

# Ask the Family!

Family Perspectives on Whole Family Support  
and Family Inclusive Practice

Commissioned by  
Whole Family Approach/ Family Inclusive Practice Working Group  
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Written by the Family Engagement Project Partners:



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Visit our virtual Ask the Family exhibition at: <https://www.sfad.org.uk/ask-the-family>

# Opening Comments

The national **Whole Family Approach/ Family Inclusive Practice Working Group** was established in 2020, with the support of the Scottish Government, to review current practice in relation to families affected by alcohol and drug use. Over the past year, the Working Group has carried out a process of information-gathering, sharing learning, and hearing from external experts (including families with lived experience and organisations working with families). The Group has identified both areas of strength and areas for improvement in Scotland's approach to Whole Family and Family Inclusive Practice.

The Group has heard many examples of excellent Whole Family and Family Inclusive Practice, where building trusting relationships between workers and families is recognised as the key to success, support moves at the family's pace and focuses on their own needs, and families feel respected and included in developments and decisions.

Amongst the challenges the Group have identified are an inconsistent approach across Scotland's communities (often termed 'a postcode lottery'), examples of siloed working, and limited evidence of rights-based practice (or of families being aware of their rights). There is also an apparent disconnect between what we know about relationship-based practice and the realities of caseload pressures for statutory services, and procurement and commissioning cycles for third sector services. In addition we have found families, who are already experiencing significant family stress and trauma, facing further service-generated trauma due to poor communication, exclusion from decision-making, and stigmatising attitudes and practice.

In response, the Working Group has drafted a set of **Whole Family Approach/ Family Inclusive Practice Principles** to apply to all services supporting families affected by alcohol and drugs. This includes family support services in their widest sense, and also treatment care services supporting families' loved ones. The Principles provide clear expectations and a practice framework to strengthen good practice and improve poorer practice. The draft Principles are available in Appendix One (presented as a working draft rather than a public document; note this version was redesigned by Scottish Families from the Scottish Government version). The Draft Principles framework includes four Overarching Principles (around rights; stigma, equality and hope; support for families in their own right; and alignment with other policies and strategies) and four sets of thematic Principles, covering Services, Models of Whole Family Practice, Workforce and Investment.

In December 2020, Scottish Families was commissioned by the Scottish Government to lead a **family engagement project** to test out these draft Principles, in partnership with Action for Children, All in the Family and Circle. This family engagement project aimed to reach children, young people and adults affected by alcohol and drugs and receiving family support. This includes family members receiving support due to other's substance use, and those supported due to their own current or previous substance use. Family Support includes one to one, group, whole family or other family support, and support provided by paid staff, volunteers and peers. The engagement project aimed to test out the draft Principles with family members in two directions:

- How far are the Principles as *written* supported by families? (Top Down)
- How far do families' *own* descriptions of family support cross-check and align with the draft Principles? (Bottom Up)

Across these approaches we wanted to find out if the draft Principles were as family members would expect, met their needs, missed anything important, and included anything surplus to requirements. So the family engagement project aimed to find out:

- What makes good (and bad) family support? (KEY COMPONENTS)
- What do families value about support/ what is important to them? (PRIORITIES)
- What words would families use to describe good family support (and their workers)? (LANGUAGE)
- What difference has support made to families and their lives? (CHANGE AND IMPACT)
- How would families describe a good family support worker? (WORKFORCE)
- What impact (if any) have their peers had as part of family support (i.e. other group members/ service users)? (PEERS)

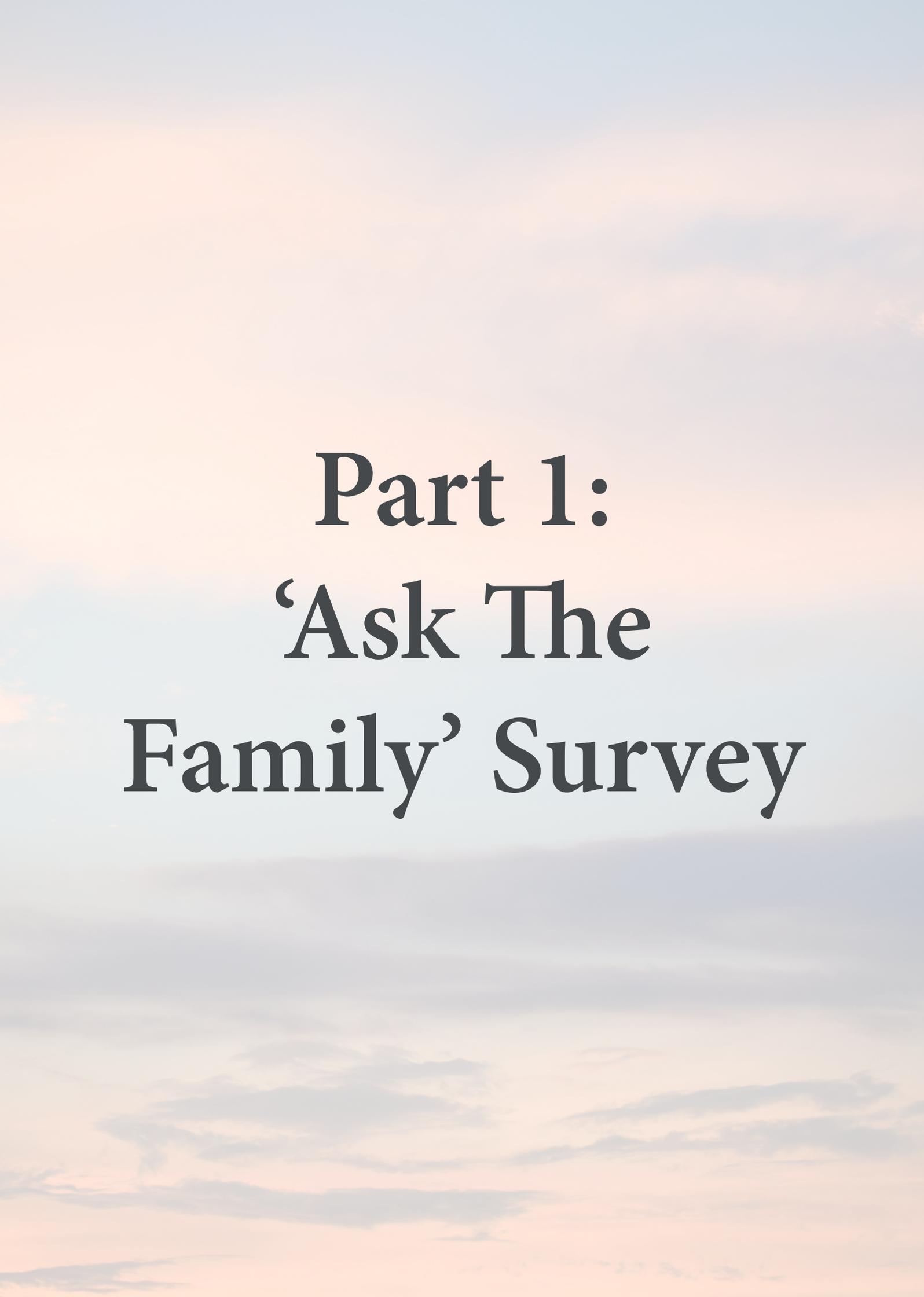
We encouraged partners to use creative and family-friendly engagement activities to ask these questions, and to present the findings. So in addition to this national report for the Working Group, we have created a '**virtual exhibition**' on the Scottish Families website to display this creative output from all of the family engagement activities. This can be viewed at <https://www.sfad.org.uk/ask-the-family>.

**One hundred and seventy-seven family members** (children, young people and adults) took part in the project. This report includes detailed findings from our national Ask the Family survey; our family conversations café; and 14 different family engagement activities. For each we briefly describe what this was, who took part, what families told us and Key Messages summarising what families felt was important in relation to the *existing* Draft Principles, and what was *different* than the Draft Principles. These Key Messages inform a revised Draft Principles framework in Part Four (Conclusions and Recommendations).

## Note of Thanks

On behalf of all the family engagement project partners, we would like to thank all of the family members – children, young people and adults – who took the time to complete our national survey and take part in our family engagement activities. Their insight and expertise has been hugely helpful, not to mention their creativity! On behalf of Scottish Families, as lead partner, I would like to thank my own team and our partner organisations – Action for Children, All in the Family and Circle – who brought bucket loads of energy, enthusiasm and innovation to this task at relatively short notice, and in the midst of further COVID restrictions and challenges. Thank you to Angie MacDonald, Liam McGinlay (Action for Children); Laurie Lee Whitton, Mel McPherson, Lisa Kerr (All in the Family), Mark Kennedy, Angela Gentile (Circle), Daryl McLeister, Claire Wadsworth and Pam Burns (Scottish Families), as well as our colleagues behind the scenes who helped make all of this happen. In particular I'd like to thank Rebecca Bradley, our Communications Officer, for all her design work on the family engagement activities, including designing our virtual exhibition space.

- Justina Murray, CEO, Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs



**Part 1:  
'Ask The  
Family' Survey**

# Ask the Family

A National Survey on Family Support

## What Is This?

Ask the Family was a national online survey carried out by Scottish Families between 8th-31st January 2021. The survey was open to anyone aged 16+ in Scotland who is affected by alcohol or drug use (their own or someone else's) and who is being supported by family support services. This includes one to one and group support, and whole family support. It includes family support provided by paid staff, volunteers and peers (i.e. other family members). It also includes support for children, young people and adults in the family.

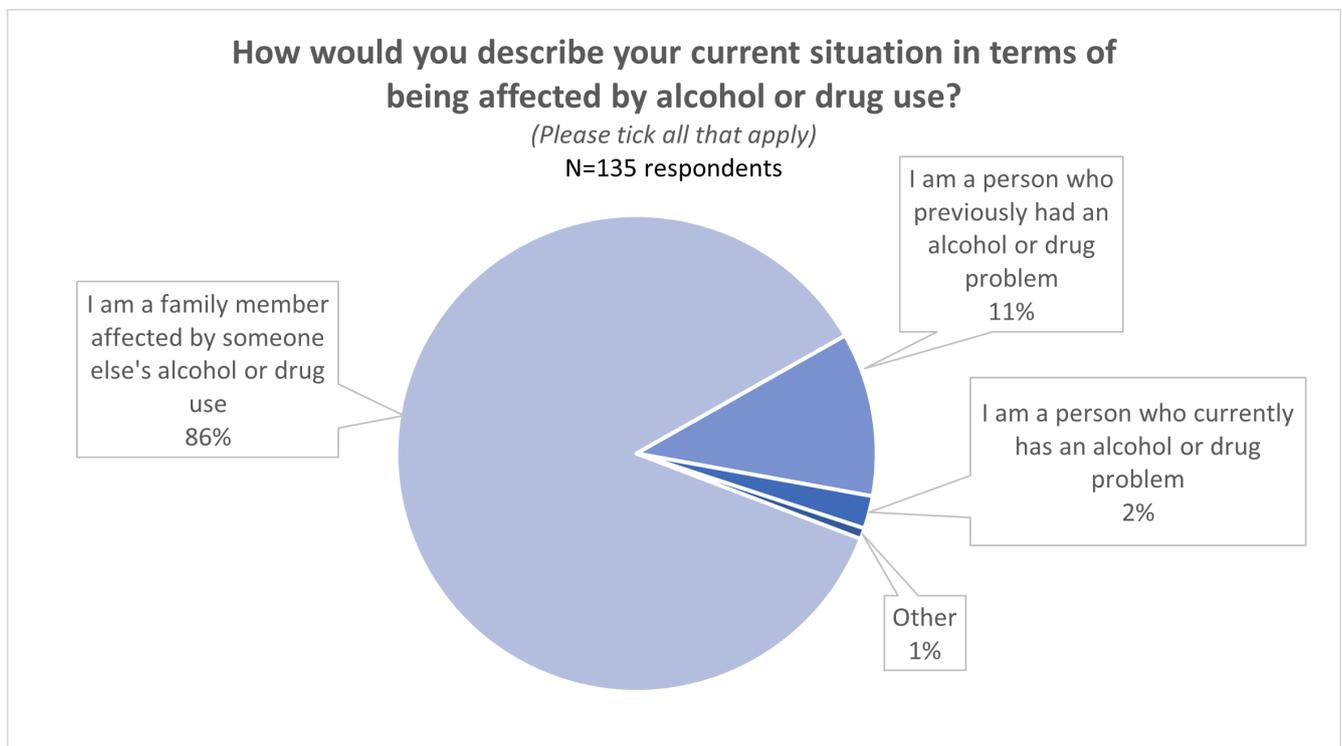
The survey aimed to understand more about families' experiences of substance harm and family support, and their views of whole family approach principles. The survey was shared via our networks and social media.

You can view a short animation summarising our survey results [here](#).

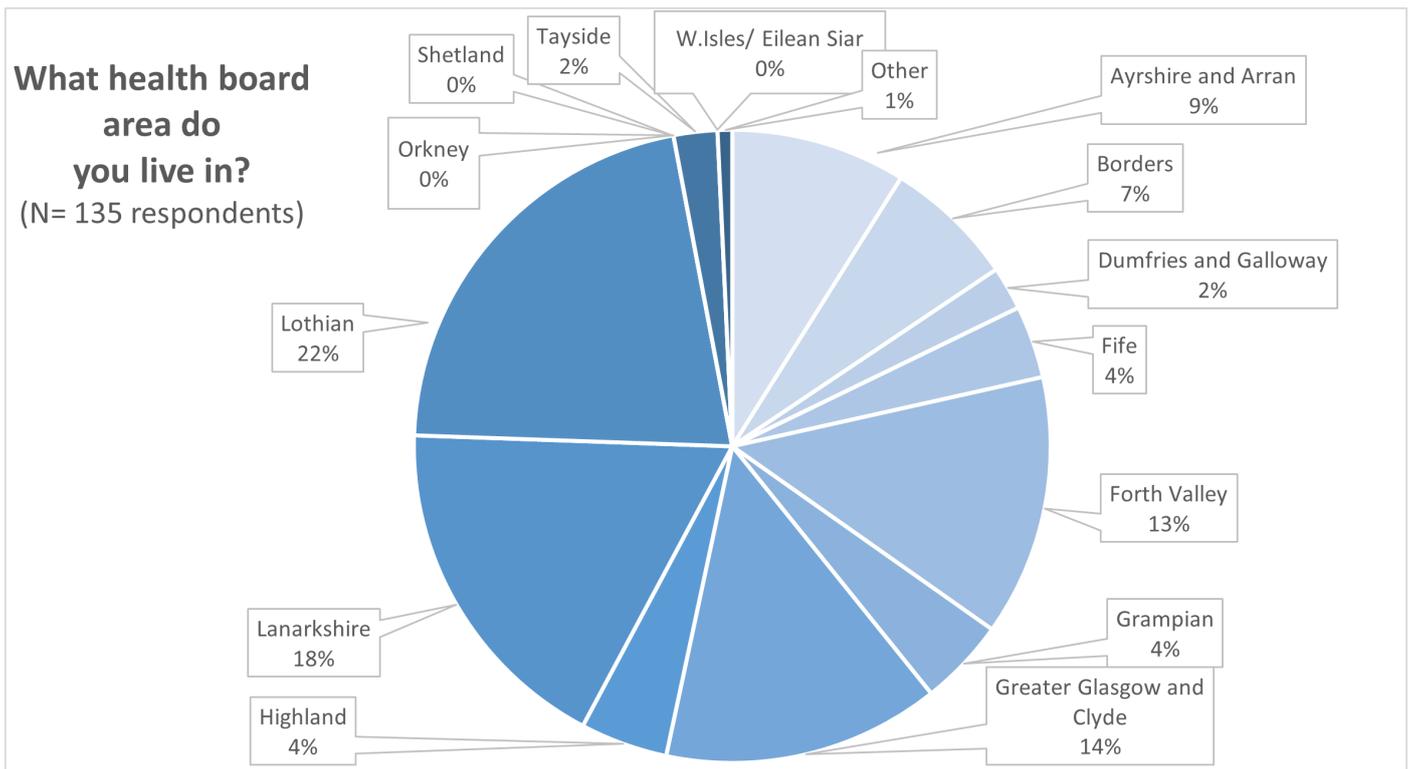
## Who Took Part?

