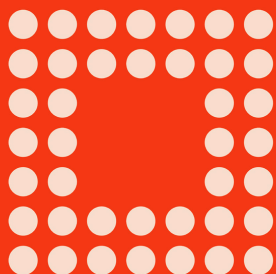
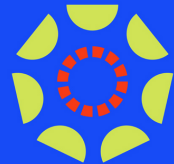


# Offaly Comhairle na nÓg Youth Conference 2024 Summary Report



Offaly



On Tuesday the 8th of October, over 100 young people gathered at Mucklagh Community Centre for Offaly Comhairle na nÓg's Youth Conference. This summary report shares some of the key outcomes of the event!

Offaly Comhairle na nÓg is our local youth council and members are aged 12 to 17. The council's purpose is to give young people the opportunity to be involved in the development of local services and policies.

A huge thank you to the Offaly Comhairle na nÓg Members, Offaly Local Development Company and Offaly County Council for running the event.

A special thanks to all attendees.



Offaly Local  
Development  
Company



Comhairle Chontae Uíbh Fhailí  
Offaly County Council



With opening words from our Chair Emily Cormican and Cathaoirleach Cllr Tony McCormack, the event got off to a great start.

Our guest speaker, Jordan Conroy, Offaly Rugby Star and Olympian, addressed the room with an inspiring talk about Mental Health and how young people can ask for help and support their friends.

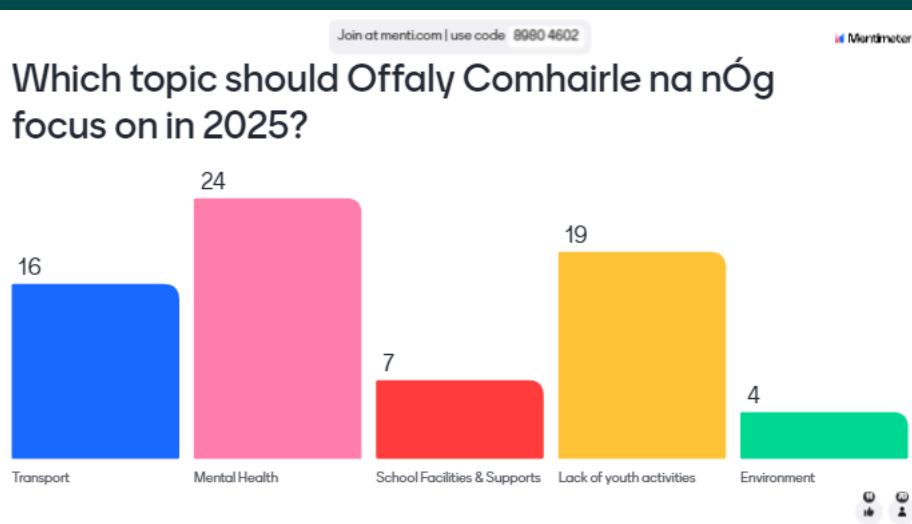
Offaly Comhairle na nÓg worked on the topic of Mental Health throughout 2024. The group worked closely with JIGSAW and led their own Colour Climb in the Slieve Bloom Mountains!



The Youth Conference was an opportunity to gather the opinions of young people from Offaly and vote on which topic Offaly Comhairle na nÓg should focus on, in 2025. Following on from our guest speakers and presentations, there were two key workshops that all attendees took part in.

Through an online vote, attendees voted for **Mental Health**.

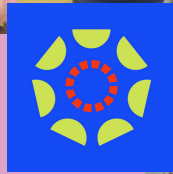
This means Offaly Comhairle na nÓg will continue working on proposals and ideas from 2024 and strive towards influencing change in Offaly!







All 12 secondary schools in Offaly were represented at our youth conference and judging by the pictures, we think they had fun!





# Workshops

## Open Space Workshop

What are the main issues for young people in Offaly?

Using post it notes, participant's answers were categorised into 5 key themes:

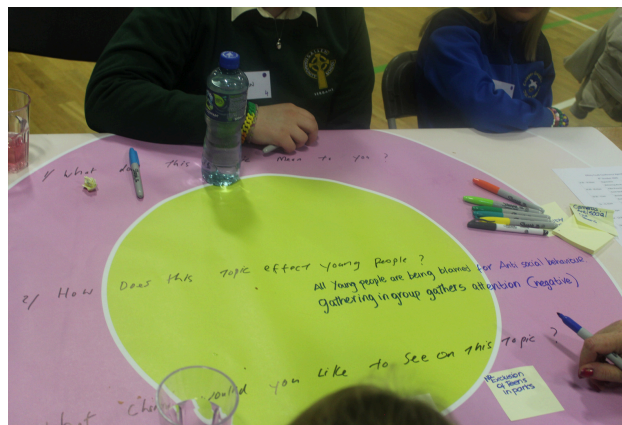
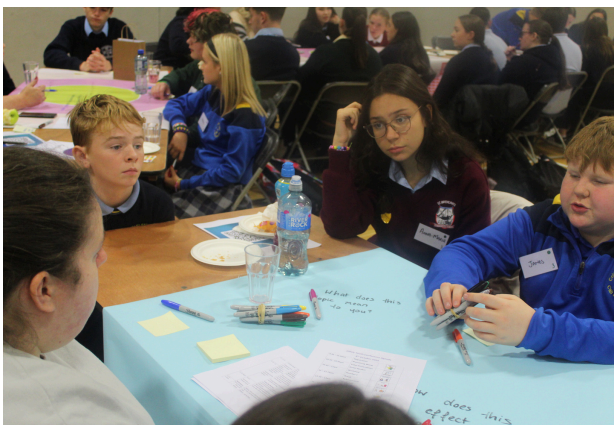
1. Transport
2. Mental health
3. School facilities
4. Lack of youth activities
5. Environment



