



NSPCC

Preventing
Child abuse
TOGETHER

Our strategy from 2021 onwards

EVERY CHILDHOOD IS WORTH FIGHTING FOR





Preventing Child abuse TOGETHER



Through the passion, kindness and generosity of our staff, volunteers, supporters and partners, we helped to make more than **five million children safer from abuse** over the course of our last five-year strategy.

But we won't stop there. We know that at least two children in every primary school classroom have experienced abuse or neglect, rising to at least four by the time they turn 18. And with less early support for families, growing online safety concerns, and the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, we can't afford to stand still.

The good news is, if we all come together now, we can make a difference. We have an important responsibility as the NSPCC to rally people together and make the biggest impact we can to stop child abuse and neglect. This is where our strategy from 2021 comes in.

Over the next ten years we will focus on three impact goals we believe will make the biggest difference to children's lives:

1. Everyone plays their part to prevent child abuse.

We'll work together to make it easier for everyone to play their part and create a social safety net that prevents child abuse and neglect.

2. Every child is safe online.

Together, we'll transform the online world, so it's safe for every child to go online.

3. Children feel safe, listened to and supported.

More children will be able to speak out, so they feel safe, listened to and understood — and abuse doesn't shape their future.

Our strategy has teamwork at its heart. Everyone has a role to play and we want many more people to play a part in protecting children. We will work with people and communities across the UK and Channel Islands to bring about

change in these three areas, using a set of principles to shape and guide everything we do.

When deciding on our focus from 2021 onwards, we listened extensively to many people — staff, volunteers, young people, external stakeholders and more. We used your insight to plan what our distinctive focus should be. And we will continue to draw on this, building on our strengths and over 100 years' experience, as we begin our next ten-year chapter.

This strategy is about evolution, not revolution. We will make our services even stronger, based on what children and young people need most, and continue building the relationships we have in communities across the UK.

We will strive to be nationally significant and locally relevant, and look at where we are best placed to do, enable, influence or celebrate the efforts of others in our shared endeavour to keep every child safe.

Over the following pages you'll read more about what we're setting out to achieve and how, together, we can stop child abuse and keep children safe.

I'm proud to be part of an organisation with the opportunity and responsibility to lead the way in making a difference to children's lives by 2031. We couldn't do this without you.

Thank you.

Peter Wanless
Chief Executive of the NSPCC



“If we all come together now, we can make a difference. We have an important responsibility as the NSPCC to rally people together and make the biggest impact we can to stop child abuse and neglect.”

How we got here

We didn't decide on this strategy alone. We engaged with a range of people — children, staff, volunteers, external stakeholders and more.

It was the most robust and inclusive consultation we have done in recent years. We listened, we learned, and we took that on board when planning our approach for 2021 onwards.

Alongside this work, we considered the latest child protection research, what we know about the needs and experiences of children across the UK, and what support others are better placed to provide.

We looked to ourselves too — weighing up what our strengths are as an organisation and where we can add the most value in making a difference for children.

We know it's vital to go into this next chapter with our eyes wide open — recognising where we are today and the impact of current challenges, with an appreciation of how much change is possible.

This is a strengths-based strategy, built on our credibility and experience, as well as insight from you and others we work with or aspire to work with. It's focused on the areas where we can make the biggest difference, together, for children.

Why we need to act now

The landscape of safeguarding and child protection is changing and, while practice is improving, statutory funding is skewed increasingly towards those already experiencing abuse or neglect. Funding is struggling to keep up with the demand. And we're witnessing the effects of a reduction in universal, early help and preventative services.



At the NSPCC, the resources at our direct disposal are modest, relative to the more than £11 billion child protection system. But our influence can be immense. We have a really important responsibility, and a distinct role to play — one that is deeply rooted in child protection — to use our insight, expertise and position to influence well beyond anything we can do ourselves.

Before the coronavirus pandemic we knew that the levels of need and risk factors surrounding child abuse were rising. And we know that the impact of COVID-19 will exacerbate the situation. This generation of children is now facing a unique and worrying set of challenges — facing unfamiliar school environments, fractured relationships, increased family pressures, less access to their support networks, and a weakening of safeguarding measures.

While the pandemic has been immensely challenging it's also helped us learn valuable lessons. Our services and practitioners quickly adapted so they could still be there for children — embracing technology and different ways of working.

