



ANNUAL REPORT

2011-2012



To improve the quality of life for women through education and personal development, supporting women to make choices for the future.

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Chairperson's Report

My second year in office has seen the continued development of the Centre which is in itself remarkable given the grim economic situation the World is currently in and the impact that this has had on Government funding to organisations such as ourselves.

As an organisation we strive never to lose sight of our ethos of *"improving the quality of life for women through education and personal development"* and to this end FSWC undertook a major review of our strategic aims and objectives.

Our Strategic Aims for the future are:

- To provide a holistic service responsive to the individual needs of women.
- To provide a high quality childcare service to support service users and to improve the educational and social development of children.
- To maintain a welcoming, safe and accessible centre.
- To maintain an effective and robust organisation.
- To ensure financial sustainability.
- To develop an innovative 'can do' culture.

A ground breaking bespoke research project was undertaken to examine the impact and potential benefits experienced by women who had participated in the "Women Towards Greater Education and Employment" programme (2008 – 2011). This unique study has provided insight into the results and outcomes of Project within FSWC, revealing perceptions, practice, processes and effectiveness. The experience and information contained within the research has generated recommendations and suggestions to assist FSWC improve their project and service provision in the current ESF programme.

I would like to acknowledge the continued support of our main funders including the Department for Social Development, the Department for Employment and Learning, the European Social Fund, Lloyd's/TSB Foundation Northern Ireland, Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council, Dungannon Surestart, EGSA, Neighbourhood Renewal and the Big Lottery.

Finally to close I would like to offer a sincere thank you to all our staff and volunteers, who by their unfailing duty and commitment to the Centre make this such a welcoming and special place to attend.

Maria Donnelly

Chairperson

Chief Executive Officer's Report

“The education and empowerment of women throughout the World cannot fail to result in a more caring, tolerant, just and peaceful life for all.”

Aung San Suu Kyi, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate,
Leader of Burma's democracy movement

The financial year April 2011 to March 2012 has been another period of fantastic achievements within our Centre, which also represented the start of a new phase of European sponsored funding through Department for Employment and Learning (DEL).

During this year First Steps Women's Centre (FSWC) received over 400 applications. 305 women attended courses in the areas of Information Technology, Health Promotion and Life Skills. The average attendance and retention was 82% and 85% respectively. These are quite remarkable figures and indicate the level of professionalism and commitment from the staff and volunteers at FSWC. In June and July 2011 FSWC staff delivered over 4,000 promotional leaflets throughout the Dungannon area which aimed to inform and attract new users to the Centre and by September 2011 over 60% of the women attending were first time participants.

Attendance in our childcare during the year averaged 70%. The total number of children registered throughout the year was 114.

A range of new courses have been introduced during this period, including Money Management, Holistic Therapy and Stress Management. These courses were developed as a result of participant feedback collated by our Course Co-ordinators.

Another exciting development where the highly innovative projects, Time4Life and Health4Life, developed through the local Neighbourhood Renewal Initiative (funded by Department for Social Development). These projects involved women researching health topics through the use of IT as well as discussion groups. Both projects culminated in the design and printing of two Health Booklets. These booklets were developed in conjunction with Patricia Hynds from Tr@inIT. The books were launched in August 2011 with the attendance of representatives from Neighbourhood Renewal Area including local politicians.

Leaver's Survey

A Leaver's Survey was also carried out between October 2011 and June 2012. The purpose of the research was to examine the impact and potential benefits within the

survey group which was drawn from those women who had participated in our 2008-11 DEL Project. The impetus for this research sprang from a number of disparate sources including our own curiosity regarding the success and outcomes (both 'hard' and 'soft') of the first three year DEL Funded Project, and the need to ensure that the subsequent project running from 2011 to 2014 would benefit fully from all the learning and experience gained. Finally we are very aware that the future sustainability of FSWC, in the current economic climate, could be dependent upon "proving our worth" and to do this empirical evidence would be required.

