



News

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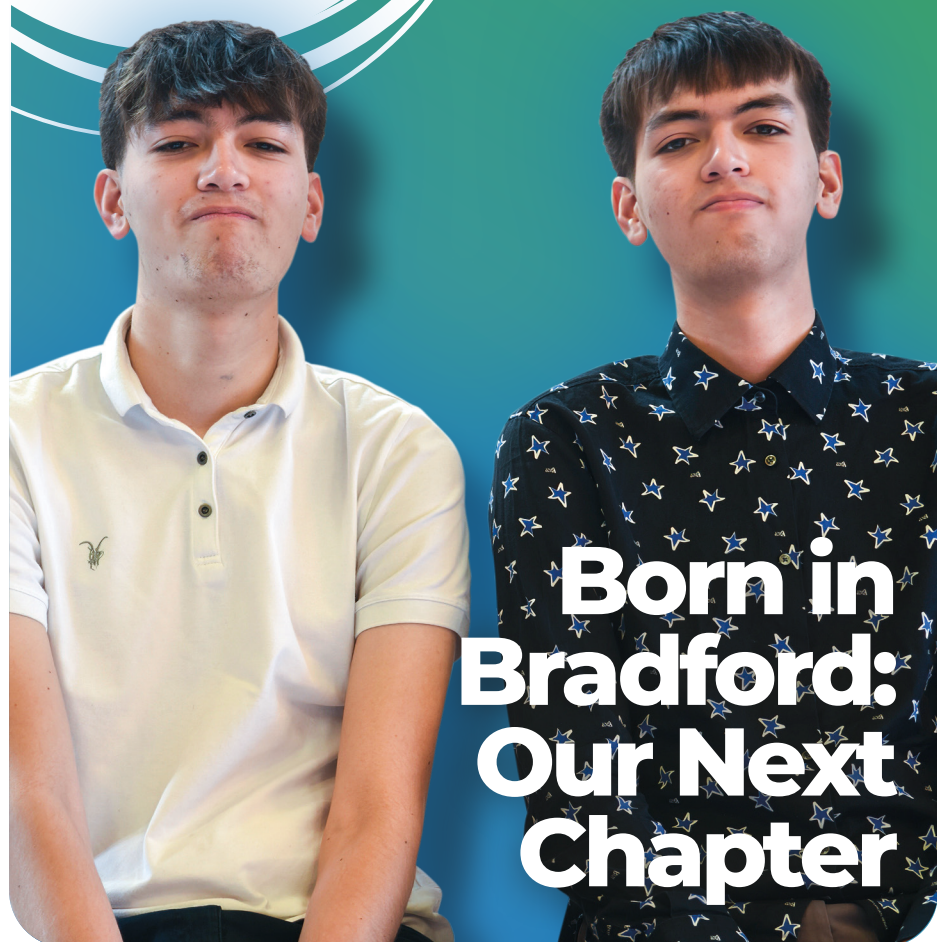
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**Born in
Bradford:
Our Next
Chapter**

www.borninbradford.nhs.uk

Letter from Rosie

Hello! Welcome to your Spring 2025 BiB Newsletter

We're excited to bring you the latest updates from Born in Bradford as we enter a milestone year.

Did you know?

Between 2007-2011 we recruited over 12,500 families to our project and have been following the health of babies born in these families ever since....that is over 13,770 of you!

2025 is a milestone year for our study, because our oldest participants are turning 18. This is huge moment that marks the beginning of adulthood for many of our young people, and an important new chapter for our project. We're so proud to have grown alongside you and your family, and we're thrilled to continue this journey together.

Over the years you have helped us make important discoveries that have helped make Bradford a healthier and happier place to live – everything from cleaning up the air we breathe, pioneering new approaches to increase physical activity, and embedding arts and culture in our schools. You can read about how your data is contributing to national research through the UKLLC on page 6.

For the past three years, as part of our BiB Age of Wonder project, we have been working with year 8-10 pupils in over 28

secondary schools. Thanks to your help we have completed: over 17,000 surveys, and have collected 7323 measures of height and weight and 914 blood samples.

In this issue you can have a sneak peek at some of our early results exploring links between social media and mental health (pg4), hear from young people taking part in our Teenage Stories project (pg 8), and meet Nina – one of the brilliant people behind the project (pg 5).

We are now offering a range of new ways for 16-18 year olds in Bradford to participate including working with sixth forms and colleges across the district. Keep an eye out for our team and come and chat to us about how to get involved.

Thank you for being part of Born in Bradford – together, we're creating something truly special.

