

# YPAR Briefing Document



## **Background**

The YPAR Initiative (Dublin North Inner City) is an interagency network of statutory, voluntary and community projects and services, established in 2004, whose work is to meet the needs of young people at risk and vulnerable families and in the area through action focused collaborative and co-ordinated approach aimed at improving all aspects of the young people's life. YPAR defines a young person at risk as a child/young person aged 0 to 25 years experiencing significant personal, family, educational or social problems.

## **Vision:**

*'To live in a place of hope, equality and opportunity where young people and their family's dreams are realised'*

## **Mission**

*'To promote and develop an inclusive approach through integration and partnership of services and agencies working with children, young people and families that serve their needs and enables them to realise their potential.'*

## **Goals**

- 1. To identify and respond to gaps and deficiencies in systems, structures and supports, working in partnership with services and agencies that will result in better outcomes and protect the safety and welfare of children, young people and families*
- 2. Promote, support and maintain appropriate interagency mechanisms including the Meitheal Practice Model and other areas of integration best practice.*
- 3. Identify and overcome blockages to progressive pathways of education, training and employment for children, young people and families in the NIC.*
- 4. Combat all forms of discrimination and enable minority ethnic children, young people and families to realise their potential and be active members of their community.*
- 5. Deliver creative ways to ensure the meaningful participation and voices & views of children, young people and adults are heard and acted upon.*
- 6. To promote and advocate for responsive policies for children, young people and families and promote this through active lobbying of appropriate agencies.*
- 7. To evaluate, monitor and measure progress of YPAR interventions to learn what works and what doesn't.*

## **YPAR Catchment Area**

YPAR works primarily in the area of the north east inner city, with some elements of the work in the periphery or hinterland of that area. This area is from Dublin Bay to the east and Drumcondra Road/Dorset Street/Bolton Street and Arran Street East to the west. To the south the area is defined by the River Liffey, while to the north the border is a wide arc made up the Tolka River to the west and all East Wall. This is inclusive of all of Dublin 1 and parts of Dublin 3.

## **YPAR Operational Approach and Structure**

The YPAR network and its partners continue to provide leadership through its local statutory, voluntary and community partners. YPAR's vision, ethos, beliefs, values and collective energies will continue to advocate and demonstrate the value of interagency cooperation and collaboration to improve services and quality of life outcomes to young people at risk in the North Inner City of Dublin.

YPAR offers a Community of Practice (CoP) approach that encourages agencies, services and peers with a common or similar professional purpose to work together to share information, build knowledge, develop expertise and solve problems. This CoPs approach is characterized by the willing participation of all children, youth and family services workers to interact in developing common or similar work practices in order to achieve individual and collective objectives, targets or goals. CoPs supports an integrated process or learning forums where members teach and learn from each other. The approach enriches strategic facilitation to enhance service and development outcomes.

## **Current YPAR internal Structures**

### **Governance Structures**

- Steering Committee also operating the TUSLA Child and Family Support Network (CFSN) for Dublin North East Inner City
- Finance Committee

### **Working Groups**

YPAR has developed a set of working groups, based on interagency membership to address the concerns, gaps and good practice around an age group or issue. Seven groups to date, chaired by staff from the various local services.

1. Meitheal and Practice Working Group (cross-agency collaboration to address particular difficulties for children, youth and families)
2. 0-5 Working Group (Focus on Early Years Services)
3. 5-12 Working Group (Primary School Age Focus)
4. Hard to Engage YP Working Group (Focus on young people aged 13-25 not engaging in services and maybe engaged in antisocial activities)

5. International-YPAR Working Group (Targeting support to minority ethnic young people)
6. Children & Youth Mental Wellbeing working Group
7. Homeless Children & Families Working Group

**Make up of YPAR Steering Committee (See appendix 1 below for list of current members)**

- Independent Chairperson
- Each Working Group is represented on the YPAR Steering Committee by their Chairperson.
- ICON the local Community Network has two nominations to the YPAR Steering Committee.
- The following Statutory/State services are also asked to nominate a senior representative to the YPAR Steering Committee;
  - An Garda Siochana
  - City of Dublin Youth Service Board (CDYSB)
  - Dublin City Council
  - Education & Welfare Service (TUSLA)
  - TUSLA, (Child & Family Agency), Child Protection Social Work Rep
  - HSE
  - National Probation Service (Irish Youth Justice Service)
  - TUSLA, (Child & Family Agency), PPFS

