



**One Parent  
Families Scotland**



**Annual Report 2015**





# Single Parents in Scotland



There are **170,000 single parents**  
They look after over **291,000 children**  
Most single parents have just **one child**  
**1 in 4 families** is headed by a single parent<sup>1</sup>



**Fewer than 2%** of single parents are **teenagers** - the **median age** is **38**<sup>2</sup>



**8%** of single parents are **fathers**<sup>1</sup> and the numbers are **increasing**



**64%** of single parents are **in work**<sup>3</sup> and the **majority** of the rest **want to work**<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>) Source: National Records of Scotland, 2011 Census: Aggregate data (Scotland).

<sup>2</sup>) Source: Annual Population Survey (APS), (Labour Force Survey plus boost), 2009 data.

<sup>3</sup>) Source: Working and Workless Households, 2015, Table P. ONS Statistical Bulletin, October 2015.

<sup>4</sup>) Source: Barnes, M. & Tomaszewski, W., 2010, 'Lone Parents and Benefits: An Obligation to Look for Work?' in Park, A. et al. British Social Attitudes: The 26th Report. London: Sage.

**One Parent Families Scotland is a national charity dedicated to supporting Scotland's single parents and their children.**

# About OPFS

## Our Vision

**A Scotland in which all families, without exception, can prosper from life's opportunities.**

## Our Mission

**To ensure that one parent families have the support, contacts, and confidence needed to play a full part in Scotland's economic and social life.**

## What We Do

- Encourage and help single parents to believe in themselves, discover new talents, enter education, training or work and take up new interests.
- Expand opportunities for parents and their children to be positive contributors to Scotland's growth.
- Provide vital childcare services – allowing parents to work, learn and expand their social networks.
- Use investments by funders and sponsors to create new social capital.

One Parent Families Scotland has been dedicated to supporting single parents since 1944. We already play an enormous part in enhancing the lives of parents and children, but we need to do even more – the special challenges we deal with are still there, and on the increase.



# Welcome

## Satwat Rehman, Director

Welcome to our Annual Report for 2015. This year we continued to work towards achieving our vision and support one parent families in an environment of increasing poverty and hardship. Austerity measures and welfare cuts are leaving families with even less money to live on and public services struggling to meet demand as funding reduces.

Our annual report shows the high quality work going on at a national and local level to support families in these difficult times and the very positive outcomes we have been able to achieve working in partnership with the families.

The most pernicious policy impact we have had to deal with has been the increasingly severe regime of conditionality and sanctions being applied to single parents, resulting in increasing poverty and negative impacts on the health and wellbeing of parents and children.

The experiences of the single parents we work with informed our service development and delivery, our evidence to the Scottish Parliament,

our responses to local and national consultations and our calls for mitigation measures to minimise the impacts of welfare reform and increasing poverty. The generosity with which parents have given of themselves and their time to support us in our policy and influencing work has been truly inspirational.

It has been a challenging year financially and we have taken a number of cuts in local authority funding resulting in a re-organisation and restructure of services in some areas.

We had to close our flexible childcare services in the West of Scotland having faced the ongoing childcare funding dilemma of providing a flexible and high quality service without any public funding, resulting in a high cost base which proved to be unsustainable.

Throughout all this uncertainty and change, staff have worked tirelessly and shown their customary commitment in the support they have given to single parents and their children making One Parent Families Scotland the caring and responsive organisation that it is.



# In 2014/2015 OPFS:

- Supported 7,304 families
- Directly supported 2,008 parents through one-to-one support
- Directly supported 1,251 parents through group support
- Directly supported 1,774 children (other than childcare)
- Provided 11,011 hours of childcare to over 2,612 families
- Provided 2,406 crèche places
- Engaged 587 people in specific employability programmes
- Trained 189 professionals from 63 organisations
- Dealt with 4,093 helpline enquiries
- Sent out 1,048 publications, with a further 10,512 downloaded
- Had 3.3 million hits on our website



# OPFS Dundee

## 101 Project

**Our 101 Project in Dundee offers early intervention and prevention support for children and families. We offer group work, one-to-one support, focus groups, parental consultations, jobcentre clinics and awareness-raising/outreach work.**

Children's needs and wellbeing are at the centre of what we do, and involving parents and carers in the delivery of services, as peer mentors and volunteers, is a key part of our work.

