



# 4CHILDREN AT 30 YEARS

The organisation 1983 - 2013

In 2014, **56% of parents believe that family life is harder today** than it was 20 years ago and **35% of parents think that it will get worse for today's children.** **27% of parents don't think their neighbourhood is good for children to grow up in.**

Join with 4Children to make a difference and make Britain great for children and families.



*“We didn’t know where to turn and then 4Children appeared and has stood by us. Now we’re starting to feel safe again, I know my young children are getting on as they should and I have emotional support as well as help with the practical stuff. I feel like someone is holding my hand through this terrible time.”*

**Chantel, mother of two**



*“Responding to the evolving needs of children and families has always been at the heart of all that we do – working with families and communities to build strengths and resilience. In our unique policy into practice approach this influences both our shaping and influencing and our delivery. We understand that families want early help close to home when problems develop to prevent them escalating. We also understand the importance of joined up practical support that works with children and families.*

*We take a new approach to support for children and families, which focuses tirelessly on improving outcomes for the whole family. Our evidence of success informs our demands for the future and a new and ambitious commitment for children and families in this country.*

*4Children works tirelessly to help make a better future for children and families and will continue to do so as it sets out on its new ambitious agenda of a Britain that is great for children and families. 4Children’s Trustees and staff are setting sights high for children and families for generations to come and look forward to working with you to make it happen.”*

**Pip O’Byrne, Chair – 4Children**

# Introduction



4Children has always been about children and families. From its origins and response to the changing working patterns of parents and the welfare of so called 'latchkey' children; from when it was established 30 years ago to its pioneering work to deliver joined up local services and support today, children and families, including those with some of the most complex problems, are at the heart of all that we do.

The last 30 years have witnessed some of the most profound economic and social changes for families in the UK: changes to the way we work, care, learn and play that have been set against a backdrop of equally profound changes to family structures and dynamics. As generations live longer, marry, divorce, remarry and live alone, the diversity of the family unit has changed beyond recognition. 4Children understands these changes and works closely with families to provide the support they need in response. Yet despite enormous gains in opportunity over the last 30 years, we enter 2014 as members of a society that is still deeply unequal for children and young people: one in four children are living in poverty; over one million young people aged 16 – 24 are not in employment, education or training; and many children and young people have low aspirations and low self-esteem. A staggering 500,000 families in this country are 'just coping', dropping in and out of crisis with little hope of escape from the vicious circle they are caught up in.

4Children believes a different approach is needed. An approach that listens and responds to what families really want. One that gives children the aspiration and ability to flourish as individuals. An approach that radically changes the country's system of support for those most in need and redesigns our communities for Britain's children and families of the future.

This ambitious goal is at the heart of all that we do, from our powerful campaigns to highlight need and call for change to our informed support and development of services. Over the last ten years our innovative policy into practice programme has demonstrated how the new approach can work: building trusted relationships that offer practical help and challenge; working with families strengths to build resilience for the future and working with the whole family to support both children and parents. We offer help early as problems arise with a relentless focus on turnaround if crisis hits.

Over the next 10 years we will continue to work with our valued partners, with central and local government, schools, health, business, communities and with children and families themselves to reshape this country's public services, spaces and workplaces to help the modern family flourish. Join with us to make Britain great for children and families. We look forward to working with you.

**Anne Longfield OBE**  
Chief Executive - 4Children



*"I am proud to be a patron of 4Children and so part of a force that is helping to bring positive change for families across Britain. Every family needs support from time to time and 4Children is there when help is needed, empowering and strengthening*

