



**The National Mental Health
Stigma Reduction Partnership**

2015 Report





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A message from our Director



2015 saw our ambassador programme grow from strength to strength, with over 80 voices now ready to share their personal experiences of mental health problems to challenge stigma and discrimination. The sharing of these real life stories amplifies and authenticates our call for every one of us to join the national movement for change in our behaviour towards our own and others' mental health.

2015's Green Ribbon campaign has sparked an increasing number of conversations about mental health and an increasing number of Irish adults feel more comfortable in having a conversation about mental health. The stand-out successes can be seen in the workplace, where conversations about mental health are now as commonplace as conversations with friends or family.

On behalf of See Change, I would like to thank the campaign's gracious story-sharers, public ambassadors, partner organisations, funders and everyone who supported the movement's stigma-challenging initiatives and events around the country in 2015.

John Saunders
Director of See Change



Foreword: See Change ambassador Laura Louise Condell

I decided to become a See Change Ambassador in 2012 to try to change minds about mental health.

I have always loved See Change's 'changing minds one conversation at a time' approach. I really believe this is the way to create change. We are all unique and everybody experiences mental health differently but the common ground is, we all have mental health and the more we talk about it the more we can break down the barriers that stigma has created.

The last few years have seen great change in attitudes to mental health in Irish society. I know we have a long way to go, but I can feel the difference. Some of it is internal; from being a See Change ambassador I now have so much experience talking about my mental health and indeed thinking about it in a broader setting, that I no longer feel like I need to do battle with everybody I meet any more. Each interaction is now an opportunity. To reduce stigma about mental health yes, but also to connect with people. Being honest and authentic quickly creates connections with people in a way that being so drowned in self stigma never allowed.

I have met some amazing people. Especially fellow ambassadors - all of whom come from different backgrounds and with different stories to share - See Change staff and volunteers, people at events, people reacting to talks etc. Amazing, fascinating, funny, intelligent, creative, unique people. Instead of torn apart by stigma, we are brought together by a dedication to change. This has enriched my life more than I ever could have imagined.

All See Change ambassadors have lived experiences of mental health difficulties. And for a lot of us, those difficulties are ongoing, or fluctuating. That's the thing about See Change, you don't need to be 'cured' or 'fixed'. It's not about 'conquering your demons' and never encountering difficulty again. That was one of the biggest appeals of See Change; people sharing lived experiences. I have grown so much as a person in the last 4 years, yet I still struggle to manage my mental health. Now I understand that you don't need to be 'cured' to talk about mental health, you don't need to be 'better' to have a story worth sharing.

In 2014 for Green Ribbon month I decided to take three of the themes that people are always being told to do to look after their mental health, and which can be quite daunting; food, exercise and lifestyle, and try to present them in a way that would be accessible to everyone. And so myself and a few volunteers came up with the Good Mood Series; Good Mood Food, Good Mood Moves and Good Mood Tools. All of our events and workshops were about idea and information sharing; non-prescriptive and non-judgmental events. No lifestyle shaming allowed! In 2015 we combined the series to make the Good Mood

Festival; a day long event including the same themes from the year before. We hope that it now it will be an annual event; which can change and grow according to what people want from it.

We've come so far, but there is still a lot to do. For 2016 I hope that we keep up this momentum. Change is happening but it has not reached everybody. We need to look out for each other and challenge stigma when we are able to. My hope for mental health in Ireland for 2016 is that more and more people can feel comfortable being themselves, however they are feeling. We are creating that change. Let's keep it up!



**The See Change
vision is that every
person in Ireland
can be open and
positive about their
own and others
mental health.**



About the Campaign



Established in 2010, See Change is Ireland's national stigma-reduction programme, working to change minds about mental health problems and end stigma. We work as a partnership of over 90 organisations to create a disruptive, community driven social movement to reduce the stigma and discrimination associated with mental health problems.

What we want to achieve

1. an environment where people can be more open and positive in their attitudes and behaviour towards mental health;
2. greater understanding and acceptance of people with mental health problems;
3. greater understanding and knowledge of mental health problems and of health services that provide support for mental health problems; and
4. a reduction in the stigma associated with mental health problems and challenge discrimination.

Where we work

To achieve our objectives, See Change works within a number of inter-related settings. The See Change movement is about finding the conversation, joining in and working with people and communities to change minds about mental health problems in Ireland. Inspired by international best practice, we take an approach that focuses on the following key settings;

Partnership

working with over 90 organisations to share capacity and mobilise change

Online & Media

Sharing real stories to break the silence of stigma

Grassroots

Joining with and engaging communities and local groups on the ground

Arts

challenging perceptions and sparking open discussion

Our Target Audiences

Young males (18-24), Farmers & people living in rural communities, People in the workplace

Our key target groups for phase one of the campaign (2010-2012) were determined by the findings from our benchmark study on Irish attitudes to mental health problems (See Change, 2010).

Young males, people in the workplace, farmers and rurally-based communities emerged as particularly vulnerable groups; among whom stigma is most keenly felt as they are

- most likely to hide a diagnosis,
- least likely to seek help for themselves
- or to know how to help others.

Our Investors

In 2015, the See Change partnership was kindly supported by the following organisations:



The Department of Health & Children through the National Lottery



THE EQUALITY AUTHORITY
AN tÚDARÁS COMHIONANNAIS

Equality Authority
(now Irish Human Rights Commission)

**National Office
for Suicide Prevention**

**HSE National Office for
Suicide Prevention**



Saint John of God Hospital

St. John of God Hospital



Shine

**St Patrick's
Mental Health Services**



St. Patrick's Mental Health Services

Partnership Activity

The work of See Change is underpinned and driven by a partnership model. We recognise that the job of challenging stigma and changing attitudes to mental health problems needs concerted effort and collaboration with like-minded groups from every sector of society. If See Change is to make a decisive impact on stigma and discrimination, then we can't go it alone.

Our partner organisations represent every sector of society, from the mental health sector, education, arts, general health, business, public affairs' worlds and also representative organisations of people with self-experience of mental health problems.

In 2015, the See Change partnership grew to over 94 organisations.

