

Pavee Point Travellers' Centre

Annual Report 2011

to the Family Support Agency



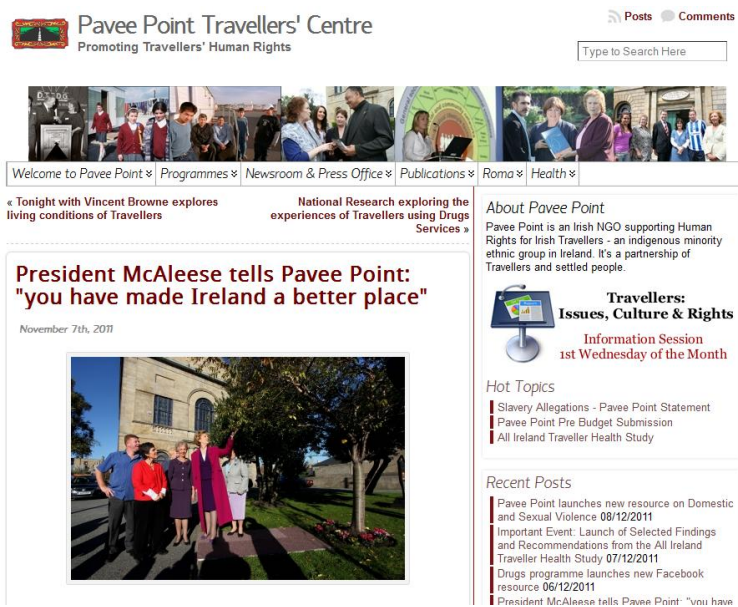
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Role and Work of Pavee Point as a Specialist Support Agency

The overall aim of Pavee Point's work as a Specialist Support agency is the appropriate inclusion of Travellers and the Traveller agenda in the focus and work of the Family Support Agency, the Family Resource Centres and other societal initiatives. This work is carried out with the application of a community development approach. Our role has taken on a number of objectives in achieving equality and rights for Travellers in Ireland and abroad.



Pavee Point's work has always been based on developing national strategies to support the emergence and development of Traveller groups and to clearly place the link between national policy development and local and regional implementation of those policies.

From the national approach to our work we have developed specific initiatives and strategies which address the needs of Traveller men, women and children, promoting the inclusion of Traveller families in the community; assessing and promoting

the needs of older Travellers; addressing the emergence of a drugs crisis within the community and appropriate responses; addressing the issue of Violence against women, exploring the issue of relationship & sexual education within the Traveller Community, sexuality and the attitudes of the community towards LGBT Travellers, responding to the growing incidence of suicide among the Traveller community; responding to Traveller education needs, both formal and informal; responding to the needs of the Roma community in Ireland; promoting a community development approach to health issues; and the challenge of trying to maintain a functioning mediation service without resources.

In 2011, we stepped up our direct engagement with FRCs, and endeavoured to provide expertise, guidance and advice to FRCs as they engaged with the Traveller community in the course of their work. Secondly, we worked to promote the creation of relationships between local Traveller organisations and local FRCs and to encourage an understanding of synergies and opportunities to work together between the two.

During this period we continued with a concerted focus on working with the media. We prioritised this because of the significant negative publicity for Travellers engendered by the broadcast of popular television programming and negative media coverage, particularly from the UK. The communications challenge in 2011 was undoubtedly exacerbated by shows like 'The Truth about Travellers', 'My Big Fat Gypsy Wedding', and 'The Most Dangerous Men in Britain'. We worked to respond to negative media and provide talented and eloquent Travellers to put the case for anti-discrimination.

2011 also saw the introduction of significant cuts and in some places complete withdrawal of supports for Traveller education. We believe this has had and will continue to have serious implications for progress and attainment levels for Travellers in the formal education system. We believe that these funding cuts will consign another generation of Travellers to poverty and exclusion. Throughout the year, Pavee Point made representations to policy makers and ministers to reverse the cuts, which have the potential to increase the strain on the community and the family.

