

Yours Faithfully

In this issue



Old Scholars in the Spotlight

Stories and memories from years gone by



Retrospective

The highs and lows of an extraordinary year



Supporting children with dads in prison

Keeping the vital family bonds strong



The stark isolation faced by new mums

Giving birth during a pandemic



Welcome from the Chief Executive



As I read the reflections of one of our *Old Scholars*, Colin Shew, featured in this edition of *Yours Faithfully*, it brought home to me how much the way we care for vulnerable children has changed over the years.

In Colin's day, children stayed in Spurgeons Children's Homes for a period of time under our care. Nowadays, most of the children we support live with their families, and Spurgeons provides care sessions in a community setting.

That way of working is very effective. But it has had its limitations during the pandemic. Restrictions have forced many of our Centres to close to public access. We have not been able to see children in person to the usual extent and many of them have been hidden and perhaps quite isolated within their homes.

We have of course used every means available to continue supporting vulnerable children. We have kept abreast of their changing needs and have learned many positive lessons which will shape how we work in the future. Find out more starting on page 8.

As restrictions lift and our services reopen, we are keenly aware that we will start to see the emergence of the deeper, longer term impacts on children and young people's social development and mental health and wellbeing. To prepare to meet those emerging needs, we have been developing exciting plans which we look forward to sharing with you in the next issue of *Yours Faithfully*.

Thank you for continuing to bless and transform the lives of children and young people in our care, through your prayers, your gifts and your time. Your support has protected some of the most vulnerable children from the worst social impacts of this pandemic and will ensure they have a hope-filled future. They, and we, will be forever grateful to you.

Thank you.

Ross Hendry
Chief Executive
Spurgeons Children's Charity

About Us

In 1867, Baptist preacher and writer Charles Haddon Spurgeon was inspired by his faith to found an orphanage in London, offering vulnerable children care and education. Today, his work continues through Spurgeons Children's Charity.

We believe that every child deserves the opportunity to live a happy and hope-filled life; that no child should face abuse, neglect or uncertainty.

In a typical year, we have contact with about 30,000 children and young people and protect hundreds from harm. We operate 55 services staffed by 400 people and supported by 200 volunteers.

No child should have to face life's struggles alone. Thanks to our volunteers, donors and dedicated staff, they don't have to.



Old Scholars in the Spotlight

Send us your Old Scholars stories for our regular feature!

Recently there has been a most welcome 'revival' in our relationship with a group of people lovingly known as our '*Old Scholars*' - those who spent some time in one of Spurgeons Children's Homes.

Every *Old Scholar* is a living link right back to the charity's earliest days, to Charles Haddon Spurgeon himself - they are his legacy and our heritage today. Every encounter with an *Old Scholar* takes us back to a very different time in our history, often times of reflection for *Old Scholars* and always learning opportunities for many of us here at Spurgeons today.

We have occasionally featured *Old Scholar* stories and accounts in *Yours Faithfully* in the past.

Please email Karen Logan at klogan@spurgeons.org in the first instance. We will use every story and every account we receive - space may be limited in the magazine, but we can make sure all your memories are featured on our website: www.spurgeons.org.

But we received such a positive response after sharing a few stories in our last edition that we want to make *Old Scholar* memories a regular feature.

So we plan to faithfully share the accounts and stories that *Old Scholars* send us, going back to the days when Spurgeons Children's Homes looked after orphans and other children who needed a loving 'home' when their families were going through difficult times.

If you are an *Old Scholar*, we would love to share your story, or stories too! And if you are still in touch with other *Old Scholars* - would you encourage them to send in their stories as well?



Old Scholars Reunion in 2022?

We want to trace and find as many *Old Scholars* as we can for another good reason: In every conversation that we have had with *Old Scholars*, we have made mention of the potential for an *Old Scholars' Reunion in 2022*, subject to there being enough interest in doing so and the ability to find/secure an appropriate venue and a date that works for as many *Old Scholars* as possible.

So if you are an *Old Scholar*, or know an *Old Scholar* (or two) - please pass on the news of a potential reunion in 2022.

Please confirm your interest (and that of any *Old Scholar* you know) by emailing myself, bbennett@spurgeons.org. Thank you - and we look forward to having the pleasure of meeting you!



Memories of seaside and strawberries

Colin Shew, aged 7, arrived at Birchington on 14 January 1960 along with brothers Peter aged 10 and Robert aged 8. They stayed in Charlesworth House where Housemaster Mr Willicome kept discipline. Colin shares some of his memories with us.

Day to day life included daily chores whereby we learnt to clean sinks, polish floors and wash dishes properly. The Homes were run on a Christian ethos so we were expected to learn the books of the Bible off by heart and to be able to recite them perfectly when called upon at Chapel Services. We can still do this today.

