

BODYWHYS

The Eating Disorders Association of Ireland

Annual Report

2008

“our vision is that people affected by eating disorders will have their needs met through the provision of appropriate integrated, quality service being delivered by a range of statutory, private and voluntary agencies”

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Chairman's Introduction



Dr. Parvez Butt

2008 was a year in which Bodywhys – the Eating Disorders Association of Ireland expanded its support services to meet the growing demands on the organisation. This increased need for support was reflected across all service provision. As all our support services are delivered by trained volunteers, it would not be possible to meet the increased demand on the organization without having the manpower to respond. Hence, during the year, the post of part-time Helpline Co-ordinator was expanded to that of full-time Services Co-ordinator and we were delighted that Harriet Parsons undertook this challenging role. 2008 also saw the biggest intake of volunteers since the establishment of the organization in 1995. This allowed the expansion of extra helpline hours and an increase in our use of innovative technology to connect with young adults particularly as we now have a presence on Bebo, Facebook and Twitter.

While we warmly welcomed the increase number in our volunteer base, it was a year of mixed emotions, as we were all deeply saddened by the death of our friend and colleague, Bridín McCarthy who was instrumental in the establishment of the Helpline service and indeed was reporting for

volunteer duty within a few weeks of her death. It is never an easy task to give the appropriate recognition to a volunteer of Bridín's calibre and while we are humbled in our efforts, we are honoured to permanently name the support service as the 'Bridín McCarthy Helpline' as a fitting tribute to her dedication and commitment to the organization even in times of illness. Our thoughts and sincere sympathies are extended to Bridín's family and many friends.

During the year Bodywhys engaged in partnerships with the Irish Mental Health Coalition to seek improvements in the delivery of the mental health services in general and specifically in relation to those affected by eating disorders. During Eating Disorders Awareness Week, a series of public information events were held including a briefing to members of the Oireachtas which was a valuable opportunity to ensure the issue of eating disorders is on the political health agenda. As a voluntary organisation we have an opportunity to ensure the voice of service users and carers are reflected through our representation on the National Service User Executive and the Mental Health Commission.

Once again I would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Department of Health & Children; and the Health Services Executive for their continued support of our work as we campaign with and to them for improved services and resources for both Bodywhys as well as improved service provision for those affected by eating disorders through the implementation of the recommendations of a *Vision for Change*.

In the changing economic climate of the year all funding streams were explored and this will represent a critical function for the future and sustainability of the organization. However, these concerns were somewhat diluted as everyone involved in Bodywhys was very proud and privileged to be the recipients of the proceeds of the 'Summer Solstice Ball'. This event was organized by the Monahan family and held in the Mansion House in June. The proceeds, which exceeded all our expectations, will contribute hugely to realizing premises of our own in the future. This fundraising event was supported, somewhat modestly, by the efforts of 'Team Bodywhys' at the Flora Mini-Marathon.

This was an enjoyable, fun day with great goodwill towards the organization from all involved in the event including several staff from Unilever Ireland as part of the Dove Self-Esteem Fund. This was a welcome opportunity for raising the profile of the organization as well as raising much-needed funds.

During the year we said goodbye to Rachael Pidgeon who retired from the Board of Directors having worked tirelessly in pursuing the aims and objectives of Bodywhys. As an Honorary Member we are delighted that we have not lost Rachael's support, expertise and loyal service.

With departures come arrivals as we welcomed Derek West who has brought a wealth of experience and additional skills to the Board in taking on the role of Honorary Treasurer. Following the Board Development Day, which focussed on governance, the team have been working hard on developing Communications and Fundraising Strategies to meet our responsibilities under the new Charities Bill.

As we are all well aware, these are difficult and unprecedented times for all of us. However, as we face into uncertain financial times, we will together rise to the challenges ahead to ensure that our support services are of the highest standards while observing best practice. Finally, it just remains for me on behalf of the Board of Directors, to acknowledge the dedication of our volunteers, who contribute in no small way to ensuring Bodywhys is the professional, supportive organization to support the needs of people affected by eating disorders. I would also like to acknowledge the team at Central Office who ensure all aspects of our organizational needs are met, and in particular making my task an easy one to execute.

