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# Executive Summary

A Youth Café Steering Committee was established in 2007 with representatives from a number of agencies including Dun Laoghaire VEC, Southside Partnership, Dun Laoghaire Community Training Centre, Dun Laoghaire Youth Service, An Garda Síochána and the HSE. The aim of this study was to assess the needs of young people in the Dun Laoghaire area, review Youth Café models nationally and internationally and to identify an appropriate Youth Café model for the Dun Laoghaire area on behalf of the Youth Café Steering Committee.

Youth Cafes provide young people with a safe place to go which is youth friendly and provides a real alternative to alcohol/drug misuse and anti-social behaviour. The National Recreation Policy for Young People (OMC, 2007) recommends that dedicated Youth Cafés be provided on a phased basis, particularly in areas where there are high concentrations of young people between the ages of 12-18. The vast majority (93%) of young people consulted in the study identified the need for a Youth Café in the Dun Laoghaire area.

The key issues affecting young people in the Dun Laoghaire area identified in the study were the lack of recreation facilities and activities. The main reasons given why there is a need for a Youth Café in the area were:

- It would provide a safe, warm, cheap and friendly facility for young people to hang out;
- It would divert young people away from anti-social behaviour and provide an alternative to underage drinking;
- It would give young people an opportunity to meet new people and try new things
- It would provide information for young people who need it.

In terms of location, the study found the Youth Café should be located in central Dun Laoghaire, preferably on the main street, close to public transport, the Dun Laoghaire Shopping Centre and other amenities such as fast food restaurants. Locating the Youth Café alongside the Youth Information Centre was considered to be a model which would work well in the Dun Laoghaire area. It is estimated that a Youth Café would cost in the region of €2.2 million. This figure includes purchase of a property (€1.6m), construction costs (€0.5m), and professional and other fees (€88k).

Young people consulted in the study stated they would like a Youth Café to have:

- Suitable staff
- A positive youth friendly environment
- Diverse representation of young people
- Adequate provision of equipment
- Flexible membership

The study found the establishment of a Youth Café in the Dun Laoghaire area would improve the lives of young people significantly as it would provide something to do, somewhere for young people to hang out, information for young people, the opportunity for young people to mix with others from different areas and socio-economic backgrounds, an opportunity for young people to engage with youth services, an alternative to underage drinking, reduce anti-social behaviour, improve the relationship between young people and the Gardaí and improve the lives of communities in general.

Key recommendations arising from the study include:

- The Youth Café should be located in central Dun Laoghaire close to public transport and ideally beside the Youth Information Centre,
- Young people should be involved in the running and management of the Café,
- The Youth Café should have adequate facilities and equipment,
- The Youth Cafe should operate a membership card system,
- The Youth Café should have clear guidelines on policies relating to alcohol and drug misuse, fighting, overcrowding, staff ratios etc.
- Community Gardaí as well as local agencies, organisations, groups and businesses should be encouraged to get involved in the project,
- The Youth Café should be purposely designed to adapt to other uses.



# Chapter I - Introduction



## 1.1 Introduction

The plan to establish a Youth Café for the Dun Laoghaire area arose out of concerns for the increasing numbers of teenagers with no place to go in the evenings and at risk of engaging in anti-social behaviour. These concerns were raised time again at fora such as Southside Partnership Youth at Risk Network and various youth related groups and committees. A Youth Café would provide a positive, alcohol-free recreational outlet for young people to socialise and be the first of its kind in Dun Laoghaire.

Following consultations, a Youth Café Steering Committee was established among representatives from a variety of agencies such as the VEC, Southside Partnership, Dun Laoghaire Community Training Centre and Youth Service, An Garda Síochána and the HSE. The committee first set about researching Youth Cafes in existence elsewhere and identified possible funding sources.

The Youth Café Steering Committee found a centrally located venue to run a pilot café and this facility was run over the summer months of 2007 by existing youth groups. A Youth Café Development Worker was recruited to develop and implement the project. The Youth Café Development Worker is currently consulting with young people in the area, identifying funding sources and possible venues and working closely with Youth Development Workers and key agencies in the area.

## 1.2 Aim of the study

The aim of the study was to assess the needs of young people in the Dun Laoghaire area, review Youth Café models nationally and internationally and to identify an appropriate Youth Café model for the Dun Laoghaire area.

## 1.3 Methodology

The study's methodology included conducting focus groups with young people from Dun Laoghaire and surrounding areas, administering a questionnaire to young people in secondary schools and youth projects in Dun Laoghaire and surrounding areas and conducting semi-structured one-to-one qualitative interviews with Youth Service Provides in the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown area. A review of national and international Youth Café models was also conducted.

## 1.4 Focus Groups with young people

In total, 110 young people were consulted in nine focus groups. Focus groups were conducted with twenty young people from Comhairle na n-Óg, eleven young girls participating in the LAB Project in Loughlinstown, 27 young girls from Rockford Manor Secondary School in Blackrock, 12

young boys and girls from Transition Year in Newpark Comprehensive School in Blackrock, nine young people from St Laurence College in Loughlinstown, eight young people from Cabinteely Community School, eight young people from Holy Child Secondary School in Sallynoggin, six young men from Dun Laoghaire Community Training Centre and nine young people from Southside Travellers Action Group (STAG) Youth Group.

## 1.5 Questionnaire

A total of 139 young people completed the questionnaire. The questionnaire was completed by twenty young people from Comhairle na n-Óg, eleven young girls aged between 12 and 14 years participating in the LAB Project in Loughlinstown, 27 young girls from Transition Year in Rockford Manor Secondary School, 12 young boys and girls from Transition Year in Newpark Comprehensive School, nine young people from St Laurence College, 8 young people from Cabinteely Community School, 43 young people from Holy Child Secondary School in Sallynoggin and 9 young people from Southside Travellers Action Group (STAG) Youth Group.

## 1.6 Youth service providers' interviews

Semi-structured one-to-one qualitative interviews were conducted with eleven youth service providers in the Dun Laoghaire area. Those interviewed were the Community Development Officer with Dun Laoghaire Area Drugs Task Force, three Youth Development Officers with Dun Laoghaire Youth Services who were involved with the Youth Café Pilot Project, the JLO Sergeant in the area, co-ordinator of the LAB Garda Diversion Project in Loughlinstown, two youth workers from the Loughlinstown area, coordinator of the Youth Information Centre in Dun Laoghaire, and representatives from Youth Choices and Dun Laoghaire Community Training Centre.

## 1.7 Consent

Consent was obtained from the Principals of all the schools and youth workers of all the youth groups who participated in the study. After consulting with the schools and the youth workers and sending them a copy of the questions it was decided that parental consent was not needed due to the non-personal nature of the questions.



# Chapter 2 - Research and Policy Context



## 2.1 Research context

Young people tend to engage in more unstructured recreation activities as they grow older, replacing organised activities with ones they control themselves (Laidlaw Foundation, 2001). Friends are a very important part of young people's lives and they spend much of their time 'hanging out' with, talking to and visiting their friends (Hendry et al, 1993; Connor, 2003; Verma and Larson, 2003).

De Róiste and Dinneen (2005) established that over 90% of young Irish people enjoy hanging around with their friends. While 'hanging out' is sometimes viewed as negative or anti-social behaviour, it has been identified as an important part of young people's development (Verma and Larson, 2003; Hendry et al, 1993). Research suggests that what young people do in their free time affects their development, how they integrate into society and their future lives (Verma and Larson, 2003).

## 2.2 What is a Youth Café?

The Prince's Trust (2006) describes Youth Cafés as "safe, alcohol-free places where young people feel welcome, can meet friends, have fun and take part in a wide range of activities."

### Features which define a Youth Café include:

- Youth cafés are run by young people, with some paid staff and adult volunteers to support them.
- They are usually open for two or three sessions a week during the late afternoon and into the early evening.
- They practice the principle 'by young people, for young people'.
- Young people with adult support make decisions about what kind of provision they want and it is young people themselves who make things happen.
- Young people determine day-to-day operational matters (such as opening hours, what food and drink should be on sale, how to raise funds and manage volunteers), codes of practice and behaviour, and the more strategic aspects of the youth café (what kind of place is the café to be and how should it develop in the future).
- In the most progressive examples, young people take considerable responsibility for running their cafés.

- Youth Cafés are natural places for information, advice and guidance to be disseminated on issues affecting young people's lives, including sexual and mental health issues, careers, parenting skills, training and further education (The Prince's Trust, 2006).

## 2.3 Policy context

The lack of recreation facilities was the most frequently raised issue by young people in the Public Consultation for the development of the National Children's Strategy (2000). The issue of recreational facilities for young people has also been raised at every Dáil na nÓg (National Youth Parliament) to date.

The Public Consultation for the development of a National Recreation Policy for Young People (OMC, 2006) identified the need for more recreational facilities as the single biggest need in terms of recreation for young people. The most requested recreational facility was somewhere for young people to 'hang out' with their friends - a place that is safe, warm, indoors, affordable, relaxed and legitimate, and where they can have a sense of ownership, go in their free time and not get into trouble. Such a facility was identified as a need particularly by females.

The Public Consultation frequently mentioned Youth Cafés and drop-in centres as examples of recreation projects for young people that work well (OMC, 2006). The reasons given for their success were they are safe, well-run, cheap and a good place to meet other young people.

The National Recreation Policy (OMC, 2007) recommends that dedicated Youth Cafés be provided on a phased basis, particularly in areas where there are high concentrations of young people between the ages of 12-18, resources permitting and following a local needs assessment. The policy also recommends that Youth Cafés/drop-in centres should be introduced in consultation with young people.

In terms of youth population, the Local Electoral area of Dun Laoghaire has a very high concentration of young people. The latest Census of Population Statistics (CS0, 2006) shows there are 4,925 young people aged 10-19 years living in the Dun Laoghaire area, with 2,343 young people aged 10-14 years and 2,582 aged 15-19 years.



## 2.4 The Youth Café model

The OMC (2008) suggests there is a three-fold categorisation for Youth Cafes:

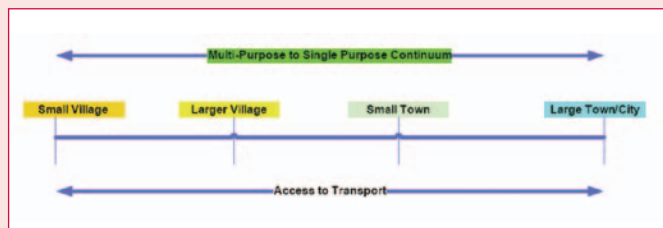
- **Type 1** – A place or space to simply hang out with friends, chat, drink coffee or a soft drink, watch TV or movies, surf the internet etc.
- **Type 2** - The same as type 1 but with the inclusion of entertainment or leisure services chosen by the young people themselves along with information on state and local services of interest and relevant to young people.
- **Type 3** – Perhaps the ideal model and the one to be aimed towards in the medium to long-term where types 1 and 2 are augmented by the actual provision of services targeted directly at young people. This can include education and training, healthcare both physical and emotional and direct targeted assistance.

