



*le chéile*  
MENTORING

# ANNUAL REPORT 2024

Inspiring hope,  
believing in change



National Team Meeting, Dublin

# Table of Contents

Introduction from our Chairperson..... 4

Welcome from our CEO ..... 5

2024 in Numbers ..... 6

Mission, Vision & Values ..... 7

News and Updates from 2024..... 8

Our Services..... 13

Youth Mentoring ..... 15

Restorative Justice..... 17

Parent Mentoring..... 19

Our Volunteers..... 21

Our Partners..... 23

Funding & Finances..... 24

Our People..... 27



**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.

## Introduction from Our Chairperson

As I write this, I am mindful that this is my final introduction as Chairperson of Le Chéile Mentoring. It has been a great honour and privilege to serve in this role over the past number of years, and as a director since 2016. I would also like to acknowledge that this is the final report for our CEO, Anne Conroy, who has completed eleven years at Le Chéile. Anne's leadership, vision and commitment have left a lasting and positive legacy on the organisation, and on behalf of the Board I want to express my sincere gratitude to her. I'm happy to add that the Board has planned for a smooth transition and that both the chairperson and CEO roles have been filled.

2024 was a significant year for Le Chéile as we finalised and launched our new Strategic Plan. This was the result of a great deal of thoughtful and collaborative work. The Board played an active role in shaping the strategy, working closely with the executive team to ensure it reflects the organisation's mission, values, and future priorities. In early 2024, the Board held a full-day strategy session, supported and guided by a dedicated Board Strategy Steering Committee. The result is a plan that positions us to build on our strengths and meet the growing needs of the young people and families we support.

Governance has remained a key priority this year. The Board met 7 times in 2024 and continued to actively engage through our sub-committees. In late 2024, we commissioned Boardmatch to undertake a Board Effectiveness Review and Skills Audit to further strengthen our governance framework. This review will conclude in 2025 and will support us in continuing to operate to the highest standards. I want to thank all my fellow directors for their efforts, expertise, contribution and support to me throughout the year.

I would like to acknowledge the significant contribution of our former Vice Chairperson, Dr. Margaret Rogers, who completed her term of office at the 2024 AGM. Margaret brought great insight, expertise and wisdom to all of our deliberations.

We were also pleased to welcome two new Board members this year – Dr. Mairead Seymour and Dr. Catherine Bond – whose knowledge and experience will be a great asset to Le Chéile.

A special thank you must go to Neilí Conroy, our Volunteer Champion, who has done so much to promote Le Chéile Mentoring and the power of mentoring through her platform. Her ongoing support has helped to raise awareness and celebrate the work of our mentors.

As always, our work would not be possible without our exceptional volunteers and staff. Their commitment to supporting young people and families continues to inspire and humble me. I am deeply grateful for everything they do to deliver our services with compassion, professionalism and dedication.

To the young people and parents who place their trust in Le Chéile Mentoring, thank you. You are the reason we do this work. Your courage, your honesty and your willingness to engage in mentoring and restorative justice give hope to us all.

As I complete my time as Chairperson, I am proud of all we have achieved together. Le Chéile is a remarkable organisation, built on strong values, committed people, and a clear purpose. I leave with confidence in its future and immense gratitude for having had the opportunity to play a part in its journey.



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "James Doorley".

James Doorley  
Chairperson

## Welcome from our CEO

Welcome to Le Chéile Mentoring's annual report for 2024. I hope this report will give you an insight into the work we are involved in.

One of the most important achievements of 2024 was the development and launch of a new organisational strategy for 2024 to 2028. A huge amount of consultation was carried out and valuable feedback was gathered from young people, parents, staff, mentors, external funders and partners. The overwhelming message from young people and parents/carers was that mentoring and restorative justice works. And their recommendation was to continue to provide those services, to more young people, and in more geographic locations.

We were therefore delighted that in late 2024 we secured funding to set up new services in counties Kerry and Galway. We will continue to seek opportunities to make our services available to more children, young people and families who might benefit from them.

Another highlight of 2024 was the commissioning of a new research project, on the family support needs of families with whom we work, and the design of a service model for Le Chéile Mentoring which can more effectively include and support families. We are grateful to the St Stephen's Green Trust for funding this initiative.

November 15th 2024, our Restorative Justice Conference was held at Thomond Park Stadium, in Limerick. With a powerful theme: "Driving Restorative Justice in Ireland Forward: Promoting Collaboration and Innovation", the event was over-subscribed and demonstrated the empowering impact of RJ from the perspectives of young people, victims of crime, front line workers, academics, and the judiciary.

Le Chéile Mentoring was part of a campaign with fellow NGOs, PACE and IASIO (now Tosú) coinciding with the 2024 General election, to advocate for more resources for community-based services. We urged the next government to take immediate action in two critical areas: sustainable funding and a deeper commitment to offender rehabilitation and reintegration. We were also involved in the setting up of Community Justice Network, a new network

with a mission to represent and strengthen the voice of justice community organisations in Ireland. Watch this space!

Youth involvement in offending behaviour is very much linked to disadvantaged communities, child poverty, early school leaving, substance abuse, and families under pressure. That is not to say that all young people who grow up in disadvantaged communities get involved in offending or anti-social behaviour. Absolutely not. However, a correlation exists between child poverty and socio-economic disadvantage and young people's involvement in offending. Youth crime and offending behaviour is complex and young people, their families and communities need support and effective interventions.

Our Vision is that every child and young person, Le Chéile Mentoring works with, will be supported and empowered to realise their hopes and dreams. We believe that working alongside young people and families, involving them in the process of change, can and does lead to positive outcomes, not just for young people, but for families, and their communities. It also leads to reduced offending and safer communities.

