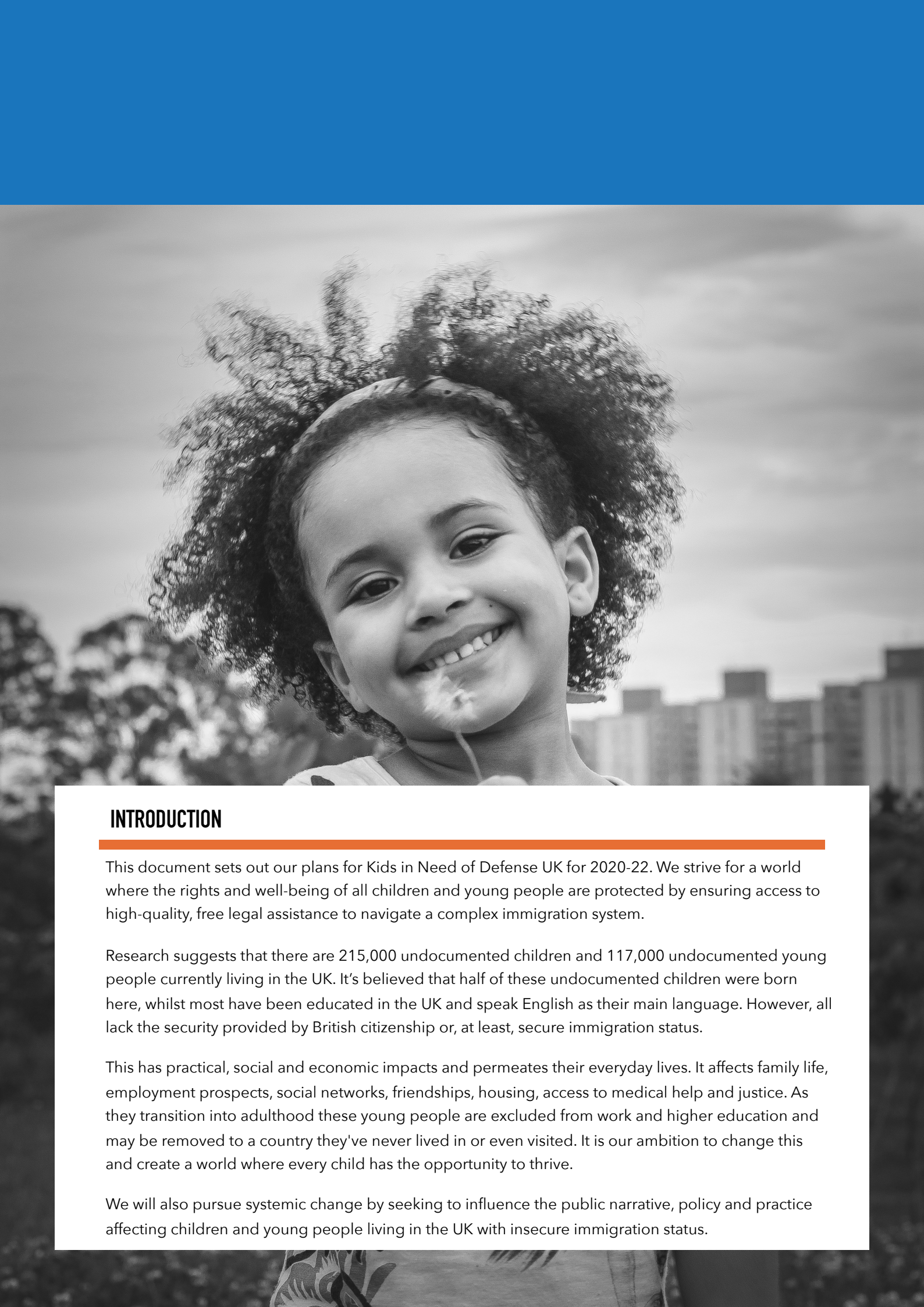


Kids in Need of Defense UK



STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2022



INTRODUCTION

This document sets out our plans for Kids in Need of Defense UK for 2020-22. We strive for a world where the rights and well-being of all children and young people are protected by ensuring access to high-quality, free legal assistance to navigate a complex immigration system.

