



# Family Policy

## A National Perspective

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# Families – The Bedrock of Society

- **Biggest influence on children and adult wellbeing**
- **Recognised by high profile reviews – including Field, Allen, Tickell & Munro.**
- **Aim to create environment in which families can thrive**
- **Ministerial Childhood and Families Taskforce**
- **Families at centre of Government's vision for Foundation Years**

# Prevention and Early Intervention

- **Families increasingly taking responsibility for strengthening their parenting skills and investing in health of their relationships**
- **Crucial to provide information and support and intervene early to prevent problems deteriorating**
- **4,200 more health visitors to provide vital support in first months after birth**
- **£2.2bn Early Intervention Grant more flexible including continued funding for network of children's centres**
- **Funding for 11 national online and helpline family support services provided by VCS partners**

# More Family Friendly Britain

- **Prime Minister's pledge in Dec 2010 and commitment to wellbeing**
- **Only 6% families agree Britain family friendly**
- **Consultation on new arrangements to help mothers and fathers balance work and caring**
- **Review of Commercialisation and Sexualisation made recommendations to put parents back in the driving seat**
- **FPI Family Friendly Scheme launched 28<sup>th</sup> June with high profile early adopters**

# More Targeted Support

- **Expanding Family Nurse Partnership programme**
- **Children's centres stronger focus on most vulnerable and disadvantaged families**
- **Schools have greater freedom over funding including £2.5bn Pupil Premium**
- **National campaign to turn around the lives of the most troubled families in England – building on the pioneering work of Family Intervention Projects**

# Relationship Support

- **Strength and stability of adult relationships vital to the wellbeing of children and critical to the health and life outcomes of adults**
- **Government committed to helping families going through breakdown**
- **Dedicated fund of £30m over next 4 years committed to support relationship support services – majority of this for the VCS**
- **An important element of proven parenting programmes**

# Family Justice Review

- **Reform well overdue, current system costly and not delivering for children and families**
- **Interim report proposals:**
  - to eliminate fragmentation and duplication within system
  - Support parents to resolve disputes without going to court
  - Speed up public law cases
- **Review panel currently considering responses to their interim report**
- **Final report Autumn 2011**

# Children in Care

- **Determined to create the right home environment for all children including those in care**
- **Increase number of adoptions and reduce delays**
- **Increase number and quality of foster carers**
- **Support local authorities to be more effective corporate parent**
- **Improve advocacy and voice of children in care**
- **Improve care leavers employment opportunities**
- **Increase use of Family Group Conferencing**
- **Around £3m for VCS 2011-13 to help drive local change**

# Role of Voluntary and Community Sector

- **Critical strategic and delivery partners**
- **£32m of the £120m DfE VCS grants awarded Feb 2011 for family support (36 grants)**
- **New Families Strategic Partner to help the sector to**
  - Feed into national policy
  - Develop capacity and sustainability
  - Encourage the adoption of evidence-based practice

# Challenges and Strengths

- **Localisation**
- **Fiscal Squeeze – for families and support organisations**

## **But plenty to build on**

- **Strong evidence base of importance of families and what works to improve parenting**
- **Committed VCS the delivery network families trust**
- **Substantial recent investment in training in proven programmes like Family Links**