

Listen UP!

Tusla's Child and Youth Participation Newsletter

What a year 2018 was for Participation! We began the year with celebrations of Care Day throughout the country and in Tusla Headquarters in February. In April, we held our biggest Child and Youth Participation Conference to date which saw over 450 attendees, including 200 children and young people, descend on the Sheraton Hotel in Athlone. Throughout the summer our seed funding projects made the most of the incredible weather and ran many exciting activities and outings. During September's Tusla National Child and Family Support Week, we celebrated local participation initiatives and presented many Investing in Children Membership™ Awards. And finally, in November, Tusla participated in the hugely successful 'Child Talks' event for World Children's Day and Dillon Owen from the Tusla 'Changing Futures' website group participated in a Tusla 'take over'. I want to thank everyone for their dedication to Child and Youth Participation in 2018. Here's hoping we can build on the successes of last year. 2019 is already shaping up to be an incredible year. Keep an eye out for the launch of the Tusla Child and Youth Participation Strategy and Child and Youth Participation Yearbook in the coming weeks

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

Child and Youth
Participation Strategy
2018-2022

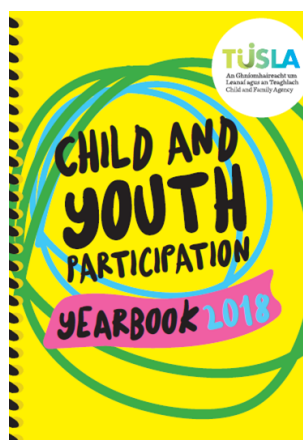


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Child and Youth Participation Yearbook

As 2018 came to an end, so did the Atlantic Philanthropies funding for our amazing 41 seed funding initiatives. Some projects are winding down and some are continuing to grow. To celebrate the fantastic work of all the projects, we are compiling a yearbook which details the achievements of each group. The draft booklet is now with the designers and it is in it's final stages. We hope to have it ready for circulation in the coming weeks. See below the design chosen by the young people for the front cover.



*The front cover design for
the Child and Youth
Participation Yearbook as
chosen by our young
people*

Tusla's 3rd Annual Child and Youth Participation Conference



MC's Rachel and Eric interview Jim Gibson



Changing Futures, the National Tusla website developed for young people by young people



Key note speakers Chloe and Finn



The fantastic Familibase from Ballyfermot

The third annual Tusla Child and Youth Participation Conference 'Where to from here' was held on 26th April 2018 in the Sheraton Hotel Athlone. An incredible 17 exhibitors kept the 450 strong crowd entertained on arrival. The photo booth and chill out room also proved to be a big hit. After registration, the fantastic Familibase from Ballyfermot performed an energetic set which set the mood perfectly for the day. Eric O Connor representing Mountmellick Youth Development Centre and Rachel Foody from Mayo Youth Advisory Committee were our MC's and kept us entertained throughout the day. Opening the conference, Fred McBride confirmed Tusla's commitment to participation.

Our first keynote speaker Finn, spoke about his experience of organising the Youth Queer Ball, an event where young people can wear what they want and be who they want. The event was a huge success and was attended by young people from Monaghan and surrounding counties. The second speaker Eurochild's Jana Hainsworth spoke about the importance of listening to the voice of children. Next up were the Investing in Children Membership TM Award presentations and 23 projects were celebrated for their achievement. Before the break the Changing Futures seed funding project (Dublin South East/Wicklow) gave us a preview of the new Tusla National Website for Young People they are designing. After coffee, attendees divided up into their chosen workshops and were entertained with song, raps, laughter and of course excellent examples of participation in their local area (more on that later).

"One of the best events I have ever been to"

After lunch, we all returned to the main room and once again Familibase got us going with another incredible set. Afterwards, Jim Gibson, Tusla Chief Operations Officer took to the stage to be interviewed by our MC's Eric and Rachel. Our third keynote speaker Chloe spoke of her positive experience with Mayo Youth Advisory Committee and the difference the seed funding initiative has made to her. A final musical performance by our talented MC Rachel who sang a self composed song about the importance of listening, rounded off the day perfectly. She was supported on guitar by her Mayo colleague Kalem Garrett. On exiting we were treated to a photo montage of the action packed day. We can't wait to do it all again next year! See more on the conference on pages 3, 4 and 5.

