Annual Report 2009
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Minister’s Foreword

2009 has been a significant year for the youth sector. Responsibility for Youth Affairs transferring from the Department of Education and Science to the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs with effect from 1st January 2009. At the same time, responsibility for the Young Peoples Facilities and Services Fund also transferred from the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs to my Office. The integration of these supports into my Office is providing both continuity of service and operational experience. It is also opening up greater opportunities for a more integrated, cohesive and effective approach to addressing the needs of children and young people. This integration will also enable my Office to provide a more coordinated and streamlined approach in policy development for children and young people. In addition, it is also helping to ensure greater value for money across my Office’s programmes and services.

This year has also been challenging on a number of fronts not least in terms of financial provision. Despite these difficulties and recognising the value of youth work to the lives of our young people, my Office’s Youth Affairs Unit provided some €48m to support and promote non-formal learning and developmental opportunities for young people. The main focus of this financial support was on the consolidation of existing youth work provision and on the safeguarding of frontline programmes, services and jobs particularly in disadvantaged communities. Almost €20m was provided for 384 facilities and services projects through Round 2 of the Young People’s Facilities and Services Fund. In addition, some €18m was provided by the Irish Youth Justice Service’s Community Programme budget.

2009 also saw the finalisation of the development of a Quality Standards Framework (QSF) for the youth work sector. This framework, which was led by the OMCYA’s Youth Work Assessor in consultation with youth work interests, is based on self assessment which will be externally validated. This will ensure that there is adherence to identified and common standards for quality youth work provision, while also seeking to guarantee resource effectiveness and value for money throughout the youth work sector.

The QSF Pilot and its independent evaluation were completed and a number of actions were embarked upon to complete the development phase. With the support of the youth work interests, the aim is to roll out the framework nationally on a phased and incremental basis commencing in 2010 and I would encourage youth work organisations and projects to embrace and actively engage in this process that will help develop and enhance youth work provision and ultimately benefit the young people involved.

Throughout 2009, the National Youth Work Advisory Committee (NYWAC) has been working on a number of important issues including a revision of the existing Child Protection guidelines for the youth work sector and the development of guidelines to help combat homophobic bullying in youth work settings. These are very valuable and important areas of work that will serve as an added precaution in ensuring the safety and well-being of young people involved in youth work activities and will encourage and foster mutual respect and tolerance. The NYWAC is also leading the way in the development of a National Training Programme for Volunteers. As volunteers are core to the delivery of youth work programmes and services, this initiative will provide volunteers with the basic training and skills that will enable them to work more effectively with young people.

Looking at the broader picture, my Office is also involved in the development of youth policy at European level. Central to the work in 2009 by Member States has been a review of the framework established following on the EU White Paper, “A New Impetus for European Youth” which was published in November 2001 and of the European Youth Pact adopted in 2005. In addition, in April this year, the European Commission published “An EU Strategy for Youth – Investing and Empowering” which aims

- to create more opportunities for youth in education and employment,
- to improve access and full participation of all young people in society, and
- to foster solidarity between youth and society.

It also emphasises the important role of youth work in dealing with unemployment, school failure and social exclusion, as well as improving skills and providing leisure time. This proposed strategy very much complements our own youth policy and will serve to enhance and underpin current youth work provision in Ireland.

Finally, 2010 will, without doubt, be a challenging year for us all. It is important to remember, however, that our aim is a shared one: we want to continue to make a positive and lasting impact on the lives of our young people. I am confident that by facing the challenges ahead we will, together, continue to develop and support effective and relevant policies as well as programmes and services for our young people.

Minister for Children & Youth Affairs
Barry Andrews T.D.
**Director’s Foreword**

As I write this foreword Ireland is facing the prospect of one of the toughest budgets in history, the debate about what to cut and by how much has displaced almost all other issues on the news agenda. Different views, arguments and policy proposals abound and each sector is putting forward strong arguments as to why they in particular should be spared further cuts.

NYCI accepts that Government faces a range of crises and that the current level of borrowing is not sustainable, even in the short term. However we have argued throughout 2009 and will continue to do so right up to the budget on December 9th and beyond that Ireland needs to continue to invest in its young people, and in those services and supports that contribute to their learning and development, assisting them to achieve their full potential. In particular we need to ensure that vulnerable young people don’t have the rug pulled completely from under them at this time. We must protect young people, particularly vulnerable young people and we must protect the services that support them. The young people of Ireland must not pay the price of recovery from a situation they had no hand, act or part in creating.

In the past two years the number of young people that are unemployed under the age of 25 has soared by 173%. The options open to many seem to be limited to ‘sign on’ or ‘sign out’ as the numbers of those emigrating are growing by the day. It is critical that those making the decisions take account of the human and social cost of cutbacks otherwise we are just repeating the mistakes of the 1980s, when the slash and burn approach led to poverty, unemployment, emigration and the creation of a lost generation of young Irish people. By the late 1980s and early 1990s we learned the lesson that the best route to recovery and renewal was to invest in people, especially young people, because they will be the drivers of any economic and social recovery.

The next few weeks will be challenging for the youth sector as we contemplate the prospect and extent of any cuts and the impact of these on young people and youth services. More critically the next few years will be tough as the problems the country faces will not be solved this year. It is vital that the youth sector doesn’t lose the strategic gains it has achieved over the last few years. Many youth projects, programmes and services have been initiated and nurtured by youth organisations, communities, volunteers and staff over many years. If funding for this work is cut, not only will young people in those communities suffer now, but for future generations to come. Youth work cannot be turned on and off like a switch, it is not an ‘optional extra’, it provides for young people to exercise genuine power, to realise their potential and to address life’s challenges critically and creatively.

Whatever happens on December 9th, we must continue to fight together for decent youth services. We need to work together and build solidarity within the membership of NYCI so that we can respond creatively and constructively to the challenges facing us. We must continue to lobby for an Ireland that values its young people. That’s the least they deserve.

The pages of this annual report are a record of a wide range of networking activities, training and support services and advocacy work we have offered for and on behalf of our member organisations during 2009. It sets out NYCI’s achievements over the past year and gives a snapshot of the breadth of the work of the organisation. 2009 is the second year of our strategic plan and we have made considerable progress against the plan that was approved by the Board in January. The most significant development has been the extent of internal collaboration that has taken place amongst the practice development areas and between that work and the advocacy work of the organisation. This year we developed a Youth Arts position paper, this work was led by the Advocacy team working in partnership with youth arts specialists both internally and externally. The paper has been a critical tool for our work in lobbying to secure funding for youth arts at a time when the arts and culture budgets are under severe pressure.

We continued developing a single corporate training brochure which was warmly received by our member organisations and the wider sector. In addition our new integrated database is up and running and we will be evaluating the effectiveness of it during 2010.

We completed some ground breaking work on a diversity proofing tool for the youth sector. This was done with the co-operation of the sector who agreed to pilot the tool, and your constructive feedback has contributed to a very high quality finished product.

NYCI has continued to invest in a programme of Board development to ensure that Board members are supported in their role as directors of the NYCI Company. Corporate governance has made news headlines for all the wrong reasons in 2009. NYCI has been pro-active in this regard and has had a considerable emphasis on improving corporate governance standards over the past few years; most recently we have been focusing on risk management within NYCI. This work will continue in 2010.

We continue to support the development of open and participative relationships with our member organisations. The Policy and Advocacy Committee has provided important advice and guidance to the Board on policy...
matters and the Specialist Organisations Network has enabled those organisations with common interests to come together to share experiences and ideas. The network commissioned research on the role of specialist organisations in youth work which will be published in 2010.

As we face an uncertain economic future, we must reflect positively on the work of NYCI this year. I believe we have worked smarter to achieve the objectives we agreed back in January. We have used our collective competences and creativity to deliver the work in new and cost effective ways.

You, our member organisations, are the National Youth Council of Ireland, and your support, confidence and belief in the power of collaboration and the collective voice enables us to do our work on your behalf.

NYCI is also an excellent and dedicated staff team and I want to thank them sincerely for their hard work and commitment during this challenging year.

