

Trav Times

Newsletter of Donegal Travellers Project • December 2020 • Issue 32



A beautiful new grotto in Ballintra has brought a bit of comfort during a particularly difficult year for one resident. See page 8 for article.

A different kind of Christmas can still be a happy one

CHRISTMAS will be different this year, but it can still be happy so long as we all stick to the guidelines.

“We won’t have the same kind of Christmas, but if we stick to the guidelines for preventing the spread of Covid-19 we’ll have some kind of normality for the holiday,” said Ann Friel, DTP Primary Health Care Co-ordinator. “We are all responsible for staying safe...it’s not one person’s job, it’s everyone’s.”

Washing hands frequently, wearing face coverings in public, not visiting other households, and staying away from people who could be at particular risk of developing a severe case of Covid-19 are all still important.

This edition of *Trav Times* contains some additional Covid-19 information, including details about the types of

households that qualify to form social bubbles during lockdown. It also looks at when to “self-isolate” and when to “restrict movement”.

But 2020 has been about more than just Covid-19.

As a result, this edition also includes a special section of GOOD news and events that have happened this year.

Good news from 2020 includes an 85th birthday for Agnes Friel and the births of Lucia Marie Mongan and Mickey Reilly. It also includes the fact that lockdown has been no barrier to learning for Travellers who have taken up education opportunities online.

The creation of a beautiful barrel-top wagon garden ornament and a stunning embroidery project are additional good news stories of 2020 featured in this edition of the newsletter.

Happy Christmas
To All From DTP



Jr. Cert and Leaving Cert Grinds

*are available from DTP
for secondary school
students*

Ring (086) 858 0298 for details

DTP/Involve Virtual Bingo for Young People

*Mondays & Wednesdays
6 p.m.*

Ring (083) 174 7694 to register

DTP-managed St. Gabriel’s Preschool

*is accepting students for
the Spring 2021 semester*

Ring (074) 912 6693 for info

Support available for Online Learning

*in many different subjects,
including job preparation
and training*

Ring (087) 130 5866 for details

1-to-1 Walk & Talk

*Enjoy fresh air and a bit of craic
with a DTP staff member while
following Covid-19 guidelines*

Ring (074) 912 9281 for info

Donegal Travellers Project is a partnership of Travellers and settled people working for Traveller rights through the five principles of Community Development:

- 1) Collectivity; 2) Community Empowerment; 3) Social Justice and Sustainable Development;***
- 4) Human Rights, Equality, and Anti-Discrimination; and 5) Participation.***

DTP welcomes Nicola Gillespie, new Donegal PHN for Traveller Health

DTP WELCOMES Nicola Gillespie to her new role as HSE Public Health Nurse for Traveller Health in Donegal.

She was recently named to the position following the retirement of Ita Ward, who had held the position for 15 years.

Nicola has been qualified in the fields of Nursing and Midwifery for the past 24 years.

She has worked as a Public

Health Nurse for the past 16 years, including as a colleague of Ita's.

Like Ita, Nicola will be available to Travellers throughout Donegal as a source of information and support with any health issues they have.

She will also work closely with the DTP Primary Health Care Team to develop health awareness campaigns, events, and screenings.

Nicola can be reached on her mobile at (087) 904 9186.



Guidelines for forming a support bubble to prevent isolation during the lockdown

“SUPPORT bubbles” are designed to help prevent social isolation during the Covid-19 lockdown.

A support bubble is formed when two qualified households have close contact with one another. The two households can meet indoors even though they do not live together.

There are special rules about who can form a support bubble. You can only form a support bubble if you:

- Live alone.
- Live alone with children under 18.
- Share parenting or custody.
- Live with an adult you care for.
- Live alone and have a carer, including a live-in carer.

Members of the two households which have formed a support bubble cannot have close contact with anyone else outside of their bubble.

You cannot be in more than one

support bubble or form a bubble with a household that is already in a bubble with someone else.

