



# Response to: Play & Leisure Implementation Plan

Issued by: Office of the First & Deputy First Minister

February 2011

Policy Subgroup  
Women's Centres Regional Partnership (WCRP)  
c/o 6 Mount Charles  
Belfast  
BT7 1NZ  
Tel: 028 90 23 02 12  
Email [info@wcrp.org.uk](mailto:info@wcrp.org.uk)

## **1. Introduction**

1.1 The Women's Centres Regional Partnership (WCRP) is a partnership of four lead regional women's organisations linking with fourteen frontline women's organisations across Northern Ireland to provide support and services to women living in disadvantaged areas. (See Appendix 1)

### **1.2 Vision**

WCRP's vision is "our vision of communities where women are recognised and valued as equal partners working toward a future based upon shared values of equality, participation and inclusion."

### **1.3 Mission**

WCRP's mission is "To work in partnership to support and strengthen the voice of community based women's organizations."

### **1.4 Background**

The four key lead partners of the Partnership are the **Women's Resource and Development Agency (WRDA)**, **Women's Support Network (WSN)**, **Northern Ireland Rural Women's Network (NIRWN)** and **The Women's Centre, Derry**. The fourteen women's organisations are spread across Northern Ireland with seven from the Greater Belfast and Lisburn area, four in the North West and three in Dungannon, Magherafelt and Craigavon. Together the WCRP seeks to develop and strengthen a regional infrastructure which will support community based women's organisations across Northern Ireland:

- To build a strong, effective and inclusive partnership for the benefit of partners and stakeholders;
- To advocate for the sustainability of frontline services for WCRP partners and stakeholders;
- To promoting best practice and quality standards training, education, advice and childcare services in the women's centres;
- To Influence policy relating to women's lives by identifying and publicising emerging issues facing women in disadvantaged areas.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. **Comments**

2.1 WCRP welcomes the department actively engaging with children and young people, we would like to see further detail as to how the voices of children and young people will be incorporated. We would also urge the department to seek the views of the community based women's centres and wider women's sector because of their important role providing community based childcare provision in areas of disadvantage.

2.2.1 The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>2</sup> recognises the rights of children to engage in play appropriate for their age. We would encourage the department to include additional impact areas ensuring opportunities are made available for the broad range of children from 0-18 years.

2.2.2 In relation to the key impact areas outlined in the draft plan under championing play and leisure, there is a need to include parent organisations as well as women's centres as a delivery partner. The community based women's centres already work with parents delivering parenting classes and could help in meeting the department's objectives in this strategy.

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.wcrp.org.uk/mission.php>

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 31: States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.

- 2.2.3 We would urge the Department to provide further detail on the monitoring and evaluation processes which will be used in the implementation of this plan. Without this detail it will be difficult to know how effective the plan is. Timeframes would also ensure the strategy is fit for purpose.
- 2.2.4 Furthermore, we have particular concerns over OFMDFM's plan for reducing the Play Policy spend as outlined in the draft budget, i.e. 'advanced status of the Play Implementation Policy enables OFMDFM to reduce spend on Play Policy by £0.55m per annum in the 2011-15 period'. We would like further detail as to how this plan will be implemented considering current budget constraints and priorities on Councils.

## **Conclusion**

WCRP welcomes the opportunity to respond to this consultation document. Whilst welcoming this document, we have offered some constructive recommendations as to how it could be improved. We particularly wish to highlight the excellent work of the community based women's sector and the positive role they already play in meeting the needs of children and families within disadvantaged areas<sup>3</sup>. We are happy to further discuss this response if required.

---

<sup>3</sup> "Childcare Mapping & Research Report 2010", Women's Centres Regional Partnership (WCRP).

## **Appendix 1:**

### Lead Organisations:

**NI Rural Women's Network (NIRWN)**  
15 Molesworth Street  
Cookstown  
BT80 8NX

**The Women's Centre, Derry**  
Beibhinn House  
5 Guildhall Street  
Derry  
BT48 6BB

**Women's Resource and Development Agency (WRDA)**  
6 Mount Charles  
Belfast  
BT7 1NZ

**Women's Support Network (WSN)**  
109-113 Royal Avenue  
Belfast  
BT1 1FF

## **Partners:**

### **Waterside Women's Centre**

170 Spencer Road  
Waterside  
Derry  
BT47 6AH

### **Foyle Women's Information Network**

The Junction  
8 Bishop Street  
Derry  
BT48 6PW

### **The Women's Centre**

Beibhinn House  
5 Guildhall Street  
Derry  
BT48 6BB

### **Strathfoyle Women's Centre**

12 Bawnmore Place  
Strathfoyle  
BT47 6XP

### **Atlas Women's Centre**

81 Sloan Street  
Lisburn,  
BT27 5AG

### **Ballybeen Women's Centre**

34 Ballybeen Square  
Belfast  
BT16 2QE

**Falls Women's Centre**

256 - 258 Falls Road  
BELFAST  
BT12 6AL

**Footprints Women's Centre**

84a Colinmill  
Poleglass  
Dunmurray  
BT17 0AR

**Greenway Women's Centre**

19 Greenway  
Cregagh Road  
Belfast  
BT6 0DT

**Windsor Women's Centre**

136-144 Broadway  
Belfast  
BT12 6HY

**Shankill Women's Centre**

151-157 Shankill Road  
Belfast  
BT13 1FD

**First Steps Women's Centre**

21a William Street  
Dungannon  
Co Tyrone  
BT70 1DX

**Magherafelt Women's Centre**

The Learning Lodge  
27-29 Moneymore Road  
Magherafelt  
BT45 5JE

**Chrysalis Women's Centre**

520 Burnside  
Brownlow, Craigavon  
BT65 5DE

---

---