
Profiling of Services for at risk youth in Dun Laoghaire Rathdown

Southside Partnership

August 2009

Sean Mc Gearty

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ALPPS: Alternative Learning Pathways Project

CTC: Community Training Centre

CODAN: Co. Dublin Areas of Need

CDB: County Development Board

CDP: Community Development Project

CYC: Catholic Youth Care

DLCTC: Dun Laoghaire Community Training Centre

DLR: Dun Laoghaire Rathdown

DLRCC: Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council

DLVEC: Dun Laoghaire Vocational Education Committee

DEIS: Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools

DJELR: Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform

ED: Electoral Division

EWO: Educational Welfare Officer

ESRI: Economic and Social Research Institute

FAS: Foras Aiseanna Saothair - Training and Employment Authority

FRC: Family Resource Centre

GDP: Garda Diversionary Project

HSCLP: Home School Community Liaison Programme

HSE: Health Services Executive

JLO: Juvenile Liaison Officer

LES: Local Employment Service

LDTF: Local Drugs Task Force

LDSIP: Local Development Social Inclusion Programme

NYP: Neighbourhood Youth Project

NEWB: National Educational Welfare Board

OMCYA: Office of the Minister of Children and Youth Affairs

RAPID: Revitalising Areas by Planning Investment and Development

SCP: School Completion Programme

STAG: Southside Travellers Action Group

SPY: Special Projects to assist Disadvantaged Youth

SSP: Southside Partnership

VEC: Vocational Education Committee

Y at R Network : Youth at Risk Network

YPFSF: Young Peoples Facilities and Services Fund

1 Introduction

In Southside Partnership, we have been in the process of planning for the extension of the Local Development and Social Inclusion Programme to the whole County of Dún Laoghaire Rathdown for some time now. A number of actions have been undertaken by the Partnership to support this objective. These actions have included the commissioning of significant pieces of research in 2008, including:

- A Social Inclusion Profile of Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown
(Niall Watters, Unique Perspectives)
 - Mapping of Family Support Services in Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County
(Hilary Curley, Curley Consulting)
 - A Profile and Needs Assessment of Older People in Dun Laoghaire Rathdown
(Liz Chaloner and Wendy Cox)
- (All reports available to download from SSP Website)*

Disadvantaged Young People/Youth at Risk is one of the key target groups for Southside Partnership and we considered it important to identify the priority issues and current needs for this group within the county.

Hence, in 2008, Southside Partnership also commissioned a piece of research on mapping and auditing of services for this target group.

The overall aim of the research was to determine more clearly this target group's needs within the existing and new areas in the county, and the current levels of service provision and models of support within the disadvantaged areas in DLR.

The objective of the research was to develop a more coordinated integrated coherent county strategy to working with disadvantaged Young People/Youth at Risk.

This research follows on from the 'Moving Beyond the Barriers' study on Early School Leaving in Dun Laoghaire VEC that was carried out by Southside Partnership & DLVEC through the Youth at Risk Network in 2004 (funded by the DL/R Drugs Taskforce), and is referenced in this report.

Looking back to that report, and the successive actions that were implemented, it is very clear that the need for inter-agency collaboration and joint working is as great, if not greater than it was then. So, to reiterate from the introduction of that report:

'There is a clear recognition from our research that no one agency can tackle the complexities inherent in the area of addressing early school leaving in a strategic way on its own; there is a real need for agencies and communities to work together to respond to the range of needs identified. Collaborative working is essential if responses are to be effective.'

... 'At a local level, the challenge is for schools, education & training providers, parents, family support services, and the other agencies named in this report, to work together towards an integration of services for the benefit of the children and their families.'

(Moving Beyond the Barriers: An Inter-agency Research Study on Early School Leaving in the Dun Laoghaire area.)

From the recommendations developed in this report we hope to devise our new strategy for Youth at Risk in DLR County, with the Youth at Risk Network.

We would like to thank all those who participated and contributed to this research, and look forward to continuing to work together to achieve the implementation of these recommendations.

*Aileen O'Brien, Education Co-ordinator, Southside Partnership
On behalf of the Youth at Risk Research Steering Group
August 2009*

2 Background to the Research

2.1 Overview of the research process

2.1.1 Research aims

The overall aim of the profiling of "at risk youth" in Dun Laoghaire Rathdown was to develop a more co-ordinated, integrated coherent county strategy to working with Disadvantaged Young People/Youth at Risk. The specific objectives included;

To determine more clearly their needs within the existing and new areas in the county,

To assess current levels of service provision

To identify models of support within the disadvantaged areas in DLR.

2.1.2 Research Methodology

The research took place over a four month period from mid December 2008 to mid April 2009. The consultation process took place over the period mid January to mid February. Southside Partnership set up a steering group to support the research process. This group comprised;

Roisin Mc Lindon: Co. Dublin VEC

Aisling Crowley: Dun Laoghaire VEC

Catherine Bell: Dun Laoghaire Community Training centre

Sinead Fortune: Youth Choices Project

Aileen O'Brien: Southside Partnership

Vivienne McCann: Southside Partnership

Margaret Groome: National Educational Welfare Board

The steering group met on three occasions over the course of the research.

The first meeting refined the research objectives and scoped out the research.

The second meeting reviewed progress and key issues emerging

The third meeting reviewed the draft research report

The research process was managed and co-ordinated by Southside Partnership. SSP provided ongoing support to the researcher, co-ordinated focus group and organised the seminar with the Youth at Risk Network.

The research methodology involved:

- A review of literature and reports relating to disadvantage and at risk youth
- A review of research on Dun Laoghaire Rathdown
- Interviews with key personnel in statutory, voluntary, and community agencies/groups in Dun Laoghaire Rathdown
- Focus groups with personnel involved in Garda Youth Diversion Projects, Home School Community Liaison Coordinators, and School Completion Coordinators.
- Focus groups with early school leavers
- Telephone interviews
- A seminar involving members of the Youth at Risk Network which involved youth service organisations, educational services and key agencies dealing with disadvantage and at risk youth in DLR (A summary of the key issues and recommendations from this seminar is provided in section 7 below).

Over the course of the research over fifty people were consulted through interviews, focus groups and the Youth at Risk Network seminar. A list of people consulted is provided in appendix 1.

2.2 Definitions

2.2.1 Social exclusion

There are clear connections between the incidence of at risk and the levels of poverty and social exclusion experienced by communities.

The National Anti Poverty definition of poverty is

People are living in poverty if their income and resources (material, cultural and social) are so inadequate as to preclude them from having a standard of living which is regarded as acceptable by Irish society generally. As a result of inadequate income and resources people may be excluded and marginalised from participating in activities which are considered the norm for other people in society¹

Combat poverty defines social exclusion as

“the process whereby certain groups are pushed to the margins of society and prevented from participating by virtue of their poverty, low education or inadequate life skills. This distances them from jobs, income and educational opportunities as well as social and community networks. They have little access to power and decision

¹ National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007 -2016 : Office for Social Inclusion (February 2007)

making bodies and little chance of influencing decisions or policies that affect them and little chance of bettering their standard of living

The Social Inclusion profile of DLR identifies ten core aspects of social exclusion namely²;

- Social exclusion is a complex process with many components and variables.
- Social exclusion is inter generational, that is, it can be passed on through social and environmental conditions in the peer or socialisation cycle.
- It is multi dimensional in nature; therefore individuals may experience a number of re-enforcing elements, i.e. unemployment, low educational attainment, health and housing problems etc, simultaneously.
- Social exclusion is related to patterns of inequality and involves social, physical, economic, psychological and political aspects.
- Social exclusion is aggravated and/or institutionally reproduced, inadvertently by societal and state activities and norms.
- Social exclusion involves a lack of access to and consequently participation in, informal networks that support people in knowledge, into jobs and social integration.
- It involves social and economic marginalisation.
- Social exclusion is related to specific geographic areas where there may be a concentration of those with similar experiences.
- Social exclusion due to its reinforcing and inter-related nature does not respond to traditional and typically generic services and policies and approaches; therefore the promotion of social inclusion requires new methods and responses.
- Social exclusion relates to the eroding of an individual's and/or geographic areas' social, cultural, and material resources.

The categories of people most likely to experience social exclusion are listed below. It is recognised that socially excluded persons often belong to a number of these categories simultaneously.

The unemployed, particularly the long term unemployed

Women (who are socio-economically disadvantaged)

Homeless people

Older people

² A Social Inclusion Profile of Dun Laoghaire Rathdown: Southside Partnership; Unique Perspectives(2009)

“At risk” young people in terms of educational underachievement, criminal activity, and/or substance abuse

Ex-offenders

Ethnic minorities/asylum seekers/refugees

Travellers

Substance users

People with disabilities

Lone parents

Gay/Lesbian/Bi-sexual/Transgender people

2.2.2 Youth at risk

There are various definitions and a lack of clarity as to how to define “at risk”. The original terms of reference referred to disadvantaged/at risk youth. The research steering group decided that it would be more useful to narrow the focus of the research to specifically look at “youth at risk” between the ages of twelve and eighteen. This definition included both those who are in school but considered to be at risk of early school leaving and young people who have left school early. For the purpose of this research the author identified three broad sub groups within the “at risk” category:

- Those who are at risk of leaving school early
- Those who are already out of school but engaged with an alternative education/training initiative
- Those who are out of school and unattached to any services or supports.

There is also a recognition among those working with young people that there are hidden groups of at risk youth who have not come to the attention of agencies. There is also recognition that those who are out of school and unattached are likely to be most at risk and the most difficult to engage.

3 The National Policy Context

Building an inclusive society and the elimination of consistent poverty have been established as core objectives of the government under its key strategies including the Towards 2016, and the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion (NAPinclusion).

The Office for the Minister of Children and Youth Affairs has a central role in the overall delivery of programmes targeting children and young people and in targeting support to youth at risk.

3.1 Towards 2016

Towards 2016 set a number of goals with regard to children. Its vision is *“an Ireland where children are respected as young citizens with a valid contribution to make and a voice of their own; where all children are cherished and supported by family and wider society; where they enjoy a fulfilling childhood and realise their potential.”*³ The key priorities regarding children are:

Every child should grow up in a family with access to sufficient resources, supports and services to nurture and care for the child and foster the child’s development and full and equal participation in society.

Every family should be able to access childcare services which are appropriate to the circumstances and needs of their children.

Every child should leave primary school literate and numerate.

Every student should complete senior cycle or equivalent programme (including ICT) appropriate to their capacity and interests.

Every child should have access to world class health, personal social services and suitable accommodation.

Every child should have access to quality play, sport, recreation and cultural activities to enrich their experience of childhood

Every child and young person will have access to appropriate participation in local and national decision making

³ Towards 2016 Ten year Framework for Social Partnership Agreement 2006 -2015 Department of the Taoiseach (June 2006)

3.2 National Action Plan for Social Inclusion

The overall objective of the NAPinclusion is to reduce the number of those experiencing consistent poverty to between 2% and 4% by 2012, with the aim of eliminating consistent poverty by 2016. The plan sets out a comprehensive programme of action to address poverty and social exclusion comprising 12 high level goals and around 150 targets across all policy areas. These targeted actions are designed to mobilise resources to address *“long standing and serious social deficits with the ultimate aim of achieving the objective of reducing consistent poverty.”*⁴

The strategic approach in the NAPinclusion recognises the need to address the multi-dimensional nature of poverty and social inclusion through a range of interventions across key policy areas including income support, employment, education, health, housing, social participation and community care.

The plans are based on the lifecycle approach which aims to place the individual at the centre of policy development and delivery. The lifecycle stages are children, people of working age, older people, and communities.

3.3 The Office of the Minister of Children and Youth Affairs

The OMCYA has a central role to play with regard to at risk youth. The aim of the OMCYA is to improve the lives of children under the National Children’s Strategy and bring greater coherence to policy-making for children. It focuses on harmonising policy issues that affect children in areas such as early childhood care and education, youth justice, child welfare and protection, children and young people’s participation, research on children and young people, and cross-cutting initiatives for children.

The key role of the OMCYA is to support the Minister in:

- Implementing the National Children’s Strategy (2000 – 2010)
- Implementing the National Childcare Investment Programme (2006 – 2010)
- Developing policy and legislation on child welfare and child protection
- Implementing the Children Act 2001
- Implementing Towards 2016 commitments in relation to children’s services.

The Youth Affairs section of the Office aims to support and promote non-formal education and learning opportunities for young people through which they can develop and enhance their personal and social skills and competencies. The objectives are:

- To develop youth work policies and strategies
- To develop and support consultation and co-operation at National and International level.
- To operate, promote and develop funding schemes for the provision of youth work and services.

