

## **Mission Statement**

*The Sligo Family Centre seeks to serve all families without discrimination, in a warm, caring and open environment. We continually strive to identify ongoing and changing needs and to respond to them in a positive fashion. We aim to provide support, information and development courses of the highest standard to families in the Sligo area.*

### **Aims 2012- 2014**

- To consolidate the existing work of the FRC
- To be inclusive of families in the area experiencing isolation, disadvantage and poverty
- To be inclusive of families from minority groups including Travellers , refugees and asylum seekers, migrants, members of new communities, people with disabilities, lesbian, gay bisexual and transgender (LGBT)
- To provide relevant supports and services for grandparents, parents and their children.

## **1.0 Brief overview of 2011 in the Sligo FRC**

The Sligo FRC had a busy year in 2011 with many staff changes. Six Community Employment staff members left during the year and eight new staff members were recruited. A new Co-ordinator came on board in a job share capacity and four staff started on the programme supporting adults with learning disabilities.

The HSE funded family support project supported 17 families in the home and 146 families in Footprints drop-in crèche, which celebrated its fifth anniversary in March 2011. The services to adults with learning disabilities living in the community increased and this service now gives 54 hours support/week to 5 clients.

Up to 190 parents/childminders took part in the parent and toddler groups which run on Tuesday and Wednesdays at the centre and Friday mornings at Caltragh Community Centre.

Four workshops for Fathers and their children were held during the year catering for 36 Dad's visits and 66 children's visits. Thirty children took part in two annual summer camps in July. On a sunny Easter Monday morning in April, staff and service users took part in the 10k run/walk in the famous Lissadel estate, fundraising over €1,200 for the various services in the FRC.

Sligo FRC became part of the social network world with the setting up of a webpage, Facebook, Twitter and you can now find us on Facebook and on [www.sligofamilyresoucecentre.org](http://www.sligofamilyresoucecentre.org).

## 2.0 Management structure and staff 2011

Chairperson:	Josette Newman
Vice Chairperson:	Chris Davis
Treasurer:	Ruth Campbell
Secretary:	Sonya Coffey
Directors:	Mary Kelly, Bernie Davey, Trish Mc Laughlin and Martina Kilgallon. Jim O' Connor and Marian Hargadon were replaced by Deirdre Gaule and Claire Donegan at the AGM in March 2011.

The management committee comprised ten volunteers in 2011. The executive sub-group is made up of the chairperson, deputy chairperson, secretary and treasurer. This group meets in the event of a crisis or for employment/staff issues. In addition, sub-groups of the board are established with two to three committee members in the event of a specific piece of work, being disbanded once the work is completed. This year two sub-groups were formed; one looking into new premises for the FRC and the other examining fundraising for the centre. This has in the past proved very effective as it ensures the work of the Centre is spread around to all members of the management committee.

## 3.0 Staff<sup>1</sup>

Elizabeth King	Co-ordinator (3 days/week)
Catherine McGlinchey	Co-ordinator (2 days/week)
Bridie Walsh	FÁS supervisor (job sharing)
Sarah Cleasby	FÁS supervisor (job sharing)
Cathy McGowan	Administrator
Charlotte Bussmann	Family support childcare co-coordinator
Rose McCrann	Drop-in crèche assistant
Sue Coleman	Home support worker (25 hours/week)
Colette Sheerin	Home support worker from May 2010 (20 hours/week)
Ann McPadden	Home support worker up to October 2011 (10 hours/week)
Karen Casey	Home support worker from November 2011 (10 hours/week)
Ann Boyd	Social Club Leader (10 hours/week)

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<sup>1</sup> Staff members written: in blue completed their employment at the centre in 2011; in green started their employment at the centre in 2011.

