



Contents

Organisational Overview	02
Chairperson Introduction	04
CEO Statement	05
Vision, Mission, Values	07
Organisation	08
Strategic Goals & Achievements	10
Overview of Strategic Goals	12
Key Focus Areas	13
2023 Activities	14
Highlights of 2023	42
Financial Overview	48
Financial Summary	50
Grants Overview	51
Expenditure	52
Looking Ahead	58
2024 Outlook	60
Future Strategic Goals	62

1

ORGANISATIONAL OVERVIEW



57%

Most families seeking emergency accommodation in 2023 were one-parent families headed by a mother.

Chairperson Introduction

In 2023 we moved positively into our next decade and continued to reflect positively on our 50th anniversary celebrations through a few lovely legacy events. We worked earnestly to ensure there would be a referendum in 2024 to include all families in our Constitution and we were briefed on the proposed wording in December by Minister O’Gorman.



We successfully produced high-quality policy and research work in 2023, a year where child poverty continued to be a major focus for us as did the reform of the family courts and legal system. Through attending various lobbying and consultation events, we ensured that the needs and perspectives of one-parent families were brought to the attention of numerous policy makers.

The *In Transit? Insights* from the lived experience of lone parents claiming Jobseeker’s Transitional Payment report was launched by Senator Alice-Mary Higgins at an online seminar hosted by One Family in May 2023. The research from Fiona Dukelow (UCC), Joe Whelan (TCD) and Margaret Scanlon (UCC), highlights the challenges that lone parents experience when applying for and are in receipt of Job Seeker’s Transitional payment and will be extremely helpful to our sector’s policy work. We are delighted to work again with these researchers on the important issue of the under-representation of lone parents in higher education. We are also a member of the steering group for the ESRI, examining The Effects of (In)adequate Housing & Communities for Family Wellbeing.

Policy submissions in 2023 included our annual *Pre-Budget Submission*, as well as input to a review of the Civil Legal Aid Scheme, state supports for PhD researchers, the *Roadmap for Social Inclusion and Pathways to Work*. One Family contributed to both the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission and Community Platform reports provided to the UN Committee Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in relation to the lived experience of one-parent families, particularly those experiencing poverty, social exclusion and inequality.

We were delighted to formally mark the handover of the Cherish/One Family archives to the National Library of Ireland in April 2023 at a lovely event that was covered on RTÉ’s Six One News. One of our founders, Mary Kerrigan, spoke at the event about the families she had worked with over the years, the stories she heard and the importance of keeping those stories safe in a changing Ireland.

The Ark hosted a rehearsed reading of a documentary theatre script we commissioned with them comprising stories from people who had grown up in one-parent families over the 50 years of our organisation. It was thrilling to attend the event reading of *Always the Two of Us* by Kate Heffernan in June 2023 with first-person voices from children of single parents.

Our Board continued to provide robust oversight to One Family, meeting all corporate governance requirements. As in life, Board membership continues to change, and we were sorry to wish farewell to John Bohan as a Director.

Finally, sincere thanks to the funders, supporters and policy makers who trust in us to work in the best interests of the wide diversity of one-parent families in Ireland. We have achieved a lot as an organisation in our 50+ years, but we have much more to do to ensure those with power in Ireland support all families and all children.

Helen Hall, Chair

CEO Statement



2023 was an incredibly busy and demanding year with a 15% increase in the number of family members we worked with as most services continued to deliver and communicate on a hybrid basis. Thanks to additional funding, we were able to increase service delivery and provide support to many more parents and children compared to 2022.

We were grateful to receive philanthropic funding to support the development and delivery of services particularly in the areas of employability, parenting, social supports, therapies and food poverty. Some of the families we provide services to continue to experience high levels of poverty and deprivation due to the cost of living, homelessness or inability to earn what their family needs to survive and thrive.

We were immensely proud of our course participants and the staff team who won a special recognition award for an adult education initiative funded by the European Social Fund at the 2023 Aontas STAR Awards in March. This award again recognised our New Futures Employability Programme for its innovation, successful outcomes, and quality content for a second time, having previously received the award in 2019.

Our biggest fundraising drive, the annual Make a Wish Come True campaign in December provided gifts for another 300 children and a food poverty grant helped over 100 families.

Work continued in partnership with the Department of Social Protection on the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation project to bring online employability supports to lone parents on social welfare in the

north-east of Ireland. We were proud to partner with the Department on the *Lone Parents Digital Activation* initiative, delivering our employability programme to assist participants with gaining high-quality, sustainable employment. This project required study visits with European partners from Greece and Finland, presentations at regional and European events, and a visit from the European Commission representative. We ensured that the voices of parents participating were consistently shared with policy makers through testimonials. It is important that this successful employability programme becomes mainstream and available nationally for all lone parents who may benefit from it.

I am committed to continuing the crucial work of supporting children and parents living in one-parent families, who face significant problems every single day because policies, laws and services in Ireland are not designed to support them. I would like to again thank these families who place their trust in us. It is always a privilege to work with such an amazing team of staff and volunteers and a Board committed to excellent governance and oversight.

Karen Kiernan, CEO



**WE ARE COMMITTED TO
HELP ACHIEVING EQUALITY
AND RESPECT FOR ALL
FAMILIES IN IRELAND BY
STRIVING TO CHANGE
ATTITUDES, POLICIES,
SERVICES AND LIVES.**

Vision | Mission | Values

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

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 an unplanned pregnancy.

While acknowledging that every family is unique, we endeavour to bring about better outcomes in the lives of lone parents and their children. In addition to our advocacy in bringing about fundamental attitudinal and structural change in Irish society, our services offer family-centric supports to individuals experiencing times of change and difficulty, whether it is family breakdown, couple separation, unplanned pregnancy and the consequences of these on parents and children.

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.

One Family has signed up to several voluntary and required quality standards including the Charity Regulator's Governance Code, Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising, SORP.

Organisation

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Our Board Directors are elected and reappointed for periods of three years, up to a maximum of nine years. Board members have a diverse mix of professional skills and personal experiences that enable them to advise on our strategies and on the delivery of our services and campaigns. The Board meets up to nine times a year and the CEO reports to the Board at these regular meetings. Board committees include Finance & Audit, Support & Supervision and the Governance Committee. In 2023, the Governance Committee focused on reviewing the updated Employee Handbook, key company policies, and compliance with the Charities Governance Code.

Our Board Members in 2023 were:

Helen Hall | Chair (since May 2017) Chief Executive of the Policing Authority. Chartered Accountant with extensive experience in auditing, governance, and public oversight, including roles with PwC, Deloitte, the UN, and the World Food Programme.

Jennifer Good | Company Secretary outgoing (since September 2017) Practising barrister specialising in civil and commercial law. Background in governance and compliance, with a focus on diversity, access to legal advice, and social inclusion.

Nuala Haughey Chair of Governance Committee (since April 2018) Head of Communications, Research, and Innovation at the Legal Services Regulatory Authority. Former journalist with The Irish Times, communications expert, and advocate for good governance and democratic accountability.

Éimear Fisher Treasurer and Chair of Finance & Audit Committee (since September 2020), is an experienced former civil servant in justice, equality, and child policy sectors. Now an independent consultant specialising in strategy, policy, and governance.

Jack Eustace Company Secretary incoming (since September 2020) Governance & Policy Officer at Spunout, Ireland's youth information service. Former political advisor with a focus on governance, strategy, and public policy.

Donagh McGowan (since July 2021) Principal solicitor with 30 years of experience, specialising in family law, probate and mediation. Former Chair of the Law Society of Ireland Family Law Committee.

Rosemary Wokocha (since July 2021) Chartered Accountant and Head of Fiduciary at Marsh Ireland. Extensive experience in the charity sector and a former board member of the Irish Family Planning Association.

Brigid Murray (since July 2023) Airport Search Unit Supervisor at Dublin Airport Authority with over 20 years' experience in security, business development, and management. Advocate for lone parents, drawing from her personal experience.

John Bohan Member of the Finance and Audit Committee, resigned in September 2023.



MANAGEMENT

The management team, collectively known as the Heads of Service, work closely with the CEO on the delivery of our organisational and operational strategies and plans. Several specialist teams within our management structure ensure that we have the right expertise to deliver different strands of our programmes and services, as well as manage IT, administration, policy and communications.

2023 brought several key staff changes, including our outstanding Finance & Data Manager, Bernadette Donlon, moving on to new adventures. We were delighted to be able to promote some existing team members into management and recruit our new Administration & Operations Manager.

In 2023, our management team worked across these departments and services: Programmes, Information & Support, Counselling, Parenting, My Options, Policy, Communications, Finance, Operations, Administration, IT, Data Management and Data Protection.