Finally I want to thank the Board of Directors who provide vision, leadership and direction for our shared goals.

Thanks are also due to all our funders, particularly the Youth Affairs Unit at the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, for their financial supports which enables NYCI to achieve the things we have over the past year.

Mary Cunningham
Director
President’s Foreword

The past year has been a challenging one for NYCI and everyone in the youth sector. The cumulative impact of the recession on young people and cutbacks in funding from a range of sources has been tough for all those working with young people. However 2009 has also demonstrated the value and importance of NYCI as a strong, independent and united representative body for the sector. As a sector we are stronger working together than we are apart. It is in times of adversity, struggle and danger that the strong partnership, trust and collective approach built up by NYCI and its members over the last 40 years is most required. I want to compliment all my colleagues on the Board, staff and in the membership of NYCI for stepping up to the plate and working collectively to make the best of what was a challenging set of circumstances in 2009.

Much of our work on funding for the sector focused on three areas. We advocated for the value and importance of youth work to be recognised and funded accordingly, we worked together to find solutions to cutbacks to minimize the impact on services and supports for young people and we engaged with Government and other partners such as the IVEA to minimize long term strategic damage to the sector. In light of the current state of the public finances this is a campaign we will be waging for a number of years. However, we will continue to insist that we are more than just an economy and that young people should not pay for the mistakes of others.

In that work I want to acknowledge the constructive relationship we have developed with Minister Barry Andrews T.D. and his officials in the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (OMCYA). A particular debt of gratitude is owed to the OMCYA for their important contribution to resourcing the work of the Council. I also want to thank our colleagues in the Irish Vocational Education Association with whom we worked closely with during the year.

2009 was the second year of the implementation of our strategic plan and I believe we are beginning to see more of the benefits of that approach to our work. The extensive range of activities outlined in the report reflects the hard work, expertise and commitment of the staff of NYCI. Their commitment to meeting the needs of member organisations is clearly evident. We continued to advocate on a wide range of issues impacting on the lives of young people. We launched two important reports, namely our national survey “The Truth About Youth” and the “Get ’Em Young – Mapping young people’s exposure to alcohol marketing in Ireland” report which attracted significant media and political attention and will serve to influence policy over the coming years. Our Vote at 16 campaign, which was launched early in 2009 is progressing well with a commitment by Government to examine this proposal.

In my second year as President of NYCI, I want to thank the members of the Board who have brought their skills and expertise to the work of the Council over the past year. I want to thank each of them for their hard work and commitment and for their support to me in my role over the past twelve months. In my view this report demonstrates the passion, commitment and hard work of the volunteers, youth workers, leaders, and everyone connected with NYCI.

We know the year ahead will be challenging, but we know the value and importance of the work we do to in promoting the well being of young people and helping them to achieve their full potential. We also know that young people have so much to contribute if given the support and opportunity. We must all remain focused on these core beliefs because that is the least the young people of Ireland deserve.

Eddie D’Arcy
President
Role, Structures and Reports

Vision

NYCI’s vision is one where all young persons are empowered to develop the skills and confidence to fully participate as active citizens in an inclusive society.

Values and Guiding Principles

NYCI endorses all the values and principles enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the principles enshrined in the UN Declaration on Human Rights, the principles underpinning the Children Act 2001 and the Equal Status Act 2000.

NYCI’s work is based on the core values of equity, volunteerism, pro-activity, interdependence, quality, and representation. Its work is also young person-centred, whereby NYCI believes that all young people are citizens in their own right and are of equal value.

Mission Statement

The National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI) is a membership-led umbrella organisation that represents and supports the interests of voluntary youth organisations and uses its collective experience to act on issues that impact on young people.

Strategic Aims

In advocating for the sector, NYCI is committed to playing a leadership role in actively raising the profile of youth work, enhancing the status of youth work and young people, and increasing the resources available to youth work.

NYCI embraces the genuine challenge of being representative of voluntary youth work organisations, as defined in the Youth Work Act 2001, and will ensure that its Memorandum and Articles of Association reflects this commitment.

We are also committed to ensuring that all its members have the opportunity to participate fully in the organisation and will promote and encourage interdependent relationships between member organisations and in how NYCI itself operates.

The relationship between NYCI and its member organisations is central to its role in developing good practice in youth work. NYCI will be responsive to the needs of its members and work in partnership with them to ensure that the considerable knowledge, expertise and experience of the collective is brought to the development of programmes.

Structures and Functions

NYCI’s Annual Assembly is its highest decision-making body and takes place once a year. As well as addressing financial, organisational and constitutional matters, elections are held. The Board of NYCI is the governing body of the Council. It is elected at the Annual Assembly. The Board ensures that the work programme and policies of the
Council are implemented. Member organisations then decide the nature of participation in NYCI (to include young people, leaders, practitioners, volunteers, managers and heads of organisations) depending on the focus, issue and/or needs by participation in thematic networks in 2009.

Member Organisations

Member Organisations will decide the nature of their participation (to include young people, leaders, practitioners, volunteers, managers and heads of organisations) depending on the focus, issues and/or needs.
Board & Staff of NYCI

NYCI Board

President
Eddie D’Arcy (Catholic Youth Care)

Vice President
Karen Hannify (Foróige)

Treasurer
Kieran O’Dowd (Macra na Feirme)
David Brown (Church of Ireland Youth Department)
John Cahill (Foróige)
Michael Clancy (Young Fine Gael)
Derek Cleary (Peace Corps Localise)
Marie Fitzpatrick (Pavee Point)
Finola Gallagher (Irish Girl Guides)
Paul Graiton (Youth Work Ireland)
Orlaith McBride (National Association for Youth Drama)
Brian Murtagh (YMCA)
Elaine Nevin (ECO-UNESCO)
Graham O’Maoinagh (Labour Youth)
Kieran O’Dowd (Macra na Feirme)
Phil Stapleton (Scouting Ireland)

International Advisory Committee

Chairperson 2009:
Elaine Nevin (ECO-UNESCO)

NYCI Staff

Director
Mary Cunningham
Assistant Directors
James Doorley & Deiniol Jones
Senior Research & Policy Officer
Marie-Claire McAleer
Research & Policy Officer
Anna Cunniffe*
Finance Officer (Part-time)
Laura Geraty
Communications Officer
Clodagh O’Brien
Child Protection Co-ordinator
Olive Ring
Youth Health Senior Project Officer
Kevin O’Hagan**
Youth Health Project Officer
Siobhán Brennan**
Senior Youth Arts Project Officer
Anne O’Gorman
Youth Arts Project Officer
Emmet Sheerin
International Officer
Jean-Marie Cullen
Development Education Co-ordinator
Johnny Sheehan
Development Education Project Officer
Senan Gardiner®
Development Education Training Officer
Alan Hayes
Intercultural Project Officer
Anne Walsh
Intercultural Outreach Worker
Elaine Mahon
Dáil na nÓg Project Co-ordinator
Meadhbh Hand
Dáil na nÓg Project Officer
Aurica Cozneac
Webmaster
Daniel Dunne
Administration Managers (Jobshare)
Lisa Hyland & Elaine Lowry
Administration Officers
Rosie Boyle, Geraldine Mahon
Office Maintenance
Florence Lynch

