NATIONAL CHILDREN'S DAY UK

2027 MEDIA AND COMMS PACK

THE CHILD AT THE CENTRE



SUNDAY 9 MAY 2027

Celebrating childhood and protecting children's rights and freedoms.

Press releases, conversation ideas, social copy, spokesperson briefing and evidence references.

Updated 15 November 2026

https://www.nationalchildrensdayuk.com/

01 NATIONAL PRESS RELEASE

Release details

FOR RELEASE [DATE]
National Children's Day UK 2027 calls for childhood wellbeing to become a national priority

The Child at the Centre on Sunday 9 May

National Children's Day UK returns on Sunday 9 May 2027 to celebrate childhood and protect children's rights, freedoms and flourishing. Rooted in concern for young children, the campaign now welcomes participation from birth to 18. The theme, The Child at the Centre, invites families, schools, youth groups and organisations to listen to children and make one improvement that continues beyond the day.

A stronger response to the evidence

The UK ranked 21st of 36 countries in UNICEF's 2025 child wellbeing comparison, drawing substantially on data around 2022. The Children's Society's analysis of PISA 2025 places UK 15-year-olds last among 29 European countries for life satisfaction. A November 2026 YouGov poll for the charity found that 50% of UK teenagers aged 13–18 feel lonely or isolated. The measures differ, but each calls for attention to the experience of growing up. [1,2,3]

The relationships and conditions around children

The campaign brings attention to accessible early years support, places where teenagers feel they belong and the transition towards further learning and work. It also recognises the wellbeing of parents, carers and educators. Children need adults who have time to listen and support of their own.

An invitation to every community

Convened by the Flourish Project C.I.C., the day welcomes participation from birth to 18. A small, free, local contribution is welcome. Use something already planned or try a new idea, including a talk, podcast or webinar. There is no need to register with us. Share activities using #NCDUK2027 and choose one improvement to continue beyond the day.

Joining the day

Find ideas and campaign resources at https://www.nationalchildrensdayuk.com/
Share public activities using @NCDUK2027 and #NCDUK2027.
Media enquiries: [press contact name, email and telephone].
ENDS
Evidence references and notes for editors follow. Insert the release date and contact details before issue.

02 RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS FROM THE EARLIEST YEARS

Our founding purpose

NCDUK grew from concern for the rights and freedoms of young children. That purpose remains at the heart of the day, alongside our commitment to children and young people from birth to 18. A healthy childhood begins with children's dignity and freedom to be themselves.

Rights belong to young children too

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child recognises rights to play and rest, freedom of expression and the right for children's views to receive due weight according to their age and maturity. These rights sit alongside care, protection and respect for children's developing abilities. [11]

Listening begins before words

Babies and very young children communicate through movement, expression, play and relationships as well as words. Adults can notice what engages, reassures or unsettles a child, offer choices and respond with care. Participation should include children who do not communicate through speech.

Make room for childhood

Protect time for unhurried play, curiosity, creativity and outdoor exploration. Respect children's pace, make meaningful choices possible and include every child. Ask what gives young children more room to discover their world, and what unnecessarily limits their everyday freedoms. Choose one way to protect these freedoms beyond the day.

[11] UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Articles 5, 12, 13 and 31 inform this section. Outdoor exploration and unhurried childhood are campaign priorities, rather than a verbatim list of Convention rights.
https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention/convention-text

03 TALK ABOUT THE THINGS YOU CARE ABOUT

Use National Children's Day UK to open up a conversation that matters. Host a talk, record a podcast or bring people together for a webinar. Explore what helps children flourish, what needs to change and what we can do together.

Make room for children and young people's own questions and ideas, alongside the experiences of parents, carers and educators.

Talks

Invite a speaker or host an informal discussion at a school, library, workplace or community space. Leave time to listen and invite participants to suggest what should happen next.

Podcasts

Dedicate an episode to childhood wellbeing. Explore a question with young people, families, practitioners or researchers, and share different perspectives. Make participation possible without personal disclosure.

Webinars

Hold an online conversation or panel, share useful practice and invite questions. Finish with an idea people can take into everyday life.

Choose a theme that matters locally

From play and early years to friendship, online life and support for the adults around children, choose what matters to your community. Share your conversation using #NCDUK2027.

Room for joy at every age

Balance the concerns with shared laughter, new discoveries and friendship. Celebrate babies and toddlers, primary-age children and teenagers. The campaign imagery illustrates these possibilities rather than documenting actual events.

