

Press Release

Youth Advocate Programme Galway to participate in this year's St. Patrick's Day Parade in Galway City

YAP Ireland are delighted to announce that a group of young people from the YAP programme in the Galway region are participating in this year's St. Patrick's Day festival in Galway city. The 8 young people who are between the ages of 10 and 18 years will take part in this year's St. Patrick's Day Parade supported by YAP staff.

When speaking about the group's performance, Niamh O'Brien - Deputy Manager in YAP Ireland said that: *"the group will use an informal theatrical performance based on an interpretation of the modern day leprechaun. Their piece will use influences stemming from Finvarra – legendary King of the Connaught Fairies and original King of the leprechauns who according to folklore, brings luck and good fortune to the community. Their piece is colourful, artistic and will use fluid movements, while also being energetic. The piece which is young person led, has involved the young people through all stages from start to finish."* Niamh O'Brien also said that *"working on the performance has helped the young people to break down barriers, assisted their confidence building, developed their social skills and creativity, while also helping to achieve a sense of accomplishment for them."* Each of these elements is key to achieving YAP Ireland's vision which is young people and families belong to confident and connected communities.

YAP Ireland has been in place in Galway since 2002. The Youth Advocate Programme uses a strengths-based, family focused approach to working with young people who have complex needs. We believe that all young people and families have strengths and capabilities, which can and should be developed. In Galway/Roscommon in 2011, 49 new cases were matched and we worked with 87 families overall. YAP's goal is to empower young people and their families with supports that will remain in place after programme involvement has ended.

Speaking in advance of St. Patrick's Day events on Saturday, Siobhán O'Dwyer CEO of YAP said *"we are delighted the young people involved in YAP have the opportunity to showcase their talents. They have gained in confidence and developed new skills, which through this performance they are now sharing with other young people, their families and the wider community in Galway"*.

The theme of this year's St. Patrick's Day Parade in Galway city is "World of Wonder". The Parade will start at 11.30am on Lower Dominick Street (Monroes Pub) and will then move up Dominick Street, over O'Briens Bridge, up Shop Street and onto Eyre Square. The Parade will finish at Galway County Council Buildings. It is hoped that this year's Parade will be the biggest ever with over 80 groups participating.

For more information on YAP Ireland please visit www.yapireland.ie or contact Siobhán O'Dwyer CEO at 01 8689180.