



KOALA
North West
Supporting children
& their families



KOALA NORTH WEST ANNUAL REVIEW

APRIL 2022–MARCH 2023




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ABOUT KOALA NORTH WEST...



Koala North West
exists to provide children
and their families with
tailored practical and emotional
support that improves
wellbeing, reduces isolation
and supports both children
and care givers to thrive.

Bev Morgan

CEO, Koala North West

Koala NW works with families from all walks of life but this year we have seen first hand the impact the cost of living crisis has had more than ever before. Across the North West 30% of children are living in poverty. For low income families this can mean using food banks and parents skipping meals to feed their children, not being able to afford winter coats or school uniforms, or suffering from the mental worry that comes when you are not able to pay your bills. It is because of this that we took the decision to join the End Child Poverty Coalition - a coalition made up of 75 organisations united in our vision of a UK free of child poverty.

All our staff and volunteers complete our Child Poverty Awareness Training so that we are looking at all that we do through a child poverty prism, and we do all that we can to support families who are struggling. This is often through working in partnership with organisations like Citizens Advice, Involve Northwest and Energy Projects Plus, but also through the grants we apply for that enable us to buy food, household items, clothing, etc. This was not something we used to do but the need we are seeing day in day out means that this has just become part of what we do to support families whenever we can.

Through our wide range of services for Family Support, SEND and Early Years we have supported 3,035 children, 2,186 families, and this report gives just a brief snapshot of the difference our wonderful volunteers and families have made during the year April 2022 - March 2023. So thank you to everyone that works and volunteers for Koala NW; and also to all our funders and those we work in partnership with. It has been a very busy year, but a very worthwhile one as you will see when you read this report. If you want to find out a bit more about what we do, or about any particular service, do get in touch - we are very proud of what we do and are always happy to talk in more detail about the services we provide across Cheshire & Merseyside.

Ron Kearney
Chair of Trustees

I've had the privilege of chairing the board of trustees and directors of Koala North West for a few years and I could not ask for a better team to head up. Our role has been to support Bev and the Koala NW leadership, to engage in the creation of strategies to ensure the sustainability of the amazing work that the Koala NW team does and to assist in managing the risks that might prevent Koala NW from continuing to support children and families. The demand for Koala North West's services continues to grow and so we have expanded both in the range of our services and the geographical coverage that we provide. All of this has taken place in an environment of financial constraints and rapidly changing expectations.

Our core work is peer support and we would be nothing without our volunteers and, conscious of this, we have been recruiting, but also celebrating success with our brilliant team.

We are pleased to say we renewed our Investing in Volunteers award and qualified for the Charities Excellence Framework Quality Mark.

Koala NW goes from strength to strength thanks to inspired leadership and a hugely committed caring team.

OUR YEAR 22-23

April 2022 - March 2023 has been yet another very busy year for Koala North West; One that has seen our further development and growth. We continued to deliver our services in Wirral and expanded our reach across Cheshire & Merseyside. We grew our Early Years 0-5 service to work in Chester, our breastfeeding peer support groups started across Cheshire West and we were commissioned by the ICB to deliver a bespoke sleep service to families who have a child who is neurodiverse. Our Little Lungs service supported families with respiratory concerns across Cheshire West & Wirral and 2023 looks set to be another area of growth whereby we are expanding our reach across the whole of Merseyside & Cheshire and we will be delivering neonatal peer support, Baby & Me and Oral Health support. None of this would be possible without the funders who continue to support our work and, of course, our team of staff and volunteers who deliver the valuable service to the communities we work in. Thank you all.





OUR WIRRAL SERVICES

FAMILY SUPPORT

SEND SUPPORT

BREASTFEEDING
SUPPORT

EARLY YEARS

SLEEP SUPPORT

BABY & ME

LITTLE LUNGS

0151 608 8288

OUR CHESHIRE SERVICES

FAMILY SUPPORT

BREAST FEEDING
SUPPORT

EARLY YEARS

SLEEP SUPPORT

BABY & ME

LITTLE LUNGS

0151 294 5885

LITTLE LUNGS



FACEBOOK



INSTAGRAM

The project encompassed two local authority areas – Wirral and Cheshire West and aimed to provide peer led support to families with children 0 to 5 at the greatest risk of respiratory conditions (such as respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)) or those with existing conditions (such as asthma), targeting those with health inequalities and living in the highest need areas. The project aimed to enhance and complement existing services utilising Koala North West's proven community approach, ensuring strong links were made and maintained with other professionals and voluntary organisations.

