

## **STRICT EMBARGO: 00:00HRS, WEDS 08/08/07**

### **CHARITY PROS GET HOOKED ON SECTOR AT YOUNG AGE; & ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE THE ELDEST OF TWO SIBLINGS**

**1 in 4 charity professionals start to become interested in the sector by age 15, two thirds by age 24; and people with older siblings, or from larger families, are significantly *less* likely to work in the charity sector than eldest siblings or those from smaller families - according to a briefing out today.**

*Charity Lovers* – a survey by leading not for profit sector think tank and research consultancy, nfpSynergy – asks a representative sample of over 500 charity professionals about their family background and when they first developed an interest in working in the third sector.

A quarter (25%) of all respondents claim to have started falling under the sector's spell by the time they are fifteen, presumably whilst still living at home; rising to two thirds (68%) by the age of 24 - with an average age of first interest of 22½ years.

43% of those working in the voluntary sector are an eldest sibling, something true of scarce a third (31%) of those within the general population. Conversely, under half (43%) of those working in the voluntary sector are themselves a younger sibling, compared with a staggering 3 in 5 (59%) of the general population.

Moreover, 44% of respondents are one of just two siblings, something true of just 30% of the general population. Conversely, scarce 1 in 20 (4%) of respondents have five or more siblings, compared with a whopping 1 in 7 (14%) of the general population. Those who are an only child are fractionally less likely to work for charity – comprising 10% of the general population, yet only 9% of the sector.

Interestingly, over a quarter (27%) of respondents claim someone else in their immediate family works for a charity; 43% claim someone else from their immediate family volunteers regularly; and almost 1 in 5 (18%) claim someone else from their immediate family gives time as a trustee.

#### **nfpSynergy's Driver of Ideas, Joe Saxton, commented:**

“Those with older siblings than themselves, or from larger families, are - perhaps - generally less likely to be a child playing a caring or mentoring role. This poll possibly suggests that such a formative role may well develop traits of particular relevance to the charity sector; thereby also clearly demonstrating a valid alternative interpretation of the well-worn epithet that ‘charity begins at home’ – not least since the findings also show a quarter of people working for charity start to get hooked on the sector before they are fifteen, whilst still living at home; and two thirds by the time they are 24.”

***A full copy of the briefing, “Charity Lovers”, can be downloaded for free at:***

**[www.nfpsynergy.net](http://www.nfpsynergy.net)**

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**MEDIA INTERVIEWS: For Joe Saxton's further comment on the briefing, please contact:**

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## **Notes to editors:**

### **• nfpSynergy**

nfpSynergy ([www.nfpsynergy.net](http://www.nfpsynergy.net)) is the UK's *only* think-tank and research consultancy dedicated to the charity sector and not for profit issues. It provides ideas, insights and information to help voluntary and community organisations thrive in an ever-changing world. Regularly harvesting the social and charity-related views of public and parliament, media and business - not to mention not for profit organisations themselves - nfpSynergy has a vast and ever-growing knowledge pool from which to extract and deliver insights.

## • Joe Saxton, Driver of Ideas, nfpSynergy

Joe Saxton co-founded *nfpSynergy* in 2002 after fifteen years experience in the voluntary sector, including as a director of the RNID (Britain's largest charity for deaf and hard of hearing people) and as a trustee of the RSPCA.

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Joe is Chair of the Trustees of the Institute of Fundraising ([www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk](http://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk)) - the professional body for fundraising and the largest individual representative body in the voluntary sector, with 4000 individual members and 200 organisational members. He was recently named one of the hundred most influential people in UK social policy by *The Guardian* and has been voted the most influential person in UK fundraising by *Professional Fundraising* for the last three years. Joe was named one of the *Ten People of Tomorrow* by public affairs agency, AS Biss, in 2006.

A well-known and respected voice within the charity world and frequent face at sector conferences, Joe has contributed - via original research, opinion pieces and interviews - to a wide range of specialist and mainstream media, both print and broadcast, from *Third Sector* and *The Guardian* to *BBC Breakfast* and *BBC Radio 4*.