Children's Disability Network Teams – Brú Chaoimhín

Newsletter

Issue 3 October 2026

Children's Disability Network Team

Message from the CDNM

Welcome to the 3rd newsletter from the CDNT Brú Chaoimhín. In this edition we will give an update on our recent family forum. We will also share some Halloween-themed communication support to celebrate AAC Awareness Month.

Melanie Anderson, Children's Disability Network Manager, Brú Chaoimhín

AAC Awareness Month is celebrated each October

It began in 2007 to create awareness about augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) and celebrate all the different ways people communicate with each other.

AAC includes any way of communicating other than spoken speech, for example:

- no-tech: gestures, facial expressions, eye gaze or Lámh.
- low-tech: paper picture boards, core word boards, visual schedules, communication books or communication boards.
- high-tech: tablets with AAC apps, or tablet-based speech generating devices.

People can switch between all those options, depending on need, preference, and availability.

Modelling is a helpful way for a parent to support their child with AAC. This is where the parent uses the child's AAC system during real activities, like mealtime or playtime or bedtime, showing or modelling how the system is used. The AAC is being used in a natural setting and situation for them. They are learning from observing their parent's use of the ACC system, before learning to do so themselves.

For more support and information around using high tech AAC, look out for your invitation to the next **AAC Family Network** session in November.

If you have questions or need help in relation to your child's AAC device, please contact cdnt.bru@hse.ie.

Halloween



For children who communicate without words, pictures can be a wonderful way to support inclusion and make sure every child can take part in the Halloween fun. From this week (12 October onwards), parents are welcome to drop into Brú Chaoimhín, to pick up a wristband featuring a simple selection of words and pictures to help children communicate while trick-or-treating.

A Halloween core communication board is included on the next page to support children to communicate around the topic of Halloween. Parents can show children how to do this by pointing to the pictures themselves as they are talking (modelling).

For Grid users, a selection of Halloween-themed vocabulary is located here: Home → Topics → Celebration → Halloween, with lots of space to add more buttons and personalise.



For TD Snap users who have set up an account on mytobiidynavox.com, you can download pre-made page sets on specific themes, for example, this one containing Halloween vocabulary and phrases: https://www.mytobiidynavox.com/psc/SnapCoreFirst/902831



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Halloween



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Our last forum

Our last family forum was on 29 September. It was online and 11 parents attended. Parents got an update from our Family Representatives, and from the CDNM.

Family Carers Ireland shared helpful and practical information. Family Carers Ireland advocate for caregivers and offer counselling and advice. They have a freephone careline 1800 24 07 24. See https://familycarers.ie/ for more information.

Our next forum is on 19 January 2027. Attendance is optional and is for parents or adults only. Invites will be sent out beforehand.

Contact us



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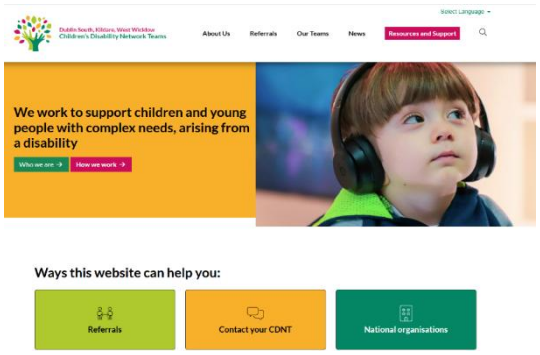
Please let us know if your contact details have changed. Our phone line can be busy, so if you cannot get through, please leave a voicemail.

Demand for services and waitlist information

There are approximately 530 children linked to the CDNT in Brú Chaoimhín. There are 90 children and young people waiting for services.

The CDNT has a waitlist as the demand for our service is greater than the staffing available. We are 64% staffed.

If you are waiting for services, please contact us for an expected waiting time for services.



CDNT website
www.cho7cdnt.ie

If you are on our waitlist, please look at our website for helpful resources and tips.

Live webinars

We also host live webinars on popular topics for parents that are on the waitlist. You will be contacted when they are next running.