

TAKINGCARE **UPDATE**¹⁸

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

- At the Taking Care Conference

Working Together...

- A common protocol for churches

Special focus

- Audit results are in!

Taking Care Update – Summer 2011 Edition 18



Hello and welcome to the Taking Care Update (18th Edition) - *From the Editor*

Greetings from our new Taking Care Offices! We have moved at last and are located back in Church House but now on the second floor where we are grateful for more space and more natural light. The new refurbishment of Church House means that the entrance foyer on the ground floor will provide a generous space for visitors to collect leaflets and forms and browse stands displaying information on the work of the boards without having to take the stairs!

It has been a busy few months at Taking Care, as well as revising the manual which has now gone to print in time for October, there's been the conference to organise, training programmes to write and deliver along with the usual training and police checking with Access NI and Garda Vetting. As well as this, the audit results had to be collated and some number crunching done! You can read the

report on the Audit given to the General Assembly in the Special Focus this issue.

This busyness has meant it's been a steep learning curve for our new administrator, Sharon Martin who is here until December. However Sharon has rose to the challenge, settled into the role and has amazed me at how quickly she has grasped all the tasks that need doing! She is working hard to keep on top of organising the training and processing police check forms.

Sharon has, however, recently been inundated with requests from congregations wanting to find out who has been checked for their congregation as records seem to have been lost along the way or have not been passed on from within the congregation. This is a time consuming task and takes Sharon away from her regular work which focuses on



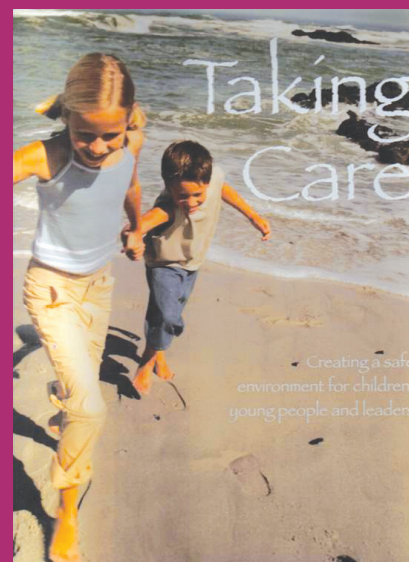
processing forms and sending them to Access NI as soon as possible. Can I remind Designated Persons to carefully keep letters that are sent from the Taking Care Office regarding the checking of leaders if you do not already? PCI cover sheets should be photocopied and kept alongside letters of appointment sent from the Taking Care Office which should be kept safely and securely on church premises.

As usual, if you have any queries or questions to do with child protection then please do not hesitate to contact me on **028 9041 7290** or email **takingcare@pcinet.org**

Reduce, Reuse and Recycle at the Taking Care Conference

It is not too late to book for the Taking Care Conference on **Saturday 8th October** although spaces are filling up fast! Posters and booking forms are still available from the office although remember that you can book online also. The deadline for booking and workshop allocation is **23rd September at 5pm**.

Remember to bring to the conference with you any of the Taking Care manuals which you have at home or lurking about the church building. We want to recycle these manuals for you and replace them with the new 2011 edition which will be available on the day. It is important that leaders are using the latest edition at all times so all Taking Care 2004 manuals need to be replaced – we need your help to do this!



Dates for your diary

Trainer's Retreat

- 2nd and 3rd December at Dromantine Retreat and Conference Centre, Newry.

Taking Care Conference

- Saturday 8th October 2011 in Assembly Buildings (Church House).

Internet Safety Evening for Parents and Leaders

- 27th September at 7:30pm, Drumachose Presbyterian Church.

For dates of Taking Care Training sessions happening at a local level in congregations please see the Training Calendar on the website - www.pcibsw.org/takingcare/training.html

Taking Care in Numbers 2011 (so far...)

73 Congregational Training events
1319 Access NI forms processed
93 Garda Vetting forms processed
3778 Number of visits to the Taking Care website at www.pcibsw.org/takingcare



Training Night for Trainers

Our Taking Care Trainers met at Saintfield Road Presbyterian Church on the evening of Tuesday 28th June. We welcomed two new Trainers to the team, Valerie Semple-Morris from Greystone Road Presbyterian Church who will be delivering training mostly in Templepatrick Presbytery and Beth McKibbin from Donaghmore Presbyterian Church who will be taking training sessions in Donegal Presbytery. We are delighted to have two more enthusiastic and talented volunteer trainers on board and hope that those who meet our trainers will show their appreciation for the work which they do on behalf of our church. At the meeting the trainers were shown the changes made to the training presentation for Autumn 2011 and informed of the latest information in terms of policy and procedures.

Don't forget to register for the 2011 Taking Care Conference

You can either apply with the application form that was posted to all Designated Persons or online at www.pcibsw.org/takingcare

Designated Person's Training

During May, three Designated Persons Training events were held in Lucan (Dublin), Cootehill (Monaghan) and Ray (Donegal). Unfortunately the event organised for Kilkenny was cancelled as only one person registered. Several people who were new to the role attended as well as those who had been doing it for some time. Special thanks goes to Geoff who took the training in Lucan and all Designated Persons who attended. New dates will be organised for Designated Persons training for Northern Ireland in due course.



