



*supporting children and young people
affected by loss through death, parental separation and divorce*

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Charity Number: 20919



Charity Impact Community
Award 2017



Limerick Person
of the Year Award
2017



Social Innovation Fund
Ireland Animate Health
Community Award Winner
2018



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Foreword

Director, Sr. Helen Culhane

The Children's Grief Centre is a support service for school-aged children and young people affected by loss through death, separation or divorce. We provide a safe and supportive place for children and young people and their families who are grieving. The service is provided by trained and experienced people.

A key aim of the Children's Grief Centre is to raise awareness and understanding in relation to the loss children feel following bereavement or separation. We provide grieving children and young people with a place and space where they are given the opportunity to look at feelings associated with loss and learn that they are not alone.

We aim to help children to overcome the obstacles that prevent them from leading full lives. In addition, the Children's Grief Centre strives to educate the community that grieving is an important part of life and is essential to an individual's ongoing growth and development.

There were 30,390 deaths in Ireland in 2016; 29,952 in 2015; and 29,095 in 2014. Although it is not possible to determine how many of these deaths involved parents who left behind children aged between 4 and 18, findings from the Growing up in Ireland national study of children reported that by age 9, 43% of children had experienced the death of a close family member, 3% the death of a parent, 15% the divorce/separation of parents and 6% the death of a close friend (Williams et al., 2009). Thus,



experience of loss and bereavement is common among the population of children and young people in Ireland.

In response to this, the Children's Grief Centre has developed since its inception in 2009, a support team of up to 8 volunteer support workers. It is primarily these volunteers, who are qualified and experienced in various relevant disciplines (e.g. teaching, art /play therapy, psychotherapy and counselling), who provide the one-to-one support service to the children and young people.

In the period from the establishment of our service in September 2009 up until September 2017, a total of 1,031 children and their families have been supported by the centre.

The Board of Management comprises people with significant skills and experience in work areas such as social work, family support, general practice, psychotherapy, accountancy, law and bereavement services. The Board meets on a regular basis to support all the volunteers and to provide guidance and advice on the ongoing development of the Children's Grief Centre.

I would like to thank the Chairman and Board of Management, who give clear and practical guidance to support and enable the development of the centre.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all our staff who each day do this work, bringing their talents, commitment, diligence and great humour to furthering our mission in all that they do. Our volunteers are at the heart of our work. Without their commitment it would not be possible to continue to provide the services we do. We thank them for their generosity and compassion which helps in a real and practical way those that we are here to help.

Our work is possible because of the support of our funders, those who so generously give philanthropic grants and donations. We are deeply grateful for this support.

The next few years will present many opportunities for us to build upon the many successes and positive outcomes from our work over the last eight years.

We will continue our work in providing some level of solace, support, reassurance, comfort and hope to the substantial number of children and young people who are suffering and grieving as a result of death, separation and divorce.

Thank you for your interest in the work of the Children's Grief Centre.

Helen Culhane
**Director, Children's Grief Centre,
March 2018**



Introduction

Chairman of the Board of Management, Philip Mortell

It is with a sense of hope and of real achievement that I present the **Annual Report of the Children's Grief Centre** for the year 2017.

The sense of achievement comes from the belief that we have made huge strides in delivering a quality service and hope in that we will continue to serve the needs of children suffering loss through death, separation and divorce. Throughout 2017, the Children's Grief Centre continued to make a difference in the lives of children and young people affected by loss.

I invite you to read the **Annual Report 2017** and be encouraged by the detailed account of the extensive work undertaken in the provision of support services for children experiencing loss through death, separation and divorce. Between them, the Director and volunteer Support Workers delivered 829 contact hours with parents, children and young people.

188 children received support sessions during the year, 107 boys and 81 girls, the majority of whom were between the ages of 7 and 14. The majority of all referrals were from Limerick city and county (138) and the remainder from counties Tipperary and Clare.

Two thirds of referrals were children affected by separation and divorce. The remaining one third of child referrals



were children affected by the death of a loved one.

The Director continued to liaise with a wide array of primary and secondary schools and community organisations. In addition, she delivered Workshops to 12 organisations, agencies, and community groups.

A revitalised **Fund-Raising Committee** developed an attractive **Information Pack** which was sent to over 100 businesses in the Munster area. The Centre continued to attract new volunteer Support Workers: these are Garda-vetted and interviewed by the Centre Leader and Chair before commencing work.

