

Families First AWARDS 2025



Celebrating the success of partnership working

Wednesday 12th November 2025 | 2pm-4pm
South Hill Centre, Hemel Hempsted



AGENDA

Introduction: Gary Mallet, Children's Service

2.30

Welcome Speeches:-

Cllr Louise Price
Deputy Lead for Children's Service

El Mayhew,
Director of Children & Families, Children's Services

2.45

Individual awards announced

Presenters: El Mayhew, Karen Dorney & Cllr Price

3.10

Short interlude / comfort break

Parent Speech

3.30

Team awards announced

Presenters: Jo Fisher, Karen Dorney, Cllr Price, Lauren Penrose/Sue Chapman

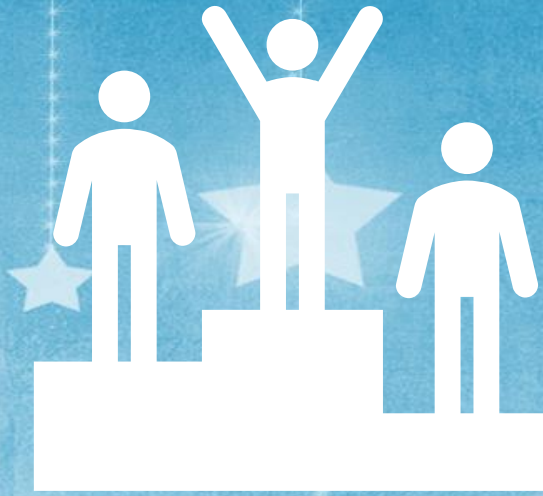
Time for photos!

4:15

END



JUDGING



A quote from one of 7 our judges:-

“I'm awestruck by the incredible work that teams across Hertfordshire are doing for children and families, and every single individual and team nominated deserves an award! It was really difficult to narrow down each category”

Maxine Bromyard, Citizens Advice

We are now delighted to
announce the winners of our

2025 INDIVIDUAL Families First Awards



AWARD 1: COLLABORATIVE WORKER OF THE YEAR



An individual who is committed to building relationships and engaging with the community to ensure positive outcomes for children, young people and families working with colleagues across different services/agencies

