



Dyspraxia Association of Ireland

# NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 8

## CENTRE OFFICIAL OPENING

10 March 2008

MS MARY HARNEY, MINISTER  
FOR HEALTH & CHILDREN

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### THE DYSPRAXIA ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND

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### HELPLINE

A help and support line is available to all our members. We can be contacted during office hours and if the phone is unattended please leave a message and we will get back to you.

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## Message from chairperson Centre Opening

Hello to all,

**This edition of our newsletter is a very special one to us all, as so much has happened since our last newsletter.**

The most significant was the official opening of the Dyspraxia Centre. I would like to thank Minister Mary Harney for officially opening the Centre.

I would also like to thank Jungheinrich for providing us with the premises and for being such a great help to us since we have arrived here.

This Centre is such a large undertaking for the association, but now with help from everyone it can be a great success. The centre was set up on our member's behalf to provide services such as Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy and Assessments. Unfortunately because of the downturn in our economy we had to cease our full time O/T services at the Centre. We are now operating with a part time occupational therapy service.

Like so many other voluntary organisations funding is always a major issue with every service, costs including overheads, wages, rent, heating etc is continually increasing and we depend even more on contributions. If it were not for our main sponsors and contributions throughout the year we could not have continued to operate on your behalf.

As you will see through the Newsletter the summer projects have been a major success and we always welcome new ideas and help to continue these events into the future.

At this point I would like to thank everyone who supported us throughout the year. Your help, however big or small you may think it is, it is always very much appreciated.

## Funding

As you are aware we do not receive any state funding. We depend entirely on voluntary contributions and membership fees, corporate donations and fundraising activities of the members and friends of the association.

Our main funder for the past number of years has been Anglo Irish Bank. We would like to express our gratitude to Anglo for their continued support to date as without them we would not be able to survive.

As important we would also like to thank 'Jungheinrich' for the use of the fine premises we have, this allows us to carry out all our assessments and treatment in a customised fitted out Centre on one floor and our library and offices on the ground floor.

We are also grateful to 'Forex Ireland' golfing society who named the association as their main charity for 2008. The 'Forex' 15th International Charity Golf Challenge was held at the Slieve Russell Hotel & Country Club on 12th-15th June 2008. and proved to be a major fundraiser for the association in 2008. Teams from Ireland, U.K., Europe, US and Canada competed over three days and we were honoured to be named as the main charity.

Barclays Bank Plc were also extremely generous to us in 2008 and we really appreciate their support under their 'Charities Aid Foundation'. Atlantic Philanthropies came to our aid also in 2008 and we were able to support assessments and intervention projects because of them, again we are eternally grateful to them for assisting us.

Ordnance Base Workshops, Connolly Barracks through Noel Hickey nominated the association as their main charity for 2008 and we appreciate the contributions that they made throughout the year, we even have the Army on our side which is reassuring.

Service Matters Roscommon sponsored all our hygiene products for the year including mats, towels, hand washes and toiletries and we say a big thank you to them for this.



We also wish to express our gratitude to A & L Goodbody, Eurogeneral and Charlie O' Loughlin for their support in 2008.

## Fundraising

### Sugarloaf Walk

On the 17th May 2008 Eimear Casey (aged 6) along with her family climbed the 'Sugarloaf Mountain' in order to raise funding and awareness for the 'Dyspraxia Association of Ireland'. Eimear had great support from her two brothers Conor (9) and Ronan (3), her parents, aunts, uncles and cousins. The walkers on the day ranged from the age of 18 months upwards.

Eimear would like to thank all who participated on the walk and those who kindly sponsored her totalling an amazing amount of €1,850.00 Eimear and her brothers even collected €12.00 from their museum day selling rocks! The Dyspraxia Association are very honoured that Eimear, her family, aunts, uncles and cousins made this huge effort on our behalf. We very much appreciate all you did.

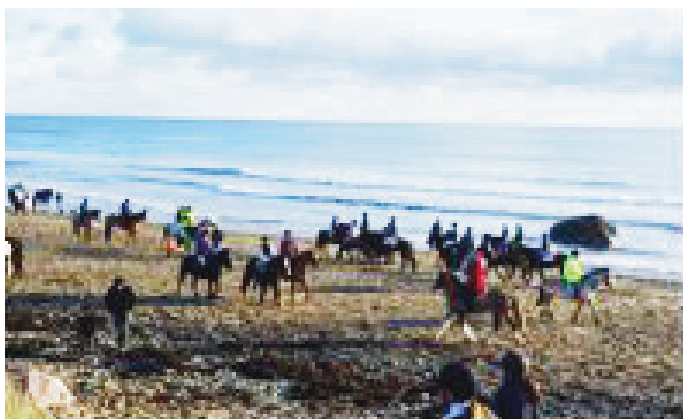


### Mini-Marathon

We wish to thank Anne Mulvey, Barbara Fox, Ciara Mangan, Michelle Naughton, Marianne Dankers, Diane Funge, Maria Coffey, Mary Tully, Eimear Sweeney, Bernie Russell, Tracey-Anne Mulvey, Siobhan Bastable, Fiona-Malley-Canning and all of those who ran or walked in the Womens Marathon this year and everyone who very generously contributed to the Dyspraxia Association of Ireland.

