

An Irish Approach to Working With Men.

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New Ross, Co Wexford.

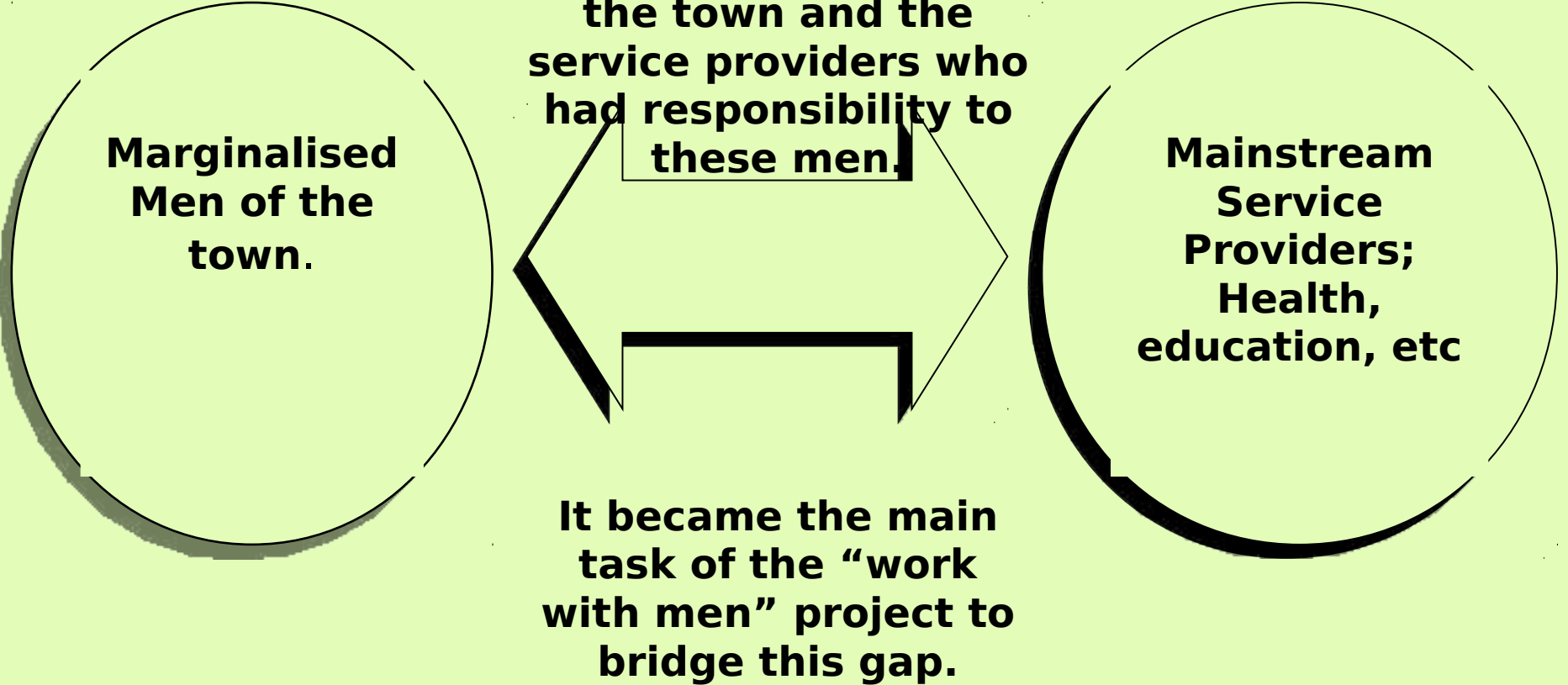


Our core Approach / Philosophy

- ❑ To work with the men who most need it.
- ❑ To empower the men to enrich their lives and to play a full and active role in their communities.
- ❑ To trust that the men know what is best for themselves and where to start.
- ❑ What our approach is not!
- ❑ Multi-disciplinary

The New Ross Model

There was a significant gap between the marginalised men of the town and the service providers who had responsibility to these men.



**Marginalised
Men of the
town.**

**Mainstream
Service
Providers;
Health,
education, etc**

It became the main task of the “work with men” project to bridge this gap.

