

Healthy Parent Carers



Dr Gretchen Bjornstad, Trial Manager, said: “The programme has run once with a group of parent carers who provided positive feedback. Participants will either follow online guidance on how to improve their wellbeing at home, or join groups led by parent carers who are experienced facilitators, aiming to cultivate peer support and empowerment.”

A parent who took part in the programme said: “This course changed my life. It was such a positive experience that even 4 years down the line I carry my “clangers” small credit card size handout with me everywhere. I also take notice of the smaller things in life and record my gratitude in my journal.”

Parent carers face increased risks of mental and physical health problems. They often prioritise the health and wellbeing of their children and their caregiving responsibilities, sometimes to the neglect of their own needs.

Many parent carers do not feel empowered to look after their own health. They may feel too tired or stressed to engage in healthy behaviours, or feel guilty about taking time for themselves. However, poor health of parent carers can have negative consequences on their wellbeing and on their children and families.

The Healthy Parent Carers programme aims to improve the health and wellbeing among parents of children with additional needs and disabilities through:

- Promoting greater empowerment, resilience and confidence of parent carers
- Taking small steps that are associated with better health and wellbeing
- Encouraging setting achievable goals and taking a problem-solving approach
- Providing information through a group programme or online resources

The Healthy Parent Carers programme was inspired by and developed together with parent carers from the Family Faculty in the Peninsula Childhood Disability Research Unit (PenCRU) at the University of Exeter College of Health and Medicine, and part of PenCLAHRC.

What we are going to do

The programme involves encouraging behaviours associated with better health and wellbeing and can be delivered as a weekly group programme or through online resources. The behaviours are called CLANGERS and are based on a book by Dr Phil Hammond.

We want to find out whether parent carers are willing to take part in a study like this, whether enough people sign up and stay to the end of the study, and whether the ways we measure health and wellbeing are appropriate.

CLANGERS
Connect
Learn
be Active
Notice
Give
Eat well
Relax
Sleep



If this study shows that Healthy Parent Carers can be delivered and evaluated in the way we propose, we can plan a larger randomised controlled trial to test whether the programme improves parent carers' health and wellbeing.



Useful Links:

sites.exeter.ac.uk/healthyparentcarers

clahrc-peninsula.nihr.ac.uk/research/healthy-parent-carers



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For further information visit:

www.clahrc-peninsula.nihr.ac.uk