



WELCOME TO OUR LATEST E-ZINE

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INTRODUCTION

The Young Community Mediators Project has been well and truly established at this stage across all regions involved. Here, in Ireland, our Regional Alliance are showing strong commitment and going that extra mile to ensure continued success of the project for the future. To date we have held some very positive and worthwhile meetings with our Regional Alliance members. These meetings have indeed being very informative and have yielded some concrete actions and goals as a result. The third International Partner Meeting was hosted by Project Partners East Belfast Enterprise



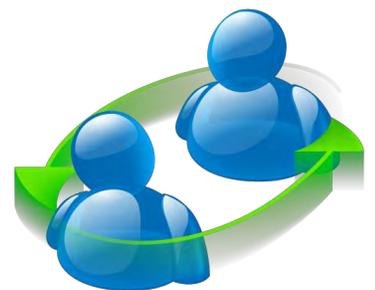
Centre which was held in Belfast, Northern Ireland from Thursday 23rd – Friday 24th February 2017. Updates and best practices were again shared between all partners. In-depth discussion surrounding intellectual outputs such as Course Curriculum

development were the main topics on the two day agenda. Again there was a great sense of excitement and enthusiasm about the YCM Project amongst all partners involved.

Impact

Young Community Mediators has been carefully structured to empower young people to settle disputes peacefully in the communities where they live, work or study by acquiring attitudes to act as

peer-to-peer community mediators. It will do so by increasing the capacity of youth workers to deliver such education in an engaging and practical manner as part of the regional youth services ecosystem.



This project has been funded with support from the European Commission

YCM Goals

Roscommon LEADER Partnership are delighted to be leading in this new EU Erasmus+ project established with the purpose of equipping young people with the knowledge and skills to become peer to peer mediators, empowering the youth of society to play a greater role in addressing conflict in the community around them thus helping to create a brighter future.

Young Community Mediators has four key Intellectual Outputs emphasised and RLP will endeavor to ensure the aims of the programme are achieved.

These include:

1. Create, publish and promote the "Young Community Mediators Toolkit" to encourage the creation of further Alliances across Europe
2. Establish 5 sector specific Regional Alliances to optimise and mobilise the youth sector response at regional level. Each Alliance commits to their ACTION in a Regional Alliance Action Plan
3. Develop and publish a course curriculum to promote peer to peer mediation and establish an open set of educational resources for accessibility
4. Provide the necessary learning materials to train youth workers to effectively engage the youth they work with in peer to peer mediation.

The Young Community Mediators Toolkit

The Young Community Mediators Toolkit is a professionally designed document describing the steps involved in initiating and establishing YCM Regional Alliances. This animated and very accessible document will be made available online and as a download to facilitate the adoption and replication of Young Community Mediators Alliances right across Europe.

This is a key intellectual output of the project and will be made available in many different languages to increase its usability and uptake.

The toolkit development goes through three stages of which we are currently in the second. These phases are preparation, implementation and dissemination. In other words, we as partners feed into it, pilot test it and everyone at the final stage makes adaptations.

To date all our project partners have had their input into the toolkit development. As a result, each partner involved in the project has been able to successfully establish their own Regional Alliance and acquire the key commitments from relevant stakeholders. The toolkit will see final adaptations from partner feedback before being officially launched at our Multiplier Event later in 2017.

Peer Mediation-The Facts!

What is it?

In mediation, an unbiased third party assists others in the resolution of conflicts with a 'win-win', rather than a 'win-lose' outcome.

Peer mediation aims to train young people as mediators to facilitate solutions to disputes among their peers.

How does it work?

Peer mediators are trained in problem-solving, conflict resolution, communication and active listening skills to intervene in interpersonal conflicts to prevent more serious problems developing.

Through training, peer mediators learn that conflict can be resolved constructively, and can assist to encourage peers to move from blaming each other to devising solutions acceptable to all young people involved.

Common ways peer mediation is used

This approach is used increasingly in school settings focusing on bullying and violence prevention and constructive conflict resolution.

Programs may occur in an informal setting (such as the playground), or may occur in the classroom or within a neutral mediation space. Peer mediation may be implemented as a stand-alone programme, however the majority of programmes utilise peer mediation as one part of a broader violence prevention and conflict resolution programme.



Regional Partnerships

Our Regional Alliance here in Ireland is well established and is continuing to work hard to make the YCM Project a resounding success in our region. The Regional Alliance fully understand the benefits of youth peer to peer mediation and realise the potential of it being an effective and efficient response to rising levels of social tensions and community conflict especially involving young people.

The Action Plan that our Regional Alliance have developed to date is very strong and effective for our region. It is built on concrete research and commitment from a strong foundation of stakeholders in areas such as youth work, training and education. These include Roscommon LEADER Partnership, Roscommon Co. Council, Leitrim Development Company, Youth Work Ireland, Foroige, Dept. of Social Protection, Mayo Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board, Galway Roscommon Education and Training Board, The Brothers of Charity, Muintir na Tire and The Drugs Taskforce. Each one of these Regional Alliance members are involved in contributing to the identification of worthwhile actions.