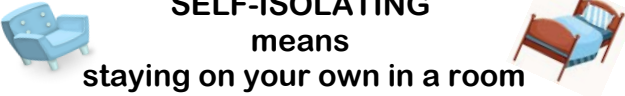
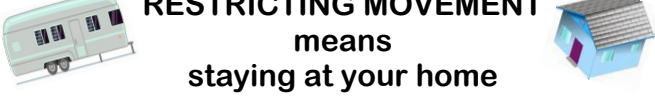
You should try to form a support bubble within 5 kilometres of your home, but it is possible to form one outside of that area if necessary.

If someone in your support bubble gets symptoms of Covid-19, they must self-isolate immediately and phone a GP.

HSE symptoms comparison for Covid-19, the flu and a cold

SYMPTOMS	COVID-19	THE FLU	A COLD
Fever of 38° or Chills	Common	Common	Rare
Cough	Common (usually dry)	Common (usually dry)	Mild
Shortness of Breath	Common	No	No
Loss/Change of Ability to Smell/Taste	Common	Rare	Rare
Fatigue	Common	Common	Sometimes
Aches and Pains	Common	Common	Common
Sore Throat	Sometimes	Sometimes	Common
Headaches	Sometimes	Common	Rare
Runny or Stuffy Nose	Sometimes	Sometimes	Common
Feeling Sick or Vomiting	Rare	Sometimes	No
Diarrhoea	Rare	Sometimes in children	No
Sneezing	No	No	Common

Differences between self-isolating and restricting movement

 SELF-ISOLATING means staying on your own in a room	 RESTRICTING MOVEMENT means staying at your home
Self-isolate when you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have symptoms of Covid-19. • Are waiting for a test or results. • Receive a positive test result. 	Restrict movement when you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are a close contact of someone who tests positive. • Live with someone who has Covid-19 symptoms. • Arrive in Ireland from another country.
Others in your household: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to restrict their movement. • Need to ring their GP and ask to be tested for Covid-19. 	Others in your household: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not need to do anything unless you develop symptoms of Covid-19. Then you will need to self-isolate and they will need to restrict their movement.
When to stop self-isolating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you are self-isolating because of a positive test result, only stop when you have had no fever for 5 days and it has been 10 days since you first had symptoms. • If you are self-isolating because you had symptoms of Covid-19 but your test result was negative, only stop self-isolating when you have had no symptoms for 48 hours. 	When to stop restricting movement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you are restricting movement because you were a close contact of someone with Covid-19, you should restrict movement for 14 days even if you have a test and the results are negative. • If you are restricting movement because you are caring for someone with Covid-19 who cannot self-isolate, you and the rest of your household should restrict movement for 17 days.

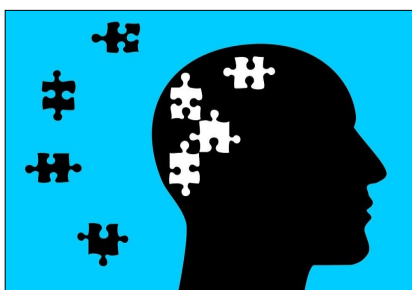
Ways to mind our nucks during Covid-19

By PAVEE POINT TRAVELLER AND ROMA CENTRE

IT IS normal to feel worried about what is happening with Covid-19 at the moment. Here are some things that might help.

1) Focus on what you can control

- Keep washing your hands.
- When in shops and other public places wear a face covering and keep 2 metres away from others.
- Stay away from older Travellers, those with ongoing illnesses, and pregnant Traveller women.
- Remember that most people with the virus will get better.



2) Avoid checking news and social media a lot

- Get information from the HSE, RTÉ News, and the Facebook pages of DTP and Pavee Point.
- Double-check any information received on WhatsApp.

3) Schedule activity

- Keep busy while you are social distancing.
- Try to get a bit of fresh air each day, such as by taking a walk.

4) Keep in touch

- Travellers are used to being together, but if we want to protect our grandparents and our community we need to keep our distance during this crisis.
- Keep in contact through video calls and texts instead.

5) Be kind to yourself and others

- If you're well, help your family

and other Travellers, such as by picking up groceries or medicine.

