



Family Support Project

## 2019 End of Year Summary Report



YNR

*Supporting children, young people and families*

**TÚSLA**

An Ghníomhaireacht um  
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach  
Child and Family Agency

# INTRODUCTION

The Family Project has been established since 2006 within Youth New Ross and is funded by Tusla, (The Child and Family Agency). Initially working in the New Ross urban area, it now works with families in the greater South Wexford area.

Tusla and The Child and Family Network Coordinator have worked together with The Family Project in Youth New Ross to develop a model for working with families who need support. Direct work has been ongoing with children, young people and families as well as interagency pieces of work to facilitate group work.

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## Overview of the Family Project Youth New Ross 2019

- In 2019 over 110 families were referred to The Family Project through PPFs referral pathways, The Social Work Department and self-referral.
- 90 families were supported by the Project throughout 2019.
  - ☞ 20 families for a variety of reasons i.e re-engagement with Tusla or change/improvement in their circumstances did not continue with the service following the initial referral.
  - ☞ 166 children and young people were supported through the Project in 2019.
  - ☞ 25 families who were supported in 2018 continued to be supported into 2019.
  - ☞ Most parents of the families who engaged with the Project received some form of parenting programme whether individually or through the Programmes offered through the Wexford Parenting Hub.
  - ☞ 17 families in addition to those referred through PPFs were supported during the course of the year through outreach work or the parents drop-in service. We receive enquiries on a weekly basis from families or professionals looking for additional assistance/support. We try where possible to refer these families on to appropriate services in their area. It is our practice to meet with these families for at least an initial meeting in order to determine the correct service to meet their needs.

## Play Therapy/Art Therapy/Equine Therapy/Counselling

Our resident Play Therapist worked with six children and their families through the mediums of Play Therapy, Filial Therapy and Theraplay Techniques.

Other therapeutic interventions included:

- Art therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Equine Therapy
- Child Psychologist
- Counselling

These interventions are either entirely funded or part funded by the Family Project and are carried out by external accredited therapists.

During 2019 we once again have been facilitated by many of the services in the Wexford area by allowing us to carry out meetings with parents, young people and professionals on their premises. The Project staff use Family Resource Centres in Taghmon, Southend and Raheen as well as the FDYS building and several schools. Working out in the community like this allows the Project to continue to build strong links with services in the locality. Most of the direct family work is carried out in the homes of the families we work with or else in the Youth New Ross premises.

It is important to note that at the beginning of 2019 a new full-time staff member was recruited this allowed for an increase in the core family work of the project. Alongside this the Project welcomed back two staff members who had been on maternity leave on a part time basis.

## The Family Project and Meitheal

- A total of 18 Meitheal meetings were attended by Project staff in 2019.
- In all of these Meitheal meetings the Family Project staff member was Lead Practitioner.
- Meitheal form 1 is filled out with all families before they begin working with the Project worker, this allows the worker and the family to get a better understanding of where the family's needs are.
- Closure forms are completed with all families whether they engage in the full Meitheal process or not.
- The feedback from families who have engaged in the Meitheal process has been very positive.

## Types of Interventions

The types of interventions the Project has provided consist of one to one sessions, small group sessions and family sessions. In some cases, more than one family member engages with the Project worker an example of this would be where parents avail of parenting support while a child has a one to one therapeutic intervention. During these sessions we use several approaches to complete the work including discussion, therapeutic board games, workbooks, art, baking and individual delivery of the various Programmes the staff are trained in. The Project also delivers programmes like the TLC KIDZ Programme which allows both children and their mothers to engage and get support in a group work setting.