Maureen Scanlon	Social Club Leader (10 hours/week)
Ann McPadden	Support Worker (6 hours/week)
Lorraine Wall	Transition Support Worker (30 hours/week)
Moya Thermes	Support Worker (10hours/week)
Fiona Brennan	Coordinator of services for adults with learning disabilities (7 hours/week)

**FÁS Community Employment Scheme Participants (2009/2010)**

Eilís Feeney Alex Streete Eileen Sheridan Clare Lynch Mary Coughlan Joanne Kelly (maternity leave),	Administration and Reception
Maureen Scanlon Karen Keenan Jacinta Stafford Katarzyna Fedorka Geraldine Kivlehan Catherine Brennan Carina Boyd Margaret Kelly Sheila Howley Anita Murrin Michelle McGovern Sandra Davey	Childcare and Home Support Workers
Alan Fox Tommy Cummins	Caretaker/Cleaner

**Student**

Karolina Koslak a student from Ballinode College has been with us on work experience one day a week since October 2011.

**Strategic Planning and Premises**

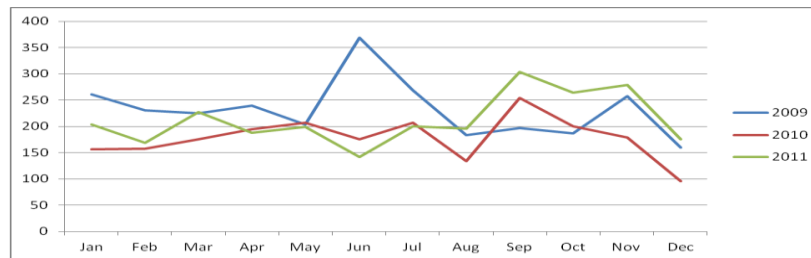
In 2011 Sligo FRC developed a new Strategic Plan 2012-15 in consultation with users of the centre, staff and Board of Management. As part of this process, a review of the premises was carried out and plans put in place to improve the way we provide services to the public and our user groups.

## 4.0 Overview

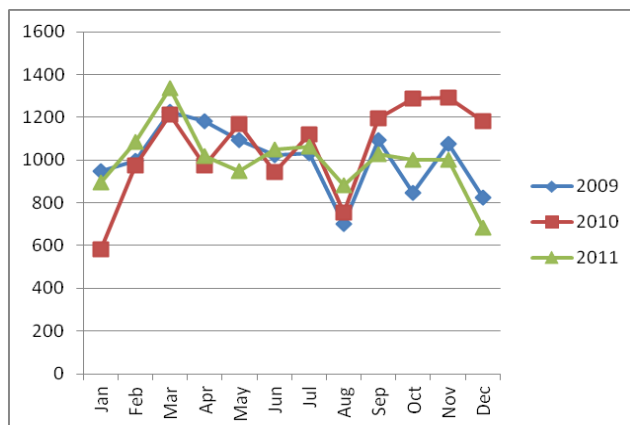
### 4.1 Centre Activity

To record use of the Centre by members of the public and colleagues in other organisations, the administration staff collate the numbers of telephone calls in and out of the Centre and the numbers of people who visit the Centre each day. This includes people who attend groups, use Footprints drop-in crèche, the Toy Library, and counselling or who have queries or information needs. These figures give the reader an overview of the activity of the Centre during the year, enable comparisons with previous years and are used as one of the indicators of the work under taken by the Centre.

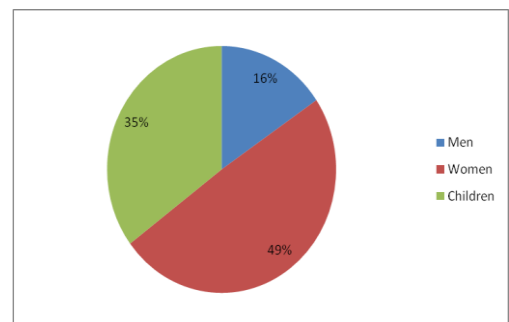
Phone calls into the Centre 2009-2011



It should be noted that web texting became a very useful tool for contacting people during the year with regard to upcoming events, programmes and classes. These are not documented in the figures above. There is also an increase in the use of email and now Facebook and Twitter to contact people in the hope of reducing the costs of the telephone.



