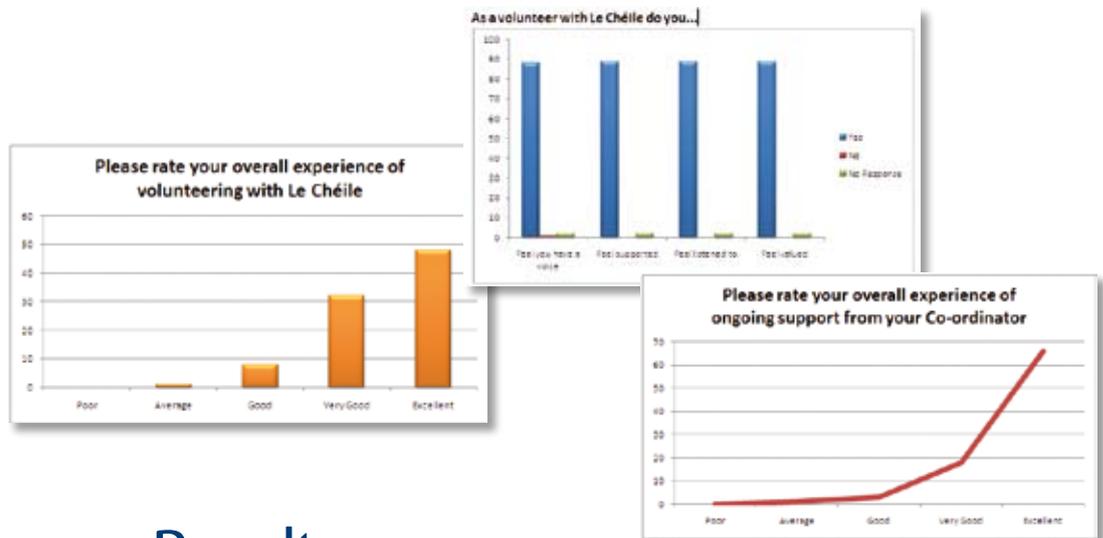


Le Chéile News

SUMMER 2011 VOLUME 1 ISSUE 4



Volunteer Survey Results

Welcome to the latest edition of our newsletter! We've had a busy few months with all regions full of activity with Youth and Parent Mentoring, Strengthening Families Programmes running around the country and the Restorative Justice Initiative busy with projects and trainings around Limerick.

The results are in from our Volunteer Satisfaction Survey and we're pleased to see that volunteers feel happy, supported and recognised in the work they do with Le Chéile. The results were overwhelmingly positive, with 87.9% of respondents rating their overall experience of volunteering with Le Chéile as 'very good' or 'excellent', and 92.3% of respondents rating support from their co-ordinator as 'very good' or 'excellent'. A large majority of volunteers feel that they are supported, listened to, valued, and have a voice in Le Chéile.

Comments from the survey about volunteering with Le Chéile were very much positive, with respondents commenting in particular about the high level of support and training they receive, and the enjoyment they get from volunteering with Le Chéile.

The volunteer survey is an important tool to measure volunteers' welfare and to ensure that we are delivering suitable and effective training, as well as providing ample support to volunteers in their work with young people and their families. The full report will be made available on our website soon. Congratulations to Simon Grimes (Dublin West) who won our Easter Hamper, and thanks to everyone who completed the survey!

Alison O'Reilly

Victim Empathy Programme

We are proud to say that we have two young clients who recently completed the very first Victim Empathy Programme with Project Worker Sarah Butler. The aim of the programme is to encourage and develop empathy in young people who have committed certain crimes and to challenge them to face up to the harm caused.

Sarah designed individual child-centered programmes in order to meet the specific needs of each of the young people. The feedback has been extremely positive and encouraging. The young people that participated say they look forward to meetings and they've learned something new each week.

Some facts from our survey

- 73% of our volunteers work as Youth Mentors.
- 91.2% of volunteers found their training 'very good' or 'excellent'.
- 88% of volunteers find group supervision 'useful' or 'very useful'.

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Introduction to Restorative Practice Training

Le Chéile Restorative Justice Project ran three Introduction to Restorative Practice training days across Limerick. The purpose of the training days was to create awareness and educate community, voluntary and statutory host agencies about reparation and restorative practice in general. There was a great level of attendance with approximately 100 people attending over the 3 days.

In true interagency fashion, Senior Probation Officer John Brosnahan, Juvenile Liaison Officer Don Davis and Probation Officer Séan Murphy facilitated the training in Limerick. The feedback from the training was very positive and we hope to continue to run further training in the coming months. Please contact Mary Henihan on 087 067 8336 or maryh@lecheile.ie if you would like to participate in any upcoming training.

We would like to thank the staff at Céim ar Céim, Southill Youth Support, Southill Youth Base, St. Munchin's Family Resource Centre, and Our Lady of Lourdes' Youth Building CSG for all their help and support with the trainings!

