

the bessborough centre: family respite

A recent addition to family support at the bessborough centre is the family respite service. It is designed to provide a safe environment to allow individuals time away from their regular, often chaotic, situations. This enables the individual to reflect on issues in their lives and to experience an alternative and positive living experience.

From time to time family situations can become difficult and stressful for both parents and children. Respite for families or individuals provides relief from chaotic situations or trauma they may be experiencing as a result of difficulties in their lives.

The service is available to the whole family or to individuals within the family. A large self-catering apartment is available for one family or any of its members to live in for a short defined period of time.

Intensive therapeutic work can be undertaken with clients during their stay with the support of the Centre's multi-disciplinary team. Where appropriate specific interventions are included such as independent living skills, home management skills, establishing routines, self-care and personal & social development.

The programme is flexible and is client specific. The length of the respite stay will vary according to the needs of the clients. During the stay staff at the centre will seek to equip the individual or family with better strategies for when they return to their normal living environment. For children this could mean therapeutic interventions such as:

- Feelings discovery programme.
- Therapeutic play.
- Self-esteem through social skills.
- Life Story work.
- Establishing routines.
- Linking with community services.
- Psychological assessment & intervention.

For parents respite offers the opportunity to leave their children in the care of registered and quality assured staff, enabling the family to cope with whatever issues they are facing.



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Family interventions include:

- Relationship building.
- Parenting Programmes.
- Stay Safe Programme.
- Home management skills.
- Counselling or assessment.

Other interventions are undertaken in response to the recommendations of the referring agency &/or the bessborough centre assessment team.

Along with the extensive parklands of the bessborough centre, the service has at its disposal the Log Cabin. This is an isolated therapeutic unit situated in the grounds. The cabin is equipped with kitchen facilities and playrooms. It is ideal for work with parents on subjects such as nutrition, health, self-care or home management. The playroom with toys and games can be used for focused direct work or therapeutic play with children.

All aspects of the work are guided by best practice guidelines and policies. The work is supported by the bessborough centre psychology and assessment teams. The family respite service works in partnership with all members of the family and the professionals involved with the clients.

We are continuously investing in on-going training for staff and are committed to up-skilling & linking in with the latest available knowledge.

