

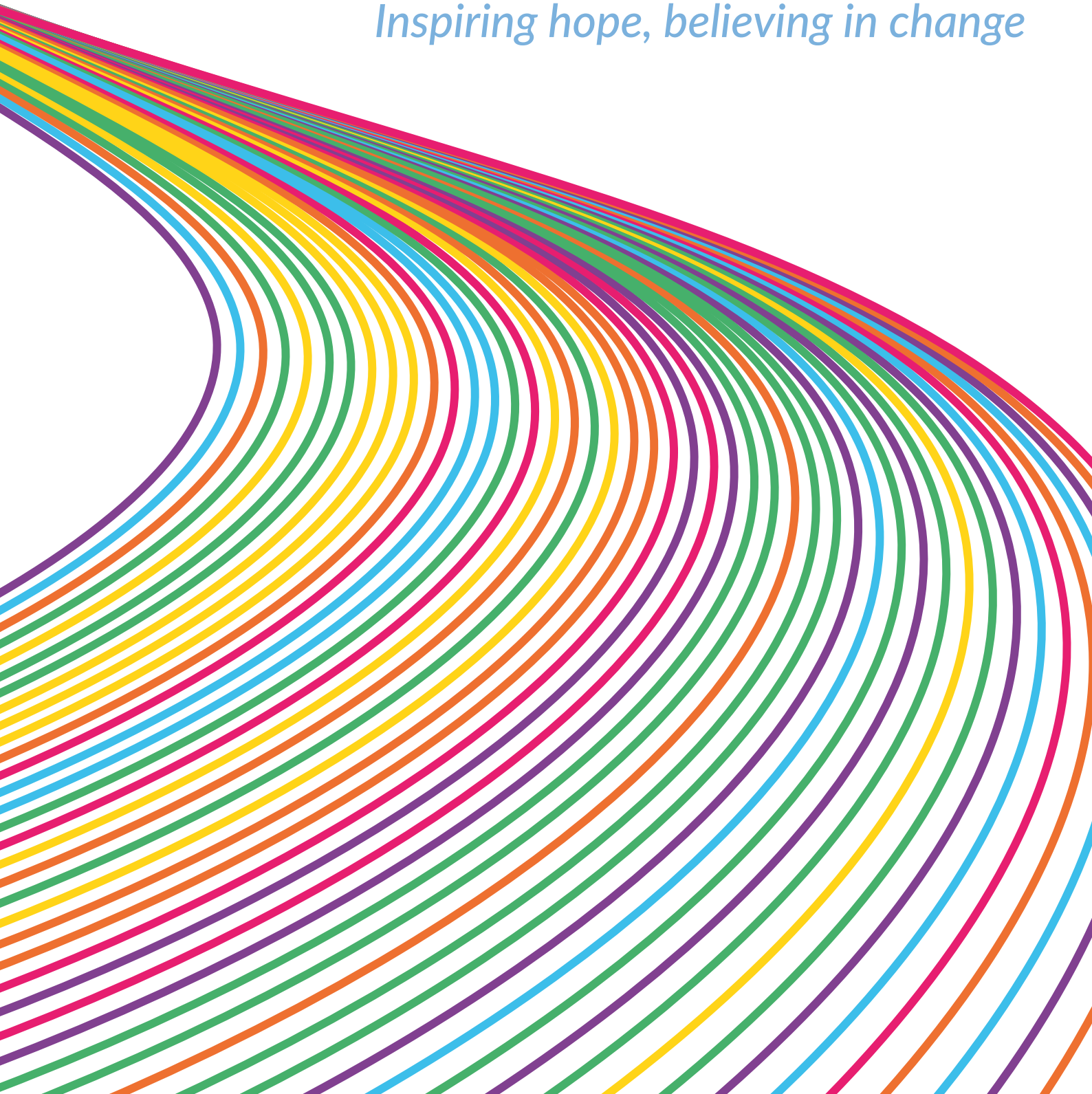


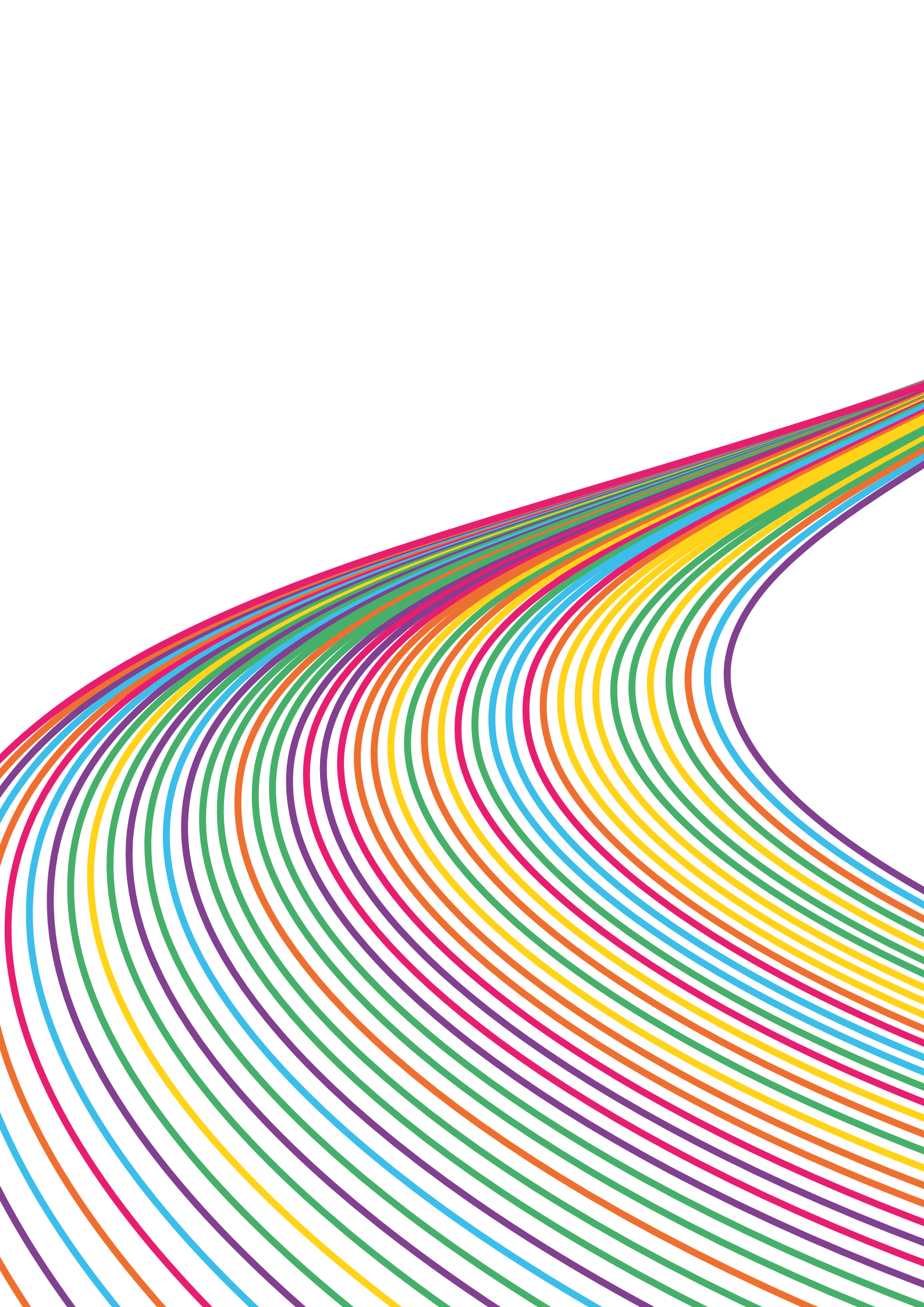
le chéile

MENTORING

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

Inspiring hope, believing in change





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Le Chéile Mentoring 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 am delighted to introduce Le Chéile Mentoring's Annual Report for 2019. As Chairperson of the Board, I want to invite you to look back over the past year of Le Chéile and celebrate the key moments and achievements outlined in this Report.

I would like to begin by extending my heartfelt appreciation for the tireless work carried out by Le Chéile's volunteers. I am always astounded to hear stories of your passion, enthusiasm, commitment, and generosity. I know that being a mentor with Le Chéile can be challenging at times but I hope you know that by mentoring you are changing lives every day and having a positive impact on individuals, families and communities across the country.

I would also like to thank the employees of Le Chéile. Your expertise and knowledge is incredibly valuable to the organisation. I know that the support provided by Coordinators and Project Officers to your volunteers is always commended and very highly regarded. It is for this reason that we have so many long-term volunteers, who have been with Le Chéile for many years. All of Le Chéile's employees play an important role in ensuring that the organisation can continue to learn and grow year on year.

To the young people and parents referred to Le Chéile who may be reading this, I also want to extend my thanks to you. It is not an easy task to open yourself up to a new service and to commit to meeting an unknown person every week. Whether you have finished with Le Chéile or if you are still meeting your mentor, I hope that you have found comfort and guidance in the listening ear, the weekly activities, the kind words of advice and the support provided by your mentor.

I would like to acknowledge our primary funders, the Probation Service/Irish Youth Justice Service. We value the partnership with the Probation Service and our joint interest in achieving best outcomes for the young people we support. It is only through our collaboration and mutual support that Le Chéile can continue to provide the quality of mentoring services that we have done for the past 15 years.

Finally, it has been a continued pleasure to be a part of the work Le Chéile does through my role on the Board. I would like to thank my fellow Directors for their continued commitment and dedication to developing Le Chéile and helping it to fulfill its mission.

