



# **YOUNG PEOPLE AS RESEARCHERS**

**How Young People Are Heard and Helped**

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# TUSLA YOUTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE MAYO



# WHO WE ARE!

The Tusla Youth Advisory Committee are a group of young people aged 13-17 years from across County Mayo

We are divided into two groups –

- \*A sub-group from Comhairle na nOg: This group is currently reviewing literature, visiting buildings and meeting staff. They have an exhibition in the main hall today.
- \* A group from Ballina Youth and Family Support Project: We are completing research and working with the sub-group.



# RESEARCH IS HARD...RIGHT??

- Lets test that theory...
- **Are you on social media?**

***DM***

***Streak***

***Snapback***



# WHY HAVE YOUNG PEOPLE AS RESEARCHERS?

## Pros

- More understandable for young people when questions are worded by another young person.
- Questions may be more relatable
- New insight is provided by young people
- Young people learn valuable skills
  - Communication
  - Problem solving
  - Analytical skills
  - Co-operation
  - Public speaking

## Challenges

- May be difficult for young people to find time to carry out the research
- Young people may not be taken seriously as researchers
- Same schools may not wish to participate
- Difficult to make links to get your research 'out there'



# Research Training with the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre – NUI Galway



## HOW WE STARTED:

- Met as a group to discuss the different ideas we had for research
- Completed a one day training with Danielle and Kate from NUI Galway Research department.
- We decided to find out:
  - Young peoples knowledge of Tusla
  - How young people access support
  - How do young people want to receive information – online or on paper
- We found the guidelines very helpful and it gave us a clear vision on what we wished to achieve in the future of our project.





- In August 2016 a piece of research was published by the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre. It looked at the Public Awareness of Parenting, Prevention and Family Support Services.
  - Carried out with adults
  - 64.7% of respondents had not heard of Tusla
  - 25% of respondents knew who Tusla were and the remaining 10.3% were unsure.
- We decided to ask a few of the same questions to see if young people had similar knowledge.

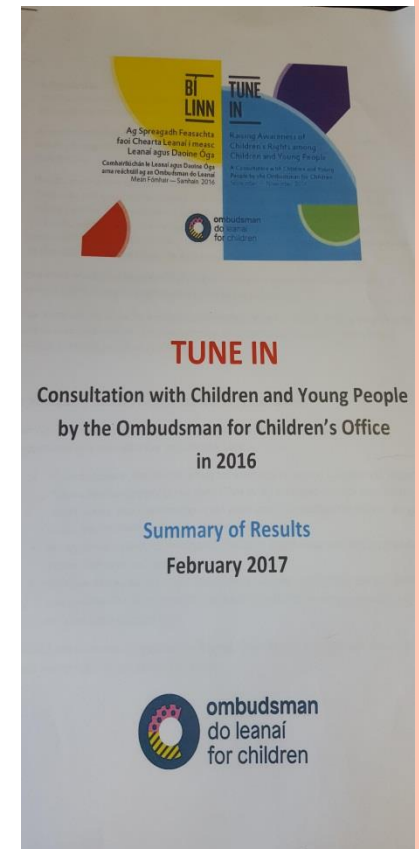
## WHAT RESEARCH HAS ALREADY BEEN DONE?





## Tune In

- **The Ombudsman for Children's Office carried out a consultation with children and young people between Sept – Dec 2016**
- **2,148 children and young people took part in this research.**
- **Children and Young people said that websites and social media are among the places they would like to get information.**
- **Teachers and parents/guardians are among the people that children and young people trust and would be happy to receive information from.**



# OUR QUESTIONNAIRE!

- We used a mixture of open and closed questions.
- Members of Comhairle na nOg assisted us with sending out our questionnaires. This meant we covered the whole of the county!
- We had a very high response rate and received 248 questionnaires back
  - To encourage people to send back the questionnaires we gave them stamped addressed envelopes

**Tusla Advisory Committee Questionnaire**

Hello, we are a Tusla Advisory Group and we are carrying out research regarding the awareness and knowledge of Teenagers about Tusla and their services. It would be much appreciated if you could take a few minutes of your time to fill out this short survey.

All information will be totally anonymous and you are not asked to put your name or school on the questionnaire.

