

International Protection Support Service Fund – 2023

Feedback Donegal Project

Donegal CYPSC was granted the full €50,000 applied for. This supported a range of 6 supports to children and families in IPAS accommodation in County Donegal during the summer of 2023.

Agencies collaborating on the Donegal IPASS funded project are:

- DLDC – John Mburu -Community Links Worker
- Foroige – Susan McLaughlin
- Donegal County Childcare Committee – Trish McLaughlin & Louise Toner
- Lifestart - Mary Walker Callaghan
- LYFS – Garry Glennon
- DYS – Charlene Logue, Elaine Begley & Pauric
- Intercultural Platform – Paul Kernan & Team
- Finn Valley FRC – Claire O’Kane & Paddy Hannigan

A sincere thank you to Finn Valley FRC who kindly facilitated funding for the Intercultural Platform led activities and to Lifestart who facilitated funding for the Donegal County Childcare Committee led activities. Greatly appreciated.

We would also like to acknowledge the support of the DLDC team, particularly Joleen Kuyper and John Mburu, in recruiting and supporting young people attending the activities of the Summertime Project.

- 1) €19,000 – Summertime
- 2) €2,500 - YIPPIE! (Young International Protection Participation Project Including Everyone!)
- 3) €3,000 - Communication Support:
- 4) €3,200 - Intercultural understanding.
- 5) €12,300 - Early Years development:
- 6) €10,000 – Poverty Alleviation

- 1) **€19,000 – Summertime:** Provide summer activities in 2 Hubs Letterkenny & Finn Valley, across 3 age ranges from 10 years to 18 years targeting children and young people in the IPAS system.



Report Finn Valley FRC Summertime Project:

1. Activities

We completed a weeklong activity, for children from the IPAS Centre in Ballybofey. See attached list of activities and timetable of events.

2. Is the funded work completed and if not, what is planned in Q3 Q4 2023

There is an outstanding balance of €2602.03 left in the budget. It is planned that we take the children to Arena 7 in Q3 and hold a Family Christmas Party in Q4.

3. Target group who participated with numbers if possible or a best estimate

Our target group was children aged 10-16 years living in the IPAS Centre in Ballybofey. We had an approx. 29 children that participated with an additional 6 volunteers from the IPAS Centre who helped.

4. Impact of the activity

The children and volunteers enjoyed the week of activities and one volunteer who was also a parent to three of the children made a statement to staff, saying that the children are free to play and not feel threatened by violence or being taken or snatched.

5. Attempts at integration with other groups

The FRC in conjunction with the school completion provided a week of activities so that the children could mix with other groups. For example, when we took the children to Lurgybrack Farm and Ards Forest Park the children played with other children and had a great time.

6. A few Comments from participants if you have them

Child 1: "We loved the week and didn't want this to end".

Child 2: "I can now build a sandcastle as I never knew how to before"?

Child 3: "I loved the week, and it was great fun".

Child 4: "I liked spending time with my brothers and sisters outside of the apartment".

7. Comment from yourself on the project – learning, observations

The week of activities were very good, but we felt that we could of combined the FRC Summer Programme and the IPAS Summer Programme together as this would be a better integration. We also felt that we were leaving children out, as young brothers and sisters wanted to go on the summer programme but due to their age this was not possible. We feel that we could have catered from 5 years and up.

One of the biggest learning opportunities that we have experienced was that all the children wanted was freedom. For example, we spent a day in Ards Forest Park and all the children wanted to do was play football on the beach and learn how to build sandcastles.



Finn Valley - IPAS Summertime 2023

Report Letterkenny Youth & Family Services Summertime project:

1. Activities:

Week Summer Programme at Illistrin National School, 10th- 14th July 2023, 9.30am-3.30pm

Acrylic Painting, Indoor Games, Urban Orienteering, Dodgeball, Terminator, Olympic Challenge, Old School Games, Talent Show, Vlogging, Dutch Auction, Ball Catcher, Sponge Fun & Excursions to Lurgybrack Farm and Ards Forest Park.

