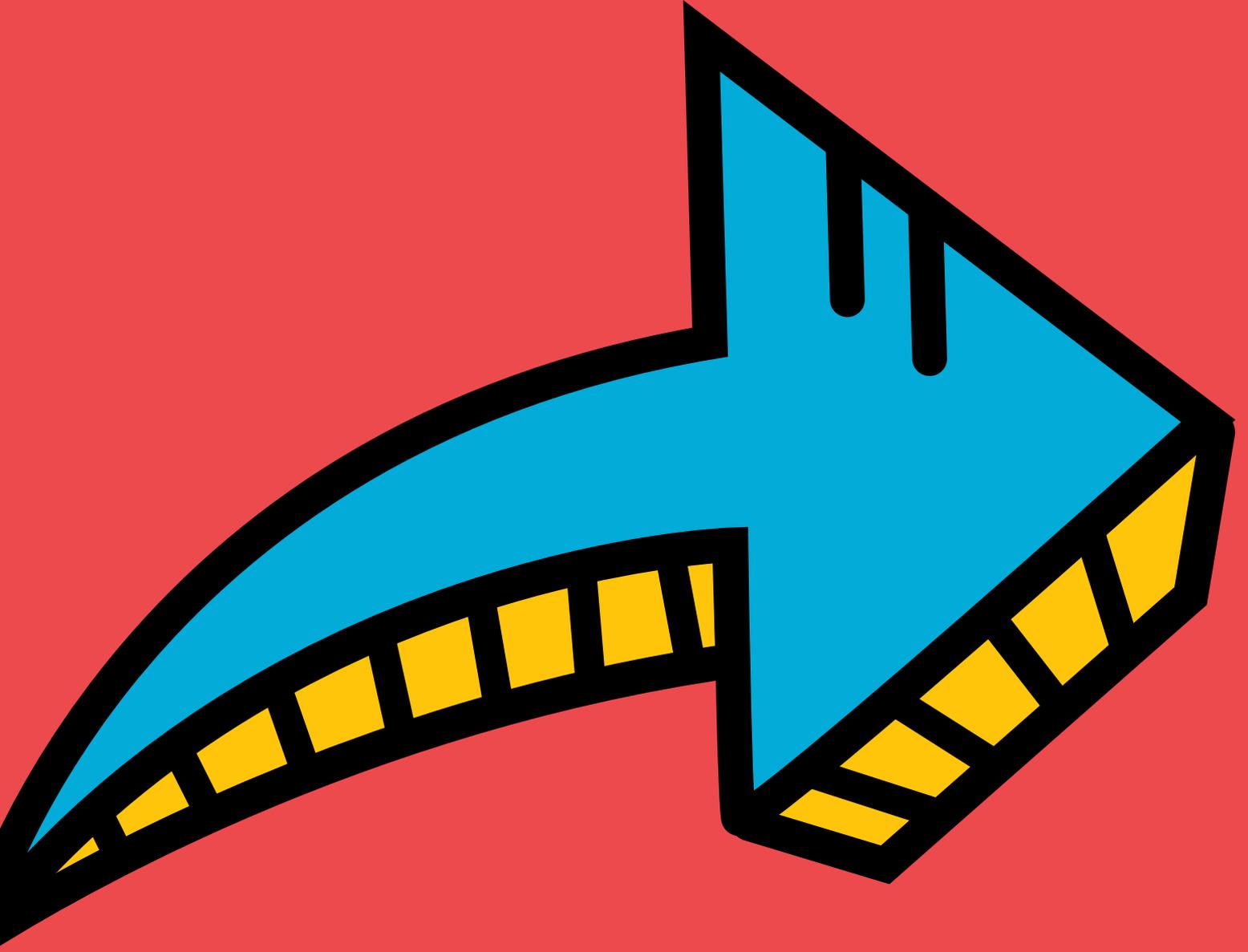




REPORT ON CONSULTATION WITH

Children, young people, parents and stakeholders
to inform the development of the new Children and
Young People's Plan (CYPP) 2025-2027



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**Our voices matter and
through this plan, we are shaping
the future we want to see**





Introduction

Consulting with and engaging with children, young people, parents and stakeholders is a pivotal part of the decision-making process of developing Kilkenny's new Children and Young People's Plan 2025 - 2027.

The main focus of the consultation was to understand:

- what is it like for children and young people growing up in Kilkenny
- experiences of parents & families living in Kilkenny
- how key stakeholders support children, young people & families
- challenges experienced by stakeholders implementing those supports

The consultation process took place from April to September 2023 and employed a range of methods to meet the varied needs of children, young people, parents and stakeholders' groups. This report describes the methods used, the findings that emerged and priorities areas for inclusion in the new plan.

Report written by CYPSC Co-Ordinator Leighann Ryan Culleton & design by momentumdesign.ie

Methodology

Young Children

Through the Kilkenny County Childcare Committee and Kilkenny Community Early Years Project, early years providers were invited to participate in the consultation. In their services, childcare providers were invited to submit words or drawings from children answers to two questions including:

- What is your favourite thing about where you live?
- If you had a magic wand, what would you change about where you live?

Children aged 6 – 12 years of age

Primary schools in both urban and rural locations were invited to take part in the consultation. A total of 3 schools participated, including 2 rural and 1 urban school. The school principals decided on which class groups would participate in the consultation. In advance of the consultation each school was provided with information on CYPSC and the consultation. This information was disseminated to both teachers and parents of the participating classes. In collaboration with the class teachers the CYPSC co-ordinator facilitated the consultation with the children. The consultation involved the participants answering two questions including:

- What do you like about where you live?
- If you had a magic wand, what would you change about where you live?

Focus groups with Young People 12 – 18 years of age

Secondary schools in both urban and rural locations were invited to take part in the consultation. A total of 2 schools participated, from urban locations. The principals of both schools decided on which class groups / students would participate in the focus groups. In advance of the consultation each school was provided with information on CYPSC and the consultation. In collaboration with the class teachers the CYPSC co-ordinator facilitated the consultation with the children. The focus group invited participants to answer/discuss the following questions:

- In your view, what are the 3 main issues affecting young people in Kilkenny?
- What are the good things about where you live?
- What are the bad things about where you live?
- What would you like to make better?

Stakeholder Consultation

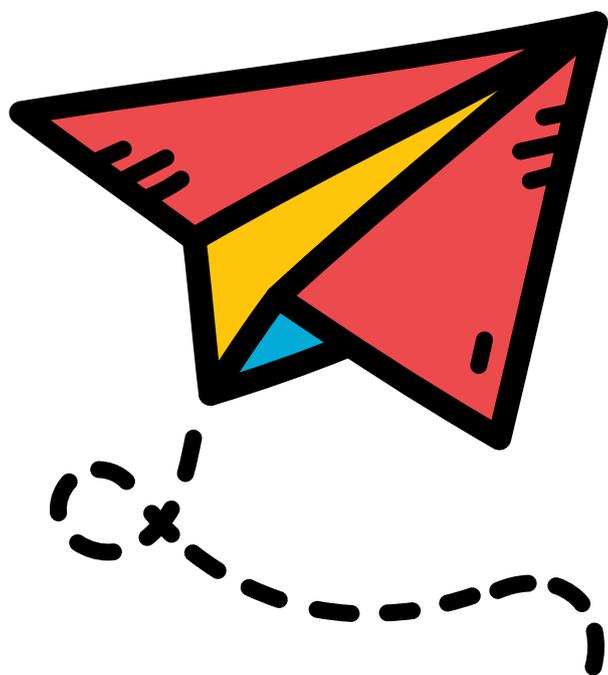
Kilkenny CYPSC member organisations and other relevant groups were invited to participate in two consultation sessions including:

Event 1: Review of CYPSC 2023 and planning the development and implementation of the new plan for Kilkenny

Event 2: Stakeholder consultation – Identify potential actions

In addition, 25 individual organisations were consulted and provided their organisations perspective on the following questions:

- Main issues affecting children/young people/families in Kilkenny
- Biggest challenges for children/young people/families in Kilkenny
- Positives for children/young people/families growing up in Kilkenny
- Difficulties experienced as a services providers supporting children/young people/families in Kilkenny
- What changes/improvements are needed to make life better for the children/young/families your organisation supports





Online survey for Young People aged 12 – 25 years of age

An online survey was developed in collaboration with Comhairle na Nog. The survey was designed to explore:

- The experience of being young in Kilkenny
- Involvement in youth services
- Information on services
- Personal experiences of key outcome areas

Comhairle na Nog hosted an event to promote the online survey. The event involved music, food, and discussion groups facilitated by Comhairle na Nog members. Additionally, agencies working with young people were invited to issue the survey from their organisation to young people including Ossory Youth, Foroige, Educational Training Board and all post primary schools.

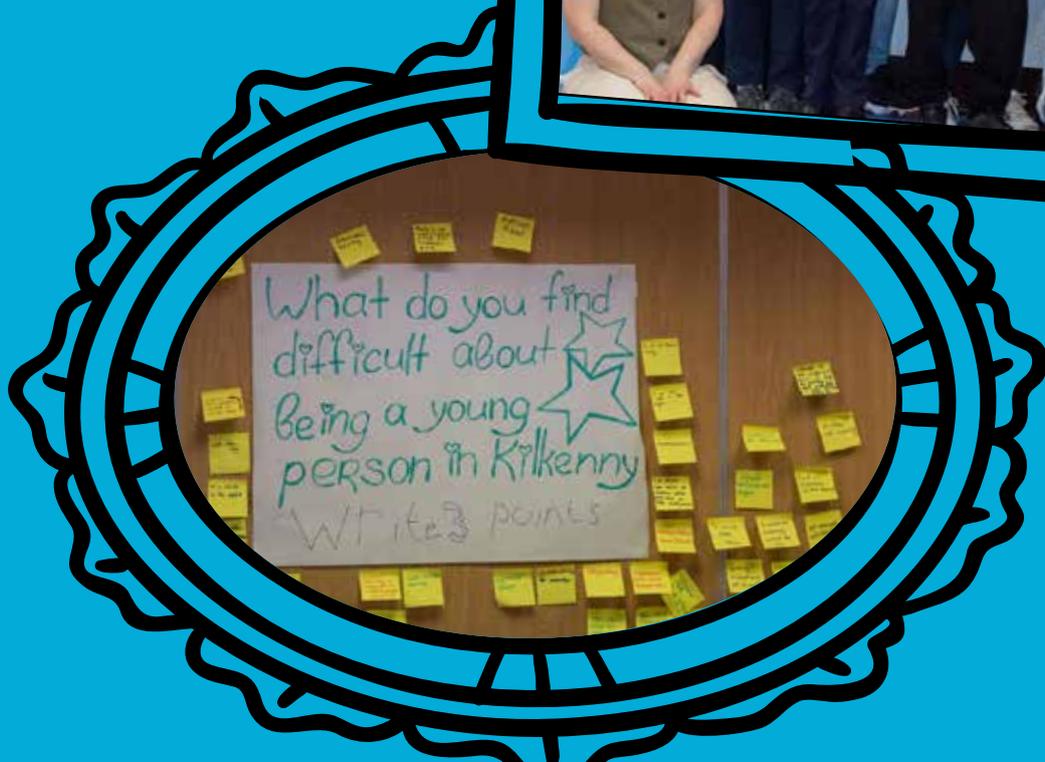
Online survey for parents

An online survey was developed for parents. The survey was designed to explore:

- The experience of being a parent in Kilkenny
- Information on awareness and accessing of services
- Personal experience of key outcomes areas

The survey was widely distributed through all the CYPSC partners.

