



# About Family Action

Family Action is a charity committed to building stronger families and brighter lives by delivering innovative and effective services and support 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.

We believe that with the right help in place most people can find the strength to overcome their difficulties, no matter how complex.

We actively seek to work with people experiencing disadvantage or social isolation because their need is greatest. We are proud of our reputation for innovation and impact.

## Our vision

Our vision is that everyone who comes to us will receive the help they need to tackle their problems, whether they are experiencing poverty, disadvantage or social isolation.

## Our mission

Our mission is to provide services and financial support which will strengthen and improve the life chances of those who are poor, disadvantaged or socially isolated. We believe in the strengths within families and seek to empower everyone we work with and ensure they are listened to. We help people to look forward to the future and not be defined by their past.

## Our values and behaviours

We embrace our values and behaviours in our work, as well as in our professional relationships with colleagues, partners and those who use our services. We do this by always:

- Being people focused
- Reflecting a 'can do' approach
- Striving for excellence in everything we do
- Having mutual respect for everyone we work with and support through our services

## 150 YEARS STRONG

### Our strategy

Our **Stronger than Ever at 150** strategy, which will take us to our 150th anniversary in 2019 and beyond, highlights three key goals:

- 1 to continue to **grow** our charity in order to help thousands more families to have better lives
- 2 to **innovate** in our service provision, as an organisation and as an employer, so that we can address new and urgent areas of work effectively and imaginatively
- 3 to **diversify our income base** to ensure we are not overly reliant on any one source of funding.

### Our services

We support over 45,000 families across the country through a wide range of national programmes, local services and training courses focusing on:

- Early Years
- Children and Families
- Adult Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Grants

### Get in touch

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- [Linkedin.com/company/family-action](https://linkedin.com/company/family-action)

# WELCOME TO FAMILY ACTION'S 4TH IMPACT REPORT

## Making our contribution count

Family Action prides itself on never walking away from issues that others find too hard to tackle, and to finding solutions even in the most challenging family situations. Faced with relentless austerity and increasing demand for our services, Family Action has continued to challenge itself and to innovate this year, to ensure we support the most vulnerable children and families across the country and make our contribution count.

Thanks to the hard work, passion and determination of staff and volunteers across the organisation, we have created bold new services to make our contribution count. These include a free, national seven day a week out-of-hours parenting support service, both short-term financial support and a long-term support service for the children and families affected by the Grenfell disaster, and an exciting service providing vital support to the most vulnerable adolescents in care.

In the following pages you will see the varied and complex challenges faced by families across the country and the ground-breaking projects and services we have developed in response. As we enter our 150th year, we will continue to challenge ourselves to do all we can to support families facing financial, emotional and practical challenges. With your help, we can keep making our contribution count.

David Holmes CBE,  
Chief Executive



## Pioneering new approaches

Charities are facing huge changes and challenges today – increased competition for grants, reduced statutory funding and relentless pressure to deliver more for less. Instead of shying away from these challenges, Family Action faces them head on by pioneering new approaches to service provision.

It is such an exciting time to become the new Chair of Family Action, when there is great change and growth within the charity. By the time this report is published, Family Action will have merged with BAND, a mental health charity that supports adults through mentoring and befriending, and with Off Centre, a charity specialising in therapeutic work with young people and young adults aged 11 to 25.

In partnership with Magic Breakfast, Family Action has been selected as the Department for Education's chosen provider of its new National Schools Breakfast Programme, helping over 1,770 schools to develop breakfast clubs to improve the educational attainment of 150,000 disadvantaged children and young people over the next two years to March 2020.

I look forward to another year of drive and innovation to engage and support even more families and deliver ever more impact.

