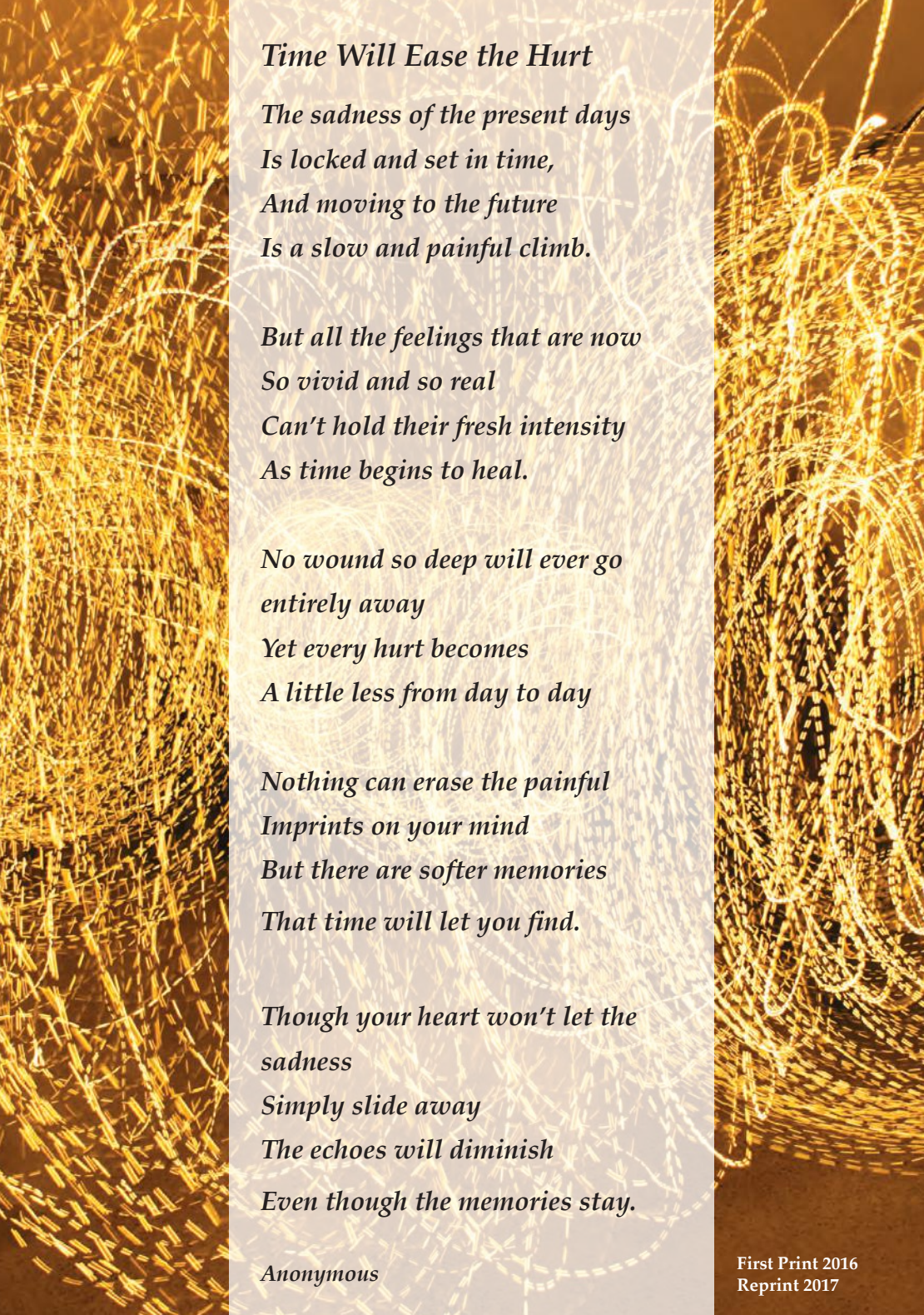


# Lighting the Way

West Cork

An information resource to support  
people who are bereaved through suicide



## *Time Will Ease the Hurt*

*The sadness of the present days  
Is locked and set in time,  
And moving to the future  
Is a slow and painful climb.*

*But all the feelings that are now  
So vivid and so real  
Can't hold their fresh intensity  
As time begins to heal.*

*No wound so deep will ever go  
entirely away  
Yet every hurt becomes  
A little less from day to day*

*Nothing can erase the painful  
Imprints on your mind  
But there are softer memories  
That time will let you find.*

*Though your heart won't let the  
sadness  
Simply slide away  
The echoes will diminish  
Even though the memories stay.*

*Anonymous*

First Print 2016  
Reprint 2017

A photograph showing the silhouettes of several people at night, with bright, glowing light trails around them, suggesting movement and light. The background is dark, and the light trails are in various colors, including yellow, orange, and blue.

# Acknowledgements

Many hands make light work, and so it is with this booklet. Special thanks to Lighting the Way West Cork Development Committee comprised of representatives from the following services:

An Garda Síochána, Bantry Bay Lions Club, Bandon Community Drugs and Alcohol Initiative, Cork South Community Work Department, Dunmanway Family Resource Centre, Skibbereen Community and Family Resource Centre, The Caha Centre, and West Cork Travellers.

External support and advice was provided by the Health Action Zone Community Health Worker Team based in the Cork North Community Work Department, HSE South. Additional support was provided by the Cork Kerry Community Healthcare Resource Officer for Suicide Prevention.

Thanks to the many organisations that provided information on the services included in this resource, detailing the variety of local supports available.

We would sincerely like to thank the National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP) for its funding of the creation of all 5 'Lighting The Way' Resources through its community resilience funding initiative, which was facilitated through the local Mental Health Manager's Office. Many thanks to Bantry ICA, Bantry Cheval, and Durrus Cheval for contributing to the funding costs for this publication. Additional funding was raised for a reprinted 2017 edition - thanks are offered to the following organisations and local services for making that possible: Durrus Cheval, The Bantry Charity Shop, Beara St. Vincent de Paul, Bantry Supervalu and The Curiosity Shop, Drimoleague. We would also acknowledge the kind donations received for reprinting from members of the public who wish to remain anonymous.

Special thanks to The Happiness Ensemble who worked with artist Tomasz Madajczak to produce a performance piece as well as a series of photographs exploring the concept of light and darkness. This project is entitled Through Light and Sound – Ritual. The photographic images produced as part of this project have been incorporated into the design of Lighting the Way West Cork. Thanks to West Cork Arts Centre for providing a space for the piece to be created and to West Cork Mental Health Services for supporting the process.

Bridín Ashe, Convenor of Lighting the Way West Cork Development Committee,  
Community Worker, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare.

# Lighting the Way

*“Even the darkest night will end and the sun will rise”*

Victor Hugo – Les Misérables



# Introduction

When someone close to us dies it may be one of the most difficult life experiences we ever have to face. When the death is through suicide, family, friends and communities must cope with the sadness of their loss plus all their additional heightened feelings like confusion, shock, blame, despair, fear, abandonment, guilt and anguish. It is possible to experience grief in many different ways and every individual's loss will be unique to them. For some people it will be important to talk to someone quite soon after the death. For others it may be a longer time. In the days and weeks following a death additional support may be needed and for those going through this heartbreaking time, information on the range of supports available is an essential contribution.

Lighting the Way is an information support for those bereaved or affected by suicide and it is also a resource for those working directly with individuals and families who have lost loved ones. The resource aims to improve the level of information and support in the community following a suicide and assist those bereaved in finding and accessing appropriate supports locally, regionally or nationally. Importantly, it also provides clear information on the process involved, both medically and legally, following a suicide.

This project represents the fourth edition of the Lighting the Way resource booklets to cover Cork City and County. The concept of Lighting the Way was originally developed in 2013 through the Health Action Zone Initiative, which is based in the Cork North Community Work Department. This resource represents a planned response to what started as a conversation around how supports could be improved in local communities to Cork City's Northside and developed as a response that was needed and valued in many communities around Cork City and County. Lighting the Way was designed as a project which could be rolled out to other areas and so there is a structure to its planning and development process starting with the formation of a multi agency/service development committee.

This fourth edition of Lighting the Way is a collaborative initiative between the Cork South and North Community Work Departments Cork Kerry Community Healthcare,



Health Action Zone Initiative, with An Garda Síochána, and representatives of key community and voluntary organisations. The geographical area of coverage around West Cork includes Bandon, Clonakilty, Bantry, Dunmanway, Skibbereen, Skull, Mizen Head and the Beara Peninsula as well as the West Cork Islands.

Lighting the Way was developed initially in response to specific actions outlined in Reach Out: Ireland's National Strategy for Action on Suicide Prevention 2005 - 2014. Connecting for Life: Ireland's new National Strategy to Reduce Suicide 2015 - 2020 has a vision which also encompasses and emphasises the continued support of persons, families and communities bereaved through suicide.

Lighting the Way is designed to be multi functional and used through a range of services locally, regionally as well as nationally including An Garda Síochána, frontline staff in the healthcare services, community services listed within the resource, in the provision of information and support to those bereaved by suicide. It continues to be an important resource to all those affected by a bereavement through suicide.

We know that the previous editions of Lighting the Way have proved invaluable and we feel confident that this resource will be as valuable to communities and services in West Cork.

**Sinead Glennon.**  
**Head of Mental Health Services,**  
**Cork Kerry Community Healthcare.**



**Please note:** the information in this booklet was accurate at the time of writing, but may be subject to change. The publishers and author(s) make no representation, expressed or implied, with regard to the accuracy of the information contained in this publication and cannot accept responsibility for any errors or omissions that may occur. Included in the booklet are some organisations/groups/services not in a funding arrangement with the HSE but who do offer supportive services for people who are bereaved. Inclusion of these organisations/groups/services does not imply endorsement by the HSE.



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# Following a Death

## Why the Gardaí are involved

In any event involving an unexpected death, including a suicide, the Gardaí are notified and an inquest will be held. In such instances the Gardaí are acting as Coroner's Officers and will enquire into the circumstances surrounding the death. They will inform the Coroner of the death and send him or her a report. The fact that uniformed Gardaí visit the relatives at their home or at the hospital does not mean that the death is regarded as suspicious. It will be necessary for them to take statements and have the body formally identified by a member of the family or relative of the deceased.

## The role of the Coroner

The Local Authority appoints the Coroner. To qualify for the position a person must be a practising Barrister, Solicitor or Registered Medical Practitioner (Doctor) of at least five years standing. In Ireland, it is a legal requirement that deaths from unnatural causes, including suicide, are reported to the Coroner. The purpose is to determine who died and the circumstances surrounding their death. To establish this, the Coroner may request a postmortem and, at a later stage, may call an inquest into the death.

## Support Tip

You can talk to your local Garda before the inquest and he or she can provide tips and links to support the family.

You can also ask questions during the inquest at the Coroner's Court.



## What is a Postmortem?

A postmortem is an internal and external examination of the body of the deceased, which takes place in a hospital and is performed by a Pathologist. It is usually carried out within twenty-four hours of the arrival of the body at the hospital. It is performed in a professional and sensitive manner. There is no visible disfigurement of the body.

### Support Tip

Some people find it helpful to discuss the postmortem results with their family doctor or arrange to meet the Pathologist who performed the postmortem and discuss the findings with him or her.

## Funeral Arrangements

A sudden or unexpected death, by its nature, denies relatives of the deceased the opportunity to say goodbye. The funeral gives families a chance to arrange and plan the service and say goodbye. Partaking in the funeral arrangements and deciding on such issues as the clothes in which the deceased will be dressed, the type of coffin and the time at which the removal will take place can achieve this. Some choices the family will have to make will be deciding where the body will repose.

By not rushing the funeral, taking time to come to terms with what has happened and being with the deceased, some sense of comfort may be experienced. Other families who have experienced a death by suicide have suggested that it is very important to spend time with the body. Even if family members do not wish to view the deceased, a vigil beside the closed coffin is often helpful. Other families emphasise the benefits of and comfort in having a public funeral. It allows them the opportunity to pay tribute to the life of their loved one. Funeral arrangements should not be made until the body is released to the spouse or next of kin, which usually takes place immediately after the postmortem examination has been completed.

## Support Tip

Funeral Directors can assist with all arrangements related to funerals from the more major concerns people will have around finances to maybe more minor details such as arrangements for music at the service. Talk to the Funeral Director about what you need and they will support you every step of the way.

## Financial Support for the Bereaved

Making funeral arrangements after losing a loved one can be difficult both emotionally and financially. Listed below are some options for financial supports which may be available to you.

### Funeral Directors

Funeral directors can arrange payment plans to cover funeral costs if required. They can also provide support when dealing with other financial institutions in the event that the bereaved person wishes to make arrangements with their bank or credit union. Funeral directors will signpost you to other sources of financial support if needed to cover funeral expenses and often do much of the communication for you.