STAFF

Staff members work to a wide range of policies and procedures ensuring accountability, high-quality services and regulatory compliance. In 2023, our staff complement included:

- Helpline Workers
- Adult Therapists (Parent Mentors and Psychotherapists)
- Child Therapists (Play and Art Therapy)
- Family Support Workers
- Employability Manager
- Employability Support Worker
- Course Tutors
- Parenting Team Administrator
- My Options Counsellors
- Crisis-Pregnancy Counsellors
- Counselling Support Worker
- Receptionist, Administrator
- Communications Manager
- Communications Assistant
- Policy Manager

In 2023, as an organisation, we focused on strengthening our governance and compliance requirements and moved to a new Customer Relationship Management system for our programmes and services delivery. This makes our monitoring and evaluation systems more efficient, and we now have a stronger focus on outcomes, leading to improved compliance and reporting to funders.



STRATEGIC GOALS & ACHIEVEMENTS



559

**Sessions of creative therapy
for 58 children.**

Overview

One Family is a provider of specialist services to one-parent families and those experiencing unplanned pregnancy, focusing on capturing their experiences to inform decision-making and drive national policy and social improvements for lone parents and their children. 2023 marked the second year of our three-year strategic plan, based on three fundamental pillars on which we devise our programmes, policy and advocacy outputs through to 2030.

Using a child-focused, trauma-informed, human rights-based approach we set our strategic goals and objectives to focus on delivering high-quality family support and therapeutic services to one-parent families as well as educational and support programmes to empower lone parents in exercising their entitlements and pursue the right opportunities for their families. Our main aim is to work with Government, policy makers, the media and society at large to effect positive change in policies, laws and attitudes when it comes to the recognition of and support for diverse families in general, and one-parent families especially.

Goals

1

Recognition of diverse families in policy and law, with the stated aim to bring about necessary and overdue access to the appropriate, evidence-based levels of statutory services, entitlements and supports.

2

Resourcing of service and support models for one-parent families through educational and direct-support interventions focused on people parenting alone, sharing parenting and separating, as well as for their children.

3

Reduction of child poverty rates through a range of targeted interventions in State-supported services, tax and income threshold changes, employment and educational opportunities, all of which enable poor families to achieve a decent standard of living.

Focus Areas

ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES

Objectives

- Lobbying the Government to develop clear targets for reducing child poverty and its negative impacts.
- Advocating for a child-centred Family Law Service Model as part of the Government's Family Law Justice Reform programme.
- Creating and responding to opportunities to provide policy expertise on a range of priority issues affecting one-parent families.
- Translate the lived experiences of one-parent families into relevant policy positions and advocacy campaigns.

SERVICE PROVISION

Objectives

- Providing high-quality specialist services for one-parent families.
- Supporting children's ability to thrive in challenging family situations.
- Supporting parents' mental wellbeing and social inclusion.
- Supporting individuals in the family law courts.
- Mainstreaming our range of services and programmes in local communities.
- Expanding and enhancing the provision of our services on multiple digital platforms to ensure families across Ireland have better access to support.
- Providing training and development opportunities for practitioners working with one-parent families in their professional roles.

2023 Activities

In 2023, we transitioned to a hybrid delivery approach to all parenting and employability programmes within our portfolio in order to enhance accessibility and nationwide availability. As a result, One Family delivered courses and services to 3,441 family members, a 15% increase from 2022.

76

Employability Clients

289

Parenting Clients

282

Counselling Clients

141

E-Learning

68

Early Years Supports

2,577

Helpline Contacts

3,441

Total Clients

Services

PROGRAMMES & COURSES

Parenting Service

This service provides a comprehensive suite of parenting supports designed to meet the varied needs of one-parent families in Ireland. These supports and courses are available both in person and remotely, delivered through group settings and one-to-one sessions, offering flexibility and accessibility and also ensuring tailored guidance for each case and situation.

A key focus of the service is providing targeted assistance to families navigating the challenges of parenting after separation. This is facilitated through the Separating Well for Children Service which offers specialised interventions to help families adapt and thrive during the post-separation transition.

We also deliver an extensive range of parenting courses and workshops in collaboration with other community-based organisations. These are designed to address the unique needs of lone-parent families and those sharing parenting through and after separation or divorce.

Additionally, we remain actively engaged with other service providers to enhance referral pathways, foster inter-agency collaboration, and improve outcomes for families. This integrated approach ensures that families benefit from a seamless and coordinated network of support.

Across a range of in-person, on-line and e-learning formats, we delivered courses and workshops on these topics:

FAMILY COMMUNICATIONS SERIES	PARENTING WHEN SEPARATED SERIES
Separating Well for Children Parenting Teens Parenting When Separated Parenting for Changing Families Parenting under Pressure	Back to Basics – Routine & Consistency What Children Need Post-Separation LGBTQ+ Conversations Adapting Parenting to Suit Your Child's Changing Needs What Children Need Post Separation Staying Grounded

Professional Development Service

In addition to our courses for parents, we provide Continuing Professional Development training to frontline practitioners supporting families and those navigating solo or shared parenting post separation. In 2023, we revamped our Train the Trainer programme and launched a bespoke professional training course, *Changing Families: Supporting Children’s Needs When Parents Separate*. This innovative course has been formally endorsed by Social Care Ireland, further attesting to its quality.

The training for practitioners/professionals is delivered in two parts: a newly developed professional e-course and a series of interactive online sessions conducted over three half days. The approach enables participants to engage more effectively with the theoretical content through the e-course and then apply this learning to practical scenarios during online group sessions. These sessions also encourage meaningful collaboration and knowledge-sharing among like-minded professionals.

We have also had a particularly active involvement with The Separation Network, an umbrella group for a number of organisations working with children and

parents going through the experience of family separation/divorce. The network focuses on developing staff training and development, and One Family assumed the role of Coordinator in 2023. Our role in this network provides a valuable platform to address the challenges families face during separation and to highlight the complexities of this work for practitioners across the country.

The Separation Network has a multifold mandate in providing bespoke training, seeking policy change and advancement across the social support and care sector on issues affecting separated/divorced families. It also offers an opportunity for frontline personnel to share best practices, develop efficient referral pathways, and to develop effective guidelines.

As part of this effort, we have tailored training initiatives to meet the evolving needs of frontline workers. In 2023, we successfully engaged 236 practitioners in training programmes, offered at significantly subsidised rates, and have received widespread recognition for the programmes’ impact, which is aimed at empowering professionals to better support families at critical junctures in their lives.

Employability Programmes

We understand the experience of parenting alone and sharing parenting and how challenging it can be to move back into education or find sustainable employment. Our employability programmes are unique because everyone who participates in our programmes has access to regular one-to-one support and other wraparound family supports.

Our **New Steps** Personal Development and New Futures Employability Programmes are free and provide lone parents with the skills and support they need to progress to education and employment.

The **New Futures** Employability Programme is a part-time personal and career development programme that explores two key modules in Personal and Interpersonal Development and Career Planning. The overall aim of the programme is to empower individuals in one-parent families to overcome personal and

situational barriers, improve their career and employability prospects, and achieve their educational and employment goals.

New Steps is the 8-week, part-time personal-development introduction to New Futures covering modules such as Personal Development & Self-Esteem, Assertiveness Skills, Stress Management, Positive Parenting and Family Communications.

In 2023 we continued our pilot project partnering with the Department of Social Protection and European partners in Greece and Finland to support lone parents towards employability and social inclusion, delivering both our New Futures and New Steps Programmes. On average, 75% of participants progressed to education and employment after course completion.

We ran three employability programmes over 2023, supporting a total of 76 clients and continued our laptop loan scheme to ensure that course participants without their own devices could access and fully engage in the online training.

	NEW FUTURES	NEW STEPS
Iterations	2	1
Course Sessions	1,003	112
Participants	50	16
Sessions	391	59

Information Service

askonefamily is the multimedia helpline channel for people parenting alone, sharing parenting and for those separating. We also provide information and support to professionals, family members and friends. Our staff provide detailed, confidential information on social welfare entitlements and finances, family law, housing, education, childcare and parenting. One Family also offers a listening support service for people who need support parenting alone, sharing parenting or separating. While listening support is not counselling or therapy, we can provide information on how to access these supports, if needed.

Our information and support service dealt with 2,577 contacts and a total of 7,027 queries in 2023 across these support channels.



27



300



878



1,372

Total Contacts
2,577

Total Queries
7,027

Telephone Helpline


There have been consistent year-on-year increases in the number of contacts and queries over the last 10 years, with 2023 being the busiest year on the **askonefamily** Helpline to date. The Information and Support Helpline recorded a 12% increase in contacts in 2023 compared to 2022 and a 39% increase in the number of individual queries. The most common queries in 2023 were related to social welfare payments, family law concerns and parenting issues, with most people contacting us with multiple types of queries. This is indicative of the complex issues lone parents deal with on a daily basis and it explains the increasing demand for our services in a tough 2023 for both one-parent families and society in general. We also provide listening support for callers in distress who need a non-judgemental listening ear about the challenges they are facing. The helpline plays a central role in providing information and referrals for all One Family supports and services and we signpost to external supports, when needed.