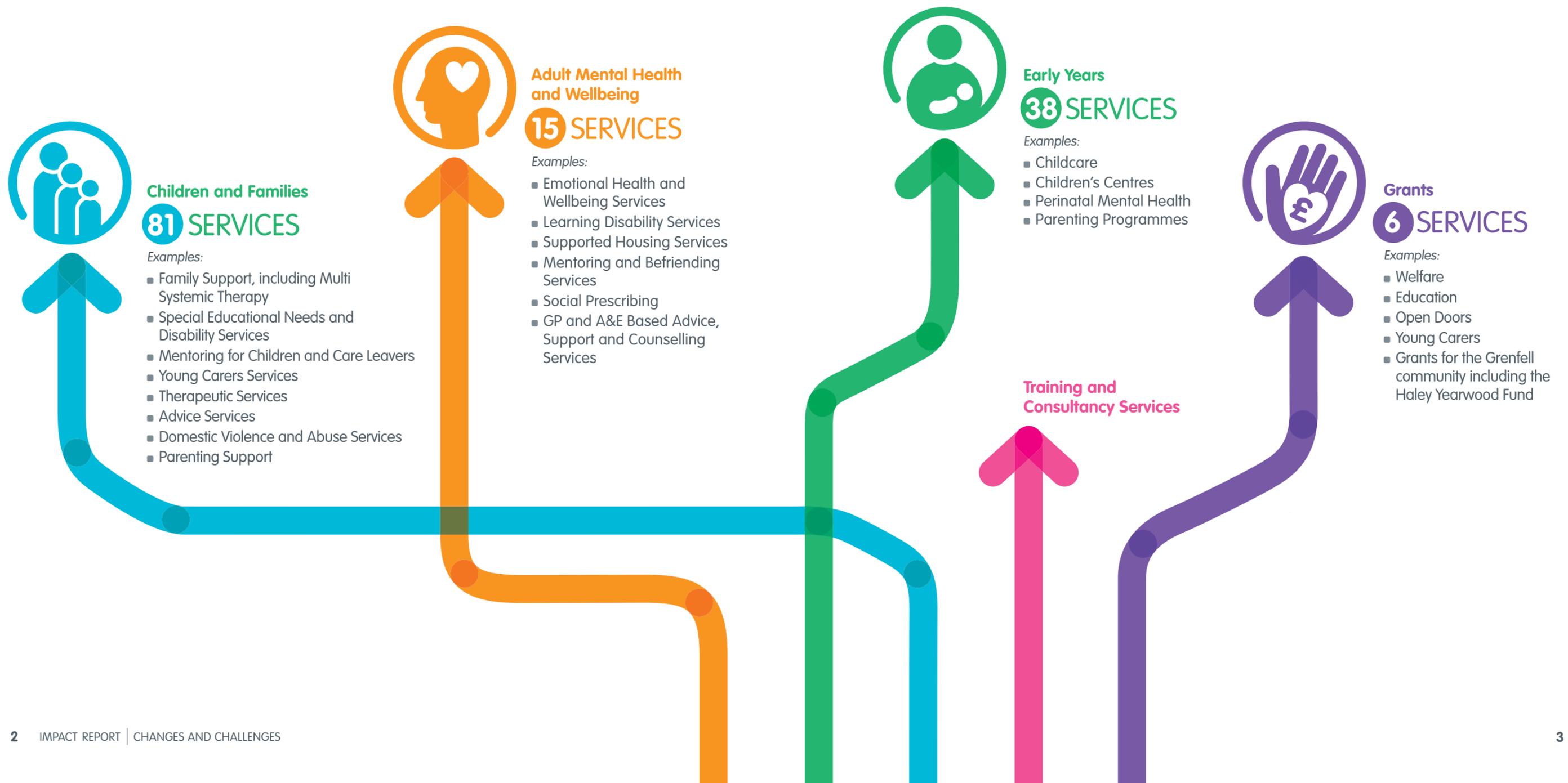
Mary Fulton,  
Chair of Trustees



> **OVER 45,000 FAMILIES SUPPORTED ANNUALLY**

> **141 SERVICES**

As at February 2018



SEE THE FUTURE  
FROM A SAFE PLACE

# TOGETHER

WINNER  
OF CHARITY TIMES  
SOCIAL  
INVESTMENT  
INITIATIVE  
AWARD 2017

Safe Haven is a 9 to 12 month, 24 hour, wraparound service focused on assertive outreach work with young people.

Family Action's Safe Haven project launched in August 2016 after many months of development work. It was designed from the very beginning to work with particularly vulnerable young people in care with the most significant needs and complex circumstances, including but not limited to the following:

- an inability to settle in foster care or residential care and consequent multiple placement moves
- at extreme risk, for example, of gang affiliation or sexual exploitation
- dysfunctional relationships with their birth families
- distrustful of the adults in their lives due to frequency of moves
- disrupted education through multiple placements
- a tendency to rebel against the ever tighter constraints being placed on them.

## Principles

The Safe Haven project has three key principles which run throughout its work:

- 1 A secure base** for the young person to go to when they feel anxious. Here they can feel safe enough to rest, think, talk, play and learn at any time of the day or night.
- 2 Building genuine, responsive, accepting and valuing relationships** with the young person, as well as relatives, professionals and friends.
- 3 Helping young people to be reflective**, to notice what works, what hurts and what helps, as well as helping them to acknowledge what they and others feel and think, what they wish for, and what they want to change

## The model

Safe Haven is a 9 to 12 month, 24 hour, wraparound service focused on assertive outreach work with young people, and complementary work with their birth families and with the professionals/carers involved in their care. Each young person has a bespoke plan with targets against four elements: deep engagement with the Safe Haven service; progress in education, employment or training (as appropriate); improvement in behaviours; placement stability.

## The staff

A team of highly skilled 'mentors' actively engage with their specifically matched young person. Their role is to be caring, trustworthy, respectful, contactable and available. The mentors offer crisis support, guiding young people through risk with an immediate response at any time of the day or night.

Safe Haven's Social Workers help birth/extended families to identify what practical support they need immediately and, where possible, help them build a better relationship with the young person moving forward.

## Funding

Safe Haven has been made possible through social investment by Social and Sustainable Capital and the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. In 2017 the service won the Charity Times Social Investment Initiative of the Year award for demonstrating how social investment can be used to facilitate the piloting of ground-breaking ideas, despite continuing financial austerity.



**‘If it weren’t for (mentor) I probably wouldn’t have finished school and I probably wouldn’t be looking for colleges and work placements.’**  
Young person

### Evaluation

Findings from two external evaluations demonstrate that Safe Haven has significant positive outcomes for this group of young people and can demonstrate cost savings for Local Authorities and other agencies.<sup>1,2</sup>

Every £1 spent on Safe Haven has an estimated return on investment of £1.94 (using the pilot payment by results model) or £1.52 (using delivery costs) over one year.

The Safe Haven pilot project supported 30 young people over a year. The success of the pilot has led to an estimated cost saving of £1,380,683:

- £774,959 in placement cost savings
- £17,666 in savings linked to the reduced risk of the young people going missing
- £391,468 in placement stability savings
- £61,679 in savings linked to better school attendance/behaviour
- £134,911 in savings associated with a series of other reduced risk factors, including child sexual exploitation, anger issues and self-harming.

**Every £1 spent on Safe Haven has an estimated return on investment of £1.94**

Safe Haven has had a significant impact on the young people who engaged in the pilot, for instance:

- 83.3% said they felt they had improved their management of and attitude to risk
- 95.6% felt they now had a positive presence in their lives
- 86.6% showed an increase in satisfaction with education
- Over 50% said their contact with birth/extended family members had improved
- 55.5% felt their emotional control, anger management or behaviour had improved.

### Learning

The evaluations show that young people with complex personal histories who do not normally engage with services **will** choose to access Safe Haven. To maximise their engagement we need to provide consistent, reliable workers who are able to make decisions and take action. They need to have the ability and communication skills to foster positive links with social workers, the police and other services. Safe Haven works for young people, their birth families and their carers and delivers an excellent return on investment.

### Case study Young person C, female, 13 years old

#### Background

C had been on a full care order since she was six. She had had five placement breakdowns in 12 months and her foster carers had given notice. C often went missing and was showing signs of poor self care and poor physical, emotional and mental health. She was at risk of inappropriate relationships, criminality and substance misuse and had problems sustaining a school place. C had had no contact with her birth father for some time but was starting to build up contact with her birth mother who still cared for two younger siblings. The longer-term plan is for C to move in with her mother.

#### What Safe Haven provided

C was supported to develop a regular and positive relationship with her mentor and to create a risk minimisation strategy. She had access to the Safe Haven premises at all times, including when she had run away. C was given a mobile phone to keep in touch with Safe Haven and her mentor. C worked with her mentor to develop a joint understanding of her family history. They worked out what works best for her in order to stay safe and she was supported to access education and therapy.