The Board continued to develop the Centre's governance portfolio: a **Volunteer Policy** was drafted, discussed, amended and eventually adopted in 2017.

In continuing to respond to the needs of children affected by bereavement, separation and divorce the board of management decided that it would be useful to produce a 5-year strategic plan which would set out the aspirations, objectives/goals, governance and management arrangements and the

planned activities for the centre in the period from 2018 and 2023. To this end, we have contracted the services of a business consultant to assist us with this goal.

In relation to governance and organisational matters we have drawn up and adopted a constitution which serves to guide and inform our work, and the centre is on the way to full compliance with the provisions of **The Governance**

Code (which is a code of good practice for organisations within the community and voluntary sector in Ireland).

Recent funding donated to the centre enabled us to tackle the waiting list and reduce it from a high of 120 children in mid 2017, with a waiting time of 9 months to what is currently a 3–4 month waiting time by the end of the year.

A growing waiting list continues to be a concern. The success of the centre raises the question: can we meet increasing demands for the service with the current, largely voluntary workforce?

There is a clear need to obtain a more long-term sustainable funding source in order to continue to provide the current level of service to meet the ever growing demand into the future.

Thank you for taking the time to read our Annual Report for 2017.

Phil Mortell

**Chair, Children's Grief Centre,
March 2018**



About the Children's Grief Centre

The Children's Grief Project (later re-named the Children's Grief Centre) was set up by Sr. Helen Culhane on the 14th September 2009. The Children's Grief Centre is a support service for school-aged children and young people affected by loss through death, separation and divorce.

The Children's Grief Centre has developed a support team of 8 volunteers. It is primarily these volunteers who are qualified and experienced in various relevant disciplines (e.g., teaching, art/play therapy, psychotherapy and counselling), who provide the one-to-one support to the children and young people assisted through our work. The premises, donated by the Sisters of Mercy is extremely conducive to carrying out caring and compassionate work with children and young people who have experienced loss and grief in their young lives.

Mission Statement

The Children's Grief Centre is a support service for school-aged children and young people affected by loss through death, separation or divorce. It provides a safe and supportive place for children and young people and their families who are grieving. The service is provided by trained and experienced people.



Who we assist

- The core work of the Children's Grief Centre relates to the provision of one- to-one support to children and young people aged from 4 to 18 who have been affected by loss through death, separation and divorce.
- We also provides support to the families of these children and young people (and especially to the parents) who bring the young person to the one-to-one sessions with the centre's support worker – although parents do not attend these one-to-one sessions, there are often discussions after these sessions with the parents (with the approval of the young person and generally with the young person in attendance).

Liaison with Schools, Organisations and Others

The Children's Grief Centre plays a key role in providing advice and information to parents, teachers and a wide variety of agencies. The Director liaised with a number of primary and secondary schools during the year. She also provided training and information to help organisations and individuals deal with grief issues.

The need for the service

There is a clear need for the supports being provided here at the centre. This need is demonstrated by the fact that there was a waiting list of 120 children and young people in February 2017 for one-to-one appointments with our support workers. The children's Grief Centre has carried out interesting and useful research which links into international studies to demonstrate the particular needs and circumstances of children and young people suffering loss and grief. This research serves to put forward a very strong case for the existence of tailored and bespoke services and supports which are specifically focused on children and young people who have been bereaved and/or whose parents are going through a separation/divorce process.

A unique service

The Children's Grief Centre is a unique, bespoke service in the Mid-West, and probably in all of Ireland, since there is no other single organisation which provides the same types of supports to children and young people who have suffered loss and grief and possibly trauma in their young lives as a result of bereavement, separation and/or divorce. There is clear and incontrovertible evidence that the experience of children and young people going through these difficult life episodes is different to that of adults and requires a different set of responses – such as the responses provided by our service. The Children's Grief Centre is the only organisation in Ireland which is uniquely focused on providing these services and supports.

The Children's Grief Centre's Ethos

We recognise the dignity of children and young people and aim to raise awareness and understanding in relation to the loss children feel following bereavement or separation. We provide grieving children and young people with a place and space where they are given the opportunity to look at feelings associated with loss and learn that they are not alone.

We aim to help children overcome the obstacles that prevent them from leading full lives. In addition, we strive to educate the community that grieving is an important part of life and is essential to an individual's ongoing growth and development.