Thank you for taking the time to fill this in.

Please tick the boxes:

1. Gender: Male  Female

2. Age: 12-14  15-17

3. (a) Do you know what Tusla is?  
Yes  No  Not Sure

(b) If yes, do you think Tusla is...  
 a branch of HSE  
 Social Work Department  
 New Child and Family Agency for support and protection

4. (a) Do you know what a Family Support Service is?  
Yes  No

(b) If so, explain in your own words what a family support service is...  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. (a) What problems do teenagers face daily?  
i. Alcohol   
ii. Drugs   
iii. Sexuality   
iv. Mental Health   
v. Body Image   
vi. Exam Pressure   
vii. Other \_\_\_\_\_

6. Do you know where you could access support if you had a problem?  
Yes  No

If yes please list below:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. How do you find/access information on support services?  
Tick all which apply  
 Posters  
 Leaflets  
 Websites  
 Social Media  
 Apps  
 Friends  
 Library  
 Trusted adult (please tick)  
 Parent  
 GP  
 Teacher  
 Youth Worker  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

8. If you had a choice of how to receive information on support services how would you like to get it i.e. online or on paper?  
online  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for filling in this questionnaire!!

# SORTING OUT THE RESPONSES!



# OUR RESULTS!

## The Basics

- 145 male
- 103 female

## 248 Questionnaires Returned

### AGE Range:

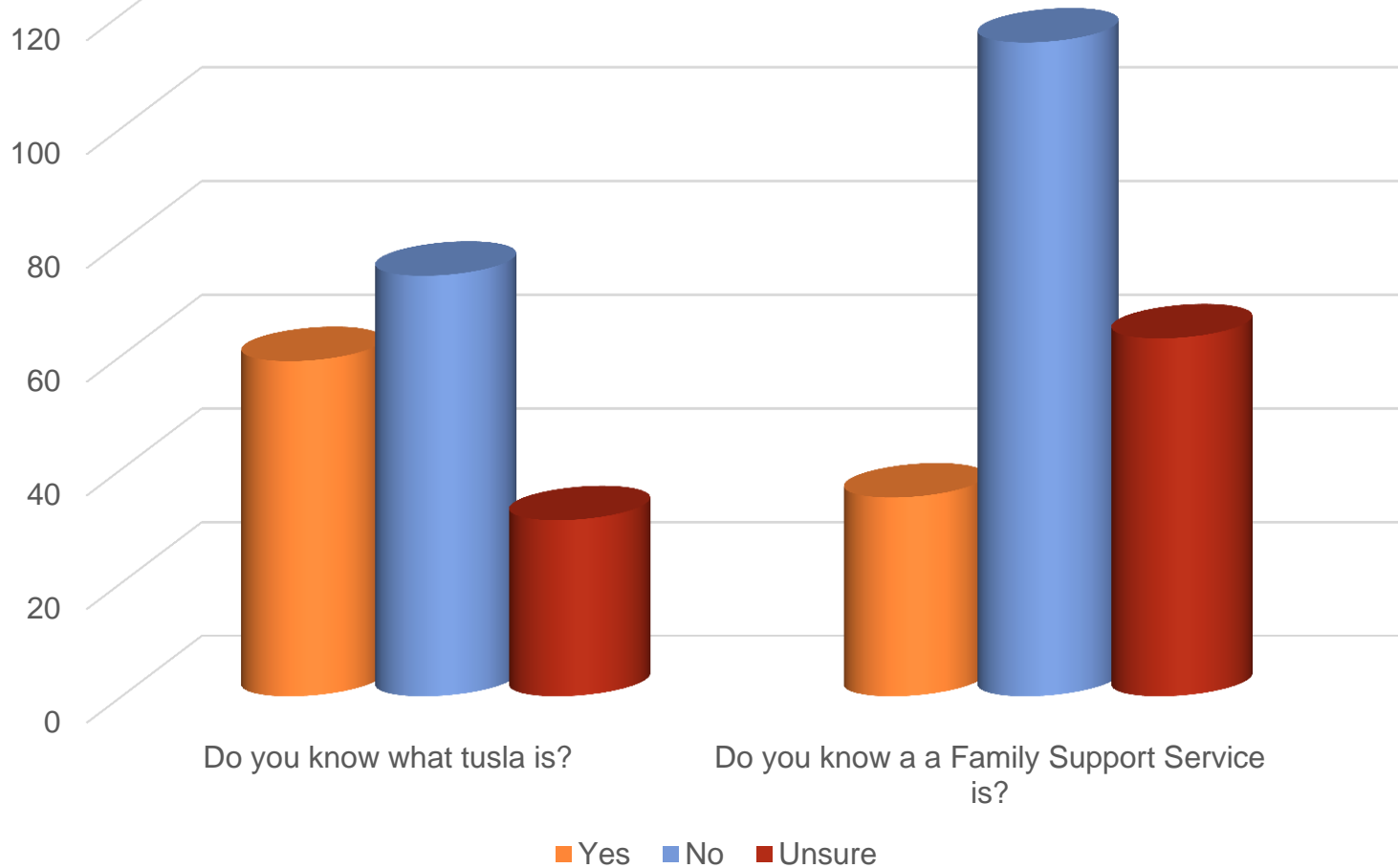
- 12-14 years – 72
- 15-17 years – 152
- 18+ years – 23
- (one person did not answer)



