

Fun with Film 2012

Review of Youth Peer Mentoring and Professional Development in Film



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INTRODUCTION

From June 25th – June 29th, two former members of Tallaght Young Filmmakers (TYF) trained as Filmmaking Mentors. This training culminated in their leading a summer project for ages 12 – 14 years entitled ‘Fun with Film’ hosted by Tallaght Youth Service, in partnership with South Dublin County Council’s Arts Office.



Mentors working with TYF Youth Film Leader on developing ‘Fun with Film’

This report reviews the training of TYF members who led ‘Fun with Film’ as well as the experiences of participants in that week-long project. In addition, the report presents recommendations for future training and programme development in film.

Tallaght Young Filmmakers (TYF) is an award-winning youth-led filmmaking group that has been in existence since 2008. The group meets weekly in RUA RED, South Dublin Arts Centre and manages their own productions from script to film. They were initiated from a generous award under the Arts Council’s Young Ensembles Scheme 2008 and are currently sustained by support from South Dublin County Council’s Arts Office. There are currently 18 members, ages 14 – 19 who work with professional filmmakers to devise their own scripts and shoot their own films. Master classes with professional filmmakers focus on film critique, scriptwriting, sound, acting, directing, editing and more. TYF members are involved in interviewing filmmakers with whom they work and managing budgets and all the production process of their films.

Background to the Mentoring Training

A Training Programme and Toolkit (available upon request) for Tallaght Young Filmmakers was developed based on best practice examples from the National Youth Council, including *Starting Out: A National Induction Training Programme for Volunteers engaged in Youth Work Practice* and the *NYCI Arts Programme Digital Filmmaking Handbook* as well as methods developed and evidenced within Tallaght Young Filmmakers itself.

TYF Members were established as Peer Film Mentors first through an application process (a copy of which is available upon request) and second, through completion of the exercises detailed in the toolkit. Some of the exercises are for personal reflection, some for discussion and review with the Leaders of TYF and some for the discussion and review of members of TYF during actual sessions.

In working with TYF, mentors take a step back from direct involvement in individual TYF film projects and oversee a specific department to help newer TYF members develop their own skills. Departments may include: editing and post-production, producing, art direction, camera, sound, lighting, etc...).

Mentors work cooperatively with and under the direction of the Youth Film Leader, TYF Welfare Officer and South Dublin County Council Youth Arts Co-ordinator.

Once this process was completed satisfactorily, Peer Film Mentors were provided an opportunity for paid work experience to lead Tallaght Youth Service's Summer Project filmmaking week, 'Fun with Film' with the support of a filmmaking tutor.

Participants of the Tallaght Youth Service Summer Programme will have expressed an interest in film-making by applying to be part of the group and will be aged 12 - 14.

TYF Mentors were encouraged to look for funding for the sustainability of such projects or the development of younger filmmaking groups.

This training process was reviewed and monitored by Tallaght Youth Service and South Dublin County Council.

Background to 'Fun with Film'

Fun With Film is a Tallaght Youth Service, Foroige Programme run in partnership with SDCC & Tallaght Young Film-Makers. It aimed to engage young people aged 12 - 14 with an interest in film and film-making. It was run for one week as part of Tallaght Youth Service Summer Programmes.



(L) TYF Mentors lead 'Fun with Film' participants in establishing an idea for their film, The Election. (R) Participants of 'Fun with Film' work on ideas in groups.

Aims and Objectives of the Connection between the Programmes

Aims: To provide members of TYF access to a leadership role in the field of filmmaking and younger individuals, ages 12 – 14 an opportunity to take part in filmmaking

Objectives:

For Mentors	For 'Fun with Film' Participants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To build on the existing leadership and volunteer training within Tallaght Youth Service and provide members of Tallaght Young Filmmakers with guidance on engaging in more directed peer leadership specifically within a filmmaking environment To continue to support TYF's peer learning environment To provide young people with the appropriate training to take on leadership roles in youth filmmaking To create an atmosphere in which younger and newer filmmakers see potential careers in filmmaking as tutors To encourage the start of new youth filmmaking groups initiated and led by young people 	<p>Participants will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> State the various methods used in film production. Demonstrate that they have a better working knowledge of the practical elements involved in film-making. Demonstrate the skills they have learnt to their peers and community representatives in a screening at the end of the course. Participants will develop links with SDCC arts office & Tallaght Youth Service and will be able to access and utilise local amenities to further develop the skills they acquired during the course.