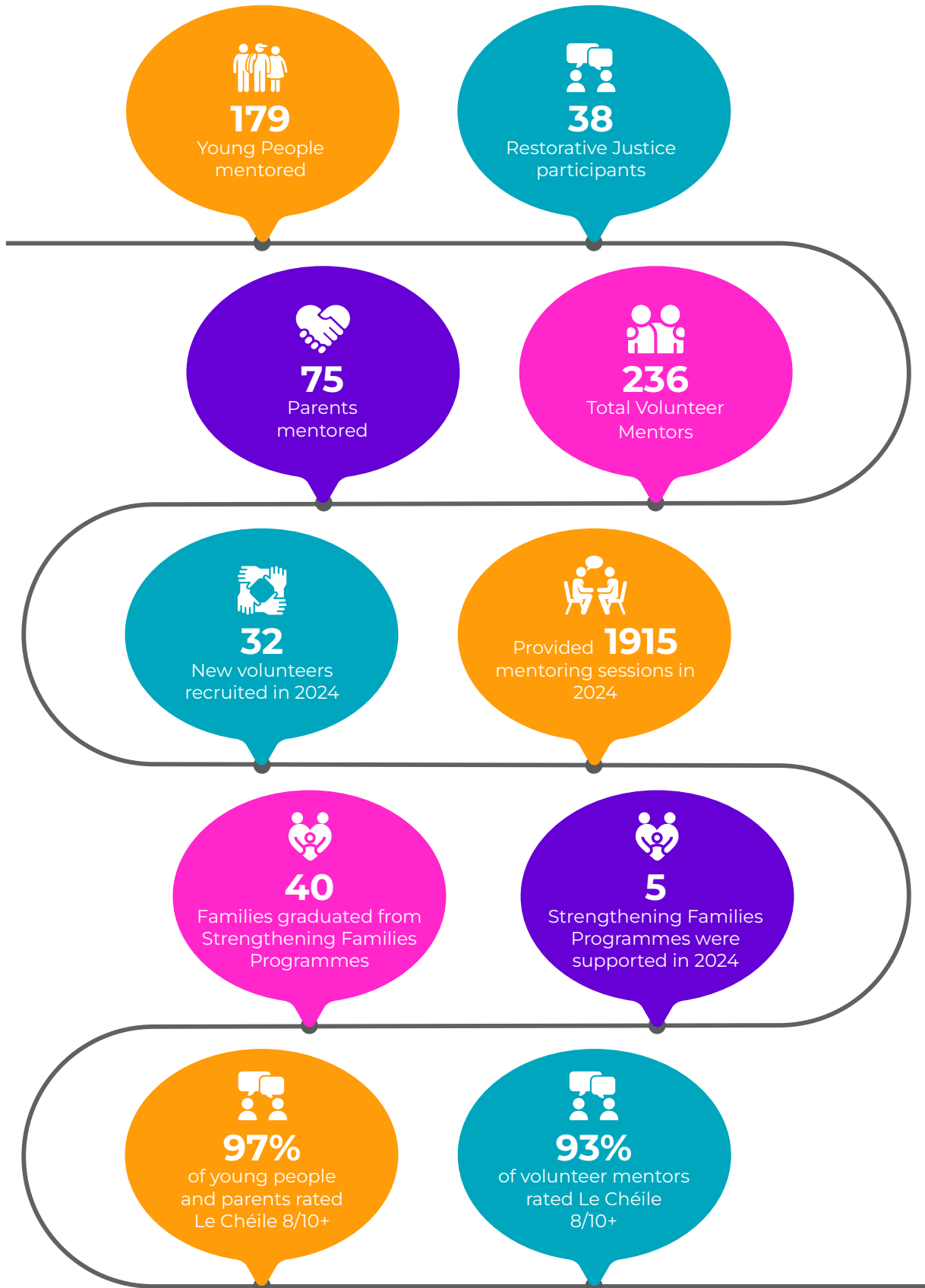
This will be my last annual report as I am leaving Le Chéile Mentoring in the coming months. My sincere thanks to James Doorley and the Board of Directors who ensure that the strategy, governance and funding of the organisation are managed to the highest standards. To the management team and colleagues who are so committed to the work of Le Chéile. To the hundreds of volunteer mentors who are so inspirational. To the children, young people and families, some of whose stories I have witnessed from afar. It has been my privilege to be part of an amazing organisation with you all.



Anne Conroy

Anne Conroy  
CEO

## 2024 In Numbers



## Our Vision, Mission and Values



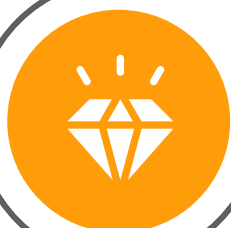
### Vision

Our vision is that every child and young person Le Chéile Mentoring works with, will be supported and empowered to realise their hopes and dreams.



### Mission

Le Chéile Mentoring is a national, volunteer mentoring, restorative justice and family support service, which supports children, young people and their families, where the child or young person is involved in or at risk of offending. We provide tailored supports, in partnership with other organisations, working alongside young people and their families, to enable them to reach their potential now and into the future.



### Values

We believe in the rights and potential of every child and young person to make positive changes in their lives and to be actively involved in that process.

We believe in the power of volunteer mentoring.

We are committed to a restorative approach.

We value partnership with children, young people, families and other organisations.

We actively listen, respect and empower.

We understand the impact of trauma and we work with a trauma-informed approach.

We are committed to evidence-informed programmes and excellence in everything that we do.

We recognise the impact of socio-economic deprivation and believe in social justice and equality.

# A Vision for the Future: Le Chéile Mentoring 2024-2028 Strategy Launch

---

In 2024, Le Chéile Mentoring proudly launched our Strategic Plan 2024–2028, “Inspiring Hope, Believing in Change”, charting an ambitious course to meet the evolving needs of young people and families across Ireland. This strategy was developed through widespread consultation with staff, volunteers, stakeholders, and most importantly, our service users.

At the heart of this plan is a renewed commitment to early intervention, restorative practice, and partnership with children, young people, families and other organisations. We are planning to expand our services geographically and beyond the youth justice system, recognising that many young people and families could benefit from preventative support before crisis points are reached.

## Key priorities for the coming years include:

- i. Enhance the quality of mentoring, restorative justice and family support for young people and their families.
- ii. Expand services within the Youth Justice System in partnership with other agencies.
- iii. Grow Le Chéile Mentoring’s services beyond the youth justice system in partnership with other agencies

## Partnerships Forged

We were delighted to be joined at the launch by Mark Wilson, Director of the Probation Service, who said:

“For us, it is the partnerships we forge together that enable us to achieve better outcomes. Our joint strength is the combination of the approaches we adopt and the relationships we form - the ‘No Wrong Door’ Youth Justice Strategy approach - and the singular commitment (of us as partners) to enable us to inspire hope, always believing in an individuals’ capacity for change (be that a child or parent).”

“Both from the Probation Service and personally, we remain so appreciative and grateful of the time and dedication of mentors. Your gift of time, your gift of care and your gift of belief in each person is immeasurable and I thank you for it. Never doubt the value of our work; never doubt the value of planting the smallest seed for change within someone; and never doubt the importance of self-care in caring for others.”

## Thanks & Closing Thoughts

We were profoundly grateful to the 37 service users and 64 mentors who took part in this consultation, undertaken by Quality Matters. The feedback not only informed the direction we want to take; it also showed us the level of engagement and impact our organisation has with our service users. This strategy is a roadmap to ensuring every young person, and family we support is met with empathy and hope.



