

## Youth Advocate Programmes Ireland – Louth Programme Profile and Outcomes Summary 2011 - 2015

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**“It’s a great support system for kids and families.” (Parent/Carer)**

In 2015, YAP Louth matched 17 new young people, working with 39 young people and families overall. We have profile information for 102 young people and families and outcomes for 92 young people and families worked with between 2011 and 2015.

### Profile of 102 Young People and Families since 2011 – 52% Boys and 48% Girls

- 25% aged <10-12; 55% aged 13-15 and 20% aged 16-18+.
- 92% described themselves as Irish, 1% Irish Traveller, 2% Eastern European and 5% as African.
- 83% were living at home while 17% were in the care system
- 89% were in Education or Alternative Education – 46% regular attendance
- 15% had a Mental Health or Disability Diagnosis
- 52% of young people were linking with one or more services per week
- 71% of young people had never been arrested.
- Family Background: 65% are single parent households.
- 22% of primary carers were in employment.
- 66% of primary carers had a full medical card
- 66% have a family history of drug or alcohol misuse

### OUTCOMES FOR 92 Young People worked with between 2011 and 2015

**SELF:** 81% showed an improvement in Relationship with Peers; 78% in Self Esteem/ Confidence and 85% in Withdrawn/Isolated.

**FAMILY:** 73% showed an improvement in Parenting Skills; 82% in Social Supports /Family and 74% in Home Environment – Physical/Financial.

**EDUCATION:** 75% showed an improvement in General Behaviour; 87% in Attendance and 77% in Aspirations.

**SAFETY/OFFENDING:** 83% showed an improvement in Risky Behaviour (Self); 82% in Impulsivity and 85% in Co-operation with JLO/Gardai.

**Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire Analysis:** Of 169 parents and young people who completed SDQ’s at beginning, middle and end of the programme the analysis shows an improvement on total difficulties scores from At Risk to Average for parents and from High Average to Medium Average for young people. See full report on website.

**Participation:** Young people and Parents/Carers presented their work and views at the Have Your Say: Social Media National Event in Croke Park in June. We trained young people from across the country to sit on recruitment panels and they are now part of our recruitment for staff and advocates. We maintained our Investing in Children Award for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Year running.

**Monitoring:** 87% of participants gave YAP a satisfaction score of 4 or 5 out of 5.

## **Profile of young people worked with in Louth June 2011 – December 2015**

The cohort is 102 young people with 49 girls (48%) and 53 boys (52%). Ages of young people: 25% aged <10 – 12; 55% aged 13 -15; 20% aged 16 – 18+. 92% described themselves as Irish, 1% as Irish Traveller, 2% as Eastern European and 5% African.

### *Care Status*

**83% were living in the family home while 17% are in the care system.**

### *Education Status*

**The majority of young people (89%) are in school or alternative education** and of these 46% attend on a regular basis.

### *Mental Health or Disability Diagnosis*

79% had no diagnosis of a disability or mental health concern and 6% are awaiting an assessment.

**Of those who did, 60% were diagnosed with behavioural or learning disabilities and 7% on the autistic spectrum.**

### *Service and Community Links*

**52% of the young people engaged with one or more services on a weekly basis.**

### *Safety and Offending Behaviour*

**71% of the young people had never been arrested.** A family member had been convicted in 38% of families while 45% did not have that experience and the information was unknown in 17% of cases.

### *Family Background*

Of the 91 cases where the information was provided on primary carers, **2% aged 18-29, 84% aged 30 – 44 and 14% aged 45 – 64. 65% are single parent households.** 22% of primary carers were in employment with the majority of primary carers describing themselves as full time working in the home. **63% of cases have a family history of drug or alcohol misuse (higher than national average of 50%),** 31% did not and for 6% the information was unknown. **66% of primary carers had a full medical card,** 24% did not and 10% did not specify.

## **Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires.**

YAP Ireland introduced Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires as a research tool as part of the NUI Maynooth evidence informed research completed in 2013. We continue to use the SDQ as an important tool in measuring our effectiveness in improving the mental health and wellbeing of Young People referred to us alongside the outcomes and monitoring systems in place and is an important practice tool.