Research suggests that there are 215,000 undocumented children and 117,000 undocumented young people currently living in the UK. It's believed that half of these undocumented children were born here, whilst most have been educated in the UK and speak English as their main language. However, all lack the security provided by British citizenship or, at least, secure immigration status.

This has practical, social and economic impacts and permeates their everyday lives. It affects family life, employment prospects, social networks, friendships, housing, access to medical help and justice. As they transition into adulthood these young people are excluded from work and higher education and may be removed to a country they've never lived in or even visited. It is our ambition to change this and create a world where every child has the opportunity to thrive.

We will also pursue systemic change by seeking to influence the public narrative, policy and practice affecting children and young people living in the UK with insecure immigration status.

OUR VISION

A world in which every child and young person has access to their legal rights and entitlements. We look forward to working with our partners and supporters to achieve this vision.

In 2016, with the support of KIND US, and a long-term funding relationship with Microsoft, four UK not-for-profits together pioneered a UK first: a ground-breaking pro-bono model of legal support with the potential to help thousands of children and young people achieve secure immigration status, opening up opportunities for them to fulfil their potential.



"I'm so glad I decided to go with Kids in Need of Defense UK. I was almost broken by the past seven years... I had lost so much confidence... But just talking to them I had a sense of peace, that they were doing everything they could... I was so impressed."

Kids in Need of Defense UK client

"I recently supported some pro bono lawyers at a first appointment for a new client and they were so well-prepared, sensitive and thoughtful, I was really moved... it's about more than providing legal representation to individuals, it's about human connections. We have the power to change society for the better and it's something I'm really proud to be a part of." "

Kids in Need of Defense UK supervising lawyer





OUR MISSION

To provide access to justice and due process to resolve the immigration status of children, young people and their immediate family members in the UK. We achieve this by harnessing the legal skills of lawyers working on a pro bono basis to provide specialised immigration legal advice and representation and by advocating for improvements in policy and practice.

In order to achieve our mission, we are guided by the following principles:

- We maintain a child rights-centred approach, which means:
 - The aim of our programme is to ensure the realisation of children's rights
 - Children's rights principles inform the way we plan and carry out our work
 - We promote the respect for, protection and fulfilment of children's rights
- Our services are accessible, specialist, professional, expert, high quality; and they are free
- We only provide services that are not eligible for public funding, or where public funding is inadequate or inaccessible
- We safeguard our independence, remain politically neutral and always act in the best interests of our client
- We adopt a learning approach, seeking to continuously improve and innovate
- Our organisation is shaped by learning from those we seek to help, from our partners and KIND in the US and elsewhere in Europe
- We are flexible and adaptable to meet changing needs and emerging problems as case demand dictates, while ensuring quality mentoring to support pro bono lawyers throughout the process
- All colleagues play an equal role in achieving our goal, and all acknowledge responsibility to each other in the way we play our part

"The teamwork [on the case] was fantastic. We pulled together and helped our client in a very real way. It was more immediately rewarding than my day-to-day work."

Pro bono lawyer

2016-19 ACHIEVEMENTS

In the last three years, we have built upon a growing culture of pro bono legal services in the UK by launching Kids in Need of Defense UK. Working with the US organisation, Kids in Need of Defense (KIND), we have successfully replicated its pro bono model of specialist end-to-end casework in the UK.¹ With the support of our pioneering law firm partners, not-for-profits and KIND, we've been able to evolve our approach and create a robust, scalable pro bono engagement model.

¹Over 10 years, KIND has enabled more than 16,000 unaccompanied children in the US and Central America to access free legal assistance working with a network of over 600 private law firms, corporate legal departments, law schools and bar associations. KIND is also working to develop its model elsewhere in Europe.