Strategy Launch 2024, Dublin

## Driving Restorative Justice Forward: Le Chéile's Landmark 2024 Conference

---

On November 15th, 2024, Le Chéile Mentoring hosted its most significant Restorative Justice Conference to date at the iconic Thomond Park Stadium, Limerick. With a powerful theme: "Driving Restorative Justice in Ireland Forward: Promoting Collaboration and Innovation", the event marked a milestone in Ireland's restorative justice journey.

Moving to Thomond Park was symbolic as well as practical with the demand for participation higher than ever, reflecting the growing momentum behind restorative justice in Ireland.

### A Day of Inspirational Voices

The conference was chaired with warmth and professionalism by Dr. Susan Leahy (Associate Professor and Director of the Centre for Crime, Justice and Victim studies at UL and member of Le Chéile's RJ Steering Committee), who set the tone for an inclusive and engaging day.

The morning sessions featured a stellar lineup of thought leaders, beginning with Tim Chapman's keynote on the future growth of restorative justice, urging a strategic approach to deepening its role in justice systems. Simon Keating followed with innovative methods to build victim empathy in young people, while Dr. Marie Keenan addressed restorative justice in cases of sexual crime through research and ethics. Closing the session, Dr. Kieran O'Dwyer reflected on Ireland's progress and challenges in implementing the Council of Europe's 2018 Recommendation.



Restorative Justice Conference 2024, Thomond Park

### Afternoon Highlights: A Judicial Perspective and Lived Experience

We were delighted to have Justice Paul Kelly President of the District Court, address the question, “How can the courts encourage greater use of Restorative Justice?” His insights bridged the gap between theory and courtroom practice, advocating for a more restorative ethos within the justice system.

The impact of the conversation between Peter Woolf and Will Riley (The Woolf Within) was profound. Their story — one as offender, the other as victim — underscored the transformative power of restorative justice.

### Closing Reflections

As the day drew to a close, attendees were invited to reflect on what they had heard, seen, and felt. The consensus was clear: the conference not only informed; it inspired.

We would like to acknowledge the key role of the Probation Service in driving restorative justice initiatives in Ireland forward, we’re proud to partner with them in delivering this service.

## Mentoring & Restorative Expansion: New Reach

---

This year also marked a major leap forward in both Le Chéile’s Mentoring and restorative justice work with the announcement of new dedicated funding to expand regional services. Thanks to the funding we were granted in 2024, Le Chéile will be expanding our mentoring and restorative justice services in Galway and the Cork/Kerry regions. We will be appointing two new coordinators in 2025.

These roles will focus on building capacity, deepening community partnerships, and ensuring that young people across the West and South-West have access to quality mentoring and restorative processes.

## National Volunteer Committee 2024

The National Volunteer committee is our forum for ensuring mentor participation in Le Chéile structures. The members represent the interests of all Le Chéile's volunteers in their area, offering us valuable feedback on our service and helping our organisation decide on a direction forward.

Key areas which the National Volunteer Committee worked on in 2024 included:

- Consultation on the new strategy and;
- Volunteer recruitment.

Thank you to all committee members past, present and future. We would like to thank all the committee members in 2024, particularly Deborah Cawley from the Meath region who chaired the committee throughout the year.



Pictured Above, National Volunteer Committee commencing 2025

## New Research on Family Support in Youth Justice

2024 marked the beginning of a vital new research journey for Le Chéile Mentoring. With funding from the St. Stephen's Green Trust. The research proposal aims to explore the needs of justice-involved families and assess how our services can more effectively include and support families navigating complex emotional, behavioural, and systemic challenges.

This year, the project came through its development phase with the establishment of an interagency oversight group comprising of key personnel from relevant partner agencies, including the appointment of a chair, Helen Fitzgerald, Assistant Director at Research Evidence into Policy, Programmes and Practice (REPPP) at the University of Limerick.

We worked together to establish the terms of reference for this project and put out a request for tenders. After a competitive interview process, we awarded the research partnership to Archways; a national organisation that works in collaboration with local and national agencies to research, develop, and promote evidence-based and informed programmes for children, young people, parents, and the professionals that support them.

2025 will see a collaborative service design process to explore how best to respond to the needs emerging from the research and identify responsive service models that are a good fit for Le Chéile with a focus on family inclusion. We look forward to sharing more in 2025 as we move into the next stage of this exciting piece of work.

# Advocacy for Change: Key Asks for General Election 2024

Le Chéile Mentoring, alongside PACE and IASIO (now Tosú) united in 2024 to deliver a powerful message to politicians and policymakers: meaningful reform in criminal justice requires urgent investment. With over 100 years of combined experience, our organisations have a proven track record of

supporting individuals at risk of offending and those reintegrating after prison. Together, we work to reduce reoffending and build safer communities. In our joint pre-election call, we urged the next government to take immediate action in the areas outlined below.

## OUR 3 KEY ASKS FOR GENERAL ELECTION 2024

#GE24

### 1. FUNDING OUR SECTOR



Our work is evidence-based and well proven and yet, since 2008, we have been struggling with extreme underfunding.

We are joining forces to call on the next government to urgently address the severe financial pressure on our organisations.

### 2. EARLY INTERVENTION



The expansion of mentoring services for young people to a nationwide network which supports them to divert from crime.

Other essential interventions include preparing people for employment, support to set up businesses, employment opportunities and training.

### 3. REHABILITATION AND REINTEGRATION



We are calling for greater action in practice to provide timely access for our clients to rehabilitation, resettlement and reintegration services.

All of these services are critical to help direct people away from offending behaviour.

*PACE, IASIO and Le Chéile Mentoring are leading organisations with over 100 years' experience between us working with people who come in contact with the criminal justice system – from youth at risk of offending to those leaving prison after serving life sentences.*



## Our Services



Each week it gives me something to look forward to, even if it's just a chat. If I'm struggling in deciding where I want to go in life, or what I want to do, it's good to chat about it. If I need advice, it's good to talk about it. —**Young Person**

## Family Support Programmes

### Parenting Together:

Parenting Together (also known as Non-Violent Resistance Parenting) is a programme for parents and carers experiencing child to parent abuse. The programme supports parents in preventing and responding to controlling and violent behaviour by children and young people.

### Strengthening Families Programme:

Le Chéile coordinates and funds Strengthening Families Programme (SFP) on behalf of the Probation Service, providing support and advice 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.

