

Local Traveller Organisations

Traveller organisations have been informed of the work of family support groups and are eager to make links with the local group. The Family Support Network and Pavee Point are asking you to arrange to meet a worker from the Local Traveller Organisation and to begin building links.

Some of the benefits to meeting with a worker from a Local Traveller Organisation include:

- **A greater awareness of Traveller culture and the issues facing Travellers living with drug use**
- **Possible new members and referrals to the group**
- **The opportunity to discuss shared experiences resulting from a family member's drug use**
- **Generate new ideas and collaborations**
- **Prevent the group from working in isolation**

Contact details of Local Traveller Organisations can be found on www.paveepoint.ie or by ringing Pavee Point on (01) 878 0255.



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How can family support groups meet the needs of Traveller Families living with drug use?



*A joint publication by
The Family Support Network
and Pavee Point*

Working in Partnership

Family Support Network and Pavee

Point are working in partnership to ensure that family support is available and easily accessible to members of Traveller families living with drug use.

Research Findings

The results of recent research conducted indicates that drug use and problematic drug use, whilst not as prevalent as with the rest of the population, both **occurs** and is **increasing** among Travellers.

The impacts of drug use on the drug users' significant others were identified as:

- Stress on family relationships
- Concern about the drug user's influence on other family members
- The negative effect on the drug user's family finances

The family is a significant element of Traveller culture and for this reason the impact of drug use by a family member can often be experienced very severely. Similarly, the family can act as key agents of recovery for the drug user.

The Role of Family Support Groups

A significant number of barriers must be overcome in the delivery of drug services to ensure Travellers feel comfortable to access these services. Each family support group can play their role in improving the accessibility of drug services to Travellers. Take your time to consider some of the questions on the next page and how the group might respond to some of the barriers facing Travellers.

Points to consider to support Traveller participation in family support groups

Barrier No. 1

The lack of awareness of the existence and nature of drug services

Has the group met with the local Traveller organisation or if you are a family support worker do you provide outreach to Travellers?

Do you have any information leaflets about the group that you could distribute?

Has the group invited a local Traveller organisation to information evenings or events?

Barrier No. 2

The lack of formal education

Do you have any easily read information that the group could distribute?

Has the group explored different ways of providing information, for example, information evenings?

Is a member of the family support group available to meet family members on a one-to-one basis initially?



Barrier No. 3

Stigma and embarrassment

How does the group accommodate new members who may feel embarrassed and uncomfortable in the early stages of attending the family support group?

Have members of the group talked about their experiences of being stigmatised as a result of drug use in the family?

Have members of the group discussed the negative impact this experience of stigma had on their overall well-being?

CAUTION-DO NOT ENTER

Barrier No. 4

The lack of culturally appropriate services

Have you invited a representative from your local Traveller organisation to learn about Traveller culture and establish links?

Is the family support group a safe place for Travellers to discuss drug use by a family member or drug related issues?

Have you ever considered that there may be ways in which your group works that prevents Travellers from attending for example the importance of confidentiality agreements?

Barrier No. 5

Racism, discrimination and stereotyping

Has the facilitator of the group or group members participated in anti-racism training?

Has the group explored the principles of diversity and equality?

Are these principles included in your group contract?