**The data is for 169 young people and Parents/Carers who completed 3 SDQ's between July 2013 and October 2015. Before engaging in the programme Parents/Carers gave young people an average score of 19.28 (At Risk) on the total difficulties scale reducing to an average score of 16.41 ( Borderline) at programme end. Young people at the outset scored themselves lower with an average of 16.07 (High Average), reducing to 14.07 (Medium Average) at programme end. Overall both Parents and Young People report a reduction in overall difficulties with Parents/Carers reporting the biggest improvement.**

## **Summary Outcomes Tables from 2011 to end of 2015**

The system is based on measuring the views of young people, families, referrers, advocates and managers when matched and then at the 6 month exit on a range of indicators. The outcomes system is just one way of measuring the positive impact of the YAP model and is a useful tool for helping young people and families themselves to see how they are changing their lives through the

use of the outcomes booklets. It also assists the organisation to measure what we are achieving through our work and to enhance the services we offer. The number of young people for whom we have outcomes has increased every year and the longitudinal figures show that the programme remains effective in all the main factors with very little variation. See full outcomes tables below.

### **Assessment/Effectiveness of YAP Ireland Service – Monitoring System**

YAP Ireland gives parents/carers the opportunity to have their say about how their involvement with YAP is progressing and to input into service development and improvement. To facilitate this, monitoring calls are carried out midway through the life of the case asking parent/carers of participants to engage in a short questionnaire. To ensure that parents/carers feel free to express their true opinions, this questionnaire is carried out by staff not directly involved in the cases.

Contents of the questionnaire:

1. What do you like best about Youth Advocate Programmes (YAP) Ireland?
2. What do you like least about it?
3. Following on from that, would you like to suggest any changes to the programme?
4. Do you feel informed and involved in your child's YAP programme? Yes/ No  
If no, is there anything we can do to help you feel more involved?
5. Overall, how are you finding the Youth Advocate Programme (YAP) service? (using a satisfaction rating scale of '1' to '5', where '1' = 'very dissatisfied' and '5' = 'very satisfied')

In 2015, a total of 412 cases were identified as eligible for monitoring. 47 were not contacted either because the case had closed before the due date for monitoring came around or other issues such as the parent/carer opted out, or the manager deemed it inappropriate to contact the family at this time. 365 call attempts were made, 165 parent/carers answered the phone and 135 of them agreed to complete the questionnaire. 117 of these calls (86.6%) resulted in positive feedback from parent/carers and 95% felt that they were well informed and involved in their Young Persons YAP Programme. 87% of participants gave YAP a satisfaction level score of 4 or more out of 5.

### **Quotes from Parents/Carers regarding what they like best about YAP**

**YAP is a brilliant programme. My son has benefitted brilliantly from the programme. Getting on very well with the Young Person. Young Person is a different child since beginning the programme. The ideas the advocate comes up with are brilliant.**