* Left during 2008  ** Joined in 2009  ® Maternity leave cover

5 On maternity leave from Sep 09  ® Acting Vice President
Representation

- Active Citizenship Steering Group
- BBC+
- Bord Oiliúint Sléibhe – (Mountain Leader Training)
- Centre for Applied Social Studies (NUI Maynooth) – Advisory Committee
- Chile Protection Working Group
- Comhar (National Sustainable Development Partnership)
- Conversation on Democracy
- Council of Members
- Crisis Pregnancy Agency Delay Steering Group
- Dáil na nÓg – Steering Committee
- Development Plan Review Sub-Committee
- Dóchas Development Education Group
- End Child Poverty Coalition Steering Committee
- European Economic & Social Committee (EESC, through CVP)
- European Youth Forum
- FÁS
- Five Nations Alliance
- Gaisce (President’s Award)
- Global Campaign on Education (Steering Committee)
- Irish Coalition of the Global Campaign for Education
- Irish Development Education Association National Council
- Léargas
  - Board
  - Youth Work Service Advisory Committee
  - Grants Committee
- National Heart Health Alliance
- National Assessment Committee for the Young People’s Facilities and Services Fund
- National Children’s Advisory Council
- National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism
- National Economic and Social Committee (NESC)
- National Economic and Social Forum (NESC)
- National Education Welfare Board
- National Forum on Europe
- National Mental Health Awareness Campaign at NOSP
- National Office for Suicide Prevention (Advisory Group)
- National Youth Work Advisory Committee
- NcompasS Grants Committee (Léargas)
- NESF Project team on Child Literacy and Social Inclusion
- New Task Group: Impact Indicators
- New Working Group: Equality & Interculturalism
- North/South Education & Training Standards Committee (NSETS)
- Office of Tobacco Control
- Pobal
- Public Health Alliance
- QSF Working Group
- Tobacco Control Alliance
- Towards 2016 Steering Group
- Volunteering Ireland
- Voter Education Sub-Group
- Wheel Board
- Working Group on Human Rights
- Youth Work Act Implementation & Monitoring Sub-Committee
In 2009 the NYCI research, policy and advocacy team continued to roll out the key policy priorities contained in the NYCI’s Strategic Plan. Our advocacy work centred on a number of key issues such as; youth work funding, protecting young people from alcohol related harm, the Vote at 16 campaign and reducing barriers to part time third level education for young people. In June 2009 we also published the findings of a national survey on young people entitled “The Truth About Youth.” This study addresses the views and opinions of 1,020 young people aged between 18 and 25 on a number of important issues.

We have sought to progress our advocacy agenda through engagement with the political and public administrative system, social partnership and through the media. This year also saw the establishment of the new Policy & Advocacy Committee chaired by NYCI Board member and Vice President, Ms. Karen Hannify. This committee comprises of representatives from both a youth policy and practice background from a variety of member organisations and has met on a number of occasions during the year and makes a significant contribution to our work.
Social Partnership

Throughout 2009, NYCI continued to engage in social partnership as part of the Community and Voluntary Pillar. Early in 2009 we were involved in a series of intense talks as part of a review of the 10 year social partnership agreement. We took this opportunity to call for the implementation of the commitments in the agreement of importance to NYCI and the youth sector. Unfortunately, the Government and Social Partners were not able to reach an agreement on a revised agreement at that time. As the economy began to wane further in mid 2009, we worked closely with our colleagues in the Community & Voluntary Pillar to ensure that the needs of children and young people and the most marginalised in society were highlighted in meetings with the Department of the Taoiseach, through press events and submissions.

Supplementary Budget 2009 & Budget 2010

The policy team published a response to the supplementary Budget in April 2009. In particular we expressed concern about the halving of Jobseeker’s Allowance for young people aged 18 and 19 years. In October 2009 we published our 2010 Pre-Budget Submission entitled “Threatening Our Future” which acknowledges the serious situation which has arisen in relation to the deficit in the public exchequer. The document highlights our concerns about the impact of the recession on youth work funding and services.

In the submission we call on the Government to protect and support youth work, remove barriers to part time education, maintain unemployment supports for young people and invest in mental health programmes and measures. In addition, we have made a number of submissions and contributions to policy reviews and proposed legislation throughout 2009. Through our advocacy work we have raised and highlighted a number of issues through press releases and interviews with local and national print and broadcast media which resulted in significant coverage for our campaign issues. NYCI also published reviews of the McCarthy report and the Revised Programme for Government during the year.
**Active Citizenship and Participation**

**Vote at 16 Campaign**

NYCI launched its “A New Age in Voting” campaign in January outside the Houses of the Oireachtas in Dublin to reduce the voting age and allow young people aged 16 and 17 to vote. The campaign attracted significant political and media support and attention. Members of the advisory group also made a presentation to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in March. In particular we were calling for young people to be given the right to vote in the local and European elections in June 2009.

While this did not happen we welcomed the decision of the Government to include a commitment in the revised Programme for Government requiring the Electoral Commission to examine this issue and report within a year. NYCI also held an international seminar funded by the Youth in Action programme in October, where we had speakers from Denmark, the UK, Austria, representatives of the European Parliament and European Youth Forum.

**Taskforce on Active Citizenship**

NYCI continued to participate in the work of the steering group of the Taskforce on Active Citizenship which was appointed in late 2008. This group was established to oversee progress of the recommendations of the report. To date progress has been slow, however we will continue to press for the roll out of measures to support and promote active citizenship among young people.

**Arts**

**Youth Arts Position Paper**

The position paper was presented to NYCI’s board on Saturday, 13th June 2009. It was developed by Anne O’Gorman and James Doorley, and informed by inputs from The Arts Advisory Group and The Young People, Children and Education Team of The Arts Council.

**Child Protection**

**Garda Vetting**

In 2009 the Child Protection Programme continued to support the introduction of mandatory vetting of personnel, paid and unpaid, who seek to work with children and vulnerable adults in Ireland. We believe that progress in this regard would remove the discretionary option that some organisations, agencies and individuals exercise at present during their recruitment procedures.

NYCI also continues to support the enactment of legislation that would facilitate the availability of ‘soft’ information as part of an expanded vetting service. Such information is currently available in Northern Ireland and in Great Britain. The availability of ‘soft’ information would apply to those that seek to work with children and vulnerable adults some of whom may not have been prosecuted in relation to an offence against a child or children but who may, in the view of An Garda Síochána, pose a danger or a threat to children.

**Child Abuse**

A submission was made in response to the Recommendations of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse Report in order to assist with the implementation plan of the Ryan Report. We welcomed the report and the efforts to implement the recommendations and also outlined our concerns and priorities in relation to the safeguarding of children and young people in the future.
Communications

2009 was a very successful year for the communications section in NYCI. The main issues highlighted in the media this year were youth work funding, the Vote at 16 campaign, alcohol and young people along with youth issues relating to “The Truth About Youth” research.

Up to November 2009 we had released 28 press releases to all forms of local and national media. As a result we received 222 mentions across print, broadcast and TV media highlighting a range of issues, an impressive increase of over 50% on 2008.

The Vote at 16 campaign launched on January 27th outside the Dáil received a huge amount of media coverage and has enabled NYCI to be a leader on this issue in Ireland. This campaign will continue to be on our communications agenda and in co-operation with other areas in NYCI, will work throughout 2010 and beyond to promote and progress the issue.

The two research reports launched in June entitled “The Truth About Youth” And “Get ‘em Young: Mapping Young People’s Exposure to Alcohol Advertising in Ireland” received substantial media attention. The reports were featured on RTE news, national and local radio stations across Ireland along with the majority of local and national print.

The monthly e-zine Clár na nÓg was reviewed this year and is now distributed every two months, covering a range of issues that are specific to those working in the youth sector. The promotion of Clár na nÓg will be a focus of the communication department in 2010.

Websites

This year the webmaster managed the development of a new integrated contacts database for NYCI, which handles group mailing, both hard copy and email. The new system makes it possible for NYCI to be more targeted in communicating internally and externally along with efficiently meet its data protection compliance responsibilities.

Following a review of NYCI’s websites cost savings were made in domain registration and hosting. This resulted in a number of our domains being transferred to direct registration with the Irish Domain Registry as charity domains, or with resellers participating in the Charity Domain Scheme. Some hosting accounts have been renegotiated or transferred to more competitive suppliers.

NYCI sites have succeeded in increasing their importance in the eyes of Google; according to its page-rank system www.youth.ie is now rated at a score of 6 out of 10.

The arts website www.youtharts.ie was re-launched in April 2009, while www.childprotection.ie and www.youthhealth.ie are being redeveloped, with relaunches planned in winter 2009. In addition www.youthdeved.ie was also rebranded.

The webmaster has been promoting best accessibility practise in the production of PDF materials for online use, where possible preparing documents which are compatible with screen-reading technologies.

