



**November 2025 Community of Practice Newsletter**

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## Queen's University Belfast and DkIT announce major partnership to establish University College in Dundalk

It has been an exciting few weeks for staff and students in DkIT with the announcement of Queen's University Belfast and DkIT plans to establish a University College in Dundalk. **The RiVeR Project team** look forward to this positive development and further extending its Domestic, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (DSGBV) Community of Practice across Northern Ireland.

[Click here to read press release](#)

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## **DkIT RiVeR Project launches 'In Their Shoes' Toolkit to strengthen training on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence**

***Adapted for Irish society, the innovative experiential resource builds empathy and awareness among frontline professionals.***

In October, the DkIT **RiVeR Project** team were delighted to officially launch 'In Their Shoes,' an interactive toolkit designed for experiential learning about Domestic, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (DSGBV). The toolkit has been adapted by the DkIT **RiVeR Project** with permission, from the original United States version of *In Her Shoes*® to make it more reflective of modern Irish society. The **RiVeR Project** team has developed the original resource to address identified gaps by including additional perspectives to increase the transferability and efficacy of the tool and ensure that it is applicable to the remit of a wider range of service providers.

Through this toolkit, participants step into the shoes of a person in an abusive relationship, making decisions based on real victim-survivor experiences. They are guided through character-specific scenarios and explore the complex choices faced in abusive situations. A vital debrief session follows, encouraging reflection, addressing misconceptions and inspiring personal and local action for change.

The DkIT **RiVeR Project** team are also hosting a series of workshops, including 'train the trainer' sessions, whereby organisations who attend it and fulfil the application criteria will be issued with an 'In Their Shoes' toolkit. The toolkit and workshops are funded by the **RiVeR Project**, supported under the Higher Education Authority Performance Funding Scheme.

The 'In Their Shoes' initiative was officially launched by Chair of the Oireachtas Committee on Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science and spokesperson on Research and Innovation, Erin Mc Greehan T.D., ahead of one of the workshops taking place on the DkIT campus.

(ICON) □□□

The RiVeR Project team were delighted to receive the first feedback from any organisation that has provided the **In Their Shoes** workshop since undertaking the Train the Trainer programme in DkIT and receiving the **In Their Shoes** toolkit. Nicola Gray and Nicola Kelly from **Inner City Organisation Networks (ICON)** provided the training to 12 participants and “the response from the group was super positive”.

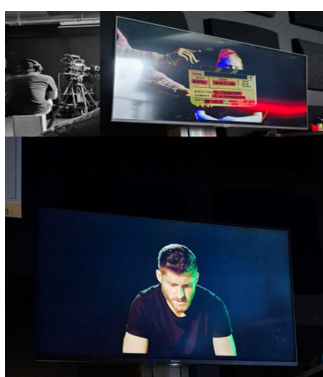


## Save the Date Alert:

Join the RiVeR Project on **23rd January** for our  
Annual Community of Practice Conference

**Theme:** Educating for Change: Celebrating a Decade of DSGBV  
Education at DkIT.

Keep an eye out for the Eventbrite registration link so that you do not miss your chance to attend this very popular Community of Practice event.



## Launch of RiVeR Project training videos

The **RiVeR Project** looks forward to launching nine short videos at their annual conference on January 23rd. These were developed as part of the **RiVeR Projects** reusable learning resources and will be made available for educational and training purposes, serving as invaluable tools to promote a zero tolerance approach to Domestic, Sexual, and Gender-Based Violence.

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## Catch Up on Our Recent Podcasts

The **RiVeR Project** has just released episode 21 of its innovative Podcast series Insights into Domestic, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence. This important and reflective series continues to bring together a diverse range of voices including:

- ☐☐☐ Frontline professionals addressing DSGBV
- ☐ Survivors and lived-experience advocates
- ☐☐ Legal and policy experts
- ☐ Academics and researchers
- ☐ Key policymakers

☐ We invite you to listen, reflect, share and engage with how Domestic, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence is understood, addressed and actively challenged across Ireland.

