

P1 #welldone

As we enter the season of exams and results, we highlight our annual National Traveller Education Achievement Awards. Get your nominations ready!

P2 #talkwithus

Sunia Geel 2 – an amazing end to a fantastic EU Project.
talkwithus@exchangehouse.ie

#YES – Welcoming a more inclusive Ireland

P3 #growwithus

Our Children and Young Peoples' Service give us an insight into the everyday work of their service and talks to us about building potential and promoting leadership.
growwithus@exchangehouse.ie

P4 #learnwithus

Our Education and Training Service will soon be recruiting.

CEO's Blog

In this edition, we launch our CEO's Blog – follow it monthly on www.exchangehouse.ie



EXCHANGE HOUSE IRELAND

National Travellers Service

QUARTERLY UPDATE | TRAVELLER PRIDE EDITION

JUNE, 2015



It's nearly that time of year again when Exchange House Ireland hosts the **National Traveller Education Achievement Awards** – our annual celebration. The event will take place in the Wood Quay Venue at the Civic Offices in Dublin on October 9th at 5.30pm. This will be our 8th year hosting the awards and we're hoping to make them bigger and better than ever before. Last year, we unveiled our "Dublin Says Well Done" viral – this year, well, who knows!!!

One thing is for certain though, it promises to be an evening of celebration, smiles and, in some cases, tears, as we come together to champion the achievements of our community.

So, watch out for the information on how you can nominate a friend, student or family member. Our Education and Training team will be in touch. If you don't hear from us, then don't hesitate to contact learnwithus@exchangehouse.ie

“ We have only one purpose here tonight and that is to celebrate your achievement - to take this opportunity to say #welldone to you, to your families and to everyone who has supported you to achieve. ”

Our Children and Young Peoples' Service has been working throughout the Greater Dublin area with Traveller children and young people to build potential and promote leadership for almost 20 years. Below, William McDonagh, our Children and Young Peoples' Service Manager, talks about the work and highlights the reasons why it is essential that we promote leadership amongst young Travellers.

Building Potential Promoting Leadership

What would you say are the main reasons young people engage with the Children and Young Peoples' Service?

Over years, the young people and their families have built up amazingly trusting relationships with the staff. They know that we are there for them; they know that when we say we will do something, we do it. It's like continuity for them.

What would you say are the main benefits for the young people from the various programmes and initiatives organised through the service?

I'd say it's the opportunities and the part they play in creating those opportunities. The model we work from is one where the young people are supported to play an active part in shaping the service; we encourage them to make decisions and choices. Often, as they grow through our service, we see them starting to make other choices – about school, work and family – and that's the main benefit I would think.

How do parents feel about placing their lovelies in your team's care?

In all the years we have been working with young people and their families, we have never had an issue with a parent not being comfortable, or not trusting us. We have brought young people all over the world and they have always done themselves proud.

What advice would you give to young people who wish to pursue a career in the youth service sector?

Working with young people is not for everyone, but if it is what you really want to do, then you need to stay in school, learn by volunteering and get your qualifications. Then, at least you can choose and that's the most important thing.



“
Our young people are our future, they need role models and they need our time and they need the space to grow and become the adult they want to be.”



#talkwithus
#learnwithus
#growwithus

Celebrating Traveller Pride
8 – 19 June 2015

JOIN THE CONVERSATION ANYTIME
www.exchangehouse.ie
@ExchangeHouseIr
#alwaysproud
#travellerpride15

Celebrating Traveller Pride 2015



At Exchange House Ireland, we take PRIDE seriously – pride in our work, pride in the achievements of our clients, pride in the community of which we are members, allies and friends. This year, we have produced a poster which we will be distributing to Traveller organisations and our partners in government departments, statutory agencies and the community and voluntary sector in Ireland and throughout Europe. Through our twitter account, we will be asking them to join us in an international conversation to highlight the achievements of members of the Traveller community and to commit to working in solidarity with us to continue to ensure that Ireland acknowledges respects and celebrates the many contributions that Travellers make to their own and the broader community.

So, check out our website www.exchangehouse.ie or follow us on twitter @ExchangeHouseIr for updates and don't forget to **Join the Conversation**. Watch out for our tweets and tell us your **#alwaysproud** stories.

Education and Training Service



Exchange House Ireland offers a suite of education and training services and supports designed to meet our learners' needs and provide opportunities for Travellers to participate in structured and accredited education and training programmes. We are also available to partner education and training agencies to support them to improve Traveller access to mainstream services and supports.

Information
Literacy Support
Intercultural Education Supports
Local Training Initiative (LTI)
Community Employment (CE)
National Traveller Education Achievement Awards
Cultural Awareness Training

Our dedicated education and training team are available Monday to Friday to provide support to individual community members to access these services. Our Community Employment Scheme and Local Training Initiative are structured one and two year programmes which combine core education and specific training.

If you know anyone who would benefit from our Education and Training Service, call us on 01 872 1094 or email learnwithus@exchangehouse.ie

Our Education and Training Service have been busy working with learners to compete the requirements for their minor awards in Information Technology – doing exactly what it says on the tin with a massive 22 completed minors in just 12 weeks. That's a major achievement. We also established our new **Youthwork** and **Resource Centre** work experience programmes, providing five of our learners with real-time work experience.

