

Without your home, your life develops differently

Teaching and learning
resource for Civic, Social
and Political Education

Kathryn Moore · Máire Ní Chléirigh

Everyone has a right to a place
they can call home.



Focus Ireland acknowledgements

Focus Ireland would like to thank the authors Kathryn Moore and Máire Ní Chléirigh and Conor Harrison of the Curriculum Development Unit of the Dept of Education.

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Author acknowledgements

We would like to thank the staff and students of St Dominic's College, Cabra; the staff and students of Gaelcholáiste Reachrann, Donaghmede; Elaine Byrne, of St Dominic's College, Cabra, for sourcing the poetry; Kunak McGann at O'Brien Press for the use of extracts from *Breaking the Wishbone* and Bob Harris at Essex Music for the use of 'Streets of London'. Thanks also to RTÉ for use of the news report for Lesson 8.

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Everyone has a right to a place
they can call home.

Lesson 1

Define 'home'

Learning outcomes

Students will be able to define the concept of home and broaden that vision.

Requirements

- › Photos of types of homes
- › Worksheets for each student

Note to teacher

The following activity may bring up issues for some students, where home may not necessarily be a happy place.

Step 1

Pose the question: What does home mean to you? Ask the students to list words, both positive and/or negative, that define home for them. Put these words on the board. Discuss the words, asking students whether they agree with all the words chosen. Ask the students if there are any words which they would not use to describe home, or if there are any words which surprise them and why. (10 mins)

Step 2

Having thought about the meaning of home, ask students to draw an outline/sketch of the image that comes to them when they think about home. Ask a number of students to briefly present and explain their image. (10 mins)

Step 3

Present students with pictures of various types of homes (pages 5–8; also available on DVD). Ask which images do not conform to their view of home. (5 mins)

Step 4

Ask the students to work in pairs and to agree on and complete their definition of home, beginning with the words: '*Home is ...*' Ask students to read out their definitions. (10 mins)

Step 5 Homework

Hand out Worksheet A and introduce/discuss the four logos shown on the sheet. Ask the students to complete the worksheet at home and to write a name and design a logo for a homeless organisation (Worksheet B). (5 mins)

Teacher's notes

Explain the symbolism of the four logos on the worksheet. Information can be found on the following websites:

www.focusireland.ie

www.makeroom.ie

www.threshold.ie

www.simoncommunity.com

Lesson 1 · Worksheet A

Here are logos used by organisations working to combat and prevent homelessness. Study the logos and give one reason why each logo was chosen.









Lesson 1 · Worksheet B

In this box, write a name and design a logo for a homeless organisation.

A large, empty rectangular box with rounded corners and a light gray border, intended for writing a name and designing a logo for a homeless organisation.

Lesson 1 · Photo 1



Lesson 1 · Photo 2



Lesson 1 · Photo 3



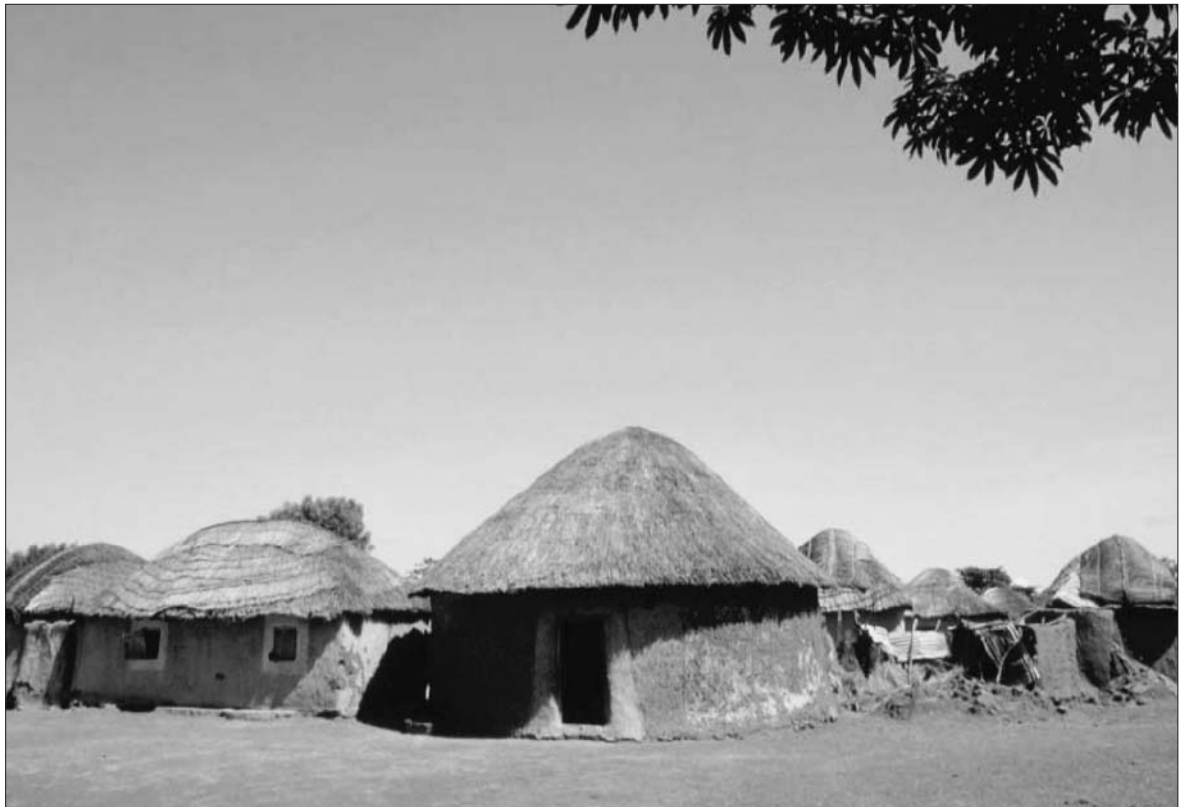
Lesson 1 · Photo 4



Lesson 1 · Photo 5



Lesson 1 · Photo 6



Lesson 1 · Photo 7



Lesson 1 · Photo 8



Lesson 2

Define 'homelessness'

Learning outcomes

Students will be able to define what it means to be homeless.

