



achievements and aspirations

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Chance UK had much to celebrate in 2013/2014. Our turnover reached more than £1 million for the first time, we began work on our most rigorous ever evaluation, a Randomised Controlled Trial funded by the Big Lottery, and an analysis by Pro Bono Economics showed that we more than pay our way.

A financial first...

Recent years have been financially tough for charities, and Chance UK was no exception. But this year, we bounced back strongly with a turnover of more than a million for the first time. This represents an increase of almost 30 per cent over 2012/2013, puts us in a strong position for the coming financial year and makes us a significantly larger player among children's charities. This result was due in no small part to the sterling work of our fundraising consultant, Navinder Kaur. In recognition of the continuing need to sustain and develop our income, she will join our Senior Management Team in July 2014.

...and a father's first

One of our funders this year was a small trust called Wednesday's Child. Their contribution enabled Parent Programme Managers to increase their support for fathers by organising events they could attend with their children, such as trips to a fire station and an ice rink. It was the first time one father had ever been ice-skating and he loved it so much he now takes his children regularly. This is just one example of how a modest amount of money and some creative thinking can pay huge dividends. Chance UK's CEO, Gracia McGrath OBE, has signalled the charity's commitment to including fathers in its work by attending the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Fatherhood.

Purpose and progress

Chance UK considers its work with parents and carers to be a significant part of its programme. The charity now has four Parent Programme Managers, with a fifth due to join us in 2014, and over the past year has reviewed the purpose of all its parenting work. As a result, we now have

a clear mission statement for the work, allowing us to keep focused on what we are trying to achieve:

The Chance UK Parent Programme is a supportive, non-judgemental service for parents/carers of children with a Chance UK mentor. The programme facilitates positive changes, the child's development and stability for the family.

In 2013, our Parent Programme Managers also began piloting a new tool, the outcome star. This has enabled them to quickly identify the areas where parents/carers need support and to effectively monitor progress. The pilot was so successful that we will begin using the star across the programme in 2014.

Building up the boroughs

Chance UK continues to have a strong presence in the Inner London boroughs of Hackney, Islington and Lambeth, but we are also increasingly making our mark in Outer London. Back in May 2012, the Big Lottery Fund granted us five years' support and £948,000 as part of the 'Realising Ambition' programme. This allowed us to begin work in Enfield and Waltham Forest, and we have continued to develop our programme there during 2013/2014. In particular, we have appointed a third Programme Manager for the area, as well as its first Parent Programme Manager.

As Enfield and Waltham Forest are new boroughs for us, all staff have publicised the Chance UK service widely to bring in child referrals from schools and to find the volunteers who are vital to our service. Mentor recruitment initiatives have included presenting at colleges and businesses, running a digital campaign via Facebook, Twitter and YouTube and producing posters and postcards. We are also in the process of creating a new and more user-friendly website. This will go live in July 2014.



“Chance UK is committed to making a positive difference to the children on its mentoring programme”

Evaluating our impact

Chance UK is committed to making a positive difference to the children on its mentoring programme. We have therefore always monitored and evaluated our work carefully and acted on the evidence collected. All previous research commissioned by the charity has indicated that it does achieve its stated aim of helping children improve their behaviour. Now, in 2014, we are able to begin a more rigorous type of evaluation. This is again thanks to the ‘Realising Ambition’ programme of the Big Lottery, which in May 2013 selected us as one of just four of the 25 projects on the programme to receive support to carry out a Randomised Controlled Trial (RCT). This support is being provided by the Social Research Unit (SRU), a charity with over 50 years of trials experience.

In an RCT, participants are divided into two groups. One group receives an intervention, in this case our mentoring programme, and the other, the control group, does not. At the end of the trial, results for the two groups are compared to see if there is any statistically significant difference between them. After Chance UK staff and the SRU complete a year of preparatory work, our RCT will start in July 2014. It is due to finish in December 2016 and the SRU trial report will appear in 2017, providing the most detailed evaluation of our programme and outcomes so far. RCTs are considered the gold standard for evaluation and Chance UK is delighted to have one.

Chance UK’s previous successful evaluations were recognised in 2013 by Project Oracle, a London-based organisation that promotes the collection and assessment of evidence to discover how best to support children in the capital: we not only reached Standard 2 of their programme but also won their Retrospective Evidence competition. We very much hope soon to reach Standard 3, which requires the use of a comparison group to assess results. An RCT by definition provides such a group.

Proving our worth

Chance UK’s key aim is to support children to reduce their behavioural difficulties, and our success in doing so will be measured by the RCT. However, the charity also needs to show funders that its work saves society money. We therefore asked Pro Bono Economics (PBE), an organisation that matches volunteer economists with charities, to carry out a cost-benefit analysis of our service.

PBE’s report on Chance UK was launched at the House of Commons in November 2013. It showed that conduct problems in children lead to an extra £22,000 public service costs per child (for example to pay for extra school support), and that the cost of early conduct problems to each individual across their lifetime is £142,800. Chance UK mentoring would therefore be cost-effective if just one of every 42 mentored children avoided these costs. As research carried out by Goldsmiths, University of London in 2008 showed that 51 per cent of our children no longer have ‘abnormal’ behavioural difficulties by the end of mentoring, our service more than breaks even.

Gracia McGrath OBE
Chief Executive