134 completed surveys were returned by November 2011. The overwhelming evidence obtained from the research stated that the need for a Women's Centre and provision of free accredited courses and childcare was essential for women to re-enter education and training.

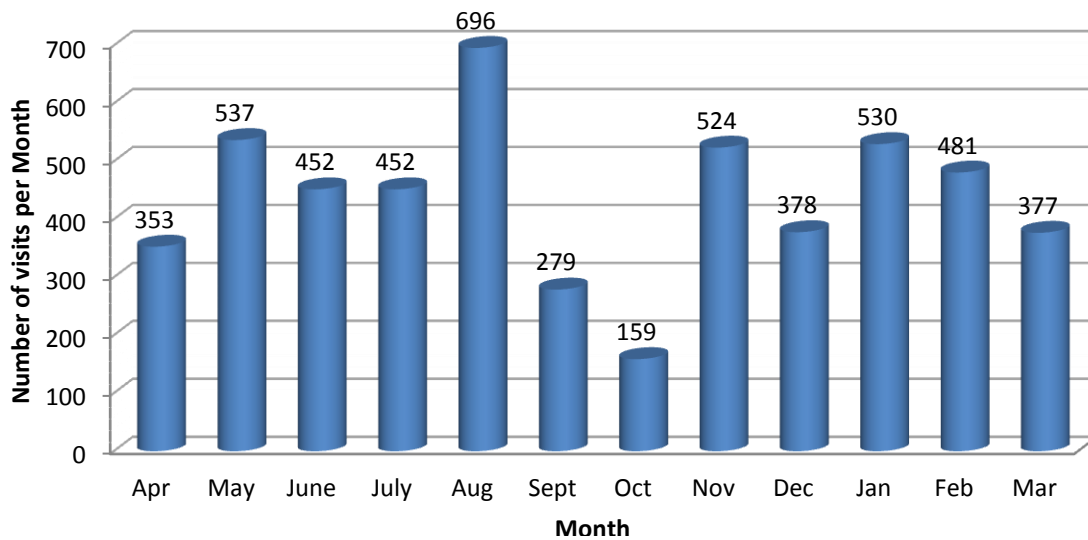
Word Power – For myself one of the most striking products of this research was a listing of all the words cited by participants – a diagram of which adorns the cover of this report! The survey concluded that the descriptors *Growth, Therapeutic, Healing, Opportunities, Heavenly, Excellence, Nurture, Happy, Beautiful* and *Accepting* were the most popular used by the women. This clearly shows that FSWC has a real focus on the well-being of the person as its starting point. This is similar to what Herzberg and Maslow outlined in their theories of motivation. People need to feel at peace and relaxed before they can flourish. It reminds me of the saying "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care". It emphasises how the culture of FSWC is one of caring as well as development.

FSWC was also successful in gaining funding from a number of sources this year including Department for Social Development (DSD) through its Neighbourhood Renewal, Community Infrastructure and Women's Centre Childcare Fund. It also continued to receive funding from Department for Employment & Learning (DEL) and the European Social Fund (ESF).

FSWC, as part of their fundraising activities, held a Coffee Morning in December 2011 and a Bag Pack at Marks and Spencer's in October 2011. Together both raised £1,268.00 for our Centre.

As CEO I am profoundly aware that up to date communication and information is a main ingredient in maintaining an effective organisation. To this end during 2011-2012 FSWC had its website revamped and included a number of professional photographs uploaded onto its homepage. The idea was to convey all of the services and facilities available at FSWC. During this 12 month period FSWC received a total of 5218 visits to the site (see graph). The average visits between January and March 2012 was 462 per month with people looking at five pages on average.