Requirements

- › Blu-Tack
- › Four blank banners
- › A4 fact sheets
- › Double-sided copy of worksheet for each student

Step 1

Ask the students to write a definition of homelessness. While students are working, make four work stations by hanging four A2 fact posters around the room. Divide the class into four groups. (5 mins)

Step 2

Ask each group to stand at one of the four work stations. Tell the groups that they will have five minutes at each station. Ask them to appoint someone to read through the facts for the group. As a group they must choose one of the given facts and the most surprising fact to write on the worksheet, Side 1. (The facts may be written in the students' own words.)

Step 3

Ask students to rotate in a clockwise direction to the next station every five minutes, until each group has visited each station and the same task has been completed at each. (20 mins in total)

Step 4

Ask students to pick one fact from their worksheet and make a headline banner with that fact. Get each group to present their fact. (10 mins)

Step 5

Ask the students to re-read their definition of homelessness (Step 1) and to complete the first section of side 2 of the worksheet. Ask them if their understanding of homelessness has now changed. Then ask them to complete the second section of the worksheet at home.

An optional ending to this lesson is to tell the students about famous people who have experienced homelessness:

Tupac Shakur, singer
George Orwell, author
Jim Carrey, actor
Li'l Kim, singer
Halle Berry, actress

Things you might not know about homelessness

Ireland had a team playing in the Homeless Soccer World Cup in South Africa, Scotland and Denmark in recent years.

London-Irish author John Healy won international awards for the book he wrote called 'The Grass Arena' about the years he was homeless.

Popular Dublin stand-up comedian Willa White was once homeless.

A man who was homeless won an award for bravery for rescuing a bus driver from drowning in the river Liffey in Dublin.

The music group The Focus Beats who were all homeless released a Christmas CD to raise money for Focus Ireland.

Youth homelessness

Nearly 500 children under 18 years of age* who were homeless were not in the care of a parent or family member (*HSE/DHC 2006).

Many young people drop out of school when they become homeless.

Children living in families who are homeless often have to move away from their local area to stay in emergency accommodation.

Young people leaving State care face a high risk of becoming homeless.

The State has a legal requirement to provide accommodation for anyone under 18 years of age.

Young people who are homeless face a high risk of becoming addicted to drugs or falling victim to exploitation by others.

Impact of homelessness

Children who are homeless and living in emergency accommodation often have nowhere safe to play.

Living in a disadvantaged area increases the risk of homelessness.

Many young people drop out of school when they become homeless.

People living in poverty are at a greater risk of living in poor housing.

People who are homeless find it difficult to get a job as they have no permanent address.

Health and homelessness

People who are homeless often have great difficulty accessing health services.

A previous report by the National Advisory Committee On Drugs found that 90% of people experiencing homelessness had a physical health complaint and that 48% reported concerns regarding their psychiatric health.

Many people who are homeless are at a higher risk of becoming addicted to drugs and/or alcohol as they attempt to escape their problems.

The average age of death of someone sleeping rough is 42 years. The average age of death for the Irish male is 78 years.

Mental health problems are a major cause of homelessness.

Lesson 2 · Worksheet A · Side 1

After your visit to each station write a fact and a surprising fact about each of the four headings below:

Things you might not know about homelessness:

Fact

Surprising fact

Youth homelessness:

Fact

Surprising fact

Impact of homelessness:

Fact

Surprising fact

Health and homelessness:

Fact

Surprising fact

Lesson 2 · Worksheet A · Side 2

Homework

You have been presented with these facts. **Now** has your definition of homelessness changed? State how.

Why/Why not?

Lesson 3

Reasons for homelessness

Learning outcomes

To investigate the reasons people become homeless.

Requirements

- › Copy of pictures from DVD
- › Nine role outlines

Step 1

Show the class the pictures (on DVD) of people and ask the students to state the different reasons they think they may have become homeless.

Try to elicit the following reasons:

- › Family breakdown
- › Mental health problems/illness
- › Domestic violence
- › Abuse
- › Leaving institutions:
State care homes, prisons,
psychiatric hospitals
- › Alcohol/drug misuse and addiction
- › Poverty/loss of employment/debts
- › Eviction
- › Lack of adequate social housing

Step 2

Ask nine students to prepare a role based on one of the nine characters presented in the role outlines. Ask them to fill in what they think is a suitable age and location for their character. They will be members of a TV panel, answering questions asked by the host/teacher.

Step 3


Role play the TV show. The host asks the characters to discuss how the following issues affect each one of them: health issues, education, employment, relationships, social skills, poverty, immigration.

Step 4


The rest of the students may wish to ask questions of the panel according to the answers they hear. Encourage student participation.

Step 5


For homework ask the students to write a story **or** a newspaper article about one of the interviewees.

Name	John	
Age		
Location		
Reason for becoming homeless	Family breakdown	




Name	Ciarán	
Age		
Location		
Reason for becoming homeless	Lost job	





Name	Vincent	
Age		
Location		
Reason for becoming homeless	Drug addiction	




Name	Paul	
Age		
Location		
Reason for becoming homeless	No home since leaving State care at the age of 18 as all young people in care have to do.	




Name	Aoife	
Age		
Location		
Reason for becoming homeless	Suffered mental health problems; lost her flat as she didn't keep up rent payments and has not had a home since her last hospital stay.	

Name	Magda	
Age		
Location		
Reason for becoming homeless	Left her home because she was the victim of domestic violence.	




Name	Baiba	
Age		
Location		
Reason for becoming homeless	Came to Ireland from Poland two years ago. She lost her job six months ago and then lost her rented flat. She has lived in emergency accommodation since then.	



Name	Rebecca	
Age		
Location		
Reason for becoming homeless	Ran away from home because of problems with her family.	



Name	Susan, Paul and their son Johnny	
Age		
Location		
Reason for becoming homeless	Became homeless when Paul lost his job as a builder and they couldn't keep up rent payments on their apartment and the family were evicted.	

Teachers notes: causes of homelessness

Homelessness is a complex issue and there is often not just one simple explanation for a person finding him or herself without a home. Focus Ireland believes it is vital to understand the wide range of issues that may lead to a family or single person becoming homeless in order to prevent homelessness and to provide relevant services to people out-of-home.

There are many different pathways into homelessness and there is usually more than one reason for an individual becoming homeless. Homelessness is more than the result of individual issues. It can often involve a complex interrelationship of social, economic and individual factors. Structural causes (such as the lack of enough social housing and poor access to private rented accommodation for people on welfare/low incomes) must be considered, not only to meet the needs of a person out of home, but also to address factors leading to homelessness. There are up to 5,000 people who are homeless in Ireland at any one time. A small percentage of this number sleeps rough on the streets, with the majority staying in emergency accommodation (such as hostels and Bed & Breakfasts) on a night-by-night basis.

