



Annual Review

May 2024 - May 2025



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Welcome

As anticipated, our seventh year was a busy one. It was a year in which our capacity to meet local need grew, thanks to established systems, delegation of job roles, and funding to support these and the core costs of the charity. This meant we could also start to think about new ideas and how we become even better at what we do.

Our fundraising galas have become key events, and whilst it may look like an evening of fun and glamour, they raise absolutely vital funds which have undoubtedly sustained and encouraged growth in the charity at a time when grant funding applications are still saturated.

Sustainability has become a focus not just financially, but in looking at our impact on the environment, and we have been working on a new clothing initiative we are excited to launch early in 2026 in our new campaigns site. This site was secured in February of this year and is already proving to be a great asset to our work.

Our networks have continued to grow this year, and we are grateful to local businesses and organisations who engage in our cause. From donations, to sharing the word, gala contributions, fundraisers, or visits, it's always humbling to see the community get behind us.

We welcomed some special visitors this year, the Lord-Lieutenant of East Sussex (Andrew Blackman) and The High Sheriff of East Sussex (Lucinda Fraser), and were moved by Lucinda's request for a second visit during which she presented us with The High Sheriff's Award. It was a delight to share with our team this recognition of their valued contribution in the local community.

As always, a heartfelt thank you to all who support our work and do what they can to help children and families.

Hannah

x



@family2family.org.uk

www.family2family.org.uk



Mission and Vision

To relieve financial hardship, poverty and associated adversity in East Sussex and surrounding areas through provision of clothing and essential items for babies and children to families in need.

To reduce waste and promote reuse through the collection of good quality baby and children's clothing and essential items.

To receive referrals from professionals who ensure recipient eligibility of support through the act of making a referral.

To support partner agencies and organisations in their work with vulnerable families through effective and timely response to their requests of items.

Where donations to Family2Family do not meet our standard, to maximise recycling and minimise those disposed of.

To remove some financial burden on families in their time of need, through the gifting of good quality and safe items, inspiring hope and change.

To provide a well-regarded and recommended service which benefits those who donate, access, and receive goods from Family2Family.

To adhere to relevant product safety standards and ensure items are in good, clean, and useable condition.

To organise fundraising events and secure grants to cover running costs and purchase essential items to benefit families.

To offer volunteering opportunities and link with businesses and other ventures who share Family2Family's values and ethos.

To gift all bundles without any cost to the families who receive them, or professionals who refer.



What we do

Family2Family collects donations of baby and children's clothing and essential items and redistributes them to families in need in East Sussex and surrounding areas.

The process is simple:

Donations of clothing and essential items for children aged 0 - 16 years are made to Family2Family. We ask that they are in **excellent condition**; items donators would feel happy to use with their own child or those they care about. This is to ensure families feel they have received a gift from the community in their time of need, as opposed to a handout. Prior to donating, we ask people to check our monthly wishlist (published on our website and socials) and to book a time slot to bring their items to us.

Family2Family **volunteers then sort and safety check** donations ready to be **gifted to families**. **Referrals are made by professionals** on behalf of families in need of support. This is done through our online referral form. The items requested are then put together into a carefully prepared bundle, specific to the needs of the baby/child(ren) and family. The professional is advised when the bundle is ready for collection, and they deliver it to the family.

Receiving referrals from professionals means it has **already been need assessed**, so we can accept every referral made to us and only need to collect limited information about the family so we can put together a tailored bundle for them, whilst they remain anonymous. Asking for help can be difficult, even when things feel different and we believe this level of separation from our beneficiaries can **enable them to access support** through professionals they already have a relationship with.

There is no cost to this service for professionals who refer or the families we support.



Trustees

'I'm a registered Social Worker with experience in Local Authority Children's Services. Family2Family was inspired through seeing local need, but also my personal experience of having my first 2 children when I was young. Fortunately I had a supportive family who were able to help me out, but many people don't have this and are isolated in their time of need. Family2Family is there to give people the practical items they need for their children, but also shows kindness and hope when people most need it'



Hannah Powell

FOUNDER / CHAIR OF TRUSTEES / GENERAL MANAGER



'My background is in IT consulting/project management. I am one of three children raised by an (amazing) single mum, money was tight and it was tough at times making ends meet. I know how a service like ours would have been a great help to alleviate some of the pressures that my mum had when we were growing up. Family2Family is such an important service for our community and I continue to be overwhelmed by the generosity of those who donate time, items and money to our cause, enabling us to help the families we do'

