

Home Truths

SPRING / 2025



Inspiring stories of the extraordinary difference you and your company make to the lives of people experiencing homelessness.

“I don’t think you know just how much you are helping.”

– Luz Sanchez,

Focus Ireland Key Worker

Inside:
A day in the life of a Focus Ireland Key Worker.

- How your care changed Leah’s life
- More homes for families in Limerick
- Your joyful gift to children
- And much more.

FOCUS
Ireland

Thank YOU.

Everyone has the right to a place they can call home. Yet, right now, there are nearly 15,000 people in homelessness in Ireland.

Homelessness is devastating. It affects the most vulnerable. It hurts children. It destroys families. And it is simply wrong. But, together, we can end homelessness. YOUR kind and powerful support is living proof of that.

This copy of your Home Truths newsletter is filled with stories that you and your company have helped to make possible. I really hope you enjoy it. Thank you for your incredible support.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Pat Dennigan'.

Pat Dennigan
CEO Focus Ireland

YOU are helping to end homelessness for good.

Your generous support for Focus Ireland is helping to end homelessness by providing people with the critical one-to-one services they need to get and keep homes of their own.

In the last year you have helped:



Over **18,000** people



1,851
families



4,223
children



593
adults were supported by the
Preparation for Education, Training and
Employment (PETE) service



450
adult-only households were supported
out of homelessness

**Thank you for making
it all possible.**



From Advice and Information, Emergency Supported Homes, and the Family Homeless Action Team – you are helping families in every region of Ireland.

“Thank you. You and your colleagues are helping people at the most vulnerable point of their lives.”

Meet Focus Ireland Key Worker,
Luz Sanchez

Originally from Malaga in Spain, Luz is one of the newest members of Focus Irelands team of dedicated Key Workers. She is based in a small hotel in Dublin city centre, which now acts as emergency accommodation for families.

“There is just me here. And we also have a specialist Child Support worker who splits her time between here and other emergency accommodations.

There are so many families here. I have 25 of those families in my case file.

When people come here first most people have no idea what homelessness involves. I'd say at least a third of the families we work with are working. They just don't have a home. And there are so many others who lost their jobs purely because they were made homeless. And when that happens, you're trapped. So, there's a lot of confusion and a lot of fear.”

During the short time we spent with Luz in her tiny office, there was a steady stream of people knocking at her door looking for advice or support.

“We are trying to help people at the most vulnerable point of their lives. Mental health is a big issue. The city centre is not a nice environment for families to be living in.

And there's a lot of problems with children's developments in these places.



Because families are living in one room, and children don't even have the space to learn how to crawl. We have 3-year-olds here who haven't really started to speak yet.

The thing that I like most about Focus Ireland is the fact that we really try to advocate for all of a person's needs. It's not only helping to find housing. It's about fully supporting their needs while they're here.

There are so many painful stories. I try my best to separate work from my life but sometimes you carry it with you. We are all human. So, I worry a lot about the families here.”

When Luz speaks about the community of Focus Ireland supporters who help to fund the service she works in, the smile returns to her face.

“People are so fantastic. It warms my heart. But I don't think people know how much they're actually helping. Because I don't think people are aware about how many services Focus Ireland has.

We work with families and children here but Focus Ireland also work with under 18s and people leaving state care. And vulnerable individuals who are facing



Luz is currently supporting 25 families.

homelessness. And now Focus Ireland is building homes as well. I just don't think most people know exactly how much is being done. Or how much of a difference it makes.

In the next few weeks alone our Family Homeless Action Team will help another 20 families move out of homelessness and back into safe homes of their own again."

Of course, that happiness is short-lived because as soon as each family

leaves, another family will arrive into the emergency accommodation where Luz is based.

"It's going to be very busy over the next few weeks because it takes time to get to know families and understand their needs. But there is no way this situation can last. Something has to change. And everyone in the Focus Ireland community is working so hard to make that happen. That's what makes me so hopeful."

LEAH'S STORY.

"YOU gave us a roof over our heads and dreams for the future."

Today, thanks to the support of kind people like you, Leah finally has what she has spent her life trying to find – a safe and secure home of her own.

When she was a child, Leah's home life was quite chaotic.

Though her parents loved her and always tried to provide for Leah and her siblings, they spent years battling addiction.

"I don't want my kids to see the things I saw growing up."

But, as a young mother she found herself in an abusive relationship. When she finally escaped it, she found herself having to care and provide for her two small children on her own.

Leah and her children lived in their rented apartment for four years before her



landlord told her he was selling the house, leaving her homeless once again.

Leah spent over a year living in emergency accommodation – sharing one small room with her two sons.

The impact of living in those cramped conditions soon took its toll. Her boys became irritable and started fighting a lot. In the confined space, with everyone struggling with the lack of privacy, Leah felt her own mental health decline.

"It was so hard. We were stuck in one room all the time. There's no space, no privacy. We couldn't even cook a meal."

But all that changed – thanks to you.

Thanks to the constant support of kind people like you, one of our Focus Ireland Family Homeless Action Team was able to give Leah and her family the type of day-to-day support they really needed.

Leah's Key Worker helped her to secure a place in emergency accommodation near the school where her sons attended, which meant the boys didn't have to go through the added stress of moving school. She was also able to get them places in an After School programme run by Focus Ireland.

