



Safe and happy childhood

Helping children and young people
in Northern Ireland to thrive

“Action for Children’s approach was non-judgmental and every week we, as parents, gained in confidence. We now have our family life back.”

Parent from one of our Northern Early Intervention Support Services



Welcome

We’re here for children, young people and families in Northern Ireland.

Our vision is that every child and young person in the country has a safe and happy childhood and the foundations they need to thrive.

We make sure children get the best start in life. We step in to keep them safe, and support young people who are having a difficult time. We also support families who need a bit of extra help.

We do this because life for some of the children we meet is hard. Some don’t have the basics, like the love and care of a family or a safe place to call home. Others are struggling with their mental health, face physical challenges or don’t have the support they need to become healthy, happy adults. These problems can have a devastating impact on their lives.

Bright futures

We give children and young people the help they need, when they need it. We’re here for them from before they’re born until they’re adults, in local communities, in schools and online. We do this right across Northern Ireland.

In this booklet, you’ll get an idea of what we do across Northern Ireland. To find out more please do get in touch.

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@Actn4ChildrenNI



[actionforchildrennorthernireland](https://www.facebook.com/actionforchildrennorthernireland)



@ActionforChildrenNI

Where we work

Western Trust

Derry/Londonderry

- Clooney Family Centre
- Waterside Sure Start
- Waterside Family Support Hub
- Western Early Intervention Support Service (WEISS)

County Fermanagh

- Fermanagh Family Support Hub

Omagh

- Floating Support Service
- Omagh Family Support Hub
- Early Intervention Family Support Service

Enniskillen

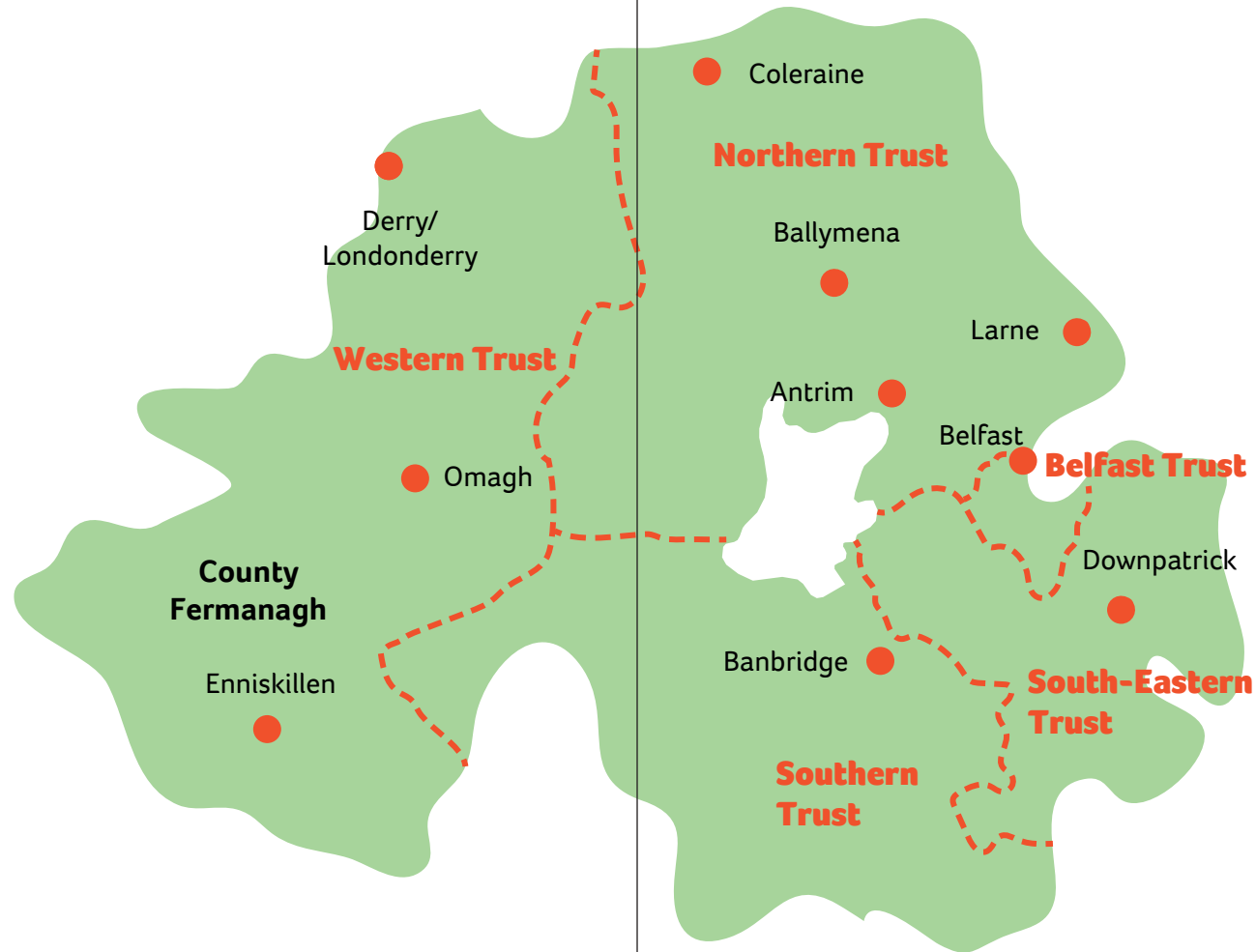
- Early Intervention Family Support Service
- Rossorry Grove Supported Accommodation
- Floating Support Service