*them so that they are ready for any challenge that life throws at them."*

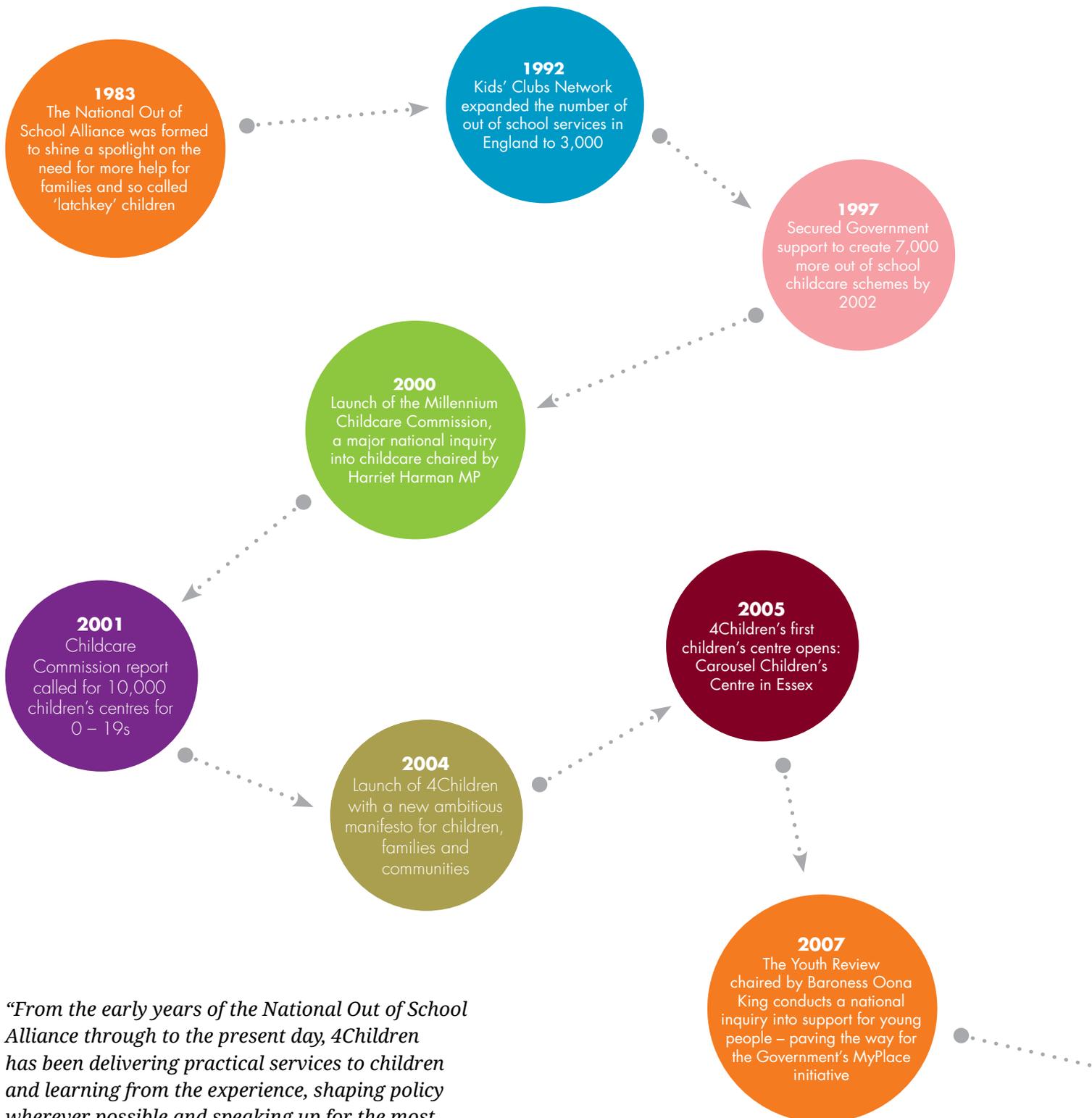
**Cherie Blair, leading lawyer and committed campaigner for women's rights**

*We have an opportunity to rethink our aspirations for children and families in the Britain of the future. We must demand a shift of ambition across every aspect of life as we know it.*

**Making Britain Great for Children and Families, 4Children 2014**

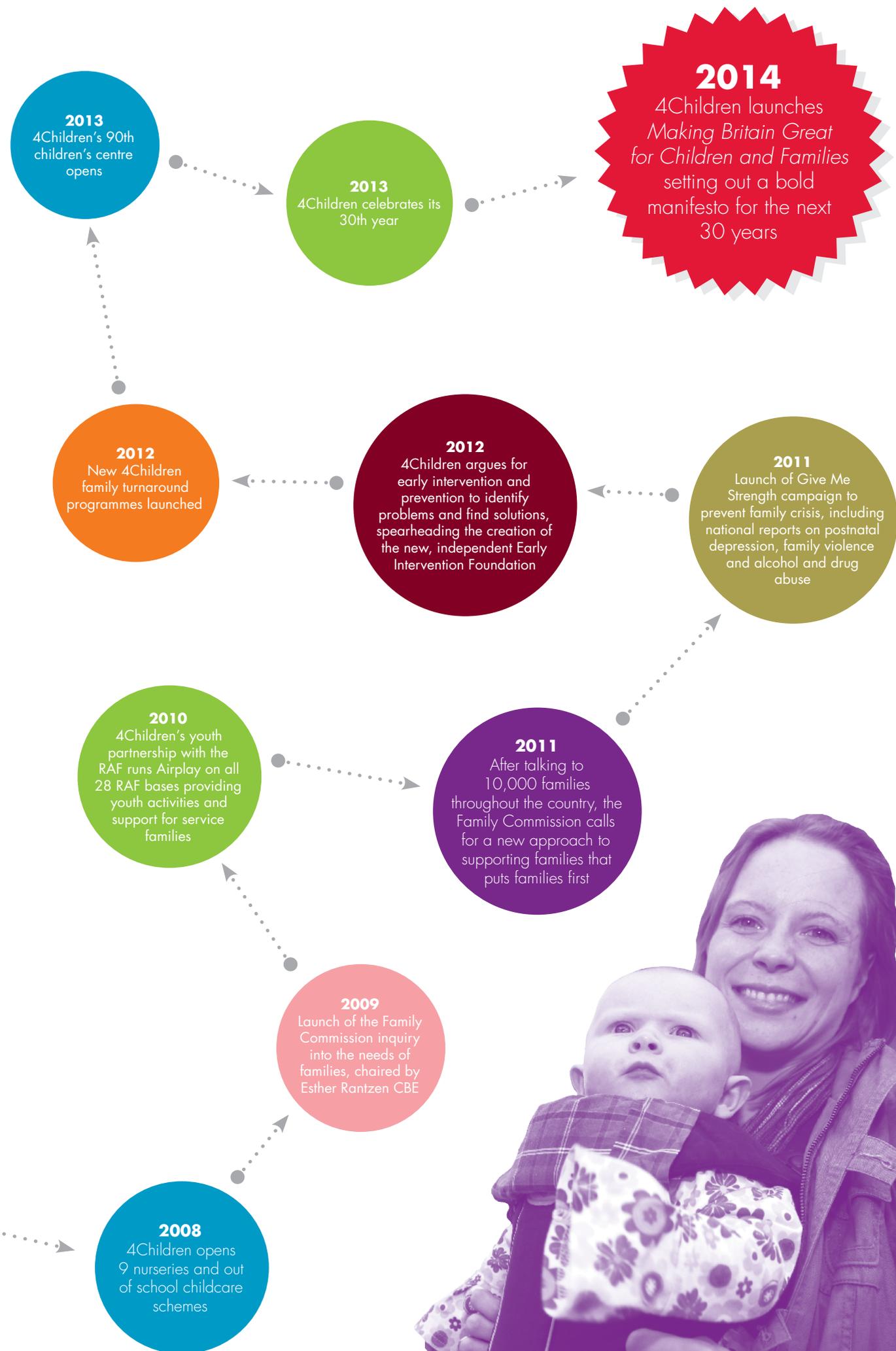
# 30 Years of 4Children: Delivering for children and families

