

INFORMATION PACK

FOR PROFESSIONALS



The
Parent
Rooms

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WHO WE ARE

The Parent Rooms is a mental health charity that supports parents in Northern Ireland to move beyond crisis and distress and into a place of wellness, social connection, and fulfilment.

Established by parents with their own lived experience of mental health difficulties, The Parent Rooms aims to empower parents to take control of their own wellbeing through engagement with a supportive community, to evolve with new wellbeing skills, and to finally empower others to begin their wellbeing journey.

OUR HISTORY

The Parent Rooms was founded by Michelle Bradley, a mum who was experiencing postnatal depression, anxiety and obsessive-compulsive disorder. Michelle's mental health difficulties, though significant and life-altering, were not deemed severe enough to access specialist support.

After being unable to find appropriate help, she began to seek support groups in her community. At the time, no such groups existed so Michelle decided to set up an online forum that could provide a safe environment for herself and other parents to gather and support each other, share experiences, and ultimately feel less alone. This group grew rapidly and continues to thrive with people from all over Northern Ireland joining and caring for each other.

As the group grew and the needs of parents emerged, we decided to create a charity that could offer more in the way of support, tools, and social connection, a service dedicated to the wellbeing of parents. In 2019, The Parent Rooms was born.

Our organisation is led by parents who understand on a deep personal level what the people we support are experiencing. We take a parent-centred and parent-led approach to everything we do, ensuring that all parents who access our service are given the best opportunity to take control over their wellbeing and no-one is left to struggle alone.



Community space to meet and socialise with other families



Access to mental health support e.g. peer support/counselling



Wellbeing programs such as meditation, art therapy, and coping skills



Family activities that promote bonding & family wellbeing



Baby bonding classes such as sensory and massage



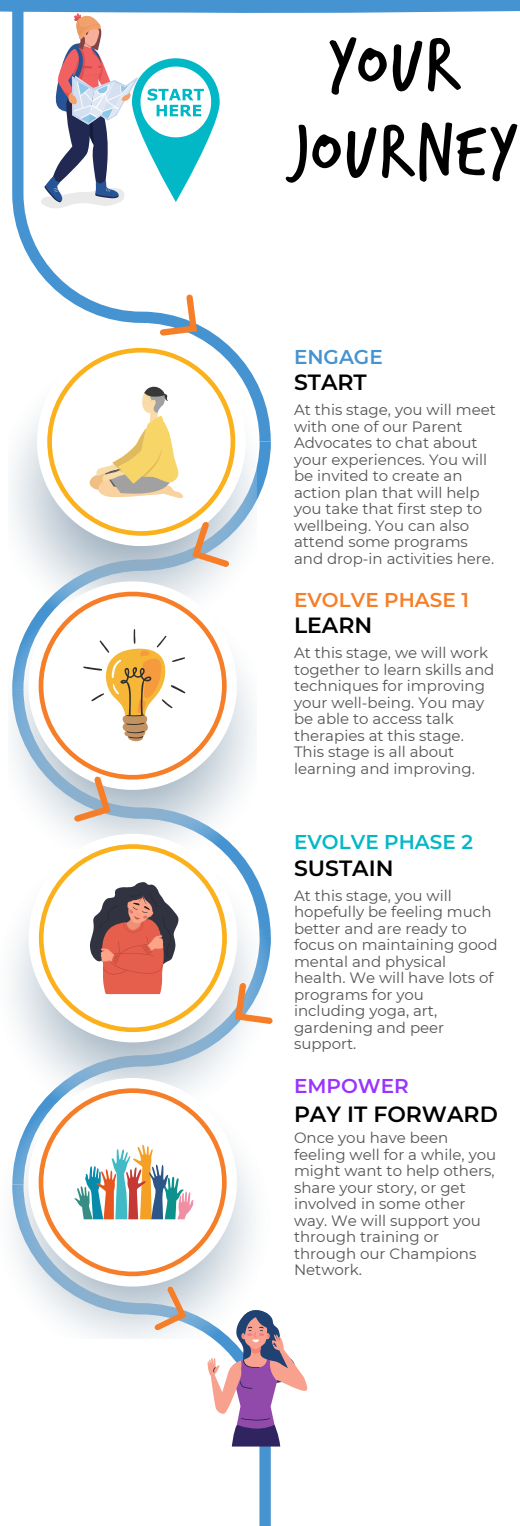
Couples activities to learn to support each other

WHAT WE DO

The overall aim of The Parent Rooms is to create a circle of support around parents, providing a safe space in which they can explore how they are feeling, make friends with others who understand their experiences, and learn tools to help them take control over their own recovery.

Our focus is to empower parents to take control over their experiences and we do this through our three-step model: Engage.Evolve.Empower. which meets parents where they are in the mental health journey and provides a clear pathway for wellness.

The Parent Rooms is first and foremost a community space in which parents can come together, seek support for their mental health, learn tools to manage their wellbeing, and have opportunities for therapeutic support where appropriate.



HOW DOES IT WORK



STEP 1: ENGAGE

The first step for parents is to register with us for support. They can self-refer or you can refer them through our secure online web-form. This is the Engage stage and where the parent's journey to wellbeing begins. Once they've been signed up, they will be matched with a Parent Advocate, one of our team who has lived experience of mental health issues and who will be the parent's guide throughout the entire process.

Together, the parent and their Parent Advocate will create a Wellbeing Plan that will help them identify the areas they need help with, and what supports will work best for them. The parent will be given a range of options to try out which can be anything from wellbeing programs, to therapeutic support, to social connection.



