



**European Expert Group Meeting  
“Confronting family poverty and social exclusion;  
ensuring work-family balance;  
advancing social integration and intergenerational solidarity  
in Europe”**

Convened as part of preparations for the  
Twentieth Anniversary of the International Year of the Family, 2014  
(Cfr. Report of the Secretary-General ,  
Preparations for and observance of the twentieth anniversary of the  
International Year of the Family in 2014,  
A/67/61-E/2012/3)

**6-8 June 2011**

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## **2. Welfare to work**

*Official name of the Organization*

Cherish Ltd t/a One Family.

*Website of the Organization*

<http://www.onefamily.ie>.

*Name of the practice*

Welfare to Work: New Futures.

*Aim of the practice*

Raising skills and aspirations by helping participants to overcome the barriers that prevent them from fully participating in work, education and/or skill development: focused on building confidence and is underpinned by mentoring and key-working support.

*Target group of the practice*

The programme offers an innovative motivational, interagency progression programme designed specifically for lone parents.

*Name of the person who will attend and make the presentation*

Stuart Duffin.

*Position in the Organization*

Project Manager.



Inspiring Practice: aspiring impacts  
Helping to make work pay

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Dr Stuart Duffin  
Centre *for* Excellence  
*in Welfare to Work*

# The challenges 1

- Increased risk of poverty due to dependence on welfare and no spare financial capacity.
- Tax and welfare traps coupled with transition costs in the system that deepen poverty and exclusion
- Internal barriers linked to low confidence and self-esteem,
- Access to high quality, flexible, affordable child and after-school care.
- Low educational attainment arising from early school leaving and relevance of qualifications and skills to current labour market requirements.

## The challenges 2

- Social isolation and lack of personal supports and networks
- Access to transport to and from education, training and employment in both urban and rural areas
- Access to affordable quality housing
- Health challenges arising from stress, domestic violence, legal issues or a poor sense of general well-being.
- Reconciling work and family life.



## Findings and evidence

- Murphy, C., Keilthy, P., Caffrey, L., 2007, *'Lone Parents and Employment: What are the Real Issues? A Research Report by One Family'*, One Family: Dublin.
- Barrett, R., Duffin, S., 2012, 'Evidence – informed practice: a platform for progression', One Family, Dublin



# Influences on our Inspiring Practice

**1** Climate of economic and social pressures- The Social Welfare (Misc Provision) Bill of 2010.

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**2** Prevention of long-term dependence on welfare

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**3** The need for parental choice with regard to care of young children

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**4** Expectation of participation in education, training and employment



# Our values

- Respect, acceptance and non judgemental;
- Innovation, excellence and determination;
- Participative, client and family centred;
- Partnership and progression

## Our work

- Ensuring a positive and equal future for all
- Supporting families as they parent through times of family, work and life change
- Delivering family centred services
- Helping to enable better lives for parents and children

Challenge and change!





# Our supports

## Our model

1. Focused specialist family support for progression to education, skill development and employment
2. Provision of expert parenting and family support to those parenting alone or sharing parenting
3. Delivery of professional development services to those working with one-parent families

# Welfare to Work

## Term 1

- **Steps2 New Futures**      **National Qualifications Framework**
- 10 weeks, 45 hours, 5 coaching sessions 2 x level 3 FETAC

## Term 2

- **New Futures**      **National Qualifications Framework**
- 14 weeks, 84 hours, 7 mentoring sessions 2 x level 4 FETAC

## Term 3

- **PASSPort to education** **National Qualifications Framework**
- 4 weeks, 12 hours, 2 mentoring sessions, 2 FETAC 5

# Welfare to Work

- **Options Programmes**
  - delivers accredited programmes which cover the following areas: Enterprise Skills; Work Trials; Customer Care; Essential Skills; Social Care, and others giving those parents enhanced skills for the labour-market
- **careerclinic**
  - a proactive and creative approach ,**7 steps careerclinic** will provides participants with practical support and advice on:
    - career review, assessment and guidance,
    - CV preparation,
    - interview techniques,
    - how to capitalise on transferable skills in order to find employment
    - challenges and solutions in parenting alone
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# Welfare to Work

## ***Marks & Start***

- pre-employment training
- Plus to a 2-week work probation placement with M&S .
- Giving participants:
  - experience of the retail sector;
  - Equipping in retail skills;
  - Giving participants a set of marketable skills; and
  - a reference.