In addition NYCI has started to make use of social networking as an advocacy tool, in particular using it for the Vote at 16 campaign, Development Aid campaign and event promotion. A twitter account has also been registered which integrates with our new mailing list manager, which we hope to develop as a campaigning and networking tool.
Dáil na nÓg

Dáil na nÓg is the annual national parliament for young people aged 12-18 years and gives young people the opportunity to discuss issues of concern to them and to influence public policy. Delegates are elected to Dáil na nÓg through their local Comhairle na nÓg (Youth Council run by a local authority). The Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (OMCYA) is responsible for, and funds, Dáil na nÓg. The National Youth Council of Ireland in partnership with Foróige and Youth Work Ireland (YWI) holds the contract to organise Dáil na nÓg on behalf of, and in co-operation with, the OMCYA.

The Event

Dáil na nÓg 2009 took place on February 20th in Croke Park and was attended by over 200 delegates. It was officially opened by the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Barry Andrews, T.D., and was chaired by Daniel Stenson (Dáil na nÓg Council 2008, Leitrim Comhairle na nÓg) and Dara Dunne-Lambe (Leitrim Comhairle na nÓg). Members of the outgoing Dáil na nÓg Council assisted as volunteers at the event.

Topics discussed -

The topics for discussion were chosen by a popular vote by the 34 Comhairle na nÓg in the previous year. Physical Health and Mental Health for Young People were the topics for Dáil na nÓg 2009. Delegates had the opportunity to discuss the themes in small groups of up to 12 young people. The discussions were assisted by volunteer facilitators.

From these discussions the groups of young people developed statements which were voted on by all delegates later in the day. The statements were then prioritised by vote to form the basis of the work of the Dáil na nÓg Council 2009.

The 3 statements voted as most important by the delegates were:

Physical Health

1) Sexual health: Cervical cancer vaccine to be made available free of charge for all 12-18 year olds.
2) Sexual health: All young people should have access to sex education that is appropriate to individual needs, comprehensive and varied in delivery.
3) Exercise and sport: PE should be prioritised and properly funded in and out of school because health and fitness are as important as education.

Mental Health (there were three statements in the joint-third most important position).

1) Mental health support services for young people: The Government needs to implement a structured SPHE (Social Personal and Health Education) course for Senior Cycle students, incorporating positive mental health awareness and develop an online support service.
2) Mental health support services for young people: Mandatory mental health awareness workshops in all schools to raise awareness about symptoms, supports and effects of mental health issues.
3) Suicide: Nationwide awareness campaign that would promote positive mental health and decrease the stigma, which would reduce the number of suicides in young people.
3) Bullying: Teachers must attend regular bullying in-service days given by mental health professionals.
3) Stress: Níos mo aiseanna agus spas, níos lú gearradh siar níos lú strus. (More facilities and space, less cutbacks, less stress).

Before the voting session Delegates participated in a lively Q&A session with a panel of experts on the two topics. The session was chaired by Eddie D’Arcy. The panel included:

- Mr. Barry Andrews, TD, Minister for Children and Youth Affairs
- Mr. Geoff Day – Chief Executive of the National Office for Suicide Prevention
Dáil na nÓg Council 2009

Dáil na nÓg is not just a one-day event. The recommendations made by Delegates at Dáil na nÓg are followed up on by the Dáil na nÓg Council. The Council is made up of 34 Dáil na nÓg representatives who are elected to represent their own Comhairle na nÓg. The Council are supported by four young people who were members of the previous year’s Council. The group meet once a month and are divided into two working groups to work on the two topics of Physical Health and Mental Health for Young People. The Council’s term of office is one year – until the following year’s Dáil na nÓg takes place. During their term of office the Council will meet a number of key policy-makers and present their findings to relevant Oireachtas Committees.

Dáil na nÓg Steering Committee

Young people are consulted during the planning of each Dáil na nÓg. Members of the Dáil na nÓg Council are elected to a Steering Committee to oversee aspects of planning the event. Council members were also involved in interviewing and recruiting Facilitators for the discussion groups at Dáil na nÓg 2009. This process will be repeated for Dáil na nÓg 2010.

Dáil na nÓg 2010

Dáil na nÓg 2010 will be held on Friday 5th March in Croke Park Stadium. Copies of the Dáil na nÓg Delegate Report 2009 are available from the NYCI office or can be downloaded from the Dáil na nÓg website. Further information on Dáil na nÓg can be found on the website www.dailnanog.ie.

Independent Evaluation

Each Dáil na nÓg event and Dáil na nÓg Council meeting is assessed by an independent evaluator to ensure that young people feel that their participation has been meaningful and to help improve the event in subsequent years. The evaluation of the Dáil na nÓg event is published in the Delegate Report. Evaluation of the Council meetings is used in planning later meetings. Dáil na nÓg 2009 received a very favourable evaluation with 88% of Delegates who completed the evaluation form stating that they felt they had been listened to at Dáil na nÓg. The same proportion of young people also felt that things would be better for young people in future because of Dáil na nÓg.
**Education**

Throughout the year we continued to campaign for measures to address the high level of early school leaving in Ireland of up to 18%. In April 2009 we met with the Department of Education & Science along with our Community and Voluntary Pillar colleagues to highlight our concerns around the cuts in education and call for the implementation of commitments outlined in the Programme for Government and “Towards 2016”.

We contributed to the development of the new Strategic Plan for the National Education and Welfare Service and continued to press for additional funding for the work of the NEWB through social partnership. NYCI was also represented on the National Economic and Social Forum’s Special Project Team on Child Literacy & Social Inclusion by the Senior Research & Policy Officer in NYCI, Ms. Marie-Claire McAleer (NYCI’s representative on the NESF).

The aim of this NESF Project was to identify best practice in the implementation of child literacy and social inclusion, as outlined in *Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS)* as well as identifying challenges to effective implementation in and outside of schools, particularly in the home and the local community. The project adopted a case study approach, grounding the work of the project team in examples of policy delivery. The project was chaired by Professor Áine Hyland and concluded its work in June with the report being published in November 2009.

**Part-Time Fees**

For the last number of years NYCI has been campaigning for the abolition of part-time fees. We raised this issue when we launched our national survey in June. In particular we called for the implementation of the actions promised in “Towards 2016” which committed the Government to the “establishment of a fund to abolish part-time fees for students in employment attending public institutions who have never previously pursued third level education.” Such support together with incentives for colleges to offer more flexible and diverse course structures, will enable more people with work or family commitments to avail of opportunities at third level.” We are disappointed that no progress was made on this commitment in 2009.

**Equality**

**Children’s Rights**

We continue to call on the Government to implement their commitment to hold a referendum to enhance the rights of children in the Constitution which has been promised for a number of years. We welcome the commitment in the revised Programme for Government to hold a referendum but are disappointed that no date has been set.

**Global Justice**

**One World Week**

This year the central action for One World Week was “Are you Cut-Out for Justice?” It builds on the theme from this year’s education pack “Just Us or Justice” and explores what justice means to young people in Ireland and around the world. A national showcase of participating groups took place on Saturday, November 21st in the Irish Aid Centre, Dublin.

**Stop Climate Chaos**

In 2009 NYCI was represented on the steering group of Stop Climate Chaos, a coalition of Irish development, environmental and youth organisations. The coalition calls on political parties to ensure that Ireland does its fair share to prevent runaway climate change. It aims to mobilise public support throughout Ireland to drive much-needed political action to meet this critical global challenge. A Day of Action was held in June 2009 to highlight the need for urgent action on climate change.
Group of young people at Dáil na nÓg 2009
**Health**

**Advisory Committee**

The development of this Committee was deferred in 2009 pending the recruitment of youth health programme staff. The Advisory Committee will be established in 2010.

**Alcohol**

Alcohol misuse continues to be an issue of great concern for youth organisations. We remain committed to the full implementation of the recommendations of the Strategic Taskforce on Alcohol. The independent evidence confirms that the pervasive marketing and advertising of alcohol increases the frequency and volume of alcohol consumed by young people under 18. NYCI has been campaigning for the existing “voluntary code” to be replaced with an independently developed and monitored statutory code.