Louise Callaghan
Chairperson

CEO's Introduction

Welcome to our 2019 Annual Report.

2019 was a very positive year for Le Chéile Mentoring, with many highlights. Le Chéile adopted a new youth participation policy in 2019 and carried out a consultation with young people which provided valuable insights into their experience of Le Chéile's services and of youth justice. We were very proud that a young man, who had been mentored, made a speech about his experience of the youth justice system at a Department of Justice and Equality seminar in May. Another highlight was the seminar which we organized titled 'Supporting families to improve youth justice outcomes', which was attended by key agencies and individuals. We were very involved in Restorative Justice Week that took place in November. This was run in partnership with other agencies in Limerick and Clare and involved events in schools, restorative practices training and other activities to promote awareness of Restorative Justice.

However, our most important activity in 2019 was working with over 230 young people and over 70 parents or carers. Most of the young people we support are not in school/training or employment, use substances regularly, live chaotic lifestyles and have been offending on a persistent basis. Through mentoring, young people build a trusting relationship with an adult who is there for them, they develop communications skills, build self-confidence and hope, get involved in positive activities and start to work on some of the challenging areas in their lives. For example, young people have taken small steps towards more positive relationships, sought support for addiction issues, or got involved in training or education.

Mentoring has been proven to be an effective intervention for young people actively involved in crime. Of course mentoring is not a magic solution, no one programme or service is. What is needed are targeted interventions which bring together support services that focus on prevention and early intervention to support families and catch vulnerable children at the earliest stage. There needs to be much better coordination and collaboration between schools, Tusla, Gardai, Probation Service and NGOs working in communities. There is a need for more resources for effective youth and family interventions, for vulnerable children and young people.

My sincere thanks to colleagues in the Probation Service, Oberstown, Crosscare, Limerick City Council and the Waterford and South Tipperary Community Youth Service for their collaboration and working together to achieve better outcomes for young people and families and safer communities for us all.

Finally, my sincere thanks to Louise Callaghan, chairperson of the Board, to the Board of Directors, to the volunteer mentors and to my colleagues in Le Chéile Mentoring for their continued commitment to vulnerable young people and the work of Le Chéile.

Anne Conroy
CEO

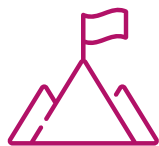


Vision, Mission and Values



Vision

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



Mission

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



Values

We believe in the potential of every young person. We are committed to a restorative approach. We believe in volunteer mentoring. We value partnership with young people, families and other agencies. We listen – respect – empower. We are committed to excellence in everything that we do.

Who are we?

Le Chéile Mentoring is a national organisation, which works to make positive changes in the lives of young people who offend or are at risk of offending and their families through youth and parent mentoring, family support and restorative justice services.

What do we do?

We provide tailored and flexible services with young people at the core. We work in partnership with the Probation Service and other agencies to reduce the level of crime in the community.

Le Chéile recruits, trains and supports volunteers from local communities around Ireland to become mentors. Mentors act as positive role models and provide a supportive relationship for young people and parents.

As well as mentoring, we also deliver a number of other services that focus on parent and family support.

Our full list of services include:

1. Youth Mentoring

2. Parent Mentoring and Family Support

- a. Parent Mentoring
- b. Strengthening Families Programme
- c. Family Support Interventions
- d. Parenting Programmes

3. Restorative Justice

You can find out more details about these services in the later sections of this Annual Report.



Where do we work?

Le Chéile is active in counties Dublin, Kildare, Offaly, Laois, Meath, Waterford, Wexford, Tipperary, Limerick, Clare, Kerry, Cork, and Carlow.

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



21 Staff

200+ Volunteers

Over 13 counties

- GYDP
- Oberstown
- Mentoring Services
- Restorative Justice Service

Our Partnerships

Probation Service

Le Chéile's primary partnership is with the Probation Service. Funded by the Irish Youth Justice Service through the Probation Service, Le Chéile works in close partnership with the Probation Service to deliver mentoring to young people across the country who have offended and are on probation, and their parents or carers.

This partnership approach works to reduce crime in communities and to offer support for young people and parents to help build their self-esteem and self-confidence, and make positive decisions that can change their lives.



"I feel Le Chéile is a great service that can make a difference for positive change in peoples lives" – Volunteer Mentor

Garda Youth Diversion Projects

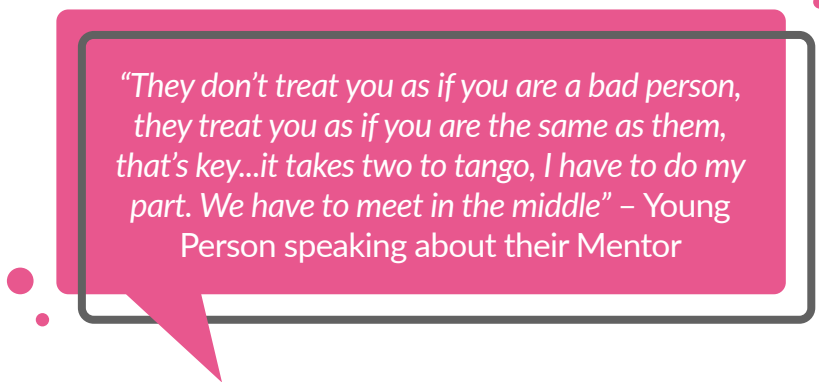
Although most of the young people and parents we work with are referred through the Probation Service, we also run two separate projects as part of the National Garda Youth Diversion Projects or GYDP under the Irish Youth Justice Service.

In Dublin, we have a strong partnership with Crosscare, while in the South East we work closely with Waterford and South Tipperary Community Youth Service. Both the Dublin and South-East mentoring services deliver tailored mentoring to young people that have come to the attention of An Garda Síochána. Le Chéile works closely with colleagues in the Garda Youth Diversion Projects in the provision of this youth mentoring service.

Oberstown Children Detention Campus

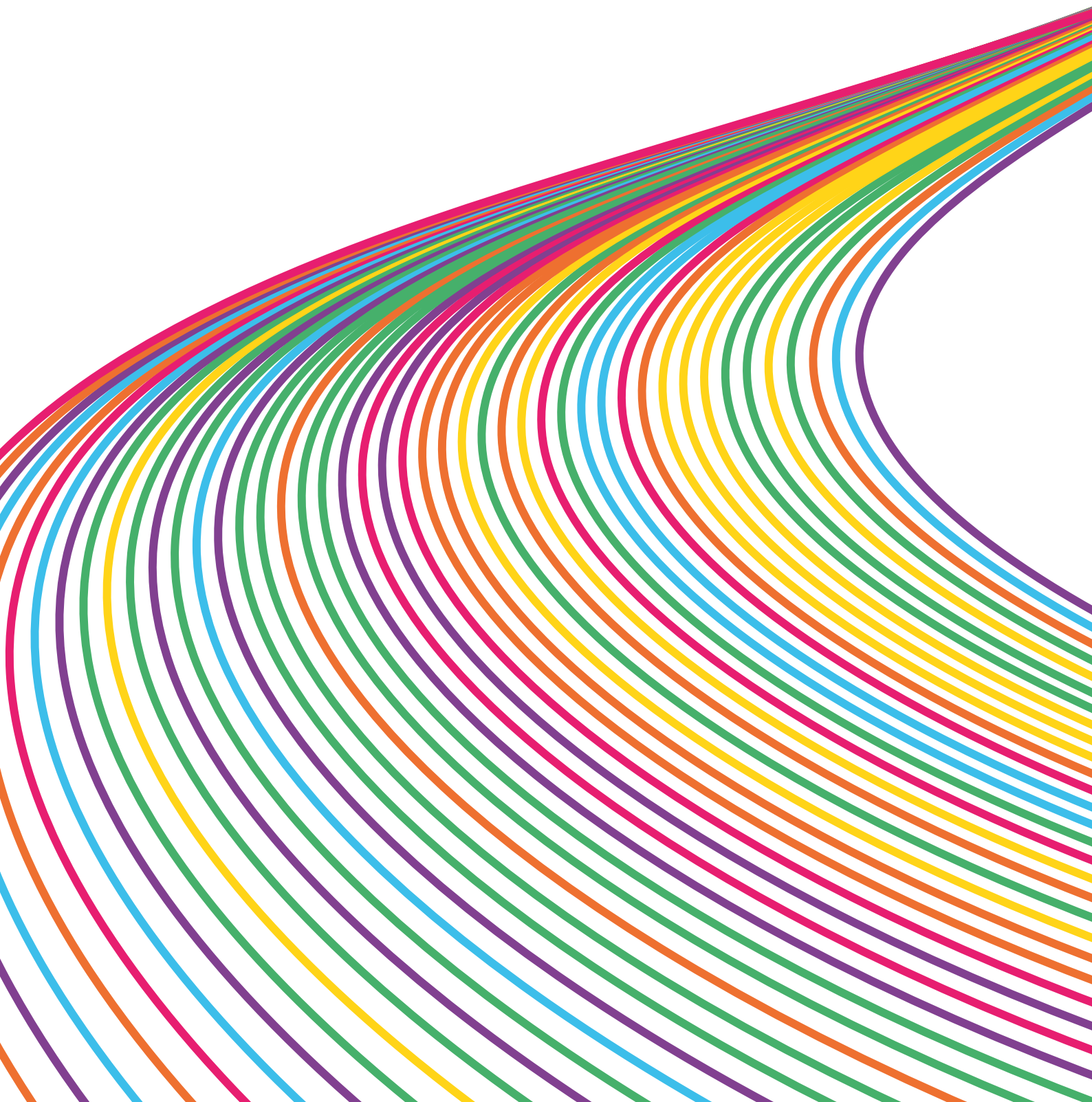
Le Chéile also runs a unique parent mentoring initiative in partnership with Oberstown Children Detention Campus. Launched in 2017, the parent mentoring project for parents of children in detention is the first of its kind internationally.

