

Tallaght Drugs Task Force

Annual Review 2010



Welcome to the first edition of the TDTF newsletter!

Tallaght Drugs Task Force's First newsletter!

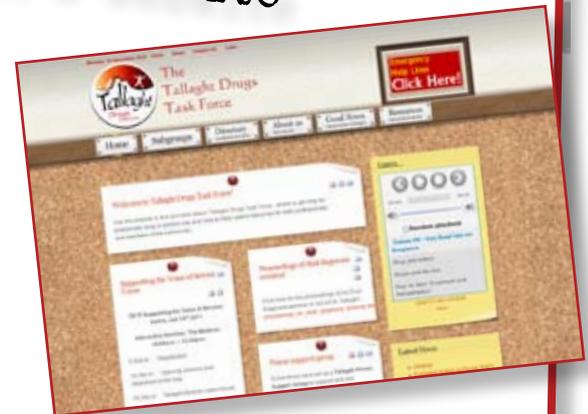
In this edition of the Tallaght Drugs Task Force (TDTF) newsletter, we highlight the achievements of Task Force projects in 2010. The newsletter covers new and expanding services for drug users in treatment and recovery and for family members affected by others' substance misuse. It describes actions to enhance co-operation and understanding between services, and it highlights research that the Task Force has commissioned to ensure that the decisions it makes are well informed and evidence-based. TDTF has always regarded education and training as essential to improve service response to drug users and to help those in recovery to lead fulfilling and productive lives. Some exciting opportunities are described in the pages ahead.

In 2008, TDTF published a 5 year strategic plan which presented 23 actions to improve service response and partnership working between projects. Three themes were adopted to drive the actions forward:

- Co-ordination**
- Consolidation**
- Capacity Building**

These themes cut across all National Drugs Strategy pillars and they underpin TDTF's new and existing activities.

www.tallaghtdtf.ie - TDTF's website



TDTF's website grows from strength to strength. Check it out (www.tallaghtdtf.ie) for up to date information on drug-related events and activities in Tallaght. The Directory of Services is expanding each month. The website is for you whether you are a service user, service provider or member of the Tallaght community.

Please keep sending us your good news stories and information on events and projects so that we can post them onto the website. Contact Grace Hill (TDTF): 01 466 4243 or email: grace.hill@tallpart.com



Some members of TDTF at the launch of their Strategic Plan 2008 - 2013 (Nov 2008)



The then Minister with responsibility for Drugs, John Curran with Grace Hill, Coordinator TDTF

Service users

The Tallaght Service Users Forum started in 2005, with three goals:

- 1: to be the be an effective strategic and professional committee/forum
- 2: to engage, inform and hear the voices of service users
- 3: to support the partnership of service users and service providers to enhance service design and delivery.

2010 has seen 6 new or expanded supports for drug users in treatment and recovery in the Tallaght area:

1 The **Service Users Forum (SUF)** is growing. A SUF representative sits on the Task Force board, the Treatment and Rehabilitation subgroup and the Health Promotion subgroup to ensure that the voices of drug users in Tallaght are heard by policy makers. For more information, contact Gráinne O'Kane (TDTF): 01 466 4235.

2 TDTF will host a **"Building a Service User Voice" Interactive Workshop** on January 14th in the Maldron Hotel. Contact Gráinne O' Kane (TDTF): 01 466 4235.

3 JADD have set up a new **Cocaine Anonymous (CA)** meeting on Thursdays 7.30-8.30pm. The meeting is open to all drug users aiming for recovery.

4 TDTF supports the **Community Wellness Project** at St Dominics Community Response Project which has been open for 3 months. It's a drop in service on Monday evenings, 5.30 to 9pm. Anyone can come for one-to-one support and auricular acupuncture. It's already popular with 16 to 21 people attending each week.

5 St Dominics and TDTF have also set up a **Tallaght Prison Support Group** to support and link individuals to services on release from prison; this is seen as crucial to break the cycle of repeat offending. The group runs on Friday evenings, 5-7pm. It is open to all males over the age of 18 and it is not restricted to those experiencing addiction. The service provides links to key agencies (eg housing) and offers needs assessment, advocacy, referral and one-to-one support.