4Children (or the National Out of School Alliance as it was originally known) was established 30 years ago in response to growing concern about the welfare of so called 'latchkey' children. Since then the charity has gone on to deepen and broaden its work around the needs of all children 0 – 19 and their families. 4Children now delivers services including children's centres, nurseries, out of school clubs and youth and family support for 200,000 children and families in the UK as well as continuing to develop and shape all aspects of policy for children, young people and families.



*“From the early years of the National Out of School Alliance through to the present day, 4Children has been delivering practical services to children and learning from the experience, shaping policy wherever possible and speaking up for the most disadvantaged wherever necessary.”*

**David Robinson, Founder of Community Links and We Are What We Do**



# Campaigning for a better future for children and families



4Children's powerful campaigns raise awareness and demand new solutions for children and families. Give Me Strength demands more help for families to avert crisis and its damaging social and economic cost.

**GIVE ME STRENGTH**

Family dramas don't need to become crises

Give Me Strength highlighted the facts behind family crisis. Our research and reports showed how families are failing to get help to deal with escalating levels of domestic and family violence, alcohol and drug dependency and poor mental health and how these damaging factors are combining to cause family crisis as a result. Give Me Strength called for a new approach to prevent crisis through joined up and practical support before problems escalate.

*"When families go through tough times, it is so important that someone is there to support and help them until they are back on an even keel. 4Children's work with families all over the country is absolutely vital and I am delighted to support them."*

**Denise Robertson MBE, Agony Aunt and Writer**

**Every year 28,000 children go into care in England. Millions more have their chances of success in later life diminished by growing up in families facing serious and multiple challenges with little or no practical help. Yet research shows us that these crises can often be prevented if the right help is available at the right time.**

**Families tell us that this means early help as problems develop and before crisis sets in. Give Me Strength demands that we respond to this call to put an end to wasting money and wasting lives.**



4Children's national campaign to support families through tough times calls on government to recognise that families are assets that will contribute to our economic and social recovery if they get the right support.



**THE TIMES**

*"Fair4Families speaks for the thousands of families who are reaching breaking point."*

**December 2013**

# Shaping the debate for children and families

4Children has been developing, influencing and shaping social policy for 30 years. In that time, we have successfully made the argument for greater access to childcare and out of school activities, Sure Start Children's Centres, youth clubs and better support for families.

4Children is about making a difference – about identifying issues and devising solutions. We are also about change – ensuring policy makers and service providers are focused on the real needs of children and their families and offering practical solutions to meet them.

4Children is a key influencer, ideas shaper and change maker – from Whitehall to the community hall. We know that in order to achieve change for children and families we need to win the argument with those that have the power to make change happen.

**We have shown time and time again that we are bringing fresh thinking to old problems and that our ideas continue to shape debates and actions.**

- ➔ Our Millennium Childcare Commission called for a children's centre in every community. By March 2010, 3,600 children's centres had been opened across England.
- ➔ Our Make Space Youth Review made the case for a new generation of youth clubs able to meet the needs of young people in the 21st Century.
- ➔ Our Family Commission called for a 'family test' to be applied to all government policy to ensure that it contributes to the goal of strengthening families.

