

# One Family's Annual Review 2009



Because it isn't easy being mum *and* dad.

The **askonefamily** National Helpline for all one-parent families offers free support and information for mums and dads - on everything from relationships to money to employment. We understand that life for one-parent families can sometimes feel twice as hard. One Family listens, understands, supports. So call us today. We can help.

Lo-call 1890 66 22 12 or visit [www.onefamily.ie](http://www.onefamily.ie)

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## 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



2009 will be seen as a critical year in the lifetime of One Family because when the country was in one of the deepest recessions for decades we were ensuring our viability by doing all the right things. As Chair of One Family I am very proud to report that we managed to cut our outgoings, assume operational responsibility for Gingerbread, plan our strategy for the next three years and cope with a phenomenal 24% increase in helpline calls.

We worked hard to deliver our planned strategy whilst coping with the downturn that has affected so many people living in one-parent families as well as the funding landscape in which One Family operates. The primary objective of the Board and staff has been to ensure that services are not impacted negatively by cutbacks so staff took a salary cut, we stripped overheads to a minimum and we delivered for our funders and the people who rely on us.

The merger with Gingerbread has been an incredibly positive experience for the people involved in both organisations and has resulted in more effective and efficient service delivery to people parenting alone and sharing parenting. We were delighted to present our views and experiences of merging and collaborative working at a number of conferences during 2009 and we look forward to more partnership working in the future.

We have been working hard on the development of our next three-year strategy. We continue to have demanding aims as we strive for real equality of opportunity and outcome for people parenting alone and sharing the parenting of their children.

Our work at a European level increased this year as we continued to bring our practice to the highest possible policy levels for maximum impact on families.

*'We worked hard to deliver our planned strategy whilst coping with the downturn that has affected so many people living in one-parent families as well as the funding landscape in which One Family operates.'*

I am delighted to have again led the innovative Board of One Family and I would like to sincerely thank all our supporters and funders, our excellent staff team, all our volunteers and our clients.

**Ian Mitchell**  
Chair, One Family



Karen Kiernan, Director, One Family, Dr. Maureen Gaffney, Chair, National Economic and Social Forum and John O'Reilly, Board, Gingerbread Ireland announce our merger

## Message from the Director



When we look back on 2009 we will all probably ask ourselves – 'how did we do it?' – because it has been one of those years when everyone was under immense pressure. One Family 'did it' by putting the families we work with first and trying our best to meet their needs. Despite losses in income we did not close services.

Both our **askonefamily** helpline and our counselling service experienced very significant increases in use, of 24% and 15% respectively, indicating that parents in Ireland are under increasing levels of stress.

We successfully introduced sliding scale fees for several of our services in 2009 and, as well as providing a small amount of income for the organisation, we have also increased attendance.

The first full delivery of our **New Futures** programme was the centrepiece of our **Welfare to Work** activities in 2009. Participants worked hard and progressed amazingly well. As usual, we learned and were encouraged by these inspiring individuals such as **New Futures** participant Rachel who spoke at our annual graduation: *'I have come a long way in the past six months and I attribute most of my recovery to One Family... I got the courage to be a single mum in November 07, leaving behind an abusive and violent relationship... I stand here today, feeling extremely confident that I have a bright new future ahead of me, very proud of myself'*.

At time of writing, legislation which would make it mandatory for lone parents on social welfare to be available for full-time work when their youngest child is 13 years old, is going through the Dáil. One Family has major concerns about this as we do not see evidence that the supports which parents need, such as after-school care and access to part time education and training, will be in place. In fact at the moment some of these supports are being actively dismantled. We have been working hard over the past four years to provide research on these parents so government can remove the structural barriers that prevent them moving

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out of poverty; as well as evidence-based programmes to support their personal, family and parenting challenges. We will continue our work in this area in partnership with others as we want the activation process to be successful for parents and their children. We want to achieve real benefits for them as families, rather than see them simply being moved onto another payment without any supports.

Planning has been underway for the complete refurbishment of Cherish House in 2010 and we look forward to the creation of a safer, more client-friendly building.

