



coram | better chances
for children
since 1739

275 years of creating change for children
Digest of achievements, 2014 -2015

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“I believe
every one
ought, in
duty to do
any good
they can.”

Thomas Coram, 1738

Coram is the UK children's charity that has been supporting vulnerable children for 275 years, and is still finding new ways to help children. We now help a million children and young people every year.

Coram helps children and young people develop their skills and emotional health, finds adoptive parents and upholds children's rights, creating a change that lasts a lifetime.

Find out more at www.coram.org.uk

Our mission is to develop, deliver and promote best practice in the support of children and young people. Our vision is that every child has the best possible chance in life.

Distribution of Coram Group Services

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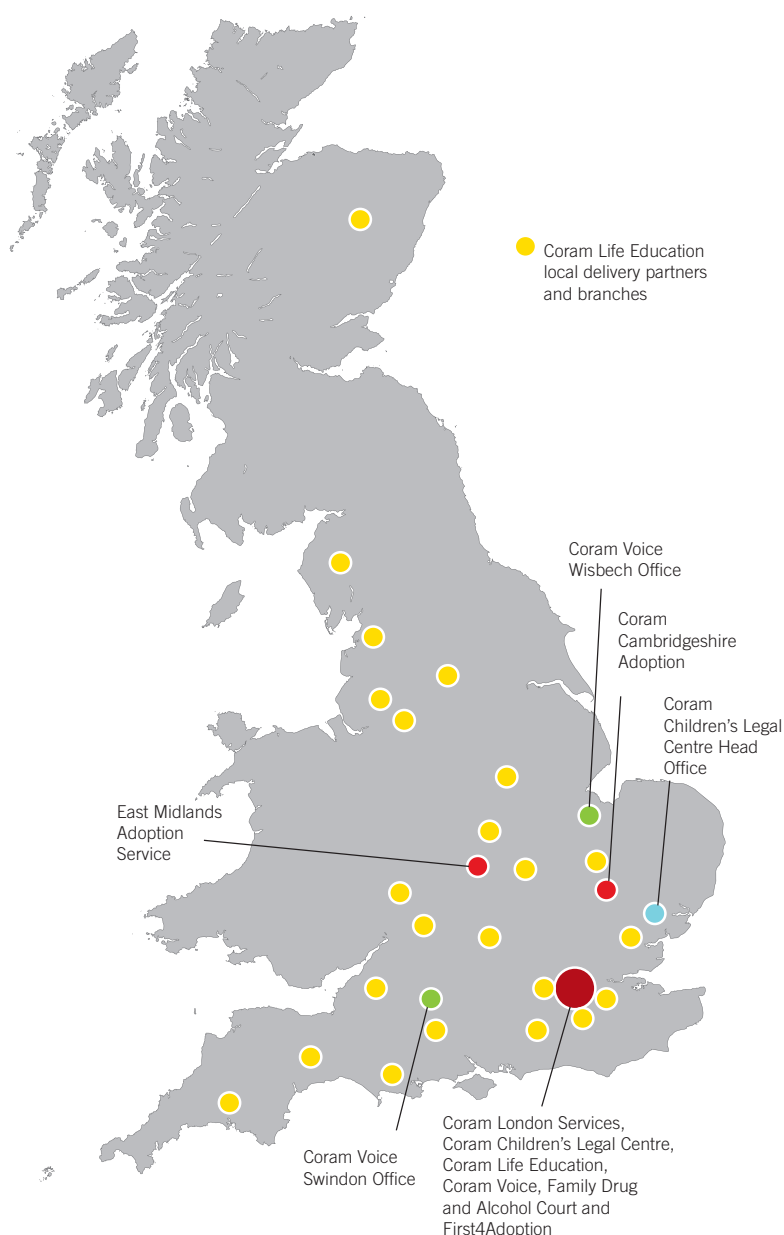
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Working in partnership with

FIRST 4 ADOPTION

THE
FOUNDLING
MUSEUM

Key Achievements

- In its 275th year, Coram has benefitted over one million children and families through direct support, advocacy, representation, advice and schools-based learning.
- Opening the Pears Pavilion as the new centre for creative therapies and adoption support services.
- Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption was established as a new voluntary adoption agency, created by Coram and Cambridgeshire County Council, with funding from the Department for Education (DfE).
- Coram made 230 placements directly and in partnership, more than any other Voluntary Adoption Agency.
- The announcement of plans for The Queen Elizabeth II Centre on the Coram Campus, which will house the children's rights centre and the Rangoonwala Conference & Learning Centre.

"The innovative Coram-Kent partnership has created a better adoption service... seen in the substantial improvements in the number of children placed and the number of approved adopters available in Kent."

Edward Timpson,
Minister for Children

Celebrating 275 years

Coram's biggest ever fundraising concert, City Rocks, at the Royal Albert Hall on 1 April 2014, launched our 275th anniversary programme.

Our 'No child should be invisible' pledge campaign saw over 1,200 signing the pledge, exceeding target by 20%, and web traffic grew by 60%.

Media Presence

In 2014/15, the print and broadcast media coverage generated by Coram's Communications team included major features:

- Front page in The Guardian Family Weekend supplement featuring a woman who adopted two young children, both with Down's syndrome, through Coram (31 January, 2015).
- One major feature in the Evening Standard focusing on the work of Coram which coincided with National Adoption Week (3 November, 2014).
- A feature-length special on Channel 4 News, covering a new Coram Voice report on youth homelessness amongst care leavers, including interviews with Coram Voice Managing Director, Andrew Radford, and Coram Voice service users (December 2014).

Recognition and Awards

- Jeanne Kaniuk OBE, Coram's Managing Director of Adoption, was awarded the prestigious silver Lifetime Achievement Award in the national Social Worker of the Year Awards 2014.
- Velou Singara, Chief Finance Officer was a finalist in the Sayer Vincent Finance Director of the Year.
- Noel Arnold, the Director of the Legal Practice at Coram Children's Legal Centre was shortlisted for the prestigious Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year awards 2015 for his dedication and commitment to children's rights.
- The Coram-Kent partnership was recognised for innovation in the GO Procurement Awards.
- First4Adoption was Awarded Digital champion of the Year at the National Adoption Week Awards.



City Rocks, featuring Lily Allen, Sophie Ellis-Bextor, Brian May and The Feeling.
© Christie Goodwin

National Platform

- First4Adoption expanded the national information centre for adopters and now includes an e-learning platform and Digital Service.
- The Adoptables was launched as a new ambassadors programme for young people who are adopted, supported by The Queen's Trust. Minister for Children and Families, Edward Timpson, visited First4Adoption to talk with these adopted young people, who have created a new online resource for First4Adoption's website.
- The Department for Education provided a Voluntary and Community Sector grant for the digital first development of the Child Law Advice Service.
- The Hadley Trust enabled the Bright Spots programme in improving the experience of care.

Policy and Practice Impact

- Coram Voice published 'The Door is Closed' report on child homelessness
- Training was delivered to over 1500 professionals.
- Coram Children's Legal Centre gave evidence to the Joint Committee on Human Rights regarding the legal aid test for individuals with less than 12 months lawful residence in the UK.
- Migrant Children's Project co-chaired the Refugee Children and the National Asylum Stakeholder Forum Children's subgroup within the Home Office.
- Coram Children's Legal Centre's International team published 'Over-protected and under-served: Legal barriers to young people's access to sexual and reproductive health services', including case studies from three jurisdictions: El Salvador, Senegal and the UK.

Partnership Success

Coram depends on the support of many individuals, trusts, companies and other funders to make its work possible. This year this support exceeded all previous years and we thank all our supporters and volunteers. Some of the special achievements included:

- The 10th anniversary Broadgate Estates CYCLE TO... MIPIM ride involved over 100 cyclists and raised a record amount for Coram this year, bringing the total raised to over £500,000 throughout the partnerships - positioning CYCLE TO... Coram's largest ever corporate partner.
- LandAid kindly funded 'The Den' in the Pears Pavilion dedicated to supporting young people aged 16-25, whilst providing pro bono landscape architecture support from LDA Design to design the Pavilion gardens.
- Sodexo supported Coram Life Education for the second year running, rebranding and launching the Parent's Assembly Programme in Salford and Greater Manchester.
- In September, Coram was visited by Miss World, Miss England and Miss Wales, receiving a large donation from the Miss World Organisation's charity, Beauty with a Purpose.
- Colt Technology Services selected Coram as its UK Charity Partner for the next two years, kicking off the partnership with a cycle ride from Amsterdam to Frankfurt to raise funds and awareness for our work.
- Mace continued to support Coram for a second year running - raising vital funds through donations, challenge events and a Gala Dinner held at the Foundling Museum.
- The Virgin Money London Marathon saw 26 runners take on the 26 mile challenge for Coram, raising a record amount in April 2015.
- The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation continues its strategic support for Coram's training, research and policy impact work to support vulnerable children.

