



Youth Work Ireland

YOUTH WORK FOR ALL

**Connection,
Creativity &
Community**

Youth Work Ireland Week Activity Pack

www.youthworkireland.ie

Connection, Creativity & Community

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Youth Work Ireland Week 2025



Youth Work Ireland Week 2025 takes place from **Saturday 5th April to Saturday 12th April** and is a week for us to celebrate young people and promote youth work.



The **Connection, Creativity & Community** pack is aimed at young people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities with the activities created so they can be adapted to suit the ages and interests of different groups. The pack will facilitate creative spaces to support young people's understanding and recognition of the impact youth work has on their lives and empower them to articulate these impacts through a variety of creative and fun activities.


Youth Work for All in Youth Work Ireland



Youth Work for All in Youth Work Ireland is a call to action, to highlight the importance of inclusive, accessible, and effective youth services that engage young people, regardless of their background, identity, or circumstances. **Youth Work for All** underscores our commitment to working together towards a future where every young person has access to the opportunities, support, and guidance youth work services provide.

Youth Work Ireland and its membership know the power of youth work to bring people together, we see how it can foster a sense of belonging and shared purpose amongst groups of young people and communities. In a world where differences can sometimes be used to divide, youth work provides a safe space where all young people are celebrated, and unity is strengthened.

Youth Work for All in Youth Work Ireland means:


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- **Empowering** young people by informing them of their economic, social, cultural, civic, and political rights and equipping them with the tools to assert those rights.
 - **Embracing** and **supporting** all young people, without exclusion or discrimination.
 - **Accepting** all young people holistically, recognising and valuing them as individuals with unique talents, dreams and potential.
 - **Adopting** a youth-centered approach, to focus on the needs and aspirations of all young people.
 - **Fostering** and **nurturing** relationships that are built on mutual respect, care, empathy and not labelling or stigmatising young people.

Creativity as a Universal Language



Creativity is a universal language. When young people engage in artistic activities together, they develop deeper connections with one another. Art becomes a tool for self-expression, but also a means of communication across different cultures, experiences, and abilities. The **Connection, Creativity & Community** pack is designed not only to produce artistic and creative outputs but to inspire conversations about the impact of youth work, our collective and individual identity, heritage, and the ways we connect with those around us.


Young people can contribute in any ways they like using a multitude of art methods such as drawings, writings, symbols, images or anything else they feel represents to them, the value and impact of youth work. It is hoped that by weaving together different forms of artistic expressions, the young people will get a chance to explore the themes that have emerged from the **Youth Work for All** campaign such as inclusiveness, safety, unity, diversity, relationships, collaboration, volunteerism, and the positive role of youth work in our communities.



Connection, Creativity & Community: Key Goals

- Foster connection and empathy through art.
- Celebrate shared and unique experiences of being a young person in Ireland.
- Create a collective piece showcasing the strength of youth work.

Connection, Creativity & Community: Learning Outcomes

- Young people will be able to reflect on their personal journeys while also seeing how their stories intersect with others.
 - Young people will be able to recognise their own personal power to contribute to positive change.
 - Young people will be empowered and supported to use art to communicate feelings and ideas they may not express verbally.
 - Young people will be able to identify and communicate the value and impact being part of a youth service has on them.
 - Young people will feel confident to talk about how they can shape their communities.
 - Young people will be encouraged to work as a team and to learn to value each others' contributions, strengths and perspectives.
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Youth Work for All



Connection, Creativity & Community



Youth Work Ireland



How to Host the Workshop

Setting the Scene

- Begin the workshop by discussing why the young people come to the youth service, what do they like about it and how does it make them feel.
- Ask them to share (if they feel comfortable) what they have learnt about themselves or what they think has been the impact youth work has had on them.
- Emphasise that these activities are opportunities for them to contribute artistically and digitally to showcasing their youth group.
- Encourage the use of reflective questions to inspire their creations – such as What makes you feel most connected to others? How has youth work impacted your life or community? What does **Youth Work for All** mean to you and how would you explain it to someone who isn't part of your youth group.

