

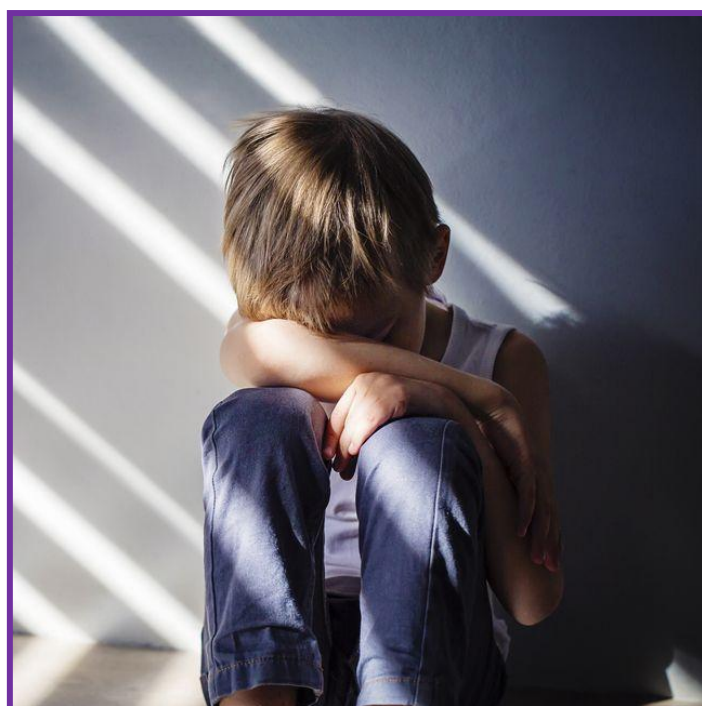


## WELCOME TO THE KNIT-FOR-NOWT

### NEWSLETTER JUNE 2024

It seems that Summer is here at last, and we actually caught a glimpse of the sun here in Yorkshire the other day! During the next three months we plan to redouble our efforts to get our very long waiting list down. So far you have been absolutely amazing and we want to pay tribute to those of you who have continued to supply items regularly to KfN, because it's largely down to you that we continue to make such progress. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

Sadly, children are suffering right now, and we receive a huge number of messages from therapists saying how much our items help. That's why your knitting, crocheting and sewing are so desperately needed.





## What's in this Newsletter?

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**Paula – Infant School, Leicestershire**

I did want to let you know that one of your worry monsters came in very handy this week. A child at our school had experienced the sudden death of their slightly older sibling, obviously something very sad that they are trying to come to terms with. Therefore we gave her one of the worry monsters to have with her during the school day. She could signal to staff she was feeling upset, sad or worried purely by cuddling the worry monster. She can of course use it to post her worries into as it is intended for too. The child has named the worry monster after her older sibling.



## LATEST KNIT-FOR-NOWT NEWS

### STATS:

Number of therapists supplied since November 2022:

**1,007**

Number of therapists still on the waiting list:

**798**

Number of organisations supplied in total so far since we started:

**2,613**

### Requests and reminders from Clare:

**Shouty/Pouty pattern has moved** to the “Patterns for Animal puppets” page of the website  
**Sewn Emoti-robot hand puppets pattern** is now on the “Patterns for Sewn Items” page

**Cats and dogs:** apart from the obvious risk of your darling pet finding the perfect, warm place to lie when they see your makes, Val has pointed out that if, whilst in the process of knitting, you let your yarn trail on the floor it's quite likely that the yarn will pick up dog or cat hairs even if you've just hoovered! Cat and dog hairs do get everywhere don't they! The trouble is that if that happens the hairs may get knitted into the garment and then are very difficult to remove. Please remember that loose hairs on any of your items are a potential asthma/allergy risk for children and therapists, so please be extra vigilant if you share your home with a pet, thank you.



**Pins:** pins are still being found occasionally in items, so please be extra careful to check that all have been removed. Please count how many pins you put in so that you can then count them out again. Please always use pins with a large head. There is now a downloadable copy of the safety rules and checks on the “DONATE ITEMS” website page, and the checks are also here on page 27.





**Puppet sets:** if you make a set of puppets, be it the family set, the professionals set, or animal pairs, please could you possibly tie each set together loosely with yarn? The yarn will be removed before donation so it doesn't matter what colour or what yarn, but it will help me, thanks. (You don't need to do that on Emoticolour or Shouty Pouty sets).