The following are some of the many reasons that can lead to people becoming homeless:

- › Family breakdown
- › Mental health problems/illness
- › Domestic violence
- › Abuse
- › Leaving institutions: State care homes, prisons, psychiatric hospitals
- › Alcohol/drug misuse and addiction
- › Poverty/loss of employment/debts
- › Eviction
- › Not enough social housing provided by the State for people who need a home

Lesson 4

Case studies

Learning outcomes

To get students to identify with people who are homeless.

Requirements

- › Ten case studies; paste copies of each on to card, ensuring every student has one
- › List of statements to be read
- › Definitions of terms used in the case studies

Note to teacher

There are five people referred to in the ten case studies. Each person is referred to in two case studies, one outlining their lives while still homeless. The second case study outlines the same circumstances but it also includes the details explaining how they eventually got their own home. Do not alert the students to this difference in the information in the case studies.

Step 1

Distribute one case study to every student (there are ten different case studies). Ensure students keep theirs private. Each student should imagine they are the person described in the case study. (5 mins)

Step 2

Students line up at the back of the room while statements are read out. Tell students they can take a full stride forward if they can achieve the statement without difficulty; if they are unsure they can take a small step; if they are sure their character cannot achieve the statement they stay still. Teacher reads out statements. (10 mins)

Step 3

When completed, ask students how they feel about where they are now positioned. Ask which statements caused most to be held back. Begin a discussion between students who had the same case study but may have ended up in different places, particularly those who had case studies for the same person but at different stages in that person's life. (10 mins)

Step 4

Ask students to consider the different situations these people found themselves in, e.g. some were on the streets, some in squats, some in hostels. On the board give the definition of the three levels of homelessness: visible, hidden, at risk. Ask students to consider which applies to their case study and to share this with the class (see p. 26). (10 mins)

Step 5

List the services referred to in the case studies, asking the class to brainstorm what the service consists of before giving the specific definition (see p. 27). (5 mins)

Step 6

As a homework activity, ask students to choose one of the services which are open to people who are homeless. They must write a short news report describing and promoting the work of the service.

Frankie, 19

I became homeless when I had to leave State care at the age of 18. I was in care as my family broke up and my mum wasn't able to cope with things. It's the same for everyone in care once you are 18. I had to leave the home I was living in with other kids and I was straight into a hostel. I didn't like it at all. Some people were using drugs and I had some of my things robbed when I was asleep. I just didn't feel safe. I ended up sleeping on the streets and that was horrible. I had to beg to get money for food and I felt most people were looking down on me when they walked by. I just felt totally lost and alone. Then one day I met a street outreach worker from Focus Ireland. I went down to Focus Ireland's Extension service (a drop in centre for young people) with him to get off the streets for a bit. He told me about Focus Ireland's accommodation for young people who have left State care. I didn't know anything about it. They work with people before they leave care and make sure they have somewhere to go to live with staff to support them. I was lucky enough to get a place and have been here 10 months now. My support worker helped me to get into a course. Eventually I will be ready to move into my own place. I love it here and it will be great when I get my own place.

**Frankie, 19**

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Caroline, 30, and Ross, 1

I spent practically all of my life sleeping on the streets, or anywhere I could find. I lived in hostels since I was 14 years old. When Ross was born I didn't want to take him to a hostel. When he was three days old, we were sent to a mother and baby unit. The unit was lovely and clean and I didn't want to leave. I felt safe there. The staff showed me how to look after Ross and they gave me the support I needed. Now we live in Focus Ireland's long-term housing. Ross went to the crèche and is now preparing for school.

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Brian, 28

I started using drugs when I was a teenager. My family were very annoyed with me when I got addicted to drugs. In the end my Ma asked me to leave. When I was homeless I slept in an old school. I used to sneak back home in through the back door. I had a shower and got something to eat. I took drugs because I was so quiet and I thought I was no good. The drugs wrecked my head. When I was on drugs I was always around people I didn't like. I trusted nobody. Keltai is a detox centre and they helped me to get off drugs. I knew I had to stay away from the gang back home if I was going to stop using. I moved into Focus Ireland's Step-Down Programme where I have a key worker, Scarlett. I'm taught how to look after myself and to know my rights as a tenant. I pay my own bills and do my own cooking. I'm also near to my Narcotics Anonymous meetings and I get all the support I need from staff at Focus Ireland to help me stay clean from drugs. I'm now studying addiction skills and I want to become an outreach worker. For the first time in my life I really believe I have a future. I really believe in myself and that I can achieve good things in life. I want to use my tough experiences to help other people.

**Brian, 28**

I started using drugs when I was a teenager. My family were very annoyed with me when I got addicted to drugs. In the end my Ma asked me to leave. When I was homeless I slept in an old school. I used to sneak back home in through the back door. I had a shower and got something to eat. I took drugs because I was so quiet and I thought I was no good. The drugs wrecked my head. When I was on drugs I was always around people I didn't like. I trusted nobody.

John, 45

I was on the streets after separating from my wife. I was sleeping rough here and there, anywhere I could get my head down. Then I was referred to the Focus Ireland transitional housing programme in George's Hill. It's brilliant here. There are rules, of course, I abide by them and they help you as much as they can. I learn the skills I need for living alone: cooking, decorating and so on. Staff also work to support me to overcome any problems I have and make me feel better when I am struggling to cope. I hope to be able to move to independent living soon. The Tenancy Support and Settlement Team will work with me after I move to make sure that I'll settle in to my new home and my new community.



John, 45

I was on the streets after separating from my wife. I was sleeping rough here and there, anywhere I could get my head down.

Maureen, 32

I have three children, aged from 2 to 5 years old. My husband became increasingly violent towards us, so I took the children and went to a refuge. We lived in the refuge for a good while before moving into one of Focus Ireland's houses in Waterford. The staff helped me to go to childcare classes. They also worked with me to teach me the skills to do things like keep on top of my bills and how to budget my money. My husband used to control everything before this so I wasn't use to dealing with money at all. I had never been shown how to, even when I was growing up in my own family. I'm now saving for a small car so that I can drive to see my mother. It will be great as I haven't seen her in years. My husband never let me see her. The baby is in the crèche here at Focus Ireland; my other two children are in the Homework Club, so I know their homework is always done. We all feel safe here.