## World Café Workshop

Young people were invited to share their opinion on a theme, from the Open Space workshop. The young people were given three questions to tackle their given topic:

1. What does this topic mean to you?
2. How does this topic effect young people?
3. What change would you like to see on this topic?





Participants sat at tables with large placemats that contained the three questions for the World Café discussion and young people could write/draw their thoughts. The purpose of this workshop was to figure out how Offaly Comhairle na nÓg can move forward with topics and to share the findings with Offaly County Council and other relevant organisations and services.

Here is a snippet of what attendees had to say!

## Transport

What changes would you like to see on this topic?

- More cost effective
- More accessible
- More routes
- Better Roads

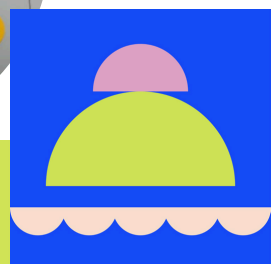
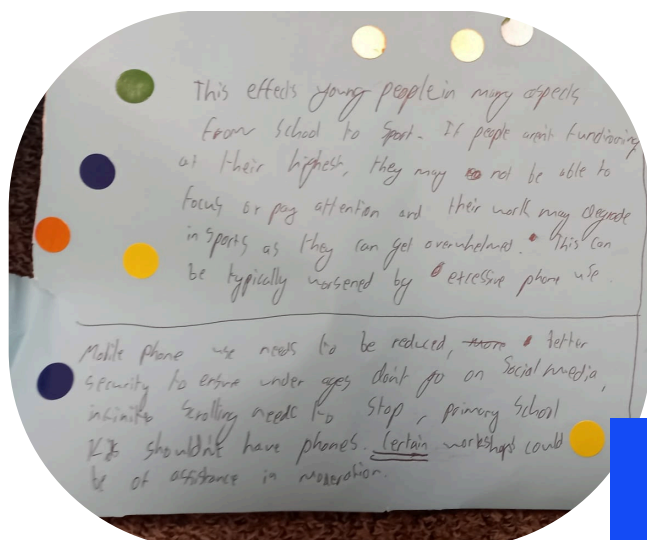
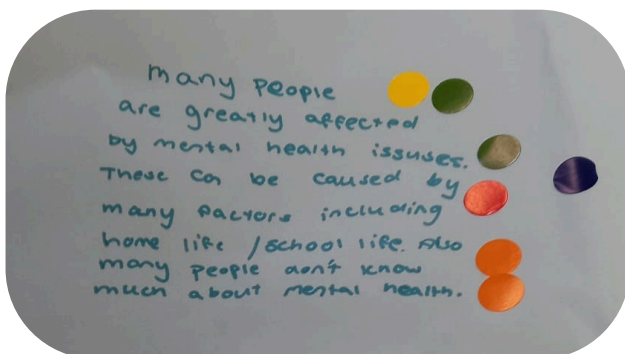


## Mental Health

*"In rural areas, people have difficulty finding their crowd"*

What changes would you like to see on this topic?

- Mobile phone use needs to be reduced
- Actions need to be taken by the person e.g. go for a walk, getting fresh air, healthy eating
- People get uncomfortable asking for help; scheduled times (for counselling) for anyone/everyone could be an important action