No of visits to Sligo FRC 2009 - 2011



% of men women and children attending Sligo FRC in 2011

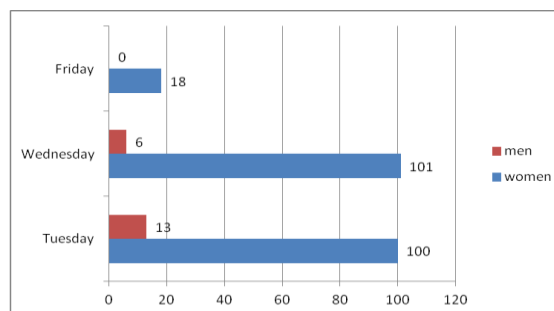
In 2011 there were 11,913 visits to the Centre, about the same as previous years (11,926 in 2010). The same percentage of men used the Centre (16%) in 2010 as in 2011.

**Room Usage:** A number of organisations hired rooms at the centre in 2011 to facilitate a variety of support groups and training. In total the rooms were used 368 times by 33 individuals or organisations including, Al Anon, La Leche League, Art Active Aged, Diversity Sligo, Greenworks, DVAS, Adoptive Parents Group, Men’s Sheds Group, Parent Support Network, Sligo Lend a Hand, HSE New Mothers Group, HSE, Women’s Well-being, counsellors HSE family therapists and social workers.

#### 4.2 Parent Support Groups

*Parent and Toddler Drama* –There were parent and toddler sessions every Tuesday and Wednesday at the Centre and Friday mornings in the centre for the first half of the year and Caltragh community centre for the second half of the year. The facilitated drama group has been particularly popular with both the parents and their toddlers. In these sessions, the parents and toddlers take part in singing, dancing, rhymes, mime and storytelling. The Tuesday session became so popular that in September 2011, we ran two sessions each Tuesday.

Below is the breakdown of the numbers attending the facilitated parent and toddler drama sessions throughout 2011.



*Strandhill Parent and Toddler Group and Carrigans Baby Group* - Sligo FRC worked with these two groups on an outreach basis in 2011, providing information, assisting with ideas and promotion and answering queries.

The *Adoptive Parents Group* continue to meet on the last Monday of every month at Sligo FRC. In 2011, the group organised a family fun day in July and a Christmas party in late November. In October 2011, the parents of Russian born children started Russian classes in language, culture, customs etc. These classes are held in the Sligo FRC on Saturday afternoons and 8 families attend.

The *Birth Parent Support Group* met several times over 2011 in the FRC. It was facilitated by the social workers from St Attracta's, with occasional links with the Sligo FRC Co-ordinator.

*Fathers and Children Workshops* took place on 4 occasions during the year. These included



Drumming, Circus Skills, Mask-making and Making Christmas Decorations. It gave Dads an opportunity to play, have fun and create with their children. These workshops are facilitated by tutors specialising in various community arts.

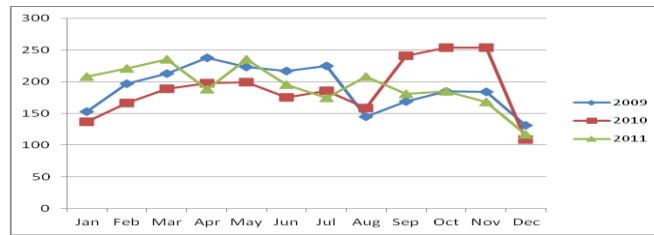
### **4.3 Family Support Project**

This project includes Footprints drop-in crèche and the home support work. It was funded by the Dormant Accounts Fund 2006 – 2007 and in the autumn of 2007, we successfully negotiated with the HSE to continue funding this project. In 2009, we received funding for Footprints drop-crèche under the Office of the Minister for Children and Young People (OMCY) Childcare Subvention Scheme (CSS).

#### **4.3.1 Footprints Drop-in Crèche**

Footprints drop-in crèche celebrated the fifth anniversary of its opening in March 2011 with a party on International Women's Day.

By the end of December 2011, 195 children from 146 families had used the service. Of these children 78% were from families in receipt of some form of social welfare benefit. Below is a view of the number of visits to Footprints 2009-2011.



#### 4.3.2 Home Support Work

This highly innovative project has provided support to 96 families directly in their own homes since it began in 2007. Support is provided in the form of parenting skills, budgeting, nutrition, childcare and homework support. Seventeen families were supported in 2011.

