



Impact Report 2021

CEREBRA 

Working wonders for children
with brain conditions



Together we are working wonders for children with brain conditions

Our **vision** is that every family that includes a child with a brain condition will have the chance to discover a better life together.

Our **mission** is to listen to families that have a child with a brain condition.

We use what they tell us to inspire the best research and innovation.

Then we help them put the knowledge into practice so they can discover a better life together.

Our families, researchers and supporters go further when they travel together:

Families play a vital role in their children's lives and in everything we do. We want the families we work with to feel valued, listened to and part of our work.

A spirit of enquiry and innovation drives our research teams. The potential for discovery in their work and in the families whose lives they will touch is truly exciting.

We want to inspire people to give, raise funds, and get behind us by not just reminding them of the need for what we do, but also the positive outcomes they could help families achieve.

This report reflects what we achieved together in 2021

In 2021 we celebrated our 20th birthday

"I have many different emotions when I let it sink in that we are celebrating Cerebra's 20th birthday. No different from how we'd feel about our sons and daughters' special birthdays I suppose.

I was there for our proverbial birth and as Cerebra was born we had a clear plan for what we wanted to achieve. Cerebra was to be a leading light in the world of research into all things to do with neurological conditions in children. The aspiration was to use the intellectual capacity of the greatest academics, thinkers and researchers to understand more about all of our children, but especially those who were so wonderfully and positively different. We saw difference as a value to humankind.

But we wanted Cerebra to do more than research and understand. We wanted to empower families by finding novel and innovative ways to share what we learned and understood so that those families with whom we did share would be empowered. Empowered by their own understanding of their own children and empowered by a new found ability to understand and negotiate the complex systems of support that all families need to confront when trying to get the best for their children.

Twenty years on I think we've made huge progress in nurturing our own child to have developed the maturity that Cerebra brings to bear today. Of course, life is a journey. For all of us. Cerebra is still on that journey and like all of us still has lots to learn and lots to offer. In many ways, at 20 years old, perhaps the best is yet to come.

One thing is for sure. I look forward to continuing that journey, continuing to grow, to learn, to develop and to share. As I look back at 20 years of Cerebra I also look forward to the next 20 years. I look forward especially to wherever the journey next takes us. I say happy birthday and many happy returns to Cerebra and to all those who've been with us on our journey and all those yet to join us as we all continue to grow."

Chris Jones Chief Executive Officer

2021 at a glance:

By 'brain condition', we mean any neurodevelopmental condition that affects the developing brain, including those caused by illness, genetics or traumatic injury. Brain conditions include (but are not limited to) autism, ADHD, Down's syndrome, learning disabilities, cerebral palsy, epilepsy and developmental delay.

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372 families got a good night's sleep thanks to our Sleep Service.



Our Legal Rights Service helped 92 families access public services.



We lent 679 books and toys to help families learn and play.



Our information resources were downloaded 50,733 times.



We spent £357,031 on life changing research.



Our Innovation Centre helped 103 children discover life and have fun with their friends.





I. We use what families tell us to inspire the best research and innovation

In 2021:

We published our new Research & Information Strategy for 2021 - 2026.

We support research that gives families access to the highest quality evidence based information and support so they can begin to tackle the challenges they face and make informed decisions about what is right for them.

We will continue to work in partnership with universities and families in a productive, engaging and collaborative way to find answers to some of the questions and most persistent problems families face.

We became a member of the Association of Medical Research Charities (AMRC).

Membership of AMRC is a mark of quality and a demonstration of funding outstanding research. It reflects our commitment to ensure our processes for commissioning research meet the principles of accountability, impartiality and transparency, and promote collaborative working with universities and other charities.

amrc
ASSOCIATION OF MEDICAL RESEARCH CHARITIES



Summary of key research in 2021:

You can read more in the 2021 Annual Reports for all of our Research Partners on our website.

University of Leeds, Mr Nigel Simpson and University of Barcelona, Professor Eduard Gratacós.

1 in 5 women will experience complications in their pregnancy that can result in childhood disability. We want to better understand the causes of these complications, develop new tools to identify women at risk of experiencing them and investigate how we can prevent them or minimise their impact on mother and baby.

2021 Highlights:

The research team at Barcelona successfully published the results of their IMPACT trial, including demonstrating that Mediterranean diet and stress reduction during pregnancy improves fetal growth and pregnancy results.

Read about the IMPACT trial on page 7.

University of Warwick, Professor Richard Hastings.

The Cerebra Family Research Group is studying the family and early years support for families to see what will improve outcomes for children, with particular emphasis on children with multiple and complex needs.

2021 Highlights:

Positive Family Connections Project

The Positive Family Connections Project is designed to enhance family relationships and wellbeing in families of children with developmental disabilities.

Family carers have worked with the research team to design and produce an intervention manual and resources. The intervention is a group intervention for families, delivered on-line by family carers.

Following the pilot study and extensive feedback from family carer participants, and those delivering the intervention, the intervention manual was revised ready for the next stage of the research.

A feasibility Randomised Controlled Trial will begin in 2022.

1 000 Families Study

The Cerebra 1 000 Families Study is exploring the experiences of families who live with a child with a learning disability. As far as we know, this is the largest ever longitudinal study of families of children

with learning disability in the UK. This research will further our understanding of what it is like to raise a child with a learning disability and will help shape future support for families and children.

