



Providing information, advice  
and support for everyone  
affected by a parent's drinking

# 2015/16 Annual Report



# About Us

Our free and confidential telephone, email, letter and message board helpline is at the heart of all we do, providing information, understanding and support for everyone affected by a parent's drinking.

The work we do is all about planning for a more positive future, creating an opportunity for children, young people and adults to see that the world can be different from the one they have always known, and they can make positive choices for themselves, irrespective of whether their parents continue to drink.

In 2015 and 2016, over 68,000 calls and emails were received, with countless other contacts through social media and blog site COAisathing. A team of dedicated volunteers respond; without them the helpline would not exist.

'The number of calls is awe-inspiring and sad, dealt with by the people who make up the Nacoe community. They give their time, energy and care to who? To people young and old who feel ignored and un-loved. This is amazing, it is humanity at its finest because it is altruistic...What they do is provide that most precious commodity of all: time.'

**Reverend Katie Watson, Child Protection Officer**

'I came across the Nacoe website a few years ago and sent an email when I couldn't cope. It was helpful just to tell someone how I was feeling without judgement.'

**Trevor, Helpline emailer**

As well as the excellent training, skills and resources there is a wonderful energy which brings the work to life. When a child calls they receive something far more than effective counselling techniques. More than the spoken words, simply knowing that someone is there to listen is a positive experience which may be missing at home. Nacoe is more than any other charity I know. It's not simply about fundraising or 'tackling issues'. It is one of the few services that is consistently available for children. This is what we mean when we say 'You are not alone'.

**Claire, Volunteer helpline counsellor**



## Our services include:

- Free, confidential helpline
- Online message boards
- Website with personal experiences, FAQs, resources and research
- COAisathing blog site
- Online message board service
- Information packs specific to individual callers
- Publications for children, young people and adults
- Publications for professionals
- Volunteering opportunities and training for volunteers
- Membership scheme
- Lectures, outreach and COA Week
- Research into the experience and prevention of alcoholism developing in this vulnerable group
- Social media awareness and campaigns



# Patrons

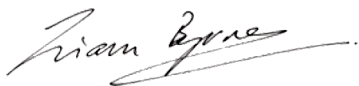
'I found Nacoa in 2009 when I joined them for the largest Urban Paint Festival in Europe, Upfest, which raises funds and awareness for Nacoa. I spoke publicly for the first time ever about me and my dad. Within a short time I found myself surrounded by people who understood. They said 'me too', a sort of shorthand for what it's like to live with the secrets that surround alcohol and the family. I became a patron because if I had known there was someone to listen, it would have helped me understand and cope with my dad's illness. I want today's children to have the help and support I did not have.'



Calum Best



'I am very proud to be a patron of this great charity. Nacoa's excellent staff and volunteers do so much for Britain's 2.6 million children of alcoholics. In the months that followed my father's death from alcoholism last year, Nacoa gave me the strength to try and make sense of my life as the child of an alcoholic. I am looking forward to another successful year working alongside Nacoa as we take our campaign for change to the heart of government.'



The Right Hon. Liam Byrne MP



'My mother was an alcoholic, in and out of hospital my entire childhood. My father divorced her when I was 14. My brother, sister and I had no one to turn to and we never spoke about it. I couldn't tell anyone 'It's Christmas Day. Mummy's in bed and no one's cooked us dinner.' We thought we were freaks. When you're a child, you blame yourself and think you're a bad person because Mummy is in bed crying and won't get up. As patron, I am proud to be part of the services which today help thousands of children like me.'



Geraldine James OBE



'I am a proud patron of this important initiative which puts children's wellbeing at the heart of all they do - a charity providing a lifeline for some of the most vulnerable and voiceless children.'

'Nacoa is not a fashionable charity; it dares to talk about problems children experience when their parents are unable to care for them due to alcohol and drug problems. It's estimated over a million families are affected in this way and it takes special courage to speak about these things. Nacoa provides an anonymous and safe place for these children for as long as needed, with a promise to always care.'



Elle Macpherson



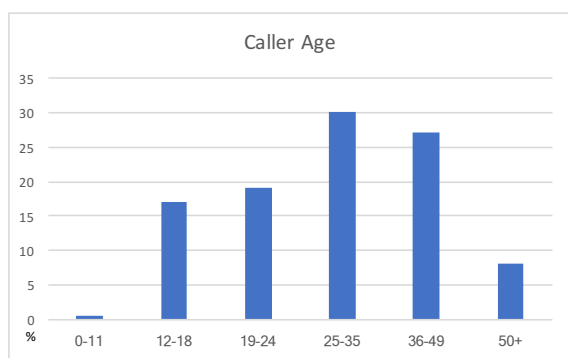
# Chair's Report

Since 1990, we've responded to 300,000 requests for help. The website—a beacon of hope to so many—has received over 750,000 visits, and is a constant reminder that children struggling with their parent's drinking are not alone. Nacoe is here to provide free, inclusive and accessible help and support to those who need it.

In 2015, we celebrated our 25-year anniversary with an anniversary gala, as well as two 25-hour yogathons running concurrently in Bristol and London, raising funds that were then matched by supermodel and Nacoe patron, Elle Macpherson. Both events were masterminded by volunteers, Courtenay Pipkin and Chris Heffernon, who, with their team, worked tirelessly throughout the year to create events that raised spirits at a time of reducing staff levels and an increasing number of requests for help.

The 25-week countdown to the gala saw the launch of twenty-five new moving personal stories on social media, including contributions from patrons, Tony Adams, Lauren Booth, The Right Honourable Liam Byrne MP, Geraldine James and Nacoe consultative council member, Virginia Ironside.

On the night, we were joined by HM Vice-Lord Lieutenant of Bristol, Dr Timothy Chambers and the Lord Mayor, Councillor Clare Campion-Smith. We also welcomed Upfest artists and Nacoe supporters, Inkie and Rob Was, who painted canvases live during the dinner that were then auctioned off in aid of Nacoe.



