



le chéile
MENTORING

ANNUAL REPORT 2022

Inspiring hope, believing in change





"Sometimes when you're in a bad way, you feel like you have nobody, and you kind of find it hard to express yourself and stuff like that but having a mentor there, like someone that's willing to listen and talk, it's definitely a good thing".

"I feel wrecked from talking, but positive that I'm doing the right thing".

"I felt like I was actually cared for, not like the person on the other side of the table was just doing their job, it felt like there was actual care there".

Young People who took part in mentoring.



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An tSeirbhís Phromhaidh
The Probation Service



An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt
Department of Justice

Le Chéile Mentoring is funded by the Department of Justice through the Probation Service.



A Message from the Chairperson

On behalf of the Board of Le Chéile Mentoring, it is my pleasure to introduce the 2022 Annual Report. 2022 marked a busy year for the Board, with service and governance activities progressing well and Le Chéile continuing to provide a quality service that supports young people and their families throughout the country.

We were especially grateful to mark the return to face-to-face activities with our annual volunteer conference being held in June. This was an opportunity to bring together our volunteers to recognise and thank them for their part in supporting the young people and parents with whom we work. The theme this year was “Digging Deep – planting seeds of change through relationships and resilience”. I was heartened and inspired by the considerable enthusiasm and dedication of Le Chéile’s volunteers which was evident throughout the day, some of whom we recognised for their long service. I was delighted too that we were joined on the day by James Leonard, co-host of the award-winning podcast “The Two Norries” and Olivia Keaveney, Deputy Director of Operations with the Probation Service. We also had many special guests appearing throughout the day including Senator Frances Black, Bressie and Fergal Darcy.

I want to thank my Board colleagues for their continued commitment and support during the year and for the time, effort and expertise they brought to all of our work. The Board met eight times during 2022 and in addition to this, Board members also attended and contributed to our established sub-committees. I want to thank Krupesh Patel and Richard McElwee who stepped down from the Board in 2022 for their excellent contribution over many years. We were delighted to welcome three new Board members, Andy Bray, Brian McDonald and Sarah Jane Judge who each bring exceptional expertise to the Board team.

None of the achievements of Le Chéile Mentoring would be possible without the continued support of our funders and the strong partnerships we have built over the years. I would like to thank the Probation Service and the Department of Justice for their commitment to young people and their families. However, I am concerned that the funding of these services has not kept pace with the high level of inflation, which is very challenging for us to manage. I hope that this is an issue which can be addressed in 2023.

I would also like to thank our partners in Oberstown, Archways, Crosscare, Limerick City Council and Waterford and South Tipperary Community Youth Justice Services for their support and collaboration in 2022. Together we continue to deliver services that have the power to encourage someone to change their life.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to express my thanks to the management team and staff of Le Chéile Mentoring for their work and commitment over the past 12 months and particularly to Anne, our CEO, for her dedicated leadership and commitment to delivering high quality services and supporting the Board in our governance responsibilities.

Lastly, but by no means least, I would like to thank our volunteers, who give their time, commitment, kindness and support day in and day out to young people and their families. **Our volunteers bring endless passion to the work they do. We are proud to say that they make real and positive change in the lives of young people and their families.**



James Doorley
Chairperson



Welcome from the CEO

Welcome to our 2022 Annual Report, which provides an opportunity to reflect on the past year and to take stock of the achievements and the challenges. Last year society was emerging from Covid, however 2022 was still not a 'normal' year. Covid had a disproportionate impact on young people and vulnerable families. In Le Chéile Mentoring, we continued to work hard to engage young people and their families.

In our experience the young people who are referred to Le Chéile are coming with multiple complex needs. Anxiety, trauma, substance abuse, mental health and learning difficulties, homelessness and family conflict are increasingly common. Parenting difficulties, mental health issues and poverty are often experienced by the parents who are referred for mentoring. **Le Chéile's never give up attitude, our flexibility, the value of meaningful relationships and the respect shown by staff and mentors is at the core of what makes mentoring and restorative justice work.**

There were many highlights in 2022. The National Volunteer Conference in June, Restorative Justice week held in Limerick in November, the extensive training and workshops organized by staff throughout the year, the development of 2 new animations which explain mentoring to potential service users, the enhancement of the website were among some of the key achievements.

Most importantly, 174 young people and 94 parents were supported through mentoring, restorative justice and family support programmes. I want to thank the young people and parents for their willingness to engage with our services and for trusting our volunteers and staff at a vulnerable time in their lives.

I am delighted to thank our amazing volunteer mentors, supported by our dedicated staff team, who together enable mentoring, restorative justice, and family support programmes to be delivered to a consistent quality standard.

I want to acknowledge our strong partnership with the Probation Service and the positive working relationships that support our collaboration, to enable best outcomes for the young people and parents. I would also like to thank our partners in Oberstown, Archways, Crosscare, Limerick City Council and Waterford and South Tipperary Community Youth Justice Services for their support and collaboration in 2022.

Our Board under the leadership of James Doorley has provided consistent governance, direction and guidance which is much appreciated. My colleagues on the Management team have been a constant source of energy and commitment. **Le Chéile Mentoring is a team effort in every sense of the word. It is by working together, our volunteers, our staff, our partners, our Board, that we can better support young people to achieve their potential and life chances.**



Anne Conroy

Anne Conroy
CEO



Who we are

Le Chéile Mentoring is a national, volunteer mentoring and family support service working with young people and their families, where the young person is involved in or at risk of offending.