Materials Needed

Here are some of the suggested materials you will need to carry out the activities in this pack, but feel free to use whatever materials you have at hand. This is a great way to use up and recycle any old materials you have lying around the youth centre.

- **Youth Work for All** Poster
- Large and small sheets of paper, cardboard, fabric (such as bedsheets) for the collage base.
- Various art materials such as paints, markers, colored pencils, paint brushes, sponges, paper plates, scissors, glue sticks and adhesive tape.
- Yarn, wool, thread, rope or any other cloth based materials.
- Printed prompts for inspiration such as magazines, newspapers, and photos for collaging.
- Digital tools: smartphones, tablets, or laptops for those creating videos, animations, audio, or photography.

Youth Wave Art Installation



In October 2025 Youth Work Ireland will hold its annual national celebration day – **Youth Wave** and this year we want to create a **Youth Work for All** art installation to showcase the creations, murals, collages and other art expressions done by young people during Youth Work Ireland Week.

Art work can be sent back to National Office before the October event or groups can bring their art with them on the day.

Activity One: “Our Community Our Strength” Collage



Objective: Create a community collage using artistic expression and a variety of materials to explore the **Youth Work for All** poster’s key themes.

Materials:

- Large poster board, canvas or bed sheets / blankets.
- Magazines, newspapers, colored paper.
- Glue sticks, scissors.
- Markers, paints, stickers.
- Printed words and quotes from the **Youth Work for All** poster.

Activity:

- Begin with a group discussion on what inclusive communities looks like and how they can be visually represented.
- Sketch ideas individually or in small groups, focusing on symbols and scenes that depict inclusiveness and empathy.
- Combine elements from individual designs into a cohesive collage / mural on a large canvas, sheet, fabric or wall space.
- Hold a session where the young people can chat about their art contributions and the collage’s overall message



Activity Two: “Hands of Unity” Mural

Objective: Show that youth work is a space for everyone... young people, youth workers, volunteers... and that everyone has a part to play by using handprints as symbols of support, connection and inclusion.

Materials:

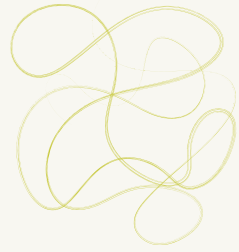
- Large roll of paper, canvas or fabric sheets.
- A4 sheets of paper.
- Paints, brushes, or ink pads.
- Markers, stickers, glitter.

Activity:

- Each young person (and leaders) dips their hand in paint and places a handprint on their A4 paper.
- Inside or around their handprint, they write or draw something about what youth work means to them taking inspiration from the **Youth Work for All** poster.
- Encourage them to decorate their handprints using stickers, doodles, or words from the poster.
- Arrange all A4 handprints in a connected design (circle, tree, or heart) on the larger paper or sheets to represent unity.



Activity Three: “Yarn Bomb” Threads of Connection



Objective: Foster collaboration and celebrate community by creating a yarn-bombing installation or textile art project that symbolises unity and shared histories.

Materials:

- Yarn / wool in various colors and textures.
- Knitting needles, crochet hooks, or looms.
- Fabric squares for sewing or embroidery.
- Scissors, sewing needles, and thread.
- Recycled materials, clothes, bedsheets, towels, etc.
- Adhesive for temporary installations (if yarn bombing in public spaces).
- Cameras or phones for documentation.

Activity:

- Discuss the historical significance of textile crafts and how they symbolise connection and tradition – *Textile crafts have played a vital role in human history, serving as both functional necessities and profound cultural expressions. From ancient weaving traditions to contemporary fiber arts, textiles have long been used to tell stories, document heritage, and pass down knowledge. In many cultures, textile crafts symbolise connection, linking individuals to their ancestors and communities through shared techniques and patterns. The act of weaving, knitting, or embroidery is not just a creative practice but a way of preserving identity and history. These crafts foster social bonds, as they are traditionally taught within families or community groups.*
- ***In an era of fast fashion and mass production, using textile crafts is a meaningful act of reclaiming slower, intentional making.***

Share examples of yarn-bombing projects for inspiration (you can google this)

- Decide as a group where the yarn bombing or textile piece will be displayed (e.g., a tree, bench, wall) and brainstorm visual themes—e.g., unity, diversity, or shared heritage. Seek permission to do this if necessary.
- Teach the young people how to knit, crochet, or embroider if needed.
- Encourage them to create individual pieces such as patches, flowers, or shapes representing their personal story.
- Connect individual pieces to form a larger textile.
- For yarn bombing, install the work by wrapping objects in yarn or attaching the textiles securely.
- Take photos or videos to share to the youth service’s socials.