### Banks

Each Bank has a bereavement support team who are there to help you in such difficult times. When a loved one or a close relative passes away you may need access to finances to pay funeral expenses for example. Learn about your bank's policy on releasing funds for things such as funeral expenses by looking on your bank's website where you will also find the relevant contact information to make appointments, access information you may need, or even download forms you may require to pay for funeral expenses.

## Department of Social Protection

A claim for assistance with funeral expenses under the Supplementary Welfare Allowance Scheme is operated by the Dept., of Social Protection and is referred to as an 'exceptional needs payment' subject to a means test. The primary consideration in determining that a payment is warranted is that there is an inability to pay the cost in part or in full by the family of the deceased person without causing hardship. The person applying for this should normally be resident in the area where application is made irrespective of where the funeral took place. There is an application form and accompanying verification needed e.g. Undertakers invoice, death certificate, copy of deceased will and any other documentation required by the Department of Social Protection. Contact your local Community Welfare Officer for more information.

## St. Vincent de Paul

On an emergency basis a request for financial assistance towards funeral costs can be made to your local SVP. This request for support is reviewed at a weekly SVP team conference where a decision will be made on how best to support the family. A person can contact the SVP regional office and speak, in confidence, with a member of SVP on 021 4270444 for further information and support with requests.

## Credit Union

If the bereaved person was a member of the Credit Union they may have availed of Death Benefit Insurance. It is designed to provide financial assistance following bereavement through the Credit Union's own insurance policy. Talk to the local Credit Union if you are having difficulty financially after bereavement, support may be available through the Death Benefit Insurance or other means.

## Death Certificate

The death cannot be registered until the postmortem report is received, which may take six weeks or longer. If the postmortem examination shows that death was due to natural causes, and there is no need for an inquest, a Coroner's Certificate will be issued to the Registrar of Births and Deaths who will then register the death and issue the death certificate. If death is due to unnatural causes, the Coroner is obliged to hold an inquest. The death will be registered by means of a Coroner's Certificate when the inquest is concluded (or adjourned in some cases).

Prior to the inquest being held, the Coroner's office will, on request, provide an Interim Certificate of the fact of death, which may be acceptable to banks, insurance companies and other institutions.

## The Inquest

An inquest is an inquiry in public by a Coroner, sitting with or without a jury, into the circumstances surrounding a death and can take place at any time from four weeks to possibly over twelve months after the death. The inquest will establish the identity of the deceased, how, when, and where the death occurred and the particulars which are required to be registered by the Registrar of Deaths. A Coroner is not permitted to consider civil or criminal liability; he or she must simply establish the facts. A verdict will be returned in relation to the means by which the death occurred. The range of verdicts open to a Coroner or Jury includes accidental death, misadventure, suicide, open verdict, and natural causes (if so found at the inquest). An inquest will not tell you why a person died by suicide. The Coroner will decide which witnesses should attend and in what order they will be required to give evidence. The Pathologist and Gardaí always give evidence at an inquest into a death suspected to be a suicide. Any person may give evidence which is relevant to the purpose of the inquest. Likewise, any person who has a lawful interest in the inquest may ask questions or be legally represented by a Solicitor or Barrister.

Such persons include:

- The family and next of kin of the deceased
- Personal representatives of the deceased
- Representatives of insurance companies

All inquests are held in public and reporters may be present. In practice, a minority of inquests are reported in the press. The Coroner is aware of the tragic circumstances and will endeavour to treat each one sympathetically. The existence of suicide notes will be acknowledged, but the contents will not be read out, except at the specific request of the next of kin and then only at the discretion of the Coroner. Every attempt is made to ensure that the inquest proceedings are not unduly intrusive on families concerned.

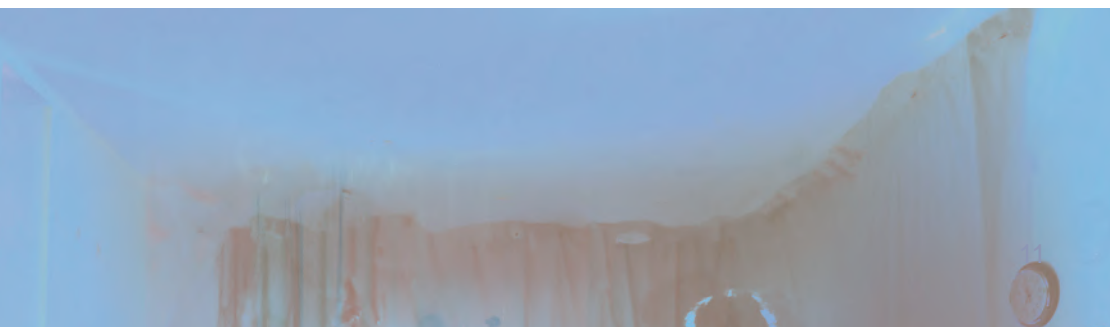
### What happens if a suicide note is left?

If a suicide note is addressed to a specific individual, the individual can collect the letter from the coroner's office. This must be done in person to ensure that it does not get lost in the post.

## Registration of the death

The death may be registered at any Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages office. The death can be registered in the council area where the person has lived or died.

A death must be registered in person and not by letter or telephone. If an inquest has been held the coroner will have registered the death within 5 days of the hearing and you will simply need to ask for a copy of the death certificate.



## Registration of the death

When registering the death you need to have the following:

- Full name of deceased
- The deceased's Personal Public Service (PPS) Number
- Sex, marital status, occupation and date of birth or age of the deceased
- Date and place of death
- If the deceased was a child, the occupation of the parent(s) or guardian(s)
- Medical Certificate of the cause of death

## Other Supports you may need

You may require support with a wide variety of issues after a death by suicide and in dealing with your loss over time as issues may emerge. Citizens Information Services are wide spread in every community in Cork City and County. You can access a wide ranging variety of supports and information here as well as limited advocacy support. See page P42 for more information about Citizens Information Services

*Grief is not a disorder, a disease or a sign of weakness. It is an emotional, physical and spiritual necessity, the price you pay for love. The only cure for grief is to grieve.*

*Earl Grollman*

# Dealing with the Loss



# Understanding your feelings

## *You can survive*

Know you can survive. You may not think so, but you can.

## *Deal with 'why'*

It is normal for people to struggle with 'why' it happened until you no longer need to know 'why' or until you are satisfied with not having all of your questions answered.

## *Overwhelming feelings are normal*

Know that you may feel overwhelmed by the intensity of your feelings but remember that all your feelings are normal. Feelings of anger, guilt, confusion and forgetfulness are common. Remember all of these feelings are normal: you are in mourning.

## *You may feel anger*

Be aware you might feel angry with the person who has taken their life, with the world, with God, with yourself. It's OK to express your anger in a safe way. You might feel guilty for what you think you did or did not do. Your guilt can turn into regret through forgiveness.

## *Find help if you have suicidal thoughts*

Having suicidal thoughts is common. It does not mean that you will act on these thoughts. However, get help if these thoughts are frequent or if you are thinking of acting on them. Remember to take one moment or one day at a time.

*No one ever told me that grief felt so much like fear.  
C.S. Lewis*



### *Tears are healing*

Let yourself cry if you want to. Find a good listener and call someone if you need to talk. Give yourself time to heal. (Remember there are many listening resources listed at the back of this book.)

### *It was not your choice*

Remember the choice was not yours. No one person is the only influence in another person's life. People are influenced and guided by many different things and people in their lives.

### *Expect setbacks*

Strong emotions can return from time to time. This is normal but it's a good idea not to make any major decisions when you're struggling with strong emotions.

## Reading Supports for Adults

There are a number of titles listed on page \_\_\_ which we recommend however there may be many others that suit your needs. Check out the **Your Good Self Programme** catalogue available in local libraries for recommend titles. More information on **Your Good Self** is available on page **77**

### **Online reading supports we recommend:**

[www.suicidesupportandinformation.ie](http://www.suicidesupportandinformation.ie) – This site provides evidence based information on bereavement following suicide and responding to people at risk of suicide. The information is tailored for people bereaved by suicide and for health professionals, including GPs and mental health professionals, as well as the general public.

[www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie) – The publication 'You Are Not Alone' is available to download under the publications section of the HSE website. This Lighting the Way publication along with all others in the series is also available to download on the [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie) website under publications.

## Types of Supports Available

While not everyone will need bereavement counseling or other types of supports, some may. Many people find the support they need by talking with their family and friends. If this is not the case for you then don't be afraid to seek another type of support that suits your needs.

### Therapeutic Group Work for those Bereaved by Suicide

These groups are organised in a more formal way and are facilitated by experienced counselors who facilitate participants in a more therapeutic way to help them navigate through their grief in a safe and gently paced way. Participants become more aware of elements of complicated grief after death by suicide where their grief reactions are normalised and supported. Often times these groups work with very small numbers and are a closed group format to enable a more intimate and safe environment to be fostered.

**Regional/National Support Services:** Pieta House Bereavement Services P61

**Local Support Service:** Clonakilty Bereavement Group P44

### Peer Support Suicide Bereavement Group

The transition for those left behind after a suicide can be very difficult. Following the funeral, many survivors are left on their own to grieve. While professional counseling is an option, many say they would also like to speak with someone who has been through a similar experience. A volunteer survivor usually facilitates informal community support groups and they provide a confidential and safe space for those who have experienced a loss by suicide to share and meet others who can understand and provide support. Sessions vary as determined by the needs of the group, but could include on-going and continuing support and assisting those with a recent loss.

## Listening Service Support

A listening service can be both a one to one and telephone support service. A telephone listening service offers an anonymous ear and confidentiality as well as ease of access. This type of service is provided by some organisations for people bereaved through suicide. Remember young people can also benefit from using listening services; Childline, through the ISPC, provide a one to one listening service run by trained volunteers. People accessing this type of service receive non-directive listening support. They can also access referrals/signposting to other statutory and voluntary services as necessary.

**Regional/National Support Services:** Aware P37, Samaritans P63, Pieta House P61

**Local Support Service:** West Cork Living Links P70

## Counselling Support

One to one Counseling provides the opportunities to reflect & talk through any concern or difficulty that you are experiencing, with an accredited counseling psychotherapist in a confidential, non-judgmental space. There are many counseling services in Cork City and County.

**Regional/National Support Services:** Pieta Bereavement Service P61, CIPC P35, Coisceim P45

**Local Support Service:** Lisheens House P59, Dunmanway FRC P48

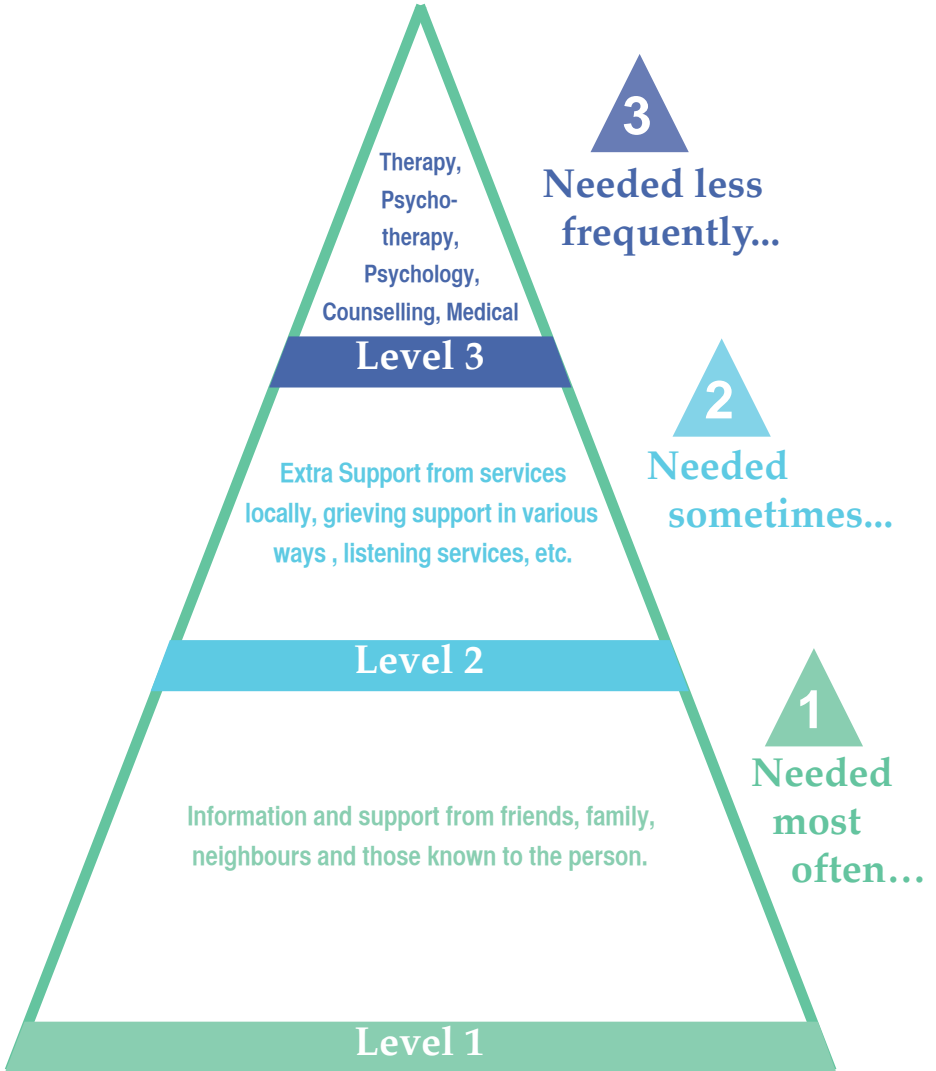
## Text Supports/Email Supports

Many services now offer a text or email support service. This type of contact is started with a text or email and maintained that way. This option of accessing support may suit some people and perhaps can develop into a person accessing other types of support after a time and as appropriate.