Youth Consultation

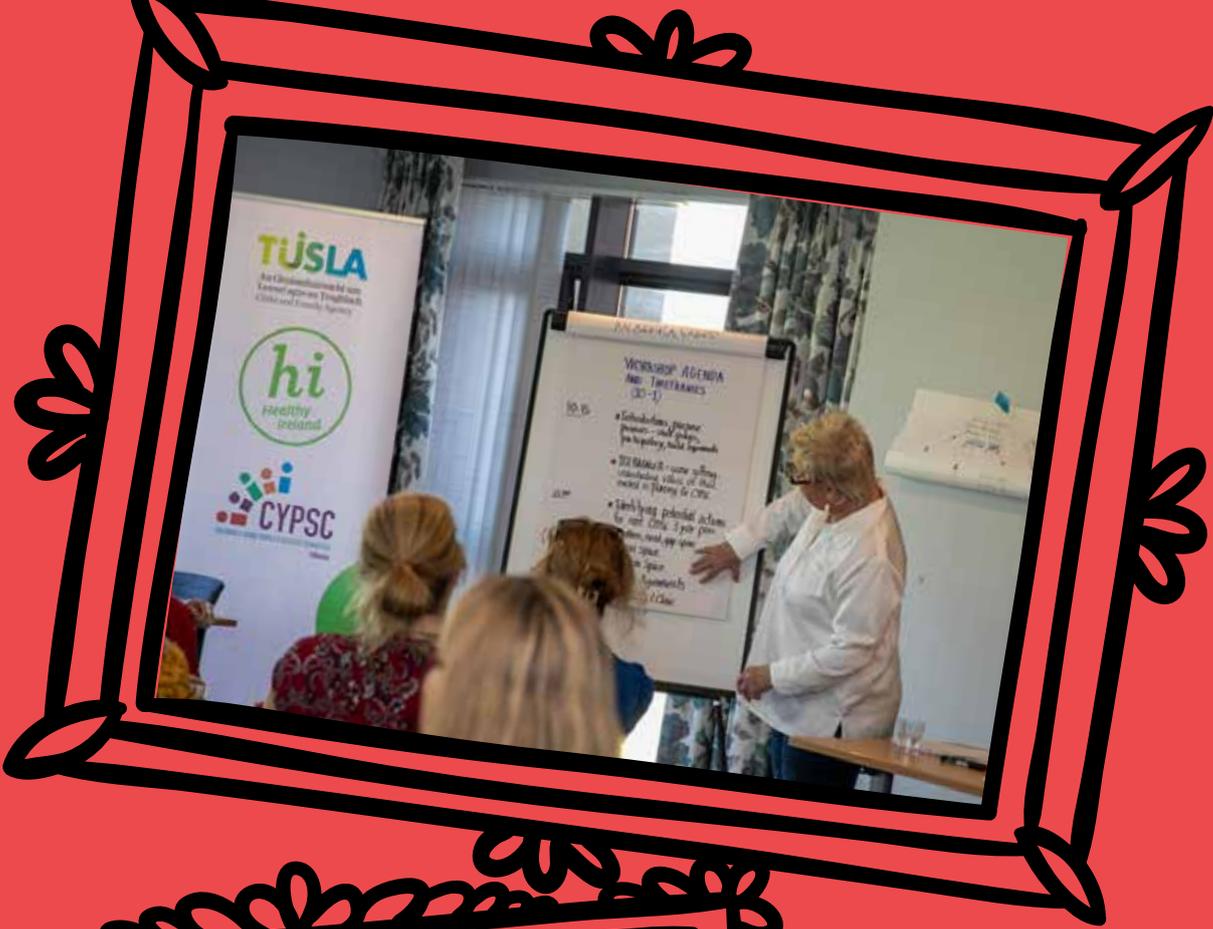






Stakeholder Consultation





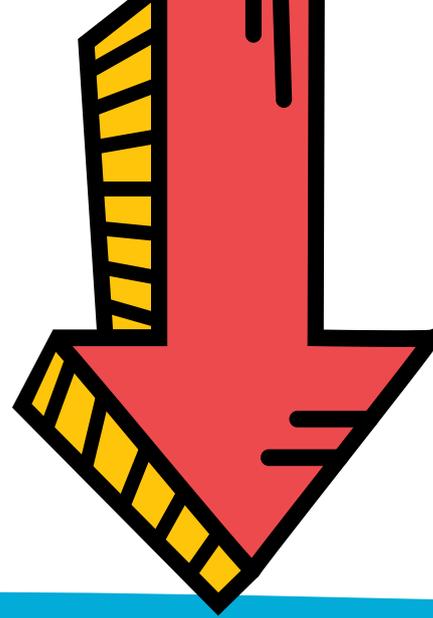
Findings

Young Children

Responses to the question 'What Is my favourite thing about where I live?'

Through words and drawings the majority of responses referred to one of the following themes

- Time with family
- Friends
- Playing
- Nature
- Fun
- Magic
- Sweets & Cakes
- Home
- Sport
- Family pets



'Getting smiley-face buns at the coffee shop'

'I like going swimming with mammy'

'I like playing with my brother and mammy and getting ice-cream'

'Playing hide-and-seek'

'Making Cakes with mammy and my brother'

'Going outside I bounce on the trampoline'

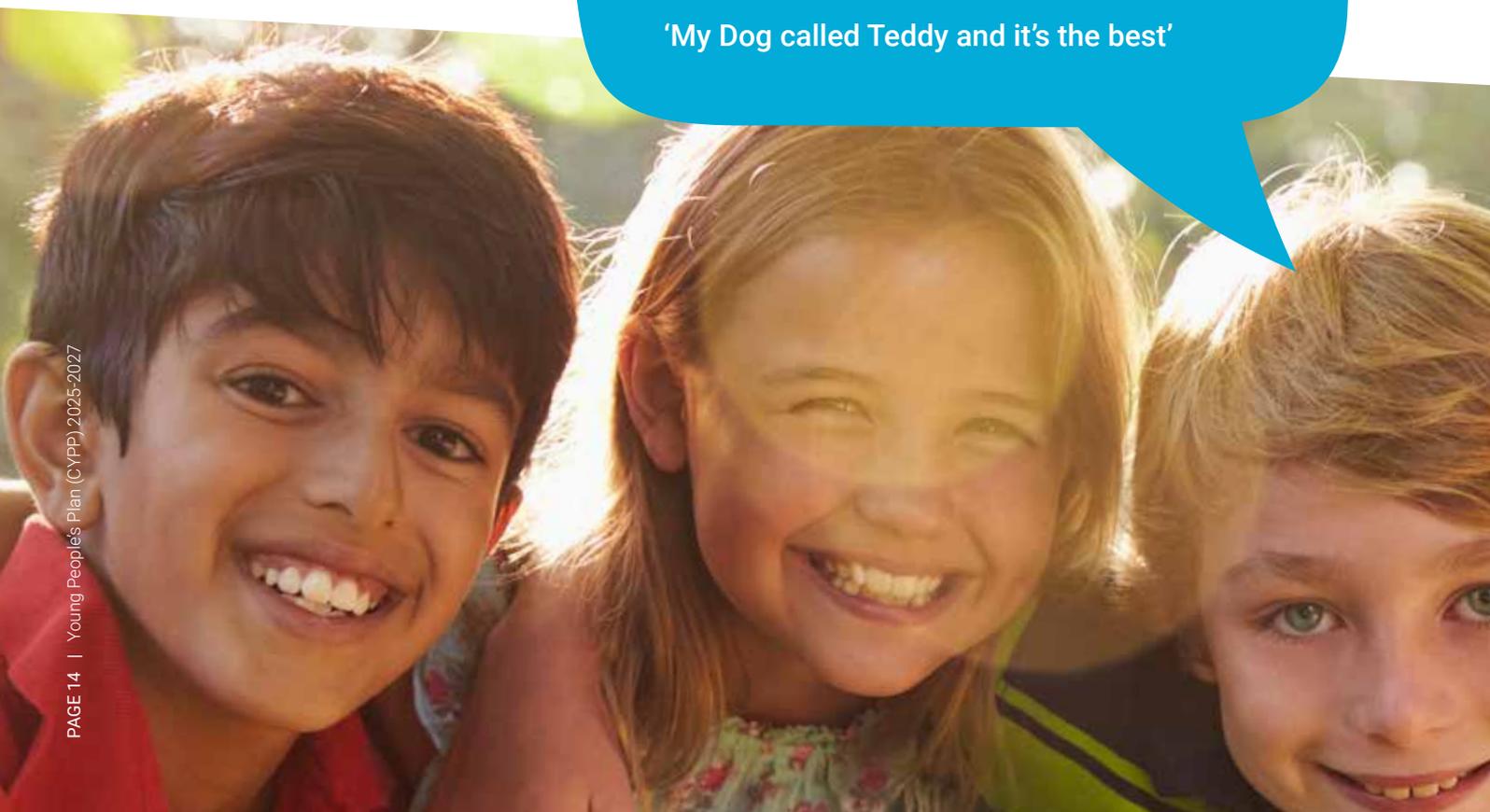
'Playing with my teddies and my toys'

'Playing on the trampoline'

'In Kilkenny, I love it because it is Green, and I love my dresses and rainbow and the party parade'

'My dad, my mum, my sister and my brother. I love my family'

'My Dog called Teddy and it's the best'



'Ride on a rainbow and a unicorn'
'More rainbows'
'Have a Popcorn Tree'
'Have a twin sister'
'Beach in Kilkenny – to make sandcastles'
'I would change it to Sunny'
'Turn Mammy into a frog'
'Turn daddy into a frog and a fairy'
'Live near a waterpark'
'Build a tractor factory'
'Own my own ice-cream shop'
'Build a dinosaur world'
'Have a bike park near my house'
'I would love to live near a beach'
'I would love to live near a lego shop'



Responses to the question, 'If I had a magic wand, what would I change about where I live?'

Through words and drawings the majority of responses referred to the following themes

- Make something magical happen
- Make something impossible happen
- More opportunities to do fun stuff
- More opportunities to be outside and in nature



I like the Playgrounds
and The lake

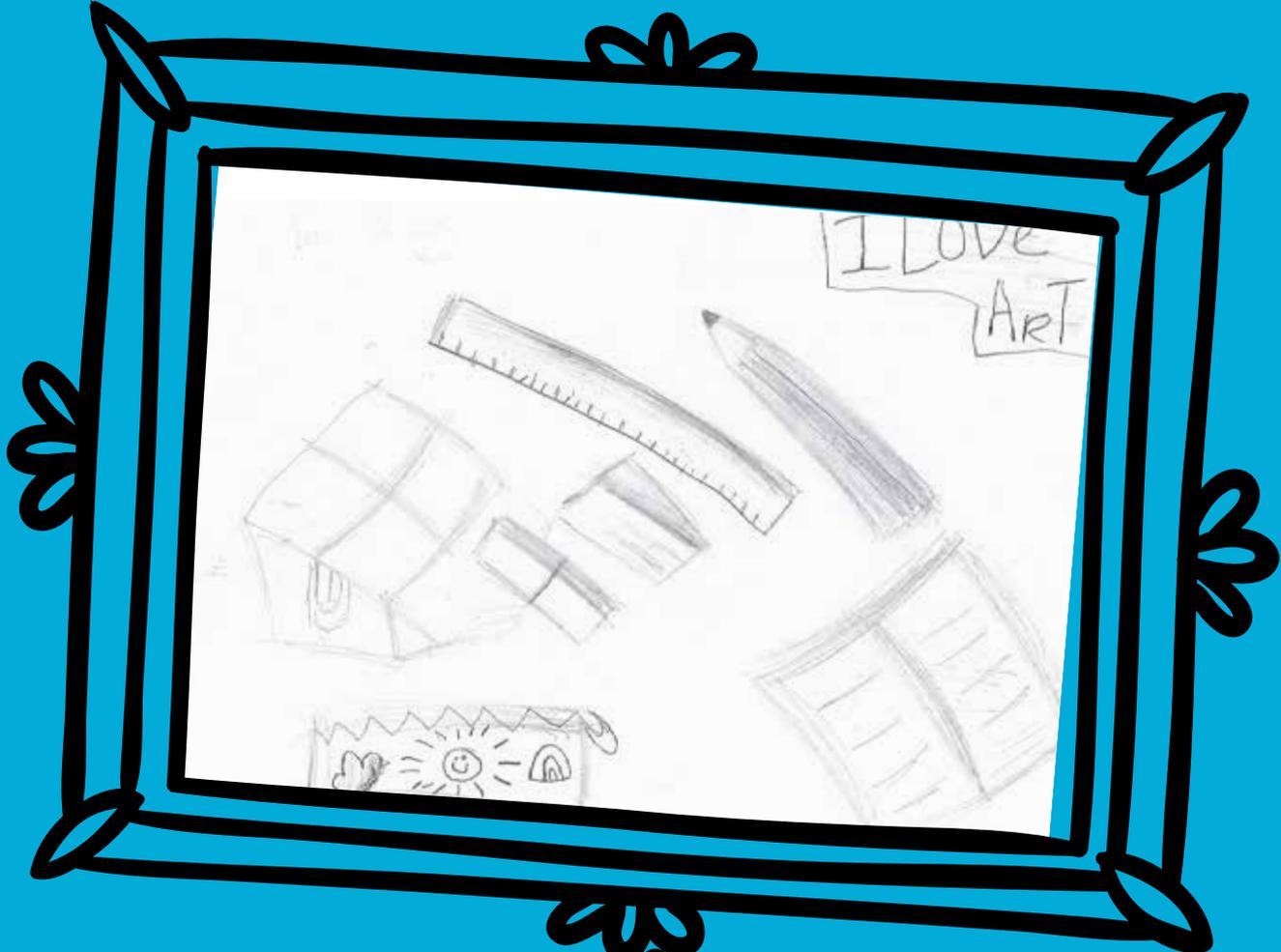


Playing
with my
friends

Playing
with my sister

Playing
a game of
chess





Findings

Children 6-12 years of age

Figure 1 outlines, a total of 151 children between 6 – 12 years of age participated in the consultation from both urban (34%) and rural (66%) primary schools in Kilkenny.

Location

Figure 1: Percentage of participants aged 6 – 12 years, from urban and rural schools

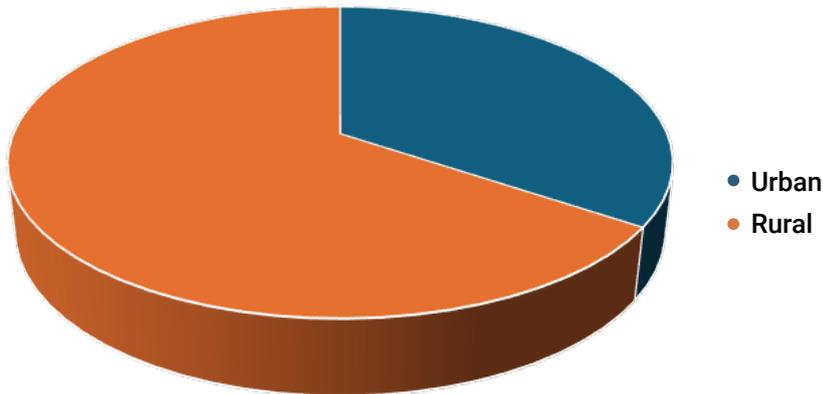
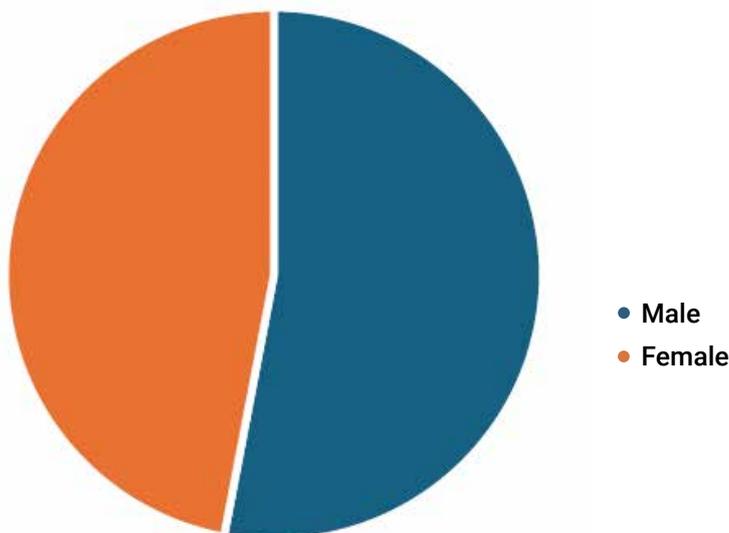


Figure 2 outlines that of the 151 participants 80 (53%) were males and 71(47%) were female.

