

*Creating a place of hope, where young people's dreams are realised*

# **Annual Report**

## **2011**

## **Introduction**

YPAR (Young People at Risk) is an interagency initiative in the North Inner City that works to support, facilitate and implement an integrated approach to meeting the needs of young people at risk. YPAR defines a young person at risk as a child/young person aged 0 to 18 years experiencing significant personal, family, educational or social problems. Numerous government reports and policy documents over the last few years have identified interagency working as a crucial element in improving the quality of services delivered to young people at risk and YPAR provides a model of how this policy commitment can be delivered at a local community level.

Dublin's North Inner City is a community with a long history of social and economic disadvantage but also with a strong history of community responses to this disadvantage. This community response has been based on strong local leadership but has also involved asking the state to be involved as partners with the community. The resulting mix and blend of community, voluntary and statutory provision provides an extraordinary level of knowledge, expertise, creativity and experience to draw on. YPAR has grown from and is built on this community history.

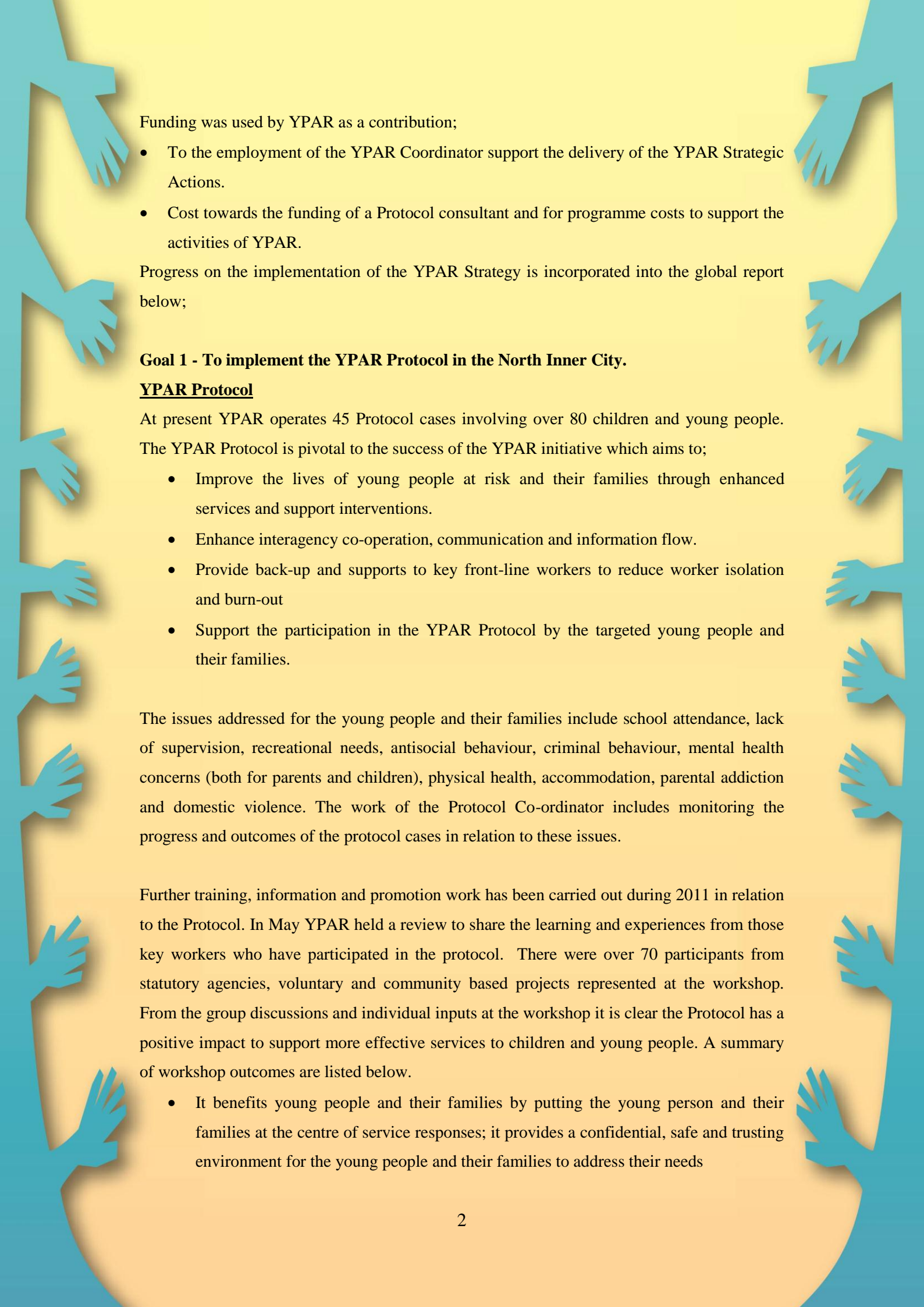
YPAR is run by an interagency Steering Group, which is made up of representatives from the statutory, voluntary and community sectors:

HSE, Dublin City Council, an Garda Síochána, Probation Service, CDYSB, National Education Welfare Board, Irish Youth Foundation, Neighbourhood Youth Project 1, Neighbourhood Youth Project 2, Community After Schools Project (CASPr), Wexford Centre, Inner City Renewal Group, Inner City Organisations Network, Ozanam House Resource Centre, Lourdes Youth and Community Services, Hill St. FRC

The YPAR Strategic Plan 2009-2013 sets out four strategic goals:

- 1. To implement the YPAR Protocol in the North Inner City.**
- 2. To support and develop young people's participation in YPAR and YEPP.**
- 3. To inform service delivery and shape policy development.**
- 4. To ensure that structures and organisation operate in an efficient manner.**

The HSE, Probation Services, City of Dublin Youth Services Board, provided funding to YPAR (through ICON- the Inner City Organisations Network), to support the work of YPAR. by support the employment of a Coordinator.

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Funding was used by YPAR as a contribution;

- To the employment of the YPAR Coordinator support the delivery of the YPAR Strategic Actions.
- Cost towards the funding of a Protocol consultant and for programme costs to support the activities of YPAR.

