

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

Garda Youth Diversion Projects

Virtual Conference 2021

27-28 April 2021

This report of the Garda Youth Diversion Project Virtual Conference 2021 was prepared for the Department of Justice by Dr. Annabel Egan.

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1. Introduction

The Garda Youth Diversion Projects Annual Conference 2021 was hosted via Zoom by the Department of Justice.

The event, which ran over two half-days in April, was very well attended with 394 delegates on day one and 392 delegates on day two including youth justice workers, members of An Garda Síochána, six conference speakers, members of the event planning team and other relevant members of staff at the Department of Justice (see Annex 1 for further detail on attendance).

First and foremost, the conference offered delegates an opportunity to reflect collectively on their own practice and experience during what has been a uniquely challenging period for youth justice workers and young people taking part in GYDPs nationwide due to the isolation imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic. Crucially, the conference also provided delegates with an opportunity to consider the new Youth Justice Strategy 2021-2027, launched just prior to the conference on 15 April 2021.

The conference was hosted online by Deaglán Ó Briain, Criminal Justice Policy (Community Safety) and was opened by James Browne T.D., Minister of State for Law Reform. The Minister's address was followed by a presentation from Brendan Sheehy, Department of Justice on the Youth Justice Strategy. Other invited guest speakers on day one included Dr. Sean Redmond, Research Evidence into Policy, Programmes and Practice and Chief Superintendent Colette Quinn, of the Youth Diversion Bureau. Assistant Commissioner Paula Hilman gave a short welcoming address to attendees on day two and the conference was also addressed by invited guest speakers Dr. Ian Marder, Maynooth University and Dr. Sharon Lambert, University College Cork.

The conference also included a series of showcase presentations prepared by a total of seven GYDPs. These presentations demonstrated how projects have stayed connected with young people despite the unprecedented circumstances in which they have been operating since

March 2020 and the positive impact that they have been able to have on the lives of young participants as a result.

During the conference, in addition to guest speaker presentations and GYDP showcase presentations, delegates also had the opportunity to engage in facilitated discussion of a total of five key topics including not only the new Youth Justice Strategy but also: the Action Research Project; the Best Practice Development Team; the European Social Fund; and the National GYDP Advisory Committee.

The conference closed with a presentation of pre-recorded interviews with two young people about their experience of participating in two different GYDPs during the pandemic.

This report summarises each of the presentations delivered during the conference and sets out the main points raised in the breakout room discussions. Section 5 draws together the main themes to emerge from the day.

2. Speaker presentations

Opening address

James Browne T.D., Minister of State for Law Reform

Minister Browne welcomed delegates to the conference and began his presentation by recognising the commitment shown by youth justice workers in ‘keeping going’ during an exceptionally difficult year and in the face of many seemingly insurmountable obstacles.

Minister Browne welcomed the development of the Youth Justice Strategy and the work of former Minister of State David Staunton and the Expert Steering Group in guiding it.

He noted that the strength of the Strategy lies in its consideration of the “full range of issues relevant to children and young people at risk of coming into contact with the criminal justice system, from early intervention and preventative work, including family support, to diversion from crime, through to court processes and facilities, supervision of offenders, detention and reintegration and support post-release.”

He said that the immediate priority for the strategy was to enhance GYDPs with four key services:

- Services for harder to reach young people in conflict with the law;
- Family services;
- Early intervention for the 8-11 year old cohort; and
- Support for school retention.

Minister Browne noted that the Strategy also aims to achieve full national coverage for the GYDP programme within two years. He also noted that the Strategy is evidence based and recognised the work of the University of Limerick partnership in this regard in providing research on cutting-edge initiatives such as Greentown and the Bail Supervision Scheme.

Minister Browne concluded his address by highlighting a new community-based approach to tackling the anti-social use of scramblers that has recently received funding approval.

Youth Justice Strategy: Overview and priorities

Mr. Brendan Sheehy, Criminal Policy/Community Safety, Department of Justice

Mr. Sheehy's presentation reinforced many of the points made by Minister Browne and provided an informative overview of the background, development, approach, principles, priorities and structures of the Youth Justice Strategy. In particular, Mr. Sheehy emphasised the priority that the Strategy gives to supporting and developing the GYDP network as well as the need for a strong evidence base to guide this process.