During 2021, the team followed up with 650 families as part of Wave 2 of the project. The third wave of the study received full ethics approval and Wave 3 data collection has begun with over 700 families eligible inclusion.

There are currently nine research papers using data from the study pending. The potential of the 1 000 Families Study to (continue to) contribute significant new high quality research knowledge is very clear.



Professor Richard Hastings was given the 2021 International Award for his contribution to developmental disabilities research by the American Association for Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.





Dr Hayley Crawford



Dr Jo Moss



Dr Caroline Richards



Dr Jane Waite

Cerebra Network for Neurodevelopmental Disorders:
Dr Hayley Crawford, University of Warwick; Dr Jo Moss, University of Surrey; Dr Caroline Richards, University of Birmingham; Dr Jane Waite, Aston University.

Network research hubs located at each university focus on key themes that are central to improving the lives of individuals with severe and complex needs and their families including research into sleep, atypical autism and mental health, as well as self-injurious behaviour and pain in this population.

2021 Highlights:

- A broad range of methodological approaches were employed including behavioural assessments, experimental studies, sleep assessments, genetic testing, meta-analytical techniques, in-depth clinical interviewing and large-scale survey studies.
- Over 800 participants were recruited to research projects.

- Longitudinal research has detailed the persistence and predictors of self-injurious behaviour in autism over 10 years. Research has shown that self-injury does decrease over 10 years and that key characteristics of overactivity and impulsivity can be used to predict which individuals will show persistent self-injury from childhood through to adulthood.
- Novel insights have been generated into the nature of anxiety in autistic individuals and people with fragile X, Cornelia de Lange, Rubinstein-Taybi, Prader-Willi and Williams syndromes, utilising behavioural and parent report assessments. Physical avoidance and seeking proximity with a familiar caregiver are primary behavioural indicators of anxiety in people who are unable to self-report.



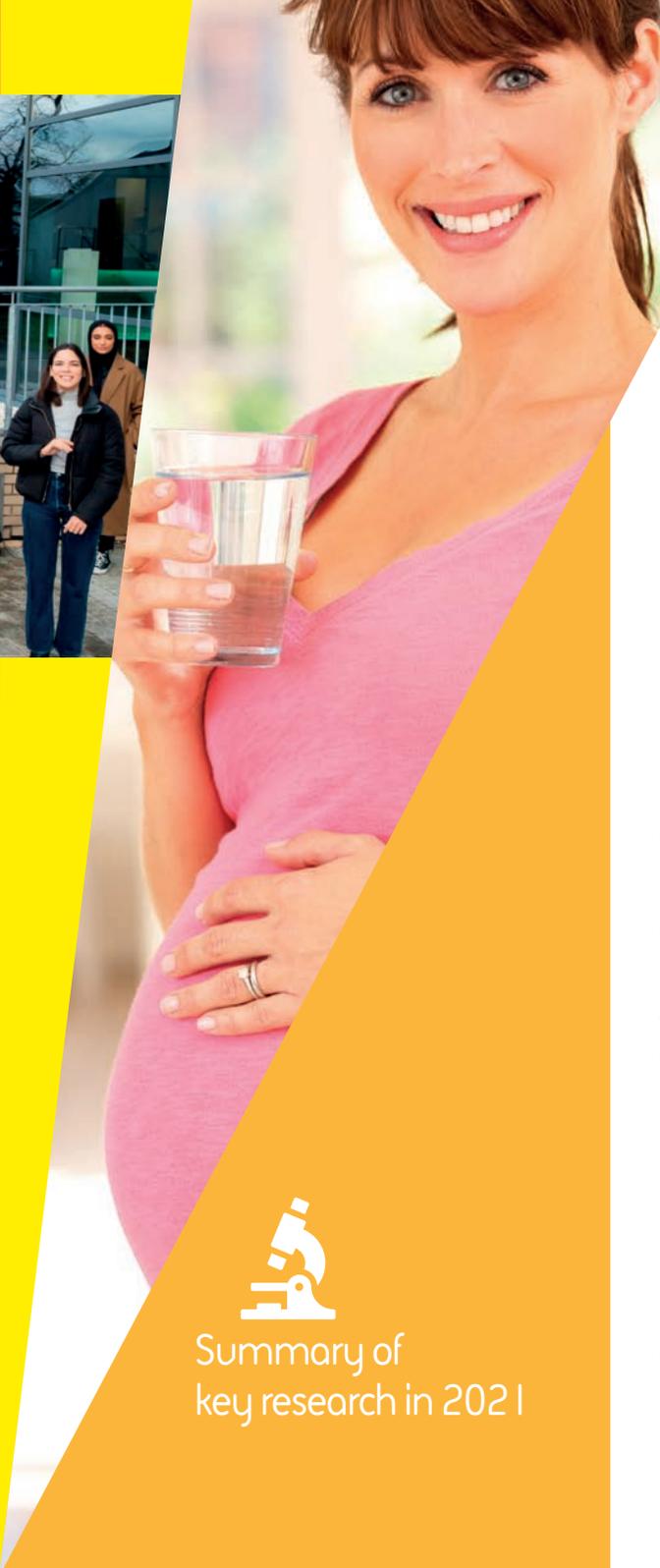
Centre for Law & Social Justice, The School of Law, Leeds University, Professor Luke Clements

Research evidence suggests children and their families experience considerable difficulties in accessing their rights to education, health and social care support. The Legal Entitlements and Problem-Solving (LEaP) Project helps families of children with brain conditions cope with the legal barriers they face.

