

TÚSLA

An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency



RAPHOE FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE CLG ANNUAL REPORT 2022



**RAPHOE FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE CLG.
ST. MICHAEL'S PLACE, CASTLE ROAD,
WILLIAM STREET, RAPHOE
WWW.RAPHOEFRC.IE ,**

COMPANY REGISTRATION NO: 347471

CHARITY NO: 16220

CHARITY REGISTRATION NO: 20057985

(PRESENTED AT AGM 26TH APRIL 2023)



**RAPHOE FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE
CLG. ANNUAL REPORT 2022**

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OUR STORY

Raphoe Family Resource Centre CLG was established in 1995. It was originally known as the Raphoe Youth and Community Project, rooted in the local authority housing estate of Meadow hill. In 2001, the project was well developed, and the voluntary committee decided to explore mechanisms for sustainability. The project was accepted into the Family and Community Services Resource Centre Programme and received its first 3-year contract in early 2002. Raphoe Family Resource Centre is one of 121 Family Resource Centres operating nationally under the FRC programme. The Family Resource Centre (FRC) programme is Ireland's largest National Family and Community Bases Support Programmes, core funded by Tusla (the Child and Family Agency). We are a member of the North West Region of Family Resource Centres and the National Forum of Family Resource Centres. All our team is fully vetted.

The FRC has grown and evolved throughout the years, continuing to respond to the needs of families and the wider community. The work of the FRC is informed and aligned to the Five National Outcomes outlined in Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People.

We work from a community development approach dedicated to meeting the needs of the community. The centre provides a wide range of universal and targeted services to individuals, families, and the wider Raphoe community to bring about more positive outcomes for children, families, and the wider community.

About us

Raphoe Family Resource Centre CLG core funding is provided by Tusla Child and Family Agency.

We are located at St Michael's Place, Castle Road, William Street, Raphoe, Co. Donegal F93 DX03

Charity Registration Number : 20057985 Charity number (CHY) 16220.
Company Registration Number – 827461

A voluntary Board of Directors provides direction and governance to the work of Raphoe FRC.

Project Coordinator: Melanie Sweeney

Chairperson: Lorraine Gallagher

Contact information

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FRC email address – info@raphoefrc.ie

Coordinators email – coordinator@raphoefrc.ie

FRC Facebook address - Family resource centre raphoe

FRC Instagram address - Raphoefrc

FRC website www.raphoefrc.ie

Chairperson's address

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Raphoe Family Resource Centre, it gives me great pleasure to present this annual report for 2022.

I am glad to say our door was very much open in 2022, but with that brought it challenges, now more than ever families needed our support; poverty, mental health and access to services very much played a heavy strain on families throughout 2022. For many, this was out of their control and is a true sign or result of this ever changing world we now live in. We are fortunate to have such dedicated and highly innovative people at the helm to ensure we continually strive to meet the needs of the Community. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the FRC Staff, counsellors and volunteers who have gone the extra mile to meet the needs of those most vulnerable in our Community.

In 2022, our staff consisted of Melanie Sweeney, full time project Coordinator, Laura Doran, Full time Family Support / Community Development Worker, Marie Porter, Full Time Administrator, Elaine Gamble Tus Admin / Youth Support Worker, Olivia Cole, DYS CE Youth Support Worker, Brendan Nelis, Charlie Paige and Seumas Mc Bride Tus Helping Hands workers and Majella Gallagher Tus Caretaker. I would also like to thank those that choose the FRC to complete the student placements, many thanks to Molly Mc Menamin - Boyle and Michelle Lafferty for their significant contributions to the project. A special word of thanks to our Counsellor Maria Whelan, who has provided Adult and Child Counselling for the service for many many years as far back to when we occupied our old building. Maria left the service towards the end of 2022, a sincere thank you to Maria for her hard work, we wish her continued success in the future.

The main challenge in 2022 was high need within individuals and families, many families are experiencing complex issues and with unfortunately limited resources. Research tells us that when families are able to meet basic needs such as food, housing, medical care, parents experience less stress which allows them to provide the care that children need to grow into healthy, productive adults. Families with children have been particularly affected by the pandemic, as parents have been forced to figure out ways to meet their families' most basic needs despite high cost of living crisis, acute concerns around health and wellbeing and other services and resources that should be typically available to support children and their families.

