



ATD Fourth World Annual Review 2014



In recent years it has become almost impossible to open a newspaper or turn on the television without facing articles and programmes about poverty. Sadly, this is not a welcome awareness of the issue but tends to be a barrage of disproportionately negative images.

Inflammatory words and phrases have become all too common in the media and out of the mouths of politicians and public figures, such as “skivers”, “benefit cheats”, “feckless parents” and “feral children”.

Such labels make no attempt to understand; instead, they serve to dehumanise people living in poverty and create societal disregard for their struggles and suffering, enabling severe and punitive actions by government to be seen as appropriate rather than draconian and unjust.

# Bringing people together



In the face of this it has become vital that ATD Fourth World takes action to counter these negative images and myths. Our evolving and ongoing *The Roles We Play* project strives to do just that. Through a multimedia exhibition that is now touring the country, project participants go out to meet and engage with the general public to reveal how they contribute to their communities and the value their actions add to society.

Alongside this, and since poverty is such a contributing factor to social service interventions, ATD Fourth World has for a number of years been involved in training social workers on issues of poverty in order to improve practice and develop a fruitful exchange between social workers, the families they work with and academics. In the current climate of blame, risk aversion

and cuts to services, this is more important than ever.

Projects such as these are not only reactive to changes in policies and attitudes to people in poverty but also part of a constant effort to bring people of all backgrounds together to work towards eradicating poverty and building a just world.

With thanks for your ongoing support,

Moraene Roberts

On behalf of the National Co-ordination Team

ATD Fourth World UK



ATD Fourth World's Family Support Programme strives to empower disadvantaged parents to achieve positive outcomes for their children and to overcome the difficulties associated with poverty and social exclusion.

Such support is rooted in both trust built over the long-term and a desire to act in partnership with the families themselves.

For one father, *"It takes the pressure off knowing that there's someone around who knows what they're doing and what you're going through. It's always hard when you get pushed from pillar to post and you don't know whether you're coming or going."*

*"And it gets even harder when you've got no friends in sight so having someone you can talk to makes a difference."*

# Positive outcomes



Families living in poverty need this foundation as they face numerous challenges on a daily basis around issues such as health, housing, debt, employment and social service intervention.

In the case of one mother, a bailiff turned up at her door threatening to seize goods. We accompanied her to visit her local council offices and discovered that she was in arrears with her Council Tax, partly brought on by an error in her benefit status. We helped her fill out the appropriate forms to re-submit her benefit claim and also have it backdated and, as a result, her arrears were halved.

However, a further consequence of her financial situation was large rent arrears. Again, we encouraged her to take the necessary steps of not only discussing a repayment plan with her estate manager but

also meeting the Money Advice Service to put a weekly budget plan in place. *"I don't think I've ever had anyone go through things with me this in-depth before. Maybe I've just been too scared to ever ask for this sort of help but I know I need it to help me get an understanding of how to manage my money better."*

In such instances, it is being able to reconnect families with services and professionals that makes it possible for them to work with each other, learn from one another and plan a path forward in which all can invest.



*“I’m really happy that we can come here as a family. It gives me a chance to be with my kids in a fun way away from day to day life and all the kids get on with one another. It’s great that I also get a chance to do the workshops and that me and my son can have some one-to-one time together.”*

While accompanying a family as it faces the daily challenges of a life in persistent poverty may be essential, it is only one aspect of genuine family support. For this reason, our *Getting Away From It* project strives to offer families distance from their everyday difficulties, space to think clearly and activities to invest in together as a family.

As the setting for our residential breaks and activities, Frimhurst Family House in Surrey can boast facilities such as an adventure



# Finding inspiration



playground, a nursery, a computer room, a games room, a library, an art studio and a bouncy castle. Through a combination of outings, workshops and time to take in one's surroundings, these residential breaks are a chance for parents and children alike to form new friendships, build connections and strengthen relationships both inside and outside of the family.

In the words of one father, *"It's meant so much to us to come here as a whole family. The children have loved it, being here and being together, and we've been able to relax as well, knowing they're safe and having fun."*

The project also takes in our Summer Fun Day and Christmas Party, organising celebratory events that enable families to once again feel part of a wider community

with access to live music, sports and games, art and calligraphy workshops, jewellery making and face painting.

For one long-term grassroots activist, the difference that such events can make is profound. *"I get inspired when I come to Frimhurst. Everywhere I go here inspires me."*



getting away from it



Poverty and social exclusion are, by their very definition, isolating. Bringing people together around new skills that can be learned, shared and taken back into the wider community is one way to counter this loneliness and separation.

Our *Skill-Sharing Workshops* and *Access to Volunteering* initiative seek to build people's confidence and help them reach their full potential by broadening their horizons, valuing their contribution and enabling them to prepare themselves for the world of work.

