

Media Release

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Smarter working will help beat the budget cuts How to keep building better childhoods and family services

Cutting services and closing facilities is not the only way forward, Children in Scotland's annual conference will hear on 4 and 5 November in Stirling.

Wealth of a Nation: Building smarter services for Scotland's children and young people, in collaboration with Stirling Council, will explore how to beat the budget cuts to save money, maintain existing provision **and** keep building better services for families – by making the best use of facilities, working across boundaries more effectively, and ensuring the financial benefits that result from smarter working return to Scotland.

Developing a workforce that can work across professional and geographical boundaries makes services smarter and more user-friendly by reducing duplication and increasing flexibility: while integrating activities within a single facility – for example, an under-enrolled school – can lead to savings, and improve services by making education, out-of-school care, intergenerational programmes, family centres, youth groups and health services available under one roof.

The conference includes a workshop programme featuring examples of good practice across Stirling, including health promotion in early years through nurseries; intervention with young people engaged in antisocial behaviour; and supporting young people in influencing the services provided for them.

Bronwen Cohen, Children in Scotland's chief executive, said:

“We need to ensure income comes back to Scotland from savings in UK budgets that are achieved through a lower take-up of tax credits and benefits resulting from increased or better Scottish services. This should form part of the implementation of the Calman report and will provide funds to implement universal services – which are the most cost effective way of transforming outcomes for all children, particularly those who are most disadvantaged. As investment in services begins to bring about long term financial rewards, we must make sure Scotland continues to receive the benefit of smarter working.”

Notes to Editors

1. *Wealth of a nation: Building smarter services for Scotland's children and young people* will take place on 4–5 November 2010 at Stirling Management Centre, the

University of Stirling. The conference is being held by Children in Scotland in collaboration with Stirling Council.

2. The Calman Commission – set up in 2007 to review Scottish devolution – reported in 2009. Its recommendations included provision for strengthening and improving the current constitutional arrangements in relation to devolved powers for Scotland.
3. **Children in Scotland** is the longstanding national agency for the whole of the children's sector, reaching over 250,000 individuals through our extensive membership of more than 450 statutory agencies, voluntary sector organisations, professional associations and community groups. For further information visit www.childreninscotland.org.uk.

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