



YOUTH SERVICE

**REGIONAL
ASSESSMENT
OF NEED**

2017 - 2020

Foreword

I am very pleased to introduce the first three-year Education Authority Youth Service Regional Assessment of Need. This publication is the product of eight months of research and consultation with stakeholders, and advice from Regional Voluntary Youth Organisations, the Department of Education, The Education & Training Inspectorate and statutory Youth Service colleagues. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to everyone involved in bringing all the data and information together in this document.

The majority of young people in Northern Ireland make a successful transition into adulthood through support from schools, communities and their families. There are many factors that young people require in making this transition such as education, personal and social development, feeling safe, being healthy and active, and having fun being just a few pieces of this complex jigsaw. Unfortunately, there is a proportion of young people living in Northern Ireland who have vulnerabilities and experience a range of challenges which contribute to a more problematic transition into adulthood.

It is also evident that young people living in certain geographical areas experience additional disadvantage and have significant needs in terms of educational attainment, their physical and mental health and the increased likelihood of coming into conflict with their community and with the law.

Additionally, there are minority groups such as LGBT&Q young people, young people with learning and physical disabilities, looked-after young people and young people in the travelling community, among others, who may not be disadvantaged or at risk by definition but who face additional and multiple barriers to learning that others may not.

The purpose of this needs assessment therefore has been to identify the key issues affecting young people in Northern Ireland, especially those most marginalised and disadvantaged and to give an indication of where resources may be best focussed to meet their needs. The document also emphasises the need to maintain and support general youth work provision, in accordance with the Department of Education's policy "Priorities for Youth" whilst targeting those most in need.

The Education Authority recognises that new needs may emerge during the life of this Assessment of Need therefore an annual review will take place to consider emerging need and diminishing need, in time to be included in the annual Regional Youth Development Plan.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Glenalee".

December 2016

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1. Introduction

An Assessment of Need is a crucial element of the planning process for Youth Services. Information gathered from an effective Assessment of Need ensures that appropriate service priorities are established and that support is targeted at those most in need by delivering essential programmes and activities to meet service objectives.

In a financially challenging environment, it is imperative to establish a rigorous regional understanding of need. Realistically, there will not be enough money to meet all needs, therefore an Assessment of Need allows planners to identify and prioritise areas of concern. This document will identify a set of priority areas, to ensure that in future, resources are channelled to areas and at those young people who need it most in a fair and equitable manner.

Strategic planning of Youth Services should reflect wider Department of Education (DE) policy and should be in response to the assessed need for Youth Work interventions. DE's policy document, *Priorities for Youth* noted that: There should be stronger strategic planning, supported by a composite Assessment of Need at local, sub-regional and regional level.¹ Youth Work, therefore, must be set within the context of *Priorities for Youth* in response to the assessed need, prioritised age ranges and other identified vulnerable groups.

This Assessment of Need has been based on an objective exploration of publicly available government sourced administrative datasets with a view to extract and summarise information that relates to children and young people who face barriers to learning and educational underachievement. The datasets that have been reviewed are those that have relevance to these issues and also those that have been identified as priority groups in *Priorities for Youth*.

From an initial wide-ranging and extensive collation and compilation of base datasets, this Assessment of Need has highlighted and summarised the key facts, trends and issues, evidenced by other research and in consultation with key stakeholders as appropriate, with a view to constructing a narrative around the barriers faced by children and young people preventing them achieving their

¹ Department of Education, 2013, *Priorities for Youth*, Department of Education, Belfast.

educational potential. The statistically based issues explored are presented in themes around population trends, deprivation and rural isolation, education, health and wellbeing and other demographic characteristics.

The Assessment of Need will include the quantitative data outlined above, as well as qualitative data including a range of available relevant research and social data, results from questionnaires, surveys, workshops and focus groups and feedback from an ongoing engagement with stakeholders including, young people, providers, community and statutory representatives and the workforce.

The needs assessment attempted to collect as much information as possible to build a comprehensive understanding of the needs and issues facing young people in Northern Ireland. Once these needs have been assessed it makes it easier to identify potential solutions and plan a range of appropriate responses to meet these identified needs.

An Assessment of Need is central to the planning process for Youth Services. Strategic planning of Youth Services should reflect the wider Department of Education policy and should be in response to the assessed need for Youth Work interventions. The needs assessment process, therefore, is a key factor for planning, delivering and evaluating Youth Work. Youth Work in future must be set within the context of *Priorities for Youth* in response to the assessed need, prioritised age ranges and other identified groups. It should also reflect the future direction of Youth Provision in terms of the new Education Authority, new local government arrangements and new community planning processes. The Regional Youth Development Plan Guidance document suggested that the following information could be used in support of *Priorities for Youth*:

- Youth population and distribution for ages 4 – 25.
- Poverty and social deprivation measures.
- Levels of educational underachievement.
- Where children and young people live (urban/rural).
- Gaps in existing information relating to targeted groups.
- Gaps in need where there is no provision.
- Birth rates, trends over time and prediction of future demand.

- Groups who are not accessing the Youth Service.
- Local information from young people and other stakeholders.

An Assessment of Need is not an end in itself, but an important tool to be used to underpin and validate decisions concerning the distribution of resources and the targeting of provision. The purpose of this needs assessment is to identify the key issues facing young people in Northern Ireland and to provide planners with a better understanding of which resources are needed in order to make the biggest impact in supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged young people. The formal needs assessment, together with effective, on-going monitoring and evaluation, ensures that not only are current models of delivery reviewed, but that emerging needs and new policy directions are adequately considered and responded to.

2. Purpose of Document

The purpose of this document is to establish a comprehensive overview of the needs of young people in Northern Ireland as they relate to the parameters set out by the Department of Education (DE) in *Priorities for Youth*. The key findings emerging from this needs assessment will inform effective decision making, prioritisation of resources and future service development for all DE funded Youth Services.

The document also seeks to devise a framework and develop a regional composite Assessment of Need highlighting priority areas which will be underpinned by a funding scheme determined by the Education Authority.

The purpose of this needs assessment therefore is to identify the key issues affecting young people in Northern Ireland, especially those most vulnerable or at risk, and to give an indication of where resources are best focussed to meet the needs of these young people. *Priorities for Youth* highlighted that in order to achieve these aims, Youth Work policy must align with DE's strategic priorities for education. The targeting of services should be based on need with a clear focus on those most in need of additional support and should embrace diversity and overcome dissatisfaction. There is also a clear emphasis on the provision of measurable, quality learning experiences for young people. All aspects of Youth Work will support the DE vision of:

- Raising Standards for All.
- Closing the Performance Gap, Increasing Access and Equality.
- Developing the Educational Workforce.
- Improving the Learning Environment.
- Transforming the Governance and Management of Education.

The strategic aims of Youth Work to support the DE vision are:

- To contribute to raising standards for all and closing the performance gap between the highest and lowest achieving young people by providing access to enjoyable non-formal learning opportunities that help them to develop enhanced social and cognitive skills and overcome barriers to learning.

- To continue to improve the non-formal learning environment by creating inclusive, participative settings in which the voice and influence of young people are championed, supported and evident in the design, delivery and evaluation of programmes.

Where possible, we have sought to include the views and opinions of young people and other key stakeholders throughout this process. The importance of consultation and engagement with stakeholders is paramount to Youth Service planning. In particular, the views of young people are critical to successful programmes and have played an important role in assessing needs as part of the overall existing planning process.

3. Methodology

Priorities for Youth maintains that the strategic planning and resourcing of Youth Work must address the assessed need for Youth Work interventions. Therefore an effective assessment of need is particularly critical given that DE funded Youth Work must be set within the context of prioritised age ranges, priority groups and a clear definition of the need for targeted interventions, alongside an element of non-targeted provision that is assessed as needed.

There is therefore a need to develop a more robust, systematic use of relevant statistical data at regional level to underpin strategic planning. The Regional Youth Development Plan will also require the effective analysis of appropriate qualitative data, current and relevant research and stakeholder feedback, to ensure that a consistent understanding of assessed need is developed to underpin the allocation of resources across the region, in support of agreed priorities.

In order to develop this needs analysis, a Planning and Monitoring Group was established, comprising members from the Education Authority, the Department of Education, the Education and Training Inspectorate and from a range of Regional Voluntary Organisations. This group, chaired by an EA representative, was tasked with undertaking a comprehensive, composite regional Assessment of Need.

Quantifying the needs of young people in Northern Ireland is a complex and difficult task. There is a clear variation and level of needs across the region, with some areas facing greater challenges than others. A range of quantitative and qualitative research methods have been used to inform this Assessment of Need. We have endeavoured to use the most up to date data and statistics from a range of government and statutory sources along with recent, relevant reports. An extensive consultation with young people and key stakeholders was also undertaken.

The information gleaned from the research has then been collated and analysed and the evidence gathered has been used to compile this report, highlighting the key issues and levels of need affecting young people in Northern Ireland.

Wherever possible quantitative and qualitative data has been used to inform this needs assessment. The information and data used in the assessment of need

process came from variety of sources, including the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), the Police Service of Northern Ireland, the Department of Education, Health Trusts and other government and statutory statistics. All the information used was publicly available as well as being objective and unambiguous. The datasets were also related to outcomes and had a clear focus on educational underachievement and disadvantage.

The regional group also endeavoured to use the most up to date data from a variety of sources. However, data is continually being updated and may be outdated by the time plans have been published, therefore it is imperative that the assessment and analysis of the needs of young people is an ongoing process and planners should be aware of this in terms of their own local and area plans.

Within this document, assessed needs are set within a framework for planning that takes into account current government policy, in particular those identified by the Department of Education in its policy document, *Priorities for Youth*. The following are some of the key themes that the group have identified, although this list is not exhaustive:

- Demographics
- Deprivation
- Proximity to Services
- Educational Underachievement
- Health and Wellbeing

The regional working group have also suggested that the needs assessment should reflect the following:

- Generic provision needs
- Targeted Needs
- The composite assessment of need
- Stakeholder engagement
- Highest levels of disadvantage
- DE Policies
- Collaborative planning and need
- Emerging needs

3.1 Desktop Research

The initial stages of the Regional Assessment of Need were based around desktop research. This process involved analysing existing Assessment of Needs models, both national and international, to gain an insight into good practice and also inform the design and development of the Education Authority Youth Service's Regional Assessment of Need.

Desktop research was also used to gather and analyse qualitative information from a range of sources. These sources were generally from government departments or other statutory agencies. The information collected from these sources helped identify key priority areas of need within Northern Ireland. A review of recent, relevant research literature was also undertaken. Evidence gathered from these documents and reports were used to support the original findings.

3.2 Questionnaires and Surveys

Stakeholder's voices, especially those of young people, are important to both the Department of Education and the Education Authority in the design and delivery Youth Service provision. Therefore the Planning and Monitoring Group were keen to consult with stakeholders in various ways.

A sub-group of the Planning and Monitoring Group designed an online survey tool, which was presented to the group for approval. The purpose of this questionnaire was to gain an insight from young people on their perceptions of Youth Provision that currently exists in their areas and highlight their issues and concerns. Following approval, the questionnaire was administered electronically (through Survey Monkey) to 1,232 young people currently engaged with Youth Services. An Irish Language version of the survey was also made available. (A copy of each survey can be found in the appendices).

The sample included representatives from a range of Controlled, local and voluntary youth groups involved in DE funded Youth Work. The questionnaires used both closed and open-ended questions and statements to gather quantitative and qualitative information from stakeholders. The questionnaires were then analysed

using SPSS and helped inform discussion for the workshops and also the Needs Assessment.

Young people not currently involved in Youth Services were also canvassed. (A copy of this questionnaire can be found in the appendices). This involved EA staff and volunteers conducting on street vox-pops with unattached young people. The purpose of this exercise was to gain an insight into why these young people did not avail of Youth Services in their area and also to ascertain what programmes or activities might entice them to become involved. There were 72 respondents to this survey.

A further questionnaire was designed for Youth Workers and Volunteers from both the controlled and voluntary sectors. The purpose of this survey was to gain an understanding from Youth Workers about the needs of young people from the areas where they worked. (A copy of this questionnaire can be found in the appendices).

3.3 Workshops

The Regional Advisory Group organised a residential in Ballintoy on 30th September and 1st October 2016. This event was designed to gather the views of young people and bring their voices directly to the policy making table. One of the workshops at this event focussed on the survey that young people had completed as part of the Regional Assessment of Need.

This event was facilitated by the Northern Ireland Youth Forum and the Education Authority. More than 50 young people participated. Facilitators were provided with prompts which were designed to elicit the young people's views on the survey analysis and discuss its findings. (A copy of the prompts used by the facilitators in the workshop can be found in the appendices).

Feedback from and analysis of the surveys and the workshop can be found in the Stakeholder Feedback chapter.

4. Policy Context

4.1 Introduction

On April 1st 2015 the existing educational structures in Northern Ireland were replaced with a single regional body, the Education Authority (EA), coinciding with the implementation of new local government structures. The new Education Authority took over all of the roles and responsibilities of the former Education and Library Boards and the Staff Commission.

Established as a non-departmental public body in 1990, the Youth Council for Northern Ireland (YCNI) continues to advise the Department of Education, the Education Authority and other bodies on the development of the Youth Service; to encourage cross-community activity by the Youth Service; to encourage the provision of facilities for the Youth Service and facilities which are especially beneficial to young persons, and encourage and assist the co-ordination and efficient use of the resources of the Youth Service. In 2016 YCNI was conferred with an additional statutory function to encourage and facilitate Shared Education.

The policy landscape has also changed following the 2016 Assembly elections. Northern Ireland now has a new Minister for Education, a new Programme for Government and a series of high level strategies set for implementation from early 2017 which may have potential ramifications for Youth Services. There is also the impending UK exit from the European Union which may influence the focus and direction of Youth Services in the future.

Strategic planning within Youth Services must take account of this high level policy context alongside wider DE policies. The following sections are a brief outline of some of the key policy areas. It should however be remembered that the policy context is constantly evolving and subject to change.

4.2 Draft Programme for Government 2016-2021

The Programme for Government is the highest level strategic document of the Northern Ireland Executive, setting out the priorities that will be pursued by the Assembly and identifying the most significant actions it will take to address them.

The draft Framework contains 14 strategic outcomes which touch on every aspect of Government, including the attainment of good health and education, economic success and establishing confident and peaceful communities. The 14 outcomes are supported by 42 indicators which are clear statements for change and each indicator is accompanied by a measure largely derived from existing statistics.

The draft Programme for Government will require a significant change in approach from that used by previous administrations and a key feature is its dependence on collaborative working between organisations and groups, whether in the public, voluntary or private sectors. Delivery of the Programme will encourage working across boundaries and focusing on the outcomes rather than traditional departmental lines.

The Department of Education will take the lead role on one of the Programme for Government outcomes, *we give our children and young people the best start in life*. There may be implications for DE funded Youth Provision to support this outcome. The greater impetus for collaborative working and the adoption of outcomes based accountability, both of which are central features of the draft Programme for Government, may also have repercussions for the scope and approach of Youth Provision in future.

4.3 Children's Services Co-operation Act (NI) 2015 and forthcoming Children and Young Persons Strategy

The Children's Services Co-operation Act (NI) (2015) places the development of a new Children and Young Persons Strategy onto a statutory footing. The Children and Young Persons Strategy will provide the overall strategic direction for the work of the Northern Ireland Executive to improve the lives of children and young people. The Act stipulates that, in future, the Executive must take account of the report on the operation of the Children's Services Co-operation Act when preparing a Programme for Government.

The Children and Young Persons Strategy will consider the key issues facing children and young people and will outline how government will work collaboratively to improve their well-being. The Children's Services Co-operation Act sets the

framework for the development of the strategy and defines well-being in terms of the following 8 general parameters:

- Physical and mental health.
- The enjoyment of play and leisure.
- Learning and achievement.
- Living in safety and with stability.
- Economic and environmental well-being.
- The making by children and young people of a positive contribution to society.
- Living in a society which respects their rights.
- Living in a society in which equality of opportunity and good relations are promoted between persons who share a relevant characteristic and persons who do not share the characteristic.

The new Strategy will replace the Children and Young People's Strategy 2006-2016, and a co-design approach has been used throughout 2016 to develop the draft Strategy.

Whilst all nine government departments will be involved in implementation, the Department of Education is the lead body and will determine the appropriate roles to be played within education, including Youth Services. It is clear that the outcomes of Youth Work can be mapped across all broad parameters of well-being identified in the Children and Young Persons Strategy and so the Youth Service is in a strong position to contribute effectively to its implementation.

4.4 A Fresh Start

The Fresh Start Agreement (November 2015) provides a set of inter-related and high-level proposals which seek to overcome some of the most challenging and intractable issues within Northern Ireland. One of the key issues addressed within A Fresh Start is that of legacy and the impact of paramilitary activity. Among the strategic actions to end paramilitarism, is a commitment to a cross-departmental programme to prevent vulnerable young people becoming involved in paramilitary activity. In 2016 the NI Executive published its Action Plan on Tackling Paramilitary

Activity, criminality and organised crime. The Action Plan states that the NI Executive should commission appropriate initiatives aimed at promoting lawfulness in schools and through Youth Work in communities.

The Department of Education will develop initiatives to ensure that those schools and youth groups dealing with the effects of paramilitary activity on young people are appropriately trained to identify risk factors and to adopt a whole school or group approach to help deal with those challenges.

The Department of Education and the Executive Office will deliver Youth Intervention Programmes specifically targeted at vulnerable young people, including those most at risk of becoming involved in or affected by paramilitary activity, so that they can make a positive contribution to their communities. The expertise within the Youth Service, particularly its strong track record in transformative and developmental work with young people who have been exposed to paramilitary threat, interface violence and sectarianism, ensures that the Service can make a positive contribution in supporting these initiatives.

4.5 Department of Education

Although the work of the Department of Education extends across many of the 14 Outcomes in the draft Programme for Government, its key area of focus lies within Outcome 14, which states that : *We give our children and young people the best start in life*. DE will lead on the development of Delivery Plans for the following 4 indicators in the draft Programme for Government:

- Indicator 11: Improve Educational Outcomes
- Indicator 12: Reduce Educational Inequality
- Indicator 13: Improve the Quality of Education
- Indicator 15: Improve Child Development

The DE Corporate Plan for Education will outline the strategic direction for DE and the wider education service and set out the key priorities and objectives during the period that it covers. The Corporate Plan is developed from the draft Programme for Government and will follow once the draft Programme for Government has been

agreed and published. Each year DE will develop an annual business plan setting out its commitments to delivering the corporate goals and strategic objectives contained in the Corporate Plan.

4.6 Department of Education Business Plan

The overarching DE vision is that *all children and young people receive the best start in life to enable them to achieve their full potential at each stage of their development*. The DE business plan reflects the key priorities and objectives during the 2016/17 financial year in support of the draft Programme for Government (PfG) framework (2016-2021). The Plan will be updated as and when the draft PfG (2016-2021) has been agreed and finalised. Currently DE's plan is set out under seven corporate goals:

- Improving the well-being of children and young people: Supporting the draft PfG Indicator 15: Improve child development.
- Raising standards for all which supports the draft PfG Indicator 11: Improving educational outcomes.
- Closing the performance gap, increasing access and equality: Supporting the draft PfG Indicator 12: Reduce educational inequality.
- Developing the education workforce which supports the draft PfG Indicator 13: Improving the quality of education.
- Improving the learning environment which supports the draft PfG Indicator 13: Improving the quality of education.
- Transforming the governance and management of education.
- Discharging our corporate responsibilities effectively.

Specific references to Youth Services in the 2016-2017 business plan include progression of the implementation of *Priorities for Youth* and development of the Network for Youth model.

4.7 Priorities for Youth

Priorities for Youth, published in October 2013, clearly sets out the positive contribution that Youth Services can play in achieving the Department of Education's vision that every young person can achieve to his or her full potential at each stage of his and her development.

The policy affirms that Youth Work can, through various methodologies and in various settings, provide additional opportunities to support young people's learning and development and improve employability by re-engaging disadvantaged young people with education.

The policy also recognises that Youth Work has a major role to play as we continue to deal with the legacy of conflict, moving towards a shared and inclusive society, by equipping young people with the skills, attitudes and behaviours to recognise, understand and respect difference.

Priorities for Youth revised the overarching aims of Youth Work to reflect a closer alignment between Youth Work and education priorities, and presented the strategic aims of Youth Work as:

- To contribute to raising standards for all and closing the performance gap between the highest and lowest achieving young people by providing access to enjoyable, non-formal learning opportunities that help them to develop enhanced social and cognitive skills and overcome barriers to learning; and
- To continue to improve the non-formal learning environment by creating inclusive, participative settings in which the voice and influence of young people are championed, supported and evident in the design, delivery and evaluation of programmes.

The policy identified the following principles underpinning all aspects of Youth Work supported by DE:

- Participation in Youth Services is voluntary and should enable young people to develop the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to tackle the issues that are important to them.

- The active participation of young people should be fostered, supported and evident across all youth settings.
- Equality and inclusion should be fundamental to planning and implementation and the values of equality, diversity and interdependence should be at the heart of Youth Work.
- Young people, their families and the wider community should be involved in Youth Work in a meaningful way, with expectations managed within the resources available.
- Young people should expect high quality services, which follow best practice including the highest standards of child protection.
- Collaborative working between the voluntary, uniformed, faith-based and statutory sectors should play an important part in securing improved outcomes for young people and the continued commitment from the youth workforce, including volunteers.
- The contribution of the volunteer workforce within the youth sector is invaluable and should be acknowledged, supported and celebrated;
- Resources should be used to achieve priority outcomes for young people in the most cost effective way, according to best practice principles (public value).
- The needs of the young person should be the key focus at each stage of development.
- Activities should be engaging, enjoyable and planned to deliver improved outcomes.

Priorities for Youth directs that Youth Work must be planned in response to the assessed need, prioritised age ranges and other identified groups. It emphasises that strategic planning within Youth Services must reflect wider DE policy and that future Youth Provision will be consistent, transparent and allocated proportionate to the level of disadvantage experienced by young people.

Whilst the needs of specific groups of young people are prioritised, the policy is clear that general Youth Provision will also continue to be supported in line with the assessment of need.

Although the policy strives for closer alignment between DE funded Youth Work and the DE agenda, it also affirms that Youth Work can assist in the delivery of a range of other strategic outcomes such as the:

- Programme for Government.
- Children and Young People's 10 Year Plan.
- Play and Leisure Policy.
- Child Poverty Policy.
- Pathways to Success.
- Delivering Social Change.
- Together: Building a United Community.

The policy acknowledges initiatives and funding opportunities available at European level, along with the need to build on co-operation between youth sectors on a north/south and east/west basis.

The policy also recognises and supports the shared values and principles in the 2011 Concordat between the voluntary and community sector and the NI Executive and notes that DE is committed to working with partners in line with the Concordat. In turn, DE requires the Education Authority and other arms-length-bodies to adhere to the values and principles of the Concordat when carrying out activities on its behalf.

In planning for youth provision, Priorities for Youth asserts that managers must take account of a range of high level education policies and services, such as CRED, Extended Schools, Full Service Schools, Education Other Than At School (EOTAS), Irish Medium Education, Special Education, Area Learning Communities and the Entitlement Framework.

4.8 Community Relations, Equality and Diversity (CRED) and CRED Addendum

The Department of Education launched the Community Relations, Equality and Diversity (CRED) policy for Youth Services and schools in March 2011. The aim of

the CRED Policy was to contribute to improving relations between communities by educating children and young people to develop self-respect and respect for others by providing them, in formal and non-formal education settings, with opportunities to build relationships with those from different backgrounds and traditions within the resources available.

To assist the implementation of the CRED policy, earmarked funding was provided to support capacity building for teachers and Youth Workers. This was designed to provide opportunities for young people to engage in meaningful activities, to develop resources and to establish a dedicated website to display and disseminate effective good practice. However this funding was withdrawn in March 2015.

In 2014/2015 DE undertook a formal review of the CRED policy to ensure that the policy was meeting its aims and objectives and to inform further development of the policy. The review findings confirmed that the policy was fit for purpose and largely effective in improving attitudes of children and young people towards those they perceived to be different, helping prepare them to take their place in an increasingly diverse society.

In September 2016 DE published the CRED Addendum. While the core CRED policy remains unchanged, the Addendum provides an updated set of commitments to be read in conjunction with the policy. The Addendum recognises the close relationship between the CRED, Shared Education, and Priorities for Youth policies. DE states that its arms-length bodies will assist educational partners in reflecting the aims, objectives and core values of the CRED policy within plans to progress Shared Education and Priorities for Youth in a holistic way.

The Addendum identifies a range of key issues and actions for DE and education partners. In terms of resourcing CRED work in the youth sector, it notes that the Regional Youth Development Plan will articulate how CRED related issues will be addressed. It also highlights that the Education Authority and other delivery organisations will take account of the particular needs of those of differing sexual orientation, racial groups and disability.

The Education Authority will identify priority areas for professional learning for practitioners and ensure voluntary youth organisations have the knowledge and skills

to embed CRED through dissemination of good practice, training and mentor support.

4.9 Shared Education

The Shared Education Act (NI) 2016 received Royal Assent in May 2016, and the purpose of the Act is to make legislative provision in relation to Shared Education. It provides a definition of Shared Education and confers a duty on DE to encourage, facilitate and promote Shared Education. The Act also confers a power on relevant arms-length bodies, including the Education Authority and the Youth Council for Northern Ireland to encourage and facilitate Shared Education.

The Shared Education Act (NI) 2016 defines Shared Education as the education together of those of different religious belief, including reasonable numbers of both Protestant and Roman Catholic children or young persons and those who are experiencing socio-economic deprivation and those who are not. This form of education is secured by the working together and co-operation of two or more relevant providers. A relevant provider means a person providing education at a grant-aided school or services of any kind, including youth services, which provide educational benefit to children or young persons.

Shared Education means that the organisation and delivery of education must align to the following three principles:

- Meets the needs of and provides for the education together of learners from all Section 75 categories and socio-economic status.
- Involves schools and other education providers of differing ownership, sectoral identity and ethos, management type or governance arrangements.
- Delivers educational benefits to learners, promotes the efficient and effective use of resources, and promotes equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.

The vision for Shared Education, articulated in the DE policy 'Sharing Works' (September 2015) is for: *Vibrant, self-improving Shared Education partnerships delivering educational benefits to learners, encouraging the efficient and effective use of resources, and promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.*

The policy reflects that equality and inclusion are key features of high performing education systems, and states that all children and young people should have the opportunity to be involved in Shared Education. The policy is therefore aimed at:

- Both statutory and voluntary early years educational settings.
- Primary, post-primary and special schools.
- Non-formal educational environments, such as statutory and voluntary Youth Work settings.

4.10 Irish-Medium Education

There is a statutory duty on the Department of Education to encourage and facilitate Irish Medium Education (Education (NI) Order 1998). Irish Medium Education is education which is provided to children and young people in an Irish speaking school.

The Irish language has a legal protection beyond education, including a commitment in both the Good Friday Agreement 1998 and the St. Andrew's Agreement 2006 to promote the Irish language at an Executive level. The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, ratified in 2001, also gives protection and rights to Irish speakers in Northern Ireland.

Priorities for Youth makes specific reference to recommendation 18 of the Review of Irish Medium Education which states that *The Department of Education should encourage and support informal opportunities for learning through the medium of Irish in the youth sector.* Fóram na nÓg (Youth Forum) is the representative organisation for the Irish-Medium youth sector in Northern Ireland. The organisation seeks to develop the Irish Medium youth sector through co-operation with Youth

Workers and volunteers, youth club committees, Irish language organisations, statutory organisations, government departments and, most importantly, young people themselves.

4.11 DE Action Plan against Child Sexual Exploitation

The findings of a report into Child Sexual Exploitation in Northern Ireland, the Marshall report, were presented to Ministers of the NI Executive in 2014. In 2015 DE published an Education Action Plan in response to the Marshall Report which comprised 40 recommendations and associated actions, including eSafety advice and guidance to teachers and an eSafety zone within the C2k Exchange.

Among the recommendations which may directly relate to the Youth Service are:

- DE should conduct a review of Youth Services that take account of the views of young people and aim to ensure that such provision is attractive and appropriate.
- DE should explore the possibilities for peer education and mentoring as a way of informing and supporting young people about CSE.
- DE should ensure that Youth Workers, whether paid or voluntary, should receive training to help them to inform and support young people who may be at risk of CSE and to identify and report safeguarding issues appropriately.