**List of YPAR External Structures**

- Children and Young People's Services Committee (CYPSC)
  - Main CYPSC
  - Safe and Protected from Harm Sub-Group
  - CYPSC Mental Health Sub-group
  - CYPSC Early Years Education Sub-group
- City of Dublin Youth Service Board (CDYSB)
- CDYSB/CDET Youth Services Network
- North Inner City Community Coalition (NICCC)
- NICCC Children, Youth and Family Sub-group
- North East Inner City Programme Implementation Board (NEIC PIB)
  - NEIC PIB Sub-group 3 – Family Children and Youth Services (Children and Young People's Wellbeing)
  - Sub-group 6 - Integration and Alignment of Social Services
  - NEIC Minority Ethnic Task Group
- Restorative Practice
- Critical Incident Response Group

## **Current 2020 Activities of YPAR**

### **1. Meitheal & Practice Working Group**

The current TUSLA interagency practice model the Meitheal Practice Model has been heavily influenced by the YPAR Protocol which evolved since 2009 as a new approach to supporting children and their families, through interagency work. The purpose of the Meitheal and Practice Working Group is to support the service practice element of YPAR and its member organisations in the implementation of their work. To monitor gaps and blocks in children services practice in the NEIC and bring these to the attention of YPAR SC & CYPSC. To Deliver a community of practice through capacity training, sharing of knowledge, skills and best practice. Continue to enhance and develop effective service responses to children, young people and their families in the NEIC. 300 plus children have been supported through YPAR Protocol and 25 children annually being supported by Meitheal. It is an approach that supports a culture of trust and confidence between agencies and their staff, through:

- Training
- Information and support
- Linkages

### **2. Early Years Pilot Initiative to support flexible childcare to young parents.**

The YPAR 0-5 Working Group are delivering an Early Years Pilot Initiative to support flexible childcare to young parents to help increase access to childcare for children under 24 months. The secondary benefit is to support parents experiencing vulnerability, low income, and social exclusion to have an enhanced parenting experience through childcare support to participate in respite, training and help them access employment. 32 families benefit from this programme.

YPAR have also been working with the NEIC and DCYA to highlighted the serious crisis of childcare in the North Inner City and the need for a full review and comprehensive and strategic approach to address the gaps and deficiencies in the current childcare and early years services in the area.

### **3. After Schools research**

The YPAR 5-12 Working Group involves representatives from primary schools, afterschool projects, Tusla children services, community-based youth projects and parents. Evidence from these groups suggests that there is a huge shortage of afterschool places to support the demands for afterschool places in the north east inner city. The Group has commissioned research funded by the NEIC Initiative to carry out a study and produce a proposal to enhance the After-School Programmes for 5-10-year olds in the NEIC. This study will be presented to the NEIC Sub-group 6 in September and is proposing a 1.5 million investment in After-Schools activities in the NEIC.

#### **4. Community Leadership Programme for Young people 17 – 25**

This initiative has been developed by the YPAR 14-24 Hard to Reach Working Group, The Working Group was established in 2015 with the aim to developing an alignment of interagency youth services to target and engage hard to reach 14-24 year olds in the North Inner City to offer them progressive options in relation to their personal, social and economic growth. Through funding from the NEIC Initiative the group with the support of external consultants have designed a bespoke youth leadership programme that will allow young people to learn how to engage with and be of service within the community. This programme purpose is to build community capacity with a group of young leaders to play an active part in supporting and building strong vibrant safe NIC communities. The Programme will be delivered in the Autumn and Winter of 2020. The programme will target 12-18 young people between the ages of 17-24 who will be supported by the local Youth Services, and GYDPs

#### **5. Targeting the Hard to Reach Young Proposal (14 – 24 years)**

The Hard to Reach Working Group commissioned and produced a piece of research carried out by the University of Limerick. The research aim was to identify and analyse the current, emerging and aspirational needs of ‘Hard to Reach’ 14-24-year olds. To identify gaps and blocks to their engagement with services and supports. The research is an attempt to offer an interagency social inclusion pathway for the young people that will enable the creation of genuine and beneficial opportunities and supports for them to move toward fulfilling economically independent life choices. Already much of the outcomes and recommendations from the research have been taken up by policy makers and practitioners in the NEIC. One example is the issue of the ‘Aged-out at 18, of GYDPs that is now being addressed by the Department of Justice. Other issues being addressed are the inclusion of Minority Ethnic YP, Drug Intimidation, Crime and dialogue with hard to reach young people through detached youth work.