Dr. Parvez Butt
Chairman

Chief Executive Summary



Jacinta Hastings

It is my pleasure to introduce the Annual Report of Bodywhys – the Eating Disorders Association of Ireland for 2008.

During the year under review, Bodywhys continued to provide a comprehensive range of support services to people affected by eating disorders. These included the provision of support groups, online support group and the helpline – full details of these activities can be found in this Annual Report. In addition we continued our advocating role through public information, education and awareness activities. A welcome information forum was the return of the eBulletin which provides much-needed information on all aspects of developments in eating disorders. During 2008 we saw an increased uptake in the use of our on-line services and future developments will ensure that technology will be availed of through innovative support structures. All of this was achieved in a year when finances were very tight, a situation which remains a key priority for us to address, particularly in relation to capital provision. Our focus on generating income from fundraising events will form part of all future activities building on the success of the 'Ball'.

2008 was certainly a year of challenge for all of us. Internally the focus was on ensuring the capacity of the organization was sustained covering areas such as planning, governance, data management, corporate capacity

and service development. As part of this process, we are constantly reviewing our systems to ensure that the appropriate provisions are in place to improve or eliminate existing standards and practices.

At policy level, we once again shared the general frustration at the lack of progress in implementing the recommendations in *A Vision for Change*. When launched in 2006, this comprehensive, modern policy to shape the future of mental health services was widely welcomed. However, by the end of 2008, the painfully slow progress was once again obvious. As a response, Bodywhys met with the Minister for State, John Moloney T.D., to request the re-affirming of the commitments as outlined in the policy document generally and specifically in relation to eating disorders. As a starting point, the appointment of a Director to lead the way forward would have a major impact in providing focus and leadership to drive the reform towards reality.

Finally, as we look forward, we remain, as ever, thankful for the commitment and dedication of all who work so hard, give so generously of their time and expertise to ensure that Bodywhys can continue to provide the much needed supports to people affected by eating disorders, and I take this opportunity to extend a sincere thank you to all.

Jacinta Hastings
Chief Executive Officer

Overview of Services



Harriet Parsons

It is appropriate to begin looking at the 2008 review of Bodywhys support services keeping in mind what the summary of figures means in reality for many people in Ireland. Just before Christmas in 2008 we received the following email:

Hi, with all my heart and soul, I need to say thanks. You see, I am one of the huge number of people whose life your organisation has helped to save, without you ever knowing. So as I couldn't for a moment claim the linguistic proficiency to express how much you have done for me, I'll keep it to a simple "thanks".

Your organisation is one where just letting people know you exist could save lives. Unfortunately eating disorders have a stigma attached. Letting people know that there is help to be had, letting people know that they are not alone, just talking about these issues could help to break down this silence.

Thank you so so much again, just for your existence. I only pray that you have some idea the beacon of hope that you offer when just existing is a struggle.

In September 2008, the role of part-time helpline coordinator changed to full time 'Services Coordinator' with responsibility for coordinating, managing and supervising all the support services and the volunteers who work on them. Bodywhys provides support and information to people

affected with eating disorders through the following services:

- LoCall Telephone Helpline
- Support groups in Dublin, Carlow and Galway
- Online support group
- Email support service
- Online message board

All Bodywhys support services are delivered by trained volunteers and in accordance with our support ethos, which states that in our services, we do not focus on food, weight or behaviours, but rather on how people are feeling about what is happening for them at that time. So, we do not focus on what a person is doing but rather on how they feel about what they are doing and in that way to try to ensure that the support space is safe for everyone.

2008 saw the biggest intake in new volunteers since the founding of the organisation. Over 50 people applied and the final count after training is 42 new volunteers working on Bodywhys support services. This brings the total number of volunteers delivering Bodywhys support services nationally up to 91. *We would like to extend our thanks to all of our volunteers, without whom we would not be able to deliver any support services.* It is due to the commitment of our volunteers that we have been able to maintain and increase the level of support for people affected by eating disorders in 2008.

