

# Make children and young people a priority

The 2011 election will be dominated by how we deal with the challenge of unprecedented pressures on finance, resources and services.

Decisions we make now will affect us all – especially the 1.1 million Scots who are under 18. They can't vote, but they will live with the legacy of what we do now for years to come.

Children in Scotland is calling on all political parties, candidates and voters to invest for the future in the wealth of our nation.

## **Children in Scotland is calling on all political parties and candidates to commit to:**

- 1 Combine resources creatively by promoting integrated services and an integrated workforce**
- 2 Strengthen the Early Years Framework by making its implementation a statutory responsibility, funded through the Scottish Parliament's current tax powers**
- 3 Ensure universal availability of good quality, integrated, accessible childcare and early learning opportunities that are truly affordable**
- 4 Ensure income comes back to Scotland from savings in UK budgets achieved through lower take-up of tax credits and benefits in Scotland as a result of increased or better services**
- 5 Maintain long-term cross-party policies that need sustained effort and stable funding**
- 6 Continue frontline services that accomplish their goals efficiently**
- 7 Support innovative projects that accomplish work with children and families, and can be adapted and adopted widely**
- 8 Invest in preventing problems, not fixing them later**
- 9 Consult meaningfully with service users to set realistic expectations of what smarter services can and should deliver**
- 10 Research actual outcomes from public spending on children and young people**

Most of Scotland's eligible voters can identify with at least one child – maybe their own family, a grandchild, or a young person they work with. Voting with that child's interests and wellbeing in mind could make a real difference to their lives and Scotland's future.

Breathing life into this Manifesto requires sharing it widely, asking candidates to embrace its recommendations and encouraging others to vote for the party/candidate they trust to do the most as MSPs to genuinely improve all children's lives and life chances.

You **can** help make this happen. Please **do**.