What parents and guardians have said about the Children's Grief Centre



"I found that my daughter benefited greatly from talking to someone that had no involvement in the situation. She has opened up more and is coping with things better".

"My daughter seemed to appreciate having a warm, welcoming neutral place to discuss her feelings".

"It was a safe place to talk. No one knew your business. The person was so nice and helpful, and I really enjoyed it a lot".

"The service has enabled (child) to express his feelings of loss in an open and supportive way with someone independent who understands where he is coming from".

"It gave (child) the space to talk about his dad without fear of upsetting anyone – it gave a voice to his feelings that he couldn't name and let him see he is not alone and it was normal".

"The one to one contact is great as (child) can be very shy and wouldn't speak out within a group. The place is homely and inviting, which in turn makes it easier for (child) to relax".

What the children have said about the Children's Grief Centre

"Being able to express my feelings and stuff off my chest".

"I found the talking really helpful because someone understands".

"It was nice that someone wanted to listen to me".

"It is very helpful and helps me to understand stuff. I was able to talk about my thought".

"I found the book and the talking helpful and also the playing".

"I feel a lot less alone and I feel able to talk to my Mum more".

"It helped to come to terms with my parent's separation".

"I liked that on thursdays I could talk about my feelings and my mom".



Case Study

Story: Tom

Tom (The name has been changed to maintain the client's confidentiality) was an eight year old. In the first session I asked Tom, why his mum brought him to the Children's Grief Project.

He appeared nervous and said: **"To talk about what is going on in my head."**

"It's better for me not to think about it too much because when I think about my father, I know there's nobody like him. Dad used to bring me to school. I have anger and other things going on in my head." I worry about mum. I worry when she cries and I wonder why she is crying."

Tom said **"I feel the hurt in my heart and what hurt most is that dad died"**

Tom quickly said to me: *"Can I draw my heart"* As Tom looked at his drawing, I asked him what he was feeling.

He replied:

**"I am 'heartbreaking'.
Can I write on my heart?"**

He wrote:

"Sad, extremed, upset, angry, shocked, patience, terrible, not alive, anxious, and unhappy".

Tom explained each of the feelings.

He described sad:

"Do you know how you feel happy when you are alive and not sad? I miss dad he was good to me. I feel not alive when I miss dad. When I am sad I feel not alive."



He extended his arms and said *"I felt extremed because I felt shocked and upset. I feel shocked dad died so suddenly and so young. My dad was only forty-two. I feel terrible myself."*

At the last session with Tom, I asked Tom to complete an evaluation sheet. In response to questions on the evaluation sheet, outlined below, Tom gave the following responses;

What had he found most helpful?

He replied *"Talking about the person. I got used to it and it helped me to talk about it with my family."*

What did you most like about coming to the Project?

"I liked writing about my dad. Helen helped me by saying it was OK to cry."

Did the sessions make any difference in your Life?

If so, can you describe the difference?

Tom replied *"The sessions made a difference to me. I am not as worried as I used to be."*

When asked if there were any other comments, Tom replied

"Thank you for helping me."

In session nine Tom shared, "I am happy. I am finding it helpful coming in here. You are helping me to understand what happened I don't like being asked questions. I'm happy you are helping me a bit. I learn what is going on. I sort things out. I understand my dad is not alive. I was sad when I started here but I now feel good."

He added;

"I am able to get my words out."



Structure and Governance

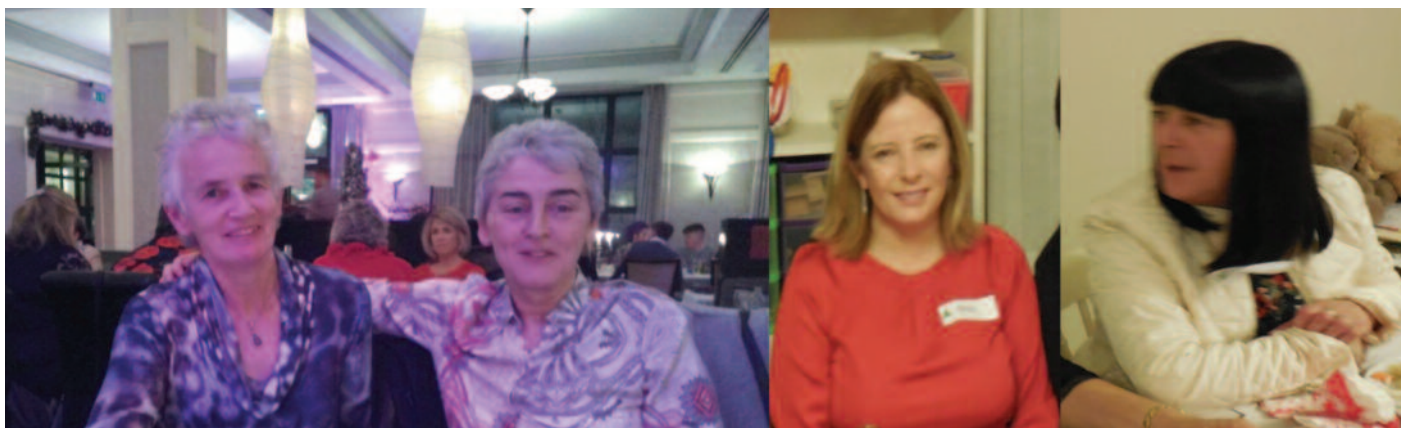
In September 2013, the Children's Grief Centre was formally constituted as a registered charity with a legally binding Constitution.