Graph 1: Number of visits per month to Website



Average visits per month – 469

Average pages visited - 5

The Future

It may be clichéd but we do live in uncertain times. The European Union and the World in general seem to be in a continuous economic turmoil. The Lion's share of our programme funding comes from the ESF via DEL. At present there are plans for another round of funding beginning in April 2014. However, no one can say for sure what the criteria will be or indeed if there will definitively be EU funding available. Despite this scenario FSWC remains positive and will continue to plan ahead. We have already begun to plan how we will do things beyond 2014. This will include a greater emphasis on one-to-one work with women. This will include developing a bespoke plan for each woman so that they can improve their chances of getting into employment or further education.

Thanks

I wish to thank the Directors, Staff and Volunteers of First Steps Women's Centre for their continual professionalism and dedication. This is a very special place staffed by very special people who continue to go above and beyond the call of duty each and every day. I would like to thank every single one of them from the bottom of my heart for giving life to this wonderful organisation.

Michael McGoldrick

Chief Executive Officer

Life Skills

Training

Befriender Training:

Patricia Quinn, volunteer, has assisted in designing a training package for Befriending. This training was piloted with a group of volunteers on 7th June 2012. The plan is to use volunteer befrienders to engage with learners for whom personal barriers are negatively impacting on their course attendance/retention. The volunteers can offer informal support and practical help. It is hoped to get the Mentoring/Befriending Network to deliver further training to staff and volunteers in the autumn which will give FSWC quality recognition.

Turn2 Us: (Benefit checker & Individual Grant Search)

Two members of staff and two volunteers completed training in Newry and a further 3 volunteers will complete the same training in the near future. A computer has been installed in the Centre with internet access for centre users to check their benefit entitlements. Pete Maguire is co-ordinating this and has also completed Benefit Checker, Individual Grant Search and Advice NI training in Benefits and Taxation.

Future Projects

The following funding applications have been completed:

1. Santander Foundation Money Management Advisor and training (£9410) (Will hear at the early July).
2. Money Saving Expert Charity for a project called MoneySmart, 2 Money Management Training Courses and 1-1 guidance (£5000) will hear early July.
3. Pfizer Foundation – Joint project with Dungannon Sure Start – Health project for East Timorese Women – (£13,500).
4. Comic Relief Money Management programme for older women (65+) (£24,000).

During the past year 13 courses were co-ordinated. The following table outlines the average attendance and retention percentages and also the qualifications gained by participants who attended the courses.

Class	Number	Retention %	Attendance %	Qualifications Achieved	Awaiting Results
ESOL (5 groups)	80	77%	80%	22 at Entry 1 44 at Entry 2 (Some Dual qualifications - Speaking & Reading/Writing)	23 Entry 3
Essential Skills Maths (2 groups)	18	62%	80%	11	
Essential Skills English (2 groups)	18	54%	70%	8	
Money Management (2 groups)	19	75%	79%	N/A	
Minding Me	9	100%	83%	N/A	
Substance Misuse	5	100%	100%	5	
TOTAL:	140	78%	82%	90	

Table 1: Statistics for Life Skills courses 2011 – 2012

Joan McCool

Life Skills Coordinator

Health Promotion

This year has been an increasingly successful year for the Health Promotion courses. The outcomes for the project this year have greatly exceeded the targets set by funders, as can be seen from the table below.