The following are examples of programmes or interventions used in 2019:

- Meitheal
- Mindfulness for Children
- Parental Drop In
- Parenting Programmes
- Parenting children with Autism
- Non-Violent Resistant Parenting
- Meetings with other professionals
- Art Therapy
- Sessions around resilience
- Letter of support for housing
- Bereavement Programme/Work
- Relaxation techniques
- Access and Maintenance issues discussed
- Anger Management
- Educational options
- Safety Plans with adults and young people
- Anxiety Work with Young People

- Sexual Health Programme
- Self Esteem
- Eating Disorder Support work
- Parenting when separated Programme
- Parenting the anxious child
- Family sessions
- Play Therapy/Filial Therapy/Theraplay
- Equine Therapy
- Keeping Safe Programme
- Separation and Loss Programmes
- Stress Relief

## Length of Intervention

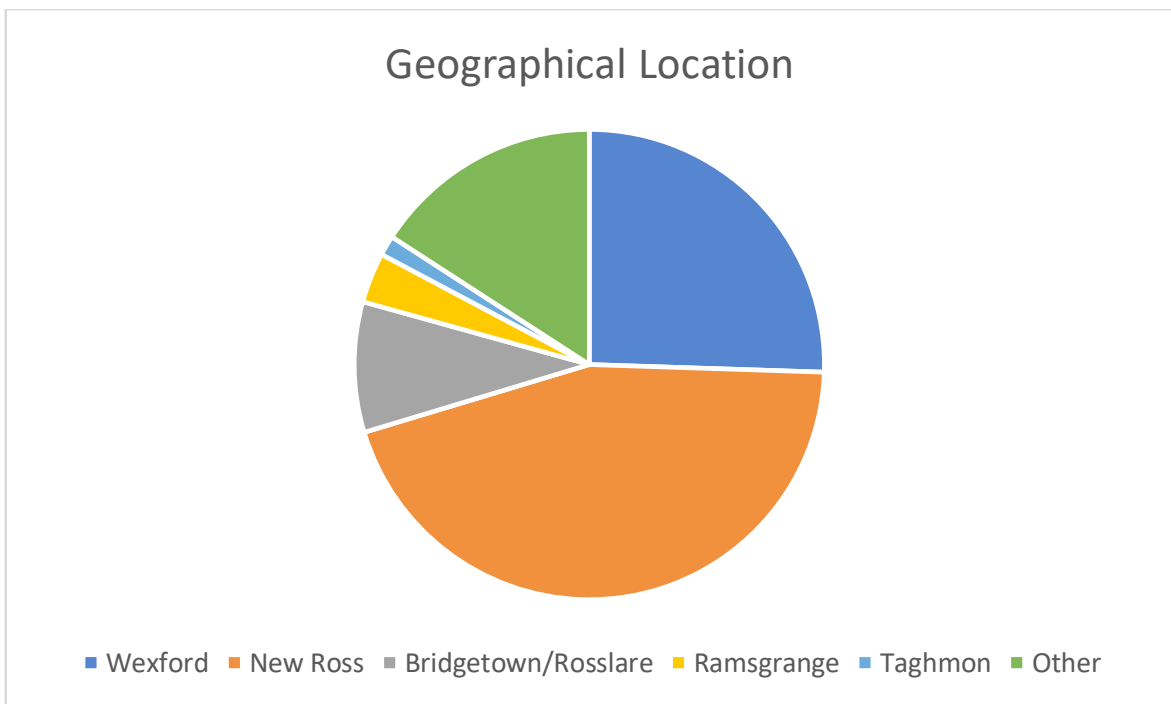
The average length of intervention is between 3-4 months. Families with higher needs are supported for longer periods of time but this is agreed at the referral meetings with Tusla.

We allow each family approximately three weeks to engage with our service. Each family is contacted by their assigned worker by phone call, text and letter giving them ample opportunity to engage with the service.

