

AI Statement

I acknowledge the use of Google Scholar (Available at: <https://scholar.google.co.uk/>) for the purpose of research for Module 14 – Leadership skills in entrepreneurship (ECEY6012).

I acknowledge the use of COPILOT to find current sources (e-books, journal articles, webpages), dated between 2015 and 2025 for the purpose of research for Module 14 – Leadership skills in entrepreneurship (ECEY6012).

I confirm I have copies of my drafts, notes, and other resources I used before, and after the use of AI tools which I may be asked to provide in evidence

Prompts:

1. Chat GPT - Can you create some example logos for a community-based charity called Family Tree offering grandparents providing childcare for grandchildren. I want it to be inclusive of all families and set ups and quite natural.
2. Can you find me information on grandparents providing childcare in the UK
3. Are current early years childcare options meeting the needs of families and if not why?
4. Is there any research on the impact of informal childcare arrangements on children's early development
5. Are grandparents beneficial to children's lives and how?
6. What national policies support community initiatives
7. What funding can a charity-based community programme access?
8. Benefits of a Pilot Study and Surveys when starting a new charity
9. What are the benefits of supporting intergenerational relationships
10. Do grandparents understand current early years pedagogy and can this cause problems?

Module: ECEY6012

- **Part 1A:** Business Pitch– (09minutes 54seconds)
- **Part 2A:** Business Plan – (1452words), Pg 3-7
- **Part 2B – Critical Analysis –** (1559 words), Pg 8-12
- **References** – Pg 13- 18

Part 2A: Business Plan

Business Name: Family Tree

Business Type: Charity

Founder: Rachael Baugh



(Chat GPT, 2026)

Introduction:

Hello, my name is Rachael Baugh and I am here to introduce my community-based charity “Family Tree”.

As a child I was cared for by my Nan alongside my siblings and cousins while our parents worked. Does this sound familiar and how many families around you adopt this arrangement?

Years later, I found myself in this position but this time experiencing it as a parent. I was fortunate to be afforded the same support my Nan gave my parents, and she stepped in and cared for my twins from the age of two until they started school, due to formal childcare options available in Torfaen being too expensive and inflexible for us to access as a family. Her support enabled us to remain a two-wage household and allowed me to return to the career I had worked hard to build.

But during that time, I noticed something important. Although she was doing an essential job she had no community, no structured-support and nowhere to connect with those in the same situation and I felt this isolation alongside her. So, this is where Family Tree began.

Purpose:

Family Tree aims to bridge this gap by creating an educational, supportive and community- based environment that recognises grandparents’ contribution to children’s development and family life. Family Tree will provide the dedicated space where grandparents can connect, share experiences and learn alongside their grandchildren, reducing the social isolation that so often goes unseen. My own Nan used to often say “we didn’t do it like this in my day” and she was right, early years pedagogy continues to evolve.

Why am I the right person:

I believe I am well placed to develop this charity because have had worked supporting children for twelve years across school and the local authority. I have good relationship-building skills, deep early years knowledge, and lived experience of grandparent-led childcare. I understand the realities of informal care as a parent, and I have spent over a decade working closely with families, children, and professionals. This combination of personal experience and professional expertise enables me to create a service that is supportive, inclusive, and rooted in community need to create positive outcomes for children.

Who is Family Tree for:

To understand the need for this charity, it is important to identify who Family Tree is designed for. My target market is grandparents who provide informal childcare for children aged 0–5years within Torfaen, with an initial focus in Cwmbran. According to data from Welsh Government (2019), informal childcare is the most common form of childcare in Wales, used by 76% of parents. In addition, 7% of parents pay family or friends for informal childcare, and children aged 0–4years are particularly likely to receive unpaid care from relatives. Additionally, Torfaen's Childcare Sufficiency Assessment emphasized parents' views that formal childcare within Torfaen is expensive and inflexible, leading parents to stay at home or rely on informal childcare arrangements, however, the assessment acknowledges that attempts to gather information from unregistered childcare providers were incomplete (Torfaen County Borough Council, 2022). Wider UK evidence reinforces this picture, with Age Cymru (n.d.) estimating that around 14 million grandparents provide childcare, and The Family Resources Survey (2025) reported that 23% of families use informal childcare, with 29% using a mixed model. Together, this evidence shows that informal childcare is widespread but largely unsupported, making Torfaen an appropriate starting point for a community-based service for grandparents.