**Maureen, 32**

I have three children, aged from 2 to 5 years old. My husband became increasingly violent towards us, so I took the children and went to a refuge.

Statements

- › I feel safe.
- › I am happy.
- › I am afraid.
- › I/my children can go to school.
- › I have a good social life and can meet up with my friends whenever I want.
- › I live with my family.
- › I am looking forward to the future.
- › When I am sick, I can go to a doctor.
- › I have enough to eat and drink.
- › I can get a good job.
- › I can travel without difficulty.

Definitions of terms used in the case studies

Levels of homelessness

Visible

People sleeping rough and/or those accommodated in emergency hostels, or private emergency accommodation.

Hidden

People who are involuntarily sharing with family or friends and/or people living in substandard living conditions.

At risk

People who currently have housing but could possibly become homeless due to economic difficulties, job losses, insecure tenure, not being able to keep up paying rent/mortgage payments, leaving State care, illness, or living with mental health difficulties.

Frankie	Family breakdown	Visible
Frankie	Family breakdown	Visible
Caroline	Family breakdown	Hidden
Brian	Addiction	Hidden
John	Family breakdown	Visible
Maureen	Domestic abuse	At risk

Some of the services available to people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless

Tenancy Support and Settlement Team

A team of staff that works with families and single people at risk of becoming homeless to ensure they sustain their tenancy and settle in as part of their local community.

Key worker

A person from an organisation like Focus Ireland who works with people who are homeless to support them step by step to get – and keep – a home and overcome other problems they may have, so they do not become homeless again in the future.

Homework Club

An after-school service working with children of families who are homeless and living in temporary accommodation. This service helps support children to keep up their education and stay in school.

Supported Housing

Many people who are homeless need support in order to live as independently as possible in their home. Without this support people can get trapped in a repeat cycle of homelessness. Focus Ireland staff work to support people to sustain their home and manage difficulties they may have to help them to move towards independent living. However, some people will need this support on a permanent basis as they may have on-going issues including health, disability, or mental health issues that could put them at risk of becoming homeless again if they did not have support as required.

Focus Ireland's Off-the-Streets Project

Provides short-term accommodation and support to young people between the ages of 16 and 18. The young people are encouraged to deal with the issues that led to them becoming homeless. Focus Ireland staff support them to overcome these problems and to take up training and education programmes that will help them move on with their lives.

Young people's Aftercare Programme

Focus Ireland has called for a legal right to aftercare. The current situation is that once a young person in State care becomes 18 they have to leave. If there was a legal right to aftercare this would mean that people leaving State care at 18 would have to be provided with somewhere to live in a supported environment for at least a year after leaving care to help them make a successful transition to independent adult life and prevent them from becoming homeless. Focus Ireland staff work with young people at their aftercare project in Dublin where they are encouraged to participate in training to support the further development of life skills, build their confidence and also undertake education and work programmes to enable them to move on to independent living.

The Outreach and Extension Team

This team works both on the street and in the Extension day service. The Street Outreach Team works with people who are sleeping rough, building relationships with them and helping them to move away from the streets by encouraging them to use other services that will help them out of homelessness. The Extension Service provides support and practical facilities, including laundry and showers for young people aged between 16 and 25 years.

Refuge

A refuge usually refers to a women's refuge which provides safe accommodation for women – and their families – who are suffering domestic violence, which can be one of the causes of homelessness.

Step-Down Programme

A short-term housing programme run by Focus Ireland to support people who have successfully completed a drug rehabilitation programme to help them stay off drugs and learn the skills needed to prepare for independent living clean from drugs into the future.

Lesson 5

Portrayal of homelessness in the media – 1

Learning outcomes

To have students explore representations of people who are homeless in various media. In this lesson, the media to be explored are poetry, song, newspapers and fiction.

Requirements

- › Four different handouts, one for each group
- › Recording of the song 'Streets of London' (DVD)

Poetry, song, newspapers and fiction

Step 1

Ask students to consider how people who are homeless are viewed by many people in society. Are there certain images associated with homelessness? Are they correct? (10 mins)

Step 2

Divide the students into four groups. Give each group a different handout.

- › Handout 1 is a poem (three poems are provided; the teacher may choose the most suitable, depending on age and ability of the students).
- › Handout 2 is the lyrics of 'Streets of London'.
- › Handout 3 is newspaper headlines.
- › Handout 4 is an extract from the novel *Breaking the Wishbone*, by Siobhán Parkinson. (5 mins).

Step 3

Ask each group to read their handout and consider the image of homelessness portrayed. Ask the students to write four points about the media portrayal of people who are homeless and to state whether or not these are accurate. (15 mins)

Step 4

Take feedback from the class. (5–10 mins)

Step 5

Finish the class by playing the song 'Streets of London' (on DVD).

Lesson 5 · Handout 1

This poem was written by a young person who was supported by Focus Ireland to move on from homelessness.

Being Homeless

Being homeless is limbo to some ...
 No work, but early starts ...
 Nothing to do, all the time in the world!
 Nowhere to go, the world is your oyster.
 No money, but wealthy in conversation.
 No peers, but friends are in the same dilemma.
 No hope, hope for others.
 No change, we're changing every day.
 No home, home's where you make it –
 Even when I'm home, in my heart I'll always remember being homeless.



Lesson 5 · Handout 1

This poem was written by a young person who was supported by Focus Ireland to move on from homelessness.

What Home Means to Me

Some people wouldn't be able to relate to my idea of home.
 Everyone is different. Having a good atmosphere.
 Sitting down and talking about stuff.
 My view of a home is where my friends come to see me.
 It's where I eat, and that's where I have the craic with my friends when they come around. That's what I call I home. Somewhere I can call mine.
 Getting a place, I found it fairly easy looking after myself 'cos I can cook for myself.
 But you can take it for granted, having a place. You can end up back on the street quicker than lightning.
 And there's a chain of events that leads back to being homeless, whether it's spending all their rent money on drugs, or having parties. Having the wrong people around, also going to raves or whatnot.
 Then the next day it's an eviction notice for you, and a lot of people don't know what way to go ... I found it myself, there's an invisible pressure there that you feel, to entertain, 'now it's my place!'
 But I have the experience now. I've learnt my lesson. I am now able to comfortably live on my own. I am happy being able to respect where I'm living.
 Some of the people that I've met while I've been homeless are some of the nicest people in the world. I don't know how they're in that position but then it happened to me as well.

