

# ONE FAMILY'S ANNUAL REVIEW 2012



## ONE FAMILY'S VISION

**One Family** believes in an Ireland where every family is cherished equally, and enjoys the social, financial and legal equality to create their own positive future.

# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



2012 saw One Family deliver even more specialist family support services on a decreased operating budget which is a testament to the professional staff and volunteers who provide these services.

We were delighted to celebrate our 40th anniversary in good company with the founders of Cherish/One Family and speakers including Minister Frances Fitzgerald, Geoffrey Shannon, Fintan O'Toole and Catriona Crowe. If you missed the evening you can view footage on [www.onefamily.ie](http://www.onefamily.ie).

Our main policy work in 2012 was inevitably taken up with trying to ameliorate the extremely negative impacts of Budget 2012 on the most vulnerable lone parents. Through our **Ten Solutions** campaign we have been able to influence the welfare reform debate to ensure some protections for one-parent families on low incomes. We worked with the Dept of Finance and other partners on the development of the **Standard Bank Account** which aims to ensure financial inclusion for everyone. We investigated how the Dept of Social Protection presents **fraud** and provided critiques to them on how out of date reporting tools result in an overstatement of fraud of One-Parent Family Payment recipients. My Board colleague Dr Anne-Marie Mc Gauran represented One Family at the launch of the **Governance Code** as we are now fully compliant.

As always it is a pleasure to lead the Board of One Family as we continue our work to ensure that the organisation is sustainable, compliant, transparent and delivers high quality, effective and relevant services. I would like to pay tribute to our funders, donors, supporters, volunteers, staff and everyone else who provides time and resources in helping us continue to be Ireland's leading organisation for one-parent families.

**John O'Connell** *Chair, One Family*

## SOLUTIONS FOR SMARTER FUTURES

### Ten Solutions:

- is solution focused and fully engages with the welfare reform process;
- promotes services and investment in human capital to enable improved outcomes;
- helps to reduce stigma and discrimination, while promoting better practices; and
- begins to change policy formers and makers' attitudes and practices.

### The solutions are:

**1 Flexibilities:** Enabling long-term direct savings; flexibilities of Jobseeker Transition lessen the impact on those parents who have a child with a disability, or lack of access to childcare or who are coping with a bereavement or separation. Full-time employment is not a possibility for many lone parents.

**2 Wrap-around Childcare:** Provision of childcare, both before and after-school care is an economic driver. A value-for-money and quality assured childcare service can be delivered by realigning practitioner training to ensure an accredited practice-led workforce development programme. This will enable access to quality, accessible and affordable childcare at local levels and ensure that lone parents are able to take up opportunities of employment.

**3 Bridging Programmes to Employment:** Bridging programmes for lone parents help them to overcome the barriers that prevent their access to full-time work and further educational opportunities. One Family's bridging programme, **New Futures**, is based on international best practice for supporting groups most displaced from the labour market and incorporates proactive community-based recruitment, thorough needs-assessment, key-working and mentoring.

**4 Expert Guidance:** Support and guidance is crucial for successfully moving from welfare into work-life. Specially trained experts who understand the challenges faced by lone parents need to be on hand to help them to achieve their goals and secure financial independence for them and their families.

**5 Responsive Learning:** Further education and training opportunities have to complement parenting responsibilities not compete with them. Institutions need to develop a wide range of part-time, modular education and training programmes that support the activation efforts of people parenting alone with children of school going age.



One Family developed the **Ten Solutions for Smarter Futures** campaign in response to Budget 2012 in order to influence government policies and to lessen negative impacts on those parenting alone. These solutions are low to no-cost and are smarter ways of thinking about public policy and practice.

**6 Progression Opportunities:** Provide equal chances for lone parents to build sustainable and fulfilling careers. All labour market activation and workforce development programmes must be open to lone parents as equal and valuable members of our economy.

**7 Income Security:** Work must pay. There is a need to develop and promote an active range of in-work assistance through the tax regime, which is tailored. This will allow flexibilities and flexicurity to have a greater impact on the family budgets. The real challenge is to make childcare affordable for those at the bottom end of the income range, so that there are strong incentives for second earners and single parents. That would do much more to help reduce child poverty, and it would help economic recovery too.