Leila Parker

FOUNDER / SECRETARY

'I have been in financial services for more than 20 years, originally with HSBC and latterly with St. James's Place, and I'm a Chartered Financial Adviser. I became involved when I saw the impact that Family2Family can have on local children and families. Having worked with clients dealing with the challenges that life can throw at you, the fact we can support them in times of need is very rewarding'

Peter Morris

TREASURER





'I have a background in education, having worked in primary schools for 15 years. Following a move to a new career in publishing, I began volunteering for Family2Family on a weekly basis in the summer of 2022 and very quickly became keen to support the amazing work the charity does in any way I could. As a mother myself, I am acutely aware of the difficulties all families can face and the impact of financial hardship on family dynamics, mental health and self-esteem'

Vicky Doe

FUNDRAISING AND EVENTS

Team

Sarah works at Family2Family five mornings a week, ensuring volunteers are welcome and motivated and making sure bundles are ready for professionals to collect.

'I have followed and admired Family2Family's journey over the years and to be onboard and a part of the expanding circle of support provided by this wonderful organisation is such a blessing.'

Sarah Tame

Session Supervisor



Ambassador

'I am so honoured and excited to be Family2Family's official ambassador, a charity that I truly champion and support. I really look forward to raising further awareness of what this amazing charity does and being involved in their overall mission'.



Kate Edmondson Founder of Home Edited
Professional Organiser & Home Accountability Coach.
www.homeedited.co.uk

Volunteers

Our service wouldn't be possible without the hard work of our volunteers. From checking donations and preparing bundles, to attending school assemblies, making bags, and responding to enquiries about donations, our volunteers are at the heart of all we do.

'When I retired I decided to look for some voluntary work. I've always worked with babies and young children so when I saw an appeal by Hannah and Leila I was instantly drawn to the set up and the whole concept of recycling clothes and equipment to help families needing a little help.

It's been a pleasure to be part of the charity as it has grown and changed over the years.'

Sharon
Weekly session volunteer



At Family2Family we understand life can be busy and commitments can change. We offer a variety of flexible volunteer roles so our volunteers can be involved as and when suits them. If you would like to help support local families and children in need, get in touch and we can let you know more.



Our bundles

When a professional makes a referral on behalf of a family they're supporting, they can select as few or as many items needed by the family. Once the referral has been received by Family2Family, the items are carefully put together specific to the requirements of the family. Where additional information is given about the likes, interests and individual needs of a child or family, we always do our best to make the bundle as personal as possible. The majority of the items we gift fall into eight categories:

The gift of sleep

Family2Family provides safe and cosy sleep items for babies and toddlers. From Moses baskets through to toddler beds, every bed is gifted with a brand-new mattress. Sheets and blankets are also provided so that beds can be assembled and used on the day they arrive with the family, providing an immediate improvement to the family environment; a safe place for little one to get some well needed sleep – perfect!

The gift of adventure

Gifting prams, slings, (and if purchased new) car seats, enables families to access the great outdoors, exercise, socialise, visit groups and appointments, and benefit from integrating in the community.

The gift of comfort

Baby toiletry bundles, nappies, and hygiene products for the whole family! Whilst adults toiletry products can't be requested on our referral form, we always add these as a surprise addition to our bundles.

The gift of safety

Items like safety gates and cupboard clips keep little ones from getting onto stairs or into cupboards. We often have requests for safety gates where families are living in temporary accommodation and need to stop mobile infants from getting into kitchens without doors.



The gift of play

Playing is the key to early learning. Our toy and book bundles are age appropriate, and promote both independent play and opportunities to interact with caregivers and other family members, which in turn supports good relationships.

The gift of dignity

Helping mums-to-be prepare for birth. Our mum-to-be bundles include breast pads, maternity pads, and toiletry bags filled with essential hygiene miniatures for hospital bags complete with some added pamper products to make sure Mum knows people care.

The gift of pride

Our clothing bundles are packed with love. All clothing is of excellent quality, folded neatly and presented in a reusable bag complete with gift tag. We provide a weeks worth of infant clothes including vests, babygrows and outfits, and for older children, a range of clothing for all weathers, including sleepwear, brand-new underwear and a coat in winter.

