

# BODYWHYS

The Eating Disorders Association of Ireland

Annual Report

2013

“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 & CEO's Report



Siobhan Breen  
Chairman

## Welcome to our Annual Report 2013

It gives me great pleasure to present the Annual Report and Accounts of Think Bodywhys Limited for the year 2013 which will reflect the activities and growth of the organisation. This report, like its predecessors, bears testimony to the breadth and depth of work being undertaken by Bodywhys during the year under review.

Considerable progress was made on our objectives during the year. As a direct response to a fundamental recognition of need, Bodywhys expanded service provision to incorporate new mechanisms of support and information including the launch of the 'See My Self' psycho-educational programme and the booklet *Eating Disorders: A Resource for General Practitioners*. While a very successful Eating Disorders Awareness Week (EDAW) provided a public and political forum to ensure that the issue of eating disorders and related issues were highlighted; a Seminar titled 'Airbrushing: A Touchy Subject' hosted by Nessa Childers, MEP, provided a platform for discussion and debate to inform this often contentious issue.

During the year we continued to support those affected by eating disorders reaching over 10,000 people through our helpline, support groups, online and outreach service. As well as our service provision, more than 15,000 information leaflets were distributed either by request or through attendance at events such as information days, conferences and health weeks. While supported by a core team, as you are aware, in the main, our services are delivered through our network of volunteers. Without our volunteers we would not be in a position to deliver our services and we thank the ongoing, and sometimes, unseen work of all who share our objectives to support people affected by eating disorders. While our volunteer time is totally valued, it is not definitively costed and by any standards their generosity is a substantial contribution to the social capital of those we support.

A particular feature of the expansion of our objectives has been the way in which we have continued to work in partnership with other voluntary and statutory agencies. We have always welcomed opportunities to work in collaboration to progress our aims and you will see ample evidence of joint partnership projects across the year's activities. Co-operative endeavours are only possible because of the reputation of the organisation and the integrity of our work.

# Chairman's & CEO's Report

During 2013 Bodywhys undertook a number of steps to improve organisational governance in seeking compliance with The Governance Code and in anticipation of full implementation of the Charities Act (2009).

On behalf of the Board, I wish to acknowledge the work of our team who continue to represent Bodywhys to their accustomed, and expected, high standards. Their energy, enthusiasm and willing flexibility is much appreciated, particularly during the past number of years of financial uncertainty. I would also like to thank our CEO for her ongoing invaluable support to me in my role as Chair and for providing the Board with over and above the required information on the activities of Bodywhys throughout the year.

Turning to the Board itself, I wish to pay tribute to my fellow Directors for their committed and conscientious work over the year. I particularly wish to extend our gratitude to Jenny Kelly who, after 18 years with Bodywhys, retired from the Board. Her contribution to the organisation is a lasting legacy to that early vision of a national organisation to support people affected by eating disorders.

I wish to express the Board's appreciation for the continuing support of the HSE and in particular for that of Jim Ryan and his colleagues with whom we regularly interface.

And, also to the Provincial, the CEO and staff of St. John of God Hospital for their ongoing support in providing Bodywhys with office space. Without this support, it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to continue to provide the services at the level we do.

As we look forward it remains for me to express my sincere belief that Bodywhys has a strong future, that the capacity to build that future is substantially due in no small way to the embracing of innovation in developing and delivering our support services for people affected by eating disorders. Our strategic focus will strengthen our efforts to ensure that all aspects of our work are relevant, timely and effective.

**Siobhan Breen**, Chairman



*Jacinta Hastings, CEO*

# Welcome

# Overview of Services



Harriet Parsons

A core aspect of the work that Bodywhys does is to provide support, information, and a listening ear to those affected by eating disorders. We endeavour to offer support services that both recognise the uniqueness of everyone's experience, while at the same time listening and providing information to help inform a service user as to the decisions they can make, in terms of how to help and support themselves. At Bodywhys, we recognise that an eating disorder is not primarily about food or weight, but rather it is a coping mechanism that a person uses to help them manage and live their lives. In this way, Bodywhys support services strives to listen first and foremost, and in doing so helps the service user to think about the situation they are in and consider the options they have open to them on how to proceed and move towards recovery. With this in mind the ethos upon which all of our support services operates is:

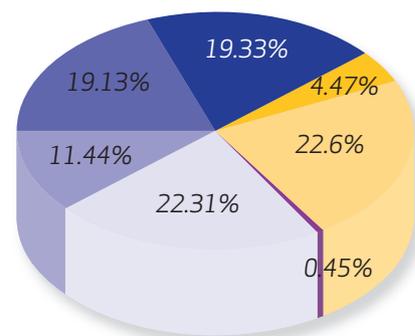
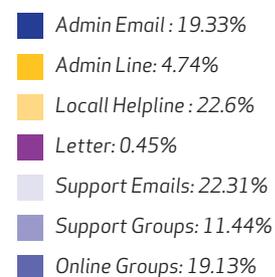
- *That an eating disorder is not about food or weight but underlying issues and feelings.*
- *That everyone has a different experience.*
- *To ensure that our support space is safe for everyone we focus on how the person is feeling and not what they are doing – our focus is on how a person feels about what they are doing.*

It has been another busy year for the support services that Bodywhys operates. During the year, new volunteers were trained to deliver support across all of our services. It is with much gratitude that Bodywhys recognises the immense work and commitment that our volunteers provide on our support services. Our dedicated volunteers, who work on all of our services, continue to ensure that the support and information we provide is done in a respectful, non-judgemental and open way.

Looking at the overall picture, and all of the ways in which Bodywhys provides support and information to people affected by eating disorders we can see in Figure 1, the breakdown of ways in which people have contacted. It is also important to remember that these were individuals who contacted us directly, and does not reflect those who we came into contact with the service through our school's programme, our SPHE resource, the many and varied events we have attended and presented at, and the training we have delivered with interested groups.

