



An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,  
Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige  
Department of Children, Equality,  
Disability, Integration and Youth

*Shared Vision, Next Steps, 2019–2024*: The National Policy Document for  
Children and Young People's Services Committees

Mid-term Report 2019–2021

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## 1. Minister's foreword

I welcome the publication of this mid-term report for *Shared Vision, Next Steps (2019–2024)*. Children and Young People's Services Committees (CYPSC) have developed from their beginnings in 2007 to full national roll-out in 2017, and have since gone from strength to strength. CYPSC play a vital role in coordinating services for children and young people in Ireland, and in meeting the needs of the children and young people in their areas.

*Shared Vision, Next Steps* was launched in November 2019, 4 months before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic and related restrictions had significant impacts across society, and in particular for our children and young people.



CYPSC across Ireland adapted to a new way of working in the context of the pandemic. The work of coordinators and chairpersons, and committee and subgroup members, saw energy and funding utilised to support children, young people and their families during very challenging times. The cyberattack on the Health Service Executive's (HSE's) information technology (IT) infrastructure compounded challenges to CYPSC work in 2020.

Despite these challenges, work towards the realisation of the *Shared Vision, Next Steps* actions continued. This report provides an overview of progress towards the 37 goals set out in *Shared Vision, Next Steps*, and reminds us of the work that remains to be completed.

I am delighted to say that 22 (60%) of the 37 actions in *Shared Vision, Next Steps* have been completed with most of the outstanding actions currently in progress.

More recent developments have also informed CYPSC work – the arrival of Ukrainian children, young people and their families to Ireland, and the increasing number of children, young people and families seeking international protection. Both phenomena are changing the demographic profiles of our communities and the needs profile to which CYPSC respond.

CYPSC' work towards the realisation of the *Shared Vision, Next Steps* actions will continue throughout 2023 and 2024. As part of Ireland's Action Plan for the European Union Child Guarantee, CYPSC will work on four local area pilots to combat child poverty. This work will be led by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) in conjunction with the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD), and the Department of the Taoiseach's newly established Child Poverty and Well-Being Programme Office.

Other important developments include the proposed amendments to the Child Care Act, 1991 to place CYPSC on a statutory footing, and the review of the CYPSC, which is currently at planning stage and due to commence in late 2023.

## Shared Vision, Next Steps: Mid-Term Report

I would like to acknowledge and thank all the CYPSC coordinators, as well as the wider CYPSC membership and partner organisations, for all their valuable work in seeking to improve outcomes for our children, young people and their families.

I look forward to continued engagement with CYPSC and Tusla colleagues, and to the final report for *Shared Vision, Next Steps* in 2025.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Roderic O'Gorman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the "G".

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Roderic O'Gorman

*Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth*

## 2. Introduction

The core purpose of Children and Young People's Services Committees (CYPSC) is to ensure effective inter-agency coordination and collaboration in order to achieve the best outcomes for all children and young people in their area. CYPSC achieve this through effective planning, coordination and oversight of policy implementation and service provision at the county level.

CYPSC are the structure through which services can work together in a systematic manner to achieve shared goals and bridge national policy with local provision.

The first four CYPSC were established in 2007 on a pilot basis, with full national roll-out achieved in 2017. In 2019, Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Katherine Zappone, launched the national policy document for CYPSC, *Shared Vision, Next Steps (2019 – 2024)*. The aim of *Shared Vision, Next Steps* is to provide a succinct road map for the further development of CYPSC. It includes 37 target actions across 10 work areas.

CYPSC work to achieve the five national outcomes set out in *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: the national policy framework for children & young people 2014-2020* (hereafter, *BOBF*), so that these may become a reality for children and young people.

All CYPSC focus on identifying gaps and supporting synergies in service delivery, leading to the development of a shared plan for children and young people. In addition, service plans developed by member agencies may in turn have due regard for local priorities identified by the CYPSC. Each CYPSC actively promotes the development of quality practices and the delivery of quality services in its area, with Tusla area managers acting as chairperson for each CYPSC.

A whole-of-government approach is an overarching term for responses to the challenges of fragmentation in the public sector and the objective of increasing integration, coordination and capacity. The CYPSC model of inter-agency working is an enabler for whole-of-government approaches. Characteristics of whole-of-government working that are enabled through CYPSC include:

- Involving stakeholders across networks at local level in support of achieving best outcomes
- Engaging those familiar with delivery issues and service users themselves
- Embedding a culture of collaboration
- Establishing an infrastructure through which to realise collaboration, and
- Realising the capacity to work across agencies and levels.

BOBF concluded at the end of 2020, but the national outcomes will be retained in the successor policy framework for children and young people, due for publication in mid-2023.

### **Background to *Shared Vision, Next Steps (2019–2024)***

Following the expiration of the *Blueprint for the Development of CYPSC 2015–2017*, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) convened a working group in 2018 to review the policy platform for CYPSC. The working group's membership comprised officials from DCYA, nominees from the CYPSC Coordinators' National Network and the National Coordinator for CYPSC.

## Shared Vision, Next Steps: Mid-Term Report

During the development of *Shared Vision, Next Steps*, consultations were held with CYPSC coordinators, CYPSC chairpersons, the wider CYPSC membership, the National Steering Group (NSG), and senior management from the then-Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA). Bilateral engagement was hosted with Tusla Child and Family Support Networks (CFSNs) and the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD).

The key output from this process was *Shared Vision, Next Steps*. It outlined the shared vision for CYPSC over the next 5 years. The 37 actions included provide the basis for a work programme for CYPSC for 2019–2024.

*Shared Vision, Next Steps* provided a review of progress made and identified the most immediate actions that needed to be addressed and advanced. The findings in this report helped CYPSC to further develop in a strategic, integrated and sustainable manner, in order to support the coordination and planning of efficient and effective services for children and young people.

### **Purpose of *Shared Vision, Next Steps*: Mid-term Report 2019–2021**

The purpose of this report is to provide a status update on CYPSC developments from 2019 to 2021, to report on progress made on the 10 high-level goals, as well as the progress made on the implementation of the 37 associated actions under these goals. The report provides information on the funding of CYPSC from 2019 to 2021, and highlights CYPSC best practice under five national outcomes achieved during this 2019–2021 period.

### 3. Progress on *Shared Vision, Next Steps* actions

A total of 37 actions are outlined in *Shared Vision, Next Steps*. These actions cover 10 key areas:

1. Strengthened leadership
2. Collaboration
3. Building capacity
4. Resourcing
5. Planning and reporting
6. Data and evidence
7. Communications
8. Participation of children and young people
9. Joint commissioning
10. Evaluation

These actions are intended to build on positive work by CYPSC prior to 2019, to strengthen CYPSC infrastructure and use the evidence base to create the optimum circumstances to identify local and national priorities for improving the lives of children, young people and their families in their local communities. These actions inform the work of CYPSC across Ireland.

The following pages provide an update on progress made with regard to each of the 37 actions together with details of the status of each action.

Progress updates on the actions are colour-coded to denote status, as follows:

<b>Green</b>	Complete
<b>Amber</b>	In progress
<b>Red</b>	Not progressed

Of the 37 actions, 22 have been completed (60%), 11 are in progress (30%) and 4 have not progressed to date (10%).

Shared Vision, Next Steps: Mid-Term Report

Key actions and implementation	Responsibility	Timeline	Status
1. Leadership			
<p>1.1 DCEDIY leadership will be strengthened through oversight and policy direction. This will include a commitment to ensure improved buy-in from other Government Departments and State agencies.</p>	DCEDIY	2019–2024	Complete
<p>DCEDIY responsibility for CYPSC national policy and oversight now lies with its Parenting Support Policy Unit. DCEDIY has always sought to strengthen CYPSC, with national leadership seeking to improve working relationships, and foster buy-in from other Government Departments and State agencies.</p> <p>Examples of engagement and recognition of the role of CYPSC by Government Departments and others include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Department of Justice consulted CYPSC and DCEDIY in 2022 towards the development and launch of <i>ZERO TOLERANCE: Third National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual &amp; Gender Based Violence 2022-2026</i>.</li> <li>• The Department of Justice recognised the role of CYPSC in the Family Justice Strategy 2022–2025 with actions included relating to CYPSC.</li> <li>• CYPSC were involved in the roll-out of the successful My Place to Play initiative to the 47 International Protection Accommodation Services (IPAS) accommodations nationwide.</li> <li>• CYPSC continue to report on action contained in the National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy 2017 – 2021.</li> <li>• The DCEDIY/CYPSC/Tusla relationship with the Department of Health (DOH) on the Healthy Ireland initiative continues, with funding remaining at a stable level. The raised profile of CYPSC led to the allocation of €865,000 in additional funding from the Community Mental Health Fund via the Dept Health and the HSE. The fund was rolled out under the Healthy Ireland banner.</li> <li>• More recently, the <i>EU Child Guarantee: Ireland’s National Action Plan</i> contains a commitment to establish four pilot Local Area Child Poverty Action Plans in CYPSC areas in conjunction with Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs) under the auspices of the DRCD; in addition, DCEDIY has engaged with the DRCD to implement this initiative involving CYPSC.</li> </ul> <p>Officials from DCEDIY meet with the National Coordinator for CYPSC at the CYPSC National Implementation Group (NIG) every 6 weeks to discuss matters pertaining to CYPSC, such as resourcing, finance, and governance and current issues. DCEDIY officials attend quarterly meetings of the CYPSC Coordinators’ National Network to provide updates on DCEDIY’s work, new policy developments, funding opportunities and resourcing for CYPSC. DCEDIY receives updates from CYPSC on current developments, best practice and challenges. DCEDIY circulates a quarterly</p>			

bulletin to CYPSC, updating them on key policy developments, new funding opportunities and DCEDIY work that is relevant to CYPSC.

Following the launch of *Shared Vision, Next Steps*, the Department (DCYA) recognised the need to further strengthen the engagement and relationship with this Government Department. DCYA organised biannual meetings with CYPSC coordinators and Tusla area managers in the DCYA offices in order to highlight best practice and to hear from CYPSC on matters relating to resourcing, key challenges and other matters. These meetings were put on hold following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, but they reconvened in the summer of 2023.

DCEDIY intends to maintain this momentum, and envisions that the proposal to put CYPSC on a statutory footing with amendments to the Child Care Act, 1991, including possible mandated membership of some Government Departments, will serve to strengthen the working relationship between CYPSC and Government Departments and agencies. Moreover, DCEDIY will ensure that CYPSC are consulted during the ongoing legislative process.