Staff and volunteers have had to try and fill the gap and do what they can to support families with the limited resources within the FRC. Finally I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow Board members for the extraordinary effort that they have made throughout 2022, thank you for your time, experience and skills as we move forward in another year.—*Lorraine Gallagher*



Organisation & Governance

Raphoe Family Resource is managed by a voluntary Board of Directors. The Board is made up of volunteers from the local community. The board meets monthly and is compliant with the Charities Regulator's Governance Code and has an active role in the organisation's policy development. The board operates under a board handbook that sets out in detail the roles and responsibilities of board members.

2022 Voluntary Board of Management

Chairperson: Lorraine Gallagher

Vice Chair: Aiden Kelly

Secretary: Patricia Tinney

Joint Treasurers: Jacqueline Gallagher

Patricia Mc Crory

Directors: Michael Devenney

Turlough Mc Dyer

Betty Mc Clintock

Elizabeth Russell

Natalie Sachs

Sarah Lowry

2022 staff members



**Project co-ordinator
Melanie Sweeney**



**Marie Porter
Administrator**



**Laura Doran
Family Support
Community Development Worker**



**Olivia Cole
Youth Support Worker**



**Elaine Gamble
Admin Support**



**Majella Gallagher
Project Care taker**



**Seamus Mc Bride
Helping Hand Worker**



**Charlie Paige
Helping Hands Worker**



**Brendan Nelis
Helping Hands Worker**

Project Co-ordinator—Melanie Sweeney

Welcome to our 2022 Annual Report.

I started the year full of ambition, how could we respond to these new needs, it was very obvious in a post pandemic society, the accessibility of community supports was to be required more than ever. We were heartened to hear these positive sentiments expressed by the Government and their recognition of the important part that the community and voluntary sector had played, the additional 4% to our core budget was a great relief for all.

In our head it allowed of us to think of the possibility of extending our space, and using this additional core funding for rent costs. A lot of my time in 2022, was completing application after application in order to meet the needs of children, families and the Community and expand on service provision.

We were delighted to be successful in our 2022 Toy Show Application. This application has allowed us to provide targeted children in the Community with wrap around services that enhances their social, emotional and spiritual well-being as well as their learning. Supporting families living on low income has always been a priority but in 2022 the cost of living crisis has dominated the lives of families living in our community. This funding has allowed us to provide a Breakfast club, and to provide a variety of programmes and supports within our Afterschool Club.

With the welcome news of 4% increase in our additional core funding from Tusla, the board prioritised using this funding to extend our space to enhance service provision. Our application to Community Centre Investment Fund was successful, which allowed us to renovate and fit out the new space. There is no doubt that the highlight of the year of was when we officially opened our new space with our Christmas Community night, this type of event had not taken place since 2019 due to the Pandemic.

2022 has definitely brought it challenges and I think it is fair to say staff were overwhelmed many days, the need for 1-1 supports on more complex issues increased dramatically, and there has been times when we felt torn in our Community development roots in delivering universal programmes and events, we were pulled to respond and assist in higher need issues. This year the biggest challenge has been operating on limited resources whilst continuing to meet the high demand for our services, workload has increased dramatically, the need for additional core staff has been highlighted throughout the meetings of the Voluntary Board of Directors. Although we have been very successful in our funding applications for programme costs, with the additional demand for 1-1 supports on Parenting, poverty, housing, Mental health, accessing services, it has taken its toll on staff and the service as a whole.