Take care,

Rosie
BiB Director:

 @drrosiemc

Ps – if you want to know more please visit our revamped website or follow our socials

 [bibageofwonder](#)

 [@bibageofwonder](#)



BiB AGE OF **WONDER**



What's next for Born in Bradford Age of Wonder?

Introducing...BiB: Age of Wonder: The next chapter!

The next stage BiB: Age of Wonder is here. Young people aged 16 – 18 years old who live, work or study in the Bradford District are invited to join this exciting next stage of the project!

Young people will get the chance to take part in questionnaires and health measures (you may remember completing these in year 8, 9 or 10).

Data collection sessions can be completed and booked at a time that's convenient for you via our new online portal. Even better, rewards will be redeemable for completing sessions!

Alongside data collection, there will be opportunities to learn more about the project and take part in lots of exciting opportunities to help develop CVs for future jobs or degrees.

Look out for us visiting schools and colleges in the next few months and come and chat to our team about how to get involved in this next stage of BiB: Age of Wonder! There will also be information on how to get involved when your child turns 18 and gets their 18th birthday card.

**Amazing
engagement
achievements
so far...**

311

enthusiastic
student
sign-ups

276

young people
actively
consenting to
participate

192

completed
questionnaires
providing
invaluable
insights

Does Social Media affect Young People's Mental Health?

What did we want to investigate?

We were interested in teenagers' social media habits and whether this differs based on their mental health.

What did we find?

The average Bradford teenager (ages 12-15) spends about 3h30m each day on social media. Over the course of a calendar year, this is comparable to the amount of time they spend in school!

In addition, those that report higher levels of anxiety and depression, spend approximately 45-minutes more each day on social media. This doesn't mean social media is causing anxiety and depression though. For example, anxiety and depression could be causing more social media use. What we can say for certain is that teenagers from all backgrounds are spending a lot of time on social media and usage is higher among those that are more anxious and depressed.

How did we find it out?

In the academic year 23-24, around 10,000 teenagers completed the BiB: Age of Wonder Young People's Survey at school. This survey was co-designed by researchers and young people and included questions about their social media use and mental health. We combined weekday and weekend social media use to find the average daily usage. Answers from mental health questions allowed us to group young people into two categories: those with high levels of anxiety and depression and those with normal levels. We then compared daily social media use between these two groups.



What are the next steps?

We still don't know if social media is causing distress, poor mental health is causing increased social media use, or that if time spent on social media is time lost doing things that would otherwise make you feel good (e.g., better sleep, more exercise). It is likely a complex combination of all three.

It's also important to recognise most young people's online experiences are generally positive and the vast majority don't report any problems with their mental health. For most young people, therefore, it wouldn't be advised to introduce drastic measures (e.g., a phone/social media ban) hoping to see a meaningful improvement in their mental health. The most sensible approach would be to promote responsible social media use that's balanced with a healthy lifestyle away from the screen.

Over the coming years, we hope to provide more answers about the causal relationship between social media and adolescent mental health. To do this we need richer sources of data than annual questionnaires, and we are working on systems allowing young people to anonymously donate parts of their digital footprint for research purposes.

Keep an eye on our website and social media channels for more updates!

Meet the team

Nina Mirza



Hello! I'm Nina, the Programme Coordinator for the BiB: Age of Wonder study at Born in Bradford.

My career began in Glasgow, where I earned my Honours degree and joined NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde for clinical research. This pivotal experience allowed me to focus on improving health outcomes and patient care. In 2010, I moved to Bradford, over the course of more than a decade, I had the privilege of leading research that addressed the unique challenges faced by various communities in Bradford. I was able to expand my expertise by working on a range of mental health studies and pursued advanced qualifications in Health Research. These opportunities have shaped my career and led me to my current role at Born in Bradford, where I coordinate the BiB: Age of Wonder study.

I work closely with schools, education institutions, and families to explore how adolescent life influences development into adulthood and their long-term health.

The best part of my role is collaborating with such a diverse group of people – from researchers to healthcare professionals, teachers, parents, and teenagers themselves. It's incredibly rewarding to see our research directly benefit families and contribute to improving health outcomes for adolescents in Bradford. I also love the sense of shared purpose that comes with this work. Everyone involved is dedicated to improving the lives of children and young people in Bradford, and there's a real sense of pride in knowing that what we're doing will have a lasting impact.

I'm especially excited to see how our research can inspire more sustainable, long-term changes in policies around adolescent health and development.

Through this work, we hope to unlock new ways to improve health, education, and overall well-being, making sure that every adolescent has the best possible start in life. As we continue to collect data and gain new insights, I hope our work will inspire positive changes in their health, both locally and globally.

