

STATES OF JERSEY



MILLI'S CONTACT CENTRE: FUNDING

Lodged au Greffe on 17th June 2014
by Deputy G.P. Southern of St. Helier

STATES GREFFE

PROPOSITION

THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –

to request the Minister for Health and Social Services, in conjunction with the Minister for Treasury and Resources and other Ministers as appropriate –

- (a) to provide appropriate funding to enable Milli's Contact Centre to continue to support children of separated families over the coming year; and
- (b) to establish, following negotiations with Milli's, sustainable longer-term funding based on a 3 year service level agreement founded on the National Network of Separated Family Centres (NNSFC) guidelines.

DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER

REPORT

The Minister for Health and Social Services' proposals in P.82/2012: 'Health and Social Services: A New Way Forward' contains the following statement:

**“5.2. REFOCUSING SERVICES FOR CHILDREN (STARTING WITH EARLY INTERVENTION)
THE VISION FOR SERVICES FOR CHILDREN**

To improve outcomes for children measured in terms of their health, social wellbeing and educational attainment. This applies to all services provided to children and will be achieved by close working between States Departments and the independent and Third Sectors.”

One such independent third sector services is Milli's Child Contact Centre, which has long delivered a vital service with little recognition from the States in the form of proper funding. It is time that changed.

Milli's Child Contact Centre

Providing a safe, caring space where parent-child relationships can be maintained.

Parental divorce or separation is shown to be more harmful to children, in terms of the stress they experience, than severe illness or the death of a family member. However, research also shows that children who grow up with non-resident but involved fathers will adjust significantly better and have fewer mental health problems as adults. Most families are able to work together to ensure that their children are able to spend time with both parents but, for a number of reasons, some are unable to do this.

Milli's is a meeting place where, when there is no viable alternative, children of separated families can spend quality time with a parent they don't live with. We provide a safe, caring environment where contact (we prefer the term 'parenting time') can be maintained in a warm and comfortable atmosphere for both parents and children. Milli's is a place in which a parent that the child lives with can have confidence, a place where there will be no arguments or family rows and a place where there is time for a child to relax and enjoy spending time with their parent.

Milli's is staffed by well-trained and highly motivated volunteers who recognise the importance to children of maintaining relationships with all of the important adults in their lives. They give up their time to help families who may be struggling to achieve this, either in the short term or over longer periods.

Milli's has been providing services to families living on the island for 14 years.

Offering wider relationship support to help families move on.

Milli's is part of a range of services provided by the new Jersey Centre for Separated Families, a voluntary, community organisation that works with everyone affected by family separation in order to bring about better outcomes for children. It works to maintain family bonds in order to help children through the changes that come with divorce or separation. The services are non-judgemental, supportive and child-

focussed. It recognises the importance of family ties and offers relationship education to build stronger and more resilient parenting relationships after divorce or separation.

The services are available to parents who are caring for their children alone, those who are sharing care and those who are not able to spend time with their children. Parents, carers, grandparents or anyone else with concerns about family separation are welcome.

Milli's in facts and figures

Milli's is currently helping 39 children maintain a relationship with a parent that they might otherwise lose contact with. As can be seen, the majority of cases are referred to Milli's through the court system.

<i>Referred by</i>	<i>Number of children</i>	<i>Number of parents</i>
Jersey Family Court Advisory Service (JFCAS)	25	22
Social Services	5	4
Self-referral	9	7
Total	39	33

Additional information –

- One child referred by Social Services is escorted and supported for fortnightly prison visits
- One father flies in from Wales once a month
- One father flies in from London fortnightly.

Most of the children who see one of their parents at Milli's are under 8 years of age, with most cases being babies or toddlers. Milli's have also had teenagers use the Centre as a place where they feel comfortable and safe to meet a parent they have not had contact with for a long time.

The number of cases at any one time is determined by the input required. Many of the younger babies and fathers can need help and assistance with feeding and changing the little ones.

Because the work is all about bonding and interacting to build a good strong relationship, there is no use of TVs or games machines, and therefore some parents struggle and need guiding and supporting as they are so used to visual aids.

Milli's funding

Securing funding is a longstanding and difficult problem that diverts valuable time and resources which could be used working and helping families and children. A list of bodies who have contributed to Milli's can be found in **Appendix 1**. Donations vary from tens to thousands of pounds. Very few stretch beyond one-off annual grants.

Running costs for the year ended 31st July 2013 were approximately £13,000.

Currently Milli's has no guaranteed yearly funding to rely on, and this has been the case over most of its life. Without a source of stable and adequate funding, there can be no guarantee that the service can continue over the coming year. As a result, Milli's has had to turn down fresh referrals recently. The funding problem has been compounded by 2 further issues –

- The service has been forced to change venue from Bel Royal to Janvrin school, which has costs associated with the move, and
- Several of the long-term and experienced (unpaid) volunteers are coming to the end of their terms. Recruiting fresh staff for what is a demanding role requiring fairly intensive training is proving difficult.

The need for additional recruitment is illustrated by the following figures, given by the Co-ordinator of Milli's, Denise Carroll, M.B.E. –

Full staffing	18
Current staffing level	13
Staff leaving	5

The security of a 3 year funding plan, with consideration to extend funding beyond this, would offer a stable and secure way forward. It could enable the payment of volunteers to replace the loss of highly experienced staff.