Peter, Robert and I stayed in the Homes for five, seven and nine years respectively and during this time saw many changes, including building of the new Babies' Home and the Chapel. There was great excitement when the Trustees purchased a television set for each house, replacing the need to gather in the Pavilion and strain to see the one distant set on the stage.

One of the favourite events of the year was the visit to a strawberry farm near Faversham owned by Mr Vinson, one of the Trustees. Places were limited and had to be earned but if chosen each child was invited to eat as many strawberries as they could manage, swim in the outdoor pool and then pick box after box to take back for the other children.

Other highlights were the trips to see the *Dancing Coloured Waters* at Margate and *The Rollo and Shandy Show* in Ramsgate.

This was a clown show with the serious purpose of teaching children about road safety.

We all looked forward to Easter when we would be given chocolate from the giant egg, donated by *Cadbury's*, which was displayed in the Pavilion.

Sporting activity was greatly encouraged and nearly every Saturday afternoon we would go and play on a particular area of grass at Minnis Bay. Mr Willicome told us this place was called the Charlesworth Green, and in our innocence we believed we owned it and would look askance at anyone daring to play nearby. All three brothers played football and cricket for the Homes and would play matches against other Children's Homes and local schools.

“We all looked forward to Easter when we would be given chocolate from the giant egg, donated by *Cadbury's*, which was displayed in the Pavilion.”

In the summer we would swim at Minnis Bay and would learn by leaping from the promenade into an inflated large inner tube, Health and Safety being unheard of at that time.

November 5th saw the impressive bonfire and fireworks display on the playing field although disappointingly one year some local youths broke into the grounds and set fire to the bonfire overnight, just to spoil the children's fun.

During the run up to Christmas a few children would be taken to various churches for Toy Services from where we would return with a 'box'. This was a tea chest filled with toys, books, games etc. donated by their congregations, the contents then shared out so that every child received a present.

The main highlight of the year was the Annual Meeting during which we all took part in the play directed by Miss Carcas. This would be performed at The Winter Gardens, Margate and the Methodist Central Hall, Westminster. A coach trip to London for the Meeting plus wonderful refreshments afterwards was especially prized.

1967 saw the Centenary of the Homes and so a special play was performed depicting the Homes' foundation. Invariably in these plays Mr Willicome would play the Voice of God, which as far as we were concerned, he was. In this play, I played a Trustee and the Rev Spurgeon was portrayed by Ray McPherson. Ray was the son of Mr and Mrs McPherson, houseparents of Waterbeach, and as Ray was older and sported a beard, he was ideal for the part.

Affectionately known as Mr Mac, Fred McPherson was much beloved by all and was always ready with a kind word of encouragement for all the children, not just those in his house. After retirement from the Homes, Mr Mac became a 'lollipop man' at The Square where today there is a plaque set into the wall of the church in his memory.



Robert went into industry after the sea and has a celebrity connection as his daughter is married to one of the world's top Disc Jockeys.

Colin Shew (left) with brothers Peter (centre) and Robert (right)

When it came time to leave the Homes, every child was taken to be fitted with their leaving outfits, comprising suit, sports jacket and trousers etc. plus a large suitcase. On leaving day, they were presented with a personally inscribed Bible and £10, then made their way to prearranged lodgings somewhere in the country to start a new life in the wide world. Although the children's' basic needs were met in the Homes, the natural closeness and love of a family unit could never be replicated.

Our father had served in the Royal Navy during WWII and the sea is in our blood because after leaving school, Peter and Robert attended Sea Training School and both joined *P&O Cruises*. Peter always said that by age 19 he had been round the world twice, yet strangely throughout his life he never set foot on an aeroplane.

Upon leaving the sea, Peter had various jobs and fulfilled his ambition of singing in a local choir and living on a boat at Newhaven until later years when the cold winters proved too much.

Robert went into industry after the sea and has a celebrity connection as his daughter is married to one of the world's top Disc Jockeys. I did not follow my brothers to sea, but went into office work and banking, and was one of the team responsible for moving *HSBC* operations from the City of London to the *HSBC Tower* at Canary Wharf.

As for the site of the Homes at Birchington, although the kitchen blocks have been removed along with the Chapel, Sick Bay and other buildings to make way for new housing there are still reminders of those days. A search for Charlesworth Drive on *Google Earth* will show the distinctive V shapes of the 12 houses still highly visible today.”

Peter, Robert and I all married, had children and grandchildren. Robert and I are retired but Peter sadly passed away in October 2019.





Remembering Old Scholar Martin Lambie-Nairn

We were sad to learn of the passing of Martin Lambie-Nairn, a former Old Scholar, in December 2020, at the age of 75.

