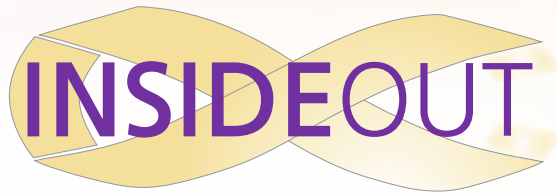
An illustration of a hand reaching out from a bookshelf to shake another hand. The hand emerging from the bookshelf is wrapped in white bandages. The background is a light pinkish-beige color.

# INSIDE OUT

**Don't judge  
a book by  
its cover**



# Welcome to Inside Out

## A Crime and Disability Awareness Resource Pack, Exploring the impact of crime on people with disabilities and older people in our community.

Seven victims of crime share their experiences of crime on this project in an effort to help make society a safer place for all in the future. Twelve Transition Year students engaged with the victims and recounted their stories in victim impact statements throughout the book. Thirty females serving time in custody at Limerick Prison participated on the project to offer comfort and understanding to victims of crime and to help steer young people away from committing crimes in the future.

A victim can be defined as a person who has suffered harm, including physical, mental or emotional harm or economic loss, which was directly caused by a criminal offence. (Criminal Justice, Victims of Crime Act, 2017).

Engaging with young people on this project has been therapeutic and helpful for victims: Victim B Jennifer says:

“During the first lockdown in March I found it unbearable as I didn’t see any one to talk to. I never knew loneliness could be so painful... Thank you all for doing this project about crime and listening to this, it has helped me to deal with it by writing it down”.



# Table of contents

<b>Foreword &amp; Introduction</b>	5
<b>Student voices</b>	5 - 7
<b>Victim voices: Impact Statements</b>	8 - 18
<b>Voice of Staff at Limerick Prison</b>	19
<b>A Social Worker's Reflection</b>	20
<b>'A Voice from Inside' Play: representation of reflections from women in custody at Limerick Prison</b>	21 - 22
<b>'The Voice Within' Play Overview</b>	23
<b>Victim Support Services</b>	24
<b>WORKBOOK &amp; WORKSHOPS:</b>	25
<b>Workshop 1</b> Group Contract, Getting to Know Each other	27
Moral and Value Judgements	27
Disability Awareness <i>by Anne Bradshaw, HSE, Disability Services, South Tipperary.</i>	28 - 29
<b>Workshop 2</b> Crime Awareness <i>by Kate Fleming, of LawEd</i>	30 - 38

Handbook compiled and arranged by:  
*Anne Bradshaw, HSE, Disability Services, South Tipperary*





*Cover Artwork by Sarah Kilcoyne, ([sarahkilcoyne.com](http://sarahkilcoyne.com)).*



# Foreword

**On behalf of HSE Disability Services in South Tipperary and An Garda Síochana, it gives us great pleasure to see the Inside Out project being presented and made available in local communities.**

Inside Out came about as a result of growing concerns around the amount of people with disabilities and older people in our community that have been victims of crime in the past. The aim of Inside Out is to create a safer community for all in the future.

Working with victims on the outside and engaging with a number of women in custody on the inside at Limerick Prison, this handbook gives a voice to the victim. It recounts and explores the impact of crime on a victim's life. The women in custody at Limerick prison were invited to explore the issues that led them into crime and to highlight the negative impact crime has had on their lives. The women scripted a powerful play that shines an intense light on the reasons why someone might commit crime. The play was not offered by the women in any way as an excuse for committing crime, but it illustrated the often chaotic and highly stressful lives some of the women lead.

The Inside Out handbook will be of interest to those working in schools, youth groups and the broader community in general interested in raising crime awareness.

Inside Out was only possible because of the hard work and commitment of a wide range of individuals, groups, organisations and schools involved. We would like to offer sincerest thanks to all; Chief Superintendent Derek Smart of An Garda Síochana who was on board with the project from the beginning, Governor Mark Kennedy, Limerick Prison and former Assistant Governor at Limerick Prison, Theresa Beirne and Sr. Bernie O'Grady, former Social Worker with The Bedford Row Family Project, Limerick.

Special thanks to Kate Fleming, of LawEd, who volunteered her time, expertise and specialist legal knowledge on Inside Out. Her contribution to the Crime Awareness section in the programme Workshop is invaluable.



The sensitive and personal nature of the content of this programme owes a great deal to the victims who volunteered to share their stories with us. The victims, male and female, who remain anonymous in the handbook, bravely came to share their stories with a group of young people who are strangers to them. They trusted them enough to expose and recount their innermost fears and emotions. We thank them most sincerely for that.

Thanks to the women in custody at Limerick Prison, who willingly participated to help prevent crime happening to others in the future.

Thanks to 12 incredible young people who volunteered to get involved from St. Anne's School, The Abbey School and St. Ailbe's School, Tipperary Town. These TY students have enabled the programme content to be accessible and relevant to the needs of victims, young people and the broader community in general.

Thank you to our funders the HSE, Tipperary County Council and Tipperary Age Friendly. Particular thanks to Derek Donlon Videography & Photography, who volunteered his time to design the Inside Out ribbon logo which he created based on suggestions from the women in custody at Limerick Prison. Huge thanks to all the artists who submitted artwork for the handbook illustrations. We used as many images as possible throughout the handbook.

We hope working on this project has helped all those involved in a positive way. We hope it offers a comforting voice to victims of crime. We hope it helps young people to understand the impact crime has on victims and we hope it ultimately brings about a safer environment for all to live in.

**Anne Bradshaw,**  
HSE, Disability Services, South Tipperary.

**Inspector Des Bell,**  
Tipperary Garda Síochana.

# Student Voice



The victim impact statements in this book are a combination of each student's engagement with the victims, recounting experiences and impact of crimes.

The following offers an insight into the student's personal thoughts and learning reflections while participating on the Inside Out project.



## Caitlín Wills Duddy

"Inside Out taught us about the psychological factors of crime and how it effects victims, it was a great project to have been involved in because now we are trying to do something about crime by spreading awareness"

## Darragh O'Brien

"This project was great to show us there are two sides to every story, we learned about the impact of crime on the victim but it also taught us about the person who committed the crime"

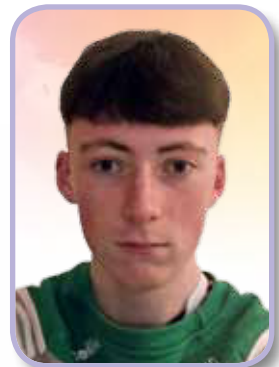


## Áine Carew

"After hearing Mary's story, I feel beyond sorry for her, she lost her son and husband and then her most precious possessions were stolen from her"

## Sean Kingston

"Meeting real victims of crime was a great experience on this project and I was looking forward to hearing the prisoner's stories"



## Adam Lohan

"I learned a lot about the impact of crime on victims, I didn't realise how bad it was"

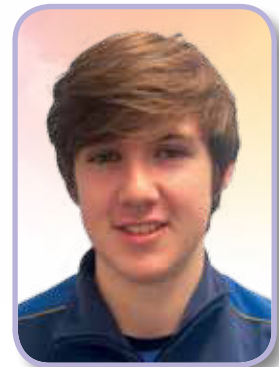


## Miah Kelly

"I panic at the thought of how Claudia must have felt, not knowing if someone was still in her house, she cannot see and I can only imagine how horrible it must have been for her"

## Jack O'Halloran

"I learned a lot on this project, we learned about the effect your childhood has on you and how it can affect the rest of your life"

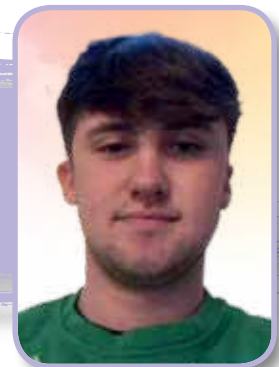


## Ella Morrissey

I enjoyed a section we did on Sociology, it helped us understand crime and the importance of not being judgemental, we learned a lot about making choices in life"

## Ben Ryan

"We learned a lot about crime on the project but we also met people with visual impairments and people with disabilities"



## Katelyn O'Donovan

"We heard victims tell us about how crime impacted their lives personally, some crimes might seem harmless to those who steal from people, but the victims lives can be destroyed"

## Ellie Crowe

The victim impact stories were very hard to hear, it must be very hard to live with a disability feeling vulnerable around people"



## Thomas O'Mahony

"I'd like to listen to people in prison and get an understanding of why they did what they did, it's a pity we didn't get to meet them because of COVID."



# Victim A - Maria



*Artwork by Sínead O'Mahony-Carey.*

**M**aria came to our school to talk about her experience of crime. She has a disability, she is visually impaired. She has Startgardt disease; she explained to us that it means she has no central vision. She brought along some pictures to show us what the disease looks like from her eyes. The pictures show people with big blacked out hazy bits at the centre of everything with some clearer images at the edges. She started to lose her sight when she was in primary school, and she had lost a lot of vision by the time she was 16yrs old. She found it very hard to deal with but with the help of a Doctor in Dublin she started to accept she has to live with this disease for the rest of her life. Only one person in 8 -10 thousand get the disease.

