

# Youth Advocate

PROGRAMMES IRELAND



"I now try  
my best at  
everything"



**83%**  
improvement in  
self-esteem &  
confidence



**79%**  
improvement in  
aspirations



"I feel YAP  
saved my son's  
life"

Funded by:

**TUSLA**

Annual Report **2017**



# What is YAP?

## The YAP Model

The YAP model is a strengths-based, needs led, wraparound, intensive support service for young people and families who are struggling with a range of issues in their lives, through use of community based advocates. The model is evidence based, achieving positive outcomes with young people and families within their communities.



## Vision

A society where all young people and families are confident and connected with their communities.

## Mission

We change the lives of young people and families in need of support by providing community-based, strengths-focused, inclusive, flexible services which improve their skills and capacity to meet their own goals.



## Who we work with

YAP Ireland worked with 487 young people and families in 2017, including 280 young people who were referred to YAP for the first time.

These young people are primarily referred to us by Tusla social work teams to address a range of complex issues in their lives. YAP is seeing an increasing number of referrals from HSE Disability and Mental Health Services as well as Oberstown Children's Detention Campus. In 2017, we also launched a new Independent Advocacy Service in the Ginesa Suite, St. John of God's Hospital.



# YAP in 2017

"YAP helps you believe in yourself. I have stopped blaming myself for things in the past."

- **Young Person**



**87%**

improvement in home environment

"I feel more able to open up to other people."

- **Young Person**

**93%**

still living at home at the end of programme

"YAP is great. it gives us great family support. The Advocate is brilliant. We are very happy with her. I know she is only a phone call away."

- **Parent**

**22**

counties in Ireland served by YAP

"YAP is fantastic. My son loves it. It is very beneficial to him. The Advocate is great. They get on brilliant."

- **Parent**



"This is an invaluable and worthwhile service to young people."

- **YAP Referrer**

**83%**

improvement in risky behaviour



**74%**

improvement in coping skills

"It has made a big difference to me and my life."

- **Young Person**

"He has quietened down a good bit - better attendance in school, improving."

- **Parent**



"One great thing that happened was going to the participation group, meeting new friends and helping me gain confidence in a group."

- **Young Person**

**77%**

improvement in school attendance



# Aidan Browne

Chairperson YAP Ireland



# Siobhán O'Dwyer

CEO YAP Ireland



One of the many things I'm proud of as a YAP Board member is how we do participation. YAP is a strengths-based organisation - so a key driver for us is hearing the young person's story - from the young person!

The staff of YAP show a genuine interest in getting to know what young people like to do, are good at, and get a sense of satisfaction from.

This is one reason why YAP programmes are so successful - and not just for the young people, but also for their parents and extended families - and our funders. In recent years we've demonstrated that listening more closely to the parents has had great benefits for both the young people and parents.

Each year we expand the principles of YAP into other areas of service - youth justice, disabilities and this year, youth mental health. I am confident that with a strong commitment to our principles, young people and families who come in contact with YAP Ireland can be confident of excellent outcomes - and our funders can be confident of exceptional practice.



The Annual Report for 2017 once again illustrates the brilliance and creativity of the Young People and Families with whom we are privileged to work,

supported by an equally brilliant and creative staff team. It is great to see the positive outcomes achieved by the Young People and Families and their willingness to respond to monitoring calls with important feedback.

I want to thank the Social Workers, Gate Keepers and Area Managers in Tusla who continue to refer to YAP Ireland but more importantly, who work with us as partners to achieve the best outcomes for these Young People and Families.

I'd like to thank the Board of YAP Ireland for their commitment and support in what was a challenging and eventful year. I want to welcome our new partner, St. John of God Hospital, Ginesa Suite where we are providing an Independent Advocacy Service since May 2017. A big thank you to staff and most particularly, to the Young People and Families who have embraced the YAP Model and from whom we continue to learn every day.

## Strategic Plan 2017-2020



### Strategic Goal 1

To Provide Quality Services to Young People and Families in line with the YAP model.



### Strategic Goal 3

Organisational Effectiveness - We Do What We Say We Will Do.



### Strategic Goal 2

To Amplify the Voice of Young People & Parents/Carers in Society.