Activity Undertaken for Mentor Training:

Mentoring within TYF

- Assistance with developing and delivering workshops with the Youth Film Leader. Training given by the Youth Film Leader and South Dublin County's Youth Arts Coordinator
- Training regarding appropriate behaviour and attitudes in mentoring
- Skills assessment in relation to filmmaking
- Basic child protection training, including communication and conflict management skills confidentiality, adolescent-related health issues, legal issues
- Training in facilitation
- Regular review meetings

Youth Leadership Training: Mentors were required to attend the following

- Child Protection Training, Certified

- Starting Out Training (NYCI) a National Induction Training for all new leaders & volunteers working with young people. It will give all leaders an introduction to youth work whilst also providing you with the skills and practical knowledge of working with young people. It is a informative, practical & fun training for all leaders. Certified
- Attend camera/film skills assessment sessions
- Attend mentor review sessions
- Complete the Training Toolkit
- Complete and return review sheets after each TYF session

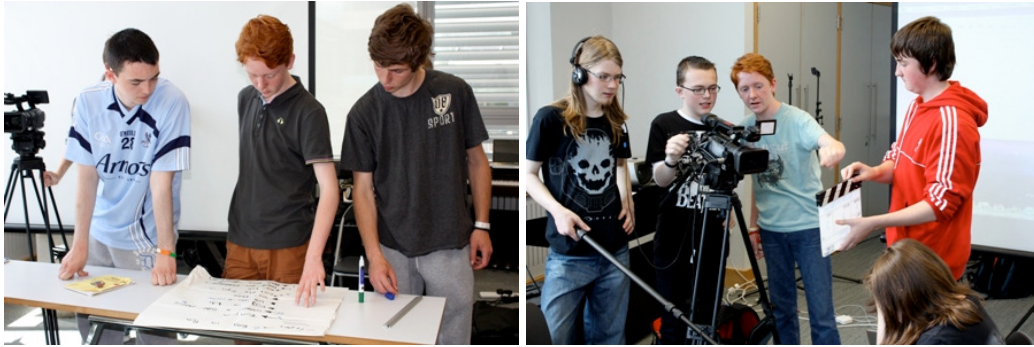


(L) Mentors, participants and support team involved in a ball toss icebreaker. (R) Participants of 'Fun with Film' play Human Bingo icebreaker.

Session	Activity	Person Responsible
1 Week of March 26 and April 2	Approaches to working with young people: Peer Leaders will be taken through the following: Child Protection Concerns, Team work, supportive language for mentoring (See previous handbook) Review the ethos of TYF	TYS Youth Worker
2 Week of April 2	Assessment of Skills: Camera, Sound and Lighting Issues Peer Leaders will be asked to <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. highlight important concerns in recording sound for film 2. demonstrate at least 7 types of shots 3. Concerns related to lighting, such as how to use natural light and white balance 4. Highlight areas they feel they are weak in so that this aspect of the programme plays to their strengths 	TYF Youth Film Leader
3 Week of April 9	Assessment of Skills Storing Footage and Editing Peer Leaders will be asked to <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. demonstrate how to store and label footage 2. demonstrate knowledge of approaches to / process of editing 3. demonstrate knowledge/familiarity with editing equipment 	TYF Youth Film Leader
4 Week of April 16	Keeping a Schedule on Set: Peer Leaders will be taken through making a schedule for film shoot	TYF Youth Film Leader
5 Week of April 2	Work with TYF Youth Film Leader to help plan the approaches to the April TYF film shoot Define Roles and responsibilities	TYF Youth Film Leader
6 - 8 Week of April 9	Assist on TYF film shoot in assigned roles	TYF Youth Film Leader
9 Week of April 16	Assist in helping group make decisions about editing process	TYF Youth Film Leader
10 Week of April 23	Assist in helping group make decisions about editing process	TYF Youth Film Leader
11 Week of April 30	Assessment Meeting: Review of activity thus far and highlight areas of need for full training programme for the summer project	TYF Youth Film Leader, Youth Arts Coordinator (SDCC)

In addition to this timetable, Mentors selected had attended some or all of the following: Starting Out Training (NYCI) (2 Mentors); Foroige Leadership 3 modules - Foundation Certificate in Leadership and Community Action – NUIG (2 Mentors); Child Protection & Duty of Care (1 Mentor). The Mentors were garda vetted.