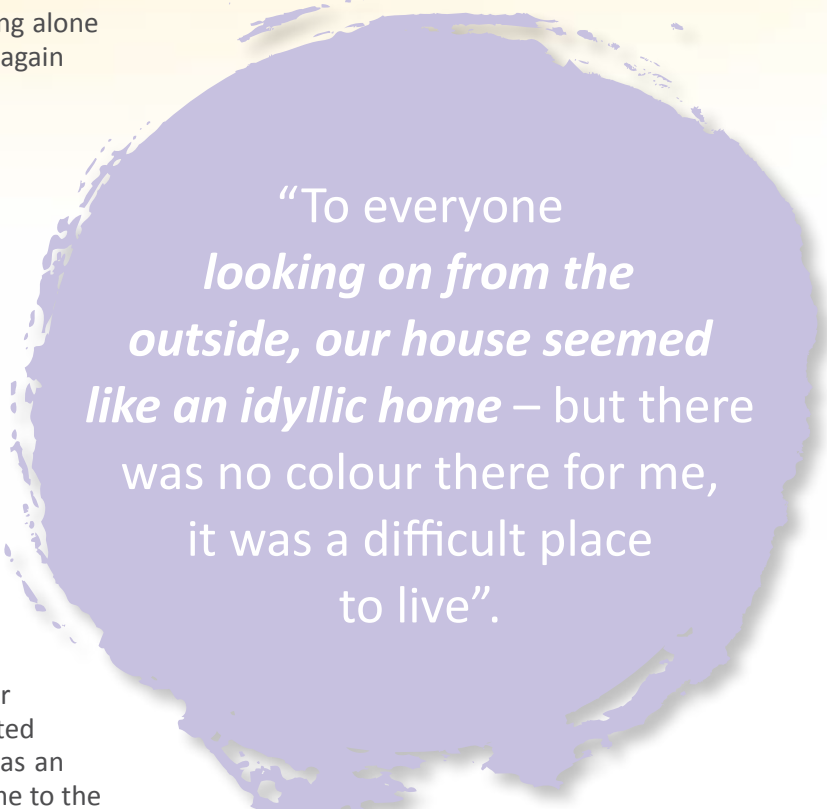
Maria was a victim of two different crimes in the past. The first one she explained was not really a crime, but it was a very hurtful thing for her and

it really shattered her confidence for a long time. She explained she was at a train station in a City late at night trying to get home. She was running a bit late for the last train, but because she cannot see, she could not read the boards with the train information on them. She asked three young lads next to her to help her find her train. They told her where she should go. The train was about to leave so she started to run but as she was running off, she thought she heard the boys laughing and making fun of her. The platform they sent her to was a long way away and later she realised they were laughing because they gave her the wrong information and directions. She was standing there alone, late in the darkness and missed her train. It took her two full hours to get back home that night and she was very frightened and felt very alone and vulnerable. She said while it is not really a crime, it is an abuse to do that to someone who needs your help. She

is still afraid and nervous when travelling alone and she will never feel fully confident again in that kind of situation.

Her second experience was a little bit more serious. She was walking at the edge of a City. It was quiet on the street and just getting dark. She was on her mobile phone as she walked and all of a sudden she heard someone behind her, they pounced on her and grabbed her from the back, one man pulled her phone and bag from her and at the same time she felt her eyes stinging, the other man had pepper sprayed in her face. She was left alone and traumatised on the street. She was not sure of the neighbourhood where she was and in her panic she ran to the front door of the first house she could and started to bang on the door for help. There was an old lady living in the house and she came to the front porch but she was petrified. She was too afraid to open the door. Maria ran to another house on the street where the family were very helpful. She got in contact with her boyfriend, who came to pick her up. She went to the police about the attack and they helped her, but the attackers were never found.

Maria told the group about her personal experience as a victim. She says she was also a victim at her own home growing up. She grew up in a home with an alcoholic father who was not a nice man, he was abusive and violent. She says her mother was the loveliest person in her life and she was very lucky to have her. She says she was always very shy in school and quiet and that was how she dealt with things. She said it is hard as a teenager when you cannot bring your friends home or have sleepovers like other friends do together. Everything at home looked normal to the outsider, but inside there was no colour and life was dark and difficult. She says her situation at home has shaped the kind of person she is now. She did not let it ruin her life. She moved to Ireland and after she settled down, she got involved with a project called the Gold Star Disability project with the HSE. She became a volunteer with this project and she says it changed her life. She worked with the Disability Officer with the HSE to co-deliver disability awareness training programmes in the community. While doing this volunteer work, she was



*“To everyone  
looking on from the  
outside, our house seemed  
like an idyllic home – but there  
was no colour there for me,  
it was a difficult place  
to live”.*

introduced  
to an  
employer in the  
Tourism and Heritage office and ended up getting a job at a Tourist Office. The manager here was really good to her and was very aware of disability issues; she said the manager only saw what she can do and not what she cannot do. This helped to build up her confidence.

All of these experiences helped Maria a lot and she went on to study Psychology. She has achieved her primary degree Level 7 and she is now studying for her Master's degree in Psychology. She says studying has changed her whole life and education is the key to positive changes. She says young people should not judge each other, she says when she was young she was quiet and introverted but it is not the kind of person she really is, it was her way of covering up living with a lot of hardship at home. She says you never know what is going on for people so be nice to each other. She finished saying she has faced a lot of challenges in her life but she always says “face the fear and try”.

# Victim B - Jennifer

Hi everybody,

First of all a little bit about myself, I am an elderly lady in my late seventies with health problems, living on my own as my dear husband died in December 2017.

I miss him very much as I had known him since I was 15yrs old and we had been married for 51 and a half years. During the first lockdown in March I found it unbearable as I didn't see anyone to talk to, just someone kindly got my shopping and left it at my front door. I never knew loneliness could be so painful, but thank God during this lockdown I'm in a 'bubble', it is much much better!!!

My husband was diagnosed with terminal cancer in May 2016, it was inoperable, no treatment, just pain relief. I didn't pray for him to recover as that would take a miracle and we were just ordinary people, not special enough to deserve a miracle. I prayed that he would be able to carry on doing the things he loved doing, chatting, reading, studying, painting and writing his poems and short stories. So right up until the time he died, though extremely ill and weak, his mind was as clear and as good as yours or mine, that's important for me to remember.

One morning, in the summer of 2017 at 7am in the morning the door bell of our house started ringing, there was banging on the front door, we woke up with a start as you can imagine, and I put on my dressing gown and



*Artwork by Sean O'Connor.*

opened the porch door to see who was there. I felt a bit nervous I can tell you.

A young man was there, with his hoodie up, but with his back to the front door. I asked him what he wanted and who he was but he didn't answer, I repeated this two or three times, with no reply, and

then he made an awful sound, a sort of half cry and scream. I was really frightened then as I thought he was high on drugs. My husband was really cross by now, and said he was coming to help me. This was really worrying as he was so weak he couldn't stand without help, but he knew something bad was happening at



**“I am an elderly lady in my late seventies with health problems, living on my own as my dear husband died in December 2017.”**

our door and there was no way he'd let me face that alone. I was so worried for him and also frightened of the young fellow at the door. I shouted I'm ringing the Gardaí and shut the porch door. I called the Gardaí who were down in five minutes, but he was well gone by then. I was literally shaking and very upset about what had happened as was my dear husband, which didn't help him in his very ill condition.

Time went on and I did put it to the back of my mind as my husband got weaker and passed away in December of that year. And, then over time I forgot about it altogether, until February of this year during the canvassing for the general election.

It was about 7pm, and the door bell started ringing, and then banging on the front door again. As I walked through the hall that awful sound of the young fellow's scream/cry came back into my mind and I felt very frightened again as I live on my own now. When I opened my porch door a young woman was there and she held up a leaflet saying she was canvassing for The Green Party... Well I opened the front door and I ate her! I'm usually a quiet person but I shouted at her, all because of what happened that morning 3 years ago in 2017, when I was so frightened by that young fellow. I thought I'd forgotten it, but that young woman canvassing brought it back up to the surface again, so as you can see, every action has consequences, sometimes those consequences can occur a long time after the initial incident.

Please, I'm asking you all and myself to think before we say something or do something as we don't

know what is happening in that person's life, or how it might affect them. I just wish I could meet that young woman who I shouted at to explain why I acted like that and to say I was sorry for upsetting her, but I'm sure she'll never come to my front door again whenever we have the next election!!

Thank you all for listening to this, it has helped me to deal with it by writing it down. I hope it has helped you to understand more about actions and their consequences as you hear it, goodbye and good luck in the futures ahead of all of you.

**“He made an awful sound, a sort of half cry and scream. I was really frightened then as I thought he was high on drugs.”**

# Victim C - Caroline



Artwork by Jolene Carey.

**C**aroline is 73 years old and lives alone in a quiet housing estate at the edge of town.

She has recently recovered from COVID 19 and she feels stronger and more resilient now than she has ever felt in her life after beating the virus.

