

## Listen UP!

### Tusla's Child and Youth Participation Newsletter



Welcome to the 2nd issue of our newsletter. There was an amazing response to our last issue. We are delighted to continue to update you on all the excellent initiatives, projects and developments in the Prevention, Partnership and Family Support (PPFS), Child and Youth Participation work stream supported by the Atlantic Philanthropies. This issue is packed with the amazing participatory practice that is being carried out across the country by Tusla staff, funded agencies, partners and young people.

*Michelle Sheehan, PPFS Regional Implementation Lead for Child and Youth Participation*

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#### Tusla's National Children's and Young People's Charter

The Charters were developed using the "Lundy Model" of Participation and over 50 young people aged between 9 and 17 years from the four regions took part. This incredible work was highlighted on the RTE news and welcomed by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. Charters are now available to download [here](#)

##### The Charters' aim:

- Give children / young people and their families' greater clarity about the quality of services they can expect from all Tusla staff members, how Tusla staff will interact with them to find solutions, and the principles that underpin this work.
- Provide all staff with a clear guide and reminder of what is important to children and young people with whom we work.



Young People from Cork Life Centre

# Universal Children's Day



Universal Children's Day was celebrated on 20th November 2017. It was celebrated across the country with many events hosted by Tusla staff, funded agencies and partners. Universal Children's Day is a celebration of children and young people's participation in decisions that affect their lives.

Our celebration in Tusla HQ was a massive success!! It was attended by many services such as Mountmellick Youth Development Centre, Deansrath Family Centre, The Mighty Midlanders, DSE/Wicklow Youth Participation Project and residential services from Athlone and Naas.

Young people spoke on the topic "What it is like to be a child in Ireland today". Click [here](#) to read an excellent speech by one of the young people on the day.

There were performances by the Familibase Music Group from Dublin South Central and the Streets Ahead dance crew. It was a lively and uplifting event with lots of fun and laughter and of course pizza. It was also a reminder of the importance of children and young people having access to space, voice, audience and influence.

A huge thank you to all the Tusla staff, funded agencies and partners nationally that celebrated with us on the day by hosting an event.



***Fred Mc Bride, Wayne Dignam and young person that created the Childrens Day website!***



***All the performers from Familibase on the day!***



***Fred Mc Bride, Jim Gibson and Michelle Sheehan***



***Thumbs up from MYDC***



***Young speakers from MYDC***



***MC from MYDC***



***Tusla COO Jim Gibson and Young Person from MYDC***



***Streets Ahead Dance Crew***



***Young person from MYDC***

# Child and Youth Participation Training for 2018

**National Child and Youth Participation Training is informative, interactive and fun!**

During this short one and a half days training you will learn about the “Lundy Model” of Participation, get tips on engaging with children and young people as well as ideas on how to overcome challenges to participation.



*Claire Foley, Caroline Cullen, Patricia Finlay, Noel Kelly, Michelle Sheehan, Anne McCabe and Kerri Martin at Child and Youth Participation Training*

The call-back half day is a great learning opportunity as each person shares the progress of the participation plans that were put into action after the first day.

Training dates for 2018 are available from your local Workforce Learning and Development Officer so ensure to book your place now. They are filling up fast! If you have only completed Day 1 of training, it's not too late to complete Day 2.

## Feedback from Training

*“The CYP Training reinforced how important it is that we as front line staff working with young people engage them in our work from the beginning. The training gave me the tools that I can use in my role to ensure that the voice of the child or young person is being heard and is taken seriously”*

*“Having come away from the training, we were really excited and inspired in creatively applying the “Lundy Model” with our friendship group in our summer project”*

The Child and Youth Participation Toolkit is available on the Tusla Website, it includes lots of ideas, worksheets and practical suggestions on how to engage with children and young people, check it out [here](#).



You suggested and we listened. We are working on how the worksheets from Participation Toolkit can be available in word format on the Tusla hub.

