



ATD Fourth World Annual Review 2015



It was a young woman I know who said it best: *“With so many problems and so much stress, it is like the walls of my home are closing in on me. I have no time and no space to think.”*

A life in poverty is one spent rushing around trying to find solutions to an endless stream of problems: financial, practical, physical and emotional. I have heard it described variously by those who face it every day as “a whirlwind” and “a prison”.

And yet, in a political climate where many living in poverty feel frustrated and rejected by the system, and where their poverty prevents them from contributing to conversations and debates on the issues that affect their lives, it is imperative that people have the chance to speak, share and listen to others.

Creating spaces



Projects like *Giving Poverty a Voice* aim to create spaces where people who live in poverty can meet, voice their views, be listened to, gain information, think together and analyse what they share. This process is not possible without such spaces. One participant told me, *“I have always known what poverty is but coming here helps me to think about what causes poverty and how to fight it.”*

The residential breaks of the *Getting Away From It* project offer a less formal but safe space to meet others in the same situation. A simple conversation, a sharing of experiences or an offer of moral support can be all the more important when opportunities to gather and socialise can be rare for those who struggle with the effects of social exclusion. As one mother said recently, *“I can be myself here; nobody is judging me.”*

Creating spaces to allow for the building of friendships and support networks is what ATD Fourth World does. Sharing these spaces with others meets a need rooted deep within human beings and creates confidence, mutual learning and knowledge. This can be a real cornerstone in creating inclusive and positive change.

Thank you all for all your continued support,

Moraene Roberts
On behalf of the National Co-ordination
Team
ATD Fourth World UK



Poor health, insecure housing, debt, limited employment opportunities and social service intervention are just some of issues on which the most vulnerable families face numerous challenges every day.

To tackle these issues, families living in long-term poverty look for accompaniment, reinforcement and the confidence to engage with others in the search for solutions and to make progress towards their personal goals. It is exactly this that the ATD Fourth World Family Support Programme seeks to provide.

In the words of one father, “Real support is having someone else to be my voice when I can’t say what I want to say because I’m angry. It’s good to have someone to explain things to me that I don’t understand or calm me down and talk things through. I couldn’t

A search for solutions



have coped without it.

“We have been through a lot as family and I think that what we’ve had to deal with recently would’ve been too hard to do alone. It’s just great to have someone on our side.”

Over the past year team members have worked alongside families in areas such as budget management, rent arrears, eviction, child benefit claims, PIP assessments, child protection case conferences and liaising with social workers. Without trust or a long-term relationship it would not be possible to help families reconnect with services and professionals or to plot a path forward.

“If you haven’t got someone with you, someone to talk to, you feel like it’s just you up against all the professionals and it’s not easy,” says one mother of four. *“Having*

someone there to support you means you don’t lose your rag and that you have someone to be a go-between for you with social services or with the school.”

family support



Creating the conditions for families to form new friendships, build new connections and see themselves within a broader network of support is central to the *Getting Away From It* project.

With a range of annual events, such as the Summer Fun Day and the Christmas Party, and residential breaks at Frimhurst Family House in Surrey during the school holidays, *Getting Away From It* can offer outings and activities that the costs of transport or admission and tightened budgets can render prohibitive for families below the poverty line.

Over the past year the project has featured workshops such as baking, arts and crafts, calligraphy, gardening, music, bike riding and sports as well as days out to various destinations including the beach, an ice

Building connections



skating rink, a bowling alley and an aviary.

A residential break can serve as a respite from the stresses of daily life as well as a refuge where parents and children can spend quality time together. One mother commented, *“Time at Frimhurst gives us a recharge; I like coming here because it does that for us. As parents and as a couple, it gives me and my husband more time to talk to each other and more time to spend with our son.”*

In the words of one twelve-year-old girl, *“This stay had a good impact on my family because we never spend any time together. We had fun doing activities together. I definitely would like to come back again.”*

Alongside the workshops and activities, *Getting Away From It* seeks to foster a

supportive and relaxed atmosphere where children, young people and parents alike can broaden their horizons and break the isolation that often compounds problems in an urban setting.

