



*Sligo Family Resource
Centre*

*Annual Report
2016*

<https://www.facebook.com/SligoFamilyResourceCentre>

www.sligofamilyresourcecentre.org

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Introduction

Sligo Family Resource Centre (FRC) has been in operation since 1995. Based at 49 The Mall, Sligo this FRC is one of 106 FRCs under the Family Support Services Programme based throughout the country.

Mission of Sligo FRC is to:

support individuals, families and communities without discrimination and in a warm, caring and open environment by identifying changing needs and responding to those needs positively.

The FRC is currently on the final year of its three year Strategic Plan 2015-2017. The Plan's outcomes are linked to the Túsla Child and Family Agency National Programme Outcomes as outlined in the Better Outcomes Brighter Futures¹ the national policy framework for children and young people 2014-2020.

The five national outcomes that we want for all our children and young people are that they:

1. Are active and healthy, with positive physical and mental wellbeing.
2. Are achieving their full potential in all areas of learning and development.
3. Are safe and protected from harm.
4. Have economic security and opportunity.
5. Are connected, respected and contributing to their world.

The Sligo FRC outcomes are as follows:

- That individuals, families and groups have access to a range of supports and services that enable and promote participation in society
- That people actively avail of a variety of community-based learning and development opportunities
- That children's holistic development is nourished in a safe, comfortable and fun environment.
- That individuals and families are supported in times of need
- That minority individuals and groups are empowered to participate in their wider community

This year, 2016, was another busy year for this Centre. We celebrated the 10th anniversary of the opening of Footprints in March and later in the year we were awarded the Healthy Ireland Smart Start Award which aims to ensure children in the pre-school settings are supported to adopt healthy lifestyle behaviours in early childhood, through promoting

¹ https://www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/cypp_framework/BetterOutcomesBetterFutureReport.pdf

health, emotional wellbeing/literacy, physical activity, nutrition, oral health and health safety. In May, we hosted a seminar for parents of children with dyslexia in association with the Sligo Education Centre with over 80 parents attending.

In July we received an unexpected visit from Katherine Zappone Minister for Children and Youth Affairs. In September we saw 19 participants graduate from their work experience in the Countess Café in Markievicz House, we had the launch of the Danú birth mothers support group booklet in the City Hall and the meeting with the Adoption Authority for adoptive parents and birth mothers in October. In addition, we, along with the Sligo Intercultural Forum hosted three intercultural events including a Symposium addressing the issue of racism. Meanwhile, we continued to work with 30-34 families each week in the Family Support Service, with up to 100 children in the year in Footprints.

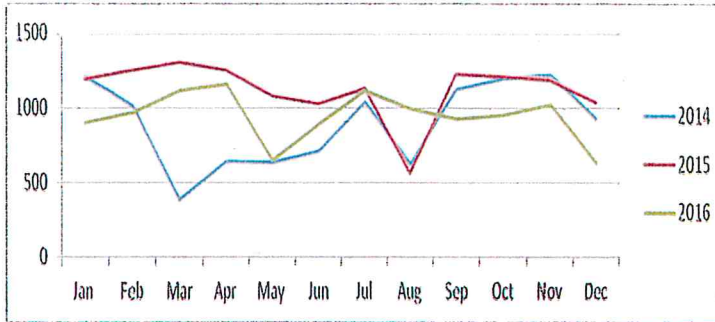


Minister Zappone, Tony McLoughlin TD, counsellor Hubert Keane staff, voluntary board of directors and service users of Sligo FRC

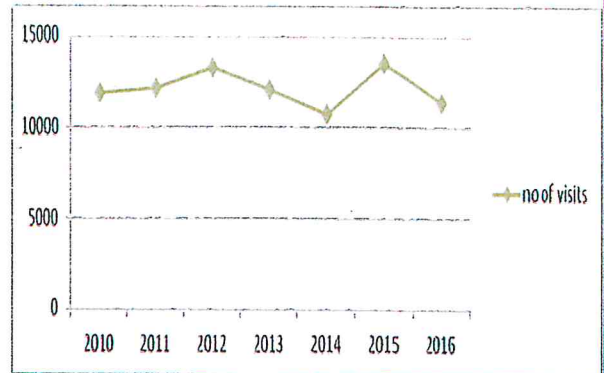
A statistical analysis of every aspect of Sligo FRC's work is made annually through the FRC's SPEAK (Strategic Planning Education and Knowledge) recording system. This annual report is intended to give you a flavour of the various events and activities engaged by the FRC in 2016.

