



Summary Forward Plan 2011-2013

Vision

All families and their children in Scotland are equally valued and empowered with choices and opportunities to participate fully in all areas of life.

Mission

To provide lone parent and other families with information, support, flexible childcare and training, to develop the skills and capacities of children and young people, especially those from lone parent families, and to empower lone parents to engage with national and local policy and service development.

Our Aims for 2011-2013

- **Sustain and develop the organisation in a rapidly changing environment:** ensure that spending is kept in line with income; that we have good evidence for the outcomes of our work; we market our services effectively to parents and their children and to funders and prospective partners in the public and private sectors. To increase our income generation through paid for services, affinity marketing and fund raising. Ensure all new developments are in line with the organisation's vision and core aims and demonstrate links with lone parent families.
- **Policy and lobbying:** to work with parents, politicians and officials at a Scottish and local authority level to get supportive policies for lone parent families and improved childcare and play for all families.
- **Specialist Information and Advice:** to reach 7.5% of lone parents in Scotland- 11,000 compared to around 4,000 now.
- **Engagement, Family Support and employability:** to increase the numbers of families we work with in existing areas and to extend our work to new areas, including greater targeting of children and young people. To create a pathway for families from initial support and information to developing confidence and skills to volunteer opportunities to work experience placements, to temporary and permanent employment.
- **Flexible childcare services:** to increase numbers of families using all our childcare services, to develop services to meet any new needs and to develop the skills and capacities of children and young people by free and outdoor play and by other means appropriate to their needs.
- **Community Involvement:** to encourage and support families to be involved in their communities and to press for services that meet needs.
- **Internal and external training:** to continue developing our skills internally and to use our knowledge to train other agencies through offering student placements and apprenticeships and training programmes.



Our Outcomes for 2011-2013

1. **The Organisation:** We are better known amongst parents and funders in the public and private sector and we are able to continue developing.
2. **Policy, Research and lobbying:** The public, politicians and officials nationally and in local authorities understand the diversity of lone parent families, their contributions and barriers and policies and services in Scotland meet needs effectively and respectfully.
3. **Specialist information, advice and advocacy services:** Lone parent families in Scotland are aware of where to access the help they need and are supported to improve their lives.
4. **Engagement, family support and employability:** Lone parent and other families are effectively supported to improve their lives and in raising their children and the skills and confidence of their children and young people are increased.
5. **Flexible childcare services:** Lone parent and other families working or studying unsocial or irregular hours or whose children or parents have additional support needs are able to study, enter or sustain employment and parents can take part in community activities. Children and young people have increased life skills and confidence.
6. **Community Involvement:** Lone parent and other families are less isolated, more confident and are able to influence local and national services and policies to better meet their needs.
7. **Internal and external training:** Staff feel confident about how to work in the changing environment and how to evidence the outcomes of what we do. Social Workers and employability staff are knowledgeable about the particular issues and strengths of lone parents and of services available to them. Childcare workers are better equipped to encourage free and outdoor play.

What we plan to do to achieve our aims

1. **Marketing:**
 - **Shared branding:** All OPFS services to use new logo and strapline alongside own name to reinforce our shared identity.
 - **Parents:** Word of mouth - parents in communities and links with agencies in touch with parents. Advertise -Yellow Pages, buses and magazines and electronic screen information at local sites. Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn electronic links and also marketing info-cards, posters, leaflets.
 - **Funders:** Evidence of what we have achieved - case studies, statistics. Adapting to the new environment of reduced public spending and contracting of services.
2. **Business Development:**
 - **Services paid for by parents:** Currently only childcare- we need to ensure they are as easy as possible to use and pay for. May be room to develop other services parents pay for.
 - **Services for parents which are funded by an agency:** We have to show what we can achieve for families and also ensure we link closely to other relevant services.



- **Help available:** We have attracted new Board members, have received help from Pilotlight with our forward strategic planning, and get private sector help from Inspiring Scotland due to our Go Play funding to develop free and outdoor play.

3. **Raising Money to help us:**

- **The Big Lottery**
- **People's Postcode Lottery**
- **Local and national charitable trusts and individual donations**
- **Travel2Give:** A charity that helps other charities to raise money through a donation when holidays or travel is booked through them.
- **Specific funding streams** supporting lone parent and other targeted families e.g. Short Breaks