-Little Lungs Team

In 2022 we teamed up with local organisations such as Wirral Multicultural Organisation, Involve NW, Bee Wirral and Caritas along with specialist paediatric nurses to deliver the Little Lungs Project.

We worked in partnership with the Wirral & Cheshire West hospital trusts and primary care networks with the aim to raise awareness, provide information and education and support families around respiratory illnesses.

Between September 22 – April 23 we worked with **262** families and reached over **2000** people via social media platforms.



What our families are saying...

"I can't explain how I was feeling, everything was crashing down around me, and to have you there to listen to me was great."

"I feel like I'm telling you my life story but it's just so lovely to have you not only listen but to understand and relate" -Said by a parent who was feeling extremely overwhelmed and very anxious that she now had to co-parent her children with her ex-partner.

My little one is always poorly with her chest, I'm really struggling. I'd seen your leaflet in my pharmacy, and I now follow you on Facebook but you have given me the confidence to access the support, thank you. - Winsford Women's Day

SEND SERVICES

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITIES

Between 22-23
we supported
104
SEND Families

Our Little Bees and Little Movers groups have provided fun and positive play experiences in a calming nurturing setting. The children have thrived this past year. They are progressing well in areas working on, meeting targets such as taking steps without support or saying single words. This is job satisfaction to a tee and such a pleasure to observe.

As well as providing excellent care to the children with SEND, we also look after our parents/ carers by providing respite, allowing them to sit back and chill with a cup of tea, whilst gaining valuable peer support, getting out the house and helping to reduce isolation. We know how much our parents/ carers value this time.

We also would like to give thanks to the Physiotherapist and Occupational Therapist, who come to visit the groups and work with the cohort of children attending. It helps to upskill the group staff in ways we can make progress with individual targets, but importantly work with the children in a familiar setting, to reach those goals.

Autism Incredible Years

Koala North West understands that parents can face many difficulties and challenges when it comes to supporting their child who is on a pathway or has been diagnosed with Autism.

Our 'Incredible Years Autism' is a group setting where parents can meet other parents and have a better understanding of themselves, their children and their needs.

The course showed how to establish:

- Directed narrated play
- Language development
- Self-regulation
- Empathy
- Emotional and social skills
- Praise and rewards
- Limit setting and handling misbehaviour



To Emma and Kate.

Thank you so much for running a Brilliant Autism course. I have taken so much away and we've been using strategies daily at home and is making family life a little easier. I've been recommending this course to others as feel it is so beneficial, hopefully you'll get the funding continued.
Thanks again
Helen, (Kye) x x x

Groups

Little Bees is a support group especially for young children where there is concern over their development of social and communication skills. Our Little Bees benefit from a stimulating and fun play experience, with emphasis on activities to promote social, communication and independence skills.

Little Movers is a group especially for children under 3 years with a physical complex need, along with their parents or carers. 'Little Movers' is about supporting and stimulating our children through music, movement and play, but most of all by having fun. Staff and volunteers work in partnership with NHS trained physiotherapists who attend the sessions weekly, helping our Little Movers to reach their full potential.



"The group has been a life saver. Having a break from a demanding child is worth its weight in gold. It allowed me to sit with others who get and understand what I'm going through. I can offload and I won't be judged. Also, due to the cost of living crisis having a group that is now free of charge has been a massive help."

-Little Bees parent

Diversity+

Diversity+ aims to support families in North Birkenhead whilst working in partnership with Equilibrium and WEB Merseyside.