### Family Support Interventions (FSI's):

Family Support Interventions are tailored supports designed for each individual family's needs, which complement the mentoring sessions. Family support interventions aim to improve communications within the family and promote the importance of family relationships. Examples might include family mediation or a family meal.

## Showing Impact & Measuring Outcomes

In 2024, Le Chéile continued to utilise the Outcome Star as a core tool for measuring progress, outcomes, and impact across our services. This evidence-based tool supports our work in tracking personal development and positive change with young people, parents/carers, and those involved in restorative justice. We use one of three stars to work with our respective cohorts: the Youth Star, the Carer Star and the Justice Star.

The following pages include outcome data alongside real stories and case studies that bring this impact to life—highlighting the personal journeys behind the numbers. All names and clearly identifying details have been changed to protect our service user's anonymity.\*

We just chat and talk about my life. We sometimes talk about what I might like to do in the future. He's made me think that I might like to do a course in something I'm interested in.  
—Young Person

## Youth Mentoring

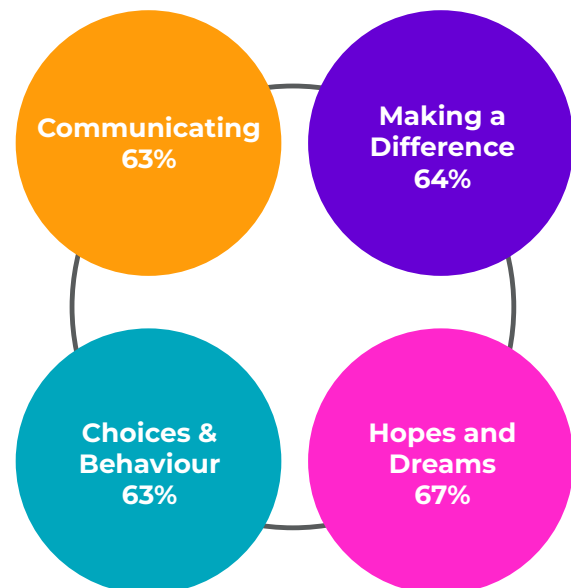
In 2024, Le Chéile mentored 179 young people across Ireland. Mentoring has consistently proved to be a powerful and effective intervention for young people involved in crime or at risk of offending. At Le Chéile Mentoring, our core focus remains on supporting young people on probation. However, our work also extends to mentoring children and teenagers involved in Youth Diversion Projects (YDPs), as well as those currently in detention.

Youth mentoring is built on a strong, one-to-one relationship between a volunteer mentor and a young person. These relationships provide stability, support, and a sense of trust—often filling gaps where guidance has been lacking. Volunteer mentors help young people reflect on their choices, set realistic goals, and take practical steps toward achieving them. They offer a listening ear, genuine care, and the benefit of their life and career experience. By participating in structured, purposeful activities, mentors help build a young person's self-belief, motivation, and confidence. It's not just about steering them away from negative influences—it's about showing them what's possible and walking alongside them as they begin to believe it, too.

### Youth Mentoring Outcomes in 2024

Le Chéile Mentoring uses the Outcomes Star tool to support the young people we work with in making positive changes in their lives. The Outcomes Star tool allows young people and parents to score their progress in a specific area. Highlighting areas of strength but also areas of difficulty, where support may be needed. Below are the top areas of progression made by young people.

#### Top 4 areas of progression made by young people in youth mentoring



## Young Person's Story

---

When \*Cian was first referred, he was deeply angry and struggling to manage his behaviour. He had already been expelled from mainstream school — not because there hadn't been efforts to support him, but because even with a reduced timetable he couldn't contain the outbursts. Cian was at risk of becoming completely disengaged.

Around that time, our coordinator matched him with a mentor known for his calm, patient approach. This mentor believed in planting seeds, not pushing. He met the young person exactly where he was at, taking things slowly and consistently, week after week. Cian responded well to someone showing up, sticking around, and treating him with unwavering patience.

His mother had started looking into different education options, and with our mentor's encouragement, Cian secured a place in an alternative education setting and began attending regularly. The mentor worked with Cian to prepare him for what to expect — another small but important step in building trust and stability.

Outside of education, the Cian was passionate about football. But during a match, he was involved in a very serious incident that left another player needing an ambulance. As a result, he was banned from all the local football club's grounds and matches.

This could have been another door closed but Cian's mentor quietly began working in the background. He spoke to people in the local club, explaining that if football was taken away entirely, Cian would lose one of the few things anchoring him. He asked the club to consider giving him one more chance.

In the meantime, Cian was working on managing his anger and reactions with the mentor. There were no sweeping promises or unrealistic goals. Just baby steps: small, achievable things like how to respond differently if something went wrong in school or on the pitch. Every week, they checked in and examined: "What worked? What didn't? What can we try next time?"

Eventually, the local football club agreed. They would allow him back — but under strict conditions. Any incident, however minor, and he would be permanently barred.

Cian didn't take this second chance lightly. With the mentor his corner, attending as many matches as he could, the young person began to thrive.

Our Coordinator said: "He didn't want to let his mentor down. Over time, their relationship deepened — not through big gestures, but through consistency, encouragement, and quiet support."

By the time the mentoring ended, the young person had become a star player. He had grown not just in ability, but in maturity, accountability, and self-belief.

Reflecting on the journey, our mentor's approach was simple: give the young person someone who has their back no matter what — someone who won't give up. That kind of support doesn't just change outcomes. It changes lives.

## Restorative Justice

At Le Chéile Mentoring, our commitment to a restorative approach remains central to our work with young people, their families, and communities. Our model is rooted in restorative principles, and all our volunteers are trained in restorative practice, ensuring that every engagement reflects empathy, accountability, and the potential for positive change.

In 2024, our dedicated Restorative Justice Project operated across Limerick, Clare, and Cork, working in close partnership with the Probation Service, An Garda Síochána and a range of statutory and community agencies.

Restorative Justice is about more than addressing wrongdoing—it's about understanding harm, repairing relationships, and empowering young people to take responsibility in a meaningful way. In 2024, our team delivered tailored restorative interventions, including:

**Victim Empathy Programmes**, helping young people understand the impact of their actions and develop greater compassion.

**Restorative Justice Meetings**, where young people, victims (or proxies), families, and professionals come together in a structured space to discuss the offence and agree on steps forward.

**Victim/Offender Mediation**, facilitated in a safe, supportive environment—often through indirect communication—to ensure that all parties feel heard.

**Reparative Actions**, such as written apologies, community activities, or personal reflection projects aimed at making amends and restoring trust.

