



Annual Report 2007/2008

BALLYBEEN WOMEN'S CENTRE MISSION

Ballybeen Women's Centre is an integrated service provider committed to enabling women, young people and children to realise their potential and fulfill their aspirations through the promotion of health, personal and socio-economic development.

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Directors Report

It has been a busy, exciting and challenging year for the Centre and I am delighted to report that all areas of our work experienced growth and development this year.

Our Early Years work continued to have a positive impact on the community as it connected even more families with a range of services and resources. The Preschool, Toddlers group and Crèche are all recognised within the community for the quality of services they provide and this is evidenced by the fact that all 3 facilities were oversubscribed. Between the three facilities 64 children attended on a daily basis.

This year we have extended our early year's provision and introduced a number of new family support initiatives including MUM's United, a programme aimed at supporting mothers and their children. Following the establishment of a partnership with Inner East Sure Start we were delighted to welcome a new member of staff to the Early Years team.



Symone Hooley joined us in August as Early Years Officer with Family and Child Support Responsibilities.

In terms of education and training the Centre continued to strive to create more opportunities for inclusion of women within the community and labour market.

Our Steps to the Future education programme provided women with the opportunity to increase their confidence and self esteem and acquire new skills and qualifications. 232 women completed courses this year proving there is still a big demand for community based education and training for women.

The new computer suite proved a great success and with demand for IT courses exceeding capacity we had to run additional courses during the year.

This aspect of our work is funded by Proteus under the Peace II measure and runs out in June 08. Unfortunately at the time of writing we have not secured an alternative source of funding. We have challenging times ahead.

Women's Health continued to be a priority within the Women's Centre this year. Monthly health events were organised in response to suggestions from women themselves and addressed issues such as dementia and Alzheimer's, Cancer and healthy lifestyle. An accredited women's health course also ran this year.

Our Culture and Diversity project created a space where women and young people's views and concerns



could be heard and in so doing aimed to instil a sense of pride and belonging. This year's activities and workshops encouraged women and young people to explore their own culture and to increase their understanding of diversity.

Over the past number of years Ballybeen Women's Centre has sought to address the legacy of the conflict with women and young people in the community and has successfully developed programmes that have enabled them to explore their identity and the culture and traditions of others. The Centre has forged links with women and youth groups from across the political and cultural divide both within Northern Ireland and the Republic. These programmes have for the first time enabled women and young people from Ballybeen to address the historical legacy of the conflict and facilitated them to take risks and confront their attitudes and feelings towards their own and others culture.

This year the Centre delivered a number of programmes that have continued to develop the partnership ethos based on mutual respect and an understanding of shared needs and experiences.

During the year women and young people participated in a number of very interesting study visits, e.g. the recently opened Battle of the Boyne Heritage Centre, Kilmainham Goal in Dublin, Clonard Monastery in Belfast and the Somme Heritage Centre in Newtownards.

The Peer Education Project has gone from strength to strength. Delivering peer led training courses in health and personal development within the community and school settings has enabled us to engage with greater numbers of young people and build good relations within the community.



The partnership with Brook N.I has been very successful and the sexual health clinic has become firmly established within the area.

A major development this year was securing funding from the Big Lottery as this enabled us to extend our services and deliver a more diverse range of activities for young people.

Funding enabled the PEP to develop and implement a new programme called Generation Health which aims to empower young people to make positive health and lifestyle choices.

Big Lottery funding also meant we were able to employ a Young People's Support Worker and we were delighted to welcome Clare Thompson to the team.

Our European work progressed further this year with the commencement of our first Leonardo Da Vinci Project.

Keys for Women's Economic and Labour Empowerment (KWELE) is a Leonardo da Vinci Transfer of Innovation Project coordinated by Mamak Municipality (Turkey).

The aim of KWELE is to develop a model of education and training that will enable disadvantaged women to acquire social and vocational skills and empower them to compete effectively within the labour market.

An Office Management training programme will be developed and piloted in four partner countries. The programme will take into account the needs of disadvantaged women and the demands of the labour market.

Partners are from Poland, Turkey, Latvia, Greece and Germany. This project will enable us to share our model of education and training with others and develop new models and tools for training disadvantaged women.