Our Office

Our office is located at Westbourne, Ashbourne Avenue, South Circular Road, Limerick. This office is open from 9.30am to 5.00pm.

Our Staff

Sr. Helen Culhane, Director/support worker, Sr. Breda O'Driscoll, administrator, Anne English, administrator, Geraldine Hannan, housekeeping.



In 2017 our administrator Ann Keane left to begin a new role nearer her home. We wish Ann the very best with this new challenge. In April 2017, we welcomed Anne English as administrator and we are delighted to have her as part of our team.

Our Volunteers

We are dependent on a wonderful network of volunteers for so many of our activities. They are the foundation of the Children's Grief Centre. Without them, it would be impossible to serve as many families as we do.

We acknowledge with gratitude the work and commitment of all our volunteers, without whom we could not operate. Volunteers make an immense and invaluable contribution to the operation of Children's Grief Centre by:

- Supporting children/young people on a one to one basis
- Helping at our annual summer party
- Helping in our Administration Department
- Offering professional knowledge and serving on our Board of Management

Through their passion and commitment, volunteers create a safe, caring setting where grieving children can express all their emotions while finding their own path to healing from loss. Their compassion and kindness is very much appreciated by the Children's Grief Centre and by the parents and children who attended in 2016.

Among our volunteers: are **Dolores Madden**, maintenance, **Una Orlandi**, landscaping/gardens, **Mary Fagan**, volunteer administrator, **Sr. Maura Flanagan**, volunteer administrator.



Being a volunteer with the Children's Grief Centre

"As a volunteer, stepping into the CGC is a warm, positive and welcoming experience. Helen, Anne and Breda make one feel very welcome. Volunteers' experience, commitment and dedication to the task of helping young people with grief is cherished and valued. Helen always provides a listening ear and genuine interest in how the volunteer is progressing within the Centre. There is always a nice cup of tea or coffee and biscuits for volunteers.

The Centre supports volunteers with supervision, case management and an empathic response. There is professional group supervision held regularly with an experienced practitioner and this is held in a supportive and welcoming manner. All the volunteers who work in the Centre are focused professionally on the ethos of providing empathic outcomes for the young people that come to the Centre. The Centre is a calm, relaxing and therapeutic space for young people and their families. This welcoming space is very evident to me as a volunteer and I really enjoy giving some of my time to the Centre".

Michele
Support worker

Support Workers

The Children's Grief Centre has helped children and young people to make more sense of their own experience of loss and grief and to come to terms with the reality of their own situation. Many children and young people are often confused and conflicted around times of death and separation/divorce, and the Children's Grief Centre support workers have assisted them to work through issues and dilemmas which were causing them concern and worry.

Families do not have to pay for services but can make a contribution if they are able to do so. Supports being provided by the Children's Grief Centre to children, young people and parents are made possible on account of the voluntary contributions made from the centre's qualified and experienced support workers and due to the fact that it's director does not draw a salary for her work.



Our support workers include: Mary Browne, Theresa Kavanagh, Claudine O'Dowd, Beryl Carswell, Ita Hannan, Ciara Ni Nuallain, Michele O'Flanagan and Helen Culhane (*Support Worker/Director*).

Dervilla Butler, Patricia English and Pat Looby withdrew temporarily owing to family reasons but hope to rejoin our team in the future. Ita Hannan, Beryl Carswell and Ciara Ni Nuallain joined our team this year and we are delighted to welcome them.