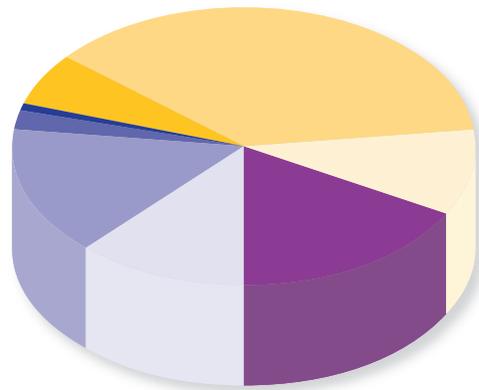
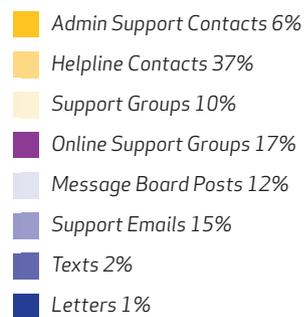
Overview of Services continued...

In total, 2,599 people accessed one of our support services in 2008! With our new volunteers becoming established in 2009, we expect to be able to increase the level of support of existing services and expand services nationally.

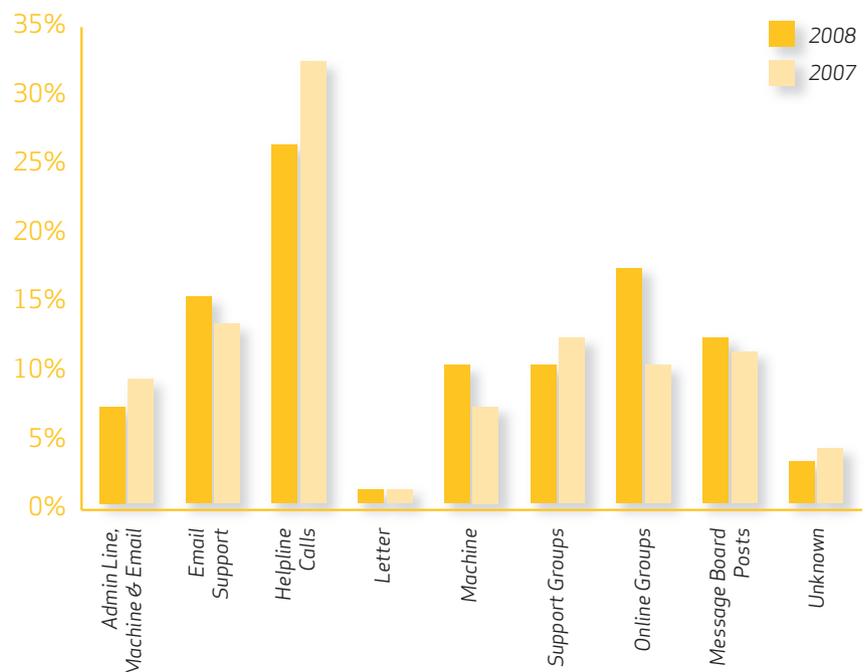
As illustrated in the diagrams, there has been a constant uptake on all of our support services in 2008.

When we compare numbers of people who used our support services in 2008 with 2007 we can see an increase in people accessing support online. This is something we hope to expand on in 2009.

Pie Chart with Breakdown of Services Overview



2007 Compared with 2008 Figures



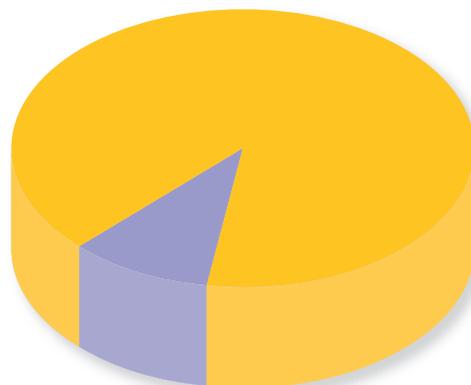
Helpline – 1890 200 444

2008 has been another busy and successful year on the helpline. The team of volunteers has grown from thirteen to twenty-six, and we have expanded the helpline to 6 days a week with a view to expanding to 7 days a week in early 2009. Our helpline is a listening ear service and all of our volunteers are trained to deliver a safe, non-judgemental, non-directive, listening and support service to people affected by eating disorders.

