

Impact Report

2019/20

Royal Caledonian
Education Trust
Established 1815

Scotland's Armed Forces
Children's Charity



Helping Every Armed
Forces Child to Thrive

Introduction

Welcome to RCET's first impact report. This has been a hugely important year in our work to support Scotland's Armed Forces Children and Young People. We developed new services, lobbied with politicians and decision makers and consulted directly with children and young people.

For many children and young people, belonging to an Armed Forces family is a hugely positive and rewarding experience. However, there is no doubt that there are those facing challenges. At RCET, we are committed to taking a children's rights based approach to all aspects of our work from service planning and delivery to policy. This means we work directly with children and young people to ensure their voices are heard and that their views are considered in all decisions that affect them.

They have spoken candidly about the challenges they can face in terms of their education and wider health and wellbeing. These include high levels of mobility, interrupted learning, coping with parental deployment and potential parental injury or death, and once the serving parent leaves the Armed Forces, issues associated with the transition to civilian life. We have worked tirelessly to mitigate those challenges.

Armed Forces children and young people are of course, first and foremost, simply children and young people, and we know from our work that many are also living in families experiencing challenges shared by civilian and Armed Forces families alike. This includes poverty, housing issues, relationship breakdown, mental health difficulties,

and substance misuse. This is particularly true in the case of Veteran families. RCET has been a vital support for those families most in need.

In this impact report, you will see the wide ranging work we have undertaken over the past year to support, empower, and advocate for children and young people in Armed Forces families, all with the aim of enabling each and every Armed Forces child and young person to reach their full potential and truly thrive.

Colin Flinn
Chief Executive Officer



Malcolm Noble
Chairman



Our Reach

Areas reached by Children & Family Support Service

Ayrshire, Glasgow, South & North Lanarkshire, Fife, Inverness, Invergordon, Moray, Aberdeenshire, Dumfries, Argyll & Bute, Borders, Clackmannanshire, Dumfriesshire, Dundee, Edinburgh, Falkirk, Inverclyde, Midlothian, Moray, Perth and Kinross, Renfrewshire, Stirling, West Dunbartonshire

My Voice Scotland Residentials

Gartocharn (Loch Lomond), Loch Tay, Perthshire and Edinburgh

7 Youth Participation Forums

Inverness, Lossiemouth, North & South Fife, Helensburgh, Edinburgh & Midlothian, QVS

Creative Forces Day Held

Dundee

Membership of TCELT - International Research Forum

Dundee

Resource Boxes

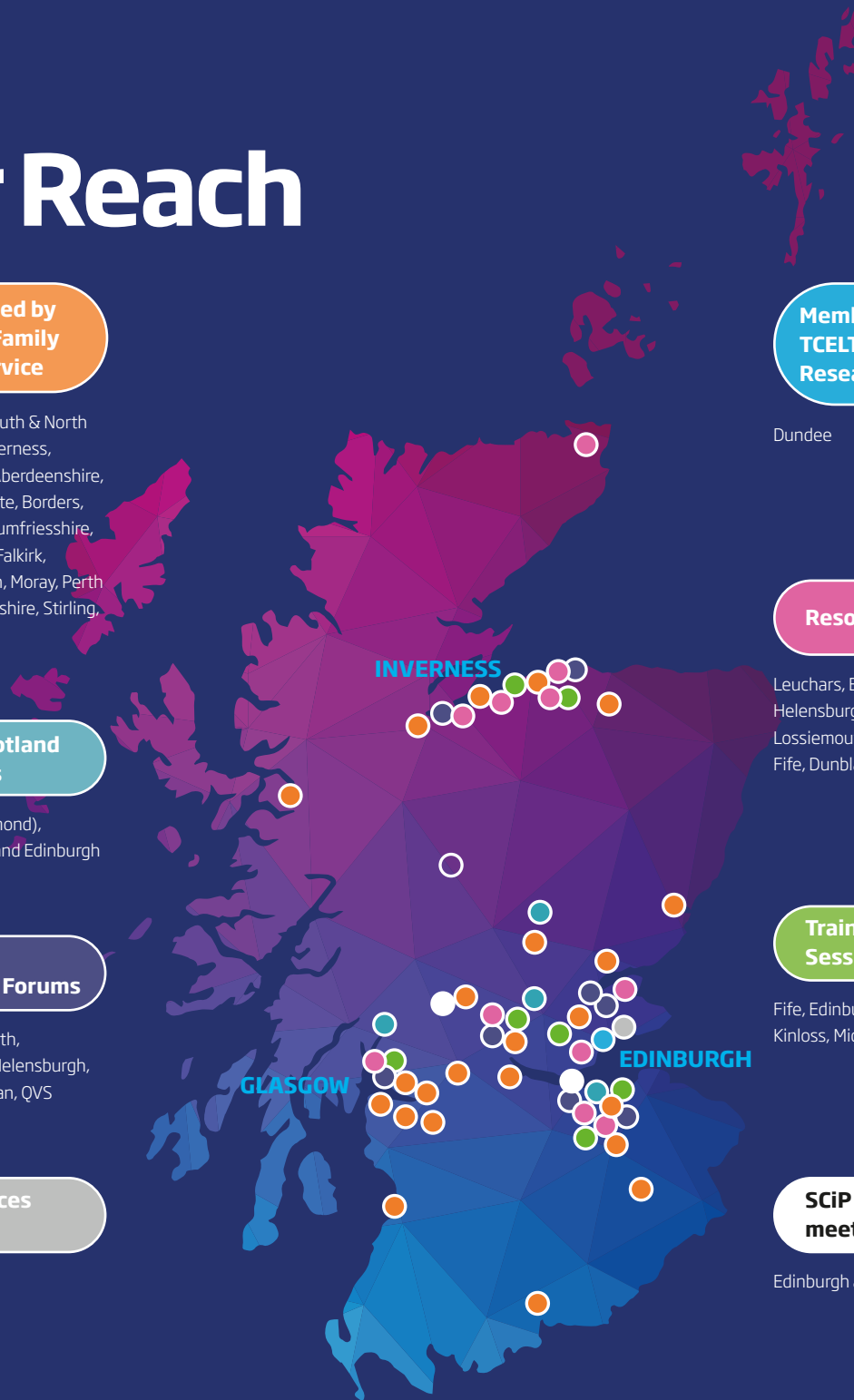
Leuchars, Edinburgh, Helensburgh, Midlothian, Kinloss, Lossiemouth, Inverness, Elgin, Fife, Dunblane, Caithness