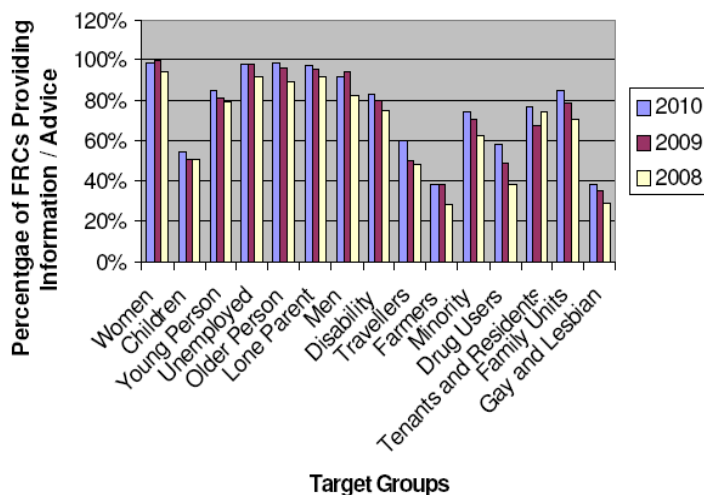
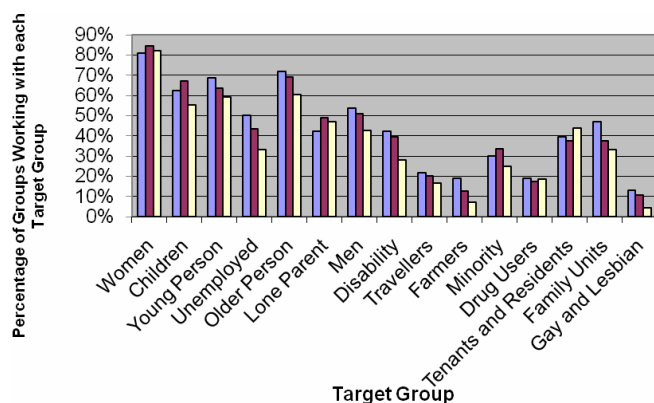
Along with challenges, there were opportunities and recognition of the work of Pavee Point. We were delighted to welcome the civil and human rights activist Rev Jesse Jackson to Pavee Point in the spring, and we were honoured with the visit of President Mary McAleese during her valedictory tour in November.

Analysis of SPEAK data for 2010

The SPEAK Data for 2010 is somewhat encouraging, and discloses a marked increase in Traveller group participation with FRCs. The data show that Travellers' groups are among the least engaged by community organisations in general, but that the engagement has grown encouragingly.

Most significantly, engagement by FRCs with Traveller organisations grew more than with any other group in 2010; we are absolutely confident that data for 2011 will show a significant increase in engagement, and we look forward to consolidating and improving on this in the future.

Importantly, the SPEAK data continues to show a lack of Traveller representation on the voluntary boards of management within FRCs – this is an issue which we sought to address in this year's engagement with staff and boards.



Support and develop the capacity of FRCs to work with Travellers and local Traveller organisations in partnership.

Increasing engagement through 2011

Pavee Point increased direct engagement with FRCs throughout 2011. Staff from Pavee Point visited and met with FRCs who had identified a need to address their work with Travellers. The purpose of

these visits was to further develop contact with the FRCs and to identify ways in which we could support them in relation to Traveller inclusion in their centres. FRCs were visited in Sligo, Cavan, Kilkenny and several FRCs in Dublin. We have already advanced plans to work with these groups in 2012, to engage in joint work around Traveller men's issues and issues impacting older Travellers.

Pavee Point participated in an event for International Women's Day organised by Hill St. FRC in March 2011, as part of our efforts to begin a programme of systematic engagement with FRCs throughout the year. We met with them in December 2010 in order to plan for further work in 2011.