In June 2009 we published our own research entitled “Get ‘em Young – Mapping the exposure of young people in Ireland to alcohol marketing” which recorded the experience of 16 young people. It found that they were exposed to high levels of alcohol marketing and advertising across a wide range of media and recommended the development of rigorous and effective codes underpinned by legislation. We will continue to raise this issue with Government and through our participation on the advisory group to the Alcohol Marketing Communications Monitoring Body.

NYCI participated in the Working Group on Sport Sponsorship by the Alcohol Industry which met three times this year. The working group was requested to make recommendations to Government concerning the commitment to phase out alcohol sponsorship and marketing of sports events. We welcomed the decision to include alcohol misuse as part of the National Drugs strategy. In October, NYCI also supported legislative proposals from Government to reduce the blood alcohol limit for all drivers from 80mg to 50mg which are currently under discussion.

**Health Position Paper**

During 2009 NYCI began the development of a comprehensive Health Position Paper which will set out the key aims and objectives of our work in this area for the coming 5 years.

**Medical Cards**

Health inequality continues to permeate Irish society and affect the lives of young people. For the last number of years we have highlighted the issue of medical cards for young people noting that many families were reluctant to take their children to the doctor for financial reasons, which is unacceptable and detrimental to the health of our most vulnerable citizens. In the Programme for Government there was a commitment to increase the income threshold limit for families with children below 6 years of age. We are disappointed that there has been no progress on this issue in 2009.

**Mental Health**

We used our participation in social partnership and the pre-budget meeting with the Minister for Finance to highlight and encourage Government to maintain funding to support the implementation of the Reach Out Strategy on Suicide Prevention. We welcomed the allocation of €1m in Budget 2009 to support the work of the National Office for Suicide Prevention, in particular the allocation to support the roll out of the “Your Mental Health” campaign.

In 2009 we raised concerns about the long waiting lists for assessments, the lack of child and young person friendly services and the lack of any service for 17-18 year olds. We had proposed in our 2010 Pre-Budget submission that an additional €0.5m should be provided to the NOSP to assist them to continue the roll out important yet inexpensive programmes such as the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST).
Interculturalism

Intercultural Strategy for Youth Work

The development of a report and recommendations for an Intercultural Strategy for Youth Work was supported by Youth Affairs at the Department of Education and Science, the National Action Plan Against Racism and by a steering committee with representatives from the youth work sector, Government and NGOs. It builds on commitments in the National Action Plan Against Racism, the National Youth Work Development Plan 2003-2007 and the existing work of national and local youth work organisations. The primary focus of our advocacy work in this regard was to ensure funding was provided for the implementation of the strategy in the coming years.

International

European Youth Policy

2009 was an important year for European Youth Policy, after a consultation with young people throughout Europe the EU Commission developed a new strategy for European Youth Policy. Entitled "Youth - Investing and Empowering", the new strategy aims to create more opportunities for youth in education and employment; to improve access and full participation of all young people in society; and to foster solidarity between youth and society.

NYCI organised a national consultation funded by Léargas with young people in September 2009 on the new EU strategy to facilitate young people and policy makers to discuss the Commission’s proposals prior to their formal adoption. The results of this consultation were fed back at a European level by NYCI representatives to the EU Presidency Youth Event in Sweden. We will continue to lobby at a national level for the successful implementation of the adopted strategy for youth policy.

European Youth Forum

We also actively contributed to the work of the European Youth Forum (EYF); lobbying at a national level for the successful campaign to designate 2011 the EU Year of Volunteering; participating in the EYF delegation to the COP15 United Nations Climate Change Conference; and nominating a NYCI member to the Expert Group on the European Vote@16 campaign.

Green Paper on Learning Mobility

NYCI is contributing to the consultation on the Green Paper on Learning Mobility of Young People at a national and European level.

Youth in Action Survey

A survey of member organisation’s use of the Youth in Action programme was carried out to inform the interim evaluation of the programme which will take place in 2010. This is an opportunity for member organisations to influence possible changes to the European funding programme.
**Policy**

**Youth Arts**

Following extensive consultation with member organisations and other stakeholders, NYCI developed a new position paper on youth arts. The paper was adopted by the Board of NYCI in June 2009. It sets out the key aims and objectives of our work in this area in the coming years.

**Youth Health**

The Youth Health Programme continued to be active in participating in the development of national and regional youth health policy during 2009, particularly in the areas of mental health, suicide prevention and sexual health. Staff members actively participated in a number of conferences, seminars and training events throughout the year. Work also started on the development of a Health Position Paper for NYCI that would guide its work on youth health.

**Publications**

In 2009 a number of publications were produced and disseminated by NYCI. A ‘Report on Consultations for Intercultural Strategy for Youth Work’ was published which offers youth organisations direct access to the voices of young people, parents and youth workers and a clearer understanding of how they can meet the needs of young people from minority ethnic backgrounds. In addition a brochure for intercultural youth work was developed and is available in Arabic, Chinese, French, Irish, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian and Russian.

The Development Education programme produced ‘Just Us or Justice: A youth work resource exploring justice in the world’ in September 2009. This resource examines what justice means to young people, highlights justice issues for young people around the world and suggests ideas for justice actions. A poster was also published to use alongside the pack.

Following the success of the “Let’s Beat Bullying” resource the Health and Child Protection Programmes, produced an extra 1,000 copies of the resource.

In addition two research publications were successfully launched in June entitled “The Truth About Youth” and “Get ‘em Young: Mapping Young People’s Exposure to Alcohol Advertising in Ireland” (for further information visit the research section).

All publications are available by request or to download at www.youth.ie.

“The Truth About Youth” & “Get ‘em Young” publications.
**Research**

**Quantitative Research**

During 2008/2009 NYCI conducted Quantitative research on a number of key policy issues facing young people in the 18 – 25 age cohort living in Ireland. The results of the survey were analysed and resulted in the publication of a research report entitled ‘The Truth About Youth’.

The report launched in June by actress Rachel Kavanagh, was written by Marie-Claire McAleer, Anna Cunniffe and James Doorley and provides a timely study identifying a number of clear indicators of the concerns, challenges and issues facing young people at the present time. It will contribute to our policy and advocacy agenda now and going forward.

**Qualitative Research**

During 2008 NYCI also commissioned a broad range of qualitative research studies on issues of relevance to the organisation. Qualitative studies were undertaken in the areas of Youth Arts, Development Education and Health.

A study entitled “Attitudes of Young People and Youth Workers to Development and Global Justice Issues and their Implications for Youth Work Practice” was completed. This report provides the results of a research project exploring the attitudes of young people and adults in youth work towards development and global justice issues.

Also in 2008/2009 a qualitative research study was conducted by NYCI. The research report entitled “Get ‘em Young: Mapping young people’s exposure to alcohol marketing in Ireland” was launched on June 9th, 2009. The research is the first of its kind in Ireland as it involves young people recording their experience of alcohol advertising and marketing in their own surroundings.

The research shows the extent to which young people are subjected to alcohol marketing from an array of media channels in Ireland and demonstrates that current policies are not working to protect them from pervasive advertising and marketing of alcohol.

**Social Inclusion**

**Child Poverty**

NYCI continues to play an active role in the End Child Poverty Coalition (ECPC). The ECPC is a partnership of seven national non-governmental organisations working together to end child poverty in Ireland. The organisations are: Barnardos, Children’s Rights Alliance, Focus Ireland, National Youth Council of Ireland, OPEN, Pavee Point & Society of St. Vincent De Paul.

2009 has been a productive year for the coalition. During the year we collaborated with the other members of the ECPC in relation to a range of social policy issues, particularly in relation to child income support. We also presented to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Social and Family Affairs, and produced a pre-budget submission on our key policy priorities and hosted a debate attended by all parties prior to European and local elections on the issue of child poverty which was chaired by RTE Newscaster Ms. Eileen Dunne. NYCI also facilitated a debate on child poverty in the Seanad in February.