5. Youth Work in Northern Ireland

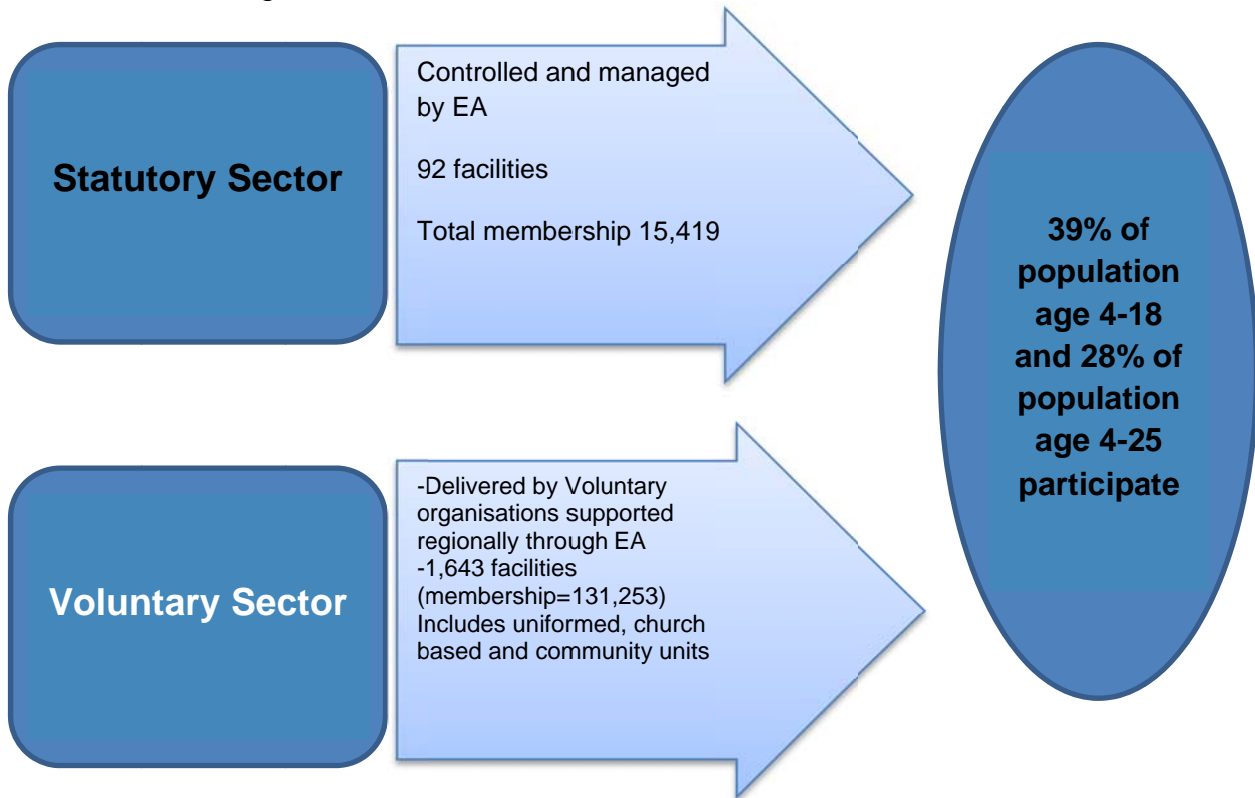
Youth Provision in Northern Ireland is made up of a range of diverse groups and organisations, including Controlled, Voluntary, Uniformed and Church Based. These range from rural groups with small memberships to larger urban organisations with bigger memberships. The Youth Sector in Northern Ireland consists of a statutory sector comprising 92 clubs and a Voluntary sector incorporating just under 1,700 units; collectively engaging 39% of the youth population aged 4-18. The most recent figures reveal that almost 180,000 young people participated in registered Youth Work.

Statutory and Voluntary Youth Services in receipt of grant aid are registered with the Education Authority and are subject to inspection by the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI). The Department of Education's investment in Youth Work aims to support and encourage young people to reach their potential and to improve their educational outcomes. This provision ranges from full-time youth centres to one night per week voluntary clubs.

In addition to these youth clubs, Youth Work also operates on an accreditation programme basis or on a detached basis. Examples of these types of provision include Community Relations, Equality and Diversity (CRED) programmes, Duke of Edinburgh's Award/Joint Award Initiative programmes, Outdoor Education Centres, statutory funded area based projects such as programmes for rural Youth Work and Outreach, Health programmes, Personal and Social Development programmes, Environmental projects, Inclusion schemes and Youth Intervention.

Accredited and non-accredited Youth Work also takes place in schools throughout Northern Ireland. These range from Transition programmes for Key Stage 2 pupils to Learning Together Programmes for Key Stage 3 and 4 pupils. School based programmes involve a range of diverse initiatives including Personal and Social Development projects, Health based projects and specific targeted programmes identified by schools. These programmes are designed to break down the barriers that some young people may face to learning and achieving. Programmes are also delivered in Special Schools to young people with Special Educational Needs or who are disabled.

This non-unit type provision typically accounts for around 25% of the total number of young people involved in youth activities, although in a majority of cases, these young people are already counted through their participation in Statutory and Voluntary centre-based provision. The following diagram illustrates the range and extent of EA registered Youth Provision that exists in Northern Ireland.



Non-Unit provision - Duke of Edinburgh's Award/Joint Award Initiative, The Prince's Trust, Youth Intervention, Area projects (issue based programmes, detached youth work), Schools based work, Youth Intervention, CRED, Extended provision, Summer Activities, Irish Medium youth work.

Age Ranges of Young People Participating in Youth Services

Priorities for Youth identified new priority age ranges for the Youth Service. In future there will be five distinct age bands for EA funded Youth Work, 4-8, 9-13, 14-18, 19-21 and 22-25. The key age bands for intervention will be 9-13 and 14-18.

The most commonly occurring age range at present for participation in the Youth Service is 9-13, accounting for 38% of the overall membership. Participation rates decline considerably in the 19-21 and 22-25 age bands. Indeed in the 22-25 age band participation rates register at 2.3%. Table 1 below shows participation in the

Youth Service as a percentage of the youth population. Only a very small proportion of the population over the age of 18 participate and those that do tend to be involved in leadership and volunteering roles or participate in accredited programmes.

Table 1: Youth Service Participation Rates (% of resident population)

Age Bands	Participation Rate 2015 Data Cycle
Age 4 - 8	34.8%
Age 9 - 13	50.0%
Age 14 - 18	33.1%
Age 19 - 21	7.3%
Age 22 - 25	2.3%
Age 4 - 18	39.0%
Age 4 - 25	27.8%

There are also geographic variations associated with participation rates. Areas near Strabane, Magherafelt and Cookstown have participation rates as low as 25% which is significantly below the average and below 18% at age 4-18. However, areas such as Craigavon and Carrickfergus show a participation rate in excess of 50% at age 4-18. In each age band apart from the 4-8 age band male participation is higher than female engagement. The chart below highlights the increasing proportion of male membership with age.

Chart 1: Youth Service Membership



In 2014, 63% of the total membership came from a Protestant community background and 34% from a Catholic background. There are however distinct

general patterns of engagement as those from a Protestant background are primarily associated with the small part-time church based and uniformed units, whereas those from a Catholic background tend to be more involved in larger voluntary groups.

Types of EA Registered Youth Provision

Historically the most common type of youth provision is in the uniformed sector, accounting for 37% of the total membership and 54% of the total number of units. This is followed by community based voluntary provision with 31% of total membership. Statutory or controlled provision accounts for around 10% of the total membership of the Youth Service. The other category includes organisations supporting young people with additional or special educational needs and disabled groups.

Table 2: Counts and Membership Totals of Youth Groups by Type of Provision

		Number of Units	Membership Totals	% of Membership
Statutory	Controlled	92	15,419	10.5%
Voluntary	Church Based	326	30,336	20.7%
	Community	352	45,951	31.3%
	Uniformed	937	53,397	36.4%
	Other	29	1,569	1.1%
Total		1,737	146,672	100.0%

Membership and Staffing Trends by Type of Provision

Annual data cycles reveal that the most popular form of youth provision in Northern Ireland is offered by uniformed youth groups. The membership of these groups tends to be younger (45% are aged 8 or under) and have more females than the other types of youth provision. Although a small number of uniformed groups can access the services of full-time staff, these tend to be exclusively church staff rather than EA funded Youth Work staff. Controlled provision is more evenly spread throughout Northern Ireland. Its membership lies mainly in the 9-13 age group who typically attend larger youth centres, with a further substantial component aged 14-

18 (see table below). Controlled units tend to be staffed by part-time and full-time workers whose posts are funded through EA.

Table 3: Key membership and staffing variables (Paid staff EA funded)

	Average Membership *	Average Hours Open*	% Volunteers	% Paid Part-Time Staff	% Full-Time Staff
Statutory	148.5	14	44.1	48.7	5.2
Church Based	59.5	3	94.3	3.1	0.3
Community	78.5	8	81.0	9.5	0.9
Uniformed	49	3.25	99.6	0.0	0.0
Other	53	6	88.0	3.1	0.0
Total	58	3.75	91.5	5.2	0.5

*Median value used to represent average

The provision of Youth Work can be categorised broadly into two types, Generic and Targeted. Generic Youth Work ensures that supportive environments are available to significant numbers of young people to help them enhance their personal and social skills, develop their communication skills and improve their levels of motivation and overall resilience. Targeted provision seeks to address the direct impact of exclusion and marginalisation, tackling key issues such as risk taking behaviour, health, sectarianism, racism, disaffection and low levels of attainment at school. Resources are also focused on specific groups of young people, such as the most vulnerable and disadvantaged, including those in the Section 75 groupings.

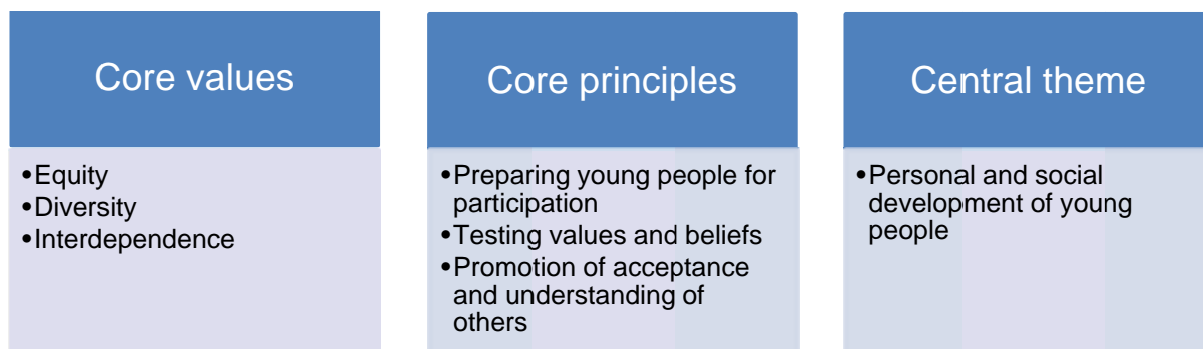
The targeting of provision is designed to meet the current policy guidelines ensuring that Youth Services are positioned to tackle the impact of economic and social deprivation that affects young people and which can make a positive impact on their future aspirations and life chances.

Whilst the Assessment of Need puts a particular focus on the needs and circumstances of specific groups, as defined by Priorities for Youth, it is important to emphasise the DE policy directive that universal or generic Youth Work will continue to be supported.

This is reflective of the fact that, regardless of socio-economic or situational context, all children and young people have universal developmental needs which can be

effectively supported by age-appropriate Youth Work provision in accordance with the Youth Work curriculum.

Youth Work: A Model for Effective Practice identified personal and social development as the central theme of Youth Work in Northern Ireland. The following diagram illustrates this as well as highlighting the core values and principles of Youth Work.²



Priorities for Youth describes some of the benefits of generic Youth Work for children and young people. It states that: *Effective Youth Work can help overcome barriers to learning by providing further opportunities to gain qualifications, to volunteer as junior leaders and to develop a range of skills and attributes that can help young people improve their life outcomes as individuals and as contributors to their community and the wider economy. It provides opportunities to build self-esteem, to work as part of a team, make friends, socialise and take part in enjoyable and structured activities in a safe environment. It also has the potential to develop mutual understanding and respect for others, and to promote recognition of, and respect for, cultural diversity.* (PfY 1.4)

The developmental needs of children and young people are not static and so the policy also directs that the focus of Youth Work activities should progress according to age, as follows:

- The focus for the age range 4-8 will be through general Youth Work provision linked to the Youth Work Curriculum;

² Curriculum Development Unit, 2003, *Youth Work: A Model for Effective Practice*, CDU, Antrim.

- For the age ranges 9-13 and 14-18 the focus will be on the provision of Youth Work activities, in line with the priority needs identified;
- For the 16+ age range, the focus will be on programmes that provide access to leadership/training opportunities or apprenticeships. Young people should also have access to recognised and/or accredited programmes to volunteer either within units or in the wider community;
- The focus for the age range 19-25 will be on issue based programmes or volunteering and leadership opportunities;
- For the age range 22-25, the focus will be on those who are either in, or at risk of being in, the group of young people not in education, employment or training or those who have not yet accessed developmental or other educational opportunities and are unlikely to do so.

Surveys undertaken with Youth Workers revealed that the best way to encourage more young people to become involved in Youth Services was through social media.

6. Youth Population

The population of Northern Ireland at the time of the census in 2011 stood at 1.8 million. The population of young people aged between 4 and 25 years was 531,929 representing almost 30% of the total population. Table 1 outlines the numbers of young people in each age range identified by *Priorities for Youth* for each new District Council. The priority age bands 9-13 and 14-18 as identified by *Priorities for Youth* accounts for 242,335 young people, representing 45.6% of the total youth population.

Table 1 - Numbers of Young People by Age Range

LGD2014	Aged 4-8	Aged 9-13	Aged 14-18	Aged 19-21	Aged 22-25	Total
Antrim and Newtownabbey	8,892	8,810	9,239	5,790	7,097	39,828
Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon	13,445	13,092	13,804	7,202	11,123	58,666
Belfast	18,621	19,261	22,438	18,884	23,196	102,400
Causeway Coast and Glens	8,533	9,228	9,860	6,107	7,445	41,173
Derry and Strabane	9,575	10,523	11,812	6,126	8,505	46,541
Fermanagh and Omagh	7,466	7,785	8,252	3,829	6,022	33,354
Lisburn and Castlereagh	8,151	8,378	9,092	4,756	6,270	36,647
Mid and East Antrim	8,210	8,225	9,155	4,711	6,745	37,046
Mid Ulster	9,697	9,583	10,141	5,528	8,325	43,274
Newry, Mourne and Down	11,689	12,056	12,852	6,476	9,620	52,693
North Down and Ards	9,147	9,138	9,611	5,043	7,368	40,307
Northern Ireland	113,426	116,079	126,256	74,452	101,716	531,929

Within Northern Ireland significant numbers of young people live in areas of multiple deprivation as identified by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). The Multiple Deprivation Measure is made up of seven key indicators including, income deprivation, employment deprivation, health deprivation, education deprivation, proximity to services, crime and disorder and the living environment.

More than one quarter of young people in Northern Ireland live in the 25% most deprived wards, however in both Belfast and Derry and Strabane District Councils this figure stands at more than 50% of young people. Table 2 highlights the numbers of young people living in the 25% most deprived wards in Northern Ireland and Table 3 highlights the numbers of young people living in rural areas. Table 4 gives a breakdown of the projected youth population by gender.

Table 2 - Number and Percentage of Young People Living in Deprived Areas

LGD 2014	Aged 4-8	Aged 9-13	Aged 14-18	Aged 19-25	Total
Antrim & Newtownabbey YP	8892	8810	9239	12887	39828
Antrim & Newtownabbey YP living in Deprived Areas	2524	2399	2580	3943	11446
% Antrim & Newtownabbey YP living in Deprived Areas	28.4	27.2	27.9	30.6	28.7
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon YP	13445	13092	13804	18325	58666
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon YP living in Deprived Areas	1208	1080	1175	1793	5256
% Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon YP living in Deprived Areas	9.0	8.2	8.5	9.8	9.0
Belfast YP	18621	19261	22438	42080	102400
Belfast YP living in Deprived Areas	10664	11062	12822	19733	54281
% Belfast YP living in Deprived Areas	57.3	57.4	57.1	46.9	53.0
Causeway Coast & Glens YP	8533	9228	9860	13552	41173
Causeway Coast & Glens YP living in Deprived Areas	1592	1681	1792	2517	7582
% Causeway Coast & Glens YP living in Deprived Areas	18.7	18.2	18.2	18.6	18.4
Derry & Strabane YP	9575	10523	11812	14631	46541
Derry & Strabane YP living in Deprived Areas	4942	5463	6369	8692	25466
% Derry & Strabane YP living in Deprived Areas	51.6	51.9	53.9	59.4	54.7
Fermanagh & Omagh YP	7466	7785	8252	9851	33354
Fermanagh & Omagh YP living in Deprived Areas	877	863	908	1204	3852
% Fermanagh & Omagh YP living in Deprived Areas	11.7	11.1	11.0	12.2	11.5
Lisburn & Castlereagh YP	8151	8378	9092	11026	36647
Lisburn & Castlereagh YP living in Deprived Areas	368	326	375	514	1583
% Lisburn & Castlereagh YP living in Deprived Areas	4.5	3.9	4.1	4.7	4.3
Mid & East Antrim YP	8210	8225	9155	11456	37046
Mid & East Antrim YP living in Deprived Areas	1333	1191	1341	2163	6028
% Mid & East Antrim YP living in Deprived Areas	16.2	14.5	14.6	18.9	16.3
Mid Ulster YP	9697	9583	10141	13853	43274
Mid Ulster YP living in Deprived Areas	1343	1278	1335	2038	5994
% Mid Ulster YP living in Deprived Areas	13.8	13.3	13.2	14.7	13.9
Newry, Mourne & Down YP	11689	12056	12852	16096	52693
Newry, Mourne & Down YP living in Deprived Areas	2018	2117	2230	3164	9529
% Newry, Mourne & Down YP living in Deprived Areas	17.3	17.6	17.4	19.7	18.1
North Down & Ards YP	9147	9138	9611	12411	40307
North Down & Ards YP living in Deprived Areas	678	597	634	1009	2918
% North Down & Ards YP living in Deprived Areas	7.4	6.5	6.6	8.1	7.2
Northern Ireland YP	113426	116079	126256	176168	531929
Northern Ireland YP living in Deprived Areas	27547	28057	31561	46770	133935
% Northern Ireland YP living in Deprived Areas	24.3	24.2	25.0	26.5	25.2

Table 3 - Number and Percentage of Young People Living in Rural Areas

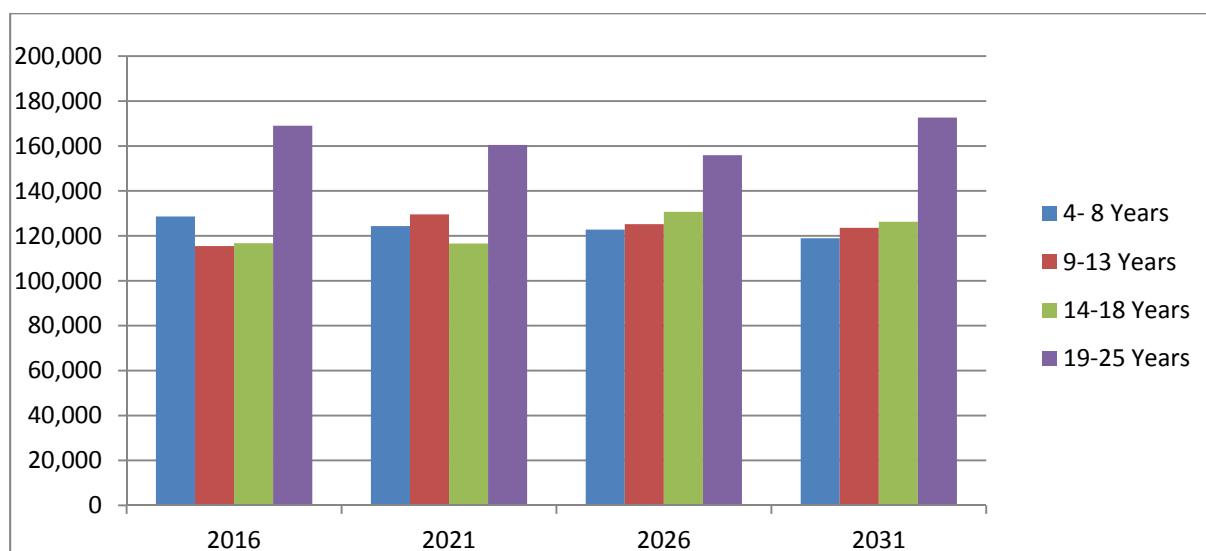
LGD 2014	Aged 4-8	Aged 9-13	Aged 14-18	Aged 19-25	Total
Antrim & Newtownabbey YP	8892	8810	9239	12887	39828
Antrim & Newtownabbey YP living in Rural Areas	1658	1820	1858	1922	7258
% Antrim & Newtownabbey YP living in Rural Areas	18.6	20.7	20.1	14.9	18.2
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon YP	13445	13092	13804	18325	58666
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon YP living in Rural Areas	5942	5668	5965	7191	24766
% Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon YP living in Rural Areas	44.2	43.3	43.2	39.2	42.2
Belfast YP	18621	19261	22438	42080	102400
Belfast YP living in Rural Areas	0	0	0	0	0
% Belfast YP living in Rural Areas	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Causeway Coast & Glens YP	8533	9228	9860	13552	41173
Causeway Coast & Glens YP living in Rural Areas	4257	4655	4759	5953	19624
% Causeway Coast & Glens YP living in Rural Areas	49.9	50.4	48.3	43.9	47.7
Derry & Strabane YP	9575	10523	11812	14631	46541
Derry & Strabane YP living in Rural Areas	4007	4451	4723	5161	18342
% Derry & Strabane YP living in Rural Areas	41.8	42.3	40.0	35.3	39.4
Fermanagh & Omagh YP	7466	7785	8252	9851	33354
Fermanagh & Omagh YP living in Rural Areas	5654	5885	6240	7199	24978
% Fermanagh & Omagh YP living in Rural Areas	75.7	75.6	75.6	73.1	74.9
Lisburn & Castlereagh YP	8151	8378	9092	11026	36647
Lisburn & Castlereagh YP living in Rural Areas	2588	2658	2740	2915	10901
% Lisburn & Castlereagh YP living in Rural Areas	31.8	31.7	30.1	26.4	29.7
Mid & East Antrim YP	8210	8225	9155	11456	37046
Mid & East Antrim YP living in Rural Areas	3021	3001	3279	3848	13149
% Mid & East Antrim YP living in Rural Areas	36.8	36.5	35.8	33.6	35.5
Mid Ulster YP	9697	9583	10141	13853	43274
Mid Ulster YP living in Rural Areas	6528	6424	6729	8901	28582
% Mid Ulster YP living in Rural Areas	67.3	67.0	66.4	64.3	66.0
Newry, Mourne & Down YP	11689	12056	12852	16096	52693
Newry, Mourne & Down YP living in Rural Areas	6585	6738	6914	8316	28553
% Newry, Mourne & Down YP living in Rural Areas	56.3	55.9	53.8	51.7	54.2
North Down & Ards YP	9147	9138	9611	12411	40307
North Down & Ards YP living in Rural Areas	1686	1688	1726	1995	7095
% North Down & Ards YP living in Rural Areas	18.4	18.5	18.0	16.1	17.6
Northern Ireland YP	113426	116079	126256	176168	531929
Northern Ireland YP living in Rural Areas	41926	42988	44996	53401	183311
% Northern Ireland YP living in Rural Areas	37.0	37.0	35.6	30.3	34.5

Table 4 – Projected Youth Population (2017) by Gender

Population Projection 2017	Aged 4-8	Aged 9-13	Aged 14-18	Aged 19-25	Total
Antrim & Newtownabbey YP Male	5010	4849	4392	6106	20357
Antrim & Newtownabbey YP Female	4821	4490	4257	5952	19520
Antrim & Newtownabbey YP Total	9831	9339	8649	12058	39877
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon YP Male	8073	7329	6753	9077	31232
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon YP Female	7757	7108	6260	8448	29573
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon YP Total	15830	14437	13013	17525	60805
Belfast YP Male	11622	10103	9772	20342	51839
Belfast YP Female	11064	9588	9380	19879	49911
Belfast YP Total	22686	19691	19152	40221	101750
Causeway Coast & Glens YP Male	4660	4656	4627	6458	20401
Causeway Coast & Glens YP Female	4462	4348	4375	6218	19403
Causeway Coast & Glens YP Total	9122	9004	9002	12676	39804
Derry & Strabane YP Male	5483	5000	5191	7082	22756
Derry & Strabane YP Female	5346	4739	4835	6929	21849
Derry & Strabane YP Total	10829	9739	10026	14011	44605
Fermanagh & Omagh YP Male	4264	4070	3949	4907	17190
Fermanagh & Omagh YP Female	3883	3769	3817	4319	15788
Fermanagh & Omagh YP Total	8147	7839	7766	9226	32978
Lisburn & Castlereagh YP Male	4835	4529	4200	5997	19561
Lisburn & Castlereagh YP Female	4535	4191	4035	5347	18108
Lisburn & Castlereagh YP Total	9370	8720	8235	11344	37669
Mid & East Antrim YP Male	4209	4277	4153	5790	18429
Mid & East Antrim YP Female	4074	4158	4031	5447	17710
Mid & East Antrim YP Total	8283	8435	8184	11237	36139
Mid Ulster YP Male	5605	5255	4925	6774	22559
Mid Ulster YP Female	5587	5018	4686	6283	21574
Mid Ulster YP Total	11192	10273	9611	13057	44133
Newry, Mourne & Down YP Male	6745	6297	6057	7804	26903
Newry, Mourne & Down YP Female	6509	5984	5741	7420	25654
Newry, Mourne & Down YP Total	13254	12281	11798	15224	52557
North Down & Ards YP Male	4907	4961	4613	5940	20421
North Down & Ards YP Female	4702	4656	4358	5500	19216
North Down & Ards YP Total	9609	9617	8971	11440	39637
Northern Ireland YP Male	65413	61326	58632	86277	271648
Northern Ireland YP Female	62740	58049	55775	81742	258306
Northern Ireland YP Total	128153	119375	114407	168019	529954

Chart 1 – Northern Ireland Population Projections

The following table details the youth population predictions for the age bands identified in Priorities for Youth. The figures reveal that there are fluctuations in numbers in each age band year on year.



6.1 Young People Living in Deprived Areas

Children and young people growing up in poverty have worse outcomes and life chances than those who do not. According to the Child Poverty Action Group, for young people poverty is not just about growing up in a low income household it is also about being denied good health, education and housing, basic self-esteem and the ability to participate in social activities.³

Young people living in deprived areas tend to have lower aspirations, have low educational aspirations and tend to underachieve in school. Close knit local social networks, low population mobility and a history of economic decline also appear to characterise neighbourhoods where young people are less likely to develop high educational aspirations.

Young people and their parents are influenced by the people and places where they live. Neighbourhood characteristics such as housing, the local environment, crime

³ Child Poverty Action Group, 2016, <http://www.cpag.org.uk/povertyfacts/index.htm>

rates and the quality of services are also likely to influence and impact upon the attitudes and outcomes of young people.

More than one quarter of all young people in Northern Ireland live in the 25% most deprived wards. This equates to more than 130,000 young people.

6.2 Young People Living in Rural Communities

More than one third of young people from Northern Ireland live in communities that have been defined as rural. In Newry, Mourne and Down more than half of all young people, in Mid Ulster almost two thirds of young people and in Fermanagh and Omagh almost three quarters of all young people live in rural areas.

For many children and young people, living in a rural community presents many challenges. There is a lack of facilities, such as cinemas or clubs, which their peers in urban areas take for granted. This isolation from services is often exacerbated by a lack of transport options and hidden poverty.

Rural deprivation is scattered and can be masked by living alongside relative affluence. Young people in rural communities face differing levels of social exclusion and marginalisation. Rural isolation also presents challenges for the provision of adequate public transport and the viability and accessibility of Youth Services.

A Department of Agriculture and Rural Development report noted that whilst poverty and social isolation exist in both urban and rural areas it should also be recognised that: 'those living in rural areas often experience poverty and social isolation differently due to issues relating to geographical isolation, lower population density and the dispersed nature of many rural settlements'.⁴

A lack of transport in rural areas was highlighted by Youth Workers as limiting a young person's opportunity to access Youth Services and could lead to social isolation.

⁴ Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, 2016, Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation – A New Framework, DARD, Belfast.

⁵ Commission for Rural Communities, 2012, Barriers to Education, Employment and Training for Young People in Rural Areas, Commission for Rural Communities, Gloucester.

