

Social Impact Report



January 2017

Foreword

I am delighted to introduce Employers For Childcare's first Social Impact Report. We have been working for parents since 1998. I am proud that as an organisation we have grown from a small community project to a large, self-sufficient organisation which encompasses three Social Enterprises.

Our aim is to support parents to access and stay in work. As a Charity we have provided advice and information to parents to help them make decisions and responsibilities about work, childcare and balancing family life. At the core of this is our Family Benefits Advice Service which was set up in 2010 to address the lack of specialised information available to local parents.

This service has gone from strength to strength and proved itself to be an invaluable service for families across Northern Ireland. We are grateful to the organisations who have worked with us to help expand the geographical reach of our service and enhance our face-to-face engagement with parents.

One of the key areas which we have proactively sought to address is the lack of suitable and affordable childcare in Northern Ireland.

Though our advice service we help parents access the financial support available to them and at a policy level we have been at the forefront of both providing up-to-date statistics on the cost of childcare and lobbying local politicians and policymakers to enact change.

We are the only organisation collecting information on childcare costs and the impact they have on local families and we will continue to use this information to lobby for change and for the implementation of a childcare strategy.

The landscape of childcare financial support which was already cluttered, will become even more confusing for working parents with the pending changes to family benefits and entitlements expected in 2017, thereby making the need for our services even more important.

However none of this work would be possible without our three social enterprises, Employers For Childcare Vouchers, Employers For Childcare Solutions and Employers For Childcare Training.

Whilst each of these businesses fulfil a social aim in their own right they also enable us to raise the funds necessary to continue our charitable activities.

I am proud to announce that we have invested all profits generated from these trading entities in providing services for working families. Since 2008 this has totalled £4.3million.

I commend this report to you. It showcases each of our services and aims to provide an overview of the social impact we have had. I hope you will find it useful and informative.

Marie Marin
Chief Executive

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Introducing...



Who we are, who we help and what we do.

Who we are...

Employers For Childcare aims to make it easier for parents with dependent children to get into work and to stay in work.

Established in 1998 as a community project, the organisation has grown to encompass a campaigning charity and three successful Social Enterprises.

Who we help...

We offer a range of services to support parents including our Family Benefits Advice Service, a salary sacrifice Childcare Voucher scheme and workshops and training covering topics that are important to them.

We also provide a range of services to support childcare providers including training, employment opportunities, recruitment solutions, the Childcare Voucher scheme and seminars.

In addition, we deliver services to support employers including workplace training and the Childcare Voucher scheme throughout the UK.

What we do...

Our range of charitable services aim to support families, including:

Family Benefits Advice Service

Our specialist Advisors carry out personalised benefits checks for parents and 'better off' calculations to ensure that every parent is claiming all the financial help they are entitled to, particularly with the cost of childcare. We also deal with queries on all childcare and work-related issues.

Research, Policy and Lobbying

We undertake both qualitative and quantitative research which provides us with the evidence to lobby Government on childcare, family and work-related issues.

Our Work

To fund the work of the Charity we operate **three** Social Enterprises:



Employers For Childcare Vouchers

Since 2004 we have been working with employers across the UK to offer the Childcare Voucher scheme to help parents save money on the cost of registered childcare.

The Childcare Voucher scheme helps employers to save money through NIC exemptions.

Employers For Childcare Solutions

We provide employment opportunities across a range of settings for those interested in a career in childcare.

We deliver childcare services in registered day nurseries, playgroups, afterschools clubs as well as babysitting for parents during hotel stays and weddings.

Employers For Childcare Training

We deliver a range of training courses for childcare providers, parents and employers.

Popular courses include Childminders' Core Training and Promoting Positive Behaviour, Paediatric First Aid and Child Protection & Safeguarding.



Employers For Childcare Solutions, Employers For Childcare Training and Employers For Childcare Vouchers are Social Enterprises, meaning that 100% of the profit made from these companies is donated to our charitable services. This report sets out the social impact we have made in the last year, for parents, families and employers.

