WHERE DO YOU GO WHEN YOU GO OUT?

Young people's views on youth friendly facilities in East Cork
Young People’s Views on Youth Friendly Facilities in East Cork

A Report by
Mary McGrath and Deborah Lynch
January 2007

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We would like to thank the following people and their organisations for their assistance and support in this work:


We also wish to thank Ryan Howard, CEO, Paul Hunter, LDSIP Manager, and the staff of East Cork Area Development who provided support and assistance throughout the project. We wish to acknowledge the contribution of Damian O’Drisccoli who conducted the content analysis of the survey data and contributed to the report. Damian grew up in East Cork and is a PhD student in the Department of Sociology at University College Cork.

We want to acknowledge the role of University College Cork in supporting local initiatives.

The authors would like to thank David Stannan for his encouragement and for providing information, statistical and otherwise.

To all at Inch Killeagh Foroige Youth Club for the energy and enthusiasm that they showed in their involvement in the Film Project.

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FOREWORD

This report represents a landmark in a process focused on young people that has been ongoing since late 2004. At the core of this process has been the active participation of the young people of East Cork. By providing the structures and opportunities for young people to express their needs, hopes and aspirations, East Cork Area Development has been able to work in partnership with young people, the Health Service Executive (HSE), and the other organisations that support them to begin a process to address these needs.

“Where Do You Go When You Go Out?” is an account of how we set out, not only to listen to our young people and act upon what they said, but also to enable them to share their thoughts in an inclusive, innovative, and participative way.

Initially, a questionnaire was circulated, which saw over seven hundred young people indicate their desire to see a broader range of youth facilities throughout East Cork. To deepen the consultation process, East Cork Area Development worked with representatives from youth organisations then organised a conference for young people. This was held in Midleton in October 2005. Exit the Street- A Place of Our Own saw over 150 young people come together to express their views through a variety of media, from film to music and drama. We have learned much in the past two years, we still have more to learn.

Inclusion Programme, East Cork Area Development has fostered a partnership approach with its Management Board being drawn from the private, public, community and voluntary sectors. It currently operates the National Rural Development Programme, the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme, and the European Interreg III B Programme.

Working in partnership with other groups and agencies it seeks to access and deliver resources for the area, directing them towards areas and communities of interest where they may have maximum impact.

Through its Local Development Social Inclusion Programme, East Cork Area Development has fostered a partnership approach with organisations like the East Cork Youth Network (ECYN) and supported the diverse range of actions that have taken place during this process. It has acted, and continues to act, as a catalyst for improving the quality of life of the young people of East Cork.

East Cork Area Development Ltd was formed in 1995 to address the economic, social, and educational issues faced by the area. It is a community partnership, with its Management Board being drawn from the private, public, community and voluntary sectors. It currently operates the National Rural Development Programme, the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme, and the European Interreg III B Programme.

In December 2004, East Cork Area Development (ECAD) set out to prioritise the needs of young people in the East Cork area and to start a consultative process with those who work directly and are concerned with young people. This is delivered through the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme (LDSIP). ECAD is committed to “The inclusion of all members of our community in deciding where we want to go and how we get there” (ECAD, September, 2005).

In consulting youth organisations in the area, a common priority clearly emerged, the need for a place where young people could meet and participate in a range of activities. In Youghal, this was about finding “a place to go” for young people. In Midleton, it was about “young people walking up and down the streets” and having “no-where to go”. In Cobh, it was about designing “a place of their own” for young people. Later, other groups from Carrigtwohill and Glanmire became involved with the same concerns. How did the young people themselves see it? An exploratory survey was carried out in preparation for a youth conference in Midleton. Exit the Street. Through this process, young people from second level schools, Youthreach and Area Youth Projects in East Cork expressed their thoughts, feelings and views.

The report will describe this work that is ongoing and has different facets. These include: the survey of over 700 young people in East Cork. Exit the Street, a young peoples’ conference where groups of young people presented using a variety of creative media including film; the East Cork Youth Network (ECYN); a Youth Film Project, a Youth Exchange Project and The Skit Day.

The report presents a snapshot of some aspects of young people’s lives, experiences, feeling and views. They told us emphatically that they do not have adequate facilities; they identified where they go and what they do currently and what they would like to happen in the future. This includes recreational facilities and places to “hang around” with friends. They also identified the issues that concern them.

WHAT IS THE REPORT ABOUT?

Based on the responses of young people and on our learning from this process, we make the following recommendations that are further developed in this report:

Recommendation One
Meet the needs of young people for recreational facilities. Our work highlights the urgent need for action at local and policy level.

Recommendation Two
Further develop networks with and for young people in East Cork.

Recommendation Three
Forge links between schools, Youthreach Youth Centre and community projects including youth cafes. All are working towards the well-being of young people.

Recommendation Four
Build confidence and skills (including leadership skills) of young people in a variety of ways.

Recommendation Five
Ensure that facilities developed are inclusive of all young people living in East Cork.

Recommendation Six
Sharing of information is needed.

Recommendation Seven
Address the health awareness needs of young people.

Recommendation Eight
Encourage young people to be actively involved in their East Cork communities by creating opportunities for them to contribute.

Recommendation Nine
To mobilise all members of the East Cork community.
INTRODUCTION

In October and early November 2005 these headlines appeared in our national and local newspapers. They reflect positive, vibrant, and active images of young people and of their East Cork communities. What sparked these headlines? What are the stories behind them?