04 THE EVIDENCE FOR ACTION

An international warning

UNICEF's Report Card 19 places the UK 21st of 36 countries with complete overall rankings and 27th for mental wellbeing. Its 2025 publication draws substantially on data around 2022. The comparison covers selected OECD and EU countries, rather than every country in the world. [1]

Life satisfaction at 15

The Children's Society's analysis of PISA 2025 places UK 15-year-olds 29th out of 29 European countries included, for the second comparison running. Their average life satisfaction score was 6.73 out of 10, against 7.32 across the European countries studied. This measures life satisfaction, not loneliness. The charity notes sampling limitations. [2]

Loneliness and isolation

A November 2026 YouGov poll for The Children's Society found that 50% of UK teenagers aged 13–18 feel lonely or isolated, even though 81% feel supported by people around them. The proportion rose from 42% among 13–15-year-olds to 61% among 16–18-year-olds. Almost 1,500 teenagers were surveyed. This broad measure differs from persistent loneliness. [3]

Close friendships

IPPR's analysis for England found that 5%, or 1 in 20, of young people aged 16–21 reported no close friends in 2023–25, compared with around 1% a decade earlier. It uses Understanding Society data and includes young adults beyond the campaign's 0–18 age range. [4]

The transition into adulthood

ONS estimated that 981,000 UK young people aged 16–24 were not in education, employment or training in April–June 2026, equivalent to 13.0%. This includes young adults and provides context for the transition children approach. It is not a count of unemployment alone. [5]

The UK performs poorly against many comparable countries on important measures. This supports a strong call for action, while retaining each finding's date, geography, age group and definition. It does not mean every UK childhood outcome is the worst internationally.

05 A FAIR START IN THE EARLY YEARS

Workforce growth has stalled

NFER's February 2026 report estimates that staffing in England grew by just 600 between 2024 and 2025, after nearly 20,000 the previous year. The government had estimated that 35,000 additional staff would be needed between December 2023 and September 2025 for expanded entitlements. NFER identifies possible regional shortfalls, especially in the South West, West Midlands and North East. Later summer recruitment, outside its study period, may have narrowed the gap. [6]

Fewer childminders and workforce pressures

DfE's 2025 provider survey estimates a 5% fall in childminders and a 1% fall in early years providers in England from 2024 to 2025. Registered places rose by 1% overall. Estimated paid staff turnover was 14% in group-based settings, against 7% in school-based settings. DfE flags uncertainty in staff movement estimates. [7]

Development and inclusion

In England, 68.3% of children achieved a good level of development at the end of Reception in 2024/25, up from 67.7% in 2023/24. Almost a third remained below that assessment threshold. The assessment framework changed in 2021, so these results are not directly comparable with pre-2021 figures. The provider survey also records an increasing share of children with SEND in group-based provision. [7,8]

Support for the adults around children

Parents and carers need practical help, reliable services and support of their own. Teachers and early years staff need time, manageable demands and working cultures that enable responsive care. Education Support's 2025 survey reports stress among 76% of surveyed UK education staff. Research links adult and child wellbeing, but relationships are complex. Children have no responsibility for keeping adults well. [9,10]

The early years figures on this page describe England, rather than the whole UK. Children develop in different ways and at different rates. A fair start requires responsive relationships and support that includes every child.

06 FEATURE AND BROADCAST ANGLES

What would a place fit for children look like

Ask young people to describe where they feel welcome and what makes it difficult to take part. A local feature could follow an accessible walk, a youth-led conversation or an existing community gathering, ending with an adult decision-maker's response.

Loneliness beyond the screen debate

Explore the places, costs and relationships that affect whether teenagers can spend time together. Give young people room to describe their experiences without assuming one explanation. Use the dated UK loneliness findings and consider a practical local response.

The adults who make childhood possible

Hear from parents, carers, teachers and early years practitioners about the time and support needed for attentive care. Include the role of services and working conditions. Avoid presenting an exhausted parent or teacher as the cause of a child's difficulties.

A fair start and a credible future

An early years story could examine a family's search for suitable provision. A youth feature could explore access to advice, learning or work. Keep age groups clear: statistics for 16–24-year-olds describe a transition extending beyond childhood.