FRCs diversity conference September

The five Specialist Support Agencies organised a one day conference for FRCs entitled "Diversity – The strength of your community?" The conference was organised for 21 September at The Gresham Hotel, Dublin. A number of planning meetings were attended during the year and Martin Collins, Co Director Pavee Point spoke at the conference on the role and work of Pavee Point as a SSA.

A workshop entitled 'Good Practice Guidelines for Traveller Inclusion in Family Resources Centres' was facilitated by Pavee Point. This workshop, which aimed to give practical information to FRCs on engagement with Travellers and to stimulate and sustain discussion on the concerns and issues FRCs have was well attended and all participants found it beneficial.

Training on Traveller Cultural Awareness, Anti-Racism and Traveller Inclusion

Two training sessions were delivered to Fr. McGrath FRC, Kilkenny. Both sessions were on Cultural awareness and anti-racism and Traveller inclusion. The first training was provided to staff from the FRC who were engaged in youth work and wanted to ensure that Traveller youth were included in their services and that their services were culturally appropriate. The second session was aimed at early child care workers, over the years Pavee Point have gained extensive experience in early childhood and interculturalism and this expertise was used during the training. Some young Traveller children were already using the crèche facilities of the FRC and the centre was working to provide a service on site. Approximately 30 staff attended the two sessions.

Training for staff and Board of Management on Traveller inclusion, anti-racism.

After direct engagement to plan training with both St. Kevin's FRC, Tallaght and Killinarden FRC, the two centres came together for joint training sessions. Training was provided to staff and Board of Management members of both FRCs. Once again the first session was on Anti-racism and Traveller Inclusion. The second session was on 'Guidelines for best practise in the Inclusion of Travellers' and was based on the constantly evolving Traveller proofing toolkit. Approx 20 people attended each session. The training, based on the Traveller proofing toolkit proved to be well received and knowledge gained will be used by both FRCs. Following on from this training it was agreed to simplify the toolkit and add more case studies. It was gratifying to note that both FRCs have indicated an intention and willingness to return to Pavee Point for training early in 2012.

Addressing violence against women

Pavee Point's Violence Against Women programme aims to 'develop a Traveller analysis of violence against women that will inform the development of culturally appropriate responses for Traveller women and influence government policy'. Women from every ethnic, cultural and socio-economic background can and do experience domestic and sexual violence. However Traveller, Roma and other ethnic minority women face additional factors, such as poverty, discrimination and social marginalisation which may place them at higher risk.

Although both mainstream and gender-based violence services are working to become more inclusive, barriers to equal access and outcome still exist for Travellers. The booklet produced in 2011 'Good Practice Guidelines: For Services Working with Traveller Women Experiencing Domestic Abuse' aims to address those barriers by highlighting key issues that Traveller women face and making a series of recommendations for service providers to ensure that their provision is culturally appropriate and meets the needs of Traveller women. Recommendations include providing a Traveller-friendly environment, Traveller proofing policies and procedures and the introduction of an ethnic identifier.

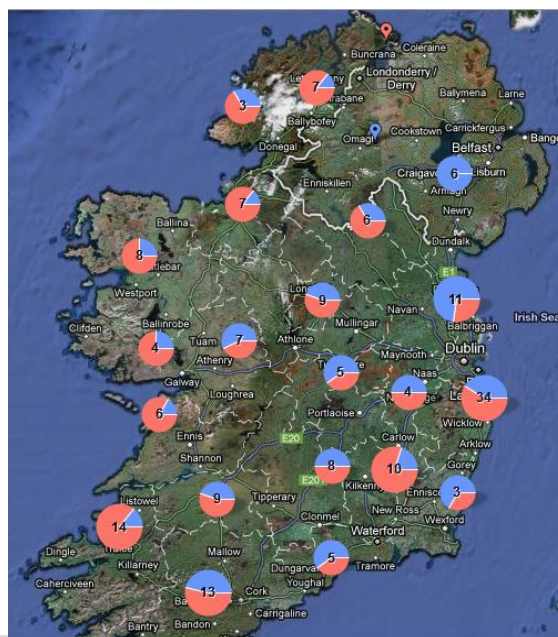
The DVD - 'Travellers and Roma Speak Out on Domestic and Sexual Violence' is targeted at Traveller representative organisations and service providers. It aims to increase awareness of domestic and sexual violence as gender-based crimes and provide key information on helplines and support services available; highlights how discrimination, poverty and social marginalisation affects Traveller and Roma women when they are seeking support in dealing with a violent relationship and identifies key barriers to accessing services and provides a number of recommendations for Traveller organisations and services to further address these issues.

