



News release

Charity announces new Vice Patrons at unique archive event

The family support charity Family Action welcomed five new Vice Patrons at their exclusive archive event “Families and Hard Times”. The event show-cased the charity’s work supporting families since it started work in 1869. It included the launch of an innovative interactive time-line charting the charity’s history and its role in the development of social care over the past 150 years.

The new vice patrons joining the charity are Christine Davies CBE; Dr Andrew McCulloch; Dame Denise Platt DBE; Katie Vanneck-Smith and Professor Harriet Ward CBE. Their fields of expertise range from children and social care to mental health issues and corporate leadership.

David Holmes, Chief Executive of Family Action said:-

“It is especially appropriate that we are able to welcome our new Vice Patrons at “Families and Hard Times” – an event which demonstrates the leading role Family Action has played, and continues to play, in the development of innovative and effective family work for nearly 150 years. Our new Vice Patrons bring with them a wealth of knowledge and experience which will be invaluable to Family Action as we continue helping families across the UK.”

He went on to say

We would also like to thank Dr Rosalind Edwards of the University of Southampton; Professor Val Gilles, and Dr Nicola Horsley both of Goldsmiths, University of London for all their hard work researching the “Families and Hard Times” project and producing the time line.”

-End-

Notes to Editors:-

Vice Patrons:-

Christine Davies CBE is a former Chief Executive of the Centre for Excellence and Outcomes in Children and Young People’s Services and a former Director of Children’s Services working with every Local Authority in England, Health Services and the Voluntary and Community sectors.

Christine also established and led the previous Government’s ‘Narrowing the Gap’ national programme which identified leading practice in improving outcomes for vulnerable children and young people and helping close the ‘gap’ between advantaged and disadvantaged groups. Christine was awarded the CBE for ‘an outstanding contribution to education’.



Dr Andrew McCulloch is CEO of the Picker Institute Europe. The Institute is a world leader in research and development into patient experience and person centred care. Andrew is a former CEO of the Mental Health Foundation and also a former Head of Mental Health at the Department for Health. Andrew brings deep experience in mental health. Prior to his appointment, Andrew was CEO of the Mental Health Foundation for 11 years, and Director of Policy at The Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health for 6 years where he established a reputation as a leading authority on mental health policy.

Andrew's other experience has included being a school governor, the non-executive Director of an NHS Trust, a Trustee of a number of charities, and the Chair of Mental Health Media, a charity dedicated to giving people with mental health problems and learning disabilities a voice. He is the Patron of Healthy Minds: Calderdale Wellbeing. He has chaired or served on a range of national advisory committees.

Dame Denise Platt DBE has a background in social care and has held a number of leadership positions in the public and third sectors at national and local level. She was Chair of the Commission for Social Care Inspection having previously been Chief Inspector of the Social Services Inspectorate in the Department of Health. She was Director of Social Services in Hammersmith and Fulham and is a past President of the Association of Directors of Social Services. She is Chair of the National AIDS Trust and a member of the General Medical Council. She is also a Trustee of the Lloyds Bank Foundation for England and Wales and a member of the Advisory Board of the NIHR School of Social Care Research at the LSE. Denise was awarded the DBE in 2004 for services to social care.

Katie Vanneck-Smith is Chief Customer Officer and Global Managing Director of Dow Jones. As head of Dow Jones's Customer Group, Katie oversees consumer and corporate marketing and customer relationships globally, as well as sales, data and product for Dow Jones' corporate-facing Professional Information Business. As global managing director, she is responsible for Dow Jones's businesses outside the US. Katie sits on the UK-based Digital Media Advisory Board and is a member of Marketing Group of Great Britain and Women in Advertising and Communications.

Katie has been an outstanding supporter of Family Action helping us to raise nearly £200,000 for the charity through fundraising events and corporate support in recent years as one of our Fundraising Ambassadors.



Professor Harriet Ward CBE has had a distinguished career as the Director of the Centre for Child and Family Research at Loughborough University and is one of the leading researchers of social work with children and families. Harriet Ward is Research Professor at Loughborough University.

She founded Loughborough's Centre for Child and Family Research (CCFR) in 2002 and directed it until she stepped down in April 2014. Between 2010 and 2014 she was also co-director of the government-funded Childhood Wellbeing Research Centre – a partnership between the Institute of Education, University of London, Loughborough University and PSSRU, University of Kent.

She has over 20 years of experience both as a research director and field researcher, as an adviser to policymakers and service providers, and as a social work practitioner. Harriet was awarded a CBE for services to children and families in June 2012.

For further information regarding our Vice Patrons please visit

www.family-action.org.uk/vicepatrons

“Families and Hard Times”

An exhibition of rarely seen historical images and documents sharing the findings from a research project examining Family Action's work supporting families in periods of economic crisis and challenge, spanning from The Long Depression to The Global Crisis. The project, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), gives a unique insight into social history using materials being made public for the first time from Family Action's Archive. The event was held at the The Geffrye Museum in East London.

For further information and interviews please contact:

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About Family Action

Family Action is a charity committed to building stronger families by delivering innovative and effective services and support that reaches out to many of the UK's most vulnerable people.

We seek to empower people and communities to address their issues and challenges through practical, financial and emotional help.

Our work is wide-ranging and includes help for parents-to-be, the provision of many Children's Centres in local communities, intensive family support, emotional health and wellbeing services, counselling, mediation and therapies, support in schools and financial grants programmes. Family Action is also recognised as a leading provider of training and consultancy, offering organisations and their employees services that can help to minimise family issues that may have an adverse impact on work or home life, providing child and adult safeguarding training, and delivering training around Family Placement.

Registered Charity Number: 264 713

Website: www.family-action.org.uk

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