## School Facilities

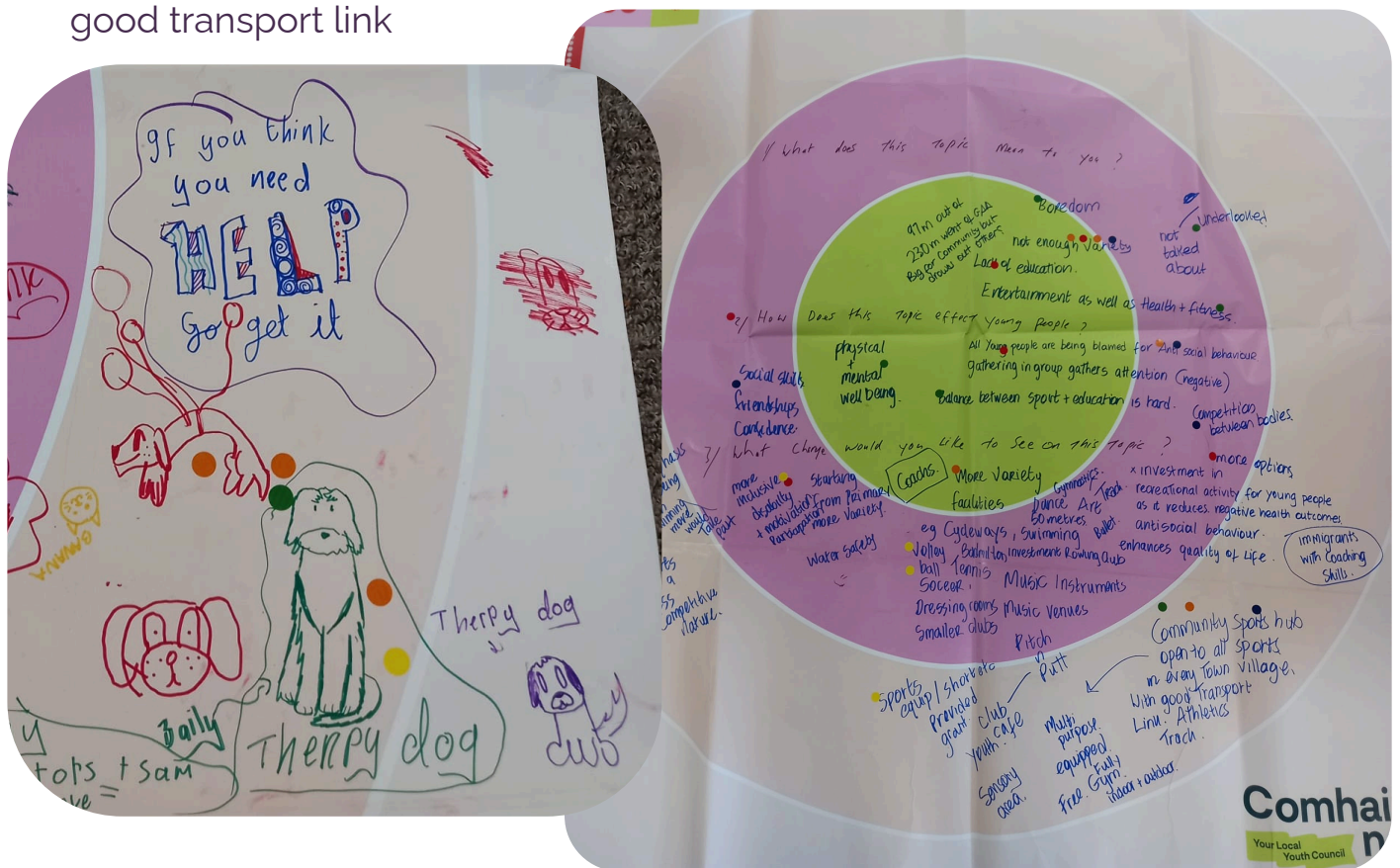
What changes would you like to see on this topic?

- More guidance counselling or rooms to be able to take a break when you are struggling

## Lack of Youth Activities

What changes would you like to see on this topic?

- Start social media pages that advertise what activities are on for young people in Offaly
- More non sport social groups
- Community Sports Hub open to all sports in every town/village with good transport link



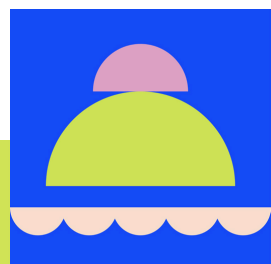
## Environment

How does this topic affect young people?

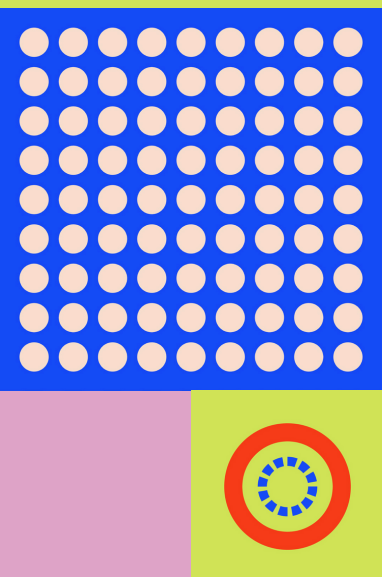
- Affects careers of young people
- Scared for our future

What changes would you like to see on this topic?

- Give uniforms & books to charity, reuse
- Raise awareness to environmental issues







## What happens next?

### New Members

As a follow-on to the conference, lots of young people have filled out expression of interest forms to indicate that they would like to become a Comhairle na nÓg Member. The coordinator will invite them to join our next meeting, in November.

### Chosen Topic: Mental Health

Comhairle members will consider the findings of the World Café Discussions. This will inform how they debate, research & consult further on the topic of Mental Health. The group will strive towards influencing real change in Offaly by creating a work plan for 2025.

- Would you like to join Offaly Comhairle na nÓg?
- Do you need the opinion of young people in Offaly?
- Are you working on a policy/service that affects young people?

Contact:

**Hazel Daly**

Co-ordinator

Offaly Comhairle na nÓg

Offaly Local Development Company

087 700 2521

hdaly@offalyldc.ie

