

## **Carrickfergus Youth Fair – supporting and encouraging local young people**

### **7 February 2017**

Over 400 pupils aged 14-15years from four post primary schools in Carrickfergus recently had the opportunity to find out more about local services that can support young people experiencing issues such as bullying, drugs and alcohol, mental health problems, social media, volunteering, domestic violence, general health and wellbeing and physical activity.



**Photograph Caption:** Adam Hamilton, Health Hub from Carrickfergus YMCA along with Carrickfergus Grammar pupils who were taking on the challenge on the spin bike.

The 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Youth Fair at Oakfield Community Centre, Carrickfergus was hosted by the Carrickfergus Raising Attainment Group and the CYPSP Carrickfergus Locality Planning Group. The event offered students from Carrick College, Carrickfergus Grammar, Downshire School and Ulidia Integrated College a chance to find out more about services and activities in the local area and how to seek help when they are in need.

Speaking at the fair, Colin Patterson, Vice Principal of Downshire School said, “The CYPSP Youth Fair is a fantastic event. Our pupils were surprised and amazed by the amount of organisations ready and willing to help and support them. Adolescence can be a difficult time, and everyone left knowing that Carrickfergus has a kind and caring community support network”.

The main theme of the fair was “Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing” and 20 voluntary, community and statutory organisations attended, providing local information and advice relevant to the young people.



**Photograph Caption:** South Antrim Community Network providing a range of information on Suicide Prevention, Mental Health and Health Improvement

Sandra Anderson, the CYPSP Participation Development Officer for the area who coordinated the event has emphasised the aim of youth fairs such as this, “The Carrickfergus annual Youth Fairs have been organised as engagement completed with young people highlighted a need to inform young people about support services available to them. The Youth Fair provided Year 11 pupils with valuable information on organisations who they can approach for help, advice and support”.



**Photograph caption:** Sandra Anderson, Participation Officer CYPSP engaging with pupils, offering information on the different support services, as well as completion of a Healthy Lifestyles Survey Monkey Questionnaire

David Penney, Director of Youth Ministries from North Street Youth welcomed the opportunity to engage with young people during the event. David has said; "The youth fair was fantastic day with opportunities to connect with over 400 young people, and letting them know about our activities for young people".



**Photograph caption:** Year 11's engaging with Pathway Adventure Activities for completion of their quizzes. There were also a range of activities for Schools to get involved in at the Youth Fair

Jo McParland, Regional Development Youth Officer from Cara-Friend is a member of the Carrickfergus Locality Planning Group. Since attending the event Jo has reported that Cara-Friend was pleased to attend the youth fair. Jo has said "The youth fair was a great event with so much information for young people. Cara-Friend was delighted to have the opportunity to explain our services to students and staff from local schools".

The Locality Planning Group works to co-ordinate existing services for young people to make them more effective. It also regularly reviews needs in the area to see that services meet the actual needs identified by young people and their families.

The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP), led by the Health and Social Care Board, is a multi-agency partnership that includes the leadership of key statutory agencies and community and voluntary organisations that have a responsibility for improving the lives of children and young people in Northern Ireland.

### **Find out more about the CYPSP Carrickfergus Locality Planning Group**

For more information about the CYPSP Carrickfergus Locality Planning Group please visit [www.cypsp.org/locality-planning-groups/carrickfergus-locality-planning-group/](http://www.cypsp.org/locality-planning-groups/carrickfergus-locality-planning-group/)

### **Contact us:**

For further information please get in touch with Sandra Anderson, CYPSP Participation Officer for the Northern Outcomes Area by email at [SandraL.Anderson@northerntrust.hscni.net](mailto:SandraL.Anderson@northerntrust.hscni.net) or telephone 028 2563 6609.