There was also a 1 day and ½ long session focused on developing the timetable and reviewing child protection training, film equipment assessment and developing activities for the week.



(L) TYF Mentors hear from participant 'Director' about the next shot. (R) Participants of 'Fun with Film' working on set.

PARTICIPANTS

Mentors

In all, three young people, all male ages 18 – 19 and former members of TYF, took part in the Mentor training programme. One of these members turned 18 during the training programme. Initially 2 young people took part in the Peer Film Mentor Training. However, due to unforeseen personal circumstances one participant left the training programme a few weeks prior to the start of 'Fun with Film'. This participant did leave the programme with a certificate from Foroige's 'Starting Out' Training. An exit meeting was held with this participant to provide support in accessing other opportunities in film.



Youth worker, Rita Comerford at the first session of 'Fun with Film'. Tallaght Youth Service was key to making the programme happen.

It was felt that one Peer Film Mentor should not bear the responsibility of leading 'Fun with Film' as the sole facilitator. As a result, another former TYF member was brought onto the programme. This Mentor had taken part in a similar Peer Film Mentoring programme during the summer of 2011 and assisted in the Foroige / Tallaght Youth Service filmmaking project over one week that summer. This Mentor was brought on to the 2012 programme in the week prior to 'Fun with Film'.

The Mentor that had been through the entire 2012 programme took the position as Lead Mentor with the second individual assisting.

A summary of the criteria for Mentors is listed below:

- Must have been a member of TYF for at least 1 ½ years
- Must be 17 years old. Maximum age 25.
- Must show you have an interest in seeing film through third level training and/or a career or an interest in teaching, tutoring and/or mentoring
- Must have a willingness to step back from direct involvement in filmmaking within TYF and serve as a support / mentor to the group in at least one department of filmmaking (such as camera, post-production, direction, sound, etc...)
- Must have a interest in working with younger age groups to develop their interest and skills in film
- Must demonstrate maturity in working with peers
- Must demonstrate reliability and responsibility (regularly attend TYF and be on time, return from breaks promptly)

Mentor Support

Mentors were supported by the following individuals and organisations:

Eric O'Shaughnessy, Youth Film Leader of Tallaght Young Filmmakers: Eric's role was to lead in the development and delivery of the filmmaking training for the Mentors and assist with any support needed in the developing of filmmaking skills for the younger participants during the 'Fun with Film' week.

Rita Comerford, Youth Worker, Foroige / Tallaght Youth Service: Rita's role was to oversee the leadership training of the young Mentors involved. In addition, she lead training in health and safety and child protection. During the 'Fun with Film' programme Rita served as welfare support for the younger participants involved, supporting their participation and addressing any behavioural issues that might arise.

Victoria Durrer, Youth Arts Coordinator, South Dublin County Council's Arts Office: Victoria's role was to lead in the development of the training programme for Mentors with the assistance of Rita and Eric. Victoria also consulted with the National Youth Council as well as Eric of Tallaght Young Filmmakers on the development of the filmmaking mentor aspects of the training programme. In addition, she developed and carried out the monitoring and evaluation of the Mentoring Programme and the experience of the 'Fun with Film' project for the younger participants.

'Fun with Film' Participants

10 young people, ages 12 – 14, took part in the 'Fun with Film' week. Participants were kept to this number due to developing the experience of the Mentors involved in leading the programme. While all of these individuals had an interest in filmmaking, only 1/3 had previous experience making their own films.

'FUN WITH FILM': THE PROGRAMME ACTIVITY

Below is a table that details the activity involved in the 'Fun with Film' week. This timetable was developed by one Film Mentor with the support of the TYF Youth Film Leader, SDCC's Youth Arts Coordinator and the Youth Worker from Tallaght Youth Service.

The project took place over 4 days with the 5th day being a public screening of the work completed for friends and family. In addition, participants took part in a Q and A facilitated by the Youth Arts Coordinator.