It is interesting to note that numbers attending our face-to-face and online groups increased in 2013.

**Figure 1: How people contacted us for support**



**Figure 2: Type of contact**



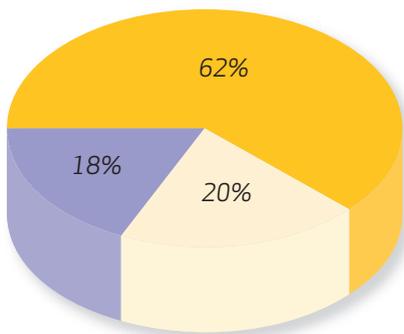
# Helpline – 1890 200 444

The Bodywhys helpline is a 'listening ear' service and all our volunteers are trained to deliver a safe, non-judgemental, non-directive, listening, support and information service to people affected by eating disorders. During 2013 our helpline has operated for 2 hours per day, 6 days per week.

Looking at Figure 3, the breakdown for the reason people contacted us via our telephone helpline, the highest proportion of callers contacted us for a 'listening ear', rather than for basic information. This indicates to us that the majority of people using the helpline have already accessed our website for basic information, and they contact the helpline to talk this information through.

**Figure 3: Reason contacted**

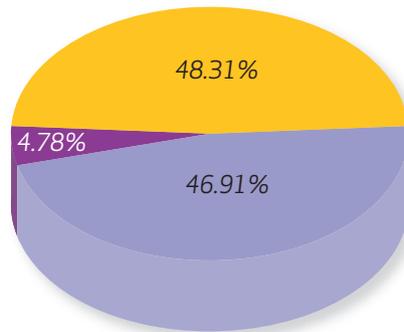
- Listening Ear: 62%
- Crisis: 20%
- Information: 18%



When we look at who called our helpline during 2013 in Figure 4, we can see the repetition of a trend from previous years. Calls are approximately evenly divided between callers who have an eating disorder, and calls from family and friends of those with an eating disorder.

**Figure 4: Who contacted**

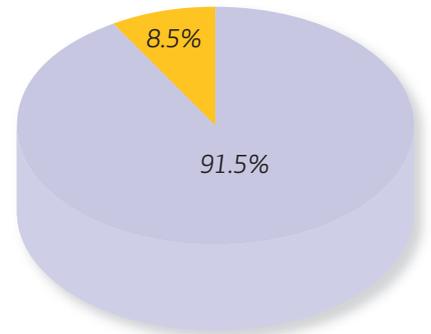
- Self: 48.31%
- Family and Friends: 46.91%
- Other: 4.78%



In Figure 5 we can see the gender of the person with an eating disorder, 91.5% were female, and 8.5% were male.

**Figure 5: Helpline Gender**

- Female 91.5%
- Male 8.5%

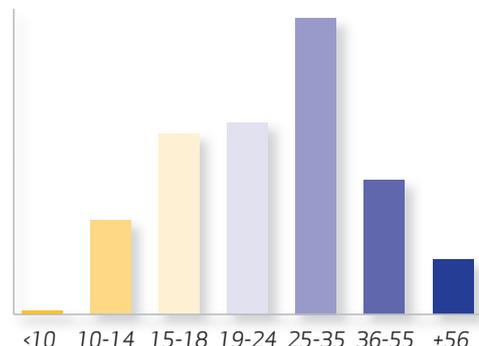


# Helpline (continued)

In Figure 6, we can see the breakdown of the age of people with eating disorders. We can clearly see a normative curve when it comes to ages, however in 2012 the majority of people fell into the 19-24 age group, whereas in 2013, the majority of people were aged 25-35yrs. As we are aware, eating disorders are not just a teenage issue, and the spread of ages identified on our helpline supports this.

**Figure 6: PWED Age**

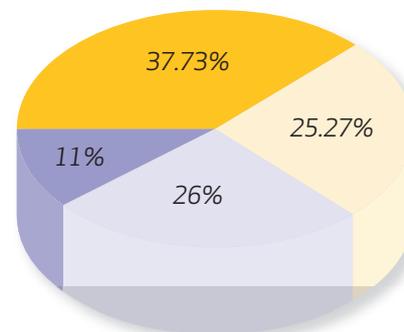
- Under 10yrs: 0.3%
- 10-14yrs: 10%
- 15-18yrs: 19%
- 19-24yrs: 20%
- 25-35yrs: 31%
- 36-55yrs: 14%
- +56yrs: 5.7%



In Figure 7, where an eating disorder was specified in a call, 37.73% concerned Anorexia Nervosa, 25.27% concerned Bulimia Nervosa, 26% concerned Binge Eating Disorder, and 11% concerned EDNOS.

**Figure 7: Eating Disorder Type**

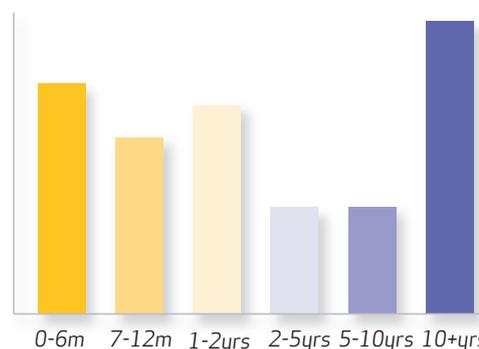
- AN: 37.73%
- BN: 25.27%
- BED: 26%
- EDNOS: 11%



Another important aspect to look at in relation to calls to the helpline, is where callers have mentioned the duration of the eating disorder. In this case, the majority of callers concerned a person who has an eating disorder for over 10 years, see Figure 8.