Mr. Sheehy highlighted the fact that only 3% of young people engage in criminal behaviour and only a small proportion of this figure develop serious offending patterns. He said that children and young people engaged in criminal behaviour are disproportionately disadvantaged and have often been exposed to multiple adverse childhood events. He then outlined the key principles of the strategy which are:

- Early intervention and family support;
- A rights based approach;
- Recognition of the need to involve children and young people in decision-making;
- The need for collaborative action;
- The need to be evidence informed.

Mr. Sheehy said that the strategy would ensure a consistent focus on "children and young people who are vulnerable to involvement in criminal or anti-social behaviour". He identified the role of the GYDP network as essential in achieving this goal along with the establishment of effective governance structures for the Strategy supported by a rigorous evidence base.

Mr. Sheehy confirmed that the Strategy made a commitment to ensuring full coverage of GYDP services across the state in the next two years assuming the required budget was allocated. In so doing, he emphasised the need to focus on:

- The challenge of disengagement from education;
- Incorporating successful approaches for engaging harder to reach young people;

- Extending specialised projects (Y-JARC, Greentown, Bail Supervision Scheme etc);
- Developing a clear system for assessing progress in delivering on the Strategy;
- Training for relevant personnel; and
- Coordination with other services.

He said that consideration would also be given to the development of a diversion pilot project targeting young people in the 18-24 age bracket. Mr. Sheehy said an initial discussion paper would be circulated on this issue in due course.

Mr. Sheehy concluded his presentation by outlining the progress reporting measures put in place for the Strategy including but not limited to preparation of an: implementation statement; annual update; and mid-term review after three years.

REPPP

Seán Redmond, REPPP, University of Limerick

Dr. Seán Redmond gave a presentation on the work of the REPPP team at the University of Limerick.

Dr. Redmond said that the purpose of the REPPP was to grow the Irish evidence base in relation to youth justice. He highlighted the innovative strategic relationship between REPPP and the new Youth Justice Strategy not only in terms of providing the evidence base for its development but also its implementation and evaluation.

In relation to implementation of the strategy, Dr. Redmond remarked that the strategy is unusual in the level of attention paid within it to the challenge of implementation. He recognised the critical role of practitioners in making change happen on the ground and said that implementation of the strategy would benefit from their expertise, pragmatism, agility and willingness to be innovative.

Dr. Redmond then introduced the core work that the REPPP team has been doing to explore 'change relationships' between youth justice workers and young people. He said that gaining

a better understanding of what constitutes a successful relationship and how to cultivate such relationships between youth justice workers and young people is important not only because about 60% of the GYDP budget is spent on relationship building between youth justice workers and young people but also because of the transformative properties of such relationships. He said the REPPP was working closely with a small number of GYDPs on this with the intention of developing and testing co-designed guidelines on change relationships for youth justice workers.

Dr. Redmond concluded by saying that the team look forward to sharing the findings of their research in the near future and also invited delegates to read and contribute to @gydp_relationship_stories on Instagram.

Early Life Trauma and Implications for Garda Youth Diversion Services

Chief Superintendent Colette Quinn, An Garda Síochána

Chief Superintendent Colette Quinn opened her presentation by recognising the commitment shown by youth justice workers and JLOs over the previous 12 months and thanking them for this on her own behalf and on behalf of all staff in the National Office.

Chief Superintendent Quinn said that over the years it has been observed time and time again that trauma is a factor in the lived experience of young people that come into contact with the Diversion Programme. As a result, in 2019 research was commissioned to retrospectively review the impact of Adverse Childhood Events (ACES) on children and young people formerly participating in GYDP projects.

The research involved a sample of 125 previous GYDP participants and demonstrated that 63% of the young people in question had experienced four or more adverse childhood events before the age of 18. As such, their ACEs profile was more similar to that of the homeless population or the adult population involved in the criminal justice system than to children and young people in the general population. The research also found that in the view of service providers, trauma informed practice was effective but that to date little if any formal training was being offered to JLOs and youth workers in this area. In addition, the research

found strong support among JLOs and youth workers for such training and for embedding trauma informed practice in the GYDPs.

Chief Superintendent Quinn then went on to ask whether a trauma informed justice system could help young people to better manage their aggressive behaviours, reduce recidivism and enhance the safety and efficacy of project staff. She said if so, the next logical steps that might be taken to achieve this could include:

- A trauma informed policing pilot;
- Adaptation of the existing Irish Trauma Care programme to meet the particular needs of youth justice workers and JLOs;
- Establishment of a panel of trainers; and
- A 12 month pilot in a number of geographic areas including a robust review and evaluation.