Web Communications

The Information and Support service provides over 100 information pages on our website. Of a total of 229,601 views on the onefamily.ie website in 2023 almost half (109,750) related to information covering topics like money, family law, separation, childcare, education, employment and parenting. Sixteen of the top 25 most viewed pages in 2023 were information pages, indicating a real need for our resources and explainers, which we update regularly to ensure consistency and accuracy. Over the year, we focused on improved family law information resources, as 20% of all helpline queries pertain to family separation. We updated the section Separating Well for Children, which is a voluntary, centre-based service focused on children's needs during the process of the parents' separation. It aims to prevent children being negatively impacted by parental separation, and to support families where conflict and domestic violence is impacting on children's wellbeing.

Social Media

Queries were received via Meta channels such as Facebook and Instagram (a total of 27), with the remaining 300 via contact forms on our website.



‘Thank you so much for the information that you provided—I really am grateful. Being able to speak with you gave me more assurance that I’m not alone on this.’


— Helpline caller

Counselling Services

We provided the following types and number of interventions across our range of counselling sessions in the Parenting and Counselling services.

Interventions	Sessions	Clients
Unplanned Pregnancy		
Unplanned/Crisis Pregnancy	232	43
Post-Crisis Pregnancy	613	61
Post-Abortion Counselling	270	58
Counselling Support Work	410	38
Separating Well for Children		
Separated Parents Counselling	319	28
Teen Counselling	19	2
Art & Play Therapy		
Sessions for Children and Parents	603	85

The Counselling service worked with 136 clients in 2023, having received 152 enquiries



‘One Family was an absolute godsend when I was really struggling to make ends meet. It was a glimmer of light and a boost when I was really struggling.’

— Service user

The Counselling service worked with 195 clients in 2023. The need across the country for counselling services is very high, and we aim to deliver more; but this is dependent on funding. The service provides the following specialist strands:

Crisis-Pregnancy Counselling

The majority of people who attended this service knew what they would like to do about their pregnancy but struggled with being able to implement their choice due to relationship, social or financial reasons. Thinking through the different aspects of their situation was often experienced as helpful and enabled these women to take the next steps in their lives. Women who lacked privacy in their living accommodation, particularly, valued being able to attend face to face appointments.

Post-Abortion Counselling

Women and couples frequently attended this service for support with experiences like hearing a particular medical diagnosis or with some aspect of their abortion care. Their experience of pregnancy often highlighted pre-existing difficulties, such as the presence of coercive control and people often attempted to resolve these difficulties following their abortion experience. Their determination not to be back in same situation again motivated them to attend counselling although many were constrained in making the changes due to additional issues such as precarious housing situations, legal status or general poverty.

Post-Crisis Pregnancy Counselling

People who experienced their pregnancy as an unplanned, unexpected occurrence or a crisis situation used our counselling and other services to continue their pregnancy. Many of these people experienced difficulties in their relationships, as well as isolation in the aftermath of birth. Other people were supported by the service to cope with their new parenting experience.

Counselling Support Work

The Counselling Support Worker primarily met with people who had a history of being in care, who were pregnant or were parenting alone. She also worked with parents experiencing difficulties due to their legal status as migrants or asylum seekers. The focus of this role was on increasing parenting skills and identifying and linking people with the best community and statutory services to meet their needs. 38 people attended a total of 410 face-to-face, phone or video meetings or were accompanied to other services.

In 2023, the One Family counselling services were available both remotely and in-person. We delivered 1,866 counselling sessions to adults and 559 sessions of Art & Play Therapy to 58 children. We also worked with various groups, including after-care services and local organisations, and we helped establish the Infant Mental Health Network in Dublin.

SUPPORT SERVICES


In 2023, we supported 104 families through funding made available from the Children's Rights Alliance holiday poverty initiative. Further support from our corporate donors allowed for over 400 children to be supported in 2023.

An important cost-of-living grant from Bank of Ireland, helped support 288 families through a variety of therapeutic, family support, and social inclusion activities. Our "soft touch" support services such as Stay and Play and Baby Massage groups were particularly beneficial for parents residing in homeless and IPAS accommodation. We received positive feedback from these mothers, who often experience isolation and loneliness as members of ethnic minority groups raising children on their own. The social outings we organised for these groups were also greatly appreciated by families, as it provided parents with opportunities to make new friends, build peer support and work towards combating the isolation and loneliness they often feel.

Our focus on the first 1,000 days of childhood was framed within Infant Mental Health, which we feel had a profoundly positive impact on the lives of many families living in difficult circumstances, parenting young children. Infant Mental Health is an

interdisciplinary field and embraces the importance of promoting positive mental health development within a relational framework with the child's caregiver(s). This area of practice is best understood along a continuum which includes promotion, prevention, intervention and treatment integrated across services and disciplines. Its principles incorporate developmental, clinical and preventative perspectives that inform the practice of service providers of different disciplines.

A total of 301 families received assistance through various means such as food vouchers, energy vouchers (made possible through a partnership with St Vincent de Paul and Payzone), back-to-school financial support, family outings and social events. 43 families were provided with supermarket vouchers to alleviate the financial burden of purchasing school uniforms. Another 125 families were given the chance to enjoy a day out together with the help of entrance tickets. Most of the families who received food vouchers were able to benefit twice a month, for a period of six months or longer. This proved to be crucial for families facing difficult circumstances like homelessness and those struggling with the ongoing cost of living crisis, which impacts lone parent families more severely than households of two adults.



‘The vouchers we received from One Family were nothing short of a lifeline.’

— Service user

Policy

Our work is informed by continuous consultations with families, funders and other stakeholders and our overall strategy is informed by several national and international policy frameworks, including:

Young Ireland: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2023-2028

First 5: A Whole-of-Government Strategy for Babies, Young Children and their Families 2019-2028

EU Child Guarantee

UN Millennium Sustainable Development Goals

National Parenting Policy Framework

Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020-2025

Life did not get better for one-parent families in 2023 in terms of financial or employment supports from Government, but we welcomed the Department of Social Protection's commitment to removing the assessment of child maintenance from several social welfare schemes – an issue we have campaigned on for a long time.

2023 also marked a deterioration of living standards across the board in Ireland and particularly for lone parents and poor families according to the national Survey on Income and Living Conditions. We learned that deprivation levels of lone parents in Ireland remain persistently high, at 41.4%, which is almost two and half times higher than those of two-parent households. Like every year, One Family continued advocating for targeted supports for the children most in need in the Government's relevant budget.

It was another disappointing Budget 2024 in the end, as opportunities to target children and families most in need were unfortunately squandered in favour of universal increases for all families. One Family did however welcome the reintroduction of child benefit for children in full-time secondary school education.

We were also concerned by the Family Justice Strategy and proposed Family Courts Bill as these did not reflect the increasing demand for out-of-court mediation services and supports for families in conflict, which invariably ends up in the adversarial system of the family law courts.

Another depressing reality of 2023 was the unprecedented increase in homelessness levels across the country and we helped shed light on the alarming rates of family homelessness faced by lone parents and their children, in conjunction with other organisations in the National One Parent Family Alliance. Between April and November 2023, 57% of all families seeking emergency accommodation were headed by one parent, usually a mother with one or two children, as a result of household break-up and particularly in the aftermath of lifting the ban on evictions.

CAMPAIGNS

In 2023 we welcomed the establishment of a new Child Poverty and Wellbeing Unit in the Department of An Taoiseach. The Unit published their Initial Programme Plan, and we lobbied for measures to reduce child poverty in one-parent families amidst the cost-of-living and housing crises. We also advocated for child-centred, out-of-court supports for families with legal disputes, meeting with the Minister for Justice and participating in the Family Justice Development Forum.

Over the year, we submitted seven policy submissions, issued 78 lobbying emails and letters, and advocated for Constitutional change of Article 41.3. We also chaired the National One Parent Family Alliance, an umbrella group of civil society organisations concerned with the high levels of poverty

experienced by lone parents and their children. We shared the lived experiences of parents through storytelling on social media, conducted focus groups, and collaborated with media sources to raise awareness about the struggles of one-parent families.

Throughout the year, we worked with civil society organisations for a referendum on the definition of family in the Constitution, and important changes in how we in Ireland should view family, care and women's role.

POLICY SUBMISSIONS

Pre-Budget 2024 Submission: This submission was made through the National One Parent Family Alliance and critiqued the 2023 budget for failing to deliver targeted support for one-parent families. Despite record expenditure, the budget did not address the specific needs of these families, who experienced the highest levels of poverty and deprivation.

