

# Northern Regional Development Worker's Trip to Dallas, Texas USA!!!

## ***Clare Edge's Reflections on her adventure...***

In April 2008, as part of a Rotary International Program, "Group Study Exchange", I was sponsored to go and experience my area of work for a whole month, in a different part of the world, the Dallas Fort- worth Metroplex in Texas. Rotarians provide humanitarian service, encourage high ethical standards in all vocations, and help build goodwill and peace in the world. Every year they send a group of young professional non-Rotarians from each district to promote good will in another district in a different part of the world, as well as to increase the group's own experiences of life, work and culture.

Whilst I was there I wrote a report on the differences and similarities that I observed, I definitely learnt an incredible amount, on top of this the people that I met were inspired by A National Voice's work and reinforced by passion I have for what ANV stands for. During the trip, I visited the following centres to experience my chosen work interests, and to promote and share the work of A National Voice:

- **Coppell YMCA:** Breakfast meeting on substance abuse
- **Ellis County Children's Advocacy Center:** 'A safe place where the multi-disciplinary team can investigate child abuse cases without subjecting child victims to repeated interviews and re-victimisation'
- **Baptist Foster Care Agency and Foster home in Waxahachie**
- **City House Family Center:** 'to enable families to function more effectively within the family unit and the community'
- **Collin County Children's Advocacy Centre:** 'CCCAC works to provide Collin County all resources necessary to meet the future needs of our community's abused and neglected children'
- **CASA:** Court Appointed Special Advocates (Sherman)
- **Grayson County Juvenile Correction Center**
- **Nexus Recovery:** 'to serve as a link to sobriety, independence and dignity for low-income women and their families affected by addiction'
- **Neighbourhood Youth Services:** 'A not for profit agency serving the mental health needs of the community'

Other Visits included: Coppell Police Department, Coppell City Hall, Region 10 Education Center, Scottish Rite Children's Hospital, Four Rivers Outreach Center, and Grayson County Jail

The itinerary was jam-packed as I spent the month staying with eight different families so I was constantly on the move! Despite the hectic itinerary I managed to have a lot of fun and experienced things typical of Texas such as the Mesquite Rodeo, Country and Western Dancing as well as being entertained by Country and Western performers on several occasions! Tex-Mex was the staple diet, as well as bigger-than-big beef burgers, I also got to see some very American sports; Ice-hockey and Baseball!!

Overall, the experience was a fantastic one and I would definitely recommend a visit to Dallas to anyone in the future!!