**Stuffing:** each time you donate please also include the name of the stuffing you've used, even if you've told me the name previously. Please always put the Trade Name eg. Hobbycraft, Trimits, Phoenix, Habico etc. There's no need to go to the trouble of photographing the stuffing, just the name will suffice, or you could include the empty stuffing bag in your parcel. If you're not sure about the stuffing you're using please get in touch and I'll check it out. Our list of recommended stuffings appears in this Newsletter again on page 29.

**NB. These are examples – the one you're using may be different but please check with Clare first**



**NB.** Ann in Hampshire has given us a tip about buying **Hollowfill stuffing in bulk** (the one in the blue bag on the left, pictured above). If you ring the company that makes it, which is Brimlake Textiles, on 020-8806-4599 and ask for a 10k (280 Litre) bag of Hollowfill it will cost you £25.00 plus £6.50 p&p. I rang on 29.5.24 to confirm that it's still available and this price was quoted to me as well. Thanks Ann, I'm sure some folk will be grateful for this tip.

*Ann says: "The bag of Hollowfill that cost the same as five blue bags is enormous. The guy I spoke to was quite happy to sell this large bag direct to customers. The large bag is a bargain and was quite funny to see expanding when I removed the clip on it. The bag just grew and grew when the air was allowed in."*

**Facebook:** just a reminder that we have a very friendly and supportive Facebook group where you can get inspiration for your makes, ask questions of other makers and post pictures of your work if you wish. Equally if you want to stay silent and just observe, that's fine too. Our group is hidden from general view, which means that it's only visible to the members of it. If you'd like to join you need to already have a Facebook personal page of your own. Please contact Val on [knitfornowtnewmakers@gmail.com](mailto:knitfornowtnewmakers@gmail.com) and she will arrange for you to join the group. If you prefer to use your husband's/partner's Facebook profile we can arrange that too.



## PLEASE KNIT A PROFESSIONALS SET

If you normally knit puppet families with the happy/sad sides please do continue to supply them. In addition though, professionals sets are requested by the vast majority of therapists, and lately there's been a shortage of those. Sometimes it means that the box which is already packed with monsters/animals can't be sent out immediately because of a lack of puppet sets.

**OUR NEW DOCTOR PATTERN is now on the website on the "Patterns for Hand Puppets" page**



We are aware that nowadays doctors hardly ever can be seen in a white coat, and are far more likely to be seen wearing scrubs. We need to depict our puppets as the children will see them, so **please could you now convert to our new doctor pattern and phase out the white coated one.** The way we've been doing the stethoscopes has sometimes proved tricky, and also can be a safety hazard, so we wish to phase out those particular ones. **There is a different stethoscope on the new pattern which is easier.** If you have already made some with the white coats/stethoscopes please do send them in, they will still be donated, but after that please convert to the new ones. The new pattern is very similar to the nurse, except without the collar, so please do the doctor and the nurse in different colours. As a guide, doctors often wear the sort of green found in operating theatres, and nurses often wear blue. Doctors and nurses don't wear lanyards.

We now feel we have a really good selection of patterns for our items and so we are not planning to add to them, except when specifically asked for one by therapists. So **please don't embark on any new patterns for us** without consulting first with Clare or Val, as we know how long they take and what a lot of work they involve. **But why not ring the changes by knitting one of our patterns that you've never attempted before?!** There are so many lovely ones to choose from!

## THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF KNITTING/CROCHET

Numerous KfN knitters have said how knitting or crochet has helped them in times of bereavement, stress or worry. If you Google the two words “knitting” and “pandemic” together you will get about 23 million hits. You’ll get feature stories about how the pandemic sparked a global knitting craze, or how knitting has become “the cool activity”.



The following is a precis of an article online by knitter Jane Brody, writing in the New York Times, and you may possibly identify with much of what she says:

About 15 years ago I was invited to join a knitting group. My reluctant response, “When would I do *that*?”, was rejoined with “Monday afternoons at 4” at a friend’s home. I agreed to give it a try. My mother had taught me to knit at 15, then decades passed without my touching a knitting needle. But within two Mondays in the group I was hooked, not only on knitting but also on crocheting. I take a yarn project with me everywhere, especially when I have to sit still and listen. When my hands are busy my mind stays focused on the here and now.

