



**variety**<sup>™</sup>  
the children's charity

# Impact Report 2025

# A hidden population

**Across the UK, 1.1 million children have a disability. Over half (600,000+) are growing up in poverty.**

## **Families with a disabled child face multiple challenges, not least extreme financial stress.**

On average, they spend three times more than families with a non-disabled child on specialist products, services, accessible transport and utilities.

Low-income families are often simply unable to meet the extra costs of disability and whilst NHS-funded equipment should be available to disabled children, the system is hugely overstretched.

Without adequate support and equipment, a disabled child risks becoming increasingly isolated; lonely and frustrated, severely impacting their mental and physical wellbeing. Unable to participate in school, sport and childhood activities, opportunities they deserve are out of reach.

Thousands of children are falling behind, trapped in a cycle of disability and disadvantage.

**£1,095**

**on average extra spent every month by families with a disabled child**

# How Variety makes a difference

## Variety provides practical, life-changing support to disabled and disadvantaged children and young people across the UK.

There are currently 4.3 million children living in poverty in the UK, with 600,000 children both disabled and living in poverty. Variety's programmes make an immediate and lasting difference by directly improving wellbeing and quality of life.

Through improving physical and mental health, increasing independence and mobility, and opening up new opportunities and experiences, Variety's work supports children to reach their full potential.

## Variety supports children and young people through four key interlinked-programmes:



### Wheelchair and Equipment Grants

We directly provide manual, sports and powered wheelchairs to help children become more independent. We also deliver a wide range of life-changing specialist equipment including educational and adaptive play equipment, hoists, walkers, beds, furniture and specialist car seats.



### Sunshine Coaches

We provide fully accessible, adapted minibuses for SEND schools and non-profit organisations. Our iconic Sunshine Coaches are valuable community assets, opening up a world of opportunities and enabling tens of thousands of children to access life-changing experiences every day.



### Great Days Out

We provide unforgettable, exciting, educational and fun experiences for disadvantaged children and their families.



### Access Interns

Our supported work experience programme partners with companies big and small to empower young people with disabilities. The programme builds new skills, boosts confidence and kickstarts careers.

# 2025 at a glance



**20,350+ disabled and disadvantaged children, and young people directly supported**



**855 grants awarded**



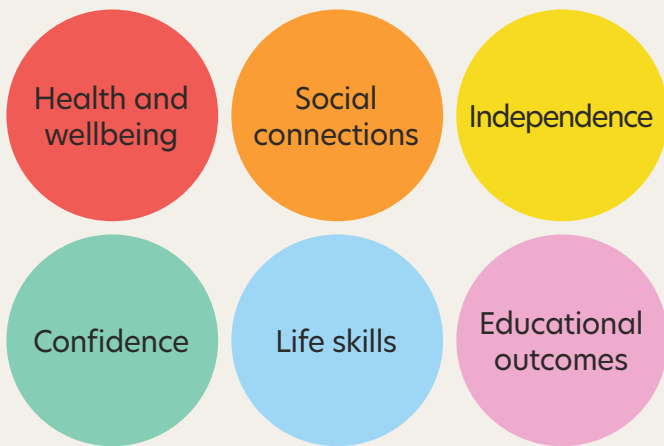
**£4.1m+ total grant value**



# Monitoring and Evaluation

**Reflecting Variety's commitment to creating lasting change in the lives of disabled and disadvantaged children, we launched a new Impact Monitoring and Evaluation framework in 2025. To implement this we created the new post of Monitoring and Evaluation Officer.**

A representative sample of 64 children and young people across all core programmes were interviewed to measure the impact of Variety support against six outcome indicators aligned to Variety's Theory of Change (see page 13):



The Sunshine Coach programme also measures Employability (see page 8).

Children and young people were asked to rate the extent of impact on a five-point scale from '1: no extent' to '5: a very great extent'.