Information and Services

Sligo FRC welcomes any member of the community to avail of its programmes and services and/or to find out more about other services or opportunities in Sligo. Below is an indication of the monthly footfall in the FRC over the past three years 2014 - 2016. The second diagram gives an indication of the footfall in the FRC since 2010. Many of those who use the FRC are multiple users so the figures are number of times the FRC is used not the numbers of individuals.

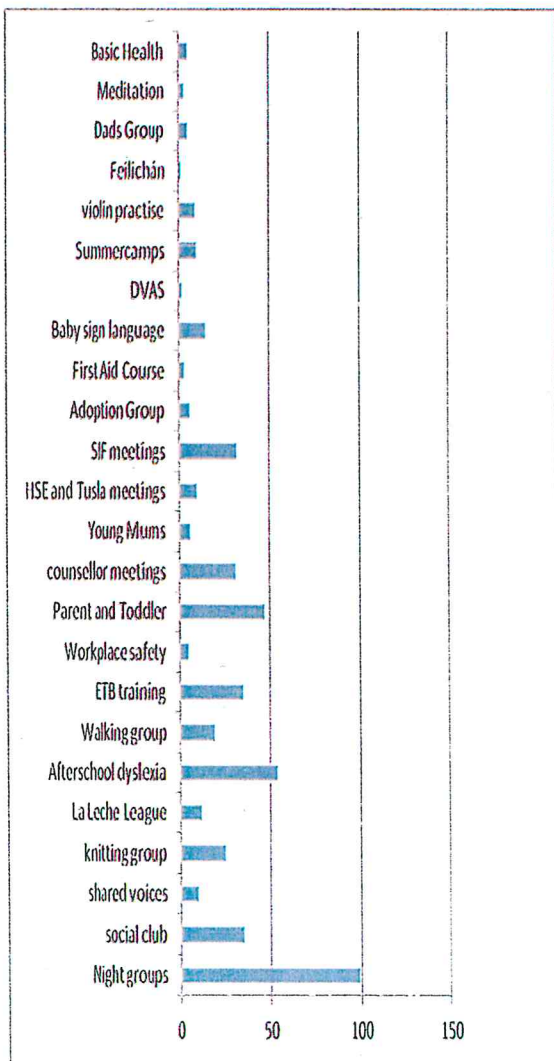


Monthly footfall 2014-2016



Yearly Footfall 2010-2016

These figures only include the people who come into the FRC, however, and do not include the outreach work carried out by the FRC staff in the family support service (Co Leitrim as well as Co Sligo), support to adults with learning disabilities service (Cregg House), parents of children with dyslexia (Education Centre), birth parents group (City Hall) and the intercultural events held in other Centres (Gillooley Hall, Model Niland Centre and the Glass House Hotel). This could increase the usage of the FRC services by an additional 400-500 times.



Information is provided through a selection of leaflets, fliers, posters and websites at the Centre. Staff can respond to a range of queries through the bank of knowledge built up over the years.

Administrative support such as design work, photocopying and printing is also available at the Centre.

The **Front Sitting Room** is used by parents, grandparents and carers who drop in for some time out and a cup of tea/coffee. Children can play or read and adults can meet to chat or feed their baby. It is also used for access visits. The **Outdoor Garden/Play Area** offers excellent play opportunities for children aged 0-6 years and a good meeting point for parents, particularly those who have attended groups or **Footprints Crèche**. Rooms for **Access** visits are also available and there has been a considerable increase in the use of the FRC for Access visits in 2016 - up to from 292 visits in 2015 to 333 in 2016.