Vision for the future

- With thanks to The Queen's Trust pledge of £2 million capital and £400,000 running costs, and The ZVM Rangoonwala Foundation's pledge of £1 million, we have announced the plans for the launch of The Queen Elizabeth II Centre.
- Coram Children's Legal Centre, will provide training around Article 12 (United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child) to residential settings and legal practitioners throughout the EU (funded by the Department of Justice).
- Coram Voice will provide advocacy services for looked after children and children subject to child protection plans in Norfolk, thanks to a new three year agreement with Norfolk County Council.
- Coram Adoption will provide Life Story Book training to professionals, parents/carers and children, with the support of the Department for Education.
- The Department for Education (DfE) also supported the expansion of Coram's regional Adoption work throughout London and Kent.
- In March 2015, Coram were successful in bidding for a Department for Education grant to develop and share best practice models for speeding up the process of matching and placing children for adoption.
- The Social Care Innovation Fund will enable the expansion of the Family Drug and Alcohol Court and Coram-i's innovative work on system reform.

Family for life

Coram runs one of the largest and most highly acclaimed voluntary adoption services in the UK, finding loving families for those in greatest need. This year Coram provided this service in and around London, East Anglia and the East Midlands.

Coram also continued to work in partnership with Kent, Harrow and Redbridge local authority Adoption Services, sharing expertise and knowledge, and established Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption to meet the needs of children in the county.

"Ongoing support for adoptive parents is absolutely vital. Parenting adopted children is a difficult and unique task and it is so important to me to know that I have a support option available."

Coram adopter

Acclaimed service

- **Ofsted Outstanding** – Coram Adoption received an 'outstanding' rating across all categories of the service.
- Coram made 230 placements directly and in partnership, more than any other Voluntary Adoption Agency.
- **Adopters highly rated the service** – user satisfaction feedback indicated a high quality service, with an overall satisfaction score of 94%, and particularly rated the skill and professionalism of Coram staff.
- **Expansion of Concurrent Planning service** – the Subscription Scheme was expanded to 17 Local Authority members and 4 Voluntary Adoption Agency members who between them had 50 babies placed for early permanence by the end of 2014.
- **Promoting best practice on Life Story work** - Life Story research conducted by Coram provided valuable insight to practitioners on how Life Story work for adopted children can be improved.
- **Improving parenting skills for adoptive parents** - 70% of parents who attended a parenting programme at Coram improved their confidence in managing their children's behaviour problems.
- **Successfully placing children with families** – 72 families were approved for adoption and 87 children were placed.

Coram Kent partnership

Kent County Council has continued to find more homes for adopted children than any other Local Authority for the second consecutive year. 143 children were placed with an adoptive family and these children were placed an average of 13 days sooner than the children placed the previous year.

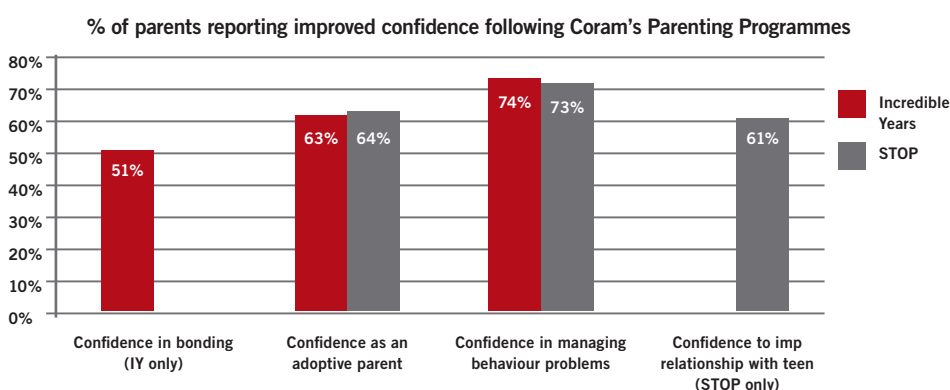
In addition we received 146 applications from households wishing to be considered for adoption in 2014/15. We approved 138 households, which was lower than the number approved in 2013/14 (167) as a result of the reduction in the numbers of children for whom we needed to find adoptive families.

The improvements we have delivered over the three years of the partnership have resulted in Kent avoiding at least £1.6m in expenditure on looked after children due to them spending less time in care.

Parenting programmes for adoptive parents

Coram provided a range of parenting programmes tailored to the unique needs of adopters with adopted children at different life stages. Parents of adopted children aged eight or under took part in the Parenting Skills for Adopters programme based on Webster-Stratton's Incredible Years, which explores pre-adoption experiences and attachment, and includes elements of play, praise and reward, limit setting and behavioural issues. Parents of adopted children reaching or in their adolescence took part in the STOP programme. Over the past two years Coram delivered 15 parenting programmes nationally to 186 adopters from 128 households.

Parenting groups were particularly effective in improving parents' confidence in managing their child or teenager's behaviour problems.





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Life Storybooks for adopted children

Children with a plan for adoption, especially young children, rely on others to provide a coherent account of their often complex early lives. Life Storybooks are the statutory required tool in which memories and accounts of events can be stored. Despite a wealth of practice-orientated guidance, there is limited research exploring the experiences of those who use the books. To this end, Coram, in conjunction with Bristol University and funded by the Department for Education (DfE), conducted surveys and interviews to explore the views and experiences of adopted children, adoptive parents and professionals from local authorities.

The key messages from the research were:

- Adopted children valued their Life Storybooks, but were concerned about the lack of overall narrative, about the honesty conveyed in their book, and about the one-sided nature of the story that was told.
- When Life Storybooks were of good quality, parents found them invaluable in their discussions with their children about their birth and care histories, and felt they facilitated a valued connection to their birth family. However, in some cases the Life Storybook was unusable and considered by

adopters to be damaging and unhelpful for the children concerned.

- Barriers to providing good quality Life Storybooks were a lack of resources, training and prioritisation, and insufficient recognition of their importance.
- Support for adopters and children is essential, and should be available and easily accessible throughout childhood and in particular as children approach adolescence, when questions of identity become even more salient.
- Training of adopters should be developed, to help them to understand the purpose of the book, when to introduce it to their child, how to deal with the details of their child's history and how to ensure the books have relevance for children across childhood and adolescence.
- With the right support and training, many adopters wanted to be involved in making the Life Storybooks, and if supplied with the skills, tools and materials, they would also be able to update the books as the child grows up.
- Sufficient time and resources must be allocated to workers for all elements of Life Story work, including for the collection of

information and material, in order to produce the highest quality Life Storybooks.

- Professional concerns echoed the concerns of children and adopters. Training for social workers to produce Life Storybooks, and to learn from the good practice of others, was considered a priority. This must feature guidance in 'telling the story', including getting the tone of the story right and ensuring that there is sufficient detail on the reasons why the child had come into care.
- Professionals felt there was need for supervision and support in monitoring the quality of the production of Life Storybooks, and in telling a difficult and complex story.
- Teachers and schools need to be supported to develop their knowledge and skills on how to best support adopted children in school, and facilitate appropriate discussions about their adoptive histories in school (if relevant). The role of school staff in supporting adopted children generally, and using Life Storybooks in particular, also needs to be addressed.

Coram has now secured further funding from the DfE to provide training workshops for professionals and adopters in Life Storybooks to improve practice nationwide.

Changing lives through music and art

Children and their families value therapeutic support, particularly if children are feeling sad, lonely, are struggling to concentrate, or are behaving in challenging ways.

Art and music therapists use art materials or musical instruments, movement and play, to help children and young people make sense of their world, whilst exploring different ways to communicate. The aim of therapy is often to help children and young people feel more confident, find positive solutions and begin to think about the way they behave and interact with others.

Creative therapy for children excluded from mainstream school

Coram continued to support marginalised children and young people with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and profound and multiple learning difficulties in schools in Camden. The project focused on improving communication, peer relations and supporting educational outcomes. 42 children received therapy individually and 33 in groups.

Creative therapy for young people in the Criminal Justice System

This project provided support to 39 young people already in the criminal justice system or those vulnerable to becoming involved in risky behaviours. Based in Kensington and Chelsea, the project supported young people aged 13–19 through sessions held at Connexions centres and in local youth offending centres. Issues tackled included low self-esteem and confidence, family relationships and building resilience.