The impact monitoring process consists of three stages of data collection: baseline data collected when prospective beneficiaries apply to one of our programmes, a telephone interview three months after their grant is delivered, and an online survey ten months after the grant delivery. This enables us to collect robust qualitative and quantitative data and compare how our beneficiaries' experiences change over time.

2025 is a pilot year for this programme; as a result, this report is built on quantitative and qualitative data generated from telephone interviews with our beneficiaries from the Sunshine Coach, Specialist Equipment Grants and Wheelchair Grants programmes, as well as survey data from participants of the Access Interns Programme. In 2026, our report will include all three stages of data collection.

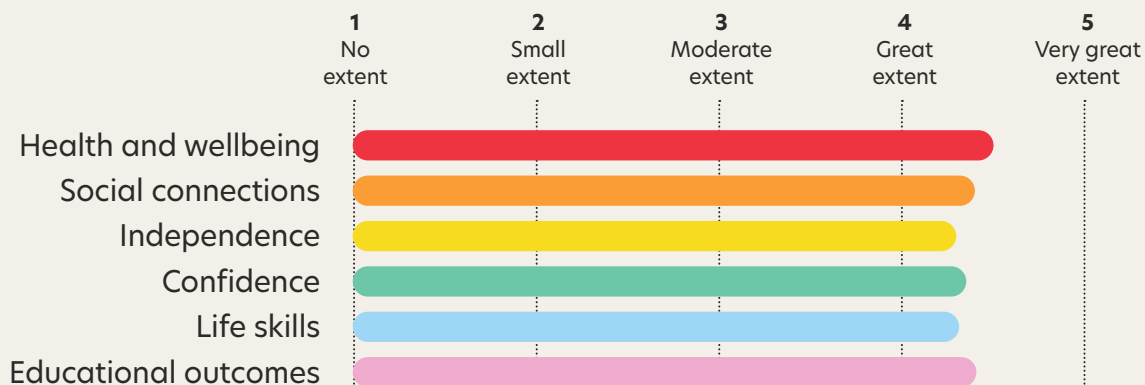
Variety's new Impact Monitoring and Evaluation process will, going forward, gather pre-grant data, and conduct structured interviews at three and 10 months to provide a clear picture of the impact of Variety's support.



# Our impact summary

## Average rating of the extent of the impact across all Variety's programmes on a five-point scale (1 to 5)

Where applicable, based on 64 beneficiaries



**71%**

rated impact as very great (45.8%) or great (25.3%) extent

**89.1%**

positive response in Health and wellbeing results

**76.5%**

positive response in Social connections results



# Sunshine Coaches programme

**Variety's Sunshine Coaches are specially adapted, accessible minibuses for SEND schools and non-profit organisations working with disabled and disadvantaged children.**

They ensure children can explore places they would otherwise never visit, experience different learning environments and gain life skills – all while supporting physical, social and language development.

Variety Golf celebrated its 60th anniversary in 2025 with an outstanding contribution of 43 coaches to the Sunshine Coach programme, continuing its role as the cornerstone funder of Variety's flagship programme.

**62**

coaches delivered  
(target: 60)