As the diagrams illustrate, in 2008 we received 1370 contacts through our helpline. 41% of calls were from family and friends of people with eating disorders, and 36% were from people who have an eating disorder. The remaining percentage of calls were from educational professionals, youth workers and health professionals. 90% of callers were female and 10% were male. In terms of the age of a person with an eating disorder, 50% of calls concerned a person aged between 15 years and 24 years old. 18% were under 15 years old, and 18% were over 24 years old. 32% of calls concerned anorexia, and 34% concerned bulimia, with 16% concerning anorexia/bulimia, 16% concerning binge-eating disorder.

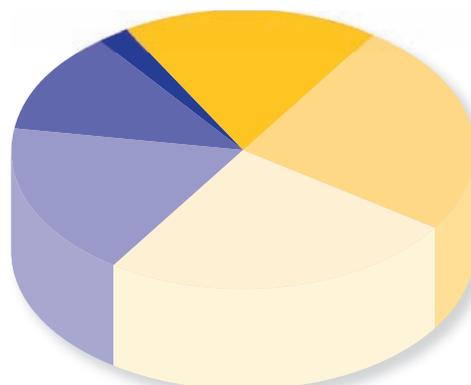
PWED Female & Male

- Female PWED 90%
- Male PWED 10%



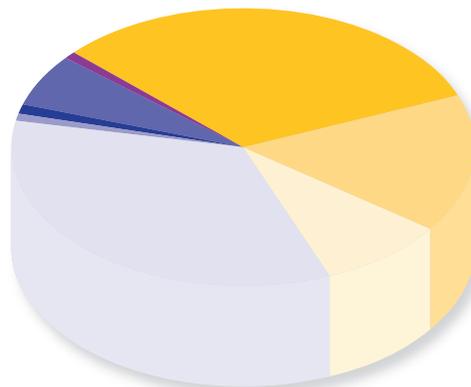
Age Groups

- Under 15 (18%)
- 15 - 18 (25%)
- 19 - 24 (25%)
- 25 - 35 (18%)
- 35 - 55 (12%)
- 55+ (2%)



Eating Disorder Type

- Anorexia 32%
- Anorexia / Bulimia 16%
- Binge Eating 9%
- Bulimia 34%
- EDNOS 1%
- Obesity 1%
- Overeating 6%
- All EDs 1%



Helpline continued...

Finally, all of us who work on the helpline were deeply saddened in 2008 with the tragic loss of Bridín McCarthy. Bridín was an extraordinary lady, who was instrumental in setting up the Bodywhys helpline. Bridín was a warm, generous, fun and dedicated person. We all learned so much from Bridín and her loss, not only to Bodywhys, but to our own lives is immense. We all miss her on the helpline, and in the office (especially on Tuesdays which was her regular day). Our memory of Bridín will remain strong always and we feel honoured to be able to dedicate the helpline to her, as a way of honouring all that she gave of herself to those who needed support around the issue of eating disorders. We will strive to ensure that the helpline continues to be something that Bridín would be proud of.

Feedback from a parent of child of 18 who has had anorexia for several years – at the time of diagnosis they had no clue about eating disorders and phoned the Bodywhys Helpline. The information pack sent out by Bodywhys contained the clearest information she had received throughout her daughter's experience. She views Bodywhys as her best form of support and thinks that support groups for Families and Friends are a great idea and parents should be encouraged to attend them.



It's not a faddy diet

It's not a lifestyle choice

It's not a phase

It's not just women

It's NOT JUST A TEENAGE THING

It's not forever

PEOPLE CAN AND DO RECOVER FROM EATING DISORDERS

NO JUDGEMENT. JUST CONFIDENTIAL SUPPORT.
LO CALL 1890 200 444
Email Support: alex@bodywhys.ie
Text the word 'support' to 53305 for details of our services.

BODYWHYS.ie
The Eating Disorders Association of Ireland

Don't let an eating disorder distort your Christmas!