Day 1 was focused on team building through the use of icebreakers. These included Human Bingo and a Ball Toss game. Mentors had previously taken part in these icebreakers through their involvement in TYF and/or in the Youth

Leadership Training provided by Foroige. In the afternoon, participants watched films created on mobile phones. They were then split into groups and given the task of making a short film with their mobile phone cameras. If they did not have one, one could be made available to them. The theme was centred on what they liked about 'The Square' shopping centre. One group had difficulty getting footage as a security guard stopped them. At the end of the day, an idea generation session was held regarding the film they would make later that week. The participants were split into 3 groups and shared their ideas with one another. The session ended with discussion on how the different ideas amongst the groups could be mixed into one shared idea.

Day 2 began with an editing session. Participants were shown a film edited together by one of the Mentors from the footage the participants had shot with their mobile phones the previous day. Then participants were given the opportunity to make their own edited versions utilising this footage. Participants were presented with the 'mixed' idea Mentors had developed from participants' notes the previous day. Afterward participants were introduced to the roles of filmmaking as well as the filmmaking equipment. They took part in training videos through which they had the opportunity to try out different roles.

Day 3 involved pre-production and practice with the roles determined for each participant.



Participants learn the editing process



Film storyboards

Day 4 was the shoot day. The entire film was shot in one day. It was edited that night by the Mentors, including music.

Day 5 involved a public screening of the work created for friends and family. This was the first time the participants' had seen their film. They also took part in a Q and A facilitated by the Youth Arts Coordinator.

Programme Output:

- 1 4-minute short film entitled 'The Election'
- Mobile phone short films made by each participant
- 1 'making of' slide show of photographs set to music

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WENESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
10-11 prep meeting	10-11 prep meeting MAC LAB TRANSFERRING FOOTAGE	10-11 prep meeting	10-11 prep meeting	
11.15-11.30: intro	Imovie workshop 11-12 basics (Wayne)	11-11.30 Role selection	11-11,45 Teams split: Equipment checks: cam, sound , Rehearsals: actors Make-up and location	
11.30-11.45: plan for the week	12-13 Group edit own footage from Monday afternoon (Wayne & Alex?)	11.30-13 Teams split up into Script/director- Eric Camera/sound- Wayne Make up/Acting- Alex All teams make wish lists, improv and games	11.45-13.00 Shoot	15-16 Presentation of films Review of week
11.45- 12.30: icebreakers	14.00- 14.45 Idea generation, deciding on idea	14-15 Pre-production cont.	14-15.30 Shoot	
12.30-13.00: watch shorts Talk about shots etc.	14.45-15.00 Explain roles. (handbook)	15-16 Rehearsals	Final edit 16.00-22.00	
14.00-14.15 Icebreaker	15.00-15.45 Make two training videos. (Alternate roles, 5 roles, director, camera, sound, acting etc.			
14.15-14.30 Watch examples of mobile phone shorts	15.45-16.00 Breakdown and pack up			
14.30-15.00 Out shooting own mobile phone shorts				
15.00-16.00 Idea generation. Short story exercise				

EVALUATION METHOD

Mentors were asked to complete a diary log after each session during which they served as Mentors. In addition, the Youth Film Leader kept a similar log, monitoring the learning and activity of the Mentors in Training. Review meetings were held with the Mentors upon completion of the summer programme.

Regular review meetings were also held with the Mentors to review progress and discuss through and address any challenges they felt they were meeting.

'Fun with Film' participants completed a questionnaire prior to the start of the week-long film project to gain an understanding of their interest and past experience in film. In addition, after each session, participants reflected on the following:

- What did you enjoy the most and why?
- Please state three things you feel you learned?
- What did you find least useful about today and why?
- Do you have any suggestions for the next session?

In addition, participants took part in a Q and A at the public screening of their work upon completion of the week. During this time participants discussed what they had done, what they had learned, what they enjoyed and what they found challenging.



(L) 'Fun with Film' participants shooting films on their mobile phones. (R) Participants working on ideas for their final film project.

FINDINGS

Mentors

This section describes the experience of the Mentors in their training and subsequent leadership of 'Fun with Film'.

