

# Health, rights and play delivered through FLOURISH

**Just before lockdown Michelle Wilson, who works in our Children's Health and Wellbeing Services based in Tayside, partnered with Salma Hanif Gani, the Family Learning Project worker at the Dundee International Women's Centre (DIWC) to develop FLOURISH – a five-week Programme that looks at health, rights, responsibilities, play, and parenting. Michelle tells us more about the FLOURISH Programme and our work with the DIWC that seeks to engage, educate, and empower women from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds.**

*"It was fun delivering the FLOURISH Programme with the DIWC and each week we had some alone time with parents and some joint time with the children. The Programme was a collaboration of work we had done together in the past combined with health, rights, responsibilities, play, and parenting and I used discussion, cooking, and crafts whilst we all embraced fun and learning together.*

*"I was there to work with the group, listen to them and hear their thoughts and feelings about health and wellbeing so I was a little disturbed when, on one of the programmes, I learned that dentists were not able to see young children as they didn't have capacity as they tried to get through their backlog. I took this issue back to one of the paediatric dentists at the dental hospital that I have worked with in the past and a special clinic has now been running to meet this need.*

*"I think one of the real benefits of the FLOURISH Programme is that it is provided in a comfortable space which is culturally sensitive to different needs, helping to break down barriers to participation. The Programme mixes relaxation time for parents with information around healthy living, health and wellbeing, and development through play. Some of the women who come to centre are isolated, English is often their second language, and it can be hard to communicate with their children's school or health professionals. By attending the FLOURISH Programme, they benefit from an extended social circle, more confidence in knowing health rights, and knowing the right questions to ask different people. I also learn a lot about how health services work in other countries and was able to take the time to explain the differences here in Scotland and how services work here. There were six sessions in total and most of all we had fun.*

**Session 1** We made hidden vegetable sauce pizzas and spoke about how to access the dentist, and how healthy start vitamins work. We read going to the dentist.



**Session 2** We made healthy snacks, created two different kinds of energy balls and sang nursery rhymes. Head Shoulders Knees and Toes became a firm favourite. We discussed weaning and types of formula. Again, we spoke a little more about Healthy Start Vouchers and discussed how much milk children should have and how you can count it in things like cheese sauce.





**“Amazing session, my daughter loved making the energy balls, we made them again at home with my other children.”**

PARENT

### Session 3

Turned out to be International Women's Day so we made some salt dough shapes and had a chat about routines for children at different ages and stages. For example, how to set boundaries especially at bedtime and combining it with a good routine. But then the Army turned up with their ambulance and we all had some fun taking photos and playing on the ambulance.



**Session 4** We painted our salt dough which we had made the previous week and tied string and ribbon to our shapes to hang up. Some of the children and mums were sending them to family as gifts. We discussed using the GP and Pharmacist minor ailments service and shared where locally we can use Health Start Vouchers/ Card. We then read the Hospital Dog and of course, sang Head Shoulders Knees and Toes.

**Session 5** We made grass heads and did a big painting collage of a tree with our handprints. We spoke about how to fit in fun activities for different ages in the family and how to involve children in fun ways with everyday activities like singing silly songs as we do the housework or having fun with cardboard boxes.



**“I learnt how to make healthy but naughty treats for my whole family, yummy.”**

PARENT

**Session 6** This was a little extra session and we made chocolate crispy nests with little yellow chicks as it was just before Easter and Ramadan. We sang a lot of nursery rhymes and played together before saying goodbye to each other.”

If you would like to find out more about the FLOURISH Programme then please contact Michelle Wilson, [michelle.wilson@childrenshealthscotland.org](mailto:michelle.wilson@childrenshealthscotland.org)