Southern Trust

- NI Regional Young Carers

Available in all Trusts

- NI Regional Fostering Service
- Young Adult Carers



Northern Trust

- Choices Family Support
- Northern Family Support Hubs

Ballymena

- Ballymena and Little Steps Sure Start Centres
- Northern Early Intervention Support Service (NEISS)

Larne

- Northern Early Intervention Support Service (NEISS)

Antrim

- Ballymena and Little Steps Sure Start Centres

Carrickfergus

- Northern Early Intervention Support Service (NEISS)

Belfast Trust

- NI Regional Young Carers

South-Eastern Trust

- NI Regional Young Carers

Downpatrick

- Ballymote Family Project
- Ballymote Sure Start

Getting the best start

We're here for young children and their parents.

Children's centres are a great place for parents to meet up, get advice and find support. These warm and welcoming places give children under four the best start in life.

Play and learning

Play is a brilliant way to learn. Our stay and play activities improve social and emotional development, and help babies and toddlers to pick up language skills.

Healthy and happy

Our centres give healthy lifestyle advice before and after a baby is born.

Health visitors, midwives and speech and language therapists also provide reassurance and guidance.

Family support

We help parents and children to bond and get to know each other. We also help families to find services and make choices about the future.

We run the following services:

Ballymena and Little Steps Sure Starts

- St Joseph's, Ballymena
- Ballykeel, Ballymena
- Antrim

Ballymote Sure Start

- Downpatrick

Waterside Sure Start

- Derry/Londonderry

The Sure Start programme is funded by the government.



Early help for families

We help families who are finding things difficult.

One of the best ways to help children is to support their families – mums, dads, brothers, sisters and other carers.

Our family services do this in lots of different ways. We help with practical things, like establishing a bedtime routine and encouraging children to do their homework. And we offer emotional support to cope with challenges like family breakdown, health problems and money worries.

We also put families in touch with health visitors, midwives and speech and language therapists.

We run the following services:

Clooney Family Centre

- Derry/Londonderry

Early Intervention Family Support

- Enniskillen
- Omagh

Ballymote Family Project

- Downpatrick

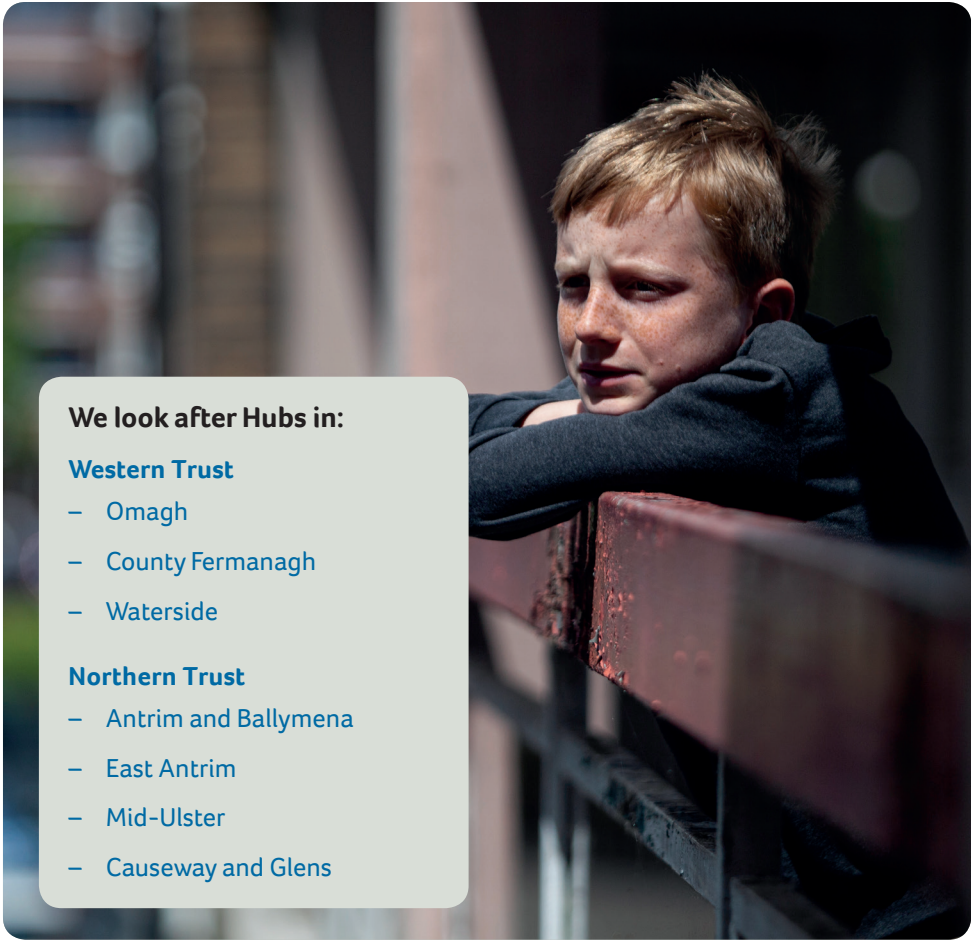


Family Support Hubs

Family Support Hubs bring organisations together to make it easier for families to get help.

The Hubs help families to find support early, before problems get worse. They give advice about the services on offer in the local area, and match families' needs to what's available.

Every Hub has a lead organisation, which manages all the services.



We look after Hubs in:

Western Trust

- Omagh
- County Fermanagh
- Waterside

Northern Trust

- Antrim and Ballymena
- East Antrim
- Mid-Ulster
- Causeway and Glens

Turning young lives around

Helping young people look forward to a bright future.

Growing up is full of challenges. We're here for every young person who needs us. We help young people to deal with traumatic experiences, have healthy relationships, and pick up the skills they need as adults.

Early Intervention Support Services

The service supports families and children from birth to 17-years-old. We help them deal with problems that are preventing children from fulfilling their potential. We do this by providing emotional support and by managing problems at school or at home. We also promote positive parenting techniques.

Choices Family Support Service

This service helps young people from 10 to 17-years-old and their families. We step in early to support young people who are at risk of going into care, becoming homeless or engaging in antisocial or offending behaviour. We also help them to build healthy, happy minds.



Help for young carers

We look after young people who care for others.

Young carers do an amazing job, looking after loved ones who are ill or who need extra help. They do this at the same time as coping with the everyday pressures of growing up.

We help to spot young carers, raise awareness of what they're going through, and make sure they get help at home. We also organise fun activities that give them a break. This gives them the chance to simply enjoy being a child.

Some of the ways we help young carers:

- One-to-one help and advice.
- The chance to meet young people in similar situations.
- Fun social groups, as well as educational activities.
- Signposting to other services so they get the right support.
- Monthly days out and groups.
- Explaining to school and other services about what's going on.



Young Adult Carers Service

We're here for young carers after they turn 18.

We know a young carer doesn't stop caring when they turn 18. And neither does the need for support.

We help young adult carers who are 18 to 25-years-old and look after parents or family members. Like our Young Carers Service, we give young adult carers a break, help them to meet people, and run activities and groups.

