



BigLife
Families

Impact report 2016

Introduction

Big Life Families supports parents, children and families from excluded or disadvantaged communities to achieve their full potential.

We do this by delivering high-quality, welcoming and accessible services, including children's centres, family support and childcare in Manchester and Stockton-on-Tees.

We work with, among others, lone parents, teenage mums, black and ethnic minority communities, and children with additional needs and disabilities.

In 2015, we launched three new services:

- **Family in Need Service:** A statutory service offering early intervention for at-risk families in south and central Manchester.
- **Children and Parents Service:** A therapeutic support service for parents and carers with children under 5.
- **Fairer Start Champions:** A programme using volunteer champions to improve outcomes for 0-3 year olds in Stockton-on-Tees.



More than **7,329**
families accessed our centres
or used our services.

Manchester children's centres

Big Life Families runs **2** children's centres in Manchester – in Longsight and Ardwick. Each centre offers a range of services to local families, such as support groups, parenting classes, family services, and training and volunteering opportunities.

We also carry out early years outreach work for **3** other children's centres across Manchester, reaching **2,746** families.

Ardwick and Longsight reached **1,401** children under five, **555** of which were under three.

In August 2015, **63%** of children aged 0-5 in Longsight were achieving a good level of development, compared to **49%** in August 2014. In Ardwick, **65%** were achieving this level, compared to **55%** the previous year.

This improvement is above national rates (**8%**) and the average improvement in Manchester (**6%**).

- **128** children accessed groups for children under one to enjoy early learning play and development sessions
- **387** children accessed a healthy child clinic
- **283** children accessed 'stay-and-play' groups
- **42** children attended our crèche
- **22** children attended 'Ready for School' groups
- **379** children aged nine months and **333** two year-olds had development checks
- **46** children attended 'Talk Time' groups
- **295** families accessed midwife support
- **47** families accessed ESOL Family Language classes





Overall, **97%** of families we surveyed say they are satisfied with the services they received.

Stockton children's centres

Big Life Families runs **2** children's centres in Stockton-On-Tees, offering a wide range of services to local families, as well as providing stay-and-play sessions at Newtown Nursery.

954 families accessed our two children's centres in Stockton, **306** families saw a midwife, **458** families saw a health visitor and **150** children accessed speech and language therapy.

51% of children access four year old funding, **62%** access three year old funding, and **94%** are eligible for two year old funding, which entitles children to 15 hours of free childcare per week. **32** children are on a Child Protection Plan.

Both centres have specific target groups, including lone parents, workless households, asylum seekers, BME families, and fathers. Of these groups:

- **61** parents and carers accessed non-accredited learning programmes, with **59** completing them.
- **160** accessed accredited learning programmes, with **107** completing them.
- **101** parents and carers accessed evidence-based parenting programmes, which provide them with tools and techniques. **99** completed the programmes.

Training includes: health and social care; maths and English; family nurturing and ESOL.





Of **200** families that we surveyed, **100%** said that they were satisfied with services at the Star and Frederick Nattrass children's centres.

Stockton nurseries

Alongside the children's centres, Big Life Families runs **3** nurseries in Stockton – Frederick Nattrass, Ragworth and Newtown. The nurseries have **120** places (60 in the morning and 60 in the afternoon), and **136** children have attended this year.

Volunteers

This year, **86** volunteers were supported by Big Life Families, with **40** going into further education and employment. Our services in Stockton also supported **12** student placements.

“My dreams came true through Big Life Families. Before I came to the UK I dreamed of speaking English and of having a good education.

“After having two children I felt bored and isolated at home. I was bringing my kids to the Star Children’s Centre, and after encouragement from the crèche leader, I joined the volunteer programme.

“After two years of volunteering my confidence had grown and my English had improved. I applied to study at university and got in. This is what I had been dreaming of.

“I’m now encouraging everyone I know to volunteer because I had an excellent experience with Big Life Families.

Fairer Start Champions



- This year, Big Life Families began to deliver A Fairer Start Stockton Community Champions Programme.

The service trains a network of volunteers to work with families with children aged 0-3, supporting them in a range of ways and encouraging them to access services.

The service held fun days, family stay and play sessions, pop up events, health information and services, attended drop in sessions and offered one-to-one support. **266** families attended the service.

Within its first year, the programme recruited **39** volunteers and held **13** community events.

Among the families with whom the programme works, **25** are not registered or engaging with mainstream services, placing them among the hardest to reach families.

Fairer Start volunteers showed an average increase of **18.5%** in terms of quality of life, employment prospects and money management.

Children and Parents Service

Our Children and Parents Service delivers courses providing therapeutic support for parents and carers with children under 5.

The courses, co-delivered with NHS Central Manchester Foundation Trust, seek to improve the parent and child relationships, the social, emotional and physical development of the child, and the economic wellbeing of the family.

2 courses were delivered – in Levenshulme and Moss Side – with 17 parents attending and 14 completing.

- 79% did not have English as their first language
- 80% did not own their own home
- 60% of families received means tested benefits
- 30% of parents reported experiencing domestic violence
- 37% of parents reported maternal mental health problems

On average:

- Parents reduced feelings of depression by 60%
- Parents reduced feelings of stress by 22%
- Child behaviour improved by 26%



Volunteers from the FINS and CAPS teams

“The course helped me build a positive bond and relationship with my children. I learned to manage difficult behaviours in a nice way instead of shouting.”

Family in Need Service

The Family in Need Service (FINS) delivers family support in Central and South Manchester, working with families for between 3 and 6 months to address issues such as mental and physical health, parenting concerns, domestic abuse and housing.

Alongside a team of **24** staff, we recruit, train and support a team of volunteers to provide peer support and mentoring to help the transition away from services.

Since starting in May 2015, the service worked with **642** children from **288** families, with **102** families completing a plan.

- **75%** of presenting needs had been resolved or improved at case closure
- **92%** of families have successfully remained out of social care
- **100%** are sustaining improvements three months after leaving the service
- **73%** are sustaining improvements six months after leaving the service

Feedback has been recorded from **29** families; **96%** stated that as a result of the intervention of FINS, things are either quite a lot or a lot better.

Things have got a lot better since our family worker started supporting us. Her support has helped me get back on track. She helped me recognise my potential with my life experience, and to apply that towards future work and my career. Thank you!





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