

# *Irish Youth Work* **Scene**

*Magazine for Youth Work Practitioners in Ireland*



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**dance 4 Life Sex Education Programme**  
**dance 4 Life - A Volunteer Perspective**  
**Drug Awareness Activities Supplement**  
**YouthWork Ireland Laois Arts Work Profile**

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## Editorial

### Follow the Yellow Brick Road

by

**Diarmuid Kearney**

**(CEO Youth Work Ireland)**

I'm wondering if the sector (along with many others) is suffering from some kind of paralysis at the moment. There seems to be little movement in progressing our collectively shared aspirations that seemed to be such a priority not so long ago. I'm not convinced however, that this is a consequence of the threat to funding resulting from what some euphemistically refer to as the economic downturn. There are of course many economic and political factors that can promote this inertia and comments like 'With the budget on the horizon we'd best keep our heads down' or 'We don't know who'll be in government tomorrow so let's be cautious' are not uncommon or unreasonable. Indeed the cuts to funding already experienced, have for many resulted in a focus on survival strategies rather than development. But I'm also wondering if the economy is a convenient excuse for not naming the real elephant in the room.

As recent arrivals to the fold of the Office of The Minister for Children and Youth Affairs the youth work sector was cautiously optimistic. On the negative side we were anxious that our non-formal educational approach would neither be valued nor understood. On the positive side the OMCYA heralded a fresh tilt at 'joined up government' and a move away from the 'silo' system which has inhibited the delivery of truly coordinated services. As a sector that works across many Government Departments we were excited by this prospect. Our experience to date has not realised these expectations. Silos are still very present. But perhaps we've been a bit like Dorothy and her companions as they progressed along the yellow brick road. We wanted, or rather, depended unrealistically on a 'Wizard' to pull the strings and make things OK for us. But there isn't anyone behind the curtain pulling the strings. There are a few people, who like us, believe a better job can be done in working collaboratively alongside young people to have their rights achieved. But it's a collective effort that's required.

Like the lion we need to find courage; the courage to challenge the narrow thinking that prevents us working effectively, the courage to be innovative, creative and critically reflective in our work and the courage to lead where leadership is required. Like the scarecrow we need to find a brain. We need to find the intelligence to be strategic in our development, the intelligence to build the systems and processes that will help us to be more effective in our work and the intelligence learn from our experience. But perhaps most importantly, like the tin man we need to find a heart; the heart to focus on what is really important. We need to find the compassion that motivates us in doing this work for and with young people and not for selfish personal or organisational reasons and we need to be kind to each other in this work.

We're in the eye of the storm right now; let's hope, like Dorothy, we get home safely.

# Heroin in Cork City

by  
Pat Leahy

## Introduction

Over the last year or so it has become apparent that heroin has finally arrived in Cork City. What is somewhat mysterious is how the city managed to more or less escape from this particular drug for so long, and many anecdotal ideas (some that stretch credibility to a staggering degree) have been advanced to explain this phenomenon.

Regardless of Cork's past good fortune the current rather stark reality is that we now have a heroin scene in the City. This article seeks to inform the reader in relation to what might best be described as a major change in the (illicit) recreational drug use ecology of Cork City, to provide a measure of information on recreational drug use in general and heroin in particular, and to sketch out how the heroin situation might well develop in Cork over the next year or so.

It is important that society's response to such an ecological change is dictated by factual information and by learning from the experiences of other areas in coping with this issue. Politicians, media and the general public can be sucked into a panic and hype driven response that can ultimately prove counter-productive; such a response has to be avoided if we are to minimise the damage and harm from heroin's arrival in Cork.

Heroin (or Diacetylmorphine/Diamorphine) is a derivative of the opium poppy, a plant that has been used for thousands of years for medicinal, religious and recreational purposes. This natural substance contains dozens of alkaloids (the 'active' ingredient in a drug) two of which, morphine and codeine are of particular interest. Most of us are familiar with codeine as a cough syrup and mild painkiller whereas morphine is a powerful analgesic (painkiller); the isolated morphine element is up to 1000 times stronger than raw opium. It is also extremely addictive.

Heroin is in turn a derivative of morphine and an even more powerful (and addictive) painkiller. This is somewhat ironic as the development of heroin by Felix Hoffman for the German firm Bayer in the 19th century was influenced by the desire to produce a non-addictive opium based medicine. The Bayer chemists 'tested' the substance on enthusiastic volunteers from the factory workforce; Heinrich Dreser coined the term heroin to reflect the heroic feelings induced in said workforce by the new drug (Jeffreys, 2008). Without going into too much detail the end result of the refining process is pure heroin; *'a white, odourless powder with a bitter taste'* (Klein, 2002).

Street heroin is 'cut' by various dealers in the supply chain to bulk up the product and therefore increase profit margins; all manner of stuff is used for this purpose, common fillers include baking powder, talcum powder, flour etc. The appearance of street heroin can therefore vary in colour and texture.

The purity and the composition of street heroin is a source of considerable worry and danger to health professionals and to heroin users alike. A batch of high purity heroin can wreck havoc as the users overdose due to their lack of tolerance; a further danger is the unknown composition of the bulking agents. The heroin user may be smoking or injecting all manner of toxic agents.

## Whats Happening in Cork

The change in Cork's drug scene due to the increased availability of heroin presents a further hazard; user ignorance. Cork has long been associated with 'yokes and coke'; ecstasy and cocaine. In any area a drug culture will evolve over time that has its own sets of rules and cultures including in as much as possible a 'safe use' culture. The user wants to get high, not to die.

The Cork drug scene is only now incorporating heroin into its panoply of substances and it is very likely that the recent tragic deaths and injuries attributed to heroin are at least partly due to user ignorance. Most of us will be familiar with the spate of deaths and injuries that accompanied the arrival of ecstasy in the 1990's and cocaine in the Celtic Tiger boom years; heroin is no different in this regard. It is a sad fact that there will be accidental deaths from use; in the past we have witnessed both moral panics and a surge in injuries and deaths accompanying the appearance of new drugs and the likelihood is that heroin will follow the same course.

It can be quite difficult for the average person to understand the attraction of illicit drugs and even more so the attraction of heroin. The stark reality is that most people who use heroin describe it as being wonderful; heaven inside you. The pleasure derived from the use of heroin has been described as "*like being wrapped in cotton wool*". It is extremely difficult for those of us who have never experienced the sheer euphoric feelings generated by this drug to fully comprehend just how fantastic this stuff actually is. However, heroin does have a nasty downside and paradoxically it isn't so much the drug itself as the conditions and qualifications on its use that conspire to make heroin the substance with a ruinous capacity to decimate people and communities.

Heroin itself is actually a rather benign drug bar the danger of overdosing; apart from the requirement to maintain use addiction doesn't lead to health problems insofar as that the drug doesn't attack the body or poison a person as alcohol does. On the other hand, sharing needles virtually guarantees the acquisition of an infectious disease and as with all illegal drugs the user doesn't really know what they are purchasing as quality control does not exist. The using of needles causes all manner of skin problems and the 'junkie lifestyle' is a prescription for harm. Self-neglect in diet and hygiene leads to problems and the need to fund a habit causes risk-taking.

On a local level the main form of use at this point in time is still orally; the drug is smoked. This will probably change however as smoking is wasteful; a lot of the heroin literally goes up in smoke. Injecting is a far more cost-effective means of administering this drug and unfortunately it is probably only a matter of time before this becomes prevalent in

Cork. The danger of overdosing is also increased through intravenous use. This raises the question of needle exchanges; on the one hand it is a proven method of reducing the spread of disease. However, the dilemma is that on the other hand access to clean syringes might well accelerate a shift to intravenous use.

