

Sligo Traveller Support Group Ltd

NEWSLETTER, Issue 5, June 2009

STSG's Newsletter is a means of keeping the Travelling community in touch with the work of the Sligo Traveller Support Group

Hello and welcome everyone to the fifth issue of our newsletter here at STSG. We hope you like and enjoy reading it.

In this newsletter you will find helpful information and also be notified of upcoming events which will be taking place.

Please feel free to call in to our office at 40 Wolfe Tone Street near the Bus Station for any information, or call us on 0719154409.

Rosie Maughan, Community Health Worker and Editor for this issue

!! NEWSFLASH !! ALL IRELAND TRAVELLER STUDY NEWS

The Traveller Census was completed very successfully last year and the rest of the study is continuing.

A number of focus group conversations are now being held around the country with Travellers to add more depth to the information already collected in the Census.

In the North West, University College Dublin (UCD), with Sligo Travellers, Leitrim and Donegal Travellers, will hold **two focus groups in Ballyshannon in July**. The topics will be '**Rural Accommodation**' and '**Mental health and suicide**'.

STSG wants to support 7 Travellers from Sligo to participate in these conversations where you will have a chance to voice your views. No-one will be identified in the research report but the information will ensure better health and living conditions for Travellers.

If you would like to be part of the focus group, contact Community Health Worker Kathleen Stokes on 071 9154409.

A DEAR FRIEND

We would like to dedicate this edition of the Newsletter to someone we love and miss dearly, the late and wonderful **Catherine Devaney**, HSE Social Inclusion Officer, for all the support, debates and hard work she has done with Travellers in Sligo and with Sligo Traveller Support Group, the Traveller Health Unit locally, regionally and nationally and more closer to home with Sligo's Primary Health Care Programme.

We miss you sincerely, Catherine, and we say in the Traveller World "*The light of Heaven to you*", as we already know you have a bed in heaven.

From all your friends and colleagues here at STSG.



Above: the late Catherine Devaney, HSE Social Inclusion Officer

A DEAR FRIEND

Sligo Traveller Support Group is working alongside DVAS to STOP violence to women

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

A note from *Domestic Violence Advocacy Service (DVAS)*

We are an organisation in Sligo and Leitrim who provide support to women who are experiencing physical and sexual violence and /or emotional and financial abuse.

Our job is to provide emotional support to women, to listen to women and to give women information about their rights and possible options.

We will help women access the things that they need to get more safety and peace in their lives.

DVAS never advise or tell a woman what to do because we know that she will know best what will make her safe or more at risk. Our service is totally confidential and free.

If you or anyone you know is being hurt or abused in the home, help can be accessed by calling us at 071-9141515, from 10am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.



Above Left to Right: Rosie Maughan of STSG, Niamh Wilson of DVAS, Kelley McGinley of STSG, Lorna Power of DVAS and Kathleen Stokes of STSG.

Youth

Community Health Worker Kelley McGinley organised a six-week (22 April – 27 May) Hip Hop programme in Northside Community Centre for young Traveller girls ages 12-16.

The classes were high energy and the 11 girls who attended enjoyed it a lot.



Above: Some of the teenagers at Hip Hop classes

Thanks to Kelisa Mulcahy, Hip Hop Teacher for the great classes.

Back To Education Initiative (BTEI)

The BTEI programme will be starting in September this year. The programme will run from this September to June next year and will have a FETAC major award at the end of it

STSG will be recruiting for participants very soon

Contact Sligo Traveller Support Group on 071-9154409 for more information.



CE Schemes

CE Schemes coming up in Northside.

For people eligible for placements, watch out in local newspapers for more information.

Intercultural Day for children and parents

Intercultural Day for children aged 10-14 years of age and parents, Saturday 26th September, 2.00pm – 5.00pm. All welcome. Contact Kelley Mc Ginley, tel 071 91 54409



Participants at the recent Mental Health Course

Learning about Mental Health

The Mental Health course jointly run by STSG and HSE Mental Health Services for Traveller Community Health Workers was completed in May. This 4-day course was run over 4 months and participants came from Galway, Roscommon and Dublin along with our own Community Health Workers here at STSG.

It focused on the journey between mental health and mental illness.

One of the participants said the key message she wanted to take back to her community was that *“Most people during their life-time will experience some form of mental ill-health. This is normal and nothing to be afraid of.”*

Another participant said she realised that *“HSE Mental Health Services are here to help all of us if we need some support at any time in our lives”*.

