



PRESS RELEASE

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Scottish Charity & Barclaycard Launch Partnership Programme in Glasgow

NB. Embargo till 8am on Thursday 22nd April 2010

Scotland's national lone parent charity, One Parent Families Scotland, is launching a new initiative in Glasgow this week, made possible through funding from Barclaycard's community investment programme.

Working through its charity partners, the Barclaycard Horizons programme supports lone parents to deal with financial hardship and build their skills to prepare for the future. For some lone parents life can be tough – money is tight, it may be difficult to plan too far ahead, and trying to mix work with bringing up children on your own is often a daunting prospect. That's where **Horizons** can help.

Supported by Barclaycard, **Horizons** brings together three or four expert partners, specifically to help one parent families - Citizens Advice Bureau; Family Action; Gingerbread and One Parent Families Scotland. Working together they give support and advice on **money matters**, provide grants towards **training and education costs** and support lone parents to **get back to work**. Since Horizons was established in 2005 over 265,000 lone parents and their children have benefited from Horizons integrated package of support.

Horizons in Glasgow

The Your Money and Your Work elements of the programme are now to be delivered by **One Parent Families** in Glasgow. One Parent Families Scotland delivers specialist services designed to inform, support and inspire Scotland's one parent families.

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Scottish Charity & Barclaycard launch

Sue Robertson, Director of OPFS said today, said,

“Lone Parent Households are now 39% of households with children in Glasgow & this rises to over 45% in its poorest communities. OPFS is most concerned about parents who are struggling to stay afloat financially and we are very pleased to have received this sponsorship from Barclaycard to enable us to support parents to address their present financial situation & prepare for the future. We know that many lone parents want to work but they face disadvantage in the labour market due to lack of suitable training or work experience and childcare. We need to make sure that they have access to appropriate advice, training and support to allow them to find sustainable jobs which will provide long-term security for their families.”

Val Soranno Keating, CEO of Barclaycard, said,

“We welcome the partnership with One Parent Families Scotland and it’s great to see the Horizons programme running in Glasgow, the programme is making such a positive impact on lone parents’ lives”

The Horizons programme in Glasgow will be launched on Thursday 22nd of April at 10 am in the Royal Concert Hall. Participants include: lone parents who have successfully completed the recent programme as well as representatives from Barclaycard, Glasgow City Council, the local Regeneration Agencies, the Health Board, Job Centre Plus, & private sector businesses.

Ends

Scottish Charity & Barclaycard launch

Notes to Editors.

1. Horizons www.yourhorizons.com

The Aims

Horizons is a pioneering scheme that helps lone parents create a better future for themselves and their children.

The Background

Barclaycard launched the Horizons programme in July 2005, seeking to develop its community programme to support people affected by debt problems. Research showed that lone parents were a group at risk of being in poverty.

Since the programme's launch, Barclaycard has invested more than £5m in supporting 265,000 lone parents and their children in the UK. Horizons aims to improve the skills and confidence of lone parents, helping them to manage their finances, improve their education and job prospects, and support their children.

Using the skills of its charity partners, Horizons helps lone parents to improve their lives by giving them practical advice on money matters, providing grants towards training and education costs and helping lone parents to get back to work.

The Programme

The three elements to the programme are:

Your Money – money advice from Citizens Advice Bureaux in England & OPFS in Scotland
Your Money is a free programme run by 12 Citizens Advice Bureaux across the UK. Lone parents can take part in a series of courses which cover a range of topics including basic household budgeting.

Your Education - education and training grants from Family Action

The Family Action fund provides ongoing financial support to lone parents who are seeking to boost their skills and employment prospects by undertaking training.

Your Work - helping lone parents back to work with Gingerbread in England & OPFS in Scotland.
Your Work is a unique, three-week, free programme run by lone parent charity Gingerbread. The programme is specifically designed to give lone parents valuable advice and support on all aspects of returning to work, as well as two weeks' work experience.

2. One Parent Families Scotland www.opfs.org.uk

Established in 1944, One Parent Families Scotland (OPFS) is a national charity dedicated to supporting Scotland's 174,000 lone parents bringing up 295,000 children. It provides lone parent and other families with high quality effective services including specialist advice and publications, family support, flexible childcare, employability and training. It has a proven track record of commitment and reliability with over 65 years service delivery expertise working with lone parents. It now has a turnover of just under £2m enabling 192 staff to deliver services to 5,000 families with 12,000 children across Scotland.

3. Pamela's story

Pamela is 37 years of age. She lives in Govan with her 2 daughters who are 14yrs and 7yrs. Pamela has never worked since leaving school; she has no standard grade qualifications or computer skills. Her confidence and self worth levels were very low. Pamela has a good social network and gives quite a lot of support to her friends and family. Pamela realised that her benefits were going to change in the near future and that she will then be required to claim Job Seekers Allowance. She does want to start work as she feels that this would be an important part of positive role modelling to her daughters.

Scottish Charity & Barclaycard launch

Through attendance at Horizons work placement programme and gaining local support with ICT, Numeracy and literacy skills, Pamela built up her skills and experience with the support of Choices and local area services. Pamela now works in a local solicitors. Advice & Training from the Financial Capability Officer has enabled Pamela to achieve financial stability and manage her work/life commitments.

4. Lone Parents in Glasgow

There are almost 28,000 lone parent families living in Glasgow, 40% of all families with dependent children, compared to 25% in the rest of Scotland.

In addressing the poverty and exclusion faced by lone parents, it is important to recognise their diversity. Some will have had their children when they were young, before they were able to take up training, education or employment. Others will have already been in paid work all their adult lives or they may have spent recent years doing unpaid work in the home. Lone Parents may be single by choice but most are separated after living with a married or unmarried partner, divorced or widowed.

However Lone Parents all share the same constraint - that there is only one potential “breadwinner” and one carer to share the load of family responsibilities. Lone Parents need both to work more to reach the same income potential as two parents and to spend more time with their children where the other parent is absent. Being a lone parent in most cases means living on an income which is half that of other families. Many lone parents face powerful barriers to finding and staying in employment. They are forced to rely on benefits or are in low -paid employment and supplement their income with in-work tax credits.

Poverty affects the lives of many lone parents and limits the life choices of their children. There is a growing recognition by policy makers that lone parents face significant barriers in escaping the poverty trap. A holistic, comprehensive approach to lone parent families could have significant economic and social benefits both for Glasgow and for Scotland.