



le chéile

Mentoring & Youth Justice
Support Services

ANNUAL
REPORT

2017



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Le Chéile is funded by the Irish Youth Justice Service through the Probation Service, as part of Ireland's European Structural and Investment Funds Programmes 2014-2020, which is co-funded by the Irish Government and the European Union



Welcome from the Chairperson

I'm delighted to introduce Le Chéile's Annual Report for 2017.

I was honoured to be appointed to the role of Chairperson of the Board of Management during the year and what a year it's been.

There have been a number of new and exciting initiatives launched in 2017, as well as some important recognition of Le Chéile's sustained commitment to providing a quality service that changes lives for young people and parents across the country.

Some of this recognition included the publication of the independent mentoring evaluation, Reducing Youth Crime in Ireland, which has proven the value of Le Chéile's mentoring in communities across the country. We were also nominated for the inaugural Charity Impact Awards against stiff competition from some large national charities and, although it wasn't to be our night, the nomination was important recognition of the work Le Chéile does. Finally, the results of the National Volunteer Survey 2017 speak for themselves with the quality of training and support offered to volunteers recognised with very positive feedback recorded across the board.

Of course all of this wouldn't be possible without the continued support of our funders and the strong partnerships we have forged over the years with the Irish Youth Justice Service, the Probation Service and the European Union. Your continued commitment to providing invaluable support for vulnerable young people and their parents/carers means that Le Chéile can continue to deliver mentoring that can change lives.

Overall, it's been a great year with plenty of progress and exciting developments. I would like to personally acknowledge the passionate, dedicated and hard-working staff and volunteers from across the country that make Le Chéile what it is today. With its volunteer base of over 200 selfless individuals and its knowledgeable and skilled staff, communities across Ireland have benefited from the great work that you've tirelessly given for over ten years. Thank you.

Louise Callaghan
Chairperson

CEO's Reflections

Welcome to Le Chéile's 2017 Annual Report.

The highlight of 2017 for me was the publication of the independent evaluation by Dr Kieran O'Dwyer, Reducing Youth Crime in Ireland - An Evaluation of Le Chéile Mentoring. We knew from our experience of mentoring of many positive changes which young people made in their lives, with the support of their mentor. However, it is important to be able to demonstrate the impact and outcomes on a scientific basis. A summary of the findings can be found in this Annual Report, however, I am delighted to highlight a couple here:

- Mentoring has significant positive benefits for young people and parents, which included particular gains in self-confidence, hopefulness, communications, engagement with activities, reduced offending behaviour and emotional well-being.
- Le Chéile mentoring gives a social return on investment of €4.35 for every euro invested.

It is no accident that the name of our organisation is 'Le Chéile', which is the Irish word for 'together'. The success of mentoring is down to relationships and working together. The relationships that mentors develop with young people and parents/carers. The openness of young people and parents/carers to sharing their stories. The training and support that our Coordinators invest in mentors. The strong partnership between Le Chéile and the Probation Service.

In 2017 we continued to provide greater access to mentoring, so that more young people could benefit. We now have 2 pilot projects run in partnership with the Gardaí, Crosscare in Dublin and the Waterford and South Tipperary Youth Service, providing mentoring for young people who would benefit from a positive relationship at an earlier stage of intervention.

We are also continuing our partnership with Oberstown where we are piloting an innovative mentoring service for parents or carers of young people in detention. This is an international first and is part of Oberstown's approach to supporting young people to integrate back into their communities. We also provide mentors for young people who spend some time in detention, both in Oberstown and in adult prisons.

Our volunteers continue to amaze me. I want to say a huge thank you to all our volunteers, our staff and our Board who together are responsible for the positive developments presented in this report.

Anne Conroy
CEO

Vision, Mission and Values



Vision

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



Mission

Le Chéile is a community-based volunteer mentoring and family support service, which works with young people involved in or at risk of offending and their parents.



Values

We listen – respect – empower. We are non-judgemental and believe in the potential of every young person. We work collaboratively with young people, families and other agencies. We use a restorative practice ethos. We deliver quality services.