EMPOWER US PROJECT

This project supports parents of children with complex needs or disabilities, by offering a wide range of support services, helping to cope with the emotional roller coaster of parenting, as well as the practical implications of having a child with additional needs. 'Empower Us' offers a safe space to share our experiences and knowledge, whilst learning from each other, through in-home support, walk and talk sessions, access to resources/information events, one to one support and emotional and practical support.

"I can't thank you enough for your support and encouragement you are like my angel, I don't know what I would have done if I had not contacted you. You have Empowered me to support my son in every way possible I have a greater understanding of my son's sensory needs, communication and language and his sleep routine. But most of all you have given me the confidence to speak up to other professionals about the well being of my son's future." -Empower Us parent

SLEEP SERVICES

53% of Service users reported a reduction in melatonin medication or that it is no longer needed.

We worked with a total of 250 families through groups and 1-1 Support

95% of parents reported an improvement in parenting confidence

92% of children sleep better

91% of children have improved wellbeing

Over the past 12 months, due to NHS funding we have been able to expand our service across Cheshire West to offer a bespoke service to families who have a child who is neurodiverse.

The sleep programme we offer to these families has been designed and expanded to enable us to support families to gain a deeper understanding of their child's neurodiversity, including their sensory needs and sensory processing along with their daily lived experience, whilst also working on a calmer bedtime and improving their sleep and overall wellbeing.

Our accredited sleep practitioners offer a choice of service; our bespoke 1-1 offer allows parents to speak with a practitioner each week for 6 weeks to support their journey navigating their child's sleep concerns, whilst our sleep groups allow parents to come together in a group with people who are experiencing a similar journey with peers they can relate to and get support from. Both options consist of six weeks' worth of support and the outcomes and feedback we receive speak for themselves.



What our families are saying...



"It's been fantastic and it's lovely to have time with my partner now she can self-settle. Thank you for the support. I really appreciate the support and the tips on my child's sensory needs and how to support her language".

"I can't believe the difference, it's not just the sleep, it's all the other information I have learnt about autism, things I didn't know but help so much, this course should be advertised for everyone"

"Having someone to talk to weekly helped and pushed me to follow through with routine. L has been completing homework which he hasn't done in the last year, and he's waking in a better mood"

The new sleep service based in Cheshire West, working alongside the paediatricians to improve sleep, has gone from strength to strength, our goal being to reduce melatonin intake by forms of diminution of prescriptions or by dosage reduction.

As a new small team, we were inundated with over 400 referrals in the 1st year, from different referrers across the Cheshire West region, and met the target set, with positive outcomes, not that we didn't hit some challenges along the way.

We work with families on a 1:1 basis, or in a group setting, 6 weeks at a time. The sleep practitioners empower parents/ carers / grandparents, to support encouraging changes and upskill their knowledge with tips and strategies, provide peer support on a weekly basis, enabling bedtime to become a more enjoyable, relaxed part of the day. As bedtime is the one they most dread.

The service is successful if the hard work is put in. We aren't the sleep police and we don't have a magic wand. But with consistency and commitment, we can improve and aid a better night's sleep.

-Emma Whittle, SEND service Lead and Sleep Practitioner

EARLY YEARS



Koala North West offer a range of projects that we deliver as part of our Early Years Service. We believe at Koala North West that every family should have access to universal and targeted provision during the earliest years of their child's life from conception to age five. Why? Because these years matter. The early years shape the trajectory of a child's future, a child's development and their voices count. At every stage of our involvement with families we hold in mind the voice of the child / infant, whilst offering a non judgemental support package for their parents or carers.

The team have really grown this year recruiting a number of staff for various early years projects. We have a highly trained workforce with experience in teaching, early years, baby massage, BFI & breastfeeding, Video Interaction Guidance, Incredible Years and HENRY.

Our Early Years Coordinators, who provide tailored support through home visits, focusing on early learning and development, have been able to work closely with our wider team in Chester to host some wonderful family events and trips. We have had the joyous moments of watching staff terrified holding snakes at our A-Z safari!! But up there with one of my favourite moments of 22- 23 was seeing the families at Christmas taking a ride on Santa's train at Gulliver's World. The smiles and laughter from the children and their parents were magical, many of whom would not have been able to attend due to health, finances, and multiple children, etc.

