

TÜSLA

An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

Parental Participation Seed Funding Initiatives 2025

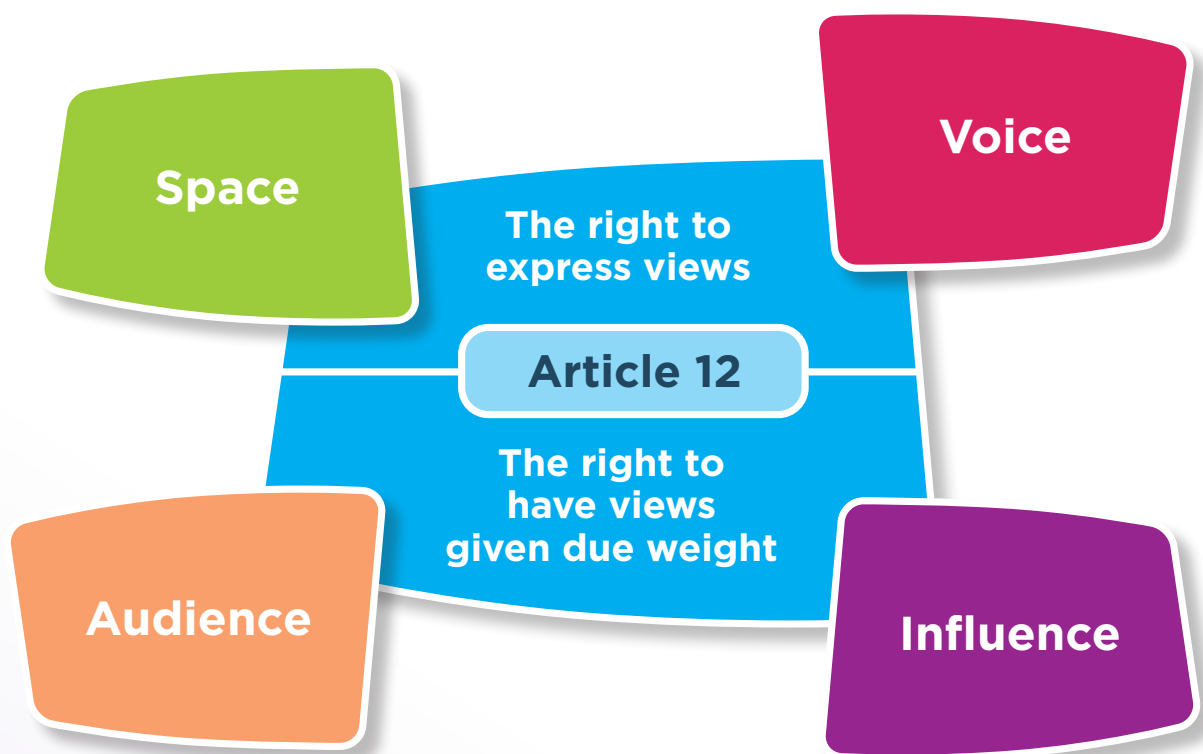




Under the Prevention, Partnership and Family Support (PPFS) programme, Tusla has been assisting areas in exploring and developing parental participatory practice initiatives since 2016.

Tusla has made funding available to support new initiatives that require funding to progress. Services and areas had the opportunity to submit one or several proposals endorsed by the relevant area manager. The Lundy Model of Participation (2007) was recommended for reference when completing the applications. This document contains brief descriptions of all of the Parental Participation Seed Funding projects that were granted funding in 2025.

Many of the projects included here can be easily replicated in other areas, and some may have resources available as a result of their work that can be shared with other areas/services. If you would like more information on any of the projects included, please contact your regional participation officer.



Lundy Model of Participation (2007)



DUBLIN MID LEINSTER

DUBLIN SOUTHEAST / WICKLOW

'Tiny Voices, Big Connections' - Wicklow Travellers Group

Implementing monthly coffee mornings for parents with infants, toddlers, and pre-schoolers within the service's youth room. These gatherings provided a dedicated and accessible space for families to engage in play, peer support, and expert-led discussions, enhancing both parental confidence and early childhood development.