It is imperative that we build on the positive and collaborative relationship that we have developed with our funders to raise the issue of Family Resource Centres need more resources to be able to continue to deliver such a vital service within the Community

As mentioned most of the year was conflicting, needing to provide universal activities, encouraging individuals to participate in their community again. Our core value was always early intervention, identifying and providing effective early support to those who are at risk of poor outcomes. Earlier is always better, which is why in 2022, there was a need to provide those most basic group activities again. In April, we organised a 'Community night out' of Banquet and bowls for older people in the Community because many had not had the opportunity to meet and engage with others in such a long time, we also provided an Easter Camp for children at National School and a Men's Health morning in June, launching the opening of the Men's Shed again. In addition, we were once again able to plan our two week summer camp in partnerships with Springboard Family Support Project and Raphoe School Completion and finally our Christmas Santa night for everyone in the Community. Everyone in the Community needed these activities to resume again because even if you weren't directly involved, it did your heart good knowing these opportunities were available again. The Road ahead was positive.

All full programme and activities resumed for 2022, new initiatives were launched within our programme – START project, The Fun gang, Breakfast Club, Recovery and Resilience Programme, with the Community Garda Drop in clinic and BREAKOUT Raphoe proving to be very successful projects that continued to grow throughout the year.

Going forward, we strive to continue to ensure the message that there is no wrong door when you come in to the FRC is embedded into our Community, but also ensure our voice is heard that we need further to break the cycle where demand for services exceeds supply, and although we are extremely grateful of the small pots of funding we receive and increases in our core funding, it doesn't stop us worrying or waiting to the end of the year to see if everything was covered. Continuing to do so runs the risk of limiting the drive to be innovative, develop newer and better solutions to meet the diverse needs of the children and families we support. I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank the board for their continuing support and cooperation. Being a member of the voluntary board is no easy task and a lot of the work they do goes on behind the scenes, their duty of care and wellbeing of staff has always been notable. They are the backbone of this organisation, as a team they oversee everything that makes Raphoe Family Resource Centre function.

To our primary funders Tusla Child and Family Agency, National Family Resource Centre Programme we thank you for your continued belief, trust and investment for continuing to core fund the centre in its 21st consecutive year core funding. A special word of thanks to those I work with on a daily basis, all of whom have worked incredibly hard thorough out the year. I am in awe of their dedication and commitment to the Community. Each individual brings their special flare and skill set to the Centre which only enhances the diversity of the project. Thank you for you continuous support and respect you afford to me.

Finally, I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the following for their continued support, trust and confidence to Raphoe Family Resource Centre

Tusla National Family Resource Programme

Tusla Local Area Team

Donegal County Council

Donegal ETB

Donegal Local Development Company

Donegal Youth Service

Donegal Network of Family Resource Centres

Garda Donegal – Community policing Lifford

HSE

Lagan Community Health forum

North West Regional Forum of Family Resource Centres

Raphoe Boxing club

Raphoe Community in Action

Raphoe School Completion Program

Raphoe Tidy Town's

Springboard Family Support Project

St Vincent De Paul

Pobal Senior Alert Scheme and Care Direct / Community Centre investment Fund

The remaining of the report will allow you to see the highlight of 2022 and the variety of universal and targeted programmes we provide within the Community.

Community Development/Family support—Laura Doran

In my role as Family Support/Community Development Worker here in Raphoe Family Resource Centre I work closely with our co-ordinator, administrator and youth team in carrying out my daily work. My main responsibilities include: supporting individuals and families through listening ear, signposting, parenting advice/programmes/Meitheal; assisting families and individuals in identifying their own needs and goals; sourcing and applying for funding opportunities to address disadvantage within the community; facilitating FRC groups such as our Little Smiles with Big Dreams Toddler Group, Women's Group and newly established Fun Gang; and working with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies such as Tusla PPFs, Tusla Social Work Department, School Completion Project, Donegal Youth Service, Donegal Parent and Family Support Service, Lifestart, and Donegal Domestic Violence Service.

Reflecting on 2022 I feel we as a Family Resource Centre have had to develop, grow and diversify in order to meet the needs of the community. Our door has never been busier. Although wonderful to see, it also highlighted the fact the needs of individuals and families have grown more complex. For many everyday life has become more difficult with a wide range of issues arising from food poverty to mental health (adult and child), bereavement, domestic violence, and parenting struggles. While we do our best to try and help the individuals and families through the difficult times the impact of lack of statutory services and resources together with the now inevitable long waiting lists for children and adults is frustrating to all.