The Safe Haven Social Workers engaged with C’s birth family to understand the family history. They were provided with ongoing practical help to build a positive relationship with C. Safe Haven supported C’s Social Workers and other agency partners to inform their practice by gaining a better understanding of the family history. Weekly reports were provided to the professionals in C’s life, in consultation with her, and Safe Haven Social Workers attended professional meetings.

#### Progress

Within two days of the referral to Safe Haven, C sabotaged her foster care placement, immediately moving in with her mother. Mum was concerned that

C was in touch with her birth father. The Local Authority felt this contact needed to go through an assessment and Safe Haven facilitated meetings with all parties to find a way forward, advocating on each occasion for C.

Mum called Safe Haven regularly for support when she experienced difficulties with C, who engaged well with the team of mentors. She regularly came to Safe Haven for respite and support and talked to her mentors about not feeling as though she ‘fits in’ at her mother’s house. Safe Haven facilitated a restorative session.

C called Safe Haven several times in the early hours of the morning, frustrated and unable to sleep. Over the next two months, further support was provided but C continued to go missing. With a robust risk management strategy in place Safe Haven was always able to contact C on these occasions and ensure a safe return to mum.

On the fifth missing episode C disclosed that her mother’s partner had kicked her out and that she was at her paternal aunt’s house. An emergency assessment with C’s Social Worker was arranged and it was agreed that C could now live with her aunt.

#### Placement stability

C remained stable with her aunt for seven months with Safe Haven support, but then sabotaged this placement after being told that there were further delays to being able to live with her father. However, C started to take appropriate control of the situation and the next time she visited Safe Haven it was with her father – all checks were clear and she was now able to live with Dad.

#### Behaviour and education

Overall C’s behaviour improved. During the Safe Haven intervention it was agreed that a managed school move would be beneficial. C was provided with a tutor at Safe Haven until an appropriate school placement could be found. Once she started at a new school, her attendance went up to 80% and then rose further to a fantastic 98.64%.



1 York Consulting (2017) *Economic Evaluation of Safe Haven*

2 Larkins et al (2018) *Evaluation of Family Action’s Safe Haven Service, ‘If I need them they’re there’*

# YOU'RE HERE

FOR ME WHEN I NEEDED SUPPORT

High-quality, timely and effective post-adoption support can make the difference to whether an adoptive family thrives or struggles, and can improve adopted children's opportunities for development. However... the demand is far higher than anticipated – and cases requiring crisis intervention due to early trauma are increasing.

*Envoy Partnership, 2018*

The Department for Education's vision for adoptive families is that by 2020: *'every adoptive family has access to an ongoing package of appropriate support with a right to a high quality, specialist assessment of need... Adoptive families have a supportive relationship with their local agency and know they can turn to them for additional support at any time, without judgment.'* (DfE, 30 March 2016, *Adoption: A vision for change*)

It is within this context that Family Action has received funding from the Department for Education (DfE) to deliver the East Midlands Adoption Support Service (EMASS).

This innovative post-adoption support service is available to adoptive families and Special Guardians (see page 22) in the East Midlands (primarily Lincolnshire) going through a crisis after an adoption placement, or experiencing severe and distressing placement challenges relating to the children in the family. The service is designed to be flexible and responsive, and works in partnership with Local Authority Children's Services, schools, parents and children.



# FLEXIBLE SUPPORT




*My twelve-year old tried to commit suicide... and now we're being passed around from one agency to another who don't want to deal with us... the police were involved... EMASS have been our only voice ... they've done everything they can since then to get us help and solutions to help.'*  
Special Guardian

Our programme has had a positive impact on children, in terms of improving their wellbeing, their safety and their engagement in school.

## Interview with Sarah Lepley, Service Manager, EMASS

**Q: Can you tell us about the EMASS project?**

**A:** Children who have been adopted or placed with a Special Guardian have often suffered neglect or abuse before being placed with a family, which may lead to them struggling academically, finding it hard to make friends, or displaying behaviour which is challenging.

We work with children, parents and schools – both in the home and in school – to help overcome such issues.

**Q: At what point do families ask EMASS for support?**

**A:** Generally speaking, it's when they reach a crisis point with their adopted child, particularly when their behaviour becomes extremely challenging at home and at school.

Examples of such behaviour include self-harm, violence against the family, hyper-anxiety, controlling tendencies, bed-wetting, depression and dark feelings, aggressively lashing out at other children or their brothers or sisters, or having no boundaries with strangers.

Parents and carers tell us that, faced with such behaviour, they feel helpless, embarrassed to reach out for help, inadequate, upset and desperate. They don't know where to go for support, or indeed what support is available. That's where we step in.

**Q: So, what does EMASS do first?**

**A:** An EMASS worker would typically arrange a home visit to find out more about the needs of the parents and the children.

We'd also visit the child's school and observe them during a typical school day, for example, who they interact with and how, how they behave, how their behaviour is managed, and what might be the potential triggers of their challenging behaviour.

An Action Plan is then developed together with the whole family, which includes a wide range of activities for the school, child and parents/carers.

**Q: What support have the children received?**

**A:** We have provided a wide range of one-to-one support to 96 children and young people. The majority of these, 70, were from adoptive families.

As an example, we have used 'Social Stories' or 'Words and Pictures Stories' to help children make sense of things that have happened, how they identify themselves, and their hopes for themselves and for the future.

We've also used activities focusing on 'Stranger Danger', and supported children to reflect on why their extreme behaviour might arise and how they can prevent situations from 'boiling over' in future.

Overall, the main benefits of our direct support have been to help the child to remain calm at school and at home when they are feeling stressed, to build and keep friendships, and to get more engaged in their school learning.



**Q: And do you also support schools?**

**A:** Yes, we have supported 95 schools in the area, for example, through case work. Staff from 175 schools have also attended our open training sessions.

The training has helped staff develop their understanding of trauma and attachment, and supported them to introduce nurturing strategies at school. It's been great to see staff sharing knowledge and information across schools, as well as more open communication with adoptive parents.

Schools have also been changing their practices to support the children – for example, introducing a familiar Meeter-Greeter at the school gate to welcome adopted children, which reduces their anxiety at the start of the school day.

We've also seen schools reducing the use of exclusion and isolations as punishments, which can lead to some children demonstrating further extreme behaviour in school and at home.