*"4Children doesn't simply look ahead, they look around the corners for the next big challenge that must be overcome to make this country great for children and families."*

**Rt Hon. Harriet Harman QC  
MP, Deputy Leader of the  
Opposition**

*"4Children stands apart from the rest in continually finding creative, new ways to give a voice to the children, young people and families of this country."*

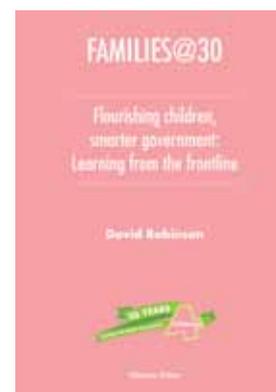
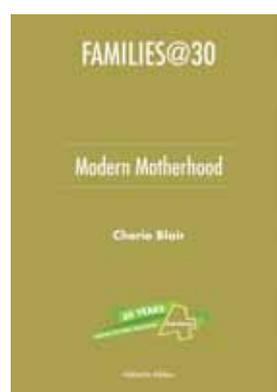
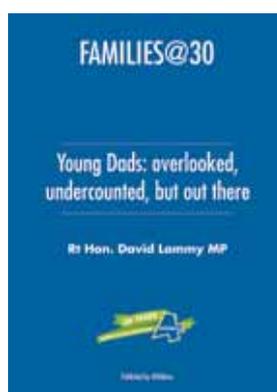
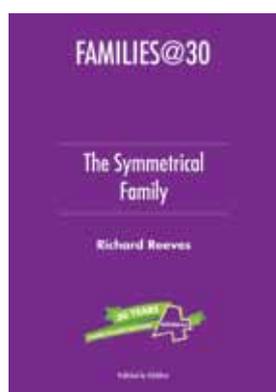
**Tim Loughton MP, Conservative MP for East  
Worthing and Shoreham and Parliamentary  
Under-Secretary of State for  
Children and Families  
from 2010-2012**

**London  
Evening  
Standard**

*"Payday loans drag too many families into a vortex of unsustainable debt, so we welcome the Government's plans to introduce legislation to cap their cost."*

**November 2013**

As part of 4Children's 30th year celebrations, the Families@30 essay series reflected on the profound changes in family life over the last 30 years and looked to the future in areas of key significance. Essays from Richard Reeves, David Lammy MP, Cherie Blair, and David Robinson looked at the challenges and opportunities ahead in the changing roles in caring, young fathers, modern motherhood, early action and prevention in a thought provoking and insightful collection.



# Championing Children's Centres

4Children has long argued the need for children's centres – from our original call for a children's centre in every area in the 2001 Childcare Commission, to our involvement in shaping and supporting their development in every area. The charity now runs almost 100 centres around the country, providing the joined up support that we know children and families need.

- ➔ Our cross party Shout Out for Sure Start campaign highlighted the benefits of children's centres and argued for their development at a key time of budget restrictions.
- ➔ Our annual Children's Centre Census identifies key trends and developments and our work to support the All Parliamentary Group on Sure Start examines good practice and shares learning.

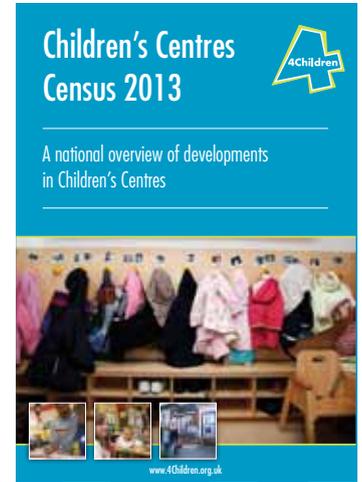
## THE TIMES

*"We must 'get serious' about the early years and commit to a long-term ambitious vision for children's centres."*

**December 2013**

**In our manifesto *Making Britain Great for Children and Families*, we argue that children's centres should extend their support to children 0 - 19 and their families and become 'Children and Family Centres'.**

**The 2013 Census reveals that for the first time over a million families are benefitting from children's centre services and that centres are supporting two-thirds of all disadvantaged families with children under the age of five.**



# Family Heroes Awards

4Children is proud to have teamed up with Take a Break magazine, Britain's biggest selling magazine to recognise amazing people throughout the country who go above and beyond to make a real difference for children and families.

**With hundreds of entries coming in from all areas of the country, our 2013 National Family Hero was Nicola Graham from the North West.**

Nicola's world fell apart when her son, Reuben sadly died when he was 23 months old to an undiagnosed and highly aggressive brain tumour. Nicola, and Reuben's dad Mike, didn't want Reuben's death to be in vain and wanted something good to come out of this tragedy. They set themselves a goal of raising £1 million in 23 months to set up a retreat called Reuben's Retreat.

The aim of the retreat is to provide somewhere for families who have children with life threatening or limiting illnesses or who have lost a child to go and just relax, recharge and rebuild their lives.