Some of these adaptations widen accessibility and increase engagement with certain children and families. These have revealed new ways that we can do our very best for children, now and in the future.

We've seen that adults spending more time with their children are noticing concerns and seeking advice and support. And the pandemic has also served as a reminder of how resourceful, resilient and brave children can be — and how much we can learn from them.

No one thing can predict abuse. But we know that children growing up in homes where there is poverty, domestic abuse, substance misuse or mental health problems are at a higher risk of abuse and neglect. We know that these factors have been heightened in families across the country during the pandemic, and combined with the existing strain on services, the implications for children are worrying.

We can't achieve the level of societal change we want, and need, alone. Now is the time to act, together.

We need to build a bigger team. By working together with supporters and partners in all regions, nations and communities, and encouraging more people to join us, we will move closer to stopping child abuse and neglect.

Our vision and impact

Together, we can stop child abuse and neglect. This is our vision. And through the collective power of our staff, volunteers, supporters and partners, and our 100 years of experience; we will move closer to achieving that vision.

Our three impact goals

These are our areas of focus from 2021 onwards, and the ways we want to impact children in the next ten years. We must address these to make the most progress towards our overall vision to stop child abuse and neglect.

Each of these impact goals contribute something different. On their own they will see us making significant and necessary changes for children. Collectively, they will build on each other and have a huge impact on children's lives.

The difference we want to make by 2031



Everyone plays their part to prevent child abuse

We'll work together to make it easier for everyone to play their part and create a social safety net that prevents child abuse and neglect.



Every child is safe online

Together, we'll transform the online world, so it's safe for every child to go online.



Children feel safe, listened to and supported

More children will be able to speak out, so they feel safe, listened to and understood – and abuse doesn't shape their future.

Our values

Staying true to who we are

As we move into this next chapter, our values remain constant. They define the kind of organisation we want to be. They help remind us what is important to all of us, and why. They make sure that what makes us 'us' does not get lost, either in the middle of our busy days or in the pursuit of our bold vision.

Putting children **FIRST**

We believe in children and we want what's best for them.



Striving FOR excellence

We do the best we can, to give every child the start in life they deserve.



Making an **IMPACT**

We base decisions and actions on evidence and the difference they will make.



Taking a stand

We are brave in our actions and we stand up for what is right.



Working together

We always achieve more by working together.



Our guiding principles

To effectively deliver our strategy, we have drawn out seven principles which will shape and guide everything we do for children and young people.



Focus more on preventing child abuse and neglect

Prevention is in our name; it's at the heart of what we do. We'll continue to prevent abuse and neglect from happening in the first place, and concentrate on stopping it faster once it's started.



Be inspired and led by children

We'll involve children and young people in our work and decision-making through meaningful participation. We'll continue to listen to them, learn from them, and be inspired by them.



Build on our strengths

We're drawing on over 100 years of experience. We'll do the things we do well — that others can't, won't or don't do. We'll do more to be present in communities, understand their needs and work with them to shape what we do.



Work in partnership

We'll work together with everyone — from schools, to local authorities and corporate partners — to reach more children and prevent child abuse and neglect. And, by working together with communities, we'll strive to be nationally significant and locally relevant — balancing our responsibility as a national charity with responding to local need.



Be trauma informed

All of our work with children will be underpinned by an understanding of trauma. We'll help others with this too — developing a shared awareness of trauma and making sure all children get the response and support they need.



Embed equality, diversity and inclusion

We believe every childhood is worth fighting for. Together, we'll remove real and perceived barriers to inclusion and diversity. Because recognising, embracing and valuing difference leads to improvements for all.



Inspire more people to be there for children

We'll inspire more people to be there for children, to keep children safe and make the biggest difference to children's lives, together.

How everything fits together

Our values are the strong foundations reminding us of who we are as an organisation.

These values helped us build the principles which will shape and guide everything we do, so we can work together with others to achieve the three impact goals, and ultimately reach our vision.



Why are these our three impact goals?

The impact areas we've chosen are individual and distinct, each contributing something different and on their own making significant and necessary changes for children. They build on each other and are interlinked. Together, they're greater than the sum of their parts and will make a bigger difference to children's lives.



Impact goal 1:

Everyone plays their part to prevent child abuse



We'll work together to make it easier for everyone to play their part and create a social safety net that prevents child abuse and neglect.