Martin became a talented brand and graphic designer and was responsible, among other things, for designing the iconic *Channel 4* logo. He is also credited with the original idea for *Spitting Image* and for helping charities with their branding free of charge.

Two of Martin's compatriots at Birchington - Colin Shew and Martin Farley (formerly Martin Harries) - shared their memories of him.

Colin says, "Martin (we just knew him as Lambie) was one of the oldest in Charlesworth and was very very friendly to us new boys.

"He seemed so grown up to us but was early teens maybe. "His artistic talent was obvious, and he won a national competition whilst in the Homes."

Martin Farley recalls, "I can remember Martin arriving at Spurgeons in about 1952. He was a small, dark-haired boy, not as tall as the other lads. His mother was quite tall, dark-haired and very stylish. She came to visit Martin regularly and I particularly remember her voice... She was always full of fun, and would always ask Martin, "What shall we do? Where shall we go?"

"Martin came up with suggestions to which his mother would always say, 'A good idea, son.' "I was lucky to have known Martin's mother as each time she came to Birchington she brought her friend Mrs Brock and took me out in her car. Mrs Brock befriended me and each month she sent me a 2/- postal order.

"She also bought me birthday presents, took me to the pantomime on ice and took me on holiday to her house. She was married and had one son called David who was in the RAF."



From Old Scholar Halina Birkett (nee Helen Mular)

Eileen Dacombe, the housemother in Spurgeons' Kelvedon House, Birchington sadly passed away on 18 January 2020. I am not sure if she kept in touch with Spurgeons over the years but there will be others that may recall her. Miss L Clapham was the other housemother when I was there.

I had a conversation with my sister today and she mentioned some names of other children who were in the house with us - Suzannah Ullah, Sylvia Harvey, Gary Melling were the only ones I recognised, but she recalled other names too.



"..we talked about his experiences, how they helped shape him, what his ideas on masculinity and fatherhood were, and that it was OK to be vulnerable and how to express emotion."

Josh learns to be the father he never had

To mark Father's Day, Nii Anum, Spurgeons Senior Practitioner at Feltham Young Offenders Institute, shares how he helped a young offender become a good dad to his newborn son.

Josh* was sixteen when he arrived at Feltham. But it was several months before he mentioned that he was going to become a dad - at which point, I started working with him.

Josh only has memories and photos of his own dad who left when he was very young. His grandfather took on the role of father - Josh adored him. But when Josh turned eight, his granddad died. With that father figure gone, Josh spiralled out of control. He loved his mum, but she found it hard to discipline him and he got involved with gangs and into trouble.

I had only six weeks to work with him before his court case came up. If guilty, he would go to prison as he was turning eighteen. We met for an hour or two every week - using a study pack about fatherhood, we talked about his experiences, how they helped shape him, what his ideas on masculinity and fatherhood were, and that it was OK to be vulnerable and how to express emotion.

A week after his little boy was born, we arranged a video call for Josh to meet him online. His son, so like him, was sleeping peacefully in his mother's arms.

Josh sat silently for ages, staring at this small person he'd helped to create, transfixed with wonder. I knew all the discussions we'd had were running through his mind -

that this was the turning point, his opportunity to leave gangs and crime behind so that his little son didn't get drawn into that life too.

I saw Josh once more, just before his court case. I reminded him how important it was to put what we'd discussed into action. I said, 'It will be hard - your son will wake you in the night, you'll have to change our plans and how you make money for the sake of your boy and giving him the future you want him to have. But you can do it.'

Josh was quiet for a moment. Then he said 'I want to thank you from deep down'.

Josh won his court case and got released. He's home now - with support, he is learning to play an active and positive part in his son's life - learning to be the father he never had.

*Name has been changed

Restrospective: An extraordinary year

As Covid restrictions progressively lift and a greater normality returns, Spurgeons Head of Practice Lorraine White reflects on how we have managed to continue providing support to children and young people during the pandemic, and the new needs that are likely to emerge in the coming months.

Since so much of our way of life and work changed in March 2020, we've had to prioritise meeting the needs of the children and families we work with in the safest way.

Early on, that meant focusing on the work that was most urgent, but over the year we have been able to return to the broader spectrum of our work, albeit sometimes with a degree of modification.

We developed risk assessments and very practical guidance for our staff teams to enable us to do as much as possible. But it was never going to be feasible to develop a definitive set of 'rules' to follow - restrictions, partner and commissioner guidelines and the needs of children and families were constantly changing.

Fortunately, the way that we work means our service managers and frontline colleagues take real responsibility for making good decisions based on the needs of the child in front of them. They have always gone the extra mile, and during the pandemic they have probably gone two!