Our focus on early intervention and prevention has a positive impact on the families involved and helps to ease demand on public services, as a lack of support at an early stage can lead to crises later on, requiring intensive interventions.

We recently launched Parent Talk Shop, a new weekly drop-in session, to provide parents with opportunities to access information, try out new activities, develop CVs and complete application forms, all with the support of our staff. We also delivered our OPFS peer mentoring programme for the first time.

This year saw us celebrating 30 years of delivering our services in Dundee, and in recognition of our service to the city, a civic reception was held in our honour. We were also honoured that Nobel Peace Prize winner, Leymah Gbowee, chose to visit the project during the summer as part of our celebrations.

This year, as well as continuing to deliver our current services, we're looking forward to developing a new Resource Hub within the 101 Project offices to provide valuable practical information and advice to parents, carers and their families on all issues affecting families' lives.







**In 2014/2015, our 101 Project supported  
486 parents and 424 children**



# OPFS Dundee

## Families' House

**Families' House runs several services in the Dundee area. These include Childcare@home, a new daycare service, crèche facilities, and local out of school clubs in Longforan and Inchture.**

Our Childcare@home and daycare services work together to provide a wraparound service for families, from early till late, seven days a week.

Childcare@home operates in Dundee and the surrounding areas, offering high quality registered care in the child's own home, as required by the family. The service provides vital childcare services, allowing parents to work, learn, and develop their skills.

Over the last year, the newly opened flexible, affordable daycare service has grown from strength to strength. This service has supported many parents and carers attending college or returning to work. It has also given foster carers the opportunity to attend support groups in the same building as their children, knowing that their children are in a safe and stimulating environment.

Our out of school clubs provide local care in the Longforan and Inchture communities. We also lead toddler groups and a gardening group. We work in conjunction with many other organisations to achieve the best for children and families in the local area.

Our flexible crèche service gives parents and carers the security and knowledge that their children are being looked after by qualified professional workers, whilst giving the children an opportunity to socialise with other children.

We continue to build on the growth of our daycare service, ensuring that families know about our flexibility and affordability. We're now also going out into the community to support families and inform them about groups that can support them and their children.







**In 2014/2015, Families' House supported 1,927 families through crèches, home-based childcare and out of school care. It supported 129 families through daycare**





# OPFS Aberdeenshire

## Flexible Childcare Services

**Our Flexible Childcare Service in Aberdeenshire operates a 7-day childcare service from early morning till late at night. It provides families with flexible childcare, for children up to the age of 16, enabling parents to work or study.**

We also provide services specifically for children with additional support needs up to the age of 19. This respite care service operates the same long hours as the childcare service, along with a transport service for residential respite care, school holiday play schemes, after school fun clubs, and local groups in Fraserburgh and Stonehaven.

The service also operates a valuable mobile crèche across Aberdeenshire.

Over the past year, the mobile crèche service has been very busy, allowing a great many parents to access valuable support and training for things like first aid classes, cooking courses and post-natal depression support.

We operated a valuable service for Aberdeenshire Council's Education Department's "Vulnerable 2s" childcare scheme. A huge commitment from staff meant that it was highly valued, and the children and parents made a great deal of progress in a short space of time.

Looking towards the future, 2015 marks our 10th year operating in Aberdeenshire, and we are looking into the possibility of operating out of school clubs, expanding our work with Aberdeenshire Council's Education and Social work departments, and continuing to develop our mobile crèche service as it goes from strength to strength.

**In 2014/2015, our  
Aberdeenshire  
services supported  
418 children  
through crèches  
and home-based  
childcare**





# OPFS Dundee

## Community Family Support Project

**We provide innovative and preventative family support and one-to-one legal advice for parents and children who are affected by poverty, stress, low income and limited opportunities.**

Over the past year we delivered early years mental well-being support by providing free Laughter Clubs for children aged 5-12 years and Family Clubs for parents.

We provide regular, creative anti-poverty engagement techniques such as doorstep food initiatives, and outreach work such as T-and-Coffee in the Park and themed family trails. We support families with allotment family gardening and a Healthy Families evening group.