# Strategic Goal 1: To Provide Quality Services to Young People and Families in line with the YAP model

## Profile of YAP Young People

YAP Ireland has gathered profile information related to 2223 young people and families we have worked with between 2011 and 2017.

### Gender and Age

57% of referrals to YAP are male and 43% are female. 18% are aged <10-12, 51% are aged 13-15, and 31% are aged 16-18+. 30% of all referrals are males aged 13-15. 14% of referrals for ages 16-18+ are male, with 17% being female. 12% of referrals aged <10-12 are male, with 6% being female.

### Household Circumstances

54% live in a single parent household with 30% living in a two parent household. 75% of families have full medical cards and 47% have a family history of drug or alcohol misuse.

### Nationality/Ethnicity

87% were classified as Irish, with an additional 5% being members of the Irish Travelling community. 4% were from an African or Asian background and 3% were Eastern European.

### Current Placement

68% of young people were living at home when they started the programme. 11% lived with extended family with 13% in foster care. 6% lived in residential care or supported lodgings. Of those living at home at the start of the programme, 93% remained at home at the end of their time with YAP.

### Education

80% of young people engaged with YAP Ireland are in education with 61% of those attending school regularly.

### Mental Health Diagnosis

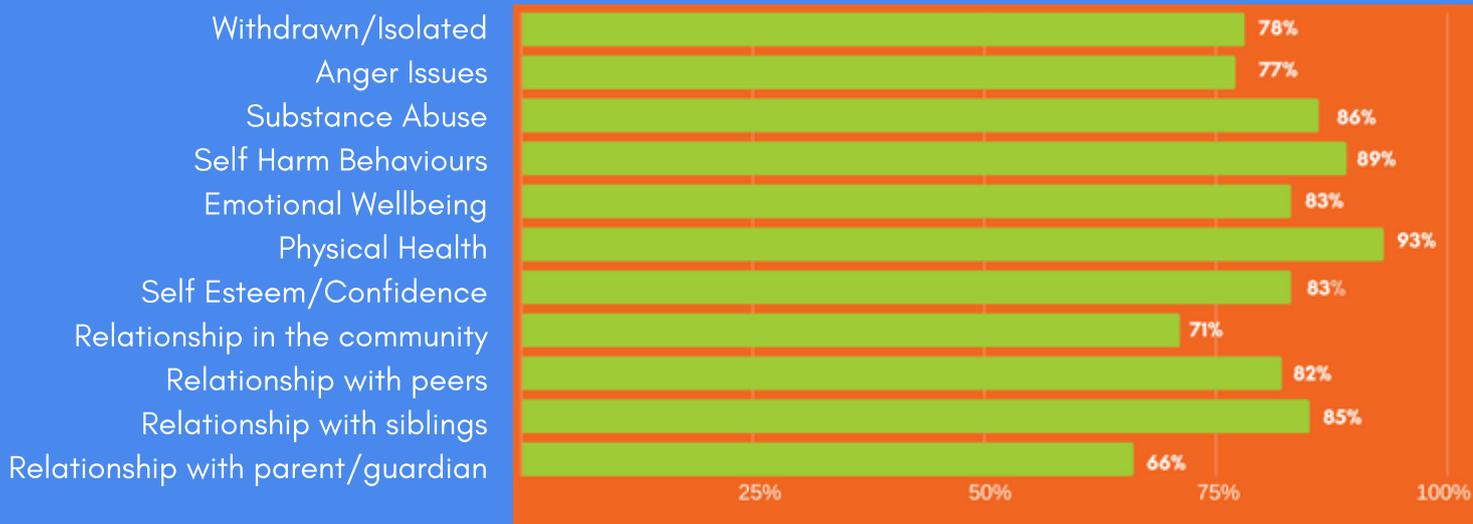
74% of young people referred to YAP Ireland have no mental health diagnosis, with 19% having a mental health diagnosis and 7% awaiting assessment.

