

# Behind the Scenes at SCMA

Team SCMA is proud to support childminding in Scotland.

During these challenging times, it has been our top priority to ensure our members are supported and well informed – now more than ever - whilst ensuring you can continue with the vital high-quality childcare that you provide for children and families across Scotland throughout the COVID-19 crisis and beyond.

We completely transformed and adapted our usual working patterns due to COVID-19, with every staff member working from home, spread all across the country. We have continued to operate with very little interruption for our members, and are dedicated to ensuring you feel supported, informed and reassured - and ensure that the voice of childminding in Scotland is heard at all levels.

## Widening our Support

Going above and beyond to work additional hours to maintain high levels of support and communication during this uncertain time, Team SCMA is here for you!

Graeme McAlister said: "We established a trusted source of information, on our COVID-19 FAQ web page. Where we could answer your questions, we did; where we couldn't immediately, we have worked to obtain answers on your behalf.

"While, as an employer, we wouldn't encourage this regularly, many of our staff worked excess hours as we knew your livelihoods were at stake. In doing so, we have put a huge amount of energy into supporting both those of you who remained open and also those whose settings had to close, as we want all of our settings still to be here as the country recovers from this."

## Widened our support as an organisation:

- ✓ Extended the hours of our Helpline and opened additional phone lines for your support.
- ✓ Developed a dedicated area of the website relating to COVID-19 for childminders, including the latest updates, useful links, guidance and your FAQs.
- ✓ Regular video updates from Graeme McAlister, following key announcements to help you digest the information and how it relates to you.
- ✓ Created a series of e-Bulletins to support your professional growth and wellbeing during this challenging time.
- ✓ Offered a free e-Learning course to all SCMA members to help you build your CPL.
- ✓ Secured £70,000 from the Wellbeing Fund to enable childminders to support vulnerable families during COVID-19.
- ✓ Established a Childminding Workforce Support Fund to support childminders experiencing financial hardship.
- ✓ Providing a voice for childminders and representing your views at the very highest levels.
- ✓ Free 24/7 counselling and wellbeing service now available for SCMA members from Health Assured.



Alongside these new and additional services and benefits, we have ensured that the usual operational elements of SCMA remain consistent - from processing your membership and insurance renewals, administrating and dispatching your orders, our finance team processing childminder payments, and much more.



## FACTS AND FIGURES

- **28,869** hits to our dedicated COVID-19 webpage and FAQs
- **48,488** hits to our [childminding.org](http://childminding.org) homepage
- **21,762** total views on YouTube for our video updates
- Our posts on Facebook have reached **381,148** people
- Our Tweets have reached **233,800** people
- **3,500+** calls answered by TeamSCMA since 23 March
- **500+** free e-Learning courses undertaken by members

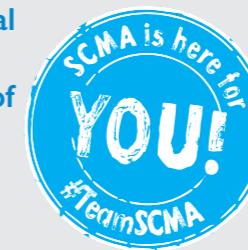
(Figures recorded since 16 March 2020)

## Recognition for Childminding

SCMA has continued to maintain and strengthen links with the Scottish Government, the Care Inspectorate and local authorities. Through emails, calls and virtual meetings, both internally and externally, together we have strengthened the focus and visibility of childminding.

Thanks to our strong and positive links with the Scottish Government, we arranged for two SCMA members to have a video call with the Minister for Children and Young People, Maree Todd. Their conversations focussed on their experience of supporting key workers' families during lockdown, adjustments they have made to their practice, how their minded children and own families were coping, the impact of the guidance and what SCMA is doing to support childminders at this difficult time.

**When schools and nurseries had to close, childminders were initially allowed to stay open due to your smaller setting size; 1000 settings remained open throughout lockdown to provide critical childcare and childminding was one of the first parts of childcare to re-open more widely in Phase One.**



## Childminding in the News

Childminding has been featured in the media more than ever before during the COVID-19, and this has allowed us to showcase childminding as the essential, positive, high-quality form of childcare that it is, with childminders and ourselves representing the professional in such a positive light – despite the challenging times we find ourselves.

Over the past few months, the flexibility and perseverance of childminding has been in the spotlight, with coverage across lots of media including STV News, BBC Scotland, BBC Radio Scotland, local and regional radio stations, and various local press titles.

We are always looking for opportunities to raise the profile of childminding and highlight the inspirational work you do every day to support children and families across Scotland.

Take a look back at the press and media coverage we've had at [childminding.org/news](http://childminding.org/news). [CLICK HERE](#)

## Meet the Team

As you may know, we're a fairly small team here at SCMA, but what we may lack in size, we make up for in enthusiasm! We are completely dedicated to supporting childminders across Scotland, through our wider and varied areas of expertise.



Michelle Graeme Louise Gillian Janine Karen Marshall Jennifer Karen Blair Katie Lisa France Lianne Millie Greg Raquel Lynne Lisa Mackay Ruth Sarah