

## Irish Youth Work Centre

### Resources

The issue of the safe use of social networking tools and social media by young people has created much debate in recent times and Youth Work Ireland has put considerable time and effort in 2009 into developing good and safe practice resources in this area, producing four practice based resources:

- **Safe Social Networking:** *Guidelines for those working with young people*
- **Safe Surfing:** *Guidelines for safe Internet use for young people and those who work with them*
- **Social Media Networking Learning Resource Pack**
- **Appropriate Use of Social Networking Tools:** *Guidelines for Youth Work Staff and Volunteers*

Youth Work Ireland also produced revised **Dealing with Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco in Youth Work Settings:** *Guidelines for Youth Workers* and developed a **Job Planning, Supervision and Performance Review System** which is an integrated system of one-to-one structures, including Support & Supervision and Performance Review, between employee and line manager to support staff in their work and ensure that the goals of the organisation are achieved. It has been piloted in National Office and was made available to Member Youth Services to adapt to their local needs.

### Irish Youth Work Centre Training

This years IYWC Training workshop programme has begun to be shaped and informed by gaps emerging from an analysis of the Quality Standards Assessments undertaken to date and these assessments will continue to inform and shape the future composition of the Training Calendar.

In 2009 workshops on **Responding to Challenging Behaviour in Young People; Effective Planning and Evaluation in Youth Work; Staff Supervision for Youth Work and Working with Minority Groups of Young People** were organised. All workshops delivered were fully subscribed and received very strong evaluations. A significant expansion of the number of workshops will take place in 2010 reflecting some of the training needs emerging from the Quality Standards Assessments.



## Youth Information

Youth Work Ireland continued to participate within the **Youth Information Support Partnership** and hosted a network meeting in November 2009 as well as developing in partnership with Member Youth Services two position papers on the Future of Youth Information and on Youth Cafes which were submitted to OMCYA.

## Teen Between

Work continued with the **Marriage and Relationship Counselling Service** to deliver the joint Teen Between Project established in 1998 and operating around the country, with a new service being established in Cloyne Diocesan Youth Service in 2009 making it the twelfth Member Youth Service to offer the service. There was a significant expansion in training in 2009 with two full basic **Teen Between Training Programmes** and **Listening Skills Workshops** being planned and delivered and in order to develop the local sustainability of each service further **Supervision Skills Training** was agreed which will take place early in 2010.

Newly redesigned Teen Between service brochures and large posters were also developed by MRCS and Youth Work Ireland for local Teen Between services. Both the brochure and poster have individualised local service information/profiles for each respective Member Youth Service who is providing the service. Youth Work Ireland also now has a dedicated page on the Teen Between website

[www.teenbetween.ie](http://www.teenbetween.ie)



Counselling for teenagers  
of separated parents

## Research

The fourth and fifth editions of **Youth Studies Ireland** were published in 2009. The journal was also made available electronically for online subscription through the IYWC website. The IYWC continues to act as a secretariat for the Youth Studies Ireland project, its Editorial Board and Advisory Committee and the production of the journal.

Irish Youth Work Press also published the outcome of a commissioned research project **The Purposes and Outcomes of Youth Work** on behalf of the Youth Services Inter-Agency Group (comprising Ogra Chorcaí, CDYSB, CYC and Youth Work Ireland) supported by the IYF and written by Maurice Devlin and Anna Gunning. A Conference will be held in NUI Maynooth in June 2010 to present the findings of this significant report and its potential implications for both practice and for policy in the current context of youth work.

Work has also commenced on a jointly commissioned partnership research project between the Irish Youth Work Centre and **NUI Maynooth** which should lead to a significant piece of research being published in 2010 on documenting practice in youth work. Kildare Youth Services has been selected as the primary case site for this piece of work.

## Other Publications

IYWC continued to produce **Irish Youth Work Scene**, on a quarterly basis as a vehicle for recording and disseminating good practice within the sector. The Centre also produced the 13th edition of its annual **Directory of Youth & Community Work Courses** and produced five editions of the **Current Awareness Update**, a bi-monthly information update for Local Youth Services on events of relevance in the external environment and produced five editions of its regular **Ezine** update for IYWC members.

The Centre through its publishing outlet **Irish Youth Work Press** also continued its commitment to providing a publishing outlet for other agencies and promoting their awareness to the sector.

