



ParentsPlus



2023

Annual Report

BUILDING CAPACITY OF SERVICES TO IMPROVE OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES


ParentsPlus

**Universal,
Preventative
and Targeted
Solutions for
Services
Supporting
Families and
Children.**



2023

Annual Report

Empowering Change

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Professor Alan Carr

Founding Director of the UCD Doctoral Programme in Clinical Psychology, and Former Head of the UCD School of Psychology



The work done to date by Parents Plus for Irish society and child and family mental health and well-being is extraordinary.

It has transformed the lives of thousands of families and done this on a shoestring budget. When the charity first began, Irish mental health and social care services were using North American or Australian parent training programmes that were not tailored to the needs of Irish families, were designed for delivery by trainers with professional backgrounds, and were very expensive, meaning many services could not afford them.

Parents Plus changed all this.

This remarkable organisation created a suite of affordable interventions designed to meet the unique needs of Irish families, that could be delivered by both professionals and paraprofessional community leaders. They developed partnerships with universities and evaluated the effectiveness of their programmes in Irish communities.

Parents Plus programmes are evidence-based and research-informed. They are grounded in family-friendly, solution-focused, strengths-based practice. Because the costs of training trainers to deliver Parents Plus programmes are considerably lower than non-Irish alternatives, these parent training programmes are more widely available to a range of services supporting families.

In other countries such as the UK and the USA with better developed funding systems for psychological research, Parents Plus, would attract significant funding for theoretical groundwork, randomised controlled trials, and replications of these trials by other research teams.

The absence of these supports in Ireland makes the achievements of Parents Plus all the more remarkable.



Message from CEO

I am pleased to present Parents Plus Annual Report 2023, which is an important opportunity to look back at 2023, spotlight our charity's key achievements and activities, and acknowledge the challenges facing our sector.

As a small Irish charity, with over 25 years' experience researching and developing evidence based parenting and mental health interventions for services supporting families, I am incredibly proud of the invaluable work and collective commitment of Parents Plus team, and voluntary board of trustees, to deliver on our mission to improve outcomes for children, adolescents and their families, by empowering professionals to deliver and evaluate our programmes through their services in local communities. Without you, none of this life changing work would be possible.

Our model of developing tailored parenting and mental health interventions in partnership with services and families for services and families, means that teams are better equipped to work collaboratively with parents to achieve the outcomes they define for their family, with our proven programmes, supervision, evaluation and outcome tracking. Indeed, our model of reinvesting all profits made from sale of our professional parenting and mental health intervention packages into development of new programmes to respond to the evolving needs of families, and in sponsorship of services with limited funding, to train in our programmes, emphasises our steadfast commitment to working together with community, mental health, disability and education services, to improve outcomes for families.

I would like to extend a special thank you to our funders of 2023 including The Community Foundation Ireland and The RTÉ Toy Show Appeal, An Pobal and The JP Mc Manus Benevolent Fund. We are extremely grateful for your support, which enables us to continue to provide our evidence-based and subsidised services at affordable rates to services supporting families, children and adolescents.

Building on the work done in 2022 to increase the impact of Parents Plus charity, and guided by Parents Plus Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025, developed in partnership with Rethink Ireland, 2023 was an extremely busy year for Parents Plus with the charity working with over 900 professionals across the community, mental health, disability and education sectors. The charity trained over 740 professionals in the delivery of our suite of evidence-based programmes and provided supervision and implementation support to 283 practitioners. We also delivered seminars to a range of professionals across Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS), disability, family support and education, in key areas such as 'Improving outcomes for children with ADHD by empowering parents', and master classes in Solution-Focused Groupwork.

A significant milestone in 2023 was the announcement in December of Parents Plus three year partnership with the HSE. The partnership with HSE Disability Division, will see our charity work with the 92 Children's Disability Network teams (CDNTs) and provide our proven trainings and implementation support for 160 practitioners over the next three years, to build their capacity to improve outcomes for families with evidence-based parenting support, the Parents Plus Early Years Programme and Special Needs Programme, as well as provision of tailored workshops on the Parents Plus Solution Focused Model of working with families, and supervision, accreditation and evaluation support.

Message from CEO

Other notable milestones of 2023 include the continued RTÉ Toy Show Appeal transformative grant funded delivery of online Parents Plus programmes to families via Parentline, ADHD Ireland and the Midwest Parenting When Separated Project, as well as the JP McManus Benevolent funded training and supervision of services in Limerick and Clare in the delivery of the Parents Plus Special Needs and Early Years Programmes.

2023 saw Parents Plus charity continue to build the capacity of a wide range of public and community and voluntary sector organisations to improve outcomes for families and children, including the TUSLA Traveller Project, the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) to roll out the Adolescents and Working Things Out programmes in secondary schools, and supporting the Tavistock and Relate services in the UK to deliver the Parenting when Separated Programme.

The charity also continued to invest in infrastructure to support growing the impact of our evidence-based services, including investment in HR consultancy, external governance review, PR expertise, SORP reporting, and salesforce functionality, all continuing to enhance delivery of high standards of governance and regulatory requirements, as well as our purpose and mission.

Without question, as with all services in the charitable sector, the economies we are working in remain challenging. Many of the services we worked with in the UK in 2023 experienced significant budget cuts. Parents Plus also experienced the challenges of rising costs to deliver our services across, for example, print and distribution. Nonetheless, the need for our services has increased considerably, and the charity has observed gradual recovery and steady progress.

As a member of the Parents Plus team since 2019 I was proud to accept the position of CEO of this invaluable charity in June 2023. The issue of inequitable access to proven parenting interventions for parents raising children, via services in their local communities, remains a challenge. However, as we embark on 2024, we are confident that as a team, and with the services we support, we can and will collectively make a significant positive impact in driving our mission forward and achieve our vision of a country where families in need have access to proven and tailored parenting tools from the services they turn to, in their communities, early on in their journey, improving their outcomes and preventing difficulties arising.



Cherie Tyner

Chairperson's Statement

Welcome to the Parents Plus Annual Report for 2023.

The Board and I are pleased to present this to you on behalf of the staff and our team at Parents Plus.

Over the last 26 years Parents Plus charity has been developing and delivering evidence-based parenting programmes across Primary Care, Disability Services, and Mental Health teams as well as in education in both the public and voluntary sectors in Ireland, the UK and internationally.

Our programmes follow international best practices have been independently reviewed and have a strong evidence base that demonstrates positive outcomes for families.

Our mission is to improve the well-being of children, young people and their parents to strengthen families by empowering professionals to deliver our evidence-based programmes in their services. We train and support hundreds of professionals as facilitators each year and provide post-training support and supervision to ensure the programmes are evidence-based, quality controlled and sustainably delivered across services.

Parents Plus Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025 guides our work and we continue to build on the work done in 2022. We are very proud to announce our 3-year partnership with HSE Disability Division was confirmed in December 2023. This will see Parents Plus work with the 92 Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNT) to provide training and support to practitioners across Ireland with the Parents Plus Early Years Programme and the Special Needs Programme.

We would like to acknowledge and thank our funders for their generosity and continued support throughout 2023, in particular the Community Foundation Ireland fund, the RTE Toy Show Appeal, An Pobal, and the JP Manus Benevolent Fund.

This allows us to continue to provide our much-needed services to organisations and professionals supporting families, children and adolescents. The continued RTÉ Toy Show Appeal transformative grant-funded delivery of online Parents Plus programmes to families via Parentline, ADHD Ireland and the Midwest Parenting When Separated Project, as well as the JP McManus Benevolent funded training and supervision of services in Limerick and Clare in the delivery of the Parents Plus Special Needs and Early Years Programmes improving outcomes for families and children.

Chairperson's Statement

In addition, the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) rollout of the Adolescents and Working Things Out programmes in secondary schools and the TUSLA Traveller Project helped support these organisations to deliver effective evidence-based programmes. In the UK Parents Plus supported the Tavistock and Relate services to deliver the Parenting when Separated Programme.

Continued thanks to the Mater Hospital for the ongoing support of Parents Plus through the provision of accommodation, services for training and support for the programmes in general.

In 2023 Parents Plus continued to enhance our delivery of high standards of governance and regulatory requirements to ensure we are exemplary as a charity and fully compliant with the Charity Act 2009 and that we meet all the standards outlined in the Charities Governance Code. The charity will continue to strive to provide the highest possible level of information, transparency and accountability as an organisation.

We are delighted to announce that Cherie Tyner was formally appointed CEO of Parents Plus in 2023. She has worked with Parents Plus since 2019 and has brought an energy and expertise that continues to have a significant positive impact on ensuring our mission and vision are achieved.

We want to also acknowledge the continued hard work and dedication of everyone working with Parents Plus. Their commitment to ensuring the success of Parents Plus is greatly appreciated.

As chair of the board of trustees, it is an honour and privilege to continue to support the work for Parents Plus and I would like to thank my fellow directors for their expertise and time that they so generously give to this remarkable organisation.

I look forward to 2024 with hope and optimism and while there are challenges ahead I believe we will continue to meet them with resolute determination.



Dr Michael Drumm

About Parents Plus Charity

Why we exist

Parents Plus charity are leaders in developing, implementing, evaluating and disseminating evidence-based parenting and mental health interventions for services supporting families and children. Over the past 26 years, our charity has been working closely with teams across the community, mental health, disability, and education sectors, to build their capacity and skills to improve outcomes for families from the early years to adulthood.