## Tusla's Participation Strategy for Children and Young People

We are in the final stages of the development of Tusla's Participation Strategy for Children and Young People. The strategy is built on the “Towards the Development of a Participation Strategy” (2014), which you can find [here](#).

Tusla is committed to involving children and young people in decision making on matters that affect their lives. We consulted with various groups of children and young people from the four regions of Ireland in the development of the strategy. They had some fantastic ideas on how we could communicate the strategy to children and young people. A huge thanks to the young people from:

*Tir na nÓg (DNE)*

*The Gateway (DNE)*

*Headhackers - Ossary Youth (South)*

*WTID (Western Traveller & Intercultural Development) Brú Bhride Girls Group (West)*

*Waterford and South Tipperary Youth Café (South)*

*Jump Club (DML)*

*Mighty Midlanders (DML)*

*Rosebrook Residential Centre (DML)*

# Tusla's 3rd Annual Child and Youth Participation Conference

## "Where to From Here"

Tusla's 3rd National Child and Youth and Participation Conference "Where to from Here" is on the 26th of April 2018 in Athlone, Co. Westmeath. The conference planning working group are busy organising a fun, uplifting and inspiring day including highlighting many of the child and youth participation initiatives across the country.

The "Where to From Here" conference is aimed at presenting Tusla's journey to date and to share and celebrate the progress that has been made within services to further integrate participatory practice into the work they do with children and young people. There will also be a focus on "where to from here" as organisations, services and practitioners strive to continually improve.

Without giving too much away, young people will MC the conference, be key note speakers and perform. The conference working group are building on the success from last year and hope that this year will bigger and better!! If you were at last years conference you'll know how amazing it was. You can find out more about last year's conference [here](#).

### Young people will host workshops:

- To explore, evaluate, plan and learn about the opportunities and challenges for youth participation within Tusla and its partner organisations;
- To ensure the sustainability of young people's participation into the future;
- To celebrate existing positive participatory practice and showcase their initiatives in the Child and Youth Participation Seed funding Sites



Child and Youth Participation Conference Planning Group



The new "Tell Us" poster from the Children's and Young Persons Advisory Committee Mayo

## TELL US at Tusla

The "Tell Us" at Tusla campaign has many ways children and young people can get in touch, including a new text or Whatsapp service. "Tell Us" at Tusla can be found [here](#)

There is an excellent "What will Happen?" Section on the poster to let children and young people know what they can expect. It states that:

- We will let you know that we have got your message (if you give us your contact information).
- We will reply to you in 30 working days.
- Your wellbeing will be our priority.

A wide range of information is available on the Tusla website such as documents, leaflets and posters which may be useful to children you work with. They are available [here](#)

# Investing in Children™ Membership Award



investing in children

The Investing in Children Membership Award™ recognises and celebrates examples of imaginative and inclusive practice. Investing in Children™

Membership gives national recognition for your good practice and active inclusion of children and young people in dialogue and change.

Twenty seven Tusla and Tusla funded services have successfully achieved the Investing in Children Membership™ award across the country, you can find more information about them [here](#). We have been busy evaluating many more in 2018. A couple of the awards even received media coverage, check them out [here](#) and [here](#). The interest in the Membership Award™ has been phenomenal. A huge congratulations to our successful applicants to date:



*Our Lady's Nursery (Dublin North City)*



*Frenchpark District Community Childcare*

- Mountmellick Youth Development Centre (Midlands)
- Longford Westmeath CYPSC (Midlands)
- The Mighty Midlanders (Midlands)
- Longford Westmeath Social Care Leaders (Midlands)
- Midlands Aftercare Service (Midlands)
- The First Steps Trust (Dublin South Central)
- Familibase (Dublin South Central)
- Carr's Child and Family Services (Dublin South Central)
- I Believe Group (Dublin South West/Kildare West Wicklow)
- Rosebrook Children's Residential Centre (Dublin South West/Kildare West Wicklow)
- Carlow Area Peer Engagement (Carlow/Kilkenny)
- Youth New Ross (Wexford/Waterford)
- Compass Outdoor Project (Cavan/Monaghan)
- Aftercare Service (Cavan/Monaghan)
- Youth Queer Ball (Cavan/Monaghan)
- Extern Dublin North (Dublin North City)
- Our Lady's Nursery (Dublin North City)
- Neighbourhood Youth Project 2 (Dublin North City)
- Sensory Garden (Dublin North)
- Rowan Tree House (Dublin North)
- Warrior Programme (Louth/Meath)
- The Connemara Crew (Galway/Roscommon)
- Clarecare Summer Camp Project (Midwest)
- Bru Bhríde Girls Group (Galway/Roscommon)
- Cool Club (Galway/Roscommon)
- Frenchpark District Community Childcare (Galway/Roscommon)
- The CRIB (Sligo)

*Why not apply for an Investing in Children Award? You can find information on how to apply [here](#)*

# National Care Day 2018

Care Day is the world's largest celebration of children and young people with care experience. Care Day 2018 was celebrated across the country on 16th February 2018.

There was a special celebration in Tusla HQ, attended by Tusla staff, EPIC and young people from the Midlands Aftercare Service and Rosebrook Children's Residential Centre who received their Investing in Children Award, Well done and congratulations.

The Limerick Prevention, Partnership and Family Support (PPFS), EPIC and Alternative Care Services hosted an event and young people premiered their rap "Do You Care, I'm in Care".

Care Day is part of 5 Nations, 1 Voice – an alliance made up of five children's rights charities across the U.K. and Ireland: Become in England, EPIC in Ireland, VOYPIC in Northern Ireland, Voices from Care in Wales, and Who Cares? Scotland. Care Day 2018 is an opportunity to celebrate the rights of care experienced children and young people. The alliance wants a world where young people are proud, fulfilled, are able to thrive and achieve their dreams.

Children and young people with experience of care, as well as those who care for an support these young people, were invited to join in this day of united celebration. Care Day also provides an opportunity to illustrate how care experienced people can feel different to others and why.

Children and young people deserve to be celebrated on Care Day and everyday!



Réidín Dunne (EPIC), Fred Mc Bride (Tusla), Young Person from EPIC, Terry Dignam (EPIC) and Cormac Quinlan (Tusla)



Celebrating Care Day in Co. Cork



Young people and staff from the Midlands Aftercare Service



Care Day celebrations in Co. Limerick



Care Day 2018 in Tusla Headquarters

Care Day is a joint initiative between children's charities across the whole of the UK and Ireland, under the 5 Nations 1 Voice Alliance. The charities in the Alliance are, Become in England, EPIC in Ireland, VOYPIC in Northern Ireland, Who Cares? Scotland, and Voices from Care in Wales.

# Child and Youth Participation Seed Funding Projects



*Aftercare Stories (Cavan/Monaghan)  
Hearing the voices of young adults in the Aftercare Service*



*"Whats the Photostory?" Syria - Tipperary  
Hearing the voices and stories of 15 young people from Syria*



*"I Believe Group"  
Creative Group Project for Birth Children of Fostering Families*

Our Seed Funding Projects are creating a tangible change in participatory practice across the country. Tusla staff are working with numerous Tusla funded agencies and partners to make a tangible change in participatory practice by funding projects that children and young people had an active role in creating.

All seed funding projects engage children and young people and listen to their ideas, opinions and what they want from a project/group to further improve Tusla's participatory culture. All projects are youth led and based on the "Lundy Model" of participation.

There are over 41 projects nationwide which involve numerous partners and hundreds of children and young people. These projects include sponsoring a football club (Mulhuddart FC), Social Peer Research Group, Children in Care Focus Group and the Creative Group Project for Children of Fostering Families. You will find a full list of all our seed funding projects [here](#).



