

GR8 26E YNG

**WICKLOW YOUTH
MENTAL INITIATIVE**

14th Annual
Youth Mental Health Initiative
2nd – 18th October 2024





Féilhmennacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive



County Wicklow Partnership





CONTENTS

1. Background
2. Aims of Wicklow Youth Mental Health Initiative
3. Agencies Involved in Committee
4. "GR8 2 B YNG" 2025
5. Challenges in Implementing "GR8 2 B YNG" 2024
6. Student Feedback
7. Challenges & New Ideas
8. Funding & Finance

BACKGROUND TO ESTABLISHMENT OF WICKLOW YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVE

Wicklow Youth Mental Health Initiative (W.Y.M.H.I.) was established in 2010 by a number of local services working with young people. The committee consulted with the local Comhairle na nÓg to identify areas where young people needed support. Mental health was highlighted as one of the principal issues impacting their lives.

The committee looked to ways of promoting positive mental health by providing workshops to second level students as well as students attending Youthreach. It has since been integrated into the Transition Year Programme in schools in Wicklow Town, with great success.

In 2011 the committee sourced funding, planned and facilitated a mental health awareness week which was held in October 2011 to coincide with National Mental Health Month and was appropriately named “GR8 2 B YNG”, by the young people themselves.

Each year since, the programme has been updated using the evaluation forms completed by young people participating in the workshops.

Aims of Wicklow Youth Mental Health Initiative

- Start the conversation with young people about Mental Health.
- Promote and enhance Mental Health & Wellbeing through the facilitation of “Wellness Workshops”
- To identify the needs of young people particularly in relation to their mental health.
- To increase resilience in young people in order for them to maintain positive mental health and coping strategies now and in the future.
- To promote young people’s positive mental health.
- To ensure that young people are aware of the supports available to them.
- To highlight gaps in service provision for young people and parents.



Agencies Involved in Committee

- H.S.E - Mental Health
- Foróige WAY Project (Youth Diversion Programme)
- Bray Women's Refuge
- The WRAN - School Completion Programme
- Wicklow Traveller's Group
- Kildare/Wicklow Education & Training Board - Wicklow Youth Officer, Further Education and Training
- Wicklow Child and Family Project



"CR826YNG" 2025

435 students took part in the Wicklow Youth Mental Health Initiative - GR8 2 B YNG. The initiative ran across three weeks starting on the 2nd October. The students were from Youthreach, Colaiste Chill Mhantain, East Glendalough School, Educate Together Secondary School, Avondale Community College and the Dominican College Wicklow and all took part in a three hour Wellness Workshop.

The initiative was kindly supported this year, by Healthy Ireland funding through the Co Wicklow, Children & Young People Service's Committee, and also funding from Resource Officer for Suicide Prevention

The committee would like to also acknowledge the support it received from the following organisations; Wicklow Child & Family Project, HSE Mental Health, Foroige -WAY project, Wicklow County Council, the Civil Defence and the Gardai.

S.O.S (Suicide or Survive) Wellness Workshop

The Wellness Workshop is aimed at helping young people understand and take charge of their own mental health. The programme was delivered by facilitators from Suicide or Survive (S.O.S), an Irish charity focused on breaking down the stigma associated with mental health issues. The workshops took place in the De La Salle Pastoral Centre, Wicklow Town.

The young people learned a wide range of practical tools and tips that they can use in their everyday life to improve their own wellness.

At the end of each workshop, every young person was given Youth Mental Health resources and information on how to get support for their mental health, should they need it or for someone they know.

Online Workshop for Parents

One Good Adult – Facilitated by Adam Burke from Jigsaw

This 1.5 hour workshop is aimed at all adults who are or can be One Good Adult for a young person in their lives.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the workshop participants will:

- Understand the factors that influence youth mental health
- Recognise the importance of One Good Adults in supporting young people's mental health
- Recognise the importance of self-care for One Good Adults

Positive Steps 5km Walk

The week closed with a 5km Positive Steps walk along Wicklow's scenic Murrough on Friday 18th October and was attended by 355 young people. Dominican Convent Wicklow held their own walk on the 22nd October as they were unable to attend on the 18th, due to prior commitment.

Overall 431 young people completed the 5Km walk. This wellness walk feeds into the "5 Ways to Wellbeing". The Five Ways to Wellbeing are simple actions to practice each day to maintain or improve our mental health and wellbeing.

Mental Health Ireland promotes Five Ways to Wellbeing as simple actions to practice each day to maintain or improve our mental health and wellbeing. These actions are Connect - Keep Learning - Be Active - Give - Take Notice.

Wicklow Civil Defence were on hand to deal with any accidents. An Garda Siochana showed their support by taking part in the walk. A comprehensive risk assessment was completed and given to An Garda Siochana and Wicklow County Council.