Our focus is training and supervising these teams to improve outcomes for children, young people and parents in their communities at their point of need.

Parents Plus charity consistently demonstrates innovative practice as each intervention has been developed with services and families, for services and families. In the last 10 years alone, Parents Plus has supported over 1,000 organisations, in Ireland and internationally, to create sustainable change in their service delivery, strengthening over 100,000 families.

Backed by over 25 years of research, our programmes have proven benefits for families, including those dealing with disadvantages, disabilities, and mental health problems, as well as family life's regular ups and downs.

All profits from sales of programme training and supervision are re-invested in developing new evidence-based programmes to respond to the evolving needs of families and to sponsor facilitator training and support of services with limited budgets, who work with high-need families.

Founded in 1995 by Child and Adolescent Consultant Psychiatrist Professor Carol Fitzpatrick and Principal Social Worker Dr John Sharry, and established as a charity in 2001, our collaborative practice, training and supervision of teams ensures we are uniquely placed to equip services to deliver proven interventions tailored to the needs of local communities.

“

In the last 10 years alone, Parents Plus has supported over 1,000 organisations, in Ireland and internationally, to improve outcomes for over 100,000 families.

”

Mission, Vision and Values

Our mission

Is to improve outcomes of children, young people, and parents and to strengthen families, by empowering professionals to deliver our evidence-based programmes in their services.

Our vision

Is that all families have access to proven and tailored parenting tools, from the services they turn to, at their point of need, in their communities, improving their outcomes.

Evidence-based

Parents Plus provides an evidence-based service. We are committed to researching outcomes and developing effective programmes in response to the needs of families and young people, as well as supporting facilitators to continually evaluate their practice to ensure their groups meet their family's needs.

Universal, early intervention, and prevention

Parents Plus programmes are important universal, early intervention, and prevention interventions.

Tailored

Our programmes are tailored to the needs of local communities and can be delivered one-to-one, in groups or online, to reach the most at-risk families.

Empowering

Parents Plus believes in empowering the professionals and families we work with. Our programmes are focused on encouraging children and parents to achieve their potential and our professional training is focused on encouraging professionals to achieve the highest standards of excellence.

Collaboration

Parents Plus focuses on collaboration. We work closely with families to ensure the programmes meet their goals and to ensure their experience and knowledge are central to the content of the materials.

Our Impact Model



Train the trainer

The Parents Plus portfolio of parenting and mental health programme training packages for professionals is effective:

- Universal programmes for all families raising children
- In prevention for disadvantaged and at-risk families
- As interventions for high-need families dealing with complex problems

Effective for children across different age groups, each programme can be delivered individually or in small groups, both in person and online, to parents and carers.



Supervision

Evidence shows that supervision and supporting facilitators through the accreditation process are integral to services maintaining improved outcomes for the families they work with, and why our charity provides two free supervision sessions to each professional trained in our programmes.



Capacity building and regional rollouts

Our team of experts work closely with services across Community, Mental Health, Disability and Education, to build their capacity and skills to deliver and evaluate our proven interventions, tailored to the needs of local communities, as well as support regional and national rollouts, to ensure effective community-wide delivery



Sponsorship of services with limited funding

Parents Plus reinvests profits made in sponsoring services who work with high-need families, and who have limited funding, to train in and deliver our programmes in their communities.



Development of further evidence-based programmes for services

Parents Plus reinvests profits made into the development of further programmes to build the capacity of services to respond effectively to the evolving needs of families, as can be noted by our suite of eight evidence based programmes, the 2022 launch of the Parents Plus ADHD Children's Programme, the 2023 new Parents Plus Early Years Programme Core Delivery, and current research and development work.

Our Professional Programmes

Our programmes combine a social learning model with a solution-focused preventative framework that encourages and empowers parents, young people, and children to 'take charge' and make positive changes in their lives.



The **Early Years Programme** for parents of children aged 1 to 6.

The **Children's Programme** for parents of children aged 6 to 11.

The **ADHD Children's Programme** to support parents of children with ADHD aged 6 to 12.

The **Adolescents Programme** for parents of adolescents aged 11 to 16.

The **Special Needs Programme** to support parents who have an adolescent with an intellectual disability.

The **Working Things Out Programme** targeted at adolescents aged 11 to 16.

The **Parenting when Separated Programme** targeted at parents who are preparing for, going through, or have gone through a separation or divorce.

The **Healthy Families Programme** to support healthy, active and positive family lifestyles.

The Services We Support

Professionals and sectors

Parents Plus trains and supports over 800 professionals as facilitators each year throughout Ireland, the UK and internationally.

Our bespoke train-the-trainer model ensures that professional service providers are best equipped to improve the lives of thousands of families and young people in a variety of settings, including family resource centres, child and adolescent mental health clinics; and disability services, childcare centres and preschools; primary and secondary schools; and child protection agencies.

Trained professionals include teachers, social workers, speech and language therapists, psychologists, family support workers, public health nurses, occupational therapists, psychiatrists, childcare workers, mental health workers, health promotion officers and community Workers.





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Parents Plus are amazing to work with and we have built a good relationship with them, which has been essential for supporting the roll-out of Parenting When Separated in Hertfordshire. They have been flexible around supervision to support practitioners through their first delivery and offered additional training to support practitioners' confidence.

”

Nicola Wilder
Development & Commissioning Officer
Hertfordshire County Council



Parents Plus
Parenting When Separated
Programme

Evidence Base



Backed by over 25 years of research.

The Parents Plus Programmes have a strong evidence base that demonstrates positive outcomes for families who complete our programmes.



There are 26 internationally recognised studies conducted in clinical, community and disability settings, attesting to their effectiveness for families dealing with a variety of challenges and issues. These studies have all been independently supervised by University College Dublin, Trinity College Dublin and the University of Limerick.

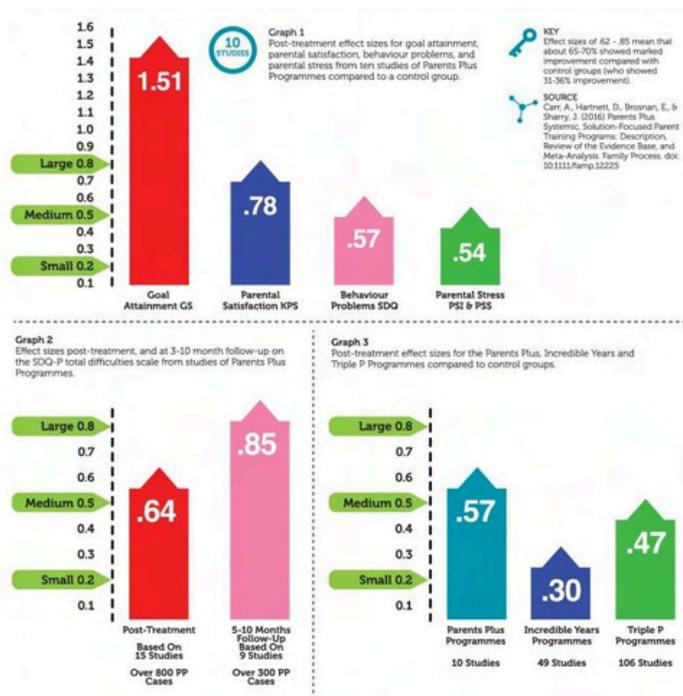


The Parents Plus Programmes follow **international best-practice guidelines** as described by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence in the UK and have been **independently reviewed** by the Early Intervention Foundation (EIF), NHS Education for Scotland (NES) and the National Parenting Academy (NPA) and were **awarded top ratings**.

Evidence Base

Meta-Analysis of the Parents Plus Evidence Base.

Professor of Clinical Psychology, Alan Carr, University College Dublin, conducted a **meta-analysis** of the Parents Plus evidence base, **with over 1,000 families** in specialist settings. This analysis highlighted the **significant benefit for families who attend the Parents Plus courses**, both post-treatment and importantly, at follow-up. Professor Carr concluded:



In summary, the research shows:

1. The Parents Plus Programmes have a significant impact on:
 - reducing child emotion/behaviour problems.
 - reducing parent stress.
 - increasing parent satisfaction.
 - increasing therapeutic goal achievement.
2. Most significantly, the gains made by families are maintained 3 to 10 months after completing the programmes and in some instances the benefits have increased. (Graph 2 below)
3. With an average effect size of .6 across all the studies, the effectiveness of the Parents Plus Programmes compares favourably with other international parent training programmes with large evidence bases. (Graph 3 below)
4. The results have been observed with over 1000 families in specialist settings, such as mental health and disability services, as well as in preventative community settings, such as schools and family centres.

The study was published in the International Journal Family Process.

[Read full paper here.](#)

Growing Our Impact

In 2023, Parents Plus has continued to expand its reach and deepen its impact, both in Ireland and the UK, aligned with our strategic goals outlined in the Parents Plus Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025. Our journey this year was marked by significant milestones, including an impactful presentation by CEO, Cherie Tyner, and Disability Programmes Lead, Ciara Ni Raghallaigh, to the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Disability Matters, highlighting the need for access to evidence-based parenting interventions, as part of family-centred practice, for families raising a child with a disability in Ireland.