# Information

- Unplanned Pregnancy
- Social welfare queries
- Family Law issues
- Parenting
- Childcare
- Education and Employment
- Finances
- Community Supports and services



# Support

- A friendly, non-judgemental and non directive listening ear for parents who may be experiencing stress in their family life
- Signposting to organisations and services when specialist information or support is needed
- One to one information sessions



# Who do we work with?

- All members of one parent families including:  
those parenting alone,  
or sharing parenting
- Single mums and dads
- Separated and divorced parents
- Professionals working with one parent families



# Parenting and Family Support Services

- Positive Parenting
- Family Communications
- Dads' Workshops
- Shared Parenting
- Parent Mentoring
- Solution focused counselling
- General counselling
- Play therapy
- Engagement mentoring
- Child Contact Centres
- Professional Development Awards



# Professional Development Services

- Up-skilling those working with one parent families

## Our programme

- Committed through education and upskilling to assisting practitioners, in both the performance of their duties and in their practice.
- Continuing effort to meet needs, we research and develop best practices to promote professional development.
- Knowing the time demands faced
- Providing a range of programmes including customised in-house programmes, short generic half- and full-day seminars, masterclasses and conferences.



# Our successes

## Benefits for participants

- Orient career
- Identify goals
- Increase self-confidence
- Better understand the job market
- Learn how to find and keep a job
- Gain experience
- Explore individual resources and options
- Identify personal skills
- Assess job-search tools
- Access customized support
- Enhance advantage in moving forward

## Benefits for practitioners

- Boost skills and effectiveness
- Enabling increased productivity
- Informing of new and best practices or legislation,
- Enabling to meet customer needs
- Helping to retain high-quality talent and motivated people



# our policy recommendations

1. A stronger, integrated, accessible and supported framework to enhance lone parents' opportunities to balance work and family life and therefore fully engage in education, skill development and work: recognizing that it is not just jobs, but jobs that pay and offer opportunities for progression, with an emphasis on sustaining and progressing in work to ensure all lone parents who need help to develop their skills have access to the relevant pre-employment and in-work development.
2. To promote a personalised and responsive approach to individual needs which will provide tailored employment and skills support to meet the needs of both lone parents and local employers, and assert a partnership approach with public and the community and voluntary sector working together to maximize innovation, leading to more and better outcomes..

**Best practice and success achieved by :**

- Facilitating access to enabling services such as childcare
- Enhancing the range, spread and reach of childcare, parenting and family support services
- Providing supports to create quality of life

**underpinned by a systemic movement away from passive income support**

## What is said about current provision ?

**lack of  
commissioning of  
services**

**Role of State and  
semi-state agencies**

**short-term funding  
initiatives**

**Reliance on  
European funding**

**many pilots little  
mainstreaming**

**Bureaucratic**

# Drivers of inspiring practice

- OECD, 'Doing Better for Families' 2011, Ireland has a long way to go if we are to meet international standards in parenting and family policy.
- One Family promotes and communicates that:
  - Early childhood services is an investment in human capital, and should be protected from 'austerity cuts'.
  - Public support for childcare services should be linked to work-life balance policies
  - 'A coherent policy approach for the early years would ensure that childcare, (parenting and family) services are available when leave benefits run out.'
  - Reducing child poverty requires a carefully designed policy-mix, including both income supports and the provision of services.
  - Quality of childcare is critical in child development

# our model

## Step 1

- **Identification of problem**

- Client work    Consultation    Evidence-based research    Policy analysis

## Step 2

- **Service response**

- Develop response professional and practice learning products    Pilot response    Evaluate    Revise    Develop

## Step 3

- **Mainstream**

- Pilot with mainstream agencies    Roll out training products    Quality assurance