Gender

Figure 2: Gender of children aged 6-12 years who participated in consultation.



My favourite thing about where I live.

Table 1 highlights, the majority of participants (n=44) indicated that being around nature was their favourite thing about where they lived. This was followed closely (n= 42) by the closeness of friends and family making where they lived special to them. Access to recreational activities was also a very important factor with 39 participants indicating that this was their favourite thing about where they lived. The remaining participants (n=26) highlighted that feeling safe in their community and or home was their favourite thing about where they lived.

Table 1: Themed participant responses from children aged 6-12 years to the question ‘What is my favourite thing about where I live?’

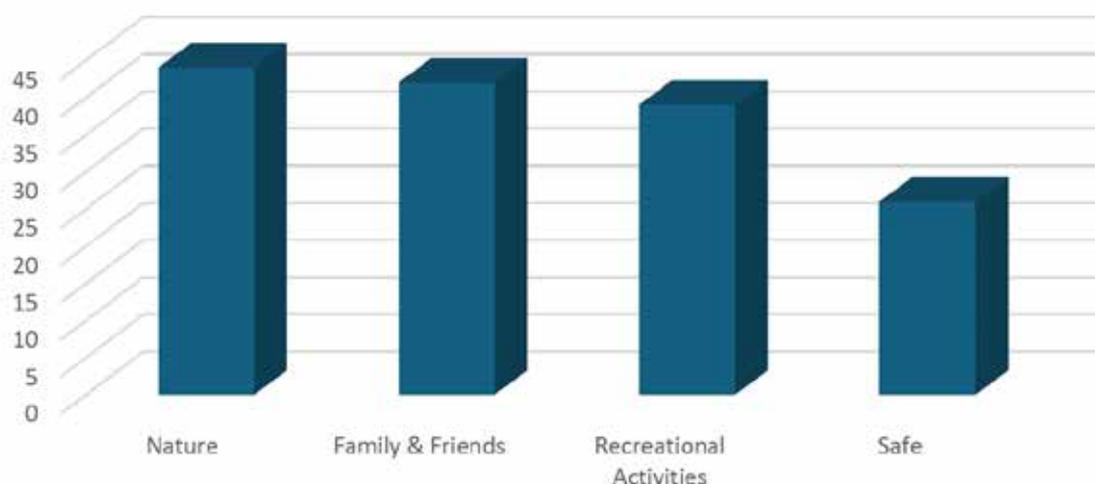


Figure 3 outlines additional information from participants responses under each of the themes.

Figure 3: Listed items for each of the themed responses to the question What is my favourite thing about where I live? from participants aged 6 – 12 years

Nature	Family & Friends	Recreational Activities	Safe
Beautiful Tree's	No bullying	Astro turf	Peaceful
The river	Live close to my grandparents	Soccer Pitch	Quiet
Animals	Friends are close to me.	Hurling pitch	My home
Green spaces to play.	Neighbours are very kind	The river	My Bedroom
Great views	Have a lovely community.	Youth Club	Small
	Play outside with my friends	Playground	Safe to go to the shops
		Tennis Court	Safe to play outside

If I had a magic wand, what would I change about where I live?

Table 2 highlights, the majority (n=77) of suggestions from participants were related to recreational activities. The second largest responses (n=39) were suggestions relating to improved infrastructure. Suggested changes relating to nature (n=8), family and friends (n=3) were very low in comparison to the number of participants (n=17) who indicated they would change nothing about where they lived.

Table 2: Themed participant responses from children aged 6-12 years to the question

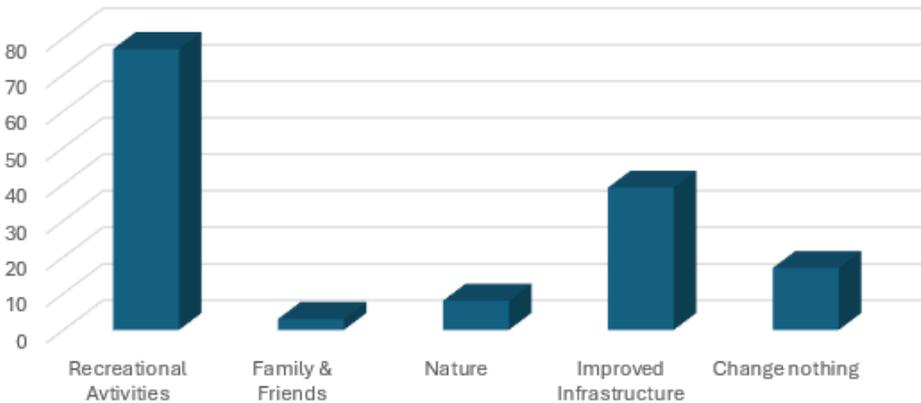


Figure 4 outlines additional information from participant responses under each of the themes

Figure 4: Listed items for each of the themed responses to the question 'If I had a magic wand, what would I change about where I live?' from participants aged 6 – 12 years

Recreational Activities	Family & Friends	Nature	Improved Infrastructure
Trampoline Park Bouncy castle on the river More Swimming activities Diving boards at the river Indoor sports hall Astro turf More hurling pitches Skate Park. More equipment in the park Fishing lessons Basketball court Golf course Go Carting Bush craft Ball wall Family day trips Youth Club Creative Activities Tennis Court Yes Day More Toys	No bullying Live near my Friends	More accessibility to fishing More green spaces	Bigger footpaths Clean up rubbish. Clean up rubbish in the river Better public transport More shops Bigger house for my family More seating areas for children More restaurants Better Hospital care for children Do up abandoned houses Have more public toilets Bigger bedroom Improve the roads Bigger garden To have a garden





“

more places to

play & and improved transport

”



Consultation with Young People aged 12- 24 years of age

This section includes findings from

- Focus groups with young people aged 12 - 18 years
- Online survey for Young People aged 12 - 24 years of age

Figure 5: Percentage of participants aged 12– 24 years from urban and rural areas

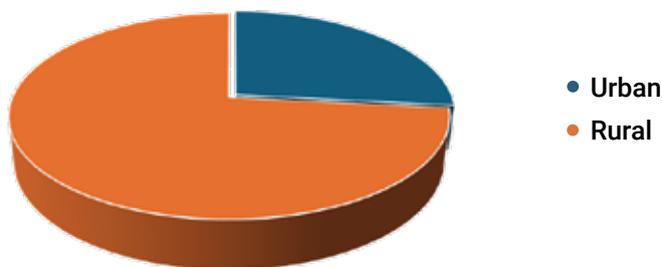


Figure 6: Gender of young people aged 12-18 years who participated in consultation.

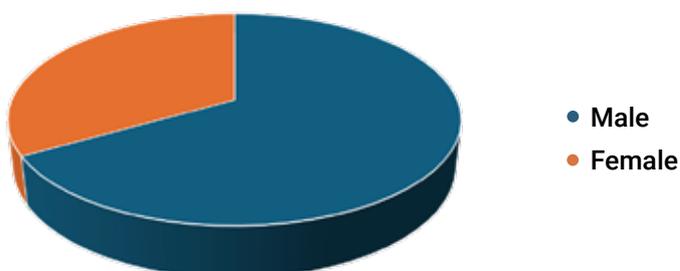
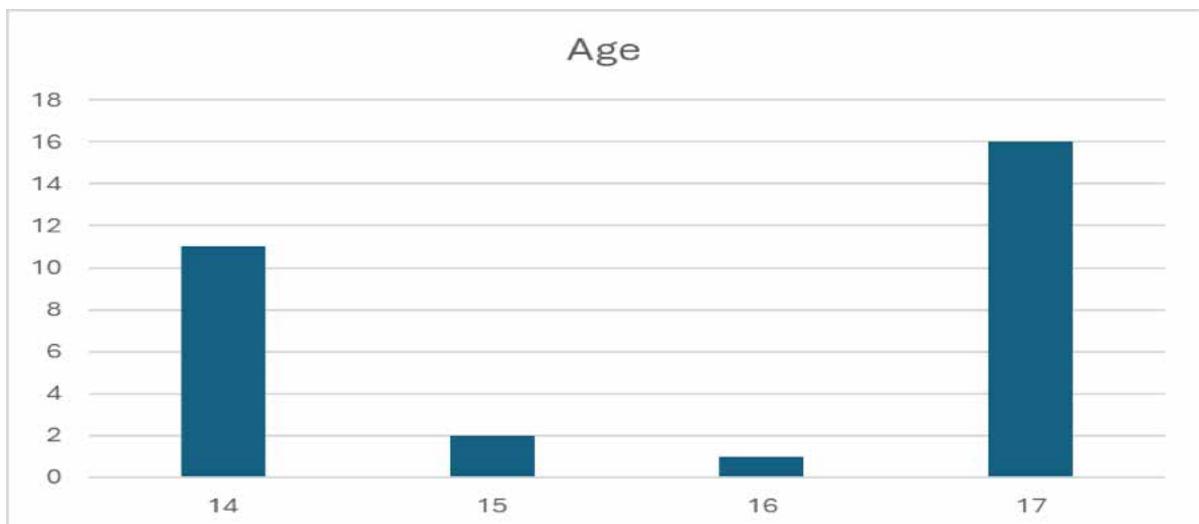




Table 3 highlights the age range of focus group participants. Of the 30 participants the majority were aged 17 years (n= 16). The remaining number of participants were aged 14 (n=11), 15 (n=2), & 16 (n=1)

Table 3: Age range of focus group participants

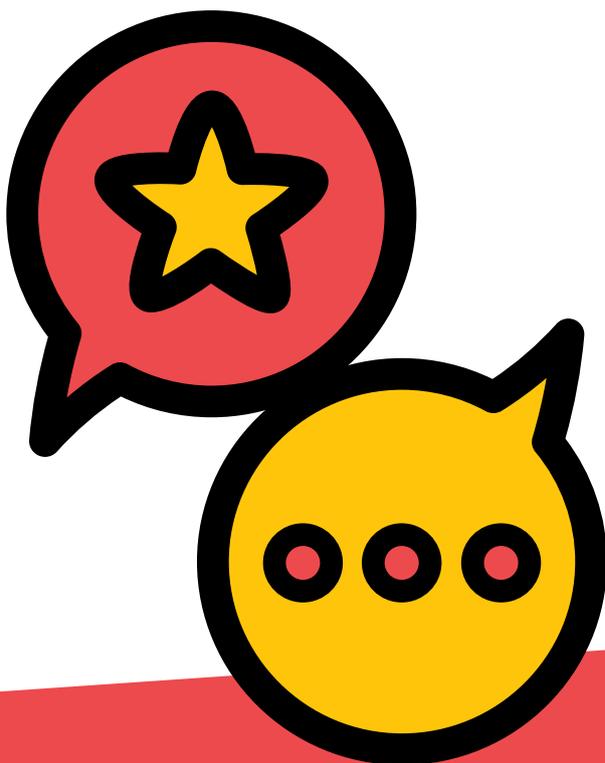
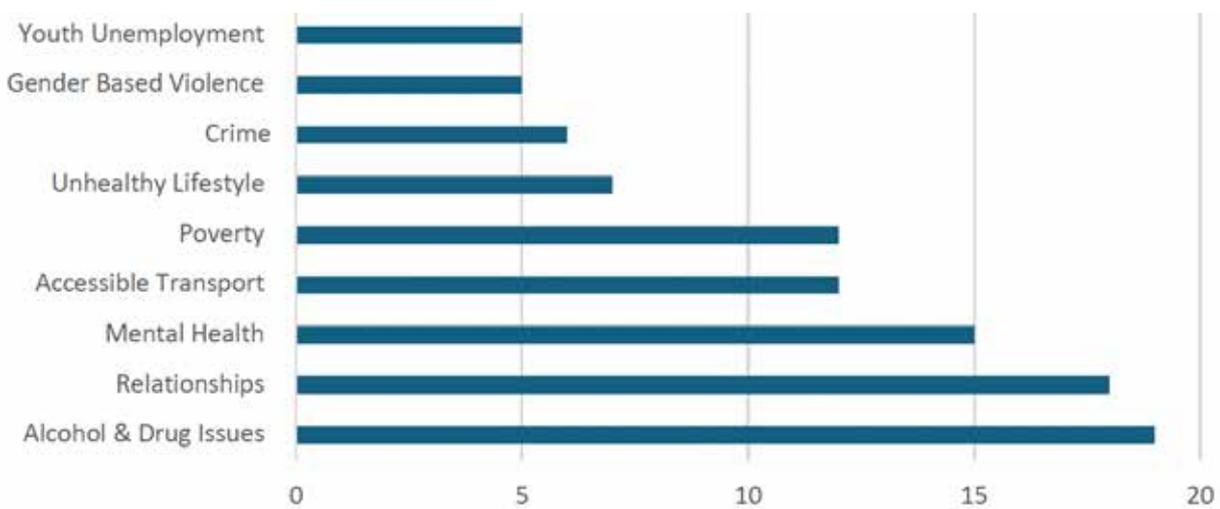


Consultation with Young People aged 12- 24 years of age

Table 4 highlights the main issues identified by young people. The top three issues include alcohol and drug use, relationships, and mental health. Included in under relationship is bullying, peer pressure and friendships.

Table 4: Main issues identified by young people aged 12-18 years

Main Issues



What is good about growing up in Kilkenny?