2021 Highlights:

- Completion of the first phase of the research programme investigating the origins, prevalence and impact of 'parent carer blame' policies and practices in England with the publication in July 2021 of 'Institutionalising Parent Carer Blame'. Read more on page 8.

- Working with the Disability Law Service (and with support from a major City legal firm) in corresponding with the local authorities identified in the 2020 'Autism Plus' report (authorities that discriminated against disabled children and young people with autism) with the aim of ensuring that their policies were changed.
- Commencement of the second phase of the 'parent carer blame' research - collection of further data and supporting independent parent carer groups in their discussions with their local authorities to effect the necessary changes identified in the 2021 research.



Lifestyle Interventions in Pregnancy

A new study by researchers from BCNatal (Hospital Clínic-IDIBAPS and Hospital Sant Joan de Déu in Barcelona) with the support of Cerebra evaluated whether lifestyle interventions based on either Mediterranean diet or mindfulness-based stress reduction when pregnant could help those at risk of having a small baby deliver a child at a healthy weight.

The clinical trial focused on low birth weight babies. Low birth weight (which accounts for 10% of all births) reflects growth restriction in foetal life. It is one of the most important causes of perinatal mortality worldwide and poor neurodevelopment in childhood.

1,200 women at risk of delivering babies with a low birth weight were randomly divided into three groups: one in which they had visits with a nutritionist in order to follow a Mediterranean diet, a second group in which they followed a



mindfulness programme to reduce stress, and a control group with standard care.

The Mediterranean group were given olive oil and walnuts and were encouraged to eat fresh fruit, whole grains, vegetables and dairy products, as well as consuming a diet rich in legumes, fish and white meat. The mindfulness group were encouraged to attend sessions of mindfulness every week for two months and follow daily meditation sessions at home.

Among those following the Mediterranean diet there was a 36% reduction of low birth weight prevalence when compared to women receiving standard care, while the mindfulness programme group demonstrated a 29% reduction.

The study demonstrated for the first time, that a Mediterranean diet or mindfulness during pregnancy reduces the percentage of low birth weight and improves complications in pregnancy for which

no previous treatment had previously demonstrated positive effects, such as preeclampsia or perinatal death, when used in a structured, guided manner.

Although further studies are required to validate these findings, the study provides important evidence for the effectiveness of structured lifestyle interventions in pregnant women and the impact to their health. It not only reinforces the importance of providing early nutritional education to pregnant women, but highlights the effectiveness of mindfulness-based programmes for improving pregnancy outcomes.

Pregnancy presents a unique opportunity to promote lifestyle changes as women. Research such as this can provide healthcare professionals with new relevant evidence-based resources that they might have not considered but can ultimately help pregnant women manage a number of pregnancy-related factors.



Summary of
key research in 2021



Institutionalising Parent Carer Blame

"Traumatising", "devastating"; "like the police turning up at your door and saying we've got a warrant to search your house".

Despite disabled children and their families being one of the most severely disadvantaged groups in the UK, these are just some of the many comments made by parents and carers who felt that the process of seeking support for a disabled child was humiliating.

A major research report published by Cerebra and the School of Law, Leeds University found that most English Children's Services Authorities operate a 'one size-fits-all' approach to families – regardless of whether it is a parent carer seeking support for a disabled child or a family where the evidence suggests there to be neglect or abuse. The effect of this approach is to create an institutional culture of 'parent carer blame'.

The research considered the experiences of disabled children and their families of the process by which their needs for care and support are assessed. The research was led by Professor Luke Clements and Dr Ana Laura Aiello with the assistance of 48 student volunteers and involved the analysis of the assessment protocols of 143 English children's services authorities and a survey of 92 English parent carer-led support organisations.

The findings revealed that the national guidance (Department for Education Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)) that directs the process by which disabled children are assessed in England is not fit for purpose and arguably unlawful. Its focus is on safeguarding children from parental neglect and abuse.

None of the local protocols contained a clear explanation that a different

approach should be taken concerning the assessment of the needs of disabled children where the referral was not accompanied by evidence of neglect or abuse. 80 per cent required the assessor to confirm if the 'child's bedroom has been seen' and 87 per cent referred to the need of seeing (or communicating with) the children alone. None gave guidance to assessors concerning the need for cogent grounds to exist before seeking to see a child's bedroom or seeking to interview a child in the absence of their parent.

Policies of this nature interfere with the fundamental rights of families to respect for their private and family lives and their home and are discriminatory in that they treat disabled people and their families in the same way as people whose circumstances are materially different.

86 per cent of the parent carer-led support groups who responded to the research survey considered the assessment process that parents and their disabled children experienced to be extremely unsatisfactory and intrusive. They highlighted the assessors' lack of training, experience and understanding of disability and its related challenges; an assessment process focused on safeguarding / child protection rather than on support; the intrusive nature of the process, with families reporting they felt they had no real choice about whether the assessor inspected their child's bedroom and interviewed their children in their absence.

