



WELCOME TO THE KNIT-FOR-NOWT NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2024

Read KfN news, tips, galleries and, most important of all, therapists' recent feedback!



"I'm going to Wales. Where are you off to? "

"I'm being sent to Northern Ireland. I'll miss our chats"



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STAR LETTER from Sarah, therapist, large Primary School, London

I just wanted to say, I had an extremely difficult day today - lots of children were sent to me who were struggling in one way or another. I left work feeling exhausted and a little frustrated.

However, when I got home, there was a rather large box waiting for me. I could see it was from Knit for Nowt. Upon opening it, I was greeted with the most glorious, wholesome sight which immediately made my day so, so much better.

The box was crammed full of beautiful, exquisitely made dolls and puppets, covering all the things any child educator could need. It was evident that each one was made with love and a passion for helping children with their mental health and wellbeing. What an amazing and incredibly creative team of knitters and seamstresses!

I shall bring them into my school on Monday and share them with the staff, who I know will all be as absolutely thrilled and dazzled by these exquisite creations.

My son was with me when I opened them and was equally as awe struck with them as me - "They're just amazing!" he kept saying! I have included a photo of him thrilled with the dolls!

Please pass on my immense thanks to everyone involved in this incredible project. I can't tell you how much use they will get and how many children are going to benefit from them.



LATEST NEWS

STATS:

Number of therapists supplied since November 2022:

1,193

Number of therapists still on the waiting list:

609

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

2,734



Notes from Clare this month:

New makers

In order to keep the charity manageable we are currently operating a waiting list for makers. If you know someone who is interested in helping by knitting, crocheting or sewing for us please explain to them that just at the moment we can't take up their kind offer of help, but if they'd like to go on the waiting list please ask them to fill in the Contact form on the website.

Puppet sets

I thank most sincerely those makers who sent in "professionals" puppet sets in response to our summer appeal. That has now been successful in balancing up the stocks. I send one of each set to each recipient, so from now onwards please could you alternate sets between each type? Please continue to send your sets (of either type) because the boxes can't go out without those.

New safety notice

We've recently made the decision to ask all makers not to use any "Googly" eyes (the plastic ones that you sew on) of whatever size on our items, including hand puppets. At first we thought them safe but in the light of experience we now know that they can come apart. So please ignore any pictures we have in our patterns of those, and use an alternative method for the eyes, thank you. Googly eyes which are "safety eyes" are fine, please continue to use those.



A reminder re stuffing

Please remember to include the Trade Name of the stuffing you're using in the note inside each donated parcel eg. Hobbycraft, Hollowfill, Trimits, Phoenix, Habico etc.

WORRY MONSTERS ARE THE BEDROCK OF OUR CHARITY AND WE NEED THEM AS WELL AS OUR ANIMAL WORRY EATERS

Recently there has been a lack of worry monsters in general of all types, so some more monsters would be very helpful.

BUT WE STILL DO NEED THE ANIMALS TOO! PLEASE DON'T STOP SENDING THOSE! If you normally make just animals and like making those the most please stick to what you enjoy, otherwise we're likely to get more monsters than animals! It's a tricky balancing act.

In each box we donate we try to include one Mojo, one Toothy or Curly plus one Zippy, so we need lots of them! We then include one or two animal worry eaters or a robot worry eater, plus in some cases we send our other types including the Body Image ones.

Our most requested monster is the SEWN MOJO, and sincere thanks go to all those seamstresses making them for us. We have three other main types of monsters:

TOOTHY – both knitted and crocheted versions, and **CURLY** - crocheted

Toothy and Curly don't have a zip, and are made deliberately rounder and fatter than Zippy, and their teeth don't necessarily make them scary! In any case some therapists have told us that they find scary monsters useful with certain children.



ZIPPY – knitted or sewn

We have been told by therapists that the zip is important because it makes the child feel that the worry is completely safely contained. Zippy is also designed to be the right size to fit our pants on for the NSPCC "Pants Programme".





IT'S BACK!
**OUR EVER-POPULAR NON-
 JUDGED**
AUTUMN LUCKY DRAW
IS NOW OPEN



Knit, crochet or sew a complete hand puppet set for Knit-for-Nowt

NEW FOR 2024 – THIS YEAR THE ENTRIES MUST ONLY BE HAND PUPPETS SETS - SEE THE LUCKY DRAW RULES FOR THE TYPES ACCEPTED. But please continue to knit/sew all our other wonderful patterns because we still need all of them.