2. Is the funded work completed and if not, what is planned in Q3 Q4 2023

Completed

3. Target group who participated with numbers if possible or a best estimate

Children from IPAS Accommodation in Letterkenny and surrounding area.

62 Children from IPAS Centres

4. Impact of the activity

Fun!

Opportunity for children to engage in summer activity that normally wouldn't be available due to resources available. Helped reduce the isolation that children suffer in the accommodation centres. Provided an opportunity to have fun, learn new skills, make friends, and develop their confidence and self-esteem. Great for integration of communities, take away fear that exists.

5. Attempts at integration with other groups

The weeklong programme included children from IPAS, children from Ukraine and children from a cross section of the community.

6. A few Comments from participants if you have them

Sorry, none taken! If a picture paints a thousand words, please see attached

7. Comment from yourself on the project – learning, observations

Fantastic time for all. Groups mixed really well. Seen great teamwork and social skills developed. Can see the confidence and self-esteem grow as the week progresses. Friendships developed throughout the week- useful for those transitioning into second level education.



Letterkenny Youth & Family Service IPAS Summertime 2023

Report Donegal Youth Service Summertime Project: Letterkenny Group led by Pauric DYS

1. Activities:

Using the funding provided we have been able to provide support to a number of young people over the course of the summer months. This support came in the form of designated places within summer programmes that the Elevate55 project were running.

The young people had access to the following summer programmes, Graffiti Camp, Art Camp, Steam Camp and Multi Activity Camp. These camps operated from Donegal Youth Service Headquarters in Letterkenny. During the Graffiti Camp the young people worked on art pieces for the Party in the Park event which cumulated in the final art work being on display at the event. Participants on the Art Camp worked on individual art pieces as well as a large banner that was on also display at the Party in the Park event. During the Steam Camp young people got to complete team building games, Lego based activities, pizza making and biscuit decorating and the week ended with a trip to Letterkenny Adventure Centre. The Multi-activity week saw the young people visit Oakfire Adventures, Arena7 and Ards Forest Park as well as a day of team building activities in the ELEVATE 55 drop in space.

2. **Is the funded work completed and if not what is planned in Q3 Q4 2023.** Completed
3. **Target group who participated with numbers if possible or a best estimate**

The target group for these activities was young people aged 12 – 24 living in direct provision centres in the Letterkenny area. Over the course of the weeks 23 young people took part in the camps provided.

4. Impact of the activity

The camps had a direct impact on the young people that attended them. Some of these young people have only been living in the Letterkenny area for a number of months and attending these camps has been the first time they have mixed with the wider community outside of school. It gave the young people much needed social interaction and also during the camps they got to experience activities that they may not have been able to do otherwise. Examples of these would be the Graffiti Camp where the young people got to work on pieces with professional artists. Another example was getting to experience zip lining and high ropes challenges in Oakfire Adventures during the Multi Activity Camp

5. Attempts at integration with other groups

During these camps the young people were given the opportunity to integrate with the wider Donegal Youth Service organisation and other young people accessing the Service. At the end of each day some free time was allocated to the young people in the drop-in space. Each camp was made up of individuals from a number of different nationalities which offered an opportunity for the young people to learn about each other and make friendships. All young people were provided information on the different groups that operate on a weekly basis and since the camps ended a number of the young people have been attending the World-Wide Voices group as well as the weekly drop in service which operates on a Friday evening and Saturday afternoon. This is exactly the result we were looking to achieve.... integration and trust.

