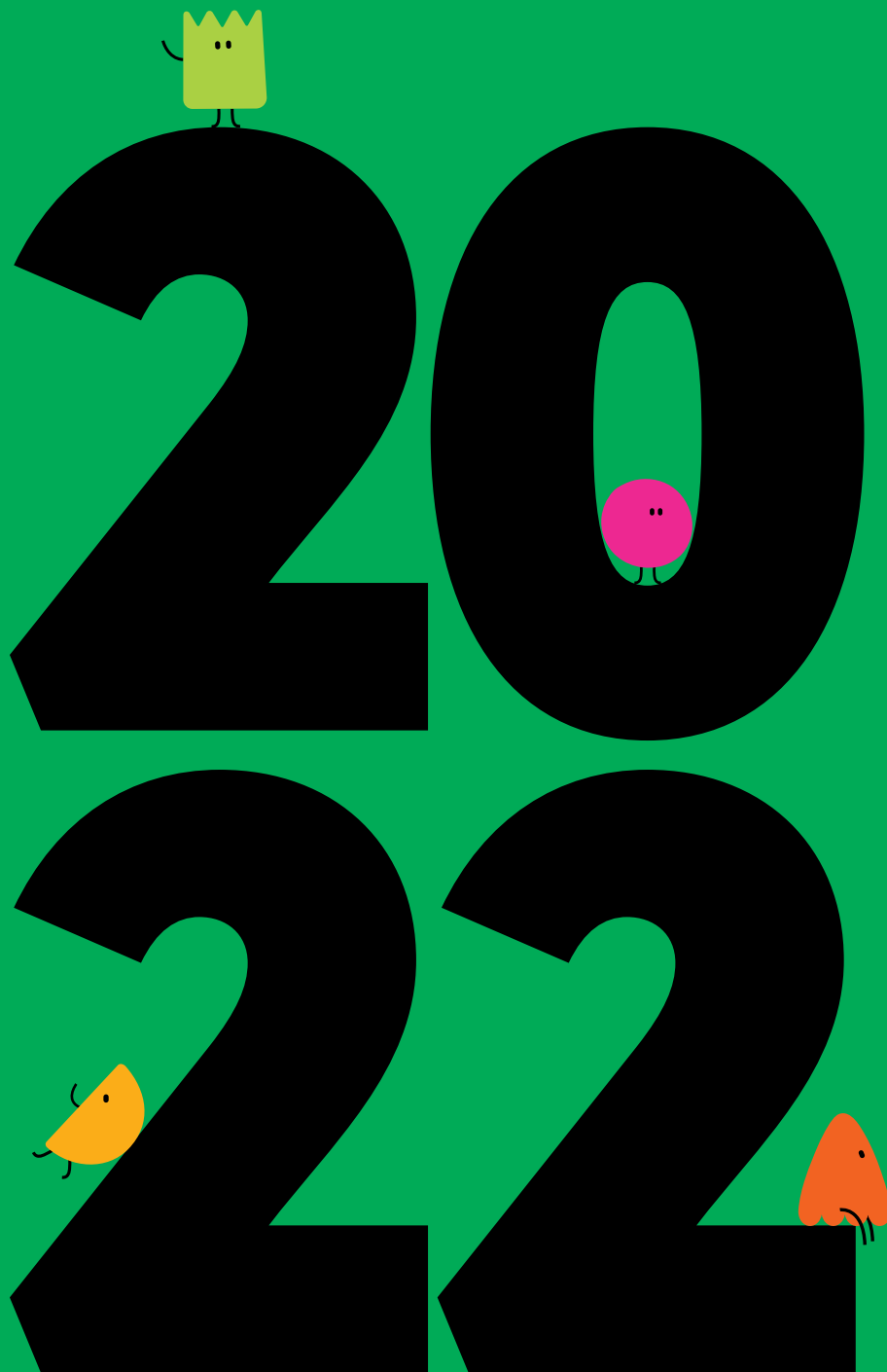


STARLIGHT



IMPACT REPORT



Compared to 2021,
in 2022 we had...

94%

more family services
activities and events



61%

more children using
our health play services



Cathy Gilman
Chief Executive



Play is an essential building block for a happy, healthy and resilient childhood. As Protectors of Play for seriously ill children, Starlight wants play to be recognised as essential as any medicine, treatment or test.

This year, we have continued to explore new ways to ensure children's right to play is protected and provided for whether in a healthcare setting or at home. We've trialled virtual reality, hosted our first Gaming Day and rolled out our services as part of a Covid vaccine project.

While 2022 has been a year of innovation, we've continued to build on our vast experience, doing what we know works well.

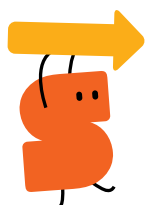
Our work is firmly rooted in insight and impact. From our hospital services to events and experiences, everything we do has to make a lasting difference to all the children and their families.

The impact of our work makes the experience of illness and treatment better for children in the here and now, and will also have long term positive affects for their physical, mental and emotional wellbeing.