6.3 Special Educational Needs and Disability

A child or young person has Special Educational Needs (SEN) if he or she has learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for him or her to learn than most other children and young people of about the same age. This definition explains that a learning disability includes the presence of a significantly reduced ability to understand new or complex information, a reduced ability to cope independently and an impairment that started before adulthood with a lasting effect on development.

The British Institute of Learning Disabilities state that a young person with learning difficulties may feel excluded or marginalised and this isolation continues when they leave school.⁶ In 2015 the CRED Reference group commissioned research into a number of themes, including disability. In terms of SEN and disability, the research report describes a range of differing and often individualised needs which must be considered in youth settings.

The study found that a child with autism may find the noise in a youth club intimidating, some young people with disabilities will have particular transport needs; others may require individualised personal support needs or access to interpreters, accessible buildings and accessible information. The research also noted particular barriers to disability friendly provision in rural communities and the need for specialised support and extra considerations such as transport costs.⁷

There are a range of issues and barriers which may be faced by young people with a learning disability including limited social contact, limited access to transport and bullying. Other barriers can include having access to information, being included in youth programmes and other services, lack of choice, environmental factors such as noise and negative attitudes and perceptions. It has also been observed that parents may be overprotective of their disabled children until they are assured that they are in a safe environment where their needs are met.⁸

⁶ British Institute of Learning Disabilities, 2011, Factsheet: Learning Disabilities, BILD, Birmingham.

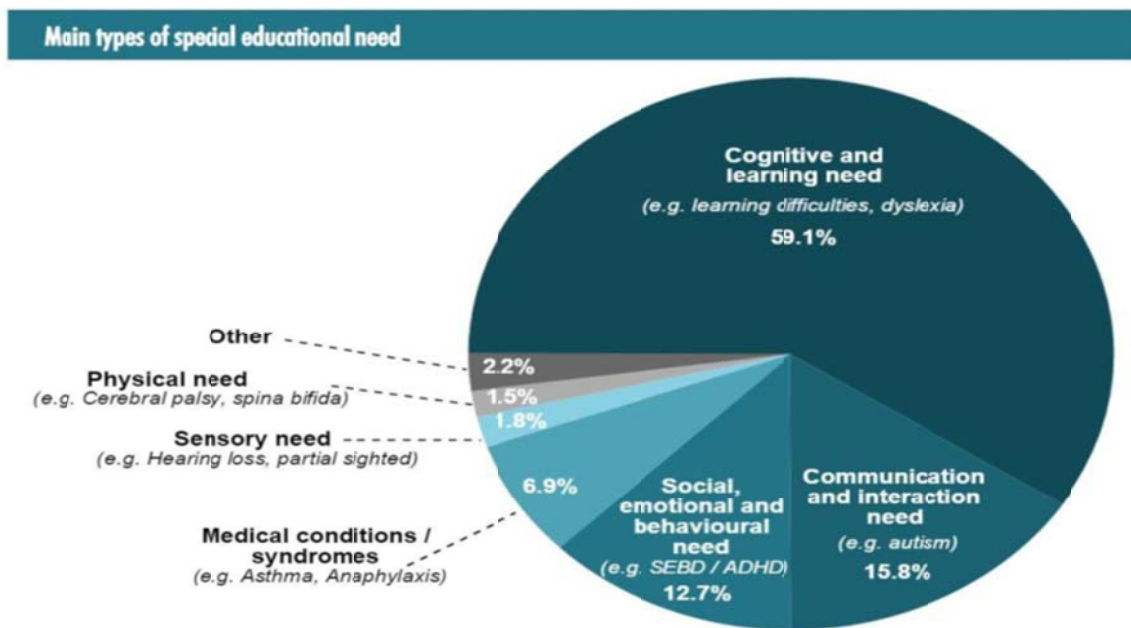
⁷ Erwin, D. & Thompson, L., (2015) Research Study to Establish Need at Regional Level for Community Relations, Equality and Diversity Based Youth Work, Commissioned by the CRED Reference Group, Belfast. (Unpublished).

⁸McVitty-O'Hara, H., Slevin, C, & Walsh, A., (2012) Chapter on Diversity in Access all Areas – A Diversity Toolkit for the Youth Work Sector' Youthnet & NYCI, Belfast

Disability continues to be a major factor limiting life choices and opportunities among children and young people. In May 2015, there were 30,400 claims made for Disability Living Allowance (DLA) in respect of 0-24 year olds, representing 15% of all claimants. Within the registered Youth Service in 2014, 4.4% of the total membership was made up of young people with a disability.

The Children and Young People Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) identified the transition of young people with disabilities into adulthood as a time of additional stress. A range of quantitative and qualitative evidence was collated by the CYPSP regional subgroup, including evidence of limited access to social activities within the local community which may lead to isolation or loneliness and possible mental health issues, delayed transition planning which can cause anxiety for families and an inconsistency in post-school opportunities.⁹

The number of pupils with Special Educational Needs has been steadily rising, with an additional 1,700 pupils with any needs and more than 700 additional pupils with Statements compared to the previous academic year. The majority of pupils with Special Educational Needs are now educated in a mainstream setting which has implications for education policy and provision. The main types of Special Educational Needs of pupils in 2014/15 are presented in the diagram below.



⁹Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership, 2011, Regional Sub Group Transition to Adulthood of Young people with Disabilities. Draft Action Plan 2011-14, CYPS, Belfast.

6.4 Looked After Children and Young People

The Children (NI) Order 1995 states that a Looked After Child is one who is in the care of a Trust or who is provided with accommodation by a Trust. Looked After Children can live either in a residential home, in a residential school, in a foster placement or in a family placement with a relative or occasionally at home. The needs of Looked After Children are complex with many experiencing some form of trauma prior to becoming a Looked After Child.

In March 2014 there were 2,858 Looked after Children in Northern Ireland, of these, the greatest concentrations were in Belfast, Derry and Strabane, Newry, Mourne and Down and Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon. DE school census data reveals that there were 2,095 Looked After Children attending schools in Northern Ireland during the 2015/2016 school year.

There are currently no numbers for Looked after Children attending registered provision, however, there is a network of Residential Homes for children across the region run by Social Services and other providers. A recent report concluded that the educational outcomes of Looked After Children are poorer than those of other young people and the gap widens as they progress through post-primary school.¹⁰ Some reasons given for this underachievement include care placement instability, a culture of low or limited expectations, higher than average rates of school exclusion and a lack of social capital.

Looked After Children and young people are also more likely to have been excluded or suspended from school and a study of 66 young people in care revealed that 41 had been suspended for more than 60 days. Looked After Children and young people also tend to move between schools frequently and often in difficult circumstances. Overall, this lack of consistency is cited as a contributory factor to poor educational achievements and issues around emotional well-being.¹¹

Research into the underlying causes of non-attendance at school by Looked After Children found a range of contributory factors including peer pressure, behavioural issues (one of the main reasons for exclusion is persistent, disruptive behaviour),

¹⁰ Perry, C., 2014, Looked After Children – Educational Policy and Practice, NIAO, Belfast.

¹¹ Burns, S., Leitch, R., & Hughes, J., (2015) Education Inequalities in Northern Ireland, Queens University Belfast, Belfast.

underlying social and personal issues (such as dealing with the loss of a parent or drug or alcohol problems), personal factors (as well as possible SEN, Looked After Children may have a lack of self-esteem, social skills and challenging peer relations) and unsettling contact with birth parents for those in stable foster care.¹²

Looked After school leavers also face particular barriers during the transition from care into independent living. A high proportion of them, (74%), left formal education with either no qualifications or less than 5 GCSEs. Inevitably, many face difficulties gaining employment.

In 2014/15 there were 289 Looked After leavers aged 16-18, and 240 aged 19. Of those aged 19 for whom information was available, 34% were classed as Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET). A high proportion of all care leavers (16%) aged 19 were parents, with over a quarter of the female cohort becoming mothers before their 19th birthday. A disproportionate number of this group, (15%), were also living with some form of disability.¹³

Between 2010 and 2013 VOYPIC (Voice of Young People in Care) conducted annual computer assisted surveys of children and young people in care across all regions of Northern Ireland. In 2013, 105 Looked After Children and young people participated in the survey. The analysis reveals that key issues for young people in care include contact and placement, as well as having their voice heard. Issues and needs in respect of education, support, safety and stability also featured in the survey. Whilst 79% of respondents felt settled and safe where they lived, 21% did not feel settled, and 17% did not feel safe. In terms of interpersonal interactions, only 54% felt they always got on well with others at school, college or in training and 34% reported having been bullied at school. The survey also found that in terms of attendance, the majority of those who had been out of education for more than three months were those living in residential care.¹⁴

¹² PricewaterCoopers, 2011, Study into how the Education System Can Improve the Attendance of Looked After Children at Post-Primary School, DENI, Bangor.

¹³ Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, (2016), Northern Ireland Care Leavers 2014/15, DHSSPS, Belfast.

¹⁴ VOYPIC, 2014, Our Life in Care: VOYPIC's CASI Survey 2013, VOYPIC, Belfast.

6.5 Newcomer Pupils

A newcomer pupil is one who has enrolled in a school but who does not have the satisfactory language skills to participate fully in the school curriculum, the wider environment and does not have a language in common with the teacher, whether that is English or Irish. This has previously been referred to as English as an Additional Language. It does not however refer to indigenous pupils who choose to attend an Irish Medium school.

Figures for 2015/2016 reveal that there were 12,187 Newcomer pupils attending schools in Northern Ireland, an increase of 1,032 from the previous year. This figure does not include children attending pre-school centres or Nursery schools. Although these newcomer pupils are dispersed throughout each District Council area there is not an even distribution as Table 15 illustrates. The greatest concentrations are in the Belfast, Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon and Mid Ulster District Council areas. Indeed almost 60% of all Newcomer pupils live in these three areas. Statistics for Newcomers attending registered provision are not currently collected.

Table 15 – Newcomer Pupils

LGD	Primary	Post-Primary	Special	Total
Antrim & Newtownabbey	568	71	19	658
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon	1894	579	25	2498
Belfast	2071	500	26	2597
Causeway Coast & Glens	459	113	7	579
Derry & Strabane	279	56	2	337
Fermanagh & Omagh	527	186	2	715
Lisburn & Castlereagh	533	163	22	718
Mid & East Antrim	431	186	6	623
Mid Ulster	1762	415	9	2186
Newry, Mourne & Down	754	238	9	1001
North Down & Ards	230	43	2	275
Total	9508	2550	129	12187

A review of research into the experiences of newcomer children highlights a range of barriers to educational achievement including limited English language ability, lack of knowledge of the education system, racist bullying, social exclusion, starting the school year at different points in time, being placed in younger age or lower ability

groups and the capacity of schools to respond to Newcomer pupils' needs. Research into racial equality in post-primary schools found that newcomers were significantly less likely to attend grammar schools compared to non-newcomers with contributory factors including parental lack of knowledge of the education system.¹⁵

DE has established an Inclusion and Diversity Service to provide support and guidance to schools regarding provision for Newcomer pupils. The regional Inclusion and Diversity Service exists to strengthen and improve support to newcomer children and young people and their parents, primarily working through schools. A recent report highlighted that because of the rapid demographic change affecting Northern Ireland, schools are dealing with a diverse range of nationalities, languages and cultures. Consequently, language barriers have been identified as an obstacle to families in terms of integration and accessing education and other statutory services.¹⁶ It has also been suggested that unrecognised or unreported Special Educational Needs or disabilities may present additional barriers for Newcomer pupils in successfully accessing the curriculum.¹⁷

6.6 Pupils from the Travelling Community

The Travelling Community in Northern Ireland represents the second largest ethnic minority group. It is estimated that there are 1,400 members of the Travelling Community living in Northern Ireland. The issues facing Irish Travellers are often linked to social exclusion, disadvantage and discrimination. The vast majority of Travellers hold no formal qualifications, and 92% have no qualification equivalent to or higher than GCSEs. The Equality Commission noted that young people from the Traveller Community and Roma children have some of the lowest levels of attainment of all equality groups.¹⁸ There are also significantly higher levels of non-attendance at school and almost non-existent attendance at Further or Higher Education. DE in 2011 established a taskforce to review the educational needs of Traveller children. The taskforce identified six core issues which act as negative

¹⁵ Burns, S., Leitch, R., & Hughes, J., (2015) Education Inequalities in Northern Ireland, Queens University Belfast, Belfast.

¹⁶ Kernaghan, D., (2015), Feels Like Home: Exploring the Experiences of Newcomer Pupils in Primary Schools in Northern Ireland, Barnardo's NI, Belfast.

¹⁷ Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, 2015, Key Inequalities in Education (Unpublished).

¹⁸ Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, 2015, Key Inequalities in Education (Unpublished).

barriers for Travellers in terms of their education: These include the following, access, attendance, integration and segregation, resourcing, evaluation and partnership.¹⁹

Young Travellers regularly encounter discrimination in a number of ways, such as, denial of access to services and verbal and physical abuse, purely on the basis of their identity as Travellers. Combined with the effects of indirect discrimination, which can affect access to health services, education and employment, many young Travellers also feel socially unaccepted, inferior to other young people, anxious about their identity and have low self-esteem. A number of issues can impact young Travellers' experiences and perceptions of school, including intergenerational attitudes and discrimination. Many young Travellers leave school early resulting in poor literacy, numeracy and other skills.²⁰

In the school year 2014/2015 there were 978 members of the Travelling Community attending schools in Northern Ireland, an increase of 24. The greatest concentrations of this group live in Mid Ulster, Newry, Mourne and Down and Belfast. More than half of all Traveller children live in social housing. Of this group, 517 attend registered provision.

Table 16 – Travelling Community Pupils

LGA	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Antrim & Newtownabbey	22	23	10
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon	140	146	104
Belfast	54	71	155
Causeway Coast & Glens	5	10	5
Derry & Strabane	112	116	102
Fermanagh & Omagh	114	126	142
Lisburn & Castlereagh	65	65	15
Mid & East Antrim	42	50	67
Mid Ulster	188	211	207
Newry, Mourne & Down	132	131	166
North Down & Ards	6	5	5
Total	880	954	978

¹⁹ McVeigh, R. & Joyce, C., (2011), Taskforce on Traveller Education – Report of the Taskforce, DENI, Bangor.

²⁰ Loftus, L. & Fitzpatrick, M., 2012 Chapter on Young Travellers in Access all Areas – A Diversity Toolkit for the Youth Work Sector' Youthnet & NYCI, Belfast

Research undertaken by Queen's University Belfast on behalf of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission reported that more than three quarters of all Traveller pupils were entitled to Free School Meals and a similar proportion had some form of Special Educational Need.²¹ Health concerns further compound many of the difficulties the Travelling Community face. The mortality rate for Traveller children up to the age of 10 has been found to be ten times higher than average. Overall, the life expectancy of Travellers is around 20% lower than that of the general population. Only 10% of the Traveller population are over 40 years of age and only 1% are aged over 65.

A recent report based on Travellers from Scotland, England and Northern Ireland noted that young Travellers from Northern Ireland experienced racism and negative societal attitudes and assumptions towards their community, culture and traditions. There was also a perception that they were negatively stereotyped and disliked by mainstream society.²² Research undertaken by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation concluded that the Traveller Community continues to suffer from particularly severe inequalities in the areas of employment, education, accommodation and health.²³

6.7 Ethnicity

According to the 2011 Census, there are 13,249 young people of a non-white ethnic background throughout Northern Ireland and also a total of 22,957 young people aged 0-24 resident in Northern Ireland who were born outside of the UK and Republic of Ireland, representing 4% of the total resident population. Of this group, 2,991 attend registered provision.

Research undertaken by the Equality Commission has shown that minority ethnic school leavers are more likely to leave school without any GCSEs and become unemployed than white school leavers. Furthermore, an emergent inequality can be seen in that minority ethnic school leavers are less likely to attain 2 or more A Levels

²¹ Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, 2012, Education Reform in Northern Ireland, A Human Rights Review, NIHRC, Belfast.

²² Article 12 in Scotland, 2015, Young Gypsy Travellers' Lives, Article 12 in Scotland, Montrose.

²³ Lucas, O. & Jarman, N., 2016, Poverty and Ethnicity: Key Messages for Northern Ireland, JRF, York.

or 5 or more GCSEs and 5 or more GCSEs including English and Maths than their white peers.²⁴

A review of linkages between poverty and ethnicity in Northern Ireland highlighted that those from the Black community and from EU accession countries face significant inequalities in terms of the employment market. The key needs for those of working age were cited as support for developing language skills, recognition of qualifications gained abroad, and improved advice on career choices and training.

The range of difficulties faced by ethnic minority individuals, including asylum seekers and the Traveller community, includes housing, healthcare and benefits. A repeated theme within the research was the impact of social networks on poverty, with those from larger, ethnically mixed networks found to be significantly less likely to be in poverty than those with small mono-ethnic networks. A lack of time and money, racism, and the absence of neutral and culturally sensitive spaces in which to meet were all noted as barriers for ethnic minorities in building networks.²⁵

6.8 Young Carers

Young carers are defined as children and young people up to 18 years who have a substantive caring role for a family member. Given the importance of their role within the family and the effect that this level of responsibility can have on their development and emotional well-being, the Children and Young Peoples Strategic Partnership recommended that young carers should receive additional support.

The impact of these barriers includes low attainment, social isolation, school absence and behavioural issues. This can consequently affect future wellbeing, life chances and fulfilling potential. Research from 2011 highlighted that 27% of young carers of secondary school age experienced educational difficulties or were absent from school. This rises to 40% when caring for someone with Hidden Harm issues. Furthermore 68% experienced bullying at school and 39% said that nobody was aware of their role as a Carer.

²⁴ Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, 2015, Key Inequalities in Education (Unpublished).

²⁵ Lucas, O. & Jarman, N., 2016, Poverty and Ethnicity: Key Messages for Northern Ireland, JRF, York.

The Youth Service can contribute to the Children and Young People's Young Carer's Action Plan by encouraging and supporting young carers in accessing community based youth provision. This will reduce the social isolation that young carers experience. Additionally, it will facilitate the bridging of individual young carers into social networks in the community and help them develop independence.

6.9 Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)

Statistics provided for the Labour Force Survey for January to March 2016 indicated that there were 24,000 young people who were classified as being Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).²⁶

A scoping study of young people who are NEET highlighted that they tend to have one or more of the following characteristics:

- Are or have been in care.
- Have had a negative experience of education.
- Have suffered from bullying at school.
- Have literacy and numeracy problems.
- Are carers or parents.
- Have been involved with drug and alcohol abuse.
- Have a physical or learning disability.
- Have committed a crime.
- Have a mental illness.
- Suffer from economic disadvantage.
- Are homeless.²⁷

Core NEET describes those young people who have one or a multiple of barriers preventing engagement in education, training or employment. Young people identified as Core NEET typically have few or low level qualifications. Many find it hard to cope with, or cannot see the point of school, leave school for reasons

²⁶ Department for the Economy, 2016, Quarterly Supplement to the Labour Market – January –March 2016, Department for the Economy, Belfast.

²⁷ Northern Ireland Executive, 2012, Pathways to Success: Preventing Exclusion and Promoting Participation of Young People, NIE, Belfast.

connected to home life or other circumstances. A recent ComRes survey commissioned by the University and College Union (UCU) of over 1,000 young people who are NEET found that a majority of those who had been out of work for over a year (66%) felt that their education had not provided them with the appropriate skills they needed for working life. The disconnection from education and from training and employment goes deeper however. Young people who are NEET are less likely to vote, to participate socially, or to trust institutions that might help them. They can be hard to engage and motivate and are not typically “joiners” or “stayers” on programmes. They often come from communities in which there is little sense of a positive future and where there is peer pressure not to succeed.

About a third of young people in the UCU survey felt they had no chance of ever getting a job, and 37% said they rarely even left the house. As little as six months out of employment, education or training has been shown to impact on mental health and the likelihood of acquiring a criminal record.²⁸

Research undertaken by YouGov on behalf of the Prince’s Trust revealed a decline in the confidence and happiness levels of NEET young people. NEET young people are significantly less happy across all areas of their lives than their peers. NEET young people have an overall index of 59 compared to 72 for those who are in employment, education or training.²⁹

6.10 Young Offenders

Youth crime and anti-social behaviour continues to be a problem in Northern Ireland especially in areas of socio-economic deprivation. Adamson (2003) noted that a range of risk factors cause offending and anti-social behaviour among young people while protective factors are absent.³⁰ Major risk factors for youth crime are:

- Low income and poor housing.
- Living in deteriorated inner city areas.
- A high degree of impulsiveness and hyperactivity.

²⁸ University and College Union, 2013, NEETs Survey, UCU, Belfast.

²⁹ The Prince’s Trust, 2015, The Prince’s Trust Annual Youth Index, The Prince’s Trust, London.

³⁰ Adamson S, 2003, Youth Crime: Diversionary Approaches to Reduction, National Crime Consortium, Sheffield.

- Low intelligence and low school attainment.
- Poor parental supervision and harsh and erratic discipline.
- Parental conflict and broken families.
- Having a peer group of friends who are offenders.
- Not having much to do in their home area.
- Using alcohol or drugs.
- Having emotional problems.
- Lack of local diversionary activities.

Children and young people who experience several of these difficulties together may be at greater risk of getting involved in crime. It has also been suggested that being involved in criminal activity when young will have a negative impact on later life chances. Young offenders are less likely to achieve educationally, their employment prospects are limited and they are more likely to reoffend as young people and offend as adults.

The risk factors for youth offending and substance abuse overlap to a very large degree with those for educational underachievement, young parenthood and adolescent mental health problems. Action taken to address these risk factors and to increase levels of protection therefore helps to prevent a range of negative outcomes. Moreover, because these outcomes are closely related (anti-social behaviour is strongly correlated with heavy alcohol consumption, for example, and vice versa), this broad based approach to prevention offers the greatest prospect of securing lasting reductions in offending behaviour.

Statistics from the Youth Justice Agency Northern Ireland (2014) reveal that there were 645 Juvenile Justice Centre Transactions, 199 Young People in Custody, 1,563 Youth Justice Service Referrals and 873 Young People Involved with Youth Justice Services. It would be reasonable to infer that the majority of young people coming into contact with the Youth Justice Agency are from areas of high deprivation as evidenced by the Crime & Disorder Domain.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) noted that the term anti-social behaviour is used to describe a wide range of inconsiderate and nuisance behaviour; such as excessive noise, graffiti, littering and disputes with neighbours. While this

type of behaviour may not in itself fall within the scope of the criminal law, it can have an equally adverse effect on the quality of life of individuals and communities. It is therefore important to address concerns about anti-social behaviour at an early stage, before a problem appears to be getting needlessly out of control.

The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency provides information on incidences of Anti-Social Behaviour and Hate Motivated Crimes, however, the information provided is not age specific. It can however be reasonably assumed that these figures include young people involved in racist, homophobic and sectarian motivated incidents, especially at interface areas and during periods of heightened social unrest.

6.11 Young People Living at Interface Areas

A recent research project funded by the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) highlighted that whilst interface neighbourhoods are often associated with sectarianism and inter-community conflict, wider risk factors can negatively impact on a young person's development, coping skills, emotional well-being, anxiety, sectarian behaviour and adjustment problems. The multidimensional research drew on a number of data sources, including a longitudinal survey data, collected between 2007 and 2012, interviews and focus groups with at risk young people and interviews with mothers. Research participants were drawn from 24 socially deprived neighbourhoods in Belfast.

The research found that the types of risks facing young people living in interface areas included alcohol and drug use, mental health problems, aggression, conduct problems including antisocial behaviour and problems with authority figures. These factors were in turn related to the erosion of the traditional family unit and problems in the school setting.

Qualitative data suggested high levels of alcohol and substance abuse across all age groups, and alcohol abuse was particularly pronounced among females in the younger age group (11-14 years). The quantitative survey also indicated that 36% of participants reported binge drinking, with over 5% reporting binge drinking 2-3 times per week. Young people's involvement and exposure to heavy and persistent drug

use was also a major theme to emerge from the research, with the highest drug and substance abuse found among those aged 15-18 years. The study noted young people's lack of awareness of the health and social risks of both binge drinking and drug and substance misuse.

The qualitative evidence suggested that mental health problems, such as low-self-esteem, anxiety, depressive feelings and low mood posed a risk to the well-being of participants and also pointed to problem behaviours such as hostility, anger, aggression and conduct problems. Further analysis suggested that young people with aggression and hyperactivity were more likely to have problems interacting with friends and family members, creating additional barriers to their social development.

The challenges associated with living in Interface areas extended to engagement in sectarian antisocial behaviour, which commonly took the form of rioting with the *other* community. Those growing up in enclave communities were more likely to rationalise riotous behaviour as *defence of the area*. The study found that those young people who engaged in sectarian behaviour tended to identify much more strongly with being Catholic or Protestant than those who did not engage in such activity. However, the study also found that young people who had been victims of physical, verbal or emotional abuse stated that this mainly emanated from within their own communities. Intra-community or non-sectarian conflict was more frequent than inter-community or sectarian conflict. Knowledge of issues regarding paramilitary activity was experienced by a minority of research participants but experience was more pronounced within Loyalist or Unionist communities and experience of paramilitaries was most common among older males.

Young people from interface areas were not only at risk of being victims of within community antisocial behaviour but were also considered as potential perpetrators. The study found that young people referenced taking part in activities identifiable as high risk including criminal damage, breaking into derelict property, fire-lighting, graffiti and window breaking. These forms of antisocial behaviour were often related

to recreational and hard drug use in public. More serious instances of crime were noted among some older research participants, those aged 15-18.³¹

In 2010, The Terry Enright Foundation undertook research into the views and opinions of young people living in interface communities in the Greater Belfast area. The study comprised a survey of 506 young people (aged 12-25) and five workshops involving young people and Youth Workers. Less than half (44%) of respondents had been involved in intervention programmes, just over half (53%) had been involved in cross-community programmes, and 70% had participated in some sort of summer scheme.

A high proportion (44%) admitted being involved in some form of rioting or stone throwing at interface areas and a third (33%) had engaged in vandalism. Less than 10% had been involved with either the Youth Justice or Probation Services. When asked to prioritise the most important issue or concern facing young people the most popular response was drugs and alcohol. Other frequent responses included peer pressure and unemployment although these were identified by significantly fewer respondents than those who had cited drugs and alcohol.

Asked about their knowledge of locally available services, most respondents were aware of youth centres, sports teams and leisure centres whilst there was less awareness of restorative justice programmes, Youth Service programmes and local interface workers. When asked to rate the most useful programmes for young people living in interface communities there was high interest in late night programmes at youth clubs and sports centres, youth centres open at weekends and at times of potential trouble on interfaces, cross community programmes and sports and residential opportunities.

During the workshops, young people identified alcohol and boredom as key contributors to risk taking behaviour and clearly articulated the links between alcohol misuse, violence and rioting at interfaces. Youth Workers and interface workers

³¹ Cummings, E., Shirlow, P., Browne, B., Dwyer, C., Merrilees, C. & Taylor, K., 2016, Growing up on an Interface: Findings and Implications for the Social Needs, Mental Health and Lifetime Opportunities of Belfast Youth. OFMDFM, Belfast.

voiced concern about the lack of strategic and targeted investment in interface areas.³²

6.12 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Young People

In 2016 YouthNet and a steering group of organisations who work with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) young people conducted a survey as a follow-up to the 2003 'Shout' research. 270 LGBT young people participated in the survey. The findings reveal the range of social and school-based experiences and mental health issues faced by LGBT young people, including:

- A large proportion of those surveyed (81%) came out to friends first whilst 62% did not feel they could tell their parents when they first came out. 86% were aware of their sexual orientation while at school and 55% were aware of their gender identity at school.
- One quarter of respondents (25%) had attempted suicide and 61% noted that they had had suicidal thoughts. More than half (52%) had self-harmed as a result of their sexual orientation or gender identity
- More than two thirds of respondents (68%) were bullied at school because of their sexuality or gender identity, and 72% had experienced negative attitudes in schools around their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- One quarter (25%) noted increased levels of truancy due to their sexual orientation or gender identity and 12% stated that they had dropped out of school as a result.
- More than half (52%) had never been a member of a youth group. Of those who had been 23% had received support or information. The vast majority (96%) believed that youth organisations had a role to play in meeting the needs of LGBT young people.³³

In 2013 qualitative research was conducted seeking the views of young people aged under 25 who had experienced gender distress or identify as transgender as well as

³² McKevitt, B. & Armstrong, H., 2010, Youth Work in Interface Communities, The Terry Enright Foundation, Belfast.

