



## News Release

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### Real change needed for poorest families – Capacity and Take Three Days launch joint programme and campaign

Take Three Days, headed by Liz Sewell, former Chief Executive of Gingerbread and Capacity are today launching *Change for Families* at a London seminar\* of Local Authority representatives and Work Programme providers.

The two organisations are joining forces to try to ensure that families with multiple problems are given proper support to access skills and receive all-round support to move out of poverty. Without this, there is a danger that the Work Programme will fail to address the economic and social hardships which cause families to be trapped in poverty.

*Change for Families* offers a new way of bringing together children's centres, schools, employment advisers, housing partnerships and families themselves, to take decisive action to address child poverty and worklessness. It also provides training for professionals on understanding disadvantage and engaging families. \*\*

Liz Sewell, Director of Take Three days said "There is too often a divide between services which work to support parenting, adult training providers and services to help individuals to find employment. We want to change this. Families need to feel in control of their own futures and to progress at the right pace for them".

Margaret Lochrie, Director of Capacity said "Inequalities in access to basic and other skills is a main reason why we have high levels of poverty and low social mobility. As a society, we are divided into the learning rich and the learning poor. Parents need much better access to learning for themselves, when their children are young".

Capacity is today also publishing two short reports\*\*\* about two children's centres which have gone a long distance helping disadvantaged families to have real change in their lives. H.O.P.E Family Centre in Herefordshire has opened two High Street Shops and is co-ordinating a business and training centre in Bromyard. The Maden Children and Community Centre in Rossendale is the largest employer in its area, and is a key provider of skills and social enterprise.

Margaret Lochrie said, "The families who contributed to these reports cope with a range of disadvantages and hardships but most definitely want change in their lives and for their children. Far from lacking aspiration, they are prepared to study, to volunteer and to work hard to get to where they want to be."

#### Notes

**For more information, contact Margaret Lochrie on 07785 918 376  
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**Capacity** is a not-for profit body, conducting research, evaluations, training and consultancy projects in the field of children's services, particularly in relation to children's centres, schools, outreach and linked strategies for reducing poverty and social exclusion. *Wishes* is an award-winning programme to intensively support parents with no or low qualifications to address literacy and numeracy needs, gain qualifications and to move into employment

**Take Three Days** is a programme developed by Liz Sewell, former Chief Executive of Gingerbread and now a consultant programme designer and trainer. *Take Three Days* has helped parents to transform their lives by giving them the confidence to return to work, education and training.

\* The seminar will take place on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> July 10.30am – 12.30pm at The Centre, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, 140 Old Street, London EC1V 9BJ. Speakers include Gill Strachan MBE, A4e and Amanda Lee, London Borough of Islington, which has just published the findings of its Fairness Commission.

\*\* *Change for Families* offers a new and different way of thinking, for example, about families thought to be *hard to reach* instead focusing on any aspects of service delivery which may put people off. Parents feel they are listened to and are in control. Each has his or her own individual learning and development plan, tailored to their needs.. Professionals receive training in how to create engaging and effective motivation and confidence building events - which respond to families' needs.

*Change for Families* also tackles the barriers which prevent people from moving into employment or addressing learning needs. Some of these barriers are related to family circumstances, or health or emotional issues while others stem from the lack of certain resources, such as childcare or transport or access to IT.

\*\*\* H.O.P.E. and change for families and The Maden Children and Community Centre are Capacity reports based on two separate evaluations. The attached reports summarise key points of best practice