

# ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

April 2020-March 2021



## Boys & Girls Clubs Annual Impact Report 2020/2021

Programmes

Projects

Services

Training

reach ~ involve ~ enjoy ~ achieve

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## INTRODUCTION – THE FIRST YEAR OF THE PANDEMIC

Boys & Girls Clubs is a registered charity founded in 1940 that works to support and represent a membership of local youth groups and organisations, with a collective membership of over 15,000 children and young people across Northern Ireland. In any normal year, we would work directly with over 2000 young people - but 2020 was not a normal year, not for our society, our sector, our organisation, its staff and volunteers, and not for the children and young people that we serve. It was the first year of the Coronavirus pandemic.

The pandemic severely impacted our capacity as a youth organisation to support our membership of local youth groups. Many part-time voluntary youth groups remain partially or fully closed today - particularly those in rural areas.

Throughout this challenging period, we continued to *REACH* out to all young people to *INVOLVE* and enable them to *ENJOY & ACHIEVE* together 'online' in shared, non-formal educational activities. Most children & young people were without access to their friends, schools and youth services due to the new legislation and social restrictions set in response to the pandemic. Parents, families, children and young people had to adapt to the evolving health, economic and social circumstances affecting everyone, but which disproportionately impacted on those living in poverty. The disruption adversely affected young people's emotional health and wellbeing through loss of structure, social connectedness and for some, not having a place to feel safe. Boys & Girls Clubs aims to promote the inclusion, engagement and development of all young people regardless of their cultural, political or religious background and to this end we sought to deliver a range of online digital programmes, projects, training and services for young people and their support workers during the pandemic.

We now present our Annual Impact Report for the period April 2020 – March 2021 and hope that it adequately conveys a positive yet realistic impression of the vision & mission we work to achieve and the values that steer us during challenging times.

### Vision

We envisage a fair and inclusive society which values and supports the development of all young people.

### Mission

Boys & Girls Clubs aims to realise the personal development and social education of young people and to work in partnership with our members to realise our vision.

**Values** - As a voluntary youth organisation and charitable company, we value:

- the potential of all young people, our members, volunteers and staff;
- the active participation of young people in community development;
- the work of all those who support local youth provision wherever it is needed;
- effective youth work and positive activities in community-based youth centres;
- young people's health and well-being;
- the contribution of all who provide leadership for our shared vision to be realised; and,
- the protection & preservation of the natural and physical environments for the benefit of future generations.

**DONAL KENNEDY, CHAIR, BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS (NI)**



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## ACTIVITIES 2020-2021 – YEAR 1 OF THE PANDEMIC.

The Coronavirus pandemic has presented huge challenge globally to the health and wellbeing of everyone. Boys & Girls Clubs adapted to the new circumstances, legislation and social restrictions whilst reducing disruption where possible to support services and programme delivery. Our Offices were closed to the public from 18<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

Due to previous investment in digital infrastructure, Boys & Girls Clubs was able to successfully and rapidly move all staff to homeworking in line with Government legislation and guidelines and to fundamentally change our mode of service delivery. Our priorities were focused on supporting staff to adjust to new ways of working, supporting their wellbeing and their capacity to provide service to others and to rapidly transition to remote delivery so we could maintain high levels of responsiveness to the needs of young people and member youth organisations.

Boys & Girls Clubs initially responded to the impact of the pandemic on young people and member clubs by producing and circulating COVID-related information and guidance, self-help videos on physical & emotional resilience and maintenance of personal health and wellbeing, as well as engaging and supporting young people and their support workers through new health & wellbeing projects and workforce training programmes and support services delivered online.

We also continued to develop services to our membership throughout the year; Boys & Girls Clubs engaged & supported **908 young people and their support staff in 2020-21**. To achieve this, we organised a dynamic online programme of youth work & Health & wellbeing activities and club support services which included: the *Do Something Healthy & Do Something Active*, health & wellbeing programmes as well as two *Together Building a United Community (T:BUC)* projects through which young people could learn, enjoy and achieve together in online activities.

