LESBIAN LINE COLLECTIVE.

Lesbian Line is a phone service for women. All women who work the Line are themselves Lesbian. We feel positive about our sexuality. The Line began in I984,arising from the great need to break the isolation and silence surrounding Lesbianism.Some of the women themselves suffered these situation and saw the grave need for this service.

All members work and attend meetings in an entirely voluntary capacity.We hold our member meetings once a fortnight and on other occasions when the need arises. The general business of the service is disscussed;finance,planning..Also we take the time to discuss any problems about working the Line,individuals may have.We take the responsibility for constantly educating ourselves in any methods of counselling that would be benefical.

The service operates one night a week for two hours.We have a rota so that all members take their turn.Outside of this,we also make ourselves available to meet women who telephone the Line,to talk and share experience.If and when they need it we may also help them to intergrate into social activities. The service is also used by visiting and other Lesbians for information.

We take on organising fund-raising events,like socials,disco,pool tournaments etc..to keep ourselves solvent.We have no grant access to date.Very often these activities end upbeing the main social activies for Lesbians in Cork and so serve adouble purpose.

The Lesbian Line has its own Constitution and Guidelines concerning its operation.

The Lesbian Line operates as a collective.

PROJECT.

We would see the project taking the following guise.

On a decided week-end a group of women from Cork would travel to Belfast on a Friday afternoon. On arrival we would be met by our hosts.There may be some social activity organised to help with initial contacts of the groups.It would be better if the group stayed with the hosts as this furthers personal communication which is very important. The day on Saturday would be spent in workshop,skill-sharing and disscussion.This is too further the main aims of the venture . These are:

INCREASED COMMUNICATION:

Discussion on the history of the Lines North and South. We feel the need to increace our communication with the other services is vital. Our position within the area of Social Services is often precarious due to sexual discrimination and our own group network of support, information and help is essiential. We feel their is a lot to learn by exchanging experiences,mistakes and sucesses.

NATIONAL NETWORK:

We would like to see some kind of plan of National Networking come out of this weekend. As of now,all the Lines operate individually and this can sometimes be lonely and frustrating.The areas of fund-raising education/information and advertising the services,could all benefit enormously from regular and consistent communication/meetings with other Lines.

COUNSELLING:

We try all the time to educate ourselves in any skills benefical to working on the Line. The exchange would be good beginning and chance for experienced women North and South in specific areas of councellingand advice to share ,train,educateothers.

POLICY:

All the Lines have particular policy,guidelines. We would hope to discu problems, and changes in relation to this and gain some insight from Belfast Lesbian Line who are an older service than ours.

OUTCOME:

We would like to see abeginning in consistent communication with Belfast,to facilitate further meetings and assistance.Continuing to educate each other in the area of counselling would be very important; along with other skill sharing.

ON Sundayit would be good too meet and draw together any loose ends an plan future activity.

We would leave on a Sunday afternoon.

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