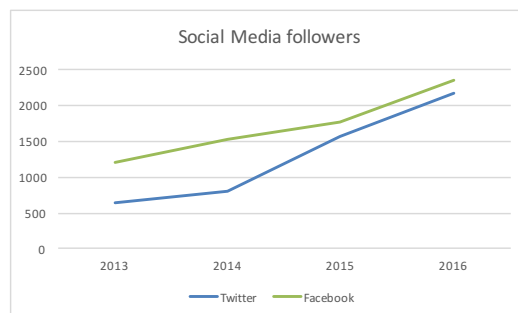
Our guest speakers, Cherie Lunghi and Liam Byrne spoke movingly about their own experiences. Mr Byrne thanked our co-founder and CEO, Hilary Henriques, for her work over the past 25-years, providing a lifeline to countless beneficiaries. She later went on to say she felt unworthy of the attention, but gloried in the fact that the gala and Liam Byrne had given these children a voice much louder than had previously been heard.

Throughout 2016 we worked closely with Liam Byrne, culminating in the establishment of the first ever All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Children of Alcoholics, which is 'calling for some simple, big steps that would

mean we connect every child affected by a parent's drinking with help that would make a difference. We want every part of Britain to have a plan in place and we want more investment in crucial helplines like the helpline run by Nacoe.'

In September the first meeting of the APPG took place, gathering evidence from Nacoe, The Children's Society, Turning Point and AdFam. Our Chief Executive and co-founder, Hilary Henriques MBE, presented on behalf of Nacoe and made the case for supporting the nationwide coverage of Nacoe's cost-effective helpline. She said: 'What we've set up is the most accessible and successful service for providing a vital lifeline for the children suffering in silence in every corner of the UK.'

Byrne also attended our annual Volunteers Awards Evening, along with HM Lord Lieutenant of Bristol, Mrs Mary Prior and the Right Honourable Lord Mayor of Bristol, Councillor Jeff Lovell and the Lady Mayoress. When presenting the volunteers' awards, Liam described his Nacoe as a family, with a feeling of 'community and coming home'.



All our volunteers deserve thanks, and, in 2015 and 2016, special awards were won by Anita Asadullah, Anne-Marie Barron, Josh Connolly, Nicky Doig, Lloyd During, John Fenston, Will Hahn, Chris Heffernon, Jenny Lee, Courtenay Pipkin and Martin Ubank. They have moved heaven and earth to make the world a better place and we applaud them for sharing their time and skills for free.

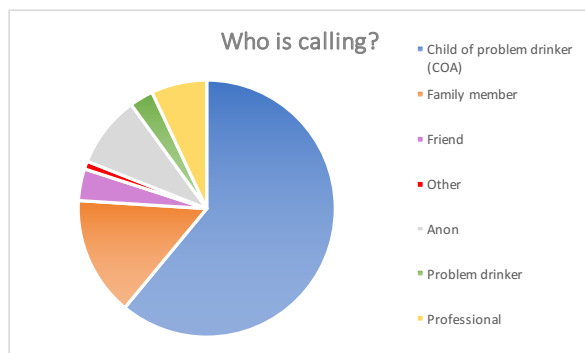
I would also like to commend our social media volunteers, who work offsite to ensure Nacoe is out there spreading our message with the media, the larger charities, and affected individuals alike. Josh Connolly, Piers Henriques and Cassie Ohlson work tirelessly and, since 2015, have attracted an ever-growing number of followers on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Josh's blog COAisathing.com now has a global reach and attracted an amazing 10,269 unique visitors in 2016, its first year of operation. With their help, also, our website continues to be regularly updated with news and events.

We were delighted in 2016 to take part in the National Citizenship Service (NCS), providing around a hundred sessions throughout Norfolk and the South West. The





talks were successful in raising awareness and gaining support with the hundreds of the young people taking part. Myself, Piers Henriques, Mike Ohlson and Tracey and Simon West all acted as session leaders during the Summer, Autumn and Winter NCS 'waves', all providing time and skills for free.



It's with a heavy heart that I report the death of one of our long-term trustees, Simon Ward. He joined us as a trustee in 1992 and was instrumental in securing funding in the early years. He was a constant source of wise counsel, passionate about our work and, when asked, said his best professional memory was Nacoa winning The Guardian Charity Award in 2006: 'a coming of age and on my watch as chair of trustees'.

On a practical note, everything we do is made possible by Peter and Frances Irwin, whose IT skills, including work on our databases, has been provided pro bono since 2000. They enable us to create publications, deliver services and large-scale poster projects, and the means to analyse and improve our helpline. Their contribution is priceless.

Unfortunately, in October 2016, Nacoa received a notice to quit our office accommodation, Trelawney House. However, despite the costs and disruption of a second forced move in two years, Nacoa is now settled, at a new premises, at a reduced rent, looking forward to a long and happy association with a fellow social enterprise.

In November 2016, we were honoured to receive a visit from HRH The Duke of Kent, introducing him to our patrons, trustees, members, volunteers and funders. He asked many questions and spent time listening to people

who give their time to keep the helpline going.

Later, HRH The Duke of Kent wrote to convey his thanks for such an insightful and warm welcome. He said the work that Nacoa is undertaking is an incredibly important one, and that he was very taken by stories of how Nacoa had supported children and affected individuals, making a genuine and significant impact on their lives.

These two years have brought about change that we might have only previously dreamed about. One such highlight was receiving a message of support from the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby:

'I want to send my greetings and gratitude for what you do. I wish you have been around (or if you were, that I had known of you) when I was growing up. You are so important because you can be the source of a real community, that merely by existing and accepting, offers the chance of healing and the hope of purpose to people whose lives have been disrupted and diminished by the effect of alcohol abuse in someone whom they love.'

We are proud of our community and I am proud to be one of the many who are passionate about providing help and support for everyone affected by a parent's drinking.

*Michelle Nadler*

MICHELLE NADLER



# CEO's Report

Nacoa was set up in 1990 in response to work at St Joseph's Centre for Addiction, where clients sometimes returned saying they no longer fitted into their families and that they could not remain sober at home. In retrospect, this made perfect sense when the family had been given little or no support or the opportunity to plan for a different future. And, lost in the re-arrangement of family life to accommodate the drinking and a code of silence, were the children.

The Nacoa helpline was created to empower these children with a variety of life skills to help them cope with difficult and ongoing challenges. The helpline is a gateway to help and support without involving parents. They can ring when needed and sometimes call at the point of crisis, and we remain with them on the phone; a kindly voice in what might seem a hostile world.

*'It's hard for children of alcoholics to reach out. To admit you need help means battling a great sense of betrayal. Not to reach out and find a helping hand or an understanding listener can spell a lifetime of problems.'*

**Lauren Booth, Patron**

We work with children as young as five, and find ways to help them as individuals, and not extensions of their parents' problems. There are no kits and no quick fixes, just a genuine desire to provide the information and care they need to exist and thrive in today's world. In effect, the opportunity to see that they can change how they feel about themselves and get what they need from others, the knowledge that the world can be different from the one they've known, irrespective of whether their parents continue to drink.