**A&S Fitness • Ahead • Amen • Support Services • Anam Cara • Aware • BelongTo • Bloomfield
Ballymun Youth Regional Service • Bodywhys • Catholic Guides of Ireland • Console
Business in the Community (BITC) • Citizens Information Board • Cork Counselling Service
College of Psychiatrists of Ireland • Cycle against Suicide • Department of Health & Children
DCU School of Nursing • DCU Students' Union • Detect • EHA • Employability
EPIC Online • Eve Ltd • Equality Authority • First Fortnight • Garageland • Gateway Mental
Health Project • Gay Switchboard Dublin • Gay and Lesbian Equality Network • Grow
Headline • Headstrong • Headsup.ie • HAIL • HSE • HSE • NOSP • IBEC • ICTU • IFA
ICA • Inspire Ireland/Reachout.com • Irish Advocacy Network • Irish Association of
Suicidology • ICSA • Irish Cattle & Sheep Farmers Assoc. Irish Council of General
Practitioners • Irish Sports Council • Its Good2Talk • Kanchi Network • Laois
Community Forum • Macrana Feirme • Men's Health Forum • Mental Health Commission •
MABS • MyMind • Mental Health Ireland • Mental Health Reform • NDA
National Youth Council of Ireland • National Service Users Executive • Near Media Coop
North Dublin Befriending Service • NUI Maynooth Students' Union • One in Four
Open Heart House • PaveePoint • Please Talk • PCI College • Rise Foundation
Samaritans • SOSAD • Shine • Seachtain Na Gaeilge • Sigmar Recruitment Ltd
Smashing Times Theatre Company • Spun Out • St. John of God Hospital • SOS
Stop Suicide • Tamnnach • TASK (Training & Support Kilkenny) • TCD School of Nursing and
Midwifery • Teagasc • TCD Students' Union • The Rise Foundation • Transgender Equality
Network Ireland • Turn2Me • UCC Students' Union • UCD School of Veterinary Medicine • UCD
College of Agriculture and Food Science Union of Students in Ireland • 3 T's • Univeristy of
Limerick Students' Union • Wicklow Local Sports Partnership • Work4U**

Online & Media Activity

Open conversation online and in media is a powerful way to challenge perceptions and share stories about the mental health problems that are common to all of us. A cornerstone of our approach is social contact theory: sharing stories of real people's experiences of mental health problems is a powerful way to challenge stigma.

Media

Our See Change ambassadors contributed to 92 media interviews and opinion pieces



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Irish Politics International Opinion Culture My Feed Election 2016

Tags: #MIND, #DISABILITY, #COLUMB, #EMPLOYEE, #BIPOLAR

'I had a nervous breakdown, but I was ready to come back to work. The gap on my CV was a big problem'

We are not the ones that employers need to be worried about. They need to be conscious of their existing employees who are struggling with their mental health but are afraid to say so for fear of discrimination, writes Miriam Dowling

Nov 6th 2015, 5:00 PM 24,738 Views 12 Comments

Share 210 Tweet 29 Email 15

Miriam Dowling

IN FEBRUARY 2003, I had a nervous breakdown. My brain just shut down. I was numb, unable to feel emotion, all that existed was darkness. It took me some years to recover from this experience and in 2007, I readied myself to re-enter the workplace.

I wanted to have a purpose, a reason to get out of bed. I wanted to contribute to society and to the household. Somewhat naively, I thought I just needed to apply for jobs, talk to people I know and see what kind of work was out there.

I wasn't looking for a high-powered executive position, my experience was in office administration. I didn't think I'd have a problem picking up even short-term contract work, as I had been in continuous employment since leaving school and never had a problem gaining employment.

I wasn't prepared for what faced me, a lot of rejection.

The gap on my CV



LUST LIFE

ABOUT US VIDEOS PROINEX PARK WALKERLIN WRITE FOR US CONTACT US

HOME MENTAL HEALTH PHYSICAL HEALTH SOUL THE BIGGER

Exploring 'dignity' and its connection to World Mental Health Week



irishtimes.com/life-and-style/people/behind-the-news-sarah-bredin-mental-health-advocate

Behind the News: Sarah Bredin, mental health advocate

Attitudes to mental health are changing. One woman with bipolar disorder talks about her approach to her condition

© Sat, Jun 20, 2015 04:40

Sylvia Thompson Follow @sylviajthompson



Sarah Bredin: "I was slowly living in a state of depression without knowing it"

One in 20 of us will have a psychotic experience in our lifetimes, according to the Psychological Society of Ireland – and simple human understanding is what will then best help us to get on with our lives, according to one 35-year-old with bipolar disorder.

"Eight months of low-budget counselling was of more benefit to me than all the psychiatrist appointments in 16 years," says Sarah Bredin, who was diagnosed after a manic episode when she was 19. She was among the 300 people who attended *Understanding Psychosis*, a talk that the society hosted

Eating Disorders Awareness Week 2015



See Change worked in partnership with Bodywhys and Headline to put the spotlight on Eating Disorders Awareness by focusing on the facts and leaving the myths behind.

- People can and do recover from eating disorders
- Remember an eating disorder is a coping mechanism and it is not all about food and weight.
- Remember you are asking a person to give up their way of coping so resistance is normal.

Little Things Campaign

See Change again worked in partnership with the NOSP on the major HSE "Little Things" social marketing campaign launched in 2014. Our See Change ambassadors continued to share their personal stories as part of the campaign.



Voice Media Awards

See Change collaborated with Headline, the national media monitoring agency for mental health and suicide to award

The Irish Mirror the 2015 Voice Media Award for its excellent quality and quantity of media coverage given to people with self-experience.



The award aims to recognise the important role played by media in giving voice to people with experience of mental health problems. This marks the first time that a tabloid news publication has won a Headline award, marking the continued focus and commitment being given by newspapers like the Mirror to responsible coverage of mental health, suicide and stories of personal experience.

Grassroots Activity

Grassroots & Community Strand

See Change recognises that real change - in terms of attitudes to mental health problems - happens at local and community level. With this in mind, we work closely with our partners with grassroots networks to help spread the See Change message with local communities, networks of service users, campus communities, membership organisations and representative bodies.

Volunteer & Ambassador Strategy

In 2015, See Change completed a highly successful initiative to recruit and train new volunteers and ambassadors. A series of nationwide training events took place in early 2015, culminating in a 'masterclass' for campaign ambassadors interested in sharing their stories of personal experience to help challenge stigma. The masterclass included media training from Dil Wickremasinghe (Newstalk) and Riyadh Khalaf (Spin1038 fm) and an opportunity to hear about the experiences of the campaign's existing ambassadors.

See Change now has over 80 ambassadors who share their very real stories about their experiences with a mental health problem. See Change has developed a manual to support the 200 existing volunteers and new recruits in running stigma-reduction events and initiatives. It includes how-to guides, template media and evaluation materials and testimonies from volunteers who have put together very successful initiatives in their own communities.

Good Mood Festival

See Change once again teamed up with The Dublin Lesbian Line to bring back the Good Mood Series in 2015 as a day long festival. The festival was held over three floors in Capel st's Outhouse, a LGBT Community Resource Centre. People from a variety of backgrounds crossed the threshold of Outhouse to take part in a unique day of free events, workshops, demonstrations, performance by singer Sonya Grimes, a reading by author Sharyn Hayden, poetry by Alvy Carragher, Spoken Word by Brave New Voices and Vickey Curtis, yoga from the Dublin Holistic Centre, story sharing and conversation. The SoapBox Sessions featured speakers from See Change, TENI, Outhouse all sharing their personal experiences.



Time to Talk Football

See Change was delighted to announce our partnership with the Football Association of Ireland to encourage conversation about mental health among fans, staff, players and coaches. To kick-start the partnership, thousands of green ribbons were distributed at the Irl v Eng match by See Change volunteers. A video message by Irish football stars Stephen McPhail, Craig Sexton, Stephanie Roche, Shay Given was played at half-time in the Aviva aimed at taking the fear out of talking about mental health.