- Prayer and listening to Mass on the radio or TV might be helpful.

6) Seek extra support

- Samaritans: 116 123
- Pieta House: 1800 247 247
- Aware: 1800 804 848
- Childline: 1800 666 666
- Teenline Ireland: 1800 833 634
- Pavee 50808 for young Travellers: text PAVEE to 50808
- Traveller Counselling Service: (01) 868 5761, (086) 308 1476
- Exchange House Traveller Mental Health Service: (01) 872 1094
- Turn2Me free online counselling: www.turn2me.org
- MyMind online counselling service: www.mymind.org

Covid-19 guidelines for parents of schoolchildren

SCHOOLS in Ireland are currently open but are following strict Covid-19 prevention guidelines. It is very important for children to be sent to school when schools are open.

DTP has created flyers about Covid-19 guidelines for Traveller and Roma parents. Some of the information from the flyers is below.

For more information or assis-

tance please ring the DTP Education Team on (086) 858 0298 or the DTP Roma Project on (086) 788 0553.



Under what circumstances should I get my child tested for Covid-19?

1) If your child has a temperature of 38° Celsius or higher, a new cough, a loss of ability to taste or smell, or shortness of breath. (See list of common Covid-19 symptoms in the table on page 2.)



2) If your child has been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for Covid-19.



3) If your child lives with someone who is unwell and who may have Covid-19.



In any of these cases, keep your child home from school and phone your GP. If your child needs to be tested, you and anyone else in the home should restrict your movement until your child's test results are known.

What if my child tests positive for Covid-19?

You need to keep your child home from school and self-isolated while they are recovering from Covid-19.

Self-isolating means staying in a room by oneself, ideally with a window that can be opened.

Most of the symptoms of Covid-19 can be treated at home, including by getting lots of rest, keeping warm, and drinking water.

Your child should not go back to school until they have not had a temperature for 5 days AND it has been 14 days since they first showed symptoms.

You and anyone else your child lives with should also be tested for Covid-19. Even if you and others test negative, you all need to restrict your movement for at least 14 days.

Restricting movement means staying at home. This includes:

- 1) Not going to work.
- 2) Not using public transport.
- 3) Not having visitors or visiting.
- 4) Not going out to shops or the chemist.
- 5) Not having close contact with older people, those with medical conditions, or pregnant women.

What if my child tests negative for Covid-19?



Your child can return to school once they have received a negative test result AND have no symptoms for 48 hours.

Your child can also return to school if a GP diagnoses their symptoms as being due to something other than Covid-19.

If your child doesn't have Covid-

19, you and anyone else your child lives with do not need to be tested.

Also, you and anyone else no longer need to restrict your movement by staying at home.

Virtual Bingo and other activities for young Travellers and Roma

YOUNG Travellers and Roma are invited to take part in a number of activities on offer by DTP/Involve in line with Covid-19 guidelines.

Any of the activities listed below must be registered for in advance by ringing Involve Youth Worker Martin Mongan on (083) 174 7694.

Weekly Virtual Bingo Games

Young people can win a €10 voucher for a prize of their choice by taking part in Virtual Bingo Games that are running on Mondays and Wednesdays at 6 p.m.

Up to thirty players can play, with

the only requirement being access to Zoom or Facebook Messenger.

“Each player is given their own online Bingo card,” Martin said. “When someone gets five numbers across they call out or message ‘Bingo!’ and let me know their card number. I can then confirm that they’ve won.”

Personal Development Training

This ongoing training for ages 13 and up offers information and a chance to chat about Mental Health, Drugs/Alcohol, Healthy Eating, Personal Hygiene, and Leadership.

Weekly Drop-In

A Weekly Drop-In is being held on Friday afternoons on a pre-booking basis only for a limited number of young people at a time.

