



♡ Welcome to the Exhibition ♡

CREATIVE CONNECTIONS

It Takes a Village

When we connect, we heal.
When we heal, we grow.
When we grow, our children thrive.

A CAMHS-ID CLINICAL NURSE SPECIALIST LED PARENT WELLBEING INITIATIVE

WELCOME ♡

Welcome to Creative Connections: It Takes a Village – a seven-week parent wellbeing programme developed by St. Michael's House Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service – Intellectual Disability (CAMHS-ID) in partnership with Fingal Libraries and Creative Practitioner John Carpenter.

This exhibition celebrates the creativity, courage, wisdom and lived experience of parents and carers supporting children and young people with intellectual disabilities and complex mental health needs.

The programme created a welcoming community space where parents and carers could pause, connect, reflect and be heard.

Through creativity, conversation and shared experiences, parents explored wellbeing, resilience, self-care, community connection and the importance of their own voice in shaping services and supports.



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WHY CREATIVE CONNECTIONS? ♡

Parents and carers are often the constant source of support for their children while navigating services, advocating for needs, managing crises and supporting mental health recovery.

Yet opportunities for parents to focus on their own wellbeing are often limited:

Creative Connections reatters

- ♡ Connection reduces isolation
- ♡ Creativity supports reflection and healing
- ♡ Every family's experience matters
- ♡ Community spaces can promote mental wellbeing
- ♡ Listening to lived experience helps shape services that feel more accessible, compassionate and responsive



WHAT MADE THIS DIFFERENT? ♡

- ✓ A welcoming community library setting
- ✓ No pressure to talk
- ✓ Optional creative activities
- ✓ Gentle, low-demand participation
- ✓ Parent-led conversations
- ✓ CAMHS-ID Clinical Nurse Specialist facilitation
- ✓ Strengths-based and trauma-informed approach
- ✓ Focus on wellbeing, connection and recovery



♡ OUR SEVEN-WEEK JOURNEY TOGETHER ♡

WEEK 1

Creating Safety & Connection



Building trust and creating a safe, welcoming space.

WEEK 2

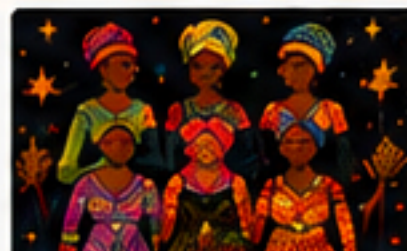
Finding Connection Through Creativity



Using art and conversation to explore identity, strengths and shared experiences.

WEEK 3

Accepting Differences & Community



Exploring differences and understanding. We belong. We understand.

WEEK 4

Time for Me, Time to Reset



Mindfulness, relaxation and strategies for mental wellbeing.

WEEK 5

The Tree of Life – Strength, Hope & Resilience



Exploring meaning, loss, growth and the stories that shape us.

WEEK 6

Our Journey, Our Stories



Memories, lessons learned and what keeps us going.

WEEK 7

We Hear You, We Learn Together



Listening, co-regulation and working together to shape the future.

A CAMHS-ID CNS REFLECTION ♡

- ♡ There is no one right way to parent, care or cope.
- ♡ Every family brings their own strengths, experiences and perspectives.
- ♡ Being listened to can be just as important as being given advice.
- ♡ Parents and carers benefit from spaces where they can connect without pressure or expectation.
- ♡ Mental health support should be relational, accessible and community-based whenever possible.



A MESSAGE FROM PARENTS ♡

"I wasn't alone."

"I felt heard."

"The group helped me breathe again."

"I found my people."

"Every week I took something useful away."



OUR SHARED MESSAGE ♡

Together We Grow.
Together We Heal.
Together We Learn.

Creative Connections created space for parents and carers to connect, reflect and share experiences in a way that felt safe, welcoming and free from judgement. Every family's journey is unique. There is no one right path, only the path that works for you and your family right now.



THIS PROGRAMME SUPPORTS ♡

- ♡ Parent wellbeing
- ♡ Emotional resilience
- ♡ Mental health recovery
- ♡ Co-regulation
- ♡ Community connection
- ♡ Psychoeducation
- ♡ Service development informed by lived experience



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ♡

- St. Michael's House CAMHS-ID
- Fingal Libraries
- Creative Practitioner John Carpenter
- Parents & Carers – The Heart of It All
- Creative Connections CNS Led Initiative