For a ten-year-old boy, *“Helping my mum to get away from home like this has been good. She has five kids, which is a handful, and here she can feel free. My mum loves the countryside; she loves the peace and quiet instead of the roar of the city. I would love to live in the countryside; it smells free!”*



getting away from it



“When I was asked to drill a hole in the wall I said, ‘Oh no, don’t ask me. I muck everything up. Whatever I touch goes wrong.’ But after some encouragement and help I managed to do it and I was really chuffed with myself. I’m proud I did that.”

As an important pillar of our Family Support Programme, our *Skill-Sharing Workshops* and *Access to Volunteering* initiative hold fast to the conviction that everyone has something to offer. Our aim is to furnish people with the support and encouragement they need, through concrete volunteering opportunities at our National Centre in London and Frimhurst Family House in Surrey, to be able to contribute to the running of ATD Fourth World.

With a continuing focus on involving more young people, the *Skill-Sharing* residential

Finding new purpose



camps held in February and July targeted those between the ages of sixteen and twenty-four who either already fall outside of work, training or education or run the risk of doing so.

As a result, more than twenty young people participated in a range of activities that included repainting the nursery, renovating the building's mock Tudor facade, landscaping the grounds and the installation of lighting in the car park. Through living, working and relaxing as a group, these residential camps strive to create a strong sense of teamwork and collective effort and so help to build young people's belief in themselves.

For the mother of two teenagers involved in the project the benefits are clear. *"My boys say it's fun. They like meeting new people and having the chance to re-connect with*

old friends. They learn new skills and it gets them out of the house. They've grown in confidence doing it and it strengthens them to go out into the real world where things are hard enough already. They just don't get the chance to do anything like it anywhere else."



At a time when human rights are in the spotlight more than ever amid talk of “scrapping” the Human Rights Act and replacing it with a bill of rights, it is imperative that those facing disadvantage every day have a voice in shaping that debate.

Giving Poverty a Voice thus spent 2015 exploring the theme of human rights and how families understand and experience challenges in their daily lives that fall within this topic.

Participants highlighted a number of challenges that they constantly face, such as health and disability, managing money and people’s access to and relationship with the services to which they are entitled, and then examined the impact of these challenges upon their personal dignity.

A new way of learning



The British Institute of Human Rights then led a workshop which introduced the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, its history and its values as well as how human rights work in the UK and situating participants' challenges within the 1998 Human Rights Act.

A small delegation also visited the *Magna Carta: Law, Liberty, Legacy* exhibition at the British Library with the aim of connecting the Magna Carta, human rights and the challenges in daily life that participants had outlined earlier.

In the words of one father, *"Giving Poverty a Voice is a platform where I can speak out on issues across the board, be understood and be listened to.*

"With human rights, it's important to know

what our rights really are and where we stand. I learned that the Magna Carta came about in 1215 from a fight between the king and the barons and this is where human rights come from.

"I'd never been to the British Library before but when we go to new places we can learn and see new things. It is an experience and an insight into what's going on around us. The whole thing is a new way of learning."



The Wakefield and Tetley Trust

giving poverty a voice



The Roles We Play: Challenging Perceptions of Poverty, a new, multimedia exhibition from ATD Fourth World and artist and photographer Eva Sajovic, toured the country throughout 2015.

It aimed to challenge the negative stereotypes of people who experience poverty and social exclusion that can be found in the media and in the speeches of politicians by showcasing specially-produced short films as well as photographs and text from the book *The Roles We Play: Recognising the Contribution of People Living in Poverty*.

Covering the four corners of the country, including events in London, Brighton, Oxford, Sheffield, Southampton, Norwich, Bristol, Dublin and Belfast, the exhibition used workshop exercises, presentations,

Refound confidence



poetry and panel discussions to focus attention on the language used to describe people in poverty and give the public the opportunity to hear people in poverty speak for themselves.