*'I used to have so much self-loathing inside. A lot of healing has gone on and my own children got their Dad back when I got sober. That's why I support Nacoa. Every one growing up struggling with their parent's alcohol problems should have the chance to talk to someone who understands, if their parent stops drinking or not.'*

**Tony Adams MBE, Patron**

The helpline relies on the many hundreds of volunteers who've contributed in a myriad of ways since 1990. Some of them are mentioned in the following pages and some are not but each and every one of them breathed life into our services.

*'What struck me about volunteering at Nacoa was the diversity of the work. As well as providing a listening service, we have a website, respond to emails and letters, send out information packs with posters and leaflets, promote research, collect data, organise events, outreach work, an annual memorial lecture, training and maintain a presence on the digital platform. We also lead UK COA Week which is now an international event.'*

**Dr Jessica Munafo, Consultative Council Member**

Our callers are at the heart of all that we do, and 2016 saw the preparation for a study reviewing the performance of the helpline over the last 15 years. This is the second study produced pro bono by Dr Anne-Marie Barron and Dr Alan Leigh who also produced 'Nacoa and its Volunteers: The Contribution of the Nacoa Foundation Training Programme', a seminal study which successfully guided Nacoa through challenges faced in 2013/2014.

*'There appears to be equilibrium in the organisation, where the different requirements of staff, volunteers, and other stakeholders are combined in such a way as to produce an extremely effective body which exists on extremely limited funds, but has the support of a large number of people, and the gratitude of countless more. As such it is not difficult to conclude that Nacoa is indeed impressive for its size, and a model of good practice. This is supported by the awards it has received and the feedback from Nacoa volunteers and users of the helpline.'*

**Dr Anne-Marie Barron, Trustee**

The first training programme took place in 1995 with students at Bristol University. Working with young people with high expectations shaped the way the programme was structured and gave access to young volunteers who were able to relate to young callers. This is peer support at its best. In 2001 we recruited volunteers from the wider community and our callers now have access to volunteer helpline counsellors with a range of life experiences and skills, with the support of each other, the helpline supervisors, ongoing training and support groups.

*'I think what stays with me most clearly was the training around family dynamics and how alcoholism ploughs an ugly red line through the whole family potentially for generations to come. The training was a real eye-opener for me because I could see that offering a friendly and informed voice on the end of the phone, can help people free themselves from the power of that red line. That's life-changing stuff and I was grateful to be given the opportunity to be a part of Nacoa and help others but more than that, Nacoa changed me too'*

**Eleanor, Volunteer Helpline Counsellor**

In this digital age, our paper publications are still a valuable resource. I've often thought about Tom who told me he kept our 'Some Mums and Dads Drink Too Much' leaflet tucked in the back pocket of his jeans. Tapping the pocket when his parents 'kicked off' helped as he clung on to the fact that this was not his fault, he hadn't caused it, couldn't control it and he could call Nacoa.

We've recently introduced two new booklets, 'Information for Professionals' and 'Information for Teachers', which





have been very well received and we look forward to reinstating the poster project, taking publications into schools, when funding allows.

Our work is challenging, but raising funds falls into a different category altogether. Remaining true to the original vision statements and refusing to chase funding that would divert energy from helpline services, has ensured longevity. But, it is soul destroying when funders only see merit in new and 'innovative' projects, rather than services, like Nacoa's, with a proven track record.

*'Nacoa isn't an organisation that goes out of its way to court the headlines. It prefers to work quietly and patiently. But it does the most extraordinary job creating an emotional and spiritual place of safety for those who grow up in alcoholic homes. For those who know the loneliness, the confusion and pain which can come from being the child of an alcoholic, Nacoa is a vital resource. It tells people that they are not alone.'*

**Fergal Keane OBE, BBC Foreign Correspondent**

In 2009 our work was featured on the Comic Relief Red Nose Day broadcast and for the first time many people saw the full impact of parental drinking on their TV screens. In the same year, Nacoa was included in the BBC Children in Need film, Brought up by Booze, featuring Calum Best. He spent time at Nacoa, looking for ways to encourage young people to come forward, and opened our flagship fundraising event, Upfest, where he spoke for the first time about his own experience.

Nacoa has been associated with Upfest, the largest urban paint festival in Europe, since 2008 when Steve Hayles brought together some of the world's leading urban artists as a fundraiser for Nacoa. An epic journey began which combines raising funds, benefiting from the generosity of the artists and an opportunity for volunteers to take our azure t-shirts onto the streets of Bristol and show the helpline to a new audience.

Local rap artist, Gimson, who dedicated his hard hitting single 'Oh Daddy' to Nacoa, teaches the kids to express themselves through rap, and together they produced and released #KidsRapUpfest. A line from the 2016 rap resonated with me: 'at Upfest you learn things you don't learn in school', and it struck me that 'at Nacoa you learn things you don't learn in school'. Providing schools with tools to identify these children and help them access the

support they deserve is a number one priority in 2017.

In 2015, Liam Byrne walked into the Nacoa office, and began an association that has changed our callers' lives forever. It is hard to put into words the impact Liam has created by speaking publicly about his life with a father who drank too much, and how it affected him. His words were then echoed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, who sent a moving letter in support to Nacoa, talking about his own experiences:

*'My experience, whether easier or more difficult than that of others, was fairly difficult. It involved periods when there seemed to be no problem, and periods when the problem seemed to have no end. It led to wild mood swings from my father, to behaviour that was in retrospect deeply abusive, and to other times where affection was expressed. By the end of his life, it meant that the event of his death was again a confusing one emotionally, including dealing with, at one level, a sense of relief.'*

*'One of the things I most missed was the company of others who understood the issue. Even good friends could not believe that he was as I experienced him, given that for them he seemed quite normal and even very amusing and clever (which indeed, in the absence of alcohol, was what he was).'*