Progress on the implementation of the YPAR Strategy is incorporated into the global report below;

### **Goal 1 - To implement the YPAR Protocol in the North Inner City.**

#### **YPAR Protocol**

At present YPAR operates 45 Protocol cases involving over 80 children and young people.

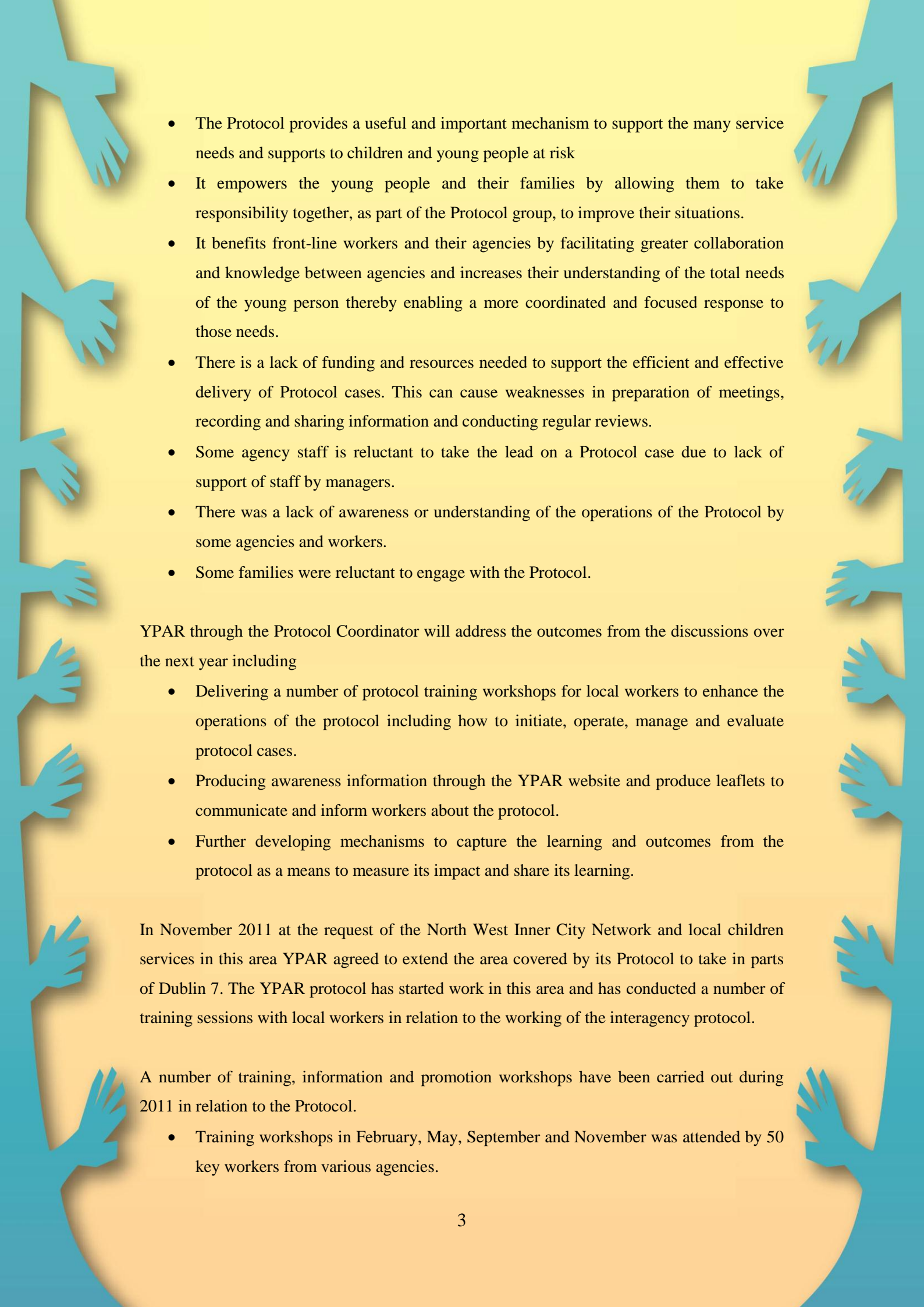
The YPAR Protocol is pivotal to the success of the YPAR initiative which aims to;

- Improve the lives of young people at risk and their families through enhanced services and support interventions.
- Enhance interagency co-operation, communication and information flow.
- Provide back-up and supports to key front-line workers to reduce worker isolation and burn-out
- Support the participation in the YPAR Protocol by the targeted young people and their families.

The issues addressed for the young people and their families include school attendance, lack of supervision, recreational needs, antisocial behaviour, criminal behaviour, mental health concerns (both for parents and children), physical health, accommodation, parental addiction and domestic violence. The work of the Protocol Co-ordinator includes monitoring the progress and outcomes of the protocol cases in relation to these issues.

Further training, information and promotion work has been carried out during 2011 in relation to the Protocol. In May YPAR held a review to share the learning and experiences from those key workers who have participated in the protocol. There were over 70 participants from statutory agencies, voluntary and community based projects represented at the workshop. From the group discussions and individual inputs at the workshop it is clear the Protocol has a positive impact to support more effective services to children and young people. A summary of workshop outcomes are listed below.

- It benefits young people and their families by putting the young person and their families at the centre of service responses; it provides a confidential, safe and trusting environment for the young people and their families to address their needs

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- The Protocol provides a useful and important mechanism to support the many service needs and supports to children and young people at risk
  - It empowers the young people and their families by allowing them to take responsibility together, as part of the Protocol group, to improve their situations.
  - It benefits front-line workers and their agencies by facilitating greater collaboration and knowledge between agencies and increases their understanding of the total needs of the young person thereby enabling a more coordinated and focused response to those needs.
  - There is a lack of funding and resources needed to support the efficient and effective delivery of Protocol cases. This can cause weaknesses in preparation of meetings, recording and sharing information and conducting regular reviews.
  - Some agency staff is reluctant to take the lead on a Protocol case due to lack of support of staff by managers.
  - There was a lack of awareness or understanding of the operations of the Protocol by some agencies and workers.
  - Some families were reluctant to engage with the Protocol.