³³ YouthNet, 2016, Still Shouting: The Needs and Experiences of Young People in Northern Ireland who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and/or Transgender (LGBT). (Unpublished).

the views of family members, Youth Workers and healthcare professionals. The research suggested that there were between 40 and 50 young transgender people accessing support services due to gender identity issues and referrals were increasing. However, the report noted that this figure was likely to be underestimated and did not reflect the actual number of young people who experienced gender distress in Northern Ireland. The findings point to numerous challenges that young transgender people face due to prejudice and discrimination that exists towards them in Northern Ireland.

Interviews revealed that although transgender young people had often been aware of their gender identity at a very young age (3 to 5) many felt unable to discuss their feelings with others until later (6-16). This led to feelings of isolation, disempowerment and consequently low self-esteem and feelings of self-loathing.

The experiences of transgender young people at school have a significant impact on their lives and the report noted that it is unlikely that pupils receive formal education regarding transgender issues. Many young respondents had witnessed transphobic comments from teachers as well as experiences of transphobic bullying from other pupils. Experiences at school had left young transgender people feeling isolated to the extent that they suffered depression, self-harmed and had suicidal thoughts. The research concluded that many young transgender people drop out of education due to the impact of bullying and lack of school support. Conversely, the research reported proactive responses to the needs of transgender pupils in one school including allowing a gender appropriate name or pronoun, providing access to gender appropriate facilities, allowing freedom of gender expression and offering robust emotional support.³⁴

A survey of LGBT young people assessed the barriers which young LGBT people face in school including homophobic bullying, school staff not adequately trained to tackle homophobia, a curriculum which does not recognise the existence of LGBT young people and education structures which are not empowering of young people. 133 LGBT young people responded to the survey. The majority of respondents had

³⁴ McBride, R.-S., 2013, Grasping the Nettle: The Experiences of Gender Variant Children and Transgender Youth Living in Northern Ireland, Institute for Conflict Research, Belfast.

left school by the time they completed the survey and the findings reflect past rather than current experiences. The survey findings included:

- The vast majority (98%) had encountered homophobic language whilst at school. Of these, 81% heard such language most days, 17% heard it sometimes, and 3% heard it rarely.
- A small proportion of respondents (14%) had never experienced a negative incident of bullying at school.
- Almost one third (30%) had suffered physical assault, 64% verbal abuse, 56% feeling excluded, 47% intimidation, 34% threats of violence, 5% death threats, 19% stolen property, 70% rumours spread about their sexual orientation and 23% had been threatened with being 'outed'. The vast majority felt that these incidents had been motivated by their perceived sexual orientation.
- Very few respondents said they had been able to access LGBT resources at school. Less than one quarter (24%) believed they had been taught something about LGBT issues which they now know to be untrue. Only 6% felt that they learnt anything relevant about LGB in sex education classes.³⁵

Several studies of LGBT young people point to profound emotional and mental health issues. Research into LGBT people of all ages indicate that these do not diminish during the transition to young adulthood or adult life. In a survey of 571 LGBT of all ages, almost two thirds or respondents (64.7%) claimed to have experienced personal, emotional, behavioural or mental health problems for which they needed professional help.³⁶

A survey of 941 LGBT people (the sample included, but was not confined to, young people) found they are substantially more likely than the NI population to have taken an illegal drug (62% compared to 22%), with a quarter of the survey respondents saying they had used drugs within the past year. The survey also found higher than average alcohol consumption, use of cigarettes and mental health issues. Health risk

³⁵ Boyd, G, 2011, Left out of the Equation: A Report on the Experiences of Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Young People at School, The Rainbow Project and Cara-Friend, Belfast.

³⁶ O'Hara, M., 2013, Through Our Minds: Exploring the Emotional health and Wellbeing of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender People in Northern Ireland, The Rainbow Project, Belfast.

behaviour and mental health issues were substantially higher among transgender survey respondents. The report suggested that emotional and psychological distress arising from the stigmatisation of LGBT people was a contributory factor in health risk behaviours and mental health issues.³⁷

6.13 Young Parents

Young parents can face isolation, negative social attitudes, stress, anxiety and low self-esteem. They can also miss out on education and employment opportunities, often live on a small budget and may lack awareness of how to access support services.

Depression is commonly associated with pregnancy in young mothers and young parents who are isolated are at more risk of becoming depressed. Negative public attitudes and stereotyping, lack of social networks, poor housing, economic deprivation, lack of access to employment and childcare and inadequate diet or self-care can contribute to physical and mental ill-health amongst young parents.

The role and involvement of young fathers should not be overlooked and young fathers need a range of support services in terms of parenting. In turn, young fathers who are positively involved can be an important resource. Research shows that young mothers who feel supported by their baby's father adjust better to motherhood.³⁸

In 2015, 95 young parents from across Northern Ireland took part in a research study which explored their views, experiences and support needs. Whilst the young participants generally enjoyed being parents, they commonly experienced stigma, judgement and discrimination. The research pointed to the need for communication which provides positive reinforcement to young parents' self-worth rather than undermining it. Only a small number of young fathers took part in the study and they felt there was a distinct lack of targeted support for them.

³⁷ Rooney, E., 2012, All Partied Out? Substance Use in Northern Ireland's LGB&T Community, The Rainbow Project, Belfast.

³⁸ YouthNet and National Youth Council of Ireland (Ewan, B., O'Carolan, N. & Walsh, A. eds), 2012, Access All Areas: A Diversity Toolkit for the Youth Work Sector, YouthNet, Belfast.

The young parents all expressed the need for more social spaces, a place where they would not feel different, somewhere to reduce social isolation and additional support to help them access services, such as paid transport and quality childcare.

The research found that those who coped better with being a young parent had good support and conversely those without support were prone to loneliness, stress or depression. The young parents identified the need for parenting advice and information to be provided in accessible ways. They wanted to access information in settings where they would feel confident to ask questions and to receive support alongside parents of a similar age with opportunities to build relationships with key workers.³⁹

6.14 Irish Medium

In 2014 Fóram na nÓg conducted surveys of pupils in Irish medium schools along with a series of focus groups with young people and Youth Workers in Irish-medium youth clubs. Survey respondents indicated a need for more information on Irish Medium youth provision alongside wider opening hours. A large proportion of respondents (79%) noted that they had no other opportunities to speak Irish outside of school other than the Irish Medium youth club. An overwhelming majority (98%) stated that participating in an Irish Medium youth club had improved or benefited their level of Irish and all respondents agreed that it was important to have an opportunity to speak Irish outside of school. Focus groups with young people already attending Irish Medium youth clubs highlighted that attendance was important in terms of the chance to socialise, speak Irish outside of school as well as take part in activities.⁴⁰

A report from the Department of Education noted that bilingualism, which is a central aim of immersive education, has been associated not only with linguistic, cognitive and academic outcomes, but also with personal and social development such as

³⁹ National Children's Bureau (2016) Young Parents Matter: Exploring the Views and Experiences of Young Parents Living in Northern Ireland, NCB, Belfast.

⁴⁰ Foram Na nOg, 2016, Youth Work through the Medium of Irish: Reasons to Take Part: Consultation with Young People and Youth Workers, Foram Na nOg, Belfast.

self-confidence, problem-solving, inclusivity, positive attitudes to multiculturalism, tolerance and acceptance of 'otherness'.⁴¹

In 2015-2016 EA Youth Services allocated £107,124 to 39 Irish Medium groups across Northern Ireland. More than 1,900 young people participated in a wide variety of learning opportunities, training and events. A recent EA report concluded that Youth Work through the Medium of Irish continues to expand and flourish across Northern Ireland in a wide range of communities.⁴²

Key Facts

- Large numbers of young people throughout Northern Ireland live in areas of deprivation, with the largest concentrations in Belfast and Derry and Strabane District Council areas.
- A significant proportion of the youth population (34.5%) live in rural areas.
- There is a disparity in what resources, facilities and opportunities which are available to young people across Northern Ireland.
- Changes in the demography of the population of Northern Ireland have resulted in a more diverse school population. Therefore there is a requirement to support schools in developing approaches in relation to issues such as community relations, equality and diversity which take account of different faiths, cultures, ethnicities, disabilities and sexual orientations represented in the classroom.
- 24,000 young people have been classified as being Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET). These young people have one or a multiple of barriers preventing engagement in education, training or employment.

⁴¹ Department of Education, 2011, Review of Irish Medium Education, DE, Bangor.

⁴² Moore, S. 2016, Youth Work through the Medium of Irish: Regional Report 2015/2016, Unpublished.

7. Education

7.1 Introduction

Whilst the majority of young people in Northern Ireland achieve and succeed at school, other vulnerable young people are at risk of failing to fulfil their potential, either as a result of their social context, an additional educational need or their experiences and attitudes towards the formal education system. In such cases, these young people may find it difficult to adapt to the prescribed curriculum, therefore, this group of young people require an education that can meet their particular needs.⁴³

It has also been suggested that failure to provide opportunities for these young people to increase their capacities could potentially lead to social exclusion.⁴⁴

Youth Work is designed to complement the formal education system and the Department of Education (DE) recognised that it plays an important role by encouraging learning in a non-formal setting and by developing young people's personal, social and other key life skills and understanding.

Some young people discussed how the formal education system has failed them and did not support them to fulfil their full potential. Many spoke about how Youth Work provided life changing opportunities for them.

Priorities for Youth, DE's policy document, noted that non-formal education in the form of Youth Work is an important aspect of the education system as it encourages young people's participation, allowing them to engage or re-engage in positive learning within a non-formal setting. *Priorities for Youth* also placed a greater emphasis on the needs of disadvantaged children and young people, as well as those for whom Youth Work can provide a valuable link with formal education to increase their life chances in areas such as future employment and training opportunities.

⁴³ Morgan, T., O'Hare, B., & Campbell, H., 2002, *The Excluded Adolescent, An Exploration of the Issues Surrounding Marginalised Young People in Northern Ireland*, Imprint Unknown, Belfast.

⁴⁴ McCartney, C. 1999, *Unattached Youth Programme*, Northern Ireland Voluntary Trust, Belfast.

Therefore, effective Youth Work can help young people overcome barriers to learning by providing further opportunities to gain qualifications, to volunteer and to develop a range of skills and attributes that will improve their life outcomes as individuals and as contributors to their local community and the wider economy. Youth Work in Northern Ireland offers a diverse range of programmes which are valued by young people as they both complement and enhance the learning provided through formal schooling.

The education system in Northern Ireland has been characterised by a significantly higher gap in achievement as compared with the rest of the UK. On one hand many young people achieve a high degree of academic success, however, significant numbers of young people fail to achieve to their fullest potential. Youth Services are ideally placed to meet the needs of vulnerable young people through a broad range of programmes and activities in a variety of settings, allowing young people to share with and learn from each other. Youth Work also contributes to the Northern Ireland Executive's Draft Programme for Government's vision for young people that they should be healthy, fulfil their potential, respect diversity and have improved educational outcomes.

7.2 Pupil Numbers

In the school year 2015/2016 there was a total of 324,547 pupils in Northern Ireland. 178,222 (54.9%) attended a Primary school, 141,152 (43.5%) attended a Post-Primary school and 5,173 (1.6%) attended a Special school.

A total of 98,823 pupils (30.4%) were eligible for Free School Meals. In Derry and Strabane 43.9% of all pupils were eligible for Free School Meals whilst in Belfast this figure stood at 39.2%. These figures reflect the high levels of deprivation that exist in these Council areas.

There were 16,467 Statemented pupils and 55,788 pupils on the Special Educational Needs Register Stage 1-4. This means that a total of 72,255 (22.3%) of all pupils had some form of Special Educational Need. The District Council areas with the highest proportion of Special Educational Needs pupils were in Belfast (27%), Fermanagh and Omagh (24.9%), Lisburn and Castlereagh (23.8%) and Derry and

Strabane (23.3%). The following tables highlight the number of pupils attending Primary, Post-Primary and Special schools throughout Northern Ireland for the school year 2015/2016. These tables also detail the number and percentage of pupils eligible for Free School Meals as well as the number and percentage of Special Educational Needs pupils.

Table 5 - Primary Pupils 2015/2016

LGD2014	Pupils	FSM Pupils	% FSM Pupils	Stated Pupils	SEN Stage 1 - 4 Pupils	Total SEN Pupils	% SEN Pupils
Antrim & Newtownabbey	13031	3125	24.0	271	2398	2669	20.5
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon	21999	5840	26.5	685	3167	3852	17.5
Belfast	32217	14573	45.2	1150	6908	8058	25.0
Causeway Coast & Glens	12651	3915	30.9	373	2254	2627	20.8
Derry City & Strabane	15836	7051	44.5	392	3132	3524	22.3
Fermanagh & Omagh	11474	3407	29.7	363	2167	2530	22.0
Lisburn & Castlereagh	12559	2386	19.0	443	1917	2360	18.8
Mid & East Antrim	11804	3089	26.2	263	1993	2256	19.1
Mid Ulster	15283	4030	26.4	455	2131	2586	16.9
Newry, Mourne & Down	18070	5664	31.3	703	2995	3698	20.5
North Down & Ards	13298	3185	24.0	353	2392	2745	20.6
Northern Ireland	178222	56265	31.6	5451	31454	36905	20.7

Table 6 - Post-Primary Pupils 2015/2016

LGD2014	Pupils	FSM Pupils	% FSM Pupils	Stated Pupils	SEN Stage 1 - 4 Pupils	Total SEN Pupils	% SEN Pupils
Antrim & Newtownabbey	7041	1739	24.7	199	1287	1486	21.1
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon	15433	3846	24.9	774	1740	2514	16.3
Belfast	30678	9741	31.8	1115	6857	7972	26.0
Causeway Coast & Glens	9728	2627	27.0	461	1418	1879	19.3
Derry City & Strabane	12164	5096	41.9	555	2136	2691	22.1
Fermanagh & Omagh	10019	2927	29.2	600	2025	2625	26.2
Lisburn & Castlereagh	7080	1825	25.8	361	1277	1638	23.1
Mid & East Antrim	10601	2292	21.6	295	1714	2009	19.0
Mid Ulster	13488	3363	24.9	590	1417	2007	14.9
Newry, Mourne & Down	15794	4402	27.9	851	2673	3524	22.3
North Down & Ards	9126	1943	21.3	311	1521	1832	20.1
Northern Ireland	141152	39801	28.2	6112	24065	30177	21.4

Table 7 - Special School Pupils 2015/2016

LGD2014	Pupils	FSM Pupils	% FSM Pupils	Stated Pupils	SEN stage 1 - 4 Pupils	Total SEN Pupils	% SEN Pupils
Antrim & Newtownabbey	543	234	43.1	517	26	543	100.0
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon	308	119	38.6	280	28	308	100.0
Belfast	1328	834	62.8	1254	74	1328	100.0
Causeway Coast & Glens	289	161	55.7	274	15	289	100.0
Derry City & Strabane	389	309	79.4	371	18	389	100.0
Fermanagh & Omagh	252	195	77.4	240	12	252	100.0
Lisburn & Castlereagh	875	402	45.9	856	19	875	100.0
Mid & East Antrim	352	172	48.9	351	1	352	100.0
Mid Ulster	211	82	38.9	192	19	211	100.0
Newry, Mourne & Down	275	121	44.0	255	20	275	100.0
North Down & Ards	351	128	36.5	314	37	351	100.0
Northern Ireland	5173	2757	53.3	4904	269	5173	100.0

Table 8 - All Schools 2015/2016

LGD2014	Pupils	FSM Pupils	% FSM Pupils	Stated Pupils	SEN Stage 1 - 4 Pupils	Total SEN Pupils	% SEN Pupils
Antrim & Newtownabbey	20615	5098	24.7	987	3711	4698	22.8
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon	37740	9805	26.0	1739	4935	6674	17.7
Belfast	64223	25148	39.2	3519	13839	17358	27.0
Causeway Coast & Glens	22668	6703	29.6	1108	3687	4795	21.2
Derry City & Strabane	28389	12456	43.9	1318	5286	6604	23.3
Fermanagh & Omagh	21745	6529	30.0	1203	4204	5407	24.9
Lisburn & Castlereagh	20514	4613	22.5	1660	3213	4873	23.8
Mid & East Antrim	22757	5553	24.4	909	3708	4617	20.3
Mid Ulster	28982	7475	25.8	1237	3567	4804	16.6
Newry, Mourne & Down	34139	10187	29.8	1809	5688	7497	22.0
North Down & Ards	22775	5256	23.1	978	3950	4928	21.6
Northern Ireland	324547	98823	30.4	16467	55788	72255	22.3

7.3 Exam Performance School Leavers

Attainment levels at the key Department of Education indicators continue to rise, however a substantial number of young people in Northern Ireland leave school every year without achieving these expected standards. A recent report noted that levels of academic achievement in Northern Ireland are rising slowly however, disparities still exist according to socio-economic background, gender and residency.⁴⁵ Pupils from economically deprived backgrounds achieve considerably lower results and social deprivation has a more pronounced negative impact within the Controlled school sector, and this is especially true of boys.

An analysis of pupil outcome statistics reveals that the overall educational figures for Northern Ireland are improving and exceed those of other regions in the United Kingdom. However, these positive figures mask a long tail of underachievement. Tables 9 and 10 outline the number of school leavers in Northern Ireland achieving DE's expected standards of 5+ GCSEs A*-C and 5+ GCSEs A*-C including English and Maths. Tables 11 and 12 detail the same information but for school leavers who live in a Neighbourhood Renewal Area. School leaver figures are an accumulation of all young people who leave school after Years 12, 13 and 14.

Table 9 - School Leavers achieving 5+ GCSEs A*-C 2014/2015

District Council	Number Achieving Level	%	Total Number of School Leavers
Antrim & Newtownabbey	1285	80.9	1588
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon	1940	81.1	2393
Belfast	2792	79.2	3526
Causeway Coast & Glens	1385	82.3	1683
Derry City & Strabane	1767	82.0	2155
Fermanagh & Omagh	1199	82.4	1455
Lisburn & Castlereagh	1383	85.8	1612
Mid & East Antrim	1389	82.1	1691
Mid Ulster	1581	81.7	1935
Newry, Mourne & Down	1974	80.2	2460
North Down & Ards	1327	76.9	1726
Invalid/Missing/Unknown Postcode	111	81.0	137
Total Leavers	18133	81.1	22361

⁴⁵ Northern Ireland Audit Office, 2013, Improving Literacy and Numeracy Achievement in Schools, NIAO, Belfast.

Table 10 - School Leavers achieving 5+ GCSEs A*-C including English and Maths 2014/2015

District Council	Number Achieving Level	%	Total Number of School Leavers
Antrim & Newtownabbey	1061	66.8	1588
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon	1151	66.7	2393
Belfast	1630	68.1	3526
Causeway Coast & Glens	2121	60.2	1683
Derry City & Strabane	1031	61.3	2155
Fermanagh & Omagh	1363	63.2	1455
Lisburn & Castlereagh	1009	69.3	1612
Mid & East Antrim	1187	73.6	1691
Mid Ulster	1145	67.7	1935
Newry, Mourne & Down	1284	66.4	2460
North Down & Ards	1702	69.2	1726
Invalid/Missing/Unknown Postcode	69	50.4	137
Total Leavers	14753	66.0	22361

Figures from DE reveal that whilst 81.1% of all school leavers achieved at least five GCSEs at grades A*-C, the proportion of free school meal entitled school leavers was 64.6%, a difference of 16.5%. The proportion of girls achieving this level was 85.4% compared to 76.9% for boys, a difference of 8.5%.

The proportion of school leavers achieving at least five GCSEs at grades A*-C including English and Maths was 66.0%. The equivalent figure for those school leavers entitled to free school meals was 41.3%, a difference of 24.7%. Over two thirds of girls (70.5%) achieved this level compared to 61.6% of boys.

The religious breakdown between these two indicators reveals that 82.7% of Catholic school leavers (9,426) achieved at least five GCSEs at grades A*-C compared to 78.9% of Protestant school leavers (6,942) and 66.4% of Catholic school leavers (7,575) achieved at least five GCSEs at grades A*-C including English and Maths compared to 65.2% of Protestant school leavers (5,731).

In 2014/2015, 26.7% (213) of Protestant boys entitled to free school meals achieved at least five GCSEs at grades A*-C including English and Maths compared with 39.9% (672) of Catholic boys. Similarly, 49.6% (826) of Catholic girls entitled to free school meals outperformed Protestant girls (40.3%, 296) based on the same indicator.

A recent Equality Commission report (2015) noted that males have lower levels of attainment than females. This trend begins in primary school and continues throughout schooling to GCSE and A Level. This inequality results in fewer male school leavers entering higher education than females. There is also persistent underachievement and lack of progression among working class Protestants, particularly boys.⁴⁶

Research commissioned and funded by both the Department of Justice and the Department of Education suggested that Youth Work methodologies should be utilised as appropriate to re-engage and support young people with education. While Youth Work is aimed at all young people, its methodologies may be particularly useful for engaging young people who are disengaged or could potentially disengage from mainstream education or facing particular barriers to learning.⁴⁷

DE's Summary of Annual Examination Results (SAER) confirms that a young person's socio-economic status has an impact on their overall educational attainment. Social disadvantage as measured by free school meal entitlement or living in a Neighbourhood Renewal Area ensures that a young person is less likely to achieve educationally and boys are less likely to succeed than girls and there are also significant differences in terms of religion.⁴⁸

The average percentage of young people from an NRA achieving the DE indicator 5+ GCSE A*-C was 71.3% and the range was 90.7% achievement in Andersonstown NRA compared to 45.2% achievement in Ballymena NRA, a difference of 46.1.

The average percentage of young people from an NRA achieving the DE indicator 5+ GCSE A*-C including English and Maths was 45.9% and the range was 75.9% achievement in Enniskillen NRA compared to 25% achievement in Portadown North West NRA, a difference of 50.9.

The following tables give an overview of the examination performance of school leavers from Neighbourhood Renewal Areas.

⁴⁶ Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, 2015, Key Inequalities in Education (Unpublished).

⁴⁷ Department of Education Research Briefings, 2012, Taking Boys Seriously, Department of Education, Bangor.

⁴⁸ www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/saer-guidance-on-form-ompletion-of-Ineligibility-return-1415.pdf

**Table 11 - School Leavers living in an NRA achieving 5+ GCSEs A*-C
2014/2015**

NRA	Number Achieving Level	%	Total Number of School Leavers
Andersonstown	107	90.7	118
Armagh	41	80.4	51
Ballyclare	*	*	12
Ballymena	19	45.2	42
Bangor	13	56.5	23
Brownlow	63	56.3	112
Coalisland	27	75.0	36
Coleraine Churchlands	30	88.2	34
Coleraine East	33	78.6	42
Colin	220	76.4	288
Crumlin_Ardoyne	118	65.9	179
Downpatrick	43	62.3	69
Dungannon	*	*	6
Enniskillen	25	86.2	29
Falls_Clonard	147	74.6	197
Greater Shankill	127	59.1	215
Inner East Belfast	77	55.0	140
Inner North Belfast	73	64.6	113
Inner South Belfast	28	54.9	51
Ligoniel	26	70.3	37
Limavady	21	65.6	32
Lurgan	30	66.7	45
Newry	86	74.1	116
Omagh	25	67.6	37
Outer North Derry	214	80.8	265
Outer West Belfast	93	79.5	117
Outer West Derry	89	76.1	117
Portadown North West	15	75.0	20
Rathcoole	23	88.5	26
South West Belfast	22	50.0	44
Strabane	66	74.2	89
Triax - Cityside	180	74.1	243
Tullycarnet	8	61.5	13
Upper Ardoyne Ballysillan	22	73.3	30
Upper Springfield Whiterock	148	75.5	196
Waterside	69	77.5	89
Total Leavers from NRAs	2328	71.3	3273

* Denotes fewer than 5 pupils

Table 12 - School Leavers living in an NRA achieving 5+ GCSEs A*-C including English and Maths 2014/2015

NRA	Number Achieving Level	%	Total Number of School Leavers
Andersonstown	86	72.9	118
Armagh	29	56.9	51
Ballyclare	*	*	12
Ballymena	12	28.6	42
Bangor	7	30.4	23
Brownlow	43	38.4	112
Coalisland	25	69.4	36
Coleraine Churchlands	12	35.3	34
Coleraine East	11	26.2	42
Colin	148	51.4	288
Crumlin_Ardoyne	71	39.7	179
Downpatrick	32	46.4	69
Dungannon	*	*	6
Enniskillen	22	75.9	29
Falls_Clonard	76	38.6	197
Greater Shankill	72	33.5	215
Inner East Belfast	52	37.1	140
Inner North Belfast	34	30.1	113
Inner South Belfast	19	37.3	51
Ligoniel	16	43.2	37
Limavady	12	37.5	32
Lurgan	22	48.9	45
Newry	53	45.7	116
Omagh	22	59.5	37
Outer North Derry	158	59.6	265
Outer West Belfast	60	51.3	117
Outer West Derry	67	57.3	117
Portadown North West	5	25.0	20
Rathcoole	19	73.1	26
South West Belfast	19	43.2	44
Strabane	40	44.9	89
Triax - Cityside	124	51.0	243
Tullycarnet	7	53.8	13
Upper Ardoyne Ballysillan	11	36.7	30
Upper Springfield Whiterock	65	33.2	196
Waterside	47	52.8	89
Total Leavers from NRAs	1498	45.9	3273

* Denotes fewer than 5 pupils

7.4 Attendance, Suspension and Expulsion

Attending school regularly can help young people maximise their own life chances and the potential contribution they can make to society and future economy. In 2016 DE consulted on a strategy for improving pupil attendance. The strategy notes the links between social deprivation and school attendance and also highlights that some vulnerable groups of children and young people require additional support in terms of attendance including pupils in receipt of free school meals, Traveller children, Roma children, Looked After children, Newcomer pupils and School Age Mothers. As part of the pre-consultation process DE engaged with young people (aged 15-22 years) who had struggled to attend school. Some of them referred to a sense of demoralisation as they perceived that the curriculum was either too challenging or not sufficiently relevant for them and that teachers simply gave up on them if they struggled to attend and attain.⁴⁹

The DE strategy identifies a range of actions and roles for schools, education support professionals and parents. In terms of non-formal education, the strategy highlights the important role for Youth Services to promote positive influences on those young people who are struggling to attend school on a regular basis. It states that many schools have recognised that Youth Workers have the skills and background knowledge to engage those young people who do not or cannot comply with the expected requirements of formal education. The report highlights that Youth Services can engage with young people in non-formal settings and can be particularly successful in re-engaging young people at risk and helping to encourage them to aspire to reach their full potential.⁵⁰

The table below highlights attendance rates for Northern Ireland pupils. The figures reveal that pupils from economically and socially deprived communities such as Neighbourhood Renewal Areas are more likely to be absent from school and confirm the findings from the DE commissioned research.

⁴⁹ Department of Education, PricewaterhouseCoopers & Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, 2011, Study into how the Education System Can Improve the Attendance of Looked After Children at Post-Primary School, DE, Bangor.

⁵⁰ Department of Education, PricewaterhouseCoopers & Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, 2011, Study into how the Education System Can Improve the Attendance of Looked After Children at Post-Primary School, DE, Bangor.

Table 14 - Attendance

Area	Present (% of half days)	Absence (% of half days)	Authorise d Absence (% of half days)	Unauthori sed Absence (% of half days)
Northern Ireland Average	95.6	4.4	3	1.4
Neighbourhood Renewal Area Average	93.8	6.2	3.6	2.6
Non Neighbourhood Renewal Area Average	95.9	4.1	2.9	1.2
Belfast Regeneration Area Average	93.8	6.2	3.5	2.7
North West Development Office Average	93.7	6.3	4	2.4
Regional Development Office Average	93.9	6.1	3.5	2.6

Suspension from school is linked to attendance. There were 3,647 pupils suspended from school in the 2014/2015 school year. Of these, the vast majority, 3,413 (93.6%) were suspended from post-primary schools and 234 (6.4%) were suspended from primary schools. Of those suspended from post-primary schools an overwhelming majority (83%) attended a secondary school.

Of those 3,647 suspended pupils, 2,831 (77.6%) were male. 1,629 (44.7%) of suspended pupils attended a Controlled school, 1,206 (33.1%) attended a Catholic Maintained school and the remaining 812 (22.2%) attended either a Grant Maintained Integrated or a Voluntary Maintained Grammar school. The following table gives a breakdown of suspensions by Education Authority regions.

Table 13 – Suspensions

EA Region	Pupils Suspended	% Pupils Suspended
Belfast	857	23.5
North Eastern	779	21.4
South Eastern	682	18.7
Southern	584	16.0
Western	745	20.4
Total	3647	100

In 2014/2015 there were a total of 25 expulsions. All expelled pupils were of post-primary age, almost three quarters were from Key Stage 4 and the majority were

male. The most common reasons for expulsion were persistent infringement of school rules, physical attacks on another pupil and disruptive behaviour in class.