**I really like it. Want to keep it up.**



**Everything is going grand, like to get out, if I mention doing particular activities, the Advocate looks into it.**



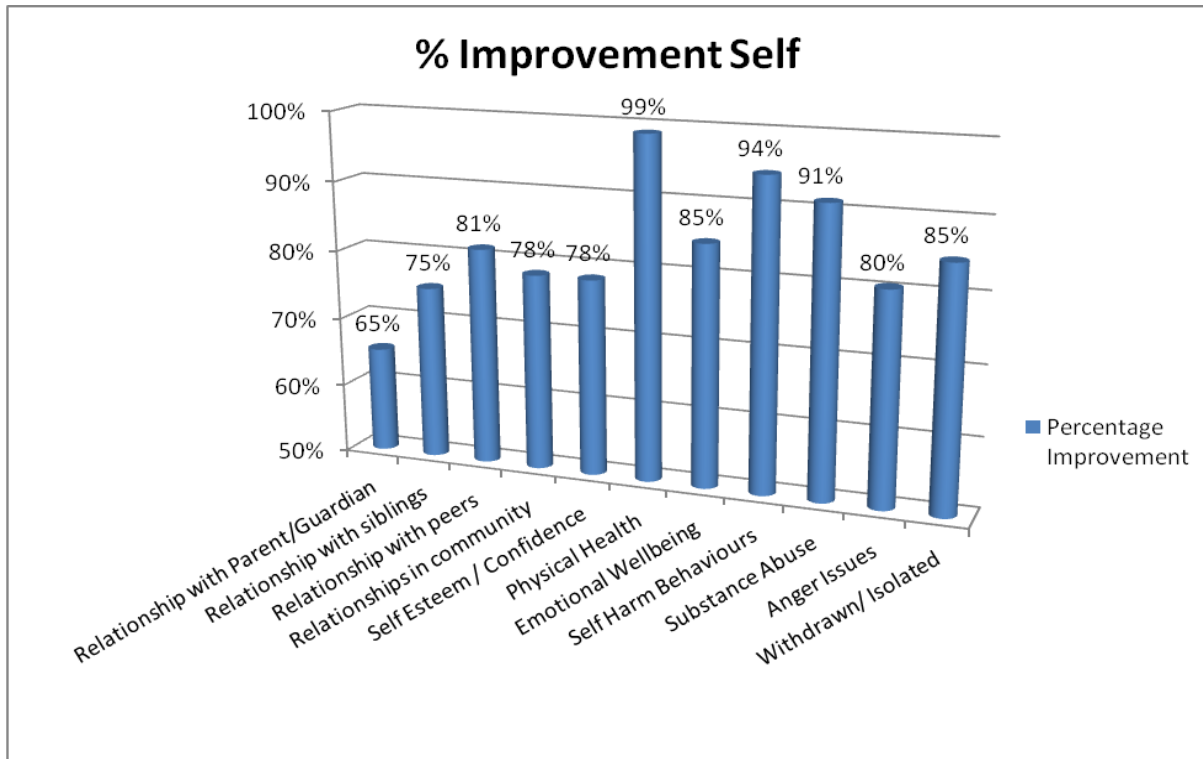
**Takes the Young Person out. Young Person is much better in himself. The Advocate is a lovely guy himself.**

For further information on Youth Advocate Programmes Ireland please see [www.yapireland.ie](http://www.yapireland.ie) or YAP Ireland's Facebook page or Follow @YAPIreland on Twitter

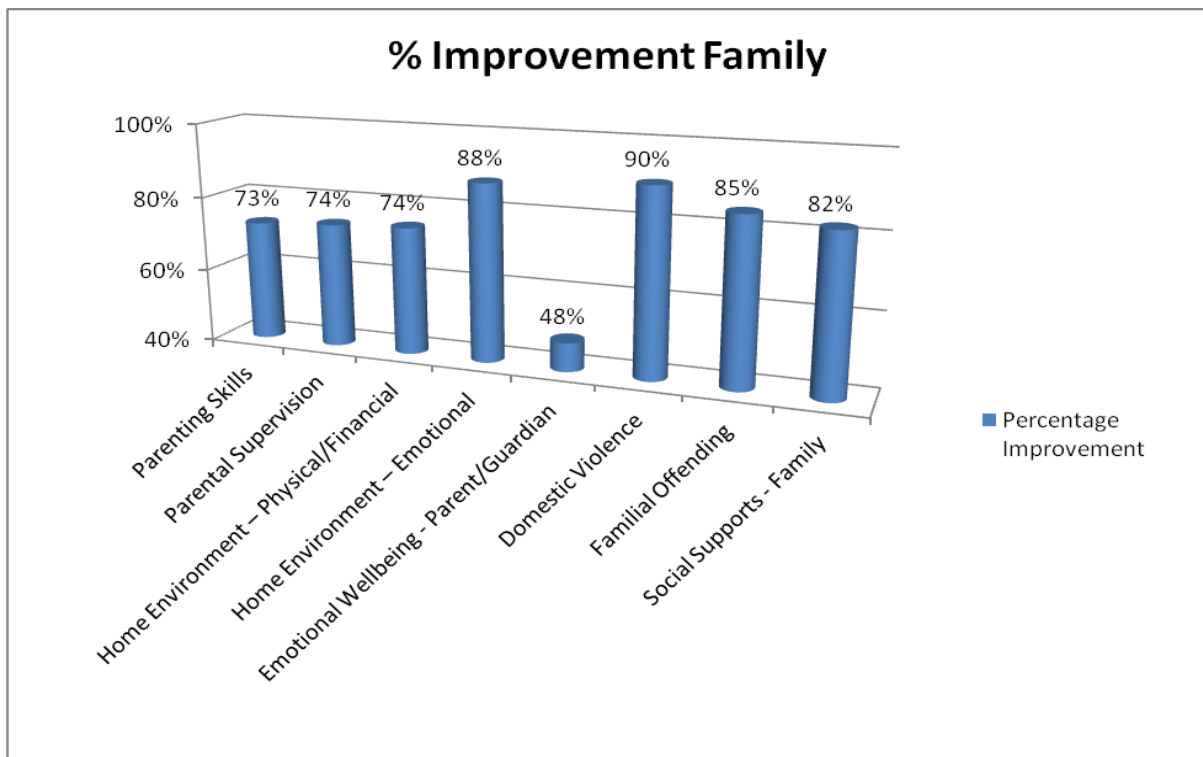
## Outcomes Tables from 2011 to end 2015