Table 2: Health promotion Statistics

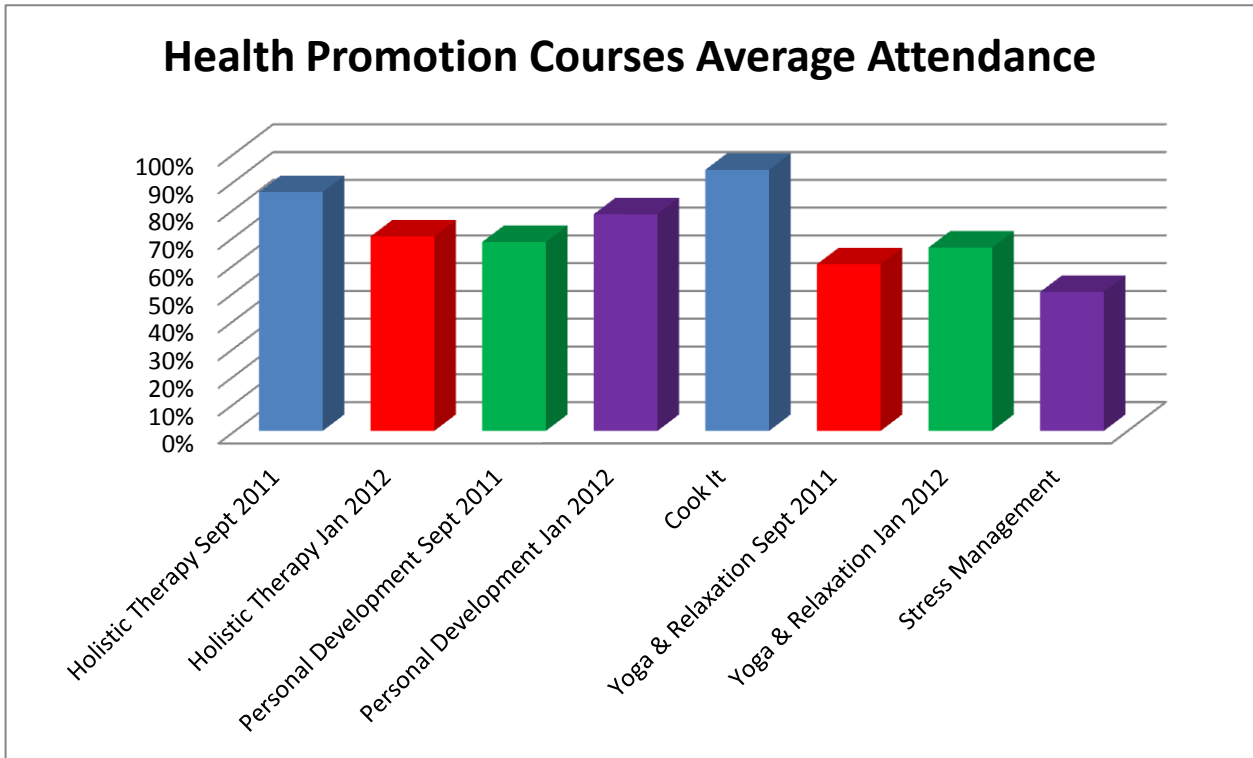
	Targets set by funders	Actual numbers achieved
Number of participants	100	127
Number of participants with Physical Health problems	a minimum of 25 new women in addition to 25 women who progress on to additional health promotion courses	91 (59 of whom were new to the Health Promotion project)
Number of participants with Mental Health problems	a minimum of 25 new women in addition to 25 women who progress on to additional health promotion courses.	36 – (24 of whom were new to the Health Promotion project)

Course Attendance

The table and graph below highlight the average attendance for the Health Promotion courses co-ordinated between September 2011 to March 2012.

Table 3: Average Attendance

Average Attendance	
Holistic Therapy September 2011	86%
Holistic Therapy January 2012	70%
Personal Development September 2011	68%
Personal Development January 2012	78%
Cook It	94%
Yoga & Relaxation September 2011	60%
Yoga & Relaxation January 2012	66%
Stress Management	50%



Graph 2: Average Attendance

Volunteering

An added value to the Health Promotion Project has been volunteers working to deliver Programmes. Our recent Cook it, Weigh to Health, Walking group and the Health Information sessions have been delivered by volunteers, making a total of 37 volunteer hours this quarter (that is just delivery hours not preparation).