*"Research from 4Children's Fair4Families campaign shows that families today are struggling to make ends meet and get the support they need. For many families, life is an uphill battle.*

*"We believe that finding our family heroes will help to inspire people across the country to do as much as they can to help people in their families and communities. If you have a family hero, why not share their story and put them forward for a thank you that shows just how appreciated they really are."*

**Anne Longfield OBE, Chief Executive of 4Children**



*"Family is the most important thing to me and that is why 4Children is a charity so close to my heart. Over the years I have witnessed their tireless commitment to supporting families in trouble and have been humbled by the stories of the unsung heroes who do so much to help. I will always support their incredible work."*

**Neil Fox, Presenter and DJ**

# Delivering for children and families

4Children believes that every child in every community should have the chance to achieve their full potential and that every parent should have the support they need to enable their family to flourish

**4Children's vision is to provide dynamic opportunities and support for children and their families to achieve real and lasting change. Creating good local neighbourhoods for children to grow up in has always been a key priority – providing joined up support that children, young people and families need close to home as part of everyday life. Translating these ambitions into reality is what 4Children is all about.**

## Leading and supporting the sector

**4Children works with a wide range of government departments; with local authorities and health agencies; with business and the voluntary and community sector to develop strategic solutions and support.**

### Supporting early years professionals - working with families from pregnancy to age 5

The Foundation Years website, newflash and associated events delivered by 4Children offer professionals working with children and families in the foundation years a one stop shop for resources, information and the latest news and developments. Including:



- Information and resources about integrating health and early years
- Debates at seminars and online with sector leaders and other professionals
- Access to information about professional development
- Sharing good practice
- Support for the sector on continuous quality improvement

*“4Children’s community childcare hub model... provides a promising model for shaping and co-ordinating the local childcare market.”*

**Baroness Claire Tyler, Liberal Democrat, Chair, Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service and President of the National Children’s Bureau**

### Leading the strategic partnership

4Children is co-founder of The Children’s Partnership, the Government’s voluntary sector strategic partner for children and families. The Partnership is leading and supporting the development of high quality sustainable support for children, young people and families through two way communication, policy advice and sector development.

4Children is also working with the Department for Education to pilot integrated childcare through community childcare hubs and support children’s centres in extending their reach to disadvantaged families as well as developing an outcomes framework with the early years sector.

**4Children has been delighted to work in partnership with Professor Marmott and the Health Equity Institute at the University College London in developing an outcomes framework for children’s centres.**

### Pioneering early intervention

4Children is advocating for a wholesale change to early intervention to prevent problems developing and reduce costs of late intervention. We were proud to become the accountable body for the Early Intervention Foundation in 2013, contracting with the DfE to work with Graham Allen MP and EIF trustees to establish the new organisation.

The Foundation will play a crucial role in shifting the culture and bringing the focus from late to early intervention. We look forward to making early intervention a reality for all children and families. The Foundation was established as an independent charity mid-2013 and 4Children looks forward to a long lasting partnership.

*“4Children is a fantastic advocate and change maker in the lives of children in the UK today.”*

**Graham Allen MP,  
Labour MP for  
Nottingham North  
and Chair of the  
Early Intervention  
Foundation**



# Great support for children and families

4Children develops and delivers great support and programmes for children and families. We help and support families as they bring up their children from the earliest days of pregnancy onwards. From babies to toddlers and teens to adulthood – we are there to help children develop, learn and flourish.

*“4Children draws on years of experience, solid research and a deep understanding of what families, in all their diversity, need to flourish to shape an agenda that we cannot afford to discount.”*

**Yvonne Roberts, Journalist and Broadcaster**

## Helping families to flourish

*“This programme has given me insight into why my children behave like they do and areas that I needed to change to give a consistent approach. It has improved my family life at home and things are a lot less stressful.”*

**Zoe, mother of three, Hampshire**

### Daddy cool

4Children centres make sure fathers are included and supported, involving them in all aspects of their child's life.

### Positive parenting

There is no definitive 'how to parent' guide but sometimes advice and support can make all the difference. We offer access to a wide range of workshops and courses.

### Health Visitors here!

We work with health visitors in all our centres to provide a tailored package of support for local families.

### Work club

4Children works with JobCentre Plus, local colleges and other partners to help parents with training and support to find jobs.

### Family learning

Our Family Learning courses include ESOL, play and language, school transition, numeracy and literacy.

### Horizons – for young parents

4Children provides specialist groups and one to one support for young parents to help with parenting, education, employment and specialist support.

### Breastfeeding support

Our children's centres offer calm, relaxed sessions with peer mentors and health visitors for breastfeeding mothers, mothers-to-be, formula fed babies and fathers.

### Community Childcare Hubs

4Children's new model of joined up and flexible childcare is especially valuable for families with more than one child and working irregular hours. Hubs provide one point of contact for childcare needs.

### Big Cook, Little Cook

Information, inspiration and support about food and nutrition for parents and children.

### Working together

Support to help separated families work together as parents in the best interests of their children.

