level of anxiety and concern which can have a negative impact on their experience and longer-term outcomes. The ‘Starting Strong’ project seeks to draw together learning from communities across Wales on the tools, techniques, and approaches that can make the transition into primary school as happy and smooth as possible for children and their families. We are currently working with schools and partners in Cardiff, Newport, Neath Port Talbot, Rhondda Cynon Taf, and Carmarthen to create a national insights piece on best practice for transitions which will be shared across a wider range of partners in Wales.

**“I was excited to start school because I like colouring and my mummy came with me,” – child at a school taking part in a transitions research project**



Photo: Sara Drysdale / Save the Children

[savethechildren.org.uk](https://savethechildren.org.uk)

Registered Charity No. England & Wales (213890) Scotland (SC039570) and Isle of Man (199)

Our Privacy Policy can be found [here](#). Do take the time to read through the details on how we collect, use and protect your information. Please contact me at any time if you would like to change the way we contact you or if you would like to stop hearing from us altogether.



Registered with  
**FUNDRAISING  
REGULATOR**

## Early Years Grants Programme

Our Early Years Grants supports families' immediate needs and include beds, highchairs, pushchair and other essential household items. They also include learning resources such as books, toys, educational activities and vouchers to spend on food and essential items like clothes.

***"By having their basic needs met, families have been able to spend time focusing on their children's education - ensuring that they are focused on their futures rather than worrying about food, warmth or clothing."***

**-Partner working with us in Cardiff**

**Thanks to the support of various funders, we have been able to distribute over 1,600 grants in Wales reaching nearly 3,700 children**

## Pause For Play

Our 'Pause to Play' project will provide useful evidence on how being able to provide families with educational toys, books and essential household items can lead to supporting parents to play and learn with their children. The project is currently being delivered through our partners in Cardiff based on in-depth interviews with the families who received the grants and with partners who delivered the support. Our aim is to use this evidence to demonstrate to decision makers the direct positive impact of material goods on children's learning.

## Raising voices for change

By working at a local level with partners, we listen to children and their families and make sure that their voices shape our work and is used to advocate for change with decision makers.

In 2021 Save the Children published a large piece of research, *The Future of Childhood*, where we asked children across the UK what they would want childhood to be like for children growing up in 2040.

Children living in Wales said that they wanted a future free of inequality and discrimination where everyone has access to the basics that they need to live a good life: a home, good food, a loving family, and supportive education. They are excited about how technology might improve the future, but also hope that, in 2040, children will have opportunities to put down devices and enjoy the outdoors.

They want to ensure we protect and care for the natural world and each other and want children in the future to have lots of opportunities for both playing and relaxing.



[savethechildren.org.uk](https://www.savethechildren.org.uk)

Registered Charity No. England & Wales (213890) Scotland (SC039570) and Isle of Man (199)  
Our Privacy Policy can be found [here](#). Do take the time to read through the details on how we collect, use and protect your information. Please contact me at any time if you would like to change the way we contact you or if you would like to stop hearing from us altogether.



Registered with  
**FUNDRAISING  
REGULATOR**

# RESPONDING TO CRISIS



## Emergency grants

When the Covid-19 pandemic hit we worked with partners to deliver early years grants to families struggling to make ends meet.

We listened to what families and their referral partners told us they needed, making sure there were tables for children whose new 'classroom' would otherwise be the end of a bed, enough money to get food and that they had books and toys to continue learning. Through gifts in kind and donors we were also able to deliver hygiene packs, family resource packs, and digital devices such as chrome books and support to help with home learning.

## DEC Cymru

When disaster strikes, we work closely with other member agencies of the Disasters and Emergencies Committee in Wales to raise money to deliver life-saving food, shelter and medicines straight to where they're most urgently needed. In the weeks and months after an emergency, we help keep children safe and support families to rebuild their lives.