1.2

The What Works initiative will be accessible and transferable to CYPSC.

DCEDIY

2020

Complete

What Works, funded under the Dormant Account Fund, is an initiative designed by DCEDIY that aims to maximise the impact of prevention and early intervention to improve outcomes for children and young people living in Ireland. At the heart of the initiative is a desire to foster persistent curiosity among those working in prevention and early intervention to improve the lives of children and young people.

Four key strands were identified in order to embed and enhance prevention and early intervention in children and young people’s policy, service provision and practice. These were: data and evidence; professional development; capacity building; and quality.

What Works seeks to take a coordinated approach to enhance capacity, knowledge and quality in prevention and early intervention services, with a focus on those at risk of poor outcomes. What Works aims to support key groups working with children, young people and families to help them understand what works, and how it works, and to provide an evidence-based approach to the application of this work. DCEDIY continues to support CYPSC with regard to prevention and early intervention initiatives via What Works.

CYPSC projects were supported under the Innovation Fund 2018, Network Support Fund 2019, the Learning Together Fund (2021), and the Training Fund 2021.

Quality implementation training (funded via What Works) was delivered by the Centre for Effective Services to Tusla staff in selected Tusla Service Areas in 2022, and was open to CYPSC coordinators as an option for those who work with children and young people on prevention and

early intervention. The aim of this training is to progress a consistent national approach in prevention and early intervention work, enabling Tusla services and partner agencies to provide for the effective implementation of evidence-informed practice. Quality implementation training aims to develop a shared interdisciplinary and inter-agency understanding of evidence-informed practice through the support of identified quality implementation champions in these services, and to focus on the importance of outcomes and incorporate an outcomes-based approach. DCEDIY and Tusla are working to ensure continued roll-out of this training throughout 2023.

An annual series of webinars sharing learnings for prevention and early intervention ran in 2020–2022 under the umbrella ‘Festival of Learning’. The festival was advertised extensively, with CYPSC coordinators invited from across Ireland and some local CYPSC coordinators giving featured talks.

<p>1.3 CYPSC will collaborate with the Parenting Support Policy Unit in DCEDIY as part of that unit’s work to consolidate, streamline and strengthen parenting information resources, and to develop a national model of parenting supports.</p>	<p>DCEDIY, National Coordinator for CYPSC, CYPSC coordinators, CYPSC members</p>	<p>2020</p>	<p>Complete</p>
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CYPSC engage with the Parenting Support Policy Unit on research and activities to improve parenting information resources. CYPSC contributed to the Collaborative Working Group to develop a national model of parenting support services, which culminated in the launch of *Supporting Parents: A National Model of Parenting Support Services* in April 2022. Providing effective parenting supports is important for ensuring the health and well-being of children and their parents during the early years of childhood and beyond. Supporting Parents clearly states that child well-being indicators and the personal preferences of parents are key in any decision-making for the provision of services to children and families, particularly parenting supports.

CYPSC are involved in the provision of parenting and family supports, and, as of 2022, 22 of the 27 CYPSC were providing support to a Tusla Prevention Partnership and Family Support (PPFS) Steering Committee as a CYPSC subgroup.

CYPSC utilised DCEDIY annual programme funding to strengthen awareness around the availability of parental supports, and to collaborate with local partners in coordinating the provision of parental supports in each local CYPSC area.

Family Resource Centres are represented on nearly all CYPSC and play an important role in enabling CYPSC and local partners to coordinate and deliver vital parenting and family supports in communities.

<p>1.4 Leadership and oversight provided by the National Coordinator for CYPSC will ensure that good practices are shared and standardised across all CYPSC. This oversight will ensure that there is coherence across the CYPSC structure and that a common approach across CYPSC is maintained.</p>	<p>National Coordinator for CYPSC</p>	<p>2020</p>	<p>Complete</p>
<p>Tusla provides core operational leadership at national and local levels to drive and sustain CYPSC. This work is progressed by the National Coordinator for CYPSC, situated in Tusla, and involves engagement with DCEDIY; the employment of local CYPSC coordinators and the National Coordinator for CYPSC; participation on the CYPSC National Steering Group (term now expired) and the CYPSC NIG; and the provision of implementation support to the day-to-day functioning and management of CYPSC and through a network of CYPSC chairpersons and local CYPSC coordinators.</p> <p>Throughout the period 2019–2021, the National Coordinator liaised with DCEDIY to ensure coordination of CYPSC at the national level with regard to leading on the implementation of the strategic plan for CYPSC. The National Coordinator ensured that national policy was communicated to the CYPSC membership at a local level so that it could be translated into local positive action. One example of this is the work carried out by CYPSC through <i>First 5: A Whole-of-Government Strategy for Babies, Young Children and their Families 2019-2028</i>) is a 10-year plan that builds on <i>BOBF</i>. <i>First 5</i> reinforces the commitments made in <i>BOBF</i> to deliver improvements across the five national outcomes.</p> <p>Other important national policy developments impacting on the work of CYPSC include the <i>LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy 2018–2020</i>, the <i>National Strategy on Children and Young People’s Participation in Decision-Making 2015–2020</i>, the <i>Youth Justice Strategy 2021 - 2027</i>, the <i>Policy Blueprint for the Development of Educational Welfare Services and Alternative Education</i>, as well as the <i>Social Inclusion Integrated Strategy 2020 - 2025</i>. Other examples include CYPSC dialogue in the development of the <i>ZERO TOLERANCE: Third National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual &amp; Gender Based Violence 2022-2026</i>, key communications and information sharing on available funding streams such as integration and IPAS funding, and the continued implementation of the Healthy Ireland initiative.</p> <p>Work was carried out consistently to ensure coherence across the CYPSC inter-agency structure, and to ensure that a common approach is applied consistently across local CYPSC and the wider system through the sharing of knowledge, learning and practical outputs generated at local level. Examples of this include the development of localised practitioners’ guides on how to respond to domestic, sexual and gender-based violence (DSGBV) and DSGBV services available, which many CYPSC published in conjunction with local DSGBV services, and School Avoidance Toolkits developed to strengthen local responses for children, young people and families affected by school refusal.</p>			

The National Coordinator ensured that the CYPSC maintained an outcomes-focused approach and operated to the highest standard, informed by current and emerging evidence. Work was implemented to build understanding of and commitment to CYPSC at both the local and national level, and this led to an increased CYPSC profile among Government Departments and agencies.

The National Coordinator and the network of local CYPSC respond to emerging needs and challenges which affect CYPSC work, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, pivoting national and local plans to address priority needs as they emerge and collaborating effectively both nationally and locally in implementation of the Sláintecare-led Community Resilience and Recovery programme. CYPSC worked in conjunction with the Children’s Rights Alliance and other partners to provide meals for families living in disadvantaged communities, and to augment family support and access to early childhood development resources for families living in cramped accommodation during the pandemic.

The National Coordinator oversaw progress and impact of CYPSC, coordinating collective reporting to DCEDIY and the CYPSC NIG. This was evidenced by the submission of annual national progress reports from 2019 to 2021 to Tusla senior management as well as to DCEDIY.

The continued operation of the CYPSC Coordinators’ National Network provided an opportunity for regular open communication with DCEDIY, a focus on learning and an effective channel for harnessing the knowledge and expertise of CYPSC to inform national policy and strategy. The National Coordinator drove a national communications approach, providing a focal point for accessing CYPSC knowledge and a gateway to local CYPSC work.

<p>1.5 The CYPSC NSG will publish a new updated work plan and ensure that strong leadership is maintained to support and guide CYPSC and to promote best practice.</p>	<p>NSG</p>	<p>2020</p>	<p>Not progressed</p>
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The main function of the CYPSC NSG was to support the operation and implementation of CYPSC. The term of the NSG expired at the end of 2020 in line with the ending of *BOBF*. The NSG provided guidance and advice on strategic, policy and operational issues relevant to CYPSC. It addressed issues and obstacles that needed resolution at the national level as communicated to it through the CYPSC infrastructure and the planning and reporting mechanisms set out in this document.

Furthermore, the NSG endeavoured to ensure that any references to CYPSC in national policy documents were aligned with the goals and objectives of CYPSC. It supported and guided local committees in achieving better outcomes for children and young people, promoted best practice and supported local committees in realising their potential.

Over the course of 2019 and 2020, the Chairperson of the NSG reported on CYPSC matters to the Children and Young People’s Policy Consortium in the Department of the Taoiseach. Over the period 2019–2020, the NSG was chaired by Dr Noelle Spring, with DCEDIY taking up the role as

Chair in the latter half of 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the NSG did not meet until 15 October 2020.

*BOBF* concluded at the end of 2020, and the role of the NSG going forward will be considered in the context of the successor framework (currently under development in DCEDIY).

1.6  
All CYPSC actions in related strategies will be advanced nationally and locally.

DCEDIY, Tusla, CYPSC coordinators, CYPSC members, other Government Departments, other State agencies

2019–2024

Complete

CYPSC are recognised as the key infrastructure for planning and coordination of services for children and young people. This enhanced profile and position, both on the ground and across Government Departments, is reflected in CYPSC being referenced in key actions in many recent policies during the period 2019–2021, such as:

- *First 5: A Whole-of-Government Strategy for Babies, Young Children and their Families 2019-2028*
- *National Strategy on Children and Young People’s Participation in Decision-Making 2015 – 2020*
- *National Youth Strategy 2013 – 2025*
- *LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy 2018-2020*
- *Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice 2018–2023*
- *Healthy Ireland Framework 2020-2025*
- *Connecting for Life – Ireland’s National Strategy to Reduce Suicide 2015-2020*
- *Higher Education Authority 2018-2022 Strategic Plan.*

DCEDIY provides strategic and policy direction to the development of CYPSC. The mandate for CYPSC has derived from Government policy over time and was renewed in the context of *BOBF* and the range of policies, strategies and innovations expressed in the overarching framework.

As the CYPSC formed an integral part of the structures provided for in *BOBF*, they were accountable to the NSG and DCEDIY, and in turn to the Children and Young People’s Policy Consortium in the Department of the Taoiseach. CYPSC, through their inter-agency coordination function, formed an integral part of the whole-of-government landscape as originally envisaged under *BOBF*.

CYPSC work alongside a number of national strategies which impact children and young people, as well as their parents.