Meeting rooms at the Centre are available for hire at subsidised rates to facilitate community groups and organisations to meet. In 2016, a total of 1,026 sessions took place in various rooms at the Centre for meeting or training purposes including 333 access visits. The variety of groups, individuals, services that use the rooms are outlined above.

Community based education, training and social integration opportunities



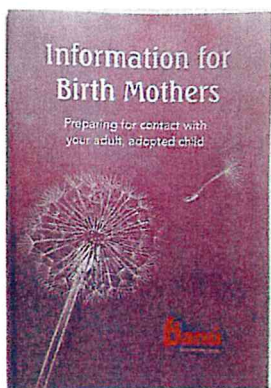
Sligo FRC ran two **Summer Camps** during July for 20 children aged 4-6 years. The children had a great week of trips to Woodville Pet Farm, the Garda station, Model Arts Centre, Doorly Park and Centre based activities including arts and crafts, face-painting and music and dance.

Sligo FRC works with May Sligo Leitrim Education and Training Board MSL ETB to provide a variety of training opportunities in the community. During the year, 103 parents/carers/ grandparents and 111 toddlers attended the **Parent and Toddler Drama** in the FRC on Tuesday and Friday mornings, Associated with the drama group is the annual Christmas party with Santa and his helpers in December.

The **Monday Walking Group** continued for the first half of 2016 with 6 adults taking part. It stopped due to staff shortages in April. Meanwhile, 14 women attended the **knitting classes** run by Ann Culkin during the year.

Parent Support Initiatives

The **Adoptive Parents Group** met twice during 2016 and had a wild and wet but lovely family walk in Gortarowey, north Sligo in July. Sligo FRC manager continues to forward emails from Western Inter-country Adoption Organisation (WIAO), Russian Intercultural Adoption Group (RIAG) and other relevant information almost weekly. Two adoptive parents and the manager of the FRC met with the board of the Adoption Authority in Sligo in October to raise awareness of the needs for post adoption supports for parents in Ireland.



The **Danú Birth Parent Support Group** has been in operation for the past 11 years as a result of collaborative work between Sligo FRC and St Attracta's Adoption Agency and more recently Túsla CFA. The



group is facilitated by Sligo FRC manager and Carmel McNamee independent facilitator and advised by Sheila Gallagher, Túsla social worker. An information booklet was launched by the Mayor of Sligo Counsellor Marie Casserley in the City Hall in September which was attended by up to 15 women from the group and their families as well as professionals in the area. 2,000 copies of the booklet was printed and distributed to libraries and other agencies around the country.



In 2016,, Sligo FRC provided support to **parents of children with dyslexia** and their children. After-school classes were available on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings from 5-6pm for children from 3rd to 6th class up to June and from September on Wednesdays only. They were facilitated by qualified teachers from Mercy Primary. Parents met twice during the year to share concerns, information and to plan other initiatives to enable their children. 35 children in total availed of the classes. The classes were partly funded by Sligo Leader Partnership. In May, a seminar entitled "*Academic and Emotional Effects of Dyslexia on children*" hosted by Dr Anne Marie Casserley from St Angela's college was attended by over 80 parents and teachers. This was supported by the Sligo Education Centre.



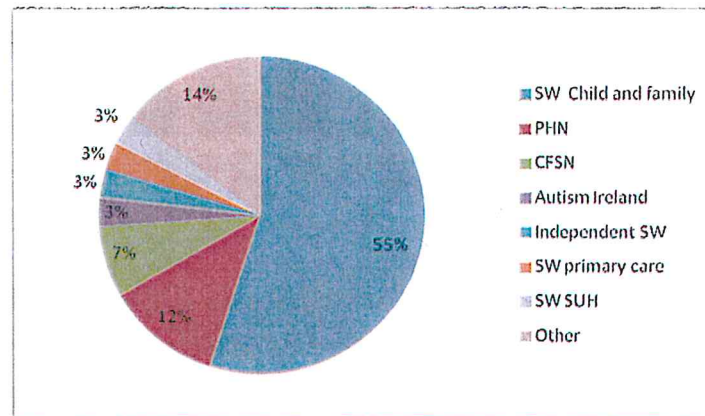
In November 2016 a new group (**DADs**) was established by two fathers to support separated fathers. This is supported by the ETB and they met four times before Christmas.