**Q: Has EMASS also been evaluated externally?**

**A:** Yes, that's right. Envoy Partnership has fully evaluated the programme. They have found that our programme has had a positive impact on adopted children, in terms of improving their wellbeing, their safety and their engagement in school, for instance.

They also highlighted how parents felt more optimistic about their situation and their ability to cope – in some cases also avoiding the break-up of adoptive couples, and helping to prevent the adoption placement breaking down.

**Q: So what's next for EMASS?**

**A:** We're busy at the moment developing a toolkit of resources to support schools across the region, and indeed across the country. The toolkit will consist of guidance and useful links for school staff working with adoptive children and those placed with Special Guardians, for example, focusing on managing challenging behaviour, improving attachment, separation and loss, and developing a sensitive curriculum.

We're also preparing a set of case studies, showing how our project has helped different children and families, for example, supporting a child moving from primary to secondary school and working with children who have a special need or disability (SEND).

To find out more about EMASS and to download a range of resources, visit [www.learning-exchange.org.uk](http://www.learning-exchange.org.uk)



*We did six sessions, thinking more about what other friends like to do and how to stay calm... I've gained new skills I can put to the test at home... I also did a friendship poster, how my senses feel when I get angry, having a time out sign on my door, still using the anger box... I talk to my parents about my feelings in the evening when everyone calms down... we make up about things the following day... sleep on it, fresh start, even if I deserve it [being told off].'*

Child

RECONNECT



> **72,670**  
CHILDREN IN CARE  
as of March 2017.

> **4,350**  
CHILDREN ADOPTED  
in 2017.

> **4,000**  
RECORD REQUESTS  
are made each year  
by adult care leavers  
in England.

DfE, 2017; Community Care, 2017

**Where are my care records? Who are my parents? Why was I adopted? These are just a few of the questions that Family Action's exciting new service 'Family Connect' will help people who have been adopted, in care, donor conceived or otherwise separated from their birth families to explore.**

Finding out about their background and family members can help people to understand inherited health risks, to make important life choices, and to understand why they were separated from their birth families. Many people are, however, unaware of their legal rights around accessing their birth and care records, what they can expect to receive, and how to go about searching for information in the first place.

Through a new and easy-to-use website, our free Family Connect service will help people who were adopted, in care or donor conceived, or who have simply lost touch with family members to:

- learn how to search for and access information about their past
- consider the personal and emotional consequences of searching
- provide information about where personal records are held
- learn how to search for a family member they have become separated from, for example, through divorce
- identify common triggers that can make people wish to explore their backgrounds, such as pregnancy or illness.



*Living with unanswered questions about their background can affect people in different ways throughout their lives – and can have a devastating impact on them and their families, including mental health problems and relationship breakdown. Our new service will help people find answers to questions about their origins – and help them move on with their lives in a positive way.'*

David Holmes CBE, Chief Executive, Family Action

**We are seeking funding to ensure this service is rolled out widely.**

Please contact our fundraising team on [fundraising@family-action.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@family-action.org.uk) if you are able to support our plans financially.

NAO, 2015; HC (481), 2016; DfE, 2016

**40%** The number of young people leaving care has increased by over 40% in the last decade.

**64%** Ofsted rated 64% of care leaver services as inadequate or requiring improvement.

**X4** Care leavers are 4 times more likely to have a mental health disorder and 5 times more likely to commit suicide in adulthood.

**40%** Around 40% of care leavers nationally are not in employment, education or training.

**22%** Around 22% of female care leavers become teenage parents.

**25%** 25% of homeless people have been in care.

**23%** 23% of prisoners were in care as children.

# WHO CARES

## WHEN THEY LEAVE CARE ?



**Every year about 10,000 young people who are in the care of the Local Authority leave their foster home or children's home (NAO, 2015). At this very crucial point in a young person's life an enduring and stable relationship with a positive, caring adult makes a significant difference. However, many care leavers are without family or previous carers they can turn to for advice, information or support when life is frightening, lonely or confusing.**

Friendship Works at Family Action has been providing volunteer mentors to children who have experienced childhood trauma or disrupted attachments for over 40 years. This year we have extended our work to include a new Care Leavers project, which aims to support young people leaving care through this important time in their lives.

### Interview with Kate Gledhill, Friendship Works Service Manager

**Q: How does Family Action's new mentoring project support care leavers?**

**A:** Our Friendship Works Care Leavers project is aimed at young people aged between 18 and 23 who are living within Greater London. Each young person referred to the project is matched with a mentor, an adult who is able to offer a long-term, caring, supportive and positive relationship with the care leaver and who can help to develop their self-esteem and confidence to take greater control in their own lives.

**Q: What kind of support does the mentor provide?**

**A:** The activities and support provided by each mentor vary, depending on the needs, interests and preferences of the young person. A mentor will typically meet the care leaver three or four times a month over two years, supporting them to cook a simple healthy meal, arrange a

work experience placement, attend a training course, develop new skills or interests, visit a local venue they haven't been to before such as a museum, or simply complete a form. Importantly, they listen to the concerns and worries of the young person, and offer both emotional and practical support.

**Q: What are the benefits of taking part?**

**A:** Knowing that you are supporting a young person whose start in life has been enormously challenging to take that next all important step can be a truly life-changing experience. Mentors find it rewarding to see the world through the eyes of a young person and many have developed new interests and skills as a result of their friendship. A positive long-term friendship with a mentor can have a major impact on a care leaver, helping them to gain different skills, to engage in new experiences, to develop their confidence, self-esteem and resilience and, ultimately, to have the confidence to make their own positive life choices in the future.

Find out about our project at [www.family-action.org.uk/friendshipworks](http://www.family-action.org.uk/friendshipworks)

**47%** 47% of working-age adults on low incomes spend more than a third of their income on housing costs.

**30%** 30% of people living in a family with a disabled member live in poverty, compared to 19% of those who do not.

**5 GCSEs** The majority of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds still do not achieve five good GCSEs.

UK Poverty 2017

# 14 MILLION PEOPLE LIVE IN POVERTY IN THE UK

**14 million people live in poverty in the UK – over one in five of the population, according to the UK Poverty 2017 report by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Eight million people living in poverty live in families where at least one person is in work.**

While the reasons for poverty are inevitably complex, key factors include the decline in state support for many of those on low incomes, an increase in housing costs, and low-paid part-time work. The impact of poverty on children and families can be huge – affecting people’s ability to afford everyday items such as food, clothing and heating bills, as well as their physical and mental health, and family relationships.