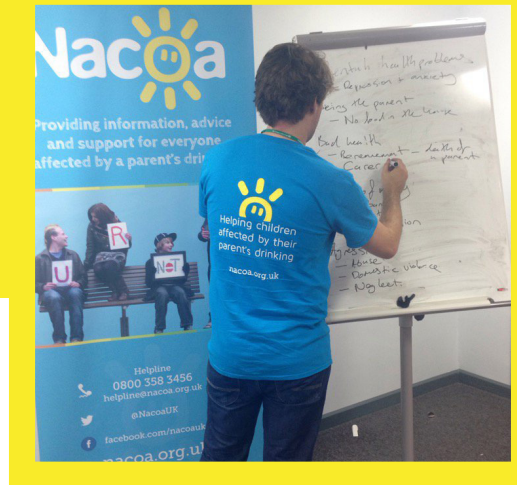
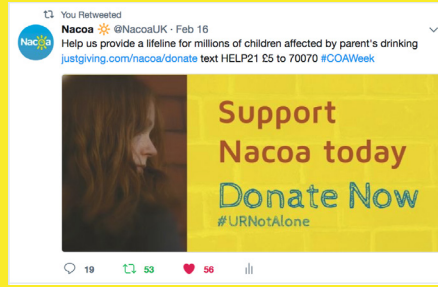
**Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury**

It was gratifying to see Nacoa's large research study, identifying the scope and scale of the problems, inform much of the discussion in the media avalanche resulting from the Parliamentary campaign, which now also includes the voice of Jonathan Ashworth MP:

*'I am delighted that over the past couple of years Parliament has increasingly taken the importance of supporting children of alcoholics seriously. Nacoa's hard work in this regard has been extremely welcome, and their support helped me to publicly speak about my own father's drinking problems last year. However, we cannot be complacent for the 2 million children of alcoholics. That's why implementing a thorough strategy remains a central priority of mine as Shadow Health Secretary and I hope Ministers will match our commitment and take urgent measures to support these vulnerable children.'*

**Jonathan Ashworth MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Health**

Significantly, these public revelations have unleashed an unprecedented increase in the number of people now talking about parental alcohol problems and asking for help. They are everyman and the helpline is here for



grandparents who want to support their grandchildren, neighbours who look out for the child next door, young people who are wracked with guilt when they choose between going out with friends or protecting younger siblings from the wrath of drinking parents: everyone affected by a parent's drinking.

One of the many positives of working with young volunteers ensures we do not become introspective and complacent; we are always looking for ways to improve and extend our services, and in 2017 we will launch SMS technology on the website, online message boards, and integrate Josh Connolly's COAisathing.com under the Nacoa umbrella of services:

*'I found Nacoa through a simple Google search. My dad drank and I had been through my own struggles with alcohol. The Nacoa training opened up my world. I was 27 years old and had already found some recovery from my own drinking but had no idea just how much Nacoa would teach me. Despite a life of internal struggles and pain, I had no clue I was suffering as the child of an alcoholic. Nacoa presented simple facts in a way that began to rid me of a lifetime of internal loneliness. I shared some of my experiences on YouTube and created COAisathing.com, a platform for shared experiences; a community of people set free from being locked into emotional pain.'*

**Josh, Outreach volunteer and creator of COAisathing.com**

This has been an incredible journey and I am especially grateful for the close association with HM Lord Lieutenant of Bristol, Mrs Mary Prior, who retires this year. Without her, being awarded The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in 2012 and meeting HM The Duke of Kent in 2016 may not have happened.

*'It has been a great pleasure to get to know you and for me to learn more about the wonderful work that Nacoa does. You have raised the profile of these children's needs in the most extraordinary and dedicated way and I do sincerely congratulate you for all that you have achieved.'*

**HM Lord Lieutenant of Bristol, Mrs Mary Prior**

2016 is a year which brought unforeseen problems and a multitude of triumphs. From our humble beginnings at Holy Cross Hospital in 1990, it was clear that children suffer unconscionably from the stigma which engulfs people who drink too much. Over the years media and governments have vilified their parents and scapegoated

them as being responsible for all the problems in our society today. Imagine how it feels to be a child in a family which is just written off as a problem.

*'As a Helpline Counsellor I spoke to frightened, hurting children, children who I truly believe would not be alive if it wasn't for the lifeline that Nacoa provides. Children experiencing a level of abuse that made them question what life was for, why nobody loved them, why they were so bad. It broke my heart to hear them but it broke my heart even more to think of the thousands of children like them who never speak the words out loud. Who never hear the words: you are good, you do not deserve this.'*

**Libby, Volunteer helpline counsellor**

It is, therefore, with infinite joy, a sense of relief and some pride that I introduced Liam Byrne MP at the 2016 David Stafford Memorial Lecture at the House of Commons, during International COA Week. His moving presentation paid tribute to David, his family, and everyone who'd worked so hard to bring us to the moment when he announced the setting up of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Children of Alcoholics.

In my twenty-six years at Nacoa, there has never been a moment when it felt as if the world was ready to listen. We applauded Liam's courage and commitment to dismantle the silence and stigma which traditionally keeps children hidden. As our newest patron spoke, I was reminded of our first patron, the late Right Honourable Dr Mo Mowlam MP who in 1996 said:

*'Life was not easy when I was growing up but somehow we coped as a family. Money was short, but thanks to my mother we managed. She worked hard all her life to keep us together, often doing two jobs. There are a lot of similar families keeping up the semblance of normality today. Drink is one of the hidden sufferings in families.'*

*'People cope in different ways. I coped by closing off the difficult times and do not find it easy going back and writing or talking about them. I talk about it because I believe it's important for people in public life to say to others who are growing up with an alcoholic parent that you can do more than cope with that kind of background. You can go on to build a successful life for yourself.'*

**Mo Mowlam MP, Former Nacoa Patron**



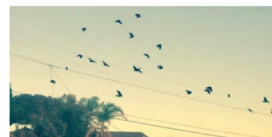
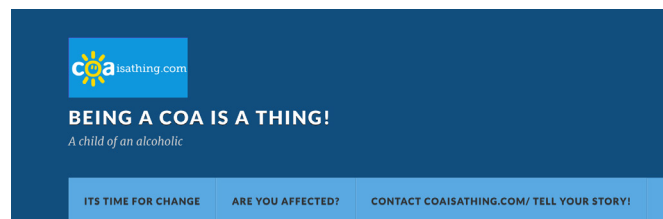


Mo would have delighted in that moment and, like Liam, encouraged us 'to talk properly about alcoholism', which we have. It has started to change the cultural landscape, so children no longer need to hide under a blanket of shame. Silent voices are now being heard as government and others listen.