Our recommendations emphasised the urgent need for targeted measures to support lone parents and highlighted the disproportionate impact of the cost-of-living crisis on one-parent families, who faced higher rates of poverty, housing insecurity, and childcare challenges. The submission called for specific actions, such as extending the Jobseeker's Transitional Payment and increasing access to affordable childcare.

Review of Civil Legal Aid: This submission to the Department of Justice addressed the inadequacies of the current Civil Legal Aid Scheme, particularly for one-parent families. It emphasised the need for accessible legal support irrespective of economic status, highlighting the intersection of family law and child poverty issues.

Mid-Term Review of Pathways to Work Strategy 2021-2025 Submission: This focused on challenges faced by one-parent families in accessing quality employment. The document called for policies that recognised the additional care-giving responsibilities of one-parent families and the need for flexible, high-level employment options.

National Policy Framework on Children and Young People: Our submission was informed by the Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures framework and called for renewed commitment to child poverty reduction, enhanced supports for one-parent families, and effective implementation of these.



RESEARCH CONTRIBUTIONS

The Bechaire Thematic Report entitled *The Power of Community Education: Supporting Lone Parents to Fulfil Their Potential in Education, Employment, and Society* explored the impact of community education on lone parents in Ireland. The research by CES used eight case studies, including contributions from One Family staff and service users, to show how these programmes help lone parents achieve better educational, employment and social outcomes. The report recommended mainstreaming employability programmes such as One Family's New Futures Employability Programme, to address employment needs and skills gaps.

Case Study for Bechaire Thematic Report: This showcased the work of One Family in providing community education and support to lone parents across Ireland. The research highlighted the positive impacts of community education on participants, including improved mental health, enhanced parenting skills, and progression to further education and employment. The report emphasised the importance of community education as a 'second chance' for lone parents to achieve their potential and improve their quality of life. Lone parents who complete community

education are highly likely to progress to further and higher education, training and paid employment and the importance of wraparound supports was also highlighted.

Voice of the Child in Private Family Law Proceedings – A Comparative Review: This examined the mechanisms for child participation in private family law proceedings across different jurisdictions, including Ireland, England and Wales, and Australia. Undertaken by Prof. Conor O'Mahony and colleagues in UCC's Child Law Clinic, it provided detailed recommendations for reform to ensure that children's voices are adequately represented and heard in family law cases.

In Transit? Documenting the Lived Experiences of Welfare, Working and Caring for One-Parent Families: This report by researchers in TCD and UCC documented the experiences of recipients of the Jobseeker's Transitional Payment highlighting the challenges faced by one-parent families in balancing work and caregiving responsibilities while navigating the welfare system. The findings called for better support and clearer communication from welfare services to improve the effectiveness of this type of support for lone parents.

Throughout the year, by maintaining a strong and consistent presence in policy discussions, consultative and advisory settings, One Family sought to influence decisions that would improve outcomes for lone parents and their children.

Communications

In 2023, communications played an important role in helping the One Family organisation achieve its strategic objectives. The organisation's communications strategy itself centred around several key goals designed to enhance the visibility of the organisations with its target audiences, as well as the effectiveness of its outputs and methods

One primary objective was to drive awareness of One Family's services among potential service users, clients and stakeholders. This involved targeted outreach and promotional efforts to ensure that those who could benefit from the organisation's programmes were well-informed about available support and its potential positive impact on their social and professional lives.

STRATEGY

Throughout the year, One Family also focused on building proactive engagement with its audiences, highlighting the success stories of our student and service user communities, and the positive effects of One Family services on individuals' lives through story-telling highlights on social media, as well as periodic impact reports to our staff and stakeholders. This approach not only reinforced the organisation's reputation but also fostered a sense of trust and connection with the communities it serves.

Another essential aspect of the communications strategy was actively engaging with policy-makers, relevant Government stakeholders and supporters from the political sphere, as well as our invaluable funders and collaborators.

The principal goal was to increase awareness and understanding of the challenges faced by one-parent families in their daily lives and in the context of a particular difficult year for disadvantaged groups in Irish society, as well as to advocate for One Family's services as an empowering tool for lone parents looking to revitalise their personal and professional lives.

Finally, showcasing the high standard of One Family's services to its users was a core communications objective. Through testimonials, case studies and service feedback surveys we aimed to highlight the quality of support and the level of service provided. As the organisation continuously aims to demonstrate its commitment to excellence, it is important to us to ensure that users recognised the value of the services they received.



COVERAGE

In 2023, One Family’s communications strategy achieved significant media coverage, with a total of 66 mentions across national print, broadcast and online platforms. Key topics covered included homelessness among one-parent families, the cost-of-living crisis, and the ongoing neglect of single-parent households by government policy and other decision-making bodies. Through extensive media engagement, One Family was able to highlight critical issues impacting one-parent families in Ireland, including financial pressures, social inequalities, limited employment prospects and opportunities, and the urgent need for policy reform.

National Print Press

In *The Irish Times* we were mentioned in 12 articles on topics touching on the challenges faced by one-parent families. A feature piece entitled ‘Irish one-parent families fall below European average for purchasing power’ reflected on another grim reality faced by all poor families in Ireland and lone parents in particular.

The Irish Examiner featured us in 10 articles, including two pieces that highlighted the most pressing problems faced by our community in a generally challenging 2023: ‘One-parent families successively neglected by Government’; ‘Calls to prioritise families amid lifting of Eviction Ban’.

The Sunday Business Post ran a significant article titled ‘State ends campaign to pursue former partners for unpaid child maintenance’, while *The Sun* and *The Independent* each highlighted social welfare changes and gender equality, respectively.



Broadcast

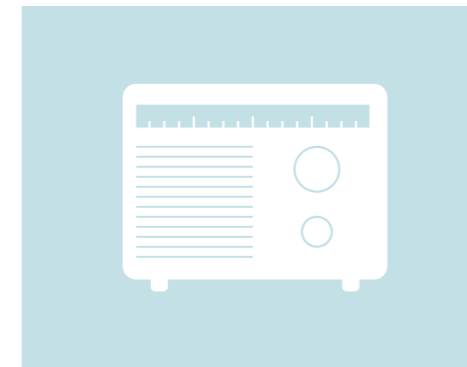
Coverage included mentions and appearances across major programmes on RTÉ, where One Family featured in ten segments, including on Six One News, Morning Ireland and Drivetime, focusing on issues such as homelessness among one-parent families, the gender equality referendum, and rising poverty levels. Virgin Media News and NewsTalk similarly covered these themes, with NewsTalk hosting discussions on child benefit system reform and homelessness.

One Family’s work also reached local audiences and communities throughout Ireland on stations such as LMFm, Kerry FM, and Highland Radio. Topics ranged from cost-of-living pressures to the increasing demand for the organisation’s helpline services.

Online Media

The Journal and *Dublin Live* ran stories on the cost-of-living crisis in Ireland, while Rollercoaster and The Irish Post covered the experience of single-parent families in a problematic 2023.

Through this coverage on diverse channels and platforms across the media landscape in Ireland, One Family effectively raised awareness of the challenges facing one-parent families, reinforcing their call for government action on housing, childcare, family law and social welfare reforms.



IMPACT

Throughout 2023, in addition to the organisation’s direct media contributions, One Family continued to receive numerous requests from journalists seeking to interview individuals who are parenting alone, sharing parenting, or going through separation. To respond to this demand, the organisation focused on building a media panel of parents willing to share their stories, either openly or anonymously.

One Family recognises the importance of amplifying the voices of those parenting alone in various circumstances and we worked hard to emphasise the importance of sharing real people’s stories with a general audience, and also with relevant decision-makers. One of the strategies we



pursue in our external communications is to make all relevant audiences see lone parents not just as faceless, nameless statistics, but as real people with real lives, as well as highlight their plight within the statutory and other support policy models for disadvantaged groups in Irish society. These personal stories play a vital role in raising awareness, challenging societal attitudes, and informing policymakers about the issues directly affecting one-parent families and how they can contribute to alleviating the difficulties found in this social grouping. By encouraging parents to share their experiences, One Family also aimed to empower individual single parents by providing opportunities to make a meaningful difference, particularly for other parents who may not be able to speak out due to personal or social barriers.

ENGAGEMENT

Our website's analytics reveal that our main digital presence (outside of the e-learning platforms) attracted significant user engagement, with around 160,000 clicks and over 8 million impressions over 2023. The top pages accessed by visitors mainly focused on social welfare payments and family law information, indicating strong user interest in practical resources and legal information. A breakdown of the resources accessed reflect the main concerns of our service user community, and those of lone parents in Ireland generally.

One-Parent Family Payment: The top accessed page demonstrates the significant need of users in terms of seeking financial support detailed information and explainers.

Working Family Payment: a crucial resource for families who need supports to stay in work

Emergency Payments: significant traffic to this resource reflects visitors' need for immediate financial assistance.

Carer's Allowance, Disability Allowance: high levels of engagement here suggest that users seek information on support for caregivers and individuals with disabilities.

