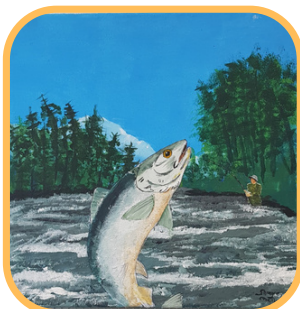


CANDLE COMMUNITY TRUST



ANNUAL REPORT 2021



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Candle Community Trust



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Organisational Planning

Important Developments in 2021

1.Candle's Response to Covid-19 Situation

In the context of Covid 19, Candle moved quickly to adapt, re-shape and re-imagine services so as to meet the educational, developmental and therapeutic needs of young people and families. Candle was clearly recognized as “an essential service” and this allowed for the opportunity during the times of lock-down in 2021 to offer a blended approach where services were delivered remotely and also in small face-to-face meetings with young people who were in particular need/crisis. The Candle Covid 19 Response Plan (as was required in accordance with the Returning to Work Protocol – Government of Ireland) continued to be adapted and the Response Team met regularly to develop action plans and review progress. Throughout the year the team worked closely with EMS Health and Safety Consultants to ensure that all relevant policies, protocols, procedures were in place to ensure a safe environment for all.

In relation to the changing situation Candle continued to focus on 6 key priorities:

- Adhere to all Government and public health advice
- Place the health and safety of young people and staff as a key priority
- Continue to be creative and innovative in delivering much needed education, developmental and therapeutic services to young people while observing any restrictions/changes which are in place
- Prioritize those young people and families most at risk and in need
- Work in close collaboration with all strategic partners, particularly funding agencies
- Provide support and care for all staff during this period



2. Governance: Charities Governance Code

As a registered charity, Candle Community Trust must be compliant with the Charities Governance Code. This code explains the minimum standards the Trust should meet to effectively manage and control the charity. Good governance involves putting in place systems and processes to ensure the charity achieves its charitable objectives with integrity and is managed in an effective, efficient, accountable and transparent way.

The Charity Regulator initiated a 3-year process (2019-2021) for all charities to comply with this Code. During 2021 Candle management and relevant staff have undergone significant training in the code and extensive work was carried out in Candle through the year on completing all requirements. The completed Candle Compliance Record in relation to the Code was adopted by the Candle Board of Trustees in early 2021. The Record is updated on a monthly basis to include ongoing activities/event which validate and evidence Candles compliance with the Governance Code.

3. Redevelopment of the Candle Campus

The redevelopment of the Candle campus has been a particular focus over the past few years. The new redeveloped facility, opened in 2019, now provides an environment that is warm, bright, welcoming and is conducive to personal growth. The Centre greatly enhances our programme delivery and is already leading to better outcomes for participants in terms of educational attainment and personal/social development. In 2020 we turned attention to the external area involving the creation of a new Therapeutic Sensory Garden along with the development of a play/recreational pitch area. There is now a strong educational dimension to what the garden offers including the potting shed and horticultural area, the outdoor fitness area, the outdoor teaching space including an art board, the recreational area that includes table tennis, football space and board games. In 2021, with the employment of a horticulturalist, the young people have been supported to engage with the garden through planting, nurturing and learning about plants, vegetables, birds, insects etc.



The water feature and large outdoor yoga/group space provide opportunities for reflection, discussion and therapeutic encounters. All of this is supplemented by beautiful green areas, planting, flowers, shrubs, trees and hedging. The garden flows from areas of activity to quieter spaces, reflecting difference shades of colour and light, each providing opportunities to engage one's senses and sensibilities.

A small space within the garden, for quiet reflection, has been constructed under the ash tree. It is a hedged area and includes a water feature, a bench and piece of sculpture named "Metamorphis" (Created and sculpted, and donated to Candle, by Dervella McNee). A small bronze plaque with an inspirational thought has been laid and this includes a word of thanks to the Slaney Foundation who funded the therapeutic garden, landscaping and new entrance.



During 2021 the final piece of this redevelopment was completed with a total redesign of the entrance area. The new walls, gates and ambient is the first interaction with Candle for young people, families, staff and visitors and the new design eschews a sense of welcome, warmth, safety and embrace.

The Candle building received an award in the RIAI Annual Awards 2020 under the title of "Wellbeing". To mark this award the 2021 March edition of the RIAI magazine contained a very interesting feature on Candle and how our vision/work is reflected in the new building structure.

4. Candle – A Trauma Informed Organization

Candle has been in the process of becoming a trauma informed organisation over the past 3 years. In 2021 this process involved a review of all aspects of the organization using a trauma informed lens. The design and structure of the new redeveloped building at Candle aims to reduce stress and chaos and prevents triggering people into re-traumatization. The building conveys important messages to participants such as "we value you", "we prioritise safety", "we care for you, "we hold you in mind".

The building itself holds participants in a cocoon of safety, warmth and containment, and supports the emergence of growth and development of the individual. All policies and procedures are being updated to include the language, attitudes and values of trauma informed practice. And staff have undergone intensive training in trauma informed organizations and trauma approaches during 2020/21. Services at Candle are infused with trauma informed approaches and new services have been created to further the aims of such approaches.

"A programme, organisation, or system that is trauma-informed realises the widespread impact of trauma, stress and adversity, and understands potential paths for healing and recovery. Recognises the signs and symptoms of trauma in staff, clients and all others involved in the system. Actively resists re-traumatisation (Committed to being trauma-reducing instead of trauma-inducing). Responds by fully and meaningfully integrating, embedding and infusing knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, language, culture, practices and settings" (Karen Treisman)

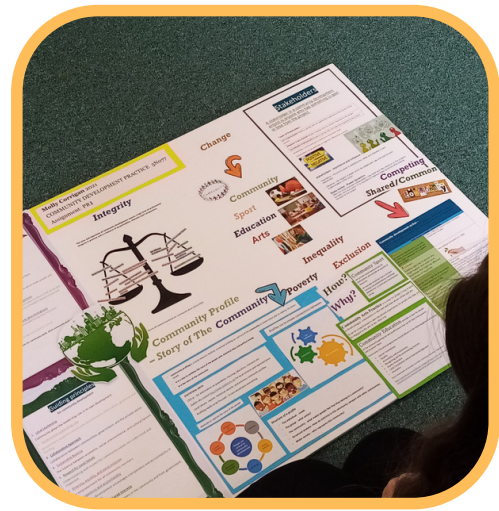


4. Progression from Candle Educational Programme

In recent years, meaningful progression routes for Candle participants have become a real focus of our work. With greater levels of educational achievement by participants and a more focused care-planning processes, we have seen levels of progression to employment and further education increase significantly. From the moment a young person commences at Candle, we now place progression as a key aspect of the training process. Learners, who successfully complete QQI Level 4 and Level 5 courses, have many progression pathways into further education opened up to them. Placing educational achievement and progression at the heart of a learner's placement provides the young person with an opportunity to change the direction of their lives, find a healthy way of living and "escape" many of the detrimental aspects of marginalization.

In early 2020 Candle commenced the delivery of a new QQI Level 5 Award in Community Development following approval by the Education and Training Board (CDETB). The granting of this accreditation to Candle by ETB was both surprising and exciting. Surprising because no other comparable service in Dublin is delivering Level 5 programming, and exciting as it offered young people the opportunity to progress from Candle to 3rd level degree courses.

In June 2021, the first 2 young people graduated from this course, and commenced training at third level educational institutions. This is a tribute particularly to the resilience of these 2 young women but also to the training staff and mentors who provide the teaching and support that facilitated a successful outcome.



5. Interagency Training

On April 14th, a number of Candle Trustees and other invited guests from the Probation Service, TUSLA and the HSE joined a Workshop in relation to a recently held six-month “Interagency Learning Forum” which was a collaboration between the Probation Service, TUSLA and Candle Community Trust, Ballyfermot. The Forum was funded by DCYA under the “Whatworks Initiative”.

This Workshop included a presentation by Dr. Karen Treisman, clinical psychologist and a leading expert in the field of relational and developmental trauma. Karen presented an understanding of trauma, trauma informed practice and offered signposts on becoming a trauma informed organization. Key to the event was the presentation of a Report which provided feedback from the participants of the Interagency Learning Forum, including recommendations for leaders in relation to working with vulnerable young people and families. A copy of the Feedback Report and a YouTube link to a recording of the Workshop is now available.

6. Community Support Hub

From early in the pandemic all people were made aware of the physical effects of the Covid 19 virus, how we can protect ourselves and what we should look out for if symptoms arise.