Our Charitable Services

Our Charity works directly with parents through the Family Benefits Advice Service, and for parents through our research, policy and lobbying work.

Family Benefits Advice Service

Since 2002 Employers For Childcare has provided a helpline and information service to parents about childcare and in-work benefits.

Changes to the benefits system and the impact of austerity measures increased the number of calls we were receiving from parents who were very unclear about the financial support available to them, for example with the cost of childcare or other family entitlements.

To address this need we set up the Family Benefits Advice Service in 2010 to provide personalised calculations and benefits advice to parents. We provide this service through a dedicated helpline and face-to-face.

The Family Benefits Advice Service added another level to the support we provide for families. In addition to our online resources and information, the Family Benefits Advice Service helps Employers For Childcare to provide a holistic service for parents.

The service is embedded in the work of the charity and has gone from strength to strength since its development, demonstrating the demand for this type of advice and information amongst local parents.

Our Family Benefits Advisors provide free, impartial, confidential advice and information on:

We also provide **Benefit Entitlement Checks** tailored to your own family circumstances

Tax Credits

Maternity/Paternity Leave and Pay

Childcare Vouchers

School Uniform Allowance

Social Security Benefits

Flexible Working

Free School Meals

Finding Childcare in your Area

Ongoing challenges:

As a result of Government's welfare reform measures, a series of changes to family benefits and entitlements have been agreed and will roll out across the UK in the coming months and years. In 2017 changes to Tax Credits from April onwards will impact heavily on many families, in addition to Universal Credit and other benefit changes.

There are difficult times ahead.

Our charity team is continually monitoring the changes and preparing parents through advice and information, through the helpline, website and on social media. Looking forward we hope to expand the service to include advocacy work and advice tailored to families with disabilities and special needs.

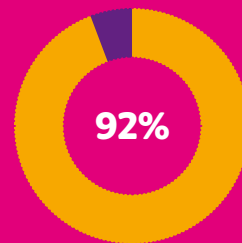


In 2015/16

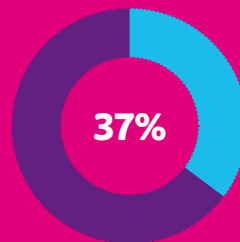
- We helped **6,644** people.
- We carried out **4,053** calculations.
- **60%** of all calculations were for a personal benefits check.
 - > Callers asking for a personal benefits check gained an average of **£3,053** in benefits.
 - > Working parents availing of a personal benefits check gained an average of **£3,899** in benefits.
- **14%** of calculations helped clients determine the best form of childcare support (Childcare Vouchers or the childcare element of Working Tax Credit) for their circumstances.
 - > **51%** of callers were better off using the Childcare Voucher scheme.
 - > The average amount of childcare support gained was **£4,581 per year** (through Childcare Vouchers and Tax Credits).
 - > Collectively we have helped parents availing of this calculation **save £2,473,559** towards the cost of childcare.
- **70%** of callers asking about the impact of Universal Credit would be financially better off on the current system of support.
- **98%** of parents stated that speaking to our Advisors helped them make decisions about their circumstances.
- **10%** of clients are actively seeking work or have secured work since using the Family Benefits Advice Service.

Who were our callers?

Female



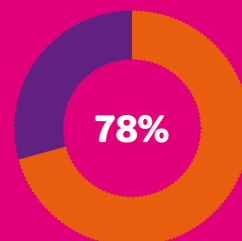
Single Parents



Part of a Couple



Working Parents



Outreach

- We carried out **298** outreach sessions
- The number of outreach events **increased by 121%** from the previous year.

