



LITRICK SERVICE CLUB
CASLEC YOUTH CLUB

YOUTH WORK IRELAND

ANNUAL REPORT

2009

NORTHSIDE

SOUTHSIDE



Youth Work Ireland





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A Word From our President

It was a great honour to be President of Youth Work Ireland in 2009. Despite a challenging funding environment our volunteers and staff proved themselves once again by offering a service to be proud of to young people all around the country.

This year we have sought to give a greater visual representation of our work in our annual report hopefully communicating the life and vibrancy of the organisation and most of all the huge positive contribution young people make to this country.

Despite trying times in terms of our economy and society our work continues to show the best side of young people and provides enormous encouragement for the future of our country

Liz Dermody

President, Youth Work Ireland

The Youth Work Ireland Board:

Liz Dermody, Kevin Matthews, Noel Fitzgerald, Marie Flynn, John Gilmore, Catherine Kelly, Charlene Logue, Wayne Mackin, Nicola Moran, Gregory Sewell, Bill Thompson, Diarmuid Kearney (Secretary)



Introduction

The launch of our new Strategic Plan in May 2009 was the formal recognition of what has been a significant and important development within the federation. Not only did the extensive consultation process create a useful analysis of our 'federal health', it produced a set of shared strategic priorities that will provide a clear focus for our work over the coming years. These priorities hold true to the principles of youth work that have underpinned our practice for almost half a century. They have also developed our mandate to advocate and refine our practice in relation to children's rights and youth participation.

As a federation of Regional Youth Services we have created a comprehensive national infrastructure that is firmly rooted in communities. As independent companies our members work collaboratively to build a cohesive national organisation delivering a repertoire of quality programmes driven by the requirements of young people and supported and resourced by our 'Quality Framework' together with a range of other development tools and opportunities.

All of this is necessary because young people are facing the most challenging times in decades. The economic downturn has impacted on all of Irish society and, as ever, young people are facing the most extreme consequences of unemployment and emigration. Young people continue to be problematised by our press, politicians and public and are subjected to personal and institutional discrimination at every turn. These and many other challenges are presented at a time in their lives when they struggle with the transition to adulthood. We hope that our work in supporting young people to have their voice heard will increasingly lead to them being seen as assets to Irish society, bringing a freshness and optimism to life on this island.

Politically we have also faced some hurdles. Finding an equal place for youth work at the table of integrated services for young people is essential and 2009 has seen us continually strive to see youth work recognised as a discrete and professional discipline bringing a wealth of knowledge, skills and experience to the task of supporting young lives. The rapidly changing policy environment has kept us busy and we hope our advocacy in this arena will help ensure that Ireland is a society in which young people are truly valued and involved.

None of our work would be possible however without the army of staff and volunteers throughout the country who work tirelessly with and for young people. They are the unsung heroes of our times.

Diarmuid Kearney
Chief Executive





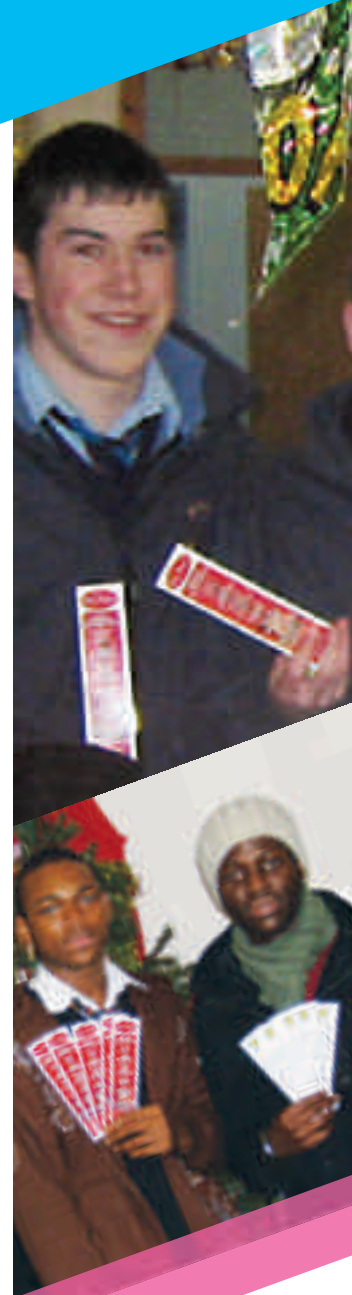
MEATH

Meath Youth Federation Developed its Meet and Eat Youth Café Bookmark for Local Students