However, the mental effects of the pandemic only gradually began to be known (and to some extent are not yet fully known) but without doubt, lockdown, social distancing, and the imposed isolation for weeks took a toll on mental health, particularly the mental health of vulnerable young people.

As a response to these mental health needs of young people, Candle established the Candle Community Support Hub as a one-off intervention for 6 months in 2020. This initiative, which was independently evaluated, proved to be a very successful and meaningful response in terms of uptake by young people, commitment of referrals agencies and, most of all, important developmental outcomes for young people in relation to their mental health and well-being.

Following a period of reflection by the Board and key management personnel in 2021 it was agreed to continue to provide this Community Support Hub at Candle for the foreseeable future. Important elements of continuing this service included the capacity at Candle to sustain a new service, the limiting of availability to 12 young people in the community at any one time, and the ongoing involvement of referral agencies who act as that wider wrap around support for the young person attending therapy.

The aim of this Hub is:

- to provide a contact point for therapeutic supports for young people and families in the Ballyfermot community
- to provide psychotherapeutic services to those young people referred including psychotherapy, drama therapy, group resilience programmes, mindfulness workshops
- to provide targeted support to parents of those young people attending for therapeutic services
- to establish a clear referral process through an interagency approach
- to reach out to young people and families who are not currently involved in Candle services or Therapeutic Space (additionality)



7. Candle Outreach Mentoring Programme

The Candle Outreach Mentoring Programme (C.O.M.P.) was established as a pilot programme in April 2021 and was a collaborative venture between Candle and Tusla. The overall purpose of the new service is to support young people in care, or on the cusp of care, to grow and develop in their educational, social and developmental needs: working within trauma informed and restorative frameworks to facilitate effective engagement, collaboration and learning.

The Mentoring Project is a partnership between Candle Community Trust and Tulsa, the Child and Family Agency. In collaboration with social workers, social care workers and other key personnel, the role of the Candle project worker is to share in the case management of a targeted group of young people referred by Tulsa as on the edge of care or in care. Key methodologies of trauma informed principles, restorative practice and empowerment model permeate all interventions and interactions. Candle personnel take a trauma informed approach, and this approach informs interventions, plans and recommendations in the project.



The project aims to ensure the outcomes set out in the National Policy Framework for Children and Young People (Brighter Outcome Brighter Futures) are realized, supporting young people to reach their potential:

- Outcome 1: Active and healthy, physical, and mental wellbeing
- Outcome 2: Achieving full potential in learning and development.
- Outcome 3: Safe and protected from harm.
- Outcome 4: Economic security and opportunity
- Outcome 5: Connected, respected, and contributing to their world.

8. International Criminal Justice Network – Candle presentation

The International Criminal Justice Network held a virtual conference/event on the 12th May 2021 to discuss how the Covid-19 pandemic has impacted on the criminal justice sector, and the delivery of services. For Ireland, they focused on how Irish Prison Service and Probation Service have adapted to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The International Criminal Justice Newsdesk brought together practitioners and advocates of innovative criminal justice engagement in a series of facilitated online conversations and discussions. Streamed on YouTube Live, these conversations enabled online interaction and engagement from an international perspective, which put the experience of people working or living in different criminal justice systems as part of an interdisciplinary and global conversation. The IN-CJ newsdesk followed a programme of themed discussions taking place across time-zones, and travelling from East to West, starting in Malaysia, and ending in Austin, Texas.

The Probation Service invited Candle to participate in this event. The discussions concentrated on the issues, working practices and experiences, that have emerged during COVID. 4 staff members from Candle and Ciara O'Connor, Probation Service, presented on how Candle adapted its services when Covid hit and on how the new needs of young people were met through innovative and creative programming.

Strategic Goals 2020-2023

ORGANIZATION

Goal A: To clearly articulate a vision for the organization that cherishes our heritage and values while reaching towards new horizons that reflect emerging needs, new research, and the signs of the times

Goal B: To foster an organisation that can respond dynamically and imaginatively to the needs of those who access services, and can deliver on strategic plans as agreed with stakeholders, particularly funding agencies

EDUCATION

Goal C: To continue to shape a holistic and responsive education and training service that meets the needs of all young people and realises the aspirations

THERAPEUTIC

Goal D: To uphold the vision of the Therapeutic Space, proactively and innovatively expanding therapeutic interventions in response to trauma and adversity

DEVELOPMENTAL

Goal E: In the journey to becoming a Trauma Infused Service (TIS), the reality of trauma and its effects will be central to all developmental processes and programming

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Goal F: Promote Candle Community Trust in the community and build awareness of the range of services being provided

Goal G: Working collaboratively with other agencies to develop holistic interventions that meet the needs of the community in order to maximise the use of resources

Activity Report Jan-Dec 2021

Workshop Training Programme

LEARNER PROFILE- Workshop Training Programme	2021	2020
Numbers aged 16/17 (at commencement)	18	12
Numbers aged 18-20 (at commencement)	14	9
LEARNER OUTCOMES- Workshop Training Programme		
Numbers in training during period	32	21
Numbers commenced during period	17	6
Numbers finished during period	17	6
Number who completed programme	12	2
Number dropped out due to personal circumstances	5	3
Number dropped out due to inability to complete	1	1
LEARNER DEVELOPMENT- Workshop Training Programme		
Induction programmes completed	32	21
Care Plans developed and reviewed	32	21
Literacy input	32	21
ACCREDITATION ACHIEVED- Workshop Training Programme		
Number of Major Awards in Employability Skills Level 3	1	1
Number of Major Awards in General Learning Level 4	8	3
Number of Major Awards in Community Development Level 5	2	/

	2021	2020
Number of Minor Awards at Level 3	9	11
Number of Minor Awards at Level 4	63	46
Number of Minor Awards at Level 5	16	4
Application of Number Level 3	1	1
Computer Literacy Level 3	1	1
Woodwork Level 3	7	7
Painting Level 4	5	6
Graphic Design Level 4	7	6
Personal Effectiveness Level 4	8	4
Work Experience Level 4	2	4
Communications Level 4	7	7
IT Skills Level 4	5	5
Woodcraft Level 4	5	6
Health Related Fitness Level 4	6	7
Functional Mathematics Level 4	8	1
Career Planning and Preparation Level 4	10	/
Communications Level 5	2	2
Personal Effectiveness Level 5	2	2

	2021	2020
Understanding Community Development Level 5	2	/
Community Arts Context and Practice Level 5	2	/
Community Development Practice Level 5	2	/
Social Studies Level 5	2	/
Working with Groups Level 5	2	/
Personal and Professional Development Level 5	2	/
SOCIAL & PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT- Workshop Training Programme		
Positive Mental Health	12	21
Socialisation Programme	32	12
Music Programme	13	/
Horticulture Programme	22	/
Sports Programme	21	21
Gaisce Award	10	2
REFERRALS- Workshop Training Programme		
The Probation Service	4	5
Candle Youth Programme	1	2
TUSLA	8	3
Youth Agencies/ other	5	2
Self-referral	23	9

TRACKING & SUPPORT- Workshop Training Programme	2021	2020
Number of ex trainees who received support	7	3
PROGRESSION PROGRAMME- Workshop Training Programme		
Number progressed to further education/ training	5	1
Number progressed to employment	5	1

Connect Programme

LEARNER PROFILE- Connect Programme	2021	2020
Number aged 15 (at commencement) Connect Youth Programme	3	1
Numbers at 16/17 (at commencement)	21	6
Numbers at 18-21 (at commencement)	9	4
LEARNER OUTCOMES- Connect Programme		
Numbers attending during period	33	20
Numbers commenced during period	10	10
Numbers progressed to Candle Training programme	17	6
Numbers progressed to other Training Centre/ education	1	1
Number dropped out due to personal circumstances	10	4
Number dropped out due to inability to complete (detention)	2	3
Number dropped out due to non attendance	1	1

LEARNER DEVELOPMENT- Connect Programme	2021	2020
Induction Programmes completed	33	19
Care Plans developed and reviewed	33	19
Literacy input	2	19
One to one specialised programme	3	1
Progression plans developed	33	19
Socialisation Programme	33	19
SOCIAL & PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT- Connect Programme		
Crime Awareness	33	19
Drug and Alcohol Awareness	33	19
Sexual Health Awareness	33	19
Positive Mental Health	33	19
REFERRALS- Connect Programme		
The Probation Service/ IYJS	12	5
JLO/ Garda Diversion Projects	11	5
Self-referral	6	3
Other	4	2