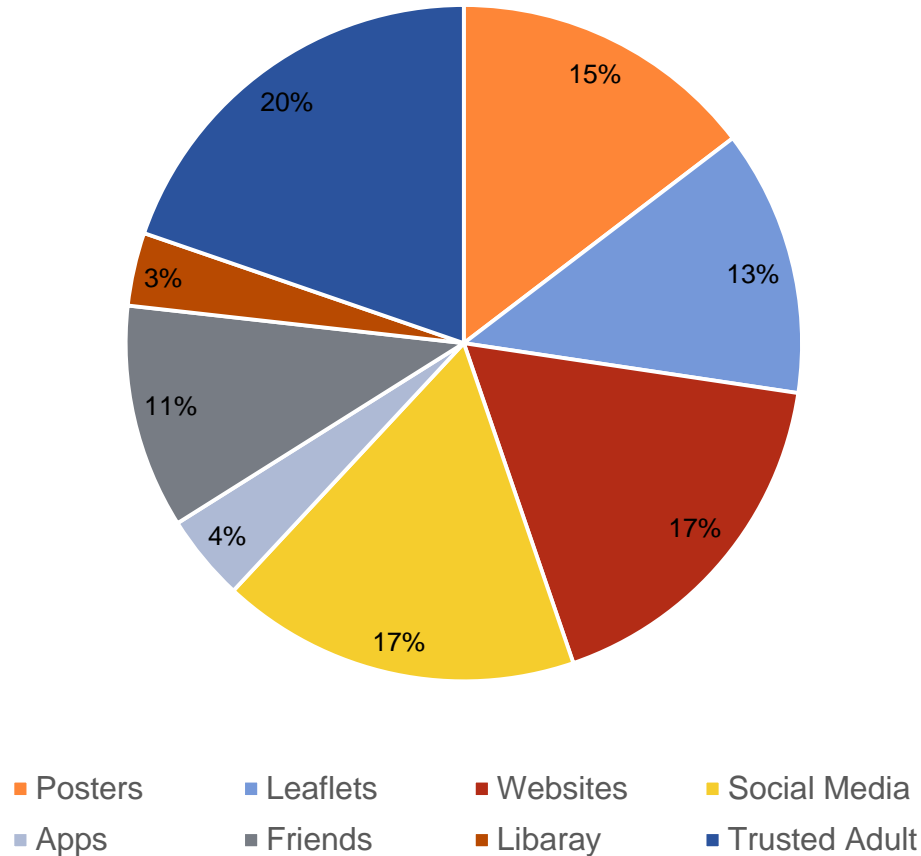
# FINDINGS FROM OUR RESEARCH



- 36% of respondents knew what Tusla was, 64% did not or were unsure.
- 16% of respondents knew what a Family Support Service was, 74% did not or were unsure. 69% of the respondents could give an accurate description of a Family Support Service e.g. *“a service that can intervene in issues that are difficult...they can provide support...”*