Family Support Service Including Footprints Drop-in Crèche

The **Family Support Service** is provided in the homes of families in counties Sligo and Leitrim. The length or extent of support depends on the needs of families; it can be a short time, e.g. helping a mother after the birth of a baby, or long term, e.g. supporting a family who are not coping due to mental health issues, addiction or learning difficulties. Support is frequently provided in the form of practical household management, parenting skills, budgeting, nutrition, emotional support, childcare and homework support.

75 families were supported in 2016 up from 67 families in 2015. Referral agents to this service are outlined below. Others include Globe House, ABC, counsellor for special needs,

Lifestart, Psychology, Mental Health, Simon community, Social Worker Alternative Care, Social Worker Mental Health and self.



The Family Support Service, including Footprints crèche (below) is funded by the Túsla Child and Family Agency, Pobal and Dept of Social Protection (CE participants).

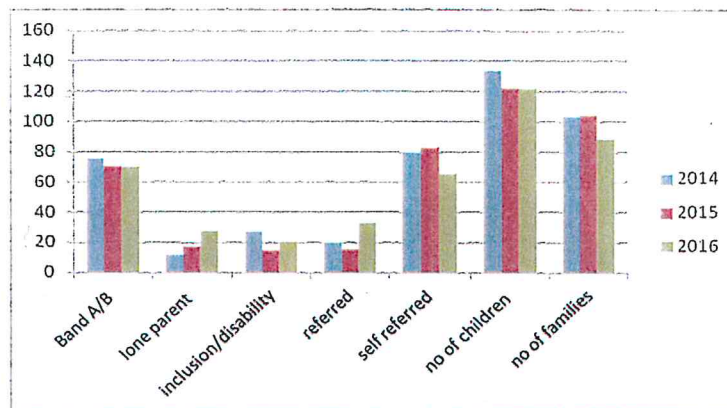
In March 2016, **Footprints Crèche** celebrated its 10th anniversary having opened its doors on 08 March 2006 and awarded the Healthy Ireland Smart Start Award. Footprints crèche is a service open to all families in Sligo and the surrounding area. It provides sessional care for up to 10 children at any one time for children up to 6 years of age on a once off or continuous agreed basis to facilitate parents to attend appointments, training, counselling etc.



Footprints 10th anniversary 8th March 2016

Last year 122 children from 89 families used the crèche. Of the families attending 20.5% were from ethnic/cultural minority /disability backgrounds, 28% lone parents, 70.5% were in receipt of a social welfare payment. See diagram for comparisons to 2014, 2015 and 2016.

Footprints has a high staff: child ratio and is affordable with 2 bands of payment based on ability to pay. Staff members have built strong links with key referral agencies over the years to ensure families with particular needs can access the crèche service.



In addition one of the managers trained in Parents Plus parenting programme and is now qualified to run parenting programmes for parents of children aged 0-6 in the FRC.

Services to Adult with a Learning Disability

Sligo FRC now has six part-time support workers on varying hours and one part-time co-ordinator employed in this Service. The **one-to-one support** to four adults with learning disabilities living in the community is in the form of addressing issues such as healthy eating and lifestyles, managing a household, managing a budget, self care while the drop-in Thursday lunchtime club gives adults with a learning disability somewhere stimulating and friendly to go.

In 2015, we negotiated a service with **Cregg House** to provide community integration with residents involving bringing them into town to shop, attend hairdresser, have coffee etc. This service started in summer of 2016 and provides 12 hours of community integration each week.



The **Coffee Dock Café** based at Markievicz House, provides training opportunities within a social enterprise for up to 20 adults with a learning disability each year. In September, 2016, 11 trainees were awarded with certificates of attendance at an Award Ceremony in Markievicz House. Cara O'Neill Head of Health and Well being Area 1 HSE thanked the staff of the Sligo

FRC for the role they played in this initiative.