From recent appeals to help with the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan and Ukraine, the generosity of the Welsh public is immediate with schools, community groups, faith groups businesses, the arts and cultural sectors coming up with creative ways to raise money.



[savethechildren.org.uk](https://savethechildren.org.uk)

Registered Charity No. England & Wales (213890) Scotland (SC039570) and Isle of Man (199)

Our Privacy Policy can be found [here](#). Do take the time to read through the details on how we collect, use and protect your information. Please contact me at any time if you would like to change the way we contact you or if you would like to stop hearing from us altogether.



Registered with  
**FUNDRAISING  
REGULATOR**

## Supporting refugees

As result of the crisis in Ukraine, children are resettling in many communities across Wales. We know that many families have had to leave everything behind, and we are working with our partners and other charities to provide Welcome Packs with information and advice on accessing local services.

We can also offer free online training to frontline workers and volunteers to develop their skills and knowledge on how to support refugee families. We are able to support families with emergency grants so that they can afford the basics and provide toys and educational activities to support children's learning.

Children in Wales and around the world have used their voices and actions to speak up for children in Ukraine. We are working with children in local schools in south Wales to develop opportunities for them to lead on new activities to welcome refugee families from Ukraine and other countries arriving in their communities.

The Child-to-Child project allows children to become actively involved in their communities and be part of solving problems and bringing about change. It also aims to help children feel connected and identify with other children in the world.

Children from a primary school in Rhondda reached out to the wider community for support to create therapeutic puppets to help children from Ukraine deal with the devastating impact that the conflict is having on their mental health. The puppets were collected from the school by Deb Barry from Caerphilly who led on Save the Children's humanitarian response in Poland. Deb spoke to the children about how the puppets will help refugee children from Ukraine who are crossing the border to Poland. Save the Children have set up various child friendly spaces full of toys, games and drawing stations on the border to give children the chance to be children again after enduring harrowing journeys and having to leave behind their homes and often family members and friends.

*"It was amazing to come home to Wales to see this outpouring of kindness and to talk to children in various schools across the south Wales valleys about how they want to help and hear about the activities and fundraisers they have been holding to help children from Ukraine. It's a reminder to us all how children keep the hope alive and know what matters."* – Deb Barry



# OUR SUPPORTERS AND VOLUNTEERS



Our fantastic network of supporters and volunteers in Wales give their time, passion and energy to achieve change for children. We simply couldn't continue to do the work we do without them.

We have branches across the country, from Anglesey to Aberdare, helping us to raise awareness of our work by organising talks within their communities, ensuring we have a presence in major events such as the National Eisteddfod and organising fundraising events to support our work in Wales and in all corners of the world. From planning a quiz night or a gala dinner to virtually walking the Wales coastal path in Christmas jumpers or attempting the world's fastest zip wires at speeds of over 100mph – the sky really is the limit when it comes to their commitment to the charity.

We also have two community shops in Mold and Machynlleth providing an insightful window into our work and helping to raise vital funds.

If you'd like to volunteer for Save the Children, please email [volunteersupport@savethechildren.org.uk](mailto:volunteersupport@savethechildren.org.uk).

For further information about our work in Wales please email [walesinfo@savethechildren.org.uk](mailto:walesinfo@savethechildren.org.uk) or visit [savethechildren.org.uk/wales](https://savethechildren.org.uk/wales)

f @savechildrenwales    t @savechildrencym

*Images Disclaimer – images used in this publication are for illustrative purposes only and inclusion does not reflect their financial situation in any way.*

[savethechildren.org.uk](https://savethechildren.org.uk)

Registered Charity No. England & Wales (213890) Scotland (SC039570) and Isle of Man (199)

Our Privacy Policy can be found [here](#). Do take the time to read through the details on how we collect, use and protect your information. Please contact me at any time if you would like to change the way we contact you or if you would like to stop hearing from us altogether.



Registered with  
**FUNDRAISING  
REGULATOR**