Arts Activity

First Fortnight Festival 2015

The First Fortnight Festival returned for the first 2 weeks of 2015 to stage another ground-breaking programme of mental health-themed arts events aimed at sparking conversation and challenging stigma. See Change was delighted to be part of it once again along with our partners at Mental Health Reform and SpunOut. This year, See Change and First Fortnight in association with Access Cinema brought conversations of mental health to the movies with various screenings of the brilliant Frank.



Suite of stigma challenging activities

See Change has developed a suite of activities that organisations and individuals can run as stigma-reduction initiatives, including a mental health themed magic show, table quiz, comedy set and various promotional materials.

In collaboration with our partners, ambassadors and volunteers, we have devised this range of engaging and thought-provoking stigma-challenging activities to help spark discussion of mental health and are delighted to be able to offer them to organisations, groups and individuals to run with the support of the See Change team.

Our suite of arts based activities includes:

- MadCraic - Comedian John Moynes has written a stand-up comedy set informed by his own personal experiences with mental health problems.
- You're not TOO anything for ANYTHING - A talk and discussion with playwright and screenwriter Stefanie Preissner
- Solpadeine is my boyfriend – Play by Stefanie Preissner
- How songs saved my life – performance and workshop by Sean Millar, musician and theatre maker
- & how does that make you feel – mental health table quiz
- See Change on campus – The See Change team are always available to share our stigma-reduction and campaigning expertise to SU officers, class reps, welfare committees and the general student body

In association with



Target Group 1: People in the workplace

See Change has identified the workplace as a key setting for stigma-reduction activity. We are working with our partners to create honest discussion and understanding of mental health problems in the workplace and collaborating with various groups to find ways to support employers and employees in launching this all important conversation.

See Change in your Workplace programme

See Change continued to work with various organisations on the 6-step “See Change in your workplace” programme, guiding employers and employee towards creating open workplace cultures, supporting each other and working to their full potential.



The half-day “See Change in your workplace” workshop continues to be in high demand, providing information on mental health and mental health problems for employers, managers and employees as well as offering best practise advice on creating workplaces that are free of stigma and discrimination and equipped to support the mental health needs of the organisation.

See Change delivered 40 See Change in your Workplace training programmes in 2014. In addition to this, lunchtime talks with See Change ambassadors have been delivered to numerous organisations.

See Change in the Workplace Pledge Programme

In April 2015 See Change launched our “See Change in the Workplace Pledge Programme”.

The aim of the programme is to help facilitate a cultural shift in workplaces so that employers and employees feel supported and secure in starting a discussion about how mental health can affect each one of us. It approaches all aspects of working life – recognising that everyone in the organisation has a role to play in challenging stigma.

By signing up to the pledge, organisations are showing that they are committed to creating an open culture around mental health for managers and employees.



The See Change Workplace Programme

Our 6-step workplace programme consists of the following:

- **Managerial Level (Address the needs of the organisation at managerial level)**
 1. Training workshops: Receive "See Change Mental Health in the Workplace" training for line managers.
 2. Policy overhaul and implementation: See Change has developed a template "Mental Health Policy Document" which will be shared with you to help your organisation develop a Mental Health Policy.
- **Staff-wide (Embed an open culture towards mental health across your organisation)**
 1. Mental health awareness/ wellness training: Host mental health awareness training and wellness workshops for staff. Create internal communications campaigns promoting wellbeing.
 2. In-house mental health promotion: Nominate staff champions to promote wellness and challenge stigma and provide information for staff to access with ease.
- **Public engagement (Make it official that you are a See Change workplace)**
 1. Engage your stakeholders: Organise a stigma challenging activity in your workplace in partnership with See Change and involve local communities and stakeholders.
 2. Become an official See Change workplace by signing the workplace pledge: This is a public statement that your organisation is aiming to tackle mental health stigma and discrimination in the workplace and has completed or is in the process of completing the first five steps in the workplace programme aimed at creating an open culture around mental health at work for staff.

Organisations that signed up to the pledge in April 2015:

- Accenture
- Adroll
- Ballymun Regional Youth Service
- Bloomfield Hospital
- Core Media
- Cornmarket Financial Services
- Deloitte
- Ibec
- Mercer
- Shine
- Valeo Vision Systems

A number of other organisations signed up to the pledge later in 2015 and we will host another pledge event in 2016 where new pledge organisations will receive their certificates.

The See Change team would like to extend our gratitude to the National Office for Suicide Prevention for funding this project which enables workplaces to receive line manager training free of charge.

We would also like to say a special thank you to our partner Suicide or Survive for their commitment to the workplace programme and assistance with the development of the programme during 2015 and to all the workshop facilitators. We look forward to welcoming some new workshop facilitators in 2016.

Thanks to all of the organisations that have engaged with us in 2015 and we look forward to working with you again in 2016 along with new organisations interested in the pledge programme.

For further details please visit our website
www.seechange.ie

Target Group 2: Farmers and people living in rural communities

In 2015, See Change continued to collaborate with our partners who have a presence on the ground in rural communities to explore ways in which farmers can be supported and stigma can be addressed.

Our research showed that 72% of Irish farmers would not want others to know if they had a mental health problem, 39% of farmers would hide a diagnosis of a mental health problem from friends and 33% would delay seeking help for fear of someone knowing about it.

National Ploughing Championship 2015

See Change in partnership with the Irish Farmers Association, MacranaFeirme, the Irish Cattle and Sheep Farmers Association, the Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers Association, the Irish Countrywomen's Association and Teagasc distributed thousands of free wallet-sized "Talking Cards" to the 281,000 'Ploughing Championships attendees that feature straight-talking advice aimed at taking the fear out of talking about mental health and encouraging open discussion.



Farming partner organisations' working group.

See Change established a working group of all partner organisations working in the agricultural or rural setting to share learnings, research and to find ways to collaborate on stigma-reduction activity across the agricultural sector. This includes representatives from the Irish Farmers Association, MacranaFeirme, the Irish Cattle and Sheep Farmers Association, the Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers Association, the Irish Countrywomen's Association and Teagasc.



Changing minds about mental health one conversation at a time



in association with



You don't have to be an expert to talk about mental health.

Talk, but listen too: simply being there will mean a lot.

Keep in touch: meet up, phone, email or text.

Don't just talk about mental health: chat about everyday things as well.

Remind them you care: small things can make a big difference.

Be patient: ups and downs can happen.

To find a support service near you visit greenribbon.ie/need-help.php

To talk to someone call the Farm & Rural Stress Helpline on 1800 742 645

Target Group 3: Young People & The Please Talk Programme

Our research showed that 72% would not want others to know if they had a mental health problem, 56% would hide a diagnosis of a mental health problem from friends (increased from 39% in 2010) and 35% would delay seeking help for fear of someone knowing about it.

