

**Acknowledgements**

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- Miss Agnes Hunter Trust
- Basil Death Trust
- Carnoustie Medical Practice
- Community Fund
- Community Mental Health & Wellbeing Framework
- Co-op in the Community Foundation
- Digital Boost
- Foundation Scotland Coop Food Fund
- Gannochy Trust
- Henry Smith Charity
- The Northwood Charitable Trust
- NHS Community Innovation Fund
- The Robertson Trust
- The Scott Radmer Trust
- Tesco
- The Tillyloss Trust
- White Top Foundation



**Contact Details**

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# PARENT TO PARENT

## ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021

### Comments from parents

*"I will never forget what you have done for me."*

*"Can't thank you enough, it's just amazing."*

*"You've been a Godsend."*

*"You've been a great help."*

*"Thank you so much, I really appreciate it. May God give you all happiness in your life."*

*"Thank you so much, this was a great help. I really appreciate all you are doing for us."*

*"I am so grateful for the shopping vouchers it will help so much with nappies and toiletries, you are an angel."*

*"Thank you so much, it means a lot to have this support."*





## STAFF

### Head of Service

Trudy Doidge

### Admin & Finance Manager

Debra Ritchie

### Operations Manager/ Neonatal Worker

Jackie O'Neill

### Admin. Assistant

Susan Donnachie

### Support & Advocacy Workers

Mairi Simpson

Wendy Gerrard

Debbie Shepherd

Sheila Day

Charleen Morton

Mandy Anderson (until August 2020)

Sheena Thomson

Lynn Stewart

Vicky Stepiens

Paula Kinnie (from August 2020)

### Young Persons' Advocacy Workers

Sally Hudson

Lynn Irving (until June 2020)

Lynzi Chalk

Genna O'Neill (from August 2020)

### 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 formal bodies.

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.

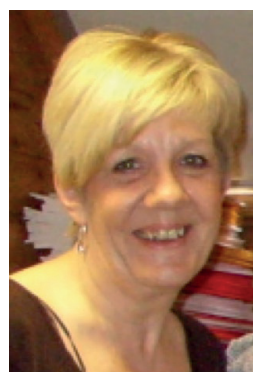
### Our aim is:

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



**2020 will be a year we will never forget and as we welcomed 2021 we were all starting to think it was going to be the same.**

We all worried about the future, what is it going to look like, will our children be disadvantaged by the disruption to their education, will things ever get back to normal. The one thing that 2020 has taught me is that what is most important is looking out for each other. 2020 was the year of wonderful extraordinary acts of kindness and selflessness. For me this is what I will remember, and this is what will help us rebuild and reframe 2021 and onwards.

As Head of Service for Parent to Parent, I am so immensely proud of our parents, their children and my

staff team and how they have managed to keep going, keep smiling. Family is not just biological, it is who holds our hand fast, provides soothing words, cares and who are there for each other.

Parent to Parent is our 'family' through good and bad, together sharing and caring, what a wonderful place to be. Thank you for being part of this great family, and may the love and kindness keep us strong.

**Trudy Doidge  
Head of Service**



This proved to be a challenging year for the organisation but the staff team rose to the challenges and used them as opportunities to find new ways to support families. Coronavirus and the restrictions on movement that ensued meant that the support workers were unable to make home visits, attend appointments with parents, run support groups and provide any face to face contact for most of the time. When restrictions were reduced it was still not possible to visit many families. The availability of technology enabled the support staff to contact their families through phone, video calls and emails and this proved to be very successful. Groups could meet via Zoom and virtual meetings were held which helped to reduce feelings of isolation.

It was a tough time for many of the parents who had been furloughed, given reduced work hours or lost their jobs. The staff team worked tirelessly to alleviate some of the worry by delivering food boxes from the food bank and other sources, applying for grants to pay for essential items and writing supporting letters to organisations that could provide further help.

When allowed, the support staff visited parents, attended meetings with them and supported them to cope with the pressures they were dealing with. In the summer they saw the parents and young people in gardens and parks: in the winter they visited cafes when they were unable to visit homes. They found they could support more families as travel time was much reduced, especially in the rural areas. Although home visits will always be an integral part of the work Parent to Parent does, there are plans to review how support is given so that more families can be seen sooner.