Course Provision

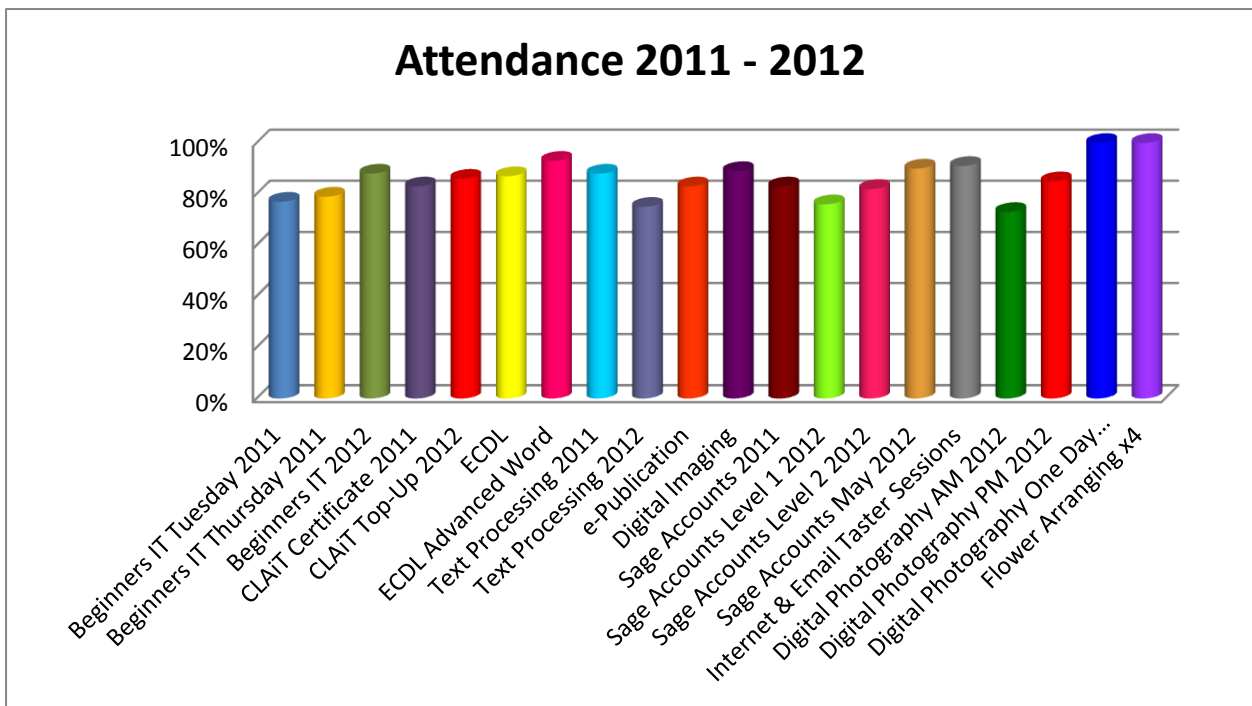
Recruitment has begun for the Autumn Health Promotion courses which will be:

- Introduction to Holistic Therapies
- Personal Development
- Yoga and Relaxation
- Minding Me
- Weigh to Health – commencing November 2012

Information Technology & Recreational Courses

Introduction

In the academic year commencing in September 2011 - 24 Information Technology and ancillary courses (see Table 4) have been co-ordinated and run by First Steps Women's Centre. These courses provided accredited and non-accredited training for 264 women in a variety of subjects ranging from ECDL to Internet & Email Taster Sessions. Courses varied in length from 2 weeks to 24 weeks in length. Attendance and retention rates continued to be very high this year, ranging from 73% to 100% (see graph below). The overall average attendance rate for 2011-2012 was 85%.