Our policy work has also gained momentum as we've forged a partnership with NHS England to increase awareness of the value of play and the role of play professionals, and improve the quality and reach of play services in the NHS.

Behind everything we do, your continued and generous support has quite simply transformed the lives of thousands of children when they are ill, in healthcare and recovery.

Thank you.



MOMENTS

JANUARY–JUNE 2022

4

JANUARY

We kicked off the year with a trip to Toy Fair, which inspired new toys for our sensory boxes.



FEBRUARY

We hosted our first Gaming Day! Starlight Days connect children with similar interests.



It's a chance for the whole family to do something together, away from day-to-day pressures of living with special needs.



MARCH

Alton Towers was a hit with our families as they braved the epic rollercoasters!



Not once did my daughter feel disabled, she felt included, empowered and confident. I really can't overstate it – this was the most amazing weekend for our family.





APRIL

For the roll out of the North East London vaccine project, we provided playful distraction for around

5,000 children



I didn't even notice the vaccine!

170 children who were asked to rate their experience out of 10 gave an average score of

9.4



MAY

We took our dancing shoes to the iconic Pineapple Dance Studios! 10 families learnt choreography to Hamilton and Frozen.



My daughter's number one physio priority is to exercise more, so this was a brilliant way to do that.



JUNE

NHS England announced a joint taskforce with us, to improve and extend the reach of health play services in the NHS.

See p11.





JULY

Over 110 children took part in our Virtual Reality (VR) trial, the largest study of its kind in the UK. We found VR can positively impact children's treatment experience.



We've shown that play specialists can lead on research and get the most out of VR for the benefit of the children we treat at Leeds Children's Hospital.

Dr Alex Paes
Consultant Paediatrician



AUGUST

We took over Warwick Castle for our summer party, hosting over 70 guests.



My children all had fun, they were able to look around the castle, have a dance, make a t-shirt, have a go at juggling and watch the entertainment



SEPTEMBER

We met Whittington Hospital's play team to see our services in action and learn more about how we can support them.





OCTOBER

We held our annual Starlight Health Play Awards, celebrating play professionals who empower children in hospital.



I feel really honoured and privileged that the work I've done is appreciated. I can't make the children on the cancer ward better, but I can make their time in hospital better.

Claire Pickett
Starlight Health Play Specialist of the Year 2022



NOVEMBER

11 families went to Brickhouse Farm Cottages. The families all have children with chronic and multiple conditions and rarely get the opportunity to have a break. 100% of families* agreed that they made special memories.

See p8.



*7 out of 11 families gave feedback

DECEMBER

We released a special festive edition of our Play Well box. 212 boxes went to healthcare settings and children, bringing Christmas magic!



You provide items that really aid the wellbeing of the patients during their stay with us on the ward.

Play Team Leader
Stoke Mandeville Hospital



Children supported by Starlight, with chronic and multiple conditions, had a break away with their families to the fully accessible resort, Brickhouse Farm Cottages.



We recently got told that Charlie's condition will limit his life, we could have five years, or it could be ten, but there's no cure. It's obviously really impacted us as a family, but we want to use the time we have to make as many memories as we can, despite all the doctors' appointments and stress.

It's important to use this time to have fun while Charlie physically can, because next year he could lose some abilities. Being invited on this family break to Brickhouse Farm Cottages could not have come at a better time. Charlie has absolutely loved it; his face keeps lighting up. We've been able to relax in a safe space that caters to his needs. We went to the hydrotherapy pool where we had fun splashing about, there's a sensory room and we did a drumming workshop.

It was so great to see all the kids smiling, but also the parents; this was the biggest thing for me, all of us feeling like we could just be ourselves.

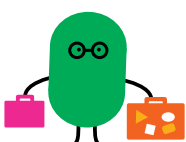
Nikki Ramage
Mum to Charlie



Seeing the families relax, socialise and enjoy quality time with their children at Brickhouse was so amazing. For Charlie's family, in particular, the last few months had been so full of sadness, stress, and challenges. Facilitating time for them to be a family and focus on making memories with their boys really highlighted the importance of Starlight's work.

As a play specialist, I know how limited these opportunities can be for families with a seriously unwell child, so it's incredibly special to make such a difference.

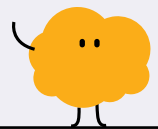
Ellie
Starlight-funded play worker



Of the families* that gave feedback...

*7 out of 11 families

100%



felt supported
and less isolated

felt their
children could
feel like their
normal selves

agreed that
the trip was
very accessible

gave 5/5 for
their overall
experience



We are a small team making a big impact. Meet two of our experts talking about how their roles contribute to creating high quality services and extending the reach of our work.



DR SANDRA GULYURTLU

Head of Impact and Insight

Sandra holds a BSc in Psychology and Physiology, MSc in Childhood Studies, PhD in Social Policy and is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. She has worked extensively in the voluntary sector and academia, conducting research into rights, welfare, safeguarding and well-being to create better outcomes for children and young people.

Why is the work of your team important?

"We build the evidence base on the 'why, what, how'. Why there is a need for what Starlight does. What makes our services important. How we can improve the lives of seriously ill children, their families and carers.

