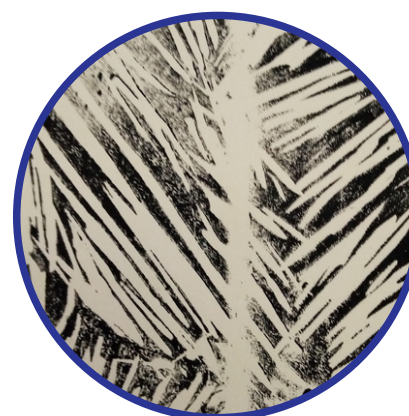


CANDLE COMMUNITY TRUST



ANNUAL REPORT
2022





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Candle Community Trust



@candle10

Introduction and Summary

2022 was a year of significant growth and development in the Candle organization. The redeveloped campus became fully operational and services changed and grew in response to emerging needs. Partnerships with funding agencies were enhanced resulting in the furthering of new innovative programming. The demand for services continued to grow and the post-covid world presented new challenges for the organization.

In early 2022 society began to move out of the critical phase of Covid 19 and life resumed with some sense of normality. During the Covid emergency Candle was designated as an essential service and continued to deliver much needed programming and interventions to young people. While that phase of Covid presented particular difficulties in terms of service delivery, the organization responded to the needs of young people in a pro-active and imaginative way. However, during the second half of 2022, the effects of Covid on young people within our catchment area became more apparent. Long absences from school and minimum community supports and structures have taken a toll and we are very much beginning to see the impact. Increased levels of anxiety, particularly social anxiety, evidence of chaotic lifestyles which oscillate between withdrawing from life and highly destructive behavior and a real lack of grounding/place is leading to young people being 'harder to reach' and connect with.

This new reality requires Candle, and similar organizations, to develop responses that are different and appropriate to meet the new emerging needs of young people. This reshaping of our response began in Candle during 2022 and is particularly seen in the further development of the Community Response Hub (a therapeutic intervention for young people in the community), the establishment of an outreach response to young people and families (Candle Outreach Mentoring Programme and Family Outreach), the inclusion of more detached youth work in our schedule and the strengthening of our trauma informed practices that permeate all programming. This new focus on outreach and methodologies to connect with those most "hard to reach" young people has begun to shape our work in 2022 and is likely to continue in the years ahead. This Report details the various programming/services that Candle delivered in 2022 in response to this changing context.



The redevelopment of the Candle Campus has been a focus also for the organization over the past 6 years. The work on the new building was completed in 2020 while the new therapeutic garden and outdoor spaces were finished in 2021. Once again Covid prevented the organization from celebrating this new 1.8 million development and it was only in 2022 that we had the opportunity to officially open the facility. We were delighted that Minister James Browne, Minister of State, and Ms. Una Doyle, Assistant Director, Probation Service were able to join the young people, Board of Trustees, staff, and community representatives on a beautiful sunny day in October for the official opening of the new campus. This Report offers a reflection on the event and the context for the redevelopment.

Candle's strategic plan reached its mid-point in early 2022 and the Board of Trustees received a detailed update on progress to date. The Plan is very much on course to be fully implemented and in late 2023 we will commence the work of shaping a new plan for the coming years, based on the needs of those who attend (and will attend) our service. The primary goals of the current Plan are detailed in this Annual Report.

We are very mindful of our collaboration with funding agencies. We are grateful for their trust in, and commitment to, Candle and we have detailed Service Level Agreements that the organization was committed to delivering upon in 2022. Candle is dedicated to providing best practice interventions and services to young people who often experience marginalization and are "hard to reach". We are committed to providing a context of growth (intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual) so that each young person can be nurtured and supported to be their best selves, taking their place in community as responsible and mature individuals. Our work with young people often leads to breaking cycles of destructive behavior, replacing it with creativity and insight, which in turn contributes significantly to better and safer communities for all. This report offers a clear reflection on each of the programmes being delivered by Candle, with particular focus on the outcomes achieved. We particularly draw your attention to the significant levels of educational accreditation achieved by the young people, the progression to further education for many and the evidence of involvement in many pro-social activities and programming.



The level of engagement of young people in therapeutic services is remarkable and is a testimony to the wrap-around approach and methodologies being delivered at Candle. The mix of services, from the formal to non-formal educational programming, has involved high numbers of targeted young people with meaningful and tangible outcomes achieved. We offer this Report as evidence of Candles ground-breaking work in 2022.

