

Parent Suggestions Session 1

Ideas For Understanding and Connecting with Your Children:

- Listening to music in the car on the way to and on the way home from school. Also chatting before bedtime.
- No expectations at any levels, adapting our behaviour completely around the child's needs
- With school (secondary) and daughter finding it hard to go in (mental health / eating issues) say to try going in and stay as long as you can./ Remind her that the teachers have a set of goals and targets each year that they have to cover so much of the curriculum by the end of the year and get as many people to achieve as many points as possible in the Leaving Cert etc so they are under pressure. So they are going to keep talking about exams and points and CBAs etc and to try block that out and focus on what she can control which is the work she can do and doing her best. We will give her all the support she needs. I find explaining things from another side to show that it isn't something personal aimed directly at her has helped with that part. Need to say it over and over but it has helped.
- Letting my children have their own voice and say in the house. being very open and honest
- Being clear about and accepting of what he does and doesn't enjoy
- Neuro-affirmative approach over the critical approach.
- Our child finds it very challenging to express emotions verbally. But finds writing things down much easier. She has really opened up with this tool.

What Resources Have You Found Useful?

- Books, websites
- The book "strong female character" by Fern Brady, Dr Tony Atwood on female autism
- Autistic adults far and away have helped me to understand what might be going through my kids' heads. Instagram (other parents for supports plus links to parent support groups). AsIAm, Neurodiversity Ireland, books, follow certain neuroaffirmative people on twitter
- Reading and group chat on a WhatsApp group
- John Sharry; son's educational psychologist (who has ADHD); scouts (he is still in scouts at 17 - lot of neurodivergent children and leaders in scouts); Richard Hogan (psychotherapist and columnist) on screen addiction and school refusal
- Being Autistic (Niamh Garvey) - helped our son to see himself.
- Wonderfully Wired Brains: An Introduction to the World of Neurodiversity