PLEASE ENTER! Full details and rules are displayed below.

This Lucky Draw is **NOT JUDGED** and is free to enter. It's open only to knitters, crocheters and stitchers already registered with Knit-for-Nowt.

If your set is picked out in our raffle you'll win a prize. Even if not picked, one of your sets will be guaranteed a place on a new Competition Gallery on the website for all your friends and family to admire!



We were so grateful to all of you who entered last time because it made it possible to create some great Galleries on the website. But we are lacking a Gallery for puppets. The Galleries are important because not only do the therapists see the items that you've made, which gives them an idea of what they might receive, but also these Galleries give you ideas and inspiration. Viewing each other's items like that is always so beneficial to all. No-one minds if you borrow ideas from other people's work, in fact it's encouraged!

Lucky Draw rules are on the next page

LUCKY DRAW RULES

- Your puppet set must be knitted, crocheted or sewn using one of the patterns on the website: <https://www.knitfornowt.org/new-knitted-puppet-patterns-page> or sewn from <https://www.knitfornowt.org/new-sewn-items-page> or Emotis sets: <https://www.knitfornowt.org/emotiknit-colour-puppets> or Shouty/Pouty: <https://www.knitfornowt.org/new-animal-patterns-page>
(No finger puppets, worry monsters, animal worry eaters, robots or any other items than hand puppet sets). Use the password to access the patterns or contact Clare.

Puppet sets eligible for entry:

- Complete happy/sad sided family which must include: Mum, Dad, Gran, Grandad, boy, girl (extra characters optional)
- Complete professionals set which must include: Doctor, Nurse, Police, Judge in robes, Professional in a suit, Social Worker, Teacher
- Complete set of knitted Emoticolour puppets
- Sewn set of Emoticolour Monsters puppets or Emoticolour Robot puppets
- Shouty/Pouty set of 4 puppets
- Items must adhere to the safety rules displayed on the website
- A complete set is counted as one entry. Any number of entries are permitted – enter as many sets as you like, for more chances to win
- Please label clearly each set which you wish to enter, giving your full name, email address and the words “Lucky Draw”, and please tie each set loosely together. The tie will be removed before donation so any type of tie will be fine
- **Competition closing date... Saturday 23th November.** Please ensure that you get your items to Knit-for-Nowt by this date
- **Lucky Dip choice** will be made during the week beginning 25th November by a senior therapist
- **Prizes: 10 lucky dips picked out each win a £20.00 voucher** to spend in the online shop Black Sheep wools, please see <https://www.blacksheepwools.com>
- **A photo of one of your sets** is guaranteed to be in a new Lucky Dip Gallery on the website, whether you win or not! No need to photograph your set, we’ll do that at this end, we’ll give it a raffle number, and then immediately donate it, so your work will get to its recipient in exactly the same time frame as normal
- **The first name and county of the winners**, along with larger photos of their winning set, will feature in the next Newsletter and on the website

By entering an item or items you are agreeing to these conditions



VAL'S TIP OF THE MONTH



“I’ve been giving the matter of tension some thought, and don’t think it would be possible to give tension advice on our patterns. Commercial patterns can do this accurately because they are usually produced by a specified brand and refer to a recommended yarn. Our knitters use everything under the sun, whatever is in their stash or nearest yarn provider.

If you are aware that your tension is consistently tighter than that given on most ball bands, then you can compensate by using a different sized needle. However, since a close weave is an advantage where stuffing is concerned, unless you think, or Clare tells you, that your items are coming out smaller than average, I should take the pattern at face value and not worry too much about exact size. Unlike garments, which need to fit, puppets and monsters are acceptable in a range of sizes.

I do think that we should try to indicate the height and width of the finished item as illustrated on the pattern, whilst making clear that an approximation is acceptable. It is one of the things that I keep in mind as I work through my own older patterns in the light of experience and feedback. I don’t always remember to measure finished items, but whenever I’m editing I shall add it to my list of things to check, and will ask our other designers to do the same. Hopefully eventually we’ll get all the patterns with measurements included, but editing is a bit like painting the Forth Bridge. It’s a bit of a mammoth task, and you always find something else after it’s been taken off the website, altered and put back up again.

Clare always gets a slightly glazed look in her eyes when I tell her I’ve found something that needs editing!”

HAVE YOU ANY TIPS OR ADVICE?

Do you have any tips for other knitters, crocheters or sewers that you think would help them?

If so, please send them in to Clare for possible publication in the next Newsletter.