In 2021:

- Twenty-seven of 27 CYPSC worked to coordinate parenting supports.
- Twenty-seven of 27 CYPSC worked to support the Healthy Ireland initiative, under which they coordinated 168 activities. This level of activity likely reflects the considerable funding provided to CYPSC under the Healthy Ireland initiative by the DOH and DCEDIY.
- Twenty-six of 27 CYPSC worked to hear the voices of children and young people.
- Twenty-five of 27 CYPSC worked to respond directly to COVID-19-related needs.
- Twenty-four of 27 CYPSC worked to respond to the needs of Traveller and Roma children and young people.
- Twenty-three of 27 CYPSC worked on DSGBV initiatives.
- Twenty-two of 27 CYPSC worked to respond to the needs of children and young people with disabilities.
- Nineteen of 27 CYPSC worked to respond to the needs of children and young people in IPAS.
- Sixteen of 27 CYPSC worked to respond to the needs of children and young people in the LGBTI+ community.
- Thirteen of 27 CYPSC worked to support the needs of children, young people and their families experiencing homelessness.
- Twelve of 27 CYPSC worked to respond to youth justice issues.

1.7

Good inter-agency collaboration, working and relationship building will be fostered, strengthened and embedded across various sectors.

National Coordinator for CYPSC, DCEDIY, CYPSC coordinators, CYPSC members

2020

Complete

CYPSC bring together relevant statutory and community and voluntary (C&V) organisations providing services to children and young people, in order to maximise the reach, coverage and impact of such services. Inter-agency working is the hallmark of CYPSC, and effective inter-agency working is important across all levels of service provision, from targeted to universal.

Cooperation, coordination and collaboration are the key components of a successful approach to inter-agency working. The C&V sector is a vital resource for local communities and touches almost every aspect of society. A diverse range of C&V organisations have key roles in the effective functioning of CYPSC. The C&V sector in tandem with its local CYPSC will work to ensure that there is an appropriate response to existing and emerging needs of children and families.

In 2020 and 2021, CYPSC responded to emerging needs by working closely with and through organisations in the C&V sector, coordinating supports in response to the COVID-19 pandemic

and the arrival of Ukrainian children, young people and their families. This rapid response was made possible by the relationships that CYPSC have built up over time and embedded across local areas. Ultimately, this response had a positive impact on all CYPSC work such as the Healthy Ireland initiative, the Community Mental Health Fund, DSGBV supports, and parental supports, among other initiatives coordinated by CYPSC. DCEDIY strives to further strengthen good inter-agency collaboration through its funding mechanisms and dissemination of national policy and funding streams via the CYPSC membership and partner organisations.

CYPSC are chaired by the Tusla local area manager, with a vice-chairperson coming from the local authority. The other members of the committee represent statutory and C&V organisations. A suggested membership composition is outlined in *Shared Vision, Next Steps*.

CYPSC members include senior managers, directors and chief executive officers from the main statutory providers of services to children, young people and families in the area. Such backgrounds have equipped them with experience in addressing issues in relation to local and nationally identified priorities and the five national outcome areas for children and young people.

Member organisations include: Tusla, local authorities, the HSE, Education and Training Boards (ETBs), C&V sector providers for children and young people, An Garda Síochána, the Irish Primary Principals' Network, the National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals, Family Resource Centres, City/County Childcare Committees (CCCs), the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (now the Department of Social Protection), the Probation Service, third-level institutions, the National Educational Psychological Service and social inclusion partners (e.g. local development companies). Some CYPSC have a young person as a member on the main committee.

In 2021, across 27 CYPSC there was a total main committee membership of 554 individual committee members and 424 member organisations. On average, 16 organisations were represented on CYPSC main committees. In total, there were 213 statutory organisations represented on CYPSC main committees and 197 C&V organisations. Thirteen CYPSC had young people on their main committee.

In 2021, there was a total of 793 organisations participating in CYPSC subgroups. Of these organisations, 522 were C&V organisations and 253 were statutory organisations. There were 146 young people participating in CYPSC subgroups.

## 2. Collaboration

<p>2.1 DCEDIY will foster stronger linkages between LCDCs and CYPSC via the <i>BOBF</i> implementation infrastructure. It will consider a review of implementation and the aligning of planning cycles.</p>	<p>DCEDIY, LCDCs, National Coordinator for CYPSC, CYPSC coordinators, CYPSC members</p>	<p>2020</p>	<p>In progress</p>
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At the local level, CYPSC are engaging formally with LCDCs, informed by the guidance document for CYPSC and LCDCs (December 2016). Under *Shared Vision, Next Steps*, it was envisaged that each CYPSC will agree key priorities with the LCDC as they consider the work of the CYPSC and its member agencies for inclusion in the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) of the local authority (i.e. the city/county council). This would involve a two-way relationship wherein local CYPSC and LCDCs inform each other of relevant developments and address issues of mutual interest. Although some CYPSC do engage and collaborate with LCDCs (such as the Healthy Ireland initiative), the level of engagement remains unclear.

The vice-chairperson of each CYPSC is a representative from the local authority (city/county council). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, work on fostering stronger links between LCDCs and CYPSC did not formally commence, although some cursory discussions took place.

DCEDIY is committed to fostering stronger linkages between LCDCs and CYPSC. This will be done through a review of implementation and alignment of planning cycles, and by aligning CYPSC with all local authority areas. Planning on this is currently underway, and discussions have been held between DCEDIY and the DRCD. Further discussions are ongoing at NIG level as to how this can best be achieved.

2.2

DCEDIY will strengthen engagement, through its Early Years unit, between CYPSC and their local CCC. This will ensure a consistent level of service across the country to progress the implementation of *First 5*.

DCEDIY, CCC, CYPSC coordinators, CYPSC members

2021

In progress

One of the aims of *Shared Vision, Next Steps* was for CYPSC to strengthen engagement with their local CCC, particularly in light of the *First 5* strategy. CCCs support and assist both families and providers of early learning and care, as well as providers of childcare at the school-age level, with childcare matters at local county level.

A consistent level of service across Ireland is necessary in order to progress the implementation of *First 5*. CYPSC have the potential to fulfil a key role in coordinating and driving this implementation at local level, and CYPSC work with their local CCCs is ongoing. One example of CYPSC collaboration with CCCs is the utilisation of DCEDIY funding for the My Place to Play initiative as a support in accommodations provided to Ukrainian families.

CCCs are represented on CYPSC main committees (26 of 27 in 2019, and 27 of 27 in 2020 and 2021).

Work is ongoing to strengthen the engagement between CYPSC and their local CCC.

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<p>2.3 Tusla and DCEDIY will work together to formalise CFSNs and CYPSC at a strategic level.</p>	<p>Tusla, DCEDIY, CYPSC members</p>	<p>2021</p>	<p>In progress</p>
<p>Tusla Child and Family Support Networks (CFSNs) are multi-agency networks that are established in each Tusla integrated service area. CFSNs are localised structures, managed by managers of the Tusla Prevention, Partnership and Family Support Programme (PPFS), serving as a connection to the CYPSC. The relationship between the CFSN and CYPSC is mediated via the PPFS Steering Committee, which operates as an Outcome 3 Subgroup.</p> <p>CFSNs are developing a smoother continuum of support for families, from low-level universal supports to more acute interventions. The development and increase in CFSNs across Ireland is conducive to capitalising on what has been learned from the ABC Programmes as well as the implementation of the What Works initiative. The <i>First 5</i> strategy is important in the context of CFSN work in that it supports an effective early childhood system and champions parenting supports. Tusla and DCEDIY are working together to formalise CFSNs and CYPSC at a strategic level to support the embedding of all government-led prevention and early intervention initiatives. CYPSC are now fully embedded in Tusla, and the number of CFSNs has increased steadily over time in response to identified need across Ireland.</p> <p>In 2019, 17 CYPSC had the PPFS Steering Committee operating as a subgroup. This figure was 21 and 19 in 2020 and 2021 respectively.</p>			
<p>2.4 The C&amp;V sector in tandem with their local CYPSC will work to ensure that there is an appropriate response to the existing and emerging needs of children and families.</p>	<p>C&amp;V sector, CYPSC coordinators, CYPSC members</p>	<p>2019–2024</p>	<p>Complete</p>
<p>The C&amp;V sector is a vital resource for local communities and touches almost every aspect of society. C&amp;V organisations play a key role in the effective functioning of CYPSC, and there are a diverse range of C&amp;V organisations effectively engaged across CYPSC. The C&amp;V sector is working in tandem with its local CYPSC to ensure that there is an appropriate response to the existing and emerging needs of children and families.</p> <p>CYPSC and local partners respond to existing and emerging needs through their 3-year Children and Young People’s Plans (CYPPs) and annual work plans. CYPSC and local C&amp;V organisations identify and respond to new and emerging needs such as homelessness, arrival of refugees, the COVID-19 pandemic, mental health and well-being, and other emerging priorities.</p> <p>The C&amp;V sector is well represented on CYPSC main committees.</p>			

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In 2021, 27 CYPSC reported the operation of 207 CYPSC subgroups. In total, there were 793 organisations participated in CYPSC subgroups. Of these organisations, 522 were C&V sector organisations and 253 were statutory organisations.

C&V sector engagement was particularly important in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of the case studies featured in Chapter 5 – Case studies are indicative of the importance of this engagement.

<p>2.5 DCEDIY and Tusla will strengthen engagement between Family Resource Centres and CYPSC through local and national structures.</p>	<p>DCEDIY, Tusla, National Coordinator for CYPSC, CYPSC coordinators, CYPSC members</p>	<p>2022</p>	<p>Complete</p>
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Family Resource Centres can assist CYPSC in developing capacity and leadership in communities, delivering local services, offering practical assistance to individuals and community groups, accessing funding and supporting networking in the community. DCEDIY is working with Tusla to strengthen this engagement further through local and national structures. From a DCEDIY perspective, the relationship between Family Resource Centres and CYPSC has been particularly beneficial with regard to the delivery of parenting and family supports. Family support is a wide range of activities that strengthen positive informal networks through community-based programmes and services. *Shared Vision, Next Steps* formalised the CYPSC/FRC relationship by including FRCs in the committees membership structure.

Family Resource Centres are significant CYPSC partners and play proactive roles on CYPSC main committees and subgroups. Twenty-five of 27 CYPSC had representatives from Family Resource Centres on the CYPSC main committee in 2021.

