



# Willow Grove Adolescent Unit

Advocacy Service  
Development

Madge O'Callaghan April 2015

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# What is advocacy?

- A “device to influence the needs/rights of the group in favour of the needs/rights of the individual” (Brandon 1995)

# Well known advocates



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# Set-up phase

- Focus groups with parents and service users, other interested organisations
- Service need identified
- Steering group established
- Service costs established
- Application for funding to Foundation
- Employment of Coordinator

# Establishment of the Youth Advocacy service for WGAU

- Identification of role of youth panel
- Recruitment of volunteers for youth panel
- Development of Group Advocacy module
- Development of staff training
- Development of a national advocacy service for children

# Group/Collective Advocacy

- Group Advocacy Service is provided by coordinator who stands up for the rights of the group and helps sort out their complaint, issue or problem.
- The coordinator takes direction from the group, keeps their issues and information private and confidential and only releases information with permission from them.

## Group Advocacy contd.

- Advocacy support can include going to meetings with or for the group, supporting them to write letters, make phone calls or lodge complaints.
- The Group Advocacy coordinator works to support the young people to self-advocate, resolve issues and improve the quality of life for young people in WGAU.

# Self Advocacy

- Self-advocacy in the general sense, is regarded as the most effective form of advocacy an individual can attain and practise in their daily life and where feasible it 'is or should be, the ultimate goal of all other forms of advocacy' (Atkinson, 1999:6).



# Human Rights Approach

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# Staff training

- WGAU staff trained in

# YES – Youth Empowerment Service

- Establish criteria for eligibility
- Recruitment & Selection
- Identification of training needs
- Assessment of skills
- Policy development
- Work-plan

# Practicalities working with young volunteers

- Meetings out of hours
- Stipends
- Develop relationships
- Support and encourage
- Engage
- Congratulate often
- Celebrate - have fun
- Network

# Practicalities (contd.)

- Be prepared
- Be open
- Inform yourself
- Listen
- Be supportive
- Be creative
- Trust
- Manage expectations

# WGAU Advocacy Group

- Fortnightly sessions
- Group context
- Address issues raised
- Support YP to self-advocate
- Teach YP to self-advocate
- Use Headspace toolkit
- Be creative – use the internet, YouTube tutorials
- Train staff

# Summary

- 1 Group advocacy
  - Developing and facilitating appropriate training materials for use with service users
- 2 Youth panel
  - Forming an enthusiastic youth panel of former service users to advocate for change for WGAU
- 3 In-house training
  - Staff training to raise awareness of advocacy

## Summary (contd.)

- 4 Network with relevant organisations – EPIC, Barnardos, Childrens Rights Alliance, Mental Health Reform, DCYA, Ombudsman for Children's office etc.



Work undertaken by



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# Staff interviews

## DOCTOR FUN

19 Apr 2003



Copyright © 2004 David Farley, d.farley@biblio.org  
<http://fb.blio.org/Daveidrfun.html>

This cartoon is made available on the Internet for personal viewing only. Opinions expressed herein are solely those of the author.

It was a mistake for Eric to wear a t-shirt to his job interview, and it was a bigger mistake to wear that particular t-shirt.

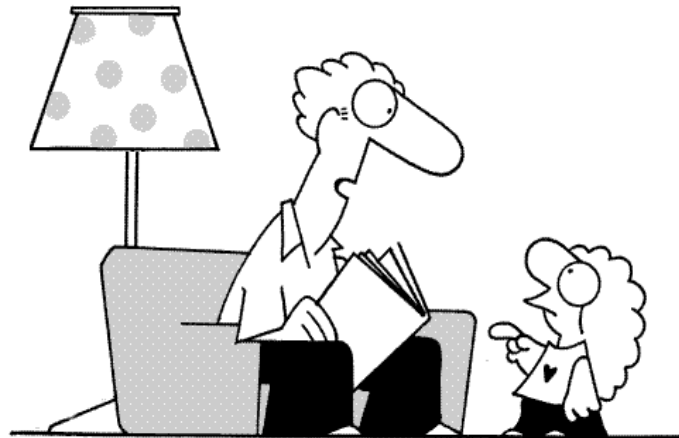
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# Policy reviews



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# Literature Reviews



**“It’s called ‘reading’. It’s how people install new software into their brains.”**

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# Videos x 3



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# Community Links programme



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# Dublin Bus Community Awards



