



## Youth Work Ireland

Press Release

Youth Work Ireland

November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024

### **"Youth Work for All" campaign launched in Dublin - Post budget disappointment and anger in run up to election.**

Youth Work Ireland has launched its "Youth Work for All" campaign today in advance of the expected calling of the general election this week. The event will gather 200 youth workers, young people, volunteers and policy makers with the theme "Youth Work for All" a national campaign by Youth Work Ireland advocating for all young people to have access to youth services in their communities.

The event will highlight significant values of youth work for today's society;

- Youth work is an enabler of rights.
- Volunteers and voluntary services are core to youth work and need to be supported and funded.
- Policy and funding need to support an integrated and holistic approach to youth service provision in Ireland.
- Youth Work engages young people in a universal way – not determined by targeted or universal work.

Dr Niall Muldoon the Ombudsman for Children will be a headline speaker emphasising the connection between youth work and significant rights based commitments the Government has undertaken. He will be joined by key policy makers from the DCEDIY, Dept of Taoiseach, Tusla, Dept of Justice, ETBI

"We are asserting the right of every young person in the country regardless of location, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability and all the other equality grounds to be able to access youth supports and services in their community. The context in which we are now launching the campaign however has changed. For the first time, in the aftermath of a national budget I am profoundly struck by the reaction of youth people and the youth sector to what was for them and us, a lost opportunity. We have been contacted by so many young people, services and colleagues in the immediate aftermath of the budget there is now anger rather than disappointment at how the youth work sector is treated in Ireland." said Dr Patrick Burke, CEO of Youth Work Ireland

"This budget was widely recognised as having the potential to be the most generous in some time yet when it came to young people there was a failure to respond to the calls from those working at the frontline with young people to address their needs. While there were some increases in funding for youth work these completely failed to address the staffing crisis in voluntary youth services where the state's own actions have left youth workers in a disadvantaged position viz-a-vis other workers in similar areas.

Looking at broader issues of concern to youth people the Government studiously failed to deal with the consistent discrimination against young people on low pay represented by subminimum wage rates for young people working in Ireland, despite the findings by its own Low Pay Commission. It is wholly unacceptable that young people are paid less for precisely the same work as older people who they could even be working alongside in the same workplace." Dr Burke added

ENDS

Contact: Michael Mc Loughlin 087 6677499