Lesson 5 · Handout 1

The Hunchback in the Park

Poem by Dylan Thomas

The hunchback in the park
 A solitary mister
 Propped between trees and water
 From the opening of the garden lock
 That lets the trees and water enter
 Until the Sunday sombre bell at dark

Eating bread from a newspaper
 Drinking water from the chained cup
 That the children filled with gravel
 In the fountain basin where I sailed
 my ship
 Slept at night in a dog kennel
 But nobody chained him up.

Like the park birds he came early
 Like the water he sat down
 And Mister they called Hey Mister
 The truant boys from the town
 Running when he had heard
 them clearly
 On out of sound

Past lake and rockery
 Laughing when he shook his paper
 Hunchbacked in mockery
 Through the loud zoo of the willow groves
 Dodging the park keeper
 With his stick that picked up leaves.

And the old dog sleeper
 Alone between nurses and swans
 While the boys among willows
 Made the tigers jump out of their eyes
 To roar on the rockery stones
 And the groves were blue with sailors

Made all day until bell time
 A woman figure without fault
 Straight as a young elm
 Straight and tall from his crooked bones
 That she might stand in the night
 After the locks and chains

All night in the unmade park
 After the railings and shrubberies
 The birds the grass the trees the lake
 And the wild boys innocent as
 strawberries
 Had followed the hunchback
 To his kennel in the dark.

Lesson 5 · Handout 2

Streets of London

Song by Ralph McTell

Have you seen the old man
 In the closed-down market
 Kicking up the paper,
 with his worn out shoes?
 In his eyes you see no pride
 And held loosely at his side
 Yesterday's paper telling yesterday's news

So how can you tell me you're lonely,
 And say for you that the sun don't shine?
 Let me take you by the hand and lead you through the streets of London
 I'll show you something to make you change your mind

Have you seen the old girl
 Who walks the streets of London
 Dirt in her hair and her clothes in rags?
 She's no time for talking,
 She just keeps right on walking
 Carrying her home in two carrier bags

Chorus

In the all night cafe
 At a quarter past eleven,
 Same old man is sitting there on his own
 Looking at the world
 Over the rim of his tea-cup,
 Each tea last an hour
 Then he wanders home alone

Chorus

And have you seen the old man
 Outside the seaman's mission
 Memory fading with
 The medal ribbons that he wears?
 In our winter city,
 The rain cries a little pity
 For one more forgotten hero
 And a world that doesn't care

Chorus

Lesson 5 · Handout 3

Newspaper headlines

Focus Ireland Schoolmate Project boosts homeless children's school attendance

The Irish Times

Society must look at its attitude to homelessness

Mayo News

Cutbacks must not undo boom years' achievements

Meath Chronicle

End of the road: homeless man forced to sleep in car

The Northside People

Paul McGrath backs Focus Ireland's campaign to secure a right to aftercare

Irish Independent

Focus Ireland working hard to prevent Sligo families becoming homeless

Sligo Weekender

Government urged to invest €4bn on housing for homeless

Irish Times

Why some people are still poor after years of plenty

The Evening Herald

Lesson 5 · Handout 4

Extracts from the novel
Breaking the Wishbone
by Siobhán Parkinson

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You have to keep yourself looking presentable too or you won't be let in. I like to keep clean anyway. I swear to God, I'd hate to be one of them homeless-looking people with crusty heads and the soles flapping off their shoes. But then again, it's not easy, that, when you have no running water. It takes forever to boil up enough for a cup of tea on that camping-gas thing we have, so it does, not to mind trying to get enough to wash your hair in.

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Hairdryers are great, so they are, because you're feeling all cold after your shower, and you can run the hot air all over yourself to warm up after washing your hair. When I get out of here and get a proper place to live I swear to God I am going to have hairdryers in every room and any time I am feeling a bit cold, I can just turn it on and take off my shoes and spray lovely hot air on my toes. Warm feet is my idea of heaven, so it is. Then again, warm all over is my idea of heaven, but warm feet is definitely the most important thing.

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Sometimes I think he's playing house, Johnner, I mean Johnner! It's all just, just, just a big game to him, and ... he has two sets of mummies and daddies ... and he's the little fella ... and he's just fooling around like a young one with a teaset, going on about the curtains and the tea chest table, we have the slates off the roof and everything, like ... like ... Like ... well like an adult I suppose. I mean, he's like a small child, a small child playing at being a grown-up and having his own house. But it's not a game living like this and it's no joke either. It's horrible sometimes, really horrible.

Lesson 6

Portrayal of homelessness in the media – 2

Learning outcomes

Through the media of television to identify with the experience of homelessness. The Focus Ireland ads aim to explain some of the reasons people become homeless, show the solutions and also break down stereotypes about people who are homeless.

Requirements

- › DVD of three short adverts for Focus Ireland
- › Two handouts with the slogans: 'Without your home, your life develops differently' and 'Without your home, you're lost'

TV adverts

Step 1

Distribute the handouts and write the slogans on the board in order to keep students' attention on them. (5 mins)

Step 2

Brainstorm the slogans and discuss different scenarios. (10 mins)

Step 3

Show the adverts, and for each advert, ask students to consider how the slogans apply to each case. (15 mins)

Step 4

As a group or homework activity choose one of the cases and write a diary entry for that person for a day when they were homeless and a further entry for the present. (5–10 mins)

Advert 1

This advert tells the story of a young girl who became homeless when her parents split up. The advert hints at money worries and difficulties for the girl and her family over the years as she says that, 'We moved flat six times one year.' The girl tells her own story and describes how she later fell in with the wrong crowd and started taking drugs and could see no way out.

Then Focus Ireland helped her, and she moved into a hostel run by the charity, where she received support and participated in a detox programme to get off drugs. The advert ends with the girl telling how she now has her own flat and a job, and how, for the first time in years, she can see a future for herself.

Advert 2

This advert tells the story of a man who has suffered from severe mood swings, nerves and depression since his teens. He had to leave home as a result of his problems and became homeless. He eventually went to Focus Ireland and they helped to get him into one of their housing projects. The man tells how his Focus Ireland support worker 'helps me cope with the darker days so I am able to stay living in a home of my own'.

Mental health difficulties is one of the many reasons people can become homeless. Without support, people who suffer from mental health difficulties,

such as severe depression, can lose the tenancy on their apartment or flat as they can't cope. Focus Ireland provides supported housing for people in this situation so they can get support from trained staff and live in their own home. This type of housing prevents many people from becoming homeless and gives others a route out of homelessness into a place they can call home.