It seems too that I’m part of a national resurgence of interest in needle and other handicrafts, and not just among old grannies like me! The Craft Yarn Council reports that a third of women aged 25 to 35 now knit or crochet. Even men and schoolchildren are swelling the ranks, among them my friend’s three grandsons, ages 6,7 and 9.

Dr Herbert Benson, a pioneer in mind/body medicine, says that the repetitive action of needlework can induce a relaxed state like that associated with meditation and yoga. Once you get beyond the initial learning curve, knitting and crocheting can lower heart rate and blood pressure and reduce harmful blood levels of the stress hormone cortisol. But unlike meditation, craft activities result in tangible and often useful products that can enhance self esteem. Since the 1990s there have been surveys of hundreds of thousands of knitters and crocheters, who routinely list stress relief and creative fulfillment as the activities’ main benefits.



Examples of how knitting and crocheting can be helpful to health can be found everywhere. My research reveals that the rewards go well beyond replacing stress and anxiety with the satisfaction of creation. For example, Karen Hayes, a life coach in Toronto, conducts knitting therapy programmes, including “Knit to Quit” to help smokers give up the habit, and “Knit to Heal” for people coping with health crises. Schools and prisons with craft programmes report that they have a calming effect and enhance social skills.

I’ve found that my handiwork with yarn has helped my arthritic fingers remain more dexterous as I age. And many folk have reported that knitting enabled them to redirect their focus, reducing their awareness of pain. It has been suggested that the brain can process only so much at once, and that activities like knitting and crocheting make it harder for the brain to register pain signals.

Perhaps most exciting is research that suggests that crafts like knitting and crocheting may help to stave off a decline in brain function with age. The researchers speculate that craft activities promote the development of neural pathways in the brain that help to maintain cognitive health.





## “WHY I MAKE ITEMS FOR KNIT-FOR-NOWT”

- I am already working on the next sets, it is so much fun, I am addicted!!!! I am glad to play a little part in this worthy cause
- Perhaps you can let everyone concerned know that I’m deeply grateful to all those who have produced the patterns: the instructions are really easy to follow which makes the puppets quick to make. You’re all stars!
- It is a pleasure to knit for Knit for Nowt, it is such a worthwhile charity. I enjoy making the monsters and think that the finishing details are so important. Not sure what I will tackle next but there is such a good choice now with the new patterns.
- I have to say that the patterns are brilliant, and my thanks to those that create them, they cover every aspect of the make in easy to follow and thorough instructions.
- Glad they arrived safe and sound. I'm always sorry to be stuffing them in a bag to send off to you. One of them always manages to stick a leg or arm out as if protesting about going!!
- Thank you for sending the info about where some of our Monsters go. It always makes me so sad to see the list of children having serious problems in their life. I think of my two lovely granddaughters, who are 12 and 8, surrounded by love and care and having the childhood they should have. It is heartbreaking that there are so many children in need of therapy and specialist support at such an early age. I'm just glad I can do a little something to hopefully help them.





## **Knit-for-Nowt get-together this August!**

**How would you like to knit, sew or crochet with other Knit-for-Nowters?**

**Knitter Liz writes:**

Come along with your current Knit-for-Nowt project and let's create together, share tips and ideas, and just relax with a drink whilst meeting other incredible people who regularly make items for this fabulous charity!

- **Where? A private area of a South Birmingham pub that has plenty of parking.**
- **When? Saturday August 10<sup>th</sup> 2-5pm**

There will be a suggested voluntary donation of £3 per person. All proceeds will go to help with the running costs of Knit-for-Nowt.

- **Purchase a raffle ticket for £1 for the chance to win a great prize!**
- **Try your hand at a "Lucky Dip" for 50p which will include craft items from the Birmingham Scrap store.**
- **"Swap Shop" Bring any unwanted yarn or craft accessories you no longer want and see if you can swap it for something you can use in your next project!**

Due to the size of the area, spaces are limited, but if you are interested in coming along or just want to find out more information, contact Clare for further details.