According to the National Recreation Policy (OMC, 2007), Youth Cafés and drop-in centres can operate at different levels of service provision designed to meet the needs of particular areas. Apart from dedicated Youth Cafés/drop-in centres that require significant staffing and other resources, there is scope for using existing facilities to provide a dedicated space for young people to meet their friends. This may involve providing one or two rooms with sofas, vending machines, a snooker table and a TV in existing community/youth facilities, provided the environment is attractive to young people. Once a space has been made available to young people, it can be used to provide health and other information/education relevant to their needs. In larger towns where there are established youth projects and services, Youth Cafés and drop-in centres can be incorporated into established services.

In terms of location, Youth Café Models tend to be centrally based (i.e. - The Gaf in Galway City) or area/community based (i.e.-Exit Youth Health Café in Tallaght). Locating a Youth Café in a more central location can combat the space being dominated by any one group of young people from a particular area, school etc. Figure 1 below identifies the factors related to accessibility to a Youth café (OMC, 2008). In general terms, in more rural areas, a Youth Café may be located in a shared multi-purpose building where transport is arranged to get the young people to the Café. However, in the larger urban areas, a Youth Café may be located in a dedicated space. According to the OMC (2008), no single Youth Café model suits all situations or locations. The precise model is something for young people themselves to decide, ideally with

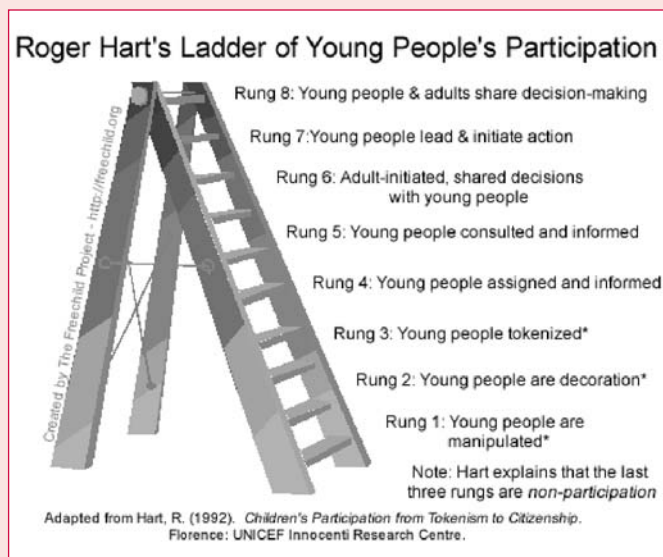
assistance from adults in the background.

Figure 1- Factors Related to Accessibility to a Youth Café (OMC, 2008)

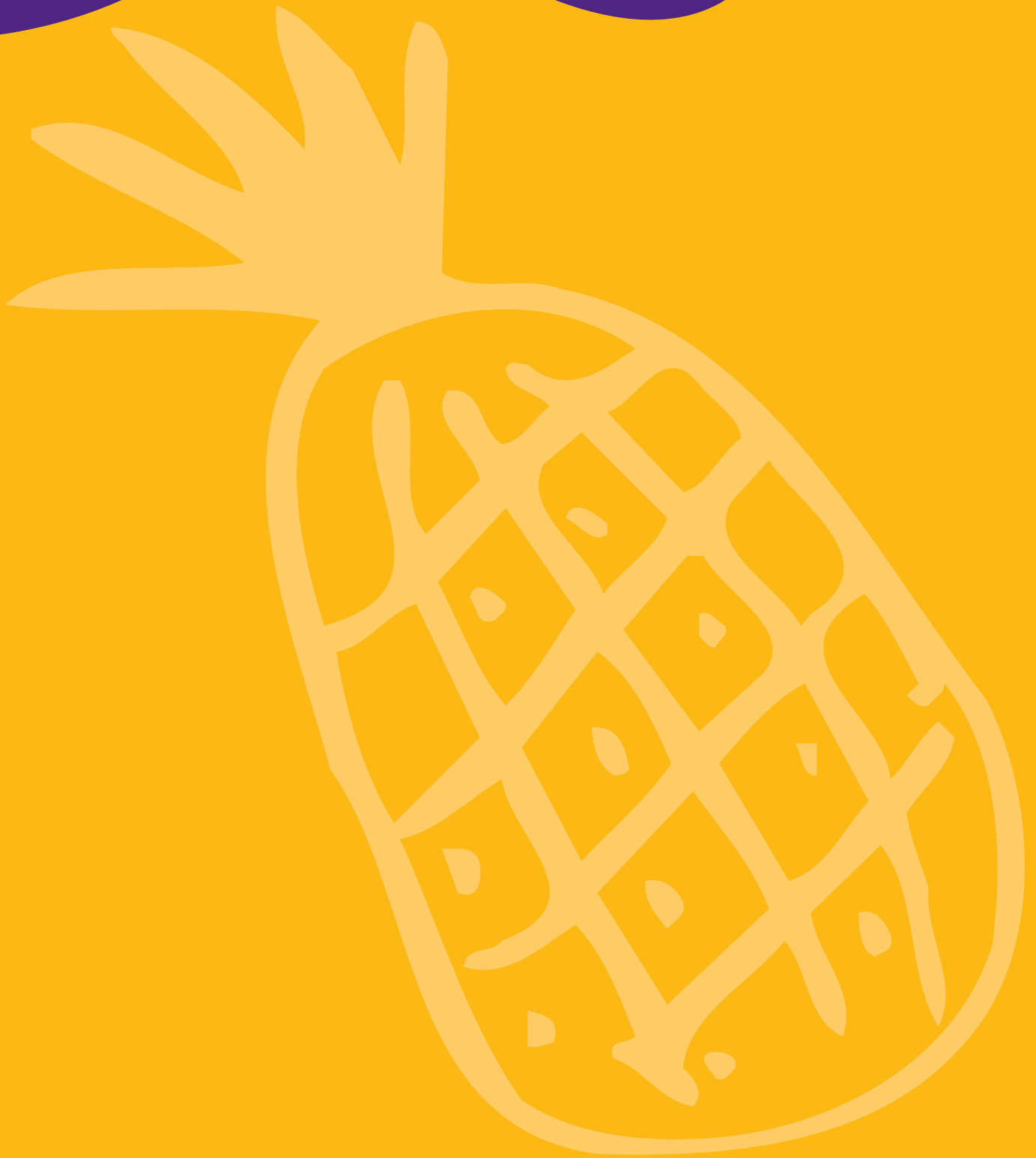


A central theme of Youth Café Models is the participation of young people in the planning, management and running of Youth Cafes to enhance their effectiveness and success. According to the Child and Family Research Centre (2008), the Youth Café approach is significant insofar as it reflects the substantive policy objective of participation by children and young people in matters which affect them in society. Hart's (1992) 'Ladder of Young People's Participation' below outlines the varying levels of participation with young people from manipulation and tokenism to young people sharing decision-making with adults.

Figure 2- Hart's (1992) 'Ladder of Young People's Participation



# Chapter 3 - Review of National and International Youth Café Models



### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter examines case studies of Youth Café models in Ireland and Australia.

#### Case Study 1 The Gaf, Galway

The Gaf Health Advice Café is run by the HSE West, in partnership with Foróige and Galway Youth Federation. The Gaf has a drop-in service which provides a drug and alcohol-free alternative for young people in Galway. To complement the drop-in service, the Gaf has a work programme, designed by staff and a youth committee, offering a variety of information and educational services, incorporating a range of prevention and education strategies and offering health information.

The Gaf caters for young people aged 14-21 years of age. Approximately 150 young people attend the Gaf per day over weekends. The space contains a drop-in area, DJ decks, a pool table and a space for workshops and formal work, such as drama, yoga, discussion, dance and photography. There are seven staff members in the building, with the addition of 10-15 trained volunteers.

The Gaf model combines a Youth Café/drop-in service/entertainment venue with an information/education service targeted at young people. As a model, it has the potential to be developed elsewhere. The following elements are essential to the successful implementation of this type of project (OMC, 2007):

- Young people must be involved in the planning process,
- A partnership approach (with statutory and other relevant agencies) should be adopted,
- The local community should be involved,
- In the case of larger towns in particular, the facility should be in a central location so that it does not become associated with one particular area,
- The building should be attractive to young people,
- Young people must be involved in decision-making processes at all levels so that they have a sense of ownership over the project,
- The facility should be drug and alcohol-free,

- There should be a range of activities and developmental programmes offered for young people, as well as just a safe place to sit and talk to friends,
- The opening times should, in so far as possible, meet young people's requirements, e.g. it should be open in the evenings and at weekends,
- There should be a combination of paid and volunteer staff,
- There should be a volunteer programme involving both young people and adults,
- Staffing structures and work patterns should reflect the requirement to provide a service outside of the normal 9-5 period,
- Insurance should be provided by the appropriate statutory agency,
- There should be a commitment to ongoing running or operational costs, as well as to the initial capital costs, by the sponsoring agency,
- The facility should be managed so as to ensure that it attracts a broad cross-section of young people and is not controlled by any one gang or group.

#### Case Study 2 C.R.I.B. (Choices, Responsibilities, Ideas, Belonging) Youth Café in Sligo

The North Western Health Board Youth Homelessness Strategy (2002) identified the requirement to address the needs of a number of young people in Sligo town and surrounding areas who were to varying degrees at risk of social exclusion and in some cases homelessness.

In response, Foróige developed a proposal for a health café, similar to the model developed in Galway in the Gaf Youth Café. The C.R.I.B. café model focuses on the mental and physical health needs of teenagers in the Sligo area. The café is a youth-friendly and relaxed social setting which provides support to young people on social and health issues, a cup of coffee and an alternative venue in a drug-free environment. The café is based in the centre of Sligo town and is open after school and one Saturday a month. It offers both a drop-in and group work facility.



### The project comprises of:

- A coffee shop,
- High profile drug free entertainment such as live music and DJs,
- Health information,
- Youth homelessness prevention,
- A youth committee which directs the service through consultation with users of the café,
- A range of individual and group work programmes, including group interventions with a mixture of generic and special interest topics and individual work where required.

### Activities conducted in the café include:

- Personal Development for young men and women,
- Special Interest groups such as art and crafts, soccer, music, film, photography,
- Citizenship programme,
- Drop-in Entertainment nights – such as Battle of the Bands, Friday night band nights,
- Thursday night activity,
- In-school programmes – such as mentoring, Individual /Crisis Intervention , Stay In School Programme,
- Personal Development & Health Group.

The C.R.I.B. café's approach is based on the key principles of the 'Get Connected: Developing an adolescent friendly health service' strategy (1999):

- Accessibility- The café is safe, accessible, and open at evenings and weekends
- Appropriate staffing- Staff have a variety of skills in relation to working with young people
- Informative- The café offers information to young people in a variety of formats

- Flexibility- Support and advice is available through a range of services
- Partnership- Service users are encouraged to become involved at every level of service and delivery management

Engagement of young people in the design and implementation of the project is a central feature of the model. The in-house layout and programmes design has come from young people. The model provides a voice to service users in the development of a youth service in the community.