Socially Connecting Parents Together - Daughters of Charity, Arklow Family Centre

The Community Parent Hub group was provided to build confidence, self-esteem and self-care skills incorporating workshops to reflect the same. Connecting parents in the community to support each other and understand the importance of support. Parents were involved in identifying their needs and were provided with weekly workshops on a range of topics from parenting support, to creative mindfulness, and journalling, amongst many other topics.

Women's drop in - Barnardos

This group was provided to build upon an established drop-in service to support and empower Mums who have lived experience of Domestic Violence through peer support / emotional wellbeing/healing and regulation. The group were involved in a collaboration with 'Fighting Words' organisation in writing and performing a play to raise awareness around Domestic violence.

DUBLIN SOUTH CENTRAL

PEEP: Learning Together Programme (Toddler) - Blue Skies

Local parents identified a gap in the lack of programmes and supports that have a strong evidence base and are professionally facilitated. This led to increasing the facilitation of PEEP which aims to strengthen relationships between parents and children, increases parental confidence, provides peer support, and improves children's early learning outcomes.



Fathers Group – Deansrath Family Centre

Following from the successful participation of Fathers in the DFC Gathers Group utilising Copper Art to express their views and raise money for good causes, the participants expressed a desire to further their skills in 2025. This year woodwork workshops and training were facilitated and used as opportunity to capture the voice of parents.

Focus Groups - Mercy Family Centre

The service brought the focus groups together into three larger groups to explore how to best provide support, identify preferences, and discuss key topics. A workshop curriculum was developed based on feedback from parents, emphasizing materials that foster a supportive community environment. The service continued to refine the sessions by incorporating ongoing parental feedback and improving both content and delivery.

Parents Information Hub - Liffey Partnership

Feedback from parents in 2024 identified the need for a central place for up-to-date information on parenting programmes and supports. This project developed a parent hub in the local library where parents could come to find out about supports and events taking place locally.

DUBLIN SOUTH WEST / KILDARE / WEST WICKLOW

Parents of Children in Care Group - Barnardos PAIS

The Barnardos Parental Advocacy and Information Service worked in partnership with Tusla to identify parents of children in care who would come together to provide feedback on their experiences, as well as be provided with peer and professional support. The parents identified a gap in accessible information that is available to parents when a child comes into care for the first time. The group met throughout the year to brainstorm and design a resource that could be provided to all parents of children in care, that contains all of the important information they need at that time. The resource will be available to social work teams and advocacy services nationally.



Retention and Appreciation of Foster Carers – Tusla, Fostering Team

Foster Families were provided with fun, enjoyable and rewarding events throughout the year for all members of their Family. The aim was to ensure foster families feel recognised and valued for the invaluable work and contribution they provide in partnership with the DSW & KWW Fostering Teams and TUSLA.

MIDLANDS

Parent Engagement Events – Portlaoise FRC

Children were supported to be part of the planning and preparation processes for parental engagement Initiatives (Little Picnic for Parents & Children, and Parent & Grandparent Recognition events).

Neurodiversity – Tusla, CFSN

Facilitating peer support groups to provide parents with an opportunity to connect with others who are going through similar experiences. These groups provide a safe and supportive environment for parents to share their experiences, learn from each other, and provide emotional support and encouragement. The groups feedback went on to influence workshops and supports that were provided during the year.

Positive Mental Health and Resilience – Mountmellick FRC

Mountmellick FRC engaged with parents who are already attending the service to identify their needs, and plan for workshops and events in the service. The parents identified a number of self-care and social opportunities they would like to see in the service. The service responded to the parents' requests by providing a number of programmes such as mindfulness, chair yoga, family games night, Christmas based workshops and family trips.

Empowering Parents – Clara FRC

Parents of six neurodivergent boys, ranging from 3rd to 6th class were invited to take part. The intervention focused on equipping parents and children with practical tools to manage emotions and problem-solving. Key components included Identifying and managing emotional states, problem-solving skills, relaxation techniques, along with many other topics identified by the parents.



Parenting Neurodivergent Children – Tusla CFSN

Working with the areas parenting fora to create a promotional video for local parents to share their experiences of parenting a neurodiverse child, and the challenges they face with service provision in the local area.

DUBLIN NORTHEAST

DUBLIN NORTH

Foroige - Steps programme

This initiative came about from informal discussions with parents, who wanted to change their current beliefs, attitudes, expectations that shaped their lives. The steps programme helped parents through practical educational supports to stimulate increased participation in and ownership of one's own personal development. The parents learned at their own pace through a medium that suited them which they self-directed.

