

## Action for Children

### Assembly for Methodist Schools.

Slide 1: No two days are the same. Yet they are similar in some ways. One thing is for sure - everyday is an opportunity for us to be a blessing to someone else by our words and actions, and to be blessed by the kindness of others. God does it all the time. Psalm 68 tells us that God 'loads us with benefits everyday.' The smiles of friends, something we were worried about that went better than we'd hoped, even sisters and brothers can be a blessing!

Slide 2: Remember that being a blessing to others is a happy thing - not just for the person that we have shown kindness and care to but for those of us who are privileged to bless.

Slide 3: To bless is to bestow good of any kind upon someone. How might you do that today?

Slide 4: All of us go through times when we are uncertain, anxious, frightened or worried. We can feel lonely, confused - through no fault of our own we just need help.

Slide 5: Imagine that you are in that situation and help comes. What a fantastic experience that must be. To know that you are not alone. To know that there is someone on your side. That help could come in all kinds of ways. It could be simple acts of kindness and love. The giving of time, kind words, someone to stand by you and who you know you can trust and who will not leave your side.

Slide 6: In 1869 a Methodist Minister called Thomas Bowman Stephenson came across some children who were in desperate need of help. He reached out to be a blessing to them. He set up a children's home which today still blesses.

Slide 7: In fact today - that one act of blessing has grown into something huge. Today Action for Children is a daily blessing to over 370,000 children and their families everyday. It works with children who are disabled, with the young unemployed, it makes sure that children are placed in safe loving homes. In fact it provides over 600 separate children's services around the country.

Slide 8: Here's the story of one of those young people. This is Grainne's story in her own words. 'Around 6 years ago, I was admitted to a children's mental health hospital in Belfast due to self-harming. Shortly after being discharged, I

had another episode of self-harm and was back in hospital. I was at risk of homelessness because my family home was too much to handle. At this point I was desperate. My social worker referred me to Action for Children and assigned a Support Worker.. We met weekly, completed training programmes and we would go out for coffee. If I ever felt low I knew that I could call Action for Children's 24/7 helpline and speak with someone. They have even come to our house on Christmas Day because they know that we might not have family, which means so much to us. Having mental health issues can affect anyone. I know what it's like to put on a fake smile, and then let everything out at home. I thought I had no-one to turn to but there is always someone there to listen. Even now when I am struggling, I can just call up Action for Children's helpline and have a chat. I have closed a chapter and now I am re-writing a new one. If I hadn't gone through what I did, I wouldn't be who I am today. I feel like it is paying off because I am now helping others who are going through what I did. I would love to work for Action for Children as they changed my life and I want to do the same for others.'

Slide 9: Everyday you can be a blessing to someone. You could pray for them. Say something nice, spend time with someone who needs it, volunteer for someone. Just smile! Think for a moment - who are you going to be a blessing to today? This week?

Slide 10: We are a school that has its roots in the work of the Methodist Church. Action for Children is a Methodist Charity - we are all part of one huge, world-wide family. It's important to hear about the amazing work that other branches of the this big world wide family are up to. Is there anything you could do to be a blessing to their work today? Could their work be a blessing to you?