6. A few Comments from participants if you have them

Feedback from the young people was very positive with a number of them saying on their evaluations that the camps offered them opportunities to try new things and how it pushed them out of their comfort zone. They talked about overcoming fears such as a fear of heights during activities and how they feel more comfortable engaging with groups after attending the camps

7. Comment from yourself on the project – learning, observations

Pauric a member of the Elevate55 staff team worked alongside the young people on the Summer Camps. He commented on how great it was to see the young people engaging with the service and how appreciative they were for everything they got during the weeks. He commented on how great it was to see the young people mixing with other young people within the Service and how it happened naturally and didn't have to force the groups to mix and communicate during activities. Since the activities ended he has seen some of these young people becoming regulars in the drop-in space and they have started to bring some friends also that were part of the initial camps.



Donegal Youth Service Activities Summertime Project Ballybofey Group led by Elaine

Introduction

Thanks to the CYPSC funding for IPAS Summer Programme's the young people living in the IPAS centres in Castlefinn, Ballybofey and two locations in Lifford, were able to be provided with much needed summer activities. The target group were young people living in direct provision aged 12-17 and over the weeks 23 young people engaged in the following activities.

Activities

The summer activities which the young people took part in consisted of Summer Camp day in Planet Youth Ballybofey which entailed small and large group activities, team building games, kite building, arts and crafts, quizzes, music and dance and an opportunity to socialise with their peers in an environment which they have not previously done so. The feed back from the young people on this day was that they "had more fun than we imaged" and "I've loved it all". The young people engaged in a trip to Lifford Cinema to see The Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. The young people shared many laughs, and had good conversations following the trip on which Ninja they would have liked to be, and why. The consensus was that Michael Angelo was the best! It was clear to see that the young people thoroughly enjoyed the Beach trip, and it was the highlight of the summer activities. The young people went to Rathmullan beach, a first for all. At the beach they had the opportunity to fly their kites which they had made during the summer camp day in Planet Youth. They played beach games, had a paddle in the water, walked along the sandy beach with their shoes off and enjoyed some seaside chips with their peers. The summer camp was filled with great laughs, enthusiastic engagement and a real sense of community. It was a lovely experience to be a part of and Elaine, the organiser, reported that the young people were eager to have more experiences like this. The funding also provided these young people with transportation each day and ensured a dietary conscious meal and snacks.

Residential

A cohort of these young people were able to engage in an over night residential to Gartan Activity Centre which consisted of a full day of on land activities including team building games, orienteering, rock climbing and archery, as well as a morning of water-based activities such as kayaking and paddle boarding. This residential was open to a mixed group of young people from multiple youth clubs in Donegal. The opportunity to bring a diverse group of young people together from different backgrounds and integrate them with their peers was a profoundly enriching experience. It also gave opportunity for the young people to make connections with other youth club leaders and volunteers which can hopefully lead to further engagement down the line. The young people from the IPAS group reported that they had "never done anything like this in (our) lives, it was so fun".

Further Planning

As all of the funding was not used by the end of the summer programme, there are plans in place to utilise this funding in different areas, in the Autumn of 2023. The funding will allow Elaine to bring in external facilitators to provide the young people in the already established IPAS youth group, with animation and digital media workshops. These workshops will be running alongside the regular group times, and are open to all the young people who have engaged with the summer programme this year.

Organisers Observation

Elaine has provided very positive feedback from the summer programme.

"The summer programme was better than I ever could have anticipated. The young people were engaged to their fullest potential, socialised well with each other, and most of all had some new fun

experiences. It was a wonderful thing to see all the young people come together and display such enthusiasm for the programme. It was also a privilege to work with these young people, as they showed their authentic self and gave such trust and respect to the workers and volunteers on the project.”

Outcomes to date

Although no formal measurement has taken place yet, we do plan to evaluate the entire programme. However, from an observational perspective it would appear that the young people have seen an increase in their self-esteem and problem-solving abilities as well as their ability to build and maintain new relationships



DYS Ballybofey IPAS Summertime 2023

Foróige Activities Summertime Project – Convoy area

Activities

Following an introduction to all the families they were mostly happy to engage. There was one family that were hesitant but when the time of the first activity came they came along and subsequently joined in every activity. First summer programme 18th – 20th July

18th July Glenveagh National Park.