We hold monthly evening family teatime activities, including a meal. To round off 2014, we hosted a Fintry Families Happy Hogmanay event for around 60 families, featuring a piper-led walk, and a traditional Hogmanay meal followed by entertainment. With support from the

local greengrocer and butcher we were also able to supply a New Year's Day meal for families to take away.

Through our active links with the organisation's dads' services, we've been able to respond well to the growing number of male single parents.

In partnership with several other organisations we organised free events for hundreds of families throughout the school holidays.

Looking ahead, we have joined with partners to provide a new and expanded range of free activities for families during school holidays, free tea time clubs and a series of one-off events at times of peak need.







**In 2014/2015, our CFSP services  
supported 1,550 individual parents;  
392 of those through group work**





# OPFS Glasgow

**Our Glasgow office offers a range of services which support parents to overcome barriers and take control of their lives.**

We run awareness-raising sessions, Preparation for the Future courses, Steps to Employment, 'One stop' Lone Parent Hubs, peer mentoring and Lone Parent Champion training, benefits and income maximisation advice, and one-to-one advice on family financial matters. Our Marks and Start programme offers pre-employment training and a work placement.

At our local hubs we provide tailored one-to-one advice, support and mentoring to single parents facing complex barriers, helping to improve family wellbeing. Through group-based confidence building and training, with associated crèche facilities, we have also increased the opportunities for parents to access employability services, employment, training and education.

Over the past year we have continued to strengthen and develop our services, supporting over a thousand parents. By providing advice to low-income single

parents on income maximisation, debt reduction and budget management we have reduced the proportion of children living in poverty.

This year we were also able to help several single parents to present feedback on their direct experiences of welfare reform to the Scottish Parliament's Welfare Reform Committee.

We are now working to match trained mentors with mentees and provide peer support to isolated single parents within their local communities. We are also training volunteer Single Parent Welfare Rights Champions to raise awareness of welfare reform changes affecting single parents in Glasgow. We are engaging with single parents and consulting them about their views on how services in Glasgow are responding to the impact of welfare reform on one parent families.





**OPFS Glasgow supported  
1,139 parents in 2014/2015**



**In 2014/2015, OPFS Glasgow gave 809 parents  
welfare rights and money advice, resulting in  
financial gains of £267,070**



# OPFS Lanarkshire

**Our services in Lanarkshire provide a range of interventions to support young parents facing multiple barriers who are living in poverty and are disengaged from mainstream services.**

Using a mentoring model we deliver services such as the Teen Parent Mentoring Service and the Transforming Lives project.

In 2014/15 we designed and piloted peer-led Mellow Parenting programmes for young parents and single fathers to promote positive parent-child interactions. This has helped develop the parenting capacity of some of the most vulnerable young parents and single fathers in Lanarkshire.

We provided one-to-one advice and support to young single parents on issues including health and wellbeing, family finances and family support.

We gave one-to-one support to pregnant teenagers and young families in their own homes, improving relationships with their children and family members. Young parents took part in weekly group sessions to increase confidence in

dealing with their children's social and emotional needs.

We hold financial surgeries in community venues across Lanarkshire. Our Transforming Lives and Mentoring Training programmes deliver personal and social development and employability training. We take out-of-hours calls from young parents in crisis, and make callouts to young parents dealing with a range of difficult issues.

Looking ahead we are beginning to deliver a new programme, Bonding with Bumps, which is a group-based service aimed at reducing anxiety and promoting wellbeing in vulnerable single mums-to-be. We are also developing the Young Parents Family Finance Toolkit, which will assist parents with user-friendly information on daily living, benefits and living on a budget.



**In 2014/2015, OPFS Lanarkshire supported  
383 parents through one-to-one work and  
304 parents through group work**





# OPFS Falkirk

## Braes Children and Families Centre

**Our Braes Children and Family Centre offers a range of one-to-one and group-based services for children and parents.**

We provide supported early years sessions for children, parent-and-child groups, parenting groups, respite for families requiring additional support, and play schemes for children during holiday periods. We are also a placement provider for 2-year-olds entitled to Early Learning and Childcare provision.

We offer one-to-one support for parents experiencing difficulties in their lives, including assistance with parenting, debt management, income maximisation, accessing education and employment and alleviating social isolation.