This model provides a way of conceptualising Article 12 of the UNCRC which is intended to focus decision-makers on the distinct, albeit interrelated, elements of the provision. The four elements have a rational chronological order:

- **SPACE:** Children must be given safe, inclusive opportunities to form and express their view
- **VOICE:** Children must be facilitated to express their view
- **AUDIENCE:** The view must be listened to.
- **INFLUENCE:** The view must be acted upon, as appropriate.

*Lundy Model of Participation*

*Over the next four pages of this newsletter we will shine a seed funding spotlight on one of our seed funding projects from each Tusla region.*

The ISPCCLed “Cork Matters” project aims to not only identify and address the key challenges facing Youghal and Ballincollig but also celebrate the great things about living there. The IPSCC listened to children, young people, parents and the wider community by conducting face to face interviews and hosting a survey on Survey Monkey.



**Working together at one of the World Café Events**

From this data they organised two “World Cafés” to give children, young people and adults in the communities the opportunity to share their views around the changes they felt would assist their areas.

This project has a fundamental child centred approach and the ISPCCL’s Children’s Advisory Committee (CAC) played a key role in the design and implementation of the project.

## What Young People involved have to say!

*“Our role in the overall project was to child-proof and approve all correspondence and documentation. We also gave feedback on the Cork Matters online survey and one-to-one questions. At our World Cafés, the locals (including lots of children and young people) worked with us to find solutions to these issues and to find out how they could be involved in the improvement of their community. There was lots of diversity within our World Cafés we made sure we had a mixture of children, young people, professionals and residents from the area”.*

*“We helped plan the World Café events and made sure that they were fun, welcoming events for people attending. At the events themselves we co-presented to the audience, took on roles of “Table Hosts” and encouraged people to interact and take part. We feel that the project was very important because it gave the locals the opportunity to voice their opinions regarding issues within Youghal and Ballincollig.”*



**Highlighting the youth facilitators at the World Café Event in Ballincollig**

**Young people in Youghal and Ballincollig have their say!**

# Dublin North East — Youth Queer Ball

The young person led “Youth Queer Ball” is an alternative to the TY Transition Year Ball for 14 to 18 year olds. The idea, which came from a young person, was to create a safe space where young people could wear whatever they wanted and feel comfortable with their peers. The ball was supported by Youth Work Ireland Monaghan and Tusla Cavan/Monaghan.



Welcome to the “Youth Queer Ball”

*“Everyone didn’t want it to be over”*

*“Next time, we’ll try to make it longer”*

Originally the ball was aimed at young people from Cavan/Monaghan but the interest was so great that young people attended from different LGBT+ groups in Carrickmacross, Castleblaney, Clones, Dundalk and Navan. There was a massive interest in attending the ball and over 54 young people attended.



Balloon registration at the ball

*“Bit more pride now, after the ball”*

*“We had a space to feel comfortable”*

Five young people sat on the organising committee and they had complete ownership of the project. The young persons committee organised the travel to and from the ball, decorations, activities at the ball which included building a stage and awards for “Queer Royalty” and “Queer of the Year”. Tickets were printed and sold to cover the extra costs including the amazing Tusla branded “Wonka Bars” as you can see from the photo.

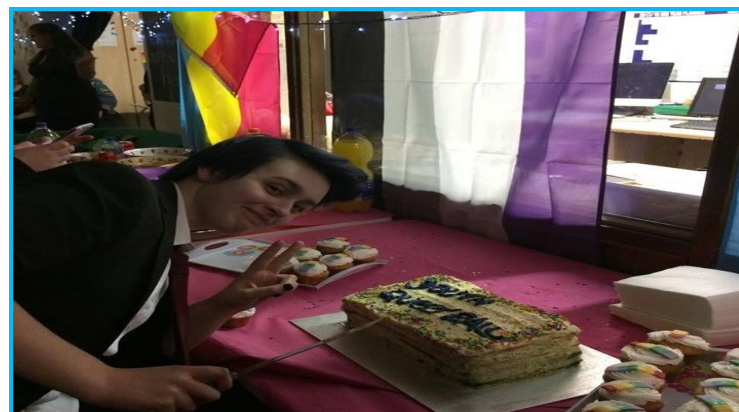


Youth Queer Ball 2017 Wonka Bars

*“I’m more comfortable and happy now”*

Well done to the young people involved in this absolutely brilliant project!