The DVD is to be used as part of facilitated training sessions and so is accompanied with a booklet providing guidance to trainers and facilitators for workshop content. It is designed to be suitable for use in a FRC environment, and will be advertised directly to FRCs and supplied at no cost to FRCs who request it.

Mapping of FRC and PHC Projects

Pavee Point began to host interactive maps of FRCs and Traveller organisations in its dedicated FRC website section in January 2011. These have been through a number of iterations since.

In mid 2011, Pavee Point developed and published online a series of maps for the use of FRCs, Traveller organisations and Primary Health Care for Travellers Projects (PHCTPs) around Ireland to identify the most proximate centres and programmes. The mapping shows significant disparities in provision of Family Resource Centres and PHCTPs across the country, and particularly uncovers some areas where it may be



advantageous for PHCTPs to work closer with Family Resource Centres to support their work.

Mapping exercises of this sort are useful to provide a spatial awareness of the provision of services – it is significantly more useful than a list of names and addresses, which show the spatial relationship between services. In addition, it provides an FRC with the opportunity to contact a PHC directly through an interaction with the Pavee Point dedicated FRC Website Section.

Inform, facilitate and resource work on issues impacting on the Traveller Family at the local and national level.

The Traveller Family

In 2011, Pavee Point significantly revised its profile of the Traveller Family. This document, designed primarily for the use of Family Resource Centres, details some of the key characteristics of Traveller family life, attitudes and outlook, and is developed on the basis of analysis of official statistics, academic research and discussions within the Traveller community. It paints a broad brush picture of general Traveller attitudes and beliefs.

The 2011 edition was finalised in October and contains more detail on Traveller drug use, divorce and the demographic distribution of Travellers. It draws heavily on information from the All Ireland Traveller Health Study 2010. It is envisaged that a 2012 edition will be published earlier than normal in 2012, to take account of headline information from Census 2011, due for publication in March 2012.

Relationships and Sexual Education: Position Paper

Pavee Point has been concerned for many years about the lack of knowledge among young Travellers about sex education. Most young people get their information about sexual relationships and sex education from school or parents. In Pavee Point we recognise that many Traveller parents do not feel equipped to discuss these issues with their children. Traditionally it has been a taboo subject among Travellers, although this is changing significantly. The fact that the majority of young Travellers are early school leavers also means that they do not have the opportunity of informing themselves in the formal education system.

The research report represents the first time Traveller attitudes to relationships and sexual education has been documented and published as a discreet report. It provides baseline information on attitudes and knowledge among Travellers and the findings have been used to inform the development of specific and targeted training modules for young Travellers and service providers.

The training modules and position paper will be of benefit to FRCs especially those working with Traveller youth. The paper will be launched in early 2012, and all FRCs can expect an invitation to attend the launch and avail of the training.

Travellers and Positive Ageing



As part of the *Bealtaine* Festival, and following on from the publication in 2009/2010 of the research report "Pavee Beoirs and Glokes" we organised an event to celebrate the contribution of older Travellers to the Traveller community and wider society. The event was opened by the Minister for Older People Kathleen Lynch TD and was attended by representatives from FRCs and the FSA.

Pat Bennett, CEO of the Family Support Agency launched the position paper 'Traveller and Positive Ageing' at this event. Through our work funded by the Family Support Agency on the Traveller family, we have tried to develop our work with older Travellers and focus on their specific needs and concerns. This position paper is part of this work. We believe that local Family Resource Centres throughout Ireland are well placed to include the needs of older Travellers in their work and will be supported by us. There are four specific recommendations in the paper, which was distributed through the Pavee Point Travellers' Centre eBulletin and website. One of these is:

Organisations representing older people and Traveller representative organisations should work together to ensure older Travellers are included in the work of mainstream organisations representing older people.