Training Sessions Held

Fife, Edinburgh, Perth, Elgin, Kinloss, Midlothian, Helensburgh

SCiP Alliance meetings


Edinburgh and Stirling




Children & Family Support Service

61 

young people supported with their education


 Most common emoji chosen by young people we support in education.


“ I chose this emoji as RCET is a very good charity and helps a lot of children such as me with paying for my dance lessons and school uniform which I'm thankful for. ” 

100 %

young people who we support to attend College or University believed our help

- ✓ increased their wellbeing
- ✓ reduced their stress and anxiety
- ✓ improved their ability to access basic needs such as food, clothing and hygiene.

“ Without your support I feel I might not have had the resources to continue with my studies at University. The funding has massively reduced my anxiety and stress and allowed me to focus on my studies. ” 

“ I can now purchase my text books without wondering where I can next get food. You've given me a proper chance in education. ” 

78



families supported with Crisis Intervention and Family Support

Items purchased include:    

- “ You have helped us as a family when no-one else seemed to care. ”
- “ After becoming a single parent 7 years ago I was left with all the debts and trying to provide for my children with just my wage. The support I received helped me to see there was a light at the end of the tunnel. ”
- “ Our daughter was able to get what she needed and was delighted which in turn gave me a brief period of not feeling guilty or ashamed and anxious about not being able to provide these things for her without taking on debt. ”

2/3

of parents told us that our support improved their mental health and increased their children's confidence.

3/4

of families told us we eased their immediate financial worries.

Family Time Respite Breaks Service launched

“ I can't thank you enough. I can now die knowing everything is in place for my family. We've been blown away at the generosity of organising one last break away as a family to make memories together. ”

6 children supported to attend pilot respite breaks in surf therapy

“ I managed to get up on the board and ride a wave. I felt like I was flying. ”

Education Programme

Our Supporting Confident Journeys Practitioners **Conference** held for over 150 delegates

100%

- ✓ agreed that there were better able to identify which next steps to take to develop new relationships and partnerships which will help them to support Armed Forces children and young people.

95%

- ✓ felt that they had a better understanding of where to go for assistance with supporting Armed Forces children and young people.
- ✓ of attendees felt that they were better able to understand the different aspects of young people's life transitions', their support needs and how these might be addressed.

Our first **Creative Forces Day** held promoting Further Education to Armed Forces children and young people.

- **Over ½** of those who attended felt more like College or University was for them after attending

What young people told us after Creative Forces day that:



That anything is possible!



Realising that there is support for Forces kids



I believe I can get into University now and I know the routes to take.



There's so many pathways now I feel encouraged.



I feel determined to get my Highers now.

27 Resource Boxes delivered to schools and community groups across Scotland.

- “ These boxes allow us to support students to talk about difficult things in their lives whilst feeling that they are not alone, but surrounded by a whole family of military children who have struggled with similar issues and got through with support, help and the right resources. ”

“ ***This training strongly highlighted a group of youngsters and families that I feel the school are not as aware of as they should be. Thank you*** ”

Teacher, Moray Council

“ ***RCET just get it!*** ”
Conference Delegate

Research



- PhD research co-funded by RCET published and recognised as a first for Scotland.