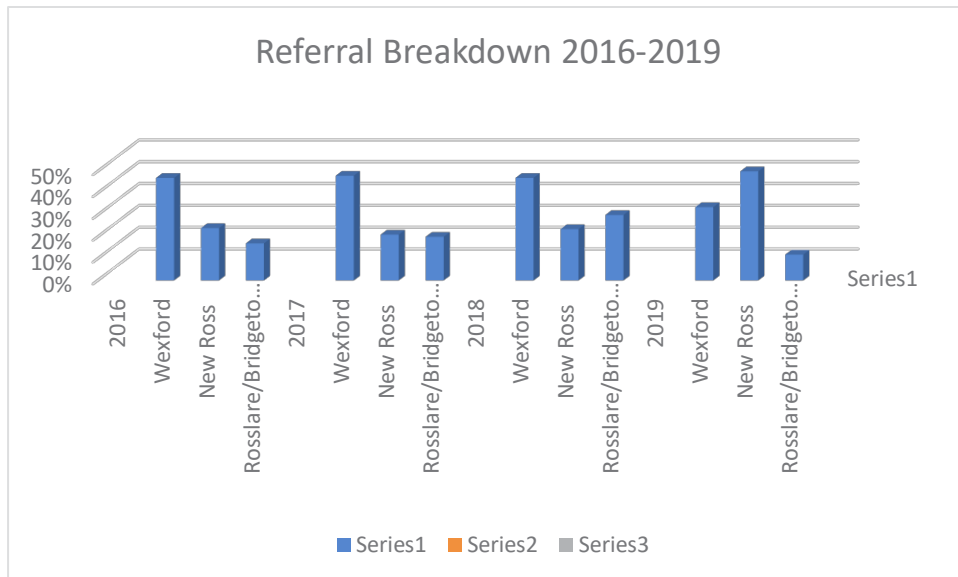
## Geographical Location

The geographical location of the families that were referred via the PPFS referral system, The Social Work Department, Self Referral and Drop In services (110), in 2019 is shown in the chart below.

The greatest number of referrals came from New Ross and the surrounding areas, Wexford town and the surrounding areas continue to have a high level of referrals and there was a noticeable drop in referrals from the Bridgetown/Rosslare area.







### Referral Breakdown 2016 - 2019

In 2016 geographical breakdown of referrals

Wexford = 47%, New Ross = 24% and Rosslare/Bridgetown = 17%

In 2017 geographical breakdown of referrals was

Wexford = 48%, New Ross = 21% and Rosslare/Bridgetown = 20%

In 2018 geographical breakdown of referrals was

Wexford = 47%, New Ross = 23.5% and Rosslare/Bridgetown = 30%

In 2019 geographical breakdown of referrals was

Wexford = 33.6%, New Ross = 50% and Rosslare/Bridgetown = 11.8%

## Presenting Issue

Main Issues Presenting on the referral form (in no particular order). Although issues presented on the referrals were varied during 2019 we saw an increase in young people presenting with anxiety, school refusal and it is clear that parental separation is a key component in family's experiencing difficulties.

- 1) Relationship breakdown or separation (between parents)
- 2) Domestic Violence
- 3) Addiction
- 4) Relationship breakdown between child and parent
- 5) Aggression shown to parent/step parent and/or siblings
- 6) Bereavement and loss
- 7) Mental health issues with parent or young person
- 8) Parenting skills
- 9) Behavioural issues
- 10) School refusal
- 11) Mental Health
- 12) Neglect

## Onward Referrals

There are many times when we feel that the families' or young person's needs, can be best met through an onward referral to another agency that specialises in the area stated on the initial referral or may be more accessible to the family. Over the course of 2019 we have referred families, children and young people to services appropriate to meet their needs either after the initial meeting or after the family has closed to the Family Project.