The illicit drug user is also at risk of running afoul of the law through possession or supplying drugs. Hard-up addicts are frequently recruited as low-level dealers in order to fund their own habit. The viewpoint of those further up the supply chain is that these people are disposable. Aside from the devastation caused to individual users and their families a major effect of heroin is its impact on the social infrastructure of communities. A bag (the usual measure of consumption) of heroin costs €50, a heavy user could be going through three or four bags a day; totalling €900 to €1,500 per week.

This leads to acquisitive crime in order to fund the habit with a commensurate effect on local communities as petty crimes such as handbag snatches increase. O'Mahony (2008) points out that most heroin induced acquisitive crimes are committed by persons who have already interacted with the criminal justice system; the need for substantial sums of cash to pay for the drug raises the incidents of crime dramatically. We must also consider that stolen goods are worth ten to twenty percent of their legitimate value so a €1,000 a week habit will require ten to twenty thousand Euros worth of stolen goods.

The characteristics of the population group in western society who tend to be most at risk of developing extreme difficulties with heroin are typically socially excluded with poor social skills, difficult family backgrounds, high levels of social welfare dependency and educational under-achievement. This group of people tend to reside in poor quality private accommodation, social housing or are technically homeless. There is frequently a history of polydrug use; i.e. the individual will use just about any substance to get intoxicated. Working class inner city and suburban districts are most at risk; nevertheless the vast majority of the population in these communities don't engage in illicit drug use. They are ordinary law-abiding citizens with a strong commitment to their families and friends who want to live their lives in peace and view illegal drugs as a menace.

For the majority of the population the most likely net result of a heroin surge will be an increase in theft, handbag snatches and suchlike activities. The effects on local authority housing estates can be magnified though as the residents suffer from petty crime and personal grief; a user who overdoses may be a neighbour's daughter or son. There is also the fear and alarm (especially amongst the elderly) as one's neighbourhood decays and for parents the anguish of worrying that their children are at risk. One should not underestimate the levels of stress and mental torture in this regard as people do feel ghettoised and abandoned by the state. Youth Work Ireland Cork (YWIC) personnel have encountered an increase in parental and community enquiries in relation to heroin in recent months.

One cannot rule out more serious crimes such as assaults and muggings (including the use of syringes as weapons, although this particularly loathsome practice is diminishing) to fund habits, typically however it is in the realm of supplying that more serious crimes are committed as gangs enforce debt collection, protect their business and sometimes feud over territory. Again, this form of activity impacts far more harshly on local authority areas as we have seen in certain areas of Limerick and Dublin. Ultimately, the arrival of heroin in the city will probably not impact greatly on the majority of the city's inhabitants but it may well be devastating for the areas and individuals that are affected.

### **Economic Factors**

A key area that is sometimes missed in debates around illicit drug use is that of economics; understanding this particular element is critical in understanding the wider issues that are wrapped up in problematic and illegal drug use. Put simply, drugs have always been a profitable global business, from medicinal substances, to tobacco (the drug that causes the most fatalities) to the socially accepted (alcohol, either consumed on licensed premises or used elsewhere) and onto illegal drugs where the scope for profit is immense.

The use of heroin (and other drugs) throughout the world is facilitated by the twin forces of globalisation and modernisation; modern society has eroded at least some of the cultural, traditionalist and religious prohibitions on consumption; equally, globalisation has seen the trade in substances rise as the world becomes a smaller place. The phenomenon of failed 'producer' states (such as Afghanistan)

wherein the government writ is not enforced also assists the cultivation and refinement of illegal drugs. The risks of being caught (and executed in some states) running drugs do not act as a deterrent as enforcement agencies estimate that at most 10% of the cargo is interdicted; bear in mind that some of the massive hauls along the West Cork coast in recent years were as a result of the incompetence of the traffickers.

A ready supply of (usually) poor and desperate people is also harnessed to act as mules; 'body packing' is a particularly dangerous practice as the mules swallow the drugs in condoms to evade detection. These people run tremendous risks for relatively trifling figures; they are most certainly not major players or drugs barons (in many cases they are paying off debts).

### **Misconceptions on Usage and Addiction**

A common misconception is to equate using a drug with addiction; this is not necessarily true and indeed most recreational drug users (including illegal drug users) do so in a reasonably safe and responsible manner. Alcohol for example, a particularly potent drug, is used by the majority of the population in a responsible and functional fashion, yet alcohol misuse is one of the primary sources of social, family and individual problems in contemporary society. The degree to which alcohol is even perceived to be a drug by large swathes of the population is debatable.

Ecstasy, cannabis and even cocaine are used by otherwise law-abiding, employed and upstanding members of the community. Again, this is not to downplay the toxicity or potential dangers as most recreational drugs are powerful chemicals that affect mood, behaviour and emotions. It is when people use to extremes, use in a dysfunctional manner or have underlying issues that serious troubles can surface or be heightened by drug use. Addiction can be constructed as the pinnacle of use insofar as that the drug use becomes a physical and/or psychological necessity.

Addiction is a heavily contested term, and not one to be used lightly. In practice, it can be surmised as the need to ingest a particular substance (alcohol, caffeine, tobacco, prescribed medications etc.) in order to function. This explains why die-hard coffee drinkers are rather bearish in the morning before they get their fix and why smokers are

incredibly grumpy if they can't smoke. If you stop using you get withdrawal symptoms; in some instances these are so severe that they can kill you. Many theoretical ideas have been advanced to explain addiction; a disease, a physical dependency on the drug, a pleasurable behaviour that we seek to repeat. There is no agreement amongst theorists in this matter yet this critical area dictates responses to people's drug use.

Aside from addiction we can get all manner of chaotic and problematic drug use; people can get themselves into all sorts of trouble; financial, emotive, physical and psychological from their drug use. But most people who use drugs in a recreational setting (including illicit drugs) don't experience major problems with their drug use. This is important to point out as throughout the world the people who tend to have the most difficulties with drugs are also those who are marginalised from their societies. Anyone can become addicted or have a problematic relationship with drugs; however the less well off have fewer resources to assist them in overcoming their difficulties.

### **How Can We Respond Effectively**

All is not doom and gloom however; services and supports do exist throughout Cork city. The first line as such is the Local Drugs Task Force and its network of community based projects. These projects offer a diverse range of services to users (and in some instances families) and local communities and are staffed by committed and experienced professionals. These workers are not necessarily counsellors; many of them hold qualifications in areas such as Youth Work, Community work and Social Work.

This is important as in many cases a wider perspective can be invaluable in piecing together a person's story and in offering assistance. Our experience is that users' expectations can be unrealistic; people seek a quick fix solution for themselves or their children. Unfortunately, there are no silver bullets or magic wands available and a problem that may have been germinating for years cannot be resolved overnight. People do seek accurate and factual information as the information on the street can be wildly incorrect.

Usually, there exists a 'package' of issues; drug use will be one, therefore a package of supports is required. This can take a considerable length of time,

years in some cases. Stability in resources and the ability to have key personnel in place long term greatly enhance a project's capabilities. The community location adds greatly to the accessibility of these projects and the workers local knowledge can be utilised to garner supports at neighbourhood level.

At city level we have dedicated drugs rehabilitation and detoxification facilities such as Arbour House and additional ancillary services also exist (such as mental health and welfare services). Nevertheless the issue of resourcing for these services is pressing and bedevils users and workers alike; as with the community based drugs projects the new economic reality of recession must not be employed by policy makers to cut services. Indeed the opposite is true as recessionary hard times are a fertile breeding ground for inappropriate drug use.

