



## Can you put a number on a feeling? Measuring charities impact on children's well-being

Camilla Nevill



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Oslo, May 2009



## New Philanthropy Capital: a unique mix

### part **research house**

- Creating a body of research which is **public** and **distributed for free** on our website

### part **think tank**

- **Challenging** opinions on charity effectiveness
- Informing **public policy**
- Identifying **best practice** in funding



### part **consultancy**

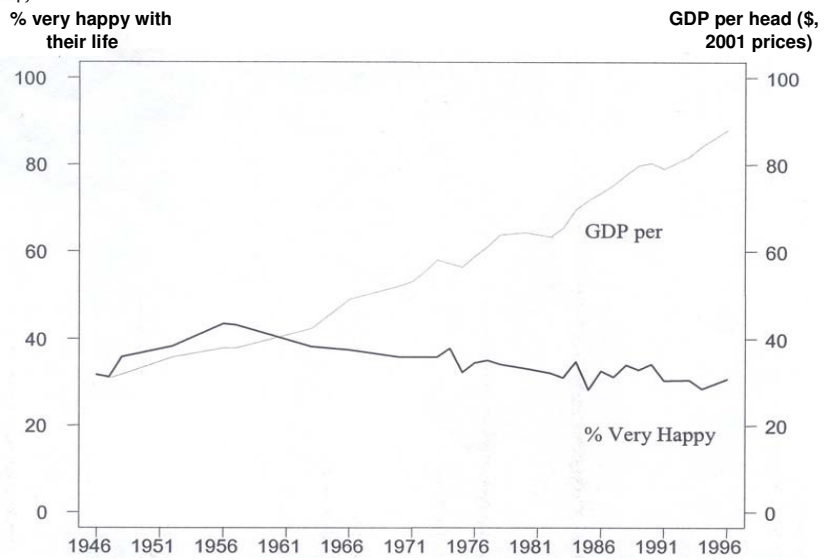
- Advising donors on **effective charities** to support
- Advising charities on **impact measurement and effectiveness**
- Creating strategies for donors to **give effectively**

### part **innovator**

- **Developing and trialling** tools to measure charity effectiveness
- Piloting initiatives such as the Results Library to **challenge existing practice**



## The policy context: U.S. income and well-being



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## The study of subjective well-being

*"The study of what makes experiences and life pleasant or unpleasant. It is concerned with feelings of pleasure and pain, of interest or boredom, of joy or sorrow, and of satisfaction or dissatisfaction"*

- Professor Daniel Kahneman

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## Existing research

Global measures of life satisfaction:

- World Value Survey
- Cantril's ladder (1965)

Scales used by psychologists and social scientists to measure aspects of subjective well-being:

- Marsh's self-description questionnaire (1988)
- Wagnild and Young's resilience scale (1993)
- Huebner's student life satisfaction scale (1991)



**But none of these meet all the needs of charities**

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## What is the well-being questionnaire?

- Paper questionnaire (eventually online)
- Answered by the child
- Designed for 11 to 16 year olds

**The seven domains of well-being**

**SELF:**

- 1) Self-esteem Q.6
- 2) Resilience Q.7
- 3) Emotional well-being Q.8

**RELATIONSHIPS:**

- 4) Friends Q.9
- 5) Family Q.10

**ENVIRONMENT:**

- 6) Home community Q.11
- 7) School Q.12

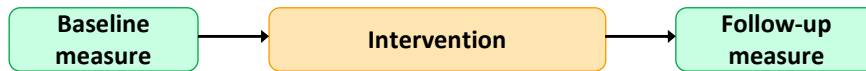
- Subjective outcomes relevant to children and charities

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## How will charities use well-being questionnaire?

- Evaluation not diagnosis
- Baseline and follow-up
- Anonymous and confidential



- Compare results to the national baseline
- Currently being piloted with five charities
  - Robust and valid
  - Sensitive to change
  - Practical for charities to use



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## Before and after an Outward Bound course

- Paired samples t-test is used
- Differences between baseline and follow-up scores for school (N=108)

Domain of well-being	Difference	P
<i>Self-esteem</i>	0.8	0.021
<i>Resilience</i>	0.6	0.006
<i>Emotional well-being</i>	1.0	0.000
Peer relationships	-0.2	0.214
Family relationships	0.1	0.608
School environment	0.4	0.120
Home environment	0.2	0.511

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## What questions can charities answer?