This year the Something Special Parental Support Group came to a natural end, needs had changed and families had grown. But as one chapter ended, a new one opened! From discussions with parents a need was highlighted to start a social group for young people aged 12 upwards who had limited or no social activities or group to attend. The gang first met on 3 May. While it was a nervous start for the members the group has really come into its own. It has been really wonderful to see the young people feel happy, safe and comfortable coming through the door on a Tuesday evening. Together they have made it their gang, a space they can be themselves. We can see confidence growing each time they come through the door.

Another major positive was the addition of our new space. The additional room has wholeheartedly changed our work here in the FRC, we can now do so much more, giving us more flexibility with our groups and ETB classes. For myself having the Parent and Toddler Group under our own roof again has opened up more opportunities for play and creativity, our Women's Group can participate in more interactive activities such as cooking and arts and crafts and the Fun Gang made their mark with their brilliant wall mural. Finally thank you to my work colleagues and board members for their continued support in 2022.

Onwards an upward for 2023!

Project Administrator—Marie Porter

In My role as project administrator I look after the financial side of the company, preparing financial reports to the Board & funders, processing payroll & revenue, paying invoices etc., to enable me to carry out this task I have to work closely with our project co-ordinator Melanie and the finance sub-committee Jacqueline & Patricia, one of the challenges we faced this year was the closure of Ulster Bank in Ireland and our subsequent move to AIB, it really was a team effort in setting up the new accounts and thanks to everyone for their help and support. I also work closely with our accountants each year to ensure they have everything they need to prepare our audited accounts and also to complete the return to the Companies Registration Office.

With my position as front of house at the Centre I am often the first face/voice many people will come into contact with! I am delighted that 2022 saw a real increase in the return of face to face activities and it was great to welcome people back after covid restrictions. Many different requests come through the door on a daily basis and these could be anything from form filling, CV'S preparation, laminating to name but a few, but it is this variety and the people that makes it enjoyable and interesting! I look after the Helping Hands scheme and the Senior Alert Scheme which is a big help to the community

When I look back over 2022 I am grateful for the return to services following restrictions and welcoming people back into our space. We were also delighted to see the summer programme in conjunction with Springboard back up and running. Over the course of 2022 we had great success with our ETB community Education programmes which included Zoom art,(at the beginning of 22 when restrictions were still in place), because it was via zoom it enabled people from all over to register and we had people from Dublin tuning in every week! Another class that lended itself very well to zoom was our Monday Mindfulness class, with many participants loving the comfort of their own home or favourite armchair whilst still being able to take part. Other successful classes included arts & crafts, Basketry, furniture upcycling, and yoga. The furniture upcycling was so popular that we had to run a second course.

The men's shed were one of the last groups to come back after lock down and are going from strength to strength, they have enjoyed taking part in the basket weaving and furniture upcycling courses and have enjoyed days out to auld lamma's fair and Gweedore as part of the Donegal Men's shed Networking event. They have also enjoyed walking trips with the walking group to Swan Park & Carrigart. They are looking forward to taking part in the Men's Fit For Life programme in conjunction with Ballybofey Men's Shed in early 2023 and are also taking part in the house of memory project in early 2023.

One of the highlights of our year has been the new space that we have acquired, it is such a lovely welcoming and child friendly space and the kids love it and it also gives us much more flexibility for classes and bookings. I would like to thank all my work colleagues and board members for all the support they have given me in 2022 and I look forward to an exciting 2023 at the Centre.

A SNAP SHOT 2022

122 Counselling sessions were delivered to children and Adults.

36 Parents participated in Parent support workshop partners

'Monday Mindfulness' 33 sessions throughout 2022

Healthy Ireland Programme – Delivering cooking programme, baby massage, music workshops.

12 Community Education Programmes such as Art, Chair yoga, sign language, Paediatric first aid, Yoga, Basket Weaving, furniture upcycling and photography with 199 Adults learners participating.

17 Children and Young people with Dyslexia and other learning differences participated in the Learning Support Group.

The 'Little Smiles' Parent and Toddler group took place each week during term with 12 Adults and 15 pre - schoolers attending weekly.