- Because children and young people have told us this is important.**
When asked what they want from our strategy, young people told us that they would like there to be less social stigma around abuse and neglect in communities. They want people to be more aware of the signs of abuse and neglect and know what to do if they're concerned about a child.
- Because we need to prioritise prevention.**
There has been a significant and widespread reduction in universal, early help and preventative services — and levels of need and the most prominent risk factors are rising.
- Because we can't do this alone.**
Each one of us can play a part in helping to keep children safe. We are here to support and enable people to protect children in their communities, and to work with others to find the best ways to do this.
- Because we believe that place-based activity will help create long-lasting systems change.**
A place-based approach means we can work more holistically — considering how all parts of the system, and all adults in a child's life, work together. By bringing everyone together to protect children and support families, we can truly build a 'social safety net' around every child.
- Because people are ready for this approach.**
Public opinion is shifting, with more and more people telling us they believe child abuse can be prevented.
- Because we can only prevent abuse if we include everyone**
To understand specific needs and issues, we need to work alongside communities of all types — whether they're identified by place, race, faith, disability or gender, for example. We need to make it possible for people to play their part so we can learn what works for them.

Impact goal 2:

Every child is safe online



Together we'll transform the online world, so it's safer for every child to go online.

- Because children and young people are telling us this is a key issue for them.**
Our consultation with children highlighted online safety as a key issue. And while there is significant provision around child safety online, for example in schools, children tell us this is not meeting their needs, or that more is needed.
- Because the prevalence and impact of online abuse is growing.**
Children spend an increasing proportion of their lives online — even more so during the COVID-19 pandemic — and, in recent years, there's been a significant upward trend in online abuse. Research suggests that online abuse can have as significant an impact on children as abuse that takes place face-to-face.
- Because we need to see significant change in this area.**
In order for children to be safer online, we need to see large-scale changes from governments and tech companies — with a regulatory framework and industry standards.
- Because the online world offers benefits and opportunities too.**
Children can connect with friends and family online, learn and create, have fun, and boost their confidence and self-expression. These benefits may be particularly important for marginalised and vulnerable groups like LGBTQ+ and disabled children. We want all children to be able to safely enjoy going online.
- Because we are experts in this area and we're already making progress.**
We're starting from a place of strength with significant success, expertise and established relationships. We've shown we can develop innovative responses to complex issues like Report Remove, which helps children get sexual images of themselves removed from the internet.
- And because people are on our side.**
The majority of parents, carers and other members of the public agree that social networks should have a legal responsibility to keep children safe on their platforms.

Impact goal 3:

Children feel safe, listened to and supported



More children will be able to speak out, so they feel safe, listened to and understood — and abuse doesn't shape their future.

- Because children's concerns and disclosures of abuse are often not recognised, listened to or understood.**
Children have told us they feel there's a lack of education or awareness of the issues they're facing and adults often struggle to provide information and support. Our research has found that many disclosures are not recognised or understood, or are dismissed, played down or ignored.
- Because children often don't get the support they need.**
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services are overloaded, with thresholds continuing to rise and children being turned away from services. We also know that children from some communities or with certain characteristics can be treated differently and aren't given the support they need and deserve. We need to make sure there are effective stages of preventative and early intervention support within all children's lives, which can offer help before higher-tier and crisis support is needed.
- Because an adult responding effectively to disclosure can disrupt the impact of trauma.**
Effective support can minimise the trauma a child experiences — and the chances of it being long-lasting and life-changing. Children have told us about the power of being listened to, action being taken to protect them, and emotional support being provided. We can't be there for every child when they need help, we need to galvanise the adults in children's lives to play this supporting role too.
- Because we understand the issue and are uniquely placed to do this well**
Children come to us for support, and we champion this approach through Childline — giving us a wealth of knowledge to build on and share. Our research and the work we do with children every day give us insights into the issues and barriers children face, and an understanding of what they want — including the importance of a compassionate response.
- Because we have the strengths to galvanise others, and to support them in playing this role for children.**
Our holistic offer means we are well placed to support and upskill others to play this role. For example, our NSPCC Learning offer for professionals, including e-learning and face-to-face training; our helpline for anyone with worries about a child; and resources like Talk PANTS.
- And because children are calling on us to address the impact of abuse and neglect.**
Children told us they would like all adults who work with them to take a child-centred approach, and to understand the different ways that trauma can affect children and young people.

