It’s All Relative
Our Strategic Plan 2017/20

Families are supported
Families are included
Families are recognised
Families are connected to communities
Families are a movement for change
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Welcome

Welcome to ‘It’s All Relative’, our Strategic Plan for 2017-20.

As Scottish Families approaches its 15th birthday next year, this is a good time to reflect on our grassroots beginnings, as an organisation set up by families for families. It was families coming together to support each other, and to form a united voice for recognition and change, which formed the beginnings of the organisation we have become today.

‘It’s All Relative’ celebrates and returns to these roots, recognising and championing the strength of families.

We have built our plan around a very simple and clear framework of five Outcomes – that families are supported, included, recognised, connected to communities, and a movement for change. In the plan, we also commit to between seven and nine Development Actions for each Outcome – these describe the practical changes and improvements we are going to make over the next three years.

In developing our new Plan, we have engaged directly with one hundred and thirty people across almost forty conversations around Scotland. This included family members, practitioners, policy-makers and people in treatment and recovery, and covered one-to-one, team and group meetings. These conversations also helped us raise awareness of the work of Scottish Families, strengthen existing links and make new connections. I am extremely grateful to everyone involved in this process for the insight, enthusiasm, and inspiration they have brought to our Plan.

Our Plan is ambitious, but we believe it is achievable with the support of families, partner organisations, and funders. We will work hard to secure the resources we need to deliver all of the commitments we have made. We will report on the progress we are making during the lifetime of this Plan so that everyone can keep up to date with how we are doing.

As Chair, I would also like to thank my fellow Board members and our energetic and hard-working staff team, for supporting Scottish Families to get to this exciting point in our story, and in looking ahead with optimism and commitment.

Isabel McNab, Chair
Scottish Families was set up in 2003 as the Scottish Network for Families Affected by Drugs. We extended our remit to include alcohol in 2013 and became Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs.

We were set up by families themselves, who came together to support each other and to create a united voice to raise awareness of the challenges they faced as family members. We are proud of this grassroots history as a supporting and campaigning organisation, created by families for families.

We receive core funding from the Scottish Government as one of their National Commissioned Organisations (NCOs) – in 2017/18, this accounts for around 20% of our income. We are also supported by a range of other government funds, commissioned work, grant funding and fundraising. We are grateful to all of our funders for supporting our work.

We provide a range of services across Scotland from our base in Glasgow.

Our Services

- **Helpline**
- **Telehealth**
- **Bereavement**
- **Local Support**
- **Training**

⇒ **Our free, confidential Helpline** – 08080 10 10 11/ helpline@sfad.org.uk. The Helpline provides listening support and advice to anyone concerned about someone else’s alcohol or drug use, including families and practitioners. Our Helpline is led by staff and supported by volunteers and is available from Monday to Friday between 9am and 11pm and Saturday and Sunday between 5pm and 11pm.

⇒ **Our Telehealth service** provides a series of free, one-to-one CRAFT sessions over the phone, video chat or instant messaging over 6-8 weeks. CRAFT (Community Reinforcement and Family Training) is an evidence-based, non-judgemental programme for anyone affected by someone else’s substance misuse. It covers issues such as positive communication, looking after yourself, and encouraging your loved one to enter treatment. Telehealth is available across Scotland.
About Us

⇒ Our **Bereavement Support Service** offers listening support and advice to family members affected by a drug-related death, along with the opportunity to be referred to a professional counsellor in their own local area. This service is free and offers up to six individual counselling sessions. Bereavement Support is available across Scotland.

⇒ We are commissioned to deliver local **Family Support Services** by a number of Alcohol and Drug Partnerships. This includes the provision of one-to-one support, family support groups and collaboration with other local services. In 2017/18 we are providing services in East Dunbartonshire and Forth Valley. We also work closely with other family support services in other areas, for example signposting people to groups or services in their own local areas. We are working with Alcohol and Drug Partnerships to ensure that the value and impact of dedicated family support is recognised in all local areas, to encourage greater investment.