The gift of nourishment

Whilst we don't redistribute baby food or milk, we do gift essential items to support feeding. This includes items like highchairs, feeding pillows, bottles, weaning items, and plastic plates, cups and cutlery.

Our Impact

In our seventh year we supported **699 families** through our core service.
Within these families **1399 babies and children were gifted essential items.**

The essential items redistributed, valued as if purchased secondhand would be **worth more than £300,000.** Items distributed included:

The gift of pride:

Clothing bundles including numerous outfits, pyjamas and coats were gifted to **986** children

The gift of sleep:

Cots, toddler beds, cribs and Moses baskets, sheets, duvets, duvet sets: **2,921** items (not including Beds4Kids figures)

The gift of play:

Toy bundles, book bundles, playmats and bouncy chairs: **1,197**

The gift of adventure:

Prams, buggies, buggy boards, reins and slings: **198**

The gift of nourishment:

Highchairs, bottles, and other feeding equipment: **2,389** items

The gift of comfort and the gift of dignity:

2,581 toiletry bundles, nappy packs, wipes, and mum-to-be bundles

The gift of safety:

35 home safety items including stairgates, monitors, and cupboard clips

In addition to our core service, families were able to access support through our campaigns...



Gifts4Kids



Bags4School



Beds4Kids



A local issue

In 2022/23, the number of children living in poverty increased by 100,000 from 4.2 million in 2021/22 to 4.3 million children. That's 30% of children in the UK. Figures shown are drawn from the End Child Poverty Coalition local area estimates for the year 2021/22.

This provides an 'After Housing Costs' estimate of the 'relative poverty' rate for children in each constituency. A household is considered to be in 'relative poverty' if their income is below 60% of the median UK household income for that year.