BINGO									
10	13	29	40						74
6		27	36	45		63			
7		26	33		55				89
	16	24		42		64	78		
2			37	47		66		81	
	15			44	51		76	84	
5	12		32				72	82	
8	17			46		67	77		
	19	30				57	61	85	

Celebrating Positive Traveller and Roma News and Events in 2020

Welcome to a special 5-page section of DTP's Trav Times newsletter in which we celebrate some of the GOOD things that happened during the very challenging year of 2020.

Beautiful barrel-top wagon garden ornament built to pass the time during lockdown

A BEAUTIFUL barrel-top wagon garden ornament was designed and built by two men almost entirely from recycled wood as a way to pass the time during lockdown.

Ned Boyle and his daughter Maria's partner, Raymond Gibson, created the wagon in a shed at Ned's home in Letterkenny.

Both men have a longstanding interest in woodwork, which Ned has applied to his employment at Letterkenny Men's Shed.

"I'd always wanted to make a bigger wagon ever since making a wee one before this," Ned said. "My father and mother had a wagon. It wouldn't have been a barrel-top, though; it was made with canvas."

The men calculated measurements themselves, using videos and a plan for a full-sized wagon as a guide.

"We stuck to just trying to figure it all out," Raymond said. "We just took it step by step."

Creating the curve of the barrel-top posed a particular challenge that the men custom-built a large compass to address. Making the wheels out of wood was another challenge that the men successfully overcame.

Inside the wagon they even built benches and a wee stove that is attached to a chimney in the roof.

The last step will be to paint the wagon and attach a model horse to it for display in the garden.

"We were quite shocked because it looked well," Raymond said. "The whole family love it."

"Having a shed comes in handy," Ned said. "The wagon was something to look forward to and focus on during the lockdown."



2020 meant reaching the tremendous milestone of 85 years for Agnes Friel

CONGRATULATIONS to Agnes Friel, who reached the milestone of her 85th birthday on 11th October.

She marked the joyful occasion with a socially-distanced event in her Killybegs home.

"It was a different kind of a birthday, but it was a very happy birthday, as well," said Agnes' son Hugh. "Me and me sister were standing at two different doors and wearing face masks."

"Eighty-five is a tremendous age to reach. It was quite emotional to

see her making that age when loads of Travellers never seen it."

Agnes grew up in Glenties and met her future husband Robert (RIP) at the Glenties Harvest Fair. They had a family of 12 together.

"She's a very inspiring woman," said Hugh. "She always learnt us never to have a bad word about somebody, but to say a prayer for them instead. Even if they done something wrong, she'd say 'There's good in them somewhere. They'll get there.'"



Celebrating Positive Traveller and Roma News and Events in 2020

Stunning piece of embroidered artwork created by the DTP Roma Women's Sewing Group this year

DESPITE the huge challenges presented by 2020, the DTP Roma Women's Sewing Group managed to create a stunning piece of embroidered artwork this year.

Group members Maria Sava, her daughter Florica Rostas, Liana Moldovan, Maria Covac Luminata, and Cosmina Fekete all contributed embroidered flower sections to the piece.

The group began work on the project in January during weekly sessions with facilitator Deborah Stockdale, a well-known textile artist, and Joleen Kuyper of the DTP Roma Project.

The group had experimented with different designs and had decided to make flowers the theme of their piece when the programme had to be suspended in mid-March due to the Covid-19 lockdown.

All was not lost, however, as the

women continued working on their embroidery at home during the lockdown.

The finished sections were then

delivered to Deborah, who stitched them together into a single piece of artwork that is a fantastic legacy of the group.



Congratulations to newlyweds Tom and Annie Ward and John and Shania Donohue



Tom and Annie Ward on their wedding day, 16th September, 2020.



John and Shania Donohue on their wedding day, 28th September, 2020.

Celebrating Positive Traveller and Roma News and Events in 2020

Lockdown has been no barrier to learning for Rosemarie Ward

LOCKDOWN has been no barrier to learning for Rosemarie Ward, who since September has been on an accredited Computer Skills Programme offered online by the Fit2Work Skills Programme.

“It’s actually really good,” Rosemarie said. “Right now I’m learning about creating files and how to organise information on the computer. It’s good experience and skills for working in an office, just to know the ins and outs of the computer.”

