



The Family Voice

Guth an Teaghlaigh

Family Support Network Newsletter

6th Edition , April 2012

Coordinator's Welcome Note

Welcome to the 6th edition of the Family Support Network newsletter. It has been a busy first four months of the year. The Service was a great success and as you will see in the newsletter we are delighted to be building on our training initiatives in 2012.

As you will see we have changed

the format of our newsletter to make it more reader friendly. We hope that you like it and if you have any feedback we would really like to hear from you (info@fsn.ie).

We can send you the Family Voice via email or post, please let us know which you would prefer.

Warm Wishes, **SADIE GRACE**

Useful Links

[HSE National Lottery Respite Grants](#)

[Family Support Network Facebook Page](#)

We're on Facebook

The National Family Support Network have recently joined Facebook. We intend on using our Facebook page to advertise events and keep our friends up to date on any news that we think may be of interest. So, if you are a member of Facebook we would really like to become your friend, you can find our page at www.facebook.com/familysupportnetworkD

or if you are reading this edition of our newsletter online simply hit the control button & click on the Facebook icon to the right of this article and it will bring you directly to our page.



Looking forward to hearing from all you fellow facebookers!

Contact Details:

Family Support Network
16 Talbot Street
Dublin 1

Ph: 01-8365 168

Email: info@fsn.ie

Website: www.fsn.ie



Service of Commemoration & Hope 2012

The thirteenth annual Service of Commemoration and Hope was held on Wednesday 1st February in the church of Our Lady of Lourdes, Séan McDermott Street, Dublin 1. The theme of the Service this year was "Growing Strong Together", Sadie Grace, FSN Coordinator stressed the importance of family support groups and networks working together in partnership with services so as to support families living with drug use. The Service was attended by The President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins, who recited the poem 'For Grief' by John O'Donoghue. Also in attendance was Minister Shortall T.D., Department of Health with responsibility for

Primary Care, who spoke of the importance of having an annual event to allow families the space to grieve & provide each other with mutual support. The service was also attended by Commandant Michael Tracey, aide-de-camp to An Taoiseach, Bishop Eamonn Walsh, Garda Commissioner Martin Callinan, Minister of State Joe Costello, MEP Emer Costello representing the Lord Mayor of Dublin, family members, friends and representatives from Family Support Groups, nationwide.



Training & the FSN

The FSN are currently engaged in two training initiatives; 5-Step Method and Safe Talk.

5-Step Method

As announced at the Annual Work Conference 2011 the FSN are working with the UK Alcohol, Drugs and the Family Research Group to introduce the 5-Step Method to Ireland. The ADF Group will be training twelve members of the FSN throughout 2012 to become practitioners in the 5-Step Method and certified trainers in the method. In approaching the training in this way the FSN are trying to ensure the training initiative is sustainable and that affiliated family support groups and services will have the opportunity to access training in the 5-Step Method for many years to come. The ADF Group delivered their first training session in Ireland at the end of March. The day was a great success and the twelve participants now have work to do to complete the first phase of the assessment. We will

inform affiliated members of opportunities for training in the 5-Step Method towards the end of 2012.

SafeTALK

The Family Support Network has organised a half day SafeTALK (Suicide Awareness) training session. SafeTALK training prepares the participant to identify thoughts of suicide. Trainees will learn how to refer the vulnerable person to suicide first aid resources. Most people with thoughts of suicide welcome help to stay safe. Alert helpers know how to use these opportunities to support that desire for safety. As a SafeTALK-trained suicide helper you will be able to identify people who have suicidal thoughts, apply the TALK steps (Tell, Ask, Listen and Keepsafe) and make referrals to relevant services.

If you would like to avail of a place on the SafeTALK training session please see details on the back page.



Sibling Support Programme

Siblings of people with alcohol and drug use problems often live in extraordinary situations and are exposed to extraordinary events and behaviour as part of ordinary life. Siblings often develop a whole range of skills and knowledge to help them through the challenging situations related to the alcohol or drug use of a brother or sister.

In general siblings confide, protect, are interested and offer guidance and support to each other. Most siblings would wish for an older brother or sister to be there for them, to listen to them, do things with them and take an interest in their lives.