Next year will see the launch of our new strategy and I look forward to working on it with our expert Board and staff. As always, heartfelt thanks to the families who trust us and teach us everything we know.

**Karen Kiernan**  
Director, One Family

# One Family Strategy 2007 – 2009

## Building a Great Future for One-Parent Families in Ireland: Strategy 2007-2009

Our strategy is organised around three major objectives which we report on below. See [www.onefamily.ie](http://www.onefamily.ie) for a full copy of our strategy.

### Client Services Strategy: We will empower all members of all types of one-parent families to create their own positive future through our innovative family support services.

#### askonefamily

This national lo-call helpline received a massive 24% increase in calls in 2009 as a direct result of the economic downturn. Most queries related to social welfare issues as lone parents lost their jobs in significant numbers. There were also numerous calls about legal issues as more couples separated due to financial stress, but could not necessarily afford to have two homes. Our helpline was able to relieve some of this stress by offering support and a listening ear.

We also introduced a much needed FLAC family law clinic which is held at our premises once a month.

### 'The course makes me think more about my reactions.'

*Young Dad, Positive Parenting course*

#### Family & Parenting

In 2009 we introduced our **Family Communications: Coping with Family Life and Communication with Teenagers** course and Dad's workshops, both of which have been extremely popular, whilst individual Parent Mentoring offers a lifeline to many parents. Our unique **Positive Parenting: building strong relationships with children and managing difficult behaviour** course continues to have

waiting lists and we have supported some community-based organisations by providing workshops and courses to them.

We supported the National Youth Council of Ireland by writing a chapter on Teen Parents for their Diversity Toolkit.

Social isolation is a huge problem for one-parent families, so, using the expertise of Gingerbread, we expanded our social group to include monthly trips for families which were of huge benefit. As one child remarked to her mum on our annual holiday, *'I don't feel weird now that all the other kids only live with one parent too'*.

### 'I was proud of myself to tell my children – I am going to work.'

*Marks & Start participant*

#### Welfare to Work

2009 saw the external evaluation of the first full delivery of **New Futures** in Cherish House. The results have been very positive, proving that the project is extremely effective at progressing parents on social welfare to mainstream training, education or employment. Even with the extensive range of supports, the **New Futures** project costs very well when rated against similar interventions.

We look forward to delivering **New Futures** regionally in 2010 as part of our mainstreaming strategy.



Fair City actor Una Kavanagh, Graduation keynote speaker, with Joan McGuirk (left) and Irene Carolus

One Family also contributed our expert knowledge to the development of the FÁS Social Inclusion Programme for Lone Parents and we look forward to the outcomes of their evaluation next year.

We continue to deliver the parents stream of the Marks & Start programme in Ireland, a training and work placement programme that continually proves to be effective at supporting lone parents into employment.

#### Training & Consultancy

As always we leverage our expertise into training products so that we can share our best practice learning with other professionals around Ireland, thereby having a bigger impact on families.



Minister John Curran, Karen Kiernan, May and Zak help Santa and his helper with presents at the One Family Winter Party in Dublin Castle

We introduced our **Family Communications** Training for Trainers this year but the most important piece of work was the delivery of our **Training Links** project where we offered intensive training to the Family Resource Centres in the south-east. This project was co-funded by The Wheel and the Family Support Agency and will continue into 2010. It has been a wonderful opportunity to test the development of a training pathway for family support workers and we look forward to the evaluation.

We also delivered specialist training on working with one-parent families to Social Welfare Facilitators and to FÁS staff.

### Legal & Policy Strategy: We will achieve equality for one-parent families through leading constitutional, legal and policy changes in Ireland.

Our research continued in 2009 as we finalised our work on the need for Child Contact Centres, this research will be launched in 2010 by Minister Barry Andrews and we look forward to recommendations about the implementation of pilots.

Our Vice-Chair Karen Fitzpatrick represented the issues of one-parent families in her work with the European Anti-Poverty Network, attending the People Living in Poverty Conference in Brussels and addressing the NESF Social Inclusion Forum on the reality of trying to move from welfare into work.