**ALL OF WHAT FOLLOWS TOOK PLACE DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC AND PROLONGED PERIODS OF SOCIAL RESTRICTIONS (LOCKDOWNS). STAFF & VOLUNTEERS WERE HOMEWORKING.**



*Abigail Hutchinson, one of the young leaders from Hospital Road Youth Club receiving her OCN Level 2 Certificate from the president of Boys & Girls Clubs, Baroness May Blood.*

*Abigail described her 10-week Good Relations project as, “a really good opportunity to meet people and to learn new things.”*

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## PROJECTS 2020-2021

### GOOD RELATIONS IN YOUTH WORK - TOGETHER: BUILDING A UNITED COMMUNITY 2020/21

#### SHARED SUMMER CAMP (January – March 2021)

15 young people from Hospital Road Youth Club, Omagh, met and worked online, participating in a 10-week Good Relations training project. The programme included good relations workshops and activities, an OCN Level 2 in Youth Leadership, Emotional Resilience workshops with LightWork NI, dance workshops and craft activities with Community Arts Partnership.

#### SPORTS CAMP

We created an e-learning section on our website that was dedicated specifically to providing ongoing support to young people, enabling them to engage and revisit at their own time and to avoid screen burnout. 18 young people from Ledley Hall Boys & Girls Club (East Belfast) and John Paul II Youth Club (North Belfast) joined online Zoom sessions for live physical activity and well-being programmes. A digital Whiteboard on Boys & Girls Clubs' website served as a Project Mural to facilitate group discussions in Good Relations activities.

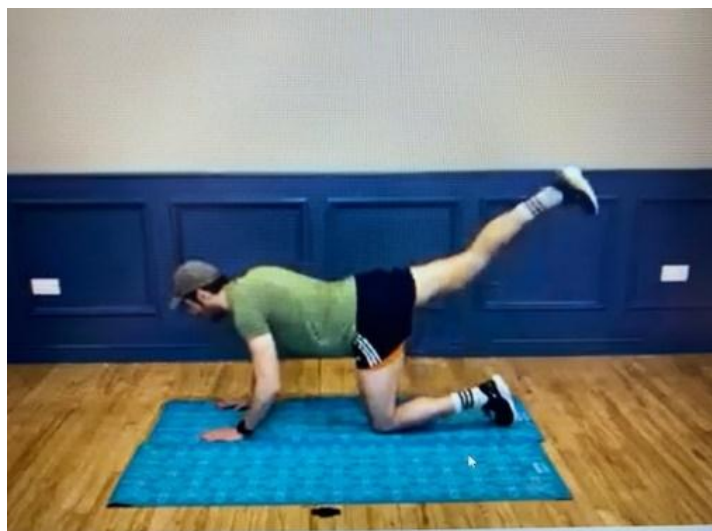
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#### DO SOMETHING HEALTHY (DSH)

This was a pilot project that supported delivery of a more holistic approach to health and wellbeing during lockdown restrictions. The project was delivered exclusively online. Seven youth organisations took part, namely: Dungannon Youth Resource Centre; John Paul Youth II Youth Club; Colaiste Feirste; Upper Springfield Development Trust; Detached Youth, Glen Parent Youth Club; Ledley Hall Boys and Girls Clubs.



SHARED SPORTS CAMP



DO SOMETHING HEALTHY – OISIN SHOWS HOW!

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## DO SOMETHING ACTIVE (DSA) - BELFAST - 148 PARTICIPANTS

*Do Something Active* provided online and valued support to young people throughout the lockdown periods. This involved aspects around emotional wellbeing, innovative methods to staying active, weight management and social wellbeing. We had seven clubs signed up to participate in the online activity programme including, St Bernard's Youth Centre, Upper Andersonstown Community Forum & Dundonald High School. Navigating and delivering this project throughout lockdown had clear benefits, an evaluative response exercise stated that *"the DSA programme acted as an escape for me and helped keep my mind away from the anxiety of the situation"*.

**PROJECT AMBASSADORS** talked with the young women on the DSA project to encourage and inspire them to stay involved with sport and exercise. Aiofe Callaghan, Basketball Ireland Team; Lauren Bohill, Trainee Barrister & Irish Dancing Champion; Marisa Callaghan, NI Women's Football Captain; and Michaela Walsh, Irish Boxing Champion, all spoke with the young women about their experiences during lockdown and the importance of resilience and staying active.



Marisa Callaghan - IFA    Aiofe Callaghan-Basketball    Michaela Walsh - IABA    Lauren Bohill – Dance

## COVID ACTIVITY PROGRAMMES- 93 PARTICIPANTS

When Online digital engagement started to lose novelty and appeal, we engaged young people in new personal challenges and tasks – an individualised programme, with fresh initiatives to sustain interest and participation. New activities involved daily personal and self-care exercises to combat inactivity. We produced online workout programmes with the support of fitness coaches and our innovative daily approaches worked very well with 93 young people from 9 clubs staying the course of the programme.