Surveys, discussion groups and feedback from staff and families have helped us keep on top of changing needs and barriers to accessing services. And our colleagues have developed inventive, creative ways to continue to support families throughout., as the stories on the following pages illustrate.

Whilst many of our Centres stayed open, where they could do so safely, we have also worked virtually. Online conferencing has helped us 'be there' and also share best practice, particularly around mental health issues and domestic violence which we've seen much more of across all services. But online conferencing also has limits - with young carers, for example. After a day of juggling caring for a vulnerable parent, home schooling, running a home, they needed social interaction more than Zoom calls. So we dropped off pamper packs and had doorstep chats, which they really appreciated.

Other service users needed and wanted that human contact too - we met them 'Covid-securely' on their doorsteps, at schools, outdoors or (when restrictions permitted) in their homes.

One key challenge has been that children have been more hidden in lockdown. For example, it is far harder to assess a young child's needs who cannot yet talk if you cannot see them in person. So we have developed ways to engage with children - using puppets on Zoom calls, offering pre-recorded activities for families, meeting children in schools when those have been open.

Our focus, as ever, has been children and young people. However, being at home so much they have been more dependent on their parents than normal. Meanwhile, parents have felt more isolated and needed our support more than ever. But being at home together has often strengthened the bonds between parents and children too.

Undoubtedly, some of what we have learned during this time we will take forward into the future. For example, *Children's Services* has been looking at the needs of the child within the whole family unit and partnering with other professionals to offer much more holistic, wraparound support. It was a way we were already working, but the pandemic has enhanced that development.

As our services reopen, we're preparing for an expected surge in children and young people presenting with pandemic-related issues that have remained hidden until now; anxiety and stress, domestic abuse, the impacts of financial hardship.

With your continued support, we'll be ready - as always, we'll be here for them and alongside them.

Delivering Services Through a Pandemic*



"I know visits are not starting yet but it will be good to carry on with this stuff when they do."
- Lakeside Children's Centre, Birmingham

"In the first lockdown, the call we had from Katy once a week, was so helpful, it helped us to know that there was life out there."
- South Wiltshire Children's Centres



"The way our son interacted with [the staff] was incredible, they had such a warmth about them, he really enjoyed it. When he heard one of them on the phone this morning, when I answered in the car he was really excited saying ('is that my teacher?'). It amazed us that connection they managed to make with our son so quickly, especially on a screen."
- Wiltshire Children's Centres