**13,144**

children supported  
with Sunshine  
coaches

**£3.41m+**

total grant value

**123**

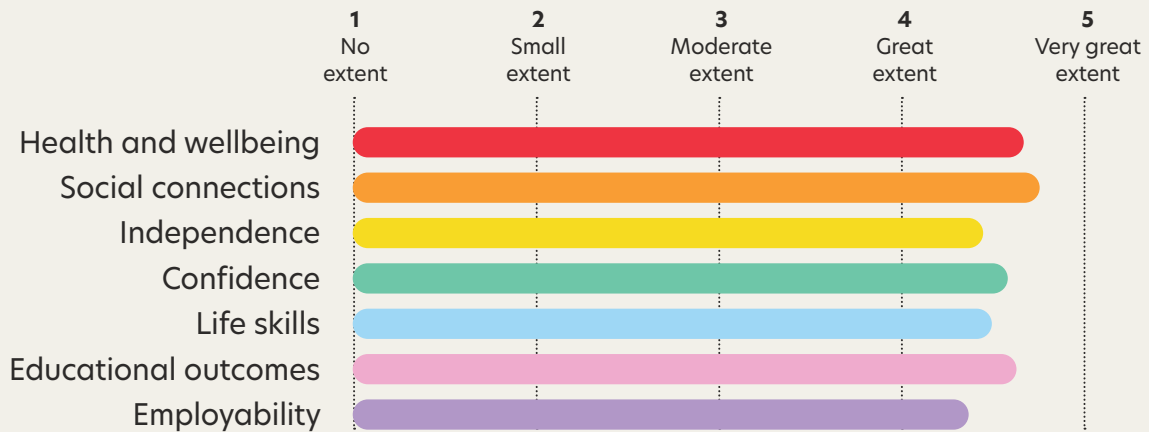
applications in the  
pipeline (at 31 Dec  
2025) valued  
at £7.2m



# Sunshine Coaches impact data

## Average scores of the impact of Sunshine Coaches on a five-point scale (1 to 5)

Based on responses from 27 beneficiaries



**4.38/5**

overall mean score shows exceptionally strong results

**100%**

reported improved Social connections to a great or very great extent

**96%**

reported improvement in Health and wellbeing

**4.2 days**

a week usage on average

“

The Variety Sunshine Coach means we can take our students to many more places and events without burdening parents with cost. We've visited the beach, the zoo, and the planetarium during their space topic, and for local history they can explore areas of Luton we're studying. We've seen a great impact on their concentration, learning and attendance.”

“

I can use the word impactful, but it's immeasurable, what this does for our children. They can become part of society, instead of just sitting on the periphery of it.”

# Wheelchairs programme

The right wheelchair offers a child or young person independence, freedom to explore their environment, keep up with friends and take part in social activities and sport. Variety funds manual, powered, sports and all-terrain wheelchairs according to each child's needs.

Sports wheelchairs accounted for nearly a third of all grants, demonstrating significant demand for equipment enabling participation in sport. The majority of grants went to young people aged 11-19, reflecting the particular importance of mobility during adolescence.

The Family Fund's promotion of our programme through its network of over 40,000 low-income families, helped raise awareness and generate referrals.

44

children supported with wheelchair grants

70%

of grants went to young people aged 11-19

30%

of grants awarded were for sports wheelchairs

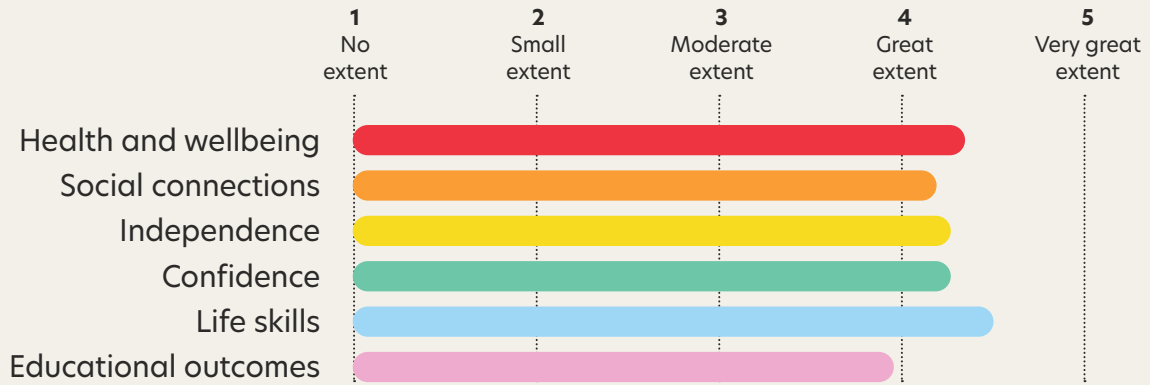
£234,079

Total grant value



# Wheelchairs impact data

Average scores of the impact of Variety-funded wheelchairs on a five-point scale (1 to 5)



**4.18/5**

overall mean score shows a consistently strong impact

**90%**

reported improvements in Health and wellbeing

**60%**

reported daily or near-daily use

**4.7 days**

a week usage on average

“

Before Variety gave my daughter a wheelchair, she was using a push one that was clunky and she was dependant on someone to push her. The new wheelchair from Variety has improved her confidence and she can go out to school herself.”



