

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

Over 600 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 from Left to Right; Janine Gaston South Antrim Community Network, Pamela McClelland South Antrim Community Network, Selena Ramsey CYPSP Locality Development and Roy Beggs Carrickfergus Locality Planning Group Chair.

The 8<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.

Hedley Webb, Principle of Carrickfergus College School spoke following the event and said “this was another successful Youth Fair run by CYPSP and the 4 Post

Primary school in Carrickfergus. The schools were delighted with the range and diversity of exhibitors in attendance and this year's topic was Resilience, a topic which is very relevant to all post primary schools”.

The main themes of the fair were resilience and gender identity. Over 20 voluntary, community and statutory organisations attended, providing local information and advice relevant to the young people.



Photograph Caption: Adam Hamilton from YMCA with Young people at Carrickfergus Youth Fair supporting the YMCA I am whole project

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”.

Kieran Mulvena from Carrickfergus Grammar School has been reflecting on the youth fair, “The Annual Youth Fair for Year 11 pupils in Carrickfergus organised by the Children & Young People’s Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) is always a

tremendously valuable event and this year's was no exception. Twenty-first century teenagers are vulnerable to more stresses than ever before so the chosen theme of "Resilience" was a pivotal focus in shaping our youth fair this year. Young people had the opportunity to access really useful, practical information from a wide range of support services all in one venue. The core message of making wise and healthy life choices was received loud and clear by the hundreds of pupils who attended. Thank you to CYPSP for all the work that went into it."

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 Carrickfergus Locality Planning Group would like to pay a special thanks for Gemma Lutton, CYPSP Support for the time she has spent coordinating this event and wish her the all the best in her new employment opportunity.

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.

For more information about the CYPSP visit [www.cypsp.org](http://www.cypsp.org)

## **CONTACT US:**

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