-Stephanie Leason, Early Years Lead

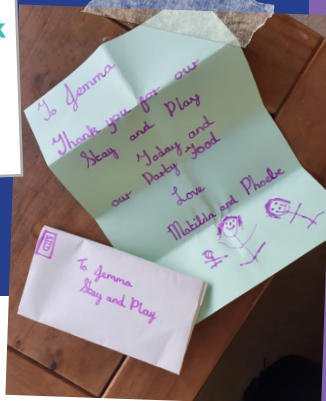
BUMP, BABY AND BEYOND

(Parent Infant Mental Health Service)

Our 'Parent Infant Mental Health Service' known as PIMHS, works with parents expecting a baby, who have recently given birth or their child is under the age of two. We focus on supporting those early relationships between parents and babies with an understanding that this can be difficult, particularly if you are experiencing emotional or mental health problems.

"Koala has been amazing for me. I don't want to leave them. The support given to me and my family has been life changing. Just knowing someone is there to talk to or offer help has been great."

-PIMHS Parent



VIG

(Video Interaction Guidance)

'Video Interaction Guidance' is an intervention offered by Koala North West, through which a practitioner aims to enhance communications within relationships. It aims to give parents a chance to reflect on their interaction with their child, drawing attention to elements that are successful, and supporting parents to make changes where desired.

"I found the VIG really good. I was pleased with what I saw in the clips. It helped me realise I was doing enough, I don't need to be my child's entertainer it is about the connection between us"

-VIG Parent

BABY INCREDIBLE YEARS

The Incredible Years Babies programme is an evidence-based parenting programme aimed at babies aged 0-9 months and is designed to strengthen and support existing parenting skills and promote children's development socially, emotionally, physically and educationally.

We ran our first group in Chester from Blacon Children's Centre and had 4 families attending. We held weekly sessions over a 9 week period from October to December 2022.

The group encourages peer support and open discussions around topics such as reading babies' cues and developmental needs, understanding the importance of communication, ways to provide physical and tactile stimulation and it's importance for brain development, introducing solids and gaining support. We received positive feedback from all families attending. One Mum commented 'Amazing class! It's great that there is funding for classes like this! It's a shame it's only for 9 weeks.'

What our families are saying...

"It's such a lovely group, where we can gain important insights and promote our child's development and it makes me see the value I have to my baby. Thank you."

"Supportive group and felt comfortable sharing experiences, thank you."

"Feel much better in myself just having others to talk to. Amazing service, so supportive and welcoming."

"Really supportive with my fussy baby."

I felt like I existed and I matter.





BREASTFEEDING

Our breastfeeding support service offers one to one and group evidenced based, non-judgmental and practical support with infant feeding. Support can be accessed in pregnancy and during the postnatal period. The service is accessible for the duration of your feeding experience.

-Sara Atherton, Breastfeeding Lead

**Between 2022-2023
we supported 1,119
Mums with 1,129
Children.**

As a first time mum the help with breastfeeding has been incredible. I've had so many questions and the team have been on hand at every point.

A massive difference. I was able to breastfeed my son because of support from Koala. The emotional support provided throughout my parenting journey has been incredible. I honestly don't know where we'd have been without them.

Did not know anything about breastfeeding and everything else about newborn. Being in the classes made everything easy.



To All the Staff & Volunteers
at Koala Northwest

Thank you all for your support and encouragement during our Breastfeeding Journey. We are now at 8 months exceeding our original goal and still going strong!! We literally could not have done it without you! I am going back to work soon but plan to continue breastfeeding just wanted to take this opportunity to tell you all how amazing you are and how grateful we are for the support offered.

Love From
Gemma Clayton & Freya
✱ ✱ ✱ ✱ ✱



FAMILY SUPPORT

Our Family Support Team have supported families for many different reasons this year, from isolation, mental health, relationship breakdown, struggling to understand and manage their children's behaviour, parenting, financial difficulties, housing, just to name a few.