In partnership with:



See Change has been collaborating with the Please Talk campaign since 2010 to engage Ireland's student population on the subject of their own and others mental health and began managing the programme in August 2014 as part of our youth strand. Please Talk is supported by the HSE through the National Office of Suicide Prevention.

I Talked Campaign

Six students, each with a personal message to tell about their health joined together to realize the first of its kind mental health exhibit that toured college campuses to encourage openness around mental health. More than simply telling Irish students to talk, the Please Talk #ITalked campus tour, for the first time, featured the messages of students who had been through a tough time and realised the power of talking.



This ground-breaking series coincided with the often stressful period of deadlines and exams in April and May 2015 and was hosted in 5 colleges across Ireland. These were UCD, TCD, DCU, UCC and NUIG. The Feedback from this campaign has proved popular with students and several colleges have contacted us to get involved in the campaign for 2016.

Chats for Change 2015



Chats for Change is an annual mental health campaign for third level colleges which is in association with St. Patrick's Mental Health Services, The Union of Students in Ireland and Please Talk. DJ and Radio presenter Aidan Power launched the Chats for Change campaign in Dublin Institute of Technology on Monday 9th November 2015 which urged third level students to talk about their mental health while enjoying a cup of tea with someone.

The Roadshow travelled to the following campuses; Dublin Institute of Technology, Athlone Institute of Technology, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, Cork Institute of Technology and the University College Cork. Over 15,000 tea packs were distributed across college campuses nationwide which also included pens with tips on how to start the conversation about mental health and useful support services both on and off campus. This was a very successful campaign with a high level of student engagement both in the colleges as well as through social media. Twitter got a reach of over 3 million and was trending as number 2 in Ireland.

As agreed with the Department of Health and Children, Shine is the coordinating organisation for the See Change programme and serves as the secretariat for all partner organisations' stigma-challenging initiatives.





Green Ribbon Campaign

Impact Report
May 2015



Campaign Overview

Campaign aim	To encourage open conversation of mental health problems in Ireland.
Target groups	General population and also encompassing See Change target groups of young males, farmers and people in the workplace.
Campaign duration	May 2015.
Distribution partners	Irish Rail, Citizens Information and MABS  Iarnród Éireann Irish Rail  Citizens Information  mabs <small>Money Advice & Budgeting Service</small>
Campaign partners	See Change in collaboration with 90 partner organisations.
Principle activity	Distribution of 500,000 green ribbons free of charge.
Grassroots activity	Hundreds of events in communities, workplaces and clubs organised nationwide by See Change partner organisations and growing network of hundreds of volunteers and campaign ambassadors.
Online elements	Greenribbon.ie, dedicated Twitter, Facebook, Thunderclap and Twibbon campaigns and 4 guest hosts of @GreenRibbonIRL.



See Change is Ireland's national programme working to change minds about mental health problems in Ireland and end stigma. The Green Ribbon campaign has proven to be See Change's flagship campaign where one month in the Irish calendar is now earmarked for helping to the end the stigma of mental health problems with thousands of organisations, groups, workplaces and individuals helping to spread the message:

“You don't have to be an expert to talk about mental health or have all the answers. Let someone know you are there for them, ask them how they are doing and simply listen.”

The third annual Green Ribbon campaign took place during the month of May 2015. Hundreds of local and national events took place as part of national the Green Ribbon calendar. This social movement to encourage a national conversation about mental health is led by 90 partner organisations, hundreds of volunteers and over 60 campaign ambassadors with real-life experience of mental health problems ready to share their own stories to help others and end stigma.

500,000 Green Ribbons were distributed free of charge by See Change partners, activists and at Irish Rail stations, Citizens Information Centres and MABS offices nationwide.

The ask is simple -wear the Green Ribbon and show your support for ending the silence around mental health problems. Take two and start a conversation with someone about mental health!





Market Research

The Green Ribbon campaign has sparked an increasing number of conversations about mental health and an increasing number of Irish adults feel more comfortable in having a conversation about mental health. The stand-out successes can be seen in the workplace, where conversations about mental health are now as commonplace as conversations with friends or family.

Post campaign study carried out by Millward Brown in June 2015.

- 75% say they now feel more comfortable in having a conversation about mental health (up from 71% in 2014).
- 66% say the Green Ribbon campaign has encouraged them to start conversations about mental health.
- 62% have been hearing conversations about mental health among family and friends since the campaign (same as 2014 and up from 52% in 2013).
- 61% have been hearing mental health conversations in their workplaces since the campaign (up from 53% in 2014 and 44% in 2013).





Campaign Highlights

National Time To Talk Day

Friday 15th of May was designated as National Time To Talk Day. Numerous events were hosted across the country to encourage people to make the time and space for conversations about mental health. Our partners at Catholic Guides of Ireland held their national Green Ribbon distribution at Irish Rail stations across the country.







Woman's Way Health and Wellbeing Show

Woman's Way readers were invited to take time out for their own wellbeing with a mental health seminar from Green Ribbon campaign manager Sorcha Lowry and See Change ambassadors Ena Howell, Nicola Hynds and Kara Madden at the Woman's Way Health and Wellbeing Show in the Silver Springs Hotel Cork.



Launch of See Change in your Workplace Pledge Programme

Kick-starting the Green Ribbon campaign 12 organisations officially pledged to make open discussion of mental health an organisational priority and challenge the stigma, discrimination and silence that often follows mental health problems in the workplace.

The organisations that signed the pledge in May 2015 were Allergen Pharma, Accenture, Adroll, Ballymun Regional Youth Resource, Bloomfield Hospital, Core Media, Cornmarket Financial Services, Deloitte, Mercer, Shine, State Street and Valeo Vision Systems.

The See Change in your Workplace programme offers a 6-step roadmap for organisations to create an open culture around mental health for managers and employees to support the mental health needs of all staff. It approaches all aspects of working life – recognising that everyone in the organisation has a role to play in challenging stigma.

See Change was invited to Leinster House to bring mental health to a national forum and host a Green Ribbon themed workshop for TDs, Senators and parliamentary staff.





Barack Obama Plaza

"We started a conversation, a real conversation with our staff in the Barack Obama Plaza and encouraged everyone to open up and to recognise that it's alright not to feel ok. Having been touched by mental health issues and suicide in our first year of operating, it was a discreet way for the staff here to do their bit for colleagues and customers, by wearing the green ribbon we were saying, I'm here even if it's just to say hello. We opened the eyes of 1000's of customers to the issues that we all face in everyday life and when one customer approached me personally and said "its fresh to see a young business tear down an old stigma" I knew our contribution to the campaign was working.

Personally wearing the green ribbon is something powerful, because those of us who suffer with mental illness know about it, and when we see this symbol, this ribbon on a lapel we know that I have someone to speak to, there is someone who will return a smile or someone who is willing to listen. I felt positivity and joy seeing my team and colleagues here embrace the campaign and genuinely felt a positive mental attitude around work.

