Foróige - The Organisation

The fundamental purpose of Foróige is to enable young people to involve themselves consciously and actively in their own development and in the development of society.

Foróige is a leading national voluntary youth organisation engaged in youth development and education. It is an organisation infused with ideals and values which form a rich philosophy of human growth and development, a philosophy based on a belief in the dignity and creativity of each individual person.

Foróige provides a comprehensive range of youth work services through the operation of Foróige Clubs, Local Youth Services, Local Youth Development Projects and Youth Information Centres. This multi-pronged approach enables the organisation to meet the developmental needs of young people in general and in particular circumstances to focus on vulnerable young people with specific needs.

Foróige Clubs

The Foróige Club is the basic unit of the organisation and consists of young people between the ages of 12 and 18 years and adult leaders, in a ratio of approximately 10 to 1. There are 413 Foróige Clubs in Ireland, each of which is “owned” by its members. The Foróige Club enables young people to experience democracy at first hand through the election of their own club committee and the management and operation of the club in co-operation with their adult leaders.

Local Youth Services

These are locally based and enable their communities to foster youth development. They provide general youth work services to, and promote the development of, the various voluntary youth organisations. They also provide specialised services to vulnerable young people. Foróige operates four such Services: Tallaght Youth Service and Blanchardstown Youth Service, Dublin; Co Longford Youth Service and West Limerick Youth Service.

YOUTH INFORMATION CENTRES

These Centres provide a free, confidential information service to young people and adults on a wide range of youth-related topics. Foróige operates four such Centres. These are located in Tallaght and Blanchardstown in Dublin, in Donegal Town and in Castlerea, Co Mayo.

Foróige Operated Local Youth Development Projects

These concentrate on the provision of specialised services directly to specifically targeted young people. They assist young people in developing confidence and communication skills and foster participation, collective action and the voluntary activity of young people within their communities. The Local Youth Development Projects are located in 14 counties around Ireland, in both urban and rural settings.

National Council/Executive

Foróige is governed by a National Council which determines its policy, and controls all business and affairs carried out by, or on behalf of the organisation. The National Council meets at least twice a year. It is made up of one Club Leader for each county where there are Foróige Clubs.

The Reference Panel

At Regional Conferences - held in 10 designated regions throughout the country for Club Chairpersons and Secretaries - 20 members are elected to form a Reference Panel. This Panel meets twice yearly and is designed to give members a direct input into the running of the organisation at national level. Four members of the Reference Panel are elected to the National Council.

District Councils

Foróige Clubs in a particular area may, with the approval of the National Council, form District Councils. Each Club may appoint two voting delegates to sit on the District Council. The functions of the District Councils include exchanging ideas; co-ordinating and stimulating the activities of the Clubs; helping in the formation of new Clubs and making representations to the National Council and National Executive on matters relating to Foróige.

Management and Staff

Foróige employs a full-time professional staff to assist and enable communities and voluntary youth workers in their youth work endeavours, and to work directly with young people as necessary and appropriate. The Organisation employs a total of 164 staff.

Foróige

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I am pleased to have been asked to write the foreword for Foróige’s 2004/2005 Annual Review. As Minister for Youth Affairs, I welcome the opportunity to show my appreciation of the valuable and worthwhile work that Foróige carries out on a daily basis.

Of particular interest to me was last year’s National Leaders’ Conference which focused on how voluntary leaders make a real and lasting impact on the lives of young people. I have often spoken about the importance of volunteering as I am conscious of the enormous contribution volunteers make to Irish society. Ireland has a long tradition of volunteering and we can only guess at the value, in purely cash terms, of that. However, the value of voluntary involvement cannot be measured in that manner. It is impossible to put a price on the commitment, enthusiasm and willingness to devote one’s own time for the good of young people. Voluntary activity is the keystone of youth work and I am aware that Foróige would not be the organisation it is today without its cohort of committed volunteers.

2004/2005 was a busy year for all involved in youth affairs, not least due to Ireland’s Presidency of the European Union in the first half of 2004. I would specifically like to thank the Foróige members who participated in the youth-based events organised during this period. In particular, the open forum at the Youth Ministers’ and Young People’s Conference at Droimaber, Co. Clare in March and the follow-up Dublin based Young Peoples’ Conference in May 2004 gave many members the opportunity to express their views to politicians and policy makers from both Ireland and Europe. The contribution made by Foróige is much appreciated and in no small measure assisted in the overall success of these events.

I firmly believe that young people should be involved in all decision-making that affects them and in support of the comments made by young people at these events, I have planned a follow-up Conference for young people in mid-April 2005. This Conference will focus on youth participation and youth welfare issues and I look forward to the active involvement of Foróige members who will, I know, play their usual dynamic and supportive role in the proceedings.

In March 2005, I was pleased to launch the Foróige Citizenship Programme 2005. It is my view that citizenship and participation are based on a concept of the importance of young people exercising their right to influence how society is organised and assuming responsibility for the decisions in which they have a share. Of the same mind, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe has designated 2005 as the “European Year of Citizenship through Education”. The theme of which is “Learning and Living Democracy.” With this designation, the Council intends to draw attention to how crucial education, both formal and non-formal, is to the development of active citizenship among young people. I am sure that the “European Year of Citizenship through Education” will give added impetus to your 2005 Citizenship Programme.

I would like to thank all in Foróige who contribute so much to youth work in Ireland today, from your organisation’s representation on the National Youth Work Advisory Committee to the front line volunteers working directly with our young people. Foróige’s clubs, projects and services ensure that some 40,000 young people are given the opportunity to develop, both personally and socially under the guidance of well-trained leaders and staff each year. All of this is evidence that voluntary youth leaders can and do make a very real impact on the lives of the young people who come in contact with them.

I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Michael Cleary, your former Director, on the well deserved award last year of an Honorary Doctorate in Law from the National University of Ireland in Maynooth.

Looking forward, the additional funding which I have secured for the youth work sector in 2005 will provide for the implementation of further sections of the Youth Work Act, 2001 and the National Youth Work Development Plan, as well as providing for the ongoing support and development of youth work organisations such as Foróige.

Finally, as Minister for Youth Affairs, I want to assure you of my continued support for the development of our young people, both in the formal education sector and in an out-of-school setting. I commend the work of your organisation and wish you every success in the coming twelve months.

Rath Dé ar bhúr saothar
Síle de Valera T.D.,
Minister for Youth Affairs

Foreword by the Minister for Youth Affairs, Síle de Valera, T.D.