At the present time there is a need for an expanded methadone maintenance programme in Cork; as with so many other areas in drugs work this is highly contentious; within our organisation we have different views on the effectiveness this response. Such debate is healthy however; if there are any truisms in the drugs field it is that no-one has all the answers (or even if answers exist) and all options must be explored.

### **Challenges for Youth Services**

From a youth work service providers' viewpoint the current situation presents a number of challenges; the priority is to offer support and assistance to young people who are using heroin whilst at the same time maintaining current levels of service to other young people. A danger exists insofar as that a focus on heroin as the key current issue to the exclusion of other issues risks concentrating on the substance rather than the person.

Trust is a major and sensitive issue; if a worker has been in an area for a number of years this trust will exist; the individual themselves or their friends might know that 'Mary' or 'Timmy' are 'sound'. It is a big step for a person to seek help; users are suspicious of the state or any organisation that can be (however tenuously) linked to the state as they fear arrest and prosecution. The issue of confidentiality is important here; the worker must be viewed as impartial and non-judgemental by the drug user.

The social conditions that conspire to place margin-

alised young people and their communities in the frontline as users, dealers, vigilantes and victims can be forgotten in the (media and politically fuelled) rush to be seen to be doing something about heroin. This usually includes the demonization of certain communities and young people. The onus is upon the youth services and other like-minded entities to avoid panic and respond in a rational rather than emotional manner.

## Conclusions

Up to six months ago in Cork the local drug scene in the main regarded heroin with deep suspicion if not outright hostility whereas cocaine and ecstasy were considered more or less to be ok. This has changed and in the local scene heroin use is now becoming more prevalent. It is important for all of us in Cork city to realise that a rubicon has been crossed and there will be no going back; heroin will not go away regardless of legal sanctions, political and community initiatives, preventative education or moral outrage. This is not to adopt a passive or defeatist stance; it is to simply acknowledge the reality. Cork has been lucky for a long time, now we must live with and deal with a new reality. Cities and countries throughout the world have implemented strategies ranging from the crudely coercive (up to and including capital punishment for users and dealers) to the sophisticated suite of services model (social, medical, economic supports etc.); in no case has either the supply or demand for the drug been significantly reduced.

Heroin and the issues that surround it present us with a complex and varied set of challenges; as individuals, families, communities and as a society. We must not forget however that the user is not some form of evil fiend from hell intent on subverting our civilisation or hooking our kids on drugs. They are also our fellow citizens; they want Cork to win all-Irelands, want to lead 'normal' lives and worry about the situation that they are in. The frustrations and angers that build up in communities due to the damage attributed to heroin and other drugs are understandable but we must guard against vigilantism or the hitching of 'get tough on heroin' messages to political groups. Emotive responses can exacerbate the problems. Reducing both the supply and demand involves a strong dose of common sense, research, hard work, tolerance for different opinions and a realisation that we cannot turn the clock back.

The drug ecology in Cork has shifted but equilibrium will eventually be restored. Heroin will ultimately settle into the Cork drug scene and remain there until such time comes around that demand ceases. But be aware that we humans like our drugs so don't expect this to occur anytime soon.

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## Editors Comment

Recent studies and media reporting have pointed to the increased heroin problem with usage outside of the bigger cities on the rise significantly. This commentary article we feel will resonate with many youth workers around the country whether they are working in Drugs Task Force Projects, Garda Diversion Projects or Disadvantaged Youth Projects. However, the article may also provoke some debate and critique and we would be delighted to hear responses from readers. Editors contact details are on the contents page.



## The dance4 Life Programme

by Ann Kennedy

### Introduction

dance4life is looking for opportunities to work with schools and youth groups this autumn. One of the highlights of the programme is the worldwide dance4life event, which will take place on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2010 to commemorate World Aids Day. Dance events are held in each participating country and all events are connected via satellite. Besides getting a sense of the sheer scale of the programme, and how many different groups of people the message has reached, the party culminates in the entire dance4life community doing their drill together at the same time.

### What is dance4life

dance4life is a HVI/AIDS awareness se education programme for young people. It is an international initiative which aims to inspire, mobilise and unite young people in the battle against HIV and AIDS. The programme was founded in 2003 and is now up and running in 20 countries. In 2006 dance4life arrived in Ireland and it is hoped that the dance4life team will visit schools and youth groups around the country.

The programme is based around the dance4life drill, a dance that is taught to students in each of the participating countries. Although every country is encouraged to add to the drill and make it culturally unique, the dance gives students a connection to participants from all around the world. The programme in Ireland is run by the Irish Family Planning Association and is offered to schools and youth organisations free of charge.

### How it Works

The tour team, made up of lively performing arts volunteers, spend a few hours with students and youth groups teaching them the drill. This is followed by the Skills4life Programme workshops. These workshops equip participants with a variety

of skills and information around HIV and AIDS and the way that it affects their lives and the lives of their peers' world wide. During these workshops participants will also explore their own sexual and reproductive health. The programme also covers self-esteem, decision making, respect and responsibility and looks at the relationship between global economic development and HIV/AIDS.



### Why this Training?

This training seeks to give participants the knowledge to protect themselves against HIV and other sexually transmitted infections; it also gives them the tools to share what they have gained with their peers. With the help of the dance4life team at the IFPA, the student groups are then encouraged to take action within their communities in order to spread awareness of an issue they find particularly important or relevant.

Depending on the size and interests of the group, this can range from a survey of STI knowledge amongst their families and friends to painting a mural at a local park, to fundraising. In completing this project, these young people become "agents of change" and are encouraged to continue activism for those issues which are most important to them. By using music and dance, the dance4life programme aims to reach youth in a meaningful way that remains with them for life.



# dance4Life: A Volunteers Perspective

by  
Hugh Kearney



## My Involvement

Using dance and music as a motivational tool to inspire young people to engage in issues surrounding HIV/AIDS is the basic premise of the dance4life programme. The programme was founded in 2003 and is now up and running in 19 countries spanning across 6 continents and including over 50,000 young people. In 2006 dance4life arrived in Ireland under the auspices of the Irish Family Planning Association (IFPA). We plan to visit at least 12 schools as well as a number of youth groups in autumn/winter of this year.



My involvement in dance4life began this summer when, through a friend in the Gaiety School of Acting, I heard that the IFPA was looking for volunteers for what sounded like an exciting youth programme. As an aspiring actor I am always looking for a new challenge and it sounded like a really good cause to boot. As it turned out it was much more challenging than I had anticipated. We did a week-long training session with Red Zebra, an international dance company that trains dance4life teams all around the world. I have little dance experience except late night forays onto the dance floor. So found it physically exhausting. By the end of August we were ready and did our first session with a youth group from Kildare. Our first visit to a school was in September when we went to St Mac Dara's Community College in Templeogue in Dublin. The programme went down very well with the students. I was surprised at how quickly the students got into it.

## The Heart Connection Tour

Essentially dance4life is a HIV/AIDS awareness sex education programme for young people. What makes it special is the use of dance, music and fun to help young people engage in the issue of HIV and AIDS and to inspire them to get involved in the global battle against the spread of the disease. There are number of distinct elements to the programme. I work as part of the Heart Connection Tour which is comprised of arts volunteers. We are the first group to visit the schools or youth groups and our role is to teach the dance drill, to educate them about HIV/AIDS and encourage them to become activists.