# Specialist Equipment programme

In 2025, Variety's specialist equipment grants were delivered through two channels: the Individual Grants programme and the Variety and Family Fund "Together Fund", a landmark new partnership launched during the year.

## Individual Grants programme

A total of 82 individual grants, averaging £1,744, provided specialist equipment tailored to each child's needs, including sensory equipment (22%), beds and cots (13%), and hoists and harnesses (12%).

## The Together Fund

The Variety and Family Fund "Together Fund" delivered 650 grants averaging £574 and totalling £372,827, exceeding its initial target. The Fund achieved UK-wide reach: England (73%), Wales (10%), Scotland (10%) and Northern Ireland (7%), representing a meaningful expansion of Variety's geographic footprint.

**£515,830**

Total grant value from both channels

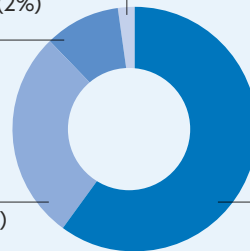
**732**

grants awarded and children supported across the UK

Specialist cycles (2%)

Enhanced sensory support (10%)

Technology (28%)



Together Fund grants awarded

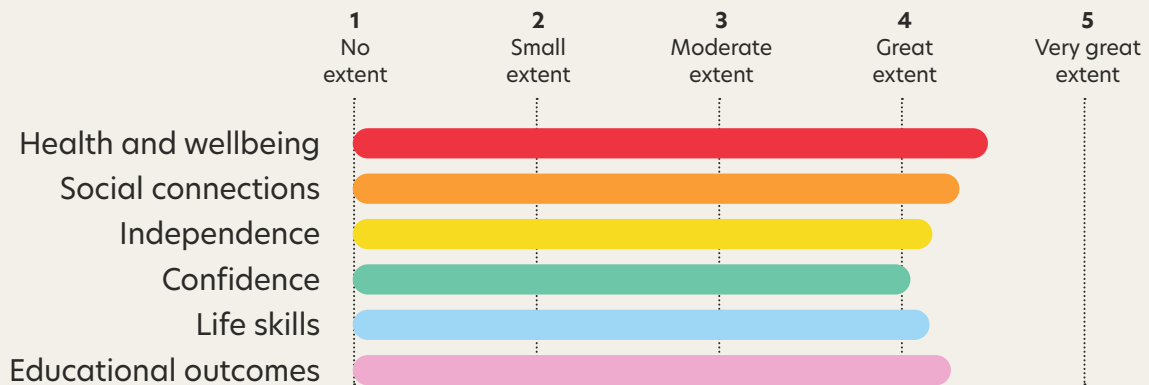
Sensory toys and equipment (60%)