**8 Work-life Balance:** Engage with employers. We need to enable parents of young children to participate successfully in the workplace through realistic leave terms and working hours. This is a corner stone of delivering a welfare model with a pro-active labour market policy.

**9 Joined-up Delivery:** Build on the Social Investment Package through the delivery of area-based outcome focused budgets which mandate and deliver: integrated solutions to child and family poverty; access to quality affordable housing; and tailored family support services that enact change, generate development and create a positive impact on reducing consistent and persistent poverty. Any increase in child poverty will cost society more in the long run.

**10 Poverty and Parent Proofing:** Monitoring and evaluating the activation process and management of lone parents needs direct and supportive engagement which can be partly achieved through a Poverty Impact Assessment. This can be carried out before the introduction of new policies, then the estimated effect on poverty levels can be factored into other cost-benefit analysis. Supportive preventative spends can then be taken by government corporately, which can help to lessen the impact on the most vulnerable families.

Find out about progress made by visiting **Policy & Research** on [www.onefamily.ie](http://www.onefamily.ie)

## MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

This year has been busier than ever. With an overall 5% increase in services offered to families who are frequently in distress and crisis, it is becoming more difficult to keep up with demand. The complexity of issues facing families has increased and more parents need support to share parenting post-separation without conflict. We now operate waiting lists for many services.



On a more positive note, **Family Day 2012** was a massive success with 5,000 happy people attending events in Dublin's Iveagh Gardens and nearly 1,200 family portrait entries from children to our national art competition.

We held the launch of our pilot **Child Contact Centres** in February with Barnardos and have seen how this incredible work maintains safe contact between children and their non-resident parent. We have seen children in unsafe access/contact arrangements, which are frequently court ordered. Much needs to be done to improve systems to understand and support shared parenting particularly where there is a history of violence and conflict within the family.

Nationally there has been increased demand from professionals for our **Training & Consultancy** service and engagement with One Family members through social media has been increasingly important as research confirms that lone mothers are the most socially isolated people in Ireland.

We have continued to invest time and energy into international policy and research work so that we can inform debates at a European level and bring learning back to our daily work. As we complete our 3 year strategy, partnerships and collaborations will remain a crucial way of working for One Family as we reach more local communities with our services.

The staff and volunteer team at One Family are excellent and committed professionals and it is a privilege to work with them.

**Karen Kiernan** CEO, One Family

# REPORT ON STRATEGY 2012

## Building a great future for One-Parent Families in Ireland: Strategy 2010–2012

2012 saw us taking major steps to complete our strategic plan in the three main areas of our work – specialist family support services; legal and policy change; and attitudinal change. What we achieved in 2012:

### Client Services Strategy

*We will empower all members of all types of one-parent families to create their own positive futures through our innovative family support services.*

#### Welfare to Work Service

There has been a 16% increase in uptake of One Family's Welfare to Work programmes in 2012, reflecting the strong desire by parents on social welfare to progress to sustainable employment. We also built and strengthened our partnership working by delivering career planning and development programmes for the North West Inner-city Network; An Cosán; EPIC programme in Business in the Community; and Galway City Partnership. These partnerships assisted in reaching more lone parents who wanted to take the next steps to education training and work. Our **New Futures** and **Career Clinic** programmes supported 68% of participants into education with a further 20% into work and 10% onto further training and skill development. In total the service engaged with almost 300 parents whose average age was 35. Participants' achievements, despite economic challenges, are both admirable and inspiring.

*"Before the course I was raw, fragile, with no goals and lacking motivation. I had isolated myself and now I am highly motivated, clear, positive, energetic and happy"*

#### New Futures Participant

Our flagship programme **New Futures** achieved accredited programme status with Quality and Qualifications Ireland (the successor to FETAC and HETAC), with the external Authenticator commenting:

"The evidence being generated is excellent, which is supported by outstanding programme materials."

The service is widely recognised as being pioneering in terms of our approach, delivery and outcomes which led to it acting in an advisory capacity both nationally and internationally. We have worked with partners in Lithuania in developing career development training for those parenting alone and participated in the European Expert Group on 'Confronting poverty and social exclusion: ensuring work-life balance.' Our model of engagement mentoring is building up a momentum of interest too.