*“The family has made good links with professionals and with other young parents. Dad has gained employment and Mum returned to school to complete her education.”*

**4Children outreach worker, Plymouth**



## Tough times



### Give Me Strength

4Children's national campaign demands a move to early intervention to prevent family crisis - and an end to wasting money and wasting lives.

### One-to-one support sessions

At home or in the centre, 4Children provides practical help for parents with multiple problems and challenges.

### No longer suffering in silence

Non-stigmatising, family orientated support for mothers and fathers suffering with depression, anxiety and low self-esteem including post natal depression.

### Helping hands

4Children works with families through Helping Hands to provide help and support to escape drug or alcohol dependency.

### Family turnaround project - Wandsworth

Our integrated approach works with families with multiple and complex problems, intervening early, focusing on the whole family, preventing escalation and working in partnership to provide early help.

*"The great thing about the group is that everyone is on the same level; there is no judgement and no pressure. Although we don't all have the same problems, we all have some kind of problem and being part of the group gave me permission to deal with issues I'd had for years but not recognised."*

**Darrin, father of four, Leeds**

## Setting sights high for children and young people

### Talk with me

Through Talk with Me sessions 4Children helps children and families with Special Educational Needs in sensory rooms and speech and language therapy.

### Cultural support groups

We work with local community and cultural groups to run children's history, language and play sessions for families new to the UK in a richly diverse programme of specialist groups and activities.

### Great childcare all year round

Our 50 nurseries and out of school clubs operate throughout the year - supporting children to develop and learn and offering great support for parents.

### Airplay

4Children and the RAF Benevolent Fund run Airplay on all RAF stations in the UK providing great activities and support for young people designed and helping relieve some of the pressure on RAF families.

### Forest School Adventure

Learning and adventure for children exploring outdoors.

### Chill at 4Children

In our 0-19 centres we work with local youth services and other key partners to deliver alternative education programmes for young people at risk of exclusion from school.



*"I was lucky, I've only moved once but loads of people have moved more than that. I feel for them, moving is hard. Airplay definitely helps the transition of moving around."*

**Alison aged 15 RAF Waddington**

# 4Children in practice

**4Children has an outstanding track record, providing effective and efficient services relevant to local or individual needs. Our services are underpinned by good relationships, partnership working and communication between families, stakeholders, local advisory boards and local authorities.**

## Improving outcomes

4Children's services are innovative, flexible and responsive – we recognise that every family is unique. We value all children as individuals and ensure every child's needs are met by encouraging children and their parents to learn and develop through play. We involve children and parents as active participants in their own lives and local services. Children, young people and families influence how provision is shaped and developed to ensure our services remain accessible and relevant.

## Working in partnership

We develop our children's centres as multi-agency hubs and co-locate with our partners to achieve effective integration and common purpose. 4Children is committed to working in partnership with children, young people, families, health agencies, schools, statutory agencies, the voluntary and community sector and local authorities.

## Early intervention 0 – 19

Our high quality integrated family support and parenting services help families with multiple and complex problems achieve positive outcomes and prevent escalation to specialist services.

## THE TIMES

*“The Prime Minister should instruct his Secretaries of State to make families an explicit priority and the Chancellor to put families at the heart of the Comprehensive Spending Review”*

**June 2013**

*“4Children is a committed partner bringing innovation to a number of different projects and schemes in Enfield for over ten years.”*

**London Borough of Enfield**

*“4Children's cluster based children's centre model in Hampshire has provided real support to families most in need”*

**Hampshire County Council**

*“4Children helped me see that any difficulty could be worked on and managed, by breaking it down into smaller pieces and approaching each one in a logical way – one small step at a time.”*

