

Press release

New service launched to help families in Leeds who need extra support

For some families, it can be difficult and confusing to find the support they need to deal with the challenges they face. Families Together Leeds, a new service run by national charity Family Action in partnership with Leeds City Council, helps families with children and young people across the City of Leeds, to access the right support at the right time.

Families Together Leeds, which officially launched on 16 July, will provide its own family, group and volunteer support to improve outcomes for all children and young people, but especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Whilst support is offered to any family that needs extra help, the service is also there to help families avoid reaching the stage where statutory/social work services need to become involved.

Families will be offered a Family Support Worker, who will work with them to look at what is happening right now to cause concern, helping the family to work out what could happen if things don't change. They will also talk about what triggers things, what are the challenges and vulnerabilities in the family, what positive strengths the family has and what keeps issues going. From talking this through, the Family Support Worker will help the family to develop an action plan, which will be reviewed regularly.

Group Support will help parents and carers to explore the challenges they are experiencing in their parenting and allow them the space to think about what they might like to do differently in future. Groups are also a good opportunity for parents and carers to meet other families and learn from each other's experiences.

Volunteer Support will support families who are already working with our service or those families that need low-level support only. Volunteers will provide information about local resources and practical support to access community services. Volunteers will enable families to become more independent so that they can sustain their goals after involvement with our service has ended.

Janina Macheta, Operational Manager, from Family Action said:

"The aim of Families Together Leeds is to make sure that families have the support and resources they need to deal with the challenges they face. Family Action is looking forward to working with Leeds City Council to ensure that families get the right help, where and when they need it to help build stronger families with brighter lives."

Cllr Fiona Venner, executive member for children and families, Leeds City Council, said:

"We want Leeds to be the best city for children and young people to grow up in, and are committed to working with partners across all sectors to drive forward that ambition. Part of this ensures that when families are facing challenges and difficulties, the right support is available to them at the right time."

"The new service provided by Families Together Leeds will help families across the whole city, helping to find sustainable solutions to their problems before they escalate."

Our family support can be accessed via a referral from a partner agency into Leeds City Council's allocations panels. We work with our partner agencies to co-ordinate our group support, so we are delivering groups for parents and carers across Leeds where they are most needed.

We are now recruiting volunteers for the volunteer support element of our service; if you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please contact Family Action: Families Together Leeds on 0113 532 6587.

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Notes to Editor:

For more information please contact the Family Action Press Office:

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Family Action is a national charity celebrating its 150th anniversary in 2019. Around 45,000 families and hundreds of thousands of children are supported by Family Action every year, helping people overcome their family pressures such as mental health and wellbeing, behavioural issues and parenting challenges, family conflict and domestic abuse, social isolation, poverty, addiction and much more. It is committed to building stronger families and brighter lives by delivering innovative and effective services and support. It seeks to empower people and communities to address their issues and challenges through practical, financial and emotional help. Its work is wide-ranging and includes help for parents-to-be, the provision of Children's Centres, intensive family support, emotional health and wellbeing services, counselling, mediation and therapies, support in schools - including the provision of breakfast clubs and holiday hunger support, and financial grants programmes. Family Action is also recognised as a leading provider of training and consultancy.

For our 150th Anniversary we are starting a national conversation about the everyday pressures on families or 'family monsters'. The campaign aims to get these pressures out in the open and to stop family monsters from becoming overwhelming by helping families find ways to talk about and face their pressures together. To find out more, please visit www.familymonstersproject.com. Family Action has also released a new short film bringing family monsters to life. You can download the Family Monsters Project film for online or broadcast use at <https://vimeo.com/309838799>

Registered charity number: 264 713

[https://www.family-action.org.uk](http://www.family-action.org.uk)

[https://twitter.com/family_action](http://twitter.com/family_action)

[https://www.facebook.com/familyaction/](http://www.facebook.com/familyaction/)

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

Leeds City Council:

Leeds is the second largest local authority in the country with a population of 189,000 children and young people. Leeds became the only core city to have its services for children and families rated 'Outstanding' overall by Ofsted (of those inspected under the new ILACs framework) in December 2018. Due to its impressive journey of improvement since 2010, Leeds is now a national 'partner in practice' for the Department for Education and shares learning and expertise with other local authorities to help raise standards and improve practice within children's social care nationwide.

Our ambition is for Leeds to be the best city for children and young people to grow up in – a place where children are valued, supported, enjoy living and can look forward to a bright future – a truly child friendly city. The Child Friendly Leeds vision is one that the whole city can, and is, uniting behind – one that invites everyone, including individuals, schools, sports clubs, voluntary services, private sector companies, health, the police and the wider public sector to determine and develop their role in improving the lives of children and young people. Leeds has placed children and young people at the very heart of the growth strategy of the city.