Graph 3: Average Attendance

IT & Ancillary Courses 2011-2012		
Course Title	Attendance Rate	Pass Rate
Beginners IT Tuesday 2011	77%	100%
Beginners IT Thursday 2011	79%	100%
Beginners IT 2012	88%	100%
CLAiT Certificate 2011	83%	100%
CLAiT Top-Up 2012	86%	100%
ECDL	87%	Awaiting Results
ECDL Advanced Word	93%	Awaiting Results
Text Processing 2011	88%	100%
Text Processing 2012	75%	100%
e-Publication	83%	100%
Digital Imaging	89%	100%
Sage Accounts 2011	83%	100%
Sage Accounts Level 1 2012	76%	100%
Sage Accounts Level 2 2012	82%	100%
Sage Accounts May 2012	90%	Awaiting Results
Internet & Email Taster Sessions	91%	Non Accredited
Digital Photography AM 2012	73%	Non Accredited
Digital Photography PM 2012	85%	Non Accredited
Digital Photography One Day Workshop	100%	Non Accredited
Flower Arranging x4	100%	Non Accredited

Table 4: Attendance & Pass Rates for IT Courses

Course Feedback & Evaluation

Formative and summative comprehensive evaluation was carried out for each course and overall feedback was extremely positive.

Service Provider Evaluation was also conducted during this academic year. Feedback from our tutors suggests they are extremely happy with all aspects of the provision and support they receive from First Steps Women's Centre.

Notable results from our participant feedback included:

- 100% of respondents said that they would recommend courses to others.
- 100% of respondents said that they were given adequate support throughout the course from the Centre and course co-ordinator.
- 95% of respondents rated each element of every course in the top two rating categories.

Additional Developments

Fundraising

In April, Dungannon Rugby Club kindly hosted a quiz night with proceeds raised going to FSWC. A great night was had by all who attended and the total amount raised was £350.

In May, Patricia Hynds, Tr@inIT, organised and provided a highly successful one day digital photography workshop. The event raised £400.

Investors in People

Work continues towards our IiP Action Plan including a review which has resulted in the development of new strategic aims and objectives. A new system of operational planning using the Outcomes Approach Logic Model has also been introduced and will be reviewed in September 2012.

Staff Training

A number of In-house Courses were organised for staff during the year including:

- Google Calendar and Gmail Training
- Minding Me
- Compassion Fatigue
- Strategic Planning and Operational Planning
- Word 2007 Training
- Stress Management Refresher Course
- Fire Safety Training
- Policies & Procedures

New Courses For September 2012

The timetable of courses for September 2012 to June 2013 has been devised. A wide variety of courses catering for different levels of knowledge and interests will be offered, from the ever popular Beginners IT to Sage Accounts and Digital Photography and ECDL.

Key Action Points for 2012 – 2013

- Provision of high quality IT/ancillary courses to meet participant demand.
- Creation of progression routes within the IT course framework.
- Provision of unique and innovative courses targeted at 16-24 year old participants needs.
- Provision of unique and innovative courses targeted at older participants needs.
- Maintenance and continuation of IIP Silver directives.