She shared two contrasting experiences of fear. The first happened a few years ago in Limerick City. She was on her way to a night class and was trying to park her car on the street. She found it difficult to angle her car in and she was about to give up and move off when she noticed a young man in a black hoodie moving towards her car. No one else was on the street at the time, and she was frightened. The hoodie masked his face. Caroline said she automatically locked her car doors waiting for him to pass. But he didn't pass by, he came over to the car and she tried to ignore him. He tapped on the window and she pretended she didn't know he was there, but he kept

"The lad just wanted to help me, I was relieved, but I was filled with a sense of shame at the same time... I fell into the **"Hoodie wearers are dangerous" Stereotype"**.

on tapping. She reluctantly opened down a tiny bit of her window and he said "I'll guide you in there, keep reversing..." He helped her to park and then he waved and walked on down the street.

Caroline said she was relieved but she also felt a huge sense of shame, there was no excuse for the way she acted, she immediately fell into the stereotyping trap. She couldn't help herself, she immediately felt in danger and she says she bought into the 'hoodie wearers are dangerous' stereotype and it influenced how she reacted.

The second incident she told us about happened in January 2020, which has left her feeling vulnerable in her own home. Her home was a place she could close the door and be in her own space, like her refuge. At least that was until one evening in January, when she had been watching late night TV and was just getting ready for bed. There was a loud rattling of the door knob. At first she got a fright but then she thought to herself it must be one of her sons calling to see her so she calmed down, but she heard a lot more rattling and then there was a loud cursing coming from outside the door and it was a stranger's voice. Petrified, she went down to the hall door. The shouting and cursing got worse and she stood behind the door, she had the phone gripped in her hand, and her heart was pounding. She asked who was there and the stranger shouted "You know who I am, Open this door"

She replied: "Either tell me who you are or go away from my door. If you don't I will call the Gardaí" He shouted "Go on, ring the Guards"

She dialled 999, and she moved right behind the door hoping the man would hear her calling for help. She thought that might scare him away, but it didn't. She peeped through the sitting room window and she saw a big stocky man glaring back in at her. The lady who answered her 999 call was now on the line and Caroline was in tears and she begged her to send help fast.

There was a full half hour after the call that was terrifying, while an aggressive stranger was circling her house. He eventually stopped and sat on the fence facing her front door, making it impossible for her to get out or get help. There were no lights on in any of the neighbour's houses and there was no sign of the guards coming.

Caroline said the intruder finally gave up and went away down the street but she said she was still too afraid to move. By the time the Guards arrived he

was well gone. She said the Guards told her he was most likely drunk or had taken drugs and might have mistaken the house he was trying to get into.

She said the Gardaí said no damage had been done, nothing had been taken – Caroline says, "Nothing was taken, but my ability to feel safe and comfortable in my own home"

A few weeks later, during COVID-19 she ended up being 'cocooned' in the 'safety' of her own house. Home was not a safe place for her by then. She felt isolated and stigmatised as an older person. She said she never felt old before COVID-19 came, she said during COVID she felt old and afraid for the first time in her life.

Caroline says she still feels nervous at home after dark but she tries not to let the fear rule her evenings, she will not let it take over her life. She says fear is destructive and would only end up making you a victim of yourself.



Artwork by Abby Fitzpatrick-Ryan.

**"I peeped through my window  
and he was right there,  
glaring back at me."**



# Victim D - John



Artwork by Holly Cosgrave.

Hi everyone

I am a 48 year old Male and I was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) in 2002.

I am not a victim of crime but having a disability has made me more nervous of crime and that is why I wanted to talk to you today.

For many years my condition was well managed and did not impact so much on my family, social and work life and the development of new treatments for MS certainly helped me.

However, in the past few years my legs have weakened and I now use a stick to get around and steady myself. Using a stick/walking aid in Society has had the following implications for me:

- *I tend to avoid busy streets and crowded places.*
- *I feel a lot more vulnerable with routine day to day activities such as going to the bank machine. If there*

*is a group of people hanging around and doing absolutely nothing wrong, I just feel nervous.*

- *We hear regularly on the Media about incidents of crime that can occur so having a disability in this mad world makes me more nervous.*

On another note, I feel 'Home' is a place where everyone should feel safe and secure so the following has helped me achieve this:

- *Monitored Alarm*
- *Panic Alarm.*
- *Senior Alert System (SAS).*
- *Community Alert Participation*

I guess that's what living with a Disability and MS has done to me.

Thank you for listening and I wish you all well with this Inside Out Project, it is a great initiative to highlight the impact of crime, especially on vulnerable people.

I'm not a victim of crime, but I have an acquired disability and I feel a lot more vulnerable now with routine day to day activities such as going to the bank machine. If there is a group of people hanging around and doing absolutely nothing wrong, I just feel nervous.

# Victim E - Claudia

**C**laudia spoke to our tutor on the Inside Out project, Inspector Des Bell. Des recorded her story and recounted it as follows:

Claudia is a 42 year old visually impaired woman who lives independently, in a community that that is designed to assist independent living.

She has been living in her home on her own for the past few years and she also had a part time job nearby. When Claudia moved in she loved her home and her life. She loved her job; she loved being independent and not having to rely on anyone for anything. That was up until a terrible thing happened, which has completely changed her life and shattered her confidence.



Artwork by Lorraine Byron.

Claudia met her friend one day and they went to town shopping together for an afternoon out. She returned home a few hours later to discover her home had been broken into and completely ransacked. Claudia is visually impaired, and she only realised it happened because her friend had come back to the house with her for coffee.

“Everyone else has moved on after this... but not me, I can’t forget it... it’s in my senses, I think they’re around my house all the time”

She panicked when she realised it and she was petrified that the culprit was still in her house. Her friend called the Gardaí, who came and swept through the house and reassured Claudia that the intruders were well gone. They had left the house in a terrible state, they badly ransacked every room.

Claudia was devastated. She was so upset that they could come in and do this to her home; she was rattled as to why they chose her house. She was very disturbed by it, and felt she could sense that they had touched all her belongings and she wasn’t even able to confirm what they may have taken.

Claudia had lots of help and support from her family and friends and they organised for a deep clean of her house but they had to get rid of a lot of her things. These were things she had held dear to her, but she had to have them taken away because she felt the intruders would have touched them and they would never be precious to her again.

Claudia was uneasy and frightened for a long time in her home after this break-in. She did not leave her house for 4 months after the incident and she had to give up her job. She had to return to relying on others for her day to day living, such as food shopping or paying her bills. She had the entire house fitted with an alarm system and had to have cameras installed on every corner. The alarm and camera installation put a huge financial burden on her but she would not stay at home without them.

Fast forward two years and Claudia’s fear has subsided a bit. It took her a long time to build up the courage to go out and leave the house again. She still feels afraid, she feels nervous about returning home and that sense of panic she felt on the day of the break-in has never left her. She says she will always be on alert, she finds it difficult to relax fully at home. She has an image of her home being hijacked by intruders. She says: “everyone else has moved on after this, but not me, I can’t forget it... it’s in my senses, sometimes I feel I can still smell them around my house ”

The intruders were never found.

# Victim F – Dan



Artwork by Elena Sawczenko.

**D**an spoke to us about a crime that happened to him that turned his world upside down.

Dan is an old man now and shares his experience with young people if it might prevent what happened to him from happening to anyone else.

Dan was happily married for years to the love of his life, Eileen (not her real name), they went to school together since they were children. They got married 4 years after their first date out together. Dan said Mary was a great woman; she loved life and was always very outgoing. She loved her dogs, and they had two sheep dogs.

In February a few years ago Eileen died suddenly from a heart attack. Dan's sister found her in the sitting room while he was out milking the cows. He says he was heartbroken, and he still is. He was 68 years of age and he said he just had nothing else to do only get on with things. The farmhouse they lived in is very isolated, it is in off the road and it is about half a mile

outside the village. He continued to work the farm as much as he could. He was just getting used to his new life on his own when all this happened...

Dan didn't want to dwell too long on the details of the experience, he said it still makes him upset and he said he would briefly describe what happened.

"I was out milking one dark winters evening when I saw a car speeding up the passage, there seemed to be young lads in it and one of them was shouting out the back window of it. I thought they were local lads just driving in fooling around, but they were not. Four of them jumped out of the car and I don't want to go into too much

detail, but one of them hit me on the side of my head with some kind of iron bar and they dragged me into the shed by the cow house and pushed something up against the door. Then they went into the house and ransacked it, they ruined it, they got nothing worth taking to be honest, there was no money in the house. The worst part of it all was they killed one of our dogs, they rolled over him.

My neighbour found me about two hours later that night when he dropped in.

They never caught them. The Guards were very good, they did a lot to try to find them but they never did. I always heard 'home is where the heart is'... my heart isn't in this place anymore... my life will never be the same. Even if they did catch them and they were in jail, I might as well be in there with them, I feel like I'm in chains myself, my world was turned upside down".

Even if  
they were in jail,  
I might as well be in  
there with them, I feel  
like I'm in chains myself,  
my world was turned  
upside down".



# Victim G - Mary

**M**ary shared her story with Inspector Des Bell, Tipperary Gardaí. She wanted to share her story if it helps prevent young people from committing crimes that have lifelong consequences for the victim.

Mary is 68 years old now; her husband died 12 years ago. She had 5 children, but one of Mary's sons died in a car accident a few years ago when he was just 19 years old. She is still devastated.