I found that there were discussions around depression mainly and the frustration people feel when this dark cloud comes over them, I hope that from conversations with colleagues they know that they can confide in us as a company to speak with and help them through dark times. We also discussed the "down" after a heavy night of drinking and what it does to our mental stability, we were made more aware and felt comfortable discussing things I feel.

My highlight was cutting out the large green ribbon 8ft long and hanging it over our entrance door, this sparked a lot of conversation and became a highlight for some celebrities to take selfies with during the campaign."

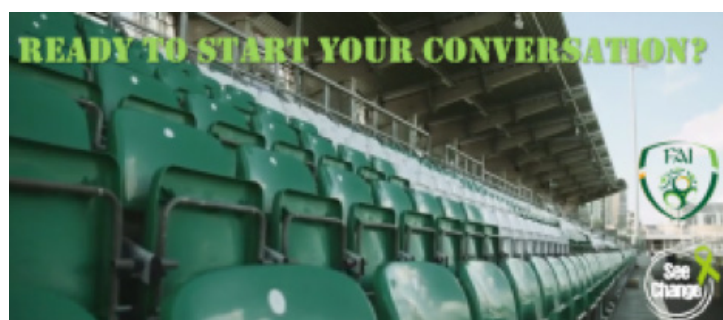
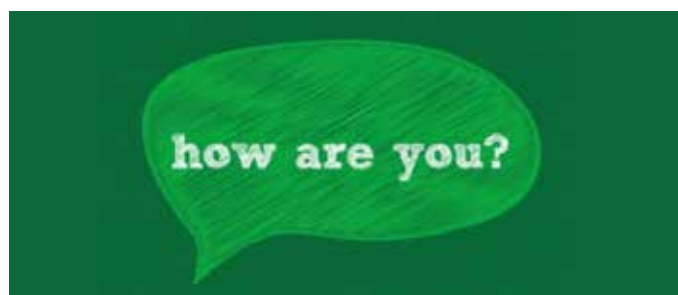
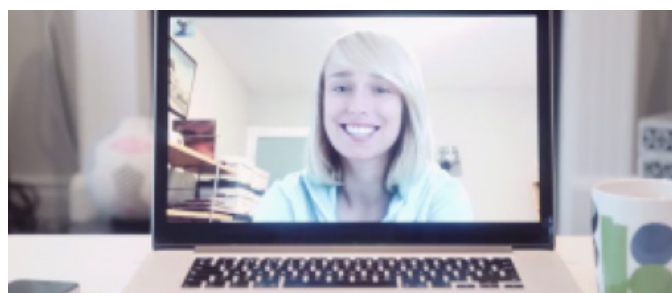
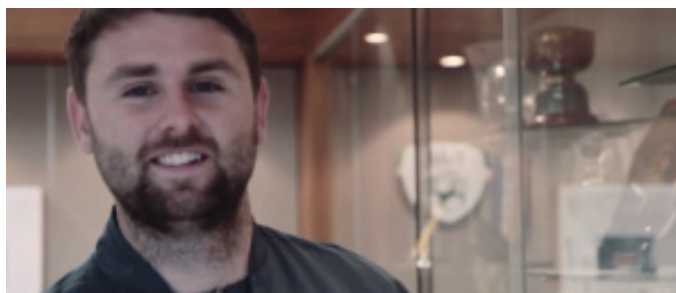
Henry Healy, Manager, Barack Obama Plaza





Irish football stars team up to get people talking about mental health

As part of Green Ribbon 2015, See Change was delighted to announce our partnership with the Football Association of Ireland to encourage conversation about mental health among fans, staff, players and coaches. To kick-start the partnership, thousands of green ribbons were distributed at the Irl v Eng match by See Change volunteers. A video message by Irish football stars Stephen McPhail, Craig Sexton, Stephanie Roche, Shay Given was played at half-time in the Aviva aimed at taking the fear out of talking about mental health.





Let's Talk & Walk Forest Walk series

See Change teamed up with the Irish Farmers Association, Coillte and Mental Health Ireland to organise the third annual nationwide series of “Let’s Talk and Walk” events as part of Green Ribbon month 2015 with walks organised in Galway, Kerry, Donegal and Wicklow hundreds of families took the positive step to make time for themselves and mental health in the great outdoors.



“Coillte were very pleased to host Let’s Talk & Walk – Green Ribbon events in partnership with See Change, the IFA, and Mental Health Ireland. Hundreds of people took part in the walks nationwide providing communities throughout Ireland with the opportunity to connect with friends, neighbours, and families, opening up the conversation about mental health and cultivating Walking and Talking as a habit for life, by regularly walking Coillte’s forest tracks and trails which provide many health benefits.”

Charlie Burke, Coillte

“IFA was proud to be part of the Green Ribbon campaign for the third year running. These walks were on in different forest parks around Ireland and the aim was to make the month of may synonymous with encouraging an open conversation on mental health. It was fantastic to see people of all ages both young and old out about on the day and kids bringing dogs and even green ribbons tied round the dogs. Everyone really enjoyed the walk and chat after over the cuppa. I notice this year more and more green ribbons been worn and for longer period of time I still meet people at meetings and they’re still on their jackets. I think we made an impact around the country on changing minds about mental health but it does take time I was delighted also to see my kids arrive home from school on a particular day wearing green ribbons as they had been distributed through the schools. On a personal note I enjoyed been part of it and seeing all the green ribbons worn where ever I would go. This is helping people realise that it is good to talk”

Maura Canning, IFA



Sunday Best Fest

St Patrick's Mental Health Services partnered with See Change to present the finale event of Green Ribbon 2015. The doors of St Patrick's Mental Health Services opened to both the public and service users to enjoy a truly unique evening of music and spoken word featuring music from the Clara Rose Band, Attention Béb  and spoken word performances from Brave New Voices and Sean Ruane.

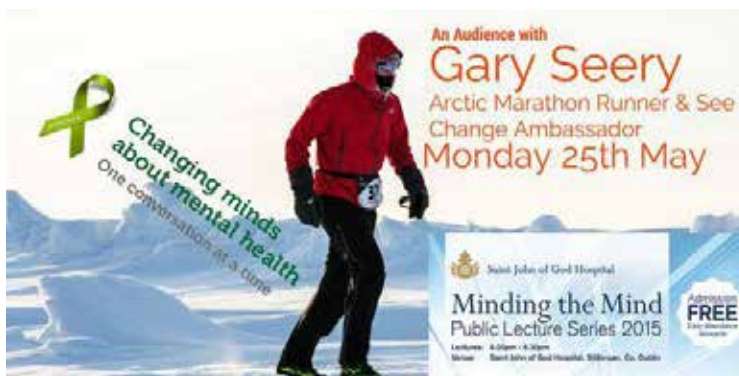






An audience with Arctic Marathon Runner Gary Seery

As part of Saint John of God Hospital's annual public lecture series, resident Health Promotion Specialist Donal Scanlan hosted an audience with Gary Seery, See Change ambassador and Arctic Marathon Runner. In this engaging and awe-inspiring story, the audience heard about the mental strength, resilience and determination of one man's recovery journey.