The following is an example of services we have referred the families, children and young people to in the South Wexford area:

- Substance Misuse Team
- Counselling – either private or through GP
- Wexford County Council
- Cottage Autism Network
- Collective Sensory Group
- Art and Play Therapists
- HSE Psychology Service
- Women's Refuge
- Disability Services
- Teen Access Project
- Risk and Resilience Project (FDYS)
- Local parent and toddlers group's
- Youth Projects
- Youth Train
- JLO and Gardaí
- Psychology Services

- SummerHill/Maryville – adult referrals for mental health via their GP
- GYDP projects such as SAFE project/GYDP in Youth New Ross
- FDYS
- Family Resource Centres – Raheen, Southend, Taughmon, SWWFRC
- Barnardos TPSP
- Cornmarket Project
- CAMHS (via their GP for a child)
- Local sports groups
- Mediation and Family Therapy
- School Completion and Home School Community Liason Projects
- St. Bridgets Centre

## Other Programme Work

The second TLC KIDZ Programme in the Wexford area took place during 2019. Six families took part in this thirteen-week programme which allows children to talk about and express the hurt experienced in their home through discussion and creative group work. It was a collaborative piece between Youth New Ross, Barnardos, Wexford Women's Refuge and Tusla. There was a lot of learning from the initial group run in 2018 which we were able to implement in the roll out of the 2019 programme. The feedback was very positive from parents and children alike.

The Mindfulness for Children Programme took place for the first time in Wexford town this year. The Project identified a need for this group due to the number of referrals it received citing that children were feeling increasingly anxious. Five children attended the programme which uses breathing exercises, meditation, discussion and arts and crafts to allow the young people involved to explore their feelings around anxiety as well as giving them a tool kit to help make them feel less anxious. Two Project workers facilitated this programme and by the end of 2019 they had completed two out of six modules of the Certificate in Creative Mindfulness for Children.

The Child and Family Support Network hosted an event in December which allowed services in New Ross and the surrounding areas to showcase the services each organisation provides. This event was for both professionals and parents to make themselves familiar with what is available in their area. On the day there was an expert who spoke about the stress individuals experience and the stress experienced by families.

The Wexford Parenting hub launched during 2019. The launch gave an opportunity for services across Wexford to present on each of their services giving an overview of what they provide to their community.

The Family Project Manager is also a Parenting Support Champion for the South Wexford area and attended several trainings in 2019 including the next level of Neuro Linguistic Programming. At the Wexford Parenting Hub Launch the Manager of the Family Project spoke about the role of Parenting Support Champions in Wexford and highlighted the Parenting24Seven booklet which has the seven key messages of parenting broken down into simple tips and tricks. The idea behind this booklet was for parents to pick this up while in waiting rooms or at home and have simple, useful information they can use in their day to day parenting. It has been a huge success with parents and professionals alike.

The Parenting Support Champion also attended the Tusla National Conference the day was useful for information sharing and to get ideas going forward with how to promote the Parenting Support Champions and the work they do at a local level. There are now four Parenting Support Champions in the Wexford area, regular meetings take place with our colleagues in Waterford in order to allow us to share expertise and training opportunities. The Parenting Support Champion for South Wexford continues to disseminate information about the Parenting 24Seven website, as well as highlighting the seven key messages for parents. As part of the Parent Support Champion role the worker sits on the PPFSC CYPSC subgroup as well as the Child and Family Support Networks for the Wexford and New Ross areas. The Parent Support domestic abuse and in the delivery of the TLD KIDZ Programme.

Champions from the Waterford/Wexford area came together during 2019 to compile information and produce a parenting booklet (as mentioned previously), for parents with helpful suggestions in relation to the seven key parenting messages. At the National Symposium for Parent Support Champions the Manager of the Family Project presented work that the Wexford/Waterford Champions had completed during the year. There was great interest in the booklet that was produced as well as the Wexford Parenting Hub.

Two Family Project workers attend the National Childhood Domestic Abuse Community of Practice. This helps to inform the work the Project carries out and share information on a national basis. It is particularly useful where a family has experienced The Family Project secured funding for an event which was held in December 2019. The purpose of the Winter Wonderland event was to give families an opportunity to spend time together and to create happy, fun filled memories around the festive period. Over 200 people attended the event, each young person received a selection box and each parent received a self-care package. Local businesses kindly donated raffle prizes which allowed us to run a free draw for families who attended on the day. There was also face painting, arts and crafts and music. Each family also had a family photo taken on the day as a keepsake. The event was a huge success and the feedback from young people and parents was very positive.