### Internal use (service delivery)

- Are we working better with some groups than others?
- Are elements of our service delivery linked to particular outcomes?
- How can we predict who will find our services more useful and use this to adapt our services?

### External use (marketing)

- Are we working with disadvantaged groups with low levels of well-being?
- Do we improve the well-being of the children we work with?
- Do children we work with show long-term improvement?

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## Strengths and weaknesses of the well-being tool

### Strengths

- General tool enabling charities to prove success at a range of subjective outcomes
- Academically robust and valid
- Practical for charities to use
- Freely available
- National baseline

### Weaknesses

- The attribution problem
- Should be used alongside other methods to get the full picture
- Not appropriate for work with some children (e.g. victims of abuse)

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## The future of the well-being questionnaire

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- Online and freely available for charities to use.
- Charities can share their results
- Well-being questionnaires for other groups:
  - The elderly (60+)
  - Young adults (17 to 25)
- Well-being questionnaires for other countries?



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## Contact details

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Camilla Nevill

Tel: 020 7785 6583

New Philanthropy Capital, 3 Downstream, 1 London Bridge, London SE1 9BG

Email: [cnevill@philanthropycapital.org](mailto:cnevill@philanthropycapital.org)

Website: [www.philanthropycapital.org](http://www.philanthropycapital.org)

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## Evidence based policy and practice: NGOs and The UK third sector



Ann Buchanan  
University of Oxford



## What is the third sector?



The third sector in the UK , like NGOs the world over, is a diverse, active and passionate sector.:

- non-governmental: value-driven
- principally reinvest any financial surpluses to further social, environmental or cultural objectives.
- The term encompasses voluntary and community organisations, charities, social enterprises, cooperatives and mutuals both large and small.

## Who are they?



- In England and Wales at the end of 2006 there were 168,600 registered charities. Long history.
- They range from: household names such as Barnardo's (one of the 630 registered charities with annual income over £10 million) to the small trusts founded to relieve hardship in a specific
- **Social enterprises** – in 2005 there were over 55,000 social enterprises. The annual turnover of social enterprises is around £27 billion and they contribute about £8.4 billion to GDP

## What the UK third sector does.....



- **Key activities:** Campaigning, strengthening communities; supporting services, social enterprise
- **The number of people volunteering** formally or informally at least once a month rose from 18.4 million in 2001 to 20.4 million in 2005.9
- **Charitable giving** has kept up with the growth in GDP in recent years, at around £9 billion in 2005-06.10 billion in 2005,
- But in addition **Government contracting 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector large sums of money to run services**

## The dilemma. Does it make a difference?



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- A lot of money. A lot of volunteer effort. But does it make a difference?
- Three options: make things better; make no difference; make things work
- Considerable reluctance from third sector to get involved in evaluation
- Where government funding charities for services, they now asking for more evidence that they are best value.
- Private sector complaining that the Government is creating an unfair market.

## Why is more evidence necessary in the third sector?



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- Ethical responsibility to ensure 'do no harm'. Often working with vulnerable people. Human Rights issue
- Some of Third Sector has Government money and is accountability to public purse
- Cannot assume that third sector that it is necessarily better.
- Private organisations are now challenging the protected status of third sector.