Fuel Allowance: interest in this key benefit is especially relevant during times of seasonal high living costs.

Domiciliary Care Allowance: traffic here underscores the need for information on supports for families with additional care needs.

Custody and Access Information: family law resources on custody and access issues

indicate strong demand for legal-type information and parenting post separation.

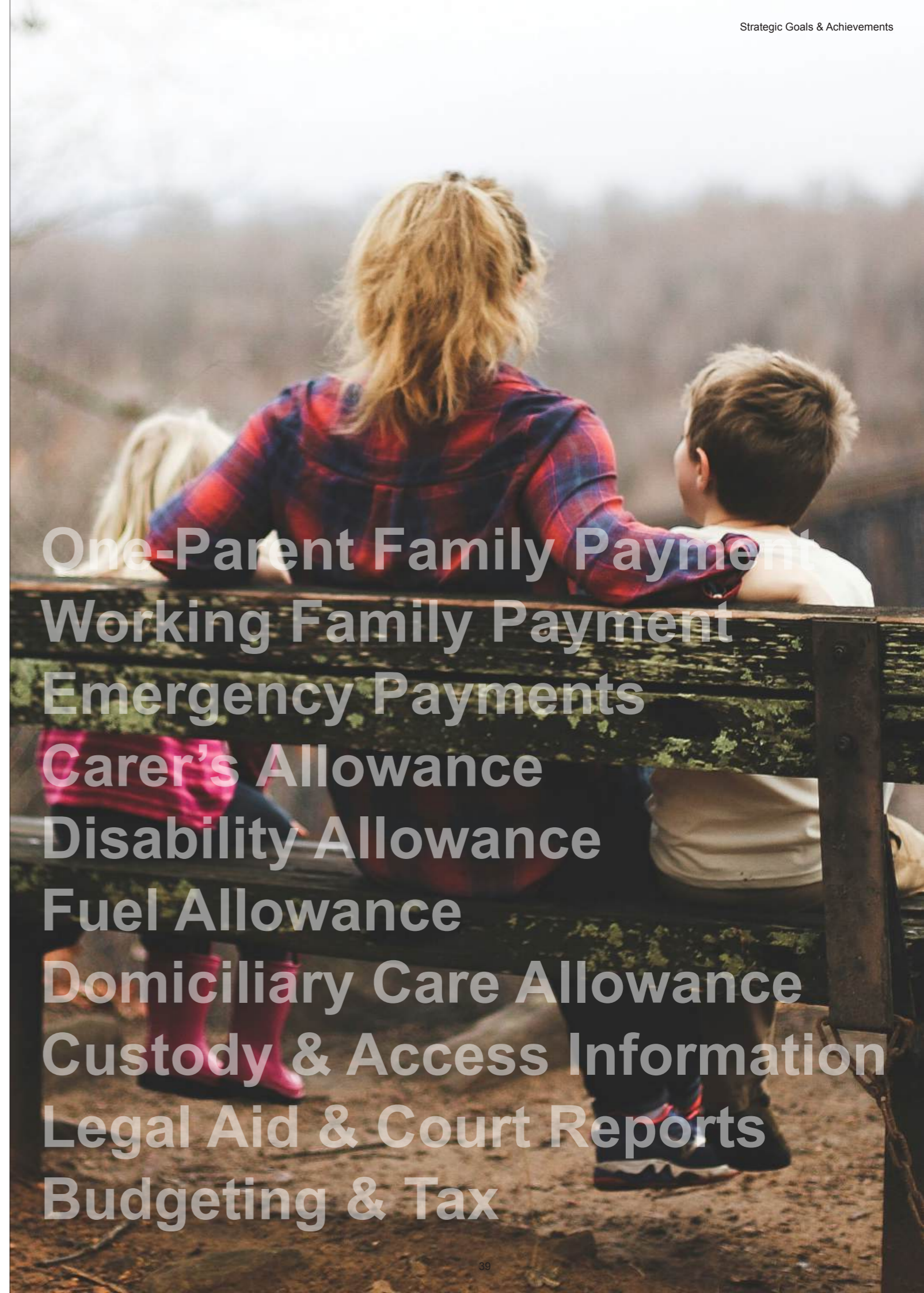
Legal Aid & Court Reports: high traffic here denotes high interest from users requiring legal information for family court legal proceedings.

Budgeting and Tax: a high number of visitors on this section points to the importance of financial literacy and planning for families.

This web traffic analysis reflects the essential role of the One Family website in providing vital information, and more importantly, relevant explanations to lone parents, on social welfare, family law and financial planning, beyond the standard resources from statutory information services.

Social media channels are sometimes a lifeline for lone parents with little time to spare in their daily lives. In addition to the resources we collate on our website, our regular updates and information soundbites are the quickest and easiest way for some parents to keep informed on essential changes to their social, legal and financial circumstances throughout the year. The One Family Facebook page had a total of 38,849 fans in 2023. It reached 97,252 people and generated 164,160 impressions by year end. These figures demonstrate strong engagement, with content accessed seen multiple times by both current followers and new audiences.

In 2023, the Parenting service collaborated with the Communications and Policy services to empower parents in sharing their stories through social media story boards. As a result, we have successfully shed light on the pressing issues faced by this particular family group.



One-Parent Family Payment
 Working Family Payment
 Emergency Payments
 Carer's Allowance
 Disability Allowance
 Fuel Allowance
 Domiciliary Care Allowance
 Custody & Access Information
 Legal Aid & Court Reports
 Budgeting & Tax

From left: Gráinne Farren; Karen Kiernan; Dr Audrey Whitty, Director of National Library of Ireland; Evelyn Forde, Mary Kerrigan, Anna Lee.



EVENTS

Launch of Report on One-Parent Families' Experiences of Welfare, Working, and Caring: This event marked the release of a research report by University College Cork and Trinity College Dublin, in collaboration with One Family. The research highlights the challenges and benefits of the Jobseeker's Transitional Payment and its impact on one-parent families.

Always the Two of Us: This event was a rehearsed reading of a new play by Kate Heffernan, commissioned by The Ark and One Family. The play shares real-life stories from adults who grew up in one-parent families during the 60s to 90s, exploring the challenges and joys of growing up in single-parent households, reflecting on societal attitudes and personal experiences.

One Family Handover of Cherish Archives to the National Library of Ireland: One Family, originally founded as "Cherish", donated its archives to the National Library of Ireland. The archives document the experiences of one-parent families from the 1970s onwards. This donation ensures that the voices and stories of these families are preserved and included in Ireland's national history.

Annual Sherie de Burgh Lecture: This lecture, hosted by One Family and Trinity College Dublin examined the historical challenges faced by single mothers in Ireland. The event also featured a panel discussion on current issues and future support for one-parent families, with contributions from various experts and policymakers.

From left: Deirdre Mortell, CEO, Rethink Ireland; Valerie Maher, Programmes & Information Manager, One Family; Ursula Mapley, Chief Operating Officer, Bank of America Europe DAC



ESF+ Employment and Social Innovation Project: Our project partnering with the Department of Social Protection in Ireland and European partners in Greece and Finland explored employability and social inclusion of lone parents. Funded by the EU's ESF+ Employment and Social Innovation Fund, it helped us deliver our New Futures Employability Programme in 2023. In October 2023 we co-hosted a dissemination event with the Department of Social Protection to highlight our work with parents and the need to mainstream our employability programmes throughout Ireland.

Rethink | Bank of America Partnership Event: In October 2023 we secured funding from the Rethink Ireland Mná na hÉireann Women of Ireland Empowerment Fund to support delivery of our New Futures Employability Programme until 2026. Bank of America co-fund the project and provided our staff with ongoing mentorship and resources.

2023 Highlights

The Parenting Service continued to see a steady increase in the demand for its services and supports to separated families, particularly through the suite of courses and supports delivered within the Separating Well for Children service. These supports are focused on the children's needs during the process of their parents' separation and following separation. This service aims to prevent children being negatively impacted by parental separation, and to support families where conflict and domestic violence impact on children's wellbeing.

The number of families attending our centre in person rose during 2023. This was the case particularly for parents with very young children. There was an increasing demand for food voucher support, due to the continuously rising living costs throughout the year, and the ongoing struggle of parents in meeting the day-to-day expenses of their families as prices continue to rise.

2023 was the busiest year for the **askonefamily Helpline** to date, having recorded a consistent year-on-year increases in the number of contacts and queries over the last 10 years. Compared to 2022, last year we recorded a 12% increase in the number of contacts made to our service, and a 39% increase in individual queries.

My Options

For the crisis-pregnancy advice and support phoneline delivered by One Family on behalf of the HSE, 2023 was the busiest year since the service began in 2019. A team of counsellors responded to over 12,000 calls and 1,000 webchat queries, providing information, listening support and counselling to callers looking for information on how to deal with an unplanned pregnancy or seeking post-abortion support.