David Mulrooney, Secretary, Conary Foróige Club, Co. Wicklow speaks about his Foróige club

“Our club has only been up and running for 6 months and we play table tennis, pool and table soccer. It’s great because I get to meet up with people I was friendly with in Primary School, but who went to different Secondary Schools. The Regional Conferences really helped us because we got a lot of ideas from other clubs about different projects we could get involved in.”
Séumas O’Brien
Chairperson of the National Council of Foróige

During my time as National Chairperson I have set myself two main goals. I want to achieve real development in both the quantity and quality of the services that we provide to young people and their communities and I also want to foster what I have come to call the ‘Foróige Family.’

To maintain our position as the leading youth development organisation in Ireland, it is important that we continue to develop and grow. We need to increase the number of young people that are touched by the Foróige experience, whether they are Club members or project participants, we need to work together as a single entity to ensure that we have a positive influence on the lives of young people. But ‘development’ is not all about numbers, it is also about looking critically at how we do things and finding ways in which we can do them better. This is the secret of long-term growth and sustainability.

At the National Leaders’ Conference last April, I spoke of my belief that we have three parts to the ‘Foróige Family’ - Young People, Leaders and Staff - we are three parts of one organisation, each of equal importance and dependent on the other. Take any element from this system and there would be no Foróige. As we expand the number and type of services that we offer young people and their communities, it is now more important than ever that we strengthen the links between our clubs, projects and services. Voluntary leaders, as the people who govern this organisation, must take real ownership of all that Foróige is and all that we offer.

We need to look critically at the quality of service that we provide to young people as a voluntary led youth organisation. For development to happen we need to create a Foróige where we see each other as one organisation, united by our organisational purpose, where we will support each other not only at the administration table but where practicable on the ground.

I am extremely proud to be involved in an organisation with such great members, leaders and staff, you can all be justly proud of your work and proud of Foróige. You are a major influence for good in the lives of many thousands of young people, do not underestimate that, you have a unique role and opportunity to influence the lives of young people and their communities.

Together we will develop and shape a future for Foróige where the service we provide is the best in the business. Together we will ensure that Foróige remains the leading youth development organisation in the country.
I am delighted to have this opportunity to look back on what has been a year full of promise and excitement in Foróige.

We have continued the renewal programme that got under way in early 2004 and we are now beginning to see some of its benefits. Club numbers grew last year and we are seeing a fresh enthusiasm for volunteerism across the organisation. Giving freely and openly of your time and talents to the benefit of others is, without doubt, the highest form of community service and it is in all of our interests to foster a society in which a true commitment to volunteerism is the norm as opposed to the exception.

The National Council established a number of sub-committees last year, involving both Foróige leaders and staff and these sub-committees have worked effectively to drive the renewal process forward.

The training and programmes sub-committee have guided the introduction of new levels of training to help support leaders in their role in a very practical and organised manner.

The public relations sub-committee have started work on modernising the organisation’s logo and creating a new Foróige website.

The sub-committees have also been overseeing changes to the election regulations.

A main aim of this year was to promote the real value and relevance of the Foróige educational programmes to the development of young people. Our first step was to publish updated and revamped leaflets for the Citizenship, Health, Science and Culture programmes. The move was much welcomed by leaders, members and staff alike and I’m happy to report that there is already evidence of a renewed enthusiasm for programme-based activities by both Clubs and projects.

Foróige’s project and service provision continues to go from strength to strength and we now have 97 projects spread countrywide.

We have continued to develop our working partnership with St. Patrick’s College, Drumcondra and are looking forward to exciting developments in the future.

The Big Brother Big Sister programme continues to expand and we have piloted the programme in a number of schools. We have also established an exciting international partnership with Big Brother Big Sister Bulgaria and look forward to developing this over the coming years.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank Foróige’s members, voluntary leaders, management and staff, each of whom form a vital link in the chain that makes this organisation strong - you demonstrate your commitment to the fundamental purpose and philosophy of Foróige on a daily basis and by doing so, you personally invest in the active development of young people and communities across Ireland.

My thanks also go to our many funding agencies for the faith that they place in the organisation and for their ongoing support.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to the members of the National Council of Foróige for their support, leadership and vision.

I look forward to the year ahead with great optimism and enthusiasm.
2004 was a local and European election year in Ireland and the young people involved in Blanchardstown Youth Service (BYS), which is managed by Foróige, wanted to ensure that their voices were heard and their issues put firmly on the political agenda prior to the elections. BYS joined forces with the Citizens Information Centre, Blanchardstown Area Refuge Network and “80/20” (a development education organisation) to enable young people to identify their key issues and present them to the candidates in both elections and to the general public, who could then advocate on their behalf. John Cahill, Manager, Blanchardstown Youth Service, reports on how young people are taking action to ensure that they have their say on issues that affect them.

In March 2004, over 60 young people from voluntary youth groups and youth projects took part in an afternoon workshop. They identified and prioritised the five main issues facing young people in Blanchardstown today.

The issues they prioritised were:
- Facilities and Activities
- The Gardaí
- Security Issues
- The Physical Environment
- Work Issues
- Being Heard

The next challenge for the young people involved was to work out how best to communicate these issues to ensure that they had real political influence. After much debate and discussion, the young people decided to split into three working groups. The first group wrote and produced an information leaflet on 'youth issues' that was widely distributed in the area prior to the elections. The second group organised a meeting with election candidates to discuss and communicate their issues and another group presented the issues visually in a filmed 10 minute piece.

321 committee member, Laura Rowlinson, 16, said “young people are constantly being accused of being apathetic and uninterested in politics or participating in the society around them. This project proves that this is false - we are interested and we want to be listened to.”

It was certainly hard work, but in early June it all came together with a lively event, held in Mulhuddart Community Centre in Blanchardstown, where over 40 young people met with a large number of the election candidates. Mary Cunningham, the Director of the National Youth Council of Ireland, was the guest speaker and she praised the young people “for their active citizenship” and said that the “future of Dublin 15 is in good hands.” The video presentation and information leaflet were launched on the night and both proved to be very effective tools in communicating the issues of the youth of Blanchardstown.

The real discussion between the politicians and young people took place in an exercise that used some ‘speed dating’ concepts. Politicians met with a small group of young people on each issue. Each group had 5 minutes to hear what the candidates had to say on the issue they were representing, before the candidates moved on to meet a new group representing another issue. Following on from the event, local community and resource centres showed the video continually and thousands of leaflets were distributed door to door to inform the local community about youth issues and to encourage them to vote with them in mind.

So what’s next? Well, the young people that were involved in the committee have met again and are determined to meet with the successful candidates to challenge them on what they have done about the issues that they raised last year.

