

Information

Membership

Advocacy

treoir

The National Federation of Services for
Unmarried Parents and their Children

Unmarried
expectant
parents

Unmarried
parents and
their children

Teen parents
and their
children

Grandparents
and other
relatives

Living
together
or apart

Opposite or
same sex

Those
working with
them

Strategic
Plan

2012 -
2016

VISION

Treoir's vision is an Ireland which treats unmarried families with equality and respect in its Constitution, laws and services

MISSION

Treoir, in partnership with its member agencies, promotes the rights and best interests of unmarried parents and their children through providing specialist information and advocating for their rights

VALUES

Integrity, respect, empathy, inclusion, professionalism, flexibility, optimism

PRINCIPLES

Treoir

- *recognises the diversity of family life in Ireland*
- *recognises that all families, including unmarried families, have the same rights to respect, care, support, protection and recognition*
- *supports and promotes the rights of all children as outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*
- *believes that all children have a right to know, be loved and cared for by both parents.*

Who are we?

Treoir is the National Federation of Services for Unmarried Parents and their Children. We

1. Operate the free, confidential **National Specialist Information and Referral Service** on all aspects of unmarried parenthood for
 - unmarried expectant parents
 - unmarried parents living apart
 - unmarried parents cohabiting
 - teen parents
 - opposite and same sex parents
 - grandparents and other relatives
 - those working with unmarried parents and their families.

2. Advocate on behalf of unmarried parents and their children.

Treoir is a registered charity, a company limited by guarantee and is funded by the HSE, the HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme, Citizens Information Board and other grants.

About this Strategy

This five year strategy has been developed following consultation with members, council, staff, funders, policy makers and other stakeholders and it sets out our goals for the future and how we plan to achieve them.

Context

1. The number of births outside marriage each year since 2008 has remained around 24,500 a year, and while births outside marriage as a percentage of all births has risen from 31% to 33% since the year 2000, it has remained at 33% since 2006. In other words the number and percentage of births outside marriage seem to have levelled off.

The number of births registered to unmarried parents residing at the same address has been recorded by the CSO since 2007. This number has grown from nearly 12,000 in 2007 to 13,500 in 2010.

2. The number of queries to the National Information Service increased from 4,600 in 2004 to 8,253 in 2011.

3. There is much social legislation in train reflecting the significant social change that is taking place in Ireland:

1. The *Civil Partnership and Certain Rights and Obligations of Cohabitants Act 2010* was the most significant piece of family legislation for a considerable number of years.
2. The *Children's First Bill 2012* and the *Criminal Justice (Withholding of information on offences against children and vulnerable persons) Bill 2012* have just been published and will have a significant impact on Treoir members who work with young parents.
3. It is likely that new legislation will be enacted following the recommendations of the Law Reform Commission's report on *Legal Aspects of Family Relationships* in the areas of guardianship for unmarried fathers and others, including grandparents, compulsory birth registration etc.
4. There is a government commitment to hold a referendum on children's rights in 2012.
5. Budget 2012 saw dramatic changes introduced for recipients of One-Parent Family Payment and future Budgets are expected to impact negatively on unmarried families.

4. While Treoir is aware of the importance of personal contact in responding to some queries, it is mindful of the implications of social media and information technologies in maximising our resources and opportunities to communicate information.

5. During the life-time of this Strategic Plan family social services, currently funded by the HSE will transfer to the Child and Family Support Agency. Treoir will endeavour to build strong working relationships with key CFSA staff in the interests of children of unmarried parents.

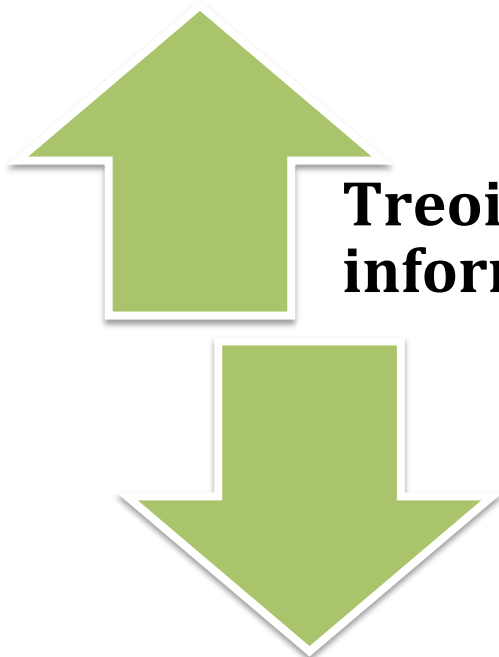
Implementation

The implementation of this plan will be overseen by the Council, the CEO and management of Treoir. In the Strategy we have identified six key strategic priorities in the areas of:

- Information
- Advocacy
- Raising Awareness/PR
- Teen Parents
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- Strategic Alliances/Membership
- Good Governance.

There is a need to be realistic about what can be achieved with limited resources and Treoir must maximise and use its own expertise and avail of the expertise of others.

