



**Ormiston  
Families**  
Brighter futures

**Ormiston Families**  
**2021/22 Impact Report**









## Safe, healthy, resilient families

Thousands of children, young people and families throughout the East of England face daily challenges in achieving a life of connection, safety, confidence and compassion.

At Ormiston Families we know families are the very fabric of life and have been supporting them to make long-lasting positive changes for 40 years, resulting in brighter futures for the next generation. Our vision is that every child in every family in the East of England can get the support they need to bounce back from challenges and ensure they feel safe, healthy and resilient.

2021/22 was a year for reopening, rebuilding and reconnecting. For many, it offered a chance to embrace life, travel and loved ones. For the people we work with, it brought anxiety, loss and isolation. Read about their stories, and how through compassion, working together and focussing on solutions, Ormiston Families supported them to move forwards.

# Our work supporting families affected by imprisonment

**Why? Because roughly 312,000 children per year in England and Wales are affected by the imprisonment of a close family member**

Source: Kane, E., Kincaid, S. and Roberts, M. (2019), 'Children of Prisoners', Crest Advisory

- In 2021/22, 183 children and young people benefited from support from our Breaking Barriers service to cope with having a close family member in prison.
- Our Prisoner Family Services offered over 28,000 prison visits and nearly 5,000 video visits to keep families connected.
- Resident support initiatives like Storybook Dads – giving dads in prison a chance to record bedtime stories for their children – were delivered to 223 prison residents.



After the imprisonment of his father, Maxi's behaviour at school deteriorated and he became anxious and angry. The people around him were worried he might end up excluded from school and in trouble himself. Our Breaking Barriers team helped him work through this tough time...

## Maxi's story

Nine-year-old Maxi had moved with his mum and brother to a peaceful village near his grandparents, but he continued to struggle to come to terms with his dad being in prison. His behaviour at school became disruptive, and he would often be rude to members of staff and refuse to complete tasks. He became extremely anxious and would refuse to talk about his emotions.

Maxi was referred to Ormiston Families' Breaking Barriers service after his classroom behaviour continued to decline. A Breaking Barriers practitioner worked with Maxi and his mother to understand his struggles and set out targets for helping him to handle these difficulties. Maxi and his practitioner met weekly in school for 2 months. They used a range of techniques and resources to help Maxi understand his feelings and take control of his actions.



After his sessions, Maxi remarked that the tools helped him to calm down when he felt angry, both at school and at home. He began to build a trusting relationship with a member of school staff, so he could have someone to talk to about any feelings he was struggling with.

Maxi's mum noticed that he began to express his emotions more openly with her. She said: 'Maxi is a lot happier at school and at home. He is starting to open up more. I highly recommend this service.'



*It was amazing to see the difference in Maxi as the weeks went by. From meeting a shy, nervous and unsmiling young person to working with someone who was open, honest and always smiling when he came into the room. Maxi embraced the opportunity to talk freely when he wanted to, and expressed himself by making things with various resources, using his wonderful imagination. He was able to produce some lovely drawings, all of which helped him to express himself physically and verbally.' Breaking Barriers practitioner*

# Our work supporting families affected by poor mental health

**Why? Because 300 children aged up to 17 will experience the death of a parent every year in Cambridgeshire**

Source: The Childhood Bereavement Network

- In 2021/22, our Supporting Smiles team offered 7,869 sessions of support to children and young people in Norfolk & Waveney experiencing anxiety, low mood and other mental health concerns.
- Small Steps Together offered blended online and in-person sessions of support to 124 new and expectant mothers struggling with their mental health.
- New services; YOUnited, Stars, and WeWill, reached over 300 children and young people through professional mental health support, bereavement counselling and training student wellbeing ambassadors in schools.





Like so many others, Samuel faced the trauma of losing a parent to Covid-19 at an unexpectedly young age. Our newest service, Stars, was on hand to help him navigate this very sad time...

## Samuel's story

Samuel's dad, Tim, fell sick in March 2020 as the nation was held under the first round of pandemic-related restrictions. With no opportunity to say goodbye as he was taken to hospital for tests, and with contact with the hospital often short and sporadic, the family were left in the dark about how serious his condition was. After days of worry and confusion, Samuel's mum was given the devastating news that Tim was being moved to end-of-life care.

