



One Parent Families Scotland

Participatory Single Parent Proofing

April 2015- March 2017





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Glasgow Lone Parent Development Project Aims

To improve how Glasgow city's mainstream services work for single parents:

- by involving single parents and
- improving collaboration across relevant public, voluntary and private providers.



Key Goals

- Minimise challenges created by welfare reforms for single parents & children
- Minimise identified barriers within lone parents 'employability' journey.
- Identify ways for lone parents to reduce living costs.



Why Single Parents ?

Some Facts





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Research – Napier Univ/GCPH 2015

40%



of all households with children in Glasgow are lone parent households - the highest percentage of any Scottish local authority.



Almost half of lone parents [46%] reported experiencing some type of domestic violence compared with 7.4% of couple parents.

Lone parent employment rate of

58% in Scotland

but only **49.5%**

in Glasgow.

43% of all children in lone parent families live in poverty after housing costs, compared to **22%** of children in couple families.



Single Parents in Glasgow

- Almost half of lone parents report experiencing domestic violence.
- Most single parents have one child.
- In poorest areas families up to 61% headed by a single parent (Parkhead)





Single Parents- The Facts

- Fewer than 2% SP's are teenagers
- The median age is 38 yrs
- 92% SP's women - gender is a key issue
- Scottish SP HH's projected to increase by 22 %, from 156,100 to 190,800





Single Parents – the Facts

- 40% SP's have no qualifications
- Higher qualifications- better jobs !
- 68% enter the three lowest paid occupational groups - poverty





Single Parents & Welfare Reform

- Predicted Child Poverty Levels by 2021 (IFS)
All children – 26% In LP Families – 40%
- Single Parent, 2 children, working f/t on NLW
Income dropped by £2,586 since 2015 (JRF)
- Parents with child 3yrs, to look for paid work
- 1 in 5 single parents on benefit been referred for a sanction, 1 in 7 had a sanction (cut) imposed.



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Project Design

Single Parent Participation

- **Funded by 5 key agencies**
- **Single Parents Advisory Group 12 parents**
- **Staff**
 - Lone Parent Development Manager(GCC)**
 - Single Parent Advisor (SP with lived experience at OPFS)**
- **Steering Group (5 Partner agencies)**



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Single Parent Consultation (295) Policy Priorities

- 1. Stigma/attitudes towards single parents**
- 2. Affordable, quality, flexible childcare**
- 3. Welfare reform & cuts to social security**
- 4. Lone parent friendly employability pathway to sustainable employment**
- 5. Health and Wellbeing support**
- 6. Money and debt advice**



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Single Parent Proofing

- Influence employability activity—Scot Govt Work Prog / GCC Employability Standards
- JCP: Reduce barriers and improve interactions with system- Claimant Commitment : Test of Change
- Reduce stigma and challenge attitudes - People Make Glasgow Fairer -#ProudSingleParents campaign
- Welfare Reforms: tailored SP response



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Achievements/ Influencing

- Universal Credit – Split Payments
- Cost School Day / School Clothing Grants
- Devolved Benefits – Best Start/Healthy Start : focus group, testing forms
- GCC FE & Life Long Learning Commission
- GCC Housing Strategy – focus groups
- Scottish Govt HIDG LP Working Group



‘Cross – Pollination’

- Castlemilk “ Reduce Cost Of School Day “ Participatory Budget project
- Clyde College Adult Achievement Award Pilot – SQA – 6 parents
- GCC ESF LP tailored employability package
- JRF Event with key influencers



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Learning from Pilot

- Not about “projects” about influencing mainstream.
- Importance of internal champion at strategic level within targeted public sector organisations
- Single Parents often not seen as “deserving” group
- Gender a key issue – 93% SP’s women
- Focus on tackling poverty through structural issues
- Small changes can make big impact.
- Real Participation costs staff time & resources !



Participatory Approach -Gains

- Direct evidence of experience highlights new issues and connections
- Ensures policy is grounded in parents realities
- Ensures policy/service makes sense to parents
- Increases trust in policies/services
- Sense of ownership and information can increase take up of services



Evaluation

Partners Commissioned Research to focus on:

- Key service providers: engagement and influence
- Co-production between lone parents and key service providers
- Collaborative working
- Project implementation process
- Understanding of transferability

(Published October 2017)



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Further Information

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