As expressed by Edward and Hatch, there is “a need for a story about young people that is not just about young people at risk, young people in education or preparing for work or young people being diverted from anti-social or criminal behaviour. The story of young people must add up to something positive. It must convey that we are interested in young people not just because they will be adults one day in the future, but because it is important to do right by them now” (2003, p.58).

These headlines are referring to an East Cork Youth Conference that was held in Midleton, East Cork on Tuesday October 24th 2005. Some 250 people attended the conference, Exit the Street: A Place of Our Own. Of these, 150 participants were aged 15 to 19 years. But this is only part of the story. This report is an account of a process of engaging with young people. The Conference is part of that process, one which involves young people and those who work with them in this East Cork community.

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The report will address the following questions:

**HOW DID IT ALL START?**
**WHO WAS INVOLVED?**
**WHAT WAS THE CONFERENCE ALL ABOUT?**
**WHAT HAPPENED AFTER IT?**

We will describe work that is ongoing and has different foci. These include: an exploratory survey of over 700 young people in East Cork in the lead up to the conference, Exit the Street: A young people’s conference where groups of young people presented using a variety of creative media including film; the East Cork Youth Network (ECYN), a Youth Film Project, a Youth Exchange Project and The Skit Day.

This report and its launch are also an integral part of this work in motion. All of this is about young people exploring and identifying the issues which affect their lives and examining the facilities that are available to them now. It is also about identifying the ways in which these facilities can be improved upon in East Cork and the development of support networks. Though we are aware of the common use of the term “recreation” by government (Office of the Minister for Children, 2006) and other research in Ireland (de Roiste & Dineen, 2005), the term “facilities” is used intentionally by us. This term was used initially in the context of involving young people in a conference which was about the need for them to have “a place to go”; hence “Exit the Street: A Place of Our Own”. In this work we are interested in the places, locations and structures that facilitate the gatherings of young people in a social context. Nevertheless, the term “recreation” is one which we accept as important, particularly in relation to the National Recreation Policy for Young People due to be published this month. This policy document we are led to believe will prioritise both “recreational facilities” and “youth café type facilities” in particular (O’Brien, 2007). We have avoided using the term “leisure” as our focus is on places and on activities rather than on all the things young people do in their free time such as watching television and reading. We also feel that the term “leisure” has been commercialised (Caldwell, 2005).

Our use of “youth friendly” in the title of the report is a descriptive term in relation to facilities named by young people themselves; it is very specific to the report and implies that we are naming facilities that young people have identified as important to them in meeting their needs, hence “youth friendly”.

In October and early November 2005 these headlines appeared in our national and local newspapers. They reflect positive, vibrant, and active images of young people and of their East Cork communities.

**CONFERENCE JUST FOR THE YOUNG ONES**
*THE IRISH EXAMINER, TUESDAY 18TH OCTOBER 2005*

**CONFERENCE TO FOCUS ON YOUTH**
*THE EVENING ECHO, TUESDAY 18TH OCTOBER 2005*

**EAST CORK YOUNG PEOPLE’S CONFERENCE TO PROVIDE POSITIVE FORUM**
*THE MARIOK BOXER, TUESDAY 18TH OCTOBER 2005*

**YOUNG PEOPLE’S CONFERENCE IN MIDLTON – A FIRST FOR EAST CORK**
*THE MARIOK BOXER, TUESDAY 25TH OCTOBER 2005*

**SUCCESSFUL YOUTH CAFES SET TO MAKE CORK DEBUT**
*THE MARIOK BOXER, TUESDAY 18TH NOVEMBER 2005*
The work in this report is based on a belief that young people are best able to express what young people need. They do not need interpreters. They do need the support of all of us in the community to enable it to happen in a way that is positive and enjoyable and provides learning for all. Throughout this report, we choose to use ‘young people’ because in our view, it is not over laden with preconceived notions like terms such as teenager, adolescent or youth. For more detailed exploration of representations of ‘youth’ refer to Christine Griffin’s work (2004). In the context of our work, young people are people between the ages of 13-19 years and who live in the East Cork Area. Like Stainton Rogers and colleagues (2004), we argue that young people are a highly diverse group. Some are at school, others have already left, and some are working, while others are not. As these authors state, “All that (largely artificially) defines them is a matter of age” and “They vary along all manners of factors including those of class, gender, sexual orientation and ethnicity. They also vary in their religion (or lack of it), their political affiliation (or lack of it) and the sub-cultures to which they belong” (p.19). When we use the term ‘young people’ here we use it in an inclusive sense. It is only exclusive in relation to age. For us ‘young people’, though a distinct grouping with their own experiences, needs and ways of behaving, are part of the whole community of ‘people’ in East Cork.

The report is a ‘snapshot’ of what it is like to be a young person in East Cork at this particular point in time. We acknowledge that things are changing all the time at the local level and these young people are moving on. We are also very aware of the rapid changes occurring at the national level in Ireland. As we write, we await the delivery of a National Recreation Policy for Young People (Office of the Minister for Children, March 2006), informed by a public consultation process that involved young people. This is all happening in the context of rapid social changes in Ireland, the ‘Celtic Tiger’ economy, greater cultural and ethnic diversity and legislative and policy developments in the area of children’s rights (Hennessy and Hogan, 2000 cited in Lalor and Baird, January 2006, p.14). The National Development Plan (2007-2013) is due to be announced with up to €650 billion in social spending programmes. We believe the seven year strategy will include funds for recreational facilities for children. It is being drafted by the Office for Social Inclusion (O’Brien & Paul, 2007).