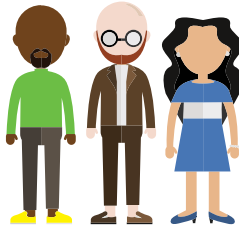
2017 in Numbers

153



Young people mentored

46



Parents mentored

3238



Total number of hours mentoring

27



Young people engaged in the Restorative Justice Project

+200



Volunteer Mentors

69



Families on a Strengthening Family programme

5



Parenting programmes run

Mentoring Evaluation



Vivian Geiran, Judge John O'Connor, Anne Conroy, Dr Kieran O'Dwyer and Isaac Boss at the launch

2017 saw Le Chéile launching its formal evaluation report, Reducing Youth Crime in Ireland. The research, which was carried out by Dr Kieran O'Dwyer, independently evaluated the provision of Le Chéile's mentoring over the period of 2013 to 2015.

One of the most significant findings in the report showed that young people involved in offending reduced this offending behaviour by an average of 28% over the period of mentoring. This had a significant knock-on effect in reducing the social and economic impact of crime.

Overall, the report highlighted a number of important outcomes that prove the value of mentoring and will help shape the organisation's future growth and development.

The findings included:

1. Mentoring has significant positive impacts for young people who engage with the service, with gains made in the areas of self-confidence, hopefulness, communications, engagement in activities and, crucially, offending behaviour.
2. Le Chéile mentoring gives a social return on investment of €4.35 for every €1 invested.
3. The current model of mentoring for young people and parents is robust and fit for purpose.
4. The fact that mentors are volunteers is a key strength of the Le Chéile model.



Anne Conroy and Dr Kieran O'Dwyer present the Evaluation to Minister David Stanton



Copies of the Evaluation

5. Offending by young people is not confined to the existing regions and it seems likely that similar need arises elsewhere.
6. A number of young people and their parents commented that they would have benefitted from earlier access to mentoring.
7. Mentoring was seen as having a valuable role in providing support for young people from care backgrounds.
8. Mentees and their families appreciated the support during detention, and mentors commented that it strengthened the basis for mentoring after release.
9. Coordinators identified potential for mentoring in cases seen as challenging or where referrals to other services had failed.
10. Parents who are mentored are better placed to deal with the child who is in trouble and to restore and develop a healthier home environment for themselves and any siblings.

11. The relationship between Coordinators and Probation Officers is recognised as important, not least in generating referrals, and was generally regarded as positive and professional.

To mark the launch of the report, Le Chéile's CEO, Anne Conroy and the evaluator Dr. Kieran O'Dwyer, met with Minister of State David Stanton TD to share the results and make the case for further support of mentoring and family support initiatives for young people at risk of offending or reoffending.

Raising Le Chéile's Profile

Charity Impact Awards Nomination for Le Chéile

Le Chéile was nominated for the 2017 Community Impact Award for large organisations at the Wheel's Inaugural Award Ceremony hosted on the 13th December.

Shortlisted from 118 organisations across the country, Le Chéile was nominated with Barnardos, LauraLynn, Alone and Oxfam

Ireland, with the award celebrating the work of community, voluntary and charitable organisations that have brought about positive change in the past year.

Ultimately it wasn't to be Le Chéile's night with Barnardos taking home the award but the organisation received a lot of welcome support and good wishes along the way from staff, volunteers, colleagues in our partner agencies across the country and extended friends and family.



Charity Impact Awards Attendees

Le Chéile participates in the 11th European Forum on the rights of the child

On the 7th and 8th of November, the 11th European Forum on the rights of the child focused on the theme of children deprived of their liberty and alternatives to detention.

Held in Brussels, Belgium, the Forum is an annual conference organised by the European Commission. It gathers key actors

from EU Member States (as well as Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland and the Western Balkans), international organisations, NGOs, Ombudspersons for children, practitioners, academics and EU institutions to promote good practice on the rights of the child.



European Forum on the rights of the child

Speaking at the event Le Chéile's CEO, Anne Conroy, co-presented with Pat Bergin, Director of Oberstown, focusing on mentoring with children in detention and their parents/carers.



Le Chéile in the News

It was a busy year with some important national coverage of Le Chéile and the work it does in communities across Ireland.

A feature in March for the Irish Times focused on the first-hand account of a young person who previously took part in Le Chéile mentoring when he was 18. The story highlighted the difficulties he faced with abuse, drugs, homelessness and crime while growing up, as well as the positive influence that his mentor, Mick, ended up being. "Mick was influential in that he was a true leader and the best role model which made him easy to get along with."

On the 4th of April, one of our volunteer mentors from Dublin, Catherine Leonard, and one of her previous mentees talked to Evelyn O'Rourke on the Today with Sean O'Rourke show on RTE Radio 1. Speaking from the mentor and mentee perspectives, both women focused on the positive impact that mentoring can have and how it really made a difference to the mentee's life.