How to find available provision already in place:

It is also important to acknowledge existing provision in Torfaen that may impact Family Tree. I would need to investigate similar services by using recognised local information sources such as Connect Torfaen, Family Information Service, and the Care Inspectorate Wales, which are recommended tools for mapping community and

childcare provision (Welsh Government, 2023). Through these platforms, I can identify services such as kinship support groups, intergenerational projects, and playgroups that welcome grandparents, as well as formal schemes like Flying Start Programme, Childcare Offer for Wales and Tax-Free Childcare. I would then use a SWOT analysis to compare these services, as SWOT is a recognised method for evaluating competitor strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (Queensland Government, 2025). This approach would help me understand what my competitors do well, where they have limitations, and where my opportunity is. Competitor research is also recommended to identify gaps in the market and refine a new service (Business Wales, 2025), meaning the SWOT findings would directly inform and enhance the Family Tree model by highlighting the absence of dedicated, community-based support for grandparents providing informal childcare.

Research and gathering information:

To fully understand the need for Family Tree, I would carry out surveys within Torfaen. As surveys are a practical way to gather clear information from the public about community needs (Sheikh *et al.* 2024), and they help identify the key issues families are facing (Ponto, 2015). These results could then lead to more detailed questionnaires or interviews, giving me a deeper understanding of the gap in support and how Family Tree can make the most of this opportunity.

Promoting Family Tree:

I would also need to consider how I would promote Family tree. I would look to utilise existing networks through leaflets and promotional materials using Family Information Service, health visiting teams, GP surgeries, libraries and community centres. Health visitors are particularly well placed to signpost, as they maintain regular contact with families during the early years and routinely share information about childcare and family support services (Welsh Government, 2023)). Rodrigo (2026) evaluation on family support programmes highlighted that the way a service is promoted and introduced to families has a significant impact on engagement and outcomes, emphasizing effective advertising, clear communication and appropriate family recruitment were essential components of successful implementation and attendance.

Funding Family Tree:

To ensure long-term sustainability, Family Tree would initially operate as a registered charity. This opens access to funding streams from Community Foundation Wales, the National lottery Community Fund, and small grant programmes promoted by Play Wales. I would use also use the Third sector Funding Wales platform, led nationally by Wales Council for Voluntary Action to search for any other suitable opportunities from local, national and international sources to identify grants, loan and social finance. In addition, Welsh Government schemes such as the Community Facilities Programme and Children and Community's Grant (Welsh Government 2025). Over time, evidence from the pilot and ongoing feedback would strengthen funding applications and demonstrate the impact of supporting informal childcare. This creates a financially realistic model that can grow across Torfaen and eventually, wider areas, with the potential to develop into a social-enterprise model in line with Welsh Government's encouragement of sustainable, community-led organisations (Welsh Government, 2026).

Pilot study:

Another element to consider would be the use of a pilot study within Torfaen more special Cwmbran. This will enable me as the founder to identify potential problems gather feedback and highlight weaknesses to monitor and address before full implementation (Hassen, 2006). It would also validate the purpose of Family Tree and help to inform what grandparents would value and need when implemented on a wider scale (In, 2017).

Unique selling point and benefits for children:

Research shows that grandparents play a meaningful role in children's development. The University of Oxford (n.d.) identified that grandparent involvement in their grandchildren's lives contributed positively to children's overall emotional well-being. Additionally, Wu (2025) emphasizes the role of grandparents strengthening resilience. Public Health sector work by Sari (2025) argues that we must stop underestimating the impact grandparents have on children and work towards multigenerational approaches in policy and within intervention, so their role is supported and recognised. As Grandparent's role in children lives offer rich and varied ways to enhance children's development from caregiver, companion, teacher

and cultural guide, supporting children to develop a sense of belonging, identity and connection to family history, while also supporting early language and literacy (Anil, 2025). This suggests intergenerational relationships promote better health and well-being outcomes for children and need to be part of our early years offer to children a period where Welsh Government recognises an important window for learning and development and supports their priorities around investment into the early years through whole family support and community-based interventions. In particular:

- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) ACT 2015
- Early Years Transformation Programme
- Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014

Family Tree creates a service that strengthens the role of grandparents in early childhood, supports the relationships that shape children's earliest experiences, and contributes to better outcomes for their future. Let's invest in our grandparents!