It operates similarly to Le Chéile's other parent mentoring programme in that it seeks to provide support, a listening ear and build confidence in different skills that a parent may find useful in relating to their child. It ultimately aims to offer support to these parents/carers that will help them when their child is released from Oberstown.



"They don't treat you as if you are a bad person, they treat you as if you are the same as them, that's key...it takes two to tango, I have to do my part. We have to meet in the middle" – Young Person speaking about their Mentor

An Overview of 2019



2019 in Numbers



237

Young people
worked with



78

Parents
worked with



2617

Total number of
hours mentoring



1758

Total number of
mentoring sessions



31

Young people engaged in the
Restorative Justice Project



4

Parenting
programmes run



55

Families on a Strengthening
Families Programme



237

Volunteer
Mentors

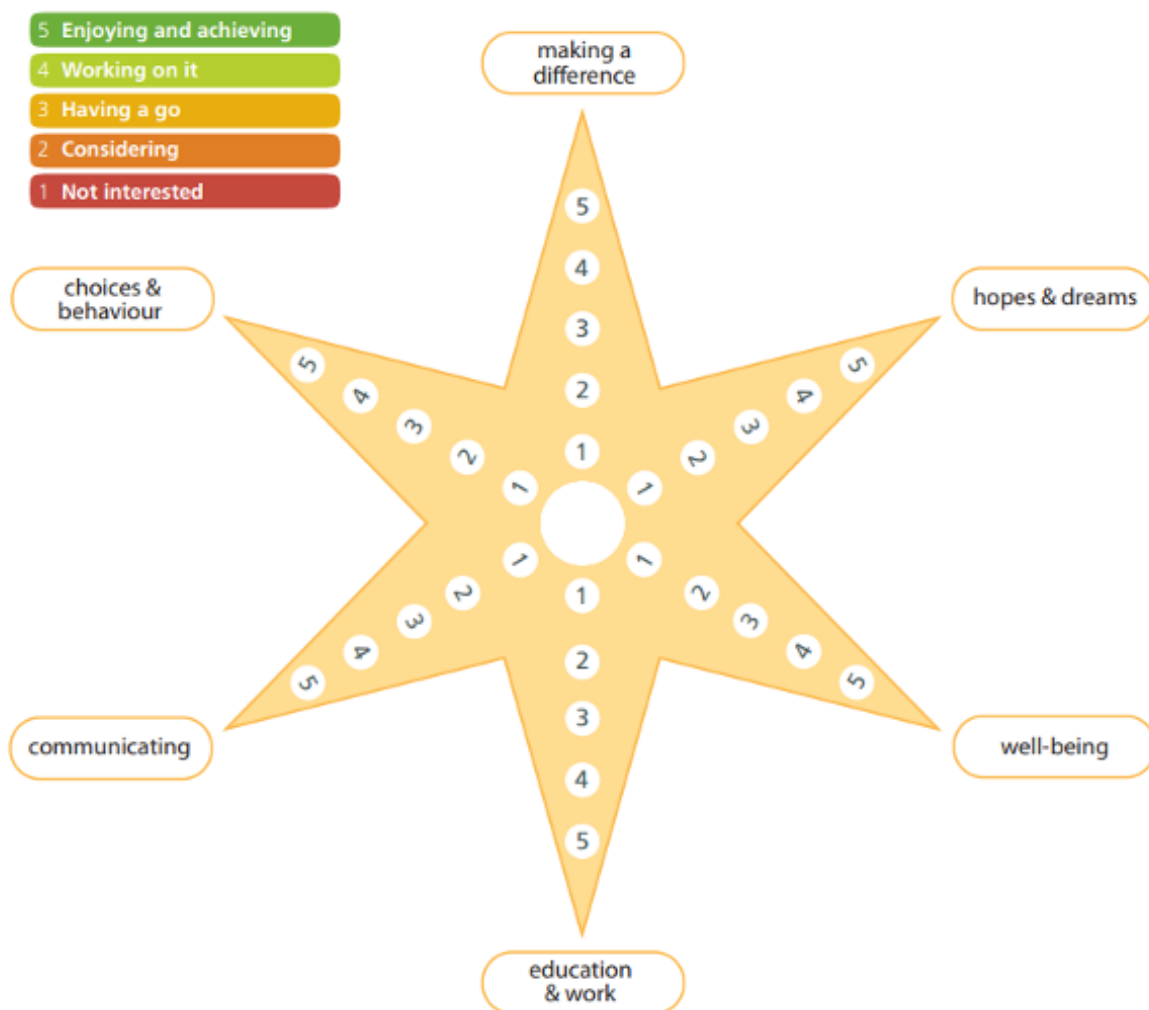


28

Participants on Restorative
Justice training

Outcomes for Young People and Parents

Le Chéile have been using Outcome Star since 2016 to support the young people and parents we work with in making positive change in their lives. Outcome Star is a tool that allows the young people and parents to score their progress in specific areas. See a sample star below.



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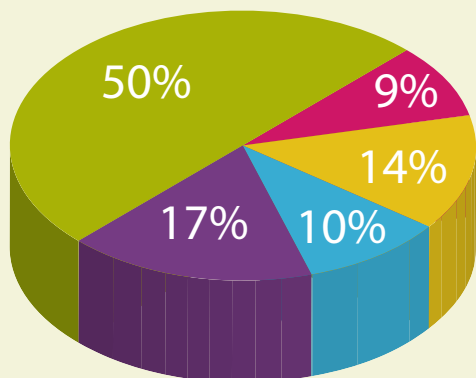
Each young person or parent completes an initial star when they engage with Le Chéile and then

they will complete additional stars on a regular basis as they progress on their mentoring journey. When their journey is complete, a final star is filled in and this demonstrates how far the young person or parent has come since their initial star. Le Chéile has fully integrated this way of working into daily practice.

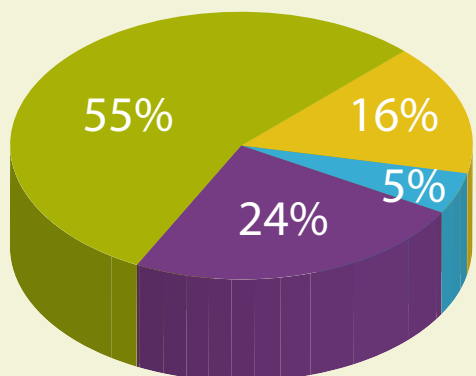
Using the Outcome Star is a collaborative approach with the young person and parent that empowers them to make decisions that can change their life. Outcome Star highlights areas of strength but also areas of difficulty and is, therefore, adaptable to each young person and parent, as well as providing a person-centred approach. The lives of young people and parents are complex and the path of change is never easy. Some of the areas we measure are outside of the control of our work with young people and

parents and may show a decreased score e.g. housing or financial issues. However, this allows us to signpost the young person or parent to other agencies that can assist them with making positive change in these areas.

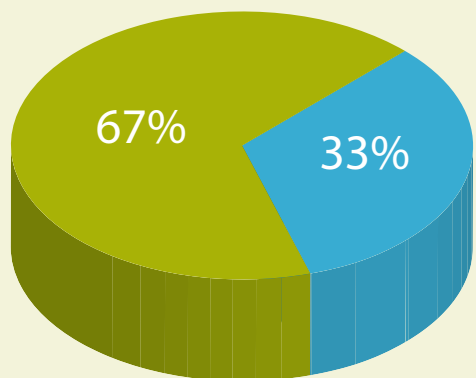
The graphs below indicate the overall change recorded by young people and parents between their first star and their last star, at the end of their time with Le Chéile. An increase represents the overall improvements across each focus area.



Young People mentored - 67% overall positive change



Parents mentored - 79% overall positive change



Restorative Justice participants - 67% overall positive change

■ Big Decrease ■ Small Decrease ■ Same ■ Big Increase ■ Small Increase

Consultation with Young People on their experience of Le Chéile Mentoring

At the end of 2019, Le Chéile consulted with young people across the organisation on their experience of Le Chéile Mentoring. This consultation was carried out by an independent consultant, Lynne O'Connor, in response to Le Chéile's new Youth Participation Policy, and confirms the organisational commitment to ensuring the voices of young people in Le Chéile are heard and respected.

As part of the consultation, 14 young people were interviewed and asked about their expectations of Le Chéile, the benefits of being a part of the service, and any challenges or areas they felt could be addressed.

Most of the young people reported having negative expectations prior to commencing mentoring, however, they reported that their experience was much more positive. Overall, the young people reported that they liked the relationship with their mentors. They enjoyed the regularity of meetings, which they felt was sufficient to meet their needs. Some of the young people highlighted the importance of having a 'good match' and being paired with a mentor that had a similar personality or similar life experiences. When asked about particular challenges, some of the young people reported time-keeping and keeping appointments as a difficulty given a lack of routine and chaotic lifestyles that were a feature of some of the young people's lives.

