

Invitation to Tender

Evaluation of The Children's Society's CSA
Transformation Programme

January 2021

One: Overview



Client: The Children's Society

Description: The Children's Society wish to appoint an independent evaluator to deliver evaluation activities as outlined within this tender for the Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) Transformation programme. The programme is funded by the Home Office through the CSA Transformation Fund, until March 2022. It will deliver Brief Interventions to young people who have experienced child sexual abuse, and provide insight to advocate for systems change.

The selected supplier will be required to contract on The Children's Society's consultancy contract, and process any received data in line with a signed data processing agreement.

Contract Value: The total contract value for the evaluation is £25,000 inclusive of VAT.

Closing Date: 17:00 on 11/02/2021

About The Children's Society

We are a national charity working to transform the hopes and happiness of young people facing abuse, exploitation and neglect. We support them through their most serious life challenges and we campaign tirelessly for the big social changes that will improve the lives of those who need hope most. We've been doing this for 140 years and we won't stop until we've built a society where hope is alive in every child.

Our vision is the world we seek to create. And we won't rest until we've achieved our vision. Where together with young people and our supporters, we've created a society built for all children. Where hope is alive in every child. Our vision is a society built for all children.

In the decade ahead we are determined to make sure this generation of children have a better childhood. So we will set out to build a happier, safer society for young people to grow up in, where they can look forward to their futures with more hope. Our goal is to overturn the damaging decline in children's well-being, setting a path for long lasting growth.

For more information about The Children's Society (TCS) and what we do, please visit our website: <https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/what-we-do>

Two: The Programme

The objective for the programme is to improve outcomes for children and young people who have experienced sexual abuse. The programme will identify opportunities for change to improve current support systems for children and young people who have experienced CSA. The programme is an early intervention model. It will:

- Provide direct support to children and young people affected by sexual abuse, including the delivery of short-term (brief) interventions combining cognitive and behavioural tools with support to navigate local systems, early-intervention risk and needs assessment, emotional support, advocacy and long-term support planning for children and families. This will be delivered by a network of children and young people's project workers.
- Offer national systems change leadership to oversee delivery and gather insight into the trends/issues faced by the children and young people supported to enable change. This will include bringing together experts and communities of practice (internally within TCS and externally) to identify development and change opportunities in the systems that support children and young people.
- The programme is currently undertaking a systems enquiry, which involves mapping the local systems within which our programme will operate. This exercise will support the TCS delivery teams to gain insight into the systems in each of the three delivery areas (Devon, Nottingham, and Newcastle). We are seeking to understand the context and dynamics of the systems within which the TCS CSA programme will operate. It is aimed that this work will deepen TCS' understanding of the systems in which we operate, in order to optimise service delivery and drive our work to strengthen the system.

It is intended that the systems enquiry will identify key themes that can inform the development of tailored systems change interventions at a local, regional and national level.

The programme will operate across three areas in England; Nottingham, Newcastle, and Devon. Each site will have two dedicated project workers. The programme will work alongside The Children's Society's well-established operations in these areas. A National Programme Manager will provide national systems change leadership to bring together insight, and effect change.

The programme will work directly with young people both digitally and face-to-face. The programme has been developed based on the Child and Family Traumatic Stress Intervention developed by Yale University. It will deliver brief interventions to young people with the aim of reducing early post-traumatic stress symptoms, and reduce the need for longer-term treatment in future.

The Children's Society is one of six grantees successful in gaining funding from the Home Office Transformation Fund. It is our intention to work as closely as possible and lead collaboration across

these partners to develop collective ambition for systems change and improvements to support for young victims of sexual abuse.