YPAR through the Protocol Coordinator will address the outcomes from the discussions over the next year including

- Delivering a number of protocol training workshops for local workers to enhance the operations of the protocol including how to initiate, operate, manage and evaluate protocol cases.
- Producing awareness information through the YPAR website and produce leaflets to communicate and inform workers about the protocol.
- Further developing mechanisms to capture the learning and outcomes from the protocol as a means to measure its impact and share its learning.

In November 2011 at the request of the North West Inner City Network and local children services in this area YPAR agreed to extend the area covered by its Protocol to take in parts of Dublin 7. The YPAR protocol has started work in this area and has conducted a number of training sessions with local workers in relation to the working of the interagency protocol.

A number of training, information and promotion workshops have been carried out during 2011 in relation to the Protocol.

- Training workshops in February, May, September and November was attended by 50 key workers from various agencies.



- A workshop on Youth Justice was delivered in May and was attended by 150 people including residents and key workers from various agencies.

**Other on-going work includes**

- Supporting links between agencies and groups through walking tours of services for new workers and face to face meetings.
- Advice and information on services
- Peer Support/Community of Learning for key workers.
- Support outreach of Protocol to other areas North Wall and North West Inner City.
- On-going support to YPAR working groups on the delivery of the YPAR Protocol.

A framework for on-going evaluation of the Protocol has been developed and implemented by the Protocol Co-ordinator. This enables the outcomes of using the Protocol to be recorded and tracked at a number of levels: engagement of services, engagement of young people, engagement of families, immediate outcomes for the young person in relation to changes in circumstances and changes in behaviour. Work is on-going in relation to developing an effective monitoring tool to facilitate long-term evaluation of outcomes for the young people and their families.

**Strengthening Families**

Following on from the successful delivery of the YPAR Strengthening Families Programme in the North Inner City in 2010 YPAR intended to deliver the programme again in early 2012 with funding from the Probation Services and Croke Park Community Fund. There is quite a lot of preparation work for this programme which will be undertaken over the final three months of 2011. The programme works with young people and families and is based on interagency working.

**Goal 2 - to support and develop young people's participation in YPAR and YEPP**

**Youth Forum North Inner City**

YPAR is currently working in collaboration with NYP2 (Neighbourhood Youth Project 2) to develop a North Inner City Youth Forum. To date a number of development meetings have taken place which involved the participation of over 50 young people and representatives from four of the local youth services. The Forum will hold a number of meetings in October 2012 to further develop youth participating and a structure to support the vision, purpose, structure and ground rules to inform and govern the work of the Forum. It is hoped that the Youth Forum will be launched in March 2011.

### **Youth Empowerment Participation Programme (YEPP)**

On the 30th June 2011, after 10 years YEPP as a foundation-led programme came to an end. YPAR participated in several YEPP transnational activities over this period and it provided young people from the North Inner City with the opportunity to travel abroad and engage with young people from other countries and cultures. While unfortunately due to capacity difficulties (change of YPAR Coordinator and reduction of Coordinator to Part-time) YPAR has not participated in YEPP activities as much as they would have liked in 2011. YEPP is now involved in a consultation transition period which it is hoped will be completed by December 2011. YPAR recognises the importance of networking on a local, regional, national and international level and intends to continue its participation in YEPP and ensure there is an YPAR input into the future strategic direction and its new model of local ownership operating structure and transnational support for youth and community empowerment. YPAR intends to participate in the 5th YEPP Community Conference and Youth Meeting “10 Years of YEPP” in Görlitz (Germany) / Zgorzelec (Poland) from 14th – 18th November 2011.

### **Youth Bank**

The Youth Bank is an initiative that gives young people a formal role in grant-giving to other young people in their community, based on their shared understanding of the needs of young people in the area. The NIC Youth Bank is part of the IYF national network of Youth Banks and on-going support is provided through IYF. The NIC Youth Bank was set up following participation by 6 young people in training in Poland in August 2009. NIC Youth bank gave out 8 grants to local people in 2011 these included;

- Environmental Programmes
- Sports initiatives
- Arts groups
- Community Radio
- Healthy Living and Nutrition initiatives

The Youth Bank is currently reviewing its structures and looking for more young people to get involved in the committee.

### **Goal 3 - To inform service delivery and shape policy development.**

Throughout 2010 and 2011 YPAR has met with key policymakers and agencies to discuss how interagency working can be facilitated and supported both at a practical and a policy level. Meetings took place with the following:

- Meeting with the Office of Minister at the Department of Children
- Submission to the Department of Children on the work and model of YPAR
- Submission to the Department of Education and Skills on the work and model of YPAR
- Participating in Dublin City Children's Services Committee
- YPAR Participates in the North City Child Protection Committee.
- Meeting with Centre for Effective Services – Policy and Practice Advisers to Irish Government on Children Services.
- Meeting with senior statutory officials in HSE and Garda Siochana.
- On-going meetings and collaboration with statutory services providers.