We were invited to become a member of Eurochild's Thematic Working Group on Family & Parents in 2009 and we continue to represent the interests of one-parent families in Ireland in the EAPN Social Inclusion Working Group and we have networked extensively with lone parent organisations from across Europe.

It is of vital importance to us that the learning we gain from our practice is translated into policy so that we can make changes at local, national and EU level to improve the lives of one-parent families.

### Attitudinal Change Strategy: We will ensure that one-parent families are cherished equally by inspiring others with the realities of family diversity.

A major issue for many people with whom we work is that they do not perceive themselves as 'a family'. We strongly believe that all family types should be recognised, supported and respected in Ireland so we continue to call for constitutional change and to celebrate International Day of the Family.

To this end, we undertook a radio, print media and poster campaign to broaden the public's view of who one-parent families are. Using photos of female and male versions of one-parent families (as per the cover), the ads helped to raise awareness and also promoted askonefamily.

Leaflets based on the campaign have been available in all Peter Mark salons along with our askonefamily cards and we have been working on stereotyping with the Equality Authority.



One Family Vice Chair Karen Fitzpatrick at NESF Social Inclusion Forum with Mary Hanafin, former Minister for Social & Family Affairs

# Support

**'I got a lot more out of the course than I expected. I am a much stronger person and prouder of who I am and more optimistic about my family's future.'**

*New Futures 2009 graduate*

## Sincere Thanks...

No charity can operate without investment and support from a range of statutory funders, individuals and corporate partners. Our sell-out Food & Wine events continued in 2009 when we partnered with Avoca for a fantastic evening. We also received training from Google and were delighted to again be recipients of the annual Club di Dublino dinner.

We would like to sincerely thank those generous individuals who regularly donate money to us, attend our Table Quiz and Food & Wine events and who raise money for us, be it bag packing, running a marathon or generating your own fundraising idea – please know that you make a huge difference. To the companies who have made cash donations to us for special projects, such as our Summer Programme, family holiday and Xmas party, our clients are so appreciative to have your support!

Lastly, we could not do the life altering work we do without the support of so many statutory agencies and Government departments who believe in our work, recognise its importance and who are aware of the crucial and strategic gaps that we fill. Parenting is difficult, and can be more so in a one-parent family. As donors and supporters giving of your time, talent and energy you are making a difference through your support of One Family. On behalf of our clients and their children, we say thank you!

## Our Services for Families

One Family offers a wide range of services to one-parent families, to those experiencing a crisis pregnancy and to those working with one-parent families.

We work with all members of all one-parent families: mothers and fathers; children; grandparents; step-parents; siblings; parents with care; non-resident parents; and those who are sharing parenting.

## One Family Parenting: building strong families

- Childcare service
- Parent mentoring
- Positive Parenting: Training for Trainers
- Family Communications: Coping with family life and communicating with teenagers
- Dad's workshops
- One Family Futures: creating a positive future through training, education & employment
- New Futures (FETAC Accredited)
- Marks & Start courses and placements
- Adult Guidance & Career counselling
- Key working and needs assessment
- Guidance and Support

## One Family Supports: sharing through difficult times

- Counselling for adults and adolescents
- Crisis pregnancy counselling (non-directive)
- Post-termination counselling
- Social & support groups
- askonefamily: providing support and information for one-parent families
- National lo-call helpline 1890 66 22 12
- Email query and support service
- Information sessions
- Information leaflets

## can\*: campaigning and advocacy network

Join our 1100 members to contribute to a movement that wants its voice heard at national and international level to bring about positive changes for one-parent families.

Email [can@onefamily.ie](mailto:can@onefamily.ie) for more information.