Finally, the Board acknowledges the immense contribution of the staff at Candle. The staff are our greatest resource and we are fortunate to have a team of professionals who are totally committed to the young people and bring competency, skills, compassion and fun to all their interactions. In 2022 a number of staff retired after many years of long service for which we thank them greatly. We wish them every happiness in the next steps of their lives. A significant number of new staff joined in 2022 (due to these retirements and new additional posts being assigned to Candle) and we welcome each and look forward to building the organization further in the coming year.



Official Opening of the Redeveloped Campus

In 2022 we welcomed Minister James Browne, Minister of State, to Candle Community Trust for the official opening of our newly redeveloped campus. We also warmly welcomed various community representatives and stakeholders to a moment of celebration for our organisation.

Candle has been in existence for 45 years and has always sought to respond meaningfully to the ever-changing environment. Working in close collaboration with the Probation Service, CDETB, CDYSB and in recent years TUSLA and HSE, Candle has evolved from humble beginnings into an organisation that delivers a large range of creative and innovative educational, developmental and therapeutic programmes to young people and families. Over 170 young people currently attend services on a weekly basis and Candle now has 32 staff members delivering these services. The redeveloped campus now provides a context for this service delivery, and it greatly enhances and supports the essence of the work.

The official opening marked the culmination of 7 years of planning, development, building and significant fundraising. What started as a small seed of an idea in early 2015 for the creation of a space that would reflect the development of services, grew to a total redevelopment of the campus. The campus now includes a facility, double the size of the original premises, a therapeutic garden, a new recreational pitch area and a totally restructured entrance area.

In recent years Candle has developed a model of practice, a methodology and service delivery, that seeks to meet the needs of young people. Candle uses trauma informed approaches and restorative practice methodologies in its programming to provide a wrap-around service to young people. These methodologies and services inspired how the facility was designed and built. The resulting ambience and aesthetics of the new Centre and outdoor spaces are indeed a fitting context for a service that espouses to be trauma informed in its thinking and approaches.

**Candle
Community
Trust**



On the day of the official opening we particularly acknowledged the young people, staff and board who make Candle such an enriching learning community. We thanked the many local agencies who work in close collaboration with Candle for the benefit of all in the community. We also acknowledged the immense support of our funding agencies and thanked each for believing in Candle's work and for their ongoing commitment to the Project. And finally, a huge thank you to those many benefactors who supported this redevelopment financially. Without their contribution and support this venture could not have been undertaken.



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 organization 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 2022

Training Programme

LEARNER PROFILE- Training Programme	2022	2021
Numbers aged 16/17 (at commencement)	23	18
Numbers aged 18-20 (at commencement)	8	14
LEARNER OUTCOMES- Training Programme		
Numbers in training during period	31	32
Numbers commenced during period	15	17
Numbers finished during period	14	17
Number who completed programme	7	12
Number dropped out due to personal circumstances	4	5
Number dropped out due to inability to complete	3	1
LEARNER DEVELOPMENT- Training Programme		
Induction programmes completed	31	32
Care Plans developed and reviewed	31	32
Literacy input	31	32
ACCREDITATION ACHIEVED- Training Programme		
Number of Major Awards in Employability Skills Level 3	1	1
Number of Major Awards in General Learning Level 4	13	8
Number of Major Awards in Community Development Level 5	1	2

	2022	2021
Number of Minor Awards at Level 3	24	9
Number of Minor Awards at Level 4	123	63
Number of Minor Awards at Level 5	16	16
Application of Number Level 3	2	1
Computer Literacy Level 3	2	1
Woodwork Level 3	12	7
Health and Fitness Level 3	1	/
Career Preparation Level 3	2	/
Communications Level 3	2	/
Personal Effectiveness Level 3	1	/
Art & Design Level 3	2	/
Painting Level 4	11	5
Graphic Design Level 4	8	7
Personal Effectiveness Level 4	14	8
Work Experience Level 4	/	2
Communications Level 4	12	7
IT Skills Level 4	15	5
Woodcraft Level 4	9	5
Health Related Fitness Level 4	13	6

	2022	2021
Functional Maths Level 4	13	8
Career Preparation & Planning Level 4	10	10
Plant Identification, Care & Maintenance Level 4	17	/
Drawing Level 4	1	/
Communications Level 5	3	2
Personal Effectiveness Level 5	3	2
Community Arts Context and Practice Level 5	3	2
Understanding Community Development Level 5	3	2
Community Development Practice Level 5	1	2
Social Studies Level 5	1	2
Working with Groups Level 5	1	2
Personal and Professional Development Level 5	1	2
SOCIAL & PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT- Training Programme		
Socialisation Programme	31	31
Music Programme	13	13
Horticulture Programme	18	22
Sports Programme	31	21
Gaisce Award	20	15