We have supported families to become more resilient and independent, to empower them to make positive changes and overcome difficulties by providing a non-judgmental approach. We have listened to families to establish the best support that is needed. We have then offered home visits and provided the best tailored support that's suited to them and their own individual needs.

Partnership working is very important to us at Koala NW and we are delighted that successful networking and promoting the service is an ongoing success. This year we have seen a significant increase in food and energy poverty, and we have been able to recognise this with low income families with children, who are already making sacrifices on essentials like food, basic toiletries and adequate clothing. We have been able to offer support before the situation gets out of hand by providing energy vouchers, warm clothing, blankets, hot water bottles for families in need and also some incredible fresh fruit and vegetable hampers delivered at different times throughout the year to ease the financial burden already with so many families during a year of price rises and high inflation rates.

Over the last 12 months we have seen the expansion of the Family Support team across all areas. It's been an exciting time seeing the teams grow at a fast pace, recruiting more staff to support even more families.

-Julie McGuinness, Family Services Lead for Cheshire West

We offer a free confidential home visiting service with trained volunteer mentors who volunteer their time for up to 3 hours per week. All our volunteer mentors have parenting experience. Our volunteers work together with our families by offering practical and emotional support and guidance around routines, family management, children's emotional health, and support in ensuring children are school ready.

Between 2022 – 2023 we supported **1906** children within **1067** families through home visits and targeted groups. We also hosted **28** family events.

What our families are saying...

"It's made a massive difference to our well being and my ability to deal with what's going on. I'd still be thinking I was a crazy single mum failing at everything if it wasn't for Koala NW! I think Koala North West's Family Support is Extremely helpful. I found that the service for me was fundamental in building a better relationship with my son and dealing with his behaviour."

"I've never had anyone I can share the more ridiculous aspects of 'the things that bake my noodle' with. Hidden that for my whole life so as not to be judged. I really appreciate you and your help. Thank you, it makes such a difference"

"I think Koala North West's Family support is... Absolutely invaluable. I found that the service for me was ... a mechanism to guide me out of trauma towards a more complete life."



FULL CIRCLE

Bringing generations together

During 2022-2023 we ran **46 Full Circle sessions** with **75 different people attending**. In total we had **344 attendees** across the year.

"We have been coming to the Full Circle group since the new year. It is a lovely group which brightens up our week! You can really see how much enjoyment the younger and older generations get from the time they spend together, playing, singing. We wish we knew about it sooner."

- Parent

FULL CIRCLE

Every Thursday morning down at Hollymere,
Lots of laughing voices you may begin to hear
A happy throng of mums and babies come to chat
together
Yes, every week on week, and whatever is the
weather.

Kayleigh brings Grayson with Noah as well,
Then Ruth, our Beautician, (she keeps us looking
swell).
The Elder is Margaret (she's about 92), and curly
haired Blake, at the grand age of two.

There's Sophie with Elton (but not Elton John),
She works in the office, and who we rely upon.
Frewein and Kidus – he takes it all in.
Just sits and discovers just who's coming in.

There's also Aurora – you have to adore her, with
curls all around her cute little face.
Her best friend is Blake – a lively pair they make
When they run round and round keeps us all awake.

Dawn is another who comes as a mother, and Logan
whose mum's called Louise. They all join the fun,

Another called Nellie, she joins in the melee, and
Janet just reads us a story.
We all pay attention, and I have this to mention, that
it's better than watching the telly!!

Janet and Tarnya bring life to the throng, with stories
and songs that we all sing along.
They also serve coffee and cake with a smile, brings
happiness feelings that last quite a while.

Ann is our poet, who just does her best, to make it all
rhyme, but it's all done in jest.
Angela found us, as some lists she looked up, but she
adds to the number, and helps to wash up.

So, if you pass by on your way to the shops, you might
be surprised when the penny just drops.
That's what's going on behind those closed doors, is
something quite special..THE KOALAS, of course!!!!



A Poem from Ann, a regular attendee at the Intergenerational group in Ellesmere Port.

OUR CHARITY SHOPS

FOLLOW OUR SHOPS ON SOCIALS



We have two charity shops selling second-hand items to the community to raise much-needed funds for Koala North West. Between 2022- 2023 our income raised was **£149,185**.

