**YPAR 14s – 24s Hard to Reach Working Group Zoom Meeting Minutes**

**25th January 2022**

**In attendance:** Aoife O’Regan (Chairperson & SWAN), Sarah Kelleher (LYCS), Noel Smith (SWAN), Kim Flood (Belvedere YS), David Cooney (HAY), Jonathon Dowling (Belvedere YS), Dwayne Horace and Aoife (Crinan), Geraldine Brennan (ASESP), Maire Higgins (Larkin College), Emma Wheatley (NCI), Pat Buckley (CDETB Adult Guidance), Dean Murray (Belvedere YS), Greg McGovern (JLO), Amy White (Ballybough YS), Aimee Harding (SWAN), Pat Gates, Mary Meehan, Frank Mulville (YPAR)

**Minutes from the 30th November 2021 – Read and Noted**

**Energy Levels – 6-9**

**Check In & Services Update**

* **YPAR –** There is a lot happening **–** Getting some young people to engage in youth service can be difficult. YPAR is establishing a Meitheal Plus which will look at a mechanism to support the hard-to-reach young people and their families. Eleonora Sozzi the Meitheal Coordinator is taking up another post for 6 months – New person coming in to cover Eleonora. Fast Track Counselling continues – Age range change 0-25s. This has now been mainstreamed by the Department of Health to be channelled through Cross Care.
* **Ballybough Youth Service –** Endeavouring to engage a particular difficult group of young people –whose behaviour around the Community Centre out of their group time is causing some concern.
* **Larkin College** – A lot of young people are dealing with bereavement issues. 17 young people out last week due to Covid.
* **SWAN** – Similar to Ballybough youth service – same group are causing disruption and making people unsafe. Street Workers targeting groups on the street. Big issue with young people living in hostels and drug misuse. Very visible grooming of the young people re drugs – need to make the young people aware of the dangers. There is a particular problem with children under 10 and the fact that there is very little support services after school for this age group.
* **Belvedere Youth service** – Quiet at the moment – 3 to 4 young people looking for external support. Developing an outreach team - Running a programme with Gregg similar to Green Town Model.
* **NCI** – Trying to work through restrictions – Most of the work over the last 2 months has been with adults. We are Looking at the young people now and developing restorative practice interventions – Contact Emma re this programmes
* **Garda** – Working with group of hard to reach – helping and supporting in anyway we can. The Garda and Young people dialogue is going very well. Was hard to engage families during covid – looking forward to face to face meetings in the future.
* **HAY** – Engagement is good with the hard-to-reach young people, making headway in known drug spots. We are involved in the ‘footy’ with the Garda in O’Connell’s. We continue to run diversionary programmes with targeted group.
* **Career Leap SWAN** – Training referrals are high numbers. Looking at how best to work with young men who have picked up criminal charges. We are rolling out Barista training - Safe Pass - Manual Handling. We have also received funding for IT resources for the young people to avail of - Theory tests – employment and CVs – HACCP programme. There are 2 groups for Career leap
* **LYCS** – All groups are back in action, CTC – a lot of the young people living in hostels. Drug dealing Sean Treacy House – Smoking grass as young as 10 - need to consider this age group. A lot of the young people not involved in any services. DCC and Circle housing doing some work with residents. Cluid working well – Circle not so well, no residents committee no security – groups can congregate which is making some residents feel unsafe.
* **CBETB Adult Guidance** – Getting back up and running – have been working from home and online. looking at getting out and about visiting the services. Will forward on any of the courses coming up in the next quarter.
* **Crinan** – Things are picking up – New referrals coming in – young people in homelessness is a major issues. We have established an Outreach team – setting up DJ programme – Student offering Hip Hop classes for young people.
* **ASESP** – Continuing with our groups we have reduced groups due to lack of space hoping to identify new premises soon to be able to extend our numbers. Operating with early years, after school and with some groups up to 14 years. Lots of children in the programme are hard to reach. Very visible the young people dealing. Very little police presence in the North Wall area. We need to get young people early.