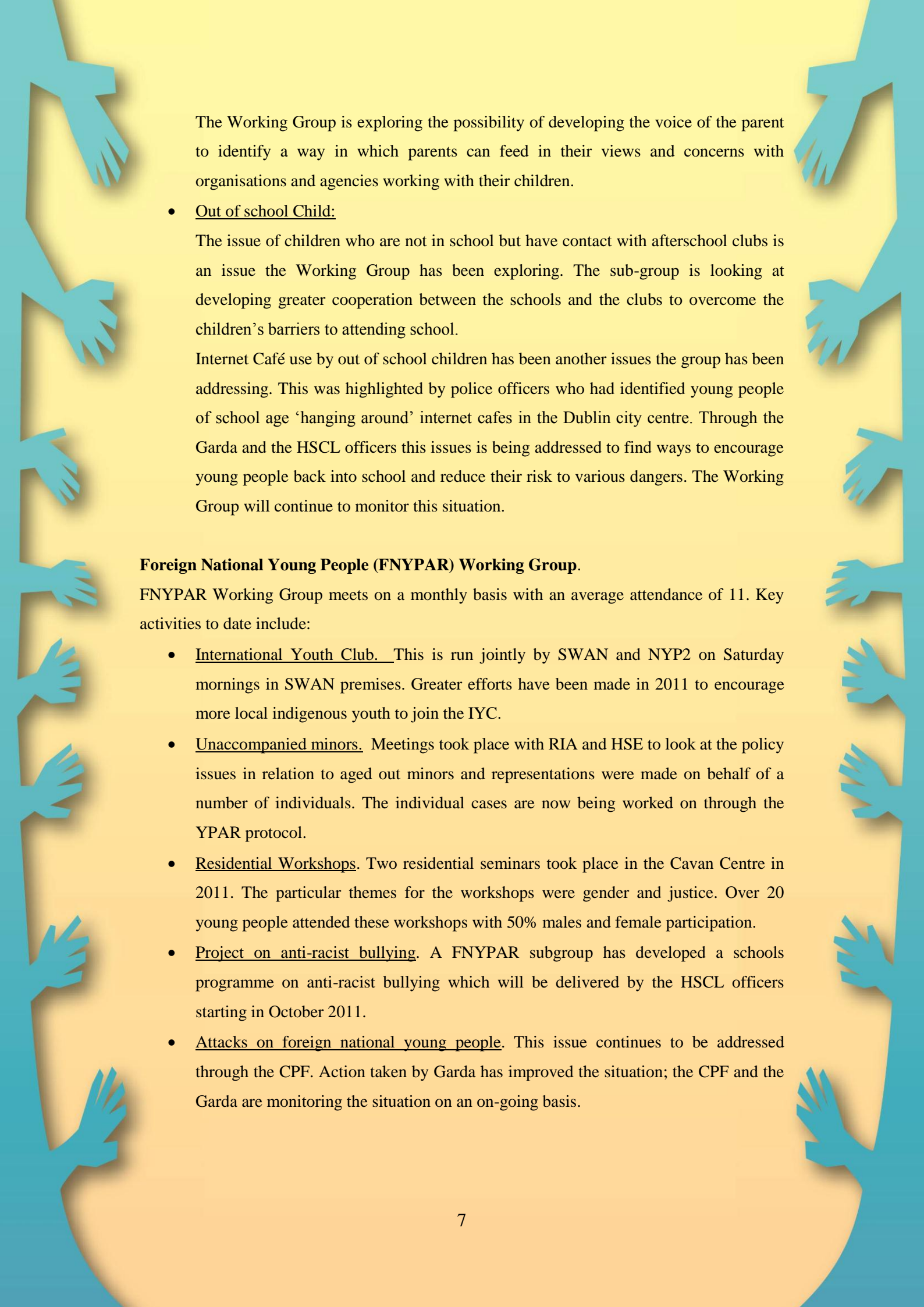
**Goal 4 - to ensure that structures and organisation operate in an efficient manner.**

**5 to 12 Working Group.**

The 5 to 12 Working Group meets on a monthly basis with an average attendance of 12. Key activities to date include:

- Interagency discos. 4 groups have been involved (Ozanam House, NYPI, CASPr, Foundations) and 3 discos have taken place in the last year. Ballybough Community Centre and Hill St. FRC are also becoming involved in running the discos.
- Coordination of Summer Projects. Each year the 5-12 Working group develops a database of summer projects to coordinate the summer project activities. This information is then shared with other projects to support a staggering of projects to enable young people access maximum activities. It also informs other projects and parents of the dates, types of activities, cost and accessibility of the various activities. The Working Group also organises interagency summer activities such as Swimming Galas and Football Blitz.
- "Voice of the Child". Work has continued to engage children at primary school age. Three sessions have taken place in collaboration with the schools in 2011. The work will focus on the issues identified by the children in relation to life in their communities.
- Safety in parks and play areas. This is an on-going issue that is being monitored by the Working Group. This emerged from the concern of children not feeling safe in their play areas. This work is coordinated through the HSCL Local Education Committee. An initiative has been taken by DCC, in partnership with the Gardai, to put up new signage in the parks which will include Garda and DCC phone numbers for immediate contact. The effectiveness of this measure will be kept under review.
- Voice of the Parents



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The Working Group is exploring the possibility of developing the voice of the parent to identify a way in which parents can feed in their views and concerns with organisations and agencies working with their children.

- Out of school Child:

The issue of children who are not in school but have contact with afterschool clubs is an issue the Working Group has been exploring. The sub-group is looking at developing greater cooperation between the schools and the clubs to overcome the children's barriers to attending school.


Internet Café use by out of school children has been another issues the group has been addressing. This was highlighted by police officers who had identified young people of school age 'hanging around' internet cafes in the Dublin city centre. Through the Garda and the HSCL officers this issues is being addressed to find ways to encourage young people back into school and reduce their risk to various dangers. The Working Group will continue to monitor this situation.

### **Foreign National Young People (FNYPAR) Working Group.**

FNYPAR Working Group meets on a monthly basis with an average attendance of 11. Key activities to date include:

- International Youth Club. This is run jointly by SWAN and NYP2 on Saturday mornings in SWAN premises. Greater efforts have been made in 2011 to encourage more local indigenous youth to join the IYC.
- Unaccompanied minors. Meetings took place with RIA and HSE to look at the policy issues in relation to aged out minors and representations were made on behalf of a number of individuals. The individual cases are now being worked on through the YPAR protocol.
- Residential Workshops. Two residential seminars took place in the Cavan Centre in 2011. The particular themes for the workshops were gender and justice. Over 20 young people attended these workshops with 50% males and female participation.
- Project on anti-racist bullying. A FNYPAR subgroup has developed a schools programme on anti-racist bullying which will be delivered by the HSCL officers starting in October 2011.
- Attacks on foreign national young people. This issue continues to be addressed through the CPF. Action taken by Garda has improved the situation; the CPF and the Garda are monitoring the situation on an on-going basis.



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- FNYPAR Conference. The group is planning a Conference in November 2011. The conference which will be opened by the Minister of Children will explore policy and practice of health, education and justice for young foreign nationals.