In April, an editorial in the Irish Times focused on the publication of the Reducing Youth Crime in Ireland report. The article focused on the importance of crime prevention and keeping young people out of prison. It addressed the fact that amongst adult prison populations, the recidivism rate amounts to 62 per cent within three years. Therefore, it concluded that keeping young offenders out of jail would have an obvious knock-on-effect on their later behaviour.

A Journal.ie article from July focused on the publication of a new report looking at Oberstown Children Detention Campus and focused specifically on Le Chéile's mentoring provision for parents of young people in detention and the continuation of mentoring for young people that had previously been mentored before going into detention. Le Chéile's CEO, Anne Conroy, spoke about how mentoring is "about the relationships, the young people know that the mentor really cares about them. It's the relationship that they have that's important".

Youth Mentoring

Youth mentoring is at the heart of Le Chéile's work in communities across Ireland. From the establishment of the first project in 2005, working with young people in North Dublin, the service has continued to expand into different areas of the country and has developed in response to the changing need of the young people.

Youth mentoring is delivered, in partnership with the Probation Service, in areas across Dublin, Kildare, Offaly, Laois, Meath, Waterford, Wexford, Tipperary, Limerick, Clare, Kerry and Cork.





Profile of young people we work with

The young people we work with come from a variety of backgrounds with the common feature being that they have either committed an offence or are at risk of committing an offence.

Often, these are young people that have led difficult and chaotic lives with features including, poor school attendance, alcohol and drug use, limited ability to manage anger or aggression, mental health issues, learning difficulties, low empathy and impulsivity.

Therefore, a one size fits all approach to mentoring does not work as the complexity of some cases requires a focused and tailored approach. The emphasis is placed on building a strong relationship between mentor and young person that is fully supported by Le Chéile's Coordinators and additional supports where necessary.

Working in partnership with the Probation Service

Le Chéile was founded in 2005 to meet the needs of the Mentor (Family Support) Order under the requirements of the Children Act 2001. Funded by the Irish Youth Justice Service through the Probation Service, Le Chéile works in close partnership with Probation to deliver youth mentoring to young people across the country who offend or are at risk of offending. This partnership approach works to reduce crime in communities across the country and to offer alternative support for young people to help them make positive decisions that can change their lives.

Probation Officers make referrals to Le Chéile of young people that they believe would benefit from mentoring and the principle of 'One Good Adult', which positions the volunteer mentor as a strong and reliable relationship for each young person that is matched.

Volunteer Training

When volunteers commence their induction training, they complete an intensive programme of seven varied modules that aim to equip them with the skills necessary for being a mentor and working with vulnerable young people. These modules are:

1. Introduction to Le Chéile
2. Communications
3. Being Matched
4. Policy and Procedure
5. Child Protection
6. Issues and Values
7. Outcomes, Goals and Review

Youth Mentoring in Numbers

153



Young people
mentored

1198



Youth mentoring
sessions

1991



Hours of youth
mentoring

Mentoring Partnerships with GYDPs

Although most of the young people we work with are referred through the Probation Service, we also run two separate projects as part of the National Garda Youth Diversion Projects or GYDP under the Irish Youth Justice Service. In Dublin, we have forged a partnership with Crosscare, while in the South East, we work closely with Waterford and South Tipperary Regional Youth Service to deliver tailored mentoring to young people that have come to the attention of An Garda Síochána. This is part of our strategy to provide greater access to mentoring for more young people at an earlier age.

The Garda Youth Diversion Projects are local, community-based programmes which aim to help young people move away from behaving in a way that may get them into trouble with the law in future.

Young people are referred to Le Chéile by the Garda Youth Diversion Projects or the Juvenile Liaison Officers, who are members of An Garda Síochána.

As part of building relationships with the Juvenile Liaison Officers, the South East held a seminar in 2017 as an opportunity to hear about how Le Chéile's mentoring can help young people move away from anti-social behaviour and make positive changes in their lives.



Aiden's Story

Sometimes the young people we work with come to us with a history of offending behaviour. In the case of Aiden, it can also be an out of character event that can lead someone to their first offence. This allows mentoring to take a reflective approach with the young person to allow them space to address their behaviour and make positive changes.

Aiden was referred to Le Chéile by the Probation Service at the age of 19. He had been out of education for a couple of years and presented with a learning disability. He was quiet, whilst being friendly and open to trying mentoring. His home life was loving, if sometimes chaotic and crowded.

