

# COMMUNITY FAMILIES



Building stronger  
communities



Community Families is **Creative Futures'** flagship families programme in north Westminster. We reach around 100 families every week through 7 free music-based sessions.



# What we do

We deliver 7 free sessions every week in Family Centres and community venues across northwest Westminster. Of these:



- ◆ **2 sessions per week are for parents with pre-crawling children.**
- ◆ **2 sessions are for families referred by the Family Centres these - Nurture Groups provide small-group support as a pathway into the larger sessions.**
- ◆ **3 sessions are open to families with children aged 0-4 years.**

We draw families from Queen's Park, Harrow Road, Westbourne, Bayswater and Church Street wards, covering some of the most deprived neighbourhoods in London.

Our sessions are led by Julie and Tonique, our welcoming and inspiring staff who bring local knowledge and professional expertise to every session. Some groups are also supported volunteer Maternity Champions from PDT.

Every session includes group singing and music-making, story-telling and movement, songs from cultures around the world, freeplay time for the children to explore and socialise, and time for the parents to meet others from their community, make friends, and form connections.

***"Thank you for all the fun sessions during lockdown. It was a genuine life saver, mental health saver - so many people are benefitting from it. It's such a valuable and wonderful thing you're doing." (Parent)***

# Our Impact

We reach 400+ families every year in north Westminster.

As a result of our programme:

**94% of parents felt less isolated.**

*“Our community is quite divided. This is the one place where you meet people from different backgrounds - suddenly you recognise people and start to have conversations, and that can have a knock-on effect for the wider community” (Mother)*

*“The quality of care is at the heart of the programme’s success... where parents are welcomed from the moment they step in, and leave with a smile on their face.” (evaluator)*



◆ **96% of parents said they felt more confident.**

◆ **100% felt that sessions had a positive impact on their child’s wellbeing and self-confidence.**

*“This exceptional initiative addresses some of our society’s most fundamental challenges such as social isolation and equity. By consistently widening access to opportunities it has transformed the experience of parenting for hundreds of families improving well-being, helping parents to bond with their child, feel part of a wider community, and be empowered through information and support networks. This work has the power to radically shift life chances of children from vulnerable backgrounds as well as reduce anxiety and social isolation.” (Independent evaluator, 2021)*

# Our Story



Community Families has grown from a resident-initiated drop-in once a week in 2013, to its current 7 sessions per week. It was devised to meet a gap in mother-and-baby activity for families in Queen's Park, and has grown in line with growing need from families across north Westminster to find accessible opportunities to meet, be creative, engage and socialize with other children – and for the parents to build connections and find community support.



Through our research-based music approach, involving singing, story-telling, movement and creativity, we support families to connect and to improve their well-being, and enhance many aspects of early childhood development.

The majority of neighbourhoods we serve are in the **10-20%** most deprived in the country (Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2019), and in the **10%** most deprived on the Index of Deprivation Affecting Children and Index of Income Deprivation. It is a highly diverse area, with a highly transient population. The area is characterized by significant health inequalities, high levels of child poverty and overcrowding, high levels of mental health concern, and above average early childhood speech and language deficit – all of which have been severely exacerbated by the coronavirus lockdowns.

*Creative Futures is delighted to collaborate with the following organisations in the delivery of Community Families, and we are grateful to the funders of the current phase of the programme:*