Rosemarie is able to participate in the programme entirely in her own time and at her own pace.

“I log in at 7 and do a good few assignments before taking a break at 9. It occupies your brain and you’re learning new things.”

“I go into my Gmail and it brings me to a log-in with my email address and a password,” she said. “Once I’m in I click on an assignment and watch short videos about the computer. At the end they test you with a quiz of five or six questions. Once you’ve passed the quiz for one assignment you move on to the next.

“Being in lockdown, it passes a few hours in the evening. I log in at 7 and do a good few assignments before taking a break at 9. It occupies your brain and you’re learning new things.”

Fit2Work is offered by Donegal Local Development (DLDC), which provides telephone support to students as they progress through the programme.

Information about the programme is available from DLDC Traveller Job Coach Maeve McIvor on (087) 130 5866.



Once Rosemarie has completed the Computer Skills Programme she will be awarded a certificate that can be attached to her CV as evidence of her computer skills.

She is already applying some of the skills to volunteer work she is doing three days a week for a Click and Collect service run by the Siopa Pobail Charity Shop in Falcarragh.

“The shop advertises stuff for sale on Facebook, and people can then come to pick it up,” Rosemarie said. “I like it because it gets me out of the house for a couple of hours.”

Welcome to the world, Lucia Marie Mongan and Mickey Reilly!



Lucia Marie Mongan was born on 23rd August, 2020.



Mickey Reilly was born on 8th July, 2020.

Celebrating Positive Traveller and Roma News and Events in 2020

Gorgeous new grotto in Ballintra brought comfort during a very difficult year

A GORGEOUS new grotto which has been built at Ballintra has been praised for providing a bit of peace and comfort during a very difficult year for one resident.

Brigid Reilly has been suffering this year from the tragic death of a third beloved daughter as well as from a terrible accident soon afterwards that left her in the hospital for eight weeks.

“The grotto is something I’ve always wanted, ever since I lost my daughter Margaret,” Brigid said. “It gives me a sense of calm and helps

me when I’m having a bad day. Depression is something I’ve suffered over a long period of time. The grotto is situated where I can see it from my mobile home. I say my prayers while looking out at it. As a Catholic it’s important to me to have the grotto to reflect on.”

Funds for the statue were raised by site residents, while support with constructing the grotto was provided by Rose McDonagh of DTP and Maeve McIvor of DLDC.

“I am very grateful for all of the work that was put in,” Brigid said.

“I am also very thankful to Siobhán McLaughlin for her hard work with Donegal County Council in getting a mobile home to meet my needs following a serious accident that affected my ability to walk.”

Brigid plans to get a plaque with the names of her three daughters installed at the grotto, as well as lights so it can be seen in the dark.

“It’s a great comfort,” Brigid said of the grotto. “When I feel down and out I look out at it. I always pray to it. I just love saying what’s in my heart.”



The new grotto at Ballintra.



The grotto can be seen from Brigid Reilly’s home.

2020 was a year of important firsts for Roxanne Mitchell and Eileen Flynn

Roxanne Mitchell celebrating her First Holy Communion on 25th September, 2020.



In 2020 Donegal resident Eileen Flynn became the first female Traveller in the Seanad. She was recently elected Chair of the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Key Issues Affecting the Traveller Community, making her the first Traveller ever to chair a Joint Committee.

Celebrating Positive Traveller and Roma News and Events in 2020

Harness racers Mickey Connors and Hugh Friel did Donegal proud in 2020



Mickey Connors (shown in the photo on left) and Hugh Friel had a fantastic year of triumphs as they competed successfully on a professional track in Belfast against harness racers from all over Ireland.

Interview with Pamela Boyle about a Degree she started studying for online during lockdown

What course are you on and which school is running it? I am doing a Degree in Applied Addiction Studies and Community Development. I am doing it online with An Cosán through IT Carlow.