In the past, he had been resistant to other supports the Probation Officer was trying to link him in with, with one of the key priorities being linking to education and training, as well as trying to give him a bit of structure to his day.

Most of Aiden's time was spent watching TV or playing video games into the early hours of the morning. These late night gaming sessions were the main stumbling block to attending other services. As a starting point, mentoring was a slow, non-threatening, easy entry into the other services. After a few months Aiden agreed time limits to ensure he could get up in the morning and get to other appointments.

Once this was established, Aiden went on to have one of the best attendance records at mentoring sessions across the whole service. He and his mentor would meet at the same time every week and they would have lunch, while Aiden talked to his mentor about his family and all the other activities he was doing. He seemed to thrive on the positive reinforcement given back to him from his mentor.

Trying to pull him out of his comfort zone took time and patience. It was slowly achieved and eventually Aiden started linking in to the other services regularly. With this, he gained the chance to join a football team and you could see the pride he had in this when he talked about it. He also upskilled in some basic plumbing and woodwork programmes.

After 18 months of fully-engaging with his mentor, along with the support of his Probation Officer, Aiden has not been in any further trouble with the law and has secured a place on a Level 4 education course. He is now a happy young man who is looking forward to his future.

Parent Mentoring

Parent Mentoring in Le Chéile has two different strands. The first is for parents/carers of young people who have offended and the second is for parents who have committed offences themselves.

Parent mentoring supports parents and helps them to identify and develop their own parenting skills and gives support with parenting issues.

It operates in a similar way to youth mentoring, whereby a parent is matched with a current volunteer mentor based on shared interests and the emphasis during mentoring sessions will be on working to improve confidence, providing support and help in managing their child's behaviour through a positive, non-judgemental, peer relationship.



Parent Mentoring in Numbers

46



Parents mentored

658



Parent mentoring
sessions

1247



Hours of parent
mentoring

Oberstown

Le Chéile also runs a unique parent mentoring initiative with Oberstown Children Detention Campus. Commenced in 2017, the project sees mentors being matched with the parents/carers of young people in detention.

It operates similarly to Le Chéile's other parent mentoring 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 who has committed a crime and been detained.

It ultimately aims to offer support to these parents/carers that will help them when their child is released from Oberstown.



Kate's Story

Kate was referred to Le Chéile by Probation for parent mentoring. During the initial meeting, she described herself as having extremely low confidence and mood, and admitted to a history of mental health issues with a reliance on medication. She stated that she did very little for herself and stayed at home mostly. As a result of this, Kate felt guilty that her mental health problems affected her motivation to do things with her children.

It was agreed that the focus of mentoring sessions should be to promote the value of self-care and to set a series of goals which she would work towards by trying out new activities. Kate was matched with an experienced mentor who began meeting with her for coffee and a chat once a week. Through her attendance at mentoring sessions, Kate stated that she appreciated having the support of someone to chat about parenting and family life stresses.

Some mentoring sessions involved a nail or hair treatment and Kate says that she now appreciates the value in looking after herself and rewarding herself, particularly during times of high stress.

Some sessions involved cooking and baking, which she really enjoyed. This included the whole process of looking up recipes, shopping for ingredients and the actual cooking experience itself. On top of this, she mentioned that her kids were always excited for her to bring home the result or to include them when she was cooking at home.

Kate and her mentor met in different cafes each week and this in itself helped her appreciate the value of getting out and about in minding her mental health. Kate was able to share with her mentor about things that may have happened in the previous week.

During these sessions, Kate opened up a lot about her family and other stresses. Her mentor encouraged her to be motivated and positive and to use her strengths in dealing with day-to-day stresses.

As a result of mentoring, Kate became much stronger and more resilient in coping with difficulties within the family. While relations are still strained, Kate felt that she can manage her emotions better and have a better overall perspective on things. Kate's Probation Officer said that her risk of reoffending was greatly reduced and she was in a much stronger position moving forward with her life.

Restorative Justice

Le Chéile's Restorative Justice Project was set-up in 2010 to address the needs of youth offenders, victims and communities in Limerick City and is run in partnership with the Probation Service, An Garda Síochána, Limerick City & County Council and Support After Crime Services.

There is an ongoing problem in regeneration communities in regard to youth crime and anti-social behaviour. This project works with high risk, vulnerable young people aged 12-21 years, families and organisations in the regeneration areas of Limerick City, with a strong focus on the Southill, Ballinacurra Weston, Moyross and St Mary's Park areas. The project also takes referrals from counties Limerick and Clare.