Our **Guidance Service** worked with 72 people and gave 12 talks/workshops on routeways and drivers of the domestic and the internationally traded labour market. 2012 also saw One Family take over the convenership of the South Dublin Voluntary Group and their move to Cherish house. SDVG delivers community employment opportunities in a range of employment experience to 60 participants across Dublin and Wicklow.

One Family's Welfare to Work Services illustrate the effectiveness of thought-out programme design based on assessment, job search assistance and job readiness training, coupled with more intensive elements (engagement mentoring and guidance) to augment human capital. We have seen again that intensive training is associated with greater earnings gains in the long run.



Graduation 2012

### Family & Parenting Supports

The **Parenting Service** – comprising **Positive Parenting** and **Family Communications** courses, and individual **Parent Mentoring** – experienced massive demand in 2012 with increased numbers being sent through the courts due to family separation, and additional HSE referrals and self-referrals. A new post-separation parenting course in partnership with ParentsPlus was piloted, supporting each parent with parenting skills and in maintaining a conflict-free relationship with the other as they transition to shared parenting so that contact can be smooth for children.

We saw far more parents, particularly mothers, who experienced domestic violence and suffered poor mental health as a result. We worked with parents whose children have been taken into care and ran a series of outreach parenting courses in an addiction support service, mainly with fathers who were trying to re-establish a relationship with their young children.

The number of child protection notifications we needed to make increased in 2012. Many families are struggling in these challenging times and the conflict and stress caused by family breakdown can unfortunately lead to an increase in levels of concern around child wellbeing.

The pilot **Child Contact Centres** project was fully operational and One Family provided the necessary therapeutic and parenting supports in partnership with Barnardos. We recruited additional play and art therapists to support children availing of the service. The project has been an excellent way of hearing children's voices, keeping them safe in contact visits and supporting parents in their parenting skills and emotional issues.

The **Training & Consultancy** service rolled out 12 training events across 41 days all over Ireland, including the introduction of bespoke training for crisis pregnancy counsellors who support people who parent following an unplanned pregnancy. We also offered master classes on crisis pregnancy through NUI Maynooth. Our Director of Professional Development presented the model of the Training Links project we ran in partnership with the Family Resource Centres in the south east of Ireland at the Think Parents! in the Hague, Netherlands; a Family Communications workshop at the international Transgender Europe conference in Dublin; and an international delivery of Family Communications where participants attended from Poland, Malta and Romania.

***"The trainer broadened out every topic. and was excellent at challenging the group to go deeper on issues. The training flowed and was an efficient learning process"***

**Training for Professionals Participant**



One Family staff



Karen Kiernan & Minister Frances Fitzgerald at the Child Contact Centres launch

The One Family **Counselling Service** saw an additional 6% of clients across the emergency crisis pregnancy service as well as post-termination, solution focussed and therapy for adults and adolescents. We expanded our play therapy work with children and secured funding for a new service in 2013 specifically to work with young people in care who become parents. The service is at capacity and has to operate waiting lists.



#### **askonefamily national helpline**

The helpline has gained increasing recognition over the years as a place for quality information on issues affecting one-parent families as well as a listening support service. Calls received went up another 4% in 2012 reflecting confusion and distress experienced over the changes in Budget 2012 as well as ongoing relationship breakdown, legal queries and concerns about money and income. To respond to the growing number of calls a service model has been developed that will see the engagement of volunteers in 2013. The service continues to respond to requests for information sessions and this year delivered sessions in the community for young people and those experiencing homelessness.

#### **Learner Story**

Helen, mid-30s, has two young children. She left school early and experiences literacy difficulties. She attended an adult learning centre to help her with literacy and completed a FÁS course, where she heard about New Futures. During the needs assessment, it was evident that Helen's self-esteem was low. She had good motivation and attendance on the course but was quiet during the first weeks so mentoring sessions focused on exploring her understanding of course content. She worked hard to improve her literacy: as the course progressed her confidence, communication skills and literacy levels improved. She now feels less isolated and is in steady part-time work.