A major highlight of the year was the announcement of Parents Plus collaboration with the HSE Disability Division and the 92 Progressing Disability Network Teams across the country. This partnership will see our charity work with these teams over the next three years to build their capacity to improve outcomes for families with evidence-based parenting support and programmes, tailored to the diverse needs of service users and families, provision of tailored workshops to these teams, as well as supervision, accreditation and evaluation support.

Moreover, 2023 saw the introduction of our new Parents Plus Early Years Programme Core Delivery. This alternative delivery enables trained facilitators to deliver the programme to individual families in a flexible manner, shaped to their needs over an extended period of time. The programme is particularly suitable for home visiting initiatives. This development represents further our commitment to adapting our programmes to ensure that services are empowered to respond effectively to the evolving needs of families, children, and young people.

Our dedication to empowering services across community, mental health, disability, education and youth sectors to improve family outcomes through our evidence-based programme training, supervision, and outcome tracking, is constant. Through seminars and events like 'Collaboration is Key', 'Improving Outcomes for Children with ADHD by Empowering Parents,' and the 'Adapting Early Years Parenting Programme' event, we continued to empower practitioners to make a meaningful difference in the lives of children and families.

As we move into 2024 our charity looks forward to growing and deepening our impact, and empowering more professionals and services to improve outcomes for the families and communities they have set up to serve.

Strategic Plan 2022 - 2025

2022 saw the launch of the new Parents Plus Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025. The plan is informed by up-to-date research on the needs of families; the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic; the current social, economic and political context for families living in Ireland, and internationally; as well as the gaps in services working with parents, children and young people.

Building on the work of 2022, in 2023 Parents Plus continued to focus on increasing our impact in Ireland to respond to the growing needs of families and services, and scaling our current work in the U.K. and internationally to further strengthen families and improve outcomes.

Guided by the eight strategic goals set out in our strategic plan, Parents Plus remains committed to:

1. Increasing the impact of our world-class parenting and mental health programme research, training, supervision and outcome monitoring for services, and importantly, families;
2. Continuing to respond to the evolving needs of families, particularly those most marginalised and underserved, through the development of evidence-based programmes and sponsorship of services with limited budgets and who work with high-need families.

Strategic Goals

- Goal 1** Increase the impact of Parents Plus in Ireland, through the number of services and professionals trained and supervised in programme delivery, to improve outcomes for families.
- Goal 2** Increase the international impact of Parents Plus.
- Goal 3** Increase programme accessibility and impact for services and families.
- Goal 4** New Programme research and development to respond to evolving needs of families and services supporting them.
- Goal 5** Increase access to our evidence-based programmes by high need and disadvantaged groups.
- Goal 6** Increase impact of post training support to agencies to improve outcomes for families
- Goal 7** Research and Evaluation of our programmes to ensure excellence
- Goal 8** Governance and Administration

“

Overall, for me as a practitioner, I value this programme as I have watched it give so many parents an opportunity to have a voice and be heard and their experiences acknowledged. Something so simple makes such a difference to the confidence of parents.

The parent book is a great addition too – it's something that belongs to the parent that they can write in and refer back to.

The Parents Plus team has been great to work with – responsive, supportive, and knowledgeable.

”

Jackie Liddell
Northumberland Family Hubs
Northumberland Council
UK



Parents Plus
Parenting When Separated
Programme



Our Impact in Ireland in 2023

In 2023, our charity made a significant impact by training 743 professionals in our suite of evidence based parenting and mental health programmes, delivering 54 trainings, providing individual supervision to 76 trained facilitators, and group supervision to 196 trained facilitators. Importantly, this work has contributed to developing the skills and expertise of these professionals to improve outcomes for the children, adolescents and families they are set up to serve.



Our Impact in the UK in 2023

In 2023, Parents Plus continued its work in partnership with services across the UK. This work included training 107 practitioners from UK services. We strengthened further our impact across the UK, with new services from various councils participating in our evidence-based parenting and mental health training programmes for professionals, as well as supervision and implementation supports.



107
TOTAL
PROFESSIONALS
FOR TRAINING

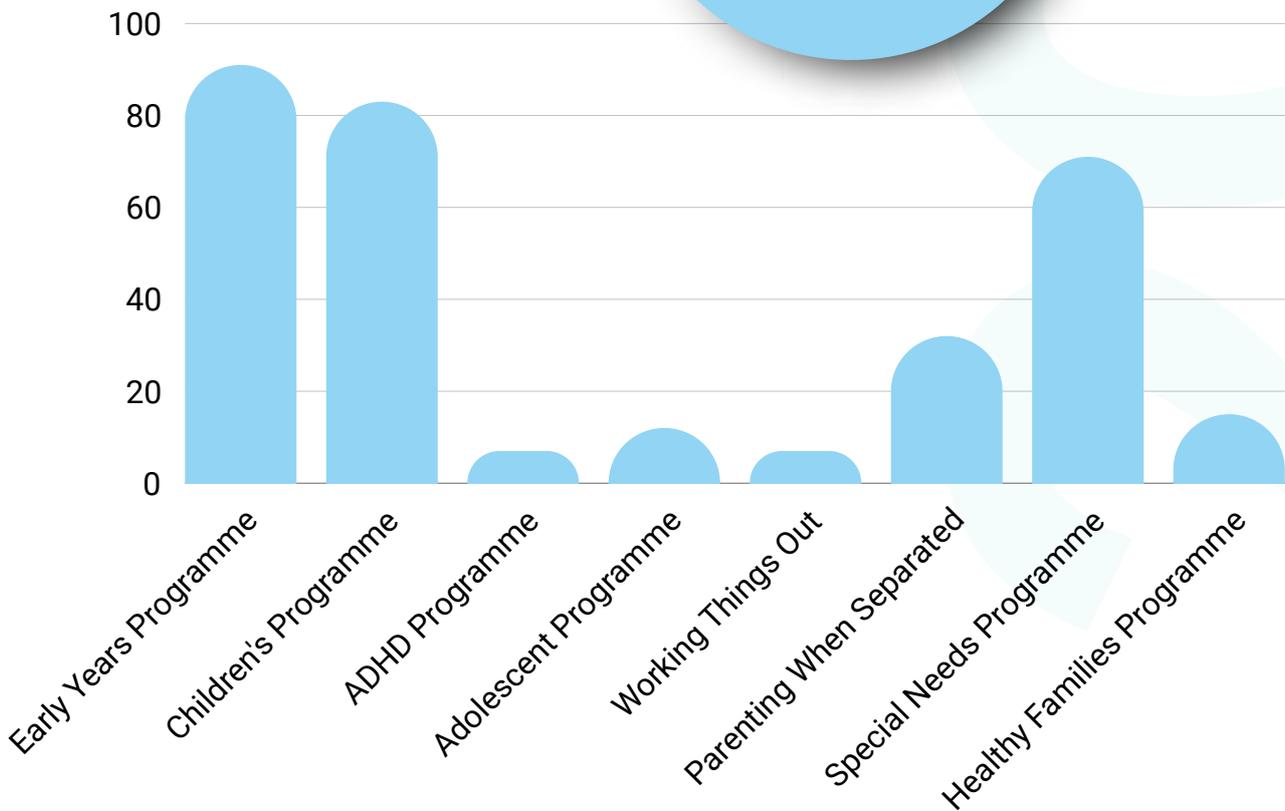
66
ONSITE
TRAININGS
DELIVERED

Training and Supervision

743
PROFESSIONALS
TRAINED IN CORE
PROGRAMMES

272
TOTAL
PROFESSIONALS
SUPERVISED

Breakdown of professionals by
Parents Plus Programmes for 2023

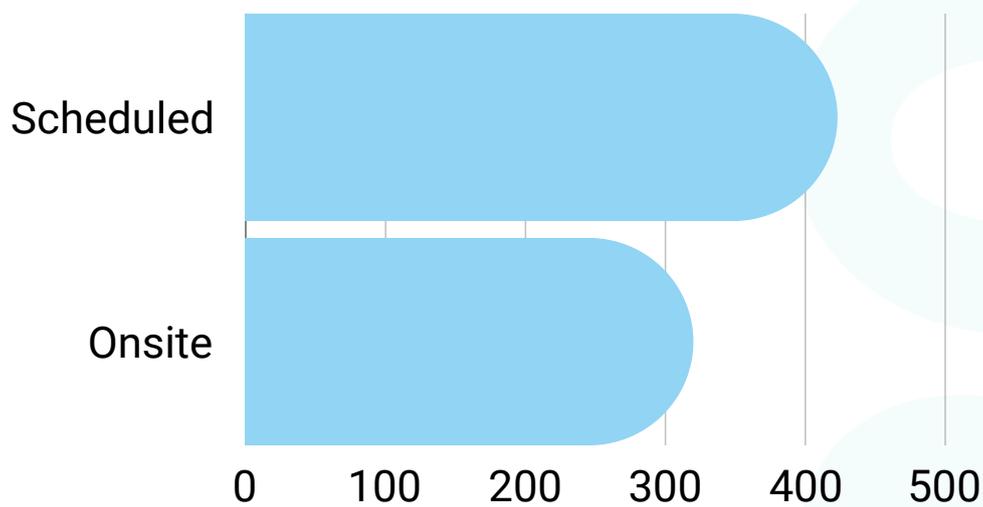


Training and Supervision

Evidence shows that in order to further improve outcomes for families, professionals must be supported, post training, to implement parenting and mental health groups within their own settings. Thus, a key strategy for Parents Plus is to increase the engagement of trained professionals in post training supervision. With this in mind, Parents Plus continued to integrate post-training supervision into all training packages.