*"Feeling sluggish on a Tuesday - No better way to start your day than with a quick workout and a healthy breakfast!"*



*Oisín's video demonstrating 'home workouts' – The PLANK.*



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## SPORT STEERING COMMITTEE - 33 PARTICIPANTS



This Sport Committee was created to co-design the DSA & DSH programmes and to provide direction to the Organisation on how it could best meet the wellbeing needs and interests of young people.

- Upper Springfield Development Trust Glen Parent
- Hospital Road
- Omagh Boys and Girls Clubs
- Dungannon Youth and Resource Centre
- John Paul Youth Club

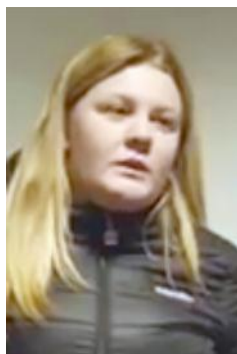
***BGC staff, Donal McKernan, & the 6 Core Workout exercises.***

## EMOTIONAL WELLBEING AWARENESS – 23 PARTICIPANTS

Over a 4-week duration, this programme entailed delivering themed workshops to both young people, volunteers, and youth practitioners. Workshops were facilitated by specialists that were bought in as external facilitators.



*Katie says "it's been hard in the covid restrictions. But doing exercises and sport helps with my physical and mental health"*



*Erin said, "I started running at the start of lockdown and I'd be lost without my sport"*

## Mental Health Awareness (OCN Level 2) – 11 participants

At the start of the first lockdown, one member club identified the need to further their knowledge and understanding of mental & emotional health issues. Others agreed, and as a result, we facilitated a Mental Health Awareness programme for adult workers. The training was designed to increase participants' awareness and response skills and be better equipped to support their own and others emotional wellbeing.

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## Do Something Healthy- Belfast- 25 participants

This project focused on providing OCN Levels 1 & 2 certification for young people from disadvantaged areas across Belfast. The project targeted young people who were underachieving academically and had not achieved GCSE benchmarks to allow them to transition into A-levels. This was a pilot scheme to develop school partnership working in local schools.

## UK Leadership Awards- 90 participants

80 young people completed evidence portfolios demonstrating competence and understanding for Youth Leadership awards. The programme was delivered via online sessions over a nine-month period - no small feat during the pandemic – and well done to all involved.

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## CREATIVE EXPRESSION COMPETITION – 19 COMPETITION ENTRIES

In partnership with Bourke Sports, young people were involved in a 'Design Your Own' club T-Shirt – with a chance to have this made specifically for them. There were 7 clubs involved in submitting a variety of designs - the winning design came from the Hammer Youth Club (Belfast).



**DESIGN YOUR CLUB T-SHIRT – WINNING DESIGN (ABOVE) FROM THE HAMMER YOUTH CLUB (BELFAST).**

## CLUB DEVELOPMENT PLANS

As the capacity for youth services diminished due to club closures during the first lockdown, club volunteers **adapted club priorities & premises to support those in their communities with the greater need e.g. with family food parcels, children's services for care workers' families, school breakfasts, pensioner's meals etc.** Practitioners also focused on future planning and enhancing the club services and infrastructure. This resulted in the development of bespoke club development plans and involved planning for partnership working, diversifying income streams, obtaining club validation through the hallmark award and policy development. This work was facilitated by staff from Boys & Girls Clubs.

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## NUTRITIONAL WORKSHOPS- COOK IT / COOKING TOGETHER – 32 PARTICIPANTS

Through e-learning, young people and practitioners got involved in the Cook-it programme. Project features included: Make Your Own Pizza (with Little-O's DIY kit) and Baking on a Budget. The syllabus and format for the award was developed and delivered in partnership with the Belfast Trust.



***All together online - instruction with Grainne & Tanya – making nutritional meals.***

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT – 22 PARTICIPANTS

Throughout the lockdown, we facilitated 6 online *Food For Thought* workshops. Programme content emphasised the importance of healthy eating, particularly during the lockdown period. During a review & evaluation phase, one participant wrote that *“the project helped me to stop overthinking, I really did not want to eat - because I was afraid of getting fat and I wasn't walking, but the programme really helped.”*

## RESTART PROJECT (OCTOBER 2020 – MARCH 2021) – 42 staff from 29 Youth Clubs.

in the context of COVID-19 and during lockdown restrictions, the Restart Project was a planned six-month programme to resource and local Youth Organisations to restart youth provision safely and effectively.