### Killinick Pony Club

Killinick Pony Club Wexford had their annual beach ride on Saturday Dec 13th. Their chosen charity was the Dyspraxia Association who benefited from the event. We are truly grateful for all the effort put in by the Club to raise money on our behalf. The event attracted close to 100 ponies and it was some spectacle seeing them ride from 'Carnsore Point' to 'Kilmore Quay'. A big thanks to our member Jack Scallan for nominating us.



## Events

### Rose of Tralee

Congrats to Hannah McDonnell who did so well in the 'Rose of Tralee' festival from everyone at the 'Dyspraxia Association'



### Drama

Our Drama group are in full swing at the Centre and Michael McCabe our Drama Therapist is proving to be a big hit with the children. We are here every Saturday morning. The drama has carried on after a week long summer camp was well attended and the children wanted it to continue on a weekly basis.

## Conference 2008

Our Annual Conference took place on Saturday 12th April, 2008, at Clarion Hotel, Liffey Valley, Dublin. The theme of the Conference was "Growing Up with Dyspraxia – Childhood to Adulthood". Our keynote speakers were:

Prof Amanda Kirby, Medical Director and Chairperson DCD UK.  
Director and Founder of Discovery Centre, Wales.  
Ms Jo Todd, Key 4 Learning UK.



Jo Todd



Prof Amanda Kirby

It was such a successful day for everyone and it was great to see so many new faces. Dr. Amanda Kirby was as usual so enthusiastic and informative with lots of useful information in her presentations.

As I said in the speech that morning I hoped there would be some answers to the questions you might have had. Looking at the evaluation forms I would think all went very well and according to feedback most people found Amanda's presentation most helpful and very worthwhile with things we can all put into practice straight away with our children.

Jo Todd was another very experienced speaker that we were honoured to have. Jo looked at how we should think 'different ability NOT disability' and also looked at the traits of Dyspraxia and 'The Benefits of Difference-Dyspraxia' with creativity and hardworking, persistence and empathy among the skills associated with the children who have Dyspraxia. Jo also got positive feedback and again we learned so much from her presentation.

There was a big audience on the day and as time went by quickly I am sorry if not everyone's questions were answered. We hope to invite both speakers back again as their presentations opened up huge discussion. Copies of the presentation are still available from the Centre.

## Soccer Camp

Oisin Jordan and his F.A.I. coaches ran a soccer camp for us in the summer. This again proved to be something that the children loved so a big thanks to the F.A.I. for starting it up again and running the camp over October/November/December for us. The all-weather facilities at 'Sacred Heart F.C' in Tallaght are fantastic and we are very grateful for the use of their facility for the camp.

## Hikes

During the summer we had the teen group out on two hikes and we hope to expand on this and hike throughout the year. A big thanks goes out to our two Hike leaders, Sean Malone and John O'Brien who gave up their Sunday's to take us out on a well organised and fun trip each time. Anyone interested in coming along or suggesting routes please let us know.



## Parent Support Group Meetings

During the past few months we have had interesting speakers at our meetings in the Centre. We would like to thank them all for giving up their Monday night to share their knowledge and views with us all. Thanks to all the parents for being there and our speakers Jenny Brady RGN, Caroline Golding Brady, Teacher and Special Support and School Advisor, Anne McLoughlin, Psychotherapist, Marian Egan, Kinesiologist, Alice Kennedy, Nutrition Advisor, Ikram Mohammed, Paediatric Physio, Enda Halpin, Local Area Health Manager, HSE, Dublin West, Adrian Charles Local



Area Health Manager, HSE, Dublin South West, Elaine Kelly Senior Clinical Psychologist, Enable Ireland, Dr. Ety Schuurmans, Principal Medical Officer, HSE.

We also launched a Parent Support Group on the northside of Dublin where we held an information evening in Darndale. Over 80 people attended our presentation which was given by Elaine Kelly, Senior Clinical Psychologist and Erin Riley, Senior Occupational Therapist, both formerly attached to the DCD unit in Cork. Members Dorothy and Gerry Byrne hosted the event with the kind permission of Mr. Linnane, principal of 'Our Lady Immaculate' senior school Darndale. Mr Linnane opened the event and has been very supportive of us and pro-active in getting the message across regarding dyspraxia in his and the other schools in the area. Parents Orla Stanley and Siobhan Gallagher made presentations to NEPS, Greenhills Community School and St. David's N.S Sutton on our behalf. The schools and NEPS were very much appreciative of the information and knowledge that Orla and Siobhan were able to pass on to all in such a clear and professional way.