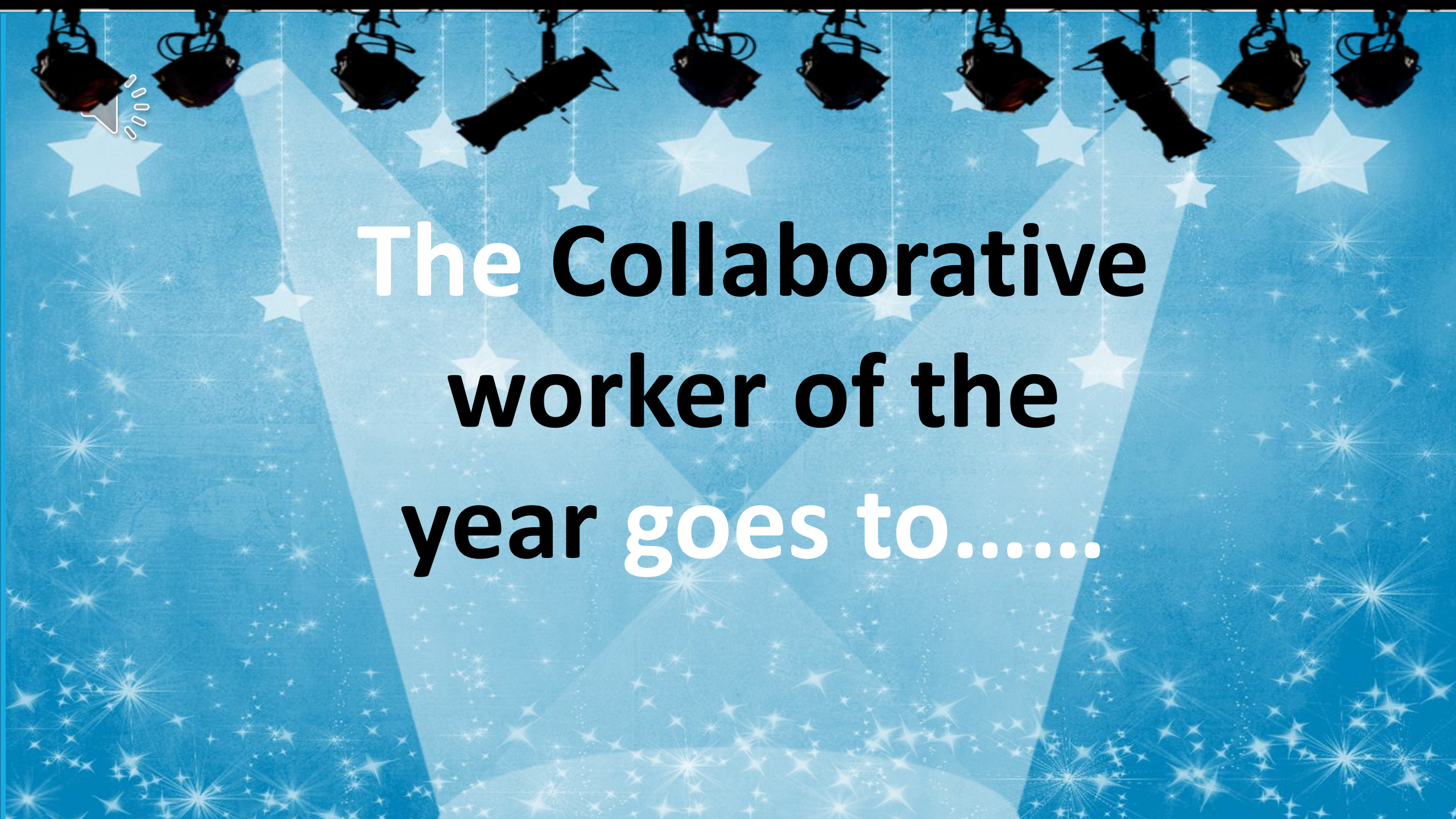


The Nominations are...

**Collaborative
worker of the year**

Brooke Donovan,	Supporting Families, Participation Team
Clare Cross,	Services for Young People, North Herts & Stevenage Team
Dee Norman,	Homelessness Prevention Team
Helen Whyman,	Supporting Families Partnership Team
Lara Carvalho,	Pastoral Leader, Beechfield School, Watford
Michelle Penny,	Intensive Family Support Team, Watford & Three Rivers
Tina Powell,	Strategic Partnerships Team, Joint Children's and Young People Commissioning Service, HCC



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**The Collaborative
worker of the
year goes to.....**

Lara Carvalho

Pastoral Leader, Beechfield School



Through her considerable support, advice and signposting Lara has empowered many of our families and children to be resilient and built mutually respectful and trusting relationships between families, external providers and our school.

working with various agencies she has been able to support children and families with:

- finance,
- housing,
- attendance and punctuality,
- access to mental health
- domestic violence support, and much more

Nominated by:
Gillian Jackson,
Head

Lara's role in our pastoral team has been transformational in terms of Early Help and supporting children and families with ALL needs to support their social and emotional wellbeing.

Collaborative worker of the year

PARTNERSHIP SCHOOL OF THE YEAR



Recognition for a school that hears and responds to the voice of the child, supports the whole family and exceed the expectations of an educational setting, in areas such as protective behaviours, emotional wellbeing, 1:1 pupil work.



The Nominations are...

Partnership School
of the Year Award

The Lea Primary School and Nursery (Harpenden)

High Leigh Primary School (Hoddesdon)

Laurance Haines School (Watford)

Hitchin Boys' School (Hitchin)





The Partnership
School of the year
goes to.....

Laurance Haines School

Watford



The school's "ethos of personalised support means that every intervention—whether focused on protective behaviours, emotional wellbeing, managing change, or academic progress—is tailored to meet the unique needs of each child"

Laurance Haines School is more than an educational institution—it is a sanctuary of hope, resilience, and partnership.