Creative therapy for adopted children

79 adopted children with complex needs received intensive one-to-one interventions, which delivered positive outcomes according to most parents. This pilot led to a continuation of art and music therapy for adopted children in Cambridgeshire, Kent, the East Midlands and London.

Delivering training and presentations

Nationally, Coram has delivered training across the health and charity sector. This has included sessions in the use of the Music Therapy Outcomes Star; on 'Music and the Brain' at Goldsmith's University; and various sessions in the use of art and music therapy in different settings and with different groups.

International work

A team from Coram spent two weeks in Mumbai, India, working for two charities: Talitha Arts and The Rangoonwala Foundation.

Talitha Arts work alongside the International Justice Mission to support young trafficked women through creative engagement groups, providing a safe place for exploited young girls and women to express themselves non-verbally and build self-esteem. Coram joined Talitha in the co-facilitation of groups and advised them on therapeutic practice issues such as safe working in relation to trauma.

At the Rangoonwala Foundation, training was delivered to 25 outreach workers on using art and music to foster positive engagement with children, families and the elderly living in Mumbai slums. The group reported that the skills they learned are already supporting them in their work with disadvantaged children.

Creative therapy for children

- **Successfully supporting more children each year** – nearly 300 children received Creative Therapy.
- **Supporting therapists in demonstrating their practice** – 35 therapists were trained to use the Music Therapy Outcomes Star.
- **Purpose-built facilities for creative therapies** – the opening of the Pears Pavilion in 2015 saw the creation of a dedicated space for music and art therapy sessions.
- **Improved outcomes for children** – 68% of parents said their children's behaviour improved after art therapy; over 75% reported children improved in emotional well-being after music therapy.

New Model Arts Project

Thirteen young people aged 12–14 years old took part in Coram's New Model Arts Project. This pioneering approach engaged marginalised young people in order to build trust with adults, support peer to peer relationships, emotional literacy and self-esteem, and build empathy.

The therapeutic group was cofacilitated by a Coram Art Therapist, an Art Teacher, and an Art Psychotherapist. The group produced an animation, 'Anime', which was displayed at Coram and the Foundling Museum. Young people also talked about the project's impact on their empathy and self-esteem in a short film, which featured in the Mental Health Foundation's Anxiety Arts Festival 2014.

Individual stories are real, but the accompanying images are posed by models and are not the subject of the story.



David's Story

David was born to a mother with profound mental health difficulties. When he was eight months old, it was decided that David's mother couldn't offer him the support he needed, and he went through a series of foster placements until he was adopted aged 16 months. This left David with high levels of separation anxiety, and he would wake up in the night screaming for his parents.

At the age of three-and-a-half, David's dad brought him to music therapy at Coram. At first David tried to prevent his dad from leaving, and he was very nervous about interacting with his therapist. Over several sessions, David's dad was encouraged to start leaving the room. Initially this made David very angry and he would shout, stamp his feet and throw instruments. The therapist worked with David to express his anger and helped him to understand that his feelings were being heard. By the end of the course of therapy, David could get through a whole session on his own without any tears or anger. In his Dad's own words:

"We were extremely concerned about David starting nursery in September. We are now four weeks in and he is happy to attend. After some understandable nervousness he was OK with me leaving. Without music therapy, we would not be in this position. I learnt so much and was better able to manage his fears, clinginess and anger."

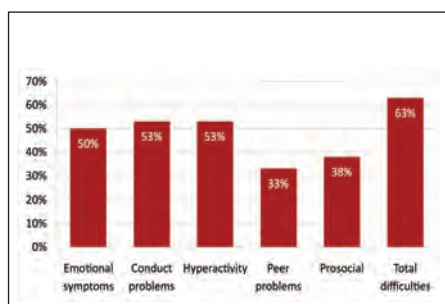
Art Therapy

Coram's art therapy offers children and families the opportunity to explore and express their feelings by making art. Working with each child or young person to build a trusting relationship, a trained art therapist uses a variety of different art materials to help them communicate in a totally new way.

Since therapy, 68% of parents said their children's behavioural difficulties improved. The majority of children improved in their total behavioural difficulties, which were a combination of emotional symptoms, hyperactivity and peer problems. Indeed, almost 50% of children improved in three or more areas.

"... I'm happy I participated in it... I didn't know I could make something like this... I never knew I could make the hat or anything like that... I feel better, accomplished."
13-year-old boy

Improvement in outcomes for children after receiving art therapy

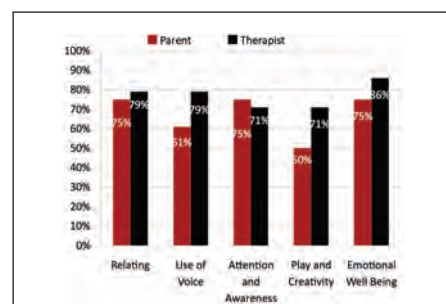


Source: Coram Evaluation 2014/15

Music Therapy

Coram's music therapists help children explore their feelings and communication, through sound and play, in order to help them work through complex issues and build their confidence and resilience. The therapists work with children who find it difficult to communicate, engaging them in interaction by helping them express themselves through all aspects of music. This includes voice, movement, percussion instruments and piano.

Coram uses the Music Therapy Outcomes Star, a tool developed by Triangle Consulting and Coram, as part of a therapeutic process to demonstrate change in five key areas listed on the chart below. Therapists and parents reported improvements for the majority of children and young people in all of these areas, particularly in emotional well-being.



Source: Coram Evaluation 2014/15

Helping parents do their best for their children

Parents sometimes struggle to manage caring for their children. They can have trouble coping with very young children or become so overwhelmed by their own problems that they struggle to provide the stability their children need. Coram's parent support and advice offers early help and support to parents to avoid crises, so that they can do the best for their children in the long term.

The service based in Thurrock offers borough-wide, one-to-one support and parenting programmes to families with children from birth to eighteen years old. It focuses on building parental and family resilience, and strengthening family and community attachments.

"I've noticed so many positive changes in my family"

Thurrock Parent

"Since the group, mum and dad have been much calmer and have dealt with things in a different way"

Thurrock Child

Community Based Assessment Project

The Community Based Assessment Project is a partnership project between Thurrock Council and Coram. It was at the early stages of piloting in 2015 and will work with six families over the forthcoming year.

Community Based Assessment is a holistic multi-agency model of assessment of families in need. It brings together local, community and family resources to minimise negative impact on children and young people, and to maintain family contact. The model is an alternative to residential provision and the need to commission external expert reports. The Community Based Assessments are co-ordinated and completed by a Community Based Assessment Senior Social Work practitioner, employed by Thurrock and supervised by Coram.

Parent feedback:

"The staff welcome you and the children in a friendly way. They encourage children to learn, play and share the toys. They share rhymes, books and stories from many cultures, sometimes using languages other than English. They provide an environment that encourages children from babies to toddlers to use indoor and outdoor play."

Building resilience for parents and creating stronger families

- **High attendance of activities:** 194 parents attended a parenting group, 498 one-to-one support sessions were run, with 296 new parents attending these sessions throughout the year.
- **Parent satisfaction:** 96% of parents were satisfied with the overall service, with 99% satisfaction amongst parents attending drop-ins*.
- **Father involvement:** 25% of parents completing parenting programmes or one-to-one sessions were fathers, which is well above the average for fathers attending parenting groups nationally.
- **Supporting cultural diversity:** providing parenting manuals in community languages and making interpreters available to encourage involvement from non-English speaking communities.

*Source: Coram Evaluation 2014/15

Child and Family Law

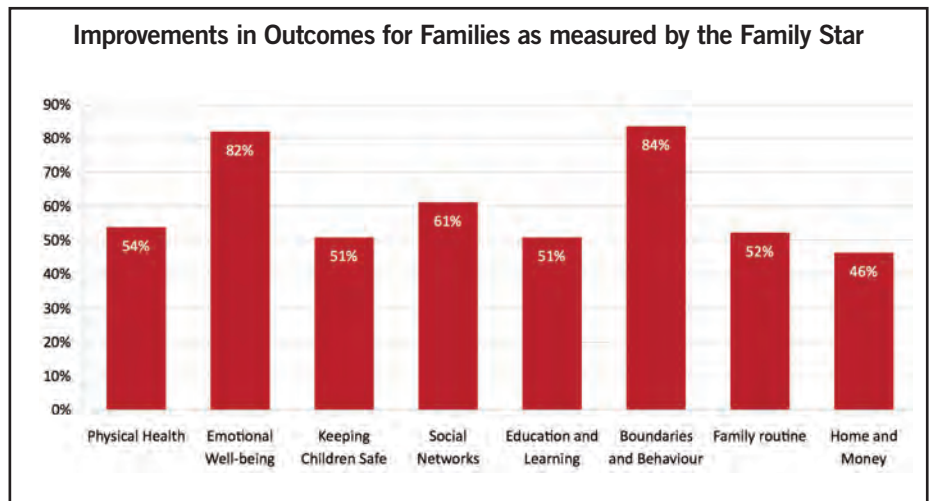
Coram's Child Law Advice Service provides legal advice and information on family, child and education law affecting children and families. Free advice is available on information ranging from healthcare to child protection to education. The service provides a support line and free legal advice fact sheets, which were accessed by over 197,000 children and families throughout the year.