Yvonne Corbett

IT Coordinator

Childcare

Performance in 2011-2012

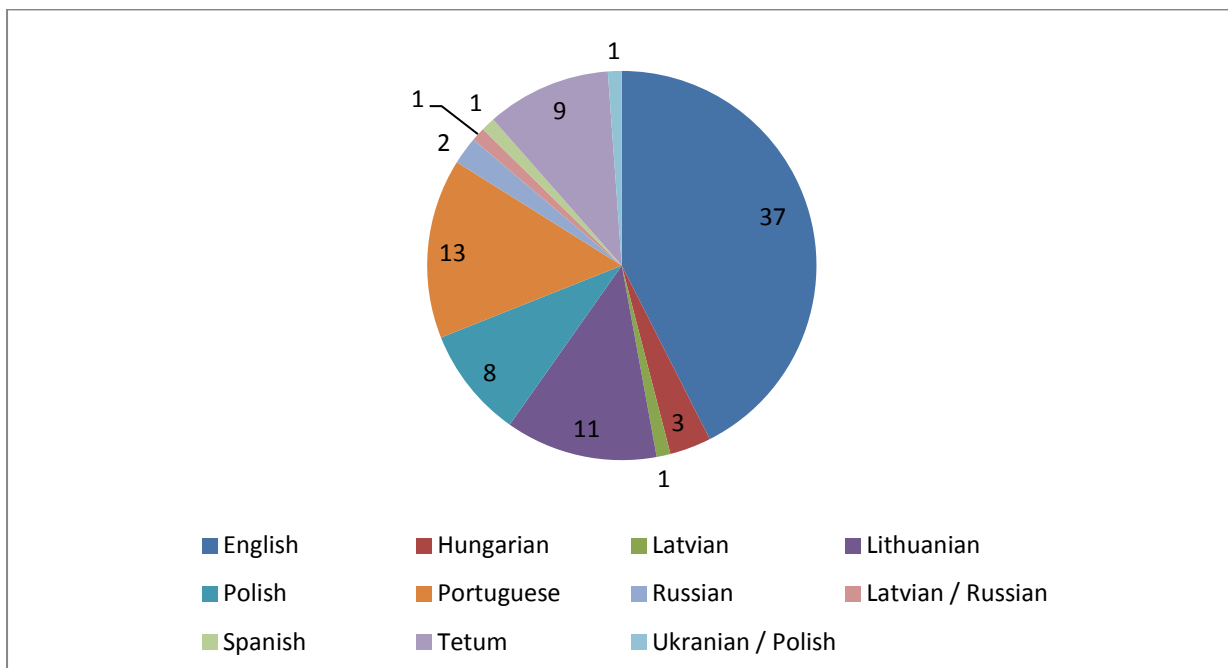
TERM	NO OF WEEKLY 2 HOUR CHILDCARE PLACES	CHILDCARE PLACES PROVIDED	PLACES FILLED	NEW FAMILIES PER YEAR
DSD Targets	81	3888	3402	4
1 APRIL - JUNE 2011	24	1140	1040	36
2 SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 2011	58	1665	1370	37
3 JANUARY - 31 MARCH 2012	64	1671	1393	9
TOTAL ANNUAL Childcare	146	4476	3803	82

Table 5: Childcare Statistics

Statistics are recorded monthly as above and we also have to provide separate statistics to Dungannon Sure Start when invoicing as Match Funders.

Newsletters are compiled and given to mums / carers, website and displayed every term to inform others of the work we do.

Breakdown of children's nationalities who attended



First Steps Childcare as a childcare placement provider

First Steps Childcare works closely with South West College Dungannon and Northern Regional College Magherafelt as a provider for placements for Childcare Students. Over the past year there have been 5 placements ranging from NVQ2, NVQ3 and National Diploma Children's Care, Learning and Development as well as work experience for the Steps to Work programme.

Placement students gain guidance, training and support allowing them to further develop their communication skills. They are also given the opportunity to gain practical experience in health and safety, developmental stages and challenges, behaviour management techniques, observation and planning, employability responsibilities and teamwork.

How we do our work with the children:

We learn everyday about each individual child, their carer and development. This helps us plan the activities for the children ensuring that each child is getting a diverse range of stimulation to promote their stage of development and keep them content while in our care. The range of nationalities poses many challenges for us.

Each week we have themes and activities to fit around events e.g. Halloween, Christmas, Jubilee, Olympic Torch etc, seasons e.g. Summer, Winter etc or what the children dictate. Partnership with organisations, such as Sure Start, WCRP and Early Years team is also a key element of our work.

Some comments from parents:

- The crèche is clean and has lots of toys and healthy food for children. My child is happy with that and they show great responsibility for my kids. There is a great place for children to play. My daughter loves it.
- When I'm going to collect my son from childcare he is a happier boy than he would be at home. He likes to be at childcare so much.
- My daughter can be with other children and she always learns new things.
- Staff is very welcoming and flexible. My child is very settled in this environment and it encourages me to further my education knowing that he is happy. Great Work.
- Staff is so friendly and caring. They are very quick to learn about the needs of my child. They provide a fun/educational setting that my child enjoys.
- My child loves going to FSWC childcare. He is happy while there and the staff is friendly and welcoming.