## How Young People Access Information



**20% of young people accessed information from a trusted adult with parents and teachers being the preferred people.**

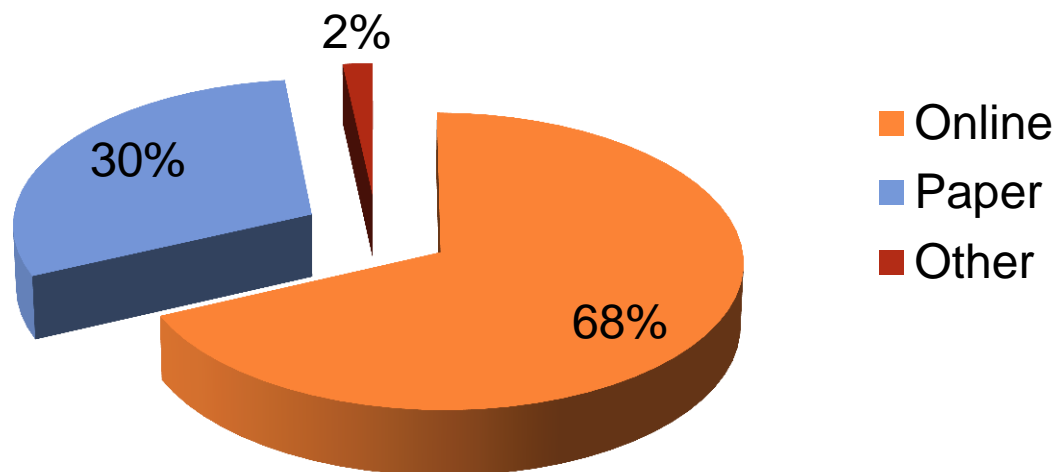
**Social media and Websites were the next most popular way of accessing information.**

**Apps and the Libaray were the least popular method of accessing information among our respondents**





## How would you like to receive information on support services...online or on paper?



Other ideas included:

Back of toilet door

CAMHS

Helplines

MindSpace Mayo

Childline

Family

Friends

School

Counsellors

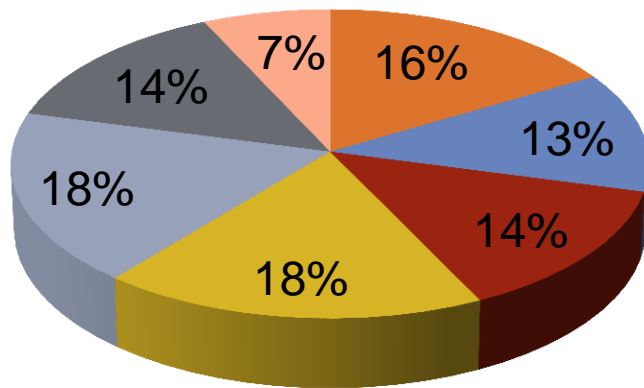
HSE/Tusla

Online

Teachers



# What Problems do Teenagers Face Daily?



- Alcohol
- Drugs
- Sexuality
- Mental Health
- Body Image
- Exam Pressure
- Other

## Others included:

- Relationships
- Bullying
- Friends
- Balance of school life and other activities
- Anxiety
- Social Networking
- Family Problems
- Social Pressure
- Money & Jobs



# GENDER DIFFERENCES

## Male

- 74% did not know or were unsure of what Tusla is.
- 70% would like information online.
- 66% would look for information or support from a parent
- 20% had no trusted adult they would look for information or support from

## Female

- 73% did not know or were unsure of what Tusla is.
- 69% would like information online.
- 58% would look for information or support from a parent
- 27% had no trusted adults they would look for information or support from



- 86% of 12-14 year olds, and 68% of 15-17 year olds and 73% of 18+ year olds did not know or were not sure what Tusla is
- 80% of those who said that they knew what Tusla was could correctly identify that it is the New Child and Family Agency for Support and Protection.