7.5 Young People Living in Deprived Areas

The link between educational underachievement and disadvantage is well documented. A young person's educational success can be dependent upon their social background and where they live. Children growing up in poverty and disadvantage are less likely to do well at school. This contributes to disadvantage in later life and in turn affects successive generations.

A recent report concluded that social class is the strongest predictor of educational attainment in the UK.⁵¹ DE is committed to tackling the root causes of educational underachievement and deprivation and to breaking the cycle and the process that results in young people living in poverty developing into underachieving adults with limited aspirations and low levels of educational qualifications and skills.

Eligibility for Free School Meals is strongly linked with underachievement, however, there are other factors that can negatively impact on a young person's ability to achieve and learn. These include, among others, one's socio-economic background, ethnicity and parents with low educational aspirations. Other significant factors which impact on a young person achieving at school include some of the following:

- Being a Looked After Child.
- Being a Newcomer Pupil.
- Being a Carer.
- Being from the Travelling Community.
- Being from a Section 75 group.
- Living in a deprived area.
- Family Breakdown.

Whilst living in a deprived area has been identified as a contributory factor to educational underachievement, it should therefore be noted that a significant number of young people throughout Northern Ireland (52,639 pupils, 16.2%) live in a

⁵¹ Perry, E. & Francis, B., 2010, The Social Class Gap for Educational Achievement: A Review of the Literature, Report for RSA, London.

Neighbourhood Renewal Area. Of these, 29,879 attend Primary schools (16.8%), 21,373 attend Post-Primary schools (15.1%) and 1,387 attend Special schools (26.8%).

A Neighbourhood Renewal Area is defined as an area in the most deprived 10% of wards across Northern Ireland based upon the Multiple Deprivation Measure as identified by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). There are currently 36 Neighbourhood Renewal Areas in Northern Ireland. There are 15 in Belfast, 6 in the North West (including 4 in Derry) and 15 situated in other towns and cities across Northern Ireland.

7.6 Special Educational Needs Pupils

A young person is deemed to have a Special Educational Need (SEN) if he or she has significant learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for them to learn than most children of the same age. Special Educational Needs can be broken down into two categories, SEN with a Statement which sets out a young person's needs and the additional support they should have and SEN without a Statement which identifies pupils with less severe educational needs.

In terms of gender, boys are more likely to have a Special Educational Need. Of all SEN pupils without a Statement (2015/2016) the majority, 61.2% were male and 38.8% were female. In terms of SEN pupils with a Statement (2015/2016) 72.2% were male and 27.8% were female.

Young people with Special Educational Needs are less likely to achieve DE's key indicators. Table 15 highlights the attainment difference between pupils with additional needs and those without.

Table 15 – Special Educational Needs Pupils 2014/2015

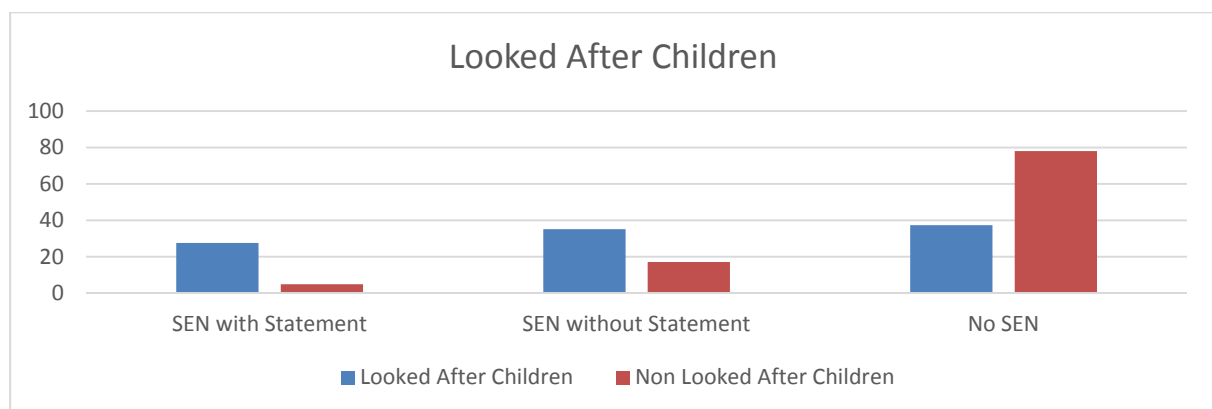
DE Indicator	No SEN	SEN Stages 1-4	SEN Stage 5	All School Leavers
5+ GCSEs A*-C	86.4	63.5	38.9	81.1
5+ GCSEs A*-C including English & Maths	73.3	38.3	18.9	66

7.7 Looked After Children

Looked After Children are those who are looked after by an authority either in the care of the authority or provided with accommodation by the authority, this also includes young people who are fostered.

The following chart illustrates that Looked After Children are more likely to have a Special Educational Need than non-Looked after Children.

Chart 1 – Looked After Children with SEN



Looked After young people are also less likely to achieve DE's key indicator, 5+ GCSE A*-C including English and Maths than their non-Looked After peers. The most recent figures reveal that only 25.8% of Looked After young people achieved this target compared to 66.3% of non-Looked After pupils. It is also worth noting that 8.2% of all Looked After school leavers became unemployed compared to 2.7% of non-Looked After school leavers.

Many Looked After young people have poor attendance at school which has a negative impact on their educational attainment. Research into the underlying causes of non-attendance at school by Looked After Children found a range of contributory factors including peer pressure, behavioural issues (one of the main reasons for exclusion is persistent, disruptive behaviour), underlying social and personal issues (such as dealing with the loss of a parent or drug or alcohol problems), personal factors (as well as possible SEN, Looked After Children may

have a lack of self-esteem, poor social skills and challenging peer relations) and unsettling contact with birth parents for those in stable foster care.⁵²

7.8 Newcomer Pupils

Newcomer Pupils are those young people who do not have English or Irish as their first language and do not have satisfactory language skills to participate fully in the school curriculum.

According to DE the ten languages most spoken by Newcomer Pupils are Polish, Lithuanian, Portuguese, Chinese, Romanian, Malayam, Latvian, Slovak, Hungarian and Tetum.

Whilst Newcomer Pupils are less likely to have a Special Educational Need than non-Newcomer Pupils they are however more likely to have Free School Meal Entitlement (32.5% compared to 30.4%). The average attendance for Newcomer Pupils stands at 92.2% compared with non-Newcomer's average of 94.7%.

Newcomer young people are less likely to achieve DE's key indicator, 5+ GCSE A*-C including English and Maths than their non-Newcomer peers. The most recent figures reveal that only 21.3% of Newcomers achieved this compared to 66.5% of non-Newcomers. A significant proportion (6.3%) of Newcomer school leavers became unemployed compared to 2.7% of non-Newcomer pupils.

7.9 Pupils from the Travelling Community

Pupils from the Irish Traveller tradition make up just 0.3% of the total Northern Ireland school population. However, almost 80% are entitled to Free School Meals compared to 30.3% of non-Irish Traveller pupils. More than half (54.3%) of Irish Traveller pupils have some form of Special Educational Need compared with a non-Irish Traveller average of 22.1%. The attendance rate average for Irish Traveller young people is 69.9% compared to a non-Irish Traveller average of 94.6%.

⁵² Department of Education, PricewaterhouseCoopers & Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, 2011, Study into how the Education System Can Improve the Attendance of Looked After Children at Post-Primary School, DE, Bangor.

7.10 Education Other Than At School (EOTAS)

Education Other Than At School is a service provided by the Education Authority to assist schools to provide appropriate education for children and young people who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties or who are temporarily unable to attend school.

The Education Authority also has a statutory duty to provide access to education for young people who cannot otherwise receive suitable provision. In 2014/2015, around 450 young people attended an EOTAS centre. DE published guidance in 2014 clarifying the legislation and detailing the minimum requirements for EOTAS provision; this took effect from 2015-16.

The guidance notes suggested that the best place for young people to receive their education is in a mainstream or Special School. EOTAS provision is designed to meet specific pupil needs and is not intended as a standalone alternative. EOTAS focuses on helping young people to overcome barriers to learning, particularly social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, as well as supporting educational progression.⁵³ At present, each EA Office approaches the delivery of education to EOTAS pupils in different ways.

7.11 Other Minority Groups

DE publishes information annually on the above groups and it clearly demonstrates that the majority of young people in the above categories are clearly disadvantaged in terms of their access to education. DE do not currently report on other minority groups, such as ethnic groups and other Section 75 groups, such as LGBT, due to smaller numbers or because specific information is not collected about them. However, research would suggest that members of these smaller, vulnerable groups also experience similar educational disadvantage.

⁵³ Perry, C., 2015, Education Other Than At School and Youth Work, NIAO, Belfast.

7.12 Summary

Failure to address the gap in education attainment ensures that young people from the most deprived areas and those from the vulnerable Section 75 groups identified in *Priorities for Youth* will face a future with fewer opportunities and greater challenges. In order to address the gap between the highest and lowest achieving young people there is a clear need to tackle the root causes of educational disadvantage and barriers to learning through interventions in both the formal education sector and in the non-formal Youth Service settings.

Some young people at the Workshop reported that the formal education system has failed them and did not support them to fulfil their full potential. Many stated that access to Youth Work had provided life changing opportunities for them. Others noted that there was too much emphasis on qualifications and not enough on developing young people's personal, social and life skills.

The survey findings also reveal that the issue affecting most young people (46%) was exam stress. This was more prevalent among those aged 14-18 (57%) and also among females (56%).

Youth Services therefore are ideally placed to contribute to the reduction in barriers to learning through personal and social development programmes, focusing on outcomes such as enhanced personal capabilities, improved health and well-being, the development of thinking skills, life skills and work skills, improved relationships with others, increased participative action and active citizenship. This, alongside the availability of accredited and non-accredited programmes in the youth setting can potentially increase educational attainment among the most vulnerable young people and minority groups.

Youth Work therefore can help young people succeed in education and allow them to continue to participate in learning in a non-formal education setting. Success for many of these vulnerable young people will not be through the traditional formal school system but rather in a Youth Work setting which provides both academic and vocational opportunities which are engaging and challenging and meet the needs of the most vulnerable young people.

Key Facts:

- Educational Attainment at Key Stages 3 and 4 is improving in Northern Ireland, however there is a tail of underachievement which is prevalent among vulnerable groups, including those with Special Educational Needs, Looked after Children, from the Travelling Community and pupils entitled to Free School Meals.
- There is also a need to address the educational underachievement of boys from disadvantaged communities.
- Pupils living in a Neighbourhood Renewal Area are less likely to achieve DE's key indicators.

8. Health and Wellbeing

8.1 Introduction

Health outcomes in Northern Ireland continue to improve thanks to advancements in medical knowledge, improved social conditions and investment in the healthcare system. However, these improvements mask a widening gap in health outcomes between the wealthiest and most deprived communities. The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) noted that a child born into a home with well-educated and financially secure parents has a greater chance of living longer, without disease and disability than a child born to parents who are not.⁵⁴

The World Health Organisation defined health inequalities as the differences in health determinants between different population groups.⁵⁵ These differences are considered inequitable when they are either unfair or unavoidable. Poor health outcomes are also linked to education. The Centre on Society and Health pointed out that poor health not only results in lower educational attainment it can also cause educational setback and interfere with schooling.⁵⁶ The Association for Young People's Health have identified some social determinants which can have a negative impact on a young person's health and physical well-being; these include some of the following:

- Poverty and deprivation.
- Maltreatment and neglect.
- Parental mental health problems or addiction.
- Long term health conditions of parents or self.
- Family disruption, or pressures of caring for others.
- Bullying and social media issues.
- Peer problems, relationship stresses, or pressures from substance use.
- Pressures on body confidence⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Royal College of Nursing, 2012, Health Inequalities and the Social Determinants of Health, RCN, London.

⁵⁵ World Health Organisation http://www.who.int/social_determinants/en/

⁵⁶ Centre on Society and Health, 2015, Why Education Matters to Health, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond.

⁵⁷ Association for Young People's Health, 2016, A Public Health Approach to Promoting Young People's Resilience, AYPH, London.

RCN noted that it is now widely recognised that these social determinants are responsible for significant levels of unfair health inequities.⁵⁸

The Department of Health factsheet, Health Inequalities in Northern Ireland: Key Facts 2015 confirms that health outcomes are much worse for people living in deprived communities. Among the health inequalities they identify include the following:

- Male Life expectancy in the most deprived areas was 4.4 years less than the average.
- Female Life expectancy in the most deprived areas was 2.7 years less than the average.
- The adult obesity rate in the most deprived areas (28%) was 47% higher than the rate in the least deprived areas (19%).
- Primary 1 obesity levels were 86% higher in the most than least deprived areas. The inequality gap for Year 8 pupils was 62%.
- Almost one in five (19%) people in NI showed signs of a mental health problem.
- The rate in the most deprived areas (30%) was double the rate in the least deprived areas (15%) and 63% higher than the NI average.⁵⁹

8.2 Healthy Lifestyles

Researchers have identified that physical activity should be a normal part of growing up for children and young people. Throughout the early years of life, physical activity plays a key part in young people's physical, social and mental development. In addition, a physically active lifestyle has direct and indirect health benefits for young people, particularly by preventing obesity, reducing the risk of disease, promoting good mental health and establishing healthy lifestyles that may be continued into adulthood.⁶⁰ Department of Health, Social Services and Public Health guidelines seek to empower young people and their families to make healthy choices to reduce

⁵⁸ Royal College of Nursing, 2012, Health Inequalities and the Social Determinants of Health, RCN, London.

⁵⁹ Department of Health, 2016, Health Inequalities in Northern Ireland: Key Facts 2015, DOH, Belfast.

⁶⁰ European Heart Health Initiative, 2001, Children and Young People – The Importance of Physical Activity, EHHI, Brussels.

the risk of obesity related diseases and improve health and wellbeing by creating an environment that supports a physically active lifestyle and a healthy diet.⁶¹

Government guidelines recommend that all children and young people should engage in at least an hour of moderate to vigorous physical activity every day and also advise reducing the amount of time being inactive.

Young people in Northern Ireland have a more sedentary lifestyle than their peers in other regions of the UK. Research undertaken by Sustrans reveals that only 14% of young people aged 11-17 are achieving the Chief Medical Officer's recommended daily amount of physical activity. Boys were more likely to reach this target with 1 in every 5 boys stating that they had been involved for 60 minutes or more moderate to vigorous sport or physical activity each day, compared to less than 1 in every 12 girls. Children in Northern Ireland are also the least physically active in the United Kingdom. It has been reported that more than half (57%) of 7 year old children are not getting the recommended one hour of physical activity each day, which is posing real, long term risks to health and wellbeing.⁶²

A poor diet is also a contributory cause of ill health. A recent Welsh report indicated that people living in the most deprived areas are less likely to have a healthy balanced diet and therefore will endure worse health outcomes.⁶³ Young people with a poor diet run the risk of growth and developmental problems and poor academic performance. Bad eating habits can also persist into adulthood.

As a result of inactivity and poor diet obesity has become a major public health concern for Northern Ireland. It has been estimated that 25% of young people in Northern Ireland are either overweight or obese. Government research highlighted that young people are getting heavier, which can be detrimental for their health, especially as they get older. Young people who are overweight are more likely to develop diabetes or heart disease in later life and are more likely to be obese in adulthood. However, health is not the only concern. Overweight young people could also be affected by bullying, embarrassment when playing games or sports and

⁶¹ Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, 2012, A Fitter Future For All - Framework for Preventing and Addressing Overweight and Obesity in Northern Ireland 2012-2022, DHSSPS, Belfast.

⁶² <http://www.sustrans.org.uk/sites/default/files/images/files/policy/Key%20statistics/Key%20Northern%20Ireland%20Statistics%20Data%20Sheet%20updated%20March%202015.pdf>

⁶³ Public Health Wales, 2014, Health of Children and Young People in Cardiff, PHW, Cardiff.

difficulty in being active.⁶⁴ Excessive weight can also be a contributory factor to low self-esteem and poor mental health, which may in turn have a negative impact on a young person's educational performance. A recent government report noted that young people living in deprived areas are also more likely to be obese.⁶⁵

Of the young people who responded to questions about health risk behaviours in the 2013 Young Persons' Behaviour and Attitude Survey (YPBAS) 13% admitted to smoking tobacco, although only 4% had smoked in the last week. The most common age for having their first cigarette was between 12 and 14 years. Almost 40% had taken an alcoholic drink, including 7% who had consumed alcohol in the past week, and 13% who had taken alcohol in the past month. The most common ages for taking their first alcoholic drink was between 12 and 14 years. A small percentage of respondents, (5%), reported inhaling solvents, with under 3% saying that this had been within the past year. 11% said they had been offered cannabis, and 5% reported they had tried it. More than a quarter of respondents, (28%), noted that it would be 'very easy' or 'fairly easy' to obtain cannabis. 17% of respondents had been in trouble with their parents or another family member because of having used or tried some form of drugs.⁶⁶

Statistical evidence for alcohol related abuse show that 5.5 out of every thousand 0-17 year olds have been admitted to hospital with an alcohol related diagnosis. This figure is even higher in some areas where the rate is as high as 7.4 per 1,000. Those young people who practice alcohol misuse and other risk-taking behaviours are likely to experience problems with violence, mental health problems, impeded educational progress and ultimately a lack of employment prospects. Statistics for drug-related diagnoses are not available for age groups but they are significant enough to deduce that young people, especially in deprived areas, are vulnerable to this.

Youth Workers noted that alcohol misuse was a key area for concern among the 14-18 age group.

⁶⁴ <http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/children-and-healthy-weight>

⁶⁵ Baker, C. & Bate, A., 2016, Briefing Paper 3336, Obesity Statistics, HMSO, London.

⁶⁶ Central Survey Unit, 2013, Young Persons' Behaviour and Attitudes Survey 2013, NISRA, Belfast.

NIDirect, the official Government website for Northern Ireland citizens, providing a single point of access to public sector information and services, noted that the negative effects of alcohol on young people are not necessarily the same as they are on adults. Whilst alcohol misuse can present serious health risks and cause careless and reckless behaviour in all age groups, it is even more dangerous for young people.⁶⁷

NIDirect stated that in terms of health, young people are particularly more vulnerable to the long term damage caused by alcohol misuse, which can include: cancer of the mouth and throat, liver cirrhosis and heart disease and sexual and mental health problems, including depression and suicidal thoughts. It has also been suggested that drinking alcohol in adolescence can harm the development of the brain.

Young people might think that any damage to their health caused by consuming alcohol lies so far in the future that it is not worth worrying about. However, there has been a sharp increase in the number of people from Northern Ireland, in their twenties, dying from liver disease as a result of drinking heavily in their teens. Young people who drink are also much more likely to be involved in an accident and end up in hospital.

Drinking alcohol lowers people's inhibitions and makes them more likely to do things they would otherwise not do. Young people are particularly at risk because at their stage of life, they are still testing the boundaries of what is acceptable behaviour. One in five girls and one in ten boys aged 14 to 15 reported going further than they wanted to in a sexual experience after drinking alcohol. In the most serious cases, alcohol could lead to them becoming the victim of a sexual assault.⁶⁸

If young people drink alcohol, they are more likely to be reckless and not use contraception if they have sex. Almost one in ten boys and around one in eight girls aged 15 to 16 have unsafe sex after drinking alcohol. This puts them at risk of sexual infections and unwanted pregnancy. Research shows that a girl who drinks alcohol is more than twice as likely to have an unwanted pregnancy as a girl who doesn't drink. Teenage pregnancy is often associated with poor health and social outcomes for

⁶⁷ NIDirect www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/young-people-and-alcohol-what-are-risks

⁶⁸ NIDirect www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/young-people-and-alcohol-what-are-risks

both mother and child and there is also a close link between social economic deprivation and high rates of teenage pregnancy.⁶⁹

When young people drink, it takes longer for the alcohol to get out of their system than it does in adults. So if young people drink alcohol on a night before school, in all probability they will do less well in lessons the next day. Young people who regularly drink alcohol are twice as likely to miss school and get poor grades as those who don't. Almost half of young people excluded from school in the UK are regular drinkers.⁷⁰

8.3 Mental Health

The World Health Organisation (WHO) have defined Mental Health as a state of wellbeing in which an individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community. Poor mental health manifests itself in many ways, including depression, anxiety, personality disorders, suicidal thoughts, self-harm, phobias and bipolar disorders. Among the determinants of poor mental health identified by WHO include socio-economic pressures, rapid social change, gender discrimination, social exclusion, unhealthy lifestyle, physical ill health and the risk of violence.⁷¹ A recent study by the Centre for Mental Health noted that:⁷²

- 10% of 11-year-old children experienced a mental health problem in 2012.
- Children from low-income families are four times more likely to experience mental health problems than children from higher-income families.
- Mental health problems are twice as common in boys as girls.
- Over 20% of children experience a mental health problem at some point between the ages of 3 and 11.

⁶⁹ Department for Education and Skills, 2006, Teenage Pregnancy: Accelerating the Strategy to 2010, DfES, Nottingham.

⁷⁰ Holtman, M., 2015, Risks to young People from Alcohol, Life Works, <http://www.lifeworkscommunity.com/blog/risks-to-young-people-from-alcohol.html>

⁷¹ <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs220/en/>

⁷² Centre For Mental Health, 2015, Children of the New Century: Mental Health Findings from the Millennium Cohort Study, UCL, London.

As indicated elsewhere in the Assessment of Need, many of the target groups identified in *Priorities for Youth* such as LGBT, NEET, Looked After Children, Young Carers and Young Parents report disproportionately higher levels of mental health issues, which can include depression, self-harm and attempted suicide. Mental and emotional well-being has also been consistently identified as a concern among the wider youth population.

Evidence from the stakeholder surveys reveals that mental well-being is not a singular construct and can be linked to a range of diverse issues which concern young people, including body image, exam stress, confidence, relationships, suicide, bullying and boredom.

On an annual basis, and in partnership with the UK Youth Parliament, the Northern Ireland Youth Forum gathers the views of young people from across Northern Ireland in an extensive peer-led consultation. The survey identifies priority issues as highlighted by young people, through a voting system, and during the years from 2011 to 2015 over 100,000 young people have participated. A year on year analysis indicates that there are some issues of concern which have remained constant to young people over this period. In particular, the issue of mental health has appeared in the top five priority issues for young people every year.

Further evidence of mental health issues are the hospital admissions due to self-harm which result from an inability to manage feelings and demonstrate underlying emotional difficulties. In 2013, 9 out of every 1,000 young people aged 17 and under were admitted to hospital with a mental health issue, in one area this figure was 14.5 of every 1,000 young people. Additionally, almost 10,000 young people under 25 attended Children and Adolescent Psychiatry Services as outpatients in 2014. In 2014, there were 313 deaths by suicide among 0-24 year olds in Northern Ireland, 80% of which were male.⁷³

In 2015 the NI Commissioner for Children and Young People contributed to the UK Commissioners' report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. In this, the NI Commissioner highlighted that historically NI has been estimated as having a higher

⁷³ <http://www.nisra.gov.uk/>

rate of mental illness prevalence than England, and yet a proportionately lower expenditure on child and adolescent mental health services. The report argued that cuts to universal, preventative services, including Youth Service provision, would result in a greater need for more Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service's (CAMHS) interventions.⁷⁴

A recent report conducted by Ulster University on behalf of the Commission of Victims and Survivors highlighted that as many as 30% of the Northern Ireland population suffer mental health problems and of these, almost half can be attributed to the Troubles. The study noted that emerging evidence indicates that Northern Ireland has high levels of often untreated, post-traumatic stress disorder as a result of decades of violence. The legacy for young people is that some, through family or community influences, may still have unresolved issues and this can manifest itself in risk taking behaviour, mental health issues, poor peer and adult relationships or in some instances be drawn towards paramilitarism.⁷⁵

In assessing mental health needs, it is important to highlight that official statistics on prevalence are based on diagnosed cases, whereas substantially higher levels of self-reported mental health issues have been identified by young people in a wide range of surveys conducted throughout Northern Ireland. A recent survey of 753 young people found that more than a quarter (27%) had a concern about their mental health.⁷⁶ Another survey specifically looking at self-harming, which questioned almost four thousand 15 and 16 year olds across Northern Ireland, found that 10% of them indicated they had self-harmed at least once in their lives.⁷⁷ Secondary analysis of successive Young Life and Times Surveys, which have monitored the mental and emotional health of 16 year olds since 2004, confirmed that over a quarter of 16 years olds reported experiencing serious personal,

⁷⁴ NI Children's Commissioner, 2015, Report of the UK Children's Commissioners, UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, Examination of the Fifth Periodic Report of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, NI Children's Commissioner, Belfast.

⁷⁵ O'Neill, S. et al., 2015, Towards A Better Future: The Trans-generational Impact of the Troubles on Mental Health, Commission of Victims and Survivors, Belfast.

⁷⁶ The views and experiences of young people in Northern Ireland – exploring participation, knowledge and respect for rights, community life and leisure, and mental health. Children's Law Centre (2015).

⁷⁷ NI lifestyle and coping survey: a survey of 3500+ young people in post primary schools: Universities of Oxford and Strathclyde (2010)

emotional or mental health problems.⁷⁸ The majority of these young people had not sought professional help and are therefore not included within official government statistics.

Recent research concluded that some factors associated with mental health well-being may be gender varied. A survey of 1,574 girls aged 7-21 from across the UK found that many are struggling with their mental health and well-being. When asked to indicate what issues they felt to be the most serious health issues for young people, the top responses were self-harming (75%), smoking (72%), mental illness (69%), anorexia or eating disorders (66%), drug abuse (64%), binge drinking (60%), teenage pregnancy (59%), STIs (53%), obesity (51%) and lack of exercise (48%).⁷⁹

The same study noted that 82% of girls believed that adults around them fail to recognise the pressure that young people face. Almost half of those aged 11 to 16 reported experiencing bullying through social media. The survey found that gender stereotypes affect older girls' aspirations, for example 44% feel they must stay slim. A high proportion, (81%), reported experiencing or observing sexism. Three quarters said that anxiety about sexual harassment negatively affects their lives, including their choice of clothing, body confidence or their freedom to go where they want on their own. Among older girls who responded to the survey, 13% reported that a partner has made them feel frightened or unsafe, and 11% have stayed in a relationship despite this. Girls reported feeling increasingly insecure about their place and safety in their local community. When asked what one thing they would change to improve their lives, several themes were consistently suggested, including, greater equality, action against stereotyping in the media, more awareness of mental health and well-being issues and to live free from fear and violence.⁸⁰

Youth Action's 'Young Men Talking' survey was conducted with 131 young men from across to Northern Ireland to look at their concerns. A large number (81%) stated that young men need skills to address conflict and violence in their everyday lives. A high proportion (91%) reported they were aware of factors that triggered violence and more than half of respondents (57%) claimed that they did not have the skills to deal with everyday violent situations.

⁷⁸The mental and emotional health of 16 year olds in NI: Patient and Client Council (2010)

⁷⁹ Girlguiding, 2015, Girls' Attitude Survey, www.girlsattitudes.org.uk

⁸⁰ Girlguiding, 2015, Girls' Attitude Survey, www.girlsattitudes.org.uk

Research conducted by the UU Centre for Young Men's Studies indicated that violence creates barriers to learning, life and work, to good relationships in communities and has a serious impact on boys' mental health. This longitudinal study tracked 378 post-primary school boys over a five year period and found a higher number of boys reporting abnormal levels of conduct, hyperactivity, peer and social problems than UK averages. The report explored a wide range of barriers which boys faced in their learning and described the complexity in the ways adolescent males construct their understanding of masculinity. Boys who participated in the study expressed concerns about a lack of preparedness for key transitional stages during adolescence and the research also concluded that many boys failed to seek emotional support. A minority of boys had been victims of bullying, which had had a profound impact on their lives and learning. The research revealed that the majority of boys who had been victims of violent acts did not talk to anyone about the incident.⁸¹

Young people are also witnesses to and victims of domestic abuse. Between June 2014 and July 2015, there were 12,720 recorded offences, though many more incidents will have been unreported. Exposure to domestic violence can have damaging long-term effects on a young person's mental health and ability to form relationships. A Welsh Assembly publication reported that the adverse effects of living with domestic abuse for young people must be recognised as a child protection issue. The effects, it suggested can be linked with poor educational attainment, social exclusion, juvenile crime, substance abuse, mental health problems and homelessness.⁸²

The stakeholder surveys suggest that young peoples' issues and pressures accumulate with increasing age, signalling the multi-layered nature of need and complexity of life for those in transition to adulthood.