Mehreen (from Bingley, West Yorkshire) is a single parent to Assad, who is seven years old and autistic. She told the BBC about the struggles and humiliation that she had to endure to get support from Bradford Council. She felt uncomfortable

during the assessment, with the assessor asking what Mehreen thought to be intrusive and safeguarding focused questions: "They really left me thinking whether they are questioning, albeit indirectly, my parenting abilities or my personality or me as a person or if I was fit even to be a parent to Assad. It made me feel incompetent as a parent and that's not something I've felt before." She also said assessors asked, on three occasions, to see Assad's room.

Paula (not her real name – a Mum from West Berkshire) told the research team: "I felt bullied ... suddenly a stranger in our house demanding we answered these questions, we had no choice it just was really, really horrible ... and then she wanted to see (child's) room ... and I (asked) why is that relevant to you coming to assess me (for a PCNA) ... and she just said 'oh it's just standard – just what we do' and again I just felt that we can't deny it because again you'll think what am I hiding, I just felt we were being treated like criminals ... it was almost like the police turning up at your door and saying we've got a warrant to search your house."

The research team is now focused on achieving change at the 'coal face'. Urgent action is required to address the research findings and enable the families of disabled children to access a valid and supportive social care needs assessment. For example, the team is working to support parent carer groups to have meaningful discussion with their local authorities, to bring about changes in their policies and practices.

The 'Parent Blame' report attracted widespread interest among both the media and families who clearly identified with its findings:

- 1,535 downloads of the report
- 32.9% increase in website traffic
- 655% increase in visits to the Leeds Law webpage
- 3,766.7% increase in downloads of the template letter 'we want something confirmed in writing'
- 286.6 % increase in social media traffic
- BBC Yorkshire TV Feature programme
- Main BBC on-line news channel
- BBC Radio 4 Woman's Hour



Summary of
key research in 2021





2. We provide families with the highest quality evidence-based information and support

From physical and mental health, dealing with social services, financial and legal affairs and education, all of our [Information Resources](#) offer expert advice and research-driven strategies to help families deal with issues we know they may be facing.

All of our information resources are free to download from our website.

90% of users who gave feedback rated our guides as excellent.

Our top 10 downloaded guides and factsheets for 2021 were:



1. Disability Living Allowance Guide	22,291
2. Sleep Guide	5,996
3. Sleep Cards	2,802
4. Sleep Tips	1,427
5. FLACC Pain Infographic	1,244
6. Anxiety Guide	1,094
7. Internet Safety Guide	574
8. Education in England Guide	501
9. Managing Challenging Behaviour	484
10. Disabled Facilities Grants Factsheet	480

Our Sleep Advice Service offers a range of information and support to help children – and everyone in the family – get a good night's sleep.



In 2021:

We helped 517 families on a one to one basis.

We held 10 online sleep seminars and 4 face-to-face workshops.

225 families were helped through our seminars and workshops.

Our Sleep Guide was downloaded 5,996 times

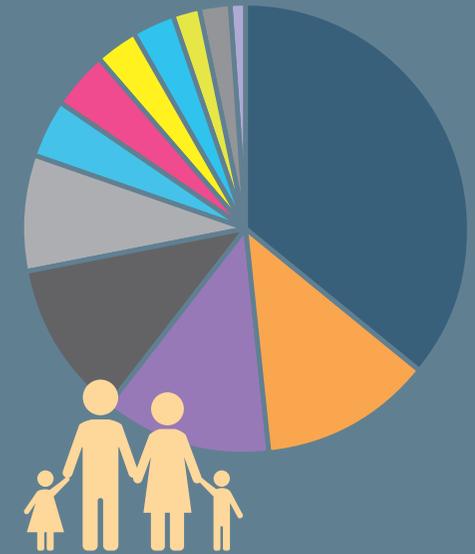
Our Sleep Tips booklet was downloaded 1,427 Times

Our Sleep Cards were downloaded 2,802 times.

Parents told us:

"The step plan worked brilliantly and our child is now able to fall asleep in his own bed (most nights) and use the 'baby monitor' to check in with us. Sleep is still a challenge but I do feel that we have made big steps in the right direction. Thank you for all your advice and support."

"We have been implementing the advice you gave and it has been a game changer. It really seems to have helped with keeping him settled and it's meant there have been less night wakings. Thanks again for all your help and advice, we really appreciate it!"



We helped 97 families with specific information:

Social care	35
School transport	12
Health services	12
Disabled Facilities Grant	11
SEN provision	8
Continence services	4
Discrimination	4
Welfare benefits	3
Safeguarding	3
CAMHS	2
Other	2
Transition	1



We published 6 new guides and factsheets:

- Weighted Blanket Factsheet
- Information and support for parents of a child recently diagnosed with a genetic condition
- Parental Responsibility and Disabled Children Factsheet
- Accessing Services Mythbuster
- An Introduction to DLA Factsheet
- Practical tips for effectively accessing public services for your child Factsheet



Our Legal Rights Service provides families of children with brain conditions with help when facing difficulties accessing support services they are entitled to.

In 2021:

Our Accessing Public Services Toolkit was downloaded 1,341 times

Our legal rights template letters were viewed 705 times

We held 14 Problem-Solving Accessing Public Services Toolkit Workshops – 13 on-line and 1 face-to-face

A total of 108 people attended

94% of attendees reported that after attending the workshop they now had the confidence to try this at home.