We showed the group the displays in the visitor centre that tell the tale of the park, its flora and fauna, and the castle. We all walked the grounds, had lunch and ice-cream on the way home.

19 July – Ards Friary Coastal Walk.

We set out to complete the coastal walk from the friary, but when we came to the first beach the young people were more interested in playing on the beach and paddling in the sea. We played some ball games and had our lunch, then explored some more of the area before returning home with ice cream on the way.

20 July – Waterworld, Bundoran

This was undoubtedly the favourite activity with the young people. The wave machine and water slides were very popular with the group. We had lunch and ice cream on the lawn and the younger ones played in the adjoining playground before returning home.

Second summer programme: 9,10, 14 and 15 August.

9 August – Inch Wildfowl Reserve. We did the 8km walk around the reserve, stopping for lunch on the way. We were lucky with the weather and the young people loved it, eating blackberries along the way, stopping at the picnic benches for lunch.

10 August – Cinema. Half of the group went to see Barbie and the rest of the group saw Elemental. We had soft drinks and popcorn while there.

14 August – Jaws Watersports Dunfanaghy. The group got fitted with wetsuits and life vests before making our way to Portnablagh for kayaking and monster paddleboarding. They played a series of team games on the beach first, and then split into two groups alternating between the kayaks and the monster paddleboard. Afterwards we had lunch on the beach and ice cream on the way home.

15 August – Lurgybrack Farm. We visited the farm where there were lots of small animals, birds and farm animals to see. There were plenty of activities to try out. We had lunch while there on the picnic benches before returning home.

Is the funded work completed and if not, what is planned in Q3 Q4 2023

There is still work to be completed. The plan for the remainder of the work is to engage with the young people to plan activities that they would most enjoy at a time that they are available, e.g. mid-term break.

Target group who participated with numbers if possible or a best estimate

The target group was IPAS young people living in Convoy. To date we have engaged 17 children / young people aged 7 to 17.

Impact of the activity

The children and young people really loved the summer activity days. They thoroughly enjoyed visiting a range of places they had never been too or would never get the chance to see or engage in these types of activities. It enabled them to integrate more into their new environment and culture. They learnt new skills – communication, problem solving, turn taking, team building. It provided them with an opportunity to communicate with staff the challenges they have overcome, their worries as well as their hopes and dreams for the future.

Attempts at integration with other groups

This was probably the more challenging aspect of the programme for a few reasons:

They live in Convoy which is a very small rural town where the process of integration is at a relatively early stage with others living in the town. The Foróige service in the South Central CFSN area commenced in January so as a staff team we are in the early stages of building connections with communities in the area and getting to know the young people ourselves. If we were more established it would have resulted in more successful attempts at integration.

A few Comments from participants if you have them.

“Hello, thanks to you the children had a good time, they enjoyed these summer camps, you such a good man, we appreciate you, thank you so very much.”

“Hi I'm so thankful for you the kids have enjoyed a lot I really appreciate you so much you really are an amazing guy 😊😊😊”

“Thanks to you and your team, the kids enjoyed the summer holidays with lots of fun on each activity. We do appreciate the effort of your team towards enhancement of integration to the new environment. Much 😊”

“Hi, thank you so much for Everything my children enjoyed all the summer camp activities, they had fun 🙏”

“Hello. First I must commend you and your organisation for your thoughtful plans to give our children a fun summer experience. Being in a new country and a new environment, my children were so bored as the holidays started, so it was a welcome experience indeed. I would like to suggest that perhaps, you could plan to bring children from other locations or accommodations along on the trip. That way, they would be able to meet other/more people, mingle and make friends easily. Talent training or hunt would be nice too. Like, have the children learn music, story writing or telling, painting, the work! I mean, the holiday is 3 months! 🤔 Lastly, if it's possible to make the summer camp/ trips longer than a few days, we would love that very much. Cos, it means making sure that they are engaged actively for the whole 3 months. Once more, we appreciate you. Thank you ever so much 🙏”

Comment from yourself on the project – learning, observations

The young people thoroughly enjoyed the summer programmes. It provided an introduction to Foróige and our plan would be to continue to engage the children and young people in the service now that they have established a relationship with some members of the team. More development work would be required over a longer period of time to enhance the integration of IPAS young people with young people in the town and surrounding areas.