Figure 7: Listed items for each of the themed responses to the question “what is good about growing up in Kilkenny?” from participants aged 12-18 years

Infrastructure	Family & Friends	Recreational Activities
Accessible to shops & restaurants	Access to Youth Services	Good support network
Castle Park	Playing Sports	GAA Club
Quiet		
Peaceful		
Green spaces		
Outdoor spaces		
Bus into Kilkenny.		
River		
Coffee shops		
Library		
Nature		
Safe		
Quiet		
Culture		

Figure 7 outlines participant responses to the question ‘what is good about growing up in Kilkenny?’ The responses were themed into three areas including infrastructure, recreational activities and family and friends. The responses highlighted indicate responses that were identified by all participants.



What is bad about growing up in Kilkenny?

Figure 8: Listed items for each of the themed responses to the question 'what is bad about growing up in Kilkenny?' from participants aged 12-18 years

Recreational Activities	Infrastructure	Community	Healthy Lifestyle
<p>Not accessible to everyone</p> <p>Not enough pitches</p> <p>Not activities for teenagers</p>	<p>Lack of nature</p> <p>Public transport</p> <p>Lack of public toilets</p> <p>Not enough seating areas inside or outside</p> <p>Rubbish</p> <p>Local link bus</p>	<p>Young people judged on appearance.</p> <p>Judged as a young person.</p> <p>Judged when in a group.</p> <p>No spaces for young people to hang out</p> <p>Travellers</p> <p>Access to drugs</p> <p>No coffee shop.</p> <p>Drug usage</p> <p>Lack of sense of community</p> <p>Feeling lonely</p> <p>Feeling judged about where I am from</p> <p>Criminal activity where I live.</p> <p>Poverty</p>	<p>No cheap healthy food</p> <p>Cost of food</p> <p>Vaping</p>

Figure 8 outlines participant responses to the question 'what is bad about growing up in Kilkenny?'. The responses were themed into four areas including recreational activities, infrastructure, recreational activities and family and friends.

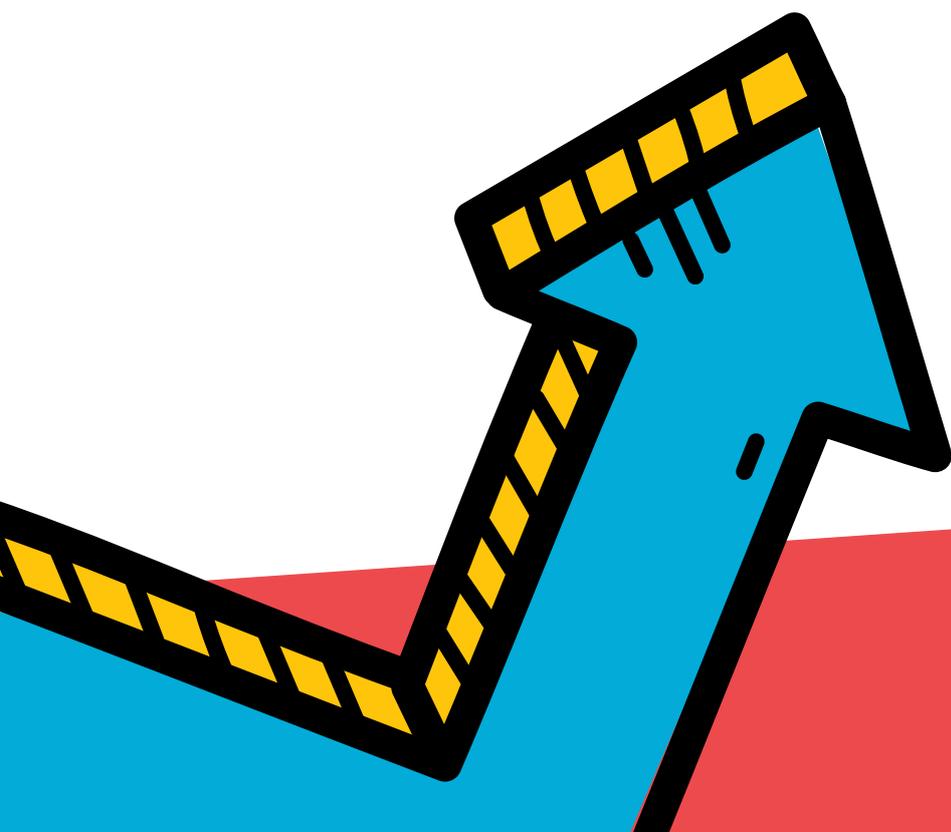


What would make life better?

Figure 9 Listed items for each of the themed responses to the question 'what would make life better?' from participants aged 12-18 years

Recreational Activities	Infrastructure	Community	Relationships	Support
Basketball court Extra football / hurling pitches	More green spaces More public bathrooms Larger cycle paths Cleaner rivers Public transport Free public transport More seated areas	Perceptions of young people Youth friendly café / restaurant Youth friendly spaces to hang out Manage drug issue Communal youth space in Kilkenny that is warm & safe Opportunities to work More gardai presence	To have friends No bullying	In school Support transitions in / out of school. Sexual health education More positive resources To feel happy Neuro Divergent young people With Learning disabilities

Figure 9 outlines participant responses to the question 'what would make life better?'. The responses were themed into four areas including recreational activities, infrastructure, recreational activities and family and friends. The responses highlighted indicate responses that were identified by all participants.



Online survey for Young People aged 12 - 24 years of age

Table 5 outlines, the age range of the 67 young people who participated in the online survey. Of the 67 participants the majority of young people were aged between 18-25 years of age (n=39) followed by 12- 15 years of age (n=20). The lowest number of participants were from the 16-17 years of age (n=8).

Table 5: Age range of online survey participants aged 12-24 years of age

Age

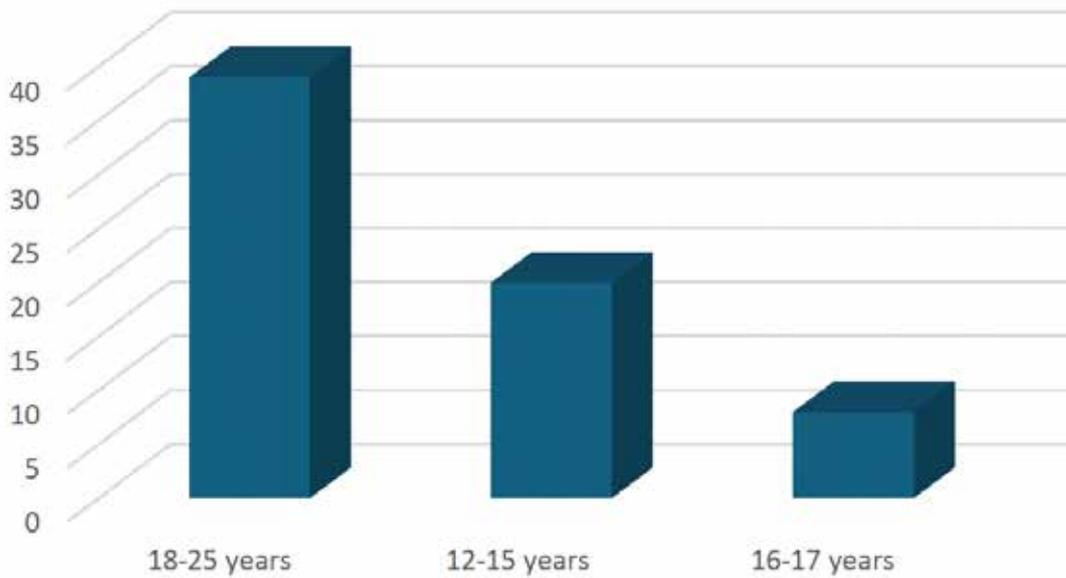


Figure 10 outlines the gender of the 67 participants. Of the 67 participants the majority were female (53%), followed by male (34.3%). The remaining participants were non-binary (3%) and 6% indicated that they prefer not to say.

Figure 10: Gender of young people aged 12- 24 years who participated in online survey.

Gender

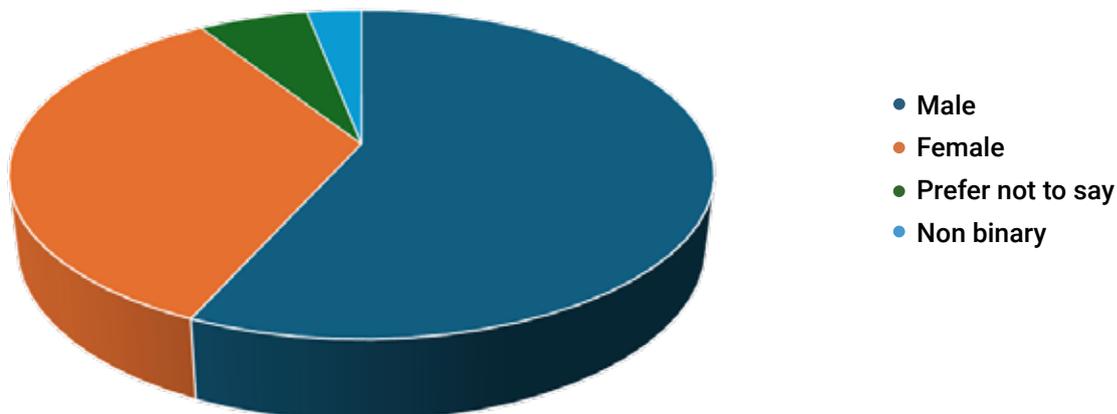


Table 6 highlights the ethnicity of the participants. The majority of participants were White Irish (n=32), followed by any other white background (n=17). The remaining participants included black or black Irish, Irish traveller, Asian, Latvian, Slovakian, Portuguese and mixed Irish.

Table 6: Ethnicity of young people aged 12 – 24 years who engaged in online survey.



What do you enjoy about being a young person in Kilkenny?

Figure 11: Listed items for each of the themed responses to the question ‘what do you enjoy about being a young person in Kilkenny?’ from participants aged 12-18 years

Recreational Activities	Infrastructure	Community
Things to do	Castle Park	Friends
Opportunities to be creative	Pretty Locations	Kind People
Youth Services	Easy to walk around	A sense of community
Fun	Shops	Diversity of communities
Going to matches	Safe place to live	
	Nature	

Figure 11 outlines participant responses to the question ‘what do you enjoy about being a young person in Kilkenny?’. The responses were themed into three areas including infrastructure, recreational activities and community. The responses highlighted indicate responses that were identified by all participants.

What do you find difficult about being a young person in Kilkenny?

Figure 12: Listed items for each of the themed responses to the question ‘what do you find difficult about being a young person in Kilkenny?’ from participants aged 12-18 years

Daily Life	Infrastructure	Relationships	Money
School	Insufficient public transport	Relationship difficulties	Not having enough money
Study		Struggling to fit in	Lack of affordable place to live
Not having a say in decision making		Hard to find new friends	The cost of living
English language		Bullying	Affordable place to eat
Finding a job			
Safety at nighttime			
Unhealthy lifestyle			
Alcohol & drugs			

Figure 12 outlines participant responses to the question ‘what do you find difficult about being a young person in Kilkenny?’. The responses were themed into four areas including daily life, infrastructure, relationships and money.



The main challenges for young people living in Kilkenny?

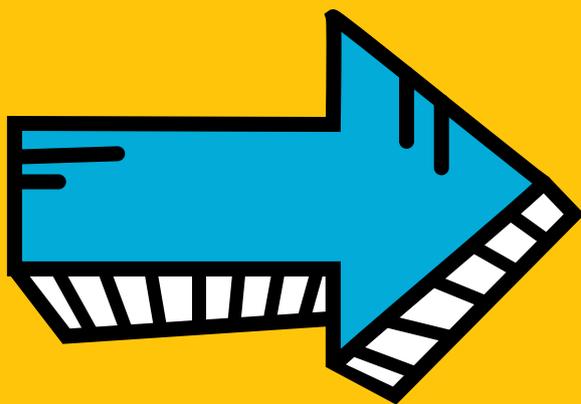


Figure 13: Responses to the question 'what are the main challenges for young people living in Kilkenny?' from participants aged 12-18 years

- School
- Public Transport
- Cost of living
- Fitting in
- Alcohol & Drugs
- Peers pressure
- Bullying
- Mental Health
- Lack of affordable housing
- Unhealthy lifestyle
- Physical activity

Supports, Services & Information for Young People

Table 7 highlights responses from young people on what supports young people participation in supports, services and youth activities. The majority of young people indicated support from friends or having friends present (n=27) encourages participation. Fun (n=20), and receiving information on supports services or activity, particularly via social media (n=16) is also an important ingredient in encouraging youth participation.