In April a group of women and young



people undertook a European Awareness Training Programme that culminated in a study visit to Brussels, where they met with Jim Allisto MEP, a representative from the N.I. Executive Bureau.

We were delighted to host a visit from Margaret Ritchie, Minister for Social Development last November. The minister is very supportive of the work of Women's Centre's and was impressed by the scope and quality of our work here at Ballybeen. The visit was also attended by Iris Robinson our local MLA and long time supporter of the Centre.



Finally I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank all the staff for their hard work and commitment during this year as without it we could not continue to grow and deliver the high quality services that we do.

Thank you also to our dedicated and supportive management committee and volunteers.

Tanya Hughes

Director

Early Years

This year our Early Years work has gone from strength to strength and we are now offering a more comprehensive and diverse range of support services and programmes to families within the community.

As ever partnership working is an integral part of our work. Working collaboratively ensures that we deliver quality services to children and families and adhere to the Children's Order N.I and other relevant policy and legislation.

This year we were able to provide 60 childcare places daily and as usual all places were taken and waiting lists operational in all three facilities.

Following the establishment of a partnership with Inner East Sure Start we secured funding to employ an Early Years Worker to develop and deliver programmes aimed at families and also to support children with additional needs.

We were delighted to welcome Symone Hooley into the Early Years team in August. Since starting Symone has been busy familiarizing herself with the local community and identifying needs. As a result, she established a new programme called Mum's United. This programme supports young mum's to meet new friends, build confidence and self esteem and learn new skills. This was an extremely successful programme and evaluations showed that as a result of their participation women felt more confident to get involved in other activities within the

Centre. We look forward to a second programme running next year.

This has been another very successful year within all three facilities:

Preschool

The Preschool delivered a diverse range of programmes that enabled children to gain knowledge, confidence and experience self achievements. The aim of the group is to nurture children to reach their full potential, enabling them to strive forward to their next stage of development.

As part of our health promotion programme the preschool children participated in the 321 Dental Health Award Scheme and I am delighted to report that the staff and children's dedication and effort was rewarded when they received the gold award at a ceremony in the Ramada hotel.



Children attending our toddler group enjoyed a stimulating and challenging programme that included activities aimed at raising awareness of other cultures and identities. The children thoroughly enjoyed tasting food from other countries and learning about children from all over the world.



Training

This year our Early Years Staff completed the following training:

PEAGS

Alert to Asthma

Early Years First Aid

Cluster Group Early Years Training

Child Protection

Graduation

Once again the graduation ceremony was a great end to the year.



Fundraiser

Well done to the Early Years Team for raising £634.00 for Macmillian Cancer Support. Parents, children and staff enjoyed a coffee morning and sale to raise money for this very worthy cause.



The visit from Hullabaloo Children's Interactive Theatre Company helped us to further children's awareness of others culture and diversity.

Finally, a big thank you to the Early Years Team for their hard work and commitment throughout the year.



Education and Training 2007-2008

Steps to the Future

Ballybeen Women's Centre has developed an innovative model that aims to develop the learner's potential not only in terms of education, skills development and employability but also in relation to their personal development, confidence building and self-esteem. By adopting an integrated approach it identifies and addresses the key barriers to individuals competing effectively for job opportunities. Steps to the Future promotes the value of learning, is community based and delivers a diversity of courses together

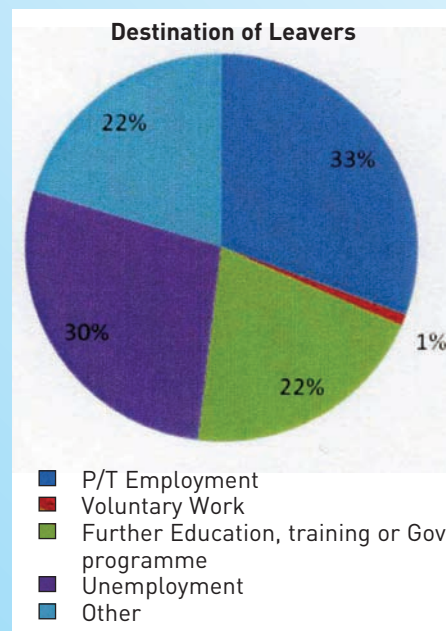
with culture and diversity training.