100% said the workshop improved their knowledge on how to access public services.

Feedback from our workshops:

"I feel more empowered to be able to query the LA and fight for my son's needs to be met."

"Whilst I had experience of challenging some bodies when supporting carers - I definitely think this course has given me more confidence in doing so and also really useful examples which I will use in my practice."

"I feel more confident to insist on written communication from public bodies and to escalate to complaint using templates and knowledge in the workshop and the toolkit."



Our Innovation Centre (CIC) designs and builds innovative, bespoke products to help disabled children discover and engage with the world around them.

The adventures of Sparky!

Illustrator, Brogan Evans helped us inject some fun and colour into our Oxy-gems by making Cerebra mascot, Sparky the bear, a new travel companion for the children that use them. Sparky is displayed on all our new Oxy-gems and can be seen going on many different adventures from the depths of the ocean to outer space!

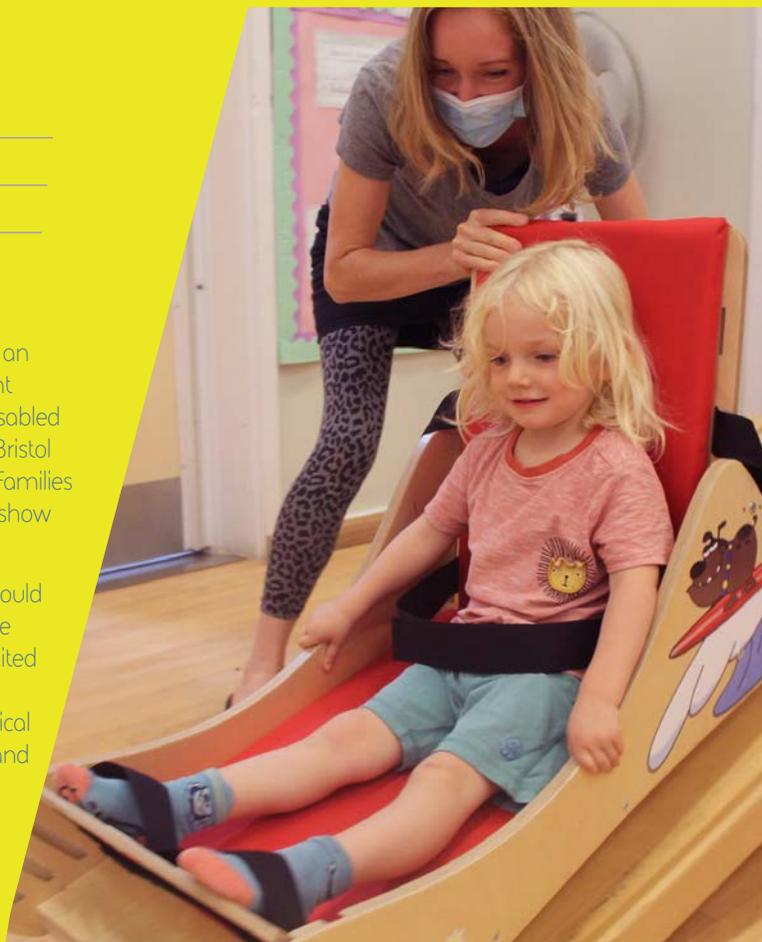
In 2021
we helped 122 families:
51 with unique designs
44 with repeat designs
27 with advice

Super Surfer!

We worked with Gympanzees on an innovative new piece of equipment which was a huge success with disabled children and their families, across Bristol and the Southwest last summer. Families attending the Gympanzees Roadshow named it the 'Super Surfer'.

We made a cart and ramp that would accommodate all disabilities. There are straps to hold anyone with limited movement, it caters for a range of sizes and is equipped to hold medical equipment, such as food pumps and ventilators, safely.

Great fun was had by all!





Our Sensory Toy Library helps children to discover a favourite sight, sound or smell with one of our switch toys, fibre optics or sensory kits.

In 2021:

We loaned **247** toys

We added **22** new toys to the library

96% of our library users told us that the toy they'd borrowed had met their child's sensory needs

84% said the toy had improved their child's skills

96% said the toy had helped their child's enjoyment of life

87% said the toy had helped their child to interact with family and friends

86% had decided to purchase their own following the loan

Our most popular toys were:

1. Sensory in a Suitcase
2. Fibre optics
3. Bouncy Lily Pad



Our Postal Lending Library helps families to play and learn.

In 2021:

We helped 265 families

We loaned a total of 611 items.

Our library has books on a wide range of topics with titles for both adults and children.

In 2021:

We loaned 364 books

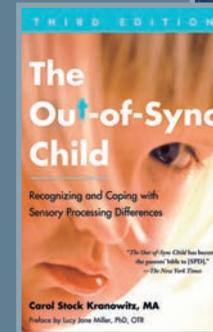
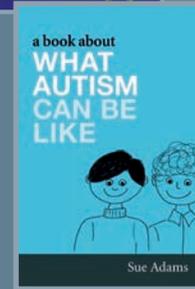
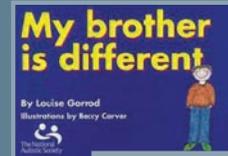
We added 84 new books (48 adult and 36 children)

86% of our library users told us that the book they'd borrowed had helped them to meet their child's needs.