**The PYE Project (London) – Double Edge Programme**

* Feedback from the PYE Project presentation on anti-knife crime at the last meeting. Great presentation – Fantastic initiative. Aoife and Pat met to see where we can go with it and if we could deliver the training for youth services in the NEIC.
* Looking at a possible sub-group to work on this. Need to pursue it a bit more to get more information on how this could be delivered. Possibly look at train the trainer and to dovetail with what is already happening. Emmanuele (from the PYE Programme) has offered their support.
* **C District Store Street :** Statistics re knife crime 14 December 2020 - 15 December 2021 don’t show a rise in knife crime. Could be that there is a under reporting. We should not over sensationalise the problem.
* Some young people feel they need to carry a knife for protection
* The problem may not be huge at the moment but the signs are there that it could increase and there is a lot of fear among young people.
* Services need to be proactive in relation to prevention and early intervention. Education is key here.
* Programme in schools will require consent – Fishamble Duck Duck Goose link to be sent to group

**Youth Services Alignment**

* Huge amount of collaboration happening already between NEIC youth and youth related services.
* The NIC Youth Projects & Services Network(YPSN) are continuing to progress the Research that has been completed
* Meeting was held on 7th December – need to look at the outcomes of this and the research recommendations.
* Youth services have different briefs re different funding stream so services need to be mindful of this. We also need to engage the policy makers and funders to ensure there is flexibility vis-à-vis SLAs. But generally there is good alignment between the various youth service projects and disciplines.

**Youth Harmful Behaviours, Drug Use, Misuse & Addiction** (points from General Discussion)

* At the last meeting, we discussed the use of cannisters (balloons) however since then things seem to have gotten worse.
* The issues of gangs, drug selling all over the NEIC communities and the grooming of young people are becoming a major issue.
* Knife crime – open drug dealing is real and making residents feel unsafe.
* Lack of cohesive policing; some front-line workers are felling unsafe.
* Very visible grooming, a lot of the young people in hostels are from the local area and are being targeted by the Criminal Networks.
* Grooming far bigger piece than knife crime at the moment.
* Street workers visited Dunnes Street Flats – spoke with group on the stairs. There was No hiding drug use – no fear – part of their way of life – how do we hold relationships – young people’s lives being shattered. Bragging about what they were doing and the money they are making – not realising they are being groomed
* At present we are getting the solutions all wrong we need a new approach. Need to go back to the drawing board if we are to create positive change
* Community Safety Partnership – New coordinator we need to link in and inform them of the issues. YPAR Coordinator to meet with the new CSP Coordinator
* Lots of hotspots in the area for drug selling. It is a business to them, same families – Historical
* Garda only one small part of this. We need to have a separate meeting of a smaller group to ask the hard questions. Need for practical solutions. What will success look like?
* At present we are firefighting. We need to come up with a more progressive policy approach.
* Legislation needs to change we need to look a criminal convictions that become lifetime barriers to alternative pathways. Also, decriminalisation has to be discussed.
* How can we build on our successes. However, this is a lot bigger than what we can do. Greentown – support the young person and the family - Focus on pragmatic issues
* Growing fear of challenging the most at risk children. We need to improve out education system in the NEIC which is broken. Could we talk to the National Assembly of Education. Chris Chapman change maker – look at what the schools should look like to improve the educational outcomes for young people in the NEIC.
* Request to look at the support re the 3 young people in Oberstown from the community who have been involved in homicides. We need to Review what supports they had and did not have. Not a blaming review but a learning review. We need to identify gaps and how we all can do better.
* We are doing what we are doing but we need something on top of this – a loftier view. What our community has to endure would not be tolerated in Dublin 4
* We can’t lose sight of the deep complex causes and there is no easy or quick solutions.
* We need to ask what could be done better. We have a huge experience in the room we need to look at setting up a sub-group to look at the bigger picture. Start with an initial small group and then extend to others for support down the road.

**Action**

* Pat and Aoife to send date for the sub-group to meet who will then report back to the next meeting for further discussion.

**Next meeting Tuesday 29th March at 10am**

**Venue SWAN**