Many thanks to Anne and Paul in Donegal CYPSC for the opportunity to access this much needed funding.



Convoy Foroige IPAS Summertime 2023

€2,500 - YIPPIE! (Young International Protection Participation Project Including Everyone!): Create links to local services, support English language development via social & learning events after summer provision ends. Teenagers 13yrs to 18 yrs. 4/5 trips, social & learning events. 40/50 young people. Lead agency Intercultural Platform

The update on IPASS funding is as follows. We were able to link in with activities and events and advertise and encourage participation of young IPAs in programmes over the summer which meant we could focus on a couple of events and aim for more over the September to December period as follows.

Yippie project

- a. We undertook a Wild Ireland trip with both the Older youth team and 15 Yippee members (€400)
- b. Film night with food / refreshments (Letterkenny 23 young people (€175)
- c. Took group of YIPPEE youth to the Letterkenny Think Equality Family Day (37 young people €370)
- d. Movie night – 25 young people took part in Pizza and Film event in Letterkenny(€380)
- e. Bus Trip to South West Donegal – Glencolmcille August 2023 (€450.00)
- e. Halloween Break – We are planning a party event for the Twin Towns area for 12-18 year olds and linking with World Wide Voices, Planet Youth, Castlefinn and Ballybofey IPAS residents and local youth volunteers, (Budget set aside €1,000 including transport)

€3,000 - Communication Support: Provide interpretation services to support activities take place. €30ph X 100. Lead agency Intercultural Platform

Communications Supports

- a. Translations services for documents, certificates, diplomas and articles, notices etc for local groups and IPAS residents (€540)
- b. Community interpretation sessions. 11 interpretation sessions with schools, for parents, for community groups and more supports planned.

We have recruited 14 casual interpreters covering French, Russian, Lithuanian, Arabic, Georgian, Spanish, Portuguese, Pasto, Farsi/Dari, Bengali, Ukrainian, Polish, Serbo-Croat, Bulgarian and Slovakian. These casual interpreters are paid a small fee to offset their expenses and travel. Spent to date (€280)

We have 4 more bookings for interpretation assistance for early October. There are a number of newly arrived Afghan and Algerian men needing additional communications support and we plan to produce local Information Guides in four languages (Arabic, Pasto, Somali and Spanish), these will be produced through October.

- c. We predict that these communications services will run through to the end of the year and will include special workshops for newly arrived IPAs with no English (7 workshops through the summer for Somali, Afghan and Sudanese women) we are planning additional sessions for English through Arabic and Somali and possibly Spanish for new IPA residents with no English Communication skills to help with very basic integration. (Budget 20 hours of workshops €800.00)

We have also set aside 700 for special interpretation and translation for the planned IPA men's health workshop 12th October and the IPA / Migrant women's seminar on the intersectionality of Gender, health and ethnicity scheduled for 23 November including translation of documents, reports and invitations. (Predicted spend €700.00)

€3,200 - Intercultural understanding: Provide X 2 Intercultural Family Fun Day events in 2 large towns in Summer & Autumn 2023. Engaging 100 participants per event. €3,200, €1,600 per event X 2. Lead agency Intercultural Platform linking with other agencies.