### ☐ Listen to Episode 21 and explore earlier episodes via:

- ☐ RiVeR Project Website: <https://www.riverproject.ie/education-training/podcast-series/>
- ☐ Spotify: [https://open.spotify.com/episode/6tKL9weCfRqVR2VtCM0ugJ?si=bo12h\\_3QRQivcrnHVkCjSA](https://open.spotify.com/episode/6tKL9weCfRqVR2VtCM0ugJ?si=bo12h_3QRQivcrnHVkCjSA)
- ► YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nI6fRRgQCTE>

[Click here to access all podcasts](#)

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# MOVE IRELAND & MEN'S DEVELOPMENT NETWORK NATIONAL TRAINING CONFERENCE 2025

Save The Date

**move**  
Men Overcoming Violence

 **Men's  
Development  
Network**  
Better Lives for Men, Better Lives for All

 **MEND**  
Men Ending Domestic Abuse

## RESET

Rethinking, Engagement, Safety,  
Empowerment, Transformation.



Tuesday the 28<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday  
the 29<sup>th</sup> of October 2025.



The Anner Hotel, Dublin Road,  
Thurles, Co. Tipperary

A collaboration between MOVE Ireland  
and Men's Development Network.

This is supported by CUAN- The Domestic,  
Sexual and  
Gender-Based  
Violence Agency.



**CUAN**  
An tSeirbhís náisiúnta le haghaidh Sábhá,  
Cúntaíocht agus leasúcháin  
The Domestic, Sexual and  
Gender-Based Violence Agency

## RESET MOVE Ireland & Men's Development Network-National Training Conference

The **RiVeR Project** was delighted to support the RESET MOVE Ireland & Men's Development Network- National Training Conference held in Thurles. The conference theme was RESET – Rethinking, Engagement, Safety, Empowerment, and Transformation. The conference explored the evolving landscape of DSGBV intervention and discussed strategies for resetting the narrative through innovative approaches in rethinking practices, engagement, safety protocols, empowerment initiatives, and transformative solutions. The conference also featured a series of presentations, and workshops.

# Applications open for January '26 intake of Domestic, Sexual & Gender-Based Violence programme in Dundalk IT

Applications are open for the January 2026 intake of the Level 8 'Certificate in the Fundamentals of Understanding and Responding to Domestic, Sexual & Gender-Based Violence' programme in Dundalk IT. Programme details and access to application portal is available in the link below:

**For more details on the programme**

The DkIT RiVeR project (Funded by the Higher Education Authority) will offer a **Scholarship to Five** applicants to the January intake of this programme. The Scholarship will cover the fee for the programme which is €750. **Deadline for applying to scholarship is 15th Dec 2025**



## Men's Aid Ireland: National Conference and Knowledge Exchange Event marking International Men's Day

The **RiVeR Project** was delighted to be invited to this landmark event on 19th November which was opened by Minister for Justice, Home Affairs and Migration, Jim O'Callaghan TD. The findings of "Men Call Help", a national research project led by Trinity College Dublin and Men's Aid Ireland, were presented by Dr. Melissa Corbally. The research explored the experiences of men seeking help for domestic abuse in Ireland. Men's Aid Ireland's 2024 Annual Report was also published which highlighted the importance of inclusive, evidence-based support for all victims of domestic abuse. It was heartening to see and hear about the impact of the **RiVeR project** on Men's Aid Ireland highlighted in this report. Other presentations included:

- Frontline Perspectives were presented by Derek Byrne, LGBTQ+ Programme Coordinator, Men's Aid Ireland
- Insights on Reform and Justice – Keith Walsh BL, Family Law Solicitor
- Karen Ryan, daughter of the late James Ryan provided a very powerful Lived Experience Perspective





### Create a Star for Change! □□□□□□

The **RiVeR Project** are delighted to team up with **RESPECT | DkIT** to host Siobhan McQuillan, *Project lead*, **One Million Stars Ireland**, **Amber Women's Refuge** as we invite DkIT staff and students to create Stars for **Amber's One Million Stars Ireland project Home - One Million Stars Ireland**

The Stars created at this event will become part of a travelling **LOVE** installation (coming soon to DkIT....) as we stand in solidarity against domestic abuse and all forms of violence.