Youth Programme

YOUNG PEOPLES OUTCOMES- Youth Programme		2021
Numbers attending during period (individual young people)		95
Number of overall formal contacts		1765
ATTENDANCE FIGURES FOR:	No. of Y/P	Contact
Youth Cafe 16+ (2x a week to Sept.)	19	470
Youth Cafe 2nd/3rd Year (Sept Start)	15	140
Girl's Group (Sept start)	8	54
Boy's Group	10	351
6th Class	27	144
First Years	10	126
Community Hub Group	6	64
Young Women's Empowerment Group	4	24
Key-working 18-21 yr olds	6	152
Targeted Outdoor Summer Programme	15	90
One to one work (Covid 19)		150

YOUNG PEOPLES PROFILE- Youth Programme	2021
Numbers aged 10-12 years	37
Numbers aged 13-14	35
Numbers aged 15-18	16

	2021
Numbers aged 18+	6
Number of females attending programme	61
Number of males attending programme	34
SOCIAL AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT- Youth Programme	
Healthy Eating Workshops	6 YP
Resilience Programme	6 YP
Arts Programme	6 YP
Dance Programme	6 YP
Halloween Community Event	10
Outdoor Recreational Programme to support mental health	15

Note: Comparative figures not available for the Youth Service due to restructuring during COVID

Therapeutic Space

YOUNG PEOPLES OUTCOMES- Therapeutic Space	2021	2020
Numbers accessing service during period	113	139
ATTENDANCE FIGURES	No. of sessions	No. of sessions
Counselling/ Psychotherapy (29 clients)	444	461
Community Support Hub (38 clients)	301	162
Yoga (15 individual y/p from June)	76	21

	2021	2020
	No. of sessions	No. of sessions
Yoga via zoom (6 participants twice weekly)	74	/
Acupuncture/ Mindfulness (34 individual y/p)	215	194
Parent Support (6 parents)	25	/
CHLP (5 parents)	114	45
COMP (2 y/p from November)	6	/
CSH (3 y/p from July)	36	/

C.O.M.P Service statistics – (Apr '21 – Dec 21)

Tusla Referrals	14*
Y/p actively engaged in C.O.M.P service	10
Overall Sessions Contacts	156
Statutory Meetings (Child in Care Reviews, Core Group Meetings, Collaboration/ Professional Meetings, Formal Social Work Meetings)	27
Residential Team Meetings	5
Other Professional Support Meetings (G.A.L, School Officials etc.)	7

**1 y/p referred as an emergency contact on week intervention
Referral sought for 1 y/p linked with social services*

The Training Programme

2021 began with a return to e-learning and classes being taught remotely via digital platforms. The Education Team at Candle had prepared a blended learning model to facilitate both online and onsite learning. Our learners had been assigned laptops which allowed them to work from home and the Training Programme timetable was followed remotely, as it would have been onsite. At the beginning of 2021 we delivered a wide variety of Level 3, 4 and 5 QQI modules, carried out skills demonstrations and assessments and made CAO applications, before returning to onsite learning.

The Training Programme at Candle Community Trust is aimed at early school leavers, those who have disengaged with the educational system or those who have completed second level education and wish to study our QQI Level 5 programme. We aim to support young people with diverse and complex needs. The age range of the young people accessing our programmes is 15 -21 years. All three of our major awards are focused on employment and progression opportunities. Our referrals come from Probation/IYJS, JLO's, HSE, local agencies and family and self-referrals. At Candle we offer a second chance in education. We respond to the needs of those young people who are marginalised and disadvantaged, while delivering an educational programme of an exceptional standard. We endeavour to continuously improve and implement progressive changes into the programme with the aim of preparing the young people to take on opportunities and challenges in their future.



Accreditation

QQI qualifications are an important goal for every young person who engages in education at the centre: due to the sense of achievement and pride for the young person and the progression pathways that accredited qualifications offer. The programmes provided on the Training Programme are accredited by QQI (Quality and Qualifications Ireland). The awards are assessed at level 3, 4 or 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

Awards available:

QQI Level 5 Major Award
Community Development
5M3050

QQI Level 4 Major Award
General Learning
4M2010

QQI Level 3 Major Award
Employability Skills
3M0935

Achieving a Major Award at level 3,4 or 5 is the principal accreditation goal of each learner. The level 4 major award remains the heart of the education programme. The overall aim of the awards is to focus on learning skills for further education or employment. Trainees also can obtain a Safe Pass, Manual Handling and other certificates from external facilitators and are encouraged and supported in doing so.

Support

We believe our education programme to be unique in terms of the range of support offered and the emphasis on the education and developmental needs of the young person. All education programmes are underpinned by the guiding principles of the Restorative Practice Model, the Empowerment Model and the Trauma Recovery Model and strive to offer appropriate interventions and build resilience in our young people. All young people who attend the Training Programme have access to our Therapeutic Space.

Before commencing on the programme young people take part in an educational assessment. The assessment means that the education and developmental needs of the young person can be established to ensure early-stage interventions.

The Literacy and Numeracy Programme at Candle is an intrinsic part of the Training Programme and is integrated into the programmes as well as being provided on a one-to one basis. Learning needs are identified through the initial educational assessment as well as during classroom observation. The programme is tailored to each young person and so individual literacy, numeracy and confidence issues are addressed. The programme is flexible and is adapted regularly to meet the needs of the learners. We advocate for the promotion of literacy and numeracy skills to allow young people to reach their full potential and experience equality in education.

We take an encouraging, restorative approach towards education and include developmental and therapeutic programmes. We aim to develop positive relationships by working in small groups, setting clear boundaries, and encouraging responsibility.

Developmental Programmes

The Trauma Recovery Model informs all our developmental programme planning, assessment process and indeed all our interactions with the young people. The key focus of the assessment process is identifying the educational, emotional, personal, and social needs of the young people and wrapping around precise programmes and interventions which address these needs. The assessment process lasts 8 weeks (2 weeks before commencement on the programme and 6 weeks during induction). Through a range of different processes, a clear profile of the young person's educational, emotional and behavioural needs are created and any developmental issues, which require particular intervention, are identified. The team are then tasked to respond to each person's needs through a range of creative and innovative approaches.

Appropriate support around issues raised is incorporated into each young person's developmental plan. This has led to the establishment of a targeted programme to support young people with additional needs.

The Developmental Programmes offered to Trainees aim to create a safe space to learn about and discuss important and relevant topics. All young people attending the training programme participate in this programme with their voice and their needs being central to shaping the programme. The programme includes group sessions looking at specific topics, for example mental health, individual support and key working, and forums, where young people have their voice heard.



Socialisation Programmes

Despite Covid restrictions the young people at Candle attended a range of socialisation programmes and outings throughout 2021. These trips have become an essential part of the Training Programme as they serve to strengthen relationships and to broaden the social and cultural experience of the young people. Excursions take place throughout the year. This year's summer programme began in June with social and cultural trips to Pitch & Putt, Chester Beatty Library, The Lab and Hugh Lane Gallery, Dublinia and the Botanic Gardens. July was an active month for our young people with outings to Jump Zone, Go Karting, Kayaking at Avon Ri and a visit to EPIC, The Irish Emigration Museum.

A music programme was also delivered during the summer and young people had the opportunity to participate in the production of a music video and recording of an original song. In August activities continued with onsite Film Club every week, Outdoor Health & Fitness, and a trip to Zip it. The winter programme took place in October and November with outings to Awesome Walls, Go Quest Indoor Challenge Arena, Jeanie Johnston Tall Ship and Wild Lights at Dublin Zoo. The outings are always great fun and enjoyed by young people and staff.

Gaisce Award

Gaisce, the President's Award, is the most prestigious youth award for young people in Ireland aged 15-25 to dream big and realise their potential. Gaisce is focused on, and driven by the following core values, Empowerment, Inclusion & Equality, Respect and Excellence. In essence, Gaisce or 'great achievement' is a self-development programme for young people. By taking part in Gaisce, young people take on exciting personal, physical and community challenges and develop new skills and friendships. Young people set and pursue personal goals in four different areas of activity.

In Candle in 2021, we had 10 young people working towards their bronze award ranging in age from 16 to 21. To achieve this award the young people, take part in several activities each week in each of the challenge areas: Personal Skills, Community Involvement and Physical Recreation. The bronze award challenges will be completed in Spring 2022 when the participants will undertake an Adventure Journey in at the Carlingford Adventure Centre.