MORETON

240 Hoylake Rd
Moreton
Wirral
CH46 6AD

0151 678 5746

MON-SAT 9-4
WED 10-4

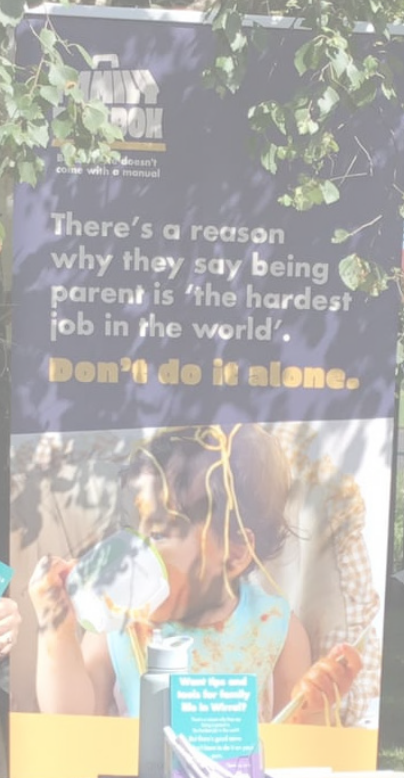
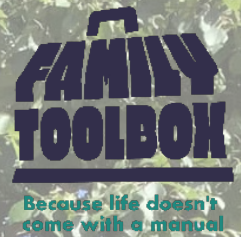
CLAUGHTON

48 Upton Rd
Claughton
Wirral
CH41 0DF

0151 652 0020

MON-FRI 10-4

FAMILY TOOLBOX



The Toolbox website is fab, it's really useful as a professional to find out what is available for families I am working alongside. I use it to help families look for things in their local community to broaden their involvement and make connections. It is really useful when working with families to help them to look at their support network to provide them with a resource they can go to if they are struggling or feel they need some additional support once my involvement has come to an end.

-L.A Professional



In the last year Family Toolbox has managed to reach 98,398 through social media alone.



FACEBOOK



WEBSITE

Family Toolbox is a collection of local people, places and experiences that families can get involved in either online, at www.familytoolbox.co.uk or in person through the Family Toolbox founding organisations and members across the borough.

The founders are 7 local organisations, including Koala North West, who have committed to making their support free from referrals and thresholds, so families can access support as and when they feel they need to. The 7 organisations have been funded to work together in an Alliance with Wirral Council over the next 5 years as a minimum and have the responsibility to help Family Toolbox grow and evolve over that time.

The online side of the model is a mobile-friendly website that Wirral's parents and carers can use to find resources, people and places to help them with anything specific they want to work on.

Along with some funding towards our family support services, Koala North West have been funded to deliver the majority of the 'backbone' of the Family Toolbox, developing and maintaining the website, and publicising Family Toolbox through community engagement, social media, networks and events.

The team also support other organisations and professionals to help them deliver better services to Wirral families.

"It's great to have something all in one place, that I can go to when I am struggling with being a parent. As dads we are often forgotten about, and it's so good that I can have a look at what is out there to help me if and when I may need it."

-Parent

"It's so good (website), families should be able to find support for themselves, most are able to and it stops the family feeling like they aren't able to do things for themselves. It's great to support us in our role as pastoral staff, we can support families to access the website."

-School Pastoral Team



FOR THE COMMUNITY

A photograph of a woman and two children swinging on a large rope swing in a wooded park. The woman, wearing a blue and white patterned jacket and a blue paper crown, is smiling. The children, a girl in a blue patterned shirt and a boy in a blue jacket, are also smiling. The swing is made of thick rope and has red poles. The background shows trees and other people in the distance.