135 people took part in the survey. The survey was open to anyone who is affected by alcohol or drug use (their own or someone else's) and who is being supported by family support services.

86% of respondents described themselves as family members affected by someone else's substance use, whilst 11% said they had previously had an alcohol or drug problem themselves and 2% currently had a problem. 1% chose 'Other' (i.e. worker).



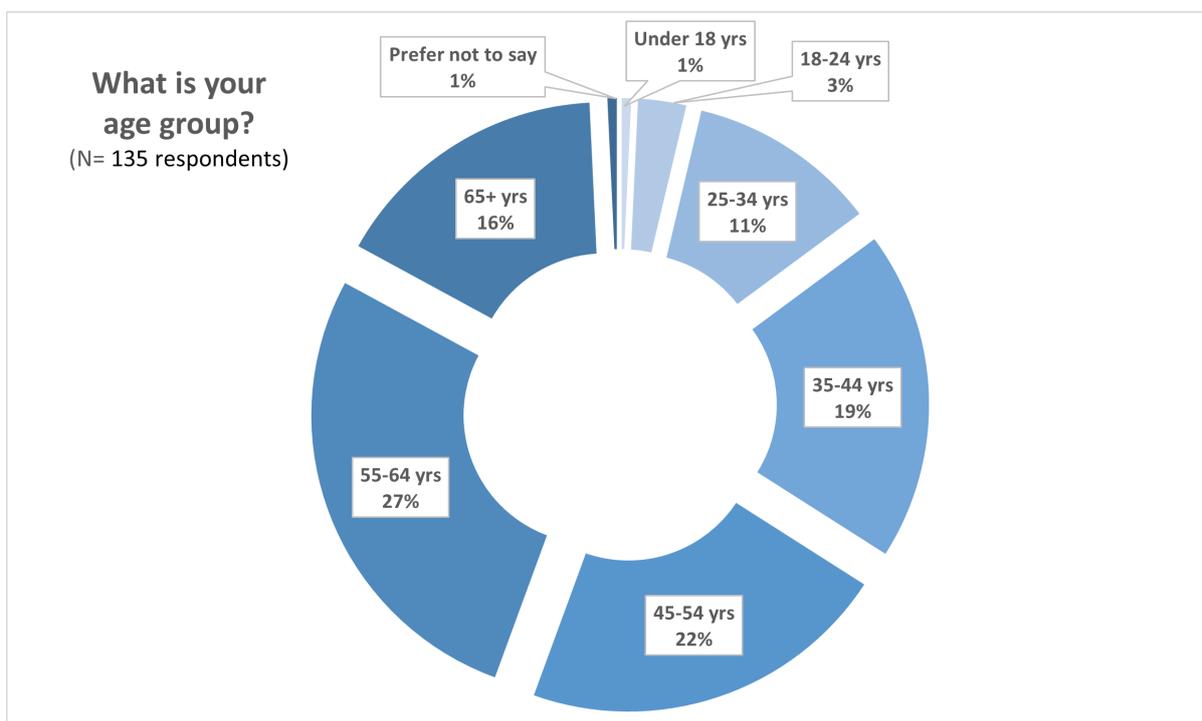
Respondents came from all mainland health board areas of Scotland. We had no responses from the three island health board areas.



The vast majority of respondents were female (89%), with 10% male, 1% non-binary and 1% preferring not to state their gender.

97% of respondents described their ethnicity as white, with 1% describing themselves respectively as Mixed, Asian, and Black.

There was a good age range across respondents. The survey was open to anyone aged 16 years or over, and all age groups were represented. Around two thirds (65%) were aged 45 years or over, whilst around a third (34%) were aged under 45. 1% preferred not to state their age.

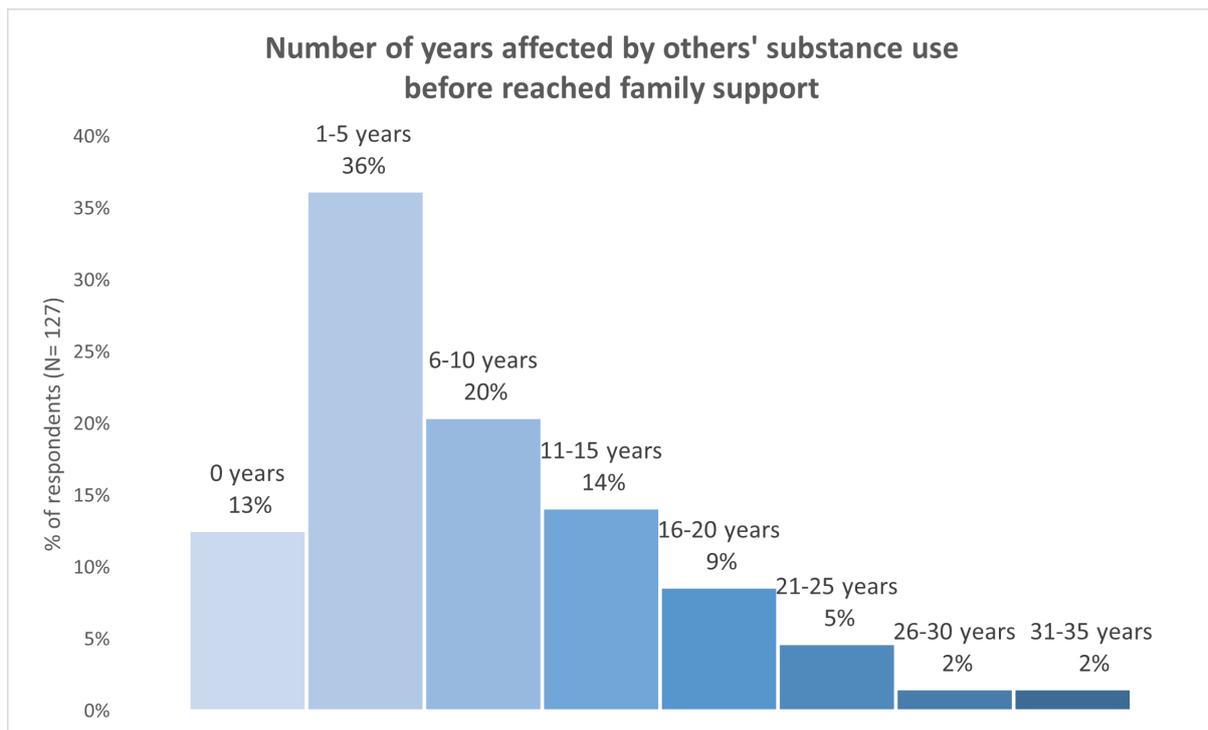


## What Did Families Say?

We asked respondents to identify the first year that alcohol or drug use (their own or someone else's) **FIRST became problematic** in their lives. Individual responses ranged from 1970 to 2020. We then asked them to identify the year when they **accessed family support for the FIRST time**. This included one to one, group or whole family support, and could include support provided by paid staff, volunteers and peers. Individual responses ranged from 1980 to 2020.

Calculating the gap for each person between the year they were first affected by substance use and the year they first accessed family support presented some concerning results:

- Just one in eight (13%) family members had reached support the same year they became concerned about the alcohol or drug use.
- Well over a third (36%) had reached family support within 1-5 years (with half of these within 1-2 years and half 3-5 years).
- A fifth (20%) had only accessed support between 6-10 years after becoming affected.
- Around three in ten (31%) had had to wait over 10 years before reaching family support. A quarter of this group had waited over 20 years, including 2 people who had lived with the impact of alcohol or drug use for 35 years before accessing family support.

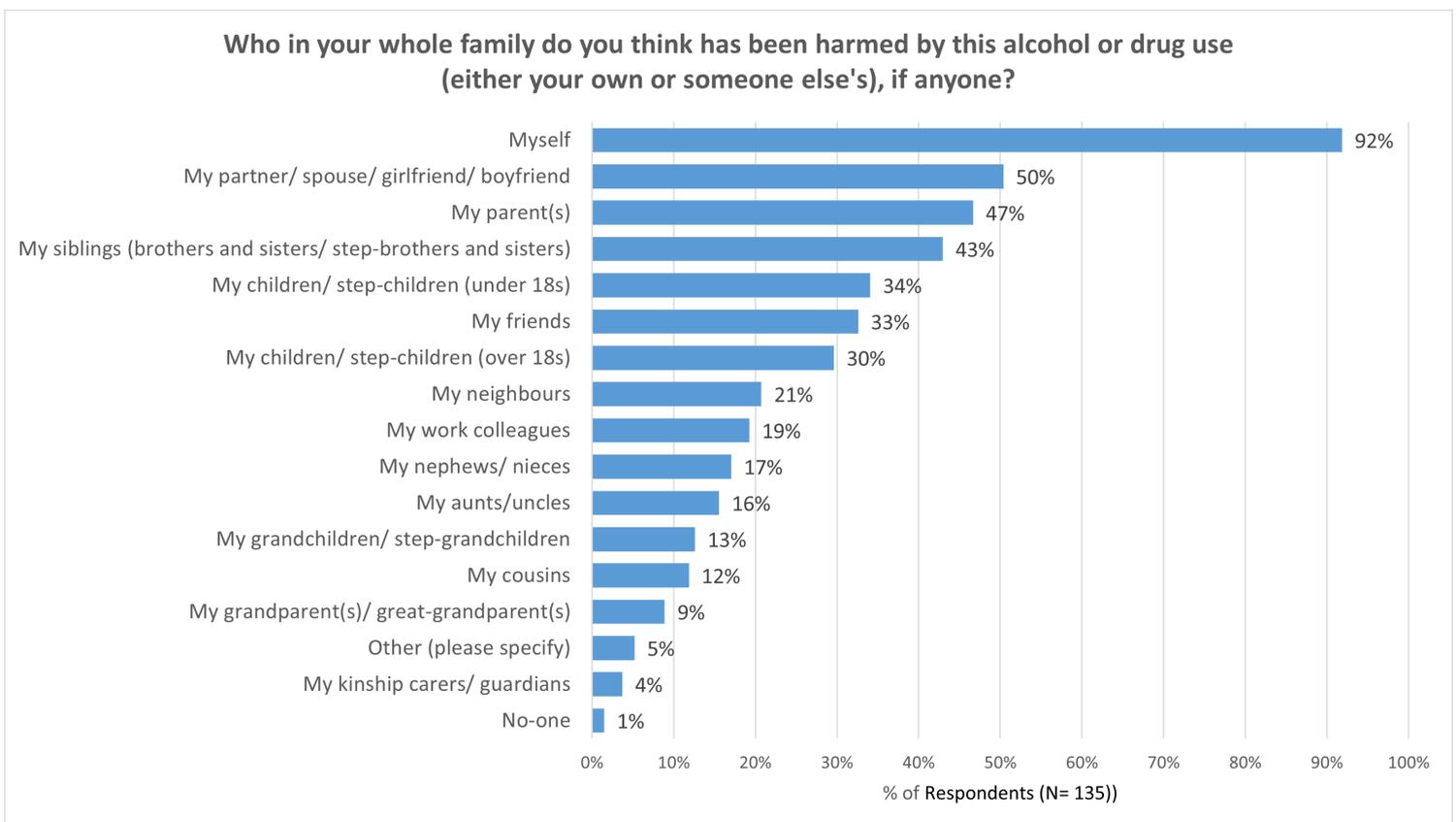


On average, at the time of the survey, family members had been **affected by problem substance use (either their own or someone else's) for 16 years**, and it was an average of **8 years before they reached family support**. The shortest time before reaching support was 0 years (13%) and the longest was 35 years (2%).

The survey stated that we know that alcohol and drug use doesn't only affect the person using substances. It can also harm children, young people and adults around this person. Bearing this in mind, we asked respondents **who in their whole family did they think had been harmed** by this alcohol or drug use (either their own or someone else's), if anyone? We asked them to include those who they thought had been HARMED by the alcohol or drug use, and they could tick as many family relationship categories as they wished:

- Unsurprisingly, the most common response was 'Myself' in terms of those harmed (92%);
- Partners (50%), parents (47%) and siblings (43%) followed as the next most common people harmed;
- Around a third each felt their children (including 34% adult children over 18 years, and 30% children under 18 years) and friends (33%) had been harmed;
- Around two in ten mentioned neighbours (21%) and work colleagues (19%);
- Extended family made up the remaining categories from kinship carers (4%) to nephews/nieces (17%);
- In the 'Other' category selected by 5% of respondents were partners' families ('in-laws') including parents-, siblings- and children-in-law (either by marriage or outwith), as well as ex-partners and pets.

In summary, respondents identified that **ALL categories of family relationship were harmed** by the substance use in their family, and just 1% felt no-one else was affected.