	2022	2021
Relationship & Sexuality Education	12	/
Positive Mental Health	13	12
One World Week (sustainability)	12	/
Driver Education Programme (Youth Employability)	5	/
REFERRALS - Training Programme		
The Probation Service	11	4
Candle Youth Programme	/	/
Tusla	2	/
Youth Service Agencies/ other	7	5
Self- referral	10	23
COMP	1	/
TRACKING & SUPPORT- Training Programme		
Number of ex Trainees who received support	11	7
PROGRESSION- Training Programme		
Numbers progressed to further training/ education (internal)	6	/
Numbers progressed to further training/education (external)	3	5
Numbers progressed to employment	5	5

Youth Employability Programme

	2022
Number of one to one sessions held	98
Number of group sessions held	21
Overall number of participants	47
	No. of participants
Employability Skills workshops	12
First Aid course	4
Manual Handling Training	11
Safe Pass Training	2
Driving Programme	9
Barista course	6
Graffiti Art workshop	10
1:1 support with progression planning	8
College visits/ college awareness	11
Team building/ confidence building trips	27
1:1 support with job/ training application process	17
Support with sourcing work experience placements	5
Assistance with funding applications/ other	4

Connect Programme

LEARNER PROFILE- Connect Programme		2022	2021
Number aged 15 (at commencement) Connect Youth Programme		1	3
Numbers at 16/17 (at commencement)		14	21
Numbers at 18-21 (at commencement)		6	9
LEARNER OUTCOMES- Connect Programme			
Numbers attending during period		25	33
Numbers commenced during period		21	10
Numbers progressed to Candle Training programme		13	17
Numbers progressed to other Training Centre/ education		2	1
Number dropped out due to personal circumstances		2	10
Number dropped out due to inability to complete (detention)		2	2
Number dropped out due to non attendance		4	1
LEARNER DEVELOPMENT- Connect Programme			
Induction Programmes completed		25	33
Care Plans developed and reviewed		25	33
Literacy Input		25	2
One to one specialised programme		/	3
Progression plans developed		25	33
Socialisation Programme		25	33

SOCIAL & PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT- Connect Programme	2022	2021
Crime Awareness	25	33
Drug and Alcohol Awareness	25	33
Sexual Health Awareness	25	33
Positive Mental Health	25	33
REFERRALS- Connect Programme		
The Probation Service/ IYJS	11	12
JLO/ Garda Diversion Projects	3	11
Self-referral	2	6
Tusla	5	/
Other	1	4

Youth Service

YOUNG PEOPLES OUTCOMES- Youth Service	2022	2021
Numbers attending during period (individual young people)	145	94
Number of overall formal contacts/ sessions delivered	3514	1765
ATTENDANCE FIGURES FOR:	Contact	Contact
Youth Café 2nd/3rd Year	540	470
Thursday Youth Café	675	140
Young People 10-12 Years (Afterschool & Boys Group)	1095	54

Youth Service

	2022	2021
First Years Group	215	351
Brod Group	204	144
Direct Provision Group	323	126
Intensive Group Work	120	64
Young Leaders Group	102	24
Key working 18-21 year olds	210	152
Number of Young People who engaged in Acupuncture Sessions	30	/
YOUNG PEOPLES PROFILE- Youth Service		
Numbers aged 10-14 years	72	37
Numbers aged 15-17 years	61	35
Numbers aged 18-21 years	12	16
Number of females attending programme	70	61
Number of males attending programme	75	34
SOCIAL AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT- Youth Service		
Swimming Programme	10	6
Self- Esteem Programme	15	6
Graffiti Art Skills Workshop	14	6
Drama Workshop	18	6

	2022	2021
Halloween Community Event	15	10
Outdoor Recreational Programme to support mental health	17	15
Martial Arts Programme	6	/
Driver Theory Test Group (Youth Employability)	4	/
Barista Training (Youth Employability)	5	/