Through our extensive grant programme, Family Action has been able to support vulnerable children, young people and families to overcome their immediate challenges and improve their long-term situation.

## Welfare Grants

In 2017 we provided **606** small grants to help struggling families, particularly those on benefits, to pay for essential household items, such as white goods, furniture and furnishings and clothing.

## Further Education Grants

Over the same period we provided grants to **655** people on a low income to help them cover the costs associated with their studies, such as equipment, travel and books.

## Open Doors Grants

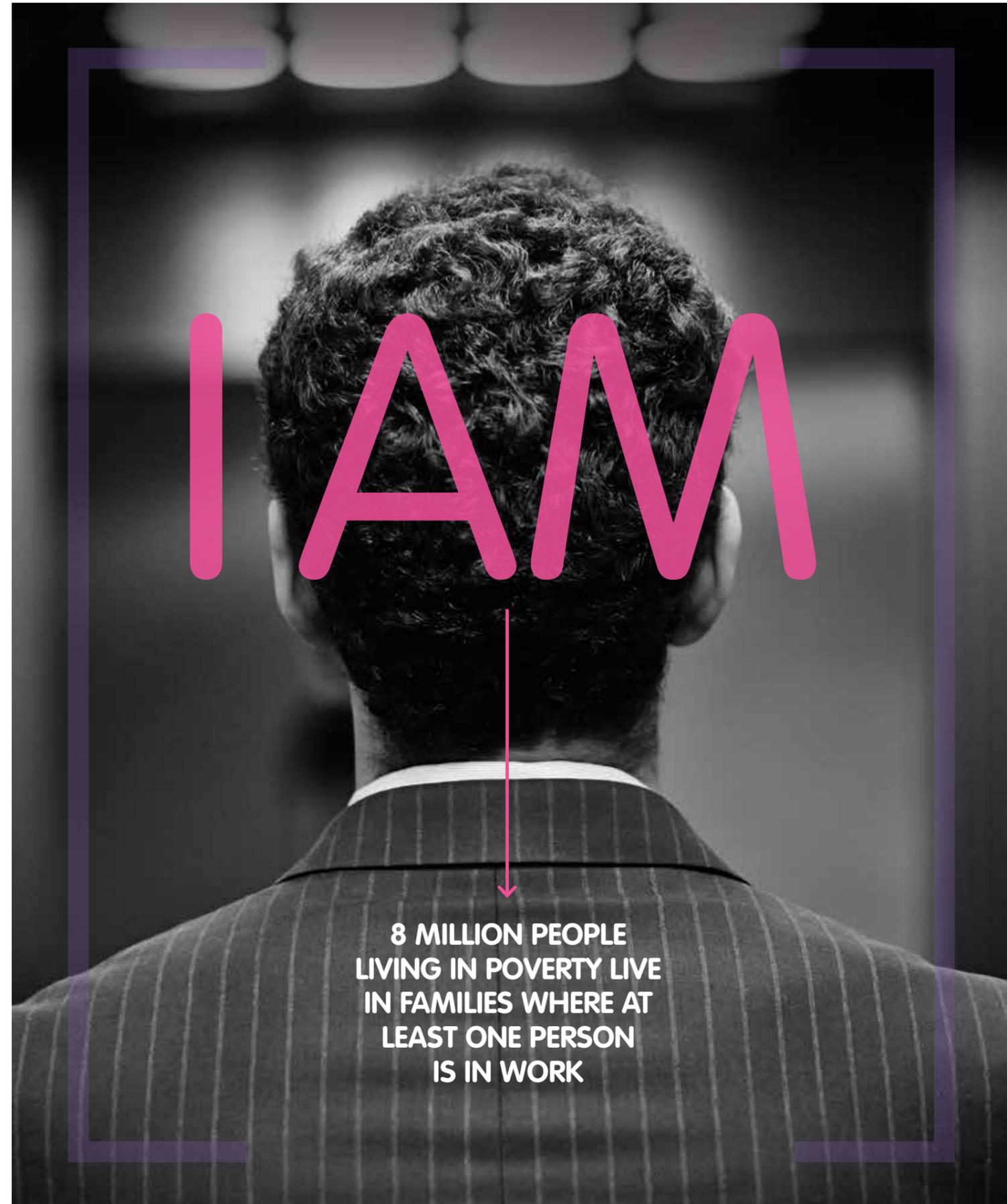
We have been delighted to work with corporate partner NewDay to provide **354** cash grants and bespoke support to individuals living in poverty who experience issues such as domestic violence, homelessness, mental ill health, and sexual exploitation.

## Caroline’s story

Life has a strange way of not turning out the way you expect and my life changed drastically as I turned 50 as my husband of 25 years, Ian Threadgold, tragically and unexpectedly died while we were both on a 10k race on Wimbledon Common with the Wimbledon Windmilers back in November 2015.

Ian and I used to love running and, with the support of our two wonderful children Craig and Laura, family friends, the Wimbledon community and all the Wimbledon Windmilers, I have kept the running up each Sunday. In memory of Ian a group of 12 of our friends and fellow Wimbledon Windmilers went to Reykjavik in Iceland on 18 August and I ran my first ever half marathon.

Ian was an LSE alumni, an ACCA panel member, a school governor, a loving dad and above all wanted young people to achieve their potential. For that reason we chose Family Action and the educational grants service as our chosen charity and we have already helped five young people achieve their dreams of studying. Ian would have been delighted that this run also helped so many young people achieve their potential.



**8 MILLION PEOPLE LIVING IN POVERTY LIVE IN FAMILIES WHERE AT LEAST ONE PERSON IS IN WORK**

# RESPONDING TO THE CHALLENGE OF GRENFELL

On the morning of the terrible Grenfell Tower fire in June 2017 Family Action launched a crowdfunder to raise money for the children and families affected. We were humbled to raise over £300,000 in a matter of a few short weeks from thousands of donors and corporate supporters.

Our extensive knowledge of efficient grant making meant we could very quickly set up an online grants service specially for the Grenfell families and **within two weeks** of the fire we had started paying out grants.