Chief Superintendent Quinn said such an approach might support the key principles of the Youth Justice Strategy and deliver:

- A national training programme adapted to GYDP specific examples (including videos and case studies);
- A panel of colleagues trained as trainers;
- A large cohort of frontline workers trained in trauma informed practice;
- Relevant quantitative and qualitative data; and
- Recommendations for further expansion.

She confirmed that co-creation and co-ownership of any such training by youth workers and JLOs was envisaged although some element of the training would be role specific. She said that ideally all sectors of the criminal justice system would ultimately have access to such training, not just JLOs and youth justice workers but also lawyers and community Gardaí etc. With regard to timeframe, Chief Superintendent Quinn said pilots were ready to go in some

areas and would be launched as soon as possible and by the third quarter of this year at the latest.

Chief Superintendent Quinn concluded her presentation by describing the new Youth Justice Strategy as ground breaking in establishing for the first time a structure that would compel senior managers in all relevant organisations not only to buy-in to the Strategy but to support front-line to deliver it. She said that as such, the Strategy had reinforced her hope and passion for youth justice work and would act as a signpost for the whole sector.

Assistant Commissioner Paula Hilman

Assistant Commissioner Paula Hilman briefly addressed the conference to welcome delegates on day two, to introduce herself and her work in overseeing the Garda Youth Diversion Bureau. She welcomed the new Youth Justice Strategy the implementation of which she said she was fully committed to. She also thanked delegates for their commitment and flexibility over the previous year and looked forward to the opportunity to meet in person at the 2022 GYDP conference.

Mainstreaming restorative youth justice and youth work

Dr. Ian Marder, University of Maynooth

Dr. Ian Marder said that under the Children Act, JLOs are able to use restorative cautions to bring those harmed by crime or conflict, and those responsible for that harm together to engage in a dialogue enabling everyone affected to play a part in repairing the harm done and finding a positive way forward. Dr. Marder said this is the definition of restorative justice and it offers enormous benefits to both perpetrators and victims. A total of 716 restorative cautions were offered in 2020.

Dr. Marder said that when offered, victim participation in restorative practice is high (73%); victim and offender satisfaction is high (93% and 94%), and the rate of compliance with agreed outcomes is also high (89%). As a result, Dr. Marder said he was advocating the use of restorative cautions as a default position that should be universally available and on offer to victims. He said that this was in line with the 'principle of parsimony', or minimum intervention. He said this principle is informed by youth justice research all over the world

which demonstrates that when dealing with youth offending, minimal criminal justice intervention is in the best interests of victims and offenders. In this regard, he highlighted the difference between punitive intervention through the criminal justice system and voluntary intervention including welfare based and youth work interventions. Dr. Marder noted a high degree of interest in this issue among delegates and provided a link to further material:

https://howardleague.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Justice_for_young_people_web.pdf (pp. 3-10)

In terms of methodology, Dr. Marder said 'circles' has been used as a restorative practice with great affect by Gardaí in several areas and recommended its further roll out.

Dr. Marder described the Youth Justice Strategy as a 'reboot' for restorative justice. In line with the new European framework he said that he hoped to see JLOs supported to use restorative cautions more widely and to offer this to victims whenever available.

Dr. Marder concluded by alerting delegates to an existing podcast on restorative justice as well as case studies on its impact and inviting participants to contact him if interested in joining the Restorative Justice Strategy for Change Stakeholders Group (see below).

- <https://restorativejustice.ie/case-studies/>
- <https://audioboom.com/channels/5022933>
- ian.marder@mu.ie

Applying trauma research to service design and delivery

Dr. Sharon Lambert, University College Cork

Dr. Sharon Lambert's presentation began with an overview of the definition of psychological trauma, which she confirmed as unique to individuals, and the different types of trauma.

These include:

- Single incident;
- Complex;
- Developmental;

- Intergenerational;
- Historical; and
- Related to the experience of immigrants, refugees or ethnic minorities.

