



# Go and do something...



## ...focus on children and families

**The challenge given by William Booth to his son Bramwell, ‘*Now that you know – go and do something!*’, still remains for Salvationists of the present generation.**

From the early days of The Salvation Army the mission to address the needs of children and families has been a central aim.

This leaflet presents a timeline illustrating social action taken respectively by the UK Government and The Salvation Army from 1867 to 2012. It shows that The Salvation Army was often ahead of the public response to issues related to troubled families and asks: ‘**Can this still happen in the 21st Century?**’

*The Seeds of Exclusion* report (2008, 2009) highlighted the impact of childhood experiences and how these are reflected in later life wellbeing, mental health, vulnerability to substance dependency and employability. There is a clear link between current and past relationship problems and exclusion. Support services need to be developed which facilitate the nurturing of good quality relationships within families whatever their make-up.

It is to this end that The Salvation Army continues to place vulnerable and troubled families at the top of its priorities. The Salvation Army still aims both to advocate for the concerns of troubled families and at the same time to be part of the solution towards improvement.

It acknowledges that it is the *consistent contact with the same families over a longer period* that enables trust to develop, empowers for change and facilitates hope. The Salvation Army recognises that the challenge in 2012 is to identify entry points into the lives of families to join with them and, as a movement concerned with social justice, to work for improvement in their circumstances.

This leaflet presents an insight into the current challenges in addressing the needs of families in the UK and some of the initiatives taken locally. The Salvation Army wants to offer relationship support – connecting and journeying together, particularly with vulnerable families, in order to smooth the way to reconciliation with God, within families and their communities.

**There are some great examples of where this is already happening across the territory. Here are just a few:**

[www.salvationarmy.org.uk/campaigns](http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/campaigns)

## VISION IN ACTION – Fostering and Adoption

The Salvation Army recognises that the best environment for children to develop their life chances is within a stable family, either in a nuclear or extended family. The Salvation Army has produced a **fostering and adoption resource pack** to raise the awareness of this area and plant the seed for the possibility of people pursuing this personally. The resource also aims to raise the understanding of the commitment placed on extended families and the need for the support of their corps congregation in this endeavour. The hope is that by children and young people being assisted in this way they can reach their God-given potential, however difficult the early experiences of their life may have been.

## DEDICATED

### Blaydon School

#### Vision

Born out of prayerful conviction and an identified need, two children's workers – Catherine and Alison (Divisional Children's Officer) – set up the Blaydon project eight years ago as a provision for children and young people.

As a qualified primary school teacher Catherine (with support from Alison and the divisional headquarters team) linked into a local primary school, offering support to teachers, parents and students.

Both moved their homes into the area at the development of the project as they believed in the benefits and importance of living within the community they serve.

#### Quote from a mother of children at Blaydon School

*'I think it's nice that there's somebody there that [the children] can absolutely trust 100 per cent, because they don't always want to go and speak to a teacher... I just think that it's nice to know that they're here, because they are here for the children. It doesn't matter what's happened – they're there for them.'*



Food kitchen c.1930



Blaydon children and young people's project

#### Insight

The school recognised a gap it had in support for children who require extra nurturing. These are often the children who have been bullied by other children and/or who have difficult home environments. Catherine provides this support through group work as well as one-to-one contact, building the self-confidence of the children.

This support is extended out of school with a kids club, the Blaze youth club, junior youth club, monthly Messy Church and summer awaydays. These have resulted in some children attending the annual Salvation Army children's camp.

Being so visible within the school has facilitated the development of trust and the building of relationships. Catherine and Alison, and consequently The Salvation Army, are an integral part of the community in which they live and serve and have a great impact on the lives of the families within it.

## RELATIONSHIP

### London South-East Division Summer Outreach Camp

#### Vision

Developed from the vision and passion of the Divisional Children's Officer, since 2004 The Salvation Army in the London South-East Division has run residential camps during the summer holidays for vulnerable children referred from social services and local corps.

Convinced of the value of taking children out of their everyday difficult settings and influences and allowing them the opportunity to be children in a positive environment with the support and encouragement of committed Christian leaders, the division supported the setting up of these week-long camps.

#### Quote from a Corps Officer

*'Kids camp influences the spirituality of children which in turn impacts family in terms of behaviour, attitudes and morality. They develop a hunger to worship God, which blesses our worship on Sunday. It does make a huge difference to the whole community.'*



Poor children's outing to Epping Forest c.1900



London South East Divisional Summer Camp

#### Insight

The camps take place at Vinehall School and each camp lasts for five days.