These would include the types of yarn you find best for certain items, including current prices; knitting, sewing or crochet technique tips; and anything you’ve found helpful when making items for us.

Space will limit how many are published in any one Newsletter and will be subject to whether we’ve previously given those particular tips out, so we can’t guarantee to publish them, but would love to hear from you with possibles for inclusion. You can stay anonymous if you wish!

“WHY I MAKE ITEMS FOR KNIT-FOR-NOWT”

- Knitting for K-f-N has many, many benefits - it really has got me through some tough times. I'm sure many Knit-for-Nowters will tell you the same thing. When life issues hit us and we feel powerless (health in my case) it's uplifting and empowering to still have the ability to be helpful to others in worse situations than ourselves.
- It is so lovely to read the wonderful letters and spurs me on all the more to help these poor children in their suffering.
- I do often hope that my big cuddly items may perhaps bring a morsel of comfort to a troubled child.
- There are so many youngsters out there needing support. It makes you think reading through them. Hopefully our efforts are doing a small amount to putting things right. The work the therapists and support staff do must be very stressful and difficult. We must all keep up supplies!
- What a wonderful team of crafters you have gathered together - I'm sure, like me, they get a lot of satisfaction in helping provide the monsters and puppets. I really enjoy looking at the Facebook page to see what people make - so inspiring.
- Really glad that these monsters are of use and I do enjoy making them! It keeps my hands busy when I'm watching TV on an evening. They also provide a few hours activity for my granddaughter who likes to take endless 'publicity photos' of them.





YARN/FABRIC SHOWS ACROSS THE UK THIS YEAR

As we did last year, Val and I plan to be at the Harrogate Knitting and Stitching Show 21-24 November. **We hope to be there on Sunday 24nd November.** If you would like to meet up and have a chat over a cuppa at the show please let Clare know. It would be lovely to meet up with KfN friends from last year and new ones who are at the moment “email friends”.

Last year we wore hand puppets so as to be recognised, which resulted in many folk coming up to us to ask if they could buy them!! (Answer: NO!)

It always feels so good to be amongst a lot of yarn/fabric doesn't it! And it's so inspiring to see what can be made from it.

Kernow Yarn and Fibre Festival Website: [Kernow Yarn and Fibre Festival](#).

15 September 2024

The Pavilion Centre, Royal Cornwall Showground, Wadebridge, Cornwall, PL27 7JE, England

Yarndale Website: [Yarndale](#).28–29 September 2024

Skipton Auction Mart, Gargrave Road, Skipton, Yorkshire, BD23 1UD, England

Shetland Wool Week Website: [Shetland Wool Week](#)

29 September – 5 October 2024

various venues, Shetland, Scotland

The Knitting and Stitching Show Website: [Knitting and Stitching Show, Alexandra Palace](#).

10–13 October 2024

Alexandra Palace, Wood Green, London, N22 7AY, England

West Wales Wool Show Website: [West Wales Wool Show](#).

12 October 2024

The Queen's Hall and Play Hyfryd Hotel, Narberth, Pembrokeshire, DE45 1AH, Wales

The Glasgow School of Yarn Website: [Glasgow School of Yarn](#).

18–20 October 2024

Trades Hall, Glasgow, Scotland

The Big Textile Show Website: [The Big Textile Show](#).

26–27 October 2024

The KUBE, Leicester Racecourse, Oadby, Leicester LE2 4AL, England

The Bakewell Wool Gathering Website: [Bakewell Wool Gathering](#).

19–20 October 2024

Bakewell Agricultural Centre, Agricultural Way, Bakewell, Derbyshire, DE45 1AH, England

Stitch Fest South West Website: [Stitch Fest South West](#).

2–3 November 2024

Newton Abbot Racecourse, Newton Abbot, Devon, TQ12 3AF, England

The Knitting and Stitching Show Website: [Knitting and Stitching Show, Belfast](#).

7–10 November 2024

Titanic Exhibition Centre, Queens Road, Belfast, BT3 9DU, Northern Ireland

Yorkshire Yarn Festival Website: [Yorkshire Yarn Festival](#).

8–10 November 2024

Sandburn Hall, York, YO60 7RB, England

The Knitting and Stitching Show Website: [Knitting and Stitching Show, Harrogate](#).

21–24 November 2024

Harrogate International Centre, Kings Road, Harrogate, HG1 5LA, England

Christmas Wool Show Website: [Christmas Wool Show](#).