Responding to Challenges

2021 was a year like no other for education in Ireland. During this time, Candle continually demonstrated its capacity to be responsive to the demands of Covid restrictions and resilient when faced with evolving challenges. Upon reopening the Centre, we continued to apply strategies and approaches used during remote provision, including the use of digital technology to enhance learner outcomes and experiences.

Outdoor education programmes were a significant feature of learning and contributed to building the young people's sense of wellbeing and contentment. Our therapeutic garden was central to the outdoor learning environment and allowed our young people the opportunity to learn new horticulture skills.

QQI Awards

The highlight of 2021 for the Training Programme in Candle Community Trust was the achievement of two QQI Level 5 Community Development Awards. The Level 5 award is an access course for third level education. The young people who achieved the major awards have benefitted hugely from the delivery of this programme within the supportive environment of Candle. It offered them the opportunity to obtain the qualifications to progress on to third level education. They both secured places in further education and third level courses where they are pursuing their chosen education paths.

The QQI Level 4 Major Award in General Learning remains the bedrock of the educational programme. Most learners at Candle complete modules at this level. We achieved a high level of accreditation in 2021 with 12 minor awards and 2 major awards at level 5, 63 minor awards and 8 major awards at level 4 and 9 minor awards and 1 major award at level 3. Huge credit is due to each young person who achieved awards in challenging circumstances in 2021.

Teaching and Learning

The classroom-based modules at level 4 are varied and are delivered by experienced and skilled teachers. Young people learn life skills through the activities on the Communications module. They gain confidence through the Personal Effectiveness and Work Experience modules. The Functional Maths module offers young people an opportunity to improve their practical maths skills. The practical woodwork pieces produced by the students, as part of the Woodwork module, are of exceptional standard and this module is always enjoyed by students. Painting and Graphic Design continue to be very popular and the creativity and talent that emerges is outstanding. Some of the pieces produced by students in our bright, calm art room are illustrated throughout this report.

We also place a particular emphasis on digital literacy with Information Technology being delivered at level 4. This year saw the introduction of a new award, Career Preparation and Planning, specifically designed by the CDET B Curriculum Development Unit as a temporary replacement for the Work Experience module allowing the young people to prepare for the workplace in a simulated environment in the absence of a work placement. A module in Health-Related Fitness at level 4 is integrated into our weekly timetable. Activities include tennis, volleyball, basketball, badminton, circuit training and football and are facilitated by two external fitness instructors, on site at Candle.

"Candle allows me to be myself...I get support emotionally & financially. It gives me and other smart people the opportunity to get an education I didn't feel access to before."

*Voice of the
Young People*

"Candle helps you a lot in life... helps you to be able to get a good job- and there are lovely people/ staff."

"All the staff are very helpful and so nice to talk to. They are very supportive and always looking to help you out if you need it."

"There's many things I like about Candle. One of my favourites is that the way they teach is much more helpful..... they treat us like adults....no pressure is put on anyone, you can take things at your own pace."

Looking Forward

Some of the developments we are planning for 2022 include further developing our delivery of mathematics, continuing to support young people with their digital literacy, young people who have been taking part in Gaisce completing and receiving their bronze award, further integrating horticulture into the timetable, and exploring in more depth our understanding of trauma informed pedagogy.

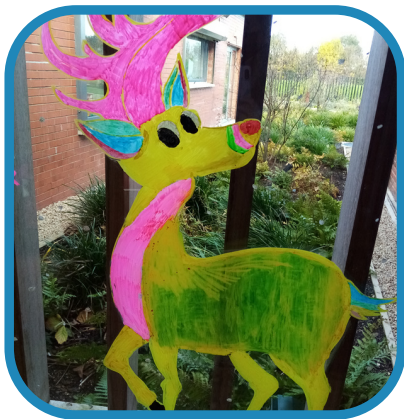
Progression from Training Programme

As the Training Programme in Candle has developed, there has been an increased focus on supporting young people with meaningful progression from the programme into education or employment. The accreditation the young people receive, as well as the developmental support and practical support with identifying and accessing progression pathways, are all part of making this possible.

2021 Progression

- 1- progressed from Level 5 to Arts Degree in Maynooth
- 1- progressed from Level 5 to Level 6 in Community Development in Ballsbridge College of Further Education- currently applying to Youth Work degree in TU Dublin
- 1- progressed from Level 4 programme to Level 5 in Youth and Community in Liberties College.
- 1- progressed from Level 4 programme to Level 5 programme in Candle.
- 1- progressed from Level 4 to Level 5 in Culinary Arts in Crumlin College of Further Education
- 3- progressed from Level 4 to employment





Vision & Methodologies

"The most basic of all human needs is the need to understand and be understood. The best way to understand people is to listen to them. They may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel."



Trauma Recovery Model

A model for working with young people which brings together needs, behaviour and interventions. It also considers development and suggests a sequence in which interventions should be applied.



Restorative Practices

Helps us to strengthen relationships, build community and prevent conflict. Working together to repair any harm caused and collaborating to find ways to make things right. Building relationships based on trust and empathy, insight and learning.



Empowerment Model

To empower young people to find solutions, promote agency and give young people a voice.

Trauma Informed Approaches and the importance of relationship.

Outcomes for Young People



Organisational Outcomes



The Connect Project

The Connect Project is a programme with a specific focus on providing interventions and support which actively encourages young people to make healthier life choices and engage in positive pro social behaviour. The Connect project provides a service which is underpinned by theoretical practice, namely the Trauma Recovery Model, that meets the holistic needs of each young person through the development of tailor-made programmes that include developmental, educational, and therapeutic aspects. The main priority of the Connect project is to fully understand the young person and their life experiences to create a sense of belonging and build relationships. The programme is sensitive to the complex needs of participants and aims to support and motivate young people to positively participate in an educational setting.

The Connect Project works with young people male, and female aged 15-21 years. Many of the young people are early school leavers and face the challenge of reintegration back into education. The young people often have chaotic lifestyles and may be engaged in criminality. Connect provides a safe space for young people to develop their self-confidence and re-engage with education at a pace that is in line with their needs. The programme re-introduces structure and routine to stabilise and prepare young people to engage with a wide range of programming, which not only develops their educational attainment but their emotional, social and physical well-being. The support we provide to young people helps them to manage the complexities of their everyday lives and strives to empower them to become more self-aware and reach their full potential.



The Connect Project works closely with the Young Person's Probation, Probation Service, TUSLA, local agencies and families all of which can refer to the service. The programme is facilitated through daily small group sessions which focus on relationship building, education, developmental, socialisation skills and therapeutic interventions. Individualised one to one programmes can also be facilitated where specific referrals are made.

Record of Achievement 2021

At the start of 2021 the programme continued to be affected by the global pandemic. In early January we were unable to return to the centre as planned and remote learning commenced. Within the Connect project we were keen to maintain contact with young people and provide support to them where required. This was maintained for a few weeks and due to the nature of our service we were then able to provide a reduced timetable of two days per week to Connect young people on Probation/known to Tusla at the end of January. This worked well and proved invaluable for some of our most at risk young people. This change in service provision was a direct response to the arising needs of the young people to engage in a structured, routine-based setting to provide alternatives to activities that may have led to offending behaviour. During this time young people were difficult to engage and it was felt that young people were struggling with the change in restrictions. Connect was able to build on the two days per week and move to three days which provided additional service provision at the start of February.



During February and March, the service then increased to four days per week. During this time, we also began to receive new referrals and new young people commenced on the assessment programme. We continued to receive referrals from Probation, Tusla and other organisations and worked closely with one young person who was released from Cloverhill Prison. Young people also reengaged with mindfulness sessions and counselling via the therapeutic space which supported them to navigate the return to higher restrictions.

In April two young people were registered from Connect and moved onto the training programme. We also returned to a five-day week and the Connect programme numbers increased. Connect facilitated ten sessions during this time to accommodate social distancing requirements. The young people engaged well with smaller class numbers and responded well to a split timetable. This also enabled us to build some capacity in the project and explore how we could possibly extend the programme.

During May and June Connect enjoyed two trips to IMMA and the Botanical Gardens. The young people enjoyed being out in nature and learnt about the environment. They observed animals such as squirrels and tortoises up close and were amazed by them. It was a lovely experience for the group and enabled them to see nature and really experience it whilst interacting with the animals. During the summer months the young people enjoyed a mix of recreational activities and education. The young people enjoyed spending time in the garden and enjoyed sessions in the music programme. The young people embraced yoga and participated in sessions outside. Attendance was good during the summer months and the young people enjoyed a more relaxed timetable of activities. They enjoyed a summer BBQ with the training programme and a games day which they loved prior to their summer break.