Our fast and effective response to the disaster has ensured that **251 grants** have now been issued to individuals and families to cover the additional costs they faced because of the disaster, such as clothing and study/work items, as well as improving their wellbeing by funding trips out of the area.

In October 2017 Family Action was honoured to be chosen by Haley Yearwood to disburse the **£1,418,245** that was donated by **36,323 people** through her incredible crowdfunding appeal for the individuals and families affected by the Grenfell fire.

**£750,000** of Haley's funding has already been given out in grants and the balance is being used to provide a long-term support service for the Grenfell community. This service, which opened its doors in February 2018, will provide practical and emotional support in the years ahead.

All grant giving, under both our own scheme and Haley's Fund, has been provided free of charge by Family Action so that 100% of the funds raised could go straight to the families.

In total Family Action has already supported **over 350 children and adults** affected by the Grenfell fire.

Find out about all our grants at [www.family-action.org.uk/grants](http://www.family-action.org.uk/grants)

“

*I would love to say thank you to the donors. Every single person, whether they put in one pound or a thousand pounds, have helped me to support people in ways that we can't even imagine right now. But, from the bottom of my heart, thank you so much because every little helps and that's what we need to do – to help the Grenfell survivors in whichever way we can.'*

Haley Yearwood

# WE ARE



**RESPONDING IMMEDIATELY  
AWARDING GRANTS IN TWO WEEKS  
WORKING WITH LOCAL PARTNERS  
PROVIDING LONG-TERM SUPPORT**

Working with five local partners has helped us to understand and respond quickly and appropriately to the changing needs of the Grenfell community. Funds raised have already enabled people affected by the disaster to purchase essential items such as winter clothes and shoes for the children, bedding and curtains, kitchen items, travel passes and furniture. Our service will ensure that families will continue to receive the support they need into the future.

# HEAR ME SEE ME



*What all of us do know, is that missing out on a good education is bad for a child's development and life chances. An adult who received a poor education is more likely to suffer from health problems, be unemployed and to go to prison than someone who had a good education as a child. So the social costs – and as a result the financial costs to the state – of those excluded from school are considerable. Those children excluded from mainstream education are more likely to be vulnerable, and for many it is one step along a journey that ends with adult social exclusion and troubled lives.'*

Anne Longfield OBE, Children's Commissioner for England

**Lincolnshire Behaviour Outreach Support Service (BOSS) was designed to provide additional support to schools who are challenged by the needs of children whose behaviour puts them at risk of exclusion from education.**

**Lincolnshire Ladder**  
Lincolnshire BOSS was commissioned by Lincolnshire County Council and is embedded in 'The Lincolnshire Ladder of Behavioural Intervention'. The Ladder gives schools a structured process to support them to plan and deliver additional support for children and young people who present behaviour that challenges at school. It starts by offering information on a range of evidence-based interventions to support specific areas of need, as well as guidance on developing a bespoke Pastoral Support Plan for each pupil involved highlighting the support to be provided.

**Reducing the risk of exclusion**  
If sufficient impact is not experienced after delivering the support agreed within the Pastoral Support Plan, schools can go on to make a referral for support from Lincolnshire BOSS. As a result, the children and young people our service works with are those that are at increased risk of exclusion from school, and many find themselves facing permanent exclusion as a result of their actions in school. BOSS aims to support the children and young people it works with, and their schools, to reduce the risk of exclusion to a point where direct support from a caseworker is no longer required.

**Behaviour Improvement Plan**  
Central to the work of the service is the creation of a Behaviour Improvement Plan. This template pulls together the experiences of the child or young person, their views of their needs, the outcomes from observations and the needs of the school. Through contributions from all those involved, the BOSS workers set out a shared plan of action for all parties concerned.

**Restorative practice**  
The BOSS integrates the philosophy of restorative practice within its work. This means we seek to work with those we support in a restorative or 'shared' way: working with both the child and the school to agree what should happen. The service has been assessed for the Restorative Service Quality Mark and is leading the development of a Restorative Champions Network of Schools. Since its creation the service has worked in partnership with the organisation Restorative Solutions to deliver restorative practice training to 16 schools in Lincolnshire.

**BOSS team**  
The BOSS team has been drawn from a wide range of backgrounds, which has created a unique pool of talent, knowledge and skill. Bespoke in-house training, peer supervision and development groups have enabled us to strengthen and spread specific knowledge and skills across the service. The result is a multi-talented team that is able to draw on its combined resources to provide a wide range of casework approaches.

# WE HEAR WE SEE



## Support for young people

Caseworkers provide direct support to children in developing new skills and new perspectives. They work with unconditional positive regard to develop trusting relationships in order to understand the views and experiences of the children they work with. Their work can be targeted on developing self-esteem, or the ability of a child to understand their own emotional responses and how to manage them. One-to-one work may also include solution-focused coaching or motivational interviewing.

Lincolnshire BOSS is supporting **298** cases with **24** frontline caseworkers. Since our launch in September 2016 we have worked with a mix of **220** primary and secondary schools across the second largest county in England.

## Support for schools

Part of the remit of the service is to support schools to more effectively support behaviour that challenges them through their existing systems and staffing. The BOSS team provides tailored support to each school to meet the needs of both the staff and the young people.

You can read more about the service at [www.family-action.org.uk/lincs-boss](http://www.family-action.org.uk/lincs-boss)



*'Thanks for helping me improve my behaviour and not get an exclusion. I will miss you.'*

Child

*'Thank you for being a constant and doing intense work. Thank you for your patience, persistence and input. I can't thank you enough; it's been a long journey.'*

Parent

*'We feel that without BOSS's ongoing support the pupil would not have come close to the confident child he now is and would now still be displaying negative behaviour day to day. The work undertaken with the pupil has been to such a high standard that we feel it needs to be complimented.'*

School

# START BEST B



## SAFEGUARDING THE FUTURE

The early years are vitally important in children's overall development, and quality childcare for very young children can have a huge impact in terms of improving school readiness and longer-term educational outcomes.

Family Action has recently taken over the running of Birchtree Pre-School in Dogsthorpe, Peterborough. Karen Woodcock, Early Years Manager, explains how Birchtree is rising to the challenge of providing high-quality childcare for vulnerable children and families in Peterborough.