*NB. This event is kindly being organised by knitter Liz. Please note that, unless arranged beforehand, only makers who are registered with KfN will be admitted. (Sadly Clare and Val are unable to be present). Maybe you'd like to organise a similar event in your area?*



## NOTICE TO CROCHETERS

It's been fantastic to have so many brilliant and skilled crocheters joining us after the closure of the charity "Octopus for Preemies". You have been making us so many wonderful items, so we want to say a huge "THANK YOU!"

As you know, our items are often used in whole class or group therapy situations where multiple children will post their worry papers into the monster, so we need the items to be large enough to accommodate them. That's why Toothy, Zippy and Curly monsters need to be a minimum of 12" from top of head to bottom of the body, (not counting the legs), but ideally more like 14" or 15".

- The crochet method used in the octopus charity was the "yarn under" method because it was needed for those, but **for our items we ask that you use the "yarn over" method** because otherwise we are finding that the items are coming out a bit too small and sometimes also too tight to get your hand comfortably into the pocket.
- **We've also realised that using 100% cotton yarn on our items doesn't work so well** because it doesn't stretch and so again the item comes out too tight to get your hand in the pocket. **Please therefore avoid 100% cotton yarns, thank you.**

If you're already using the "yarn over" method, but the item is still too small, our crochet pattern makers recommend that you try using a larger hook. As long as the stuffing cannot be seen through the stitches when you've finished then it will be safe.



Here's Rachel's Curly monster – he's big and cuddly!



Some examples of your recent “Curly monsters”.



## Who are ELSAs?

Many of your items are donated to “Emotional Literacy Support Assistants”. An ELSA is a specialist teaching assistant who has been trained to work with children who are showing a wide range of emotional or social difficulties for example; anxiety, low self esteem, problems with anger etc. ELSAs have been chosen for their ability to build good relationships with children.

## What do ELSAs do?

ELSAs work closely with teachers to set clear objectives for individual children. The ELSA will then work on these objectives with the child individually or in a small group. Activities which target the needs of the child will be planned carefully by the ELSAs.

ELSAs have to complete a recognised training course designed specifically for assistants working in schools that covers a wide range of areas including: social skills, emotions, bereavement, social stories and therapeutic stories, anger management, self-esteem, counselling skills such as solution focus and friendship. ELSA sessions are planned in advance and tailor made to suit the needs of the children. The sessions are designed to be fun and interactive to engage and motivate the child.

The ELSA may use a range of activities throughout the sessions which could include games, puppets, role play, making things, talking and listening etc. Puppets can be a great way of modelling social situations or getting children to talk about how they feel in different circumstances.

## What will be covered during the sessions?

Relationships, recognising emotions, social skills, friendship issues, self esteem, understanding anger, loss and bereavement, anxiety, coping strategies, resilience building and bullying issues

## A Day in the Life of an ELSA

Kelly-Jayne Jones from Newbridge Junior School shares her experience working as an ELSA:

In my school, I support children when they first get into school by welcoming them into the school building or checking in with them during the morning to make sure they are settled. I help them in their classroom to regulate their emotions so they are able to focus on their school work.

I have children for 1:1 sessions where together we think of strategies to help support them to prevent dysregulation, and help with steps they can take before they get to the coke bottle explosion!

I also run a Service Children group, where once a week, we all get together and talk about how they are feeling when loved ones are deployed. They all help each other when they are finding it hard by giving each other coping mechanisms and making each other laugh!

It is a very rewarding job and I love seeing the positive impact it has on the children.”

Source: internet

Louise, a Consultant Clinical Psychologist sent this feedback from one of her team Kate, a “Highly Specialist Perinatal Psychotherapist” (Early Years Service) and she is also a Child and Adolescent Psychotherapist - East London NHS Trust

Re. worry octopus made by Rachel W in Derbyshire

I just want to give some feedback that the knitted octopus has been a great favourite with the parents and infants whom I see in therapy. One mum even asked if she could \*buy it or another octopus. It is such a wonderfully expressive and imaginative work of art. The babies love the colours and that it's about their height. The octopus is def our most popular design!

*\*NB. please note that the charity's constitution forbids the selling of any of our items, Items must always be given out free of charge, apart from p&p.*



Val's new poem for “Huggles” the octopus.

We already have a poem about worry monsters which we send out with each box. This new poem will be sent out to the therapists with each octopus

Hello, my name is Huggles,  
And I've a job to do.  
I gather all your worries,  
And pop them in to chew.