She has a very strong faith and says her faith is the thing that keeps her going. She has 4 children now and 7 grandchildren, all of whom live close by and she is in regular contact with them.

She had an awful experience of crime last year. She goes to mass every morning and she loves meeting up with her friends afterwards for a chat and a cup of tea. Last year, she was in Church, praying by the candle lighting grotto, as she always does. She left her handbag on the railing just beside her. Her heart sank when she turned around to realise it was gone... vanished... she hadn't seen or heard anyone around her... her precious bag was gone. She says it wasn't the bag, it was the purse inside the bag that was precious. Nor was it the money, that was her pension, she would manage without that, but she had two things in her purse that were the two most important things to her in her life. She had a lock of her 19 year old son's hair she had kept after he died in a red velvet pouch. She also had her husband's wedding band in the same pouch. There were lots of other items, her pension book, her medical card, her driving

"What was in my bag that day at mass might seem like rubbish to whoever stole it because there was no money, but they stole something much more meaningful to me than money, they stole my soul that day"



Artwork by Gemma Kilcoyne.

licence and her house keys, but none of that mattered, she could replace all them but she will never again have her red velvet pouch.

The local Gardaí were called and they arrived almost immediately, they searched a huge radius area for the handbag. They said sometimes a thief will mostly be looking for money and they discard the bag and the rest of the contents over a wall or ditch. But, Mary's handbag was never found, nothing was ever handed in at the Garda station and no one ever saw or identified the thief.

She says still looks for her bag, a full year later, she walks to mass along the same route every morning and every morning she peels her eyes along the trees and bushes by the park, just in case she will catch a glimpse of something some day that turns out to be her bag.

Mary says "What was in my bag that day might seem like rubbish to whoever stole it because there was not much money, but they stole something much more meaningful to me than money, they stole my soul that day"

# There is a crack in everything. That is how the light gets in

Leonard Cohen



*Artwork by Gemma Kilcoyne.*

“One of the women in the care of Limerick Prison reminded us on this project that we should ‘never judge a book by its cover’. Her words resonated with all involved and the artist who created the collage above used these words as a theme for her piece. The collage shows how, in life we can all come from contrasting backgrounds, some dark and challenging, others bright and opportune, but the important thing to remember is nobody is perfect, but everybody has potential and can rise and emerge into brightness when the light gets through.”

Anne Bradshaw.

# Voice of Staff at LIMERICK PRISON



**I**n January 2020 I saw an opportunity for Limerick prison to be involved in a multi-agency project involving our female prisoners. A lot of women in Irish prisons see prison as a respite from street life declaring it gives them a break from the relentless pursuit of funding their addiction, being trafficked and being homeless. My goal for the women was to raise awareness among themselves and their families on the impact of crime on people with disabilities and older people in their communities. As for most of them this is where they will be returning on release from prison.

This undertaking comprised of working with the multi-agency team and a number of transition year students in the Tipperary region. This endeavour really resonated with the females as most of them are Mothers and some are Grandmothers. They have children themselves and some are in care of the State. For each of them, while serving a sentence it is important that their children do not go along the same path by being in trouble with the law or ending up in prison. Also, this project was important to them as they felt with their contribution they were supporting the students achieve their goals.

We decided on doing a drama with a theme of restorative justice flowing through it.

The drama was very personal to the females as they drew on their experience of life. It was sad, funny, animated at times, but very powerful in their message “don’t judge a book by the cover”. This drama meant that everyone had to work together as a team and put aside their differences. Everyone felt a sense of pride in the commitment they showed towards each other and what they achieved as a group. It certainly presented challenges to us all but for everyone involved it was an experience that we shall not forget. Unfortunately, due to COVID restrictions we were unable to put on the drama for the public but hopefully in the future this may change when we return to a somewhat normal regime. To say I am very proud of the females is an understatement and on behalf of us all in the prison we wish all the students and victims who participated on this project well in the future.

**Theresa Beirne,**  
Former Assistant Governor at Limerick Prison.



Seirbhís Phríosúin  
na hÉireann  
Irish Prison Service





# A reflection by Bernie O'Grady

(former Social Worker Bedford Row Family Project, Limerick)

**T**he women in the care of Limerick Prison were invited to become part of the Inside Out Project that would look at the impact of crime on victims, particularly on victims with disabilities and older people. The project would also look at some of the reasons why someone commits a crime and would educate young people with a broad awareness of these issues and enable them to be ambassadors of a safe community for all.

I have worked as a social worker with Bedford Row Family Project in Limerick for nearly twelve years. I believe that crime and criminality impacts all of us, it disturbs the social fabric of our society and it is never permissible or acceptable. I have also worked from the philosophy that we need to understand why a person commits a crime and then work with that 'why'. In doing so I believe we have the chance to build safer communities and ensure better outcomes for children.

The women in the care of Limerick prison embraced the invitation to take part in this project early in 2020. From their own initiative they set about scripting a Play that they felt would capture the essence of what this project was aiming to attain. Their plan was to enact the play for the HSE and the Garda representative on the Inside Out project when they visited the prison in February 2020.

The women's play focused on the reasons why someone might commit a crime, in this instance the main character was a women who was a victim herself of domestic violence. She robs to repay her husband's drug debt. The victim she robs was another woman whose whole life changed when she was robbed at her local weekly bingo. Following the crime she did not go out and lived at home in isolation and fear. The play brought both aspects together, highlighting the trauma and devastation for the victim and also highlighting the chaos and desperation in the life of the perpetrator. The play also demonstrated how a restorative model could impact positively on this very tragic example.

The women spent weeks in preparation for this play and in the process of doing so worked through many aspects of what this programme was aiming to attain in terms of awareness, wanting their children to be people who respected others and in particular would be aware of people who are older and those who may live with a disability.

Unfortunately due to Covid 19 and lockdown, the women got to perform the play for the HSE and the Garda representative but that was as far as it was able to proceed for them. The planned workshops and the art therapy group could not go ahead.

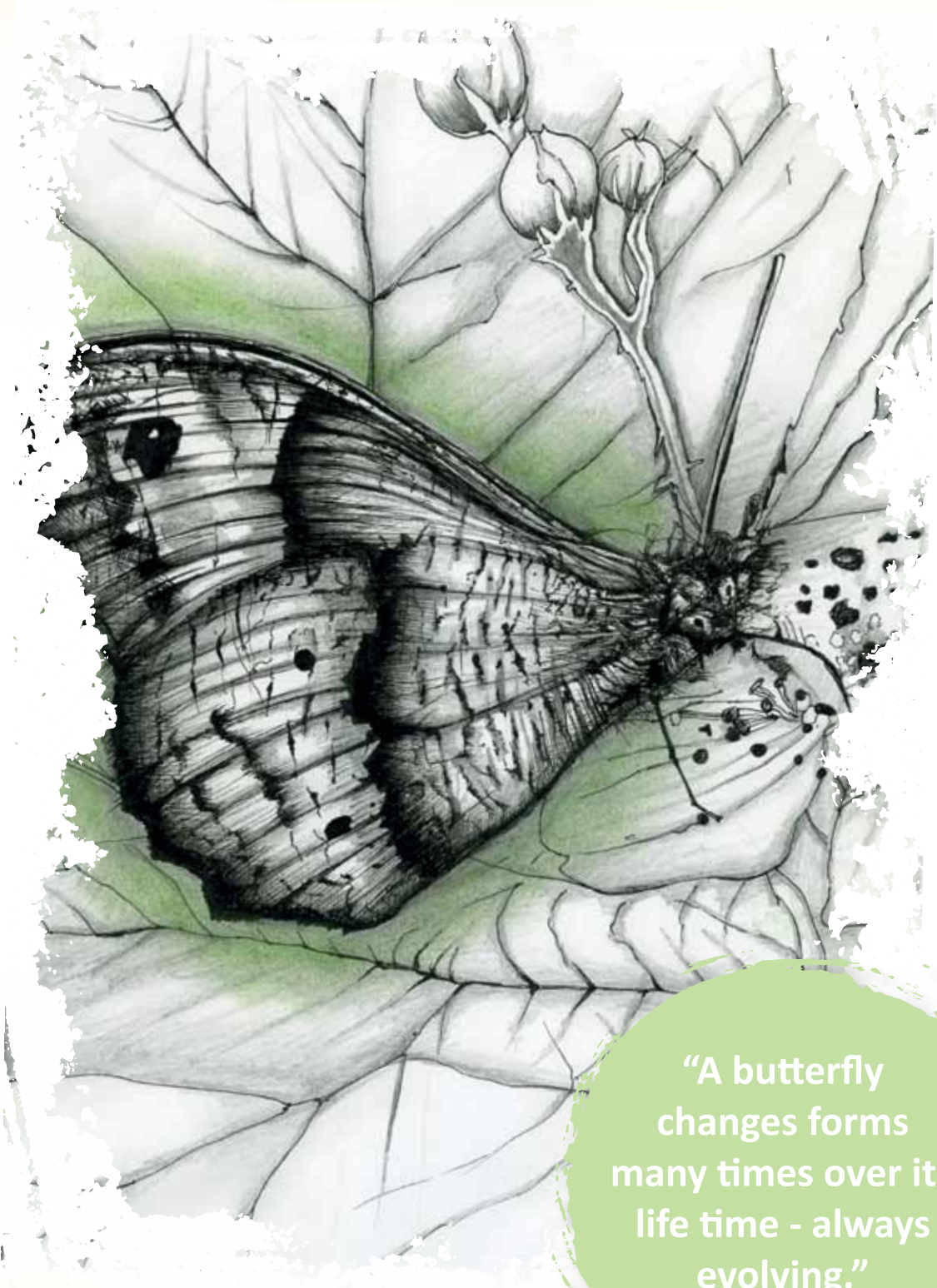
However I do believe that the work behind the scenes on the play and its performance was deeply impactful for the women. On the day of the performance for the HSE and the Gardai, one of the women concluded by saying 'never judge a book by its cover'. I believe this captured the core for the women and I hope for the victims of crime and the TY students also. We might all pause before jumping to judgments on other people and perhaps see a broader reality.