Sussex Weald

24%

That's 4,443 children, or 7 children in every classroom of 30

Lewes

25%

That's 4,354 children, or 7 children in every classroom of 30

Bexhill & Battle

30%

That's 4,475 children, or 9 children in every classroom of 30

Hastings & Rye

38%

That's 7,624 children, or 11 children in every classroom of 30

Eastbourne

32%

That's 6,185 children, or 9 children in every classroom of 30

Tunbridge Wells

21%

That's 4,890 children, or 6 children in every classroom of 30

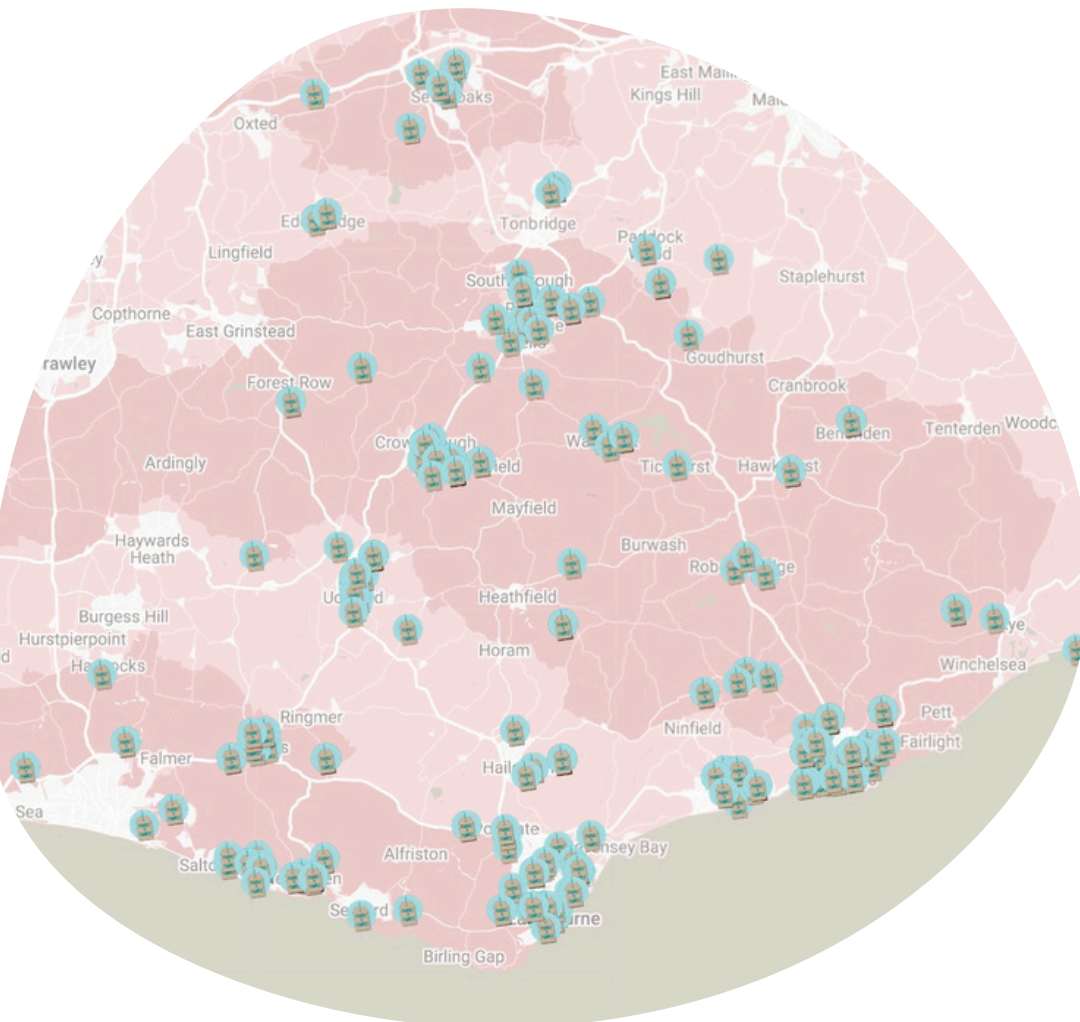
Why we do it

Through the simple act of redistribution and reuse, Family2Family gifts families in need of support with essential items for their children including prams, cots, toddler beds, clothing, toiletries, bedding and toys.

Receiving these items provides an immediate improvement to their situation, provides hope, and often demonstrates kindness to some who have seldom experienced it. In addition we have feedback from professionals who have recognised an improvement in parental mental health and wellbeing on receiving a Family2Family bundle, which in turn, improves their ability to focus on other aspects of parenting and ultimately benefits babies and children in their care.

We have gifted bundles to families experiencing challenges which include low income, mental health issues, domestic abuse, homelessness (or risk of), care leavers, young parents, asylum seekers, and women who have been trafficked. Many of these families were isolated and vulnerable and were truly overwhelmed to receive such gifts.