Therapeutic Space

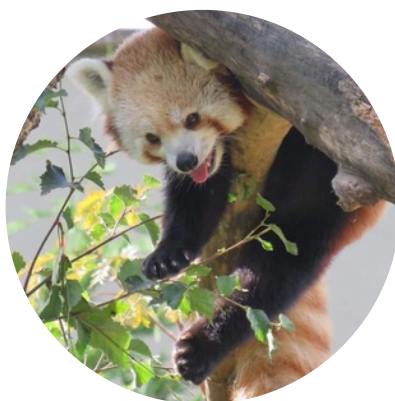
YOUNG PEOPLES OUTCOMES- Therapeutic Space	2022	2021
Numbers accessing service during period	152	138
ATTENDANCE FIGURES	No. of sessions	No. of sessions
Counselling/ Psychotherapy (30 clients*) 15 trainees/ 11 youth service/ 2 COMP/ 2 parents	374*	444
Community Support Hub (65 clients*)	458*	301
Yoga (13 young people*) 10 trainees/ 3 Connect	138*	76
Acupuncture/Mindfulness (44 individual y/p*) 22 trainees/ 5 Connect/ 2 COMP/ 1 CSH/ 14 youth service	559*	215

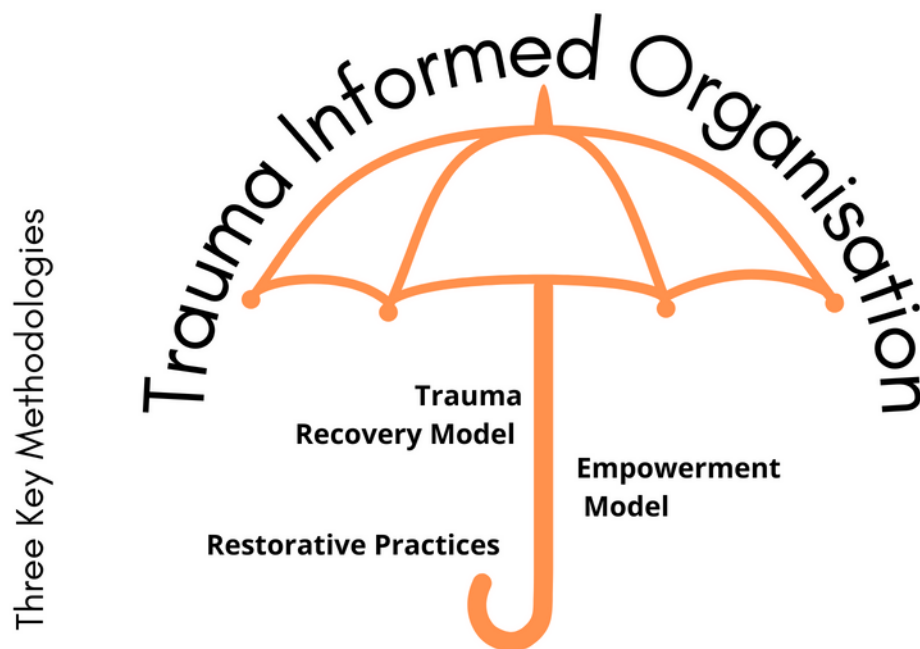


C.O.M.P

	2022	2021*
Tusla Referrals	5	14
Y/p actively engaged in C.O.M.P service	10	10
Overall Sessions Contacts	321	156
Statutory Meetings (Child in Care Reviews, Core Group Meetings, Collaboration/ Professional Meetings, Formal Social Work Meetings)	27	27
Residential Team Meetings	8	5
Other Professional Support Meetings (G.A.L, School Officials etc.)	10	7

*2021 statistics- April to December 2021





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.

Outcomes for Young People



The Training Programme

The full-time training programme at Candle is an educational programme for 16-21-year-olds, primarily aimed at early school leavers, but also those who have completed second-level education. We offer an interesting and practical range of modules leading to Major Award QQI accreditation at level 3, 4 and 5. The Training Programme at Candle is delivered in a dynamic learning environment in our purpose-built, newly developed campus in Ballyfermot. The awards and modules are employment and progression focused. Our referrals come from Probation/IYJS, JLO's, HSE, TUSLA, local agencies, families and self-referrals.

We believe our educational programme to be unique in terms of the range of supports offered. A variety of social and developmental programmes are incorporated into the timetable to ensure that all the young people who commence their education at Candle can achieve their potential. Some of these include cultural trips and activities. Additional support is given in literacy, numeracy and resource teaching. All young people who attend our training programme can access our therapeutic space. We believe our programme prepares the young people very well for opportunities and challenges in their future and our academic success is a testament to this.

