



Building  
stronger  
families

## National Digital Parent Support Service

**Role Title:** Virtual Volunteer Counsellors

**Time Commitment:** Minimum 2hrs per week for 12 months

**Location:** Homebased

**Reporting to:** Volunteer Coordinator

### Purpose of Role:

The newly developed National Digital Parent Support Service provides digital and telephone support to parents and carers as they face issues or challenges which are impacting on their families day to day living. The areas of support may include but is not limited to parenting, hardship, isolation, relationship breakdown, domestic abuse, immigration, education, disability and additional needs. Parents and carers will be able to access the service by calling the dedicated freephone helpline, using the text messaging service or by email and will be offered support appropriate to their needs.

Virtual Volunteer Counsellors will receive referrals from other teams within the Digital Parent Support Service. Referrals will be made for the service users who are identified as requiring additional support. Virtual Volunteer Counsellors will provide short term counselling of 6-8 sessions to parents or carers requiring support. The referral for counselling sessions may include but are not limited to factors such as depression, stress, family pressures, abuse, bereavement, trauma, relationship breakdown.

**We are looking for volunteers who are qualified to level 3 or above. Being registered with a recognised body is desirable. Family Action would particularly welcome applications from volunteers aged 50+. Volunteers are asked to commit 2 hours of their time per week.**

### Volunteers help parents to:

- See things more clearly
- Focus on feelings, experiences or behaviour, with a goal to facilitating positive change.
- To explore many aspects of their life and feelings
- Express difficult feelings such as anger, resentment, guilt and fear in a confidential environment
- Make effective decisions leading to positive changes in their attitude and/or behavior
- Recognise their own emotional and physical health needs

- Feel more confident in managing their children's behavior
- Manage relationships with members of the immediate and wider family
- Manage challenges that cause family breakdown or lead to crisis

### **Responsibilities**

- To be in receipt of clinical supervision which should continue regularly throughout volunteering
- To arrange telephone/digital appointments with parents at mutually agreeable time on a weekly basis
- Be available for a minimum of 2 hours per week to carry out counselling appointments and record information on the system
- To understand and abide by all relevant Family Action policies and procedures
- To engage in group supervision with a volunteer coordinator who will provide ongoing service and volunteering support
- To build trusting relationships, fostering open and honest communication
- To maintain confidentiality and professional boundaries at all times
- To positively promote Family Actions values and if called upon act as an ambassador of the charity

### **Training and Support:**

Volunteering for Family Action is not only personally rewarding, it is also a great opportunity to develop new and existing skills. In addition to the training programme, volunteers are supported throughout their journey by Volunteer Coordinators.

Volunteers are provided with the training required to carry out the role, which includes (but is not limited to) using the digital system, responding to challenging and emotional calls, safeguarding and effective communication. Volunteers have access to Family Action staff training to further support them in their role.

Volunteers are required to join our digital group supervision sessions and will have the opportunity to attend volunteer celebrations and meet other volunteers to share skills, experiences and ideas.

### **Benefits:**

- Becoming a part of Family Action, the largest National Family Charity established in 1869
- Proportion of the cost of registration to a recognised body contributed on a pro-rata basis with volunteering time completed
- Proportion of clinical supervision costs contributed on a pro rata basis with volunteering time completed

- The opportunity to be part of a new service supporting families during challenging circumstances, providing a rewarding volunteering experience
- Regular training and development opportunities
- Being part of a virtual team
- Support and guidance from skilled volunteer coordinators including regular supervision
- The opportunity to be involved in group work, gaining further skills and knowledge
- The opportunity to build a portfolio of your training, skills, experience and qualities
- Opportunity to improve future employment prospects

**Skills and attributes required:**

- Minimum of Level 3 Qualification in Counselling
- Basic computer skills and access to a computer, telephone and the internet
- Non-judgmental and accepting of difference
- Friendly and reliable
- Be able to demonstrate empathy
- Ability to manage own and others emotions
- Emotionally mature
- Able to demonstrate commitment
- Be reliable and consistent
- Demonstrate resilience and the ability to remain calm in times of stress
- Demonstrate good listening and communication skills
- Ability to understand the experiences of parents
- A desire to help individuals gain coping skills to better manage stressful situations relating to being a parent
- To be open to challenge and to be able to challenge while maintaining trust and relationships

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