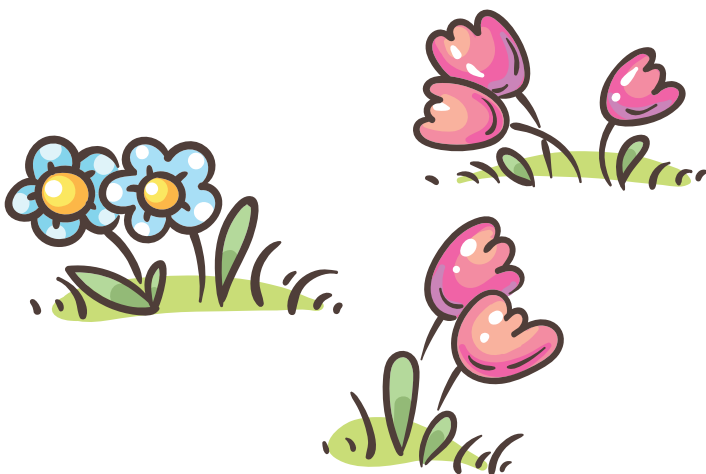
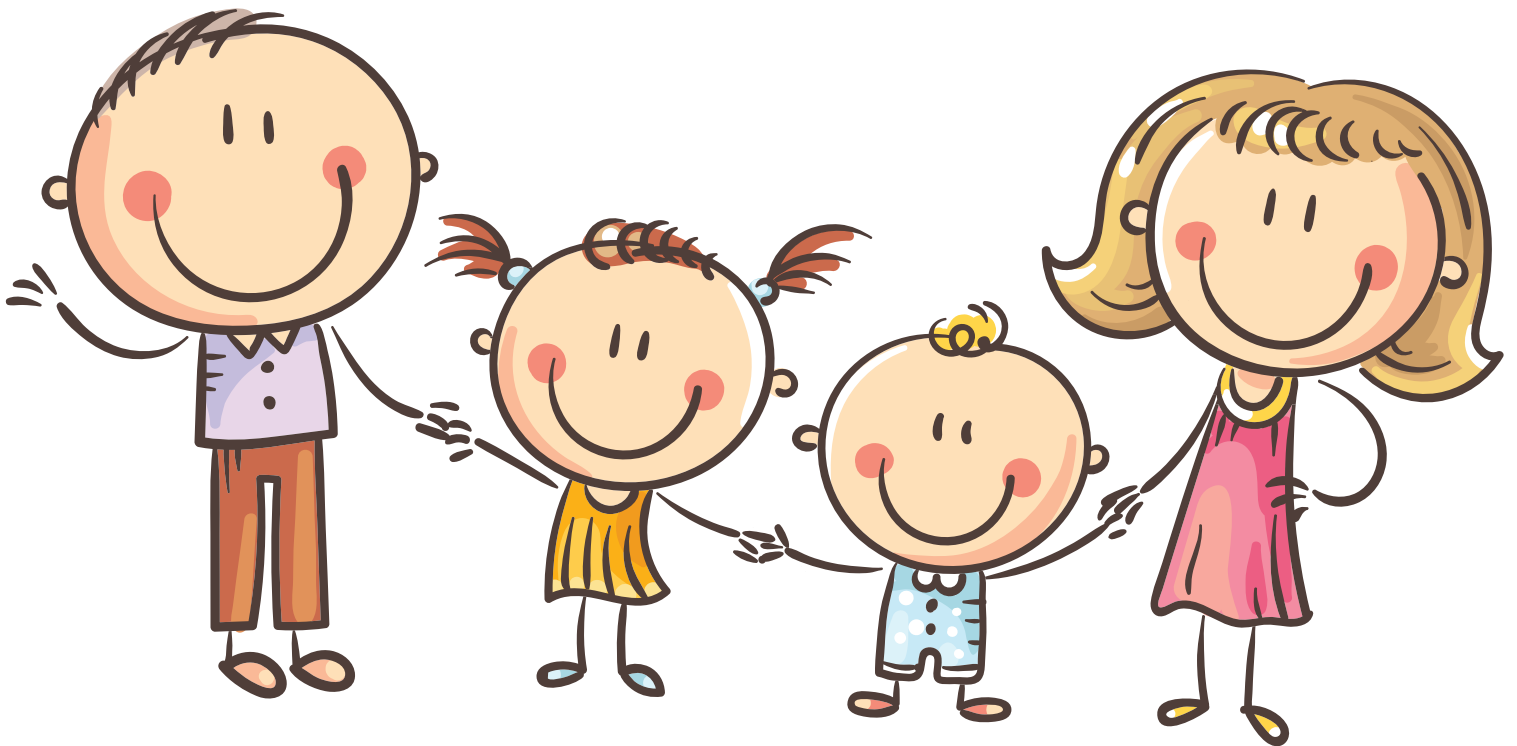


# PARENT TO PARENT

ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022



## STAFF

### Head of Service

Trudy Doidge

### Operations Manager

Jackie O'Neill

### Admin & Finance Manager

Debra Ritchie

### Admin. Assistant

Susan Donnachie

### Support & Advocacy Workers

Sheila Day (until December 2021)