**Regional/National Support Services:** Samaritans P63, Aware P37 and Pieta House P61

# Pyramid of Bereavement Supports

*Types of supports most needed during and after bereavement*



3

## Needed less frequently

This type of support is specialised and provided by professionals (Psychotherapy, Psychology, Counselling, Medical type of supports). Some people develop complications or become stuck in their grieving process and this extra support may be required. Some community-based services directly provide these supports. There are also services in the community who provide this level of support but bring professionals in to do so if requested by individuals.

2

## Needed sometimes

Some people may need extra support processing their grief. This could be because of the additional traumatic nature of a death by suicide. It is generally short-term support but can be for longer also. Bereavement support groups, mental health groups and listening services can help. These supports, or information relating to such supports, is available from services across the community.

1

## Needed most often

Most people who are bereaved will find the support they need, practical help with tasks and social support from people around them such as family, friends and local services. Providing information and signposting people onto services they need is a role that many community service providers fulfil in the community. Professional training is not necessary but an awareness of the grieving process and the ability to listen is required.

## Caring for those bereaved

- Allow bereaved people to express the pain they may be feeling at this time.
- Allow them to talk about their loss as often and as much as they are able and want to.
- Do not avoid mentioning the death because of fear of reminding them about the pain. They will never forget.
- Let your genuine concern and caring show.
- Be available for them to talk.
- Talk about memories and the special qualities of the person who died.

## What can friends do?

Often friends may not know how to comfort and support someone who has been recently bereaved by suicide. These suggestions come from others who have lost a loved one to suicide and may be of assistance in helping friends to know what they can do.

- Keep in touch on a regular basis. Don't abandon your friend.
- There may be times when your offers of help are refused. Try again later. If you feel awkward because you don't know what to say, be honest - "I don't know what to say.. is there anything I can do?"
- Send a note - if you don't know what to say, you can just write "thinking of you".
- Offer to do something practical such as making a meal, paying bills or doing the shopping or washing.
- Offer to find out resources and information for them.
- Anticipate birthdays, holidays, anniversary dates and other celebratory events where the person's absence will be felt more keenly.
- Be kind to yourself. It can be draining to share your friend's loss. You also may be affected by this loss and have your own grief to deal with. Take time to do some special things for yourself.



## Common Questions

### *Why did it happen?*

When someone dies it is not uncommon for the bereaved to question why the person died and to try and understand why it happened and create some meaning of the event.

However, with suicide, the questions seem endless. Why did it happen? Why didn't he/she tell me how they were feeling? Did I really know him/her? Why did this happen to me? Why do I have to suffer so much? Am I the only one who feels that way?

All these questions are normal responses to a suicide and an honest attempt to create some meaning. However, suicide often does not make sense to the bereaved. That is why it is important to mind oneself after bereavement by suicide and get support to deal with the grieving process.

### *Will it get easier?*

Losing a loved one is always difficult and it takes time to grieve. If you allow yourself to grieve and address the challenges that suicide brings (e.g changes within the family, anger with the person who died by suicide or how you communicate about them) appropriately, it will get easier.

Dealing with the pain of the death and living your own life does not mean that you are forgetting or dishonouring the person who died. You do not need to be in pain to remember a loved one.

It may help to make contact with support services to help you in dealing with the immense pain that you are going through after a death by suicide.



### *What about medication, drugs and alcohol, do they help?*

After suicide emotions of sadness, anger, disgust, guilt or fear can be intense and sometimes overwhelming. Some people feel numb and others feel as if they are on an emotional rollercoaster. Therefore it can be helpful to discuss these emotions with your local GP, who can prescribe medication as a 'first aid' measure if necessary. Further on it may be helpful to speak to other professionals who are trained to deal with suicide bereavement, such as a counsellor or psychotherapist, as they can help you to work through the emotions and offer support throughout your grieving process.

Using alcohol or illegal drugs to escape the pain is not helpful as they will prolong and complicate your grief and add further problems to your situation.

### *Should I tell people if it was suicide?*

Sometimes it can be difficult to talk about the cause of death and people can be fearful of other people's reactions in relation to suicide.

Give yourself some time to think about what you want to say if being asked and how you can stay truthful to yourself and your relationships, whilst supporting yourself and acknowledging that you might have different needs at different stages of your grieving process.

It is important that you do whatever you feel comfortable with when talking about the death of your loved one.

Also remember, that if people know it was suicide they may be able to support you more adequately or may be able to point you in the right direction for support services that will be able to help you through this difficult time.



## *What do I say when people ask me how many people are in the family?*

This may be an awkward question for you. Your loved one will always be part of your life but it may be that you don't want to invite further questions. 'Do I include the person who has died or am I denying their existence if I don't include them?' Say whatever you are comfortable with. This may depend on who is asking the question and their reasons for it. It may also depend on how you are feeling that day.

## **Early grief and mourning**

### *Shock*

The death of someone close to you comes as a tremendous shock. When someone dies unexpectedly this shock is intensified and when someone takes their own life the shock can be particularly acute the days and weeks immediately following a death. Some experience it more severely and for longer than others.

### *Numbness*

Following the death of someone you have been close to, you may experience feelings of numbness. What has happened may seem unreal or dreamlike. The thought 'this can't really be happening' may recur. The numbness of early bereavement may itself be a source of distress and misunderstanding if one wonders, for example, why one cannot cry at the funeral. In fact, this numbness is only delaying emotional reactions and may be a help in getting through the practical arrangements. This feeling of numbness gradually wears off allowing you move on in the process of grieving.



## *Disbelief*

It is natural to have difficulty believing what has happened. Where a death was untimely and sudden it is even harder to grasp that the loss is permanent and real. While it is possible to “know” that a loved one has died, it can be difficult to “accept” and disbelief often surrounds the bereavement. A large part of you will resist the knowledge that the person who has died is not going to be around any more. Confusion, panic and fear are common during this struggle between “knowing” they have died and disbelief.

## *Searching*

Numbness and shock tend to give way to an overwhelming sense of loss. Many bereaved people find themselves instinctively “searching” for their loved one, even though they know that they are dead. This may involve calling their name, talking to their photographs, dreaming they are back or looking out for them amongst people in the street. This denial of a painful reality is a natural part of mourning. Realising that a death has really happened and is irreversible takes some time.

## *Anguish and pining*

The understanding that a loved one is really dead brings with it tremendous misery and sadness. As the loss begins to make itself felt, pining for the person who has died is common. Powerful and desperate longings – to see and touch them, to talk and be with them - may be felt. The intensity of emotions is often frightening and may leave the bereaved feeling devastated. Emotional pain is often accompanied by physical pain. It is common to go over and over what has happened, replaying things in your head or talking them through. The need to talk about a loved one, following their death, is part of the natural struggle to counteract their loss.

## *Physical and emotional stress*

Losing someone close to you is a major source of stress. This stress may show itself in both physical and mental ways. Restlessness, sleeplessness and fatigue are common. You may also have bad dreams. Loss of memory and concentration are common. You may experience dizziness, palpitations, shakes, difficulty breathing, choking in the throat and chest. Intense emotional pain may be accompanied by physical pain. Sadness may feel like a pain within. Muscular tension may lead to headaches, neck and backaches. Loss of appetite, nausea and diarrhoea are also common and women's menstruation may be upset. Sexual interest may also be affected. The physical effects of shock usually pass with time.

## **Myths and Facts About Grief**

**Myth:** *The pain will go away faster if you ignore it.*

**Fact:** Trying to ignore your pain or keep it from surfacing will only make it worse in the long run. For real healing it is necessary to face your grief and actively deal with it.

**Myth:** *It's important to 'be strong' in the face of loss.*

**Fact:** Dealing with loss is not easy. Emotions can be quite overwhelming and intense. Expressing these emotions for e.g. crying does not mean you are weak but will help you through the natural grieving process. You don't need to 'protect' your family or friends by putting on a brave front. 'Being strong' includes knowing what your needs are when dealing with loss and working through it. This may include speaking to your GP or seeking support services that will help you deal with your bereavement appropriately.

***'Being strong' does not mean suffering in silence!***

**Myth:** *If you don't cry, it means you aren't sorry about the loss.*

**Fact:** Crying is a normal response to sadness, but it's not the only one. Those who don't cry may feel the pain just as deeply as others. They may simply have other ways of showing it.

**Myth:** *Grief should last about a year.*

**Fact:** There is no right or wrong time frame for grieving. How long it takes can differ from person to person. It is important to mind yourself throughout the grieving process and consider outside support to help you through it.

*Try to remember:*

- You are NOT responsible for the death
- It takes time to heal
- The intense pain does not go on forever
- It does soften
- Gradually there will be more good days than bad days
- This does not mean you will forget and stop loving the person who died

## Helping children with grief

Children express their feelings differently to adults. It is normal for a child to appear as though everything is ok. It is important for children to know that they don't need to feel sad all of the time. Unlike adults, children grieve in "bits and pieces". Many of the fears that parents/caregivers have about causing greater distress for their children are not realised, as most children, even very young children, take the news in a "matter of fact way"

### *Talking to your child about suicide*

Often the first question that arises for a parent is "what should I tell my children about suicide?" Many parents/caregivers have had little experience talking with children about death let alone suicide, and are worried about how their children will react and how the news will affect their child in the

long-term. Parents often express great relief that they have spoken to their children about suicide.

- Be honest and consistent.
- Ask your child what death means to them, explain it to them and be sure they understand.
- Use simple language to explain suicide.
- Maintain routines and expectations such as bedtime, homework, sporting activities and playing with friends. This gives children a sense of consistency and security.

### *Suggested activities to do with young children*

- Create a memory box. Put mementoes of your loved one into a special box and look at them anytime.
- Look at pictures of past good times.
- Read together. Books can encourage understanding and discussion (see suggested reading page 76).
- Use a toy phone to talk about what happened.
- Draw or paint to show how you feel. You can make a 'feelings' book. Include some things that make you feel safe or loved. Put the date on each page to show how your feelings change as time goes on.

## Reading Supports for Children

There are a number of reading titles for children of varying age that will help a parent or carer to support a child through grief listed on page 76. We recommend you again refer to the Your Good Self Programme catalogue or indeed speak to the librarian in your local library for information on titles that are appropriate to the age of the child and type of loss or grief experienced.

### Online reading supports we recommend:

There are lots of online sources of information that can be helpful in difficult times. We recommend [www.childhoodbereavement.ie](http://www.childhoodbereavement.ie) for supportive information. The site contains factsheets that are downloadable around Children and Grief, an area with teachers resources and its supported through TUSLA and The Irish Hospice Foundation.

# Adolescence Grief and Loss

Adolescence is a time of great change in the life of a young person. Teenagers struggle with issues of identity and independence, as they try to bridge the gap between childhood and adulthood. When a death occurs their life can become very difficult. The most frequent deaths adolescents experience are those of parents, siblings or peers. The responses to their loss will depend on their age, the nature of the death, their relationship with the deceased, their personalities, how the family grieves and the changes the death creates in the family or life of the adolescent generally. Unlike young children, adolescents fully understand the concept of death; they know that death is final and inevitable. Each young person grieves in their own way. While there is no set formula to help them cope there are some more common reactions in bereaved adolescents which we can be mindful of.