Walk and Talk Merrion Square Tour with the College of Psychiatrists

The College of Psychiatrists organised a walking tour of Merrion Square Garden with history, information, personal stories and trivia on the mental health theme. Speakers on the day included See Change ambassador Laura Louise Condell, College members Dr John Hillery, Vice-President John Tobin Dr. Denis Eustace, Dr Roisin Plunkett and Liam Hennessy of REFOCUS.



Green Ribbon at the Milk Market

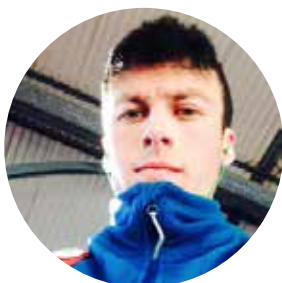
Limerick Mental Health Association held its annual Green Ribbon festival event at Limerick's Milk Market with more than 20 stalls, music and children's entertainment. Hundreds gathered to show their support for mental health. Event organiser Amanda Clifford and Mayor Michael Sheahan spoke of the positive atmosphere in the Milk Market and the high attendance.





Take-over of @GreenRibbonIRL

With the spotlight on conversations about mental health for the month of May, we invited See Change ambassadors and partners to curate the Green Ribbon twitter account.



Gavin O'Donovan

See Change Ambassador
[@GDon0](#)



John Buckley

SpunOut
[@JohnDaveBuckley](#)



Donal Scanlan

St John of God's Hospital
[@DonalScanlan](#)



Anne-Marie Flynn

See Change Ambassador
[@thecailinrua](#)

"During the month of May See Change invited me to spend a week curating their Green Ribbon Twitter account. As I'm an internet fiend, I thought this will be easy, a few tweet here and there, but it was something a lot more challenging. I learnt a lot about my own views on mental health and spent time thinking through stigma that I didn't know existed for me. What was great was embedding myself actively (not passively as I tend to sometimes do with my own Twitter account). The audience was a strong mix of tentative new voices on mental health and established people, sharing experiences, advice, stories and empathy. Challenging conversations around self harm, LGBT mental health and stigma were met with support and sensitivity. The social media medium is that quiet change maker that shapes the conversation around us, I loved being a part of it."

John Buckley, SpunOut.ie





Green Ribbon at Cycle Against Suicide

Thousands of Green Ribbons were distributed along the Cycle Against Suicide route in the opening week of the campaign. See Change ambassador Ellen Downey, Gary Seery and Ciara McCullough joined up to share their message to Cycle Supporters along the route. Green Ribbon distribution partner Irish Rail supported a team of cyclists from their Athlone division who wore specially commissioned Green Ribbon jerseys on the cycle.



Green Ribbon story telling evening

Café Moda in Rathmines opened its doors to the public for a night of storytelling and sharing by a variety of performers, musician and poets including Mark Cox, Tom Rowley, Sarah Nangle, Catherine Brophy, Alvy Carragher, Kellie Marie Reynolds and See Change ambassadors Sean O'Reilly, Rick Rossiter, Mairead Carey and event organiser Sarah Monaghan.





Green Ribbon activity in South Tipperary

Local See Change ambassadors Kelley Lee and Rita Bourke put together a month long programme of activities to get Clonmel, Cahir and its environs talking openly about mental health. Their whole-month programme of barbecues, coffee mornings, information sessions and distribution days meant that the Green Ribbon message gathered such momentum that the finale community event hosted by local employer Lodge Security saw over 800 people pack the Lissenhall Community Hall to show their support.

"I've had so many highlights, speaking to so many people from all walks of life. One conversation that really stuck with me is talking to a homeless guy from Clonmel, he is also a drug user. I handed him a ribbon, he asked me if he could have a couple more for some of his friends. He told me he lost his brother to suicide, he also told me that he attempted it several times. I told him that there was a reason he survived. I told him there was hope, and he's now seeing a counsellor. We've so much support here in the Clonmel area. With the Mayor, members from every political party, and various organisations backing everything we do. they're also re posting our statuses on Facebook. It was also really great to speak so publicly and in front of Minister Alan Kelly at our event in Nenagh. People keep asking why do See Change not accept money for the ribbons, I reply "because it doesn't take anything to talk or to listen"

Kelley Lee, See Change Ambassador





BRYR spark conversations with staff, young people and the wider community



Ballymun Regional Youth Resource ran Green Ribbon activities across the organisation for staff, the young people using the service and the wider community. As part of taking the See Change in your workplace Pledge, BRYC held a wellness day for staff, delivered by Suicide or Survive, on selfcare, preventing burnout, mindfulness and coping skills.

BRYR compiled a “Time to Talk Kit” which included some wellness tips, tea bags, ribbon, bracelet, pen and support cards and 500 were distributed to young people to start the conversation about mental health. An intimate Wellness Night for young people saw story-sharing, healthy food, guided meditation, an introductory session to creative writing. A “Look after yourself” themed evening was hosted in the lead up to the Junior and Leaving Cert exams and included activities such as relaxation/ mindfulness themed evening, advice and techniques on staying calm and coping though the exams.

BRYR Outreach Workers had “walks & talks” with young people as part of their street work 3 – 4 times per week about the stigma attached to mental health and provided tips for keeping healthy, raising awareness around services and gathering feedback on issues facing young people. Open space “Eat and Talk” discussions about the stigma attached to mental health took place in the Reco and including chill out music and relaxation techniques.



EVE Clubhouses Go Green

EVE clubhouses continue to surprise and delight us every year with new and creative ways to promote the Green Ribbon and get people talking about mental health.



Suaimhneas Clubhouse Scavenger Hunt

EVE's Suaimhneas Clubhouse devised a novel way to engage local business on the theme of mental health by organising a scavenger hunt for them. Green ribbon clues and balloons were hidden in various companies around the industrial estate. This was an imaginative approach to getting companies involved with the green ribbon campaign. Suaimhneas also organised a coffee morning to help further raise awareness and encourage people to have a coffee and a chat about mental health.



Rainbow Clubhouse's Flash the Tasche initiative

EVE's Rainbow Clubhouse in Ballyfermot brought a comic element to an otherwise serious topic but encouraging people to have fun with the campaign by downloading their specially commissioned green moustaches and to share the message by sharing a selfie with one.



Freeze for Eve Flash Mob

The 'Freeze for EVE' flash mob for Green Ribbon by EVE and Focus Ireland's High Hopes Choir took place at several locations across Dublin city throughout May. Participants froze like statues on Dublin's South King St. to encourage passers-by to take time out to reflect on and be mindful of their own mental health.



Phoenix Clubhouse bring Green Ribbons to the Bealtine festivities

To celebrate Green Ribbon month, Phoenix Clubhouse Clondalkin joined the Social Inclusion Unit team from South Dublin County Council at the Bealtaine Festival closing event and tea dance to share green ribbons and discuss mental health with everyone in attendance.



