

ONE FAMILY STRATEGY

2019-2021



Working towards an Ireland where every family is cherished equally
www.onefamily.ie



Our vision

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

Our mission

One Family is working to ensure a positive and equal future for people parenting alone, sharing parenting and parenting around separation – changing attitudes, policies, services and lives. We are committed to achieving equality and respect for all families. While acknowledging that every family is unique, we will endeavour to bring about better lives for these parents and children.

In addition to striving for fundamental attitudinal and structural change in our society, our services offer support in a family-centred way to individual families through times of change and difficulty, as well as supporting those experiencing a crisis pregnancy.

Our values

Respect, compassion for and **acceptance** of the parents, children and organisations that we come in contact with are at the heart of what we do. We connect with others in a relationship of equals and are completely **non-judgmental.**

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, accountability** and our **family-centred approach.**

Since being founded as Cherish in 1972, One Family has been an organisation of determination, passion and courage, working with integrity towards achieving equality for all families in Ireland.

How will our vision become a reality?

One Family is an organisation that develops and critiques policies, as well as being a specialist service provider. We focus on delivering **positive policy** and **attitudinal** change for the families we represent at a national level. This focus on improving the lives of one-parent families is fundamental to our work.

We want Ireland to have achieved the following by 2030:

- **Child poverty** rates in Ireland will be dramatically reduced as Government reaches its child poverty target through a range of universal and targeted services; targeted income transfers; inclusive employment and educational opportunities; and the necessary targeting of one-parent families for additional supports based on available evidence.
- **Family support services** will be available for people parenting alone, sharing parenting, and separating so that conflict and disruptions are minimised for children. This includes the development of a new Court Welfare Service including a statutory Child Maintenance Service; accessible services for separating families and people who are sharing parenting of their children; and targeted family supports for vulnerable one-parent families.
- **One-parent families** will be widely recognised, understood and celebrated as positive family forms. The marginalisation of diverse families needs to end and all families need equal access to statutory services, policies and laws. We would like this reflected in our Constitution so that all families are protected and respected.

To make it happen:

We will fearlessly name the challenges faced by the families we represent and work with. We will speak out and challenge laws, policies and services so that we can all do better. We will work with others to strategically achieve shared goals, while continuing to be accountable to all our stakeholders, uphold excellent governance standards and deliver quality specialist services.

Policy framework

One Family works under several overarching national and international policy frameworks. These include:

- Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: the national policy framework for children & young people 2014-2020.
- First 5: A Whole-of-Government Strategy for Babies, Young Children and their Families 2019-2028.
- Whole of Government Approach to Tackling Child Poverty.
- The UN Millennium Sustainable Development Goals.

Development of the strategy

One Family undertook a comprehensive consultation exercise with hundreds of families, funders and service providers in order to inform the development of this strategy.

Our strategy 2019-2021

1 Family support services

We will work directly with families parenting alone, sharing parenting and separating by providing specialist family support services that improve the lives of children and their parents. Children are at the centre of our work and we seek to improve the lives of all members of one-parent families by empowering, supporting and up-skilling parents so that they, and their children, can reach their potential.

We will achieve this by:

- Providing an excellent range of specialist services for all members of one-parent families through parenting services, counselling, information, training and support.
- Supporting children's ability to thrive in challenging family situations.
- Supporting parent's individual ability to cope with challenging situations through strengthening their mental health, skills and communications.
- Increasing our online services to ensure families across Ireland have greater access to us.
- Providing training and development opportunities to professionals and employers working with one-parent families.

2 Represent, champion and celebrate

We will fearlessly represent, champion and celebrate the realities and needs of one-parent families to Government, policy makers, media and wider society in order to bring about positive change in policies, laws and attitudes.

We will achieve this by:

- Working to ensure Government reaches its targets on child poverty.
- Listening to one-parent families so we can directly translate their lived experience into active policy.
- Working to secure the provision of a comprehensive Court Welfare Service.
- Responding to opportunities to provide policy perspectives on a wide range of issues affecting people living in one-parent families.
- Representing the reality of the lives of people parenting alone, sharing parenting and separating across a range of media and to a multitude of audiences.
- Working for Constitutional reform of Article 41.3 in order to ensure equality for all families.

3 Sustaining a strong organisation

Our ability to deliver strong outcomes depends on the strength of our supporting strategies and systems. We will continue to be a trustworthy and accountable partner to funders and policy makers, and an honest and fearless voice for the families we work with and represent.

We will achieve this by:

- Ensuring excellent governance and compliance.
- Securing stable funding for core family support services.
- Working in partnership with others to be as effective as possible in services, policy and communications.
- Ensuring excellent evaluation, monitoring and data collection systems.
- Managing our growth and staff team positively and proactively.
- Generating unrestricted income to meet the additional needs of the organisation.
- Developing our communications and social media presence.
- Ensuring our physical and ICT facilities are fit for purpose.



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