

Celebration of Infant Mental Health Week

Shoppers in Tesco, Enniskillen and Asda, Omagh recently had the chance to get their ring fingernail painted in a show of support for Infant Mental Health Week.

The CYPSP Western Outcomes Group, Fermanagh and Omagh Locality Planning Groups and Family Support Hubs hosted awareness mornings at the two supermarkets during Infant Mental Health Week 2016.

Members of the public had the opportunity to have their ring finger nail painted to highlight the "Vena Amoris", Latin for "the vein of love" which runs from the ring finger to the heart, to highlight the importance of bonding and loving babies which helps promote positive emotional health and wellbeing throughout life.

Shoppers also received information on ensuring the best start in life for their child including not smoking or drinking during pregnancy, breastfeeding, regular story reading, giving lots of love, affection and praise, having fun and playing with their child.

Kieran Downey, Western Trust Director of Women's and Children's Services and Chairperson of the CYPSP Western Outcomes Group commented, "Together we are making a commitment to ensure an emphasis is placed on positive emotional health very early in life which will in turn improve health outcomes, life expectancy, educational and economic outcomes and reduce crime and violence. Untreated mental health problems create enormous distress for children, young people, their families and carers, and this negative impact continues into later life, affecting future generations."

The events were also an opportunity for local services to highlight the availability of support services available to parents in both the Enniskillen and Omagh areas.

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