The programme empowered parents to move beyond limitations or mind sets they acknowledged did not work for them. It also set out a self-care element to their role as parents.

Foroige - Youth mental health first aid

This initiative was promoted for adults who have connections with young people from 12 - 18yrs old. As result of a young person losing their life; this community parent initiative was rolled out to prevent further loss of life and offer parents skills and knowledge to be mental health first aid role models.

The initiative was open to all parents regardless of background and it mobilised parents to prioritise mental health events, workshops and or to organise regular community actions including seminars, and peer support groups to continue the conversation on mental well-being.



DUBLIN NORTH CITY

Aosog - Family trees, family ties

This initiative explored parents experiences of growing up and how this can influence their outlook on life, and their hopes for their children. Experienced facilitators explored and discussed family histories with parents to give them a sense of identity and belonging through sharing memories and creating hopes for their children's futures. The facilitators acknowledged some parents may have felt sad remembering some experiences, but this was managed in a sensitive and empathetic way.

NIAPP - Digital safety

This initiative was inspired by parents highlighting their lack of knowledge and capacity to understand the technological world that their children inhabit. Parents requested support to help them to navigate and understand technology. The service responded to the need by providing two specialist workshops to empower parents some of whom had also highlighted genuine concerns around technology and their child's harmful behaviour.

Some of the topics identified were the latest trends in AI, hidden apps, risky apps—protective software.

Daughters of Charity, Henrietta Street - Parental Support and Participation

Daughters of Charity staff had run workshops in previous years on Promoting Positive Behaviour, Self-Care, Mindfulness and toileting workshops. They requested additional workshops which provided accessible, high-quality information and guidance for Parents or Guardians on promoting healthy behaviours, positive play-based early learning and on creating the conditions to form and maintain strong parent-child relationships.

Young Ballymun - Engaging Dads initiative

The Engaging Dads initiative focussed on supporting fathers in their caregiving role and to hear their views on influencing service delivery in Youngballymun. The service offered Dad's out of hours workshops and activities to enhance the father to baby sensory experience, baby brain development and musical workshops for both parents. During the workshops and through individual and group discussion Dad's wanted more Dad-baby specific groups and correspondence via text and emails to themselves and their babies mother.



Treoir - Kinship care week

Kinship Care Ireland and Treoir along with a range of interagency service providers led this initiative which rolled out Kinship Care week in October 2025 as part of Global kinship care week. The weeks events championed kinship care and carers, it raised public awareness and gathered political attention. The kinship care week involved online webinars, social media campaigns with 181,000 views as well as an in-person event in Dublin with notable kinship carers talking to professionals about their experiences.

National College of Ireland - Jet education tool

The ICON FAACT Group (volunteer parents) worked together to identify issues and challenges that they faced as parents trying to support their children with additional needs. The parents reflected on their own experiences and developed a resource called the JET Education Tool to support other parents who are trying to navigate the journey of accessing support for their children. The education tool was circulated to parents of school going children in the northeast inner city to inform them of the pathways to access services, supports and social activities.

LOUTH / MEATH

Social Work Department Meath - Collaborative review of Support & interventions for at risk placements

A consultation process was conducted with foster families to elicit their experience of the current Policy and Procedure on Placement Breakdown in Foster Care. Foster carers were supported by allocated staff to safely express their views on the supports they had received via semi structured interviews in their home or at a location of their choosing. Furthermore, foster carers reviewed the nurturing in nature camps programme to establish its effectiveness as an intervention for the support of placements at risk.



CAVAN / MONAGHAN

Parenting Cavan - Parents Matter in Cavan - You talk, We Listen

Parenting Cavan continue to support the two parent panels in Cavan as a response to parents requests for a variety of interventions. The initiative cultivated Easter, summer and Halloween events and had trips to Emerald park as the parents highlighted the significant cost of family activities. The parents requested more information on different issues, consequently parents roadshow workshops and digital wellbeing supports were provided. Public health nurses gave talks and efforts on developing information packs for new mothers is ongoing.

Parenting Monaghan - Parenting Activities 2025

This initiative developed upon work already started with parents involved in the Parent Panel who were involved in the promotion of the various Parenting Programmes. The Parents Panel were also involved in the selection of topics for the parenting Talks and they supported discussion and identification on topics of relevance to parents. Parenting Monaghan supported weekly check-ins with their Parent Panels from April to June 2025.

