



**Annual
Report
2019**

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Introduction

No 4 Youth Service was founded in the early 1980's in response to the needs of young people at that time. While the organisation has adapted to the needs of the community in the intervening years, it continues to remain true to its mission of: -

'Assisting Young People at Challenging Times'.

No 4 Youth Service aims to enhance the quality of young people's lives by providing an effective and holistic response to a wide variety of issues pertaining to young people aged 13 - 25 years.

Our Work

No 4 Youth Service provides a wide range of supports for young people, all of which are based on a youth work approach, ensuring that young people aid their own personal development.

The aim of **No 4 Youth Service** is to ensure that all of our programmes result in 'Better Outcomes' for young people in line with Ireland's National Policy for Children and Young People. It is important that young people can access support to help them to address the various issues they may be faced with, and critically it is essential that young people are supported to develop their own resilience to ensure that they can make positive choices for themselves as they go through life

We aim to improve the health and well-being of young people through implementing programmes and activities that have an emphasis on intervention and prevention in a range of areas including, homelessness, education, physical and mental health and employability.



"Persistence and resilience
only come from having
been given the chance to
work through difficult
times."

- Gever Tulley



Support available

Counselling

By engaging in the counselling process young people have the opportunity to gain self-respect, esteem, optimism and resilience. They have the potential to become full and healthy members of their community through better relationships with family, friends and colleagues.

Personal and Social Development

Using informal individual and group work, one to one support and youth focused activities, young people are given the opportunity to find a sense of their own self-worth, to become more self-confident and more self-reliant, and to overcome difficulties that they may encounter.

Information

Information and assistance to access information on a wide range of issues is provided to young people.

Employability Skills and Careers guidance

Careers guidance is offered, providing the opportunity for young people to explore and clarify their options, needs and interests. Young people are assisted to build their communication and presentation skills. Practical support with CV writing, interview skills and job/course applications was also available throughout 2019.

Homelessness Prevention

Young people (aged 18-25) are offered support, guidance and advocacy in relation to their housing needs. They are assisted to;

- Clarify their housing options
- Develop their personal and communication skills
- Source and view potential accommodation
- Apply for housing assistance payments as required
- Relocate and link up with supports in the local community
- Get acquainted with good home management practices

“They helped me get a place...with course, forms, work and info on things”

“I can express my personality more”

“I have met new people and I have somewhere I know I can go to relax, get advice and have fun.”

“...I know I won't be judged.”

“I'm more confident in meeting new people and I have grown as a person since coming to No. 4”

F.E.A.D

FEAD is a national food programme targeting those on the margins of society who are in need of essential food support. Monthly food deliveries of non-perishable goods are available to young people who find it difficult to manage living independently on a restricted budget.

Formal tuition

Support for young people who are excluded from mainstream school or require additional assistance to remain in school is available in the form of individual or small group classes with subjects including English, History, SPHE, Personal and Social Development and Maths. Support is also available for those in need of assistance with numeracy and literacy skills and cannot access more mainstream services. A personal and social development educational programme that focuses on developing the 'soft skills' of young people in a semi-classroom environment was evaluated in 2019 with a decision then made to make this part of ongoing service delivery.

Health

A range of practical supports are provided to ensure young people can attend to their basic health and hygiene needs to include shower and laundry facilities, access to toiletries and clean clothing and a daily nutritious meal.

2019

**No. 4 was accessed over 4,500 times by 424
Young People**

34 young people attended tuition

**90 young people engaged with careers
guidance and support around employability**

**133 FEAD packages to young people in
independent living were delivered**

86 young people attended counselling

1,419 meals were provided

Organisational Structure

No 4 Youth Service – Seirbhísi na nOg CLG is managed by a voluntary Board of Directors, with operational responsibility delegated to the Manager, Mary Mac Lynn.

- Marian Colohan (Chair)
- Carmel Brennan (Vice Chair)
- Pat Connolly (Secretary)
- Sheila Connell (Treasurer)
- Maureen Fleming
- Michael McCann
- Fr Des Foley
- John Kavanagh

Employees

1 Part-time Manager

1 Part-time Deputy Manager/Youth Worker

1 full-time Youth Worker

2 part-time Youth Workers

1 part-time Careers Guidance Counsellor

1 Part-time Teacher

1 part-time Community Employment Scheme participant (Youth Work)

3 counsellors were available to work for 18-21 contracted hours per week, one third of which were provided in a voluntary capacity.

Volunteers

2 volunteer tutors generously gave of their time to provide formal tuition in maths.

Training

The professional development of staff members always been a priority for **No 4 Youth Service**. Staff members have always taken part in training that enables them to develop their skills and work with young people to the highest standards.

Young People

(Names have been changed)

Rachel

Rachel first presented to the **'No.4 Youth Service'** when she was 23 years old. She had been in foster care at two different stages throughout her childhood. Whilst living in the family home she had a difficult relationship with one parent and suffered the bereavement of the other parent. Rachel left the family home at 16 years old and in the interim lived in a variety of accommodation.