This dance serves two purposes. First and foremost it is fun. AIDS and HIV are serious and at times intimidating topics. The dance helps break the ice with young people and gets them engaged. Secondly, it provides a tangible physical link to all the other young people around the world who are also involved in the programme. The same dance (with some local variations) is being taught in 19 different countries around the world, from places as far apart as Russia, Sierra Leone and Moldova. We have incorporated a bit of Irish dancing into our version of the dance. Young people can go online to [dance4life.ie](http://dance4life.ie) and see their peers from all over the world performing the same dance. Most recently a group of young people from Tanzania uploaded a YouTube film of their version.



The grand finale of this element of the programme is the worldwide dance4life event which takes place every two years on the Saturday before World AIDS Day. The next event is on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2010. Young people who have participated in the programme and attend the event will be connected live via satellite as they dance together in front of the world. This provides an exciting culmination to the programme and serves to remind world leaders of the promises they have made to young people about tackling HIV/AIDS.



### After the Heart Connection Tour

During the Heart Connection Tour we give young people simple messages about HIV/AIDS such as the fact that 60% of new infections were involving young people between 15 & 24. We also do short dramas such as a dramatisation of someone trying to tell his friends that he has HIV illustrating the different reactions and prejudices people have about the disease. After the Heart Connection Team visit the young people they are taught in more detail about how to take responsibility in the skills4life element of the programme. This is undertaken by a team of sex education trainers from the IFPA.

This is an in-depth programme where they learn more about HIV and AIDS and how it can affect their lives and those of their peers in the developing world. During this element they will also explore issues such as self-esteem, decision making and respect and responsibility.

Once they're fired up they're ready for the third part of the programme, which is called act4life. As the name suggests this is all about taking actions of activism. Young people are encouraged to become agents of change and engage in personal actions. This could mean anything from becoming a volunteer, fund raising or simply spreading awareness. A school in Dublin, for example, did a No-Uniform Day fundraiser for HIV/AIDS.

### What it means to me

Working with young people is new to me, but I have found it very rewarding. The fact that I am only around eight year older than many of the young people we are engaging with makes for a good dynamic. I don't look at them as "kids" and don't talk to them any differently than I would to my own peers. What I really like about the programme is how genuinely enlightened the message is. I feel that if we can turn even just one young person's life around it is worth all the effort. In the coming weeks we will be bringing the programme to Killinarden Community School in Tallaght and then onto Breifne College, Cavan; Drogheda Youth Reach, Co Louth; the CBS in Nenagh, Co Tipperary; Sutton Park, Co Dublin and CBS in Enniscorthy, Co Wexford.



Hugh Kearney pictured above is a volunteer with the Irish Family Planning Association's dance4life programme.

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# Drug Awareness Activities Supplement

by  
Gina Halpin

## Introduction:

Drug awareness education is key to preventing young people from becoming engaged in experimenting with drugs, which occurs initially out of curiosity or peer pressure, and without the full knowledge or awareness of the devastating effects of drug use. This activity supplement hopes to equip youth workers with exercises and information to help them engage with young people around the issue of drug use.

## Drugs Classification:

Drugs are described in different ways. People use words like 'soft', 'hard', 'upper' and 'downer'. Classifying them can help make sense of what they do to us.

### Stimulant (upper)

Stimulants speed up the brain and central nervous system. Examples are caffeine (in coffee, tea) nicotine (in cigarettes), amphetamines (speed, dexamphetamine, diet pills), cocaine, and ecstasy.

### Depressant (downer)

Depressants slow down the brain and central nervous system. Examples are alcohol (beer, wine, vodka, gin, etc.), marijuana /cannabis ('dope', 'grass', 'weed', etc.), fantasy, heroin, tranquillisers and anti-anxiety drugs (including sleeping pills).

### Hallucinogen (psychedelic)

These drugs alter the user's state of consciousness, and include drugs such as LSD ('acid', or 'trips'), ecstasy, PCP, magic mushrooms, datura and marijuana/cannabis. The most commonly used drugs in many countries are alcohol, tobacco and prescription drugs. Alcohol and tobacco are also the biggest killers. Marijuana is the most commonly used illegal drug.

## Ice Breaker Definitions....

**Aim:** To get the group comfortable with each other & to encourage the young people to share their understanding of what is meant by the term 'drugs', both legal and illegal.

**Materials:** Flipchart paper & markers.

- Begin by asking the group to brainstorm the names of as many drugs as they can - stress that you are not asking how many they have used or seen, just heard of.
- Record these onto flipchart paper as the young people call them out.
- Split the young people into groups of 3 or 4, their challenge is to come up with a definition of what a 'drug' is to them. They can illustrate this if they want to - the point is to discuss the term and reach agreement.
- Once everyone has finished invite each group to share what they have come up with.
- Display the young people's definitions on the wall of the youth club.

*Source: A Little Book of Drugs, by Vanessa Rogers*

## Activity One Why do Young People Use Drugs?

**Aim:** To explore the role of drug use among young people and to explore the differences and similarities between young people and adults in relation to drugs use.



**Materials:** Flip chart paper, pens & markers.

- Divide the group into smaller groups of four or five.
- Give each group a flip chart page with the

statements 'Reasons for Use' and 'Reason for Non Use' written on it.

- Ask some groups to brainstorm the reasons why some young people choose to use drugs and why some choose not to.
- Ask the other groups to brainstorm the same task but to focus on adult use and non-use of drugs.
- Give the groups 15-20 minutes to brainstorm, then bring them back and ask them to feedback to the bigger group.
- Using a flipchart list and compare the reasons recorded for young people and those recorded for adults.

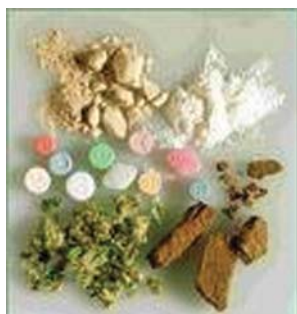
If time permits, start a group discussion using some of the following statements:

1. Are there different pressures or influences affecting males and females to use drugs?
2. How does your circle of friends influence whether a person uses drugs or not.

Source: L.E.A.D. - Leading Education About Drugs, by Helen Cahill

## Activity Two: Handling Pressure in the Moment

**Aim:** To enhance skills in dealing with peer pressure of peer invitations to engage in drug use. This exercise will give young people prepared ideas and answers as to what to do if they are invited to use drugs.



**Materials:** Lines of Offer Cards and Tactics Cards (see below for details of these cards)

- Explain to the young people that knowing how to deal with pressure from friends to use drugs is very important.
- Organise the role plays by asking the group to form into groups of three or four.
- Give the Lines of Offer Cards (see below - write or print these statements on a post card prior to the group work) to each group and ask them to work out a response in which they decline the offer to use drugs.

- Make it clear that the offer is to be made by one person to the two others who do not want to take up the offer.
- Challenge the young people to develop a scene in which those refusing the offer do not come across as the less attractive characters - but rather as funny, clever and witty.
- Remind the young people that the role of this activity is to model ways in which young people can decline drug offers without looking like a 'loser'.

For a focus on tactics have the young people choose an approach for themselves or alternatively use the Tactic Card (see below - again have these card prepared before the group meets).

### Lines of Offer Cards:

Put pressure on the other player by suggesting that:

They're too scared to try the drugs!
Everyone else is doing it!
Doing drugs will make them look cool!
Their party will be rubbish without drug!
No one will ever find out about their drug use!
Everyone tries it at some time!
It will help them relax and cope with stress!
It's a special occasion & they should celebrate!
It will make them more attractive!
It can do no harm!