Table 7: Participant responses to the question 'what you think supports young people to participate in activities' from participants aged 12-18 years

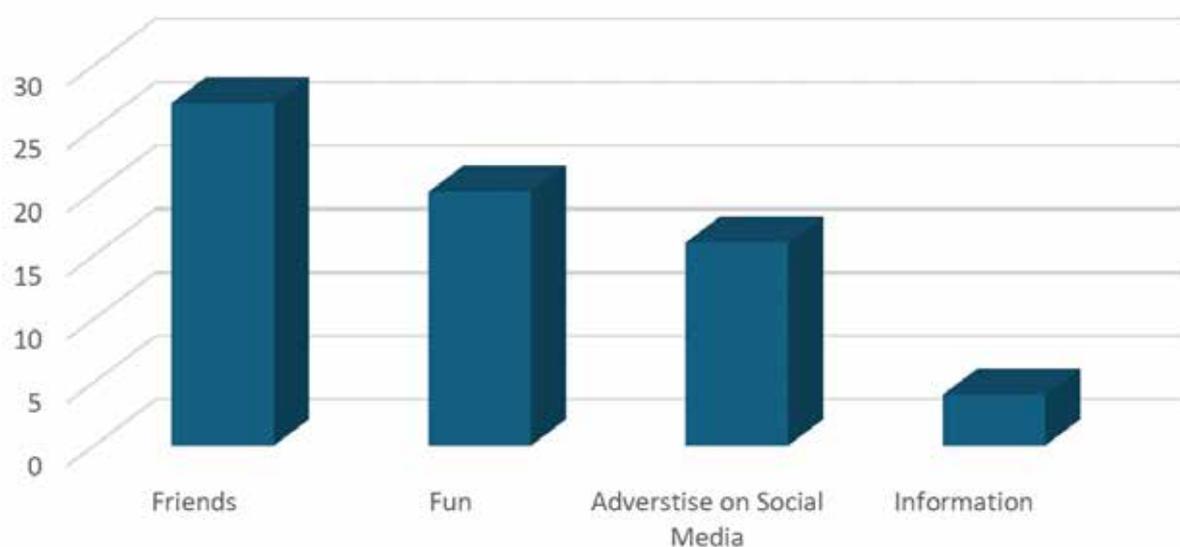


Table 8 highlights responses from young people on where young people access information on services and supports available to them. The majority of young people indicated that they seek information on supports from friends (n=51), followed closely by in school (n=42) and from social media (n=42). Other main sources of information on supports include family (n=32), youth services (n=22) and websites (n=18). Accessing information from professionals, community centres, libraries and GP were also identified by fewer young people.

Table 8: Participant responses to the question 'where do young people access information' from participants aged 12-24 years.

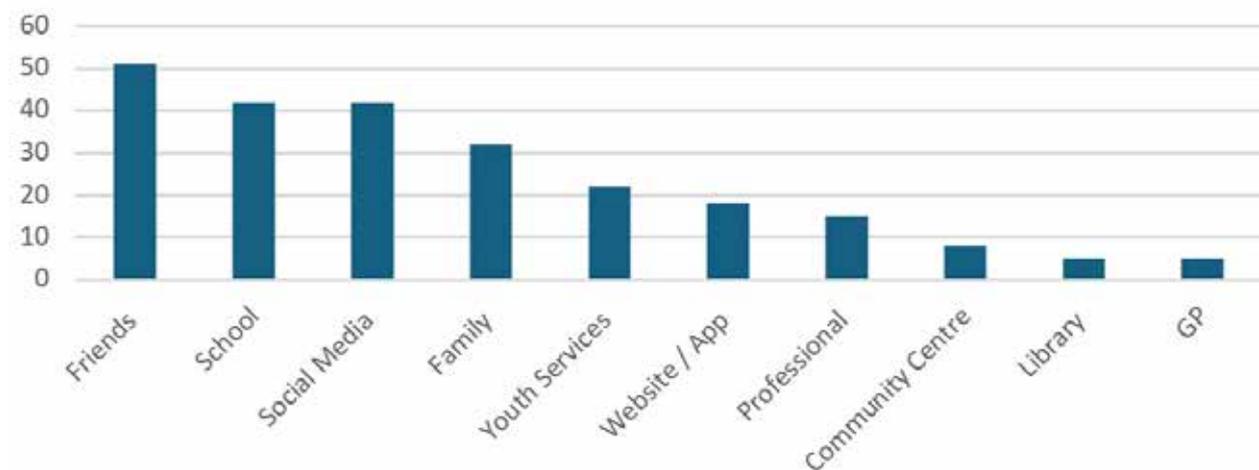


Table 9 highlights responses from young people on what information is important to them. The majority of young people indicated information on mental health (n=57) education (n=56), followed closely by in physical health (n=42) and things to do (n=40). Information on safety (n=38), relationships (n=33), arts and culture (n=32) and sexual health (n=32) were also highlighted as important for young people. Accessing information on Environment. Politics, legal, employment and entitlements were also identified by fewer young people.

Table 9: Participant responses to the question ‘what information on services and supports is important to young people’ from participants aged 12-24 years.

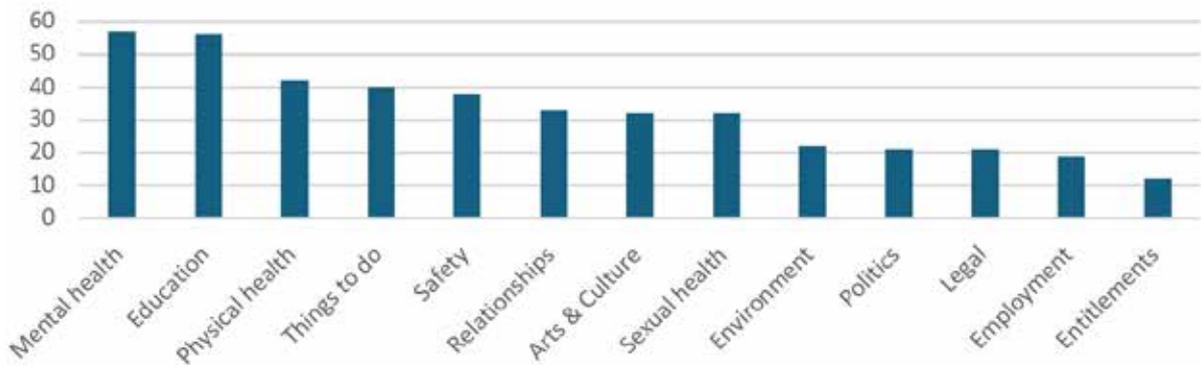
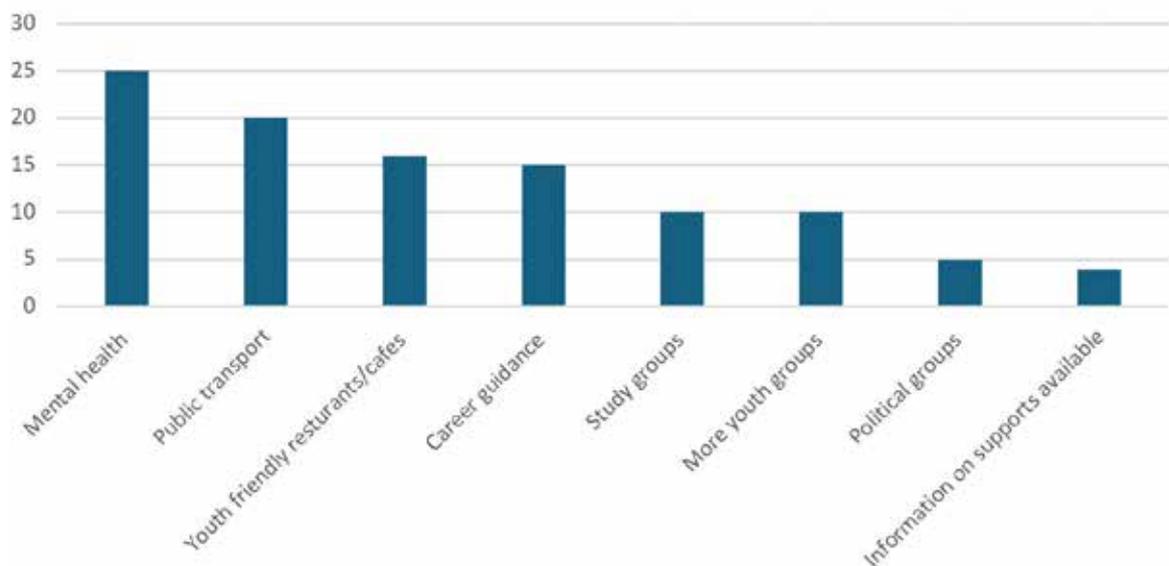


Table 10 highlights responses from young people on what’s needed for young people in Kilkenny. The majority of young people indicated information on supports for mental health (n=25) public transport (n=20), followed closely by youth friendly resultants / cafes (n=16) and career guidance (n=15). Access to study groups (n=10), more youth groups (n=10), political groups and information on supports available (n=5) were also highlighted as important for young people.

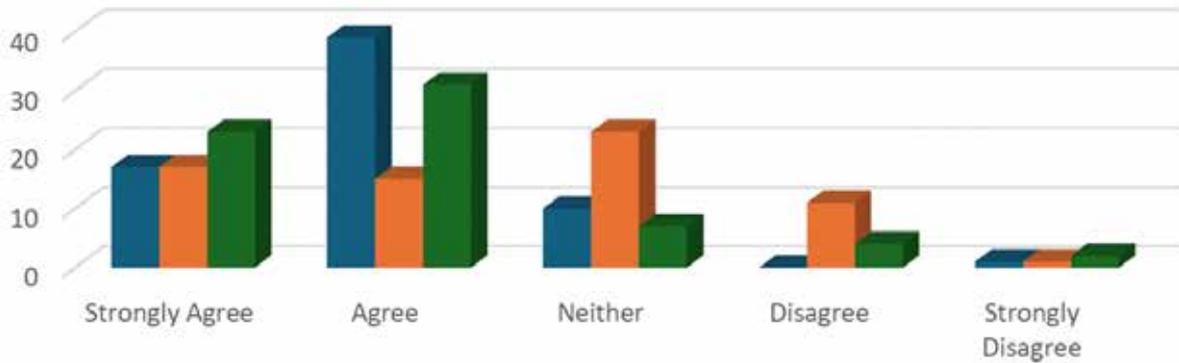
Table 10: Participant responses to the question ‘what’s need for young people in Kilkenny’ from participants aged 12-24 years.



Personal Experience of Outcome Area

Table 11 highlights responses from young people on outcome area 1 – Healthy & Active. The responses indicate that eating healthy and been physical active is important to the majority of young people. It also highlights that harmful substances are easy to access for young people.

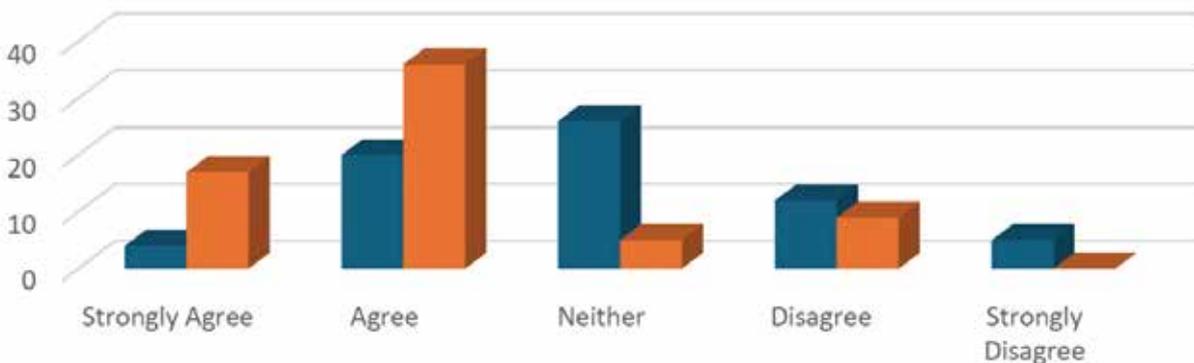
Table 11: Young people responses on questions related to outcome 1 - Healthy & Active



- Its is important to me to eat healthy food everyday
- Harmful substances are easy to access in my area
- I am physically active for a least 30 minutes everyday

Table 12 highlights responses from young people on outcome area 2 & 4 – Education and economic opportunity . The responses indicate the majority of young people in Kilkenny have enough training and employment opportunities in their area and access to quality education supports.

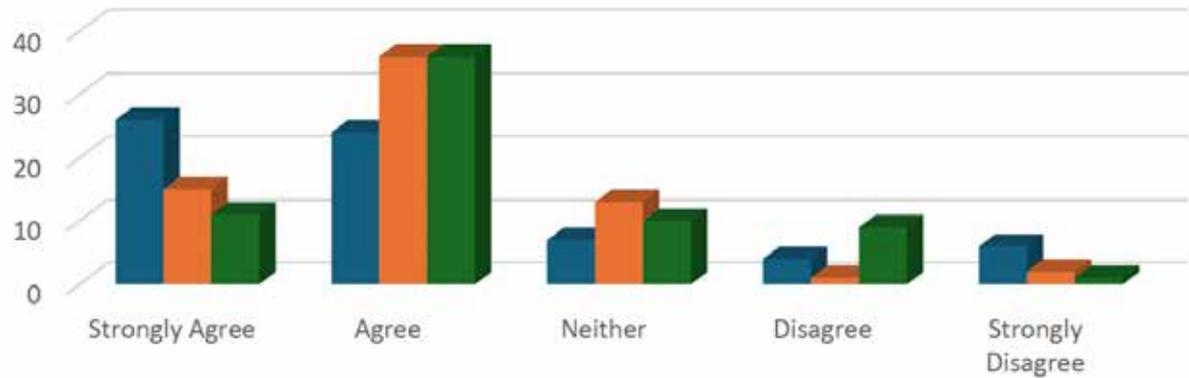
Table 12: Young people responses on questions related to outcome 2 & 4 - Education and economic opportunity



- There are enough training and employment opportunities in my area
- I have access to quality education supports

Table 13 highlights responses from young people on outcome area 3 – Safe & Protected from Harm. The responses indicate the majority of young people in Kilkenny have a caring adult they can tell anything to, have safe public spaces and have access to quality health services.