The camps are staffed by a team of volunteers who are passionate about making a difference in the lives of these children. There is a high ratio of leaders to children, which fosters trusting and positive relationships with adults through structured and fun activities. These activities also aim to promote positive interactions and the development of skills and self-confidence.

The vision has been developed further by the current Divisional Children's Officer, so children, and then their families, not only engage for the week of summer camp but are also linked into and supported by corps throughout the year. These positive interactions have resulted in children coming to faith.

*While women weep, as they do now, I'll fight; while children go hungry, as they do now I'll fight; while men go to prison,*

## VISION IN ACTION – Employment Plus

In November 2007 The Salvation Army created the **Employment Plus** department so that it could be intentional about serving unemployed people, their families and the communities in which they live. Since then **Employment Plus** has supported some 12,000 people on their journey back into work. This is not only by helping them prepare their CVs, fill in application forms, make links with employers, but also by supporting them to overcome the personal barriers they might have which prevent them from entering and sustaining employment.

## VALUED

### Edinburgh Prison Visitors Centre

#### Vision

The Salvation Army entered into an agreement in 2004 with The Onward Trust and The Scottish Prison Service to manage the Edinburgh Prison Visitors Centre.

With a population of 900+ prisoners (including a percentage of women) in the prison, the visitors centre is responsible for booking in all the visiting family and friends of the prisoners, facilitating engagement with roughly 50,000 people a year.

#### Quote from a prison visitor

*‘I was terrified the first time I came to visit the prison – but all the staff in the visitors centre were so welcoming, a few of the staff sat with me and waited with me. It helped a lot.’*



The Salvation Army Prison-Gate Brigade officers in action c.1885

Edinburgh Prison Visitors Centre run by The Salvation Army

#### Insight

Managed by Kerry, a passionate advocate for the rights of the families of prisoners, the visitors centre provides a holistic service developed with those engaging in the service.

It focuses on providing four key areas of support:

- **Prison-based information** helping to eliminate the anxiety of the people visiting by informing them of what is expected.
- **Children’s advocacy** developing award-winning programmes including one that facilitated fathers in prison sitting with their children during visiting and supporting them to complete their homework.
- **Family support** working in partnership, the centre has a funded worker dedicated to assisting families to understand their rights and the support available.
- **Healthy living** through promotional days and low-cost nutritional food options available within the centre’s snack bar.

The Salvation Army is visibly evident within the service, not only through the chaplaincy and all the literature and signage that is present but also because staff display the enthusiasm and motivation which is characteristic of those who are impassioned by the mission and vision of the organisation.

## VOICE

### Anti-Human Trafficking

#### Vision

The Salvation Army has been committed to stopping human trafficking and supporting victims since the 1880s. Here in the UK in the last few years we have stepped up our commitment to the prevention of trafficking, making it a key strategic area of work within the territory. This has been achieved through awareness-raising programmes and the protection and support of female victims in a dedicated safe house.

#### Quote from a rescued trafficked person

*‘Anything I wanted from them or any assistance... anything that will make me happy, they stick their neck out and go to extra lengths. They make me realise that people are different.’*



Salvation Army Rescue Home in Glasgow

Anti-Human Trafficking work

#### Insight

In 2011 The Salvation Army took responsibility for delivering the UK Government’s £2 million a year contract for managing the provision of services for all adult female and male victims in England and Wales.

The Salvation Army, as prime contractor, has built a network of providers and now has 12 sub-contractors in place who, together with ourselves, provide a service from the moment of referral to the point at which the victim is able to use mainstream services or is able to return home.

Since the start of the contract more than 220 people have been supported by the service.

The capacity of this network has increased with over 100 bedspaces now available for trafficked persons. The Salvation Army also provides more than 1,000 vehicles across the network which can be used to transport victims to safety when rescued.

*in and out, in and out, as they do now, I’ll fight; while there is a drunkard left, while there is a poor lost girl upon the streets,*

## VISION IN ACTION – Family Tracing Service

Motivated by the love of God, the **Family Tracing Service** seeks to reconcile families and facilitate the building of relationships. With over 125 years of experience, the service achieves a more than 89% success rate, handling over 2,500 cases a year by journeying with the individual, by offering support throughout the process of searching regardless of the outcome and by providing a service that is professional, compassionate and non-judgmental.