*Organised, facilitated and hosted by Young People*



Chairperson of the Youth Queer Ball Committee

# Dublin Mid Leinster - The Mighty Midlanders



*The Mighty Midlanders presenting their workshop*



*Displaying their Artwork at the Conference*



*Mighty Midlanders, Jim Gibson, Tusla staff and partners*



*Thumbs up from the Mighty Midlanders*

In July 2016 “The Mighty Midlanders” were formed. It is a collaboration between the Tusla Midlands Area and YAP. The Social Work Department wanted to hear from young service users, they wanted to know what they are doing well and what they could change to make the service better. Through art they sought the views of 10 young people from Laois, Offaly, Longford and Westmeath. The group is facilitated by a Community Artist, Team Leader from YAP and a Social Care Leader from PPFS.

Following on from this the young people met area management and advised them of what they would like to happen or change in the future. Management have listened to and openly discussed the views of the young people with them and acknowledged what they may be able to enhance or provide going forward. Equally important to the young people is that they have also been given reasons if some of their wishes cannot be fulfilled.

***“We wanted to explain and say to adults how we felt about things and what needed improving, which they help us with”***

Four of the young participants have availed of Agenda Day™ facilitator training and are eager to run an Agenda Day™. All the young people involved attended and facilitated a workshop at the National Child and Youth Participation Conference in April 2017. “Presenting at the Child and Youth Participation Conference was a huge achievement for our young people. They and us facilitators were bursting with pride on the day!!”

The finished artwork will be displayed in the new Social Work Office in Mullingar as a permanent reminder of the importance of Child and Youth Participation. What a fantastic project, well done to all the young people involved.

***Young People Influencing the Planning, Delivery and Evaluation of Services***



*CYPAC with Tusla staff and partners at the event*

## What Young People have to Say!

*"My name is Chloe and I'm a member of Mayo Comhairle na nÓg. Through Comhairle, I put my name forward to become part of the Mayo Child and Young Persons Advisory Committee along with members of the Ballina Youth and Family Support Service. The group is youth led and consists of members from various backgrounds and locations in Co. Mayo. Our project was established under the CYPSC Family Support Group and is a partnership between Foroige and Tusla.*

*Recently, we worked with Tusla to create a poster for "Tell Us". This seeks feedback from young people involved in Tusla. We were given the amazing opportunity to go to a workshop in "Research Training" from the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre. From this a sub committee of the group carried out a piece of research called "Helping Young People be Heard and Helped" with over 250 young people across Mayo, which is now available on the Tusla Research Hub.*

*Personally, I have only recently realised how much being part of the CYPAG and Comhairle na nÓg have changed me as a person. Thankfully, this change has been for the better. I have a condition called albinism which means I have a visual impairment and I am registered with the N.C.B.I. (National Council for the Blind Ireland) . I always found it difficult to mix with new groups outside of my own friends. Yet from working in a team with such an amazing group of people, it has become second nature. I am no longer afraid to speak or give my opinion on topics that I care about. I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank all of the people involved in this incredible project."*

The Mayo Children's and Young Person's Advisory Committee (CYPAC) was formed as part of Comhairle na nÓg to develop greater input and participation of young people in the delivery and evaluation of Tusla services. The "Youth Researchers" reviewed local and national information leaflets, provided feedback on their content and audited Tusla premises to determine their suitability for children and young people.

Recently the group organised and hosted "How Young People are Heard and Helped" in the Park Hotel on 18th January 2018. The event was attended by 140 people, including the Ombudsman for Children, who spoke at the event. There was also a super young person as MC and many powerful young speakers.

On the day CYPAC presented their new poster to promote the "Tell Us" at Tusla campaign to Pat Osborne, you may have seen it on page 4 of this newsletter. The CYPAC also launched an information poster on "What Young People Want Adults to Know", available [here](#). The lyrics to a song that was written, composed and performed by a young person is available [here](#).