A total of 29 membership clubs, involving 42 youth club staff, benefited from a range of programme support and resources including:

- Microsoft Office 365 licence and training offering access to Office 365 - for sharing documentation with other youth clubs;
- Group training sessions and access to a range of specialist services including HR, Quality Assurance, and I.T. support;
- Access to sample policies and templates to facilitate a safe restart of youth work;
- Access to an operating platform to assist digital youth work moving forward;
- Workforce development focusing on mental wellbeing and safeguarding (13 staff/ volunteers completed OCN accreditation in Healthy Living);
- Opportunity for club staff to complete a (Level 5) CMI Leadership and Management qualification.



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## MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

Boys & Girls Clubs offers a range of important support services to support for member youth organisations, for example: -

- Safeguarding Children & Young People –quality assured child protection training through the Keeping Safe Initiative.
- Thinkuknow –Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP). Online safety training
- AccessNI vetting checks for paid and voluntary staff working with young people
  - Risk management Insurance services –insurance products for legal compliance
- Website & social media channels providing member information services
- Governance, Supervision & Appraisal and Fund-raising Training

## SAFEGUARDING TRAINING

Boys & Girls Clubs is a registered 'Umbrella Body' with AccessNI and supports member clubs in the processing of criminal record checks for new staff and volunteers. In the latter part of this year, 22 clubs were assisted in the processing of 94 applications. With the partial reopening of some clubs in the summer months, we were able to offer safeguarding training online to raise awareness of safeguarding issues and to upskill youth work personnel.

Staff from Ederney YC, Ledley Hall Boys & Girls Clubs, Tollymore YC, Newhill YC, Scotch Street Youth & Community Centre, St Michael's Magherlin - attended the Keeping Children Safe training throughout the year.

A total of 27 first year students on the Community Youth Work Course from Ulster University completed their mandatory safeguarding training before going out on placement in both Keeping Safe and CEOP. 'Thinkuknow' is the education programme from the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) aimed at protecting young people online. Training is based around three key themes: How To Have Fun, How To Stay In Control (or, How To Take Control) and, How To Report a Problem.

Further programmes for Online safeguarding were facilitated for two member clubs, and one with the Boys & Girls Clubs' Youth Council.

## MEMBERSHIP CONSULTATIONS

With the continued lockdown in place a Covid -19 impact analysis was carried out with 20 member clubs. The survey focused on several issues, including:

- health & well-being.
- technical challenges via WFH/social distancing & travel restrictions.
- programmes for the upcoming period to discern online feasibility in the Covid-19 context.
- work with member clubs & young people to ensure BGC is addressing needs.
- design support to maximise online engagement.
- enhance the service capacity of members.

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## PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

Boys & Girls Clubs (NI) operates a yearly planning cycle that is measured against its capacity to achieve strategic direction. We have an excellent but small staff team and our capacity to deliver is tight. We must carefully consider how best to maintain our direction, prioritise our work and develop our plans within a very challenging and particularly difficult health, social and financial environment.

Next year, the 2021-22 period, will be one of continued uncertainty as we respond to the monumental challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, which will have far-reaching and sustained effects on our health, wellbeing and economy. We expect the pandemic will result in enduring problems for many young people in terms of their education, school attendance and access to youth services. The key priority for Boys & Girls Clubs will be to ensure that the charity can adapt and maximise its capability to provide effective actions and services to address the evolving needs of the children and young people we serve.

We expect that 2021 will see the introduction by the Education Authority NI of a new regional funding scheme for youth services and initiatives to support youth work delivery. Boys & Girls Clubs will continue to develop our services and maintain and improve our reach to engage young people who need our support, particularly in prioritised work areas such as emotional health and wellbeing and our digital capacity to support methods of service delivery. We will also strengthen our electronic communication systems and processes to further develop service user involvement and to measure the evidence and value of our work in the lives of young people and children.