**'Since Family Action took over the running of Birchtree in July 2017 we have been determined to build on the good work already being done, and to extend the childcare available to local families. That's why we have extended our opening hours and increased the number of sessions we run every week. By opening each morning and afternoon we can offer more childcare places than we did previously, and welcome more children.'**

We also want to ensure that the cost of our childcare isn't a barrier to parents working, taking part in training or volunteering. That's why we have recently started to offer the government's new 30 hours free childcare for working parents, in addition to our existing 15 hours of free childcare for disadvantaged 2 year olds and 15 hours of childcare for all 3-4 year olds. This means that families wanting to go back to work or increase their hours, where the cost of childcare previously wouldn't make this viable, can now leave their children with us for 30 hours a week without having to pay. This is having a major financial impact on families across the city.

High-quality, well trained staff can have a huge impact on the development of the young children in their care. This year we have extended the training and support we offer our early years staff to ensure they have the knowledge and skills they need to provide quality childcare to children who have a wide variety of needs. A key part of our work has been to ensure that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and from disadvantaged families are able to access and benefit from our childcare. We have, for instance, recently introduced a Learn@Lunch club. This enables us to provide additional support to children who struggle at mealtimes – such as supporting children to spoon feed themselves – which is helping to promote school readiness and 'close the gap'.

Many of the children at Birchtree are eligible for the Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP). By pooling funding for EYPP across a number of Peterborough settings, we have been able to pay for a dedicated member of staff to support all the eligible children. As well as visiting each setting and providing targeted support to small groups of children,

the staff member also works one-to-one with some of our children. This is ensuring that **all** children receiving EYPP are supported to overcome barriers they face to developing to their full potential, and that best practices are shared across our network. Already we have seen improvements in children's confidence levels which, in turn, has enabled them to improve their speech and language skills and to make progress in their literacy, numeracy and science work.

This is just the start of an exciting journey for the team at Birchtree. We've successfully applied for a Local Authority grant to develop our childcare offer further, and have been invited to take over the running of an additional pre-school in the city. We look forward to welcoming even more children from the local area to our settings in the future, and to supporting more struggling families.'

Read more about our early years work at [www.family-action.org.uk/early-years](http://www.family-action.org.uk/early-years)

# SUPPORT WHEN OTHER LOCAL SUPPORT IS NOT AVAILABLE

Thousands of children every year are placed by court order with a Special Guardian. A Special Guardian is someone who provides a safe, permanent and loving home to a child who is unable to be cared for by their parents and where fostering or adoption is not the answer. A Special Guardian may be a member of the child's extended family, such as a grandmother or uncle or perhaps a family friend.

Special Guardians often have to grapple with the pressures of caring for a young relative, perhaps a grandchild or a niece/nephew, while also trying to manage ongoing relationships and contact with the child's birth parents. Inevitably, many Special Guardians will find themselves supporting children who have complex needs – a traumatic past, challenging behaviour, and difficulties forming relationships to name but a few. Many Special Guardians will also be older, financially poorer and in worse health, in comparison with other parents.

A Government review (DfE, 2015) of the use of Special Guardianship Orders (SGOs) concluded that a: 'significant minority' of children were being placed at risk through an SGO being made inappropriately and there being inadequate support for Special Guardians.'

Through our new National Special Guardianship Support Service, Family Action is supporting the increasing numbers of Special Guardians across the country. We have created a website packed with information and resources that is just for Special Guardians, as well as a seven-day-a-week evening and weekend telephone helpline providing practical advice and emotional support, again just for Special Guardians.

This bespoke national service, the first of its kind, ensures that Special Guardians are able to access advice, guidance and support from trained helpline staff from their own home at a time that suits them, and – crucially – when other local support is not available.

If your Local Authority is interested in subscribing to the service, please visit [www.specialguardiansupport.org.uk](http://www.specialguardiansupport.org.uk)

**11.4%** ↑ **SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIP ORDERS**

In 2015 5,386 children and young people were the subject of Special Guardianship Orders (SGOs) made by the family courts in England and Wales compared with 4,835 in 2014 – an increase of 11.4%.

Ministry of Justice, 2016

**8%** ↑ **CEASED CARE DUE TO A SGO**

In the year to March 31 2016, 3,830 looked after children ceased care due to a SGO. This is an increase of 8% on 2015 and an increase of 78% on 2012 for children ceasing care through this route.

DfE, 2016

## Support us



### Engage your staff in fundraising

If your company is looking for a new partner to be your Charity of the Year, or if you and your colleagues are interested in fundraising to help improve the lives of children and families across the country, please email [fundraising@family-action.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@family-action.org.uk)

### Take part in one of our challenges

Money raised through fundraising enables Family Action to provide additional support to vulnerable families across the country. If you're interested in getting involved in fundraising for Family Action, why not take part in one of our forthcoming challenges? Visit our website to find out more: [www.family-action.org.uk/event](http://www.family-action.org.uk/event)

### Remember us in your will

The work of Family Action has been supported for nearly 150 years through the generous legacies left by individuals in their wills. Every legacy enables us to extend and develop the work we do to support vulnerable families. If you would like information on leaving a legacy to Family Action, please email [fundraising@family-action.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@family-action.org.uk)

### Engage with us online

Help to promote what we do by engaging with us through our website and social media channels:

- Visit our website to find out about our latest programmes and services: [www.family-action.org.uk](http://www.family-action.org.uk)
- Follow us on Twitter: [Twitter.com/family\\_action](https://twitter.com/family_action)
- Share our Facebook posts with your contacts: [Facebook.com/familyaction](https://facebook.com/familyaction)
- Take a look at our Instagram page: [Instagram.com/family\\_action](https://instagram.com/family_action)

And if you are fundraising for Family Action, don't forget to shout about what you're doing – tell your local paper or share your story online.

### Volunteer with us

If you're looking to share your expertise and experience, develop your skills and knowledge, and improve the lives of vulnerable children and families, why not volunteer within one of our programmes or services?

Family Action currently supports hundreds of volunteers, who come from a wide range of different backgrounds. Don't worry if you haven't volunteered before – we will offer you all the training and support you need to undertake your chosen volunteering role effectively.

To get started, browse our website [www.family-action.org.uk/volunteer](http://www.family-action.org.uk/volunteer) There you'll find full details of all our current volunteering opportunities, such as virtual befrienders or helpline volunteers on our new Digital Parent Support Service.