**Between 2022 - 2023 we
were able to accommodate
661 children and parents
on trips and activity
sessions.**



"Absolutley outstanding trip! The pick up was on time and got us all there together which was great! The whole experience meant everything to be able to do it and enjoy it with my little girl as well as meet other mums and all the staff! We had never been before so we feel very honoured and are very grateful to get the chance to do something so, so special. The staff are all so lovely and so helpful with everything they have all made it an extra special day out. Thank you so so much for all your help at Koala NW and to Melissa"

-Family who attended Chester Zoo



"It was really good. Very well organised. The kids had a fantastic time. The koala team was absolutely brilliant, around to help everyone with kids throughout the day, one staff ran to collect another ladies double buggy for her after Santa which was really, really thoughtful as it really is a struggle with 2 children. Just thought the staff was absolutely amazing throughout the day"

-Family who attended Gulliver's World

FOREST SCHOOL



During 22-23 we were able to deliver **27** forest school sessions for our families, **319** children benefitted from these sessions.



HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND

During 22-23 we were able to provide **164** families with essential household items such as food, clothing, white goods and furniture benefitting **507** people in Wirral alone.

We provided **159** Cheshire families with food hampers benefitting **381** people



"I have just sat and cried, can't thank you enough the weight has been lifted. Not having to worry about food for Christmas now. Thank you so much."



"The kids are made up, They have never had a fruit and veg like this. They loved having a look in the box to see what was in it."



OUR WARM HUB

Between January 23 -April 23 we had 341 visitors attend our weekly warm hub and, across this period we provided them with 194 household items including food parcels, heaters, warm bundles and Christmas Presents.



Because I like to come to get out from the house. I suffer from depression and anxiety. I can't cook as well. I like to talk to people and get information. Just to get out and meet people. I like having lunch together to stop me being isolating at home.

I come to socialize with other people and it gets me out of the house. and it's warm

Excellent. Fab idea.
Makes a big difference to us
all. Thank you. Keep up
the good work.
Hope it continues!! ...



I have recently moved into the
area & have found the
welcoming atmosphere wonderful



Staff are amazing and always
helpful and pleasant. to
every one, and of course the
lunch.

IMPACT

88% of parents felt supported to attend appointments/ classes, report improved home conditions and have essentials for baby/ preparing home for new baby/ family provided

89% of parents reported an increase in involvement in their child's development

90% of parents reported an improvement in mental health, well-being and coping. Increased social networks. Increased resilience/ better coping strategies

87% of parents reported an improvement in physical health

91% of parents reported an improvement in self-esteem/confidence and reduced isolation. Improvement in child's behaviour, budget and money management, child's speech & language, school readiness and a better understanding of child development.

92% of parents reported a reduction in stress/anxiety, improved parenting skills, increased confidence in child's learning + development, read more with their children and engage more with their child's early learning

WHAT OUR FAMILIES THINK

Thank you I appreciate it. I didn't know about the foodbank so without your help we wouldn't have had that much food this weekend. I can't thank you enough for phoning and coming with me as I've never been before so I didn't know what to expect.

I don't see anyone else all week so look forward to your weekly visits.

Mel always arrives friendly and happy to see us. Melissa has been really helpful with routines and organising financial planning, as well as helping through my tribunal with the DWP. It's nice to see Melissa and I always feel like I've accomplished something after we get together.

The support we as a family of 5 all with additional needs ranging from both us parents being registered as blind and 3 children aged 9, 5 and 5 with ASD, GDD and visual impairment receive from Melissa at Koala NW is excellent. She is supporting us as parents to socialise and be active in the community as well as support us as a family to access and accompany us to social and play sessions/parks in the Lache area. I can not go out with all 3 children on my own so her help is amazing.



WHAT OUR VOLUNTEERS THINK

"I really enjoyed this course, the online learning part of it was helpful to be able to do it at home in our own time, the ladies who carried out the courses were all very knowledgeable and happy to answer any questions or go over things again."

"There is always someone at the end of the phone and I never feel alone."

"I can tell you really appreciate everything we do as volunteers."

"In the year I have been volunteering with Koala I have been impressed with the support and supervision I have received from my supervisor/ coordinator and the way the management of the organisation make sure their volunteers feel valued and important. The supervisor gives valuable advice and information when needed but also takes on board suggestions from the volunteers. She is readily available to answer queries or advise on problems. She is proactive in getting things sorted out for the service users as soon as she is aware of a problem whether it's providing equipment needed or helping with financial difficulties. She also organises meetings of groups of local volunteers so they can get to know each other and pass on information and suggestions supporting each other to help clients better. It is a very friendly organisation that works well helping vulnerable families. I am proud to be assisting as a volunteer."