And when they're swallowed down and gone,  
You'll see I've arms to spare,  
I'll wave, or shake your hand or hug,  
To show you that I care.



## ZIPPING the worries away!

Why is the zip important in therapy? We've been told by therapists that the child feels that the worry is totally enclosed and can't get out! We donate one zipped monster (if available) and one Toothy or Curly monster (which are designed to be without a zip) to each therapist so that they have a choice. If you currently make Zippy monsters but without the zip that's fine also, but the zip does add value for the therapist.









## THE WORK OF OUR TALENTED SEAMSTRESSES

*Please note that if your item doesn't appear here it's never deliberate; items are chosen at random, and also some come in after the Newsletter has been compiled. If you'd like your item to appear in a future Newsletter please just let Clare know. Don't forget there are still lots of pictures of your work on the website Galleries*









## OWL-uvly!

All our animal worry eaters need a nice deep pocket, so please make the pocket as deep as you can, particularly in owls, where the body is shorter (so there's not so much depth available). Small children may draw a picture of their worry, or write with very large letters, so their papers may be very bulky. They need as much room as possible. We're going to try to check all patterns for the dimensions given in case they need altering, but please don't feel you have to stick to exactly the pocket size in the pattern, please use your own initiative to make it as deep as you can in your own items, thanks.



## BRAND NEW FEEDBACK FROM THE THERAPISTS

*NB. all pictures of children have full parental/guardian permissions*

### Therapist in a Primary School

“The absolute impact of these monsters. Last week we shared them in a whole school assembly. This week I have been using them in my Emotional Literacy Support role. Here is a photo of a child. He made a disclosure. Did not reveal everything. We have put a post-it note in Reggie the elephant to talk about tomorrow. He made the disclosure, walked to my toy area, laid down with Reggie and fell asleep with his worry. I covered him with my spare hoody. Thank you so much.”

*Note from Clare: you can just see the child's dark brown hair behind the elephant*



*\*Permission given for photo, but not location*



**Teresa – ELSA and Family Link Worker, Bristol**

Just wanted to let you know my package arrived today. WOWZERS!!! Totally blown away by its contents and the quality of the worry monsters and hand puppets. Every member of staff I have shown them to so far wants them! (I've told them all – hands off!!) Please pass on my sincere thanks to all of your fabulous team of knitters – such an amazing project that will definitely help so many pupils that I support. Thanks so much.

**Rachel – SENCO, Primary School with a high level of need, Bedfordshire**

I just wanted to let you know that my parcel has arrived today. I am blown away by its contents. I don't think I was expecting such lovely things. Thank you again to you and all your volunteers

**Nicky – ELSA team, two Primary Schools, Streatham and Balham, London**

I just wanted to send you the attached photographs and our huge thanks for the amazing Worry Monsters and hand puppets we received at the end of last year.

We are a group of ELSAs at a Lambeth Primary School (across two sites one in Balham and one in Streatham) who are already seeing the benefits of using them in our sessions. In my sessions they have prompted fabulous discussions, been written to, spoken to, cuddled and very much loved. They are a brilliant tangible resource which can really help the children express and explore their worries and fears safely.

Our heartfelt thanks go out to all the fabulous volunteer knitters and sewers. They really are making a difference with every stitch.



**Nicky and the ELSA team.**

**Zoe – Freelance Children's and Young People's Counsellor, Dorset**

They just arrived and I'm blown away, they're absolutely amazing and so beautifully made! It was lovely to see a transgender puppet as I have clients that this will be particularly helpful to work with. Thank you so much to you and your knitting army, you're all doing such an important and valuable job to help aid Children's and Young People's counselling x

**Vanessa – self employed Play Therapist, Suffolk**

I'm utterly speechless and so very grateful. Arrived home to a huge box and when I opened it, the sight of all these puppets was amazing. A therapist's dream! I am so grateful to all the volunteers who are knitting so many puppets for us to use with the children and young people. I know they'll all be used, each will mean something to all of my children. What a wonderful charity for those of us who work with children!



**Yvonne – ELSA, Primary School, Staffordshire**

Oh my, oh my. Well what can I say, WOW! The monsters and puppets arrived today, I cannot express just how elated I feel, (far surpassed anything I was expecting).