This is an exciting time but what remains a constant is the knowledge that for every call we take, or email we read, there are countless thousands of other children who remain lost in their pain. This is a social injustice which we must address if we want to believe we are a caring society.

To know and do nothing is immoral and unworthy and I encourage you to join Nacoa so children no longer suffer alone and in fear. We are truly privileged to work with these children; they trust us with their darkest thoughts and fears, talk to us about the very worst of human behaviour and show us the very best. They remind us never to underestimate how important it is to listen, and how important it is to be heard.

Hilary Henriques MBE



CHILD OF AN ALCOHOLIC, MENTAL HEALTH  
Katie Alcoholic Mother Died After 1



CHILD OF AN ALCOHOLIC, MENTAL HEALTH  
Alicia, London, St. James

## COAisathing.com launch 2016

In August 2016, Nacoa volunteer Josh Connolly launched COAisathing.com. The website extends Nacoa's online presence and provides a blog platform for anyone affected by a parent's drinking.

Josh says, 'COAisathing is for anyone affected to reach out and help others by telling their story. I have found writing and sharing my story online to be an immeasurably positive experience. We will make it your story and your post.'

By the end of 2016, the site had attracted 10,269 visitors and multiple contributors. Early responses from writers, commenters and readers were very encouraging:

*'You have provided a platform that enables people to share their powerful, inspiring stories. It's cathartic for us all. Thank you!'*

*'Discovering Nacoa was my breakthrough moment and although it's very difficult for us to recount our memories and experiences and share them with others, it helps us and those who read them enormously!'*

*'I find the blogs on COAisathing so calming. It's become my 'go to' place when things get too overwhelming.'*



# Nacoa Helpline Model of Care

In a family struggling with alcoholism, parenting can be chaotic and inconsistent and is often characterised by secrecy and lies in an effort to keep the family's problems secret from the outside world. This leaves children confused and unlikely to reach out for help; often in fear of not being believed or of betraying the family.

**Breaking the Silence:** We focus on the individual caller, encouraging them to look at their own practical wants and needs, rather than those of the family. Callers may feel they are putting themselves at risk or being disloyal to their parents. They need to know that they can remain anonymous, that they are calling for themselves and not to betray their families.

*'He said you were kind, caring and gave him the opportunity to talk – without you he did not know what would have happened. He'd called other helplines and all they wanted to do was to get him off the phone with another phone number to call. You made all the difference.'* Anon

Callers tell their stories to more than one Volunteer Helpline Counsellor. Sometimes they've allowed their feelings to build up inside until they feel ready to explode or become ill with symptoms like abdominal pains and headaches. These children need help to identify their feelings and find ways to express them in healthy ways with people they trust.

The Nacoa Helpline was set up to empower children with a variety of life skills to help them cope with difficult challenges. The way we work has been developed by listening and taking account of what children and young people tell us they want and need. They are the true architects of our Helpline Model of Care.

*'To the world outside everything was fine, a normal family. To have shared the secret burden that my brother and I carried would have brought shame on the entire family; we were led to believe we would become outcasts.'* Daisy

By recounting experiences, callers begin a process of looking at difficulties one at a time, tackling life a day at a time, sometimes an hour at a time, or simply between calls.

Important messages include:

You are not alone

You are not responsible for your parent's drinking

You did not cause it and you can't control it

You are not responsible for your parent's behaviour

*'Everything you said and the stuff on the website is exactly what we're going through –it's great to know and so helpful.'* Tom

**Working with other agencies:** Being heard and having found words to ask for help often leads callers to speak to people in their local areas. We share how to research other services, so callers can access information and support for themselves. We also research on their behalf, including confidentiality issues for younger callers.

Callers can continue to call when they find help elsewhere. There is no time limit and continued support does not depend on contacting other suggested agencies or groups. Engaging with, and becoming involved, e.g. by contributing a personal experience for the website, or becoming a member or volunteer, brings our work full-circle helping others to help themselves.

*'Growing up with an alcoholic parent was not easy. When it was 3am and my mother was screaming at us, I felt responsible and needed to do something to stop it—with nowhere else to turn I would phone 999. This didn't help and in fact made things worse. Years later, I found Nacoa and I was sad that they didn't exist when I was younger and decided to get involved. I've completed the training and it's great to know that any time I spend at Nacoa means more people are heard. They may have a little more hope and start to believe that it isn't, never was and never will be their fault. That's why I volunteer. I know how important being listened to is.'*

Katy, Volunteer Helpline Counsellor



**Coping with difficulties:** Callers often feel overwhelmed and use drink, drugs, eating disorders and self-harm, as a means of surviving difficulties at home and problems at school and other social situations. These seemingly destructive behaviours become a way of coping with their problems.

*'This young boy told me he sat down at the breakfast table and cried. He said, 'I'm turning into my mother. I've lived with it all these years, and today I had to have a drink to start my day.'* Anon

Callers tell us they drink because 'It numbs the pain', 'I want to forget what's happened', 'I drink with mum, it's the only good times we have', 'The only time I'm happy is when I'm out of it.'

Some children experience family violence, neglect and other problems, others may lack confidence and self-esteem. These children can learn a variety of coping and self-care strategies to stay safe and to respect themselves through experiences in which they have opportunities to succeed and thrive.

**Who can help:** We encourage callers to talk about their relationships with teachers, friends and other family members. These relationships may be difficult because they fear being taken away from home or of 'telling' on their parents. Anxiety leads to further isolation as they maintain what is often a painful silence. For some callers there is no one to confide in, for others they simply need help to rehearse what to say and how to ask for help.

*'I rang your Helpline last year, when I could not take it any longer and I will never forget the lady who chatted to me for two hours, and calmed me down by actually*

*understanding where I was coming from - as my friends and family never did.'* Sarah

We are often the only people callers feel able to ask for help about growing up in today's world. We help them to make informed choices without feeling that they have to be an adult. We provide age-appropriate information so they can explore their options. The call is always about the caller, relevant to their individual situation, directed by the caller and at his or her own pace.

**Ongoing support:** Callers ring or email for as long as they want. The work revolves around what the caller wants to discuss, providing help when needed and sometimes at times of crisis.

Regular callers are supported in ways which might ordinarily come from parents or carers. No two calls are the same. Callers talk about a wide range of problems and sometimes are concerned about younger siblings. The roles of child and parent have become blurred adding to the caller's sense of responsibility for what's happening.