14–15 December 2024

National Conference Centre, Coventry Road, Solihull, B92 0EJ, England



Got a bit of time on your hands?

Browse on the following links for some great knitting tips!

<https://nimble-needles.com/tutorials/10-knitting-tips-for-beginners-and-advanced-knitters/>

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLIeld-W61aRQYNKToM2i3A3eB6jEGq8fi>

MATTRESS STITCH: Once again we'd like to encourage you to use mattress stitch when sewing up your seams. It's a brilliant way of making the seam invisible, it's really easy, and it also means that you don't need to change colour of yarn when sewing up stripes!

There are several very good tutorials online if you Google "Mattress Stitch" and here is a recommended link which describes it really clearly:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PS-sxbo6o_8



And here's an example of mattress stitch in place. Spot the join!



ENCOURAGING OUR YOUNGSTERS TO LEARN TO KNIT

Schools stopped teaching knitting as part of the national curriculum in the UK in the late 1980's and on Shetland in 2010. Knitting is still taught as part of the Waldorf school curriculum and is returning to schools as an extracurricular activity in many places across the UK.

Children can learn to knit at quite a young age – as young as five or six if they are really keen – it all depends on the dexterity of an individual child. As a general rule, 7-8 is a good age, especially if you are expecting them to read instructions and follow patterns.

In fact, knitting is one of the therapies used with children with ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), as it allows them to learn to become more aware of their own movements and thus be able to control them.

For very young children (below 8 years), basic crocheting is probably easier. The same applies to adults who lack delicate fine control in their hands. Pulling a simple loop through another loop using a hook is, initially, a lot easier and often less frustrating.

“According to (the 2021) Arts and Crafts Consumer Market Reports, “younger consumers were driving sales of yarn” a BBC article says. “The big trend is many younger people, and a lot of men”.



Boys now make up around 50% of primary pupils involved in Craft Club, the campaign run by the Craft Council and UK Handknitting Association, which supports schools to run knitting clubs led by community volunteers. Since it was set up there are now over 350 groups around the UK, mainly in primary schools, and many more knitting groups run independently by teachers.

Stephanie Laing, a Primary School teacher in London, can't quite believe how popular her knitting club became among the boys. A knitting enthusiast herself, Laing set up the lunchtime club and the first four members were year 6 boys. "I was surprised by the ones who signed up – not only the boys, but it was the cool kids," she says. "I thought they weren't going to last, but it has become the cool thing to do."

Laing was a learning mentor when she started the club, working one-on-one with pupils who had emotional or behavioural problems. "I wanted them to be able to advance their skills, but it was also a way of opening up what I did for the whole school," she says. "For them, coming into a quiet room with bean bags and sometimes music playing is quite comforting and non-threatening."

Boys in the knitting circle agree that the club is one of the few relaxing parts of the school day. "It's peaceful, no shouting. It's different to other things in school," says 10-year-old Sam. "I usually play football – it's mad."

Incorporating knitting into school life and throughout the curriculum has also been a successful way of getting boys involved. As well as teaching knitting within art, Kathryn Hitchings, classroom teacher at a Primary School in Ipswich, used knitting to teach pupils about the second world war "make do and mend" campaign. She also launched a sponsored knit, encouraging pupils to unleash their competitive streak. One boy managed to knit 75 metres in one day and pupils also took part in yarn bombing, covering a tree with their knitted garments.

The teachers involved in knitting groups have also noticed that the craft appeals to children who don't normally achieve in other areas, or who tend to misbehave. This is because there is an immediate and visible reward directly linked to the effort put in, says Katy Bevan, the Craft Council's participation and learning manager. "If you have a difficult child who's constantly misbehaving and being told off, suddenly they have knitted half a scarf and are given heaps of praise," she says.

As the boys at the London Primary School finish up before the bell rings, they are evidently proud of their knitting skills. They revel in advising their classmates and show off what they have made. But for one year 6 pupil, the appeal of knitting is more personal. "If you're angry, it calms you down," he says.



Source: internet articles

Children's emergency mental health referrals in England soar by 53%

The number of children referred to emergency mental healthcare in England has soared by more than 50% in three years, according to data laying bare the impact of lengthy waiting lists for regular NHS treatment.

There were 32,521 emergency and urgent referrals to child and adolescent mental health services crisis teams in 2022-23, analysis of official data by the Royal College of Psychiatrists revealed.

This means that more than 600 mentally ill children a week are deteriorating to such a state that they have reached crisis point. Many of the children requiring emergency care have been stuck on waiting lists for an average of five months, and in the worst cases as long as two years.