<p>2.6 Better connectivity between the ABC Programme and PPFS Programme will be advanced. DCEDIY and Tusla will strengthen linkages between the ABC (Commissioning) Plans, CYPSC CYPPs, LCDC plans and other CFSN and Family Resource Centre plans where they exist.</p>	<p>DCEDIY, Tusla</p>	<p>2022</p>	<p>In progress</p>
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ABC Programmes, while not nationwide, are situated in 8 out of 27 CYPSC areas and are involved in CYPSC subgroups in these areas. ABC Programmes offer a distinct contribution, additional to the PPFS Programme. It is important to align ABC area plans with Tusla area commissioning plans, CYPSC CYPPs and LCDC plans. This fits in a tiered level of universal and targeted programme delivery at a local, regional and national level. The ABC Programme will have a more sharply delineated anti-poverty focus with associated impact measures where feasible. Aligned within the PPFS, and informing CYPSC, the ABC Programme intends to develop a robust prevention and early

intervention infrastructure that will support enhanced service provision and inform cross-government actions in addressing child poverty.

Officials with responsibility for CYPSC and the ABC and PPFS Programmes are now situated in the same unit in DCEDIY. The ABC Programme budget is now incorporated in the wider PPFS budget, in Tusla.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, work on fostering stronger links between LCDCs and CYPSC did not formally commence under *BOBF*, although some cursory discussions took place. *BOBF* concluded at the end of 2020, and work on the successor framework has commenced in DCEDIY. Consideration of alignment of planning cycles between LCDCs and CYPSC is ongoing, with talks taking place at NIG level.

2.7

CYPSC will play an important role in coordinating a response to assist with the implementation of government strategies and plans. It will help deliver the 17 UN Sustainable Developmental Goals (SDGs) by 2030 through forging partnerships with local partners.

DCEDIY, CYPSC coordinators, CYPSC members, Tusla

2023

In progress

As reported under Action 1.6, CYPSC work alongside a number of national strategies which impact children and young people, as well as their parents.

The 17 UN SDGs align with the national outcomes set out in *BOBF*, particularly those focused on: eliminating poverty, eliminating hunger, providing for good health and well-being, quality education, gender equality, clean water and sanitation, decent work and economic growth, reduced inequalities, sustainable communities and partnerships for achieving goals. CYPSC work extensively under the Healthy Ireland initiative to coordinate supports regarding health, nutrition, play and recreation, mental health and well-being, and education around health and well-being. CYPSC play an important role in the participation of children and young people in initiatives to boost equality and awareness of climate change. Much of this work is conducted by CYPSC, working collaboratively with Comhairle na nÓg, and young people who are members of CYPSC.

2.8

CYPSC, DCEDIY, Tusla and relevant others will identify and agree on clear pathways and mechanisms of influence for CYPSC to shape systems, practice and policy development. This will include communicating local issues that require national action to bring about positive change for children and young people.

National Coordinator for CYPSC, CYPSC coordinators, CYPSC members, DCEDIY, Tusla, others

2022

Complete

The CYPSC model of inter-agency working focuses on the abilities of individual agencies represented on the committee, as well as the committee as a whole, as they contribute, perform and harness their efforts in a planned, coordinated and concerted response to the needs of children and young people at a local level. CYPSC ensure that national policy is implemented locally in their areas by planning and coordinating the provision of services for children and young people, informing the deployment of resources and taking into account needs identified both locally and at the national level.

CYPSC work is informed by the CYPSC Planning and Reporting Framework (2017). This framework serves as an overarching guide for all CYPSC stakeholders on the planning and reporting cycle supporting the CYPSC initiative in realising its core objectives and relevant government commitments. This sets out the parameters for planning and reporting, enabling CYPSC to report to Tusla and DCEDIY on progress made on implementation, best practice and translating national policy into a local context.

Each local committee develops and oversees the implementation of a strategic, evidence-informed, 3-year CYPP in line with the five national outcomes. The CYPSC National Coordinator reports local issues to the national level at the NIG, which sits every 6 weeks. DCEDIY representatives attend quarterly CYPSC Co-ordinators' National Network meetings to engage with coordinators on key issues. DCEDIY regularly communicates national policy and funding initiatives to CYPSC coordinators and the CYPSC wider membership.

The National Coordinator for CYPSC prepares an Annual National Progress Report that identifies the most prominent priority needs of children and young people as reported by local CYPSC. This report is then submitted to DCEDIY for consideration.

Other priority needs reported in the CYPSC Annual National Progress Report 2021 include disability services, education supports, domestic violence and supports to parents.

<p>2.9 Stronger linkages will be developed between CYPSC and the ETB by aligning mutual priorities informed by <i>BOBF</i>.</p>	<p>ETBs, CYPSC coordinators, CYPSC members</p>	<p>2022</p>	<p>In progress</p>
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There are currently 16 ETBs which operate community national schools, post-primary schools, further education colleges and a range of adult and further education centres delivering education and training programmes. ETBs are providing CYPSC with an ideal opportunity to deliver education and training in their communities by providing pathways for children and young people across all levels of education.

CYPSC engage with ETBs and partners in work under Outcome 2: 'Achieving full potential in all areas of learning and development', as set out in *BOBF*. 'Achieving full potential in all areas of learning and development'. At local level, CYPSC engage formally with local ETBs informed by their statutory functions in relation to youth work, as well as primary, post-primary and further

education and training (Education Act, 1998, Education and Training Boards Act 2013, Further Education and Training Act 2013).

One example is the Clare CYPSC, which coordinated the development of the Secondary School Avoidance Toolkit. The CYPSC was able to facilitate a resource that was designed for all services working in educational and community settings. The CYPSC provided a setting where organisations could learn from and work collaboratively to respond to the multi-layered and complex issue of school avoidance. There is now a coordinated inter-agency response to dealing with school-avoiding behaviour.

ETBs are represented on CYPSC committees. In 2021, 25 CYPSC committees had representatives from ETBs, and 27 CYPSC committees had representatives in 2019 and 2020.

### 3. Building capacity

#### 3.1

Capacity building support for CYPSC, including training and sharing of best practice, will be made available to local CYPSC chairpersons, vice-chairpersons, coordinators and committee members, subject to the identification of needs and the availability of resources.

National  
Coordinator for  
CYPSC, Tusla

2019–2024

Complete

Training for CYPSC coordinators is available via Tusla under the What Works initiative. Training provided via What Works has included the Executive Leadership Programme, quality implementation training, and the Festival of Learning.

The University of Limerick’s Executive Leadership Programme, which runs under the auspices of the What Works initiative, offered up to 25 places to professionals with the capacity to bring energy, leadership and influence to needed developments. While the organisation of the programme can vary depending on specific requirements, it is usually scheduled in three two-day blocks at the University of Limerick, or another suitable venue. The programme is aimed at enhancing the skills of local practitioners, providers and policy-makers working with children and young people at adopting evidence-informed prevention, early intervention and problem-solving approaches to their work.

The overarching aim of the Executive Leadership Programme is to enhance the capacity of professionals working in, managing, funding or supporting public purpose organisations, with the aim of addressing complex social problems in their area of work. Programme participants were a mix of frontline and management level, across the spectrum of statutory and voluntary agencies, from Limerick city and county. The programme involved a collaboration between the Research Evidence into Policy Programmes and Practice team based in the University of Limerick School of Law and the Limerick CYPSC. The programme ran until 2022.

Furthermore, some CYPSC successfully applied for funding under What Works through funding schemes such as the Learning Together Fund 2021 and the What Works Training Fund 2021. Both of these shared knowledge of evidence-informed practice among organisations and provided training and professional development for staff.

3.2

National CYPSC events, workshops and seminars will continue to provide an opportunity for knowledge exchange and networking, and to ensure that best practice models are identified and shared.

National Coordinator for CYPSC, DCEDIY, CYPSC coordinators

2019–2024

Complete

The national website for CYPSC ([www.cypsc.ie](http://www.cypsc.ie)) is a focal point for information on CYPSC and a gateway to information on individual county-level committees. It is managed by the National Coordinator for CYPSC in Tusla and has proved to be a valuable resource for CYPSC, organisations, Government Departments and agencies, and the public. The website promotes inter-agency working through CYPSC to a wide-ranging audience across sectors, professions and disciplines; provides current information to all levels of CYPSC infrastructure; facilitates information and best practice exchange between local CYPSC; and supports CYPSC in locating themselves in the larger community/national initiative.

At the launch of *Shared Vision, Next Steps* in 2019 held in Department of Children and Youth Affairs, CYPSC were given the opportunity to highlight their best practice in local areas. Minister Katherine Zappone met CYPSC coordinators individually to experience and discuss CYPSC work, best practice, achievements and the benefits realised for children and young people and their families in local communities.

Since the launch of *Shared Vision, Next Steps* in 2019, DCEDIY has sought to embed a culture of collaboration by establishing an infrastructure and fostering a culture to realise that collaboration and improve communications with CYPSC and its wider membership.

Between 2019 and 2020, information and updates from the national *BOBF* structures (such as the Children and Young People’s Policy Consortium and the National Advisory Council) were shared with CYPSC, with the initiative featuring in quarterly communications issued by DCEDIY (*BOBF* e-zine) and other communication channels such as the CYPSC (CYPSC e-zine).

The CYPSC Coordinators National Network continues to meet on a quarterly basis to share best practice models, and innovate and discuss resourcing, challenges and emerging needs in CYPSC areas, among other matters. DCEDIY attended these quarterly network meetings to listen to CYPSC concerns, discuss CYPSC work and achievements, and update CYPSC on national policy developments and funding initiatives.