## What is evidence based?



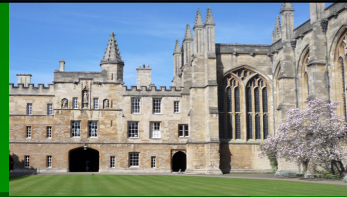
- 'Is the integration of best research evidence with clinical expertise and values' (Sackett, Straus, Richardson, Rosenberg & Haynes, 2000 p1)
- 'It is the conscientious, explicit and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the care of individual clients' (Sackett et al, 1997, p2)
- 'Evidence-based health care refers to 'use of best current knowledge in decision making about groups and populations' (Gray 2001)

## Experience at Oxford



- Ian Chalmers and the Cochrane Collaboration
- The Campbell Collaboration
- First MSc in Evidence based Social Work – now in 5<sup>th</sup> year
- Doctoral students

## So what have we learnt?



- Students from all over the world: Chile, Argentina, USA, Canada, Europe, Post soviet countries, Russia, India, China and Australasia. Many involved NGOs in their countries.
- They make use of the 'hierarchy' of evidence. If there is no evidence you need to find what evidence there is. The extent of the problem; the risk and protective factors, associated, the possible interventions, setting up small trials, going public.
- We have had to help students make sense of what is know and what may not yet be known – becoming critical
- But continuing the search for evidence despite the problems
- Above all we have learnt that those who intervene in the lives of others both for economic and humanitarian reasons have know what there is to know.

## Evidence based Policy



- But research in NGOs and UK third sector is still at embryonic stage.
- Work at New Philanthropy capital important
- Place2Be research important.

## **So the journey to EB Work on NGOs and the third sector has just begun....**

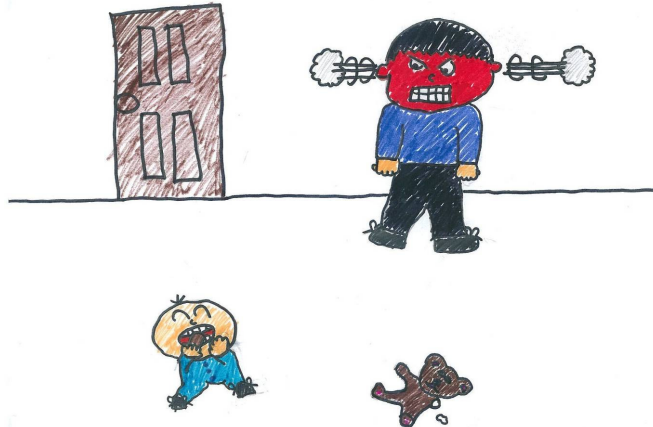


- There will be many disputes and arguments ahead
- But national and international organisations are asking for more evidence.
- We cannot assume that just because an organisation is not for profit that it is necessarily better than one run for profit
- We have humanitarian and economic responsibility that what is done – at least does no harm.

Enabling emotional and therapeutic support to children in schools



## The Place2Be



Advantages and challenges of evidence-based practice

Benita Refson **OBE**, Chief Executive

## The Place2Be: Our Vision and Mission



**Our Vision** is a world where all children have the chance to grow up with prospects rather than problems.

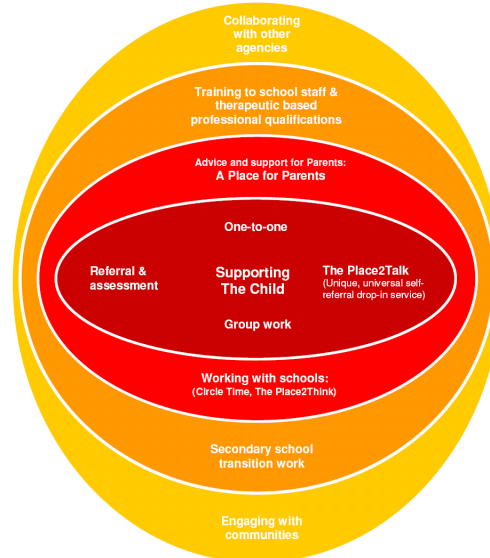
**Our Mission** is to enable therapeutic and emotional support to be provided to children in schools based on a practical model backed up by research.