Workshops — Child and Youth Participation Conference

Attendees had a total of five workshops to choose from, each with two seed funding initiatives showcasing their projects. The workshops proved equally popular and were all packed to capacity. **Longford Westmeath CYPSC** described their 'Our Voice' project in which they spoke to over 400 young people in the two counties about what they wanted in their local CYPSC plan. **Carlow Area Peer Engagement (CAPE)** had us captivated with the power of drama as a platform for participatory practice. The **Mighty Midlands** kicked off their workshop with a participation rap and then explained to us the task they had set Tusla staff in their area. The **Roscrea Agenda Day** presentation explained how gathering local young people together to ask them what they needed, resulted in a counsellor allocated to the area. The **Aftercare Stories project in Cavan/**

Monaghan described how care leavers tell their story of their time in care. The **Sligo Leitrim Participation Lab** tested us to see if we really were participatory in practice and the **Cyber Safety Hub from Dublin North** presented issues that are facing young people today. The **ISPCC Cork** showcased their project 'Cork Matters' and the work they are doing in the community to support participatory practice. The **Wellview Resource Centre from Mulhuddart Dublin** described their Sensory Garden project which was designed by the 'Krafty Kids' group. Finally **Mayo Youth Advisory Committee** told us the eight key messages that young people want adults to know. All workshops were presented, introduced and facilitated by young people. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive and a massive thank you and well done to everyone involved.



Clockwise from top left: Longford Westmeath CYPSC; Mighty Midlands; Roscrea Agenda Day; Wellview Resource Centre Mulhuddart and Mayo Youth Advisory Committee.

Exhibitions — Child and Youth Participation Conference

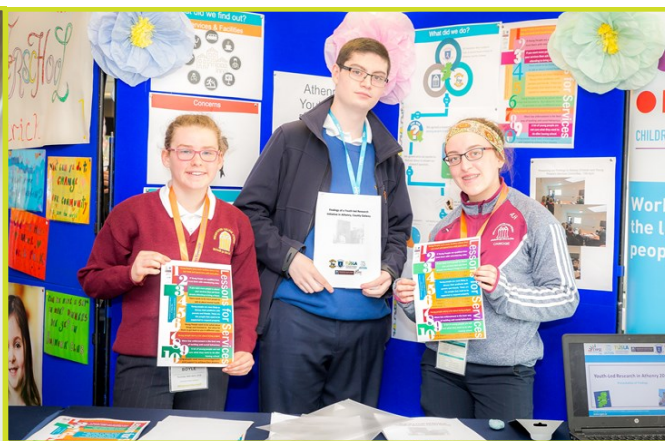
Each year our exhibition space has been growing and this year was no exception as a massive 16 exhibitors showcased their seed funding initiatives. The exhibition area was buzzing and a hive of activity as the conference attendees arrived. The exhibitions, all manned by young people, engaged us with their colourful and interesting displays and it was clear a lot of effort and work had gone into the presentations. Well done to all involved. Please see below full list of the exhibitors.

Dublin South West/Kildare West Wicklow	I believe (Group for Birth Children of Foster Carers)
Dublin South West/Kildare West Wicklow	The Unity Project Child & Young Person Friendly Spaces
Dublin South Central	Deansrath Family Centre Coderdojo Academy
Midlands	Mighty Midlanders
Dublin North City	MOST Project O'Devaney Gardens Photo documentary
Dublin North City	Extern Dublin North
Carlow/Kilkenny/South Tipperary	Head Hackers Ossory Youth Project Kilkenny
Galway/Roscommon	Happy & Healthy Volcanos Roscommon
Galway/Roscommon	Athenry Youth Researchers Project
Galway/Roscommon	Connemara Family Services
Galway/Roscommon	X-Hale Project Roscommon
Galway/Roscommon	Cool Club Galway
MidWest	Limerick Barnardos
MidWest	Limerick Youth Service
MidWest	Thurles Youth Service
Nationwide	Tusla/EPIC fora



Clockwise from top left: Head Hackers Ossory Youth Project Kilkenny; I believe Group Kildare and X-Hale Roscommon

Exhibitions — Child and Youth Participation Conference



Clockwise from top left: Cool Club Galway; Athenry Youth-Led Researchers; Extern Dublin North; Barnardos Limerick; Connemara Club Galway; Limerick Youth Service; MOST Project O'Devaney Gardens Dublin and Deansrath Family Centre Dublin

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. In 2016 it was launched in Tusla and since then a massive 64 Tusla and Tusla funded services have received the award. It is a fantastic achievement for each and every service involved and we have more than doubled the target set for us by Investing in Children, a UK based human rights organisation. Renewals are well and truly underway with existing members implementing new participatory initiatives. If you are interested in applying for the award, please contact your regional Participation and Partnership Officer, contact details are on the back page. See the full list of the 58 Memberships below and some photos of their presentations.



