

About One Parent Families Scotland

One Parent Families Scotland (OPFS) is the only third sector organisation working exclusively with single parent families across Scotland. Our vision is of a Scotland in which single parents and their children are valued and treated equally and fairly. Our mission is to work with and for single parent families, providing support services that enable them to achieve their potential and create lasting solutions to the poverty and barriers they face.

OPFS case study – caller to OPFS Lone Parent Helpline during Quarter 1 2024

Parent caller was phoning as she was feeling very upset and distressed about her situation with her husband. She has two very young children aged 4 years and 9 months old. She said she found out her husband had been unfaithful to her in the marriage. She was hoping with counselling and support there may be a chance they could salvage the relationship. She has been with her husband for 20 years and never thought anything like this would ever happen. She was willing to give him another chance, but he has said no to this. She was feeling even more depressed and anxious than ever. She had put everything into the marriage and now it had ended. She was terrified of being a single parent with two very young children. She was asking how she would cope and was feeling very vulnerable and unsure where to start with all the different issues to deal with: housing; family law; contact with the father; child maintenance; mental health; flexible working. A benefit entitlement calculation was also needed as well as counselling at some point.

Advice Given by helpline advisor.

“I did a lot of active listening with the caller as she was very distressed and emotional when she first came on the call. I gave the caller space and time to speak and express her emotions and worries about the future. She was feeling extremely emotional. I managed to reassure her that OPFS are here to support her through this very difficult journey. The caller managed to calm down a bit after a while. I was able to do a benefit calculation, talk over housing issues, child maintenance, childcare support. I told caller about the Parenting Plan from Scottish Government and Social Security Scotland for certain benefits she could apply for. I advised her to speak to her employer about flexible working when her maternity leave ends this year. I mentioned she could register with the OPFS Online Parent Forum which she may find useful to speak to other single parents in the same situation.”