DCEDIY continued to engage directly with Tusla and the CYPSC coordinators to ensure two-way knowledge exchange with the frontline. This engagement was strengthened over the period

<p>2019–2020, with DCEDIY hosting biennial CYPSC meetings with coordinators and Tusla area managers in the Department with the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs and Secretary General attending from time to time. These meetings were held to foster relationships, improve communications, acknowledge best practice and achievements, update CYPSC on DCEDIY work, discuss translation of national policy to local implementation and listen to CYPSC coordinators’ concerns. With the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, these meetings were suspended but resumed in 2023.</p>			
<p>3.3 The What Works initiative will enhance capacity, knowledge and quality in prevention and early intervention for children, young people and their families, with a focus on those at risk of poor outcomes.</p>	<p>DCEDIY</p>	<p>2022</p>	<p>Complete</p>
<p>The What Works initiative continues to enhance capacity, knowledge and quality in prevention and early intervention practices. Quality implementation training (funded via What Works) was delivered by the Centre for Effective Services to Tusla staff in selected Tusla service areas, and was open to CYPSC coordinators. The aim of this training is to progress a consistent national approach in the prevention and early intervention work of Tusla services and partner agencies, in order to provide for the effective implementation of evidence-informed practice. Quality implementation training aims to develop a shared interdisciplinary and inter-agency understanding of evidence-informed implementation by providing support of identified quality implementation champions in these services, focusing on the importance of outcomes and incorporating an outcomes-based approach.</p> <p>Further details on CYPSC engagement with What Works is available under Actions 1.2, 3.1, 6.2 and 6.4.</p>			
<p>4. Resourcing</p>			
<p>4.1 DCEDIY will aim to maximise the resourcing of CYPSC by encouraging related sectors (such as local government, health authorities and education sector stakeholders) to provide resources in support of shared objectives identified through the CYPSC structures.</p>	<p>DCEDIY</p>	<p>2021</p>	<p>In progress</p>
<p>Total CYPSC funding (pay and non-pay) allocated by DCEDIY, Tusla and partners has increased fivefold since 2016 to €4.9 million in 2021. Funding between 2019 and 2021 remained stable. The non-pay element includes funding from Government Departments and agencies as well as funding leveraged from other local organisations and funding streams.</p>			

The four most prominent funds received by CYPSC from 2019 to 2021 were from:

1. Healthy Ireland (DCEDIY/DOH)
2. BOBF–CYPSC Programme Fund 2021 (DCEDIY)
3. Community Mental Health Fund (DOH), and
4. Community Resilience Fund (DOH).

DCEDIY continues to resource CYPSC subgroups through continued programme funding under the five national outcomes set out in *BOBF*. Since the *Blueprint for the Development of CYPSC 2015–2017* was launched in 2015, CYPSC funding from DCEDIY for actions in the CYPP under the five national outcomes has increased nearly six fold, from €126,000 in 2015 to €756,000 in 2019, 2020 and 2021, with each CYPSC receiving €28,000 per annum. CYPSC receive State funding and also may leverage funding from other partners locally. This funding gives CYPSC the ability to partner with other local organisations and pool resources, both human and financial, in the coordination of supports and services for children and young people.

Since 2017, DCEDIY has worked collaboratively with the DOH in co-funding the Healthy Ireland initiative via all CYPSC nationwide, with an annual allocation of €1.3 million for 2019, 2020 and 2021. CYPSC are key partners in the implementation of this initiative. This funding is instrumental in helping CYPSC to advance their work in ‘Outcome 1 – Active and healthy, physical and mental wellbeing’ as set out in *BOBF*. Over the period 2019–2021, some CYPSC pooled their financial resources with their LCDC, which further strengthened local approaches to working under the initiative.

Other funding leveraged for CYPSC includes the Community Mental Health Fund and the Community Resilience Fund.

DCEDIY disseminates information about other potential funding streams to CYPSC via the National Coordinator. DCEDIY and Tusla continue to maximise resourcing both human and financial for CYPSC.

<p>4.2 Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) between DCEDIY and key agencies (the Local Government Management Agency, the HSE and education sector stakeholders) will be pursued to further support CYPSC and give full effect to inter-agency cooperation.</p>	<p>DCEDIY, other Government Departments , and agencies</p>	<p>2022</p>	<p>In progress</p>
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In 2017, an MoU between the DCYA and Tusla regarding CYPSC was signed. The purpose of this MoU was to ensure that a mechanism be put in place to support the clear strategic management, coordination and operation of CYPSC between the DCYA and Tusla. This MoU is further informed by the Communications, Collaboration and Accountability Protocol agreed by DCYA and Tusla in

2015 and does, where appropriate, utilise the processes outlined in this protocol. This MoU remains in place today and contains two specific actions relevant to the possibility of MoUs between DCEDIY and key agencies:

- Explore the development of MoUs between CYPSC and relevant agencies.
- Develop guidance on the relationship between CYPSC and other agencies.

Work to develop MoUs between DCEDIY and other key agencies was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The forthcoming amendments to the Child Care Act, 1991 will include a duty for many Government Departments and State agencies to cooperate with CYPSC, will strengthen this engagement and provide a platform for further collaboration between Government Departments and State Agencies.

4.3

DCEDIY and Tusla will consider financial, administrative or professional supports that will enhance the ability of CYPSC to support key priorities and objectives and will encourage CYPSC to leverage local funding.

DCEDIY, Tusla

2020

In progress

The financial, administrative and professional supports available to CYPSC are continuously reviewed in Tusla and in collaboration with DCEDIY.

DCEDIY continues to maximise the resources available for CYPSC by encouraging related sectors to provide resources in support of objectives they share with CYPSC. These may include financial, administrative or professional supports that will enhance the ability of CYPSC to achieve their key priorities and objectives. The intention is that providing such resources acts as direct recognition of the effectiveness of the CYPSC, demonstrating to local stakeholders each member agency's commitment to improving outcomes for children and young people through inter-agency collaboration.

Over the period 2019–2021, some CYPSC availed of various DCEDIY funding streams under the What Works Training Fund and Learning Together Fund. Similarly, quality implementation training funded by What Works was available to some CYPSC coordinators. The Executive Leadership Programme was also a valuable professional development tool for some CYPSC, funded under DCEDIY's *What Works*.

Details of the financial investment in CYPSC from 2019 to 2021 are outlined in Section 4.

No progress was made from 2019 to 2021 in securing additional administrative support for CYPSC, despite Tusla submitting a business case for increased resources during this period. Both DCEDIY

and Tusla are continuously working to secure additional investment as part of the annual Estimates process.

In 2022, DCEDIY secured an additional €79,000 for CYPSC as part of the overall Tusla funding provided by DCEDIY for 2023. This funding provides for the hiring of an additional coordinator, who will take responsibility for a CYPSC previously coordinated by a coordinator with responsibility for two CYPSC.

CYPSC continue to leverage locally available funds, as well as funding from other Government Departments and State agencies. More detail on this is available in Chapter 4 – Finance.

4.4

DCEDIY will continue to resource CYPSC Subgroups through continued *BOBF* programme funding under the five national outcomes.

DCEDIY

2019–2024

Complete

Each local CYPSC operates one main inter-agency CYPSC committee and a number of inter-agency subgroups. Each subgroup is aligned to one of the five national outcomes for children and young people as outlined in *BOBF*.

All subgroups are responsive to local needs and trends, and their work reflects both national and local priorities. The subgroups take into consideration the views of children and young people, including seldom-heard children and young people, and children and young people in some cases are invited to attend these subgroups.

DCEDIY continues to resource CYPSC subgroups by providing *BOBF* programme funding under the five national outcomes. Since *Blueprint for the Development of CYPSC 2015–2017* was launched in 2015, CYPSC funding from DCEDIY for actions in the CYPSC 3-year CYPPs under the five national outcomes has increased fivefold, from €126,000 in 2015 to €756,000 annually in 2019, 2020 and 2021, with each CYPSC receiving €28,000 per annum.

In 2021, 27 CYPSC reported the operation of 207 CYPSC subgroups, with an average of 7 subgroups per CYPSC. In total, there were 793 organisations participating in CYPSC subgroups, of which 522 were C&V sector organisations and 253 were statutory organisations. The C&V sector is better represented on the CYPSC subgroups than statutory organisations, while the statutory organisations are better represented on the Main Committee.

While *BOBF* concluded at the end of 2020, DCEDIY has continued to provide CYPSC with programme funding each year. CYPSC will continue to work with their subgroups towards the achievement of the five national outcomes set out in *BOBF*. These outcomes will be retained as part of the successor framework, currently under development.

In 2021:

- Twenty-five of 27 CYPSC had a subgroup for Outcome 1 – Active and Healthy, Physical and Mental Wellbeing
- Twenty-five of 27 CYPSC had a subgroup for Outcome 2 – Achieving full potential in all areas of learning and development
- Twenty-six of 27 CYPSC had a subgroup for Outcome 3 – Safe and protected from harm
- Eighteen of 27 CYPSC had a subgroup for Outcome 4 – Economic security and opportunity
- Twenty-two of 27 CYPSC had a subgroup for Outcome 5 – Connected, respected and contributing to their world

## 5. Planning and resourcing

<p>5.1 Through the CYPSC Planning and Reporting Framework, each CYPSC will produce an Annual Programme of Work.</p>	<p>CYPSC coordinators, National Coordinator for CYPSC</p>	<p>2019–2024</p>	<p>Complete</p>
<p>CYPSC work is informed by the CYPSC Planning and Reporting Framework (2017). This sets out the parameters for planning and reporting.</p> <p>Over the period 2019–2021, each local committee developed and/or implemented a strategic, evidence-informed, 3-year Children and Young Person’s Plan (CYPP), designed to improve outcomes for children and young people in the area.</p> <p>Each CYPSC produces an Annual Programme of Work, outlining the committee’s objectives for the year. It is informed by local priorities as expressed in the CYPP and the priorities previously set out by the NSG and the Children and Young People’s Policy Consortium. The plan should also refer to national policies and strategies affecting children and young people. It addresses processes to support local implementation of national policies and strategies that may be directed from time to time by DCEDIY.</p> <p>Each CYPSC produced an Annual Progress Report for Tusla, and these were collated for submission to DCEDIY and the NSG (up until 2020). The National Coordinator for CYPSC monitored progress in relation to the implementation of CYPPs. All CYPPs are posted on the national CYPSC website (<a href="http://www.cypsc.ie">www.cypsc.ie</a>). Local committees and their member agencies were encouraged to include these plans on their own respective websites.</p> <p>A CYPSC Annual National Progress Report was submitted to DCEDIY by the National Coordinator for CYPSC for each of the years 2019, 2020 and 2021.</p>			
<p>5.2 The National Coordinator for CYPSC and Tusla will build and implement an online report function for CYPSC to use for submission of</p>	<p>National Coordinator for CYPSC, Tusla, CYPSC coordinators</p>	<p>2020</p>	<p>In progress</p>

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<p>their Annual Progress Reports. This will assist knowledge exchange and good practice between stakeholders.</p>			
<p>The CYPSC Annual National Progress Report presents a national high-level overview of CYPSC implementation across 27 local CYPSC, including quantitative and qualitative analysis of CYPSC activity.</p> <p>The analysis is organised under six themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finance</li> <li>• Inter-agency measures</li> <li>• Policy implementation by CYPSC</li> <li>• Strengths and challenges in CYPSC implementation</li> <li>• Priority needs of children and young people identified by CYPSC, and</li> <li>• Examples of local CYPSC achievements.</li> </ul> <p>Currently, the Tusla Survey System is utilised to streamline data collection. An investment in CYPSC reporting will be required in order to enhance coordinators' capacity to submit reports in a timely manner.</p>			
<p>5.3 The National Coordinator for CYPSC will monitor progress in relation to the implementation of CYPPs, and all CYPPs will continue to be posted on the national CYPSC website.</p>	<p>National Coordinator for CYPSC</p>	<p>2019–2024</p>	<p>Complete</p>
<p>The content, scale and frequency of CYPPs are considered in order to ensure that they are contemporary, relevant and timely, and can accommodate and anticipate themes and trends affecting the child and youth population in each local area. Plans will take into account the requirements of LECs to ensure that these plans and the local CYPSC plans complement each other.</p> <p>A standardised approach to the development and quality assurance of plans and their implementation will be developed as part of the wider reporting framework for CYPSC, in order to ensure enhanced accountability and quality assurance. The National Coordinator for CYPSC will monitor progress in relation to the implementation of CYPPs and produce a report to DCEDIY and CYPSC NSG.</p> <p>CYPPs are reviewed by a group comprised of the CYPSC National Coordinator, other CYPSC coordinators, Tusla staff and DCEDIY officials before final sign-off. The National Coordinator chairs this meeting and provides feedback to the presenting CYPSC for consideration.</p>			

All CYPPs are posted on the national CYPSC website ([www.cypsc.ie](http://www.cypsc.ie)). Local committees and their member agencies are encouraged to include relevant CYPPs on their own respective websites. To embed the work of the local committees, and to ensure that relevant input is acknowledged, all member agencies are requested to include reference to their work in CYPSC in their annual reports.