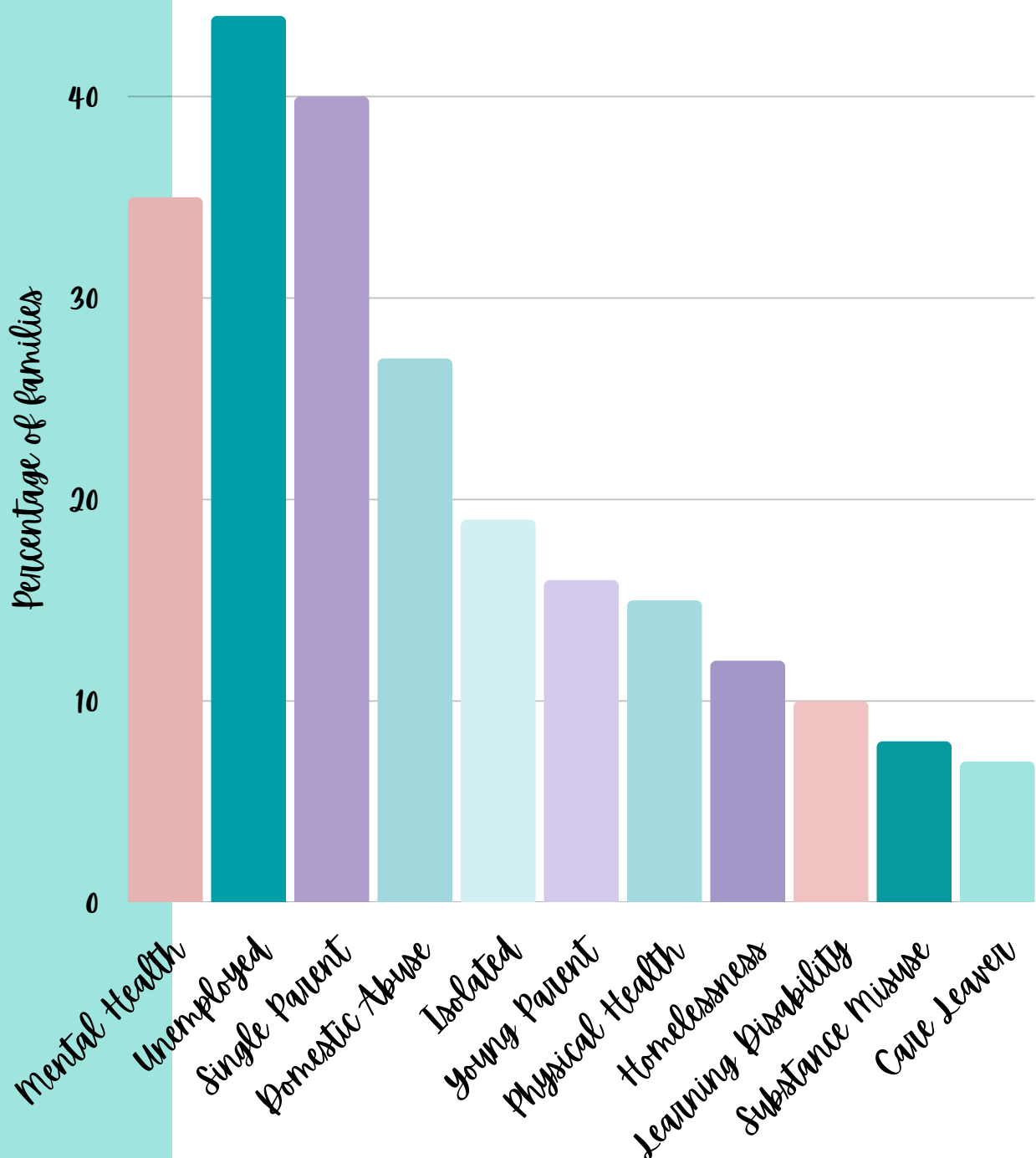
We believe that receiving a bundle from Family2Family can cause a ripple effect in the life of a struggling family. Receiving physical items improves day-to-day quality of life, and the process of receiving quality, well presented items improves wellbeing, relieves stress and strained relationships, and enables parents to meet the needs of their children.



Family2Family is proud to support families across East Sussex and surrounding areas. Professionals who refer families are asked to come and collect their bundles from us in Crowborough. The bundles then make their way to households across the county, and sometimes further afield; items moved from one family to another and making a huge difference to those in need.

All the families we support have low income, and there are usually other adversities impacting them too. These can be temporary or prolonged but all contribute to the challenges they are facing and add to the need for support from Family2Family. In addition to the factors below, we support migrants and asylum seekers, children and young people in care, and some who have been trafficked.

We are proud to work with a variety of professionals and organisations who are working with some of the most vulnerable families in our community, including Social Workers, Foodbanks, Refugee charities, and refuges for women and children.



Milestones



Every summer we treat our team to a celebratory afternoon – tea, to thank them for their time and commitment supporting local children and families. This year we enjoyed a lovely afternoon at Buxted Park Hotel.

We were delighted to welcome The Lord Lieutenant of East Sussex to hear about our work and meet some of our dedicated team.



All fundraisers held for our cause are vital and appreciated. Amongst funds raised for us in our seventh year, were those from the Ashdown Golfers Captains Charity.



We were blown away by the support from Brambletye school who selected us as their charity of the year and raised a staggering amount of more than £37,000.





Corporate volunteering sessions are beneficial to all involved and we welcomed some of the team from AXA for a wholesome morning of volunteering.

In December our community were treated to a charity ice skating session thanks to Collins & Sons who donated the two hour slot to Family2Family. In the spirit of Christmas giving, we decided to keep these tickets free of charge and offer them out to our amazing network. It was real Christmas magic to see children and families enjoying this time.



Through our membership of the Baby Bank Alliance we were thrilled to be selected as one of ten baby banks in the UK to receive a donation of an electric van from Mercedes. The van has subsequently been wrapped and we are excited to put our plans for the van in to action.

In February 2025 we took on the lease of a second site which will host our campaigns, as well as a brand new initiative to further our work supporting families and the environment. Coming soon!