TOPSDublinNorth
 MightyMidlanders
 LimerickPrison&BedfordRowProject
 BridgetownSchoolCompletionProgramme
 FrenchparkDistrictCommunityChildcareGalway
 OurLady'sNurseryBallymun
 BarnardosFamilySupportFinglas
 StLouise'sDublinNorthCity
 ExternDublinNorth
 FDYSWexfordJustBeYou
 ConnemaraClubGalway
 WarriorProgrammeMeath
 Dublin12SocialWorkDepartment
 Clarecare
 ISPCCCork
 TheGatewayForoigeMidlands
 CoolClubGalway
 LimerickYouthServices
 BarnardosLimerick
 Galway
 CYPSCTheCribSligo
 AthrúDongealTuslaEPICForum
 Sligo/Leitrim/WestCavanPPFSandFamilySupportService
 LongfordWestmeathCYPSC
 MayoYouthAdvisoryCommittee
 YMCAParents&KidsTogether
 TuslaFamilyResourceCentreNavan
 MidlandsAftercareService
 CarlowAreaPeerEnagement
 SouthendFamilyResourceCentre
 BarnardosPlaygroundWaterford
 IBelieveKildareWestWicklow
 ConnectFamilyResourceCentreMoneymore
 CarrsChildandFamilyServicesDublinSouthEast
 FirstStepsTrustDublinSouthCentral
 LusnaGreineFamilyResourceCentreMidlands
 RosebrookChildren'sResidentialCentreKildare
 NeighbourhoodYouthProjectDublinNorthCity
 WellviewResourceCentreMulhuddart
 YouthQueerBallCavan/Monaghan
 MountmellickYouthDevelopmentCentre
 YouthNewRoss
 SafeGardaYouthDiversionProjectWexford
 TheGlórProjectWexford
 CompassOutdoorProjectCavan
 AftercareServiceCavan/Monaghan
 ArklowSpringboard
 KilkenneyCommunityEarlyYearsProject
 ChangingFeatures
 LongfordWestmeathPPFSocialCareLeaders
 BlakestownMountainviewYouthInitiative

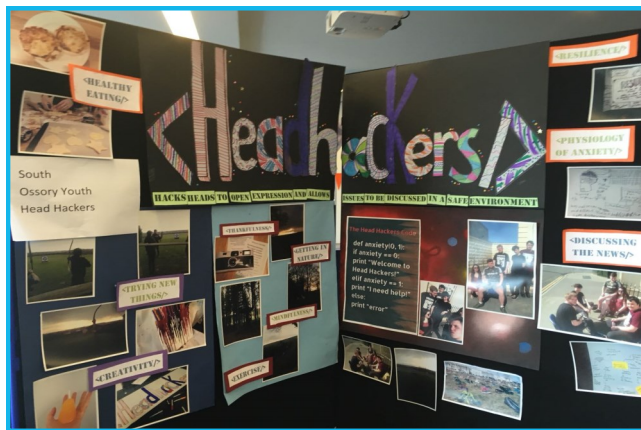
Investing in Children Membership™ Awards

A small selection of Investing in Children Membership™ Awards. For full list see page six.



Clockwise from top left: Youth Queer Ball (Youth Work Ireland); Mountmellick Youth Development Centre (MYDC); Brú Bhríde Girls Group Galway; Youth New Ross; ISPCC Cork; The Crib Sligo; Midlands Aftercare Service and Aftercare Service Cavan/Monaghan

Seed Funding Focus—Head Hackers (South)



Occurring every Saturday from 3.00pm-4.30pm, Head Hackers is a youth group organised within the Ossory Youth Project Kilkenny. This group caters specifically to young people (14- 18 years) experiencing anxiety, giving them an opportunity to discuss mental health and build new friendships in a safe environment.

Since last September, Head Hackers has been a tremendous success for Ossory Youth, with numerous young people joining and building the courage to discuss their anxiety in a safe place where they can acknowledge.

*"an opportunity to discuss mental health
and build new friendships in a safe
environment"*



Head Hackers covers a variety of activities such as socialising and outdoor activities to learn about how anxiety works in hopes to combat against anxiety, with acknowledgements of this matter provided by our well-respected youth workers. They show a great understanding for the members of Ossory Youth. These aspects of social activities apply to group discussions, archery, walking activities, kayaking, cooking, art and more on that regard.