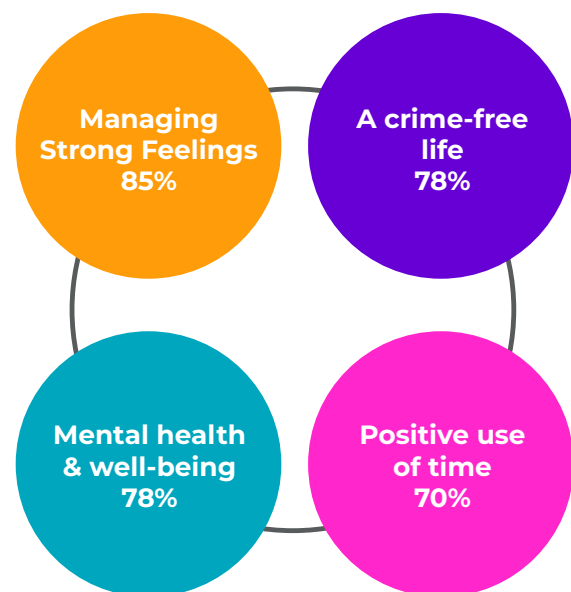
### Restorative Justice Participants 2024

- **Victim Empathy Programmes:** 35 participants
- **Participants in training or RJ workshops:** c. 200
- **Reparation Interventions:** 7 participants
- **Restorative Justice Meetings:** 9

### Restorative Justice Outcomes 2024

The Justice Star is the Outcome Star tool we use to measure the journey of change of our participants who have engaged in restorative justice.

### Top areas of progress made by Restorative Justice Participants



## Restorative Justice Story

---

“One of the most powerful experiences for me this year as a Restorative Justice Project Coordinator was facilitating a Restorative Justice meeting between a young person who had committed an assault and \*Sean, who was directly impacted by it. While most of the Restorative Justice meetings I facilitate involve offenders and indirect victims—such as family members or community members—this encounter stood out because it brought together the two individuals most directly connected to the harm.”

“It began with a question: would the victim be open to learning more about the restorative process, without any obligation to participate? When we sat down, the first thing he told me was that several people had advised him not to engage. But he was still willing to listen.”

Our Coordinator explained how the offender had already taken part in our Victim Empathy Programme, a core part of our work at Le Chéile. Through one-on-one sessions, young people are supported to develop their current level of victim empathy. Through this they gain a greater understanding of the impact of their actions—not only on the victim but also on various other victims that are affected by an offence. This is further developed by exploring times when they themselves have felt vulnerable or harmed. In this case, the young offender showed genuine remorse and developed insight into the consequences of his actions.

“What struck me most about the Sean was his maturity. He acknowledged the severity of the injuries he had sustained, and how the assault had disrupted his life. Yet he also said something very compassionate: he didn’t want to see the offender’s life completely derailed over one night’s mistake.”

Preparing for a restorative justice meeting like this takes time and care. Multiple individual meetings were held for both parties to walk through exactly what would happen: including who would speak first, who would enter or leave the room first and where each party would sit. This structure is critical, especially for victims, to ensure they feel safe and in control. Initially, Sean had planned to speak first, but as his confidence in the preparation process grew, he chose to let the offender begin.

“When the day of the meeting arrived, both participants spoke honestly. Sean shared his story. The offender offered a sincere apology, which was accepted. They shook hands. It was a moment of mutual recognition that was great to witness,” our Coordinator recalled.

“Something that naturally came up in the conversation was the practical impact of the assault. Sean shared how much he had spent on medical care, transport, and missed work. The young person offered to pay those costs. I thought that gesture showed genuine accountability.”

The Probation Officer, who had supported the process from the start, was deeply encouraged by how the meeting unfolded. And while we are always careful not to use terms like “healing” or “closure”—we don’t want to set unrealistic expectations—both parties left feeling a sense of resolution. Sean spoke positively of their overall experience, from preparation sessions to the facilitation of the Restorative Justice meeting on the day.

“One thing Sean said that stood out to me, was the fact that if someone they cared about got into trouble, that they would be given a chance to make some amends. That understanding that we all need compassion, even when we’ve done wrong, is at the heart of restorative justice.”

## Parent Mentoring

Parent mentoring continues to offer a vital support to parents and carers navigating the challenges of family life. Delivered in a voluntary, non-judgemental and confidential space, the service provides a unique opportunity for parents to reflect, gain perspective, and build on their strengths through regular meetings with a trained volunteer mentor.

Throughout 2024, we have seen parent mentoring make a meaningful difference in areas such as self-confidence, emotional wellbeing, stress management and strengthened family relationships. Parents also report feeling more hopeful and engaged with community life, including education, training, and employment.

Parent mentoring is available to parents or carers of young people on probation or at risk of offending. It is also available to parents who are on probation themselves. Our inclusive approach recognises the importance of family in reducing reoffending and building safer, more resilient communities.

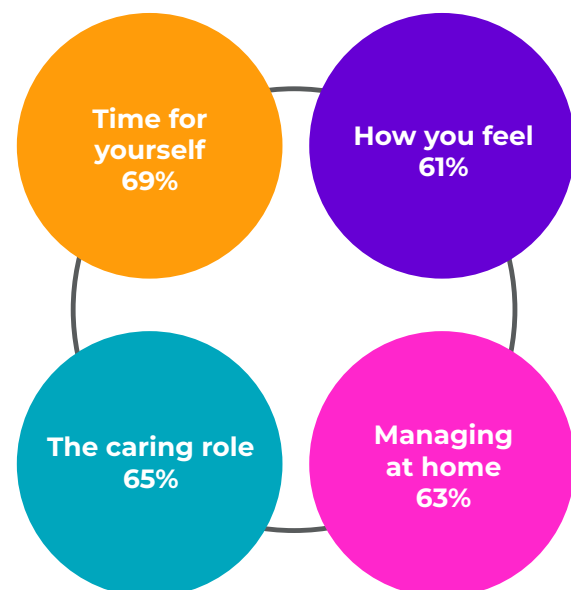
A standout element of our service remains our ongoing collaboration with Oberstown Children Detention Campus, where we support parents while their child is in detention and during the post-release period. This support provides a critical bridge in helping families stay connected and move forward together.

Parent mentoring reaffirms the belief that positive, lasting change begins with one relationship at a time — and that when parents feel supported, families can work on building resilience.

### Parent Mentoring Outcomes in 2024

The Outcome Star tool is also used in parent mentoring. Parents can record their progress across seven different areas under the Carers Star. The outcome areas of progression for parent/caregivers in 2024 are detailed below, showing the average percentage increase in each area.