⇒ We deliver **Workforce Training and Development Support** to organisations across Scotland, including alcohol and drug services and the wider workforce. This support is tailored to meet each organisation’s needs, including short present actions or briefings, half-day interactive sessions, and bespoke training and development work. For example courses for between 10-20 people are available on Families Need to Recover Too, Family Inclusive Practice and Group Facilitation Skills.

Our other work

⇒ We have developed a range of approaches to **Working with Communities**, including our Adult Learning and Empowering Communities (ALEC) toolkit (which uses an asset-based community development approach with both geographic communities and communities of interest); prevalence studies (including with specific groups such as young people) and scoping studies.

⇒ Although we do not have a dedicated **Policy and Campaigns** resource at the time of writing this Plan, the Scottish Families team plays an active role in shaping and influencing policy and practice. For example, we are members of a number of expert groups and partnerships, including parliamentary cross-party groups, local and national strategy and service development groups, and advocacy groups.

⇒ Our **Communications** portfolio includes our website (completely re-designed and re-launched in Autumn 2017), social media and media relations. This work helps increase awareness of families’ experiences, including supporting families to tell their own stories where appropriate.

⇒ Through **Fundraising**, we aim to create a sustainable resource base to support all of our work. Our Fundraising Manager is supported by two local fundraising committees in this work.
What is Family?

Scottish Families uses a broad definition of ‘family’. We support anyone who is concerned about someone else’s drug or alcohol use, which includes family members, carers, friends, neighbours, work colleagues, or any other ‘Concerned Significant Others’ (CSOs). In our strategy engagement conversations, we asked people to tell us what family means to them. Here are some of their views:

“Family is the first port of call for most people when things go wrong.”
   “People looking after people.”
   “My best friends in life are here.” [recovery community]
   “Family is whatever people believe it to be.”
   “It’s helpful to consider friends as family.”
   “The community at large, as human beings, we’re all family.”
   “The people we surround ourselves with.”
   “I’ve got two families – my family at home and the group family.”

These comments support our broad definition of ‘family’ – those you love, those around you, those you care about. However much of the focus of alcohol and drug policy and service development to date has been primarily on Children Affected by Parental Substance Misuse (CAPSM), in particular, younger children (especially under 12s, under 8s or under 5s).

It is important that policy-makers and those planning and delivering services realise that this is only one (although important) family group, and we can be more responsive and effective if we include a broader view of family. Siblings and older ‘children’ (e.g. 12 -25 years) are often overlooked, along with partners, parents, grandparents, kinship carers (formal and informal), friends and others.

If we see the Whole Family as an asset, even where the family unit is fragile or damaged, we can identify and support all of the potential strengths around individuals, whether or not they are in treatment or recovery.

Supported, recognised, included and connected families will create stronger communities – a good investment for everyone.
We know that families support a holistic approach to treatment, improve engagement with services, improve recovery outcomes and act as a protective factor. In our strategy conversations, we asked people to tell us why they thought families should be involved in treatment, support, and recovery:

“Recovery is not just about the person, recovery can’t happen without family recovery as well”

“You can’t have a well-functioning family that excludes a member – you can’t cut them loose”

“Families can help them do their jobs and be part of the team. It can contribute to much better outcomes”

“The family has washed their hands with them, they’ve given them every opportunity. ... Most of the people I work with, they’ve burnt their bridged with their parents, but I’ve never thought of support for families – I’ve focused mainly on the person”

“Families know what the solutions are, but it means services doing things differently!”
Why invest in families?

“Families can help them do their jobs and be part of the team. It can contribute to much better outcomes.”

In 2011, it was estimated that every £1 invested in a family support service created social value worth £4.70. This social return on investment analysis, commissioned by Adfam in England, concluded that savings to the state were greater than the total cost of the service, even before taking into account the positive health and wellbeing effects on the families themselves.1 We are keen to update these figures and calculate a true cost-benefit analysis.