The Young People of Blanchardstown get Vocal

Young people from Blanchardstown at the launch of their 321 election manifesto, which was widely distributed in the run up to the local and European elections.

BRIAN DOOLEY, Chairperson, Castletara Foróige Club, Co. Cavan discusses the main issues facing young people today.

“Depression is a really big issue for a lot of young people - especially with the pressure of exams and the idea that if you fail your Leaving Cert you’re a failure in life - some young people find it difficult to deal with. Alcohol and a lack of facilities are fairly big problems too.”

Young people from Blachardstown at the launch of their 321 election manifesto, which was widely distributed in the run up to the local and European elections.
“Children will have a voice in matters which affect them and their views will be given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity.”

(First goal of the National Children’s Strategy)

In 2005 Foróige entered into a new and exciting partnership with the National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI) and the National Youth Federation to implement Dáil na nÓg 2005 on behalf of the National Children’s Office. Colin McAree, Area Manager, Eastern Region, reports on how young people are having their say on the issues that impact on them.

Daíl na nÓg, means ‘young people’s parliament’ and it gives the youth of Ireland an opportunity to represent their views on issues affecting them at a national level. 200 delegates, elected by Comhairle na nÓg throughout the country, attended the Dáil on the 19th March, 2005 in Croke Park.

The two topics chosen by delegates to discuss on the day were alcohol & drug misuse and facilities for young people.

On the issue of alcohol and drug misuse among teenagers, delegates voted as their top three issues:
- Specialised training for Gardaí on youth issues
- Increased funding for youth related activities, like clubs and projects
- Drug and alcohol awareness should be started in 4th class in primary school in a child-appropriate manner.

On the issue of facilities for young people, delegates voted as their top three issues:
- Child fares on transport and admission charges should apply to under 18s and be subsidised
- Opening hours of youth facilities should be extended and linked to different age groups
- The voting age should be lowered to 16 years.

Sheila O’Donnell, a member of Moyvoughley Foróige Club, said that her favourite part of Daíl na nÓg was the question and answer session with Minister for Children. “Without hesitation the Minister will listen to our issues and it will benefit all young people in the future. I just can’t wait for next year now.”

In his opening speech to the Dáil, Brian Lenihan TD, Minister for Children, said “the misuse of alcohol and drugs and facilities for young people are crucial issues in Ireland today. Young people are closest to these problems and their voice must become part of the solution. I want to ensure that young people can participate in a wide range of activities in safe and youth friendly environments. I will present the report of this Dáil to the Cabinet Committee on Children.”

Boris Humvimana (left), a member of the International Foróige Club, Carrick-on-Suir Neighbourhood Youth Project, summed up what he thought of the day by saying that it was “great fun. It was wonderful to be able to outline our problems to politicians and then say what we thought the solution to them should be.”

Former Foróige leader and member, Brendan Gallagher, Hillview Foróige Club, Waterford, was a facilitator on the day and said that, “attending today’s Dáil na nÓg as facilitator is a direct result of the opportunities and confidence I have gotten through my involvement with Foróige, having attended a previous Dáil na nÓg to come back now as a facilitator has been really exciting for me.”

ALISON STAUNTON, Chairperson, Paulstown Foróige club, Co. Kilkenny sums up what she loves about Foróige

“I get great satisfaction out of being part of a group that actually gets out there and does stuff. It definitely helps with your confidence and it’s a great way to socialise and get to know new people.”

Foróige members Niamh McGuinness (left) and Niamh Cullen discuss the issues at Dáil na nÓg 2005.

Sheila O’Donnell, Moyvoughley Foróige Club, asks Brian Lenihan TD, Minister for Children, some tough questions.

Foróige members Niamh McGuinness (left) and Niamh Cullen discuss the issues at Dáil na nÓg 2005.

Dáil na nÓg - Youth Participation at its Best

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EDEL BURKE, Secretary, Newcastle Foróige Club, Co. Galway, talks about the big issues facing young people today.

"Under age drinking and drugs are two of the biggest pressures facing young people and they really need to be talked about. It’s good having something like the Reference Panel and Regional Conferences so we can talk about these issues and look at what can be done to help."

Rathvilly is a small village on the banks of the River Slaney in Co. Carlow and Rathvilly Foróige Club, founded in 1968, is the third longest running Foróige Club in the country. Over the Club’s 37 years, members have been involved in countless projects related to the eight Foróige educational programmes including variety concerts, tidy towns initiatives, jewellery making, ballroom dancing, glass painting and fundraising. This year the Club produced a Foróige Calendar for 2005, which was designed in such a way as to show all eight Foróige educational programmes. Local photographer, Frank Murphy, gave an intensive workshop to the Club on photography and members then divided into four groups, each of which had to take two photographs for the calendar.

By late November all of the photographs were gathered and the club got full sponsorship to print 100 calendars. The project proved to be a great success and members hope to treat themselves to a night of bowling & indoor soccer to celebrate.

The Staircase Foróige Club was established in July 2004. The Club caters for young people seeking asylum in Ireland who arrive without any parent/guardian. Some of these young people are housed in an Eastern Area Health Board run hostel called ‘The Staircase’ in Dublin City Centre. The residents of this hostel form the club’s membership and they come from a host of different countries including Ethiopia, Somalia, Iraq and Romania. The Club’s leaders have all been though the asylum process themselves, so have considerable knowledge to pass onto the members. Two of the leaders, Johnson Godwin and Bukasa Mukalenga, have completed Foróige’s Level II training.

The Club has packed a wide range of activities into it’s short existence including: a trip to an Ireland soccer International in Lansdowne Road, a tour of Croke Park, lots of inter-club events and ice-skating.

Curry Foróige Club was formed in 1972 and has enjoyed unwavering success ever since. It is estimated that in the Club’s thirty plus years of existence over 500 members have enjoyed the Foróige experience. Last year Members and Leaders decided to celebrate the long tradition of Foróige in the village by publishing a commemorative booklet that celebrates Curry Foróige through the years. In compiling the booklet, the young people contacted former members, leaders and staff to get their hands on old photographs, but more importantly to gather memories and stories of Foróige past. The publication is packed full of interesting articles and really shows just how important the Foróige Club has been to the whole community.

A deserving special message from President Mary McAleese was the icing on the cake for all of the hard work put in by the members and leaders.

