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Editorial

This is a first edition of the Crosscare Community Adult Education Programme. In other editions, inputs will be given by coordinators on the Network.

While reflecting on the past year, not only supporting but observing the excellent work of those on the Crosscare Network, the overwhelming common theme was that the nature of their work is not valued by state agencies who do not seem to appreciate the significance and meaning of Community Adult Education.

While discussing this 'dilemma' with a Greek friend of mine, she coined the label a 'Social Pedagogy'—that was it—a succinct title that captures both the educational aspect of the work on the ground but also its social impact. By its very nature, a Social Pedagogy incorporates the two dimensions of Education—"To Bring Forth" and to "Skill and make ready for Society"

In practice, it empowers participants to re-engage primarily in a relationship which supports them to rediscover their own abilities to learn and to embark on alternative progression routes that lead to a more enriched life both on the personal and pragmatic arenas. Each of the centres/groups which engage in the Crosscare Community Adult Education Network is completely committed to this genre of education. Apart from the impact on participants, there is a deep commitment to empowerment by developing community role models, to develop leadership, to promote equality and to validate through celebration, the achievements attained with the promotion of active citizenship. But who acknowledges the coordinator, the driving force behind all of the above?

This Bulletin is about these extraordinary women who do extraordinary work and

who are devoted wholeheartedly to their staff, their participants, to the methodology of Community Adult Education and who tirelessly advocate that this genre of education is given its due recognition by receiving a just financial remuneration to enable this work to continue.

The Struggle

There is an annual angst for each of the centres to go in search of funding, funding which arrives too late for their Academic Year. Each year there is additional angst to ensure that there is sufficient funding to employ their staff, who also do Trojan work.

In addition to this scenario, one group struggled to find new premises in order to keep Community Adult Education available in the community it serves. Now, groups who have Community Crèches are struggling with the impact of a new funding structure, which has huge implications for the sustainability of the Community Crèche—a Crèche desperately needed for the parents who avail of its services.

This is a brief backdrop of the struggles encountered by those who attend the Crosscare Network meetings. It is necessary to acknowledge this struggle first so that we can value and celebrate the excellent quality work rolled out on the ground. The following are just some stories of these stalwart coordinators against the backdrop of the non-stop fight for proper recognition of their work.



Some members of the
Network



Lobbying for Community
Adult Education



Bishop Eamon Walsh,
Sr. Louise O'Connell with
participants at the Killinarden
FRC Open Day



The New D8CEC Premises

THE NEW D8CEC (FORMERLY FRANCIS ST)

The former Francis Street Community Education Centre has been in search of premises for the past four years. Courtesy of St. Catherine's Foyer in Marrowbone Lane, the Centre was able to continue to operate its services for the local community. However in the Summer of 2007, the Centre had to vacate St. Catherine's. The coordinator, Marie Mulvihill, searched extensively for new premises, which she eventually found in August. The promise to participants that the Centre would be in operation in September was realised. As the Centre is no longer in Francis Street but James's Street, it is now called D8 Community Education Centre (D8CEC). It is located in one of the premises belonging to the Digital Hub.



Loreto Crumlin Diploma Group

While talking to Marie and I quote "the impact of having beautiful premises for our participants has been incredible. They love being here, our registration has increased by 40% and our attendance at classes has greatly improved. It confirms for me that when those who have experienced disadvantage are given the very best and of the highest quality, they react from the very best of who they are. Our participants have become leaders in their own community.

Personal Development Graduation
with Crosscare Certs

They have progressed from being participants to being part of the volunteering tutoring team. The knock-on effect is other participants are encouraged to engage more fully". Marie is surrounded by two co-workers who have helped carry the burden of continuing the service while the threat of closure hung over them all—namely Rachel Morrissey and Michele Donovan. The centre also has the 'luxury' of a very committed team of tutors together with the aforementioned team of volunteers. This achievement surely deserves CELEBRATION.

LORETO CENTRE CRUMLIN

One of the most important first steps in Community Adult Education is providing participants with Personal Development Courses. These courses facilitate the participants to grow into an awareness of their unique value, their self-worth and empowers them to take control of their lives. In the Loreto Centre, Crumlin, under the guidance and leadership of Sr Anne O'Dwyer and her administrator Ruth Lunnion, their Personal Development courses have led participants not only to further training/employment but also to Third Level in UCD where the women have undertaken courses in Equality Studies. In spite of this marvellous achievement, there is a constant search for funds on a yearly basis to ensure that the quality of these courses are maintained. This is a clear demonstration of the extraordinary work of the coordinator who achieves such quality while struggling to ensure funding provision. Another reason why "Celebration" is so important!

"In order to
change your
relationship
with the world,
first name
it and then
change it"

Paulo Freire "Pedagogy of the Oppressed"

in the image and likeness of God.



Deansrath Personal Development Graduation with Crosscare Certs

DEANSRATH WOMEN'S CENTRE

Sr. Maria Dunne, the coordinator of the above centre, developed the Deansrath Women's Centre when there was nothing to support the women in the area. The centre is now a dynamic centre of personal development and advancement.

As with all the other centres on the Network, the impact on the lives of the women has been extraordinary and it too is a perfect example of the development and empowerment of community leaders. This has been exemplified when Sr. Maria was appointed Provincial for the order of FCJ the women who came up through the Centre have now being able to keep it running so that other women in the locality can also avail of its transformative services.