⁴ National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007 -2016 : Office for Social Inclusion (February 2007)

The Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (OMCYA) is part of the Department of Health and Children. The OMCYA units that are part of the Department of Health and Children include:

Minister's Office Staff and Advisor

Child Welfare and Protection Policy Unit

Childcare Directorate (formerly part of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform)

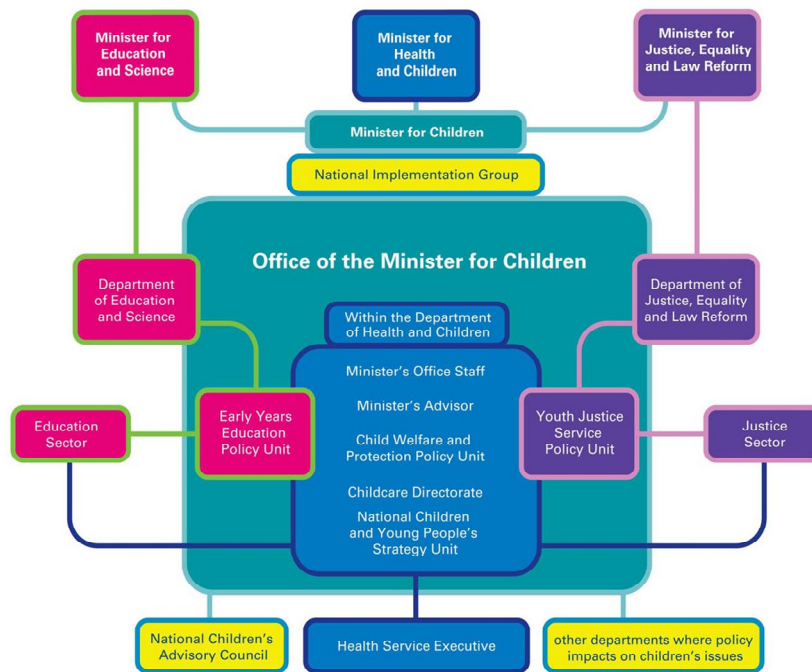
National Children and Young People's Strategy Unit (formerly the National Children's Office).

In addition, two other units are co-located with the OMCYA:

Irish Youth Justice Service (Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform)

Early Years Education Policy Unit (Department of Education and Science).

Structure of the Office for the Minister for Children and Young People. ⁵



⁵ Presentation by Sylda Langford Director General Office of the Minister for Children (November 2006)

4 Early School Leaving and Youth at risk

The problem of early school leaving is central to the whole issue of at risk youth and there is a strong link between the incidence of early school leaving and other problems related to the lifestyle and behaviour of youth at risk.

4.1 Early School Leaving

Early school leaving is defined as leaving school before the minimum statutory age of sixteen. At national level around 4% of students leave school annually with no qualifications (5% of males and 3% of females) while 14% leave after Junior Certificate. Approximately 20% of students leave school without completing the Leaving Certificate.

Economic and Social Research Institute research

The ESRI has carried out a number of studies on early school leaving including the 'Early School Leavers Survey (2007)' and 'Investing in Education: Combating Educational Disadvantage (May 2009)'.

Despite the range of initiatives to prevent early school leaving there is still a sizable cohort of early school leavers, particularly in disadvantaged areas, and this factor has significant implications for the lives of these young people. This is reflected in the 2007 ESRI School Leavers survey⁶ which stated that

Low educational achievement continues to have serious implications for the life chances of large groups in society, particularly those from households where all parents present are unemployed, both in the short-term in accessing further education and training opportunities and in longer-term labour market and social outcomes. The reliance on particular sectors, such as the construction sector for males, is likely to have serious consequences for vulnerable school leavers in light of the recent decline of this sector at the time of writing. Furthermore, this presents an important challenge for policy makers concerned with integrating young people into the labour market.

This report shows that males are more strongly represented than females among those who leave school without any qualifications. In aggregate, 17 per cent of early school leavers exit in their first year of secondary school, thirty four percent leave in second year, and a further 37 % leave in third year. The research also looked at factors which influence early school leaving. The overriding factors influencing a student's decision to leave school relate to 'school factors' (62 %), followed by 'economic or work factors' (60 %), 'family factors' (14 %) and 'health factors' (5 %). The report notes that these factors are not mutually exclusive and many respondents indicated more than one reason. With regard to gender differentials there is a clear distinction between the factors underlying early school leaving – males are much more likely to cite economic/work factors behind their decision to leave school, while more females cite family factors.

⁶ School Leavers Survey Report 2007 Byrne Delma, Mc Coy Selina, Watson Dorothy, Economic and Social Research Institute & Department of Education and Science (March 2009)

The principal findings of the report with regard to early school leaving were:

The percentage of early leavers remains relatively constant, and gender differences in the educational attainment of males and females persist. A larger proportion of males continue to exit the education system at an earlier stage relative to females.

Socio-economic differences in second-level education completion are particularly evident. Young people from professional, employer-manager and farming backgrounds continue to have significantly higher educational attainment than those from other socio-economic backgrounds.

Persistent truancy is much more prevalent among those who leave school prior to completion of compulsory second-level education. [Compulsory second-level education is defined as up to 16 years of age or completion of 3 years post-primary education, whichever is later.]

In relation to attitudes towards school, school leavers who complete post-compulsory education are more likely to have positive views of the support they got from their teachers, and considerably more likely to consider their classroom environment as orderly.

The economic status position of school leavers one year after leaving school is differentiated according to the educational level attained at second-level education, gender and socio-economic background. School leavers who left school without any qualifications experience the highest levels of unemployment and the lowest levels of employment.

Long-term trends in the economic position of school leavers indicate that persistent labour market disadvantage is associated with leaving school without any qualifications.

The problem of early school leaving is recognised as being critical to the overall issue of at risk youth and as being a significant contributory factor in a range of at risk behaviours. A recent ESRI report on early school⁷ leaving shows a clear link between early school leaving and a range of at risk behaviours, including the following:

Those with lower levels of education are less likely to practice safe sex and have a higher incidence of teenage pregnancy.

Early leavers are 1.8 times more likely than the more highly educated to report smoking.

In relation to drinking behaviour, we distinguish between those who report having six or more drinks more than once a week and all others. The early leaver group is 1.2 times more likely to report falling into this category than those with Leaving Certificate (or higher) qualifications.

Information on treated problem drug use indicates that problem drug users are generally male, young, have low levels of education and are unlikely to be employed. Figures for

⁷ Investing in Education: Combating Educational Disadvantage ; Smith Emer, Mc Coy Selina Economic and Social Research Institute (May 2009)

1996 indicate that 62 % of all treated had left school at 15 years of age or younger. More recent data indicate that those who leave school before the legal school-leaving age make up around a fifth of all those treated for problem drug use.

There are also clear links between early school leaving and crime. A study of a sample of prisoners in Mountjoy indicated that four-fifths had left school before the age of 16 years; half had left before the age of 15 years, while three-quarters had never sat a State examination. Only 4 % of the prisoners had reached Leaving Certificate level or beyond. Over a quarter (29 %) of the prisoners had difficulties in relation to literacy. Among this group of prisoners, leaving school earlier was found to be associated with earlier first convictions and a greater number of convictions overall.

The report also identifies a strong link between early school leaving and unemployment. *“In sum, education is found to be highly predictive of labour market outcomes in the Irish context. Those with lower levels of education spend more of their adult life in unemployment and, where they are employed, they are disproportionately found in less skilled and lower paid work.”*

4.2 Government initiatives to prevent early School Leaving

In response to this problem, the Department of Education and Science has introduced a range of initiatives to tackle educational disadvantage and to reduce the levels of early school leaving.

Delivering Equality of Opportunity in schools (DEIS)

The DEIS Initiative aims to strategically target children in disadvantaged areas and focus on key issues around equality and access to education including:

- Improving access to early education and the important academic skills it fosters,
- Improving literacy and numeracy standards,
- Improving the involvement of parents and communities and supporting school attendance and progression.

DEIS focuses on the needs of children from pre-school through second level education (3 -18 years). It provides various supports to both primary and post primary schools including reduced pupil teacher ratio and access to numeracy/literacy support, Home School Community Liaison Services, and School Completion Programmes.

The School Completion Programme

The SCP is targeted at young people between the ages of 4 and 18 who are at risk of early school leaving and concentrates on areas with the highest level of disadvantage and early school leaving. Selected schools at primary and secondary level are brought together into a local structure which aims to provide integrated local approaches to ensure maximum participation in the education process. The provision includes in-school, after-school, out-of-school and holiday-time supports.

The Home School Community Liaison Programme

This is a school-based preventative initiative which aims to develop partnership between parents, teachers, and relevant community agencies. It includes home visits and training and supports for parents and teachers.

National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB)

The creation of the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) in 2000 aimed to address the issue of early school leaving by focusing on absenteeism which is recognised as a key indicator for dropping out of school. Schools are obliged to submit a report to the NEWB on levels of school attendance and the Educational Welfare Officers follow up on children who are not attending school regularly.

The remit of the NEWB will be expanded in September 2009 when a single co-ordinated School support programme will be established. Existing programmes including the Home School Community Liaison Programme, the School Completion Programme and the Visiting Teachers Service for Travellers will be integrated under the NEWB.

4.3 At risk youth

There are various definitions of ‘at risk’ and a lack of clarity as to what “at risk” means and how best to address the problem. For the purpose of this research the author identified three broad sub groups within the “at risk” category:

- Those who are at risk of leaving school early
- Those who are already out of school but engaged with an alternative education/training initiative
- Those who are out of school and unattached to any services or supports.

Youth at Risk in the UK describe youth at risk as “*disaffected and marginalised young people who lack the social and emotional skills to see their potential, access support and connect with their communities*”. It defines risk as a spectrum from not achieving educational grades to engaging in anti social behaviour to being imprisoned for criminal behaviour, and identifies two specific characteristics of young people at risk. Those at risk are likely to

have the presence of anti-social behaviour or underachievement in more than one area of their life (e.g. behavioural problems at home, not applying themselves at school, bullying or exclusion from school, criminal behaviour, alcohol or drug misuse, or cultural conflict); at least one risk factor related to the root causes of anti-social behaviour, i.e. low self esteem, low aspirations for the future, little sense of internal control, unable to handle negative experiences effectively, no committed family adult, no committed adult outside of the family, or involvement in anti-social networks.

4.4 Strategies to address at risk youth

A range of programmes and initiatives have been developed to address different aspects of disadvantaged and at risk youth. The OMCYA administers a number of funding programmes which specifically target disadvantaged areas including:

The Young Peoples Facilities and Services Fund

The Young Peoples' Facilities and Services Funding (YPPFSF) was established in 1998 to assist in the development of preventative strategies/initiatives in a targeted manner through the development of youth facilities (including sport and recreational facilities), and services in disadvantaged areas where a significant drug problem exists or has the potential to develop. The objective of the Fund is to attract "at risk" young people in disadvantaged areas into these facilities and activities, and divert them away from the dangers of substance abuse. The target group for the Fund are 10-21 year olds who are marginalised through a combination of risk factors relating to family background, environmental circumstances, educational disadvantage, involvement in crime and/or drugs, etc.

Special Projects to assist Disadvantaged Youth

A scheme of grants is made available in respect of special out-of-school projects for disadvantaged young people. Priority is given to projects in the spheres of special youth work initiatives, young homeless people, young substance abusers and young travellers. Grants are allocated to organisations and groups for specific projects which seek to address the needs of young people who are disadvantaged, due to a combination of factors including high youth population, youth unemployment, drug/substance abuse, homelessness, and problems of juvenile crime, vandalism and truancy.

Other initiatives which focus on at risk youth include:

Community Training Centres and Youthreach Centres

Youthreach and Community Training Centres provide early school leavers with basic skills and work experience and assist with their progression to further training, education or employment. Programmes are targeted at unemployed young early school leavers aged 15-20 and offer participants the opportunity to identify and pursue viable options within adult life and to acquire certification.

Youthreach is delivered in out of school settings and managed by the VECs. Community Training Centres are funded by FAS. There are also a number of specialised 'Justice Workshops' funded primarily by the Dept. of Justice Equality and Law Reform. A parallel programme for Travellers is delivered in Senior Traveller Training Centres through the VECs.

Garda Youth Diversion projects

The Gardai play a key role in dealing with young people who are at risk, and focus in particular on young people who have committed offences or come to the attention of the Gardai. The Garda Juvenile Diversion Programme aims to divert offending juveniles away from criminality and the formal justice system by offering guidance and support to them and their families. The programme was placed on a statutory footing under the Children Act 2001, is administered by the Garda National Juvenile Office, and implemented nationally by Juvenile Liaison Officers. These gardaí are specially trained to deal with young

people and their families in relation to crime-prevention, the operation of the diversion programme, and all other areas involving young people and the criminal justice system. Each Garda District in Ireland has a Juvenile Liaison Office, and it is their responsibility to maintain informal contacts with young people at risk, and to liaise with teachers, Health Service Executive staff, School Completion Programme Coordinators, and other gardaí in their local area.

Garda Youth Diversion Projects are community based, multi-agency crime prevention initiatives which seek to divert young people from becoming involved (or further involved) in anti-social and/or criminal behaviour by providing suitable activities to facilitate personal development and promote civic responsibility. The Garda Youth Diversion Projects are funded by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and administered through Garda Community Relations Section. The projects provide the young people with opportunities to engage in activities such as education, employment training, sport, art and music. Most projects operate outside of school hours, although activities may also be planned during the daytime. The local Community Relations Service within An Garda Síochána is responsible for these projects and each project is managed by a committee including local Gardaí, the Probation Service, Youth Services and the local communities. Each project reflects the needs of the local community but every project ultimately has the same objective of diverting young people away from crime and anti-social behaviour.