## *Reactions in bereaved adolescents - they may:*

- mask their fears with rebellion, acting out their protest at what has happened
- exaggerate their maturity and mask their inability to cope
- be moody, negative and rebellious, feeling life has become very unfair
- use drugs or drink to numb the pain they experience
- express blame at anyone they feel might be responsible for the death
- drop out of their activities, lose enthusiasm and become disconnected
- try to find some meaning in the fact that they are powerless over what has occurred
- struggle in preparing for an uncertain future
- feel different from their peers and won't always want to talk
- use sport as a release, watch sad movies or read books on loss, giving them an excuse to cry

## *How can we help them?*

Adults who are willing and able to listen to teens, who accept their feelings as real and important and who model openness in discussing issues of life and death can be a resource to young people as they try to cope with loss and bereavement.

- we need to be present for them
- we need to listen to them and hear what they are not saying
- we need to give them time to unfold their struggles
- they may talk to another adult who can support them, they do this to protect parents from their pain
- it is important to be patient and not react to their responses to loss

While doing all of the things mentioned above is helpful and supportive, there may also be times when adolescents need additional help while they try to cope with grief and loss in their lives.

### *Adolescents need additional help if they are suffering:*

- panic, anxiety, fear or physical ailments without medical causes which interfere with life
- physical ailments that continue without identifiable medical causes
- prolonged feelings of guilt or responsibility for the death
- chronic depression, anger or hostility
- behaviour that is reckless and life-endangering to self or others
- prolonged changes in personality, personal appearance and/or behaviour
- consistent withdrawal from friends, family members and prior interests
- prolonged changes in sleeping patterns
- continuing problems with eating (overeating, under-eating, bingeing)
- drug/alcohol abuse or sexual promiscuity
- self-harming and or suicidal thoughts or actions

## Support Tip

Talk to your GP about any concerns you have about your children/teen following bereavement and in particular suicide bereavement. Further online sources of information and support can be found on page. The 'Your Good Self' catalogue in local libraries also has more titles around grief and loss, see page 76/77.



## Online Safety Resources and Support

We all use the Internet for so many reasons. It is one of the most powerful inventions ever created by mankind, one that must be respected and used responsibly. While being an informed parent and educator about technology is imperative to the safeguarding of young people online, we all play an important role in our community. Listening and keeping an open conversation with young people is at the heart of online safety education.

Encouraging a healthy digital life from an early age will nurture the idea of creating and maintaining an online presence that they are proud to own and a space that they can enjoy safely.

The websites below are useful resources that will answer many questions for you, information about the latest apps, social networks, games, new technology, safety, privacy, cyberbullying, sexting, security online and so much more.

**Webwise** is the Irish Internet Safety Awareness Centre, which provides information, advice, and tools to parents to support their engagement in their children's online lives. It provides teaching resources and advice on Internet safety topics including cyberbullying, social media, privacy and much more. [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie)

**Common Sense Media** improves the lives of kids and families by providing independent reviews, age ratings and other valuable information about all types of media. Everything you need to know about the latest movies, books, games, apps and social networks and much more.

[www.common sense media.org](http://www.common sense media.org)



**Connect Safely** is a non-profit organization dedicated to educating users of connected technology about safety, privacy and security. Here you'll find research based safety tips, parents' guidebooks (to snapchat, Instagram etc), advice, news and commentary on all aspects of tech use.

[www.connectsafely.org](http://www.connectsafely.org)

**Trend Micro's Internet Safety for Kids and Families Programme** offers complimentary Internet Safety talks as part of their global *Corporate Social Responsibility* commitments. If you would like a parent talk in your local community, please contact Trend Micro directly on 021 730 7300.

**An Garda Siochána** also offers a Garda Schools Programme, which is an initiative around educating parents and children about the procedures to follow for respectful online communication. Contact your local Garda for more information.

## Memorialising and Removal of Social Networking Accounts

People will usually want to do a couple of things if a person dies and they want to deal with social networking accounts and that is reporting an account to be 'memorialised' and removal of an account. Here are some steps that you can take with a number of social networking website to do this and while we cannot cover all social networking website, these are the larger and more popular ones.

**Facebook:** If a Facebook user has passed away Facebook will help you to memorialise or remove an account. Click on the question mark located at the top right hand side of Facebook. Type your request to either 'Memorialise an account' or type a key word like 'Deceased' into the search field entitled 'How can we help?' This will provide you with several questions and answers to assist you in memorialising and removal of the account.

**Instagram:** If you see an account on Instagram that belongs to someone who's passed away, you can report it to Instagram for memorialisation of that person. If you're a verified immediate family member you can request the account be removed from Instagram. To begin this process, go to <https://help.instagram.com/> and search 'Report a deceased person's account'

**Twitter:** In the event of death of a Twitter user, Twitter will work with a verified immediate family member of the deceased to have an account deactivated. To begin this process go to <https://support.twitter.com/> and enter 'Removal of a deceased users account' into the search bar as highlighted below.

**Google:** They do recognize that many people pass away without leaving clear instructions about how to manage their online accounts. Google can work with immediate family members and representatives to close the account of a deceased person where appropriate. To begin this process, go to Google and enter 'Submit a request regarding a deceased user's google account' into a search bar.

**Snapchat:** They do not currently allow you to nominate a digital guardian or legacy contact as Facebook does (see tip box below), your account simply becomes inactive with time, as your content isn't saved on Snapchat for a long enough duration of time, being viewed after death would not be a concern.

## Support Tip -

What is a legacy contact?

A legacy contact is someone you choose to look after your account if it is memorialised, some people will have done this and it's recommended that we all do this to make dealing with social networks easier for our loved one if we are not around. Facebook allows this nomination and other social networks may also do so it's worth checking.

# Community Supports






## Introduction

There are many organisations, services and information providers that can support people through a bereavement by offering support and understanding on the wide range of issues connected to suicide. These supports range from signposting to information, listening services to counselling and medical type supports.

This section contains a list of community services, organisations and groups who can provide various levels of support, access to activities and connections with supportive groups. Becoming involved in a group or activity can be a great support in itself.

Several national organisations facilitate bereavement/mental health specific groups in your local community. These groups provide a safe setting where free expression of grief is acceptable, confidentiality is observed and compassion and non-judgemental attitudes prevail.

If you are looking for a specific level of support such as one-to-one counselling or an informal listening service please note the triangular symbols, which indicate what different services can offer in the community (see Pyramid of Bereavement Support p14 for more information)

-  **1** Needed most often...
-  **2** Needed sometimes...
-  **3** Needed less frequently...

# Health Services

## Your GP/Primary Care and Mental Health Services

In Ireland the main route to accessing all health services is through your GP in what is called a Primary Care setting. GP/Primary Care Services manage a lot of mental health needs and this is where an initial assessment is completed. If a person's needs are more complex or a person needs more support the GP can refer into the Community Mental Health Team (CMHT).

The local CMHT consists of the following: Team Co-ordinator, Consultant Psychiatrists, Non Consultant Hospital Doctors, Community Mental Health Nurses, Occupational Therapists, Social Workers, Psychologists and Clinical Nurse Specialists for Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) / Psychotherapy and a Home Focus Team (HFT).

The CMHT provides a wide range of assessment, treatment, care and therapies which include mental health assessments, psychological assessments, occupational and social needs assessments. The CMHT and HFT can also provide home visits if needed.

The Home Focus Team is a Recovery-Orientated Assertive Outreach Programme for service users. They have a person centred approach, working with service users in their homes and in their communities assessing needs which both support and facilitate a person's recovery.

The Open Dialogue Clinic in Bantry offers assessment and treatment that includes service users, their support network (family and friends) and mental health professionals. This approach promotes shared communication, reflection on current needs and helps develop collaborative solutions. This clinic is only open to GP referrals from the Bantry area.

# Counselling in Primary Care (CIPC)

## *What is available*

People sometimes experience difficulties in life with which they would like help. Counselling in Primary Care (CIPC) is a short-term counselling service that provides up to 8 counselling sessions with a professionally qualified and accredited Counsellor/Therapist. The service is suitable for people who are experiencing certain difficulties such as: depression, anxiety, panic reactions, relationship problems, loss issues, stress.

## *How it works*

The referrer sends in the referral form and you phone to opt in to the service. The referral is reviewed by the Counselling Coordinator. When an appointment space becomes available a counsellor will contact you.

**Referral process:** Referred by GP or Primary Care team member

**Waiting time:** Varies



021 468 1006



[www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)



9am to 5pm Mon- Fri



Over 18



Medical card holders only



Depends on location



Yes to access parking depends on location



No childcare available

1

2

# Anam Chara

## Parental and Sibling Bereavement Support

### *What is available*

Anam Cara is an all-Ireland organisation founded by bereaved parents to ensure families have access to information and support. We provide a range of bereavement support services, the main one in West Cork being monthly meetings in Bantry which give you a chance to meet other bereaved parents in a safe and comfortable environment. We offer peer support and understanding to parents who have experienced the death of a child, including by suicide. We also offer resources such as our Information Pack and our online videos.

### *How it works*

Our online and face-to-face services are available to all parents, no matter what the age or circumstances of your child's death, or whether the death was recent or not. At Anam Cara we focus on the similarities of our loss rather than the differences. We provide a level of support and understanding that others cannot offer. Our bereavement as parents unites us.

**Referral process:** Please call our Information Line on 085 288 8888 for details about the next West Cork meeting.



HCL House, Second Avenue, Cookstown Industrial Estate, Tallaght, Dublin 24



085 288 8888



info@anamcara.ie



anamcarabereavement



www.anamcara.ie



9am to 5pm (leave a message anytime for call back)



All ages



Free and for as long as needed



Yes



Yes



No childcare available

# Aware

## What is available

Aware is a nationwide organisation that supports individuals affected by depression or bipolar disorder, and their relatives. Support services include: 37 Nationwide Support Groups, Support Line and Support Mail. Education services include free programmes for adults (Life Skills – group and online options and a Relatives & Friends programme), free secondary school programmes (Life Skills in Schools, Beat The Blues Talk), and a Wellness@Work programme. Extensive information on depression, bipolar disorder, Aware services and self-help tips are available at [www.aware.ie](http://www.aware.ie)

## How it works

If a person wants to attend one of the Aware groups they operate in various locations: Cork Support Groups: Inniscarraig Centre, Western Road, Cork City, every Tuesday and Thursday at 8pm and Relatives Information on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month at 8pm. The Support Line operates 10am-10pm, 365 days a year. Support Mail also operates 365 days a year and all emails are answered within a 24 hour period. Life Skills programmes run several times a year and people are invited to register online at [www.aware.ie](http://www.aware.ie).

If a person needs support around a bereavement through suicide we would offer what support we can in groups and signpost to a more appropriate service if needed. There is no wait time for the support groups, all are welcome and no referral is necessary.



**Aware Support Line**  
1800 804 848 (Freephone)



[support@aware.ie](mailto:support@aware.ie)



[www.aware.ie](http://www.aware.ie)



10am–10pm 7 days a week



**Adults 18 +**



**No Charge**



**Yes: Pedestrian & Vehicle access via the Western Road**



**Yes**



**No childcare available**

# Bandon Community Drugs and Alcohol Initiative

## What is available

The Bandon Community Drugs and Alcohol Initiative supports young people in the Bandon and wider West Cork area who are experiencing problems in their lives as a result of drugs and alcohol. Services offered include assessments, brief interventions, care planning, key working, case management, counselling, harm reduction, family support, education, information and onward referral where necessary.

## How it works

While the project is drug and alcohol specific, bereavement and loss are common issues for service users and sometimes a contributory factor to their drug and alcohol misuse. In the case of a service user being bereaved by suicide, the worker will assess the young person's needs and refer on to a suitable service if necessary.

**Referral process:** Self referral, family member, a concerned person or friend, GP or other drug and alcohol service. **Waiting time:** None (Counselling services may have a waiting time)



Room 6, Town Hall,  
North Main Street,  
Bandon



086 825 1215  
023 8820721



None



None



9am – 5pm Mon-Fri



Service for ages 14+



Free



Available at rear of building



Yes



No childcare available



# Family Support & Community Well Being Bandon

## *What is available*

Family Support & Community Wellbeing Bandon has information, supports and services which are made available to all individuals, families and community groups that call to the centre. We offer:

Information and referrals, counselling service, job seekers clinic, tenancy/homeless support clinic, low cost yoga, walking group, play therapy, HSE wellbeing courses, meditation, auricular acupuncture, light therapy, women's group, community gardening, young mothers group and a HSE primary health care clinic.