Make a Wish Come True Campaign

Our annual Make a Wish Come True campaign in December provided gifts for 300 children and a food poverty grant helped over 100 families. This is an invaluable lifeline for many parents faced with insurmountable costs and expenses during the festive season.

Our Biggest Asset

Our staff is our biggest asset and we, as an organisation, are incredibly proud to recognise their dedication and empathy in the work that they do every day. In 2023, we were incredibly proud to have a number of participants in our courses, together with our employability programmes staff, recognised with a Special Recognition Award for an adult education initiative funded by the European Social Fund at the 2023 Aontas STAR Awards in March. Our Employability Programmes department staff won this award for a second time in 2023, having previously received the honour in 2019. This award again established the quality and recognition of our New Futures Employability Programme for its innovation, successful outcomes and quality content.



STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Niamh Wynne is an IACP accredited counsellor who joined the Programmes service as a support worker in 2017 and was promoted to Employability Manager in 2023. As such, she oversees the day-to-day delivery of the New Steps and New Futures programmes, supports the participants and manages our staff, tutors and parent mentors involved in delivery of our programmes. She also leads on funder reporting for each project we work on, tracking progression, outputs and outcomes.

Niamh has lived experience of parenting alone and progressing into education and work as a lone parent; this experience informs her work. She regularly speaks at public events and ensures that those listening get a real sense of the experiences and challenges of people parenting alone.

In 2023, Niamh worked closely with colleagues to design and plan a project to pilot delivery of the New Futures

Employability Programme through e-learning and successfully secured funding from Rethink Ireland. In advance of this, she oversaw the content development of our e-learning programme and worked tirelessly to ensure every detail had the needs of people parenting alone carefully considered and incorporated into the overall design.

Niamh is a valuable team member within our organisation and in February 2023, she accepted the national AONTAS Special Recognition STAR Award for outstanding contribution to adult learning in Ireland on behalf of the parents and staff within the Programmes service.

She is determined to ensure that every parent that we support feels welcomed, can explore their passions and leave with the confidence to take the next steps. Quite simply, parents are in very good hands under her leadership and support.



Margareth (Maggie) Petroli, our Data Coordinator, is a long-standing member of our staff and became Data Management and Protection Officer in 2023. Having transitioned from an equally demanding role, she quickly transformed how we use user management systems and reporting tools, and introduced and trained staff in Salesforce – a major and complex achievement in itself.

In her new role Maggie pro-actively engaged with the management team to gain a deep understanding of their needs, service delivery methods, and outcome measurement approaches in an impressive holistic effort to make their jobs easier and the students' experience optimal.

One of Maggie's notable achievements was supervising the development and deployment of an anonymisation flow to Salesforce. Additionally, she integrated digital communications with Salesforce, enhancing security of service user data retention and handling. Alongside a GDPR consultant, Maggie spearheaded the

planning and rollout of a comprehensive GDPR audit and is leading the efforts to implement enhanced security across all of our operations.

Maggie is not only an all-rounder expert who will impress with her innumerable technical skills, but she is a powerhouse when it comes to spreading her magic across multiple operations, improving organisational processes, making efficiency gains and keeping things organised in a very busy service-based environment. That she does all this and much more besides with a smile and a seemingly inexhaustible source of genuine enthusiasm is only further evidence that fairies do exist.



Our Programmes service Employability Manager, Niamh Wynne alongside New Futures participant, Michelle, accepting an AONTAS STAR Award at the ceremony in March, 2023.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Special Recognition Award For The New Futures Employability Programme

One Family's New Futures Employability Programme received the Special Recognition Award at the Aontas Star Awards in a ceremony at Croke Park in March 2023. The STAR Awards are an initiative by Ireland's National Adult Learning Organisation and celebrates the fantastic work undertaken by adult learning initiatives throughout Ireland.

This is the second time our employability programme has been honoured, having previously won in 2019. The award recognised the programme's outstanding contribution to adult learning, which boasted an impressive 75% progression rate in 2023.

This is more than just an award for a programme of learning. The award highlighted the hard work of the New Futures team and the positive experience of the parents who have participated in the

programme. Our Programmes staff are deeply involved with and striving to produce the best experience for our participants. Our Employability Manager, Niamh, in particular, is a strong advocate for lone parents having a voice and is actively involved in supporting current and previous participants of our programmes to provide testimonials and engage in focus groups and public speaking events to tell their story to policy makers and other sectoral stakeholders.

The programme itself is but one of the ways in which we empower parents to progress personally and professionally. Parents often tell us that they don't feel the challenges they face are understood in society – until they come to One Family. We are passionate about empowering and supporting lone parents to reach their education and employment goals.

PARENT STORIES

Every year our organisation presents a submission ahead of the latest Government Budget highlighting the needs of lone parents in Ireland. In the aftermath of the budget launch, we talk to parents around the country about their feedback and feelings on how the Budget did or did not deliver for them. Sometimes we facilitate this feedback in the media. Julie-Ann O'Connor's story featured in an ample article in the *Irish Independent* in October 2023, by Cian Ó Broin.

'Julie-Ann O'Connor, a single mother from Clare, said right after the launch of Budget 2024 that the Government needed to focus on targeted and sustained supports for lone parents. "We need sustained measures, not one-off payments."

Julie-Ann, who lives in east Clare and is a single mother to her 15-year-old and 12-year-old, makes three 25-km round-trip journeys for the daily school run, comprising of a joint morning run and two separate pick-ups after school.

In 2023, she said certain things such as her family's weekly food shop, the cost of running their car, heat and electricity are all more expensive than the year before.

"I have two teenage children and I parent alone. The cost of living has been really difficult, especially when there's only one income in the household," Despite doing her best to plan ahead and budget, she now dreads the arrival of "outrageous" household and energy bills following a "difficult" winter, she told the *Irish Independent*.

She labelled the 2024 Budget "really disrespectful" towards lone parents who, she said, "have been completely ignored once again". She said she feels "disheartened" after the Budget which she said showed just how far down the list the Government ranks one-parent families. "If the Government wanted to eliminate child poverty, as they claim, they could have allocated money towards a proper qualified child payment increase," she said. "It is completely inadequate. A €4 increase per child. You don't have to be an economist to know that is not in keeping with inflation. Last year it was raised by €2, which is absolutely nothing, and by the same amount the year before and the one before that. It wouldn't even cover the cost of fruit for two days.

"We need an adequate amount that is in line with the cost-of-living crisis."

Ms O'Connor feels that the Government should have put some of its finances in the Budget towards a "long overdue" independent child maintenance agency that could deal with issues that contribute towards child poverty and not just implement "budget-to-budget one-off measures".

‘One Family recognises that being a single parent or sharing parenting responsibilities can come with unique challenges, and they offer assistance and guidance in areas such as childcare, financial planning, and accessing community resources.’

— Caroline, New Futures Participant, 2023

PARTICIPANT TESTIMONIALS

‘As a single parent, I have always struggled to balance the demands of parenting and pursuing my own personal and professional growth. However, this programme has truly been a game-changer for me and has opened a world of opportunities that I never thought possible.

What sets this apart is its approach, addressing both personal and interpersonal development as well as career planning. This unique combination ensured that I received a well-rounded education that caters to my individual needs and aspirations.

One of the most valuable aspects of the programme is the group training delivered two mornings per week online. The sessions are engaging, informative, and empowering. Through interactive workshops, group discussions, and practical exercises, I have gained valuable insights into various aspects of personal growth, such as self-confidence, communication skills, and resilience. The trainer was highly knowledgeable and skilled at creating a supportive environment where everyone feels comfortable sharing their experiences and learning from one another and, on a week-to-week basis, friendships developed.

One Family recognises that being a single parent or sharing parenting responsibilities can come with unique challenges, and they offer assistance and guidance in areas such as childcare, financial planning, and accessing community resources.

Another highlight of the New Futures Programme is the individual 1:1 key-work sessions. These sessions provided personalised help, support and guidance tailored to my specific needs and goals. The keyworker I was assigned was incredibly supportive, offering valuable insights, helping me identify my strengths and interests, who championed me every step of the way and assisted me in creating a clear career plan. The individual attention I received made me feel valued and motivated to pursue my aspirations.

Since completing the New Futures Programme, I have experienced a tremendous transformation in my personal and professional life. Not only have I acquired new skills and knowledge, but I have also gained a renewed sense of confidence and self-belief in myself.

Without this programme, I don't think I would have the confidence to really reach the personal accomplishments that this course has given me. The programme has helped me realize my full potential and given me the tools to navigate the job market with a clear vision of my career goals. I cannot recommend the New Futures Programme enough. It is a truly life-changing opportunity for single parents and those sharing parenting responsibilities.’