**Figure 8: Duration of Eating Disorder**

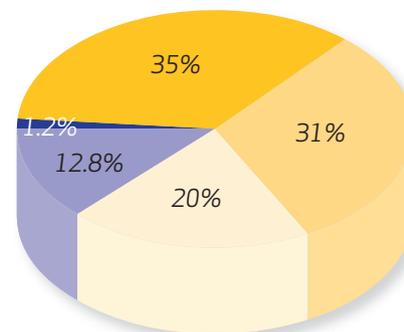
- 0-6 months: 20.5%
- 7-12 months: 15.7%
- 1-2 years: 18.6%
- 2-5 years: 9.5%
- 5-10 years: 9.5%
- 10+ years: 26.2%



Callers do not always disclose whether they are in any form of treatment. Where this is mentioned, it is worth noting that in 2013 where known, 50.3% were currently in some form of treatment and 49.7% of callers to the helpline were not currently engaged in any form of treatment. The breakdown of type of treatment are seen in Figure 9:

**Figure 9: Type of current treatment**

- Psychotherapy / Counselling only: 35%
- GP only: 31%
- Psychiatrist / Hospital Treatment: 20%
- GP + Psychotherapy: 12.8%
- GP + Dietician: 1.2%



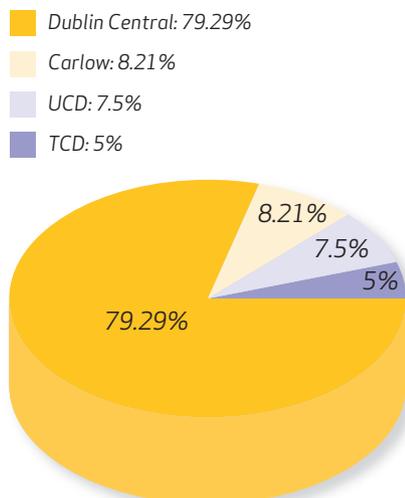
# Support Groups

Bodywhys offers two types of support groups, one for people with eating disorders, and one for family and friends. The groups in Carlow and Dublin have continued throughout 2013, and this is in no small part to the group of extremely committed volunteers in both those areas.

We have three groups operating in Dublin. Our longest running group, in Temple bar, has continued to be accessed by many people throughout the year, as have our groups in UCD and TCD. There have been peaks and troughs with attendance at our UCD and TCD groups, but this is expected on a college campus with the timetable that students engage in. We would like to thank the Trinity Student Counselling Service for their ongoing support, and Cian Dowling, the Welfare Officer in UCD, for his support of the group.

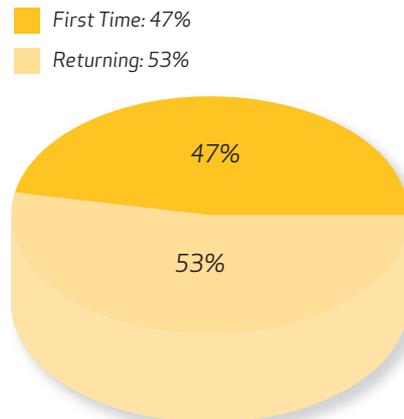
In 2013, 108 groups were held in Dublin and Carlow. In Figure 10, you can see the breakdown of percentage attendance at all of our support groups.

**Figure 10: Support Groups**



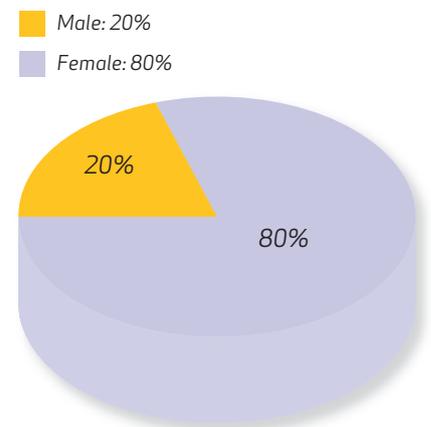
It is worth noting that in Figure 11, when we look at attendance of our support groups, 47% of people attending at the group were there for the first time, and 53% of people attending had been to the groups before, and were returning. With this level of people returning to our support groups, we are encouraged that the way we operate our groups and the support ethos that underpins all of our services, makes the group a safe place for people to articulate their experiences and get and give support to one another.

**Figure 11: Support Groups Attendance**



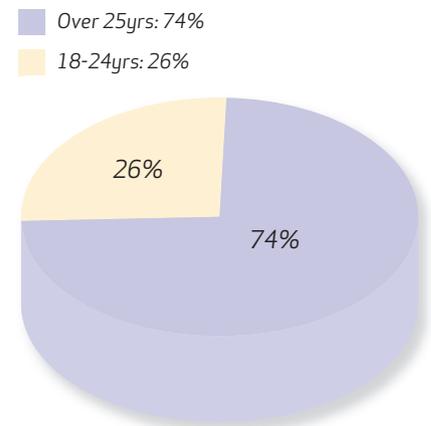
In Figure 12, we can see that 80% of people attending our groups in 2013 were female, and 20% were male.

**Figure 12: Support Groups Gender**



In Figure 13, we can see that 74% of people attending the group were over 25 yrs., and 26% were aged 18-24 yrs.

**Figure 13: Support Groups Age**



# Online Services

## Online Support Groups

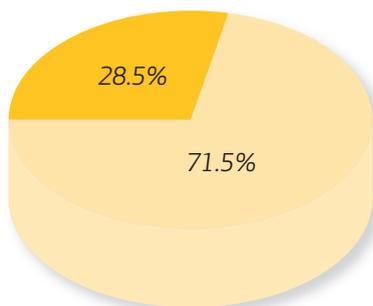
Bodywhys operates two types of online groups, one for adults and one for teens. Our adult online support group, **BodywhysConnect**, operates every week, either on a Monday or a Wednesday evening, and our group for teens, **TeensOnline**, operates every Sunday evening.

## Teens Online Support Group

In 2013, we had a 52.7% increase in the number of new registrations for our teens online support group. We held 52 groups and there was a 32% increase in numbers of people participating in the group. In Figure 14 you can see that 28.5% of users were aged between 13-15yrs., and 71.5% of users were aged 16-18 yrs. In Figure 15 you can see that 95% of users were female and 5% were male.

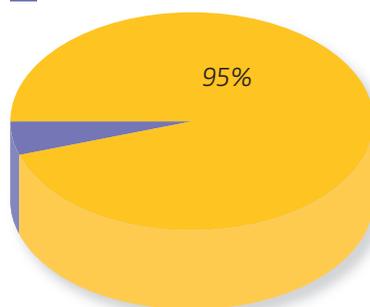
**Figure 14: TeensOnline User Age**

- 13-15yrs: 28.5%
- 16-18yrs: 71.5%



**Figure 15: TeensOnline Gender of User**

- Female: 95%
- Male: 5%

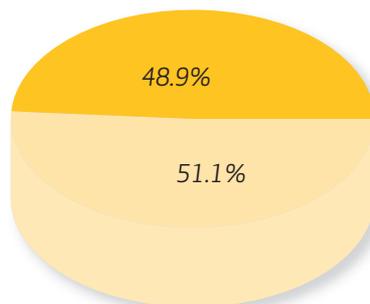


## BodywhysConnect Adult Online Support Group

We ran a total of 53 adult online support groups in 2013. Of these, 24.4% were new users, and 75.6% were returning users. In Figure 16, you can see the age breakdown of participants in the groups, and in Figure 17 you can see the breakdown in type of eating disorder that people identified themselves as experiencing.

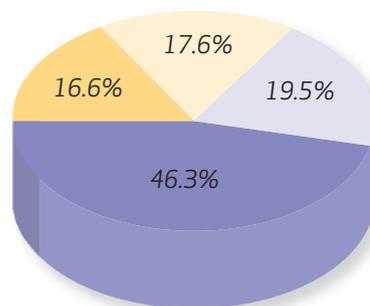
**Figure 16: BodywhysConnect User Age**

- 18-25yrs: 48.9%
- Over 25yrs: 51.1%



**Figure 17: BodywhysConnect User PWED Type**

- Anorexia: 16.6%
- Bulimia: 17.6%
- Anorexia/Bulimia: 19.5%
- Binge Eating Disorder: 46.3%

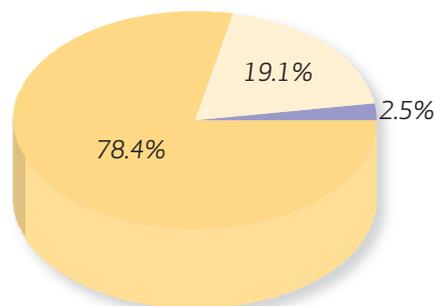


## Email Support

In 2013, our email support service dealt with 546 emails. As you can see in Figure 18, there was a high percentage of people who have an eating disorder (self contacts) using the email service as a way of getting support and information. This is a much higher percentage than on our helpline service.

**Figure 18: Type of Contact Person**

- Self: 78.4%
- Family / Friend: 19.1%
- Other: 2.5%

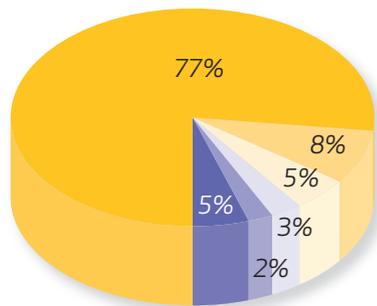


# Online Services (continued)

Figure 19 gives the breakdown of the treatment options those who contacted through the email service are currently engaging in. Significantly, 77% of emails concerned people who are not currently in any form of treatment.

**Figure 19: Type of current treatment**

- No Current Treatment: 77%
- Hospital / Psychiatrist: 8%
- Psychotherapy / Counselling: 5%
- GP and Psychotherapy / Counselling: 3%
- GP: 2%
- Unknown: 5%



## SeeMySelf - Online psycho-education programme for 15-24 year olds.



In 2013 Bodywhys launched an innovative online psycho-education programme, SeeMySelf, developed in conjunction with Dr. John Sharry and Silvercloud Health. This psycho-educational tool, targeted at those aged 15-24yrs, which is the average age of onset for an eating disorder, was developed to support young people to understand and strengthen the core issues and develop coping skills to support the multitude of life changes that occur during these years. The online programme covers topics including self-esteem, body-image, food and mood, understanding the media and how it influences self image, and thoughts-feelings-behaviours cycles. The aim of the programme is to help young people gain a broader understanding of those core features which are key to establishing a strong sense of identity.

The participant explores each module over a six to eight week timeframe. Each module uses videos, quizzes, interactive tools, exercises and goal setting to address the core issues. The young person is supported through the programme by a designated online supporter, meaning that it not only uses the online medium, but also engages at a personal level. Working these two elements together provides participants with a unique opportunity to develop their coping skills and to learn about themselves.

*“It really makes you think about the way you describe yourself and the way you feel about yourself. It makes you focus on all the positives and by doing so, helps you to see that the things you maybe don’t like are part of what makes you unique.”* - Comments by participant in the pilot programme

### AND FINALLY...

Bodywhys would like to acknowledge that it is only with the generous gift of our volunteer’s time, energy and enthusiasm that our support services continue to be the cornerstone of our organisation. We would like to sincerely thank all our volunteers for this.

# Communications



Barry Murphy

## Traditional Media

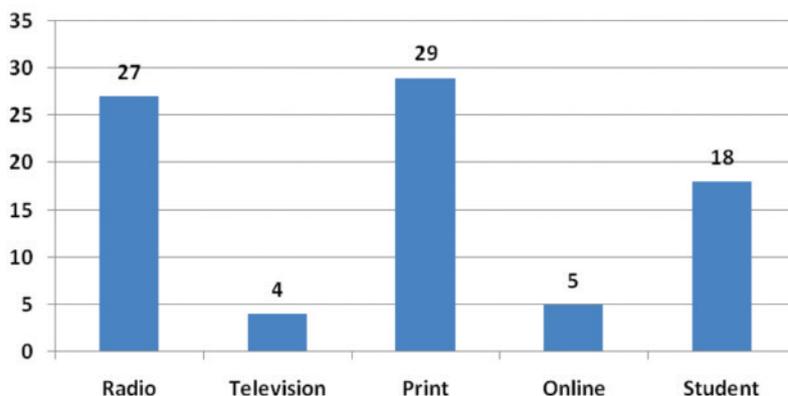
Media reporting of eating disorders and related issues continued steadily throughout 2013. The year saw a range of issues covered across sections of the media. In January, sections of the media looked at the pressure on adolescents in relation to diets. The launch of the Bodywhys *SeeMySelf* programme received wide coverage in February. March saw reporting on the possibility of an 'anorexia pacemaker', whilst pregnancy and eating disorders were also discussed during this month. April's coverage included laxative abuse, body dysmorphic disorder and anorexia. May's reporting focused on women and eating disorders, size zero, pro-anorexia websites, bulimia, recovery from eating disorders and the publication of Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5), which significantly introduced binge eating disorder as its own diagnostic category.

July saw Dublin host the European Society for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (ESCAP) conference, airbrushing led to some coverage whilst anorexia formed part of the media's focus during August. Concerns about child pageants in Ireland and a suggested genetic component to eating disorders were highlighted during September and October respectively. November and December saw coverage of binge eating disorder, fears around coping at Christmas and the Bodywhys publication *Eating Disorders: A Resource for General Practitioners*. Information about this resource was published in the ICGP publication, *The Forum*. Finally, other topics discussed throughout the year included warnings about laxative abuse and slimming pills, body image, and eating disorder-centred letters to personal issues columnists. During the year, Bodywhys received 65 media requests and 18 contacts from third level students. Print media and radio queries were the most common

form of request. The busiest month for media queries was February, followed by November and October. The nature of the requests included seeking input from individuals with personal experience of an eating disorder.

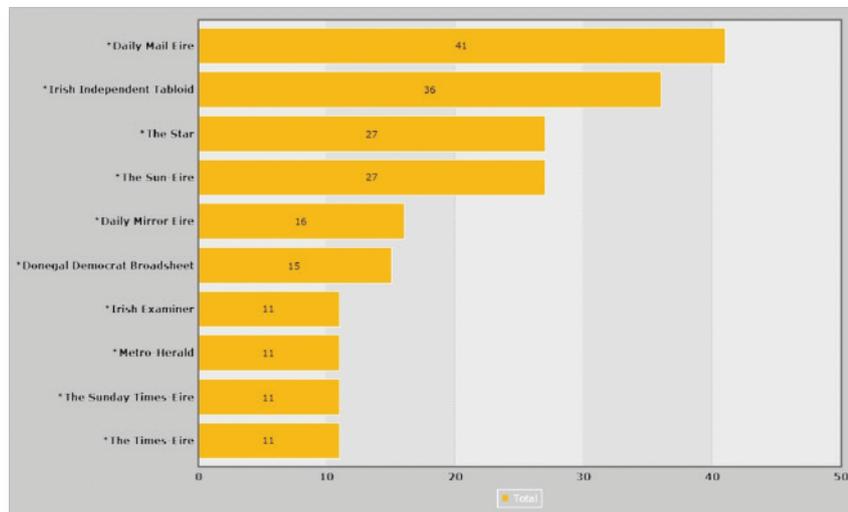
Bodywhys remains grateful to the members of the organisation's Media Panel and their willingness to share their experiences with the media. Other topics Bodywhys was asked to respond to were advice on overcoming an eating disorder, body image, unrealistic media images and airbrushing, eating disorders and exams, eating disorders and pregnancy, social media and finally, men and eating disorders. Print media coverage for 2013 primarily focused on eating disorders in general, whilst anorexia was the next most referenced disorder. Bodywhys was referenced in 111 articles across the year, bringing a potential readership of approximately 6.1 million.

## Communications Queries for 2013



# Communications (continued)

## Top 10 Publications - Eating Disorder Coverage in 2013



## EDAW 2013 Media Coverage

Print media coverage of Eating Disorders Awareness Week 2013 was driven by 3 core components: general discussion of eating disorders, coverage of activities related to eating disorders awareness week and the launch of the Bodywhys resource, *SeeMySelf*. Twenty articles referenced Eating Disorders Awareness Week bringing a potential readership of approximately 799,583 (distributed edition).

Bodywhys received and responded to radio requests from *Newstalk FM*, *Kildare FM*, *Spin FM*, *Clare FM*, *Castlebar (CRC) FM*, *Near FM* and *South East Radio* during Eating Disorder Awareness Week.

## Online

### Bodywhys eBulletin

Five issues of the Bodywhys eBulletin were distributed during 2013 – with subscriber numbers up by approximately 18% compared to the previous year. Click-thru rates for the eBulletin are also above average. An archive of eBulletins can be found on the Bodywhys website: [www.bodywhys.ie](http://www.bodywhys.ie)

### Bodywhys Website

The main Bodywhys website ([www.bodywhys.ie](http://www.bodywhys.ie)) continued as a vital resource with traffic steady throughout 2013. February and August featured the highest number of visitors to the website. 77% of visitors originated from Ireland. Overall, 48,182 unique visitors logged on to the website during 2013. An increase of 18% compared to figures from 2012.

## Social Media

Bodywhys' presence on social media grew strongly through 2013 surpassing 2,200 followers on Twitter, and reaching 1,560 'likes' on Facebook by the end of the year.

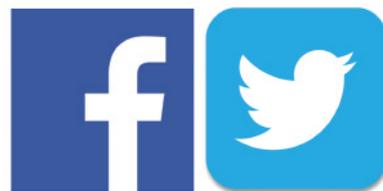
Social networking sites were a source of feedback on Bodywhys as an organisation:

*"I would really recommend having a look at the Bodywhys website"*

*"So delighted to see the amazing work Bodywhys continue to do to raise awareness for and support those affected by eating disorders"*

In early 2013, we posted a number of Youth Panel video interviews to our online video channels and we also posted a short video demonstration of our online support groups.

In November, social media postings at the Bodywhys event 'Airbrushing: A Touchy Subject' saw @bodywhys and the event's hashtag #ats13 trending on Twitter.



# Youth Development



Fiona Flynn Dăscălescu

A continued focus for the Youth Development Officer in 2013 was meeting the requests from schools and youth groups nationwide to speak with students about eating disorders and body image through our 'Be Body Positive' programme. In response to a large increase (300%) in the number of requests from single sex boys' schools in 2013, the 'Be Body Positive' programme was expanded to include additional information about Muscle Dysmorphia and to provide more information on boys/men with eating disorders. Over 6,000 students received the programme in secondary schools and youth groups in 2013.

As part of the growth of the 'Be Body Positive' Schools Programme, in-depth training was provided to volunteers nominated by the Eating Disorder Centre of Cork (EDCC) on how to deliver the programme to schools in their locality.

Work with Youth Reach centres across the country continued in 2013. Bodywhys provided training for Youth Work Ireland staff and gave support to youth workers and young people in Cork, Dublin, Galway, Kilkenny, Laois and Limerick.

Bodywhys continued to provide an input into training at third level as part of social studies, nursing, teacher training and other courses through lectures to promote awareness and understanding on the area of eating disorders. We also engaged third level journalism students in discussion on the importance of responsible reporting in the area of eating disorders and how this could be achieved.

During the year we met the ongoing demands for input to continued professional development at in-service days and events nationwide – including Social Personal and Health Education, youth workers, Guidance Counsellors, and talks with medical teams and counselling services in Universities and Colleges. In October 2013 Bodywhys also delivered training to primary school teachers on how to promote positive body image in the classroom.

# Youth Development *(continued)*



Fiona Flynn at the Bodywhys stand Young Social Innovators Exhibition – May 2013.



Bodywhys and SeeChange on Parking Day.

## Youth Panel & Events

Bodywhys also saw an increase in the number of requests for involvement in youth events in 2013, particularly in the number of requests from regional groups of Comhairle na n'Og. Dail na n'Og focussed on 'Body Image' in their survey, ***How We See It: Report of a Survey on Young People's Body Image*** conducted in 2011 and published the findings in 2012. Dail na n'Og regional groups requested an input on the issue as a follow-up to the results.

Bodywhys spoke to a further 1,840 young people through talks and workshops at these youth events nationwide during 2013.

During 2013 the youth panel were involved in a range of different activities including input into the 'Be Body Positive' programme to include more information relevant to eating disorders in males. To facilitate the broadening of the 'Be Body Positive' message the youth panel contributed inspiring posts in the form of images, quotes and personal stories, on a monthly basis to the existing Bodywhys Facebook and Twitter pages.

In May we had an information stand at the Young Social Innovators showcase in the Citywest Hotel. This is one of the largest youth events of the year with over 3,000 young people attending.

Participants were invited to post 'Be Body Positive' messages on a cardboard stand. These ideas were subsequently shared with a wider audience through the Bodywhys Facebook and Twitter pages.

In September Bodywhys joined up with SeeChange for their Parking Day in Dublin City Centre. The focus of the day was stigma reduction through encouraging members of the public to talk more openly about issues around mental health.

# Projects Officer



Elizabeth Murray

In 2013 Bodywhys continued to work in consultation with third level colleges, the Union of Students in Ireland (USI) and the College and University Sports Association of Ireland (CUSAI) to address the support and information needs of students nationwide.

We brought our 'Size Doesn't Matter' campaign to campuses across the country. This campaign was developed as a result of extensive discussion with Student Welfare Officers who raised a number of areas of concern for students: body image, peer pressure and issues around disordered eating.

As part of this campaign we designed a banner which challenged many of the misconceptions around eating disorders:

- ***They are a form of attention seeking***
- ***They are a choice***
- ***That they only affect females***

During the year we were part of a number of mental health weeks across the county and these included: Cork IT, University of Limerick, Athlone IT, University College Cork, Waterford IT and Galway-Mayo IT.

## **Fundraising and Raise and Give week**

In 2013 we were successfully chosen by University of Limerick as their charity of the year who donated funds raised during their 'Raise and Give' (RAG) week to Bodywhys. A sincere thanks to all the students who supported us and gave their time and energy to raise funds on our behalf.

## **DCU Fashion Show**

In 2013 we worked with the students of DCU on their annual fashion show. The theme of the show was focused on fashion and style as a way to express yourself regardless of social pressure. We worked closely with the students around appropriate messaging for the event. Bodywhys details were included on all branding and media releases leading up to the show. DCU also worked with FM 104 and many other national media groups to publicise the event which provided us with an opportunity to raise awareness and communicate the Bodywhys message to a large audience. The fashion show took place in March and was a great success with attendance on the night in excess of 900 people.