**Kimberley – ELSA, Infant and Junior School, Suffolk**

I just wanted to say that I'm blown away by the worry monsters you have sent, which I received today. They are amazing, I can't wait to take them to school tomorrow. I will send you some proper feedback and photos once we've used them but I just wanted to say a massive thank you to you and all the kind people who make this possible, you are all amazing!

**Rachel – Play Therapist, Kent**

I wanted to thank you SO much for the wonderful box of monsters I received last week - they are amazing! So beautifully made and enormous - far bigger than I had realised, which is great as they are very huggable! I am astounded by the talent of your knitters - I'd be very grateful if you could pass on my thanks to them.

**Niki – Head Teacher, Primary School, Dorset**

Many thanks for the most beautifully crafted worry monsters. We currently have two ELSA's, a play therapist and drama therapist and these will be used for supporting children who have trauma, anxiety, or major transitions in their life. It has been amazing to have a selection that can 'speak' to the children depending on what their need is, and have the power to create a connection. Thank you so much it is deeply appreciated.

### Facebook Post from Kayleigh - Primary School ELSA, Hampshire

"We were delighted to receive 6 'Worry Monsters' from the charity Knit-for-Nowt who are based in Yorkshire. They are made by a dedicated team of knitters and are sent across the country to help schools to engage with children who may need some support! Our children love them and they are already proving to be a big hit during ELSA sessions. They all have their own ID badge, too, along with their name. A very big thank you."



### Claire – ELSA and Pastoral Lead, Primary School, Lincs

I wanted to email to say a HUGE thank you to yourself and the team of volunteers who create the worry monsters. We received our worry monsters yesterday; I was blown away by the quality of them! Thank you so much to the team of knitters and seamstresses that created them for us.

They have already been deployed around the school, 4 of them in our 'Green Room' which is where I carry out all of my pastoral work with our pupils. The other 2 have been added to displays in our main corridor that promote our protected characteristics. They are all a perfect addition to help us with the work we do to promote Children's mental health and well-being.

### Angela – ELSA, Primary School, Lancashire

Thank you, the box has already arrived and I'm amazed at the contents. I am so excited to get started with them!

The changeable face monster (Mojo) has been used with young children to explore their own emotions. At such a young age they often think they have to smile and be happy. Hiding behind a face like a mask helps them show true feelings and they can talk about it or draw a picture to put in the monster's mouth.

The family puppets have been used to help a child with a family member who is in hospital. We were able to put puppets in their “homes” and then show their feelings. We then went on to act out situations for different family members.

The small finger puppets are used for group work. Each child has a finger puppet which they can place anywhere on the emotion line at the start of group work. Children find it much easier to express feelings through using puppets.

### Keely – “Shepherding Lambs Counselling”, Belfast

Post on Facebook

“❤️ Always such a joy to teach the therapeutic play module on Phyllis Coulter's CYP therapy course. This time it was fun using the gorgeous knitted worry monsters and puppets from Knit-for-Nowt. These have been so lovely to use with children, but this was their first time being used by students. Never stops feeling like such an honour and privilege getting to share what I do with others.”



### Clare – ELSA and Pastoral Lead, Primary School, Nottingham

I cannot begin to tell you how much I love my delivery. The skill and effort that has gone into them has far exceeded any expectations I had. The NSPCC pants ones were a touch of brilliance to add in. If there is any way that thanks can get passed onto the ladies who made them I would be so grateful. You’ve made my week!



**Vicky – teacher, Primary School, Blackburn, Lancs**

Just to let you know that our worry monsters arrived today and we are absolutely thrilled with them. A huge thanks to Vicky B in Warwickshire, Maureen L in Surrey, Ann P in Tyneside, Diane A in Dorset and Alison A in Glasgow. The children think they are amazing!



**Avril – Play Therapist, disadvantaged area, Northern Ireland**

I cannot tell you how beneficial those worry monsters have been...today a young client shared a worry with the monster and then decided she would like the monster to share the worry with me. Such a breakthrough.

**Hannah – Teaching Assistant, Special Educational Needs, Leicestershire**

I just wanted to say an absolutely massive thank you to all who have created such wonderful worry monsters! They are amazing! It's obvious as to how much care and attention has been put in to the creations for the children. You have blown me away and I know that the children whom I work with will love them and appreciate them so. Thank you so very much. Please pass on my warmest thanks.