We also offer one-to-one time for children of all ages, allowing them the opportunity to express any issues they are experiencing in a safe environment.

Our trained family support workers offer a training programme for parents to learn more effective parenting techniques, leading to strengthened attachments.

We provide a range of support groups for school age children.

We have adapted to meet the needs of the families we support. We identified a need for provision of a lower level of support and employed a befriender/ respite worker. A major development has been an improvement in our profile across Falkirk; we are now recognised as key providers along with larger third sector providers.

We are currently going through some changes due to funding cuts, but in the year ahead we will continue to offer supported childcare, Early Learning and Childcare, parenting groups, one-to-one support, respite/befriending, nurture groups, friendship groups and transition groups.





**Braes Children and Families Centre  
supported 143 children in 2014/2015**



# OPFS Support for Dads

**We provide more support to single fathers and their children than any other organisation in the country. Our work with single and contact fathers is delivered across projects in Dundee, Edinburgh, Falkirk and Motherwell.**

Part of our success is down to understanding the kinds of activities and support that separated parents and their children need. The help we offer is tailored to suit the needs of the families, with some fathers and children taking part in our group sessions, while others benefit from more focussed one-to-one support.

Children and dads engage in regular trips to museums, art groups, swimming, and days out to beaches, country parks, and football games.

We understand the importance of fathers to their children's development, advocating on their behalf when helpful, and providing them with parenting information and support. We prioritise the importance of peer support, and look to foster connections between families with shared experiences in an effort to help build capacity for the future.

Across the projects we have helped fathers become more confident via structured parenting programmes, healthier cooks through our healthy cooking courses, and supported them to become peer mentors, offering an opportunity to pass on their skills and experiences to families new to the organisation.

We have also helped alleviate the impact of poverty on families by helping them access foodbanks and food vouchers.

Looking ahead, we'll continue to build on our successful group activities, support and peer mentoring initiatives, along with our extremely popular healthy cooking programmes. We will also be celebrating the 15th anniversary of our successful Edinburgh Lone Fathers Project – a service set up to support single and contact dads at a time when the subject was rarely even discussed.



A photograph of a father and son flying a kite in a grassy field under a blue sky. The son, in the foreground, is wearing a yellow shirt and holding the kite string. The father, in the background, is wearing a blue shirt. A colorful kite is flying high in the sky.

**In 2014/2015, we supported  
163 families through our  
dads' services**

**Our developing expertise  
has led to a 60% increase in  
the number of fathers and  
children that we engaged  
with in 2014/2015**





# OPFS Helpline & Training

**We provide a national freephone helpline for single parents – and professionals working with them – staffed by experienced rights workers. We also run a training programme for professionals, and arrange bespoke training on request.**

Information and advice is available on a variety of issues affecting single parents, and we're able to carry out benefit calculations for callers. We have a range of publications available on key issues. Enquiries to the helpline can be made by phone, email, or via the website.

Over the past year, benefit delays and sanctions have increased calls to the helpline.

The helpline team work closely with staff from our local projects, meaning that callers can be quickly offered a broad range of services and support.

We provide an valuable service to the various Making It Work services by carrying out 'better off calculations' for parents thinking about returning to work.

The helpline formed part of the Family Decision Making service – a partnership between OPFS, Children 1st and the

Scottish Child Law Centre. It supported separated and separating families, helping them to deal with difficult issues and make positive decisions benefiting their family. Families, parents and carers were supported through the partnership's helplines, online resources, face-to-face support and family group meetings. The service was used by more than 1,500 people.

The rollout of Universal Credit increased the demand for our training and factsheets. Our Universal Credit training and factsheet have proved very popular with our clients, staff and external organisations.

We also launched two new training programmes – an overview of benefits for single parents, and single parent awareness training – both of which have been warmly received.



**In 2014/2015, we dealt with  
4,093 helpline enquiries –  
an increase of 44% on the  
previous year**

**We sent out 1,048  
publications,  
with an additional  
10,512 publications  
downloaded from  
our website**



**Our rights workers trained  
189 professionals from  
63 organisations**



**“As a single parent it’s important for me to know there is hope...”**

# Policy and Influencing

**Our campaigning work with parents is at the heart of what we do. OPFS’ vision is of a Scotland in which one parent families are valued, treated equally, and no longer live in poverty.**

Contrary to how the media labels one parent families, bringing up children as a single parent is a very common part of family life. One in every four households with dependent children is now headed by a single parent. Despite the fact that a majority of single parents work, children from one parent families are twice as likely to live in poverty as children from couple families.