During the winter months attendance and engagement continued to be positive. The Connect project continued to gain referrals for young people seeking to access the Level 3 and Level 4 programme and worked proactively with Probation clients. Young people completed activities for One World week and Restorative Justice week and engaged in discussion and debate around world issues alongside their QQI support work. Connect has been a vibrant programme over the last year and this has been felt by all staff that have had the pleasure of working with the young people. We have worked with our highest number of probation young people in the last few years and supported them to move to the Training programme and continue to progress in their education. The young people within Connect bring a lovely atmosphere to the centre and we have learnt much from them and value their contribution to the service.



Timetable & programmes

The programme is offered to all young people 5 days each week, unless attending on a specialised one to one programme. The specialised programmes are tailored to suit the individual needs and requirements. Participants engage in the following programmes:

- Communications (QQI level 3 and support work QQI level 4)
- Health & Fitness (QQI level 3)
- Computer Literacy (QQI level 3)

- Application of Numbers (QQI level 3)
- Career Preparation (QQI level 3)
- Art & Design
- Woodwork

Fortunately, during the pandemic the Connect timetable was carried out face to face with a reduced timetable and only a short break in January to remote learning. The programme continued a theme of being needs-led with a particular focus on developmental programmes in terms of promoting positive emotional well-being and encouraging prosocial behaviour during higher level restrictions and we were able to incorporate a balance between developmental programming and QQI modules when young people were able to return to the centre.

Tailor Made/Specialised Programmes

During 2021 we expanded our Connect Project and offered an additional Connect Youth Programme in an afternoon slot three days per week. This programme was developed to facilitate working with younger (14years+) Probation clients in an early intervention capacity. The programme consists of a mix of developmental programming, key working/mentoring, therapeutic supports, and youth work engagement. The programme works with young people to support school attendance and encourage re-engagement in education. This programme came from the need to work with younger Probation clients that may be hard to reach. During the year the programme has grown and accommodated five young people all who have moved or are hoping to move on to the Connect project or the Training Programme in the future. This new programme is part of a pathway for Probation young people within Candle with the overall goal of engaging them in a full-time educational programme at a pace that is tailored to their needs.



Where possible we facilitated one-to-one programmes for young people who were unable to participate in the core programme due to personal struggles, behavioural concerns and needs raised by referral agencies or the young person/family. Tailor made and specialised programmes are devised to work with young people with specific needs in innovative ways to promote engagement.

Overall, the specialised programmes were successful as they helped to build confidence and a sense of belonging to those engaging in the programme.



Prison Visits – face-to-face prison visits were carried out with three young people during the year. Visits were also carried out virtually via the conference call and Zoom service in line with restrictions when required. This enabled two young people to successfully transition back to Candle with ease following their time in juvenile justice. Prison visits support young people whilst in Candle and maintain those relationships, an important aspect of the Connect project.

Personal & Social Developmental Programmes

As part of the Connect Programme all participants engage in our personal & social developmental programmes. Whilst the pandemic was on-going, we were mindful to respond to emerging needs in the implementation of developmental programmes. A strong focus was on Positive Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol Awareness and Crime Awareness. Developmental programming is discussion led by the young people and enables them to have a space where they can gain knowledge and discuss any issues or concerns.

Developmental programming during this year has been focused on practical support and tools to support and enable young people to understand and manage their feelings and emotions during these difficult times and to enable them to engage in pro social behaviour that will benefit themselves, their families, and the wider community. An emphasis was also on young people managing themselves within negative peer groups and their role in criminality, the impact of this on them, their families, and the wider community. We believe young people gained insight into their actions and this is further explored through key working support.

Socialisation/Team Building Programme

During 2021 some cultural and educational visits around the Dublin area were postponed due to restrictions. This was unfortunate as it enables young people to develop a sense of belonging and connection with the city in which they live however we were able to facilitate trips over the summer period and into the winter programme when restrictions eased. The young people took part in a cooking programme in November/December, and this tied in with their work in Health and Fitness. The young people also commenced practical health and fitness in December when the opportunity arose, we hope that this extends in 2022. The young people enjoy working as part of a team during times of cooking and playing games.

The process of teamwork enables them to develop skills and understand the different dynamics that can arise when working within a group. These opportunities also help the young people to get to know each other and hang out together in an informal fun way. The generic team building programme usually involves weekly onsite and off-site activities. This programme involved more on-site activities such as arts, crafts and team building games. This programme supports the development of team building skills, social interaction, and confidence within small groups and within the community. These benefits are seen through the improved attendance and positive spirits by the young people.

Outings

The Connect Programme runs continually throughout the year and young people are offered the opportunity to attend various outings throughout the school holidays including Easter, Summer, Halloween, and Winter. During the year some outings were cancelled due to restrictions, however the young people enjoyed trips to Go Quest, IMMA, The Zoo, Botanical Gardens, Pitch and Putt, Go Karting and the EPIC museum.



Youth Service

The Youth Service began the Year in Level 5 Restrictions, and again adapted in response to ensure that the needs of the young people were met. The service moved online and those who were comfortable using this platform made use of the support that was provided, enjoying the online fun and games and the sense of the community virtually. Other Young People did not engage with online platforms and one-one work was delivered in the centre to meet the needs of these young people. The Youth Service operated in pods of 6 young people until November 2021. The focus of the work during this period was to ensure the young people had fun and had a space to be young people and recover from the effects of the pandemic. This allowed for opportunities for the Youth Work Team to really get to know the young people attending the groups and provided a solid sense of community and solidarity for the Young People.

Later in the year, the pod size increased to 15 young people and a sense of freedom was felt in the air as the young people invited friends to join their group and the noise, excitement and buzzing energy of youth began to fill the centre.

Throughout the year in Candle a fundamental tool used by our youth work team was informal education. This was done through building relationships with young people which provided a partnership and support system, in which they learned to navigate any challenges or issues they encountered. Our youth work team strives to challenge engrained ways of thinking or identify problem behaviours in young people, in turn empowering them to grow, develop and reach their full potential. The youth work environment created in Candle allows for young people to be seen, to be valued and express their unique self.



Throughout the year the Youth Service provided targeted support systems to young people to strengthen relationships with them, their families and other services involved in their life. The young people engaged in the Youth Service were identified under the following UBU Target Groups.

- Young People experiencing economic, social, and cultural disadvantage.
- Young People experiencing marginalisation
- Young People who are vulnerable and at risk of not flourishing

The Youth Service provided programmes which supported 7 key personal and social development outcomes: Communication Skills, Confidence, Planning & Problem Solving, Creativity & Imagination, Relationships, Resilience & Determination and Emotional Intelligence. Some of the targeted programs that were delivered in this period were:

- Internet Safety
- Art Programme
- Sexual Health Programme
- Key- Working
- Anti-Bullying Workshops
- Inclusivity and Diversity Programme

Highlights of the Year

- The trip to Cavan made me so happy and filled me with many great memories
- Kayaking
- Zip It

*Voice of the
Young People*

My Favourite thing about Candle is

- All of the things
- The People
- The Youth Workers and the Food
- Socialising and Talking

What I want from Candle in 2022

- More Trips
- Acupuncture
- More Trips

Highlights of the Year

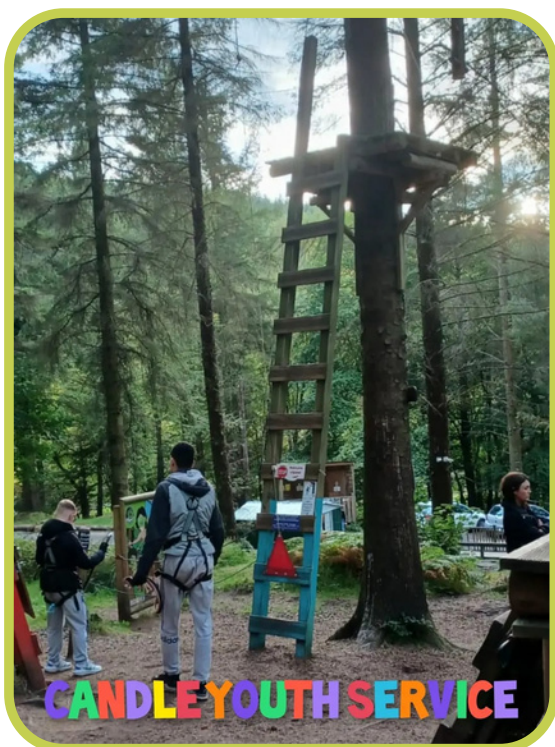
Summer and Winter programmes

This year in the Candle Youth Service the focus of our summer program was to get participants out and about, providing activities that would support them to recover from the impact of multiple lockdowns. We aimed to support young people to re-engage with each-other, connect with nature and dis-engage from their mobile phones.

