



Pavee Point Travellers' Centre

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"We're taking control of our lives in a way that we never did before. And it will be a long time before that will have an impact on a political level. But, on a personal level that feels good – that sense of acknowledging your own self worth,"

Rosaleen McDonagh.

Traveller Women

Traveller women play an important role in their immediate family and the wider Traveller community. They have responsibility for the home, family and children. They also broker with service providers and often take on leadership roles in acting as spokespeople for the community.

Discrimination against Traveller Women

Traveller women experience triple discrimination: discrimination as women, discrimination as Travellers and discrimination as Traveller women. For example:

- Lack of access to basic facilities has a direct negative impact on Traveller women because of their domestic role.
- There is much opportunity for direct discrimination when women, on behalf of their families, broker with settled service providers.

Like women from other minority ethnic groups Traveller women experience an intersection of a number of oppressions and experience both racism and sexism. The Task Force on Violence Against Women (1997) highlights the difficulties for Traveller women in addressing this issue:

"Black and minority group women have extensively documented the interplay between, and contradictions of addressing gender oppression and racism in their lives. This can involve women in invidious choices between raising the issue of sexism within their own community and being in solidarity with their own community in resisting external oppression. Both the internal and the external discrimination experienced by Traveller women need urgent responses. For this to begin to happen such discrimination must be named in ways which do not further marginalise Traveller Women."

Violence Against Women

Throughout its work Pavee Point has always included attempts at raising awareness of the issue of violence against women. It is our analysis that Traveller women experience three types of violence - violence from an intimate partner, violence from the settled community and, in terms of evictions, violence from the State.

Since 1998, Pavee Point has been involved in partnership with the Eastern Regional Health Authority in developing culturally appropriate responses to the issue of violence against women in the Travelling Community.

Women and the Traveller Movement

Traveller women play key roles in the Traveller movement throughout Ireland. They articulate the issues, and in particular the experience of Traveller women, at local, national and international levels. The National Traveller Women's Forum has been operating since 1988. The Forum is a partnership organisation of Travellers and settled women from all over Ireland who meet to discuss issues and share experiences and information. This helps women develop greater solidarity, explore gender issues, challenge sexism and take action on the situation.

Visit our web-site at www.paveepoint.ie