The 'Fun gang' began in May 2022 – a social group for Teenagers with additional needs.

24 adults from the Community participated in HSE – safeTALK Training “Suicide Alertness for everyone”

The Brunch and Breakfast club were launched in July 2022, to support families living on low income.

46 Children registered in the Afterschool Programme.

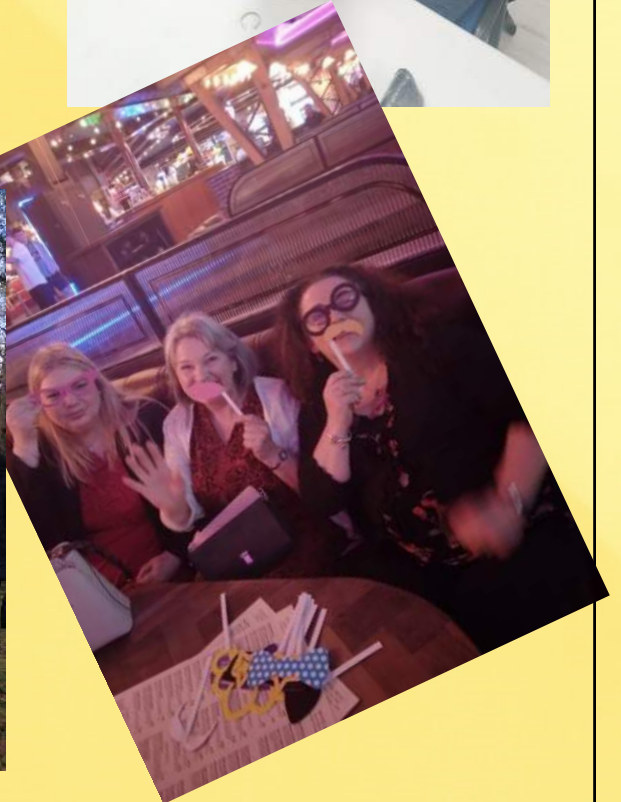
90 children participated in the Raphoe Summer Programme in partnership with Springboard Family Support Project.

The FRC welcomed “START” programme to the centre. The START programme provides support and guidance to drug / alcohol users and their families.

The Project Coordinator and Family Support Worker participated in 10 Meitheal processes within various roles throughout the year.

A YEAR IN PICTURES







BreakOUT

BreaKOUT Raphoe is a Donegal Youth Service youth project that focuses on LGBT+ young people aged between 12 and 30 years old. The project operates a weekly drop-in provision in Letterkenny and provides an outreach here in the Family Resource Centre. Since the project started, it has been very successful, with a core group attending each week and new members joining regularly.

Those who are members can avail of training, information and one to one support. The project is specifically for young LGBT+ people, LGBT+ allies and young individuals who believe in social justice. Many thanks to Donegal Youth Service and the team at BreakOUT for providing this service in our Community.



Little smiles with big dreams



The Little Smiles with Big Dreams Baby & Toddler group provides a safe place where parents and caregivers can come to meet and get to know others in their community while also providing a space for baby/toddler social interactions and play. It is a great way to enhance your little one's confidence and meet other children of similar age. After having to rent premises for several years the group are delighted to have their own space in the Family Resource Centre and have had loads of fun with tiny tunes, messy play, painting and water play! One of the highlights of the year was when play trail came to visit and we had a lovely day outside complete with sunshine and ice cream!

Fun Gang

The Fun Gang is our new social group for young people aged 12-16 years with additional needs. The gang was established in May of this year as a result of discussions with parents who expressed their teenagers had limited or no social groups or activities to attend. The main aim of the gang is to provide a safe and inclusive space where the young people can be themselves, are given the opportunity to participate in activities they themselves decide they want to do and enjoy while also enhancing their social, emotional and personal development. We currently have four gang members and since May the group has thrived.



Walking Group

Our walking group meet each Thursday morning at 10.30 am, and enjoy a local walk around the town. We are privileged to live in such a historical town and walking is



always more fun with good conversation. The walking group is for everyone in the community.