There is a real lack of up-to-date prevalence data for Scotland, to enable us to understand the scale and impact of families affected by alcohol and drugs. We are committed to developing high-quality data within the lifetime of this strategy, to support our qualitative understanding that “Everyone who is impacted has an impact on others. Every person is directly involved or knows of somebody” (family member).

In Scotland there is a range of family support across the country, however, there is significant variation depending on where families are based. Provision includes:

- Community-based support groups facilitated by volunteers or paid practitioners, sometimes as part of wider family support or alcohol / drug services;
- Mutual aid groups (e.g. Al-Anon, Families Anonymous);
- Peer support groups set up and run by families;
- SMART Family and Friends;
- Carers and Young Carers groups and services;
- Family support linked with residential rehabilitation services; and
- Family involvement with local recovery communities.

Many groups are open to all families affected by alcohol and drugs, whether or not their family member is currently (or was previously) linked in with a host service.

There is a sense from those we work with that family support options have diminished in recent years as budgets have tightened and key individuals who perhaps drove local developments have moved on. Again we are keen to gather more robust data on this.

It is important that families have options around support, and indeed many families do link in with more than one form of provision where that exists.

Our Strategic Plan starts from this point – a recognition that families have a vital role but are often excluded; we need to develop more robust, local and national data on prevalence and costs-benefits; there are a range of options for some families but access and choice vary significantly across the country; there is a perception that support for families is reducing as budgets tighten.

Our Outcomes and Development Actions

This Plan is built on a simple framework of five Outcomes – these are the results we want to achieve in 2017-20: Families are:

- Supported
- Included
- Recognised
- Connected to Communities
- A Movement for Change

In developing our new Plan, we collected an ‘Ideas Bank’ for each of our Outcomes. These Ideas Banks were made up of potential new developments, changes, and improvements for the next three years to help us achieve each of our Outcomes. Some of the ideas were about improving what we already do, and some of them were completely new ideas.

In August 2017, we issued an open invitation through our contact list, website, and social media to engage with us in developing our new Strategy. We then spoke with 138 people across 38 different conversations in September /October 2017. This included family members, people in treatment and recovery, practitioners and policy-makers. We engaged with local, regional and national partners, including new and old partners for Scottish Families. Our conversations included formal presentations and more informal one-to-one and group discussions, and they focused on our draft Outcomes and the Ideas Bank.

As well as informing our Plan, this engagement process increased partners’ understanding of Scottish Families’ history, approach and ‘what we do’; strengthened existing links and created new connections; and identified significant learning, good practice and partnership opportunities for us to build on.

This engagement process led us to introduce some new ideas and drop other ones, as well as introducing an additional Outcome – that ‘Families are a movement for change’. The Ideas which were supported are now described as Development Actions for 2017-20. Feedback on the Outcomes was very positive, including significant support for the simplicity of these as a strategic framework (rather than the common multi-layered approach of Vision, Mission, Principles, Priorities, Aims, etc etc etc).

Our conversations confirmed that families continue to face significant challenges in relation to stigma, secrecy, and shame in relation to their wider family, friends, community, and workplaces. But we also confirmed that families have hope, aspirations, strengths and that “we are ready to stand up and be counted” (family member). People are confident that an asset-based approach is essential for change and that families must be at the heart of this.
Families are Supported

Supported

What does this look like?

Case Study

This Family Member contacted the service initially seeking support for her 17-year-old daughter who had been using heroin for two years. Her daughter had recently had two non-fatal overdoses in short succession. She did not feel able to cope with her daughter’s drug taking and her behaviour. She was also concerned for her other three children who she felt were impacted greatly by their sister’s drug misuse. She felt she was supporting her in the wrong ways - providing her with money, buying her new clothes etc.

The Family Member was aware she had no time of her own and felt she had become isolated from her friends. She had been off work for 6 months due to the stress of supporting her daughter.

Through emotional support and working through the CRAFT programme the family member became aware of alternative ways to support her daughter and the importance of allowing her daughter to experience the natural consequences of her decisions and actions. She felt communication improved between herself and her daughter due to her using more positive communication and avoiding arguments. She began feeling more confident with setting boundaries and sticking to these.