From the results, the consultant made a number of key recommendations for the growth and development of the mentoring and restorative justice services. These recommendations included:

1. Explore the possibility of re-engaging young people who have successfully participated in the Le Chéile Mentoring programme with a view to them becoming mentors themselves.
2. It was identified that some young people may benefit from being mentored by an older mentor, as they would bring valuable life experience to the match.
3. As well as receiving support from an individual mentor, an extra layer of peer mentoring and support through group work, if managed tightly, could provide a forum for progression and potential youth leadership.
4. It was suggested that early referral to Le Chéile's mentoring or restorative justice service would optimise opportunities for change and progression for young people involved in the Justice System.

The report also includes a number of insightful comments and quotations direct from the young people, such as the one below. For volunteers, the report demonstrates the value and respect that the young people have for their mentors and the difference that they can make in their lives.

"If you are being offered a service like that, grab it with both hands because it really really helps, it really does help, I don't think anyone wants to go to jail" – Young Person

Le Chéile seminar on 'Supporting Families to Improve Youth Justice Outcomes'

On Tuesday 28 October 2019, Le Chéile hosted a seminar for professionals working in the youth justice field in Ireland.

The title of the seminar was 'Supporting families to improve youth justice outcomes' and was based on the increasingly accepted idea that the importance of families is pivotal in supporting young people in desisting from crime. Strong family relations have been shown to improve outcomes for young people and maximise engagement with services. However, it is also widely acknowledged that many families may need additional support to provide a family environment that helps their child unlock their potential.

On the day, Le Chéile and attendees were delighted to hear from Dr Niall Muldoon (Ombudsman for Children in Ireland), Professor Ursula Kilkelly (Head of College of Business and Law at UCC), Alice Ann Lee (Coordinator and Clinical Supervisor of Families First Team/

Archways), and Anne Conroy (CEO of Le Chéile). We also heard from Karen Grimes, who is a parent mentor with the Oberstown project. She gave some insight into the role and her reflections on what parents valued most from mentoring.

Dr Niall Muldoon opened his speech with a thought-provoking and appropriate quote for the day from Frederick Douglass:

"It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men"

The overwhelming message was that a collaborative, interagency approach to youth justice was needed and that extended support for families is integral to effective interventions.



Oberstown Evaluation and Project Extension



In 2019, Le Chéile Mentoring commissioned a review of its parent mentoring programme for the parents of children detained in Oberstown Children Detention Centre.

Launched in 2017, the Oberstown mentoring programme matches volunteer mentors with the parents or carers of children who have committed crimes and been detained in Oberstown, Ireland's only children detention campus.

As part of the evaluation, mothers that participated in the programme were interviewed. The mothers were all committed to the welfare of their sons but reported many challenges at the beginning, such as low morale, little self-confidence, basic income, limited employment opportunities and poor communication skills.

Parents reported they liked having space for themselves and someone to talk to, while the boys (in detention) were happy to see independent support for their mothers. Described by one parent as a "lifeline", the evaluation showed improvements in participants' self-confidence, emotional wellbeing, hope, parenting skills and family relationships.

Le Chéile's model of parent mentoring is built on the ethos that parent well-being is critical in

enabling effective support for children and that to reduce the level of youth crime, you need to start by offering support to families.

Le Chéile received significant publicity surrounding the Evaluation and the parent mentoring project more broadly. Anne Conroy, CEO of Le Chéile, was accompanied by Rita McInerney, a parent mentor in Dublin to speak on Drivetime on RTE Radio 1 with Mary Wilson. Conor Gallagher from the Irish Times also wrote an article specifically focusing on the results of the Evaluation. In the article, he spoke to volunteer mentor, Marianne Scanlan, about her experience of mentoring parents with Le Chéile.

Overall, the results of the Evaluation confirm the positive feedback that has been received from parents participating on the programme, their children, the volunteer mentors and the staff at Oberstown. Parent mentoring is an innovative approach in a detention context and Le Chéile has been unable to identify a similar project internationally.

Since the Evaluation, Oberstown made the decision to extend the pilot project of parent mentoring.



Governance update

In 2019 the Board of Directors completed a review of Le Chéile's company structures and adopted a new Constitution and Board handbook, designed to provide greater clarity to the organisation's structures. We also reviewed compliance with the Charities Regulator's Governance code. In October 2019 the Board of Le Chéile Mentoring were proud to be able to confirm Le Chéile's compliance with the Charities Regulator's Governance code.

At the July AGM, the Board approved a proposal to change the name of the organisation to 'Le Chéile Mentoring', to distinguish us from other 'Le Chéile's' and to highlight our core service. The change was also approved by the Charity Regulator.

Le Chéile awarded Mentoring and Befriending Accreditation



Le Chéile has been awarded renewed accreditation from the NCVO in the UK for the Mentoring and Befriending Approved Provider Standard.

The process involved a lengthy and thorough analysis of Le Chéile's policies and procedures, which were assessed against ten specific requirements in four key areas. These key areas included:

1. Management and operation
2. Service users (mentees and befriendees)
3. Mentors and befrienders
4. The mentoring and befriending relationship

An Assessor also visited three projects in Dublin, Meath and Limerick to interview staff, mentors and service users about their experiences with Le Chéile.

The accreditation is an important validation of Le Chéile's mentoring practice and commitment to quality.

Accreditation will now last for the next three years until 2023.

Restorative Justice Week 2019



From the 18th to the 22nd November 2019, Restorative Justice practitioners, academics and other interested organisations across the world opened their doors to host different campaigns and events to help raise awareness of Restorative Justice and Restorative Practices.

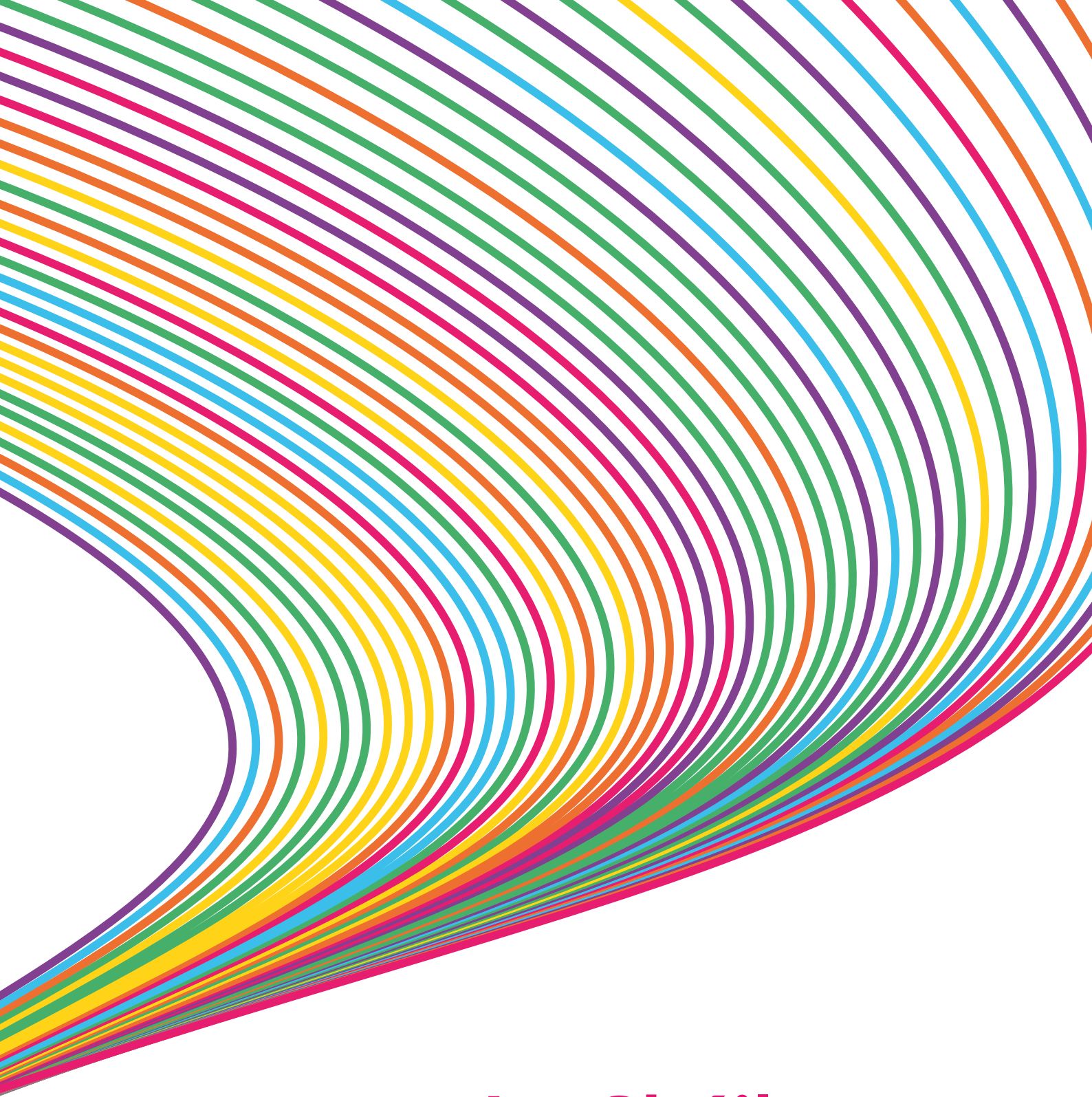
Le Chéile Mentoring celebrated International Restorative Justice Week in partnership with Clare CYPSC and Limerick Restorative Practices Project.