The agreed outcomes for the programme's direct work with young people are:

- Reduced trauma symptoms
- Improvement in wellbeing
- Reduction in risk (increased protective factors)

The Dartington Service Design Lab has been appointed by The Children's Society to conduct a Theory of Change process with the programme. This process will identify the programme's activities, mechanisms for change, the key outcomes that these are anticipated to lead to, and the ultimate goal to which the programme aims to contribute. The evaluation will be expected to capture evidence of these outcomes. For example, this may include:¹

- Increased understanding of trauma and its impacts
- Impact on longer-term post-traumatic stress symptoms
- Impact on family relationships
- Young people have a better experience within systems (such as more appropriate referral routes, at the best time)

¹ Please note that all outcomes included are indicative, provided as examples only, and will be confirmed following the Theory of Change process.

Three: Evaluation Details and Scope

The Children's Society is committed to capturing rigorous data, insight, and evidence about the programmes that we run. The Evidence and Impact Team within the organisation will be available to support with the evaluation, and has considerable expertise in relation to evaluation, monitoring, and collecting data for impact. The evaluation will form a crucial component of enabling us to understand what works in supporting children and young people, capturing insight on how to improve our work in future, and sharing the voices and experiences of children and young people.

All areas of the programme are currently in scope for the evaluation. This includes both our direct work with young people, and work to influence and change the systems around them.

We are particularly interested in:

- Building on the existing evidence base around this model, including understanding whether the Brief Interventions delivered have been successful in improving outcomes for young people who have experienced sexual abuse;
- Sharing and disseminating insight about best practice in supporting children and young people who have experienced sexual abuse; and
- Understanding to what extent the impact seen is sustainable (for example, by conducting interviews with young people after they have finished with the service).

Other important considerations:

- As the programme is delivered across three sites, and nationally, it will be important to ensure that the evaluation considers and takes into account local delivery variances and context in each of these areas.
- The Children's Society is committed to an intersectional approach, and anti-racism. We want to ensure that the impact we deliver works for all young people, and that our evidence considers not just what works, but for whom. We would like to see this reflected within the evaluation.
- The Children's Society has appointed Dartington Service Design Lab to carry out a Theory of Change process with the programme. The evaluator, therefore, is not expected to conduct this. The Theory of Change will inform and guide the evaluation, and there is an opportunity for the evaluator to observe the Theory of Change process.
- An output from this work will also include a guiding framework that can be used to inform monitoring and evaluation. The evaluator should expect to work with The Children's Society on implementing this (as such you will not be expected to create an entirely new outcome framework).
- The systems enquiry process to map the system will be undertaken prior to the evaluation's conception, and the evaluator will be expected to utilise the findings from this work within the evaluation.
- The programme delivery will have commenced prior to the evaluation being commissioned, with some data collection already in place.

The evaluation should use a mixed-methods approach, capturing both quantitative and qualitative data about the programme. The Children's Society has well-established mechanisms for capturing data, on which the evaluators will be expected to draw and utilise within the evaluation. As part of this programme, this might include use of outcomes tools such as CRIES-8 or our Good Childhood Wellbeing Index. We have several mechanisms for collecting qualitative and quantitative feedback, which will also be made available to evaluators.

We are also interested in any quantitative data from relevant partners that might demonstrate impact, and we would hope to work with the evaluator to explore this. For example, this might include quantitative data that demonstrates whether the programme has impacted on demand for other local support services. We are also open to any evaluation approaches that are able to provide an understanding of Cost Benefit Analysis, if appropriate and possible within data limitations/availability. We would welcome suggestions on these elements based on the outcomes and information provided, but do not expect this to be the main focus of the evaluation.

Whilst the main focus of the evaluation will be impact, we are also particularly interested in ensuring that process evaluation is included. This should include learning about what enables change, both within our direct delivery, and within the external systems surrounding delivery.