### **0 to 5 Working Group.**

This working group was reconvened in November and has identified some initial tasks to be addressed in early 2011

- Carry out training with staff of 0-5 services on the use of the protocol
- Identify and link into existing networking structures for 0-5 services in the area
- Explore the possibility of the schools having a protocol/mechanism for identifying children from the 3-6 age groups who may be at risk and share this information with relevant stakeholders.
- Develop a transition report mechanism by pre-schools to provide child development/progression information to primary schools to aid the school identify issues for early intervention and supports.

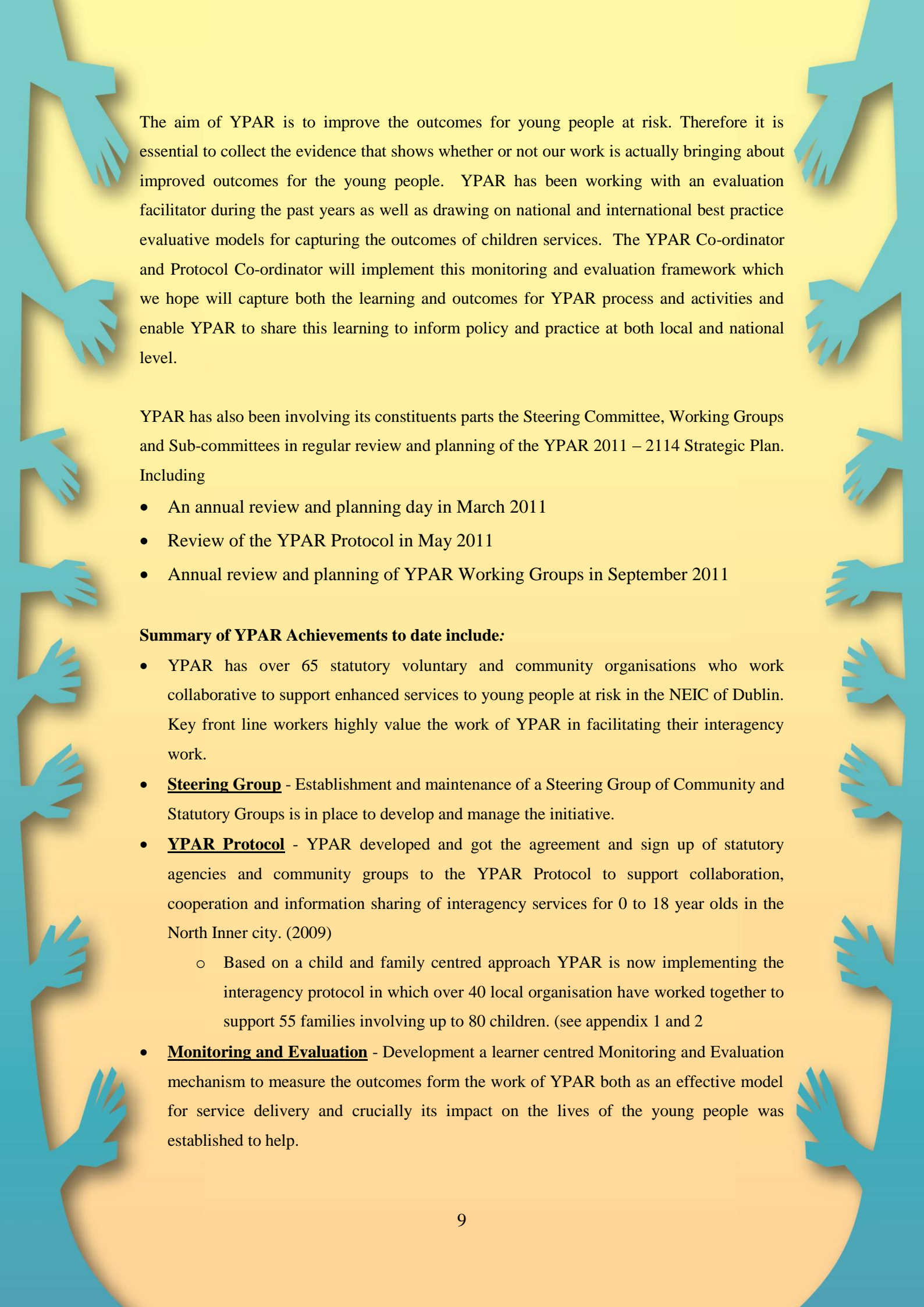
### **Safer Streets Working Group**

Following the work carried out by CDYSB on the Safer Streets Initiative, a number of actions were identified by CDYSB which would be appropriate to the brief of YPAR. A number of agreed actions were identified and have been substantially progressed in 2011. These include;

- Youth Participation; being progressed through the Youth Forum.
- Youth bank/advocacy work; being progressed through the Youth Bank Committee with the guidance and support of the YPAR staff.
- Development of a YPAR Website and social media; Website went live in October 2011 [www.ypar.ie](http://www.ypar.ie), further work will developed on the development of social networking links.
- Residential Workshops for the 'hard to reach'; there has been a number of residential collaborations with the NYPs and local youth projects in 2011 targeting this group.

### **Developing and implementing an evaluation framework.**

As part of YPAR's person centred and learner centred approach to capturing the positive or negative outcomes of its approach, YPAR is exploring ways to involve young people and their families who are engaging in the YPAR Protocol to feedback their views and critical analysis of the strengths and weakness of the Protocol and the YPAR interagency model.



The aim of YPAR is to improve the outcomes for young people at risk. Therefore it is essential to collect the evidence that shows whether or not our work is actually bringing about improved outcomes for the young people. YPAR has been working with an evaluation facilitator during the past years as well as drawing on national and international best practice evaluative models for capturing the outcomes of children services. The YPAR Co-ordinator and Protocol Co-ordinator will implement this monitoring and evaluation framework which we hope will capture both the learning and outcomes for YPAR process and activities and enable YPAR to share this learning to inform policy and practice at both local and national level.