**Chris, father of two**

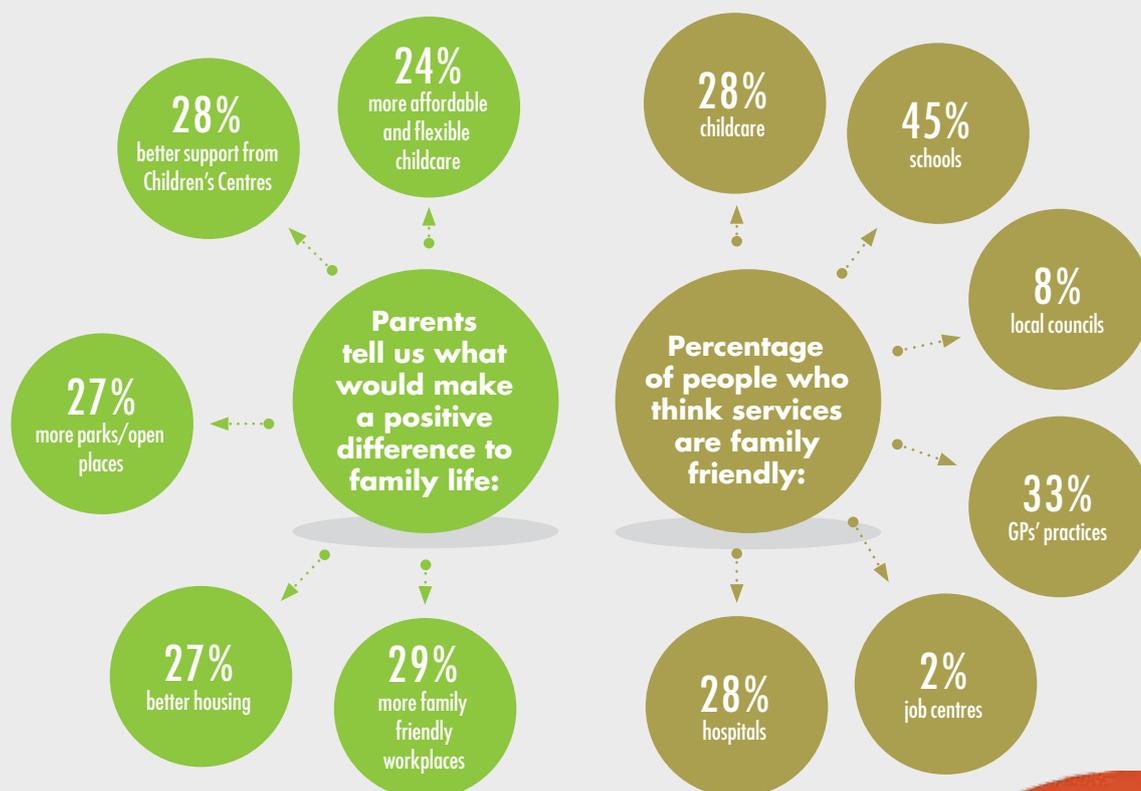


# Looking to the future for children and families

4Children sets sights high for children and families. At the end of our 30th year we are now looking to the future with our new manifesto *Making Britain Great for Children and Families* where we set out a blueprint for action to support children and families for generations to come.

**As a country, we have choices about the kind of society we want for our children and families. As we look to the end of the current economic crisis, it is time to rethink and reshape our services and communities to enable all families to flourish and to offer vulnerable families the help they need to transform their lives. It is time to take action and to invest in our future. We have the opportunity to make Britain great for children and families for future generations.**

*Making Britain Great for Children and Families, 4Children, 2014*



YouGov poll on behalf of 4Children, 2014

**4Children's manifesto for the future, *Making Britain Great for Children and Families*, throws down the gauntlet to politicians, policy and decision makers. It calls for them to reshape this country's public services, spaces and workplaces in response to the dramatic changes to modern family life. It demands that we act now to prevent family crisis and enable all children to flourish.**

*A great Britain creates a positive environment for all families to flourish with specialist help and early intervention for those who need it to reduce or prevent crisis.*

# A new commitment to families in Britain

4Children is calling decision makers throughout the land to make a new commitment to families. At its heart would be a radical change in the approach to working with children and families to achieve longer term generational change over decades to come. This longer term approach will be rooted in understanding how to support sustainable families and will work with the strengths of families through a joined up approach.

Britain needs a culture change in its whole system of support for families that moves from transacting with families to building trusted relationships. It will be backed by a new generation of staff that can positively support the vulnerable children and families they are working with to achieve real change.

## A great Britain for all families

- ➔ A family commitment from government to consider the needs of families in everything they do
- ➔ A comprehensive universal affordable childcare guarantee from 0-14
- ➔ Part-time and flexible working with flexible maternity and paternity leave
- ➔ Children and Family Centre Hubs offering help advice and specialist, co-ordinated services for families in greater need

## Great childhoods for all children

- ➔ World class support during pregnancy, antenatal and postnatal support
- ➔ Great services for early years and support to help children and young people to develop and learn
- ➔ Safe and inspirational places for children to play and for young people to meet
- ➔ Determined action on bullying, health and child obesity
- ➔ Specialist help to support children with specific needs – early intervention to build social and emotional capabilities and intensive turnaround for teenagers in trouble

## Transforming the lives of vulnerable families

- ➔ Early help in every community, through Children and Family Centres and Hubs to prevent crisis
- ➔ Intensive help to overcome drug and alcohol dependency, mental health problems and domestic violence
- ➔ Family support for all families who are just coping and to help tackle problems head on before they take over
- ➔ Intensive family support for all families in crisis, to turnaround problems through practical help and challenge
- ➔ A new outcomes-based approach to child protection and care, with intensive support, including kinship care

## Good places to grow up in

- ➔ A family commitment to all aspects of the local community, including planning, public spaces and parks, transport and policing
- ➔ A major programme of building to create affordable and social housing
- ➔ Intensive action to eradicate the issues behind so called 'problem estates' and build positive communities for children and families, including action on gangs

## A new approach to help for families - Children and Family Centres

4Children has developed a model for Children and Family Centres, which delivers real change for families. These multi-purpose community 'hubs' provide a vital and trusted resource for all local families and communities, from pregnancy through to the teenage years, with extra help for those that need it.