Monitoring of progress is ongoing, although there have been some delays to publication of CYPPs online due to human resource constraints in Tusla.

Between 2019 and 2021, approximately 20 CYPPs were reviewed and approved for publication and implementation.

## 6. Data and evidence

### 6.1

The *BOBF* Indicator Set will help CYPSC plan and coordinate services for children and young people through an evidence-informed approach. The Indicator Set will be utilised in Tusla’s Outcomes for Children National Data & Information Hub. CYPSC will use the indicator set to track progress against the five national outcomes.

DCEDIY

2023

Complete

The purpose of the *BOBF* Indicator Set is to track progress for children and young people aged 0–24 years across the five national outcomes set out in *BOBF*. The indicators included in the *BOBF* indicator set are aligned with the five national outcomes for children and young people (which CYPSC work to), and they help to provide milestones for tracking progress made towards achieving these outcomes. While these indicators do not explain how or whether a particular action or commitment on the policy framework has given rise to, or caused, a particular outcome, they are important because they:

- Help track progress towards improving outcomes for children
- Assist in identifying changes and/or trends
- Contribute to priority setting or resetting
- Inform policy formulation and service provision, and
- Provide for international comparisons, where possible.

The Indicator Set represents a significant resource to support the policy framework and the work of Government Departments and others involved in the implementation of *BOBF*.

In 2022, DCEDIY released an update to the *BOBF* Indicator Set. The Indicator Set tracks progress for children and young people aged 0–24 years across the five national outcomes set out in *BOBF*. The *Better Outcomes Brighter Future Indicator Set Report 2022* updates the indicators for children and young people that are aligned with these five national outcomes. It identifies and combines

data from a range of sources, including administrative, survey and Census data, revealing the wealth of statistical information available on children and young people, while simultaneously highlighting areas that require further data collection, such as child poverty. The report tracks progress across *BOBF* outcomes and informs the prioritisation of policy objectives. In this way, the indicators measure progress that has been made towards realising the objectives of *BOBF*, and identify the challenges which will be addressed under the forthcoming national policy framework for children and young people.

CYPSC have utilised data from the *BOBF* Indicator Set, Tusla’s Outcomes for Children National Data & Information Hub, the Census (2022 and other years), Planet Youth and other sources to plan their CYPs.

Further information about the Outcomes for Children National Data & Information Hub is available under Action 6.4.

<p>6.2 The What Works website will act as a knowledge exchange platform providing a detailed overview of learning to date on innovations in prevention and early intervention practices.</p>	<p>DCEDIY</p>	<p>2019</p>	<p>Complete</p>
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What Works is funded under the Dormant Accounts Fund, which aims to take a coordinated approach to enhance capacity, knowledge and quality in prevention and early intervention services, with a focus on those at risk of poor outcomes. What Works aims to support key groups working with children, young people and families to know what works and how it works, and to provide an evidence-based approach to the application of this work. Previous What Works funding has supported information sharing, training and development, and best practice.

Local CYPSC projects were supported under the Social Innovation Fund 2018, the Network Support Fund 2019, the Learning Together Fund 2021 and the Training Fund 2021.

The What Works website was launched in June 2019 and continues to be maintained and updated as a knowledge exchange platform. Reports on projects funded by What Works are featured on the webpage, as well as links to useful resources for service providers. Videos from the Festival of Learning events that took place each year up to 2022 are available on the What Works website and include key learnings from national and international speakers.

A forthcoming project, the What Works Ireland Evidence Hub, will feature reviews of evidence around prevention and early intervention programmes. The Hub will support providers and commissioners in implementing evidence-based programmes.

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<p>6.3 CYPSC will be encouraged by both DCEDIY and the National Coordinator for CYPSC to highlight excellent local initiatives and innovations, and to work with the national structures to disseminate these across CYPSC.</p>	<p>National Coordinator for CYPSC, CYPSC coordinators, DCEDIY</p>	<p>2019–2024</p>	<p>Complete</p>
<p>CYPSC highlight local initiatives and innovations at the CYPSC Coordinators’ National Network. The Network is a forum for local CYPSC coordinators that meets four times a year and is facilitated by the National Coordinator. Its main role is to support the strategic and operational development of CYPSC by bringing CYPSC coordinators together to share information on practice, learning, and national and local developments. The CYPSC Coordinators’ National Network has enabled CYPSC staff to connect with each other and with DCEDIY officials. An online knowledge hub supports the Network, where CYPSC practice and implementation tools can be accessed by all coordinators.</p> <p>CYPSC best practice is highlighted on <a href="http://www.cypsc.ie">www.cypsc.ie</a> and is disseminated in DCEDIY and to other Government Departments where appropriate.</p> <p>In 2019 and 2020, DCEDIY hosted regular biennial meetings with CYPSC to discuss all pertinent matters, including the sharing of best practice. This gave DCEDIY, including the Minister and the Secretary General, the opportunity to see first-hand how effective CYPSC are in their local communities. These meetings also provided an insight into the level of work carried out by CYPSC through collaboration with local partners. These meetings were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but will resume in 2023.</p> <p>At the launch of <i>Shared Vision, Next Steps</i> held in DCEDIY in 2019, Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Katherine Zappone, met with coordinators to see and discuss CYPSC projects and initiatives, and to see how best practice is disseminated across CYPSC.</p> <p>Some examples of CYPSC sharing good practice include the launch of local DSGBV guides for practitioners, the roll-out of the My Place to Play initiative, mobile playgrounds and homelessness supports.</p>			
<p>6.4 The Outcomes for Children National Data &amp; Information Hub will be rolled out nationally, which will assist CYPSC in supporting inter-agency work, collective action planning and to deliver improved outcomes for children and young people.</p>	<p>Tusla, DCEDIY</p>	<p>2019</p>	<p>Complete</p>
<p>DCEDIY worked with Tusla to develop the Outcomes for Children National Data &amp; Information Hub. This data hub is an online interactive area-based geo mapping system which uses available</p>			

administrative data. The development of the Hub was funded by DCEDIY through What Works. It was launched in June 2019 and is hosted on the What Works website ([www.whatworks.gov.ie](http://www.whatworks.gov.ie)).

Developed in conjunction with Tusla, the Hub ensures that those working with children and young people are supported in accessing and using published data sets to inform their work, so as to secure the best possible outcomes for children and young people.

In 2021, the Outcomes for Children National Data & Information Hub transitioned to Tusla’s IT management and will continue to develop as an intuitive web platform that provides visualisations of published datasets as they relate to children and young people. It is anticipated that this website will continue to be updated with newly published datasets in the future.

In 2022, €139,803 was allocated to this project by DCEDIY to further maintain and develop the Hub.

## 7. Communications

<p>7.1 Communications between CYPSC and the local and national infrastructure will be improved. This will ensure that good practices are identified, shared and standardised across the country and that emerging issues are brought to national level.</p>	<p>CYPSC coordinators, DCEDIY, National Coordinator for CYPSC</p>	<p>2020</p>	<p>Complete</p>
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The CYPSC model of inter-agency working is an enabler for whole-of-government approaches. The need for Government to integrate policy development with policy implementation can be supported by CYPSC at national and local level, and therefore it is vital to enable communications between the local and national levels in order to facilitate working across agencies and sectors.

To this end, during the period 2019–2021, DCEDIY has been keen to strengthen communication channels between DCEDIY Tusla and CYPSC.

DCEDIY officials attend quarterly meetings of the CYPSC Coordinators’ National Network to update CYPSC coordinators on key issues, and to receive input from regarding local issues that require national attention.

Prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and related social restrictions, the CYPSC coordinators visited DCEDIY on a regular basis (at least once a year) to meet with the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs/ Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth and the Secretary General. Tusla area managers also attended these meetings. These meetings resumed in 2023.

DCEDIY keeps CYPSC coordinators and members abreast of important policy developments and initiatives by circulating press releases and information on grant schemes and other funding

opportunities. DCEDIY also distributed the *BOBF* implementation e-zine to CYPSC and its membership.

Over the lifespan of *Shared Vision, Next Steps*, CYPSC have improved the process of submitting reports to DCEDIY. Improvements include better use of data, standardised Annual Progress Reports and comprehensive updates at the NIG.

7.2

Communications to CYPSC from DCEDIY, Tusla, NIG and the NSG will be improved and strengthened. This will disseminate the CYPSC message in a more coherent manner.

DCEDIY, NSG,  
NIG, Tusla

2019

Complete

DCEDIY and Tusla are committed to ensuring that there are clear lines of communication between the national and the local CYPSC. DCEDIY continues to engage directly with Tusla and the CYPSC coordinators to ensure two-way knowledge exchange with the frontline.

Over the course of 2019 and 2020, information from the national *BOBF* structures was shared with CYPSC. Communications were shared in quarterly communications issued by the DCYA and other communication channels.

Communications to CYPSC from DCEDIY and the NIG were issued via the National Coordinator. CYPSC is now embedded in Tusla, and Tusla can provide communications directly.