## Outcomes

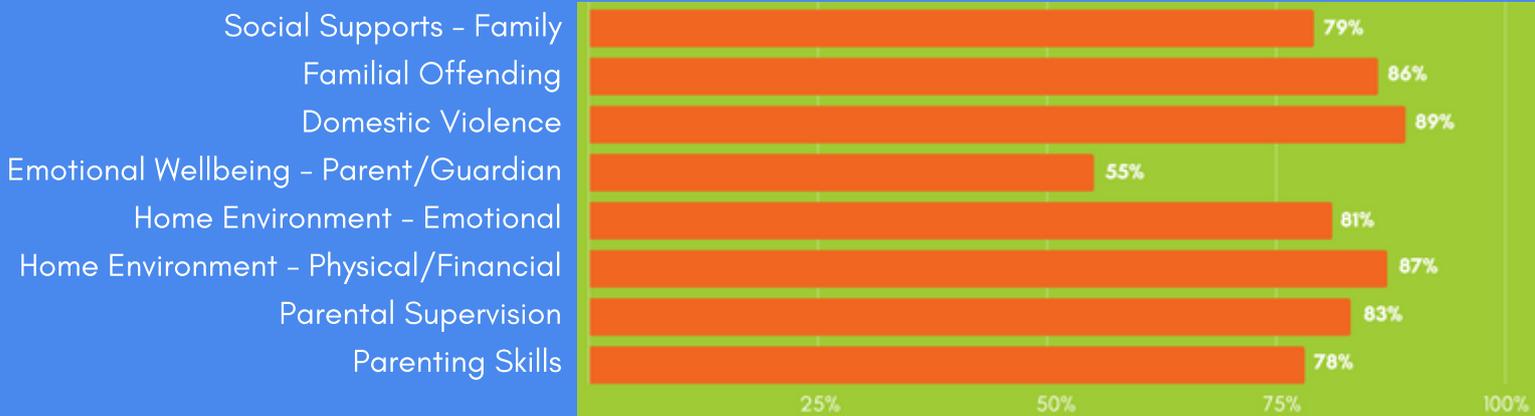
The national outcomes summary includes information for 1690 young people who YAP Ireland have worked with between January 2011 and October 2017. The longitudinal figures show the programme remains effective in all the main factors with very little variation. The system measures the views of young people, families, referrers, advocates and managers when matched and then again when the young person completes the 6 month programme.

