



PEN PICTURE: Mellow Parenting and the Mellow Ability programme

Mellow Parenting works to address social and health inequalities and improve gaps in service provision. We partner with public, third and private sector organisations. We provide their staff with quality training and ongoing support in our early intervention programmes. We seek to build better family relationships, improve mental health and increase the ability of children to reach their full potential.

Registered as a Charity since 2006, Mellow Parenting has grown since initial trials, building up our evidence base and family of programmes which now include: Mellow Bumps for Mums and Dads-to-be, Mellow Mums, Mellow Dads, Mellow Futures for parents with learning difficulties, Mellow Ready for young people and Mellow Ability for parents who have children with additional needs and disability. Based in Glasgow, we have a global reach, providing training to over 4000 practitioners worldwide.

Our recent successful pilot of our newest programme Mellow Ability, means we are now ready to increase our partnership working and train more group facilitators.

Mellow Ability Dad's Group: a Dad's story

Mellow Ability is a 14-week group programme that runs one day per week. Partnership working with Falkirk Council's Children with Disabilities Team enabled the establishment of a group that brought together Dads who were isolated and experiencing challenging circumstances caring for young children with a variety of different needs.

Daniel was invited to attend the Mellow Ability Dads' group. Daniel is a 45 year-old Dad who has a young son with learning disabilities and complex additional needs. His son requires support with his learning, mobility and eating. Daniel is a parent under pressure. His own childhood experiences left him with scars, and difficulties in forming relationships. Daniel was isolated and lacked support.

Daniel was able to share with the Dads and this enabled him to understand and build on his parent-child and family relationships. Following the end of the group, the Dads continue to meet and keep in touch with each other. They plan to help other parents in a similar situation to themselves and want to help mentor other parents through Mellow Ability.

"The friendship and bonds with the other Dads have been great. The information we received was fantastic. I now have a closer relationship with my son and his behaviour has improved."

- Daniel, Mellow Ability Dads' group participant

Mellow Ability: a Mum's story

I spoke to a Mum recently. She had attended a Mellow Ability group. Her daughter is aged seven. She has complex learning disabilities. She said she loves the wind in her hair. The words and poem below capture this Mum's experience after attending a Mellow Ability group.

The Wind in Her Hair

*I realized I can do more.
I can give her that experience.
She can have fun, she can enjoy life.
My husband is buying a trailer for his bike.
I'm taking her horse riding.
We are giving her new opportunities .
That's what really matters,
This is how we can connect.
(Inspired by A and M.)*

www.mellowparenting.org