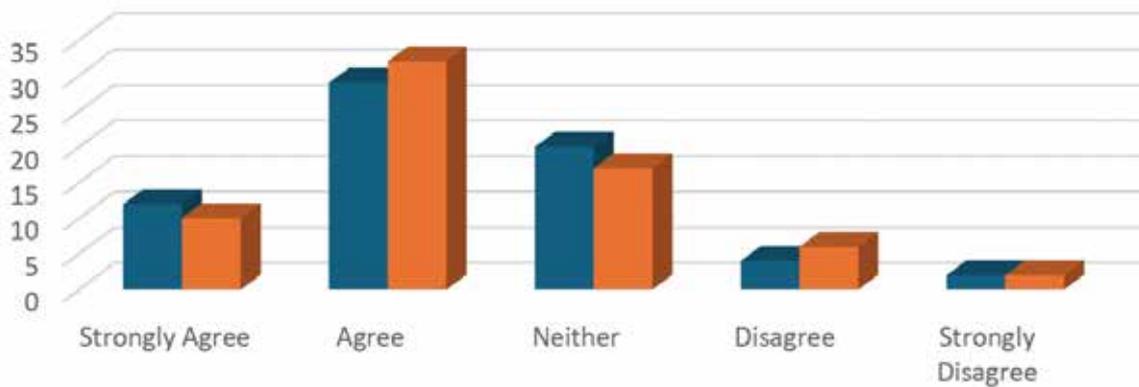
Table 13: Young people responses on questions related to outcome 3 - Safe & Protected from harm



- I have a caring adult I can tell anything to
- I have safe public spaces
- I have access to quality health services

Table 14 highlights responses from young people on outcome area 5 – respected and contributing to their world. The responses indicate the majority of young people in Kilkenny feel valued and respected as a person and make a positive contribution to their world.

Table 14: Young people responses on questions related to outcome 5 - Respected and contributing to their world



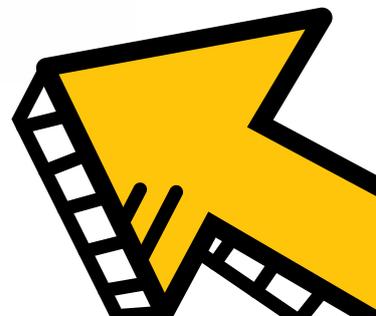
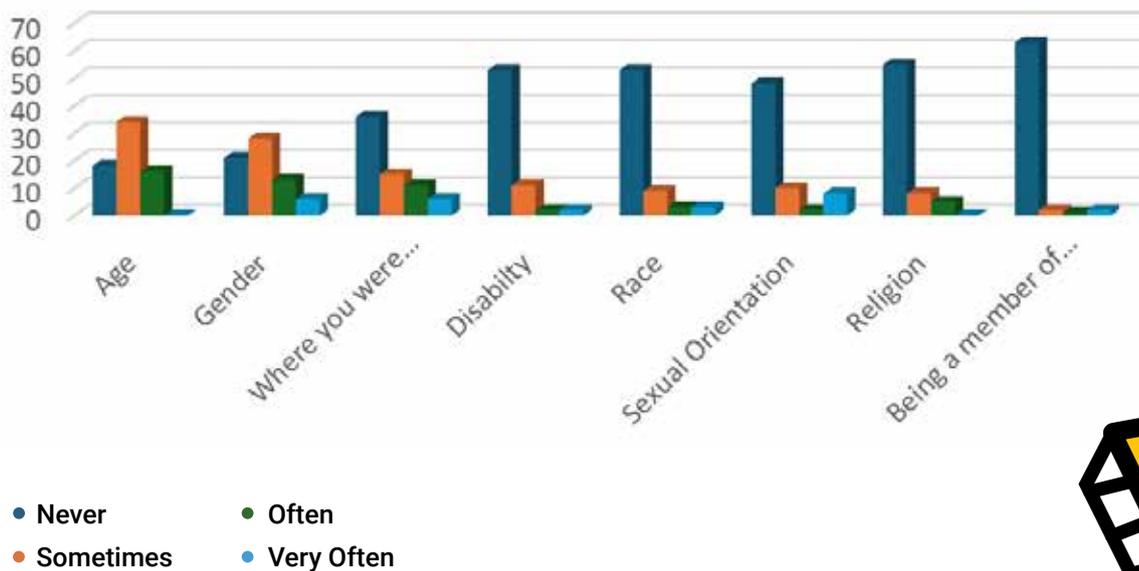
- I feel valued and respected as a person
- I make a positive contribution to the world



Personal experience of discrimination

Table 15 highlights responses from young people on the issue of discrimination across and number of different factors. The responses indicate the majority of young people have never been discriminated for their disability, race sexual orientation, religion or being a member of the travelling community. Young people responses also indicated they sometimes experience discrimination as a result of their age , gender and where they were born.

Table 15: Young people responses on experience of discrimination in Kilkenny





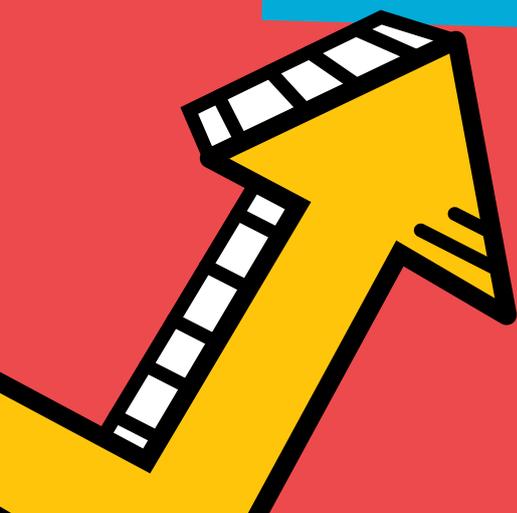
“

Connected, Respected,

Safe, Healthy &

Economically Secure

”



Parents



Figure 14 outlines the gender of the 35 participants. Of the 35 participants the majority were female (91%), followed by male (6%). The remaining participants (3%) indicated that they prefer not to say.

Figure 14: Gender of parents who participated in online survey

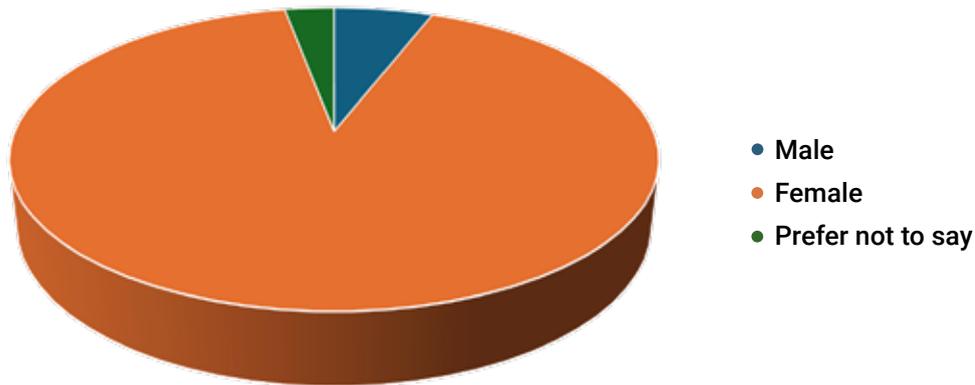
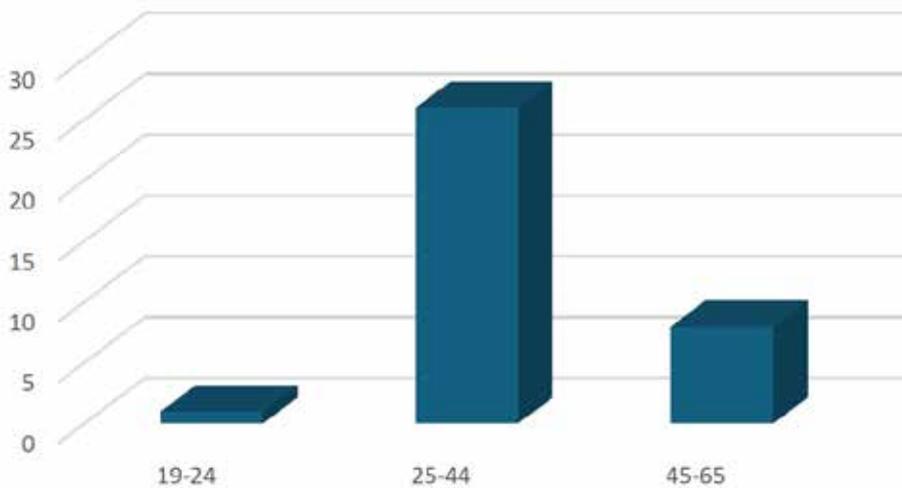


Table 16 highlights, the age range of the 35 parents who participated in the online survey. Of the 35 participants the majority of young people were aged between 25-44 years of age (n=26) followed by 45-65 years of age (n=8). The lowest number of participants were from the 19-24 years of age (n=1).

Table 16: Age range of parents who participated in online survey



Parents

Table 17 highlights the main status of parents who participated in online survey. The majority of parents are employed (n=25). The remaining participants were unemployed (n=2), full time carers (n=2), part time carers & employed (n=1) and other (n=5).

Table 17: Main status of parents who participated in online survey

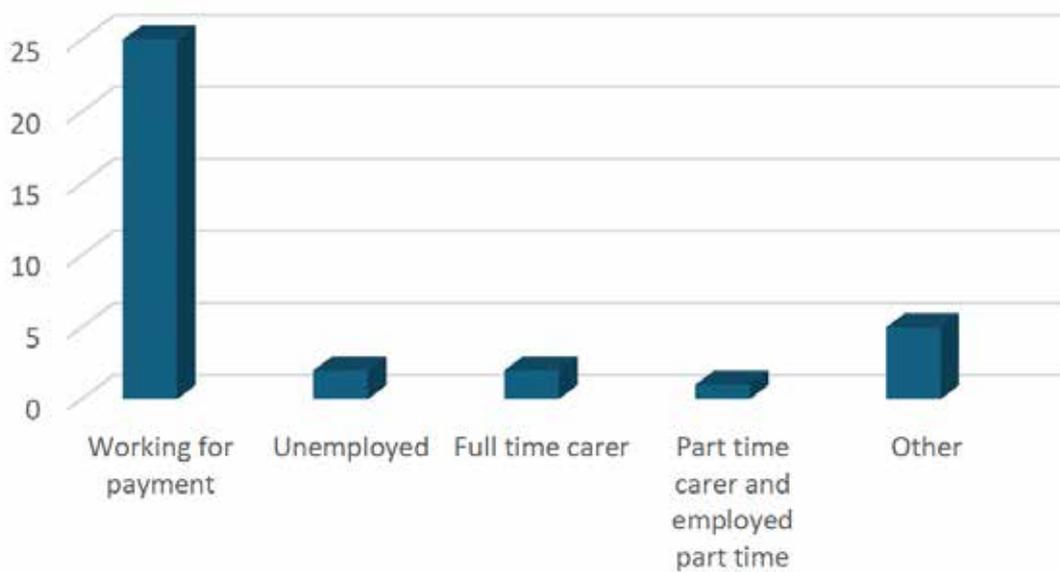


Table 18 highlights the ethnicity of the participants. The majority of participants were White Irish (n=28), followed by any other white background (n=4). The remaining participants included Asian (n=1) and other (n=2).

Table 18: Ethnicity of parents who engaged in online survey.

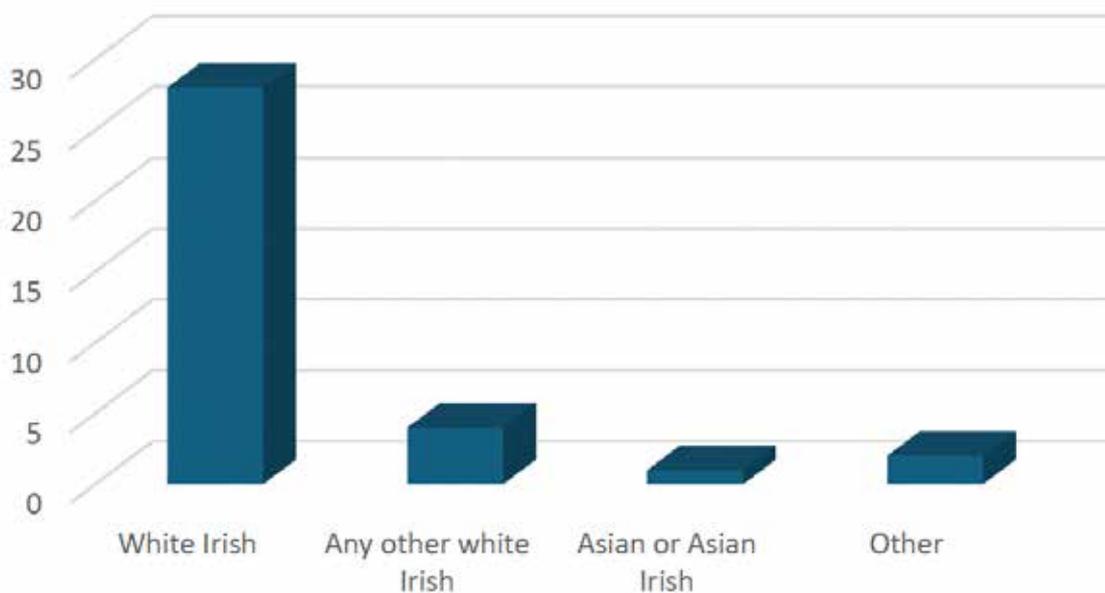


Table 19 highlights the age profile of children of the parents who participated in online survey. The majority of parents had children aged 6-12 years (n=20). The remaining participants had children aged 0-5 years (n=8) aged 13-17 years (n=6), and aged 18-24 years (n=1)

Table 19: Age profile of children of the parents who engaged in online survey.