Fundraising Gala

Our Fundraising Gala has become a vital source of income for Family2Family. With support from the event sponsors and all those who attend and get involved in our online raffle and auction, we were thrilled to raise £25,231. These funds have been carefully allocated and have already contributed to an exciting and beneficial new initiative (coming soon in 2025), and to securing the ongoing work of our core service. This was our second Gala, held at the impressive Ashdown Park Hotel where our guests had a fantastic evening of fun whilst fundraising for our cause.

Needless to say, we are incredibly grateful to all who contributed and look forward to our next Gala in the spring of 2026.



Fundraising Gala 2024 was proudly sponsored by:



Special Recognition



'I first heard about Family2Family from the Sussex Community Foundation, who advised me to visit and to see for myself the fantastic work that they are doing.

On visiting I was immediately overwhelmed at the outreach of the work that is being done by Family2Family, no longer just supporting families with babies and their needs, but entire families with children of all ages. The amazing team are reaching out and supporting the most vulnerable and in need across the county. I am aware that the demand is ever increasing in these very challenging times that we live in.

The initial vision to support parents in need with new babies has grown in a very short time to a much needed and vital support network across East Sussex.

I found it totally inspirational and Family2Family are a very fine example of the unsung heroes in our community supporting the most vulnerable in society. The moment I visited, I knew that this was a charity that most certainly should have a High Sheriff Award'.

Lucinda Fraser HIGH SHERIFF OF EAST SUSSEX 2024/2025



Feedback



'It made a difference in children's lives as I have worked with children who have limited clothes and toys to play with and it is very heartwarming to see them enjoy playing with toys that were gifted'

Keyworker

'The impact on mums MH being able to get out is immeasurable. I really don't know how we could have supported the family without this charity'

Social Worker

'I am so incredibly grateful you exist and offer this kind of support. It is so overlooked, children are so special and deserve to feel it - YOU help them to feel and look loved!'

Parent

'Unpacking each item brought me to tears, it was beautifully presented with care and thoughtfulness. Please know your kindness has brought much difference to my family. Thank you for making a difference, Thank you for bringing Joy when a family is in Crisis. It is honestly so profound what you do for families in need'

Parent

'Mother fled a domestic abuse relationship and currently living in refuge. Perpetrator is the father of the baby and therefore has no financial support. The items received were absolutely incredible. Such a beautiful range and really makes things easier for our new mums'

Womens Refuge worker

'The family to worry less about money and will also aid their emotional wellbeing and support them in having positive lived experiences.'

Midwife



Beds4Kids



In the UK, more than 400,000 children are without a suitable bed of their own. In our referrals we hear of children sleeping on duvets on the floor, and had a request of support for a family of 5 children who all slept in one bed.

Buttle UK found that 30% of low-income households struggled to afford beds for their children in 2020 and the number is on the rise. Not having a bed to sleep in impacts neurological, physical and emotional development and affects all aspects of a child's life including education, mood, wellbeing, and relationships.

Following a successful Crowdfunder in 2023, and subsequent funding in 2024 Family2Family launched Beds4Kids – this campaign sees children gifted new beds, mattresses and bedding – needless to say, this provision has a huge positive impact on the beneficiaries both in the short and long term. We are seeking corporate sponsors for this campaign.

“The 13 year old had been alternating between an airbed with a hole in and the sofa. The bed has meant he is feeling more rested, in turn this has meant he is sleeping better, waking at a more reasonable time in the morning and his attendance at school has improved.”

Feedback from a professional

171

children now have a safe and comfortable bed of their own

159

children have been gifted brand new mattresses

277

Duvet sets and sheets gifted

127

Duvets gifted



Bags4School 2024 was generously sponsored by Wellesley Charitable Foundation.

260 primary

223 secondary



Gifts4Kids



In the run up to Christmas we are extra busy; on top of our core service we open our Christmas campaign. Gifts4Kids sees Family2Family collect donations of brand new toys and gifts for children 0 - 16 years who are living in East Sussex (or surrounding areas) and are otherwise likely to go without a gift.

Christmas 2023 saw a huge increase in demand for this campaign (almost 50%!) but incredibly, with support from local individuals and various businesses, we were able to provide great quality gifts for all 705 children referred. Each child received a main gift, secondary gift and stocking filler gift. Whilst we don't collect information about families that would make them recognisable, we asked referees to provide details about the children's interests and needs so we could ensure gifts were well matched.

633 children

1900 gifts



Sponsors

We are very grateful to our sponsors whose generous monthly funding supports our work and provides income which can be used flexibly to meet the needs of the charity. For more information on sponsorship opportunities, please get in touch.