### The desired outcomes of the project are:

- A user-friendly one stop shop for young people,
- Provision of an alternative venue to licensed premises for young people's entertainment,
- Service development led by the stated needs of young people,
- Café offering an opportunity to services working with young people to meet them in a non-threatening, non-stigmatising manner;
- Targeting vulnerable young people through universal service provision,
- Specific programmes for young people in crisis.

### The strengths of the C.R.I.B. Youth Project and Health café model, as identified by the project are:

- Targeted delivery within universal provision,
- User consultation and planning in service delivery,
- Community based,
- Non-threatening, non-stigmatising, attractive base for service delivery,
- Value for money,
- A service for young people which is accessible outside of 9-5 and open occasional weekends.



### Case Study 3 Pulse Youth Cafes, Australia

Pulse was launched in 1997 as a crime prevention initiative of Police Community Youth Clubs. Pulse combines youth entertainment and unstructured activity spaces in a purpose built facility, usually housed in a separate room adjoining the main supervised area. Specifically designed for attendance by young people, the Pulse space offers a variety of social activities in a relaxed and safe environment.

According to Queensland Police, "Pulse Cafés have become a central point of the PCYC Queensland's Crime Prevention Strategy by providing young people with a place they can go and just hang out with their friends in a relaxed and safe environment."

In Australia, the police and Citizens Youth Clubs in South-East Queensland have undertaken a major change in direction — from the traditional emphasis on energetic physical activities, such as boxing and gymnastics, towards the provision of informal and unstructured space in 'The Pulse' youth cafés. These include state-of-the-art music recording and mixing facilities, as well as facilities for large discos and participatory drama. Four of these multi-purpose youth activity centres were opened in 1998, three of them located near existing urban centres (Heywood et al., 1998).

The cafés usually consist of pool tables, televisions, sound systems, canteen and couches to help make the area as inviting as possible to the young people of the community. The spaces in the cafes also provided a venue for youth involvement at the branch by being able to give input in to what should be in the space.

# Chapter 4 - Questionnaire Findings



## 4.1 Introduction

In total, 139 young people from local secondary schools, Comhairle na n-Og, the LAB Project and STAG Youth Group completed the questionnaire.

## 4.2 Gender

In terms of gender, 63.3% of those who completed the questionnaire were female and 36.7% were male.

## 4.3 Age

As table 1 below outlines, the youngest respondent was 8 years and the eldest was 18 years of age. The mean age of respondents was 16 years of age. There was one (0.7%) respondents aged 8 years, one (0.7%) aged 10 years, one (0.7%) aged 11 years, 4 (2.9%) aged 12 years, nine (6.5%) aged 13 years, six (4.4%) aged 14 years, 23 (16.5%) aged 15 years, 63 (45.3%) aged 16 years, 27 (19.4%) aged 17 years and four (2.9%) aged 18 years.

Table 1 - Age of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
8	1	0.7%
10	1	0.7%
11	1	0.7%
12	4	2.9%
13	9	6.5%
14	6	4.4%
15	23	16.5%
16	63	45.3%
17	27	19.4%
18	4	2.9%
Total	139	100%

## 4.4 Need for a Youth Café

Respondents were asked if they think there is a need for a Youth Café in the Dun Laoghaire area or not. Overall, 93% of young people stated that there is a need for a Youth Café and 7% stated there is a not a need.

Young people were also asked why there is a need for a Youth Café in the area. The main reason given by young people was that there is nothing to do and nowhere to hang out in the area. Over half (54%) of all respondents stated they have nowhere to go in the area to hang out with their friends.

Other reasons given why there is a need for a Youth Café in the area included:

- To keep young people off the streets and out of trouble;
- There are very few free or cheap places for young people to go;
- There is a need for somewhere safe for young people to hang out;
- There is a need for a place for local bands to play;
- There is a need for somewhere for young people who do not drink to go;
- To meet new people and make friends;
- To cut down on teenage drinking;
- To cut down on young people loitering;
- To give young people an opportunity to try new things;
- Because it would be fun.

The following quotes demonstrate these points:

- *"Because there is nothing to do around here."*
- *"Because there's nowhere to hang around these days."*
- *"Because there is nothing to do for people with not a lot of money."*
- *"Because there is nowhere to go except the cinema or fast food places which make you fat."*
- *"Because teenagers might cut down drinking."*
- *"To keep young people off the streets and give them the opportunity to try new things."*

## 4.5 Young people's involvement in running a Youth Café

Respondents were asked whether young people should be involved in the running of a Youth Café or not. Three quarters (75.6%) of young people thought young people should be involved in the running of a Youth Café and just over one fifth (21.6%) thought young people should not be involved. 1.4%

stated young people should 'maybe' be involved and 1.4% did not answer the question.

#### 4.6 Opening hours

Young people were asked what times and days they would like a Youth Café in the area to be open. Weekends were the most popular time identified and were mentioned by 54.7%, followed by after school (53.2%), evenings (48.2%) and weekdays (35.3%).

#### 4.7 Information/programmes available

Respondents were asked what types of information and programmes they would like to be available in a Youth Café. Information and programmes on alcohol and drugs were the most popular (67.6%), followed by sexual health information and programmes (58.3%) and information and programmes on suicide prevention (53.9%). Other types of information and programmes young people would like to be available included information and programmes on family problems, mental health, depression, drink driving, education, college information, events, youth activities, information on sexually transmitted diseases, teenage pregnancy, eating disorders, environmental issues, driving, self-defence, websites which could help young people, youth help lines, skincare, weight loss programmes, career advice, and finance. Young people also suggested a Youth Café should have cheap music lessons, run beauty, hair and make-up courses and could give out free condoms.

#### 4.8 Advertisement

Young people were asked what would be the best way to advertise a Youth Café in the area. Overall, 69.8% stated a website would be the best way to advertise and 29.5% thought text messages would work best. Advertising on a Bebo site was suggested by 12.9% of young people. Advertisements on billboards, bus stops, buses, LUAS, DART, newspapers such as Southside People and Metro, radio stations such as Spin 103.8, TV and magazines were suggested by 15.8% of young people. Other suggested advertisement methods included going into schools to give talks, posters in local shops and schools, handing out fliers outside schools and youth events such as Wesley Disco. A number of young people thought a Youth Café would be advertised through word of mouth.

#### 4.9 Problems envisaged

Respondents were asked whether they saw any problems with having a Youth Café in the area. The majority of young people (63.3%) saw no problem with a Youth Café. The main problem envisaged by respondents related to security and safety issues. Just over one fifth (22.3%) of respondents believe there would be problems with young people fighting, causing

trouble and clashing. Young people coming together from different areas, schools and groups were considered to be potential problems. Other problems envisaged by young people included bullying, the café being too far away, the type of people who might go there, having an overly structured environment, overcrowding, people under the influence of drugs and alcohol, vandalism, and graffiti.

#### 4.10 Activities

Young people were asked about what types of activities they would like to be available in a Youth Café. As can be seen from table 2 below, the most requested activities for a Youth Café are pool/snooker tables, followed by computers and internet access, dance mats, machines and classes, music and a jukebox, video and computer games, TV, space for bands to play and practice, table tennis tables, darts, air hockey, football, games, food and snacks, sport, a gym, drinks, sofas, yoga, comedy, discos, Twister, beauty classes, cookery, karaoke, karting, Fussball, trips, music lessons, a room 'to express emotions', movies, self-defence classes, DJ training, a smoking area, group activities, open mic nights, drama, someone to talk to, spin the bottle, canoeing, and hair straighteners in the toilets.

Table 2- Requested Youth Café activities

Activity	Frequency	Percentage
Pool/snooker tables	48	34.5%
Computers/Internet access	47	33.8%
Dance mats/machines/classes	27	19.4%
Music/Jukebox	26	18.7%
Video/computer games	20	14.4%
TV	18	12.9%
Band space/Battle of the Bands	17	12.2%
Table tennis table	12	8.6%
Darts	11	7.9%
Air hockey	9	6.5%
Football	9	6.5%
Games	9	6.5%
Food/snacks	7	5%
Sport	7	5%
Gym	6	4.3%
Drinks	6	4.3%
Sofas	5	3.6%
Yoga	4	2.9%
Comedy	3	2.2%
Disco	3	2.2%
Twister	3	2.2%
Beauty classes	2	1.4%

Table 2- Requested Youth Café activities

Activity	Frequency	Percentage
Cookery	2	1.4%
Karaoke	2	1.4%
Karting	2	1.4%
Fussball	2	1.4%
Trips	2	1.4%
Music lessons	1	0.7%
A room to express emotions	1	0.7%
Movies	1	0.7%
Self-defence classes	1	0.7%
DJ Training	1	0.7%
Smoking area	1	0.7%
Group activities	1	0.7%
Open microphone nights	1	0.7%
Drama	1	0.7%
Someone to talk to	1	0.7%
Canoeing	1	0.7%
Spin the bottle	1	0.7%
Hair Straightners in the toilets	1	0.7%

#### 4.11 Suggested location for a Youth Café

Respondents were asked where they considered to be the best location for a Youth Café in the Dun Laoghaire area. The majority of young people stated that the Youth Café should be located in central Dun Laoghaire, on the main street, close to public transport, the Dun Laoghaire Shopping Centre and other amenities such as fast food restaurants. A number of young people suggested the Café should be located in their own community. A small number of young people suggested the Youth café should be located by the seafront. Other suggested locations include where Iceland was located, beside McDonalds, near the cinema, and in the café next door to Elvery's Sports.

#### 4.12 Suggested names

Young people were asked to suggest a name for a Youth Café in the Dun Laoghaire area. Suggestions included:

- The Chill Grill
- The Drop-in
- Free Gaff
- The Café
- An Gaff
- Fun Laoghaire
- Burger Queen
- The Land of the Free
- The Youth Café
- Young and Irish
- 4 Youth
- Slash's Place
- The Java Lava
- Forever Young
- Café Jeune
- Ramba
- Juno
- Youth Time
- The Rascal's Café
- The George
- Junior's Place
- Super Fly
- Teen Café
- Hooligans
- The Shelter
- The Den
- Hull City Café
- Young and Proud
- Milk and Two
- Cup a tea/2 sugars easy on the milk
- Milk 2 Sugars
- The Sozler
- Chillax
- Afternoon Delight
- Sweet Kiss
- Teen Scene
- Dun Laoghaire Youth Café
- Dun Laoghaire Café
- D.L.C.
- Youth Café Inc.
- Tea and Café
- Y.C.
- Fusion
- The Mary Jane
- Come on in kids café
- The Murphy's Café
- Priceless
- Fun For Youths (FFY)

# Chapter 5 - Focus Group Findings



## 5.1 Introduction

A total of nine focus groups were conducted with 110 young people from five secondary schools in the area, Comhairle na n-Óg, the LAB Project in Loughlinstown, Dun Laoghaire Community Training Centre and Southside Travellers Action Group (STAG) Youth Group.

