

## WHO ARE WE?

### **DEPAUL IS A CHARITY SUPPORTING PEOPLE WHO ARE HOMELESS AND AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS.**

DEPAUL BELIEVES THAT HOMELESSNESS HAS NO PLACE.

We offer homeless and disadvantaged people the opportunity to fulfill their potential and move towards an independent and positive future.

#### **OUR MISSION**

We aim to end homelessness and change the lives of those affected by it.

#### **OUR VISION**

Our Vision is of a society in which everyone has a place to call home and stake in their community



#### **INTRODUCTION TO DEPAUL**

Depaul was established in Dublin in 2002 and Northern Ireland in 2005. Depaul works with some of the most marginalised individuals and families in local communities. These are groups in our society that have sometimes been

multiply excluded from other services due to complex and challenging needs.

#### **Depaul is a values led organisation We celebrate the potential of people:**

- We believe in the potential of the people we work with
- We will treat all of the people who use our services with respect
- We believe in development
- We have a strong culture of volunteering.

#### **We put our words into action:**

- What matters is what we do
- We do what we say we will do
- We are committed to innovation
- We take risks

#### **We aim to take a wider role in civil society:**

- We believe in partnership
- We aim to be open and accountable
- We are custodians of valuable resources
- We strive to be a best practice organisation.
- We have a global perspective and potential.

#### **We believe in rights and responsibilities:**

- We believe that people have fundamental rights
- We believe that with rights go responsibilities

## NORTHERN IRELAND HOST PROJECTS

### STELLA MARIS PROJECT ENVIRONMENT



Stella Maris is a Low Threshold, Harm Reduction homeless accommodation Service providing 24/7 support to long term street drinkers in the North Belfast.

The project works within a principle of 'harm reduction' which means that we work with service users at their level and individual needs to provide the best possible interventions for them. Because of the needs of the service users the project has allocated communal areas where **service users can consume their own alcohol on site under alcohol management procedures.**

The project provides its service users with a safe and comfortable home. It provides all the services one would normally expect in a hostel from single room accommodation to full catering and laundry facilities. During service users stay, they are also engaged in a key working system which allows them to gain access to welfare rights advice, health care, personal development and any other specialist services that they may need.

Most importantly, the project provides a homely environment where people can feel safe and comfortable and begin to address the issues which may have led to them becoming homeless in the first place. Service Users are supported to move on to their own independent tenancy via the Housing First Service.

Stella Maris is close to the dock area of Belfast over-looking the famous Titanic quarter and Harland and Wolff ship building cranes are located. The Service is close to bus and rail routes and is a 20 minute walk into the city.

Service users may be living chaotic lives and it can be a challenge for volunteers to engage them in activities. ***Depaul celebrates even the smallest of achievement and volunteers should be patient when working with this client group who can be challenging and apathetic due to low self esteem and alcohol related health problems.***



## Stella Maris Tasks

Our aim is to open new possibilities for the project and its service users through the inclusion of volunteers. While the project staff often have to focus on the basic service provision the volunteers can concentrate solely on additional activities which will be of great benefit to the service users.

- Music: We have a number of musical instruments including percussion.
- Life skills: literacy, health awareness, hygiene, relaxation
- Arts & Crafts: Painting, mosaics, crafts, Cookery: We have a canteen facility
- photography, creative projects
- Games: board games, pool/snooker, computer games etc
- Gardening: We have 2 small yards with plants, trees, herbs and vegetables
- Accompany service users on trips outside the project / Befriending
- Spending time to talk and get to know the service users
- Volunteers own project – build on your own personal skills & interests



## Stella Maris Volunteer Essential Skills

- Very patient and have the ability to inspire and motivate a challenging client group
- Empathic and non-judgmental
- Ability to use initiative and be flexible and open to new situations
- Open to understanding the issues surrounding homelessness & addiction
- Willing to work with people who are on the margins of society
- A good level of written and spoken English



## HOMELESS FAMILIES PROJECT ENVIRONMENT

The Homeless Families Project (Mater Dei and Cloverhill) are supported accommodation services for vulnerable families experiencing homelessness (ie. ranging from expectant mother through to mother, father and children).

The Services have 14 / 18 self-contained family units. There are large communal areas for the service users.

The displacement of families is due to any number of factors such as inappropriate living arrangements, overcrowding, domestic violence, bereavement, family relationship break down.

Some of our resident parents are very young themselves and have had very little life experience. It is important that families are kept together and provided with high levels of support during any period of transition. Families are appointed a key worker to ensure they receive the appropriate support.

A support plan (life skills, budgeting, parenting skills and health support) is developed between the service user and worker.

The project provides the time and space during which families can address the issues which led to their housing crisis.

The project supports families to gain practical skills which enable them to adapt to life after they have left the project. Floating Support workers support service users who move into their own tenancies.



### MATER DEI

Mater Dei is situated in a residential area of North Belfast. It is close to a main road into the city centre. Buses are frequent and it is approximately a 30-45 minute walk to the main shopping area at the centre of the city.



### CLOVERHILL

Cloverhill is situated in a large residential area of West Belfast. It is located on a main road with buses into the city centre which take approximately 50 minutes.



## Homeless Families Project Tasks

Our aim is to open new possibilities for the project and its service users through the inclusion of volunteers. While the project staff often have to focus on the basic service provision the volunteers can concentrate solely on additional activities which will be of great benefit to the service users.

**Because service users' have their own flats in the building it can be difficult to get them to socialize and participate in activities within the Project.**

On arrival, each volunteer will be inducted into the policies and procedures of the project. This will include training around safety procedures, professional boundaries, child protection, crisis prevention and intervention, importance of using team communication and other issues relating to working in a residential setting.

- Arts & Crafts: Painting, crafts, jewelry making, educational play
- Social activities – film, games, quizzes
- Keep Fit, Dance classes, sport
- Gardening: Mater Dei has a small garden area that needs developed
- Life skills: literacy, health awareness, relaxation, parenting issues, money management, job search, cookery
- Health / Fitness promotion
- Accompanying resident families on trips outside the project /Befriending
- Spending time to talk and get to know the resident families

For the first few weeks the volunteers will visit both Family Services to get an understanding of them both. This will be a supportive mechanism to ensure that volunteers become familiar with the relevant policies and procedures during the Induction phase.

After induction the volunteers will get involved in workshops and activities. Volunteers will also play a role in team meetings and debriefing sessions in which any issues are handed over from one team to another.

## Homeless Families Volunteer Essential Skills

- Empathic and non-judgmental
- Patient and self-motivated
- Ability to use initiative and be flexible and open to new situations
- Interested in, and a basic understanding of the issues around homelessness
- Willing to work with children (of all ages) and parents who are on the margins of society
- A good level of written and spoken English

