



# 2024 Impact Report

BIGKID FOUNDATION

Charity No.1128158

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**We are on a mission to  
End Youth Violence**

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# A letter from our CEO



It's been another busy year for BIGKID. Despite it being a difficult time for charities, particularly for fundraising, where many are facing closure, we haven't just kept our work going, but continued to grow as an organisation, developing new partnerships and opportunities.

This year our focus has been on youth voice – core to everything that we do, we strongly believe that young people need to be at the forefront, driving our mission to end youth violence. Seeing the growth of previous beneficiaries, coming through our programme, becoming volunteers then staff within the organisation or beyond, is huge, cementing belief in our approach.

Key highlights for me this year include Chicago Bears week, not only all the great community events that we supported on, but their owners and staff coming to Dexters, along with a group from Players' Coalition to volunteer and see first-hand what we do. Our shared values around community engagement are clear and I'm excited to do more together in future, growing the game and partnering on opportunities further afield. Our Summer Reception as always, was a great occasion, seeing our partners, young people and community coming together is incredibly heart-warming, a chance to reflect and celebrate our achievements.

We are deeply grateful and humbled by continued support for our mission, from all different sectors. Without you we would not be able to continue our mission to end youth violence and leave a positive, everlasting impact on the next generation.

As we look to 2025 and our 17th year as a registered charity, we are excited for what the next 12 months will bring. There is still so much more to do. Together, we'll continue to create opportunities for young people to thrive and build brighter futures.

**Shaniga Marasha**  
**CEO & Founder of BIGKID Foundation**



# A letter from our Patron



In my 8 years as Patron for BIGKID, I have been deeply impressed by the organisation's ability to adapt, pivot and ultimately thrive in often extremely challenging circumstances. In the last few years alone, they have navigated a global pandemic, a huge rise in the cost of living and an increasingly competitive fundraising environment. The lasting impact of all of these is still being felt, particularly by young people, for whom, all too often, it manifests itself in their mental health and well-being, and/or behaviour.

BIGKID's mission is to provide young people with a safe space to help them take control of their lives, find, develop, and act on their own potential. These are vital antidotes to the hectic world in which we live. Our facilities offer a place where young people can find someone to talk to if they need, a hot meal, positive interactions and support. BIGKID reminds me of my own experiences as a teenager growing up in Nottingham in the 1960s. It was my good fortune to receive the support of many whose only motivation was to support my personal development.

As we welcome the new year, there is much to look forward to. I am immensely grateful to the committed and passionate team at BIGKID and to our many funders and supporters. I have absolute confidence that together, they will continue to ensure that the positive power of community defeats the many divisive forces that haunt the streets of our great capital city.

**Sir Kenneth Olisa OBE**  
**HM Lord-Lieutenant of Greater London**



# The year in review

250

Young people, families and local residents attended our free community events

10,000

Total aggregate attendance across all programmes

46%

Of our total number of unique beneficiaries for our Flag programme were girls

£635,000

Raised towards direct delivery

40% Trusts & Foundations

24% Corporate

11% Major Donors

11% Statutory

5% Events

5% Donations

4% other





# Amplifying Youth Voices

This year there was a profound focus on amplifying youth voices across all our departments. We live in a society where we sadly hear more about youth violence than celebrating the good that many are doing. With the aim of changing that narrative we are giving our young people a platform where they can visualise and act on those visions whilst inspiring their peers to unlock their undiscovered skills and realise that their voice matters too. With the emergence of our new Media Department headed by Dellali Defor and assisted by Omari Hunte, BIGKID has produced an array of content over the course of 2024 that has seen our young people step in front of camera for the first time, share their story and what it means to be a BIGKID.

Some stories included;

“Road to Orlando” followed Jonathan Mbanefo’s journey in American Football from humble beginnings in Sedge Hill school in Lewisham to competing in a 1v1 tournament in Tottenham stadium which earned him a place in finals taking place in Orlando. This was an inspiring piece, highlighting the incredible opportunities this sport can bring.



“Kingsley & The NFL Academy” followed Kingsley Eke, who started off as one of our beneficiaries who had never played American Football before but found himself quickly having a deep passion for it and making it into the illustrious NFL Academy.