One project participant spoke at King's College London about being able to choose the photographs that accompany her written text in the book and exhibition. She said, *"I liked the process a lot because it made me feel like I was in control of how I wanted myself to be portrayed; I decided when and where the photos were taken. This is very rare in life, especially when you are struggling. When I look at the pictures I see somebody that's happy and proud of themselves. I feel proud of these photos."*

"Taking part in The Roles We Play has changed for me the way I am perceived by

people. At one point I used to be dismissed as a nobody. I was looked down upon as though I was nothing. I don't feel that way now. I can go out and hold my head up. I get respect."

"They see me more as a human being now; for the first time in years I have the confidence to stand up and be counted."

The Roles We Play: Challenging Perceptions of Poverty was made possible by support from the Big Lottery Fund Awards for All.



LOTTERY FUNDED

the roles we play



At the heart of our *Social Worker Training Programme* is a two-pronged approach: firstly, to deliver, with the active participation of families who have experience of social service intervention, a teaching module to students and newly-qualified social workers and, secondly, to bring together professionals, academics and family members to discuss key issues in social work practice and plot a positive way forward for the system as a whole.

In looking to present the perspective and experiences of those living in poverty so that they can have an input into social work practice and research, ATD Fourth World has supported a number of parents to engage with the wider policy framework by leading workshops at events such as the College of Social Work annual conference in London and the Joint Social Work Education and

Standing together



Research Conference in Milton Keynes.

A series of study groups over the course of the year highlighted themes and topics central to social work practice and garnered valuable contributions from Professor Brid Featherstone, Professor Kate Morris and Doctor Joanne Warner. The fruits of these study groups emerged in the article *Poverty and Shame: Messages for Social Work* which was published in the respected Critical and Radical Social Work journal.

The study groups have also continued to facilitate a re-design of the format and content of the teaching module delivered at Royal Holloway, University of London.

“Through the project I’ve learned things about how social workers approach situations and this helps me when I meet

them outside,” says a mother involved in the project. *“We know the system punishes families who are poor but we want to change people’s views on the effects of poverty. Being in poverty doesn’t mean we can’t parent our children; love doesn’t cost money.*

“At the study groups we meet people in the same boat, as well as professionals with different views, and we discuss the issues. Then, when we go and do the teaching, what we say gets taken seriously.

“It’s a long process to change the system but it’s about all of us standing together.”



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 maintenance. Often based at the ATD Fourth

An enriching experience



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

Chiara Artale spent one year as an intern before deciding to join the UK team full-time and says of her experience, *“I am thankful to have had this opportunity to be involved with ATD Fourth World.*

“Through the Getting Away From It project I have gotten to know lots of families and they have shared with me not only fun times but also taught me so much about the difficulties and injustices they are forced to face in their everyday life.

“I have seen them then use their experi-

ence to enrich and carry forward projects like Giving Poverty a Voice and The Roles We Play where they fight prejudice, speak out and have their say. I feel proud to have been at their side and supported them in this battle.

“The way that ATD Fourth World is able to support people to gain the confidence to talk about their life and their struggles without being ashamed is quite unique and is based around making people feel included and equal.

“I consider my time here to have been enriching, both professionally and personally. It will always inspire me.”

For more information on ATD Fourth World volunteering opportunities, visit our website at 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.

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 2015 - December 2015	January 2014 - December 2014
INCOME		
Grants	£261,000	£289,000
Donations and legacies	£42,000	£44,000
Publications, contributions and interest	£27,000	£25,000
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	£330,000	£358,000
EXPENDITURE		
Family Support	£149,000	£139,000
Policy, Participation and Training	£162,000	£184,000
Publications	£5,000	£19,000
Administration, fundraising and depreciation	£9,000	£9,000
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	£325,000	£351,000

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

Company Secretary Daniel Kenningham

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