**Graduated Driving Licensing System**

NYCI made a submission to the Road Safety Authority consultation document on the Graduated Driving License System in March 2009. While we welcomed some proposals, we also raised concerns about others such as a curfew on all young drivers between 10pm and 6am being unworkable and disproportionate. We welcome the fact that the RSA appear to have taken many of our observations on board.
**Private Rental Sector**

We have focused primarily on the issue of improving standards and enforcement of standards in the private rental sector and additional rent relief for tenants for the last number of years. In that context we welcomed the adoption of improved standards for the private rented sector in early 2009.

**Youth Unemployment**

During this year, Ireland experienced a marked deterioration in the labour market with a significant increase of 173% in youth unemployment since 2007. NYCI has been highlighting this issue and calling for concerted action to be taken to assist young people into education, training and employment. We plan to issue a policy document on this issue in early 2010.

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**Youth Work**

**Funding Campaign**

2009 has been a difficult year for many organisations and sectors and the youth sector was no different. The large cut of 8% in the youth service budget line in Budget 2009 impacted significantly on organisations. We know that all organisations have worked very hard to minimise the impact of these cuts on young people participating in their activities and services by trimming programme costs to the bare minimum. However despite their best efforts some services, supports and programmes for young people had to be curtailed or abandoned. The cut in the Youth Affairs budget line has been compounded by the cuts in funding to the sector from other sources such as the Young People’s Facilities and Services Funds, Local Authority Community Grants, HSE Funding, Youth Justice and the Local Drugs Taskforce Funding.

Throughout 2009 we have consistently highlighted the value of youth work and the need for continued and consistent funding demands on organisations has increased as young people and their families are looking for positive, low cost opportunities. NYCI was pleased that our lobbying activities resulted in no further cuts to youth work funding in the supplementary Budget in April 2009.

We met with the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Barry Andrews T.D. and his officials throughout the year to raise our concerns about funding cuts; we also highlighted the impact of cutbacks on our work through social partnership. In addition the issue of funding for youth work was also raised in our pre-budget meeting with Brian Lenihan T.D., Minister for Finance. NYCI raises the issue of funding for youth work with politicians and policy makers at every opportunity.
NYCI continued with the implementation of its Strategic Plan 2008-2012. Opportunities were identified to ensure that there was better integration and co-operation, between the practice development and policy work areas.

Internal working groups established in 2008 looking at strategic areas such as training and practice co-ordination continued. The practice team met quarterly during the year and this became a forum to reflect on individual practice during the year and focus on the learning from the process of working together. The training team, once again supported the development of the training brochure for 2010 and the ongoing support of the training delivery during this year.

Key successes were the engagement with the International programme, particularly in relation to the development of a new European Youth Policy, and participating in the development of position papers on Youth Arts, Youth Health and Child Protection that ensured that policy papers were informed by a practice development perspective.

A further success in 2009 was the integration of Interculturalism into the work of NYCI. Building on the success of the conference in November 2008, the programme staff developed support resources and through outreach work, delivered training across Ireland raising awareness of Intercultural issues. The diversity proofing tool-kit, developed during 2009 will be an invaluable support tool to organisations.

This work will also inform NYCI’s work over the remaining years of the Strategic Plan, particularly in the areas of participation, extending provision and volunteering. The base line data identified during 2009 will inform planning for 2010 and the setting of key objectives and actions in these areas.

Finally, 2009 saw the continuation of strategic partnerships with the Youth Affairs Unit the HSE, the Arts Council, Irish Aid and the OMCYA in delivering national programmes and also with other agencies such as the Crisis Pregnancy Agency, The Irish Heart Foundation, Trócaire and others in delivering specific project work.
Training

NYCI provides comprehensive training through its integrated training brochure on a national, regional and local basis.

Work was also carried out on the ongoing development of the integrated training brochure for NYCI for 2010 onwards. This will ensure that training in all areas of our work will reflect the needs of the youth sector and will be delivered in a collaborative and integrated way which will avoid unnecessary duplication and ensure the most effective use of resources. A review was also carried out in September/October by the staff resulting in the addition of some new training opportunities for next year.

Arts

Training was delivered in Creative Facilitation, Sound Engineering and Photography for youth workers. All three of these trainings were fully subscribed. Creative Facilitation was run in association with Artsplan UK; Sound Engineering with The Base, Ballyfermot; & Documenting Your Projects in association with The Gallery of Photography.

Our training calendar for next year is based on feedback from the sector around particular needs at this time, some of the existing training will be rolled out again and some new specially designed options will be added for 2010.

Child Protection Awareness Programme

The Child Protection Programme (CPP) continues to develop and deliver a wide range of training to the youth work sector throughout 2009. Increasing numbers of national youth organisations have adapted the Child Protection Awareness Programme as part of their internal training delivery for staff and volunteers. Additional trainers have been up skilled to deliver the course and are supported and monitored by the CPP. The success of this programme has been recognised at an international level through the work of the EU Commission sponsored Risk and Young Person Protection Committee.

Much of this initiative has been promoted by the CPP in close collaboration with Léargas – the Exchange Bureau. Work has been done in redesigning the Child Protection Awareness Programme as part of an international child protection and safety training module. The programme focuses on risk awareness and will create a greater understanding as to the welfare and safety needs for those participating and promoting youth exchanges at a European level. It has the potential to lead to a more common and co-ordinated approach to a most valued area of youth work and intercultural learning.

Designated Person Training

Another exciting development for the Child Protection Programme this year was the roll out of the ‘Designated Person Training’ which was developed and piloted with the assistance of a specially established working group. This new training programme is aimed at those in organisations who have responsibility for dealing with child protection issues.

Development Education

Development Education training was offered throughout the year, on demand training to individual youth organisations and accredited training. The training provides practitioners with the opportunity to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to deliver quality development education, inspiring the young people with whom they work to act for a more just and equal world. In 2009, training took place during the day and in the evening to accommodate both volunteers and staff of youth organisations and in a variety of regional locations in order to make the training as accessible as possible.

In partnership with YMCA, we successfully delivered a FETAC level 5 accredited course, “Global Justice in Youth Work”. The course was delivered twice in
2009. The course was also assessed during 2009 and met its targets. NYCI signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Liberties College to deliver the course to all first year students on the youth work certificate course. The course is being delivered from September 2009 – May 2010.

Health

One of the most popular courses for 2009 was “Challenging Encounters” – strategies for addressing difficult and problematic behaviour when working with young people and “Let’s Beat Bullying”. This year also saw the ongoing delivery of trainings such as “Let’s Leave it Till Later” - sexual health delay programme (which the Crisis Pregnancy Agency will fund to deliver in 2010); “Good Habits of Mind” – a mental health training; and “Sense and Sexuality” – a sexual health support training.

Intercultural

We developed 8 different training programmes over the year, delivering five of these twice as scheduled trainings. These varied from offering ‘Practical Supports for doing Policy Development’ and ‘Tackling Racism’ to ‘Intercultural Awareness’. In addition 19 requested trainings were delivered throughout the country. In total, in 2009 we have trained nearly 500 people.

We also contributed to training development in collaboration with a number of other bodies including YMCA’s new Yshare programme and the Global Justice in Youth Work Course.
Arts

Arts Advisory Group

A new Arts Advisory Group was established in 2009. The objective of the committee is to ensure that the youth arts programme continues to represent best practice and is relevant and useful to the youth work sector, and that it is informed by the experience and perspectives of a wide range of stakeholders from the youth arts world. The committee met in March 2009 and their first contribution was to the development of the NYCI’s Youth Arts Position Paper.

Current Membership:

Mike Kelly, Director, Young Irish Filmmakers, Kilkenny
Carmel O’Connor, Education Officer, Catholic Youth Care, Dublin
Dermot O’Brien, Youth Development Manager, Herbert Road Youth Centre, Bray Co Wicklow
Dr. Maurice Devlin, Senior Lecturer, Applied Social Studies, NUI Maynooth, Kildare
Mark O’Brien, Arts Development Manager, Axis Arts Centre, Ballymun, Dublin
Anisa Saleh, Youth Theatre Co-ordinator, 20 Stories High Youth Theatre, Manchester
Adam Wallace, Freelance Arts Consultant, Belfast
Alan Hayes, Development Education Trainer, NYCI, Dublin
Trevor Sweetman, Youth Officer, Sligo VEC
Philip Delamere, County Arts Officer, Roscommon County Council

Artist in Youth Work Residency Scheme

The scheme will roll out in 2010 on smaller funds than previous years, as is the experience of many awards and funding schemes in recent months. However, our agreement with our partner funders is that maintaining the infrastructure of the award through the current economic climate is of huge importance to the sector.