### Gita, London

I'm the Inclusion Officer and I run the Wellbeing Centre. I work with students with differing needs ranging from Autism Spectrum Disorder, Special Educational Mental Health Needs, Speech, Personal Development, Language and Communication Needs and other Mental Health issues.

I cannot begin to tell you how successful these monsters have been. We are an all through, mainstream school and even though I work in the secondary section, I requested the monsters, as I work with SEND/vulnerable students. When I received the monsters, I decided to keep one and donate the remainder to the primary. I can tell you that an assembly was held to introduce the monsters and they have since then been used daily in a Nurturing Group. The children adore them. At the secondary, we have kept the rainbow elephant and named her Suzie after her creator. Even the older teenagers tend to want a little squeeze and I often find notes in her mouth. Thank you very much, they are invaluable.

Gita sent us this picture of the items we donated to her



### Kerensa - Social Worker working as a Family Court advisor with children in the court process, Cornwall

Thank you so much for the box. I have just opened it and am totally blown away with how much I have received for my team. The professional hand puppets will be invaluable in my role and I cannot wait to use them. This is me having a look with my family as my children are super interested in them, which is a great sign!



## WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

### We'd like to ask if you'd PLEASE DO THE FOLLOWING SAFETY CHECKS ON YOUR ITEMS

You all make the most incredible items and for the vast majority of the time they are super safe, thank you for the checks you already make on them. This checklist might help to reassure you that you've checked over all aspects of your item, as it's so easy to forget one or two of them! We've all done it! All items are safety checked again before being sent out.

- 1 Have I used an approved stuffing? Check the recommended stuffings document you were sent, or see the one on page 28
- 2 Have I left any pins in? It's best to use the larger headed pins but even these can become lost in the knitting
- 3 Are all the attachments nice and firm? Pull strongly on all attachments, including any buttons – really pull! They must be absolutely secure and unable to be pulled out by a small child. Secure again anything you're not happy with
- 4 Is the hair secure? Between first finger and thumb pull on each and every strand of yarn attached to ensure that none can be pulled out by a small child
- 1 Have I left any holes in my work? Check your item for holes in the stitching where stuffing could be seen through. In particular this can happen at the top of the head on a monster/animal, or at the sides of the mouth pocket/mouth and where you increased the stitches. If you find any holes please sew them up!
- 2 Is anything too long? Check that any choking hazards such as ropes, strands, ribbons, yarn, or lengths of arms/legs are no longer than a maximum of 9" (not counting feet or hands)
- 3 Ooh, what's that pong??! Has my darling pet been lying on my work?? Have a good sniff! Ensure there are no strong odours which might affect asthma/allergy - these can include cooking smells, smoke, pets or even strong disinfectant. If the odour is strong please don't use washing powder/fabric freshener but instead rinse in fresh water and/or hang out on the line. And please check for dog/cat hairs on your work. If you have a pet and your yarn trails on the floor whilst knitting it's likely to pick up hairs, even if you've just hoovered! The hairs then get knitted in and are difficult to remove

### SAFETY RULES DOWNLOADABLE DOCUMENT

For your convenience and in response to a request by a knitter there is now a downloadable pdf of our safety rules and the safety checks you can do yourself (as above). It's on the "Donate Items" page of the website.