Since April 2006 the education and training programme has been funded by Proteus through the Peace 11 Extension Programme under Priority 1: Economic Renewal, Measure 3: New Skills and New Opportunities. During the 27 month project 156 women enrolled and 75% of the women who enrolled on courses during the life of the project completed courses and gained qualifications. The following table shows the education and training courses which ran at the Centre and the number and type of qualifications gained by women:

Course	Qualification Gained
Essential English Skills	1 Entry Level Literacy 3 Level 1 Communication
Essential Maths Skills	5 Level 1 Application Of Number
Introduction to Women's Health	13 OCN Level 1 - 3 Credits Introduction to Women's Health
First Aid	8 St John Ambulance Public First Aid Certificates 8 British Red Cross Public First Aid Certificates
Women Moving On	6 OCN Level 1 - 3 Credits developing Personal Confidence and Self Awareness
PC Skills	21 OCN Level 1 - 3 Credits Introduction to Computers
	11 OCN Entry Level 3 - 3 Credits Introduction to ICT Systems
	11 OCN Entry Level 3 - 3 Credits Introduction to Word Processing
Internet and Email	14 OCN Level 1 - 3 Credits Using the Internet and Email
OCR CLAIT	28 OCR CLAIT
OCR CLAIT +	7 OCR CLAIT+
ECDL	13 ECDL
IC3	2 Internet and Computing Fundamentals
Microsoft Office Specialist	3 MOS Word
	3 MOS Excel
	2 MOS Powerpoint
	2 MOS Outlook
Stepping Out	2 OCN Level 1 - 3 Credits Identity
History	1 A/S History
Total	165 Qualifications

An integral part of this project was the peace and reconciliation element. 36 women took part in a range of activities such as single identity workshops, visits to meet women from other cultures and traditions, culture and diversity courses, a multi-cultural event at the Waterfront Hall and a residential to the Battle of the Boyne Exhibition Centre at Drogheda. As a result these women increased their understanding of their own and others identity and culture.

A data base is kept on all participants on the education and training programme detailing the courses they completed and their progression. The table below shows the destination of women after leaving the project:



Lipstick and Money Programme

5 women participated in this 6 week programme run by East Belfast Enterprise. Women received one to one coaching as they built up their confidence and enterprise skills. They also met with local women who run their own businesses. The programme culminated with a celebration event in the Europa Hotel, Belfast where women had the opportunity to play 'Who Wants to be a Millionaire?' The event was hosted by Julian Simmons.



E-Cert

20 women completed this 5 week course in which they learnt a range of ICT skills – word processing, desk top publishing, internet and emailing. It was provided through Equal IT Project - Belfast Metropolitan College – Castlereagh.

Presentation of Certificates

The presentation morning took place on the 25th June 2008 at the Strangford Arms Hotel. As well as certificates for women completing courses under the



Steps to the Future Project, certificates were given for the following courses:
Creative Crafts
Digital Photography Levels-1 and 2

Lipstick and Money
E-Cert
Mixed Crafts
Family History



Health Promotion

Health Promotion and Education is a core area of work within the Women's Centre.

The Centre is committed to addressing the health needs of both women and young people and to this end has developed a range of comprehensive programmes and services.

WOMENS HEALTH

'Introduction to Womens Health – OCN Level 1'

The accredited women's health course remains central to the work around Womens Health. Whilst the programme covers a number of core elements it also aims to address the health information needs of the women participating.

This year seven women completed the course which included topics such as our bodies, PMS, Post Natal Depression, alcohol awareness and personal development.



Monthly Health Events

Health events are organised and planned on a monthly basis in consultation with women so that they are given the opportunity to express their needs.