Here’s to another 30 years of involving the young people of Curry in their own development and in the development of their community!
Voluntary leaders are the people who exercise the greatest influence on the development of the young people in Foróige clubs. The way in which a leader works and interacts with members can have a major and often profound effect on their personal growth and happiness. The leader’s role in the club is crucial and fundamental to its success. This role as a facilitator of learning and development, however, requires a particular set of knowledge and skills. Gerry McDonald, Foróige’s Head of Training and Programmes, reports on why it is vital for Foróige to have a comprehensive leader training programme that is relevant to the needs of clubs.

This year we are developing a new system of leader training which consists of a series of levels through which leaders can progress. Leaders begin at level I and work their way up to the higher levels. This model is based on the belief that as well as developing their members, leaders themselves can engage in their own process of development. In fact, both processes are complementary.

Involvement in Foróige provides tremendous opportunities for leaders to personally grow themselves, as well as facilitating the growth of their members.

Progression through the levels of training enables leaders to track their own learning in terms of knowledge, skill and self-awareness and look forward to further learning and growth.

Certification will be an important part of this new system. Leaders will receive a certificate on completion of each level. The purpose of this is to recognise the standard of skill that the leader will reach and to recognise their particular standard of achievement.

LEVELS I AND II

Training Courses for Level I and Level II have already been developed and implemented throughout the country.

Level I training focuses on setting up a Foróige club properly. It includes training on the purpose and philosophy of the organisation, the role of the leader and Foróige policies on child protection, drugs and insurance. It also involves planning the first few meeting of a club.

Level II training focuses on how the leader can facilitate learning and development by young people through their involvement in the Foróige Club. This means having good educational activities, good democratic structures and good relationships within the club. Ultimately it involves getting the basics right so that the club functions properly.
GRÁINNE MORAN, Chairperson, Newport Foróige Club, Co. Mayo, tells us what she thinks the biggest issue for young people today is:

"I think peer pressure is a huge issue for young people. The pressure to have the right phone, the right clothes and wear the right labels - you have to have fashionable clothes or people will look down on you. It's more of an issue for girls than boys though."

This level consists of four modules. Each of these modules lasts two and half hours in length. They can be conducted over four evenings. Topics include:

- Finding out the interests of members
- Generating ideas for activities
- The psychology of learning
- Using activities as a means of development
- Training committees in their roles
- Developing positive relationships

12 level II training courses have already been held in different venues throughout the country and approximately 250 leaders have attended these courses. Some are still completing their modules, but feedback so far has been very positive. Leaders have found the training to be extremely useful and relevant. They very much like its practical nature and the "space" given to exchange ideas, discuss issues and reflect on club practice.

Two courses in personal effectiveness are currently being run. Each course consists of two weekends. The first weekend of each course has already been held. This training aims to enable leaders to:

- Improve their inter-personal skills so that they can draw out members and get them thinking for themselves.
- Develop greater self awareness and appreciation of their strengths.
- Lead group discussion with members.
- These are highly important skills for working with young people.

Foróige is about empowering young people to think for themselves, direct their own action and take charge of their lives. This process requires particular inter-personal skills on the part of the leader. Also, time and time again, Regional Conference's and Reference Panel meetings emphasise how important it is for young people to be actively engaged in open discussions with adults and peers on issues that concern them. Having the inter-personal skills to facilitate this process of discussion is vitally important. It can also lead to excellent club programmes, based on the real interests and concerns of members. The feedback from the personal effectiveness courses so far is very positive.

MORE ADVANCED LEVELS OF LEADER TRAINING

Limited numbers of more advanced training are currently being held on topics such as personal effectiveness and organisational leadership.

PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS TRAINING

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Future levels of training will include a comprehensive course on organisational leadership, which will involve learning how to exercise leadership at county and national level. However, the process of developing these levels will be on-going. They will need to be constantly evaluated to make sure they are always relevant to the needs of leaders and that they empower them to work effectively in facilitating the development of young Foróige members in the modern world.

FUTURE PLANS

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Building Bridges through Cross-Border Diversion & Exchange

KAREN FITZPATRICK, Chairperson, Clonaslee Foróige Club, Co. Laois, tells us what she gets out of being a Foróige member.

"Since being elected Chairperson of our Club it has given me a lot more confidence to talk in front of people - which is good because I hope to become a teacher eventually. When I’m chairing meetings I’m at the top of the club and I have to speak and listen and make sure everybody has a chance to give their opinions."

The Monaghan and Armagh Diversion and Exchange (MADE) Project opened its doors in April 2004 and is the first cross-border project in which Foróige has been involved. It came about after a successful joint funding proposal between the "Armagh and Dungannon Adolescent Partnership" and the Foróige managed "Monaghan Neighbourhood Youth Project" to the European Union’s Peace II Initiative. Helen O’Neill and Linda Gillespie, both Youth Officers with the MADE Project, report on how the initiative has impacted border communities in its first year.

The key Concepts of the MADE project are ‘Diversion’ and ‘Exchange’. It is about diverting young people away from involvement in anti-social behaviour and towards involvement in civic society and exchange, while also establishing links across borders. One of the key purposes of MADE is to work with young people at risk in marginalised communities within the Armagh, Dungannon and Monaghan areas. Since the project got underway it has worked with over 120 young people from both rural and urban areas.

MADE particularly strives to reach out to young people who have little or no contact with any other youth group and works to provide them with a sense of belonging as well as the opportunity to learn new skills and build self-confidence. The project has run a variety of programmes, including driver theory, health & fitness, an eight-week accredited hair & beauty course, programmes on the theme of ‘Identity’ during which young people created storybooks, billboards, video diaries and photographs exploring issues affecting them.

They have also done a lot of work on specific issues affecting young people living in Northern Ireland. So far, the project has organised eight cross-border trips and there are many more planned for the coming year.

In October 2004, the project played host to the final leg of a Léargas funded Tri-lateral exchange with 35 young people from Wales, Enniskillen and Monaghan taking part in a week-long residential in Monaghan. The exchange theme was "recyclable materials in art" and it involved young people in designing and making costumes and masks out of recyclable materials. Many great friendships were forged amongst the young people and the week was an undeniable success.

The project has a jam-packed schedule for the coming year, including working with local Foróige clubs on the issue of diversity. The project is also involved in a project called "VISIONS", run by Cooperation Ireland, that will engage 60 young people from both the North and South in making a short film on the theme of ‘Identity’. MADE is also hoping to organise an International youth exchange themed “Young people living in a divided society.”

A group get ready to strut their stuff on stage at the official launch of the MADE project.

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The boys group from the MADE project listen to a guest speaker as part of their ongoing cultural awareness programme.
President Mary McAleese Celebrates Youth Work in Co. Offaly

The midland town Banagher came to a standstill on the 29th June last year as The President of Ireland, Mary McAleese, accompanied by her husband, Dr. Martin McAleese, stopped by to honour the work of Foróige leaders and members in County Offaly. During her visit, Ireland’s first citizen, also officially launched the West and South Offaly Youth initiative, which is a community-based youth scheme funded by the Health Service Executive and West Offaly Partnership.