From 2023, all professionals trained in Parents Plus programmes were offered:

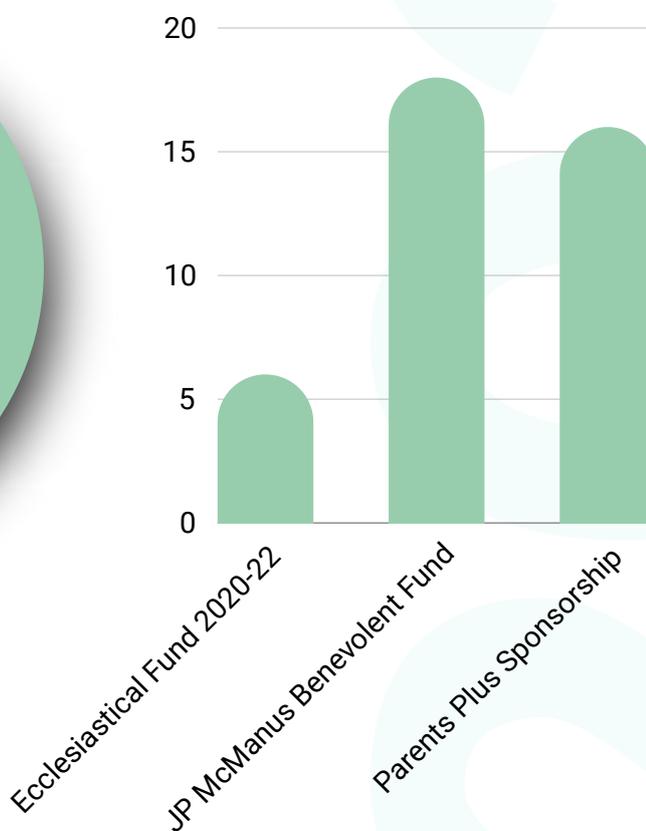
- A two-week post training call to provide support
- Two supervision sessions funded by Parents Plus within year one
- Further sponsored supervision available by application.



Sponsored Training

In 2023 our charity proudly sponsored/funded training places for **40 professionals** from the community, education, health and disability sectors. This was from our own resources, as well as from external grants that we secured, to support services who work with high need families, and who have limited funding, to train in and deliver our programmes in their communities.

40
SPONSORED
TRAINING
PLACES



Onsite Training

Post Covid, we were once again in a position to offer onsite training. In 2023 we delivered 16 face-to-face programme trainings in the Republic of Ireland and the UK.



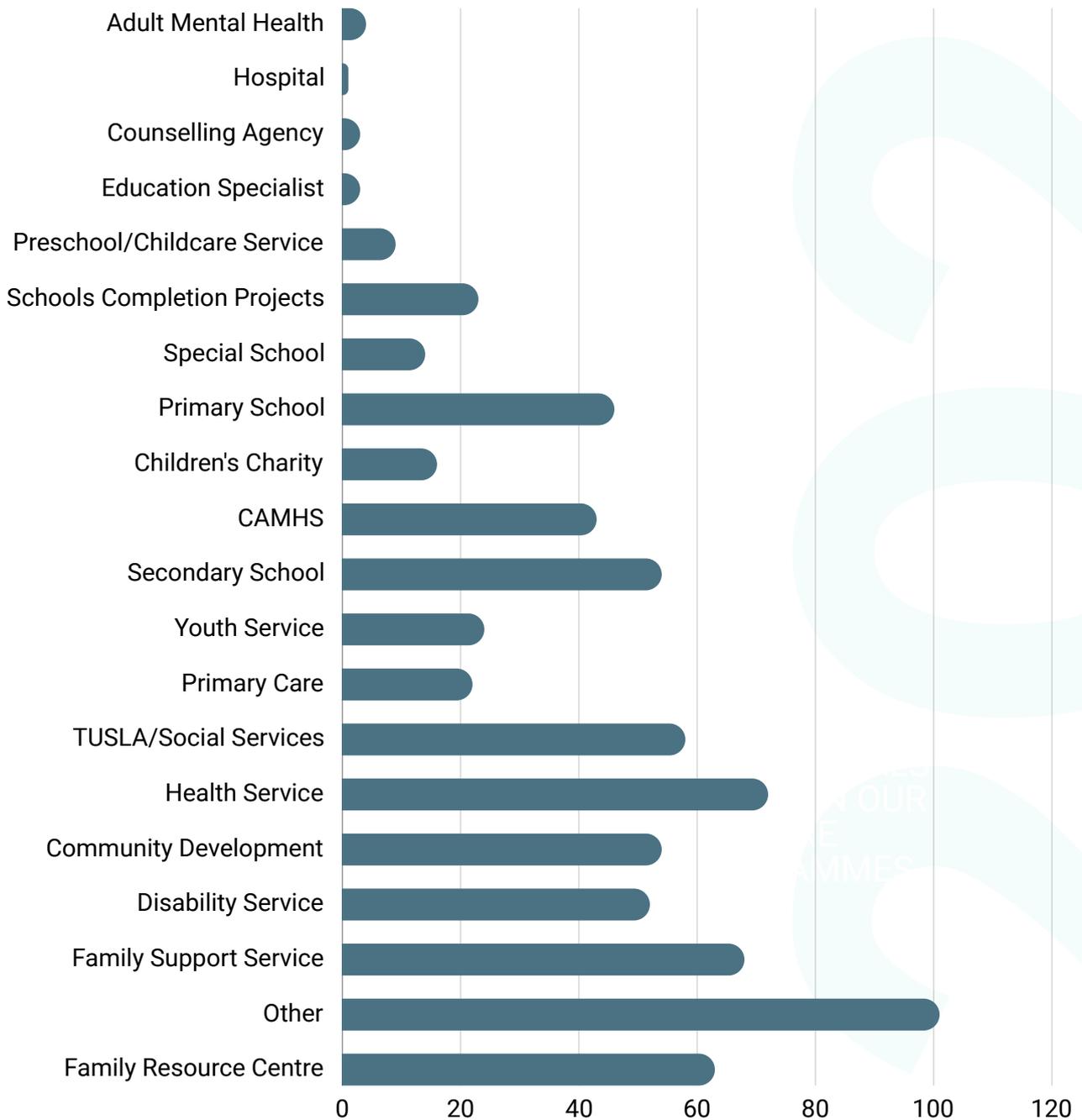
Professionals and Services

Professionals who trained in Parents Plus programmes were from a wide range of professions. Most were represented across the Family support, Mental Health, Education, Disability and Community Sectors.

743
PROFESSIONALS
TRAINED IN OUR
PROGRAMMES



Professionals and Services



Spotlight On 2023

As we look back on 2023, we would like to acknowledge the achievements made possible with the services we work with across health, community, education, and disability services. Their commitment to working with Parents Plus charity to improve outcomes for families with evidence based service delivery has enabled us to have a meaningful impact within their services and in the lives of the families they support.

Together, we have continued to deliver on our mission, and we look forward to even greater success in the future.

Over the following pages, we will spotlight some of the work from 2023 that has laid a solid foundation for our charity's continued growth and increased impact in the years ahead.

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The dedication and engagement of parents and carers in this programme is nothing short of remarkable. Their willingness to deeply engage with the programme and each other, investing time, emotional energy, and a commitment to integrating new strategies into their lives, has been a cornerstone of the programme's success.

”

Dr Elsabé de Villiers
Wicklow Primary Care and
Children's Disability Team
Mid-Wicklow



**Parents Plus
Special Needs Programme**





Parents Plus and the HSE Children's Disability services to roll out the Parents Plus Early Years programme and the Parents Plus Special Needs programme.

We are delighted to announce a new collaboration between Parents Plus Charity, the HSE Disability Division, and Children's Disability Network Teams, 2024 - 2026.

The critical value of early access to evidence-based and tailored parenting interventions for families raising a child with a disability cannot be underestimated. It is a key component of family-centred practice which recognises the importance of focusing on the whole family and not just the child requiring support. Research further emphasises that empowering parents of children with a disability with the tailored parenting tools that they define as needed to support their family, is a critical determinant of a child's future outcomes, as well as affecting the well-being of siblings and parents too.

Indeed, in a recent randomised controlled trial study, parents attending the Parents Plus Special Needs Programme reported significant improvements in:

- **Parenting practices**
- **Problem behaviours**
- **Parental satisfaction**
- **Parental self-efficacy**
- **Personal goal attainment**

The research was published in the Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities in 2023.

The partnership with HSE Disability Division, will see our charity work with the 92 Children's Disability Network teams (CDNTs) and provide training and implementation support for 160 practitioners over the next three years to build their capacity to improve outcomes for families with evidence-based parenting support, the Parents Plus Early Years Programme and Special Needs Programme, tailored to the diverse needs of service users and families, as well as provision of tailored workshops on the Parents Plus Solution Focused Model of working with families, as well as supervision, accreditation and evaluation support.

We look forward to working together with the CDNTs to help families deal with the challenges they face.