Diolch yn fawr.

This Business plan was informed by The Prince's Trust (2015).

Part 2B- Critical Analysis:

This section critically analyses the potential impact of the community-based charity, Family Tree, on the development of young children including a critical reflection on Family Tree compared with what is currently available and accessible to young children in Wales. Family Tree was designed to support grandparents who provide informal childcare through reducing social isolation by building intergenerational relationships and creating learning opportunities aligned in current early years practice.

Richter *et al.* (2019) emphasize that children's experiences and exposures in the first few years of life shape the development of lifelong health, well-being and productivity. This aligns with Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory which highlights that children develop through interconnected microsystems such as parents and grandparents who play the central role within their development. Similarly, Vygotsky (1978) argued children learn from more knowledgeable others through guidance, scaffolding and support. Family Tree's focus on strengthening family networks surrounding children reflects these theoretical ideas, recognising that grandparents act as the more knowledgeable others offering life experience, cultural traditions and established relationships to support children's sense of belonging, identity and early learning (Anil, 2025). However, although they play an important part in children's development, grandparents are not acknowledged in current childcare policies and provision. Intergenerational relationships have been recognised as beneficial for children's social, emotional and cognitive development through shared activities and reciprocal learning between grandparents and grandchildren, (Mitchell, 2008; Gyllenspetz, 2007, as cited by Kanyal *et al.* 2024). Furthermore, Sadownik and Visnjic Jevtic (2023), as discussed by Kanyal *et al.* (2024), state the importance of intergenerational dynamics being reflected in current early education and care frameworks and policies. This highlights a policy gap, even though evidence demonstrates that intergenerational relationships have developmental benefits for children.

Current childcare provision in Wales focuses primarily on formal childcare programmes such as the Flying Start Programme (Welsh Government, 2025), Childcare Offer for Wales (Welsh Government, n.d.) and Tax-Free Childcare (HM Government, n.d.). These programmes provide valuable support for many families'

however access to these programmes depends on eligibility criteria relating to postcodes, income, working hours and child age. As a result, many families cannot access formal early years provision and support. Research by Oxfam Cymru, reported by Turkmen (2023) shows 92% of parents report childcare in Wales remains expensive, inaccessible, and does not align with real working patterns, with no support for children under two. Therefore, limitations within current formal provisions push families towards informal childcare provided by grandparents and they are not being supported.

Although data on informal childcare in Wales is limited, wider evidence across the UK and Europe indicates informal childcare arrangements are regularly being used. The Family Resources Survey 2022–2023 (Department for Work and Pensions, 2025), reports that 23% of families rely on informal childcare, with a further 29% using a mixed model of formal and informal arrangements, demonstrating the central role grandparents play in children's daily care. However, informal childcare can include a range of carers such as extended family and friends as well as grandparents meaning the data available does not reflect only grandparent provided childcare to fully understand their contribution to children's lives. Chen, Liu and Mair's (2011) study highlighted a reliance on informal childcare and identified limited data available in understanding why families chose informal childcare over formal provision. Although this is an older study, it identified a lack of data on informal childcare in 2011. These gaps remain today, demonstrating limited progress has been made in understanding informal childcare despite investment in formal childcare options for families. The UK Government does, however, recognise informal childcare by giving Specified Adult Childcare Credits (HM Government, 2024), for grandparents providing informal childcare identifying it awareness of the level of care they provide. But it supports grandparents financially rather than developmentally, overlooking practical support to children's learning, well-being and development. Bronfenbrenner's ecological system would place grandparents as part of children's microsystem, however current evidence only uses data related to the exosystemic part limiting understanding on how microsystem level care influences early development of children. This reinforces the need for more research into informal childcare and suggest community-based opportunities like Family Tree

could provide insight into the role grandparents have on children's development and make them more visible as part of wider early years provision.