Whether it be wanting to get fitter, or meeting new people in your community, the walking group is a lovely place to start looking after yourself. All you have to do is turn up, walk and enjoy yourself. There are no medals for first place, but you will receive a warm cup of tea. Throughout the year, the group organises and plans guided walks to explore the beautiful landmarks and sights in Donegal. The walking group is an

excellent opportunity to find out what is happening in the FRC, many of the members attend other supports within the FRC.

Woman's Group

Our Women's Group has been ongoing for a long time and meet on a fortnightly basis. The women's group are delighted to be meeting face to face following the ease of restrictions, they had missed their cup of tea and chats! Throughout the year they have enjoyed walking, furniture upcycling, yoga and Christmas crafts.

While the group is based in Raphoe Family Resource Centre, we have participants that attend from surrounding townlands and areas.



Men's Shed

Our Men's Shed provides men with the opportunity to meet, socialise and make new friends in a 'man to man', 'shoulder to shoulder' environment. With the general



attitude of the group being 'doing things together', the group gives men a space to share their skills, learn new ones, socialise and develop friendships in a friendly-safe environment. The men are delighted to be finally using the "Shed" after covid and are continuing to grow in numbers. They have enjoyed taking part in various projects throughout the year to include basket weaving, furniture upcycling, walking trips and art. They also attend regular networking events with Men's shed groups from all over the county!

Services

Family Support

The Family Resource Centre can help through a listening ear, parenting programmes, one-to-one support, and a drop-in clinic to offer support on issues that are affecting home life.

Our Family Support worker is trained in Parents Plus—Early Years, Working things out, Special Needs and Parenting when separated, which can be delivered on a 1-1 basis or group setting.

The Family Resource Centre can also support a family through the Meitheal process, acting as a Lead practitioner. The Meitheal Model led by Tusla - Child and Family Agency, can help you and your child get the supports you need, easily locally and when you need it. Meitheal brings everyone together.

Counselling

The Family Resource Centre provides one-to-one low-cost counselling for those who are in need of assistance. The service provides Counselling for Adults and Young People, play therapy for children from ages 7+ Following the pandemic the need for counselling continues to increase and we try to keep our service as inclusive and affordable as possible.

Afterschool

The After School Program provide a safe, happy, and fun space for National school children in the local area. Its objectives are to provide activities that meet the needs of children and to enhance their skills and abilities in a fun environment.

Throughout the year our numbers have increased and we had lots of fun activities, our Easter camp held over 3 days was a great success. With arts & crafts, baking and egg hunt! Relax kids joined us for several sessions and the kids were introduced to mindfulness and relaxation techniques which went down extremely well and the kids thoroughly enjoyed it, with a few even having an afternoon nap at times! A cinema outing for Halloween was great fun!



Services

Monthly Community Garda

The purpose of our Monthly Community Garda Clinic is to provide an accessible way for you to speak with the Community Garda in your local area. It operates on a monthly basis. The drop in clinic has been very successful, many thanks to Garda Catherine Callaghan and Garda Ted Mc Caffrey for facilitating this initiative.

Family Access space

The Family Resource Centre has been used to provide a safe, warm and caring environment in which Family Access visits between parents and their children can take place. Our Family Support Community Development worker is trained to provide support and guidance on any issues that are coming up for families.

Food supports

The Family Resource Centre continue to provide food support to those in need. Many families continue to struggle with the cost of living and high utility bills.

Individuals and families were encouraged to make contact with the Family Support Community Development worker if they needed help, which provided a safety net for those who found themselves struggling.

Admin Supports

Our Admin support service is extremely busy with individuals needing help with photocopying, laminating, printing and CV preparation. Many families availed of our free photocopying service and loan device during the pandemic to help with home learning.