“

The Parents Plus team are true to their principles and values – they empower us as facilitators and believe in us as much as we then believe in the parents. They could not be more supportive as an organisation – they want to make it as simple as possible for you as a professional to be trained and get going with a programme. There are no unnecessary barriers and costs with the accreditation processes.

The materials in the programme are high quality, too. Parents loved the glossy parent books and also enjoyed the videos. We had only to sift through the contents each week to pick out what would be most appropriate for our ASN group and did not need to modify anything.

We'd like to say a big thanks to Parents Plus for their support in getting our programmes up and running in Falkirk.

”

Susi Wakely
Senior Educational Psychologist
Falkirk Council, Scotland



Parents Plus Early Years' Programme



Parents Plus Presents to the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Disability Matters



In January our CEO, Cherie Tyner, and our Disability Programmes Lead, Ciara Ni Raghallaigh, were invited to present to the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Disability Matters.

Cherie and Ciara were joined by Wayne McSweeney, parent, and Niamh Kerrigan, parent and Programme Co-Facilitator, with all four speaking to the committee about the need for access to evidence-based parenting interventions, as part of family-centred practice, for families raising a child with a disability in Ireland.

Below is an extract from Parents Plus Opening Statement to The Joint Committee on Disability Matters.

“The critical value of early access to evidence-based and tailored parenting interventions for families raising a child with a disability through their local CDNTs cannot be underestimated. It is a key component of family-centred practice and essential if we are to ensure delivery of individual family service plans which recognises the importance of focusing on the whole family and not just the child requiring support. Research further emphasises that empowering parents with the tailored parenting tools that they define as needed to support their family, is a critical determinant of a child's future outcomes, as well as affecting the wellbeing of siblings, parents, communities, and the next generation. However, early or any access to proven parenting interventions can be low in some areas, where parents and children can end up in crisis, eventually receiving reactive rather than preventative parenting supports, failing on our commitment to UNCRPD and the right of families to equitable, accessible and tailored information to support their family.

As an Irish Charity with over 25 years of experience researching and developing evidence-based parenting interventions for services supporting families, our collaborative practice, training and supervision of these teams ensure we are uniquely placed to empower services to deliver family-centred parenting interventions tailored to the needs of local communities. We hold parents in high esteem and recognise them as the experts of their families and their needs. We work closely with disability teams to build their capacity and skills to improve outcomes for families from the early years right through to adulthood. Furthermore, our model of developing tailored parenting interventions in partnership with services and families for services and families, means that teams are better equipped to work collaboratively with parents to achieve the outcomes they define for their family using proven programmes, supervision, evaluation and outcome tracking. Indeed, our model of reinvesting all profits made from the sale of our professional parenting intervention packages into the development of new programmes to respond to the evolving needs of families, and in sponsorship of services with limited funding, to train in our programmes emphasises our steadfast commitment to working together to improve outcomes for families.

This can be seen in our recent work to support disability services to improve outcomes for adolescents with an intellectual disability (11 – 18) and their families. There are over 22,000 children under 18 living with an intellectual disability in Ireland. For several years disability services contacted our charity to develop an evidence-based parenting programme for these families, communicating that although they receive tailored support during the early years, as the child approaches adolescence, services did not have a proven parenting programme to draw on for this cohort when challenges and psychological distress are at their highest.

Families can experience unique and increased challenging behaviour, communication and sexual problems, stigma and isolation from their communities, as well as difficulties promoting the independence of the young person. Parents Plus responded to this need developing by The Parents Plus Special Needs Programme (PPSN). PPSN has undergone a Randomised Controlled Trial with the Psychology Dept., Trinity College Dublin, with impressive results; was developed in partnership with families and disability services; and is designed to be delivered by established disability services to parents, in their local communities, to empower them to change the outcomes not just of their child with an intellectual disability, but all of their family so they can realise their full potential, belong to, and contribute to an inclusive society. - a key commitment of CDNTs and UNCRPD. The urgent need for this programme was brought home by a disability social worker who trained in and delivered it – “Our service operates a duty social work call service. Up until we ran PPSN, parents frequently called the number, pleading for help with their child's challenging behaviour or because they did not know where else to get help. Very often we had to advise that they contact the guards or present to A & E. Fast forward and not one of the parents who attended PPSN has called this number. This is incredible. PPSN is without doubt the solution to the crippling problems that parents of adolescents with an intellectual disability face. Each parent who completed the group talks about it as life-changing. All professionals working in disability should be trained in the PPSN. It should be compulsory and offered to every family.”

However, although we share the successes and the incredible work done to date with disability teams, the issue of inequitable access to proven parenting interventions for parents raising a child with a disability via their local CDNTs is still an issue. Weekly we are informed of no budgets and services contacting us seeking funding from Parents Plus to train in and deliver our parenting interventions. We sponsor whom we can yet resources are finite. Weekly parents contact us, stressed, and seeking to signpost to evidence-based parenting interventions being run in their local communities. This is not a criticism of CDNTs. This is just a reality. But it is a reality that we can work together to solve and one that the Parents Plus charity is committed to helping overcome.

I would like to thank the committee for addressing this important issue and we look forward to answering any questions that you may have.”



Continuing our commitment to support professionals



In 2023, Parents Plus continued its support of professionals working with families and children through a series of innovative seminars and workshops. These educational events have played a role in enhancing the skills and knowledge of practitioners and managers alike, enabling them to deliver impactful support to the families they work with and through the Parents Plus programmes.

A notable highlight of the year was the free online seminar focused on **running effective online Parents Plus programmes**. This seminar was designed for practitioners trained in any Parents Plus programme, or planning to deliver an online group to parents. It provided a platform to share successes and learnings from various settings across Ireland and the UK, where Parents Plus programmes have been successfully delivered online.

Key insights from the seminar included practical guidance on launching online programmes, refining online delivery skills, recruiting parents, and pre-programme preparation. It emphasised supporting parents' participation, facilitating engagement among participants, and maintaining a strengths-based approach in an online setting. The seminar also covered balancing programme content with parent discussion time and the effective use of 'breakouts' for small group work, worksheets, and exercises.

We also announced a number of dates for our **Master Class in Solution-Focused Groupwork**. This masterclass, led by Parents Plus Clinical Director, Prof. John Sharry, and Senior Parents Plus Trainer and Clinical Nurse Specialist and Lecturer at the University of the West of England, Fred Ehresmann, aimed to equip group facilitators with the skills and knowledge necessary for effective group work, creating an atmosphere of trust and respect within groups.

Participants were introduced to the theory and practice of a strength-based approach to groupwork, covering topics such as establishing client-centred goals, solution-focused group facilitation, harnessing group dynamics for positive change, and managing group challenges. The training provided practical training and valuable networking opportunities, making it an ideal event for Parents Plus group facilitators and professionals working in mental health, education, and community settings.

Events such as these highlight Parents Plus' dedication to empowering professionals and enhancing the levels of support we provide. By fostering a culture of continuous learning and innovation, Parents Plus ensures that its evidence-based parenting and mental health programmes for services, continue to make a real difference in the lives of children and their families.

"Collaboration is Key" seminar

In June of 2023, Parents Plus hosted the online seminar "Collaboration is Key – Achieving Positive Outcomes for Children and Families." This event was designed for professionals working within Community, Health, Education, and Disability services, who support families and young people, including commissioners, heads of service, team leaders, and practitioners.

The seminar was hosted by Parents Plus Senior Trainer, Clinical Nurse Specialist and Lecturer at the University of the West of England, Fred Ehresmann, setting the stage for an enlightening session. Professor John Sharry, the co-founder and Clinical Director of Parents Plus, provided an in-depth introduction to the eight Parents Plus Programmes, highlighting the significant evidence base that supports these interventions.

The seminar showcased the experiences of professionals who have delivered the Parents Plus programmes across various settings. The focus was primarily on the Adolescent Programme, the Parenting When Separated Programme, and the Special Needs Programme, highlighting their positive impact on service delivery and for the families involved.

Parenting Supervisor from Bristol Council, Deborah Davis, shared insights from a decade of Parents Plus Programmes in Bristol, with a particular emphasis on the Parents Plus Parenting When Separated Programme. This case example illustrated the transformative effects these programmes have on positively supporting parenting journeys.

Parenting Lead from North Somerset Council, Emma Pattinson, discussed the successful implementation of the Parents Plus Adolescent Programme, providing valuable lessons on effective programme delivery.

Additionally, Family Support Workers from Bristol Council's Disabled Children's Service, Jacinta Bethell and Lizzie Boyes, shared their experiences with the Parents Plus Special Needs Programme, showcasing how it empowers parents and supports children with complex needs and severe learning difficulties.

The seminar highlighted one of the cornerstones of Parents Plus' work as a charity: the importance of collaboration with established services in achieving positive outcomes for children and families. By partnering with a wide range of organisations and working closely with professionals, Parents Plus ensures its programmes are responsive and tailored to the communities services have been set up to serve. This collaborative approach enables the provision of comprehensive and effective support, addressing all aspects of family well-being.

By sharing experiences, best practices, and the impact of the Parents Plus Programmes, the event not only educated but also inspired participants to continue working collaboratively to strengthen families and improve the well-being of children.

Improving outcomes for children with ADHD by empowering parents



In a special event for mental health professionals, the charity hosted an important and free online seminar titled 'Improving Outcomes for Children with ADHD by Empowering Parents'.