### Tactic Cards:

Deal with the pressure by:

Stalling	Complain about something you have to do
Changing the subject	Joking
Making an excuse	Reasoning
Distracting	Arguing
Explaining	Ignoring

Source: L.E.A.D. - Leading Education About Drugs, by Helen Cahill

## Activity Three: What Happens Next

**Aim:** To encourage young people to think through possible consequences of drug related situations.

**Materials:** Flip chart paper for each group, pens and markers

- Divide the group into smaller groups of three or four and give each group a different scenario.
- Explain that each scenario depicts a situation where drug use is an issue.
- Give each group flip chart paper & markers & ask them to construct a comic strip to show what happens next.
- Encourage the groups to think about the consequences of actions, what they may have done differently in the situation and what could be done to resolve the scenario.

### Scenarios

1. A 14 year old youth is caught at school with cannabis in their school bag.
2. A 21 year old man offers an 'E' to a 15 year old girl he has just met in a club.
3. A 17 year old young woman passes out at a club after doing a line of cocaine.
4. A 16 year old student tells her teacher that she uses cannabis to relax her.

Source: A Little Book of Drugs, by Vanessa Rogers



## Activity Four: Drugs in Sports

**Aim:** This is a discussion activity to look at the issue of drugs in sports and explore values and attitudes within the youth group.

**Materials:** A red, yellow & green card for each person and a copy of the drugs in sports warm up (see below - this can be either written up on a flip

chart page prior to the group meeting or photocopied and given to each young person.

- Give each young person a yellow, green and red card. Explain that you are going to read a series of statements and you want the young people to raise the card that corresponds with their opinion

**RED - No, I disagree**

**YELLOW - I want to say something about this**

**GREEN - Yes, I agree**

Allow time for people to ask questions or make comments about the statements. If no one uses a yellow card, you can ask questions or challenge red & green card answers.

### DRUGS IN SPORT WARM UP



Random drugs tests are the only way to stop athletes cheating.

Drugs in sports have only been a problem since the 1980s.

Athletes caught using steroids should be barred for life from competing.

Disabled athletes should be subject to the same drug rules as other athletes, otherwise, it isn't fair.

If someone refuses a drugs test then he/she must have something to hide.

It would be better if every sportsperson was drugs tested before competing.

Athletes should provide good role models for young people.

If a sportsperson is found to have used drugs before winning a medal then it should be taken away from them.

Athletes who are wrongly convicted should be given their titles and medals back.

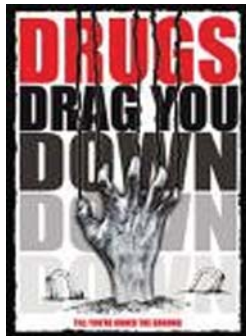
Some over-the-counter remedies for colds and flu contain banned drugs that can make athletes test positive for drugs.

Source: Youth Work Now, January 2009

## Activity Five: Challenging Stereotypes

**Aim:** To challenge young people's assumptions about drug using and drug users.

**Materials:** Flip chart paper, markers, blu-tack and pieces of card labelled - **Cannabis User** - **Alcohol User** - **Amphetamine User** - **Ecstasy User** - **Aerosol User** - **Heroin User** - **Cocaine User** - **Person who does not use drugs**.



- Divide young people into small groups and allocate one card to each group.
- Ask them to draw what they think the person using drugs looks like.
- Stick the drawings on a wall and then ask the young people to guess from each other's drawings which drug the person uses.
- Next ask how they made these decisions, what information or knowledge it was based on and if their assumptions were correct.
- Introduce the idea of stereotypes.
- Discuss what it means and offer the following definition "A stereotype might be defined as a generalisation and assumption that, together, portrays the reputation of a group".

### Group Discussion:

1. Are the drawings stereotypes?
2. Do most users of that drug really look like that?
3. How are gender, age and ethnicity represented in the drawings?
4. Can you tell who might use or not use different drugs just by looking at them?
5. What can happen if incorrect assumptions are made about people?

Finally ask the young people to share their own experiences of being stereotyped and conclude that you cannot always tell if a person is using or misusing drugs just by their appearance, the music they listen to or the friends they have.

Source: Youth Work Now, January 2009

## Useful Websites & Organisations

Ana Liffey Drug Project  
[www.aldp.ie](http://www.aldp.ie)

Merchants Quay Ireland  
[www.mqi.ie](http://www.mqi.ie)

Children's Rights Alliance  
[www.childrensrights.ie](http://www.childrensrights.ie)

Community Awareness of Drugs  
[www.aboutdrugs.ie](http://www.aboutdrugs.ie)

Crosscare Drug And Alcohol  
Awareness Programme  
[www.drugs.ie](http://www.drugs.ie)

Headstrong  
[www.headstrong.ie](http://www.headstrong.ie)

Health Promotion Unit  
[www.healthpromotion.ie](http://www.healthpromotion.ie)

Narcotics Anonymous  
[www.na-ireland.org](http://www.na-ireland.org)

National Drugs Helpline  
1800 459459

National Youth Health Programme  
[www.youthhealth.ie](http://www.youthhealth.ie)

Reach Out  
[www.reachout.com.au](http://www.reachout.com.au)

Spunout  
[www.spunout.ie](http://www.spunout.ie)



*Gina Halpin is the Information & Resources Officer  
with the Irish YouthWork Centre.*

# Youth Arts Work in Youth Work Ireland Laois

Service Profile

by  
Aishling Hennessy



## Introduction

Youth Work Ireland Laois has worked tirelessly over the last year to promote and support the arts within the youth Community in Portlaoise and throughout Laois. Within the last year Youth Work Ireland Laois has encountered massive changes from re-branding to moving premises to new Project Manager to the launching of our Youth Café! Lots of change can only result great things to come. Our Arts focus over the last year has increased greatly due to the committed work of Youth Arts Worker, Aishling Hennessy, Youth Worker, Aoife Walsh, Office Co-ordinator, Nicola Coss and Project Manager, Joe Thompson.

This work started with the massive success of the Haunted House Project in 2008, which saw over 50 young people, aged 13-17 from all over Abbeyleix participating. Props we're made, costumes were designed, sets created and performances were rehearsed. A fantastic night was had by all involved.



Graffiti Project 2009

## Youth Arts Programme

In January, we saw the first of our Youth Arts Programme for 2009 take place. All workshops were kindly supported by Portlaoise Credit Union and Laois County Council. Animation workshops started in January with innovative work produced by the participants! From skydiving monkeys to martial arts men, the characters created by the group became a great insight into technical minds of our youth and their ability to demonstrate their computer graphics capabilities.

From there, we set about promoting our next series of workshops. Photography, Painting and Ceramics workshops took place from March to April '09 with a great reaction from the young people of Laois. Photography workshops gave the participants the opportunity to look at Portlaoise through the lenses of their cameras. Painting workshops allowed the young people to display their individuality through the medium of paint while also using mixed media to create texture and depth. Ceramics workshops saw Ceramicist Eleanor Swan from Kildare work with us. Her energy and Artists Way was quite obvious to us as she worked with the young people. The ceramic pieces created we're a symbolic to their experience with Eleanor as each piece was beautifully sculpted, glazed and exhibited.



Ceramics Workshop 2009

## D' YOUTH FACTORY Launch

Youth Work Ireland Laois officially opened its door to the public with the launch of D' YOUTH FACTORY on 20<sup>th</sup> June. To coincide with this event, we set about displaying to greater community the artistic abilities of the young people involved with us through "The Tunnel". This piece of Graffiti Art was created in the archway between The Fruit 'n' Nut Place and Portlaoise Pharmacy. Over 20 young people were involved in this project and the results of the hard work are on display for the public to see. A week later saw Graffiti workshops start for two weeks. These workshops brought together over 30 young people who set about creating fifteen 8x4 pieces of graffiti art.