We now have a fully-functioning pro-bono service that in the last three years has:

- Provided legal assistance and representation to **408** individuals
- Achieved **198** individual grants of citizenship or leave to remain
- Achieved **99%** success in all cases where we have had a decision
- Engaged **over 300** lawyers, each working on one or more cases

OBJECTIVE 1

To maintain a sustainable national pro-bono movement with potential to address the needs of migrant/UK-born children living in the UK with unresolved immigration status

Limitations in the provision of legal aid across the UK mean children and young people do not always qualify for free and specialist legal help with citizenship and immigration applications. Families rarely have funds to pay for legal advice or representation in addition to application fees; a wasted fee may mean a family cannot afford to try again. They may be unable to access specialist advice particularly when the application is complex and sometimes they won't be able to access any advice at all. In this context, securing permanent solutions to children and young people's immigration status can be challenging.

HOW

Our pioneering work with partner law firms and KIND in the US has shown that it's possible to build an effective national model of pro-bono engagement to take on this challenge. Expert supervision and support from specialist not-for-profits is critical to making this model work.

We will continue to invest in our established pro bono partnerships and work to build new ones so that we can help more children and young people.

We will build and sustain relationships with a wide range of funders and supporters to sustain the movement financially.

BY 2022

- We will have recruited 500 pro bono lawyers, all of which will have taken on cases
- At least 75 lawyers will have taken on three or more cases
- We'll be working with 30 law firms or corporations
- We'll have built a regular and sustainable income stream

OBJECTIVE 2

Fewer children and young people in the UK will experience barriers to social inclusion caused by insecure immigration status

The latest research suggests that there are 215,000 undocumented children and 117,000 undocumented young people living in the UK. It's believed that half of the undocumented children were born here. Most have been educated in the UK and speak English as their main language yet lack the security provided by British citizenship or, at least, secure immigration status.

This has practical, social and economic impacts and permeates their everyday lives. It affects family life, employment, social-networks, friendships, housing, access to medical help and justice. As they transition into adulthood these young people are excluded from work and higher education and may be removed to a country they've never lived in or even visited.

HOW

We have learned that expert supervision and support for pro bono lawyers is critical to making this model work. To increase national coverage, we will continue to build capacity at each not-for-profit and work with our learning partners to evolve practices to improve efficiency, maximising the numbers of young people we help.

We will maintain and develop relationships with organisations that can help us reach children and young people living in the UK with unresolved immigration status.

BY 2022

- We will have helped 1000 children and young people and their families resolve their immigration or nationality status
- We will provide support to children and young people across the whole UK
- Their stories will show the impact that this change has made on their lives – opening up opportunities that would otherwise be unavailable, including further education, employment and secure accommodation

OBJECTIVE 3

Kids in Need of Defense UK becomes an influential advocate in support of children and young people's rights and access to justice.

The situation for children and young people with insecure immigration status is exacerbated by complex and inadequate laws, procedures and policies at both a UK and international level. We want to give these children and young people a voice.

HOW

Our partnership has the capacity to help more children and young people in the UK than any other. We will use that position to involve all partners in a determined and comprehensive effort to seek policy change and influence the public narrative.

We will seek to engage pro bono lawyers involved in this work to build a greater understanding of the issues affecting children and young people with insecure immigration status. Our learning partners will help us establish a mechanism for the voices of children and young people to be heard. We will work with others in the sector to build relationships of influence with policy makers. We will undertake or support strategic litigation.

We will work with KIND in the US and its initiative in Europe to strengthen the global voice for children and young people with an unresolved immigration status.

BY 2022

- Our expertise and experience in this area will be widely acknowledged
- We'll have strong alliances with other organisations working in this sector
- Young people and their families will be confident to speak out
- There will have been systemic improvements in the fairness and effectiveness of UK policy, procedures and practice as they impact on children and young people in the UK with insecure immigration status