## Galway and Cork

Both Galway and Cork groups are flying and we thank Ger O' Flaherty and her group for making us welcome at her support group meeting which is always so well attended. Thanks to Oona O'Shaughnessy and her Cork group for keeping us in booklets and sharing information on an ongoing basis.

## 2009 and beyond

Date for your Diary Annual Conference  
28th March 2009, Clarion Hotel Liffey Valley

## Wexford

Just waiting to confirm venue for seminar on Dyspraxia /DCD which will be held in Wexford on Saturday January 24th. Watch web site for venue or contact Centre. Speakers are Elaine Kelly, Senior Clinical Psychologist and Erin Riley, Senior Occupational Therapist formerly of the DCD unit in Cork. Keep on eye on our soon to be revamped web-site for events and new support groups sprouting up in Wexford, Louth and Kildare soon. Again thanks to all for helping out in 2008 and we wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.

## Adult Group

There has been a great feedback from the Adult group and they are always seeking out new members. Mark Daly the group chairperson gives us his review on a most popular book 'Caged in Chaos'

## Caged in Chaos A Review by Mark Daly

I really wish that this book had been written back when I was at school. It possibly would have not done any good but multiple copies would have been bought because this is the Dyspraxia bible for teenagers along with living with Dyspraxia. Victoria Biggs is an excellent writer. Her story is that she lived in Saudi Arabia for many years but wasn't diagnosed until her second year in school or Colditz as she calls it.

There are parts in this book that go over my head - I didn't go to boarding school and we didn't do the cadet thing. However, here are moments in the book where the author is on the money about how co-ordination can affect PE or schools sports and she gives great advice for all areas of school life, her stories are punctuated by other teens and how Dyspraxia affects them.

Interestingly, she also mentions that Churchill and Einstein had forms of Dyspraxia. This is a book not just for teens but it is also for parents, teachers and schools, there is advice about being bullied. She also warns the reader that there is a fine line between saying too much and saying too little. In other areas too she gives good advice regarding what to do after you leave school and that is where I think the book is at its best. Along with coping strategies like doing volunteering work, creative writing or theatre work or drama, librarianships and other ideas are suggested.

In the end what marks Victoria Biggs out is her superb writing, her use of wit, using classic literary works, Brontë comes to mind. I used to think that I had a reasonably good command of English, but you know there is always someone better!

## Teen Group

The Teen Group will be meeting in the Centre on Saturday January 15th from 12.00 till 2.00 p.m. We will be doing Art, playing music and getting to know each other. Contact the Centre for more information. Catriona Moore, Artist will be taking the class.

## Art Therapy

The main aim of the class is to help the student tap into the latent talent that they all have. It is important to encourage the student and not judge their work yet praise every effort. It will not be a competitive environment - more a creative one where their creations become Masterpieces.

In a relaxed environment, each student will be given instruction in how to paint and draw. Themes such as the seasons, Winter, Spring, Summer and Autumn will be used. The world of the imagination will be explored which is great fun, making stories through pictures. A lot of activity work in stimulating their ability to create those special pictures will be used and this is very successful. Exercises in mixing paint to achieve particular colours and paint effects along with other paint techniques will be taught. At the end of the term each student will have a portfolio to be proud of.

## Acknowledgement

The day of the Centre opening was also a very sad occasion for my family with the very sudden passing of my father in law that evening. On behalf of all the family we would like to thank everyone for their unceasing kindness and support.

While we deeply mourn Paddy's passing we take great comfort from the very many demonstrations of sympathy and support to us all.

We would like to acknowledge Roisin Mangan, Bray Credit Union the donation received on behalf of Michael Mangan (R.I.P.). The thought is much appreciated at this time.

Yours sincerely

Jo Cullen  
Chairperson

## Retirement

On behalf of the Dyspraxia Association I would like to wish Ann Hughes, Director and Chairperson of the Dyslexia Association well in her retirement. Ann has worked alongside many different voluntary organizations including 'Spectrum', which we are members of. I would like to wish you a long and happy retirement.

### Our Committee members are as follows:

Chairperson	Jo Cullen
Development Officer	Harry Conway
Treasurer	Maire O'Brien
Secretary	Catriona Cahill
Teen Support Group	Orla Stanley
Adult Support Group	Grainne Delahunt
PRO	Susan O'Regan
New Committee Member	Karen Smith (Parent support group)
New Committee Member	Michelle Naughton (Parent support group)





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