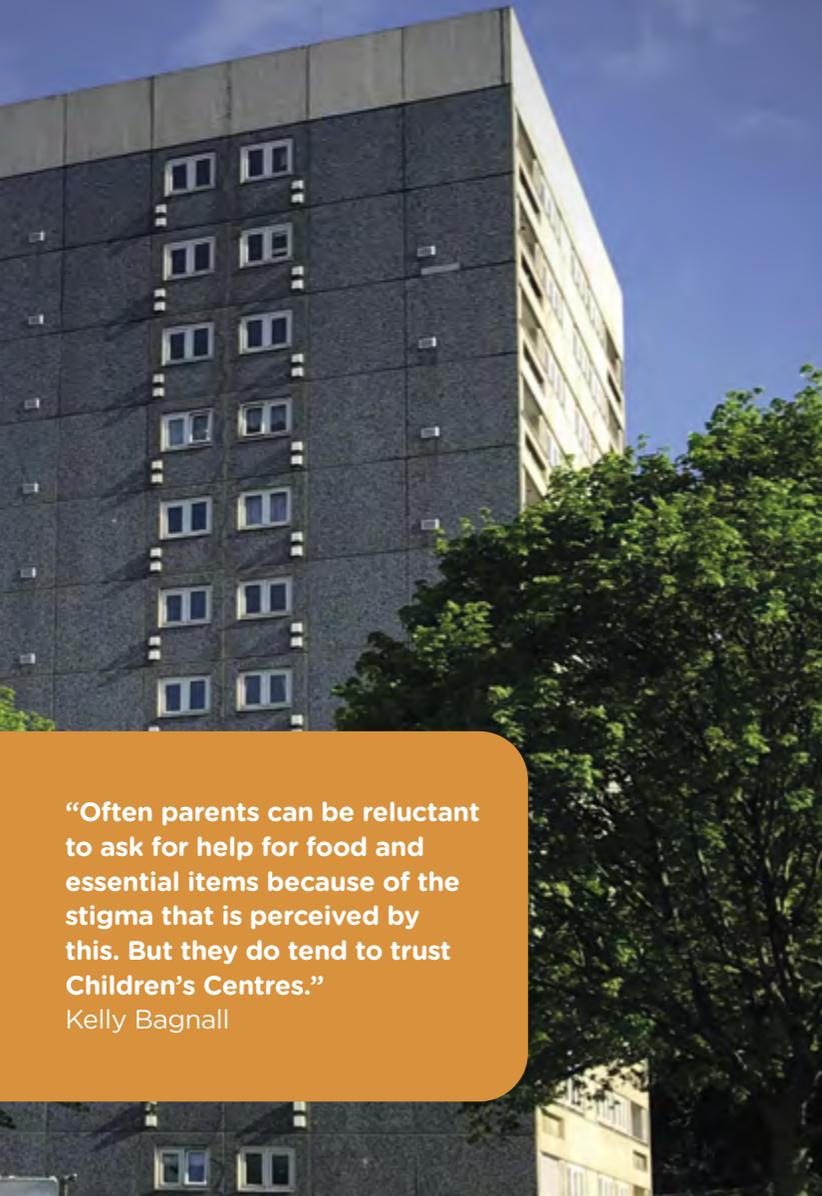


We set up social media activities. These were viewed at least **6647** times



*Statistics count numbers of instances, not number of people reached, and is relevant from September 2020 to March 2021.

Helping Birmingham families during Covid



“Often parents can be reluctant to ask for help for food and essential items because of the stigma that is perceived by this. But they do tend to trust Children’s Centres.”

Kelly Bagnall

Kelly Bagnall is Spurgeons’ Senior Manager in the *Birmingham Forward Steps* partnership, a city wide integrated early years, health and wellbeing service for families with babies and children under five. Ria Evans is the Spurgeons *Together for Families* worker who connects Tame Valley Children’s Centre and the local community. They share some brief insights into some of the challenges children and families have faced during the pandemic, and what solutions they have helped to develop.

The rise of wraparound support and community spirit

Kelly says, “During Covid, there’s been a real shift towards different organisations in a community connecting with each other and working together to help families in need. *Birmingham Forward Steps* and the *Early Help Locality* teams are co-ordinating this response so that there is equity of access for children and their families.

“We have secured small grants to give out to families facing financial hardship so they can buy food, heating, school uniforms and other essentials. These aren’t just available to the families we already serve through Spurgeons Children’s Centres – there’s a new process in place via the *Early Help Locality* offer, so that schools and other local organisations can connect us to any children, young people and families they come across who are in need.

“Often parents can be reluctant to ask for help for food and essential items because of the stigma that is perceived by this. But they do tend to trust Children’s Centres. We can reassure them that there’s no shame in asking for help, especially at the moment, and that it doesn’t mean they’re a bad parent. So we’re a good first contact point for the support they need.

“We don’t just give them a food parcel and send them on their way. We also take time to chat with them and find out what the underlying issues are, because we want to support the family in order to support the child. Maybe a parent has lost a job, a relationship has broken down, there might be domestic abuse involved. Depending on what those issues are, we can assist, or we can signpost to other organisations – it’s about enabling families to know where to go for help and ensuring they get it.”



Parenting 24/7 – out with TV, in with activities

Ria would normally work out of Tame Valley Children’s Centre, but during the pandemic it has been closed to public access. She says her existing community contacts have been invaluable during this time. “Right from the first lockdown, we saw such a blossoming of community spirit and sense of connection. I’ve worked for some time with a local community group called *Together We Can*. They’re well known and trusted in the area. We would really have struggled to get support to families without their considerable help. And so many families did need so much support!

“Before the pandemic, parents would normally have only taken part in creative activities with their children at the Children’s Centre – at home, some parents would rely on putting their child in front of the TV. But you can’t do that all day, every day, for months!

“So with the support of *Together We Can*, we produced activity packs and delivered them door to door. One pack had a gardening theme – we included seeds, plant pots and soil so they could grow plants in gardens, on a windowsill or balcony.

Families were so excited – some of them had never grown anything together before!

“We also set up a scavenger trail in the local bluebell woods so families could visit on their daily exercise – most parents had never been there. And we supported two mums to put on a Halloween trail. A committee of local residents developed out of that – they have gone on to put on other local family events.

“Naturally we hope that some parents will carry on regularly doing activities at home with their children after restrictions end.

“Some parents found it was a bit outside of their comfort zone, but we tried to make it easy for them. Many of them have had lovely experiences, strengthened the bond with their children and created memories to treasure forever.”

Personal contact – essential, not a luxury

During the pandemic, where in-person meeting was no longer possible, the go-to solution was to go online. However, Ria says she has realised how much parents value the personal connection and how important it is.

She says, “Not all parents have the internet, or enough data, or their children may be using the family’s only computer for schoolwork. Some parents don’t have the confidence to turn up to a *Zoom* or *Microsoft Teams* session online – or even to a community event. There might be a language barrier, they might not know how to use the technology properly, they might worry about going to a community event where they may not know anyone.

