

Changing Ideas: A Call for ideas to improve children's health and wellbeing



changing
ideas

1. Context

Supporting the wellbeing of children and young people has been a strategic priority for Inspiring Scotland since 2008 and we are doing all we can to improve life chances for children and young people in Scotland.

[Inspiring Scotland](#) is delighted to be working with [Changing Ideas](#) on this ‘**call for ideas**’ to look at new ways to improve children’s health and wellbeing in Scotland. The need for innovation and new thinking is now. This call for ideas has been developed by David Graham, the philanthropist and founder of Changing Ideas and will be managed by Inspiring Scotland.

We believe that wherever you start in life you should get a fair chance to enjoy a happy, healthy life free from poverty or disadvantage.

Too many young people in Scotland start their lives at a disadvantage, often leading to further generational poverty, lost life chances, and shortened life expectancy. A child born in one postcode can die 20 years before their peers in a neighbouring postcode, after experiencing decreased life quality and health outcomes. This disparity in people’s lives based on where they live, and the situation of their birth, is both inhuman and immoral.

We believe that we need to focus on children and young people throughout their life journey so that they have happy and healthy childhoods leading to positive adult lives. This includes support for parents, carers, and wider family to enable them to move out of poverty and to provide the necessary and nurturing care that children and young people need to thrive. Beyond any moral perspective this is an extremely effective use of funding.

We fund, support, develop, and learn from organisations who provide holistic, whole family support and trauma informed activities from pregnancy through early years, school and post school transition, to early adulthood, in order to improve life outcomes for children, young people, and their families.

2. Issues affecting children and young people in Scotland

This 'call for ideas' is focused on improving health and wellbeing outcomes for children and young people in Scotland. We know there are many factors which impact on the success of this. The information below sets out a range of statistics which helps to build a picture of the challenges affecting children and young people and families in Scotland.

Poverty

1 in 4 children in Scotland are living in poverty. As a result, they are more likely to have negative health outcomes and development. Low-income families do not have the same access to adequate food, housing and other essential resources.

<https://data.gov.scot/poverty/>

The latest statistics for Glasgow from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) estimates that, in 2022/23, a total of 33,508 children were living in relative poverty¹, a rate of 33.5%.

Mental Health

In 2020, almost one-quarter of young people in Scotland experienced two or more psychological problems in a single week. About 1 in 10 children and young people between the ages of five and 16 had a mental illness that could be diagnosed clinically, but they lacked the services to support them.

"Almost half of children and young people reported in the online survey that they do not feel good about their mental health and wellbeing." Youthlink Scotland, Mental Health Insights Report <https://www.youthlink.scot/wp-content/uploads/Mental-Health-Insights-Report.pdf>

The 2022 Health Behaviour in School-aged Children Study in Scotland found: *"...around a fifth (19%) of young people reported feeling lonely all or most of the time in the past year, and feelings of loneliness were highest among 15-year-old girls (31%). The report also found that around a third of young people reported anxiety, with higher levels among girls than boys; and over a third (35%) were classified as having either low mood or risk of depression."* [University of Glasgow - University news - Archive of news - 2023 - June - Scottish study reveals insights into young people's mental health since pandemic](#)

The Girlguiding survey found: UK-wide *Fewer girls say they're very happy and more feel anxious, for example among 7-21 year olds agreement with 'I'm very happy' is down from 40% in 2009 to 17% in 2023* - [girls-attitudes-survey-2023.pdf](#)

¹ Relative poverty is defined as a household income of less than 60% of the UK median. For example; the UK median income for a lone parent with two children is £682.80. Lone parent families in relative poverty have a weekly income of £409.68.

Confidence

2022 Health Behaviour in School-aged Children Study in Scotland found "...the lowest levels of adolescent confidence seen in 28 years, with only 42% of adolescents in Scotland reporting often or always feeling confident in themselves." [University of Glasgow - University news - Archive of news - 2023 - June - Scottish study reveals insights into young people's mental health since pandemic](#)

School Attendance

Since the pandemic, attendance at school has declined across the UK. In the 2022/23 academic year, 32% of Scottish children were persistently absent, missing 10% or more of their school time. In comparison, the figure in England was 21%.

The report from Reform Scotland also shows a 72% increase in severe absence rates (children missing 50% or more of their school time) between the 2018/19 and 2022/23 academic years. *Reform Scotland (October 2023) Absent Minds: Attendance and Absence in Scotland's Schools.*

In 2023, 37% of all pupils (259,036 individuals) had an additional support need (ASN). This is 2.8 percentage points higher than 2022 when 34.2% of pupils had an additional support need. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/summary-statistics-for-schools-in-scotland-2023/pages/classes-and-pupils/>

Impact of the Pandemic

The pandemic has negatively impacted aspects of child development, including speech, language, and communication skills.