WEST NORTH WEST

DONEGAL

PPFS Donegal - Parent hub development

This initiative explored parents needs via surveys across various multimedia channels. The survey highlighted that parents asked how to best promote their parent hub and parent hub initiatives for parents in need. Tusla parent forums also reviewed how best to promote the parent hub initiatives.

Some of the surveys highlighted the need for supports for parents whose children may need assessment and diagnosis for autism. The initiative facilitators will continue to support early intervention, accessibility and workshops for parent supports in Donegal.



SLIGO / LEITRIM / WEST CAVAN

Sligo Family Resource Centre - Migrants parent mornings

This initiative focussed on supporting parents from migrant communities. More than thirty mothers engaged in a variety of activities including, crafts, art, music, mindfulness and woodland walks throughout the year. The group discussed many topics, challenges, worries and concerns and relished the opportunity to make connections with other parents some of whom became friends. The group meetings signposted parents to family supports, social prescribing and children's camps and gave the parents time out for themselves.

MAYO

PPFS Mayo - Bridging the Gap

This initiative focussed on the needs of parents in IPAS accommodation and facilitated the training of a second therapist to offer out pre-counselling support groups for women residing in IPAS accommodation who were dealing with serious trauma. The initiative also supplied parents with resources and materials required to participate in evidence-based parenting programmes

GALWAY / ROSCOMMON

Monksland Community Centre - Engaging Fathers in Roscommon Town and Monksland

This initiative asked parents what they needed, fathers expressed a strong interest in a dedicated programme tailored to their needs. The service provided outdoor activities, cooking, walking, and cycling and information on supports as well as enhancing parental skills and knowledge as requested. Additionally, fathers who attended Parenting When Separated, highlighted their desire for their own space and a programme was created that focused on their specific experiences and well-being.



Foroige Roscommon - 60 Minutes For Me - Health and Wellbeing Parent Group

This initiative supported parents to spend time taking a breath and concentrating on healthy living, cookery classes and information on nutrition and a balanced diet. It also focussed on enhancing their emotional wellbeing, the service provided sound baths and mindful yoga sessions as an opportunity to reconnect with themselves and manage the challenges of parenting with a calmer mindset. This initiative helped parents achieve a balanced approach to their own well-being, which positively impacts their ability to nurture their children and their families.

Ballinasloe Family and Community Resource Centre - Development of Support Group for Parents of Children with Additional Needs

This initiative was parent inspired as they wanted to create a support group for parents of children with additional needs in Ballinasloe town and surrounding areas.

They emphasised that the group would be a place to come to recharge, gather information, discuss pathways of referral, understand the system better and connect with other parents. The parents were invited to coffee mornings and used this to highlight their views to the local parent FORA. Self-care as a theme was emphasised which they said might need mindfulness and craft classes. Triple P was offered to the parents to help them parent their other children. The group also has had Christmas breakfast mornings.

Forum Connemara - Building Bridges Initiative

This initiative focussed on parent child bonding; it created a welcoming space that encouraged connection and creativity over a two-month period. The initiative provided opportunities for families to engage in new experiences, develop art and STEM skills, and participate in team challenges and communication games. It enhanced relationships between young people and their parents thereby increasing understanding and appreciation of each other's viewpoints. There was notably improved communication and the ability to engage in constructive conversations. The atmosphere fostered mutual understanding and strengthened relationships, leaving everyone with a sense of growth and belonging.



Galway autism partnership - Inform, Take Time & Reset: Parent Wellbeing & Self Care Programme

This initiative focussed on delivering information sessions to parents and guardians around topics including services, speech and language and art therapy supports at Galway autism partnership. The service also focussed on emotional, and wellbeing supports for parents. It supported weekly programmes focussed on yoga and sound baths followed up afterwards with coffee and catch ups in the service.

Additional parental supports included beauty therapy sessions focusing on wellbeing & mindfulness including Indian Head Massages, Hand Massage & back, neck & shoulder massage.

The service created calming moments of time for parents and guardians to engage in self-care which they may not typically have a chance to avail of.