For a number of years, we have offered supported volunteering placements in office administration and this has now been expanded to include new opportunities such as a community garden project as well as in the fields of computers and information technology alongside an experienced



# Developing skills



professional.

*In the words of one mother, “Access to Volunteering gives me something to do because I can’t go to work. It means I’m accomplishing something and doing something for others. I help with typing up letters so we can keep a copy on the computer and so they don’t get lost.*

*“It’s good being able to use my brain instead of staying at home all day and it’s given me the confidence to go back to college to do English and Maths. I look forward to it every week.”*

In addition, a *Skill-Sharing* residential camp at Frimhurst Family House in July successfully targeted a number of manual work tasks, including the replacement of a window frame, sanding and re-varnishing

a set of wooden garden furniture, replacing the timber frame of a children’s sandpit and landscaping and relaying a garden path.

This residential camp was jointly organised with and led by a group that had regularly participated in the past and it was their support and encouragement for the thirteen young people who were new to the project that ensured its success.

For one participant, *“Skill-Sharing is a chance for me to give back to ATD Fourth World so that it may help other people make positive changes in their own lives; if someone can take a skill away, use it and pass it on to someone else, it’s a bonus.”*

skill-sharing / access to volunteering



*Giving Poverty a Voice* began two and a half years ago with the aim of using a combination of discussion groups, workshops focused on training for public speaking and expert-led presentations to identify the issues on which people would most like to see change and explores ways to make their voices heard.

Throughout 2014 the project continued to enable those with first-hand experience of poverty, inequality and social exclusion to meet decision makers, participate in the democratic process and get involved in their local communities.

In January, Darren Johnson AM launched into an informative explanation of the the London Assembly, its role in holding the Mayor of London to account and how its decisions affect all who live in the capital.

# Making voices heard



Project participants then met Jean Lambert MEP in May as she traced the work of the European Parliament, what an MEP does, who they represent and the big issues at stake in the European elections.

Following on from a workshop run by the Old Vic New Voices community theatre group at *Giving Poverty a Voice* in late 2013, project participants Patricia Bailey and Paul MacDonald were involved as backstage crew in the fantastic production of David Watson's *Housed* over the summer.

In November *Giving Poverty a Voice* held a conference to look back over the project so far, highlight its achievements and address its impact on participants' lives. According to one mother, "*Last June, I spoke about food poverty at a Just Fair event. What made it special was speaking at the Houses*

*of Parliament in front of MPs and lords. It was a big deal. I had never done something like that before. And it took a long time to get to that point.*

*"Giving Poverty a Voice has helped me learn how to do that and be more confident. It has helped me express myself. People don't understand what life is like for someone living in poverty; speaking out is my chance to explain what life is like for me and for other people."*



Lloyds TSB | Foundation for England and Wales

giving poverty a voice



*The Roles We Play: Recognising the Contribution of People Living in Poverty*, a new, full-colour book and exhibition, was officially launched in October.

The result of a collaboration between artist and photographer Eva Sajovic and ATD Fourth World, the book takes its cue from the original photo exhibition that toured the country in 2010 and the participatory film project of 2012. It features both professional portrait photographs and self-written biographies that focus on what people do to combat poverty and social exclusion in their everyday lives, neighbourhoods and communities.

In preparation for publication, a weekend of writing exercises and workshops was held at Frimhurst Family House in March to allow participants to explore the use of language,

# Regaining confidence



different styles of writing and the words and phrases they wanted to use to represent themselves.

Once published, a number of events were held to support the launch of the book, including a month-long exhibition comprised of photographs and text from the book at 198 Contemporary Arts and Learning gallery in South London. There was also a workshop for young people and a symposium that discussed how genuine collaboration can be achieved in art projects and campaigns rooted in social justice.

Addressing the launch, one participant said, *“The Roles We Play is important because it shows other people that those living in long-term poverty are human beings... We are not the stereotypes of not wanting to go to work and sitting on our bums all day. The Roles*

*We Play shows that this is not the case.*

*“The project has helped me be able to talk to other people and not be ashamed that we live in poverty. It may still be a struggle but I am getting there... I have also gotten my confidence back. It can be nerve-racking to stand up in front of strangers and talk about our lives but the responsibility is a great one and every time I do it I feel I have accomplished something.”*

The book was made possible by support from the Big Lottery Fund Awards for All.



the roles we play





Poverty is a multi-dimensional problem that affects many areas of people's lives and, due to the stresses and strains of daily struggle, impacts upon their relationships with the services and professionals whose role it is to support them.

ATD Fourth World, in collaboration with Royal Holloway, University of London, seeks to redress this situation by bringing together families living in poverty, academics and social work practitioners to produce a training programme that reflects the needs and concerns of those in the field while also finding new ways of addressing the issues service users wish to tackle.

Over the past year, a series of study groups have met to discuss and debate current research trends impacting upon social work, contemporary issues in social work practice

# Initiating change



and the best ways to present the perspective and experiences of those living in poverty so that they can have an input into social work practice and research.