⁸¹ Harland, K. & McCready, S., 2012, Taking Boys Seriously - A Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Male School-Life Experiences in Northern Ireland, Department of Justice, Belfast.

⁸² Welsh Assembly, 2010, Information and Guidance on Domestic Abuse: Safeguarding Children and Young People in Wales, Welsh Assembly, Cardiff.

8.4 Child Sexual Exploitation

The term Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) relates to young people aged 18 years and under. According to Barnardos, CSE can manifest itself in many different forms, from grooming, abuse by an individual who has established a seemingly consensual relationship with a child or young person, informal introduction to other potential abusers and the formal prostituting of a child.⁸³

An inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Northern Ireland was launched in September 2013 following the Police Service of Northern Ireland's (PSNI) review of its cases covering a short period of time during which 22 children had been reported missing a total of 437 times. The inquiry highlighted that young people did not necessarily consider themselves to be potential victims of CSE even though they could acknowledge the vulnerabilities of their friends and peers.⁸⁴ Prior to the inquiry, Barnardo's highlighted that CSE was occurring throughout NI and suggested that the risk of CSE was high especially among more vulnerable young people.⁸⁵

The Inquiry established that few reliable figures exist to measure the extent of CSE in Northern Ireland. From the available data it estimated that between 100 and 145 children and young people were identified as being at significant risk of CSE. However, the inquiry concluded that the number actually experiencing CSE was likely to be significantly higher. The inquiry also reported that Looked After young people were particularly vulnerable to CSE. Children with disabilities were also identified as being more exposed to exploitation involving social media since many rely on this as a valuable tool for social engagement.

Social media and online grooming are increasingly implicated in sexual exploitation. Non-Governmental Organisations highlight the need for consistent, clear messages for children and parents around internet safety, which acknowledge the relationship between this issue and child sexual exploitation.⁸⁶

⁸³ Beckett, H., 2011, 'Not a World Away': The Sexual Exploitation of Children and Young People in Northern Ireland, Barnardos NI, Belfast.

⁸⁴ Marshall, K., 2014, Child Sexual Exploitation in Northern Ireland: Report of the Independent Inquiry, RQIA, Belfast.

⁸⁵ Beckett, H., 2011, 'Not a World Away': The Sexual Exploitation of Children and Young People in Northern Ireland, Barnardos NI, Belfast.

⁸⁶ Children's Law Centre & Save the Children NI, 2015, Submission to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child.

The Inquiry noted that advances in technology have exposed more children to CSE activities. Online grooming and the sharing of indecent images between young people, which can go on to become the focus of bullying and blackmail were highlighted as issues, with sexting reported to be widespread in schools. The accessibility of online pornography was found to affect children's views about what is considered normal in relationships.⁸⁷

Although both males and females are known to be at risk of sexual exploitation, evidence suggests that significantly higher proportions of young females are exploited. An analysis of 1,102 risk assessments completed by social workers in Northern Ireland found that sexual exploitation was identified as an issue of concern for more the four times as many females as males and 14 years was the most frequent age at which concerns were first identified. The analysis found that sexual exploitation was identified as an issue of concern for 33% of those involved with the Youth Justice System at the point of assessment and for 40% of Looked After Children in residential care.⁸⁸

8.5 Summary

Increasingly, health and wellbeing among children and young people needs to be considered in its broadest sense, emphasising mental and social health as well as physical aspects of health. The survey results show that body image, confidence and mental health featured highly in the issues facing young people.

Addressing health issues such as smoking, alcohol and drug misuse and sexual health has been an integral part of Youth Work. Increasingly, Youth Services are developing additional programmes and activities around physical activity, healthy eating, obesity, body image and mental health to counter the challenges facing young people today. These programmes are designed so that young people are emotionally and physically healthy and resilient to cope with the demands of adolescence and making the transition into adulthood.

⁸⁷ Marshall, K., 2014, Child Sexual Exploitation in Northern Ireland: Report of the Independent Inquiry, RQIA, Belfast.

⁸⁸ Beckett, H., 2011, 'Not a World Away': The Sexual Exploitation of Children and Young People in Northern Ireland, Barnardos NI, Belfast.

Youth Work is uniquely positioned therefore to provide opportunities for young people to participate in engaging activities that develop their resilience and the personal, social and emotional skills that they need in life as well as allowing them to enjoy their leisure time.

Key Facts:

- Young people living in disadvantaged areas are more likely to endure health deprivation, disability or suffer mental health issues.
- These vulnerable young people are more likely to be absent from school which will negatively impact on their educational attainment.
- Mental health has become a major health concern for young people.
- Obesity among young people is increasing.
- Health inequalities are clearly linked to one's social status.

9. Stakeholder Feedback

9.1 Young People's Feedback

Two online surveys were conducted comprising an 8 item questionnaire aimed at young people currently attending a range of youth provision across Northern Ireland and an identical version translated into Irish for completion by young people attending Irish medium provision. The questionnaire was designed to elicit the perceptions of young people in relation to the issues affecting them, the activities the Youth Service should provide to meet these needs and how positively they rated their current youth provision. The two datasets were combined for analysis and the results presented below represent this. In total there were 1232 responses, of which 119 were from the Irish Medium survey. This report presents the headline results followed by an exploration of the survey findings by age, gender and geographical area.

Type of Youth Provision Attended

Type	Response Count	Response Percent
School Based Youth Work	99	8.0
Youth Council	35	2.8
Youth Programme	120	9.7
Youth Centre (Part-Time)	114	9.3
Youth Centre (Full-Time)	94	7.6
Youth Forum	7	0.6
Uniformed Organisation	202	16.4
Church Based Youth Centre	108	8.8
Duke of Edinburgh's Award/Joint Award Initiative	171	13.9
Local Youth Group	163	13.2
Other (please specify)	119	9.7
<i>answered question</i>		1232

BACKGROUND VARIABLES

(i) Gender of respondents

Gender	Response Count	Response Percent
Female	54.1	665
Male	44.9	552
Other (please specify)	1.1	13
<i>answered question</i>		1230
<i>missing responses</i>		2

(ii) Distribution of age groups

Age group	Response Percent	Response Count
9 to 13	15.1	186
14 to 18	62.9	775
18+	21.8	269
	<i>answered question</i>	1230
	<i>missing responses</i>	2

(iii) Geographic distribution

LGD	Response Count	Response Percent
Antrim & Newtownabbey	182	14.8
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon	95	7.7
Belfast	199	16.2
Causeway Coast & Glens	93	7.6
Derry & Strabane	198	16.1
Fermanagh & Omagh	101	8.2
Lisburn & Castlereagh	55	4.5
Mid & East Antrim	79	6.4
Mid Ulster	64	5.2
Newry, Mourne & Down	61	5.0
North Down & Ards	100	8.1
	<i>answered question</i>	1227
	<i>missing responses</i>	5

HEADLINE RESULTS

Table 1 (p93) shows the distribution of issues that young people identified as affecting them, and reveals varying extents to which the stated range of issues concerned the young people surveyed. The most notable issue affecting this group of young people was exam stress, accounting for 46% of the total response count. Further analysis show that exam stress disproportionately affects females and those in the 14-18 age band. Although 35% cited boredom as an issue, almost half these responses came from young people who also cited exam stress, suggesting that both are an issue at different times. Around one-third of the cohort also identified mental health, confidence and body image as being concerns and in general terms were more prominent than the risk-taking behaviours of drugs, smoking and alcohol (which still affected 20% of the cohort). A further notable result is that concerns over bullying affects 20% of the young people surveyed.

TABLE 1

Please indicate the issues facing you from the following list.

(Each respondent asked to tick 5 answer options; responses listed in descending frequency)

Issues	Response Count	Response Percent
Exam Stress	565	45.9
Boredom	425	34.5
Body Image	424	34.4
Confidence	403	32.7
Mental Health	372	30.2
Relationships	257	20.9
Careers	252	20.5
Alcohol	242	19.6
Bullying	234	19.0
Health	176	14.3
Drugs	166	13.5
Suicide	127	10.3
Smoking	127	10.3
Transport	117	9.5
Sectarianism	88	7.1
Sexual Health	87	7.1
Culture	85	6.9
Discrimination	76	6.2
Sexual Orientation	66	5.4
Legal Highs	47	3.8
Racism	46	3.7
Gender Issues	32	2.6
Migration	21	1.7
Other	62	5.0

In order to address the concerns cited previously, young people were asked to identify programmes and activities that could be provided by the youth service. The most prominent preferences were for opportunities to travel and for sport (potentially addressing the issue of boredom) though Peer Education, School-based programmes and Community relations work appeared to be among the least favoured options. Conversely, young people were more likely to see the value in qualifications (whether youth work or academic) and around one-fifth cited

residential, events and awareness raising as activities they would value within youth work. It is also notable that although confidence is an issue for many, personal and social development programmes were generally not cited as an activity to meet this need. Although 20% of all young people surveyed expressed a preference for late-night opening, this did not extend to weekend opening (less than 10%).

TABLE 2

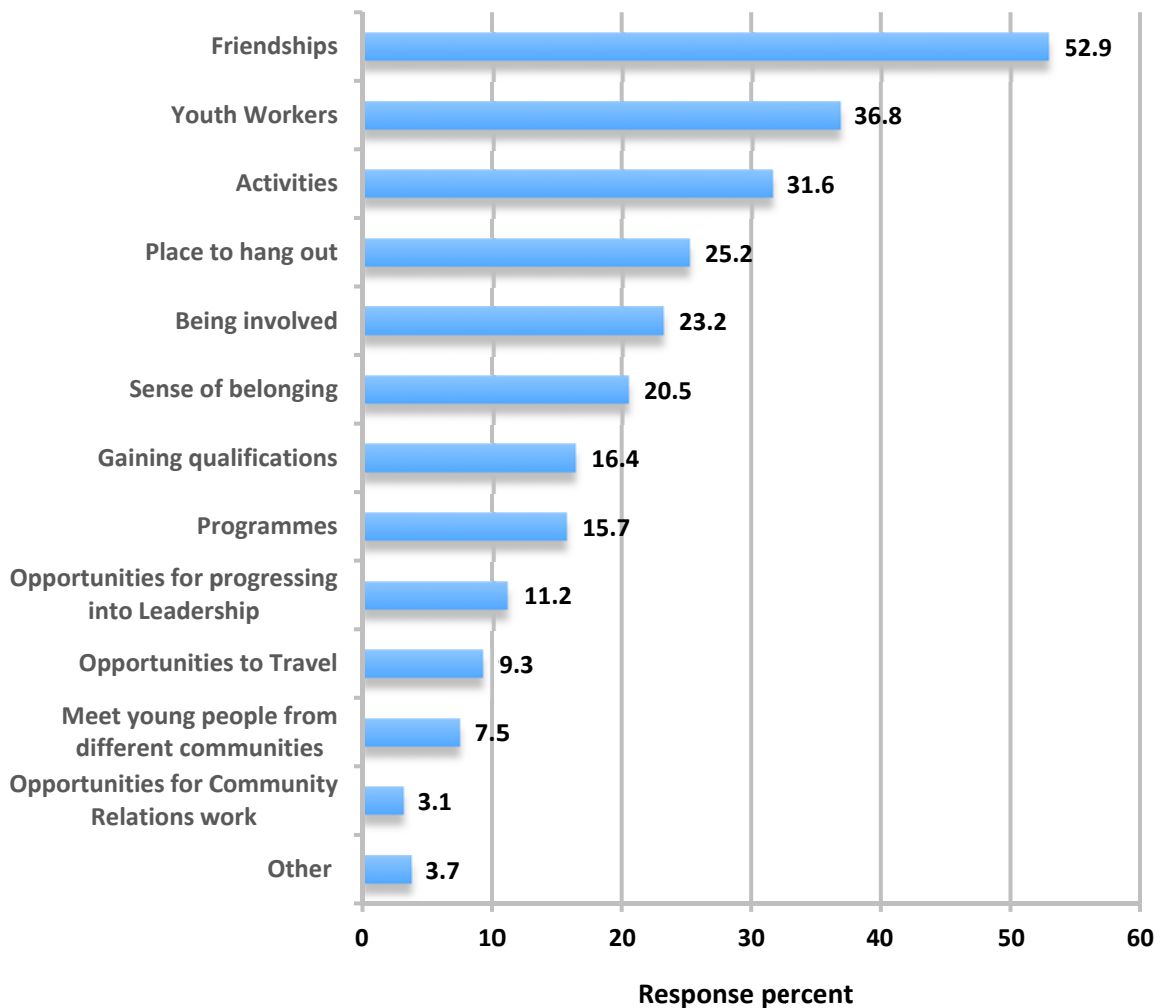
What activities and programmes would you like the Youth Service to provide for young people in your area to address the issues raised in the previous question?

(Each respondent asked to tick 5 answer options; responses listed in descending frequency)

Programme/activities	Response Count	Response Percent
Opportunities to Travel	414	33.6
Sport	399	32.4
Qualifications	381	30.9
Residential	340	27.6
Events	313	25.4
Awareness Raising	302	24.5
Volunteering	275	22.3
Life Skills Programmes	272	22.1
Late Nights	249	20.2
Outdoor Education	242	19.6
Meeting young people from different communities or ethnic backgrounds	239	19.4
Art	171	13.9
Leadership Programmes	165	13.4
Personal and Social Development Programmes	156	12.7
Drama	155	12.6
Drop in	145	11.8
Media	134	10.9
Inter-club activities	119	9.7
Weekend Opening	113	9.2
Peer Education	89	7.2
School Based Programme	78	6.3
Community Relations Work	65	5.3
Youth Councils/Forums	48	3.9
Other	43	3.5

Survey respondents were asked to cite the three most positive aspects within their current youth provision (see Fig.1). The results stress the personal and social benefits and the central role of youth worker and youth work activities as among the most highly regarded benefits of their provision. Over half (53%) cited friendships as the most important benefit though a sense of belonging is much less prominent (21%). Nevertheless, a significant proportion (25%) rated their youth provision simply as a place to hang out and being involved as key benefits. Over one-third (37%) of the cohort perceived their youth worker as a positive aspect and similarly, youth work activities were among the aspects of youth work rated most positively. Gaining qualifications and programmes were much less prominent even though qualifications were much more frequently cited in order to meet their needs as referenced in the previous question. This pattern is also true for opportunities to travel, as less than 10% rated this as positive in comparison to 33% who cited this as an area for the Youth Service to develop further in response to their needs. This would point to a possible under-provision of these activities.

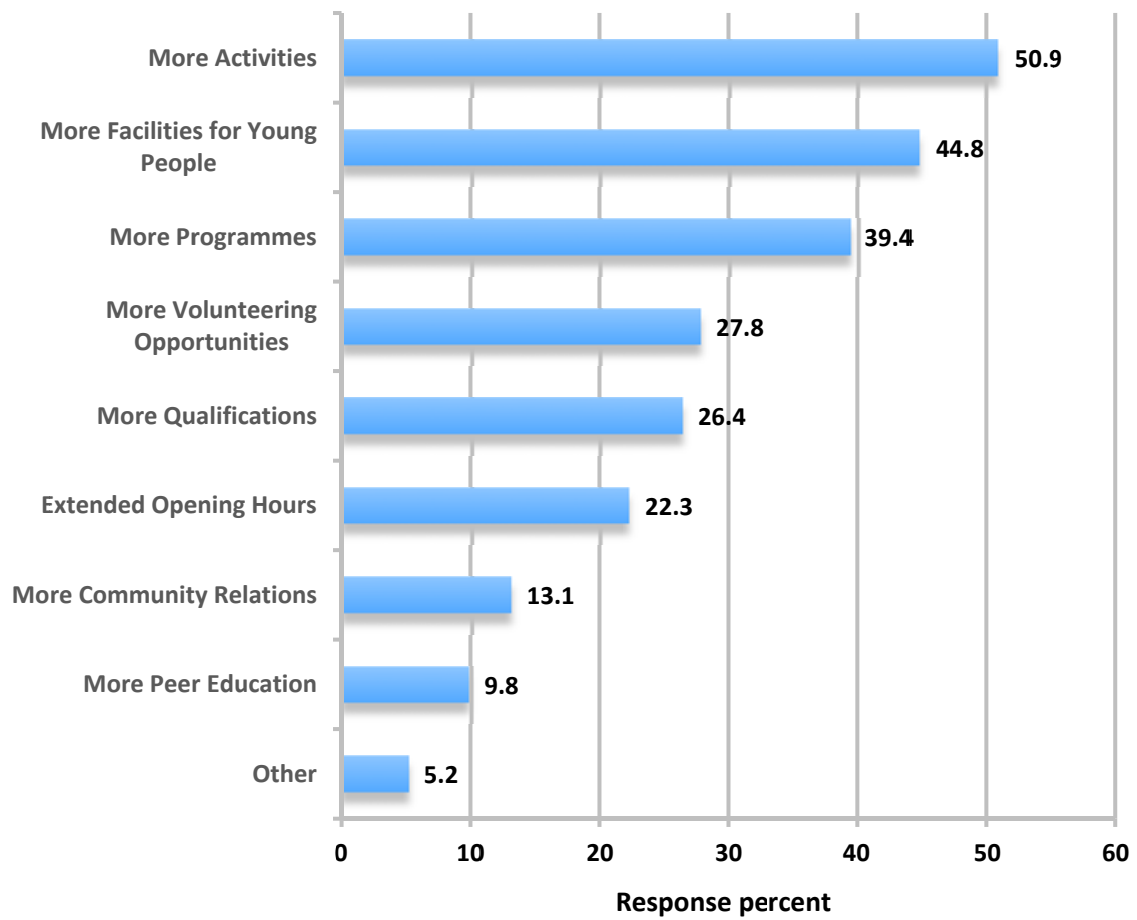
Fig.1 - Please identify the positive aspects of Youth Provision in your area (3 answer options)



Consistent with those areas of youth provision perceived to be most positively regarded, over half of young people surveyed cited more activities as the key aspect in improving their youth provision. A highly significant proportion (45%) cited improved facilities as an area for improvement. Although almost 40% cited programmes as a key area for improvement, it is unclear whether these programmes should have a different emphasis as only 13% cited Personal and Social Development programmes as responsive to their needs. A significant perception that youth work could be improved by volunteering opportunities and qualifications is noted (over a quarter of respondents) but Peer Education and Community Relations are much less prominent (though it is notable that a disproportionately higher

percentage of those in the 18+ age band identified community relations as representing an improvement in their youth provision).

**Fig.2 - How do you think Youth provision in your area could be improved?
(3 answer options)**



RESULTS BY GENDER

Tables 3-6 below present the survey results by gender. The percentage shows the proportion of males and females who responded to each item. Table 3 shows the issues affecting young people by gender. In general, Body image, exam stress and confidence were issues much more cited by females, whereas smoking, alcohol and drugs were issues more commonly identified by male respondents.

Concern over exam stress is prevalent among females (56%), particularly in the 14-18 age group (70% were female). Almost a quarter of females were concerned about their future career, particularly in the older age categories.

A major issue is body image, cited by almost 35% of respondents. Body image is a key issue particularly for females (46% of all females cited this as an issue). This issue affects the over 14 age groups most acutely in which 70% within this group were female. The accompanying issue of confidence follows a similar pattern, affecting one third of all survey respondents, and females especially (of all those who cited confidence as an issue, 65% were female, and 40% of all females surveyed did so). In comparison, around one-fifth of male respondents identified with body image and confidence.

In contrast, males identified risk-taking behaviours of alcohol, drugs and smoking as issues that affect them. Although males were also more likely to cite racism, sectarianism and legal highs, these are issues that are not generally prominent.

In terms of programmes and activities that young people would prefer the Youth Service to provide in order to meet their needs, there is some clear divergence between males and females in some areas. Whereas opportunities for travel were widely identified as a preferred activity, this was more prominent among females (40% of all females compared to 25% of males). Females also had a more noticeable preference for Volunteering and were more likely to cite life skills programmes and opportunities to meet young people from different communities or ethnic backgrounds. In contrast, male respondents were overwhelmingly more prone to cite sport as a preferred activity to meet their needs (44% of all male respondents identified sport, compared to 23% of female respondents).

TABLE 3**Please indicate the issues facing you from the following list:**

(Each respondent asked to tick 5 answer options; responses listed in descending frequency)

	Female (%)	Male (%)	N
Exam Stress	55.9	34.4	562
Body Image	45.7	21.0	420
Confidence	38.9	25.0	397
Boredom	35.3	34.1	423
Mental Health	32.9	26.1	363
Careers	23.2	17.4	250
Relationships	21.4	19.7	251
Bullying	17.0	21.4	231
Alcohol	15.8	24.6	241
Health	13.7	14.9	173
Transport	9.9	9.1	116
Drugs	9.3	18.5	164
Suicide	9.0	11.1	121
Smoking	7.4	13.9	126
Culture	7.1	6.9	85
Sexual Health	6.5	7.8	86
Discrimination	5.9	6.7	76
Sectarianism	5.6	9.2	88
Sexual Orientation	4.5	5.4	60
Racism	2.4	5.3	45
Gender Issues	2.3	2.0	26
Legal Highs	2.1	6.0	47
Migration	2.0	1.4	21
Other	3.8	6.5	61

TABLE 4**What activities and programmes would you like the Youth Service to provide for Young People in your area to address the issues raised in the previous question ?**

(Each respondent asked to tick 5 answer options; responses listed in descending frequency)

	Female (%)	Male (%)	N
Opportunities to Travel	40.2	26.3	412
Sport	22.7	44.0	394
Qualifications	33.1	27.9	374
Residential	29.3	25.5	336
Events	26.5	24.5	311
Awareness Raising	26.2	21.7	294
Volunteering	27.5	16.3	273
Life Skills Programmes	25.0	18.8	270
Late Nights	19.8	20.8	247
Outdoor Education	17.7	22.5	242
Meeting young people from different communities or ethnic backgrounds	22.0	15.9	234
Art	15.6	11.8	169
Leadership Programmes	12.6	14.5	164
Drama	14.3	10.5	153
Personal and Social Development Programmes	13.4	11.2	151
Drop in	12.3	10.7	141
Media	9.5	12.5	132
Inter-club activities	8.7	11.1	119
Weekend Opening	8.6	9.8	111
Peer Education	5.3	9.2	86
School Based Programme	7.5	5.1	78
Community Relations Work	4.2	6.7	65
Youth Councils/Forums	3.2	4.9	48
Other	2.6	4.2	40

From Tables 5-6, there are no substantial differences in how positively males and females view their current youth provision other than a much greater emphasis placed on youth work activities by male respondents. Whereas female respondents were more likely to cite volunteering opportunities as a means to improve their current youth provision, males tended to favour extended opening hours.

TABLE 5

Please identify the positive aspects of Youth Provision in your area.

(Each respondent asked to tick 3 answer options; responses listed in descending frequency)

	Female (%)	Male (%)	N
Friendships	55.0	50.7	646
Youth Workers	35.0	38.6	446
Activities	27.5	37.1	388
Place to hang out	24.8	25.7	307
Being involved	25.0	21.4	284
Sense of belonging	21.2	19.7	250
Gaining qualifications	18.6	13.6	199
Programmes	14.1	17.8	192
Opportunities for progressing into Leadership	10.8	11.8	137
Opportunities to Travel	8.6	10.5	115
Opportunities to meet young people from different communities or ethnic backgrounds	9.8	4.9	92
Opportunities for Community Relations work	3.8	2.2	37
Other	3.3	3.6	42

TABLE 6

How do you think Youth provision in your area could be improved?

(Each respondent asked to tick 3 answer options; responses listed in descending frequency)

	Female (%)	Male (%)	N
More Activities	49.9	53.1	625
More Facilities for Young People	48.1	40.8	545
More Programmes	40.2	38.9	482
More Volunteering Opportunities	32.2	22.5	338
More Qualifications	27.1	25.4	320
Extended Opening Hours	19.2	25.7	270
More Community Relations	12.2	14.1	159
More Peer Education	9.3	10.7	121
Other	4.1	6.5	63

RESULTS BY AGE

Tables 7-10 below present the survey results by age group. The percentage shows the proportion within each age group who responded to each item. Table 7 shows the issues affecting young people by age group.

Smoking and drugs are more prevalent issues among the youngest age group (9-13), accounting for 16% and 22% of all young people in this age group respectively. Although a high proportion of young people generally have highlighted boredom as an issue affecting them (35%), this time, the youngest age group (age 9-13) have most frequently cited this. Bullying also appears to be a prominent issue among the 9-13 age group, affecting 28% of all respondents.

Although exam stress is the single biggest issue for all survey respondents, a particularly high proportion of the 14-18 age group (57%) were affected (compared to 34% of the over 18 age group). Further to this, almost a quarter of all survey respondents over the age of 14 were concerned about their future career. The issue of body image was most prominent among the 14-18 age group (40%), also affecting almost affecting one third of the over-18 age group and these results also show the highest proportion of respondents to be concerned about their confidence to be within the 14-18 age category.

Those in the over 18 age category display a different pattern of identified issues. In particular, mental health was most striking issue of which 43% identified with (compared to 30% for the entire survey cohort). This age group also shows a greater tendency to be more concerned with relationships (27% of all surveyed), sectarianism and discrimination, although the latter two issues were not prominent among the entire cohort of young people.

In terms of programmes and activities that young people would prefer the Youth Service to provide in order to meet their needs, there is some clear divergence between young people within the three age categories. The youngest survey respondents (in the 9-13 age category) have an overwhelming preference for the youth service to provide sporting activities (57%) relative to the over 14 age groups and this is mirrored to a slightly lesser extent by a preference for outdoor education. Furthermore, this age group is much more likely to favour late-night and weekend

opening and express further preferences for art and drama within their youth work programmes (22%, compared to 13% for all age groups in the case of drama). In contrast, survey respondents over the age of 18 favoured awareness raising (36%), Personal and Social development programmes and meeting young people from other communities and ethnic backgrounds. In general, activities with an educational or qualification focus become more frequently cited with increasing age, whereas the reverse is true in the case of sporting and outdoor activities.

TABLE 7

Please indicate the issues facing you from the following list.
(Each respondent asked to tick 5 answer options; responses listed in descending frequency)

	%9-13	%14-18	%18+	N
Exam Stress	18.8	56.6	33.8	565
Body Image	20.4	39.5	29.7	424
Boredom	36.6	35.2	30.9	424
Confidence	25.8	35.6	29.4	403
Mental Health	15.1	29.5	42.8	372
Relationships	10.2	21.3	26.8	256
Careers	3.2	23.5	23.8	252
Alcohol	26.9	17.3	21.2	241
Bullying	28.0	16.5	19.7	233
Health	13.4	11.9	21.9	176
Drugs	22.0	9.9	17.5	165
Suicide	9.1	9.9	12.3	127
Smoking	15.6	9.8	8.2	127
Transport	3.8	9.0	14.9	117
Sectarianism	6.5	5.8	11.5	88
Sexual Health	3.2	7.1	9.7	87
Culture	6.5	5.0	12.6	85
Discrimination	7.0	4.6	10.0	76
Sexual Orientation	2.2	5.8	5.9	65
Legal Highs	3.2	3.6	4.8	47
Racism	8.1	2.8	3.0	45
Gender Issues	1.6	2.6	3.3	32
Migration	1.6	1.7	1.9	21
Other	8.6	4.0	5.6	62

TABLE 8**What activities and programmes would you like the Youth Service to provide for Young People in your area to address the issues raised in the previous question?**

(Each respondent asked to tick 5 answer options; responses listed in descending frequency)

	%9-13	%14-18	%18+	N
Opportunities to Travel	23.7	35.1	36.4	414
Sport	57.0	30.2	21.2	397
Qualifications	7.5	35.1	35.3	381
Residential	24.2	28.5	27.5	340
Events	29.6	25.5	22.3	313
Awareness Raising	12.9	23.2	36.4	302
Volunteering	7.0	25.7	23.0	274
Life Skills Programmes	12.9	23.9	23.4	272
Late Nights	24.7	20.4	16.7	249
Outdoor Education	28.0	18.6	17.1	242
Meeting young people from different communities or ethnic backgrounds	13.4	19.1	24.5	239
Art	23.1	13.9	7.4	171
Leadership Programmes	3.8	12.8	21.9	165
Personal and Social Development Programmes	8.1	12.1	17.5	156
Drama	22.0	12.4	6.7	155
Drop in	9.7	11.1	15.2	145
Media	8.6	11.6	10.4	134
Inter-club activities	12.9	7.9	12.3	118
Weekend Opening	20.4	5.7	11.2	112
Peer Education	6.5	5.5	12.6	89
School Based Programme	3.2	6.7	7.4	78
Community Relations Work	4.8	3.4	11.2	65
Youth Councils/Forums	3.8	3.0	6.7	48
Other	3.2	3.0	5.2	43

When comparing responses from the three age categories, the following trends can be observed:

- The older age groups (age 18 and over) tended to rate programmes and opportunities for progressing into leadership as the most positive aspect

of their current provision. 45% of this age cohort cited more programmes as a means to improve provision.

