

Welcome to the October edition of my Connect newsletter, bringing you news from The Children's Society across Somerset, Devon & Cornwall.

You may have seen in my September newsletter that there are changes happening at The Children's Society. Sadly, the effects of covid have forced the organisation to have a re-structure and move forward into a new era of working. I'm delighted to tell you that I was successful in my application and will now be the Community Relationships Manager for the South-West Region. From Monday 25th October, I will return to full-time working, covering Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Somerset, Wiltshire, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. There will be changes in the way I

will be working; however, these won't be fully established for some time. I will be sure to keep you updated, but rest assured that our goal remains the same – to reverse the damaging decline in children's mental health and well-being by 2030 and to create a society built for all children.



I've had some fantastic meetings and given presentations this month to Diocesan teams and have spoken to many supporters about their October house box collections. I've been planning a couple of in-person events, one in Bath and one in Plymouth, to showcase the results of this year's annual Good Childhood Report and to also celebrate our supporters. Unfortunately, the Bath event has been cancelled due to low uptake and we still only have three people registered for the Plymouth event. I will shortly decide whether to cancel Plymouth and move the event on-line, opening it up to all across Cornwall, Devon, and Somerset. I will send further details by email.


Thank you all for your ongoing support. Every penny you raise, campaign you sign, prayer and conversation about our work really does make a difference. I'm excited to move into a new era of working here at The Children's Society and hope you will continue to support us on this journey.

Wishing you all a wonderful Harvest Festival,
Jess

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 Jess Meale Tcs



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Working days – Wed-Fri

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CheckPoint Torbay

I wanted to take the opportunity to showcase the work of our CheckPoint Project in Torbay in this newsletter. The project has been running for over 20 years, providing advice and support to young people aged 8-18. They have services across Torquay, Paignton and Brixham. They work with those who have low emotional health and well-being, who go missing from home, those affected by drug and alcohol use, those who have experienced sexual exploitation and also provide advocacy and independent visitors to children in care. More information about their work can be seen by clicking [here](#). Some of the staff at the project are also speakers who deliver talks about the CheckPoint project and our work in general. Zac Tioncgo, Child Sexual Abuse Worker for Exeter, Mid and East Devon is one such speaker who delivered a fantastic talk at a virtual coffee morning in late 2020. If you missed it, you can catch up on YouTube [here](#).



Prevention Work

I met with our South-West Prevention Officer, Jackie Thomas, on 29 September who provided an update on what she's been working on:

- Preventing exploitation to hospitality across the city of Plymouth. Jackie will work in collaboration with Devon and Cornwall police based in Plymouth and the Plymouth Community Safety Partnership to deliver training. This will be from November onwards.
- Witness Service South West- strategic planning on reframing narratives surrounding children and young people who are child witnesses. These could be victims of exploitation and appear in a court setting. Working with all teams from October 2021, via workshops and webinars to explore stereotyping and unconscious bias.
- Parkdean Caravan Parks – Jackie is working with the South West and National team to creating a webinar, including case studies, to be included in their national e-learning package on 'spotting the signs of exploitation'. This will go out to all new and existing staff.
- Creating a resource for parents and professionals on how to support children and young people who have been exploited into 'debt bondage'. Debt bondage occurs when a person is forced to work to pay off a debt. They are tricked into working for little or no pay, with no control over their debt. Most or all of the money they earn goes to pay off their loan. The value of their work invariably becomes greater than the original sum of money borrowed, and this regularly occurs with young people involved in county lines drug trafficking. This is in collaboration with the National Working group which includes the Met police and other force colleagues along with the The Children's Society's 'Disrupting exploitation team. Due to be finalised Nov 2021 and will be circulated.
- Delivered to the new social work teams across Children's services in Avon and Somerset. Sessions included 'risks and vulnerabilities', and 'peer to peer' abuse
- Missing Tool- The Children's Society created this tool for all agencies to support their improvement of interventions on 'missing children'. These 2 workshops were delivered across Devon and Cornwall who requested this. An interactive and problem-solving

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session to explain the missing tool, and how The Children's Society can support bespoke outcomes leading to improved outcomes for children and young people.

The Prevention Team will be launching their annual **#Look Closer** campaign from 11-18 October and Jackie is part of the national working group, collating, creating, and bringing the campaign together. This campaign aims to raise awareness of child exploitation and abuse and focuses on public spaces where exploitation may be most visible to the public – parks, supermarkets, transport, banks and online environments like gaming platforms and social media. There is a full #LookCloser pack, which provides details of how to support the campaign on social media, posters to display in your local area and training opportunities. Please let me know if you'd like the pack.

