



Youth Work Ireland

Press Release
Saturday June 29th

Young LGBTQI+ people from rural Irish communities get a chance to shine at this year's Dublin Pride parade.

As part of this year's Dublin Pride parade, over 450 young people from Youth Work Ireland's LGBTQI+ youth groups across Ireland will gather in Dublin to celebrate and march in Dublin Pride under the '*Proud Spaces*' banner. The *Proud Spaces* model of LGBTQI+ youth work, developed by Youth Work Ireland and its 20-member youth services, verifies what needs to be provided to help young LGBTQI+ people growing up in rural Ireland to feel safe, included and equal in their communities.

Youth Work Ireland's members are the largest providers of LGBTQI+ youth work services in rural Ireland and provide safe and inclusive spaces for young LGBTQI+ people, who despite progress, continue to face isolation and exclusion in their communities. Through the consultative work on *Proud Spaces* young LGBTQI+ people have spoken about the struggles, challenges and discrimination they face, but also about the supports they get from being part of their youth group and now they want to use their voices and lived experiences to share with others, so every small town, village and farm in Ireland can become a proud space.

Youth Work Ireland's Pride breakfast event will be colourful, fun, life changing for some and most importantly, a safe and inclusive space for young people to gather and celebrate their identity in a safe and accepting environment. Special guests will visit throughout the event to show their allyship and solidarity with the LGBTQI+ community.

Speaking in advance of Dublin Pride, Dr Patrick Burke, CEO of Youth Work Ireland says:

"As part of Pride, we, in Youth Work Ireland are celebrating the role which youth work plays in accompanying LGBTQI+ young people to self-actualisation. By providing a whole range of services, activities, proud spaces and advocacy efforts, our Youth Work Ireland youth services throughout Ireland, help create a more inclusive society where all young people can flourish. This work is critical, ongoing and unfortunately still underfunded. The best way our government can celebrate Pride is to commit to providing significant increased funding for the youth work sector and we call on the Government to redouble their efforts so that every LGTBQI+ young person in the country has immediate access to supports and services."

Speaking in advance of Dublin Pride, Bea from Tipperary said

Being at my first ever Dublin Pride with my friends and incredible youth leaders brings me so much joy and allows me to both be myself and be proud of myself. Having come out to my friends and family 5 years ago, it feels incredible to finally be walking in my first Dublin Pride parade and I thank Youth Work Ireland for this opportunity!

ENDS

Notes to editors

- A panel of LGBTQ+ young people and CEO of Youth Work Ireland Dr Patrick Burke, are available for interview. To arrange an interview, please contact:
 - Eppy Mutetwa | 086 078 9352 / emutetwa@youthworkireland.ie
- Photos to accompany Press Release will be available via Marc O'Sullivan Photography on the day.

Youth Work Ireland is a youth led and rights-based organisation committed to equality and inclusion for all young people. Our 20 Member Youth Services deliver a wide range of innovative services, supports and programmes to thousands of young people each week through our unique Integrated Youth Services Model. Our services address issues and concerns that affect young LGBTQI+ people growing up in Ireland and this work is very much guided and framed by the principles and values of youth work practice. Through our dedicated and ally groups our services we provide young LGBTI+ people with safe, inclusive and welcoming spaces where they can hang out with their peers, relax, talk, listen to music and be themselves. All our programmes are supported by trained and professional youth work practitioners who support young LGBTI+ people in their journey to become their authentic self. www.youthworkireland.ie