Local Drugs Task Forces (LDTF)

Local Drugs Task Forces are comprised of a partnership between the statutory, voluntary and community sectors and target areas experiencing high levels of drug misuse. The focus of LDTF is on the development of community-based initiatives to link in with and add value to the programmes and services already being delivered or planned by the statutory agencies, and to provide a mechanism for the co-ordination of services in these areas.

5 Profile of Dun Laoghaire Rathdown

Overview of Dun Laoghaire Rathdown (DLR)

Dun Laoghaire Rathdown was established as a county in 1994 as a result of legislation which sub divided the then County Dublin into three local Authority areas: Fingal, South Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Rathdown. DLR covers an area of 125.8 sq km with a total population of 194,038 (2006 census). This represents an increase of 2.1% (4,039) since 1996. The county includes both traditional urban centres along the coast, newer suburbs and rural areas in the west. The size of the county and this diversity presents challenges to those involved in delivery of services on the county.

“The county exhibits a high degree of diversity on most social, economic and demographic scales. This diversity, the geographic scale of the county in terms of travel distances, and the absence of a clear and agreed central or focal point together with a lack of a traditional “county identity” in heritage or sporting terms represents significant challenges for bodies in seeking to promote collective approaches to the governance of Dun Laoghaire Rathdown”

Local Governance: The case of Dun Laoghaire Rathdown⁸

The fact that agencies working with young people also use different geographic regions adds to the complexity of the work. While DLR Co. Council and Southside Partnership have responsibility for the entire county, some of the key agencies with responsibility for young people and youth at risk including the VECs, the HSE and the Gardai, operate along different regional boundaries which do not correspond to the county boundaries.

Socio-economic profile of Dun Laoghaire Rathdown

As part of its strategy to extend the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme (LDSIP) to the whole County of Dun Laoghaire Rathdown, Southside Partnership carried out a comprehensive social inclusion profile of the county in 2008. This research focused on a number of key aspects including;

Specific local communities for which information was not available including local authority housing estates not currently designated as disadvantaged

Areas of the county not covered including rural parts of the county

Private estates/areas where there is known private rented accommodation.

It involved detailed information gathering of needs in terms of both geographic communities and target groups. It aimed to find out about new and existing target groups in the new parts of the county and to gather information on the range of services and supports available. This research highlights the challenge of profiling social exclusion in DLR due to the heterogeneous socio-economic profile of the county. This situates pockets of disadvantage alongside areas of significant relevant affluence and results in:

⁸ Local Governance; The case of Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Dr. Brendan O Keefe
SPAN /Southside Partnership (Jan 2008)

“the masking of disadvantage at the electoral division level and seems to depict the county as the location solely of affluence but crucially suggests that there is little or no relative deprivation or social exclusion .

Disadvantage in DLR is speckled throughout electoral division rather than clustered overwhelmingly in a number of EDs as is the case in other parts of Dublin and other urban areas”⁹

Population

DLR has a total population of 194,038 (2006 census); this represents an increase of 2.1% (4,039) since 1996. This rate of increase is low in comparison to the rest of Dublin (City and County) and nationally where the increases were 12.2% and 16.9% respectively.

However this overall figure masks substantial population increases in some areas mostly those south of the M50. A number of EDs in these areas, particularly some of the rural and suburban areas, experienced significant population increases over the period 1996 -2006.

“Population growth has been fuelled by immigration from other parts of Ireland and from overseas. The south of the county is characterised by the presence of new communities with many incomers having little affinity with their locality, a limited knowledge of Dun Laoghaire Rathdown and/or opportunities for citizen participation in decision making”¹⁰

• Significant population increases at ED level 1996 -2006

| ED | % Increase |
|--------------------------|------------|
| Blackrock-Boosterstown | 30.3% |
| Blackrock-Carysfort | 11.9% |
| Cabinteely-Loughlinstown | 189.3% |
| Clonskeagh –Belfield | 22.8% |
| Clonskeagh-Roebuck | 13.9% |
| Dundrum-Kilmacud | 26.1% |
| Dundrum-Sandyford | 12.3% |
| Dun Laoghaire –Salthill | 19.6% |
| Glencullen | 72.7% |
| Shankill-Rathmichael | 29.8% |
| Stillorgan-Priory | 29.1% |
| Tibradden | 22% |

A number of EDs experienced population decreases with some having decreases of over 10%. These are mainly ED with established private housing stock and a naturally ageing population.

⁹ A Social Inclusion Profile of Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown Southside Partnership Unique Perspective (2009)

¹⁰ Local Governance; The case of Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Dr. Brendan O Keefe
SPAN /Southside Partnership Jan 2008

Age Structure

The 2006 census shows a number of differences between the age structure in DLR and both the rest of Dublin, and nationally, with a lower percentage of young people and a higher percentage of people aged 65 and over. The percentage of the population in DLR in the 0 -14 age range was 18.2% while the corresponding figure for the country as a whole was 20.4% and for the rest of Dublin it was 18.3%. On the other hand 13.4% of the DLR population was aged 65 or over while the corresponding figure for Dublin was 10.3% and the national figure was 11%.

The working age population of DLR is 68.4% which is similar to the national figure (68.65%) but lower than the equivalent figure for the rest of Dublin 71.4%.

The age dependent figure for DLR (aged under 15 or over 65) is 31.6% which is in line with the national figure of 31.4% but slightly higher than the rest of Dublin (28.6%)

The Social Inclusion profile for DLR highlights the divergences between ED within the county and the need to examine the population structure at this level. The main concentration of EDs with a higher proportion of young people are those south of the M50 and N11 where a total of eight ED are above the national average and well above the county average.

- **EDs with population in the 0-14 range above the national average**

| ED | % of pop. in 0-14 age range |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Dun Laoghaire – Mount town | 23.4% |
| Foxrock - Carrickmines | 21.8% |
| Glencullen | 27.3% |
| Killiney South | 22.3% |
| Shankill – Rathmichael | 24.3% |
| Shankill – Rathallagh | 20.4% |
| Shankill – Shanganagh | 22.6% |
| Tibradden | 22.1% |

The breakdown of the youth population of DLR highlights a number of interesting features. The figures for the cohort of children in the preschool category (0-4) is lower than the national figures while those for the primary school category (5-12) and the secondary school category (13-18) are similar to the national figure.

| • Breakdown of population (0-18) | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|-------------|------------|
| Age | 0- 4 yrs. | 5 – 12 yrs. | 13 -18 yrs |
| DLR | 5.8% | 9.7% | 8.2% |
| National | 7.1% | 10.6% | 8.1% |

Lone Parents

The 2006 census indicated that there were 7,926 lone parents in DLR (i.e. just under a quarter of all families with children). This is lower than the figure for the rest of Dublin (29.9%) and comparable to the national figure of 25.2%. Again there are significant differences across EDs and the ‘Social Inclusion Profile’ identifies 12 EDs where the percentage of lone parent households is greater than the Dublin figure of 27.5%. Examples of these include;

Ballinteer-Meadowmount 36.5%

Dun Laoghaire Mounttown 49.3%

Dun Laoghaire West Central 36.5%

Housing

Just under 10% of housing (6,413) in DLR is social housing which is lower than the Dublin figure of 15.7%. The total population in local authority housing is just under 9,500 of which 3,854 are children.

This means that DLR /Southside Partnership area has the third highest number of social housing units in the country behind Dublin inner city and Tallaght. There are major variations across DLR with a lot of EDs having over 90% private ownership. On the other hand there are 13 EDs where the figure is higher than that of Dublin (15.7%). Overall there are significant concentrations of local authority houses in Ballybrack, Blackrock, Carrickmines, Dun Laoghaire, Dundrum, Glasthule, Loughlinstown, Monkstown, Rathfarnham, Sallynoggin, Sandyford, and Shankill.

Deprivation

The deprivation indices which are widely used to map disadvantage are not very useful in the case of DLR as they focus on the level of EDs, and use the proportionate measure of various social inclusion indicators (lone parent households, low educational attainment, etc) on the basis of the population of each ED. The indices measure both absolute and relative deprivation. In the case of absolute disadvantage a total of 11 EDs are below the national and Dublin measures. With regard to relative deprivation there are 8 EDs which are below the national average but no EDs are actually considered disadvantaged. However the Social Inclusion report states that

“while this is the case at the level of ED analysis the data presented elsewhere suggests to the contrary that there are significant numbers of disadvantaged persons in the county though not concentrated simply in a number of EDs

While it is clear that DLR is the most affluent county in the state, this has the effect of statistically skewing the extent of disadvantage which while low in proportionate terms is significant in numerical or real terms. The

implications of this is that firstly disadvantage has not been catered for in service and support as this level of need has not been officially recognised. Secondly due to the nature of the county and its association with affluence, there is a sense that socially excluded persons in the county may be more marginalised than their counterparts in other areas which are generally viewed as disadvantaged and therefore provided with the requisite resources and supports.

Other key data on DLR relating to disadvantage and social exclusion include:

A total of 18,092 persons have one or more types of disability in the county representing one in ten people in the county. The largest proportion of people with disabilities are over the age of 65 but the age group of 0 – 14 also has a significant number of people with disabilities (1,424) or 7.9% of the population. Southside Partnership has in fact the largest population of people with disabilities compared to other Partnership areas.

The Traveller population in the county in 2006 amounted to 363 persons or 70 Traveller households, with an average household size of six. The most recent count undertaken by DLR County Council was in 2007 which identified 120 Traveller families.

The rate of drug use is increasing in the County and the number of people presenting for treatment has also increased. Overall, between 2001 and 2006, there were 1,187 persons in DLR who are categorised as previous treated cases. There were 769 new cases presenting for drug treatment services from 2001 – 2006.

Educational disadvantage in Dun Laoghaire Rathdown

While DLR has the highest educational attainment rates in the country there are still some significant issues with regard to educational attainment in the county. Over 12,500 people (10%) had only primary education or had no formal education. This is considerably lower than the Dublin or national figures (16.7% and 18.9% respectively) but still represents a significant number of people. The Social Inclusion Profile goes on to identify 13 EDs in DLR where the proportion of the population with no formal or primary education only is above the Dublin figure of 16.7%. These include the following:

Churchtown Nutgrove 29.6%

Clonskeagh-Farranboley 27%

Dun Laoghaire Mounttown 26.5%

Dun Laoghaire-Monkstown Farm 25.1%

Dun Laoghaire –Sallynoggin West 22.7%

The figures show “clustering of EDs with high proportions in this category in the north east of the catchment around Churchtown, Ballinteer, and Rathfarnham; to the immediate west of Dun Laoghaire around Sallynoggin and Mounttown, and finally in the south east of the county around Ballybrack and Loughlinstown”. It is evident that these areas are also the location of the largest concentrations of social housing. This again underlines firstly the correlation that exists between housing tenure and indicators of social disadvantage and secondly that where in the county there exists social housing there are likely to be higher levels of social exclusion.

The research also concludes that *“regardless of the proportionate measure the extent of educational disadvantage in the catchment of Southside Partnership is as high in numerical terms if not considerably higher than corresponding measures in other partnership areas”*.

RAPID area

Recent research carried out in the Loughlinstown/Shanganagh areas¹¹ highlights some key statistics:

- One third of the population (aggregated across both communities) is under 20 years of age
- Almost one third of all households are headed by a lone parent
- 15% of households have at least one adult unemployed
- 11% of households have at least one person with a disability
- Just over half of the people living in the area have no formal educational qualifications – with 22% having left formal education before their 15th birthday.

‘Moving Beyond the Barriers’ Research

Significant research carried out in 2004 by Southside Partnership and Dun Laoghaire VEC (funded by LDTF) on early school leaving in the Dun Laoghaire VEC area¹² indicated that the figures for this part of the county are on a par with national figures. The research dealt with early school leaving at both primary and secondary level and also focused on those considered by the relevant school principals to be at risk of early school leaving.

Ten local primary schools were involved with a total school population of 1,802 pupils. The total number of children considered to be most at risk in these schools was 210 which equates to 12% of the overall school population.

Six secondary schools were involved with a total school population of 2,424. The total number of students considered to be at risk of leaving school early was 257 which equates to 10.6% of the school population.

This shows an average across a number of schools but there is evidence that the situation is much worse in some schools. This fact is highlighted in the report which quotes the school retention plan for two School Completion Programmes (Cabinteely and Mounttown /Sallynoggin plus 7 linked primary schools). These plans indicated that 486 young people (27% of the combined school population) were identified as being most at risk of leaving school early.

Figures from five schools in this research on early school leaving showed that the percentage of early school leaving recorded in May 2003 was 3.85%. The research also indicated that at least 33% of these left school with no qualifications while 58% left after the junior cert and that the majority (53%) were male.

¹¹ Working together to make a difference – Exploring the support needs of families in the Loughlinstown Shanganagh RAPID area (May 2009)

¹² Moving Beyond Barriers : An inter-agency research study on early school leaving in the Dun Laoghaire Area; Youth at risk Network / Adrienne Redmond (April 2004)

The impact of the problem of early school leaving is reflected in the fact that over 12,500 people in the county have either no formal or primary education only. This group have always been at a serious disadvantage with regard to employment but their situation will be even more difficult as the number of educated and skilled job seekers increases as a result of the current recession.