It may have been wet outside, but spirits were far from damp as President and Dr. McAleese were treated to a colourful display of the work of local Foróige Clubs. Foróige members were given the opportunity to get involved in some very exciting projects last year and they were delighted to have the opportunity to tell The President all about them! Facilitated by M.J Grogan, the Youth Worker with West and South Offaly Youth initiative, they presented and produced a series of radio shows, in a project run in conjunction with Midlands 103. They were also involved in the design, content and construction of a website called YOUR MATTERs - which was also officially launched on the day.

Jamie Lee Conney, Chairperson, Ferbane Foróige Club, welcomed President and Dr. McAleese to the event and spoke about her experiences as a Club member, saying that “the emergence of Foróige in the area has given young people the opportunity to be involved in projects that benefit the community as a whole, while also benefiting the young people of the area themselves.”

The President complimented the work of volunteers involved in Foróige, saying that “they organise things which give young people opportunities...We rely, as parents, on these people who create and maintain opportunities for young people and I congratulate the young people for taking these opportunities when they were presented with them...it gives you confidence and plugs you into the community.

It is so important that as individuals and as a society that we encourage the work of Foróige - it is a community effort and it allows young people to flourish. It is so important to give young people the space to experience things with their friends - and this is what Foróige does so well.”

M.J Grogan thanked the President and complimented her on the way she has used her office to “build bridges with young people.”

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JAMES RYAN, Chairperson, Tallaght Foróige Club, Co. Dublin, speaks about why he became a Foróige member.

“I joined Foróige initially because my friends were in the club, but now all of the people in the Club are my friends, some of them with disabilities, that I would never have gotten to know otherwise. My favourite Club outing was a visit to the Burren Adventure Centre for a weekend. I enjoyed all of the activities, but the best part of it was that everybody from the club was there and had fun together.”

President Mary McAleese chats to members and leaders from Rahan and Banagher Foróige Clubs about their work.

President Mary McAleese and her husband, Dr. Martin McAleese, admire the YOUR MATTERs website, being demonstrated by Foróige members from Co. Offaly.
Soccer, parades and fun fun fun - it was action all the way at the 'Galway World Cup Fun Weekend,' which was held in the Regional Sports Ground in Galway last June for the sixth year running. Paul Tamhian, Project Leader, Ballinfoile Neighbourhood Youth Project, reports on the goings-on at one of the liveliest weekends in the Foróige Calendar.

The ‘Galway World Cup Fun Weekend’ is an annual event organised by Foróige, the Health Service Executive and lots of local volunteers. Last year’s tournament involved 32 teams from all over Ireland competing for the coveted World Cup - a whopping 20 of which represented Foróige Clubs, projects and services. While soccer is the basis of the event, the real emphasis is on having fun and making friends. There is also a strong educational element to the initiative, as teams have to research the country they are given to represent and base their costume design for the opening parade on their findings. Young people also have an opportunity to mix with their peers and develop their team building skills with a number of off-pitch team games and activities.

As in previous years, the weekend kicked off with a colourful, carnival style parade of teams, each of whom designed their own kits and banners! Members were interviewed and a panel of judges decided, based on originality and knowledge, which team should be awarded the prize for the most creative kit. Points were given based on how well they performed in all of the events including the creative kit, off-pitch activities and the soccer. The team with the most points won the title of ‘Fun Weekend Champions.’ Congratulations to the members of the Foróige managed Ballinfoile projects, who represented South Korea, on winning this year’s title!

There was also a more serious aspect to the initiative, which involved an awareness and fundraising campaign for GOAL’s Street Children’s Project in Kenya. Participants raised over €6,000 for the cause and learned about the adverse circumstances in which many young people in developing countries live along the way. Then it was down to the competition itself, which was spectacularly opened by a samba drum and dance extravaganza by young people from the Foróige operated Ballinfoyle, Ballybane and Knocknacarra projects. Like the FIFA tournament, there were eight groups of four teams. The top two teams of each group qualified for the next round on the following day. The teams knocked out on the first day had a second chance for victory in competing for the Shield. The BAY project from Cork, representing Sweden, were the winners of the World Cup and the Bohermore projects of Galway representing Egypt, picked up the Shield.

A special word of thanks to the organising committee, the volunteers and the weekend’s main sponsors: The Health Service Executive, Galway City VEC, Galway City Partnership, Bank of Ireland and the Football Association of Ireland.

Having a Ball in Galway

Kate McManamon, Secretary, Newport Foróige Club, Co. Mayo, tells us what they get up to on their Club nights.

“We always have our meeting first and then what we do depends on what’s going on at the time - some weeks we just chill out and play games, but recently we organised a first-aid course and we had a Foróige talent night a few weeks ago. We had a choreographer come in to help us with our dance routine - it was great fun.”

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Listening to Young People

Foróige Regional Conferences 2005

To ensure that Foróige remains relevant to young people in the modern world, the organisation needs to put time and effort into listening to the views of its young people and involving them actively in its democratic structures. The Regional Conferences of Foróige Club chairpersons and secretaries are one excellent way of doing this. Gerry McDonald, Foróige’s Head of Training and Programmes, reports on the findings of this year’s groups.

Foróige runs 11 Regional Conferences every year throughout the country. At these lively gatherings, young people debate issues that impact on their daily lives and make corresponding recommendations regarding these issues to the National Council of Foróige and to local district councils. Each conference elects two of its members to the National Reference Panel of Foróige, who in turn elect four members onto the National Council, which is the governing body of the organisation.

The issues identified most frequently at this year’s conferences, held last January, were substance misuse, with a particular emphasis on underage drinking and peer pressure. Many participants felt that lack of confidence and insecurity were reasons why young people drank. Some stated that there was a perception that “alcohol combats shyness” and that you “can’t have fun without it”. Some felt that “there was enormous pressure on young people to drink.”

Peer pressure was the second most frequently identified issue and it was discussed at great length by some conferences. It is clear that peer pressure is a major influence on the daily lives of young people. There was a fear that if you did not conform to the group you would lose friends. The conferences felt that negative peer pressure could be combated if it were discussed openly in the club and if real debates occurred on this issue. One conference suggested developing a peer pressure resource pack with suitable issues for discussion. More work is needed in clubs to ensure that members feel comfortable voicing their true independent opinions and to develop their assertiveness skills. There was also a need for a code of practice in the club that eliminated bullying and “slagging.”