## KNOWLEDGE

### Alcohol, Children and Families

#### Vision

The Salvation Army continues to raise awareness of alcohol related harm to individuals and society, with particular focus on children and families, and to advocate for UK and European polices aimed at reducing alcohol-related harm in the general population and protecting children.

Currently discussions across a range of Salvation Army services including ALOVE and the Communications Service are aimed at mobilizing Salvation Army young people, and their peers, to monitor the online promotional activities of the global alcohol industry, leading to the development of a UK Youth Network to advocate for the regulation of subversive alcohol promotions to young people via the new media.

#### Quote from a person in recovery from alcohol dependence

*‘A year ago I never thought I’d see my children again. Thank God and The Salvation Army, I have now.’*



Drunkard Raid in Leyton

Street Pastors

#### Insight

The significant influence of alcohol, as a factor in human suffering, was identified by William Booth and the early Salvationists, as noted in the *Darkest England and the Way Out*.

Today alcohol is a major determinant of health and social harm in the UK, Europe and globally.

Alcohol related harm includes adverse physical, psychological and social well-being. The main life style factors driving up the increasing levels of alcohol related harm are; affordability (alcohol is seven times more affordable than 10 years ago) and the influence of the global alcohol industry (spends £600 million annually on advertising in the UK).

A particular current concern is the effect of this huge marketing drive on children and young people using social networking sites. Exposure to alcohol advertising is associated with the onset of drinking among young people and increased consumption among those who already drink.

## COHESIVE

### Family Church

#### Vision

Today the fight is for wholeness in family life, for families to stay together and for the love of Christ to draw men, women and children to unity in him. The good news is that there are Salvation Army centres taking loving and adventurous steps to bring worshipping corps and community together. Traditional Salvation Army methodology is being re-evaluated. In some places the set patterns of the past are being rewoven and the fabric completely changed.

Such corps and centres connect with their communities, not through set programmes that certainly worked until the mid-20th century, but rather through relational interaction for the whole family that sees inclusivity as crucial. Such interaction includes local Salvation Army football clubs; gardening clubs for kids; exercise classes for the over 50's; community gospel choirs for everyone; coffee shops; café church services; Sunday worship feasts – the list goes on.

#### Quote from a newcomer

*‘Coming to The Salvation Army was a warm welcoming experience for all our family. People talked to you and seemed genuinely interested in who you were and why you had come to the church. It felt as if there was a place for you if you wanted to stay... My children felt it was a safe place.’*



Home League Meeting

Messy Church

#### Insight

A gloriously gregarious God-inspired church inevitably draws people. Today's family unit seeks affirming relationships, security and purpose. How well this connects with The Salvation Army's DNA! Indeed, if William Booth were alive in 2012 in the same context that he burst on the church scene in 1865 he would be an insightful and totally committed 36-year-old, born in 1976! As in 1865, his zeal and energy would be for justice for trafficked woman, the unjustly imprisoned, the abused child, the broken family...

Thank God for those Salvation Army corps and centres that, in 2012, fight for the family, and who take risks for the future, bringing holistic and practical faith, with no barrier or condition, to fractured, hurting communities.

*while there remains one dark soul without the light of God, I'll fight, I'll fight to the very end! General William Booth.*



To break the cycles of exclusion from generation to generation

Establishment of the UK Government  
Social Exclusion Unit

National Advisory Committee  
on Nutrition Education  
(NACNE) (1983)

Primary health services for health inequalities  
The new NHS, Modern and Dependable

Dept of Health Campaign to  
fight AIDS/HIV

Addressed drug use in young people and communities  
Tackling Drugs Together

The Black Report  
1980 - 1983

Safe from Harm Guidelines  
1994 - 1997

Emphasis on  
education, prevention  
and enforcement  
Tackling Drugs  
Together  
updated  
2002

Every Child  
Matters  
2003

Integration of  
services, children's  
commissioner  
The Children's  
Act  
2004

Emphasises the  
responsibility of the  
individual and  
alcohol industry  
Alcohol Harm  
Reduction Strategy  
2005

The National  
Children's Plan  
UNICEF Report on  
Wellbeing in Children  
2007

UK Strategy for reducing  
childhood obesity  
Dept of Health:  
Change for Life  
2009

Launch of  
The Big Society  
2010

The UK Alcohol  
Reduction Strategy  
The Riots, Communities  
and Victims Report

Reform of the  
Benefits System  
2012

1968

Flats for  
unmarried  
mothers

1970

Community action  
at corps including  
Parent and Toddlers

1980

Aids /HIV  
Working with families  
via Chalk Farm /  
Wandsworth Corps

1997 - 1999

Safe and Sound Policy / Training  
Addiction Services re-established

2001

The Burden  
of Youth

2002

Launch of  
ALOVE

The Paradox of Prosperity

### The Salvation Army's activities with children and families

*The Seeds of Exclusion (2008, 2009)* identified that among people who are socially excluded, relationship breakdown issues are key factors to people becoming homeless.