A business plan will be prepared each year detailing the activities to be undertaken in order to achieve our strategic objectives.



Treoir national specialist information service

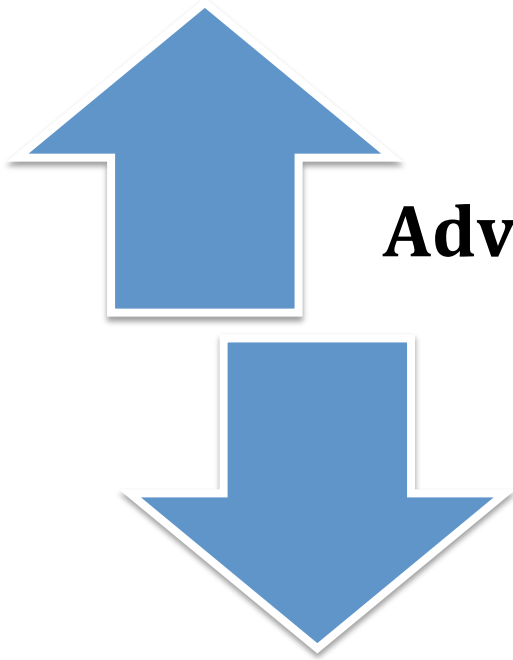
Treoir will maintain and develop the national specialist information service for unmarried parents, same or opposite sex, expectant parents, parents living together or apart, their extended families and those working with them

TREOIR WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY

Providing a full-time professional information service that will:

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- 1 Respond promptly to queries received from clients by phone, email and personal callers
- 2 Research and source information to ensure an up-to-date, accurate and comprehensive service
- 3 Produce and disseminate relevant and accessible publications
- 4 Develop, host and maintain an up-to-date comprehensive, accurate information website for parents and professionals and maximise the use of social media
- 5 Provide information sessions for parents and professionals
- 6 Develop and deliver a programme of information meetings for members

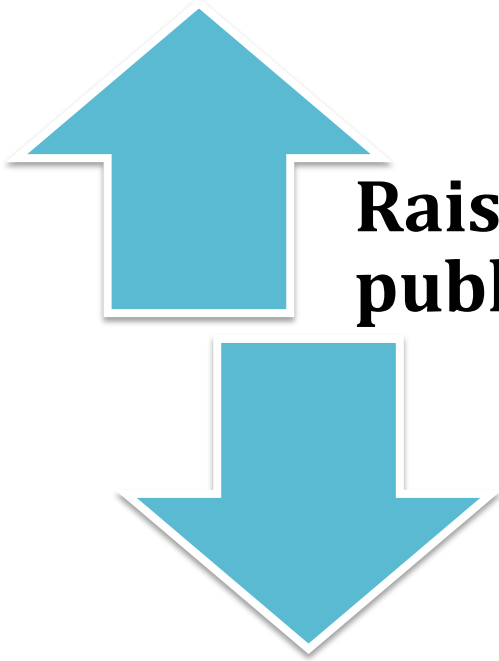


Advocacy

Treoir will advocate effectively on behalf of unmarried parents, to ensure the best outcomes for them and their children

TREOIR WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY

- 1 Working to influence forthcoming legislation on family relationships, Children's Rights Referendum, the position of unmarried families in the Irish Constitution, Adoption, Social Welfare, Underage Sexual Activity and other relevant legislation
- 2 Commissioning research where appropriate to inform the advocacy programme
- 3 Continuing to develop a policy programme which will be informed by enquiries to the National Specialist Information Service and by research findings of both Treoir and others
- 4 Working to promote children's rights to know their identity and to have a relationship with both parents where possible



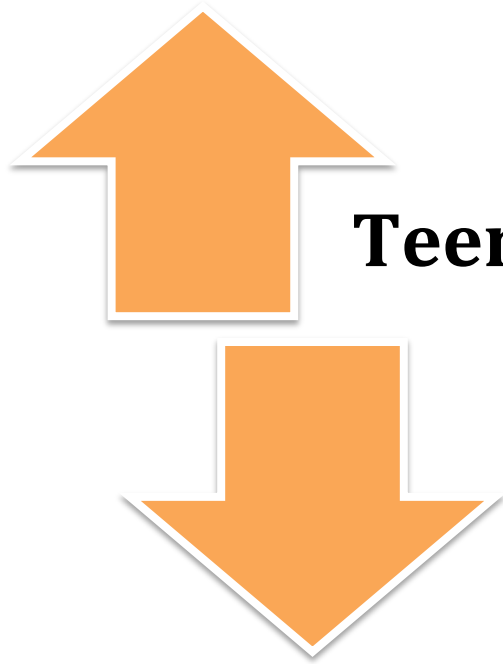
Raising awareness / public relations

Treoir will continue to raise awareness on issues affecting unmarried parents and will promote the availability of Treoir services