Contact Bodywhys
The Eating Disorders Association of Ireland

For information on eating disorders, details of support groups, online support meetings, helpline hours:
www.bodywhys.ie

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The Eating Disorders Association of Ireland

Support Groups

Dublin, Carlow & Galway



Bodywhys has two types of support groups, one for people with eating disorders and one for family and friends. The support group offers a safe space to share feelings and access mutual support. Bodywhys groups are free of charge and people can just show up on the night. In 2008 we recruited and trained 11 new volunteers to facilitate on the Dublin group. This brings the number of volunteers working on the Dublin group up to 20, and it is hoped that in early 2009 as the new volunteers complete their training and start facilitating we will be able to schedule an extra family and friends group, meaning that we would have two family and friends groups per month as well as our two groups for people with eating disorders. Approximately 204 people accessed support by attending a support group in Dublin in 2008.

Unfortunately, we were unable to recruit new volunteers for our Carlow group in 2008. However, due to the dedication of the existing Carlow volunteers they have continued their group with enthusiasm. In 2008, there were 8 volunteers working on the support group in Carlow, with a further two people being part of the wider Carlow branch of Bodywhys. Approximate figures show that 54 people attended the Carlow support group in 2008.

Due to difficulties getting volunteers in Galway, and finding an appropriate venue for the Galway support group, this group has been on a break in the latter part of 2008. This group will be up and running again in early 2009.

Feedback from a Mum who was attending a group for Family and Friends. Her daughter had also been attending a group for people with eating disorders (PWED):

What a huge help the groups have been to both herself and her daughter and she praised the skill, warmth and acceptance of the facilitators in the Dublin group. She said that the group for PWED had been instrumental in helping her daughter to sustain recovery, and the group for parents offered her the possibility of learning from others who were going through something similar, and also gave her the opportunity to share her experience and contribute to the learning of all. She said the Helpline and bodywhysConnect had also been 'lifelines'.

Dublin
Carlow
Galway

Online Services

BodywhysConnect

In 2008 we recruited 10 new volunteers for our online group, bringing the total number of bodywhysconnect volunteers to 18! Our online group had been growing in popularity with record numbers attending groups in 2008. In total there 344 new registrations for the online group, and 447 attending groups in 2008. Of these 46% were aged 18-26 years. 45% were over 25 years, and only 9% were aged 16-17 years. 61% were female, and 2% were male. Due to the way users register for the group, we are unable to determine whether 37% were male or female. In terms of the types of eating disorders users are experiencing, 30% have bulimia, 28% have binge-eating disorder, 23% anorexia/bulimia, 19% have anorexia.

“Thank you so much, for all that Bodywhys has done and is doing (especially with the online support group) has and is helping me so much in my journey of recovery.”

This amazing charity and its workers really do not get enough recognition in Irish society.”

Feedback from a girl in recovery

Email support Service – alex@bodywhys.ie

Our email service has been growing in popularity in 2008. We recruited four new volunteers to work on the email service and we said goodbye to the three volunteers we had in 2007. Overall we received 396 emails to our email support service in 2008.

“I would like to start by saying that your response has been one of the most informative emails I have ever received about anything. You truly are brilliant at your job and the support and guidance you provide is ten times more important and valuable than anyone working a typical business role (like me).”

Feedback from an person who emailed our email support service

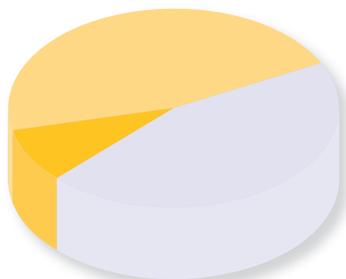
Under 25s Message Board

Bodywhys has an online under 25s message Board for people with eating disorders. This is a moderated message board and was set up in 2007. In 2008, the popularity of the message Board as a form of support has been growing steadily. We have had 47 new registrations, with 315 posts throughout the year.

“I just want to say that I think this service is fab. Its like a medium that allows you to think as well as actually make contact – empathise – etc. Thanks. It really helps in more ways than I expected.”