Over the course of the week, there were many events hosted across Limerick and Clare, including workshops in primary and secondary schools across Limerick; free, certified, restorative practices training; 'coffee with a cop' morning to

ask questions and have an open conversation with a member of An Garda Síochána; and a one-off screening of the film 'The Meeting', which focuses on a real life restorative justice meeting. There was also a special symposium during the week hosted by Ian Marder from Maynooth University that took place in the University of Limerick on the topic of 'Implementing Restorative Justice in Law, Policy and Practice'

The week was a great success and Le Chéile is looking forward to celebrating again next year, which will also be a joint celebration as Le Chéile's Restorative Justice Project in Limerick will be celebrating ten years since it was launched.





Le Chéile Mentoring's Services

Youth Mentoring

What is youth mentoring?

Mentoring is a one-to-one relationship based support. This support is provided by a volunteer mentor who is matched with a young person. Mentoring sessions take place once a week and involve the mentor and the young person meeting for food, a game of pool or doing some activity together. The mentoring relationship has an average length of 18 months.

Mentors offer young people support, stability, guidance, as well as helping them to set achievable goals and realistic challenges. They listen to, care about, and share information and life/career experience with them.

The proven outcomes of youth mentoring include improved self-esteem, relationships, communications skills, and anti-social behaviour is addressed.

The focus in mentoring sessions is on re-integrating young people into activities, supports and services in their local community, with the overall aim of reducing the level of offending behaviour.

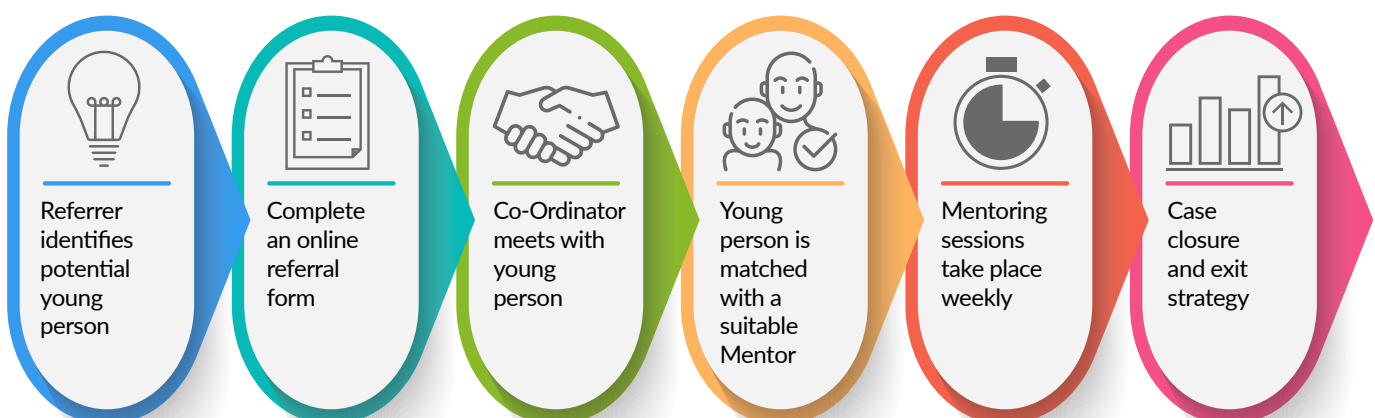
Le Chéile's mentoring model emphasises a strong relationship between mentor and young person that is fully supported by Le Chéile's Coordinators/Project Officers and additional supports where necessary.

Profile of the young people Le Chéile works with

The young people Le Chéile works 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.

The young people are aged between 12 and 23, with 17 as the average age.

Often, these are young people that have led difficult and chaotic lives, and they often present with a number of different vulnerabilities or issues requiring support. Therefore, we do not take a one size fits all approach to mentoring, as the needs of young people requires an individual and tailored approach.



Youth Mentoring in Numbers



148

Young people mentored



1230

Youth mentoring sessions

"It was not like what I expected, they help with whatever I need, I was expecting to be talking about shite, but they're helping me" – Young person

"You can have a laugh at the meetings, but once your laugh is over it's down to business. That's key, I think that is very important – you have to come in, have a laugh and a joke and get down into it. Get into why you are here. Wouldn't want to change that" – Young person

Youth Mentoring Case Study

Jake's Story

Jake was a 16 year old living with his mother, father and two younger siblings when he was referred to Le Chéile by his Probation Officer.

Jake left school early and over time he became involved with a group of other young people, who would break into buildings, steal, and sell these stolen items to buy drugs. At the time of his referral, Jake had multiple previous convictions.

When Jake and his mentor were matched, they immediately connected. Due to the mentor's openness and non-judgemental approach, Jake felt free to express his feelings and be open and honest about his life experiences. He spoke of his chaotic childhood, his strained relationship with his mother and his drug addiction and anger issues.

Both Jake and his mentor agreed to meet weekly. Each week Jake's trust grew stronger and he spoke of his desire to become clean from drugs and start a new life.

With the support of his mentor, Jake began to implement some of the goals he had set for himself. One of these goals was applying some positive changes in his life i.e. trying to stay away from anti-social gangs. Jake did encounter some difficulties here, like the feeling of loneliness. This created an extra emphasis on the mentoring sessions with his Mentor and Jake shared that he looked forward to the weekly meetings. Jake also started to display a true kindness and empathy in his behaviour. At one of the meetings, Jake stopped and gave money to a homeless man who was begging, yet he had very little himself but mentioned that he knows what's it's like to be vulnerable and he was sad to see the man with nothing.

As the mentoring progressed, Jake agreed that he was ready to enter into drug rehabilitation. The process of registering was a collaborative approach between the Probation Officer, Le

"It is harder than expected, harder than it looks, have to own up to the facts of how you are going to fix it, to do that is harder than being locked up"
- Young Person

Chéile Co-ordinator and Le Chéile Mentor. Jake was successful in his application interview and signed in for his treatment.

After five months of successful treatment, Jake was discharged. As part of his ongoing recovery, Jake participated in volunteer work, signed up to the Community Employment scheme (CE) and recommenced mentoring sessions with his Mentor. His focus was on managing day to day challenges, moving into full time employment and also aiming to complete his Driving Theory Test.

Overall, Jake fully engaged from the first meeting and continued to engage after his release from his drug treatment programme. While the match was positive from the beginning, it was still imperative for the Mentor to constantly work with Jake on building a rapport and a safe, trusting environment. The focus of mentoring sessions was on providing a listening ear, positive reinforcement, consistency, linking in with other external supports, and putting in place a plan of action for when Jake felt vulnerable. The success of the match ultimately came down to the Mentor's consistent approach and supportive relationship, as well as Jake's own desire and strength to change.

Parent Mentoring and Family Support - Parent Mentoring

What is parent mentoring?

Parent mentoring helps parents or carers develop their own parenting skills and gives support with parenting issues. Parent mentoring provides a non-judgemental time and space, outside the family home, to parents who may feel under pressure.

Parents of young people are referred by the Probation Service, Oberstown or the Garda Youth Diversion projects. Participation is completely voluntary, however most parents are willing to give it a try and there is a very high take up rate. Le Chéile also works directly with parents who are on probation themselves.

It operates in a similar way to youth mentoring, whereby a parent is matched with a volunteer mentor based on shared interests.

Parent mentoring shows significant benefits for parents in self-confidence and emotional well-being, as well as improved self-esteem, hopefulness, ability to manage stress, better family relationships and greater involvement in activities outside the home.

Profile of the parents Le Chéile works with

The most frequent form of parent mentoring is for parents/carers of young people who have offended or are at risk of offending. The referrer identifies that the young person's parent/carer may be in need of additional support and that such support may ultimately help the young person to reduce their offending behaviour.

Parent Mentoring in Numbers



64

Parents mentored



528

Parent mentoring sessions

Parent Mentoring Case Study

Tom's Story

Tom was referred to parent mentoring by the Probation Officer overseeing his son's case. In addition, it came to light that Tom himself was in court on a charge of theft. The Mum of the family was already linked into mentoring and it could be seen that the Mum carried out most of the parenting role, regarding linking in with all the services – Probation, Tusla, schools and Le Chéile.

The family as a whole had been through a very tough time from experiencing homelessness and housing exclusion due to their kids anti-social behaviour, which was linked to their abuse of alcohol and drugs. Overall, life for all had been chaotic for a number of years.

A very quiet man of few words, Tom was reluctant at the start of mentoring and was only engaging to please his wife. When completing paperwork with the Le Chéile Coordinator, he was visibly uncomfortable talking about anything and there was a general distrust of services. Over the course of mentoring, Tom continued to find the reviews a difficult space to be in and was always relieved once they were over.

Coming from a rural background, the Coordinator matched Tom with a mentor called Donal. Donal was an older mentor from the country, who was a retired solicitor, a bit of a talker and liked the same sport as Tom. The Coordinator was not overly confident in this mentoring partnership taking off and let Donal know this, with agreement that they would give it a go.

A year in, 35 mentoring sessions later and the bond and comradery between Tom and Donal can easily be seen. The mentoring sessions follow a routine of a quick cup of coffee, followed by a few games of pool and this is where the talking really happens.

At a review, Tom commented, 'Donal is the only adult male I have to speak to in the week, I look forward to meeting him'. This really stood out for

"I would honestly recommend Le Chéile to anyone who is struggling in any area of their lives" – Parent

the Coordinator and showed how isolated Tom had been, not only by the remote setting, but also by his limited support network consisting of only his wife, who was also under a great deal of pressure herself.

Having social work and probation involved with the family and finding themselves homeless, you could see the weight of this on Tom. During this time, Tom did not speak to his family members about anything that was going on. Since starting parent mentoring, Tom has opened up to his family and accepted some support, both practical and moral.