## **Bernie O Grady**

Former Social Worker with Bedford Row Family Project, Lower Bedford Row, Limerick.



# A Voice from Inside



*Artwork by Jolene Carey.*

"A butterfly  
changes forms  
many times over its  
life time - always  
evolving."

# Reflections from women in custody at LIMERICK PRISON

## A voice from the Inside

Everyone involved in the Inside Out project agreed one of the most striking statements, summing up the entire Inside Out project came from one of the women in custody when she said:

**“Don’t judge a book by its cover.”**

She did not try to excuse her involvement in crime which resulted in her imprisonment, but she offered the words in a genuine manner asking us to see the whole picture when we see ‘a prisoner’.

Prison staff reminded us that most people do not set out in life to end up in prison as a result of hurting or harming anyone. Life has dealt many people a tough hand and they may make wrong choices trying to deal with it.

The caption appears as a key message on the cover of the Inside Out handbook. It underpins the essence of the project, proposing a non-judgemental means of working together to raise awareness of the impact of crime and to create a safer future environment for everyone to live in.

A group of 30 women, in custody at Limerick Prison at the time of this project, participated in the development of the Inside Out. They offered their life experiences to show support for victims of crime and they wrote a powerful play reflecting the complex life circumstances that shaped their own lives. At no time did they offer their experiences as an excuse for committing crime, instead, they used them to illustrate how much they understood the impact of their actions on their victims. They also suggested there is room for restorative justice in the penal system that might help and support victims of crime.





# “The Voice Within”

## An Overview

The women at Limerick Prison wrote the script for their play *The Voice Within*, based on their empathy for the victims, while also providing a powerful insight into the dysfunction and often harrowing lives they lead themselves.

The play is based on real life stories related to crimes which were driven by deprivation and violence.

The play depicts the pressures a mother ‘Jacinta’ and her oldest daughter have to cope with on a daily basis in their home. It shows how domestic violence, drug addiction, poverty, homelessness, prison sentences and pressure to repay drug debts creates chaos for everyone in the home.

Using humour as a means of dealing with some of the heavier issues, the play reflects how ‘normalised’ domestic violence can be in the home at times and how it comes almost as a relief to Jacinta when her husband is sent to prison for a crime he committed a few months before.

Jacinta’s relief is short lived however – she returns home from a hard day at work to find her 6 younger children petrified following a visit from loan sharks to the house demanding repayment of a drug debt that Jacinta’s eldest son had racked up. They pledge to hurt Jacinta and her children if it is not paid.

That evening, Jacinta’s friends convince her to go to bingo with them for a break away from all the stress at home. Jane, an older lady from their Park is going to bingo too, she is on her first night out after a long spell at home following a broken hip. The friends had encouraged Jane to go and they were all thrilled when Jane won the Jackpot prize of €200. Later, when Jane went to the bathroom Jacinta stole the money in a panic to repay her sons debt.

Jane was devastated. All the friends guessed Jacinta stole it. Jacinta ends up receiving a prison sentence herself, she is treated as just another number in the courtroom. She is traumatised that her children will have no one to care for them. She is devastated for stealing from Jane. She gets involved in a restorative justice programme the judge set up to try to repair the harm and suffering caused to Jane.



## Tipperary Garda Victim Support Service Office, Support Organisations List

Organisation	Website	Main Phone	Other Phone Number	Email	Function
Support after Crime Services	<a href="http://www.supportafter-crimeservices.ie">www.supportafter-crimeservices.ie</a>	021 4320555		<a href="mailto:info@supportafter-crimeservices.ie">info@supportafter-crimeservices.ie</a>	Support Services for Victims of Crime
Crime Victims Helpline	<a href="http://www.crimevictimshelpline.ie">www.crimevictimshelpline.ie</a>	116006	085 1337711	<a href="mailto:info@victimshelpline.ie">info@victimshelpline.ie</a>	Helpline for Victims
AMEN	<a href="http://www.amen.ie">www.amen.ie</a>	046 9023718 0818 222240		<a href="mailto:info@amen.ie">info@amen.ie</a>	Supports male victims of Domestic Violence
CARI	<a href="http://www.cari.ie">www.cari.ie</a>	1890 924567	01 8308529	<a href="mailto:helpline@cari.ie">helpline@cari.ie</a>	Therapy and support for Child Sex Abuse and Violence
Cuan Saor		052 6127557	1800 576757	<a href="mailto:projectleader@cuansaor.org">projectleader@cuansaor.org</a>	Supports Female victims of Domestic Violence and Refuge Centre
Womens Aid National Helpline	<a href="http://www.womensaid.ie">www.womensaid.ie</a>	1800 341900		<a href="mailto:info@womensaid.ie">info@womensaid.ie</a>	Supports Female victims of Domestic Violence
Missing persons	<a href="http://www.missingpersons.ie">www.missingpersons.ie</a>	1890 442552		<a href="mailto:info@missingpersons.ie">info@missingpersons.ie</a>	Support for families of missing persons
Muintir Na Tire	Niall Garvey	062 51163		<a href="mailto:info@muintir.ie">info@muintir.ie</a>	Counselling for Crime Victims in Rural areas
Community Alert	Margaret Quinn	086 6000754			Supports victims of crime in Rural Areas
'One in Four'	<a href="http://www.oneinfour.ie">www.oneinfour.ie</a>	01 6624070		<a href="mailto:info@oneinfour.ie">info@oneinfour.ie</a>	Support for victims of Sexual abuse and violence
Ascend	Rabiya Ali <a href="http://www.ntlp.ie">www.ntlp.ie</a>	0505 23999		<a href="mailto:ascendservice@eircom.net">ascendservice@eircom.net</a>	Supports Female victims of Domestic Violence

# INSIDEOUT

## Workbook and Workshops



**Seirbhís Phríosúin  
na hÉireann**  
Irish Prison Service



**Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann**  
Tipperary County Council



For access to slides and course materials please contact: [anne.bradshaw@hse.ie](mailto:anne.bradshaw@hse.ie)





**Inside Out takes a deeper look at the impact of crime on people with disabilities and older people.**

**The workshop will challenge you to explore your attitudes to crime, victims and perpetrators, older people and people with disabilities.**

**You will learn about the impact of crime on victims and about the consequences of becoming involved in crime.**

# Anything might happen... Expect the unexpected on the Inside Out journey

## WORKSHOP 1

### Session One: Group Work

**Facilitator:** Using a flipchart, invite the group to brainstorm about their expectations, fears and hopes for the session ahead. Use flipchart headings: Expectations, Fears, Hopes, and Outcomes.

**Facilitator:** Agree a group contract – rules for engagement; such as respect, listen to everyone, openness, safe environment, non-judgemental, confidentiality.

**Facilitator:** Remind the group of the theme underpinning the project – coming from one of the females in custody at Limerick Prison: “Don’t judge the book by its cover” Each participant must be respectful, patient and empathetic with each other.

## WORKSHOP 1

### Session Two: Spend a little time getting to know each other.

**Facilitator:** Introduce some ice breaker exercises to stimulate group interaction.

**Facilitator:** Split the group into smaller groups. Invite each group to chat to the person beside them, telling them a few general things about themselves. Tell them 4 fun facts about themselves, 3 of which are true and one lie... the group will have to figure out which one is the lie

**Facilitator:** Introduce and host a fun/riddle me this quiz.

## WORKSHOP 1

### Session Three: Group discussion – exploring attitudes

**Facilitator:** The facilitator will place an AGREE, DISAGREE and DON’T KNOW sheet on the floor at spaced out points in the room

**Facilitator:** read out some statements to the group and invite them to choose a sheet to stand at based on the statement. Each participant must justify why they choose their stand on the topic.

## WORKSHOP 1

### Session Four: Judgements – Moral, Value and Reasoning

**Facilitator:** Value Judgement – explain the difference between a value judgement and a moral judgement, for example the facilitator might state “The Script are one of the best bands in the world” – This is a value judgement, as it true for the facilitator in their opinion, but it may not be true for the group participants – a value judgement is subjective and based on an individual’s belief system.

**Facilitator:** Explain what Moral reasoning is – a study in psychology that overlaps with moral philosophy. Starting from a young age we all make moral decisions about what is right and wrong

**Facilitator:**

Invite the group to think about and explore the following example of a moral conundrum: There’s a train roaring down the tracks at high speed. The track veers off into two tracks at a junction point ahead, there are five people tied to the tracks on one side... and there is one person tied to the tracks on the other side. You are the only person in the control tower with access to the lever that will change the direction of the train... What do you do?