As a direct result of this event links are being established with FRCs working with older people and it is hoped to organise joint meetings in 2012.

Information systems and communication

The Pavee Point Website has grown enormously as a resource in 2011. The objective of the website vis-à-vis the Family Resource Centre programme is to ensure that information on the full spectrum of Traveller issues is available both in the main site and in the dedicated FRC Website Section, which is accessible with one click from the home page.

The FRC section of the site is updated with every significant piece of news targeted at FRCs, and a digest of stories is targeted discretely at FRCs streamed from the main site as and when necessary. The FRC section was significantly updated this year, and among other items now contains:

- Profile of the Traveller Family
- Mapping of FRCs (covered in an earlier section)
- Mapping of FRCs and Primary Health Care for Traveller Projects.
- Mapping of FRCs and Traveller Community Development Programmes, either as part of partnerships or free-standing LCDP programmes

FRCs are invited to subscribe as many staff members as they wish to the monthly Pavee Point eBulletin service – in any case, all FRCs are subscribed to the FRC e-bulletins, which includes the general eBulletin and targeted communications.

There have been ten eBulletins in the reporting period sent to FRCs, covering all aspects of Pavee Point's work, issues for Travellers, media challenges and opportunities.

To provide up to date, relevant information on substance mis-use in the Traveller community to the FSA to fall in line with the FRC Programme.

The Pavee Point Drugs Programme operates to establish and share best practice and information on the misuse of drugs within the Traveller community. The programme's material is distributed within the Pavee Point e.Bulletins and within the Pavee Point website. In addition, the programme prepares its own material on the issues with which it deals.

The programme prepared four Traveller specific e.Bulletins highlighting the issue of substance misuse within the Traveller community, which was sent to all family resource centres.

The programme runs quarterly seminars on specific drug misuse issues, to which FRCs are invited. At the request of our members, specific issues were addressed as part of our quarterly Traveller Drug Network seminars this year –

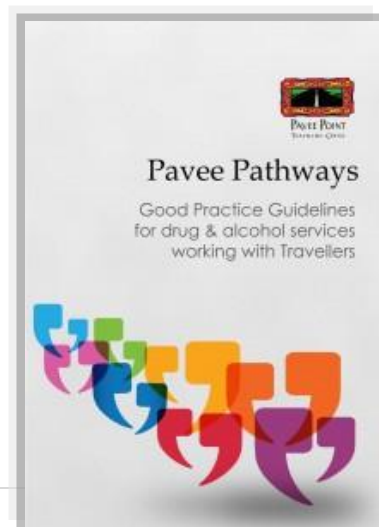
1. Risk & Protective factors for substance mis-use amongst young people – Drug related intimidation
2. Impact sexuality can have on substance mis-use levels
3. The use of benzodiazepines within the Traveller community
4. Drug use amongst young Travellers

While there were no presentations from FRCs this year, FRCs were invited to attend and network at the seminars, and it was clear that representatives from some family support groups, hosted within FRCs, did attend events.

An article highlighting the work of a local Family Resource Centre was disseminated to all Traveller organisations in the last quarter drugs programme e-bulletin. This eBulletin has a distribution list of over 700.

Pavee Pathways

A major research programme, detailing the profile of Travellers accessing drug and alcohol services, culminated in 'Pavee Pathways'- a set of Good Practice Guidelines for drug & alcohol services working with members of the Traveller community, forming of links with the Traveller Peer Support Worker, access to online media and social networks. The document was launched at the National Drugs Conference of Ireland in



October 2011, and announced through the Pavee Point website and an eBulletin to all FRCs.