6 The **Education Bursary Fund** awarded 32 grants in 2010, an increase of 9 from the previous year. Recipients took a wide range of courses including counselling/psychotherapy, addiction counselling, horticulture, BA in social care, BA in psychology, beauty therapy, play therapy and art & design.

Mullan Consulting evaluated the Fund for the years 2005-2009. They found that 96% of recipients completed their course or were on schedule for completion and 91% reported that their course *"totally met their needs"*. Sixty one percent have progressed to other forms of training and 70% are currently working or volunteering in drug-related organisations in the Tallaght area. Mullan concluded that the education bursary fund has *"contributed to the education and training of a significant number of local people who are now involved in service provision within the Task Force's catchment area"*.

Mullan's evaluation is posted on the TDTF website (www.tallaghtdtf.ie).

Family Support

TDTF has long recognised that drug and alcohol misuse can severely damage families. In 2010, many family support initiatives were set up or expanded to help those affected by another's drug or alcohol misuse. Here are just some of them:

TDTF, in conjunction with JADD, developed a support group for men in 2010. **MATES: Men Advancing Through Education and Support** currently meet every Thursday evening in Kilnamanagh Community Centre. For more information or to make a referral to the group contact Grace Hill (TDTF): 01 466 4243 or Tony Condren (JADD): 01 459 7756.

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In October, the Family Support Network and Irish Fostering Association, with support from TDTF, ran a **Guardianship Information Session**. The need for this was identified at the TDTF's Family Support subgroup who have been looking at the "granny" issue and related issues for carers for the past number of years.

This was organised by TDTF in conjunction with the Family Support Network and the HSE Social Work Department. The information morning was led by Megan O'Leary (Family Support Network) and Elizabeth Hamilton (HSE Social Work Dept) & her team who spoke about the barriers that carers face and those of other family members who are affected by substance misuse. The morning was well attended by members of the TDTF Family Support subgroup as well as other workers directly involved with family members. The information shared at the workshop proved most useful for all attendees and provided guidance on referral and the complexities of carers' payments.

Throughout 2010, the **WASP Family Support group** have met on Monday evenings, 7.30-9pm in Scoil Mhuire, Whitechurch estate, Ballyboden. The group aims to support family members who are living with addiction; to openly discuss issues of common concern, and to give advice and information. Family members attending this year have found the group very beneficial because they meet others who understand what its like to live with addiction. The group is open to new members anytime. Contact Cathy: 087 964 1588 or by e-mail waspcep@hotmail.com

In March, the **Community Response Drama group** presented "Men at Work" at Whitechurch Youth and Community Centre. The drama was based on the "lived experiences" of fathers whose children were or are addicted to drugs and it explored feelings and emotions from a father's perspective. There was a question and answer session with the cast at the end of each show. Thanks to Fathers of Addicts Support Group; the Family Support Network; Community Response and Ballyboden Family Resource Centre for putting on the show. It was well attended and helped to raise awareness about the impact of drug misuse in the Whitechurch area.



Members of The Ballymun & Gardiner Street Gospel choirs along with music group Emerge, singing at the annual Hope & Remembrance service



Walsh gave great words of comfort and inspiration, particularly focusing on the siblings of drug users. The service was well attended and thoroughly enjoyed by all. Tears were shed but of sadness and laughter in equal measure. Music hugely featured in the service – big thanks to Emerge, The Gardiner Street Gospel Choir and The Ballymun Gospel Choir.

In October 2009, TDTF hosted a half day conference on Drugs and Alcohol, Child Protection and Welfare.

In March, SWAN Family Support Group moved to St Anne's Primary School Fettercairn and Fettercairn Community Centre. TDTF supported Swan and FDRP to deliver Building Capacity in Families with Drug Issues. This was a great opportunity for both projects to work together and the programme was a resounding success, running for 3 separate groups for 10 weeks. Swan also provided a Stress Management programme for a group from Tallaght Travellers CDP. Swan made great friends with families from the Traveller community, one of whom said: "we have shared concerns for our children. We have the same issues in our families, drugs and alcohol. We didn't think you would want to come out with us".



Attendees at the Child Protection & Drugs seminar engaged in group work, held in the plaza hotel, Tallaght.

Anna Lee (Dodder Valley Partnership) opened the conference by emphasising the HSE and Task Force's renewed commitment to family support which recognises the many issues that arise in families where one or both parents are problematic drug users. She described the conference as a crucial opportunity for all participants to learn from one another, identify key issues, and explore effective ways to work with children and families in the area.