- Invited to join The Centre for Transformational Change; Educational and Life Transitions an international research network.

Changes in Practice Case Study

“ I have more empathy for children who are displaying challenging behaviour. My communication with the pupils has definitely changed and I am now more aware of the pupils' moods. We now have a Feelings Board where children can write down how they feel in the morning and make count down calendars for children with parents on deployment. We offer a Deployment Club with emotional support each Friday. This has been very successful and the children count down the days on a Monday. ”

Teacher, Kinloss Primary School

Youth Participation Programme

92%

- ✓ of Forum members feel listened to
- ✓ feel that taking part in the Programme will help them in other areas of their life
- ✓ of Forum feel that they help to decide things like the project rules and activities
- ✓ feel they have had the opportunity to talk about their experiences
- ✓ felt that being part of the Programme has had a positive influence on their lives

84%

of those involved in our Forums felt that this improved their confidence

75%

of those attending our residential felt their confidence had increased!

46%

of young people that we surveyed told us that they rarely or never felt confident

“ I’ve made so many friends and built up my confidence and even got to learn some new stuff about media. It was so fun and if I got the chance to go again I would! ”

“ *The young people shared that they felt that presenting at the Conference was a great experience and that they have grown in confidence since the event. It was also really good to see so many people approaching them afterwards as after all they are the experts in the lives of Armed Forces children.* ”

Rebekah Hill, NS FPS Casework Manager

100%

- ✓ said being part of a Forum made them feel good
- ✓ felt proud of what they achieved at the Forum
- ✓ said the Youth Participation Programme was important to them



Over 450 young people consulted

Our young people shared their experience with over

550

professionals at Conferences last year



7 Regional Participation Groups Established



National Forum - Military Youth Voice Scotland - established

Policy & Influencing



Participated in the successful campaign to have the UNCRC incorporated into Scottish domestic law



RCET Advisory Group established and first meeting held



Evidence from RCET and our young people included in Together's State of Children's Rights Report (2019)

92%

✓ of young people disagree that changing services for military children and young people was a waste of time

9

✓ meetings held with MSPs

6

✓ consultations responded to

National Transitions Programme

“ Thank you so much for the time you have taken to explain everything to me as clearly as you have. I’m over the moon that I have your support. ”

Parent

8

**years of partnership with ADES
(Association of Directors of Education
Scotland)**



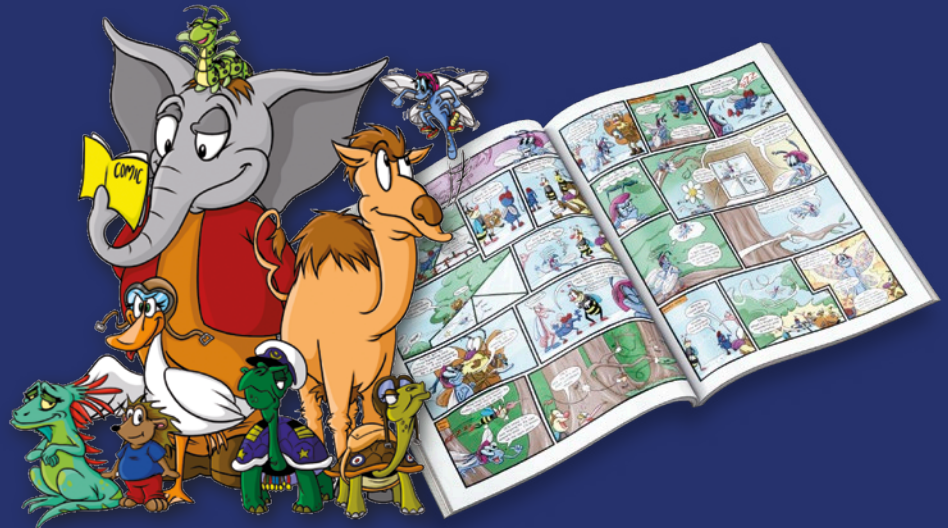
Data Collection

Through ADES, the National Transitions Officer* supported local authorities to collect improved data on Armed Forces children and young people in Scottish schools.



Reach & Resources

- ✓ Held the first ever Knowledge Exchange Meeting with Local Authorities.
- ✓ Provided 5 new resources distributed to more than 1,000 individuals or agencies.
- ✓ Published Classroom Comic Books for supporting Armed Forces children produced and distributed.



* The National Transitions Officer is seconded to the Association of Directors of Scotland (ADES) who set the strategy for this role



*Scotland's Armed Forces
Children's Charity*

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