We aim to empower young people and provide tailored and flexible services with young people at the core, working in partnership with the Probation Service and other agencies to reduce the level of crime in the community. Le Chéile recruits, trains,

and supports volunteers from around Ireland to become mentors. Our mentors act as positive role models and provide a supportive relationship for young people and parents. As well as mentoring, we also deliver a number of other services that focus on parent and family support. We recognise the link between social inequality and youth offending, and we believe that anti-poverty measures, early intervention, and greater access to education and employment are important in reducing levels of youth offending at the macro level.



VISION

For every young person at risk - the right supports at the right time, to make the most of their lives.



MISSION

Le Chéile Mentoring is a national, volunteer mentoring and family support service, which works with young people and their families, where the young person is involved in or at risk of offending.



VALUES

We believe in the **potential** of every young person

We are committed to a **restorative approach**

We believe in **volunteer mentoring**

We value **partnership** with young people, families and other agencies

We **listen – respect – empower**

We are **committed to excellence** in everything that we do.



"I have been a volunteer now for 5 years and very happy to be still involved in the important work that Le Chéile do. The genuine care, support and effort put in continues to impress me greatly. I always feel confident that with this support, the mentors are better placed to make a positive impact on the young people they work with".



"Le Chéile is an incredible organization that provides so many young people the opportunity to have a better future. It also provides superb training and support to all of its mentors. I feel privileged to be a part of it".





2022 In Numbers



152
young
people
mentored



22
young
people
engaged in
Restorative
Justice.



94
parents
supported.



25
families
graduated from
Strengthening
Families
Programmes.



230+
volunteer
mentors.



57
new
volunteers
recruited
in 2022.



12
participants
on
Restorative
Justice
training.



40+
training
sessions for
new and
existing
volunteers.



35 individuals and **25** families supported by
Family Support Interventions.



Donnchas Story



Donncha has been a volunteer with Le Chéile since 2013. In that time, he's seen real change in the lives of young people and himself. This is his story...

"I was on a train in 2013, reading the newspaper and saw an advertisement for Le Chéile. I just thought it was a good way to

give something back to society and thought it might be a fun challenge. I applied through their ad, was interviewed, trained, and I've been mentoring ever since."

Every day is different for mentors. They're matched with a young person aged between 12-24 years old and meet on a weekly basis. "The young people are linked in to Le Chéile, then we are matched up. We begin with a basis of respect and meet every week. It's all up to the young person, they lead on this, I'm here to help them as best I can. So, I always ask what their goals are. There's no judgement, I'm just there to assist them and offer advice. Whether

it's educational, work related, or personal development, we talk about it, build a plan to take small steps and go from there. We don't start off with the big picture, but bit by bit we get there."

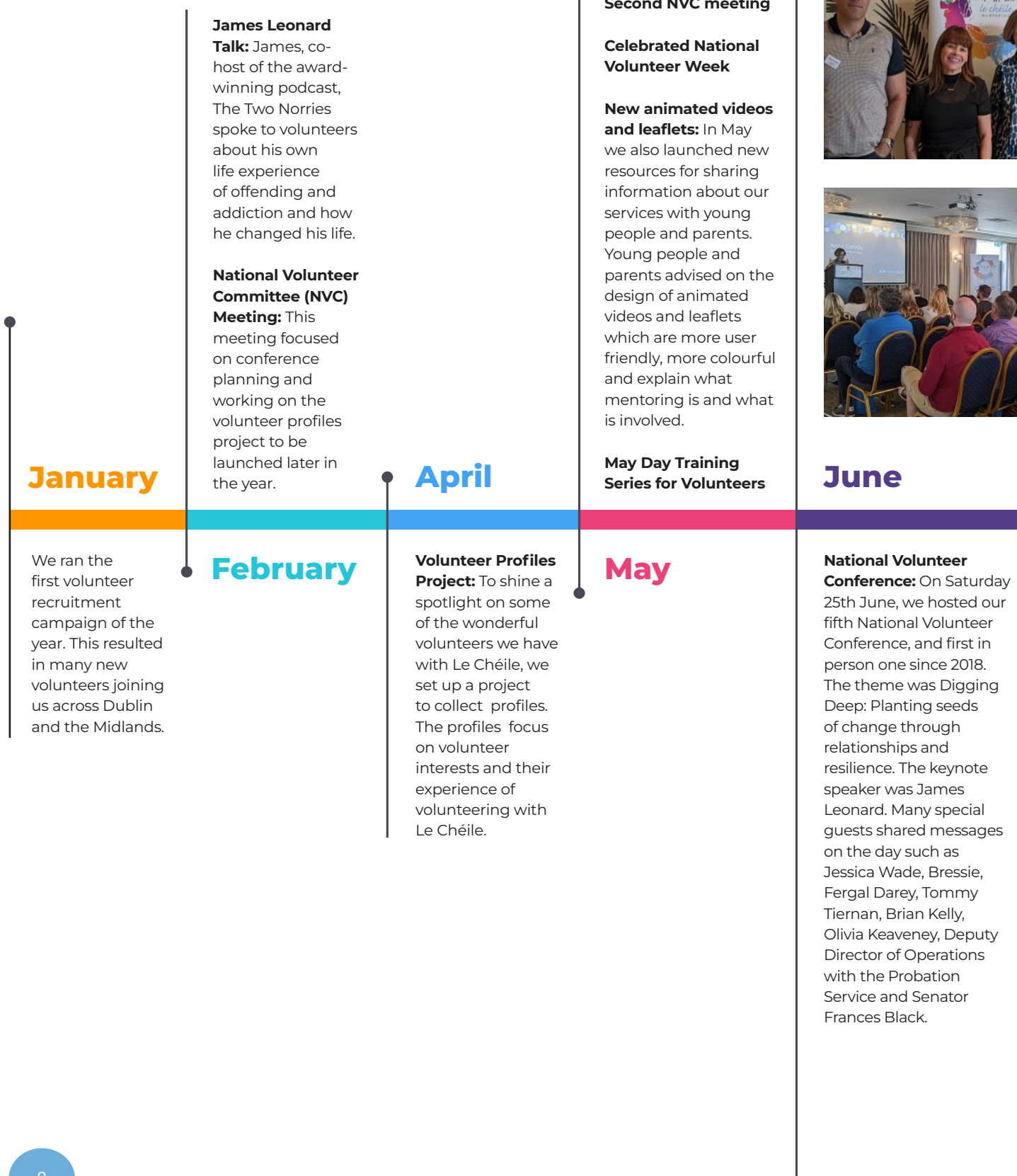
Le Chéile's volunteer mentors are there to offer young people support, stability, and general guidance and through this see positive results like improved self-confidence, hopefulness, communications skills, engagement in activities and, crucially, a reduction in offending behaviour.

