

Live & Learn - A Successful 2nd Year!

A summary of year two based on the external evaluation by Brigid Loughran

The second year of the five year Live & Learn 'Women's Centres Learning Partnership' has gone extremely well with the majority of our targets exceeded. A wide range of activities took place over the year to meet our Live and Learn Outcomes – these include: physical health; mental health; confidence, self esteem and employability; inclusion of women from ethnic minorities; and maths, English and family learning.

Year Two Outputs:

- 4,538 training places were provided to local women (exceeding the target by 139%).
- 2,163 new women were involved.
- At least 1,450 women progressed to other training in the centres (an increase of 11% from year one).
- The unit cost for year two is £47.05 per person per training place.

Beneficiary Experiences:

During the first two years of Live & Learn, the external evaluator has interviewed participants and staff at each centre. Six focus groups were held in year two for beneficiaries. Participant quotes include:

"This class is really good for your nerves. Concentrating on this and not dropping a stitch keeps you occu-

pied so you aren't concentrating on all the anxieties. I can't help it. The anxiety just comes and it won't go away for love or money. I've tried everything. But coming here definitely helps me and the other women. Especially the widow women who are on their own like me. There's company and stories to get caught up with and



Crochet Class, Shankill Women's Centre

patterns to keep in mind and your hands are busy and it's just the best therapy I know. (Crochet Class, Shankill Women's Centre)

"Coming to the Learning Lodge is really the only place where I can get 'me' time and an opportunity to meet up with other women and have a bit of fun. I travel 10 miles to get here and take two buses as there is nothing where I live and I live alone so it gets very lonely. It is the highlight of my week and I wouldn't miss it for the world. And it isn't just about 'beauty tips'. I have a health condition and the medication I am on affected my skin and coming here has helped me understand how tablets have an impact on your body. My skin has now cleared up." (Health and Beauty Programme, The Learning Lodge, Magherafelt)

"I have a job placement and improving my English and maths is a must to help me understand and to settle within the community. Coming here gives me more contact with other local women. When I get stuck about something during the week, I

write it down and we discuss it in the group and then I can understand what it has meant. And that helps us all.

I couldn't do that at the college and the confusion was terrible. I had nowhere to go with the confusion but here I get it all sorted out and my confusion is welcomed! It's just

great because it

makes my life start to be real instead of all mixed up." (Literacy & Numeracy Programme, Women's Centre Derry).

Further details across all areas of the project are contained in the Year 2 Evaluation Report produced by Brigid Loughran. **For a copy of the evaluation please contact WCRP at 028 9023 0212 or email info@wcrp.org.uk**

GREENWAY WOMEN'S CENTRE - SUPPORTING ETHNIC MINORITY WOMEN

October is Breast Cancer Awareness month. To support this important campaign, Greenway Women's Centre is hosting a breast cancer awareness event specifically targeting ethnic minority women as part of their Lottery Live & Learn activities.

Breast Cancer Care research shows that 56% of black and minority ethnic (BME) women don't check their breasts for changes because they don't know what to look for and that 45% of BME women who are of screening age (currently 50–70) have never attended a breast screening appointment.



Action Cancer Staff

Greenway hope to attract up to 70 women at their event taking place on 18 October 2011, working in partnership with Action Cancer and Women's Information Northern Ireland (WINI). There will be a range of information stands on the day and services relating to breast cancer care and general health. A Mobile Screening Service, provided by Action Cancer, will be onsite to provide access to breast screening, health checks, information and advice. Appointments will be available from 10am - 3pm.

FOYLE WOMEN'S INFORMATION NETWORK (FWIN) NW NETWORKING AND INFORMATION EVENT



L-R Lorna Porter, Strathfoyle Women's Centre; Geraldine Compton, Waterside Women's Centre; Donna McCauley, Derry Women's Centre / WCRP NW; and Katherine Robertson, WRDA

As part of Live and Learn FWIN recently held its annual information and networking event, working with our NW Women's Centres and a range of other organisations. Ninety three women attended the event to learn about services, support, advice and training that are available to them in the North West.

A variety of organisations from the NW and Donegal set up stands, distributed information and talked to the women to raise awareness about the services they have on offer. Women who attended the event also got the opportunity to avail of a variety of taster, complementary therapy sessions such as reflexology and massage.

The WCRP online prospectus <http://wcrpeducation.org.uk/> was also launched on the day.

The event was not only successful in raising awareness among women of the services available to them but also provided a good opportunity for the organisations to showcase the variety of education and learning programmes available for women, and to attract new women to their courses and events.