The key issues discussed in the focus groups were:

- Key issues affecting young people in the Dun Laoghaire area
- The best location for a Youth Café in the area
- Youth Café opening hours
- Activities which should be available in a Youth Café
- What kind of place should a Youth Café be
- What types of information should be available
- Young people's involvement in the running of a Youth Café
- Youth Café rules
- What type of people should work in a Youth Café
- How a Youth Café should be advertised
- How a Youth café would improve the lives of young people in the area
- Barriers to accessing a Youth Café
- Enablers to accessing a Youth Café
- Suggested names for a Youth Café

## 5.2 Issues affecting young people

The key issues affecting young people in the area identified in focus groups were having nothing to do and nowhere to go, drugs, underage drinking, smoking, lack of affordable recreational activities, underage sex, teenage pregnancy, vandalism and family problems. Young people talked about getting into trouble with the Gardaí because they are hanging around, however they have no places to hang out. Respondent also stated that having nothing to do leads to underage drinking. Somewhere to hang out, such as a Youth Café, was identified as the single biggest need of young people in the area.

*"The Gardaí give out to you on the streets and you aren't doing anything just hanging around on the streets."*

*"People have nothing to do so they just drink."*

## 5.3 Best location for a Youth Café

The best location for a Youth Café in the Dun Laoghaire area was identified as somewhere central near the main street and Shopping Centre in Dun Laoghaire, somewhere easy to access and somewhere near public transport. Suggested locations included beside McDonalds, the People's Park, Monkstown Park, Blackrock Park, a park by the seafront, beside

AbraKabra, units beside Hughes and Hughes in Dun Laoghaire, where Iceland was located, in the Bloomfield Shopping Centre where the newsagent was located beside the cinema or where a shop called Blonde was located. A number of young people felt that a Youth Café should be located in their own community.

*"Somewhere easy to get to."*

*"Near the bus stops, near the shops."*

*"Somewhere close to public transport like the 46A or the DART!"*

## 5.4 Opening hours

Young people stated that a Youth Café should be open on weekdays after school and at weekends. A number of local secondary schools have a half day and felt the Café should be open earlier on those days. Those attending the Community Training Centre in Dun Laoghaire felt the Youth Café should be open after they are finished their classes, which is 2.30pm. It was suggested that a Youth Café should open earlier on weekends than weekdays. In terms of a closing time, the majority of young people stated that a Youth Café should close around 9pm or 10pm on weeknights and around the time of the last bus at weekends, which is 11.30pm. A number of young people felt it should open later at the weekends. Many young people said they have nothing to do on Sundays and thought it was important that a Youth Café would be open then.

*"It should be open until the time of the last bus."*

*"If you open on Friday and Saturday you'll get people that don't drink and you'll get a lot of hung over people on Sundays."*

*"During the week some people get off school earlier so it should be open then."*

## 5.5 Activities

Activities which young people thought should be available in a Youth Café included pool tables, table tennis tables, 'Battle of the Bands', board games, computers, internet access, dance machines and classes, discos, bingo, speed dating, gym, yoga, darts, air hockey, Fussball, video games such as X-Box and Playstation, flat screen TV, Twister, arcade machines, Karaoke, comedy nights, jukebox, BBQ nights, talent shows, 'Desperate Housewives nights', 'football nights' and a swimming pool. Outside activities organised through the Café such as bowling and 7-a-side football were also suggested. Respondents felt there should be food and drink available such as pizza, coffee, smoothies, milkshakes and non-alcoholic cocktails. Young



people stated that activities, food and drinks should be either free or very cheap and healthy.

*"They should organise events like bands playing."*

*"You could have a Desperate Housewives night for the girls and a football night for the lads."*

*"A place you could get a proper dinner what was not that expensive and good for you."*

## 5.6 Characteristics of a Youth Café

Young people stated that a Youth Café should be somewhere safe, relaxed and fun to hang out, with not too many rules. Young people also felt it should be a big facility which can accommodate a large number of young people. In terms of furniture, respondents stated there should be comfortable sofas, bean bags, recliners and fat boy chairs in the Café. Young people felt the décor should be colourful and girls thought it should be pink, flowery, furry and 'bling'. Both teenage girls and boys felt there should be graffiti on the walls which they could design or draw themselves. A smoking area with heaters and chairs was suggested in nearly all of the focus groups. A stage for bands was also suggested.

*"It should be somewhere relaxed."*

*"Somewhere colourful with nice chairs to relax."*

*"They should have a graffiti wall and we could do it."*

## 5.7 Information

Overall, young people considered it to be a good idea to have information available in a Youth Café. Types of information young people felt should be available included information on drugs, alcohol, sexually transmitted diseases, sex education, and events for young people happening in the area and safety for young people. Young people from Dun Laoghaire Community Training Centre suggested information on jobs should be available. Young people were also open to speakers coming in to give talks, as long as they were interesting. Suggested speakers included reformed drug addicts and criminals. A number of young people suggested free condoms should be given away in a Youth Café.

*"Guest speakers coming in about the dangers of drugs because not many people know about them and people that were on drugs before to talk about their experiences."*

*"Information on jobs would be good."*

*"They should give away free condoms."*

## 5.8 Young people's involvement

Overall, young people had mixed feelings about young people being involved in the management of a Youth Café. Some thought young people should be definitely involved in the running of a Youth Café as it is for young people and it would give them a sense of ownership, while some thought young people should not be involved. Some stated that only older teenagers should be involved in the running of a Youth Café. Reasons given why young people should not be involved included lack of maturity and conflict between young people. However, respondents in general felt young people should be consulted in relation to the running of a Youth Café. It was also suggested that a group of young people could liaise between users of the Youth Café and the management committee. Having a suggestion box for young people to put their ideas, comments and complaints into was proposed by one respondent. Respondents felt that young people should work in the Youth Café and felt it was important that they would be paid.

*"If we are involved in the design of it like the furniture it would feel like we did something for it."*

*"They (young people) should have a say but not run it because there would be all fights."*

## 5.9 Problems

All the focus groups identified security and safety as the main problem that would be faced by a Youth Café in the area. Respondents felt there might be fighting between young people from different areas, schools and groups. Some young people were worried about "randomers" coming into the Café and causing trouble and starting fights.

While some respondents felt there should be security staff or bouncers on the door, other felt this would be off putting. A properly trained youth worker who could intervene was considered to be a better idea. A membership card system was also considered to be a good idea to alleviate people wandering in off the street causing trouble.

Suggestions as to how to young people from different areas, school and groups could mix well included having an open day in the Café for all schools to meet each other; having table quizzes with mixed teams of young people who do not know each other and a speed dating type activities in which young people could move around the room and meet everyone. Some young people felt that they would get to know other

young people through just hanging around with them and playing pool.

Other problems identified by young people included vandalism, equipment being robbed, people drinking and taking drugs.

*“There could be fights with people coming from different areas.”*

*“This is a great idea but I can’t see it working without security.”*

*“If there are security guards people will feel uncomfortable.”*

*“You could have something like speed dating but just move around and just talk to different people.”*

*“No one should be able to just walk in they should have to register and sign in.”*

## 5.10 Rules

Rules young people thought a Youth Café should have included:

- No alcohol;
- No drugs;
- No sex;
- No smoking;
- No fighting;
- No bullying;
- No peer pressure;
- No swearing;
- No parents;
- No littering;
- No spitting;
- Respect for people’s opinions;
- An age limit of 18;
- A smart dress code;
- Keep it tidy;
- Keep it as you found it;
- Respect for furniture/equipment.

## 5.11 Age limit

As regards an age limit, respondents felt that the Youth Café should be open to young people aged from 13 to 18 years. Older teenagers felt that younger teenagers should have different times and days to attend the Youth Café as they said they would not attend it while younger teenagers were there.

## 5.12 Staff

Respondents suggested that young people should be allowed to work in a Youth Café as well as adults.

The following characteristics of adult staff were considered to be important by young people:

- Friendly;
- Garda vetted;
- Used to working with young people, i.e. youth workers from the area;
- Confident;
- Out-going;
- Cool;
- Responsible;
- Young- in their twenties;
- Laid back;
- Down to earth;
- Not arrogant;
- Not rude;
- Nice;
- Good looking.

## 5.13 Advertisement

Advertisement methods suggested by young people included:

- Bebo;
- Website;
- Fliers designed by young people;
- Posters designed by young people in shops and community centres;
- Giving talks to schools;
- Ads in free newspapers such as The Southside People;
- Ads on radio stations such as Spin 103.8;
- Ads on TV;
- Ads on buses;
- Ads on bus stops;
- Text messages;
- Word of mouth.

## 5.14 Improve the lives of young people

Ways in which a Youth Café would improve the lives of young people in the area are outlined in the following quotes from young people:

- *“It would give young people somewhere to go.”*
- *“It would make you less bored.”*
- *“You would meet new people.”*



- *"It would give people in bands somewhere to go because it is very hard to get anywhere to play."*
- *"It would get young people off the streets."*
- *"You wouldn't be getting hassle off the Guards."*
- *"You wouldn't be bored and you wouldn't do stupid things that you do when you're bored."*
- *"It would stop people drinking I suppose. It would cut down on it."*
- *"We wouldn't be drinking and all that and get into trouble."*
- *"If you don't feel like drinking it would give you somewhere to go."*
- *"It wouldn't stop young people drinking but they wouldn't be drinking as much out of boredom."*
- *"It would save us money as well because when you go out at the weekend you do be spending all your money."*
- *"If you got a talker in people would get to know the dangers and proper facts about their body and drugs."*

### 5.15 Barriers

Barriers to accessing a Youth Café identified by young people in the focus groups included:

- The wrong type of people hanging out there;
- Too many rules;
- The fact that you can't drink;
- If it was hard to get to;
- If it was not a nice place;
- If it was full of younger teenagers;
- If you were getting bullied;
- If your friends weren't going;
- If it was boring;
- People starting fights;
- Bad weather;
- If it was complicated to become a member;
- If it was overcrowded;
- If you were turned away.

### 5.16 Enablers

Enablers to accessing a Youth Café identified by young people included:

- If it was good;
- Cheap food and drink;
- If it was fun;
- If it was known to be a good place to go;
- Free stuff;
- Boys;
- A gym;
- If it was open during the week;
- If there were good events on like bands;
- If there was people you know there;
- If you could hang around;
- If someone else told you it was good;
- If it was close by.

### 5.17 Names

Names which were suggested by young people in the focus groups included:

- The free gaff;
- Fun Laoghaire;
- The Java Lava;
- The Ro Jo;
- The Drop-In;
- Chillax;
- Fun for Fitness;
- Kids Rules;
- Priceless.

# Chapter 6 - Youth Service Providers Interview Analysis



## 6.1 Introduction

Interviews were conducted with eleven youth service providers in the Dun Laoghaire area. Those interviewed were the Community Development Officer with Dun Laoghaire Area Drugs Task Force, three Youth Development Officers with Dun Laoghaire Youth Services who were involved with the Youth Café Pilot Project, the Garda Juvenile Liaison Sergeant, co-ordinator of the LAB Garda Diversion Project in Loughlinstown, two youth workers from Loughlinstown area, coordinator of the Youth Information Centre in Dun Laoghaire, and staff from Youth Choices and Dun Laoghaire Community Training Centre.