- Of those aged 9-13, activities were rated as the most positive aspect (47%).
- A sense of belonging is viewed by a disproportionate representation of those aged over 18 as a positive aspect of their youth provision (almost 30%) and a positive perception of programmes is also more prevalent among this age group.
- 45% of all young people aged 18 and over cited having more programmes the best way to improve current provision. One-third of respondents in the age 14-18 age group perceived volunteering as a way in which their youth provision could be improved.
- Generally, the perception that youth work could be improved by programmes, qualifications and community relations increased with age. Conversely, the perception that youth work could be improved with more activities, extended opening hours declined with increasing age.

TABLE 9**Please identify the positive aspects of Youth Provision in your area.**

(Each respondent asked to tick 3 answer options; responses listed in descending frequency)

	%9-13	%14-18	%18+	N
Friendships	57.0	53.7	48.0	651
Youth Workers	41.4	34.6	40.1	453
Activities	47.3	30.5	24.2	389
Place to hang out	27.4	25.8	21.6	309
Being involved	17.2	24.1	24.5	285
Sense of belonging	16.1	18.6	29.4	253
Gaining qualifications	1.6	19.0	19.3	202
Programmes	14.0	14.1	21.9	194
Opportunities for progressing into Leadership	1.6	10.7	19.3	138
Opportunities to Travel	12.9	9.2	7.4	115
Opportunities to meet young people from different communities or ethnic backgrounds	7.0	6.6	10.8	93
Opportunities for Community Relations work	1.6	2.8	4.5	37
Other	3.2	3.6	4.1	45

TABLE 10**How do you think Youth provision in your area could be improved?**

(Each respondent asked to tick 3 answer options; responses listed in descending frequency)

	%9-13	%14-18	%18+	N
More Programmes	36.0	38.6	44.6	651
More Activities	61.3	50.8	43.5	453
More Qualifications	9.1	29.2	30.5	389
More Peer Education	7.5	9.8	11.2	309
More Volunteering Opportunities	11.3	32.6	25.7	285
More Community Relations	9.7	10.5	23.4	253
Extended Opening Hours	37.6	19.6	19.7	202
More Facilities for Young People	37.6	44.8	49.4	194
Opportunities to Travel	12.9	9.2	7.4	115
Opportunities to meet young people from different communities or ethnic backgrounds	7.0	6.6	10.8	93
Opportunities for Community Relations work	1.6	2.8	4.5	37
Other	3.2	3.6	4.1	45

RESPONSES BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT DISTRICT

(i) Please indicate the issues facing you from the following list. (% within LGD)

LGD	Antrim & Newtownabbey	Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon	Belfast	Causeway Coast & Glens	Derry & Strabane	Fermanagh & Omagh	Lisburn & Castlereagh	Mid & East Antrim	Mid Ulster	Newry, Mourne & Down	North Down & Ards	TOTAL COUNT
Health	11	12.6	13.6	11.8	21.2	11.9	29.1	12.7	10.9	9.8	11	174
Mental Health	41.2	26.3	29.6	24.7	30.3	23.8	27.3	34.2	21.9	27.9	32	371
Sexual Health	7.1	6.3	9.5	3.2	5.1	9.9	3.6	11.4	6.3	6.6	6	86
Body Image	35.7	37.9	26.1	41.9	33.3	25.7	50.9	38	35.9	37.7	34	422
Bullying	19.2	18.9	17.1	23.7	21.2	21.8	3.6	22.8	29.7	21.3	7	232
Boredom	32.4	26.3	30.2	45.2	40.4	38.6	29.1	34.2	29.7	32.8	37	424
Suicide	13.2	9.5	15.6	7.5	11.1	8.9	5.5	5.1	12.5	6.6	6	127
Legal Highs	3.8	3.2	7.5	4.3	2	5	0	1.3	4.7	0	5	47
Drugs	13.7	7.4	26.1	8.6	12.6	14.9	9.1	11.4	14.1	11.5	4	166
Alcohol	19.2	12.6	28.1	16.1	18.2	22.8	10.9	17.7	23.4	21.3	16	241
Smoking	8.8	5.3	15.6	3.2	11.6	15.8	3.6	12.7	10.9	9.8	7	126
Discrimination	4.4	6.3	6.5	1.1	8.6	9.9	1.8	6.3	7.8	9.8	4	76
Racism	3.8	2.1	4	3.2	4.5	4	5.5	1.3	9.4	4.9	0	46
Sectarianism	7.7	12.6	6.5	3.2	6.6	5	3.6	7.6	7.8	14.8	6	88
Sexual Orientation	6	5.3	6	4.3	8.6	5	1.8	2.5	1.6	3.3	6	66
Gender Issues	3.3	2.1	4	2.2	4.5	0	1.8	2.5	0	3.3	0	32
Relationships	20.3	26.3	14.1	16.1	24.7	14.9	29.1	29.1	20.3	23	22	257
Culture	4.4	8.4	8	2.2	9.6	8.9	1.8	6.3	7.8	8.2	6	84
Careers	25.3	18.9	17.6	20.4	12.6	19.8	25.5	21.5	20.3	24.6	30	252
Exam Stress	48.4	61.1	31.2	50.5	38.4	44.6	69.1	45.6	31.3	47.5	64	563
Confidence	33.5	27.4	28.1	40.9	34.8	29.7	41.8	27.8	32.8	36.1	33	401
Migration	1.1	1.1	2	1.1	1.5	1	1.8	1.3	3.1	1.6	3	20
Transport	4.4	10.5	6.5	16.1	12.1	5.9	16.4	10.1	6.3	11.5	13	117
Other	8.8	5.3	6.5	3.2	6.1	2	1.8	5.1	4.7	1.6	1	61

(ii) Activities and programmes for the Youth Service to provide for Young People in their areas to address the issues raised in the previous question. (% within LGD)

Column1	Antrim & Newtownabbey	Banbridge & Craigavon	Belfast	Causeway Coast & Glens	Derry & Strabane	Fermanagh & Omagh	Lisburn & Castlereagh	Mid & East Antrim	Mid Ulster	Newry, Mourne & Down	North Down & Ards	TOTAL COUNT
Awareness Raising	25.8	18.9	25.1	28	28.3	23.8	18.2	27.8	20.3	18	24	301
Qualifications	34.6	37.9	35.2	26.9	29.8	25.7	29.1	29.1	20.3	36.1	26	379
Events	24.2	26.3	24.6	23.7	24.2	25.7	30.9	27.8	35.9	27.9	18	311
Media	7.1	9.5	8	5.4	14.6	11.9	9.1	15.2	17.2	19.7	9	133
Art	13.7	8.4	11.6	12.9	16.7	15.8	20	19	17.2	6.6	13	171
Inter-club activities	11	6.3	7.5	17.2	7.6	7.9	12.7	11.4	9.4	14.8	8	119
Drama	12.6	9.5	12.1	18.3	11.1	14.9	10.9	10.1	23.4	4.9	10	152
Sport	32.4	26.3	37.7	33.3	34.3	25.7	36.4	30.4	39.1	27.9	26	396
Drop in	17.6	5.3	8.5	12.9	15.7	5.9	7.3	17.7	4.7	6.6	17	145
Opportunities to Travel	30.8	38.9	35.7	33.3	26.8	35.6	40	36.7	23.4	37.7	39	412
Residential	25.3	31.6	31.7	31.2	33.8	30.7	23.6	20.3	14.1	16.4	25	339
Late Nights	15.4	16.8	24.1	19.4	22.7	25.7	21.8	16.5	12.5	24.6	20	249
Outdoor Education	20.9	18.9	16.1	19.4	18.7	25.7	18.2	15.2	23.4	18	22	239
School Based Programme	7.1	6.3	3.5	6.5	4.5	3	5.5	10.1	12.5	3.3	13	78
Volunteering	21.4	29.5	26.1	14	23.2	20.8	36.4	20.3	15.6	21.3	16	274
Peer Education	7.7	8.4	10.6	5.4	9.6	5	5.5	3.8	6.3	3.3	4	88
Weekend Opening	6.6	6.3	14.1	15.1	9.6	5.9	5.5	10.1	4.7	8.2	9	113
Personal and Social Development	19.2	14.7	14.1	5.4	13.1	8.9	7.3	8.9	7.8	14.8	14	156
Life Skills Programmes	26.9	23.2	20.6	17.2	23.7	21.8	23.6	16.5	20.3	23	22	272
Youth Councils/Forums	3.8	3.2	4	5.4	4	3	1.8	7.6	9.4	0	1	48
Community Relations Work	5.5	6.3	5.5	3.2	4	5	10.9	6.3	3.1	6.6	5	65
Leadership Programmes	13.2	13.7	14.6	9.7	9.6	13.9	10.9	16.5	7.8	21.3	20	165

(iii) Please identify the positive aspects of Youth Provision in your area. (% within LGD)

LGD	Antrim & Newtownabbey	Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon	Belfast	Causeway Coast & Glens	Derry & Strabane	Fermanagh & Omagh	Lisburn & Castlereagh	Mid & East Antrim	Mid Ulster	Newry, Mourne & Down	North Down & Ards	TOTAL COUNT
Programmes	13.7	17.9	21.1	8.6	20.7	18.8	9.1	13.9	10.9	18	8	194
Youth Workers	28	37.9	51.3	24.7	35.4	47.5	23.6	38	31.3	32.8	38	451
Activities	26.4	34.7	29.6	31.2	38.4	34.7	30.9	31.6	37.5	29.5	25	389
Sense of belonging	18.7	20	22.1	31.2	19.7	9.9	18.2	21.5	25	18	24	253
Friendships	50	48.4	49.7	51.6	55.1	49.5	60	58.2	51.6	54.1	60	648
Place to hang out	28.6	21.1	21.1	23.7	27.8	23.8	23.6	29.1	26.6	27.9	23	308
Being involved	20.9	27.4	29.6	29	16.7	19.8	14.5	21.5	25	26.2	24	284
Gaining qualifications	16.5	22.1	15.1	19.4	11.1	17.8	20	12.7	20.3	16.4	18	201
Opportunities to Travel	8.2	6.3	11.1	7.5	12.1	7.9	7.3	7.6	9.4	11.5	10	115
Opportunities for Community Relations work	2.2	2.1	1.5	4.3	4.5	5	12.7	1.3	3.1	1.6	0	38
Opportunities to meet young people from different communities or ethnic backgrounds	8.2	4.2	8.5	7.5	9.1	12.9	7.3	6.3	6.3	3.3	4	93
Opportunities for progressing into Leadership	11	17.9	9	14	9.6	8.9	16.4	11.4	7.8	4.9	15	137
Other	11.5	3.2	1	5.4	2.5	1	1.8	1.3	3.1	1.6	3	45

(iv) How do you think Youth provision in your area could be improved? (% within LGD)

LGD	Antrim & Newtownabbey	Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon	Belfast	Causeway Coast & Glens	Derry & Strabane	Fermanagh & Omagh	Lisburn & Castlereagh	Mid & East Antrim	Mid Ulster	Newry, Mourne & Down	North Down & Ards	TOTAL COUNT
More Programmes	44	40	34.2	34.4	42.4	40.6	38.2	35.4	40.6	41	40	483
More Activities	49.5	50.5	45.7	50.5	51	52.5	61.8	57	53.1	45.9	54	625
More Qualifications	26.4	29.5	28.1	29	29.3	27.7	18.2	13.9	20.3	29.5	26	323
More Peer Education	11	10.5	10.6	10.8	11.1	7.9	1.8	8.9	10.9	6.6	11	121
More Volunteering Opportunities	25.8	30.5	25.1	19.4	33.8	27.7	29.1	27.8	23.4	32.8	30	342
More Community Relations	15.4	13.7	16.1	11.8	8.1	15.8	10.9	13.9	17.2	13.1	10	162
Extended Opening Hours	19.8	11.6	29.6	19.4	25.8	27.7	20	24.1	17.2	13.1	22	274
More Facilities for Young People	42.9	56.8	38.7	59.1	39.4	26.7	58.2	54.4	42.2	47.5	51	551
Other	9.3	6.3	4	7.5	4	4	0	7.6	1.6	4.9	4	64

9.2 Summary from Young People's Regional Advisory Group Workshop:

The following narrative provides a snapshot of some of the key issues emerging from the workshops.

Young people highlighted the following as key priority issues:

- Boredom and the need for more opportunities.
- Alcohol, drugs, smoking and legal highs should all be linked together as major health issues.
- Similarly, body image, mental health, confidence, and suicide should all be grouped and arguably classified under mental health.
- Young people want to find their place in society, be valued and end negative stereotyping.
- There is a need for support, particularly at times of crisis when young people are at their most vulnerable.
- Paramilitaries were also cited as an often unseen issue for young people.

Other reoccurring themes included:

- Demonisation and mistreatment by police.
- The need for real drug education.
- Things to do, places to go, people to speak to.
- Self-confidence in school and life.
- Limited choices in life and no support with making these choices. Some young people really struggle to identify their persona, career and educational goals.
- Missed opportunities related to the formal education system.
- Trust issues generally and with teachers.
- Disregard for those with Special Educational Needs;
- Support in dealing with loss, worries and stress. Belief that there was a need to support young people with their coping skills;
- Anxiety.
- Self-esteem.
- Peer pressure.
- Friendships.

Young people discussed the need for a flexible youth led approach to youth work as vitally important. They discussed how youth work should have the ability to respond to needs, especially at times that suit and at times of crisis.

Some young people discussed how the formal education system has failed them or did not support them to fulfil their full potential. Many spoke about how youth work provided life changing opportunities for them.

Similarly, some discussed how there is sometimes too much focus on qualifications and not enough on developing life skills. Some suggested that education does not have to mean GCSEs and A levels. Experiential learning, new opportunities and experiences, non-formal training and capacity building were cited as often more important. Youth Work qualifications were highlighted by some as important.

Young people were asked to highlight the most positive aspects of youth provision that they had experiences and highlighted the following:

- Cross Border Projects.
- Rights based programmes.
- Overseas experiences.
- Participation, Youth Voice and Youth Democracy projects, where young people connect directly with decision makers.
- Peer Education Programmes.
- Charitable work.
- Personal and Social Development Programmes such as full time Programmes where young people meet 3 or more days a week.

In terms of improving the service young people highlighted issues including:

- More work with those young people with Special Educational Needs.
- One to one support.
- Young People discussed the need for improved youth provision, where young people set the agenda.
- Funding was discussed including short term approach and how young people feel that they are the big losers when it comes to cuts and austerity.

Young people discussed how they are keen to have a say on the design and delivery of Youth Work, how they would like more investment in things that have been proven to work and spoke with frustration about how Government needs to listen and act.

Under the discussions on PFY young people noted that:

- They want help to discover their true potential and ourselves.
- They greater opportunities for employment training and education.
- They want help with mental health provision.

Young people discussed their desire to be valued by society:

- Special Educational Needs provision should be improved.
- Negative stereotyping must end.
- Issues at home are key for many young people.
- Young people need support during times of crisis.
- Test results and exams are a source of massive pressure and often reflect how society views young people.
- Peer pressure continues to be a key factor in young people's lives.
- Bullying is something that occurs regularly and many agencies just don't know how to deal with it.
- Understanding world events and young people's place within them.
- Culture, language and empathy.
- Discrimination.

Addressing the survey findings for the issues young people identified:

▶ **Do you feel that these are the top issues that young people are facing?**

- Exam stress. There is now more expectations on achieving higher grades to get into university.
- Boredom leads to antisocial behaviour and mental health issues.
- Mental health, we are surprised it wasn't higher on the survey, however this survey may have been completed at exam time, mental health has a ripple affect (suicide) and is a consistent issue. Young people can't

acknowledge mental health issues at times and seek appropriate help.
Need to educate at younger age.

- Sectarianism surprising why so far down? Local Youth Council and YAP had identified it as one of 3 top priorities through consultation.
- Boredom lack of facilities and activities to do (YC also identified it as a top 3 issue) lack of awareness of youth service provision may result in limited opportunities for young people which will in turn lead to boredom.
- Sexual health should be more towards the top especially for the 14-18 age range. It is so important and schools do it well enough.
- Opened up more to young people – lack of awareness (YAP).
- Transport seems high rather than the main issues that young people talk about on a daily basis. This may be down to a lot of rural young people completing the survey.
- More work should be done around cultural awareness. Young people are too afraid to open up about their identity and culture and try to hide it when it should be celebrated.

Looking at the list of issues, are there any issues that aren't on here that you think should be?

- Brexit and the implications. Everything is going to change and there could be a lack of understanding of what it actually entails.
- Sexual orientation and the bullying attached to this.
- Confidence building.
- Xenophobia.
- Money and lack of or not having a job is a huge issue for young people.
- Sub-teachers can have a disruptive impact on our education particularly coming up to exams and support with course work.

2 Addressing the survey findings where young people stated the activities/programmes that would address their issues:

- ▶ **Do you feel the list of activities/programmes would address the issues you are facing as a young person?**
 - YES!

- ▶ **Is there anything that isn't here which should be added?**
 - MPs + MLAs need to be more supportive and represent young people.
 - All young people need to know that there are services and projects out there to help them.
 - Realistic alcohol, drug and sexual health services that all young people can access.
 - Opportunities for more international travel. We don't get that opportunity. Group travel is more meaningful and it lets us get outside comfort zones.
 - Youth Forums should be better promoted. Young people have different opinions and experiences of these and not everyone knows what they are or when they happen
 - Funding for Youth Services should be protected. The Youth Service is a preventative service and it can target need before issues appear with young people
 - Trips are important and shouldn't be based on extras. Young people should not be expected to pay for additional programmes and activities, such as residentials and camps, as not everyone can afford it.
 - Young people should come to the Youth Service for the right reason. It is not just about playing football or pool.
 - Exam stress is a major issue and there should be awareness programmes on how to cope with the demands and being able to look into career paths which schools aren't great at.
 - Meeting young people from different communities to develop relationships and explore other cultures.
 - Going to Youth Service to give you advice on life skills and life stress.
 - Employability. Support with applying for jobs and interview skills.

- Specific classes on things like managing a budget or looking for work and other day to day things that you may need instead of just doing drugs and alcohol or other programmes.
- UCAS points
- Millennium volunteers.

3 Addressing the survey findings about the positives of the Youth Service:

▶ Do you agree that these are the positives of the Youth Service?

- Yes, especially Youth Worker relationships.
- Yes agree with the positives. The workers treat us with respect. Always work for our interests and are honest and open with us.
- Makes you self-aware and of your own surroundings.
- More insight in the community.
- Wouldn't have any problems with the survey as a whole and think the list is very fair

▶ Is there anything you would add to the list?

- All young people need to know about services and opportunities that happen everywhere and not just in their own community.
- Transport not great for all young people.
- Youth Services give young people opportunities.
- We need opportunities for meeting young people from other communities. We have all met different people and it is great and now we can keep in touch through social media!
- I've met some of my best friends through Youth Work.
- I've travelled to 2 countries in 6 months. I wouldn't get that opportunity anywhere else.

4 Addressing the survey findings about how youth provision could be improved:

- ▶ **Do you agree with these? Is there anything missing from the list that should be included?**
 - Yes, but all comes down to funding and services are getting cut.
 - We need a joint approach to host different events.
 - We need to look at accessibility for rural communities.
 - Updated youth facilities.
 - Very vague nothing specific of young people's views.
 - Very little promotion of Youth Service.
 - Advertising the Youth Service to promote it better.
 - Social media should be used. More publicity to young people as young people don't read newspapers. The Youth Service has to address young people directly.
 - Lack of recruitment because young people don't understand what is being asked of them and also they don't give it a chance.
 - Wi-Fi is really needed in this day and age.
 - Life skills.
 - UCAS. Information on universities, careers and employers.

5 Explain that the Youth Service would like to reach out to young people who don't engage with Youth Service:

- ▶ **Why do you think some young people do not take part in the youth service?**
- ▶ **If you don't use your local Youth Services, could you let us know some of the reasons why you don't?**
- ▶ **How do you think we could attract young people to take part who don't?**
- ▶ **What sort of activities or programmes would attract you to use your local Youth Services?**

- Not all young people understand exactly what youth provision is.
 - We need to do more with social media, we all use it!
 - Some people don't take part because of the benefits they are on. Job Seekers allowance stops you accessing full time youth provision because of sign on dates and parents losing child benefit
 - Sometimes young people are busy with exams.
 - Sometimes the only options are the youth clubs in your own community and it's the same thing that happens all the time in them.
 - Young people don't know about Youth Service.
 - Don't always have time.
 - Unable to manage time.
 - Not relevant.
 - Out dated.
 - Need to listen to young people more.
 - Be able to adapt to change to cater for young people.
 - Not attractive to older young people.
 - Preoccupied with school.
 - Didn't try it
 - Don't sell it enough.
 - Need word of mouth.
- ▶ **How do you think we could attract young people to take part who don't?**
- ▶ **What sort of activities or programmes would attract you to use your local Youth Services?**
- Advertising the Youth Service better.
 - Social media is important in advertising Youth Services. The Youth Service has to address young people directly.
 - Advertising is a let down.
 - Lack of recruitment because young people don't understand what is being asked of them and also they don't give it a chance.

9.3 Feedback from Young People Not Involved in EA Youth Provision

A survey was conducted with 134 young people who are not currently involved in EA registered youth provision, of whom 97% indicated they had no regular participation in any Youth Services. The respondents were asked a series of open-ended questions asking why they did not use their local youth services and what type of activities or programmes would attract them to use youth services.

Distribution of Age Groups

Age group	Response Percent	Response Count
9 to 13	3.8	5
14 to 18	73.7	98
18+	22.6	30
<i>answered question</i>		133
<i>missing responses</i>		1

Gender of Respondents

Gender	Response Count	Response Percent
Female	89	66.9
Male	43	32.3
Other (please specify)	1	0.8
<i>answered question</i>		133
<i>missing responses</i>		1

Location of Respondents

LGD	Response Count	Response Percent
Antrim & Newtownabbey	2	1.5
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon	0	0.0
Belfast	8	6.0
Causeway Coast & Glens	2	1.5
Derry & Strabane	38	28.4
Fermanagh & Omagh	83	61.9
Lisburn & Castlereagh	0	0.0
Mid & East Antrim	0	0.0
Mid Ulster	1	0.7
Newry, Mourne & Down	0	0.0
North Down & Ards	0	0.0
<i>answered question</i>		134
<i>missing responses</i>		0

Asked for the reasons why they did not use their local youth services the responses can be categorised into six main reasons listed in descending order in the table below.

Reason for non participation	Count	Percent
Too busy/ no spare time/ occupied by work/studies	35	26.1
Not aware of youth service	28	20.8
There is no provision in my area/ too far to travel	18	13.4
No interest	16	11.9
Not suited to my age group/ service is for younger ages	10	7.4
Don't know or like the people/ friends don't go	8	5.9
Unsure/ Just don't go/ Other	19	14.1

Asked what sort of activities or programmes would attract them to use their local Youth Services the responses primarily focused on sports, trips, activity-based pursuits and opportunities to socialise and have fun.

Areas of Interest	Count	Percent
Sports / fitness	26	19.4
Trips / residentials /outdoor	18	13.4
Socialising / meeting people / fun /disco	22	16.4
Activities to enhance education, employment, CVs/qualifications	13	9.7
Creative activities / dance/ music	8	5.9
Volunteering / community work / charity work	6	4.4
Other	21	15.6

The other responses to this question included comments that activities should be age appropriate, free of charge and better advertised.

When asked if they wished to make any additional comments only 8 young people did so, 7 of whom commented that Youth Services should be advertised better, particularly through social media.

9.4 Youth Workers' Feedback

An online survey was conducted comprising of an 8 item questionnaire aimed at youth workers across all sectors currently delivering youth provision across Northern Ireland. The questionnaire was designed to elicit the perceptions of youth workers in relation to the issues affecting young people as reported in a previous survey of young people and the activities the Youth Service should provide that would be most effective in meeting these needs. In total there were 285 responses. This report presents the headline results followed by an exploration of the survey findings by the age group of young people each youth worker predominantly engaged with. The tables below present the background variables and a description of the youth workers who took part in this survey.

Background variables		Percent of sample (%)	Response Count
Youth work setting	The Education Authority	48.8%	139
	The Voluntary Youth Sector	51.2%	146
Position	Full time Youth Worker	54.6%	154
	Part time Youth Worker	22.3%	63
	Volunteer Youth Worker	23.0%	65
Age group worked with	9-13	31.1%	88
	14-18	54.4%	154
	18+	14.5%	41

Geographic distribution

LGD	Response Count	Response Percent
Antrim & Newtownabbey	66	23.2%
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon	15	5.3%
Belfast	42	14.8%
Causeway Coast & Glens	15	5.3%
Derry & Strabane	47	16.5%
Fermanagh & Omagh	22	7.7%
Lisburn & Castlereagh	5	1.8%
Mid & East Antrim	42	14.8%
Mid Ulster	6	2.1%
Newry, Mourne & Down	5	1.8%
North Down & Ards	2	0.7%
Regional	17	6.0%
	<i>answered question</i>	284
	<i>missing responses</i>	1

HEADLINE RESULTS

Table 1 below shows the distribution of issues that youth workers have identified as affecting young people they engaged with, and reveals varying extents to which these issues affected them. The youth workers surveyed attributed the greatest level of importance to issues surrounding mental health, with two-thirds of all survey respondents citing this as an issue for young people.

TABLE 1

Please indicate the main issues facing young people that you work with.
(Each respondent asked to tick 5 answer options; responses listed in descending frequency)

Issues	Response Count	Response Percent
Mental Health	66.3%	189
Confidence	40.4%	115
Alcohol	39.6%	113
Relationships	36.5%	104
Bullying	36.1%	103
Drugs	36.1%	103
Boredom	27.7%	79
Exam Stress	21.4%	61
Body Image	20.4%	58
Careers/Employability	17.9%	51
Sexual Health	16.8%	48
Suicide	15.1%	43
Sectarianism	14.4%	41
Rural Isolation	12.6%	36
Health	10.9%	31
Legal Hights	8.8%	25
Smoking	8.1%	23
Sexual Orientation	7.4%	21
Discrimination	7.0%	20
Transport	6.0%	17
Culture	4.9%	14
Gender Issues	4.6%	13
Racism	3.9%	11
Migration	0.4%	1
Other	9.5%	27

Further analysis shows that mental health disproportionately affects those in the 18-plus age category. Substantial proportions of the cohort (36-40%) also identified confidence, relationships and bullying as being concerns and in general terms were more prominent than the risk-taking behaviours, exam stress, boredom and concern over future careers. A notable exception to this pattern is the perception among 40% of youth workers who identified alcohol as an issue for the young people they work with.

In order to address the concerns cited previously, youth workers were asked to identify various programmes, and interventions that could be provided by the youth service. The most frequently cited options (almost half of all survey respondents) were for personal and social development programmes and life skills programmes (potentially addressing the issue of confidence, mental health) though, sport, youth forums and inter-club activities appeared to be among the least favoured options. Although 30% of youth workers identified qualifications as effective in meeting the needs of young people, other educational programmes such as peer education, careers programmes and school based programmes carried the support of less than a fifth of respondents. Although only 11% favoured late-night opening as a means to address the needs of young people, weekend opening was perceived as the more effective option by 18% of youth workers.