— Caroline, New Futures Participant, 2023



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW



2023

Expenditure rose by 3.67% in 2023. Service costs amount to 24% and direct costs total 76%.

Financial Summary

Total income for the year was €1,501,233, a modest increase of 0.86% compared to the previous year. This included €961,958 in state grants, €80,063 from philanthropic sources, €427,225 from earned income, and €31,987 from corporate and individual donations.

Total expenditure rose by 3.67% to €1,479,181. As of 31st December 2023, the organisation held reserves of €466,969, enough to cover approximately 3.6 months of operating costs, which amount to around €130,000 per month. Additionally, the sinking fund stood at €69,810, up from €55,779 in 2022.

Grants Overview

One Family Received the Following Grants in 2023

Grantor	Name of Grant	Term	Amount €
HSE Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme	Family supports in Counselling, Information, Adult Education, Reception and Childcare services	12 months	405,000
HSE Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme	Pay Restoration agreement	12 months	18,802
HSE Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme	Inflationary Grant	12 months	10,948 <small>Deferred €3,889</small>
HSE Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme	Online CRM system for website	Term ended: June 2023	5,985
Department of Rural and Community Development	Administration, Policy and Communications services	Term end: June 2025	90,483
TUSLA Child and Family Agency	Family supports in Counselling, Parenting and Play & Creative therapies for children	12 months	191,152 <small>Deferred €3,973</small>
HSE South Western	Overheads, office administration and staff salaries.	12 months	39,357 <small>Deferred €817</small>
Department of Social Protection and European Commission	Lone Parents Digital Activation	Term end: May 2024	155,058
DFHERIS / SOLAS / City of Dublin ETB / ALCE Grant Aid	Tutors for parenting courses	12 months	38,110
The Community Foundation for Ireland – Bank of Ireland Fund	Therapeutic, parenting and social inclusion support services Provision of vouchers for food, education costs and social outings	Term end: January 2024	48,933 <small>Deferred €1,067</small>
OLC Ireland Trust Fund at The Community Foundation of Ireland	Development of online parenting courses	Term ended: February 2023	3,912 <small>Deferred €1,088</small>
Indeed Fund The Community Foundation of Ireland	Therapeutic supports and vouchers to lone parents who want to progress to education or employment in Dublin	Term end: September 2024	12,391 <small>Deferred €27,609</small>
Rethink Mná na hÉireann Women of Ireland Empowerment Fund	Supports for women to access quality employment	Term end: May 2024	2,897 <small>Deferred €24,103</small>
Children's Rights Alliance	Food poverty initiative	Term ended: December 2024	10,835

Expenditure

Our expenditure is guided by our strategic goals, where family support services and programmes service delivery (charitable activities) together account for 97% of One Family's overall expenditure. Advocacy/Policy (campaigns, events, research) accounts for 3% of the total expenditure.

Our costs breakdown is 24% service support costs and 76% direct costs. Support costs include general management, financial, IT maintenance, technical support and licences, facilities, governance costs (annual audit and board meeting costs) and are normally apportioned across the stated charitable activities based on the number of staff employed for each.

ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE	Restricted €	Unrestricted €	Total 2023 €
Family Support Services	1,016,837	419,513	1,436,350
Campaigns, Events, Policy & Research	29,747	13,084	42,831
	1,046,584	432,597	1,479,181

	Direct Costs €	Support Costs €	Total 2023 €
Family Support Services	1,151,919	282,456	1,434,374
Campaigns, Events, Policy & Research	33,843	10,963	44,807
	1,185,762	293,419	1,479,181

Staff and Related Costs	157,990
Office and Administration Costs	55,353
Governance Costs	4,812
Finance	41,111
IT	34,170
	293,436

INCOME VS EXPENDITURE

Income	2023 €	2022 €
Donations	4,723	3,936
Service income and fees (Counselling, Parenting, Professional development)	418,185	387,191
DFHERIS City of Dublin ETB ALCE Grant Aid	38,110	31,722
DFHERIS City of Dublin DETB MAED Fund	2,900	2,900
DFHERIS City of Dublin DETB REACH Fund	3,680	—
Department of Children & Youth Affairs Pobal Community Childcare Subvention Scheme	—	(280)
Department of Children & Youth Affairs Pobal Capital grants	—	(395)
Department of Rural and Community Development Pobal Scheme to Support National Organisations (SSNO)	90,967	90,483
EU Department of Social Protection EaSi	155,058	69,499
EU Department of Social Protection ESF Peil II	—	110,943
HSE National Lottery Storybook Project	—	500
HSE Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme (HSE SHCPP)	405,000	405,000
HSE SHCPP S39 Pay Restoration	18,802	11,622
HSE SHCPP Amortisation	—	9,820
HSE SHCPP Once off Inflationary grant	10,948	—
HSE SHCPP CRM System	5,985	30,460
IHREC	—	10,620
Rethink Mna na hEireann	2,897	—
TUSLA Child and Family Agency HSE South West	39,357	39,357
TUSLA Child and Family Agency Separating Well Service	191,152	201,497
TUSLA Child and Family Agency Other grants	—	3,000
The Community Foundation for Ireland Equipment grant 2020	1,095	9,295
The Community Foundation for Ireland RTE Toy Show fund	—	48,888
The Community Foundation for Ireland OLC	3,912	—
The Community Foundation for Ireland Indeed	12,391	—
The Community Foundation for Ireland BOI Cost of Living Grant	48,933	—
Rainbows Ireland	9,040	—
Childrens Rights Alliance	10,835	—
Fundraising, events and campaigns	11,626	7,113
Other Courts Service Board fees, etc	15,638	15,253
	1,501,233	1,488,424

Expenditure	2023 €	2022 €
Salaries Wages	1,236,560	1,139,600
Production of resources	394	—
Events	42,990	9,180
Power, heat & light	8,570	7,579
Printing & Stationery	6,242	13,723
Postage & Courier	4,782	3,221
Travel, Subsistence & Volunteer costs	2,748	1,577
Subscriptions & Journals	4,397	4,905
Telephone, Computer & Website	54,385	42,596
Legal / Professional	7,757	8,007
Project Consultants	—	92,019
Contract Fees	8,915	6,220
Advertising	5,242	5,269
Staff Training	16,242	19,771
Staff Expenses	4,633	5,269
Board Expenses	186	—
Other Office Expenses	2,670	2,180
Equipment	13,728	2,299
Audit	4,812	4,736
Insurance	14,063	12,546
Security Costs	534	841
Health & Safety Expense	2,421	4,145
Cleaning, Repairs & maintenance	14,391	20,428
Bank Charges	276	234
Depreciation	21,804	20,439
Loss on Disposal	439	—
Suspense & mispostings	—	—
	1,479,181	1,426,786
Operating Surplus	22,051	61,638

4

LOOKING AHEAD

A photograph of a man and a child walking on a beach at sunset. The man is on the left, wearing a dark tank top and shorts, and the child is on the right, wearing a light-colored top and shorts. They are walking away from the camera towards the ocean. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright, hazy glow. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent teal color.

2024

Our focus for 2024 includes expanding supports for children, parents and families in challenging situations.

2024 Outlook

In 2023, we contributed to highlighting many of the issues affecting Irish society as whole, and lone parents in particular. Karen Kiernan, CEO of One Family, spoke many times about the effects of impending and actual homelessness on one-parent families, which make up over half of homeless families despite representing only 20% of the population. In our various communications, as an organisation, we highlighted that consistent poverty among one-parent families rose to three times the national average in 2023.

As we continued to campaign for targeted welfare measures to be linked to minimum living standards, stressing that some parents cannot afford both rent and food, our key budget requests for Budget 2024 included increasing the Qualified Child payment, and providing free or subsidised childcare for families with a medical card. We also called for expanded eligibility for the Living Alone Allowance, Telephone Allowance and Household Benefits Package. Additionally, we asked for the housing disregard for One Parent Family and Job Seekers Transitional payments to be adjusted to reflect current market rents, as it hasn't been updated since 1997.

2023 was yet another year when we worked tirelessly to make a bigger and better impact through our advocacy and service provision while realising that we will never meet the demand for our services without increasing our funding and staff levels. It was clear to us throughout 2023 that there is a massive unmet need, and

by securing additional once-off resources we provided services to 15% more service users in 2023. It is frustrating to know that whilst some families can avail of our specialist services, many thousands more cannot, even though they need them.

Our focus for 2024 includes expanding supports for children, parents and families in challenging situations while working towards mainstreaming proven programmes across Ireland so that more one-parent families can access the specialist parenting and employability programmes and therapies we provide.

Policy work will continue to be vital as political parties develop Election Manifestos and Departments and Ministers prepare for Budget 2025. This will involve making submissions, advocating for our recommendations, and working with other organisations in other civil society organisations in a collaborative effort.

Future Strategic Goals

Providing specialist services for one-parent families: Continue to provide specialised employability programmes and seek funding to expand the Separating Well for Children Service.

