

# About Family Action

Family Action has been a leading provider of services to disadvantaged and socially isolated families for 140 years. We work with over 45,000 families every year providing practical, emotional and financial support through over 100 services based in communities across England. We build on families' strengths, supporting them to fulfil their potential and make a positive contribution to their community. We use this experience to campaign for a society free from disadvantage and social isolation.

The logo for Family Action, featuring the word 'family' in a stylized, multi-colored font (red, blue, green, yellow) and the word 'action' in a bold, black, sans-serif font, all contained within a white, rounded, arrow-like shape pointing downwards.

family  
action

Children's  
Centre  
Services

supporting families since 1869

## Family Action Central Office

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Registered charity n° 264713. Registered company limited by guarantee in England and Wales n° 01068186.  
Patron: Her Majesty the Queen. Chair: Lady Keene. Chief Executive: Helen Dent.

# Children's Centre Services

Family Action provides a wide range of services within Children's Centres across England. Our services meet the needs of children, parents and carers, with a particular emphasis on working with the whole family, service user participation and assertive outreach services to vulnerable and isolated families, many of whom have complex needs and who have not, for a variety of reasons, been able to access the services they need.

Family Action services support and train many volunteers who in turn add considerable value to our children and family services.

Family Action is proud to be managing the first children's centres in England to win the prestigious Investing in Volunteers award – in our children's centres in Mansfield, Nottinghamshire.

We are also committed to involving service users to ensure services reflect their needs and to empower them to become active citizens within their communities. Our participation strategy aims to enable service users to develop confidence, increase independence and to acquire new skills, e.g. through volunteering, work placements and training opportunities.

## Outcomes

All of our services work to achieve the five outcomes of Every Child Matters and use outcome-based evaluation systems.

## Family Support and Assertive Outreach Services

Family Action provides support to families in a flexible, non-stigmatising way. Evidence shows that the more vulnerable families are those least likely to visit centres for support. We have extensive experience of reaching out successfully to engage families who have enduring mental health problems, learning disabilities, substance misuse problems and families suffering from domestic abuse.

## Early Learning and Childcare

### Early Learning and School Transition

We enable children to access play and learning activities provided through Children's Centres. Children's Centres can help to support a child's transition into school, providing information, practical advice and support. We also work with parents to support their child's early learning (e.g. **Parents as First Teachers (PAFT)** and our own **Newpin Play Programme**).



### Childminding

We work with families to determine the best ways of accessing childminding services and with childminders themselves to support and enhance their work.

### Child and Family Health Services

Family Action works with health service staff to ensure that child and family health services are easy to access. Working together with service users, the wider community and health service staff, we strive to ensure that appropriate provision is accessed by parents. Ante-natal and post-natal services are particularly key and are provided in a variety of creative ways to engage a broad range of families, including the use of volunteer befrienders to support pregnant mothers through their pregnancy and after the birth of their child.

### Links to Job Centre Plus and Skills Development

Family Action supports parents to access work and to enjoy the benefits this brings to the whole family. Practical support in accessing pre-employment training, applying for jobs and interviewing as well as advising on accessing affordable childcare are just some of the services we provide.

### Working with Teenage Parents

Teenage parents are often reluctant to attend support services. Their needs differ from those of older parents and they can often feel marginalised and judged. We work to ensure that all Children's Centre services, including home visiting, are open and accessible to teenage parents.

### Working with Fathers

We are aware that fathers may feel marginalised in services which seem more geared to the needs of mothers. We support fathers to set up and run groups on a range of issues of shared interest and work with them to ensure they can access all services on offer.

For example, our new father-focussed family support services in the East Midlands ensure fathers are involved from the outset in service design, delivery and review. As well as direct support through outreach, group work and parenting programmes, the projects will share learning about what works, and will support workforce development in engaging with fathers.

**For more details about Family Action's Children's Centre Services please contact:**

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Visit our website at [www.family-action.org.uk/childrenscentres](http://www.family-action.org.uk/childrenscentres)