In writing this report, we hope that a balance has been maintained between producing a document that belongs to young people, that represents them and that they will want to pick up, read or flick through, and one that will help achieve facilities that meet identified needs by mobilising the East Cork community as a whole as well as service providers and funders of local groups in the area.

The outcomes of consulting young people are important, and so is the process itself (Hill et al., 2004). While consultation activities can bring a range of new skills and promote self-confidence in young people, we agree with these authors who argue that “if these gains in competence are accompanied by lack of impact, which then results in a disillusionment, this is highly negative for the individual and for society” (p.66). We are acutely aware of this danger. One young person in our exploratory survey wrote “By the time something happens I’ll be old enough to drink.”

We like the approach suggested by Hill and colleagues which involves collaboration among all the stakeholders, including young people and is committed to achieving real and tangible outcomes based on what young people want (2004, p.77). In his launch of the Report of the Public Consultation for the Development of the National Recreation Policy for Young People, Brian Lenihan TD acknowledges that services designed in consultation with young people are much more likely to succeed than those developed without their involvement. He highlights the importance of partnerships particularly at local level in developing recreation opportunities for young people (Office of the Minister for Children, March, 2006, p.3-4).

In writing this report we want to capture a way of working with young people and move this process forward in a positive way. The report is divided into two parts. The first section focuses on the process of involving young people through the exploratory survey on their needs, the conference ‘Exit the Street’ and other youth activities. The second part looks ahead to the way forward and makes some recommendations.
According to the National Children’s Strategy “Children will have a voice in matters which affect them and their views will be given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity” (Government of Ireland, 2000, p.30)

The last thirty years has seen the development of a considerable body of literature on the meaning of consultation as a mode of involving children and young people in decision making. Hart’s ladder of participation (1992) is among the best-known models and is used in the National Children’s Strategy. Other and potentially more appropriate models have since been devised, including Treseder’s non-hierarchical and dynamic conception of involving children/young people in decision-making. We like Treseder’s interpretation of consultation, “a process which requires the commitment to take on board young people’s views and present detailed information back to them” (1997, p.4). For us, consultation is an on-going process. This is emphasised by the Louth Comhairle na nOg Report (2005, p. 3) which argues that consultation as a method of gathering views must be linked to decision-making and that the views of those being consulted must be fed into a wider process, in which young people remains involved. We view adult responsibility in this process of decision-making as critically important. As noted by Kirby and colleagues (2003, cited in National Children’s Office, Children’s Rights Alliance and National Youth Council of Ireland, June 2005, p. 16) even if decisions are made autonomously by young people, “implementation will require input from adults and is ultimately dependent on adult structures, responsibility and power”. The UK National Youth Agency (April, 2004) and the Irish guidelines, “Young Voices” (NCO, CRA & NYCI, June 2005) are excellent resources on the topic of involving young people (see Recommended Reading).

We will now start at the beginning and describe this process which involved young people in East Cork...
To work in partnership with young people to support them and the future action identified was to bring together all those interested in working with young people in the area to have a place that they could identify as their own. This view was mirrored within the other two communities, Youghal and Cobh. Young People having nothing to do on a Saturday night other than walk down one side of the street and back up the other – it’s a disaster’. This view was echoed by the representatives of the organisations who worked with young people in the area. One of the members of the Youghal Youth Committee in his role as a voluntary member of the Foroige Youth Club in Youghal, prioritised the need for a place for young people to go that they could ‘call their own’ and ‘hang out’ and that would accommodate the significant need in terms of the large numbers of young people in that area. Interestingly, this focus was on ‘buildings’. Cobh Youth Services are one of the main youth service providers in that town. They had recently accessed funding to buy a building and wanted to look at what would happen in that building? This led to putting together a plan for the use of the building in consultation with all of the service users, youth workers (paid and voluntary) and the members of the Management Board. This was about ownership so that young people in Cobh would have a place that they could identify as their own.

Thus a common priority had quickly and clearly emerged from discussions with these organisations and groups, the need for a place where young people could meet and participate in a range of activities. A needs analysis that was carried out in Carrigtwohill in July 2004, found pointed to the need for young people in the area to have “somewhere to go, a safe place where young people could socialise such as a youth café or some type of drop-in centre” (Ryan, 2004, p.12). The Peer Support Education Group in Midleton stressed the need for a ‘space and place’ where they could have a place that’s away from home and away from school” (Hall, Coffey & Williamson, 1999, p.506). This theme of young people wanting a comfortable place where they could “hang out” with their friends and where they can have a sense of ownership also emerged as important for young people during the consultation process of the National Recreation Policy (Office of the Minister for Children, 2006).

It became evident to the organisations involved that if we as a community were to meet young people’s need for “a place to go”, then we had to look to other communities to see what was happening and at models which were working. Above all, young people had to be directly involved from the outset.