Supporting children's ability to thrive in challenging family situations: Aim to maintain funding for vulnerable parents with young children and establish an Infant Mental Health Network in Dublin 7 and Dublin 1.

Supporting parents' wellbeing and social inclusion: Focus on supporting isolated parents and recruit a Deputy Manager for the MyOptions service.

Supporting those using family law courts: Seek funding to expand the Separating Well for Children service and increase investment in the askonefamily helpline.

Expanding proven services and programmes in local communities: Continue engaging with child and family support networks and seek funding to expand the Separating Well for Children service.

Promoting understanding of shared parenting: Continue to call for research and policy changes to support shared parenting families.

Mainstreaming effective services: Work with funders to mainstream services like the New Futures Employability Programme and our Separating Well for Children service on a national level.

Providing services on a hybrid basis (both remote and in person): Continue delivering parenting, counselling, and employability services on a hybrid basis and develop an online, self-directed version of the New Futures Employability Programme.

Providing training and development opportunities for professionals and employers: Remain actively involved with the Separation Network, with intensive training planned to contribute to CPD for professionals.

Advocating to Government to minimise child poverty: We will continue to use our knowledge to advocate with departmental officials, policymakers, and publicly, emphasising the need to target one-parent families to reduce child poverty. We will also create a Pre-Budget Submission for 2025 and contribute to Oireachtas Committees.


Advocating for a child-centred Family Law Service Model: We will engage with civil society partners, bodies such as the Legal Aid Board, Courts Service as well as the Department of Justice around issues from the proposed Family Courts Bill and the Family Justice Strategy implementation. We will stay involved in relevant coalitions and panels.

Providing policy expertise on one-parent families: We will continue to advocate for child poverty reduction, fair employment supports, better energy poverty solutions, access to education for parents, and social protection to ensure a minimum essential standard of living. We aim to influence political manifestos for European, local, and General elections.

Listening to one-parent families: We will focus on the experiences of lone parents in our research partnership on higher education and incorporate their perspectives into our policy positions. The Policy Panel will help shape submissions, including Pre-Budget Submissions.

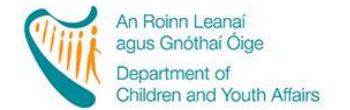
Sharing the stories of one-parent families: We will expand connections with media outlets, parenting websites, and influencers to raise awareness about social isolation. We aim to produce a video highlighting the impact of employability supports and will develop a new media panel of parents to share experiences.

Working for Constitutional reform: We will campaign for a YES vote in the upcoming referendums to expand the understanding of family in the Constitution, advocating for equality for all families, including non-marital families.



We will continue to call for systemic changes to ensure all families and family in all its forms are respected and supported, with a particular emphasis on reducing child poverty and improving family law processes.

Thank you to our funders for their invaluable support in 2023



Name
Cherish CLG t/a One Family

Registered Office
8 Coke Lane, Smithfield
Dublin, D07 EN2Y

Company Registration
No.45364

Charity No.
CHY 6525

Charities Regulator
No. 20012212

Principal Bankers
Bank of Ireland
College Green, Dublin 2

Solicitors
Shannon & O'Connor Solicitors
6 Hatch Street Lower
Dublin 2

Auditor
Duignan Carthy O'Neill
84 Northumberland Road
Ballsbridge, Dublin 4

Insurance Brokers
BHP Insurance
Plaza 211
Blanchardstown Corporate Park 2
Dublin, D15 AP2D

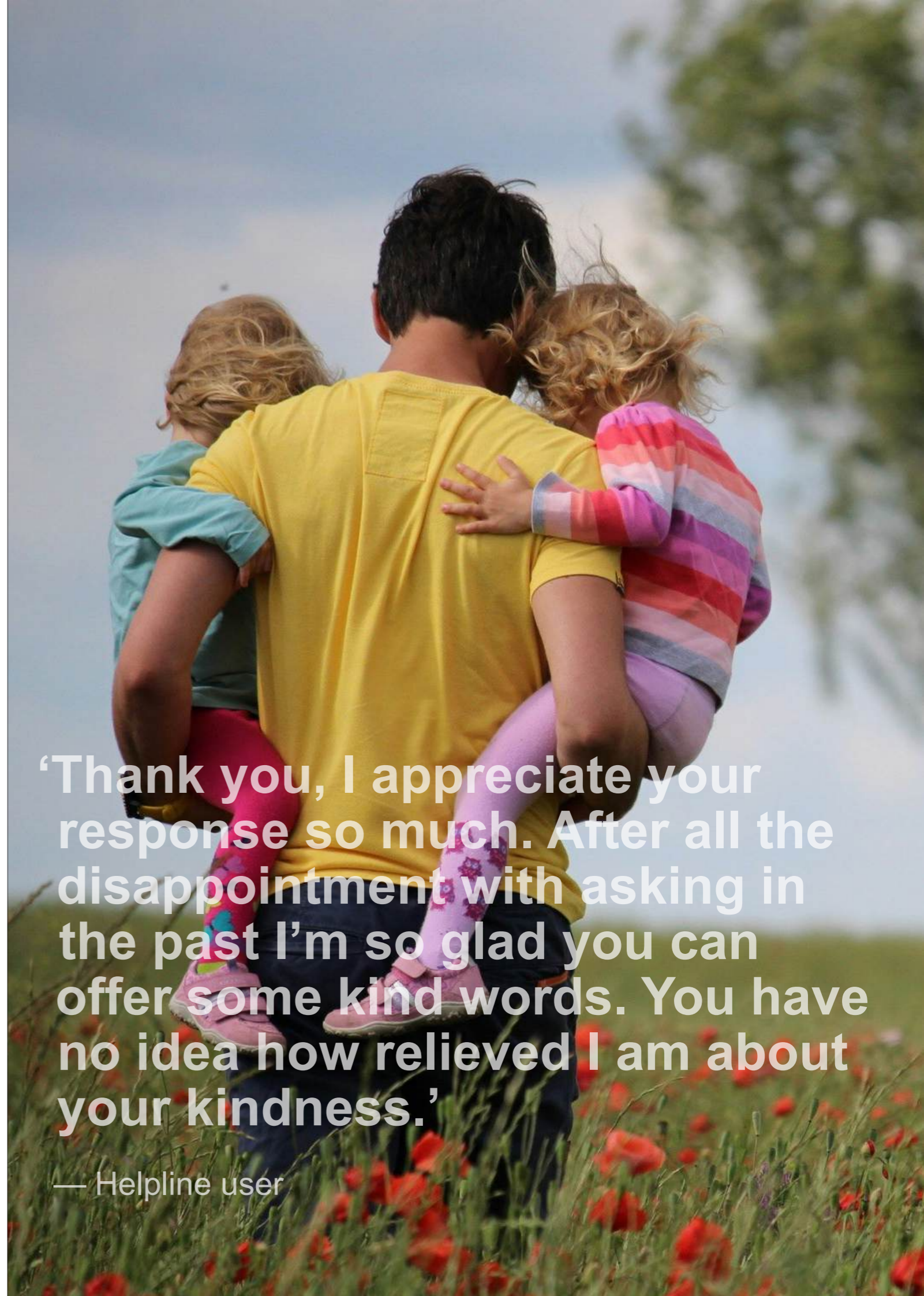
Marsh Ireland Brokers Ltd
25/28 Adelaide Road
Dublin, D02 RY98

Design by
UNIT.
unitdesign.ie

Cherish CLG trades as One Family and is registered in Ireland at 8 Coke Lane, Smithfield, Dublin 7 as a company limited by guarantee without a share capital. Consequently, the member's liability is limited, subject to each member's undertaking to contribute to the Company's net assets or liabilities on winding up such amounts as may be required not exceeding €1. The Company was set up under a Memorandum of Association that established the charitable Company's objects and powers. The Company is governed by a constitution and is managed by a Board of Directors. The Articles of Association and Constitution were last amended by a unanimous written resolution of the company members in July 2018.

The main object/ charitable purpose of the Company is: (a) To provide a comprehensive range of professional services and to campaign with and on behalf of all members of all one-parent families, people who share parenting, parents who are separated or separating, those who work with one-parent families and those concerned with the issues facing one-parent families, with a particular emphasis on the needs of the child(ren); and to provide professional services for people experiencing crisis pregnancy. (b) To achieve equality and social inclusion for all members of all one parent families in Ireland.

One Family has been granted charitable status, CHY 6525 and is registered with the Charity Regulator (CRA) under number 20012212. We meet all our annual filing requirements to the Charity Regulator, the Company Registration's Office and the Register of Beneficial Owners.



‘Thank you, I appreciate your response so much. After all the disappointment with asking in the past I’m so glad you can offer some kind words. You have no idea how relieved I am about your kindness.’

— Helpline user

Ireland's organisation for people
parenting alone, sharing parenting
and those separating