



**Children's  
Disability  
Network  
Team**

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Team – Net 12

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# WHAT IS PPSN?

## **For Parents**

- Understanding the journey of parenting a child with special needs
- Managing stress and looking after yourself as a parent
- Supporting brothers and sisters and family relationships
- Establishing good family routines
- Managing behaviours of concern.

## **For Adolescents.**

- Supporting good friendships & social opportunities
- Building self-esteem, confidence and independence
- Supporting teenagers education and development
- Dealing with puberty, sexuality and relationships
- Preparing for future transitions and adulthood.

# WHY PPSN?

- ▶ Recognised gap in the pathway for parents of children with intellectual disability.
  - ▶ Facilitating a different course that did not meet the needs of one particular parent
  - ▶ Went against the 'Do No Harm' ethical guideline
  - ▶ As a team, we wanted to do better
- ▶ Research and timing were perfectly synced.
  - ▶ Google Scholar returned over 4 million hits when typing 'Benefits of group support for parents of children with additional needs' into the search bar
  - ▶ When narrowing this to group supports in Ireland, the rabbit hole brought me to Parents Plus
  - ▶ Going through the suite of courses, the Parents Plus Special Needs course with the option for parent led choices of modules, along with allowing flexibility for facilitators was exactly what I felt would work across three network teams in Laois and Offaly
- ▶ Brought the business proposal to CDN (x 3)
  - ▶ Successful buy in from all team managers

# WHO?

- ▶ As a team, it was important that we reached out to the parents who required the most support but were in receipt of the least support.
  - ▶ Sheila Keeshan – a SLT @ the time came up with the idea of reaching out to the parents of children who attended two special schools within network 12.
  - ▶ I also contacted the parent of the original course who was the catalyst of this new support to explain the situation and offer her the course.
  - ▶ Also asked for input at team meetings from other clinicians for any parents whose children did not attend a special school but may also benefit.
- ▶ Who is was not being offered to
  - ▶ We ruled out parents of autistic children with no co-occurring conditions
  - ▶ Children with ADHD with no co-occurring conditions
  - ▶ Why – established pathways for these families
- ▶ Who attended?
  - ▶ Parents of children with Moderate to Severe Intellectual Disabilities
  - ▶ Parents of children with physical disabilities
  - ▶ Parents of children in palliative care

# ADAPTION?

## ▶ Why?

- ▶ Due to positive feedback from parents after first course – word of mouth spread from parents to various clinicians
- ▶ This led to more clinicians recommending the course but not all children were old enough to attend
- ▶ This was difficult not only for parents because they had to wait for their children to 'come of age' but also for facilitators who experienced first hand, how beneficial this program was for those who attended
- ▶ Due to our friend – ethics – I decided to adapt the program to accommodate the children under 10. I had already transferred the information onto weekly PowerPoint presentations and handouts so after making what I felt were necessary changes to these – I contacted Parents Plus.

## ▶ Who

- ▶ After getting the go ahead – we disseminated the good news throughout the three networks along with the new slides.
- ▶ We now had a wider net of support

## ▶ What we envisioned

- ▶ Parents of older cohort would attend one week
- ▶ This would build on the parents network of support outside of the services



# OBSERVATIONS

- ▶ Emotions
- ▶ Education
- ▶ Expectations
- ▶ Experiences
- ▶ Enjoyment
- ▶ Acceptance
- ▶ Breath
- ▶ Connection

# FEED BACK

- ▶ That you are not alone
- ▶ Allow the happy and fun moments to be part of your day
- ▶ Enjoy good moments.
- ▶ Learning how to step back, Stepping back and pausing.
- ▶ Remember there is 2 parents, he is a parent as well.
- ▶ Prioritise the family we grew.
- ▶ Take a mental break for both of us.
- ▶ Good enough
- ▶ Different is ok
- ▶ I will think more deeply about the feelings of my sons sister. I think I will ask her directly about her feelings. I haven't done this before.
- ▶ Comparison is the thief of joy. Do your best for each kid, know its enough. Follow through, Pausing, Allowing Wonder.....
- ▶ We connected as a group and can talk to the facilitator's and be yourself.

A large, stylized, green logo consisting of the letters 'F' and 'E' intertwined. The 'F' is on the left and the 'E' is on the right, with their vertical strokes overlapping.

# FUTURE PLAN

- ▶ Feb – March 2025 PPSN u10
- ▶ Sept – Oct 2025 PPSN 10+
- ▶ Waiting list in place
- ▶ Would like to collaborate and deliver programme with a parent

Thank you...

