



Place2Be Spring Update

We know that children from economically disadvantaged families are more likely to need our support. 46% of the children we support are in receipt of free school meals compared to a national average of 21%. It is predicted that around 500,000 more children will fall into poverty in the coming year, and we are likely to see a surge in the need for our services. So we are incredibly grateful to all those who enable us to continue our mission to ensure that no child has to face mental health problems alone.

A quote from a 15 year old pupil who shared her experiences at our Arts & Minds Gala:

"Place2Be has helped me so much because there was countless times I thought I was going to give up. Often I feel like nobody understands me and like I am stuck or suffocating in my own body but when I go to Place2Be I feel safe and know that I'm wanted in this world."



Carols at Holy Trinity Sloane Square

Katie Thistleton hosted our fabulous concert which raised a record-breaking £85,000.

It included performances by Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School Choir, soprano Laura Wright and internationally acclaimed jazz musician Jamie Cullum.

We had wonderful readings from Sophie Dahl, Jacob Anderson and Paloma Faith, while Head Teacher Tommy Ittu shared first-hand experiences of his school's inspiring involvement with Place2Be. Closing the evening, Rhys Stephenson presented a video of festive jokes by children from St Margaret's Church of England Primary School.

Special thanks to our Carol Concert Committee, led by Karen Howes and Penny Sainsbury.



29,366

children accessed support service from Place2Be between Sept 22-Feb 23 (36,565 in total 21/22)



500

schools currently have an in-school Place2Be service (400 as of March 2022)



76%

of children who have had counselling with severe difficulties show an improvement in mental health (21/22)



During Children's Mental Health Week, Place2Be Ambassador Josh Smith visited two partner schools to ask students about mental health and what it means to them.

Watch the video [here](#).

Save the date!

25
APR

Partner School Visit
Edgware Road, London

6
DEC

Christmas Carol Concert
Holy Trinity Sloane Square, London

Della's story

Please note, names and some identifying details have been changed to protect the privacy of the children and families we support. The child pictured is a model.



Della first attended Place2Be's group sessions, called Place2Talk, in her final year of school. Despite having a diagnosis of a serious mental health condition, Della had been managing well, until COVID. Then the prospect of upcoming exams, during a time of such uncertainty, set her back.

Della came to several Place2Talk sessions run by Place2Be's School Project Manager (SPM). Each time she disclosed increasing concerning issues, including self-harm, suicidal thoughts and a suicide attempt. Place2Be completed a risk assessment which was shared promptly with the school and her parents, in line with our strict safeguarding procedures. This led to Della being assessed by and supported by an NHS Community Mental Health Team.

It was agreed across these agencies that the SPM would continue to provide check-in Place2Talks in the lead up to Della's exams, as Della had identified this as very helpful. During these sessions, they completed a safety plan identifying strategies which Della could use to keep herself safe. This was shared with school staff so they were able to support her with this.

This helped Della, who said she felt that there were times she could regulate her emotions and bring her destructive thoughts back under control. Della also spoke of her clear plans for the future and about her supportive network of friends and family. Giving space to celebrate this was key to her beginning to see some light at the end of the tunnel.

Della's mental health journey had lots of ups and downs. As she said in one drop-in session, "it is so dark inside my head". Keeping her safe from this darkness was a joint effort between home, school, the Community Mental Health Team and Place2Be. For the SPM, having faith that Della could survive this darkness relied on seeing the light within her.

This involved her career ambitions, her passionate political beliefs but also her love of Harry Potter. The conversation in drop-in sessions often meandered towards these things. The SPM used these details to gently reflect back to Della what helped her cope might also be the things which made life worth sticking around for. Della has now left school and is still receiving external support.

By the time their work ended, the SPM was saying goodbye to someone who was slowly starting to embrace life again – going out with friends and planning her future. She has just aced her exams, and as her teacher said to Place2Be – Della was beaming when she opened that envelope. Perhaps Dumbledore was right: 'happiness can be found in the darkest of times, if one only remembers to turn on the light'.



Q&A with Magoo Giles

Principal Founder and Founding Head of Knightsbridge School

Why did Knightsbridge School choose to partner with Place2Be?

I met the founder Dame Benny Refson and she suggested Knightsbridge should be the first private day school to partner with Place2Be. It was a no-brainer as more and more children, parents and staff were requiring support and collaboration.

How has your partnership with Place2Be positively impacted the school community?

Place2Be is brilliant and makes such a difference. It brings such expert support and promotes early intervention which is critical to supporting children in the long haul, up to and throughout their adult life.

Would you recommend that other schools have a Place2Be service?

For those who need it, kids - staff - parents - they all benefit hugely from embedded support at all levels. Place2Be is part of the Knightsbridge School Family.

Why do you think is it important for individuals and organisations to support Place2Be?

It costs money to create a healthier and happier place. Place2Be brings hope and support to so many who do not often know which way to turn. Early intervention saves huge amounts of money in the long run and can prevent lifelong mental health issues, resulting in a society with individuals more resilient and more ready to manage the many challenges that life throws at us – you just have to read the testimonies.

Describe what Place2Be means to you in three words.

Family - Warmth - Support

“My counsellor is my superhero. She has been very kind to me since my daddy died. She listens and understands. Her magic wand makes everybody kind to each other.”

Pupil from Knightsbridge School



Law Family Salford Research Programme is launched

In September, Place2Be commenced a three-year study in 20 Salford primary schools.

Supported by The Law Family Charitable Foundation, the project will assess the impact of Place2Be's services on the whole school.

The programme will provide data-driven evidence of how Place2Be's early intervention benefits pupils, parents and teachers, enabling Place2Be to develop a template of best practice for mental health services in schools across the UK. [Read more here.](#)



Arts & Minds Gala is huge success

Hosted by Kate Silverton and Rhys Stephenson, this very special event raised an incredible £275,000.

There were so many highlights from the event held at RIBA in October, including wonderful performances from Cranbrook School and The Joe Stilgoe Trio and guest interaction with artist Ricky Martin and poet Zohab Zee. 16 year-old pupil Shekinah also spoke beautifully about her experience with Place2Be.

Enormous thanks to all who bought tables, bid in the auction and made donations.

If you would like to know more please do contact me on **07966 143 288** or Jo.Winter@place2be.org.uk

Royal Patron
HRH The Princess
of Wales

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