Similar responses to the issue of underage drinking were identified. Again the importance of members being able to discuss this issue openly with adults and to help them develop greater self confidence and assertiveness were considered highly important. Some conferences felt that Foróige should make representations to Government particularly on the issue of advertising and the portrayal of alcohol in the media. Issues also identified at the conferences included exam pressure, bullying, suicide, racism and the pressure to have money to keep up with the latest trends.

A very clear message that emerged from the Regional Conferences was that Foróige has a significant role to play in enabling young people to develop the values, awareness and self-belief to respond effectively to the pressures of modern society.

SARAH POWER, Secretary, Outrage Foróige Club, Waterford, chats about her Foróige Club.

“We have 14 members in our Club and we are very involved in the community. During the year we get involved in lots of events, but my favourite has to be the talent show that we organise every year for all of the Foróige Clubs in the area - it’s always a great night.”
New Look for Foróige’s Education Programmes

Foróige’s eight education programmes have been at the core of the organisation’s work since the early 1970’s and this year, four of the eight, have been given a makeover. MICHAEL J. COLEMAN, Chairperson, Ballaghdeereen Foróige Club, Co. Roscommon speaks about what he thinks about the Reference Panel.

“The reference panel weekend was one of my best experiences in Foróige so far. It gave young people a chance to speak out, express their opinions and have them taken seriously by the people who run the Organisation. The Chairperson and CEO of Foróige were there and we had a good chat with them about all of our ideas.”

The eight education programmes are central to the work of Foróige. Each Foróige Club and project organises a programme of activities to challenge members to develop themselves, to be more self-reliant and to seek ways to help others and their communities. These activities provide the mechanism for achieving the overall purpose of the organisation - to enable young people to involve themselves consciously and actively in their own development and the development of society. At the core of every activity is the process of involving members in informal education. The activities are not an end in themselves, but rather a method of enabling learning.

Young people in Foróige groups and projects are involved in each step of developing a programme. They decide on a programme, on an activity, do the activity and evaluate the activity and the programme. Through evaluation young people become aware of their own learning and identify further activities and programmes they would like to undertake.

Originally developed in the 1970’s, the concepts within the programmes remain as relevant to young people today as they did over 30 years ago. However, like all things in life, the programmes literature and in particular the activities, needed to be updated, revised and revamped. The result is that four of the programmes - Health, Citizenship, Culture and Science - have a new look, are more attractive and user friendly. A focus for the coming year will be to enable clubs and projects to develop these four programmes.

The programmes aim to meet the educational and developmental needs of young people through involving them in creative and exciting activities that young people are interested in. The programmes are challenging, dynamic and packed full of ideas for clubs and projects. There are over 100 ideas for activities contained within the four programme leaflets. Non-formal education is at the heart of all the programmes and there is something for everyone within each of the leaflets.

HEALTH

Social health, physical health, emotional health, mental health - there’s more to health than you may think. In today’s society with a myriad of pressures on young people, it is essential that we are all aware of the importance of health in
My best Foróige moment so far was definitely winning our Citizenship Award last year, which we go for erecting street nameplates in our town. I had to present our project at the awards ceremony, so I was pretty nervous, but it all went really well in the end and we had a great day.

Maintaining a balanced lifestyle. This programme offers a range of concepts from which to develop skills and interests and to make the utmost contribution they can make to society.

CULTURE

Culture is a people’s way of life, their customs, beliefs and values. This programme encompasses all aspects of culture - art, music, dance, storytelling etc. Importantly, the programme allows for the exploration and understanding of all cultures, thus combating prejudice and racism.

Developing a Culture Programme with young people involves the creative use of technology in our lives such as design, photography. It is based on the premise that technology offers a medium for the expression of creativity and that technology can be used to promote social, cultural and educational aims.

CITIZENSHIP

The Citizenship programme encapsulates the spirit of Foróige - young people getting actively involved in developing themselves and the community. This programme is based on the idea that young people have an opportunity to get involved in their community.

Science

Within this programme there are two distinct sections - the Natural Environment and Technology. This programme explores the concept of the Natural Environment and the responsibility of man and his actions in preserving our natural environment. The programme also explores the concept of using technology in a positive way. Using technology in a positive way enables members to develop a sense of responsibility and equips them with the skills to understand their environment.

Technology focuses on the creative use of technology in our lives such as design, video editing, DJ skills, computer skills and creative photography. It is based on the premise that technology offers a medium for the expression of creativity and that technology can be used to promote social, cultural and educational aims.

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MIRIAM HALLAHAN,
Chairperson, Kilmichael Foróige club, Co. Cork tells us why she joined Foróige.

"I really looked up to the Foróige Club members when I was younger and always went to the events that they organised - so when I turned 12 I couldn’t wait to join! I was quite shy before then and now it’s hard to keep me quiet. It’s also great that we now know how to conduct proper meetings."

MARLENE AND MARY-LOUISE

Marlene Geraghty and Mary Louise Brennan were the first BBBS match in Westport and they also have the proud distinction of being the longest established match in Co. Mayo, having started way back in October 2003. It has been an exciting few years for the Westport club, who have involved themselves in such activities as an historical adventure trail, a community clean-up, drama lessons, swimming, poetry writing, nature walks and cooking. Mary Louise says: "We try new things all the time and love the challenge of getting out there and doing something new. We’ve had endless cups of tea and chats and we even manage to squeeze in some homework every now and again!"

Big Brother Big Sister Ireland

Big Brother Big Sister (BBBS) is a preventive mentoring programme that matches an adult volunteer to a young person who needs a little extra support. The programme, which is operated by Foróige, began in Ireland in 2000 and has expanded rapidly since then. The volunteers are recruited from the communities in which the programme is offered and they are matched to young people based on their interests and personalities. BBBS currently operates in Counties Galway, Mayo and Roscommon.

MATCH PROFILE

MIRLANE AND MARY-LOUISE

Matched in December 2002, Catherine and Jessica are now looking forward to the third year of their friendship, as part of the BBBS programme in Galway. The pair describe themselves as ‘the best of friends’ and really enjoy spending time together whether it be chatting over hot chocolate, baking, gardening, doing homework or swimming. Both Catherine and Jessica have a keen interest in dancing and music, so last summer they performed together in the Macnas parade through the streets of Galway. Catherine applied to the BBBS programme in response to a local newspaper article.