Activity Four: “Story of Us” Collective Experiences



Objective: Represent personal and collective experiences in youth work using a visual timeline.

Materials:

- Long piece of rolled paper or cardboard or single sheets of paper sellotaped together.
- Markers, glue, printed images and any other arts materials.
- Old newspapers, magazines, scrap fabric, string, stickers and any other crafting materials you have.

Activity:

- Draw a long winding path across the paper as a timeline.
- Ask participants to add a drawing, image, or symbol at different points of the timeline that reflects their experiences with youth work.
- Use string or paper links to connect different experiences, showing how everyone’s journey is interconnected.
- Encourage young people to share their stories as they place their pieces (if they wish).



Activity Five: “Youth Voices” Pop Up Collage

Objective: Create a dynamic, 3D collage featuring powerful messages from young people.

Materials:

- Cards or cardboard.
- Scissors, glue, tape.
- Magazines, printed words, drawings.
- Ice pops sticks or folded paper for pop-up elements.

Activity:

- Cut out speech bubbles and banners where young people can write messages about the importance of youth work.
- Attach them using folded paper strips so they “pop up” from the collage.
- Add layers of images, drawings, and textures to create depth.
- Display the pop-up collage as a powerful visual statement about young people’s voices.



Activity Six: "Expressions of Empathy" Poetry and Spoken Word



Objective: Encourage young people to write and perform poems or spoken words that reflect on themes of empathy, care, and community as core components of **Youth Work for All**.

Materials:

- Paper, pens for writing.

Activity:

- In a group setting discuss the power of poetry, spoken word and rap in expressing the experiences of growing up in Ireland. What are the main issues that affect young people today and what have young people got to say about them.
- Provide prompts related to the **Youth Work for All** poster's themes and allow time for the young people - individual or in groups - to start to jot down their ideas.
- Create a supportive and safe space for them to share their work aloud and offer positive feedback to the emotions and ideas conveyed.
- If they wish to they can be recorded and the videos posted to the youth service's socials using the hashtag **#youthworkforall**.



Activity Seven: "Faces of our Community" Portraits

Objective: Produce portraits or artwork that celebrate diversity and the role of youth workers and volunteers.

Materials:

- Arts materials
- Paper, paper plates etc...

Activity:

- Start a discussion about the various roles individuals play in supporting young people and ask the group how they could represent them artistically.
- Use different mediums (painting, drawing, photography) to create portraits or symbolic representations of the different people in their community.
- Organise a display of the artwork in the youth centre or other local communal space, inviting others to view and discuss, with the young people explaining their pieces and the inspiration behind them.



Activity Eight: "The Heart of Youth Work" Empathy Mapping



Objective: Build understanding and connection through an empathy mapping exercise, to allow young people to explore others' perspectives and experiences.

Materials:

- Large sheets of paper, pre-printed empathy map templates or images of empathy map shared via phones.
- Markers, pens, and sticky notes.
- Reflective prompts (e.g., "What challenges do they face?" , "What brings them joy?")

Activity:

- Explain empathy mapping as a way to understand others' feelings, thoughts, and perspectives. ** Empathy mapping is a tool used to better understand peoples' emotions, thoughts, and behaviors. It helps individuals and groups step into someone else's shoes by exploring their experiences, challenges, and perspectives. Typically, an empathy map is divided into sections that ask: What does this person **see, hear, think,** and **feel?** By engaging in this process, young people develop a deeper awareness of others' needs and emotions, fostering compassion, empathy and inclusivity. In youth work, empathy mapping can be a great exercise to encourage open discussions, break down social barriers, and promote understanding among diverse groups. This practice strengthens relationships and enhances communication, making it a powerful tool for community-building and creative collaboration.*

Empathy Map



Says



Does



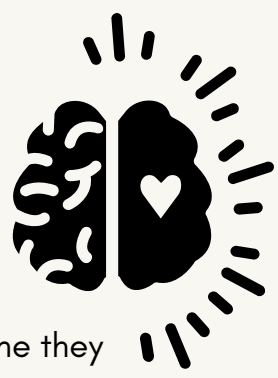
Thinks



Feels



Empathy Mapping Reflective Tool... cont.