This year a broad range of issues were covered including:

- Alternative Therapies
- Healthy Lifestyles
- Cardiac Risk Factor Assessment – Chest, Heart & Stroke Association
- Health & Beauty

Counting the Cost of Alcohol

The Centre was successful this year in a joint bid with Holy Trinity Family Centre to run a Counting the cost of Alcohol Programme which was facilitated by the WRDA. The programme aimed to raise awareness and knowledge of alcohol, encourage responsible use of alcohol and enable participants to examine alcohol and its effects.



Peer Education Project

The last year has seen a number of new developments to the programmes and services offered through the Peer Education Project (PEP). The Project was successful in securing funding from the Big Lottery Young People's Fund to deliver 'Generation Health', a programme addressing the health, social and personal development needs of young people. As part of this project a Young People's Support Worker has been employed, Clare Thompson took up post in August 2007 and has worked hard to engage with young people and support peer educators in the delivery of programmes and services.



Peer Educators from the Project during a Study Visit to Brussels.

As ever our Peer Educators have been very busy in the development and delivery of training for young people. This year the Project has worked with 170 young people and delivered sixteen different programmes. A range of new courses have been developed and delivered including; cultural diversity/identity; confidence and self esteem and a new summer programme on health and lifestyles. Funding received this year from the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and



Young people taking part in outdoor pursuits and 'Ballybeen's Got Talent' competition during this years annual residential.



Garfield Weston Foundation has enabled the Project to deliver programmes to young people both in centre and on an outreach basis; purchase new resources and provide additional training for staff and peer educators. Young people attending the project also participated in a residential to Westport where they had a great time and were able to participate in outdoor pursuits, team building and confidence building activities.

Sexual health and relationships continue to be a priority area of work. With regards to sexual health the Project provides a multi-faceted service through the delivery of programmes, which provide a safe and supportive environment where young people can develop an understanding of their own and other people's sexuality and sexual health issues. This year the Project's collaboration with Brook NI has gone from strength to strength. The Sexual Health clinic for young people operates on a weekly basis and provides free confidential sexual health advice and contraception for young people. Funding secured through the Big Lottery Young People's Fund will ensure the provision of this much needed service until 2012. This year the project has engaged in a number of new projects. A joint programme with the Forum for Action on Substance Abuse (FASA) culminated with the production of a leaflet which was developed and designed by young people participating on the Project. This leaflet was officially launched earlier this year and is now used as a learning and discussion tool during group sessions.

The Project has also developed links with other similar organisations both



Young people from the Project who were involved in the design of a new leaflet for substance abuse.

north and south of the border with a view to developing programmes for the forthcoming year. Peer Educators made a trip to Dublin where they visited a Young People's Project and also Kilmainham Gaol.

Ongoing training and development is vital to the success of the programmes and this year peer educators completed an OCN Level II Drugs Awareness

programme facilitated by FASA, cultural awareness/diversity training and other additional training in developing resilience amongst young people. The Project provided a placement this year for one of our peer educators, Kellie Walker, who participated in Youth Action's Community Leadership Programme. Having completed the programme successfully Kellie is now moving onto university to undertake a



Peer Educators at Kilmainham Gaol, Dublin.



Peer Educators receiving certificates for accredited Drug Awareness training.

community youth work degree and the Project wishes her luck for the future. The hard work and dedication of our peer educators is what makes this project a success and lastly I would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to all of our peer educators who have dedicated an enormous amount of their own personal time to both training and working face to face with young people.

Culture and Diversity

This year's culture and diversity project proved popular with both women and young people.

The programmes included a number of activities and workshops that encouraged women and young people to explore their own and others culture and increase their understanding of diversity.

BWC used the tools and expertise developed through existing networks to develop innovative programmes that

engaged women and young people in a meaningful way to address often very sensitive issues around identity and culture. Challenging attitudes and beliefs about themselves and others is a core element of these programmes.

The programmes also sought to increase participant's knowledge of political institutions both within Northern and Southern Ireland and within a European context.



Outreach and Support

Our outreach and support programme continues to encourage women to participate in Centre activities and support their personal progression. The Outreach and Support worker liaises

with a range of individuals and organisations to ensure women's needs are being met. Through the outreach programme we respond to referrals from a range of

organisations and also provide a signposting service to women and young people seeking information, advice and help.

FUNDERS



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