The overall aim of the project is to restore community values by involving the young people who have caused harm, the people who were harmed and the community in a process which addresses the needs of the victim, holds the youth accountable for the damage and provides possible restoration.



The majority of young people with whom we work with are from one parent families, are early school leavers with low level of educational attainment and literacy, unemployment and substance misuse issues. The crimes committed by the young people would include public order, drug crime, car theft, burglary, arson, threatening and abusive behaviour, drugs for sale and supply. Many of the young people we work with are repeat offenders.

The programmes delivered depends on the young person and their case but can include:

- Victim Empathy Programme
- Reparation
- Victim/Offender Mediation
- Victim Impact Panels
- Restorative Conference

The RJ project is advised by the Restorative Justice inter-agency group, which met 4 times during 2017 to discuss issues and objectives of the Project and to ensure its continued development.

Restorative Justice in Numbers

27



Young people
engaged in Restorative
Justice in 2017

5



Victims engaged

17



Families
engaged



Restorative Justice Training

In 2017, Le Chéile staff members completed the International Institute of Restorative Practices' (IIRP) Facilitation Course, with attendees being certified to lead restorative conferences.

A restorative conference is a structured meeting between offenders, victims and both parties' friends and family in which they deal with the consequences of the crime or wrongdoing and look for how best to repair the harm.

The 3 day training was facilitated by Le Chéile's Mary Henihan, Leanne Keely and Alan Quinn in Limerick.

On top of this, Volunteers from across the country also came together to complete various training in Restorative Practices. This training establishes the basic principles of restorative justice and should allow mentors to draw from these skills during mentoring sessions to address any harm that a young person may have caused and to help them look at the consequences of their actions.



In total, 2017 saw Le Chéile's Volunteers and Staff completing training in the following:

1. Volunteer training:

- 4 volunteers completed a two day Victim Impact Panel Training
- 23 volunteers completed Mentoring Restoratively Training
- 17 volunteers completed the IIRP one day Introduction to Restorative Practices Training

2. Staff training:

- 11 members of staff completed the IIRP's 3 day Facilitator Skills Training Programme

Keith's Story

Keith was referred to the Restorative Justice project for a Victim Empathy Programme (VEP) as he had been charged with numerous thefts and burglary offences and he showed little empathy for the victims of his offences. He had no understanding of the impact on the direct victims and the impact his actions may have had on his community. The purpose of a VEP is to explore how a young person's offending behaviour impacts those around them, including the victim, the family and the community, as well as to promote pro social behaviour and work to repair any harm caused.

Keith commenced work with the project early in 2017 when he consented to voluntarily participate in a Victim Empathy Programme (VEP). He attended 11 out of 12 sessions of the Victim Empathy Programme and completed exercises including "Thinking about my crime", "Why people do the right thing", "What is a Victim" and the "Ripple Effects of my Behaviour".

His attendance and time keeping skills were excellent, although in the beginning Keith was very hesitant and mistrusting. Over time, he relaxed and began to get to know the facilitator. As the relationship developed, Keith fully engaged with the VEP material and it was clear from the way he would talk about his offences that he held a lot of shame around what he had done wrong and the impact it caused on the victim and their family, his family and the community. The VEP was also an opportunity for Keith to talk and be listened to.



In the end, Keith agreed to participate in a Victim Impact Panel which provides a forum for crime victims to tell young people who have offended about the impact of the crime on their lives and on the lives of their families, friends, neighbours and communities. A restorative process is used to encourage empathy and behaviour change. The aim of doing a Victim Impact Panel with Keith was to help him understand in a safe environment what the impact of his offending behaviour may have been on his victims, families and communities. It is also an opportunity to provide the volunteer victims with a structured, positive outlet to share their personal experiences and to educate offenders, justice professionals, and others about the physical emotional and financial consequences of crime.

It was a meaningful piece of work for both Keith and the victim.

Keith stated that "In the story the victim told, I could see he was affected. I can see that I caused harm to people by what I did. I felt bad when he said he was scared". Meanwhile, the victim stated that they found it a positive experience and that it was nice to feel that they were making a difference.

In the final meeting with Keith, he stated that through looking at his behaviour and being on probation, he had learnt his lesson and he wouldn't get involved in anything like that again. Keith has not come to the attention of the Gardaí since participating in the Restorative Justice project.