Their commitment to listening to the voices of children and working in partnership with families ensures that every child feels safe, valued, and deeply connected to their school community

Nominated by:
Lauren Samson,
IFST

a truly child-centred and community-driven school

Partnership School of the Year Award

AWARD 2

KEY WORKER OF THE YEAR



An outstanding key worker who shows exceptional commitment and determination and goes above and beyond what is expected of them in their day-to-day role.



The Nominations are...

Key Worker of the Year Award

Andrea Elton	Short Breaks Review Team - 0-25 Service
Dion Lewis	Intensive Family Support Team, Watford & Three Rivers
Jean Osprey-Scott	Homelessness Prevention Team
Rebecca Paton	Homelessness Prevention Team
Kerry Xenakis	Intensive Family Support Team, Stevenage & Nth Herts
Layla Oldam	HABS Strength In Mind
Sasha Norwood	Home Start Volunteer

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**The Key Worker
of the Year
Award 2025 goes
to.....**

Dion Lewis

Intensive Family Support Team, Watford & Three Rivers

“Dion’s trauma-informed approach, tenacity, and compassion not only stabilised a high-risk situation but set a benchmark for collaborative safeguarding practice.”

“Her dedication, empathy, and skill make her a truly deserving nominee for Key Worker of the Year.”



Nominated by:

Caroline Holt
Collette Garland
Lauren Samson
IFST

She consistently encourages families to take personal responsibility, empowering them to build confidence and independence. Her flexibility and empathy are not just admirable—they are transformative.

Dion never seeks recognition, never complains, and approaches every task with grace and determination.

Key Worker of the Year Award

AWARD 3

ADMIN SUPPORT WORKER OF THE YEAR



Behind every great team is a great administrative support worker! Someone who constantly goes above and beyond to support their team and the families they work with



The Nominations are...

**Admin Support Worker of
the Year Award**

Cindy Higgs

Safe Space

Ella Young

South West Herts Partnership

Kerry Aylott

Services for Young People, St Albans

Ndeh Lewis

Intensive Family Support, East Herts & Broxbourne



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**The Admin Support
Worker of the Year
Award goes to.....**



Ella Young

South West Herts Partnership

Ella is the backbone of SWHP but never demands recognition or praise. She quietly supports all the team through monitoring home visits and ensuring the safety of everyone.

Ella will happily work over hours to take phone calls after we have completed late visits.

She runs the website, signposting and supports newsletters and our social media presence, and gathers comprehensive data to inform us of trends/primary needs, freeing up managers time

**Nominated by:
Ella Deanus, SWHP**

Admin Support Worker of the Year Award

AWARD 4

MANAGER/TEAM LEADER OF THE YEAR



An exceptional team manager / leader who has consistently had a positive impact on, not only their service but also the team members within it. A manager who is involved in the coaching, mentorship and development of others. Who leads by example and works collaboratively and creatively to make a difference to individual, departmental and organisational outcomes and culture.



The Nominations are...

Manager/Team Leader of the Year Award

Anita Harrison	CS Early Help - Gateway
Carly Maddison	South West Herts Partnership
Jodie Sanger	Homelessness Prevention Team
Lauren Penrose	Intensive Family Support Teams and Participation Team
Leigh Cole	HABS Strength In Mind
Sally Lee	Intensive Family Support Team Stevenage and North Herts



The background is a vibrant blue with a subtle gradient. At the top, there are several black stage spotlights hanging from a rig. Two large, bright white stars are positioned on the left and right sides of the top row. The floor is a lighter blue with a large, glowing white star in the center. The entire scene is filled with numerous small, sparkling white stars of various sizes, creating a festive and celebratory atmosphere.

**The Manager/Team
Leader of the Year
Award goes to.....**

Sally Lee

Intensive Family Support Team Stevenage and North Herts



“Sally fosters a working environment that is inclusive, calm, and collaborative—even during times of significant pressure and change.