*'One night my mum locked him out but I got upset thinking he would break the door down so my mum let me unlock it. I know a girl who lives at the pub where dad drinks. One night he fell down some stairs and cut his face. My friend knew and I was embarrassed. When he's drunk he's not violent or abusive but he scares me. He has no concern for us at all and my mum suffers most. If my mum divorces him we would lose our house but we are unhappy so what should we do? I wonder if*

*it's us, having a family seems to pressure him.'* Claire

Establishing what callers can change, what they can do for themselves and what is not within their power, is often a relief when they've been battling against impossible odds.

*'You know at Nacoa you are always telling me that I'm important, well it's true! I am important! I still want my dad to stop drinking but I've stopped running around trying to get through to him. He still drinks but I feel less of a failure now. A lot of what I've achieved is thanks to you for sticking by me through the bad times.'* Max

Learning to manage change, e.g. when our volunteers leave, is an opportunity for callers to experience forward planning, and to put strategies in place to support themselves in times of stress. Our work is about planning for a more positive future. Positive experiences lead to higher self-esteem, a sense of autonomy and independence and the ability to perceive experiences constructively while being supported by Nacoa.

# Finance Report



## Income

Nacoa, in common with many small charities, relies entirely on voluntary donations. In recent years and with the help of dedicated staff and volunteers, new funding sources have been introduced with an enormous number of personal donations, many from former callers or people who simply wished they'd known about the charity when they were children. There has also been a year-on increase in the number of donations from families in memory of their loved ones, who are listed on page 15. Nacoa's volunteers also raise funds by taking part in sponsored events. This funding now makes up 50% of our running costs.

In 2015, the financial burden arising from the drain of human and material resources caused by the 2014 fire was still being felt. However, Nacoa benefitted from the expertise of marketing volunteers who organised events to celebrate Nacoa's 25-year anniversary. The 25-hour yogathons ran concurrently in London and Bristol and raised £4,520 and the 25 Year Anniversary Gala in November raised £14,057 with total fundraising activities in the year of £38,109 (£19,059 in 2014).

Members and regular donors continued their historic support of £26,934 (£25,045 in 2014) and legacy and in memoriam donations of £1,801 (£1,545 in 2014) were received. In total, £107,238 was raised (£85,890 in 2014) which resulted in a smaller deficit for the year of £38,404 (£62,440 in 2014). This was achieved by cutting outgoings and the redundancy of two members of staff.

Helpline costs were reduced to £132,477 (£136,728, in 2014) despite redundancy payments and an increase in rent to £24,850 compared to £7,290 in 2014 which reflected compensation for the difficulties caused by the fire.

In 2016, a total of £101,417 was raised and, by continuing to cut outgoings, a smaller deficit for the year of £31,828 was achieved. Income was made up from donations of £43,943, membership and regular donations of £28,091, income through fundraising activities of £27,780 and legacies and in memoriam donations of £1,287.

Helpline costs were further reduced to £124,889 despite an increase in the number of requests for help in response to unprecedented press and media attention and the set up costs for the new Online Message Boards.

Nacoa is able to provide services with meagre funding with the generosity of companies like Medical Connections who advertise the helpline for free on GP's appointment cards resulting in an increase in requests for stocks of publications and in the number of children finding help.

## Volunteers

Volunteers are Nacoa's strength so excellence in volunteering is crucial to ensure they benefit from the experience of helping others. They provide significant elements of all services helping to build communities both within Nacoa and in the wider world. Responding and reaching out to this vulnerable group would not be possible without the extraordinary commitment and passion of over 400 volunteers who in 2015 and 2016 contributed in excess of 20,000 hours to support the helpline. Without these devoted people costs would be significantly higher and the commercial value of their time and skills is estimated at £180,000.

## Property and Premises

Despite being settled at our new premises, the trustees consider it prudent to establish sufficient reserves in the medium to long term to purchase secured leasehold or freehold premises.

## Management

The charity relies on the personal commitment of CEO and Co-founder, Hilary Henriques. If she were unable to continue, the charity would be impacted significantly in the short to medium term. The Trustees continue to discuss contingency and succession arrangements.

I've served as a Trustee since 1995 and it has been a great personal pleasure to be part of a team who make a positive difference, made possible by volunteers and the financial assistance of the charity's funders, including people who take part in sponsored events and charitable activities, our Members and regular donors who provide stability for Nacoa that our callers often lack.

At the time of writing, Nacoa looks forward to a surplus in 2017, in part due to media coverage in relation to the APPG. This is a time of renewed hope as finances stabilise and we look forward to providing services long into the future.

John Fenston



# Financial Statements

## Summarised Statement of Financial Activities for the years ended 31 December 2015 and 2016

	Unrestrict- ed funds £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2016 £	Total 2015 £	Total 2014 £
<b>Incoming resources from generated funds</b>						
Donations and legacies	38,825	1,405	5,000	45,230	41,510	34,468
Membership subscriptions	28,091	-	-	28,091	26,934	25,045
Fundraising events	27,780	-	-	27,780	38,109	19,059
Investment income	316	-	-	316	685	2,818
Other Income	-	-	-	-	-	4,500
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	<b>95,012</b>	<b>1,405</b>	<b>5,000</b>	<b>101,417</b>	<b>107,238</b>	<b>85,890</b>
<b>Resources expended</b>						
<b>Expenditure on charitable activities</b>						
Providing information, advice and support	127,262	981	5,000	133,245	145,642	<b>148,330</b>
<b>Total resources expended</b>	<b>127,262</b>	<b>981</b>	<b>5,000</b>	<b>133,245</b>	<b>145,642</b>	<b>148,330</b>
<b>Net incoming/ (outgoing) resources before transfers</b>	<b>(32,252)</b>	<b>424</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(31,828)</b>	<b>(38,404)</b>	<b>(62,440)</b>
Fund balances at 1 January 2016	82,765	2,000	-	84,765	123,169	185,609
<b>Fund balances at 31 December 2016</b>	<b>50,513</b>	<b>2,424</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>52,937</b>	<b>84,765</b>	<b>123,169</b>

## Independent Examiner's Statement

We have examined the Financial Statements of The National Association for Children of Alcoholics for the year ended 31 December 2016. We confirm that the Statement of Financial Activities and Balance Sheet are an accurate extract of those Financial Statements.