Held in October 2023, this seminar brought together practitioners delivering Parents Plus programmes in mental health settings to share their experiences supporting families, to an audience made up of professionals from Mental Health, Community, Disability and Education services, including commissioners, heads of service, and team leaders.

The seminar speakers included Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, Dr. Blanaid Gavin, and Associate Professor in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at UCD School of Medicine, as well as Professor John Sharry, Clinical Director at Parents Plus and Professor at UCD. They shared their knowledge on improving ADHD outcomes and provided valuable information for mental health professionals to effectively support and empower parents raising children with ADHD.

Lisa Whitlock from the Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust discussed the benefits of implementing the Parents Plus ADHD Programme through Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). Additionally, Fred Ehresman, a Clinical Nurse Specialist and Mental Health Lecturer at the University of the West of England, shared best practices for effective group delivery to families, highlighting the importance of tailored approaches to effective ADHD support.

An important aspect of the seminar was its emphasis on the lived experiences of families dealing with ADHD. Dr. Eileen Brosnan, Head of Implementation at Parents Plus, introduced the Parents Plus ADHD Children's Programme and provided the background on Ireland's first ADHD training programme for frontline professionals, developed by Parents Plus charity. Speech and Language Therapist and Co-Author of the programme, Grainne Hampson, introduced new content, while Una O'Brien, Speech and language therapist and Lisa Whitlock from Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust, shared their facilitation experiences, offering insights into the practical aspects of delivering the programme.

The seminar also featured a heartfelt discussion with two parents raising a child with ADHD, followed by a panel and Q&A session with four parents who participated in the pilot groups. This segment offered attendees an essential understanding of the family's journey through ADHD.

This seminar was a significant milestone for Parents Plus, providing a platform for mental health professionals, educators, and families to come together and share knowledge, experiences, and strategies for supporting children with ADHD. The seminar highlighted the critical role of evidence-based programmes in improving outcomes for children with ADHD and Parents Plus's commitment to empowering mental health services to effectively support families and children across the UK and Ireland.

New - Parents Plus Early Years Core delivery



In 2023 **Parents Plus** launched the innovative "Core" delivery model of its evidence-based Early Years Programme, a **collaborative development with SPECS Bray**, and **supported by TUSLA**. The launch of this alternative addition of the original format, allows facilitators to run the programme with individual families in a flexible manner, tailored to their needs, over an extended period, by adapting its concepts and written materials.



The Core delivery model was designed to offer flexibility, allowing facilitators to tailor the programme to individual family needs over an extended period. This customisation makes it an ideal option for parents who may find the traditional group delivery format challenging and would benefit from a more personalised approach in terms of content, pace, and delivery method.

The Parents Plus Early Years Core delivery model is a welcome addition to the suite of Parents Plus programmes and will empower services and professionals working with parents who:

- Have an intellectual disability or mental health issues, or have experienced adverse childhood experiences (ACEs).
- Do not use English as their first language, preferring reduced-text written materials and more individual time.
- Live in unstable accommodation and would benefit from the more flexible delivery.
- Are isolated or not engaged in services and are unready to attend a group.
- Need more individual support to reflect on their parenting and to make changes with their children.
- Benefit from a home visiting individual programme more than attending a group outside the home.

New - Parents Plus Early Years Core delivery

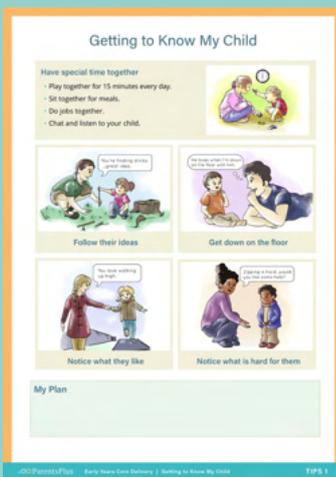
For facilitators already trained in the Parents Plus Early Years (PPEY) programme, a special one-module training was made available to explain the Core delivery approach.

This training highlighted the distinctions between the original and Core delivery materials. The original delivery provides a parent book covering nine sessions in detail, while the Core delivery offers a parent pack with loose-page handouts of fourteen topics, using less text and more images to illustrate key concepts with parents.

Clinical Director at Parents Plus, John Sharry, emphasised the benefits of this new delivery model, stating, "The Core delivery of the Parents Plus Early Years programme allows you to build the intervention around the parents needs and goals and to proceed at their pace, ensuring they have time to create new habits in the home with their children."

The Core materials are versatile, supporting both individualised sessions for parents, focusing on topics most relevant to their children's needs, and group sessions, catering to the collective needs of parent groups.

This innovative approach not only enhances the accessibility of the programme but also ensures that the intervention is closely aligned with the unique challenges and goals of each family, promoting effective and lasting change in the home environment.



Hertfordshire Council Development and Commissioning Officer, Nicola Wilder.

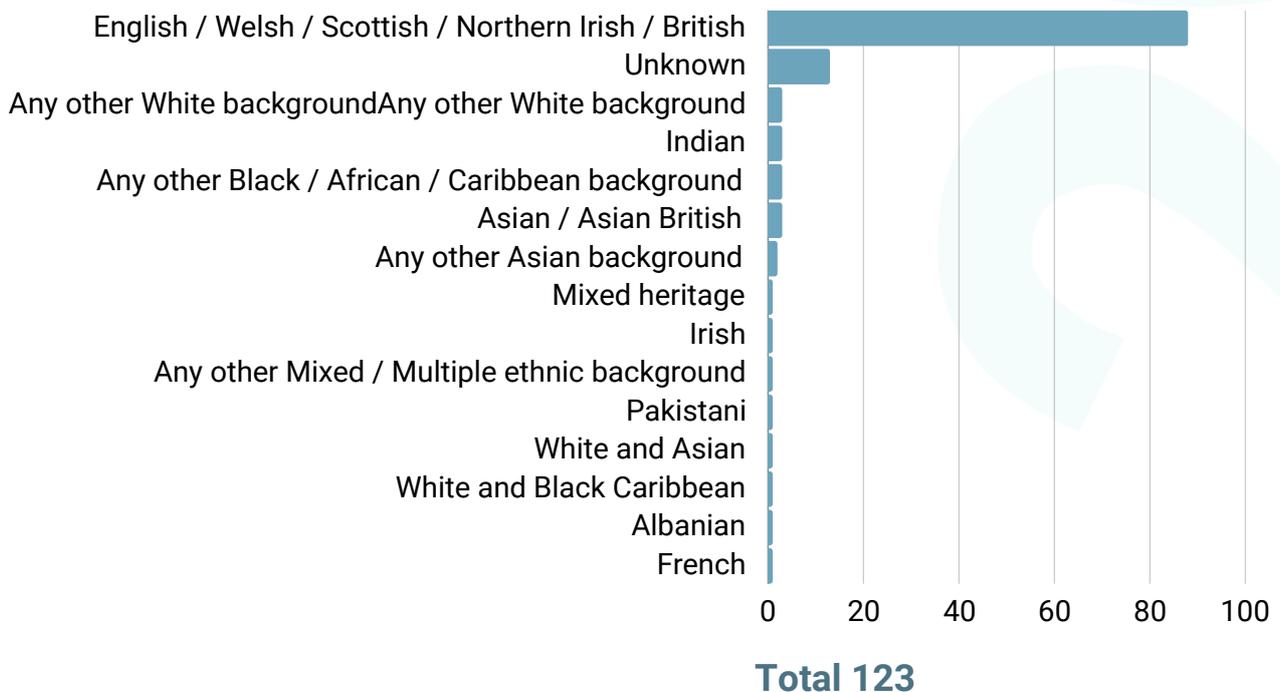


In 2023 we worked closely with **Hertfordshire Council** in their rollout of the Parents Plus Parenting When Separated (PWS) Programme, through funding from the **Department of Work and Pensions Reducing Parental Conflict Programme**. Hertfordshire Council delivered the PWS online and in person, and are currently designing and implementing an evaluation of the impact and outcomes for the families involved. Parents Plus charity has supported the Hertfordshire implementation, providing supervision to the practitioners and consultation to their Development and Commissioning Officer.

It has been a very successful collaboration thus far and we look forward to continuing to work with the council in 2024.

The below summary covers the period 1st April to 31st December 2023

- **123 referrals of which 79 were female and 44 were male**
- **36 parents and carers have completed the course**
- **85% of parents and carers are requesting online delivery**
- **72% of parents and carers referring are resident parents and carers**
- **35 families referred were parents or carers to children with special educational needs and disabilities**



Hertfordshire Council Development and Commissioning Officer, Nicola Wilder.



100%

Of parents and carers agree or strongly agree that the course was well organised.

100%

Of parents and carers agree or strongly agree that the course was well led.

100%

Of parents and carers agree or strongly agree that the facilitators included everyone.

80%

Of parents and carers reported progress made towards their goals.

What parents felt was the most helpful part of the course.

- “Ideas & understanding of other parents (non-resident) viewpoints plus little tips and tricks to ease communication.”
- “All of the course was helpful but perhaps advice on keeping things businesslike, handling challenging situations and scenarios regarding your (or one’s ex-partner) was very useful and also remaining calm and compassionate with the children and putting them at the heart of everything is important alongside taking care of yourself.”
- “Connecting with other parents and sharing experiences”
- “Reminder of the importance of self-care”
- “The group discussions were always good as they touched on subjects, we could all relate to in our own situations and the chance to talk was always good. The modules all had an element of parent and child perspective which was good to consider both and reflect from both sides.”
- “Interacting with other parents in similar situations and hearing their view and understanding that certain universal themes across everyone’s situation.”
- “Talking and listening to others’ experiences, realising that other people are going through the same thing.”