#### Top 4 areas of progression made by parents



## Parent's Story

When a young person becomes involved in the criminal justice system, much of the attention and resources tend to focus on them. Often, parents are left on the sidelines, carrying the emotional burden alone, without direct support. One Mentor Coordinator at Le Chéile shared a story that highlights the profound impact of parent mentoring. It began with a simple phone call to a mother to offer mentoring support.

"\*Ciara was anxious and hesitant at first," the coordinator recalled. "I suggested we meet in a coffee shop, but she wasn't comfortable with that, so I offered to visit her at home."

The coordinator found the house was in poor condition with clear indicators that Ciara was struggling to cope. With her son in serious trouble with the law, and a personal history marked by trauma and domestic violence, she had become isolated and overwhelmed.

Despite some initial nerves, Ciara was open to hearing about the mentoring programme. The coordinator took the time to explain the process and assess her needs. A mentor was already in mind — a local woman with older children, shared life experience, a similar sense of humour and a strong desire to support other women in her community.

"Matching isn't about ticking boxes," the coordinator said. "It's about knowing your volunteers and understanding who they'll connect with."

The match proved to be a success. Over the past year and a half, the mother has met with her mentor almost every week. Their relationship has become a consistent source of encouragement and motivation. Through their connection, the mother has begun to rebuild her life.

Ciara has taken up regular walking, joined a local sports club, and returned to counselling. Through building confidence with her mentor, this parent was able to re-enter employment, something that seemed completely out of reach to her this time last year.

Ciara faced some unexpected challenges this year. In the past, these issues may have seen her withdraw from the mentoring process, but she responded with newfound confidence and adapted.

Her resilience, she says, is thanks in large part to her mentor's ongoing support.

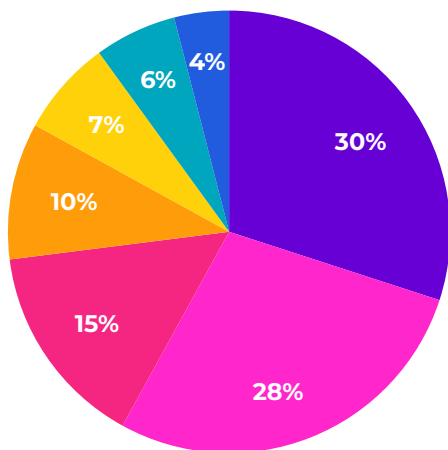
Importantly, the impact of the mentoring relationship is rippling out to her son. For the first time, the parent is navigating how to set and hold boundaries. "She's working hard to make the home a safe and stable place," said the coordinator. "Ciara's making it clear to her son that things have changed — that she's changed."

While there are still challenges ahead, the parent is determined to maintain the progress she has made. Her story reflects not only the importance of mentoring support but the potential for meaningful transformation when parents are empowered to reclaim control of their lives.

"She's done the hard work," the coordinator said. "We've just walked alongside her."

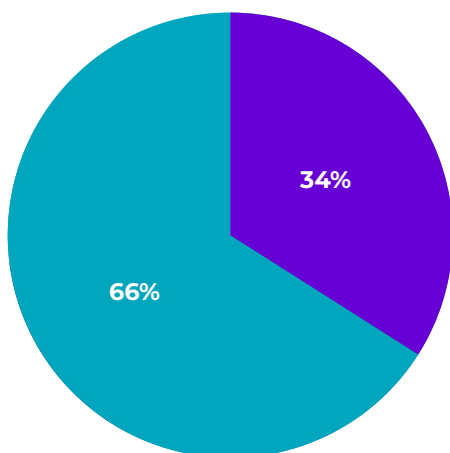
# Our Volunteers

At Le Chéile Mentoring, our volunteers are the heart of everything we do. They bring compassion, commitment, and a genuine belief in the potential for change in every young person they support. Our mentors generously give their time and energy to build trusting relationships, helping young people navigate challenges and create better futures. Many go above and beyond, continually seeking new ways to grow and contribute, not just within their local communities but also at national and international levels.



Age Range

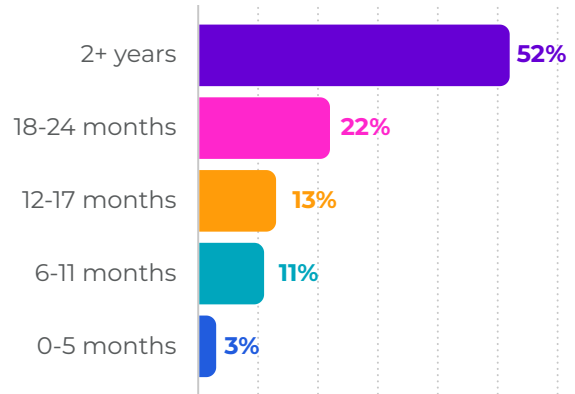
- 20-25
- 21-25
- 26-34
- 35-47
- 48-60
- 60+



Gender

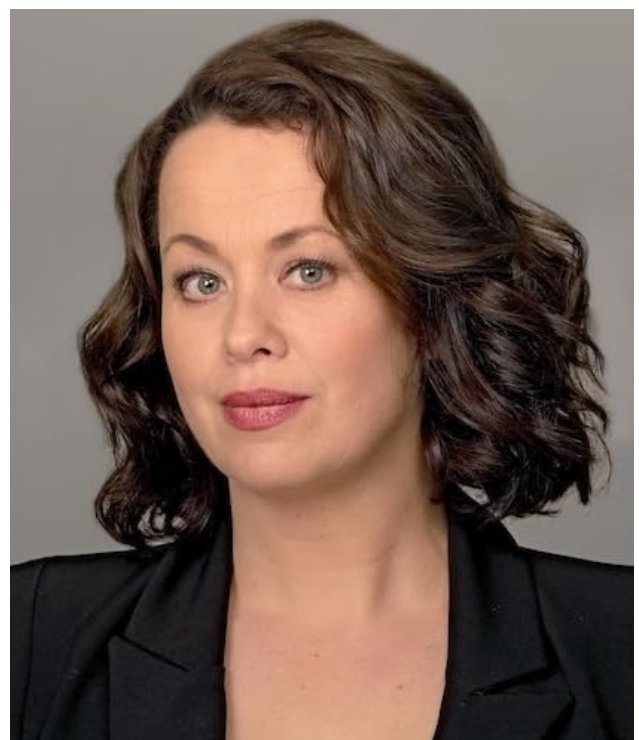
- Male
- Female

## Length of Volunteer Service



In 2024, we announced actor Neilí Conroy as our first-ever Le Chéile Mentoring Volunteer Champion at the launch of our 2024–2028 Strategic Plan. As Volunteer Champion and youth mentor herself, Neilí not only serves as a powerful advocate for the programme’s impact but also helps celebrate the dedication of the mentors. Her appointment will assist Le Chéile in explaining the impact of volunteer mentoring and promote recruitment of more volunteers committed to promoting positive change in young lives.