In 2014/2015, OPFS worked to give single parents a voice, challenging stigma, keeping parents up to date on

their rights, and providing support when it’s needed most.

We train agencies on the prevalence of one parent families, on the issues affecting single parents, and on recognising the particular needs of young parents, single fathers and families with additional support needs.

A challenging future lies ahead, where single parents are required to take paid work when their youngest child is 3 years old, when family friendly employment is scarce, flexible childcare is limited, and where the majority of children in poverty are now in working families.

Over the year to come OPFS will work with single parents to challenge policies and attitudes that create poverty, discrimination and stigma, and celebrate single parents and their children for their achievements.

**“It’s important not to feel alone, that it’s not your fault. We need jobs you can raise a family on, and childcare to take part in the things you would expect for a decent life.”**





# www.opfs.org.uk

**The One Parent Families Scotland website offers information to parents and practitioners about issues affecting single parents.**

It provides free access to all our factsheets, services, and an opportunity for single parents to voice their opinions on current issues.

## In 2014/2015:



**3.3 million hits on our website**



**2,000 subscribers to our e-newsletter**



**1,500 followers on Twitter (@opfs)**



**Nearly 600 likes on Facebook**





# Thanks to our Funders and Supporters

Scottish Government

Big Lottery

Aberdeenshire Council

Third Sector Early Intervention Fund

Falkirk Council

Wave 102

Children in Need

Erasmus+

Dundee Partnership

Dundee City Council

STV Appeal 2013

Innovation Fund

Gingerbread

Dundee Voluntary Association

Cattanach

Early Years Collaborative

Edinburgh Council

NHS Scotland

Help for Kids

Robertson Trust

Grundtvig Partnership

North Lanarkshire Council

Glasgow City Council

Macqueen Appeal

Starz in Their Eyes

Henry Smith Charity

Making it Work

Scottish Legal Aid Board

Shared Care





# Board of Directors

Acting Chair	<b>Ann Kelsey</b>	Retired community regeneration worker
Treasurer	<b>Marlene Wood</b>	Business Advisor, University of Highlands & Islands
Company Secretary	<b>Satwat Rehman</b>	Director, One Parent Families Scotland
Board Members	<b>Mark Ballard</b>	Head of Policy, Barnardo's Scotland
	<b>Sarah Barclay</b>	Volunteer, One Parent Families Scotland
	<b>Rhona Cunningham</b>	Manager, Fife Gingerbread
	<b>Neil Mathers</b>	Head of Save The Children in Scotland
	<b>Liz McEntee</b>	Head of External Relations, GCVS
	<b>Twimukye Mushaka</b>	Fieldwork Development Officer, The Poverty Alliance
	<b>Beverley Read</b>	Director, Firsthand Lothian
	<b>Vivienne Robinson</b>	Snr Economic Development Officer, City of Edinburgh Council
Retired during year:	<b>Kevin Cadman, Fiona Forsyth (Chair), Ken Wardrop</b>	
Elected Nov 2014:	<b>Sarah Barclay, Rhona Cunningham, Neil Mathers, Liz McEntee</b>	
Elections Nov 2015:	<b>Twimukye Mushaka</b>	(to be re-elected for 3 years)
	<b>Stuart Duffin</b>	(co-opted – to be elected)
	<b>Mark Ferguson</b>	(co-opted – to be elected)
	<b>Hanna McCulloch</b>	(co-opted – to be elected)
	<b>Jennifer Paice</b>	(co-opted – to be elected)
Finance Group:	<b>Mark Ballard, Fiona Forsyth (until Nov 2014), Ken Mill, Satwat Rehman, Vivienne Robinson, Marlene Wood</b>	
Personnel Group:	<b>Kevin Cadman (Adviser), Fiona Forsyth (until Nov 2014), Ann Kelsey, Ann McKenzie, Neil Mathers, Beverley Read, Satwat Rehman, Ken Wardrop (until Nov 2014)</b>	