Advert 3

This advert tells the story of how a mother and her young son became homeless due to domestic violence in their home. The little boy tells how his father came home and trashed the house one evening and he and his mother had to leave to escape from him.

The boy and his mother moved into a temporary refuge for victims of domestic violence. Staff in the women's refuge put the mother in touch with Focus Ireland and she and her son eventually got a home in one of the charity's housing developments. The woman says they now feel 'safe at last'.

Some families become homeless because they can no longer live with the domestic violence they have to endure in their home from a family member, partner or relative. Organisations like Focus Ireland can help these families or single people to find a new home and build a new life where they are safe.

**Without your
home ...**

**your life
develops
differently**

**Without your
home ...**

you're lost

Lesson 7

A day in the life of a person who is homeless

Learning outcomes

For the student to identify with the experience of being homeless.

Requirements

- › Ensure that you have a large classroom/hall available, school yard may also be used
- › Worksheet for each student

Step 1

Give each student/group of students five minutes to assume a name and a role of a person who is homeless, bearing in mind the information they have learned in previous lessons. They may be a single character, couple or family group. They must imagine what kind of a day their character would have: activities, rest, work, food, etc. The students will form 'freeze frames' of activities their character might be doing at different intervals throughout the day.

Step 2

The teacher will act as a 'Paddy O'Gorman' style or RTÉ News reporter. The reporter (with camera and microphone if available) interviews the characters to find out where they are, how they feel, etc.

Step 3

Ask the students to freeze-frame an activity their character might be doing between 6am and 10am. When students have frozen their scene, interview a number of the characters.

Step 4

Repeat the same exercise using different times during the day: 10am to 2pm; 2pm to 6pm; 6pm to 10pm; 10pm to 2am. Interview different characters during each freeze frame.

Step 5

Debrief at the end of the exercise by asking the students what they thought of the exercise and if there was anything that struck them that they might not have thought of before. Before ending the debrief and giving the homework exercise, ask the students to shout out their own name (not the character name). This is an important step to ensure that students do not retain the character identity.

Homework

At the end of the freeze-frame activity give each student a worksheet to be filled in for homework. Having simulated a day in the life of a homeless person, they are asked to write a diary for the person's day, to help them recognise the differences between their lives and the lives of people who are homeless.

Teacher's notes

Paddy O’Gorman: A roving reporter who tends to talk to people in unusual places while he is reporting on social issues, including homelessness and unemployment. He has interviewed people queuing at social welfare offices and waiting at bus stops, etc.

Suggested questions for interviewer

- › What’s your name?
 - › Describe what you are doing./Where are you now?
 - › How do you feel?
 - › How did you become homeless?
 - › Where did you sleep last night? Did you sleep in a hostel or have to sleep rough?
 - › Do you sleep there every night? Why?/Why not?
- › (If sleeping rough:.) Were you cold?/What was the weather like last night?
 - › Did you have any difficulty getting a place to sleep?
 - › Did you sleep well? Why/why not? etc.
 - › Did you eat breakfast? Where?
 - › What have you been doing since you got up this morning?
 - › What plans have you got for the rest of the day?
 - › Describe what other people are doing around you; how does this make you feel?
 - › What do you miss most about not having a home?
 - › What help do you need to move on from homelessness and get a home of your own?

Lesson 7 · Worksheet A

Write a diary entry for each of the time slots during the day.

Time	Activities
6am–10am	
10am–2pm	
2pm–6pm	
6pm–10pm	
10pm–2am	

Lesson 8

Work of Focus Ireland

Learning outcomes

To learn about the specific work of Focus Ireland.

Requirements

- › DVD of news item and documentary on the work of Focus Ireland
- › Worksheet with cloze test exercise for each student

Step 1

To recap on the adverts and case studies in previous lessons, brainstorm with students the kind of work Focus Ireland does. (5 mins)

Step 2

Watch the RTÉ news report about the work of Focus Ireland.

Step 3

Ask students in pairs to come up with three statistics from the news item which may have surprised them. (10 mins)

Step 4

Watch one or all extracts from the DVD. Give the cloze test exercise to each student to complete while viewing. (up to 15 mins)

Step 5

In groups or as a homework exercise, have students do one of the following activities based on the DVD:

- › Write an article to advertise the programme in a TV magazine.
- › Design a cover for a DVD of the programme.
- › Write ten questions for a table quiz based on the information in the programme.
- › Write a statement which summarises the programme's message.

Documentary on Focus Ireland

Divided into three chapters as follows:

- › Chapter 1: 0.00–6.02
- › Chapter 2: 6.03–11.50
- › Chapter 3: 11.51–15.00

Note to teacher – solution to Lesson 8 · Worksheet A

Chapter 1

- › Finding a way home
- › The deepest desire in any of us is to have a home
- › There is hope – you're not lost
- › I was walking the street and I didn't know where I was going to stay at night time

Chapter 2

- › Think again, it can happen to anyone

- › Manage those issues and live independently into the future
- › Finding a way
- › We can break the cycle

Chapter 3

- › Focus Ireland housing – a new start
- › Everybody has a right to a place they can call home

Lesson 8 · Worksheet A

Watch the DVD and complete the following:

Chapter 1

- ▶ Finding a _____ home
- ▶ The deepest _____ in any of us is to have a home
- ▶ There is hope – you're not _____
- ▶ I was walking the _____ and I didn't know where I was going to _____ at night time.

Chapter 2

- ▶ Think _____, it can happen to anyone
- ▶ Manage those _____ and live independently into the _____
- ▶ Finding a _____
- ▶ We can break the _____

Chapter 3

- ▶ Focus Ireland housing – a new _____
- ▶ Everybody has a _____ to a place they can call home

Lesson 9

Concept of human dignity

Learning outcomes

To define the concept of human dignity and how it relates to homelessness.

Requirements

› A set of photographs (on DVD)

Step 1

Discuss the concept of human dignity and how it relates to homelessness. (5 mins)

Step 2

Refer students to the set of photographs.

Step 3

Ask each student to choose a photograph that appeals to them; ask some to explain their choice. (10 mins)

Step 4

Divide the class into groups, asking each group to choose one photo and to come up with a caption for it. (15 mins)

Step 5

Ask each group to report back to the class on their chosen photo and caption and to explain how the photo relates to the concept of human dignity. (15 mins)

Step 6

As a homework activity, ask students to write a description of one of the photos they saw in class, referring to human dignity in their description.