Dr. Lambert discussed Neuroscience, the scientific study of the nervous system, and what this reveals about how trauma affects the brain. She said that when the brain is under stress/experiencing trauma the Prefrontal Cortex or 'thinking brain' is under-activated whereas the Amygdala which is the 'emotional brain' and controls instinctive responses is overactivated. A brain in trauma is not primed to learn or think rationally but to recognise and respond to danger and that this should be taken into account when designing services. She also emphasised that the Prefrontal cortex does not mature until age 23-25 years. She said that as a result she would strongly advocate the need for a special court service, addiction services and mental health services for persons aged under 25 separate from and distinct to adult services.

Dr. Lambert said that youth services needed to develop an organisational culture that:

- Understands the roll of stress/trauma in offending and drug taking;
- Supports staff and young people addressing/experiencing trauma;
- Provides a space for reflective practice;
- Is trauma informed or at least aware; and
- Practices self-compassion.

She concluded by saying that the best approach and most useful intervention was to help young people experiencing trauma to feel love and a sense of belonging by being "that one good adult." She said this is something that youth workers are uniquely well placed to offer because they are in a position to develop trusting relationships with young people which are in themselves transformative.

3. Showcase presentations and interviews

Donegal GYDP

The Donegal GYDP showcase video highlighted the work done by the project and the challenges of being adjacent to the border, being a county wide project, Brexit and in particular the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic. The video featured youth workers, young people, JLOs, parents and guardians involved in the project.

The showcase demonstrated how the project stayed connected with young people throughout the pandemic by phone and online offering a range of creative activities including: art challenges; online fitness, dancing, cooking and music making; outdoor activities; and a summer programme.

Young people and parents commented on how much the programme had supported them and JLOs described the project as a vital resource in the community.

MEAS, Galway

The MEAS GYDP in Galway showcase video focussed on the Follaín (Full-on) project, a small group exercise and meditation programme offered online during the pandemic. The presentation featured feedback from young participants who identified a range of benefits from their participation including:

- Improvement in mood;
- A sense of achievement;
- Embedding positive daily habits;
- Providing a chance to socialise; and
- Creating a better atmosphere at home.

SWAY, Waterford

The SWAY GYDP in Waterford showcase video presented some of the short film work completed by young people involved in the project in 2016 and 2020. The presentation

included clips from numerous short films on subjects including drug crime, teenage pregnancy and suicide. The presentation also included a discussion of the challenges involved in delivering the programme, the skills that young people learned from it and the outcomes achieved such as:

- Improved relationships;
- Enhanced empathy;
- Reduced impulsivity;
- Better understanding of the issues involved;
- Awareness of the supports available;
- Destigmatise taboo subjects; and
- Opportunities for celebration of achievements.

HUB, Carlow

The video presentation from the Hub GYDP in Carlow focused on a community of practice set up during the pandemic for a small team of six one-to-one youth workers involved in the Hub, the YARC youth work project and the County Carlow Drugs Initiative.

The purpose of the community of practice was for workers to help and support each other professionally and personally and to tackle isolation during a prolonged period of remote working.

Numerous benefits for workers were identified including:

- Feeling supported;
- Learning from each other;
- Exploring new ideas;
- Empowering workers to take control of their own space; and
- Reducing duplication of effort.

Although the initiative was launched as a short term response to the pandemic, the benefits are such that its continuation is intended.

The presentation ended by inviting interested delegates to contact the team for more detailed workers testimonials.

SYI, Limerick

The showcase video from the Southside Youth Initiative GYDP in Limerick featured a case study focusing on one young person previously involved in the project. The young person featured in the video identified numerous positive outcomes from participation in the programme including:

- A reason to get of the house;
- Something to do;
- A way to meet other people, including people from other communities;
- Having a trusted adult to speak to/ask for advice;
- Reduced impulsivity;
- No further offences; and
- Having fun (especially overnights).

WEB and ORB GYDP

The WEB and ORB GYDPs showcase videos focused on the issue of racial and ethnic integration in Onger, Tyrrelstown and Blanchardstown. The need to tackle unconscious bias and break down the barriers that exclude people of colour and ethnic minorities from having a fair shot in life and reaching their full potential was highlighted as the first and most important step to be taken by the projects.

Integration has been a priority for Foróige which has run the WEB and ORB projects for many years since the organisation launched its first integration strategy in 2009. Since that time, various programmes including Activating Empathy, In2Gr8 and the Blanchardstown World Cup have been developed to advance the objective of integration in Dublin 15. These

programmes work with young people through art, music, technology, football and spoken word.