## 6.2 Key themes

Key themes to emerge from the interviews with youth service providers included:

- Key issues affecting young people in the Dun Laoghaire area
- The needs of young people in the area
- The best location for a Youth Café in the area
- Suitable activities for a Youth Café
- Rules of a Youth Café
- Information which should be available in a Youth Café
- The importance of including young people in the running of a Youth Café
- Youth Café opening hours
- The age limit for a Youth Café
- Staffing issues for a Youth Café
- Barriers and enablers to accessing a Youth Café
- Problems with a Youth Café
- How a Youth Café would improve the lives of young people in the area
- How a Youth Café should be advertised
- Youth service providers interest in being involved in a Youth Café
- What was learned from the Youth Café Pilot Project
- What can be learned from other Youth Café models

## 6.3 Key issues affecting young people in the area

According to youth service providers, the key issues affecting young people in the Dun Laoghaire area are alcohol and drug misuse and a lack of facilities for teenagers to hang out. Respondents believe the lack of places for young people to hang out in the area is leading to anti-social behaviour and alcohol and drug misuse. This in turn is leading to conflict between young people and the Gardaí.

*“They (young people) are in conflict the whole time. There is nowhere to go. There is a bench over there and someone will take offence to them and put in a complaint to the Guards. They (the*

*Guards) come along and they (young people) don't realise what they have done wrong.”* [Coordinator of the LAB Garda Diversion Project]

*“The main issues we deal with young people in JLO projects are alcohol abuse, anti-social behaviour, criminal damage and graffiti.”* [Juvenile Liaison Sergeant in the Dun Laoghaire area]

## 6.4 Needs of young people in the area

Respondents acknowledge there are a large number of structured recreational activities available to young people in the Dun Laoghaire area. However, the need for more unstructured recreational activities was identified. Those working with young people in the area believe there is a need for somewhere such as a Youth Café for young people to hang out with their friends which would offer an alternative to alcohol and drug misuse.

*“There are an awful lot of activities available for young people in the area but a lot of people don't want to do something every night... A lot of young people just want to chill and hang out. There are a lot of structured activities but there are very little places where they can't do anything.”* [Coordinator of the Youth Information Centre in Dun Laoghaire]

*“Young people I have come across say they have nothing to do and they are drinking and doing whatever else at a young age, whereas, if they had somewhere they could go for a cup of coffee it might make a difference.”* [Community Development Officer with Dun Laoghaire Area Drugs Task Force]

Youth workers also stated there is a need to recognise that parts of Dun Laoghaire are disadvantaged and are affected by drug problems, which is having a negative effect on young people. Other needs identified by respondents included additional services for teenagers with addiction problems, family support services and personal development programmes.

*“Dun Laoghaire is a disadvantaged area as well. There is the drug project here and they (young people) think it is part of life. Little kids are looking at drug users and thinking it is normal so it needs it (a Youth Café).”* [Youth Development Officer with Dun Laoghaire Youth Services]

## 6.5 Location for a Youth Café

Respondents believe a Youth Café should be located in a central location in Dun Laoghaire town centre which is easily accessible by public transport. The need for the Youth Café premises to be independent and stand alone so it would not to be possessed by one area or group was stressed. A

ground floor premises, with an appealing surrounding environment, was also considered to be important. Specific locations mentioned by respondents included where an Internet Café was located on Upper George's Street, a listed building beside Ericsson's, the Tivoli Training Workshop, where Nemo's bar was located, and near the Play Centre on Library Road.

*"Dun Laoghaire town centre would be the best location. A lot of young people visit Dun Laoghaire. It is fairly accessible because of the train and the bus."* [Community Development Officer with Dun Laoghaire Area Drugs Task Force]

*"It (Nemo's) would have been a good location. The most important thing is that it is independent and stand-alone."* [Coordinator of the Youth Information Centre in Dun Laoghaire]

## 6.6 Activities

Youth service providers stated that activities available in a Youth Café should not be overly structured as they feel this would be off putting for young people. However, achieving a balance between activities and engaging with youth workers was suggested. Respondents also felt that activities should cater to the needs of the young people who are attending the Youth Café. Suggested activities included pool, darts, air hockey, Fussball and computer games.

*"More structured things could go on behind the scenes. I would be reluctant to have it (Youth Café) too structured."* [Youth Choices youth worker]

## 6.7 Characteristics of a Youth Café

Respondents stated that a Youth Café should be somewhere warm, friendly, accessible, safe, inclusive, informal, with nice friendly staff, not too many rules, where young people have a sense of ownership, a say in how it is run, feel like they belong there, feel included and feel free to bring up issues which are important to them. In terms of the layout and decoration, it was suggested that it should be somewhere big, open plan, with lots of sections, have comfortable seating such as couches and beanbags, resemble a regular café and be funky, bright and young. Facilities to make refreshments such as smoothies and coffees should also be in place. One respondent suggested the Youth Café should resemble a bar apart from serving alcoholic drinks.

*"It (Youth Café) should be warm and friendly. Staff have to be used to young people, not assume the worst, make them (young people) feel they are entitled to be there. There have to be rules but put across in a nice way. If there is a way of making them*

*(young people) feel it is their space and they are entitled to be there."* [Coordinator of the Youth Information Centre in Dun Laoghaire]

## 6.8 Information

All youth work service providers believed it was a good idea to have information available to young people in a Youth Café. However, it was stressed that information should be provided in an informal manner and should not be forced on young people.

*"Information shouldn't be shovelled at them (young people). It should be made available but not pushed on young people because they don't like that."* [Community Development Officer with Dun Laoghaire Area Drugs Task Force]

A number of youth service providers suggested the Youth Café should merge with the local Youth Information Centre. Locating a youth space such as a Youth Café beside a Youth Information Centre was considered to be a good model which works well in other areas. Respondents believe they would have a symbiotic and complementary relationship, providing an informal space for young people to access information. However, it was stressed that they should be two district spaces and services which would operate side by side but independently of each other.

*"It is the culture now is to move towards the youth café and youth space with information attached to it. I think there is room for both but I think they would be ideal side by side and I think they would be symbiotic because a lot of young people hanging out would acquire information from what is around them."* [Coordinator of the Youth Information Centre in Dun Laoghaire]

According to respondents, types of information which should be available to young people in a Youth Café include information on alcohol and drug misuse, recreational opportunities for young people in the area, exam pressure, stress, mental health, general health, sexual health, career guidance, CVs, part time employment rights, employment, training, citizenship, Fair Trade, social skills, positive choices and any other topical issues for young people. Information could be disseminated through leaflets, posters, information boards, talks, workshops, clinics, programmes and youth workers. It was suggested that information leaflets and programmes should be teenage friendly and the development of information resources in conjunction with young people was discussed. Focus on the dissemination of one specific type of information to young people, such as health was discouraged. The location of a Jobs Club in a Youth Café for young people

who are early school leavers was raised by those working with this target group.

*"A junior version of Jobs Club. FAS generally cater for over 18s and the younger people are out of the loop."* [Youth Choices youth worker]

### 6.9 Young people's involvement in the Youth Café

All of the youth service providers interviewed believe it is essential for young people to be involved in the running of a Youth Café for it to be successful and to engage with young people properly. It was acknowledged that involving young people would probably create more work, however it was deemed to be more beneficial in the long term as it would create a sense of ownership, respect and responsibility among young people. Some respondents considered the inclusion of young people in the process as active participants as opposed to consumers to be the most important aspect of setting up a Youth Café. It was also suggested that involving young people in the process would increase the chances of them becoming young leaders. In addition, it was stated that young people would gain valuable work and business experience from being involved in a venture such as a Youth Café.

*"It is probably the most important thing. They (young people) can't just be consumers of this- they need to be part of the process and the management."* [Youth Worker with Dun Laoghaire Youth Services]

*"It creates more work but it would work better. You can't stick something into the middle of Dun Laoghaire and say come quickly. They (young people) won't do it. If young people are involved in it, the more inclined they are to use it and take care of it. It is the way to go for everything to get young people involved."* [Coordinator of the Youth Information Centre in Dun Laoghaire]

### 6.10 Opening hours

Respondents stated that a Youth Café should ideally be open every weekday and at weekends. It was suggested that weekday opening hours could coincide with local secondary school opening hours, for example half days. All day opening for weekends was deemed to be essential. A minimum of two hours opening at a time was recommended by those who have been involved in similar projects. Ten o'clock was the suggested closing time for weekdays and eleven or twelve for weekends. Later opening hours for the summertime were also recommended.

*"It should be open all the time. Be realistic in terms of young people needing a service that is open later like 11 or 12 at the*

*weekends."* [Community Development Officer with Dun Laoghaire Area Drugs Task Force]

### 6.11 Age limit

In general, respondents felt a Youth Café should be targeted more at older teenagers in the area as they are more vulnerable, there is less available to them in terms of recreational opportunities and they are less interested in structured recreation than younger teenagers. In addition, youth service providers believe that older teenagers are less inclined to attend a Youth Café if younger teenagers are present. The possibility of having separate nights for younger and older teenagers was discussed. The example of the Exit Youth Café in Tallaght where younger teenagers attend in the late afternoons and older teenagers in the evenings was highlighted. The lower age limit was suggested to be 14 years and the older age limit 18 years of age.

*"There is a lot out there for younger teenagers to do. The 15 to 18 year olds are very vulnerable. They are not into structured activities. I would hate to see 17 year olds not going because there were younger teenagers there. They could have different ages on different nights."* [Coordinator of the Youth Information Centre in Dun Laoghaire]

### 6.12 Barriers and enablers

Possible barriers to accessing a Youth Café identified by respondents included strict rules and staff, the location, having to become a member, overcrowding, cost, not knowing about it, groups dominating the Café, younger teenagers, and having to commit immediately.

*"In the beginning that it is not too full on and it is a drop in and there is no major commitment. If they see there is too much to commit to it might be off putting."* [Youth Worker with Dun Laoghaire Youth Services]

Enablers to accessing a Youth Café included if it was somewhere cheap, informal, relaxed, accessible, warm, friendly, with good equipment, not too many unreasonable rules, unlike a school setting, where they can meet friends and chill out, where no one will give out to them and young people enjoy going. One respondent suggested making young people's first visit to a Youth Café as memorable and enjoyable as possible by getting other young people to show them around.

*"Try and make their first visit as memorable and pleasurable as possible. Get young people to show other young people around the services available. Tell them how interesting they found the service rather than them being shown around by an adult."*

[Community Development Officer with Dun Laoghaire Area

Drugs Task Force]

### 6.13 Problems

Potential problems with a Youth Café identified by respondents included young people from different areas clashing with each other, security issues, cliques, one group of young people dominating the Café, young people under the influence of alcohol and drugs trying to gain entry, young people smuggling in and consuming alcohol and drugs on the premises, young people hanging around outside, misconceptions about the Café and complaints from businesses and residents in the area, overcrowding, drug dealers hang around outside, damage to equipment, and lack of staff resources to operate the Café.