JADD has continued its great work for children of clients attending JADD's drug treatment services. A pre-school opened in September with a qualified Montessori teacher. JADD, in partnership, with the Fettercairn Youth Horse Project and Dublin Bus Community Support Programme, took part in a horse riding project for 10 weeks at the Fettercairn Centre. Eight children took part in the project and were taught horse riding, animal husbandry/welfare and stable management. Each child has benefited in many ways but the most obvious benefit has been the growth of self confidence and self esteem.



It became evident during the conference that Tallaght services work collectively and with commitment to bring positive change to their clients' lives. Anna Lee,

concluded the morning by saying that "services in Tallaght care about their clients".

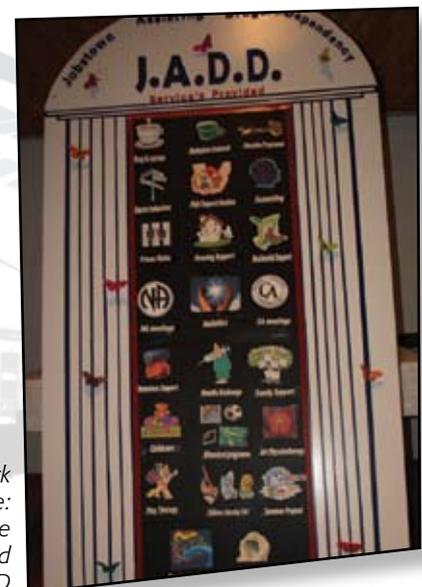
JADD, in partnership, with the Family Support Network Group, has piloted a Sibling Support Group for young people of families affected by substance misuse. It has been a great success and it is envisaged that other Sibling Support Groups will be modelled on JADD'S.

At the end of the conference, participants were asked what they would do differently to promote interagency working. Most of the responses emphasised networking, establishing contact with other services and adopting better individual and collective communication skills.

Contact: Gráinne O' Kane (TDTF): 01 466 4235.

JADD's other family services that have grown during the year are the crèche, after school homework club, Saturday Club, swimming lessons, summer Project, play therapy and art therapy, and the hosting of The Strengthening Families Programme.

This year, Tallaght's Hope and Remembrance Service was hosted by JADD in St Thomas' Church, Jobstown. The theme was CHAINS (Children, Hope, Awareness, Inspire, Nurture, Siblings) which reflects all that JADD represents and lobbies on behalf of. Father Val Martin welcomed everyone. Minister Pat Carey TD with responsibility for the National Drugs Strategy was the distinguished guest and speaker, and Grace Hill (TDTF) acted as master of ceremonies. Bishop Eamonn



JADD's signature artwork piece for the H&R service: signifying the wide range of services available behind the door of JADD

Preventing Drug Misuse & Dealing

In 2010, TDTF approached prevention of drug misuse from several different angles.

In May, the **Tallaght Dial to Stop Drug Dealing** was re-launched and in October, Grace Hill (TDTF) spoke at the national media campaign launch. She said:

We know from the success we experienced after the first launch of the campaign in 2008 that Dial to Stop Drug Dealing can yield information of great significance to the Gardaí and we want to repeat that success for the Tallaght area. Additionally, it became apparent over the last few years that the physical presence of neighbourhood advertising posters created energy and instilled confidence among local residents. *"We are again asking people to pick up the phone today and pass on whatever information they might have on drug dealing activity in their area. Dial to Stop Drug Dealing today by phoning 1800 220 220".*

The Tallaght campaign has received over 550 calls since 2008 which have led to over 200 reports of drug dealing in Tallaght.

Dial to Stop Drug Dealing is an initiative to tackle drug dealing in local communities. It provides a safe, confidential and completely anonymous way for individuals to pass on information on drug dealing in their local community. The individual is never asked for their name, their address or any other information which might identify them. They can rest assured that the person answering their call will not know them and will not recognise their voice. The information gathered is passed on directly to An Garda Síochána. For more information contact Grace Hill: 01 466 4243 or email: grace.hill@tallpart.com

Also in 2010, the **TDTF Traveller Focus Group** provided drug misuse support for Traveller communities in Tallaght and Whitechurch. The group first met in June to begin identifying the needs of substance misusers in Traveller communities. The group have since made links with Pavee Point and will actively participate in their drug network in 2011.