Roadshow locations

Area	Locations
Antrim	Action for Children Larne
	Antrim Home-start
	Antrim Sure Start
	Ballyclare Mums' Group
	Ballymoney Healthy Living Fair
	Carrickfergus Home-start
	Coiste Ghaeloideachais Chromghlinne
	Corran Integrated Primary School Larne
	Dalriada Sure Start Armoy
	Dalriada Sure Start Ballycastle
	Dalriada Sure Start Ballymoney
	Dalriada Sure Start Bushmills
	Glynn Primary School Larne
	Horizon Sure Start Carrickfergus
	Larne New Mums' Group
	Larne Bright Start Event
	Larne Surestart
	Lisburn Sure Start
	Northern Childcare Partnership Childcarer Conference
	Crumlin New Parents' Group
	Northern Childcare Partnership Bright Start event
	Carrickfergus Parent & Baby Group
	Parenting NI Parents Week event
Sleepy Hollow Day Nursey	
Belfast	Advice NI AGM
	Apex Community Information Event
	Ardmonagh Family & Daycare centre
	Ashton Community Centre
	Belfast Central Mission Brightsparks
	Beechmount Sure Start
	Belfast Childcare Partnership Bright Start event
	Belfast Metropolitan College
	Beechmount Sure Start

Area	Locations
Belfast	Blackie River Centre
	Carryduff Playcare Centre
	Colin Sure Start
	Upper Springfield Development Trust
	East Belfast Mission
	Nettlefield Primary School
	Euston Street Nursery
	Family Nurse Partnership Carlisle Centre
	Family Nurse Partnership Stewartstown Road
	Glen Parent Day Care Centre
	Greenway Women's Centre
	Total Mobile Employee Health and Wellbeing Day
	Hobby Horse Day Nursery
	Upper Springfield Development Trust Homecare Employer Session
	ICTS Employer Session
	Impact Training
	Whiterock Integrated Partnership
	Ionad Uibh Echach
	Job Assist Centre Falls Jobs Fayre
	Job Assist Centre Shankill Jobs Fayre
	Job Assist Centre Shankill
	Holy Child Primary School Job Fair
	Law Centre AGM
	Law Centre Social Security Agency Welfare Reform Round Table
	Lower Shankill Community Association
	Now Group @ The Hive
	Orange Pips Day Care
	Outer West Sure Start
	Parenting NI
	Pregnancy Matters
	QUB Health & Wellbeing event
	Roisin Lynch SDLP Constituency Office
	Loughmoss Community Centre Safe Families Event
	Saol Ur Sure Start
	South Belfast Sure Start Ballynafeigh
	South Belfast Sure Start Sandy Row
	Shankill Sure Start Shankill Women's Centre
	Small Wonders Day Care
	Smart Day Care
	Solas Autism Programme

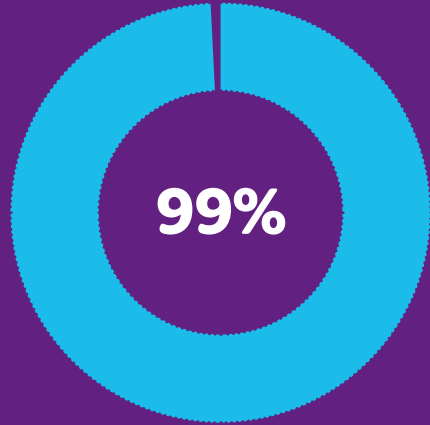
Area	Locations
Belfast	St. Martin's Nursery Tseibhe Dhoibh Ballymurphy Upper Springfield Development Trust Whiterock Community Centre YMCA Family Fun Day
Armagh	Arke Sure Start Armagh Blossom Sure Start Bright Start Cluster Armagh Emmanuel Cots and Tots Family Fun Day Keady Reed in Partnership Work Groups Lurgan & Portadown Splash Sure Start Craigavon Splash Sure Start Lurgan Stephen Moutray MLA Constituency Office
Down	Rathgael House Adult Information Day Ards Home-start Ballynahinch Home-start Bright Start Cluster Newtownards Castlewellan Home-start Crossgar Home-start Drumaness Home-start Giggles Day Care Camlough Hillsborough New Parent Group Hillsborough Afterschool Homestart - Annalong Homestart - Ballynahinch Homestart - Castlewellan Homestart - Drumaness Homestart - Newcastle Homestart - Newry Homestart - Kilkeel Homestart - Warrenpoint Kilkeel Sure Start North Down Home-start Reed in Partnership - Work Group Banbridge South Armagh Sure Start Southern Regional College Star Sure Start Banbridge
Londonderry-Derry	Apple Tree Daycare Western Childcare Partnership Bright Start Information Session