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*'I didn't know if I was ever going to go back to school. But I really enjoyed the first session we had with Ann-Marie as a family. Once we started having sessions on our own, Dolly stopped banging around at home and Benj started talking to us. Having Ann-Marie's help in lockdown was so good because we couldn't see all the people we wanted to see after Dad died. I'm so grateful for everything Stars has done for us.'*

Samuel, speaking at a recent event

Samuel, 12, and his siblings had one FaceTime call with Dad on high flow oxygen and another when he said goodbye and that he loved them. His final memory of Dad was of the last time he saw him, on FaceTime, when he didn't recognise him. Samuel was devastated, overwhelmed with worry and fear. He found school difficult, lost his appetite, and struggled to sleep even when sharing a bed with Mum.

Samuel's mum said 'I could see that the children were grieving in their own different ways. Sammy would shout down to me in the night to see if I was okay. While I was grieving myself and trying to sort out the paperwork that came after Tim passed, things at home became really tough'

Samuel and his siblings were referred to our Stars service by their school. Service Manager, Ann-Marie, met with all three children separately at school. Samuel and Ann-Marie talked about the 'Whirlpool of Grief' and Samuel saw he was in the whirlpool. They used a 'Feelings Storm' worksheet which helped Samuel express how he was feeling broken-hearted, unhappy, and anxious.

In counselling sessions, Samuel explored his bedtime routine and thoughts. He constructed and decorated a soothe box for when sad thoughts overwhelmed him. He decorated a candle, talked about Dad, and laughed at memories. Samuel was worried other loved ones would die from Covid-19, so explored how they were keeping safe. He dreamt about Dad and Grandad and his counsellor explained how dreams help us process and make sense of death.

Samuel eventually felt able to move back into his own bedroom with strategies for sleeping. He was participating in hobbies, spending time with friends, and planning for the future. They revisited his Storm Feelings worksheet and Samuel expressed he felt less sad and worried and was happier.

# Our work supporting communities

**Why? Because 40% of mothers who have lost children in the family courts have spent time in care themselves**

Source: Lancaster University (2017)

- In 2021/22 our Sensory Toy Library reached almost 100 registrations, supplying free specialist resources to parents and professionals for nearly 1,000 children with special educational needs and disabilities.
- 77 young women at risk of unplanned pregnancy and child removal were supported by YouCanBe to stabilise their chaotic lifestyles and make positive relationship choices.
- Our Mpower service worked with 143 women who had at least one child removed into care to help deal with this loss and understand and address the issues behind the removals.





Claire's childhood experience of domestic abuse had already led to her losing her home and moving school several times. The added pressure of her mum's poor mental health meant that Claire and her siblings found their own, often unhealthy, ways of dealing with their trauma. Our YouCanBe team stepped in to offer support...

## Claire's story

Claire, 19, was referred to us by the supported housing unit where she was living. Claire found school difficult, and struggled with authority, sometimes becoming disruptive and violent. She found it hard to make healthy relationships with peers or romantic partners, due to the unhealthy relationship dynamics she had witnessed. Claire felt unhappy and unsafe at home and so decided to leave her mother's house to escape further conflict and upset.

Claire was very open to the support Ormiston Families offered from the start and recognised that change would only happen if she worked hard to make different choices. She met with our practitioner Mel on a bi-weekly basis, either face-to-face, over the phone, or over zoom, dependent on Covid-19 rules and Claire's needs. Mel also checked in with Claire weekly via text.



*We are a consistent and reliable support in their lives.*

*We offer them someone to talk to when they have nobody else or when they do not feel they can talk to those around them. We have conversations with them that they do not have with anyone else."*  
Jessica, YouCanBe practitioner

Mel helped Claire create a life-story timeline, enabling her to reflect on how much she had experienced at such a young age, and to help her process the effects these experiences had and are still having on her. They also created a family tree, which further allowed Claire to unpick her unresolved feelings for her family members.

Claire engaged well with the relationship and sex education sessions she was offered and became able to recognise the differences between unhealthy and healthy relationships, and to understand the importance of rules and boundaries in relationships. She was also supported to go onto the contraceptive pill.