# new ideas that create value

delivering a climate for inspiration

**“.....enterprise and innovation are the engines of growth in the social economy”**



# the ingredients

**Leadership**---the ability to see the possibilities of the future

**People**---the heart and soul of innovation

**Basic Values**---heartfelt principles that define an organization

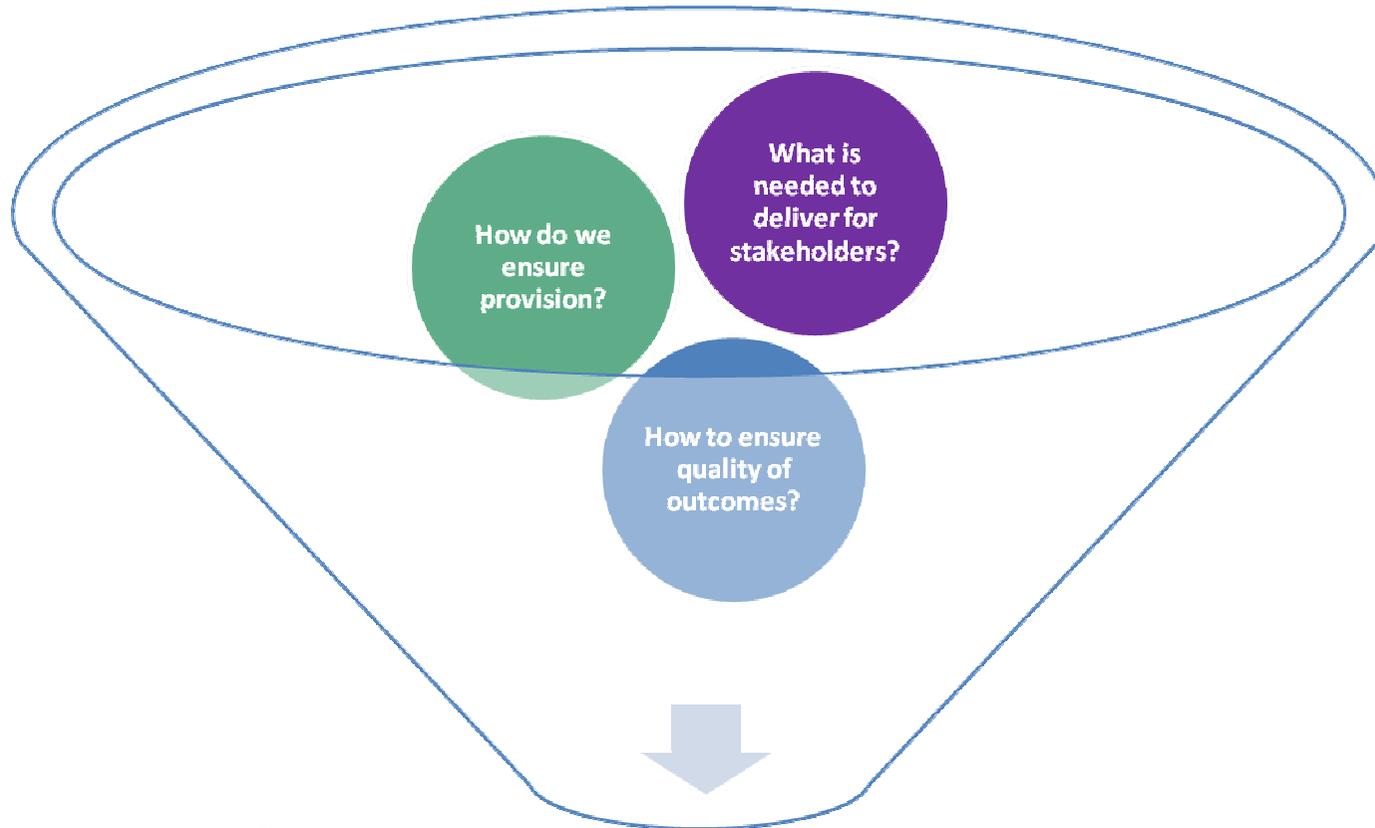
**Innovation Values**---what makes the impossible possible



# the actions

- **Challenge** -- doing things differently
- **Customer Focus** -- creating value
- **Creativity** – generate possibilities.
- **Communication** -- open communication
- **Collaboration** -- feed on interaction
- **Completion** -- strong implementation
- **Contemplation** -- gleaning the lessons