In early 2005, East Cork Area Development proposed the idea of hosting a conference in order to gain a better insight into what young people were saying and further develop ideas around meeting their needs in an appropriate way. This was supported by those who were involved in the initial research discussions. The aim of the conference was to ensure that the next step would be well informed and youth oriented. It aimed to bring together young people and those interested in working with young people in our community as a whole. These included: youth groups, youth workers (paid and voluntary), teachers, social workers, health care providers, parents, community groups and statutory agencies.

In the immdiate Irish context, a recent survey of the views and needs of 988 young people in County Kilkenny found that the most frequently identified concern by the respondents was “being bored or having nothing to do” and the future action identified was “having somewhere to go/somewhere to kick back and hang out” (Laird & Barber, January, 2006, p2-4). Hall and colleagues (1999) write about issues of “space and place” are connected to personal and social identity of young people in their transition to adulthood. They emphasise young people’s need for “a movement and an organisation to place it in context with others, space which young people can enter on their own terms and on their own initiative, unaccompanied and unsupervised by adults” (p.506). This is clearly expressed by a 15 year old in their project: “basically everyone needs somewhere to go, somewhere to be with friends…. and have a place that’s away from home and away from school” (Hall, Coffey & Williamson, 1999, p.506). This theme of young people wanting a comfortable place where they could “hang out” with their friends and where they can have a sense of ownership also emerged as important for young people during the consultation process of the National Recreation Policy (Office of the Minister for Children, 2006).

Based on the 2002 Census figures, there were 6,542 young people aged 13-19 years living in the ECAD Area in East Cork (ECAD, 2002). While age specific statistics are not available yet from the 2006 Census, the population of the ECAD area increased by 13.7% during 2002-2006, which is significantly above the comparative National, County and Province figures (ECAD, December, 2006). Figures on enrolment numbers from the Department of Education and Science (2006) for second level schools in East Cork gives the numbers of young people aged between 13 and 19 years attending schools in East Cork and for the area by school and by gender (Appendix 4). In general, the age at second level school ranges from 12 to 19. However, it is important to note that these young people attending these schools in East Cork are drawn from a much wider catchment area including Mayfield, Midleton, Ballyvolane, Ballyvolane, Cork city and even Watergrasshill and Fermoy.

Young people in five East Cork towns (Midleton, Youghal, Cobh, Glanmire and Carrigtwohill) were involved through the Transition Year (TY) Programme in 12 East Cork Second Level Schools (as there was no uptake for transition year in one second level school. 5th Year students participated) the Youghal Youthreach project and 3 Area Youth Projects including the Midleton and Carrigtwohill Youth Area Projects and Cobh Youth Services (Appendix 2). Involving all the Second Level Schools, Youthreach and 3 Area Youth Projects in the ECAD area meant that a cross-section of young people from urban and rural socio-economic backgrounds would be included. Figure 1 illustrates how young people were involved at the different stages of the project.

Figure 1 Involvement of Young People

Young People in Second Level Schools (TY), Area Youth Projects, Youthreach Midleton, Youghal, Cobh, Glanmire and Carrigtwohill

Exploratory Youth Survey Participants: 702

Youth Conference Participants: 150 attended and participated in workshops Participants: 12 groups presented

Follow-on Activities and Developments

East Cork Film Project Youth Exchange Project The Skilt Day Analysis of Survey - Validation Groups

As shown, the first stage in the process of involvement was an exploratory youth survey which was followed by the youth conference. The Street. A range of other activities flowed from the survey and conference.
The Process of Involving Young People

All the schools and youth groups were contacted directly before the summer break in 2005. Meetings took place with Principals and TV Co-ordinators in the schools and Youth workers in the projects. All were provided with an Information Pack which gave an outline of the conference event. By June 2005 all schools were on board and ready to participate in September when follow up calls were made and in each area where possible the local youth worker was introduced as the liaison person.

The young people were invited to participate and asked to complete a questionnaire individually first. It was explained that the survey was about the young people in the East Cork Area. Consent to participate was voluntary and on the basis that information gathered would be treated confidentially within the schools and youth projects and would be used only in working to meet their needs. When compiled each group would receive feedback through the youth workers. Following completion of the questionnaires, the young people moved into small groups to talk about what came up for them and common issues. The TV Co-ordinators and Youth Workers informed the young people about the idea of a conference and invited them to consider representing these group responses in a public way “to a community of people including other young people, adults who are interested in working with there is finding ways to meet their needs, representatives of other youth organisations who have experience in their own communities of working with young people”. A list of suggestions were provided to facilitate young people to think about ways of presenting that involved creative methods such as drama, music, poster, sculpture, painting, film, maps and oral presentations. Everyone who completed the questionnaires was involved in deciding what would be said at the conference and how it would be presented. At the conference there was a smaller representative group of 10 to 15 members from each of the larger groups.

The Explorerary Survey

The survey is not a stand alone research study and was not intended to be. As part of a larger process, it was a means of starting a discussion that would lead to an opportunity for the young people to present their thoughts, feelings and views in a local public forum i.e. the conference. In keeping with the goals of the conference, the survey sought to give the young people in East Cork a voice through which they could express their views on the adequacy of current facilities, their usual activities and experiences and future wishes. The qualitative focus of the survey facilitated this by allowing the young respondents of this survey to give a voice to their ideas and experiences and to express their views free from the assumptions and influence of adult views. Research designs with a predefined structure inherent in closed questionnaires and free from the assumptions and influence of adult views (13-15 years or 16-18 years). The first question was intentionally provocative, its aim being to stimulate individual responses and group discussion. The respondents were also asked to tick a box indicating their age-group (12-15 years or 16-18 years). The first question was intended to stimulate observational discussions that were likely to reveal individual experiences and group interaction in the survey. Questions were open ended questions, designed by Linda Trott and Battu that the language used was informal and youth friendly.