Claire's relationship with her Mum and her siblings improved and she has been able to talk honestly with her Mum about her more difficult feelings, forgive her and find compassion for her. The whole family dynamic has improved meaning that Claire has a positive family network of support which was not previously there.

Claire has been able to make healthy friendships at college. She has shown increased confidence in herself as well as better self-awareness, resilience and emotional regulation. Claire's self-esteem has greatly improved because of all of these changes.

# Financials

## Income

- Government funding
- Trading
- Trust and other grants
- Fees and other income
- Donations and events

£'000

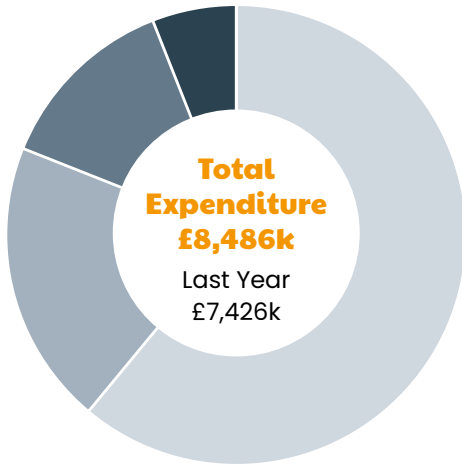
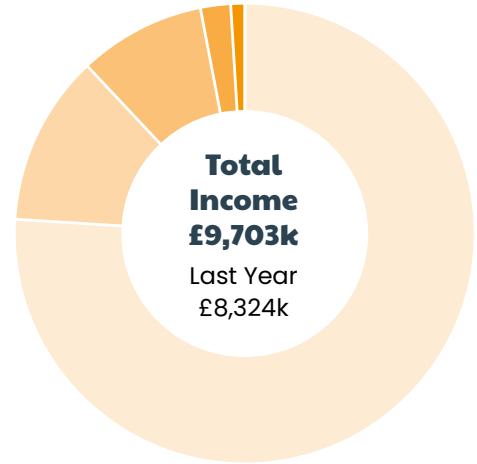
**£6728**

**£1129**

**£1552**

**£40**

**£254**



## Expenditure

- Services supporting families
- Services for those affected by the justice system
- Trading
- Raising grants and other income

£'000

**£5727**

**£1290**

**£1057**

**£412**

In 2021/22, we raised £9,703k to continue our work supporting families in the East of England. We spent £8,486k on our work to make sure our doors stayed open for people who needed support. In total, this money helped us to work directly with 3,469 families through 18,063 sessions of support. In addition, we welcomed over 28,000 prison visitors at over 1000 visit sessions\*\*.



*Thank you. It's you who has helped me get to the place where I am now. There isn't anything you could do to improve your support. It feels different to other support I have been offered before and none of that has worked. You share your own experiences and that makes it better for me" YouCanBe service user*

\*Figures taken from draft 2021/22 accounts, subject to final revisions and approval in September 2022

\*\*These figures look different to previous years. As part of our investment in impact measurement and commitment to transparency, we have revised the way that we report how many people we work with. Previously, our total reach included prison visitors – now we have separated our visits work, which may see one person counted for several visits, and our direct support work, where each individual is only counted once.

Now, more than ever, your support is greatly appreciated by Ormiston Families to ensure the brighter futures of children, young people and families in the East of England.

## Your small contribution to the charity can make a big difference to families in your community, in your street, who need us the most – get involved today:

### Fundraise

Our website has lots of ideas, and our team is on hand to support you all the way.



### Play

Join our lottery and be in with a chance of winning a £25,000 jackpot each and every week!



### Share

Pass on this report to a friend or share our social media posts to help raise awareness of our work.

### Volunteer

If you can give some of your time, check out our latest opportunities and get in touch via our website.

### Nominate

We could be your employer's next Charity of the Year if you put our name forward.

### Leave a gift

You can open the door to a child's future by leaving a gift in your will to the charity.



For more information about supporting Ormiston Families, please visit [www.ormiston.org/getinvolved](http://www.ormiston.org/getinvolved)





The continued work of Ormiston Families would not be possible without our wonderful supporters. We would like to thank every individual donor, volunteer, corporate partner and Trust or Foundation that has supported the charity. You have helped us keep the doors open, and helped thousands of families across the East of England see a brighter future.

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