Wendy Gerrard

Mairi Simpson

Sheena Thomson (until September 2021)

Debbie Shepherd

Charleen Morton

Vicky Stepiens

Paula Kinnie

Ashley Fordyce

### Support & Wellbeing Workers

Laura Doidge

Adele Cocker

Elaine Carnegie

Neonatal Support Worker

Jamie Lee Morton

### Young Peoples' Advocacy Workers

Sally Hudson

Lynzi Chalk

Genna O'Neill

Nicole Abbott

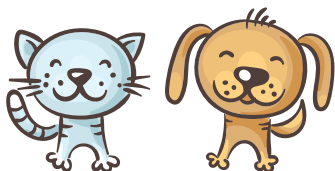


### Our Mission is:

To provide support, information and advice to families of children with additional needs. To enable the voice of parents and young people with additional needs to be heard by the statutory and to enable and empower parents and young people to take control of matters that may affect their lives, and to have a sense of belonging.

### Our aim is:

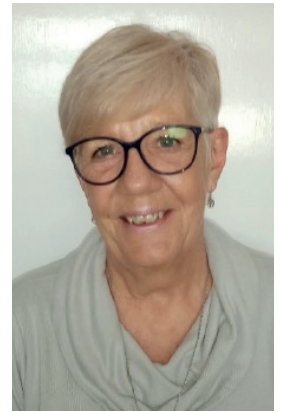
To offer support, contact and information through self-help, mutual support, assistance, research and education To support parents to overcome their feelings of loneliness and isolation To reduce their stress by reinstating hope and increasing their confidence.



## HEAD OF SERVICE

**2021 a year we thought we would get back to normal. How wrong were we!!!**

But we got through it and welcomed 2022 with a new resolve. We welcomed new staff to our Parent to Parent family as part of our Covid Response fund, and a new baby to our Young Persons' Advocacy worker. We also sadly said goodbye to 2 staff members to retirement, and a staff member who has taken up fostering. Each and every one will be missed greatly by us as an organisation, but also to all the families and young people, they met, supported, and made a difference to. As we look to 2022/23 Parent to Parent faces many challenges with funding in this ever tightening financial climate, we've been here before and we triumphed so we have strengthened our resolve, reviewed what we offer to ensure that we maintain the support to the hundreds of families across Tayside. Once again we want to thank all our funders for their continued consideration and support. Without them we would not be us. All our families and young people are very important to us especially at this time as we continue to fight back at Covid.



And to quote: **Laura Anne Gilman-writer, editor, tired person**

I THINK GETTING UP EVERY MORNING IS THE MOST AMAZING THING ANY OF US DO. WE KNOW WHAT'S OUT THERE, AND YET WE KEEP GOING.

I salute all my Board members, Staff Team and each and every one of our families and young people - they do this every day, and always keep smiling and have a kindness and strength second to none - Keep going you make me so proud to be Head of Service to Parent to Parent.

*Trudy Doidge*  
**Head of Service**



## REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

2021 – 2022 gave challenges and provided opportunities for Parent to Parent. Many of the families the organisation supported experienced stress, anxiety and hardship due to the continuing pandemic. Children struggled to understand and cope with the changes to their lives and parents tried to support them while needing support themselves. An increase in referrals for families under pressure was largely met by a one year grant from the Henry Smith Charity. This enabled Parent to Parent to employ three support workers to help families under considerable pressure due to Covid.

As restrictions reduced the support staff were able to visit parents at home and children in schools, attend in-person meetings with parents and children and run support groups. Some groups continued on-line via Zoom but a few re-started in the community. Numbers attending were kept low and staff ensured the venues were suitable for meeting e.g. well ventilated and sufficient distance between groups of people. When there was good weather the groups met outdoors.

The outdoors was used whenever possible and the staff went for walks with parents in local parks instead of home visits and arranged play dates in the summer so families could get together. Funding from several sources enabled the team to arrange free activities during the summer and this helped to reduce feelings of isolation which many were experiencing.

While it was a challenging year for the organisation in some ways it was also a rewarding year as we were able to help many families and alleviate their worries, reduce their stress and help them think more positively. Some of the new ways of working will continue as they have proved beneficial to all

## DEVELOPMENTS

The need for additional support for parents and children experiencing stress and anxiety was evident. All support staff, the Head of Service and Operations Manager undertook training in Decider Skills, a cognitive based method that helps people focus on staying calm and coping while under pressure. They then worked with groups of parents and families and with individual parents and families to teach them the skills. The Young Persons' Advocacy Workers also worked with small groups of children in schools, showing them how using the skills can help them cope with the pressures they face. This has been well received and has helped many families to be aware of how their anxiety increases and how to stop this at an early stage.

Another key development was the recruitment of a part-time support worker to support parents in the Neonatal Unit in Ninewells Hospital. This was a development of work previously undertaken by the Operations Manager and has increased the support available to families while their baby is in hospital and after they have been discharged. This three year project will help many families through what can be the most stressful time of their lives.