“But if I visit on the doorstep, or phone them, I can listen to their concerns, reassure and support them. I can connect them with other parents who might be going to a local event so they can chat first. That few minutes of face-to-face contact makes such a difference to some of our most vulnerable families.”

We hope of course that the worst of the pandemic, and restrictions, are over. But whatever the future brings, you can be sure that Spurgeons will be ready, willing and able to continue supporting vulnerable children in communities in Birmingham and wherever we work.

Supporting children with dads in prison

Keeping the vital family bonds strong

Undoubtedly many of us have struggled with how pandemic restrictions have limited our communication with our families. But the children of prisoners have had little or no contact at all with their fathers since March 2020. Spurgeons staff at a cluster of Isle of Sheppey prisons have been doing all they can to bring a ray of hope during these difficult days.

“It’s been such a tough time for children with a parent in prison,” says Lauren Sutton, Spurgeons Senior Family Services Practitioner for Category B HMP Swaleside and open prison HMP Standford Hill. “The pandemic has turned their lives upside down and left many of them feeling very insecure. It’s a time when you need the reassurance that your dad still loves you and thinks about you, even if he is in prison. But there have been no family visits allowed for months. Security issues mean that children and dads can’t talk on Zoom like you or I might have kept in touch with our families. Normally prisoners would be able to phone their children and keep in touch that way. However, many of them rely on the earnings from their in-prison work to pay for those calls – and at the moment they can’t work, so they can’t make those phone calls.

And their families can’t phone them. I can only imagine what it’s like for the children – no phone calls, no opportunities to see their dad, no chance of a hug from him.

I’ve seen tough prison dads reduced to tears because they miss the contact with their children so much.”

At Easter, the Spurgeons Prison Family Services team would usually run family days so that children visiting the prison could do some arts and crafts with their dad, spend time with him, maybe even have an Easter egg from him before they leave. It’s a little taste of normal family life that all of them treasure so much, and it provides the vital opportunity for children and parents to bond.

“we invited residents to apply to attend Covid-19 secure craft workshops where they could make cards and gifts, either for the children themselves or for them to give to their mothers for Mother’s Day. It was incredibly popular – we had over 80 prisoners taking part.”

“Because that wasn’t possible this year,” says Lauren’s colleague Sarah Burke, “we invited residents to apply to attend Covid-19 secure craft workshops where they could make cards and gifts, either for the children themselves or for them to give to their mothers for Mother’s Day.

It was incredibly popular – we had over 80 prisoners taking part.”

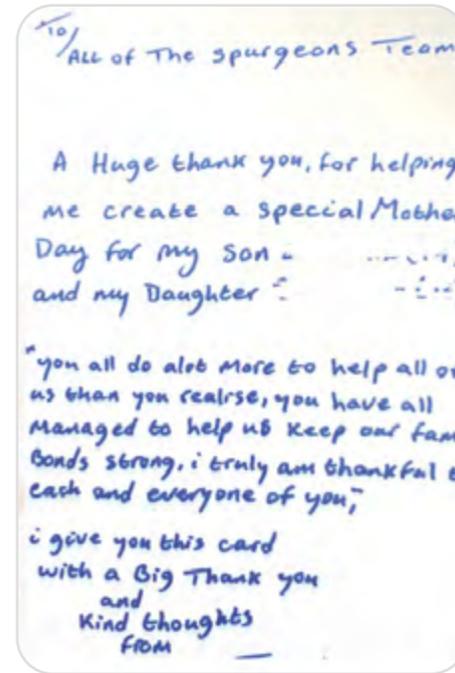
It’s about more than making crafts – it gives inmates a welcome opportunity to chat to the Spurgeons team and each other about their children. It also gives them an extra couple of hours away from their cells, where under Covid restrictions they can only otherwise leave for one hour a day, for a shower and exercise.

Others can see the benefits too. At a time when self-harm and suicide attempts are increasing amongst prisoners, the prison Psychology Department is now working with the Spurgeons team to support offenders with their wellbeing. And the *Reducing Reoffending* Governors have already asked Lauren and her colleagues to run workshops throughout the year, even when Covid restrictions are (as we hope) just a memory.

Sarah treasures a card that one of the prisoners made for her, and the message inside: “A huge thank you for helping me create a special Mother’s Day for my son L and my daughter B. You all do a lot more to help all of us than you realise, you have all managed to help us keep our family bonds strong, I truly am thankful to each and every one of you. I give you this card with a big thank you and kind thoughts.”



Sarah Burke with a card from an offender



Teddies ensure cuddles can continue

While Covid restrictions have prevented dads being able to hug their children on prison visits, hand knitted teddy bears have come to the rescue.