## Legal & Policy Promotion

*We will achieve equality for one-parent families principally by leading constitutional, legal and policy changes in Ireland and being evidence informed by our international partners.*

### Our Policy themes are:

- 1 Affordable, accessible and quality child and after-school care
- 2 Addressing work and low pay
- 3 Promoting health, housing and services
- 4 Ensuring income security

Policy and advocacy work has always been a critical part of our work and 2012 kept us extremely busy with our **Ten Solutions** campaign as we all grappled with the negative impacts of Budget 2012. We met hundreds of people to discuss this including members of one-parent families; ministers, their advisors, senior civil servants and policy makers; members and staff of political parties; government and opposition politicians; employers; and collegial organisations in the community and voluntary sector. One Family made submissions to EU Representatives in Ireland and the IMF on the cumulative impact of the austerity measures on those parenting alone.

Decision makers listened and could see the value in many of our proposals. Our Ten Solutions submission has substantially influenced the redevelopment of Community Employment associated with community-based crèches; the development and delivery of a pilot programme in after-school care; and the need for tailored solutions within the social welfare system. We challenged the Dept of Social Protection's reporting of social welfare **fraud**; worked with the Dept of Finance and other partners on the development of the **Standard Bank Account** which aims to ensure financial inclusion for everyone; made **23 submissions** to government on a range of issues including the Single Working Age Payment and lobbying; and responded to the **Law Reform Commission's** proposals in relation to family relationships, birth registration and guardianship. The development of a **national parenting strategy** is an important goal for us and we work on this through an all-Ireland Special Interest Group on supporting parents in their parenting role.

One Family represents the needs and aspirations of those parenting alone on nine national and international advisory groups. We supported Barbara Matera MEP, Vice Chair of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality in the development of her report: *The situation of single mothers in Europe*. Through these tactical involvements we aim to ensure that the voices of those parenting alone in Ireland are heard, responded to and acted upon.



Fintan O'Toole – 40th Anniversary Family Day

## Attitudinal Change Strategy

*We will ensure that one-parent families are cherished equally by inspiring others with the realities of family diversity.*

### Family Diversity

We introduced **Family Day** to Ireland with the help of EBS as a national celebration to recognise all the different kinds of families that children live in. In 2012 we had nearly 1,200 children enter our national art competition whilst a fabulous crowd of 5,000 people attended our Family Day event in Dublin's Iveagh Gardens on 13 May. All kinds of different families enjoyed the free family friendly entertainment and activities and organisations from around Ireland held their own celebrations as well.

We attended the **Bloom** festival to bring our own particular flavour of family diversity and to entertain tired parents and excited children.

We have been supporting campaigns to have the European Commission and the United Nations mark **2014** as a special year of the family as it will be the 20th anniversary of the first day and year to mark families.

### 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

2012 was also a year of celebrating the achievements of One Family since its founding as Cherish by a small group of brave unmarried mothers back in 1972. We took time to reflect on the changes in society and family life over the four decades, as well as the enormous contribution one-parent families have made to Ireland and to think about what else is needed for full equality such as an updated Constitution.

*Single Issue*, written by our founder Maura O'Dea Richards about the origins of Cherish, was reissued as an e-book; we have wonderful interviews with founders available online as well as a range of stories from families who used the organisation throughout the years.

### Media

One Family secured 145 media placements on television, radio and in print over the year. We lobbied about the impact of the cuts from Budget 2012 as well as Child Benefit reform, young parents and education, the need for Child Contact Centres, birth registration and many other issues.

Our interactions with clients, members and professionals through social media grew strongly and our website was reorganised to ensure more relevant information was readily available.

# CORPORATE & FINANCIAL REPORT

## One Family Board of Directors (as of 31 December 2012)

**Chair:** John O'Connell

**Vice-Chair:** Declan Jones

**Treasurer:** Iain Wilkinson

**Company Secretary:** Dr. Anne Marie McGauran

### Ordinary members:

Rachael Dowling

Debbie Lowe

Claire McGrade

Andrew Petherbridge

Iseult White

The voluntary Board of Directors of One Family seeks to be comprised of a broad and balanced representation including a variety of types and members of one-parent families, a balanced gender composition and wide age-range. We work to identify the skills and experience we require according to a predetermined matrix to ensure we have a full complement of all the professional skills required to run the Board of One Family effectively. Over half Board members have experience of living in a one-parent family.

We are a company limited by guarantee (no. 45364) registered as Cherish Ltd and trading as One Family. We are also in receipt of charitable status for tax purposes – CHY 6525. We submit audited accounts on an annual basis and follow all the regulations associated with corporate obligations.

