Oldham Best Start in Life Parenting Support Investment Programme

Guidance Notes

About this investment

Oldham Council working with Action Together would like to invest in up to 10 VCFSE organisations to be trained to deliver the Parent Puzzle Programme for parents / carers of children under 5 years. This investment will also support the delivery of the Programme by the trained organisations.

Background

Oldham Council working with Action Together would like to invest in up to up to 10 organisations who would like to work closely with Best Start Family Hubs over the next 3 years.

Best Start in Life funding has given the Parenting Support Team at Oldham Council the opportunity to scale up the delivery of face-to-face parenting group programmes over the next 3 years.

Alongside the core parenting team Oldham Council would like to extend the delivery and reach of the programmes to include VCSFE organisations facilitating the Centre for Emotional Health Parent Puzzle Programme for parents/carers of children under 5 years.

In supporting VCSFE organisations to deliver, far more communities and seldom heard from groups would be reached. It would also ensure that a consistent evidence-based model is used where facilitators are giving the same messages to parent/carers around supporting their children to achieve the best outcomes including a good level of development at the age of 5.

Training in delivery of the Parent Puzzle Programme requires attendance at the 4 day Parent Group Leader training in the Nurturing Programme, which is the core parent programme. Following that. Attendance at the 1 day training in Parenting Puzzle Workshop will be required.

Parent Group Leader - The Centre for Emotional Health
Parenting Puzzle Workshops - The Centre for Emotional Health

What investment is available?

A maximum investment of £10,000 will be available to VCFSE organisations which can be used for the following purposes:

- £2,500 for staff time to attend training, coaching sessions and any other staff expenses
- £1,500 for each 4 week course delivered (subject to a maximum of 5) – to cover the costs of delivering each session including room hire, refreshments, 2 facilitators, administration, facilitator travel expenses and resources

Key Dates

Deadline for submitting an expression of interest:
Monday 12 October 2026

The deadline for submitting an expression of interest is **12 noon on Monday 12 October 2026.**

All **projects must be delivered and funding spent by no later 31 March 2027.**There is potential for the programme to be extended but more details will be released at a later date once any continuation funding is confirmed.

Who is the investment for?

Groups and organisations can submit an expression of interest if they:

- are a voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) group locally rooted or actively working in the borough of Oldham; *and*
- are a member of Action Together CIO (they can register for free to become a member here); *and*
- are formally constituted; *and*
- have a bank account in the organisation's name requiring at least two unrelated signatories; *and*
- already support families with children under 5 in their communities.

Please note - To receive this investment, any outstanding monitoring information required by Action Together, relating to other grant funding must have been completed.

What will organisations who receive an investment be expected to do?

- Provide 2 members of staff or 1 member of staff and a volunteer to be trained and facilitate each course
- Provide 2 members of staff or volunteers to attend training for 5 full days
- Attend regular mentoring / coaching sessions (up to 4)
- Provide a key point of contact
- Deliver the Parent Puzzle group using a standard programme approach including the use of pre and post evaluations in a specified format
- Engage with families and recruit participants for each course
- Promote the sessions in line with branding guidelines that will be provided
- Carry out administration and data returns before, during and after each session
- Deliver between 3 and 5 courses (4 weeks each) by the end of March 2027
- Ensure that a minimum of 8 parents complete each course with at least 1 child under the age of 5 (completion means attending at least 3 out of 4 of the sessions)
- Store resources
- Find and pay for venues for each course
- Provide timely information about each of the sessions to enable promotion on Family Hub media and website
- Sign families up to the Family Hub newsletter and Essential Parent App
- Signpost families to other connected services
- Carry out all relevant health and safety risk assessments
- Be a member of the Family Hub Operational Group and attend meetings every 2 months (at least 3 per year)
- Provide an end of investment report and case study
- Attend a quarterly community of practice to meet with other organisations who have received this investment and share experiences and best practice.

What will be provided by the Family Hubs Parenting Team?

- Guidance for the delivery and facilitation of the courses and the provision of data required
- The organisation and payment for training of staff / volunteers
- Parent Puzzle Books and Boards
- Coaching / mentoring support sessions
- Quality assurance checks
- Quarterly Communities of Practice

How do we let you know if we are interested in receiving this investment?

- Please complete a brief online expression of interest form which you will find by clicking the link here
- We are happy for groups to send photos or short videos to help to let us know more about you. If you wish to send a video, please contact funding@actiontogether.org.uk and we will discuss the easiest way for you to do this.
- If you are using an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tool to help you to complete the expression of interest form, please be aware that whilst it can be a very useful tool, it often produces generic and inaccurate content. Using AI can be a helpful starting point, but please review content that has ben generated using AI to ensure that it reflects the organisation's unique experiences, skills and community and that it is accurate.

What happens after an expression of interest is sent?

- The Oldham Grants Team will carry out due diligence checks and a panel will consider your expression of interest along with any others received. Action Together may come back to you to request further information before or after the panel meeting. We plan to hold the panel meeting at the end of October
- We aim to notify organisations of the outcome of the panel meeting by email within 5 working-days after the meeting, however, we may contact you to clarify aspects of your proposal further.

If an organisation does not receive an investment

The organisation will be offered further support from one of our community development workers who will also be able

to discuss the idea and give feedback about the proposal

Contact us

If you have any questions about the process outlined above please contact
funding@actiontogether.org.uk or call **0161 339 2345** and ask to speak to a member of the Oldham Funding Team.