## GOING FORWARD

2022 will be a challenging year for Parent to Parent as some large multi-year grants come to an end. In order to meet the many and varied needs of the families referred to us for support we must innovate and find new ways of working. This process has already started and small changes have allowed more families to be supported but the reduction in funding will lead to longer waiting times. We will continue to look for ways to increase the support we are able to give to families with a child with additional needs.

## EXAMPLE OF SUPPORT

Parents of a two-month old baby with Down's Syndrome were referred for emotional support. They were devastated that their baby had a serious heart condition as well as Down's Syndrome and they needed a lot of support. The baby was due to have an operation on his heart in Glasgow but the first date for planned surgery was cancelled. The mum found this very hard and she needed a lot of support to help her cope. The operation took place a couple of months later and was successful.

The baby had been discharged from hospital on oxygen and with a naso-gastric tube. Feeding was not going well and the mum told her support worker she was being given conflicting advice from the Health Visitor and Dietician. The worker arranged a meeting with them, sorted out the issue and so reduced the mum's stress.

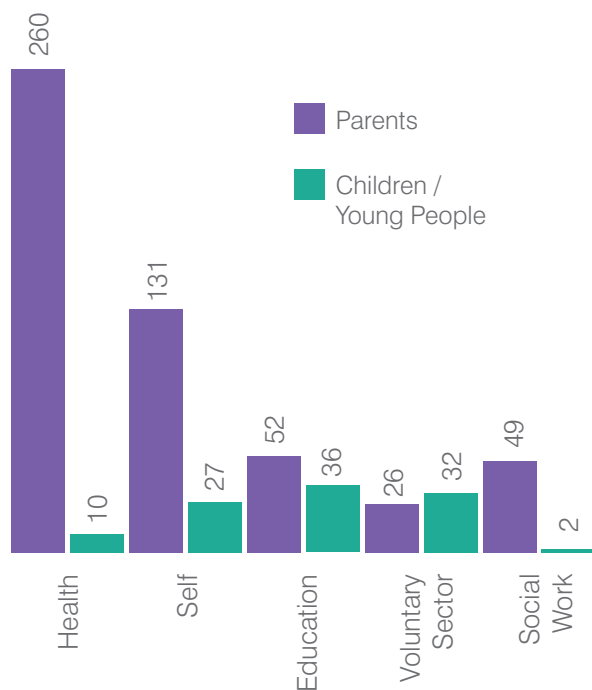
At a routine appointment the paediatrician found a lump in the boy's tummy and investigations were carried out. He had to have it removed and the parents spent an anxious few weeks wondering if it was cancerous. It was benign and the boy recovered well but both parents needed a lot of emotional support during this time.

When the boy was three he was eligible to start nursery and the mum was very anxious that his needs could not be met. The worker liaised between the parents and nursery to ensure the boy had a good transition and was available when issues arose. It took a few months for the mum to be happy that the boy had settled well and the nursery and its staff were well equipped to care for him. He is enjoying his time there and the mum is now more relaxed and less anxious.

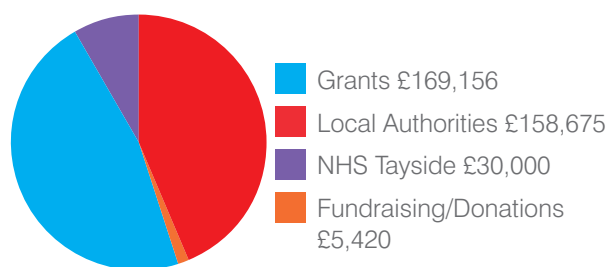
The mum now attends a support group run by the worker and has benefited from meeting new people and making friends. She still requires support at meetings but is managing well with the support she receives from other parents at the group.



### Source of referrals



### Income



### Acknowledgements

Parent to Parent is grateful for the financial support it received from Angus, Dundee and Perth & Kinross Local Authorities and NHS Tayside. Several Trust Funds also contributed to the development of the service during the year.

These include:

- Alexander Moncur Trust
- Cattanach Trust
- Community Fund
- Community Mental Health & Wellbeing Framework (Dundee)
- Co-op in the Community Foundation
- Dundee Voluntary Action Communities
- The Garfield Weston Foundation
- Henry Smith Charity
- The Hugh Fraser Trust
- The Leng Trust
- The Northwood Charitable Trust
- NHS Community Innovation Fund
- The PHP Community Fund
- Scott Radmer Fund
- The Tillyloss Trust
- The Volant Trust
- The White Top Foundation



### Comments from parents

*“The support group is my favourite time of the week as everyone is so supportive and understanding of the challenges I have with my son.”*

*“You have been an amazing support, always there when I need you”*

*“Thank you for everything. Words can’t say enough, you’ve been such an amazing help”*

*“You’ve been a total rock for my daughter over the years”*

*“You are better than good, you are a legend and a life-saver”*



### Contact Details

If you would like further information about Parent to Parent please contact:

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