Define the Focus:

- Ask the young people to choose a "persona" to map. This could be someone they know, someone from history, a celebrity or sports figure, or even themselves.

Guided Mapping: Use the following quadrants for the map and provide examples to help get started.

- **Says:** What might they say aloud? (e.g. *I am the best footballer in my team*)
- **Thinks:** What thoughts might they have but not share? (e.g. *I hope I play well today*)
- **Feels:** What emotions might they experience? (e.g. *I am scared I don't play well*)
- **Does:** What actions might they take? (e.g. *I will work my hardest*)

Group Sharing and Reflection:

- Encourage open discussions while respecting privacy and sensitivity.
- Ask the young people to share their empathy maps and discuss what they've learned about the persona they chose.
- Discuss how this understanding can lead to more inclusive and supportive communities.

Incorporating Digital Elements in Shared Learning

Once the activities have taken place encourage the young people to use digital media such as photography, video, audio, and music to tell a story or capture the process of their creative journey.

Materials Needed

- Smartphones or tablets with cameras.
- Audio recording devices (or use phone apps like Voice Memos).
- Tripods or phone stands (optional).
- Laptops or tablets for editing (if available).
- Free editing apps (e.g., Canva, InShot, CapCut, Audacity).
- Portable speakers or headphones.
- QR code generator tools (free online resources such as bitly.com)
 - What message or story does it tell?
 - How can we use technology bring this story to life?

Incorporating Digital Elements cont...

1. Introduction to Digital Storytelling

Start with a brief discussion about how technology can enhance traditional art forms.

**Technology has opened new possibilities for traditional art forms, expanding their reach and transforming the ways they are practiced and shared. Digital tools allow artists and craftspeople to document, preserve, and teach traditional techniques to a global audience. Online platforms foster creative collaboration, connecting makers from different cultural backgrounds and allowing them to exchange ideas and inspirations. In addition, digital fabrication methods such as laser cutting and 3D printing introduce new dimensions to age-old crafts, merging history with innovation. Video, animation, and interactive media further enhance storytelling, ensuring that traditional art forms remain relevant and accessible to younger generations. By embracing technology, we can honor artistic heritage while reimagining it for the future, making creativity more inclusive and adaptable to a changing world. Show examples of digital storytelling (e.g., short films, photo montages, or podcasts).*

2. Brainstorm Themes

- Ask the young people to reflect on their collage or craft pieces, use prompts such as
 - What inspired your creation?
 - What message or story does it tell?
 - How can we use technology to bring this story to life?

3. Activity Options

Photography

- Document the creation process or finished artwork in a collage of images.
- Experiment with close-up shots, different angles, and lighting.

Film

- Record a short video of the young people working on their collages, explaining their process, or sharing their personal connection to **Youth Work for All** themes.
- Explore time-lapse filming of the group work in progress.

Audio

- Create voice recordings of the young people discussing their craft, what youth work means to them, or personal stories about connection and diversity.
- Add background music (young people can choose royalty-free tracks).

Music

- If any of the young people are musicians, invite them to create a short piece of music to accompany videos or audio recordings.

4. Edit and Assemble

- Guide the young people in using free editing tools to compile their photos, videos, or audio recordings into a cohesive digital piece.

5. Generate QR Codes

- Show the young people how to create QR codes linking to their digital work. These can be added to the final collage or shared during the exhibition – see bitly.com for QR creating.

Reflective Questions to Close

It is good to check in with the young people after the session, or maybe the following week to see how they are feeling, what they have learnt and to provide some space for them to ask questions or share their thoughts. Some prompts could include:

- How has being part of a youth group or club changed your perspective or given you a sense of belonging?
- What role will you play in promoting unity and inclusion?
- What did you learn about your community doing these activities?
- How can youth work continue to support positive change for all young people?
- What's one thing you appreciate about the people you've met through youth work?
- What is one lesson or value you've learned from youth work that you want to pass on?
- What do you think **Youth Work for All** means?