As a young individual myself, I was of course sceptical when given the opportunity to join this youth group, anxious about what angle other young people would view me from. However, as I joined this group last year in 2017, my perspective of this group had indeed changed to a positive view. I have met many new friends who share many common interests, building great friendships along the way. I share no regrets from joining Head Hackers and meeting its incredible people.

Pictures from their exhibition at the Tusla Child and Youth Participation Conference



"discuss anxiety in a safe place"

Head Hackers has also received its first Investing in Children Membership™ award by Tusla as we've visited the Tusla Child and Youth Participation conference in April 2018. It was brilliant to get to go to the conference and show everyone what we have been doing, with great thanks and respect for the Tusla Child & Family Agency.

By Joshua, 16

Receiving their Investing in Children Membership™ Award

Seed Funding Focus—Athenry Youth-Led Research (West)

During the summer of 2017, Athenry Child and Family Support Network decided that it needed to work more closely with local young people in order to find out how they think their needs might be better met by statutory, community and voluntary service providers.



Exhibition at the Child and Youth Participation Conference

In September, with the support of a Tusla Seed Funding Child and Youth Participation Grant, the Child and Family Support Network worked with a team of 33 young researchers from the Transition Year programme across three local second level schools. Between October 2017 and April 2018 the young researchers participated in 7 facilitated workshops. Together, the researchers designed, developed, planned and conducted research within their schools. A survey questionnaire was made available to all second level students attending school in Athenry during the week of the 15th to the 19th January 2018. The research team visited every class in the three schools to promote the study and to encourage participation. In total 447 responses were received over the week. In May, a further 33 questionnaires were completed by young people working attending specific services in three other sites across the county.

The young researchers left a lasting impression on Marie Gibbons, the Tusla Research and Information Mentor who worked closely with them for the duration of the project. According to Marie, “the researchers were amazing. They were so enthusiastic. They were just thankful for the opportunity to take charge of how they, and their peers, would have their say. They really gave it a go. I think they learned a little about social research and a lot about how to work together as a team”.

With the research findings analysed and written-up, the research team hit the road. First, the researchers made a presentation to the Athenry Child and Family Support Network. In response, the network compiled a document categorising the research findings to reflect the remit of member organisations. This document is now informing the work of the network. After they attended the national Tusla Child and Youth Participation Conference in Athlone, the team presented their findings to the Galway Children and Young People’s Services Committee. At this meeting, the team outlined 10 key lessons for service providers. The committee unanimously agreed that these lessons need to be reflected in the next Galway Children and Young People’s Plan.

Finding an effective way of feeding back to the hundreds of survey respondents became one of the biggest challenges for the research team. After a lot of head scratching, the team decided to make a movie that could be shared via social media. “Working on the movie was my favourite thing” remembers one of the young researchers. “It was hard to come up with ideas to put across in a movie, all the things that we found out from the research. It was great fun though. I didn’t want to be in the movie so I did some of the camera work instead.” Within a week of being uploaded, the movie was viewed over 6000 times prompting Bank of Ireland to award the research team with a special Enterprise Award at the Bia Lover Festival in Athenry in June (see picture below).

“It was a great experience”, as one researcher put it, “we were able to take charge of how young people communicated with the people who get paid to work with us. Now they know what we think. The ball is in their court”.



Seed Funding Focus—The Unity Project (DML)

The Unity Project is a Tusla Dublin South West/Kildare West Wicklow Participation Seed Funding Initiative. The group comprises of young people who live in Kildare and are currently availing of services from Tusla.

The aim of this project was to develop a family friendly space in the social work department that promotes and supports positive family access. The young people involved identified the need to have a space where they can 'chill out', feel comfortable and improve the quality of family visits. The relocation of the Celbridge and Naas Social Work Departments to new buildings was the ideal opportunity to involve the young people and engage them in the project. They expressed their views on what was needed to improve child friendly spaces and these ideas were aired during meetings with stakeholders. Staff were able to negotiate and advocate on behalf of the young people and ensure their voices were heard.

The young people were creatively involved in the planning and design of the space and adopted a 'hands on' approach which involved selecting products from online catalogues and even a couple of shopping trips to local stores. Both rooms are now complete and they held a very successful official opening of their Celbridge room in September as part of Tusla's National Child and Family Support Week.

Since the re-design, the young people feel so much happier using the room and this has improved family visits.