VOLUNTEER WITH US

Koala North West relies on brilliant volunteers to power its services. Without them we couldn't function and provide our valuable services to local communities.



SCAN TO REGISTER YOUR INTEREST

Have you ever thought about volunteering with families?

Do you often find yourself offering practical and emotional support to those around you?

Do you think you could offer support to families based on your own personal experiences?

Yes? Consider volunteering with Koala North West.



THE KOALA NORTH WEST TEAM



OUR FUNDERS



With special thanks to our individual donors...

Adam Morris, Alex Maher, Amy McDonald, Antony Parkins, Azza Mahdi, Birkenhead School, Brimstage Maze, Caldys Open Gardens, CEL Solicitors, Chapter Mental Health, Christine Malkin, Christy Potter, Debbie Anderson, Diane Hastie, Hannah Bergh, Georgina Brownson, Helen Newman, Janet Johnson, Jenny Davies, Jessica Nixon, John Bateman, Katie Fielding, Kirsty Foley, Lydia Wellens, Mari Jones, Mary Winn, Matthew Pace, Merseyside Fire Services, Michelle Jeffrey, Mr & Mrs Kearney, Neston Flower Society, Prenton Ladies Golf Club, Rachel Ryan, Rachel Summers, Share a Bear Stanlaw Abbey Development Trust, St Werburghs Church - Chester, The Inner Wheel of North Wirral Benevolent Fund, Women's Institute - Neston.

HOW TO SUPPORT

EVERYONE NEEDS A LITTLE HELP SOMETIMES...

Your support could make all the difference to a local family on Merseyside and Cheshire.

£10 will fund:

Snack time for our groups for children with complex needs for a week

£50 will fund

The cost of a volunteer's travel expenses to support a family for a month

£200 will fund

Our mentor induction programme for 10 new mentors

£500 will fund

The purchase of a piece of indoor play or garden equipment for our groups for children with complex needs

£1,000 will fund

Our children's Christmas party

£2,500 will fund

A day trip for our families and their children

£5,000 will fund

Home visiting support for 5 families for a year

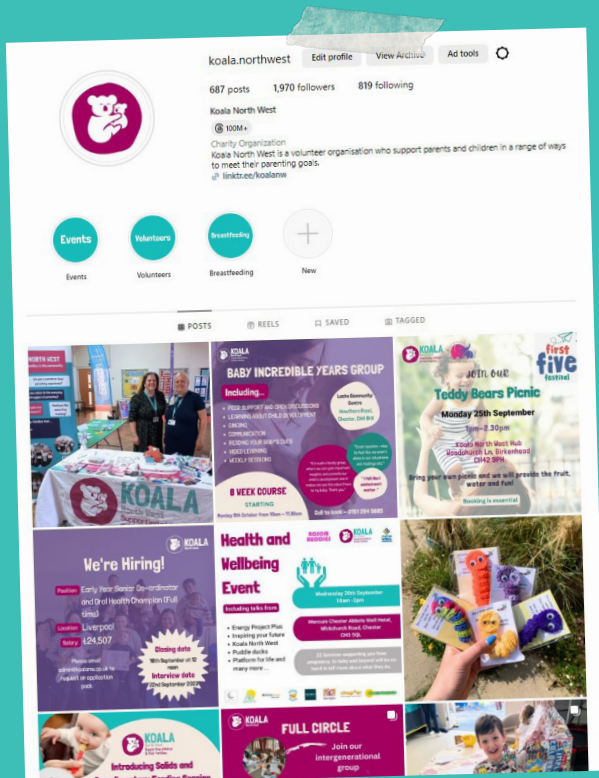
Supporting families in our local community is what Koala North West is all about. In the current climate the demand for our services has increased, while the amount of money we receive has decreased.

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KOALA

North West
Supporting children
& their families

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