How did you pick the topic you're studying? I choose this topic because during lockdown I completed a QQI Level 6 module in Project Management and the tutor suggested I try for this programme because I work as a Support Worker for people with drug addictions. My job is through a CE Scheme and offers loads of experience, but this programme will give me the qualifications I need to do the work hopefully in full-time employment.

Are you enjoying the course so far? Yes, I am really enjoying the course so far. The thing I'm excited most about is knowing I am on the

road to finally achieving a degree and in something I love to do.

I love that this course is virtual learning online. I live in Donegal and have kids, so learning online makes it easier for me to access the learning I want and need to achieve my career goals. It saves me having to travel to college and trying to set up childcare for my kids. I also love that I get to meet people from all over Ireland with different views, ways of learning, and ways of life.

Would you recommend online learning to other Travellers? Yes, I would, 100 percent. Sometimes going into college environments can be quite daunting, especially when you are from the Traveller community. I did not have great experiences in the past of education because of the awful discrimination and prejudice against Travellers and the



Pamela Boyle at her laptop during an online meeting of a course she is taking with An Cosán through IT Carlow.

feeling in primary and secondary school that there were no great expectations for me to do well. I didn't even have any great expectations for myself. Being with An Cosán has given me the courage and the belief in myself to know I can do well, and even when I feel like I can't, the programme has loads of supports to help get me through it.

Memories of Christmas when they were growing up shared by Eckie McGinley and Annie Mongan



You wouldn't have a wild lot of gifts, but you'd appreciate what you got



ECKIE MCGINLEY: You wouldn't have a wild lot of gifts the same as wains now, but you'd appreciate what you got, you'd be glad to get it. You'd be lucky if you got a wee tin whistle or a wee horse. You'd get an apple betimes and a sweet.

You'd get plenty to eat, though, a very good soup, a hen or a duck or whatever it would be.

You'd believe in Santa, they'd tell you he'd be down the chimney and there'd be stuff left at the chimney for you. My father would get a half bottle of whiskey in his sock! When you'd be at the chimney your mother would say, "Watch out now...see if Santy's coming!"

On Christmas morning the old crowd would all get a wee drink. They'd all be asking, "Did you get Santy Claus? Did you get Santy Claus?" Then you'd hear them singing an old song

One thing you'd never see is rows or fights. All the Travellers camped together, and one crowd would come up to the other's fire all year round. It was poor, but it was happy. If you have money now you have no money because you need that much.

Mammy was born in Bunbeg and Daddy in Fanad, that was the routes. Everybody knowed them.

In Falcarragh at Christmas time, if you were at the pub you'd leave

with your arms full...a hen, vegetables, anything at all.

A whole crowd of us used to go out with the mummers singing and dancing. You could make a few pennies in every house. We'd divide them up and you'd be alright then. It was different days.



Eckie McGinley



Christmas was like regular times for us when I was growing up



ANNIE MONGAN: When I was growing up Christmas was like regular times for us. We'd have no turkey, no gammon, no ham. We wouldn't have no biscuits or sweets, only cakes from flour and treacle that me Mammy would make.

Living in a barrel-top wagon and a canvas tent we'd have the light of a lamp with paraffin oil. There was no cookers, only the fire. My mother would bake cakes in a little oven on the fire. They were good cakes.

We got no toys for Christmas then, only an orange and an apple for presents. There were no new shoes or new clothes. We had no money to go nowhere. Some Christmases we'd make flowers and go up to sell them.

St. Stephen's Day me and me two sisters and two brothers would go out with the Wren Boys. We'd dress up, polish black coal on our faces, and go round to the pub singing and

dancing to make money to give our Mammy for food. Every Christmas we gathered up sugar, flour, butter, turnips, and spuds for the dinner.

You were close to the family, Travellers was awful close to their families. They shared everything. Some of them would sing their own songs and make their own music.

Christmas got better later. We'd have turkey, ham, clothes for the

children, and toys. I was married when things started changing. They started changing a wee bit in '72 or '73, and kept rising from then all the way to today. Things got better because we started to get money. Money changes everything.

They was hard Christmases, but I would like to go back to then. Now with the lockdown, sure what good is money now?



