

Tel: 0207 391 4583

Website: www.cccs.co.uk**Press Release**

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Family and friends key to raising awareness of free debt help

National debt charity Consumer Credit Counselling Service (CCCS) says that family and friends are key to preventing people paying for debt advice unnecessarily. CCCS says that many struggling debtors pay for debt advice because they are unaware that free help is available. It stresses that family and friends are crucial in raising awareness of free debt help with one fifth of the 418,000 people who contacted the charity last year referred to it by a friend or family member.

The charity says that everyone should understand the vital lifeline they can provide to people they know who are struggling with debts and refer them to free sources of debt help. It is warning that this help will be increasingly needed as budget pressures such as inflation and wage freezes lead to growing numbers needing debt help.

Delroy Corinaldi, CCCS External Affairs Director, says: "The next year will be very difficult for many people and I am concerned that those struggling with debt will end up being charged for debt advice because they are unaware that free advice and support is available.

"It is crucial that people understand the role they can play in helping their friends and family who are struggling with debt by making them aware of free sources of advice such as CCCS, National Debtline and Citizens Advice."

The CCCS free phone helpline 0800 138 1111 is open 8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday. Online counselling tool *CCCS Debt Remedy* is available at www.cccs.co.uk 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

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Notes to editors:

1. CCCS's ethos is to help the "can't pays", not the "won't pays", and does not condone debt avoidance. CCCS always aims to help its clients pay back what they owe, in a realistic timescale and manner that is suited to each individual's situation.
2. CCCS is self-funding. Lenders share with the charity the benefit they receive from its operation, making a donation from the money repaid to them. This allows CCCS to retain its independence and ensure that its advice is always in the best interest of the client.
3. Follow us on Twitter: @CCCSPressOffice

Media enquiries:

All media enquiries should be directed to:

Frances Walker - francesw@cccs.co.uk

Una Farrell - unaf@cccs.co.uk

Tel: 0207 391 4583 (07950 469101 if outside office hours)