FRC Programme

The aim of the FRC programme is to combat disadvantage and improve the functioning of the family unit. Each FRC operates autonomously working inclusively with individuals, families, communities, and both statutory and non statutory agencies. FRCs are an integral part of the Child and Family Agency's Local Area Pathways model and act as a first step to community participation and social inclusion. The programme emphasises involving local communities in tackling the problems they face, and creating successful partnerships between voluntary and statutory agencies at community level.

A central feature of the FRC programme is the involvement of local people in identifying needs and developing needs-led responses. FRCs involve people from marginalised groups and areas of disadvantage on their voluntary management committees. This approach ensures that each FRC is rooted in the community and this, in turn, makes it a vehicle for delivering other programmes in the community. FRCs are participative and empowering organisations that support families while building the capacity and leadership of local communities.

FRCs provides a range of universal and targeted services and development opportunities that address the needs of families. These can include:

- The provision of information
- Advice and support to target groups and families
- Information concerning the range of services and development options available locally and advice on accessing rights and entitlements is also extended. FRCs act as a focal point for onward referrals to main stream service providers.
- Delivering education courses and training opportunities
- The establishment and maintenance of new community groups to meet local needs and the delivery of services at local level (for example, childcare facilities, after-school clubs, men's groups, etc.)
- The provision of counselling and support to individuals and groups.
- Developing capacity and leadership within communities
- Supporting personal and group development
- Practical assistance to individuals and community groups such as access to information technology and office facilities.
- Practical assistance to existing community groups such as help with organisational structures, assistance with accessing funding or advice on how to address specific social issues.
- Supporting networking within the community.

Contributing to Policy work