# Outcomes

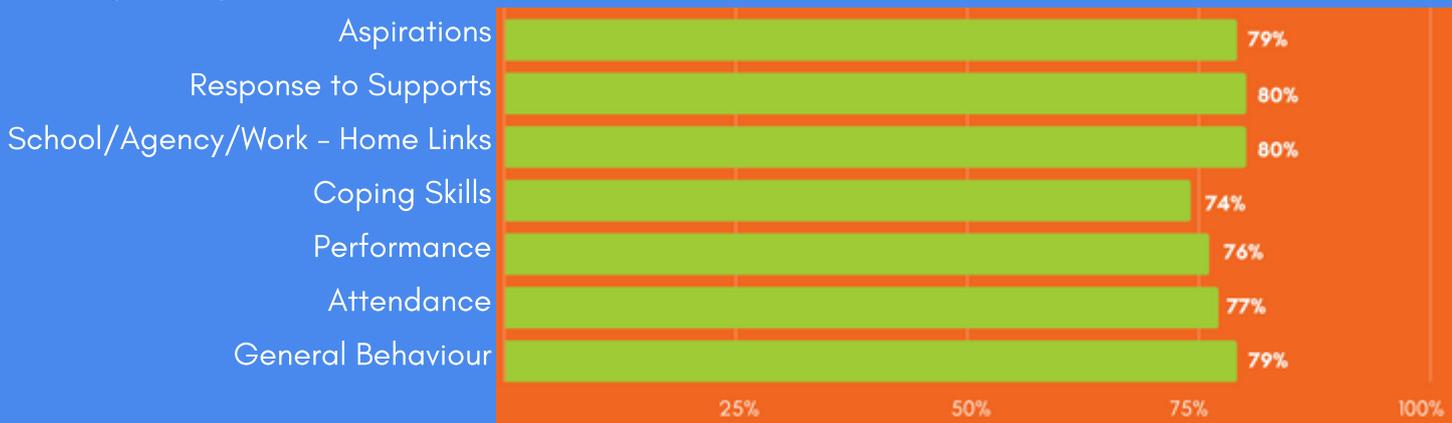
## Percentage Improvement in Self



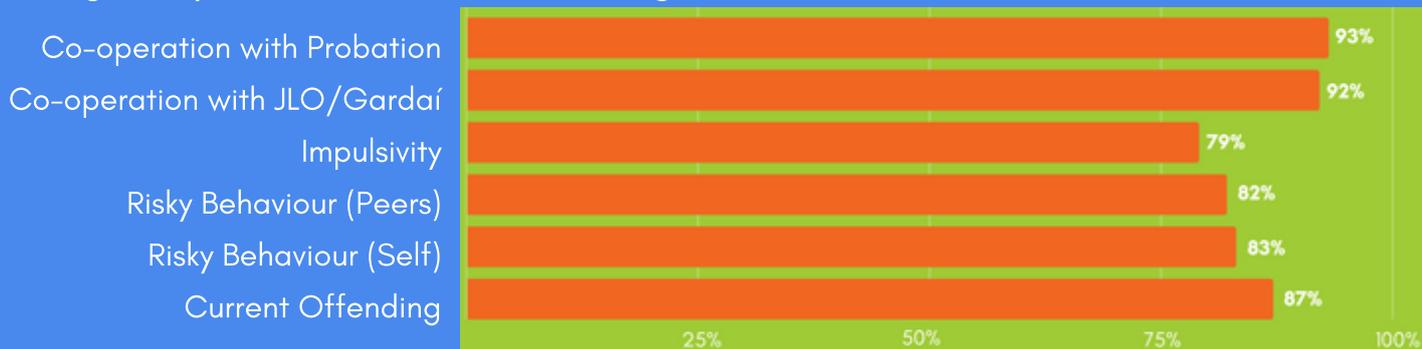
## Percentage Improvement in Family



## Percentage Improvement in Education



## Percentage Improvement in Offending Behaviour



# Strengths and Difficulty Questionnaires (SDQs)

YAP Ireland use Strengths and Difficulty Questionnaires to measure improvement in resilience for young people we work with. The data is for 256 young people and 254 parents/carers who completed 3 SDQs.

SDQ Stage	Parent/Guardian	Young Person (Self)
Stage 1	19.20	17.16
Stage 2	17.48	16.50
Stage 3	16.74	15.34

## Quality Monitoring

YAP Ireland carries out quality monitoring assessments with young people, parents/carers and referrers to find out how they feel about their involvement with YAP. Here are some key quotes and statistics from these calls.

"My daughter was very shy at the beginning and now she is chatty and confident. I have seen lots of change in her."

- **Parent**

**93%**

of parents/carers gave YAP a satisfaction score of 4+ out of 5

"She loves YAP and her Advocate. It's a great service and I would recommend it to anyone."

- **Parent**

"Since I started in YAP I have seen a big change in myself and I'm very happy and grateful for the support YAP has given me."

- **Young Person**

**92%**

of young people gave YAP a satisfaction score of 4+ out of 5

"It's very fun and I enjoy it a lot. It helped me to be more open with people and not to be afraid to say what I think."

- **Young Person**

## Referrer Feedback

In 2017, we included those who refer young people to YAP in our quality monitoring assessment for the first time. These referrers include Tusla social workers, people working within Disability Services and within Mental Health Services.

We have received excellent feedback, with 100% of responders saying they would refer another case to YAP and 99% saying they would recommend YAP to a colleague.

**100%**

of referrers would refer young people to YAP again

"I think YAP is a fantastic service and do great work."

- **Referrer**



# Strategic Goal 2 : To Amplify the Voice of Young People and Parents/Carers in Society

## Participation in 2017

Directly involving young people and families in the direction our services take is a core priority for YAP Ireland. We do this through local and national Participation groups and events.

### These are some highlights from Participation in 2017:

To learn about how they can influence change, the Dublin Participation group sent a letter to Minister Katherine Zappone asking to visit the Dáil, which she kindly facilitated.

The young people were delighted to visit Leinster House to get to see where important decisions about the future of the country are made and how they can influence those decisions.



