

With thanks

Dear friends,

It's been another challenging year for so many people, with the cost of living crisis affecting everyone. So we want to say thank you, once again, for your continued support.

We know that among those who will struggle the most during difficult times are the vulnerable children and families we support. You continue to help us be a vital lifeline for desperate families with nowhere to turn.

In this newsletter, you'll read an update from the 2023 Methodist Conference, and Action for Children Sunday which took place in July.

You can find out more about how to get involved with our work through local fundraising, our Boycott your Bed event, and our Secret Santa campaign (don't forget to get creative with the enclosed cut out bauble to decorate and put on your tree).

There's details of where to buy your Action for Children Christmas cards for this year.

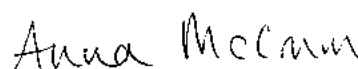
And of course, there's our Methodist Stars section, where we say a heartfelt thank you to just some of our incredible supporters from this community.

As we look ahead to Christmas and to 2024, we hope you enjoy reading about the difference you make to our work. We look forward to another year of working together to create safe and happy childhoods.

We wish you a joyful Christmas and a very happy new year.



Katie Cartwright
Head of Regional Fundraising



Anna McCrum
Faith Partnerships Lead

Even better together!

Many of you are part of one of our Volunteer Fundraising Groups, which we now call Action Squads. These community groups are made up of amazing people, bringing together their friends and family to hold events and raise money to help change the lives of children and families across the UK.

To get involved, you can:

- Plan and organise your own fundraising events, with the support of Action for Children's Regional Support Officers.
- Get involved in big Action for Children events like our Christmas fundraiser, Secret Santa.
- Volunteer at national events, like the London Marathon and Great North Run.
- Give talks about our work in the community and support our campaigns.



Whether you organise one big fundraiser a year, or lots of smaller events like raffles, quiz nights and bake sales, there are so many ways to raise money for us.

We're sure that you've got lots of fantastic ideas, and we're here to support you, whatever you need. Take a look at the Action Squads section of our website for more, and don't hesitate to get in touch to talk it all through in more detail.

Boycott your Bed Live



For over 25 years, supporters just like you have helped us raise an incredible £13.5 million. They've given up their bed for one night to sleep out and show their support for children who face every night without a safe place to sleep.

This year's Boycott your Bed takes place on **Friday 6 October 2023**. We'd love you to get together with your community to host your very own event, taking on the challenge of sleeping out and raising money for vulnerable children.

It's time to get together, raise vital funds and take on the challenge of sleeping out. Take a look at our website for more information or speak to your Action for Children contact for some information and inspiration: boycottyourbed.co.uk

Pride, Appreciation and Respect

Building on our shared heritage, the Methodist Conference 2023 shone a light on the power of our common purpose, while charting a course for the future.

Our wonderful Methodist supporters continue to offer huge support to Action for Children in many ways including fundraising, supporting and amplifying our policy campaigns, volunteering, and facilitating our services through the use of church premises.

Anna McCrum, Faith Partnerships Lead at Action for Children shared:

“At the Methodist Conference there was pride, appreciation and respect shown for the work that Action for Children does across the nations of the UK.”

We commit to continuing that work, and thank you for your continued support and trust in us. We're looking forward to seeing more of you to fundraise together in 2024.

A reminder of our mission

It's over 150 years since our founder the Reverend Dr Thomas Bowman Stephenson saw children living rough under the arches of Waterloo Station and decided to step in. Today, many children are still going hungry. They're still cold. Some are still just surviving, not thriving. We're determined to be a vital lifeline for families living a reality that should be confined to history. Here's how we help:



Family support

Supporting families to make sure children and young people get the best start in life.



Children in care

Caring for children and young people to give them a safe, stable and loving home.



Disabled children

Supporting disabled children, young people and their families.



Mental health and wellbeing

Building children and young people's emotional resilience to help them overcome challenges.



And we influence policy decisions to improve the lives of children and young people.

We deliver **426** services in local communities across the UK, in schools and online. So that more children can have safe and happy childhoods.

In 2022/23, we helped

765,905 children, young people and families across the UK.

Gifts in wills



Last year, **24%** of our income from fundraising was made through gifts in wills. Interested in writing brighter futures?

Get in touch for more info via giftsinwills@actionforchildren.org.uk

Our Methodist stars

We love sharing examples of just some of your brilliant fundraising achievements:

On Friday 14 July, Wesley Methodist Church in Reading

hosted a summer concert in aid of Action for Children. The **Take Note Community Choir** performed a range of pop, soul, rock ensemble and solo songs as well as some well-known pieces from musical theatre. The concert was held as part of the 150th anniversary celebrations for Wesley Methodist Church and it raised an amazing £1,059 for Action for Children. Happy anniversary to you all and congratulations on a successful concert. Your generosity and commitment will help make a huge difference to the children and young people we support.



Surbiton Hill Methodist Church have supported Action for Children for many years. Since databases were introduced, we've recorded they've raised £60k from Home Collection Boxes, so we know that amount will be even more. We are so grateful to you all at the church and to your community for giving so generously.

A flower arranging event in **The Vale of Stour Methodist Circuit** held in May raised £372. What beautiful creations and thank you to you all.



Elaine Hendry, part of **St Andrews Methodist Group** in Mavagissey, Cornwall, held a Strawberry Fair Event in their church to mark their 30th anniversary of supporting Action for Children. Elaine even made a branded cake for the occasion!

Paisley Methodist Church hosted the Rock Choir on 17 June and raised over £800 – what a huge amount to help fund our work.

Be a **Secret Santa** for a vulnerable child



The magic of Christmas begins in childhood. Hanging stockings. Sharing festive food. Presents under the tree. It's a time for children to make precious memories. For them to feel happiness and love – the kind of magic that lasts a lifetime.

For vulnerable children across the UK, Christmas is anything but magical. No stockings. No presents. No festive food – maybe no food at all.

But you could help change that.

Become a Secret Santa and you could help a vulnerable child feel the magic of Christmas.

iamsanta.org.uk



Action for Children Sunday

On Sunday 9 July, on the anniversary of the opening of our first children's home, many of you gathered at church services across the country to celebrate our work and extend your generous and, in so many cases, long-standing support for us. This year's theme was 'growing and flourishing together'.



As much as we possibly could, our Regional Fundraising Team got out and about to visit you all and your services. It was brilliant to connect with you and talk about how to maximise Action for Children's impact across communities.

Thank you to you all for being such valued advocates of our goals and our ambition.

Christmas cards for your loved ones

We know many of you support our work by buying Action for Children Christmas cards to share with loved ones, near and far.

To buy yours this year, simply visit **charitycardsonline.com/actionforchildren** or speak to a member of our Supporter Services Team on **01934 522920**.