The trainees receive experience in all aspects of catering under the watchful eye of the two supervisors and one CE participant.

Access Support Worker

In August 2015, we received funding from Tús/la CFA to recruit a support worker to work directly with families during access visits. The worker was based in the social work team in Markievicz House and worked with up to 6 families each week at Hardiker Level 4. She resigned in August to go to another job and was not replaced.

Working with Cultural Minorities

Sligo FRC continues to be actively involved in working with minorities in Sligo. This year with additional funding it was particularly busy.

Racist Indecent Reporting and Support Service: This service was established in 2013 and is overseen by the Interagency Group made up of representation from the Gardaí, Sligo Borough Council, Domestic Violence Advocacy Service, Sligo Rape Crisis Centre, Lifestart Sligo. The Group met 3 times in 2016. There were no incidents of racism reported in this year. In December 2015, we received funding from the Social Inclusion office of the HSE to part fund a worker. This has made a big difference to the work and in November the Integration Worker in collaboration with SIF organised a Symposium entitled *Advancing the Conversation on Racism*. It was attended by up to 80 people.



Rory O Neill, IRC, Nike Ogunn SIF Cathy Kilcoyne Sligo FRC, Ken McHugh SARI, Ciarán Hayes CEO Sligo Co Co and Shane O Curry



In 2016, the Sligo FRC with the support of the Integration worker continued to support the work of the **Sligo Intercultural Forum** with a number of events including St Patricks Day Intercultural Event in the Gillooley Hall (supported by NW Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force), capacity building training in the summer (supported by the ETB and DVAS), the AGM in September with funding from Belonging16 and the Intercultural concert in November with funding from Sligo County Council.

Sligo FRC has been involved with **Diversity Sligo** since 2003. This is a group made up of volunteers and professionals to support asylum seekers living in Globe House. This year we were again involved in operating the library in Globe House, funding for a worker and the summer outing to the beach and Eid and Christmas party.





Voluntary Board of Directors and Staff Team 2015

Sligo FRC is managed by a voluntary board of directors who oversee the work of the Centre and strategically guide the services. Twenty full and part-time staff are employed to manage and implement the work and ensure services are provided to the highest standard. Fifteen staff are employed through a CE training scheme.

Chairperson:	Don Watts	Directors: Mary Kelly, Nike Ogun, Nessa
Vice Chairperson:	Sonya Coffey	Cosgrove, Sarah Wetheral, Michelle
Treasurer:	Deirdre Gaul	Lally, John Burrows
Secretary:	Padraic Cuffee	

The voluntary board of management comprised 10 volunteers in 2016. The executive sub-group meets for employment/staff matters or specific issues. Sub-groups of 2-3 board members are established for specific, short term pieces of work in order to share the load and they've proved to be effective.

Staff Team

Elizabeth King	Manager (job sharing)
Caroline Bradshaw	Manager (job sharing)
Cathy McGowan	Administrator
Fiona Brennan	Coordinator of Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities
Charlotte Bussmann	Family Support Childcare Co-coordinator
Cathy Kilcoyne	Family Support Service Coordinator
Grainne Brennan	Access Support Worker left in August
Rose McCrann	Footprints Crèche Supervisor
Ann Rooney	Family Support Worker
Nicola McCormac	Family Support Worker
Karen Casey	Family Support Worker and Coffee Dock supervisor
Aishling Kelly	Family Support Worker replaced Charlotte Fahy in January
Debbie Feeney	Family Support Worker replaced Christopher Flanagan in April
Ann Boyd	Support worker and Social Club Leader



Maureen Scanlon	Support worker
Amy Gerrity	Family Support Worker and support worker
Ann McPadden	Support Worker left in April replaced by Debbie Feeney
Kate Lambe	Support Worker replaced Patricia Coleman August 2016
Marion Roycroft	Coffee Dock supervisor
Anne Marie Cawley	Support Worker

Volunteers

Jennifer Omereye Jimoh	Intercultural work
Laura Martin	childcare



Students in 2016:

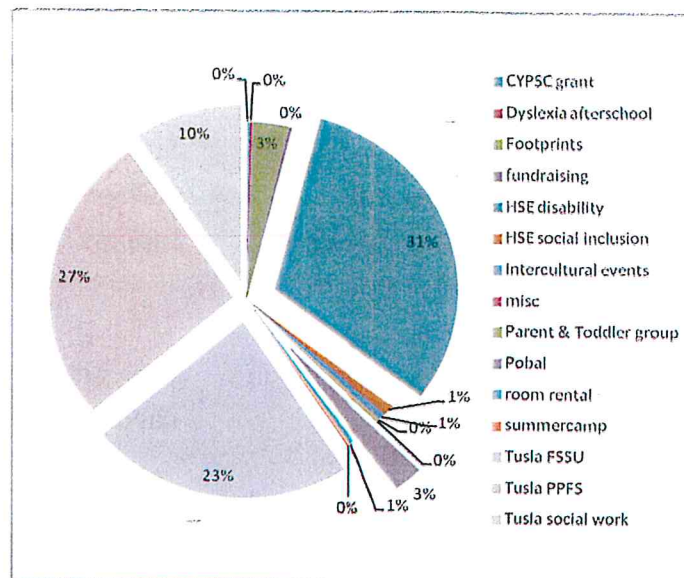
- Amy Irwin, Sligo IT Social Studies
- Brendan O Reilly Ballinode College
- Lauren Devers Ballinode College
- Sarah Kisby Ursuline College
- Hugh Kisby Summerhill TY

FÁS Community Employment Scheme Participants (2015/2016), 19.5hrs/week

Administration and Reception	Rita Finan, (Cecile Lamy, Jonathon Farrell Alex Streete) replaced by Dorota Lisowski, Louise McElhatten
Childcare and Home Support Workers	Natasha Mulligan, Geraldine Ryan, Kate McCarthy (CE ended moved into FRC Disability Service , Michelle Cohn (maternity leave – did not return),
Childcare Workers	Martina Foley, Jackie Dolphin (Sarah Ward, Emma Wyber) replaced by Shauna Foy
Disability Worker	Caroline Cunningham
Caretaker/Cleaner	Richard Deignan (John McLoughlin) replaced by Tom Dillon

Funding

Here is a breakdown of the funding received in 2016. The greatest amount of funding comes from Túsła including the Family support Service Unit, the Prevention Partnership Family Support unit and directly from social work totalling €275,184. HSE disability contributed €145,000 and social inclusion €5,000. A considerable amount of time is spent drawing down funding, administering it, ensuring it is spent on what it was drawn down for reporting and accounting.



Collaborative work

Sligo Family Resource Centre does not work isolation. Much of the work carried out during 2016 was in collaboration with other organisations and funders. Sligo FRC is also part of the wider network of Family Resource Centres within the Family Resource Centre National Forum and Regional Forum. Our chairperson was the regional representative (Sligo, Leitrim and Donegal FRCs) on the National Forum and his skills and knowledge in the area of policy development were used in the National Forum policy sub group.

In addition one of the managers served on the Board of the Children and Young Peoples Services Committee (CYPSC) representing the 6 FRCs in Sligo/Leitrim. She was part of the planning and development working group which has overseen the development of the CYPSC three year strategic plan that will be published later this year following approval by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

We also have had representation on the Sligo County Childcare Committee, Sligo Community and Childcare Company Limited, Childcare Managers Working Group of the Sligo County Childcare Committee, Child and Family Support Network (CFSN), CYPSC parenting support sub group, Parents Support Champion, Diversity Sligo, Public Participation Network (PPN) secretariat, Sligo PPN social inclusion electoral college as well as being part of a number of *Meithals*, (a Túsła national practice model), Child Protection conferences, Multi disciplinary meetings, professional meetings, Connecting for Life (HSE Suicide Prevention initiative) and attended the AGMs of Resource House Springboard project, Sligo County Childcare Committee, National Forum of Family Resource Centres and Sligo Social Services.