

SETTING UP A PARENT AND TODDLER GROUP

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



**Childcare
Committee**

County Kildare

Colste Cúram Páistí Chontae Chill Dara

INTRODUCTION



What is a parent and toddler group?

An informal, community group that offers opportunities for play, learning and social interaction. They usually meet one morning a week for approximately two hours.

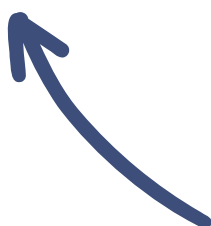


How much does it cost?

There is a small fee charged to cover rent, insurance, refreshments, toys, etc.

Who runs the group?

A voluntary committee, often made up of parents and carers oversee the running of the group.



Who uses the group?

Parents, grandparents, aunties, uncles, childminders and caregivers are all welcome to attend the group.

SOURCING A VENUE

Potential venues may include:

- Local GAA club
- Community centre
- Church Hall
- School
- Local Library
- Family Resource Centre

Points to consider when choosing a venue:

- Is there adequate parking?
- Is the venue accessible- for buggies and/or wheelchair users?
- Are there bathroom and kitchen facilities?
- Is there changing room facilities?
- Are there costs involved- rent, heating, electricity etc.
- Is there secure storage for toys/materials?
- Is the space large enough for a variety of types of play?

RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS

Parent and toddler groups are usually run by a group or committee of parent/ carer volunteers. You can agree with the other members of the group the level of commitment you can give, for example one person might help with finances, others might be available to set up or meet and greet new families.

You may choose to recruit volunteers through [Kildare Volunteer Centre.](#)

All committee members should complete the short Tusla e-learning module in child safeguarding. For more information click [here.](#)



OBTAINING INSURANCE

Before starting your parent and toddler group, you must ensure to have a valid insurance policy.

The policy must include:

- Public Liability
- Equipment Cover
- Cover for Outings
- Cover for Children and Parents



Your venue's insurance policy may cover the P&T group, or it may be possible to add it to their cover. In this case the P&T would simply pay the balance.

Early Childhood Ireland offer specific insurance policies for P&T groups. For more information click [here](#).

FUNDING

Grant Applications

The Irish Government (Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth) provide Parent and Toddler Initiative Grants annually. Applications for these can be made through Kildare County Childcare Committee.

The Childcare Committee are here to offer support for grant applications.

Further sources of funding

1. Donations from local businesses
2. Fundraising events e.g. bag packing, table quiz, bake sale, coffee morning
3. Fees/donations from group members, or go-fund me type collections
4. (most groups ask for a small charge or donation from those attending, €2-€5 would be the general range)



ACTIVITIES

Toddler sessions

During parent and toddler group sessions, parents / carers stay and have a chance to socialise, possibly over a cup of tea, while young children have an opportunity to play.

- Most groups have a selection of suitable toys to allow children to play in an appropriate manner.
- Parents & carers are responsible for the care of their own children.
- Some groups provide snacks for children, being mindful of possible allergies.

Volunteers who run groups are usually responsible for: opening and closing the venue, welcoming people, providing toys and so on.

Some groups have organised activities on occasion, such as a music session / messy play / story time and so on.

Groups can also arrange training and talks for parents, such as First Aid or a visit from a Public Health Nurse to discuss diet and weaning (or another area of interest expressed by the parents). KCCC can offer training also, please contact us to join our mailing list for training events (info@kccc.ie).

Often the benefits of these groups are as much for the parents as the children, the peer support aspect can be very helpful to parents who are finding things difficult, and it is often a great excuse to get out and meet people, particularly those who are new to a community.

Simple activities such as play dough, providing sand play or water play (where possible) can be a big hit with toddlers!

HOME MADE PLAY DOUGH



HOW TO MAKE PLAYDOUGH

MAKES 1 COLOURED BALL

PREP 10 MINUTES

YOU WILL NEED

8 TBSP PLAIN FLOUR

2 TBSP TABLE SALT

60ML WARM WATER

FOOD COLOURING

1 TBSP VEGETABLE OIL

METHOD

1. MIX THE FLOUR AND SALT IN A LARGE BOWL. IN A SEPARATE BOWL MIX TOGETHER THE WATER, A FEW DROPS OF FOOD COLOURING AND THE OIL.
2. POUR THE COLOURED WATER INTO THE FLOUR MIX AND BRING TOGETHER WITH A SPOON.
3. DUST A WORK SURFACE WITH A LITTLE FLOUR AND TURN OUT THE DOUGH. KNEAD TOGETHER FOR A FEW MINUTES TO FORM A SMOOTH, PLIABLE DOUGH. IF YOU WANT A MORE INTENSE COLOUR YOU CAN WORK IN A FEW EXTRA DROPS OF FOOD COLOURING.
4. STORE IN A PLASTIC SANDWICH BAG (SQUEEZE OUT THE AIR) IN THE FRIDGE TO KEEP IT FRESH.

FROM BBC GOOD FOOD, ALSO AVAILABLE: SLIME, SALT DOUGH, MOONSAND
[HTTPS://WWW.BBCGOODFOOD.COM/HOWTO/GUIDE/PLAYDOUGH-RECIPE](https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/howto/guide/playdough-recipe)

ACTIVITIES

Special interest groups

Groups can be formed to address a particular need, for example parents of children with additional needs may wish to set up a group so that they can share their experiences and support each other, parents in accommodation centres may wish to set up a group to provide play opportunities.

Help with setting up and sustaining your group

The Early Years Initiative for Kildare is a collaboration between KCCC and Kildare CYPSC, funded by Healthy Ireland.

Our development officer can visit your group and offer supports on setting up and keeping a group going.

If your group would like some support or advice please contact us, jane@kccc.ie / info@kccc.ie 045-861307

ROOM SET UP

Sample room set up for a small parent and toddler group.

The room set up does not need to be complicated, a selection of suitable toys and some sensory play can be a good starting point!



KILDARE COUNTY CHILDCARE COMMITTEE 2024

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