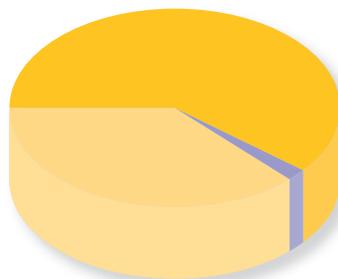
Feedback from Message Board User

B/C User Age



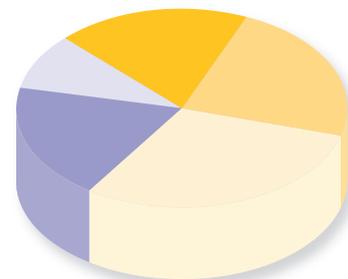
- 18 - 25 (46%)
- 25+ (45%)
- 16 - 17 (9%)

B/C User Sex



- Female 61%
- Male 2%
- Unknown 37%

B/C User PWED Type



- Anorexia 19%
- Anorexia / Bulimia 23%
- Bulimia 30%
- Binge Eating 19%
- Overeating 9%

Communications



Ruth Ni Eidhin

Media interest in the issue of eating disorders and in Bodywhys as an organisation remained strong throughout 2008.

Eating Disorders Awareness week was the first focus point for the year at the end of February. The issue of eating disorder treatment services in Ireland was a recurring theme along with a focus on Bodywhys support services.

In April, media work focussed on the issue of men and eating disorders, particularly in light of John Prescott (ex UK Deputy Prime Minister) revealing his 20 year struggle with bulimia.

Later in the year, the issue of age emerged as a key theme for media work. Eating disorders in those younger and older than the 'usual' age range was explored at some length. Towards the end of the year, the focus on eating disorders and teenagers was linked in with the issue of internet safety and the ongoing concern of pro-anorexia websites.

Christmas poster campaign

In December, posters were distributed to schools and libraries around the country highlighting the particular issues that can arise for people affected by eating disorders during the Christmas season. The message, 'Don't let an eating disorder distort your Christmas' was combined with media work and a refreshed list of 'Tips for coping at Christmas'.

Student Interviews & Research

Throughout 2008, large numbers of students contacted Bodywhys to work on specific research projects, projects for exhibitions (e.g. Young Social Innovators) or student media projects. Student interest was particularly noticeable during October and November. The focus for the majority of these interviews was around the causes of eating disorders, and in particular the link between media messages, body image, and the potential development of eating disorders.

Bodywhys eBulletin

One of the major communications during 2008 was the re-launch of the Bodywhys eBulletin in August.

The eBulletin is an electronic newsletter aimed at our volunteers, supporters and other interested parties who want to keep informed about the work Bodywhys is doing and about developments in the area of eating disorders generally.

Each bulletin also contains a 'Focus Issue' providing some introductory information on a specific aspect of

eating disorders which may be of interest to readers. The eBulletin is bi-monthly and can be subscribed to from our website at www.bodywhys.ie.

Website

The Bodywhys website remains a vital source of information and support for those contacting Bodywhys. The directory of service providers is consistently popular, as are the online information sheets.

In 2008, the Bodywhys website was visited 84,395 which is an average of over 7,000 times per month, reflecting increased interest in Bodywhys online services along with a steady increase in the level of internet usage in Ireland generally. A review of the website was conducted in late 2008 with a view to updating and refreshing the website, to ensure it can continue to provide as much support as possible to users.

Online Presence

Expanding on our online presence, Bodywhys is now available on Bebo, Facebook and Twitter.

External Events

Bodywhys had a stand at the Young Social Innovators (YSI) Showcase in May, which proved to be hugely successful. There was a very high level of interest in Bodywhys and in the issues around eating disorders generally. A number of projects submitted to the showcase by student groups were about eating disorders so our presence was particularly useful. Bodywhys also had a stand at the Women's World exhibition in June, to tie in with our participation in the Flora Ladies Mini Marathon.

Other Activities



Mary Crean

In 2008 we received over 45 requests for talks/workshops from schools and outside agencies.

We were delighted to provide talks for such a large number of health care and youth workers who are seeing an increase in the numbers presenting with eating disorders and understand the need for relevant and appropriate training.

Also, in an effort to provide support and awareness to the wider community we ran a number of public talks. These talks took place in Galway, Cork and Drogheda.