Most people will choose to sacrifice one life on the track for the good of saving 5 lives on the other track....

However, what choice would you make if the one person tied to the track is your twin brother? What decision would you make then?

Discuss the difficulty of making moral choices/ judgements.



# WORKSHOP 1 Session Five: Disability Awareness

## Gold Star Disability Awareness Training – (GSDAT)

### Inside Out Session



Gold Star Disability Awareness Training: GSDAT

## Definitions of Disability

Disability Act 2005, (Section 2)

- Disability...." In relation to a person, means a substantial restriction in the capacity of the person to carry on a profession, business or occupation in the State or to participate in social or cultural life in the State by reason of an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual impairment"



Gold Star Disability Awareness Training: GSDAT

## Interacting with People with Disabilities

- When meeting a person with a disability for the first time, perhaps one of the most important points of all to remember is to relax and be confident, positive body language and a relaxed approach will put both you and the person you are meeting at ease.

Gold Star Disability Awareness Training: GSDAT

It helps to be aware:

- Avoid making assumptions about a person's physical ability – Just because someone uses a wheelchair doesn't mean they are paralyzed and cannot take a few steps, some people may use a chair because they cannot stand for long periods.

Gold Star Disability

## 'Language and Disability' Avoid the following

- Invalid (Translates to in-valid)
- Handicapped (not acceptable term)
- Deaf & Dumb (use non-verbal/hearing)
- The Disabled (People with disabilities)
- Retarded (not acceptable term)
- Spastic (not acceptable term)
- Wheelchair Bound (Person who uses a wheelchair)



Gold Star Disability Awareness Training: GSDAT

There are many aspects of everyday life in your community which affects people with disabilities. Learn how you can help.



## Do's and Don'ts

Look and speak directly to a person with a disability - rather than looking at a friend they may be with



Try to find a good way to communicate with a person who is Deaf or hard of hearing, they may lip read or sign or write down what they want



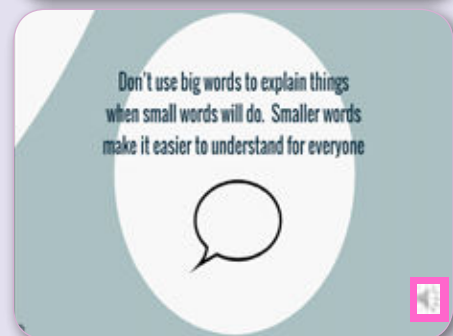
If you are talking to someone with hearing loss, speak clearly and normally, don't shout. You can repeat or rephrase if they don't understand



Always introduce yourself to a person who has a visual impairment and if you are leaving their company always tell them you are leaving







**Facilitator:** Invite the groups to choose a victim impact statement from the handbook to discuss in their group: Ask, what kind of crime was committed, how did it make the victim feel, what are the long term effects of the crime, is there anything that could help the victim feel better?

# Workshop 2

## Inside Out: Crime Awareness

By: Kate Fleming, of 'LawEd'.



### Introduction

Have you ever wondered how our country makes laws and how these come about?

We have one of the fairest legal systems in the world and believe that everyone needs to know the law not just lawyers.

We as Irish citizens live in a democracy, which is a system of government by which we the citizens choose leaders by voting.

At some point in your life, you may be involved in a legal case or may have to appear in court. A basic knowledge of the legal system is paramount. Everyone has the right to go to court to ask for help in resolving a dispute.

If you have followed any high-profile case in the news, you already have some familiarity with the legal system. At first glance, it may appear complicated, but you will see that it is logical and largely based on common sense.

### A definition of the law

As a young person you should be aware that laws and rules are extremely important in any community or society. They order and set out common codes of conduct for relationships between individuals, groups and society as a whole.

They inform us of our rights and of our responsibilities and prevent an unruly state. Lawlessness and ignorance of the laws results in a decline in the quality of life in communities and society at large.

A rule is something that must be abided by **some** people whereas a law has to be abided by **every** person in that country or state.

From the high-profile criminal court cases, to the silent business takeovers affecting the global economy, to the simple act of buying a chocolate bar, almost all of our daily activities are governed by and related to some aspect of the law. The great reach of law is neatly summed up by Raymond Wacks in 'Law: A Very Short Introduction' (2015): "Your job, your home, your relationships, your very life – and your death – all, and more, are managed, and directed by the law".

### Criminal Law

Criminal law concerns an individual's relationship with society at large.

It criminalises certain acts which are not in the public interest or is a public wrongdoing.

An example would be where a group of young people vandalise a public space thinking their graffiti is artistic and beautiful – when in fact it is a public order offences and criminal damage.

The purpose of criminal law is to deter certain types of behaviour.

Simply, you now have the knowledge and education that by carrying out certain acts you can receive a criminal sanction.

Sanctions for breach of criminal law include, fines and or prison sentences.

The Accused is always prosecuted by the State - Guards or Director of Public Prosecution (DPP).

Criminal law is extremely important because it makes certain acts illegal, such as murder, theft, rape and armed robbery. These acts go against our society's basic value system.

Without criminal law, people could do whatever they wanted. They wouldn't have to face any consequences for their actions. We would have a lawless state.

Breaking a criminal law can result in you going to any one of the courts (District, Circuit, Central Criminal Court, Special Criminal Court, Court of Criminal Appeal, High Court and Supreme Court).

## Criminal Courts

The Criminal Courts deal with criminal cases.

Crime is divided into two categories;

- summary
- indictable offences

Criminal Cases are prosecutions brought by the State (Guards or DPP) against people accused of crimes anything from anti-social behaviour, petty theft to murder charges.

The seriousness of the crime will indicate the court in which the case is to be tried.

The aim of the criminal courts is to punish, usually through a jail sentence or a fine.

Where a judge and jury sit, the judge's job is to guide the jury on legal matters while the jury then decides the verdict on the facts and make their outcome.

## Criminal Responsibility

Most people commit a crime during their lifetime... Have you?

Most frequently committed crimes by young person's today are;

- Underage drinking,
- underage smoking,
- illicit drug use,
- driving without a licence,
- vandalism,
- trespassing,
- criminal damage to property,
- shoplifting
- assault,
- harassment,
- cybercrime,
- child pornography,

## What is the age of criminal responsibility in Ireland?

In Ireland, young people/juveniles can be held responsible for a crime from the age of 12.

So, Gardai can arrest a young person if they think that they committed a crime (for example, theft, assault, drug possession, anti-social behaviour, criminal damage, underage drinking or trafficking).

### Responsible before age 12?

10–11-year-olds can be charged with serious offences in Ireland such as murder, manslaughter and rape and aggravated sexual assault.

A child under 14 charged must have the consent from the DPP's office.

**But the law treats teens under 18 differently than adults.**

Have you heard of the *Garda Pulse System*?

## Garda Pulse System

In some cases, a young person's details might firstly be put on the Garda PULSE System (PULSE is a computer system used by the Garda Síochána) and subsequent to that the young person is given the opportunity of the *Juvenile Diversion Programme*.

If so, the youth might not have to go through the usual court process.

In serious cases, a young person might be officially accused of a crime and have to go to court straight away such as a case of assault causing serious harm or knife crimes.

There was a significant increase in the number of reported offences carried out by juveniles last year, according to Garda figures.

The increase includes substantial rises in violent crimes, such as sex offences, threats of murder, aggravated burglaries, robberies, and assaults.

It's not only males – there has been a 10% increase in female offenders, who accounted for half of thefts from shops and consumption or purchase of alcohol cases, a third of drunkenness cases, and 30% of reported minor assaults.

A "significant spike" in crimes occur on two days of the year — Can you Guess?



- St Patrick's Day
- Halloween (please note here that the use and possession of fireworks is illegal in Ireland and a criminal offence if caught in possession)

## What is the Juvenile Diversion Programme?

The aim of this programme is to prevent young offenders and children involved in anti-social behaviour in Ireland from entering into the full criminal justice system by offering them a *second chance*.

The law wants to protect you as everyone can make a mistake!

The intended outcome of the programme is to divert young people from committing further offences and/or anti-social behaviour.

### Objective of the programme

- Is to divert the child from committing any further offences.
- The child will be placed under the supervision of a juvenile liaison officer (JLO) for up to 12 months who is a specially trained Garda trained to work with young people.

This programme allows for young people who commit criminal offences or anti-social behaviour to be dealt with by means of a **caution** instead of the formal process of charge and prosecution for offences in the courts or an anti-social behaviour order.

## Caution

### Different types of caution?

Two types of caution may be given;

- formal
- informal.

The decision as to whether to administer a formal or informal caution is made by the Director of the Programme and will generally depend on the seriousness of the youth's criminal behaviour.

Formal cautions are **more serious** than informal cautions.

If a youth has previously been formally cautioned, it is not open to informally caution the child on a later occasion.

### How is a formal caution delivered?

The formal caution is given by a JLO, a Garda inspector or a more senior officer.

Those present when the caution is delivered must include the youth, the youth's parents or guardians and a JLO (if the JLO is not administering the caution).