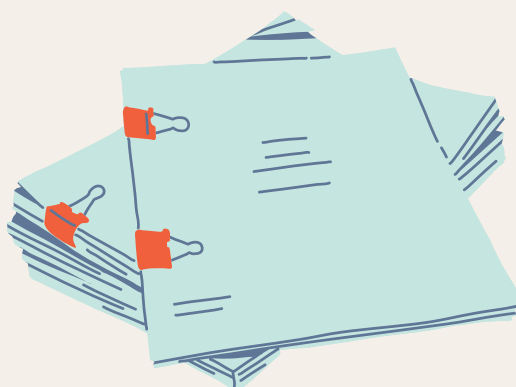
Our “Sailing Vlog” was shot in a way that captured, first-hand, the unforgettable moments from our annual sailing trip to Aldeburgh Yacht Club. Following our young people, we were able to dive into a journey where our youth braved the waters, conquered their anxieties, and found joy in every wave.



“

*“Being on set gave me a firsthand look at the intricate teamwork and preparation that goes into each scene, which is something I never fully understood before. I gained a deep appreciation for the craft of acting—how every choice, no matter how small, impacts the overall performance. It was an incredibly rewarding experience, seeing the collaborative effort of everyone involved and feeling the magic of bringing a story to life.” – Jerelyn*

”



2024 saw our leadership programme for girls, funded by Jo Malone, turn into an incredible short film “Kali” where some of our girl's stepped in front of camera for the very first time and unlocked their hidden acting talents. The film was not only a reflection of their hard work and commitment over several weeks, it was a beautiful journey that saw the girls build lasting and positive relationships with each other, bonds built on trust, moments of vulnerability and a shared goal to prove to themselves that together they are powerful and can achieve anything they put their mind to.



We are proud of the stories we have been able to help our young people tell – excited for what the next year holds!





# Sailing

Each year during the last week of May we take a group of our young people on our annual sailing residential, hosted by our incredible friends at Aldeburgh Yacht Club in Suffolk. It's a week that not only challenges our young people's fears but ultimately builds lasting and unbreakable bonds between them.

We were honoured to watch our young people conquer their fears, embrace the waves of the water, and emerge as confident leaders. Their journey from trepidation to triumph was nothing short of inspiring to us and each other. As each one challenged their fear, it encouraged their peers to do the same. This programme wasn't just about sailing and who could go the week without capsizing; it was about building character, fostering teamwork, and most importantly, having endless fun. Their shared smiles, laughter, and newfound friendships were a testament to the unforgettable experience we shared.

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*"Sailing has had a positive impact on me as it's pushed me out of my comfort zone to try new things as I have never been sailing before. I met new people that are a part of BIGKID's other departments and became closer to them making more close friends. I got to try something that I never saw myself ever doing. I have to give a huge thank you to Omari, Marina and Esosa who made this trip 10x better with all the singing and dancing we did!" – Natalie*

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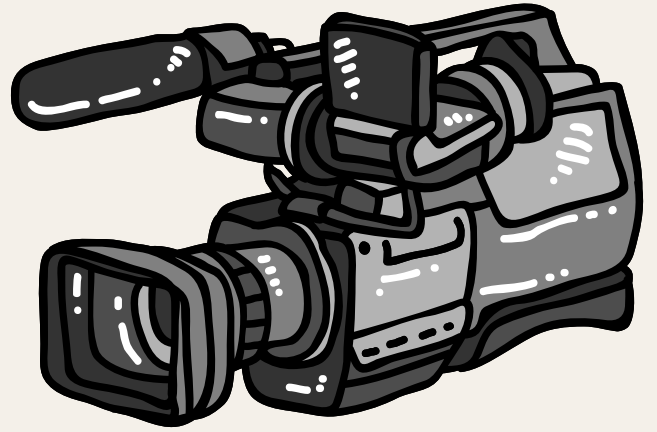


# Stepping into the *spotlight*



Amy, 17, grew up in South London and lives in Brixton—an area she describes as sometimes intimidating but always full of new experiences. Currently in sixth form, Amy first encountered BIGKID Foundation in 2019 when staff ran football sessions at her school. However, it wasn't until 2023 that she started attending our youth club, where she found both physical and mental support, as well as a new community of friends.

Her journey with BIGKID has led her to unexpected opportunities, including stepping in front of the camera for our “Kali” short film and a sailing documentary.



*"At first, it was nerve-wracking, but I got over it and had loads of fun acting," she reflects. Her confidence has since skyrocketed—once uncomfortable in the spotlight, she now embraces it fully. "I used to hate being on camera, but now I always want to be on camera."*

Amy's parents were incredibly proud of her role in Kali, with her dad still sharing it with family members. Through BIGKID, she has developed leadership and communication skills, helping her overcome fears and step into new opportunities. Looking ahead, she hopes to pursue a career in the arts, football, or content creation. Her advice to others? "Be yourself, be unique, be different."