The 2022 Health Behaviour in School-aged Children Study in Scotland found: "While 43% also reported a positive impact on their physical activity, 29% said that their physical activity had been negatively affected. The main negative impacts overall were on mental health (38%) and school performance (34%)." [University of Glasgow - University news - Archive of news - 2023 - June - Scottish study reveals insights into young people's mental health since pandemic](#)

Criminal Justice

Trauma and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) have been shown to impact substantially on life chances and later involvement with criminal justice systems. Those who have experienced four or more ACEs* are potentially:

- 14 times more likely to be a victim of violence in the past year
- 15 times more likely to be a perpetrator of violence in the past year
- 20 times more likely to be incarcerated

Furthermore, almost half (47%) of Scottish adult prisoners in 2019 reported* that they had been physically abused in their home as a child, 58% suffered verbal abuse as a child, and 62% reported having been bullied as a child. *Scottish Prison Service Prisoner Survey 2019.

Care Experience

The lives of care experienced children and young people are increasingly complex, which can affect their emotional wellbeing, physical health, and education. CELCIS has recently reported higher Additional Support Needs rates in children with experience of kinship care (57% vs 32% in the general population) and more frequent developmental concerns (31% vs 12%) underlining the need for support.

Poverty is a substantial issue for some kinship families. The balance of care nationally is changing. Kinship is increasingly recognised by statutory social work teams as the first choice, with far more children in kinship care than other forms of care. This is reflected in a substantial increase in the proportion of children living in kinship care, from 1 in 8 (13%) in 2006 to 1 in 3 (34%) in 2023.

https://www.celcis.org/application/files/1017/2831/4415/Growing_Up_In_Kinship_Care_Report_-_CELCIS_8_October_2024.pdf

Around a quarter of people in custody have experience in the care system rising to 31% of females in custody. Care leavers also make up 25% of the adult homeless.

Infant Mental Health

Infant mental health (mental health from conception to age 3), is a strong indicator of future health. While prevalence is more difficult to determine, it has been suggested that rates for poor mental health in infants are likely to be comparable to those of older children and may sit somewhere between 16% and 18%. <https://ihv.org.uk/our-work/our-work-in-mental-health/perinatal-and-infant-mental-health-what-it-is-and-why-it-matters/>

In addition, up to 20% of mums and 10% of dads experience poor mental health in the perinatal period (pregnancy and first year of life), which increases the risk of children developing emotional, behavioural, social, and educational problems.

Impact of Screentime and Social Media

Children's heavy reliance on screen media has raised serious public health issues since it might harm their cognitive, linguistic, and social-emotional growth. Screen time is much higher in the more socioeconomically deprived individuals, aggregated screen time data from HSBC 2018 on recreational screen time on weekdays is around 9 hours/day in boys and around 8 hours/day in girls and these values have increased over time as a secular trend. (Active Healthy Kids Scotland Report Card 2022, University of Strathclyde.)

More girls in the UK are experiencing negative behaviours online, for example 81% of 11-21 year olds have experienced some form of threatening or upsetting behaviour online, compared to 65% in 2018 - Girlguiding survey [girls-attitudes-survey-2023.pdf](#)

[The World Health Organization recommends no screen time](#) for babies under 2 and no more than one hour of screen time a day for those aged 2 to 4."

Physical Activity and Obesity

It is advised that children aged between 5 to 18 years old, should do moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity for around 60 minutes per day.

The Active Healthy Kids Scotland Report Card (2023), highlighted that children in Scotland are not meeting the recommended levels of physical activity and are engaging in limited active play. 28% of children in Scotland are at risk of being overweight or obese. <https://www.activehealthykids.org/scotland/>

Access to Greenspace

“...researchers concluded that neighbourhood greenspace may reduce social, emotional and behavioural difficulties for 4 to 6 year olds...Urban planning policies that ensure children have nearby access to nature could help improve children’s development.” [The Third State of Scotland’s Greenspace Report \(2018\)](#)

Children living with domestic abuse

The Children Living with Domestic Abuse report found: *By the time study children were six years old, 14% of all mothers reported experiencing any form of domestic abuse since the child’s birth, including 7% who experienced physical abuse. This equates to c.45,000 children aged under 7 who are potentially affected by domestic abuse in Scotland. Children living with domestic abuse. Social inequalities in mother and child experiences and repercussions for children’s wellbeing.* <https://www.pure.ed.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/391327772/SkafidaEtalFPR2023ChildrenLivingWithDomesticAbuse.pdf>

3. Guidance and information

Inspiring Scotland and Changing Ideas are committed to improving the lives of the most vulnerable within society by strengthening the impact of charities. Collectively we back people, movements and organisations challenging the status quo and support action that can achieve lasting impact.

With a focus on children and young people's health and wellbeing, this funding is for projects that will support an organisation to try out an idea, test a new way of working or investigate something that could lead to positive changes in outcomes for young people in Scotland.