Exploited young people don't always look and act vulnerable

Look closer

If something doesn't feel right, it may not be.

Young people can be exploited anywhere and may be most visible in public spaces.

Help us protect children and young people from exploitation and abuse.

Don't wait. Report it:



If you are concerned about a child and think it's an emergency, dial **999** or **101** if it's not an emergency.

On a train text British Transport Police on **61016**.



If you would rather remain anonymous, you can contact the independent charity Crimestoppers online or call **0800 555 111**.

childrenssociety.org.uk/lookcloser

#LookCloser



The Children's Society



Charity Registration No. 221124 © The Children's Society 2021 DEX015a/0421

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Black History Month

In October we celebrate Black History month. It is a chance to shine a light on our shared British history and tell stories from the perspective of all people and pray for those who experience bullying and racism because of their race, ethnicity or national origin.

The Children's Society believes every child should have the chance to be safe, happy and achieve their dreams regardless of their parent's immigration status. Our services across the UK give young refugees and migrants opportunities to recover, meet people and start enjoying life in a new country. We pray especially for those who have recently arrived from Afghanistan.



Sunday 3 October, 18th Sunday after Trinity

Based on Mark 10.13-16

Loving God

Our communities and our lives are blessed by children and young people of infinite diversity, each one unique and precious. We praise you for them.

We pray for the children and young people whose lives and wellbeing are diminished by their circumstances or experience.

Forgive us when we block them instead of bless them, dismiss or don't notice them, disbelieve or take no interest in what they tell us or show us, blame them for abuse against them.

Help us to discern when we must get out of their way or pave the way.

As Black History Month unfolds over the days ahead, and black and brown people of all ages are invited to share what they are "proud to be", we pray for children and young people who experience bullying and racism because of their race, ethnicity or national origin.

We pray for The Children's Society as it builds up relationships and campaigns for structures that enable all children and young people to have life and have it to the full.

Amen.

Campaigns

Improve children's well-being

Children's well-being has been getting worse for over a decade. Even before the pandemic, increasing numbers of young people were unhappy with their lives. This must change. We



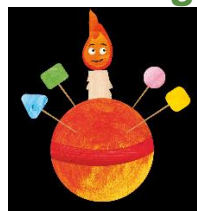
need a brighter future for all children. The Government must make children's well-being a priority. You can join our campaign by calling on your MP to hold the Government to account. They need to meet their promise to leave no child behind and put children's well-being at the heart of national recovery. Help us build a brighter future for all children and click [here](#) to email your MP.

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Christingle shop open!



Our Christingle resources shop is now open and can be accessed by clicking [here](#). You can order downloadable and physical resources such as ribbon, candles and collection boxes.

If you'd like a speaker to come and give a talk about our work at your Christingle service, please let me know.

Devon & Cornwall Police Youth Advisory Group

Devon & Cornwall Police are seeking the views of young people, aged 16-25, on their plans to establish a Youth Advisory Group. They really want this group to include individuals with lots of different life experiences, opinions and ideas, and want young people to be truly involved from the ground up in creating this group.

They want to hear from as many young people as possible, even those that don't necessarily want to be part of the Youth Advisory Group. They don't need to provide their name or any personal information on the survey, but if they are interested in applying to be part of the group in future, they can provide their contact details at the end of the survey.

The online survey can be accessed via the link below and the QR code on the Graphic, and via Devon and Cornwall Police Facebook, Twitter and Instagram Accounts.

<https://services.devon-cornwall.police.uk/surveys/youth-advisory/>



Prayer Email



Do you know that The Children's Society sends out a monthly prayer email? You can sign-up [here](#) to receive monthly prayers that support our work. You can unsubscribe at any time.

This web page also has a link to our church resources and a form to book a speaker for your church or group.

Diocesan Ambassadors Needed

I'm seeking two individuals to take on the role of Diocesan Ambassador, for the Bath & Wells and Truro Diocese respectively.

A Diocesan Ambassador is an individual who can work collaboratively with senior diocesan staff, clergy and our Volunteers, as well as the staff of The Children's Society, in particular myself. If you, or someone you know, has amazing communication skills and enjoys talking to audiences both large and small, has excellent networking and engagement skills, coupled with a knowledge of the church of England and how diocese and parishes work, then please contact me for a chat and full information pack.