1. Do you think that there are adequate facilities for young people in...? (name of area)
2. Where do you go out where do you go?
3. What would you like to see happening in...? (name of area) for young people in the future?

The questionnaires were analysed using descriptive statistics such as percentages, means and standard deviations. The respondents were also asked to rate a bar indicating their age-group numerical scale (1-10, 1 being not at all and 10 being very). The first question was intended to stimulate observational discussions that were likely to reveal individual experiences and group interaction in the survey. Questions were open ended questions, designed by Linda Trott and Battu that the language used was informal and youth friendly.

Analysis

A content analysis was carried out on the questionnaire data gathered, using the method described by Knobel (1993). Content analysis involves the manual coding of documents to obtain counts of categories or themes which facilitate interpretation and further analysis. This approach allowed the identification of the key activities, issues and themes that were expressed by the young respondents of this survey and enabled them to be analyzed in a meaningful way. See Appendix 2 for discussion of coding system used.

Validation Groups

Another layer built in to the analysis of the information from the questionnaires was called validation (Appendix 5). Accepting that as adults do not know what the issues are for young people and that we sometimes use a different language, a further consultation with young people was introduced after the initial coding was carried out. Interpretation of the information from young people in their responses is not left up to one or two adults. Instead, in issuing an invitation to participate in the analysis of the data it re-invokes some of the young people who have participated from the start. This led to further engagement, re-iterating ownership.

Groups of young people from each of the five areas, who were involved in the questionnaires and in the conference, gathered together to validate the interpretation of the responses to the questions. Groups ranged in size from 3 members (Glinamore) to 7 members (Youghal). Groups had to have a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 12 members. In all, 22 young people were consulted.

The validation session took place at a local venue organised through the local youth project (13 or school) and was friendly and informal. The interviewer together with the Youth Worker or Teacher, acting as note taker, introduced the new activity, recapped on the questions, blank questionnaires were passed around with reminders of how the questions were introduced. Information was given on how many were returned from their area and in East Cork overall. Members of the group then looked at five actual questionnaires. A brief introduction to coding followed, outlining the reasons as to why this was done. This was followed by a focus on the data from the questionnaires. The intention in doing this is to ensure that no transcription, no changing, no misinterpretation took place. This was done by use of direct quotations and by checking interpretation in the validation groups. Are we understanding and using coding correctly what you and other young people are saying? In asking about the coding we checked if we were interpreting correctly and whether our codes were valid and reliable. It also allowed young people who participated in this process of validation to choose what quotations best expressed their views and experiences. Questions asked were:

Is there something that stands out for you?
Is there something that really says it for you?
Can we quote your responses?

They were consulted on how they would like their ideas presented, what format of reporting their views would be preferable to them and most likely to be read by their cohort. They were asked about how they would like the launch to be carried out, what speakers they suggested who were local and in whom and in what way they would like to be involved in it. They were asked who they would like to invite to the launch and for their ideas on getting publicity for the event.

The validation process also presented an opportunity to provide reassurances of confidentiality and use of the information only to achieve support both financially and otherwise, from members of their community as a whole and to lobby for adequate resources for young people in the East Cork area.
The Survey Findings

Overall there were 702 responses to the questionnaire from participating young people. As Table 1 shows, most of the respondents were from Midleton. As illustrated in Appendix 4, second level school population numbers were highest for Midleton. Some 56% of the questionnaires were completed by young people in the 13-15 age-group which would be expected as most of the respondents were in transition year in the second level schools. Ages of the young people were not recorded for the Youthreach group. With the exception of Youghal (48.2%), response rates were high for all the second level schools ranging from 85% to 100%. Some 90% of the trainees in Youthreach participated.

Table 1: Number of Respondents by Town, Youth Group/School and By Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>School/ Group Name</th>
<th>No. aged 13-15</th>
<th>No. aged 16-18</th>
<th>Age not recorded</th>
<th>School total No.</th>
<th>Town Total No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carrigtwohill</td>
<td>St. Aloysius College*</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carrigtwohill Area Youth Project</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cobh</td>
<td>Colaiste Muire</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Campanophilia Community College</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glanmire</td>
<td>Colaiste an Phiarsaigh</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Glanmire Community College</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>58</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midleton</td>
<td>St. Mary’s High School</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CBS Secondary School</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Midleton College</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>St. Coleman’s Community College</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Midleton Youth Project</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youghal</td>
<td>Schools: Colaiste Eoin /Loreto /CBS</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Youghal Area Youth Project</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Youthreach</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Numbers</td>
<td></td>
<td>393</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>702</td>
<td>702</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* As a result of changes made to this question by one organization, the responses could not be included.

