

PROJECT TELLS TEENS TO THINK IT OVER
BALLYBEEN Peer Education Project has just launched its *Baby Think It Over* Programme.
The aim is to provide an experience for young adults that stimulates the parenting of a baby and explores the emotional, financial and social consequences of becoming a parent.
The programme, supported by Halifax PLC, is also designed to help young people make informed choices and consider the implications of becoming a teenage parent.
The launch is timely in light of a recent report released by the DHSS which revealed that Northern Ireland has one of the highest rates of teenage pregnancy in Europe.
Three young people from the project experienced first-hand the pressures when they took an infant simulator home for the weekend.
After a couple of sleepless nights, they were more than happy to return them on Monday!

Paymaster General visits Ballybeen Women's Centre

The Paymaster General, Dawn Primarolo MP, met staff and users of Ballybeen Women's Centre in Dundonald last Thursday, as part of a series of visits by Treasury Ministers to discuss the Government's Pre-Budget Report proposals across the UK.

The Centre is the only group to be visited in Northern Ireland, from which the Government can receive feedback on policies.

Ms Primarolo was there to see at first hand the work which has developed there to provide childcare services, support for women and their families, and a peer support project for women.

During an hour meeting with Centre staff, Anne Graham, Community Education Officer, Amanda Marshall, and Training



Paymaster General Dawn Primarolo during her visit to Ballybeen Women's Centre.

Women's centre marks 20th anniversary

For the past decades BWC has committed to the personal, social, health, educational, development of women, young and pre school children and it has been a mission during this time to develop and provide services to women.



Lady Mayhew officially opens Ballybeen Women's Centre, with staff and children present.

Trail blaze for Ballybeen Women

Ballybeen Women's Centre was awarded the Training for Women's Training Award at the Training for Women's Training Awards Ceremony on 10th November. The award is given to local organisations that have achieved excellence in training and education. Highlighting the importance of training and education, the award was presented to the Centre by the Minister for Education, Mr. Michael D. Higgins. The Centre's Director, Mrs. Anne Graham, expressed her pride in the achievement and thanked the staff and volunteers for their dedication. The award is a testament to the Centre's commitment to providing high-quality training and education for women and young people.

Ballybeen Play Group welcomes Minister

East Belfast SureStart

SOUTH EASTERN EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD

HSC Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

Education and Culture Lifelong learning programme LEONARDO DA VINCI

Pfizer

UK Foundation LET'S EVEN THINGS UP

An initiative of Pfizer Ltd



This project is part-financed by the European Union under the Peace II Programme through PROTEUS (NI) Ltd

Department for Social Development www.dsdni.gov.uk

Supported by The National Lottery through the Big Lottery Fund

Education and Culture DG Lifelong Learning Programme

30 years working for a future together co-operationireland

Castlereagh Borough Council



Reconciliation Fund Department of Foreign Affairs

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BALLYBEEN WOMEN'S CENTRE

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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Challenging topics with the Cross Border Women's Collective



visits

Centre visits Ballybeen



Social Development Minister Margaret Ritchie visiting Ballybeen Women's Centre with children.



Hanson hears calls to rejuvenate 'deprived' Ballybeen

Minister for Education, Mr. Michael D. Higgins, has heard calls to rejuvenate 'deprived' Ballybeen. The Minister was speaking at a meeting with local community leaders and residents in Ballybeen. He expressed his commitment to improving the area and creating more opportunities for the people of Ballybeen. The meeting was held at the Ballybeen Women's Centre, which is a key community hub in the area. The Minister listened to the concerns and suggestions of the community and promised to take action to address the issues raised. He emphasized the importance of working together to create a better future for Ballybeen.

Annual Report 08/09

Since first opening its doors 25 years ago Ballybeen Women's Centre (BWC) has been developing and delivering quality services in an area of low and weak community infrastructure. The Centre has developed a service delivery model that enables individuals and families to access a range of services and support in one location. The Centre provides support to other community groups in the area and has been a catalyst for community development and capacity building. The principles and practice of community development underpin all the work of the Centre.

BWC promotes social inclusion by involving the most marginalised and disadvantaged groups in the community in the development and management of programmes to address their needs.

Childcare is at the core of the Women's Centre. The Crèche, Toddler and Preschool facilities provide vital services to families in the community. All 3 facilities continued to operate at full capacity providing 58 childcare places between them. This year the Preschool had a Department of Education Northern Ireland inspection and I am delighted to report that no recommendations in terms of service provision were made by the inspecting team and the preschool staff were commended for their professionalism and commitment.

Providing support to families has increasingly become a major aspect of our work and our partnership with East Belfast Sure Start has enabled us to develop and deliver a range of support services to families with young children.

A very successful family support initiative has been the Friends Together group which was set up last year to provide opportunities for parents of young children to make friends, socialise and learn new skills.

The commitment of funding from the Department for Social Development over the past 2 years has enabled us to continue to deliver much needed services within the community and respond to the changing needs of our target groups.