"Sometimes we have young people who start out looking at their phone more than you. They don't have the confidence. But to see that young person in six months sitting up looking you straight in the eye and actually talking, the transformation is amazing.

It's not always easy, sometimes it doesn't always work out, but if anyone asked me should they volunteer I'd tell them 'any challenges are so worth it.' **I have this philosophy, 'if you give, you get'. And that's exactly the kind of thing you find in mentoring. You can leave a positive legacy in your community, just by being there for someone.'**



2022 Year in Review





Our **second recruitment campaign** kicked off in September across our Dublin projects and we welcomed new volunteers to our team.

September

Mentoring piece in Irish Examiner: Our interview with Kildare mentor, Anthony Wyse in the Irish Examiner summed this up and spoke about the power of passing on the support to the next generations. He said "I got involved because I got good opportunities myself growing up, I met some positive people who saw potential in me and helped me along. I'm a big believer in equal opportunities, but I know it doesn't always pan out that way for everyone. This is how I play my part in sharing those opportunities more evenly".

October

Third NVC meeting

3 Bs of Mentoring – Balance, Boundaries and Breaks Training

Substance Abuse and Dual Diagnosis Training



Restorative Justice

Week: Restorative Justice week was filled with events taking place across Limerick under the theme – the Voice of the Victim. Highlights included a screening of the film *The Meeting*, with a Q&A with Ailbhe Griffith, who plays herself in the film. In addition, we had sessions on the voice of victims and the benefits of RJ.

November

December

The Wheel's Unsung Heroes event:

The event was in celebration of the unsung heroes of the community and voluntary sector. The Le Chéile Volunteer team was represented by Debra Crawly, a mentor from our Meath team and Chair of our National Volunteer Committee.



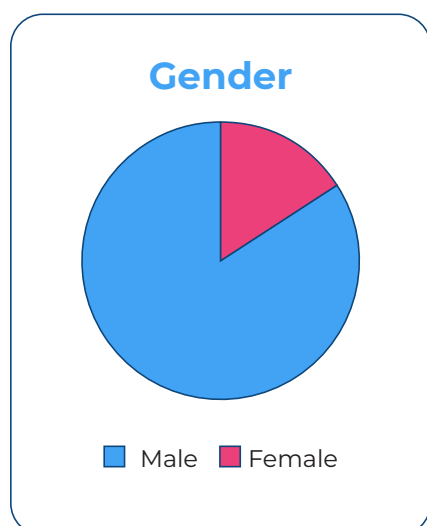
Youth Mentoring

Youth mentoring is a one-to-one support-based relationship between a volunteer mentor and a young person. Mentors act as a positive role model and friendly support to young people, offering, stability, and general advice. Through mentoring, young people are supported in making choices, setting achievable goals and realistic challenges. Mentors listen, care, and share their life experience in order to help young people use their time positively and realise their potential. Mentors and young people engage by planning and doing activities together, this helps build the mentoring relationship, supports the young people to build

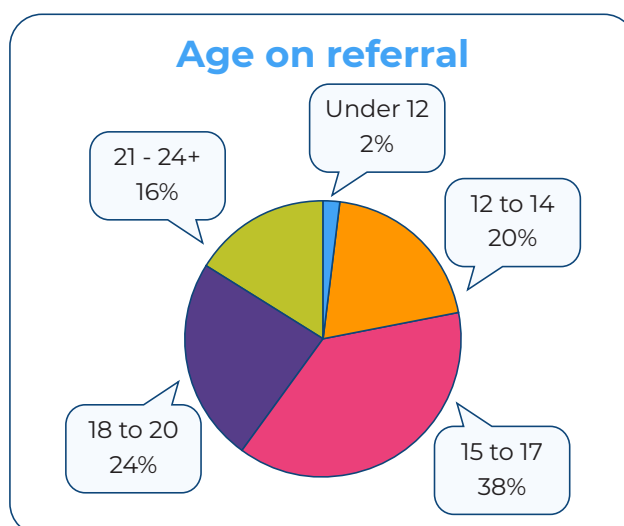
self-esteem, self-confidence and empower them to achieve their goals.