EASPD Knowledge Café and Parents Plus



In February 2023, the **European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD) and Parents Plus** co-hosted a webinar introducing our Special Needs programme developed for professionals including social workers, therapists, and teachers, to assist parents who are raising an older child or adolescent with a mild, moderate or severe intellectual disability, and who may also have an additional diagnosis, such as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or a physical disability. The Knowledge Café webinar spotlighted the Parents Plus Special Needs Programme, led by Ciara Ni Raghallaigh, the Parents Plus Disability Programmes Lead. This evidence-based programme is flexible and can be delivered over 6-12 weeks in small groups or with individuals.

The seminar covered many challenges that parents of adolescents with intellectual disabilities frequently encounter. Among these were managing behavioural and emotional issues, navigating the complexities of puberty, sexuality, and relationships, and fostering a supportive environment for all family relationships. It also emphasised the importance of building self-esteem and confidence in their children, advocating effectively for their needs, supporting their education and developmental milestones, and preparing them for adulthood and future transitions.

As the first of its kind in the world, our programme stands out as a valuable tool for professionals who work with parents of adolescents with disabilities. During the seminar, our team emphasised the collaborative approach developing the programme with services and families, to ensure its effectiveness and relevance.

Participants in the Knowledge Café gained a deeper understanding of the programmes proven benefits, which have positively impacted both families and professionals. By facilitating the sharing of Parents Plus strategies, experiences, and knowledge, the webinar provided those attending with insights into how to effectively support parents to meet the unique needs of adolescents with intellectual disabilities and their families.



RTÉ TOY SHOW APPEAL

 The Community
Foundation for Ireland

Parents Plus online programmes scale through funding from The RTÉ Toy Show Appeal Transformation Grant (2022 - 2024)

This project has involved the online rollout of the Parents Plus evidence-based suite of parenting programmes, through our project partners – Parentline, ADHD Ireland, Family Carers Ireland and the Parenting When Separated Project in the Mid West Family Resource Centre (FRC) network coordinated by the Northside FRC in Limerick.

This project began out of a collaboration between Parents Plus to support Parentline and with ADHD Ireland respond to the demand for parenting support during the period of Covid 19. The suite of Parents Plus programmes made available online through this initiative includes Parents Plus Early Years Programme, Children’s Programme, ADHD Children’s Programme, Adolescent Programme, Special Needs Programme, Healthy Families Programme, and Parenting when Separated Programme.

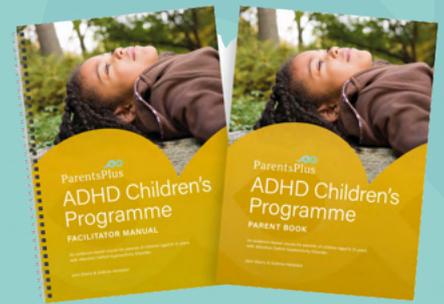
Through the support of RTÉ, via the Toy Show Appeal Transformative Grant, and The Community Foundation Ireland, Parents Plus were able to scale this project. To date up to 700 parents have availed of the programmes, impacting over 2,000 children and parents. Providing the programmes online has met the needs of many families who could never access programmes in person due to work, family commitments, geography and other barriers, to attending in-person groups. The aim of this project has not been to replace in-person delivery but to enhance the current in-person provision and make the programmes more widely accessible to a broader community of parents experiencing parenting challenges.



In looking at the impacts of the programmes, parents attending the online groups were asked to provide feedback on their experiences of attending and what impact it had for them and their families. Here are a selection of responses from parents on their online experience, the content and the support from other parents.

Mother of a 9-year-old boy with ADHD attending the ADHD Programme:

“Connecting with the facilitator and this wonderful group of parents who each have shared the challenges of ADHD has been life-changing. Being able to talk about the difficulties with people who understand, I’ve never been able to talk to family or friends like this. There are judgments on your parenting skills from others when your child is considered ‘bold’ or ‘misbehaves.’ I felt comforted and empowered to gain a new understanding of my child’s differences and know that the meltdowns and sensory overload that go with ADHD are not my fault or his. It’s been so powerful to meet others experiencing the same problems and gain new ideas and strategies. I will be forever grateful.”



Parent attending the Parenting When Separated Programme:

“I could not easily fit in going to this programme in person and as far as I know it isn’t even available in my area. The topics covered were right on the mark – moving me to think about the effects of the separation on my two children. Putting their needs at the centre and trying to improve my communication with their other parent for their sake. None of it is easy but the programme gave me space to think.”



Dad attending the Early Years programme:

“Going to the programme helped me to stay calm and not jump to a big reaction when my son’s behaviour gets challenging. That was the best part of the content for me – Learning to Press the Pause button and take a step back to understand what is happening with my child, and why he is reacting in certain ways.”



Research updates 2023

2023

New research confirms the positive impact of the Parents Plus programme on special needs children with intellectual disabilities and their families.



Parents Plus released new research in 2023, highlighting the positive impact of our Special Needs Programme. Led by Assistant Professor in Clinical Psychology, Dr. Charlotte Wilson, Trinity College Dublin, and Clinical Psychologist at the School of Psychology, Suzanne McMahon, Trinity College Dublin, the study demonstrated the programmes effectiveness in improving outcomes for adolescents with an intellectual disability and their caregivers.

Published in the **Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities**, the research centred on the Parents Plus Special Needs Programme (PPSN), a seven-week initiative designed to empower parents of adolescents with intellectual disabilities. The study involved a rigorous cluster randomised controlled trial across 24 intellectual disability services, involving 141 parents in the PPSN group and 136 in the waitlist control group. The outcomes were promising, highlighting improvements in parenting practices, family adjustment, emotional regulation, and professional practice.

One of the findings was the **significant improvement in children's behaviour, emotional regulation, and social skills**. Parents observed improvements in their children's ability to communicate, express emotions appropriately, and interact socially with peers. Such advancements emphasise the programmes efficacy in nurturing crucial life skills in children with special needs.

The positive ripple effects of the PPSN extended to the well-being of parents as well. The programme significantly reduced stress levels among parents, improving their mental health and their relationships with their children. Parents reported feeling more connected and better equipped to enjoy meaningful interactions with their children, marking a substantial improvement in family dynamics.

PPSN also had an impact on professionals working with families of children with special needs. Those trained in the programme reported increased confidence and knowledge in supporting these families effectively. They praised the programme for its practical strategies and tools, which have become invaluable in their work with families, fostering a more supportive and understanding environment for children with special needs.

Co-founder and Clinical Director of Parents Plus, Professor John Sharry, expressed his enthusiasm for the research results, highlighting the programme's evidence-based approach and its significant contributions to improving the well-being of children and families. Similarly, Parents Plus Disability Programmes Lead, Ciara Ni Raghallaigh, echoed these sentiments, noting the important value and impact the programme has had on families she has worked with.

In 2023 our charity also conducted a longitudinal study for PPSN, evaluating the impacts over time for families. The study includes data from 150 parents from 20 groups collected at four-time points - pre and post-programme, six-month and one-year follow-up. Final data will be collected in 2024 and we hope to have results later in that year

The PPSN Longitudinal Study runs in tandem with the scaling up partnership initiative in Ireland and UK services, made possible with grants from the Ecclesiastical Movement for Good, Rethink Ireland, The Sunbeam Trust and the JP McManus Benevolent Fund



Strengthening families through evidence-based parenting support: Parents Plus Healthy Families programme randomised control trial



This Randomised Controlled Trial (RCT) study examining the effectiveness of the Parents Plus Healthy Families programme is currently being undertaken by Dr Claire O'Dwyer, Psychologist in Clinical Training under the supervision of Prof. Alan Carr and Dr Kathy Looney at the School of Psychology, University College Dublin.

The study is in its second phase of recruitment and to date 101 parents have taken part, 54 parents have completed the treatment group and 47 parents have completed the control group. 10 services have engaged in the second phase of the research, facilitating the Parents Plus Healthy Families programme in their services. We await the results of the study.

Under the supervision of Professor Alan Carr and Dr. Kathy Looney at University College Dublin, a second study is being undertaken by Dr. Brid Davis, Psychologist in Clinical Training, looking at validating the Healthy Habits questionnaire from the Parents Plus Healthy Families Programme. The questionnaire is being administered to 500 parents in the community, and the results of the study will be available in 2024.

Update of the meta-analysis of Parents Plus evidence base

In 2016 Professor of Clinical Psychology, Alan Carr, University College Dublin, conducted a meta-analysis of the Parents Plus evidence base, with over 1,000 families in various settings. This analysis highlighted the significant benefit for families who attend the Parents Plus courses, both post-treatment and importantly, at follow-up. We are delighted to report that this meta-study will be updated in 2024 to include the additional studies conducted since then.

Prevention and Early Intervention Summit - Evaluating online Parents Plus programmes

In 2023 Parents Plus presented the **evaluation of the online Parents Plus programmes** via Parentline at the **Prevention and Early Intervention Summit** in Limerick.