Milsted-Langdon LLP

## Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2016

	2016 £	2015 £	2014 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>			
Tangible Assets	9,912	9,838	13,118
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Stock	153	153	153
Debtors	10,713	19,961	9,949
Cash at bank and in hand	34,100	56,362	103,783
	44,966	76,476	113,885
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	<b>(1,941)</b>	<b>(1,549)</b>	<b>(3,834)</b>
<b>Net current assets</b>	<b>43,025</b>	<b>74,927</b>	<b>110,051</b>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>	<b>52,937</b>	<b>84,765</b>	<b>123,169</b>
<b>Income funds</b>			
Restricted funds	-	-	-
Unrestricted funds	52,937	84,765	123,169

## Hon. Treasurer's Statement

The Statement of Financial Activities and Balance Sheet are a summary of the information contained in the full accounts which have been subjected to an Independent Examination, resulting in an unqualified report. The Trustees approved the full accounts on 20 October 2017 and a copy has been submitted to the Charity Commission.

The summarised accounts may not contain sufficient information to allow for a full understanding of the financial affairs of the charity. For further information, the full annual accounts, including the Independent Examiner's Report, may be obtained online, [nacoa.org.uk/about-nacoa.html](http://nacoa.org.uk/about-nacoa.html), and on request from the Nacoa office.

John Fenston

# Achievements

## 1990-2016

### 1990-1994

- O800 Helpline established
- Charitable status granted
- First information leaflets produced
- Employed first full time member of staff
- Included in the Home Office Drug Prevention Initiative

### 1995-1999

- First volunteer training programme developed and delivered
- The Rt. Hon. Dr Mo Mowlam MP becomes first patron
- First Helpline Evaluation produced by Rhian Huxtable and Professor Deborah Sharpe
- David Stafford Memorial Lecture established
- First website created pro bono

### 2000-2004

- Study finds 2.8M adult children and 920,000 children affected by parental alcoholism
- Ten-year anniversary ball
- New Website created
- Tony Adams MBE, Geraldine James and Fergal Keane OBE become patrons
- Fergal Keane presents BBC Radio 4 Appeal
- Poster Project despatches 27,000 information packs despatched to schools and GP surgeries

### 2005-2008

- Helpline volunteer Dr Isabelle Eardley voted THA National Helpline Worker of the Year
- CEO receives MBE and Bristol Lord Mayor's Medal
- Nacoa receives Guardian Charity Award 2006
- Elle Macpherson recruited as patron
- Email helpline established

### 2009

- Calum Best recruited as patron
- First UK annual Children of Alcoholics Week

- Women of the Year, Outstanding Achievement Award, given to Hilary Henriques
- Comic Relief's publication 'Inspiring Women' features Hilary Henriques
- Nacoa's work featured on BBC Comic Relief's Red Nose Day broadcast
- Nacoa's work featured on BBC Children in Need film 'Brought up by Booze'

### 2010

- Certificate of Merit awarded by Young Bristol
- Beacon Fellowship Highly Commended in Leadership awarded to Hilary Henriques
- First Facebook post
- Nacoa's work featured on BBC Comic Relief's Sports Relief broadcast
- Nacoa's written evidence published in House of Commons Health Committee Report

### 2011

- Springboard Award 2011 awarded for excellence in training
- First tweet on Twitter
- David Yelland and Olly Barkley recruited as patrons
- Charity single and video 'A Change is Gonna Come' released

### 2012

- The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service received
- Meritorious Service Award 2012 received from NACoA USA
- Nacoa contributes to the Office of the Children's Commissioner study, 'Silent Voices'

### 2013

- Geraldine James presents BBC Radio 4 Appeal
- The Archbishop of Canterbury supports fifth COA week
- Research study 'Nacoa and its Volunteers: The Contribution of

the Nacoa Foundation Training Programme' published

- New website designed, built and maintained pro bono by Modular Digital
- Nacoa volunteers take part in research study 'Understanding and supporting family members affected by a drug or alcohol-related death'

### 2014

- 'Volunteer team of the year Award' received from Voscur
- Overcame fire at premises
- Schools Campaign launched
- Jeremy Irvine swims the Channel alone to raise funds and awareness

### 2015

- Nacoa 25-year anniversary celebrating receiving 250,000 helpline calls
- Volunteers organise 25-hour yogathons and 25-year anniversary gala
- Liam Byrne addresses Ministers and MPs at Westminster Hall and praises the Nacoa helpline as a resource
- Independent's Happy List features Hilary Henriques

### 2016

- Liam Byrne MP and Cherie Lunghi become patrons
- Eighth UK COA Week with unprecedented media coverage
- Liam Byrne announces All-Party Parliamentary Group on children of Alcoholics
- Nacoa invited to take part in National Citizenship Service
- HRH The Duke of Kent visits Nacoa
- Shadow Health Minister, Jonathan Ashworth MP endorses Nacoa in the national press
- Helpline Review 2001-2015 begins with Dr Anne-Marie Barron and Dr Alan Leigh

# Acknowledgements and Organisation



## Acknowledgements

### Funders including

Allied Irish Bank  
Altodigital  
Bargain Booze  
Bristol Savages  
J&M Britton  
Charitable Trust  
L Cauldwell  
L Collinson  
Comic Relief  
Ethi-call Limited  
J Fenston  
E Freeman  
T Freeman  
Fuller Smith & Turner plc  
R Gholap  
H Henriques  
A Hittu-Hilthunen  
E Hruzik  
F and P Irwin  
B Kenton  
E Macpherson  
G Montgomery  
M Nadler  
M Parker  
W Pratt  
NM Rothschild & Sons Limited  
The Serve All Trust  
Somerville College  
Oxford  
The Joan Strutt  
Charitable Trust  
Stella Symons  
Charitable Trust  
Vintners' Company  
Charitable Trust  
Wadham College  
Students Union  
Waitrose plc  
S Ward  
K and E Watson

### In Memoriam

F Beardsworth  
M Benyon  
M Bestwick  
L Clennell  
A Cole  
M Daubney

C Dawson  
P England  
I Frances  
R Heron  
E Knighting  
J Lawrenson  
D Lee  
L Lee  
L Matthews  
A Moultrie  
F Pearce  
F Rogers  
A Styburski  
J Symons  
T Thomas  
S Ward  
M Wilde  
S Winship

### Sponsored Eventers including

K Barnett  
L Brimley  
J Carr  
F Dac  
G Dehasse  
Devon and Cornwall Police  
L During  
E George  
S Goulsborough  
H Hahn  
W Hahn  
D Hall  
S and E Hayles  
C Heffernon  
Inkie  
J Irvine  
T Legg  
A Nocti  
H Peacock  
R Pendred  
C Pipkin  
K Ransley  
K Rudzinska  
A Smith  
S Summers  
N Rimmer  
C Rogers