The presentation recognised that in racially and ethnically diverse areas, families of origin often fear integration and that in order to secure parental buy-in, focusing on issues that matter to parents is a deliberate strategy. As a result, for example in the African community, education is at the heart of several programmes. The presentation ended by highlighting the findings of a series of roundtable meetings that took place in Dublin 15 in the aftermath of the murder of George Nkencho. These include the identification of a range of challenges facing young people of colour and from ethnic minorities in Ireland such as:

- Lack of cultural sensitivity in education;
- Media representation;
- Prejudice in employment; and
- Lack of access to safe places.

Showcase interviews

The conference included a presentation of pre-recorded interviews with two young people from the WEB GYDP in Dublin and the JUNCTION GYDP in Ballinasloe. The young people in question spoke about the circumstances that brought them to these projects, what they liked about the projects and how they benefitted from them. Both young people identified the relationship with their key youth justice worker as transformative and encouraged other young people in similar situations to take the opportunity to get involved.

“It gave me hope and helped me to build a positive mindset.” Participant, WEB GYDP, Dublin.

“It helped me to visualise myself and what I wanted for myself: what habits I would have to drop or adopt in order to succeed.” Previous participant, JUNCTION GYDP, Galway.

4. Breakout sessions

In the afternoon, participants were divided into smaller discussion groups to explore one of five topics including the (in alphabetical order):

- Best Practice Development Team;
- Action Research Project;
- National GYDP Advisory Committee;
- European Social Fund; and the
- Youth Justice Strategy.

Each discussion group had a facilitator and a note taker to record participants' input. This material was collated by the rapporteur after the conference for inclusion in this report.

Best Practice Development Team

The Best Practice Development Team presentation focused on Restorative Practices, what they are and how they feed into Restorative Justice procedures. During the breakout session a video interview with individuals involved in developing the RP training process was also shared. These individuals identified numerous key strengths for the RP approach including:

- Techniques applicable to the frontline of youth justice work.
- The use of talking pieces and restorative circles that enable better outcomes for the target group.
- Methods of working with young people that enhance existing initiatives.

The next steps for the development and roll out of the RP training were identified as:

- 10 trainings to be delivered to end of 2021, all online;
- Format of 5 days (3 for learning + 2 reviewing);
- Optimum 2 persons per training, to support implementation in the workplace.

The group was then addressed by Hugh Campbell, Senior Lecturer in RP, Ulster University. Mr. Campbell welcomed the new Youth Justice Strategy which he described as ‘fused’ with restorative practice ideas including in particular Objectives 1.5, 2.6 and 2.8.

Action Research Project

The Action Research Project presentation focused on the work of the team in the area of relationships. As elsewhere during the conference, the presentation emphasised the transformative positive impact that successful relationships can have in the lives of young people and said that over 60% of the €13 million GYDP budget is essentially dedicated to relationship building.

The presentation outlined the work being done by the Action Research Project on relationships at 16 separate trial sites culminating in the development of ‘interim guidance documents’ on ‘how to’ build effective relationships in GYDP projects.

The document identifies seven core skills, attributes and practices as central to successful relationship building. These include:

- Being fully committed;
- Communicating with empathy;
- Making connections and advocating;
- Being young person centred and flexible;
- Self-reflection;
- Being honest and challenging constructively; and
- Guiding, inspiring hope and building agency.

National GYDP Advisory Committee

The National GYDP Advisory Committee presentation outlined the history, vision, purpose, membership, key objectives, working methods and future priorities of the Committee.

Delegates were informed that the National GYDP Advisory Committee was established in 2019 as a platform for GYDP Stakeholders to come together nationally to support, challenge, debate and influence the future direction of GYDP projects. The Committee is part of the overall Youth Justice Strategy structure and reports directly to the Youth Justice Oversight Group. It meets every 6-8 weeks and is comprised of two representatives from each of the following:

- Crosscare;
- The Department of Justice;
- Extern;
- Foróige;
- An Garda Síochána;
- The Independent Project Network;
- REPPP; and
- Youth Work Ireland.

The purpose of the Committee is to “support and inform the strategic direction of the work of GYDP in line with the Youth Justice Strategy” and its vision is that “all young people in the criminal justice system can access quality GYDP services.”