Strengthening Families Programme, Ballincollig



Le Chéile Cork was delighted to be involved in an inter-agency roll-out of the Strengthening Families Programme in Ballincollig, Cork. This programme was funded by both Le Chéile and the Cork Drug Task Force. The programme received referrals from agencies based in Cork city and county. Nine families graduated the programme, of which five are connected with the Justice services. The programme was held in Yeats House, Ballincollig. A presentation on the programme was offered to all Referral Agents prior to the Information Night full understanding of the programme and the role everyone plays in making SPF a success. The programme was a truly inter-agency effort with a wide range of agencies from Cork developing and delivering the programme.

A steering committee (including Le Chéile) was formed to help with the preparation and we were delighted that staff from the following agencies were involved: Ballincollig Garda Diversion Project, Cork Local Drug Task Force, South Lee Social Work Department, North Lee Social Work Department, Le Chéile, Foróige, and Primary Care Social Work team. Adelle Helen, our Cork intern shadowed the parent facilitators for the 15 sessions and created a keepsake for each of the families at graduation.

Special thanks to Deirdre Nagle, our teen facilitator, who baked a tasty chocolate cake for graduation night in her own time. Thanks also to the Kinsale Lions Club whose financial donation helped with the running costs.

The Site Co-ordinators, Rachel and Claire, have already booked in a reunion night for the 6th September and we're looking forward to working with them to make this a success and celebrate the families' achievements. Special thanks to Rachel and Claire for their hard work, both behind the scenes and in front-line delivery in co-ordinating this programme for the fifteen evenings.

Victim Impact Panel

The Le Chéile Restorative Justice Project facilitated its first Victim Impact Panel meeting in April 2011. Co-ordinator Mary Henihan would like to thank An Garda Síochána for supporting the initiative. Superintendent Frank O'Brien and Finbarr Murphy have been a huge support to the project from the beginning.

The victims who participated in the Victim Impact Panel felt that it was a very worthwhile and rewarding experience for them. In participating in this process they now had the opportunity to 'tell their story' and for a young person to listen and see the impact of their behavior on victims of crime. Overall this process has benefited victims, offenders and family members in that they all felt that having an opportunity to share their story and be heard helped them put the past behind them and move on from the experience. One panel member stated that "it was great for me to tell my story and to see how such a bad time in my life could now be used for good."

This was a very empowering meeting for all involved and Le Chéile continues to support the young people, their family and victims who participated on the day.

The second Victim Impact training took place on the 13th and 14th May in Limerick City, please contact Mary Henihan on 087 067 8336 or maryh@lecheile.ie if you would like more information on the process.

Our Volunteers, Their Stories



How did you find out about volunteering with Le Chéile?

I read an advertisement in a local newspaper while sitting in a coffee shop for the pool to open.

How have you found volunteering with Le Chéile?

I really enjoy being part of such a fantastic team of volunteers, and more importantly, working

with young people and collaborating in such fun and meaningful experiences.

Any advice for a newly-matched Mentor?

Be nervous, be real, be yourself. Expect the unexpected; your eyes will be opened. Have fun!

What's the biggest challenge when mentoring?

The first couple of weeks can be a challenge. Getting to know a complete stranger can be daunting, but a relationship builds in small steps.

What's important when mentoring?

Being oneself, openness, fun and healthy relationship boundaries. It is also important to model good behaviour and encourage a Mentee.

What was the high point of your match with your Mentee?

I would have to say watching my Mentee learn to drive and eventually pass his driving test. What a great achievement. Pride is the word that comes to mind.

Peter Maguire, Dublin South

Around the Regions

MIDLANDS

Co-ordinator Helen McCarthy is busy training 13 new volunteers from all around the region. We'd like to welcome our new volunteers. Current volunteers had a chance to refresh their active listening skills with Counsellor Nicola Connery.

Midlands Volunteers are warming up for this year's summer social event which will be held in July. We're repeating last year's soccer tournament as lots of fun was had by all. Guest transfers from other regions are welcome!

Finally a big congratulations to Karen Gallagher, a volunteer with Le Chéile since 2008, who got married in April to Gary Boylan. As our picture shows, Karen looked amazing on the day.

CORK

Cork has been full of activity in 2011! With a high level of referrals to the project, Cork has trained 13 Mentors in June and a further 10 in September. We'd like to give a warm welcome to our new mentors, who completed training on the 28th May. Coming from west, north Cork and the city centre, our trainees come from all walks of life and have a great variety of life experience, ages and skills.

SOUTH EAST

The sunny South-East has busy with activity. Case numbers are growing in our new region of New Ross/Wexford and the volunteers are a great addition to an already committed and enthusiastic bunch of volunteers! There have been lots of activity in the Waterford and South Tipperary, with mentors busy with mentoring and case reviews and supervisions; we've had some time to reminisce on the last four years, and are delighted that many are able to continue to offer their time and energy to Le Chéile.

Looking to the summer, we have a summer event scheduled and plans are afoot for a summer barbeque, on the 25 June. Look out for photos in the next newsletter!