Parenting and Family Support

Strengthening Families Programme

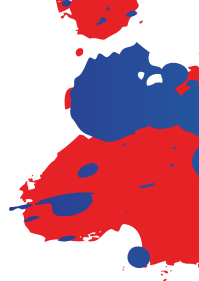
Since 2009, Le Chéile has administered and funded the Strengthening Families Programme (SFP) on behalf of the Probation Service.

Strengthening Families is a 14-session, evidence based, family skills training programme which works on communication skills, addressing and decreasing risk factors in families, and promoting protective factors.

It's designed to give parents and their children the opportunity to create positive relationships within families and assist and reduce the risk of young people developing adverse behaviours.

Le Chéile coordinates and funds Strengthening Families Programmes on behalf of the Probation Service and works in partnership with SFP steering groups at local level.





SFP turns 10 in Ireland

In 2017, the Strengthening Families Programme in Ireland reached its 10 year anniversary with the first-ever programme being run in Cork in 2007. Since then, programmes have been run across Ireland through the collaboration of statutory, community and voluntary agencies and volunteers.

Le Chéile is proud of its commitment to the programme and it has collaborated with agencies up and down the country in delivering a high-quality service that has changed the lives of so many families across Ireland.

In 2017, a total of six programmes were approved for funding through Le Chéile, however one was deferred until the following year. Through the remaining five, a total of 69 families have engaged with the Strengthening Families Programme and this breakdown is highlighted below.

Strengthening Families Programme in Numbers





10 years of Strengthening Families



Cork Strengthening Families
Coordinator Training



Listowel Strengthening Families
Facilitator Training

Family Support Interventions

Le Chéile offers a tailored and individualised support in the form of 'Family Support Interventions.' These interventions complement the role of mentoring and benefit not just the young person but also 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, a family meal or family outing.

Parenting Programmes

Le Chéile provides a range of parenting programmes and can link parents to locally available parenting programmes, such as Parenting Plus, Strengthening Families Programme, and Non-Violent Resistance Parenting Programme.

The Non-Violent Resistance Parenting Programme is for parents experiencing child-to-parent violence and was delivered in Cork and in Limerick in 2017. Referrals are made by the Probation Service and other justice and family support agencies. The programme is run in group sessions which allow parents/carers to share their personal experiences and to draw strength from others to help prevent violence in the home. On occasion, we also run the programme with individual parents who are unable to attend the group programme.

Strengthening Families Programme



Meath Community Drug & Alcohol Response

Meath Community Drug & Alcohol Response (MCDAR) has been involved with Strengthening Families since the first Meath programme in 2009 and is the host agency for the Meath programme. MCDAR represents SFP Meath on the National Council for Strengthening Families.

It has been a most remarkable experience for MCDAR to have been involved with and part of the Meath Strengthening Families Programme throughout. We have been part of so many SFP Teams and are a member organisation of the very passionate and committed Steering Group for the Meath Programme. SFP is unique in that it allows the whole family to engage in a skills programme both separately and together, which leads to a very holistic approach.

We have been privileged and humbled to have had the opportunity to engage with so many wonderful young people and parents who have put their trust in the team for each of their 14 weeks on the programme.

Following 10 years of success working with over 70 families, it is our intention in Spring 2019 to host a celebratory occasion for all who have been part of this journey.

SFP has been a very positive example of true interagency work. The continued anchor support from Le Chéile, alongside other community and statutory agencies has made possible a great family intervention that no one agency could have achieved on its own.

Families will always remember their time with SFP. It has helped build trust for families in support services and it is very positive to see that so many of our SFP families have reached out for support when they need it in the years after their programme. An early intervention when something first presents can be very effective for families.

"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." - Helen Keller

Cathy Whelan

Coordinator MCDAR, Facilitator Meath SFP

Trish Egan

Community Project Worker MCDAR, Site Coordinator Meath SFP

Our Volunteers

Le Chéile volunteers represent the foundation of the organisation. With over 200 volunteers who have been specially recruited, vetted and trained as volunteer mentors, they have given a combined total of 3,238 hours to mentoring sessions in 2017.

The impact of this does not go unnoticed and one of the key findings from the mentoring evaluation published last year highlighted the fact that it is the voluntary nature of Le Chéile's mentoring that really resonates with the young people and their parents/carers.

In doing this work, Le Chéile is always looking to ensure that there is continuous recognition of the knowledge, enthusiasm and empathy that our volunteers bring to the role through the facilitation of ongoing supervision, training and conferences. This represents a continued commitment from Le Chéile to ensure that our volunteers are recognised and respected for the invaluable work that they do.

