

The Rt. Hon. Boris Johnson MP
10 Downing Street
Westminster
London
SW1A 2AA

29 July 2019

Dear Prime Minister

Many, many congratulations on becoming Prime Minister. Your optimism and determination are much needed, and I wish you every success in delivering your programme.

I write on a matter that is almost as urgent as Brexit and at least as important – the health and wellbeing of our children and young people.

The Children First Alliance is a new organisation. We have rapidly gained the support of more than 160 organisations and expect to launch formally over the summer. Our aim is to encourage politicians to act in the best interests of children. It is vital that we succeed for we seem to be heading towards the least healthy adult population in living memory.

The CFA has grown out of an All-Party Group that has published 13 in-depth reports over the last 5 years examining many aspects of child health and wellbeing. The reports detail the growing challenges faced by children and families, which are clearly evidenced by the statistics on child physical and mental health. Poor physical and mental health are more the symptoms of the problems than the cause.

The inescapable conclusion is that firefighting on individual policy fronts will be insufficient to reverse the continuing powerful negative trends and may we therefore urge you to appoint at Cabinet level a senior Minister to take ownership of these issues and develop and implement solutions across Departments that will really make a difference?

You would gain enormous support from the sector if you were to take on this challenge and I know that you will be aware of the massive cost to the NHS of treating obesity, mental health and the many other consequences of a poor start in life.

May we also encourage you to consider incorporating the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child into domestic law? It is many years since the UK ratified the Convention and this would be a strong signal of serious intent and a recognition that in order to have a productive and healthy adult population we must start at the beginning.

I know from your statements that these matters are very important to you. Please appoint someone senior to deliver on this vital issue.

If there is anything at all I can do to assist please let me know.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'S' followed by a long horizontal line that ends in a small hook.

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