YPAR has also been involving its constituents parts the Steering Committee, Working Groups and Sub-committees in regular review and planning of the YPAR 2011 – 2014 Strategic Plan. Including

- An annual review and planning day in March 2011
- Review of the YPAR Protocol in May 2011
- Annual review and planning of YPAR Working Groups in September 2011

**Summary of YPAR Achievements to date include:**

- YPAR has over 65 statutory voluntary and community organisations who work collaborative to support enhanced services to young people at risk in the NEIC of Dublin. Key front line workers highly value the work of YPAR in facilitating their interagency work.
- **Steering Group** - Establishment and maintenance of a Steering Group of Community and Statutory Groups is in place to develop and manage the initiative.
- **YPAR Protocol** - YPAR developed and got the agreement and sign up of statutory agencies and community groups to the YPAR Protocol to support collaboration, cooperation and information sharing of interagency services for 0 to 18 year olds in the North Inner city. (2009)
  - Based on a child and family centred approach YPAR is now implementing the interagency protocol in which over 40 local organisation have worked together to support 55 families involving up to 80 children. (see appendix 1 and 2)
- **Monitoring and Evaluation** - Development a learner centred Monitoring and Evaluation mechanism to measure the outcomes form the work of YPAR both as an effective model for service delivery and crucially its impact on the lives of the young people was established to help.

- **Youth Forum** - The creation of a Youth Forum to provide the opportunity for young people to express their views on decisions that affect their lives.
- **Working Groups** - Local service providers and their agencies are actively engaged in Working Groups in addition to their own other duties and workloads
- **Training and Information Workshops** - Total of 250 front-line workers participated in YPAR review, planning, training and information workshops, including Child Protection, the role of the Gardai (JLO, Community Gardai and Child Protection Gardai, working effectively with parents, and training in the use of the YPAR Protocol.
- **Strengthening Families Programme** - The delivery of the Strengthening Families Programme to 10 local families. This programme is designed to allow parents and their children develop new, healthy parent/child communication skills that build up positive relationships
- **YPAR Directory** - A Resource and Service Mapping Directory of Children and Young people services in the NEIC Report is complete.
- **Database** - Developing a database of front line workers in the area identifying their specific skills and areas of expertise. This will work as a resource to families, young people, local projects and other statutory agencies.
- **Mapping Report** - Through the Mapping Report an Audit has identified a number of facilities and resources and their use, with a view to maximising their use and avoiding duplication.
- **Consultation Exercises** - Local community and neighbourhood youth projects deliver regular residential consultation exercises with young persons which constantly inform services providers of the current and emerging needs of young people.
- **Youth Events** - A number of collaborative Youth focussed Events have been held which include Graffiti, DJ-ing and an Intercultural Football event
- **YEPP** -Through involvement in the Youth Empowerment Partnership Programme a number of local Young people have attended a number of transnational events.
- **Youth Bank** - Providing administration and technical back up to support the delivery of the Dublin North Inner City Youth Bank which provides small-scale funding to local youth-led community initiatives.
- **Home School Community Liaison Clusters** have played an active part and essential role in YPAR ensuring the local schools have a formal mechanism to learn, share information and support early interventions for identified children at risk within the schools.

#### **Specific YPAR Protocol Outcomes in 2011**

- Effective and willing co-operation between services around individuals/families.



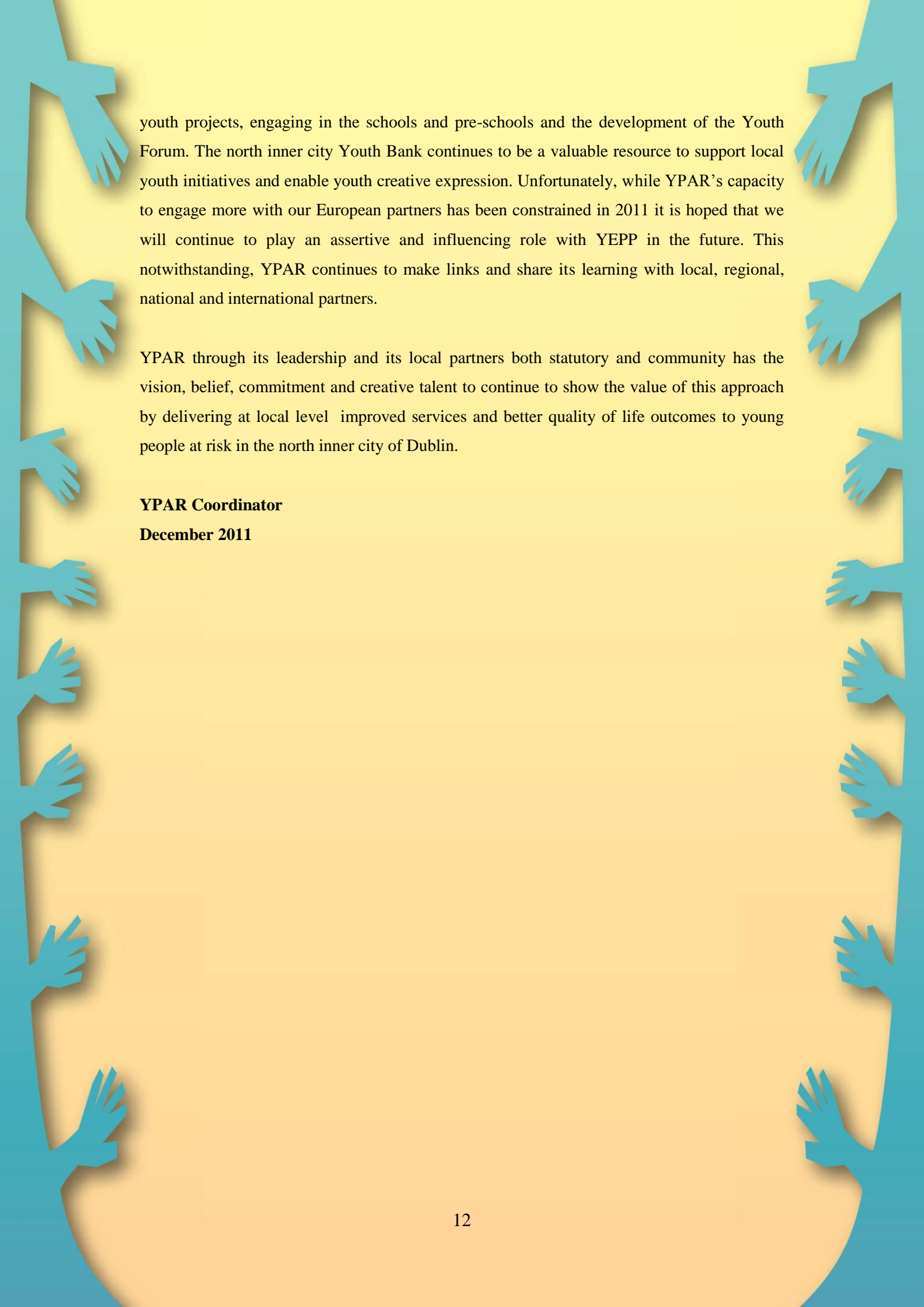
- More effective use of resources in supporting people through:
  - Sharing relevant information on needs and services
  - Reduced retelling of distressing life stories by young people and families.
  - Through the Protocol meeting, the relevant workers can discuss whatever issues are appropriate to the needs of the young person in the company of the parent or guardian, other workers and the young person if age allows, and this reduces the need for unnecessary home visits, often fruitless, and the need to ring each worker individually. All in a non-judgmental and non-disciplinary atmosphere
- Family Re-housed
- Family member offered supportive accommodation
- School attendance improved
- Parents and family being provided with on-going support
- Agencies agreed to become involved because of the Protocols criteria
- Support provided to families experiencing different types of loss
- Improved supervision by parents
- Co-operation between services around individuals and families
- Finance made available for home improvements
- Family availed of respite week
- Young person helped to postpone involvement in destructive behaviour
- Young person supported by school to continue in education
- Supportive information and resources shared between services and groups

