

Plant Dewi has worked with people in their communities to establish centres that offer support to families with young children. Local people have formed committees, gained charitable status and attracted funding. Local authority houses, disused chapels and unused land have been transformed into family centres. Each family centre is unique in design but families can be assured that each provides a welcome and a place where they are supported to do one of the most difficult jobs in life, that of being a 'parent'. Family centres are open in Carmarthen, Pencader, Llanybydder, Trimsaran, Betws, Garnant, Felinfoel, Llanelli, Burry Port and Morfa.

A family centre provides a safe and 'homely' environment for families to meet other families, for parents to receive support in bringing up their children and support in overcoming the barriers that prevent them improving their quality of life. It is a place where children can gain valuable childhood experiences. The centre works with the children and their families to reduce stress, prevent family breakdown and support families to enable them to continue to live together in their community. The centre aims to enhance the lives of all the families that attend by improving their life skills, which will then empower them to make positive changes that will benefit their quality of life

A family centre provides families and young children with an open access service that is of a low-key, preventative nature and has the flexibility to provide intervention work in response to need. The 'family centre approach' is based on the concept of working in partnership with family members and empowering both parents and children as required in the Children Act 1989.

The key priority is to adopt a holistic approach that responds to the needs of all the family, especially their emotional well-being, in order to enhance their capacity to cope with the challenges of family life and help children and young people reach their full potential.

Family centres generally operate outside the boundaries of agencies such as Social Services, Health, Education and Child care, however, they do provide a supportive service for those agencies.

Family centres do not discriminate on the basis of age, race, gender or disability. They provide a service for families who are of varied backgrounds. The dynamics of socialising together provide networks that extend beyond the centre into the wider community, breaking down divides and promoting inclusive

approaches to community regeneration.

Family centres empower people, increasing their confidence and self esteem in order that they can gain the skills and knowledge to make informed decisions in their lives that lead to more choices being available.