MATCH PROFILE

CATHERINE AND JESSICA

A match made in Heaven - Catherine (left) and Jessica grab a quick chat after one of their adventures.
I read the basic information in the article and attended the information session because I had been thinking of doing some sort of voluntary work for a long time" says Catherine. "We really have become great friends since then, I love seeing Jessica smile and enjoy herself when we are together.

Young people can gain so much from involvement in the programme, especially with regard to increasing their self confidence, promoting their independence and introducing them to a different perspective on life."

Jessica acknowledges that she was initially a little apprehensive about the programme, but since meeting up with Catherine, she says that she "hasn’t looked back. I’m comfortable talking to Catherine, we can chat about anything and I really enjoy her personality - she always makes me laugh."

**BIG BROTHER BIG SISTER GOES INTERNATIONAL**

In June 2004 BBBS Ireland became a partner to BBBS Bulgaria. The Bulgarian programme, which is located in Plovdiv, Bulgaria’s second city, operates in orphanages, a street shelter for Roma youth, a school for deaf children and with young people with disabilities. The International partnership took a practical step when Irish ‘Bigs’ and ‘Littles’ fundraised for a special camp for their fellow matches in Bulgaria.

Foróige was also delighted to assist BBBS Bulgaria to access a three-year funding grant to expand their programme from the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Séan Campbell, Chief Executive Officer, Foróige, said that “This is a major international move for Foróige and we look forward to developing the partnership with BBBS Bulgaria over the coming years. I welcome the financial commitment made by the Department of Foreign Affairs to fund the expansion of the programme in Bulgaria and I’m confident that it will be a major force for good in communities all over the country.”

**RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE BIG BROTHER BIG SISTER ‘SCHOOL’ MENTORING PROGRAMME**

In May, the BBBS ‘School’ Mentoring Programme was formally launched in Mount St. Michael’s Secondary School, Claremorris, after a successful pilot version of the programme was completed in the school. The project provides a little extra support to newly arrived students by matching them to older student mentors.

Matches are made on the basis of similarity of interests and personalities. Training and preparation is provided for all participants and then matches meet up at least once a week. School matches are fully supported by a designated ‘Link Teacher’ within the school, along with project staff working for Foróige.

At the launch in Claremorris, a number of students spoke of their delight at being involved in the project. Lisa Donnellan, a first year student, explained how over the course of the year, it had given her “the opportunity to get to know an older student” and “a little bit of extra confidence”. Likewise, Sandra Kelly, who is a mentor, also found the programme very rewarding and believed that the programme has enabled her to "develop her communication skills, as well as her ability to form new friendships."

Following the success of the pilot programme in Claremorris four other schools in Galway, Mayo and Roscommon have adopted the BBBS school mentoring programme in the hope that it will offer additional support to students by developing a positive school environment and countering the incidence and effects of bullying.

To date the feedback from both the schools and students has been extremely positive. In a recent evaluation, students said that they enjoyed the opportunity to develop a new friendship and most students highlighted the importance of taking responsibility for the welfare and well being of others as being a key motivational factor for becoming a Big Brother or Big Sister with the programme.
Garda Youth Diversion Projects

Garda Youth Diversion Projects are community based, multi-agency initiatives that provide suitable activities for young people to facilitate personal development and promote civic responsibility. Foróige operates 18 Garda Diversion Projects, funded by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform through An Garda Síochána and supported by the probation and welfare services, the local community and business interests. Edel Maughan, Co-ordinator, the Longford Enabling Action Project (LEAP) speaks to two of project participants about their experiences.

Mary (pictured below), 14, has been involved in the LEAP project for about three years now and hasn’t looked back since. “I like having a place to go to meet my friends and it’s just the girls group on a Monday evening so I can really be myself and chat to the other girls about lots of different things” she says.

“I think that I have really benefited from being involved in the Project, I have learned to take correction a bit better and I’ve changed at home too. I used to go around starting trouble but I’ve learned to walk away I think that I’ve quietened down in one way, but I’ve also come out of my shell a bit more too - if that makes sense! I think that I’m more confident, I’ll even speak in public now. I have learned lots of new things that I know I wouldn’t have gotten the opportunity to learn if I wasn’t a part of this group. I get on really well with all of the others and Edel, the project co-ordinator. It’s great to have a place to go to talk to someone who you know will listen.”

Claire, 15, has been involved in the LEAP project for about a year and a half. Claire says “before I got involved in LEAP, anything that was happening I got into it. The project keeps me busy all the time - being able to mix with other young people has helped my confidence and has changed me. I used to be always in trouble at school and at home and in fights. I honestly can’t remember being like that since I got into LEAP. I have learned a lot about the law that I didn’t know before and bullying and things like that. I suppose you could say that I’ve cleaned up my act since I joined LEAP!

The project has given me the opportunity to get involved in loads of activities from the ‘Back Stage Theatre Activity Group’ to the Colour Me Beautiful course and a Cookery Course. We learn loads - but we always have a laugh doing it.”

Margaret Dooney, Chairperson, Carracastle Foróige Club, Co. Sligo chats about what they get up to on their Club nights.

"After our meeting we generally play football, basketball and other sorts of sports. We also arrange fundraising for lots of different charities and have discos for our community or for other Clubs in our area. There is loads of organizing involved, but they’re great fun, so its always worth it in the end.”

(Margaret Dooney was unable to attend for the photo, hence the use of the words “Pictured below” to indicate that the photograph shows Claire, Aissa, Lindsey, Edel, Winnie and Anna from the LEAP project on a day trip to Salthill in Galway last year.)
Meet some Foróige Volunteers

MARY KENNEDY

Mary Kennedy is a former Foróige member, who served on the Reference Panel and is now a voluntary leader herself, with Knocklyon Foróige Club, Co. Dublin. Here she chats about why she gets much more out of being a leader than she ever imagined.

“When I was growing up I was a member of a Foróige Club and I really gained a lot from it - I don’t quite know if I knew it at the time, but it most definitely helped with my confidence and I can see that now. When I moved to Knocklyon, I saw an advertisement in the paper looking for volunteers to set up a Foróige Club in the area - and that was it. I knew that it was my time to give back to the organisation that I had gotten so much fun out of when I was younger. What I didn’t know was that I would enjoy being a leader so much! The Club is booming, we have 50 members, 6 leaders and a jam-packed schedule of events.

In March we got together with a gospel choir who trained the members in gospel singing - I say ‘we’, but it was the young people themselves who organised the whole thing, we enabled the process, but they did all the work and that is amazing to watch and be a part of.”