For young people, the key benefits of mentoring include reductions in their offending behaviour and alcohol or drug misuse, improved self-confidence, hopefulness, and happiness. Mentoring supports with soft skills such as organisational skills and interpersonal skills which improves their relationships with their family, peers, and the community. The biggest gains overall are made in building self-confidence, empowerment, and belief in the young person – something which is facilitated greatly by their mentors.

Profile of young people supported in 2022



Le Chéile supported 174 young people in 2022. The profile of young people that are referred to us is changing. Young people are being referred at an older age and are presenting with increasingly complex needs compounded by various issues that they face in their lives. Many young people who avail of our services have severe anxiety and



mental health conditions which can inhibit their engagement with mentoring. Addiction is a common theme in young people's lives and many young people experience financial and safety risks due to debts relating to their substance use. This often affects young people's immediate and wider family too.



Accommodation challenges were regularly reported by young people, many are at risk of homelessness or are hidden homeless such as couch surfing, living between towns or are living in emergency accommodation. Due to a lack of financial stability young people are often denied the opportunity to move out of home when the time is right. This can place a strain on family relationships and lead to conflict and disharmony within the home.

Young fathers are particularly affected by the issues outlined here and in addition face access and guardianship challenges when trying to look after their children. Many feel they are in a hopeless situation because of this.

Due to the intersecting disadvantages facing these young people, attending school, or gaining and maintaining employment becomes a significant challenge and so many young people referred to Le Chéile have often limited education and are unemployed. Similarly, while young people have often been referred to other services, they often feel let down and have an attitude of suspicion towards services, feeling that none of them can meet their needs. These issues affect young people's confidence, self-esteem, and ability to visualise their future prospects.

Youth mentoring outcomes in 2022

Percentage of positive change made by young people



Mentoring seeks to actively involve young people in pro-social activities. However it also supports the young person to focus on the issues that they want to address. The majority of young people in 2022 reported that mentoring helped them use their time more positively. This can be through gaining employment, having a routine, and engaging new interests and hobbies. Many reported building on their living skills and selfcare. This included learning to live independently, cooking and cleaning skills and learning how to budget and manage finances. Some young

people who reported positive change in this area are young parents, so the benefit of mentoring is contributing to a more positive environment for the next generation. Young people reported that mentoring helped them to reflect on their offending behaviour and what feelings were behind this, and to devise coping mechanisms for managing these feelings. In addition, 59% felt they had improved on understanding risk in terms of their choices and behaviour, feeling they want to stay out of trouble and stop taking risks.



Kevin's story – Youth Mentoring

Kevin was referred to Le Chéile by the Probation Service in late 2021. Kevin was 17 and had been getting into lots of trouble with the Guards when he was referred. His Probation Officer thought he would benefit from a mentor who could support him in finding new interests and having a positive, supportive influence around him.

The Probation Officer shared that Kevin was a friendly, affable, upbeat person who had been exposed to significant trauma in his life including the death of his mother. Some of Kevin's wider family members struggle with addiction and criminality which Kevin was exposed to daily. Kevin used to play sport with his local GAA club but following the death of his mother, Kevin gave up. Kevin suffered from mental health problems after this which impacted his involvement in the community as he didn't want to go out or interact with people.

Le Chéile found it difficult to make contact with Kevin after receiving the referral, Kevin cancelled many appointments, and it was apparent he was not ready to engage with our mentoring service. The Le Chéile Coordinator persisted in making opportunities available to Kevin to participate, often linking in with Kevin's grandmother who was his guardian. Together they worked on advising Kevin how mentoring could support him and be a positive opportunity.

Kevin was matched to his mentor in early 2022. The goal that Kevin chose to work on was to get his driver theory test. However due to the Covid 19 pandemic, mentoring sessions were often cancelled, and this resulted in Kevin disengaging again as the routine of attending mentoring sessions was disrupted. Kevin's Probation Officer worked closely with Le Chéile to encourage Kevin to get back to mentoring. John, Kevin's mentor was very flexible in his availability for mentoring and understood the importance of consistency when mentoring.

Gradually Kevin was engaging a lot more frequently and it was evident that he was very ready for the support. His attitude had improved, and he was more open to trying different activities. John is a very motivated and encouraging mentor, always keeping in contact with Kevin to organise activities and mentoring sessions.

Kevin shared that he was interested in checking out work and training opportunities. He was interested in joining the Naval Service and so John arranged for them to go on a trip to visit a naval ship and meet the crew. Kevin thought this experience was excellent and he really enjoyed getting out. Kevin is interested in history and so John often suggests trips to historic sites around the county.

When talking to his coordinator about mentoring during one of the recent regular reviews, Kevin said that he enjoys meeting John and getting to try new things. John shared that he enjoys Kevin's company, and he is finding mentoring to be an interesting experience.

Kevin and John continue to meet on a weekly basis to do interesting activities. **The positive and trusting rapport built between them has benefited Kevin as he is engaging more in pro-social behaviour and has an encouraging and trusting mentor who believes in his ability. This in turn is allowing Kevin to build confidence in himself and empowering him to make small steps towards positive change.**





Parent Mentoring

Family life is not always easy. Parent mentoring helps parents and carers develop their own parenting skills and gives support with parenting issues. It provides a non-judgemental time and space, outside the family home, to parents who may feel under pressure. Parent mentoring is a chance for parents to have time to reflect and discuss the issues that are arising for them, with a volunteer mentor and to feel empowered to take on the challenges that life throws at them.