Board Members

The Children's Grief Centre reports to a Voluntary Board, the members of which are appointed by the Trustees, the Sisters of Mercy, South Central Province. The Board members are drawn from diverse backgrounds and bring with them a wide range of skills and experience which contribute significantly to the work of the Centre.

Board Members 2017

Name	Position	Joined Board
Philip Mortell	Chairman	September 2013
Majella Foley Friel	Board Member	September 2013
Dr Paula Gaire	Board Member	April 2017
Marie Stuart	Board Member	September 2013
Seamus Enright	Board Member	September 2013
Ita O'Brien	Board Member	September 2013
Seamus O'Brien	Treasurer	September 2013
Therese Barry	Secretary	September 2013
Caroline Keane	Board Member	April 2015
Vicki Lynch	Board Member	November 2015
Anne Comerford	Parent Representative	June 2016

The Centre is governed by the Board of Management. The Board meets five times each year and has responsibility for overseeing all the business of the Centre. The Director presents to the Board a report on case work, referral statistics, compliance matters, employment matters, accounts and future development of the Centre. The Chair of the Board meets frequently with the Director during the interval between Board meetings. Board members, having served a three-year term at the time of the AGM, shall retire and may be eligible for re-election for one further three-year term.

The Children's Grief Centre is registered as:

- A Charity with the Revenue Commissioners (CHY No: 20919)
- A Charity with the Charities Regulatory Authority (Charity Registration No: 20083403).

The Board is working towards full compliance by the Centre with The Governance Code - a Code of Practice for Good Governance of Community, Voluntary and Charitable Organisations in Ireland. The Children's Grief Centre is on the 'adoption journey' of the Governance Code.



Visit www.governancecode.ie for more information.



External Partnerships & Collaborations

UL Engage

The UL Engage initiative by the University of Limerick supports university and community collaborations through its programmes and projects. In 2017 the Children's Grief Centre began a joint project with UL staff and students to develop an information leaflet aimed at parents and guardians supporting children experiencing loss through separation and divorce.

Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT)

We are delighted to participate in a joint research project with the Loss and Grief Research group @ LIT. The project, titled 'Dealing with Loss: Young Peoples' Views of Support Services for Issues Related to Loss and Grief', receives funding from the LIT Graduate Research Office.

The project, which began in September 2017, is a collaboration between us and LIT and a MA research student.

This MA student will explore views of young people who attended a support service due to experiencing loss and grief as a result of parental separation and/or death.

The aim of the research is to explore what types of creative mediums therapeutically help young people deal with loss and grief in a family context.

The project is overseen by Jennifer Stritch, Principle Investigator for Loss and Grief group and by Dr. Michele O'Flanagan.

University College Cork (UCC)

The Children's Grief Centre has engaged with UCC as part of their integrated work placement programme for a number of their undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.

In 2017 UCC MA research student, Siobhan Sweeney joined the team here at the centre. We were delighted to have Siobhan on board for the duration of her placement and really appreciate the contribution she made.

Mary Immaculate College (MIC)

Throughout 2017, our director, Helen Culhane had been invited to give presentations and seminars as a guest lecturer to MIC students on the undergraduate Bachelor of Arts Degree programme. The Children's Grief Centre has also facilitated MIC student site visits.



Social Media Communications

The Children's Grief Centre maintains an active social media presence on **Twitter** (@children_grief) and **Facebook** (Children's Grief Project). We are active with these very useful platforms in spreading awareness of our support service and informing our audience of available resources around bereavement and loss.

Our website (www.childrensgriefcentre.ie) is regularly updated with blogs of relevance to our work.



@children_grief



@Childrensgriefcentre



@childrensgriefcentre

Media Partners

Throughout 2017 there were many newspaper articles about the Children's Grief Centre. These appeared in both the Limerick Leader and the Limerick Post. Additionally, there were articles on the ILoveLimerick.com website and the work of the Children's Grief Centre was also featured on Limerick's Live95FM.



Finance

Cost of our service

In 2017, the cost of running the Children's Grief Centre amounted to €53,087. We received €105,329 in grants, donations and from fundraising. Included in these donations was €20,000 received from the Sisters of Mercy and a further €20,000 from the JP McManus Charitable Foundation. The remainder, €80,069, was received as a result of our fundraising events and activities and from benefactors, including parents, friends and local businesses. These monies were put towards supporting our service, for which we are very grateful.