Providing opportunities for education and training for women within the community remains at the forefront of our work at Ballybeen Women's Centre. With the support of funding from Lloyds TSB Foundation and partnerships with organisations such as Belfast Metropolitan College, FIT N.I., South Eastern Regional college and East Belfast Enterprises we were able to deliver a wide range of courses that covered subjects such as ICT (all levels), enterprise skills, history, essential skills and personal development. This year I am delighted to report that of the 108 women that enrolled onto courses 87% completed and 70% attained a nationally recognised qualification.

This year we have continued to work in partnership with a wide range of organisations and individuals and participate in various networks and working groups.

We were delighted to hear that the Women's Centre's Regional Partnership was successful in their application to the Big Lottery's Live and Learn Programme. This will provide much needed funding to enable Women's Centre's such as our own to deliver innovative education and training for women.

It was another very busy year on the European front with the Centre participating in several EU partnership projects:

The Transfer of Innovation Project: Keys for Women's Economic and Labour Empowerment (KWELE) – now in its second and final year has enabled us to share our model of education and training "Steps to the Future" with organisations from throughout the EU. We were also delighted to host the projects steering group in March.

25 YEARS DEVELOPING AND DELIVERING

1984 Ballybeen Women's Centre first opens its doors to women

1985 Establishment of a Summer Scheme for primary school age children, which was organised and run by volunteers from the Women's Centre. Representatives from Ballybeen Women's Centre join a delegation to Westminster to protest against the Fowler Review (proposed changes in the Welfare System).

1986 2 representatives of the group attend the World Congress of Women in Moscow.

1987 The Women's Group commenced the task of carrying out a Comprehensive survey of the needs of the community in Ballybeen.

1988 Work commenced on a campaign for the establishment of a statutory nursery School in Ballybeen Estate.

1989 The results of the survey 'A Profile of Ballybeen Estate' was published and launched. The Management Committee met with Richard Needham, Secretary of State for the Environment to lobby for an extension of the Belfast Action Team to include Ballybeen. Ballybeen Women's Centre moved into larger premises.

1990 Belfast Action Team (BAT) boundaries were extended to cover a number of outlying estates including Ballybeen through the creation of Outer Belfast Action Team.

Ballybeen Women's Centre in partnership with a range of Voluntary and Statutory agencies organised and hosted a two day Women's Health Fair in the Estate.

Established a Pre-School Playgroup within the Women's Centre.

The Centre was involved in organising the first Community Conference in Ballybeen, the aim of which was to inform people about the BAT Initiative and identify issues of local concern.

Education programme within the Centre broadened to include GCSE and RSA certified courses.

1991 Members of Ballybeen Women's Centre involved in the establishment of Ballybeen Community Bus scheme.

A representative of Ballybeen Women's Centre among a group of eight women from Northern Ireland involved in community development work, invited to meet President Mary Robinson in Aras an Uachtarian, Dublin.

Successful end to the campaign for a nursery school in Ballybeen. It was announced by Minister for Education that finance would be made available through the Making Belfast Work initiative for the school.

Establishment of the Peer Education Project aimed at addressing the health needs of young people in Ballybeen.

1992 Members of BWC met with President Robinson. An objective evaluation of Ballybeen Women's Centre was carried out and the report published and launched in July. *"The Centre is recognised as a model of good practice and expertise of both staff and volunteers are frequently drawn upon, not just by colleagues in the voluntary sector, but also by the statutory agencies"*

BWC along with seven other Women's Centres helped establish the Belfast Women's Training Services.

1993 Ballybeen Women's Centre secured capital funding from Making Belfast Work for the construction of an upper floor extension to existing premises and revenue funding for salaries and running costs until April 1997.

Ballybeen Women's Centre officially recognised as an education outreach centre by the local Further Education College.

Women's Health Course developed, recognised and accredited through the Open College Network. Chairperson of the Women's Centre part of delegation to Washington Conference.

1996 New premises officially opened by Lady Mayhew. Introduction of Highscope into Pre School.

1997 Accreditation at Level II of Groupwork Skills course – Peer Education Project. Accreditation of Pre School by NIPPA. Recipient of Adult Learners Award.

1998 Ballybeen Women's Centre Pre School allocated funded places in SEELB Pre School Expansion Programme.

1999 EHSSB recognise the work of the Peer Education Programme as a Flagship Project in South and East Belfast for the approach it takes in addressing local health issues amongst young people.

Ballybeen Women's Centre recognised as an outreach centre of Dundonald Flexible Learning Unit for ICT training.

Ballybeen Women's Centre's Early Years Services recognised as one of only three Good Practice Networks in Northern Ireland.

2000 Ballybeen Women's Centre chosen for the announcement of EU funding for Northern Ireland by Commissioner Pádraig Flynn – Minister for Employment and Social Affairs.