Area	Locations
Londonderry~Derry	Coleraine Sure Start
	COS for Autistic Families
	Dalriada Sure Start Portstewart
	Dry Arch Centre Dungiven
	Dry Arch Centre Limavady
	Edenballymore Sure Start
	Little Hands Sure Start
	NIPSA Information event
	Shantallow Sure Start
Tyrone	Action for Children Omagh
	Armagh Home-start
	BCM Dungannon
	Woodland Adventure After School
	Bright Start Cluster - Cookstown
	Bright Start Cluster - Strabane
	Western Childcare Partnership Bright Start Information Session Omagh
	Brocagh After School Club
	Clogher Valley Agricultural Show
	Clogher Valley Sure Start
	Cookstown SDLP MLA & Council staff
	Dungannon Family Fun & Information Day
	Galbally Community Centre
	Gold Sure Start Ardboe
	Juniors Daycare - Omagh
	Last Sure Start
	Libraries NI - Dungannon
	Little Stars Daycare
	Network Personnel
	Pomeroy After School Club
Steps to Success - Omagh	
Strabane Sure Start	
Woodland Adventure After School	
Fermanagh	Western Childcare Partnership Bright Start Information Session Enniskillen
	Cherish Sure Start - Newtownbutler
	Cherish Sure Start - Roslea
	Cherish Sure Start - Irvinestown
	Cherish Sure Start - Lisnarick
	Fermanagh County Show
	Lakeland and Irvinestown Home-start

Response to the Family Benefits Advice Service



...of clients would recommend our services to other parents



...of clients rated the quality of the service as excellent or good

“It’s great that there is someone impartial, who is willing to help with this information. There is so much info available online and on the GOV website, but talking to someone who understands it all and knows how it actually affects each individual and can therefore give the personalised advice is brilliant.”

“I have used the service several times and have always found it really useful. The people I have spoken to are always really friendly and knowledgeable.”

“I have used this service a number of times, the staff are always helpful and can help with my concerns and issues, educating me on the correct benefits advice. Great free service which I will use time and again as I have trust in the organisation. Thank you for your help and support to date.”

“The Employers For Childcare charity have provided an invaluable service to me in a number of occasions and without their help I would be in a very difficult situation. Thank you to all your staff for providing such a fabulous service.”

Research, Policy and Lobbying

Research

Each year Employers For Childcare carries out research which provides up-to-date information on the issues which impact parents. This provides evidence to lobby government on childcare, family and work-related issues on behalf of working families.

Our research helps us to:

- Capture the challenges and issues that working parents are facing today.
- Intelligently lobby Government for more support for parents to address these issues. We have been working to influence our local politicians to provide increased support to parents and families across Northern Ireland.
- Ensure that the views of local families are represented in the development of policies and strategies, for example the Childcare Strategy and the Children and Young People's Strategy.
- Develop easy to access, useful information, tailored to parent's needs. This helps us to ensure we are providing parents with the information they need, for example of policy changes, such as Shared Parental Leave, or financial changes, such as Welfare Reform. Our research also informs the services we provide across the organisation.
- Encourage the development of family friendly workplaces.
- **Be a stronger and more powerful voice for the parents we represent!**

Our recent research reports:

Northern Ireland Childcare Cost Survey 2016



In 2016 we launched the seventh annual Northern Ireland Childcare Cost Survey.

Until 2010 no measure of childcare costs existed in Northern Ireland to track how prices were rising or the impact on parents. To record this data we began tracking the cost of childcare through our annual Childcare Cost Surveys.