Drop-ins

Coram's Parenting Service offers stay and play sessions, for parents with a child under the age of five. Coram's nursery is on site with places for 108 children and Ofsted rating 'Outstanding'. These groups create a sociable environment for both parents and children, offering a range of activities including a wide toy selection, art, singing, and celebratory cultural events.

Parent feedback:

"I really rate the atmosphere and the sociability of the group and the parents - I think every child (and every parent) deserves this service!!"



Source: Coram Evaluation 2014/15

Parenting Programmes

The majority of the parenting programmes Coram provided were 'Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities' (SFSC), which is a universal preventative programme suitable for any parent of children aged three to 18 years old. It aims to increase parental self-esteem, increase parental confidence and achieve positive changes in family relationships.

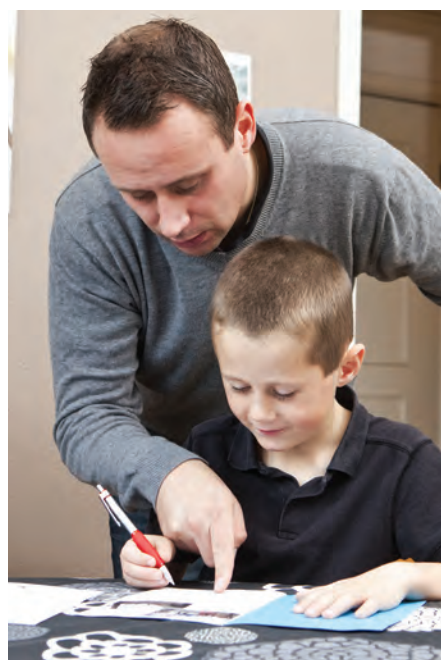
Coram also delivered a small number of more intensive programmes, using the Triple P and Mellow Parenting models. Triple P aims to prevent severe behavioural, emotional and developmental problems in children. Mellow Parenting focuses on attachment through parent-child interaction; child behaviour problems; parental well-being and parental effectiveness and confidence. Historically, Mellow Parenting had been delivered separately for mums and dads, however Coram has been part of a unique pilot jointly delivering the programme.

One-to-one support at home was also provided for all parents attending a programme, to enhance learning. It is also provided as a standalone intervention to some parents who are not able to engage in a group setting, as a result of mental health issues or learning difficulties. Parents currently receive six tailored one-to-one sessions, but a new model is being developed using material from Triple P, which will enable a more structured programme of intervention.

Parenting Programme outcomes

Before starting a parenting programme with Coram, parents most often reported difficulties in providing suitable boundaries and enforcing good behaviour with their children, and in promoting the emotional wellbeing of their families.

Parents experienced substantial improvements after the parenting programme, particularly in those areas of greatest need, with 82% of parents showing improvement in supporting the emotional wellbeing of their family and 84% improving on their ability to provide boundaries and moderate behaviour.



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Parenting Programmes: A father's story

One family came to the parenting service after Children's Services found that the child's parents were engaged in serious physical chastisement of their child, which they were reluctant to change due to cultural beliefs. Whilst the father was initially reluctant, Coram was able to engage well with him and he developed a strong bond with staff.

After completing the programme, the father commented how the programme had changed his perception of parenting. He also reported significant changes related to the emotional wellbeing of his family, their physical health and the use of boundaries and behavioural control.

Explaining the impact of the parenting programme, he said, "Coming to Coram had really changed my life as a father. My coping strategies had improved. Better experience on the process of discipline. I am happy to be part of this programme and I do highly recommend this programme to professionals and [to those] who come to becoming a better parent."

The father is now an ambassador for the programme and promotes what he has learnt about parenting, and the benefits of Coram's parenting programme, at his church.

Managing risk for children

Parental substance abuse is the leading preventable cause of child abuse and neglect featuring in three out of four care proceedings. Launched by the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust and Coram in 2008, the Family Drug and Alcohol Court (FDAC) has continued to demonstrate its success in helping turn around families affected by drug and alcohol misuse. Outcomes for children and families using FDAC have been consistently better than in ordinary care proceedings, with fewer parents relapsing, more parents resuming the care of their children, and less abuse and neglect after a return home. Strong performance has led to the extension of the project from three to six London boroughs, and new projects have also started in Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire and East Sussex.

“FDAC has helped me be the sort of person I want to be. It’s helped me remain focused and motivated and instilled in me a real sense of achievement and confidence.”

FDAC parent

Key achievements

- Extension of the project to six new local authorities giving FDAC a presence across London and in the South East.
- Creation of the National FDAC Development Unit to roll out the project nationally to eleven new sites.
- London FDAC in 2012/13 is estimated to have produced a net saving of £1.2M as a result of reduced costs of care proceedings, post-proceedings care and costs incurred by parental substance misuse.

FDAC Analysis in Department of Education Report 2014

Evaluation Summaries - Better outcomes for FDAC children and families compared to those in standard care proceedings:

- Twice as many FDAC mothers were reunited with their children, having stopped misusing substances (35% versus 19%).
- FDAC fathers were five times more likely to stop misusing substances.
- Where children were returned home, fewer FDAC children were abused and neglected a year after proceedings (25% versus 56%).
- A return of investment of £2.57 for every £1 spent.

FDAC Evaluation (conjunction with Brunel University) 2014

Developing the National Unit

Recognising its national potential, the Department for Education (DfE) awarded FDAC a grant in 2015 to help local authorities around the country implement the model. The new National FDAC Development Unit will establish six new FDACs - Coventry, Kent & Medway, Plymouth, Torbay & Exeter, and West Yorkshire – in 2015/16 and aims to open four new FDACs in each of the following five years. This national roll-out offers the prospect of greatly improved long term outcomes for children and families in over half of the 44 Local Family Justice Board areas in England and Wales.

“I’ve been sober for nearly three years. I still have bad days, but I’m more relaxed and confident as a mum.”

FDAC parent



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Supporting young people in their transition to adulthood

Developing independent living skills is a challenge for young people from all walks of life. But for those who have found themselves living on their own from the age of 16, the challenges can be overwhelming.

Coram not only provides housing for vulnerable young people but also works closely with them to help them build the confidence and life skills needed for independent living. Residents are supported in finding employment or securing a place in training or education. They are also supported in developing life skills in budgeting, time management, laundry and cooking to help them thrive independently. Many residents may have experienced emotional difficulties and the team provides personal support to help the young person deal with these challenges. The team are skilled in providing support around issues such as family relationship breakdown, the stigma of being in care and social isolation. The team's approach is to work in partnership with social workers to encourage and build young people's resilience and to empower them to progress confidently into adulthood.

Helping young people gain the skills needed for independent living

- House-leavers showed improved confidence and coping, improved support networks and better money management.
- 83% of residents rated the quality of Coram's service as very good or good.
- Over 50% of young people were supported to enrol on education or training courses whilst at the supported house.

Source: Coram Evaluation 2014/15

Brent Housing Project

Throughout the past year, Coram ran a large supported housing provision in Brent, consisting of seven houses and housing a total of 41 young people aged from 16 to 25 years old.

Supporting looked after children in Bexley

Started in 2015, Bexley is a small housing project for young people leaving care, ensuring that young people aged 16 or 17 are given support in their transition to independent living and adulthood. Staff cover is provided 24 hours a day so that young people have advice and care on hand whilst developing their own independence skills.

"Coram have helped me so much. I now feel safe and teachers have commented that my work is a lot better and that I am more focused."

Female service user,
17 years old

Heritage Lottery Project: Twisted

The Twisted Project brought together experiences of life in care from different generations of Coram's young people. Young people from Coram's supported housing compared their experiences of the care system to that of members of the Old Coram Association, who were pupils of the former Foundling Hospital School. This resulted in the young people creating an improvised play, providing a platform for their voices to be heard.

The Adoptables

The Adoptables is funded by the Queen's Trust and run by Coram, producing tool kits to aid teachers and social workers in improving their interactions with adopted young people. The project engages with young people between 13 and 15 over a 3 year period through a range of workshops and residential sessions.