And more good news was on the way: just before Christmas, we were able to offer Leah and her two boys a home of their own, in one of the Focus Ireland Supported Housing programmes that your donations are helping to fund.

And the difference it has made is just incredible.



Leah's boys now have a room of their own.

The boys are no longer as stressed as they were. They have their own space and have the freedom to play and be themselves again.

"It's so much better... you actually feel like you're getting normality back. I am so grateful to Focus Ireland for supporting each and every family to get here. You have given us so much. It's not just a roof over our head. It's a dream of a better future."

Children now have the freedom to play and grow.

We have recently been able to give a much-needed face lift to the Tippy Toes crèche, which is part of the Focus Ireland Supported Housing programme in Aylward Green, Finglas.

For children who have spent months or even years living in one small room in emergency accommodation, the new Tippy Toes Crèche offers them a wonderland of colour and stimulus.

There are 26 children in Aylward Green. But it's not just the tiny tots who are now benefiting from Tippy Toes.

This warm, child-friendly space is also home to a Friendship Club for older children – and also provides a quiet space for school-going children to study in the evenings.



Just as importantly, Tippy Toes also provides parents with a precious few hours to themselves where they can concentrate on the difficult journey of rebuilding their family's lives after homelessness.

Our Solution: More homes for more families.

The number of families and individuals in homelessness is at an all time high. The cost of living that has driven families from their homes, with house prices out of reach, rents rocketing, and landlords leaving the market.

That has just added even more pressure to the limited housing stock available for those already trapped in homelessness and living in emergency accommodation.

How do we end this rising tide of homelessness? By getting families back into safe and secure homes as quickly as possible. And that's exactly what Focus Ireland is doing, every day.

Right now, our Focus Ireland team is providing homes to vulnerable people and families all across Ireland. Every day we are looking for new opportunities to build, renovate or buy homes for the people and families who urgently need them. We have already provided homes to hundreds of individuals.

And, with you and your company at our side, we are committed to acquiring and renovating more homes this year. These will be used for individuals and families in need.

New homes are being added every week. Here are just a few of the new homes that we have been recently able to provide.

Limerick: Development has recently been completed at Bua na Gruadan, Castletroy, Limerick, with 37 new one- and two-bed homes in a much sought after area. 24 tenants have moved in so far.

Recently Completed Homes:

Westend, Mallow, Cork: **13 new homes.**
Launched on Feb 21st by Taoiseach Micheal Martin.

Homes in the Pipeline:

Prussia Street, Dublin 7: **5 new homes.**
Richmond Avenue, Dublin: **35 new homes.**
Ballinglanna, Glanmire, Cork: **30 new homes.**

Thank you and your company for helping families on their journey to a safe place to call their own.



Top to bottom: Completed homes at Bua na Gruadan, Castletroy, Limerick.

The communal children's play area at Bua na Gruadan. Taoiseach Micheál Martin with Focus Ireland CEO at the opening of the new homes in Westend, Mallow, Co Cork.

YOU and your company are giving a voice to families trapped in homelessness.

Head of Family Services John O'Haire explains how your support is helping to lead the way to a better future for families in homelessness.



About 10 years ago, there were less than 800 families homeless. It's now over 2,000 families. Over 4,000 children still don't have a safe place to call home. There simply isn't enough housing options to fill the need. It's nothing to do with the family and nothing to do with their behaviour. For decades now the Government has failed to build enough social or affordable housing.

But with your support, our Advocacy Team are fighting to change that by putting pressure on the Government to take decisive action.

YOUR programme for change.

Together with 11 other frontline Homeless organisations our Advocacy Team have made a number of critical demands of our new government policy, which include:

- Build 300,000 homes in the next 6 years- including 12,000 Social Homes each year.
- Require local authorities to prioritise the leasing of one-bedroom units, addressing the immediate needs of single households.
- Create 2,000 Housing First tenancies to limit long term homelessness.
- Focus Social Housing on getting families out of long-term homelessness
- Provide emergency accommodation or everyone who needs it with special supports for children.

With thanks to the support we receive from you and companies like yours, we will continue to advocate until the trauma and devastation of homelessness is a thing of the past.



The 30 new homes in Ballinglanna, Co Cork.



Continue to support us in working towards solutions

With support from you and your company, Focus Ireland can continue to advocate and help the most vulnerable in our society. Join us again in 2025 by taking part in one of our many events:

Shine A Light



Friday October 10th, join thousands of individuals, companies, business leaders, schools and communities sleeping out across Ireland for one night. As a team, you can join us at our hosted locations in Dublin and Cork or organise your own sleep out in your workspace.

40 Kilometers for 40 years

40
YEARS
FOCUS
Ireland



Join us this summer, take part in either of the below active challenges and cover a distance of 40km to acknowledge Focus Ireland's 40 years in operation.

- Summer Active challenge – This June, Walk, Jog or Run a total of 40km across 40 days.
- Join us between May – July and take part in either an office based Spinathon or a Team Cycle.
- Create your own fundraiser, we are here to support you in creating, implementing and executing your own event.

Scan Me →
For more information on events.



Consider a gift in your Will to end homelessness

A gift in your Will allows you to make an enduring impact and ensures that your legacy of kindness lives on forever. By providing a gift to Focus Ireland in your Will, you can join a community of inspiring people who, like you, hope to secure a future where families and children have a loving home of their own.

For further information on our fundraising campaigns or legacy giving, please contact the team at corporate@focusireland.ie



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