An editorial opportunity

An opinion piece could ask what would change if children's wellbeing guided decisions about neighbourhoods, education and public investment. These are proposed angles. No interview, event or case study is confirmed by this pack.

07 QUESTIONS JOURNALISTS MAY ASK

What is National Children's Day UK

A national day rooted in the rights and freedoms of young children, inviting communities to celebrate childhood and protect the conditions children need to flourish. It welcomes participation from birth to 18. The 2027 theme is The Child at the Centre, on Sunday 9 May, with locally organised participation around that date.

Is there evidence that the UK has a particular problem

Yes. UNICEF places the UK behind many comparable countries overall. The Children's Society's PISA analysis places UK 15-year-olds last among the 29 European countries studied for life satisfaction. Its separate November 2026 poll found that half of UK teenagers feel lonely or isolated. These findings use different measures and should be described separately.

Why discuss parents and teachers in a children's campaign

Children grow within relationships. The wellbeing and circumstances of the adults around them affect the care and attention available. The campaign invites support for children and adults together. Children should never carry responsibility for keeping adults well.

What can one day achieve

The day creates a shared moment for participation and public attention. Its value depends on what people do and what continues afterwards. NCDUK does not claim that a one-day activity has demonstrated improvements in health or mental health.

How can people participate

Use an existing activity or try a new idea, including a talk, podcast or webinar. Hear children's views and choose one feasible improvement. Small, free contributions are welcome. Share activities using #NCDUK2027. There is no need to register, email plans or send reports to the coordinating team.

Who organises and pays for activities

Local organisers manage their own events and responsibilities. NCDUK is convened by the Flourish Project C.I.C. Participants can raise funds for their own chosen cause; contributions to the wider Flourish initiative are separate. The full organiser notice appears on the campaign website.

08 LOCAL PRESS RELEASE TEMPLATE

For local organisers

FOR RELEASE [DATE]
[Community] puts children at the centre for National Children's Day UK

Release copy

[Place], [release date] — [Organisation] is inviting families and young people to [activity] for National Children's Day UK 2027. The national day falls on Sunday 9 May, with the theme The Child at the Centre.

The local activity takes place at [venue or online] on [actual date], from [start time] to [finish time]. [Explain what people can expect, who it is for, access arrangements, costs if any, and how to join.]

Children and young people helped shape [specific aspect]. The organisation's commitment after the day is [feasible improvement], with an update by [date].

The campaign calls for a stronger response to children's wellbeing, including adolescent loneliness and unequal access to support. It recognises the needs of parents, carers and educators as part of the conditions children need to flourish.

[Approved local spokesperson quote, with name and role.]

Details and booking: [link].
Media enquiries: [name, email and telephone].
ENDS

Short listing copy

[Organisation] marks National Children's Day UK with [activity] at [venue] on [actual date and time]. [Age group, access details, cost and booking link.] The 2027 theme is The Child at the Centre. @NCDUK2027 #NCDUK2027

Before sending

Replace every bracketed field. Confirm practical details and approval for attributed quotes and images. Use national statistics only with their dates, geography and age groups. Do not imply a confirmed partnership or endorsement without agreement.

09 SPOKESPERSON AND INTERVIEW BRIEFING

Proposed quote for Wendy Ellyatt to approve

"We have to take seriously what children are telling us about the experience of growing up. Their wellbeing is shaped by the relationships, places and decisions around them, and by whether the adults who care for them have support too. National Children's Day UK is an invitation to celebrate childhood and make a commitment that lasts beyond the day."

Suggested attribution after approval: Wendy Ellyatt, founder of National Children's Day UK and the Flourish Project.

Short proposed quote for local use

"Putting the child at the centre begins with listening, but it needs an answer. We are asking every participating community to choose one change with children and say what will happen next."

Draft wording only. Obtain the named speaker's approval before attribution.

The central interview message

Children's rights and freedoms belong at the centre of our response to the UK's serious and unequal childhood wellbeing problem. This begins in the early years, with play, responsive care and adults who notice what young children communicate. The day invites meaningful participation and a commitment that continues afterwards.

Keeping the evidence clear

Keep the UNICEF ranking, life satisfaction, loneliness and close-friendship measures distinct. Describe ONS figures as ages 16–24, including young adults. Early years workforce, provider and Reception figures refer to England. Distinguish publication years from data years and avoid promising health effects from campaign activities.