## *How it works*

Family Support & Community Wellbeing Bandon has an open door policy. It is a confidential service. We would offer the person access to existing programmes in the centre and also signpost them to more specific services such as West Cork Living Links in Bandon and the other national organisations

**Referral process:** Self-referral

**Waiting time:** We operate an open door policy.



76 South Main Street,  
Bandon



023 88 68107



info@cfsbandon.com



9.30am-4.30pm Mon- Thurs  
9.30am-1.30pm Fri



All ages



None



Street Parking



No



No childcare available

1

2

3

# Beara West Family Resource Centre

## *What is available*

Beara West Family Resource Centre provides a range of information and support for individuals and families in the community. Current supports include: one-to-one support, a telephone support line for older people, Senior Alert Scheme, and linkages with local organisations and agencies. Among the services offered is low cost counselling which is provided by outside counsellors.

## *How it works*

If someone is bereaved by suicide, we give a warm welcome to the person and offer one-to-one support. This could take the form of listening, talking, or referral to counselling and/or other appropriate services such as Beara Bereavement Awareness.

**Referral process:** A person can self refer. Voluntary and statutory agencies can also make referrals. **Waiting time:** No waiting time to meet Centre staff.



No/4 The Courtyard,  
Bank Place,  
Castletownbere



All ages



028 70998  
083 1599748



Free



info@bearawestfrc.ie



Available



Beara West Family Resource  
Centre



Yes



9am-1pm Mon-Fri



No childcare available

# The Caha Centre

## What is available

The Caha Centre is a Family Resource Centre providing support in the communities of Ardigole, Ardgroom, Lauragh & Tuosist on the Beara Peninsula.

Supports available include:

- Low cost (or no cost) counselling
- Parent and toddler groups
- Childcare
- Education and recreational classes
- Men's and women's groups
- Older people's activities
- Coffee mornings
- Parenting programme
- Information and support provision
- After schools groups

The programme of work for the centre is based on need in the community so we are always open to suggestions or ideas of new ways or groups which can support people.

## How it works

Members of the communities we serve can contact us or call in for support following a bereavement. A member of staff will be happy to meet with you. We can also assist you with finding appropriate information and can refer you to supports such as counselling which are tailored to your particular needs.

**Referral process:** Self-referral or can be referred by an organisation/person.

**Waiting time:** Usually no waiting time to talk with staff. For counselling waiting time is based on the availability of the counsellor which is often within 1 week.



Adrigole, Beara



All ages



027 60909



Based on people's ability to pay



thecahacentre@gmail.com



Yes



thecahacentre



Yes



9.30am – 5pm Mon-Thurs  
9.30am – 4pm Friday



Childcare available

# Citizens Information Service West Cork



## *What is available*

West Cork Citizens Information Service provides a free, independent and confidential information, advice and advocacy service. It has offices in Bantry and Macroom as well as providing weekly services in Bandon, Clonakilty & Dunmanway.

Citizens Information staff are there to assist you when you need help to access your rights and entitlements, particularly at times where you may be experiencing upheaval or change in your life. Staff are available to provide information, advice and advocacy on a variety of topics.

## *How it works*

In relation to the death of someone who dies in Ireland and to bereavement, help can be provided around the following issues: registering a death; what happens to the deceased's estate; and money matters after death. Assistance can be provided to access counselling or support services for the bereaved person. Information and assistance can be provided re accessing social welfare payments if required. Staff are also available to provide assistance with completing forms and writing letters. Where appropriate, our advocacy service will support you with social welfare and employment rights appeals.

**Referral process:** To access the service: drop-in or telephone the offices in Wolfe Tone Square, Bantry or South Square, Macroom. Drop-in to our weekly services in Bandon, Clonakilty & Dunmanway. You can telephone the West Cork Citizens Information help-line, 0761 07 8390, which connects you to the Bantry office or email [bantry.cic@citinfo.ie](mailto:bantry.cic@citinfo.ie).

**Waiting time:** No appointment is required and the service is free and confidential.



### Bandon CIC

c/o St Michael's Centre,  
South Main Street,  
Bandon,



076 107 8390



Every Thursday  
10am-1pm 2pm- 5pm

### Bantry CIC

Wolfe Tone Square  
Bantry

Mon, Tues, Thurs 10am-1pm &  
2pm -5pm  
Wed, 10am-5pm  
Fri 10am - 4pm

### Clonakilty CIC

16, Rossa Street  
Clonakilty

Every Wednesday  
10am-1pm 2pm-4pm

### Dunmanway CIC

Ross House  
Dunmanway

Every Second Wednesday  
(Fortnightly)  
10am-1pm

### Macroom CIC

South Square  
Macroom

076 107 8430

Mon, Tues, Weds, Thurs  
10am-1pm 2pm-5pm  
Friday Closed



[bantry.cic@citinfo.ie](mailto:bantry.cic@citinfo.ie)



All ages



No cost



Varies, call for details



Depends on location



[www.citizensinformation.ie](http://www.citizensinformation.ie)



No childcare available

# Clonakilty Bereavement Group

## *What is available*

Clonakilty Bereavement Group provides a support system to work through grief. Here we feel understood, listened to, encouraged to look inward at our own inner strengths. Listening to others helps us to get in touch with our own grief. It gives us the freedom to experience our own pain, which with time helps us to recover and lead a full and rewarding life. A support group is a safe and secure place in which to process our grief.

## *How it works*

Clonakilty Bereavement Group provides a six week course either spring or autumn and both are conducted in the Parish Centre in Clonakilty in the evening time. Once the course dates are set it is then advertised locally in the papers and the Parish newsletter.

**Referral process:** Phone to book a place on the course

**Waiting time:** Twice yearly course spring/autumn



086 804 7701



No charge

# Coiscéim

## *What is available*

Coiscéim is part of the Social and Health Education Project (SHEP) and provides low cost counselling / psychotherapy for individuals, and a limited service for couples and under 18's. Counselling provided covers a broad range of issues e.g. bereavement, coping difficulties, depression, difficulty in relationships, bullying, low self-esteem/confidence, stress etc. Coiscéim counsellors are based in different locations throughout Cork City & County & Kerry. There are a number of counsellors working out of different areas in West Cork and Coiscéim has good relationships with many services in the West Cork Region.

## *How it works*

On calling our office your name and number will be taken. Our referral counsellor will call you back and take some details to help her to refer you to a counsellor who would best suit your needs. Together you will agree a fee that you can afford, the location/day and times which best suits you. Having chosen and spoken to a counsellor who has agreed to see you the referral counsellor will then call you back giving you the name and number of your counsellor. The counsellor will then ring you to set up an agreed appointment time.

**Referral process:** Self referral or through another health professional

**Waiting time:** 3-6 weeks



Varies



**Adults, limited service for couples and under 18's.**



021 466 6180  
087 799 8602



**Based on ability to pay**



socialandhealth@eircom.net



Yes



www.socialandhealth.com



Yes



9am-1pm + 2-5pm Mon-Fri



**No childcare available**

# Community Welfare Office

## Department of Social Protection

### Supplementary Welfare Allowance

#### *What is available*

A claim for assistance with funeral expenses under the Supplementary Welfare Allowance Scheme is operated by the Department of Social Protection. Entitlement to an exceptional needs payment for funeral expenses is subject to a means test. The primary consideration in determining that a payment is warranted is that there is an inability to pay the cost in part or in full by the family of the deceased person without causing hardship. The person applying for payment should normally be resident in the area where the application is made irrespective of where the funeral took place. The person applying for assistance must complete an application form and supply accompanying verification which may include undertakers invoice, death certificate, copy of deceased will and any other documentation required by the Department of Social Protection.

#### *How it works*

Application forms are available from all Community Welfare offices and INTREO offices of the Department of Social Protection.

**Referral process:** Self referral

**Waiting time:** No waiting time to make an application. Application is usually assessed within seven working days.



Community Welfare Office,  
Hospital Gds., Skibbereen



028 40423/24.



[www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie).



9am–5pm Mon-Fri



Over 18



No Charge



Yes



Yes



No childcare available



# Cork Gay Community Development Company LTD

## What is available

The Cork Gay Community Development Company is a community development organisation working with gay and bisexual men and their families in Cork city and county. We at the project offer activities such as drop in, education programmes, a number of different support and social groups throughout the city and county.

We also offer confidential support through our involvement with the National LGBT Helpline on 1890 929 539 or at [www.lgbt.ie](http://www.lgbt.ie)

## How it works

People access the service for different reasons including the struggle of family members with their sexual orientation, support around sexual health and mental health issues. The project will signpost to appropriate services around bereavement support and specifically bereavement through suicide if more support outside of groups and services is needed.

**Referral process:** Self referral

**Waiting time:** No waiting time, just drop in



4 South Terrace, Cork



021 430 0430  
087 638 1578



[info@gayprojectcork.com](mailto:info@gayprojectcork.com)



[www.gayprojectcork.com](http://www.gayprojectcork.com)



10am-6pm Mon-Sat



Service for gay and bisexual men and their families



No charge for services but donations accepted



On street parking



Yes



No childcare available

# Dunmanway Family Resource Centre

## What is available

Dunmanway Family Resource Centre (DFRC) offers a range of support services for families and members of the community. A low cost counselling service is provided by external counsellors who use the DFRC space for their sessions.

External agencies supporting people bereaved by suicide use the space for group meetings on occasion.

## How it works

Individuals over 18 seeking counselling supports are given the contact details of the counsellors using the DFRC space as well as other counselling services and support groups. Individuals are given the facilities to call the counselling service in a private space. Individuals under 18 are provided with contact details for supports for their age group and are supported in contacting a parent/guardian.

Any individual at risk of suicide/expressing suicidal thoughts is taken through our suicide action plan. Contact with family members, GP, Garda and psychiatric services may be made on behalf of the individual if required.

**Referral process:** Individuals can self-refer. Most of our services are universal and families and individuals participate as desired. Any external statutory, voluntary agency or GP can refer an individual or family for support.

**Waiting time:** None for family support and signposting services.



Kilbarry Road, Dunmanway



All ages



023 88 56818



No charge for Family Support services  
Low cost counselling



info@dunmanwayfrc.com



Available



www.dunmanwayfamily  
resourcecentre.ie



Yes



9.30am-3.30pm Tues -Thurs  
Counselling – as required



No childcare available

# Dzogchen Beara Care Centre



## What is available

The Care Centre is purpose-built to provide a sense of space and relaxation. Guests are welcome to stay for a break to renew their energy and inspiration in their own way or to avail of the support of our Spiritual Care team.

We offer planned Care Breaks for guests who are:

- facing long-term or life-limiting illness
- grieving the loss of a loved one
- living with a disability
- needing a break from being a carer
- experiencing difficulties in relationships
- experiencing stress or burn-out.

## How it works

Guests can enjoy a break in their own way and are welcome to attend the free guided practices of meditation and Loving Kindness offered daily. They can also meet with a member of the Spiritual Care team on a one-to-one basis. The team offers support through listening and companionship, and through guidance in simple meditations and contemplations, helpful for loss and grief. We also offer residential weekend programmes, specially designed for those who are personally experiencing bereavement. While the practices introduced come from the Buddhist tradition they are universally meaningful, even for those with a secular outlook.

**Referral process:** Guests who wish to have a supportive care break are asked to phone in advance to discuss their wishes and expectations with the resident Care Coordinator. There is no charge for this service; guests pay only for their accommodation and food. We offer financial assistance (supported by donations) for people who need help to cover their costs.

There is a simple application process for assistance. **Waiting time:** None (dependant on room vacancies.) Places limited on weekend bereavement programmes



Allihies, West Cork



027 73370



care@dzogchenbeara.org



www.dzogchenbeara.org



N/A



Adults 18+



Charge for accommodation and food only (financial assistance available)



Yes



Fully wheelchair accessible



No childcare available

# Foróige



## What is available

Foróige enables young people to involve themselves consciously and actively in their own development and in the development of the community. Foróige engages young people aged 10 – 18 in its clubs, programmes and activities, to facilitate their growth and development. Young people attend to access services provided and to be in a safe and caring environment where they will be respected.

In West Cork Foróige operates Youth Projects in Bandon, Kinsale and Castletownbere, employing Youth Officers. There is also a very strong network of Foróige Clubs all over West Cork that are run by volunteers and meet up once a week.

## How it works

The bereaved person will usually be known to staff and volunteers of Foróige. The young person will meet with the youth worker / volunteer that they trust. From there, the young person can be supported through the bereavement in a group setting, in a one-to-one or through peer support. If the young person is in the need of extra support, they will be referred to a more appropriate service.

**Referral process:** Sometimes people will self-refer or drop into our service. Schools at times call us as does the HSE or Gardaí can sometimes call about a young person getting involved.