She also found dedicating more time to her other children improved their moods and gave her some ‘respite’ from her daughter. Through regular attendance, at a family support group, she felt she reconnected with people and found it helpful to meet with other people going through similar things.

The Family Member returned to work 2 months after accessing support as she felt more able to cope and understood the importance of not always being available for her daughter.

Her daughter ceased her heroin use 4 months after she accessed support and while her other behavioural issues are still impacting the family the Family Member felt more able to cope with this.

(Forth Valley Family Support Service)
“There’s not enough support for families.”

“Coming here has really helped – I’m doing something about it.”
In our strategy engagement conversations, people shared their views on **supporting families**

“There’s not enough support for families.”

“Who do you actually turn to?”

“Families are pretty much neglected across the board, but particularly siblings – the ‘good child’ syndrome.”

“You’re always blaming yourself.”

“We just tried to keep it hidden away.”

“I never told anyone, I was expert at keeping a secret.”

“Maybe I needed someone I could phone but I didn’t feel I could. I worried we’d be living on the street.”

“If it was a health issue, you’d get seen to right away, there’s no shame.”

“Coming here has really helped – I’m doing something about it.”

“A person’s a person – the need of the person is at the centre of everything we do.”
### Development Actions for 2017-20: Families are supported

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<th>Please Make Your Way to the Platform</th>
<th>Year of Young People 2018</th>
<th>Re-Connect and Rebuild</th>
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<tr>
<td>We will invest in and re-design our helpline and website, and develop our social media presence, to offer a range of high-quality options for families and practitioners to contact us, access support, and connect with each other.</td>
<td>We will mark and celebrate the Year of Young People by working with partners on a national demonstration project to engage with 12-25-year-old family members (including siblings) around their experiences; develop and test out a range of responses; build capacity; and share learning and resources across Scotland.</td>
<td>We will explore the use of conflict resolution and family mediation techniques to help families re-connect with each other and rebuild damaged relationships. This includes relationships with the person in treatment/recovery and other family relationships which have been impacted by this.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Support for Families - EVERYWHERE</th>
<th>The Death of a Loved One</th>
<th>A Stitch In Time ...</th>
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<tr>
<td>We will work with partners to extend and strengthen the range and availability of family support provision across Scotland, building on ‘what works’ in the existing provision and promoting support for families in their own right.</td>
<td>We will develop our Bereavement Service for families bereaved by drug-related deaths to increase its profile and use; better prepare people for counselling and increase completion rates, and explore extending the service to alcohol-related deaths and supporting practitioners affected by the death of a service user.</td>
<td>We will promote early intervention and prevention for families, including encouraging families to seek support at any time — not just at times of crisis — and championing the role of families in preventing and reducing harm.</td>
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<th>Signpost and Refer</th>
<th>A Pathway for Families</th>
<th>Let’s Get Craft-y</th>
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<td>We will work with partners to agree reciprocal signposting and referral protocols and agreements, to ensure more families receive the most appropriate support.</td>
<td>We will develop a pathway for those engaging with Scottish Families, from the first contact through to volunteering, peer support and employment opportunities for those who wish.</td>
<td>We will increase our level of expertise around the CRAFT programme, including working towards full accreditation for all of our practitioners and hosting Scottish-based CRAFT training for others.</td>
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Families are Included

Included

What does this look like?

Case Study

I remember in my first month at East Dunbartonshire, an addiction nurse telling me that it was ‘inappropriate’ for a wife to come into her husband’s appointment. She told me, ‘you deal with the families and we’ll deal with the person with the addiction, it’s best to keep them separate’. That was over four years ago and I’m delighted to say things are dramatically different now.

It definitely helps to be in the same building as the addiction staff, often they’ll pass me saying, ‘Oh, I’ve got a mum I need you to call’ and rush off to get me their details. Each new member of staff comes along to a family support group so they can see how families are affected by a loved one’s drug or alcohol misuse and this also means they are more likely to refer families in future as they know what the support we offer looks like.