The summer programme offered opportunities for adventure, challenge, and exploration. Trips included kayaking, hiking and outdoor adventure centres. The young people developed resilience and determination in challenges they encountered in adventure centres and grew in confidence as a result. They learned new skills, overcame fears, explored, and enjoyed the stillness of Carlingford Lough. The summer programme brought participants together who did not have any other social outlets and provided an opportunity for them to work as a team, make friends, be challenged, and of course have a lot of fun!

Throughout the summer the youth service enjoyed the tranquillity that the therapeutic garden offered and the beauty of Candle's outdoor Campus.

The Candle overnight took place in November this year. There was a chill in the air, but the young people enjoyed the comfort of warm fires, hot chocolate and marshmallows and some board games! During the day the young people took part in a range of activities and ended the night sharing a bonfire with other groups from around the city who were also on overnights.



Detached Youth Work

During the summer months the Youth Service took part in weekly detached youth work in the Community. This involved visiting public spaces in which young people 'hung out' and bringing the service to them. During this process the Youth Service engaged with new young people and got a chance to see our 'usuals' out and about in their community. This piece of work strengthened Candle's work within the community and provided us with an opportunity to support young people in a different capacity. During the build up to Halloween there were a lot of bonfires in the area and fireworks, we used our learning from being out in the community and the dangers that young people faced around this time of year to have conversations on how they can keep themselves safe.

Halloween

The young People in the Youth Service worked to create Candle's photo booth. Candle worked in partnership with other community organisations to create a Halloween Event for the community. Participants of our youth service volunteered in the event, to deliver the photo booth on the day and engage with their community.



Christmas Takeaway and Movie Nights

Over the Christmas period we tried something different this year. We enjoyed a quieter space in Candle in which the young people could relax, watch a Christmas film, get creative with a range of arts and crafts, and enjoy a very tasty takeaway together! The young people really enjoyed this, and we think it supported the Young People in having a sense of 'calm' during a very busy period.



Goals for 2022

Develop a Youth Work Curriculum that provides opportunities for Young People in the following Key areas: Arts & Culture, Recreation/ Outdoor Pursuits, Citizenship, Social Action & Youth Participation, Welfare & Wellbeing, Life Skills, and Leadership Skills and Intercultural and International Awareness.

Programme Plans for 2022

- Drama Workshops to educate and inform Young People about Bullying
- Comedy Workshops to increase the confidence of Young People
- Regular and Routine Detached Youth Work in the Community
- Targeted Initiatives: Barista Course. Driver's Theory Test
- Explore: A six-week Summer Programme in which the Young People will engage with other Youth Services in the North & South and visit Tourist destinations.
- 6-week Self-Care Programme for Young Women, followed by 'Feminta'-workshops designed to empower and educate Young Women.
- Brod Project: Providing a space and medium for Young People from LGBTI+ to express themselves and access support.

Therapeutic Space

Therapeutic services are open to all young people who attend Candle, with participants of new initiatives like Candle's Outreach Mentoring Programme and the Community Support Hub also availing of therapeutic interventions. This service is unique in its approach, creating 'care within a circle of care' or a 'wrap around' service which delivers significantly positive outcomes for very vulnerable children, young people, and their families. The therapeutic services have become an integral response to meet the complex needs of the young people, in providing therapeutic interventions deemed necessary following the assessment and care planning process. All the staff in Candle work collaboratively to support the young people in accessing their therapeutic care plan. Through this vital support young people rarely miss their appointment and as a result engage fully, with remarkable positive outcomes achieved.

The Therapeutic Space like all Candle's programmes have had to adapt and become more flexible in our approach and delivery of services through a second year of the pandemic. Adhering to government guidelines to ensure the safety of young people and staff was foremost on our minds while striving to provide vital therapeutic interventions. Thankfully counselling could continue throughout the year in person and acupuncture was permitted from February through individual appointments. Yoga classes were reintroduced in June with one-to-one classes.

A renewed appreciation for the therapeutic services was witnessed, especially this year. The young people have expressed their greater understanding of the experienced benefits of therapeutic interventions on both their physical and mental health and overall well-being.



Developing as a trauma responsive and informed organisation is key to Candle's vision and has informed every goal and focus of services in Candle, in particular the therapeutic service. Every aspect of our building and the surrounding grounds have been designed to create an environment that is trauma reducing and conducive to our work with young people. The sensory garden that was completed in 2020 has created a biodiversity with its conscious planting of native trees and plants which is drawing staff and young people alike outdoors regardless of the weather to embrace the peace and tranquillity. Over this year the paths in the garden have been well worn as some therapists took counselling outside, so much so we extended the walkways.

Therapies Offered

The Therapeutic Space provides weekly individual psychotherapy and counselling alongside drama therapy, acupuncture, yoga, and mindfulness practice as part of the overall programming for young people accessing Candle's services.

Young people who present with complex needs are supported through therapeutic interventions to work through their personal struggles to fully partake in educational/developmental programmes and to ultimately grow and develop as healthy human beings.

As a trauma informed organization, Candle is acutely aware of the negative fall-out for many young people in the community, during COVID 19 particularly in relation to mental health. Many young people found it hard to cope with isolation and loneliness, a loss of routine and social connection, anxiety about the future, a disruption to their education, and in some cases difficult or traumatic experiences at home.

Consequently, in September 2020 Candle approached Ballyfermot Chapelizod Partnership to fund and collaborate on a new initiative to reach out to young people in the wider Ballyfermot community who were not currently engaging in Candle services. The proposed 5-month initiative called the Community Support Hub was a response to the mental health needs of young people and families following the lockdown and during this ongoing pandemic period.



Following the evaluation of the pilot programme in April 2021 and the reported overwhelming needs of the young people in community, Candle concluded that the Community Support Hub should be sustained through the therapeutic service. The original referring agencies: the 4 local secondary schools, Ballyfermot Youth Service and Familibase were invited to continue in the programme. Each service can refer 2 clients for 12 weeks of individual psychotherapy with a continuous intake. The referring agency has a nominated person who commits to working collaboratively with Candle in supporting the young person while they are attending counselling and to put a care plan in place if the participant requires additional support.

This year the Community Support Hub has become fully established both in Candle and in the community. Young people and their families have reported on the positive's outcomes due to engagement and acknowledge the importance of this vital service to young people living in the area. Several young people having completed their counselling have been introduced to our other services in particular the youth service and have joined groups that are both supportive and fun.



Inter-agency Dimension

The Therapeutic Space and Youth Service continue to work in collaboration with local schools and agencies to identify those most at risk and then providing personal development groups, psychotherapy, and counselling for those identified. It is of utmost importance that the philosophy and ethos of the Therapeutic Space underpins interagency involvement i.e. that young people establish a particular sense of security and belonging with the Agency and Candle which enables them to take up the therapeutic services. We also unceasingly strive to create a 'wrap around' service through individual care plans for those young people referred by TUSLA, Probation and the HSE who have no prior engagement with Candle services.

Engagement in Therapeutic Services in 2021:



The Therapeutic Space services are continuously reviewed by the participants, keyworkers, and service providers.

Outcomes identified in these evaluations:

- The significant mental health needs of very vulnerable young people are being addressed.
- A reduction in suicidal feeling and ideation among client group.
- Decrease in levels of anger or aggressive outbursts in the Centre and at home.
- Development of important life skills and supports which help to reduce anxiety and address depression.
- Decreased levels of offending and anti-social behaviour.
- Healthier attitude to relationships, sexual activity, and consent.
- Greater ability to focus and participate in educational and developmental programmes resulting in higher levels of accreditation being achieved.
- Building of healthy social networks/relationships
- Children and young people were helped to emotionally self-regulate.

- Building of internal psychological safety and containment.
- Improved self-care and living skills for participants.
- Development of self-confidence, self-efficacy, and resilience.
- Normalisation of the concept of seeking support.
- Young people had the opportunity to work with painful personal experiences and possible trauma.
- Time to connect with one's own creativity and personal identity.

It is our firm belief that engagement in the Therapeutic Space is making a considerable difference in the lives of the young people, from their education attainment to reducing offending behaviours and towards greater healthy personal and social integration.