In last year’s scheme, a successful pilot initiative was offered, where all funded projects were invited to attend a workshop on evaluation and documentation processes in projects. This was intended to provide the participants with the opportunity to network and develop peer support, and facilitate the return to us of qualitative information on projects – enabling us to lobby for funds, identify trends and challenges and to build relationships between NYCI and the funded projects. We would like to expand this initiative next year as a way of adding value to the monetary award and offering in kind support.

Certificate in Youth Arts

A comprehensive review of the Certificate in Youth Arts was completed by Dare to Stretch Consulting in April 2009. Taking on board the findings, the criteria for application to the certificate were more focused and clarified and a new prospectus drawn up. The course began in October with 23 students (from youth work and youth arts backgrounds across Ireland) hoping to graduate next summer.

The assignments have also changed, there is now one comparative research piece on youth arts projects, one case study, one designed, delivered and evaluated project, and the creation of a box of stimulus materials replace the three essays, project and work placement. It will still be necessary for students to attend 80% of modules in order to graduate. Two deferral students from 07/08 with our support have now successfully completed the deferral requirements and subject to ratification by NUI Maynooth have both passed.

NYCI’s Digital Film Working Group

The use of film projects continues to gain popularity in youth work settings. Access to equipment gets increasingly easier and technology gets more and more user friendly. NYCI identified a gap in provision around information, ideas and support for youth workers who have access to equipment.
We have established a working group to inform the development of a resource designed to assist youth workers in engaging young people in digital filmmaking. The resource will provide best practice guidelines, techniques, ideas and starter exercises on particular aspects of the filmmaking process that are important to consider. In addition it will consider the ‘whole-life’ process from the initial ideas through to ways to promote the finished product.

Draft guidelines are now complete, and we will be seeking 3-5 youth groups to pilot these over the coming months to inform the final guidelines. The resource will be published in printed format, with a PDF available. We are also considering developing a web-space to complement the printed version with live and updated information. The project was steered by Emmet Sheerin (NYCI).

Child Protection

Garda Vetting

There has been a marked increase in the number of youth work organisations availing of vetting. This is reflected in the doubling of the membership of the NYCI Garda Vetting Consortium since 2008. The CPP administered approximately 1,400 vetting applications on behalf of its membership in 2009. This is a very welcome development and we will continue to offer support advice and information to organisations on good practice in relation to the recruitment vetting and selection of staff and volunteers.

Revision of the Child Protection Code of Good Practice

Following the review of the Child Protection Code of Good Practice in 2008, the code has been extensively rewritten and will be considered by the National Youth Work Advisory Committee, following which the revised code will be launched. This will be a very valuable resource for the sector and it emphasises the responsibilities we all have in protecting and safeguarding children and young people.

Participants at the “Documenting Your Projects” NYCI Youth Arts course
**Development Education**

**One World Week**

One World Week is a week of youth-led awareness raising, education and action that takes place throughout Ireland every November. During One World Week, young people learn about local and global justice issues and take action to bring about change. This year One World Week ran from 14th – 22nd November.

The theme of One World Week 2009 was young people and justice. Thirty training sessions were delivered throughout Ireland exploring the theme, use of the pack and how to get involved in OWW actions and activities. The trainings took place from mid-September to mid-November and participants received a free copy of the education resource.

**Zambia Exchange 2009**

Following a very successful exchange between youth workers from Zambia and Ireland in 2008, NYCI organised an exchange visit for youth workers from NYCI member organisations to Zambia in September/October 2009. Four youth workers and an NYCI representative visited youth organisations, development agencies and Ireland’s official aid programme to share experiences of youth work and learn about issues facing young people in Zambia.

The group ran a One World Week workshop for 40 young people on the theme of youth justice. Five youth workers from Zambia travelled to Ireland in November 2009. They travelled around the country to visit youth groups, sharing their experiences and bringing a Southern perspective to One World Week activities throughout Ireland. The exchange was organised with the support of 80:20 Educating and Acting for a Better World.

**Health**

**Health Quality Awards**

This year, ongoing support was provided to a number of organisations in the Health Quality Mark process. All of these organisations have achieved their awards after submitting evidence in the form of a portfolio and a site visit by NYCI and a Health Service Executive representative. Five organisations were re-monitored this year to ensure that they have maintained their standard of award; having achieved it three years previously. There are now 37 organisations taking part in the award across a range of youth organisations.

**Health & Arts**

As part of its new integrated ways of working, NYCI have identified an opportunity for collaboration between the Youth Health and the Youth Arts Programmes to develop a practice manual around promoting health through the arts. The whole issue of using creativity methodologies in other work areas has been a constant issue for NYCI and as such we are looking to use the in-house expertise of the Arts Programme to support this exploratory piece of work which will take place next year.

**Healthy Eating & Active Living Initiative**

The partnership initiative with the Irish Heart Foundation continued during 2009. A new resource is being developed that will cover areas such as culture, health education, policy and practice, healthy eating and active living and good practice. NYCI will develop a training programme to accompany the resource which will be rolled out from 2010.
Specialist Certificate in Youth Health Promotion

Given the success of the previous Specialist Certificate in Youth Health Promotion and the demand expressed for the course, NYCI have again commenced the delivery of a new course, which started in October 2009. As usual the course is being delivered in association with the National University of Ireland, Galway and is scheduled to complete in May 2010.

A total of 15 people are participating in the course, which NYCI hopes will continue to increase the expertise in youth health promotion within the sector. Depending on interest and capacity it is hoped to look at delivering the course on an annual basis from 2010. In addition a youth health promotion network was established for those who have completed the certificate. The first network meeting was held in November.

Spiritual Health

Consultations were carried out in the area of Spiritual Health during late 2007 and 2008 and completed a paper on spiritual health and youth work. During 2008 NYCI continued to build on the outcomes of the 2007 seminar and a working group was formed made up of youth organisations working in this area. This will be a key focus for the new staff team in 2010.
**Interculturalism**

**Development of Best Practice model**

The intercultural project identified 12 best practice steps that should be evident in intercultural youth work. To demonstrate how these work in practice, eight interviews have been conducted with youth work organisations around the country. These will be featured on the NYCI intercultural website as a resource for youth workers.

**Development of Diversity Toolkit**

The Diversity Toolkit is a self assessment tool that will allow youth workers both assess how their service is responding to issues of equality and inclusion and gives practical guidelines on how to improve their levels of inclusion of all marginalised young people. It will be a web based resource available at [www.youth.ie](http://www.youth.ie) and on request from NYCI.

**Outreach**

Our outreach programme took three strategic routes throughout 2009:

- **Mapping and Sharing of Good Practice**
  - 3 regional events were held to bring youth workers together to share and learn about intercultural youth work (85 youth workers attended).

- **Responding to phone and e-mail queries**
  - 120 recorded interventions were offered to youth organisations to help them engage with and include young people from cultural and minority ethnic backgrounds. These interventions included support and encouragement, advice on various topics and the provision of resources. Meetings were held with approximately 30 groups and outreach visits have taken place across the country.

- **Networking events designed to bring youth groups together with young people from minority ethnic backgrounds**
  - 92 people were brought together over three events with at least one new project resulting from each event.

*2009 winners of the Irish Youth Music Awards*
International

Throughout the year many young people and youth workers were nominated by NYCI to take part in youth work training and seminars at an international level. Irish young people got the opportunity in 2009 to learn, share best practice and meet other young people at various events in Ireland, Europe, and Africa. The participants discussed many issues affecting young people, such as European youth policy, youth work and global youth co-operation.

More youth organisations successfully applied for the Edger Otto Thedens grant to do international youth work and NYCI continues to promote and support youth organisations to add an international dimension to their youth work.