EDUCATE TOGETHER SECONDARY SCHOOL WICKLOW



Wednesday 2nd October 2024 Dominican Convent Wicklow	82 Students
Monday 7th October 2024 Coláiste Chill Mhantáin	72 Students
Thursday 10th October 2024 ETSS & YR	76 Students
Monday 14th October 2024 Avondale Community College	90 Students
Wednesday 16th October 2024 East Glendalough	48 Students
Thursday 17th October 2024 Coláiste Chill Mhantáin	43 Students
Friday 18th October 2024 - 5Km Wellness Walk	329 Students
Tuesday 22nd October - 5km Wellness Walk with Dominican Convent Wicklow	82 Students 411 students in total

Challenges in Implementing “GR8 2 B YNG” 2024



- Schools changing day's last minute due to clashing with school activities.
- High numbers in some classes make it harder for the facilitators to get good engagement.
- While the Parents Evening had a good initial sign up, only 3 parents logged on for the session.
- The weather was poor, with constant rain, but the students didn't mind at all... it did limit photographs and the wind was too bad to use a drone to capture the event.
- Leaving Cert Applied Classes; we were unable to include this cohort in the workshops due to capacity, but we feel that they should be included in future.
- Coordinating the event; this year the event was stretched over 3 weeks and will be longer in 2025. There are many minor hiccups and challenges during this time with - schools, food- venue - busses... these are nothing major, but usually need immediate attention or follow up.



SOS Wellness Workshop Feedback to GR8 2 B Young

Feedback from Students

- ☞ I enjoyed the workshop and the break.
- ☞ I liked the mindful minute and am going to use it when I remember to.
- ☞ There was a lot of people in the room but the group work was good.
- ☞ I liked this workshop; the 2 men were very nice and made the day fun.
- ☞ The line from 1 to 100 is a good way of checking in with myself and how I feel.
- ☞ I didn't want to talk but I did when I was put into a group with others.
- ☞ We talked about stress; it was good to learn how to deal with it.
- ☞ I like the idea of having a toolbox to put your wellness ideas into, that was great.
- ☞ The 2 men made me feel relaxed and they were easy to listen to.
- ☞ The stories about people being stressed, it made me think I am not on my own and that being stressed can be fixed by doing something good for myself.
- ☞ Lots of people in the room, I liked the smaller groups.
- ☞ I really liked the workshop; it has made me think of my own wellness and how I can look after myself.
- ☞ I am going to look at how I react sometimes instead of stopping and thinking first.
- ☞ One of the guys talked about himself, it was very interesting.
- ☞ I liked the morning, the thing about minding your mental health the same way as dental health was a good example.
- ☞ I am going to try to do 5 mindful minutes each day.

Facilitator Feedback

- 💬 They really engaged in small groups but struggled to talk in the big group.
- 💬 Facilitators noted the students were quiet but attentive, talked well in the small groups but only a few spoke in the larger group.
- 💬 It was a challenge to deliver a workshop to such a large group.
- 💬 Big groups like this are difficult to get engagement with. Smaller groups would be much better for dynamic engagement.
- 💬 Having a smaller group made the workshop more manageable and there was more individual engagement which was great.
- 💬 Facilitators did a number of group exercises which engaged the group and ensured their continued attention.
- 💬 Facilitators were energised by the workshop and upheld the SOS values, however with the group being so big, facilitators have to work much harder, constantly reading the room and keeping the energy up.
- 💬 A great big room, it was chilly at the start, but they had the heating on asap, then it got really warm (heating/number of people) but they opened doors then which was fine, catering/staff were brilliant as always.
- 💬 The students were very attentive for the workshop, spoke openly in small groups and a few spoke up in large group also.



COMMITTEE MEMBERS & SUPPORTERS AT THE "WELLNESS WALK"

Wicklow Youth Mental Health Initiative Committee Members are as follows:

Name	Organisation
Siobhan Quinn & Louise Farrington	Foróige WAY Project
Peter O'Reilly	HSE Traveller Mental Health Coordinator
Fiona Creedon	KWETB - Wicklow Youth Officer, Further Education and Training
Lizzie Sherwood-Smith	Youth Outreach Support Worker - Anu Wicklow Domestic Violence Supports
Lisa Dickenson	Wicklow Child & Family Project
Jamie Dunne	WRAN School Completion Programme
Adam Burke	Jigsaw Youth Mental Health
Sinéad Plunkett	Education Community Development Worker - Wicklow Travellers Group

The committee would like to thank our funders:

Children and Young People Services Committee and Healthy Ireland funding
Connecting for Life and Resource Officer for Suicide Prevention

We would also like to thank the following organisations for their continued support;

- Suicide or Survive (SOS),
- The WAY Project
- Wicklow Child and Family Project
- YODA - Youth Drug and Alcohol Service
- Wicklow County Council
- The local Garda Síochána
- Wicklow Civil Defence
- County Wicklow Partnership
- Most importantly all the schools and young people who participated in "GR8 2 B YNG 2024".

Budget Breakdown 2024 Healthy Ireland Funding

Costs for 2024

Business/Agency	Amount
Nick's coffee - Food/refreshments for 5km "Positive steps" walk	€2255.00
Jailer's Rest - Food for D.C.W	€585.00
Donation to Civil Defence provide medical cover for the 5km walk.	€300.00
Pastoral Centre - 6 days of workshops	€900.00
Wicklow Print Solutions - T-Shirts, Signs & Printing	€4411.95
Refreshments for workshops	€651.39
Bus for Avondale	€1700.00

Total	€10803.34
--------------	------------------

Budget Breakdown - Connecting For life Funding

Suicide or Survive (SOS) -6 days of workshops	€2,000.00
---	-----------

Total Cost of 2024 "Gr8 2 B YNG" initiative	€12,803.34
--	-------------------

Total Contributions by Funders 2024

Healthy Ireland & the Children's & Young People's Service Committee	€10,803.34
Connecting For Life	€ 2,000.00





COLAISTE CHILL MHANTAIN



