



Structured Dialogue Cycle 3 - Social Inclusion

National Implementation Project 2014/2015



On May 8th 2015 a group of young people presented to the National Forum on Guidance. Representing the National Implementation Project (NIP) of the NYCI and DCYA were Shane O'Sullivan, Annika Lipsius and Vanessa Mulhall. The presentation was the culmination of a six month process whereby young people from across Ireland considered the outcomes of the consultations from Cycle 3 of Structured Dialogue on the topic of Social Inclusion. After a number of meetings and facilitated workshops 'Guidance Counselling' emerged as an area that could have a key role during the important life transitions of young people and therefore its potential for having a significant positive impact on Social Inclusion became apparent to the group.

The group were invited to attend and present at the NCGE's National Forum on Guidance which is an annual gathering of practitioners from the field of Guidance within the Second level, Third level, Community and Vocational sectors.

By outlining the process and the rationale for ultimately choosing Guidance Counselling as their Topic they were able to illustrate how a diverse group of young people came to the conclusion that a positive and strategic improvement in the provision of Guidance Counselling across the sectors could have a very

significant impact on Social Inclusion. Combining research with real life stories while paying attention to the resonance of the possible positive impact, the group found themselves on a journey that they believed could promote real change for the better.

They believe in the idea that Guidance Counselling at its best begins in 1st year of Secondary School and offers support to students as they navigate their education pathways through second level, community, vocational or third level education. They see a distinction between guidance counselling for life and guidance counselling for careers. The NIP group fundamentally believe that a fully equipped and high quality Guidance Counselling model can have an impact on such ongoing challenges in society such as school dropout, college dropout, mis-informed choices for learning/training/studying, managing mental health, navigating adolescence etc.

If Guidance Counselling were to reach its potential we see a service that facilitates the empowerment and enabling of young people to reach their potential as well as a service that supports people at the times and in the moments when they need it most.