Suggested ways of addressing these problems included having clear guidelines around policies relating to alcohol and drug misuse, fighting overcrowding etc. Locating the Youth Café close to the Garda Station and where the CCTV operates in Dun Laoghaire was suggested as a way of reducing the threat of fighting and violence. Having a strong presence on the door was also considered to be important to address fighting, overcrowding and people gaining access under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Involving young people in the development of the Youth Café rules was considered to be a means of ensuring they are effective and adhered to.

Marketing the idea to traders and residents in the area was recommended to overcome misconceptions and complaints. Suggested ways of addressing cliques and the domination of groups included having a neutral venue, having representatives from each area on the management committee and conducting ice-breaker activities which would bond large groups of young people from different areas. Having a night where young people have to bring a new person along every month was also suggested. One youth worker suggested having separate nights for young people from different areas and gradually mixing groups together:

*"To get around the cliques you could have representatives from each area on the committee. First come first serve as a policy. Having activities to bond everyone that goes there or ice breakers once a week. A lot of young people are intimidated about things if there is a group settled in there."* [Coordinator of the Youth Information Centre in Dun Laoghaire]

### 6.14 Improve the lives of young people

The following quotes highlight how youth services providers envisage a Youth café would improve the lives of young people in the Dun Laoghaire area:

- *"It will give them something to do and somewhere to hang out."*
- *"It would be somewhere for them to come at night time instead of hanging around the roads."*
- *"It could have a great knock on effect for communities."*
- *"It would be an opportunity for them to get involved with other young people and youth services and youth workers."*
- *"It would give them information and let them develop their opportunities."*
- *"It would be somewhere they can be themselves, not bring attention to themselves, not get in trouble and explore activities they might like."*
- *"It will be a positive social outlet, somewhere to go where they won't get hassle."*
- *"It would divert young people away from anti-social behaviour, from boredom."*
- *"Somewhere like a youth café would also give some young people the confidence to go and mix with other people."*
- *"It would give the opportunity for young people to mix with young people from other areas and socio-economic backgrounds."*
- *"It would stimulate those out of the education system."*
- *"In time if there were programs on substance abuse issues it might have an impact on some young people."*

### 6.15 Rules

Rules recommended by respondents included no alcohol or drugs on the premises, no bad language, respect for the premises and other people, confidentiality between those in the Youth Café, the youth worker on duty has the right to eject any young person breaking the rules and the young person must leave if asked. All respondents believe that young people should be involved in developing Youth Café rules as this would ensure a higher level of compliance. It was also highlighted that rules would have to be age specific, for example being allowed to smoke.

*"If the young people are involved in the rule making process and there is a contract drawn up before they enter the door."* [Youth Worker with Dun Laoghaire Youth Services]



## 6.16 Advertisement

Advertising methods recommended by respondents included giving talks to schools and youth clubs, putting up posters in libraries, health centres, resource centres, shops, handing out fliers outside schools, youth workers informing young people in their areas, radio adverts and through word of mouth. One respondent suggested bringing young people from schools and youth clubs to the Youth Café on a tour and offering them a voucher to entice them back.

*“What I would do is bring them (young people) down to see it (Youth Café) which would break the barrier to come through the door. Give them a voucher for a cup of coffee. It gives them a reason to come down then.”* [Coordinator of the Youth Information Centre in Dun Laoghaire]

## 6.17 Staff

Youth service providers interviewed advised that staff in a Youth Café should be very lively, vibrant, outgoing, open, friendly, flexible, relaxed, welcoming, inclusive, patient and adjustable to the needs and interests of young people. All respondents believe young people should staff the Youth Café in addition to adults and be more visible than adults. It was recommended that the Youth Café should have two full time paid staff on at any one time, supported by youth staff. The employment of one male youth worker was considered to be a good idea in terms of providing a male role model for young people and for security reasons.

*“Depending on the size you should have two full time paid staff on at any one time and supported by youth staff. The young people should be most visible. Staff should be open, friendly, ideally one male because a lot of young people don’t have a male role model and for security as well.”* [Youth Worker with Dun Laoghaire Community Training Centre]

## 6.18 Youth Service Providers Involvement Interest

All youth service providers stated they would be interested in getting involved with a Youth Café in the area. The Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Local Drugs Task Force stated they would be interested in linking up with the Youth Café on joint ventures and substance misuse information and programmes. The Gardaí believe linking in with a Youth Café would be an excellent way for Community Guards to engage with young people of the area in an informal and non-threatening manner.

*“We would have no problem linking in with a youth café. We link into other youth programmes. There would be community Guards that could drop in to the café. It would be a great way to interact*

*with young people in the area. J.L.O.s have their official work but the Community Guards could build up informal links with young people in the youth café.”* [Garda Juvenile Liaison Sergeant in the Dun Laoghaire area]

The Youth Information Centre in Dun Laoghaire believes they could contribute greatly to the information resources of a Youth Café in the area, ideally if they were located side by side. They believe a Youth Café would provide an audience of young people who do not engage with information service who could be potentially engaged in relevant information services.

*“From the Youth Information Centre perspective, it would be very important for us to contribute to a youth café and there is a huge role that we could play from young people just dropping in and what we could add to a youth café. Youth cafés should look like somewhere to drop in but as we have them as an audience it is really important not just to have them sitting there, that there is an educational role.”* [Coordinator of the Youth Information Centre in Dun Laoghaire]

## 6.19 Lessons learned from the Pilot Project and other projects

A Youth Café Pilot Project was run by youth workers from Dun Laoghaire Youth Service this year. The Café was located in a building near the church in Dun Laoghaire and operated two nights a week from 7pm until 9.15pm. There were approximately twelve young people aged 17 to 21 years involved in the project.

Youth workers running the project stated it provided a safe place for young people to hang out away from the streets and offered an alternative to the pub. They provided information to young people if asked and picked up on issues affecting those in the group. It took a few weeks for young people from different areas to mix together but this was slowly achieved through spending time together and taking part in group activities. Young people were involved in the running of the project which they believe gave young people a sense of ownership, respect and responsibility. The local Gardaí engaged with young people in the project in an informal manner, which also was very successful.

Equipment in the Youth Café included a pool table, a dart board, Playstation, DVDs, CDs, a microwave to make popcorn, smoothie makers, sandwich makers and soda streams.

Youth workers involved in the Pilot Project made the following recommendations:

- The location needs to be accessible
- The Youth Café should operate on a membership card basis
- A limit should be set on the number of young people who are allowed in the Youth Café at any one time
- Young people should be involved in the Youth Café process
- Staff need to be well briefed to include young people in the running of the Youth Café
- Information and programmes should not be forced on young people
- Local Community Gardaí should be encouraged to engage with the project
- Issues relating to caretakers need to be ironed out before proceeding
- Young people from different areas should be mixed gradually
- A Youth Café should be sustainable well into the future so as not to disillusion young people

Youth workers involved in the “Chill Café” in the Community Rooms in Loughlinstown made the following recommendations:

- Young people should have a say in how a Youth Café is run
- A Youth Café should operate in a stand alone premises
- There should be a balance of structured activities for young people attending the Youth Café as well unstructured time to hang out
- There should be adequate equipment which appeals to young people in a Youth Café
- A Youth Café should be an open, inclusive and welcoming place for all young people

- There should be a limit on the number of young people allowed in to the Café at any one time
- The Youth Café should operate on a membership card basis
- If there is a problem with young people breaking rules they should be given another chance
- There should be a strict door policy in order to alleviate young people smuggling in alcohol, drugs and dangerous weapons
- Community Gardaí should be involved in the project
- Young people should be encouraged to participate in Junior Leadership Programmes
- A link could be established with young people involved in Youth Work Programmes, such as the one in the Tech in Sallynoggin, who may be interested in work experience in a Youth Café
- If numbers fall off at the beginning, persist with the venture

## 6.20 Names

Youth service providers suggested the Youth Café name should be short, funky and catchy. Ideally, they think young people should pick the name in a competition. It was also suggested that young people could design a logo for the Youth Café in conjunction with an artist.

# Chapter 7 - Costs, Staffing, Management, Evaluation and Sustainability



## 7.1 Property costs

Dun Laoghaire is a county with very high rents and high density housing. According to the Architect's Report commissioned for the study, there is no likelihood of a green field, or brown field site being available for this project. There should however be existing buildings available for purchase, suitably located, and suitable for adaptation to this specific use. The likely cost of this type of building is circa €1,500,000.

Cost of property	1,500,000 Euro
Stamp duty, fees etc.	165,000 Euro
<b>Total Purchase Cost</b>	<b>1,665,000 Euro</b>

## 7.2 Construction costs

According to the Architect's Report, construction costs would be circa €510,182. Construction costs would include possible demolition works, shoring of adjoining properties, preliminaries, refurbishment adaptation/extension of building, and carrying out all construction works, decoration etc. It does not include loose furnishings.

Construction Costs	449,500 Euro
VAT at 13.5%	60,682 Euro
<b>Total Construction Costs</b>	<b>510,182 Euro</b>

## 7.3 Professional fees

Professional fees, which would include architectural, quantity surveying and structural engineer's fees, to carry out full service, from inception to completion are estimated at €77,164.

12% of construction costs	63,772 Euro
VAT at 21%	13,392 Euro
<b>Total professional fees</b>	<b>77,164 Euro</b>

## 7.4 Planning permission

According to the Architect's Report, it is most likely that the proposal will be subject to a planning application, depending on the property. The planning and design process will take 3 months, and the planning application and decision a further 3 months. A planning appeal could extend this process by a further 6 months. The building process should take 9 months.

Statutory fees associated with the planning process are as follows:

Planning application 2.90m2	536.50 Euros
Fire safety certificate application, at 3.60 m2	666 Euros
Provision for development charge	10,000 Euros
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,202.50 Euros</b>

## 7.5 Summary of costs

Property purchase	1,665,000.0 Euros
Construction costs	510,182.0 Euros
Professional fees	77,164.0 Euros
Planning fees and development charges	11,202.5 Euros
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,263,548.5 Euros</b>

## 7.6 Staff and staff supports

The Code of Practice – Child Protection for the Youth Work Sector (Department of Education and Science, 2003) recommends the minimum adult: young person ratio should ideally be one adult per group of eight plus one other adult, and allowing an additional adult for each group of eight thereafter. Local circumstances, the ages of the children, the experience of the volunteers and the staff should also be taken into consideration. Safety, ability/disability of young people and the nature of the activities being undertaken may require that these ratios be considerably lower.

In terms of Youth Café staff: young people ratio, Australian Youth Cafés such as Café Horizons and Jack's Island Youth Café recommend ratios of 1:6 and 1:4 respectively.

According to the Prince's Trust (2005) Youth Café Survival Guide, providing specific training and skills to staff and volunteers is essential. Some staff and volunteers may already have relevant training while others will need to be provided with training in areas such as youth worker skills and certification, drug and alcohol awareness, child protection and health and safety. Volunteers should also be given clear roles and responsibilities so they know what is expected of them.