MPs and health leaders said the NHS figures exposed a "devastating explosion" of untreated severe mental ill health among children.

CAMHS teams are struggling to see children quickly enough. Many of the conditions arising in children could be prevented or treated if prompt support and access to care were available.

The evidence shows us that children who receive support quickly are less likely to develop long-term conditions that negatively affect their education, social development and health in later life.

Source: The Guardian Health Editor Andrew Gregory Feb 2024



GALLERY – mixed monsters

Please note that this gallery contains a completely random selection and if your item doesn't appear it's never deliberate, it's just due to lack of space. If you'd like one of your items to appear in a future Newsletter Gallery please let Clare or Val know, thank you.





GALLERY – each type of animal in alphabetical order (well, nearly!)





Featured family of hand puppets by Helen in Kent

Knitting families of puppets can be such fun!!

Please take inspiration from Helen's creativity to use your own ideas whilst still sticking to our patterns. You can use different knitting stitches and colours, add a variety of features (very firmly attached!) or even combine knitting with sewing, as Helen has done.

New makers please note that all hand puppets need to fit an adult hand (including the boy and girl) and should be happy/sad sided on family sets. Please ensure that hair and all attachments are really firm for safety, thank you. We have two basic patterns for the family set: one with stuffed heads and one without – choose your preference!



Dad



Mum



Grandad



Gran



Girl



Boy

NEW PATTERNS

From now onwards we feel we have a very good selection of patterns, so we don't need any new ones thanks, unless they are specifically requested by therapists.

Alongside our cochlear implant pattern we now have a new pattern for hearing aids. Val made this pattern for teachers/therapists working with deaf children, and she took as her inspiration a child who wears them. The pattern is on the "Patterns for Worry Monsters" page.



The hearing aids have a red ear-piece, a clear connecting tube and a green over ear battery box. The knitted version is made in three colours on three sizes of double pointed needles in icord. The prototype was knitted to fit Minty the Monkey's ears, but would also fit Toothy's or Zippy's ears.

AND A REMINDER ABOUT OUR SEWN EMOTICOLOUR ROBOTS AND MONSTERS Both patterns for these are on the Sewn Items page of the website and are eligible to be entered into our Raffle competition. They're easy to sew and made of felt.



RECENT FEEDBACK from recipients

Sam – ELSA, Junior School, Wiltshire

I received your wonderful delivery this afternoon. We are speechless over these gorgeous creations. They are amazing! I had children and adults stop in their tracks because I was so excited. Our amazing school office lady is writing a piece about the 'monsters' in our weekly newsletter as we speak. I can see that the children will benefit from these in our sessions so much. I have several children that will benefit greatly from the family and professional glove puppets because of situations they are in. Thank your extremely talented ladies and thank you for the amazing work you do. I have attached a couple of pictures of the monsters on our field. Kindest regards to you all.

We are very grateful to *Sandy P and Sandra W in Cheshire, Ros R in Surrey, Margaret G in Dorset, Dawn F in Wiltshire, Ann K in Nottinghamshire and the lovely Clare who runs the charity.*



Billy – Wellbeing and Nurture worker, Primary School, Devon

All I can say is wow, wow, wow!!! What a dedicated and talented team you have. The amount of effort, time and thought that must have gone into each and every item is simply outstanding. I can't wait to introduce each character to my class and watch the growth and support they will give them. They will help many children for years to come. Please pass on my gratitude to all involved.

Gary - Primary School ELSA and Learning Mentor supporting vulnerable and safeguarded children, as well as those who have experienced trauma.

Thank you all soooo much for the box. Although we are a mainstream Primary, we are in an area of high deprivation and, being a 3 form entry, it will help so many of the children I support in my ELSA work with Special Educational Needs and trauma. I use the Class Mojo for ELSA sessions aimed at starting to think positively, when children work on worries or self esteem. Not only that, I work closely with our Play Therapist who can also share these resources thanks to your generosity. Thank you so much. This will make a huge difference to the confidence of children who get very little outside of school.

Cath - ELSA, Primary School, Suffolk

Oh my goodness I don't know where to start!