## About Us



- Founded in 1994
- 14 years experience delivering school based counselling services
- Multi-award winning charity supporting 47,000 children
- In 2009 we will be working in 146 schools across 16 hubs (clusters) in the UK



## History of Research and Evaluation



- 1995 **Royal Free Hospital research**  
- The Place2Be model founded
- 2004 **The King's Fund**  
- Funded and supported the development of a three-year Research and Evaluation Strategy and work plan  
- Funded consultancy from two senior academics at the Institute of Psychiatry, King's College
- 2008 **Research Advisory Group**  
- To advise and support the Research and Evaluation team in areas such as pursuing new areas of research, ethics, statistical analysis and disseminating The Place2Be's research and evaluation findings to a wider audience
- 2008 **Business Impact Analysis**  
- Calculating the unit cost and conducting a cost benefit analysis of The Place2Be's services

## Advantages of The Place2Be's evidence-based practice

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### Demonstrates the value of The Place2Be's work

- Through providing solid evidence of the effectiveness and value of our interventions

### Demonstrates positive outcomes for funders / commissioners

#### Quality assurance

- Internal discussion and team feedback of outcome measurement findings (SDQ, CORE-OM)
- Internal quality assurance (Quality Committee, Research Advisory Group)

#### Improve service delivery

- Quantitative/Qualitative study to identify the pattern of effectiveness (what works for whom)
- Comparison with similar services (e.g. NPC results library & well-being project)

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## Advantages of Business Impact Analysis

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- **Measure a wider impact on children, families, schools and the society**

Research projects evaluating impact on whole school and community

- **Demonstrate Value for Money**

Cost-benefit analysis to estimate savings for society by early mental health interventions

- **Benchmark service & performance**

Benchmark with similar statutory and voluntary services on service delivery, efficiency and effectiveness

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## Challenges associated with evidence-based practice



### Size of evaluation task

- Data processing. In 2007/08:
  - almost 2,000 children accessed individual or group interventions
  - 5,000 children accessed The Place2Talk
  - 240 parents received support from A Place for Parents

### Evidence largely based on internal research and evaluation

- May be viewed externally as biased; being addressed through:
  - establishing the Research Advisory Group
  - increasing links with academia to outsource research
  - Publishing evaluation findings

### Cultural issues

- Working with BME and 'hard to reach' families
- Aligning the clinical work and expertise of the Counsellors with the skills necessary to administer and manage robust evaluation methods

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## The Place2Be: Key findings



### Individual and group interventions

In 2007/08

- 60% of children had lower **teacher-rated Total Difficulties** scores, as measured by the SDQ, following The Place2Be intervention
- 71% of children had lower **parent-rated Total Difficulties** scores, as measured by the SDQ, following The Place2Be intervention

### A Place for Parents

In 2007/08

- 92% of parents had lower Total Global Distress scores, as measured by the CORE-OM, following intervention

### The Place2Talk

Surveys conducted between March 2006 and July 2008

- 90% of children found the service to be either 'very helpful' or 'a bit helpful'
- 68% of school staff were aware of noticeable benefits to the whole school as a result of The Place2Talk

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## What the Donors say about us



*"Whilst I understood that measuring outcomes is not easy and that financial discipline is very tough when funding is precarious, I have to admit to being frequently disappointed about what I found. One could list so many shortcomings, but what has struck me most is the absence of a culture of accountability (to funders, employees) the lack of interest in demonstrating efficacy, non-existent grasp of costs, weak governance structures, absence of strategic planning and wasteful fundraising ratios. So you will understand how enormously welcome it was today to meet you and to understand about the way that you run The Place2Be. The professionalism of your team would put many businesses to shame."*

(Head of UK and European Equities)

*"The Place2Be has one of the most sophisticated outcomes measurement systems NPC has seen."*

(New Philanthropy Capital – Formal Charity Recommendation)

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## The feedback



*"If there wasn't any P2B here, I'd do it myself but it would be very hard." Child accessing The Place2Be*

*"It helped my daughter 100% in Year 3. I hope it has a place in our school for the future years." Parent of child receiving The Place2Be support*

*"Pupils are provided with good pastoral support and care, including initiatives such as 'The Place2Be' where those who find it difficult to settle or behave well can improve their social and emotional development." Ofsted, 2008, (Chalkhill Primary, Brent)*

*"The Place2Be has touched the lives of the whole school community in a positive way over the past year." Head teacher*

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