Referrals to the Therapeutic Space:



The Candle Home Liaison Programme

The Candle Home Liaison Programme (CHLP) aims to engage the most 'hard-to-reach' young people, support their motivation and involvement, as well as to enhance their well-being through the facilitation of a supportive home environment. The involvement and support of parents and the family is crucial during the young persons' engagement with our services. It is our experience that better outcomes are realised when parents and families are involved in their child's placement.

The function of the Home Liaison role is to work on the ground, increase parental involvement and help to facilitate a supportive home environment. The implementation of frequent family contacts offers the opportunity of parenting support with the purpose of communication, strengthening parenting skills and identifying needs. By building a positive relationship with the parents from the beginning and with ongoing frequent contact, Candle aims to establish a positive foundation for successful cooperation to support the young person's development.

The work of the CHLP is underpinned by the three key methodologies used at Candle: Trauma Recovery Model, Empowerment Model and Restorative Practices.

Impact of COVID 19

During COVID restrictions the CHLP continued to work in an adaptive and imaginative manner to maintain contact and connection with families and offer support. While in person meetings with parents were subject to restrictions, contact over the phone was maintained and social media was used to share information. Online platforms were also used to host mindfulness and information sessions for parents and family members.

Support with getting online- During conversations with parents they, indicated that they would like to participate in mindfulness and yoga over Zoom, but would need some support to become more confident online. A number of sessions were held with parents to facilitate this.

Consultation with Parents

Early in 2021 fifteen parents and family members participated in a phone survey carried out by the CHLP. They were asked about a range of potential supports which could be offered and whether these would be helpful to them. They were also asked about potential future events, talks and therapies and which they would be interested in attending. The responses to this survey were then used to inform the work of the CHLP.



The Therapeutic Space

Candle recognises an increase in complex needs and significant emotional stress due to the level of trauma experienced by young people attending Candle and their families. During 2021 the CHLP organised several events for parents and family members within the Therapeutic Space.

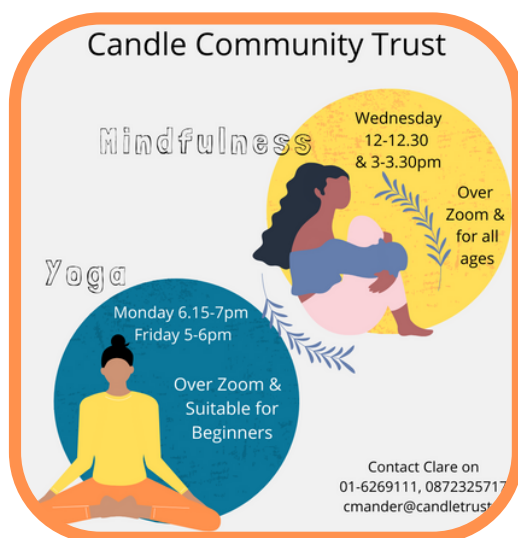
Family Mindfulness- Two family mindfulness sessions were held weekly over Zoom from January to June 2021. The sessions introduced parents and children to the theory and practice of mindfulness in an accessible manner. Families who participated were also sent care packs containing essential oil to use during the sessions and in their own mindfulness practice.

Acupuncture Appointments- Following on from the Zoom mindfulness appointments, onsite acupuncture appointments were offered to parents. Each participant was offered six sessions of acupuncture.

Good Mood Food Talks- An initial two talks for parents over Zoom were organised. The talks focused on changes to eating habits that can help with energy levels and reduce stress. The sessions were facilitated by a Therapist from the Candle Therapeutic Space. At the request of the participants a subsequent two talks were held. A meal guide was also put together and shared with the participants.

Parents Group

During Term 3 of 2021 the CHLP established a Parents Group, which was attended by 4 parents. The work of the group focused on approaches to communicating with children and young people. The group had a relationship-based approach, aiming to develop a framework for thinking about parent/ child relationships, promoting communication, and exploring feelings.



Looking Forward

With increased opportunities to meet in person, it is envisioned that the CHLP can continue to build upon the relationships and connections with parents and further expand the reach of the programme. This important part of the wrap around supports offered by Candle will also continue to support better outcomes for the young people.

Candle Outreach Mentoring Programme

The Candle Outreach Mentoring Programme (C.O.M.P.) was established as a pilot programme in April of this year as a collaborative venture between Candle and Tusla. The overall purpose of the new service is to support young people in care, or on the cusp of care, to grow and develop in their educational, social, and developmental needs: working within trauma informed and restorative frameworks to facilitate effective engagement, collaboration, and learning. The creation of this new initiative followed on from a very productive and successful interagency training period on trauma informed practice & organisations. The new service has strived throughout the report period to encapsulate the essence of, and learning from, this training; coupled with the expertise honed from decades of working with marginalised and “at risk” young people, in its engagement with young people referred to the service. This has led to a way of working that promotes a youth centred approach, where the voice of the young person is to the fore; where the young person is considered the “expert in their own lives”; and where the pace and content of the work is teased out in close conjunction with the young person to ensure that is meeting them where they are at (their comfort level, pace and developmental stage).



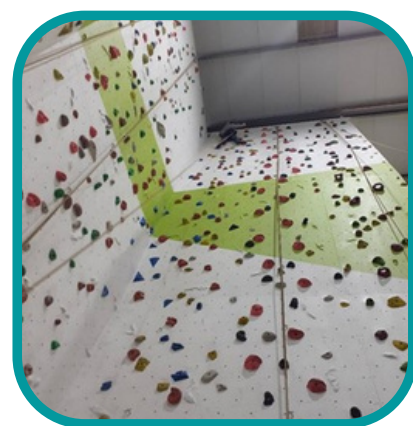
All interactions with the young people availing of the service to date has been influenced by a relationship model; in that the first port of call is to actively build positive working relationships with them, getting to know them and ensuring their comfort and trust is established, before any exploration on their life choices or behaviours; or before more in-depth developmental intervention is undertaken. The duration of the formation of these relationships is very individual based and the service takes a very respectful and flexible approach in being guided by this and a bespoke approach is adopted. At the heart of the interaction with young people is the creation of a genuine appreciation and enjoyment in spending time with them. As simple as this may sound, it is the cornerstone of the approach, in that it goes a long way in the young people trusting the relationship, feeling validated & valued and acceding to open-up about their life experiences and their views of the world they inhabit.



The service rotates around the availability and timetable of the young people with weekly 1-to-1 sessions taking place at varying times of the week (a number of Saturday sessions have also taken place), as well as varying times of the day. The structures and settings of these sessions are also led by the young people, with content being assorted to meet the ever-changing need and daily situations of the young people involved. This content has ranged from more informal developmental workshops on emotional regulation, social development, communication skills, identity & self worth and safe driving theory programmes to more informal discussions around issues such as personal identity, welfare & safety, drug use, educational advice, and support.

Contact time has been conducted within foster family homes, residential units, special care units, local parks, GAA fields, pool halls, horse stables, river walks and within the Candle premises itself. Some young people are content and at ease in interacting on a simple car journey where the less formal setting can facilitate great discussion and self-reflection.

An important element of the working relationship with the young people and their acceptance of it, has been the responsibility to really listen to them on issues that are important to them. What naturally follows in some instances and where applicable, is the clear responsibility to advocate on behalf of the young people to get their voiced needs met. Ongoing, healthy collaboration and communication between professionals (social workers, teachers, guardian's ad litem, residential workers, etc) and family members (parents, grandparents, foster parents, suitable extended family members) has been undertaken throughout this period to highlight issues raised by the young people that are important to them. C.O.M.P. realises the unique and privileged position it holds; in that it has the flexibility and time with the young people with a very open and young person led agenda which can produce quite unique and progressive outcomes for the young people. For this reason, it is imperative that the service has ensured that the content, and also manner, of the work is fully communicated to all relevant stakeholders. The service has also strived to champion the approach to the work with the young people with other professionals: highlighting the effectiveness of flexibility, creativity, and time in the building of positive child/adult relations; and stressing the importance of this relationship being the starting point from where engagement, support and the reaching of outcomes ensue.



Similar approaches to that of the relational model utilised with the young people are undertaken with the parents and relevant care givers directly after the receiving of individual referrals. Sufficient time has always been awarded significant care givers (parents, foster carers, residential workers) to voice their thoughts, concerns and/or day to day challenges. It has been imperative for C.O.M.P. in the ongoing inclusion and collaboration of care givers to ensure they receive validation on their role, knowledge, and care of their child, coupled with an acknowledgement of their feelings in the ongoing interactions with the service.