# Financial Statement

## Statement of Financial Activities (incorporating Income and Expenditure Account)

**Year ended 31 March 2015**

### Incoming Resources

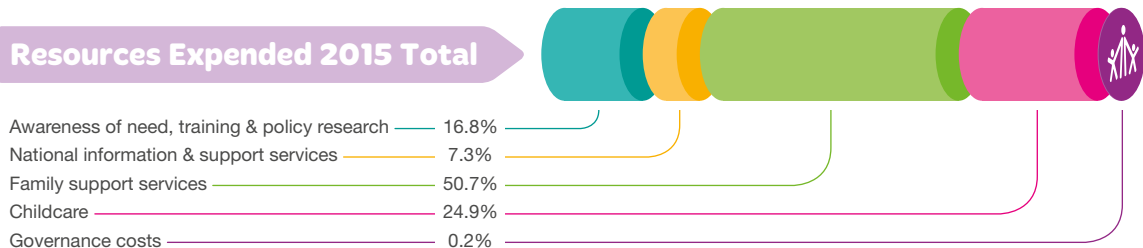
	Restricted Funds £	General Funds £	2015 Total £	2014 Total £
<b>Incoming resources from generated funds:</b>				
Voluntary income	–	131,939	131,939	118,386
Investment income	–	479	479	224
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	–	132,418	132,418	118,610
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Incoming resources from charitable activities:</b>				
• Awareness of need, training & policy research	228,912	81,193	310,105	244,663
• National information & support services	317,506	2,949	320,455	214,937
• Family support services	1,476,294	78,352	1,554,646	1,580,968
• Childcare	300,624	388,531	689,155	710,303
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	2,323,336	551,025	2,874,361	2,750,871
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	<b>2,323,336</b>	<b>683,443</b>	<b>3,006,779</b>	<b>2,869,481</b>
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>



## Resources Expended

	Restricted Funds £	General Funds £	2015 Total £	2014 Total £
<b>Charitable activities:</b>				
● Awareness of need, training & policy research	350,859	185,129	535,988	406,726
● National information & support services	232,597	–	232,597	256,622
● Family support services	1,545,661	69,946	1,615,607	1,368,518
● Childcare	307,747	484,816	792,563	752,969
	<hr/> 2,436,864	<hr/> 739,891	<hr/> 3,176,755	<hr/> 2,784,835
Governance costs	<hr/> –	<hr/> 6,793	<hr/> 6,793	<hr/> 8,178
<b>Total resources expended</b>	<hr/> <b>2,436,864</b>	<hr/> <b>746,684</b>	<hr/> <b>3,183,548</b>	<hr/> <b>2,793,013</b>
Net income/(expenditure) for the year	(113,528)	(63,241)	(176,769)	76,468
Net funds brought forward	<hr/> 391,233	<hr/> 354,619	<hr/> 745,852	<hr/> 669,384
<b>Net funds carried forward</b>	<hr/> <b>277,705</b>	<hr/> <b>291,378</b>	<hr/> <b>569,083</b>	<hr/> <b>745,852</b>

Full accounts available on request from One Parent Families Scotland, 13 Gayfield Square, Edinburgh EH1 3NX.





# OPFS Offices

## Headquarters

### One Parent Families Scotland

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Edinburgh EH1 3NX

Helpline: 0808 801 0323

Helpline email: [helpline@opfs.org.uk](mailto:helpline@opfs.org.uk)

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[www.opfs.org.uk](http://www.opfs.org.uk)

## 101 Project

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## Braes Children & Families Centre

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## Flexible Childcare Services Aberdeenshire

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## Families' House

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## OPFS Glasgow

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## Dundee Community Family Support Project

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**Family  
Support**

**Financial  
Inclusion**

**Employability**

**Childcare**

**Policy &  
Influencing**



**Involvement &  
Engagement**

**Information  
& Training**



## **One Parent Families Scotland**

13 Gayfield Square  
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Tel: **0131 556 3899**  
Email: **info@opfs.org.uk**

Lone Parent Helpline: **0808 801 0323**  
Helpline Email: **helpline@opfs.org.uk**

**[www.opfs.org.uk](http://www.opfs.org.uk)**

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