The National Steering Group (NSG) Chairperson attended the Children and Young People’s Policy Consortium hosted by the Department of the Taoiseach three times a year, and brought matters of importance regarding CYPSC, communicated by the local CYPSC, to the attention of Government Departments and agencies as well as representatives from the C&V sector.

Officials from DCEDIY attend quarterly meetings of the CYPSC Coordinators’ National Network to update CYPSC coordinators on key issues, and to receive input from coordinators regarding local issues requiring national attention.

Over the course of 2019 and 2020, DCEDIY organised biennial meetings in DCEDIY with CYPSC coordinators and Tusla area managers, with the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs and Secretary General in attendance from time to time. These meetings were put on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic but resumed in 2023.

## 8. Participation of children and young people

8.1

CYPSC will increase the involvement of children and young people, including seldom-heard children and young people, children and young

CYPSC  
coordinators,  
National  
Coordinator for  
CYPSC, CYPSC

2019–2024

Complete

<p>people with disabilities, and children and young people from LGBTI+ and diverse backgrounds, with their local CYPSC. This will ensure that the voice of children and young people is embedded into the planning and delivery of local services.</p>	<p>members, DCEDIY</p>		
<p>The participation of children and young people in decision-making is a key objective of CYPSC under <i>BOBF's</i> Outcome 5 – ‘Connected, respected and contributing to their world’.</p> <p>CYPSC is supported by DCEDIY through its <i>Guidance for Children and Young People’s Services Committees (CYPSC) on participation by children and young people in decision-making (2018)</i>, and is strengthening the involvement of children and young people, including seldom-heard children and young people, with both national and local CYPSC structures<sup>1</sup>.</p> <p>Tusla implements its child and youth participation strategy using the Lundy model of child participation as a guide for staff (including CYPSC coordinators) and service providers as to what constitutes true participation.</p> <p>CYPSC have increased the involvement of children and young people with their local CYPSC, including seldom-heard children and young people, children and young people with disabilities, and children and young people from LGBTI+ and diverse backgrounds. This ensures that the voice of children and young people is embedded into the planning and delivery of local services.</p> <p>A couple of examples of this participative work include Louth CYPSC’s supporting early childhood educators in developing, improving and enhancing their practice around recognising, listening to and responding to children, and Donegal CYPSC’s facilitation of ongoing dialogue between CYPSC partner agencies and children/young people, and the development of a mechanism designed by young people to support this process, promote participation and inform the work of the CYPSC.</p> <p>In 2019 and 2020, a young person was invited to join the NSG to act as a voice for children and young people, and to advise policy-makers and implementers on issues and challenges affecting the everyday lives of children, young people and their families in CYPSC local areas across Ireland.</p> <p>Comhairle na nÓg also gives children and young people a voice in decision-making with regard to the development of local services and policies. Participation of Comhairle na nÓg youth members in CYPSC (main committee and subgroups) increased during the period 2019–2021. In 2021 thirteen CYPSC had young people on their main committee.</p> <p>The engagement of children and young people in CYPSC work is ongoing. In 2021, 22 out of 27 CYPSC reported operating an Outcome 5 – ‘Connected, respected and contributing to their world’</p>			

<sup>1</sup> Available here: <https://www.cypsc.ie/fileupload/Documents/Resources/Resources%20Page/Final-Guidance%20for%20CYPSC%20on%20Participation-Feb-2018.pdf>

subgroup. The number of youth members engaged on main committees and subgroups has grown between 2019 and 2021, with 48 in 2019, 54 in 2020 and 161 in 2021.

**9. Joint commissioning**

9.1

The work of CYPSC will evolve and include joint commissioning, where service responses to locally identified needs are designed and commissioned by two or more CYPSC members. This will draw on the CYPSC evidence-informed planning process and encompass service innovation as well as a focus on the reorientation of existing resources where relevant and appropriate.

Tusla, National Coordinator for CYPSC, CYPSC coordinators, CYPSC members

2021

Not progressed

Joint commissioning is a strategic planning process that links resource allocation with assessed current and future needs, in order to achieve best outcomes for citizens and service users in line with policy objectives.

It is envisaged that the work of CYPSC will evolve to include joint commissioning whereby service responses to locally identified needs are designed and commissioned by two or more CYPSC members. This joint commissioning approach will draw on the CYPSC evidence-informed planning process and encompass service innovation as well as a focus on the reorientation of existing resources where relevant and appropriate. The joint commissioning project has been delayed.

9.2

The joint commissioning model will be developed under the auspices of the CYPSC NSG, and this will be critical in linking resource allocation with assessed current and future needs.

Tusla, NSG

2020

Not progressed

The development of joint commissioning is delayed.

9.3

Joint commissioning requires the input of other stakeholders and agencies, and these entities will be required to provide the necessary investment to help address gaps in service provision locally.

Tusla, National Coordinator for CYPSC, CYPSC coordinators, CYPSC members, other local stakeholders

2021

Not progressed

The development of joint commissioning is delayed.

**10. Evaluation**

10.1

An evaluation of the extent of the value of inter-agency working across CYPSC and how CYPSC are embedding this in their work will be considered by DCEDIY and Tusla.

Tusla, DCEDIY,  
National  
Coordinator for  
CYPSC

2023

In progress

DCEDIY and Tusla are working in collaboration to commence the review of CYPSC by year end 2023. The purpose of the review is primarily to establish an understanding of the current CYPSC landscape; secondly, to identify opportunities for strengthening and enhancing CYPSC; and, finally, to make recommendations for building on existing strengths and supporting the future development of CYPSC. The overall objective of the review is to inform the ongoing development and strengthening of the structures, particularly with reference to the proposed amendments to the Child Care Act, 1991, with regard to putting CYPSC on a statutory footing – this may include proposals for capacity building.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is currently considering CYPSC as part of a wider project with DCEDIY, using funding from the European Union’s Technical Support Instrument. The OECD submitted a diagnostic report to DCEDIY in June 2023.

This review is included in the Tusla Business Plan for 2023. The review will consider aspects of the initiative not covered by the OECD diagnostic report and will be published in 2024.

## 4. CYPSC finance

As noted under Action 4.3, the financial, administrative and professional supports available to CYPSC are under continued review.

This section will outline some of the financial supports made available to CYPSC by DCEDIY, previously DCYA, and Tusla during the period 2019–2021, as well as funding leveraged via other sources. Figures listed are approximate.

### 2019

In 2019, CYPSC funding from DCYA totalled €2,405,000:

- €756,000 was provided as *BOBF* programme funding (€28,000 per CYPSC).
- €130,000 was provided for National Coordinator office and programme costs.
- €650,000 was provided towards Healthy Ireland funding.
- €800,000 was provided towards CYPSC coordinators' salaries.

Tusla provided a further €800,000 towards CYPSC coordinators' salaries. The Department of Health provided co funding of €650,000 towards the Healthy Ireland Initiative. €536,783 was provided to CYPSC from a Community Mental Health Fund.

### 2020

In 2020, CYPSC funding from DCYA totalled €2,405,000:

- €756,000 was provided as *BOBF* programme funding (€28,000 per CYPSC).
- €130,000 was provided for National Coordinator office and programme costs.
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### 2021

In 2021, CYPSC funding from DCEDIY totalled €2,405,000:

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Tusla provided a further €800,000 towards CYPSC coordinators' salaries. The Department of Health provided co funding of €650,000 towards the Healthy Ireland Initiative

## 5. Best practice – case studies

CYPSC work to achieve the five national outcomes for children and young people as set out in *BOBF*. These outcomes are interconnected and mutually reinforcing, and capture current and new government commitments to improving policy and services.

The national outcomes are that children and young people will:

1. Be active and healthy, with physical and mental well-being
2. Achieve full potential in all areas of learning and development
3. Be safe and protected from harm
4. Have security and opportunity, and
5. Be connected, respected and contributing to their world.

Although *BOBF* is now concluded, CYPSC planning and reporting continues, viewing these five national outcomes as goals. The use of the five national outcomes is viewed as a coherent policy architecture, which has helped to identify, plan and coordinate services for children and young people. The outcomes will be retained in the new DCEDIY policy framework for children and young people, which will be published in 2023.

This section will highlight some of the self-reported best practice case studies provided by CYPSC over the period 2019 – 2021. The case studies are grouped under one of each of the five targeted national outcomes.



### **Outcome 1: Active and healthy, with physical and mental wellbeing**

**2019**

#### Dublin City North: My Place to Play – a resource for babies living in emergency accommodation

Dublin City North CYPSC raised concerns that babies living in emergency accommodation had limited space for their social, play and physical development needs due to confined spaces in emergency accommodation, such as hotel rooms. As a result, parents living in such accommodation found it difficult to find adequate space to interact with their babies in a suitable play environment or to provide opportunities for important developmental activities such as tummy time.

With Healthy Ireland funding, Dublin City North CYPSC, aligned with its Health and Wellbeing Action Plan, coordinated and funded an interagency response to this need in partnership with local ABC Programmes\* , Dublin Region Homeless Executive, and Focus Ireland. My Place to Play has subsequently been rolled out IPAS accommodation settings around the country.

Dún Laoghaire Rathdown: *Creating inter-agency structures and initiatives to improve infant, child and youth mental health*

Evidence-informed programmes to promote positive well-being were provided through multi-agency intervention. These programmes ensured that children who were unable to attend school because of their mental health were empowered to identify solutions. Learnings included an understanding that it is important to invest in evidence-informed programmes, as well as facilitate services and encourage young people to work together. Funding evaluation was important, in the absence of an evidence base. This work created an interlocking sustainable stakeholder structure, which drives inter-agency collaboration to improve child and young adult mental health.

Kerry: *South Kerry Community Drugs & Alcohol Pilot Project*

South Kerry's community-based substance misuse service achieved its aims and benefitted from links with other established services. The CYPSC identified a need for the project. A pilot project supported learning, and additional funding was secured. CYPSC provided funding as well as a governance structure to oversee the project.

Roscommon: *County Roscommon Early Years Health and Wellbeing Plan (2018-2020)*

The implementation of an early years well-being plan saw an increase in supports, knowledge and play activities for young children. By working with Family Resource Centres, the programme was able to access families and venues. The programme identified the importance of consultation with children. Low attendance by minority groups influenced further plans to increase access for minority groups.

**2020**

Clare: *Cooking at Home initiative*

The Cooking at Home initiative aimed to support vulnerable families in preparing healthy, nutritious meals during the COVID-19 pandemic. The initiative increased parents' confidence with meal preparation, enabling them to act as positive role models for children who learned from seeing their parents prepare meals in the home. CYPSC offered a coordinated structure to ensure the successful delivery of the project.