Intercultural understanding

a. Planned Twin Towns YIPPEE event with Ballybofey GAA 2nd Sept Cancelled due to local bereavement

Re-scheduled for **Saturday 30th Sept**, Ballybofey 50+ YIPPEE kids from Castlefinn, Stranorlar, Ballybofey plus Letterkenny. For 80 young people in total. (€800)

b. Planning Halloween break Youth event in Bunrana with IPA teens, families and twinning with local Youth Club and The Exchange community centre and the Bunrana for the whole group. (Budget €1,200)

c. Lifford / Ballindrait area – Talking with local volunteers to provide a Letterkenny trip for the young people and parents from the Lifford, Ballindrait areas to Arena 7, games, food and Transport (Budget €1,000)

d. Transport contingency – we are holding a €200 contingency to encourage participation for the young people and some parents from Drumbrick (Termon) to join either the events a or c above)

€12,300 - Early Years development:

8-week programme of 3 hour facilitated therapeutic play sessions to be held weekly in each of the two main IPAS centres in Donegal, engaging children from birth to 10 years (0-5 years and 5-10 years). €12,300, Facilitators X 3, Play resources per Centre. Agencies involved Donegal County Childcare Committee, Lifestart Services, Letterkenny Youth and Family Services

Report Donegal County Childcare Committee: Action completed.

have supported the IPAS families by providing Play and Stay sessions for children under 8 years.

6 weeks of sessions took place in 9 centres across Donegal ensuring all families were given the opportunity to engage in social activities with their children. The sessions were successful in providing a play space for these children and interaction with other children.

Resources were provided that the children may not have had access too. In addition, parents had an opportunity to relax and engage with both the staff of Donegal CCC and other parents.

There were some challenges to the delivery of these sessions. The Play space is limited in some centres, making these sessions even more valuable but difficult to facilitate.

Parents are seeking respite, and this is not available to them currently.

Successes

- Being a part of a team and having the opportunity to provide a service which brings families and children together from different ethnicities, cultures and beliefs, through quality play interactions.

- Building relationships with the families and making them feel valued.
- Identifying needs of the families and supporting them to fulfil them.
- Collaborating with other services in the community to meet the needs of expecting mothers such as Lifestart.
- Collaborating with and building positive relationships with the IPAS managers which was crucial in the delivery of the play and stay sessions.
- Working together as a team with shared values that aim to positively impact the lives of the children and their families.

Challenges

- Accommodation Centres having no space.
- Lack of Attendance potentially due to the centre being a 1km walk from the Accommodation Centre. We had one family arrive the first week, they owned a car but it for work, so they left after an hour. They spoke of a family resource centre in Dublin that used to mind the children while the parents did English/Cooking lessons.
- Uptake in Letterkenny – We had good attendance in Conwal Hall for July, families from outside Letterkenny, No Letterkenny residents.
- Broad age range – As it was the school holiday period we have had to be adaptable in terms of activities for the children as we had a much broader age range to cater for. While this wasn't a huge challenge to overcome it meant we had to carry a lot of extra resources and utilise our floor space a bit differently. We were lucky in some centres they had a good outdoor space that we could use which was very beneficial for us and the families.

€10,000 - Poverty alleviation:

Provide essential items required by families on arrival into system for the welfare of their children. Essential Items needed until they can be processed and receive items needed. Lead agency taking referrals from other agencies

Action ongoing – Interim Report Lifestart:

Lifestart Services CLG poverty elevation fund is going well.

Families are being referred from several different agencies including:

- Donegal Parenting and Family Support Service
- Donegal County Childcare Committee
- The FRC's
- Fóroige
- Lifestart Family Visitation Service

Vouchers were purchased to allow families to purchase hygiene and other products not supplied (max. €50 per family).

Families were also supported to purchase uniforms, clothes and bedding. Hygiene products particularly nappies and wipes are being provided on request from the fund.

Further referrals have been received in relation to 2 newborn babies who require equipment such as sterilisers, bottles, Moses baskets and other essentials. These have not yet been sourced.

Spend to date €4,300 approximately.