I will be here to support you every step of the way and together, we will create a plan of action for your respective diocese. It's a wonderful opportunity and incredibly respected role

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here at The Children's Society. If you'd like to help the most vulnerable children in the UK by engaging your church networks, then please do get in touch.

Ann Stevens is already a Diocesan Ambassador for the Exeter Diocese and has been making great leaps to engage with new opportunities across the area. Ann is always happy to have a chat with anyone considering taking on the role.

'Diocesan Ambassadors play a very important part in The Children's Society and knowing about the work done with some of the most vulnerable young people means I've found it one of the most rewarding roles I've played' – Diocesan Ambassador

Christmas Cards



It may only be October but here at The Children's Society, we're thinking Christmas! Our Christmas Cards are now on sale and can be seen by clicking [here](#) along with some other items such as wrapping paper, gift labels and even tea-towels! Many of our supporters choose to go down a sale or return route. This means you can apply to sell Christmas cards within your local community, only paying for what you sell. If you're interested in this, please drop me an email and I can organise for you to be set up on our system.

Newquay Shop

Val Newbold, Regional Retail Manager has provided an update on our Newquay shop.



Val Newbold

Yesterday at 4:37 PM • Edited • @2

Seen by 26

Newquay!!!!

Today has been fun & games with only part of our fascia being fitted, but looking good



The shop is progressing nicely, hoping for opening day to be Tuesday 19th October, also we are delighted to have recruited 2 new volunteers in our first few days of being here!!!!

Exciting times ahead

[Sarah Brereton Maxine Williams](#)



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Spotlight

Spotlight is the section of my newsletter where we recognise and celebrate our amazing supporters.

I was delighted to receive an email from Graham Harry, Youth Pastor for The 06 Project in Ottery-St-Mary, who I met back in July, to say that the **Newton Popleford Youth Group** has chosen The Children's Society as its charity of the year! I'll be working with Graham over the coming months to provide advice and support on fundraising activities. Thank you so much Graham and I look forward to working with you.

There have been lots of box openings in the last month. **St Peter & St Pauls Church Shepton Mallet** opened their house boxes raising a wonderful £249.62. Box co-ordinator Debbie will be stepping down from the role for a much-needed break. I'm working with the church to book a talk to try and find a new co-ordinator to take on the role. Thank you for all your support Debbie! **St John in the Wilderness Church Withycombe Rayleigh** have also collected in their boxes raising £345.02. A huge thank you to box co-ordinator Judy. **St John the Baptist Church Yeovil** raised an incredible £900.15 from their house boxes and also gave a £66.06 donation and St Marys Church Appledore have donated £310 from boxes. Thank you to Jenny in Yeovil and Sue in Appledore for your ongoing support.

Thanks also go to the Nailsea committee and Christ Church Nailsea for their respective donations of £100 and £106.90.

Local speaker Chris Shepherd gave a talk to Exeter Mother's Union on 24 September, which was booked after Chris' talk at St Marks Church Exeter a few months ago. Chris clearly inspired those who attended her talk, as she's also been booked to speak at Dawlish Mother's Union in March 2022! Thank you for your proactive approach to booking talks Chris, and for being a great advocate for our work.

Your connections



Do you have any connections with a local Rotary, WI, Freemason, Golf Club etc.? It seems there is huge appetite at the moment for these organisations to book a speaker or look to support financially. It's always better if a connection is made with someone who is already part of the group or knows someone in one of these groups. My plea to you is could you speak to them on my behalf? It would be great if you could mention that we can offer a speaker, either in person or virtually. Maybe ask if they'd consider us as their charity of the year? I'm very happy for you to pass on my details to them, or theirs to me, so I can follow up. Thank you in advance for your support.

My month

The highlight of my month has been presenting virtually to both the Bath & Wells and Truro Education Teams with my colleague Mike Todd, National Church Engagement Manager. I was so delighted to receive the following feedback from the Bath & Wells Team:

'I really enjoyed your presentation to our team meeting on Monday – thank you very much, you really inspired us. So much so that I am reaching out to ask if you would be willing to be one of our keynote speakers at our Multi-Academy Trust Trustees and Members Online Conference on Saturday 13th November'

I of course accepted and look forward to presenting at this.

It's been a difficult few months with the changes happening but I look forward to starting my new role on 25 October and continuing to work with you all.

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