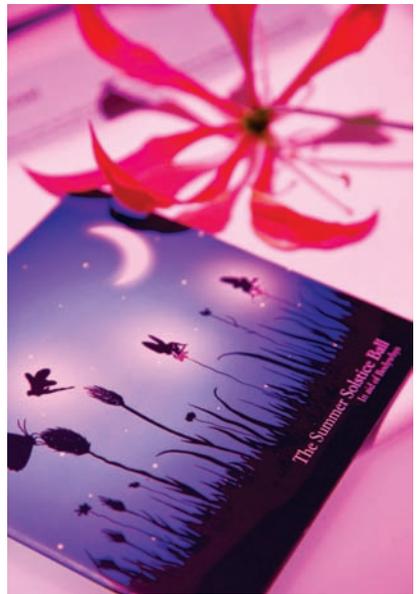
For the fourth year running 'Team Bodywhys' took part in the annual Flora Women's Mini Marathon. Over 30 people participated on 2nd June which was the largest group to date. Thanks to all who pounded the pavement on behalf of Bodywhys and raised much needed funds.



June 2008 also saw the arrival of the first Bodywhys ball. It was a themed Summer Solstice Ball held in the Mansion House on mid-summers night. A huge amount of work went into organising the event and we were delighted to be the recipients of the funds raised. A magical and fun night was had by all and many thanks to all that were involved in its organisation.



Summer Solstice Ball Invite



 The Summer Solstice Ball
In aid of Bodywhys

Statement of Financial Activities

for the year ended 31 December 2008

	Notes	Specified Projects Fund 2008	Unrestricted Services Funds 2008	Total Funds 2008	Total Funds 2007
		€	€	€	€
Income					
Donations & Other Income		61,723	-	61,723	38,343
Grants	3	11,300	280,000	291,300	390,268
Fundraising		46,730		46,730	
Deposit Interest		-	12,090	12,090	7,971
Total Income		<u>119,753</u>	<u>292,090</u>	<u>411,843</u>	<u>436,582</u>
Expenditure					
Operating Overheads	4	8,950	219,293	228,243	246,861
Literature & Publications		-	-	-	51,520
Travel & Meetings		-	12,617	12,617	15,917
PR & Advertising		11,342	5,440	16,782	18,825
Research & Programmes		16,051	-	16,051	-
Website Development		-	2,729	2,729	-
Total Expenditure		<u>36,343</u>	<u>240,079</u>	<u>276,422</u>	<u>333,123</u>
Net Incoming Resources		83,410	52,011	135,421	103,459
Funds brought forward		<u>182,861</u>	<u>133,644</u>	<u>316,505</u>	<u>213,046</u>
Retained Funds carried forward		<u>266,271</u>	<u>185,655</u>	<u>451,926</u>	<u>316,505</u>

There are no other recognised gains or losses for the above two financial years.

All the company's activities are continuing operations.

Approved by the board on 6 May 2009 and signed on its behalf by:

Jennifer Kelly **Parvez Butt**
Director Director

Balance Sheet

as at 31 December 2008

	Notes	Specified Projects Fund 2008	Unrestricted Services Funds 2008	Total Funds 2008	Total Funds 2007
		€	€	€	€
Current Assets					
Debtors	6	1,149		-	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>499,475</u>		<u>346,903</u>	
		500,624		346,903	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year					
	7	<u>(48,698)</u>		<u>(30,398)</u>	
Net current assets			<u>451,926</u>		<u>316,505</u>
Net assets			<u>451,926</u>		<u>316,505</u>
Funds					
Specified Projects Fund	8		266,271		182,861
Unrestricted Services Fund	8		<u>185,655</u>		<u>133,644</u>
			<u>451,926</u>		<u>316,505</u>

Approved by the Board on 6 May 2009 and signed on its behalf by:

Jennifer Kelly **Parvez Butt**
Director Director

Acknowledgements

The Chairman, Board of Directors and Staff wish to record their sincere thanks to all those who volunteered or donated to Bodywhys in 2008. Your interest in and support of our work is much appreciated.

BOI Give Together Initiative
Caroline Morahan
Community Foundation of Ireland
CubedRoute
Double Dutch Design - Gabie Devaney
Hospital Saturday Charitable Trust
Health Service Executive – Martin Rogan & Staff
Health Service Executive – Jim Ryan & Staff
Max Factor
Monahan Family
Pearls Dental Clinic
Public Communications Centre
St. John of God Brothers
StudentCents
Unilever

Thank You

Company Information

Company Information as of
31st December 2008

Directors

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Marie Devine
Siobhan Bereen
Jennifer Kelly
Valerie Kilkenny
Helen McDaid
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2008

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