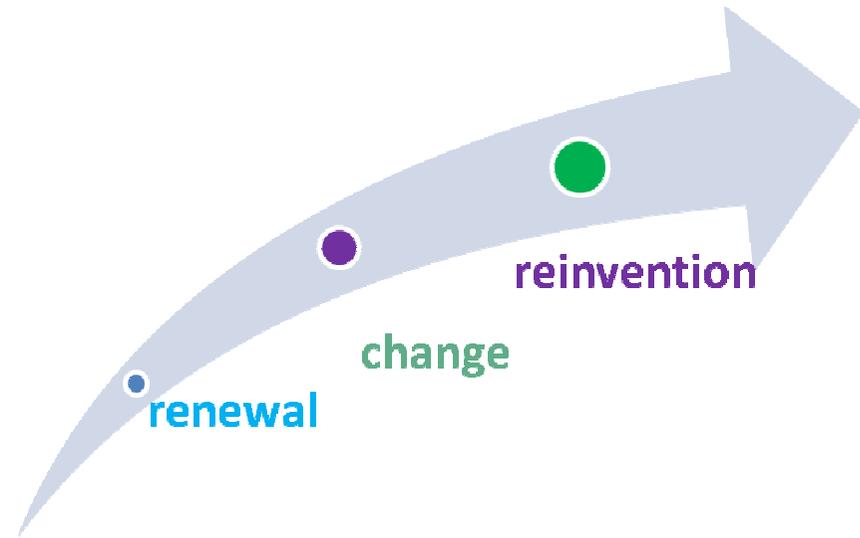
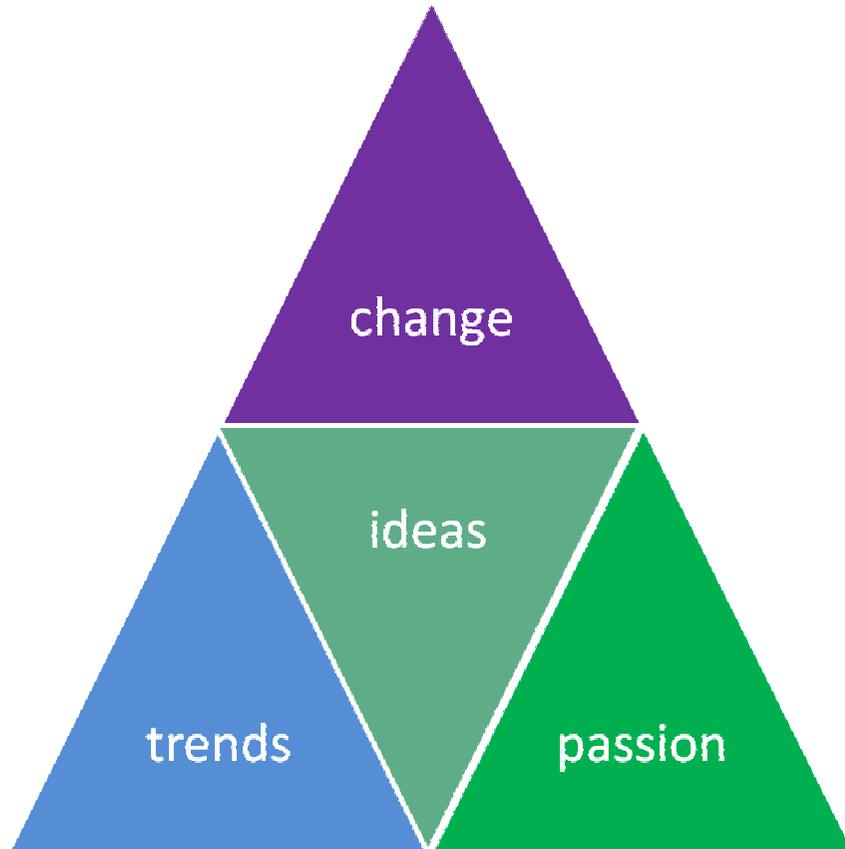
# the mix



**Facilitating and meeting needs**



# drivers-entryways to inspiring practice





# making it happen –

- **Needs**
- **Approach**
- **Benefits**
- **Competition**



## making it happen: the skills

- **Leadership**
- **Communication**
- **Ambition**
- **Aspiration**
- **Knowledge**
- **Confidence**



# critical success factors

## People:

- Leaders
- Investors
- Inventors

## Culture:

- Celebrate success
- Change and innovation
- Partnership



# advantage

- ICE-Breaking Innovative Creative Entrepreneurial
  - focused strategy
  - create the future
- By
  - thinking together creatively and collaboratively
  - creating a challenge that excites
  - focusing on people and communities



## Where to find us



- [www.onefamily.ie](http://www.onefamily.ie)
- Information & Listening Support
- Signposting to services
- Email support & information
- Publications
- Free Legal Advice Centre-  
Family Law Clinic