



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

## News

### **Decriminalisation Town Hall Event + Public Consultation**

On June 26th this month our policy worker Aoife spoke on a panel with speakers from the London School of Economics, Ana Liffey, Hotpress and the Southern Regional Drug and Alcohol Taskforce on the topic of decriminalising personal possession of drug use. The meeting was convened as a series of public engagements around the issue as the government has established a working group to look at the issue as an action in the current national Drug Strategy. If decriminalisation comes into effect, this would mean that instead of an automatic criminal conviction for possessing drugs for personal use, other options, such as referral to a community drugs worker or treatment centre, would be explored. At our annual work conference in 2015, decriminalisation was the subject of our plenary session where participants on both sides of the debate gave their views. A vote was held and family members in the audience voted overwhelmingly to support the decriminalisation of drugs for personal use. The public consultation on the issue of decriminalisation is available online until **July 13th**, NFSN are advocating that as many family members as possible have their voices heard on this issue, so please search for “**Public Consultation on Personal Possession of Drugs**” online to have your say.

## **Conference on Drug Related Intimidation – North Inner City**

On June 18th our policy worker Aoife spoke at a conference on the issue of Drug Related Intimidation in the North Inner City. The conference was organised by the Project Implementation Board of the Mulvey Report, a report launched in 2017 convened by the former Taoiseach Enda Kenny as a response to drug related crime and death in the North Inner City. NFSN advocated during the completion of this report and since its launch, that funding promised with the Mulvey Report should be prioritised to employ a dedicated worker with a specialist interest in drug related intimidation, family support and community liaison in the community. We know from years of advocacy and working with families in the area that we need meaningful, resourced change, not delays or talking shops, and we used the opportunity of the conference to voice this strongly. During the plenary session of the conference numerous round-tables and speakers from the floor identified the need for a worker also. We will keep you updated on the launch of the report of the conference and what action happens next.

## **Upcoming Training/Events**

### **Young Persons' Support Programme Information Seminar**

We are delighted to announce our speakers for the Young Persons Support Programme Information Seminar, and they will include renowned sportsman Philly McMahon as well as representatives of NFSN, Foroige and CYPSC. The seminar will take place on the **25th of July**, in the **Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Buildings, Green Street, Dublin 7** from **10:30am to 1pm**. Tea, coffee and light refreshments will be provided. This seminar will be an opportunity to learn more about the programme, hear from a variety of speakers, and join a group discussion. To book a place please contact **Conor at [development@fsn.ie](mailto:development@fsn.ie)** or call **01-898-0148**. Full details including agenda available here: <http://www.fsn.ie/news-events/events/young-persons-support-programme-information-seminar-25th-july>

## **Bereavement Support Programme**

The NFSN will be running our second Bereavement Support Programme for 2018, commencing **Thursday, 19th July 2018** at **7pm - 9pm**. This programme will run weekly for 9 weeks and take place in the NFSN offices at **5 Gardiner Row, Dublin 1**.

If you or anybody you know has lost a loved one through substance misuse and would be interested in taking part in this programme please contact the office on **01-898 0148** or email **info@fsn**.

## **International Overdose Awareness Day**

International Overdose Awareness Day occurs annually on **August 31st** and is a date to commemorate those who have died from drug overdose and a day to advocate for the needs of people who are at risk of overdose and their families. The planning stages for this year's International Overdose Awareness Day have already started, we are working with our networks in UISCE, Merchant's Quay, the Simon Community and the HSE to ensure that on the 31st of August this year the event is as impactful, accessible and informative as possible, we will update you as to the national plans for the day closer to the time.

## **Network Highlights**

### **Ballyfermot Star Annual Service of Commemoration and Hope**

Ballyfermot Star are hosting their Annual Service of Commemoration and Hope this Thursday, the 28th of June, at 7:30pm in Our Lady of the Assumption Church, Ballyfermot. This is always a great event and this year promises to be just as good. To RSVP, please contact Kathleen Cronin at **01-623-5643**.

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

This month our Development Officer Conor met with a number of organizations who work with young people in the Cork area, with the aim of rolling out the Young Persons' Support Programme in the area. An informal network was formed, and this will hopefully form the basis of further work in the area. We look forward to working with local organizations to roll out the programme, both in Cork and the rest of Ireland, and we'd love to work with more. If you or your organization are interested in the programme, please contact Conor at **development@fsn.ie** or **01-898-0148** for more information, or if you are interested in hosting an information session in your area.

## **5-Step Method Accreditation**

We would like to congratulate **Mary McEntegart** from **Drogheda**, as well as our own Development Officer **Conor Byrne** who has recently completed their 5-Step accreditation and are both now accredited 5-Step practitioners. We're sure that the skills they have gained will aide them greatly in their work. The next 5-Step Method training session is in **Letterkenny, Donegal**, on the **5th and 6th of July**. 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** 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 23rd of July. You can email us at [development@fsn.ie](mailto:development@fsn.ie) or call 01-898-0148.**

Best,

The NFSN team