The current and future priorities of the Committee were described as:

- Building commitment among stakeholders to engage with the GYDP;
- Identifying and supporting progression of key actions in the new Youth Justice Strategy related to the GYDP (including 1.2.2(f); 1.2.2(g); 1.5; 2.1; 2.2.1; 2.8; and 2.9);
- Continuing to support the BPDT and the ARP;
- Developing a three year vision and plan for the BPDT and the ARP.

European Social Fund

The European Social Fund presentation updated delegates on the current ESF programme, of which the GYDP is an integral part, as well as on the new 2021-2027 ESF+ programme which is currently under development.

Delegates were informed that ESF+ is the EU instrument for investing in people. The objective of ESF+ is to achieve high employment levels, fair social protection and a skilled and resilient workforce ready for the future world of work as well as inclusive and cohesive societies that aim to eradicate poverty and deliver on the principles of the European Pillar on Social Rights.

Ireland's allocation of EU funding for the ESF+ in 2021-27 is €451m (2018 prices). ESF+ in Ireland will be delivered through a single national operational programme managed by the ESF Managing Authority in the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science.

To date, six high level themes including the following have been identified, with theme four being of particular relevance to the GYDP projects:

1. Access to employment, including for underrepresented groups;
2. Increasing female labour market participation and enhancing access to affordable, quality childcare;
3. Skills and lifelong learning for all, with a focus on green and digital transition;
4. Tackling poverty and social exclusion (at least 25%);
5. Food and basic material assistance for the most deprived; and
6. Social Innovation.

Delegates were informed that it is hoped a draft operational programme will be in place by the end of the summer for further consultation in advance of submission to the European Commission.

Youth Justice Strategy

The Youth Justice Strategy breakout session opened with a presentation delivered by officials involved in its development from the Department of Justice and An Garda Síochána.

The membership and function of the Youth Justice Oversight Group comprised of senior Officials from the Department of Justice and Senior Gardaí was discussed as well as how this Group will interact with the National GYDP Advisory Committee.

Delegates were informed that numbers in the diversion programme have reduced from 9,842 in 2019 to 8,169 in 2020 and that while these statistics are welcome, the aim is to reduce this further. In order to achieve this, early intervention is key and the strategy provides a strong mandate for working with children at risk and their families before they interact with the criminal justice system as well as with those unsuitable for the GYDP.

Delegates were informed that the BPDT and the ARP in Limerick will have an essential role in progressing the development of services for children in the 8-11 age group and an assessment of the current pilot is already underway.

In this regard, it was remarked that evidence from the Greentown study and anecdotally from members of the Gardaí and youth justice workers highlights the impact of trauma and chaotic personal circumstances on young people engaging in criminal behaviour and this needs to be recognised in delivering on the objectives of the strategy.

The possibility of interagency working, including cooperation with partners in the probation service, bail supervision and the courts was seen as positive as was the fact that Tusla and the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth are named in the strategy as stakeholders.

The new strategy also envisages the development of services for those in the 18-24 year old category in cooperation with front line workers. In this regard it was remarked that a bottom up approach that gives due regard to the lived experience of young people involved in the criminal justice system is required.

5. Conclusions

The main themes to emerge from the conference were the impact of Covid-19 and the transformative potential of the new Youth Justice Strategy.

The impact of Covid-19

The impact of Covid-19 on the youth justice sector was a central and recurrent theme throughout the two-day event. The resilience and flexibility of youth justice workers, young people and JLOs as well as their willingness to adapt to an entirely new way of working for a prolonged period of time became obvious early on. The use of creative methods to stay connected with young people involved in GYDPs online featured prominently as did the use of online tools to support the development of self-care communities among youth justice workers.

The transformative potential of the new Youth Justice Strategy

The new Youth Justice Strategy was welcomed as a ground breaking document with the potential to transform the way youth justice services are designed, delivered and evaluated in Ireland. Key themes in this regard included the focus on early intervention, family support and restorative practice, the delivery of trauma informed services and the development of services for 18-25 year olds. At the same time, the structures put in place to implement the strategy and ensure that it is underpinned at all stages by a solid and evolving evidence base were welcomed as innovative and effective.

The strategy is premised on the understanding that no child or young person is beyond redemption and provides a revised and expanded mandate for GYDPs to assess and meet the needs of children and young people in conflict with the law. In doing so, flexibility and place based strategies are emphasised as key principles for service delivery with practitioners playing a leading role in the co-design of local approaches and solutions along with children and young people affected.