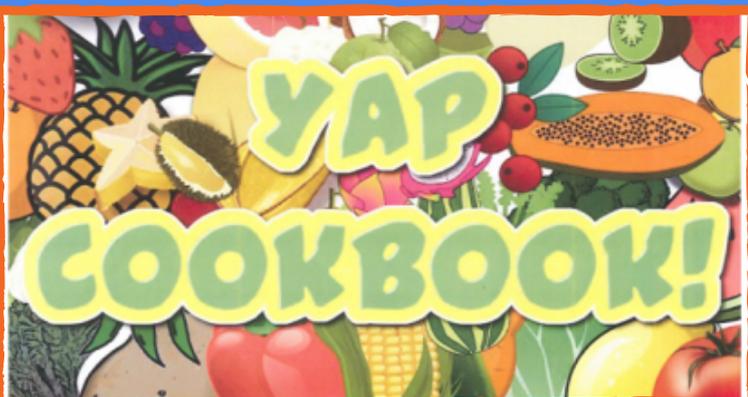
Parents in Cork came together to create a fantastic 'Paying It Forward' leaflet to share their problem-solving tips with other parents to help give back to their communities. They worked together with the young people to decide what they wanted to include in the leaflet.

**34**  
parents attended local  
Participation groups in  
2017

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Parents & Young People  
**PAYING IT  
FORWARD**

**HACKS** for  
Problem Solving



The Dublin Participation group put together their very own YAP cookbook.

The young people suggested that the food provided for their meet-ups could be a bit more varied and from that the idea of their own cookbook was born!

**120**

young people  
attended Participation  
events in 2017

**71**

Participation events held  
nationally in 2017



The 'Mighty Ole Midlanders' Participation group created an amazing art project which will be permanently displayed in Tusla's new offices in Mullingar. As part of the project, they learned about how important their voices are and got to share their ideas with representatives of senior management in Tusla.

## Youth Forums

A key aspect of YAP Ireland's Participation Strategy are our Youth Forums. The Youth Forum aims to amplify the voices of the young people engaging with YAP by giving them the opportunity to come together and speak on issues that are important to them. The format of the Youth Forums are guided by the wishes of the young people.

In 2017, our Youth Forums brought together young people from all over the country to discuss issues and challenges around the theme of 'How Can I Influence Change?'

The continued growth of the Youth Forum is of huge importance to YAP Ireland and we were delighted with its successes in 2017.

## National Event

The YAP National Event took place in Croke Park Conference Centre on Thursday 17th August 2017. Our National Event is an opportunity for young people to showcase their work from throughout the year. Young people and families from across the country presented on how they had brought about change for themselves and within services.



The event was attended by over 300 people, including Fred McBride (CEO of Tusla), Dr. Niall Muldoon (Ombudsman for Children), Jim Ryan (Head of Operations and Mental Health - HSE) and Anne Rabbitte TD (Fianna Fáil Spokesperson on Children and Youth Affairs). This allowed the young people and families to speak directly to people of influence about how services could change.

It was an inspirational day for all who attended.

# Investing in Children

In 2017, YAP Ireland received the Investing in Children Membership Award for the fourth consecutive year.

This award recognises imaginative practice and the active inclusion of children and young people in dialogue that leads to change. YAP is fully committed to ensuring the young people engaged with our services have a say that results in real change, and we are very proud to have once again received this award.



As part of the assessment for the award, young people are interviewed to ensure they feel their voices are heard. Below are some quotes from these interviews.

**"If you really need someone like a friend that listens to you. It's a great service to give to young people who don't have anyone to depend on."**

**"It gives me time to set my mind free, gets me out of a sad place."**

**"I was very shy and it built my confidence. Before I started I had bad anger swings and now I go out the back and calm down."**

**"It helped me to get out of my shell. I isolated myself, never did much. My Advocate tried to show me things I could do, instead of keeping myself contained."**



What young people said about YAP

**"My Advocate helps me get through stuff, especially with school as she knows my teachers and I'm able to tell her things about school when it's not going so good and she understands."**

**"I have been involved in my plan and what I want to do. I can pick and choose and [my Advocate] encourages and supports me."**

**"[My Advocate] was nice, she was caring and helping and I could talk to her about anything."**

**"I feel free and I am a much happier person. They listened and talked to me and have brought a smile to my face."**

YAP Ireland is also privileged to be the assessors for the Investing in Children Award Scheme in Ireland, in conjunction with Voices of Young People in Care (VOYPIC) in Northern Ireland. We are working with a range of organisations in Ireland towards Investing in Children membership. If you would like to find out more information, please contact us by email at [info@yapireland.ie](mailto:info@yapireland.ie) or by phone on (01) 8689180.