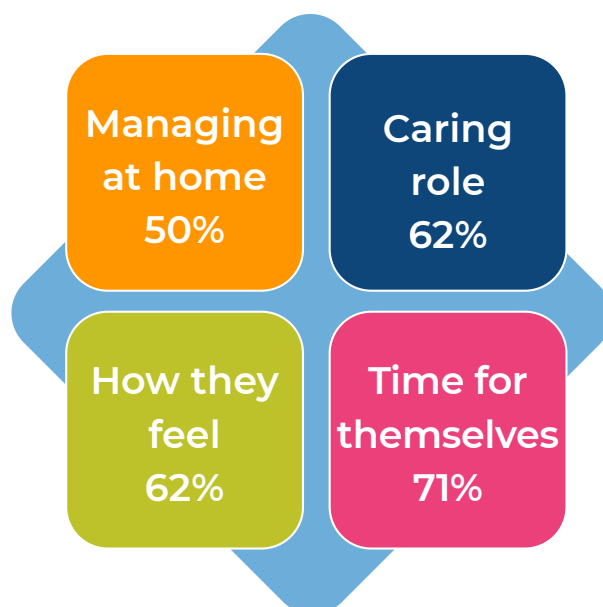
Parent mentoring shows significant benefits for parents in self-confidence and

emotional well-being, as well as improved self-esteem, hopefulness, ability to manage stress, better family relationships and greater involvement in activities outside the home. Parent mentoring is available to parents or carers of young people who are on probation, or at risk of offending.

We also run a unique parent mentoring initiative with Oberstown Children Detention Campus, which offers support to parents/carers while their child is in detention and post-detention.

Parent mentoring outcomes in 2022

Percentage of positive change made by parents



In 2022, parents and carers referred to Le Chéile reported having little time to focus on themselves or were not able to prioritise this time due to caring responsibilities. Most parents and carers reported that mentoring allows them time to focus on themselves, whether it is just a coffee and chat each week with their mentor or the encouragement to seek out other opportunities such as joining a club or meeting with friends. Over

half of parent mentoring participants in 2022 felt that they were more supported as a parent/carer because of mentoring and have developed ways to deal with anxiety/stress in their relationships with family and others. Developing their parental skills is key to this as managing at home and dealing with schools, services and the justice system can be extremely challenging for parents.



Louise's Story – Parent Mentoring

Louise was referred to Le Chéile Mentoring in 2020. She was a single parent, living with her two sons, one of which, Shane, who was 20, was on probation. Shane's Probation Officer suggested to Louise that she might benefit from having a mentor as they could help support both herself and her family.

Louise agreed to give it a go and during her first meeting with Le Chéile, shared that she felt her life was chaotic. She felt her relationship with Shane who is her eldest son was very strained. Shane often stayed out all night and sometimes did not come home for a few days as he stays out with friends. This creates tension in the household as Shane does not respect the rules of the house and Louise feels like it is a difficult situation to live in due to the stress and anxiety it causes her. Shane has been violent towards Louise in the past. In addition, Louise is worried about her own brother who is in and out of prison. Louise feels guilt and shame as she feels she is unable to support her brother while also looking after her own family. She is a carer for her mother who is terminally ill and feels she is constantly looking after everyone and has no one to turn to for support.

It was agreed that Louise would meet with her mentor, Liz, once a week. It became apparent to Liz that Louise has a very kind and caring nature, was sociable and chatty, however lacked a support circle that could encourage and listen to her. During mentoring sessions, it became clear that Louise had been through a very tough time as a child herself and as a parent, and that Shane's anti-social behaviour was having a negative effect on the family. Overall, life for all had been chaotic for a number of years.

Mentoring sessions at first focused on creating a bond and building the relationship between Louise and Liz. As mentoring progressed, Liz and Louise became close. Louise appreciated that Liz was there to listen and to support her, as she felt she did not have the support of her own family sometimes. Talking through her issues and being able to 'offload' was supportive especially dealing with her relationship with Shane.

While mentoring mostly focused on parenting support and skills, Louise also expressed that she would like to go back to education and work towards getting a job. Liz helped Louise to look into different courses and worked with Le Chéile to source a laptop for Louise to do the classwork. She also got involved in a local women's shed and community garden which has helped her relieve some of the stress she feels from home.

Liz supported Louise to believe in herself and was constantly an encouraging presence at times where Louise felt like giving up. This is what Louise appreciated the most during mentoring. Liz and Louise continue to meet up each week for mentoring sessions and while Louise's life can be very up and down, she finds mentoring to be a consistent and constant avenue of support, which encourages her to persevere and overcome challenges.



Restorative Justice

Le Chéile is committed to a restorative approach. Le Chéile's mentoring model incorporates a restorative ethos, and all volunteers are trained in restorative practice. Our unique Restorative Justice Project in Limerick and Clare, addresses the needs of young people who offend, victims of crime and local communities. In 2022 at the request of the Probation Service, the Restorative Justice service was extended to County Cork.

The project works in collaboration with the Probation Service, An Garda Síochána and Limerick City & County Council, along with Support After Crime Services and other

agencies. The overall aim is to contribute to the reduction of youth crime and anti-social behaviour in Limerick, Clare and Cork. Le Chéile also provides training in Restorative Justice for professionals. In 2022 Le Chéile provided 3 training days in collaboration with Céim ar Chéim, for colleagues in the Probation Service.