She celebrates our successes, helps us learn from challenges, and inspires us to grow both as professionals and individuals.”

“Her safeguarding knowledge is exceptional—she is a go-to resource for colleagues.”

“Her ability to lead with empathy and clarity creates a culture where staff feel safe, supported, and motivated to deliver high-quality work.”

“Sally is always there to listen—whether it's work-related stress or a question—and consistently offers thoughtful, reassuring, and practical guidance.”

Nominated by:
Suzanne Welham
Michelle James
Tracey Collier
Lauren Penrose

Manager/Team Leader of the Year Award

AWARD 5

UNSUNG HERO AWARD



An award to acknowledge those in the wider community whose good work is invaluable, yet not always obviously recognised. This could be an individual who has gone above and beyond to support children and/or their families or the service. Inclusivity, creativity, flexibility, innovation are all evidenced by this individual.



The Nominations are...

Unsung Hero Award

Denise Marshall

Safe Space

Emma Hicks

Marlborough Science Academy, St Alban's

Gianna Foster

Safe Space

Ruth Coleman

Intensive Family Support Team, (Welwyn, Hatfield & Hertsmere)

Teresa Meehan

Supporting Families Development Team

Tom Downey

Family Action

William Bower

Broxbourne Hostel & Temporary Accommodation Team



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**The Unsung Hero
Award goes
to.....**

Emma Hicks

Family Engagement Worker,
Marlborough Science Academy, St Alban's

Emma's support to the children is outstanding.

Emma's office, the "M-Store", operates as a food and essentials bank for students and families to freely access dried and tinned food, bedding, school uniforms, prom dresses and suits, and even a gifting section for those who struggle to purchase gifts for a family member's birthday.

"Her vision for the M-Store was to create a space where people can come in, have a cup of tea and a biscuit, chat about life, and help themselves to what they need."

"Emma's warm and empathetic approach was a key factor in getting the family to engage and achieve improved child and parental mental health."

Nominated by:
Jacky Reynolds,
SF Partnership Team

Unsung Hero Award

You're all amazing!



**Families
First**

Early help, brighter futures

Homelessness Prevention Team

Chaotic Angel



Foundation

Registered Charity: 1197984



**BOROUGH OF
BROXBOURNE**



4-4-2 SPORTS



Early help, brighter futures



We are now delighted to
announce the winners of our
2025 Families First

TEAM Awards



AWARD 7

CREATIVE EARLY INTERVENTION



An award to celebrate the success of an innovative early intervention programme/initiative and the people behind its delivery. This award is to recognise a team or individual who may have come up with a unique, creative solution to a problem that had been tough to tackle, or to recognise someone who was the driving force behind a great campaign that helped improve the team/service/CYPF



The Nominations are...

Creative Early Intervention Award

The Bridge Building Confidence and Resilience in Young People and their Families,
Intensive Family Support Team: WH&H

Youth Ambassadors Project, WithYOUth, Sandbox and Just Talk

The Sensory Room, Intensive Family Support Team, Watford & Three Rivers

Peer-to-Peer Support Initiative, Home-Start

The REACH Partnership Project Delivery Team, Services for Young People





**The Creative Early
Intervention Award
goes to.....**

THE BRIDGE

A safe space to build resilience for young people & their families

WH&H, Intensive Family Support Team,

The Bridge is a groupwork programme designed to **build confidence and resilience for young people & their families**

The Bridge was developed as creative solution in response to a gap in support for families where young people face educational barriers due to mental health needs and/or neurodiversity. These challenges often lead to prolonged absence from school, affecting confidence, resilience, and academic progress.



Parents' Reflections:

Emotional Connection: One parent shared the joy of seeing their child engage with peers for the first time.

Realising Loneliness: Many hadn't recognised their isolation until joining the group, and valued the inclusive space.

Parents noted their children were motivated to attend school just to be part of The Bridge

Nominated by:
Lauren Penrose
IFST

Creative Early Intervention Award

AWARD 8 : SERVICES TO YOUNG PEOPLE TEAM OF THE YEAR



A team who work tirelessly to improve the lives of young people by providing an outstanding service that ensures the best outcomes for young people.