Parenting is now a joint effort between Tom and his wife. There is no doubt that his wife still takes the lead, however, it can be seen that she now feels more supported and Tom is attending meetings regarding their children, presenting as a united front. Still a quiet man and uncomfortable in the more formal setting, there is an openness now to working with Le Chéile, which is undoubtedly due to the additional support and relationship with his mentor, Donal, who gained his trust.

For 2020, both Tom and his wife plan to undertake the Le Chéile Parenting Together course. Their respective mentors have touched upon aspects of the course and they are keen to complete this, with the aim of having a happier and safer family.

Strengthening Families Programme

Le Chéile coordinates and funds Strengthening Families Programmes (SFP) on behalf of the Probation Service and works in partnership with SFP steering groups at a local level. In 2019, six programmes were supported.

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.

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 the young person, as well as the parent/carer and wider family.

Family support interventions aim to improve communications and family relationships. Examples of family support interventions have included family mediation, a family meal or family outing.

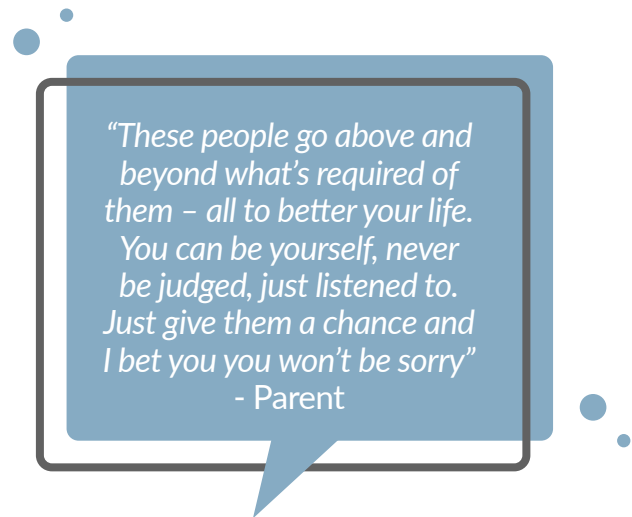
Parenting Programmes

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.

Le Chéile runs a targeted parenting programme called Parenting Together, which works with families that may be experiencing child to parent abuse. This is a practical and positive 10 week parenting course that mixes support with learning new skills. These skills include non-violent resistant responses and other unique resources that have been created especially for this course.

The course considers how parents/carers can assertively oppose controlling/aggressive behaviour in their children, while at the same time start to repair the damage done to that relationship.

The course may be run on a one to one basis or as part of a group and Le Chéile is now delivering Parenting Together across all regions. Referrals are made by the Probation Service and other justice and family support agencies.



"These people go above and beyond what's required of them – all to better your life. You can be yourself, never be judged, just listened to. Just give them a chance and I bet you you won't be sorry"
- Parent

Restorative Justice

Le Chéile's Restorative Justice Project was set-up in 2010 to address the needs of young people who offend, victims and communities in Limerick City. The project works in collaboration with its partners - the Probation Service, An Garda Síochána and Limerick City & County Council, along with Support After Crime Services and other justice agencies. The overall aim of this collaborative approach is to reduce the incidence of youth crime and anti-social behaviour in Limerick and Clare.

Restorative justice brings together everyone affected by the crime (offenders, victims, families and communities) and focuses on repairing the harm. The process looks at the

needs of the victim, while holding the young person accountable for the damage and provides possible restoration. The project was independently evaluated in 2014 and was found to have significant benefits not only for young people but also for the families and the victims of crime.

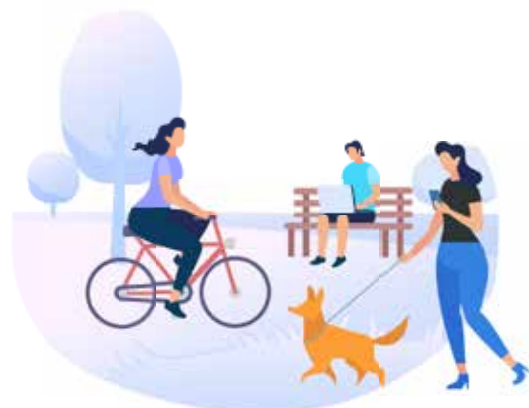
Le Chéile has established a Restorative Justice Steering Group consisting of a multi-disciplinary team to direct and guide the work of the project.

Delivery of training in Restorative Practices is central to Le Chéile's strategy and, in 2019, we trained 28 professionals, in partnership with the Probation Service.

Repair the harm caused



Rebuild relationships



Restore communities

Le Chéile offers the following Restorative Justice programmes:

Victim Empathy Programme:

Le Chéile's Victim Empathy Programme encourages empathy in young people who have offended, challenging them to face the harm they have caused and consider what they can do to help put things right. This is carried out by regular one-to-one meetings with the Restorative Justice Project Officer.

Victim/Offender Mediation:

This is where the victim and young person who has offended can liaise in a controlled and safe environment. This usually takes place indirectly, with a project officer acting as a "go between" in a "shuttle mediation," where the parties do not meet but where messages are communicated through an intermediary.

Reparation:

This is a process of redressing the harm done to the victim, while holding the young person who has offended accountable for his/her actions. It is an opportunity for the young person to repair the harm done to the victim in a meaningful way. The main emphasis is on (a) relationship building, (b) reconciliation, and (c) agreement around desired outcome between victim and young person. It may include one or more of the following: apology, activities, reflective work, symbolic reparation etc.

Victim Impact Panels:

A victim impact panel provides a forum for crime victims to tell young people who have offended about the impact that the crime has had on their lives and on the lives of their families, friends, and neighbours. In these cases, the victim is a volunteer who is not the victim of the young person's specific crime.

Restorative Conference:

A Restorative Conference is a structured meeting that involves a young person who has offended, a victim(s), a RJ Project Officer, family members, friends, community representatives, and State services. The conference is a fully restorative process that provides an opportunity for the (actual) victim to be directly involved in the discussion of the offence and decisions regarding outcomes, as well as increasing the young person's awareness of the impact of their actions on the victim, their family, and the wider community.

"It was good to see him stand up and take responsibility for his actions, and he showed remorse to those he had hurt" –
Garda Case Manager

Restorative Justice Service in Numbers



31

Young people engaged in Restorative Justice in 2019



28

Participants on Restorative Justice training



31

Young people who took part in a victim empathy programme



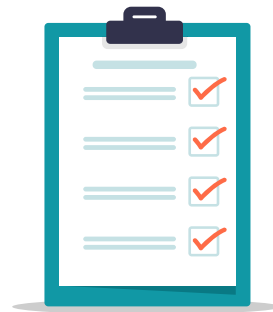
4

Restorative conferences carried out



5

Victim/offender mediations initiated



3

Reparation projects completed

Restorative Justice Case Study

John's Story

John was a 17 year old young man who was living with his mother at the time he came into contact with the Gardai. He had previously had an interest in sport but had lost motivation over time as a result of drug use. He smoked cannabis on a daily basis and had come to see this as normal behaviour. He was arrested for various drugs offences, both for his own use and for sale and supply to others. John had very little insight into the effects of his offences at the time, both on the general public and with regard to his own mother, who felt considerable fear in her day to day life as a result of John's behaviour.

John was assigned a Probation Officer who made a number of recommendations for him, including that he complete a Victim Empathy Program (VEP). He was referred to Le Chéile's restorative justice project in order to facilitate this.

The case was deemed suitable for restorative justice as John was clearly unaware of the impact of what he was doing. John underwent 10 VEP sessions with the Restorative Justice worker. These were instrumental in helping him, firstly, develop his communication skills and later his consequential thinking skills. He gained particular insight into his susceptibility to peer influences, as well as the impact of his own drug use.

The VEP was highly effective in bringing John to the point where he could attend a restorative meeting with his mother. John's motivation also appeared to change over the course of the VEP. Initially he appeared motivated by fear of probation implications and a desire to be seen to do the "right" thing. As the weeks went by however he presented as less negative, he opened up more and his reasons for attending began to appear much more genuine. In addition he went from finding it difficult to sit down during sessions to being able to sit and write and work through the programme work sheets. These emotional and social skills are a fundamental

pre-requisite to any would-be meeting between a victim and an offender.

On a practical level John developed a re-offending prevention plan through the VEP program. This identified triggers at the time of his offending and the changes needed to address these in the future, e.g. changes to his peer group, looking at his relationship with drugs/alcohol, developing future ambitions, etc.

Over time, it was decided that a family conference to address the harm done to his mother would also be appropriate. The family conference was facilitated by the Le Chéile worker. On the day, this was seen as a good success by all present. John's mother had been nervous and didn't know what to expect. Even though John's discomfort was palpable on hearing the impact on her, he never interrupted once and this was significant for his mother, she later reported. His mother felt she said what she wanted to say and reported she had never had a safe enough environment before to do so.

John, for his part, reported satisfaction with the process too. He had begun to see the significance of his drug use and expressed a desire to reduce his use and eventually give up. He said he no longer sold drugs. He also felt more confident in himself and was hopeful for a brighter future for himself. At the six month follow-up (a feature of the restorative justice program) he had not re-offended.

"It feels like a weight has been lifted off my shoulders" – Young Person

Our Volunteers

Le Chéile believes in volunteer mentoring and we are proud of our volunteer team of over 230 trained mentors across the country who are the foundation of Le Chéile. Without the experience, commitment, kindness, and generosity of each and every volunteer, Le Chéile would not be able to have the impact we have on young people and families across the country.