TABLE 2**What activities and programmes or interventions do you think the Youth Service should provide for young people in your area to address the issues raised in the previous question?**

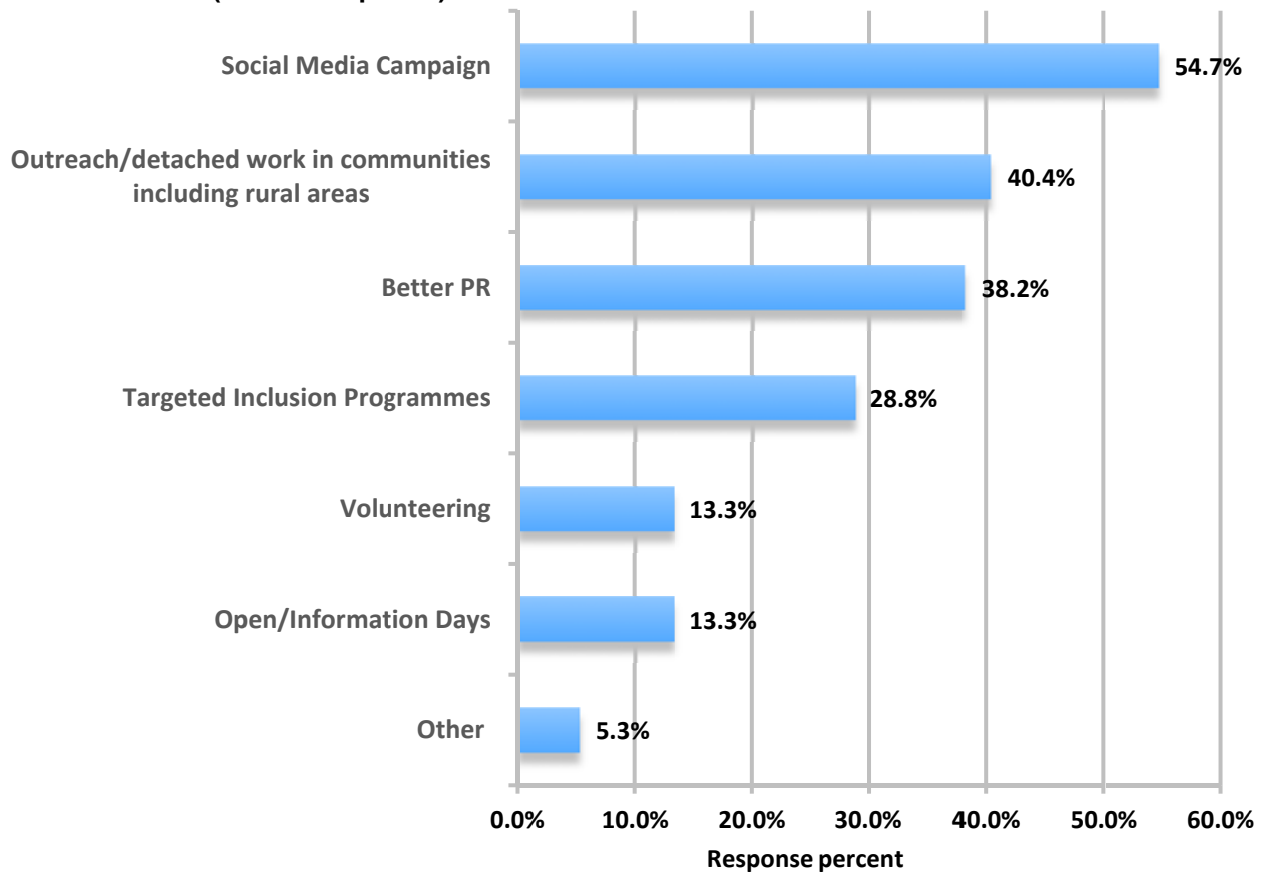
(Each respondent asked to tick 5 answer options; responses listed in descending frequency)

Programme/activities	Response Count	Response Percent
Personal and Social Development Programmes	49.8%	142
Life Skills Programmes	47.7%	136
Awareness Raising	45.6%	130
Drop In	32.6%	93
Residentials	30.9%	88
Qualifications	29.8%	85
Opportunities to Travel	29.8%	85
Leadership Programmes	23.2%	66
Outdoor Education	21.1%	60
Peer Education	19.3%	55
Weekend Opening	17.9%	51
Community Relations Work	17.9%	51
Careers/employability Programmes	17.2%	49
School Based Programmes	16.5%	47
Volunteering	14.4%	41
Sport	11.9%	34
Inter-club activities	11.6%	33
Late Nights	11.2%	32
Youth Councils/Forums	10.5%	30
Other	7.0%	20

In order to encourage more young people to become involved with youth services, survey respondents were asked to select various methods that youth workers could employ to bring this about (please see Fig.1 for results). From these results, youth workers attached the greatest value to social media campaigns which was cited by, 55% of respondents as an activity youth workers could carry out in relation to this. Outreach and detached work in communities (including rural areas) were also prominently rated (40% of all respondents cited this) though targeted inclusion programmes tended to be a less favoured option for these purposes. Conversely,

open days and information days were not generally perceived to be as appropriate to encouraging more young people to become involved in youth services.

**Fig. 1: How can youth workers encourage young people to become involved in youth services?
(2 answer options)**



RESULTS BY AGE GROUP OF YOUNG PEOPLE ENGAGED WITH

Tables 3-5 below present the survey results by age group of the young people they primarily engage with. The percentage shows the proportion of survey respondents who engaged with each age group who responded to each item. Table 3 presents the issues perceived by youth workers as affecting young people by these age groups.

Although mental health is the single biggest issue affecting young people as perceived by youth workers generally, it is notable that this sample of youth workers regarded this issue as disproportionately affecting the age 18 plus age group. An exceptionally high proportion (93%) attributed this issue to this age group and it is also notable that a very substantial proportion of respondents (70%) also attributed the mental health issue to the 14-18 age group. In parallel, very high proportions of survey respondents (almost one-third) referenced suicide as endangering the well-being of the older age group of young people.

These results also indicate that bullying is a prominent issue facing young people in the 9-13 age group, as cited by 53% of youth workers who engaged with these young people and the prominence of this issue has also been emphasised at age 14-18 by 30% of youth workers. A further 30% of survey respondents cited body image as main issue facing the young people age 9-13 that they engage with and a similar proportion also highlighted that these young people are also affected by boredom. Smoking is regarded as a more pressing concern for the youngest (age 9-13) age group, though risk-taking behaviour around legal highs become more central at age 18 and over.

The youth workers surveyed have recognised exam stress as an issue for the 9-13 age group most particularly, but an excessively high level of concern over future career was perceived as an issue for those young people over age 18. Although survey respondents identify health to be a main issue for the over 18 group, it is notable that one-fifth of survey respondents attributed sexual health issues as affecting those young people between the ages of 14 and 18. Furthermore, almost half of those respondents who engage with this age group cited alcohol as a main

issue for them and a third of respondents have indicated likewise for the 9-13 age group.

Table 4 sets out the programmes, activities and interventions that young workers suggested the Youth Service provide in order to meet the needs of the young people they engaged with, indicating some areas of divergence in the methods preferred according to their age category. Although the personal and social development programmes, life skills programmes and awareness raising, which have been most favoured overall, are perceived to be effective across all ages, survey respondents were more likely to cite residential, sport and inter-club activities as being more appropriate to the youngest age group (9-13). Conversely, the effectiveness of drop-in, peer education and careers and employability programmes in meeting the challenges posed by the issues facing young people increase in parallel with age. For example, one-third of survey respondents believed the youth service should provide peer education for young people over the age of 18, compared to 9% for the 9-13 age band.

TABLE 3

Please indicate the main issues facing young people that you work with from the following list.

(Each respondent asked to tick 5 answer options; responses listed in descending frequency)

Issues	%9-13	%14-18	%18+	N
Mental Health	47.7	70.1	92.7	189
Confidence	42	39.6	39	115
Alcohol	31.8	48.7	24.4	113
Relationships	38.6	35.7	36.6	104
Bullying	53.4	29.9	24.4	103
Drugs	30.7	37.7	39	103
Boredom	33	26	19.5	79
Exam Stress	28.4	21.4	7.3	61
Body Image	29.5	16.9	14.6	58
Careers/Employability	6.8	17.5	41.5	51
Sexual Health	14.8	20.8	7.3	48
Suicide	9.1	13.6	31.7	43
Sectarianism	11.4	16.9	12.2	41
Rural Isolation	13.6	13	9.8	36
Health	11.4	8.4	17.1	31
Legal Highs	4.5	9.1	17.1	25
Smoking	12.5	7.1	2.4	23
Sexual Orientation	5.7	8.4	7.3	21
Discrimination	9.1	5.8	4.9	20
Transport	4.5	5.2	12.2	17
Culture	5.7	5.2	2.4	14
Gender Issues	1.1	5.2	9.8	13
Racism	1.1	6.5	0	11
Migration	0	0.6	0	1
Other	9.1	9.1	12.2	27

TABLE 4**What activities and programmes or interventions do you think the Youth Service should provide for young people in your area to address the issues raised in the previous question ?**

(Each respondent asked to tick 5 answer options; responses listed in descending frequency)

Programmes/activities	%9-13	%14-18	%18+	N
Personal and Social Development Programmes	47.7	50	53.7	142
Life Skills Programmes	52.3	46.1	46.3	136
Awareness Raising	46.6	46.1	43.9	130
Drop In	28.4	35.7	31.7	93
Residential	37.5	31.2	17.1	88
Qualifications	35.2	27.9	26.8	85
Opportunities to Travel	27.3	32.5	24.4	85
Leadership Programmes	19.3	26.6	19.5	66
Outdoor Education	20.5	21.4	19.5	60
Peer Education	14.8	20.1	26.8	55
Weekend Opening	20.5	14.9	24.4	51
Community Relations Work	14.8	19.5	19.5	51
Careers/employability Programmes	9.1	18.2	31.7	49
School Based Programmes	15.9	18.2	12.2	47
Volunteering	12.5	16.2	12.2	41
Sport	18.2	8.4	9.8	34
Inter-club activities	20.5	7.8	7.3	33
Late Nights	11.4	8.4	19.5	32
Youth Councils/Forums	6.8	13.6	4.9	30
Other	2.3	7.8	9.8	20

Table 5 sets out how youth workers have responded when asked how they can encourage more young people to become involved in youth services according to the age of young people they engage with. From these results, it is clear that survey respondents were more likely to attach importance to outreach and detached work in communities (including rural areas) as most appropriate for young people over the age of 18 (54% of youth workers who engaged with this age category) and similarly, although less prominently, targeted inclusion programmes were more likely to be acknowledged for this purpose. Although survey respondents tended to cite information days and volunteering as the most effective means to encourage young

people in the 9-13 age group to become involved in youth services, these were among the least preferred activities overall. The final key point to highlight is that although social media campaigns was the method which the greatest number of survey respondents affirmed overall, this was true of a particularly high proportion (62%) of youth workers who engaged with young people aged 14-18.

TABLE 5

How can Youth Workers encourage more young people to become involved in Youth Services?

(Each respondent asked to tick 2 answer options; responses listed in descending frequency)

Method	%9-13	%14-18	%18+	N
Social Media Campaign	47.7	62.3	43.9	156
Outreach/detached work in communities including rural areas	30.7	42.9	53.7	115
Better PR	38.6	37.7	39	109
Targeted Inclusion Programmes	27.3	26.6	41.5	82
Open/Information Days	22.7	9.1	9.8	38
Volunteering	18.2	13	4.9	38
Other	4.5	4.5	4.9	15

QUALITATIVE COMMENTS

The final question of the survey invited respondents to comment on the needs of the young people they work with, and thirty nine youth workers chose to complete this. It was notable that the focus of their comments varied widely and there were no dominant themes. Nevertheless, three issues were raised in a significant minority of the responses:

1. Maintain the principles of informal education and the aspects of youth work which appeal to young people, and avoid over-formalising youth work.

The most recurrent comment reflected a view that, in order to respond to the needs of young people, youth provision must continue to offer a safe place which is enjoyable and fun to young people, to offer attractive, educative programmes and activities which interest them, and allow young people to relax, play sports, socialise, and interact with peers and staff whenever they wish. Conversely there were

concerns that a move towards formality, excessive focus on qualifications and set programmes, a pressure on young people to constantly engage in projects, and the use of a 'business model' approach to work with young people were felt to be unhelpful.

2. Address workforce, HR, funding and environmental issues within local youth groups, as these factors impact on the quality and appeal of youth work.

Several respondents reflected that the needs of young people are most effectively addressed when long term relationships have developed between young people and workers, and they expressed concerns about a range of issues which impede this. Comments included issues with part time and temporary contracts, issues of pay parity, loss of staff due to short-term funding streams, a need for extra full time staff and staff support, the need to ensure personal carers for some young people, and lack of job security in the profession. Several respondents also drew attention to environmental standards in older premises, poor disabled access, and the need for more welcoming or purpose built centres, as well as the capacity to extend opening hours.

3. Concerns that a static or limited view of young people's needs reduces the scope and reach of youth services.

There were some comments about the process of needs identification, with a view that a survey approach is restrictive, that needs are best identified through in-depth conversations with young people, that young people may not always be aware of their own needs, a fear that the process can lead to targeting only a certain type of young person, that the sector must appeal to multiple identities of young people rather than the need presented, and that young people's needs can vary over the course of a year.

Other comments about the needs of young people included:

- The central role of **social media** in young people's lives, including the potential damage caused by inappropriate social media posting, and a decline in social skills. On the subject of ICT another commented that the youth service risks lagging 'behind the times' in terms of using ICT as a

tool, while another highlighted the value of social media as a means for recruiting and engaging with young people.

- Concerns for the **mental health** of young people including access to mental health services for young adults, provision of counselling services, young people's lack of confidence, and their sense of disconnection from their communities.
- The lack of access to transport for young people in **rural areas**, leading to isolation. It was felt that a lack of policing in some rural communities impacts on the personal safety and security of young people.
- **Paramilitaries** as well as **sectarianism** continue to be issues for young people
- The need for greater recognition of the value of **detached youth work**, and to allow adequate time for this youth work method without the pressure of 'forming groups'.
- The demand for **Irish-medium youth work** is outstripping supply
- There is a significant value of **volunteer roles** in attracting young people
- The need for updated **advertising** to target the 'right' young people for programmes.
- The need for young people to have exposure to other groups, as well as gaining independence, eg. through outdoor programmes.

APPENDICES

Consultation with Young People

Purpose

This survey is being undertaken by Education Authority as part of its Regional Assessment of Need.

The purpose of the survey is to gain an understanding from Young People currently involved in Youth Work into the level of Youth Provision that exists in their area.

The survey should take about 5 minutes to complete.

Many thanks for participating.

1. What is your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Other (please specify)

2. What is your age?

- 9 to 13
- 14 to 18
- 18+

3. In which Council area do you live?

- Antrim & Newtownabbey
- Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon
- Belfast
- Causeway Coast & Glens
- Derry & Strabane
- Fermanagh & Omagh
- Lisburn & Castlereagh
- Mid & East Antrim
- Mid Ulster

- Newry, Mourne & Down
- North Down & Ards

* 4. What type of Youth Provision do you mostly attend? (Please Tick 1)

- School Based Youth Work
- Youth Council
- Youth Programme
- Youth Centre (Part-Time)
- Youth Centre (Full-Time)
- Youth Forum
- Uniformed Organisation (eg Boys' Brigade, Girl Guides)
- Church Based Youth Centre
- Duke of Edinburgh's Award/Joint Award Initiative
- Local Youth Group
- Other (please specify)

* 5. Please indicate the issues facing you from the following list. (Tick up to 5)

- Health
- Mental Health
- Sexual Health
- Body Image
- Bullying
- Boredom
- Suicide
- Legal Highs
- Drugs
- Alcohol
- Smoking
- Discrimination
- Racism
- Sectarianism
- Sexual Orientation

- Gender Issues
- Relationships
- Culture
- Careers
- Exam Stress
- Confidence
- Migration
- Transport
- Other (please specify)

* 6. What activities and programmes would you like the Youth Service to provide for Young People in your area to address the issues raised in the previous question?(Tick a maximum of 5)

- Awareness Raising
- Qualifications
- Events
- Media
- Art
- Inter-club activities
- Drama
- Sport
- Drop in
- Opportunities to Travel
- Residentials
- Late Nights
- Outdoor Education
- School Based Programme
- Volunteering
- Peer Education
- Weekend Opening
- Personal and Social Development Programmes
- Life Skills Programmes

- Youth Councils/Forums
- Community Relations Work
- Leadership Programmes
- Meeting young people from different communities or ethnic backgrounds.
- Other (please specify)

* 7. Please identify the positive aspects of Youth Provision in your area? (Tick a maximum of 3)

- Programmes
- Youth Workers
- Activities
- Sense of belonging
- Friendships
- Place to hang out
- Being involved
- Gaining qualifications
- Opportunities to Travel
- Opportunities for Community Relations work
- Opportunities to meet young people from different communities or ethnic backgrounds
- Opportunities for progressing into Leadership
- Other (please specify)

* 8. How do you think Youth Provision in your area could be improved? (Tick a maximum of 3)

- More Programmes
- More Activities
- More Qualifications
- More Peer Education
- More Volunteering Opportunities
- More Community Relations
- Extended Opening Hours
- More Facilities for Young People

- Other (please specify)

9. If you have any other comments about Youth Services in your area please let us know.

Consultation with Young People (Irish version)

Cúis Purpose

Tá an súirbhé seo á dhéanamh leis an Údurás Oideachais mar chuid den Mheasánú Reigiúnach Riachtanais.

Is í fáth an tsúirbhé ná tuigmheál níos doimhne ó dhaoine óga atá páirteach in obair óige faoi láthair san leibheál sólathair óige atá ar fáil I gceantar s'acu.

Ní ghlactar níos mó ná 5 bhom leis an súirbhe a chomhlíonadh. Go raibh agat as a bheith páirteach.

This Survey is being undertaken by Education Authority as part of its Regional Assessment of Need.

The purpose of the survey is to gain an understanding from Young People currently involved in Youth Work into the level of Youth Provision that exists in their area.

The survey should take about 5 minutes to complete. Many thanks for participating.

1. Inscne Gender

- Beaninscneach Female
- Firinscneach Male
- Eile (Mínigh, le do thoil) Other

2. Cén aois thú? What is your age?

- 9 to 13
- 14 to 18
- 18+

3. Cén Chomhairle ina bhfuil cónaí ort? In which Council area do you live?

- Ceantar Aontroma & Bhaile na Mainistreach Antrim & Newtownabbey
- Ceantar Chathair Ard Mhacha, Droichead na Banna & Craigavon Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon
- Cathair Bhéal Feirste Belfast
- Ceantar Chlochán an Aifir agus na Glinnte Causeway Coast & Glens
- Ceantar Chathair Dhoire agus an tSraitha Báin Derry & Strabane
- Ceantar Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí Fermanagh & Omagh

- Ceantar Líos na gCearrbhach agus an Chaisleáin Riabhaigh Lisburn & Castlereagh
- Ceantar Aontroma Láir agus Thoir Mid & East Antrim
- Ceantar Lár Uladh Mid Ulster
- Ceantar Chathair an Iúir, Mhúrn agus an Dúin Newry Mourne & Down
- Ceantar an Dúb Thuaidh agus na hArda North Down & Ards

* 4. Cen sórt soláthar óga ina bhfuil tú páirteach den chuid is mó? (Uasmhéid de 1 rogha) What type of Youth Provision do you mostly attend? (Please Tick 1)

- Obair Óige Scoil-Lonnaithe School Based Youth Work
- Comhairle Óige Youth Council
- Clár Óige Youth Programme
- Ionad Óige (Páirt-Aimseartha) Youth Centre (Part Time)
- Ionad Óige (Lán-Aimseartha) Youth Centre (Full Time)
- Fóram Óige Youth Forum
- Eagraíocht Faoi Éide (mar sh. Briogáid na nGasúir) Uniformed Organisation (eg Boys' Brigade)
- Ionad Óige Eaglais-Lonnaithe Church Based Youth Centre
- Gradaim Dhiúc Dhún Éideann Duke of Edinburgh's Award/Joint Award Initiative
- Grúpa Óige Áitiúil Local Youth Group
- Eile (Mínigh, le do thoil) Other

* 5. Cad iad na fadhbanna atá ag cur ar dhaoine óga i do cheantar? (Uasmhéid de 5 rogha) What are the issues facing Young People in your area? (Tick a maximum of 5)

- Sláinte Health
- Sláinte Mheabhrach Mental Health
- Sláinte Ghnéis Sexual Health
- Copríomha Body Image
- Tromaíocht Bullying
- Leadrán Boredom
- Féinmharú Suicide
- Siabhráin Dhleathacha Legal Highs
- Drugaí Drugs
- Alcól Alcohol
- Caitheamh Tobac Smoking
- Idirdealú Discrimination
- Ciníochas Racism
- Seicteachas Sectarianism
- Gnéaschlaonadh Sexual Orientation

- Saincheisteanna Inscne Gender Issues
- Caidrimh Relationships
- Cultúr Culture
- Gairmeacha Careers
- Brú Scrúdaithe Exam Stress
- Muinín Confidence
- Imirce Migration
- Iompar Transport
- Eile (Mínigh, le do thoil) Other

* 6. Cad iad na cláir agus na himeachtaí a ba mhaith leat go gcuirfear ar fáil ag an Seirbhís Óige roimh dhaoine óga i do cheantar le freastal ar na fadhbanna a luaíodh sa fhreagair dheireanach? (Uasmhéid de 5 Rogha, le do thoil) What activities and programmes would you like the Youth Service to provide for Young People in your area to address the issues raised in the previous question? (Tick maximum of 5)

- Múscailt Feasachta Awareness Raising
- Cailíochtaí Qualifications
- Imeachtaí Events
- Na Meáin Media
- Ealaíon Art
- Imeachtaí Idirclub Inter-club activities
- Dráma Drama
- Spórt Sport
- Intiteán Drop in
- Taisteal Travel
- Cónaitheach Residentials
- Oícheanta Mhalla Late Nights
- Oideachas Allamuigh Outdoor Education
- Clár Scoil-lonnaithe School Based Programmes
- Oibriú go deonach Volunteering
- Piaroideachas Peer Education
- Oscailt Dheireadh na Seachtaine Weekend Opening
- Cláir Fhorbartha Pearsanta agus Sóisialta Personal & Social development Programmes
- Clár Scileanna Saoil Life Skills Programmes
- Comhairlí/Fóraitim Óige Youth Councils/Forums
- Caidreamh Pobail Community Relations
- Cláir Cheannasaíochta Leadership Programmes
- Buailleadh le Daoine Óga ó phobail difriúla nó ó chúlraí eitneacha difriúla Meeting young people from different communities or ethnic backgrounds.
- Eile Other

* 7. Ainmnigh, le do thoil, na gnéithe dhearfacha den soláthar óige i do cheantar?
(Uasmhéid de 3) Please identify the positive aspects of Youth Provision in your area? (Tick a maximum of 3)

- Cláir Programmes
- Oibrithe Óige Youth Workers
- Imeachtaí Activities
- Muintearas Sense of Belonging
- Cairdeas Friendships
- Áit le do scíth a ligint Place to Hang Out
- Bheith páirteach i rud éigin Being Involved
- Ag baint cailíochtaí amach Gaining Qualifications
- Taisteal Travel
- Caidreamh Pobail Community Relations
- Buailleadh le Daoine Óga ó phobail difriúla nó ó chúlraí eitneacha difriúla Meeting young people from different communities or ethnic backgrounds
- Cláir Cheannasaíochta Leadership Programmes
- Eile Other

* 8. Cad é mar a cheapann tú go gcuirfear leis an soláthar óige i do cheantar?
(Uasmhéid de 3) How do you think Youth Provision in your area could be improved?

- Tuilleadh Chláir More Programmes
- Tuilleadh Imeachtaí More activities
- Tuilleadh Chailíochtaí More Qualifications
- Tuilleadh Phiarioideachais More Peer Education
- Tuilleadh Dheiseanna Oibriú Deonacha More Volunteering Opportunities
- Tuilleadh Chaidreamh Pobail More Community Relations
- Uaireanta Oscailte Sínte Extended Opening Hours
- Tuilleadh Áiseanna do Dhaoine Óga More Facilities for Young People
- Eile Other

9. An bhfuil aon tuairim eile agat ar an soláthar óige i do cheantar?

If you have any other comments about Youth Services in your area please let us know.

Consultation with Youth Workers

This survey is being undertaken by the Education Authority as part of its Regional Assessment of Need.

The purpose of the survey is to gain further understanding from Youth Workers about the needs of young people in their areas.

The survey should take about 5 minutes to complete.

Many thanks for participating.

This survey is being undertaken by the Education Authority as part of its Regional Assessment of Need.

The purpose of the survey is to gain further understanding from Youth Workers about the needs of young people in their areas.

The survey should take about 5 minutes to complete.

Many thanks for participating.

1. In which sector do you work or volunteer?

- The Education Authority
- The Voluntary Youth Sector.

2. Which of the following best describes you?

- Full time Youth Worker.
- Part time Youth Worker.
- Volunteer Youth Worker.

3. Which of the following age groups do you predominantly work with?

- 9-13
- 14-18
- 18+

4. In which Council area do you work?

- Antrim & Newtownabbey
- Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon
- Belfast
- Causeway Coast & Glens
- Derry & Strabane
- Fermanagh & Omagh
- Lisburn & Castlereagh
- Mid & East Antrim
- Mid Ulster
- Newry, Mourne & Down
- North Down & Ards
- Regional

* 5. Please indicate the main issues facing young people that you work with from the following list. (Tick a maximum of 5)

- Health
- Mental Health
- Sexual Health
- Body Image
- Boredom
- Suicide
- Legal Highs
- Drugs
- Alcohol
- Smoking
- Discrimination
- Racism
- Sectarianism
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Issues
- Relationships

- Culture
- Careers/Employability
- Exam Stress
- Confidence
- Migration
- Rural Isolation
- Transport
- Other (please specify)

* 6. What activities, programmes or interventions do you think the Youth Service should provide for young people in your area to address the needs raised in the previous question? (Tick a maximum of 5 responses)

- Awareness Raising
- Qualifications
- Inter-club activities
- Sport
- Drop In
- Opportunities to Travel
- Residentials
- Late Nights
- Outdoor Education
- School Based Programmes
- Volunteering
- Peer Education
- Weekend Opening
- Personal and Social Development Programmes
- Life Skills Programmes
- Careers/employability Programmes
- Youth Councils/Forums
- Community Relations Work
- Leadership Programmes
- Other (please specify)

* 7. How can Youth Workers encourage more young people to become involved in Youth Services? (tick a maximum of 2 responses)

- Better PR
- Social Media Campaign
- Open/Information Days
- Outreach/detached work in communities including rural areas
- Targeted Inclusion Programmes
- Volunteering
- Other (please specify)

8. If you have any other comments about the needs of young people you work with please use the section below.

Survey with Unregistered Young People

Purpose

This survey is being undertaken by Education Authority as part of its Regional Assessment of Need.

The purpose of the survey is to gain an understanding from Young People not currently involved in Youth Work.

The survey should take about 5 minutes to complete.

Many thanks for participating.

1. In which of the following age bands are you?

- 9-13
- 14-18
- 18+

2. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Transgender

3. In which Council Area do you live?

- Antrim & Newtownabbey
- Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon
- Belfast
- Causeway Coast & Glens
- Derry & Strabane
- Fermanagh & Omagh
- Lisburn & Castlereagh
- Mid & East Antrim
- Mid Ulster

- Newry, Mourne & Down
- North Down & Ards

4. Do you use Youth Services regularly?

- Yes
- No

5. Could you provide us with some reasons why you do not use your local Youth Services?

6. What sort of activities or programmes would attract you to use your local Youth Services?

7. Have you any additional comments you would like to make?

PURPOSE OF WORKSHOP

We have been asked by the Regional Advisory Group to engage young people in Regional Youth Development Planning by finding out your views on the big issues in your lives and communities and to find out directly what you feel the Youth Service should be doing for you.

QUESTIONS FOR WORKSHOP

1. Addressing the survey findings for the issues young people identified:
 - Do you feel that these are the top issues that young people are facing?
 - Looking at the list of issues, are there any issues that aren't on here that you think should be?
2. Addressing the survey findings where young people stated the activities/programmes that would address their issues:
 - Do you feel the list of activities/programmes would address the issues you are facing as a young person?
 - Is there anything that isn't here which should be added?
3. Addressing the survey findings about the positives of the Youth Service:
 - Do you agree that these are the positives of the Youth Service?
 - Is there anything you would add to the list?
4. Addressing the survey findings about how youth provision could be improved:
 - Do you agree with these? Is there anything missing from the list that should be included?
 - What specific activities, programmes or facilities should the Youth Service provide for young people?
5. Explain that the Youth Service would like to reach out to young people who don't engage with Youth Service:
 - Why do you think some young people do not take part in the youth service?
 - If you don't use your local Youth Services, could you let us know some of the reasons why you don't?

- How do you think we could attract young people to take part who don't?
- What sort of activities or programmes would attract you to use your local Youth Services?

When the workshop is complete please thank all participants for taking part.

Planning and Monitoring Working Group

Deirdre Bradley	Education Authority
Natalie Corbett	Northern Ireland Youth Forum
Wendy Crawford	Education and Training Inspectorate
Liam Curran (Chair)	Education Authority
Gerard Doran (Outgoing chair)	Education Authority
Clare Harvey	Education Authority
Arlene Kee	Education Authority
Anne Marie McClure	Start 360
Rory McLaughlin	Education Authority
Aoife Nic Collaim	Fóram na nÓg
Caroline Redpath	YouthAction NI
Christine Robinson	The Prince's Trust
Brenda Shearer	Department of Education
Kate Thompson	The Duke of Edinburgh's Award/Joint Award Initiative

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