The Nominations are...

**Services to Young People
Team of the Year Award**

ARC Rapid Response

HABS Strength In Mind

Safe Space

Services for Young People Broxbourne Youth Work Team

Services for Young People SEND Youth Councils/Youth Work Leads

South West Herts Partnership





**The Services to
Young People Team
of the Year Award
goes to.....**

ARC Rapid Response



"ARC are a lifeline for families in crisis, offering not only practical help but also emotional reassurance"

"Feedback from young people has been overwhelmingly positive... ARC helped their parents to finally listen and understand their perspective."

ARC focus on the young person, offering strategies, validating their concerns, and working with parents to create meaningful change.

**Nominated by:
IFST Managers**

Services to Young People Team of the Year Award

AWARD 9

SERVICES TO FAMILIES TEAM OF THE YEAR



A team who work with families in Hertfordshire, bringing positive change to the whole family through outstanding work and commitment



The Nominations are...

**Services to Families
Team Award**

Buttle UK

Home-Start Co Ordinator's

Homelessness Prevention Team

St Albans & Dacorum Intensive Family Support Team

Kaotic Angels Foundation

Letchworth Family Support Team

South West Herts Partnership

Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield Local School Partnership

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**The Services to
Families Team of
the Year goes to.....**

Kaotic Angels Foundation

Kaotic Angels is a remarkable community-led charity whose work embodies the Families First ethos in every sense. Founded with a mission to support vulnerable individuals and families, their team has gone above and beyond to provide practical, emotional, and social support in Stevenage and other Hertfordshire towns

“Their work is rooted in compassion, responsiveness, and innovation.”

“Kaotic Angels is a shining example of grassroots action making a profound impact.”

Nominated by:
Sally Lee, IFST

Services to Families Team Award

AWARD 10

COLLABORATIVE TEAM OF THE YEAR



For a team who is committed to building relationships and/or joint working with colleagues across different services/agencies to ensure positive outcomes.



The Nominations are...