Examples of outcomes achieved include:

*routines have been set: baby thriving, mother attends the P&T group, older brother is more accepting of new arrival, mother feels more rested, mother plays with children, preparing healthy dinners for toddler with mother, laundry sorted with the mother, twins stronger and in a feeding routine, affordable curtains are bought, menu plan put together, trusting relationship established with HSW*

(taken from quarterly reports to the HSE 2011).

#### 4.3.3 Home Support Specific Project

This project was established in co-operation with the HSE social work department Tubbercurry in 2007 and involves working with one specific family for fifty hours per week. In early 2010, a decision was made to increase the working hours with this family from 50 to 55. Sligo FRC was then in a position to employ an extra home support worker. In 2011 the three staff worked 25, 20 and 10 hours per week, respectively to support and assist this family.



#### **4.4 Social Club and other services for adults with learning disabilities**

##### **4.4.1 Social Club**

A number of joint initiatives have been developed between the Adult Learning Disability Social Work Department in Markievicz House and the Sligo FRC. The Social Club is for adults with learning disabilities who live independently in the community. Up to November 2010, the Club was held for two hours every Saturday evening but due to its popularity with the clients, the number of hours increased and a second two-hour session is now held every week. There is a core group of 4 people attending the Club but in the past number of years 13 people have taken part in its activities.

##### **4.4.2 Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities**

In May 2011 a support worker was employed to work 6 hours/week with a client in the community. In September we employed a transition support worker to work 30 hours/week with a client to enable her to transfer to the HSE training centre in Ballytivnan. In October a third worker was employed to support a client for 10 hours/week and in November 2011, we recruited a staff member to co-ordinate all these activities.

#### **5. Outreach School Project**

The School Outreach Project enables the centre to work directly with children in



communities targeted by our programmes and raise the profile of the centre with these children and their families.

In February 2011, as part of a collaborative Art Initiative between Sligo FRC and the Project School, local artist Martha Van der Meulen was employed to work with 20

children on the creation of monsters. From stories, pictures and then wooden monsters, the pupils eventually displayed their creations at the 2011 School Open Day organised by the school parent's association.

In the Autumn term of 2011, Sligo FRC employed Deirdre Gaule to facilitate a 6 week drama programme in St Brendan's national school, Cartron. Twenty five children took part. The programme was extended to 11 weeks as it was so popular and they were then able to perform at their school Christmas concert.

## 6. Summer Camps

Sligo FRC organised two summer camps for children aged 4-6 years during July. The camps



were attended by 20 children, 10 of whom were from Globe House. The children tried out new activities including arts and crafts, baking, dentistry and drawing at the Model Arts Centre, as well as a fun trip to Gilligan's World, Calry Pet Farm and Eagles Flying. The children made new friends and got the opportunity to share summer experiences that would otherwise have been unaffordable to them.

## 7 Family Fun Days/Events

Sligo FRC held four fundraising events during the year. The first was on Pancake Tuesday for the National Children's Hospital, Tallaght. The second was the 10k Lisadell/Carney walk/run in which we raised €1,200 for the centre. In June, we held the annual picnic in Kevinsfort for Barnardos as well as a flag day where staff and Board members collected for the FRC.



Christmas parties were held for the adoptive parents and their children in November and the parent and toddler group, as well as children from Footprints drop-in crèche in December.

## 8. Ethnic Minorities and WISH project

Sligo FRC is involved in working with minorities through Diversity Sligo and the Globe House crèche steering group. In December 2010, the Sligo FRC collaborated with Diversity Sligo



and the HSE public health nurse in Globe House to secure funding from PEACE III to set up a women's group comprising women from Globe House and women from the community. Work began on the WISH (Women Inclusion Support Hope) project in January 2011. The project ran for

12 weeks and 16 participants took part. The women had the opportunity to get to know each other, to challenge attitudes towards racism, to highlight their commonalities, share experiences, information and knowledge and to experience new ideas and concepts.

Feedback from the group was very positive.