The 2016 survey is based on data collected from over 900 childcare providers and 6,000 parents from across Northern Ireland.

Key findings include:

- The average full-time childcare place cost £168 per week in 2016.
- 63% of parents struggled with their childcare costs either throughout the year or at some point during it.
- 25% of parents regularly used credit cards, loans from family and friends, or payday loans to meet their childcare bill.
- For 43% of parents the cost of childcare influenced the pattern of hours worked (e.g. working compressed hours).
- For 50% it influenced the total number of hours they worked (e.g. part-time hours or leaving work altogether).
- 50% of parents were unsure they were claiming all the family benefits and entitlements that are available.
- 81% of all informal childcare was provided by grandparents.

The Childcare Cost Survey is often used and referenced as a reliable and valuable resource. It has informed debates in the Assembly, policy development and service delivery.

Striking the Balance: The impact becoming a parent has on employment, working life and career

'Striking the Balance' sought to uncover the challenges that working parents face in balancing work and family.

The survey of 4,200 local parents found that a staggering 91% stated that it

is difficult to combine work with family responsibilities.

Key findings include:

- 63% of parents made changes to their employment after becoming a parent.
- 77% of parents said that it was difficult to progress a career after having children.
- Parents with supportive employers were more likely to be satisfied with their work-life balance than those with unsupportive employers.
- For many the choice to make changes to employment to accommodate family commitments was taken at the expense of career development.
- 91% of parents said it was difficult to combine work with family commitments.

The findings were considerably shocking especially considering the 'family friendly' movement which became increasingly popular in 2015, with the introduction of a number of family friendly initiatives in Northern Ireland, such as the introduction of shared parental leave, and a number of major

international employers, such as Netflix and Virgin, hailing the importance of facilitating working parents.

The findings showed that there is still much work to be done to help working parents create a suitable work-life balance.

As a result we published a follow-up guide based on the Striking the Balance report. The **How to be a Family Friendly Employer Guide** is aimed at encouraging employers to embrace family friendly working policies.

Policy and Lobbying

During the year we:

- Engaged with policy makers on the development of a Childcare Strategy and a Children and Young People's Strategy for Northern Ireland. We were involved in the co-design process for each of these strategies and also submitted a consultation response to the draft Childcare Strategy.
- Produced briefings on topics such as Welfare Reform, Tax-Free Childcare, Tax Year Changes, the Budget 2016 and Autumn Statement and Marriage Allowance.
- Met with MLAs to discuss childcare and family policies.
- Produced research and held report launches for both the Childcare Cost Survey 2015 and the Striking the Balance report.
- Represented parents at political party conferences.
- Produced a Manifesto for the 2016 Assembly Elections and circulated to all MLA candidates and political parties.
- Engaged with each of the 2016 Assembly candidates in the countdown to the election.
- Sat on policy groups including the Early Years Strategic Alliance, the Child Poverty Alliance, the All Party Group for Social Enterprise, the All Party Group for Children and Young People and the Children's Budgeting Working Group.



Family Friendly Employer Awards 2016

Our annual Family Friendly Employer Awards recognise and reward employers across Northern Ireland who go above and beyond legal requirements to provide and actively promote family friendly working practices. From flexible working policies to offering employee benefits such as the Childcare Voucher scheme and extra days off, the annual Awards ceremony celebrates family friendly organisations that are committed to initiatives that make it easier for parents to balance their work and family life.

The 2016 Award winners were:

- **Public Sector Organisation of the Year** – Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (winner), Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council (highly commended)
- **Large Private Sector Company of the Year** – Allstate NI (winner), Lagan Construction Group (highly commended)
- **Small Medium Enterprise of the Year** – Aisling Daycare (winner), Progressive Building Society and Catalyst Inc (joint highly commended)
- **Education Sector Organisation of the Year** – Queen's University Belfast (winner), Aisling Daycare (highly commended)
- **Charity Social Enterprise of the Year** – MACS NI (winner), NI Hospice (highly commended)



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Family Friendly Employer Workshop

A Family Friendly Employer Workshop is held each year following the Awards ceremony, where HR professionals from all industries come together to share best practice advice, inspiration and practical ideas to improve employee welfare and help employees to better manage their work-life balance.