## Training

During 2019 the Family Project team completed training in

- Non-violent resistant parenting
- Child and Youth Participation training
- Parenting the anxious child
- Certificate in Creative Mindfulness for Children module 1 and 2
- Supervision Theory and Practice with I.T Carlow
- Human Givens Training
- Meitheal Chair Training
- SMART Consent training through NUIG
- Neuro Linguistic Programming
- STATS Hub training with Tusla
- Reflective Practice
- Gaisce

### Steering and Advisory Groups

In 2019 members of the staff team were part of the TLC KIDZ Programme steering group and the C.E.O of YNR together with the Manager of the Family Project also attend the Wexford Parenting Hub steering group meetings. We are also involved in the National Quality Standards Framework Implementation Team.

### Networks

Family Project staff members continue to sit on both the Wexford and New Ross Child and Family Support Network groups. The Manager of the Project liaises with the other two Networks in Gorey and Enniscorthy as the Family Project are responsible for managing the funding for all four networks.

### PPFS referral meetings

Regular meetings take place with the PPFS coordinator to facilitate the referral of new families from Tusla to the Family Project. This also allows opportunity for ongoing quality assurance.

### Children and Young People Services Committees

The C.E.O of Youth New Ross sits on the main CYPSC group for Wexford. Members of the Family Project continue to sit on some of the working groups namely Prevention, Partnership and Family Support and Young People and Mental Health.

## Staffing

**Project Manager:** Joanne O` Gorman

**Administrator:** Sarah Corish

**Project Workers:** Katie O` Brien,  
Saoirse Murphy,  
Sinead Roche,  
Ger O` Connor  
Annmarie Costello

**Cleaner:** Joan Power



## Feedback Forms 2019

The following are direct quotes from families and young people who have been involved in the Family Project during the course of the year;

### What did you like about the Family Project?

- "I was confident in telling..... how I felt and it was nice to know I had support and someone to turn to"
- "I felt confident and able to feel like the old me again"
- "I want to thank the service for helping me and my two children at the hardest time of our lives"
- "It felt like it was safe and comfortable place to come for advice and support"
- "To know that someone has my back, to call if needed and who knows what the child's history is. So much easier that the service comes to you in the home"
- "Knowing support is out there and only a phone call away"
- "Willingness to listen and help find solutions to difficult situations"
- "I got information on additional services available, support generally and ..... was very understanding"
- "I liked the support with family life and relationships"
- "...guided me on what to do to help my son"
- "I got good support emotional wise and understanding children's behaviours and solutions for everyday problems"
- "I'm sorry that this service and help is over now as I'm going to miss .... support and advice"
- "I liked the support, ideas and time that was given to me and my child"
- "Help and support for me and my son"
- "Helped me to say no to my child"
- "It felt like someone was trying to really help me and my child"
- "They were helpful and supportive"
- "Support was great"
- "How friendly and kind ..... was to .... And all of the family. And the activities she did with....."
- "Willingness to listen and help find solutions to difficult problems"
- "... our support worker was absolutely fantastic always a joy to be around"
- "I didn't know who else to call, I knew ..... Would know what to do"
- "Thank you"
- "I felt safe here"

## Feedback Forms 2019

Have you an ideas about the services that are needed/required in your local area in Co. Wexford?

- "Dietician in Wexford for children in the community"
- "Support groups particularly aimed at teenager"
- "More play areas for children"
- "Mental Health supports for children, young people and adults. Youth group and support for younger children. Family support in the community"
- "I think a lot of services are too far away and are needed in New Ross"
- "That it doesn't take as long to get help"
- "Parent support group for children with diagnoses"
- "More mental health facilities for teenagers"