See full outcomes in all domains below for 92 young people.

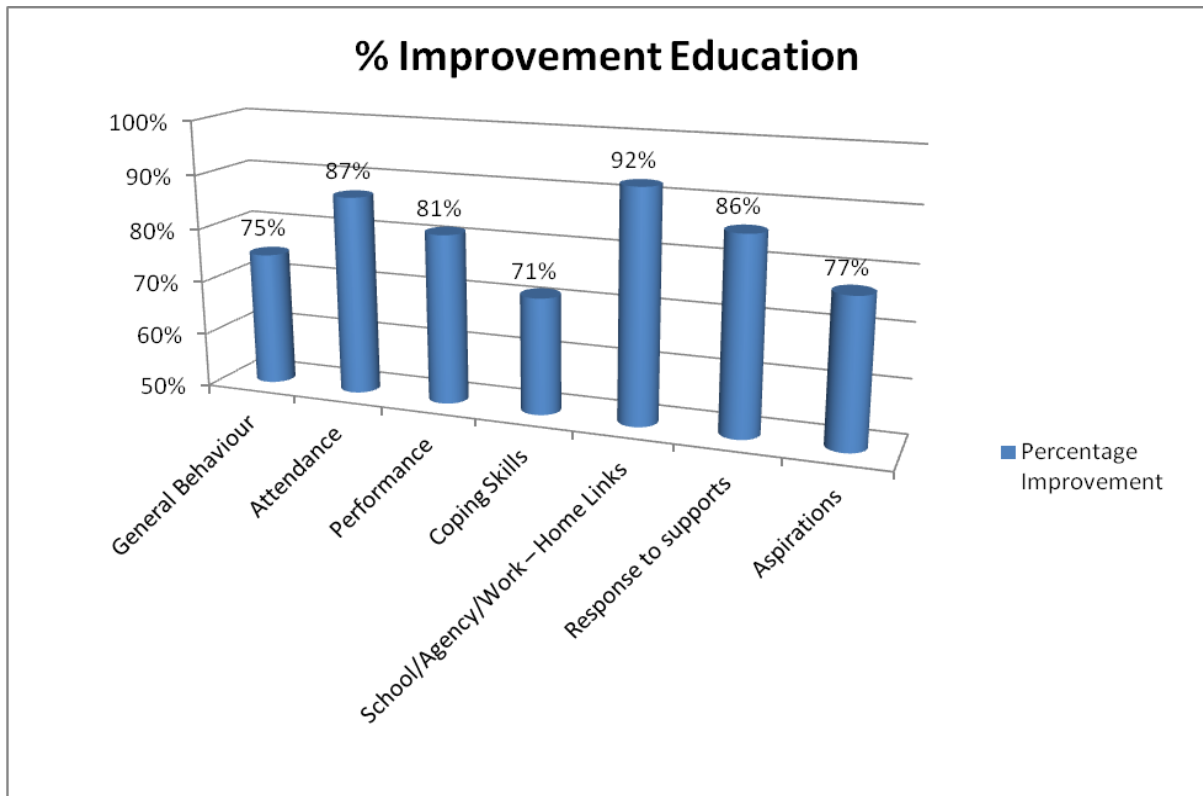
The following chart shows the percentage improvement in Self domain



The following chart shows the percentage improvement in Family domain



The following chart shows the percentage improvement in Education domain



The following chart shows the percentage improvement in Offending Behaviour domain

