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***Cinderella Parents....***

*The Parent Action Model of Enabling, Advocacy and Empowerment: Developing Parent Carers as Transformational Leaders*

*Aislinn Mooney, Volunteer Parent Facilitator, Parent Action  
Orla Watt, Nurse Consultant, Parent Action*

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Orla : Purposes of the presentation



1.To advance the audience understanding of the **experiences, values, strengths and resources of the community of families raising children, young people and adults with disabilities, learning difficulties and long term health conditions** in Northern Ireland, in 2016.

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2. Explore with the audience today, how **Parent Action's values**, can be used to **assess, measure and improve the experiences of Parent Action families**, at the same time, **transforming parents** (and potentially professionals) into **quality improvement leaders**.

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Funded by.....



Foundation of Nursing Studies

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- Outcomes of Project = to be enabled and empowered, parents and professionals in public services, need to take action on;
  - Communication
  - Care Co Ordination
  - Child and Family Centred Lifelong Planning
- ONLY POSSIBLE THROUGH EFFECTIVE AND MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT WITH PARENTS, AND THEREBY, THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE THEMSELVES.**

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What does Parent Action stand for? = Values



- **Respect :**
- **Safety :**
- **Communication :**
- **Privacy :**
- **Dignity :**
- **Promoting person centred cultures and systems in children and young people's health, social care and education services :**

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What is engagement?



- What is engagement?
- Involvement?** *"..means more than consulting and informing, it includes **engagement**, active participation and partnership working.."* (PHA 2012, p8)
- Personal and Public Involvement?** (PHA 2012)

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I as a parent I like.



- *"**Engagement** means that I am bringing my humanity, my emotional intelligence, my compassion, my love and commitment to my children, my professionalism, fully to my **(parenting)work**, every day."*
- I do that when I **trust** the **leadership** of the **public service organisations**, my child has no choice but to engage with.
- I and my children are engaged, when we **perceive fairness**, when we perceive **effective support**, when I perceive **equal opportunities** for my child with learning difficulties as his brother and sister receive, when I perceive **equal access** for my child with learning difficulties, to the services he needs to support his development, as his brother and sister get.....(Michael West, 2015).

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Parents say.....

# Parent Action is...




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Parent Action is *Enablement*.....

- *“Help, advice and taking the same from others”*
- *“Mr Give and Mrs Take – 2 hands”*
- *“Calm – stay away thunder and lightening”*

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Parent Action is *Advocacy*...

- “ ..a two way process...parents and professionals act together”
- “..a bridge..”
- “..other parents helping you to fly your kite when you cant...”

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Parent Action is *Empowerment...*

- *"Having power to change attitudes about your child.."*
- *"A bridge to cross to and from services..."*
- *"Me time achieved!"*

*"At the start, my main fear was sounding stupid..."*



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*“Now they cant shut me up!”*



*“A lot of issues with health and social care...stressful”..*

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*“With this group, now all supportive of each other, I feel that I can make a difference...”*



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*“I need to come here and clear my head...then I can fly my kite for my son’s rights...”*

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*“We, parents, are all the same...”*

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*“My children with a rare condition...difficult to know where to go at times....”*

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A Parent's View on Family Engagement....(Aislinn)..



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Disconnected  
Alone/Isolated  
Afraid

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**Day Dreams**  
**Feels Connected**  
**In Own World**

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Trying to please  
Wants to fit in  
Wants to be connected

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Feeling Left out  
Feeling Different  
Feeling unwanted

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Opportunity to be like everyone else

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Feels special  
Feels Connected

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Everyone working together  
To Find the best Fit

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So that all concerned can have a  
Happy Ever After

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Parents as Transformational  
Leaders(Orla)



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Transformational Leadership (Kouzes and  
Pozner, 1987; Manley et al 2009)



- Transformational leadership is a clear and well researched concept that encompasses;
- **Paying attention to culture in public services,**
- **Role modelling shared values with both the people who use services and those people who deliver services.**
- **Achieving a common vision through engaging with people both who use services and people who deliver services.**

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*“Looking at our experiences can be scary....” (Parent, FoNS project)*

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- *“Fear is a natural reaction to moving closer to the truth....”*  
(Pema Chodron, 1990)

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Thanks for Your Attention! We hope this has been TRANSFORMATIONAL!!

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