Table 2: Adequate facilities in each town?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School/ Group Name</th>
<th>Adequate Facilities</th>
<th>Adequate Facilities</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>No Response</th>
<th>Total No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carrigtwohill</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>38*</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cobh</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glanmire</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midleton</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youghal</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39 (5.5%)</td>
<td>555 (78.1%)</td>
<td>64 (9.1%)</td>
<td>44 (6.3%)</td>
<td>702</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* As Table 2 shows, 39.3% of respondents answered ‘no’ when they were asked if they thought there were adequate facilities in their town for young people. Only 5.5% said ‘yes’ that there were adequate facilities. A further 9.1% gave a qualified response.
In many cases 'no' was emphasised by use of large print and exclamation marks. This is illustrated by the following examples which are colour coded as follows to indicate each of the five towns (Glanmire, Cobh, Youghal, Carrigtwohill and Midleton):

**Midleton**

“No!!! There is nothing here whatsoever. Nothing at all. Not even a little thing to do. Do something!!!”

“No. No facilities for young people.”

“No way. Not at all. Too many pubs, restaurants, no sheltered areas to go.”

“No absolutely not!”

“No. There is Nothing to do at all!!”

“No there is nowhere to go”

“Absolutely nothing.”

“No. There is not a lot to do or go anywhere at the moment.”

“No. The Guards and the Council are constantly giving out because there is nowhere else to go”

“No, midleton has no adequate facilities because all people do is go walking around the town and nothing else to do. It’s not worth going there.”

“It’s not even safe for young people to go there".

“Not a HoPE”

“NO!!!!”

“No!!!”

“No there’s no where to go”

“NO EDIT”

“No, there is not much else to do if you don’t play pool”.

“In Cobh, for my age group I don’t feel there are adequate facilities. I used to be a member of a drama group but due to lack of funds have closed down. I feel bored everyday.”

“Absolutely without a doubt in my mind”

“No. We have no place to go in the evening. We just have nowhere to go.”

“No. We have no place to go on the weekend. We have nowhere to go, which annoys old people. We have no proper place to hang around.”

“Absolutely (without a single doubt in my mind) NOT!!”

“No. There’s no where to go & that’s the pool hall, most people who go out and just go drinking”

“No, there’s no swimming pool, not even a youth club so young people get bored and so many of them decide to drink under age”

“Absolutely nothing to do……this can lead to underage drinking in forests and parks.”

“NO! There are facilities for children such as playground + there are pubs for over 18s but nothing for the teenage population!”

“No. Because there are absolutely no facilities young people have nothing to do but smoke drink.”

“Cobh has very inadequate facilities. There is nothing for young Adults to do! You can go for a walk or go drinking and that is the sad truth.”

“NO! I don’t + I think this is obvious. As to the amount of people you see on the streets drinking, smoking, etc.

“No. Young people/teenagers in Glanmire and have nothing to do…….this can lead to underage drinking in forests and parks”

They also chose to make other comments about this in response to the question:

“NO, there is not a lot to do or go anywhere at the moment.”

“No, there are no recreational facilities at all for young people in this area. People that live here get so bored because there is nothing to do EVER!!!”

There were many references to drinking alcohol in answer to this question:

“No! Young people have nowhere to go or nothing to do so they turn to underage drinking”

“No because teenagers have nowhere to go and causes underage drinking and gets into trouble. They just hang around dangerous places such as pontoon, Stonebridge. "I don’t think there are enough facilities in Midleton for young people, as the cinema is very old and not very big and it is expensive………Market Green is a great place to shop for young people - but not at night time. Not of young people get bored and so many of them decide to drink under age”

“NO!!!!”

“No because teenagers hang in the same spot and usually get into trouble. Because of boredom, they also get depressed because of no facilities and end up in a lot of danger like vandalism getting drunk or dealing with drugs”

“No. Because there are absolutely no facilities young people have nothing to do but smoke drink.”

“Absolutely there’s no where to go when in Midleton on a nite out. There is limited amount of places to go. And some young people get bored very easily. Some young people turn to alcohol as a means of doing something to occupy themselves”

“Absolutely”

“No. The Guards and the Council are constantly giving out because there is nowhere else to go”

“No, there is a pool hall & that’s all there is & it’s boring”

“No, it’s only one place to go and that’s the pool hall, most people who go out and just go drinking because there is nowhere else to go”

“No there’s nowhere to go & that’s the pool hall, most people who go out and just go drinking because there is nowhere else to do if you don’t play pool”

“Absolutely (without a single doubt in my mind) NOT!!”

“No, there’s no where to go & that’s the pool hall, most people who go out and just go drinking because there is nowhere else to do if you don’t play pool”

“No, there is not much else to do if you don’t play pool”.

“In Cobh, for my age group I don’t feel there are adequate facilities. I used to be a member of a drama group but due to lack of funds have closed down. I feel bored everyday.”

“No. No place for young people”

“Absolutely nothing”

“NO!!!!”

“No!!!”

“No there’s no where to go”

“No. There is nothing to do EVER!!”

“No way. Not at all. Too many pubs, restaurants, no sheltered areas to go.”

“No absolutely not!”

“No. There is Nothing to do at all!!”

“No there is nowhere to go”

“Not absolutely nothing, no. There’s no swimming pool, not even a youth club so young people get bored and so many of them decide to drink under age”

“No because teenagers have nowhere to go and causes underage drinking and gets into trouble. They just hang around dangerous places such as pontoon, Stonebridge. "I don’t think there are enough facilities in Midleton for young people, as the cinema is very old and not very big and it is expensive………Market Green is a great place to shop for young people - but not at night time. Not of young people get bored and so many of them decide to drink under age”

“NO!!!!”