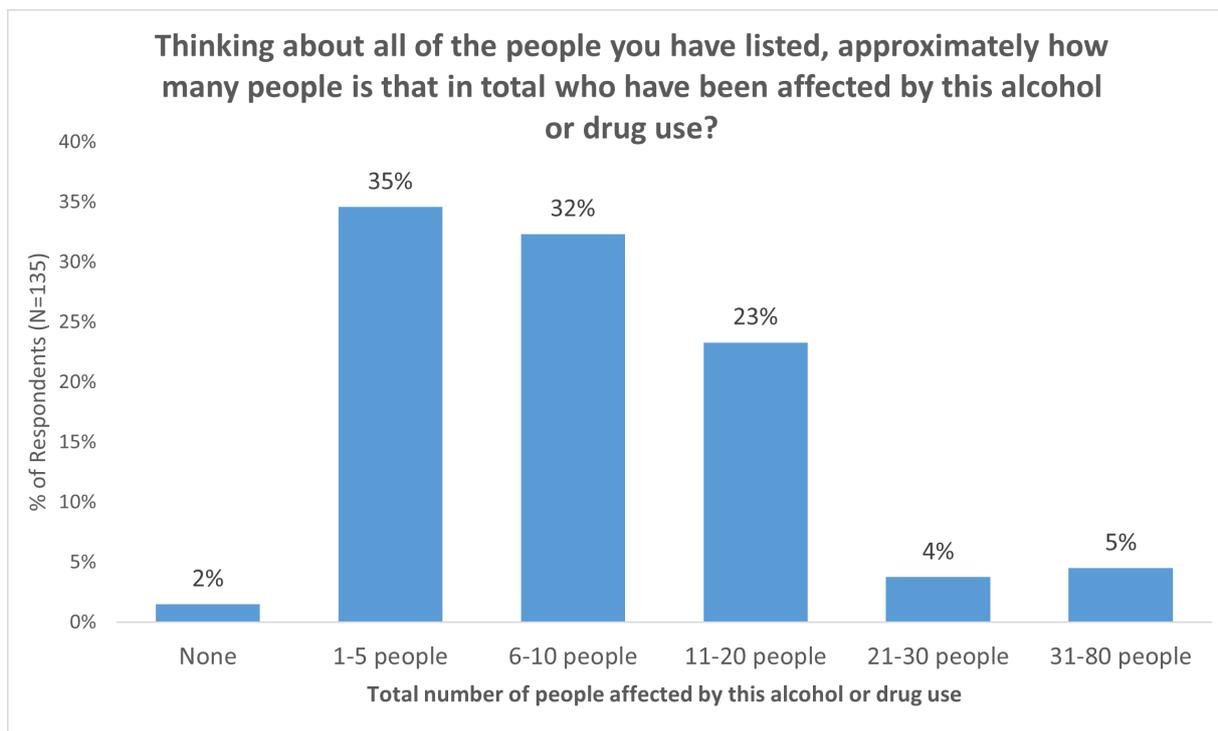


We then asked respondents to think about all of the people they had listed, and count **approximately how many people** that was in total who have been affected by the alcohol or drug use:

- Just over a third (35%) counted between 1-5 people, and a similar proportion (32%) counted 6-10 people.
- Just under one in four (23%) felt between 11-20 people were harmed
- The remainder (9%) counted more than 20 people.

- The lowest number counted was zero, and the highest number was 80 people harmed across all family relationships.

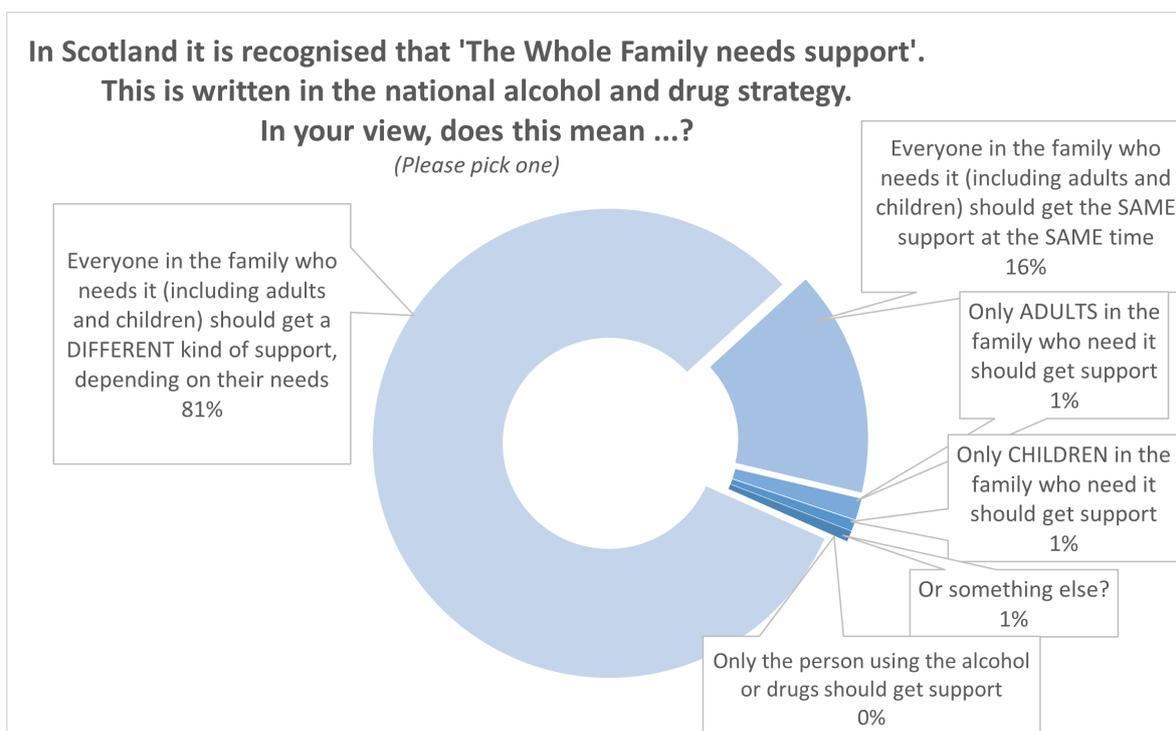
**On average, 11 people had been harmed across all family relationships, for each respondent.**



The national Alcohol and Drug Strategy, '[Rights, Respect and Recovery](#)' (2018) states that:



However the Strategy does not include any definition of exactly what this means or how it should be implemented in practice. Indeed this was one of the drivers for establishing the national Whole Family Approach/ Family Inclusive Practice working group. We asked the survey respondents **how they would define this statement that 'The Whole Family needs support'**, from a range of options. The overwhelming majority of respondents, over eight in ten (81%), stated that this means that everyone in the family (adults and children) should be supported, but in a different way, depending on their needs. One in six (16%) felt everyone should be supported, but in the same way at the same time. Very few respondents picked the other categories, i.e. that only adults (1%) or children (1%) should get support.



A number of respondents added comments under 'Or something else?' although just one person only picked this option without also selecting one of the others. Comments included doubt that the person using the substances would engage in whole family support:

*"I think it would be good for the whole family, adults and children to have support. I am not sure about it being together as we would probably not say as much in front of the children. I would invite the person who has the drink problem but would not expect them to take part, my husband couldn't listen to what he had done to us, he could not cope with the guilt."*

*"Sometimes [the] family need support coz the person with problems won't get help or doesn't see the problem."*

Others added that there should be no time limit on whole family support, as the impact can be felt many years later, including after bereavement or family members moving away:

*"Sometimes it may be years later [a] sibling or parent may need support or counselling to process the impact or their ongoing sadness and confusion, trying to understand."*

*"The effects within a family can be delayed. Secrets kept from other family members causing isolation and breaking down of relationships from other family branches."*

Finally here, some felt none of these descriptions accurately reflected the true impact or reach of substance harm on whole families:

*"They are just words on paper. There is NOTHING that truly understands the impact on a family."*

*"It needs to be talked about more openly and not stigmatised. Probably almost EVERY family has a LOVED one ill with some form of addiction....substance use."*

The next question was based on the Draft Principles framework developed by the national Whole Family Approach/ Family Inclusive Practice Working Group (available in Appendix One). We picked out **key words and phrases from the Principles**, and adapted these into 12 family-friendly statements, e.g. 'I am treated with dignity and respect' and 'I can get support with all areas of my life

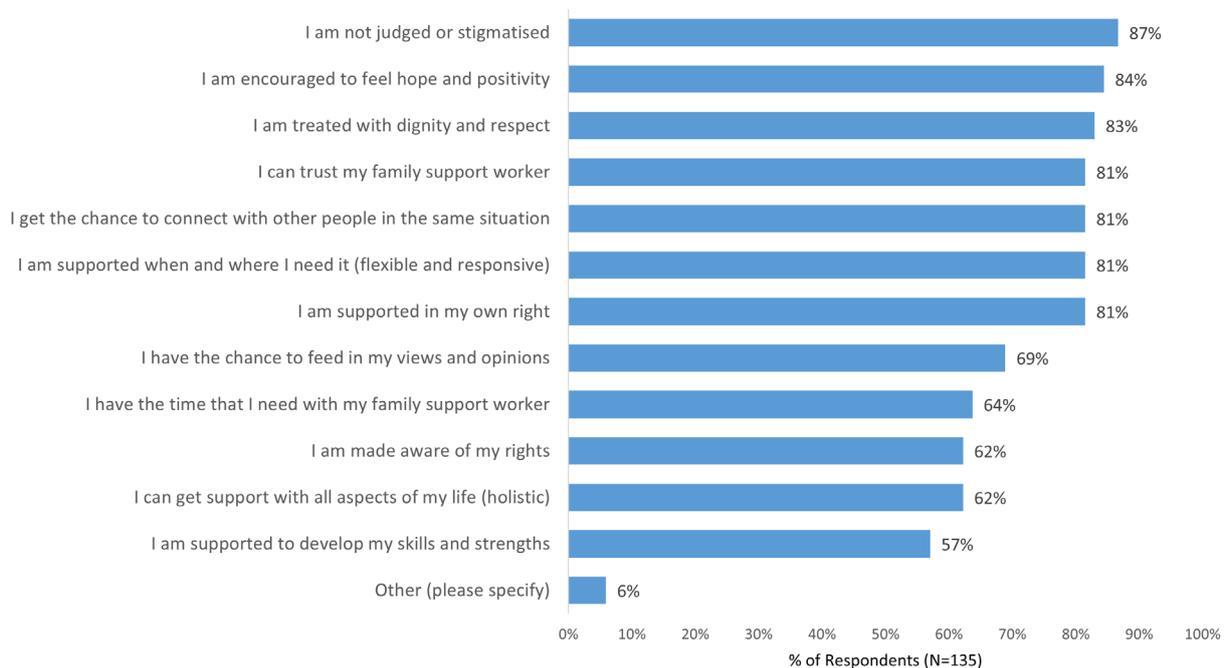
(holistic)’. We asked people to select which of these were important to them, and they could choose as many (or as few) as they wished. This was part of the top down testing of the Draft Principles mentioned in the Opening Comments to this report (*‘How far are the Principles as written supported by families? Top Down’*).

On this basis, we found that **ALL of these Draft Principles as presented were supported by a majority of respondents**. As shown on the chart below, seven of the twelve statements were supported by over 80% of respondents, and the remaining five were supported by between 57%-69% of respondents. Even the statements at the lower end (i.e. rights, holistic, strengths-based support) were important to well over half of respondents. Those who ticked the ‘Other’ category also ticked one or more of the main statements, but also noted the importance of support from named organisations; visibility (*‘It’s communicated that it is actually available’*); “available” and immediate support (*‘I get help quickly’*); and access to “one to one support” and “outreach”. Being supported together with their loved one was also important:

*“[Organisation] are amazing and it is great to connect with others who get it who know exactly what a bad day feels like ...the family support worker is invaluable, hugely helpful and encouraging positivity in small steps.”*

*“That I get to talk to my family member as well, I hated the thought of being separated from them with support. She needed my help and even she said so, but the service didn’t care about that.”*

**Thinking about family support for anyone affected by alcohol or drug use, which of these aspects are IMPORTANT to you?**  
(Please tick all that apply)



Following this, the survey took the reverse approach, asking families to state in their own words **three different words or phrases describing how their family support makes them feel**. This was the other aspect of our project noted in the Opening Comments earlier (*‘How far do families’ own descriptions of family support cross-check and align with the draft Principles? Bottom Up’*).

372 words or phrases were contributed by the respondents. These have been sorted, analysed and grouped into 15 different statements, based on the words they used. For example 49 respondents used words and phrases like “hope”, “hopeful”, “positive”, “things can change”, “I have a purpose to live”, “life’s not over and is worth living”, “light at the end of the tunnel”, “looking forward to the future”. These were grouped into a new statement: ‘I have hope and feel positive about the future. I know things can change.’

Eleven words or phrases were categorised as 'negative' e.g. words like “*embarrassed*”, “*hopeless*”, “*uneasy*”, “*worthless*”. It was unclear from the content whether these related to how family support makes people feel, or how living with substance harm makes people feel. For example one person wrote “*Angry that there is hardly anything available*”, and it is unclear if this is lack of family support, lack of treatment/care options for their loved one, or something else.

The statements are listed on the table below, and presented from most to least mentions of the words encapsulated within them. The statements are also presented on the following page in graphic form.

	<b>Analysis and interpretation of families’ 3 different words or phrases describing how their family support makes them feel</b> <i>(Please use a different box for each word/phrase)</i> <b>(N = 128 respondents)</b>	<b>No. of mentions of similar words</b>
1.	I have hope and feel positive about the future. I know things can change.	49
2.	I know I am not alone. I am not going through this on my own.	44
3.	I feel supported by others. I have back-up when things go wrong.	36
4.	I have a safe space to share with people I trust. I feel secure.	33
5.	I am accepted and understood by others. I am not blamed or judged.	28
6.	I am valued and needed. I feel wanted and worthwhile.	28
7.	I have grown in confidence. I feel stronger and better able to cope.	21
8.	I feel good about myself. I am happier and my relationships are closer.	18
9.	I am being listened to - and heard.	18
10.	I feel loved and cared for. I belong.	17
11.	I am connected to others who understand. We are in it together.	15
12.	I am included and involved. I feel human again!	15
13.	I have gained knowledge and tools. I can understand my situation better.	14
14.	I am calmer and less anxious. I feel comfortable and relaxed.	13
15.	I feel capable and empowered. I can do it!	12
	<i>Negative phrases (e.g. embarrassed, hopeless, uneasy, worthless)*</i>	11
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>372</b>
* See further comments on these negative statements above.		

## 15 Ways Families Describe How Support Makes Them Feel...

I have hope and feel positive about the future. I know things can change.

I know I am not alone. I am not going through this on my own.

I feel supported by others. I have back-up when things go wrong.

I have a safe space to share with people I trust. I feel secure.

I am accepted and understood by others. I am not blamed or judged.

I am valued and needed. I feel wanted and worthwhile.

I have grown in confidence. I feel stronger and better able to cope.

I feel good about myself. I am happier and my relationships are closer.

I am being listened to - and heard.

I feel loved and cared for. I belong.

I am connected to others who understand. We are in it together.

I am included and involved. I feel human again!

I have gained knowledge and tools. I can understand my situation better.

I am calmer and less anxious. I feel comfortable and relaxed.

I feel capable and empowered. I can do it!

The survey ended with the opportunity to add any **final comments**. These mainly included statements on the need for families to be supported, why family support matters, appreciation for existing family support workers and services, and the changes and improvements to family support that people wanted to see. Here is a selection:

'Whole family' often makes me think of those silly adverts promoting holidays or games - 'it's fun for the whole family!' I think it's a difficult and confusing phrase. 'Whole Family Approaches' really it should just be Family Approaches or The Family Approach. I hate anything that sounds policy and jargony, makes me feel less human and more of a test subject.

