

Marie Mooney enjoys a musical interlude at RehabCare's Dun Laoghaire resource centre where service users are blossoming into talented performers.

Thank You for  
**the Music**

Marie Mooney is studying Business Studies and Administration at National Learning Network's Roslyn Park College in Dublin and is currently on work placement with Rehab's Communications and Public Affairs team. A keen musician, Marie plays traditional fiddle and has an interest in music therapy. She recently visited RehabCare's Dun Laoghaire resource centre to take part in the centre's musical programmes, and discovered a wealth of hidden talent!

### "FRIDAY IS COOL BECAUSE

Friday is music day!" says Deirdre O'Brien and indeed Friday is cool, as I discovered when I visited RehabCare's Dun Laoghaire resource centre in South Dublin to find out what kind of music therapy programmes go on there.

Located in Clarence House, an old Georgian building in the centre of the town, the RehabCare resource centre was opened six years ago.

I was greeted at the gates outside and introduced to Clara McAuliffe, the centre's Community Services Manager.

The morning started off with singing classes from music therapy teacher Marion Smith. Marion, originally from Greystones, has lots of experience in providing music classes in the centre and has also set up her own organisation – Music Together. The singing classes were based on actions with words and in the classroom you could feel a whole creative buzz. The songs and raps that Marion teaches enhance memory and also help the brain to concentrate on achieving the rhythm of the songs.

Next up was guitar lessons with the experienced Bray-based music teacher, James Quinn. The service users seemed to be really enthusiastic about the guitar lessons from James, or Jimmy, as they called him. Everyone was playing and singing together and just happy to be there.

There has been very positive feedback from the service users to the programme. "Participants come up to me at the end of the class to say that they sing the songs for other people," says Marion.

Jimmy says, "While taking part in the guitar classes, I could feel a strong sense of partnership and camaraderie between everyone involved. Attending the centre is clearly having a very positive effect on all the people who are there."

Clara McAuliffe agrees. "The music therapy classes provide a medium for self-expression and also help to stimulate the brain. Since the service users have started the classes, I've noticed positive changes and both their self-esteem and their levels of independence have improved. There's a real sense of unity in the group and everyone encourages each other."

The participants of both the singing and guitar classes recently showcased their talent in front of an appreciative audience of over 60 people at a musical coffee morning held in the centre.

Well and truly bitten by the performing bug, the participants are now hoping to take part in



*Pictured above:* Deirdre O'Brien.

Dun Laoghaire Rathdown's Social Inclusion Week 2010, which takes place from the 8th to 12th November and is held in partnership with Southside Partnership in Blackrock. Plans are also being made to perform at a pre-Christmas concert later in the year. It certainly looks like there's no stopping the musically-talented bunch from RehabCare Dun Laoghaire. Now, where's Simon Cowell? ■

### Who to contact

For further information please contact:



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