The Children's Grief Centre is heavily dependent on the Mercy Order and on fundraising and to date has not received any main public grants or State monies apart from a counselling grant of €4,100 in 2017. The cost of running the Children's Grief Centre far exceeds the current level of resources available to us. This is possible as a result of a large number of in kind donations we receive, e.g.

- Use of premises, light, heat, rent and insurance free
- Free conference facilities
- Pro-bono legal services by solicitors
- Pro-bono auditing and accounting services
- Volunteer support workers
- Volunteer administrators

Our main costs include:

- Office, such as: telephone/postage/stationery/printing and equipment /IT support/maintenance

- Core salaries and employer costs of administration staff and paid support workers
- Travel

The Children's Grief Centre aims to work towards becoming self-financing. We continue to work towards this goal by developing and improving our service, continuing to apply for appropriate grants, and expanding our fundraising programme.

Fundraising Committee

Fundraising committee members are all volunteers and meet regularly. They include: Fiona Brosnan, Michelle Walsh, Philip Mortell, Katrina Bourke, Paul Gleeson and Betty Walsh. In 2017 Fiona Brosnan stepped down from the committee due to personal reasons. We would like to thank Fiona for her valuable contribution and wish her the best of luck. We welcomed Paul Gleeson as a fundraising committee member and we're delighted to have him as part of the team.

2017 was an incredible year for the Children's Grief Centre as we received a number of large donations both from individuals and businesses in the region.



Befriending Service

Ways to support and become a friend of the Children's Grief Centre

Online: To donate online just click the "Donate" button on our website at www.childrensgriefcentre.ie

Post: You can post cheques, bank drafts or postal orders made payable to the "Children's Grief Centre", to our office at Westbourne, Ashbourne Avenue, South Circular Road, Limerick.

Bank Transfer: Donations can be made by sending money directly to our bank account by either bank transfer or standing order. Please see page 29 of this report for details or contact us for further information.

As a friend of the Children's Grief Centre, you help us to continue our work of providing support to children and young people who have experienced bereavement and loss through death, separation & divorce.

By participating in our befriending service you will help us to raise awareness around bereavement and loss and support the centre in providing education and training for those working with children in need of bereavement support.



Fundraising Events 2017

There were two big fundraising events organised by friends and supporters of the Centre which together raised almost €15,000.

These were the:

Christmas Carols and Show Songs Concert organised by Owen Gilhooly, Musical Director, Aoide Choir & Mid West Vocal Academy, Lisnagry, Limerick which took place on Saturday, 9th December, 2017



The Londubh Youth Choir & Celtic Ensemble Concert which took place on the 3rd December, 2017 and was organised by Claire Connellan and Fr. Pat Malone, PP, Clarecastle Church, Co. Clare.



Funders

2017 was an incredible year for The Children's Grief Centre we would like to acknowledge and gratefully thank our funders for their generous support. Funders to the Children's Grief Centre are a combination of corporate and philanthropic organisations and individuals acting in a private capacity. We gratefully received grants ranging from €200 to over €20,000.

Philanthropic Charitable Donations

- **JP McManus Charitable Foundation**
- **Conrad N. Hilton Charitable Foundation**

Corporate/Business and Community Group Donations

- **Munster Rugby:** The Foley family nominated The Children's Grief Centre for a large donation, raised from the sale of a commemorative match day programme.



- **TESCO Community Fund 2017**
In 2017 the Children's Grief Centre was delighted to be nominated by some of our parents and then successfully chosen to benefit from the Tesco Community Fund. We were very grateful to be chosen and to receive this donation.

The Children's Grief Centre would also like to sincerely thank the following donors and funders. We are very grateful for their contribution.

- Extreme Networks in Shannon for choosing us as the Charity they supported in 2017
- Coffee Day Fundraiser, organised by Prior, Fr Noel Hessian, St Augustine's Church, friends and supporters
- Moyross Community Group & Moyross
- MDRT Foundation Grant
- Limerick Solicitors' Bar Association
- The Movie Club, Limerick
- Limerick Lions Club
- Clonlara Underdog Theatre Group
- Thurles Croke Athletic Club
- Lord Mayoral Fund:
Cllr Michael Hourigan
- Northern Trust, Limerick



Jason Daly of The Movie Club presents a cheque to Anne English, administrator, Helen Culhane, Director, Anne Keane, Administrator, March, 2017



Members of the Lions Club - cheque presentation, March, 2017



Moyross Threads Group, July 2017

What Children's Grief Centre achieved this year!