In considering the key findings The Salvation Army proposed a range of new initiatives and renewed its focus on some existing programmes.

*In order to support and strengthen bonds within families and the community as a whole and ensure consistent provision across the UK and Ireland, The Salvation Army committed to:*

- enhance and raise the profile of its work with children, parents and families particularly at community level.
- commit to the development of innovative programmes which will support all families whatever their make up.

Within an internal review of The Salvation Army's corps community work carried out in 2009, analysis of the data indicated a wide range of community-focused activities.

**However, only 38% of the 508 corps that responded reported running externally focusing programmes with children and families. Although there are programmes that offer the possibility of reaching out to and supporting families within our communities, a greater impact is needed.**

### Effects of budgetary cuts on children and families

- Spending on children's services across England and Wales decreased by £1.86bn in 2011 (CIPFA, 2011).
- **Local authorities are cutting children's social care budgets by up to 40%.**
- Recent evidence shows over 124 SureStart centres have now closed completely (Guardian, 2011). Other changes which will affect families and children include:
  - The introduction of Universal Credit, which rolls up a series of existing benefits allowances and tax credits into a single payment.
  - The abolition of the Social Fund, which provides crisis loans to vulnerable people.

### TOWARDS 2017:

Within the next five years The Salvation Army intends to:

- › **Work** towards every corps having a **DEDICATED** person or team involved with vulnerable families.
- › **Continue** to provide a place of safety, sanctuary and service to reflect, remember, renew and rebuild healthy **RELATIONSHIPS**. Children and families will be assured that The Salvation Army can be trusted to be interested and involved in their lives.
- › **Facilitate** safe environments where families are **VALUED** and listened to, and expected and empowered to contribute in some way to their own and their local community development.
- › **Provide a VOICE** on behalf of families. Themes of stories heard are taken to local and national government to support the development of appropriate policies.
- › **Develop** a deeper **KNOWLEDGE** and understanding of the lives of vulnerable children and families in the local community, leading to befriending and support programmes in all corps and centres.
- › **Support COHESIVE** and team efforts together with good interdepartmental communication, since the work with vulnerable children and families is a shared concern for the whole organisation.

*The Salvation Army strategy for children and families.*

## A CALL TO ACTION!

While there are **2.6 million** children living in the UK below the poverty line

**Will YOU fight?** *(Department for Work and Pensions, 2011)*

While **600,000** people are trafficked worldwide annually

**Will YOU fight?** *(US Government)*

While there are **705,000** children living in the UK with dependent drinkers

**Will YOU fight?** *(NHS statistic unit)*

While **2** women die as a result of domestic abuse in the UK every week

**Will YOU fight?** *(Family Action)*

While there are **155,000** irregular or undocumented migrant children resident in the UK

**Will YOU fight?** *(University of Oxford)*

While less than **5%** of looked-after children are adopted

**Will YOU fight?** *(Adoption UK, 2011)*

While **17%** of all people arrested are aged between the ages of 11 and 17

**Will YOU fight?** *(Ministry of Justice, 2012)*

While nearly **400,000** children miss at least one month of school each year

**Will YOU fight?** *(Department for Education, 2012)*

While **16,500** children every year in Scotland are separated from a parent through imprisonment

**Will YOU fight?** *(Central Statistics Office, 2012)*

While Ireland has the fifth highest rate of suicide among **15 to 24** year-olds in the 26 countries of the EU

**Will YOU fight?** *(Alcohol action Ireland, 2012)*

### **Will YOU fight to the very end?**

A detailed report of research into children and families will be published during 2012.

Alcohol will be a main focus of the *Children, Young People and Families* Research Report to be produced in 2013.

[www.salvationarmy.org.uk/campaigns](http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/campaigns)



The Salvation Army is a Christian church and a registered charity  
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