# Miles with a purpose

In 2024, BIGKID once again took on the Royal Parks Half Marathon, continuing our tradition of challenging ourselves while raising vital funds to end youth violence. Inspired by last year's efforts, Omari was determined to run again—especially after missing out on the Brighton Marathon due to a broken ankle. Undeterred, he set his sights on October, running with purpose and determination.

At BIGKID, we strive to inspire and uplift one another, encouraging young people to push beyond their limits and embrace new challenges. Last year, Thierry's journey motivated Omari, and this year, Omari passed that inspiration forward, encouraging Dellali to take on his first half marathon—bringing along a group of friends to join the cause.

With five dedicated runners, this was our largest team yet at a single event, demonstrating the strength of our community and the growing commitment to our mission. Seeing so many young people and supporters step up for BIGKID is not just inspiring—it's a testament to the impact we are making in the fight against youth violence. Their combined efforts raised almost £1000 towards our cause!





# Liam

Liam, 18, grew up and still lives in Lewisham, an area he describes as having both good and bad aspects. Currently studying at college, Liam first got involved with BIGKID Foundation through our Flag Football sessions at his school. Over the past four years, he has attended both Flag Football and Youth Club sessions, taken part in multiple NFL events, and even had the opportunity to go sailing this year.

Through BIGKID, Liam has built trusted friendships beyond his usual circles, improving his social and leadership skills. "I have made friends with not just my age group, which I wouldn't have normally done," he shares.

Liam expresses that being involved with BIGKID has also given him a safe space during difficult times at home and helped him manage his emotions through sports. Looking ahead, Liam aspires to work in the creative industry, planning to achieve this through networking and earning a degree. His advice to others in need of support:

*"Don't be afraid to open up to someone, as you are never alone. There's so many people within BIGKID that you can go to for advice, mental support and anything that may be bothering you."*

For Liam, BIGKID has been more than just a charity—it's been a place of growth, connection, and opportunity.



# A Story From Fear To Empowerment

Helping young people unlock and act on their potential and challenge their fears is at the heart of what we do. We can all agree that it's a very moving moment when you see a young person who was once grappled by a fear now relish in those exact moments. In October all of BIGKID proudly witnessed several inspiring moments of growth as Omari, who was once a beneficiary now turned staff, take the stage as a panel member at Kings College London to share his insights on mental health and inequalities, then go live on air on Capital Xtra & LBC to share his remarkable journey with BIGKID and why he chooses to give back to the coming generations.

Together with our CEO, Omari was also a part of a round table discussion on knife crime, organised by actor Idris Elba, hosted and attended by HRH King Charles III, which also saw attendance from Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer and many more, where he impactfully shared his story and solutions to reducing knife crime.

Just over a year ago Omari was plagued by the fear of public speaking, which held him back from sharing his powerful and inspiring voice. Determined to not be confined by this barrier, Omari put himself in situations to shadow our CEO Shaninga at events, seek guidance and support from the BIGKID team where he gained the belief in his message, which in all helped Omari transform that fear into strength.



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*“I can’t thank BIGKID enough for the belief they’ve instilled in me to help me conquer this fear that has been following me since I was in year 8. Realising that for many their voice is never heard or thought of, for me to be a voice for the youth in so many impactful rooms such as His Majesty’s Throne Room and live on air has been not only a privilege but something I hold close to my heart.”*

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# Flag Football

It was a busy year for Flag where we delivered in several new schools and started all girl sessions. The girls were by far the shining light of last year. The girls from St. Mary Magdalene joined the Jets vs Bears league. They excelled across the board and made it all the way to the finals and were crowned 2nd in the country. Legends Of The Turf returned, but with a flip of an all-woman cast. This brought on an introspective chat about sport through their eyes from both a flag and contact perspective.

The week that was dubbed 'Bears Week' was filled with non-stop action and excitement. This covered the girls international flag championships, to watching our beneficiaries at NFL Academy play at Tottenham Stadium! Moving on to working with the Chicago Bears at their Mini Monsters camps. The Bears also came down to Dexters to volunteer with their Chairman and the Players' Coalition. Before leaving they donated an incredible \$10,000! Our young people then all flocked to Tottenham stadium to participate in an NFL event where they got to play on the field and meet and talk with the commissioner of the NFL Roger Goddell. Things wrapped up when we were invited to Kennington Park by the NFL for a special visit from HRH Prince William.

