



Youth Work Ireland

Press Release
Youth Work Ireland
Tuesday August 23rd

‘Young people living in Direct Provision Centres can no longer wait to have their rights affirmed, vindicated and upheld’ Says Leading Youth Organisation

Young people supported by Youth Work Ireland’s membership and going through the asylum process, say there is no time to wait to have their rights vindicated - supports are needed now! This is the message of a short film **Waiting, Waiting, Waiting** launched today in the Irish Film Institute by Youth Work and former Miss Ireland Pamela Uba.

The 10-minute film was made with the support of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission and features 10 young people aged 14 and 24 from **County Longford Youth Services, Limerick Youth Services and CDYS Youth Work Ireland**, who have lived, or are living in Direct Provision Centres. The film threads multiple voices from varying perspectives together, to express the overarching themes of frustration, helplessness and hope.

The organisation has today also launched a new youth work resource, to support young people to become empowered and integrated in Irish society. The resource – **Youth Work with Young People in Direct Provision and those Seeking Asylum - Practice Guidelines to Support Youth Workers** – is a ‘*how to*’ for youth workers to support their work to engage and work with young people seeking asylum and their families. Youth workers have played a key role in supporting young people seeking asylum for many years, with much of this work under funded and falling outside the remit of traditional youth work. In many cases youth workers have become the main point of contact, support, family and friend to the young person who themselves may be dealing with trauma and have no one to support or care for them.

The resource, developed by the everyday experiences of youth workers, will help build the knowledge, skills and capacity of youth workers and clearly demonstrates how youth work practices and processes can be applied easily and effectively to working with young people from different cultures, religions and backgrounds

Speaking at the launch Minister of State at the Department of Rural and Community Development Joe O’Brien, said

“This is a vital piece of work and a poignant and timely reminder that we need to renew our collective focus on supporting people living in Direct Provision, particularly young people, while we work towards ending Direct Provision completely.”

Speaking at the launch Gina Halpin, Head of Information and Inclusion at Youth Work Ireland, who led this project, said

“Young people grow up quickly and the opportunity for them to build a future is brief. There is no time to wait to begin the process of securing their rights, and becoming fully part of Irish society. That’s the message of this film and that’s why Youth Work Ireland is investing in developing effective supports for young people in the asylum-seeking process through our new youth work practice resource and programme of work. What’s needed now is for the state to invest in youth work for asylum seeking young people in line with their own recommendations and ultimately to end the practice of direct provision in Ireland immediately.”

Ends

Notes to Editor

Youth representatives, CEO of Youth Work Ireland, Dr Patrick Burke, are available for interviews. To arrange an interview, please contact:

Gina Halpin, Youth Work Ireland | 087 682 8045 or ghalpin@youthworkireland.ie

[The film and resource will be available from www.youthworkireland.ie on August 23rd](http://www.youthworkireland.ie)

About Youth Work Ireland

Youth Work Ireland is the largest youth organisation in Ireland. We are made up of 20 Member Youth Services and a national office. We support our members to deliver an Integrated Youth Services Model to young people in their communities. This means that young people around Ireland can avail of a whole range of services and supports if and when they need them.

We actively engage with over 76,000 young people every week. Over the years we have developed highly innovative services, supports and programmes for young people between the ages of 10-25 years, including mental health supports, resilience building, anxiety programmes, drug and alcohol supports, LGBT+ youth work, club development, employability programmes, counselling services, rural outreach, and fun safe spaces for young people to gather. Our Vision is an Ireland of equality, access and participation for all young people; and our mission is to work together with our Member Youth Services to inspire, educate and empower all young people.

About Pamela Uba

Pamela Uba is an Irish medical scientist and model. She was born in South Africa to Nigerian parents and moved with her family to Ireland when she was 8 years old. Pamela spent 10 years living in Direct Provision and in 2021 Pamela won the Miss Ireland competition and went on to represent Ireland in the Miss World 2021 beauty pageant.

Pamela is a passionate advocate for children and young people in Direct Provision and has raised money for educational supports.

Youth Work Ireland Member Youth Services Include

Canal Communities Regional Youth Service
Carlow Regional Youth Service
CDYS Youth Work Ireland
Clare Youth Service
Donegal Youth Service
FDYS
In Sync Youth and Family Services
KDYS
Limerick Youth Service
Ossory Youth

Waterford & South Tipperary Community Youth Service
Youth Work Ireland Cavan/Monaghan
Youth Work Ireland County Longford
Youth Work Ireland Galway
Youth Work Ireland Laois
Youth Work Ireland Louth
Youth Work Ireland Meath
Youth Work Ireland Midlands
Youth Work Ireland North Connaught
Youth Work Ireland Tipperary