**Press release**

**31 October 2019**

**Training, Careers & Lifestyle Fair for Young People with a Disability**

What do I want to be when I grow up? What do I have to do to get there? Who can help me on my way?

“These are questions that young people often ask” explains Anne Timoney Meehan who is to the fore in organising a unique event in LYIT on Saturday 16 November targeting young people with disabilities or additional support needs, aged 16 years or over.

“For some, there is often a clear career path but for young people with a disability or additional support needs it’s not so easy” says Anne Timoney Meehan who is the Co-ordinator of the Donegal Children & Young People’s Services Committee.

“That’s why we are hosting a dedicated Training, Careers & Lifestyle Fair on Saturday 16th November in Letterkenny Institute of Technology from 12pm to 4pm. We are targeting young people with disabilities or additional support needs and their families, who are interested in further education, training or employment opportunities or who are looking for sport, recreational and lifestyle activities. Their supporters, carers and those working in community projects and the disability sector are also welcome”.

Speaking about the event Co-ordinator Anne Timony Meehan explains “on the day, there will be 40 information stands covering further education and training opportunities and supports; employment supports; recreation and sporting opportunities.

“There will also be a range of information workshops’ including the ‘Onside Project’ from the Independent Living Movement of Ireland; new adaptive technology in use in the Donegal Library Service; rights and entitlements, training opportunities, coaching supports into employment as well as sport and leisure opportunities and much more”.

Anne adds that ‘this event will include a series of short video clips that will give us an opportunity to learn from the lived experience of people with disabilities or additional support needs, what being included in mainstream activities means to them in social and recreational environments as well as in training and the workforce.

“These short video clips give us a glimpse of the experience of a range of young people at different stages of their journey and includes Donegal Youth Councillors speaking about their experience being part of this countywide group”.

The Bluestack Special Needs Foundation, Saturday Club will be there on the day bringing Arts and Crafts fun for Children 4 years and older with special needs. Sign language interpreters will be available throughout the day and can be requested at the Registration desk.

The event will also see the second edition of the Donegal Disability Directory of Services being launched with copies available for all attendees.

“I hope that after attending this event, the next time a young person with a disability or additional support needs asks ‘what do I want to be when I grow up? ’ they will realise that it’s entirely their choice and that there is a wide range of supports available to help them to achieve their full potential and thrive” says Anne.

Local Link will provide free transport to all young people with disabilities and their families to this event, and all you have to do is register by contacting CYPSC Coordinator Anne Timony Meehan at Anne.TimonyMeehan@tusla.ie or call 087 3527651 or CYPSC Administrator Gearoid on gearoid.horkan@tusla.ie.

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