

Limerick Youth Service

New Youth Leaders for West Limerick

Fourteen young people from West Limerick completed a Junior Leadership training programme with Limerick Youth Service at the Burren Outdoor Activity Centre, Co. Clare recently. The teens, who are members of Abbeyfeale and Newcastlewest Youth Clubs and Rathkeale Youth Space enjoyed two days of workshops and activities in the Banner County.

The Junior Leadership Training Programme, which is accredited by Youth Scotland, equips young people with the necessary skills and confidence to assume leadership roles in their youth clubs and community.

The training covers an array of topics such as welcoming new members, communicating skills, body language and organising events such as discos and interclub visits, explained Eithne Stemberidge, Limerick Youth Service.

'The skills the young people have learned will stand to them as they progress to leadership roles with their respective youth club/group,' said Eithne,

'The Youth Global Programme was hosted and organised by the International Federation of Workers Education Association (IFWEA) an international NGO dedicated to community and worker education,' explained Prof. Maura Adshedd, UL's Politics Dept. As part of the week long programme the young people shared their experiences of promoting

youth issues in their respective nations and the successes and challenges of encouraging young people to engage in the democratic process.

'We also discussed ways to increase participation in politics in a way that is inclusive, creative, subversive, diverse, and respectful,' said Prof Adshedd.

Away from the academic debate, participants also went on field trips to some of South Africa's most famous tourist sites and spent time in the 'Townships'. 'Our visits to the

'Townships' were incredibly moving as we visited schools and spoke with local students,' said John Rea, Limerick Youth Service.

'The conditions in the 'Townships' were eye-opening as we learned that many of the areas had their water supply turned off after 6pm and had limited access to Wi-Fi, things that we take for granted,' said John.

Reflecting on an incredible week, John thanked the many organisations that developed a real sense of global citizenship through shared activities. Looking to the future, Limerick Be Heard will

people who 'were great ambassadors for their city, community and peers,' Limerick Be Heard was created in Limerick in 2016 with the aim of increasing the political participation and civic engagement of groups whose voices are seldom heard in mainstream electoral discussions.

As part of the project, mirror 'Be Heard' groups were created in other cities with young people exchanging ideas and developing a real sense of global citizenship through shared activities. Looking to the future, Limerick Be Heard will

create five more new groups in the New Year to promote human rights and positive political change while another international conference is also in the pipeline.

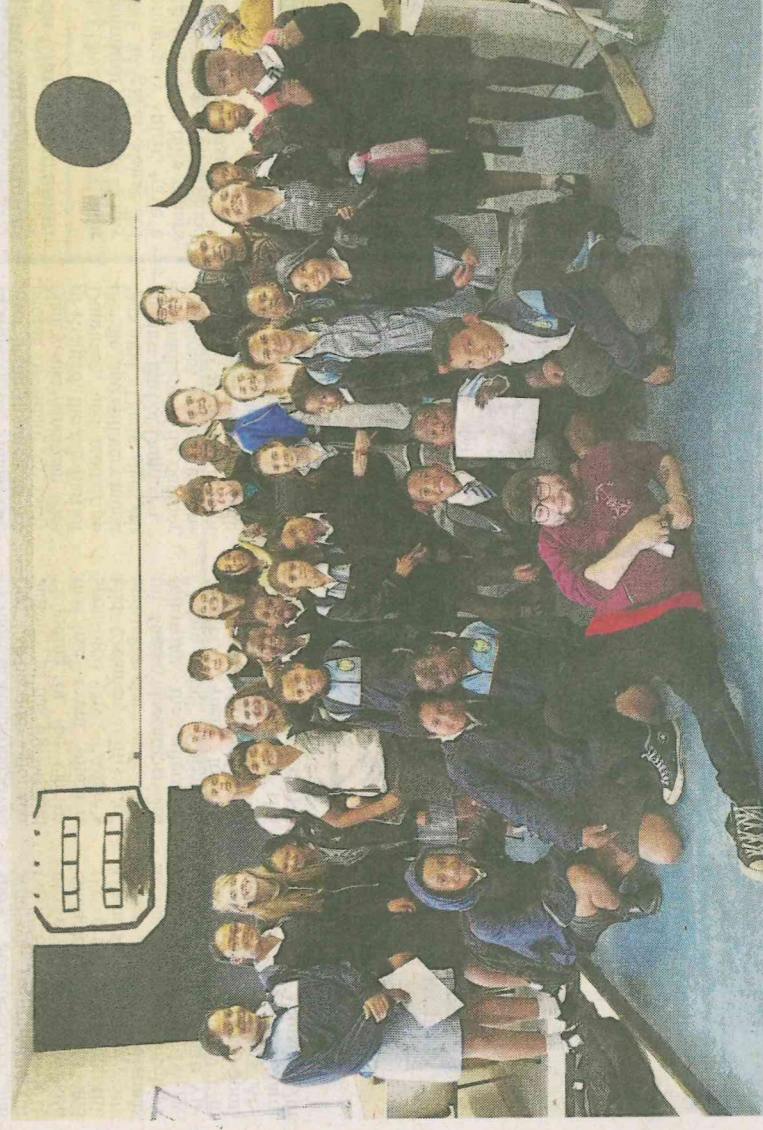
One of 31 nationwide, Limerick Comhairle na nÓg is a youth council that gives young people the opportunity to be involved in the development of local services and policies that affect them. A member of Youth Work Ireland, Limerick Youth Service remains committed to supporting and encouraging young people to be active participants in shaping their futures.



West Limerick's new Youth Leaders in training at the Burren, Co. Clare.



Members of Limerick Youth Service at the Cape of Good Hope, South Africa. The young people were in South Africa for the Youth Global Awareness Programme.



Members of Limerick Youth Service visited the Battswood Primary School, Cape Town, South Africa.



Parent Teacher Meetings

Elaine Sparling is the CEO of the award winning Hummingbird Learning Centre®. Based in Adare and Tralee, she works with clients on a one to one basis to improve their literacy and numeracy. She can be contacted on 087-2996054 or through their website www.hummingbirdlearning.com



When I've written about the annual parent/teacher meeting (PTM) before, I've tended to talk from the perspective of the primary school meeting. This year I'm talking about the secondary school meeting or, more accurately, meetings.

At secondary school it takes lots of planning to have a successful PTM. So many teachers, so little time. Being prepared is what it is all about. Remember, the PTM is an investment of your time, so make sure you get a really good return on that investment. Have your questions for each subject teacher prepared in advance. In the lead-up to the meeting ask your child how they feel they are getting on at school? Avoid mentioning the forthcoming meeting when you do this, as the child may become defensive, afraid to raise a matter in case it backfires on them in the future. Write your questions down and remember to bring them with you. Some secondary schools now do the Christmas tests in November, so if you have the school report, bring it with you as well. This is a marathon event. If possible, both parents should attend. You have a lot of teachers to meet, so split the list between you and save time. If it is your

first PTM it is a good idea to have a chat with some parents who have had children at the school already. Find out which teachers tend to take the longest time, and if this is someone that you really need to see, then one parent queues while the other meets other teachers. For many parents, only one will be able to attend the PTM. If this is the case, then prioritise meeting with the teachers of subjects where your child is underperforming, and then meet their class/form teacher. That way you will still get a good overall picture of how things are going. It is really important that you tell this teacher about any issues that are happening in the child's life outside school. I know that this can be difficult, especially sharing private issues, but the parent/teacher meeting is like the professional. The teacher there are things outside the child, the school needs to know. Once you meet the subject teacher, if you have an issue to raise with them, do it in a non-confrontational way. Use phrases such as

'How do you think Johnny is getting on at...?', 'What can we do?', 'How do you see Johnny improving at this?', 'How can we all work together on this?'. Most teachers want their students to succeed, and this is more likely to happen when everyone is on the same page. Occasionally though, you may meet a teacher who you feel is the complete opposite. No matter how infuriating they may be, remain calm. Ultimately, the annual parent-teacher meeting should be a good event. Neither side of the desk should be surprised during the meeting - if there are issues, they should have been brought up long before now. If you do find that there are issues to be addressed, then make a separate appointment to meet the teacher and/or the school principal. Finally - be mindful of other parents who are queuing behind you. Everyone needs to talk with the teachers, so limit your time with each one. For more information on our Study Success Programme contact Elaine on 087 2996054.