# Strategic Goal 3 : Organisational Effectiveness - We Do What We Say We Will Do

## Financial Information

Complete audited accounts for YAP Ireland for 2016 are available to view on our website at [www.yapireland.ie](http://www.yapireland.ie).

Audited accounts for 2017 will be published on our website in due course.



YAP Ireland was proud to be one of the first signatories of the Governance Code - the Code of Practice for Good Governance of Community, Voluntary and Charitable Organisations in Ireland. We were delighted to sign up for another three year period in 2017.

## The YAP Board

<b>Aidan Browne</b>	Chair
<b>Paula Cahill O'Sullivan</b>	Vice-Chair
<b>Claire Fitzpatrick</b>	Secretary
<b>Lynette Brown Sow</b>	Director
<b>Vivian Sanks-King</b>	Director
<b>Edel Quinn</b>	Director
<b>Donncha Hughes</b>	Director
<b>Greg O'Leary</b>	Director
<b>Réidin Dunne</b>	Director
<b>Keith Cassidy</b>	Director
<b>Paul McGettigan</b>	Resigned 2017

## Staff Opinion Survey 2017

It's very important to YAP Ireland that all those who work for YAP consider us to be a great place to work, with the YAP model at the centre of all that we do. We want our staff to enjoy their work, to feel they are supported to do their jobs to the best of their ability, and to feel as though they are encouraged to grow in their roles and gain new skills.

To this end, we conduct an annual survey of our staff, asking them a number of questions on how they feel YAP Ireland is as an employer. Here are some key statistics from the 2017 survey:



**87%**  
agree YAP is an enjoyable place to work

**90%**  
believe YAP lives up to its values

**70%**  
believe they are given opportunities to learn new skills

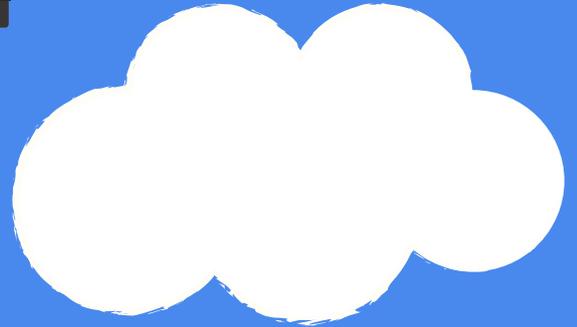
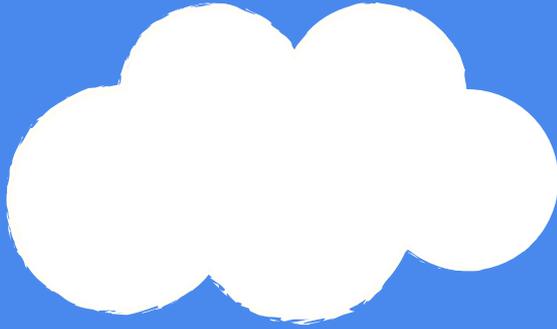


Top 3 things people like about working in YAP:

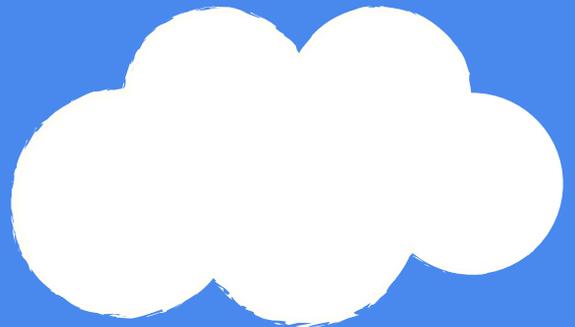
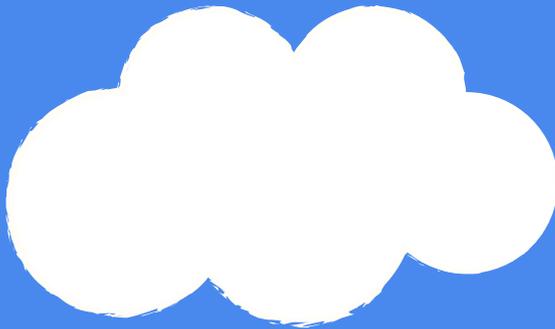
1. Working with young people

2. The YAP model

3. Flexibility



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