Three members of Scouting Ireland
Organisational Effectiveness

Governance and Management

Since the AGM in 2008 the Board has met seven times, including two residential meetings. As part of our commitment to ensure best practice in governance, the Board has been involved in a developmental process that examines their responsibilities regarding risk assessment for NYCI. In 2009 we commenced a skills audit of the Board and this work will continue in 2010.

Secure & Manage the Optimal Budget

In 2009 NYCI faced the same challenges as our member organisations of significant cuts to our funding. We embarked on a major review of all budget lines, paring costs to the bone. A freeze on recruitment to core funded posts, a freeze on increments and cost of living increases were required to enable the organisation to operate within its reduced means. Work is continuing on the development of a financial procedure manual, and we continue to focus on developing high levels of financial awareness at both staff and Board level. As the year ends we are facing the same financial uncertainty as the rest of the sector.

Implement & Monitor Business Plans

The integrated planning model begun in 2008 was continued in 2009. A recent review carried out with senior staff identified a high level of satisfaction with the model. There is growing evidence of better joined up thinking and working which the model was designed to achieve. The operational plans will continue to be out-come focused and to include objectives around improving internal integration to further develop the more collaborative working model we want to achieve. The Senior Management Team continues to report progress against the Corporate Implementation Plan to the Board on a quarterly basis.

Membership

NYCI’s members are our strength. They are the source of our authority and they inform every aspect of how we work. In line with our current strategic plan, a membership criteria review group of the Board was established in mid 2009 to examine if the current membership criteria reflected the diversity and complexity of the youth sector. This work will continue in 2010. A discussion document outlining proposals for a change to the process of becoming a member of NYCI and a re-organisation of the Electoral Colleges was accepted by the Board in November 2009 for consideration by the AGM.

The Specialist Organisations network under the chairmanship of James O’Leary, CEO of the National Association of Travellers Centre's, met quarterly through 2009. The network commissioned research on the distinctiveness and contribution of specialist youth organisations within the youth sector in Ireland. The research is currently being finalised and will be disseminated in early 2010.
The Policy and Advocacy Committee continued to meet regularly throughout 2009 and is reported on elsewhere in this report.

Culture & Work Practices

2009 saw changes in the staff team as two staff moved on to pastures new and a number of existing vacancies at programme level were filled. During 2009 there has been increased emphasis on the role of all NYCI staff as ambassadors for the organisation.

The primary focus of staff has been on continuing to meet the needs of our member organisations. We offered a wide range of supports, events, training and networking opportunities to our members. We continued to develop the single reporting system across the organisation. 2009 saw budgets for staff training and development drastically reduced; despite this we continued to meet our existing commitments to staff members. We have continued our practice of professional supervision for all staff.

Management Information Systems

The major database project commenced in late 2008 was completed in 2009. The purpose of the project was to improve the effectiveness’ and efficiency of our communications with all our stakeholders. NYCI now has one corporate database replacing all of the individual databases held by each work area. In 2010 we will examine how we can use this resource to better effect in supporting our Customer Relationship Management Service.

Communications

The primary focus of the Communications function within NYCI continues to be supporting the advocacy work of the organisation. Alongside this is the important role of supporting our member organisations through the sharing of relevant information. We have commenced an internal review of the content, shape and format of the information services we offer. This review will continue in 2010 with a survey of members.

Corporate Identity

NYCI has continued to roll out the single corporate identity project across all aspects of the organisation. During 2009 the websites of Youth Arts, Development Education and Child Protection have been updated in line with the corporate identity. Work will commence in 2010 on the Youth Health website.
2008 was another busy year for the NYCI with activity increasing right across our range of programs.

Although activity increased, there was a slight decrease in the finances of the Council with both income and expenditure down on the previous year, income by some 6% to €2,292,752 and expenditure by 5% to €2,294,782. This trend is going to continue through 2009 as a result of various cuts in government expenditure advocated and implemented by the Department of Finance. The activity within the different work areas would also have been affected by the staff turnover in the year. The most significant increases were seen in research and intercultural strategy.

Overall, for 2008 we recorded a deficit of €2,030 compared to a surplus of €17,193 in the previous year. This represents less than 1% of our total income and is an indication of the very tight financial constraints in which the NYCI operates, an issue the Council shares with the entire youth sector. This situation is unlikely to improve in 2009 and so tight budgetary controls will be adopted to minimise any potential deficit for the year.

The small deficit this year is indicative of good financial management by the Council, balancing income and expenditure at a time of rapidly increasing activity is difficult, but essential. Resources do remain an issue, but our management of those resources has been thoroughly, professionally and efficiently handled.

Finally, the NYCI and its work could not exist without extensive funding from external sources. I would like to record the Board’s thanks for the continued support of our funders. We are facing difficult challenges in 2009 and beyond, but with the continued support of our funders and member organisations we will meet these challenges.

Kieran O’Dowd
Honorary Treasurer
**Income & Expenditure Account – Year Ended 31st December 2008**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Continuing Operation</td>
<td>2,292,752</td>
<td>2,437,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expenditure</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Continuing Operation</td>
<td>(2,294,782)</td>
<td>(2,420,507)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Deficit/Surplus for Year</strong></td>
<td>(2,030)</td>
<td>17,193</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are no other gains or losses other than those included in the income and expenditure account and thus a separate statement of total recognised gains and losses has not been prepared.

**Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2008**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fixed Assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tangible Assets</td>
<td>313,314</td>
<td>338,935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current Assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debtors</td>
<td>16,537</td>
<td>20,516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash at bank and in hand</td>
<td>748,668</td>
<td>725,195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</strong></td>
<td>(717,678)</td>
<td>(713,039)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Current Assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>360,841</td>
<td>371,607</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Assets less current liabilities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year</strong></td>
<td>(111,011)</td>
<td>(119,747)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Represented by:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accumulated Funds</td>
<td>171,361</td>
<td>173,391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revaluation reserve</td>
<td>78,469</td>
<td>78,469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Assets</strong></td>
<td>249,830</td>
<td>251,860</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These financial statements were approved by the board on the 17th September 2009.

These accounts have been extracted from the statutory financial statements of the National Youth Council of Ireland. The auditors KPMG expressed an unqualified audit opinion on these accounts.

A copy of these accounts will be filed with the Registrar of Companies.
Members

1. An Óige – The Irish Youth Hostel Association
2. BeLonG To
3. Boys Brigade
4. Catholic Guides of Ireland
5. Catholic Youth Care
6. Church of Ireland Youth Department
7. Club4U
8. Confederation of Peace Corps - Localise
9. Department of Youth and Children’s Work of the Methodist Church of Ireland
10. ECO-UNESCO
11. EIL Intercultural Learning
12. Exchange House
13. Feachtas
14. Foróige
15. Girls’ Brigade Ireland
16. Girls’ Friendly Society
17. HSE Community Games
18. Irish Congress of Trade Unions (Youth Committee)
19. Irish Girl Guides
20. Irish Red Cross Youth
21. Irish Second-Level Students Union (ISSU)
22. Junior Chamber Ireland
23. Labour Youth
24. Macra na Feirme
25. National Association of Travellers Centres
26. National Association for Youth Drama
27. National Committee for Diocesan Youth Directors
28. National Forum for Local Voluntary Youth Councils
29. No Name Clubs
30. Ógra Choráí
31. Ógra Fianna Fáil
32. Ógra Shinn Fein
33. Ógras
34. Order of Malta Cadets
35. Pavee Point Travellers Centre
36. Presbyterian Youth and Children’s Ministry
37. Scouting Ireland
38. Union of Students in Ireland
39. Voluntary Service International
40. Young Christian Workers Movement
41. Young Fine Gael
42. Young Irish Film Makers
43. Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA) Ireland
44. Youth Work Ireland

Affiliates

1. Amnesty International
2. Blakestown & Mountview Youth Initiative
3. Enable Ireland
4. Glencree Youth Group
5. IntroArt
6. Irish Family Planning Association
7. Irish Wheelchair Association
8. Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA) Ireland
9. Youth 2000

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