Annual Green Ribbon public lecture at TCD

The school of Nursing and Midwifery and Trinity College Students Union teamed up to organise a public lecture entitled “Internalised Stigma: Avoiding Negative Self Beliefs.” The aim of this lecture was to discuss the impact of mental distress on how we think and feel about ourselves and to explore ways to avoid internalising negative self-beliefs which may impact on our journey to recovery.

The speakers on the night were See Change’s Sorchá Lowry, Andrea Koenigstorfer of Insight Matters and MyMind, Brian Keogh of Trinity College Dublin and Domhnall McGlacken-Byrne and Ian Mooney from Trinity College Students Union.



Croagh and Crokes unite for the Green Ribbon Challenge

Committed opponents on the field of play, Craobh Chiarain and Kilmacud Crokes joined forces in the battle against stigma to wear the “Green Ribbon” to encourage the squads, clubs and communities of Dublin GAA to start the conversation about mental health. Both clubs are currently implementing a progressive wellbeing agenda promoting positive physical and mental wellbeing with a range of initiatives being implemented. The clubs have a commitment to building supports and resilience within their club and community under the auspices of the Dublin GAA Health and Wellbeing Committee, and the Croke Park National Health and Wellbeing Committee.





Dundalk FC players support Green Ribbon

Dundalk FC players and management showed their support in Oriel Park at their Friday 1st May fixture by teaming up with the Dundalk Positive Mental Health Forum to make Green Ribbons available to all at the grounds. The Dundalk Positive Mental Health Forum is chaired by Senator Mary Moran and includes representation from organisations such as Shine, Dundalk Outcomers, the HSE, an Garda Síochána, Dundalk Counselling Centre, Turas Counselling Services and the Louth Leader Partnership.



Seas Suas for Green Ribbon

The Green Ribbon Campaign was launched in the National University of Ireland, Galway by a number of students who are volunteers in the Seas Suas programme. 'Seas Suas' is an initiative between NUI Galway's Student Services and Students' Union designed to encourage students to be proactive in helping fellow students. It aims to improve the health, well-being and engagement of students at NUI Galway. The Green Ribbon campaign and the promotion of mental health is one of the projects that Seas Suas volunteers are actively promoting throughout the University campus and beyond.





Good Mood Festival

Following on from 2014's Good Mood Series, which was developed by See Change ambassador Laura Louise Condell, this year's Good Mood Series took place as a one-day festival, incorporating the ever-popular SoapBox Session as part of the day. The festival was held over three floors in Capel st's Outhouse, a LGBT Community Resource Centre. People from a variety of backgrounds crossed the threshold of Outhouse to take part in a unique day of free events, workshops, demonstrations, performance by singer Sonya Grimes, a reading by author Sharyn Hayden, poetry by Alvy Carragher, Spoken Word by Brave New Voices and Vickey Curtis, yoga from the Dublin Holistic Centre, story sharing and conversation. The SoapBox Sessions featured speakers from See Change, TENI, Outhouse all sharing their personal experiences.



The UV Run Killaloe

See Change ambassador Ciara McCullough created an amazing and energetic 3k event to kick-start the Green Ribbon campaign in Clarisford Park, Killaloe, Co. Clare. Thousands of people arrived at dusk to a DJ and foam party before the glow run began. The course was lit up with stages of blacklights and the runners were sprayed in glow paint and glow foam so they glowed in the dark while running and celebrating at the finish line!





Extreme Green Ribbon-ing

This year, the Green Ribbon message was supported and amplified by many extreme sports clubs around Ireland. Ireland's Ice Hockey league were on board with Celtic Clovers fully decked out in Green Ribbons when they took on the N.I Prowlers in an exhibition match to support the Green Ribbon campaign in Ireland. Jugger Ireland showed great support with the Setanta Jugger Club bringing the Green Ribbon message to national and international tournaments. Thanks to all at Jumpzone, Bike Park Ireland, Awesome Walls, Wakedock, Canoeing Ireland, Chain Reaction Cycles, Dublin Dodgeball Club, Nigel Monaghan Racing and East Coast Sea Kayak club for their support. And we have the Irish Parachute Club to thank for the most spectacular photos of Green Ribbon 2015.





Your Green Ribbon 2015 Testimonies

Our thanks go to everyone who played their part in starting a conversation about mental health this May.

Let's hear from our ambassadors and activists from across the country on what Green Ribbon 2015 meant for them.

Lucie Kavanagh, See Change Ambassador

"The Green Ribbon campaign meant something very personal to me this year. When I look at it, I see myself nearly three years ago, walking down a brightly lit street in the run up to Christmas and feeling this suffocating fear. Fear of never being able to say how much I hurt, fear of what lay ahead, fear of being the only one, on the outside, always. I often look back to various instances around that time of being with family and friends and trying my hardest to hide the pain. What could I have said? Now, I can think of a myriad of ways to say it but that's only because other people have been there and told me and shown me that it's possible.



Towards the end of 2012, it very gradually started to dawn on me that something was wrong and maybe had been wrong for quite a while. Looking back on it now, it felt that somehow lights were going out, one after another, not quick enough to be immediately noticeable but a darkness was growing stronger and stronger.

Sometimes it felt like being bored even though I had plenty to do. Sometimes nothing seemed worthwhile. Films, books, anything that usually engaged me lost the power to do so. What was the point crossing the room to the DVD player when the likelihood was that ten minutes in, I would have lost interest? Stressful situations became downright terrifying. Outside of that I felt steadily worse and worse, tired but unable to sleep. Restless but unable to utilise the energy.



It was the most frightening time of my life. I had this thing in my head that was getting worse and no language to describe it. I didn't know how bad it was going to get. All I could see ahead was confusion, maybe hospitals, medication with long names and side effects, services I knew very little about. Every day I worried about being able to face work the next day. I had family, close friends, plenty of people I could turn to and yet I couldn't. I didn't know how to say it. It was so terrifying to me from the inside that it felt unbearable for someone I loved to hear it.

It took the best part of a year to learn enough words to get psychiatric help and by that stage, I really needed it.

Gradually having to deal with it gave me some language. Some, I read from my file in the clinic. For better or worse, good old Doctor Google was responsible for a lot of my research. Best of all, there were people out there who were writing their experiences. I began to save articles and post on Facebook. Sometimes people in my life commented on my unusual Facebook activity. This was the beginning of a dawning realisation that I was not the only one struggling for words.

I regret not speaking to the people closest to me. I always will. But the language and the courage took a long time to acquire and for a long time, I only spoke it in fragments and tested the reactions. Sometimes my desire to put it aside and enjoy normality with friends got in the way too.

Last year I got my diagnosis. It was both a nightmare and a blessed relief. The relief, ironically, came from a feeling that I was right, that I always knew there was this mysterious "something" wrong, that maybe my mind words better than I give it credit for. It was frightening and sad to have this clinical label, an official mental illness but nothing was scarier than the not knowing at the very beginning.