Designated Persons of Donegal Presbytery with new Taking Care Trainer, Beth McKibbin, at the training evening in Ray.

Working Together to Protect Children – A Common Protocol for churches and independent organisations.

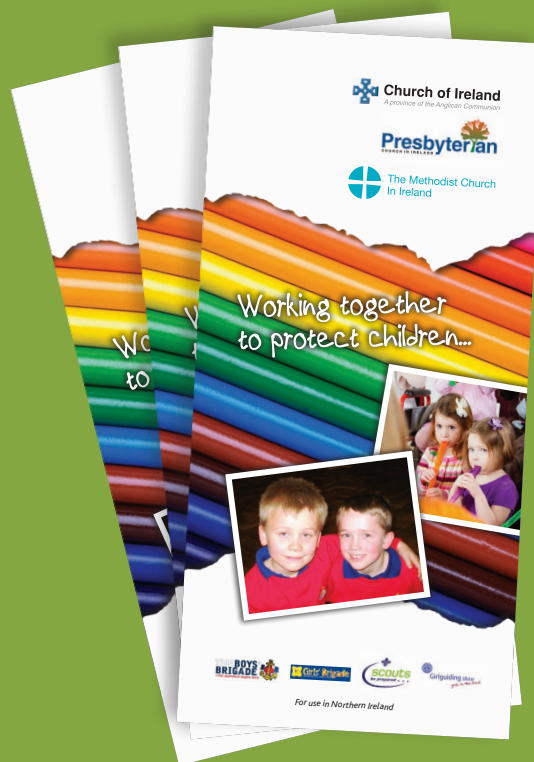
In 2005 representatives from the Church of Ireland, Methodist Church in Ireland, Presbyterian Church in Ireland, along with the Girls Brigade (NI), Boys Brigade (NI), Scout Association and Girlguiding Ulster met to put together an agreed procedure to assist churches that regularly allow independent youth organisations to use their premises and Independent organisations working with children and young people, regularly using church premises for meetings.

This agreement was known as, 'The Common Protocol' and has

been available on the Taking Care website for some time.

The group, who meet regularly, were concerned that little was known about this agreement within congregations and so we decided that a leaflet should be designed and published to explain what the protocol is and how it works.

The colourful and easy to understand leaflet is now available from the Taking Care Office, it is important that all Designated Persons understand the agreement and how it works. Please contact us for a copy of the leaflet.



Special focus

Taking Care Audit

The Taking Care Audit took place at the start of 2011.
Results were collected between January and May of this year.

The Taking Care Audit took the form of a questionnaire and was sent out to all Clerk of Sessions in November 2010 to be signed by both the Minister and Designated Person. The audit was to be returned by 21st January 2011 although there was some catch up time until the end of May.

At the Board of Social Witness report to the General Assembly this year Taking Care was a main feature. Deborah reported on the results of the audit, although a full report will be available shortly, below you can read what was in the report to the assembly.

How many audits were returned?

In total, **342** audits were returned out of **518** congregations which is **66%**. This is an improvement from the **2007** Taking Care Presbytery Review for which there was a return of **42%**.

Where did the figures come from?

The percentages below are based on the **342** audit returns and the figures have been extrapolated to give an indication of what the answers would have been had all 518 audits been returned.

Child Protection Policy

- **98%** of congregations have a child protection policy.
- **87%** of congregations have child protection on their Kirk Session agenda.

Designated Persons

- **99.7%** of congregations have at least one Designated Person for Child Protection.
- **86%** of Designated Persons have attended training specifically for Designated Persons.

Promotion of Taking Care

- **82%** of congregations said that they use the pocket leader's guide 'We care 4 U Too'.
- **9** congregations out of the **342** said that they have held a Taking Care Sunday, as a more recent initiative this is very encouraging. It would be great to hear some feedback from those congregations who have held a Taking Care Sunday, let us know how it went.

Vetting

We have vetted in the region of **13,851** people.

Appointment Process

- **85%** of congregations ask new leaders to complete an application form.
- **74%** of congregations ask new leaders to provide references.

Child Protection Incidents

There were **302** child protection issues reported to the Taking Care Office in the past five years, issues range from bullying in the youth club to a child disclosing that she had been abused and raped.

Taking Care Training

The number of leaders who have attended taking care training is **16,260**. We are, as a church, indebted to our **26** Taking Care Trainers without whom this would not be possible. The trainers facilitate the training sessions in their own time in a voluntary capacity.

Let's Celebrate!

We were very pleased to announce the following figures which demonstrate the extent of the youth and children's work done in the name of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland:

- The total number of youth and children's organisations within the Presbyterian Church is **3,370**.
- The total number of leaders working with children and young people within the Presbyterian Church is **32,964**.
- The total number of children and young people attending PCI youth and children's organisations comes to **119,721**.