Annie Mongan as a girl with her family.



Christmas Dinner for People On Their Own



ANYONE living in Donegal who will be spending Christmas alone this year is invited to request delivery of a free Christmas Day Dinner for People on Their Own.

This is the 15th year that the dinner is being offered; due to Covid-19, however, people will receive the dinner in their homes rather than sitting down together as in the past.

If you or anyone you know who will be spending Christmas on their own would like to receive a free dinner at home on Christmas Day, please ring (086) 867 6565.



Ways to reduce financial stress at Christmas

By the MONEY ADVICE AND BUDGETING SERVICE (MABS)



- **Make a list** of all the things you need to buy (gifts, food, etc.) and the money you have to spend on them. Sticking to your list will help prevent stress both now and after Christmas.
- **Shop around** for the best prices and keep an eye open for sales by stores and online of items on your list. Don't be tempted by sales for items not on your list. Remember, it's not a deal if you don't need it.
- **Avoid borrowing money** or paying by instalment, as these options will cost you more in the long run.
- **Know all terms and conditions** of any purchases made through credit card or finance arrangements.
- **Make Christmas cards and gifts** such as baked goods or wreaths with your family to create holiday memories while also saving money.
- **Check delivery dates** for items bought online and the seller's return or exchange policy.
- **Be aware of your rights** and entitlements when shopping online (see the "Shopping Online" page of the Citizens Information website).
- **Keep all receipts** together by placing printed ones in an envelope and creating a folder in your email box for ones you receive online.



Tips for healthy relationships at Christmas

By GARY MARSHALL

Assistant Director of Nursing, Letterkenny Community Mental Health Team



OUR relationships with other people can have a major impact on our own mental health at all times of the year, including Christmas.

This Christmas amid the Covid-19 pandemic we have a chance to think about how healthy or unhealthy our relationships with others are.

It is important not to compare our own relationships with those we see on social media, on the telly, or in films. Relationships in the media rarely show the reality of everyday life. Instead they show whatever the person posting or producing the media wants to show.

Our expectations for our own relationships need to be realistic. Every relationship can go through ups and downs or face difficulties and challenges. This is part of normal life.

In a healthy relationship you should feel positive about yourself and comfortable being yourself.

You also should feel confident, loved, wanted, needed, and useful.

Even if you disagree about something, you should still feel that your views are respected and that you can be yourself. You shouldn't feel like you can't relax around the other person or have worries that they won't like you if you show them your true self.

Having strong, positive relationships with family and friends requires effort and communication. We need to let people know when something is bothering us and listen carefully to their responses. We also need to respect the opinions and feelings of others, and be open to compromise.

It is important to keep lines of communication open while following Covid-19 prevention guidelines. Tools like Zoom and Facetime can help us have a social connection while keeping a safe distance apart.

It is important to know that some problems are not easily solved and that relationships are a process in

which we are all learning.

When problems occur in a relationship we need to *calm down before talking and be prepared to be flexible*. We also need to be patient, dependable, responsible, and trustworthy.

Healthy relationships allow for change and growth. If you feel you need help with any of your relationships it's OK to seek support.

You can reach out to a trusted friend or relative, your GP, or any of the following services: Childline, 1800 666 666; Women's Aid, 1800 341 900; Parentline, 1890 927 277; Donegal Women's Centre, (074) 912 4985; or the Pastoral Centre, (074) 912 1853.

Never underestimate the impact of relationships on your own mental health and the mental health of those around you.

Mairead Gallen, Family Therapist, Donegal Mental Health Service, also contributed to this article.

Community Resources

Donegal Travellers Project, Port Road, Letterkenny, (074) 912 9281: Support with health, housing, social welfare, education, and more.

DTP Roma Project, (086) 788 0553: Offers a range of supports for Roma.

DLDC Traveller Job Coach Maeve McIvor, (087) 130 5866: Support with employment and training.