How we'll achieve change for children

A pivotal part of our strategy is working together with people beyond the NSPCC to build a bigger team.

We'll focus our efforts on where we as the NSPCC are uniquely placed to **do, enable** and **influence** — and we'll strive to be nationally significant and locally relevant.

By working together with supporters and partners in all regions, nations and communities, we will move closer to stopping child abuse and neglect.

Do:

What we decide to do ourselves will build on our organisational strengths, culture and legacy. We'll consider what we're known for, specialist skills or services, provision in the sector, and where we have already had successes and impact. We'll build from our learnings in place-based sites and do more to be present in communities and understand their needs.

Our face-to-face services for children and families are fundamental to what we do, and they'll continue to play an important role — with a particular focus on preventing child sexual abuse and supporting early years development.

Not only do they provide help and support for individual children and families, but they help us understand what's happening for children, build our evidence base and underpin our credibility for all that we do across the organisation. Through this, we can enable and influence others.

We already do this through our work in:

- face-to-face services for children and families
- schools
- Childline
- Together for Childhood.

Enable:

We can't prevent child abuse and keep children safe alone. We are here to enable and support people, and to work with others to find the best ways to do this. Because we believe that place-based activity will have the greatest impact in creating long-lasting 'systems change'. And because children's concerns, worries and disclosures of abuse are often not recognised, listened to or understood.

We'll make it easier for everyone to play their part in keeping children safe and supporting them. This means changing how we work with and alongside many more people in the communities where we work.

We already do this through:

- NSPCC Learning — safeguarding and child protection training and resources for anyone working or volunteering with children
- behaviour change campaigns like Talk PANTS and Look Say Sing Play
- supporting organisations to deliver evidence-based services which we have developed
- our helpline.

Influence:

Children are calling on us to address the impact of abuse and neglect. More and more people believe abuse can be prevented and are primed to join with us. Together, we can call for the changes that make this possible.

Our successes to date through campaigns like Wild West Web and Flaw in the Law show us that when we work with those who hold power we can make big, system-level changes for children.

We already:

- influence governments and decision-makers across the four nations to change laws and systems so they better protect children
- run local and national campaigns to influence how individuals and organisations act in the interests of children.

Understanding progress towards our strategy

Having set out our ambition for the ten years to 2031, it's important we understand how well we're progressing towards these changes for children. We will track the progress of our strategy in terms of:



1 Research with children and families

Our progress within this strategy is understood through high quality, accessible and useful research. We design our research to build the NSPCC's understanding — and improve the evidence base — about what works to prevent child maltreatment, and to support children who have experienced it.

Our evaluation research aims to understand changes that have happened for children and families as a result of support from the NSPCC, with outcomes including a reduced risk of abuse, improved parent-child relationships, and increased mental wellbeing.

At the heart of all our research is increasing children and young people's participation and applying an intersectional approach to the research questions. We are agile in responding to changing contexts, and aim to make sure our research is reflected in policy, practice and guidance as well as influencing knowledge, attitudes and behaviours relating to child maltreatment.

2 Whether the changes we want to see in the UK are occurring

It's important to understand where positive change is being made for children, and where more needs to be done. For example, we track and report the proportion of the public who believe abuse can be prevented, and legislative and guidance change to better protect children as a result of our evidence and influencing.

3 How people experience the NSPCC

To inspire collective action, we are mindful of how we interact with others. The better we are regarded, the more effective we can be for children. For example, we track and report supporter satisfaction, and children and young people's influence on how we work.

4 NSPCC performance

We track whether we are performing effectively, making efficient use of our income. For example, we track and report our reach to children, parents and members of the public, and people who work and volunteer with children, as well as monitoring how many people support us, and our income and expenditure.

Generating life-changing income

Everything we do, and everything we want to achieve through our new strategy, relies upon the generosity of our supporters. Fundraising underpins our commitment to keeping children safe and preventing abuse.

Funding our work

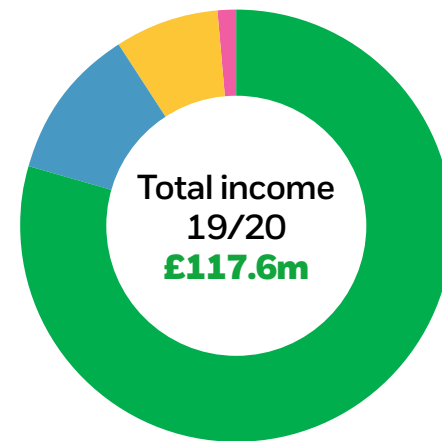
Around 90 per cent of our income comes from voluntary donations. We can only drive change for children with our donors', volunteers' and partners' help.