The Prince's Trust (2005) believes there are many and various opportunities for young people to learn new skills in the context of a Youth café. These include getting involved in organising activities and events, day to day running of the Café, assisting with fundraising and contributing to interior design and decoration. The benefits young people gain from this kind of involvement are both practical and personal and include increased self-confidence and improved communication skills



(Prince's trust, 2005).

## 7.7 Management

Some Youth Cafes have a mixture of adults and young people on their management committee; others have two management committees running side by side, one made up of adults, one made up of young people. The number of people involved can also differ from small groups of about ten right up to a large single group of 22. It is recommended to choose the structure that fits best with your community and your plans (Prince's Trust, 2005).

Recommendations for management committees include:

- Agree the shape of your management committee
- Agree on the size of the group
- Agree on how many adults should be involved
- Agree on how often it will meet
- If you decide to have two separate groups, agree on how ideas will be exchanged and decisions will be reached
- Small groups from the management committee should be given responsibility for specific jobs, i.e. fundraising, making contact with the media
- Give the management committee a name and make it official by agreeing and adopting the rules of the organisation, i.e. a constitution

A sample constitution given by the Prince's Trust (2005:23) is:

*We recognise that young people need a safe, non-alcoholic place to go. We accept each person may have different needs and reasons for coming to our youth café. We will try to support all of the people who come through our doors. We will respect and acknowledge the rights of each individual.*

In the case of a management committee for a Youth Café in Dun Laoghaire, a small operations group from the local youth service provider could be involved in the day to day management of the café, while a larger interagency management committee could support this group. It is essential that young people are also involved in the management committee in a non-tokenistic way.

## 7.8 Evaluation

The Prince's Trust (2005) Youth Café Survival Guide states

that evaluation is an essential part of the life of a Youth Café for two reasons- it helps find out what is being done well and what can be improved. It also provides interesting and essential information for funders and supporters. They add that successful evaluation requires a Youth Café to review the clear aims and objectives agreed on early on in the project and assess the project's performance against them. It is also essential to be very clear about why specific pieces of the evaluation are being carried out, who the information is being gathered for and exactly what information is being sought. Evaluation results are very dependent on the questions asked.

Measurements can be either:

Qualitative (assessing the quality and value of achievements)  
e.g.:

- Users' opinions of the café;
- How much fun the café is;
- Whether the café is providing activities that they enjoy;
- What kinds of opportunities they have had to learn new skills.

Quantitative (counting the number and type of achievements)  
e.g.:

- Number of young people using the café;
- Takings at the shops;
- Events and activities;
- Numbers attending.

Information can be collected by a variety of means e.g.:

- Using regular records you keep as part of the café business administration;
- Via informal discussion and feedback;
- Through workshop meetings that focus on a particular topic;
- Through questionnaires or feedback forms about the café facilities and services.



The Prince's Trust (2005) also recommends keeping records of any evaluation carried out as it can be useful in future funding discussion and applications.

As regards monitoring and evaluation systems of Youth Cafés in Ireland, much of the data collected by Youth Cafés is for monitoring purposes only. Several cafés (The Zone, The CRIB, FDYS) collect information on age, gender, date of first contact with café, frequency of attendance, home location, involvement in youth café activities, involvement in other youth activities, contact details for parents, and information on allergies and illnesses. Where youth cafés have members, this information can be recorded at registration. Where external trips are taken, parental consent is requested again.

These practices are most common where existing youth work organisations have existing policies on membership and the Youth Café is one among a range of services. Members sign in whenever they attend. Where there is no membership, surveys of those attending are often taken quarterly. On a day-to-day basis the number of people attending can be recorded hourly, by the staff. One of the recommendations of the Zone evaluation is to establish baselines of participants' needs, knowledge, skills, and attitudes when they first attend.

The GAF in Galway uses a system of objectives and indicators as a means of monitoring and evaluating their work. Despite this system, they state that by its very nature, much of what goes on in a Youth Café is very difficult to measure. Documenting the number of self-referrals to the Project is another method of evaluation, as it shows that young people value the Project.

The Zone Youth Café, located in Blanchardstown, Dublin has developed a robust method of monitoring and evaluating its work, with the use of *Outcomes, Indicators and Targets*. This model identifies seven outcomes central to its work those being, *Engagement, Youth Friendliness, Health Promoting Service, Personal Development, Implementation of Good Youth Work Practices, Engagement with Appropriate Agencies and Cost Effectiveness*. For each outcome, the model in the Zone has identified an indicator and target, which when combined, form the basis for the evaluation of the Café (Child & Family Research Centre, 2008).

## 7.9 Sustainability

The Youth Café Steering Committee consists of sustainable groups such as the VEC, Southside Partnership, Dun Laoghaire Community Training Centre and Youth Service, An Garda Síochána and the HSE which is important in terms of sustainability. Comhairle na n-Óg and local secondary schools

have also been involved in the project so far. Having such a comprehensive group of organisations involved in the project means there is wealth of information and resources being contributed. The project needs to continue to work as a partnership between different agencies for the Youth Café to be successful and sustainable. Funding is also an essential part of sustainability for the Youth Café project.

When the Café is up and running, there is huge potential for the premises to be used out of hours (i.e. while young people are at school) by other groups to raise funding. Other Youth Cafes, such as those in Ronanstown and Clondalkin rent out their Youth Café premises for other uses. The Exit Youth Café in Brookfield has purposely designed their furniture and lighting to adapt to other uses other than a Youth Café. This would be a good option for the Youth Café in Dun Laoghaire in terms of sustainability.

According to the Prince's Trust (2005), for a Youth Café to last it needs to be thought of as a small business that incurs regular costs and consequently needs to regenerate regular income- be it from funders, activities or individuals. In order to give those involved in the Youth Café, the management committee, potential funders and any other interested parties confidence in the long term sustainability of the Youth Café, a business plan needs to be written.

### A business plan:

- Pulls together all the information that has been gathered so far;
- Gives an overview of the project aims and objectives, and details how they are intended to be achieved;
- Will help to clarify the work that needs to be done;
- Will show potential funders and supporters forward thinking and future plans;
- Demonstrate that the Café is intended to be run in a business-like fashion;
- Estimate running costs of the Café such as insurance, electricity, Café expenditure and income;
- Include a well thought out and realistic budget;
- Include a section on how progress against the Café's set aims and objectives will be monitored and measured, i.e. monitoring systems such as attendance records, feedback forms and activity reports (Prince's Trust, 2005: 45).



The Prince's Trust (2005:45-46) highlights the following considerations for a Youth Café business plan:

Personal objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why you are setting up the café and what do you want from it?</li> </ul>
Business description and purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the purpose of your café?</li> <li>• What are its unique selling points?</li> </ul>
Business vision and long term objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you want your café to be in the future?</li> </ul>
Current market situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there a need for a café in your area?</li> <li>• How will you get young people to use your café?</li> </ul>
Target customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What groups are you planning to support in your café?</li> </ul>
Competitor analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there another café or youth centre already in the area?</li> <li>• What are you going to do differently?</li> </ul>
Marketing strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How many people will use your café?</li> <li>• How will you tell them about what you're doing?</li> </ul>
Operational requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What resources do you need to get your project off the ground?</li> <li>• Where will you get the resources from?</li> </ul>
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How much money do you need?</li> <li>• Where will it come from?</li> </ul>
Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who is involved in your project?</li> <li>• How will they provide support?</li> </ul>
Business risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could anything go wrong?</li> <li>• What would you do about it?</li> </ul>

# Chapter 8 - Key Findings and Recommendations



## 8.1 Introduction

The aim of this study was to assess the needs of young people in the Dun Laoghaire area, review Youth Café models nationally and internationally and to identify an appropriate Youth Café model for the Dun Laoghaire area.

## 8.2 Key findings

The key findings of the study include:

- The need for a Youth Café in the Dun Laoghaire area
- Why a Youth Café is needed in the area
- Characteristics of a Youth Café
- What activities and equipment should be in a Youth Café
- The best location for a Youth Café
- The age limit for a Youth Café
- Young peoples' involvement in running a Youth Café
- Youth café opening hours
- Information to be available in a Youth Café
- Potential problems with a Youth Café
- Barriers and enablers to accessing a Youth Café
- How a Youth Café would improve the lives of young people

## 8.3 Need for a Youth Café in the Dun Laoghaire area

Overall, the study found there is a need for a Youth Café in the Dun Laoghaire area. The key issues affecting young people in the area were identified as having nothing to do and nowhere to go. Youth service providers and young people unanimously agreed there is a need for such a facility, with 93% of young people stating there is a need for a Youth Café. A Youth Café could also be easily transferred to other geographical areas, for example the Westside of Dun Laoghaire Rathdown.

## 8.4 Why a Youth Café is needed in the area

The main reasons given why there is a need for a Youth Café in the area were that it would provide a safe, warm, cheap and friendly facility for young people to hang out, it would divert young people away from anti-social behaviour, it would provide an alternative to underage drinking, it would give young people an opportunity to meet new people and try new things and it would provide information for young people who need it.

## 8.5 Characteristics of a Youth Café

Young people stated that a Youth Café should be somewhere safe, relaxed and fun to hang out, with not too many rules. Overall, young people felt it should be a large facility which can accommodate a large number of young people, brightly decorated with comfortable furniture. Having friendly, young,

outgoing, down to earth staff was also considered to be very important.

## 8.6 Youth Café activities and equipment

The most requested activities and equipment were pool tables, computers with Internet access, dance facilities, music, computer games, TV, band space, dart board and air hockey tables.

## 8.7 The best location for a Youth Café

Both young people and youth service providers agreed that the Youth Café should be located in central Dun Laoghaire, on the main street, close to public transport, the Dun Laoghaire Shopping Centre and other amenities such as fast food restaurants. Central Dun Laoghaire was considered to be an ideal location for a Youth Café as it is served extensively by public transport which operate through local areas- i.e. the DART and the following bus routes: 7, 7A, 45A, 46A, 59, 59A, 75, 111, 746, 7N and 46N.

The Architect's Report for the purposes of this study concurs that a Youth Café should be located "in a quality high street location, and not adjoining shops, so as to promote a proper sense of identity." It adds, that "to date youth facilities have been located in a non prime and marginalised locations, frequently lacking in any 'sense of place.'" It states that "facilities in such locations do not generate a sense of pride, belonging, or place and are frequently underused, blighted and subject to vandalism."

## 8.8 Age limit for a Youth Café

A Youth Café was considered to be more in demand for older teenagers in the area as younger teenagers have more structured recreation available to them. Young people and youth service providers agreed that older and younger teenagers should not be mixed and the possibility of running different nights or times for different age groups was discussed.

## 8.9 Young peoples' involvement in running a Youth Café

Youth service providers and the majority (75.6%) of young people agreed that young people should be involved in the running of a Youth Café. It was suggested that older teenagers should be involved in this process rather than younger teenagers. Involvement in the running of a Youth Café was considered to be important in relation to creating ownership, responsibility and respect among young people. Overall, young people showed an interest in working in the Youth Café.

### 8.10 Youth Café opening hours

It was recommended that a Youth Café should be open every day of the week if possible. Weekends were the most popular time identified by young people, followed by after school, evenings and weekdays. Closing times of 10pm on weekdays and around the time of the last bus on weekends were suggested.