In 2009 this included:

- **Flying The Coop: A Guide to Students Leaving Home & Going to College** by Youth Work Ireland Roscommon/ N.E. Galway
- **Young People in South Tipperary: A Demographic Profile** by South Tipperary VEC

Finally, work commenced in 2009 on a rebranding process for the Irish Youth Work Centre. This work has recently been completed and in an exciting new development for the Centre a new logo, website and web shop will be launched in 2010.



# OSSORY YOUTH KILKENNY

## From Carrantuohill to Tinergwet

A group of twelve young people, two volunteers and three staff from Ossory Youth in Kilkenny embarked on an epic year-long outdoor youth project that culminated in a five-day trek to the summit of Jebel Tinergwet, the most Westerly peak of the High Atlas Mountains in Morocco in October 2009. The group, originally comprising of eighteen young people from both Kilkenny city and county started preparing for their Moroccan challenge in November 2008 and since then can lay claim to trekking in the toughest of conditions and terrains in Ireland, that of the Knockmealdowns, Galty and Comeragh Mountains and of course Magillicuddy's Reeks.

However, the ultimate challenge was the trek to the summit of Jebel Tinergwet, that stands at 3,551m (Over three times higher than Ireland's highest peak). The group flew into Casablanca and made their way to Touradent, a traditional walled town in Western Morocco. From there, they hiked to the mountain village of Islan, where they were invited to stay in the houses of two local families. *"We got to sleep on the roof with just our sleeping bags, which was brilliant because when you wake up, you're just staring at the mountains and stuff"* said Eamonn Roche (15), a young participant from Hebron Park, Kilkenny. The following four days involved trekking and camping, three days to reach the summit and one day to come down. The food was basic and typically Moroccan, with bread being the staple diet for breakfast and lunch along with fruit and vegetables and pasta in the evening. *"Because of the heat, we had to drink about 2 litres of water per day, which is funny because it was completely different to trekking in Ireland, where we didn't have one dry day!"* according to Johanne Barcoe (16) from Goresbridge, Co. Carlow. The high altitude meant that more than half of the group



suffered nosebleeds and stomach upsets. Washing was done in a nearby rock pool or stream, *"which was freezing cold!"* according to Marie Power, a volunteer leader from Callan.

Ossory Youth has always valued International Youth Work as a method of providing informal learning opportunities for young people but this time raised the bar with a project that was more challenging but where the potential outcomes for young people were more rewarding. *"This project was brought about to give young people an opportunity to take on a massive challenge and to see it through to the end"* said Kevin O'Driscoll, a youth worker in Castlecomer. *"The outcomes for the young people were enormous for this project, including fitness and health awareness, building self-esteem and confidence, setting personal long-term goals, experiencing a very different and in some ways difficult cultural environment and promoting personal responsibility within a team setting. There isn't one person in the group that didn't take something away from this."* Young people in the group echoed those sentiments. *"It was very tough but I'm really glad I did it,"* said Jamie Brennan (16) from Castlecomer.

Indeed, reaching the summit of Tinergwet may have been the collective goal but the group also had to accustom themselves to a predominantly Islamic culture with different social norms, dress code, climate, language, currency, food and customs. It was enjoyable helping some of the young people to 'haggle' in the markets of Marrakech according to Kieran Scanlon, a Juvenile Liaison Officer in Kilkenny Garda Station who volunteered his time as a leader for the project. *"The price the vendors gave was only a 'first price' and haggling was all part of the process of reaching an agreement. Once the lads got the hang of it there was no stopping them"* he laughs.

This project counted on young people and parents fundraising by bag packing and table quizzes. *"We also got significant assistance from Kilkenny Youth Bank because they saw the value in what we were trying to achieve, which was very much appreciated"* says Martina Maher, Rural Youth Worker with the GB Girls Group in Goresbridge.

So what is the future for the group? *"We're not sure yet"* says Youth Worker Paul Bolger. *"We're fairly certain that some of the group might want to take on a leadership role for projects like this in the future, so we're going to sit down with them to plan our next steps. For now, we just would like to thank all those who supported the project, and in particular Kilkenny Youth Bank, Garda Kieran Scanlon and An Garda Síochána in Kilkenny, our volunteers and parents and young people who collectively pulled together to make this project happen".*