UK Longitudinal Linkage Collaboration



UKLLC Update: How Your Data is Powering National Research

We're excited to bring you an important update on our participation in the UK Longitudinal Linkage Collaboration (UKLLC). We wrote to you in September 2021 to tell you that BiB was joining 20 other leading UK research studies, under the banner of the UKLLC, to contribute to vital research on how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted our health, education, and families. We want to ensure you're fully informed about how your data is being used and why it's so important.

Why UKLLC Matters

The UKLLC provides a fantastic opportunity to combine data from over 2 million research volunteers across the UK. This larger scale allows researchers to identify trends and patterns that wouldn't be visible in smaller studies, enabling a deeper understanding of complex issues. And, importantly, the

UKLLC is now open to support research for any public benefit. This means the data you've generously provided could contribute to a wide range of vital research areas in the future, helping to improve lives across the country.

How Your Data is Being Used

Here's a reminder of exactly how we're using your data within the UKLLC:

Record linkage: To conduct this research, we use routine health, socio-economic, and environmental records to gain a more complete picture of health and wellbeing. This includes linking your BiB data to information from NHS records and potentially other administrative datasets. To make this linkage possible, your personal identifiers (like your name and date of birth) are shared securely with the NHS and UK Statistical Authorities. Information that may identify you is removed before data is shared with UKLLC.

Data access by researchers:

Accredited researchers can access the de-identified research data within a secure Trusted Research Environment (TRE). This TRE is a safe and controlled space that meets the highest possible security standards, and all researchers must undergo rigorous vetting and training before they can access the data. They can only use the data for approved research projects that demonstrate a clear public benefit.

BiB stays in control:

Researchers must apply to the Born in Bradford Executive in order to gain access to data, so BiB always stays in control of who uses data for research.

Your right to opt out:

It's important to remember that you have the right to opt out of your data being shared with the UKLLC. If you wish to opt out, please contact the Born in Bradford office at 01274 274474 or borninbradford@bthft.nhs.uk and we will ensure your data is not included. This will not affect your participation in any other aspect of BiB's work.

Thank you for your continued support of Born in Bradford. Your contributions are making a real difference in understanding and addressing important health and social challenges!

Where can I find out more?

More information about UKLLC:
<https://ukllc.ac.uk/about/>

**Watch the video
on YouTube**

UKLLC's promises to study
participants
<https://ukllc.ac.uk/our-promises>

The UKLLC privacy policy:
<https://ukllc.ac.uk/privacy-policy/>

Born in Bradford privacy policy:
<https://borninbradford.nhs.uk/privacy-policy>





Teenage Stories

BiB: Age of Wonder: Teenage Stories is one of Born in Bradford's latest research projects which is all about what it's like to be a teenager growing up in Bradford today. Young people are followed from their teenage years to early adulthood and have the opportunity to discuss the topics that matter to them in interviews with researchers and in group discussions with their peers. Each year, young people are asked about their hopes and dreams for the future and can take part in a range of creative workshops such as photography, creative writing, and rap.

We are looking for 14-15 year olds who would like to take part. To sign up, or for more information, please contact: **teenage.stories@bthft.nhs.uk** or call/text **07831 437456**.

Read on to hear from some of our Teenage Stories participants:

"Being part of the Teenage Stories project has been an unforgettable experience. The interviews and group discussions gave me a voice and helped me grow in confidence. I got to share my hopes for the future, be creative, and take part in amazing activities. Making a film about my life and my city was a huge achievement, and winning a prize for it made me feel so proud! Through this I was able to share my message of compassion and help raise awareness to eradicate racism. Getting my portrait taken by a professional photographer was also a really special moment as I was able to express myself and show who I really am. The whole BiB project has inspired me, and I'm so grateful to have been a part of it! I hope to continue taking part in such projects in the future!" – Zahra

"Hi, I'm Lewis! Bradford born and bred like my parents before me, and theirs before them!

I have been actively involved with Born in Bradford for as long as I can remember, my mum tells me there was far more before too that I don't! We have lost count of the studies I have been a part of!

I have been active in Born in Bradford and Age of Wonder, becoming a child ambassador and, more recently, participating with the CELEBRATE project supporting young people's mental health! Something I feel passionate about.

In my down time, I love gaming, traveling and playing my guitar, something I started in lockdown and have been hooked ever since! So yeah - that's me!"
- Lewis

Find out more about Teenage Stories on our YouTube channel:



Let's Get Social!

Want to stay in the loop with all the latest updates, trends, and exclusive content? Follow us on Instagram and TikTok for daily inspiration, behind-the-scenes peeks, and a whole lot of fun. Join our community, be part of the action, and let's make some unforgettable memories together!