Kirsty Glover, Spurgeons Senior Practitioner at HMP Bure, says, “Maggie Dixon MBE is chair of our local *Independent Monitoring Board* (which monitors daily life in the prison and ensures residents are fairly treated). She has contacts within many local knitting groups, who knitted some teddy bears for us to use with children during socially distanced visits, with one group ‘*Norfolk Knitters*’, donating over 30 bears.

“It’s been hard for the children not to be able to have any physical contact with their fathers.

“They could choose two teddies to take into the visit hall – one for them, and one for a Spurgeons staff member to pass to their dad. These teddies can then pass ‘magic cuddles’ for dad or child to feel during the visit.

“The Prison have been very supportive, with Governor Adcock (HMP Bure’s *Reducing Reoffending* Governor) supporting the scheme from the beginning.”

Often fathers in prison have not seen their child for a long time, and they can struggle to keep the conversation going. But playing together with the teddy bears can really help. One dad commented, “We had fun with the cuddly toys and it made the experience easier.”



The stark isolation faced by new mums

Since the start of the pandemic, around 750,000 mums in the UK have given birth. But it's not been an easy time for them. Ria Evans, Spurgeons Together for Families worker in Hodge Hill, shares a glimpse of what new motherhood has really been like.

Flanked by two motorways, the 1960s estates of Bromsford and Firs were originally dominated by tower blocks, but most have now been demolished.

Tina* lives alone in a cold, damp flat on the seventh floor of one of the remaining blocks. Just before the pandemic, she fell pregnant. She didn't have the best childhood herself, and she'd grown up being told that she was no good. But she was absolutely determined to do all she could to give her baby the best start in life.

Ria says, "She'd enthusiastically signed up to go to all the support groups she could at the Tame Valley Children's Centre, which is where I'm based. But then the Centre had to shut and the groups were cancelled. Instead, Tina was trapped in her flat, just her, a bump and four walls, worrying about what the future would bring."

The prospect of motherhood both excited and terrified Tina. "She didn't know if she could cope," remembers Ria.

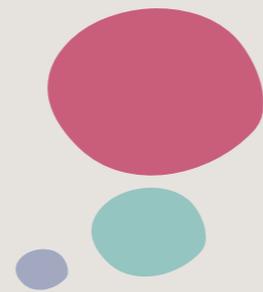
"Every week, I went round and stood on her doorstep, or went for walks with her to offer emotional support and advice and reassure her that it was all going to be fine."

Later, in a hospital delivery room, surrounded by strangers in masks and gowns and with no family allowed in to support her, Tina gave birth to a little girl, Casey*. Ria observes, "A lot of expectant mums like Tina have been terrified that they or their baby might contract Covid in hospital - and sadly in some cases that has happened. But thankfully, Tina and her baby were both absolutely fine."

"Every week, I went round and stood on her doorstep, or went for walks with her to offer emotional support and advice and reassure her that it was all going to be fine."

Ria continued with her doorstep visits when Tina came home with her new daughter. More recently, the Children's Centre has reopened, and Tina has been taking Casey along to *Songs and Story* sessions. Ria laughs, "It's wonderful to watch them both - it's hard to tell which of them enjoys those sessions more!"

"I think Tina's surprised herself. She told me, 'I can't believe I'm doing this!' and I said, 'You are - we supported you, but you're the one who is with your baby day in, day out!' She's listened and learned, she puts her baby first, and she's developed a strong and hopefully enduring bond with Casey. Tina's done what she set out to do - given her baby the best start in life. I'm proud of her."



Children and Young People Now Awards

Children & Young People Now Awards 2020

Congratulations to Spurgeons Norwich Connect service who were recognised with a Highly Commended honour at the recent Children and Young People Now Awards.

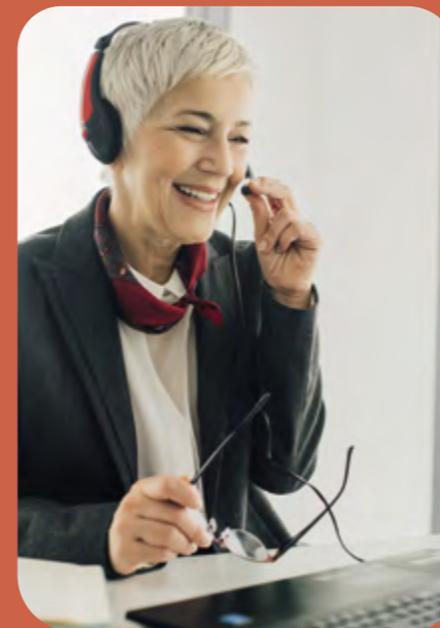
The awards, hosted virtually this year by Alan Dedicoat, promote and celebrate the work of teams that are striving to improve the lives of others.