THE OPEN DOOR PROJECT

The Open Door Project, located in the Mercy Convent on Herbert Road closed its doors in the summer of 2007. The project provided English lessons, IT classes, an on-site crèche, an information service and a Support & Integration service to 90 refugee, asylum seeking and immigrant women. The service was well attended and had a long waiting list of women waiting to avail of the much needed help. The Sisters of Mercy decision to close the service devastated staff, volunteers and clients. The Project staff, guided by Project Coordinator Aoibheann Barnes and the Support & Integration Coordinator, Sinead Moloney, worked tirelessly to find replacement support services for their clients. This wasn't always possible due to the severe lack of alternative services supporting this client group.



The last Graduation Day of the Open Door Project 2007

Many clients attending the Project had experienced violence, war and the loss of family members. The Open Door Project provided them with support and hope in a welcoming, caring environment. The decision to close the centre was devastating. However, huge efforts were made by staff to reduce the trauma for clients impacted by the closure to provide a place to 'grieve' their loss and link with alternative service providers for the future. Through the work of the Open Door Project, many clients gained skills and confidence with some attending further education or gainful employment. A very special Graduation Day was held in June where all efforts were made

to help clients look forward positively taking good memories of their time at the Open Door Project. This was also a very difficult time for those working on the project who cared deeply for their clients and who also had to look for alternative employment.

I am happy to announce that Aoibheann has since become a new mother to a beautiful baby boy (Thomas) and Sinead Moloney, is now the Coord. of the Recreational Activities Programme in St. Patrick's Hospital. Well done to all those who both struggled and celebrated.



DICP and Matthias Weber and Tobias Loitsch from Zittau

M.A.I.N (MEN ALONE IN NO MANSLAND)

When one speaks of 'Equality' it implies 'inclusion.' In this regard the Crosscare Community Education Programme has been playing a supportive role with Pat Gates from Dublin Inner City Partnership in assisting M.A.I.N. to become established as an entity which addresses the needs of men living in isolation and social exclusion. M.A.I.N has a two-way mechanism. One is outreach as demonstrated by providing a Big Breakfast and the other Personal Development Courses. As with the women, these courses are a unique way to breakdown the walls of isolation and to engage in relationships founded on trust and mutual support. The members of M.A.I.N. are: Joe Murdiff, Richard McDermott, J.P. Trainer, Dave Barry and Aengus O Riain.

A TRIBUTE TO ANNA DANGERFIELD

For the past four years Anna Dangerfield has been Head of the Community Adult Education Programme. She has worked endlessly to support coordinators through mentoring, training provision, and promotion of their work to ensure that Community Adult Education remains within the radar of funding providers and government Departments such as Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.



Her belief, passion and boundless energy ensured that the Crosscare Programme developed into what it is today. However, behind all of this, was Anna's profound compassion for those struggling with the injustice of disadvantage that truly made Anna a formidable advocate and deeply committed to ensuring that the needs of those she served were not only 'heard' but 'responded to' appropriately and with immediacy.

Anna resigned in December 2006 to continue with her other passion – educational psychological assessments – a further demonstration of Anna's commitment to education and depth of compassion. It goes without saying that Anna's resignation was received with sadness and great gratitude for her extraordinary work and wonderful commitment to those in her charge.



'Ladies who do lunch' Network Day in May 2007

THE CROSSCARE COMMUNITY EDUCATION NETWORK

Given the wonderful work outlined in this first Bulletin, one may ask what is the function of the Crosscare Community Education Network (CCEN)? Unlike other Networks, the CCEN takes a three-prong approach to its members:

1. Personal Support
2. Peer Support
3. Professional Support

1. Personal Support

The disadvantaged encountered by participants is mirrored back to their coordinators. It is therefore the function of the CCEN to affirm the coordinator and to validate her work by providing a "sacred space" where she as a person can receive the nurturing necessary to sustain her in her work.

2. Peer Support

By listening to the experience of her peers, and their approaches to similar problems, encourages her to think laterally, to gather new ideas and to intra-network with other coordinators.

3. Professional Support

This in itself has a three-prong approach also:

To provide relevant information that impacts on their work.
To provide additional training
To liaise with funding providers on behalf of the coordinators so that their difficulties are highlighted to key personnel.

In this Bulletin, I have highlighted only samples of the type of work generated by groups on the Network. I wish to congratulate you all for your unwavering commitment to those you serve and for your deep rooted principles of Equality, Quality, Justice and Empowerment. I look forward to receiving your articles for the 2nd Bulletin from the CCEN.

Marie Keegan



Crosscare is the social care agency of the Catholic Archdiocese of Dublin. It draws its inspiration from the example and teachings of Jesus Christ.

We believe that every person is created in the image and likeness of God. This places responsibility on us to work to the highest possible standards while treating every person who uses our services and who works for or with us with the utmost respect, courtesy and love.

The Crosscare Community Adult Education Programme reflects the principles of the organisation by advocating the value and quality of community adult education which promotes Empowerment, Equality, Leadership and Celebration in order that we are Acting Justly, Loving Tenderly and walking Humbly with our God.

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