Received parcel yesterday, thank you soooooo very much, what a lovely group of extremely talented people you have. My surprised colleagues couldn't put them down, they're just as

popular with the adults 😊 Please pass on my very heartfelt thanks to the knitters

Kirsten – Social Worker, Cambridgeshire, received one year after she received our items

It has been a long time since I received the puppets and monsters - I have used them for almost a year as a newly-qualified social worker. They are extraordinarily made and have been such a help with certain children, particularly with 2 children who have experienced extensive *ACEs, trauma, as well as multiple placement moves. The children regularly ask to see the elephant and robot monsters and they were accompanied by these when they moved to a different placement, cuddling them and speaking with them about their worries. I want to say a huge thank you - these items really are life-changing for professionals like me.

*ACEs = Adverse Childhood Experiences

Leanne – ELSA, Primary School, Berks

We all absolutely love the Worry Monsters. The love and care that went in to making them blew me away - so much so that I cried!! A huge thankyou to you and your knitters, so very much. Our Chair of Governors was in school on the day I took them in and she completely fell in love with them too and what they're going to be used for.

Trish – ELSA, Junior School, Northants

What a wonderful box I received this morning! I am totally in love with my monsters and puppets, and blown away by the amount!

Please pass on my thanks to all the knitters - what talent, and what generosity! Many thanks to everyone involved.



NB. Children's faces are blocked by request

Emma – ELSA, Primary School, Kent

On behalf of everyone at our school, we would love to send you all a huge thank you for sending the wonderful Knit for Nowt worry monsters to us. They are fabulous! I have attached a letter from our Head Girl and Boy, along with some photos. I am certain the monsters will be well loved and well used.



Precis of letter received from the children at this school in Kent

We received five of your amazing Knit for Nowt worry monsters at our Primary School and we are so thankful for them. We loved how bright and colourful they are and we think that if someone was feeling upset or worried, they will really cheer them up. You can see from our faces in the photos that they have put smiles on our faces. We love how unique they are and how different each one is. They are all special in their own ways. We particularly liked how each monster had a label that told us the monster's name, who knitted it, (especially Ilse who is 90!) and what the monster could be used for.

With kind regards and many thanks from all of the pupils and staff,

Belle and Elliott - Head Girl and Head Boy

Paula - ELSA, Primary School, Hampshire

Oh Wow, I have received my box from Knit for Nowt and to say I'm totally overwhelmed by your generosity is an understatement. What absolutely gorgeous therapy aids these are. Thank you so much.

Clare – ELSA, Primary School, Hampshire

I just want to say a huge THANK YOU for the absolutely beautiful items that have arrived at our school. They are truly so perfect and will be so loved. The makers are extremely creative. They have now found their new home in our ELSA area where they will be very well used for emotional support in groups and 1:1. We work with a number of deprived and disadvantaged children and families as well as a huge number of children needing emotional support and the items will be such a benefit when working with the children.

Georgena – Secondary School, Berkshire

Hi, my parcel has arrived – I am just blown away by how fantastic they are. I can't wait to share them with our students. Thank you and thank you to all the wonderful makers

Tracy – ELSA, Junior School, Lancashire

I have just received the box of worry monsters and puppets and am completely overwhelmed at how wonderful they are. I can't thank everyone enough and assure you that they will be put to good use.

Deirdre – ELSA, Primary School, Surrey

Thank you so much for the AMAZING puppets which I received for the children at our school. I took them into school to show the wellbeing team and like me they were very excited at the prospect of using them in our sessions. Today, one of the children has been introduced to the emotion monsters, so they are already at work. A big thank you to Knit for Nowt and all the kind people who offer their time and effort to help with children's wellbeing.

A special thank you to *Doreen M from Cumbria, Stephanie C from W. Yorkshire and Sue C from Essex, our super talented puppet makers and to all at the Knit for Nowt team*

Anonymous feedback (by request) from an ELSA in a Primary School

One of our children in year 2 has some severe speech and language issues and is not easily able to communicate with his peers or the adults who work with him. However, I suggested to the member of staff who works with him to use one of the dolls when she is with him and he has transformed. Whereas before, getting him to sit down/move around the school was very difficult, now, with the help of Monkey who models how to do it, he follows instructions. His words are very few so each new word is greatly celebrated - his most recent new word is....monkey!

Jane – ELSA, Infant School, Essex

Hi I just wanted to say a big thank you to your lovely ladies who knitted the puppets. The children absolutely love them and always ask for them to be in their wellbeing sessions each week. In particular they have really been a godsend to one little girl who has had a lot of trauma in her life and has now started to open up through the puppets. So thank you, absolutely amazing!

Louise – THRIVE practitioner, Doncaster

Louise's request:

What an amazing organisation!