Young voices and real stories

Ask young people how they want to contribute and whether they want publicity. Participation must remain possible without a photograph, interview or personal disclosure. Confirm consent, support and editorial arrangements before offering any case study to media.

10 SUPPORT A CAUSE YOU CARE ABOUT

Make a difference close to home

Turn a celebration of childhood into something that continues to make a difference. A shared meal, a sponsored walk or an exhibition of children's artwork can bring people together around a cause that matters to your community.

Support a school, youth group, charity or local project whose work you want to help grow. Invite children and young people to shape the idea and imagine what your support could make possible.

Whether you help open up an opportunity, create a welcoming space or strengthen support around families, your contribution can become part of a story that continues long after the day.

Help a flourishing future take root

Imagine a society where every child grows up with a sense of belonging, adults have the support to care well, and the places we share nurture both people and the living world. The Flourish Project works towards that possibility.

Your contribution can help develop freely accessible resources, sustain shared inquiry and bring people together around the conditions children and future generations need to thrive.

National Children's Day UK is one expression of that wider work. By supporting the Flourish Project, you help nurture the understanding and connections from which more caring communities can grow.

Contribute to the Flourish Project: https://flourishproject.net/ncduk2027

Contributions through the Flourish Project link support its wider C.I.C. initiative, of which NCDUK is part. Funds raised for your own chosen cause remain separate.

11 SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Since 2014, NCDUK has connected families, early years settings, schools, charities, cultural organisations, public services and businesses. Sponsorship offers an opportunity to support child wellbeing in the UK and help keep campaign resources freely available.

A national network over time

Organisations recorded as supporting NCDUK over the years have a combined potential social-media audience estimated at around 9 million. This historical estimate adds followers across past supporters. Audiences may overlap. It is not measured campaign reach or a guarantee of exposure in 2027.

Supporting Partner £5,000

A linked logo and short acknowledgement on the campaign website, an agreed sponsorship announcement and campaign-period social acknowledgement, with permission to acknowledge support using approved branding.

Core Partner £10,000

Supporting Partner recognition with more prominent website placement, a partner profile of up to 200 words and an agreed communications plan. Recognition on selected campaign materials and a summary of activity and available audience data.

Strategic Development Partner By agreement

Explore a deeper partnership around future campaign development, resources or communications. Contribution, scope and delivery are agreed around shared aims and the capacity to deliver.

These are suggested contributions for the 2027 campaign. Smaller or in-kind contributions can be discussed individually. Benefits, timing, payment terms and any applicable VAT are agreed before confirmation. The campaign retains its independent voice.

Please email harriet.broadfoot@flourishproject.net to discuss sponsorship opportunities for NCDUK2027.

12 READY TO SHARE

General campaign post

National Children's Day UK is Sunday 9 May 2027. Celebrate childhood and protect children's rights and freedoms, starting in the earliest years. Listen to young voices and choose one change that continues beyond the day. A small, free, local contribution is welcome. www.nationalchildrensdayuk.com #NCDUK2027

Talks podcasts and webinars

What do you care about for children's futures? Use National Children's Day UK for a talk, podcast or webinar about what helps children flourish. Make room for children and young people's questions and ideas. Share your conversation using #NCDUK2027.

Joy and belonging

Shared laughter. New discoveries. Friendships that make us feel at home. On Sunday 9 May, make room for joy at every age, from early years to adolescence. Celebrate the everyday moments that help childhood flourish. #NCDUK2027

Local participation template

We're marking National Children's Day UK with [activity] at [place or online] on [actual date and time]. [Who it is for, access details, costs if any and how to join.] Our next step with children is [change]. #NCDUK2027

An invitation for an email or newsletter

National Children's Day UK returns on Sunday 9 May 2027 with the theme The Child at the Centre. Use something already planned or try a new idea, from play and creativity to talks, podcasts and webinars. There is no need to register with the coordinating team. Share your activities using #NCDUK2027 and choose something that can continue beyond the day. Explore the campaign at https://www.nationalchildrensdayuk.com/

Complete all bracketed details before publishing. Campaign images are illustrative. Arrange appropriate permissions for real images, stories and quotations.

13 NOTES FOR EDITORS AND VISUAL IDENTITY

About the campaign

Rooted in concern for the rights and freedoms of young children, National Children's Day UK has brought communities together since 2014. The Flourish Project C.I.C. now convenes the initiative. The 2027 day welcomes children and young people from birth to 18. Activities are independently organised, with the full organiser notice on the campaign website.