Social Innovation Fund Ireland: Animate Healthy Community Award 2017



**SOCIAL
INNOVATION
FUND**
Sustaining great ideas

The Children's Grief Centre was successfully chosen by Social Innovation Fund Ireland as one of ten Animate Healthy Community Award winners in 2017 to receive €25,000.

The Animate Fund Award, which was set up by Social Innovation fund Ireland, Medtronic and the Department of Rural and Community Development, aims to help groups develop community projects that promote good health, wellbeing and inclusion.

The Children's Grief Centre also received a place on the Social Innovation Fund's Accelerator programme which will provide support and advice for the growth and development of the centre.



Pictured: Helen Culhane, Director, Children's Grief Centre along with the other winners of the Social Innovation Fund Ireland's Animate Healthy Community Award 2017

Nominated for a Community Impact Award 2017 in the Small Organisation's Category!

In November, 2017 the Children's Grief Centre was shortlisted in the small organisations category of The Wheel's Charity Impact Awards 2017.



The Wheel, Ireland's national association of community, voluntary and charitable organisations, has developed the Charity Impact Awards to promote best practice and increase awareness of the significance and role of the non-profit sector in Irish society. This award celebrates the work of community and voluntary and charitable organisations, clubs and other non-profit groups that have brought about positive change.

Though we were unsuccessful this year we were delighted to be selected as one of five shortlisted contenders to receive this highly coveted community award.

Sr. Helen, Limerick Person of the Year 2017!

The Children's Grief Centre founder and director, Sr. Helen Culhane was named Limerick Person of the Year 2017.



Sr. Helen received the top honour for her dedication and commitment to providing children and young people with a place and space where they are given the opportunity to examine feelings associated with loss and learn they are not alone. We are all delighted Helen has received this huge recognition of her years of dedication working in child advocacy.

You can watch Helen receiving the Limerick Person of the Year Award 2017 at the following YouTube address: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DhdsbMDvgXA>

Helen Culhane was overwhelmed to be voted Limerick Person of the Year for 2017. As a deeply proud Limerick person, she saw this award not as a personal vindication of her work but as recognition of the impact that all those who have contributed to the centre, have made in such a relatively short period of time.

Appendices



Income and Expenditure Account for the Year Ended 31st December 2017

	2016	2017
INCOME	€	€
Donations	10,289	100,069
Grants	4,350	4,100
Workshops and Training	1,798	1,160
Total Income	16,437	105,329
LESS: EXPENDITURE	€	€
Salaries, wages and state insurance	20,459	24,541
Postage, stationery and art room supplies	3,769	6,411
Motor and travel expenses	1,295	1,649
Training and supervision	2,989	2,796
Telephone	902	934
Repairs and maintenance	1,349	1,170
Office furniture and fittings	1,513	3,177
Cleaning and canteen	845	888
Volunteer Expenses	1,135	1,119
Bank interest and charges	176	158
Computer equipment	726	6,481
Christmas party costs	1,106	810
Donations and gifts	413	288
Annual subscriptions and registration fees	205	165
Strategic Review	-	2,500
Total Expenditure	36,882	53,087
EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE FOR YEAR	(20,445)	52,242

Approved by:

Philip Mortell
Philip Mortell
 Chairman

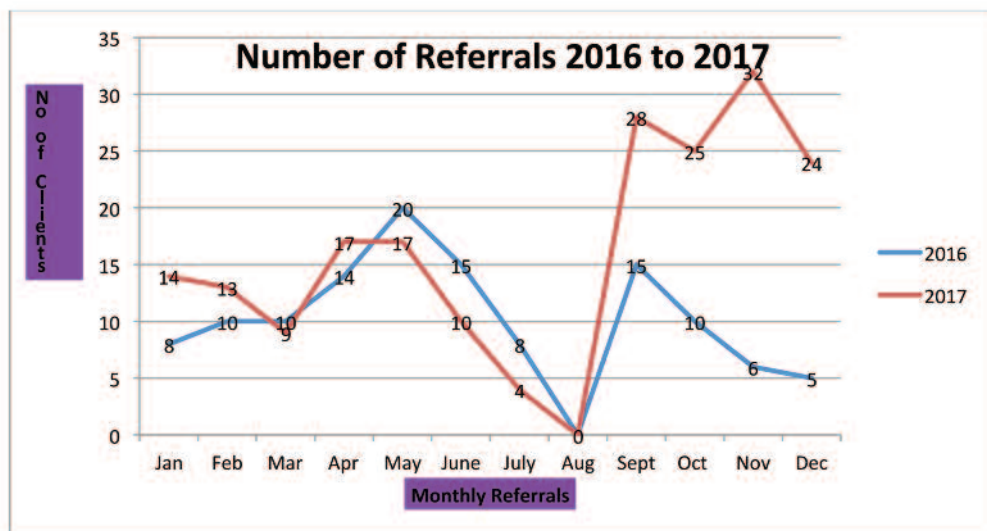
Seamus O'Brien
Seamus O'Brien
 Treasurer