In 2016 over 60 delegates attended the Workshop, held at Malone Lodge Hotel in Belfast and sponsored by Worthingtons Solicitors, where they enjoyed a networking breakfast and insightful presentations delivered by the Family Friendly Employer Award winners of 2015 on examples of their own family friendly workplace policies.

Guest speakers from Worthingtons Solicitors and the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland also gave informative talks on equality within the workplace and employment law, while encouraging all delegates to provide a supportive and 'family friendly' working environment for their staff.

Our Next Workshop!
Thursday 2nd March 2017
at Galgorm (Four Seasons)
Email us on hello@employersforchildcare.org to find out more.

Eye
BUSINESS
SMALL BUSINESS AWARDS

Employers For Childcare Awarded for Community Contribution!
Employers For Childcare Charitable Group was delighted to win the Contribution to the Community Award at the 2015 Business Eye Small Business Awards.
The Contribution to the Community Award recognised and rewarded the work of the charity for its commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility and how this has made a positive difference to the local community.



Our Social Enterprises

In order to fund our charitable services we operate three social enterprises: **Employers For Childcare Vouchers, **Employers For Childcare Solutions** and **Employers For Childcare Training**.**

100% of the profit made through these businesses is invested in our charity.

Employers For Childcare Vouchers

In 2004 we set up Employers For Childcare Vouchers. At that time very few local employers were offering the Childcare Voucher scheme to staff, meaning that a limited number of parents could make savings on their childcare bill.

The Childcare Voucher scheme is a tax and National Insurance exemption scheme. It is offered as an employee benefit.

Employers For Childcare administers the scheme for employers, across each of the sectors.

Employees using the scheme can save a **maximum of £933 per year** and employers also save on Employer's National Insurance Contributions.

Last Year:

- 12,774 parents used our Childcare Vouchers
 - > This is an increase of 8% on the previous year.
 - > Collectively, parents saved £10million.
- 1,870 employers offered the Childcare Voucher scheme to their staff as an employee benefit.
 - > This is an increase of 15% on the previous year.
 - > Collectively, employers saved £4million.
- In total our Childcare Voucher scheme delivered savings of £14million for local parents and employers.



What our customers say:

Employers

"Working in partnership with Employers For Childcare has assisted our employees who are working parents to find accessible and affordable childcare solutions and has supported us in retaining key talent."

Paul Molloy - Finance Director, Liberty IT

The Employers for Childcare team are at all time's professional, non judgemental and eager to help both our staff and our management team on all levels, without this fantastic service both parents and employers would be losing a valuable and beneficial service."

Sheelagh Dornan, HR Officer, Donnelly Group Ltd.

Parents

"Employers For Childcare Vouchers are amazing - I have found them very useful and the system works really well. I have found it a real stress reliever."

"Employers for Childcare in a valuable service my wife and I both use, giving us both savings, every penny counts! The service is easy to use and the customer service is absolutely excellent!"

"Employers for Childcare have been wonderful and have saved us a huge amount of money!"

Employers For Childcare Solutions

Childcare Solutions:

Childcare Solutions was set up in 2012 to address some of the deficiencies of the childcare system in Northern Ireland, such as the lack of provision of childcare outside 'typical working hours'. This led to the development of direct provision of childcare to families in their own homes through Approved Home Childcare (AHC).

This also included care packages tailored to meet individual and specific needs through Childcare Plus for children and young people up to the age of 18 years old with a disability.

Unfortunately, in 2016 Employers For Childcare was notified by HMRC that the provision of childcare services in the home is a service on which VAT must be paid.

