



# Ballymun SFP Parent Support and Development

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# Overview

- History of Parent Support
- **Parent Advocate Worker**
  - Aims and Development
  - Challenges and Benefits
  - Future
- **Parents Graduate Volunteer**
  - Initial Involvement
  - Development of the role
  - Benefits of the role
  - Hopes for the future



# History of Parent Support

- 2008: A number of graduate parents continued to meet, using local secondary school as venue.
- 2009: Ongoing demand from graduate parents
- 2010: Barnardos contracted to implement graduate programme until June 2010. Three parents identified and trained to support graduate group.
- 2011: Ongoing meetings with parents in groups through SFP Team.
- 2012: Parents support worker appointed by BLDTF



# Parents Advocate

## AIMS OF THE ROLE:

1. To complement the ethos and learnings of SFP.
2. Support for parents engaged in SFP and post-programme.

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE ROLE

Funded by the Ballymun Drugs Task Force

1. **Feb-May 2012:** SFP 12 to 16 years programme
2. **March-June 2012:** SFP 6 to 12 years programme
3. Graduate group meetings + individual support

## Support for Parents and Families during SFP

- Providing brief intervention support for families experiencing difficulties during the programme.
- 30 mins to 1 hour session in the home.
- Phone contact with the families.
- Providing catch-up meetings for families who are unable to attend sessions.
- Liaise with the Programme Manager, Site Coordinator and Referral Agencies.

# Graduate Support

- SHORT TERM  
INDIVIDUAL WORK
- PARENTS SUPPORT  
GROUP



# Parents Support Group

## Meeting Structure

1 hour meetings every 6 to 8 weeks consisting of:

1. Formal Session : half hour
2. Informal chat/tea coffee : half hour



# 1. Formal Session



- Revisiting topics from programme
- Looking at other issues relevant to parenting teenagers

## 2. Informal Session

- Allowing parents to catch up with each other.
- Offering parents an opportunity to discuss issues relevant to them.



**CHALLENGES**  
and  
**BENEFITS**

# Catch up Sessions

## Challenges

- Onsite sessions add to the length of the evening for parents
- Home sessions can be less focused
- Children need to remain with parents during catch up session

## Benefits

- Sessions are short : half hour
- Main points of missed session covered
- Ensures continuity of the programme for parents

# One to One work with parents

## Challenges:

- Finding time that parents are available.

## Benefits:

- Offers parents time to discuss issues without taking time out of the programme
- Opportunity to reinforce topics covered
- Support for parents struggling with home practice

# Parents Support Group

## Challenges

- Difficult to find time and location that suits parents
- Child minding issues for some parents
- Mixing parents from different programmes
- Families tune out at Christmas/Summer

## Benefits

- Parents express an interest in attending
- Parents in crisis are inclined to attend
- Parents who attend enjoy the sessions

# Future

- On-going development
- Continuous evaluation
- Ensuring the role stays within the principles and ethos of the Strengthening Families Programme

**PARENT GRADUATE  
VOLUNTEER**



# INITIAL INVOLVEMENT

# DEVELOPMENT OF THE ROLE

- Dec 2011 - Management Committee endorsed involvement of volunteers
- 2012: Attended 2-day training and Garda Vetting
- Floater (February to May 2012)
- Parents session: Observer (Sep – Dec 2012)
- On-going training : Train the Trainer, Fetac Level 6. To be completed by end 2012

# Benefits of the Role

- Viewed the programme from the other side
- Identify with the parents
- Put parents at ease
- Support from BLDTF, Programme Manager, Site Coordinator, Parents Advocate Worker and Facilitators.

# Hopes for the Future

- Volunteer on the programme as a Facilitator
- Establish a route for other parents