Donegal Family Resource Centres (FRCs) at 10 locations in Donegal: Cara

House FRC, Letterkenny, (074) 912 3986; Donegal FRC, Donegal Town, (074) 972 5337; Downstrands FRC, Portnoo, (074) 954 5879; Dunfanaghy FRC, (074) 913 6548; Finn Valley FRC, Stranorlar, (074) 913 1245; Mevagh FRC, Downings, (074) 915 5055; Merville FRC, (074) 938 5548; The Forge FRC, Pettigo, (071) 986 1924; Raphoe FRC, (074) 914 5796; St. Johnston and Carrigans FRC, (074) 914 8551.

Donegal Women's Center, (074) 912 4985: Counselling, support, courses, and other services for women.

Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre, (01) 878 0255: Support in English, Romanian, and Romani languages.

Society of St. Vincent de Paul, (074) 917 3933: Provides assistance to people in need throughout Donegal.

We Care Letterkenny Food Bank, (087) 147 1325: Food for people in need.

Health Services

Covid-19 Helpline for the Traveller Community, (083) 100 6300: Support for Covid-19 questions or issues.

Covid-19 Helpline for the Roma Community, (087) 126 4606: Covid-19 support offered in Romanian and Romani.

Donegal Covid-19 Helpline, 1800 928 982: Delivery of food, household items, and medication; support with isolation.

Hospitals, dial 999 for emergencies, Letterkenny Hospital, (074) 912 5888; Sligo Hospital, (071) 917 1111.

HSE Health Centres, visit www.hse.ie for Centre locations all over Donegal.

Public Health Nurse for Traveller Health Nicola Gillespie, (087) 904 9186: Provides healthcare and support.

NowDOC, 1850 400 911: GP service.

Government Services

An Garda Síochána (Police), dial 999 for emergencies, (074) 916 7100.

Citizens Information, (076) 107 4000, citizensinformation.ie, offices in Ballyshannon, Bunrana, Donegal Town, Milford, Carndonagh, Letterkenny, Dungloe.

Department of Social Protection: Done-

gal Town, (074) 974 0050; Ballyshannon, (071) 982 2030; Ballybofey, (074) 913 0490; Killybegs, (074) 974 1010; Bunrana, (074) 936 4600; Letterkenny, (074) 916 0460; Dunfanaghy, (074) 913 6750; Dungloe, (074) 956 1031.

Donegal County Council, (074) 915

3900: Offers a range of services at Public Service Centres in Donegal Town, Milford, Dungloe, Carndonagh, Letterkenny.

Donegal County Council Traveller Accommodation Officer Fergus McAteer, (074) 915 3930: Offers assistance with Traveller accommodation in Donegal.

Helplines

Aware, 1800 804 848: Support for those with depression and their loved ones.

Childline, 1800 666 666 or text TALK to 50101: 24/7 listening and support for under-18s.

Donegal Sexual Abuse and Rape Crisis Centre, 1800 448 844: Support for those affected by abuse and sexual violence.

Donegal Women's Domestic Violence Service, 1800 262 677: 24/7 support for

women experiencing domestic abuse.

Exchange House Traveller Mental Health Service, (01) 872 1094: Family support and crisis intervention.

Men's Aid Ireland, (01) 554 3811: Supports men experiencing domestic abuse.

Pavee 50808 support for young Travellers: Text PAVEE to 50808.

Pieta House, 1800 247 247: Listening and support available 24/7.

Parentline, 1890 927 277: Information and support with all aspects of parenting.

Samaritans, 116 123: Listening and support available 24/7.

Teenline Ireland, 1800 833 634: 24/7 listening and support for under-18s.

Women's Aid, 1800 341 900, 24/7 domestic violence hotline, support available in Romanian, Czech, and Polish from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m..

DONEGAL TRAVELLERS PROJECT
Port House, Port Road, Letterkenny • (074) 912 9281
Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Email: travcom@eircom.net • Facebook: Donegal Travellers Project
Website: donegaltravellersproject.ie

DTP



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AN ROINN DLÍ AGUS CIRT AGUS COMHIONANNAIS
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND EQUALITY