In the words of one independent social worker, *“The study groups are the only forum I know that contains a combination of parents who have experienced the intervention of social services, academics and practitioners.*

*“It is a forum in which I both learn and hopefully contribute to learning. I find those who attend are candid, reflective and pro-active, and the combination of presentations and group discussion generates joined-up, creative thinking.*

*“In my view this format is an effective way of harnessing a range of knowledge and*

*experience with the potential of translating it into practice. The study groups inspire me, energise me and give me hope that we really can initiate change and ‘protect children together’.*”

In covering topics such as the relationship between poverty and shame, the impact of material deprivation upon social work practice and the politics of recognition and respect, the study groups have also fed into a re-thinking and re-designing of the content of our Social Worker Training Programme teaching module as delivered by service users to social workers and students alike.



A residential internship at ATD Fourth World can offer new skills, discoveries and experiences to anyone willing to give their time, energy and talents towards making a difference.

Volunteers have an important role to play in the running and organisation of a number of our projects in the UK and there are opportunities to work directly with families living in poverty or supporting those who do. Every effort is made to take into account the location, availability, background and interests of the applicant so as to make it possible for those that wish to get involved to do so.

A limited number of residential internships are made available throughout the year, ranging from supporting specific projects and campaigns to fundraising or general

# Making new connections



maintenance. Often based at the ATD Fourth World National Centre in London or at Frimhurst Family House in Surrey, these full-time internships last a minimum of six months and accommodation, work-related travel expenses and basic living expenses are provided.

Naomi Anderson spent one year as an intern before deciding to join the UK team full-time and says of her experience, *"I find it refreshing to work alongside, not for, people who experience poverty. Working in this way has given me the confidence to be able to mix with people from all walks of life, from academics to grassroots activists, and taught me so many invaluable things about challenging inequality and promoting social justice in the UK."*

*"I feel privileged to be working on our The*

*Roles We Play project, helping to organise exhibitions in local cafés or appearances at poetry readings or workshops designed to engage local people. I am constantly making new connections and nurturing ones that have already been made.*

*I am able to do this with confidence because I know that I have the support of the whole team. It is an experience that I would not exchange for any other. "*

For more information on ATD Fourth World volunteering opportunities, visit our website at [www.atd-uk.org](http://www.atd-uk.org).

volunteering opportunities

# How can I get involved?

Our **Friends and Supporters' Network** is a way for everyone to get involved in the fight against poverty.

Friends and supporters help us in many ways from the running of our projects, housekeeping, gardening and fundraising to maintenance, special events, administration, family support and a whole lot more.

Whether you like to work alone or in a group, in an office or outdoors, on the front line or in a support role, we can always use the help and we are very flexible according to your available time and skills.

It is also a great way to meet a lot of new and interesting people!

Call us to find out more or visit our website at [www.atd-uk.org](http://www.atd-uk.org).

**ATD Fourth World Volunteer Corps members** make a long-term commitment to working alongside families living in extreme poverty and are involved in projects here and overseas.

Members of the Volunteer Corps agree to live on the same basic wage and make themselves available to go where their expertise and skills are most needed.

Families, couples and individuals of all ages, from a variety of backgrounds and with an assortment of practical skills and qualifications, make up this diverse group of dedicated, full-time workers.

There are a number of steps to joining the Volunteer Corps, the first being involvement in ATD Fourth World projects here in the UK.





## Summary of accounts

January 2014 -  
December 2014

January 2013 -  
December 2013

### INCOME

Grants	£289,000	£277,000
Donations and legacies	£44,000	£52,000
Publications, contributions and interest	£25,000	£24,000
	<u>£358,000</u>	<u>£353,000</u>

### EXPENDITURE

Family Support	£139,000	£143,000
Policy, Participation and Training	£184,000	£186,000
Publications	£19,000	£7,000
Administration, fundraising and depreciation	£9,000	£11,000
	<u>£351,000</u>	<u>£347,000</u>

**Board of Directors** Rev. Nicholas Edwards (chair), Caroline Davies, Anna Gupta, Margaret Guy, Tish Mason, Thomas Mayes, Maeve McGoldrick, Paul Paroissien, Isabelle Pypaert-Perrin, Veronique Reboul-Salze, Ajanta Sinha, Mark Smith and Greygory Vass

**Company Secretary** Daniel Kenningham

With thanks to the following for their support over the past year: BBC Children In Need, Big Lottery Fund, Johnson Wax Charitable Trust, Lloyds TSB Foundation, Peter Minet Trust, Porticus UK, Trust for London, Wakefield and Tetley Trust and Volant Charitable Trust



ATD Fourth World  
48 Addington Square, London SE5 7LB  
tel: 020 7703 3231 fax: 020 7252 4276 website: [www.atd-uk.org](http://www.atd-uk.org)  
Registered Charity no: 209367