95% rated our postal library service as excellent.

Our most popular books were:

1. My Brother is Different by The National Autistic Society
2. A Book About What Autism Can Be Like by Sue Adams
3. Autism Superheroes Comic Strip by Johanna Manikiza



Families can also borrow ebooks and audiobooks using the BorrowBox app and website.

In 2021:

We loaned 186 BorrowBox books

We added 21 new books to our BorrowBox

Most popular BorrowBox loans:

1. The Out of Sync Child by Carol Stock Kranowitz (e-audiobook)
2. Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them by J K Rowling (e-audiobook)
3. The Gruffalo by Julia Donaldson (e-audiobook)



We also welcomed Ffion to our team as part of a scheme designed to empower people with disabilities and help them get jobs.

Ffion told us: "I love everything about my new job with Cerebra. After months of lockdown the routine of working is making a huge difference to my mental wellbeing and I feel more confident and self-sufficient".



3. We help children to fulfil their greatest potential without barriers to their complete participation in family life and society.

Over 500,000 children in the UK live with a brain condition. This can make normal activities such as learning, playing or simply experiencing the world a huge challenge. We offer solutions and advice to help these children and their families enjoy lives full of hope and discovery.

We'd like you to meet just a few of the families we helped to discover a better life in 2021:



Betsy

"Betsy has Rett Syndrome and Autism. Her needs are very high and she is very sensory driven requiring constant sensory feedback. Our family life is impacted hugely as Betsy requires supervision 24 hrs a day. Outings are a struggle and so we rely heavily on having the right environment at home to keep Betsy stimulated, calm and happy.

It's difficult to keep Betsy occupied. Often things we think she may like she doesn't and so being able to borrow different items from the toy library gives her the opportunity to try out a good variety of wonderful sensory equipment that we would otherwise be unable to provide.

The free loan of equipment has given us the opportunity to provide Betsy with variety and fun in her life and we have been able to make her smile with items we could not normally buy. She has loved the numerous things we have loaned and seeing her face light up or the concentration when she sees a new object is absolutely lovely.

Knowing I can contact Cerebra and always receive a supportive quick reply is so refreshing as a special needs parent! Thank you for all you do!"

Sarah, Betsy's mum.
Library Service.



David

David is two-years-old and is a happy little boy who loves books, toy trains and going on the swings. He suffered from lack of oxygen to the brain at birth and needs some help with mobility, communication, eating and drinking. His mum Lauren was relieved to find out that Cerebra could help to overcome some of the challenges they faced.

"After trying sleep training with David at around 9 months, his sleep started to deteriorate at around 14 months, where he would wake multiple times each night, and we could not figure out what the issue was. I was finding it especially hard as the disruption was affecting me at work and we got to a point where we all were suffering from a lack of consolidated sleep.

It was so helpful to talk with a sleep specialist from Cerebra with experience of neurological conditions, as they really 'get it' and understand what you are dealing with. Our sleep specialist was able to help us rule out things that were a barrier for David's sleep, things that we hadn't even considered, and helped us to make a plan for helping David to sleep better.

They shared lots of useful information with us and we really appreciated the gentle and child-centred approach.

Through making some small changes to his evening routine, bedding, sleep space and daytime activity levels, we were able to get David into a better routine for sleep, which has made everyone much happier!

We found out about Cerebra's toy library and book library service, where we have been able to borrow books to learn more about supporting David and how to better look after ourselves as his parent carers. We recently enjoyed the loan of a Sensory Suitcase, full of lovely toys to help engage and inspire David during his playtime and physiotherapy sessions.

The toy and book libraries have been brilliant. There are a lot of unanticipated costs as part of being a parent of a child with a disability, so it's been great to be able to borrow toys for David to enjoy and specialist books for us to better understand his condition".

Lauren, David's mum.
Library and Sleep Services.



Lucian

7-year-old Lucian is a happy and bubbly young boy who gets on so well with others and loves being outdoors. Last year, Lucian started finding it hard to sit still and was getting more and more frustrated. As his temper tantrums got more frequent, it became clear he was experiencing sensory issues. He also started to suffer from night terrors and lack of sleep and this is when his mum Gemma was referred to our sleep team.

"Our Sleep Practitioner was absolutely brilliant," explains Gemma. "She started off by asking us to keep a sleep diary, before working with us on different techniques to help Lucian sleep at night. She was always available to catch up and so I let her know about Lucian's sensory issues also."

After talking through these issues, Gemma found out about our Sensory Toy Library. We sent Lucian and Gemma our Sensory Suitcase, which contains fibre optics and UV lights as well as sound and tactile items. Lucian loves to play with the disco light merry-go-round and the fibre optics help him to respond well to colours.

"All-in-all, I'm overwhelmed by the support we've had. We've received the knowledge, guidance and reassurance to help me realise that this is ok and there is support available. The mental stimulation from the sensory toys will help Lucian stay relaxed and focussed and the sleep support will help him to sleep at night."

Gemma, Lucien's mum .
Sleep and Library Services.



Josh

Fifteen-year-old Josh has been struggling with his sleep for a couple of years. He often lies awake for 2-3 hours, not falling asleep until the early hours of the morning. This leaves him feeling very tired and getting up for school can be a struggle.