## COMPARISONS

### Public Awareness of Parenting Prevention and Family Support Services

- 65% of adults did not know what Tusla was according to this research

### Children and Young Persons Advisory Committee Mayo: How young people are Heard and Helped

- 64% of young people did not know what Tusla was according to our research



# COMPARISONS

## Tune In: Consultation by the Ombudsman for Children 2017

- Children and Young People said they would like to receive information about children's rights on Social media and websites
- The OCO found that Parents and guardians were among the people they trusted most to give them information

Children and Young Persons Advisory Committee Mayo:

## How young people are Heard and Helped

- Our research also found that young people like to find information through websites and social media
- Our research also pointed to parents and teachers being the preferred 'trusted adult' to seek support and information from



# OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- More emphasis on information to be put online and on social media instead of on leaflets.
- There should be more positive coverage on the media.
- Further promote knowledge surrounding who Tusla are and the work they do.
- An advertising campaign around what Tusla do.





## PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

- We intend to present our findings to the Managers and Staff of Tusla.
- We hope to bring our findings to NUIG research department.
- We propose the creation of a video in partnership with the research department to promote youth research.



# WHAT WOULD WE DO DIFFERENTLY?

- In our questionnaires:
  - A pilot questionnaire in a school rather than within the project.
  - We forgot to include a telephone number for principals to contact with any queries about our questionnaires.
  - We would have included an age bracket for 18+
  - We would put a 'please turn over' note at the bottom of the first page!
  - A logo would have proved the authenticity of our questionnaires.



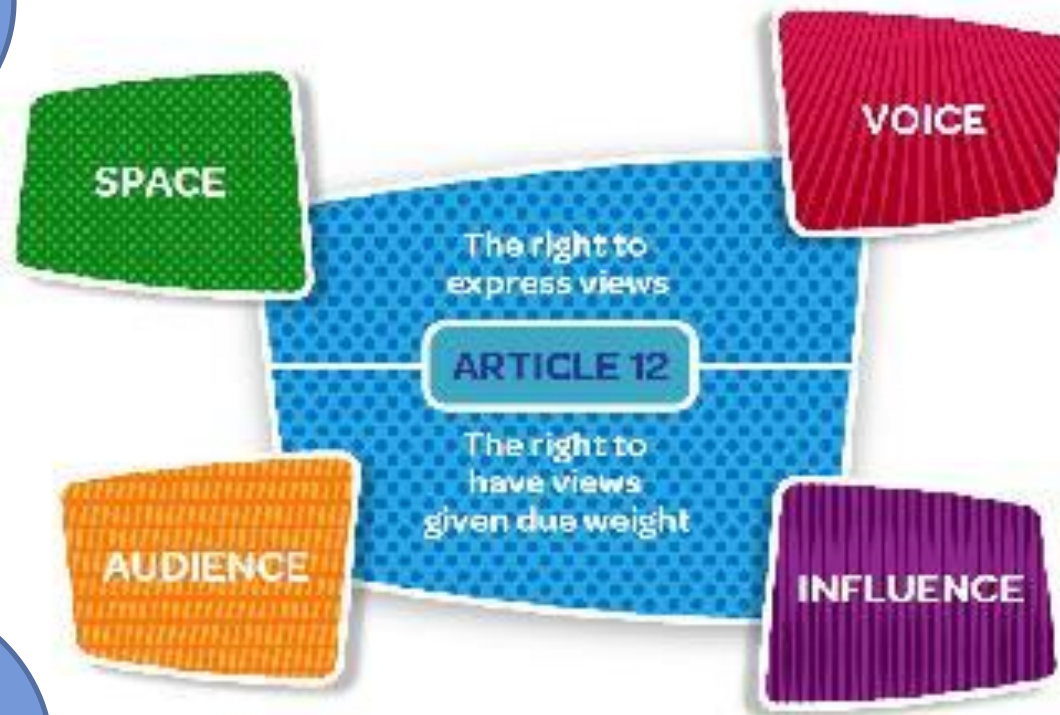
# WHAT DID WE LEARN?

- We learned that teamwork is vital for the completion of any project.
- We also gained numerous valuable skills such as:
  - *Research skills*
  - *Communication skills*
  - *Analytical skills*
  - *Organisational skills*
  - *Advocacy*



# YOUTH PARTICIPATION

We had time and space to work on this project



Our voice was key in all decisions making around this project

We will share our findings with NUI Galway, Tusla Management in Mayo via presentation and a written report

We hope to influence the way information is offered to young people



QUESTIONS??