



This is the ninth monthly newsletter of the National Family Support Network, a way for us to promote events and spread news throughout the network.

## News

### Re-affiliation process

Over the last month we have rolled out our re-affiliation process, in which we ask our members to complete the forms necessary to re-affiliate. This is a great opportunity for us to touch base with our members and their needs. All existing affiliated members will have received an email or letter with the affiliation forms and will soon be receiving a check-in call from a member of our staff. If you have already heard from us and have sent in the forms, we sincerely thank you. For those who haven't, please contact us and we'll send on a copy of the form to you as soon as we can. We ask you to please complete these forms as soon as you can and get them back to us, either through post to **NFSN, 5 Gardiner Row, Dublin 1**, or by scanning and emailing them to **development@fsn.ie**. A timely response will greatly help the process go smoothly and will help us to keep up to date with your group. We're looking forward to hearing from you all soon.

## Upcoming Training/Events

### World Café on Kinship Caring, Tallaght Area

Together with Tallaght Drug and Alcohol Task Force, we are hosting a "World Café" style workshop on the topic of what it is like to care for children or young people

because their parents aren't in a position to do it, because of their own misuse of drugs or alcohol. Many grandparents, aunts, uncles and others are in this position. This workshop will take the form of a group discussion on the topic, in which carers in this position can share their experiences and see if they can join together to improve things for themselves and the children they care for. We invite anyone living in the wider Tallaght area or close to it who is looking after children or young people because of their parents' substance misuse, or who has ever done so to take part in this workshop. The workshop will take place on the **16th of May**, in the **Russell Centre, Tallaght**. To RSVP, please contact **Ger** at **01-898-0148** or **membership@fsn.ie**. Places are limited so booking soon is recommended.

### **Glendalough Peer Supervision Weekend**

As many of you are aware, each year we host a weekend for our facilitators in Glendalough, in which they receive supervision, support and guidance from each other. This provides an opportunity for reflection on facilitation practice, and mutual support in their continuous development. This year is no different and will take place in the **Crosscare houses in Glendalough** on the **25th and 26th of May**.

As usual, it's made up of two days, with working sessions discussing different aspects of facilitation of Friday evening and all-day Saturday, with overnight stays on Friday and Saturday. Meals will be provided on the Friday evening, and everyone usually chips in for a takeaway or cooked meal on the Saturday. It is optional to stay on the Saturday evening and into Sunday morning, in which respite activities will take place. The event is free of charge, and transport from Dublin City Centre will be provided if needed. If you are a group facilitator, we really hope that you will join us as it always proves to be a very fruitful and enjoyable weekend for all involved. To book your place, please contact **Ger** at **membership@fsn.ie** or call **01-898-0148**. Please note that places are limited.

## Network Highlights

### **'Our Life, Our Voice, Our Say' - Research Report Launch**

This month CEO Sadie Grace and Policy Worker Aoife Frances attended the launch of 'Our Life, Our Voice, Our Say', a research report completed by Service Users Rights in Action and the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission. This report examined human rights and public-sector duty in the context of service user of opioid treatment services and advocates for key changes to be made in treatment services. One of the key findings regarding the indignity and inappropriateness of supervised urine testing has led to the HSE taking the stance that direct supervision of urine specimen collections are NOT required. If a person who is using a treatment service is asked to provide a supervised urine sample they can contact the **Service User Rights in Action group** on **1850-241850**. If you have any questions or if you want to find out more as a family member you can also speak with **Aoife in NFSN** on **01-898-0158**.

### **Meeting of Drug and Alcohol Family Support Workers**

On the 19th of April, the National Family Support Network and the Western Region Drug and Alcohol Task Force organised a meeting for drug and alcohol family support workers. The meeting was hosted in Galway by the Western Region Drug and Alcohol Task Force, and 15 people, from all around the country, took part. Participants shared information on their activities, their achievements, the issues facing family members that they work with, and the challenges of their work. It was agreed to hold a follow-up meeting in September. Further information from: **Ger Doherty (NFSN; (membership@fsn.ie, 01-8980148)** or **Debbie McDonagh (Western Region Drug and Alcohol Task Force; Debbie.mcdonagh@wrdatf.ie, 091-480044, 0876955557)**.

## **Meeting of representatives of families on the Drug and Alcohol Task Forces**

On the 20th of April, the NFSN organised a meeting at which participants came together to share their experiences of representing families' interests on six different Task Forces. It was agreed at the meeting that the NFSN will use the national structures set up under the new national drugs strategy to pursue the issue of families' representation on the Task Forces. The Department of Health has written to Task Forces encouraging them to include representatives of families in their memberships. The NFSN will seek information on how the Department is following up on this matter and will also seek to ensure that representatives of families on all Task Force have the same supports available to them as other community representatives.

The NFSN is to organise another meeting of family representatives in June, and it is hoped that members of more Task Forces will participate. Further information from **Ger Doherty: [membership@fsn.ie](mailto:membership@fsn.ie), 01-8980148.**

## **Young Persons' Support Programme Info Sessions**

This month our Development Officer, Conor, and our intern Kirsten, delivered a very successful information session on the Young Persons' Support Programme, in the Cork City Partnership. This information session was attended by representatives from 14 local organizations and services, who were briefed on the Young Persons Support Programme and its contents. The session was highly enjoyed by all, and we look forward to working with local organizations to roll out the programme in the Cork area. Please contact **Conor at [development@fsn.ie](mailto:development@fsn.ie) or 01-898-0148** if you are interested in hosting an information session on the programme in your area.

## **5-Step Method Accreditation**

We would like to congratulate **Caroline O'Donoghue**, of **Northstar Family Support Project** who has recently completed her 5-Step accreditation and is now an accredited 5-Step practitioner. We're sure that the skills she has gained will aide her in supporting family members into the future. More 5-Step training will be announced throughout the year. If you are interested in attending any of these please contact **Christy** at [training@fsn.ie](mailto:training@fsn.ie) or **01-8980148**.

**If you have any events or information that you would like to be shared in future newsletters, please contact us directly before the 28th of May. You can email us at [development@fsn.ie](mailto:development@fsn.ie) or call 01-898-0148.**

Best,

The NFSN team