Minister for Children and Families, Edward Timpson, visited Coram to talk with members of The Adoptables.
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Helping young people find their voice

Coram Voice works to ensure children and young people in care get the same opportunities as those from more stable backgrounds, so they can reach their potential and lead happy and healthy lives. Coram Voice ensures that children in care as well as care leavers are treated fairly and receive the support which they are entitled to.

The Coram Voice Helpline takes referrals and gives advice to children and young people, and also undertakes advocacy case-work, assigning young people to community advocates for one-to-one support.

Coram Voice's advocates regularly visit settings such as Children's Homes and Secure Units, to support the children and young people in resolving any difficulties they may be experiencing. The service also provides Independent Visitors for particularly vulnerable young people in care, and specialised mental health advocacy in child and adolescent psychiatric wards. They also works with fostering agencies to ensure that the young people they place are informed about, and have access to, advocacy support.

"You helped me to speak up... I was happy to speak to you about my feelings and what I wanted to say at the meeting. I want to say thank you for everything you did."

Young Person supported by
Community Advocate

Over 3,500 young people were supported by Coram Voice's services

322 adults were given advice about helping children in need and signposted to appropriate services

788 professionals attended Coram Voice training, presentations and seminars.

98% of service users said Coram Voice helped them

92% consider the service easy to use

Homelessness Outreach Project

This unique project supports children in care and care leavers who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. It also supports a large number of young people who had presented themselves to Children's Services as having nowhere safe to live but had not been provided with an appropriate level of support.

The service is currently being delivered at two homeless centres in central London. This year, over 200 young people received support through information-giving session or one-to-one meetings at the two centres; 72 of those were supported by Coram Voice advocates to access their entitlements. This included ensuring they were in safe and suitable accommodation, as well as making sure they were receiving support to meet their educational and welfare needs.

The Door is Closed

In December 2014 Coram Voice launched their report, *The Door Is Closed*.

The report detailed the experiences of children who were homeless and had approached their local authority's Children's Services department but were turned away with little or no support - some without even being assessed.

The overarching recommendation was that Central and Local Government must fundamentally change their approach to child and youth homelessness. To recognise that it is a situation of risk that affects all aspects of a child's life and that it can significantly undermine their personal development as well as their physical and mental health.

The report was well received and media interest was high. The report featured on Channel 4 News, BBC News and in *The Independent*. It also generated significant social media interest.

Further work on homelessness

Coram Voice is running training for professionals to provide them with the skills and knowledge they need to support this vulnerable group.

Local Authorities and Children's Services departments are being approached to explore opportunities to work together, using the findings of *The Door is Closed* report to bring about much needed change. Coram Voice is also looking for examples of good practice that can be emulated and disseminated.

Bright Spots Project

Bright Spots is a joint partnership between Coram Voice and the Hadley Centre for Adoption and Foster Care Studies at the University of Bristol.

The project aims to give local authorities a better understanding of the policies and practices that make up a positive care journey, from the child's perspective. It encourages all local authorities to adopt the standards of the best services.

The project has recruited nine local authorities and has conducted 20 focus groups, consultations and interviews with 154 children and young people.

The children and young people told Coram Voice they enjoyed taking part in the focus groups, with one young person saying the best thing was "[seeing] that people were interested in [their] views."

Coram Voice and the University of Bristol have published two literature reviews - one covering children's views on being in care and the other an international literature review on measuring the wellbeing of children in care.

A pilot survey of children in care in one local authority achieved a response rate more than 12 times higher than the national survey. Coram Voice will refine and re-test the survey with other participating authorities.



Susan's story

Susan, 13, called the Coram Voice helpline asking for help. She was very distressed. She told the advocate that she did not like the foster care placement she had been moved to a couple of weeks earlier. Susan said the foster carer's family made her feel unwelcome, and that her social worker was not listening to her feelings about this and was just saying everything was fine. Susan said that sometimes she cut herself because she felt so bad, but she had not told anyone else about this.

The helpline advocate praised Susan for sharing something that was difficult to talk about. The advocate then advised Susan that it was worrying that she was harming herself and that she would need to share this information with Susan's social worker. Susan agreed and the helpline advocate then made an immediate call to Susan's social worker to raise the safeguarding concerns. The social worker confirmed that she would immediately contact the foster carer and would visit Susan as a priority to make sure she was safe and supported.

Upholding rights for children

Coram is the children's rights centre for England, upholding the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, helping nearly 200,000 children and families in the UK and millions around the world. Coram Children's Legal Centre strives to promote children's rights through the following activities:

- Direct support to children, families and professionals through free legal advice from the Child Law Advice Service (CLAS).
- Influencing policy through consultations, providing written and oral evidence at parliamentary committees, and training and representation on policy boards.
- Undertaking legal representation and bringing strategic 'test' cases on issues affecting children.
- Addressing legal and policy issues affecting migrant children in England.

"They have taken an incredibly stressful situation, turned this around and given us our life back."

Clients of Legal Practice Unit

- Supported over 197,000 families and children through the Child Law Advice Service.
- The Legal Practice Unit set up a new project to provide legal services on the registration of children as British citizens.
- Training delivered to over 850 practitioners on the rights of migrant children by the Migrant Children's Project (MCP)
- The Legal Practice Unit secured a legal aid contract to provide legal casework on community care issues.
- CCLC International worked in a total of 40 countries on 23 research projects throughout the year

Resolving legal issues for children and families in need

CCLC provides front line legal support to children and families in need. The Child Law Advice Service (CLAS) reached over 197,000 individuals, with the Migrant Children's Project's advice line reaching over 3,000 families and children. CLAS provided legal advice and information on all aspects of family, child and education law affecting children and families.

CLAS provided invaluable support to families experiencing considerable difficulties. 59% of callers* reported feeling that their problem had a high impact on their life when they called the advice line. The advice received increased the confidence of callers in dealing with their problem. Over 88% acted upon the advice given to them and 71% of respondents* considered the information they received from CLAS to have significantly contributed to resolving their problem.

**Source: Coram Evaluation 2014/15*

Promoting best practice on children's legal issues

CCLC has worked diligently to promote best practice on children's legal issues through training to practitioners in local authorities and other organisations. Practitioner training forms an essential part of CCLC's knowledge sharing within the sector, ensuring authorities working with children are equipped to uphold their rights and promote their welfare.

This year the Migrant Children's Project (MCP) delivered training to over 850 practitioners including training on the rights of migrant children and the registration of children as British citizens.

"Thank you for your help. It confirmed my thoughts within a legal framework giving me more confidence to move forward. The response was quick and I was able to act on it in a timely way ensuring that the child's needs were met appropriately."

Caller - Migrant Children's Advice Line



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Policy impact

CCLC has maintained a strong focus on influencing policy and ensuring children's rights are at the heart of policies affecting them. This is achieved through providing written and oral evidence at parliamentary committees, chairing and sitting on political consortiums and publishing work in various legal and political journals. MCP co-chaired the Refugee Children's Consortium and the National Asylum Stakeholder Forum Children's subgroup within the Home Office. This strategic role has put Coram at the heart of decision making, ensuring the voice of children is represented in policy.

A highlight of policy work this year was CCLC's commentary on proposed changes to legal aid highlighting its potential impact on children. As a result of its front line work supporting migrant children, CCLC was able to highlight the detrimental impact of the proposed legal aid residence test on children. This would have restricted access to legal aid for individuals with less than 12 months' lawful residence in the UK. CCLC met with the Joint Committee on Human Rights to discuss the issue. This meeting prompted the committee's decision to conduct a follow-up inquiry specifically regarding children, to which MCP Ogave oral evidence.

Strategic litigation

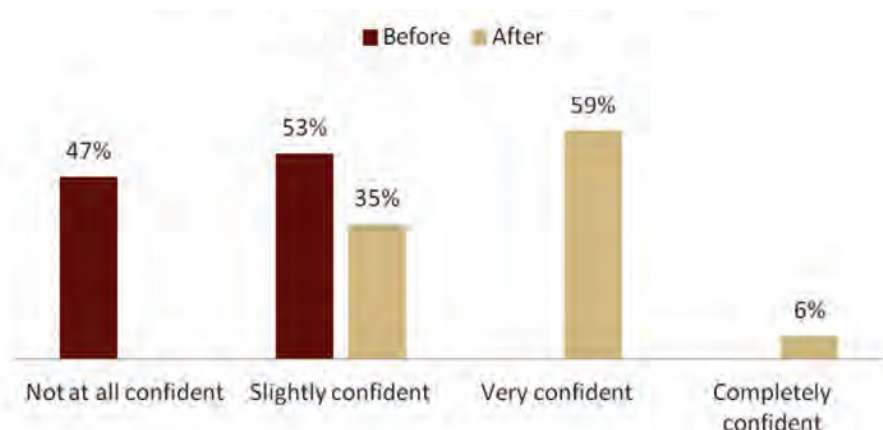
CCLC actively worked to promote children's rights through involvement in legal 'test' cases. In 2014 for example, CCLC brought the case of PO v London Borough of Newham in which the High Court held that Newham's policy on supporting families with no recourse to public funds was unlawful. This represented an important development in the jurisprudence on the growing issue of support for families with no recourse to public funds.

