

CARI say toys help to rebuild confidence

By DEARBHLA ACHESON

FOR most children, toys are not a luxury, and are just part and parcel of their everyday lives.

But for the children who are in therapy with the Children at Risk in Ireland Foundation (CARI), they are a crucial part of help-



ing them regain confidence in adults.

The CARI foundation, based at 2 Garryvoan Road, have applied to the Limerick Leader/Combined Insurance Make It Happen Community Giveaway for a share of the €20,000 prize pool.

They badly need money to help them buy toys for the children and do-up their playrooms.

"To date, the toys we have used are toys donated by people when the centre was set up or second-hand toys brought in by staff. We have put together a wish-list of toys, and possi-

bilities for the refurbishment of three playrooms in the centre. This whole wish-list would cost €3,053.

Any money we'd get from this giveaway would go towards that. The therapy we provide here for children is through the medium of art, drama and play, so toys are a must for us," Anne Byrnes of CARI said.

Nominating the cause for some of the prize fund she added: "This voluntary organisation goes from strength to strength each year. A very dedicated group of workers and volunteers raise money and give therapy to children, families and groups affected by child sexual abuse."

The foundation was also nominated by Marion Dineen. "CARI work very hard to provide a service to children who have been sexually abused, without core government funding. The fundraising team raise approximately 70 per cent of their income each year," she commented.

The CARI therapy centre in Limerick has been opened since 1994, and works with children from three years of age to 18. A report released in 2002 found that one in five children are affected by child sexual abuse.

The CARI helpline number is 1890 924567, and is open from 9.30am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday.



Members of CARI Michelle Kennedy, Helen Cooze, Inga Ammonsens, Patsy Carroll, Teresa Sheehy, Tom Stokes, Rose O'Keeffe, Nuala Walker and Ann Byrnes (L)