



Annual Report

2005 – 2006

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Why we are here

Mothers Voices

As the mother of a son who has abused substances for 9 years, I found myself desperately in need of help and support a few months ago.

I was given the telephone number of SFSS from a National Helpline and within a few hours of speaking to Linda the Administrator I had a one to one counselling session with Janice, Project Manger. During this first session I knew SFSS gave a very professional and confidential service and I felt confident that the help I had needed for such a long time was now available. As well as expert counselling, I was offered treatment from a Clinical Aromatherapist and an early appointment was arranged for me.

Weekly support and aromatherapy massages soon had me feeling stronger and more able to cope with the situation. I look forward to each session and always come away feeling that I have been listened to and treated well. Without this valuable service I do not know how, ever, if I would have coped. It is my hope that other people who find themselves in need of help and support will be able to obtain this from SFSS.

A very grateful mother.

My son had been using drugs for many years. I'd given up hope of him ever giving them up. I was given the number for SFSS and I phoned and spoke to someone, I phoned a few times and found talking really helpful. I was offered other services and some I have used.

With the help and support I received it helped me understand my son's addiction, I also started to realise I have needs of my own.

I'm now able to help and support my son. With help from SFSS I have been able to help my son get the support he needed to start his recovery.

Thank you very much.

A family member.

Justice Minister Cathy Jamieson said:

"The police are working to target dealers and to defend communities against drugs and drug related crime. But the hard reality is that as long as there is a demand for drugs - criminals will profit, families will suffer and communities will be threatened.

"That is why it is vital that we have the support in place to help those who have developed problems to choose to turn their backs on drugs and crime and to fulfill their potential.

1/07/05

Chairpersons Report

SFSS has experienced a successful but somewhat frustrating year. Looking on the positive side we have achieved many of the aims and targets that we set ourselves this time last year. We have expanded into many new partnerships consolidated our core service, and endeavoured to respond to the growing demand for family support not only in the Stirling area but across the Forth Valley Area and indeed on a National scale. Our members, staff and volunteers completed NVQ training in March 2005 run by Lyn Clare from P.A.D.A. to enable us to operate the National helpline. We now facilitate the operation of this telephone helpline one afternoon a week and on an "as required" basis covering holidays etc.

In 2005 we drew up a three year business plan to help us to focus on how we would manage to provide Family Support in the future, our Development Workers Post funding came to an end in August 2005 and we faced an uncertain future with our core funding due to come to an end in March 2006. As we are a registered charity this has enabled us to apply to many different sources for the funding of our project. This process involves many hours of work, research and form filling. I would like to thank all those involved in this procedure, which is still ongoing at this time, for all their work help and guidance and hope that the eventual outcome will ensure a more secure future for SFSS.

We continue to provide the administration support and to chair the Forth Valley Family Support Network, which has enabled us to have a clearer overview of the services required throughout the region. Our project manager Janice Beaton has recently become the Forth Valley Representative on the Scottish Network Association for Families Affected by Drugs (SNFAD) this further increases our experience of the needs of families throughout Scotland and where we fit into the bigger picture.

We remain the only service in the Stirling Council area that provides support, information, and training to parents, family members, individuals and the wider community where there is a substance misuse problem. The frustration that we have experienced is because due to the uncertainties of funding we have constantly to concentrate on consolidating our service rather than developing and expanding it, so enabling us to reach more members of the community. Our staff Linda and Janice have worked tirelessly throughout this time with complete dedication and I would like to express my gratitude to them for this, also thanks are due to our current funders and partners, advisors to the management committee, members of the management committee, volunteers and indeed all who have helped us continue to serve the community during this past year.

Kathleen M Forsyth
Chairperson
Stirling Family Support Service

SFSS has a vital role to play in tackling drug use

Drug use is a complex problem for our communities, and understanding drugs use is about much much more than just what the substances are and their effects, many people take drugs to control illness or pain, many of us take painkillers occasionally for backache, headaches etc. Others take drugs because they can make them feel good or to help them cope with their lives more easily, in fact we live in a world where drug use is part of everyday life.

Most of us hope that our children will avoid taking drugs, unfortunately drugs are all too common in our communities, whether they are rural communities or part of the city, and that is one of the reasons why SFSS has seen a rise in figures this year.

However in 1999, mothers who were devastated by their children's illegal drug use set up Stirling Family Support Service.

Many of the parents who contact SFSS feel they don't know anything about drugs, many are concerned about changes in mood and appearance, attitude towards school or work, losing interest in activities, concerned they're child is becoming secretive and when this happens many parents assume their child is taking drugs.

This may not be the case and we need to bear in mind that some possible signs of drug taking are normal signs of young people growing up. Our staff and volunteers are skilled and trained to help these parents cope with these fears. We are also experienced and skilled at supporting the family cope and identify their own needs when faced with the fact that they have a substance user in the family.

This has been a very busy, exciting and challenging year for the Family Support Service. Our small team of dedicated staff, management committee, volunteers and advisors all playing their part to ensure families of substance users get the help and support they need, and as we've developed we haven't lost sight of the fact that families needs are very different to that of the substance users; each family member is unique and every family members has different needs.

Staff and volunteers deal with a range of issues affecting families as a result of someone else's drug or alcohol use and will continue to champion the cause for families to have their own dedicated services.

You'll see later in this report that most of our work is still done using the phone and changing the helpline to a freephone number this year has made a difference to the number of calls coming through the helpline and freeing up the office phone for business calls.

The Scottish Executives "Quality of Life Initiative" through Stirling Council, which allowed us to continue and build on existing good practise came to a natural end in March, although we had hoped to get continuation funding to keep the core services Stirling Council like all other local authorities in Scotland had some difficult decisions to take in terms of budget savings, unfortunately Stirling Family Support Service as a voluntary partner fell into the category of savings.

However, it must be recognised here that over the past 6 years Stirling Council have always been a major supporter and very supportive of SFSS and the work we do, and are represented on our advisory group at Head of Service level. They also recognise the value and the need for services such as SFSS to exist, and at the time of writing this report they have agreed to fund the core cost on a month to month basis to give us time to identify and secure a more sustainable funding sources.

As you go through this report you will see the efforts made by the team to ensure we continue to provide a quality service and have built on the success of previous years.

Janice Beaton
Project Manager

Some of our adventures

Talking Scotland

I've been volunteering for 16 months now.

I volunteer for Stirling Family Support.

Stirling Family Support Service is a voluntary organisation to support families and friends of substance misusers.

Before I began with Stirling Family Support, I didn't have a lot of motivation, confidence; self-esteem was quite low, so the whole build up to becoming a volunteer, and then doing the work with them, it's really changed my outlook on life.

Being a single parent it's the kids and the house constantly, so Stirling Family Support's given me the opportunity to get out, meet new people and do positive things.

I like the idea that I could be making a difference to someone's life, even just one person's life.

Knowing that you could make that difference is such a good feeling.

Lesley Rogers
Volunteer

Crusaid Walk for Life 2006

Two members of SFSS joined with the HIV-AIDS Carers & Family Service Provider to attend the Crusaid 10k Walk for Life in July 2006. This was a great day and thoroughly enjoyed by Edna and Linda who raised almost £600.



Good Luck Karin



Karin completed the COSCA Counselling Skills Certificate Course with SFSS in April 2004 as part of her training to deliver face to face services, as a result of completing this course Karin applied for a place at Jordanhill (Strathclyde University) to complete the Diploma in Counselling, she has naturally been accepted, Karin starts her new adventure in September 2006.

We all wish her great success.

Table Top Sale

Working in partnership with Stirling Boys Club Management Committee to fundraise.

Thank you to everyone who gave a donation.



Fond Farewell

Lynne has been a volunteer with SFSS for over 5 years and during that time has been enthusiastic and committed to the service. She started off as a volunteer and became a member of the Management Committee in 2003. Lynne took the opportunity to participate in a variety of training and particularly enjoyed the COSCA Counselling Course and participating in Information and Promotional days. Lynne said, "she felt that being involved in the Management Committee has given her a good insight into how committees work and the problems they have to overcome."

We take this opportunity to wish Lynne every success in her many new adventures.

Workshops/Training

Drug Awareness Young Persons Programme – Fallin



The programme was developed by Lesley and Melanie in conjunction with the Young People and covered a mixture of group discussions, quizzes, and games, looking at the effects of Alcohol using Beer Goggles, role play, using the video camera and separating Myths from Facts.

Jim Rutherford donated his time to demonstrate First Aid. The Young People really got into the practical stuff.

On a more serious note they looked at how drugs affects other Family members and Friends and what to do in an Overdose situation.

They also looked at how to have fun and party with Non-Alcoholic Cocktails.



Comments from Evaluation Sheets suggest the Young People really enjoyed this experience: -

“This was really cool”

“Really enjoyed the First Aid, Cocktails, drama and the discussion on facts”

“I thought this was fab, ace, fandavidozzy”

“Really really good and very very good fun”

“Alcohol dilemmas was good”

“Learning how to do CPR and the recover position. I would feel confident about carrying out the procedure now but before I wouldn't have had a clue”



Photographs: Young People from Fallin participating in a six week Drug and Alcohol Awareness Raising Sessions.

Partnership working between SFSS, Stirling Council Community Services (Youth Team), Fallin & Throsk Localities Group and Jim Rutherford, British Red Cross.
March 2006

Homestart Volunteers



Photographs of Homestart Volunteers participating in drugs information workshop

Parent to Parent Training

What is it?

'Parent to Parent' is a video based workshop for parents of preteens and teens. The goal is to train the participants in the skills; attitudes and abilities they may need to get their children through their adolescent years without significant drug or alcohol use. In the event that their child does develop an alcohol or drug problem, the participant is presented with a framework for recognising and dealing with it effectively.

How does it work?

Parent to Parent consists of 8 mini workshops dealing with different issues –

Video 1: Today's Toxic Culture

- Developing basic awareness
- The challenge of parenting today
- Character traits of effective parenting
- Seeks for a common ground for the group in terms of their perception of alcohol and drug use by young people

Videos 2 to 7

The heart of 'Parent to Parent'. Consists of 6 video presentations and is built around the acrostic PARENT.



Having completed the task to reach the mystery bag Donna explores the contents during her first week of Parent to Parent. October 2005

Partnership between Children's Community Partnership (Wallace Cluster), Fallin Primary School, LADA and SFSS

Comments from Evaluation Forms

Of those participating in Parent to Parent training 50% of the group felt their skills, confidence and abilities as a parent were better, the other 50% felt their abilities were now excellent.

100% of the group felt the course had been extremely useful.

- The course was very informative and challenging
- Although the course was free of charge, once a commitment has been made, failure to attend should result in a fee being charged.
- Beneficial in learning new skills to help your children through any aspect of their lives.
- Would recommend Parent 2parent to all my friends and colleagues.
- Brilliant.
- I would have preferred a bit more work to do at home then to talk it through as a group.

Scottish Network for Families Affected by Drugs

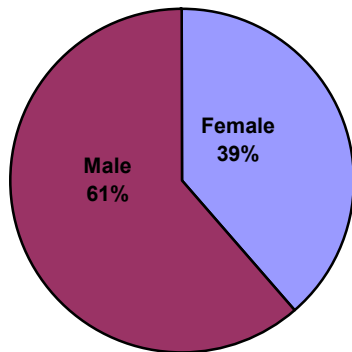
Having completed the national helpline training staff and volunteers now run the helpline one afternoon a week, being part of the helpline team has provided SFSS with another networking opportunity for sharing ideas; participating in teambuilding and training events, it's also given us the opportunity to meet other people from across Scotland involved in providing support to families. As part of the helpline team we have drawn up a workplan and presented it to the main SNFAD committee to take forward our ideas and to help shape National policies that impact on the lives of families affected by someone else's substance use. A major area of work ongoing for SNFAD is looking into the issues and concerns of kinship care.

Statistics

This report gives statistical information on the contacts Stirling Family Support Service received April 05 – March 06

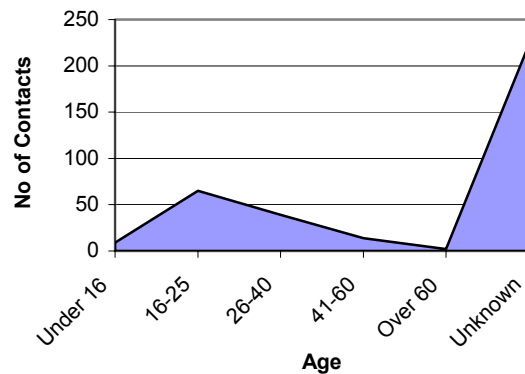
352

Gender of Substance User



Almost two thirds of the enquiries we deal with are concerned about a male drug user or suspected drug user.

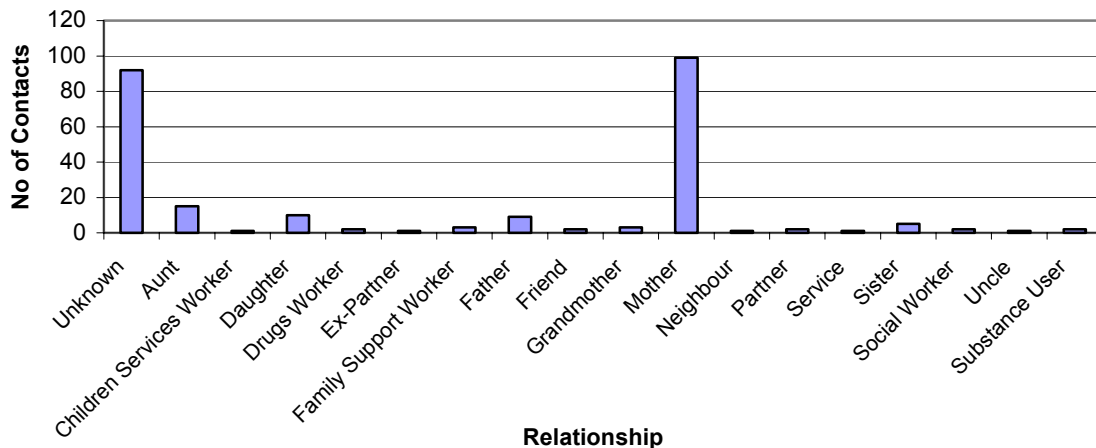
Age of Substance User



Almost 63% of enquiries regarding the substance user's age were unidentified.

However 3% were concerned about Under 16's, 18% concerned about 16-25's, 11% concerned 26-40's and 5% concerned over 40.

Relationship of Caller

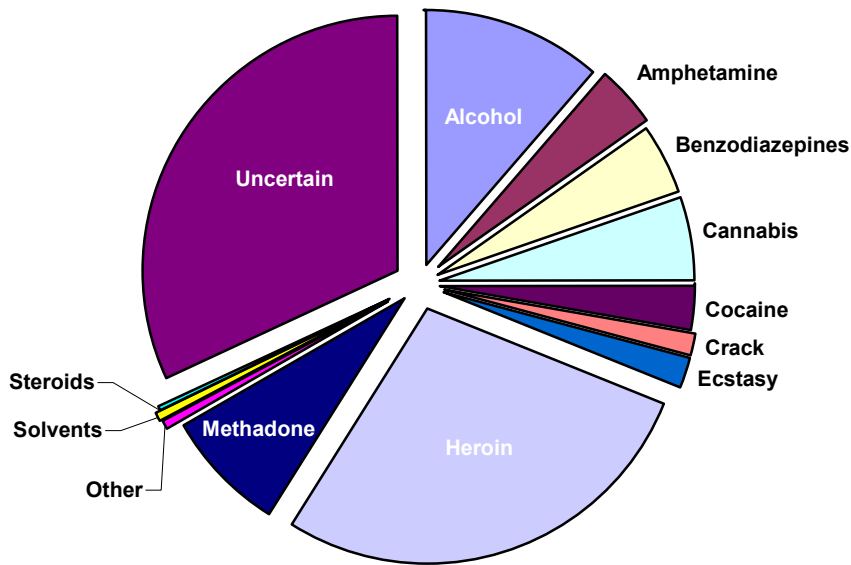


As with the previous 3 years we have seen a consistent trend that the majority of our contacts are female members of the family with 28% being mothers, 3% of total contacts are from fathers, and although we have noted that 55% of callers did not want to be identified it is clear they were also female callers.

3% of our contacts are from other professionals seeking support or information.

These figures reflect trends across Scotland with SNFAD (Scottish Network for Families Affected by Drugs) reporting 51% of calls from mothers and only 7% of calls from fathers.

Drug Enquiries



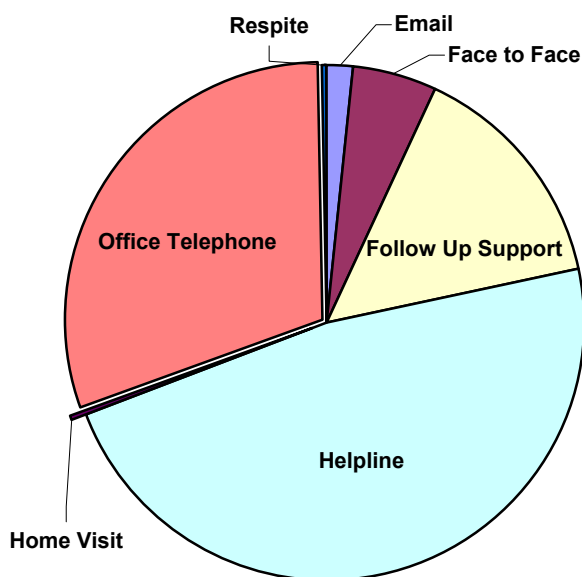
Information taken from SFSS Database March 2006

236 contacts could positively identify the substance affecting their family, whilst 116 were uncertain or suggested there may be a combination of drugs being used.

Figures from previous 2 years highlighted Heroin and Cannabis as being the most problematic, this is consistent with Scottish Network for Families Affected by Drugs who report their top two enquires are about Heroin 25% and Cannabis 25%.

However statistics from our own database for April 2005 to March 2006 show Cannabis has dropped to fourth position. Heroin 28% Alcohol 12% Methadone 8% Cannabis 5% and 33% uncertain or a combination of drugs.

Type of Support Taken Up

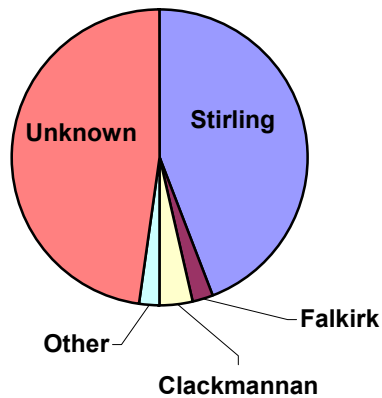


These figures show that the majority of support work is still via the telephone 78%.

Last year we changed the Helpline to a Freephone Number this has helped to encourage callers to use this number thus freeing up the office line for business calls.

We also note that 15% of contacts continue to receive support and this may continue for a considerable time.

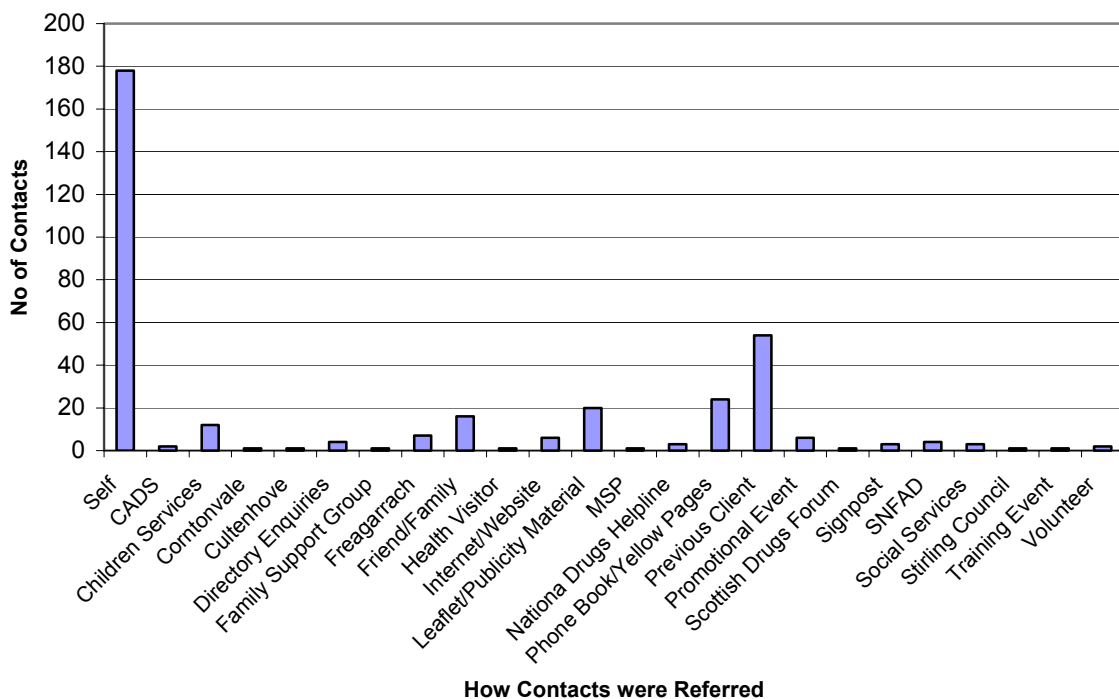
Location of Contacts



Stirling Family Support Service covers the geographical area of Stirling Council and although a significant number of contacts prefer not to disclose their location, we can state that the majority of identified contacts are located within various areas of Stirling.

Stirling 44%, Falkirk 2%, Clackmannan 4% and Other 2%

How Contacts Were Referred



51% of those contacting the service self referred
 11% were referred by other services and agencies
 21% referred by Previous Client, Friend or Family Member
 14% saw publicity material or advert in phone book

It is acknowledged that some of those who self refer are actually informed of our service by another agency however they do not say this at the time of contact.

Training and Conferences

Training for volunteers and staff continues to be an area of priority for SFSS

Alcohol & Drugs: A Family Matter

1 Volunteer

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training

1 Volunteer

Basic Book-keeping

1 Staff

3 Volunteers

Basic Drugs Awareness

Young People's Programme

1 Volunteer

Blood Borne Viruses

1 Volunteer

Children & Families

1 Volunteer

Drug Awareness First Aid

1 Staff

1 Volunteer

Effective Volunteer Recruitment

1 Staff

Increasing Volunteer Effectiveness through Training and Development

1 Staff

Matching Volunteers to Roles & Tasks

1 Staff

Mediation Homelessness/ Young People Awareness

1 Staff

1 Volunteer

Planning Strategically for Volunteer Involvement

1 Staff

SNFAD Family Support Conference

1 Staff

5 Volunteers

SNFAD Teambuilding & Peer Support

2 Staff

2 Volunteers

Suicide – TALKing It Over

1 Volunteer

Support & Supervising Skills

1 Staff

Working with Groups

1 Volunteer

Where do we go from here?

- Well firstly securing funding to keep the core service will be the priority.
- Maintaining the confidence of Stirling Council as a key partner and negotiating funding even though it may only be very short term to give us time to secure a more sustainable source.
- Application have already been made to:
 - Robertson Trust, and we're awaiting the outcome
 - Lloyds TSB have provided funds for Capacity Building, and the committee will be working with three consultants over the coming months to develop a: -
 - Funding Strategy
 - Marketing Strategy
 - Governance of the organization
 - Lloyds TSB standard grant is also about to be submitted.
- We were previously unsuccessful with the Big Lottery, however they are about to change their guidance and criteria and we believe we will have a much better chance of success next time round (fingers crossed)
- Continuing to develop the existing networks and developing new ones is always on the agenda.
- Maintaining the support from Forth Valley Substance Action Team and the Stirling Substance Forum to ensure the quality of service we have in Stirling for families affected by drugs and alcohol continues.
- Enlarging the Management Committee to help share the load will be something we want to consider.
- Planning a programme of Committee training for specific skills and competencies, specifically in governance, organisational and management issues, and strategic planning.
- And developing the services we offer to families will be something we want to work towards, however priority must be given to securing the funding for what we currently have before we can move forward.
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www.stirlingfamilysupport.org.uk

Acknowledgements

We work very closely with Stirling Council, Forth Valley Health Promotions, Central Scotland Police, Forth Valley Substance Action Team, Voluntary Sector, and Community Planning. I would take this opportunity to thank everyone for his or her contribution to SFSS over the year and look forward to your continued support.

There are so many people that have contributed to the success and development of Stirling Family Support Service that it would be impossible to name them all individually,

However, special thanks must be given to

- Our Staff: Janice Beaton, Project Manager
Linda Junnier, Project Administrator.
- Anne Allan, Neighbourhood Renewal Co-ordinator, Community Planning, for advice and support
- Anne Gray, for auditing our accounts
- Catherine McColl (aka Twiggy) our volunteer who's always on hand when needed
- Cath Sutherland, for advice, which is much, appreciated.
- Children Communities Partnership (Wallace Cluster):- for funding Parent to Parent
- Colin Waddell, Central Scotland Police provides support advice and up to date accurate information.
- Christine Piper, Stirling Council, always able to get us information when needed.
- Cllr. Corrie McChord, Leader of Stirling Council for continued support
- Des Friel, Stirling Council; Head of Service. His enthusiasm and determination in ensuring the families of Stirling continue to have access to Quality services, and his commitment to all at SFSS.
- Elaine Lawlor, Health Promotions, for her enthusiasm, her mind of useful information and her ever willing to help.
- Fallin & Throsk Localities Group
- Gordon Griffiths, Community Services (Youth Team)
- Grangemouth and LADA Family Support Groups
- Jim Rutherford, First Aid Training
- Joe Hamill, helping raise money for Crusaid, HIV Carers
- Leona Paget, Substance Action Team now moved onto GP Prescribing Service.
- Lesley Rogers, for all her hard work in developing the training for Homstart, the Young People and for her determination to help out.
- Lynne Hope, for many years of volunteering and dedication, thank you.
- Maggie Aitken, Daisychain
- Melanie Sanderson for her input and commitment to the Young Persons Project
- Ruth Gallagher for Accountancy Skills
- Staff at the Volunteer Centre for providing training and signposting potential volunteers
- Stirling Area Substance Forum
- Stirling Boys Club Management Committee
- Stirling Council, Community Services for our core funding till March 2006.
- Suzi Mercer, Voluntary Sector, for her tenacity.
- Theresa Martinus, Health Promotions for continued support.
- Yvonne Allan, Development Worker.
- **All the volunteers who give that extra mile in providing a support service**

Kathleen Forsyth	Edna Mason	Karin Davidson
Barbara Fotheringham	Lynne Hope	Jinny McBride
Lesley Rogers		
- The family members that continue to allow us to use their stories.