# Corporate & Financial Report

## One Family Board of Directors (as of 31 December 2009)

**Chair:** Ian Mitchell

**Vice-Chair:** Karen Fitzpatrick

**Treasurer:** Iain Wilkinson

### Ordinary members:

Rachael Dowling

Debbie Lowe

John O'Connell

Anne Marie McGauran

Andrew Petherbridge

Claire McGrade

Declan Jones

**Company Secretary:** Karen Kiernan

### Board members who resigned in 2009:

Ross Golden-Bannon

The 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.

**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 are governed by a voluntary Board of Directors and we submit audited accounts on an annual basis and follow all the regulations associated with corporate obligations.**

The following is a summary of our income and expenditure for 2009 based on our audited accounts.

| 2009 Income Sources                             | €       |
|---|---------|
| Charges for services                            | 38,619  |
| Community Foundation of Ireland                 | 7,500   |
| Crisis Pregnancy Agency                         | 367,382 |
| Dept of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs  | 107,520 |
| Donations & Fundraising                         | 75,116  |
| Dublin Bus                                      | 5,000   |
| Family Support Agency                           | 90,750  |
| FÁS   | 102,264 |
| H.S.E – South Western                           | 54,354  |
| Office of the Minister for Children/ Pobal/NCIP | 34,213  |
| Office of the Minister for Integration          | 1,454   |
| The Wheel/Training Links                        | 19,948  |
| Sundry income                                   | 1,714   |

| 2009 Expenditure                        | €       |
|---|---------|
| Wages and salaries                      | 572,814 |
| Events                                  | 15,019  |
| Health, safety & security               | 1,910   |
| Insurance                               | 6,046   |
| Contracted services                     | 59,862  |
| ICT, communications                     | 19,392  |
| Light and heat                          | 4,488   |
| Repairs, maintenance and cleaning       | 3,131   |
| Printing, postage and stationery        | 25,144  |
| Advertising/Campaign                    | 18,628  |
| Travel and subsistence                  | 6,146   |
| Accountancy, audit, legal and bank fees | 15,131  |
| Sundry expenses                         | 3,195   |
| Subscriptions and journals              | 5,425   |

## One Family's Mission

One Family is working to ensure a positive and equal future for all members of all one-parent families in Ireland – changing attitudes, services, policies and lives. Together with one-parent families and those working with them, we are committed to achieving equality and respect for all families.

In addition to striving for fundamental structural change, we support individual one-parent families as they parent through times of family, work and life change, and those experiencing a crisis pregnancy. We know that every family is unique, and so we work in a family-centred way to bring about better lives for parents and children.

## One Family Values

- In One Family we work from a place of **respect** and **acceptance** of the parents, children and organisations that we come in contact with.
- We work with **compassion**, which means that we connect with others in a relationship of equals and we are completely **non-judgemental**.
- We believe that we can **hold the hope** for the families we work with, especially when they are unable to.
- We achieve this through **innovation, excellence, determination** and our **client-centered approach**.
- One Family is an organisation of great **courage** as it has been from its foundation and we continue to work with **integrity** to ensure **equality** for all one-parent families in Ireland.

## What next?

In 2010 One Family will be working to our new strategy for the next three years; we will be launching our **Family Communications** products as well as our **Child Contact Centre** research and we will hold a major national campaign celebrating International Day of the Family in May.

## Help us to continue our services

As a voluntary organisation and registered charity One Family relies heavily on a range of funders and donors to deliver its services. One Family appreciates the commitment of all those who help us to fundraise through a range of activities. If you would like to fundraise on One Family's behalf please call us on 01 662 9212 or email [development@onefamily.ie](mailto:development@onefamily.ie)

If you would like to learn more or become involved in our policy and campaigning work you can become a member of can\* (Campaigning and Advocacy Network). Please email [can@onefamily.ie](mailto:can@onefamily.ie) for more information.

## How to make a donation to One Family

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.

If you would like to make a donation to One Family you can do so at Bank of Ireland: **Account No.** 17 19 19 23 **Sort Code** 90-00-17

*If and when the time is right for you to make a will, please remember One Family after your own family and friends.*

**One Family** Cherish House, 2 Lower Pembroke St, Dublin 2

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Company No. 45364 Charity No. 6525