Showcasing Youth Work for All



Amplifying the Impact

While engaging in activities with youth groups is valuable, sharing the finished products with the community amplifies their impact. Why not consider hosting an evening event to showcase the artwork created by young people. This showcase will not only highlight the creativity and talent of the young people but also provide an opportunity for decision-makers, community leaders, and other stakeholders to witness firsthand the positive outcomes of youth services and for them to gain a better understanding of the **Youth Work for All** campaign.

Spreading the Word

Another suggestion is that each youth group can work on a young people driven social media campaign to spread the word on **Youth Work for All**. The young people can have free creative reign and can come up with ideas from the Incorporating Digital Elements piece such as graphics, videos, skits etc.. Young people can also write poems, articles or do designs that will be featured in the Youth Work Ireland E-newsletter. Those interested can record their poems and they will feature on Youth Work Ireland's national YouTube channel and website.

Video piece: Volunteers and members of clubs can make videos of themselves and ask the following questions

- What does **Youth Work for All** mean to you?
- What does the **Youth Club** mean to *me*?
- What does the **Youth Club** mean to my *community*?

Spotlight on Volunteers and Youth Work for All

Volunteers can do a 60 second type interview with young people or member youth services nominating a volunteer. Questions could include - Your Name, How did you get into volunteering with your local youth club?, How long have you been involved with the club?, What does a youth club mean to the community?, Fun fact about yourself?.

Spotlight on our Clubs:

Clubs can do a 60 second video with a group photo and questions could include: Name of club, name of the community it is in, How long has the club been open? What kind of activities does the club do? How important is the youth club in your community?

Remember to use the hashtag #youthworkforall

Youth Work Ireland

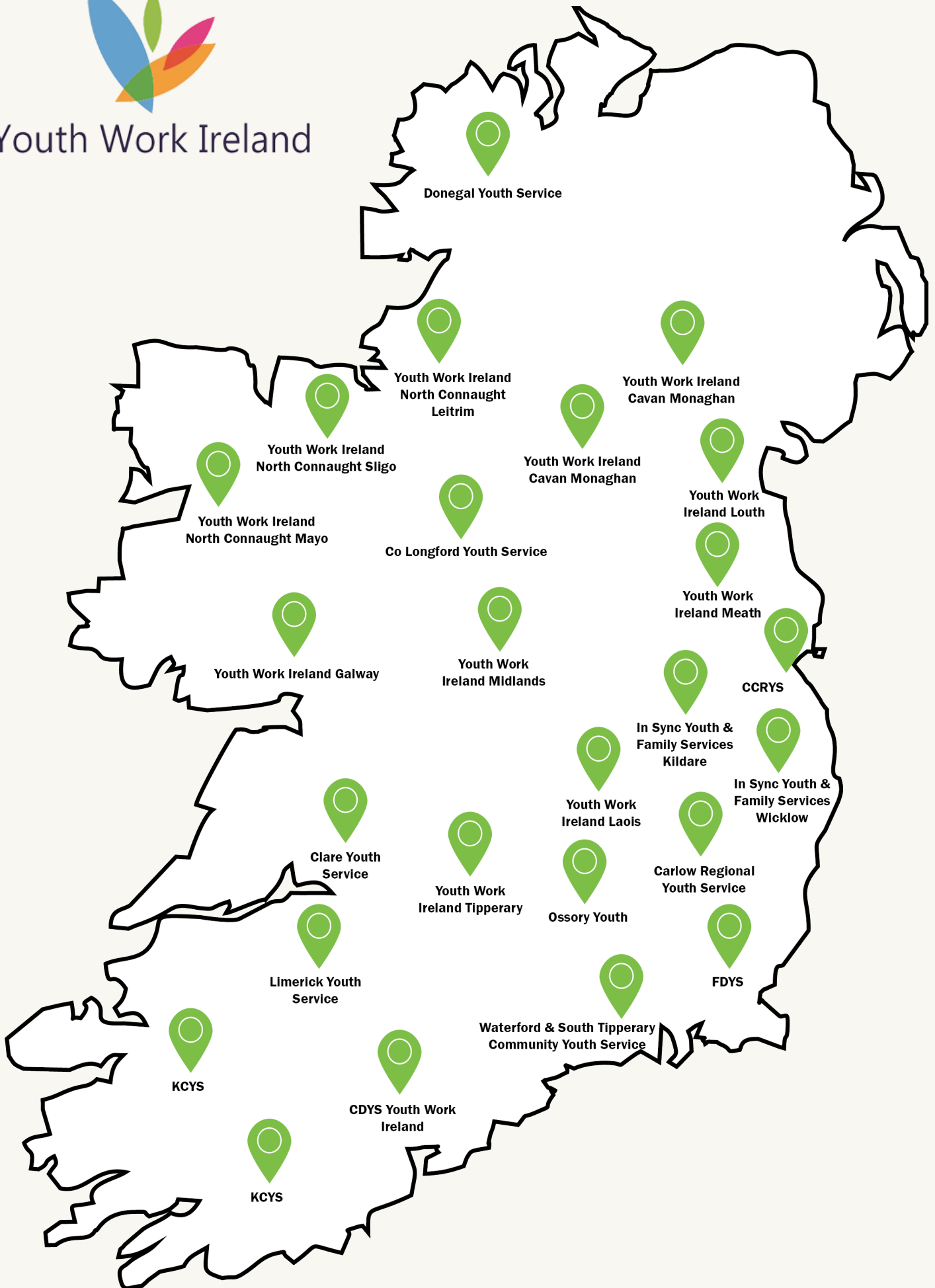
Youth Work Ireland is a federation of 20 member youth services located across Ireland who engage with over 76,000 young people each week, through a range of activities, services and supports.