The project costs totalled €33,500.

Donegal: *Provision of Sensory Support Gift Packs for children and young people with additional needs*

Sensory Support Gift Packs for children with additional needs were developed to alleviate heightened levels of stress and anxiety experienced by children and young people during the COVID-19 pandemic. This led to a reduction in negative behaviours in children and young people and improved family dynamics in the home. CYPSC engaged multiple agencies to support the project.

The project costs totalled €5,000.

Kilkenny: Provision of Sensory Gift Packs for Children and Young People with Special Needs

Drawing on work by Donegal CYPSC, Kilkenny CYPSC provided Sensory Support Gift Packs for children and young people with additional needs who had no access to their normal supports during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The project costs totalled €2,500.

Limerick: Limerick Food Partnership

The Limerick Food Partnership mapped, funded and coordinated food supports. Food-related skills were enhanced for individuals and the community.

The project costs totalled €50,967.

Louth: Counselling

A strategic inter-agency approach to increasing counselling hours for children and young people provided additional supports to children and young people and enabled them to learn more coping strategies.

The project costs totalled €20,796.

Sligo Leitrim: Brief Intervention Therapy Project

The Brief Intervention Therapy Project provides interventions for children and young people across Sligo and Leitrim who are experiencing mild difficulties in their mental health and well-being. Family Resource Centres were engaged as suitable venues, and therapy supports were embedded in local communities.

The project costs totalled €32,050.



**Achieving**

**Outcome 2: Achieving full potential in all areas of learning and development**

**2019**

Laois Offaly: LGBTI+ supports and safe places

The CYPSC provided a dedicated space for LGBTI+ young people, as well as access to trained staff members. New relationships between services permitted sharing of knowledge and information.

Meath: Access to Education

Meath CYPSC coordinated a transport initiative targeted at disadvantaged young people, which improved post-primary school punctuality and attendance rates. The transport service has now been mainstreamed.

Wicklow: Wicklow School Refusal Pack

The Wicklow School Refusal Pack provides practical early interventions and guidance from teachers and parents regarding school refusals. The Pack provided children and young people with a clear pathway and better understanding of why it is in their best interests to attend school.



**Outcome 3: Safe and protected from harm**

**2019**

Carlow: Domestic Abuse Action Network

Carlow CYPSC provided training to frontline workers on domestic violence and improved services' response to children who have been impacted by domestic violence. Families were provided with a greater understanding of available supports.

Dublin City South: Dublin CYPSC Directory

The five Dublin CYPSC developed an online directory for families to access up-to-date information on services. Over 5,000 services for children, young people and their families have been listed on the directory to date.

Kildare: Online Safety Campaign for Parents

CYPSC funded the project to educate parents about online safety, enabling them to take appropriate actions and promote positive experiences to their children. CYBERSAFE provided additional input.

South Dublin: Launch of Many Hearts, No Homes

Multiple agencies gave those experiencing homelessness the opportunity to voice their experiences, and provided input on how to best support them. There was an increase in awareness and understanding of those experiencing homelessness, and a need was identified for agencies to continue to plan collaboratively.

Wexford: Wexford Parents Hub

The Wexford Parents Hub is a dedicated source of information that parents can access, where they can work with a dedicated mentor to ensure that they receive access to programmes and supports designed around their needs.

2020

Longford Westmeath: Domestic violence multilingual leaflets

The provision of multilingual leaflets aimed to support and strengthen the work of DSGBV services for victims who do not speak English, and support the implementation of the Domestic Violence Act 2018.

The project costs totalled €2,340.

Mayo: Safeguarding Children and Young People in Mayo Initiative

The Safeguarding Children and Young People in Mayo Initiative is a programme that informs organisations about their responsibilities and roles in child protection. To accomplish this, the Initiative published leaflets and posters, and a series of online workshops were developed.

The project costs totalled €1,088.

Tipperary: Barnardos Clonmel Family Support Project

This project responded to COVID-19-related family needs by assisting with the purchase of food and other necessities in the household.

The project costs totalled €12,000.



**Outcome 4: Economic security and opportunity**

2019

Monaghan: Dedicated post-Leaving Certificate access worker

A dedicated post-Leaving Certificate access worker assisted students by providing them with additional supports and guidance to support them in their transition from post-primary school to post-Leaving Certificate.

2021

Donegal: Food and fuel poverty response

DCEDIY provided Donegal CYPSC with €10,000 additional funding to meet identified need and to support families facing increased costs of food, energy, electricity, gas, solid fuel and home heating oil. The initiative supported the most vulnerable children and families struggling with poverty because of the loss of regular employment due to COVID-19 and related restrictions. Local CYPSC partners distributed vouchers to families identified as being most in need. The initiative helped to alleviate extreme cases of hardship experienced by vulnerable families in Donegal.



**Outcome 5: Connected, respected and contributing to their world**

2019

Fingal: Youth Participation and Engagement Wheel

The establishment of the Youth Participation and Engagement Wheel for Fingal gave young people an opportunity to have their voices heard. It improved their skills and knowledge and provided an opportunity to bring about change in their community. This included a youth participation structure to allow for more engagement with seldom-heard children and young people.

Waterford: Rural support

A needs analysis, including a consultation and demographic profile, provided evidence of the needs of children and young people living in west Waterford, as well as how to support and prioritise them.

2020

Cavan: Planet Youth

Planet Youth is an evidence-based prevention model that gathers data from young people in County Cavan in order to inform the development of suitable interventions across the community, and address identified priority needs. Planet Youth has provided an effective example of collaborative partnership work, demonstrating that partners are clearly encouraged to work across projects when they can achieve shared outcomes.

The project costs totalled €56,000.

Cork: *Anti-racism work*

Cork CYPSC worked to develop and implement anti-racist policy and practice within services and institutions in Cork. An anti-racist subgroup then created a safe space for young people's concerns to be heard.

The project costs totalled €10,000.

## 6. Conclusion

This mid-term report for *Shared Vision, Next Steps* provides an update on the work achieved in the development of the CYPSC at a national level, and by individual CYPSC across Ireland over the period 2019–2021.

The report provides information regarding the funding of CYPSC from 2019 to 2021 and highlights CYPSC best practice under the five national outcomes for children and young people during this time.

Good progress has been made with 22 (60%) of the 37 *Shared Vision, Next Steps* actions completed. Most of the outstanding actions are currently in progress. Some actions have not progressed such as joint commissioning, but DCEDIY and Tusla will continue to work on delayed actions in order to progress these.

With CYPSC now seen as a key infrastructure, greater connections between the national and local levels have been forged. Two-way communications between the national and local levels has assisted in addressing policy implementation deficits, while ensuring that national structures and initiatives are directly informed by local needs and emerging trends.

Since the launch of *Shared Vision, Next Steps* in 2019, the CYPSC initiative has gone from strength to strength. This has been achieved through effective planning, coordination and oversight of policy implementation and service provision locally.

CYPSC, its members and its local partner organisations have been well placed in identifying priorities and emerging needs that required a collaborative and coordinated response. CYPSC responses to the emerging needs were tremendous despite limited resources, which highlighted the value of CYPSC with regard to inter-agency collaboration and delivering on the ground. Through their work, CYPSC have fostered local relationships and a depth of commitment and goodwill, encouraging committees and individuals to work together for Ireland's child and youth population.

CYPSC are adept at identifying and responding to emerging needs, and have identified mental health and well-being, disability, education supports, DSGBV supports and parenting supports as top priorities. Recent work carried out by CYPSC up to 2021 in response to policy imperatives and emerging needs included coordination of parenting supports, Healthy Ireland/mental health, and the needs of Traveller and Roma families, among other priorities.

CYPSC have identified challenges such as under-resourced services and increasing local demand for services, increased complex needs of children and young people, membership dynamics and difficulties maintaining engagement, and lack of awareness of what CYPSC is, funding and, in particular, human resources (project support and administrative support) to support CYPSC in their day-to-day work.

CYPSC identified collective inter-agency working and networking as a significant strength, emphasising how the inter-agency structure has enabled relationship building between numerous agencies as well as co-operative functioning at a service level. Other strengths included project

delivery and how CYPSC, through its approach and way of working, brought partners together to deliver effective projects.

CYPSC have found that knowledge sharing has supported CYPSC to in leveraging multiple funds and benefitting from external expertise. A further strength is their ability to respond to community needs through engagement with children, young people and their families at a local level. CYPSC are well informed, which allows them to respond to new and emerging needs. CYPSC have identified that their valuable local membership leads to active participation in the committee.

The examples of CYPSC best practice highlighted in the CYPSC National Annual Progress Report (2021) give us an insight into the immeasurable work that they do. However, this work is not without its challenges. CYPSC have huge potential going forward, but the under-resourcing of the CYPSC initiative and local coordinators is a concern which is impacting on the ability of CYPSC to fully deliver on its mandate.

CYPSC are instrumental in delivering better outcomes for children, young people and their families around Ireland, and the initiative has much more potential. Both Tusla and DCEDIY are committed to supporting and realising this potential.

Tusla, the CYPSC National Coordinator, local CYPSC coordinators, CYPSC membership, local partners and local organisations should be commended for the all the excellent work they have carried out to date.

Forthcoming developments will further shape the future of CYPSC. These developments include the proposed amendments to the Child Care Act, 1991 and the placing of CYPSC on a statutory footing, complete alignment of CYPSC with local authority areas and planning cycles, the implementation of four CYPSC local child poverty plans under the European Child Guarantee and the completion of the CYPSC review (due to be published in 2024).

The implementation of *Shared Vision, Next Steps* will continue, with a final progress report due in 2025.

## 7. Glossary

ABC	Area-Based Childhood Initiative
BOBF	<i>Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The national policy framework for children &amp; young people 2014-2020</i>
CCC	City/County Childcare Committee
CFSN	Child and Family Support Network
CYPP	Children and Young People’s Plan
CYPSC	Children and Young People’s Services Committees
C&V	community and voluntary
DCEDIY	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth
DCYA	Department of Children and Youth Affairs
DOH	Department of Health
DRCD	Department of Rural and Community Development
DSGBV	domestic, sexual and gender-based violence
ETB	Education and Training Board
HSE	Health Service Executive
IPAS	International Protection Accommodation Services
IT	Information technology
LCDCs	Local Community Development Committees
LECP	Local Economic and Community Plan
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NIG	National Implementation Group
NSG	National Steering Group
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PPFS	prevention, partnership and family support
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals