



No greater joy

No greater loss

**Supporting bereaved parents and families
after the death of son or daughter**

AnamCara.ie

ANAM CARA ANNUAL REPORT

FY 2013

Anam Cara was established in 2008 as a national organisation to support bereaved parents and families after the death of a child of any age and through any circumstance.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents

Chairmans Foreword	1
Chief Executives Foreword	2
About Anam Cara	3
2013 Activity Report	4 -10
Financials	11
Financial Summary	12
Independent Auditors Report	13
Our Supporters and Partners	14
Board of Directors:	15
Company Information	15

ANAM CARA ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Chairman's Foreword

John Mullins
Chairman Anam Cara



ANAM CARA ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Chief Executives Foreword

2013 was a significant year for Anam Cara as we marked both 5 years of supporting bereaved parents throughout Ireland, and reaching the milestone of 5,000 parents availing of our online or face to face services since our launch in 2008.

It was also in part a challenging year with regards to fundraising and meeting the growing demands of the organisation. The decision to place professional co-facilitators to work alongside our volunteer parents at each of the Anam Cara groups has ensured these groups remain safe and comfortable places for both our volunteer parents and parents attending the parent evenings.

Throughout 2013 Anam Cara facilitated over 70 events, including our annual 'Balloon to Remember' Event on Saturday 2nd November at the Hodson Bay Hotel which saw 70 Families travelling from all over Ireland to attend our National Remembrance Day, which continues to gather momentum year on year.

In 2012/2013 we worked with our key stakeholders to develop Anam Cara's 2013 – 2016 strategic goals, thus ensuring the ongoing development of the organisation. This strategic plan will allow Anam Cara to take a step closer to our vision, *'that every bereaved parent and family will have access to the appropriate bereavement support after the death of their child of any age and through any circumstance.*

In addition to our national activities, Anam Cara played a key role in the founding of the Family Bereavement Network in Europe. This network will benefit organisations supporting bereaved families living in Europe through the sharing of significant research and best practices.

In terms of future, Anam Cara will continue to strive to deliver quality online and face to face services to parents and families throughout the 32 counties, while building strategic partnerships with key organisations to ensure the best use of public funding and resources.

Finally I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank everyone who has supported Anam Cara over the last 12 months, our volunteers at the Anam Cara groups, as well as those who help with the administration of the organisation. Our professionals who work alongside Anam Cara and the many people from the business and corporate community who support our organisation.

Sharon Vard

Chief Executive Officer



ANAM CARA ANNUAL REPORT 2013

About Anam Cara

Every year some 2500 families in Ireland experience the death of a child. The impact on parents and families is one of anguish and isolation, with the intense grief lasting longer than society realises.

The families' situation is exacerbated by the lack of information and support services, which is more prevalent for parents who have experienced the sudden death of their child outside of hospital or hospice environment.

Anam Cara Parental and Sibling Bereavement Support was set up by bereaved parents to support bereaved parents and siblings throughout Ireland.

Anam Cara is an inclusive organisation which is there to provide support to any parent or family who has lost a son or daughter regardless of age or cause of death, whether it is a recent loss or one that happened many years ago. The death may have been a result of road traffic accidents, serious illness, drug related deaths or suicide.

Anam Cara reaches across all communities in Ireland and provides peer support.

Peer support is a special kind of support which has the following benefits for bereaved parents using our online and face to face services:

- Reduces Social Isolation
- Provides a safe place where we can be ourselves
- Recognition & normalise the intense grief
- Time out for parents– let the mask drop
- Sharing promotes models of surviving
- Provides a structure for information& signposting
- Hope in meeting parents further on
- Continues after family/friends support has waned



ANAM CARA ANNUAL REPORT 2013

2013 Activity Report

Our Vision

Every family, throughout Ireland will have the relevant support they need after the death of their son or daughter.

Our Purpose

Anam Cara provides a lifeline to parents through our on-line and face to face bereavement support services

Need

- Anguish & Isolation families experience after the death of a child
- Lack of information & support services for parents in Ireland
- Can effect Parent's Emotional & Physical health which may in turn affect siblings

Fact

- 2,584 families each year experience the death of a child
- Sudden deaths outside a hospital or hospice system have no access to bereavement support
- Intense grief lasting longer than society realises

Impact

- Anam Cara has impacted on 5,800 parents since 2008
- 70 events in 2013 across the 32 Counties
- Provided 3,740 support hours to parents throughout 2013
- 6 Active Support Groups

Our Priorities

- Bereavement Information Events
- Access to Bereavement Professionals & information
- Focus on Continuous Improvement
- Online and Face to Face Support
- Access & Links to additional Supports
- Connect with other bereaved Parents
- Build Partnerships
- Conserve Resources
- Share Best Practice



ANAM CARA ANNUAL REPORT 2013

2013 Activity Report

Our Achievements

Anam Cara continues to provide a lifeline to bereaved parents through our online and face to face bereavement services in Ireland. This support is provided regardless of the age of their child or circumstances of their death

In 2013 Anam Cara the board, central office and volunteers worked extensively on delivering a quality service for bereaved parents throughout the 32 counties.

Our key achievements in 2013 are:

- The successful introduction of Professional Co-Facilitators to the Anam Cara Groups
- The appointment of a Professional Coordinator
- Facilitated 60 Anam Cara Parent Support Evenings at 6 locations throughout the 32 counties
- 8 Anam Cara Bereavement Information Evenings with guest speakers
- 6 Anam Cara Family Events
- Co-founding the European Family Bereavement Network in Europe
- National Bag Pack Fundraising Event in conjunction with Dunnes Stores
- Survey of Parents connected to Anam Cara on how employers and work colleagues can support a bereaved parent on their return to work
- Supported over 1,124 parents and 320 children



• Professional Co-Facilitators

Anam Cara has appointed professional co-facilitators to each of the Anam Cara Groups ensuring our volunteer parents are supported in their role at the Anam Cara Parent Evenings. These professionals have extensive knowledge of parental grief and facilitating diverse groups. Although not in a therapeutic role, our professional co-facilitators will guide parents who are concerned about their or another family's member health and wellbeing, or signpost them to other relevant services in the community.

Professional Co-ordinator Appointment

In 2013 Anam Cara introduced Professional Co-ordinator into the organisation, their role is to support both the Anam Cara volunteers and professional facilitators and ensure best practice within the groups around all governance issues when dealing with child protection and vulnerable adults.

ANAM CARA ANNUAL REPORT 2013



Anam Cara Groups

Anam Cara currently has 6 active groups. They meet once a month and are co-facilitated by an Anam Cara Volunteer Parent and a professional. On average 10 – 12 parents attend each group. The focus of these groups is to give parents a safe and comfortable forum where they can connect with other bereaved parents who understand the depth of the loss and grief.

Peer support is the main feature of the parent evenings at the Anam Cara Groups, allowing parents to talk about issues that are on their mind, as one parent described 'speak the unspeakable'.

The professional co-facilitator has a key role at the Anam Cara. They ensure the event follows Anam Cara's core values which protect all attending. They are also there as a sounding board for parents who are concerned about aspects of their own grief or wellbeing of that of another family member.

To conclude the peer support model Anam Cara offers with both volunteer (bereaved parents) and Professional Co-facilitators ensures parents who are experiencing complicated grief or Post Traumatic Stress after the death of their child are supported and signposted to the relevant services in the community, if these services are available.



Anam Cara Bereavement Information Evenings

Each Anam Cara Group facilitates a minimum of 2 Bereavement Information evening throughout the year for parent. We source Bereavement Specialists to do an input presentation at this event giving parents an opportunity to hear an experienced bereavement professional talk about the many challenges families have to face into after the death of their son or daughter.

This event is often a good introduction to the Anam Cara Groups.

Anam Cara Family Remembrance and Social Events



Anam Cara hosts Family Social and Remembrance events through the country. Our main event is held on the first Saturday in November and kick starts our National Awareness Campaign. Anam Cara's annual 'Balloon to Remember' event gives families an opportunity to remember together. In 2013 a total of 68 families from the 32 counties attended this event.

ANAM CARA ANNUAL REPORT 2013

European Bereavement Network



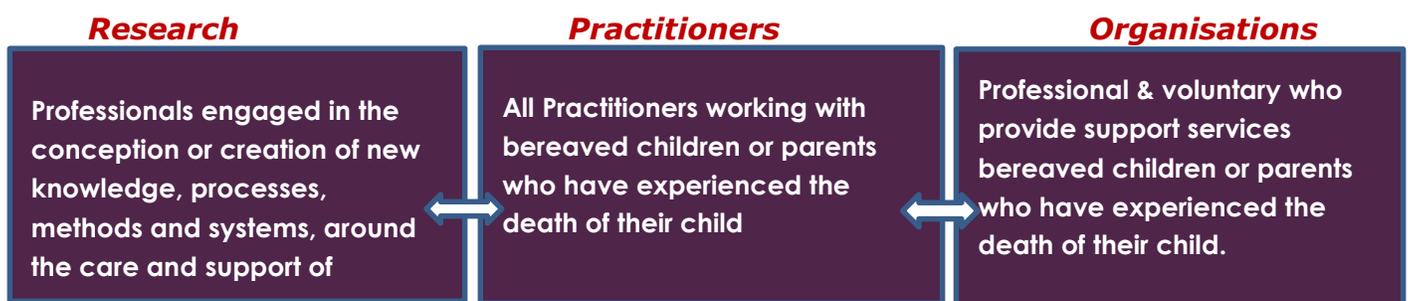
A really exciting development in 2013 is the founding of European Bereavement Network for families. Anam Cara has worked closely with the Laura Centre in Leicester to get this project off the ground in 2013. We identified organisations across Europe who are currently supporting bereaved parents and bereaved children.

We held an exploratory meeting in September, inviting representatives from these organisations to attend. We are delighted to report a really positive start as a total of 22 delegates attended, representing 10 EU countries.



This network's primary focus will be to ensure the sharing of research, information and best practices in the support of all bereaved children and bereaved parents across organisations in Europe.

The network will have 3 key interconnecting components:



A Steering Committee was appointed with their first task to agree the name of the Network, the Vision/Mission Statements and the networks short term key objectives.

The network will be called the Family Bereavement Network in Europe (FBNE) officially launching on 25th September 2014.

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In conclusion

Anam Cara services fulfil a huge gap that exists throughout the 32 counties of Ireland for bereaved parents. In particular for parents and families who have experienced the sudden death of their son or daughter in a road traffic collision, by suicide, SADS (Sudden Adult Death), or accidents in or outside their home. The reality of their situation is because their son or daughter was not in a hospital or hospice system, they are not offered or have access to any bereavement support.

Research will confirm Parental Bereavement differs hugely from other bereavements. The grief of a Mum or Dad continues far longer than society recognises.

The current economic climate in Ireland has also brought about difficulties and added stress for bereaved parents. The below table are the results from research completed in the UK and indicates some of the challenges parents face into.

Challenges Specifically Linked to Parental Bereavement	
Problems at Work	55%
Financial Difficulties	42%
Relationship Difficulties	64%
Childcare Problems	33%
Concerns about family coping	88%

Anam Cara has identified that for bereaved parents social isolation is a significant risk factor for later problems in coping and complications and this is where we can make a difference. Anam Cara services are available to all bereaved parents when they want to use them. They don't need a referral and each group has a lending library and additional information of other services available.

ANAM CARA ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Breakdown of Anam Cara 2013 Activities

Event Type	Brief Description	Average No. Parents Attending each event
Parent Evenings	Monthly informal meetings allowing parents to connect with each other in a safe and comfortable forum.	10 - 12 Parents
Bereavement Information Evenings	Professional guest speakers with experienced in parental bereavement. Focus of these evening to give parents appropriate information that will help them at the early stages after the death of their child.	25 – 50 Parents
Family Fun Days X 2	An informal family day with activities for all ages,	Total 60 Families
Anam Cara's National Day of Remembrance	This takes place on the 1 st Saturday in November, and has grown each year to be our main national event with families travelling from each region.	70 Families – Approx 270 Parents and Children
Celebration of Life events	We hold this event in December recognising how difficult Christmas is, this event gives families an opportunity to meet up for a Remembrance Service, highlighting they are not alone at a very difficult time of the year.	20 + Families Each Event X 3 Events = 60 Families
70 Events in 2013	Our salesforce database attendance reports are an indication of the minimum number of parents who have attended Anam Cara events throughout 2013.	984+ Parents Attending 320+ Children



How Anam Cara services are funded:

All Anam Cara Services are offered free of charge to parents and are available for as long as they may need them. Anam Cara currently does not receive any state grants. Our central office function and activities is funded through corporate and private donations and public fundraising activities.

Our current staffing levels are a fulltime CEO and Part-time Administrator and our central office is based at the Healy Group, in Dublin 24.

ANAM CARA ANNUAL REPORT 2013



Collaboration

Anam Cara endeavours to collaborate with other organisations throughout Ireland who are in contact with bereaved parents.

These include Hospitals and Hospices throughout Ireland. National organisations like, Garda Siochana, Barnardos, ISIDA, Marie Keating Foundation, the Jack and Jill Foundation, ISIDA, Pieta House, Console, Living Links, Little lifetime Foundation, the Laura Lynn Children's Hospice, SAD (Sudden Adult death).

These crucial partnerships ensure there are no duplication of services and the best use of each organisation's resources in challenging times.

Thank
You

Appreciation

Anam Cara continues to be funded and supported through a mixture of corporate donations and public funding. We appreciate this support which allows us provide the services for bereaved families in our communities at no charge.

Our Volunteers

Our final words are for the Anam Cara Volunteers who are the very heart of Anam Cara and are committed to the support of bereaved parents in their region. Their compassion and kindness for bereaved parents is very much appreciated by Anam Cara and the 984 parents we have supported through 2013.



ANAM CARA ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Independent Auditors Report

ANAM CARA ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Our Supporters and Partners

Anam Cara is most appreciative of the following organisations and foundations support



Maurice and Adelaide Healy for their donation of our office facility



IRIS O'BRIEN FOUNDATION

The Iris O'Brien Foundation for their ongoing support of Anam Cara



Nightline Couriers for sponsoring Anam Cara's parcel deliveries



Unity, in particular Colm Lennon for his support around our IT Functions



DUNNES STORES

Dunnes Stores Nationwide for their support the 2013 National Bag Pack.

Anam Cara would like to acknowledge the continued support of the many friends of Anam Cara who help with national and local fundraising events throughout 2013. All our services are provided at no charge to parents and families and that is down to their support kindness and efforts. On behalf of the volunteers and parents at the Anam Cara groups we would like to express our huge appreciation.

We would also like to thank the many companies and patrons who attend our regional fundraising events, in particular the fundraising Lunches. In these challenging times we appreciate your support and sponsorship

ANAM CARA ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Company Information

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Board of Directors:

John Hynes



Michael McEnery



Ed Delany



Anna McGroddy



Mary O Neill
Company Secretary



Anam Cara Parental & Sibling Bereavement Support limited is a company limited by guarantee not having a share capital, registered in Dublin Ireland with registered company number 452644. Anam Cara Parental & Sibling Bereavement Support group limited is also a charity with CHY Number 18073



Company Information

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Anam Cara Parental & Sibling Bereavement Support



@anamcarasupport

Anam Cara's Bank Details

Ulster Bank
130 Lower Baggot Street
Dublin 2

Account Name:

Anam Cara Parental and Sibling Bereavement Support Limited

Account Number:

00636306

Sort Code:

98-50-20

BIC:

ULSBIE2D

IBAN:

IE66ULSB98502000636306