As a person in recovery from addiction, I can see the benefits of having a strong family support network around you to get support. This is only possible when the families of addicts are also supported to recover.

I shudder to think what would have happened to my physical and mental health if I had not been given the chance to connect to this group. They have been my saviour. I can never thank them enough.

I have now left my alcoholic ex drug-using partner but the effect of his addiction will affect my children for years to come, and has affected their childhood to date. I hope other families can receive the help they need to leave sooner so less children are exposed to addict parents. I know some will have the motivation to overcome their addictions, but we had no choice but to leave, and as far as I can see my children's father is still very much in the fight to overcome his addictions even with a high level of professional help.

Our family support comes from my children's school and is not specifically trained in substance abuse issues. There is no such service locally and the services supporting my husband through his recovery do not communicate with me nor do they take a family centred approach to his recovery.

Since receiving the family support I have been able to understand the addiction of my partner better and it's helped me a great deal to be stronger and focus on myself and my family and not just him and his addiction. Using the groups to talk as well has helped me feel less alone in this and allowed me to mix with others who are in or have been in a similar situation as well as just feeling like you have a group of people who aren't judging you and your situation is nice.

I don't know how I would have coped without the family support. It had been amazing. G has been such a support to me. She is so easy to talk to and so helpful. She really helps me feel positive and I have never felt judged. It is also great to speak to people in the same situation. It shows you are not alone and able to talk about things you may not want to talk to others about. I'm so glad I go in touch.

## Key Messages

<b>What is important?</b> <b>SAME</b> as Draft Principles?	<b>What is important?</b> <b>DIFFERENT</b> than Draft Principles?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Driven by positive family values and a positive inclusive ethos</li> <li>✓ Family rights</li> <li>✓ Focus on people's individuality, strengths and assets</li> <li>✓ Fosters hope and positivity</li> <li>✓ Free from stigma and judgement</li> <li>✓ Help and support is available to individual family members in their own right</li> <li>✓ Holistic approach; "<i>Look at the whole person</i>"</li> <li>✓ Mutual respect</li> <li>✓ Swift and responsive; continually improve accessibility and availability; "<i>There when I need it</i>"; "<i>No postcode lottery</i>"</li> <li>✓ Trusted relationship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Connecting with others with the same experience; peer support</li> <li>◇ Leads to change in my life; makes me feel better</li> <li>◇ Listen (take time and show interest)</li> <li>◇ Love and belonging; feeling valued and worthwhile</li> <li>◇ Providing respite/ relaxation/ escape</li> <li>◇ Safe space to talk and open up</li> <li>◇ Support me to advocate and make decisions for myself</li> <li>◇ Support outside of the family; independent of the family</li> <li>◇ Support to grow knowledge and skills</li> <li>◇ Time and Patience (going at our pace); recognise change can be hard work for families</li> <li>◇ Visible family support and recovery</li> </ul>

Click [here](#) to view our *All in the Family* national survey animation.



**Part 2:  
Family  
Conversation  
Café**

HAVE YOUR VOICE HEARD ABOUT  
THE 'WHOLE FAMILY APPROACH'  
NATIONAL PRINCIPLES

# Conversation Cafe

WHAT DOES FAMILY SUPPORT  
MEAN TO YOU?



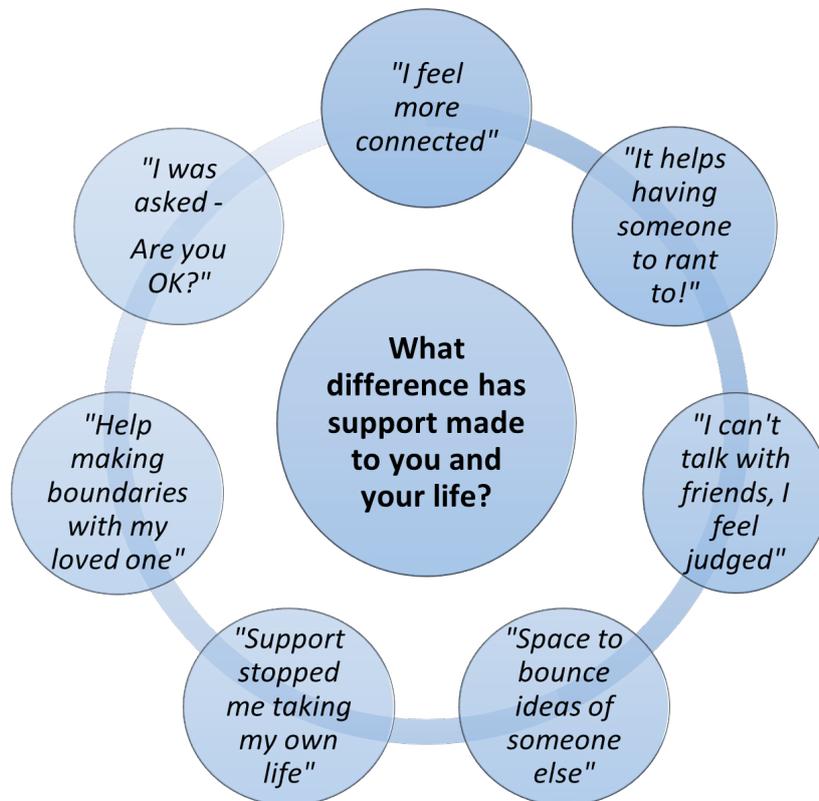
SCOTTISH FAMILIES AFFECTED BY ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

via Zoom - Thursday 21st Jan | 10am - 11:30am

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



way.”). There was recognition that accessing support “*normalised what I’m going through*” (in a positive way) and helped people gain new insight into their situation – “*I was able to see I wasn’t responsible for everything*”. The benefit of friendship and connection was also evident (“*I feel connected*”; “*I go out for coffee with people*”), as well as fun and humour (“*Laughter is the best medicine!*”, “*Absolutely right!*”)



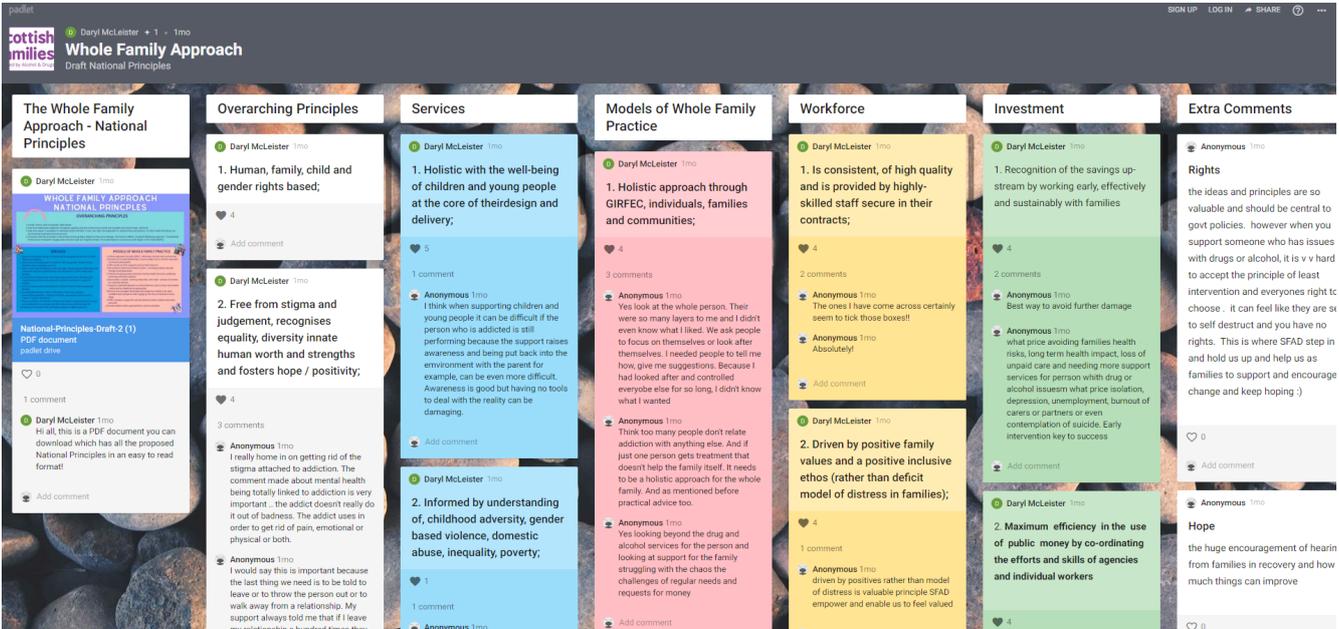
A number of participants also talked about their frustration about being excluded from their loved one’s care and treatment:

*“I had a lot of doubts about my loved one’s treatment, and felt let down by professionals at times.”*

*“When I got in touch with professionals to discuss treatment, they either couldn’t answer my questions or were not willing to.”*

Towards the end of the Conversation Café, there was a demonstration of the Padlet platform (shown on the next page), and an invitation to engage with this following the session to **comment on each of the individual Draft Principles** in the Framework. The Draft Principles as shown in Appendix One were shared with family members, and this was included in the Padlet as a downloadable PDF. The Padlet format enabled participants to take some extra time to read through the principles, to indicate ‘Likes’ for different principles and to add comments on electronic post it notes below any Principles they wished.

The Padlet shows support for many of the Draft Principles and a wide range of insightful comments across most of the Principles. Some key comments are replicated on the next page.



Free from stigma and judgement	Support for families in own right	Access to other supports such as food, financial
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>I would say this is important because the last thing we need is to be told to leave or to throw the person out or to walk away from a relationship. My support always told me that if I leave my relationship a hundred times they would still be here for me. This was so important because I hated myself for keeping going back to a damaging relationship where there was alcohol abuse involved.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>This is also very important to me because I knew a lot of the behaviours in my home growing up were wrong. But my parents denied their was a problem. If I waiting for them to admit they had an addiction I might have waited and wasted my own life. ...The person whos drinking is affecting you may not know this is a problem but it's a problem for you and your life is important too. The person may never stop drinking but the family member can recover, detach with love and be free.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>I think it's like maslows hierarchy of needs and acknowledge that you can't even begin to discuss feelings or emotions if someone is worried about how they'll eat and where they will sleep. Dealing with the practical matters and basic needs is most important at first.</i></li> </ul>

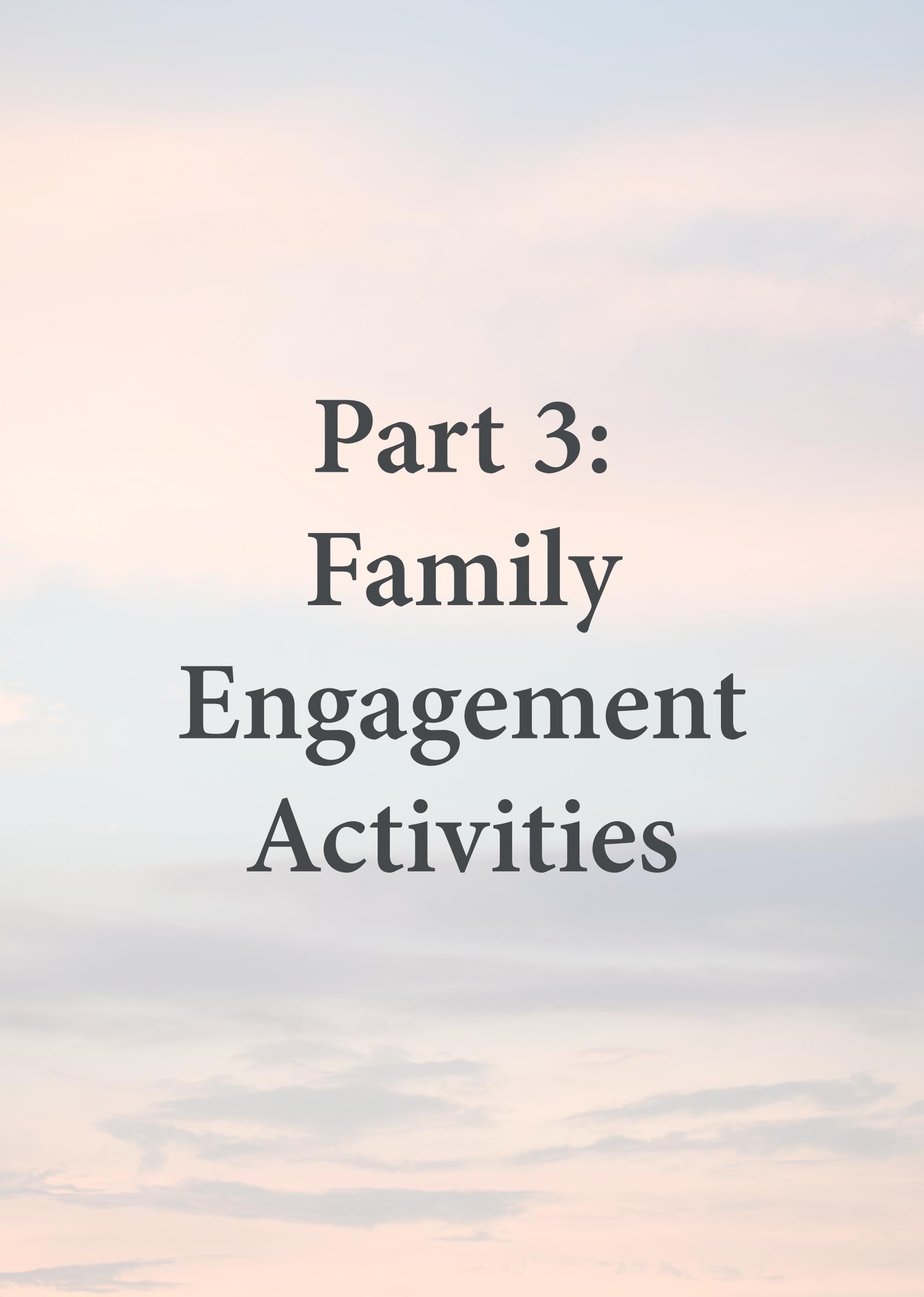
Swift and responsive	Informed by understanding of different issues, e.g. domestic abuse, poverty	Provided with the right tools
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>I think it's important to be quick off the mark with support, especially because denial can begin to kick in again. 'it's not that bad', 'I can fix this, I don't need help'.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Yes it's very important that these things are all taken into consideration and how addiction affects us financially, mentally, spiritually and physically.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>I hadn't thought of needing "tools" to cope with the situation that we're in until I heard that in SFAD. It's a valuable concept: to have tools at your disposal to do the job.</i></li> </ul>

Wellbeing of children and young people at the core of their design and delivery	Holistic approach through Giftec (individuals, families, communities)	Early intervention
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When supporting children and young people it can be difficult if the person who is addicted is still performing because the support raises awareness and being put back into the environment with the parent for example, can be even more difficult. Awareness is good but having no tools to deal with the reality can be damaging.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Think too many people don't relate addiction with anything else. And if just one person gets treatment that doesn't help the family itself. It needs to be a holistic approach for the whole family. And as mentioned before practical advice too.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What price avoiding families health risks, long term health impact, loss of unpaid care and needing more support services for person with drug or alcohol issues, what price isolation, depression, unemployment, burnout of carers or partners or even contemplation of suicide. Early intervention key to success.</li> </ul>

## Key Messages

What is important? SAME as Draft Principles?	What is important? DIFFERENT than Draft Principles?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Able to work holistically with the whole family</li> <li>✓ Children's rights</li> <li>✓ Collaborative multi-agency approaches; "Joined up thinking"</li> <li>✓ Driven by positive family values and a positive inclusive ethos</li> <li>✓ Engaging the voice of families at every stage</li> <li>✓ Family rights</li> <li>✓ Fosters hope and positivity</li> <li>✓ Free from stigma and judgement</li> <li>✓ Help and support is available to individual family members in their own right</li> <li>✓ Holistic approach; "Look at the whole person"</li> <li>✓ Mutual respect</li> <li>✓ Offer access to other supports such as food, financial</li> <li>✓ Swift and responsive; continually improve accessibility and availability; "There when I need it"; "No postcode lottery"</li> <li>✓ Trusted relationship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Connecting with others with the same experience; peer support</li> <li>◇ Friendship; be like a friend; relatable; use everyday language</li> <li>◇ Goal setting and structure; solutions-focused</li> <li>◇ Help and support as soon as you need it (early intervention)</li> <li>◇ Helping; "Invested in helping"</li> <li>◇ Humour</li> <li>◇ Included in loved one's treatment and care (family inclusive practice)</li> <li>◇ Leads to change in my life; makes me feel better</li> <li>◇ Lived experience as a qualification/ Learning from lived experience</li> <li>◇ Love and belonging; feeling valued and worthwhile</li> <li>◇ Providing respite/ relaxation/ escape</li> <li>◇ Safe space to talk and open up</li> <li>◇ Support families to have fun</li> <li>◇ Support me to advocate and make decisions for myself</li> <li>◇ Visible family support and recovery</li> <li>◇ Workers openly demonstrate and share knowledge and skills</li> </ul>

Click [here](#) to view to view our Family Conversations Café Padlet.