This research also explored factors contributing to early school leaving and identified some of the determinants of early school leaving. The criteria used by the local schools in Dun Laoghaire VEC area involved in the study to identify pupils at risk of early school leaving were:

| Primary | Secondary |
|---|---|
| High level of absenteeism | Child that is quiet and withdrawn in the school |
| In school behaviour including record of conflict/non co-operation | Low aspiration and low interest in school |
| Family dysfunction including drug/alcohol addiction problems | Victims of bullying/isolation |
| Disadvantaged circumstances including poverty, poor housing, low income, family pattern of early school leaving | Record of non co-operation in schools |
| Parents and siblings' level of educational attainment | Persistent difficulties with homework |
| Test score on admission and academic performance to date | Lack of positive role models in their lives |
| Long term illness and medical condition | Disruption in family life by circumstances e.g. illness, moving, stress |

Actions arising from the 'Moving beyond the Barriers' Report

The 'Moving Beyond the Barriers' report made a number of recommendations regarding early school leavers including;

To extend and develop preparation programmes and follow-up support for young people making the transition from primary to secondary level.

To strengthen the links between schools, youth services, and community groups and to explore possibilities of working together to benefit young people at risk of leaving school early.

That individual education and training plans be put in place for all young people who left school early and have returned to access further education/training.

To extend and develop new programmes designed to meet the needs of specific target groups such as early school leavers who are young mothers, young asylum seekers, young unqualified male school leavers and young early school leavers with drug issues. Focused targeting of groups for whom the main training programme may not be a suitable option.

To strengthen links/information sharing between the three training centres and explore possibilities for working collaboratively with young early school leavers.

To strengthen the information sharing between local secondary schools and the three training centres and explore possibilities for working collaboratively for the benefit of young people at risk of leaving school early and existing early school leavers.

To broaden the range of learning options available to early school leavers which include the opportunity to complete the Junior and Leaving Certificate.

To build and develop the range of services and supports available to young people between the ages of 12 and 15 who are out of school or who are having difficulties within the school system.

To establish a community based youth guidance scheme for early school leavers which will incorporate a comprehensive integrated tracking system, drop in, and outreach services.

Over the last five years Southside Partnership via the Youth at Risk Network, and other agencies, have progressed a number of these actions. One key recommendation - to establish a Community-based Youth Guidance Service for young early school leavers - was divided into 2 objectives: to develop an integrated local tracking/referral system, and to explore the development of an inter-agency local youth guidance service.

This resulted in the establishment of the Youth Choices Outreach & Tracking Project, and the development of the Youth Café Pilot.

6 Profile of services for young people at risk in DLR

Supports and services for youth at risk

National policy has identified a number of key instruments and measures to combat wider social exclusion issues and to prevent and address specific issues such as early school leaving, and drug abuse.

Southside Partnership

Southside Partnership is funded under the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme (LDSIP) and is the largest urban partnership in Ireland; it caters for disadvantaged communities in Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown. Its brief is to tackle socio-economic disadvantage and social exclusion within all sectors of our community and it provides assistance, advice and support to enable disadvantaged groups to play a fuller and more active role in modern Irish society. The work of the partnership is implemented through three main programme areas¹³

Services to the unemployed/ LES

Community Development

Education Youth and Childcare

The Education Youth and Childcare programme aims to ensure that the needs of those most at risk are met through specific and targeted responses. Specific actions under this programme are:

1. To add value to the effective delivery of mainstream policies and programmes through the provision and co-ordination of networks and working groups, and to work with relevant agencies and groups to develop more coordinated and integrated responses, structures and policies for tackling educational disadvantage in the area.
2. To involve parents, young people, schools and community/voluntary groups in a range of strategies designed to prevent educational under-achievement among young people at risk.
3. To identify the barriers to third level access among the partnership's target groups and work to improve take-up among these groups to higher education programmes.
4. To enhance the educational, training, and development opportunities for young people who have left school early, or are at risk of early school leaving, through the development and support of coordinated initiatives in the area.
5. To work with relevant organisations to enhance the quality and availability of community-based childcare provision in the Southside Partnership area.

¹³ Additional information on Southside Partnership is available on their website www.southsidepartnership.ie

Southside Partnership strategy on Youth at risk

The specific actions which are aimed at youth at risk are under the Out-of-School Supports/Youth Access Programmes. The objectives of this programme are to “*support and engage young people through targeted programmes, and to strengthen or restore their links within formal education; to develop education/training paths as identified through Task Groups and Networks*”. The Southside Partnership has developed and supported a number of initiatives which have focused on educational disadvantage and at risk youth. In particular the SSP has supported the establishment and operation of Networks and Working Groups to address specific issues relating to disadvantage and at risk. The Youth at Risk Network has played a key role with regard to issues for those at risk over the last few years and has served as a central network for a number of thematic and geographic initiatives in DLR. This includes groups such as the Youth Café Sub group, the Travellers Education Task Group, and the Ballyogan Youth Needs Task Group. The SSP, through the Youth at Risk Network has also initiated and/or supported a number of innovative initiatives to address youth issues including:

| Project | Overview |
|--|---|
| Youth Choices Project | Youth Choices offers support, advice, and information about options to young people who have left school early and are interested in returning to education, training, or employment. An inter-agency steering group was set up to guide this project and involves SSP, DLCTC, NEWB and DLVEC. The project worker is based in DLCTC, and the project is funded through the DLR local Drugs Task Force. |
| Youth Café Pilot | An inter-agency Youth Café Steering Committee was established in 2007 with representatives from a number of agencies locally to develop a one stop shop for young people to meet in a youth friendly, non-licensed and safe environment. The target group: older teenagers (15+) who are at risk of engaging in anti-social behaviour, early school leaving, alcohol and substance misuse etc. A half-time Youth Café development worker post was sourced through the Dormant Accounts Fund for 1 year, and hosted by DLVEC. |
| Community Digital Media Project | The Community Digital Media Centre is a joint initiative of FÍS / Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology (IADT), Southside Partnerships and RAPID and is based in the Holly House Community Development Project in Holly Court, Loughlinstown. FÍS was initially set up in 2000 as a pilot project to introduce children to aspects of the film-making process. FÍS is based at IADT. Its aims include; to promote the understanding of digital media in a disadvantaged area and to create new opportunities for learning in a disadvantaged area |
| Introduction of Restorative Practices in both formal and non-formal education settings | Restorative Practices comprise a range of actions which promote “ <i>inclusive approaches to problem solving and building healthy relationships.</i> ” A number of information sessions, seminars, and training workshops have been organized by SSP since 2007 with the aim of providing supports to local schools/youth providers, and communities in working with challenging behaviour issues within their student populations. The main objective of the training has been to assist |

| | |
|--|---|
| | the participants in applying the principles of Restorative Practices to their work. |
|--|---|

Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Co. Council

DLR Co. Council has a central role in the provision of supports and services for disadvantaged communities in the county including housing (management of the Council’s housing estates, the operation of the plan for social housing, and Traveller accommodation); provision and management of facilities and parks. The Environment and Culture Department is responsible for the management and development of the cultural, community and amenities aspects of the County through the provision of Library services and the support and development of an extensive Arts programme.

The Community Department of DLR Co. Council aims to *“help communities to identify their needs... come to terms with those needs and having done so... to meet those needs.”* This Department supports a number of resource centres in disadvantaged areas of the county including Ballyogan, Hillview, Brookfield, Shanganagh Park House and Loughlinstown. These Resource Centres help to give communities the opportunity to develop their areas by providing a facility to promote projects such as adult education, womens’ groups, youth issues, senior citizens’ groups, crèche facilities, and other community related issues.

The Council operates a Community Grants Scheme, which seeks to assist groups in addressing local issues by offering financial assistance from a limited fund. The focus of this Scheme is to promote community based initiatives, which seek to promote the principles of Community Development (i.e. fostering inclusion, equality, participation and change). Special provision is made for CODAN areas (County of Dublin Areas of Need). These areas have been designated as disadvantaged given the levels of unemployment and lack of access to resources experienced by these communities. Other supports provided by DLR Co. Council include:

- Provision of community facilities in areas such as Meadowlands and Ballyogan
- Sports and leisure facilities including parks and swimming pools
- The Arts Access Grant Scheme which targets areas where a gap in the provision of community based arts programmes has been identified
- The Community Department assists community groups in funding and organising summer projects aimed at providing a supervised programme of both recreational and educational activities for young people during the summer period.

DLR County Development Board

The Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Board (CDB) developed a 10-year Strategy relating to the economic, social, and cultural development of the County. The purpose of the strategy is to provide a framework for the co-ordination of services at point of delivery to citizens by addressing the challenge of local service integration at county level.

The Social Inclusion Unit aims to mainstream social inclusion throughout the local authority and is responsible for conducting research into local social exclusion issues that will inform the Local Authority as well as the County Development Board in their efforts to create sustainable and inclusive Communities. The Unit is also responsible for promoting and mainstreaming social inclusion within the County Council by proofing programmes, policies, and activities, and ensuring that no group is excluded or disadvantaged from accessing public services. Where feasible the Unit promotes active participation by vulnerable groups in all aspects of public service delivery. The Social Development strand of the CDB strategy identified the following priority areas;

Local & Community Development

Education

Health

Family Support

Rural Communities

Safety, Security & Policing

Social Inclusion

Substance Abuse

RAPID

The RAPID programme (Revitalising Areas by Planning, Investment and Development) is aimed at improving the quality of life and the opportunities available to residents of the most disadvantaged communities in Irish cities and towns. There is only one RAPID programme in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown which focuses on the areas of Loughlinstown and Shanganagh / Rathallagh. The RAPID programme is managed by a local Area Implementation Team (AIT) which is made up of representatives from statutory agencies and local development companies and community representatives. The AIT has agreed a new action plan for the next phase of the RAPID programme which identifies priority areas of work such as Youth, Education & Training, Estate Enhancement, Childcare, Family Support and Community Development.

The Health Service Executive

Services for children and families are provided in a variety of community and residential settings including the home, community, schools, health centres and acute hospitals, in partnership with communities, children, young people, families and carers. These services are provided by a range of statutory, non-statutory, voluntary and community groups.

HSE direction in service provision is informed and guided by the National Children's Strategy, 'Our Children - Their Lives - 2000' as well as a significant amount of legislation. Child protection and welfare services and services targeting at risk young people are also provided by the HSE through the Social Work Department and include:

Duty Social Work
Children in Care
Welfare & Protection
Fostering & Adoption
Aftercare
REACH team
Institutional Abuse

These services are linked to HSE Family Support and Childcare services and, through individual referrals, to HSE Psychological Services.

Youth Services in DLR

The Youth Work sector has a critical role in the provision of services aimed at addressing the issue of at risk youth. The youth work sector actively works with young people outside, yet alongside, the formal education sector.

The Youth Work Act, 2001, and the National Youth Work Development Plan 2003-2007, which underpin policy at present, provide both a clear definition and direction for youth work. Youth Work is defined as:

"a planned programme of education designed for the purpose of aiding and enhancing the personal and social development of young persons through their voluntary participation, and which is complementary to their formal, academic or vocational education and training; and provided primarily by voluntary youth work organisations." (Youth Work Act, 2001)

The Act makes provision regarding VECs and their key role in the delivery of youth services. Among other things it requires the VECs to ensure co-ordination within its vocational education areas of youth work programmes and youth service with educational programmes, and other programmes that provide services for young people. This is a potentially key role and according to Lalor, de Roiste and Devlin has *"the potential of remedying the current unsatisfactory situation whereby there is no systematic co-ordination between various types of provision for young people which have increased and diversified enormously in recent years (with funding from a wide range of statutory sources each largely without reference to the others)".*¹⁴

The main agencies with responsibility for youth services in DLR are the two VECs: Dun Laoghaire VEC which covers the old Dun Laoghaire Borough area and Co. Dublin VEC which covers the Dundrum/Rathdown area

DLVEC also delivers an Out of School Education Service. This service was set up in 2005 to work with other providers to cater for the educational needs of young people who are at risk of leaving school early

¹⁴ Young People in Contemporary Ireland Kevin Lalor, Aine de Roiste and Maurice Devlin Gill & Macmillan (2007)

and/or have already left school (under 16), or those who might be entering adulthood without any formal education beyond primary/Junior Cert, and have been out of the system for some time (post 16). In addition the aim of the service is to work with the Adult & Further Education Service of Dun Laoghaire VEC to provide continuing and appropriate educational opportunities for vulnerable or at risk young people where such opportunities do not already exist.

Dun Laoghaire Youth Service (DLYS) is a joint project of Catholic Youth Care and Dun Laoghaire VEC. Its catchment area has a population of around 70,000 and covers Loughlinstown, Ballybrack, Cois Cairn, Sallynoggin, Mounttown and Central Dun Laoghaire.

Aims of the Service:

- To foster, promote and develop co-operative structures which will give support to youth work programmes, activities and events in established areas.
- To develop and implement such programmes, activities and events with an emphasis on their particular relevance to disadvantaged areas.
- To establish and develop productive links with those members of the young population who are not attracted to the more formal youth organisations.

Dundrum/Rathdown Youth Service is a joint project of Catholic Youth Care and County Dublin VEC. It is the youth service provider in the Rathdown area of the borough of Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council.