If you would like to know more about Mental Health Services in Sligo please contact us in STSG at 071 91 54409 and we can fill you in and also support you in accessing services.



Update on activities for younger children

Toybox Project

Childcare workers, Rosie Ward and Eileen Wallace, are now running a **toybox project** set up in conjunction with Lifestart Family Support Agency, SCCC, NCDP, MCR and STSG for the Traveller community.

The two workers arrange with parents to come out to the halting sites and houses and play for a half-hour with the children in the mornings.

There are 11 families in the project. One of the parents said *“This is great. It is helping the children get ready for Pre-School”*.

One of the Mothers said *“I’ll definitely tell other parents about the project”*. If you are interested, contact Rosie Maughan here at STSG, tel 0719154409 and/or Lifestart Offices and ask for Rosie, Trish or Eileen, tel 071 9146034.



Above: Hughie and Alick McGinley at the recent Health Session on skincare

More Hip Hop..... classes for 7-12 year olds

Hip Hop classes for boys and girls aged 7-12 year old started on Monday, 22nd June 2009. The classes are in the Northside Community Centre for one evening a week for one hour, 5.00 – 6.00pm.

Contact Community Health Worker Rosie Maughan at 071 9154409 if you are interested in Hip Hop.



Skin Care Health Session

THANKS TO PHARMACIES IN SLIGO AND LEITRIM who provided skin care samples. You contributed to the great success of our health session.

Eleven Traveller women attended our Health Session on 12th May where, Selene Farrell, Clinical Nurse Specialist in Dermatology, filled us in on how to care for our skin.

Did you know that skin is one organ? Whatever damage is done to one part of your skin is remembered by your whole skin.

We learned how much damage is caused by using sunbeds, and by not wearing sun block.

Remember:

- If you want to stay young looking, **stay off sunbeds.**
- If you want healthy skin, **use sun block factor 50** and **wear a hat to cover your head and ears.**

Imagine! 80% of sun damage is done to your skin before age 16 ! it is very important to protect children.

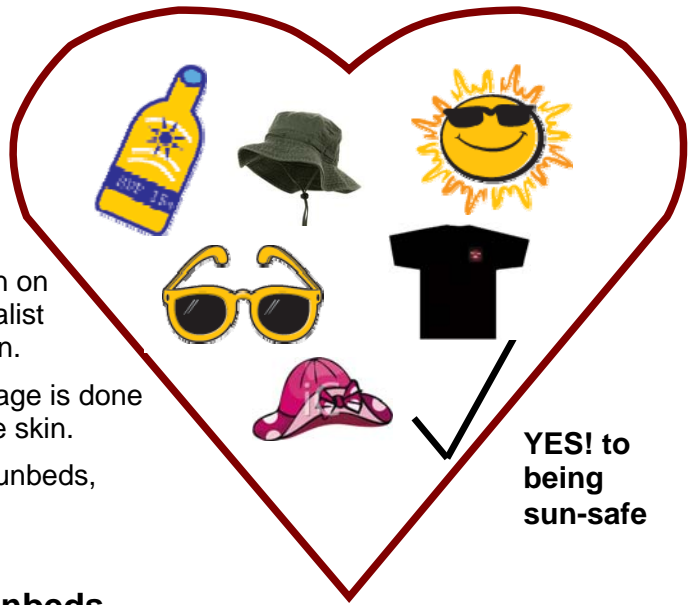


So when it is a sunny day, don't rush out. STOP, and put your sun block and your hat on.

Alick says "I'm wearing my hat!"



Well done to Marie Ward (above) for winning 1st prize in the raffle at the Skin Care Health Session



YES! to being sun-safe



NO! to sunbeds

Immunisation – the safest way to protect your child

STSG Community Health Workers met with Una Duffy, Assistant Director and Senior Public Health Nurse for Immunisation.

It is very important that your children will have all their vaccines, as there can be long term **DAMAGE** if they don't. You can call Una on 071-9155148 to arrange appointments at any time.

Don't hesitate to get your children vaccinated. "**You won't be sorry**".

Early Intervention Services, Nazareth House

STSG Community Health Workers, together with the Designated Public Health Nurse, Floraidh Dunn, recently met with Anita Owens, Manager for Early Intervention Services and Geraldine Cosgrove, Councillor for Special Needs. Nazareth House is located near st Michael's Family Centre.

Anita told us that Sligo is ahead of other parts of the country as it has all the services together in the one house so they can bring a team approach to looking after children with special needs. Children can have all their appointments on the one day in Nazareth House.