International reach

CCLC's international team has continued its work globally to protect children's rights, particularly relating to child protection and juvenile justice. A highlight of this year's work is a new EU-funded project, 'Access to Justice for Migrant Women and Children in Detention in South Africa', investigating the extent and nature of illegal detention of migrants in South Africa.

Direct support to children and families in need

Confidence of callers in dealing with their problem before and after calling Child Law Advice Line



Source: Coram Evaluation 2014/15

Helping young people make positive choices and achieve wellbeing

Coram Life Education (CLE) works nationally with primary and secondary schools, families and others in the community to help children make healthy choices. CLE educators visit schools in a mobile classroom and deliver life skills lessons designed to help children develop the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to make healthy life choices. CLE is the leading UK provider of health and drug education in schools.

CLE reaches some 850,000 children and young people across the UK and beyond through health education:

- CLE delivered its primary age mobile classroom programmes to over 675,00 children in 2,840 schools.
- Additional programmes nationwide include online teaching resources and mapping tools, secondary targeted, parent support and Special Educational Needs programmes, estimated to reach of 175,000 children.
- CLE's partners also reach children in Finland, Barbados, Cyprus, Australia, New Zealand and Croatia.

“What I have learnt in my life education is being healthy and looking after myself and making the right choices in my life.”

CLE session, Year 5 girl

CLE Developments

Curriculum mapping: Curriculum maps have been produced, to help schools plan effective PSHE and demonstrate how CLE programmes can support them in meeting the expectations of the Department for Education (DfE) and Ofsted. Schools using the maps are reporting their unique value in enabling them to manage the delivery of PSHE within a crowded curriculum.

bCyberwise: Life Education Australia (LEA) recently introduced online safety programmes and resources as part of its offer to schools. These resources were produced with sponsorship from McAfee.

Sodexo project: A further round of funding from The Sodexo Foundation has enabled us to refresh KS1 Assembly Programme 'A Happy Healthy Start' and deliver this to 31 schools in Salford (where Sodexo's Head office is based) and surrounding localities.

Information Standard: CLE achieved The Department of Health (DoH) Information Standard Quality Kitemark in June 2014. This is the fourth successive year CLE has achieved the standard.

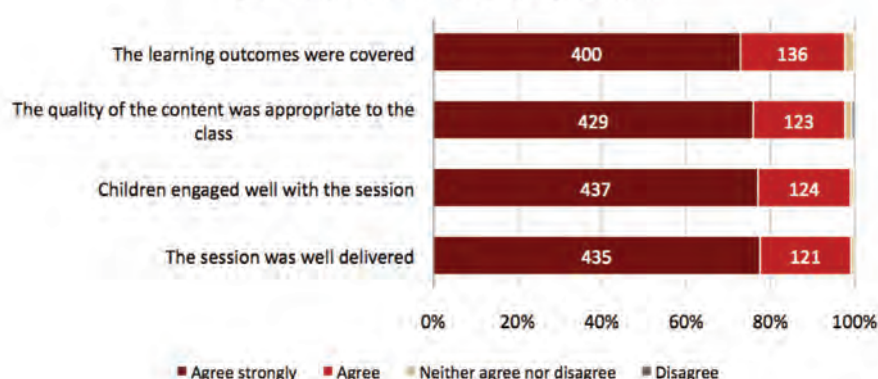
Evaluating outcomes for schools

100% of schools' senior staff were satisfied with the content and delivery of the CLE sessions, with over 99% of teachers agreeing that their session was well delivered and the children were engaged. Over 98% of teachers agreed that the learning outcome was covered and the quality of the content was appropriate for the class:

“The pitch was appropriate to the pupils' ability and the content was clearly explained and delivered enthusiastically.”
Class teacher

The majority of class teachers agreed that CLE boosted their confidence in teaching PSHE as well as providing them with new ideas about the subject. CLE sessions were also considered to contribute to wider school practices, with 97% of teachers believing that CLE sessions reinforced the science and PHSE curriculum. The majority of teachers suggested that CLE contributed to Ofsted requirements for pupils' well-being (92%), to the Healthy Schools Programme (90%), to drug education (84%) and to strategies for raising improvement (78%), as well as promoting parental engagement in the school (69%).

Class Teacher evaluation of the CLE session





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Evaluating outcomes for children

Year 5 pupils told Coram about what they had learnt over the past year in the CLE sessions.

Many talked about eating more healthily after their visits, in addition to being more empathetic to other children. Some of the children told us things they learnt in the CLE sessions which they had applied on a daily basis:

“To help others and whenever someone is upset try to get involved and talk to them about what’s gone on - the life bus is useful.”

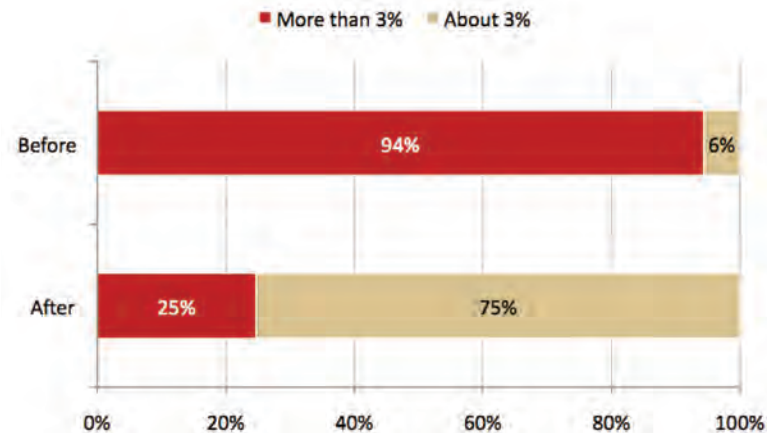
Year 5 pupil

“I have learnt about a healthy body. And that I should share with people.”

Year 5 pupil

CLE sessions are also shown to increase children’s knowledge of social and health issues. For example, statistically only 3% of young people smoke regularly in the UK. However 94% of Year 5 children surveyed thought that more than 3% smoked regularly before the session, with only 25% responding incorrectly after.

What percentage of 11 to 15 year-olds in England do you think smoke regularly?



SCARF:

Safety, Caring, Achievement, Resilience and Friendship

SCARF has been developed as an innovative range of online resources designed to equip and support busy teachers in providing the best PSHE and wellbeing education for their children. The SCARF resources embody a value-based approach that puts children at the centre, nurturing the crucial elements of Safety, Caring, Achievement, Resilience and Friendship in their lives.

The mobile classroom visit combined with the integrated SCARF resources and curriculum mapping tools have been designed to quickly and easily enable schools to develop a PSHE scheme of work – or enhance their existing one – ensuring that it is carefully tailored to pupils’ precise needs, and embodies Ofsted’s Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) education expectations.

Four CLE regions have received training in using and marketing the SCARF resources. Feedback from schools who have subscribed indicate the service has been well received:

‘Fantastic value for money!’

‘We will definitely use the assessment tools.’

‘It’s very comprehensive and makes such sense.’

‘It covers so much more than I would have thought of.’

Schools on the SCARF online resources

Peer Education

The Innovations Project, delivered through Parenting and Creative Therapies, is a peer-to-peer education scheme, delivered as part of the PSHE curriculum in Camden schools for pupils aged 12-16 years old. The project aims to raise pupils’ awareness of sexual health issues, relationships and thinking about how having a child might impact their lives financially, emotionally and socially.

Of the young people who have taken part in sessions so far, a significant increase in knowledge on sexual health issues can be identified, with over 90% responding correctly to sexual health questions after the session, opposed to approximately 40% prior to the session. Perceptions on the impact of pregnancy among young people were altered from the sessions, with 97% of young people indicating post-session that they thought their lives would be ‘mostly’ or ‘very’ different if they had a baby.

The scheme has also been shown to increase empathy and promotion of self-reflection. One male aged 14 years commented he felt it important to hear from young mothers “because it taught me how it felt for the girl in the relationship”.