**Waiting time:** Drop in or phone the Youth Worker in your area



See opposite page



See opposite page



foroige



www.foroige.ie



Flexible Hours



Services for young people aged 10 - 18



None to minimum



On street parking available



Depends on service



No childcare available



**Bandon GYDP**  
21 Deerpark, Bandon

Marie O Connor  
Valerie Wongkumad



marie.oconnor  
@foroige.ie  
valerie.wongkumad  
@foroige.ie



086 045 5012  
086 780 0091

**Kinsale GYDP**

Fiona Callinan

fiona.callinan  
@foroige.ie

086 008 1174

**Beara Youth Dev.  
Project, The Square,  
Castletownbere**

Gwen O'Donovan  
Tina O'Callaghan

gwen.odonovan  
@foroige.ie  
tina.ocallaghan@  
foroige.ie

086 384 1066  
086 822 2656

**West Cork Regional  
Youth Officer**

John Dennigan

john.dennigan  
@foroige.ie

086 979 5199

**Bandon Community  
Drugs Initiative**  
Room 6 Town Hall  
North Main Street  
Bandon

Julie Cummins

julie.cummins  
@foroige.ie

086 825 1215

# The GAA

## *What is available*

There are approximately 275 GAA clubs in Cork focused on promoting Gaelic games including Hurling, Camogie and Gaelic Football. Your local GAA club is often at the heart of the community and can be a great place to seek support. GAA clubs are actively involved in the area of Health and Wellbeing and many clubs now have a Health and Wellbeing Officer who can help a member looking for support.

## *How it works*

The Club Health and Wellbeing Officer will guide someone who has been bereaved by suicide to appropriate local services where necessary. The Club Health and Wellbeing Officer is supported by the wider club structures and the Cork GAA County Health and Wellbeing Committee. There are a number of GAA specific resources available to support club members and the wider community in times of difficulty and need. Please check with your club secretary for contact details of your Health and Wellbeing Officer. Samaritans are the official mental health partner of the GAA and are available 24 hours a day to offer emotional support. (See page XX for further information on Samaritans.)



**Local GAA club**



**County Health and Wellbeing Committee**  
**Noel O'Callaghan (Chair)**  
 086 259 4421  
**Janas Harrington**  
 (Secretary) 087 417 5353



**chair.hwc.cork@gaa.ie**



**All ages**



**No charge**



**Depends on location**



**Depends on location**



**No childcare available**

# The Grace Centre

## *What is available*

The Grace Centre is an interdenominational community centre which offers affordable counselling in Clonakilty and provides meeting rooms for various community groups. The Centre is run by a volunteer committee and can be contacted by phoning the contact number below.

## *How it works*

If a person has been bereaved by suicide, they can call the Centre and leave a message, stating that they want to access counselling and leaving their own contact number. One of the Centre counsellors will return the call and will then make an appointment to meet as soon as possible.

**Referral process:** Self referral

**Waiting time:** The person will be called back from the Centre within a few days at the most. Waiting time for counselling is usually within a week



Sand Square,  
Clonakilty



087 4025911



bernieoshea@gmail.com or  
eileenmcs@eircom.net



As required



All ages



Whatever the person can  
afford



Yes



Depends on location



No childcare available

1

2

# GROW

## *What is available*

GROW is a mental health organisation which helps people who have suffered, or are suffering, from mental health problems. Members are helped to recover from all forms of mental breakdown and emotional turmoil, or to prevent such happening. GROW holds regular meetings throughout Ireland.

## *How it works*

GROW members attend a weekly meeting lasting about two hours, during which a specific group method is followed which enables them to learn a practical psychology of mental health, known as the GROW Programme. People can just come along to the meetings, where they will be given a warm welcome. Meetings in West Cork:

Monday 7.30pm in Droumleigh Resource Centre (behind Bantry Hospital), Bantry.

Thursday 8pm, Myross Wood, Leap, in the M.S.C. Grounds.

**Referral process:** Self referral **Waiting time:** None



**Cork GROW Office, 1st Floor, 34 Grand Parade, Cork**



**Info line: 1890 474 474  
Cork Office: 021 427 7520**



**southernregion@grow.ie**



**www.grow.ie**



**Info line: 9am-1pm  
Cork Office: 9am-2pm  
Mon - Fri**



**Service for adults 18+**



**No cost**



**Yes**



**No, Myross Woods  
Yes, Bantry**



**No childcare available**



# Irish Farmers Association Cork

## *What is available*

The I.F.A. farm family and social affairs committee represents the interests of farm families at national and local level to improve the welfare of rural people in relation to education, health and social security.

The farm family group address issues including pensions, spouse pensions, child benefit, fair deal scheme and the promotion of better health including mental health for rural families.

## *How it works*

In relation to issues of suicide and bereavement we talk with people and refer them on to suitable professional support services such as Pieta House.

**Referral process:** Self-referral

**Waiting time:** We respond to queries as soon as possible, usually within a day.



Technology Centre,  
Curraheen Road,  
Bishopstown, Cork



021 454 5944



cork@ifa.ie



www.ifa.ie



930am-5.30pm Mon - Fri



Service for adults 18+



None



Yes



Yes



No childcare available

# Library Services County Cork



## What is available

The Library service operates through 28 branches and 4 mobile libraries throughout Cork County. It offers a full range of services, lending adult and children's materials as well as a reference and local studies service. You may borrow fiction and non fiction ranging from current best sellers to biographies as well as books on grief/loss/bereavement. You can also borrow dvd's, books on CD, large print editions as well as access to a wide range of e-books, e-audiobooks, e-magazines and a huge variety of courses and language learning sources. We also offer free wifi, as well as computers with internet access.

Your Good Self, the award winning positive mental health programme, run in conjunction with the HSE, is now set up in 13 branch libraries and materials from the programme are available through all service points. In West Cork, the Branches include Bandon, Bantry, Skibbereen and Dunmanway. Further details can be found on [www.corkcoco.ie/library](http://www.corkcoco.ie/library).

## How it works

If you want to borrow a book about a topic such as grief/bereavement, we have a selection of books to suit adults and children. These can be found in our Your Good Self collection and have been reviewed by HSE Psychologists. If a book isn't available, please ask the staff to request it from another branch. If you have any queries please ask – we are there to help. The library is free of charge and very easy to join: just bring a proof of identity and proof of address along to your local branch or mobile library. You can borrow up to 10 items for 2 weeks. Libraries, mobile library stops and opening times can all be found at [www.corkcoco.ie/library](http://www.corkcoco.ie/library)



**Open to everyone**



**No membership fees but charges apply for printing**



**[www.corkcoco.ie/library](http://www.corkcoco.ie/library)**



**Parking available**



**[corkcocolibrary](https://www.facebook.com/corkcocolibrary)**



**Yes**



**[corkcolibrary](https://twitter.com/corkcolibrary)**



**No childcare available**



<b>Bandon</b> Shopping Centre, South Main St	023 88 44830	bandon.library @corkcoco.ie	9.30am-5.30pm Tues-Sat
<b>Bantry</b> Bridge Street,	027 50460	bantrylibrary @corkcoco.ie	9.30am-5.30pm Tues-Sat
<b>Castletownbere</b> The Square	027 70233	castletownbere library @corkcoco.ie	10.30am-1pm Tues-Sat 2pm-5.30pm Wed & Fri
<b>Clonakilty</b> Old Mill, Kent Street	023 88 34275	clonakilty.library @corkcoco.ie	9.30-5.30pm Tues-Sat
<b>Dunmanway</b> The Square	023 88 55411	dunmanwaylibrary @corkcoco.ie	9.30-5.30pm Tues-Sat
<b>Oilean Chleire</b>	028 41006	cleirelibrary @corkcoco.ie	3-5.30pm Wed & Thurs 11am-1pm Fri 1pm-4pm Sat
<b>Schull</b> Main Street	028 28290	schull.library @corkcoco.ie	2.30-5.30pm Tues, Thurs, Fri 9.30am-1pm & 2-5.30pm Wed 9.30am-1.30pm Sat
<b>Sherkin Island</b> Adjacent to the Community Hall	028 20009	sherkin.library @corkcoco.ie	5.30-8.30pm Tues 11am-2pm Thurs 1.30-5.30pm Fri
<b>Skibbereen</b> North Street	028 22400	skibbereen.library @corkcoco.ie	9.30am-5.30pm Tues-Sat
<b>West Cork Mobile Library Service</b>	021 454 6499	corkcountylibrary @corkcoco.ie	For routes, times and days, please check <a href="http://www.corkcoco.ie/library">www.corkcoco.ie/library</a>

# LINC (Advocating for Lesbian & Bisexual women in Ireland)

## *What is available*

LINC is a city centre community resource centre open to the public Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday as a drop in support and advocacy service for lesbian and bisexual women and their family members.

The centre is open some evenings offering information, peer support groups and social activities. One to one support and subsidised counselling are also available.

## *How it works*

LINC encourages you to drop in and talk to us about the services we offer, you will be greeted with a warm and friendly welcome. For bereavement, one to one support will be offered and should you require it we will help you choose another appropriate bereavement service to access.

LINC is part of the national LGBT Helpline network 1890 929 539

**Referral process:** No referral necessary to access LINC supports

**Waiting time:** No waiting list



11A White St. Cork



021 480 8600



info@linc.ie



www.linc.ie



11am-3pm Mon & Tues  
11am-8pm Thurs



All ages



No charge but donations are welcome



Disc parking available



Only to main room.  
No access to toilet at present



No childcare available but  
children & family welcome

# Lisheens House

## *What is available*

Through our centre in Skibbereen we offer free counselling as well as a number of short term courses - including Coping with Bereavement, mindfulness, art and music therapy - and a musical library of 1500 classical music CDs. We hope to provide self-motivation talks and courses including delivering QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) suicide prevention training.

## *How it works*

Our service is accessed through a helpline number and anyone calling the number is offered free counselling with one of our counsellors. Our service is strictly confidential and any person accessing counselling is given a six digit Client Code to protect their anonymity. Visitors to our centre are more than welcome to browse the art on display or discuss any of our services or courses. We also hold a games club on Wednesday afternoons and everyone is welcome. Open, friendly and accessible are three words that sum up the ethos of our centre.

**Referral process:** Self-referral

**Waiting time:** Clients can normally be seen by a counsellor in 24 to 48 hours



Ilen Street,  
Skibbereen



HELPLINE 023 8888888  
Training & Support Centre  
028 51950



lisheenshouse@gmail.com  
facebook: lisheenshousewestcork



www.lisheenshouse.ie



10am-5.30pm Mon - Sat  
Helpline voicemail always on



Service for adults 18+



None



Yes (very close by)



Yes



No childcare available

# Macra Na Feirme

## What is available

Macra na Feirme is a rural youth organisation aimed at people aged between 17-35 who are interested in getting involved in a wide range of social activities such as sports, travel, drama or debating. Although we do not have specialised services for bereavement through suicide, Macra na Feirme clubs in West Cork have attended talks about mental health issues.

## How it works

The door is always open to people who are suffering bereavement through suicide. If someone comes to us, we would talk with them about the difficulties they are experiencing and would refer them to specialised services in the area.

**Referral process:** Self-referral.

**Waiting time:** None



Irish Farm Centre  
Bluebell  
Dublin 12



01 426 8900



www.macra.ie



macra@macra.ie



MacranaFeirme



9.15am-5pm Mon -Fri



Ages 15 – 35



No charge



Depends on location



Depends on location



No childcare available

# Pieta House Bereavement Services

## *What is available*

Pieta House Bereavement Services provides:

Individual, couple and family counselling or therapy for anyone bereaved by suicide; Practical information for people who have been bereaved by suicide, including guidance, literature and other services; Counselling and therapy for children and adolescents who have been bereaved by suicide; Support groups or therapeutic grief programmes for anyone bereaved by suicide; Training and awareness programmes to community groups and agencies particularly when they have been affected by suicide.

The national 24/7 suicide helpline provides free professional counselling, support for anyone in suicidal crisis or who has been bereaved by suicide.

## *How it works*

**Referral process:** To access counselling a referral form needs to be completed and delivered to address below. Referral forms are available by phoning 021 434 1400 or 1800 247 247

**Waiting time:** Once a Referral Form is received an initial meeting will be arranged with you within a week



Highfield Lawn,  
Model Farm Rd,  
Bishopstown, Cork



021 434 1400



info@pieta.ie



www.pieta.ie



9am-8pm Mon-Thur  
9am-6pm Fri, 10am-2pm Sat  
Evening appointments available



All ages



No charge



On street parking



Yes



No childcare available

# Saint Michael's Centre

## What is available

St Michael's provides a range of supports, services, and activities for older people living in the wide catchment covering Bandon town, and areas including Ballinspittle, Kilbrittain, Enniskean-Ballineen, Newcestown, Crookstown, and Knockavilla-Inishannon. Programmes provided to the community include: Care and Repair, Care Ring Telephone Service, Meals on Wheels, Family Carers Support, Senior Alerts Scheme, and Visiting Service. Social and recreational activities are provided at the centre and off-site. Signposting and information services are provided and the Citizen's Information Service attends weekly. The Centre offers access to low-cost counselling and other services such as those offered by Alzheimer's Society, Parkinson's Society etc. Finally, the Network of Social Groups (primarily active retirement groups) is also supported in their planning, delivery and review work.