Last year, this team of volunteers gave an incredible 2,617 hours of listening, understanding, motivating, guiding and inspiring the young people and parents that they mentor. This effort does not even include the time taken to attend regular group supervisions, additional training, or making individual calls and providing updates to their mentoring coordinators, as well as all of the other activities that are a part of being a Le Chéile Mentor.

This dedication and hard work deserves recognition and Le Chéile always aims to acknowledge the expertise, passion and diligence that our volunteers bring to the role.

Volunteer Induction Training

In 2019, Le Chéile recruited and trained 53 new volunteers in counties Cork, Laois, Offaly, Kildare, Dublin, Waterford and Tipperary.

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 and parents. 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

"It brought me out of house, taught me that I have something to contribute and got me back to college for further study so it has been life changing" – Volunteer Mentor on the experience of mentoring

Ongoing training and volunteer development

On top of the induction training, regular refresher training is provided, which creates opportunities for volunteers 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.



National Volunteer Committee

The National Volunteer Committee (NVC) is a forum for volunteers to participate in the discussion and development of the work of Le Chéile. It is a two-way, information-sharing platform between volunteers and Le Chéile.

The Committee is made up of two volunteer representatives from each mentoring service and meets three times a year.

Thanks to all the Committee Members for their invaluable input over the course of the year which has helped shaped the work of Le Chéile.

Volunteer Case Study

Anthony's Story

When I was in my late teens (many years ago!) I was involved with a juvenile detention centre for girls in Stillorgan. I had also visited a number of detention centres for teenage boys both North and South of the border. I was always interested around the circumstances in which these young people ended up in these centres. I was interested in a career in this field but, due to circumstances at the time, was not able to follow through on it.

Two years ago, I came across an advertisement for Le Chéile, googled the organisation and was impressed by the work they were doing. I felt I already had some understanding around the work and combined with my life experience and other volunteering experience, felt I could contribute as a mentor with young offenders. I am a strong believer in equal opportunity and feel that a lot of young people simply don't have the same opportunities in life as their peers and, in some cases, can't see the few opportunities that are there.

My first case was short lived, as the young person I was matched with moved within the first few weeks. However, it was good to get some initial experience and he was very easy to work with. I think this came down to the careful consideration my Coordinator put into matching me with that particular young person and the experience was a very positive one.

My second match with a young person was a big step up in terms of the charges against him but also in communicating with him. Over the course of the first few weeks, I felt that he was more comfortable talking with me, however, he was resistant to looking at goals and fully engaging in the process. I was impressed though at how much opened up to me and how his communication improved over time. I like to think that maybe sometime in the future, some of our discussions might have relevance to him and his thinking on things might change.

I am currently working with my third young person, who has been a pleasure to work with from day one. He is willing to talk about anything and is very open and honest. I feel we have made good progress in terms of him getting more confident and we have started to make a plan for him to become more independent.

In terms of challenges, the biggest one I see is trying to get the young person focussed on a goal. The last two young people I mentored were always hung up on impending court dates and their possible outcomes. It is very difficult for them to work to targets when they are not sure of their future. Both of them specifically mentioned that they don't want to be 'building up false hopes' and they see any future planning as doing this. In this sense, it can be difficult to motivate them at times.

Throughout my time in Le Chéile, I have been really impressed with the level of training and support I have received. The initial training was hugely effective in preparing volunteers for their roles as mentors. In each of my cases to date, I have come across several scenarios that may have been difficult but so far had all been covered in training. This has a huge positive impact in terms of being comfortable and confident whilst engaging with young people. My Coordinator is extremely supportive and has helped me with numerous suggestions and supports when working with the young people.

Working with young offenders has affirmed the diversity and differences among each of these individuals. There is variation in terms of education, social background and personality. This may often be over looked. Understanding this has helped me greatly in seeing each young person as a different individual and my need to alter my own communication and listening skills. I believe I can build trust more easily and allow the young person to engage on a more equal level where they can discuss their ideas, opinions and more importantly any aspirations they might have.

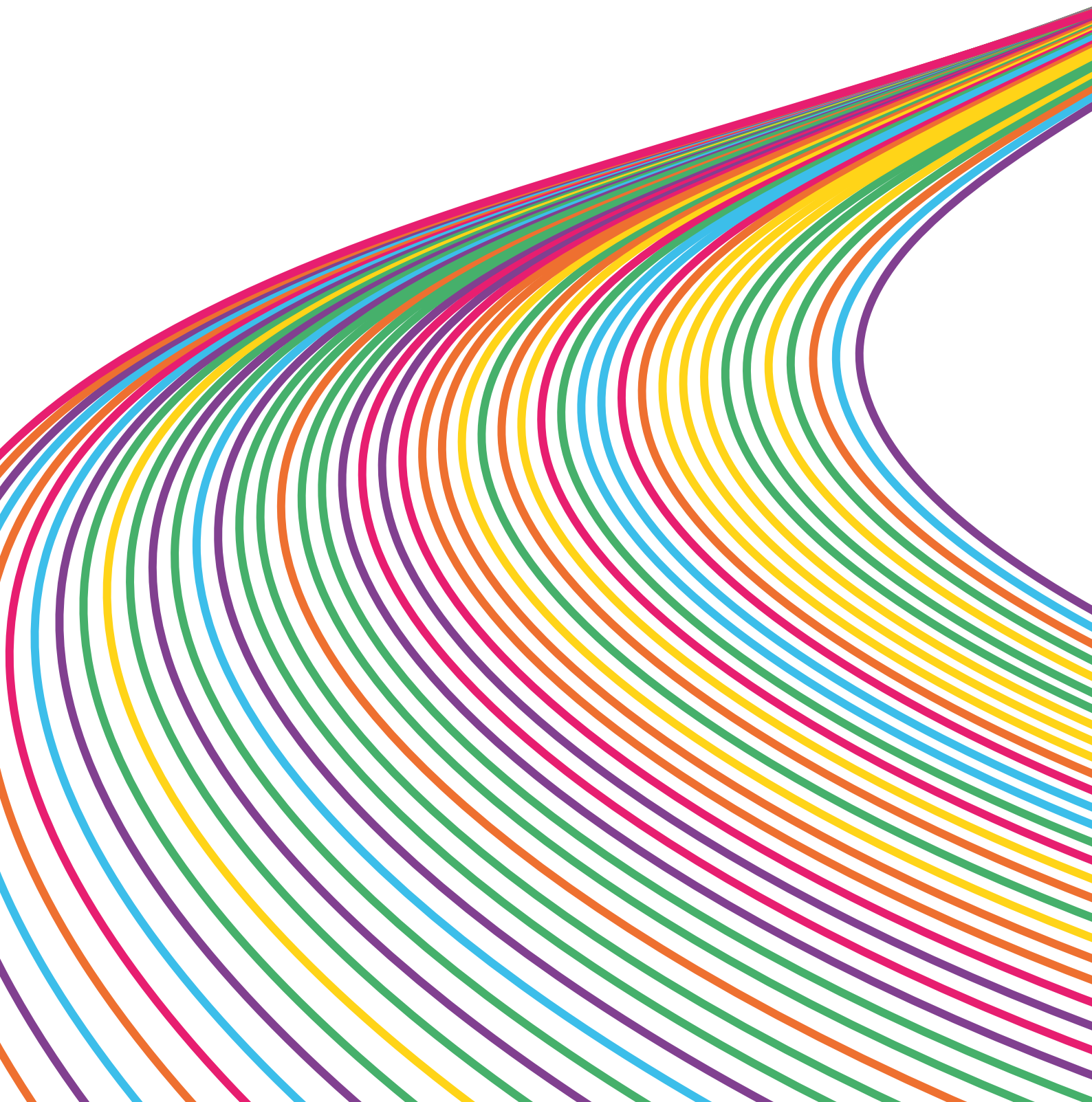
Volunteer Photos



"Overall I have enjoyed volunteering with Le Chéile, excellent supervision, great support with peer group chats. Learnt a lot about myself along the way and each year with each new mentee you gain more experience and therefore the experience helps mentees. Excellent service and lucky to be involved within it" – Volunteer Mentor

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

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 Victims of Crime Office.

Le Chéile received funding in 2019 for the Oberstown parent mentoring project through the Dormant Accounts.

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



Statement of Financial Activities

LE CHÉILE MENTORING COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019

		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2019 Total Funds	2018 Total Funds
	Appendix Note	€	€	€	€
Incoming Resources					
<i>Incoming Resources from Charitable Activities</i>					
Government, Institutional funding and other grants	2	-	1,371,744	1,371,744	1,348,408
<i>Investment income</i>	6	2	-	2	2
Total Incoming Resources	I	2	1,371,744	1,371,746	1,348,410
Resources Expended					
<i>Charitable Activities</i>					
Total Costs	4		1,366,395	1,366,395	1,346,820
Total Resources Expended	I	-	1,366,395	1,366,395	1,346,820
Net Incoming/(Outgoing) Resources		2	5,349	5,351	1,590
Total Funds Brought Forward		14,827	63,989	78,816	77,226
Transfers between funds		7,000	(7,000)	-	-
Total Funds Carried Forward	14	21,829	62,338	84,167	78,816

Balance Sheet

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2019

		2019		2018	
	Notes	€	€	€	€
Current assets					
Debtors	11	32,582		28,250	
Cash at bank and in hand		200,418		209,714	
		<u>233,000</u>		<u>237,964</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	(148,833)		(159,148)	
		<u></u>		<u></u>	
Net current assets			84,167		78,816
			<u></u>		<u></u>
Net assets			84,167		78,816
			<u></u>		<u></u>
The Funds of the Charity					
Unrestricted reserves	14		21,829		14,827
Restricted reserves	14		62,338		63,989
			<u></u>		<u></u>
Total Charity Funds	14		84,167		78,816
			<u></u>		<u></u>