Reasons for taking part

The development of this programme came out of a need identified by young people themselves. Through activities, such as public screenings and public Q and A sessions held with members of TYF, individuals expressed an interest in developing facilitation skills and sharing opportunities available to them with other young people interested in filmmaking.

All the Mentors involved, but particularly the two who lead the 'Fun with Film' session have a desire to promote Tallaght Young Filmmakers in the wider community and wish to share their skills with other, younger, aspiring filmmakers. They hope that involvement in this training programme and in facilitating 'Fun with Film' will lead on to the opportunity to develop future filmmaking activities, such as a young filmmaking group, other summer camps, or projects in schools.

One Mentor stated, "[I] feel TYF should start to branch out into the community, I think even if the group is full the members can share their skills in school projects and also summer camps, so to benefit young people who don't get the chance to be involved in TYF."

Developing a leadership position in film

At the outset for this 2012 programme, the Mentors were given Mentor responsibilities with sessions held for Tallaght Young Filmmakers. Initially, this was met with challenges as the Mentors had been previous members of TYF and had only just finished the programme. It was difficult to create distance between themselves as former participants with their peers and now as Mentors with more responsibility. At an interim meeting with the Youth Film Leader and the Youth Arts Coordinator, a new approach was developed. In this approach at the start of each TYF session, TYF members were reminded as to the roles of the Mentors, with their roles and the activities with which they were charged clearly explained. This improved the feeling of status felt by Mentors and thus the ability for them to take on their roles more directly. It was also acknowledged, however, that any similar situation would present challenges for future Mentors and it would be necessary to develop the programme as an outreach by TYF Mentors to other, younger filmmaking groups, so that they may be able to apply their training and share their skills with individuals who had not been peers.



Mentor talks to participants about their ideas for the film

Utilising the NYCI Arts Programme Digital Filmmaking Handbook

As part of the training programme the NYCI Arts Programme Digital Filmmaking Handbook was made available to Mentors in order to assist them in developing the timetable and activities for the 'Fun with Film' week. The Mentors found the Handbook very useful overall highlighting the different timetables presented, the way in which roles in a film crew are explained and templates for permission forms, equipment checklists, and calls sheets. In particular, one Mentor stated, "The Handbook had things I hadn't thought of explaining before."

The Handbook's idea generation activity was utilised during the 'Fun with Film' week and felt to be very useful, but it was felt that other individuals might wish to see other ways in which stories might be developed with groups.

Learning gained on facilitating film projects for young participants

Both mentors felt they had gained skills in developing a timetable for a week-long film project. In addition, they realised the importance of being flexible and able to adjust activities on-the-spot based on the learning needs and interests of participants involved.

Each mentor demonstrated skills in different and complimentary areas, with one being very strong in assisting with story generation and developing creative solutions to filmmaking problems (such as with props or creating montages) and the other individual being strong on leading the planning of the overall shoot and schedule and directing the activities of the week. It was felt that one Mentor was more comfortable and confident than the other at leading and facilitating young people. Specifically, one Mentor seemed to have difficulty letting go and allowing the participants to utilise the camera and serve as Director.

Overall, both individuals learned the importance of having a strong plan in place, but back-up activities as well in order to be able to adjust activities as needed. They also realised the delicate skills required to allow young people to lead their creative development of a project with knowing when to step in and provide suggestions or questions to help them make those ideas a reality. Understanding how to encourage compromise and working together is another skill the facilitators demonstrated developing.

It is felt by the Mentor Support Team that the programme helped the young people apply what they had learned both in TYF (as former filmmaking participants and Mentors in Training) and through the Leadership Training provided by Foroige. Comments were made that being able to apply knowledge gained in a 'real' situation (and with support) was very important.

Both Mentors felt that the week went “very well.” They felt the young participants enjoyed the workshops and that they had both exhibited leadership skills. One mentor felt he could have taken more of a leadership role than he did.

Finally, the Mentors were supported by a Youth Worker and the TYF Film Leader. This may have presented challenges for the Mentors in being able to step forward and lead the facilitation of the week without feeling they were being observed, rather than supported. This was discussed at the conclusion of each session and during lunch breaks. It is felt that with confidence, this shyness will be overcome.