Thumbnails of photos which are on accompanying DVD.



Teacher's notes

Homelessness may be discussed in relation to all seven concepts of CSPE. Some aspects of how this connection may be made are outlined below:

- › **Rights and responsibilities:** The right to shelter is incorporated in the UNDHR.
- › **Stewardship:** Natural disasters have left many people homeless. Due to climate change these natural disasters are becoming more common.
- › **Development:** How well a country provides for its vulnerable is a measure of development. In the developing world a major issue is the provision of housing, e.g. Niall Mellon project to build homes in South Africa.
- › **Law:** There are laws against vagrancy and begging.
- › **Democracy:** To vote you need an address; this makes it very difficult for people who are homeless to fully participate in democracy.
- › **Interdependence:** By supporting organisations like Focus Ireland we can all play our part in combating and preventing homelessness.
- › **Human dignity:** Everyone has the right to the dignity of a place they can call home.

Lesson 10

Simulation of an action project

Learning outcomes

Students will learn the stages involved in organising and carrying out an action project.

Requirements

› Worksheets for each student

Step 1

Tell the students that their class has agreed to undertake an action project based on the issue of homelessness. The action project chosen is an awareness-raising day on homelessness for the school. It has been agreed that the class should make and display posters highlighting the issues surrounding homelessness, broadcast a message/thought for the day about homelessness and hold a photo exhibition. They will form six committees/groups to complete the tasks necessary for holding the awareness-raising day. Each group will have specific tasks to do for the action project.

Step 2

Divide the students into six groups and give copies of a different worksheet (A–F) to each group.

Step 3

Ask each group to complete their worksheet.

Step 4

Ask each group to list the tasks they would need to do to complete the project, to list items that they require and to name a person or people that they would have to communicate with during the project. Write the answers on the board or on a chart.

Step 5

Discuss other action projects that could be undertaken on this issue.

Lesson 10 · Worksheet A

Committee/group
Poster making

List four tasks that your group needs to do:

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____

List items required:

Person/people communicated with:

Lesson 10 · Worksheet B

Committee/group
Research

List four tasks that your group needs to do:

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____

List items required:

Person/people communicated with:

Lesson 10 · Worksheet C

Committee/group
Publicity

List four tasks that your group needs to do:

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____

List items required:

Person/people communicated with:

Lesson 10 · Worksheet D

Committee/group
Permission

List four tasks that your group needs to do:

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____

List items required:

Person/people communicated with:

Lesson 10 · Worksheet E

Committee/group
Intercom broadcast

List four tasks that your group needs to do:

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____

List items required:

Person/people communicated with:

Lesson 10 · Worksheet F

Committee/group
Photo exhibition

List four tasks that your group needs to do:

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____

List items required:

Person/people communicated with:

Action projects

Other possibilities for action projects

Contact your local TDs:

Focus Ireland believes that housing the most marginalised people needs to be made a real political priority if more action is to be taken. Add your voice of support by sending a letter to your local TDs calling for specific action.

Log on to the take action page at:

<http://takeaction.focusireland.ie/takeaction> to sign up and support Focus Ireland's latest campaign. One such campaign is Focus Ireland's work to try and secure a legal right to aftercare for young people who have to leave State care once they reach 18 years of age.

Volunteer:

Volunteer to participate in one of Focus Ireland's many fundraising events by mailing events@focusireland.ie or calling 01 881 5900. You could also

choose to take part in a suitable event for your age group if you prefer this option. One suitable event could be the Focus Ireland Schoolmates Sleepover. Details at www.focusireland.ie.

Sign up for the Focus Ireland newsletter:

Log on to www.focusireland.ie and sign up to receive Focus Ireland's newsletter to find out more information about the charity's work to combat and prevent homelessness.

Help raise awareness:

Speak to someone about the issue of homelessness or even email some of your family and friends and ask them to log on to www.focusireland.ie or contact the charity at 01 881 5900 so they can find out more about the problems of homelessness and housing need in Ireland and find out what they can do to get involved.

Section 1

- 1** Each of the points (A–I) below describes the services of Focus Ireland. Match each one with the correct name of the service in the table below.
- A** A team of staff that works with families and single people at risk of homelessness to ensure they sustain their tenancy and settle in as part of their community.
 - B** A person from an organisation like Focus Ireland who works with people who are homeless to support them step by step to get – and keep – a home and overcome other problems they may have.
 - C** An after-school service for children of families who are homeless and living in temporary accommodation. This service helps support children to keep up their education and stay in school.
 - D** Housing where staff work with people to help them to live as independently as possible in their own home.
 - E** It provides short-term accommodation and support for young people between the ages 16 and 18. The young people are encouraged to address the issues that have led to them becoming homeless, and to take up training and education programmes that will help them move on with their lives.
 - F** Focus Ireland has called for a legal right to aftercare, which means that young people leaving State care at 18 would be able to live in a supported environment for a year after leaving care to help them make a successful transition to adult life and prevent them from becoming homeless. Focus Ireland’s professional staff work with young people at their Aftercare Programme in Dublin where they are encouraged to participate in training to support the further development of life skills, build their confidence and also undertake education and work programmes to enable them to move on to independent living.
 - G** Works both on the street and in the Extension day service. The Street Outreach Team works with people who are sleeping rough, building relationships with them and helping them to move away from the streets by encouraging them to use other services that will help them out of homelessness. The Extension Service provides support and practical facilities, including laundry and showers for young people aged between 16 and 25 years.

- H** Provides accommodation for women – and their families – who are suffering domestic violence, which can be one of the causes of homelessness.
- I** A short-term housing programme run by Focus Ireland to support people who have successfully completed a drug rehabilitation programme to help them to prepare for independent living clean from drugs.

Key worker

The Outreach and Extension Team

Supported Housing

Step-Down Programme

Tenancy Support and Settlement Team

Homework Club

Refuge

H

Young people's Aftercare Programme

Focus Ireland's Off-the-Streets Project

2 Which **two** of the following organisations work with people who are homeless?

Pavee Point

Focus Ireland

Threshold

ENFO

3 Name the organisation associated with each of the following logos.



4 Name three human rights taken away from people who are homeless.

Section 2

1 Study the newspaper article below and answer the questions.

Scaling the heights for Focus Ireland

A local team made up of six ladies, Lorraine Donnelly, Karen Murphy, Carol O'Brien, Marie Dunne, Caitriona Harrison and Noelle McSweeney, have decided to take on the Four Peaks Challenge in June. The team will climb the highest peaks in the four provinces in Ireland in just three days in a bid to raise some much-needed funds for Focus Ireland.