Preventing juvenile drug-related crime was the main theme of the **European Action on Drugs** (EAD)'s annual event, which took place in Brussels in June. (<http://ec.europa.eu/ead/html/index.jsp>) Grace Hill (TDTF) attended along with 100 other participants from all over Europe. The conference brought together personalities from the worlds of sports and entertainment to share their experience on drugs. An important moment of the event was the presentation of Alessandro "While", an Italian rap singer and anti-drugs campaigner who wrote a song "Libero di vivere" especially for the event. The video clip was shown at the event and is available at www.youtube.com

Headshops became a growing concern in 2010 and TDTF delivered 3 actions to prevent the harm that "legal highs" can cause. In February, JADD hosted an information morning on headshops with invited speakers Dr Des Corrigan (Chair of NACD), Tony Duffin (Anna Liffey project) and Philip James (nurse at YODA). Shortly after, Gráinne O'Kane (TDTF) hosted



an **information session with Dr Bobby Smyth**, Consultant Psychiatrist, Tallaght Addiction Services in response to a request for more information from a wide number of service providers.

In March, Tommy Gilson (JADD); Grace Hill (TDTF), and Sgt. Goretti Sherridan (Drug Squad, Tallaght Garda) attended a **national conference on headshops** in Mullingar which was attended by 340 people. See the website www.drugs.ie which provides links to Dr Des Corrigan's talk on substances sold in headshops and Dr Bobby Smyth's talk on the effect of legal highs.

'Legal or illegal highs can cause serious health problems - they're anything but safe'

In July 2010 the HSE unveiled a new national campaign on the dangers of legal and illegal drugs. The campaign, which was launched by the Minister for Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs; Pat Carey, T.D. entitled 'Legal or illegal highs - they're anything but safe'. The campaign is seeking to raise awareness of the dangers and significant negative mental and physical health effects that can be caused by these psychoactive substances.

Along with recent legislation introduced by the Government prohibiting the sale or supply of psychoactive substances, this public awareness campaign forms an important part of tackling what has become a serious public health issue.

The campaign features a number of important messages which illustrate the ill-effects that can be caused by these substances. Legal or illegal highs can cause paranoia; impotence; kidney failure; heart problems; seizures, death or make you act like a fool - they're anything but safe. These messages will feature on radio ads, in cinemas, washrooms in bars and clubs and at festivals over the summer.

The website www.drugs.ie has been updated to include new information in relation to the campaign and legal and illegal highs guardians. The HSE Drugs Helpline on 1800 459 459 is also available to support the campaign.

HSE's campaign

Published in the Echo Newspaper March 2010





Enhancing inter-agency service co-operation and co-ordination

TDTF worked hard last year to further develop its strategic theme of co-ordination between services.

TDTF are facilitating the design and development of the **SPEAK database** which has been established between JADD, St Dominics and Tallaght Rehabilitation Project (TRP) to encourage information sharing and to support the planning, monitoring and cohesiveness of rehabilitation services in Tallaght.

TDTF convened a conference with the **Dual Diagnosis Network** on October 20th 2010 in the Maldron Hotel. The conference aimed to create dialogue between practitioners to build effective working relationships; share learning about the challenges of working with dual diagnosis, and identify gaps and recognise opportunities to improve service provision.

140 people from a wide range of statutory and community services attended. Speakers included Richard Lakeman Dublin City University; Martin Rogan Assistant National Director Mental Health; Dr. Bobby Smyth Consultant Psychiatrist Tallaght Addiction Services; Dr. Peter Whitty Consultant Psychiatrist Tallaght Adult Mental Health Services; Des Caprani HSE Outreach; Lisa Glassett Tallaght Probation Project, and Simon Monds Tallaght Housing Advice Unit.

There was a call for improved co-ordination and collaboration between services. It was agreed that mental health and addiction issues should be treated at the same time which requires effective inter-agency links, shared learning and information sharing agreements.