Once drug users develop a dependency, everything else including family members take second place as the drug using brother or sister

prioritise their drug use above all else. The FSN have developed a ten week programme for siblings living with drug use. The purpose of the sibling support programme is to give siblings of drug using brothers or sisters an opportunity to obtain peer support and education within a recreational context. The programme combines information and discussion with games and activities. The sibling support programme is designed for under 18's.

Presently there are two sibling support programmes in operation, one in Arklow, covering the East Coast Area and one in Fettercairn, Tallaght, Dublin 24.

If you would like further information on the FSN Sibling Support Programme please contact Siobhán Maher, 01- 836 5168.

East Coast Area Booklet Launch

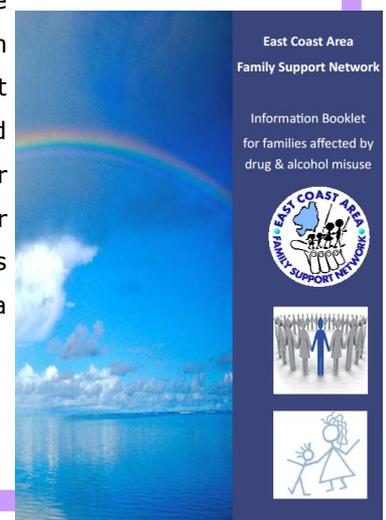
The East Coast Area Family Support Network (ECAFSN) launched their Information Booklet for Families Affected by Drug & Alcohol Misuse on the 22nd March 2012. The booklet provides family members with information on family support and local family support groups. In addition the booklet provides family members with an overview of some of the issues that families living with substance misuse experience including guardianship and foster care, bereavement, intimidation and imprisonment. A directory of services is also included at the back of the booklet. The intention of this is to encourage families to access relevant services in their local area. The launch of the booklet was held in the Ramada Hotel in Bray. Speakers on the day included Geraldine Fitzpatrick (Chairperson, ECAFSN), Sadie Grace

(Coordinator, FSN) and representatives from the various groups that form the ECAFSN.

Attendees at the launch expressed their congratulations on the booklet and provided the ECAFSN committee with excellent ideas for future initiatives.

The booklet can be found on <http://www.fsn.ie/research/index.html>.

The ECAFSN work from community development principles and would be glad to provide information or advice to other local or regionally based networks that would like to publish a similar booklet.



Drugs Corner

Methadone is a chemical substance that was first synthesised in German Laboratories during the Second World War. Initially its purpose was to be a painkiller, but today it used as a drug replacement treatment for opiate users. It is a coloured liquid that can only be prescribed by some GPs.

In Ireland there are over nine thousand people on methadone treatment. Each person receiving methadone has their name on a central confidential list. Methadone is what is known as a harm reduction measure. This means that it can help reduce the risk to the user of blood borne infection, having to engage in criminality and improve general health.

The effects of methadone range from drowsiness and pain relief to teeth problems. Methadone is an addictive drug which many

Trevor Bisset , CAD

users say is desperately difficult to stop taking. Methadone can be very dangerous if taken incorrectly. It is toxic to those who don't use it regularly and can lead to overdose if taken after a gap in use or with other drugs. Due to this danger the Community Detoxification Initiative was piloted in 2007 and is being rolled out in 2012. The purpose of this project is to manage the risk of relapse and overdose for those who are stopping their methadone treatment.

For more information on the Community Detoxification Protocols please go to www.progressionroutes.ie



Dates for your diary

| Event | Date & Time | Venue | Contact Details / Further Information |
|--|--------------------------------|--|--|
| FSN host SafeTALK Half day training session | 1st May 2012 9.30am—12.30pm | St. Andrews FRC, Pearse Street, Dublin 2 | Siobhán Maher, Development Worker 01-836 5168 |
| Addiction Response Crumlin, Drug Awareness Week | 14th—18th May 2012 | Various | Michelle or Breda 01- 4113222 or 086-770 7511 |
| FSN Bereavement Support Group | LAST THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH | FSN office, 16 Talbot Street, Dublin 1 | Sadie Grace, FSN Coordinator 01-836 5168 |

DO YOU OR SOMEBODY YOU KNOW NEED SUPPORT?

Call us on 01 –836 5168, We are here to help