For over a century, the public has trusted us with their donations, knowing that all their gifts — big and small — are vital to our work. Their generosity has seen us reach millions of children — saving lives, changing laws and breaking the silence around abuse.

We need their continued support, so we will make sure our donors understand the incredible difference they are making to children's lives.

By celebrating the impact of their generosity and sharing children's stories, we will inspire more people to join us by donating and fundraising.

At the same time, we know we need to diversify our income for the future and have already identified other ways we can secure funds. These include training for people who work with children, and developing new commercial opportunities — all of which increase our income, while also reaching more children and supporting the creation of safer communities.



- Donations and legacies: **£93.5m**
- Income from carrying out our charitable work: **£13.6m**
- Other trading activities: **£9.0m**
- Investment income: **£1.5m**

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We will give everyone an opportunity to donate their time, energy and expertise to spread our messages and raise money for the children who need us.

How everyone can join in

Over the next decade we will bring more people together to keep children safe.

Providing different ways for people to support us, help fund our work, fundraise and generate income will be a crucial part of how we strengthen the social safety net for children.

From regular monthly donations, to sponsored runs, to leaving gifts in their will, every person can play their part. And together, we will create fundraising moments that are both meaningful and fun.

Take our flagship event, Childhood Day, as an example. This celebrates 'play', harnesses community spirit, involves fundraising and includes local activity which will raise awareness and have local impact. We'll also build ambitious strategic partnerships with responsible companies — uniting their employees and customers in efforts to end abuse and neglect.

In our neighbourhoods, schools, workplaces, and online, we will give everyone an opportunity to donate their time, energy and expertise to spread our messages and raise money for the children who need us.

We can't do it without you

To rise to the scale of the challenge facing children, we must secure the future of our work.

Funding for this strategy will be driven by great ideas, and by passionate people who share our vision of a world where all children are safe from abuse and neglect — our staff, volunteers, and supporters.

People like you! So thank you.



How everyone can get involved

We can achieve so much more for children by working together. Each and every act from our incredible staff, volunteers and supporters makes our pioneering work possible. But to make an even bigger leap forward, we need an even bigger team.

In the previous pages, we've outlined some of the ways we'll be working with individuals, communities and organisations of different shapes and sizes to create a social safety net that keeps children safe.

But there are so many ways for everyone to get involved. From volunteering to talk to children in schools or as part of Childline, to lending your expertise to our work; taking part in fundraising events, adding your voice to push for important changes that protect children or by making a donation.



1. Donate

No matter how big or small the donation, every pound counts towards our shared vision to stop child abuse and neglect.



2. Fundraise

From baking cakes to running marathons, and everything in between. Giving your time and energy to raise vital funds for children will always be worth it.



3. Campaign

We can't stand up for children alone. Join us by adding your voice to our call for change. Demand better for children and change lives.



4. Volunteer

Whether you answer Childline calls, visit schools, join the Young Witness Service, volunteer in your community or at one of our events, you'll be helping us turn children's lives around.



5. Partner with us

We're proud to work with companies and organisations who share our passion for keeping children safe. Let's get to work, together.



6. Be there for children

Visit our website for advice and guidance on a range of topics. Our helpline is here if you ever want to talk things through on **0808 800 5000** or at **nspcc.org.uk/helpline**



Together, we can stop child abuse and neglect – by working with people and communities across the UK and Channel Islands to prevent it, transforming the online world to make it safer for children, and making sure every child has a place to turn for support when they need it.

We campaign for change. We work with schools to help children understand what abuse is and support them to speak out and feel safe. Childline is there for young people when they need us. And our helpline is ready to respond to adults with any worry about a child. We develop services in local communities to stop abuse before it starts and help children recover, so it doesn't shape their future.

And, above all, we work together – because we can't stop child abuse alone. Everyone has a part to play in keeping children safe. By building a bigger team, we can give more children the safety and support they need. Every pound you raise, every petition you sign, every minute of your time, will make a difference. Together, we can change children's lives.

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

EVERY CHILDHOOD IS WORTH FIGHTING FOR