Aims of the service:

- To foster, promote and develop co-operative structures which will give support to youth work programmes, activities and events throughout the Rathdown area
- To develop and implement such programmes, activities and events with an emphasis on their particular relevance to disadvantaged areas.
- To establish and develop productive links with young people who are not attracted to more formal youth organisations.
- To promote social inclusion and address social/economic disadvantage using the youth work model.
- To place the young person at the centre of the process and encourage empowerment through ongoing consultation and active participation.
- To support voluntary youth groups and encourage voluntary participation.
- To encourage and develop partnerships by engaging with local communities and promoting interagency work.

- To recognise that equality, diversity, respect and inclusion are integral components of the youth work approach.

The Rathdown area has a population of approximately 120,000. County Dublin Vocational Education Committee Youth Services is one of the largest youth services in the country. It provides a wide range of supports that enable the delivery of educational, recreational and developmental programmes, projects and services to disadvantaged young people through partnerships with voluntary groups, voluntary youth organisations and other national service providers. As well as financial supports County Dublin VEC Youth Service provides co-ordination, advice, training and information.

The two VECs are also responsible for monitoring and evaluating Youth provision in their respective areas.

Catholic Youth Care (CYC) is a key player in youth service provision in DLR as it directly delivers the youth service in the two parts of the county (Dun Laoghaire and Dundrum/Rathdown). CYC's initiatives and programmes include:

- Programmes, training, events and activities for youth clubs/groups and adult leaders.
- Co-ordination and support for summer programmes, which provide educational and recreational programmes for children and young people during the summer months.
- Programmes which promote social inclusion amongst young people.
- Provision and encouragement of youth arts activities.
- Crime diversion programmes which help young people involved in crime.
- Drug Education and Prevention Initiatives.
- Adventure Sports Programmes.
- Local Youth Services including the services in Dun Laoghaire and Dundrum\Rathdown, and a Youth Information Centre in Dun Laoghaire.

Garda Projects

The Gardai play a key role in dealing with young people who are at risk, and focus in particular on young people who have committed offences or come to the attention of the Gardai. The Garda Juvenile Diversion Programme aims to divert offending juveniles away from criminality and the formal justice system by offering guidance and support to them and their families. The programme was placed on a statutory footing under the Children Act 2001 and is administered by the Garda National Juvenile Office and implemented nationally by Juvenile Liaison Officers. These gardaí are specially trained to deal with young people and their families in relation to crime prevention, the operation of the diversion programme and all other areas involving young people and the criminal justice system. Each Garda District in Ireland has a Juvenile Liaison Office and it is their responsibility to maintain informal contacts with young people at risk and to liaise with teachers, HSE staff, Educational Welfare Officers, and other gardaí in their local area.

Garda Youth Diversion Projects are community based, crime prevention initiatives which seek to divert young people from becoming involved (or further involved) in anti-social and/or criminal behaviour. There are currently 3 Garda Diversion projects in DLR in the following areas

Ballyogan - Castle Project

Loughlinstown and Ballybrack - LAB Project

Sandyford - SAY Project

There are strong links between these projects and the local youth services in these areas, and the projects are hosted by the youth services.

Dept. of Education and Science School linked Programmes

Significant resources have been invested in school based programmes aimed at addressing educational disadvantage and reducing the problem of early school leaving. The DEIS Initiative (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools) aims to strategically target children in disadvantaged areas and focus on key issues around equality and access to education. DEIS provides various supports to both primary and post primary schools including reduced pupil teacher ratio and access to numeracy/literacy support, Home School Community Liaison Services, and School Completion Programmes. There are currently 5 post primary schools in DLR in the DEIS School Completion programmes:

- Holy Child Community School, Sallynoggin
- St. Tiernans Community School, Sandyford
- Cabinteely Community School, Cabinteely
- Ballinteer Community School, Ballinteer
- St. Laurences College, Loughlinstown

Thirteen Primary schools which feed into these schools are also included in the DEIS programme. A list of these schools is provided in appendix 3.

Youthreach and Community Training Centres

Youthreach and Community Training Centres play a key role in the provision of support to early school leavers and are therefore central to work with those at risk. These projects provide early school leavers with basic skills, qualifications, and work experience and assist with their progression to further training, education or employment. There are five centres offering training provision for at risk youth in DLR. At present three centres (DLCTC, Rathfarnham Youthreach, and Sportsreach) cater for over 100 young people in the DLR area. The Tivoli Training Centre is closed and the St. Kieran's Senior Travellers Training Centre caters for over 18's and draws its participants from a wider catchment area.

| Centre | Primary Funder | Description and number of trainees |
|---|---|---|
| Dun Laoghaire CTC | FAS | This centre caters for 70 trainees in the 15-25 age range and has an ongoing waiting list. It provides training in Industrial Skills, Catering, IT, and Hair and Beauty. It also offers pre-apprenticeship training, a young mothers' programme, and a work experience programme. |
| Youthreach Rathfarnham | Co. Dublin VEC | Youthreach is directed at unemployed young early school leavers aged 15-20. It offers a flexible programme of integrated general education, vocational training and work experience. The centre caters for 25 trainees and has a waiting list. |
| The Tivoli Training Centre | Probation & Welfare Service (Dept. of Justice) | The Centre is currently closed, and a newly built centre will reopen in 2010. The centre caters for young people linked to the Probation Service. The new centre will provide a holistic programme including skills training but with the focus on behavioural change. |
| Sportsreach Centre | DL VEC & HSE | The project is located in Sallynoggin and caters for 25 trainees. Its programmes include Junior Cert, FETAC, coaching courses, arts and crafts, football, and swimming. |
| St Kieran's Senior Travellers Training Centre | Co. Dublin VEC | This project is located in Bray and caters for Travellers from the DLR and Bray areas. It provides programmes for Travellers over 18 years who have left formal education. |

DLR Local Drugs Task Force

The Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown Local Drugs Task Force was set up in 1997. It is comprised of a partnership between the statutory, voluntary and community sectors and targets areas experiencing high levels of drug misuse. The focus of LDTF is on the development of community-based initiatives to link in with and add value to the programmes and services already being delivered or planned by the statutory agencies, and to provide a mechanism for the co-ordination of services in these areas.

The LDTF supports a substantial number of initiatives in the county, including:

The DLR Outreach Project (DROP)

The Haniel Project

Youth Choices

The Parachute Project.

The young peoples Facilities and Services Fund (YPFSF)

This fund assists the development of preventative strategies/initiatives in a targeted manner through the development of youth facilities and services in disadvantaged areas where a significant drug problem exists or has the potential to develop. The objective of the Fund is to attract "at risk" young people in disadvantaged areas into these facilities and activities and divert them away from the dangers of substance abuse. It specifically targets 10 -21 year olds who are at risk. Examples of projects in DLR supported through this scheme include:

The Alternative Learning Pathways Project (ALPP)

Sallynoggin and Ballybrack Youth Projects

The Traveller Youth Service (STAG)

LDTF Education Coordinator

The Early School Leaving Project in Ballyogan

A list of projects in DLR funded under the YPFSF is provided in Appendix 2.

Community-Based Services

A range of other services and supports are available to support at risk young people including;

| Initiative | Overview |
|--|--|
| Youth Choices | Youth Choices is an interagency initiative involving DLCTC, DLR Local Drugs Task Force, SSP, DLVEC, and FAS. It offers support, advice, and information about their options to young people who have left school early and are interested in returning to education, training or employment. |
| Teen Counselling Service | Teen counselling provides counselling and support to teenagers and their families who are experiencing difficulties in their lives. It is funded by the HSE, the Family Support Agency, and the Young Peoples Facilities and Services fund, through Crosscare. |
| Mounttown Neighbourhood Youth Project | The NYP is a community based initiative which works with young people aged 8 -13 for the purpose of supporting their emotional development and enhancing their self esteem. It is primarily funded through the HSE. |
| Alternative Learning Pathways Project | ALPP is a transition programme for 12-15 year olds who are out of school, based in the Loughlinstown/Ballybrack area. It provides a person centred educational environment for young people to assist them to progress to alternative education or training and is managed by DLVEC. |
| Springboard | Springboard in Loughlinstown is a community-based, early intervention initiative funded by the HSE. It is specifically focused on supporting families with children who are at risk of going into care, dropping out of school, or getting into trouble with the law. |
| Southside Traveller Action Group | The STAG youth service aims to build Travellers self confidence and integrate them into activities in the local community. It provides services which support Traveller youth and helps combat barriers that young Travellers face including discrimination and difficulties in accessing appropriate education. |
| Community Development Projects and Family Resource Centres | CDPs and FRCs in the area provide a range of locally based programmes which address the needs of disadvantaged young people. Examples of this are the Oasis project in Mountwood operated by the Mountwood Fitzgerald CDP, and the Ballyogan Youth Initiative operated by Ballyogan FRC. Others centres providing youth programmes which target at risk youth include Hillview, Rosemount, Cois Cairn, and Shanganagh. |

7 Stakeholders perspectives on “youth at risk”

Over the course of the research a range of perspectives were provided on the issue of at risk youth. The research process involved consultations with a range of stakeholders in DLR and included interviews, focus groups and a seminar with the Youth at Risk Network. While there were some differences among stakeholders with regard to the issue of at risk, there was also a considerable level of consensus on the key issues for at risk youth. One of the main points to emerge from the research is the number and the range of groups and organisations involved in some way in the provision of supports and services to disadvantaged youth. The projects range from the major statutory bodies such as the HSE and Gardai to smaller youth and community initiatives dealing with local issues on the ground. This section provides the perspective of a number of key groups of stakeholders, the Youth at risk Network, disadvantaged young people and local communities in disadvantaged areas.

The perspective of the Youth at Risk Network

The views of individual agencies have been incorporated into the overall report. This section will present the key points to emerge from a seminar involving members of the Youth at Risk Network. Members of the Network participated in a seminar in early March 2009 as part of the research process. (A list of participants is provided in appendix 2.) The seminar focused on three main questions:

Are the existing structures and systems the most effective for addressing the existing and emerging needs of at risk youth in DLR, and how could they be improved?

How could existing resources and skills be marshalled and co-ordinated more effectively to provide a more targeted and focused service for at risk youth? What specific approaches and interventions could be useful and effective?

What could be done to enhance and improve the delivery of services on the ground for at risk youth? Are there particular needs in the areas of training and support for those working with at risk youth?

The key points to emerge from the seminar were:

Service providers are now dealing with a wider array of needs with diminishing resources. Existing structures are effective in addressing current and emerging needs for youth at risk in our areas but collaboration remains weak. There is a need for greater collaboration between schools and training centres. More information is needed regarding what is available locally.

There was a recommendation for an online directory of services that young people can access including the promotion of services that already exist.

It was felt there is a difficulty for communities in the west of the county to access existing services within the Dun Laoghaire area. It was felt connections between services in the Dun Laoghaire area and services west of the county were not strong enough.

Services such as the Alternative Learning Pathways Project (ALPP) need to be replicated in Dundrum/Rathdown. Rathdown would also benefit from a more locally based service within the Youth at Risk Network.

The Youth at Risk Network, while reaching a wide audience in terms of service providers, needs a clearer focus if it is to be effective. There is a wealth of services and agencies represented on the network. There was a suggestion that these could be categorised into services involved in: general provision for youth; provision for youth at risk; provision for youth at increased risk.

Coordinated delivery of services to youth at risk should include services in the following areas: Education, Social / informal activities, therapeutic provision, and inclusion of the HSE/ drug and alcohol services in this process.

Parental involvement is key to young people accessing and staying engaged with services. More work therefore needs to be done with parents (e.g.: making them aware of existing services and improving existing communication structures between parents and service providers). Communications skills are needed for working with parents, and greater mental health awareness is needed – for parents and service providers.

Funding and premises are very scarce and we should be promoting better use of existing services (e.g. Dun Laoghaire Community Training Centre is currently open 8am to 4pm. Premises could be availed of for additional evening youth programmes).

Outreach work is needed to target those most in need; there is particular demand for out of hours services. There is also a need for access to family support initiatives and targeted work and interventions for young people and families. There was a recommendation for the HSE attendance and input in this area.

Service providers should as far as possible all be working from the same standards and skills sets, or at least familiar with the approaches being used in related projects. This will facilitate greater collaboration and a better use of limited resources.

There were recommendations for training in systemic processes, holistic provision and the promotion of inter-agency work to address the needs of youth at risk, and for training in the areas of child protection and positive behaviour management for individuals working with youth at risk. Peer education was also identified as being very effective in terms of reaching young people.

There is also a need for increased support and recognition of the emotional impact on staff working with young people with social, emotional and behavioural problems and dealing with disclosures of abuse. The provision of external supervision by trained professionals, similar to that provided to counsellors and guidance counsellors, would be beneficial.

There is a need for clarity around responsibilities for youth at risk at policy level and a strategy for influencing higher levels in terms of decision making with regard to youth at risk.

The perspective of disadvantaged young people

One of the limitations of this research was the limited engagement with those considered to be at risk and the challenges involved in these consultations. The key points which have emerged from the perspective of young people in DLR were:

Alcohol plays a key role in the lives of these young people

There is no problem getting alcohol and there is always an older person available to buy alcohol

A lot of drinking is carried out in the open - in parks etc and the young people feel that this is the cause of a lot of problems. Being able to drink in pubs would *“reduce the amount of aggro and conflict with the gardai”* and *“there would be less bins burned”*.