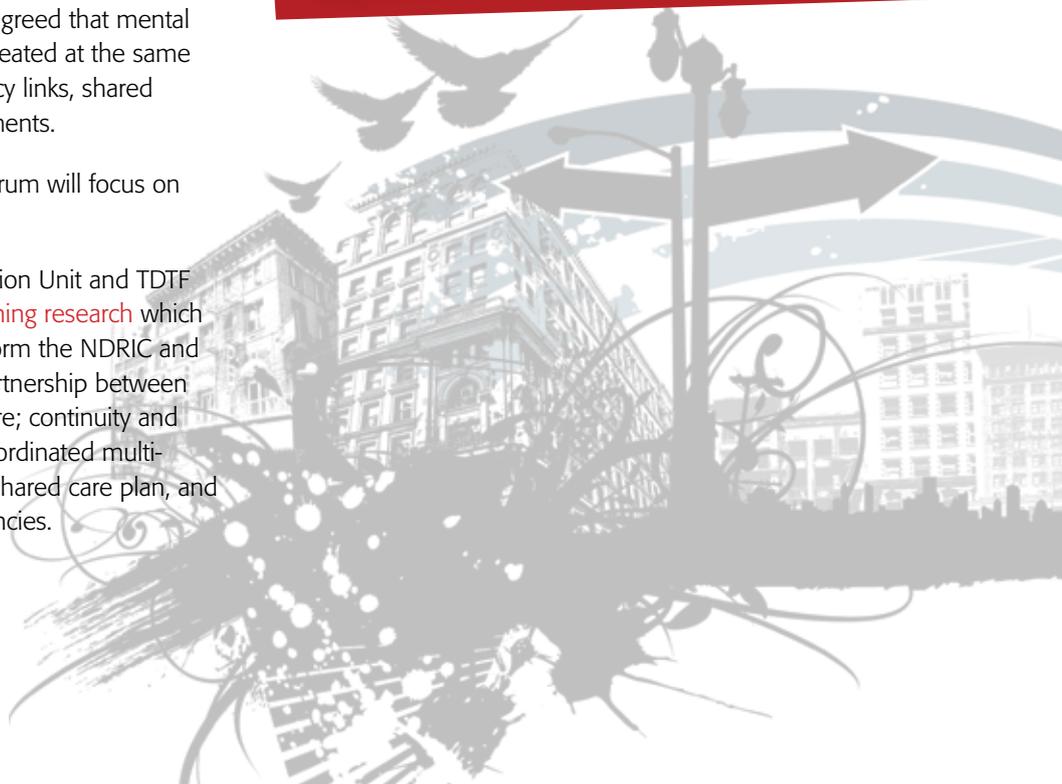
The day was a great success and the Forum will focus on building collaboration in the future.

Julian Pugh from the HSE's Social Inclusion Unit and TDTF have been involved in **shared care planning research** which will be submitted as a framework to inform the NDRIC and HSE. The goals are to establish joint partnership between services; planned delivery of through care; continuity and integration of rehabilitation services; co-ordinated multi-disciplinary working; use of a common shared care plan, and improved communication between agencies.

Harm reduction and rehabilitation were the themes explored at the National Drugs Conference of Ireland, attended by Gráinne O'Kane (TDTF). For further information and copies of the presentations, see www.inef.ie.

In October 2010, the GP Coordinator for the South Western Area, Dr Margaret Bourke, delivered a **public presentation on HSE addiction services** in Tallaght from their inception to present day, including client numbers, profile and future challenges. For further information and presentation details, contact Gráinne O Kane: 01 466 4235.

"...build effective working relationships; share learning about the challenges of working with dual diagnosis, and identify gaps and recognise opportunities to improve service provision."



Focus on Rehabilitation

In 2010, TRP were at the forefront of enhanced service provision for people recovering from addiction. One of TRP's most successful tools was a **residential weekend** in An Tobar, Co Meath for 10 TRP participants. There was a 6 week comprehensive therapeutic module of preparation for people wanting to do the residential. The theme of the weekend was "Life stories". It aimed to provide a safe, secure environment to enable participants to work on in-depth, personal issues and to address sensitive emotions that may have underpinned their addiction problems. The residential was very successful: 3 participants attained drug free status and 5 people embarked on significant decreases in their prescribed medications.

TRP also produced a **key working competency framework** for TRP to outline the core skills and work involved in best practise key working in rehabilitation services.