That there are people out there writing and talking and campaigning, for me, has been what has helped more than anything. I can do my talking therapy and take my medication but those things are a fraction of my time. The majority of my life has to be spent in the real world and only by knowing that people can and do live happily with a mental health issue gives me the reassurance I need to do the same.

Fast forward to the present day and I got a chance to "pass it forward". I met some likeminded people, organised a coffee morning and pinned up every saying, picture and article that helped me. I was able to watch other people look at them and share their experiences. We have the tentative beginnings of a group of people who would like to meet and talk regularly. I have spoken to others who have said that even though they were not ready to come and join us, they enjoyed reading about the campaign and wearing their own ribbon. I had people come up to me and say that they have never known what the green ribbon was about. We turned the vague and frightening terms of the past "suffering with the nerves" into names and more importantly, into people."



Barbara Brennan, See Change Ambassador

Barbara Brennan, See Change ambassador “I kept Green Ribbons on the counter beside the till in both of my shops and this allowed me to offer each customer a ribbon. So many didn’t know what it was so it was a great opportunity to talk about mental health. The response was fantastic, and the conversations quite amazing.

I kept spare ribbons in my bag so that any time I was asked about my ribbon I could say “thanks for noticing, thanks for asking, I’d like to share with you and here’s your very own ribbon!” People seemed overwhelmed to be given a gift.

In reality, I felt I had been given a gift – the fact they noticed, the fact they cared enough to talk about it, and that they made me feel important because of what I was sharing. What a wonderful experience.

My boyfriend’s daughter made her communion recently, and because I had been wearing a green ribbon daily she wanted to wear one on her communion dress. She wanted to know all about it, and was only too delighted to show her special ribbon to everyone and tell them she was ok talking to people who didn’t feel well because it’s not nice to feel bad and have nobody to talk to. What a beautiful kid. She has it so right and it just made complete sense. She made me feel like if we explained everything to each other the way we might explain to a child that maybe we would take that first step, tell somebody, get help, and start the journey to feeling human again.”



Rick Rossiter, See Change Ambassador

I got involved with See Change early in 2015, they were an eager and enthusiastic bunch and made me feel welcomed and heard... more than that, they allowed me to participate with my own conversation and stories of my hard journey and experiences dealing with my diagnosis of being Bipolar by nature and Borderline Personality through nurture.

While driving home one night my daughter said to me that her friends thought it was so strange that I knew how to talk to teenagers and that I could relate to them and their problems. I was always good at speaking and I generally understood people’s views regardless of age or background and the thought that I could make a difference has been with me since my late teens, it’s just that there were no platforms or groups dealing with mental health that a person with a mental health disorder could share their stories and experiences with back then, it would be many years before that approach was finally seen for what it is, a brilliant one.





The Green Ribbon Campaign for the month of May has been the best thing I have done for my mind, motivation and overall wellbeing is such a long time. In just the past few months I have meet more people and gotten involved with various events, meetings, interviews, festivals, conferences and have had more conversations with people than I have had personally over the past several years combined. I have finally found the voice and drive that I knew was there. Through See Change I found encouragement, resources and the recognition that my voice did matter, and better yet, I saw that during the month of May with the Green Ribbon Campaign, that all our efforts, staff, volunteers and See Change Ambassadors alike... that we all mattered and made a difference.

I am just at the start of my new journey in life now and I know that there are many more people to meet and events to be a part of but for now, the greatest understanding and awareness that I have learnt over the past month is that no matter the hardships of their past, difficult predicaments in life or painful physical and/or physiological health, that people will always find a way to show you just how strong and resilient they can be in life no matter what life threw at them. This is the best thing I have seen and I have seen it day after day, the greatness that is people's hearts and the beauty and magic that is their minds.

The highlight at the Leixlip Festival were the conversations that happened with the people at the events, sharing their stories and experiences. Most of us don't know that we have something worth sharing, especially experiences until they begin to talk about them. The highlight at the school events were the way the students stopped, watched and listened to every word you spoke -messaging around is a part of most assemblies but when you strike a chord with issues that mattered to them, they will pay attention and take in what you are saying to them. They understand stress and stigma, it's just they process and word it differently than adults. With raw elegance.





Other Testimonies

“For the Green ribbon campaign I had posters and ribbons at my workplace and sent an email to encourage people to take one and to start a conversation I also handed them out to my family to wear, who also passed them onto friends. Explaining to my 6 year old nephew what it was about and why it was important showed me that it didn’t need to be some deep conversation about depression or mental health but that even for someone of his age to understand that if you’re feeling sad or have a problem, then if you talk to someone it will make you feel better.

As much as I don’t hide my depression, I also think about who I tell my story to. I moved back to Ireland last year and moved to a new job, house etc. in Cork at the end of last August. Telling new friends my story was one thing and making a really good friend from the see change volunteer session I attended was great, but having the courage to be the one promoting the campaign in work has been a big step and I’m glad I did it.

Someone in work approached me because of my promotion with See Change to tell me about their story which I don’t think they would have done before the campaign.

The highlight of the campaign for me was seeing so many people walking around the office wearing the ribbons. It was a really proud moment. So many people just embraced it and were proud to wear them and some still do, which I think was a big achievement.”

Orla Meade, See Change Ambassador

“I proudly experienced how 2015’s Green Ribbon campaign changed opinions, families and communities this May, because one of those families and communities was mine.”

Wayne, See Change Ambassador

“The green ribbon campaign gave us an opportunity to have a conversation about mental health issues in a community where this is seen as a very taboo subject.”

Meath Primary Health Care Project for Travellers

“I love when random strangers strike up conversation about the green ribbon, they are always amazed they are free and appreciate the sentiments behind the initiative.”

Nicola Cantwell, IT Carlow



*“Facilitating / Enabling a conversation where all are heard is a liberating experience for all involved.
Give it a try, “ its good to talk”.”*

Mike Edwards, Roscrea Cardiac Responder Group

“Breaking the silence was powerful as it allowed for open and frank discussion with the community.”

Stella O'Brien, Ballyfermot Citizens Information Service

*“The green ribbon is not about supporting a particular group of people. We all have mental health;
you realise that by the reaction people have on their face when you explain what the green ribbon
is for. Theres a brief look on peoples faces, of understanding what its like to have a period of
struggle with your mental health.”*

Aaron Galbraith, Youth Empowerment Service

Meet the Team

As agreed with the Department of Health and Children, Shine is the coordinating organisation for the See Change programme and serves as the secretariat for all partner organisations' stigma challenging initiatives



Shine is the national organisation dedicated to upholding the rights and addressing the needs of all those affected by mental ill health, through the promotion and provision of high-quality services and working to ensure the continual enhancement of the quality of life of the people it serves.

Campaign Director - John Saunders is the Director of Shine and See Change. John oversees all campaign activity and serves as the lead spokesperson for the movement.

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The See Change team would like to thank all of the people, groups and organisations who pooled their passion and commitment to challenging stigma and helped make 2015 such an action-packed year for the See Change movement.