### Make a donation

All donations – small regular donations from generous individuals or large one-off donations from the corporate sector – enable us to improve the long-term support we offer to families, to pilot ground-breaking new projects, and to provide short-term grants to vulnerable families. Find out how you can make a donation by emailing [fundraising@family-action.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@family-action.org.uk)

### Offer in-kind support

We welcome the support of individuals and organisations that can offer their time, expertise, resources and skills for free. To find out how you and your organisation can make a difference to the lives of children and families through offering in-kind support, please visit [www.family-action.org.uk/corporate](http://www.family-action.org.uk/corporate)

### Work for Family Action

If you share our vision to improve the lives of vulnerable families, why not join the Family Action team? Browse our current vacancies online at [www.family-action.org.uk/vacancies](http://www.family-action.org.uk/vacancies)

### Become a partner

Family Action works in partnership with a wide range of organisations across the country – Local Authorities, health agencies, other charities, large private companies and smaller organisations to name but a few. If you are interested in working in partnership with Family Action, contact us on [info@family-action.org.uk](mailto:info@family-action.org.uk)

## Christmas 2017 Toy Appeal – Facts and Figures

**6,000 TOYS**

**6,000** gifts were donated by over **60** companies, individuals and community groups.

Christmas gifts were distributed to **50** different Family Action services across England and Wales.

The total value of gifts and money donated to the Toy Appeal exceeded **£100,000**.

**6,000** children who might not otherwise have received a Christmas present did not miss out.

All parents and carers caring for those children realised that they were not alone.



**'This training should be made mandatory; excellent.'**  
Delegate

# YOU CAN EXPERIENCE EXPERTISE

Family Action's Training and Consultancy team provides high-quality training and consultancy services for a wide range of organisations – Local Authorities, the NHS, schools/academies, early years settings, adoption and fostering agencies, charities and commercial enterprises.

Our open workshops, in-house training and consultancy services draw on Family Action's extensive experience of delivering projects and services to support children and families across the country.

This ensures that our training and consultancy is always based on real-world experience, reflects the latest research, and is grounded in best practice. Examples of our workshops include but are not limited to:

- Mental Health First Aid
- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Domestic Violence and Abuse
- Direct Work with Children and Young People
- Attachment Issues
- Perinatal Mental Health
- Specialist training for fostering and adoption agencies

Find out more by visiting [www.family-action.org.uk/training](http://www.family-action.org.uk/training) – where you can browse our forthcoming workshops and conferences and download our specialist brochures.



**'All profits from our training and consultancy feed back into the charity's wider work, enabling Family Action to support more vulnerable families across the UK.'**  
Nicky Probert,  
Training and Consultancy Manager

**Thank you** to the wide range of organisations and individuals who so generously support Family Action. These include, but are not limited to:

ACI Worldwide	John Lewis Partnership and Services Office
Adactus Housing Group	Kensington & Chelsea District Nursing Trust
Adam&Eve DDB	Lady Eileen Joseph Foundation
AIB Group	Laytons solicitors
Alix Partners	M & C Trust
Banham Foundation Limited	Manulife Asset Management
Barclays Bank PLC	Mary Robertson Trust
Baron Davenport's Charitable Trust	Michael Cornish Charitable Trust
BBC Children in Need	Michells Robertson
Big Lottery Fund	Microgaming Health and Care Trust
Big Lottery Improving Futures - Haringey	Navigation Partners
Big Talk Productions	NewDay
Bottega Vaneta	Oldhurst Trust
Brakes	Pareto
Breckland Community Fund	R A & V B Reekie Charitable Trust
Brian Mitchell Charitable Settlement	Resource Experience Limited
British Gas Energy Trust	RetailMeNot
C B & H H Taylor 1984 Trust	Royal Bank of Scotland
Camelia Trust	Santander UK Foundation
Carers Trust	Seymours Solicitors
Charles S French Charitable Trust	Shearman and Sterling LLP
Church Burgesses Trust	Shell International Limited
City Bridge Trust	Sir James Knott Trust
Clyde & Co. LLP	Slaughter and May
CMS Cameron McKenna LLP	Sotherby's
Comic Relief	Sphere Digital Recruitment
Commerzbank	St Andrew Holborn Charity
Dentsu Aegis Network	St Giles-in-the-Fields and William Shelton Educational Charity
Department for Education	Stirling Reid
Department of Health - Health and Social Care Volunteering Fund	Systemos
DNA electronics	TACT Care
Doris Field Charitable Trust	Targetfollow
Dotcomprepublic	Texel Finance
Dow Jones & Company	The Austin & Hope Pilkington Trust
Edith Murphy Foundation	The Baily Thomas Charitable Fund
Elite Associates Europe	The Carpenters Arms
Eric W Vincent Trust Fund	The Charlotte Bonham-Carter Charitable Trust
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	The Clara E Burgess Charity
Etsy	The Eveson Charitable Trust
Eversheds	The G M Morrison Charitable Trust
F & P C Scotto Charitable Trust	The Hampstead Wells and Campden Trust
Fidelity worldwide Investments	The LankellyChase Foundation
Fieldfisher llp	The Maud Elkington Charitable Trust
Final Cut LTD	The N Smith Charitable Settlement
Find My Past	The Restaurant Group plc
Four Acre Trust	The Salamander Charitable Trust
Get West London	The Swire Charitable Trust
Gilead Sciences	The Tanza Trust
Gledswood Charitable Trust	The Trusthouse Charitable Foundation
Google DeepMind	The Vandervell Foundation
Habitat UK Ltd	The Volant Charitable Trust
Helios Towers Africa LLP	The Worshipful Company of Coopers
Heritage Lottery Fund	The Worshipful Company of Innholders
Highgate Golf Club	The Worshipful Company of Security Professionals Charitable Trust
Hull And East Riding Charitable Trust	Tonkotsu
ICap	Toureen Mangan
Imperial Society of Knights Bachelor	Vice
ING Group	Virtual Racing UK
Inspiro	Walcot Foundation
Irwin Mitchell	Wandsworth Grant Fund
Islington Giving	Weil, Gotshal & Manges (London) LLP
J.P. Morgan Private Bank	Welsh Government - Sustainable Social Services Grants
Jeroboams	Workday
John Horniman's Children's Trust	

# CHANGES CHALLENGES



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