### D'YOUTH FACTORY launch 2009

These workshops were facilitated by Athy Artist Ben Pateman and Portlaoise Artist Alan Scully. Stomp Music workshops took place for two weeks in July with participants creating their own Music instruments with the facilitation of local musician Ross O'Meara. Over the course of two weeks, the young people learned body percussion, beat and made instruments from recycled materials. They worked as a group to compose pieces of music using a mixture of body percussion and instruments. The main piece composed by the group was Billy Jean by Michael Jackson. The workshop was also featured by Claire O'Brien on Midlands 103.



### Rock Garden Party August 2009

Our final blast of energy came about through the organisation of D'Rock Garden Party on 20<sup>th</sup> of August by D'Rock Garden Sub Committee, who thought it was a good opportunity to bring together the Workshop, Club and Cafe Members for a celebration of achievement of the very successful Graffiti Art, Tunnel, Stomp Music Summer Workshops and Charity Pig Race event in associa-

tion with the Magnet Portlaoise Festival which raised €1,554.38 for the Youth Centre. The sub-committee successfully demonstrated leadership and organisation skills for the following key activities: Cody McDonald ( Stage and Safety Coordinator), David Harte (Technical Coordinator), Caoimhe Commins and John Delaney (Promotions Coordinators), Sid Thompson (Artist and Set Coordinator), Kearin Roberts (MC) and Niamh Cahill (DJ).

To put into words the amount of Arts related learning that has been displayed throughout the last year, is in honesty, quite difficult. The young people demonstrated not only artistic abilities but also maturity, friendship, team work, organization and above all else a sense of responsibility for each projects success. To witness this, should prove to the sceptics that young people really can contribute positively to our Community and their openness and free spirit should be characteristics we embrace, not diminish.

### Please get in touch

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer with us, curious as to what is we do or interested in upcoming workshops, please feel free to drop into us on the Abbeyleix Road from 9.30 am – 1pm and 2pm – 6pm. The Youth Café is open daily with Junior Group (1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> year) meeting Mondays from 4-6pm. Senior Group (4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> year) meet Tuesdays from 4-6pm. Wednesdays are dedicated to Arts workshops. Thursdays is our drop-in evening from 4-7pm and Fridays are our Friday Nite Live from 5-9pm. Members only so pop in for application and Parental consent form.

*Aishling Hennessey is the Youth Arts Worker with Youth Work Ireland Laois. For further information on the service or any of the activities mentioned please contact:*

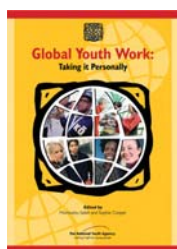
**Youth Work Ireland Laois**  
**Shamrock House**  
**Abbeyleix Road**  
**Portlaoise,**  
**Co Laois.**  
**Tel: 057 8665010**  
**Fax: 057 8665010**  
**Email: info@ywilaois.ie**  
**Web: www.ywilaois.ie**



# IYWC New Resources

## GLOBAL YOUTH WORK

**Global Youth Work: Taking it Personally**  
by  
**Momodou Sallah and Sophie Cooper, 2008**



Resource pack containing a host of reasons why youth workers should involve themselves in Global Youth Work - as well as a range of practical ways in which they can do so. Geared towards practitioners it will help make the personal, local, national and global connections between 'things out there' and 'things in here'. The ten sections consider a range of issues, from the economic and security implications of globalisation, and how these stretch beyond moral and green imperatives, to globalisation and human values; body image; gangs and crime; the clothing industry; refugees; the war on terror; religious identity; music and sustainable development and the way we live.

## HEALTH

**Mind: Emotional Health and Wellbeing Activities for Young People**  
by  
**Vanessa Rogers, 2007**



Good emotional health enables young people to feel happy respected and content. It also enables them to value and respect the worth of others. Developing young people's emotional wellbeing contributes to an overall healthy lifestyle and gives them a valuable resource to use in everyday life. This activity pack provides a toolkit of ideas and activities for youth workers and other professionals working with young people to explore good mental health and emotional wellbeing. This pack comprises of five sections - Warm up activities; Emotional wellbeing exercises - Anxiety & stress; Expressing feelings & emotions and finally ideas for reviewing and reinforcing

learning.

**Soul: Spiritual Health and Wellbeing Activities for Young People**  
by  
**Vanessa Rogers, 2007**



Activity pack written to support youth workers and other professionals in exploring beliefs, values and ethics with young people. Looking at spirituality in the widest sense these activities encourage young people to question both themselves and what they see in the world around them. The pack consists of six sections - Warm up activities; Exercises that encourage young people to explore what it is that makes them unique; Personal beliefs and values; Exploring ethics and finally Relationships and spiritual awareness.

## INTERNET SAFETY

**Online Groomers**  
by  
**Dr. Julia Davison & Dr. Petter Gottschalk, 2009**



The Internet has greatly facilitated the ways in which paedophiles can groom children and young people. This important book offers numerous new insights and, in the process, provides a sound conceptual approach to understanding continuing developments in: (i) Characteristics of the Internet (ii) How these are explored and exploited by sexual offenders to groom their victims (from the initial targeting of sites where children and young people visit online, contacting their potential victims and forming a bond, through to the abuse taking place) (iii) Legislation against online grooming (iv) The conviction, understanding and treatment of offenders preventing them from causing harm.

The book is aimed at anyone responsible for the care or safeguarding of children and young people. It places examples from current technology and laws within the rapidly developing interna-

tional context of online child protection; and provides policy and practice information on:

**Profiling online groomers**

**Policing online groomers**

**Preventing online grooming offences**

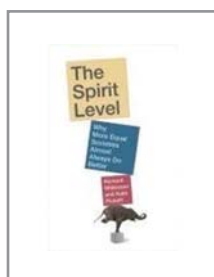
It uses international examples to illustrate larger concepts and cases, and the difficulties involved in tackling a world-wide problem where individual countries have their own laws protecting children, but where there is no concerted law enforcement and international legislation to combat child abuse; and where there is no direct governance of the Internet by an international body to curb illegal online content and activity. Above all, this book demonstrates how people working in many different specialisms and countries can co-operate to help ensure children and young people remain safe online.

## SOCIAL EQUALITY

**The Spirit Level:**

*Why more equal societies almost always do better*  
by

**Richard Wilkinson & Kate Pickett, 2009**



Large inequalities of income in a society have often been regarded as divisive and corrosive, and it is common knowledge that in rich societies the poor have shorter lives and suffer more from almost every social problem. This book, based on thirty years' research, demonstrates that more unequal societies are bad for almost everyone within them - the well-off as well as the poor. The data the book lays out and the measures it uses are like a spirit level which can be held up to compare the conditions of different societies. The differences revealed, even between rich market democracies, are striking. Almost every modern social and environmental problem - ill-health, lack of community life, violence, drugs, obesity, mental illness, long working hours, big prison populations - is more likely to occur in a less equal society. The book goes to the heart of the apparent contrast between the material success and social failings of many modern societies.

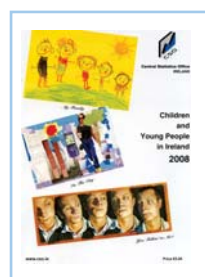
The research contained in this book, does not simply provide a key to diagnosing ills. It tells how to shift the balance from self-interested 'consumerism' to a friendlier and more collaborative society. It shows a way out of the social and environmental problems which beset societies and opens up a major new approach to improving the real quality of life, not just for the poor but for everyone.