This is also reflected in consultations carried out as part of the feasibility study for the proposed development of a Youth Café in the Dun Laoghaire area.¹⁵ This report found that the key issues affecting young people were *“having nothing to do and nowhere to go, drugs, underage drinking, smoking, lack of affordable recreational activities, teenage pregnancy, vandalism and family problems.”*

Young people consulted as part of this study talked about getting into trouble with the gardai because they were hanging around, having no place to *“gang out”*, and commented that

“People have nothing to do so they just drink”

“Gardai give out to you on the streets and you aren’t doing anything just hanging around the streets”

Many of the young people are pessimistic about their options with regard to both training and jobs.

However, the young people who are on the CTC waiting list are keen to become trainees and recognise the value of a training place. The main point they stress is *“having something to do”* and *“getting paid”*.

The perspective of disadvantaged communities

Local communities in disadvantaged areas are acutely aware of the issues and problems around at risk youth, and expressed concerns regarding the impact on local communities and the level of services being provided to address the problem. There are concerns that existing services are seriously stretched, and are likely to be cut back in the current economic climate, and that programmes which are making a difference will be scaled back or closed. Local communities are inevitably focused on the particular needs of their own area and may not be fully aware of the conflicting demands placed on service providers. It is also important to note that local communities tend to focus on the more visible and immediate issues and may not be fully aware of the full range of supports and services available to the community.

¹⁵ Development of a Youth Café in the Dun Laoghaire Areas; A feasibility Study on behalf of Dun Laoghaire VEC and Southside Partnership; (April 2008)

These points are also reflected in research carried out by Loughlinstown/ Shanganagh/Rathsallagh RAPID Programme . The research noted that most of the issues deemed as high priority by respondents related to young people and included; drug awareness, crime and safety issues, support to those at risk of early school leaving, back to education for school leavers, and drop in facilities for teenagers.

“Residents in these areas ranked crime and safety as their biggest concerns followed closely by services for young people. The researchers noted that many respondents made a definite link between the two and identified the lack of youth service support as one of the key factors in their perception of the level of anti-social behaviour within their community”¹⁶.

There are limited opportunities for many young people who drop out of school. Training places are limited and difficult to access in some cases as young people, and especially those at risk, are often reluctant to leave their own areas and travel for these services. This presents challenges to all service providers who are targeting these groups as it is not feasible to provide targeted programmes at local level in all areas. This problem is further exacerbated in DLR by the demographic profile of the county and the fact that there are pockets of disadvantage dotted across the county. Inevitably there is a need for an increased level of centralised services working across a number of areas or even the entire county.

There is a recognition that local schools and related support services make great efforts to prevent early school leaving, and to provide supports and services to those young people who have, or are about to drop out of school. However there are also some views that these services are limited as they are linked to the school calendar and are not available to deal with the issues out in the community, or when the young person actually drops out of school.

One of the main concerns among local communities is the increasing level of problems associated with alcohol abuse and the growing problem of anti social behaviour. They feel that existing services are not providing sufficient support to local communities affected by these problems. While communities recognise that there are excellent local initiatives dealing with young people (Garda diversionary projects, drug initiatives and the provision of new facilities etc), the scale of the problem means that these are insufficient. In reality, communities are looking for assistance with major social problems linked to wider social, economic and environmental issues and can have unrealistic expectations about what services can actually deliver.

People identified the need for key agencies to come together more often and to respond more effectively and in a more timely manner to these major social issues, such as anti social behaviour and drug abuse.

There are limited facilities available for at risk youth in many of the areas. A related problem is the times at which some of these facilities are open and available for the young people. There is a need for facilities that are flexible, age appropriate and are open at times which suit these young people.

There are particular concerns about the problem of suicide both among young people and among older people including parents. Incidents of suicide can have a serious impact among the peer group and communities feel powerless to deal with this extremely difficult issue. While some incidents are linked to drug abuse there are also concerns that increased economic difficulties may become a factor as unemployment levels increase in disadvantaged areas. People feel that services to deal with suicide and mental health, and especially to support communities where there have been incidences of suicide, need to be available locally.

¹⁶ Working together to make a difference – Exploring the support needs of families in the Loughlinstown /shanganagh RAPID Clarity Research Development and Training (May 2009)

The lack of or reduction in support services provided through schools and by the HSE and other providers was also highlighted. People feel that services such as counselling and drug awareness programmes have a key preventative role, and that cutbacks in this area will inevitably lead to higher levels of early school leaving and more young people at risk.

The research in the RAPID areas identified a number of particular gaps in this regard including:

- The availability of assessment for particular behavioural and learning difficulties and the implementation of timely and appropriate interventions and supports.
- The availability of speech and language service and supports.

The youth service is perceived as a key player in the whole area of dealing with youth at risk, and there is an expectation from the communities that these services can address the complex and widespread issues linked to at risk youth. As the research was focusing on at risk there was a bias towards this area. There is a perception among some stakeholders that the provision of services for young people is not sufficiently focused, and the services tend to work with the young people who are easier to engage with. General programmes for young people delivered in centres will not attract the youth who are alienated and at risk. Services therefore need to be more geared to the needs of those at risk.

Local communities would like to be more involved in the planning of programmes for young people in their areas, and would like to build on relationships with the agencies involved in this work.

There is a recognition that more needs to be done to build links between services and local communities, and that more volunteers in these communities need to be involved and trained to take on work with at risk youth.

Specific gaps identified relating to youth at risk included targeted service provision and supports for young people at risk – including those young people who are not currently engaged with formal education, and the parents of those young people. The need for information and support for parents emerged in a number of different contexts and there is broad consensus that many parents of young people and especially parents of young people at risk are struggling to cope, especially with regard to drug abuse. Research in the RAPID areas identified a number of needs with regard to drug and alcohol abuse including: information on service and support provision, locally based peer support programmes and locally based prevention programmes. This research also stated that:

“The most often cited fear for parents of teenagers (or those just about to reach teenage) was related to drugs, their fear for their childrens’ safety, and their own lack of knowledge around the tell-tale signs. Parents were particularly adamant that their best defence was information and for many there was not enough available”¹⁷.

¹⁷ ibid

8 Synthesis of Key issues

It is acknowledged that work with at risk youth is resource intensive, challenging and that it requires specific approaches and skill sets. Standard services and approaches may not work, and indeed may be part of the problem, as the young person who is at risk is likely to be alienated from the system (school, youth services etc.) This issue is highlighted in Young people in Contemporary Ireland

A failure to recognise that there is more to being young than the age related aspects runs the risk of stereotyping young people – a simplification of a complex social reality. It is particularly damaging because it ignores the issues and concerns confronting young people who are socially marginalised and excluded and for whom “youth culture” may seem to hold limited relevance or attractiveness, may be difficult to access or participate in or may itself be experienced as actively marginalising and excluding

Young People in Contemporary Ireland (Lalor, de Roiste & Devlin)

For the purpose of this report three broad sub groups within the “at risk” category were identified:

- those who are at risk of leaving school early
- those who are already out of school but engaged with an alternative education/training initiative
- those who are out of school and unattached to any services or supports.

The issues identified here are common to all of these categories and indeed to a much wider cohort of youth population who are not normally considered to be at risk. In the case of those most at risk it is a combination of a number of these issues which often causes the young persons’ lives to spiral out of control. These issues fall into a number of broad categories; those relating to the lives of young people who are at risk, wider societal/environment issues, and issues relating to services for young people at risk.

The overall context for dealing with youth at risk is changing rapidly and a number of factors are likely to exacerbate an already difficult situation. Recent cutbacks in special support services to schools and a gradual whittling away of other supports and services will inevitably make it more difficult to target resources at those young people in need of support. Preventative work which is considered to be most effective in dealing with this issues will more than likely be scaled back with a detrimental effect on those young people who are most at risk.

Over the last decade expectations have been raised among young people and the changing economic environment will have implications for all young people and how they perceive their situation. Among the wider youth population there will be increased free time as a result of less opportunities for part time work. While those most at risk may not have had high expectations or availed fully of employment opportunities available, there is no doubt that the economic decline will negatively impact on this cohort. The changing economic environment means that there are fewer employment opportunities for young people, particularly those who have left school early with no qualifications. There will also be increasing levels of unemployment among parents of these young people and in the wider disadvantaged

communities in which the young people live. There will be increased competition for jobs - even lower paid and lower skilled jobs - and increased pressure on the limited number of training places open to those with no qualifications.

Overall it is likely to be a much more difficult and challenging environment for the young people at risk, for their families, and for the already over stretched services trying to support these young people.

A number of significant gaps have emerged with regard to supports and services for at risk youth. While gaps have been highlighted it is important to note that there is valuable work going on to address these gaps and a number of projects are in place with a specific remit to deal with these issues. However the gaps relate to the county wide context and do not reflect the work of specific projects. A related issue is that some of the services tend to be reactive and crises driven while all the evidence points to the need for early interventions and preventative approaches.

Services dealing with alcohol and drug abuse

There is broad consensus among those working with young people in DLR that alcohol is a significant problem among a large section of young people, and that it is a gateway to a range of other at risk activities including drug abuse, anti social behaviour and risky sexual activity. There are two parallel trends which are exacerbating the situation. Children are abusing alcohol at a young age and girls are also now more involved in extensive abuse of alcohol. The situation in DLR is mirroring the wider national context where alcohol abuse is recognised as a major social issue among young people. Recent research by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction¹⁸ showed the scale of the problem in Ireland. An average of 26% of Irish students said they were drunk in the last thirty days with girls ahead of boys in this respect. The figure for girls was 28% while that for boys was 24%. Alcohol abuse is seen as a major factor in unsafe sex and in teenage pregnancy and the long term impact on girls' lives and opportunities can be enormous. The report raised concerns about what it describes as heavy episodic drinking among Irish teenagers.

The issue of drugs emerged as a factor in at risk youth although there were some differences regarding the nature and extent of the drug problem in DLR. Some of those involved in working with young people felt that there was not a major problem with harder drugs such as heroin or cocaine and that most drug taking involved cannabis. However, others felt that there were more serious problems in DLR, possibly out of sight from the Gardai, with pockets of more serious drug abuse including heroin.

A number of people interviewed referred to the issue of an older generation of drug abusers in some neighbourhoods, some of whom are now parents. In some cases there is now an intergenerational drug problem with both parents and children involved in drug abuse. The ESPAD report also notes that girls in Ireland are more likely to take drugs than boys. 10% of girls admitted to having tried drugs compared to 8% of boys while 16% of girls said they had used inhalants compared with 14% of boys.

As outlined above the most significant problems regarding at risk youth relate to alcohol and drug abuse and other activities related to these problems (anti social behaviour and risky sexual behaviour). At the same time the lack of services to address these issues was identified as being one of the most significant

¹⁸ European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction; The 2007 ESPAD report: Substance use among students in 35 countries. Björn Hibell, Ulf Guttormsson, Salme Ahlström, Olga Balakireva, Thoroddur Bjarnason, Anna Kokkevi, Ludwig Kraus (Feb 2009)

gaps in provision in DLR.. There are limited services for people under 18 with drug and alcohol problems as services tend to focus on adults who are addicts.

Another gap in relation to at risk youth is the lack of a locally based out of hours service. As a result, young people from DLR who need out of hours support are accommodated in the city centre. This brings this vulnerable group in contact with other potentially more hardened at risk youth from across the city at a time when they need support and structures. This can result in the young people establishing links with other at risk youth and can lead the young people into further at risk behaviour.

Mental Health

A major issue among young people in DLR is mental health. Mental health problems appears to be affecting increasing numbers of young people, both girls and boys, and has serious implications ranging from early school leaving to depression, and in extreme cases, to suicide. Suicide among young people and among an older generation is a major issue in some of the more marginalised areas, and can have serious effects on the well being and behaviour of other young people in the community and/or peer group.

Another significant issue identified in the DLR area during the research is the challenge faced by many young girls who experience exclusion and bullying and who live in difficult family circumstances. There is a concern among some of those interviewed that this group can go unnoticed and receives little support.

The situation in DLR is replicated across the country. Recent research by Headstrong¹⁹ showed that almost two in three young people in Ireland are ‘unable to cope with the problems they face’ only 64% report having an adult available to them to talk through their problems regularly; 47% of respondents report having been bullied at some point in their life and, 10% have had serious problems and have not sought professional help.

While all young people who are bullied or have difficulties coping with problems are a concern, it is the 10% who have serious problems and who don’t get help which is of particular concern, as the implications for this group can be much more serious.

The reality of the issue was highlighted recently by Dr. Sarah Buckley a consultant child and adolescent psychiatrist in St. Patricks Hospital.²⁰ Dr Buckley stated that there are major gaps in psychiatric services for teenagers with waiting lists of up to two years despite the fact that over three quarters of mental illness actually starts by the age of 16. There is increased demand for and increased pressure on services because of increased pressure on teenagers today.