We run a Thrive Base within a Primary School for children who've experienced emotional trauma.

We'd really benefit from some worry monsters if possible  Thank you!

And on their receipt:

Wow, how amazing are these knitted worry monsters? Thank you so much, what a wonderful idea, our children will get so much benefit from these! They're simply gorgeous

Sarah – Pupil Support Worker, Primary School, Lancashire

I just wanted to say a huge thank you for the 7 worry monsters we received for our school. They are absolutely amazing and I know that they will have a huge impact on our children. The care and attention gone into making these is simply magnificent! Many thanks again to you all, keep up the great work.

Hannah – ELSA, Primary School, Northants

I just wanted to let you know I have received the worry dolls and we are blown away by the quality of them. They are absolutely incredible and already loved by all the children and staff! They have pride of place in the wellbeing room at school and will be frequently used. Please pass on my thanks to all those involved in creating them. The stickers saying who had knitted each were a lovely touch.

Tom – ELSA, Primary School, Leics

Everything has arrived! My children absolutely love them as I am sure the children at school will too – looking forward to using them in my ELSA sessions. You have a wonderful team and are making a huge difference to so many young people.



Vicky – ELSA, Primary School, Berkshire

All I can say is OMG!!! I have just got home to a huuuuugggee box of goodies!! I cannot actually believe the generosity of the knitters. I wish I had half the talent that they have!! I can't wait to show my new colleagues! Thank you so much from the bottom of my heart!!

Gabrielle – Nursery, Lancs

We are a Nursery based within a Family and Wellbeing Centre. We are situated in an area of high deprivation. Many of the children in our setting have multiple problems including SEN needs.

We received our box of monsters and puppets. We are overwhelmed with the generosity and kindness of your knitters. The detail that has gone into making each monster and individual item is absolutely amazing. We have already started to plan activities for each monster and will incorporate them into our Nurture group. The little puppets and finger puppets are also wonderful. We would like to thank all your knitters from the bottom of our hearts, especially *Jackie O, Carol, Pam T, Jane B, Helen I, Christine P, Lesley P, Sue C*. We will make sure these beautifully knitted worry monsters and friends will help our children to cope with their emotions and bring them lots of comfort, laughter and enjoyment.

Clare – ELSA and pastoral support, Primary School, Lincs


Our worry monsters and puppets have arrived, and I just wanted to say a HUGE thank you to you and all your team who make these!!! We have all fallen in love with the monsters and puppets (my particular favourite being the 'Anxiousaurus') and I cannot wait to use them with the children in the next school year. You are all doing an amazing job in creating these beautifully made items to support our work with children around their emotions and worries. You have some very talented knitters and seamstresses! THANK YOU from everyone at our school.

Primary School ELSA (anonymous by request)

My puppets arrived yesterday! I honestly can't thank you enough. I had no idea there would be so many beautiful puppets. I can't wait to start using them. In particular the family set and the Shouty and Pouty ones will be very useful. I also have some ideas for the mirror work puppets which are absolutely gorgeous. We have a non verbal little child starting in our school in September and I am hoping these will be useful for working with that child. I am so grateful to all your lovely ladies who have given up their time to make them. Funds are so tight, I could never have had a budget to buy these wonderful resources. Thank you so much and please pass on my gratitude.

I was showing them to one child I work with and I had the Dad puppet. I showed the child the downturned mouth and the child said, "Is he sad or angry?" I said he wasn't happy. This led to a conversation: the child asked me if my Dad had ever been angry? How old had I been when my Dad was angry? And we talked about how the child's Dad had other children by other women who weren't the child's Mum. You never know where a conversation can go x

Vanessa – ELSA, Primary School, Leics

I've just received my box! Oh m! I've still got tears in my eyes! I love them sooo much and I know the children will. The work that has gone in to making them is amazing  thank you to all involved.

Karen – Family Court Adviser, Derbyshire

The puppets have arrived and I am speechless .

Thank you to: *Carole C in Hampshire, Janice P in Co Durham, Lorraine O in Leeds, Anna H in Lancashire*

I am so grateful for the time and dedication you have put into making these puppets, they are remarkable and will allow me to work with children in a calming and creative way. They will help me to break down barriers with children with the hope that I can build trust, and they will allow me and other professions to support them. I really appreciate the work you have put into them.

Tanya - Social Worker, Essex

Tanya's request:

Hi, I am Social Worker working in a Family Centre. I facilitate groups as well as working with children and their families on a one to one basis. The majority of my work is trauma work as well as assessments that are Court directed. Your resource is absolutely amazing and I would love to obtain some of your worry monsters and puppets to use with clients.