As part of planning for activity in 2012, an additional needs assessment was conducted by the Drugs Programme. FRCs were contacted in late 2011 for their responses, which are awaited at the time of writing. A needs assessment report is due to be collated and published in early January 2012, at which point it will be sent to FRCs for comment and observations. The needs assessment will inform the development of future training programmes on Traveller misuse of drugs, with which FRCs will be proactively encouraged to engage.

The development of a Traveller peer support worker within the Pavee Point Drugs Programme, whose services have been advertised to Traveller organisations and FRCs, marks a new development in the ability of the programme to project support to FRCs. Where an FRC identifies a drug misusing Traveller who might be prepared to access therapy or support, but who has concerns about what that entails, the Traveller peer support worker can be engaged to meet and discuss the process with the person in question. This can help address some of the concerns that prevent many Travellers from availing of the supports available to them, and we believe will increase the number of successful interventions for Travellers misusing drugs.

To promote community participation in Community Health Forums and Primary Care Teams (PCTS)

Pavee Point developed and produced a document "Guidelines for Best Practice for Traveller Inclusion in Primary Care Teams". This document is available on our website. A position paper on Primary Care Teams has been produced and will be launched in early 2012. During 2012 we plan to work with the FSA on promoting community participation in health arenas, including work with Primary Care teams.

As part of our mapping exercise we will be including the location of PCTs in relation to FRCs, for similar reasons as outlined in other mapping.

Conclusion and outlook for 2012

2011 was a challenging year with a significant increase in engagement with FRCs on training and support. Figures from SPEAK 2010 tend to validate our view that engagement between FRCs and the Traveller community is growing, albeit from a low initial level. It is our objective to enhance this engagement and collaboration significantly, to ensure Travellers are able to access and benefit from the good work of the FRCs and to support the FRC mission to support the Traveller community. One challenge of the year was financial constraints experienced across almost all sectors, but we feel that our approach to the provision of more information and direct requests to offer support to FRCs has brought benefits to the community, to organisations working with Travellers and to the mission of the FRCs themselves.

2012 threatens to be a more challenging year yet, with significant financial strain, cutbacks to services and a reduction in service levels to Travellers. It is in times like these that family breakups increase, people turn to drugs, and the other threats posed by poverty are at their most stark. Perhaps now more than ever, Travellers and Traveller organisations will have need of the services to community cohesion offered by the Family Resource Centres Programme – perhaps now more than ever, the FRC programme will be of assistance to Travellers.

Emerging Issues for 2012

- Funding and cuts to services
 - Double whammy impact of general public service cuts and Traveller specific supports
- Traveller recognition as an ethnic group – and policy changes as a result
- Pressing need for an updated National Traveller Health Strategy which takes account of the findings of the All Ireland Traveller Health Study

The plans we have for 2012 will strike at the heart of issues affecting Traveller family life. We aim to tackle the enormous problem of suicide, which accounts for more than 1 in 10 Traveller deaths. We aim to tackle the stigma in the community relating to sexuality and relationships which can result in family disintegration and breakup, tackling some of the causes of Traveller ill-health which emerge from risk-taking behaviour and diet, and tackling, despite a profound lack of resources, the issue of conflict between and inside Traveller families.

2012 is set to be the year for intergenerational solidarity – our past efforts in engaging young and older Travellers will stand us in good stead for the year ahead, and we hope to engage effectively in events for the year, and in seeking to address our work to the spirit of the year.

The problems which face the Traveller community today perhaps now more than ever align themselves with the objectives of the Family Support Agency and the Family Resource Centres programme. We hope that in 2012 we can engage together with those objectives and realise more positive outcomes for the Traveller family.

Appendix 1:

Presentation "Good Practice Guidelines for Inclusion of Travellers in Family Resource Centres"

Appendix 2:

Training on Traveller Cultural Awareness, Anti-Racism and Traveller Inclusion

Appendix 3:

Violence Against Women Position Paper and DVD

Appendix 4:

Profile of the Traveller Family October 2011 Edition

Appendix 5:

Travellers and Positive Ageing Position Paper

Appendix 6

Pavee Pathways Drugs Research