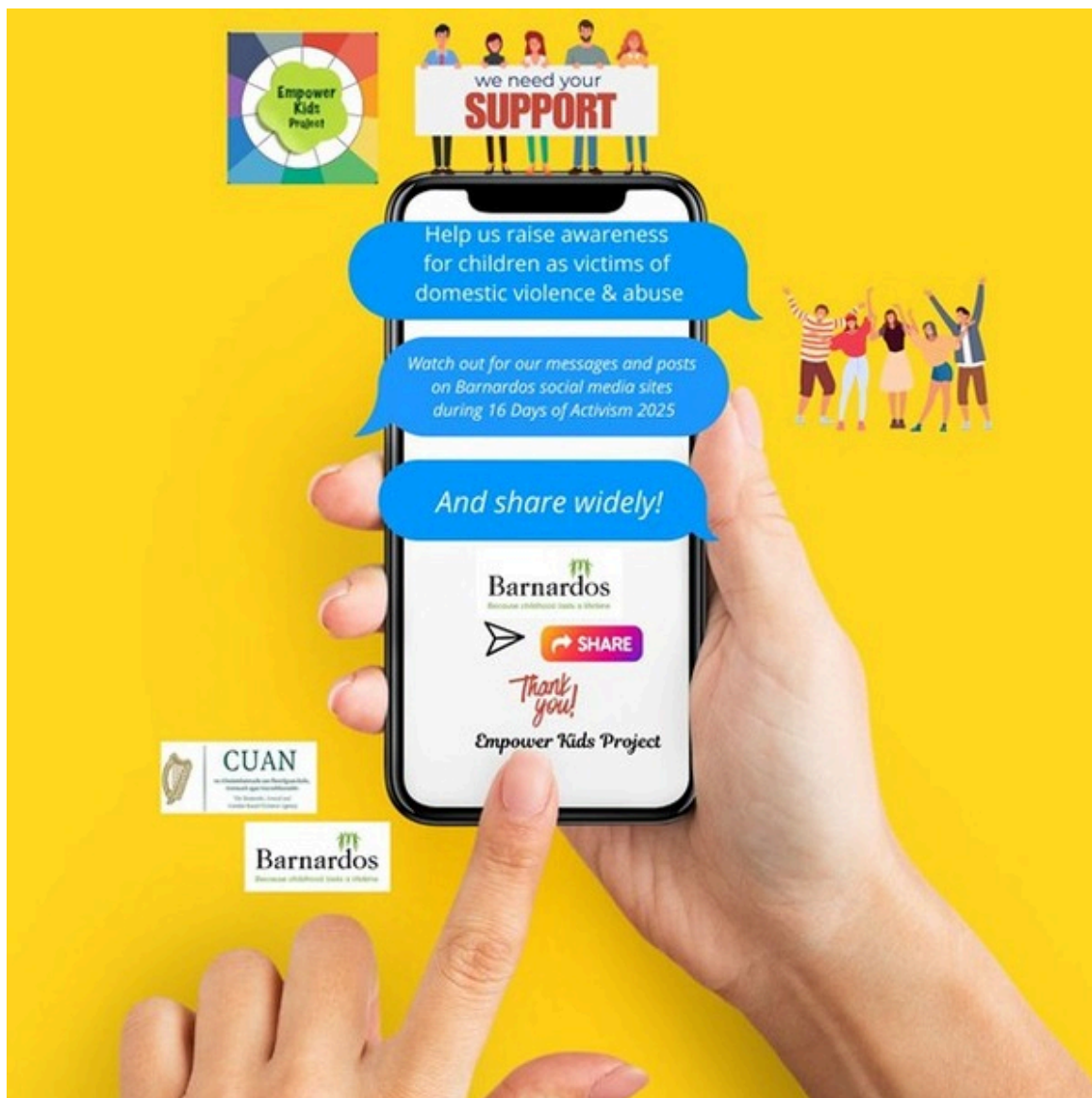
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## Other Events and Notices From Our Community of Practice.



**Well Done:** The team at **Drogheda Women's and Children's Refuge Centre** have had a busy and productive period of professional development. They are pleased to share that staff are now fully trained as Parent–Child Attachment Facilitators through the *Heart to Heart* module. In addition, their Support and Children's Services teams have completed the DAVINA training with SAOL, further enhancing their capacity to deliver trauma- and domestic-abuse-informed supports.

They are also delighted to announce that DWR has been successful in securing funding through the *Community Safety Fund*. This funding will enable them to recruit a Child and Youth Outreach Worker to meet the growing needs of families living with domestic abuse. It will also support the development of a dedicated child, youth, and teen space within the DWR Resource Hub. This investment marks an important step in strengthening community supports and creating a safe, specialised environment where children and young people can access the domestic abuse supports.



**News:** Please support the children and young people in the Barnardos Empower Kids and TLC KIDZ projects during the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence 2025.

We are children and young people with **lived experience of domestic violence and abuse**.

**Please support us during this year's  
16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence  
by  
watching out for our messages and posts across  
Barnardos Ireland social media sites and sharing widely ....**

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HEA

AN tÚDARÁS um ARD-OIDEACHAS  
HIGHER EDUCATION AUTHORITY

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