MOLACHY BOOTH

Malachy Booth is a community Garda in Ballybane, Co. Galway who has been a Foróige leader for over sixteen years. He first volunteered with the Ballybane Youth Development Project before becoming involved with the local Foróige Club during which time he also served on the National Executive. Malachy subsequently got involved in the funding application for the Bán project and now serves voluntarily on its Management Committee. Here he speaks about why Foróige has changed how he thinks about young people.

“It is a great experience to have the opportunity to work with young people and to gain an insight into how they think. As a Garda I tend to see one side to young people, but in the club or project I get to see a very different side. There is a great sense of joy and satisfaction in being a leader. If you are a voluntary leader you will always look at young people differently from then on - I’m convinced of it.

Other people quite often see the negative in the antics of youth, but as somebody who works with them in a positive environment you learn to see the good in every one of them and in all my years as a volunteer I have never come across a young person that there is absolutely no good in - our job as volunteers is to draw it out of them - that is our challenge and it is also our joy.”

MARGARET MINIHANE

Margaret Minihane is a mother of four and is Club leader with Bandon Foróige Club, Co. Cork, which she helped to found some five years ago. Here she speaks of her experiences as a parent volunteer and why she thinks that they are so important.

“There was really nothing in Bandon for young people before Foróige and as a parent I was very aware that there was a genuine need for something, but I wasn’t sure how we could go about meeting that need on our own. Then I heard about a Foróige information evening in one of the local hotels and that was it, we haven’t looked back since. We have 54 members and 11 adult leaders and it has really benefited the community and made life a little bit better for all of us. I enjoy knowing that I’m helping to provide a safe place for my own children and the other members to socialise with their friends - something for them to belong to and take ownership of. It is necessary for parents to get involved, I feel very strongly about that, if you believe that it is important, then you need to make it happen yourself and not depend on others to do it for you.”
There was great excitement in Dublin last October when eight Foróige groups were honoured for their outstanding work demonstrating good citizenship in their local communities at the National Foróige Citizenship Awards 2004. Dancers, samba drummers and puppeteers entertained an upbeat audience, who were also treated to creative stage presentations by each of the award winners on the content and impact of their projects. The Citizenship Awards, which are sponsored by The Wrigley Company Ltd., are open to Foróige’s 415 Clubs and 93 Projects nationwide.

Speaking at the Awards Ceremony, Séumas O’Brien, Chairperson of the National Council of Foróige said “I am continuously amazed and impressed at what young people can do when they are given the opportunity. I believe that the Foróige Citizenship Programme represents one such opportunity, and the work on display reflects just what young people can do if they are given the chance. But this will only happen if they are facilitated, guided and supported by dedicated volunteers and staff. We are all citizens and citizenship not only provides certain rights and privileges but also places on us certain duties and obligations.”

**TALLAGHT FORÓIGE CLUB, CO. DUBLIN**

Club members carried out a detailed community survey and canvassed local County Councillors and TDs to take action on the issues identified as being of most importance to their local area. They also designed and built a wild flower garden in their local school.

**BALTINGLASS FORÓIGE CLUB, CO. WICKLOW**

Baltinglass Foróige Club researched the needs of their community using a wide variety of methods including questionnaires, interviews and an in depth study of the local environment. They eventually focused on erecting street nameplates in the town.

**IRISHTOWN FORÓIGE CLUB, CO. MAYO**

The number of church services in Irishtown were under threat, so the Foróige club responded to this by coming up with new and creative ideas for church ceremonies. They got the whole community involved in their project and took responsibility for organising much of the church liturgy.
After a friend was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes, Loughglynn Foróige Club became very conscious of the effects that poor modern day eating habits and lack of exercise was having on young people who have contracted AIDS. The club raised a massive €3,300 for the organisation as part of their project.

Coosan Foróige Club decided to respond to the problem of AIDS in Soweto in South Africa. They researched the problem in great depth and eventually linked up with an organisation called “Soweto Connection” that works with young people who have contracted AIDS. The club raised a massive €3,300 for the organisation as part of their project.

Having carried out an analysis of the needs of the people in their local area, Ferbane Foróige Club decided to focus on the social inclusion of senior citizens in the community. They organised a special social evening where both young and old contributed their talents and exchanged ideas. As a tribute to the success of the evening, Active Age Group’s all over Co. Offaly have decided to organise similar events.

Monamolin Foróige club organised regular meetings with Wexford County Council to examine ways of improving road safety in their area. Following on from these meetings, the club decided to coordinate the re-designing and re-building of a dangerous junction in the village to make it safer for the whole community.

Congratulations also to:

- Whitechurch Youth Development Project, Co. Dublin;
- Coon/Muckalee Foróige Club, Co. Kilkenny;
- Exit Foróige Club, Co. Cork;
- Lurgan Foróige Club, Co. Cavan;
- Club 23 Foróige Club, Co. Dublin,

whose Citizenship projects were highly commended on the night!
Foróige in Pictures

A look back at Foróige events during the year

Kevin McAree, Foróige Manager, Eastern Region, Justin Daly, Ferbane Foróige Club and Orlaith Knight T.D. at The President’s visit to Foróige members and leaders in Co. Offaly.

Techno wizards Wayne Leonard (left) and Chase Nouri, from the Foróige managed Computer Clubhouse, Blanchardstown Youth Service, pictured with their mini robots at the Clubhouse’s stand at the Young Scientist Exhibition this year.

Hurler of the Year, Seán Óg Ó h’Ailpín, on a visit to Mountbellew Foróige Club, in February 2005.

Minister for Youth Affairs, Síle de Valera T.D., pictured with Alison Reynolds and Laura Reid from Loughglynn Foróige Club at the launch of the Foróige Citizenship Programme 2005.

Congratulations to Michael B. Cleary, former Director of Foróige, pictured here with Chancellor, NUI, Dr. Garret Fitzgerald, who was conferred with an honorary degree of Doctor of Laws by NUI Maynooth, for his 36 year contribution to Youth Work.

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(l-r) Tracey Fahy, Claire McCormack and Rachael Molloy of Corofin Foróige Club, Co. Galway, get down to work at their annual charity daffodil picking day.

‘Grease Mania’ proves to be a winner for Ballymacward Foróige Club in the East Galway District Council Variety Competition.

Foróige leaders from Co. Cork pictured at last year’s National Leaders’ Conference.

And they’re off! Members from Kildare Foróige take to the water during an inter-club adventure day.

Clowning Around - The Girls from the Monaghan, Armagh Diversion and Exchange Project get into the party spirit.

Just for laughs - Paulstown Foróige Club perform a comedy sketch at the Kilkenny District Council talent show held earlier this year.

Foróige leaders from Co. Cork pictured at last year’s National Leaders’ Conference.
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(*) denotes at set-up stage