Restorative Justice brings those affected by crime together (offenders, victims, families and communities) and focuses on repairing the harm. The process looks at the needs of the victim, while holding the young person accountable and provides possible restoration.

Restorative Justice outcomes in 2022

Percentage of positive change made by young people



Similarly, to youth mentoring, most Restorative Justice participants felt supported to improve basic living and selfcare skills and use their time more positively in 2022. Participants reported that taking part in the restorative justice process has helped them see the role misusing drugs and alcohol has played in their lives and a large proportion

of these took steps to reduce or manage substance and alcohol during their time with Le Chéile. Similarly, participants worked on the impact of strong feelings such as anger, frustration, shame, guilt and allowed them to reflect on how they can deal with these emotions in a more positive way



Eoin's story – Restorative Justice

Eoin was 19 years old when he was referred to Le Chéile. His Probation Officer referred him as he had been charged with serious offences including assault. His Probation Officer felt that by referring Eoin to Le Chéile's Restorative Justice Project, it would help him develop remorse and regret for his offence. On referral our Restorative Justice Project Officer, Simon, noticed that Eoin had little insight into the impact of his behaviour on the victim or people who witnessed the incident, or the impact on his own family.

Eoin did not want to take part in the Victim Empathy Programme (VEP) at first. He didn't speak much at all in the first couple of sessions. Simon persevered, eventually finding common ground for conversation in football and horseracing. This allowed Simon and Eoin to build a connection and paved the way for a more open, trusting relationship which resulted in more communication during the sessions. Through the VEP, Eoin explored his behaviour and the need to be more aware of others around him. At first, Eoin was reluctant to revisit past events; he only wanted to look forward. Over time, Eoin then became more open to exploring his actions and behaviour and learning from his past to act and behave in a more positive, less harmful way.

During the sessions, Eoin and Simon discussed Eoin's life, priorities and actions. They looked at the impact of his behaviour, who was affected and what could be done to put things right. Eoin and Simon also completed the justice star, Le Chéile's outcome measurement tool which showed that Eoin made progress in three areas over time – mental health and wellbeing, family and relationships and reduced use of drugs and alcohol. Eoin had realised that drinking often had a negative result on the relationships

with people around him. He felt that the sessions gave him a lot of things he needed to know like 'how to talk to people, teach you to have respect'.

By the end of the sessions, it was clear to Simon that Eoin had developed more awareness of the consequences of his actions. Eoin commented that it helped him 'realise what's right and wrong and the consequences of my actions'. Eoin had expressed his regret for the assault and the ripple effect his actions had on others. Simon encouraged Eoin to take steps to repair any damaged relationships Eoin felt he wanted to approach. This led to Eoin meeting with some members of the community and having a discussion which allowed them to share the impact of his behaviour and for Eoin to take responsibility for it. In addition, Eoin agreed to write a statement of regret at the end of the sessions. This was a clear sign of the progress made by Eoin as initially he was reluctant to the idea and refused. **'I have a different outlook on life' Eoin said at the end of his time with Le Chéile, 'it helped me develop'.**





Family Support Programmes

Le Chéile provides a range of parenting programmes and can link parents to locally available parenting programmes, such as Parenting Together and Strengthening Families Programme,



Parenting Together

Parenting Together (also known as Non-Violent Resistance Parenting) is a targeted programme that works with families that may be experiencing child to parent abuse. This is a practical and positive parenting course that mixes support with learning new skills. The course considers how parents/carers can assertively oppose controlling/aggressive behaviour in their children, while at the same time start to repair the damage done to that relationship. The course may be run on a one-to-one basis or as part of a group. We deliver this service nationally.



Strengthening Families Programme

Le Chéile coordinates and funds the Strengthening Families Programme (SFP) on behalf of the Probation Service, providing support to local steering committees. SFP is an evidence-based, whole family skills training programme, designed to work with high stress families, including families with drug and alcohol issues. SFP has been proven to help build communication skills, decrease risk factors in families and reduce negative behaviours in children.



Family Support Interventions

Family Support Interventions are tailored, individualised support mechanisms for Le Chéile service users. These interventions complement the role of mentoring and benefit the young person, as well as the parent/carer and wider family. Family support interventions aim to improve communications and family relationships. Examples of family support interventions have included family mediation, counselling, a family meal or family outing.

Our Volunteers

Our volunteers are the foundation of our organisation. Without them, our services would not be able to make such a difference in communities across the country, nor in the lives of so many young people and parents. Our mentors show immense dedication to the young people, parents/carers and families they support. In 2022, we were delighted to have new volunteers join with enthusiasm and excitement to get involved in Le Chéile. Mentors encourage, support and empower young people and their families to make positive choices and provide alternatives to offending. To support our volunteers and develop their skills and expertise, Le Chéile encourages and facilitates ongoing training opportunities for volunteers such as one to one support with staff, group supervision and training. Le Chéile is committed to ensuring that our volunteers feel supported and empowered in their role as mentors.

Without the experience, commitment, kindness, and generosity of each and every volunteer, Le Chéile would not be able to have the impact we have on young people and

"It's really insightful and humbling that others allow me to be a support to them. It has been one of my best decisions to become a mentor".

families across the country. Thank you to all volunteers for your continued support of Le Chéile and the work we do.