We do think that it is becoming harder for adolescents nowadays. There are a lot more pressures on them.Adolescence is a time of increased risk of poor mental health and anxiety, depression, psychosis, eating disorders, and substance misuse becoming more prevalent as well as an increasing risk of deliberate self harm and suicidal behaviour.²¹

There is consensus among many service providers in DLR that there are significant mental health issues among young people across the county and across different socio economic groups. Much of this is

¹⁹ Headstrong : Somewhere To Turn Someone To talk to : March 2009

²⁰ Dr. Sarah Buckley Irish Times Health supplement (31/03/09)

²¹ Ibid

hidden and therefore is difficult to address. However mental health problems which are not addressed can have devastating effects on the young person, their family and their peer group.

Local provision

The distribution of disadvantage in DLR is distinct from that of most other counties as it is dispersed among quite affluent areas and is often masked by the overall wealth of the county. It is sometimes difficult to develop appropriate services to cater for the dispersed nature of disadvantage, and it would probably not be feasible in these conditions to develop significant parallel services in both sides of the county to address the problems of at risk youth.

For historical reasons a number of key services targeting at risk are based in Dun Laoghaire (Youth Choices, Teen Counselling) and therefore may not be so easily accessed by at risk youth in other parts of the county. This issue emerged during consultations and in the seminar with the Youth at Risk Network. People expressed the view that there would be merit in replicating or expanding some existing services in the west of the county. Examples which were cited included the Teen Counselling Service and the Alternative Learning Pathways Programme.

It must be recognised that services have made enormous efforts to reach out to young people across the county. However the reality is that the geography of the county combined with perceptions regarding services can mean that those most in need may not avail of such support.

Some of the key gaps in provision related to services for at risk youth such as alcohol and drug addiction services for teenagers, mental health services, and out of hours services, require considerable investment and would require the involvement of a range of stakeholders. As outlined in this report there are a significant number of agencies involved in work around the issue of at risk youth. While these agencies have their own strategy there does not appear to be a co-ordinated interagency strategy to deal with at risk youth. Overall co-ordination and integration of work on these significant issues could be improved with more county wide approaches which would fit with the strategic plan of the DLRCC and DLR County Development Board.

There are two VECs in the DLR County and two separate youth services operating in the county. Both of these operate independently although there is a good level of co-operation on operational matters. VECs are required under the Youth Act to draw up a plan for their area with the emphasis on co-ordination within the VEC region and as a result DLR will have two separate plans. Given the scale of the county the fact that there are two plans is not a major issue for most youth work.

However in the case of at risk youth there is merit in taking a more strategic county wide approach. A number of those consulted have referred to this issue and highlighted the potential benefits of a county wide approach even if it is implemented separately by the two VECs. Increasingly community and social inclusion services such as the LDSIP and the LDTF are being delivered on a county wide basis and key agencies such as DLRCC, SSP and the CDB operate across the county.

One of the critical factors identified in this research for engaging with at risk youth is that of local engagement where the young person feels ownership and at ease and where there is potential to involve

the family and the local community. There are some good examples of locally based projects in the county where there is strong local community involvement.

However the dispersed nature of disadvantage in the county and the inevitable lack of resources means that it is difficult to deliver appropriate services into all communities. There is a recognition that building local involvement and capacity is the most effective way of addressing many of the problems relating to at risk youth and all agencies need to keep this high on their agenda.

There are concerns among some people consulted that services are becoming more centralised with less engagement with the local community and more importantly with the at risk young people on the ground.

Developing skills and building local capacities

There are a range of innovative initiatives in DLR which are addressing this problem and providing real alternatives for youth at risk. However two issues have emerged in the course of this research. One relates to the skills required to work with at risk youth and the need for ongoing training for all front line staff working with at risk youth, including teachers, community workers, volunteers, social workers, gardai, youth workers, etc. The second issue relates to the need for more locally based and detached initiatives in order to really engage with those at risk.

At present people are coming to work with at risk youth from a variety of backgrounds and in different contexts (youth work, training centres, schools etc) and each approach has unique aspects and specific strengths. There is value in sharing these approaches and learning from each other. Considerable resources have been invested in different sectors to develop the skills and enhance the capacity of staff to deal with the issues around youth at risk. The Youth at Risk network does facilitate some sharing of approaches and cross fertilisation of ideas but is limited with regard to a more in-depth exploration of approaches.

Training programmes provide a more structured approach and provide opportunities for new approaches and models to be explored, and for personnel coming from different backgrounds (teaching, youth work community development, garda, social work etc.) to explore approaches and methodologies for working with at risk youth. They also provide opportunities for volunteers involved in locally based initiatives to develop their skills.

There are some examples of detached youth work in the county but there is still a heavy reliance on centre based initiatives which are often not attractive to those at risk. At the same time one of the big issues in the county is the lack of appropriate facilities for young people and especially for young people who are at risk. Therefore there is merit in looking at alternative approaches to address this problem and to investigate where and how more detached approaches could be implemented. There is also a need to ensure that services are responsive to youth at risk and reflect the lives of those considered at risk in terms of the timing of programmes etc.

School based approaches to dealing with at risk

National policy dictates that the main focus for tackling early school leaving and associated at risk problems is in school based approaches. As a result considerable resources have been invested in a range of initiatives aimed at preventing early school leaving. DLR has benefited from these initiatives and there is now a reasonably good infrastructure in place across the county to prevent early school leaving. Despite

the investment in this area there are still considerable problems with early school leaving in the county and the situation is likely to get worse as the economic downturn continues.

While the school based initiatives are essential in stemming the flow of early school leavers it must be recognised that they are limited and that there will inevitably be a cohort of young people who will drop out of school irrespective of what supports are provided within the system.

Another significant point with regard to school based programmes is the fact that many of those considered to be at risk of early school leaving do not attend designated disadvantaged schools. The ESRI report on early school leaving²² dealt with this issue;

“However, it is not at all evident that all, or even the majority of, disadvantaged students attend DEIS schools. Unfortunately, no evidence is available on the primary sector but a national survey of school leavers indicates that 61 per cent of young people from semi/unskilled manual backgrounds and 56 per cent of those from non-employed households attend non-DEIS schools. These are groups that are likely to experience socioeconomic disadvantage and we know from existing research that they achieve poorer educational outcomes. Thus, a significant proportion of the potential target group do not fall within the remit of the DEIS second-level scheme. There has been allowance for such ‘dispersed disadvantage’ at primary level but not for second-level schools.”

This highlights the need for services which can effectively cater for both those who are in designated schools and those who are in other schools. In terms of out of school provision, The DLR area has been reasonably well resourced through the ALPP, Youth Choices, and youth training projects such as the CTC, Rathfarnham Youthreach, Sportsreach and the Tivoli Training Centre. However there are still substantial numbers of young people who are not adequately catered for. The fact that there were approx. 50 young people on the waiting list for the DLCTC (Feb. 2009) would indicate that there is a significant cohort of at risk youth unable to avail of services.

Therefore there is a need to invest resources to expand or replicate innovative alternative programmes such as the Alternative Learning Pathways programmes, or through resourcing additional initiatives and programmes through CTCs and Youthreach centres which can cater for this cohort of youth at risk and provide them with viable alternative routes into other training education and/or employment opportunities.

Premises

A common issue across a lot of the county is the lack of facilities especially for at risk youth and the difficulty in providing age appropriate facilities for this group. There are difficulties at local level in this regard in a number of areas, although progress has been made with regard to facilities in Ballyogan, Sallynoggin, Cois Cairn, and (soon to be completed) in Mounttown and Nutgrove. The proposed Youth Café will also be a significant addition and a model for other work in the area. There is also a recognition that greater use could be made of existing facilities. Examples include the CTC in Dun Laoghaire which could be availed of for additional evening programmes, and the youth space available in the SSP basement. An Audit of Youth Services in the DL area is to be published by DLVEC in September 2009, and this will include a directory of current projects and facilities in the area.

²² Investing in Education: Combating Educational Disadvantage: ESRI May 2009

Networking and Collaboration

Overall there is a good level of networking among the various educational and youth services involved in tackling disadvantage and at risk youth. This is particularly the case in Dun Laoghaire where agencies are located in close proximity to each other and there are opportunities for networking. However there are issues around collaboration between some of the key services providers such as the HSE and DLR Co. Council and the need for more joined up service provision for disadvantaged areas where there tend to be more young people at risk.

There appear to be strong school linked structures in place among many of the schools in DLR and the linkages between these structures appear to work well.

The Youth at Risk Network has a wide membership and is considered to be useful for contacts and information sharing. It provides a platform for some important work in DLR and people feel it has made a valuable contribution to a range of issues around early school leaving and at risk youth. However there were a number of criticisms of the Network and how it operates including:

Issues about who is a member and who attends.

There is a view that the diversity within the group and the range of agencies involved can mean it is difficult to fully meet peoples expectations.

It is not considered to be strategic enough –not dealing with issues.

Too much time spent on the lack of resources or on specific issues relating to one area of the county.

A need for more analysis of the common issues across the county and the development of appropriate responses.

A number of other related issues were also highlighted by those consulted. These include:

The fact that more specialist services for at risk youth tend to be stand alone and not fully connected so as to provide a holistic support to the young person.

The links between schools and the other agencies involved in provision of service are good in places but there are gaps in other places and this area needs to be strengthened.

Integration and co-ordination depends on the individual worker and in some cases is not fully institutionalised.

Youthreach and Community Training centres are key supports for at risk youth and there is a need for enhanced networking in this area. There is evidence that there is a shortage of training places and some difficulties with progression for those who are in the training centres. Pressure in this area is likely to increase as the recession deepens and employment opportunities for this cohort decrease. There may be scope for the centres to co-ordinate their efforts and to lobby for increased provision of training places in the county.

Issues relating to specific target groups

A number of specific groups of young people are considered to be more at risk including young Travellers, Lesbian, Gay and bisexual young people, young people with disabilities, and young immigrants and asylum seekers. There is a need for a balance between the delivery of specialised services for these groups and the need to ensure that they are integrated within mainstream and/or more specialised programmes aimed at the wider at risk population.

In the case of Travellers there is a reasonably good transfer rate between primary and secondary school but there are significant problems in retaining these children in secondary school. On the wider front there are gaps between the Travellers and youth services and a need for a more integrated approach.

Parenting skills programmes emerged as a significant gap in provision across the county and were identified as being critical to breaking the cycle of disadvantage and at risk which affects certain communities and families. Again there are a number of initiatives taking place across the county such as the young mothers programme in DLCTC, the HSE and JLO programme based in St. Tiernans Community School, and the Infant Matters programme based in Barnados, Loughlinstown. Two categories of parents in need of support were identified: parents of teenagers who are experiencing difficulties and/or are at risk, and teenage mothers

Evaluation of work with at risk youth

There is still insufficient attention paid to evaluation of work with at risk youth and a need for increased focus on this area. One of the main challenges facing those involved in this area of work is in proving that they are making a difference and providing value for money. This lack of information about the approaches being applied and the benefits of focused activities is also a cause of criticism of the work. Where evaluations are carried out there is a tendency to focus on individual projects which fails to capture the links between initiatives, the gaps in provision and the overall effectiveness and impact of the work. More sector based evaluations would require pooling of resources but would greatly enhance learning and the overall impact of the work.

9 Conclusions

The unique demographic profile and the dispersed nature of disadvantaged communities in DLR presents challenges to all agencies involved in targeting disadvantage and makes it more difficult to deliver services effectively.

As outlined in section 5.2 above several areas of the county have changed dramatically over the last decade and have experienced major population growth (Clonskeagh-Belfield + 189%, Glencullen + 73%). Inevitably services are struggling to keep pace with this change, with pressure emerging in all areas including, childcare, schools, and social and recreational facilities. The recent economic downturn will impact across virtually all services and will inevitably have a negative affect on the roll out of new services in such areas.

The main challenge facing these services will be about how to respond to the likely cutbacks as the situation on the ground relating to at risk deteriorates. In difficult financial circumstances resources will be limited and there will be a need to move towards increased pooling of limited resources.

There is a solid structure in place to deal with disadvantage in DLR and a range of innovative projects working to support disadvantaged and at risk youth in the county. Substantial progress has been made on several fronts over the last few years and this will be important as the budgetary situation deteriorates. Examples of these include;

- The establishment of a new youth service in Dundrum/Rathdown.
- The provision of youth facilities in Ballyogan, Meadowlands, Sallynoggin and Cois Cairn.
- The establishment of a new Garda diversionary projects in Ballyogan, and an additional service applied for in Shankanagh/Rathsallagh.

The Youth at Risk Network has played a valuable role in bringing together key players involved in working with at risk youth. It was instrumental in progressing a number of key recommendations from the 2004 ESL research including the establishment of the Youth Choices Project, continuing support for the Alternative Learning Pathways Project (ALPP), and by responding to specific needs through pilot initiatives such as the Youth Café and the Restorative Practices training. The Network can be a key mechanism for future work on issues relating to at risk youth.

There is a good level of networking and interagency co-operation with regard to at risk youth and some good examples of how this interagency co-operation can have an impact and bring real benefits for those at risk.

There are however some concerns around existing services and the capacity of these to reach the most at risk. There is recognition that generalised services are not the most effective means of reaching this group but even specialised projects can struggle to reach those most at risk. There are also some concerns that existing services are becoming disconnected from communities on the ground and there is a need for greater engagement with disadvantaged communities and enhanced mechanisms to give these communities a real voice in the delivery of services focusing on at risk youth. With limited resources there is a huge need to engage communities around these issues. There is an ongoing challenge for service

providers to respond to communities needs and to engage them more actively in the design of programmes. At the same time there are significant challenges for agencies, and communities need to recognise and value the efforts of the various agencies and groups working to address the needs of at risk youth, and to respond to and support this work where possible. They also need to recognise the capacity/resource limitations of existing services in this regard.