This is a unique form of childcare which Employers For Childcare offers in the family home. This meant a 20% increase in the cost of this service which left the service unaffordable for many families and as a business model we could no longer sustain this. The service ceased to operate from 4 November 2016.

Last Year:

- We provided childcare in the family home to 61 families, including 21 families of children with special educational needs through our Childcare Plus service.
- We provided a total of 21,339 hours of childcare.
- 34 families were newly matched with childcarers.

“We used the Professional Nanny Service because we wanted the best care for our children in the comfort and familiarity of the family home. Without the hassle of drop-offs to crèche or childminders’ houses, keeping the children at home with a handpicked carer who devotes themselves to our children was an absolute result. The children have the life of Riley, which we are delighted to be able to give them through the Professional Nanny Service. Their stresses are minimal, their routine is tailored, and their care is of an excellent standard. We have struck lucky with our carer and the backup support of the Professional Nanny Service team.”

J P Irvine – Parent

“We used the Professional Nanny Service for our young children and we would definitely recommend it. Our Nanny has a great relationship with our children and they absolutely love her! They have so much fun with her and learn loads. She’s great at taking responsibility with the children and makes sure that they are happy and fed by the time we come home from work. All in all the service has been brilliant. My husband and I have found our Nanny great to work with - she is very helpful with the children and around the house, and has been the best childcarer that we have ever worked with.”

Geraldine - Parent

The service continues to deliver staffing solutions for day nurseries.

Childcare Temps

Childcare Temps is a staff bank of trained, experienced and approved childcarers who provide temporary childcare as and when required in childcare settings.

Employers For Childcare Solutions employs the childcarers and takes full responsibility for the AccessNI and approval from the Trust.

All childcarers are fully vetted and approved to work in registered childcare settings across Northern Ireland.

The service helps childcare providers to effectively manage holiday periods, training days, maternity leave, unexpected absences and recruitment gaps.

Last Year:

- We provided temporary childcare for 48 nurseries.
- With a total of 153 nurseries registered with the Childcare Temps Service.
- We provided 7,805 hours of temporary cover.

"This is a much needed service that will take away the hassle of finding relief staff. It is reassuring that the Childcare Temps are all qualified to a high standard. We have used the service while waiting for a new staff member's AccessNI to come through and have found it to be excellent. I would definitely recommend Childcare Temps to other Nursery Managers."

Sharon Bushe - Puddleducks Day Nursery, Belfast

HR Packages

We support registered childcare providers with recruitment and selection:

Last Year:

- 24 Childcarers were recruited.
- 22 HR Packages were delivered.
- 4 External Trust approvals were completed.



Employers For Childcare Training

Employers For Childcare Training delivers accredited and certified training courses which are designed to meet the needs of parents, childcare providers and employers, both at our site and at external premises throughout Northern Ireland. We ensure all training provided is interactive and to the highest quality, equipping all attendees with the necessary skills.

Last Year We Trained:

- 370 childcare professionals
- 240 employees
- 2,138 parents

Our range of training provision includes:

- Emergency First Aid at Work
- Paediatric First Aid
- Risk Assessment
- Fire Safety
- Manual Handling
- Food Hygiene
- Child Protection & Safeguarding
- Phonics Workshops
- Plan, Play and Observe

In 2016 we received funding to run 'Promoting Positive Behaviour' workshops for parents through the Big Lottery Fund.

This was provided to 600 parents in 29 local communities throughout Northern Ireland, the courses were carried out in the evenings to accommodate working parents.



“Belfast International Airport recently embarked on a Engagement and Wellbeing programme and were delighted to be able work with Employers For Childcare Training to provide our nutrition awareness sessions. As part of our corporate social responsibility commitment, we are driven to support local Social Enterprises. Employing the skills and expertise of Employers For Childcare Training has proved to be invaluable.”

Jaclyn Coulter, Human Resources Manager, Belfast International Airport

“My husband and I attended the ‘Oh Baby’ workshop as we are expecting a baby and wanted to have a level of confidence should we find ourselves in the position of dealing with a medical emergency with a little one. The course surpassed our expectations and we came away feeling reassured, more aware and confident.”