The National Volunteer Committee

The National Volunteer Committee (NVC) is integral to representing the voices of volunteers in the decision-making processes of the organisation. The NVC meets three times per year to share information across regions and discuss pertinent issues arising for our volunteers. In 2022 the NVC was chaired by Leanne Caufield from the Dublin South Region and in October 2022, the position of chair was handed over to Debra Crawley from the Meath Region.

Results of our 2022 Volunteer Survey



96%
rated their
experience of
volunteering
as very good or
excellent.



99%
rated the
support from
Le Chéile as
very good or
excellent.



92%
rated their
experience of
ongoing training
and talks as very
good or excellent.



In conversation with Debra Crawley, Chair of Le Chéile's National Volunteer Committee



Deb has been a volunteer with Le Chéile for over 3 years now in Meath. Deb is also a member of our National Volunteer Committee for the last two years and Chair of it since November 2022. Deb has a passion for supporting and helping

people. When Deb saw Le Chéile advertising on LinkedIn looking for volunteer mentors, she was filled with hope. She says, **'I am a firm believer in second chances and the earlier people are supported to take second chances, the better'**. Deb joined Le Chéile in 2020, during the pandemic. However, this did not deter Deb from throwing herself into mentoring. She was one of our first mentors to be matched remotely during the pandemic and since then she has accompanied three young people and one parent on their mentoring journey.

Deb felt that mentoring aligned with her personal values and knew that she wanted to support young people with experience of the justice system and their families but wasn't exactly sure how to. 'Having all training provided was really important to me when I signed up for mentoring' Deb says, as while she felt she had the right skills and personality for mentoring, she was worried about making mistakes. When asked about her first impressions of mentoring, she says that 'if anything, mentoring just confirmed what I already thought about second chances and believing in people's abilities'. 'Mentoring is very different to anything I have done before. It is really about being present for someone no matter what. It's not about my goals, it's about what the mentee wants'. Deb shared that some young people really

just appreciate that someone is being caring towards them and gives a couple of hours in total focus on that young person.

'I think mentoring gives them an outlet to express their thoughts, frustrations and goals in a non-judgemental space, and allows them to explore these areas for themselves. I think they feel respected and heard and I hope it is an empowering space'.

'On a personal level, I have learned so much from the training, workshops and from other mentors during supervision sessions that I would never have experienced otherwise. It helped me to look at things from a different perspective'. On a professional level, Deb feels that the training, experience and support has really stood to her as a manager and in her own job working with people.

Many young people today face many challenges from mental health to addiction to homelessness and adults often mark young people's behaviour as an indicator of their potential. 'I think it's vital for young people to know that just because the newspapers blame 'the youths' for all that is wrong in society, and even if they have done something 'wrong' that not all adults believe young people should be shamed and stigmatised forever for it. Doing something wrong doesn't make you a bad person, it just means you did something wrong, and you can always do better next time'.

Deb is one volunteer that represents a whole community of dedicated, enthusiastic and determined volunteers from across the country. Her words mirror those of so many of our mentors who believe that a supportive voice and a friendly face is critical for empowering young people and their families to achieve their potential.



Our Partnerships

We believe in the power of partnerships and that partnering with other agencies is imperative to meeting the needs of young people and their families. We value our established partnerships and understand that tackling the challenges of Youth Justice is complex and can only be achieved by working with others towards shared objectives. Our collective impact is greater and more effective than anything we could achieve on our own.

Probation Service

We have a long-standing partnership with the Probation Service. We are funded by the Department of Justice through the Probation Service and work in close partnership with them to deliver mentoring to young people on probation and parents/carers of young people on probation as well as parents on probation.

Youth Diversion Projects

We provide mentoring for young people referred by Youth Diversion Projects (YDP) in Dublin, Waterford and parts of Tipperary. In Dublin, we have a strong partnership with Crosscare while in the South-East we work closely with Waterford and South Tipperary Community Youth Service. Tailored mentoring is provided to young people or parents/carers of young people who are at risk of offending or becoming more involved in crime/anti-social behaviour. YDP Projects and mentoring challenges young people to divert from offending behaviour and empowers them to make positive decisions about their life.



Oberstown Children Detention Campus

Since 2017, we have partnered with Oberstown to run a unique initiative supporting parents where their child is in detention. The parent mentoring project for parents of children in detention is the first of its kind internationally. It operates similarly to Le Chéile's other parent mentoring programme in that it seeks to provide support, a listening ear and build confidence in different skills that a parent may find useful in relating to their child. It ultimately aims to offer support to these parents/carers that will help them when their child is released from Oberstown.

Archways

Le Chéile and Archways have been in partnership since 2021 working on an interagency family support project. The project is a pilot which has been developed following extensive research undertaken by the University of Limerick. It is an evidence informed programme that works with young people, their families, and the community. The aim is to strengthen families, remove barriers to prosocial opportunities and increase community efficacy. Our role in the project is to provide a mentoring service to young people to support them to make choices which promote positive changes in their lives.



Funding

Le Chéile is funded by the Department of Justice, through the Probation Service.

Le Chéile's Restorative Justice Project receives funding from the Probation Service, Limerick City and County Council and Victims of Crime Office.

The Oberstown mentoring project is funded by Oberstown Children Detention Campus.

Le Chéile also receives funding for its two Youth Diversion Projects from the Department of Justice and Equality via Waterford & South Tipperary Community Youth Service and Crosscare.

“I am very grateful Le Chéile took this case as K really needed a service that would gently guide him and work with him where he is at around the parenting issues. It's a complex case and without Le Chéile's involvement would have proved difficult to source appropriate intervention for him that he would have engaged with”.