Inspiring a new generation of adopters

People considering adopting a child often report feeling confused about the process and unsure where they can go to get advice. First4Adoption provides independent advice and guidance to potential adopters in England.

Supported by the Department for Education (DfE), First4Adoption's telephone line and online guides help potential adopters navigate the process and encourage more people to consider adoption. The service has established itself as a key national hub for independent information and advice, attracting almost 210,000 unique visitors to its website and assisting over 3,200 enquirers calling the helpline over the past year.

"It was everything I needed that moment, and the adviser was just brilliant! Without [adviser's] help I wouldn't be an approved adopter today!"

Adopter who called the First4Adoption helpline

Key achievements:

- Awarded 'Digital Champion of the Year' at the National Adoption Week Awards 2014.
- Ministerial visit to the team, to meet volunteers and launch 'Top Ten tips for adopters' from 'The Adoptables.'
- Unique website visitors increased by 120% on the previous year to over 209,200; helpline calls increased by 47% to over 3,200.
- Over 34,000 visitors have made direct onward enquiries to adoption agencies via the First4Adoption agency finder, which represents a referral rate of over 16% of all website visitors.
- 'First Steps', a free e-learning resource designed to build adoption readiness in prospective adopters, was launched in June 2014. Out of 1,554 registrations in the first 6 months, 85% were potential or prospective adopters.
- First4Adoption ran a series of workshops with Future Foundation on future-proofing adopters and customer service.
- First4Adoption completed 12 mystery shopping assessments of adoption agencies.

'Clear, simple to use, bite-size exercises and really interactive. Listening to the recorded voice of adopters is also really helpful, and [these are] the people who applicants get the most from too'

Adoption Professional using First4Adoption e-resources

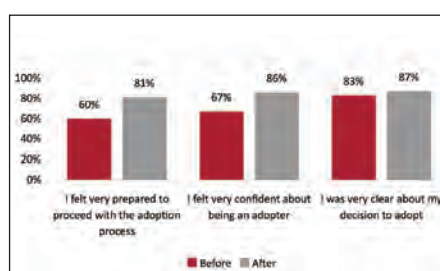
What difference did First4Adoption make?

First4Adoption has helped people get the information they need about adopting and feel more informed about taking their interest forward. In Coram's service evaluation, 93% of respondents considered their interaction with the service to be useful, with 87% stating they would recommend it to a friend. A key outcome for those calling the First4Adoption helpline was an increase in confidence in proceeding with the adoption process and becoming an adopter. Furthermore, a majority of callers went on to pursue adoption, with 52% speaking to a social worker, 50% contacting a Voluntary Adoption Agency and 45% contacting a Local Authority after calling.

Source: Coram Evaluation 2014/15

"Before calling, we definitely knew we wanted to adopt but didn't feel we really knew what to do, afterwards we felt quite certain."

Caller to First4Adoption Helpline



e-learning for adoption

A key development was the launch of e-learning materials (First Steps) on the First4Adoption website. This is the first time a national, free e-learning resource for potential and prospective adopters has been made openly available.

The material to read, explore and test participants' knowledge covers:

- Backgrounds of children and why they come into care
- Attachment and its importance in adoption
- Identity, heritage and life story work
- Challenges and transitions to new situations

The most popular exercise was 'backgrounds of children and why they come into care', with 1139 people taking part in the activities.

Feedback from the resource shows how it has been well received by both potential or prospective adopters and professionals:

'Nice easy-to-use format and interesting information. I like the recordings, supplemented with the text and a quiz, which can be redone to cement the learning.' Prospective adopter

'We now advise all our potential adopters to complete the e-learning on First Steps.' Adoption professional

Helping local authorities find lasting solutions for looked-after children

Coram's award-winning consultancy service shares 275 years of expertise in providing services to children and families with local authorities and other relevant agencies, so that they are equipped to deliver better outcomes for looked after children.

Coram consultancy has several long term partnerships with local authority adoption services. This year, it supported four local authorities to improve their services and undertook a number of diagnostic studies for agencies who wanted to know more about the strengths and weaknesses of their own adoption services.

"The diagnostic report provided the impetus for action planning... it brought the impact and delay for our children alive at the individual case level and then in aggregate".

Assistant Director,
Children's Services

Improvement projects

Coram consultancy worked with four local authorities this year.

The team analysed data to help the agencies identify, and focus on, the tasks that would make a difference to the performance of the adoption service and the lives of children in the area. This resulted in an increase in the speed with which adopters were assessed and reduced the time children waited for a permanent adoptive home.



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Award

In recognition of its work, the consultancy team was awarded a 'Highly Commended for 'Innovation, excellence and achievement' in the 2015/16 National Government Opportunities Awards, in the 'Best Service – Health and Social Care Organisations' category.



Adoption Diagnostic and Journey Analysis

This year, three local authorities commissioned Coram to review their adoption services, to identify those areas where there is room for improvement and develop an action plan for change.

Coram's analysis compared children placed for adoption in relation to the general profile of looked-after children; evaluated timescales and potential drift in children's adoption journeys; and looked in detail at the shortest and longest adoption journeys experienced by children, as well as the experiences of children under five who remain in care.

Grants success

Coram consultancy was awarded three major grants this year.

The first, awarded by the Department for Education (DfE) Innovation programme, was for two pilots designed to demonstrate how the team's improvement work can be scaled up nationally; and the creation of a new Academy that will enable the team to share its learning with the nation.

Coram consultancy was also awarded a DfE grant to test promising approaches to adoption matching, focusing on the children who are hardest to place, in order to influence and improve matching practice nationally.

Project evaluation

Coram consultancy started work on an evaluation of a capacity-building programme administered by the Consortium for Voluntary Adoption Agencies. The team conducted interviews to assess how the programme helped to improve the market positioning of Voluntary Adoption Agencies.

Improving outcomes through insight

Coram is committed to developing and promoting best practice in support of vulnerable children and young people. We do this through research, evaluation and policy development and by speaking out on the issues that matter most to children.

“Taking the monitoring of our Parent Champions work to a new level, This has resulted in the model being accepted as evidenced practice for application in areas beyond just childcare.”

Deborah Brodie, Project Manager,
Family and Childcare Trust

Service evaluation: improving performance

The Policy and Research team work proactively to maximise the impact of Coram's work by monitoring service performance. The team works closely with Coram's services to design evaluation frameworks that accurately capture the difference made to beneficiaries. Using rigorous measurement, outcomes are monitored with feedback to the services, helping to improve performance. The team applies recognised standards of evidence to evaluate services, ensuring that results communicate effectively with external audiences.

Dr Roland Marden, Head of Policy and Research at Coram, speaking at the Parent Champions conference

Promoting best practice and policy

Coram's involvement in service delivery makes it uniquely placed to evidence practice and disseminate knowledge to help improve outcomes for children across the sector. The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation is currently funding the team's activities, supporting work to build an improved knowledge base and to influence policy and practice. Highlights for the team this year were innovative research on therapeutic support for adopted children, a review of what works in helping young women escape the destructive cycle of multiple child removal, undertaking a practitioner consultation to inform a policy manifesto for the All Party Parliamentary Group for Adoption and Fostering, and a national survey investigating the pathways and thinking of people interested in adopting.

Evaluation consultancy

Other charities in the children's sector have used the expertise of Coram's Policy and Research Department to evaluate projects. This year the team was selected as an approved evaluation supplier for the Department for Education's (DfE) Social Care Innovations programme. Coram contributed to the development of the programme's evaluation framework. The team was also commissioned to deliver evaluations for Family and Childcare Trust's Parent Champions programme, using volunteers to encourage parents to use childcare and other services, and After Adoption's Breaking the Cycle, a therapeutic intervention aimed at helping young women who have had a child removed.



Advancing Research

Coram works closely with university partners on national programmes of work with specialist advisory groups. We would like to thank our members and partners including Professor Julie Selwyn (Hadley Centre, University of Bristol), John Simmonds (BAAF), Professor Sir Michael Rutter (King's College London) and Professor Geraldine MacDonald (Queen's University Belfast) who chairs the Children's Services and Ethics Committees.

National Representation

The Chief Executive, Dr Carol Homden CBE serves on the National Adoption Leadership Board (for which she chairs the National Recruitment Forum), the Children's Inter-agency Group (for the Connaught Group of children's charities) and is Chair of the National Autistic Society.

International Impact

Professor Carolyn Hamilton, Coram's Director of International Programmes and Research, this year supervised 23 research projects in a total of 40 countries. Forthcoming research entitled the "Legal protection from Violence: Analysis of Domestic Laws relating to Violence Against Children in ASEAN states" is one of the 'top 12' pieces that has made it into the next tier of selection in the 2015 Best UNICEF research exercise.