*"What Young People want Adults to Know" that the group created*

# National Tusla Website for Young People by Young People



The Dublin South East/Wicklow Child and Youth Participation Project is so brilliant it has grown into a National Project! They have hosted three Agenda Days™ in the area supported by Crosscare Youth Service in May 2016, November 2016 and April 2017. The Agenda Days™ have been facilitated by six young adults who have lived experience of Tusla and its funded services.

These young adults have developed a short film to talk about their experience of hosting the first Agenda Days™ in Ireland which was presented at the National Child & Youth Participation Conference. Each Agenda Day™ has brought 20-30 young people aged 9-18 years old from Tusla and its funded services together in an adult free space to develop their ideas for the website. A research group of 8-10 young people aged 12-18 years old was formed from the wider Agenda Days to ensure that young people were involved at every stage of the project. To date 13 research groups meetings have taken place.



**Young People  
working with  
students from  
IADT on the  
website**



A sub-group of local Tusla staff from social work, social care, family support, access and educational welfare came together to assist the research group in developing content about their roles. These practitioners attended the research group to talk about their work, be interviewed and filmed by the young people.

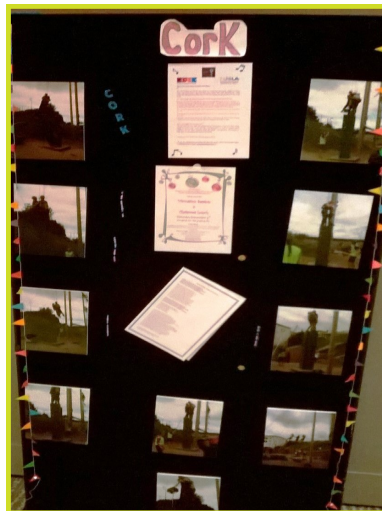
Most recently, they have contracted the 3rd year visual communication students from IADT in Dun Laoghaire to work in partnership with the research group to develop the website design and some content. This work is underway and the research group have been to the college to review the progress so far – they are delighted to see all their hard work come to life. The research group hopes to present a prototype of the website at the Tusla Child and Youth Participation Conference in April 2018. So it's going to be an exciting and busy few months ahead!

If you have any questions about the project or have any child led or developed content that may be suitable for the website, please do not hesitate to contact Lindsay Markey at [lindsay.markey@tusla.ie](mailto:lindsay.markey@tusla.ie)

**Creative and fabulous designs from  
students at IADT**

**For Young People, by Young People**

# "Our Say, Our Way"



On the **1st November 2017**, the Young People of the EPIC and Tusla Fora hosted their first National Fora Participation Conference, "Our Say, Our Way"!

This is a Tusla and EPIC initiative to share young people's experience of care and what they would like you, as a professional, to know about their journey.

The day included inspiring presentations by young people on their projects, perspectives and experiences with a view to influencing how we all work together.

It also included amazing drama performances, a young person's panel, workshops, games, music and fantastic performances from young people.

Each of the twelve Fora from around the country had an exhibition to display all their super work. Each Fora exhibited their excellent work, The pictures are just four of the exhibitions that were up on the day.

It was a brilliant day and well done to the young people, Tulsa staff and partners involved.

**TUSLA**  
An Ghníomhaireacht um  
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach  
Child and Family Agency

**EPIC**  
empowering people in care



## We Have A Winner!!

Congratulations to the winner of our "Name Our Newsletter" competition. From over 50 entries, the winner, in 1st place is from the Mighty Midlanders (DML) with Newsletters new name "Listen Up!". 2nd PLACE and a really close runner up was "Future of Today Changing the Tusla of Tomorrow" from the Children and Young People's Advisory Committee (Mayo).

All of the entries were superb and it was a very, very, very tough to choose a winner. It was a really close competition. Thank you to all the young people who put forward an entry.