## SUMMARY OF ITEMS NEEDED

- 1      **Worry monsters** – Choose from “Zippy” (has a zipped mouth) or “Toothy the Worry Eater”, or our crochet monster patterns. Sewn ones welcome too. Please note the recommended dimensions in the patterns and please stuff these firmly with approved stuffing.
- 2      **Animal Worry Eaters or Robot Worry Eaters** – please ensure that you make a really good, deep pocket and please stuff these firmly with approved stuffing.
- 3      **Sewn Mojo monsters** –Please stuff these firmly.
- 4      **“Body Image” worry monsters**, both in knitted and sewn versions, identical in height and colours, but one is fatter, one thinner.
- 5      **Disability monsters** – if only one leg or arm, please make a stump, it looks more realistic. Or use our detachable limbs pattern. No disability animals thanks.
- 6      **Abuse monsters** - simply add a crescent shape around one eye, (black eye), and some purple, red or black marks on the limbs by sewing on pieces of felt, knitting or embroidering them. No abuse animals thanks.
- 7      **Pants for monsters** – if you send a set of them we can fit them on the monsters here, or you could make your own for your monster.
- 8      **Hand puppet families with happy/sad sides** – Mum, Dad, Gran, Grandad, boy, girl, with siblings if you like. With faces in cream or pale pink yarn, or any shade of brown, but not black . Please make them all to fit an adult hand, including the boy and girl. Please tie sets together.
- 9      **Hand puppet families as above, but specifically Muslim or Asian**
- 10     **Emoticolour sets** – each puppet represents a different emotion – we have patterns for either knitted or sewn versions.
- 11     **Bully hand puppet and Internet groomer hand puppet**
- 12     **Pairs of identical hand puppets** for Play Therapy work – these could be “people” or animals
- 13     **“Professionals” sets of hand puppets:** doctor, nurse, police, social worker, teacher, and judge in robes, “professional in a suit”
- 14     **Animal or children’s character hand puppets** – feel free to use patterns available online. As it’s for charity we’ve never had a problem with that, but we’re unable to put them up on the website due to copyright.
- 15     **Transgender hand puppets** (one side male, one side female)
- 16     **Finger puppets** – use any pattern you like, they can be people or animals
- 17     **Pregnant monster and pregnant hand puppet**



## WHAT STUFFING SHOULD I USE?

Knitters quite rightly are concerned to use the correct, approved stuffing in their monsters and/or puppets' heads, but it's often difficult to tell online whether stuffings are really suitable. The old CE label has become the UKCA label after our leaving the EU, and there are various different BS markings covering flammability and cleanliness/toxicity – all very confusing! When posting items, please confirm which stuffing you have used.

The following are at present, (@ June 2024), available online and are approved for our items. You may use others which you find with the correct markings, but these must first be sanctioned by us. We'll need the full maker's name and the link where you buy it.

Many stuffings online have the fire safety numbers but not the hygiene ones. Please don't use these even if they say they are safe for toys.

**HOLLOWFILL** <https://www.ebay.co.uk/itm/182637234827> This one is very cheap if bought in bulk.



### TRIMITS

[https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B07RR28NBP/ref=pe\\_3187911\\_185740111\\_TE\\_item](https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B07RR28NBP/ref=pe_3187911_185740111_TE_item)

### HABICO

<https://www.minerva.com/mp/1192018/450gm-toy-filling-stuffing-white>

### HOBBYCRAFT

[www.hobbycraft.co.uk](http://www.hobbycraft.co.uk) – we have confirmed with them that the stuffing they sell complies

But please bear in mind that all these can be purchased from various different manufacturers, so you might want to shop around a bit. Please always look for the picture of the bag, with the BS numbers on it. All four of the above have the correct markings. The stuffing you use should have the following on the bag

**BS5852 (fire safety)                      BS1425 (cleanliness), and/or EN71 or BS 5665**

Other stuffings recently approved: Phoenix, Habicraft, Dunelm “Wool Couture”

## WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO.

This message sums up our whole reason for keeping on knitting, crocheting and sewing our items to help children



Justyna – ELSA, Primary School, London

No words can describe how grateful I am for the puppets and monsters. I nearly burst into tears (tears of happiness) when I received them; it made me very emotional as I know how useful they will be around our school.

Please thank everyone for knitting these, their hard work, and their contribution to making a difference in children's lives.

All the puppets and worry monsters sit in our ELSA room, brightening up the space, the children love them so much!

One boy on autism spectrum is inseparable from the "emotions monster" (Mojo) and loves to show us how he feels. It is amazing how these beautiful visuals help our children to communicate.

I am so grateful. You have made such a difference. You are amazing.





Summer is always a time when our thoughts turn to gardens, holidays and visits with relatives, and it's right that we should be enjoying all those things. But as a result our donations do tend to drop off during the Summer, so please try to use the wonderful light evenings to continue crafting your amazing items. You have read in this Newsletter how much they mean to the therapists working so hard to help children, some of whom are going through unimaginable horrors, so by now you will be very aware of the need. There is no better way to use your talents than to help these vulnerable children. Thank you again on behalf of all the therapists who are doing such a very challenging job



## THANK YOU!



Clare Allan Knit-for-Nowt March 2024

[www.knitfornowt.org](http://www.knitfornowt.org) email: [knitfornowt@gmail.com](mailto:knitfornowt@gmail.com) 07538 157487