



Youth Work Ireland

Press Release
Youth Work Ireland
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“Government has a Major Role in Responding to Mental Health and Other Issues for Teens” says Leading Youth Organisation in Response to Latest Growing Up In Ireland Survey

Youth Work Ireland has said that improved efforts and joined up work by Government is needed to address the ongoing issues of mental health highlighted in the latest Growing up in Ireland Survey. The organisation is particularly concerned at the level of mental health issues reported and the numbers reporting poorer mental health during the pandemic and the disruption to young adults’ employment, education and day-to-day activities. The group believes the Government needs to redouble its efforts to deliver on its substance misuse policies and existing mental health commitments set out in the Vision for Change and the Youth Mental Health Strategies. The youth organisation also highlighted the potential significant long-term impact of Covid 19 on young people after schools and educational establishments closed and economic opportunities denied in traditional service jobs.

“The latest Growing up in Ireland Survey data presents a familiar picture to some with the more worrying findings particularly in the areas of mental health. It is also fair to assume that the Covid 19 pandemic will have longer term impacts due to the significant dislocation it has created in young people’s lives. In both the areas of mental health and substance misuse, the Government has key policies, but they have not been delivered in an optimum way and today’s data needs to serve as another reminder of the need to double down on efforts in these areas” Said Michael Mc Loughlin of Youth Work Ireland

“At the end of August 2021, there were 2,384 children awaiting CAMHS services with 170 of those waiting more than a year to be seen. This is the main community response to youth mental health issues and the alternative to institutional settings. Services are still mainly 9-5, Monday to Friday despite commitments made. These issues have been emphasized again and again by those working in the field. In the wake of Covid and recent revelations the Government must ensure the proper support and funding for CAMHS and immediately move to fill the current vacant posts. While there was some improvement recently the Government’s substance misuse policy and specifically its approach to the regulation of alcohol have been criticised by many groups for their slow implementation. These services, which focus on prevention, assessment, and detection for children in difficulty, are considered vital in providing effective early intervention. So, in the key areas of concern outlined in the Growing up in Ireland Survey there are real and tangible policy actions that a new Government can prioritise” Mr Mc Loughlin concluded

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Contact: Michael Mc Loughlin 087 6677499