Date: 08/02/18

In 2017 Children's Grief Centre provided a support service to 188 clients

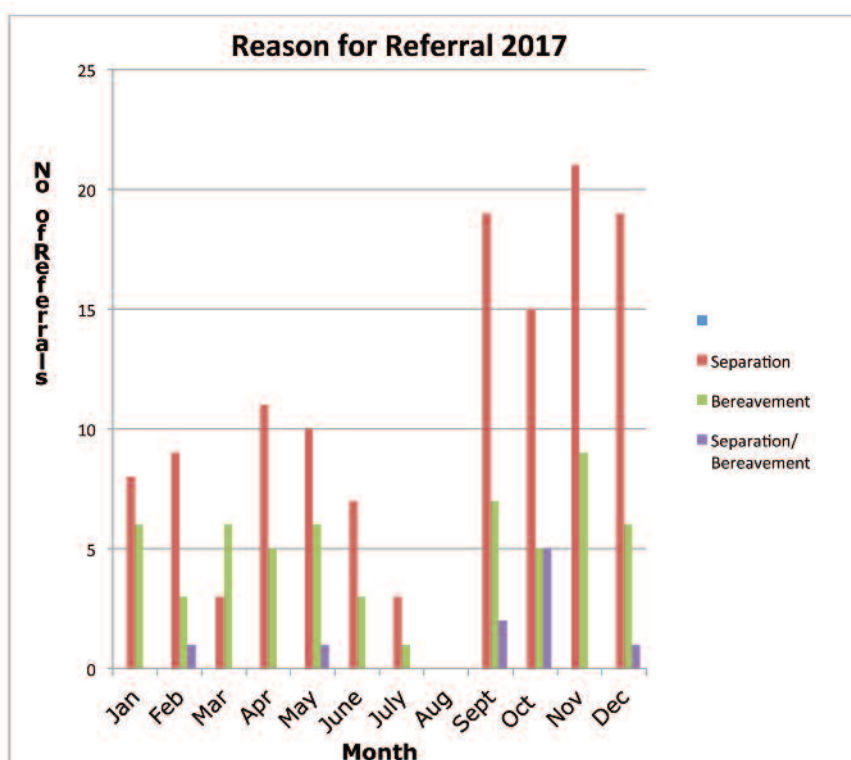
This resulted in 188 children and young people being able to talk to a support worker who listened to that child's experience of bereavement and/or loss.

As can be seen in the above graph, there was a sharp increase in the number of children seen at the centre from September, 2017.



Number of children seen by a support worker at the centre 2016 and 2017

This was as a result of additional measures undertaken by staff and volunteers to address the waiting list.



Challenges

The greatest challenge facing the Children's Grief Centre is the ever-increasing number of children on our waiting list and sourcing on-going funding.


At the end of 31st December, 2017 we had 63 children on the waiting and this is down from a mid-year high of 120. Addressing our ever increasing waiting list remains the greatest on-going challenge as we face into 2018.

The graph above illustrates the numbers of children and young people in 2017, referred to the Children's Grief Centre due to separation, bereavement or in some cases for both separation and bereavement.

Banking Details

Bank: Bank of Ireland, 125 O'Connell St, Limerick
Account Name: Children's Grief Project
Account No: 28979708
Sort Code: 90-43-17
IBAN: IE40BOFI90431728979708
BIC: BOFIE2D



A photograph of three children in a grassy field reaching up towards a large yellow balloon. The balloon contains a quote by Teilhard de Chardin. The background shows rolling green hills under a blue sky with clouds.

The future
belongs to those
who give the next
generation
reason to hope
Teilhard de Chardin