**Part 3:  
Family  
Engagement  
Activities**

# Our Family Engagement Activities

- **Family Support is a Lifeline**  
A Family Guide to Support
- **It's Good to Talk**  
TikTok by Routes Young Persons' Project
- **Let Us Reach Out**  
A Poem to Our New Family Support Worker
- **My Road to Recovery**  
A Parent's Story
- **This is Your Journey**  
A Letter to those who are struggling and those who are trying to help
- **Families on the Edge**  
Reflections by families around being supported
- **Welcome to our Family Word Cloud**  
A Picture in Words
- **Now He's got a Friend in Me**  
A Child's Poem
- **What is Important to Us?**  
Our views on what we value from those who support us
- **What a support worker should be**  
A Letter from a Young Person
- **What do we already know?**  
Our Whole Family Evidence Bank
- **A Tool Belt for Families**  
A film
- **What makes good family support?**  
A Young Person's View
- **A Chat about Family Support**  
Conversations with Parents

# Family Support is a Lifeline

## A Family Guide to Local Support

### What Is This?

This family guide was developed as an easy-read ‘family support made simple’ document. It sets out families’ own definitions of key family support principles, including clear descriptions, translations and alternative family-friendly words for terms which policy-makers and practitioners might use.

### Who Took Part?

This guide was developed by a group of six adult family members who are supported through All in the Family, a family support partnership between Scottish Families and My Support Day working across the South Lanarkshire Beacons (recovery hubs).

### What Did Families Say?

The group identify characteristics which make good family support “*life-changing*”, such as providing respite and retreat (“*some place to go to get away from it all*”); recognising “*It’s not all doom and gloom*” and “*being able to share the good stuff too*”; including children; and providing emotional, practical, mental health, legal and financial support.

They identified the difficulties they face as family members affected by others’ substance use, such as being dismissed by others (“*Just put him out!*”) and being excluded by treatment services – “*Nobody is prepared to share info about what was going on with your loved one. It would have saved 10 years of trouble*”. Invisibility of support, inflexible and time-limited services (“*Family support can’t just be 9am-5pm*”), and a postcode lottery of services are also concerns, “*It’s like going down a rabbit hole trying to find support*”.

Words which family members used to describe good family support included “*invested in helping*”, “*talk to people on their level*”, “*connection*” and “*being able to say out loud what really happened*”.

The group felt lived experience is a good qualification for anyone working in family support, as “*You’re looking for somebody who has been through it themselves*”. The “*collective*” of peers (other family members) was similarly seen very positively – “*Blown away by peers and what they were saying. ... They could eloquently describe what I was experiencing*”.

The guide finishes with a table (replicated ahead) which takes eight terms/ phrases from the Scottish Government’s Draft Principles, and translates them for families.

## Key Messages

<b>What is important?</b> <b>SAME</b> as Draft Principles?	<b>What is important?</b> <b>DIFFERENT</b> than Draft Principles?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Able to work holistically with the whole family</li> <li>✓ Collaborative multi-agency approaches; <i>“Joined up thinking”</i></li> <li>✓ Empowering families to ‘reach in’ for support, not just be referred by others</li> <li>✓ Engaging the voice of families at every stage</li> <li>✓ Focus on people’s individuality, strengths and assets</li> <li>✓ Fosters hope and positivity</li> <li>✓ Free from stigma and judgement</li> <li>✓ Help and support is available to individual family members in their own right</li> <li>✓ Holds on until a family feels sufficiently ready to move on, <i>“Stickability”</i>; <i>“Never gives up”</i></li> <li>✓ Holistic approach; <i>“Look at the whole person”</i></li> <li>✓ Offer access to other supports such as food, financial</li> <li>✓ Swift and responsive; continually improve accessibility and availability; <i>“There when I need it”</i>; <i>“No postcode lottery”</i></li> <li>✓ Trusted relationship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Be yourself; show your human side; open up about yourself</li> <li>◇ Connecting with others with the same experience; peer support</li> <li>◇ Empathy (not sympathy); understanding of the person’s experience</li> <li>◇ Equality between family and worker (on the same level)</li> <li>◇ Helping; <i>“Invested in helping”</i></li> <li>◇ Honesty and openness (e.g. being blunt, direct, brave, assertive, challenging)</li> <li>◇ Humour</li> <li>◇ Included in loved one’s treatment and care (family inclusive practice)</li> <li>◇ Kindness; consideration; caring; nurture</li> <li>◇ Listen (take time and show interest)</li> <li>◇ Lived experience as a qualification/ Learning from lived experience</li> <li>◇ Providing respite/ relaxation/ escape</li> <li>◇ Safe space to talk and open up</li> <li>◇ Support to build confidence and self-esteem; reassuring</li> <li>◇ Support to grow knowledge and skills</li> <li>◇ Team approach with family; <i>“a two way street”</i></li> <li>◇ Visible family support and recovery</li> <li>◇ Workers openly demonstrate and share knowledge and skills</li> </ul>

Click [here](#) to view *Family Support is a Lifeline*

# Appendix: Government Interpretation vs. Family Interpretation



## Government

## Family

<p>'Positive inclusive ethos.' (Workforce)</p>	<p>'It's for everyone – people need to be able to include their children. Available even if loved one isn't engaging with a service, or isn't here anymore.'</p>
<p>'Peer-support and high quality supervision is essential, enhancing skills knowledge and innovative practice.' (Workforce)</p>	<p>'Lived experience as a qualification, need to know how to access other services and knowledge about how other services, staff being well trained and knowledgeable about issues we face, as well as providing that training for us.'</p>
<p>'Holistic.' (Services)</p>	<p>'Relating and support as a collective. It's totally destructive and no one understands until they've lived it.'</p> <p>'Recognition it impacts your whole life.'</p>
<p>'Families should be empowered to know how to 'reach in', not be 'referred to'. (Services)</p>	<p>Leaflets lying about in GPs. Referral process in place with GPs.</p> <p>'I was a mess and went straight to the doctor.'</p>
<p>'Recognition of the savings upstream by working early, effectively and sustainably with families.' (Investment)</p>	<p>'Shame needs to be removed and support needs to be put in its place.'</p>
<p>'Adequate resources are required to back up delivery of the sustainable long term financial framework to meet the aspirations of this work.' (Investment)</p>	<p>Family support can't just be 9-5, it needs to be flexible for us. Not time-limited or on a short-term bases.</p>
<p>'Are built on trusted relationships, mutual respect and a common approach to recovery and growth.' (Models)</p>	<p>'Meeting people who have lived it – you can offer support and receive support once that trust is there in that environment. You can speak freely and openly, more directly than anywhere else.'</p>
<p>'Clearly connecting areas of distress (mental health/recovery), wellbeing, parenting and family support.' (Models)</p>	<p>'Even if the NHS had been willing to share things. They won't share with family members. Nobody is prepared to share info about what was going on with your loved one. It would have saved 10 years of trouble.'</p>

# It's Good to Talk

TikTok by Routes Young Persons' Project

## What Is This?

Young people from Scottish Families' Routes project wrote and performed a short sketch on TikTok (running time 00m:28s) to show what their lives were like before and after getting support from Routes. It shows how much they value support from a worker as well as connecting with each other. Claire their worker said *"They thought of the idea themselves and loved doing it"*.

## Who Took Part?

Three young people (Amy, Ashley and Chloe) aged under 18 years from Routes took part, along with Claire and Pam from Scottish Families (Pam stayed behind the scenes!). Routes is a national demonstration project based in East and West Dunbartonshire, working with young people aged 12-26 years old who are affected by someone else's substance use.

## What Did Families Say?

Amy talks about the impact of her mum's drug use, leaving her feeling *"really alone and rejected, like I have no-one to talk to"*. She talks about the impact of meeting Claire from Scottish Families as then *"I feel like I have someone to talk to who understands what I am going through. I can tell her anything and she still won't judge me."* Through Routes, she connected with other young people *"that are going through the same as me"*:

*"I finally felt like I have friends and someone to talk to who understand me and who go through the same stuff as me. Thanks to them I've learned that it's good to talk."*

## Key Messages

What is important? SAME as Draft Principles?	What is important? DIFFERENT than Draft Principles?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Free from stigma and judgement</li><li>✓ Help and support is available to individual family members in their own right</li><li>✓ Trusted relationship</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◇ Connecting with others with the same experience; peer support</li><li>◇ Empathy (not sympathy); understanding of the person's experience</li><li>◇ Friendship; be like a friend; relatable; use everyday language</li><li>◇ Safe space to talk and open up</li></ul>

Click [here](#) to view *It's Good to Talk*



# Let Us Reach Out

## A Poem to Our New Family Support Worker

### What Is This?

This poem is written by a parent to describe what they are looking for from their new family support worker. The person also provided explanatory notes explaining specific lines of the poem. The poem was submitted in writing, and Scottish Families also produced a short film (running time 02m:06s) using the words alongside images and music.

### Who Took Part?

This poem was written by a parent supported by Action for Children.

### What Did Families Say?

This poem outlines a very honest person specification for the worker seeking to support this family.

There is a real balance between softer characteristics around helping, supporting, listening, kindness, but also the ability to challenge through “a proverbial shove”, and ensuring the family are in control at all times (“*Let us reach out/ ... “Speak not on our behalf”*).

There is a call for equality with the worker (“*On the same level/ There is no height*”). It is clear this family are seeking to move forward, not stand still, and they know the right worker can support them do this.

The poem and explanatory notes emphasise the importance of workers being themselves:

*“Bring your real authentic self/ And show your human-ness’ is about just being you. Workers seem to change who they are because they are in a job but it will work better if you be you.”*

There are two mentions of “*Love*” and “*Kindness*” which are not a word commonly used by services, but are so important to this family (described as one of the “*seeds that help us grow*” and “*how we will progress*”).

There is a lovely reference to footballer, Ian Wright, who mentors others based on his own experiences of people (such as his former teacher) who believed in him and inspired him.

## Key Messages

<b>What is important?</b> <b>SAME</b> as Draft Principles?	<b>What is important?</b> <b>DIFFERENT</b> than Draft Principles?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Empowering families to ‘reach in’ for support, not just be referred by others</li> <li>✓ Engaging the voice of families at every stage</li> <li>✓ Focus on people’s individuality, strengths and assets</li> <li>✓ Free from stigma and judgement</li> <li>✓ Need to understand trauma</li> <li>✓ Trusted relationship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Be yourself; show your human side; open up about yourself</li> <li>◇ Equality between family and worker (on the same level)</li> <li>◇ Helping; “<i>Invested in helping</i>”</li> <li>◇ Honesty and openness (e.g. being blunt, direct, brave, assertive, challenging)</li> <li>◇ Humour</li> <li>◇ Kindness; consideration; caring; nurture</li> <li>◇ Leads to change in my life; makes me feel better</li> <li>◇ Listen (take time and show interest)</li> <li>◇ Love and belonging; feeling valued and worthwhile</li> <li>◇ Time and Patience (going at our pace); recognise change can be hard work for families</li> </ul>

Click [here](#) to view the written and film versions of *Let Us Reach Out – A Poem to our New Family Support Worker* (written version also replicated on the next page)

## A Poem to Our New Family Support Worker

When we need your helping hand  
Let us reach out  
Learn our stories to understand  
Without judgement or doubt

Trust, kindness and unconditional love  
The seeds that help us grow  
And yes sometimes a proverbial shove  
But at our pace, sometimes slow

No stigma, no assumptions, no judgement  
Be our mentor, our Ian Wright  
Be open and honest, one hundred percent  
On the same level, there is no height

Don't underestimate your listening ear  
Humour too, we like a laugh  
But our stress also disguises as fear  
Our voice, speak not on our behalf

Bring your real authentic self  
And show your human-ness  
Love and kindness are our wealth  
This is how we will progress

### Explanation:

- ◇ “Let us reach out” means letting us choose the support we want and that support being ready when we want it.
- ◇ “Learn our stories to understand” means taking the time to not only listen to us but actually be interested in what we have been through so we feel heard.
- ◇ “But at our pace, sometimes slow” means sticking with us and knowing that sometimes we aren't ready to go as fast as you want us to. When my Grandson was placed into my care I needed more support. Just because you knew he was safe doesn't mean your job is done, I still needed help.
- ◇ “Be our Ian Wright” is about giving children a role-model to be there for them and for them to look up to. Just like Ian Wright's teacher was there for him. It made such a difference to his life and there needs to be more people with this approach, especially in schools.
- ◇ “On the same level, there is no height” means treating us equally and listening to and acting on our concerns and worries.
- ◇ “Our stress also disguises as fear” means that sometimes we get angry and frustrated but it's about looking at what is causing that rather than just seeing it as anger or frustration.
- ◇ “Our voice, speak not on our behalf” means me and my child's views being as important as anyone else's.
- ◇ “Bring your real authentic self and show your human-ness” is about just being you. Workers seem to change who they are because they are in a job but it will work better if you be you.