Follow-on opportunities

One Mentor has applied and received funding from the O2 Think Big Scheme to develop a younger filmmaking group. The hope is that some participants who have taken part in ‘Fun with Film’ will wish to move on to being part of a longer-term youth filmmaking group for ages 12 – 14. Development of this is ongoing. Both mentors are interested in developing this group. One mentor felt that he would need further supporting in planning and managing the group than the other mentor. In particular, help with making sure the space was correct, ensuring funds were sustainable and someone to talk to about organising activities. Both mentors felt they would need help with promoting the group and recruiting members and making sure they had film equipment.



Still from Film

‘Fun with Film’ Participants

This section describes the experience of those young people who were participants in, rather than leaders of, ‘Fun with Film’.

Reaction to learning from other young people

It is worth noting that from the start, participants approached the Film Mentors as the film leaders and facilitators. There was no issue documented or shared about the facilitators being 18 and 19 years old.

Activities most enjoyed by participants:

At the screening and Q and A held with participants they stated the following activities were overall highlights of the programme:

- Making new friends, meeting new people
- Communicating with new friends
- Filmmaking, including camera, shooting and acting
- Making films on a mobile phone
- The way making a film brought everyone closer together
- Watching the development of the story and characters through the acting
- Getting to take the lead: “bossing people around”

Below is a list of the various activities enjoyed by participants during each days of the week long programme, leading up to the screening on Day 5.

- Day 1:
 - Ice breakers / games 2
 - Filming 1
 - Coming up with an idea for the script, developing the idea from a mixture of ideas come up with by the sub groups 6
 - Camera work 1
- Day 2:
 - Working with the camera 3
 - Shooting practice 3
 - Editing 2
 - Directing 1
 - Sound 1
- Day 3:
 - Writing the script 1
 - Camera and setting up camera 3
 - Team bonding 1
 - Acting workshop 2
 - Organising orders of shots and planning 2
- Day 4:
 - Filming 4
 - Sound 1
 - Acting in the film 1
 - Setting up the set 1

Learning Gained by participants:

Below is a table detailing feedback on learning gained by participants. At the conclusion of the week, participants did highlight the following as areas of learning:

- Accessibility of filmmaking (different tools that can be used, such as mobile phones)
- Communication
- Meeting new people and making a friend

- The amount of work and time that goes into making a short film
- Being flexible

Learning 'Fun with Film' Participants Felt they Gained during programme

Learning Area	Percentage of Participants who felt they gained learning in this area
Social and Personal Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Team work - Meeting new People - Participation - Having Fun - Responsibility - Respect - How to Plan 	33%
Skills in Story Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Generating ideas - fleshing out a story - character and plot angles - Scriptwriting 	15%
Accessibility of Filmmaking: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - how easy it can be to make a film - how you can make a film with few materials at hand - using the mobile phone as a film camera 	7%
Skills in Creative Filmmaking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Editing (how to use it) - Framing shots - Story boarding - Directing 	33%
Technical Skills in Filmmaking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Utilising the camera - Utilising sound equipment - How to assemble a tripod - Utilising the clapper board - Editing (how to) - Roles involved in filmmaking - Organising props - Shot names 	42%
Acting skills	3%

Areas for Improvement:

In terms of areas for improvement, overall participants had few suggestions. On Day 1 a few participants seemed concerned that their story was not developed enough, but this was addressed on the next day.

Communication was highlighted as an area of improvement by a few participants across the week. It appears these comments were in relation to idea generation and understanding roles at the outset of the film shoot. Feedback from participants indicates that these concerns were addressed as the week progressed.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

- There is potential for the development of a filmmaking facilitation training similar to NAYD's Arts Train Programme
- It would be beneficial to get the backing of a certified film organisation to help formalise the Mentor Training and perhaps bring it out more to the public.
- TYF members who are interested should be encouraged and facilitated to assist with school and youth service film projects. It is not clear if there would be TYF members interested in this every year. This should be further explored.
- Tallaght Youth Service is interested in supporting the mentors involved in this programme to apply for NYCI Artist in Youth Work Fund to start a young filmmaking group that may feed into Tallaght Young Filmmakers. There is the potential for a strong relationship between TYF and this new group. The potential of this will be explored via the O2 funding received this year. This is very dependent upon the support of Tallaght Youth Service.