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# One act play: MASKS



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# Street activity



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# TY involvement



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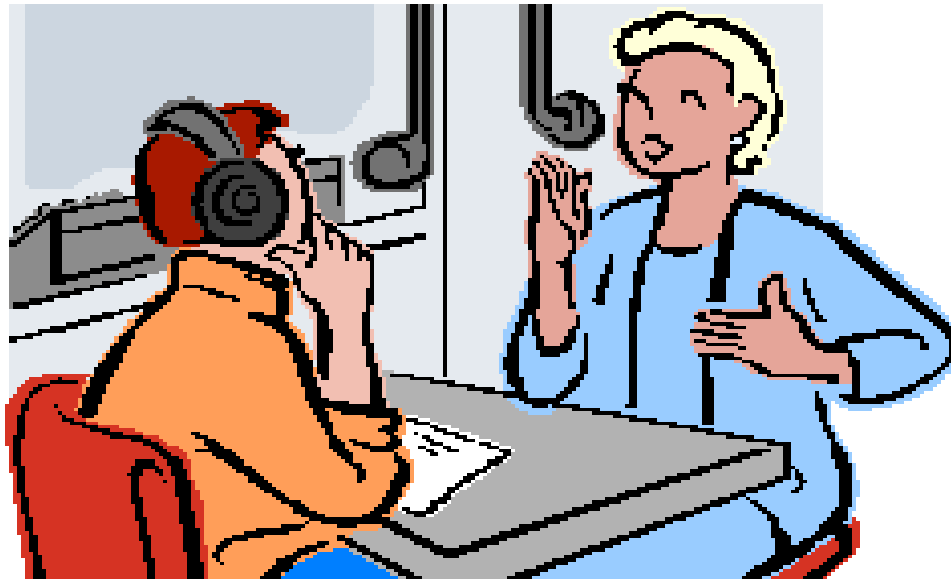
# Academic meeting SPMHS



# Representation (e.g. HSE reference group)



# Radio Interviews



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# Mental Health Day



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# Delivering papers



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# Mental Health Fair



**Youth Mental Health Fair**  
St. Patrick's Mental Health Services,  
James's Street, Dublin 8  
**Saturday September 19th, 2015**  
**11am-4pm**

Information stands. Freebies.  
Laughter Yoga session, Mindfulness, Drumming, Yoga, Dance.  
Music, Poetry Slam, Fun and games.  
Some serious stuff too from mental health experts.  
**FREE tickets at <http://yes4youth.eventbrite.ie>**  
All welcome!

 YES  
youth mental health services

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# Mental Health Fair Line-up


YOUTH EMPOWERMENT SERVICE  
Mental Health Advocacy

YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH FAIR  
SATURDAY, SEPT 19TH 11AM – 4PM

## EXHIBITORS

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ACTIVE CONNECTIONS</li> <li>2. WALK IN MY SHOES</li> <li>3. ARAMARK</li> <li>4. YES</li> <li>5. LET'S GO MENTAL (COMHAIRLE/DCYA)</li> <li>6. FIRST FORTNIGHT</li> <li>7. MYMIND COMMUNICATIONS</li> <li>8. CROSSCARE TEEN SUPPORT</li> <li>9. SOAR</li> <li>10. MENTAL HEALTH REFORM</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11. MYLIFE SOLUTIONS</li> <li>12. BODYWHYS</li> <li>13. CHILDREN'S RIGHTS ALLIANCE</li> <li>14. YOUTH CONNECT</li> <li>15. REACHOUT.COM</li> <li>16. YOUTH SUICIDE PREVENTION IRELAND</li> <li>17. OMBUDSMAN FOR CHILDREN'S OFFICE</li> <li>18. EPIC</li> <li>19. MINDFULNESS MATTERS</li> <li>20. MENTAL HEALTH INFORMATION FROM HEADSTRONG, MENTAL HEALTH IRELAND ETC.</li> </ol>
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## WORKSHOPS

*What's on*

- Drumming
- Zumba
- Singing
- Yoga
- Laughter Yoga
- Mindfulness
- Comedy
- Poetry
- Healthy cooking

*Performed by*

- Mesamba Samba School
- Róisín Mc Cannon
- Rachel O'Brien
- Emma Mooney
- Laughter Yoga Ireland
- Mindfulness Matters
- Laughter Lounge
- Stephen Murray
- Aramark

*Room No. Time*

We will have two people talking about mental health – Glamo and Stephen Murray – a performance of MASKS by the YES youth panel followed by a Q & A, and finally a group performance, bringing together the poetry, singing, drumming and dancing. The day will be directed by Róisín Mc Cannon of the YES panel.

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# Posters

- Community Links
- Developing an advocacy service
- GP consultation

# The challenge

- To establish a national independent advocacy service for adolescent mental health that would provide advocacy services for all children in mental health services.

# Progress to date

- One new service expected to be running by end 2016



Over to you:

Questions?

Comments?

Suggestions?