

Family Hubs to Launch Nationwide in England to Support Children and Families

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— Categories: Human Rights



The UK government has unveiled a plan to establish family hubs in every local authority across England by April 2026, aiming to support 500,000 children in disadvantaged areas. Backed by a £500 million investment, the initiative expands on previous efforts to provide parenting, youth, and early childhood services in a single, accessible space.

Education Secretary Bridget Phillipson introduced the “Best Start” programme, describing the new hubs as a transformative resource for struggling families. The centres will offer a broad range of services, including birth registration, midwifery care, parenting support, debt advice, and youth activities. The initiative is part of the government’s broader strategy to reduce inequality and improve children’s outcomes regardless of their background.

Phillipson said the policy reflects the administration’s core objective: “It’s the driving mission of this government to break the link between a child’s background and what they go on to achieve. Our new ‘Best Start’ family hubs will put the first building blocks of better life chances in place for more children.”

While the concept is not new, the plan marks a significant expansion. The idea of family hubs builds on the early 2000s “Sure Start” centres launched under New Labour, which provided health, education, and care services to young families. Many of those centres were closed after 2010 due to austerity measures introduced by the Conservative-led coalition government. Last year, the Conservative administration under then-Prime Minister Rishi Sunak began reviving the concept, launching 400 hubs across 75 councils.

By the end of 2028, Labour’s new government intends to increase the number of hubs to 1,000. Officials say the integrated approach aims to make essential services more accessible, streamline referrals, and reduce long-term social care costs by intervening earlier in family crises.

Critics, however, have questioned how much of the plan is genuinely new. Shadow Education Secretary Laura Trott claimed the government is

simply rebranding existing services and offering little innovation. “This is a government defined by broken promises and endless U-turns,” she said.

Despite political criticism, the policy has received praise from children’s advocacy organisations. Save The Children UK welcomed the announcement, citing its effectiveness in local communities. Executive director Dan Paskins said combining parenting, healthcare, and education services under one roof is proven to help families access the support they need.

The rollout is expected to progress steadily over the next three years.