One Family complies with the Fundraising Code of Practice, is fully compliant with the voluntary Governance Code and is working towards the highest level of quality assurance under PQASSO.

*The following is excerpted from our audited accounts 2012.*

## Statement of Accounts for year ended 31st December 2012

Incoming Resources	€
Voluntary and Fundraising income	46,259
Services	52,544
Grant income	631,298
Other incoming resources	26,257
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	<b>756,358</b>

Resources expended	€
Expenditure	722,993
<b>Total resources expended</b>	<b>722,993</b>
<b>Surplus for the year</b>	<b>33,365</b>

Income/Funders 2012	€
Charges for Services	52,545
City of Dublin VEC	5,400
Department of Children & Youth Affairs	70,000
Department of Environment, Community & Local Government	95,000
Dublin City Council	8,000
EU/Lifelong Learning Programme	10,572
Family Support Agency	5,200
Fundraising & Donations	46,257
HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme	374,906
HSE South Western	45,777
HSE Carlow/Kilkenny National Lottery Grant 2012	2,000
Office of Minister for Children/Pobal-Community Childcare Subvention Scheme	14,444
Sundry Income	26,257
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>756,358</b>



Dr. Anne Marie McGauran representing One Family at the Governance Code launch

# ONE FAMILY FUTURE

## What next?

In 2013, work will continue on achieving each of our **Ten Solutions**. We will also be calling for the **Constitutional Convention** to review the definition of family as part of their work. We will contribute to the debate Minister Shatter intends generating in relation to his reform of the **Family Law** courts.

Service provision may become even more challenging if demand continues at the same rate. Waiting lists have lengthened and we may prioritise more complex families in crisis. The **Child Contact Centre** pilot will be coming to an end and we will need to seek funding to ensure mainstream provision of these vital services throughout the country.

We will open a new service to support young people who have been in care with pregnancy and parenting as a result of additional funding from the HSE's Crisis Pregnancy Programme.

We want to develop an even bigger and better **Family Day** and to really establish the celebration of all types of families as a national holiday.

Finally, 2013 will see the start of our next **strategy** which will guide our work until the end of 2015.

## Supporting One Family

We would like to thank all our statutory and private funders, our individual supporters, our amazing volunteers and everyone who helps to ensure that we can keep our vital services running for vulnerable families.

Many thanks to everyone who dug a little deeper in 2012 and contributed to our **Big 40 for Families Challenge**. We came close to reaching our target and we really appreciate it.

Thanks to our founder Maura O'Dea Richards for being the face of our legacy campaign and a huge thanks to any of you who made a commitment in your will to the work of One Family.

## It is never too late to donate to us and here is how you can do it:

Choose the Donate option on our website [www.onefamily.ie](http://www.onefamily.ie) or call our office at 01 662 9212 if you wish to set up a Direct Debit. Alternatively you can donate by mail, deliver cash or mail cheque donations to us at the address below, or donate directly to:

Bank of Ireland

**Account No:** 17 19 19 23 **Sort Code:** 90-00-17

## A message from our founder, Maura O'Dea Richards

*"With a small group of women I founded One Family, formerly Cherish, in 1972 because I was a single unmarried mother who decided I wanted to keep and raise my child myself. Over the decades I know that we have helped many thousands of families get on their feet, raise their children well and that we have helped make Ireland a fairer place in which to live. I still believe in and support the work of One Family and I know that they continue to develop new services to meet the needs of one-parent families today, such as Child Contact Centres and back-to-work programmes. That is why I have decided to leave a legacy in my will to help continue the really important work of One Family and I would like to invite you to do the same. I can honestly say that my darling daughter would not be the great person she is today without the love and support of One Family and all the people involved. Help make this support a reality for other families in crisis and need."*

## One Family Membership

We have been steadily growing our membership and we would love you to get involved. You can join online by choosing the **Join Us** option online or by emailing us at [info@onefamily.ie](mailto:info@onefamily.ie). We inform and consult our members on policy issues, when we are involved in research and when we are developing our strategic plans.

Remember that you can also follow us on **Facebook** ([onefamilyireland](https://www.facebook.com/onefamilyireland)) and **Twitter** ([@1familyireland](https://twitter.com/1familyireland)) to join in the discussion, share updates and keep up to date on what is going on in terms of news, policy and events relating to one-parent families.

### One Family

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