Meath Youth Federation's Meet and Eat Youth Café continues to go from strength to strength and their latest initiative is set to push the project on even further. Before Christmas the Federation launched its Bookmark which contains information on the services provided, opening times, contact details etc. One thousand bookmarks have been distributed to students attending school in the Navan area. Printing and design of the Bookmark was sponsored by local business MG Music.

Meet and Eat Youth Café provides a lunchtime and evening service for secondary school students and has been running for over two years. It has offered many young people a space where they can relax, eat their lunch, talk with friends and enjoy activities including pool, table tennis, table football, free internet, games and music.

The Youth Café provides a hassle-free and safe environment where young people can meet whilst at all times being supervised by trained staff and volunteers. Over 4,000 students have availed of the Youth Café's services in 2009.



Meet and Eat Youth Café's Bookmark Launch



Meath Volunteer recognised by Volunteering Ireland

Patricia Ryan was instrumental in setting up Next Generation Youth Club in the Ballivor area of Meath. She saw the need for the young people to be given an opportunity to express themselves in a safe environment with their peers. She exudes confidence and determination and is meticulous in her planning of all youth club matters. Patricia is a mother and has a full time job but this does not stop her doing all she can to help the young teenagers of her local community. She takes her role as secretary very seriously and simply wants the youth club to be the best club possible. She has organised great youth club nights including pizza cooking, murder mystery nights and quiz nights, as well as often organising fundraising events with the young people to make them aware of the needs of other people in their community. She encourages other youth clubs to take part in events organised by the national office and welcomes inter-club activities within the county. Patricia is also a great time manager but knows her limitations and shows other volunteers how to pace themselves in order to sustain the fun, enthusiasm, ideas and friendships needed to keep the youth club going into the future. She glows with pride when speaking about her youth club and all the young people involved. She actively promotes Meath Youth Federation with the work she does and successfully promotes the young people of Ballivor in a very positive way.

"Last year our youth club became the most active and successful community venture in our area for youth. Without the dedicated, committed, enthusiastic and supportive group of volunteers this would not have evolved. We concentrated on the teenagers whose need was greatest and have been greatly rewarded with 60 tremendous members who continue to give and appreciate our efforts. I am one of many and am extremely proud of what we have all achieved, together."

– Patricia

Minister Noel Dempsey talks
to MYF staff at International
Volunteer Day

Volunteering Ireland Award
Trish Ryan

Tracie (MYF) & Patricia
(Next Generation YC)
receive Award

Quality Standards Framework – 2009

The implementation of the Quality Standards Framework in 2009 has continued to progress. The focus has been on supporting Local Youth Services through their preparations for assessment, through the self-assessment process, and through the peer assessment process. Four further services have successfully completed the assessment process – Limerick Youth Service, CDYS (Co. Cork), Clare Youth Service and Youth Work Ireland Galway.

There has been further progress in the preparations of a number of local youth services who are lining up for assessment in 2010. Carlow Regional Youth Service, Youth Work Ireland Roscommon/N.E. Galway, Youth Work Ireland Cork and Tipperary Regional Youth Services have all invested time and effort into their preparations and have made significant progress towards assessment in 2010. The North East Cluster group (Youth Work Ireland Monaghan, Youth Work Ireland Louth, and Meath Youth Federation) have been working collaboratively, with support from National Office, to develop and implement a shared work plan that will progress their preparations for assessment.