## How it works

The person will meet or contact a member of staff who will guide them to talk to the Coordinator, who in turn listens and guides them to make contact with a counselling service and provides them with a list of useful contact points. We do not have expertise to deal with bereavement issues per se, but we are a professional point of contact through which a person can feel comfortable and enabled to make further contact with other professionals and services who can help in the bereavement process.

**Referral process:** Self Referral **Waiting time:** None



South Main St., Bandon



023 88 41681



9am-5pm Tues-Fri



Primarily over 55 years of age (and their families)



No charge



On street and nearby public car park



Downstairs access only



No childcare available



# Samaritans

## What is available

We offer emotional support to anyone feeling distressed or needing to talk. We listen in a non judgemental, open way. As well as talking on the phone people can also visit the centre between 9am and 10pm every day. If you feel you don't want to call in or phone, you can always e-mail us at [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org).

We are also available to give talks to schools and other organizations on the importance of emotional health.

When supporting people, it's all about listening, not telling callers what they should do about a particular issue. So, there's no advice, and no judgement, just a listening and sympathetic ear.

## How it works

Our volunteers would listen to what a caller needs to say, whatever it is. We would provide them with emotional support, without judgement, whatever time it is, 24 hours a day, every day of the year. . We could also offer a follow up call if it were wanted.

**Referral process:** Self Referral

**Waiting time:** We are always there for you, available 24 hours a day 365 days a year.



7/8 Coach St,  
Cork



116 123



[jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)



[www.corksamaritans.ie](http://www.corksamaritans.ie)



24 hours on the phone,  
9am-10pm face to face



All ages



No charge



Yes



Yes



No childcare available

# SHINE - Supporting people affected by mental ill health

## What is available

The Regional Development Officer (RDO) can provide information, listening, support and training, signpost you to services within Shine or externally if appropriate. They can offer you a one to one meeting for an initial chat about your issues/concerns/needs. Relatives Support Group and Phrenz Group (for relatives of and people with self-experience of mental health difficulties). Practical information and support are the key facets of these groups. The Basement Resource Centre is a peer driven resource centre for people with self-experience of mental ill health. A confidential, affordable, safe and professional service is provided by trained accredited counsellors.

**Email support service:** [phil@shineonline.ie](mailto:phil@shineonline.ie)

**Information Resource:** [www.recovery.ie](http://www.recovery.ie)

## How it works

Services of the Basement Resource Centre and Regional Development Office are free of charge. Membership of Shine and access to counselling services are charged on a sliding scale rate.

Basement Open Morning first Friday of the month 9.30 am - 12.30pm.

**Referral process:** Self Referral



**Basement Resource Centre, 14A Washington Street West, Cork**



**Basement 021 422 6064  
RDO 021 494 9833 086 8525755  
Counselling 086 040 1657**



**info@shineonline.ie**



**www.shineonline.ie**



**Basement (Membership required)  
9.30am-4.30pm Mon-Thurs  
9.30am-3.30pm Fri**



**Service for adults**



**See above**



**On street parking available**



**Limited**



**No childcare available**

# Skibbereen Community & Family Resource Centre

## *What is available*

Skibbereen Community & Family Resource Centre delivers Community & Family supports in response to identified needs in the community. The centre provides a meeting place for individuals, community and family orientated groups based in the area, and works in partnership with these to provide information and signposting to meet their needs. We help to establish and maintain new community groups to meet local needs and deliver services at local level. We support and facilitate adult education courses and training opportunities, and we support personal and group development. Our aim is to promote individual, family & group empowerment. We offer a service that is free from prejudice, exclusion and discrimination

## *How it works*

Our staff has up to date information on referral pathways and information leaflets to hand for sharing with service users. Anyone who needs support around bereavement through suicide would be signposted to Pieta House. They would also be given information and contact details for the Samaritans, West Cork Counselling Services and Coiscéim. Contact details for West Cork Living Links and Clonakilty Bereavement Support Group may also be shared.

**Referral process:** Self referral **Waiting time:** None



49b Townsend Street,  
Skibbereen



028 23572



9.30am-4.30pm Mon-Thurs  
Closed for Lunch 1-2



All ages



No charge



Roadside parking  
3hr limit Fields Car Park



Access Yes  
Parking No



No childcare available

# Society of St Vincent de Paul

## *What is available*

The SVP is a parish based charity visiting individuals & families who may be in need of support on a short term basis. The SVP offers support, promotes self-sufficiency and social justice for those unable to speak for themselves. SVP volunteers meet on a weekly basis generally to discuss requests for assistance and visit the person or family in the parish areas. They can be contacted through the parish office or the SVP regional office.

## *How it works*

In the case of support being sought around a bereavement, if a person makes contact with the parish offices in West Cork relevant to the area they live in or the SVP Regional Office they can leave a message. A member of SVP will ring the person back, generally within 1 week, have a chat and establish their requirements. Sometimes a home visit is needed, 2 members of SVP will visit the person in their home. Generally a male & female member will visit together. Information on the supports available in the area in the aftermath of suicide will be given to the person/family. If some families require assistance with the funeral expenses then this potential request for support will be brought back by the SVP representatives to a weekly SVP team conference where a discussion will take place as to how best support the family.



**Regional Office 021 427 0444**  
**Bandon 086 825 5092**  
**Bantry 027 55951**  
**Clonakilty 023 88 21400**  
**Dunmanway 086 345 8037**  
**Skibbereen 087 918 2698**



**Ozanam House, 2  
Tuckey Street Cork**



**info@svpcork.ie**



**Service for adults 18+**



**www.svp.ie**



**No cost**



**10am-12.30pm & 2pm to  
3.30pm Mon-Fri**



**No childcare available**

# TENI

## (Transgender Equality Network Ireland)

### *What is available*

Transgender Equality Network Ireland (TENI) provides advocacy and support to transgender people, their family and friends, including the following:

- Signposting, to specific suicide prevention services and/or to TENI peer support group
- Peer support for parents of transgender children, and their siblings.
- Support for transgender children.
- Informal one to one chat with a support worker
- Resilience and stress management workshops for transgender people and family members.

### *How it works*

Our service is specifically for transgender people and their families. If a person has been bereaved by suicide, they can call our national phone number and we will talk with them and signpost them to relevant local services.

**Referral process:** Self-referral

**Waiting time:** If the phone line is busy or you call after office hours, please leave a message and someone will get back to you as soon as possible, at the most within a few days.



01 873 3575



office@teni.ie



www.teni.ie



10am-6pm Mon - Fri



All ages, under 18 with consent



No cost



Not applicable



Not applicable



No childcare available

# West Cork Counselling and Support Services

## What is available

WCCSS offers the following services:

- Low cost 'Life Event Counselling' to individuals over the age of eighteen.
- Free 3-Option 'Crisis Pregnancy Counselling Service' supporting anyone effected by a crisis/unplanned pregnancy.
- Free 'Abortion Aftercare Counselling' to anyone wishing to seek support following the termination of a pregnancy.
- Information on existing voluntary and statutory groups and services.
- Identification of needs for additional supports/services and promotion of the development of appropriate responses.

## How it works

Any person over the age of eighteen who approaches our service seeking support will be given a warm welcome and will then be offered a place on our waiting list. When a space becomes available they will be offered counselling with one of our accredited counsellors. They will be offered seven low-cost counselling sessions.

Should a client express urgency regarding counselling at time of initial contact they will be given details of other services to contact. Persons seeking counselling for minors will be given contact details of appropriate services. **Referral process:** Self Referral or any agency referral **Waiting time:** Life Event Counselling: Dunmanway: 8weeks Skibbereen: 6 months Crisis Pregnancy Counselling: within the week



'Ross House', Main Street,  
Dunmanway



18+ for Life Event Counselling.  
Crisis Pregnancy Counselling: all  
ages



023 88 56852  
Crisis Pregnancy:  
Freephone 1800252359



€10 - €20 per session - Social Welfare and  
Family Support Supplement recipients  
€20 - €35 per session - Medical card  
holders  
€35 - €50 per session - All others



info@wccs.com



Street parking



Office: 9am-1pm Mon-Fri  
Counselling: 9am – 5pm



Yes in Dunmanway

# West Cork Islands

## What is available

1. Bere Island Projects Group run a community development project for the six West Cork Islands of Bere, Whiddy, Dursley, Sherkin, Long and Heir. The group have an office and staff on the Islands of Bere and Sherkin and provide an outreach service on the other four Islands on a monthly basis. They provide an information service to the communities on the six Islands and signpost clients on to mainland services.
2. Comharchumann Chléire Teoranta operates a broad range of services on Cape Clear and liaises with various services at local, regional, national and European level. They provide an information and referral service as needed by the community.

## How it works

If a person approaches the above groups, they will be made welcome and a meeting will be held in private, they will be given information and signposted to relevant services in their area. If they require any support with booking a GP, visiting a service provider or help with transport, for example, this can be arranged straight away. They will also be given information on social groups on the Islands such as men's shed, parent & toddler, or active retirement. All services are for the whole community.

**Referral process:** Self Referral **Waiting time:** drop in service on Bere and Sherkin but people can also ring and book a time that suits them. Other islands: ring and make an appointment

	Bere Island Projects Group (BIPG)	Comharchumann Chléire Teoranta	Sherkin Island Development Society
	Community Centre, Bere Island, Beara, Co. Cork	Oileán Chléire	Community Hall, Sherkin Island
	027 75099	086 8322855	087 766 9657
	bereisle@eircom.net		aisling@bipg@gmail.com
	www.bereisland.net	www.capeclearisland.ie	www.sherkinisland.ie
	9am to 5pm	9.30am-1pm 2-4.00pm	Variable and flexible

# West Cork Living Links

## *What is available*

West Cork Living Links provide outreach and support to those bereaved by suicide by helping increase awareness and understanding of suicide and its effects on individuals. They liaise with and provide families with information on health services available in the region and advise about referral pathways to those services should professional counselling be required. They encourage those who are bereaved or affected by suicide to establish and foster an ongoing support group for themselves.

## *How it works*

A number of trained individuals are available to offer confidential, practical support and information to families and individuals who have experienced a death by suicide. The Outreach Support person will visit the family in the home or another suitable venue. It is usually two volunteers who will sit with the family and encourage them to talk honestly and openly about what happened. Telling the story of the person who has died is important at this time. You may also need factual information about entitlements and supports.

**Referral process:** Self-referral - phone for appointment

**Waiting time:** 2-3 days



085 244 5575



westcorklivinglinks  
@gmail.com



www.westcorklivinglinks.ie



All ages



To suit



No charge



# West Cork Travellers

## What is available

Based on community development principles, West Cork Travellers is a Traveller led, not for profit organisation working to achieve economic, cultural, social and political equality for the Traveller community across West Cork. Our main centre is based in Clonakilty and we also run services from the Family Resource Centres in Skibbereen and Bandon, with further outreach services to Macroom and Bantry.

We welcome all members of the Travelling community from across West Cork and we offer a range of services which may include health supports, referrals, advocacy, FAS CE scheme opportunities, employability supports, training opportunities, adult groups for men and women and homework clubs. In addition we can offer a link to other services and activities.

## How it works

In response to suicide bereavement, West Cork Travellers can provide a tailored plan to suit your individual and family needs. We will work with you sensitively and in confidence to explore the supports you require. We offer both practical and counselling supports and can help you to access other available assistance should you wish. We also work with a range of agencies in the area of bereavement and suicide, to highlight the specific cultural needs of the Traveller community and deliver Traveller Cultural Awareness training. **Referral process:** Drop in - Phone for times

**Waiting time:** Usually none



**Murphy's Garage**  
Western Road  
Clonakilty



023 8835039



westcorkphc@gmail.com



9am-5pm Mon-Fri



**Individuals and families**



**No charge**



**Yes = Clon Yes = Macroom**  
**Yes= Skibbereen**  
**N/A Bandon and Bantry**



**Yes- Clon**



**No childcare available**

# West Cork Women Against Violence Project

## *What is available*

We are a domestic violence service for women who are or have experienced violence within an intimate relationship. We provide a confidential support and information service. Our activities include a helpline, one-to-one support sessions, advocacy, court and general accompaniment, transport in crisis and referrals to appropriate services. We also provide education and training to school, community and statutory agencies. We produce a quarterly publication titled “West Cork Whisper”.