# My Road to Recovery

## A Parent's Story

### What Is This?

This is a powerful illustrated story of a parent's own journey from addiction to recovery, including a frank insight into how workers helped (and didn't help) at different points.

### Who Took Part?

This story was written by a mum supported by Action for Children.

### What Did Families Say?

This parent's experience shows that alcohol and drug issues are far from the only challenges facing many receiving family support. She also talks about dealing with domestic abuse, homelessness, and issues with her children's education and health. She feels "*judged by my drugs worker*" and GP, "*Housing weren't much help*" and I "*didn't trust my social worker*". These are all 'helping services' but felt far from it. She felt she wasn't listened to (including when she asked for a new drugs worker), her concerns were ignored, and that there were "*underhand tactics going on at times*". She got a new drugs worker only when her family worker attended appointments with her, but "*It shouldn't be like this*". Her youngest son being removed and positive changes in workers were turning points, as well as learning new skills like mindfulness. The theme of workers' humanity comes through strongly ("*She spoke to me on a human level and was just herself*"). She talks several times about how hard she had to work to change things. This is a story with a happy ending, and the positive impact of her family support worker (as well as others) and her own hard work are plain to see.

### Key Messages

What is important? SAME as Draft Principles?	What is important? DIFFERENT than Draft Principles?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Able to work holistically with the whole family</li><li>✓ Free from stigma and judgement</li><li>✓ Offer consistent support for woman (parents) where children have been removed</li><li>✓ Trusted relationship</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◇ Be yourself; show your human side; open up about yourself</li><li>◇ Choices and options (including how we are supported and by whom)</li><li>◇ Equality between family and worker (on the same level)</li><li>◇ Goal setting and structure; solutions-focused</li><li>◇ Listen (take time and show interest)</li><li>◇ Support families to have fun</li><li>◇ Support me to advocate and make decisions for myself</li><li>◇ Support to grow knowledge and skills</li><li>◇ Time and Patience (going at our pace); recognise change can be hard work for families</li></ul>

Click [here](#) to view *My Road to Recovery + This is Your Journey*

# This is Your Journey

A Letter to those who are struggling and those who are trying to help

## What Is This?

This letter follows on at the end of the 'My Road to Recovery' story above. This is an open letter "to send a message to those that are struggling and to workers to know how they can help us better". At the end the author shares four motivational quotes.

## Who Took Part?

This story was written by the same mum on the previous page who wrote 'My Road to Recovery'.

## What Did Families Say?

This letter reads very differently than her recovery journey story. The former is reflective, as she thinks about what she has been through and how far she has come. This letter is much more directive and motivational, clearly telling others in a similar situation (and their workers) what they need to do, based on her own difficult experiences. There is anger and frustration at being made to feel like "a 2nd class citizen", despite four years in recovery. She talks about the importance of telling your story, "We've all got a story to tell, ... with us it's how we'll overcome, it's how we'll move on". Listening to these stories is vital ("all we really need is a pair of ears ... once you've got that you're sorted"). She notes the benefit of connecting with others, not "toxic ppl" but "good ppl". A key motivation was being re-united with her son, and recovery for her whole family. She has achieved this goal with the right support and her own hard work. As with her recovery story, she says finding the right worker is at the heart, "...start by getting a worker that you gel with as this is your journey".

## Key Messages

What is important? SAME as Draft Principles?	What is important? DIFFERENT than Draft Principles?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Able to work holistically with the whole family</li><li>✓ Free from stigma and judgement</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◇ Choices and options (including how we are supported and by whom)</li><li>◇ Connecting with others with the same experience; peer support</li><li>◇ Empathy (not sympathy); understanding of the person's experience</li><li>◇ Goal setting and structure; solutions-focused</li><li>◇ Honesty and openness (e.g. being blunt, direct, brave, assertive, challenging)</li><li>◇ Listen (take time and show interest)</li><li>◇ Safe space to talk and open up</li><li>◇ Time and Patience (going at our pace); recognise change can be hard work for families</li></ul>

Click [here](#) to view *My Road to Recovery + This is Your Journey*

# Families on the Edge

Reflections by families around being supported

## What Is This?

This is a powerpoint slide show which displays eight reflections from parents (quotes) with an interpretation by their workers about what this tells us about good family support.

## Who Took Part?

The content for the slides comes from families supported by Action for Children’s residential Family Support Services.

## What Did Families Say?

Parents talk about importance of support not being time-limited (*“I don’t think we’re ready to go it alone yet”*), and going at their own pace (*“My worker gradually built my confidence through listening and reassuring”*). The pain of children being formally removed is a thread running through, particularly where this was *“for reasons I still don’t fully understand”*. However some parents also reflect on this process combined with good support giving them the space, motivation and time they needed, and how support for them (and wider family members) helped them to reunite (*“He is back home now and things are very different”*). Earlier support may have avoided this, *“It’s a shame that you have to be at breaking point before you can get help.”* Parents talk positively about *“straight talking”* workers, helping honest conversations (*“Nothing shocks and embarrasses her and I feel I can talk to her honestly... ..whereas before I would bottle things up”*). Practical help with e.g. budgeting, benefits, cooking/ healthy eating and employment was valued (*“how can you work with people when you’ve not even got any money or food on the table first”*), as well as helping families to have fun and play together. The parents talk about good family support reaching beyond what is going on at home to other areas where there is family stress, such as school.

## Key Messages

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Able to work holistically with the whole family</li> <li>✓ Free from stigma and judgement</li> <li>✓ Holds on until a family feels sufficiently ready to move on, <i>“Stickability”</i>; <i>“Never gives up”</i></li> <li>✓ Offer access to other supports such as food, financial</li> <li>✓ Offer consistent support for woman (parents) where children have been removed</li> <li>✓ Trusted relationship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Help and support as soon as you need it (early intervention)</li> <li>◇ Help to navigate other areas of family stress, e.g. school, social work</li> <li>◇ Honesty and openness (e.g. being blunt, direct, brave, assertive, challenging)</li> <li>◇ Safe space to talk and open up</li> <li>◇ Support families to have fun</li> <li>◇ Support to build confidence and self-esteem; reassuring</li> <li>◇ Time and Patience (going at our pace); recognise change can be hard work for families</li> </ul>

Click [here](#) to view *Families on the Edge* (see some excerpts on next page)

“

My baby went to live with my aunt and uncle as soon as he was born, but the plan was always that we would work for him to come home to us... ..it was hard because they were family and obviously they became very attached to him... ..so the workers needed to work with them as well. He is home now.

”

Parent discussing the need for workers to support wider family members as part of whole-family approach.

She tells it like it is... ..she is straight talking and doesn't judge me in the way others have in past. Nothing shocks and embarrasses her and I feel I can talk to her honestly... ..whereas before I would bottle things up.

Parent reflecting on the importance of a trusting relationship and the skills and values required by a Family Support Worker

“

My baby was removed from my care at birth for reasons I still don't fully understand... ..I was young at the time and Social Work didn't think he was safe. It was hard to bond properly during contact but our workers were amazing... ..we covered loads with them: 1-1 work, cooking lessons, healthy eating, weaning, safety, how to play, and how to interact. We have our son back home and we are so grateful for the support.

”

Parents talking about the types of support that were important for them in having their son returned home

# Welcome to our Family Word Cloud

## A Picture in Words

### What Is This?

This word cloud reviews some of the language used in the draft Principles along with the words family members would use to describe an effective family support worker:

*“We wanted to let you know what words we would use to describe workers who support us effectively ... and how we should relate to each other*

### Who Took Part?

The word cloud was designed by a dad based on his own family’s experiences, and the values and approaches they feel make effective family support. The family are supported by Action for Children’s Dundee Families Service, offering intensive residential family support.

### What Did Families Say?

The notes alongside the word cloud say that the most effective workers combine:

- The right values, skills, personality, AND
- The right knowledge, AND
- The ability to relate in an everyday way.

In particular use of friendly words like e.g. ‘mate’, ‘pal’ and ‘buddy’ were seen by this dad as “*common ways to relate in everyday life*”, to help “*break down barriers and work together on a human level*”.

There are messages here about family members seeking ‘human’ relationships with workers, rather than feeling people are behind a professional veneer. This is also about workers being given permission and feeling confident to be themselves, be authentic, openly demonstrate their humanity and their own personalities.

### Key Messages

<b>What is important? SAME as Draft Principles?</b>	<b>What is important? DIFFERENT than Draft Principles?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Able to work holistically with the whole family</li><li>✓ Free from stigma and judgement</li><li>✓ Mutual respect</li><li>✓ Need to understand trauma</li><li>✓ Trusted relationship</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◇ Be yourself; show your human side; open up about yourself</li><li>◇ Friendship; be like a friend; relatable; use everyday language</li><li>◇ Honesty and openness (e.g. being blunt, direct, brave, assertive, challenging)</li><li>◇ Kindness; consideration; caring; nurture</li><li>◇ Listen (take time and show interest)</li><li>◇ Team approach with family; “<i>a two way street</i>”</li><li>◇ Time and Patience (going at our pace); recognise change can be hard work for families</li><li>◇ Workers openly demonstrate and share knowledge and skills</li></ul>

Click [here](#) to view *Welcome to our Family Word Cloud* (also replicated on the next page)

# FAMILY WORD CLOUD



Welcome to our family word cloud. We wanted to let you know what words we would use to describe workers who support us effectively. This includes words about the type of person (values, skills, personality) who we would like to support us and the knowledge they should have (e.g. childhood trauma, drugs, parenting).



We have also included words about how we should relate to each other, e.g. using words like, 'mate', 'pal', and 'buddy'. These are common ways to relate in everyday life and we feel that in order to break down barriers and work together on a human level we need to move towards a more relational way of communicating.

# Now He's Got a Friend in Me

A Child's Poem

## What Is This?

This poem is a description of a child's relationship with his family support worker, including how the worker helped the child and the activities they enjoyed together. He has also recorded it as an audio clip.

## Who Took Part?

This poem was written by a 10 year old boy (with the help of his mum) whose family has been supported by Action for Children.

## What Did Families Say?

This poem packs a lot into 10 lines! The author recognises that his worker came into his life at the hardest time, helped him to open up and "*became my friend*". Like 'Love', 'Friendship' is not a word which workers would often use, but it is important to families. As with other children and young people, the power of fun activities is emphasised. This helps workers and families connect, chat more informally and build trust. Trust here is also described as an absence of fear ("*Helped me talk without fear*"). The boy recognises that the worker "*Gave me strength and built resilience/ Tools and tactics to put to use*", which helped him survive the past year.

## Key Messages

What is important? SAME as Draft Principles?	What is important? DIFFERENT than Draft Principles?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Children's rights</li><li>✓ Focus on people's individuality, strengths and assets</li><li>✓ Trusted relationship</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◇ Friendship; be like a friend; relatable; use everyday language</li><li>◇ Listen (take time and show interest)</li><li>◇ Safe space to talk and open up</li><li>◇ Support families to have fun</li><li>◇ Support to grow knowledge and skills</li></ul>

Click [here](#) to view and listen to *Now He's got a Friend in Me* (written version also replicated on the next page)

# Family Support

He was there for us at my toughest time  
Helped me talk without fear  
Became my friend, now he's got a friend in me

Fun games, quizzes and bike rides  
Video calls, trampolining, and walks in the park  
Without his friendly ear who knows where I'd be

First thought was to help our family  
Gave me strength and built resilience  
Tools and tactics to put to use

Survived 2020 with help a plenty

By child (10) and his Mum

# What is Important to Us?

Our views on what we value from those who support us

## What Is This?

This is an animation (running time 01m:42s) representing the views of the children about what they value from family support workers. Watch it with the sound on to enjoy the soundtrack too!

## Who Took Part?

Girls and boys aged 3-13 years supported by Action for Children's Dundee Families Service, an intensive residential family support service.

## What Did Families Say?

This uplifting animation has children front and centre, presenting in a really visual and accessible way the wide range of things they value, from wishing they had a superpower; the activities they enjoy doing with workers; how workers help them; their views on spending time with family; things which make them sad; and hopes and aspirations. The children emphasise the importance of fun activities as well as the opportunity to talk about their feelings. They also show that simple things are really important too (*"Having clothes and drinking juice are important to me"*).

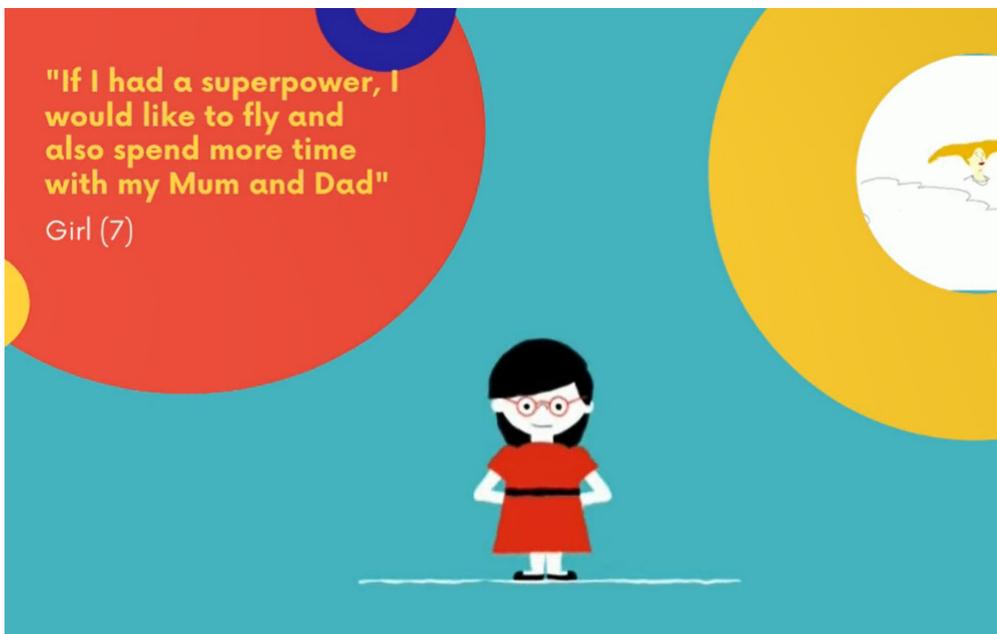
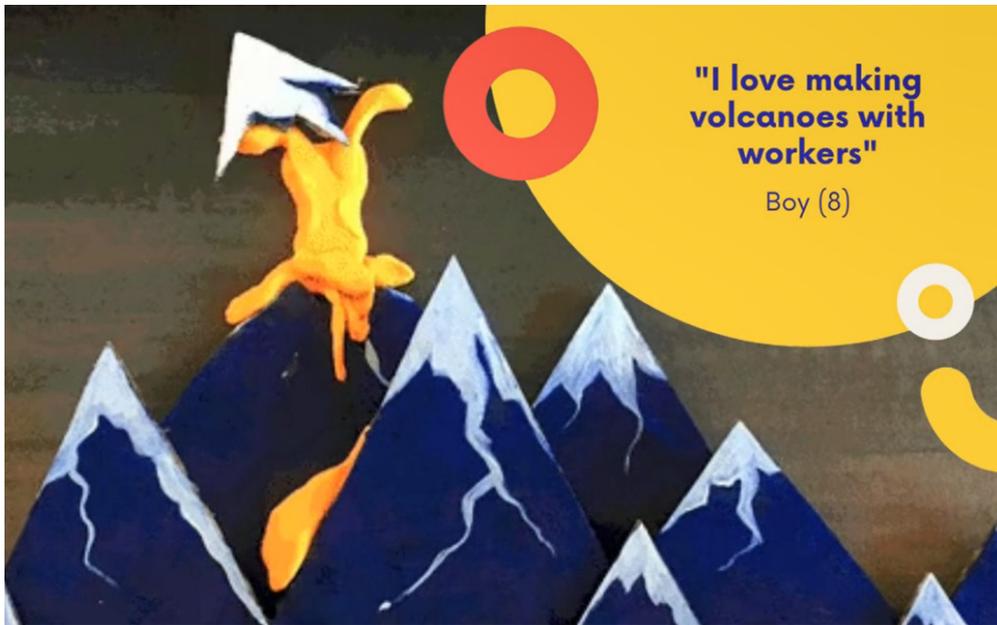
## Key Messages

What is important? SAME as Draft Principles?	What is important? DIFFERENT than Draft Principles?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Able to work holistically with the whole family</li><li>✓ Children's rights</li><li>✓ Driven by positive family values and a positive inclusive ethos</li><li>✓ Focus on people's individuality, strengths and assets</li><li>✓ Help and support is available to individual family members in their own right</li><li>✓ Offer access to other supports such as food, financial</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◇ Safe space to talk and open up</li><li>◇ Support families to have fun</li></ul>

Click [here](#) to view *What Is Important to Us?* (see some excerpts on next page)

# What is important to us?

Our views on what we value from those who support us



# What a support worker should be

A Letter from a Young Person

## What Is This?

Family members were invited to write a letter to their support worker as part of this project. This letter is written by a young person about what a support worker should be, based on her experience.