"Le Chéile recognises and supports its volunteers better than any other organisation I have worked [with]. I think this is evident by the enthusiasm and commitment it receives from its volunteers".
- Volunteer Mentor



Ongoing training and volunteer development

On top of the induction training, regular refresher training is hosted in different locations throughout the year giving volunteers an opportunity to meet with their fellow mentors and to develop or enhance certain skills that may be useful in working with some of the young people or parents referred to us. Some of this additional training is highlighted below.

- This year, the Cork regions hosted Senior Probation Officer, Rosemary Fox, who delivered a session on the work of the Probation Service, in particular the Young Person's Probation, and how mentoring links in with this work.
- In Dublin, volunteers attended a workshop delivered by Jigsaw which focused on young people's mental health. The workshop focused on enhancing the knowledge, confidence and competence of our mentors when working with young people who may present with mental health problems.
- In the South East, volunteers gathered together for a morning of informative talks from other organisations in the locality which work with similar young people to those mentored by Le Chéile. This included a local Probation Officer, a representative from the TYRE Garda Youth Diversion Project, Youthreach, Treo and Waterford Youth Training and Education Centre.
- Volunteers from the different Dublin projects received training in mindfulness practice and reflection as part of their ongoing training programme. Dr Trish Leonard of ActNow facilitated the training, which included an overview of acceptance and commitment therapy, as well as a number of guided meditations.

- In Cork, volunteers from both projects attended drug & alcohol awareness training. This was facilitated by Kate Gibney, Coordinator of the Southern Regional Drug & Alcohol Task Force, and Bill Kelly, Arbour House Substance & Alcohol Misuse Services, Cork.

Mentor nominated for Volunteer Ireland Awards

Le Chéile's Catherine Leonard was one of 30 volunteers from charities across all of Ireland shortlisted and recognised for her contribution to the local community and to every mentee that she has mentored over the years. Catherine has been a volunteer with Dublin South for over ten years, treating every young person with whom she works with kindness, respect and compassion.

National Volunteer Committee

Le Chéile's National Volunteer Committee was set-up to allow volunteers a forum to have their voice heard in the decision-making process of the organisation. This ensures that volunteer interests and ideas are taken into account and reflected in how Le Chéile is governed. During 2017, Jacqui Burton was the elected Chairperson of the Committee and Tina Russell was the elected Vice Chair.

Thanks to all the Committee Members for their invaluable input over the course of the year which has helped shaped the directions taken by Le Chéile in its organisational management.



National Volunteer Satisfaction Survey 2017

Le Chéile's annual Volunteer Satisfaction Survey forms part of our commitment to ensuring volunteers feel heard and supported by us in the work that they do with young people and parents.

The results are overwhelmingly positive and we're delighted to have maintained this standard from previous years.



90%

of volunteers rated their overall experience of volunteering with Le Chéile as 'very good' or 'excellent'.

97%

of volunteers were very positive about the overall support they receive from their coordinators, with an impressive 97% of respondents rating it 'very good' or 'excellent'.

2017 saw an increase in volunteer retention

79%

of our volunteers with us for more than 1 year

52%

of volunteers with us for more than 2 years.

98%

We were delighted to find that 98% of respondents rated induction training as 'very good' or 'excellent' and 97% of respondents rated ongoing training as 'very good' or 'excellent'.

We hope we can continue this high level of satisfaction from all our volunteers and will be working hard to ensure all our volunteers feel happy and satisfied in their volunteering work. We'll continue to ensure that induction training, ongoing training, and supervision meet all our volunteers' needs.

Our Volunteers

Donncha's Story as a Youth Mentor



I have been with Le Chéile for over five years now and during that time I have had a number of different mentees but, as with life, not all matches between mentor and mentee will work. Over the years, I have worked with a number of different young people and learned a lot along the way.

From the first meeting with my last mentee, it was a new experience for both of us. I learned that I was matched with a young person that had a very enquiring mind, which always wanted to know the answer to so many questions. While we would often talk about small, day to day events, sometimes the conversation would open up a deeper discussion about lots of different things. It was during these discussions that I really earned an insight into the life of this young person and everything that he had going on.

As part of our mentoring sessions, we have been to the cinema, eateries, pool halls, museums and places of historical importance. The fact that he had the benefit of a one to one with somebody that was willing to listen and share knowledge with him meant he felt open to ask questions and talk. If I couldn't give a particular answer, I might ask him to look it up and in doing this he became more comfortable in using a computer and carrying out his own research.