Our ambassador Efe Obada ran his yearly camp, this time at Kennington Park. It was filled with a plethora of activities from a barber to a caricature artist. As always, the camp was packed with young people from all over the capital who were mesmerized, leaving with new inspiration for the sport. We cannot wait for the camp next year!



85%

Feel better able to manage their mental health

86%

Feel less lonely and isolated

86%

Feel as though their wellbeing has improved





# A New Game, A New Dream

Enrique, 19, grew up in Southwark, southeast London, and still calls it home, though he now studies in Loughborough. His journey with BIGKID Foundation began in December 2022, when a friend encouraged him to join flag football sessions. Since then, he has participated in numerous NFL-related events, including Jag Tag, ambassador Efe Obada's Camps, and our Larkhall sessions, which have played a crucial role in shaping his development as an athlete.

Through BIGKID's flag football program and his involvement with the South London Renegades, Enrique found a space where he could express himself through American Football while competing in a structured and supportive environment. These experiences ultimately paved the way for him to join the NFL Academy, where he now competes against some of the top high school football programs in America and Europe.

For Enrique and his family, this opportunity means everything. *"I'm in a place where I can change my life and work towards a D1 Scholarship at an American college, playing at the highest level possible."* His ultimate goal is to secure that scholarship and use his NFL Academy experience to propel his football career and future.





ACADEMY @NFLACADEMY

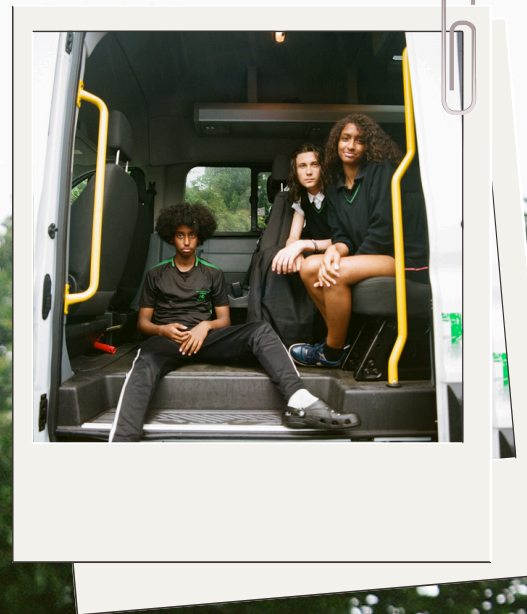


His advice to young people hoping to follow in his footsteps?

*"Experience new things, embrace opportunities, and always give your best effort—you never know who is watching."*



# Breaking Barriers



Our highly acclaimed programme continues to empower young people at risk of exclusion with the necessary leadership skills to be role models in their communities alongside confidence to act on their potential.

This year we engaged multiple schools in three boroughs: Lambeth, Croydon and Wandsworth.

***"I feel like I've improved in my reflectiveness."***

***"I speak up more now, with my friends and family"***

***"This programme has helped me encourage others in a positive way and be more punctual in school"***



# Youth Club

At BIGKID we are all about providing our young people with positive pathways. This year Youth Club saw an explosion in our beneficiaries becoming volunteers, achieving their 100 hours and progressing to be paid sessional staff. We are a genuinely youth-led charity, with our young leaders running activities, having a massive say in how things look and operate. This was only amplified with the addition of previous beneficiary Destiny (now studying Psychology & Neuroscience) to the team as our Health & Well-being Officer.

This saw massive change in some of the activities that we ran at Youth Club. There was a larger focus on art & crafts and baking which included a pasta-making class ran by Selina. We started E-sports which was a massive hit and started karaoke during which we found a few diamonds in the rough. One thing that has been a staple is a well-deserved water fight during the blazing heat in the summer.

Not only did the youth club activities have a change but so did the trips. Our young people took on the Seven Sister peaks, had a careers day at Latham & Watkins, saw Hamilton, watched an MLB (Baseball), T20 (Cricket) and London Lions (Basketball) games amongst other trips. It really was a jam-packed year!

***"They listen to the youth and make activities based on what the youth are interested in as well as enjoy. They're fun and inclusive."***



85%

Feel they have someone they can go to if they need help

90%

Feel less lonely and isolated

94%

Rate Youth Club as very good or excellent





# Football

Our football programme continues to engage young people through skill development, teamwork, and social interaction. Over the past year, we have strengthened our impact through partnerships, tournaments, and innovative initiatives. The Nike Battersea store supported our sessions by sending staff to assist and mentor participants, further enhancing their experience. We collaborated with London Youth for tournaments, giving boys and girls competitive opportunities. Internal tournaments with 4-6 teams fostered camaraderie, while friendly games with Marcus Lipton strengthened community ties.