Josh was becoming increasingly tired, anxious and frustrated. The lack of sleep and Josh's mood was having a big impact on family life. The family were put in touch with one of our Sleep Practitioners who worked closely with the family to try to find a solution.

His mum Sarah told us: "The sleep practitioner was fantastic. He had a really friendly approach and made sure that he fully involved Josh in the process, consulting him and explaining things clearly. Because Josh has tried all of these options, he is now eligible for a paediatrician appointment as well as a referral to CAMHS to tackle underlying anxiety issues. We are hopeful that there is more that can be done to help him and we can also rely on Cerebra's on-going support. I would absolutely recommend Cerebra's Sleep Service to other families".

Sarah, Josh's mum.

Sleep Service.



Libby

Libby often sees other children playing and although her parents try as much as possible to help her do what the other children are doing, they see the upset and frustration in Libby's face when she can't.

Rosy, Libby's mum, contacted our Innovation Centre for something sturdy and easily manoeuvrable to help her play and have fun at home and with friends. We were thrilled to be able to help and to build Libby her very own Walker. We even made sure it was fun and colourful so that Libby could be the envy of the play area!

Rosy told us: "In play areas, Libby would often push a toy pram or shopping trolley, but they've always been too light for her to lean on. Now she has her very own pushing trolley. We put things inside for her, behind the rainbows, and she loves crashing!"

Rosie, Libby's mum.

Innovation Centre.



Teddy

"As Teddy was due to start school we weren't sure how he would manage because we carry his oxygen round for him all the time. I was looking for a way for Teddy to independently carry his oxygen around as even the smallest cylinders are too heavy for him.

I came across the Oxy-gem trolleys that Cerebra had made and got in touch to ask where we could buy one. They came back to me so quickly and offered to make him his own one, which was specific to his needs. The wonderful team made Teddy a fantastic trolley so he can push his oxygen safely around on his own. It will make such a difference to him especially at school. We cannot thank them enough for what they have done".

Clare, Teddy's mum .

Innovation Centre.



Henry

Three-year-old Henry needs to take his ventilator with him everywhere he goes. Like any young boy, he wants to play and be active, but it was becoming hard for his mum, Shevonne to keep up with him while carrying the ventilator – especially after Santa gave Henry a brand-new bike for Christmas.

Shevonne got in touch with our Innovation Centre team who were delighted to make Henry a bike trailer to carry his ventilator. His new trailer gives Henry so much more freedom and independence as he can now take his ventilator with him on his adventures without his parents having to run alongside.

As soon as the trailer was delivered to their home, Henry couldn't wait to take it out for a spin. Shevonne told us: "It's absolutely amazing! The freedom it has given him is incredible. I can see his expression and the delight on his face. It's literally life-changing for us and we are incredibly grateful."

Shevonne, Henry's mum.

Innovation Centre.



Harrison

"Harrison is eight-years-old and finds it hard to sit still and focus as he doesn't have a brilliant concentration span. He often prefers his own company and can show challenging and sometimes dangerous behaviours. Although he can talk, he has very limited understanding. Harrison has ASD, ADHD, Sensory Processing Disorder and learning disabilities.

"We thought that Harrison might benefit from playing with sensory toys but the ones we wanted were far too expensive for us to buy only to find that Harrison didn't like them. We were thrilled to find Cerebra's toy library and Harrison loves it when we receive a new box of toys to try".

Anmarie, Harrison's mum.
Library Service.



Bailey

Twelve-year-old Bailey has Septo-optic dysplasia, a very rare condition where the pituitary gland doesn't develop properly. He is also autistic and registered blind, which can cause him frustration on a daily basis. He is such a bright young boy and has such a love for music. It's his passion in life and his way to communicate.

Charlie, Bailey's mum explains: "Music has played a huge part in Bailey's development, ever since he was a baby. I would play music and he would follow that music and that's how we got him to do everything – stand, crawl, walk, smile. If he was sleeping and he heard music, his eyes would open and he would smile. We knew from such a young age music was going to be his life".

Charlie, wanted to know if there was an instrument out there that could combine different touches and sounds to help with Bailey's sensory needs. She found out about our Innovation Centre and got in touch to see what our talented team could come up with.

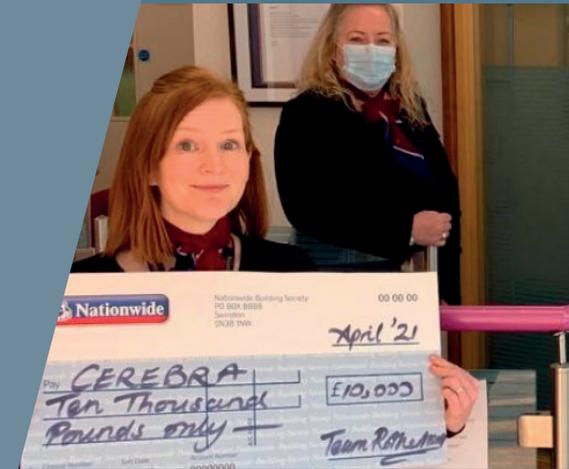
They made Bailey a wonderfully crafted wooden drum with a compartment, which includes a xylophone, a shaker and also stores all Bailey's different drum sticks. Not only that, but the patterned sides help Bailey to touch, explore and create different sounds.

Charlie, Bailey's mum.
Innovation Centre.