Involvement

When Rachel presented to No.4 she was experiencing homelessness. She was often resistant to accepting support due to surviving by herself since she was 16 years. Over time she recognized that in order to progress out of the cycle of homelessness she was in, she needed to access the appropriate supports. She was assisted with registering for homeless services and was placed in private emergency accommodation, which provided her with the opportunity to save and explore educational options while having a warm, safe place to stay each night. Rachel came to understand that some form of supported accommodation would be beneficial for her in the medium term, and having successfully completed the interview process Rachel has now been living there for several months.

Rachel values all the supports available to her through the **'No.4 Youth Service'** including help to complete her medical card application, engagement with careers guidance and additional practical help such as meals, FEAD, printing and internet. Rachel said that it was the overall environment of **'No.4 Youth Service'** which led her to keep coming back, 'if you want to talk you can, talking to staff makes me feel better...', 'There are fun events and always something new and different happening...' Rachel spoke of the impact alcohol had on her life growing up and how if she was feeling stressed at home she would go to the pub to get some space. Rachel stated that 'it's nice that there is a place to come and socialize with people that's a drink free zone'.

Outcomes

Communication - Rachel feels better equipped in communicating how she is feeling since coming to No.4, 'I used to always do it on my own', 'I didn't want to put it on people to fix my problems'.

Relationships - Rachel spoke of the importance of maintaining positive relationships in her life. Rachel recalls finding it hard to remove herself from negative situations involving friends previously. Through the support of staff in **'No.4 Youth Service'** Rachel has begun to recognise her self-worth and has made steps to 'hangout with some less' and 'cut other people from my life'.

Planning - Rachel identified that in the past she could face big problems but struggled with small things. Rachel expressed that 'I now feel better when I'm doing the small things like going to the dentist, sorting my phone'.

Future

Rachel identified that the end of 2020 will bring about a lot of change for her. She will no longer be able to access the service due to turning 25 and that her time in supported accommodation will also end. She has identified a number of goals for her future:-

- Completing her course and then progressing on to an apprenticeship.
- Engaging in regular exercise to feel fitter and overall healthier.
- To secure some work while studying to assist financially.
- To find new accommodation to transition to.

Rachel spoke of the steps she has already taken towards her goals including saving up to buy a laptop to assist in her studies, handing out CV's for work, and trying some exercise classes in relation to her health.

Sarah

Sarah was 18 when she presented to '**No. 4 Youth Service**', Sarah was transitioning from foster care, and had just completed her Leaving Certificate and had been accepted on a course on study in a local college. A Social Worker who was working with Sarah at the time of her transitioning from foster care, introduced Sarah to the service.

Involvement

Sarah spoke of her reservations in coming to the '**No. 4 Youth Service**', "I wasn't expecting anything, I thought it would be useless', Sarah now feels that engagement with the service has helped her progress in ways she didn't think she could 'I would think I can't do that or that won't happen, 'when I come here I feel I'm seen and heard, I can ask for help'. Sarah presented to the service requiring help with securing housing - navigating the social welfare system, applying for a housing need assessment and seeking accommodation. Staff advocated and supported her through this.

Sarah engaged with careers guidance and made a decision to leave college to pursue a different course in another country where she has more family support. 'I mean you guys really helped me to make the decision, without the career guidance support I wouldn't have made the decision'.

Barriers

Sarah spoke of finding it difficult to access the service at times due to living in a rural area and being financially stressed. She spoke of the emotions she experienced before coming to the service 'I didn't want to have to tell my story again, I had not had a good experience with other services in the past, and I didn't feel heard'. Sarah spoke of how she felt when she first came to '**No.4 Youth Service**', 'I didn't think it would look as nice, I thought everything would be grey and white, I didn't expect it to be so homely'.

Staying Involved

Sarah feels that she was given the support to reach her full potential and gained her confidence back. Sarah spoke of having control in her own decision making whilst being supported by staff members. 'I never felt that I had to agree with suggestions that were made'

Sarah feels that her time with '**No.4 Youth Service**' has empowered her to help other people.

'I had a very positive experience in my foster placement, my foster mom really empowered me, and No.4 reminds me of being in my foster home'

Outcomes

Communication - Sarah feels that she can socialise better with her peers, and can speak up for herself.

Confidence – Sarah feels her confidence has grown a lot in the past year.

Planning – Sarah spoke about hating to have to plan. Now Sarah demonstrates this skill daily, through budgeting, noting deadlines, listing tasks to be completed. *Emotional Intelligence* – Sarah spoke about how her emotional intelligence has evolved- 'I have learned to control my emotions and balance myself'.

Looking to the future

Sarah is continuing to work towards her goal of moving country and starting a new course of study there. She also has a desire to teach English and wants to pursue this in the future. Sarah hasn't had much involvement in team work activities and would like to join a team sport when she moves, such as volley ball or rugby.

Finally, Sarah has a passion for piano playing and has not had the opportunity to practice this for a long time. Sarah has also made plans to pick this back up when she moves in the near future.

Sarah spoke of her sadness of not having access to '**No. 4 Youth Service**' in her life when she moves, Sarah is very thankful of the support she has received from the service.