Neilí Conroy, National Volunteer Champion



## Rita's Story: A Personal Journey Towards Powerful Service

---

Rita has been a volunteer with Le Chéile for twelve years, bringing wisdom, empathy, and deep dedication to her role as a parent mentor. Alongside her career, Rita earned a Humanities degree in Psychology and Sociology. It was during this time that Rita began to truly explore the structural inequalities and emotional challenges that shape people's lives—especially as parents.

“When I had my children, I planned on being the best parent in the world,” she recalls. “I had enough money, a lovely husband, and two lovely kids, but I realised parenting was still incredibly hard.”

Despite supportive circumstances, Rita found herself struggling. It led her on a personal journey of self-discovery—through study and reflection. She came to a powerful realisation:

“It's difficult to be a ‘good enough’ parent. You have to put your own mask on first. Your well-being affects your children's well-being.”

Her insight into the complex realities of parenting—especially when burdened by trauma, poverty, or isolation—ignited a passion to support others.

“I had a support system. But what if you didn't? What if you were parenting alone, in poverty, with trauma stacked against you? It makes an already complex job even harder.”

That passion led her to Le Chéile, where she has spent over a decade offering empathy, understanding, and practical guidance to parents facing overwhelming challenges.

“I don't always get the chance to spend time with people who share this passion of mine. But when you get together with Le Chéile people for training or supervision, and you're working towards the same goals, you feel a sense of togetherness. It's truly inspirational.”

My mentor makes me see that it's not just me that has difficulties in parenting. It's hard for everyone and there's ways you can think about it that make it easier.  
—Parent

## Our Partners

We believe in the power of collaboration and partnering with other agencies to meet the needs of young people and their families. Our collective impact is greater and more effective than anything we could achieve alone.

### Probation Service

We have a longstanding partnership with the Probation Service. We are funded by the Department of Justice through the Probation Service and work closely with them to deliver mentoring to young people on probation, parents/carers of young people on probation, and parents on probation. We also run a unique restorative justice service with the Probation Service in Counties Limerick, Clare and Cork with funding to expand services in Kerry and Galway.

### Youth Diversion Projects

We provide mentoring for young people referred by Youth Diversion Projects (YDPs) 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 challenge young people to divert from offending behaviour and empower them to make some positive changes in their lives.

### Oberstown Children Detention Campus

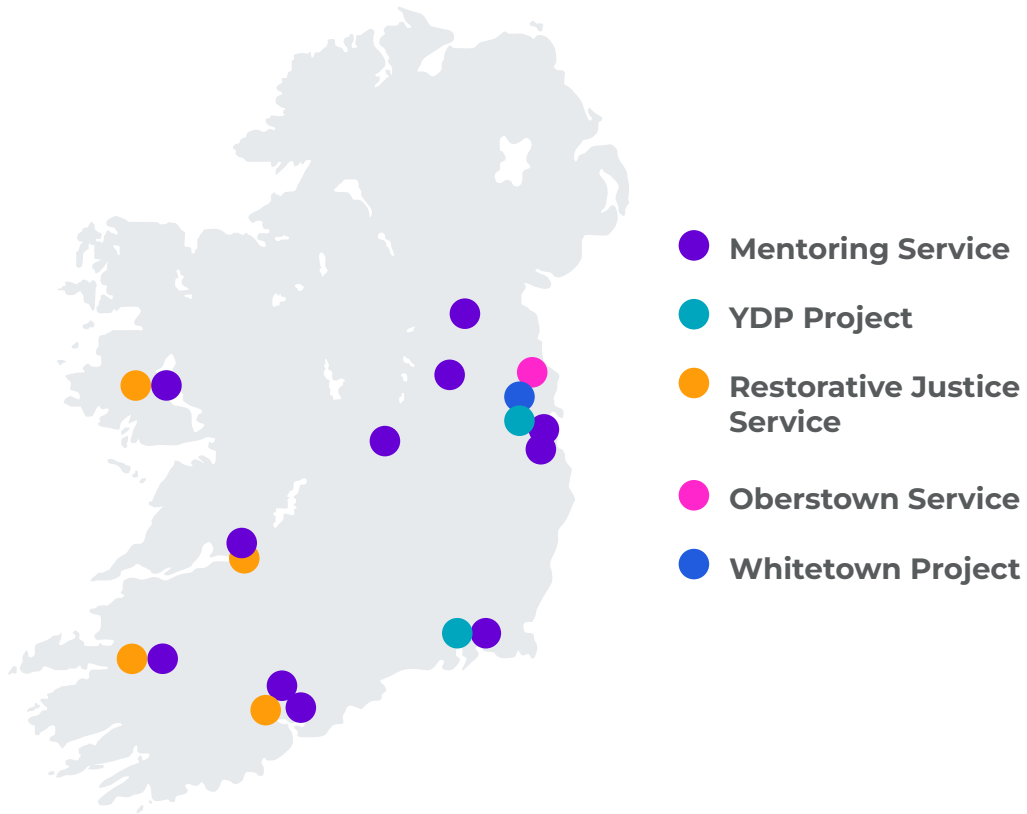
Since 2017, we have partnered with Oberstown to run a unique initiative supporting parents where their child is in detention. The first of its kind internationally, parent mentoring is voluntary

and 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 aims to offer support to these parents/carers that will help them when their child is released from Oberstown. Mentoring is also offered to young people so that they have a supportive adult to turn to when they are leave Oberstown.

### Archways

Le Chéile Mentoring and Archways have been in partnership since 2021, working on an interagency family support project. The project is a pilot developed following extensive research undertaken by the University of Limerick, part of the Greentown initiative. It is an evidence-informed programme that works with young people, their families, and the community. Our role in the project is to provide a mentoring service to young people to support them in making choices that promote positive changes in their lives."

## Expansion of Services 2025



## Funding & Financial Report

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

In 2024, Le Chéile's Restorative Justice Project received funding from the Probation Service, Limerick City and County Council and the Victims of Crime Office.