Involving a total of 135 parents who completed time one measure and completed pre and post-measures, the study shows a statistically significant decrease in emotional problems, conduct problems, hyperactivity, and peer problems and a significant increase in prosocial behaviour, as measured by the SDQ. In the KPSS, statistically significant improvements were found in both satisfaction with oneself as a parent and overall total score. With the PEEM, significant improvements were found with small to medium effect sizes across items including staying calm under stress, and, most strongly, one's knowledge of parenting tips to share with others.

These findings suggest that online Parents Plus courses may be as effective as their in-person equivalents.

Qualitative feedback on the courses was overwhelmingly positive and retention in the groups was extremely high, with 93.52% of households attending at least 50% of their course and 75% missing no more than one session.

Supporting UK Services

In 2023, Parents Plus continued its work in partnership with services across community health, disability and education, to improve outcomes for families and children in the UK. Our work included training 107 practitioners from UK services and 66 professionals attending onsite training in 2023. We widened our impact with new partnerships across the UK, with services from various councils participating in our evidence-based parenting and mental health training programmes for professionals, as well as supervision and implementation supports.

We would like to acknowledge the support we received from teams at Bristol Council's Disabled Children's Service, Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust, North Somerset Council, and Northumberland Council. Their assistance in showcasing the value of our evidence based services in multiple seminars and case studies allowed us to create further new partnerships throughout the country.

Additionally, the launch of a .com version of the Parents Plus website has enhanced our ability to increase the number of strategic partnerships in the UK, providing us with the tools to connect with a wider audience and showcase the transformative potential of our evidence-based parenting programmes. Overall, the achievements of 2023 reflect the continued success and growth of Parents Plus in the UK.

Permanent CEO appointment

In June of 2023 Parents Plus charity announced the permanent appointment of Cherie Tyner as CEO. Cherie, who previously served as Interim CEO, will lead the implementation of our Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025, in collaboration with the Board of Directors.

Cherie's leadership will be instrumental in driving the delivery of the key strategic objectives, growth, and impact outlined in the plan. Furthermore, she will play a crucial role in developing our future strategic direction, ensuring that Parents Plus focus is on services and building their capacity to improve outcomes for families with our evidenced-based programmes and services.

Parents Plus trainers and supervisors

We would like to take this opportunity to also acknowledge, and sincerely thank our core team of expert Parents Plus Accredited Supervisors and Trainers, working with us regularly, offering training, supervision and mentoring to new Parents Plus facilitators across the suite of programmes, as well as to those who are participating in the Parents Plus Programme Accreditation process.

In 2023 we added 12 new accredited professionals to this team who positively impact the mission and development of the charity on a day-to-day basis. As we expand our 'Train the Trainer' model more and more of our Parents Plus accredited and experienced practitioners have the opportunity to engage with us to extend their practice and programme delivery skills and share their knowledge.

Post-training support

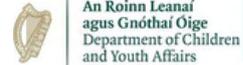
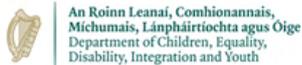
In addition to supervision and implementation support, Parents Plus also offers further post-training support in the form of the Facilitator's member's area of the website.

Resources on this section of the site also include:

- Streaming of the Parents Plus programme DVDs,
- Resources such as posters and fliers to promote groups
- certificates and handouts for the parents in the groups
- best practice information from the Parents Plus trainers, as well as presentations and tips from Parents Plus facilitators
- an archive of the monthly facilitator newsletter
- information on the accreditation process and quality assurance protocol.
- Facilitators can also avail of support to promote their groups locally via Parents Plus Communications Lead who issues press releases to print media, as well as promoting facilitator groups on Parents Plus Twitter and Facebook pages.

Parents Plus Facilitators are also kept up to date on valuable resources and research to aid their practice after training with regular emails and contact from Parents Plus.

Our Supporters



Governance and Organisation

Parents Plus CLG is an Irish registered charity and complies with the Charity Act 2009. Parents Plus is constituted as a company limited by guarantee not having a share capital, registered with company number 530105. Parents Plus CLG is registered with the Charities Regulatory Authority with registered charity number 20043124 and has been granted charitable tax exemption by the Office of the Revenue Commissioners with the CHY reference number 13664.

Governance code and compliance

Parents Plus complies with all of the core standards outlined in the Charities Governance Code. In compliance with the Charity Act 2015, Parents Plus reports annually on their compliance, which commenced in 2020. In addition, the charity has and continues to submit an annual report to the Charities Regulator. In 2018 and 2019, Parents Plus completed a review of our constitution, which was formally adopted by the board in June 2019.

Finance

Building on our compliant financial reporting requirements as detailed by the Charities Regulatory Authority, Parents Plus is also committed to working towards reporting in line with Charities SORP (Standard of Reporting Practice under FRS102), a statement of recommended practice that sets out how charities should prepare and report on their finances. Although not to be introduced into law until 2024/25, Parents Plus charity recognises the value of this measure in providing a greater level of information, transparency and accountability.

Triple locked certification

Although Parents Plus do not raise funds directly from the public, as part of our commitment to the highest of charitable standards and governance, the charity is also working towards securing the Triple Locked Standard of excellence with The Charities Institute of Ireland, a certification that shows excellence in fundraising, annual and financial reporting via SORP and Governance.

Lobbying

In accordance with the requirements of the Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015, Parents Plus charity signed up to Register for Lobbying with the Standards in Public Office Commission (SIPOC) in 2022, ensuring compliance with The Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015. The charity took this step to ensure that if and when Parents Plus engages with designated public officials on specific policy or legislative matters relevant to families in Ireland, we are fully compliant and transparent.

Governance and Organisation

Board

The Board of Directors, who meet six times annually, have responsibility for the governance and strategic direction of Parents Plus in liaison with the Chief Executive Officer and senior staff members. During 2023 the Board of Parents Plus comprises the following members (31st December 2023)

- Dr. Michael Drumm - Chairperson/Trustee
- Dr. Charlotte Wilson - Trustee – resigned 16th April 2023
- Jane Morgan - Trustee
- Andrew Bourke - Trustee
- Reynagh O' Brien - Trustee
- Andrew Balfe - Trustee

Board Sub-committees

To maintain and continually improve standards, Parents Plus has two subcommittees that meet throughout the year and report to the Board:

- 1) Finance Subcommittee – Meets to review financial procedures and to produce a draft budget and financial plan for the board.
- 2) Governance Subcommittee – Meets to review all governance procedures and to ensure the highest standards of accountability and governance.

Governance and Organisation

Parents Plus Core Team

Cherie Tyner - CEO
Professor John Sharry - Clinical Director
Dr. Eileen Brosnan - Head of Practice and Implementation
Breda Flood - Finance and Governance Manager
Claire Raftery - Programmes Manager
Ciara Ní Raghallaigh - Disability Programmes Lead
Grainne Hampson - Programme co-developer
Vicki Byrne - Impact Lead
John Harvey - Communications Lead
Donna Kavanagh - Office Manager
Cian O' Regan - Researcher/Assistant Psychologist
Lesley Lally - Researcher/Assistant Psychologist

Parents Plus Trainers and Supervisors

Fred Ehresmann - Senior Lecturer in Mental Health, University of the West of England, UK
Geraldine Buckley - Senior Speech and Language Therapist
Fiona Hughes - Senior Social Worker
Dr. Adele Keating - Senior Clinical Psychologist
Matt McDermott - Senior Social Worker
Michelle Choudhry - Senior Social Worker
Wendy Taylor - Early Learning Practice Teacher
Karin Todd - Family Support Practitioner
Úna O'Brien - Senior Speech and Language Therapist
Lisa Whitlock - Family Support Practitioner
Cliodhna Cunningham - Family Support Manager
Marian Monaghan - Senior Clinical Psychologist
Jenny Smith - Family Support Practitioner
Deborah Davis - Parent Supervisor, UK
Clare Murphy - Family Support Practitioner

Charitable Tax Exemption by the Office of the Revenue Commissioners CHY 13664.

Charities Regulatory Authority Number 20043124

Company Registration Number 530105

Accounts auditors

Robert J Kidney and Co.

Registered Office

Parents Plus Charity,
Mater Hospital, Eccles Street,
Dublin 7, Ireland, D07 R2WY.

Finances

Parents Plus charity accounts show a loss in 2023. This was a planned for, and board approved decision, to invest in a number of key areas to build capacity of the charity to increase our impact, sales and strategic partnerships. Investment areas included: Human Resources consultancy, external governance reviews, public relations expertise, SORP reporting, and salesforce functionality.

	12 months ended 31/12/2023
	€
Income & Expenditure Account Extract	
Incoming Resources	
Programme & Training	556,540
Grants received	306,640
Total Incoming Resources	863,180
Resources Expended - Ongoing Expenditure	
-Training & Other Costs	852,576
Administration Costs	
-Administration Costs	112,588
Sub-Total Resources Expended - Ongoing	
- Depreciation	881
Net Incoming Resources for the Period	-102,865

	12 months ended 31/12/2023
	€
Balance Sheet Extract	
Fixed Assets - Fixtures, Fittings & Equipment	4,034
Current assets	
Accounts Receivable	64,880
Cash at bank - unrestricted funds	797,107
Cash at bank - designated funds	131,601
Stock	119,608
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	
Operating Creditors	314,307
Accumulated Net Funds (2014-2023)	772,626