This funding will support projects that address a social challenge, improve understanding of it and propose ways to address it. Applicants may want to consider:

- If there are new or different ways to deliver interventions or services?
- Ways to improve current interventions?
- How to collaborate more effectively within and across sectors?

What funding is available?

- Four or five grants of around £20,000 will be awarded.
- Funding will go to projects that support developments in children and young people's health and wellbeing.
- Funding will contribute to project costs, but can include an allocation towards running costs required to set up, run and manage the project.

Who can apply?

- You must be a Scottish Registered Charity or one of the legal forms listed in Section 1, Question 3 of the Expression of Interest form.
- Your organisation must be currently funded by, or working in partnership with Inspiring Scotland or the Rank Foundation (in Scotland).
- Your organisation will have a track record in supporting children's health and wellbeing.
- Partnership applications are welcome. Please have the lead partner complete the Expression of Interest form.

What should your project aim to achieve?

- By the end of the project you will better understand the scale of the problem you were trying to address.
- Know what it will take to implement more effective solutions at scale, for example at lower-cost and/or higher impact.
- You will be better able to validate new ideas with better methods for evaluation.
- Tested new approaches to address the problem.
- Opportunities to develop and/or share best practice with other organisations.

What are we looking for?

- Finding cost-effective interventions, delivered at a community level, that could be scaled.
- Trialing solutions which identify scalable models that can be implemented within a measurable timeframe.
- Fostering collaboration and shared learning by demonstrating how a proposed project directly impacts upon a wider charitable eco-system.
- Consideration of how new technologies and digital tools could help improve the delivery of services.

Delivery

- Projects should have a project plan and a clear timetable (being completed within 6-9 months) with agreed outcomes which will form part of the signed agreement if a grant is awarded.
- Potential for collaboration with partners and/or other relevant grant recipients will be encouraged.
- During the project, we will have appropriately timed catch-ups to help partners and capture learning along the way.
- Reporting will be minimal to give organisations the space to deliver their work.
- You will have an Inspiring Scotland point of contact who will support you during the project.

Examples of previous grants

Here are some previous examples of grants that Changing Ideas have made demonstrating the value of funding:

Human trafficking: an exploration of the effectiveness of partnership models in improving the identification of victims of human trafficking in Scotland.

Human trafficking in Scotland is vastly under identified and reported, resulting in devastating effects for individuals, communities and significant cost to the public purse. A Changing Ideas grant in 2022-23 is enabling [Survivors of Human Trafficking in Scotland](#) (SOHTIS) to pilot a model of improved identification of victims of human trafficking first developed in Greater Manchester. The results from this pilot have the potential to provide an evidence base for systemic change in the approach taken to anti-human trafficking policy and practice across Scotland. Early evidence has demonstrated an increase in the number of victims of trafficking being identified and brought to safety.

Flexible Childcare Services Scotland

The availability of flexible childcare is a barrier to parents accessing work, education or training: conditions vital for employment. Stable employment for parents is a key factor in reducing child poverty. The FCSS provide flexible childcare access to thousands of children per week, but this is expensive.

FCSS conducted research to explore the idea that there may be a point at which enough stability at home/work has been reached, that fully flexible childcare is no

longer needed. This research could be used to identify suitable delivery models, measure their societal impact, and recommend their use to the wider sector and Scottish Government.

Simon Community Scotland

Simon Community Scotland is at the forefront of tackling the causes and consequences of homelessness. They work with people on the streets and in homes to resolve and prevent loss, improve health and wellbeing.

Having developed and delivered a harm reduction approach operating along 7 key principles they wanted to combine these elements into a Good Practice Model. This model would aim to reduce drug related deaths, drug misuse, structural violence and stigma experienced by people with complex lives.

This was to be evaluated for impact and if successful to be promoted for adoption to improve practice and outcomes for homeless people internationally.

4. How to apply?

Please submit an Expression of Interest application through [this online form](#). To prepare your application, use this [Microsoft Word version](#) of the online form.

You must answer the questions in the online form. When you have submitted your Expression of Interest application, you will receive a confirmation email. If you do not receive this, please check your spam folder, and contact us if you have not received it.

You must submit your completed Expression of Interest application by 12pm (midday) on Thursday 12 December. We cannot accept applications after this deadline.

What happens after you apply?

Inspiring Scotland will discuss Expressions of Interest with Changing Ideas over the course of December 2024 and January 2025.

We may be in touch with separate questions about your application during this time. We expect to let organisations know if they were successful or not in February 2025.

Accessibility

If there are barriers to you accessing this information or the application form, please get in touch.

Questions and queries

If you have any questions about the process contact ia@inspiringscotland.org.uk

If you have any questions about the content of your project, please contact your Inspiring Scotland Fund team. If you are from the Rank Foundation portfolio please contact ia@inspiringscotland.org.uk and we can pass on your query.

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