## Who Took Part?

This letter is written by a 12 year old girl supported by Circle. Her parents are also receiving support from the same worker.

## What Did Families Say?

In the letter the girl describes her experiences of receiving family support, which she feels is good because she has someone to talk to and to listen to her as well. She likes that her worker “*always checks that I’m OK*”. Support is there when she needs it. Importantly she notes that “*Having a support worker has made a difference to my life*”, emphasising change and impact. (We know that for families where there is no support, or poor quality support, nothing changes.) She writes a great short person specification for a family support worker:

*“My support worker is what a support worker should be, he’s kind, friendly, funny and he listens to me.”*

Finally the girl reflects on the positive impact of the support her parents receive from the same support worker. She notes this support makes things better for her parents, “*and that makes me feel better too*”, clearly illustrating the positive whole family impact of supporting individual family members in their own right.

## Key Messages

What is important? SAME as Draft Principles?	What is important? DIFFERENT than Draft Principles?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Able to work holistically with the whole family</li><li>✓ Help and support is available to individual family members in their own right</li><li>✓ Swift and responsive; continually improve accessibility and availability; “<i>There when I need it</i>”; “<i>No postcode lottery</i>”</li><li>✓ Trusted relationship</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◇ Friendship; be like a friend; relatable; use everyday language</li><li>◇ Humour</li><li>◇ Kindness; consideration; caring; nurture</li><li>◇ Leads to change in my life; makes me feel better</li><li>◇ Listen (take time and show interest)</li><li>◇ Safe space to talk and open up</li></ul>

Click [here](#) to view *What a support worker should be* (also replicated on the next page)

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

My Name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am 12 years old.  
I have family support in my life and it is good  
because I have someone to talk too and also  
someone to listen to me which is really important.  
My Support Worker is really nice and he always  
checks that I am okay - I feel he listens and I feel  
comfortable with him when I am talking.

Having a support worker has made a difference  
to my life because it is nice to know someone  
is there if I ever need them.

My Support Worker is what a support worker  
should be, he's kind, friendly, funny and  
he listens to me.

My Support Worker is good because  
he also talks to my Mum and Dad,  
my mum talks to him and feels better  
about things afterwards and that  
really helps, he checks on my  
Dad and he gives him good  
support and advice and that  
makes me feel better.

From \_\_\_\_\_



twinkl.com

# What do we already know?

## Our Whole Family Evidence Bank

### What Is This?

In addition to the new information gathered through our family engagement project, we felt it was important to review what families had *already* told us about what good family support and family inclusive practice looks like to them. We picked five recent publications produced by or for our respective organisations, and assessed them in the same way as the other engagement activities.

### Who Took Part?

The reports were:

1. Constantly just holding it up and together (Scottish Families)
2. Conversations for Change (Circle)
3. Circle Families Evaluation (Circle)
4. Action for Children 'What Works' report (Action for Children)
5. Behind the Numbers (Scottish Families)

### What Did Families Say?

There was strong consistency across the five publications around what families said mattered to them in terms of whole family support and family inclusive practice; what works for them; and what gets in the way. There was also a robust relationship between this evidence base and the output of the wider 'Ask the Family' engagement project. Comparison with the Draft Principles showed all of the Draft Principles were supported by our evidence (Top Down), and all of families' own descriptions of family support cross-checked and aligned with the Draft Principles (Bottom Up):

*"...always knowing that there's someone you can hit on speed dial when I'm really struggling. You can have the most loving family and friends, but sometimes you just want to speak to someone else, because you get a different perspective on things, you know. ... It's good to know there's another person out there listening, who's genuinely concerned."*

*"He (worker) helps me to do things I never thought I would be able to do, like the volunteering...He always looks at things from my point of view and understands what is happening and is able to read the situation. He has always been here. ... our whole lives have changed from how they were."*

## Key Messages

What is important? SAME as Draft Principles?	What is important? DIFFERENT than Draft Principles?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Able to work holistically with the whole family</li> <li>✓ Children’s rights</li> <li>✓ Collaborative multi-agency approaches; <i>“Joined up thinking”</i></li> <li>✓ Driven by positive family values and a positive inclusive ethos</li> <li>✓ Empowering families to ‘reach in’ for support, not just be referred by others</li> <li>✓ Engaging the voice of families at every stage</li> <li>✓ Family rights</li> <li>✓ Focus on people’s individuality, strengths and assets</li> <li>✓ Fosters hope and positivity</li> <li>✓ Free from stigma and judgement</li> <li>✓ Help and support is available to individual family members in their own right</li> <li>✓ Holds on until a family feels sufficiently ready to move on, <i>“Stickability”</i>; <i>“Never gives up”</i></li> <li>✓ Holistic approach; <i>“Look at the whole person”</i></li> <li>✓ Mutual respect</li> <li>✓ Need to understand trauma</li> <li>✓ Offer access to other supports such as food, financial</li> <li>✓ Offer consistent support for woman (parents) where children have been removed</li> <li>✓ Swift and responsive; Continually improve accessibility and availability; <i>“There when I need it”</i>; <i>“No postcode lottery”</i></li> <li>✓ Trusted relationship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Be yourself; show your human side; open up about yourself</li> <li>◇ Choices and options (including how we are supported and by whom)</li> <li>◇ Connecting with others with the same experience; peer support</li> <li>◇ Empathy (not sympathy); understanding of the person’s experience</li> <li>◇ Equality between family and worker (on the same level)</li> <li>◇ Friendship; be like a friend; relatable; use everyday language</li> <li>◇ Goal setting and structure; solutions-focused</li> <li>◇ Help and support as soon as you need it (early intervention)</li> <li>◇ Help to navigate other areas of family stress, e.g. school, social work</li> <li>◇ Helping; <i>“Invested in helping”</i></li> <li>◇ Honesty and openness (e.g. being blunt, direct, brave, assertive, challenging)</li> <li>◇ Humour</li> <li>◇ Included in loved one’s treatment and care (family inclusive practice)</li> <li>◇ Kindness; consideration; caring; nurture</li> <li>◇ Leads to change in my life; makes me feel better</li> <li>◇ Listen (take time and show interest)</li> <li>◇ Lived experience as a qualification/ Learning from lived experience</li> <li>◇ Love and belonging; feeling valued and worthwhile</li> <li>◇ Providing respite/ relaxation/ escape</li> <li>◇ Safe space to talk and open up</li> <li>◇ Support families to have fun</li> <li>◇ Support me to advocate and make decisions for myself</li> </ul>

Click [here](#) to view *What do we already know?*

# A Tool Belt for Families

A film

## What Is This?

This short film (running time 05m:33s) is inspired by conversations at My Support Day, where families are supported through an evidence-based programme called Community Reinforcement and Family Training (CRAFT). The group leaders (who are also family members) use a Tool Belt analogy to describe the impact of CRAFT to families. They explain to families that they have arrived with an empty Tool Belt, having lost or buried all the tools they used to have, due to the impact of addiction on their family. Learning and practising CRAFT will help fill their Tool Belt with everything they need for their own and their family's wellbeing, through bringing to the fore these tools which have been lost or buried.

## Who Took Part?

This film was written and produced by Mel McPherson, a family member and founding member of My Support Day, a peer-led family support organisation in South Lanarkshire. Many of the statements in the film are quotes and comments by family members.

## What Did Families Say?

The film opens with common sounds surrounding families affected by substance use, including drug-related deaths. The 'rule of five' is mentioned, where for every one person using substances, a further five family members are affected.

The soundtrack then changes to 'Sledgehammer' to illustrate how the person with the addiction holds power and control over the whole family, and dictates everything that happens – *"Often the loved one holds all the tools to the family home when there is no family support"*.

Statements from families describe the powerlessness, suffocation, isolation and pressure of their "rollercoaster" lives, as well as the "postcode lottery" of trying to access family support. They talk of being excluded by treatment services (*"Punished for wanting to be involved"*).

The film presents nine tools which family members say they need in their Tool Belt, including bespoke support, options and choice, championing the value of family support, and joined up thinking by services.

## Key Messages

What is important? SAME as Draft Principles?	What is important? DIFFERENT than Draft Principles?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Able to work holistically with the whole family</li> <li>✓ Collaborative multi-agency approaches; <i>"Joined up thinking"</i></li> <li>✓ Engaging the voice of families at every stage</li> <li>✓ Family rights</li> <li>✓ Focus on people's individuality, strengths and assets</li> <li>✓ Fosters hope and positivity</li> <li>✓ Free from stigma and judgement</li> <li>✓ Help and support is available to individual family members in their own right</li> <li>✓ Swift and responsive; continually improve accessibility and availability; <i>"There when I need it"</i>; <i>"No postcode lottery"</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Choices and options (including how we are supported and by whom)</li> <li>◇ Honesty and openness (e.g. being blunt, direct, brave, assertive, challenging)</li> <li>◇ Included in loved one's treatment and care (family inclusive practice)</li> <li>◇ Safe space to talk and open up</li> <li>◇ Support to build confidence and self-esteem; reassuring</li> <li>◇ Support to grow knowledge and skills</li> <li>◇ Visible family support and recovery</li> </ul>

Click [here](#) to view *A Tool Belt for Families*



# What makes good family support?

A Young Person's View

## What Is This?

Family members were invited to write a letter to their support worker as part of this project. This contribution was written by a young person about what makes good family support, based on their experience. They have also recorded it as an audio clip.

## Who Took Part?

This contribution was written by a young person aged 16 years old, who has been supported by Circle over the past year. The young person's mum receives some support from the same worker, whilst their dad (who lives separately) is supported by Circle's dad's worker.

## What Did Families Say?

This young person is very clear about what makes good family support in their experience. This includes characteristics which are commonly mentioned by others, such as needing *"to be able to trust the worker and feel that you can open up to them"*, and being friendly and funny. The young person also mentions the importance of being able to see change and impact (*"I notice I feel better and the way I deal with situations in my life is better"*). They make a really vital point that communication has to be two way to be successful, *"...otherwise, I feel like I tell them my life story and get nothing back"*. This gives the sense that the young person has experienced this with other workers in the past.

## Key Messages

What is important? SAME as Draft Principles?	What is important? DIFFERENT than Draft Principles?
<p>✓ Trusted relationship</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Be yourself; show your human side; open up about yourself</li> <li>◇ Friendship; be like a friend; relatable; use everyday language</li> <li>◇ Helping; <i>"Invested in helping"</i></li> <li>◇ Humour</li> <li>◇ Leads to change in my life; makes me feel better</li> <li>◇ Safe space to talk and open up</li> <li>◇ Team approach with family; <i>"a two way street"</i></li> </ul>

Click [here](#) to view and listen to *What Makes Good Family Support?* (written version also replicated on the next page)

# What makes good family support?

Having a good worker is really important.

You need to be able to trust the worker and feel that you can open up to them and relate to them. They need to be friendly and my worker is funny which helps.

Getting good support has meant that I notice I feel better and the way I deal with situations in my life is better.

Being supported by someone who is able to give advice and feedback when I ask for it otherwise, I feel like I tell them my life story and get nothing back.

Be able to share some personal experiences of things that have helped so I don't feel like I'm the only one who finds things hard sometimes.

# A Chat about Family Support

## Conversations with Parents

### What Is This?

This is a record of conversations with parents about what makes good (and bad) family support (Key Components); what they value about support, i.e. what is important to them (Priorities); what words would they use to describe good family support (and their workers) (Language); what difference support has made to them and their lives (Change and Impact); and how they would describe a good family support worker (Workforce).

### Who Took Part?

Circle workers held phone conversations with four mums being supported by their West Lothian family support service. The mums are all aged in their 30s, and have eight children between them (aged 2-14 years, four boys, four girls).

### What Did Families Say?

The parents described good family support more than bad. They noted the importance of “*Somebody outside of the family to talk to*”, and also support through crisis (“*I’d have lost my kids without her*”).

Good workers support families to navigate relationships with other services, such as social work (“*the worker helped take the pressure off that relationship*”).

Separate support for children was also appreciated. In terms of what was valued, and what was important to families, again support for the whole family was mentioned, along with clear direction – “*The worker is a soft soul but also assertive and kept me focused on what I needed to do*”.

Parents valued support to make their own decisions, rather than decisions being made for them.

One mum described her worker as “*such a strong person for me, ... like an angel*”. Helping find new solutions and “*different strategies as a parent*” is key.

As well as commonly mentioned words, the parents noted family support should also be “*reassuring*”, “*distracting (from negative thoughts)*” and it “*Lifts you up*”.

The parents were able to identify a number of ways in which family support had made a difference to their lives, including “*The worker made me believe in myself*”.