Lorraine Rooney - Parent

Overall Social Impact

Since 2008 we have invested **£4.3million** into providing services for working families.

We have helped parents to maximise their incomes, manage childcare costs and create a suitable work-life balance – which benefits the whole family. Through working with employers and policy makers we have sought to encourage and secure better support for families both in the workplace and in public policy.

Through our Social Enterprise model we have been financially sustainable and have been able to grow our charity, empowering us to support more families through our charitable services.

There is more ground to be covered and we will continue to work to progress childcare politically and call for enhanced support for families.

In the coming months the landscape of support for families is set to change drastically through Welfare Reform. We will work to ensure that working families are prepared and informed during this time of transition.

Furthermore, we will continue to work with the Elected Representatives and policy makers, ensuring that the needs of parents are highlighted in the policy process.

“I, in addition to other MLAs, recognise the work of Employers For Childcare. It is one of the finest social enterprises that we have in Northern Ireland. Frankly, it has stepped in and done the work that OFMDFM and other Departments have failed to do. It has conducted an annual cost of childcare survey to set out what is facing our families in Northern Ireland in reality. It has raised awareness of the Childcare Voucher scheme and assisted families and employers to administer that scheme, bringing savings across the board for our families and businesses in Northern Ireland. That work needs to be recognised.”

Chris Lyttle, MLA (NI Assembly Nov 14)

Thank you!

We would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to everyone who has supported our work over the last year, whether you are a parent who completed our surveys, an organisation which has hosted a Family Benefits Advice roadshow, a policy maker who listened or an employer who offered our Childcare Voucher scheme – **thank you!**





How you can help!

Our work will only be a success if we have strong partners and supporters. Here are some ways you can help us:

1. Parents

Complete our surveys

We usually carry out two surveys a year, the information we collect helps us to effectively lobby on behalf of local parents. The more parents who complete our surveys the stronger and more powerful our message will be. The surveys are advertised on social media and our website.

Recommend our services

If you have used our Family Benefits Advice service, childcare services, training or Childcare Voucher scheme please recommend us to anyone else you think could benefit.

2. Employers

Offer our Childcare Voucher scheme

We are the only Childcare Voucher Provider which operates as a social enterprise. All of the others are private businesses. Using our Childcare Voucher scheme means that all profit is invested in services for working families.

Use us as your training provider

We offer a range of workplace training, including Emergency First Aid at Work and Nutrition Awareness.

Host a Family Benefits Advice Roadshow

Our Family Benefits Advice Team can provide roadshows in your workplace, offering one-to-one advice for employees or a presentation about forms of support, including help with the cost of childcare. These are provided free and are extremely beneficial for staff.

5. Other Organisations

Work with us

If you can host a Family Benefits Advice Roadshow, use our research in your own policy responses, provide our Childcare Voucher scheme to staff or use our training services we would greatly appreciate it!

3. Childcare Providers

Avail of our Childcare Temps service

Could you benefit from our Childcare Temps service to cover staff sick days or annual leave? We provide reliable, qualified staff.

Use our training services

We provide a range of training for new and existing childcare providers, including Paediatric First Aid, Child Protection and Childminder Core Training packages.

Promote our Family Benefits Advice Service

Our Advisors offer parents advice and information on how to maximise their income, including help with the cost of childcare on your site.

4. Policy Makers

Heed our advice

We speak on behalf of local parents, indeed our lobbying activities and policy work are based on evidence gathered directly from parents. We understand the challenges they face and the actions which could help them and their families. We are experts in this area and want to work to enact change at a policy level. We are willing to assist in policy development.

Host a Family Benefits Advice Roadshow in your Constituency Office

Our Family Benefits Advice Team can provide roadshows in your Constituency Office, offering one-to-one advice for parents or a presentation about forms of support, including help with the cost of childcare.

Employers **For Childcare**

Employers For Childcare

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