An undertaking to ensure national coverage of the GYDP network within two-years subject to the allocation of appropriate financial resource was also seen as both positive and ambitious.

Other recurring themes included the need for external supervision for youth justice workers and the need for interagency cooperation in the delivery of youth justice services.

Annex 1**GYDP Annual Conference Agenda Day 1: 27 April 2021**

9.30am-9.40am	10 minutes	Welcome by Deaglán Ó Briain
9.40am-9.55am	15 minutes	Address by James Browne, T.D, Minister of State for Law Reform
9.55am – 10.00am	5 minutes	Deaglán Ó Briain to introduce showcasing
10.00am - 10.10am	10 minutes	GYDP Showcasing DONEGAL
10.10am –10.15am	5 minutes	Intro by Deaglán Ó Briain
10.15am-10.35am	20 minutes	Presentation by Youth Justice Strategy, Brendan Sheehy
10.35am-10.45am	10 minutes	Q&A moderated by Sinéad Murphy
10.45am – 10.50am	5 minutes	Intro by Deaglán Ó Briain
10.50am-11.05am	15 minutes	Presentation by REPPP (Research Evidence into Policy Programme (REPPP). Dr. Sean Redmond
11.05am-11.15am	10 minutes	Q&A moderated by Sinead Murphy
11.15am-11.30am	15 minutes	COFFEE BREAK
11.30am – 11.35am	5 minutes	Intro by Deaglán Ó Briain
11.35am -11.50am	15 minutes	Presentation by AGS - Colette Quinn
11.50am-12.00am	10 minutes	Q&A moderated by Damian O’Donovan
12.05am-12.50am	45 minutes	Breakout sessions
12.50am – 12.55pm	5 minutes	Deaglán Ó Briain to introduce showcasing
12.55am-13.20am	25 minutes	Showcasing MEAS- Follain & SWAY
13.20-13.30pm	10 minutes	Deaglán: Close of morning Webinar

GYDP Annual Conference Agenda Day 2: 28 April 2021

9.30am	5 minutes	Deaglán Ó Briain to welcome all and provide overview of the day.
9.35am	5 minutes	Short Address by Assistant Commissioner Paula Hilman

9.40am		Deaglán Ó Briain to introduce showcasing
9.40am -9.55am	16 minutes	Showcasing HUB and SYI
9.55am-10.00am	5 minutes	Deaglán Ó Briain intro to Dr. Ian Marder
10.00am – 10.15am	15 minutes	Guest Speaker: Dr. Ian Marder, Lecturer in Criminology, Department of Law, Maynooth University
10.15am- 10.25am	10 minutes	Q&A moderated by Edel Kelly
10.25am-10.30am	5 minutes	Deaglán Ó Briain intro to Dr. Sharon Lambert
10.30am-10.45am	15 minutes	Guest Speaker: Dr. Sharon Lambert
10.45am- 10.55am	10 minutes	Q&A moderated by Sinéad Murphy
10.55am – 11.00am	5 minutes	Deaglán Ó Briain to introduce showcasing
11.00am-11.15am	15 minutes	GYDP Showcasing WEB
11.15am-11.30am	15 minutes	COFFEE BREAK
11.30am-12.15pm	45 minutes	Breakout sessions
12.15pm-12.20am	5 minutes	Deaglán Ó Briain to introduce interviews
12.20am- 12.50pm	30 minutes	ORB & Galway 16
12.50pm-13.00pm	10 minutes	Deaglán to close conference

Annex 2 Statistics

Day 1 - Tuesday 27 April 2021

	Breakdown of Attendees	Questions/comments received
Main Plenary	394	69
W1 Best Practice Development Team (BPDT)	95	
W2 Action Research Product (ARP)	42	
W3 National GYDP Advisory Committee	43	
W4 European Social Fund (ESF)	27	
W5 Youth Justice Strategy	136	
Day 1 – Total Sign-ins	737	

Day 2 - Wednesday 28 April 2021

	Breakdown of Attendees	Questions/ comments received
Main Plenary	392	42
W1 Best Practice Development Team (BPDT)	100	
W2 Action Research Product (ARP)	41	
W3 National GYDP Advisory Committee	42	
W4 European Social Fund (ESF)	32	
W5 Youth Justice Strategy	72	
Day 2 Total Sign-Ins	679	

Overall Total sign-ins x 2 days = 1416