

Cityside LPG Funded Understand Me Workshop 19.03.26

The Western Area Outcomes Group (WAOG) awarded funding to the Cityside Locality Planning Group (LPG) to support delivery against the four WAOG priority areas. In response, the LPG engaged in consultation with members—particularly representatives from the Multi-Disciplinary Social Work Teams and Family Support Hub Coordinators—to identify the most pressing needs emerging from local families. Emerging was a consistent pattern: families were experiencing significant challenges related to their children's behaviour and communication, often resulting in heightened stress, anxiety, and uncertainty about how to respond effectively.

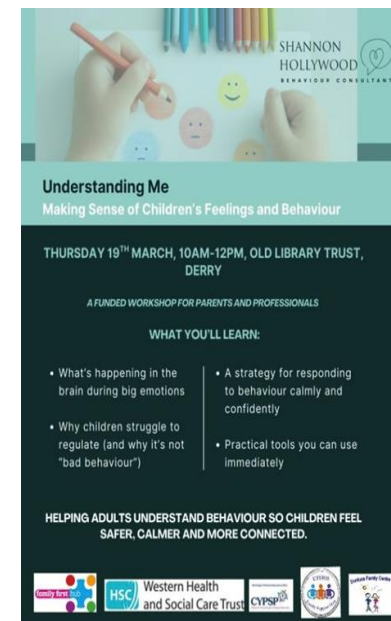
Practitioners reported that many parents were presenting with escalating concerns, frequently feeling overwhelmed and unsure how to manage behaviours that were becoming increasingly difficult to navigate. These challenges were thought to be rooted in underlying issues related to emotional regulation, communication, and developmental understanding.

Members agreed that families would benefit from training that:

- returned to foundational principles of child development e.g age appropriate boundary setting,
- was grounded in current knowledge of brain development,
- offered simple, practical strategies that could be easily embedded in daily routines.

It was also recognised that a shared learning approach—bringing practitioners and families together—would strengthen consistency, reinforce common language, and support collaborative implementation of strategies in the home and outside.

The membership decided to use some of the funding to commission Shannon Hollywood to facilitate a workshop titled : Understand Me: Making Sense of Children's Feelings & Behaviours. Subsequently, the rest of the funding was used to purchase resources for Cityside Family Support Hubs which could be used to advertise or promote the work of the Hubs. These resources will be brought to events or, left wherever families attend to hopefully support families make contact.



SHANNON HOLLYWOOD
BEHAVIOUR CONSULTANT

Understanding Me
Making Sense of Children's Feelings and Behaviour

THURSDAY 19TH MARCH, 10AM-12PM, OLD LIBRARY TRUST, DERRY

A FUNDED WORKSHOP FOR PARENTS AND PROFESSIONALS

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN:

- What's happening in the brain during big emotions
- Why children struggle to regulate (and why it's not "bad behaviour")
- A strategy for responding to behaviour calmly and confidently
- Practical tools you can use immediately

HELPING ADULTS UNDERSTAND BEHAVIOUR SO CHILDREN FEEL SAFER, CALMER AND MORE CONNECTED.

Logos: Family First, HSC Western Health and Social Care Trust, CYPSP, and other partners.

How much did we do?

Number of Attendees

25 people attended with a mix of parents and practitioners from all three respective neighbourhoods covered by their local Hub.

The session focused on:

- Understanding behaviour as communication
- Brain development and realistic expectations
- Discipline as teaching, not punishment
- Supporting children with big emotions and anxiety
- Building emotional safety and connection
- Responding to behaviour with confidence and consistency
- Supporting parents to feel calmer and more capable



How well did we do it?

Feedback from participants demonstrated strong engagement and clear evidence of learning.

Participants showed:

Improved ability to respond consistently and compassionate.

Increased commitment to creating emotionally safe environments where children feel secure, understood, and able to thrive.

A shared desire to reduce stress for both children and adults, recognising the importance of co-regulation and supportive communication.

Is anyone better off?

Practitioners reported that the joint training model strengthened relationships with families and enhanced their ability to work collaboratively toward shared goals.

Early indications from practitioners support the families suggest that families feel more confident, better supported, and more equipped to manage day-to-day challenges.

Recommendations moving forward

- Offering follow-up sessions to reinforce learning and deepen skills;
- Developing resource packs for families to support ongoing implementation;
- Gathering longer-term feedback to assess sustained impact.
- Gathering longer-term feedback to assess if the blend of parent/ practitioner joint training enhances outcomes and deepens relationships.