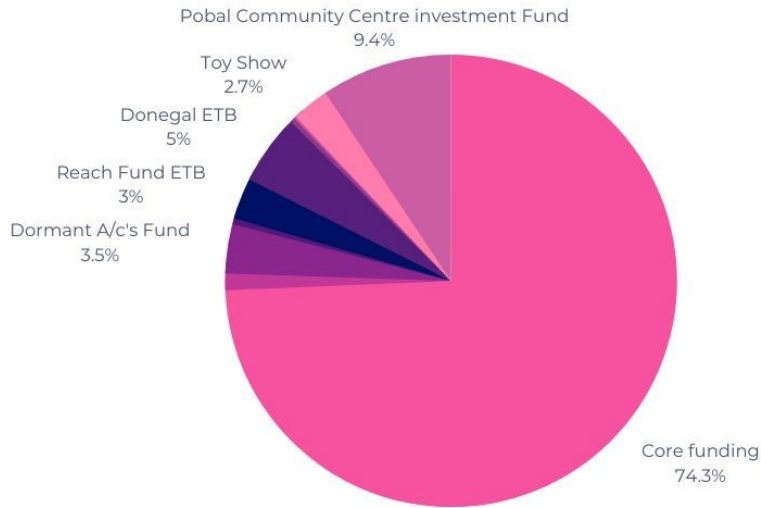
S.T.A.R.T Project

Would you like to talk to someone about your concerns around drugs/alcohol? Free, confidential – non-judgemental service providing up to date information and practical supports, including CBT, Motivational Interviewing, Mindfulness practices, Brief Solution Focus Therapy and the Smart Recovery Principles. Drop in Group/Individuals every Monday 10am-12pm in the Raphoe Family Resource Centre. Letterkenny C.D.P is a community Development Project providing a Community Response to Alcohol/Drug misuse throughout Co. Donegal. We provide non-judgemental support guidance and education to drug/alcohol users, their families and the community. Contact our

Helping Hands

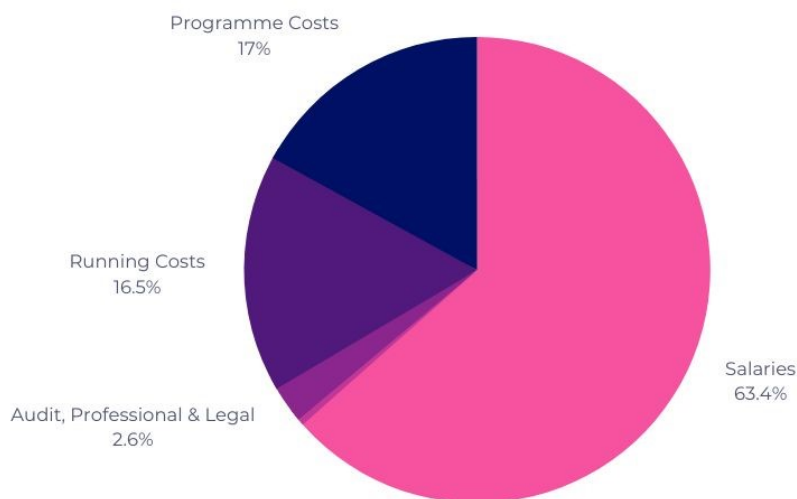
Our Helping Hands program sees individuals helping others in the community, who no longer may be able to carry out maintenance work. Some of the tasks they help people with include outside home maintenance like cutting grass, strimming, painting, power washing and more. This is a low cost service, although participants will need to provide some materials such as paint. This service plays a vital role in providing hands on support to many elderly and vulnerable in our community. The clients really appreciate the work that is carried out and often look forward to a wee chat with the boys!

INCOME 2022



DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL 0.40% COUNSELLING GRANT 1.20%
DOBNEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL 0.40%
HSE/NATIONAL LOTTERY 0.34%
POBAL - SAS 0.16%

EXPENDITURE 2022



INSURANCE 0.45%

Network & Presentation

During 2022, Raphoe Family Resource Centre continued to participate in various agency and networking bodies including the:

North West Regional Forums of FRCs

Family Resource Centre National Forum

Donegal Family Resource Centre Network

**Children and Young people's Service Committee (CYPSC)
Health and Wellbeing Sub group**

Raphoe School Completion Local Management Committee

South Central Child and Family Support Network

DLDC Community Food Network

Lagan Community Health Forum

Teen Parent Support Programme (Foroige)