## YOUTH WORK RESEARCH

**Children and Young People in Ireland 2008**

by

**Central Statistics Office, 2009**



The social partnership agreement 2003-2005 requested the CSO to support a move towards more evidence-based policy making. The National Statistics Board further requested that the CSO provide a comprehensive set of social indicators with emphasis on disaggregation by key characteristics such as the nine equality grounds. The first set of social indicators published by the CSO focused on the theme of gender. Other social indicator reports have focused on ageing, equality and regional quality of life. This report compliments the earlier report on ageing. The report is focused on the 0-19 years age group or pre-teen and teenage years. Most indicators are presented in either a national or international context - the indicators used are (i) Population (ii) Education (iii) Health & Care (iv) Transport, society and lifestyle. The national context is generally in a time series format while the international context compares Ireland principally with other EU countries.

**Get 'em Young:**

**Mapping Young People's Exposure to Alcohol Marketing in Ireland**

by

**NYCI, 2009**



Research aimed at examining if Ireland's stated commitment to protect young people from the pressure to drink is reflected in the actual experiences of young people. The project was designed with young people as co-re-

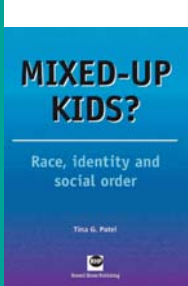
searchers to provide a better understanding of their experiences and to improve the credibility of the knowledge that is derived from research involving young people. Marketing and advertising play a major role in forming and shaping opinions, attitudes and behaviour in our society. The drinks industry is among the highest spenders in this sector; however they state that their activities do not target young people. This report is unique in that for the first time in Ireland, young people record their experiences of alcohol advertising and marketing in their surroundings and environment. This mapping report was conceived as part of a broader examination of the impact alcohol marketing.

**Report on Consultations for an Inter-Cultural Strategy for Youth Work**  
by  
**Lisa Mauro-Bracken, 2009**

Report summarises information gathered as part of focus group consultations held with young people, their parents, youth workers and representatives of minority ethnic communities including youth workers from minority ethnic backgrounds. It highlights the range and depth of comments made during the consultation phase of the development of an intercultural strategy for youth work. There were a number of reoccurring themes, which emerged; the general findings demonstrated that the equality focus at the local level is not significant, with limited inclusion programmes and activities being implemented.

**YOUTH WORK PRACTICE**

**Mixed Up Kid**  
by  
**Tina G. Patel, 2008**



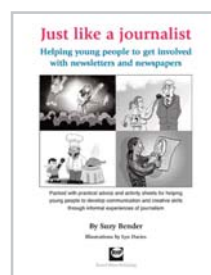
More & more children are growing up in mixed-race families and social environments and there is also increasing variety within this mixed-ness. Yet services for them have been bogged down by restrictive policy and practice guidelines based on: (i) Outdated and problematic ideas about essentialised racial identities (ii) The supposed need for children to commit fully to one of these identities (usually the black minority ethnic one) in order to minimise identity problems and experiences of discrimination.

This book is aimed at anyone working with such children and young people - in social work, adoption and fostering, education, youth work and youth justice - this book asks:

1. Why essentialist ideas about a single identity tend to dominate.
2. What the consequences are for those who actively choose not to identify themselves as having a single racial identity.
3. How policy and practice can be improved.

The autor provides thought provoking analyses of existing literature, and calls for recognition of these individuals, for example those who were transracially adopted as children, and whose reflective narratives form a major part of this book.

**Just Like a Journalist**  
by  
**Suzy Bender, 2009**



User-friendly resource for helping young people to develop communication and creative skills through informal experiences of journalism, including: (i) Writing (ii) Interviewing (iii) Editing (iv) Creating images (v) Presentation of text and images on paper and on the web (vi) Working in groups (vii) Creating a flyer, info sheet or newsletter from scratch (viii) Contributing to existing club or school newspapers (ix) Making submissions to local newspapers and magazines (x) Getting a point across in print and on the web.

The materials can be used flexibly by anyone with youth work or teaching skills - no experience of journalism is required. This is not a complex programme that has to be worked through from beginning to end, but an informal, engaging and coherently presented collection of guidance, information, suggestions, activities and anecdotes that can be used flexibly in any of the above circumstances.

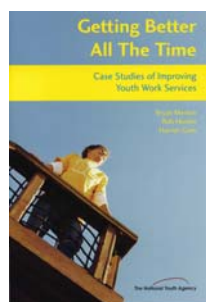
It is written by an experienced journalist who has helped young people contribute to youth publications over several years. The material which is presented here in informal and engaging ways - can assist youth leaders, youth workers and teach-

ers to add some specialist skills and experiences in their work with young people in clubs, schools, detached settings or anywhere else where they meet with them who may:

1. Already have a strong desire to write and 'publish', but don't know how to go about it.
2. Want to become journalists.
3. Have strong views about something that has arisen and need encouragement and help to organise 'a voice'.
4. Benefit from encouragement to join in existing opportunities such as contributing to their school or club newsletter.

## YOUTH WORK PROVISION

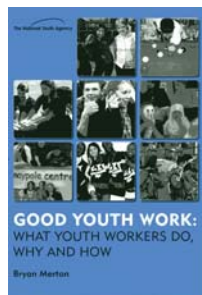
### Getting better all the Time: Case Studies of Improving Youth Work Services by Bryan Merton, Rob Hunter and Harriet Gore



Book aimed at highlighting the lessons that can be learned from services that have brought about significant changes to the way services work in order to raise standards of youth work provision and practice. Themes have been selected that impact on quality outcomes for young people, case studies describe how these have led to organisational development and service improvements and reference is made to models of change management to help pull the various threads together.

The book is invaluable reading for all those who are responsible for developing policies and services for young people; those who fund, plan, commission and manage these services; and the front line staff who deliver the work. It will assist in planning and managing any changes that are necessary to raise standards so young people can achieve the best possible outcomes.

### Good Youth Work - What Youth Workers Do, Why and How by Bryan Merton, 2007



Book which describes and explains good youth work, drawing on the reflective practice of those who do it. It is aimed at practitioners and managers of youth work, wherever they are located, and at policy makers and commissioners who may want to know about the work they support. By examining what good youth workers do the book aims at making youth work practice explicit, visible and comprehensive; and thereby revealing its complexities, nuances and the different kinds of knowledge, skills, resources and insight that youth workers draw on in their everyday work. In doing so, the book hopes to illuminate what tends to be obscured by the phrase 'the youth work approach' and show how youth workers operate with sometimes very challenging young people in often difficult circumstances.

All these titles are available  
**ONLOAN - not for sale -**  
to Irish Youth Work Centre members.

For further information or to request any  
of these titles please contact:

Gina Halpin / Breege Kiernan  
Irish Youth Work Centre  
20 Lower Dominick Street  
Dublin 1

Tel: 01-8584500  
Fax: 01-8724183

Email: [ghalpin@youthworkireland.ie](mailto:ghalpin@youthworkireland.ie) /  
[bkiernan@youthworkireland.ie](mailto:bkiernan@youthworkireland.ie)

Website: [www.iywc.com](http://www.iywc.com)



# Round Up

## Growing Up in Ireland 2009 Research Conference

The **Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI)** and **Trinity College Dublin** will host the inaugural Growing Up in Ireland Research Conference in Dublin on 7th December 2009. Growing Up in Ireland is the only nationally representative longitudinal study of children in Ireland. It follows the progress of almost 20,000 children — a cohort of 8,500 9-year-olds and a cohort of 11,000 9-month-olds. It will provide the basis for research and policy formation for many years to come.

Mr. Barry Andrews T.D., Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, will open the conference with the official launch of the study's first main report on 9-year-old children..