- Youth Work Ireland Cavan Monaghan
- Youth Work Ireland Galway
- Youth Work Ireland Laois
- Youth Work Ireland Louth
- Youth Work Ireland Meath
- Youth Work Ireland Midlands
- Youth Work Ireland North Connaught
- Youth Work Ireland Tipperary
- Canal Communities Regional Youth Service
- Carlow Regional Youth Service
- CDYS Youth Work Ireland
- Clare Youth Service
- County Longford Youth Service
- Donegal Youth Service
- FDYS
- In Sync Youth and Family Services
- KCYS
- Limerick Youth Service
- Ossory Youth
- Waterford & South Tipperary Community Youth Service

Find out more at www.youthworkireland.ie



Youth Work Ireland



YOUTH WORK FOR ALL



Youth Work Ireland

What Youth Work for All means to young people,
youth workers and volunteers.....

SAFE & FUN SPACES

Youth Work for All means all young people growing up in Ireland have a right to access safe and inclusive youth spaces in their communities, where they are supported, learn new skills, have their voices heard, make friends and take part in fun activities.

INCLUSIVENESS

Youth Work for All means all young people, without exception, are welcome in our youth spaces and are treated in a positive, holistic, accepting, and inclusive way without being labelled or judged.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES

Youth Work for All means young people engaging in youth services are supported by professional youth workers and trained volunteers who provide an integrated service of advice, information and pathways to supports if needed.

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Youth Work for All means we build relationships based on mutual respect and acceptance – meeting each young person where they are at, in order to achieve better outcomes for all.

YOUTH WORK FOR ALL

RIGHTS ENABLER

Youth Work for All means our work aims to support the personal and social development of young people, inform them of their rights and provide them with the tools to assert those rights.

EMPATHY & CARE

Youth Work for All means our youth services operate in a culture of kindness, empathy and care; embedded in the values and principles of youth work practices to support young people achieve their ambitions and aspirations.

WORKING TOGETHER

Youth Work for All means we work together with government, policy makers and support services to advocate and campaign for better resourcing of youth work, youth workers and youth work spaces.

COMMUNITY BASED & VOLUNTARY LED

Youth Work for All means we recognise the role and celebrate the contribution volunteers play in supporting young people and youth work services in their local communities every week.

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