Volunteers will attend a Suicide Awareness Information Day. This is a very sensitive issue but sadly one we are all aware had to be covered when working with a vulnerable client group.

DUBLIN NORTH

Dublin North recruited 10 new volunteers this Easter. We'd like to welcome you all and look forward to working with you!

Other training that was offered to mentors which was Emergency First Aid, run by Safety Ireland, and attending a one day training session on Suicide Awareness and Self Harm with mentors from Dublin South and West. A



difficult topic to cover, the feedback from those who attended was excellent, and we hope to run the course again for our new mentors.

Finally Dublin North, West and South will be holding their annual summer volunteer recognition event with dinner and cruise in La Peniche barge restaurant on 16 July. We hope everyone can attend and that it's an enjoyable and memorable night for everyone!

DUBLIN WEST

It's been all systems going the new region. Dublin West has been busy recruiting and training new volunteers for the region, and hopes to be at full capacity by the end of the year. Co-ordinator Lyndsey McCabe would like to welcome all our new volunteers.

Dublin West joined with Dublin North and West to provide mentors with Emergency First Aid training and one day course in Suicide Awareness and Self Harm.

LIMERICK

The Limerick Region has being busy with volunteers involved in mentoring matches. Volunteers also had the opportunity to partake in Restorative Justice Information training in Spring. Some volunteers have gone onto participate in Victim Impact Panels.

Limerick volunteers will have a training on drugs on the 9 July with a social event planned for around that time!

Congratulations to volunteer Jak Pugh and partner Olivia on the birth of twins Lexi and Ruby in May!



Focus on Dublin South

Marie Vanasova has been the co-ordinator of Dublin South since 2008 since the project was established. Previously, it had formed part of the large Dublin Region. Covering Crumlin, Drimnagh, Clondalkin, Tallaght, Dún Laoghaire and the city centre, the project is very busy and successful in both young person's mentoring and parent mentoring. The project has had a busy 2011, having recruited volunteers early in the year. We'd like to welcome our 10 new volunteers to region and wish them all the best with their volunteering.

Current volunteers have been busy too, with ongoing training. Majella Hickey, Probation Officer for Dublin South area, held a Suicide Intervention training day which was available to all Mentors. The session was really insightful with a mix of role play and group discussion. The topics covered included chemical and non-chemical addictions, the roles within the dysfunctional family, warning signs and issues of trauma, grief and loss. Thanks to Majella for such a successful and interesting training session.

The region has a strong parent mentoring presence with a number of matches running, with two new mentors from Dublin South attending May's parent mentoring training.

Being an urban region can be a mixed blessing – while there's plenty of activities to do in Dublin, it can also mean that there's a lot of distractions when getting a young person engaged in the service! A great strength of the regions is that, being close to the other Dublin regions, there's great working relationships and a chance to share skills, resources and ongoing training opportunities.

Marie is due to go on maternity leave in June and would like to welcome Claire Carroll, who will be taking on the role of project worker and managing the youth mentoring side of the project. Lyndsey McCabe, Dublin West Co-ordinator, will be managing the parent mentoring cases. We wish them both the best of luck and looking forward to welcoming Marie back soon!

Strengthening Families Training - West Cork

Le Chéile and the Probation Service were delighted to provide a set of Strengthening Families Programme Training in the West cork area on the 14th and 15th March 2011 to help support and interagency pilot programme there in September 2011. Carol from Le Chéile and Rosemary Fox, Senior Probation Officer co-facilitated this training to 35 professionals. These professions represented the statutory and non-statutory sector, and came from Bantry, Dunmanway, Skibbereen, Clonakilty and Bandon.

Many organisations came together in providing the training in a true inter-agency effort! The HSE paid for the room rental, Le Chéile

organised the training and the Probation Service released Rosemary Fox (Master Trainer) for the two days.

Professionals based in West Cork hope to access funding from the Drug Task Force to cover the cost of the programme and staffing is to be sourced from a wide mix of agencies in West Cork agreeing to release staff. It is hoped that the Young Persons Probation will be able to refer a number of families to this program. Le Chéile and the Probation have volunteered to help with the organising the pilot programme.



European Year of Volunteering

2011 has been designated the European Year of volunteering both to celebrate the work of volunteers across Europe, and to encourage those who do not currently volunteer, to get involved so they too can make a difference. Co-ordinated in Ireland by Volunteering Ireland, many events, exhibitions, live demonstrations and other activities will be taking place throughout Ireland during the year. Organisations, individuals, schools, colleges and companies are all participating in celebrating volunteering and challenging people to get involved.

At Le Chéile, we're proud to work with volunteers in providing services to young people and their families and we're grateful for your enthusiasm and commitment to the organisation. Visit www.eyv2011.ie for information on events celebrating volunteers nationwide.

Funded by:

Young Persons
PROBATION

Disclaimer: Opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of Le Chéile. We welcome your questions, comments and feedback! Please submit any articles to mary@lecheile.ie. Le Chéile, Tivoli Training Centre, 24 Tivoli Terrace South, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin. Registered Charity No. CHY 17621

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