STEP 2: EVOLVE PHASE 1

Once the parent has created their Wellbeing Plan, the next step is to begin learning how to improve their mental health. This is what we call Evolve Phase 1 and this is where they will learn to build a self-help toolkit for improving their mental health and where they will start in earnest to improve their wellbeing.

The Parent Advocate can help the parent identify which programs they feel will be most helpful. Some of our programs will offer free on-site childcare so the parent will have time for themselves to learn new skills and enjoy time with other parents in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere.



STEP 3: EVOLVE PH. 2

Once the parent has built their wellbeing toolkit and has noticed improvement in their mental health, the next step is to explore ways to maintain this feeling of wellness. We call this stage Evolve Phase 2.

In this stage, the parent will have access to a range of programs and activities aimed at promoting good mental health and building strong social connections with others. Activities can include coffee mornings, craft clubs, yoga, art therapy, music, movement classes...anything that provides a sense of wellbeing and connection. It will be during this stage that the parent will review their progress with their Parent Advocate and see how far they've come.



STEP 4: EMPOWER

By the time the parent has reached this stage, they should be feeling happier, healthier, and more resilient. They might be feeling now that they would like to help others on their wellbeing journey to get to where they are. We call this the Empower stage.

In this stage, the parent can choose a number of options. They might want to volunteer to host social groups or peer support. They might want to join a committee or our Champions Network, or they might want to raise funds for us.

We will provide all the training and support they need.

REFERRAL GUIDELINES

WHO CAN REFER TO US

GPs, midwives, health visitors, family support workers, mental health support workers, social workers, and any other relevant health professionals or community/voluntary organisations. Parents may also self-refer.

WE ASK THAT WHEN PUTTING THROUGH A REFERRAL THAT YOU DISCUSS WHAT WE DO WITH THE PARENT FIRST AND SEEK THEIR CONSENT. WE CAN PROVIDE PARENT INFORMATION PACKS THAT YOU CAN SHARE WITH YOUR CLIENTS.

WHO IS SUPPORT AVAILABLE TO?

Parents who are experiencing mild/moderate anxiety, depression or other mental health issues. While the majority of parents who come to us will have children under the age of three, we don't exclude parents based on the age of their child/children. We support parents of children of all ages.

PARENTS WHO ARE EXPERIENCING SEVERE MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES SHOULD BE REFERRED TO SPECIALIST SERVICES. WE CAN PROVIDE WRAPAROUND SUPPORT FOR PARENTS MOVING INTO OR OUT OF SPECIALIST SUPPORT BUT DON'T DIRECTLY SUPPORT THOSE IN NEED OF MORE INTENSIVE CARE.

ARE THERE ANY EXCLUSIONS?

The only exclusions we have are for those on the severe end of the mental health spectrum who are requiring more intensive support. We can still provide some supports for these parents including social connection and wellbeing activities but we aren't equipped to provide therapeutic services at this level. We can work alongside you where appropriate to provide wraparound care for your client and this will be agreed on an as-needed basis.

REFERRAL GUIDELINES

DO YOU PROVIDE COUNSELLING?

As part of our Engage.Evolve.Empower. model we will have scope to provide therapeutic support such as counselling, VIG, and therapeutic play. However, the need for this will be identified at an individual level with the parent, their Parent Advocate and our therapeutic staff and isn't advertised as core service.

We do have service level agreements in place with various organisations and statutory services to deliver counselling to their clients on a funded basis. If this is something you would like to discuss, please get in touch.

DO YOU PROVIDE PEER SUPPORT?

Peer support is one of our core offerings and this is done through activity-based peer support, and one-to-one peer support depending on volunteer availability. All our peer support volunteers are trained to OCN Level 3 to deliver high quality peer support.

We can also work with organisations who are considering implementing a peer support program to deliver accredited training and support.

HOW DO I REFER?

You can complete a referral form on our website using the link on the following page. You can also request a form to download, print and submit by post.

We ask that before you submit a referral that you have discussed our services with the parent and sought their consent so that when we call, they know who we are and why we are getting in touch.

Please ensure you include the parent's contact number on the form.

REFERRAL GUIDELINES

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I REFER?

Once we have received your referral form, we will process it and allocate a Parent Advocate to your client. The Parent Advocate will make contact with the parent to discuss their experiences and will invite them in to have a tour of our space and complete a Wellbeing Plan.

CAN I GET AN UPDATE?

If you would like to receive updates on your client you will need to complete a Data Sharing Agreement and we will do the same with the parent. This allows us to communicate about your client's progress while still complying with GDPR.

MY CLIENT LIVES OUTSIDE BELFAST

While the majority of our work takes place at our Wellbeing Hub in Belfast, we do offer some support to parents outside of this area. This includes remote peer support, community activities and online counselling where it has been identified as a need.

We currently have plans to have face to face activities taking place in community settings in Castlewellan, Ballymena, Derry and Enniskillen.

Our long-term goal is to have Parent Rooms Wellbeing Hubs in every trust in Northern Ireland.

IMPORTANT LINKS

PROFESSIONAL REFERRAL FORM:

<https://www.theparentrooms.co.uk/for-professionals/>

SELF-REFERRAL FORM:

<https://www.theparentrooms.co.uk/register/>

PARENT INFORMATION PACK:

<https://www.theparentrooms.co.uk/parent-info-pack>

PARENT JOURNEY INFORMATION:

<https://www.theparentrooms.co.uk/engage/>

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