“No there is nowhere to go”

“Absolutely there’s no where to go when in Midleton on a nite out. There is limited amount of places to go. And some young people get bored very easily. Some young people turn to alcohol as a means of doing something to occupy themselves”

“Absolutely (without a single doubt in my mind) NOT!!”

“No, there is not much else to do if you don’t play pool”.

“In Cobh, for my age group I don’t feel there are adequate facilities. I used to be a member of a drama group but due to lack of funds have closed down. I feel bored everyday.”

“Absolutely (without a single doubt in my mind) NOT!!”

“No. There is not a lot to do except to lye down the field and talk on sunny days & there is no where to socialise with my peers.”

“No. There are too many pubs and restaurants and that is the sad truth.”

“NO, there is not a lot to do except to lye down the field and talk on sunny days & there is no where to socialise with my peers.”

“Absolutely there’s no where to go & that’s the pool hall, most people who go out and just go drinking because there is nowhere else to do if you don’t play pool”

“Absolutely (without a single doubt in my mind) NOT!!”

“No. No place for young people”

“Absolutely nothing”

“NO!!!!”

“No!!!”

“No there’s no where to go”

“No. There is nothing to do EVER!!”

“No way. Not at all. Too many pubs, restaurants, no sheltered areas to go.”

“No absolutely not!”

“No. There is Nothing to do at all!!”

“No there is nowhere to go”

“Absolutely nothing.”

“No. There is Nothing to do at all!!”

“No!!!”

“No there’s no where to go”

“NO EDIT”

“No, there is not much else to do if you don’t play pool”.

“In Cobh, for my age group I don’t feel there are adequate facilities. I used to be a member of a drama group but due to lack of funds have closed down. I feel bored everyday.”

“Absolutely (without a single doubt in my mind) NOT!!”

“No. There is not a lot to do except to lye down the field and talk on sunny days & there is no where to socialise with my peers.”

“No. There are too many pubs and restaurants and that is the sad truth.”
We were struck by the large number of references to drinking alcohol in the responses. Yet we did not specifically ask these young people about drinking alcohol. The young people themselves were making the link between the lack of facilities, feelings of boredom, depression, danger and drinking alcohol. A large scale national study on the mental health of young people also highlights the link that young people made between a lack of recreational activities in their communities to feelings of frustration, boredom and misuse of drugs and alcohol (National Suicide Foundation, 2004).

We believe that the comments of these young people about alcohol need to be framed in the national Irish context where under-age drinking is ranked as the highest among 35 European countries in relation to the number of teenagers who regularly binge drink and the second highest in reported regular drunkenness (ESPAD, 2003) cited in National Children’s Office, May, 2005, p.11). These comments provide us with some insight into young people’s feelings and views, and the validation groups’ comments provide clarification and additional perspectives on the issue of drinking alcohol.

For example, this is what the Cobh validation group told us:

“Drinking happens a lot in Cobh. If friends are drinking you have nothing else to do other than drink.”

When asked if there was peer pressure to drink they felt there wasn’t that but “just nothing else to do” although one questionnaire respondent in Cobh says “My associates drink and it’s hard for me not to”.

In the Carrigtwohill validation group, they said “All young people in Carrig drink, these places are not safe, and we drink because we have a rugby club, golf club and pitch and putt club. The pitch and putt club is constantly being vandalised”. “No. There isn’t a lot of things only sports and not everybody plays sports.”

“Drinking is an issue. Nothing to do but drink”.

“People who don’t go out can get into pubs & so has something to do”

In Youghal, a “yes” to this question it was felt must be made “by a lad into sports… or maybe someone older, 17-18, who can get into pubs & so has something to do”.

In Midleton, likewise the validation group members agreed that there is “nothing to do unless you do sports” and “there’s loads to do if you play sports”.

Other Responses
Some 9.1% of responses to question 1 were put in a category “Other”. These included “not really”, “don’t know”, “yes but could improve”, “kind of I supposed”. These responses were coded to be ambiguous, some said “no” with qualification for example with the exception of “sport” or “money” (i.e. there are not adequate facilities unless you have money).

If the participants responded to the question in terms of their own area i.e. they made reference to the place they live being outside of the East Cork area, then these were also coded as “other” (Appendix 5).

### Activities and Places

The respondents were asked “if they go out when do they go?” and in responding to this question many of them mentioned particular places that they went to with friends or activities in which they participated.

