



The Family Voice

Guth an Teaghlaigh

Family Support Network Newsletter

14th September 2012

Coordinator's Welcome Note

Welcome to the seventh edition of the Family Voice. The summer months have been very busy for the Family Support Network. The 5-Step method training is progressing and we hope next year to be able to deliver this training to our affiliated members. We have also been working in partnership with Progression

Routes Initiative, the Garda National Drugs Unit and NDRIC to develop resources for drug services responding to issues of intimidation. Looking forward to seeing you all at this years Annual Work Conference.

Warm wishes,

Sadie Grace

Useful Links

[HSE National Lottery Respite Grants](#)

[Family Support Network Facebook Page](#)

Annual Work Conference 2012

The Family Support Network Annual Work Conference will be held in the Green Isle Hotel, Naas Road, Newlands Cross, Dublin 22, on Saturday 24th of November. Due to funding cuts this year's conference is again a one day event. The Conference provides family support groups with the opportunity to discuss national policy developments and to participate in training workshops and holistic therapies on the day. Details including the itinerary and cost of the conference will be

sent to each group in the near future. Looking forward to seeing you all there.



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National Drug Related Deaths Index

In this edition Dr. Suzi Lyons has provided The Family Voice with a summary of some of the findings of the National Drug-Related Deaths Index (NDRDI). The Family Support Network continues to sit on the NDRDI Steering Committee.

The NDRDI produces figures every year on deaths due to poisoning by alcohol and/or other drugs, and deaths among drug users. 2009 are currently the most recent figures available. Figures for 2010 will be available in the autumn.

In 2009, 357 people died of a drug poisoning, that is equivalent to seven people every week. Just over two thirds of those who died were men. Many of those who died were young, aged between 25 and 44 years. The average age was 38 years. Just over half of the deaths involved more than one drug. The number of deaths in which heroin was involved (either alone or with another drug) rose to 108 in 2009, compared to 90 in 2008. However alcohol was involved in nearly 2 out of every 5 deaths by poisoning, more than any other drug

or substance. Benzodiazepines (e.g. Valium, diazepam, D5s) also were involved in many of the poisoning deaths.

In 2009, there were 271 non-poisoning deaths recorded among drug users in the NDRDI. Deaths among drug users (whether the user is dependent or non-dependent) may be indirectly attributed to their drug use. Just over half of deaths were due to medical causes (143 deaths) mainly cardiac events, respiratory infections and cancer. Most of those who died from medical causes were aged between 30 and 49 years. Almost three quarters were men. The rest of the non-poisoning deaths (128 deaths) were due to traumatic causes mainly hanging and choking. Those who died from traumatic causes were generally younger than those who died from medical causes, as the average age was only 30 years but again most were men.

Health Research Board (2011) Drug-related deaths and deaths among drug users in Ireland: Revised 2009

Drug Awareness Training for Family Resource Centres

This September the Family Support Network delivered a Drug Awareness Training day in the Mid West Region working with the Family Resource Centres in Limerick and Clare. On completion of the training day staff and volunteers of the FRC's will have up to date knowledge of drugs and their effects and will also be able to work with family members in promoting change in their lives when it comes to drug and alcohol addiction in the home. The

FSN will offer to deliver this training to all Family Resource Centers throughout the country giving staff of FRC's up-to-date information on drug use.

If you are a staff member of a Family Resource Centre and would like to know more about this training, please contact Siobhan in the FSN office, on 01 8365168.





www.drugs.ie - Calling All Family Support Groups

As you are all aware family members seeking support may first browse the internet to access information on drugs and support services. The first website family members often visit is www.drugs.ie and many family members have been referred by the website through the directory of services or the helpline to family support groups. That is why it is so important that all family support groups have their details on this website. Currently they are developing a national treatment directory. This will replace the contact details for services that are currently on the website. Therefore each group/project must register their family support service.

You will need to use your own email address to do so and you will then receive your own username and password. This will mean that you can access the directory at any time to update, edit or review the information that

you want displayed on the site. Once the site goes live you can also upload other promotional material for example videos and newsletters. It really will be a great resource to publicize the work of your group. To get started you need to click on the link: <http://clients.kooba.ie/drugs/sign-up.php> and start the registration. You will fill in a few questions in relation to your service to get started. Most of the questions are tick the boxes so it is very simple to complete. Once you have done this you will remain the person or service in control of the information on the site.

Jennifer Clancy from the Social Inclusion office in the HSE would appreciate it if you could contact her by phone or email to confirm registration of your family support group or service so she can tick you off her list. E: jennifer.clancy@hse.ie / P: 085 132 7974

Calling all Quilt Makers

The Family Support Network will be starting to organise next year's Service of Commemoration and Hope very soon. We would like to encourage all family support groups to consider making a quilt for this service. For those of you who have made quilts in the past would you consider volunteering to guide another group through the quilt making process? If so please get in touch with the Family Support Network office and we will try to match you with a group in need of your skills.



Bereavement Support

Family Support Network are offering information and support for family members bereaved through substance misuse. This group is held the last Thursday of every month in the office of the Family Support Network. For more information please contact Sadie on (01) 8365 168.





Drugs Corner

Trevor Bisset , CAD

It is two years since the psychoactive substances act outlawed the sale of Head Shop Drugs. During this time the majority of the shops that sold these products have shut down and the problem would seem to have disappeared. This episode provided a reminder of the power of communities coming together to challenge these insidious establishments. However, whilst the shops have largely disappeared the drugs are still available. A recent report by the NACD stated that much of the business of Head Shops has migrated online. There have been a large number of seizures this year alone including one seizure with a 'street value' of over €350,000.

Also known as 'Legal Highs', these substances come in a variety of forms. The most common forms include powders, pills, smoking mixtures and other plant prod-

ucts. The packaging on these products aims to create the impression that they mimic the effects of drugs such as cocaine, speed, cannabis and even heroin. The side effects are diverse and can include anxiety, paranoia, cancer and psychological dependence. Needless to say these can be devastating and vary from person to person.

It is important to remember that the phrase 'Legal Highs' is a misnomer. Since 2010 the vast majority of these substances have been criminalised. Prior to this they operated in a legal grey area. Many of the websites that sell these products still claim these are legal which will leave the purchaser vulnerable to prosecution. More pertinently however is the real danger of using these substances.

Dates for your diary

Event	Date & Time	Venue	Contact Details / Further Information
Good Practice Guidelines Training	October 11th 2012	FSN Office, 16 Talbot Street, Dublin 2	Family Support Network 01-8365168
Tallaght Service of Commemoration & Hope	October 25th 2012	Fettercairn Community & Youth Centre	Grace Hill, Tallaght LDTF 01-4664243
Cork FSN Service of Commemoration & Hope	November 8th 2012	SMA Church, Wilton, Cork City	Pat Herlihy, Cork FSN 0857438306
Intercultural training day	November 12th 2012	FSN Office, 16 Talbot Street, Dublin 2	Family Support Network 01-8365168
FSN Annual Work Conference	November 24th 2012	Green Isle Hotel, Newlands Cross, Dublin.	Family Support Network 01-8365168

DO YOU OR SOMEBODY YOU KNOW NEED SUPPORT?

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