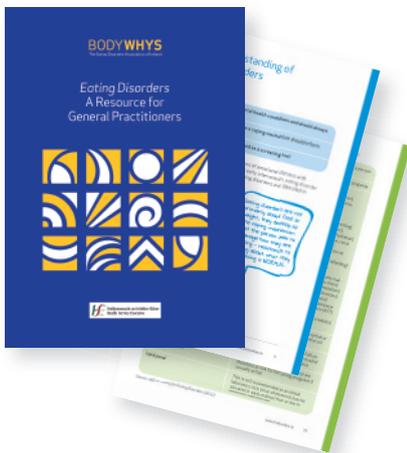
During 2013 the one-year position of Projects Officer concluded and we thank Elizabeth Murray for her innovation during her tenure with the organisation.

# Other Activities



Mary Crean

## Resource Development

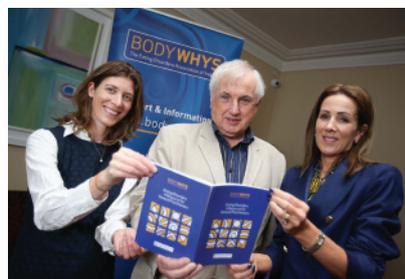


**Eating Disorders: A Resource for General Practitioners** was developed by Harriet Parsons, Bodywhys in 2013 in partnership with Dr. Sinead O'Dea, Clinical Lead for Eating Disorders, Irish College of General Practitioners.

Research<sup>1</sup> suggests that people with eating disorders consult their GP more frequently than other people in the 5 years prior to being diagnosed. GPs are therefore uniquely placed to identify and assess those patients with disordered eating before these behaviours and psychological distortions become entrenched.

The booklet is a comprehensive guide which will assist general practitioners in the identification, assessment and management of patients with eating disorders. It aims to provide GPs with an understanding and awareness of the issue along with practical information with regards to assessment, diagnosis and treatment pathways.

Over 3,000 copies of this resource were disseminated to GPs nationwide through the Irish College of General practitioners magazine, *The Forum*. It is also available free of charge from Bodywhys central office. Our sincere thanks to Dr. Sinead O'Dea and Pearse Finnegan, Irish College of General Practitioners and to Gerry Raleigh and NOSP for funding.



Launch of the Resource for GPs, Harriet Parsons, Pearse Finnegan, Dr. Sinead O'Dea

## Training/Education

In 2013 Bodywhys was asked to participate in a number of different conferences with varying perspectives:

- **Technology for Well-Being Conference.** Harriet Parsons from Bodywhys presented the results from research into the role of our online support groups in the recovery process from an eating disorder which was carried out by Dr. Niamh McNamara, UCD School of Medicine.
- **Congress of European Society for Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, ESCAP 2013.** Bodywhys was delighted to be able to present at the ESCAP 2013 conference which was held at the convention centre in Dublin. This presentation by Harriet Parsons focused on the role of Bodywhys, a support organisation, within the wider context of service provision for eating disorders in Ireland.
- **Newbridge Mental Health Conference.** Harriet Parsons from Bodywhys presented a paper on the effectiveness of online support groups in the recovery process from an eating disorder, again using the results from the research conducted by Dr. Niamh McNamara.

During the year, we responded to many training requests from relevant health professionals who come across the issue of eating disorders as part of their work. Our training module, 'Understanding Eating Disorders'

<sup>1</sup> (Treasure J et al; Mind the gap: service transition and interface problems for patients with eating disorders. Br J Psych 2005; 187: 398-400)

# Other Activities *(continued)*

provided these professionals with an understanding of eating disorders, and the recovery process with a view to increasing their knowledge base. This training module was delivered to the nurses of the Lucena Clinic, staff of the Willow Grove Adolescent Unit (St. Patrick's Hospital), the Employment Assistance Programme (EAP), the Training Links Programme, Coolmine Addiction Service, Crosscare Teen Counselling, Social Workers at Enable Ireland, Carline Learning Centre and the St. Vincent's Hospital Fairview Mental Health Services .

In 2013 we were delighted to be asked to be the Reachout.com 'Ask the Expert' on two occasions. During these months we responded to many emails submitted on the issue of eating disorders.

## Annual Awareness Campaign



Eating Disorders Awareness Week (EDAW) February 11<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>.

Throughout awareness week, a variety of information and awareness events took place across the country, including:

- The launch of Bodywhys innovative online programme, SeeMySelf
- An information evening for GPs in conjunction with St. John of God Hospital, Co. Dublin
- Briefing by Dr. Caroline Maher for TDs and Senators on the dangers of pro-ana sites
- Public information events in Monaghan, Sligo and Wicklow



Launch of SeeMySelf

- Bodywhys Youth Development Officer provided talks to KPEG – Kilkenny Education Guerillas Youth Group
- Bodywhys Service Coordinator responded to queries on ReachOut.com's Ask the Expert
- An information stand in St. Vincent's Hospital, Dublin
- Youth Panel interviews with celebrities which included Miriam O'Callaghan, Catherine Fulvio and Monica Loughman about their views on body image were posted on the Bodywhys Facebook page
- SpunOut.ie posted the myths surrounding eating disorders

## Bodywhys Literature and Information Stands

During 2013, Bodywhys distributed over 7,300 information packs, leaflets and resources via our support services. In addition to this it is approximated that a further 8,500 resources were distributed through school talks and information stands.

Bodywhys hosted an information stand at the following: St. Patricks Hospital information evening, the

Killaloe Mental Health Day, Arklow Mental Health Week, Wicklow Cycle Against Suicide event, Fettercairn Mental Health Week, Roscommon Mental Health evening and Bantry Mental Health Day.

## Events

### Airbrushing Seminar: A Touchy Subject



In November 2013, Bodywhys, in conjunction with Nessa Childers, MEP, hosted a one-day seminar titled *Airbrushing: A Touchy Subject*. This seminar provided a forum to review, discuss and debate the often contentious topic of airbrushed, photo-shopped or digitally enhanced media images. A wide variety of speakers contributed to the day bringing a diversity of perspectives.