2001 Official opening of new Pre School premises.

2002 Visit to the Centre by Paymaster General Dawn Primavola.

2003 Commencement of pregnancy and Parenting classes overseen by Community Midwife. Staff visited President Mary McAleese's residence in Dublin.

2004 2 EU Transnational projects started – funded through the Grundtvig Programme. 5 Women receive Millennium Awards. Extension to Pre School completed. Cross border Women's Collective established.

2005 • BWC awarded the Training for Women Network award of Excellence for Peace and Reconciliation. • Alongside other women's centre's successfully lobbied DSD for funding.

2006 • BWC secured funding from DSD for childcare care and management and finance. • BWC participated in UK wide identity project – local women's photographs displayed in exhibition in Brick Lane Art Gallery in London. • Establishment of partnership with East Belfast Sure Start. • Participation in all Ireland Women's Conference - Women In Focus. • Establishment of Young People's Sexual Health Clinic in partnership with Brook N.I. • Peace II Extension funding secured for Education and Training Programme. • BWC gained National Open College Accreditation. • BWC became a Microsoft IT Academy.

2007 • Peer Education Project (PEP) was the Regional Winner for the Nationwide Awards for Voluntary Endeavour. • PEP received funding for 5 years under the Big Lottery Young People's Fund to deliver 'Generation Health'. • Family Support Project "Mums United" commenced. • Margaret Richie, Minister for Social Development, visited the Centre in November. • Pre School achieved 321 Dental Health Scheme Gold Award. • Leonardo Da Vinci EU 'Transfer of Innovation' Programme KWELE commenced. • Lloyds TSB funding for upgrading computer suite. • New computer suite opened.

2008 • Education and Training Programme won the Local Ulster category in the AONTAS 'STAR' Awards for Adult Learning Projects. • PEP – Joint project with FASA and young people – development and production of drugs awareness leaflet. • PEP – Pfizer funding – 1 year young women's health and personal development programme as well. • Women and young people undertook a European Awareness Training Programme – study visit to Brussels and met with Jim Allister MEP. • EU Grundtvig Multilateral Partnership - BASIC Life project commenced.

2009 • BWC received funding from the Big Lottery Live and Learn programme for Education and Training through the WCRP application. • EU Grundtvig Learning Partnership – Dance of the Creative Hands commenced. • EU Young Women in Politics Project commenced.

The Basic Life Project is concerned with developing models of good practice in the field of family learning. In this project we have the opportunity to work with organisations from Portugal, Latvia, Austria, Germany and Romania. We are looking forward to piloting our own Family Learning Project in 2010.

Promoting culture and diversity and creating opportunities for women and young people to come together on a cross border and cross community basis remains an extremely important aspect of our work at the Centre. Thanks to support from Castlereagh Borough Council, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Ireland we were able to further develop our work in this area.

This year a group of young people from the Peer Education Project made links with a youth project in Blanchardstown, Dublin, where the young people met for the first time. The groups are now making plans to work together on a joint project next year.

Women from the Centre continued to participate in the Cross Border Women's Collective – an initiative that brings women from Ballybeen, Ardmonagh and Donegal together to promote mutual respect and an understanding of shared needs and experiences.

This year also saw the introduction of a brand new course that taught women about the World War I and the Battle of the Somme. The course culminated in a visit to northern France to see battle sites and memorials including the Peace Tower at Messines. I think it is fair to say that this was a very memorable and touching experience for all those that participated.

In 1992 the Women's Centre established one of the first Peer Education Projects in Northern Ireland. The project aims to support, educate and empower young people to make positive lifestyle choices through the development and delivery of a range of programmes and services. Last year 98 young people participated in training delivered by peer educators. The project not only delivers programmes within the Centre but also within the local primary and secondary schools and youth clubs.

The Peer Education Project (PEP) is both proactive and progressive and has established itself as a major resource for young people within the community. Our partnership with Brook N.I ensures the delivery of a weekly sexual health clinic for young people which this year saw the introduction of free Chlamydia testing.

As a result of funding secured from the Big Lottery Young People's Fund the PEP has been able to expand its staff team and is now reaching many more young people.

We were delighted this year to receive funding from the Pfizer Foundation to develop and deliver health and personal development programmes both to women and young people.

Women benefited from being able to participate in a very diverse year long health programme that enabled them to gain skills and qualifications in areas such as essential skills, ICT, health and personal development. Young people benefited from participating in drugs training programmes and our peer educators were able to undertake up-skilling and retraining in a range of areas. 20 young people also participated in outdoor pursuits residential that challenged them both physically and emotionally.

Finally, a very special thank you to everyone who has supported Ballybeen Women's Centre over the past 25 years.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those organisations who have believed in the value of our work and through their commitment of funding have enabled the Centre to achieve its many goals and in so doing enriched the lives of many people.

Thank you to the staff team for their ongoing hard work and commitment.

Thank you also to our dedicated and supportive management committee and all our volunteers for the contribution they make to the Centre.