“I met P yesterday and he presented a little more confident and engaging than in the past. We had a chat about this, and he states that he feels that he's benefiting from the regular engagement with Le Chéile”.



Statement of Financial Activities

(Incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account) for the financial year ended 31 December 2022

	Unrestricted Funds 2022 €	Restricted Funds 2022 €	Total 2022 €	Unrestricted Funds 2021 €	Restricted Funds 2021 €	Total 2021 €
Income						
Donations and legacies	1,593	-	1,593	1,700	-	1,700
Charitable activities						
Grants from governments and other co-funders	-	1,436,086	1,436,086	-	1,270,801	1,270,801
Other income	2,417	-	2,417	2,417	-	2,417
Total income	4,010	1,436,086	1,440,096	4,117	1,270,801	1,274,918
Expenditure						
Charitable activities	4,010	1,449,428	1,453,438	4,116	1,345,611	1,349,727
Net income/(expenditure)	-	(13,342)	(13,342)	1	(74,810)	(74,809)
Transfers between funds	7,000	(7,000)	-	7,000	(7,000)	-
Net movement in funds for the financial year	7,000	(20,342)	(13,342)	7,001	(81,810)	(74,809)
Reconciliation of funds						
Balances brought forward at 1 January 2022	39,311	62,399	101,710	32,310	144,209	176,519
Balances carried forward at 31 December 2022	46,311	42,057	88,368	39,311	62,399	101,710



Balance Sheet

as at 31 December 2022

	2022	2021
	€	€
Fixed Assets		
Tangible assets	<u>1,100</u>	<u>1,700</u>
Current Assets		
Debtors	54,944	1,274,918
Cash at bank and in hand	<u>566,731</u>	<u>613,030</u>
	<u>621,675</u>	<u>653,091</u>
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	<u>(534,407)</u>	<u>(555,997)</u>
Net Current Assets	<u>87,268</u>	<u>97,094</u>
Total Assets less Current Liabilities	<u><u>88,368</u></u>	<u><u>101,710</u></u>
Funds		
Restricted funds	42,057	62,399
General fund (unrestricted)	<u>46,311</u>	<u>39,311</u>
Total funds	<u><u>88,368</u></u>	<u><u>101,710</u></u>



Our People

Board of Directors

James Doorley	Chairperson and Director
Margaret Rogers	Director, Vice Chairperson and Company secretary
Richard McElwee	Director (until April 2022)
Darina Sexton	Director
Maria Molloy	Director
Krupesh Patel	Director (until December 2022)
John Balfe	Director
Brian McDonald	Director (from July 2022)
Sarah Jane Judge	Director (from July 2022)
Andy Bray	Director (from July 2022)
Olivia Keaveney	Director (from July 2021)

The Board reported the following attendance in 2022:

James Doorley – 8/8

Margaret Rogers – 6/8

Richard McElwee – 2/3

Darina Sexton – On maternity leave

Maria Molloy – 5/8

Krupesh Patel – 7/8

John Balfe – 6/8

Brian McDonald – 5/5

Sarah Jane Judge – 1/5

Andy Bray – 2/5

Olivia Keaveney – 5/8



Staff

Anne Conroy	CEO
Claudio Marmo	Accounts and Corporate Services Manager
Mary Daly	Eastern Regional Manager
Alan Quinn	Southern Regional Manager
Laureen Christie	Whitetown Mentor Coordinator
Ingrid Cooney	Dublin North Mentor Coordinator
Grace Jordan	Dublin North Mentor Coordinator
Marie Vanasova	Dublin South Team Leader
Cormac Ryan	YDP Dublin Mentor Coordinator
Stephanie Power	Oberstown Mentor Coordinator
Allison Gordon	Cork South & West Mentor Coordinator
Ailbe Coleman	Cork North & East Mentor Coordinator
Heather Sinnott	South East Team Leader
Jenny Croke	YDP South East Mentor Project Officer
Helen Mc Carthy	Midlands Mentor Coordinator
Lyndsey McCabe	North East Mentor Coordinator
Lorna Walsh	Limerick and Clare Mentor Coordinator
Maxine Kelly	National Volunteer Coordinator
Aideen Curran	Accounts and Finance Administrator
Dervla Potter	Policy and Communications Officer
Carol Doyle	Administrator
Mark Turner	YDP Project Officer
Simon Keating	RJ Project Officer



“I have changed so much. [Mentoring] has helped me with my financial problems, addiction and mental health, no longer in a rut, I know what opportunities are there for me and I am going back to adult education”.

Parent

“It helps put yourself in someone else’s shoes really”.

RJ Participant

“It was a lifeline – I don’t know how we’d have managed without them”.

Parent

“I think differently about what I did now compared to back then”.

RJ Participant



"I find Le Chéile a really good organisation to volunteer for as they are very appreciative of my work and I feel very supported by my coordinator".

"No words can explain as a volunteer, to give 1-2 hours a week, the feeling you get when you see a person grow and want to make changes in their life because they have someone who meets with them and believes in them".

”



“My mentor made me realise that I’m something, I’m not worth nothing.... My mentor told me not to be throwing my life away, that I was worth something at the end of the day... I just thought there was nothing in life for me”.

“I was very much inside myself, depressed, feeling so bad about what I had done. It helped me to like myself again. It lifted me to a better place. I was sorry about what I had done, but I learned to accept it”.





le chéile
MENTORING

Inspiring hope, believing in change

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