Hamilton *et al.* (2025) emphasize that informal care provided by grandparents is invaluable for supporting working parents, echoing that current research only focusses on formal childcare policies and provision and does not consider how these policies affect wider family decisions and real-life patterns. Reports of the Childcare Offer for Wales (Gilson and Watkins, 2025) show that families frequently combine multiple forms of childcare to meet their needs. However, current evaluation frameworks for early years outcomes focus on what happens in formal childcare settings (Welsh Government 2023; Welsh Government, 2025), meaning informal childcare outcomes are not being measured. Resulting in inaccurate interpretation of early years outcomes, even though there is strong evidence suggesting mixed models of care are being utilized (Welsh Government, 2024; Bajjada *et al.* 2024).

The purpose of investment into early years in Wales is to improve outcomes for children through early intervention (Welsh Government, 2023; Welsh Government, 2025), however those children cared for solely through informal arrangements are currently not being reached by current systems. Consequently, there are missed opportunities in identifying emerging additional learning needs or adverse childhood experiences, even though national policy emphasizes the importance of early identification (Children in Wales, 2021; Welsh Government, 2023). By providing accessible early years guidance, community connection, and opportunities for shared learning, Family Tree can strengthen the quality and consistency of care children receive. Supporting grandparents' confidence and knowledge will enrich early learning experiences and increases the likelihood of early identification of developmental concerns, speech and language delays, and social communication differences because responsive interaction and understanding are key to early development (Vygotsky, 1978; Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Welsh Government, 2023).

Grandparents providing regular informal childcare may find aspect of current early years pedagogy different to when they raised their children, especially related to play, learning and child development. The Welsh Quality Framework for Early Childhood Play, Learning and Care highlights the importance of responsive, child led and developmentally informed practice (Welsh Government, 2023), However many

grandparents may not have had access to new guidance and odea around child development and the importance of play. Family Tree therefore could offer access to a supportive community to learn about new approaches, build confidence and connect with other facing the same situations.

Local Authorities in Wales offer parent and toddler groups as part of community family support (Torfaen County Borough Council, n.d.) as well as kinship care initiatives (Torfaen County Borough Council, 2021) for grandparents with legal custody of their grandchildren. However, these services do not apply to grandparents providing informal family childcare leaving a large group of carers unsupported despite their role in children's lives. Family Tree responds to this by offering a dedicated, low-cost space for grandparents to access early years guidance, shared learning and community connections. Family Tree will operate as a community-based charity to ensure it is low cost and accessible for families, using community funding streams to sustain the provision it offers. However, sustainability would be dependent on securing ongoing funding and reliance on charity grants could lead to variation in provision across areas and ability to meet community need and develop into other areas (Wesh Government, 2025). Additionally, by focusing on grandparents, Family Tree unintentionally excludes other informal carers such as friends or extended family members. This reflects wider inequalities within current early years provision and reinforces the need for more inclusive support for all informal childcare arrangements (Turkmen, 2023). Another aspect to consider would be Family Tree would need access to a team of early years practitioners to deliver high quality guidance, model practice and support grandparents' knowledge and confidence. The early years workforce in Wales is already facing problems around recruitment, capacity and demand (Early Years Wales, 2025). This means securing practitioners involvement in supporting community-based initiative such as Family Tree could be challenging without secure funding adding more challenges around the charity-based model. However, where practitioner engagement is achievable and committed Family Tree could ensure consistent delivery of early years pedagogy, strengthen early identification of needs and improve learning experiences and opportunities available to children being cared for informally by grandparents.

In conclusion Family Tree will not resolve the barriers within current formal early years provision in Wales, but it does highlight the need for further research and

enhancements to policy to include those not engaged in formal childcare. It's concept compliments current early years provision by supporting a large proportion of informal carers such as grandparents, providing insight into children's experiences outside of formal provision which is currently limited. Through shared learning, early years guidance and strengthen intergenerational relationships, Family Tree can highlight previously unseen additional learning needs, enabling earlier access to early intervention and support.

Family Tree also aligns with national priorities around resilience, cohesive communities, and intergenerational wellbeing. By creating a dedicated space for grandparents to connect, learn, and share experiences, it contributes to stronger community networks and improved family resilience. Recent political discussions around recognising informal childcare further demonstrate growing acknowledgement of its importance within the UK. Overall, the evidence suggests that Family Tree addresses a clear gap in current provision and has the potential to make a meaningful contribution to children's development and family wellbeing in Wales.

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