

# Introduction

## Welcome to the CAMILLE Training

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# Introduction

- Background: The CAMILLE Project
- Focus Groups
- Aims of the training
- CAMILLE Principles
- Content of training course

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## Background

The CAMILLE Training is a Pan-European training package for professionals working with children & adolescents' families where there is a parent with mental illness.

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# Introduction

**The CAMILLE Training has been developed by the CAMILLE Project between 2013 to 2015, funded by the Daphne III funding of the EU.**

The partnership is as follows:

- UTA School of health sciences, Tampere University Finland
- Academy of Special Education, Warsaw Poland
- University of Dundee, Scotland / NHS Fife
- University of Essen, Germany
- Middlesex University, London UK
- Nordland Hospital, Bodø Norway
- ULSS, Rovigo Italy
- Synergia, Italy

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## Background

Social support and professional interventions are two examples of the protective factors of children's mental health.

The need for better knowledge and training in order to support and help these children and adolescents is emphasised by the scientific community.

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## Focus Groups

- We conducted three focus groups in different European countries which included: England, Scotland, Poland, Italy, Germany, Norway, Finland.
- The idea was to explore people's experiences and views of the specific problems for families where there is a mentally ill parent.
- We also wanted to find out about what they thought were the strengths and weaknesses of existing services and their suggestions for improvements.

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## Three focus groups took place in each country:

1. Workers (nurses, psychologists, family therapist, voluntary sector workers, early year practitioners, social workers, etc.)
2. Children and partners of mentally ill parents
3. Parents who had experience of mental health problems

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## What we found out about children:

- They often have inappropriate roles (parental roles) within the family.
- They may develop emotional problems like insecurity, anxiety, fear, guilt, shame.
- They may develop behavioural problems like not attending school and anti- social behaviour.

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## What we found out about children:

- Their needs are not fulfilled due to lack of parents' attention and engagement.
- Like the rest of the family, they experience stigma and isolation at school and sometimes keep their parent's illness secret.
- They suffer from financial and social struggles like poverty and lack of social support.

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## What we found out about parents:

- They face social isolation and loneliness.
- They want professionals to listen.
- They need better support and help to improve relationships with their family: greater openness to others is needed.
- They worry about transferring distress, insecurity and mental illness to the child.
- They worry about their inability to be a parent, control their child's behaviour and lack of attachment.

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## What they said about the main weaknesses of existing services:

- No access, lack of support
- Stigma – lack of understanding, lack of tolerance
- Financial support
- More education is needed- everywhere in society
- Bureaucracy
- Multidisciplinary approach is needed (multiagency)
- Professionals need to listen

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## What they said about what would help:

- To listen to the family
- Consultation
- Individual contact
- Psychological interventions
- Counselling
- Cooperation between professionals
- Availability and flexibility of professionals

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## Aim of the Training

This new European training programme aims to:

1. raise your awareness of the needs of families where there is a parent with mental illness.
2. build your confidence and skills to enable you to empower the children in these families, and prevent them from developing behavioural and emotional problems.

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## **CAMILLE Principles for Workers to Empower Families with a Mentally Ill Parent**

1. Become aware of the needs of these families, especially the issues faced by the children.
2. Be aware of and connect with all the different agencies and professionals which can help the family - communicate with and support each other.
3. Consider the whole family and the relationships between the family members.
4. Focus on what creates resilience and wellbeing in the child.

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## **CAMILLE Principles for Workers to Empower Families with a Mentally Ill Parent**

5. Look for the strengths of all family members and help the family to develop these to support each other.
6. Be consistently tolerant, respectful and compassionate to each person involved.
7. Encourage open communication about mental illness and substance abuse between family members and professionals.
8. Nurture the parent's capacity to be warm and responsive to their child.

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## **CAMILLE Principles for Workers to Empower Families with a Mentally Ill Parent**

9. Listen to the family's agenda – they need to decide what's important for them.
10. Think about simple, practical solutions for the family's everyday life.
11. Challenge stigma and discrimination whenever it is encountered.

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**The CAMILLE training is grouped together under three main themes:**

1. Knowledge Base
2. Experiences and needs of families
3. Methods for supporting families

Within each of these themes, there are individual topics. The rationale for this, is that the training can be tailored to different groups of workers by putting together suitable modules for a particular target group.





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**The core program consists of 9 topics from the three main themes:**

- **Knowledge Base**
  - Mental Illnesses & Substance Misuse
  - Child & Adolescent Development
  - Attachment
- **Experiences and needs of families**
  - Living with a parent
  - Being a parent
  - Stigma
- **Methods for supporting families**
  - Talking with children
  - Resilience
  - Successful Services

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## Suggested plan of the training

### — Day one

- Introduction
- Mental illness & Substance Misuse
- Child & Adolescent Development
- Attachment
- Living with a parent
- Being a parent

### — Day two

- Stigma
- Talking with children
- Resilience
- Successful Services
- *Evaluation*

