This paper details how Sligo Family Resource Centre has developed a primary prevention, early intervention and cost effective Service over the past eight years by engaging family support workers through a Community Employment Scheme to support families in the Sligo area at Hardiker Levels 1 and 2 (the Hardiker Model 1991).

The Service supports parents and children directly in their own homes who are undergoing a specific time of need or stress. The majority of the referrals are made by PHNs.

The Paper outlines a brief history of the Service, the outcomes achieved for both the families who receive the Service and the Community Employment participants who undertake the work and the challenges it faces.

An account is given of the issues arising for families who require such a Service, details of the work undertaken with parents and children in their home where the worker concentrates on family strengths and capacities and the outcomes achieved linked to the national programme. We demonstrate the value for money and the cost effectiveness of this Service to the families themselves and to those who have referred families. The Paper outlines the training and skills gained by the Community Employment participants who undertake this work and the system used to track progress and results.

This paper gives readers an opportunity to hear from the service provider the lessons learned in the past eight year. It aims to share ways of adapting this Service to the work in other communities by giving a clear, practical step-by-step account of resources required including training, knowledge and skills, as well as challenges faced.

Sligo Family Resource Centre has found this Service provides a significant difference to families in the area while at the same time training and developing the skills of the workforce for the future.