### **Conclusion**

While YPAR has had reduced resources in 2011 which has resulted in a reduction in the working hours of its staff, YPAR has managed to consolidate its core work and even develop new initiatives by drawing on the generous and collaborative interagency support of statutory key workers and local community project staff. In 2011 the interagency protocol continues to bring together service providers, services users and community support organisations to develop a safe and confidential way of interagency working that enables multi-agency supports to address the service needs of vulnerable children and young people. Other interagency initiatives such as the Strengthening Families Programmes have also enabled YPAR to bring together agencies to develop tailored supports to families experiencing particular difficulties.

YPAR has also worked at a number of levels to support and develop youth and family participation through the YPAR Protocol, its Strengthening Families Programme, the local



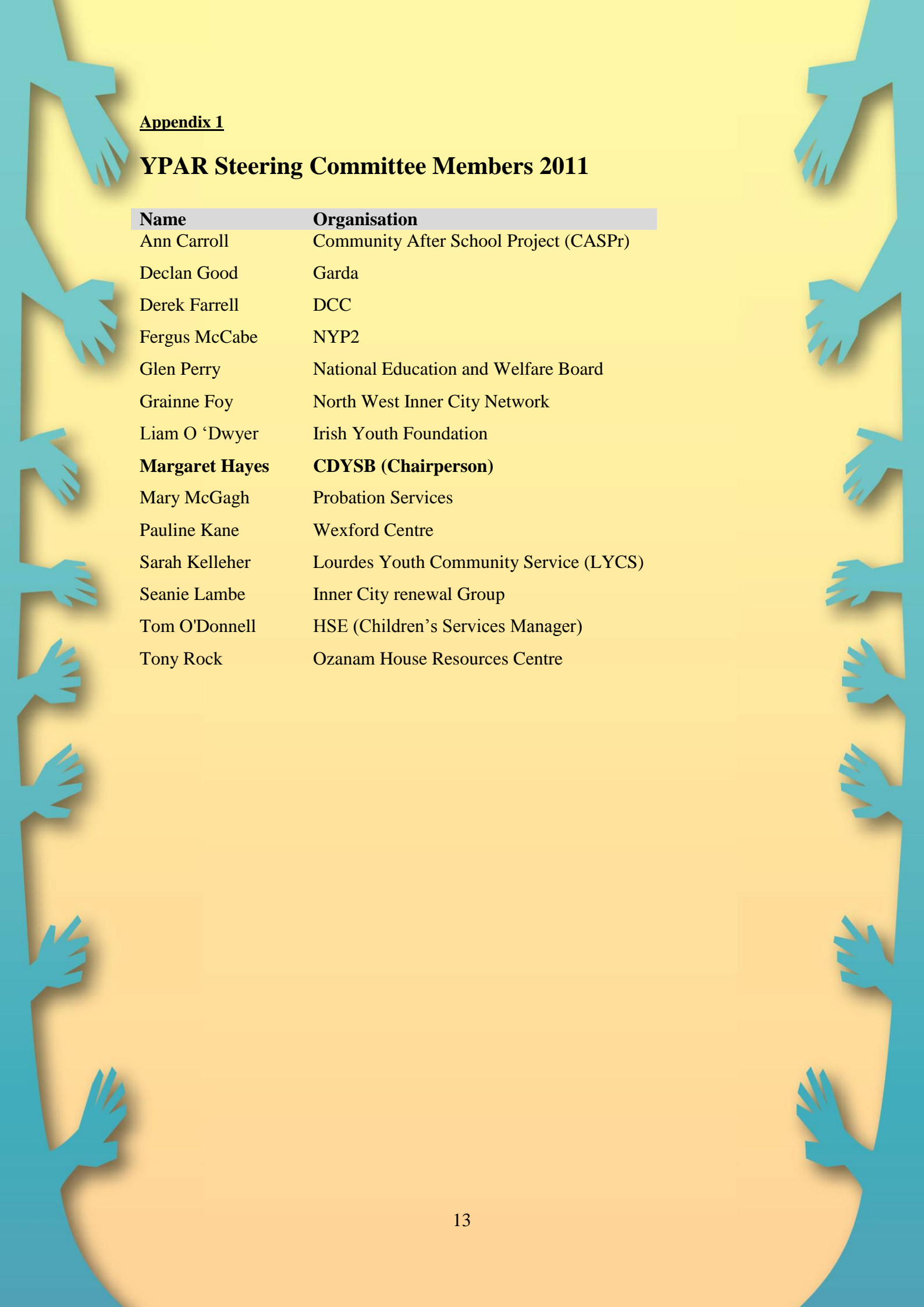


youth projects, engaging in the schools and pre-schools and the development of the Youth Forum. The north inner city Youth Bank continues to be a valuable resource to support local youth initiatives and enable youth creative expression. Unfortunately, while YPAR's capacity to engage more with our European partners has been constrained in 2011 it is hoped that we will continue to play an assertive and influencing role with YEPP in the future. This notwithstanding, YPAR continues to make links and share its learning with local, regional, national and international partners.