And on receipt:

I received my box today and I'm totally overwhelmed! What an amazing resource you are! Can't wait to show them to the team! Once again thanks so much, this is going to be a blessing to many.

Andrea – Nurture Lead, Primary School, Cambs

Just to say a massive thank you for the wonderful puppets I received yesterday. I was blown away with how beautiful they are and a massive thank you to the talented knitters. I will be using the emotion puppets in September as the colour monster story and activities are what we introduce first within Nurture. Many thanks once again.

Cathy – Play Therapist, Belfast, Northern Ireland

I wanted to say my sincere thank you for all the beautiful worry monsters and puppets I received from your charity. I was blown away by the detail of each creation. I am totally in love with them. I cannot thank you enough. They have been a very welcome addition to my playroom in my school and the children that attend play therapy with me absolutely love them. There really are some wonderful kind people in the world and they have made such a difference to the children in our school. So from the very bottom of my heart,



THANK YOU!

WOULD YOU LIKE TO MEET OTHER KFN KNITTERS IN YOUR AREA?

Liz in Birmingham had the idea of organising a “Knit (or crochet or sew!) and Natter” for Knit-for-Nowt makers in her area, and the event was a great success. We’d like to thank Liz so much for asking for voluntary donations to KfN from attendees, which raised a the fantastic sum of £120.00. As you’ll probably know, there are running costs of this charity and so it’s really great to have this very generous donation.

Here’s Liz (left) and Lesley, another KfN knitter, at the event



Liz is planning another similar event, which is likely to be before Christmas, for anyone who would like to attend. If you’re in the West Midlands area (or indeed further afield, everyone would be welcome!) please let Clare know if you’re interested, and she’ll put you in touch with Liz in order to find out the details nearer the time.

Note from Clare:

If you would like to have a get-together in your own area with other KfN makers please let me know. Although I have records of where our knitters live, my system doesn’t sort them into areas, so it’s not possible for me to contact everyone who knits for us in your particular area. But what I can do is advertise your event on our Facebook group (which is private – only KfN makers can see what’s on there), and then put you in touch with anyone interested. Unfortunately I’m not able to organise any events for you, I’m afraid time simply wouldn’t allow!



WHICH ARE OUR MOST POPULAR ANIMAL WORRY EATERS?

HALL OF FAME!

This is a question Clare frequently gets asked by makers. All patterns which are on the website are needed because we give out a selection to each therapist or therapy team. Therapists don't tend to specify which ones they'd like because they're only too glad to be given ANY! But going on the responses they've sent after receipt of our items, here's a list of the most popular animals:

In no particular order:



Octopus



Anxiousaurus



Chomp, Munch and Scorch



Cat



Monkey or ape



Elephant



Frog



Bear



Dog



Rabbit

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 it's on page 31
- 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. We suggest you use safety pins.
- 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



- 1 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
- 2 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!
- 3 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)
- 4 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

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?

Makers 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.

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.

The following are at present, (@ September 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.



HOLLOWFILL: <https://www.ebay.co.uk/itm/182637234827> You can get it on ebay, but this one is very cheap if bought in bulk by phone.

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. (Price @ August 2024)

TRIMITS: 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>

HOBBY CRAFT: www.hobbycraft.co.uk – we have confirmed with them that the stuffing they sell complies

PHOENIX: <https://www.thewoolfactory.co.uk/phoenix-filling---toy-stuffing-250g-bag-796-p.asp>

DUNELM WOOL COUTURE: <https://www.dunelm.com/product/wool-couture-premium-toy-stuffing-1000190331>

HABICRAFT: <https://www.ebay.co.uk/itm/304919365160>

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

One day Val discovered that her smart watch, which monitors how many steps you take in a day, registered 10,000 steps. She'd been sitting knitting all day and hadn't left the house. Fooled it!



- For a full list of all organisations/individuals which have been supplied with our items go to the website page "Quotes from Recipients". You can then look for your own region
- If you want to find out how the waiting list is doing, the number of therapists waiting can be found on the "Waiting List Information" page of the website, which is updated regularly



CALLING ALL KNIT FOR NOWTERS!

LET'S SEE HOW MUCH WE CAN REDUCE THE WAITING LIST BY CHRISTMAS - EVERY SINGLE ITEM COUNTS!



THANK YOU!



Clare Allan Knit-for-Nowt September 2024

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