## Key Messages

<b>What is important?</b> <b>SAME</b> as Draft Principles?	<b>What is important?</b> <b>DIFFERENT</b> than Draft Principles?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Able to work holistically with the whole family</li> <li>✓ Driven by positive family values and a positive inclusive ethos</li> <li>✓ Fosters hope and positivity</li> <li>✓ Holistic approach; <i>“Look at the whole person”</i></li> <li>✓ Swift and responsive; continually improve accessibility and availability; <i>“There when I need it”</i>; <i>“No postcode lottery”</i></li> <li>✓ Trusted relationship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Empathy (not sympathy); understanding of the person’s experience</li> <li>◇ Friendship; be like a friend; relatable; use everyday language</li> <li>◇ Goal setting and structure; solutions-focused</li> <li>◇ Help to navigate other areas of family stress, e.g. school, social work</li> <li>◇ Honesty and openness (e.g. being blunt, direct, brave, assertive, challenging)</li> <li>◇ Leads to change in my life; makes me feel better</li> <li>◇ Providing respite/ relaxation/ escape</li> <li>◇ Safe space to talk and open up</li> <li>◇ Support me to advocate and make decisions for myself</li> <li>◇ Support outside of the family; independent of the family</li> <li>◇ Support through crisis</li> <li>◇ Support to build confidence and self-esteem; reassuring</li> </ul>

Click [here](#) to view *A Chat about Family Support*



**Part 4:  
Conclusions  
and  
Recommendations**

# Conclusions and Recommendations

1. **One hundred and seventy-seven family members** took part in our Whole Family Approach/ Family Inclusive Practice engagement project in January 2021. This includes 135 who took part in our national survey, and 42 who took part in our Conversation Café and 14 other family engagement activities. See <https://www.sfad.org.uk/ask-the-family>.
2. Our national Ask the Family survey found that just one in eight (13%) family members had reached support the same year they became concerned about alcohol or drug use within their family. On average, at the time of the survey, family members had been **affected** by problem substance use (either their own or someone else's) **for 16 years**, and **it was an average of 8 years before they reached family support**. The shortest time before reaching support was 0 years (13%) and the longest was 35 years (2%).
3. Survey respondents identified that ALL categories of family relationship were harmed by the substance use in their family. **On average, 11 people had been harmed for each respondent**. The overwhelming majority of survey respondents, over eight in ten (81%), stated that **'The Whole Family needs support'** means that that everyone in the family (adults and children) should be supported, but in a different way, depending on their needs.
4. Family members generally use very **different terminology** than policy-makers and practitioners to describe what they are looking for from family support. As part of our survey analysis and interpretation, we developed 15 statements based on words which families use to describe how support makes them feel. It would be useful to look at the language in the Draft Principles framework and similarly rephrase this into more family friendly language (which would also be easier for workers to understand).
5. We **tested the Draft Principles** in both bottom up and top down ways, that is we tested how far the Draft Principles as written were supported by families (Top Down) and how far families' own descriptions of family support cross-check and align with the Draft Principles (Bottom Up). We found that **families were in the large part supportive** of the content in the Draft Principles Framework, albeit they would use different language as noted above. On p59 we have listed the *existing* (as written) Draft Principles which families identified as particularly important to them.
6. Families also identified a number of **additional Whole Family Approach/ Family Inclusive Practice Principles**. These are listed on p57. These include three additional Overarching Principles; six for Services, ten for Models of Whole Family Practice, and ten for Workforce. (The Investment principles were not the focus of this project).
7. Amongst these are some **crucial insights** into what families are looking for from their support workers, including showing their human side, honestly challenging them, and being 'invested in helping'. Along with offering a safe space to open up, a trusted relationship was the most frequently mentioned Principle for family support in terms of importance, followed by freedom from stigma and judgement, and working holistically with the whole family. Workers' 'stickability', holding on and never giving up on the family were highly valued.
8. We are aware that far more of our conversations with families were around Whole Family Approaches than **Family Inclusive Practice**, reflecting the focus of the Draft Principles on the former rather than the latter. However family members continued to identify challenges and very negative experiences in relation to their inclusion (or lack of) in their loved one's care and treatment. It is important that the revised Principles proactively seek to strengthen practice across both of these aspects.
9. It is vital that these Principles are not only applicable to those delivering substance-related family support services in the traditional sense, but to all services supporting families (including universal services), and all those coming across families affected by substance use in their practice.

10. It is clear that there is already some **very strong Whole Family Approach and Family Inclusive Practice evident in Scotland**. This had already been identified by the national Working Group, and was confirmed by family members who spoke movingly and powerfully about the difference that family support had made to them and their lives. However as noted above, it had generally taken a long time to find this support (or to find the right kind of support), and there was a strongly held view that “*There simply isn’t enough of it to go around*”, it “*should be available to all across Scotland*” and “*it should be rolled out across Scotland*” (survey comments).
11. Although Investment was not the focus of this family engagement project, it is an obvious point that **significant additional resources are required** to ensure that all members of family get the support they need in their own right, and as defined earlier by families (i.e. Whole Family support means each individual family member – adults and children – being supported in whichever way which they need).
12. Investment will help improve the reach of Whole Family support, but also the **visibility and speed of response** of family support, so family members no longer have to wait an average of eight years before reaching help, as noted in our survey.
13. Whilst the Draft Principles framework has been written as a practice framework focused on services and workforce, we must note the importance placed by families on connecting with others in the same situation, that is the **value of peer support** and the friendship, laughter, solidarity and understanding which come from this. Peer support also needs space and resources to flourish alongside complementary practitioner-led approaches. We will leave our closing comments to a family member:

*“When addiction knocks on your door it turns your whole life upside down, you forget what’s important and get caught up trying to help your loved one, but you forget about yourself and you eventually run out of steam and feel there’s no hope, nowhere to turn and nobody who can understand what your life is like, so you keep it all in and despair becomes your friend. Having family support can help you face another day, support you when you have difficult decisions to make, they help you to think about you and how you’re feeling without feeling guilty, they show you tools that will help you deal with your everyday situations. They have been a life saver for me.”*

# WHOLE FAMILY APPROACH/ FAMILY INCLUSIVE PRACTICE DRAFT PRINCIPLES – WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO FAMILIES?

Families identified the following **EXISTING** Draft Principles as important (listed in order of importance within each section):

<p><b>OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Free from stigma and judgement</li> <li>✓ Help and support is available to individual family members in their own right</li> <li>✓ Fosters hope and positivity</li> <li>✓ Children's rights</li> <li>✓ Family rights</li> </ul>	
<p><b>SERVICES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Focus on people's individuality, strengths and assets</li> <li>✓ Swift and responsive; Continually improve accessibility and availability; "There when I need it"; "No postcode lottery"</li> <li>✓ Collaborative multi-agency approaches; "Joined up thinking"</li> <li>✓ Empowering families to 'reach in' for support, not just be referred by others</li> <li>✓ Holds on until a family feels sufficiently ready to move on; "Stickability"; "Never gives up"</li> </ul>	<p><b>MODELS OF WHOLE FAMILY PRACTICE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Trusted relationship</li> <li>✓ Holistic approach; "Look at the whole person"</li> <li>✓ Offer access to other supports such as food, financial</li> <li>✓ Engaging the voice of families at every stage</li> <li>✓ Mutual respect</li> <li>✓ Offer consistent support for woman (parents) where children have been removed</li> </ul>
<p><b>WORKFORCE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Able to work holistically with the whole family</li> <li>✓ Driven by positive family values and a positive inclusive ethos</li> <li>✓ Need to understand trauma</li> </ul>	<p><b>INVESTMENT</b></p> <p><i>None noted</i> <i>(NB: the Investment principles were not a focus of this engagement project)</i></p>

Families proposed the following **ADDITIONAL** Draft Principles as important (listed in order of importance within each section):

<p><b>OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Connecting with others with the same experience; peer support</li> <li>◇ Visible family support and recovery</li> <li>◇ Included in loved one’s treatment and care (family inclusive practice)</li> </ul>	
<p><b>SERVICES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Providing respite/ relaxation/ escape</li> <li>◇ Choices and options (including how we are supported and by whom)</li> <li>◇ Help and support as soon as you need it (early intervention)</li> <li>◇ Help to navigate other areas of family stress, e.g. school, social work</li> <li>◇ Support outside of the family; independent of the family</li> <li>◇ Lived experience as a qualification/ Learning from lived experience</li> </ul>	<p><b>MODELS OF WHOLE FAMILY PRACTICE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Safe space to talk and open up</li> <li>◇ Leads to change in my life; makes me feel better</li> <li>◇ Time and Patience (going at our pace); recognise change can be hard work for families</li> <li>◇ Support families to have fun</li> <li>◇ Support to grow knowledge and skills</li> <li>◇ Goal setting and structure; solutions-focused</li> <li>◇ Support to build confidence and self-esteem; reassuring</li> <li>◇ Support me to advocate and make decisions for myself</li> <li>◇ Equality between family and worker (on the same level)</li> <li>◇ Love and belonging; feeling valued and worthwhile</li> </ul>
<p><b>WORKFORCE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Listen (take time and show interest)</li> <li>◇ Friendship; be like a friend; relatable; use everyday language</li> <li>◇ Honesty and openness (e.g. being blunt, direct, brave, assertive, challenging)</li> <li>◇ Helping; “<i>Invested in helping</i>”</li> <li>◇ Be yourself; show your human side; open up about yourself</li> <li>◇ Humour</li> <li>◇ Empathy (not sympathy); understanding of the person’s experience</li> <li>◇ Kindness; consideration; caring; nurture</li> <li>◇ Workers openly demonstrate and share knowledge and skills</li> <li>◇ Team approach with family; “<i>a two way street</i>”</li> </ul>	<p><b>INVESTMENT</b></p> <p><i>None noted</i>  <i>(NB: the Investment principles were not a focus of this engagement project)</i></p>

## WHOLE FAMILY APPROACH NATIONAL PRINCIPLES

### OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES

1. Human, family, child and gender rights based;
2. Free from stigma and judgement, recognises equality, diversity innate human worth and strengths and fosters hope / positivity;
3. Help and support is available to individual family members in their own right: Not dependent on whole family participation, nor their loved one being in an alcohol/drug treatment/recovery service;
4. Consistent with the principles of the alcohol and drug Rights, Respect & Recovery Strategy, The Promise, GIRFEC, Scotland's Wellbeing approach The National Performance Framework, Equally Safe Indicators/Safe and Together Model, The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).



### SERVICES

1. Holistic with the well-being of children and young people at the core of their design and delivery;
2. Informed by understanding of, childhood adversity, gender based violence, domestic abuse, inequality, poverty;
3. Able to work with individuals in their own right, recognising and respecting that individuals may have responsibilities and obligations to others within their families;
4. Committed to collaborative multi-agency approaches which actively cross organisational and sector boundaries to provide continuity in support for families;
5. Swift and responsive to individual and collective needs as they emerge and develop;
6. Get alongside families in their communities, continually improve accessibility/availability: Families should be empowered to know how to "reach in", not be "referred to".
7. Focus on people's individuality, strengths and assets, recognising when families and relationships are an asset, and when they are not and may pose risk and
8. Holds on until a family feels sufficiently ready and ready to move on.

### MODELS OF WHOLE FAMILY PRACTICE

1. Holistic approach through GIRFEC, individuals, families and communities;
2. Are built on trusted relationships, mutual respect and a common approach to recovery and growth;
3. Offer access to other supports such as food, financial;
4. Are evidence based and evidence driven – including evidence derived through lived experience;
5. Clearly connecting areas of distress (mental health/recovery), wellbeing, parenting and family support;
6. Key workers in place, working intensively with small numbers of families for sustained periods;
7. Supports a blended approach of service delivery: Face to Face, home based, online and by telephone as appropriate;
8. Services are managed, developed and shaped by families in an open, confident and transparent way: engaging The voice of families at every stage;
9. Offer consistent support for woman (parents) where children have been removed;
10. Involve fathers where appropriate as much as possible.



# WHOLE FAMILY APPROACH NATIONAL PRINCIPLES



## WORKFORCE

1. Is consistent, of high quality and is provided by highly-skilled staff secure in their contracts;
2. Driven by positive family values and a positive inclusive ethos (rather than deficit model of distress in families);
3. Work within clear collaborative frameworks
4. Feel competent, confident, skilled with the right the tools and the culture to help them to support and deliver the best benefits and outcomes for families and individuals within the family;
5. A culture where services and staff are able to understand the spectrum of relationships: (supportive, nurturing, strength and asset based), the misuse of power and trust, need to understand trauma, healing individuals and families;
6. Able to work with families in an adaptive and flexible way e.g. cross Local Authority work, Advocacy knowing legal rights for all parties;
7. Understand and recognise the exploitative and abusive nature of some family relationships and are confident and competent to address and respond to these harmful behaviours
8. Protected and optimised caseload management to support relationship based practice
9. Able to work holistically with the whole family - working across traditional silos and specialisms and working flexible where positive relationships already exist;
10. Highly collaborative in approach, constructively using the totality of professional (statutory and third sector) resource, knowledge and skill across our communities;
11. Peer support and high quality supervision is essential, enhancing skills, knowledge and innovative practice;
12. Roles and responsibilities and understanding of partner agencies is essential for working together and complementing each other (e.g. solution focused, relationship based, asset based).



## INVESTMENT

1. Recognition of the savings up-stream by working early, effectively and sustainably with families
2. Maximum efficiency in the use of public money by co-ordinating the efforts and skills of agencies and individual workers
3. Adequate resources are required to back up delivery of the sustainable long term financial framework to meet the aspirations of this work;
4. Joint commissioning approaches are put into place and funding sources from local Alcohol and Drug Partnerships/Integrated Authorities/Children's Partnerships and other local partners are aligned around common objectives in meeting local need and ambition,
5. We have developed and work to common sets of core outcomes for all partner agencies.
6. We play to the strengths of local partners, creating trust, a positive set of relationships, a strong ethos and alignment between partner's;
7. Finding ways that our current commissioning cycles and competitive tendering approach works for us to develop sustainable services with deep roots in our communities.

# APPENDIX TWO

## Equalities Monitoring Data

Age Band (Years)	No. of participants	% of participants
0-4	1	1%
5-11	3	2%
12-17	7	4%
18-24	4	2%
25-34	21	12%
35-44	31	18%
45-54	34	19%
55-64	40	23%
65+ years	26	15%
Prefer not to say	1	1%
Don't know/ Couldn't collect info	9	5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>100%</b>

Gender	No. of participants	% of participants
Male	19	11%
Female	156	88%
Non-binary	1	1%
Prefer not to say	1	1%
Don't know/ Couldn't collect info	0	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>100%</b>

Ethnicity	No. of participants	% of participants
White	162	92%
Mixed	3	2%
Asian Scottish / Asian British	1	1%
Black Scottish / Black British	2	1%
Other (please specify)	0	0%
Prefer not to say	0	0%
Don't know/ Couldn't collect info	9	5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>100%</b>

Disability	No. of participants	% of participants
People with disabilities (as defined below)	7	4%
People without disabilities (as defined below)	16	9%
Don't know/ Couldn't collect info	154	87%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>100%</b>

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