YPAR through its leadership and its local partners both statutory and community has the vision, belief, commitment and creative talent to continue to show the value of this approach by delivering at local level improved services and better quality of life outcomes to young people at risk in the north inner city of Dublin.

**YPAR Coordinator**

**December 2011**



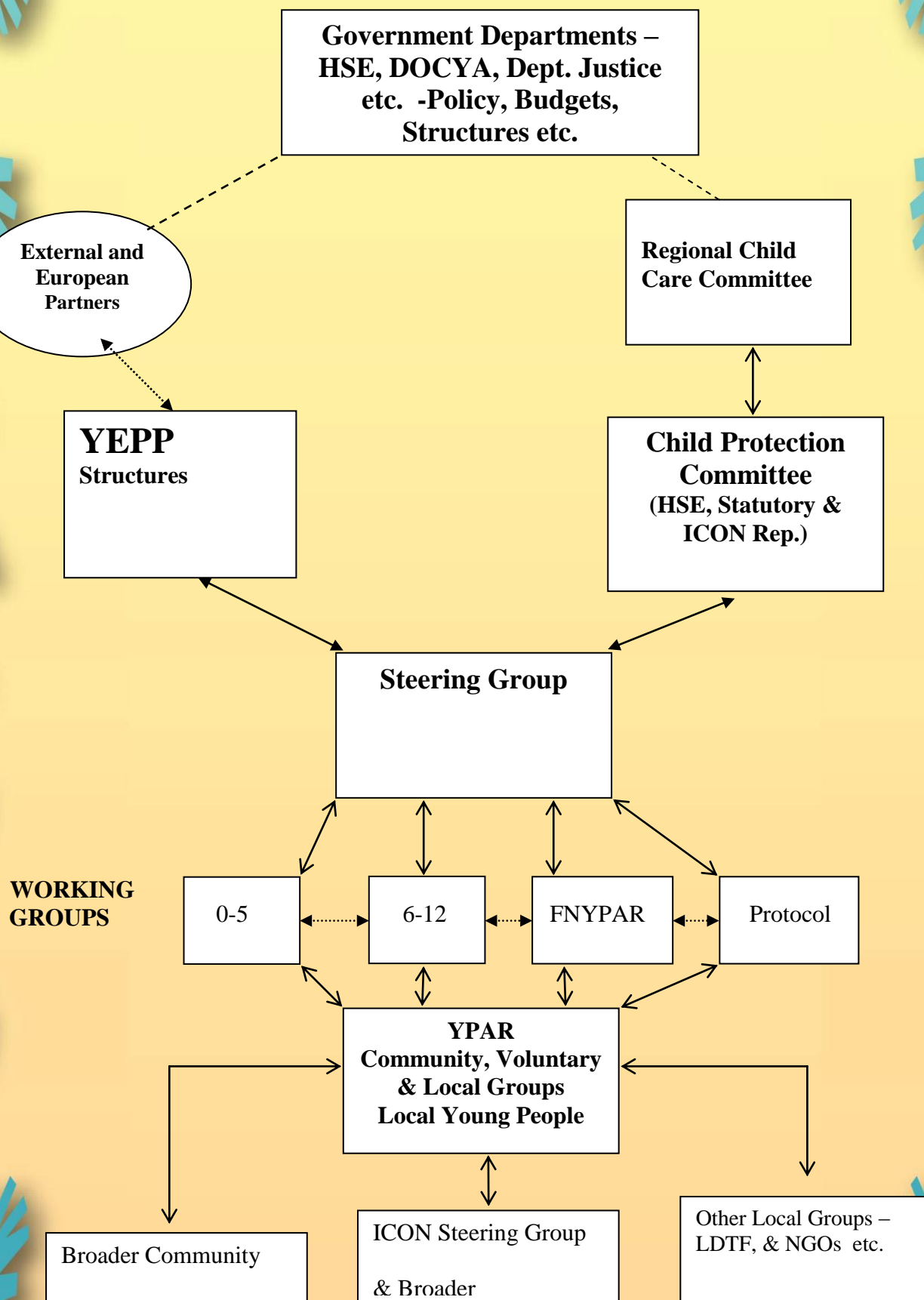
## Appendix 1

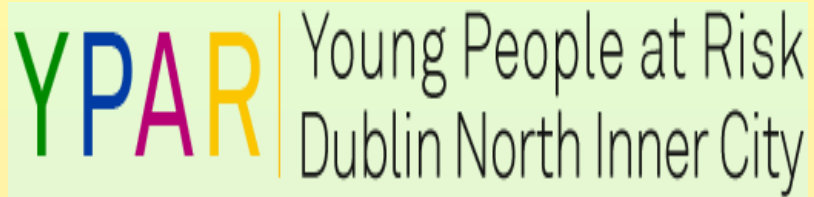
### **YPAR Steering Committee Members 2011**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Ann Carroll	Community After School Project (CASPr)
Declan Good	Garda
Derek Farrell	DCC
Fergus McCabe	NYP2
Glen Perry	National Education and Welfare Board
Grainne Foy	North West Inner City Network
Liam O 'Dwyer	Irish Youth Foundation
<b>Margaret Hayes</b>	<b>CDYSB (Chairperson)</b>
Mary McGagh	Probation Services
Pauline Kane	Wexford Centre
Sarah Kelleher	Lourdes Youth Community Service (LYCS)
Seanie Lambe	Inner City renewal Group
Tom O'Donnell	HSE (Children's Services Manager)
Tony Rock	Ozanam House Resources Centre

## Appendix 2

### YPAR STRUCTURES





**Contact Details:**

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