We take learning into practice and practice into learning. By capturing the opinions of the people we work with, we have a solid evidence base for

reviewing existing services or developing new ones.

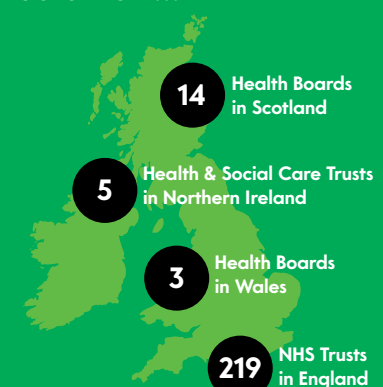
We want to hold ourselves to account and ensure we're spending resources to achieve maximum impact for children."

What is your team's proudest achievement in 2022?

"We have almost completed a much-needed mapping exercise of the state of play in healthcare across the UK. Nothing like this has ever been done before for health play. It's been a significant undertaking and we will finish the work in 2023.

It's already informing us of huge gaps in resources and our understanding of play services across the NHS in all four nations. Being able to map where we're needed most informs our service delivery, fundraising and policy work at a national and local level."

Mapping exercise includes Freedom of Information data from...*



*At the time of print, 92% of responses have been received



ADRIAN VOCE

Head of Policy and Public Affairs

Adrian is a practitioner, writer and advocate for children's play, playwork, and child-friendly planning. He is the author of the book 'Policy for Play' and, as the founding director of Play England, was the main advisor and delivery partner for the government's Play Strategy (2008-2011).

Why is it important to influence health service policy?

"The importance of children's play in their healthcare isn't widely enough recognised or supported, but evidence tells us it is vital.

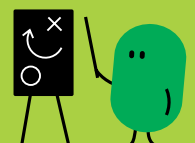
Hospital can be a scary place for children. Playing helps to normalise their experience and relax. This has profound benefits for their mental health, which are often overlooked.

Health play professionals provide opportunities for children to play and feel less

anxious about their treatment. They also use play to distract and comfort children during difficult procedures. However, they're often considered less important than other children's health professionals. Many settings have none. We want to change that.

Starlight co-chairs a taskforce with NHS England. What's the overarching aim?

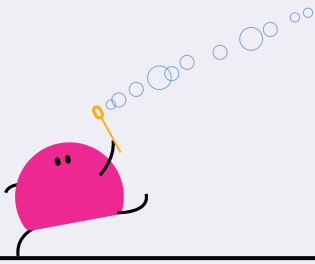
"The taskforce is driving systemic change in the role of play in children's healthcare: national standards and guidance for the NHS and, ultimately more funding and a larger workforce for health play services. We want all children to enjoy their right to play when they are sick.



The taskforce comprises:

- Starlight
- NHS England
- Royal College of Nursing
- Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health
- National Association of Health Play Specialists
- Health Play Specialists Educational Trust
- Sophie's Legacy





99%

agreed that children's play is important to their health and wellbeing, and should be provided for within the healthcare system*

89%

believed that play is not given the priority it deserves within the NHS*

*Of 102 people who responded to our public survey



Nurse Chris used play to calm and distract his patient Reece



I'm a nurse in paediatric day surgery and one of the main purposes of my role is to make the children's experience the best it can possibly be.

Coming into a strange hospital environment can make children feel disempowered, but play can put them at ease.

Most children know how to play, so I help them have ownership again and create a fun space with toys and games consoles provided by Starlight.

Play certainly makes my job easier too! If a child is happy, calm and co-operative, then procedures can go smoothly and quickly. If I can help make a child's hospital experience a positive one, then I know I can go home having done a good job.

Chris Harrison,
paediatric nurse



At our recent hospital visit, Chris was so welcoming and really helped to reassure Reece (and me too!). When we went down to theatre, Chris got a box of toys out for him to play with.

Reece was so calm and didn't even think twice about the fact he was going in for surgery. Chris was one of the most enthusiastic people I've ever met, he was so caring and helped to make it a really quick and easy hospital trip.

Reece isn't scared of hospitals at all now, in fact he had quite a nice time!

Leanne Williamson,
mum to Reece



87%

of healthcare settings* that disclosed their play budget, had no funding for play

*455 surveyed in Financial Year 21/22

The majority of healthcare settings that did have funding for play* had a budget of under

£500

*37 disclosed the value of their budget from the last two financial years



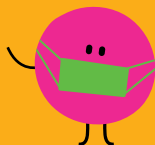
We estimate our health play services were used almost

2.4 million times



616

healthcare
settings
reached



78%

↓ decrease in children
feeling afraid...

77%

↑ increase in children
feeling happy...

as a result of using our services in healthcare and treatment

95%

of health professionals*
agreed our health play
services helped children
have a more positive
experience in healthcare

*365 surveyed



Of families asked
about our events...

92%

agreed they created
special memories and
quality family time*

*Feedback from 195 families

87%

felt supported
and less isolated*

*Feedback from 193 families

86%

felt like they had
a break from illness
and treatment*

*Feedback from 194 families



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