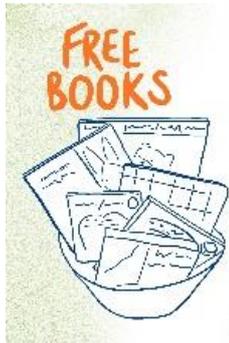


April to June 2021: Growing Minds is getting back to strength!

Growing Minds has seen a brilliant rise in uptake as we have come out of lockdown, and the collaboration continues to grow.

Progress

Our headlines for the second quarter of the year:



186 families are now receiving support from Growing Minds

123 of our Growing Minds families signed up with babies, 63 with toddlers

119 of our families live in Littlemore and 67 in Berinsfield

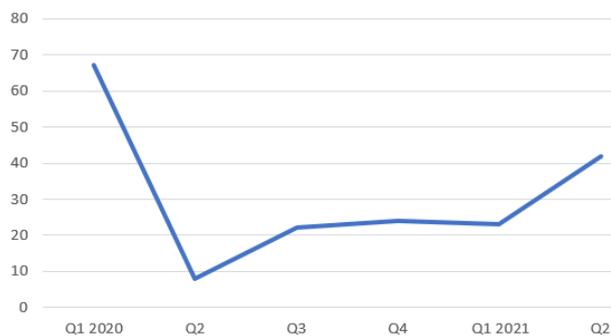
1,170 age-appropriate Imagination Library Books have been delivered since the start of the project

17 local professionals across the two communities have been trained in the Peep Learning Together Programme through Growing Minds.

Quarter two has brought a large increase in the number of families signing up to the initiative – 42 new families from April to June, which is more than in any other quarter over the last 12 months, and only rivalled by our first quarter of delivery on the project.

We think this is reflective of the continual return to normal of services such as health visiting, and opening up of other services in our networks, such as family centres. It may well also be reflective of increased interest from families as they realise the impact of the pandemic.

Growing Minds Sign-Ups



Our partners have steadily opened up activities as staffing and restrictions have allowed. These include the following interventions and support:

- Ongoing phone contact from trusted practitioners
- Online Peep group sessions
- Monthly Imagination Library book deliveries
- Referral and liaison with wraparound services (health services, faith groups, community groups and many others)

GROWING MINDS IN ACTION

Partnership example:

A family in Littlemore, with a baby born in lockdown, has struggled with parental mental health. Both parents have been unwell, which has led to isolation and lack of engagement with support. Due to the dad working long hours, the mum has felt this particularly keenly, resulting in feelings of overwhelming anxiety when leaving the house. Home-Start Oxford has built a good relationship with the family, building the mum's confidence by engaging her in buggy walks. They have also provided treasure basket ideas, songs, and stories to use at home, as well as some supplies such as clothes and nappies where these were necessary. Home-Start is working with the mum to engage with specialist support for her mental health concerns, as well as to explore childcare options to support her return to work.

The Growing Minds Partnership:

The Berin Centre, John Henry Newman Academy, Abbey Woods Academy, Oxfordshire Health Trust, Oxfordshire Birth Registration Service, Peep, Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire, Home-Start Oxford, Oxfordshire Community Foundation

- Play: Full food sessions by a parent volunteer – parents are provided with ingredients and cook alongside their child
- Imaginative play ideas sent to families by WhatsApp
- Families linked with a range of opportunities, such as a SEND tailored theatre experience
- Clothing and supplies through Oxford Baby Bank and others
- Regular newsletters, including home learning activities
- Buggy walks
- Baby massage groups.

A repositioning in collaboration

Growing Minds has made amazing headway in the first 18 months of delivery, providing a structured way for partners to work more harmoniously together. Between these partners we have engaged and supported families in ways that meet their immediate (and pandemic-related) needs, all the while continuing to engage families in interventions to substantively improve home learning for the longer-term benefit. OCF has largely coordinated the decision-making in this collaboration, which we believe has been vital for getting the initiative up and running and forming a sustainable partnership.

Going forward, OCF hopes to become a more equal partner in Growing Minds, empowering more collaborative decision-making across all of the partners. This will allow the project to develop sustainably and responsively, driven and influenced by the needs and knowledge of the families themselves and those delivery agencies that work directly with them.

Deliverables and funding

Quarter 2 Costs (£)



Expenditure for quarter two is £33,763 – slightly more than the last quarterly expenditure, due to an increased number of Imagination Library books being sent out.

We remain grateful for those who have helped secure existing funds, and continue to raise funds for the remainder of year two and beyond, to support as many families in the best way we can. We continue to expand our network of donors for Growing Minds and are actively seeking new supporters. We would welcome a conversation with you, our existing donors, if you have ideas to help us spread the word.

A family in Berinsfield have been working with Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire. The family have three children, and have been trying to address behavioural challenges relating to learning difficulties. There are also safeguarding concerns. Home-Start has begun a parenting course with the mum, and the dad is also keen to engage with it. They have immediately started to implement some of the new parenting strategies, which are already creating some improvements for their home environment.

Quotes from parents on the baby massage group:

“I have been able to do more massage with M this week, which we are both enjoying.”

“Thank you for the videos this week, it is really useful to see the strokes demonstrated again.”

“My daughter asked what the massage bits were, so I ended up massaging her tummy and chest and practising those strokes. My daughter really enjoyed it.”

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