## **9. Knitting and Crochet classes**

As a follow-on from the WISH project, the VEC agreed to fund a series of knitting/crochet classes. Fifteen classes took place attended by 27 women from both the community and Globe House. This proved very popular and a subsequent request was made to the VEC to fund sewing classes in 2012.



## **10. Eurowatchers**

This was a programme devised by MABS and the VEC in Donegal to address issues relating to budgeting, attitudes to money, spending habits, credit train and managing money. This 6 week programme was run at the centre in the Autumn and was attended by 8 women.

## **11. Men's Group**

A new men's group was established towards the end of 2011 and meet at Sligo FRC on a weekly basis. The centre support the group through information provision and links with the men's network.

## **12. Mothers Support Group**

A new mother's support group programme was initiated by the HSE and ran for 10 weeks at the centre. Mums were supported in coping with their new babies and meeting the challenges of parenthood through peer support and facilitated sessions.

## **13. Grandparents Event**

This took place at the end of September to mark Grandparents Day. Sean O' Hanrahan facilitated a session on dream catchers for grandparents and their children.

## **14. Marie Keating Information Sessions**

The Marie Keating service provided the centre with two information sessions on cancer awareness and prevention. Twenty five parents and staff attended.

## 15. Other Initiatives/Services

**The Family Room** is used by parents and their children as a family friendly drop in facility. It provides a break from being in town, a chance to meet other parents, feed a baby, use the toy library or just to get a cup of tea.

**Sligo FRC Toy Library** is a service valued by many families. In 2011 there were 54 visits to the Toy Library to borrow toys and books. Five new members joined to avail of the service.

**Sligo Volunteer Day** took place in October and the centre facilitated the “Voluntours” organised by Sligo Volunteer Centre to commemorate the Year of the Volunteer. In addition the centre promoted its services in the Yeats building.

**Access Visits** took place on 20 occasions during the year. The centre facilitates parents whose children who are in foster care and/or living with the other parent to meet in a safe and child-friendly setting. Depending on the circumstances, these visits may have been supervised by a centre staff member.

**Counselling room** – two counsellors used this room 55 times to provide counselling services to members of the public.

**Local Networking** – we are represented on the board of the Sligo County Childcare Committee, Area Implementation Team (AIT) as part of the RAPID working group, Social Inclusion Measures (SIMS) group, Sligo/Leitrim Children and Young People’s Committee, Diversity Sligo, Sligo Men’s Network, Border County Childcare Network.

**Regional Networking** – occurs as part of the Donegal, Leitrim and Sligo FRCs’ co-ordinators’ and administrators’ regional network meetings and the Regional Forum of FRCs.

**National Networking** – Sligo FRC attended the AGM of the National Forum of Family Resource Centres and FRC national forum.

**Training Links** – we were part of a consortium which successfully obtained funding from The Wheel for training of staff in voluntary/community organisations in the Sligo area.

**Training undertaken by CE participants (2010-2011)**

<b>Training</b>	<b>No of Participants</b>	<b>Level of Achievement</b>
Buntus Refresher Training	1	Certified
Care of the Older Person	1	FETAC Level 5
Caring for children 0-6	4	FETAC Level 5
Child Development	2	FETAC Level 5
Early Childhood Education	5	FETAC Level 5
Communications	2	FETAC Level 5
Working in Childcare	1	FETAC Level 5
Work Experience	1	FETAC Level 5
Occupational first Aid	4	FETAC Level 5
Occupational First Aid Refresher	1	Certified
Child Protection Training	3	Certified
Child Protection for Disability	2	Certified
Conflict Resolution	10	N/A
Creativity & Art in the Early Years	2	N/A
Home Support Training	12	N/A
Health & Safety Training	2	Certified
Induction	17	N/A
Door Security Procedures	1	Certified
Guarding Skills	1	Certified
Infection Prevention & Control	7	N/A
Literacy Tutoring	1	N/A
Domestic Violence Advocacy training	6	N/A
Parenting Course	8	N/A
Play Workshop	10	N/A
SAGE Accounts Part One	2	Certified
SAGE Quick Pay Training	2	Certified
Siolta-Parents & Families	3	N/A
Thesaurus Payroll Training	3	Certified
Training the Trainer	1	FETAC Level 6