He has always given the view that he has enjoyed our sessions but I also get a lot out of them too. Mentoring has opened my eyes about the world we live in and changed the way I think about a lot of things.

From the very first time I met him he has developed ambitions and worked towards goals for his life. He wanted to finish education, get a driving licence, and apply for an apprenticeship to become an electrician. Through Le Chéile he has had a number of mentoring reviews and spoken openly about these goals and he has been helped along the way by Le Chéile and myself.

It is my belief that we always leave a legacy with our Mentee - whether it's 2 weeks, 2 months or 2 years you're with them for. You'll never know the true impact you have on them.

Financial Report

Funding

Le Chéile is funded by Irish Youth Justice Services through the Probation Service, as part of Ireland's European Structural and Investment Funds Programmes 2014-2020, which is co-funded by the Irish Government and the European Union.

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

The Garda Youth Diversion Mentoring Projects and Oberstown are funded by the Dormant Accounts Fund.



Statement of Financial Activities

LE CHEILE MENTORING PROJECT COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2017

	Appendix	Note	Unrestricted Funds €	Restricted Funds €	2017 Total Funds €	2016 Total Funds €
Incoming Resources						
<i>Incoming Resources from Charitable Activities</i>						
Government, Institutional funding and other grants		2	-	1,303,350	1,303,350	1,246,083
<i>Investment income</i>		6	6	-	6	11
Total Incoming Resources	I		6	1,303,350	1,303,356	1,246,094
Resources Expended						
<i>Charitable Activities</i>						
Total Costs		4	-	1,335,279	1,335,279	1,239,543
Total Resources Expended	I		-	1,335,279	1,335,279	1,239,543
Net Incoming/(Outgoing) Resources			6	(31,929)	(31,923)	6,551
Total Funds Brought Forward			14,819	94,330	109,149	102,598
Total Funds Carried Forward		14	14,825	62,401	77,226	109,149

On behalf of the board

Isaac James Boss
Director

Louise Callaghan
Director

Date: 23/07/2018

Balance Sheet

LE CHEILE MENTORING PROJECT COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2017

	Notes	2017 €	2016 €
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	10	1,610	3,221
Current assets			
Debtors	11	19,238	18,391
Cash at bank and in hand		204,451	195,101
		<u>223,689</u>	<u>213,492</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	<u>(148,073)</u>	<u>(107,564)</u>
Net current assets		<u>75,616</u>	<u>105,928</u>
Net assets		<u>77,226</u>	<u>109,149</u>
The Funds of the Charity			
Unrestricted reserves	14	14,825	14,819
Restricted reserves	14	62,401	94,330
Total Charity Funds	14	<u>77,226</u>	<u>109,149</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Board on 23/07/2018 and signed on its behalf by

Isaac James Boss
Director

Louise Callaghan
Director

Board and Staff in 2017

Board of Management

Louise Callaghan	Company Secretary. Chairperson (from July 2017)
Margaret O'Connor	Chairperson to July 2017
James Doorley	Company Secretary from July 2017
Isaac Boss	Vice Chairperson
Anna Connolly	Member
Margaret Rogers	Member
Darina Sexton	Member
Brian Santry	Member
Kieran O'Dwyer	Member
Maria Molloy	Member

Staff

Anne Conroy	CEO
Claudio Marmo	Accounts & Corporate Services Manager
Andy Bray	East Regional Manager
Mary Henihan	South Regional Manager
Ingrid Cooney	Dublin North Mentor Co-ordinator
Marie Vanasova	Dublin South Team Leader
Fidelma Connolly	Cork South & West Mentor Co-ordinator
Lorraine O'Donovan	Cork North & East Mentor Co-ordinator
Alan Quinn	Limerick Mentor Co-ordinator
Heather Sinnott	South East Team Leader
Helen McCarthy	Midlands Mentor Co-ordinator
Lyndsey McCabe	North East Mentor Co-ordinator
Leanne Keely	Restorative Justice Project Worker
Mary Davis	Communications & Policy Officer
Maxine Kelly	National Volunteer Development Officer
Izabela Lodziewska	Accounts Administrator
Janice Hickey	GYDP South East Mentor Project Officer
Danielle McCann	GYDP Dublin South Mentor Project Officer
Ronan O'Malley	Oberstown Co-ordinator

All names and some details in case studies have been changed to protect the privacy of young people and families.



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