501 Fun

501 Fun are a global leader in social entertainment technology. Their ground breaking interactive and augmented reality darts products help venues around the world attract more guests and deliver unforgettable experiences.

"501 Fun are delighted to continue sponsorship of Family2Family, furthering our ethos of giving back to the community and supporting those in need. We believe that every child deserves to have the basic necessities for a healthy and happy start in life, and we are honoured to be able to contribute to that mission. By partnering with a respected organisation like Family2Family, we are certain that our sponsorship is used effectively and diligently to ensure maximum benefit to the most amount of people. It is amazing to witness the remarkable work Family2Family do and we look forward to supporting them for many years to come"



OP Automotive

OP Automotive provides a range of vehicle rental options to customers. They offer flexible terms, competitive rates, and a variety of vehicles to choose from, making it easy for customers to find a vehicle that fits their needs and budget.

"We believe in the importance of giving back to our community and supporting organisations that align with our values and mission. By sponsoring Family2Family, we can make a positive impact in the lives of families who are struggling to provide for their children. We are honoured to support an organisation that is making a difference in our community, and we hope our partnership can help the charity continue to thrive and grow."

How to help

Donate time

We are always in need of extra hands! We offer varied opportunities for individual volunteers and corporate groups. You can find more information and a volunteer contact form on our website.

Donate items

Donate clothing and essential items for children 0 - 16 years. A full list of items we can accept is available on our website. Due to storage capacity, we publish a monthly wishlist of the items we are accepting. This can be found on our website and social media pages.



You can buy items from our amazon wishlist and have them delivered directly to us. You can find a link to the list on the 'other ways to help' page of our website.



We are always grateful for monetary donations which can be made to our Local Giving account where you can add Gift Aid, or directly to our bank account.

www.family2family.org.uk

Fundraise

Make an event of it! Rally your friends, family, or club and raise funds for a great cause.

Spread the word

Stay up to date and help spread the word by following and engaging with our social media accounts. Your 'like', share or follow could lead to someone making a donation, or someone in need of support becoming aware of help they can access.



@family2family.org.uk

A community effort

With special thanks to the individuals, businesses, and organisations who supported our cause this year, including:

HM Lord-Lieutenant East Sussex
The High Sheriff of East Sussex
501 Fun
OP Automotive
Brambletye School
Ashdown Golfers Captain's Charity
InKind Direct
Joanna Farrow Art
Morrisons Crowborough
Tesco Crowborough
Waitrose Crowborough
Home Edited
The Hygiene Bank
Infusion Flowers
Baby Bank Alliance
Sussex Community Foundation
Lewes Business Media
Childrensalon
Thorne Civil Engineering
Cranwell Wealth Solutions
Garrison Roofing
Cottier Contracting
KMJ Property
Diamond Interior Contracts
Roger Harris Photographer
Purity Bridge
SET
Liverpool Football Club
Coppards
Kent Coachworks
Fresh Air Thinking
Emma Raducanu
Craft'd Bus
Caracol Camping
The Props Store Ltd
Victoria Genevieve Styling
Steve Goodwin Art

Fusion Events
Ashdown Park Hotel
Lottie Topping Photography
Wellesley Charitable Foundation
Original Factory Shop Crowborough
Neil Long
Chomp Baby
G. Collins and Sons
Jeni Barnett
Jemtech
Charlie Hedges DJ
Highlands Inn, Uckfield
Elite Hotels
Horsted Place Hotel
Uckfield Rugby Club
Urban Jump Trampoline Park
Freedom Leisure Crowborough
Sankey's, Tunbridge Wells
Nevill Crest and Gun
Dark Master Escape Rooms
Black Cat Yoga
The Massage Company in Tunbridge Wells
The Wells Candle Company
Nizels Golf & Country Club
Blush Beauty Room
Bluebell Vineyards
The Hot Box Co
Dr Roxy Belpassi
HiTech Aesthetics
Halo Gym
The Spring Rooms
Beau Property
Plumpton Racecourse
The Royal Hippodrome Eastbourne
Crowborough Beacon Golf Club
Isabella Grace Bridal
Nectar Sleep Centre
Lamberhurst Golf Club
Sussex Cricket
Universal Dance
Kimmy Beatbox



Coming soon...