Conferences and Training

Coram has delivered and contributed to a number of conferences through the year, sharing knowledge and expertise with practitioners and service users:

- Mary Rose Brady, Head of Service for Parenting and Creative Therapies, delivered presentations on the use of art and music therapy for children who have been through traumatic experiences. Conferences included

'Public Health England 2014', 'Attachment and the Arts' and 'What Do I Need to Know – Navigating Boundaries with Children who have been Sexually Abused'.

- The Policy and Research team have delivered presentations at the 2015 Parent Champions conference, and the Adoption Support and the Importance of Life Story and Legal Adoption conference.
- Kamena Dorling, Policy and Programmes Manager for the Migrant Children's Project, presented on 'Trafficked young people and the issues of age determination' at the Youth Justice Convention in November 2014. In addition, Coram Children's Legal Centre hosted the EU CONNECT conference 'Always Migrants, Sometimes Children'.

Coram also has a strong training programme, delivering training to over 1,500 practitioners throughout the year, including:

- Kamena Dorling delivered training in Brussels on 'the best interests of migrant children' at the Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants working group on undocumented children and families
- Adoption have delivered training to 70 practitioners on 'Embedding Concurrent Planning in a Local Authority/Voluntary Adoption Agency - Pathways to Early Permanence Planning', with further training to 50 practitioners on engaging Local Authorities and Voluntary Adoption Agencies in the process of developing their own concurrent planning programmes.

"Whereas art heralds the particular talents of the child who is without parents, Coram takes care of her (or him). This is why I support them. Coram look after the most important and precious product of our society – children."
Lemn Sissay, MBE

Recent publications



Press highlights

CITY ROCKS FAMILY FUN TO HELP THE KIDS

On a night helping the UK's oldest children's charity, Lily Allen made sure her two own youngsters had something to smile at. The singer, performing at the City Rocks concert at the Royal Albert Hall for Coram (top right), took time out during her set to take a quick snap of the packed and dancing auditorium.

"This is for the kids at home," she said, referring to her daughters Ethel, two, and Marnie, one.

The *Hand Out Here* star wasn't the only one with family matters on her mind. *Strictly Come Dancing*'s Sophie Ellis-Bextor performed her 2001 hit *Murder on the Dancefloor* before her husband, Richard Jones, took to the stage with his band The Feeling.

HELLO! when we exclusively joined the stars backstage for their pre-show sound check.

"It's something that really resonates when you have your own children," added Richard, the father of Sonny, nine, Kit, five, and Ray, one, with Sophie. "Two of our boys were born prematurely, so anything for kids is close to my heart."

With close friends in Lily and Sophie's bands and their hero, Queen's Brian May, sharing the stage, The Feeling's singer Dan Gillespie Sells summed up the atmosphere. "It's a bit of a family affair," he said.

"It's not too hard to say yes when you're asked to perform at the Royal Albert Hall with Brian May," drummer Paul Stewart told us, "to nod of assent from the band's guitarist and keyboard player, brothers Kevin and Ciaran Jeremiah. Established



Hello!
14 April 2014

www.entertainmentwise.co.uk
2 April 2014

BY REBECCA LAWRENCE ON APRIL 2, 2014

Fundraising Concert Inspires Sophie Ellis-Bextor And Peter Capaldi To Sign Coram's Pledge Wall

A range of artists showed their support for the charity

EMAIL 0 SHARE 0 TWEET 1 8-1 0

The Royal Albert Hall was bursting with talent last night as a unique line up of singers staged a concert to celebrate the 275th birthday of Coram, the UK's oldest children's charity.

Stars such as Lily Allen, The Feeling, Maverick Sabre and Sophie Ellis Bextor all performed sets to show their support.

Maverick Sabre kicked off the show with a soulful, stripped back set and asked the audience to text a £10 donation to support Coram's music therapy services.



The Evening Standard
3 November 2014

Public Sector Recruitment National Adoption Week

To advertise call 020 79 38 38 38

A chance to be in the same family

"ADOPTION is a life changing opportunity for children who have had a very difficult start in life – and we clearly need to pay a great deal of attention to those who are not being adopted at the same rate as other children," says Dr Carol Horden, chief executive officer of children's charity Coram (coram.org.uk). "That is why the focus of National Adoption Week this year is the 49 per cent of children waiting for adoption in England today who are part of a sibling group."

"They may have a special bond with a brother or sister, but they also need to be placed in a loving home so we need more people to come forward who are prepared to adopt siblings. That is why we are asking people who think they may be able to offer a loving home to think again about whether they could adopt two or even three children."

"Here at Coram a quarter of the

Nearly half of the 5,000 children waiting for adoption are each part of a sibling group. National Adoption Week focuses on the need to keep brothers and sisters together.
By Niki Chesworth

Crucially, the length of time it takes to find loving homes for children in care are now being addressed. Back in 2011 only 76 children under one were adopted.



Magical bonds
adopters who
expect to form a
family one child
at a time often
fall in love with a
sibling pair

ES Jobs

Miss England Beauty Pageant's Facebook
12 September 2014

Channel 4 News
16 December 2014



On 16th December 2014, Coram Voice appeared in a segment on Channel 4 news discussing their latest report entitled: "The Door is Closed", which urges local authorities to protect vulnerable teenagers



Coram shared Miss England Beauty Pageant's photo.
12 September 2014 · Edited ·

It's the lovely Miss England, Carina Tyrrell, Miss World Megan Young and Miss Wales Alice Ford who came to present Coram with a generous donation of £50,000 raised by Miss England finalists. These funds will be used for our vital work with vulnerable children. Read the full story here: bit.ly/1tPr3Pm



Miss England Beauty Pageant with Miss World - Wales and 2 others

@coram #coram London HQ today with @missworldengland Carina Tyrrell @missworld Megan Young @misswales Alice Ford Special presentation news coming soon #beautywithapurpose

the guardian
Winner of the Pulitzer prize

UK world sport football opinion culture economy lifestyle fashion environment tech money travel

home > lifestyle > family women home & garden food health & fitness love & sex

Family

I chose to adopt two babies with Down's syndrome as a single mother

She had always dreamed of having a family – mother, father, two children. But in her late 30s, Jilly Smithson realised it might never happen, so she made a decision

Jilly Smithson and her children, Emily and Tom.

The Guardian,
Family and Guardian.co.uk
31 January 2015

Celebrating 275 years of better chances for children

At 17.39 on 17th October 2014, Coram celebrated the 275th anniversary of the granting of the Royal Charter to Thomas Coram to create his charity, then known as the Foundling Hospital. A special illumination designed to Handel's *Anthem for the Foundling Hospital*, and donated by digital artist Steve Caplin was projected onto the modern day building to tell the Coram story and the continuing impact of Coram's work today.

The anniversary programme was extensively covered in broadcast and social media including the interview on Radio 4 Woman's Hour with Coram's social historian and featured on Paul Sinha's History Revision. It featured the launch of the new Women's Chapter to celebrate the contribution of the 21 ladies of "quality and distinction" whose petition signatures helped Thomas Coram to succeed in his campaign to establish the first charity dedicated to children.

Convened by the CEO Dr Carol Homden CBE, the first contributors included Professor Monica Grady, Nicola Horlick, Baroness Oona King, Dr Eleanor Mills of the Sunday Times and historian Hallie Rubenhold. Together they considered their influences and the issues still affecting women as they did the founding mothers of the 18th century.

The 'No child should be invisible' pledge campaign saw 7,000 people visit the campaign website with over 1,200 signing the pledge, exceeding target by 20%.

Coram saw a 22% increase in individual supporters between April 2014 and March 2015.

There have been 47,000 visitors to Coram collection and history displayed by the Foundling Museum.



Vision for the future

As we approached the 275th anniversary of its Act of Parliament of 1740, Coram announced the appeal for the creation of The Queen Elizabeth II Centre to bring its expertise in children's rights, education and welfare together with partners as a national centre of excellence to improve the chances of the next generation of children. **To find out more see www.coram.org.uk.**



No child should be invisible



275 years ago, abandoned babies were a common sight on the streets of London. Ignored by everyone, except one man: Thomas Coram.

Since 1739, Coram has been creating better chances for vulnerable children.

But today, too many children are still waiting for the security of a permanent family. Too many children's rights are ignored and too many young people have nowhere safe to call home.

**Our children still need your help.
Sign the pledge at www.coram.org.uk/pledge**

coram

better chances
for children
since 1739



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**Keep up to date with the latest news and events
on our website: www.coram.org.uk**



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