### Gifts in Kind including CTO and HSO

P Irwin  
**Child Protection Communications including**  
L Byrne  
J Connolly  
J Fenston  
T Freeman  
P Henriques  
S Hexter-Andrews  
C Ohlson  
S West  
T West  
**Helpline Counsellors including**

A Asadullah  
K Barnett  
A-M Barron  
L Bartlett  
A Boulter  
A Brett  
S Brett  
R Coats  
J Connolly  
A Coombs  
E Cox  
N Doig  
L During  
A Ferrier  
J Fifield  
T Freeman  
A Gane  
E Gomez-Cicuendez  
V Gonicki  
W Hahn  
C Heffernon  
A Hittu-Hilthunen  
Z Johnson  
A Laidlaw  
L Leadbeater  
M Luckman  
J Lee  
T Legg  
C Norman  
C Ohlson  
S Page  
C Pipkin  
S Rankin  
G Reid  
S Smeaton  
A Vaghela  
**Helpline Evaluation**

F Irwin  
**Helpline Supervision**  
H Henriques  
M Nadler  
M Parker  
**Internet Research Research**  
A-M Barron  
A Leigh  
**Social Media**  
P Henriques  
C Ohlson  
C Pipkin  
T West  
S West  
**Website Management**  
P Irwin  
C Ohlson

## Organisation

### Patrons

Tony Adams MBE  
Olly Barkley  
Calum Best  
Lauren Booth  
Liam Byrne MP  
Cherie Lunghi  
Geraldine James OBE  
Elle Macpherson  
Suzanne Stafford  
CQSW  
David Yelland  
**Ambassadors**  
John Fenston  
Maya Parker  
Emma Spiegler

### Trustees

Michelle Nadler FRSA, Chair  
John Fenston, Hon. Treasurer  
Laurence Alleyne  
Philip Auden DL  
Anne-Marie Barron  
Deirdre Boyd  
Peter Irwin  
Maya Parker MA

### Consultative Council

**Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection**  
Clare Adams  
Katie Watson  
**Clinical Advice**  
Peter Taberner  
**Clinical Psychology and Family Therapy**  
John Friel  
Jerry Moe  
**Counselling & Therapy**  
Lois Evans  
**Fiscal Probity**  
Keith Hall  
**GP Liaison**  
Jacqueline Chang  
**Helpline**  
James Galloway  
Jessica Munafò  
**Legal**  
Valerie McGee

### Press and Communications

Julia Goodwin  
Virginia Ironside  
Deidre Sanders  
**Research**  
Martin Callingham

### Chief Executive

Hilary Henriques MBE

### Evaluation

**Administrator**  
Frances Irwin

### Helpline Supervisor

Steph Page  
**Communications**  
Piers Henriques

## Awards 2015/6

### New Volunteer of the Year

2015 C Pipkin and C Heffernon  
2016 A Asadullah

### Upfest Volunteer of the Year

2016 M Ubank

### Digital Platform Award

2016 C Pipkin

### Outstanding Achievement Award

2015 N Doig and T Legg  
2016 L During

### Long Service Award

2015 J Fenston  
2016 J Lee

### Volunteer of the Year

2015 A Gane  
2016 J Connolly

### Bankers

Lloyds Bank plc

### Accountants

Milsted-Langdon LLP

Registered Charity No. 1009143





The National Association  
for Children of Alcoholics

Providing information, advice and support for everyone affected by a parent's drinking

Nacoa was founded in 1990 to address the needs of children growing up in families where one or both parents suffer from alcoholism or a similar addictive problem. This includes children of all ages, many of whose problems only become apparent in adulthood.

## Nacoa's aims

1. To offer information, advice and support to children of alcohol-dependent parents
2. To reach professionals who work with them
3. To raise their profile in the public consciousness
4. To promote research into the problems they face and the prevention of alcoholism developing in this vulnerable group

## Contact

Administration	<a href="mailto:admin@nacoa.org.uk">admin@nacoa.org.uk</a>
Chief Executive	<a href="mailto:ceo@nacoa.org.uk">ceo@nacoa.org.uk</a>
COA Week	<a href="mailto:coaweek@nacoa.org.uk">coaweek@nacoa.org.uk</a>
Finance	<a href="mailto:funding@nacoa.org.uk">funding@nacoa.org.uk</a>
Fundraising	<a href="mailto:fundraising@nacoa.org.uk">fundraising@nacoa.org.uk</a>
Membership	<a href="mailto:members@nacoa.org.uk">members@nacoa.org.uk</a>
Nacoa News	<a href="mailto:editor@nacoa.org.uk">editor@nacoa.org.uk</a>
Research	<a href="mailto:research@nacoa.org.uk">research@nacoa.org.uk</a>
Training	<a href="mailto:training@nacoa.org.uk">training@nacoa.org.uk</a>
Volunteering	<a href="mailto:volunteering@nacoa.org.uk">volunteering@nacoa.org.uk</a>
Webmaster	<a href="mailto:webmaster@nacoa.org.uk">webmaster@nacoa.org.uk</a>

## Address

PO Box 64  
Bristol  
BS16 2UH

Tel: 0117 924 8005

Registered Charity No: 1009143

*'I support Nacoa because I know childhood is not easy for children when their lives are taken over by their parent's drink problem. Imagine coming home from school and not knowing what you'll find and having no friends because you can't bring them home. My message to them is there is hope and help from people at Nacoa.'*

**Cheri Lunghi**

Actor and Nacoa Patron

*'I felt very low, alone and enormously sad and one day I said to Paul Merson, 'I've got a drink problem'. He said 'Join the club'. I guess that's what it's all about not feeling alone. That's why I'm a Nacoa patron because Nacoa is there for everyone affected by a parent's drinking, the way Paul was there for me.'*

**Tony Adams MBE**

Football Manager and Nacoa Patron

## Helpline



0800 358 3456

[helpline@nacoa.org.uk](mailto:helpline@nacoa.org.uk)



## Message Boards

[nacoa.org.uk/messageboards](http://nacoa.org.uk/messageboards)

## Social Networks



@NacoaUK



[facebook.com/nacoauk](https://facebook.com/nacoauk)

**nacoa.org.uk**