The initial appointment letter inviting people to come for an assessment at the Alcohol and Drug Service now includes a line letting them know they are welcome to bring along a friend or family member. If they do bring someone with them, that person is given our details and asked whether they would like us to call them, again a massive step forward for family-inclusive practice.

I think the best example of how family inclusive East Dunbartonshire ADP has become, is when they found out some family members were working towards their Diploma in Indian Head Massage and needed ‘guinea pigs’ to practice on. They asked if the families could come into their office one lunch time and practice on the staff, which they did. The family members and the Addiction staff both loved it!

(East Dunbartonshire Family Support Worker)
In our strategy engagement conversations, people shared their views on including families:

“There’s no need for a who’s who. We’re all the same, we’re all operating out of pain. We need to work together.”

“I had a sympathetic boss but it took me years to tell them!”

“I would have to lie to my manager – I don’t know her view of addiction.”

“He [son] doesn’t manage anything at all. I’m advising him all the time. You take on the advisory role plus some”

“Our family members say we’re NOT carers – we’re trying to teach them not to be in that role!”

“This group has given me my voice back.”

“It affected how I saw myself in the profession I am in.”

“You need to walk in that person’s shoes to know.”
### Development Actions for 2017-20: Families are included

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<th>Investors in Families</th>
<th>Whole Family Recovery</th>
<th>Staying Alive</th>
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<td>We will develop a network of family members to develop, test out and apply ‘Investors in Families’ quality improvement tools for services, to strengthen family-inclusive practice and encourage Whole Family approaches. This may include the development of a formal accreditation scheme for services.</td>
<td>We will strengthen our training and workforce development to promote family-inclusive practice and Whole Family Recovery approaches. This includes packaging what we offer, developing new courses, and collaborating with other training providers such as Scottish Drugs Forum.</td>
<td>We will champion and support the role of families as a protective factor in reducing drug-related death, including promoting naloxone training for families, supporting assertive outreach with families, and taking a strengths-based approach to prevention.</td>
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<tr>
<th>The Family Business</th>
<th>We Know What We Know (And We Don’t Know What We Don’t Know)</th>
<th>Am I a Carer?</th>
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<td>We will engage with workplaces to raise awareness, tackle stigma and improve support for employees who are family members affected by alcohol and drugs. This will include more responsive and compassionate workplace policies, culture and practice, including employees, colleagues, and managers.</td>
<td>We will link with the academic research community, including the new Drug Research Network Scotland, to increase learning and understanding about families; strengthen our evidence base; and contribute to new research and innovation.</td>
<td>We will work with families and policy-makers to raise awareness of the caring roles, responsibilities, and entitlements of some families, including young carers and (formal and informal) kinship carers. This includes ensuring families recognise and can access their rights as a Carer where appropriate, linked to legislation.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Looking for Justice</th>
<th>Scottish Families is for Everyone</th>
<th>Family Recovery Workbook</th>
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<td>We will develop opportunities to support families affected by both alcohol/drugs and the justice system, working in partnership with organisations such as Families Outside, prisons and prison visitor centres, and local and national community justice bodies.</td>
<td>We will ensure we are actively connecting with all families across all of the equality groups, recognising and celebrating Scotland’s diversity. We will focus in particular during this strategy on reaching young people, men, minority ethnic groups and the LBGTQI community.</td>
<td>We will work with the Scottish Recovery Consortium to produce a Family Recovery Workbook – a partner publication to their Scottish Recovery Workbook. This will include information on theory, lived experiences and recovery processes.</td>
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Families are Recognised

Recognised

What does this look like?

Case Study

When the drug-related death statistics for 2016 were published on August 15th, 2017, it was easy for families and their pain of losing their loved one to be hidden behind the statistics – to become numbers and percentages rather than a person and a family. As a response to the statistics, we held a bereavement outreach day. Our staff team were proactive and placed themselves across Scotland to be a response to anyone who needed support or who were concerned about the statistics. We had staff in East Dunbartonshire, Dundee, Edinburgh, Forth Valley and Glasgow where we explained our services, offered support and developed relationships with potential partners.