Centres bring together and co-ordinate services – from midwives and health visitors to childcare, out of school and youth support. Universal advice and activities mean centres are there for everyone, with specialist help on hand for families with greater needs – help with parenting, debt and housing and support

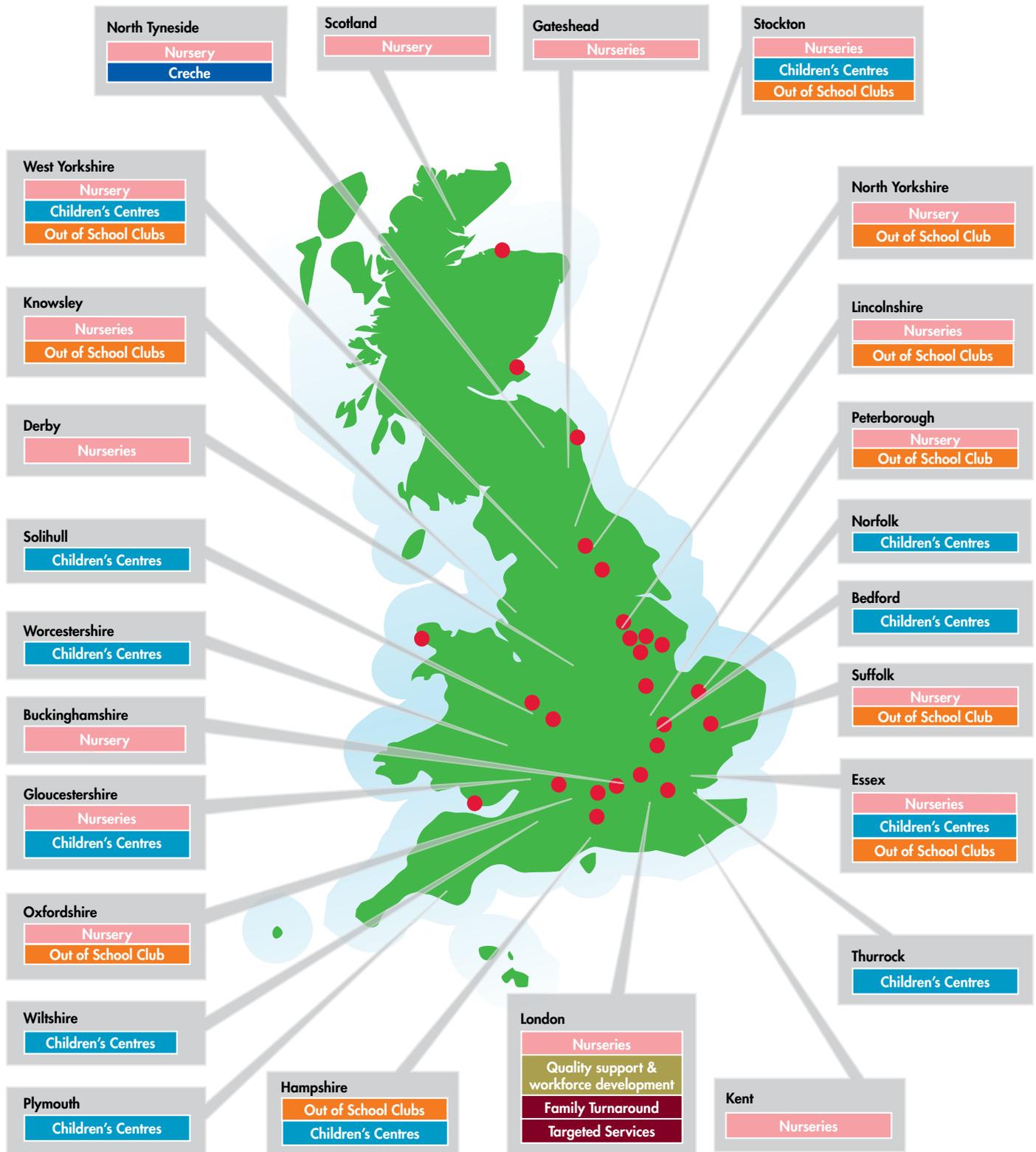
to tackle many of the underlying issues of family crisis – domestic abuse, alcohol and drug addiction and poor mental health for families struggling to cope.

*Over a million families now rely on children's centres. This could double over the next five years if we extend their reach to older children and their wider families and place them at the heart of the community.*



# 4Children's support around the UK

4Children delivers childcare, youth activities and family support services around the country, including nurseries, schools, children's centres and RAF bases.



Airplay Youth Activities Programme  
in partnership with the  
RAF Benevolent Fund on RAF bases

Find 4Children services in your area by visiting  
[www.4Children.org.uk/services](http://www.4Children.org.uk/services)

*4Children believes  
that every child in every  
community should have the  
chance to achieve their full  
potential and that every parent  
should have the support they need  
to enable their family to flourish.*

**Join with us to make a difference for children and families**

[www.4Children.org.uk](http://www.4Children.org.uk)



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