

secret successes

Our regular feature on the hidden gems of youth work from around the city



A ray of sunshine

the whole of Dublin city, It also stretches from Wicklow, west to Laytown and north as far as Dundalk. Over 1,000 young people travelled with us in 2008; we cover all the costs, so parents only have to provide spending money. Many local youth projects work with us by nominating children – if yours would be interested in doing likewise, why not get in touch?

What's available for our guests

While they're with us, our young guests are entertained from morning until night: outdoors we organise a whole range of activities, including football and basketball leagues, marathons and obstacle courses; children can also play on the swings, slides and play equipment in our five acres of grounds. Later, they might head to the beach, go shopping or crab hunting or have a treasure hunt. Even poor weather doesn't stop us, with activities held in our play centre, indoor sports hall and concert hall.

One young boy captured neatly how much fun children have at Sunshine: "I want to go next year, and the year after as well. I want to go for my whole life." He'll be glad to hear we're already making plans for 2009!

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The team behind the Sunshine Fund explain to **YNOW** why they're proving popular with parents and children alike.

"Lauren will rabbit on all year about this holiday – I won't hear the end of it for another year now," a parent recently told us. And why wouldn't Lauren? Since The Sunshine Fund was founded in 1928, we've given over 100,000 children the holiday of a lifetime – one many of them will never forget.

Dublin and beyond

In a special works conference of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, our volunteers provide children aged 7-11 with a week-long summer holiday at Sunshine House, our holiday centre in Balbriggan, a small seaside town north of Dublin. Our facility is available to children living in areas of disadvantage, and our remit extends throughout the Greater Dublin Area, including



Women on their way

The Ballymun Women's Resource Centre empowers women from 12-60 through a process of confidence, education and training. By **Sarah Doyle**.

The Ballymun Women's Resource Centre (BWRC) has several success stories.

Last year, over 200 women graduated on International Women's Day with recognised qualifications, following participation in BWRC programmes.

Lucy and Kate (not their real names) joined the WRC's Youth Programme in 2002. Dealing with education and social hardships, the girls were referred to the BWRC to see whether they could make positive changes in their lives.

Learning without pressure

Amanda Murphy of the BWRC says the girls were

"initially vulnerable", wary of what people thought of them and nervous in learning environments.

"We worked with them through an informal type of development to ease them into the learning process without pressure," she says. "This builds confidence and learning skills until they're able to take part in more focused learning," she continues, noting that the improvements in the girl's confidence levels were clear to all involved.

Lucy and Kate, like many young women referred to the BWRC, moved through the BWRC's programmes over a number of years, and were encouraged to explore their options through its 'education' areas. In August 2008 they began a