TREOIR WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY

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- 1 Securing funding to run appropriate awareness raising campaigns on key issues of concern to unmarried expectant parents, unmarried parents whether living together or apart
- 2 Addressing the issue of mis-information
- 3 Engaging directly with members of the media and providing them with material to ensure publicity on issues affecting unmarried parents
- 4 Maximising our use of social media, including the website, to highlight and raise awareness of issues affecting unmarried parents
- 5 Developing and implementing a communications plan to promote the availability of Treoir services

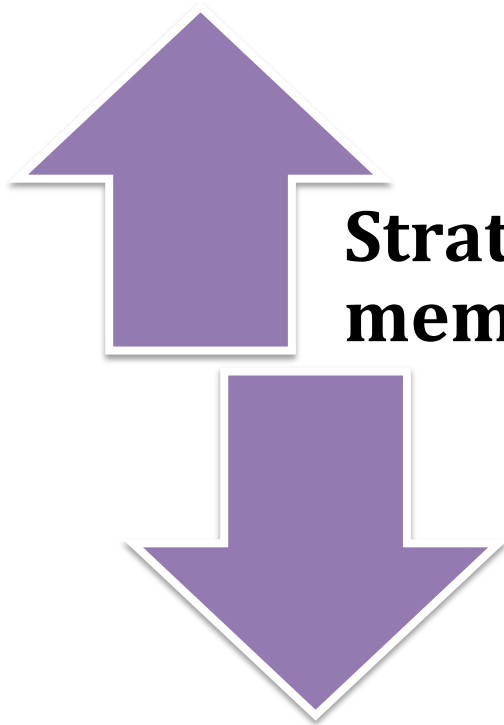


Teen Parents

Treoir will support those working with young parents in Ireland

TREOIR WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY

- 1 Continuing partnership with the HSE in managing the national co-ordination and the development of the Teen Parent Support Programme
- 2 Producing publications in response to identified needs of young parents
- 3 Advocating on issues affecting young parents



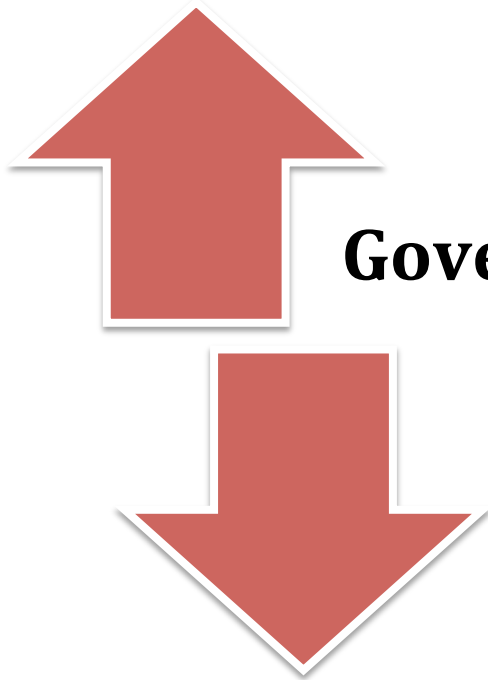
Strategic alliances / membership

Treoir will develop strategic alliances and seek to engage more fully with members

TREOIR WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY

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- 1 Maintaining relationships with key agencies including funders, service providers, government departments, statutory bodies, policy makers, stake holder organisations, experts with a commitment to improving the position of unmarried parents and particularly with member agencies
- 2 Identifying agencies with whom we should align, particularly in the broader family support area, and collaborating effectively with them
- 3 Engaging with members to engender commitment and ownership of the organisation
- 4 Mobilising the expertise of members and involving them in campaigns

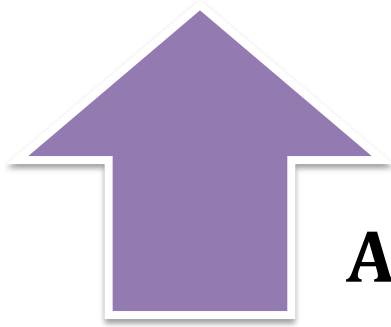


Governance

Treoir will have a robust governance and HR system to deliver a professional service which is fully compliant with company and charity legislation

TREOIR WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY

- 1 Developing an action plan to ensure the implementation of this strategy
- 2 Maintaining commitment to, supporting and training staff to provide a quality service
- 3 Treating staff with respect and supporting them to reach their full potential
- 4 Ensuring that as a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity we meet all legal obligations
- 5 Publishing an annual report including the financial statement
- 6 Adhering to the Voluntary Code of Governance for the community and voluntary sector
- 7 Complying with conditions laid out in Service Level Agreements with funders



Assumptions



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1. Council and staff are committed to the vision, mission, values and principles of Treoir
2. Council and staff are committed to implementing the strategic plan which is the guiding document for staff and Council
3. There will be sufficient funding to implement the strategic plan
4. The aim is to achieve the strategic priorities by 2016 and every action will be in pursuit of these priorities
5. We endeavour to achieve the best possible value for money in our service