Ballybane resource centre - Learning Through Play, Sensory play mornings for guardians, Parents and children

This initiative responded to parents requests for a calm, child-friendly space where they could relax, connect, and engage with their children and other parents during visits or group sessions. The project aimed to support parent-child interaction, wellbeing, and inclusion within the centre. The service asked the parents what they would like to do with their grant and they decided to create a dedicated sensory space for mothers and toddlers at Brú Bhríde. Parents helped design the sensory corner and chose the colour scheme and materials for the area. The funding purchased sensory equipment, sensory toys, paint, and materials to brighten and transform the room. Parents took part in craft activities, including making sensory fidget blankets together, helping to build ownership and connection.



MID WEST

LIMERICK

IPAS: Parent Forum – Barnardos

Parents forum provided to parents living in IPAS to facilitate positive and effective two-way communication between parents, carers and the services. This is providing a channel of communication and feedback in order to make improvements to the service, and ensure that the parents have a voice in decision making in the service.

NORTH TIPPERARY

Bringing Past Traveller Culture and Traditions into Mindful Parenting Today – Tusla, CFSN

This initiative has evolved from an existing piece of work with a group of parents from the Travelling Community. Through discussion with the parents, they identified the change in their cultural practices. They expressed worry that future generations will not be aware of these parental practices and childhood experiences, many of which are unique to their culture. They wish to share these experiences and traditions with future generations in their own way. Within this they also wish to capture lessons that they have learned and want to share in terms of current parenting and mindfulness practices. Three consultation and planning sessions were held with the parent group. Agreement reached on common themes emerging for all of the group members and that they would collate these in booklet format.

SOUTHWEST

CORK

PPFS, CYPSC and TESS - School avoidance supports for parents

In answer to a need from parents in the area for information on school avoidance, a document was created by PPFS, CYPSC and TESS with information for parents on how to support young people through this. This was carried out in consultation with young people across the county. The document was launched in October and has been well received by parents.



PPFS - Foster carer retention

Several self - care events for foster parents were funded around the country. At the events foster parents were invited to raise topics or suggest trainings that might be of interest to them. This information will influence future foster carer events. This work was in line with the strategic plan for Foster Care services 2022- 2025.

KERRY

Peer support group for parents (school avoidance)

Five Family Resource centres across Kerry established peer support groups for parents experiencing school avoidance with their children. Parents were consulted once the groups were established and were able to voice what supports they might need. The overall aim in spreading the funding across the county was to support as many parents as possible and to reduce the overall school avoidance figures in Kerry.

SOUTHEAST

CARLOW / KILKENNY / SOUTH TIPPERARY

Mill Family Resource Centre - Art and Craft Therapy

The family resource centre ran a series of art and craft workshops in the centre for both adults and children. The theme was on flora and fauna. Given the rural location the workshops provided a way for people to stay in touch and as they could bring their children it was very popular. The workshop incorporated healthy eating and mental health aspects and worked to improve overall well being for service users in the area.

Barnardos – parenting anxious children and teens

To offset the impact of school refusal and anxiety in children and teens linked to technology events were held for parents to support them to manage when encountering these situations in the home. A guest speaker was invited and over 100 parents attended the event.



Tipp County Childcare Committee – Parents and childcare

An infographic, survey and focus groups were funded to inform Tipp county childcare committee topics of interest to parents. The funding was then utilised to run 6 different information events for parents based on the survey results.

Kilkenny/ Carlow ETB – Couch conversations

A series of 15 short videos featuring representatives from different community services were developed and distributed to school communication channels and social media to increase awareness of the supports available to families. Parents were initially consulted through focus groups, and this was the deciding factor on the services that were featured in the videos. The hope for this project was to increase awareness, engagement and connections with parents and services.

Forward steps – Wellness workshop for parents of children with additional needs

A ten week workshop was funded to teach parents how to manage stress and improve their physical well being. The workshops were timed to be finished for when the summer break started so that parents would be energised and have a support system after the workshops.

WATERFORD / WEXFORD

Southend FRC and Wexford Women's Refuge – Parental Peer Support Project

The aim of this funded project was to increase parental engagement in their children's lives and to establish a peer support group from this. Collaboration with Wexford women's refuge and the rape crisis centre directed the timetabling of events and the subject of events by the parents themselves. Parenting support champions were on hand to support and at the year end the champions and parents came together to reflect on the year of events and take some learning from what was helpful and what could be improved.

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