**Collaborative Team
of the year Award**

4-4-2 Sports

Ask SALI

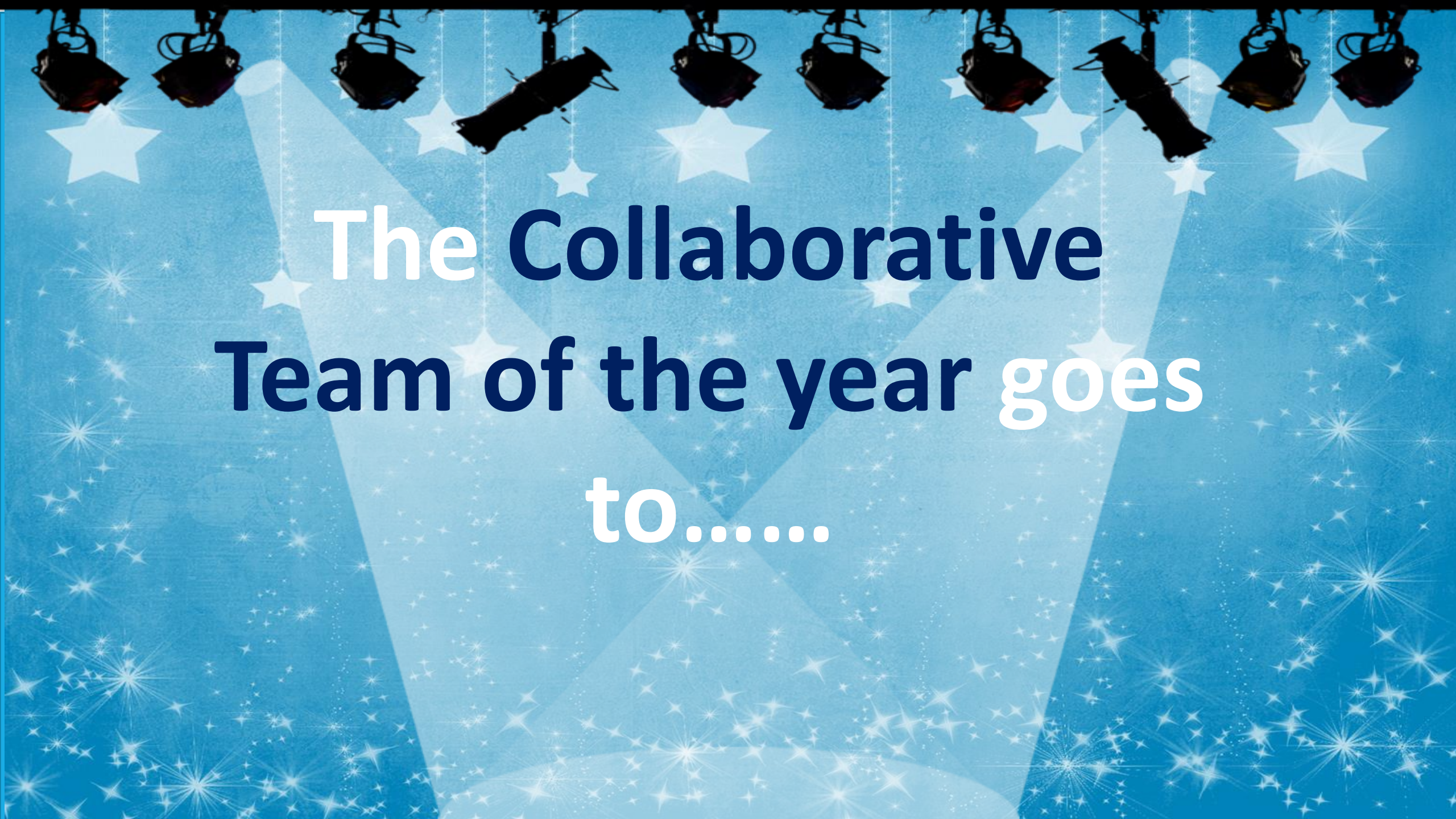
Hertford Saint Andrews Primary School

Hertfordshire Sports & Activity Partnership - HAPpy Delivery Team

Housing Operations Team, Three Rivers District Council

The Family Support Team at Playskill and the SEND Champion Teams in the South and West Hertfordshire Family Centres



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**The Collaborative
Team of the year goes
to.....**

Hertfordshire Sports & Activity Partnership: HAPpy Delivery Team

Herts
**Sport &
Physical
Activity**
Partnership

The HAPpy programme in Hertfordshire has developed since its inception to become a valued source of support to families and has supported thousands of children over this period.

“A unique programme that highlights community partnership working at its very best.”

“The programme was a great success giving young people an opportunity to engage in physical and creative activities in a safe environment.”

Nominated by:
George Gearing,
HCC

Collaborative Team of the year Award

AWARD 11

EARLY YEARS TEAM OF THE YEAR



An outstanding team within early years who shows exceptional commitment and determination and goes above and beyond what is expected of them in their day to day role..



The Nominations are...

**EarlyYears Team of
the Year Award**

Home Start

NHCVS Breakaway North Hertfordshire

SPACE Hertfordshire's Early Years Support Team

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**The Early Years Team
of the Year goes to.....**

NHCVS Breakaway

North Hertfordshire



"Breakaway shines as an example of what outstanding voluntary service looks like."

Nominated by:
M Novelli

The Breakaway team has created a space where "children" can thrive, explore, and feel secure. Their staff demonstrate a rare combination of skill, empathy, and unwavering commitment.

Their support extends beyond the sessions themselves; they offer reassurance, understanding, and genuine partnership to families

EarlyYears Team of the Year Award

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**We have one final
award ...**

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**A Special Recognition
award for impact in early
help for Hertfordshire
Families goes to...**

Karen Dorney

Head of Supporting Families

Early Help Impact Award



**Nominated by:
Supporting Families
Managers**



Congratulations



You're
all
Stars!



Families First

Early help, brighter futures