



Creative Connections



It Takes a Village  

CAMHS-ID Parent Wellbeing Hub



WEEK 2

A Journey We Don't Walk Alone

 Connecting, Learning & Building Strength Together 

Why This Matters

Parents of children who are nonverbal and have complex mental health needs often experience isolation, misunderstanding and exhaustion.

Creative Connections provides a safe, supportive space where parents feel seen, heard and understood.



THIS WEEK WE EXPLORED

Week 2 was about meeting other parents who truly understand the unique challenges of raising a child with complex mental health needs, particularly when their child is nonverbal.

- ♥ Feeling understood.
- ♥ A safe space.
- ♥ Non-judgemental.
- ♥ Shared experiences.
- ♥ We are not alone.
- ♥ An unknown journey, but we walk together.



*Every parent's journey is different.
Every child's needs are unique.
Together we share, learn and support each other.*



Mental Health Focus



Emotional Safety



Connection & Belonging



Validation & Understanding



Self-Care & Wellbeing



Resilience & Hope

Psychoeducation Topics

- ♥ Understanding stress and burnout
- ♥ Regulation strategies for parents and children
- ♥ Supporting children with complex and nonverbal communication
- ♥ Anxiety, sensory needs and mental health
- ♥ Self-care, compassion and boundaries
- ♥ Where to find help and supports



What Parents Told Us

"I finally met other parents who just get it."

"It's a safe space to be honest."

"No judgement. Just understanding."

"It's nice to know we're not alone."



CAMHS-ID CNS Core Competencies in Action



CLINICAL PRACTICE

Assessment of parental wellbeing needs.
Early identification of stress, anxiety and risk factors.
Therapeutic support through listening and guided conversations.



ADVOCACY

Amplifying parent voices and lived experience.
Promoting access to appropriate supports and services.



EDUCATION & HEALTH PROMOTION

Psychoeducation on mental health, self-care and support strategies.
Empowering parents with knowledge and tools.



CONSULTATION & COLLABORATION

Working in partnership with parents, libraries and community organisations.
Building a multi-agency approach to better outcomes.



AUDIT, RESEARCH & EVALUATION

Listening to feedback.
Evaluating impact.
Improving services based on what parents tell us.

Why Is This a Mental Health Nursing Intervention?

This is more than a social group – it is a clinically led mental health intervention that:

- ♥ Reduces isolation and emotional distress
- ♥ Improves parental mental health and wellbeing
- ♥ Builds capacity and confidence
- ♥ Promotes early intervention and prevention
- ♥ Supports children's mental health through stronger, supported caregivers



Why Is This Different?

- ✓ Held in a neutral community setting (library)
- ✓ Not appointment based – no clinic pressure
- ✓ Time to connect before needing to talk about difficult things
- ✓ Focus on wellbeing, not crisis
- ✓ A space to just be – without judgement
- ✓ Built on trust, choice and respect



Better Services for Children & Adolescents



Stronger Families



Better Mental Health Outcomes




Early Support Improves Long-Term Outcomes



Reduced Crisis & Distress



Healthier Communities

When parents are supported, children thrive. 

Legislation & Best Practice

- ✓ UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 24 – right to the highest attainable standard of health)
- ✓ Mental Health Act 2001
- ✓ Children First Act 2015
- ✓ A Vision for Change (2020)
- ✓ Sláintecare – Right Care, Right Place, Right Time



Self-Care: Building Capacity of Carers & Parents

- ♥ You can't pour from an empty cup.
- ♥ Taking time for yourself is not selfish – it is essential.
- ♥ Small steps. Kindness. Grace.
- ♥ You matter too.