#### **6. Fast Track Counselling YPAR Youth Mental Wellbeing Working Group**

Due to the huge waiting list in the NEIC for young people to access psychological and wellbeing therapeutic supports the YPAR Mental Wellbeing Working Group, which is made up of local services mental health and social support practitioners, developed a Fast-track Counselling and Therapeutic proposal for Young people and their families under the age of 18 experiencing mental health/wellbeing difficulties, trauma and toxic stress. The initiative has been funded by the NEIC Programme Implementation and managed by YPAR and Teen Counselling since 2018. The model operates through an interagency referral system that links young people and families to a panel of therapists using art, drama, play, trauma informed and talk therapies. Since July 2018 over 180 young people and their families have benefited from the fast-track counselling. Key referral pathways to the initiative come through the schools, GYDPs and Youth Services.

## **7. Interagency knowledge**

Services in the YPAR area have a well-developed knowledge of the other services, have access to the YPAR Services Directory and know to access the office for information. Working Groups, Brown Bag lunches and Guided Walks, as well as interagency training supports this.

## **8. Accessibility**

Staff can access the office, and support/information five days a week, whether general or specific. This includes sending requests and emails between agencies and the wider YPAR network, for purposes including:

- a. Information sharing, e.g. NEIC, CDET B etc.
- b. Requests for support
- c. Requests for household goods or transport for families in/leaving emergency accommodation.

## **9. Responding to emerging needs**

Staff from the member agencies have identified different emerging needs, some within the existing Working Groups, others outside them. In some cases, this led to the development of other Working Groups such as Homeless and Hard to Engage Working groups. In other cases, it involved drawing together people from different agencies for a specific task, e.g., Parenting and Critical Incident response.

## **10. Supporting specific agency actions**

- Gardai in their development of the Restorative Practice work.
- TUSLA in rolling out the Meitheal Practice Model.

## **11. Changes in policy**

- Development of the Meitheal Practice Model.
- Internal policy changes in agencies e.g. school policy in supporting children and young people from the New Communities.

## **12. Additional Resources**

Through NICCC action, leading to NEIC Initiative, supporting the various finance management and actions, (Subgroups 3 & 6).

## **13. Relationships between staff and agencies**

YPAR continues to support a culture of trusting relationships within a Community of Practice.

## YPAR internal and External Linkages

### YPAR Governance

Steering Committee

TUSLA CFSN

Finance Committee

Staff

### YPAR Working Groups

Meitheal & Practice WG

0-5 Early Years WG

5-12 Primary School WG

13-24 Hard to Engage  
WG

International-YPAR WG

Children & Young people's  
Mental Wellbeing WG

Homeless WG

Roma WG

### External Linkages

CDYSB Youth Service Network

CYPSC

CYPSC Mental Health

CYPSC Early Years Education

CYPSC Safe and Protected from Harm

NICCC

NICCC Youth & Family Sub --group

NEIC PIB

NEIC PIB Sub Groups 3&6

Restorative Practice

Critical Incident Response



## YPAR Steering Committee 2020

Name	Organisation	YPAR Working Group Chairperson
Ann Carroll	Community After Schools Project (CASPr)	
Aoife O Regan	SWAN YS Project Leader	14-24 Hard to Reach Working Group
Cecil Agar	TUSLA Social Work Team Leader	
Ciara Naughton	HSCL	Roma Working Group
Daniel Morrogh	DEASP Area Manager	
Deirdre Conway	Garda Inspector, Mountjoy Garda Station	
Eileen Smith	Hill St FRC	0-5 Working Group & Finance Officer
Emma Nugent	HSCL Teacher Rutland Street Primary School	5-12 Working Group
Evelyn Ryan	SWAN YS	International-YPAR
Gerry Cullen	City Connects Manager	
Janet Colgan	Education Welfare Service (TESS)	
John Peelo	NYP1 TUSLA	Youth Mental Wellbeing Working Group
Lana Commings	Area-Based Childcare Programme	
Margaret Hayes	City of Dublin Youth Service Board (CDYSB)	
Mona Locus	School Principals Network	
Paul Flynn	Crosscare	Homeless Working Group
Sarah Kelleher	LYCS	
Shane Boyne	Dublin City Council (DCC)	
Sian Muldowney	ICON	
Sile Loughrey	Probation Services	
Teresa Nyland	TUSLA PPFS Manager	
Tony Rock	Independent Chairperson	Meitheal and Practice Working Group

## YPAR Staff 2020

Mary Meehan	Administrator (F/T)
Frank Mulville	Part-time – YPAR Meitheal and Services Support Coordinator (P/T)
Patrick Gates	YPAR Coordinator (F/T)

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**YPAR** | Young People at Risk  
Dublin North Inner City

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