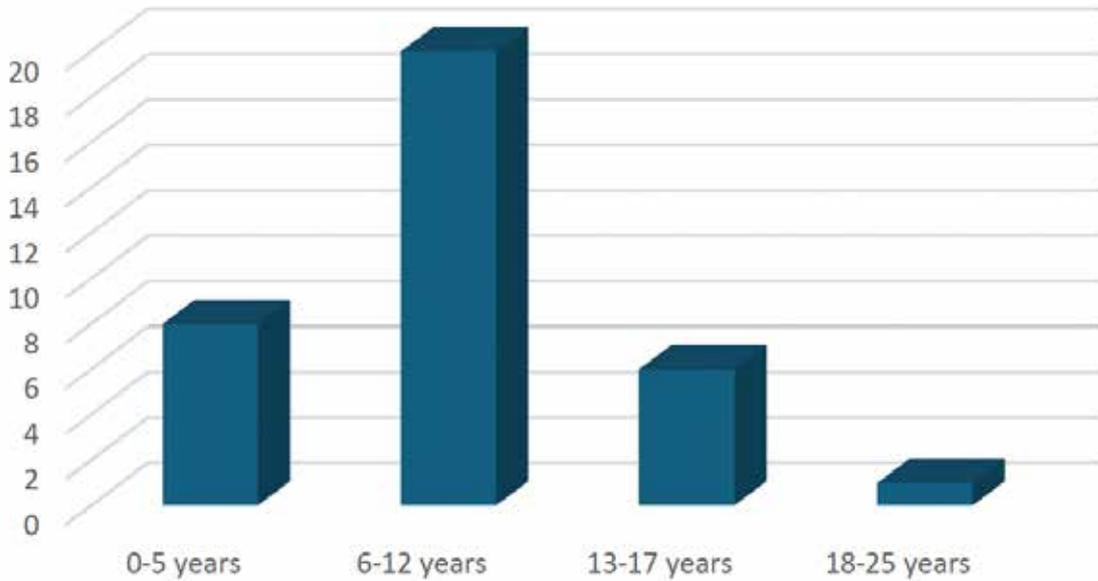
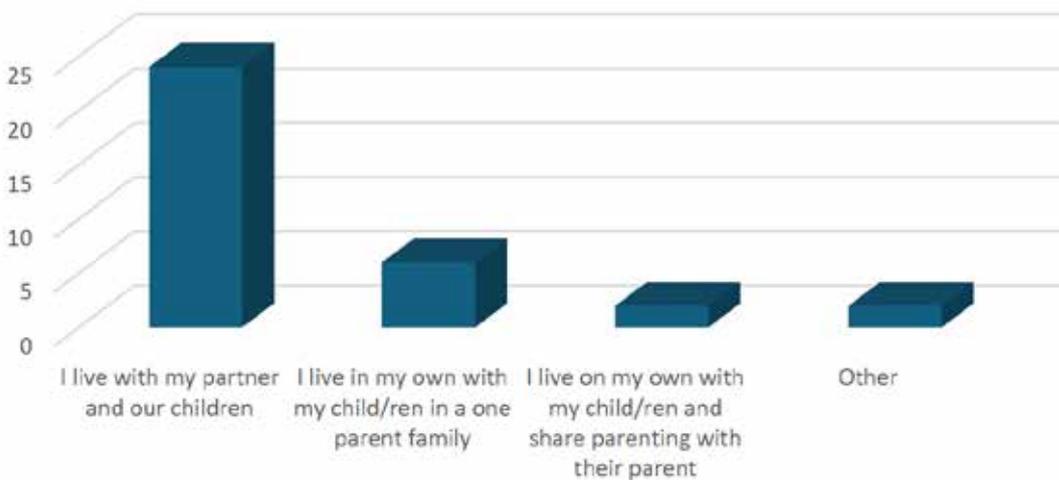


Table 20 highlights the current parent status of the parents who participated in online survey. The majority of parents live with their partner and children (n=24). The remaining participants live in a one parent family (n=6), share parenting role (n=2) and other (n=2)

Table 20: Current parental status of parents who engaged in online survey



Experience of being a Parent in Kilkenny

Figure 15: Parents' themed responses to the question.

What do you enjoy most about being a parent/guardian in Kilkenny	
Recreational activities	Sense of Community
Green spaces	Schools
Arts & culture	Beautiful spaces & places

Figure 16: Parents themed responses to the question.

What so you find most difficult about being a parent/guardian in Kilkenny'	
Cost of living	Childcare
Public transport	Access to GP
Managing work life balance	Lack of recourses / activities in rural areas

Figure 17: Parents themed responses to the question.

What parent support would you like to access'	
Teen parent support	Support for personal wellbeing
Lone parent support	Parenting with disability, illness or additional needs
Support for navigating services	

Figure 18: Parents themed responses to the question.

What would make it easier for you to take part in the supports you suggested	
Transport	Childcare
Cost	Geographical spread
Knowledge of events	



Figure 19: Parents responses to the question.

One thing that would make your life easier as a parent?

Cost of activities	Childcare
Parenting support	Transport
Housing	Access to GP
Things to do with my family	Support for children and adult mental health





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Parents in Kilkenny rely

on local resources

to find support and services

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Information relevant to Parents

Table 21: Participant responses to the question 'How I find information about supports and services in Kilkenny?'

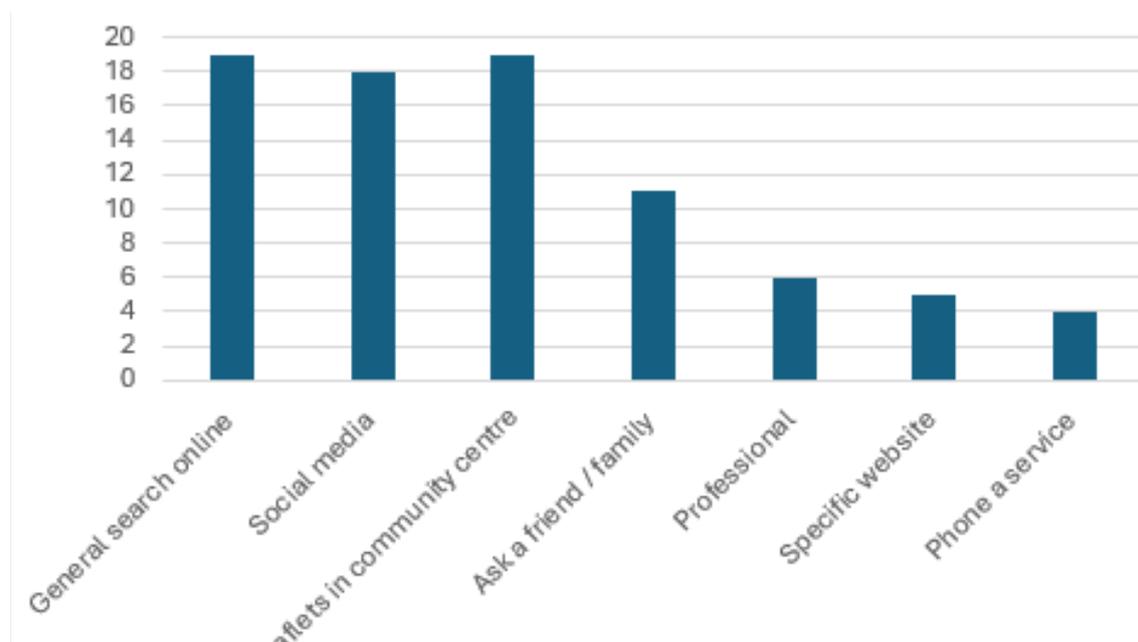
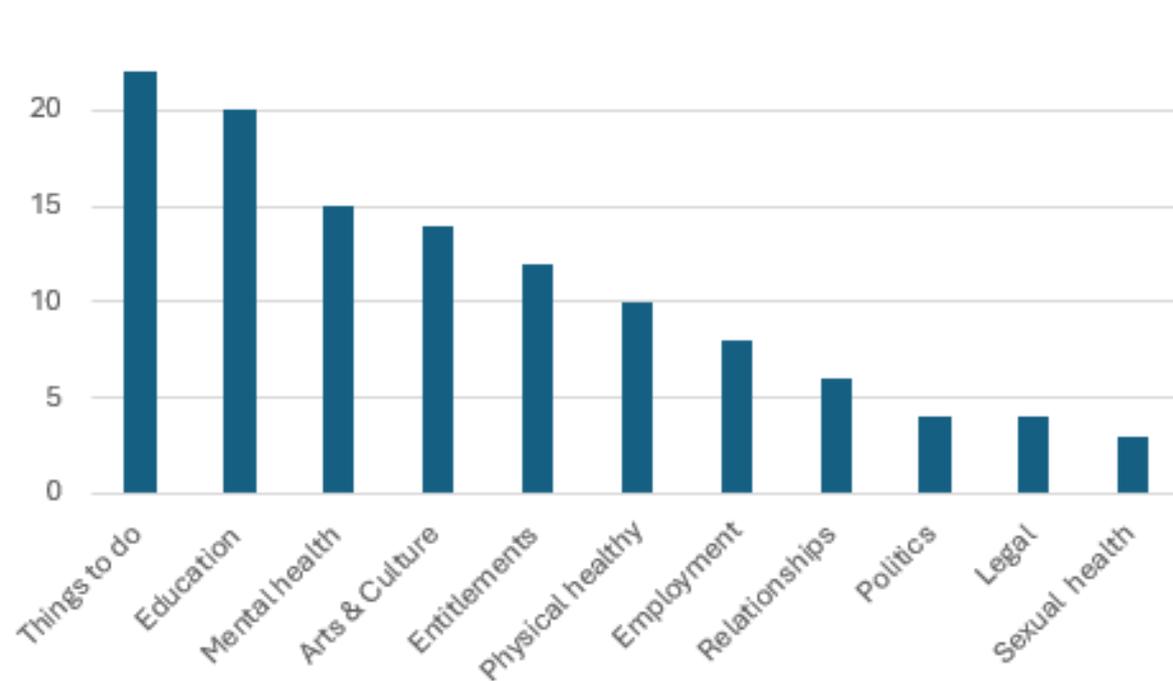


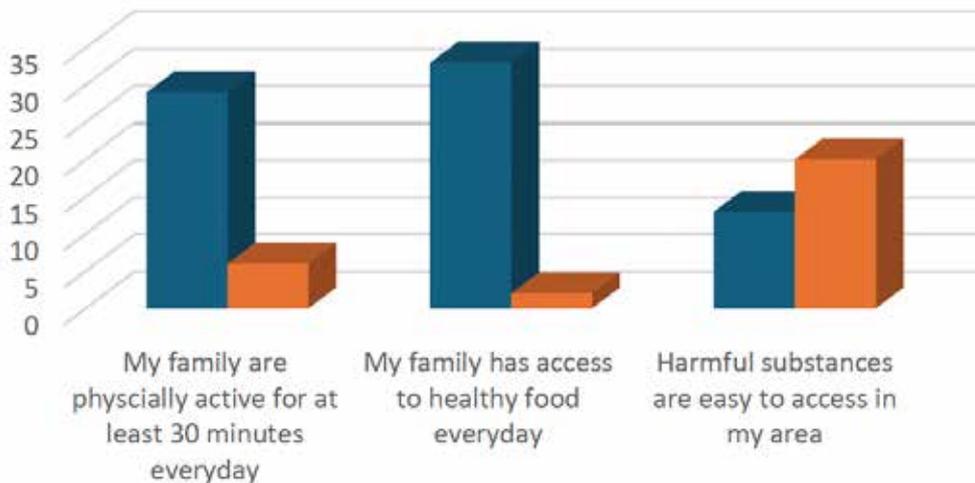
Table 22: Participant responses to the question 'What type of information might you be looking for?'



Parents Personal Experience of Outcome Areas

Table 23 highlights responses from parents on outcome area 1 – Healthy & Active. The responses indicate that eating healthy and been physical active is important to families in Kilkenny. Similar to responses from young people, it also highlights that harmful substances are easy to access in communities.

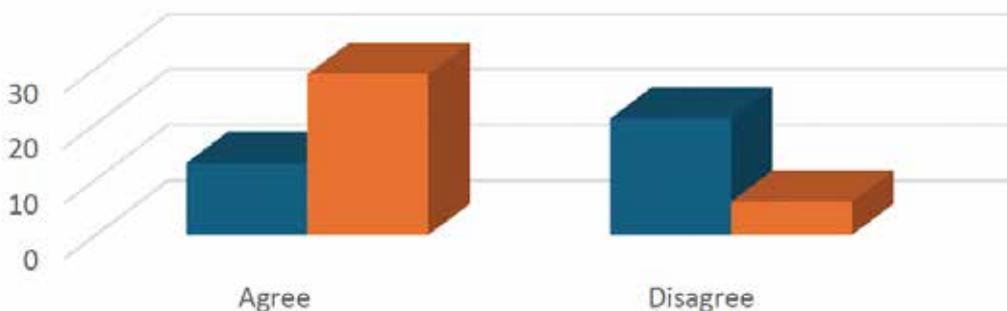
Table 23: Parents responses on questions related to outcome 1 - Healthy & Active



- Agree
- Disagree

Table 24 highlights responses from young people on outcome area 2 & 4 – Education and economic opportunity. The responses indicate the majority of parents in Kilkenny that there isn't enough training and employment opportunities in their area but feel that their family has access to quality education supports.

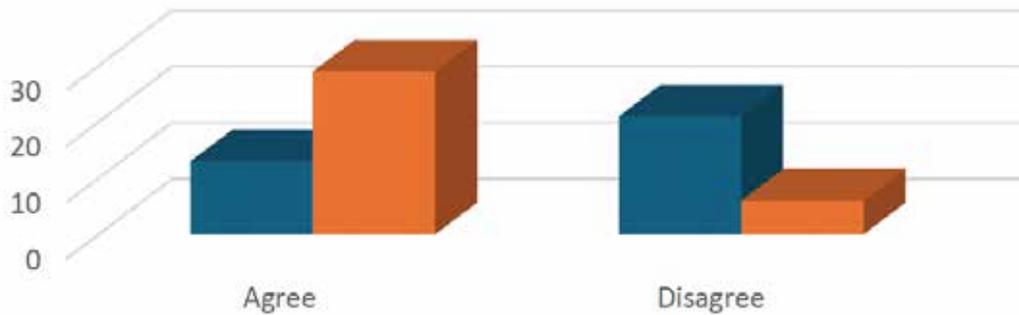
Table 24: Parents responses on questions related to outcome 2 & 4 - Education and economic opportunity



- Agree
- Disagree

Table 25 highlights responses from young people on outcome area 3 – Safe & Protected from Harm. The responses indicate that parents feel where they live is a safe place to raise children. There is a more divided response in accessing quality health services.