Deliverables: At a minimum, the evaluation will be expected to provide the following deliverables:

- Working closely with the delivery team and partners across the programme to build a thorough and in-depth understanding of the programme's approach
- Comprehensive data collection, capturing evidence both in relation to work with young people and systems change, including:
 - Advising on data collection methods if appropriate and required
 - Implementing data collection methods in partnership with the E&I team, such as surveys or other mechanisms
 - Qualitative research with the programme (young people, staff, and partners)
- Data analysis
 - Analysis of all monitoring and evaluation data to draw conclusions about the programme's impact and learning
 - Utilise data captured elsewhere (such as through systems enquiry / mapping or Theory of Change process) to inform evaluation findings
- Reporting
 - Interim report (Autumn 2021)
 - Final report (March 2022)
- Dissemination
 - Providing evaluation materials in a format that aids dissemination, such as presentations or summaries
 - Facilitation of findings workshop(s)
 - The Children's Society is committed to open learning with the wider children's social care sector. As such, we will be actively writing blogs about the work as it develops. This will include sharing the approach and progress of the evaluation. We will expect the evaluator to actively participate in blog writing and sharing approaches and work as it emerges.

Four: Tender Submission Detail

Commissioning Timeline

- Deadline for Submissions: 11/02/2021
- Online Interview Dates: 15/02/2021 – 19/02/2021
- Appointment date: 22/02/2021

Budget: The maximum budget available for the evaluation is £25,000 (inclusive of VAT) across the lifetime of the programme. Please note that due to spending restrictions we anticipate that some of this budget will be frontloaded in the current financial year, in anticipation of work delivered in the following financial year. The contract will specify this.

All fieldwork, travel, expenses, transcription and other costs should be included within your budget. There is no additional budget available for evaluation expenses or other costs. However, given the ongoing situation due to the Covid-19 pandemic, all work will in the first instance be delivered virtually, until such time as it is risk assessed that face-to-face evaluation activity becomes appropriate. This is not likely to be for some time.

It is The Children's Society's policy to provide a £10 voucher to all young people who take part in an interview for research and evaluation purposes. A portion of the budget will be reserved by The Children's Society for this purpose, which will be dependent on the number of interviews evaluators propose to carry out.

Proposal Development

If you would like to submit a response to this invitation to tender, please cover the following points in your submission:

- Understanding and Requirements
 - Your understanding of the requirements as outlined
- Experience and Expertise
 - Your relevant experience and expertise.
 - Details of team members involved in the project, their relevant qualifications, experiences, and expertise. The Children's Society is committed to Safer Recruitment. Please note that all team members who will have direct contact with children, young people, and vulnerable adults must have an up to date Basic DBS check.
 - If there are any examples of work you wish to send with your application, please either include a web link or share these as a separate document (Maximum of 2).
- Approach and Methodology
 - An indicative approach and methodology you would recommend for this evaluation. At this stage it does not need to be full details, but is intended to demonstrate how you would approach this evaluation in particular. We are interested in your suggestions.
- Capacity
 - Demonstrate that you have the capacity required to fully commit to this project.
- Research Ethics, Safeguarding, and Governance

- Outline your experience in relation to involving potentially vulnerable and marginalised children and young people and families in research/evaluation.
- This should specifically include your approach to safeguarding,² approach to interviewing vulnerable young people, ensuring confidentiality/anonymity, adherence to GDPR during data collection, recording, analysis, and reporting.
- Please outline how your commitment to safe and ethical research will be guaranteed within this evaluation.
- Budget and Value for Money
 - A full indicative budget breakdown demonstrating value for money.

Written responses must be in Arial font size 11 and must not exceed 10 pages. If you have any questions before preparing your submission, please contact chloe.nelson@childrenssociety.org.uk.

Scoring Criteria

All proposals received will be assessed according to the following weighted scoring criteria:

- Understanding and Requirements (10%)
- Capacity (10%)
- Experience and Expertise (15%)
- Budget and Value for Money (15%)
- Approach and Methodology (25%)
- Research Ethics, Safeguarding, and Governance (25%)

Please send your submission to chloe.nelson@childrenssociety.org.uk .

² Please note that you will be expected to abide by The Children's Society's Safeguarding Policy and other relevant policies.

The Children's Society