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

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

## Statement of Financial Activities

(Incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account) for the financial year ended 31 December 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds 2023 €	Restricted Funds 2023 €	Total 2023 €	Total 2022 €
<b>Income</b>					
Donations and legacies Charitable activities	3.1	354	-	354	1,478
Grants from governments and other co-funders	3.2	-	1,517,997	1,517,997	1,559,923
Other income	3.3	19	-	19	5
<b>Total income</b>		<b>373</b>	<b>1,517,997</b>	<b>1,518,370</b>	<b>1,561,406</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Charitable activities	4.1	354	1,529,870	1,530,224	1,536,179
<b>Net income/(expenditure)</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>(11,873)</b>	<b>(11,854)</b>	<b>(25,227)</b>
Transfers between funds		10,500	(10,500)	-	-
<b>Net movement in funds for the financial year</b>		<b>10,519</b>	<b>(22,373)</b>	<b>(11,854)</b>	<b>25,227</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>					
Balances brought forward at 1 January 2023	16	71,538	42,057	113,595	88,368
<b>Balances carried forward at 31 December 2024</b>		<b>82,057</b>	<b>19,684</b>	<b>101,740</b>	<b>113,595</b>

## Balance Sheet

as at 31 December 2024

	Notes	2024	2023
		€	€
<b>Fixed Assets</b>			
Tangible assets	10	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Debtors	11	23,918	52,173
Cash at bank and in hand	18	<u>529,665</u>	<u>382,761</u>
		<b>553,585</b>	<b>434,935</b>
<b>Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year</b>		<u><b>(451,843)</b></u>	<u><b>(321,340)</b></u>
<b>Net Current Assets</b>		<u><b>101,740</b></u>	<u><b>113,594</b></u>
<b>Total Assets less Current Liabilities</b>		<u><u><b>101,741</b></u></u>	<u><u><b>113,595</b></u></u>
<b>Funds</b>			
Restricted funds		19,684	42,057
General fund (unrestricted)		<u>82,057</u>	<u>71,538</u>
<b>Total funds</b>	16	<u><u><b>101,741</b></u></u>	<u><u><b>113,595</b></u></u>

## Our People

### Board of Directors in 2024:

<b>James Doorley</b>	Chairperson and Director
<b>Margaret Rogers</b>	Vice Chairperson, Company Secretary and Director (stepped down July 2024)
<b>Carin Bryans</b>	Vice Chairperson and Director
<b>Mary Byrne</b>	Company Secretary and Director
<b>Brian McDonald</b>	Director
<b>Sarah Jane Judge</b>	Director
<b>Andrew Bray</b>	Director
<b>Ronan McLoughlin</b>	Director
<b>Claire Walsh</b>	Director
<b>Deirdre Macklin</b>	Director (stepped down October 2024)
<b>Mairead Seymour</b>	Director
<b>Catherine Bond</b>	Director (appointed July 2024)

### Board meeting attendance 2024:

<b>James Doorley</b>	7/8
<b>Margaret Rogers</b>	5/5
<b>Carin Bryans</b>	7/8
<b>Mary Byrne</b>	8/8
<b>Brian McDonald</b>	6/8
<b>Sarah Jane Judge</b>	3/8
<b>Andy Bray</b>	1/8
<b>Ronan McLoughlin</b>	7/8
<b>Claire Walsh</b>	6/8
<b>Mairead Seymour</b>	7/8
<b>Catherine Bond</b>	3/3
<b>Deirdre Macklin</b>	3/6




Board of Directors 2024

## Staff:

<b>Anne Conroy</b>	CEO
<b>Claudio Marmo</b>	Accounts and Corporate Services Manager
<b>Mary Daly</b>	Eastern Regional Manager
<b>Alan Quinn</b>	Southern Regional Manager
<b>Laureen Christie</b>	Whitewtown Mentor Coordinator
<b>Ingrid Cooney</b>	Dublin North Mentor Coordinator
<b>Maartje Van Stokkem</b>	Dublin North Mentor Coordinator
<b>Marie Vanasova</b>	Dublin South Team Leader
<b>Cormac Ryan</b>	YDP Dublin Mentor Coordinator
<b>Conor Byrne</b>	Oberstown Mentor Coordinator
<b>Allison Gordon</b>	Cork South & West Mentor Coordinator
<b>Ailbe Coleman</b>	Cork North & East Mentor Coordinator
<b>Heather Sinnott</b>	Southeast Team Leader
<b>Jenny Croke</b>	YDP Southeast Project Officer
<b>Helen Mc Carthy</b>	Midlands Mentor Coordinator
<b>Lyndsey McCabe</b>	Meath Mentor Coordinator
<b>Lorna Walsh</b>	Limerick and Clare Mentor Coordinator
<b>Aideen Curran</b>	Accounts Administrator
<b>Sara Mc Donnell</b>	National Volunteer Development Coordinator
<b>Josephine Gibney</b>	Communications and Information Coordinator
<b>Carol Doyle</b>	Administrator
<b>Mark Turner</b>	YDP Dublin Project Officer
<b>Simon Keating</b>	RJ Coordinator

## Notes

## Notes



I honestly don't know where me or my family would be without the support of my mentor over the last few years. It has to be one of the best organisations my family have been referred to. One of the best things about le Chéile is they look at the family as a whole, not only the person that has been referred. I will always be grateful for the support, understanding and kindness I received from my mentor."—**Parent**

I'm working and in a day programme and my coordinator had a word with my day programme to fight for me to do a social studies QQL level 5 course. She supported me and believed in me, and I got a merit in it. She matched me up with my mentor who has helped me so much from looking up stuff for me to chats about my life.

We've become friends and I have someone in my life who is not in addiction and can see how his life is, he has a good job. I would really recommend Le Chéile, they are an excellent service, and many people would be lucky to have people like that in their lives.  
—**Young Person**

As a mentor I have learned a lot over the years and I am now very well up to date on training from drugs awareness, approaching and helping mentees with their life's problems/ difficulties, also maybe helping someone who might be thinking of taking their own life by suicide - all as a result of training courses and listening to people who know and have learned from others.—**Mentor**

It has helped me to see life in a different way, a more positive way.  
—**Young Person**



*le chéile*  
MENTORING

Inspiring hope, believing in change



Le Chéile Mentoring,  
Tivoli Training Centre, 24 Tivoli Terrace South, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, A96 K522.

T: 01 214 4351 | E: [info@lechéile.ie](mailto:info@lechéile.ie) | W: [www.lechéile.ie](http://www.lechéile.ie)

 @Le\_Chéile  /LeChéileYouthJustice

Registered Charity No. 20066000 | Company No. 424299 | CHY 17621