**However, if we have learnt anything about our youth work throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, it is that digital contact is a poor substitute for the personal, face-to-face engagement which is so vital to sustaining both high levels of participation and the health and wellbeing of the children and young people we serve.**

## FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Boys & Girls Clubs (NI)		
	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2021	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2020
Total Income	£282,119	£225,369
Total Expenditure	£245,770	£233,253
Balance	£36,349	(-£7884)
Total Assets less Current Liabilities	£54,486	£18,137

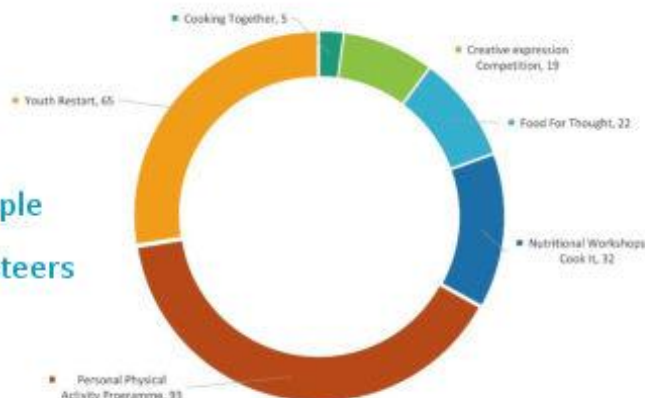
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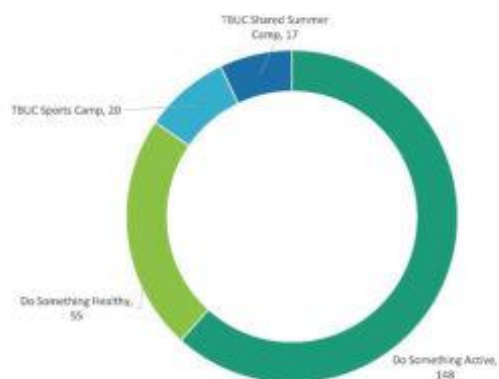
## PARTICIPATION - PROGRAMME

114 Young People  
51 Adult Volunteers  
and Staff



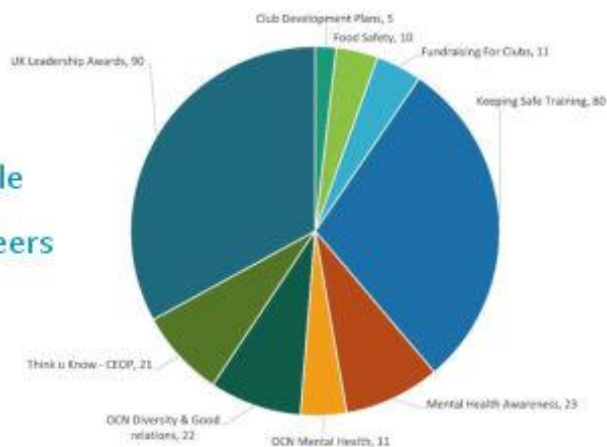
## PARTICIPATION - PROJECTS

208 Young People  
32 Adult Volunteers  
and Staff



## PARTICIPATION - TRAINING

198 Young People  
96 Adult Volunteers  
and Staff





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Activity	Date	No of Clubs	Young People			Adults	Total Attendees
			Females	Males	Total		
Access NI	Apr-March	34				94	94
Club Insurance	Apr-March	32					
Club Development Plans	Jul-Sept	1				5	5
Cooking Together		2	5		5		5
Creative Expression Competition		7	11	8	19		19
Do Something Active	Apr-March	7	125	2	127	21	148
Do Something Healthy	June-March	7	15	33	48	7	55
Food Safety	Apr-June	1				10	10
Food for Thought	Apr-June	2	10	10	20	2	22
Fundraising for Clubs	Apr-June	1	5	5	10	1	11
Keeping Safe Training	Apr-March	12	19	9	28	52	80
Mental Health Awareness	Jan- March	3	6	13	19	4	23
Nutritional Workshops Cook It	Jul-Sept	3	13	14	27	5	32
OCN Mental Health	Apr- March	1	6	4	10	1	11
OCN Diversity & Good Relations	Apr-March	1	16	4	20	2	22
Sports Committee Volunteering	Oct-Mar	20	5	11	16	17	33
Policy Development	Apr-March	3				10	10
Survey Monkey	Apr-March	22				22	22
TBUC – Sports Camp	July- Feb	2	12	6	18	2	20
TBUC – Camp Shared Summer	July - Feb	1	9	6	15	2	17
Personal Physical Activity Prog	July-March	14	51	42	93		93
Thinkuknow – Introduction	Aug-Sept	2	5	5	10	11	21
UK Leadership Awards	Oct – March	6	24	56	80	10	90
Youth Restart	Oct-Mar	30	13	8	21	44	65
<b>TOTALS</b>			<b>350</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>586</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>908</b>