The Men

- Long term unemployed
- Traveller men
- Asylum seekers
- Older isolated men
- Younger men with few prospects
- Men with disabilities

The Issues

- ❑ Poor Health; physical, mental, emotional, etc
- ❑ Employability; long term unemployment and few prospects
- ❑ Low educational achievements including illiteracy
- ❑ Housing; homelessness, sub-standard accommodation, etc
- ❑ Substance misuse issues; drug & alcohol dependency, etc
- ❑ Social exclusion; stigmatisation, poor life skills, inability to deal with bureaucracy
- ❑ Hegemony of existing sub culture

The Stages of Engagement

- Contact stage.
- Engagement,
- Practical support,
- Confidence & Esteem building,
- Building awareness of the available services
- Ongoing links & support
- Progression

Work with service providers

- ❑ Coming out from behind the slogan.
- ❑ Acknowledging that work needs to be done.
- ❑ Overcoming preconceptions
- ❑ Challenging prejudices

Qualities of a Successful Worker

A willingness to:

- Go the extra mile.
- Work un-sociable hours.
- Give of themselves.
- Tackle his/her own prejudices'.
- Feel uncomfortable.
- Take risks.
- Make mistakes.

Qualities of the worker, ctd.

- ❑ Take responsibility.
- ❑ Have high self-worth, leading to high levels of self care.
- ❑ Have good personal boundaries.
- ❑ Know how to say “no”.
- ❑ Be a positive role model.
- ❑ Understand the personal risks of the work.
- ❑ Believe in the cause.

Do's & Don'ts for a positive experience; Do:

- ❑ Invite participation.
- ❑ Go at the group/individuals pace.
- ❑ Be consistent.
- ❑ Be sensitive.
- ❑ Be flexible.
- ❑ Be transparent.
- ❑ Be honest.
- ❑ Work as a team.
- ❑ Show you care.
- ❑ Listen to the group/individuals.
- ❑ Put concerns on the table.
- ❑ Give ownership to the group/individuals.
- ❑ Value difference.
- ❑ Meet people where they're at. (incl. Language.)
- ❑ Say thank you.

Don't :

- ❑ Be vague.
- ❑ Make promises that you can't keep.
- ❑ See target group through “ Them & Us” framework.
- ❑ See people as their behaviours.
- ❑ Show favouritism.
- ❑ Use complicated language.
- ❑ Tell people how to live their lives.
- ❑ Have hidden agendas.
- ❑ Expect people to conform to our ways.
- ❑ Be conditional with your praise / thanks.

The Barriers to Learning Participation in Adult Learning

- **Dispositional:** the individual's feelings, thoughts and attitudes to him/herself and to learning activities
- **Institutional:** the image, ethos, and physical environment, administrative and pedagogical practices of education and training providers
- **Informational:** the availability, range, quality and reliability of information on education and training opportunities
- **Situational:** the individual's life situation as well as the extent to which resources such as time or money influence participation.

Informational and situational barriers frequently overlap. (Owens T, 2000 & Aontas 2009)

The Engage Program

- ❑ Training men to work and engage with men in the community
- ❑ Counteracting the gender imbalance which exists in the staffing and participation of Community Projects
- ❑ Teaching the approach through the approach
- ❑ The ripple affect
- ❑ The community education approach
- ❑ Accreditation

The Growing Support for Men's Shed's in Ireland.

- Visit of Barry Golding and Mike Brown To Ireland in 2008.
- The publication of the Irish men's Health Policy in December 2008.
- Dr Ted Flemings article in a Community Education journal "Explore"
- "White Paper on Adult Education"

Internet References:

- ❑ www.pobal.ie
- ❑ www.cowexfordvec.ie
- ❑ Irish Men's Health Policy www.dohc.ie
- ❑ Increasing Men's Participation in Adult Learning
www.aontas.com/pubsandlinks/publications/btei-guidelines-increasing-men-s-participation-in-adult-learning
- ❑ Explore
http://www.aontas.com/download/pdf/9287_aontas_explore_winter_08.pdf
- ❑ "White Paper on Adult Education"
http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobServlet/fe_adulted_wp.pdf

Glossary of Abbreviations

- BTEI Back To Education Initiative
- CDP Community Development Project
- Co. County
- DSFA Department of Social and Family Affairs
- FDYS Ferns Diocesan Youth Service
- HSE Health Service Executive
- RAPID Revitalizing Areas by Planning Investment and Development
- VEC Vocational Education Committee
- Wex Co.Co. Wexford County Council
- WLD Wexford Local Development Ltd.

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