### Table 3 Activities Identified by Respondents in each Town

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Carrigtwohill Schools/Youth group (N=140)</th>
<th>Cobh Schools (N=86)</th>
<th>Carrigmore Schools (N=126)</th>
<th>Midleton Schools/Youth Groups (N=272)</th>
<th>Youghal Schools/Youth Groups (N=77)</th>
<th>Total No. Respondents (N=702)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drinking alcohol</td>
<td>118 (84.3%)</td>
<td>76 (88.4%)</td>
<td>101 (80.7%)</td>
<td>250 (90.9%)</td>
<td>63 (80.8%)</td>
<td>537 (82.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Night-time activities (drinks, band and open mic nights)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>1 (1.2%)</td>
<td>13 (10.3%)</td>
<td>9 (3.5%)</td>
<td>8 (10.4%)</td>
<td>24 (3.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport (pitch and putt, soccer etc)</td>
<td>2 (1.4%)</td>
<td>17 (19.8%)</td>
<td>13 (10.3%)</td>
<td>9 (3.3%)</td>
<td>8 (10.4%)</td>
<td>49 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time work (Baby sitting)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>1 (1.2%)</td>
<td>1 (0.8%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2 (0.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerts</td>
<td>19 (13.6%)</td>
<td>1 (1.2%)</td>
<td>18 (14.3%)</td>
<td>90 (32.9%)</td>
<td>16 (20.7%)</td>
<td>144 (20.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping</td>
<td>12 (8.6%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4 (3.2%)</td>
<td>3 (1.1%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>19 (2.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pool-snooker</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (0.8%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (0.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hobby (dance, art, music, etc.)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>6 (6.9%)</td>
<td>1 (0.8%)</td>
<td>1 (0.4%)</td>
<td>1 (1.3%)</td>
<td>9 (1.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other activities in which they participated (i.e. there are not adequate facilities unless you have money).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WHERE DO YOU GO WHEN YOU GO OUT?
The validation groups comments provide further insights:

"Cinema too expensive"

"Money is an issue. If you work it affects school but if you don’t then you don’t have any money and must rely on pocket money. There should be student discounts. Cinema should be cheaper—swimming pool good value is only €3.50."

"In cork it (cinema) wouldn’t be the only solution—need for other things to happen too."

"Hang around is the main thing really…not a big omniplex but as part of the overall like amusement centre…We have to go to cork now, not Malahide—no direct bus."

"If you aren’t into sport and just hanging around then everything is so costly…buses, cinemas and we’re not supposed to work…because it interferes with study."

"Bus fares—reduced only up to 15.30 when we’re in school not so costly…buses, cinemas and we’re not supposed to work, to no money of our own."

"Everything is money."

"What is the point in having a cinema with no money.. young people don’t have money."

Overall 7% of respondents mentioned being involved in sports when they went out. The percentage was highest for Cobh (13.8%) and about 10% of respondents in Glenmore and Midleton indicated that they were involved in sports "training."

The issue of money was also raised by the validation groups in relation to sports: "You even need money for that, we’re charged for everything."

Comments from the Glenmore group were similar to above with comments on charges for Astro Pitch of €50 per hour.

As highlighted by these comments, lack of money limits young people’s options and in effect, can exclude them from accessing commercial leisure facilities. Access to transport is also a factor..."the buses don’t run a lot, so you can’t go to town, etc."

Six percent of all respondents referred to drinking as an activity when they go out. This figure is higher in Youghal at 16.6% and comments included: "At the Weekend: Go cruising around and the place. Then just hang around the streets, fairly pissed usually. Or sometimes out to pubs but we always get kicked out. Or hang around green park..." "Drinking in places where no-one can Find me and I can’t be sayin where — Bushing, Coze don’t be noting bitta 4 us to do."

The comments of 5.7% of respondents from Carrigtwohill indicated that they are out when they drink alcohol. As one young person commented, "hang around the shop or around the streets. We go drinking on strandid or bushes to pass the time. I have also witnessed 12/13 year olds smoking drugs and drinking at this early age because of lack of amenities."

The Carrigtwohill validation group expressed the view that "Young people might not have told everyone for fear teachers would see questionnaires". This comment ties in with comments in the Youghal validation group when asked why they thought drinking is mentioned more in their town than in others in the survey. The Youghal group commented, "Parents telling us not to go into pubs...Not to go drinking but we want to for the socialising side of it, just a few drinks to relax."

The members of the validation group in Youghal felt that this quote, "All at the weekend: Go cruising around the place, then just hang around the streets, fairly pissed usually or sometimes out to pubs but we always get kicked out" (13-15 old in response to question two) is "like what adults think young people get up to more than we do."

When asked why they thought drinking was mentioned more in Youghal than in other towns, they agreed the following: "We don’t really care what people think; so better to be honest if we want to do something and get something going for young people."

In response to the following quote: “Well in the night time I don’t really only on my friends go out, this night I don’t drink but most of my friends do. And I don’t see the point, I’m ashamed to hang around with them when they are drinking” (13-15 old in Youghal) the validation group commented, “It takes a lot for someone to say no I don’t want to drink. That person should have somewhere to go. This quotation should be focussed on.”

Few of the young people mentioned hobbies such as dance, art or music in the context of ‘going out’. As our focus was on young people’s activities when they go out, home based hobbies would have been excluded. As the Table shows, 13.4% were involved in ‘other activity’ and in Carrigtwohill this figure is highest at 20%. For example: ‘spinning around in cars with fella’s’ and ‘spinning around at place with different people, nothing to do really!’ This was also mentioned by Youghal and Midleton respondents (“...spin in cars”).

The Youghal validation group explained this activity to us as follows: “All the younger girls spin around in cars with fella’s, they might not know the fella’s, they do it whether they have something to do or not but (having something to do) does lessen the risks.”

The validation group responded to the comment “Hang around or else go spinning in cars” (response from a Youghal respondent to Questions 3) with “Cool people go spinning, some people get picked up in cars and think it is cool to drive around town—showing off”. The validation group talked about the element of danger and speeding to impress. Other respondents in Youghal, Cobh and Midleton told us that they do not go out at all or only sometimes because of lack of activities. One Midleton respondent expressed “A lot of nights I stay home watching TV, I would like to go out more but there is nothing to do.”