### 8.11 Information to be available in a Youth Café

In general, it was agreed that information should be available to young people who need it in a Youth Café. However, it was stressed that information should not be forced on young people. Information and programmes on alcohol and drugs were the most popular identified by young people, followed by sexual health information and programmes and information and programmes on suicide prevention. Merging a Youth Café with the Youth Information Centre was considered to be an excellent model which has worked well in other areas. It is believed that this model would open up information to a much wider audience of young people in the area and provide information in an informal setting. However, it was emphasised that the services should remain two separate structures operating side by side.

### 8.12 Potential problems with a Youth Café

While the majority of young people (63.3%) saw no problem with having a Youth Café in the area, the main problem envisaged related to security and safety issues. Young people coming together from different areas, schools and groups were identified as potential causes of conflict in a Youth Café. It was suggested that young people from different areas should be mixed gradually and group activities should be used to help young people to get to know each other. The use of membership cards was also recommended.

### 8.13 Barriers and enablers to accessing a Youth Café

Barriers to accessing a Youth Café identified in the study included strict rules and staff, the location, having to become a member, overcrowding, cost, not knowing about it, groups dominating the Café, younger teenagers, and having to commit immediately. Enablers to accessing a Youth Café included if it was somewhere cheap, informal, relaxed, accessible, warm friendly, with good equipment, not too many unreasonable rules, unlike a school setting, where they can meet friends and chill out, where no one will give out to them and young people enjoy going.

### 8.14 How a Youth Café would improve the lives of young people

It was considered that the establishment of a Youth Café in the Dun Laoghaire area would improve the lives of young

people significantly as it would provide something to do, somewhere to hang out for young people, information to young people who need it, the opportunity for young people to mix with other young people from different areas and socio-economic backgrounds, an opportunity for young people to engage with youth services, an alternative to underage drinking, reduce anti-social behaviour, improve the relationship between young people and the Gardaí and improve the lives of communities in general.

### 8.15 Recommendations

Drawing from the research findings, the following recommendations are made:

#### 8.16 Youth Café characteristics

- A Youth Café should be somewhere warm, friendly, safe, assessable, inclusive, informal, relaxed and fun to hang out, with not too many rules, where young people have a sense of ownership, a say in how it is run, feel like they belong there, feel included and feel free to bring up issues which are important to them
- The Youth Café should be big enough to accommodate a large number of young people
- The Youth Café should be bright and colourful with comfortable seating and lots of different sections

#### 8.17 Youth Café facilities/activities

- In terms of activities, the Youth Café should aim to provide pool/snooker tables, computers/internet access, dance mats/machines/classes, music/Jukebox, video/computer games, TV and a space for bands.
- A balance should be struck between participating in activities and engaging with youth workers
- Young people from different areas should be encouraged to mix and get to know each other through initiatives such as open days, table quizzes and 'speed dating' type ice-breakers
- The Youth Café should sell cheap food and drink
- Facilities to make refreshments such as smoothies and coffees should be in place
- The Youth Café should have a smoking area for young people legally allowed to smoke

### 8.18 Youth Café staff

- Youth Café staff should be young, friendly, Garda vetted, used to working with young people in the area, confident, out-going, cool, responsible, laid back and down to earth
- Staff and volunteers should be provided with relevant training
- Volunteers should be given clear roles and responsibilities so they know what is expected of them

### 8.19 Youth Café location

- The Youth Café should be located in central Dun Laoghaire, preferably on the main street, close to public transport, the Dun Laoghaire Shopping Centre and other amenities such as fast food restaurants and should be a ground floor premises, with an appealing surrounding environment
- The Youth Café should be located in a neutral location to avoid domination of groups
- The Youth Café should operate in a stand alone premises
- The Youth Café could be located close to the Garda Station and where the CCTV operates in Dun Laoghaire in order to reduce the threat of fighting and violence

### 8.20 Youth Café opening hours

- The Youth Café should be open at weekends, after school, evenings and weekdays
- The Youth Café should be open later at weekends, perhaps to coincide with the last bus/train times

### 8.21 Young people's involvement in the Youth Café

- Older teenagers should be involved in the running of the Youth Café to promote a sense of ownership, respect and responsibility
- Young people should be involved in the development of the Youth Café rules to ensure they are effective and adhered to
- Young people from different areas should be represented on the management committee to avoid cliques and the domination of one group
- Young people should be involved in the design and decoration of the Youth Café, i.e. a graffiti wall

- Young people should be encouraged to participate in Junior Leadership Programmes

### 8.22 Youth Café policies and rules

- The Youth Café should consider having a membership card system for safety and security reasons
- The Youth Café should be open to different age groups at different times, i.e. older and younger teenagers
- The Youth Café should consider setting age limits for membership
- The Youth Café should have clear guidelines around policies relating to alcohol and drug misuse, fighting, overcrowding, staff: young people ratios etc.
- The Youth Café should have a strong presence on the door to address fighting, overcrowding and people gaining access under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- The Youth Café could draw up their own constitution/mission statement

### 8.23 Youth Café management

- The shape and size of the management committee should be decided, i.e. how many adults and young people are going to be involved

### 8.24 Youth Café and information

- Ideally, the local Youth Information Centre should be located beside the Youth Café
- The Youth Café and the Youth Information Centre should be two district spaces and services which would operate side by side but independently of each other
- Information and programmes on issues such as alcohol and drugs, sexual health, suicide prevention, family problems, mental health problems, drink driving, education, college, exam pressure, employment rights, events, youth activities, teenage pregnancy, eating disorders, environmental issues, driving, self-defence, citizenship, Fair Trade, social skills, positive choices and any other topical issues for young people should be available in a Youth Café
- Information should be provided in an informal manner and should not be forced on young people

### 8.25 Advertisement and promotion

- The main form of advertisement could be through a website such as Bebo
- The Youth Café should be promoted through giving talks and information to young people in local secondary schools
- The Youth Café should be marketed positively to local traders and residents to overcome misconceptions and complaints

### 8.26 Community partnership and involvement

- Local Community Gardaí should be encouraged to engage with the project
- All interested local agencies, organisations, groups and businesses should be encouraged to get involved in the project, i.e. the VEC, Southside Partnership, Dun Laoghaire Community Training Centre, Dun Laoghaire Youth Service, An Garda Síochána, the HSE, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Outreach Project
- A link could be established with young people involved in Youth Work Programmes, such as in Sallynoggin Community College, who may be interested in work experience in a Youth Café

### 8.27 Sustainability

- A business plan for the Youth Café should be written to ensure the long term sustainability of the project
- The continued involvement of sustainable groups in the project should be encouraged
- The Youth Café should be rented out outside of operating hours
- The Youth Café should be purposely designed to adapt to other uses, i.e. furniture and lighting

### 8.28 Evaluation

- The project should be evaluated on a regular basis

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### Additional resources:

Campbeltown Youth Café, Argyll  
[http://www.yesweb.org/gkr/project\\_factsheet.html?pid=733](http://www.yesweb.org/gkr/project_factsheet.html?pid=733)

Elgin Youth Café  
[www.elginyouthcafe.org](http://www.elginyouthcafe.org)

Retro Youth Café - Youth Action and Policy Association NSW  
<http://www.yapa.org.au/youthwork/stories/retrocafe.php>

Spelthorne Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (2006)  
[http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/agenda\\_item\\_5\\_\\_update\\_on\\_mobile\\_youth\\_provision\\_project.doc](http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/agenda_item_5__update_on_mobile_youth_provision_project.doc)



# Appendices



## Appendix I- Dun Laoghaire Youth Café Study

1) Are you?

Male

Female

2) What age are you?

12  13  14  15  16  17   
18  19  20  21

3) Do you think there is a need for a Youth Café in the Dun Laoghaire area?

Yes

No

Why

4) Do you think young people should be involved in the running of the Youth Café?

Yes

No

5) What times and days would you like a Youth Café in the area to be open?

Weekdays

Weekends

After School

Evenings

6) What types of information/programmes would you like to be available in a Youth Café?

Alcohol/drug information/ programmes

Sexual health information/ programmes

Suicide prevention information/programmes

Other

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7) What would be the best way to advertise a Youth Café?

Website

Text messages

Other

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8) Do you see any problems with having a Youth Café in the area?

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9) What types of activities would you like to be available in a Youth Café?

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10) Where would be the best location for a Youth Café?

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11) What would be a good name for a Youth Café in the Dun Laoghaire area?

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THANK YOU!



## Appendix 2- Focus Group Questions

- What is the single biggest need of young people in the area?
- What do you do in your free time?
- How much time do you spend hanging out with friends?
- Do you think there is a need for a youth café in the area?
- Where would be the best location for a youth café?
- What type of layout/decoration would you like in a youth café?
- What type of place do you think a youth café should be?
- What rules do you think a youth café should have? i.e. alcohol and drug free
- What times and days would you like a youth café in the area be open?
- What types of activities would you like to be available in a youth café?
- What types of programmes would you like to be available in a youth café? i.e. alcohol and drug awareness programmes, suicide prevention programmes, sex education programmes
- Would you like to be able to access information in a youth café?
- What types of information do you think should be available for young people in a youth café? i.e. health, alcohol and drugs education
- Do you think young people should be involved in the running of the youth café? Why?
- Would you like to be involved in the running of the youth café? Why?
- What type of people would you like working there?
- Do you see any problems with having a youth café in the area and what would these problems be and how could they be overcome?
- What would be the best way to advertise a new youth café?
- Should the youth café have a website to let young people know what is going on in the youth café?
- What would be a good name for a youth café in the Dun Laoghaire area?
- How do you think a youth café will improve the lives of young people and the community in the Dun Laoghaire area?
- Do you think a youth café would make young people in the area stop or cut down on drinking?

## Appendix 3- Youth Service Providers Questions

- What is the single biggest need of young people in the area?
- What are the main issues/problems affecting young people in the area?
- Do you think there is a need for a youth café in the area?
- Where would be the best location for a youth café?
- What type of place do you think a youth café should be for young people?
- What are the barriers/enablers to young people accessing a youth café?
- What rules do you think a youth café should have? i.e. alcohol and drug free
- What times and days do you think young people need a youth café in the area be open?
- What types of activities do you think should be available in a youth café?
- What types of programmes do you think should be available in a youth café? i.e. alcohol and drug awareness programmes, suicide prevention programmes, sex education programmes
- Do you think young people should be able to access information in a youth café?
- What types of information do you think should be available for young people in a youth café? i.e. health, alcohol and drugs education
- Do you think young people should be involved in the running of the youth café? Why?
- What type of people do you think should be working in a youth café?
- Do you see any problems with having a youth café in the area and what would these problems be and how could they be overcome?
- What would be the best way to advertise a new youth café?
- Should the youth café have a website to let young people know what is going on in the youth café?
- How do you think a youth café will improve the lives of young people and the community in the Dun Laoghaire area?
- Do you think a Youth Café will cut down on alcohol consumption among young people in the area?
- What would be a good name for a youth café in the Dun Laoghaire area?