The 2027 identity

The existing multicolour NCDUK heart logo remains the primary campaign identifier. Its original artwork and proportions are retained. Barlow Condensed Bold provides the editorial headlines, with Manrope for supporting copy. Blue #086FA5, orange #F8791D and dark ink #102B35 organise the layouts; the logo retains its own colours. Give the logo clear space and use it on a white field for reliable contrast. The simple blue and orange Child at the Centre symbol is a secondary theme mark and may support selected sections. It does not replace the NCDUK heart logo. The original National Children's Day UK wordmark with colourful children appears in the founding-purpose section to connect the 2027 campaign with its roots. Preserve its proportions and white background.

Images and permissions

Images in this pack are illustrative campaign artwork, not photographs documenting particular participants or events. They must not serve as evidence of attendance or endorsement. For news coverage, arrange authentic, consented photographs and captions identifying the actual activity, date, location and photographer.

Press contact to complete

[Named press contact]
[Email address]
[Telephone and availability]
Interview and case-study requests remain subject to confirmation. No interview or event access is guaranteed by this document.

Campaign links

https://www.nationalchildrensdayuk.com/
@NCDUK2027
#NCDUK2027
Sponsorship enquiries: harriet.broadfoot@flourishproject.net
Contributions: https://flourishproject.net/ncduk2027

14 SOURCE REFERENCES

[1] UNICEF Innocenti 2025

Report Card 19. UK 21st of 36 overall and 27th for mental wellbeing. Data substantially relate to 2022.

https://www.unicef.org/innocenti/reports/child-well-being-unpredictable-world

[2] The Children's Society 2026

PISA 2025 analysis. UK life satisfaction at 15: 6.73 out of 10, last among 29 European countries studied. Published 18 September 2026. Sampling limitations apply.

https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/about-us/our-blogs/young-people-in-the-uk-have-the-lowest-life-satisfaction-in-europe

[3] The Children's Society and YouGov 2026

November poll, almost 1,500 UK teenagers aged 13–18. Loneliness or isolation: 50% overall, 42% ages 13–15 and 61% ages 16–18. 81% feel supported. Reported by Social Care Today and The Northern Gazette.

https://socialcare.today/2026/11/04/childrens-charity-launch-campaign-to-save-teenhood/
https://northerngazette.com/charity/north-west-teenagers-loneliness-support-survey/

[4] IPPR 2026

The Loneliest Generation. England, ages 16–21, Understanding Society data 2023–25. 5% report no close friends, against around 1% a decade earlier.

https://www.ippr.org/articles/the-loneliest-generation

[5] Office for National Statistics 2026

August release. UK ages 16–24, April–June 2026. NEET estimate 981,000 or 13.0%. Sampling uncertainty applies.

https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peoplenotinwork/unemployment/bulletins/youngpeoplenotineducationemploymentortrainingneet/august2026

Evidence reviewed 15 November 2026. Refresh before issue in 2027. Publication dates, data periods, countries and age groups differ. Campaign proposals are distinct from research findings.

15 SOURCE REFERENCES CONTINUED

[6] NFER 2026

February workforce research. England estimates for 2024–25 and the government's additional-staff estimate for December 2023 to September 2025. Later summer recruitment is outside the study period.

https://www.nfer.ac.uk/press-releases/research-suggests-early-years-recruitment-may-have-stalled-raising-concerns-over-35-000-extra-staff-target/

[7] Department for Education Provider Survey 2025

England provider, childminder, registered-place and turnover estimates. Staff movement estimates carry uncertainty.

https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/childcare-and-early-years-provider-survey/2025

[8] Department for Education EYFSP 2024/25

England Reception good level of development 68.3%, against 67.7% in 2023/24. Assessment framework changed in 2021.

https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/early-years-foundation-stage-profile-results/2024-25

[9] Mental Health Foundation

Family and parenting statistics. Qualified context for links between parental mental health and child development.

https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/explore-mental-health/statistics/family-parenting-statistics

[10] Education Support 2025

Teacher Wellbeing Index. Stress figure refers to surveyed UK education staff.

https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/resources/for-organisations/research/teacher-wellbeing-index/

Evidence reviewed 15 November 2026. Refresh before issue in 2027. Publication dates, data periods, countries and age groups differ. Campaign proposals are distinct from research findings.