Norwich Connect was recognised within the *Early Intervention* category, with specific focus on the service's work with children and young people, and part of a wider service that meets whole family needs in relation to domestic abuse in and around Norwich, Norfolk. Well done also to Spurgeons *BeLeave* team who were finalists, also for the *Early Intervention* award.

The Early Intervention Award

Spurgeons Norwich Connect (domestic abuse programme)

Highly Commended



Write your Will for free over the telephone



As a special opportunity for our supporters, we've teamed up with *Farewill*, named as *National Will Writing Firm of the Year 2020*, to give Spurgeons supporters like you an easy way to write your Will over the telephone for free.

Farewill have made Will writing easier and their award-winning experts can give you all the support you need. If you'd like to take up this free offer call **020 8050 2686** and let the *Farewill* team know at the start of the call that you are a Spurgeons Children's Charity supporter. You can find out more at www.spurgeons.org/support-us/leaving-a-gift-in-your-will.

How would you like to hear from us?

A couple of weeks ago, you should have received a two-part confidential *Donor Survey* from us through the post.

While we have already made some improvements, based on feedback from our Donors, we know we can always do more.

Your response will enable us to provide you with the best possible experience of Spurgeons Children's Charity by tailoring it more towards your needs and interests. It will also help us make the very best use of your generous donations.

If you've completed and returned the *Donor Survey* already - thank you!

If you have yet to complete it, it's not too late, and we would really value your feedback.

If you need a further copy of the Donor Survey, you can get one by calling us on **01933 417388**, or by emailing supportercare@spurgeons.org.

Spurgeons Donor Survey

How would you like to hear from us?

Thank you in advance for taking the time to complete this confidential questionnaire, in two parts. Your responses will help us give you the best possible experience as a Donor to Spurgeons Children's Charity.

While we have already made some improvements, based on feedback from our Donors, we know we can always do more. These improvements will enable us to provide you with an experience of Spurgeons Children's Charity which is more tailored to your needs and interests. This short questionnaire is designed to help us achieve this for you.

We want to provide you with the level of service that you need and expect from us. This will also help us make the very best use of your generous donations.

How to complete PART ONE of the questionnaire:

PART ONE: On this page there are seven questions. These questions are prepared as pairs of statements. For each pair of statements, please tick the box closest to the statement you most agree with. Should you **fully agree** with one or other statement, please tick the box at the end of the bar closest to the statement you fully agree with; should you have no particular opinion on any statement, please tick the **'Neutral'** box in the centre. If you do **not fully agree** with one or other statement, please tick one of the other boxes, to the left or right of the 'Neutral' box, to indicate your agreement to a lesser or greater extent.

← Neutral →

1	It is important to me to receive regular news or information from Spurgeons Children's Charity	<input type="checkbox"/>	I would rather not receive news or information from Spurgeons Children's Charity				
2	I enjoy being part of a Donor community	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have little interest in feeling part of a Donor community				
3	I am keen to understand the impact of my contribution	<input type="checkbox"/>	I do not need to understand the impact of my donation				
4	I enjoy Donor events and welcome the opportunity to attend	<input type="checkbox"/>	I am not interested in events				
5	I donate because I like to have a deeper engagement with Spurgeons Children's Charity	<input type="checkbox"/>	I am happy to donate to the Charity and have no deeper engagement				
6	I prefer donating to a particular project or area of work	<input type="checkbox"/>	I am happy for my donation to be applied where most needed				
7	I prefer to make regular, planned donations	<input type="checkbox"/>	I prefer to give particular amounts as and when I choose				

Please tick here

Connect with us online

Keep up online with how your support is changing lives - visit our website:

www.spurgeons.org

Or like us on *Twitter* or *Facebook* and join in the conversation:

@spurgeons @spurgeonsUK

Contact us :

Spurgeons, 74 Wellingborough Road,
Rushden, Northants NN10 9TY
Tel 01933 412412 Fax: 01933 412010
Email: marketing@spurgeons.org

Registered Charity Number 1081182

If you no longer wish to receive
Yours Faithfully, please notify us in writing.

Privacy Notice

We are committed to keeping your personal information safe and secure and to protecting your privacy. How we do this and why is explained in our Privacy Policy, along with your rights regarding your personal information and how we might use it to keep you updated about the work you are helping to make possible.

In February 2021, we carried out a review of our Privacy Policy and you can see the updated version on our website, or by requesting a paper copy. We promise to continue to respect your wishes about how you want us to stay in touch, and you can change your contact preferences at any time by emailing info@spurgeons.org or calling 01933 412412. Find the updated Policy at www.spurgeons.org/privacy