

CAMHS

PARENT/CARER SUPPORT GROUP

Parenting a child with mental health issues can be difficult, but you are not alone.

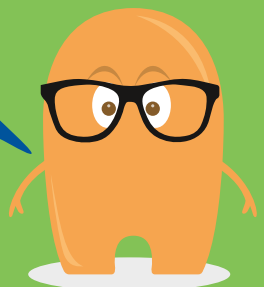
In our support group, there are parents who are here to help you. Whether you need to let off steam, listen to the stories of others, share some of the emotions that can come with being a CAMHS parent/carer or simply be alongside people who truly understand – then our support group is for you.

In this leaflet you'll find more information about the group, members share their stories of how the group has helped them and you can find out how to join us.

WHAT IS THE CAMHS PARENT/CARER SUPPORT GROUP?

The support group is an informal group led by parents/carers. It is open to all parents/carers who have a child using any Sheffield Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS) service. This includes children with mental health issues, such as depression, anxiety or an eating disorder, and other difficulties such as learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

The group meets twice a month to talk, listen and share in a friendly atmosphere over tea, coffee, cakes and snacks



WHY SHOULD I JOIN?



As one of our members explained: “You may find support you’ve been missing or didn’t even know existed.”

“We are all in the same boat, so don’t feel you can’t join because your situation is somehow worse than others. I was worried I would not be able to identify with others or others with me, but in fact the opposite was true.”

“Parenting children with difficulties/disabilities, like mental health, ASD, ADHD etc can often make you feel inadequate, inferior and isolated (and I’m speaking from experience!), but in this group you can find acceptance, support and even friendship.”

I ALREADY HAVE SUPPORTIVE FRIENDS/FAMILY, WHAT ELSE CAN THE GROUP OFFER ME ?

You may be fortunate enough to already have people around you to support you. But our members report that even supportive friends can find it difficult to “get” what things are like for you.

A member said: “In the support group I’m meeting with people with a similar perspective and in a similar emotional/psychological state. I have supportive friends but with children who are OK, so it is difficult for them to appreciate all that’s going on. They are not always able to know and empathise with what goes on or how it feels, or what problems arise. Their lives are a world apart. ”

“Also, my friends don’t always know how to support me whereas sharing with the group provides an empathetic perspective and can provide practical help and advice too. That is so valuable to me.”

MY STORY



Members find the group can help them in a variety of ways. One of our members shares how the group has helped her:

“I wasn’t sure what it would be like meeting other parents who have children with mental health issues, but in a way looked forward to it in the hope of finding fellow travellers along my way in life. It is a space to talk about what’s happening and just be with others who are in the same boat.”

“After going to a meeting I feel more relaxed and happy, as sharing alleviates some of that pent-up stress. I also feel encouraged when I hear other children are making progress or have come out the other end. It gives me hope and lifts my spirits.”

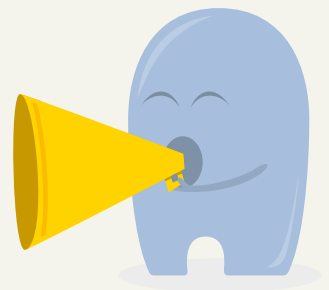
“And even if the situation for me or others is difficult or worsening, it helps me that I can feel accepted and that there is space to air frustrations and sadness. I feel connected to others rather than be isolated at home alone.”

DO I HAVE TO TALK ABOUT MY PERSONAL LIFE?

It is up to you how much you want to share and when. Members are welcome to just come along and listen; there is no pressure to talk if you don’t want to.

IS THE INFORMATION I SHARE CONFIDENTIAL?

Absolutely! We ask all members of the group to respect the information shared in the group and not to share it outside. This is a safe place to talk.



WHEN ARE THE MEETINGS?

The support group meets:

1st Wednesday of month, 11am to 12pm

Centenary House, Heritage Park, 55 Albert Terrace Road, Sheffield, S6 3BR

3rd Monday of month, 10am to 11am

Beighton CAMHS, The Becton Centre for Children and Young People, Sevenairs Road, Sheffield, S20 1NZ

If these meeting times are not suitable for you or someone you know who might benefit from the group, please contact us and we will look at where and when we meet.

IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE I NEED TO KNOW?

Our priority is looking after each other, so as well as respecting confidentiality, it is also important to listen to each other and respect each other's views and differences.

This is your space to relax too. So while the subjects might sometimes be tough, it is somewhere you can be yourself, feel relaxed and may be even end up having a laugh together.

WHO DO I CONTACT IF I WANT TO ATTEND?

To let us know you are coming, please contact Nicky Windle or Sian Beynon. Please also get in touch if you have any questions or would like to know more about the group.

Key contacts

Nicky Windle, Clinical Nurse Specialist, CAMHS.

Sian Beynon, Participation Project Worker, Chilypep.

Email: sheffieldpcpg@gmail.com

 @pieceofcakesheff

WANT TO GET MORE INVOLVED?

As well as the CAMHS Parent/Carer Support Group, there is an additional group for parents who are interested in helping to shape future CAMHS services in Sheffield – the CAMHS Parent/Carer Participation Group.

This group meets on 3rd Monday of month (after the Parent/Carer Support Group meeting) and is run by CAMHS and the charity Chilypep. Travel expenses are paid and you can learn new skills too.

For more information, speak to your clinician or contact Nicky Windle.