Overall there is a need for enhanced communication between agencies delivering services and the disadvantaged communities, and more opportunities for real dialogue and collaboration around the key local issues impacting on at risk youth. Efforts should also be made to enhance the participation of young people including youth at risk in these processes.

There is recognition among local communities that the communities themselves have a critical role to play in addressing the problems relating to at risk youth and a desire among people in these communities for more consultations around strategies and planning. The Youth at Risk Network and SSP can play a key role by building trust, and promoting partnership and dialogue between agencies and local communities in disadvantaged areas.

The need for local community involvement, partnership approaches, and the engagement of the young people themselves was highlighted in research carried out by the Children Research Centre in Trinity College²³. This research identified models of good practice for community based projects supporting children and young people at risk of educational or social disadvantage, and highlighted three fundamental commitments for this work:

- A commitment to genuinely caring and supporting relationships that help children and young people feel they belong.
- A commitment to partnership that involves projects working with families, schools and other services in the wider community so as to maximise the benefits to children and young people at risk.
- A commitment to building clear trusting and supportive relationships with these other players so as to ensure a true partnership approach to working together.

This research also identified how projects can help children/young people feel they belong through the development of caring and supporting relationships including:

Targeting: clarifying the need for a prevention project in a community, how it fits in with other services, which young people might benefit from it and how to reach out and bring those young people in.

Engaging: Offering young people experiences that are exciting enough for them to want to become involved in the project and to stay involved.

²³ Helping Children Feel they Belong: A guide to good practice in community based prevention and support work with children and young people at risk of educational disadvantage. Monica Brown Childrens Research Centre, Trinity College (2003)

Caring: ensuring that the child has a sense of being genuinely cared for and believed in and that this sense is reflected in the atmosphere, physical appearance and relationships that make up the project.

Supporting: helping young people in particular ways to cope with everyday demands of life such as communications, stress, change, schoolwork, family relationships, friendships etc.

Strengthening: building on children's talents and strengths so that their confidence and independence grows.

The bulk of funding for youth work and youth services is provided for disadvantaged youth. Given the range of funding streams in operation it is difficult to give an exact figure for the amount of funding coming into DLR which is aimed at disadvantaged youth. It is recognised that DLR is a large county with a growing population and dispersed pockets of disadvantage. The reality is that the current level of funding is unlikely to increase and may be reduced in the coming years. Therefore there is a need to ensure that services are responding to changes in demographics in the county, that they are targeted at the most disadvantaged, and that there are clear strategies in this regard.

10 Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the issues emerging in the research and on the current framework in which agencies operate. The proposed timeframe for implementation is three years while recognising the likely impact of the growing recession on all services over this period.

It is recommended that the SSP should continue to support the Youth at Risk Network and its varied membership to develop a shared approach for working with at risk youth in the county, where the strengths and expertise of the relevant agencies can be used to maximum benefit. In particular it should support the Youth at Risk Network to continue to strengthen links between school based programmes, the youth service and other relevant agencies. In order to maximise the effectiveness of the Network there is a need to restructure the network and to adopt a more thematic approach with increased emphasis on smaller working groups. This should include setting out agreed objectives, priorities and key actions for the next three to five years.

Southside Partnership should build on its strengths at community level and support and facilitate locally based initiatives to address gaps in services for youth at risk with the emphasis on volunteerism. This would include:

- Working with local communities in disadvantaged areas and using community development approaches to identify gaps and issues on the ground and to feed this into the relevant youth services in a structured manner.
- Promoting greater co-ordination and networking at local level with the emphasis on developing local solutions to the problems of at risk youth.
- Supporting the building of local capacity to address the needs of at risk youth and linking this into the appropriate youth structures.

The Youth at Risk Network should explore the possibility of supporting the replication of existing projects which are located in Dun Laoghaire (e.g. Teen Counselling, ALPP) into the rest of the county.

Subject to the availability of funding the Youth at Risk Network should carry out a confined piece of research among schools in the county not designated as disadvantaged to ascertain the scale of at risk in these schools.

The Youth at Risk Network through the Early School Leaver Working Group should support and co-ordinate networking between the training centres in the county (DLCTC, Youthreach, Tivoli Training Centre, St. Kieran's Senior Traveller Training Centre, Sportsreach) and between these and FAS/VEC to enhance progression routes for trainees in these projects.

The Youth at Risk Network working with the DLR/LDTF (primarily the LDTF Education Prevention Sub-group) should research other models for the delivery of services related to alcohol and drug abuse among teenagers and investigate how appropriate programmes could be established in DLR.

The Youth at Risk Network should continue to research and explore new approaches and methodologies which can enhance the work of dealing with at risk youth, particularly preventative approaches. This would include linking in with the Southside Community Training Network, and with other training providers about responding to emerging training needs for workers/volunteers working with at risk youth.

The Youth at Risk Network should explore how to more actively include the voices of at risk young people in its deliberations, including promoting the development of structures and processes to more actively engage and consult with youth at risk on an ongoing basis.

The Network should support the development of good practice guidelines and policies for all work with at risk youth. These guidelines could draw on best practice in different sectors.

Southside Partnership/ the Youth at Risk Network should support and facilitate closer collaboration between agencies including the youth services and communities in disadvantaged areas. This could take the form of coordinating local area-based Youth at Risk sub-groups around specific issues.

The Network should develop a strategic plan for the Network in consultation with other agencies which would be complementary to their strategic plans, in order to ensure effective collaborative working.

This should include the following

- The Youth at Risk Network needs to revise its structures and how it works in order to stay relevant to the diverse and changing needs in the county; to ensure it has a more strategic role in the future; and to enable its members to focus on the key issues in the county. In particular the network should consider the following actions (with the necessary support of SSP and the network members).
- The Network should focus on specific issues affecting at risk youth in the county (e.g. Alcohol, Mental Health) and develop a learning approach where best practice and innovation within the county and from elsewhere is shared and where possible integrated into work in the county.
- There is a need for sharing of information regarding existing services targeting at risk youth and the Network should explore how this can be done most effectively. The Network should explore how to develop broader evaluation approaches which can capture and reflect the overall impact of interagency work with at risk youth (rather than project based evaluations). The learning from this could be used to improve overall effectiveness and impact of the work in the county.

It is recommended that the network work through already established working groups where possible, and establish new working groups where required to implement these recommendations, and that the main network should meet less regularly (possibly on a bi-annual basis.)

Appendix 1 Agencies and individuals consulted

Alison Corr: Southside Travellers Action Group

Jim Doherty: DLR Local Drugs Task Force

Emma Campbell: DL Youth Service

Simon Molloy: Teen Counselling

Antoinette Murphy: DLVEC (ALPP)

David Lawless: RAPID

Catherine Bell: DL Community Training Centre

Margaret Groome: Educational Welfare Officer

Anne Traynor : Shanganagh CDP

Emma O'Brien: Dundrum/Rathdown Youth Services (Shanganagh CDP)

Marion White : Mountwood Fitzgerald CDP

Zuleika Jamieson: DLVEC

Mary Cullen: Mounttown Neighbourhood Youth Project

Mary Fagan: HSCL Coordinator, St. Tiernan's Community School

Ian Alderdice : SCP Coordinator, Sallynoggin area

Sinead Murphy: DLVEC

Jim King: Probation & Welfare Service

Aileen Mulligan: Dundrum/Rathdown Youth Service

Enda Dwyer: Dundrum/Rathdown Youth Service

Angela Sweeney: DLR Co. Council

Colette Farrington: Ballyogan FRC

Sinead Fortune: Youth Choices

Fiona O'Shea: SAY Garda Diversion Project

Majella Lynch : JLO Sergeant, Dun Laoghaire

Paul Sargeant: Community Sergeant, Blackrock

Jim Foley: JLO Blackrock

Francis Ferris: JLO Dun Laoghaire

Angelene Confrey: Community Sergeant, Dun Laoghaire

Shane Gatley: Ballyogan Garda Diversion Project

Sean Greene: Community Garda Dun Laoghaire

Roisin Mc Lindon: Co. Dublin VEC

Aisling Crowley: DLVEC

Phoebe Fraites: HSE

Eoin Mc Maolir.: SCP Coordinator, Cabinteely

Liz Gaire: Visiting Teacher for Travellers

Fidele O Riordan: Rosemount Family Resource Centre

John Paul Durcan: Ethnic Liaison, DL Gardai

Michael Redmond: Principal, St. Laurence's College

Paddy Beare: Chair, DL Community Training Centre

Martin Doran: HSCLCoordinator, St. Laurence's College

Orla Briscoe: FAS Placement Services, Rathfarnham

Joan Dwyer: Holly House CDP

Tiernan Murphy: Dun Laoghaire Youth Service

Jim Lawless: Sportsreach, Sallynoggin

Fiona Burke: Southside Local Employment Service

Carol Ward: Youthreach, Rathfarnham

Tony Corcoran: Tivoli Training Centre

Fergus Farrell: St. Kieran's Senior Traveller Training Centre

Aileen O'Brien: Southside Partnership

Vivienne McCann: Southside Partnership

Marie Carroll: Southside Partnership

Appendix 2: YPFSF Projects Dun Laoghaire (funded projects 2009)

- **Sallynoggin Youth Project**
The Sallynoggin service consists of two full-time youth workers and one part-time assistant. Since September 2008 they have been based in the new youth facility in Sallynoggin.
- **Ballybrack Youth Project**
Funding for this project is for one youth worker who works out of the Ballybrack Project centre.
- **Cuala Sports and Social Integration Project**
Funding is for one full-time worker, based at the GAA project in Dalkey. This project works closely with the communities and is linked into all of the local schools. There are very high numbers of young people involved giving the work a different emphasis to the traditional youth work projects.
- **Prevention Through Education**
Funding covers one full-time Education Prevention Officer who reports to the LDTF, is based at D.R.O.P. and covers the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown area.
- **Youth Arts Access**
Youth Arts Access is a fund that is administered by Dun Laoghaire Youth Service and is open to applications from those working through the arts with young people.
- **Traveller Youth Service**
Funding provides for one full-time coordinator, three part-time positions plus financial support for running costs of the TYS mini-bus. Workers are based at the STAG facility in Sandyford industrial estate and cover the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown area.
- **Cois Cairn Youth Project**
Based in Bray the project includes two full-time youth workers. They recently moved into a dedicated premises in the Cois Cairn estate.
- **Dun Laoghaire Central youth Project**
This project consists of two part-time youth workers and no base. Workers utilise the Playcentre on library road, when it is available, for most programmes.
- **Adventure Sports programme**
This funding provides for an adventure sports Youth Officer who works with specific adventure sports youth groups as well as a range of groups from across Dun Laoghaire. Young people attending have access to sailing, canoeing, abseiling, trekking etc.
- **Alternative Learning Pathways Project**
ALPP is an out of school transition programme for 12-15 yr olds who are out of school, based in the Loughlinstown/Ballybrack area. It provides a person centred educational environment for

young people to assist them to progress to alternative education or training and is managed by DLVEC.

- **Small Grants**

The YPFSE small grants awards up to €5000 to youth groups annually to support them in a range of ways including equipment and programme development. The aim is to offer once off support to help groups provide services in sustainable ways they would not otherwise have the capacity to offer.

- **Youth Bus**

This service is offered to youth groups across Dun Laoghaire Rathdown at a minimal fee. Funding pays a part-time driver salary and costs. This service is highly utilised and as a result can be difficult to book.

Appendix 3: Primary Schools in DLR included in DEIS Programme

Scoil Cholmcille Senior School, Ballybrack

Scoil Cholmcille Junior School, Ballybrack

Scoil Mhuire N.S, Rathallagh, Shankill

Archbishop McQuaid N.S., Loughlinstown

St. John's National School, Ballybrack

Holy Family National School, Dunedin Park, Monkstown Farm, Dun Laoghaire

St. Kevin's N.S., Pearse Street, Sallynoggin

St Joseph's Primary School, Tivoli Rd, Dun Laoghaire

Dominican Convent, Convent Rd, Dun Laoghaire

St. Mary's National School, Sandyford

Queen of Angels N.S., Wedgewood, Sandyford

Holy Cross National School, Upper Kilmacud Road, Dundrum

Good Shepherd National School, Churchtown

Our Lady's Clonskeagh NS, St Columbanus Rd, Clonskeagh

Appendix 4 : References

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- Towards 2016 Ten year Framework for Social Partnership Agreement 2006 -2015 Department of the Taoiseach (June 2006)
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- A National Survey of Problem Behaviours and Associated Risk and Protective Factors Among Young People : Sarah Beniart, Barry Anderson, Stephanie Lee, David Utting 8 April 2002 (Joseph Rowntree Foundation)
- National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007 - 2016
- Presentation by Sylva Langford Director General Office of the Minister for Children (November 2006)
- Development of a Youth Café in the Dun Laoghaire Areas; A feasibility Study on behalf of Dun Laoghaire VEC and Southside Partnership; Sandra Roe (April 2008)
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