"The new room is more child-friendly".

The Unity Project is one of the first groups to receive the Investing in Children Membership™ Award for the design of a child and youth friendly space. Their fantastic work has inspired other young people and staff to rethink and redesign their spaces. Many staff from across the region who wish to replicate the project have visited the rooms for inspiration. The Unity Project exhibited their progress at the Child and Youth Participation Conference 2018 and received overwhelming positive feedback for their work.

"The new room is bright, inviting and makes you feel happier."



The Unity Project receiving their Investing in Children Membership™ Award from Caroline Sheehan DSW/KWW Senior PPFS manager as part of Tusla's National Child and Family Support Week



Pictures of newly re-designed family rooms in Naas (left) and Celbridge (right)

Seed Funding Focus—Wellview Resource Centre (DNE)



Official Opening on 21 September 2018



The completed sensory garden



Receiving their Investing in Children Membership™ Award

The sensory garden at Wellview Family Resource Centre was initiated by a group of young children named 'Krafty Kids' who meet at the resource centre every Tuesday afternoon. The group comprises of boys and girls aged 6 – 10 years and it was the thoughts and imaginations of these children that inspired the creation of the sensory garden.

The children individually came up with their thoughts and plans for the garden and garden landscapers were contracted to collate the children's individual plans into one large garden design. The result has been an inviting, welcoming and colourful outdoor space which hosts a tree house, a sand pit, apple trees, a water feature, musical wind chimes and a fairy themed area in the garden with a fairy mural on one of the walls as well as a number of sensory garden herbs and plants like mint and lavender.

"It was the thoughts and imaginations of these children that inspired the creation of the sensory garden"

Funding was made available through Child and Youth Participation seed funding and the children involved in this project received an Investing in Children Membership™ Award. They also presented on their experiences of what it has been like for them to be involved in this project at the Tusla Child and Youth Participation Conference on the 26th April 2018.

After much hard work, dedication and commitment Wellview Family Resource Centre were delighted to officially open the gates of the sensory garden on the 21st September 2018. The event was officially opened by Paul Donnelly and by Cathriona Sheehan Principal Social Worker for PPFS in Dublin North. The event was attended by children from the Krafty Kids group, their parents and siblings, members of the Child and Family Support Network and the family support team for PPFS for Dublin North. A great afternoon was had by everyone who came to admire and celebrate the work of the children in Krafty Kids in the creation of a truly beautiful garden space which is a great addition to both the family resource centre and to the community.

"A truly beautiful garden space which is a great addition to both the family resource centre and to the community."

'Child Talks' celebrating World Children's Day

World Children's Day is a celebration of children and is celebrated on 20th November each year. As part of World Children's Day 2018, Dillon Owen (15) took part in a Tusla 'take over' where he represented Interim CEO Pat Smyth at external events, and attended key meetings with senior Tusla staff. We were delighted and honoured that Dillon undertook such a task and he did a fantastic job on the day. Dillon has been working hard on the Tusla 'Changing Futures' website for young people in recent years. The transition year student from Bray, Co Wicklow also presented with the DSE/Wicklow seed-funding group at the Tusla National Child and Youth Participation Conference in April 2018, and at the Signs of Safety Conference recently. As part of the 'take over' Dillon attended the 'Child Talks' event in Dublin City Hall which was organised by the Ombudsman for Children in partnership with several organisations including Tusla. The event was live streamed on Facebook and RTE News Now. Seven courageous young people Katie McKenna, Aoibheann Mangan, Grace Murphy, Amy Hunter, Fearghal O'Mahony, Margaret Ward and Sinead Pollack took to the stage to share their inspiring personal stories. The event was a huge success and was featured on the RTE news. It still available to view in the RTE player. We cannot wait to see what is planned for this year!



Pictured top to bottom: Dillon Owens in Tusla Headquarters Dublin and Aoibheann Mangan at 'Child Talks' in Dublin City Hall

Get Involved!

If you would like to get involved, submit content for inclusion in our newsletter or have any questions there is a Partnership and Participation Officer in every region.

Participation and Partnership Officers

DML

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West

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Child and Youth Participation Strategy

The Tusla Child and Youth Participation Strategy is almost ready to print. Over 300 children, young people and staff were consulted on the strategy and we are delighted to see it finally come to life in a colourful and engaging booklet. Based on feedback from the children and young people, there will also be an info graphic which summarises the strategy on one page. Keep an eye out for its launch in early 2019.

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.