Communication can range from the more formal statutory meetings like Child in Care reviews to a weekly chat over the kitchen table. Time is also spent in regular phone conversation with caregivers to ensure proper feedback is given on sessions undertaken, alongside inclusion in planning for upcoming sessions. At times lengthier dialogue occurred where parents could seek advice on managing certain challenging behaviour, both over the phone and in person. A parent peer group was also run-in conjunction with the Candle Home Liaison which consisted of developmental workshops that parents could learn from one another, share self-care strategies, and be provided with group acupuncture.



An integral component to the success and effectiveness of the service is the close collaboration and joint learning that is created between C.O.M.P. staff and referring Tusla social workers. The C.O.M.P. service understands the power of a multi-agency approach to create a platform of open dialogue that the young person can be considered through many different lenses; and that knowledge, information and effective approaches can be shared and reflected on, to in turn be put in to practice with the individual young people. Great efforts have been exercised on both sides during this report period to create and maintain open channels of regular communication that can facilitate and encourage this reflection and growth. As the working relationships have matured, more in-depth discussion has arisen between social workers and C.O.M.P. that has been extremely healthy and inquisitive by nature and which puts efforts into joint thinking on the needs of the individual young people, where through curious dialogue, new perspectives and strategies of support emerge and joint understanding of purpose is reached. Over the course of the report period the C.O.M.P. staff have been very appreciative of, and benefitted from, the willingness and openness of the social work personnel to engage in this type of discourse, as it has honed ongoing practice and ensured that the young people were always to the fore of the planning of service provision.

TRUSTEES 2021

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Representatives who currently attend Candle Board of Management Meetings:

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Garreth Tierney Liaison Officer - CDYSB

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(Developmental Co-ordinator)

Elena Moreo
(Yoga teacher)

Martina
Speranza(Horticulturalist)

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Samantha Yap
(Psychotherapist)

Breeda Slevin
(Teacher)

Kathleen Moore
(Psychotherapist)

Veronica Bowden
(Receptionist)

Brian Johnston
(Director)

Kevin Callan
(Acupuncturist)

Veronica Woods
(Kitchen/Housekeeping
supervisor)

Carmel Buckley
(Housekeeping)

Linda Coogan
(Classroom Assistant)

Ciara Cassoni
(Drama Therapist)

Linda Hayes
(Financial Administrator)

Clare Mander
(Education Services Co-ordinator
Home Liaison Co-ordinator)

Louise McCormack
(Youth Worker)

Dervella McNee
(Associate Director)

Lovette Omprogbe
(Housekeeping)

Donna Dinnegan
(Teacher)

Martina Galvin
(Teacher & QQI Co-ordinator)



Acknowledgements

I wish to record my thanks and gratitude to all those people who contributed so richly and generously to Candle during 2021.

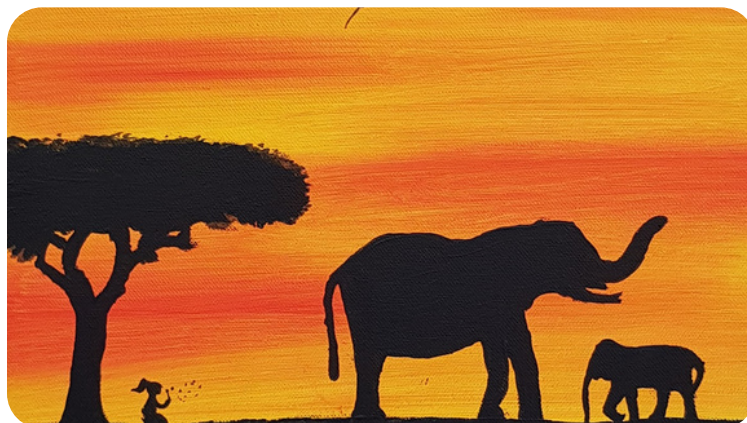
Firstly, I want to thank the many young people who participate so willingly and enthusiastically in the various Programmes and Activities. They are at the heart of what the Project is all about and it is their energy and openness that makes Candle such a special place.

Thank you to Seamus Taaffe, Chairperson of the Board, for leading the organization with great vision and commitment, in collaboration with all Candle Trustees. I thank each trustee for the many and varied ways that they have been involved with the Project over the past year.

The staff at Candle are our greatest resource. I am privileged to work with a staff team who have a real passion for youth work and who contribute whole heartedly and generously every day to Candle and its participants. I thank each staff member for their efforts and dedication in 2021.

At Candle we are fortunate to have a number of volunteers who give freely of their time to working in Candle services. We are grateful to each volunteer for their commitment and time.

I acknowledge our Funding Agencies who provide not just finance but ongoing support to the organization. I thank the Probation Service, CDETB, CDYSB, TUSLA and HSE for their continuing support of Candle's work. I wish to record my thanks to: Joe Keaney, Ciara O'Connor and Olivia Keaveney, The Probation Service; Probation Officers whom we work with on a daily basis; Tony Browne and Tanya McEntagart CDETB; Maria Hayes, Des Delaney and Deirdre Roche, TUSLA; Garreth Tierney and Brian Healy, CDYSB; Deirdre Nolan, Kylemore College (CDETB); Cecilia Munroe, Ballyfermot College of Further Education (CDETB); John Meehan, National Office for Suicide Prevention.



Acknowledgements

The Jobs Initiative and Community Employment Schemes are extremely important to Candle and to enabling Candle provide its current level of Service. Thank you to Michelle McEvoy, J.I. Co-ordinator, and Henry Harding and Dave Fleming, C.E. Supervisors.

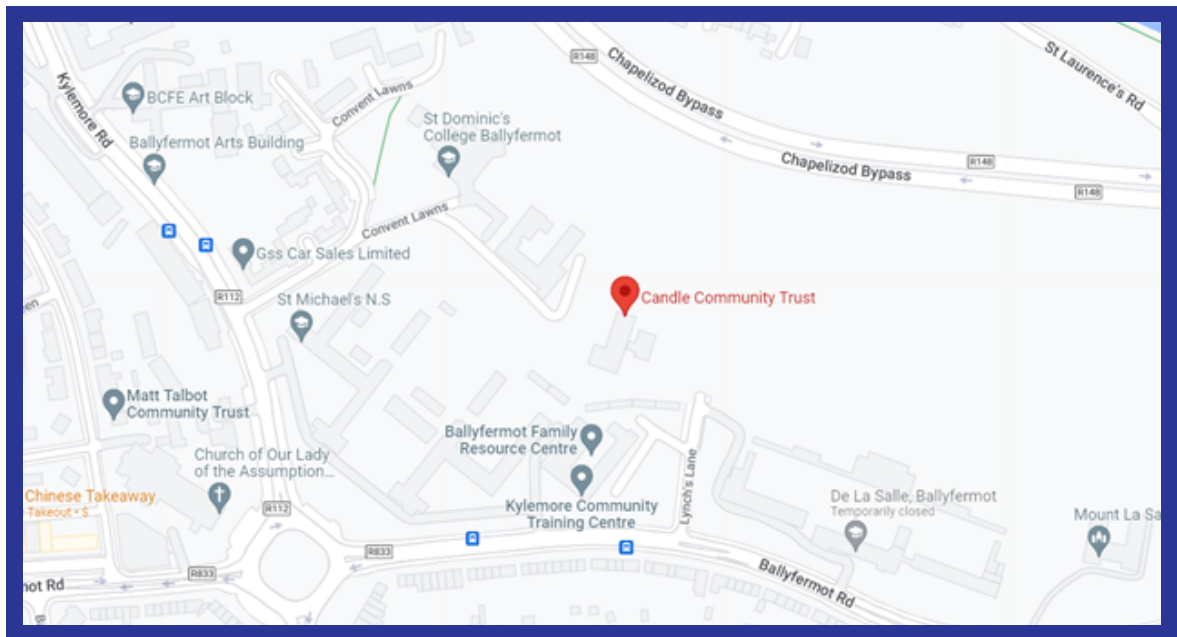
A significant number of organizations and individuals have contributed financially to the redevelopment of the Candle Campus and to ongoing service provision. We are deeply indebted to each for their generosity, and for the trust which they place in the Candle organization.

Finally, there is a wide network of people and community agencies who have contributed significantly to the life and work of Candle over the past year. I acknowledge these mutually fruitful relationships and am grateful for our collaboration and cooperation.

Brian Johnston

Our Funders





*"Everyone is welcome here,
equally cherished for the gifts
they bring to our community"*

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