Janice McMullan

Childcare Manager

Finance Report

FIRST STEPS WOMEN'S CENTRE

Detailed Statement of Financial Activities

For the year ended 31 March 2012

	2012 £	2011 £
Incoming resources		
Incoming resources from generating funds:		
<i>Voluntary income</i>		
Gift AID	7,690	-
Donations	14,087	17,239
Other Income	2,073	1,598
DSD	108,429	49,933
P2YO	-	9,850
Sure Start	9,996	13,408
Dungannon & South Tyrone BC	3,390	5,000
New Life Directions	-	7,400
DEL/ESF - WTEE 0086	-	265,904
Live and Learn Funding	12,652	14,882
DSD CIF	-	54,097
CVSS	-	1,561
Steps To Work	-	4,088
Lloyds TSB	-	5,000
Extended Schools	-	2,622
Voluntary Service Belfast	-	1,750
EGSA	2,570	2,500
Neighbourhood Renewal	38,322	12,073
ICPD (Peace 2)	-	1,000
ADAPT	-	2,000
DEL/ESF WTEE 19410	225,855	-
Community Health	-	3,000
John Moores Foundation	5,000	-
LESTAS	402	-
PBNI	3,889	-
Children in Need	5,500	-
SH & SCT	374	-
	<u>440,229</u>	<u>474,905</u>
<i>Investment income</i>		
Bank Interest	124	4
	<u>1244</u>	
Total incoming resources from generating funds	<u>440,353</u>	474,909
Total incoming resources	<u><u>440,353</u></u>	474,909

	£	2012 £	£	2011 £
Charitable activities				
Education and personal development				
<i>Grant funding activities</i>				
Printing, Postage and Stationery	12,663		9,646	
IT Support	10,696		4,741	
Wages and Salaries	207,020		243,786	
Rent, Rates and Room Hire	29,592		30,226	
Project Delivery Costs	3,699		-	
Light and Heat	10,855		8,995	
Repairs and Maintenance	7,035		14,314	
Crèche Equipment	8,112		3,251	
Insurance and Bus Insurance	2,924		2,944	
Staff Travel and Subsistence	4,913		5,558	
Staff Training and Recruitment	2,804		2,429	
Motor Tax and Maintenance	2,483		1,635	
Course Expenses and Tutor Fees	68,470		60,326	
Legal and Professional Fees	-		1,515	
Accreditation	500		1,925	
Emergency Assistance	2,712		1,480	
Subscriptions	446		175	
Health and Safety	933		883	
Telephone and Fax	6,143		5,810	
Marketing, Advertising and Seminars	2,985		5,712	
Depreciation	9,856		11,595	
Childcare and Travel	917		2,777	
	<u>395,758</u>		<u>419,723</u>	
Education and personal development total expenditure		<u>395,758</u>		419,723
Total charitable activity expenditure		<u>395,758</u>		419,723
Governance costs				
<i>Activities undertaken directly</i>				
Audit fees	2,220		2,709	
Salaries	32,723		30,726	
Sundry and cleaning expenses	1,909		1,362	
Bank charges and Interest	893		1,127	
	<u>37,745</u>		<u>35,924</u>	
Total governance costs		<u>37,745</u>		35,924
Net incoming/ (outgoing) resources for the year		<u>6,850</u>		19,262

FIRST STEPS WOMEN'S CENTRE
Notes to financial statements
For the year ended 31 March 2012

Governance costs
Restricted funds

	Total £	Total £
	2011	2012
Audit fees	2,220	2,709
Salaries	32,723	30,726
Sundry and cleaning expenses	1,909	1,362
Bank charges and Interest	893	1,127
	<u>37,745</u>	<u>35,924</u>



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