The Young People's Team brought young people together to make a video to share their experiences of what lockdown meant to them and who helped them get through it. This led to a project to pull together resources to help young people and their families manage some of the emotional aspects. A 'getting back from Lockdown' resource toolkit has been collated this can be found on our website :

<https://parent-to-parent.org/support/getting-back-from-lockdown-resource-toolkit/>

The young persons' video can be found on our Facebook page: [https://www.facebook.com/1136461673082349/videos/651359982380687/?so\\_\\_=channel\\_tab&\\_\\_rv\\_\\_=all\\_videos\\_card](https://www.facebook.com/1136461673082349/videos/651359982380687/?so__=channel_tab&__rv__=all_videos_card)



### Financial support to families in need

#### Emergency Fund

An idea to create an emergency fund to support families in urgent need of financial help had been discussed by the management team for a while but had not been implemented. When coronavirus hit and affected so many people it was time to act. A GoFundMe page was set up and requests for support sent via the Facebook page raised £1,100. A generous offer of support from Ben Carscadden, a local musician, to promote the fund on his regular music show raised a further £1,000. An application to Tesco Bags for All raised another £500. The support staff nominated families who needed some financial support and grants were made to several families to pay for essential items.

#### Radio Tay Cash for Kids

Radio Tay Cash for Kids generously supported many of our families to enable them to buy essential items for their children. The support team nominated families who had suffered financially due to Coronavirus and each family was given £35 per child to buy items such as food, toiletries, nappies and toys. 101 children were supported through this initiative.

Their Winter Fund enabled us to provide 22 families, 49 children, with supermarket vouchers for £100 per child. This was awarded in January when many parents really needed some extra support and were very grateful for this boost.

#### Well-being Fund

Parent to Parent applied to the Government's Well-being Fund for supermarket vouchers for families affected by Covid. £3,200 worth of vouchers were bought and sent to 42 families across Tayside. This relieved much of the stress and worry in many families.

#### Foundation Scotland Coop Food Fund

An application to Foundation Scotland Coop Food Fund secured £2000 worth of supermarket vouchers. Vouchers worth £60 were sent to 34 families during the winter when they needed extra help.

*"I just got the voucher in the post. Thank you so much for putting us forward for that. I honestly didn't have any money for shopping this week. This will make a huge difference, thank you".*

### Referrals

Between April and July referrals were steady and the support staff were able to see the majority of families soon after the referral was made. Many of the referrals were for support for parents whose children were struggling with lockdown and could not cope with the change in routine. This was creating worry and stress. The support staff were creative and provided resources to help children understand what was happening and gave tips and advice to parents to help them support their children. Once the children returned to school the number of referrals increased, the majority for children who could not cope with the return to school. They were anxious about the virus, apprehensive about starting a new school or having a different teacher and worried about how they would cope with school work. There were also referrals for parents who needed help to support their children who were refusing to go to school or self-harming. The support staff worked hard to see as many families as possible and to reduce the waiting time.

### Going forward

We will review how we have operated during this difficult year and incorporate some of the new ways of working that have been effective into our future plans. The need for support for families caring for a child with additional needs continues to be great and we must ensure that they receive the support they need quickly. We will need to equip the staff with up to date I.T. equipment to ensure they can work effectively and be less reliant on face to face contact. Changes will proceed after consultation with staff, the families we support and other stakeholders so that support continues to be individual and of a high standard.

### Example of support provided during the year

Parents of a six month old girl were referred by the child's paediatrician. She was the only survivor of twins born prematurely and had complex disabilities. There were another two children in the family, both under five. The mum was unsure about having another person in her life as Social Work and health professionals were heavily involved but agreed to see the support worker for an initial chat. They quickly built a good relationship and the support worker recognised that while the parents had support from others for the care of their baby, no-one was supporting them through the grief of the baby who had not survived. The worker had supported several other parents with loss and bereavement and her understanding of their situation helped them speak openly. The worker helped them to complete a Disability Living Allowance form, something they found quite traumatic as it focused on their baby's difficulties. The mum called the support worker and was very upset as she felt the Health Visitor and Social Worker were against her and finding fault with the way she was weaning the baby. The worker called the two workers and explained that the mum was very emotional and sometimes misunderstood what was said to her. She also contacted the paediatrician who confirmed that the Mum's approach to weaning was suitable for her baby's needs. The worker then became the Care Co-ordinator for the family.

In the spring Covid 19 changed the way the worker could support the parents; she could no longer visit them but could offer telephone support and later outdoor visits. The mum was very anxious about the virus and struggled to cope with all that was happening. The support worker agreed to call her regularly and this helped to alleviate much of her anxiety. The worker applied to the Family Fund for outdoor play equipment for the two older children in the family and the parents were awarded £300 to buy suitable toys.

With the support from the worker Social Work withdrew from the family and said they were happy with the progress made. They felt the family had benefitted from the Care Co-ordination provided by the support worker and the family situation was much improved.