We also reacted to media enquiries from STV and BBC concerning the statistics by asking our friends at SEA (Someone Else’s Addiction) Support Group in Kilmarnock if they would be interested in being interviewed and to talk about their personal experiences to show what families go through when they lose a loved one to drugs.

The SEA group agreed to be involved and were confident in speaking out about their experiences and how families need to be recognised and thought of more when statistics and stories are published concerning drugs and alcohol:

‘We talk about figures but these are lives – people’s daughters, sons, husbands. It’s just getting worse and worse’ – Julie, co-founder of Someone Else’s Addiction (SEA).

Their story became the feature for both BBC News and STV News at 6pm and had a reach across Scotland to everyone who tuned in to watch the 6pm news on August 15th.

Other media enquiries included our CEO interviewed live on BBC Radio Scotland Newsdrive and our comments appeared in several articles where we clearly stated that the statistics would be even higher if not for the efforts families are making in keeping their loved ones safe and alive.
In our strategy engagement conversations, people shared their views on recognizing families.

“Everyone knows someone who is touched by alcohol and drugs.”

“Everyone’s got a story or a reason why they use drugs.”

“People don’t think about the family and how it affects them, they don’t think about the bigger picture. I am the bigger picture!”

“As much as I don’t like him just now, he is my son! ... I don’t care who sees me here, but I do care about my son.”

“It’s real when you tell someone else.”

“I felt I was backed into a corner and there was nothing I could do ... I felt there was nowhere to go. It was a big relief when it was out in the open.”

“People in addiction, including families, their voice is very, very small.”

“I went to the doctor about my concerns [about his wife’s drinking] and he just said there was nothing you could do – she needs to decide herself. Never once did he ask how I was.”
### Development Actions for 2017-20: Families are recognised

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<td>We will work with families to look at the language and other communication we use, to make sure we are reflecting families’ own preferences.</td>
<td>We will work with partners to carry out a national prevalence, impact and finance mapping study, to understand scale, experiences and costs/benefits around families.</td>
<td>We will design and deliver a national campaign, inspired and informed by families, to increase awareness and support; reduce stigma and build connections, and inform and inspire change.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Hello! We’re Over Here!</th>
<th>Road to Recovery – 10 Years On</th>
<th>In My Own Words</th>
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<tr>
<td>We will increase the public, professional and media profile of Scottish Families as a unique national organisation which truly represents the voice and experience of families, and which supports families across Scotland.</td>
<td>We will actively contribute to the review of the Scottish Government’s Road to Recovery Strategy, to strengthen families’ voice and influence, and promote a Whole Family approach to recovery. We will also actively participate in delivery of the new strategy.</td>
<td>We will create opportunities for families to tell their own stories, to share their voices and experiences directly. We will use multi-media approaches to share these powerful stories to increase awareness and campaign for change. This includes linking with people with a public profile who are family members.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Scotland’s Changing Relationship with Alcohol</th>
<th>Promoting Mental Health</th>
<th>What About ACEs?</th>
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<tr>
<td>As part of the Alcohol Advocacy Coalition?, we will actively participate in the refresh of the national alcohol strategy, including reducing consumption; campaigning on price, availability and marketing; promoting access to independent and accurate information and advice; improving treatment and support; and championing the Alcohol Free Childhood campaign.</td>
<td>We will campaign for improvements in dual diagnosis (mental health and addictions), including ensuring access to appropriate services and improving joint working. We will also actively participate with families in the development of the new national Suicide Prevention Plan, learning from families’ own experiences.</td>
<td>We will work with families and partners to ensure that the focus on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and early trauma does not increase judgement and blame on families for someone else’s addiction. We will encourage services to take a forward-looking, trauma-informed approach which acknowledges each individual family’s story, strengths, and assets and which promotes everyone’s wellbeing.</td>
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2. The Alcohol Advocacy Coalition members are Alcohol Focus Scotland, Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems (SHAAP), British Medical Association and Scottish Families.
Families are Connected to Communities

Connected to Communities

What does this look like?