Members of the YCM Regional Alliance who attended a meeting in King House, Boyle Co. Roscommon recently

To date we have held three Regional Alliance Meetings with regards to the Young Community Mediators Project. Our third Regional Alliance Meeting took place in King House, Boyle Co. Roscommon on the 25th of January. There was a lot of networking and discussion around the outputs of the project and how we could empower young people to become peer to peer mediators in their own communities. Discussion was facilitated on the course curriculum content which was a main objective of the meeting. It was agreed that the course must be animated; youth focussed and attractive as youth workers and young people are the direct beneficiaries of the project. Collaborations were made with Mayo Sligo Leitrim Education and Training Board and Rossinver CE Rehabilitation Project.

YCM Benefits

Young Community Mediators has been carefully structured to empower young people to settle disputes peacefully in the communities where they live, work or study by acquiring the knowledge, skills and attitudes to act as peer-peer community mediators. It will do so by increasing the capacity of youth workers to deliver such education in an engaging and practical manner as part of the regional youth services ecosystem. There are many overarching benefits of YCM such as...

- Young people will have the knowledge and skills to settle disputes peacefully in their schools and wider communities, contributing to the wellbeing of those around them.
- Youth workers will avail of professional training through an open set of resources and acquire the necessary skills, strategies and tools to integrate mediation education in their line of work. As a result youth organisations will have the ability to stay up to date with changing societal needs.
- Local Authorities will also benefit from experiencing a new model of partnership with youth service providers in which they “train the trainers”. This helps them fulfil their mission of social inclusion and education for hard to reach and disadvantaged young people.
- Educational institutions and social development agencies will understand the importance and advantages of using peer-to-peer mediation and provide a new path to engaging with the hard to reach young people, often from disadvantaged backgrounds.

On the 23rd and 24th of February YCM partners met for the third time. The partnership was warmly welcomed by Jonathan McAlpin and the team of East Belfast Enterprise Centre in Belfast, Northern Ireland.



The aim of this meeting was to share experiences in the establishment of regional partnerships and the development of regional action plans. Karin gave a presentation on the toolkit to date and added that it is a unique toolkit and is perceived as being very attractive to date by all partners. Karin also added that the graphics and voice over are clear and easy to understand, again making it user friendly. Updates of regional action plans were shared by all partners involved and exchanges took place of knowledge and best practices amongst all regions. The course curriculum was also presented and the next step is to transfer materials to an online platform. The course curriculum contains modules very attributable to peer-to-peer mediation. We are all eagerly awaiting the animated toolkit and if you are too then keep a close eye on the project website www.youngcommunitymediators.how

Going forward, we would envisage that we could interrelate with other such similar alliances across Europe notwithstanding.

Youth Community Mediators Course Curriculum

We are currently finalizing a training course to train young people aged 16 to 30 in social mediation skills. This will contribute directly to the Erasmus+ priority of “promoting empowerment, participation and active citizenship of young people”. Roscommon LEADER Partnership is leading this aspect of the project and to date we have developed many drafts of such a curriculum taking into account partner suggestions and opinions on both a local and European level. This needed much focus and attention as it is a major output of the entire project.

The field of youth mediation and social mediation in general is relatively new and this course curriculum will be used either individually or as part of group training for youth workers. As a result it will “strengthen the education and training path of educators and youth workers”.

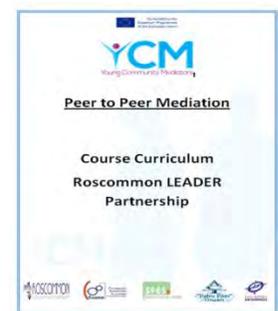
By doing this we are following the premise of the project which states that the most effective way to reach the target group of young people over the long term is through the provision of improved training for the staff of youth services and community organisations that are active in the youth work sector.

If your organisation is small, you may want to list the names of all employees.

If you have any prices of standard products or services, you can include a listing of those here. You may want to refer your readers to any other forms of communication that you’ve created for your organisation.

You can also use this space to remind readers to mark their calendars for a regular event, such as a breakfast meeting for vendors every third Tuesday of the month, or a biannual charity auction. The ultimate aim of this course curriculum is to empower youth workers to develop the capacity of the natural

young leaders in society to use these leadership skills in a good way, for the betterment of their peers, making a positive impact with the ultimate aim of fostering a peer to peer mediation mind-set.



Screenshot of cover page of Course Curriculum

The modules involved in the course curriculum include Introduction & Welcome Understanding Conflict, Peer Mediation & Listening Skills, Overview and process involved in the Peer Mediation Event and Decision Making & Teamwork. The next step after final review is getting it online and pilot testing which will take place in the near future.

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