TRP have also delivered a **successful aftercare service throughout 2010. To date, 56 people have availed of this service.**

The TDTF Treatment and Rehabilitation sub group identified pre entry routes to residential rehabilitation services as a gap in services in Tallaght. In response, TDTF and St Dominic's Community Response Project have established a **Pre Entry Support and Advice Group** for people from Tallaght looking to access detox and residential treatment. St Dominics are collaborating with Coolmine Therapeutic Community to provide 12 clients at any one time with weekly planning, advice and one-to-one support. The group is for those who are motivated to remain drug free. It leads to referral to residential rehabilitation or day/community rehabilitation services; further stabilisation on medication regimes and/or opportunities for detoxification within a community or residential setting.

Also, in 2010, TDTF contracted Howarth Bastow Charleton consultants to conduct a **Feasibility study** to examine if a residential rehabilitation service should be established in Tallaght. They concluded that a residential service would only be effective as part of an integrated treatment structure supported by all those working in the drug treatment sector. They observed that, currently, the medical profession remain opposed to detoxification and abstinence programmes.



Participants and staff of TRP trail while on their residential weekend.



TRP staff members, Carla Gunnery and Jamie Byrne take a break for a pic on the TRP residential

They made 5 recommendations, as follows:

- ▶ A comprehensive needs assessment should be undertaken
- ▶ The current service structure should be reviewed with a view to streamlining, improving communication and establishing care pathways and comprehensive care management
- ▶ There should be co-ordination with services outside Tallaght to explore the potential for establishing residential services aimed at more than one area
- ▶ Expanded aftercare services are required for existing service users who have completed residential treatment
- ▶ Drug free service users should be supported while they are waiting for residential treatment

Capacity Building - Education and Training

In 2010, TDTF continued its strategic theme of capacity building by supporting several developments in education and training which enabled service users to obtain accredited qualifications and for service providers to undertake continuous professional development:

The **Strengthening Families Programme (SFP)** is a 14 week evidence based programme with demonstrable outcomes for families, including improved communication skills, reduced conflict and hostility, increased attachment between family members and more consistent and effective parent discipline. Due to the partnership approach between Tallaght Youth Service, JADD & Barnardos, it has been hugely successful. It is currently running at JADD as an inter-agency initiative between Tallaght Youth Service, Barnardos and Young People's Probation Southside.

In September, 2010, training was provided at Tallaght Youth Service to enable staff and volunteers working in Tallaght to refer families to SFP; offer support to families participating in SFP and to facilitate SFP sessions. Many staff members give their time voluntarily to facilitate the programme.

If you would like further information call Suzanne or Trish at Tallaght Drug Education Initiative (TDEI): 01 463 2070.

Training was provided throughout the year for workers in various TDTF projects, board members of TDTF and related subgroups. Places were made available to the wider community wherever possible.

Training opportunities for service providers in 2010

Fire Safety - EMS Fire Safety and First Aid Training Co.

HSE - Child Protection & Welfare

First Aid - EMS

Self care & Supervision - HSE

Facilitation - Meitheal

Sexual awareness - *Belong To*

Putting the Pieces together, Drug and Alcohol Training - West Regional Drugs Task Force

Suicide Prevention - Pieta House

The **Community Addiction Studies Course** is currently running at the Institute of Technology Tallaght in partnership with Urrus, Ballymun. In 2010, it was awarded FETAC Level 5 accreditation which comes as a great boost to all who work hard to qualify. Approximately 25 people start the course each September and about 20 complete the course the following April. The course is run on Wednesday nights from 6.30 to 9.30 pm. The course covers a wide range of addiction issues and how addiction affects people, families and communities. About 300 people have successfully completed the course and many have gone on to greater things.

Since 2008, **An Cosán** has supported students studying for the UCD Diploma in Community Drugs Work. In 2010, the course was awarded Level 7 NUI status which offers students the opportunity to progress towards a Level 8 degree from NUI. An Cosán submitted an evaluation to the Task Force in 2010 which shows the diploma brings many beneficial outcomes with increasing numbers of students achieving degrees, going on to further training and taking up employment.

The diploma has been in huge demand for the current academic programme (2010-2012) with twice the number applying. The course is attractive because of its accredited status and the range of personal development supports offered to students.