The Director of the Programme may also invite the victim of the crime to attend. This is what we call restorative justice.

The youth may be invited to apologise to the victim and where appropriate to make financial or other amends to the victim.

The formal caution normally takes place in a Garda station to highlight the seriousness of the situation to the child.

### How is an informal caution delivered?

The informal caution given for *less serious* criminal behaviour may be given at the child's home or in a Garda station.

Underage drinking would be an example of an informal caution.

It is administered by a JLO. The only people obliged to attend while the caution is being given are the parents or guardians of the youth.

3 basic criteria for eligibility;

- Child must **accept responsibility** for the offending behaviour
- Child must **consent to be cautioned** and supervised by the officer allocated
- Child must be **over 12** and under the age of 18

## Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs)

- This is a civil order
- However, breach of this is a criminal offence
- Maximum penalty of **5 years**
- Relates to behaviours by the child that may cause harassment, distress, fear, intimidation and impairment of someone's use or enjoyment of their property.

## Your Rights and the Gardai

### Your rights as a young person when stopped by the Gardai

Firstly, take note **YES** you can be stopped, searched and questioned by the Gardai.

Just because you are under the age 18 does not make you exempt!

Also, the myth around the Garda wearing or not wearing his hat is nonsensical.

A member of the Gardaí can ask **any** member of the public to **stop at any time**.

You may be legally bound to stop if the Garda believes that you have committed an offence/are committing an offence.

They have to show '**reasonable suspicion**'.

If the Garda is not wearing their uniform, they must show you identification if you ask them.

You may need to give your name and address. If you refuse to do so, you could be arrested.

If the Garda asks you to go to the station with them, you should ask if you are under arrest.

If you are under arrest, you must go with them.

Fighting it will only add another charge to your case, such as resisting arrest. If you make a run for it, this will cause you further problems.

If you are not under arrest, you do not have to go to the station.

### Your rights when placed under arrest

In Ireland, a Garda does not need an arrest warrant to arrest you.

In order to be arrested, the Gardaí must have a **reasonable suspicion** that you have broken the law.

A youth is seen running from a local shop that was just burgled with a bag on his back acting very suspicious!

You have the right to be told very clearly that you are under arrest and the reason for your arrest.

As mentioned above, it is best not to resist arrest, even if you think you are being wrongfully arrested  
- **Resisting arrest is a crime in itself.**

### Your rights when searched

A Garda may search you if they have a **reasonable suspicion** that you have committed a crime. In such a case, you can be searched **without** your consent.

The Gardaí also have power to search you for illegal drugs under the Misuse of Drugs Acts, and bring you to a Garda Station for the search. This is anything to a joint in your possession.

Before searching you, a Garda must explain to you in plain English why they want to do so.

A member of the same sex must search you if the search consists of more than a pat down over your clothes. Often, a member of the same sex will perform a pat down though.

The Gardaí have the right to search your car or any car you are a passenger in if they have a reasonable suspicion that you have committed/are about to commit a certain crime or that you have drugs on you or in the car.

You can be searched at home, at work, on the street or in a Garda station.

It is important to note that **security guards** do not have any power to search you without your permission, and may only detain you if they believe you have committed an offence and are attempting to avoid arrest by the Gardaí.

If a security guard does arrest you, they must transfer you to Gardaí as soon as possible, who may carry out a search if necessary.

### Your rights at the Garda station

The Gardaí must inform your guardian or parents that you are in custody, the reason for this and that you have the right to a solicitor.

They must tell your parents/guardian to come to the station as soon as possible.

You have the right to be told in clear, easy to-understand language that you are under arrest and the reason for your arrest.

You cannot be questioned by the Gardaí without your parents or guardian being present.

# Your rights and the Criminal Justice (Public Order) Act

## Loitering is a criminal offence in Ireland.

**Do you know what it is?** to linger or hang around in a public area without any apparent purpose for being there.

Groups of young people hanging around their local shop, public park or children's playground could deem to be loitering. The law is a bit blurry between *hanging out* and *committing a crime!*

As a young person please note, just hanging out at your local shopping centre to committing a criminal offence (loitering) is paired with "certain types of disruptive behaviour" such as;

- intimidating passers-by
- sexually harassing people (a wolf whistle or sexual slur for example),
- drug dealing or use,
- obstructing a public way—there is a chance you're breaking the law
- Being loud or obnoxious and the use of foul language

A '**public place**' includes roads, public parks, playgrounds or recreational areas, cemeteries, churchyards, trains, buses and other public transport vehicles.

**Alcohol** has been identified as a contributory factor in **97%** of public order offences as recorded by the Gardaí

Offences under this order include:

- public drunkenness
- threatening or abusive behaviour in a public place
- distributing abusive or obscene material in a public place
- disorderly contact in public (urinating in a public place which is now a €500 fine!)
- failing to comply with Garda orders (i.e. ignoring a Garda's order to move off the street and go home)
- trespassing

- obstruction of vehicles or people- a youth doing a dance in the middle of the street holding up traffic!
- rioting
- assault
- failure to give your name and address to a Garda.

If a Garda believes that you have alcohol or drugs on you, they have the legal right to ask you to leave the area, to confiscate the drugs/alcohol or to question you about what you are carrying.

So, bus trips to concerts, underage events, nightclubs and even the national ploughing championships can lead to a significant Garda search of all persons and belongings on the bus!

A Garda does not need a warrant to arrest you for most of the above listed offences.

Your photograph, fingerprints and palm prints can be taken without your consent if you are being detained at a Garda station.

## Consequences of getting a Juvenile Record

People under 18 suspected of committing a crime will have a juvenile record (this will wipe from their record in certain circumstances when over the age of 18).

In fact, a young person can have a record as soon as the guards stop them (their name will be entered on the Garda PULSE system. Other organisations might also keep information about the teenager (such as TUSLA).

## Who can see a juvenile record?

The Guards create records about teenagers after they are stopped on the Garda PULSE System. Later, other organisations involved in the case will keep information about the teen as well such as the Juvenile Liaison Officer (JLO), Social Worker, TUSLA.

**Juvenile records are usually confidential (secret).** People cannot just show up at a Garda station and ask whether a person under 18 committed a crime.



## Juvenile Record or Criminal Record?

Just that you are completely clear what is the difference between a *juvenile record* and a *youth record*?

Youths under the age of 18 who have committed a crime will usually have a juvenile record **not** a criminal record;

However, youths who get an adult punishment will have a criminal record. So, if you go straight to court for your crime and serve time in detention school you can take it that you have a criminal record for life.

## Consent and the age of Consent for Sexual Relationships

### What is Consent

Under the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act of 2017;

*“a person consents to a sexual act if he or she freely and voluntarily agrees to engage in that act”*

It should be given **freely** without any **manipulation, convincing or threats**.

“Yes Means Yes campaign” consent is not the absence of a “no”, **it is the presence of an enthusiastic “yes”**.

Consent is about communicating to make sure you are both on the same page at all times.

For example, a person cannot give proper consent if they are:

- asleep or passed out
- affected by drink or drugs
- forced or threatened or held against their will
- mistaken as to the identity of the person
- unsure of what they have agreed to do

The reality is that consent must be given on **every single occasion**, and cannot be transferred across sexual acts, interactions, or partners.

In all circumstances where a person is intimate with someone consent needs to be established first, from the first holding of hands, kissing to full sexual intercourse.

When having **sex**, consent is an agreement between all participants that they definitely want to have sex, or do any sexual act.

Everyone needs to fully and clearly agree to it and their consent must be **continuous** for the duration of sex.

This means that they have the **right to change their mind at any time**, for any reason, without any consequences.

Consent is needed for vaginal, anal or oral sex, mutual masturbation, sexual touching or kissing.

Consent can be expressed both verbally and physically - so it can be with words, as well as actions and body language.

It must be enthusiastic, conscious and voluntary. Consent should be given freely without any manipulation, convincing or threats.

If consent is not expressed, this is not sex - it is sexual assault.

### Alcohol and Sexual Consent

- Alcohol in general can affect people’s ability to make decisions, which includes the decision to partake in sex.
- If a person is completely intoxicated or out of it due to drinking, this means that they are **not able** to give consent.
- Any sexual activity with someone who doesn’t know what is going on is considered to be sexual assault/rape.
- Non-consensual activity, includes anything from kissing to sex, is against the law.

So,

Is a smile enough to show consent?

How much alcohol is too much before someone loses the capacity for consent?

If a person doesn’t say no, does that mean consent?

## Victim Shaming

We should also note that there is a lot of victim shaming in Ireland around this area.

Huge bias and discriminatory views exist such as;

Have you ever heard the phrase *“oh, he/she was asking for it”*?

Words brandished about what the person chooses to wear on the night out, how they were acting, highly intoxicated, extremely flirty and friendly but *‘he/she was so flirty’, ‘I heard she is easy’, ‘he/she was up for it’* are sadly behaviours which have come to be acceptable - But they should not.

Often times those phrases can indicate a case of victim blaming.

Victims of rape are sometimes blamed for their own rape because of their choice of clothing or because they didn't fight back.

## Sexual Relationships under 18

While 18 years is the age at which a child becomes an adult, the law in relation to sexual relationships and consent is different.

The age of consent to engage in a sexual act is **17 years of age for males and females or same sex relationships**.