# Specialist Equipment impact data

## Average scores of the impact of Variety's specialist equipment grants on a five-point scale (1 to 5)

Based on responses from 27 beneficiaries\*



**4.19/5**

overall mean score shows a strong impact

**90%**

reported a positive impact on Social connections

**5.5 days**

a week average usage: highest of all programmes

**52%**

reported daily use of special equipment

“

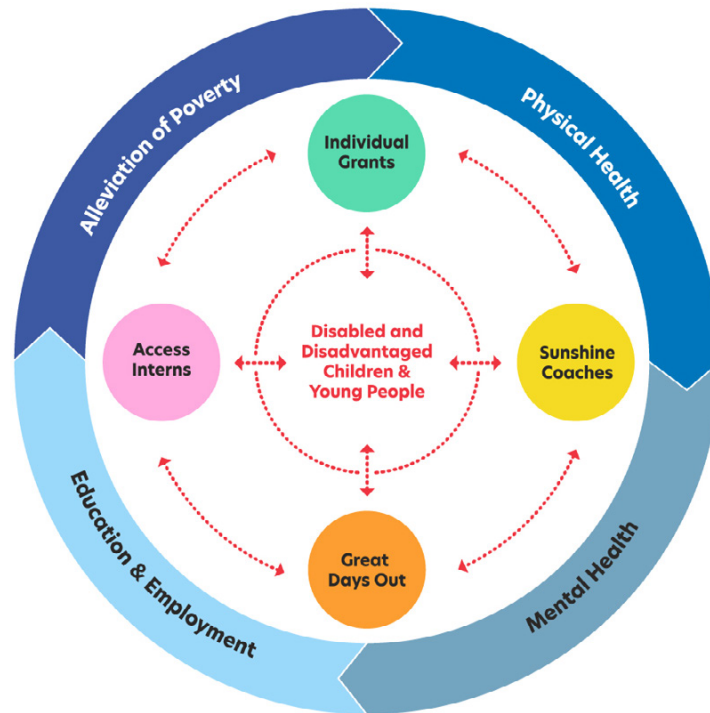
**Receiving the sensory equipment from Variety has been vital. My daughter was having a lot of meltdowns due to sensory triggers. I was trying to help her but because she wasn't getting the input she needed, we were butting heads. Now with the equipment from Variety, she listens to me more: I can talk to her and she understands me.”**

\*The Together Fund evaluation, due September 2026, will provide additional impact data.

# Variety's impact framework

Our Impact Monitoring and Evaluation framework is informed by Variety's Impact Ecosystem and Theory of Change models.

## Variety's Impact Ecosystem



## Variety's Theory of Change

Activities	Short Term Outcomes	Long Term Outcomes	Long Term Impact
Wheelchair & Equipment Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased Mobility</li> <li>Better Quality of Life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved Health</li> <li>Increased Independence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Empowered &amp; Fulfilled Lives</li> <li>Improved Health</li> <li>Reduced Inequality</li> <li>Improved Social Mobility</li> <li>More Inclusive Society</li> <li>Increased Workforce Diversity</li> </ul>
Sunshine Coaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation in educational, recreational &amp; sports opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased Confidence</li> <li>Better Educational Outcomes</li> </ul>	
Great Days Out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Experiences</li> <li>Social Interactions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stronger Social Connections</li> <li>Improved employability</li> </ul>	
Access Interns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work Experience</li> <li>Career Development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better Life Skills</li> </ul>	
<b>Moderators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good Governance &amp; Strategy</li> <li>Successful Donor Relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Successful Fundraising</li> <li>Well Supported Staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Good Supply Chain</li> <li>Strong Stakeholder Relationships</li> </ul>

# Our wider programmes

## Voices for Change

Variety awarded four organisational grants through the Voices for Change campaign, totalling £15,068 to widen participation in sports for children with disabilities.

**1,879**

children and young people supported

## Access Interns

Launched in October 2022 in partnership with The Kartik Foundation, the Access Interns programme provides supported work experience placements for disabled and disadvantaged young people.

In 2025, the programme placed 14 interns - significant growth from the pilot year's intake of three. The programme is expected to expand to 30 interns in 2026, with new educational institution partnerships in development.



## Great Days Out

Variety's Great Days Out programme provides memorable childhood experiences that reduce social isolation and increase participation in previously inaccessible activities.

We held 14 events in 2025. Parents and carers consistently report the positive impact these experiences have, allowing families to enjoy quality time together away from the stresses of daily life.

**4,544**





young people and their families participated

# Thank you to all our donors, volunteers and supporters



**Your dedication makes our work possible and helps ensure that every child and young person has the opportunity to reach their full potential.**



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[www.variety.org.uk](http://www.variety.org.uk) 020 7428 8100

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