Some of the ways we help young adult carers:

- Fun activities that give people a breather.
- The chance to talk to and share experiences with people in similar situations.
- One-to-one help and advice.
- Educational activities, groups and programmes.
- Group sessions that promote health and wellbeing, and boost self-esteem and confidence.
- The chance to mentor younger carers.
- Signposting to other services.



Safe and loving foster homes

Providing a sense of home and family – for a day or forever.

There are children right across Northern Ireland who desperately need love and a safe place to call home. That's where we come in. We help create loving families and provide safe homes for children and young people who can no longer live with their own family. This could be for a short time or forever.

Our foster families offer warmth and stability, enabling children to cope with the changes that life brings them. This means encouraging children to play, learn and try new things. And it means being there for them when things go wrong, as well as right.

We have a lot of success in find long term families for children. We do that through thoughtful assessment of potential foster carers, careful matching, paying attention to attachment and therapeutic need, and through lots of support, 24/7.

If you would like to more more about foresting, follow us on Facebook @AFCNIfostercare or visit actionforchildren.org/fostering

“ *This is the only place that has felt like home to me.* ”

Foster child



Tackling homelessness

We step in to stop young people becoming homeless.

There are lots of reasons why a young person might become homeless. These include family or relationship breakdown, domestic violence or abuse. The young people we work with aren't always on the streets. Often, they're moving between friends' sofas or floors.

Homelessness is increasing but our services make a real difference. Every young person gets housing and social care support that works for them. We also help young people to develop the practical, emotional and relationship skills they need as adults.

Floating Support Service

We run a Floating Support Service in Omagh and Enniskillen, which helps 16 to 24-year-olds to find a safe place to live. The service provides a tailored support package to the young person, targeting emotional and physical well being, independent living skills, money management, training and education and support network. The service provides an on-call service for support should a young person find themselves homeless.

Supported Accommodation

Rossorry Grove Supported Accommodation in Enniskillen, provides short-term accommodation service for young people aged 16-21 years. This offers young people a safe place to live until they find somewhere of their own. We also offer support to get into education, employment and/or training, emotional support and access to services that can help young people overcome challenges and support to develop essential skills for independent living, including cooks, budgeting, and self-development.



Parent Talk

We offer free advice for parents and carers of children aged 0-19 in the UK. Our parenting coaches have seen and solved it all – from weaning to teenage worries.

Whatever your background or experiences, we want to help. We know that everyone's challenges are unique, and aim to offer a welcoming and trusted place to get support.

We're on hand to support you, when you need us. Browse our articles on the most common parenting questions from our experts. Or talk one-to-one with a qualified parenting coach about anything that's worrying you. It's all free, and no topic is too big, small, or embarrassing.

Down-to-earth parenting advice you can trust.

Our parenting coaches write our advice articles and are available to support you via live chat. They'll listen, take time to understand your situation, and offer ideas to help. Between them, they've seen and heard every kind of parenting question or worry. They're qualified support workers, childminders, play practitioners and teachers. They're parents and carers, just like you.

"Yesterday I was at breaking point. Today I feel hopeful and positive that I can deal with things and make a positive change. Thank you so much!"

parents.actionforchildren.org.uk



Getting involved

Raising money, campaigning, changing lives.

Giving young people a voice

Children and young people have a big say in everything we do. They're involved in every aspect of their care so that it's always right for them. They also come up with ideas to improve our services, and help with fundraising and campaigns.

Our Young Ambassadors speak at events and to supporters, sharing their stories and bringing what we do to life. They also help us to choose new staff and trustees. Two Young Ambassadors are members of the Northern Ireland Committee, which looks after all our work.

Fundraising and campaigning

We can only be here for children and young people with your support. Without you raising money, the children we care for wouldn't get the help they need.

We engage with local NI decision-makers and government bodies, with evidence from our services, to try and improve outcomes for 0 - 25 year olds. Our campaigning gives children a voice. We speak up to improve the lives of children in Northern Ireland, and make sure everyone understands the issues they face.



There are so many ways that you can help children and young people in Northern Ireland. Find out more at:

actionforchildren.org.uk/how-to-help

Safe and happy childhood



Action for Children protects and supports children and young people, providing practical and emotional care and support, ensuring their voices are heard, and campaigning to bring lasting improvements to their lives.

Get in touch

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