This includes all penetrative sexual acts.

Penetrative acts include insertion of the penis into the vagina, anus or mouth or the insertion of an object into the vagina.

**However Please Note –**

Female youths under 17 years of age **cannot** be prosecuted for having **consensual** sexual intercourse even though the male who has sexual intercourse with her **may be** prosecuted, even if he too is under 17 years of age!

Do you think this is fair;

Males?

Females?

## Why is there a Legal Age of Consent?

The law is there to protect young people.

It also aims to prevent older people from taking advantage of younger people.

It is a crime to engage in a sexual act with a person who has not yet reached the age of 17.

The law regards sexual activity with a person who is under 15 even more seriously and the penalties for this crime are greater.

## Sexual Offences

Sexual offences may be committed by male and female adults and children aged 10 years or more.

Sexual offences may occur within heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual and transgender relationships.

It crosses class, gender, race and religious belief.

At all times **no consent** was present.

### Rape

It is defined as having sexual intercourse with a person **who does not want to, or cannot consent**.

Under Section 4 is defined by the Criminal Law (Rape) (Amendment) Act 1990 as a sexual assault that includes “penetration (however slight) of the anus or mouth by the penis, or penetration (however slight) of the vagina by any objects held or manipulated by another person.”

A person found guilty of rape under section 4 can be sentenced to **life in prison**.

### Sexual Assault

Is an act in which a person intentionally sexually touches another person without their consent

Sexual assault, classified as a sexual attack with a less serious level of violence than aggravated sexual assault,

Can be punished with a term not exceeding **5 years in prison**.

### Aggravated sexual assault

This is defined as being an assault of a sexual nature, aggravated by serious violence, or the threat of serious violence, or is such as to cause severe injury,

humiliation or degradation of a grave nature to the victim as detailed in the Criminal Law (Rape) (Amendment) Act 1990.

The law states guilt and conviction of this crime, can be punished by **life in prison**.

## Sexual abuse

**Sexual abuse**, also referred to as **molestation**, is abusive **sexual** behaviour by one person upon another. It is often perpetrated using force or by taking advantage of another.

## Statutory Rape

**Statutory rape** is the term that is commonly used for unlawful sexual contact with a person aged **under 17 years**. What this means is, even if the person has consented to sex themselves, their consent is not considered legally valid because they are underage.

If a person is in a position of authority then the age of consent is 18 i.e. a teacher/student relationship.

## Defilement

Term '**defilement**' is to engage or attempt to engage in a sexual act with a child **under the age of 15 years**. The maximum sentence for this offence is **life imprisonment**.

## Prosecuting children for sexual offences;

The law now provides that children can be prosecuted for sexual offences and the offences of rape and aggravated sexual assault can be committed by a child aged 10 years and older.

## Sentences

The maximum sentence for having sex with someone over the age of 15, but under the age of 17, is five years.

It is ten years if the person is in a position of authority i.e. a relative, teacher, sports trainer.

If a person can prove that they believed the victim was over the age of 17, however, the court may view this situation differently. Asserting that the person consented to sex is absolutely not considered a valid defence.

Currently, women under the age of 17 cannot be prosecuted for having sex with someone under the age of 17.

Once you are over the age of 17, you are legally able to have sex with anyone you want, even someone much older than you.

Only these people can see someone's juvenile record, and they need a good reason to see it:

- the teenager's parents
- the victims (if any)
- the guards
- Juvenile Liaison Officer or youth social workers who work in such centres
- some people who work in the justice system, for example, the teenager's lawyer, a judge and the prosecutor DPP.

## Previous Convictions

Very few people are allowed to see a juvenile record. But anyone can ask a young person if they have any **previous convictions**. A previous conviction means that the youth was found guilty of a crime in the past.

Young people who have never been found guilty of a crime can answer no, they don't have any previous convictions.

## A Juvenile Record Can Cause Problems

**The knock-on impact of getting a juvenile and criminal record can effect:**

### Third level education and apprenticeship applications

Most of the time third level institutes will not ask if a student has a juvenile record. But for some programs, students might have to provide a **certificate of good conduct** or agree to a **background check**. They can contact the Gardai to get the required documents.

This might be the case for students who will interact with children (teachers, social workers, medical staff) as part of their studies. It might also be a requirement for those who want to work and train with the defence forces, trainee Guards or a career in the legal field.

## Getting a Job

Most employers are not allowed to see juvenile records.



## Travelling

Teenagers who have committed a crime **can still travel anywhere in Europe**. But they should be careful if they want to travel outside the European Union. Customs officers are allowed to ask teenagers/young adults questions. The teenager/young adult must tell the truth.

**Customs officers decide whether people can enter their countries.** Each country decides what crimes will stop a person from entering the country.

**For example, can people with juvenile records travel to the United States or Australia?** Usually, people **are not allowed to enter the United States or Australia** if they committed a violent crime or a crime involving drugs or prostitution. But the customs officer can still let people into the country if:

- they committed the crime more than 5 years ago, and
- they were under 18 at the time they committed the crime.

Under **Section 258 of the Children Act 2001** an offence committed by a child under the age of 18, for which they have been found guilty, can be automatically removed from the record as if never committed, once certain conditions are met. The conditions are as follows:

- The offence was committed before the child reached the age of 18 years
- The offence is not one required to be tried by the Central Criminal Court (such as murder or rape)
- At least 3 years have elapsed since the finding of guilt and

- The child has not been dealt with for another offence in that 3-year period

If these conditions are met, they are no longer regarded under Irish law as having committed an offence.

When looking for employment or applying for an educational course or insurance, they can claim to have a clean record.

However, if they are travelling or emigrating to a country such as the USA, Canada or Australia, they are subject to that country's immigration laws and may have to disclose such convictions.

## Workshop 2 – Crime Awareness

### Key Takeaways:

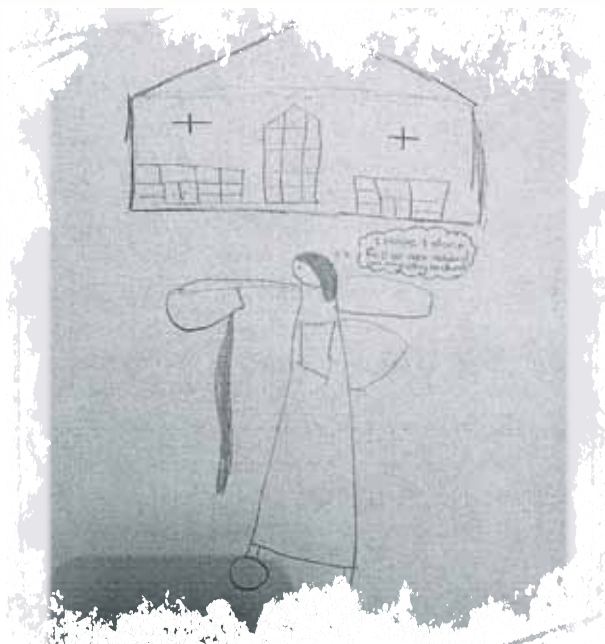
- As a victim of crime in Ireland you don't get to take the case to court yourself, this is done by the Guards and Director of Public Prosecution (DPP)
- The accused is always innocent until proven guilty and always has a right to a fair trial – Due Process
- Summary offences are crimes of a minor nature and indictable offences are crimes of a serious nature
- The age a juvenile can be convicted of a crime today in Ireland is 12 years
- Juveniles are given a second chance by going on the Juvenile Diversion Programme
- There are two types of cautions a Guard can deliver - formal and informal
- ASBO 's (Anti-Social Behaviour Orders) can be handed down to juveniles who are intimidating, harassing and impairing someone's use and enjoyment

of their own property

- Under the age of 18 years the Guards can stop, question, search and arrest a juvenile
- Resisting arrest is a crime
- Loitering is a criminal offence
- A juvenile record can have an impact on your future travel and career opportunities
- The main detention school in Ireland for juveniles is Oberstown Detention School
- It is illegal for shops to sell cigarettes to under 18's
- To purchase an e-cigarette, you must be 18 years of age
- It is an offence to pretend you are over the age of 18 in order to buy alcohol
- You must be out of a pub under the age of 18 at 9pm (10pm May to September)
- The age of consent for sexual acts today in Ireland is 17 years
- Consent must be freely given at all times without manipulation, convincing or threats
- The offence of statutory rape is having sex with someone under 17 and includes if both parties are under 17 and consenting – the boy is always prosecuted
- Sexting is sharing intimate, explicit or nude selfies by mobile phone or social messaging
- Revenge porn - where sexting content is maliciously shared without consent is now a criminal offence in Ireland
- A photo showing a child's (under 17) genitals is deemed to be child pornography even if they take and distribute the photo themselves, they can be charged with child pornography.



## Artwork by participants at the **MOOREHAVEN CENTRE**





## Students, victims and participating agencies on the Inside Out project



**Seirbhís Phríosúin  
na hÉireann**  
Irish Prison Service



**Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann**  
Tipperary County Council



For further information contact at [anne.bradshaw@hse.ie](mailto:anne.bradshaw@hse.ie) or log on to [www.disabilityawareness.ie](http://www.disabilityawareness.ie)