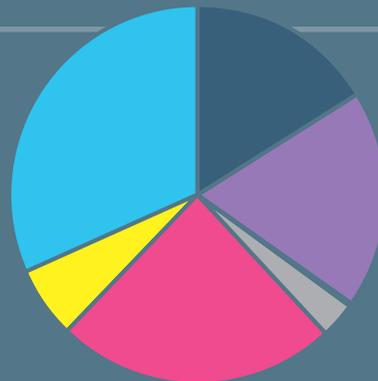
4. Together we are helping families who have a child with a brain condition to discover a better life. Thank you for joining us on our journey in 2021.



Nationwide

Number of individuals who supported our income streams in 2021:

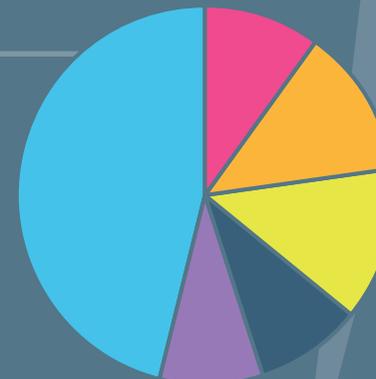
Raffle	10,961
Trusts & Foundations	40
Gift Aid	12,498
Corporate	38
Regular Giving	2,143
Legacies	10
Donation Card	16,181
Other	4,188
Lottery	21,189
Total	62,972



If you would like a financial breakdown, please do contact us directly. You can also view our published accounts on the Charity Commission website.

How it helped:

Support Services	10%
CIC	13%
Sleep	13%
LEaP	9%
Health & Wellbeing	9%
Research Projects	46%



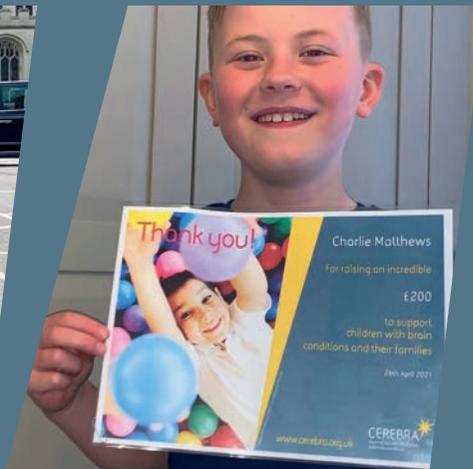
Support from a number of Trusts and Foundations and Corporate Grants towards the work of our Innovation Centre meant that even more children are able to have fun with their family and friends.

Thanks to:

The Rothley Trust, Bruce Wake Charitable Trust, Pobl Trust, Boshier Hinton Foundation, Alpkit Foundation, Tesco, Nationwide, B&Q, Clothworkers Foundation, Hospital Saturday Fund, Morrisons Foundation, DWF Foundation, Alta Advisers, The Childwick Trust, Toy Trust, Percy Bilton, The Henry Sale Foundation, The Hargreaves Foundation, The Reed Foundation.



Katherine Marlow



Charlie Matthews



Theo Wyld



Louise Astill

We are grateful for:

The financial support given by the following solicitors, who specialise in accident or clinical negligence cases relating to brain conditions or Court of Protection Deputyships and Personal Injury Trusts.

Over the past 12 months, these solicitors have provided support to a number of families Cerebra work with. They have also provided detailed and insightful articles and interviews across a wide range of topics, which are available to view on the News section of our website.

Enable Law,
Pryers Solicitors,
Birchall Blackburn Law,
Bolt Burdon Kemp,
CL Medilaw,
Hyphen Law.

Thanks to everyone who signed up to Team Cerebra this year. You are all superheroes!

Katherine Marlow took part in the London Landmarks half marathon and raised £470.

"I'm a first year PhD student at the University of Birmingham. I conduct research within the Cerebra Network for Neurodevelopmental Disorders. I'm proud to support my research team and Cerebra in running this race. I hope my fundraising campaign will help spread awareness of the support and information Cerebra offer to families of children with brain conditions. I'd never run a half marathon before, but I love a challenge and dedicating myself to something. When I heard about the opportunity to run I thought back to the promise I made to myself during lockdown: "when people offer you opportunities that you can take, just say YES!" so here we are."

Nine-year-old Charlie Matthews put his baking skills to creative use and raised an amazing £200.

Charlie loves cooking and was inspired to fundraise so that he could help more children like his cousin, Austin, who has Cerebral Palsy. Covid restrictions meant that Charlie wasn't able to hold a traditional bake sale so instead he took orders from family and friends and hand delivered them.

Charlie says: "I wanted to raise money for my little cousin and so my mum asked my auntie what a good charity would be and she told us about Cerebra. I enjoyed making all the colours for the icing the most and I had to eat one of every batch to make sure they were top notch!"

Louise Astill and Theo Wyld took on the London Marathon. Ahead of the race Louise told us: "I am both nervous and excited about running the Marathon. It has always been a dream of mine and I couldn't think of a more deserving charity to run in support of. I cannot wait to get to the finishing line and celebrate both the achievement of having made it and also having helped support Cerebra." Louise raised a wonderful £3,393.

We look forward to where the journey takes us next.

Why not join us?



Thank you for working wonders for
children with brain conditions

Cerebra

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