Case Study

ALEC peer mentor training was delivered to eight students over a six-week period at the Falkirk campus with Access to Social Care students who volunteered to take part to enhance their own learning, practice and employability. With a focus on the Falkirk campus as a community, participants were encouraged to explore how local assets (people, associations, services, businesses and open spaces) and whole-community approaches could be used to create opportunities that would reduce the impact of substance related harms and isolation whilst improving overall health and wellbeing through participation and increased social connection. Students were also provided with drug and alcohol awareness training as well as listening skills techniques.

This work as has featured as an example of good practice for peer-led approaches to improving mental health and wellbeing in the National Union of Students, Further Education and Mental Health round table and report, 2017.

‘By delivering this training to students they were able to gain a qualification as a community champion and gain knowledge, understanding and tools to better support their peers with not only issues surrounding alcohol and drugs but mental health and wellbeing also.’

(Health, Wellbeing and Sport, Vice President, Forth-Valley College)

‘I found the whole course informative & enjoyed finding out what Scottish Families do... It has given me the incentive to explore the service and assets in my own area with the view to getting involved in some of them.’

(Social Care student).

Scottish Families was also approached as a result of the ABCD Masterclass in 2016 to lead on a piece of work on behalf of Falkirk Community Justice. Social work staff received ALEC training which was used to identify a project, local assets and local builders who would support the development of volunteer pathways to enhance community justice processes. Over a 6 month period over 200 local residents were engaged from 33 stakeholder associations who participated in a series of ALEC events, activities and initiatives to inform priorities for Falkirk outcomes improvement plan. A full evaluation report was produced as part of this work including workforce, community and lived experience learning and plans by local residents to initiate an asset transfers (with approved planning). The report also provided recommendations from lived-experience events and actions for service improvements.
In our strategy engagement conversations, people shared their views on connecting families and communities:

“If people weren’t so ignorant, they wouldn’t be so judgemental.”

“Many people are just completely disconnected.”

“It’s not that folk have to walk about with a badge, but it should just be accepted and understood.”

“People just want to love and be loved.”

“I was terrified to tell people.”

“I’m surprised there is stigma after all these years.”

“We suffer the stigma as much as anyone else – who do we turn to?”

“You’re never going to change the stigma overnight.”
### Development Actions for 2017-20: Families are connected to communities

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<th>Meet ALEC</th>
<th>From Stigma to Respect</th>
<th>Purely Voluntary</th>
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<tr>
<td>We will roll out our Adult Learning and Empowering Communities (ALEC) Toolkit, focused on asset-based community development and growing whole community responses. We will also explore new methods of delivery, both online and directly with communities.</td>
<td>We will help shape and deliver the national anti-stigma campaign to challenge and change attitudes towards all those with lived experience – including families.</td>
<td>We will strengthen our approach to volunteering with Scottish Families, including a volunteering pathway for family members; opportunities for home-, community- and office-based volunteering; and ‘volunteer-friendly’ accreditation.</td>
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<tr>
<th>A Resource for ADPs</th>
<th>Breaking News</th>
<th>Get Involved!</th>
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<td>We will refresh our relationship with Scotland’s Alcohol and Drugs Partnerships (ADPs) including clarifying our Core Offer funded by the Scottish Government, and supporting ADPs in relation to Quality Principle 8 (“Services should be family-inclusive as part of their practice”).</td>
<td>We will work positively and pro-actively with local and national media, to increase awareness and understanding of families’ experiences; challenge stigma and negative language, and encourage families to seek support and connections. This may include media training for families to support them to engage with the media.</td>
<td>We will seek opportunities for wider communities to get involved in our work with families, to increase awareness, support and connections. This includes volunteering and fundraising opportunities.</td>
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Keep the Faith

We will work with faith communities to ensure families are included in their recovery work as appropriate.