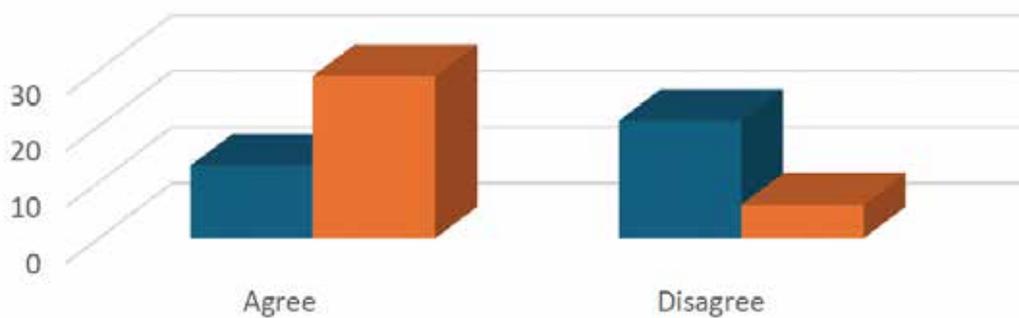
Table 25: Parents responses on questions related to outcome 3 - Safe & Protected from harm



- All my family have access to quality health services
- Where I live is a safe space to raise children

Table 26 highlights responses from young people on outcome area 5 – respected and contributing to their world. The responses indicate the majority of parents in Kilkenny have someone they can talk to, feel valued and respected as a person and make a positive contribution to their world.

Table 26: Parents responses on questions related to outcome 5 - Respected and contributing to their world

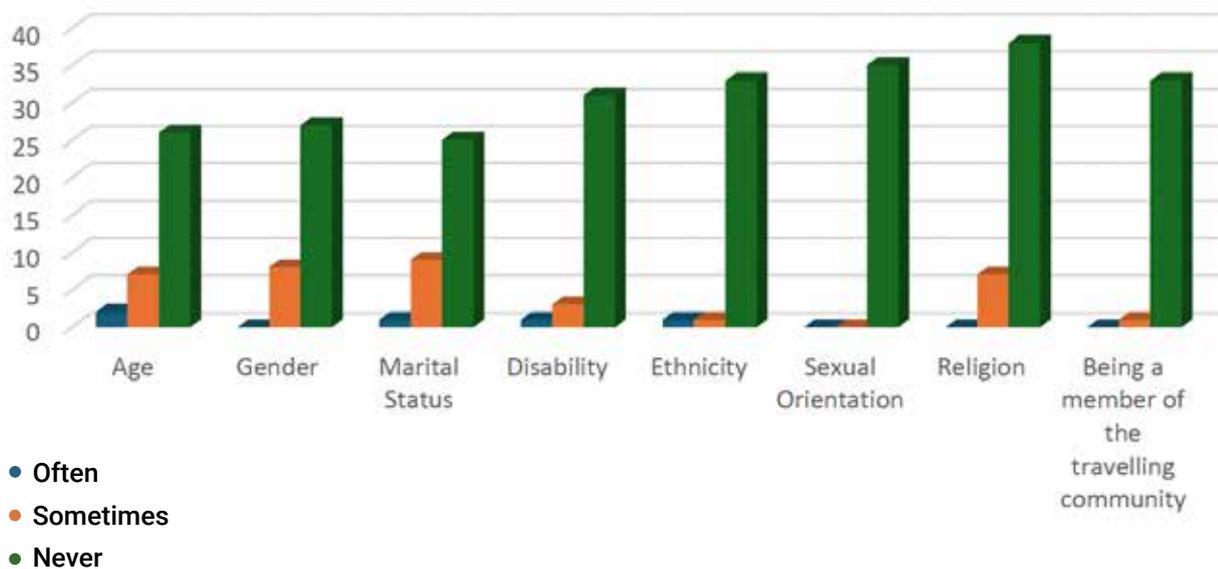


- Agree
- Disagree

Parents Personal Experience of Discrimination

Table 27 highlights responses from parents on the issue of discrimination across and number of different factors. The responses indicate the majority of parents have never been discriminated for their age, gender, marital status, disability, race, sexual orientation, religion or being a member of the travelling community. A number of parents have indicated they have experienced discrimination as a result of their age, gender, marital status, disability, religion and being a member of travelling community.

Table 27: Parents responses on experience of discrimination in Kilkenny





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Together, we're shaping

the future for children

& young people in Kilkenny.

”

Stakeholders Findings



Stakeholders Identified the following:

Outcome 1 -Active and Healthy

The need for the development of a new infant mental health strategy for Kilkenny. The strategy needs to encompass early intervention supports and programmes, training for healthcare providers, community awareness initiatives that foster supportive environments for infants and their caregivers.

Their concerns about the declining wellbeing of children and young people and the rising incidence of mental health challenges. Specific issues highlighted include lengthy waiting lists for mental health services, especially CAMHS, and the limited capacity of both parents and professional to effectively support children, young people and families experiencing mental health challenges.

The need for additional support for both parents and professionals in navigating mental health services available to them. Many are facing challenges in identifying appropriate resources and accessing necessary care for children and young people.

The absence of adequate support for children, young people, and families dealing with physical and intellectual disabilities. There is an urgent need for comprehensive services that address the unique challenges these families face, including access to healthcare, educational resources, and social support networks.

The pressing need to develop and promote lifestyle well-being supports for children, young people, and families across all demographics. Particularly vital for disadvantaged families, who often face greater barriers to access and engagement in well-being resources. Promoting lifestyle well-being supports must consider cultural, economic, and social factors that affect various families.

The need to address the vaping problem and the rising rates of cannabis use among young people is a critical public health priority. Stakeholders highlight the significant impact these substances are having on both the mental and physical health of young people. They highlights the importance of working together to reduce the prevalence of vaping and promote healthier habits among young people.

The need to promote engagement in non-competitive physical activity amongst young people. It is essential that these activities lower barriers to participation, making them accessible to individuals of all skill levels and backgrounds.”

Across all sectors stakeholders identified the need to support children and young people to build connections in their daily lives. Additionally challenges with relationships were also identified as a major difficulty. Stakeholders recommend the promotion of positive healthy relationships and the identification of unhealthy relationships among children and young people.

The ongoing need for appropriate information and education for children and young people that addresses and challenges incorrect messaging on consent & pornography

Outcome 2 – Achieving in Learning and Development

Disability services there is a very significant gaps in the provision of services for young people leaving post primary school and transitioning to adult services and supports.

Their concerns around parental awareness of the potential adverse effects of prolonged use of screens among infants, children and young people. These can include issues related to mental health, exposure to inappropriate content, cyberbullying, and negative impacts on self-esteem and social skills. There is a need to tackle this issue from 0 – 18 years.

Identified the need to support parents, guardians, and carers to support children and young people with school avoidance and refusal at primary and post-primary school as well as transitioning to a new school.

The need to develop a strategic National Special Education lobby campaign whereby schools and parents are fully aware of all services, education options and supports that will create better linkages between service providers, schools, and parents.

Expressed the challenges they face encouraging some parents to engage in supporting their children in the school system. Stakeholders recommend the need to support parents where education is not viewed as a priority by parents, where their own experience of school has been poor, and on building positive relationships between schools and parents.

Outcome 2 – Achieving in Learning and Development

Highlighted how English language proficiency and skills pose a barrier for Refugee and asylum-seeking parents when accessing information and support, engaging with schools and healthcare professionals.

The pressing need for more robust supports for individuals across the spectrum of

neurodiversity, encompassing children, young people, and their caregivers. Individuals with



neurodiverse conditions—such as autism, ADHD, dyslexia, and others—face

distinct challenges that can impact their education, social interactions, and overall quality of life. Effective supports must be tailored to address these challenges and foster environments where neurodiverse individuals can thrive.”

Outcome 3 – Safe and Protected from Harm

The need for the Rainbows programme in Kilkenny to recommence. The need to develop collaborative responses to address hate crimes and anti-immigrant sentiment within our communities. By uniting our efforts, we can create safer, more inclusive communities that not only respond to hate but also actively promote understanding and acceptance among all individuals.

The need to map existing services. This would help identify gaps in support for specific disadvantaged cohorts within our community. This process would lay the foundation for effective advocacy and targeted funding applications that address the unique needs of these populations. It would also help us to gain a clearer understanding of the resources currently available and where deficiencies exist.

Across many sectors stakeholder report that children and young people continue to experience bullying outside school, including online, and that this is having a negative impact on the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people.

Expressed concerns with the rising rates in domestic violence. The need to support families and children and young people impacted.

Potential actions under Outcome 4 -Economic Security and Opportunity

The need to effectively support young people to stay in school. it is crucial to identify and address the barriers they face in remaining engaged in their education. These barriers may include mental health challenges, family issues, economic hardships, bullying, or a lack of academic support. Understanding these obstacles allows for more targeted interventions.

Have a deeper understanding of the needs of young adults aged 18 – 24 years. Many young people face barriers during this critical transition period, such as a lack of practical life skills, limited access to post-secondary education or job opportunities, and inadequate support systems. Recognizing these challenges is vital for providing targeted support that meets their unique needs –

Additionally, a special focus is required for young people who are neurodivergent.

Provide training and supports to meet needs and address barriers to getting experience and recommendation for job/apprenticeship for socially excluded groups. This includes young people leaving care, neurodivergent young people and young people from the Traveller Community, young people experiencing homelessness.

Acknowledge that young people aging out of foster care are at a heightened risk of homelessness and housing instability. They often lack the necessary support systems, resources, and life skills to navigate the housing market effectively. Common barriers include limited income, insufficient housing options, and a lack of experience in managing independent living. providing adequate housing support for young people exiting the foster care system is a vital step in ensuring their successful transition to adulthood. By developing transitional programs, fostering partnerships, and advocating for policy changes, we can help this vulnerable population achieve stability and thrive in independence.

Their concerns over the rising cost of living. Many families are struggling to meet their basic needs, exacerbating child poverty across our communities. As families find it increasingly challenging to afford necessities, many are pushed below the poverty line or experience deepening poverty. Child poverty has far-reaching consequences, impacting not only the immediate quality of life but also long-term outcomes in education, health, and economic stability.

Outcome 5 – Respected and contributing in their world

identified the need to address the ongoing issue of transport affordability and accessibility in rural counties. Access to transport is a very significant issue for children and young people living in County Kilkenny

The ongoing participation of children and young people in local decision-making was also identified as important by professionals.

Change Management

CYPSC to review its membership and identify gaps in representation with regards key gaps and issues in the county for Children and Young people.

Further develop and promote Kilkenny CYPSC Website and Social Media platforms.

The need for a dedicated space for professionals from different sectors to understand each other's roles is essential for fostering collaboration and improving outcomes in our communities. By creating opportunities for engagement and support, we can build stronger partnerships that lead to more effective solutions and improved outcomes for those we serve.



Organisations involved in Kilkenny Stakeholder Consultation

[Ossory Youth](#)

[Foroige](#)

[Newpark Family Resource Centre](#)

[Father McGrath Family Resource Centre](#)

[Droichead Family Resource Centre](#)

[Parenting Hub Kilkenny](#)

[Kilkenny ETB](#)

[Kilkenny Sports Partnership](#)

[Kilkenny Leader Partnership](#)

[Kilkenny County Council](#)

[SETU](#)

[Kilkenny Childcare Committee](#)

[Kilkenny Community Early Years Project](#)

[Tusla](#)

[HSE](#)

[An Garda Siochana](#)

[Ambers Women Refuge](#)

[Kilkenny Rape Crisis Centre](#)

[Home School Liaison](#)

[School Principals Network](#)

[Substance Misuse Service](#)

[Kilkenny Library Services](#)

**What
needs more
attention**



Supporting Parents

- Reduce working in silo's
- Listening to parents' voice
- Whole family support
- Supporting migrant parents and children
- Providing Information on supports for parents
- More promotion in health care settings
- More collaboration with HSE
- Advocacy for parents on waiting lists
- Additional supports for family with additional needs (diagnosed and undiagnosed)
- Advocating for the development for FRC'S
- More attention 0 – 6 years
- Implementation plans for preschools on early years nutrition.
- Promoting volunteerism

Strengthen Transitions

- Focus on 17- 24 years old.
- Focus on mental health, housing and education for 0 – 24 years of age
- Youth at risk
- Integration of new communities
- How people / agencies are made aware of funding
- Increased awareness of services for parents
- 'Mo sceal' needs more buy in and resources for wide stream implementation

Early Intervention and Prevention

- Targeted and strict funding criteria
- Need more universal funding for services
- Transition between services could be better
- More staff resources to meet the demands and waiting lists
- Lack of services available to children aged between 0-10 years of age
- Early intervention for new communities
- Not enough funding for mainstream or universal work for young people outside of school
- Undiagnosed conditions for children and young people
- Lack of access / cost of counselling services.

Ensuring Quality Services

- County boundaries are governed by different area offices.
- Support local agencies to provide high quality services
- Sustainable long-term funding
- Avoid duplication of services
- Childcare spaces for under 2 years of age - need to be funded.
- Geographical spread of support and services
- Agencies to be more trauma informed.





Listen and Involve Children and Young People

- Universal access to services and support
- Capturing the voice of seldom heard young people
- Access to information
- Meaningful participation
- Communication to children and young people of services and support available
- How to encourage children participation in early years

Cross Government and Interagency Collaboration

- Lack of understanding at National level from how national policy will impact local level
- Short term funding / once off can be counter productive and doesn't allow for development work
- Ensure all relevant agencies engage.
- Awareness of all the strategies and policies relating to children and young people





“

Engage, listen, and

involve young people through

access and collaboration

”



Notes



**FOR MORE
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