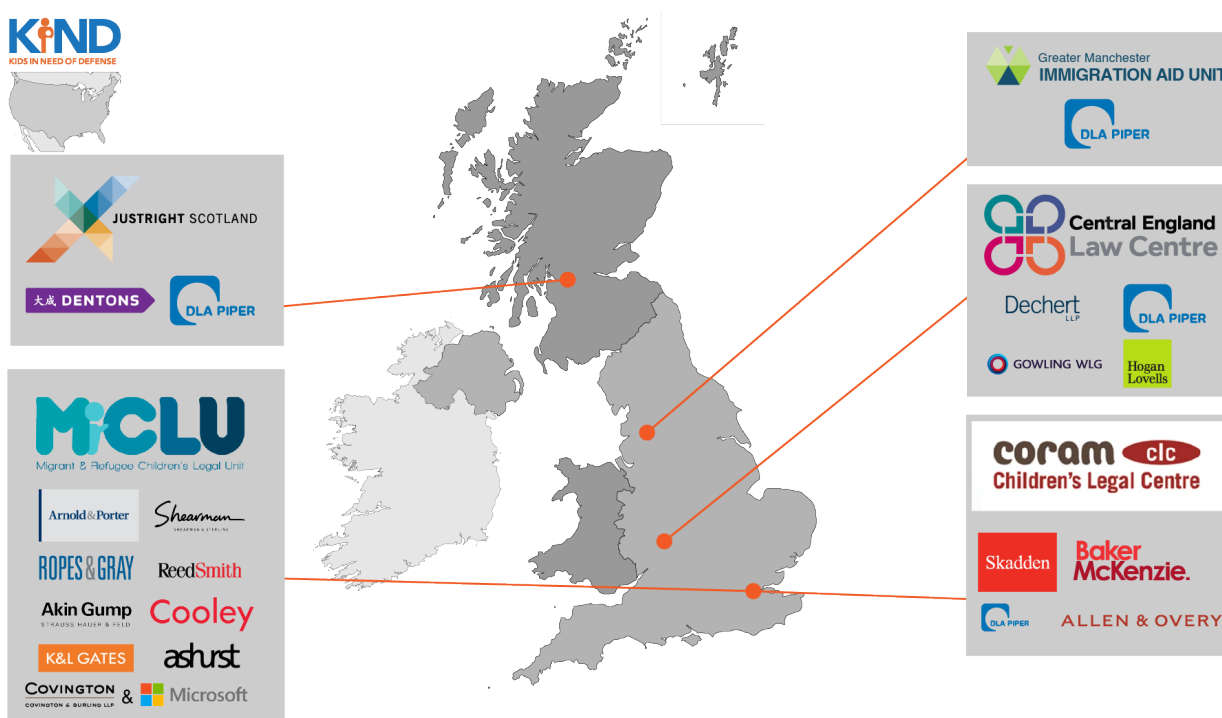
HELP US ACHIEVE OUR VISION

We achieve nothing without our pro bono partners, funders, and allies.

Kids in Need of Defense UK's work is only possible because of the support and generosity of our law firm partners, the commitment of individual lawyers and trusts, foundations and Microsoft, who are providing funding to make it happen.

THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES.

TOGETHER WE WILL ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVES IN THIS STRATEGY



Kids in Need of Defense UK is a collaboration between not-for-profits and law firms to train and supervise pro bono lawyers, who in turn provide representation to children and young people with insecure immigration status.

KIND is a US non-profit, sponsored by Microsoft, which in 10 years has trained 25,000 commercial lawyers to represent 16,000 children in deportation hearings. It's a significant force in public education and campaigning for unaccompanied children to receive fair and appropriate treatment within the US immigration system.

It is reaching out and sharing its expertise into the UK and Europe, it provided the impetus for this innovative new approach and remains the founding member.

LONDON

- Coram Children's Legal Centre, established 1991 and expert in all areas of children's rights
- Migrant and Refugee Children's Legal Unit, established 2012, a specialist legal and policy hub based at Islington Law Centre

MIDLANDS

- Central England Law Centre, established 1976, a recognised sector-leader in innovation and partnership working - leading the project

NORTH WEST

- Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit, established 1995, provides free legal representation and support services to people seeking asylum, refugees, children and vulnerable adults

SCOTLAND

- Scottish Refugee and Migrant Centre, established 2017, specialist legal, training and policy centre based at JustRight Scotland