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A Movement for Change

What does this look like?

Case Study

Scottish Families has been part of the executive council for the Recovery Walk for the past 3 years. The council has a responsibility for identifying the location for the walk, fundraising and mobilising the country to attend the walk. Dundee was the chosen area to host the walk for 2017 due to the development of the local recovery community and the ability to strengthen that through the creation of the Walk movement.

Families were the agreed topic with a theme of “Love Makes You Family” chosen by Scottish Families to give thanks and love to the families that support communities across Scotland. The local host network, Recovery Dundee, included families in the development of what the day would include from leaflet drops, banner, and flag making through to organising the festival stage. Scottish Families conducted a survey to find out what families would like to see on the day and aimed their Recovery Village activities at family fun for all ages.

The day started with a roses ceremony where families were invited to place a rose in the river to remember those they have lost. The walk made its way through the city to the Recovery Village. The Scottish Families marquees were busy all day resulting in 226 faces painted, 298 glitter tattoos applied, over 400 photo booth pictures taken, 1100 crafting family trees made, 2 bears were raffled to new homes and many memorial messages left in the bereavement memory book. Families were amazed that they were welcomed to the event and that everything was free allowing all families to be included.

A family member’s story:

“What a fabulous day from start to finish, the support and friendship shone through. It was the first Recovery Walk Charlie (my dog) and I had done. We were both made to feel very welcome, kids and adults petting Charlie and strangers becoming friends before the day was over. I was in awe of the vast numbers that took part in the walk. The quotes on tee-shirts and banners were fabulous and thought-inspiring. So much effort from so many people, sharing hope for the future. At the park, the kids could have some fun face-painting, games, assault courses and more, while the adults could dance the afternoon to the great live music. For me, it was a time to chat & laugh putting problems to the side for a few hours. It couldn’t have been a better day. Watching the kids getting back on the bus, tired but happy, said it all.”
In our strategy engagement conversations, people shared their views on families as a movement for change:

“Don’t re-create the recovery movement – join it! Let’s do more things together and move into the same space.”

“You have to create the conditions to allow people to come together”

“Ask families – what would make a good movement?”

“The women that I know, they are so strong and resilient”

“As families, we have rights as well. I have a right to privacy. … You feel you’re getting punished, your address is in the paper. My neighbour’s never even knew about X’s [son’s] drug habit”

“Linking different communities is important, we are the only family support group in this area”

“We shouldn’t be hidden, we should be visual and vocal”
Families are a Movement for Change

Development Actions for 2017-20: Families are a movement for change

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<tr>
<th>Linking Lived Experience</th>
<th>We’re All In This Together!</th>
<th>Recovery Initiative Fund (RIF) For Families</th>
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<tr>
<td>We will help connect families with lived experience together across Scotland, to reduce isolation; build connections and capacity; share experiences, learning and ideas; and create change. This includes linking families, groups and services.</td>
<td>We will grow our movement of families as part of the wider recovery movement, uniting all those with lived experience of the impact of alcohol and drugs. This includes working together with the Scottish Recovery Consortium and local recovery communities.</td>
<td>We will work with the Scottish Government and the Corra Foundation to establish an ‘RIF for Families’ small grants scheme to help build our movement for change.</td>
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<tr>
<th>What about families?</th>
<th>A Rights-Based Approach</th>
<th>Members Only ...</th>
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<td>We will campaign relentlessly to increase awareness of the impact on families; their contribution to holistic treatment and recovery; and their need for better recognition and support.</td>
<td>We will develop a rights-based approach across our work, making sure that families are aware of their rights and are supported to exercise these rights. This links to a wide range of legislation, such as children’s rights, human rights, carers’ rights, communities’ rights etc.</td>
<td>We will review our Scottish Families Membership function, to make sure membership of our organisation is meaningful for families and partner organisations.</td>
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<th>What do we think about that?</th>
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<td>We will develop a clear policy position on a range of relevant issues relating to alcohol, drugs and families, to help guide our work and engagement with partners:</td>
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