



‘Positive Mental Health in Families’

The Combined Delivery of the Parents Plus Adolescent &
the Working Things Out Programmes
with added Problem Solving Family Sessions

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Presentation Outline

- Background
- The programme
- Implementation in CAMHS- challenges & learning
- Case Example from Linn Dara service



Background

- 2011- Mary Keane, Mags McCormack and colleagues at National Behaviour Support Service (NBSS)
- Targeted school based intervention
- Young people with identified difficulties
- Engage their parents

Young person more likely to stay on in school and achieve their potential if parents were also engaged in the change process

- Family approach – reached over 40 schools
- NBSS Research Study; CAMHS study

2014 – Partnership with the 3Ts charity Parents Plus have been able to roll this out to a further 28 sites
(16 schools & 12 CAMHS)



Positive Mental Health in Families

Young person attends the Working Things Out programme

- 8 session intervention focused on coping skills, communication and managing mental health

Their parents attend the Parents Plus Adolescent programme

- 8 session positive parenting course focused on building positive family relationships, positive discipline and increasing good listening and communication skills in the family

Both parent and young person attend 2 individual family sessions

Key part of the intervention aimed at helping transport the new skills to home

Defined problem solving structure



Problem Solving 'Coaching' sessions

Structured problem solving process

Visual – Problem Solving Structure

Facilitators role is key

Maintain 3 rules for Problem Solving :

Be Respectful

Take Turns Speaking

Listen to everyone



Implementation in CAMHS

Services

Commitment for a service to implement a programme like this- clinician time, practicalities/logistics, for families with high end mental health needs – gain benefit from the programme but some also needed ongoing support from the wider MDT

The learning- to make it work the MDT needs to be behind it

For families

Big commitment for them to attend and stick with the programme

The learning – efforts at keeping families engaged and attending, for example, group facilitator phoning in between sessions to check in – how are things going?

Families report benefits - both parties working together towards solutions and developing their communication skills

Common goals identified at the start of the programme

Parents- 'I'd like to have a better relationship with my child, be able to talk more to them'

Young people- 'to get on better with parents/less fighting-talk more to my mam/dad'



The experience of Erin and her Mum Linn Dara CAMHS

**Presented by:
Abi Orimolade, Social Worker, HSE Linn Dara**



Linn Dara CAMHS

Erin (15) - self-harming behaviour and low mood resulting from bullying at school

Mum-Trish (40) 3 children 15, 9 and 3 years

Goals for coming to the programme:

Trish – to improve communication and have more self control in dealing with her own emotions

Erin – to learn positive ways of coping and learn to talk to her parents when upset.

They attended 7 out of 8 sessions & 1 family sessions



Problem Solving Session

They opted to work on:

“talking more openly about problems at home”

What they wanted to be different?

Erin wanted to talk to her Mum sooner about a problem

But Erin commented that she did not want to upset her Mum

In deciding what they each would do they agreed ‘to work together’
and for Mum ‘to listen more’



For Trish (Mum):

At the end of the eight week programme

Trish reported being able to remain calm when problems arise in her family

She identified this as “a huge accomplishment” for her.

The most helpful part of the course for her

Discussing the videos

Discussing problems and successes from the week (review of the week)

Ideas of the “pause button and changing her approach to problem solving” helpful at home with all her children



For Erin:

Reported progress in her goals at the end of the Working Things out programme.

“I learned how to cope and calm down and talk to my parents more. I also go to them now when upset or need advice”.

“I’m still learning to keep positive and deal with my depression and anxiety and everything else but in a good way things are looking up”.

Most helpful part the Working Things Out programme

The “Stop, Think, Do” and “discussing ways of asking for help”

Erin’s last incident of deliberate self-harm was in January 2015 around the time she was referred to the group.



Follow-up

Erin was discharged from CAMHS service two months after attending the programme.

3 month review they reported ongoing progress at home with better communication and improved mood for Erin with no further incidents of DSH at that time .

Specifically her Mum reported that she was taking on more responsibility at home e.g. chores and babysitting her younger sibling.

“We talk more, I deal with situations differently....more in control of my emotions in stressful situations and I’m more aware of behavioural changes in my children”



Facilitator

- Seeing parents take over the group themselves and draw on group support
- Opportunity to stand back from being the 'expert' allows group members to be empowered

Young people are willing to change and improve their behaviour as long as their parents are making similar efforts

- Family focused programme provided both parents and teenagers a platform for change in improving communication and promoting positive relationships within the family
- Challenges around managing group dynamics; having a mixed group, for example, some parents with children with acting out behaviours and then others with more internalizing problems
- To deal with this - at every session we tried to get the parents to apply the skills to their family situation regardless of presenting issues

The best experience for the facilitator is when parents try out the techniques at home and start reflecting on the change process.