A highlight was attending Nike's Champions League viewing event in Battersea, inspiring our young players. We also introduced a fun coach swap event between flag football and traditional football, encouraging adaptability, at the same time as more integration across our programmes. To boost engagement beyond the pitch, we ran social media football challenges, showcasing young talent. Our partnership with Nike led to an exciting tournament with BIGKID, providing a professionally organised competition. Additionally, we organised a friendly match with the police, using sport to build trust and positive relationships within the community.

These initiatives have expanded access to football, promoted inclusivity, and strengthened bonds among participants. Our programme continues to provide a platform for young people to develop their skills, confidence, and sense of belonging both on and off the pitch.



369

Unique beneficiaries  
attended our football  
programme





# A Helping Hand

Our fundraising events are always a highlight of our annual calendar. This year's Aldeburgh Yacht Club dinner in April was a particular success, raising almost £23,000, more than ever before! We are so grateful to everyone who came, donated, bid and bought raffle tickets, we were truly bowled over by the generosity shown.

Our Sounds Familiar quiz in July was another fun evening, filled with music and some impressive dance moves – congratulations to Kings College for coming out as winners!

We rounded off the year in November, with our Cook Off event, co-hosted with the wonderful Livelyhood Pubs and dedicated Ambassador, Chef Michel Roux Jr. Guests enjoyed a sumptuous three-course meal and canapes, prepared (with more than a little help from Chef Nick Carter!) and served by a group of our young Chefs, who really rose to the occasion.

## Grants:

Whilst it being an increasingly difficult environment for fundraising, particularly from grants, we were thrilled to secure new multi-year funding from National Lottery's Million Hours fund, to extend our youth club delivery to five nights a week, and from the Charles Hayward Foundation for a girls' Breaking Barriers with Flag programme.

Huge thanks also to our statutory partners, particularly Lambeth Council, Department for Culture Media & Sport, and NHS Southeast for their continued support during 2024.

## Corporate Partnerships:

Key highlights with our corporate partners include the amazing Jo Malone leadership programme, which culminated in the 'Kali' film project (see page 7 for more!) and growth of our engagement with PwC UK to include a second business unit, alongside multiple fundraising initiatives raising over £5,000.

October is always a busy week for BIGKID with the NFL teams in town. This year we spent an amazing week with the Chicago Bears, supporting their schools' engagement events. To end the week the Chicago Bears owners and group of employees came down to Dexters together with the Players' Coalition for a volunteer day, where they generously donated an incredible \$10,000! If your company would like to get involved, get in touch to find out how.

## Monthly donors:

A huge thanks to all of you who donate regularly to BIGKID, this helps immensely, directly supporting our core operations. If you're interested in setting up a new regular donation, or would like to increase your current support, get in touch with [abby@bigkidfoundation.org](mailto:abby@bigkidfoundation.org) to find out how.



# How to get involved



If you would like to see how you can get involved  
please scan the QR code!



# A Thank You From All of BIGKID

A massive thank you to all our wonderful funders, supporters and partners:

Aldeburgh Yacht Club	National Lottery – Million Hours fund
Alper Charitable Trust	Neighbourhood Well-being Delivery Alliance
Brixton Streetwear	NFL Foundation
Broad Oak Trust	Nike UK
BSTN	Nike Battersea store
Building Young Brixton consortium	Pipeline Trust
Cawston Press	Players' Coalition
Charbonnel et Walker	PwC UK
Charles Hayward Foundation	Q Charitable Trust
Chicago Bears	TA Associates
Children in Need	The Brixton Project
Department for Culture Media & Sport	UK Youth Thriving Minds
OnePlanet	Under Armour
G-Tennis	Vinci Foundation
Global's Make Some Noise	Vintners Foundation
Greater London Authority	Wine Fusion
Greewich Peninsula Community Fund	Worshipful Company of Leathersellers
Goldman Sachs	WWE
Guys & St Thomas'	Yard Sale Pizza
Impact on Urban Health	
Jack Petchey Foundation	
Jo Malone London	
King Charles III Charitable Fund	
Kricket restaurant	
Lambeth Council	
Lambeth Integrated Children's Commissioning	
Latham & Watkins	
Le Gavroche	
Livelyhood Pubs	
London Community Foundation	
London Marathon Foundation	
London Sport	
London Youth	
Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing	
Michael & Betty Little Trust	