Board and Staff in 2019

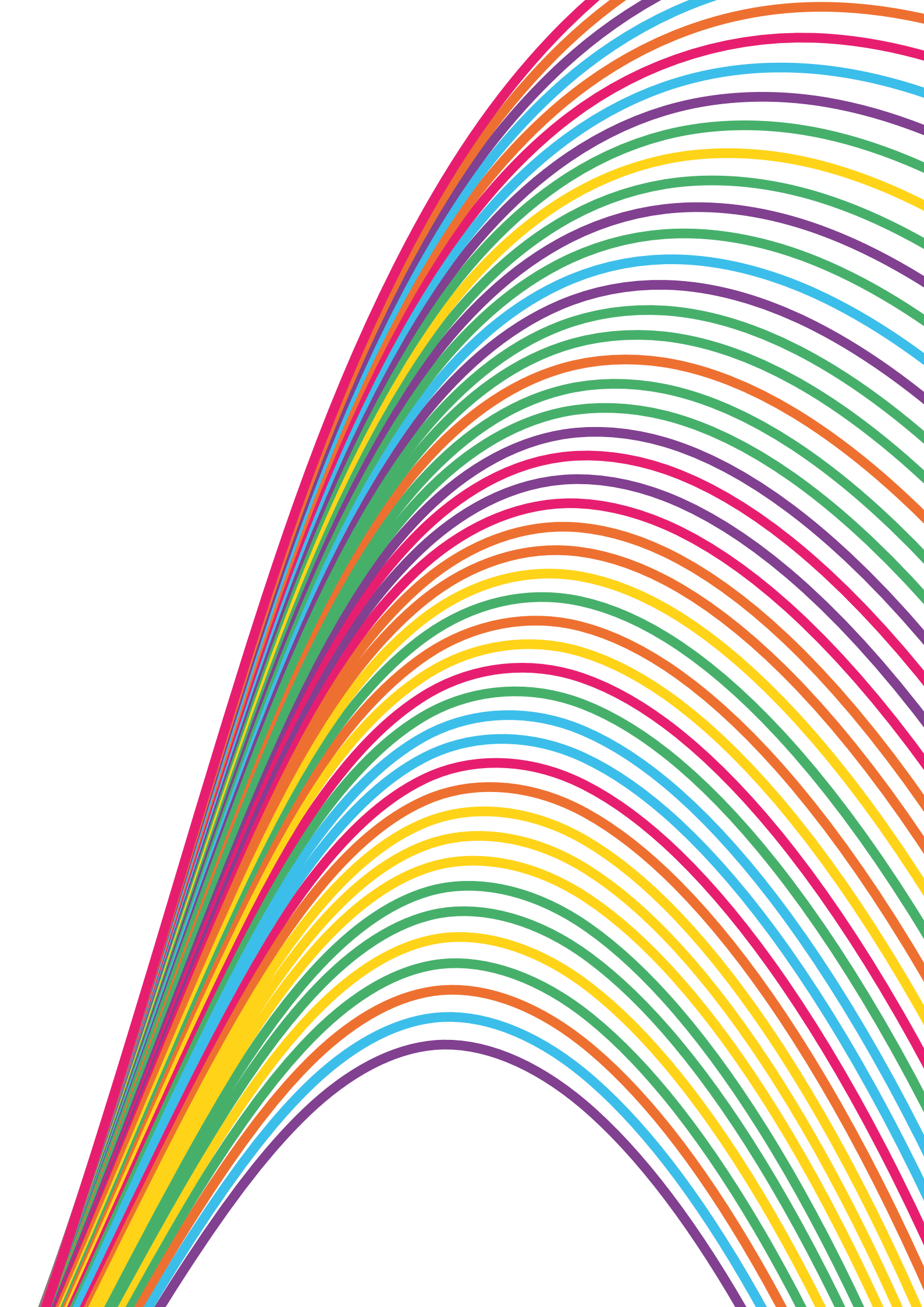
Board of Directors

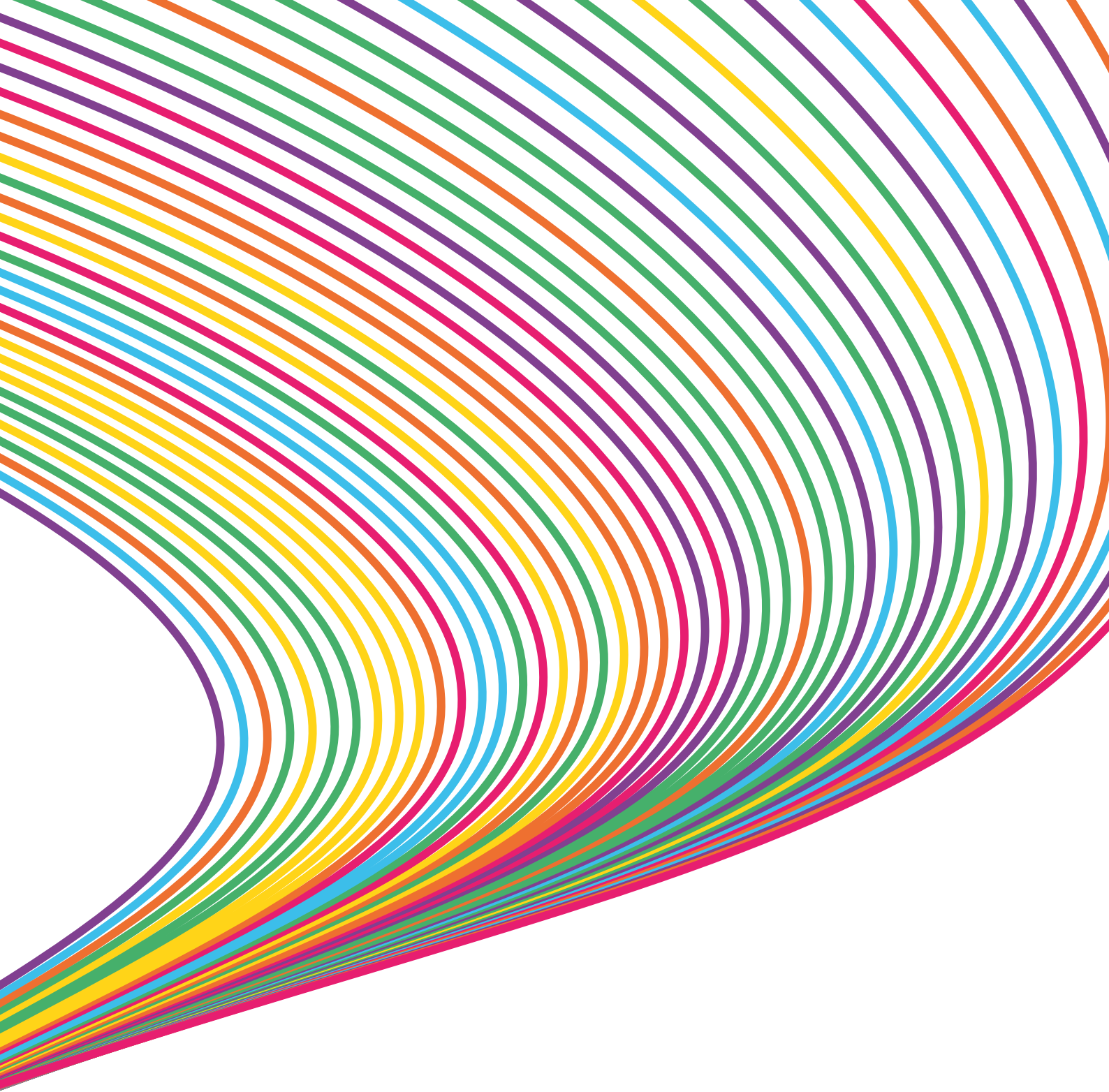
Louise Callaghan	Director/Chairperson
James Doorley	Director/Secretary
Margaret Rogers	Director/Vice Chairperson
Kieran O'Dwyer	Director
Richard Mc Elwee	Director
Darina Sexton	Director
Maria Molloy	Director
Ciara O'Connor	Director

Staff

Anne Conroy	CEO
Claudio Marmo	Accounts & Corporate Services Manager
Andy Bray	Eastern Regional Manager
Mary Henihan	Southern Regional Manager
Ingrid Cooney	Dublin North Mentor Co-ordinator (p/t)
Grace Jordan	Dublin North Mentor Co-ordinator (p/t) (from September 2019)
Marie Vanasova	Dublin South Team Leader
Cormac Ryan	GYDP Dublin Mentor Project Officer
Ronan O'Malley	Oberstown Co-ordinator (until September 2019)
Stephanie Power	Oberstown Co-ordinator (from November 2019)
Allison Gordon	Cork South & West Mentor Co-ordinator
Ailbe Coleman	Cork North & East Mentor Co-ordinator
Alan Quinn	Limerick Mentor Co-ordinator
Heather Sinnott	South East Team Leader
Jenny Croke	GYDP South East Mentor Project Officer
Helen McCarthy	Midlands Mentor Co-ordinator
Lyndsey McCabe	North East Mentor Co-ordinator
Lorna Walsh	Restorative Justice Project Officer
Aoife Quinn	Communications & Policy Officer
Maxine Kelly	National Volunteer Development Officer
Izabela Lodziewska	Accounts Administrator (until July 2019)
Aideen Curran	Accounts Administrator (from August 2019)
Susan Buckley	Administrator

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





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