The race is on now, for June, when it is hoped that a significant number of our LTI learners will go forward for their Major Award in Information Technology at Level 4.

In the meantime, we are working with **Quality Qualifications Ireland** to design and validate our Fetac Level 5 Major Award in Community Development. Once we have completed this process, we will be in a position to offer this to our own learners and others working in local Traveller organisations throughout the country.

Finally, if you – or anyone you know – is interested in joining one of our Education and Training Programmes, or just needs some information and support, you can call in, telephone or email us.

CEO's Blog

A CEO's Blog? Now what's that when it's at home? Really, it's very simple. Basically, it's an opportunity for me to share our thoughts, hopes and aspirations and reflect out loud on the achievements and challenges we face every day in trying to achieve our vision. As I write, I am just over a year in the role of Chief Executive and I can honestly say that it has taken that entire year to become fully au fait with the scale of our services and supports and the complexity of the issues which they are hoping to address.

As we move towards the summer, and into the celebrations of Traveller Pride Week, we are planning to launch our new strategy document on June 25th - **talkwithus | learnwithus | growwithus** which will, hopefully, very clearly define the scale, scope and breadth of the work we do here at Exchange House Ireland and identify as "smartly" as we can, what we hope to achieve, the nature and extent of that achievement and the ways in which we are seeking to monitor the quality and effectiveness of the work of the whole organisation. Pulling this all together and making it as real as we possibly could has been a mammoth task for the Management Team and their staff and has involved the development of new systems for capturing the information we need to continue to build our "practice" and affect change in the lives of our clients, learners and participants with **care and integrity**. Those really are the key words, so I will repeat them **care and integrity**.

Too often, our clients, learners and participants have not experienced these from mainstream service providers, having, in many cases, missed out on the opportunities afforded their fellow citizens in the majority population. As we reviewed the work of the organisation over its 35 year history, we saw that from the very beginning – when Exchange House was established as a shelter for homeless Travellers – these two words, and what they actually mean in practice, needed to be central to any new strategy.

So, that's where **talkwithus | learnwithus | growwithus** came from, the first step being the hardest, but the benefits of the range of services available here accrue from that first single step. Every time the telephone rings, or the door buzzes, an individual is taking that first step, and we have to be ready, have to be present for that person, no matter how upset or chaotic they may seem to be. The people who work here know how to do that, to be present for that individual, and they have colleagues across all of our different services who can support their work, providing opportunities to access education and training and for children and young people to achieve their potential.

In these uncertain times, as we come through the dark days of swingeing cuts, Exchange House Ireland seems well placed to continue to respond in that crucial moment of crisis or that "light bulb" moment of knowing that education is a big part of the journey. That's when the growth can start. So, Travellers come to us,



they talk with us, they learn with us and, hopefully, they have an opportunity to grow with us. That's a big responsibility, and we are ready to take it on.

So, we will launch our strategy during Traveller Pride Week, and hope that it helps us to continue to be present, with **care and integrity**.

Don't forget to follow us on twitter @ExchangeHouseIreland and check our website www.exchangehouse.ie for regular updates on the work we do and for your invitation to join us at our launch. Suggestions for things we might do differently or better are also always welcome. Happy Pride!

Take care

Catherine Morley, Chief Executive

Family Support and Crisis Intervention Service

SUNIA GEEL 2

Opening the conference to mark the end of our Sunia Geel 2 Project, Sharon O'Halloran (below), Chief Executive with Safe Ireland, gave us an overview of the extent of Domestic and Gender Based Violence in Ireland today. Speaking to an international audience – comprising representatives from the statutory and community and voluntary sector - she welcomed the leadership provided by Exchange House Ireland and highlighted the context within which this violence occurs and the various constraints experienced in terms of resources and sustainability in responding to the issue.



“ **Every minute, 14 women in Europe become a victim of domestic violence. According to Human Rights Watch the number is much higher. Women and children living in marginalised communities are at an especially high risk...** ”



Partners from Romania, Austria, Germany and Italy – as well as our own Penelope More - gave insights into their work on the project and on the creation of the tools, processes and indicators of achievement of the project as a whole. In many ways, whilst there were differences in emphasis and approach, the core therapeutic tools of art therapy, group work, relationship building and exploration were the cornerstones of each country's methodology. Delegates were then invited to participate in an “open to the floor” session, where ideas and plans for the future of the project were discussed and agreed.

Following the formal conference, delegates had an opportunity to network with the partners, and, most importantly, discuss the art works created by women, men and children from the partner countries throughout the course of the project.



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Exchange House Ireland welcomes the outcome of the Marriage Equality referendum of May 22nd and was delighted to be part of the coalition of civil society, private sector and ordinary citizens advocating for a yes vote. The highly successful #YesEquality campaign has shown the world that a small country can take a big step in leading the way towards equal rights, and that as a nation, we can make significant change happen. Exchange House Ireland was delighted to stand in solidarity with the campaign, with **LGBT Pavee** and **#weareone** partners throughout Ireland and Europe.