**Well Done!**

## Calling all budding journalists and artists!

Send us in your masterpieces!



If you are a young person and would like to submit a piece for inclusion in the newsletter, please let us know!

Send in your pieces to [emma.hanway@tusla.ie](mailto:emma.hanway@tusla.ie)

## Useful Contacts for Young People

Contact information for a wide range of child and youth centred agencies such as EPIC, Belong To and the Youth Advocacy Service can be found on the Tusla website [here](https://www.tusla.ie).



# Participation and Partnership

## Get Involved!

If you would like to get involved, a young person you work with would like to submit a piece for the newsletter or if you have any questions there is a Partnership and Participation Officer (PPO) in every region.

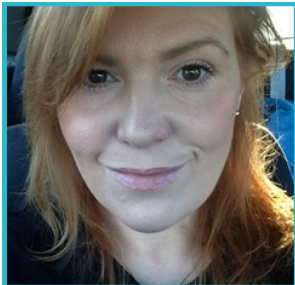
If you would like to know about all the excellent participation initiatives in YOUR region please email your local Participation and Partnership Officer to be added to their participation mailing list! (*Email is sent once every three months*)



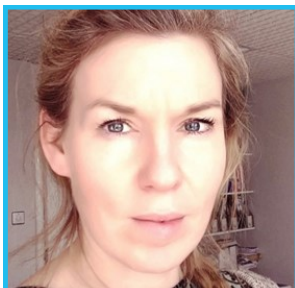
**Avril Dooley**  
**Dublin Mid Leinster**  
avril.dooley1@tusla.ie



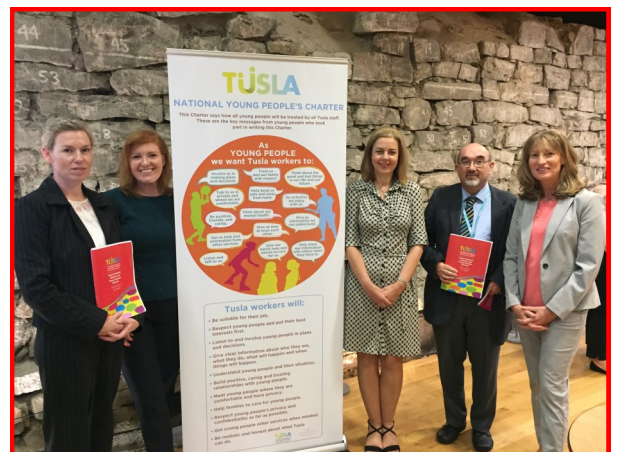
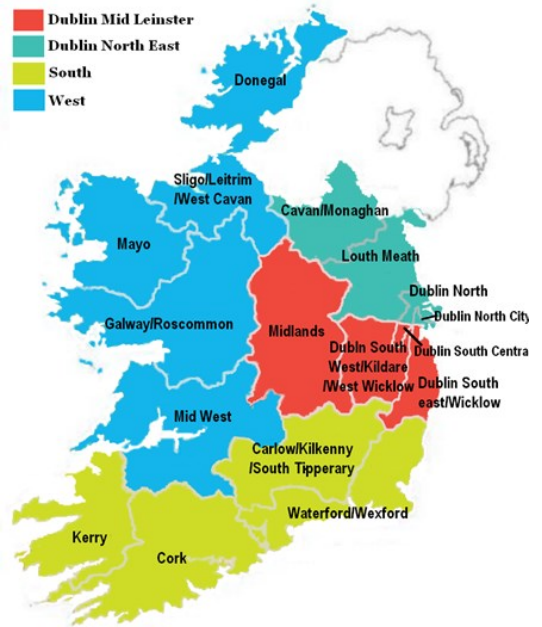
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*Pat Osborne, Michelle Sheehan and some of the PPO's at the launch of the Children's Charter*

All of the initiatives in this Newsletter are part of the Participation Stream of Tusla's Prevention, Partnership and Family Support programme, funded by the Atlantic Philanthropies.