Opening the event Nessa Childers, MEP, focused on how the body ideals depicted in airbrushed images were unobtainable, that the causes of eating disorders are multi-faceted and also that the issue can affect individuals of all ages. Based on feedback gathered through our schools programme, Fiona Flynn, Youth Development Officer with Bodywhys, discussed how airbrushed images can have a knock on effect on an individual's self-esteem.

# Other Activities *(continued)*

Bringing a media perspective, Dil Wickremasinghe from Newstalk FM spoke about her personal background and how cultural and media messaging can impact on mental health. Coleman Noctor, psychotherapist from St. Patrick's Hospital's Adolescent Service, discussed the role of the internet and the potential developmental and psychological difficulties that may occur due to the access young people now have to sexually explicit material.

Speaking on the issue of media responsibility, Orla Twomey from the Advertising Standards Authority of Ireland (ASAI) discussed media regulation in the Irish context, the complaints procedures and the mechanisms that are available.

Exploring recent research findings, Dr. Barbara Dooley, UCD, presented the results from the *My World Survey*. Dr. Dooley's presentation explored areas such as bullying, emotional distress, anxiety, depression and body dissatisfaction. Adopting a sociological perspective, Derek Chambers from Inspire Ireland spoke about the personal struggles that individuals can experience, how these issues may be a cause for concern in the broader public context, and the role of the media.

Professor Fiona McNicholas discussed the complexity of eating disorders and the role of the media. According to Professor McNicholas, the evidence does not currently support the contention that the media causes eating disorders, however it can contribute to negative feelings about body image for some individuals, it can lead to unhelpful social comparisons and ideals for all and finally result in those already vulnerable engaging in dangerous behaviours in an attempt to meet these ideals.

Combining journalism and marketing experience, Sheena Horgan, author of *Candy Coated Marketing*, described Ireland's relationship with the media and advertising as well as how the media shapes opinions and can set norms.



*Airbrushing Seminar, Breda Naddy, Nessa Childers, MEP, Marie Devine, Parvez Butt, Prof. Fiona McNicholas*

## **Fundraising Activities**

In February 2013 Melanie & Darren Wright, Lois Bridges Eating Disorders Treatment Programme in Sutton, generously held a charity lunch with proceeds to Bodywhys. Paddy Cunningham, who came to fame through his participation in the Biggest Loser, was the guest speaker on the day and a phenomenal €4,649 was raised by the event. A sincere thank you to all those involved in making the event such a resounding success.

Bodywhys was delighted to be selected as one of four charities by ARAMARK to be the recipient of funds raised through their Charitable Fund in 2013.

Once again Bodywhys participated in the Flora Women's Mini-Marathon in 2013. We had approx 15 people who participated on behalf of Bodywhys last June and we would like to say a huge thank you to them for their generosity and support.



*Flora Women's Mini-Marathon, Jennifer Nolan & Catherine Clarke*

# Other Activities

# Statement of Financial Activities

for the year ended 31 December 2013

	Notes	2013	2012
		€	€
<b>INCOME</b>			
Donations & Other Income		-	411
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects		296,031	286,287
Investment Income		10,503	-
<b>Total Income</b>		<u>306,534</u>	<u>286,698</u>
<b>Charitable Expenditure</b>			
Operating Overheads		41,496	85,892
Costs of Charity's Activities		281,398	228,604
Management Costs		4,795	4,551
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<u>327,689</u>	<u>319,047</u>
<b>Operating Deficit for the year</b>		<u>(21,155)</u>	<u>(32,349)</u>

There are no other recognised gains or losses and all activities relate to continuing operations.  
Approved by the trustees on 10 June 2014 and signed on their behalf by:

**Siobhan Bereen**   **Parvez Butt**  
Trustee                      Trustee

# Balance Sheet

as at 31 December 2013

	Notes	2013	2013	2012	2012
		€	€	€	€
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>					
Cash at bank and in hand		299,485		347,188	
		299,485		347,188	
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	6	(20,990)		(47,538)	
<b>Net current assets</b>			278,495		299,650
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>			278,495		299,650
<b>FUNDS</b>					
<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>					
General Funds	9		18,065		39,220
Designated Funds	9		226,730		226,730
	9		244,795		265,950
Restricted Income Funds	9		33,700		33,700
<b>Total Funds</b>			278,495		299,650

The financial statements were approved by the trustees on 10 June 2014 and signed on its behalf by:

**Siobhan Bereen**   **Parvez Butt**  
Trustee                      Trustee

# Acknowledgements

The Chairman, Board of Directors and Staff wish to record their sincere thanks to all those who volunteered or donated to Bodywhys in 2013. Your interest in and support of our work is much appreciated.

ARAMARK

Double Dutch Design – Gabie Devaney

Genio Trust

Health Service Executive – Martin Rogan & Staff

Health Service Executive – Jim Ryan & Staff

Irish College of General Practitioners – Pearse Finnegan & Dr. Sinead O’Dea

Lois Bridges – Melanie & Darren Wright

National Office for Suicide Prevention - Gerry Raleigh & Staff

Niamh McNamara BA PhD

SPHE Support Service – Siobhan Foster, Regional Manager

St. John of God Brothers – CEO, Management Team & Order

Union of Students in Ireland – Denise McCarthy

University of Limerick Students Union

# Thank You

# Company Information

Company Information as of  
31st December 2013

## **Directors**

Parvez Butt  
Alison Darcy  
Marie Devine  
Siobhan Bereen  
Jennifer Kelly  
Breda Naddy

## **Secretary**

Henry Blake

## **Registered office**

18 Upper Mount Street  
Dublin 2

## **Auditors**

DLT Dillon Kelly Cregan Ltd  
18 Upper Mount Street  
Dublin 2

## **Registered Charity No**

11961

# BODYWHYS

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Support Email: [alex@bodywhys.ie](mailto:alex@bodywhys.ie)