## *How it works*

Our agency focuses on domestic violence so people would need to meet that criteria for us to work with them. Where a person has become bereaved through suicide, support, information and an appropriate referral (possibly to counsellor) would be offered.

**Referral process:** A client can contact the office by phone or helpline and speak with a support worker. One can also present at the office and if the support worker is available have immediate access to someone. Otherwise an appointment to suit the client can be organised.

**Waiting time:** None



Harbour View, Bantry



18+



027 53847 office  
1800 203 136 helpline



No charge



admin@  
westcorkwomensproject.ie



Available outside door



www.westcorkwomen  
againstviolence.ie



No, but would be facilitated  
outside office



9am-5pm Mon-Fri



No childcare available

# Youthreach

## What is available

Youthreach is a Department of Education and Skills official education, training and work experience programme for early school leavers aged 15-20. Youthreach offers young people the opportunity to identify options in training and education and provides them with opportunities to receive certification at Level 3 and Level 4. As it operates on a full-time, year-round basis, Youthreach has a continuous intake policy and our training course can be flexible to meet your need at this time in your life. In Youthreach, you can expect to: improve your confidence; engage in work experience; be part of a caring, non-judgmental, safe and respectful environment; be encouraged to work to the best of your ability with plenty of support; be guided towards a career choice that best suits you.

## How it works

In the event that you will need additional support in coping with a bereavement through suicide or other circumstances, we can help you with support/mentoring and professional counselling that will be available to you in our centre to help you at that time. We can also refer young people to appropriate agencies such as Aware or Pieta House, if needed. **Referral process:** Self Referral **Waiting time:** None



**Station Road, Bandon**  
**St Goban's Further**  
**Education and Training**  
**Centre, Seskin, Bantry**



**Ages 15-20**



**Bandon: 023 885 2002**  
**Bantry: 027 52634/52648**



**None**



**Bandon: bandonadmin@**  
**youthreach.net**  
**Bantry: admin@**  
**youthreachbantry.net**



**Yes**



**Yes**



**8.30am-4pm Mon -Fri**



**No childcare available**

# Youth Cafés

## What is available

Three Youth Cafés operate in West Cork.

Bandon: The Funky Fish

Bantry: The Attic Youth

Dunmanway: Dunmanway Youth Café

The Youth Cafés provide a safe, supervised meeting place for young people, away from the pressure of drugs and alcohol. Young people can engage in a broad range of activities and access accurate information on a wide range of topics and issues. They also get to spend time with supportive volunteers or youth workers who are positive role models and can help them through difficulties they may face.

## How it works

If a young person has been bereaved by suicide, the Café staff or volunteers try to attend the funeral to show solidarity and then continue to support the young person in the weeks and months that follow. Where necessary, the young person is referred on to other appropriate services, eg counselling.

**Referral process:** Self-referral **Waiting time:** No waiting time for Café services



**Funky Fish Youth Café,  
St Finbarr's Place, Bandon**



**13-18 years**



**085 777 3522**



**Free**



**funkyfishyouthcafe**



**Nearby**



**funkyfishcafe@eircom.net**



**Yes**



**4-6.30pm Tues-Thurs  
4-6.30pm & 8-11pm  
Fri & Sat**



**No childcare available**



**The Attic Youth Café**  
Marino Street, Bantry



086 466 8488



atticyouthcafe



atticbantry@gmail.com



3.30-7pm Tues-Thurs  
3.30-10pm Fri  
5-7.30pm Sat



14-18 years



Free



Minimal



No



No childcare available



**Dunmanway Youth Café,**  
St Patricks Hall, Main  
Street, Dunmanway



086 398 6205



olivemurray64@gmail.com



7.30-9pm Thurs & Fri  
During term time



11 -18 years



€3 per week + yearly  
membership



Yes



No



No childcare available



# Further Reading

All of the books below are available in your local library or available through interlibrary loan. Ask the librarian for assistance.

## List of books for adults:

- **Overcoming Grief:** Morris, Sue. Practical, helpful book. Outlines realistic expectations about bereavement and tips on how to manage challenges such as dealing with grief triggers.
- **A Voice for Those Bereaved by Suicide:** McCarthy, Sarah. An honest, moving and valuable book. Suicide has been denied and hidden for too long; Sarah McCarthy's decision to tell her story provides a voice for all those bereaved in this tragic way.

## List of books for children:

- **Finding a Way Through When Someone Close Dies:** Mood, Pat & Whittaker, Lesley; Workbook for children and teenagers who have experienced the death of someone close to them. Discusses feelings and provides tips on how to cope. Also helpful for adults in relation to how to support children going through a bereavement.
- **All Kinds of Feelings:** Brownjohn, Emma; This is a short "lift the flap" book that is helpful to teach children that there are lots of different feelings and that all feelings are okay. Lists different feelings (e.g. happy, sad, and angry) but does not go into detail. Useful starting point to encourage children to talk about feelings.
- **I Miss You, A First Look at Death:** Thomas, Pat; This reassuring picture book explores the difficult issue of death for young children. Children's feelings and questions about this sensitive subject are looked at in a simple but realistic way. This book helps them to understand their loss and come to terms with it. Books in the series give advice and promote interaction between children, parents, and teachers on a wide variety of personal, social and emotional issues.

# Your Good Self



The 'Your Good Self' programme aims to provide quality information to the people of Cork on how to look after their emotional well-being as part of their overall health. An extensive list of recommended books, websites and other resources have been compiled and reviewed by psychologists and other professionals working in the HSE.

These materials which have been approved by experts in Primary Care Psychology Services in Cork provide information, knowledge and ideas on how best to deal with life's challenges. The resources are practical and helpful and cover an extensive variety of topics including parenting, stress management and self-esteem. Your Good Self catalogues are available in your local participating library and on the Cork County and City Library websites. See Library Services listing on p57 for contact details

## Online Resources

**[aware.ie](http://aware.ie)** support and information for people who experience depression or bipolar and their concerned loved ones.

**[barnardos.ie/teenhelp](http://barnardos.ie/teenhelp)** a guide for teenagers in Ireland looking for advice on their personal problems or issues in life.

**[belongto.org](http://belongto.org)** an organisation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered (LGBT) young people, aged between 14 and 21.

**[citizensinformation.ie](http://citizensinformation.ie)** this site provides information on public and social services. One stop shop for information about a whole range of issues.

**[corksamaritans.ie](http://corksamaritans.ie)** website provides confidential, emotional support and information to people who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those which may lead to suicide.

**[connectingforlifeireland.ie](http://connectingforlifeireland.ie)** information on Ireland's national strategy to reduce suicide.

# Online Resources (cont.)

**childhoodbereavement.ie** a hub for professionals working with bereaved children, young people and their families in Ireland

**childline.ie** 24 hour confidential phoneline for children and young people up to 18.

**nosp.ie** National Office for Suicide Prevention website

**pieta.ie** Centre for the Prevention of Self-harm or Suicide. Provides information on the prevention of self-harm and suicide and suicide bereavement counselling centres.

**reachout.com** information on stress, anxiety, bullying, suicide, depression, bipolar and other issues that can affect your mental health and well-being.

**spunout.ie** a not-for-profit website created by young people to promote general wellbeing and healthy living for young people.

**shineonline.ie** upholding the rights and addressing the needs of people affected by mental health.

**seechange.ie** to reduce stigma and challenge discrimination associated with mental health.

**suicidesupportandinformation.ie** provides evidence based information for people bereaved by suicide or at risk of suicide, it can be used by health professionals, including GP's and mental health professionals, and the general public.

**IACP.ie** – Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy. Find a Counsellor/Psychotherapist in your local area.

**welfare.ie** Department of Social Protection website

**yourmentalhealth.ie** Website promoting positive mental health.



# Bibliography

## HSE Publications

- Reach Out: The Irish National Strategy for the Prevention of Suicide 2005 - 2014, HSE (2005)
- You Are Not Alone: Help and advice on coping with the death of someone close, HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention (2007)
- Bereavement: When someone close dies, HSE, (2007)
- Suicide Prevention in the workplace: A resource for organisations and workplaces responding to supporting persons who are at risk of suicidal behaviour, HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention (2009)
- Suicide Prevention in the Community: A Practical Guide, HSE (2012)
- Connecting for Life: Ireland's National Suicide Prevention Strategy, 2015 - 2020, HSE (2015),

## Other Publications Referenced

- Bereavement: Information for those affected by bereavement, published by Citizens Information Board
- Commonwealth of Australia, Information & Support Pack: for those bereaved by suicide or other sudden death, Canberra, Commonwealth of Australia 2010.
- Noonan, K. & Douglas, A. As part of the Children Bereaved by Suicide Project. NSW Health Department (2002)



Little things can make a big difference

[yourmentalhealth.ie](http://yourmentalhealth.ie)  
#littlethings

HE

116 123  
SAMARITANS  
IRELAND

## PROBLEMS FEEL SMALLER WHEN YOU SHARE THEM

Talking about your problems is proven to have a positive impact on how you feel.



HE

116 123  
SAMARITANS  
IRELAND

## DO THINGS WITH OTHERS THERE'S STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

Being involved in activities that you enjoy is proven to have a positive impact on how you feel.



HE

116 123  
SAMARITANS  
IRELAND

## LENDING AN EAR IS LENDING A HAND

Talking about our problems is proven to have a positive impact on how we feel.



HE

116 123  
SAMARITANS  
IRELAND

## THE MORE YOU MOVE THE BETTER YOUR MOOD

Getting regular exercise is proven to have a positive impact on how you feel.



HE

116 123  
SAMADYFAR  
IRELAND

## IF A FRIEND SEEMS DISTANT CATCH UP WITH THEM

Being in touch and connecting with other people is proven to have a positive impact on how we feel.



HE

116 123  
SAMADYFAR  
IRELAND

## BOOST YOUR MOOD WITH HEALTHY FOOD

Eating a healthy, balanced diet is proven to have a positive impact on how you feel.



HE

116 123  
SAMADYFAR  
IRELAND

## 8 HOURS SLEEP MAKE THE OTHER 16 EASIER

Getting a good night's sleep as often as you can is proven to have a positive impact on how you feel.



HE

116 123  
SAMADYFAR  
IRELAND

## DRINK LESS AND GREAT NIGHTS BECOME GOOD MORNINGS

For the average Irish drinker, drinking less alcohol will have a positive impact on their health and mental wellbeing.





## Through Light and Sound - Ritual

**Artists: Tomasz Madajczak with The Happiness Ensemble**

The photographs featured throughout this Lighting the Way information resource booklet form part of an artwork entitled:

Through Sound and Light - Ritual. This work was created during a collaborative process between multimedia artist Tomasz Madajczak and The Happiness Ensemble, a performance and sound group supported by West Cork Mental Health.

During a series of experimental sessions held in Uillinn, The West Cork Arts Centre, the group explored different aspects of suicide and its consequences for society.

The focus while making the work was on thoughts and emotions which could support people bereaved by suicide. The aim was to create a cathartic experience and to communicate the stages of change through time, with the eventual possibilities of making new beginnings.

The process involved the group creating and experimenting with the transformation of sound, movement and light. The images were created by recording the sessions on long exposure photographs, using different light sources and color filters.

Each of the 10 sessions were documented and the group collaborated to create a short multimedia artwork which was performed in Bantry at the launch of this booklet.

For further information related to the art project aspect of Lighting the Way, and if you would like to watch and listen to some of the visual and audio recordings of this project, as well as view some of the artwork created for the previous three editions, please see:

[www.lightingtheway.ie](http://www.lightingtheway.ie)

*"Let yourself begin to heal. It is not a sign that we loved the person less. As the months pass we are slowly able to get through the day without the same degree of pain. That's all right. It is a sign that we are working through our grief and beginning to accept that our loved one would want us to have some peace of mind in our life again...It can take a long time for family and friends to reach a place where they can look at the fullness of their loved ones life and not just their death. It takes time, a lot of time, for the pain to become bearable and for some of the good memories to come back- but they do and they will."*

*Anonymous*





**UILLINN**  
WEST CORK ARTS CENTRE



West Cork Travellers

**SVP**  
Society of St. Vincent de Paul  
Beara

*O'Keefe's Bantry*  
**SuperValu**  
Real food. Real people.

The Curiosity Shop  
Drimoleague

The Bantry Charity Shop

Bantry



Irish Countrymen's Association  
Bairbreacht na Tuisithe



Community & Culture  
**foróige**

**DUNMANWAY**  
Family Resource Centre

Skillsbase  
Community & Family  
Resource Centre



**The Caha Centre**

Bantry & Dúnna  
  
Chevaks

**CK** CLUINN SI ANTE FORAÍ  
**CORCAIGH CIARRAI**  
**CORK KERRY**  
COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE



**Health Action Zone**



**Connecting For Life**