Milli's would of course continue to raise funds from private sources to augment core funding.

What families say about the service provided...

'I would just like to record my personal thanks and gratitude to you and your team at the contact centre. As you know, until recently, I was probably your longest standing client. The help and support you have provided has been enormous in what were initially very difficult circumstances particularly for me personally.'

"I hope you can look back and regard the support you and your team have provided as one of the centre's success stories as [child] and [child] now have a proper established and structured access arrangement which I know they benefit greatly from."

“The work undertaken by the centre should never be underestimated as I have experienced first hand the remarkable difference your support can give in establishing parent and child relationships.”

Proposed Budget

<i>Expenditure</i>	<i>(£,000)</i>
Service delivery	4.0
Volunteer costs	2.0
Promotion of services	2.5
Office costs	2.5
Insurance	0.6
Training	5.0
Communications (inc. website)	1.0
Total	17.6

This proposal is designed to deliver funding to an important and proven service to the courts and to social services which hitherto has been neglected. As has been demonstrated, there is a fairly urgent need to deliver some funds immediately to maintain the service as currently structured. This should be followed by the negotiation of a service level agreement and the delivery of sustained long-term funding over a 3 year period. It follows exactly the policies outlined in the proposal of the Minister for Health and Social Services for greater co-operation between her Department and Third Sector services contained in ‘A New Way Forward’.

Financial and manpower implications

Delivery of a maximum of £17,600 for the coming 3 years would not seem to be likely to overstretch the resources of those at the Health and Social Services Department who administrate the delivery of Third Sector services, and I believe that this could be funded from within existing resources.

Sources of funding

Ana Leaf Foundation
Ogier
Elizabeth Violet Rouse Settlement
Jersey Ladies Tangent
St. Lawrence Charity Horse Show
EFG
Schroder's
RBC Services Ltd.
Samarès Investments Limited
Lions Club of Jersey
Jersey Electricity plc.
Parish of St. Saviour
Parish of St. Lawrence
Parish of St. Ouen
Viberts
Hambros
The Masonic Lodges
IFM Trust Limited
St. Martin's Gymkhana and Fête
Waitrose Community Fund
Social Security Department
St. Matthew's Church
Lloyds TSB
Rotary Club
Osiris Management Services
Benest & Syvret
Sinels
HSBC
Barclays
AIB Care Scheme
Andium Trust

Training

Milli's is a member of the National Association of Child Contact Centres (NACCC).

NACCC is the supporting membership body for around 350 child contact centres and services located throughout England (including the Channel Isles), Wales and Northern Ireland. It is the largest in Europe. Child contact centres and services are neutral places where children of separated families can enjoy contact with their non-resident parents and sometimes other family members, in a comfortable and safe environment. Over 4,000 volunteers and staff work in these centres and over 17,000 children use them each year. They are run by a variety of independent organisations that form the membership of NACCC, along with affiliated members such as family lawyers, CAF/CASS, CAF/CASS CYMRU and the judiciary.

NACCC values are –

- Ensuring safety
- Child centred within the family
- Promoting equality, celebrating diversity
- Independent and impartial
- Respecting individuals, preserving confidentiality
- Valuing and supporting voluntary service
- Sharing skills and expertise to achieve better outcomes for children and their families.

Volunteering with Milli's

Volunteers initially undergo a meeting to discuss the role and ensure they understand what is required of them, and are then invited to read the volunteer's agreement/contract and complete the necessary application forms. Volunteers then have to undertake –

- A DBS check
- First Aid training
- Child protection course.

As soon as the DBS is received, they are partnered with a senior member of staff to help, support and train the volunteer. Volunteers are partnered for the first year for on-the-job training.

There are also 11 NACCC training modules that every volunteer must undertake over a set period of time, and specialist training from Nick and Karen Woodall, The National Network of Separated Family Centres (NNSFC).

A personal file containing copies of the various National Association of Child Contact Centre (NACCC) policies are issued to each volunteer to read, understand and keep for future reference.

Confidentiality Policy
Data Protection
Domestic Violence Policy
Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy

Child Protection Policy
Health and Safety Policy
Complaints Procedure

National Network of Separated Family Centres

Milli's is also a member of the National Network of Separated Family Centres and has undertaken training in *Whole Family Approaches to Supporting Separated Families*; *Putting Children First Parenting Programme*; and *An Introduction to Understanding and Working with Parental Alienation*.

Background Information

The Separated Families training team work with an emphasis on whole family engagement, the training provides tools and strategies to support practitioners in recognising and responding effectively to families who are separated or at risk of separation. Focussing on children's experiences of separation, the training aims to –

- Reduce the emotional and psychological impact of separation on children;
- Increase the number of children benefiting from effective post-separation parenting relationships;
- Increase the number of effective and co-operative arrangements for the care of children after separation;
- Strengthen and maintain relationships between children and both of their parents after separation.

Training modules include –

- Understanding family separation: exploring the myths and stereotypes that surround family separation;
- Children's experiences of separation: understanding children's experiences and ways to reduce the emotional and psychological impact on them;
- Engaging with parents: strategies and techniques for engaging with parents in ways that promote child-focussed change;
- Meeting the different needs of mums and dads: understanding and responding to the different experiences and different needs of mums and dads;
- Promoting collaborative post-separation parenting arrangements: recognising the blocks and barriers to collaborative parenting and offering tools and strategies to overcome them.