The Focus Ireland Four Peaks Challenge takes place over three days, starting June 6th. The team of six, called 'The Peakaboos', will travel to Kerry to take on the mighty Carrauntoohil at 3,406 ft; Saturday's climb takes them to Mweelrea in Mayo, standing tall at 2,670 ft; and Sunday sees a 6am start at the base of Slieve Donard (2,786 ft) in Co. Down, before a quick spin down to Wicklow to climb their final mountain, Lugnaquilla (3,035 ft).

Focus Ireland opened its doors in 1985 in Eustace Street, Dublin; the agency provided

streetwork services to young people and advice and help with finding a home. Since then, Focus Ireland has continued to grow and expand its services and now has additional housing and service projects in Dublin as well as housing developments in Limerick, Waterford, Cork and Sligo.

At any one time in Ireland, there are over 5,000 people homeless or in danger of becoming homeless. Focus Ireland ensures that this is only a stage in these people's lives and not a permanent state and gives them the helping hand they need to get back on their feet. With your help and support we hope to raise enough money to ensure that they can continue with their efforts in combating the problem of homelessness in Ireland.

The group is holding a fundraising night at Lisatunny on Friday, 18th of April and your support and generosity would be much appreciated.

The Guardian, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary

a) What are the six ladies named in the article going to do?

b) In what year did Focus Ireland open its doors?

c) Apart from Dublin, name **two** other places where Focus Ireland has housing projects.

1 _____ 2 _____

d) Describe **one** of the services which Focus Ireland provides to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

e) Name and describe **two** other fund-raising events which could be undertaken by Focus Ireland.

Event 1 _____

Description _____

Event 2 _____

Description _____

2 Study this advertisement and answer the questions.

a) What organisation is this an advertisement for?

b) Why do you think this name was chosen?



c) Explain the logo used.

d) Name two ways you could help this organisation.

e) Imagine the person saying the slogan: 'Lost my job, lost my house, lost my family – Found Focus.' Write this person's story or draw a series of pictures outlining different stages of the story.

3 Study this selection of newspaper headlines and answer the questions.

The Irish Times

Charity condemns State's housing record

RTÉ

Charity helped 270 households secure homes last year

Evening Herald

Charity's new campaign aims to dispel myths around homelessness

Drogheda Independent

Sleep out for the homeless

Irish Independent

Homeless in overnight Dáil protest

a) Why do you think the overnight protest was held outside the Dáil?

b) What do you understand by the *Evening Herald* headline?

c) Name three charities which could be the ones referred to in the headlines.

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____

d) Choose one of the headlines and write the article which you think followed.

Headline _____

Article _____

Section 3

- 1 Your school decides to hold an awareness-raising event to highlight the needs of people who are homeless.
 - a) Write a short speech for a school assembly, describing the event you and your classmates are planning. You should include **three** different activities which will take place during the day. (6 marks)
 - b) Design a poster that you would use to promote awareness of the problem of homelessness. (6 marks)
 - c) Name and explain **two skills** that you and your classmates would use while raising awareness of this issue. (8 marks)

- 2 Having studied homelessness in your CSPE class, you and your classmates have decided to invite a key worker from Focus Ireland in order to find out more about the issue.
 - a) Write a letter inviting this person to your class. In your letter:
 - explain why you are inviting them
 - explain what you wish to learn from the visit
 - outline some of the information you have already learned about homelessness.(8 marks)
 - b) List **six** questions which you could ask during the visit. (6 marks)
 - c) Describe the work of **three** committees that you would set up in order to organise the visit. (6 marks)

- 3 Your local community has become involved in a fund-raising event to raise money to help people who are homeless.
 - a) Name **one** organisation that you think should receive the funds raised. Give **two** reasons why you think this organisation should be supported. (8 marks)
 - b) Write a short article for your local newspaper describing the fund-raising event. (6 marks)
 - c) Draw a sketch of a poster that you would use to encourage people to support this event. (6 marks)

- 4 You and your CSPE class have decided to carry out a survey on attitudes to homelessness in your school.
 - a) Describe **two** classroom activities that you would organise which would help your CSPE class to plan and prepare this survey. (8 marks)
 - b) Write **three** questions that you would ask in this survey. Give a reason for asking **each** question. (6 marks)
 - c) Describe **two** ways that your class could present their findings to the rest of the school. (6 marks)

Notes

First published 2009
Focus Ireland
9–12 High Street
Christchurch
Dublin 8

www.focusireland.ie

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Design and layout: Identikit Design Consultants, Dublin
Editor: Julie O'Shea
Printed in the Republic of Ireland by Impress Printing Works, Dublin

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To protect the identity and privacy of our customers some personal details have been changed, otherwise all information represents the real life stories of Focus Ireland customers. The photographs used in this publication are not of the real people who kindly took the time to tell their own stories of homelessness and how Focus Ireland supported them on their journey home.

About Focus Ireland

Focus Ireland is a housing and homeless charity working to prevent people becoming, remaining, or returning to homelessness through the provision of quality services, supported housing, research and advocacy. Founded in 1985 by Sr Stanislaus Kennedy, Focus Ireland believes that everyone has a right to a place they can call home which is safe, secure, affordable and appropriate to their needs.

Our mission

Focus Ireland aims to advance the rights of people out-of-home to live in a place they can call home through quality services, research and advocacy.

Our vision

Focus Ireland believes that everyone has the right to a place they can call home.



Focus Ireland, Head Office
9–12 High Street
Christchurch, Dublin 8
Tel 01 881 5900
Fax 01 881 5950

Focus Ireland, Waterford
Grange Cohan
St John's Park, Waterford
Tel 051 879 807
Fax 051 879 811

Focus Ireland, Limerick
Parnell Place
Parnell Street, Limerick
Tel 061 317 199
Fax 061 311 629

Focus Ireland, Sligo
69 John Street
Sligo Town, Sligo
Tel 071 914 9974
Fax 071 913 8856

Focus Ireland, Cork
107 Acorn Business Campus
Mahon Industrial Estate, Cork
Tel 086 602 8143
Fax 021 435 0666

Focus Ireland, Kilkenny
Tel 056 777 7848

Email info@focusireland.ie
www.focusireland.ie