The aim of this one-day conference is to:

**Present** research findings from the study.

**Examine** the contribution of the study to our understanding of children and childhood

**Consider** the study's research and policy potential

Keynote speakers include Dr. Satya Brink (HRSDC), Professor John Bynner (Prof. of Social Sciences in Education - London Institute of Education), Prof. Sir Michael Rutter (Institute of Psychiatry, Kings College, London)

**A conference brochure and registration form will be distributed in the coming weeks.**

**All enquiries to Claire Delaney,**

**Growing Up in Ireland,**

**Tel: 01-8632053**

**Email: [claire.delaney@esri.ie](mailto:claire.delaney@esri.ie)**



## Third Level Access Scheme extends to all secondary schools

The **Higher Education Access Route (HEAR)** is being extended by the seven universities, DIT and the seven colleges of education from 305 to



all 730 secondary schools in Ireland. The scheme will broaden access opportunities to third level education for school leavers from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds across the country. This expansion of the scheme, which was primarily reserved for students from DEIS schools, recognises that educational disadvantage affects a cross section of all communities and is not confined to clearly identifiable areas or regions.

Under the Higher Education Access Route, participating colleges are allocating a quota of places on a reduced points basis, across all academic areas. Students who secure one of these places will be offered a range of academic and personal supports while at college. Since the inception of the access admissions scheme a decade ago the number of students who have entered college through the Higher Education Access Route has grown steadily from 175 in 2000 to 682 in 2009.

For the first time, school leavers who wish to apply for the scheme can do so online as part of the CAO application process. Applications open from 1st November 2009 onwards. A dedicated website [www.accesscollege.ie](http://www.accesscollege.ie) has also been developed to provide full details of the scheme and assist students in making their application.

**For further information contact:**

**Lia O'Sullivan**

**Communications Manager  
Irish Universities Association**

**Tel: 01-6764948, 085 7141414**

**Email: [lia.osullivan@iua.ie](mailto:lia.osullivan@iua.ie)**

# Notice Board

## Planning & Evaluation in Youth Work

**Date:** Thursday 12th November 2009

**Venue:** Youth Work Ireland Offices, Dublin 1

**Cost:** €75.00 (includes course materials & lunch)

**Facilitator:** Siobhán McGrory

### Course Content:

This workshop aims to examine the rationale and purpose for planning and evaluation of Youth Work and to provide participants with a range of practical models and approaches for ensuring effective planning and evaluation in Youth Work Practice.

The **morning session** will focus on Planning and address the following issues:

- Youth Work planning – purpose and rationale.
- Planning as a core component of effective programme management.
- The links between needs assessment and project planning.
- Types of planning - strategic, tactical, recurrent, project, operational, day-to-day and contingency planning.
- Planning Models and Approaches – introducing a sample of planning models and approaches that can be practically applied to effective Youth Work practice.
- How to develop a comprehensive programme/project plan in Youth Work – applying a Logic Model Approach.

The **afternoon session** will focus on Evaluation and address the following issues:

- Evaluation in Youth Work – rationale and purpose.
- What are we evaluating in Youth Work – outputs or outcomes?
- Benefits of effective evaluation – for whom?
- Stakeholder Analysis.
- Types of evaluation in Youth Work.
- Creating an effective evaluation framework – steps in the process.
- Participatory Evaluation (PE).

- Evaluation – a Force Field Analysis (supports, barriers and ways to overcome barriers to evaluation of Youth Work).
- Guiding principles in conducting evaluations.

For further details on this course and to reserve a place, please contact:

Irish Youth Work Centre  
20 Lower Dominick Street  
Dublin 1

Tel: 01-8584500

Fax: 01-8724183

Email: [ghalpin@youthworkireland.ie](mailto:ghalpin@youthworkireland.ie)

Website: [www.iywc.com](http://www.iywc.com)

Booking forms can be downloaded from  
<http://www.iywc.com/events.htm>

## Sustain it!

### Creating Sustainable Organisations: Practical Solutions for the Youth Sector

**Date:** November 2009

**Venue:** Dublin

### Course Content:

This innovative course is aimed at people looking to introduce the principles of sustainable development and education for sustainable development into their organisations, particularly in the youth sector.

### Learning Outcomes - by the end of the course the participants will:

- Be aware of concepts and principles related to sustainable development & education for sustainable development.
- Develop an understanding of a whole organisation approach to sustainability.
- Be able to apply a sustainability framework.
- Be confident in applying a sustainability diagnostic tool.

## Youth Work and Sustainability

**Date:** Friday 27th November 2009

**Venue:** Galway

### Course Content:

One-day training for youth workers provides an in-depth look at Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), a new vision of education that empowers young people to create a sustainable future.

By the end of the training participants should:

- Understand concepts and principles related to Sustainable Development and Education for Sustainable Development.
- Be aware of values inherent to sustainable Development.
- Develop a knowledge of environmental & global issues.
- Be able to access further resources to support the use of ESD methods in youth work.

For further details on all these course and a breakdown of fees please contact:

Graham Clarke  
Eco Unesco  
26 Clare Street  
Dublin 2  
Tel: 01-6625491  
Email: ysd@ecounesco.ie  
www.ecounesco.ie



## Enhancing Adolescence

**Date:** Tuesday 10th / Wednesday 11th November

**Venue:** Cork

### Course Content:

Two-day course exploring issues of self-esteem and health behaviours in adolescence. It will look at the nature of adolescence and assist in identifying the importance of self-esteem and social skills as a foundation for healthier lifestyles.

### Learning Outcomes

- To examine adolescence in relation to pos-

itive and negative health behaviours.

- To develop an understanding of the nature and importance of self-esteem.
- To identify the factors which impact positively and negatively on self-esteem in young people.
- To explore methodologies for facilitating young people to develop effective decision making skills and coping strategies.

The course is targeted at anyone working with young people in a youth work, out-of-school or non-formal education setting.

## Lets Beat Bullying - An Organisational Approach for the Youth Work Sector

**Date:** Wednesday 18th November 2009

**Venue:** Sligo

### Course Content:

The course will focus on bullying in its widest sense and enable participants to examine an organisational response to the issue of bullying.

### Learning Outcomes:

- To define what bullying is and what bullying is not.
- To develop an understanding of the key concepts and definitions relevant to the issue of bullying.
- To develop and understand the nature of bullying and its effects.
- To explore good practice for anti-bullying education programmes.

Course is targeted at decision makers in organisations who want to develop anti-bullying work and structures within their organisations; and/or workers working directly with young people in youth work or non-formal education.

For further information on these courses  
please contact:

NYCI  
3 Montague Street  
Dublin 2  
Tel: 01-4784122  
Email: info@nyci.ie  
www.nycitraining.org





Youth Work Ireland's National Conference 2009

# ‘Claiming Our Space’

Youth work's contribution to an integrated  
approach to meeting the needs of young people

**Date:** Tuesday 24th November 2009

**Venue:** Dublin Castle

A Youth Work Ireland conference aimed at those who work with young people in the fields of health, education and justice.

The conference will focus on the policy and practice of an integrated approach to working with young people.

**Keynote speakers will include:**

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Barry Andrews T.D.

Dr. John Pinkerton (Queens University, Belfast)

Ms. Sylva Langford (OMCYA)

Ms. Anastasia Crickley (NUI Maynooth)

Dr. Maurice Devlin (NUI Maynooth)

Mr Denis Leamy (Pobal)

Mr Sean Redmond (Irish Youth Justice Service)

Mr Eddie Ward (National Education and Welfare Board)

**Cost: €60.00**  
(€35.00 - unwaged)

Booking forms can be downloaded from the Youth Work Ireland website at  
[www.youthworkireland.ie](http://www.youthworkireland.ie) or tel: 01-8584500



Youth Work Ireland