TDEI ran a summer programme in 2010, one of the highlights of which was **Future FM**. The youth groups who took part in Future FM had previously completed drug prevention programmes. Participating young people identified life issues which were used as themes in various broadcasts. Future FM empowered young people to express opinions, raise questions and be a positive influence on their peers. It engaged young people not currently involved in drug prevention through provision of radio broadcasting as a summer programme. (These programmes were rolled out in Jobstown, Killinarden, Springfield and Oldbawn). In addition to drugs information, Future FM encouraged healthy lifestyles and promoted alternatives to drug use. 120 young people participated and developed new technical and life skills. Some

interviews are available on podcast, check out the TDTF website: www.tallaghtdtf.ie.

Future FM means that Tallaght has a model for youth radio. This will enable TDEI and Tallaght Peer Drug Education to reach a broader target group across all communities in Tallaght. Future FM will be part of ongoing targeted and universal work in relation to the needs of young people.



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Diploma in Community Drug Work 2010 graduates receive their diplomas in UCD.



Students working away on assignments in An Cosán.

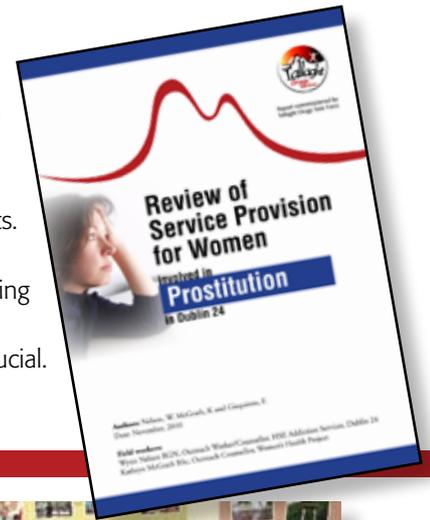


Ashley Dawson, participant 2008 - 2010 diploma course, received a student of the year award from An Cosán: presented by Mayor of South Dublin County at the graduation in June

Research

The long awaited Review of Women Involved in Prostitution in Dublin 24 was published in late 2010. Funded by TDTF, researched by Wynn Nelson RGN, Outreach Worker/Counsellor, HSE Addiction Services, Dublin 24 and Kathryn McGrath BSc, Outreach Counsellor, Women's Health Project, and compiled by Dr Fran Giaquinto, the report provided evidence of 106 women involved in the sex industry from or in the Dublin 24 area, 52 of whom were drug users. The authors concluded that a local, confidential, "safe" place for women is urgently required

where vulnerable women can have access to sexual health services, information, advice, counselling and other supports. Prevention work, including education and awareness-raising in schools and among service providers was also seen as crucial.



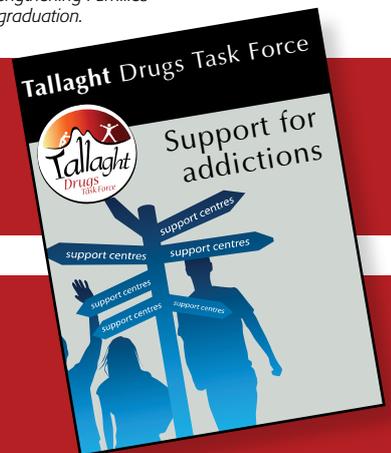
Group photo at the European Action on Drugs first annual event, June 25th 2010: Grace Hill TDTF Coordinator was in attendance representing Ireland on the invitation of the EAD.



Staff & volunteers at the Strengthening Families Programme 2010 graduation.



Support for Addictions
For printed copies of these pocket sized 10 page listings, please contact: Grace Hill Coordinator ph. 01 466 4243 or by email grace.hill@tallpart.com.



Final note from Anna Lee, Chairperson of Tallaght Drugs Task Force

Tallaght Drugs Task Force wishes to sincerely thank all our members, colleagues & funders who supported us and made our 2010 work plan possible. We look forward to working with you all again in 2011, which looks like another challenging year! I would like to take this opportunity to particularly acknowledge the work and commitment of our community representative of 13 years, Alice Murray, who is standing down as a Task Force member at the end of 2010.

We hope you all had a safe and happy Christmas, and wish you success and happiness in 2011.



Tallaght Drugs Task Force
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For further detailed information on TDTF and related services are available at www.tallaghtdtf.ie

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