2022 started strong with the introduction of two new modules to the Level 4 programme, Drawing and Plant Identification, Care and Maintenance, and the reintroduction of one of the core modules, Work Experience. In the second half of the year, we received funding (through the REACH fund) for iPads to support teaching and learning through ICT.



QQI Awards

QQI qualifications are an important goal for every young person who engages in education at the centre. Achieving an accredited qualification instils a sense of achievement and pride for the young person and opens up progression pathways. The programmes provided 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).

QQI Level 3 Major Award
Employability Skills
3M0935

QQI Level 4 Major Award
General Learning
4M2010

QQI Level 5 Major Award
Community Development
5M3050

We achieved a highest level of accreditation to date in Candle during 2022 with 163 Minor Awards and 15 Major Awards. There was 1 Major Award and 16 minor awards at Level 5, 123 Minor Awards and 13 Major Awards at level 4 and 1 Major Award and 24 Minor Awards at level 3. Well done to each young person who achieved awards in 2022!

The QQI Level 3 Award in Employability Skills gives the young people the opportunity to engage with education while obtaining a qualification equivalent to the Junior Cert. The QQI Level 4 Major Award in General Learning award remains the bedrock of the educational programme. Most learners at Candle complete modules at this level.

The Level 5 award is an access course for third level education. The young people who achieve the Major Award have benefitted hugely from the delivery of this programme within the supportive environment of Candle. It offers them the opportunity to obtain the qualifications to progress on to third level education.

Accreditation in 2022:

	QQI Level 3	QQI Level 4	QQI Level 5	Total:
Major Awards achieved	1	13	1	15
Minor Awards achieved	24	123	16	163

Teaching and Learning

All education programmes are underpinned by the guiding principles of the Restorative Practice Model, the Empowerment Model and the Trauma Recovery Model. 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 and appropriate educational interventions identified. One to one support with literacy, numeracy or other areas is provided on a needs led basis.

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 are of exceptional standard and this module is always enjoyed by students. Painting continues 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 IT based modules being delivered at levels 3 and 4. We introduced Plant Identification, Care and Maintenance a level 4 module that allows the young people to study the science of horticulture and promotes conversations about biodiversity and the environment.

A module in Health-Related Fitness at levels 3 and 4 is integrated into our weekly timetable. Activities include tennis, volleyball, basketball, badminton, circuit training and football and were facilitated by two fitness instructors, on site at Candle during the Spring and Summer months. The second half of the year saw a return to the Ballyfermot Sports Complex, where the young people played squash, badminton, football and worked out in a fully equipped gym.

The subjects delivered at Level 5 are focused on Community Development, with an emphasis on group work skills, research, written work and independent learning, to prepare the participants to progress to further or higher education.



Targeted Programme

The Targeted Programme at Candle targets individual needs within the structures of the existing training programme. The targeted programme is an integral and successful part of our educational programme and highlights our commitment to the Trauma Recovery Model. The programme aims to meet the needs of the young people according to their cognitive and emotional abilities and is primarily aimed at young people whose assessment indicates that they will learn and thrive more effectively by attending an alternative programme within smaller groups.

Developmental Programmes

The Developmental Programmes offered to Trainees aim to create a safe space to learn about and discuss important and relevant topics. In 2022 we facilitated several programmes with a focus on wellbeing: Relationships and Sexuality Education, Mental Health, as well as hosting One World Week (learning about sustainability). Young people were also supported through programmes focusing on active citizenship, crime awareness, drug & alcohol misuse, working with anger, emotional regulation, self esteem, resilience and adulthood.

Young people can share their thoughts on the programme and on issues that are important to them at weekly forums. These are an important opportunity for young people to have their voices heard and to ensure that the programme is responding to emerging needs.

Summer Programme

The young people at Candle attended a range of outings throughout 2022. These trips serve to strengthen relationships and to broaden the social and cultural experience of the young people. This year's summer programme began in May with trips to The National Museum of Ireland and Hugh Lane Gallery. Trips continued throughout June with Pitch & Putt, the Bloom Festival, Go Karting and Bubble Football. July was an active month with outings to Bay Sports, stand up paddle boarding, walking from Bray to Greystones, Causey Farm and High Ropes

As well as the trips out, the skills demonstrations for the Plant Identification, Care and Maintenance module were carried out during the summer and young people had the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of the outdoor classroom. Young people also took part in Graffiti Art workshops and copperwork classes.



Gaisce Award

The Gaisce Award is a prestigious award for young people in Ireland to encourage them to dream big and realise their potential. 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 achieve the award by learning a new skill (painting), taking part in physical activity (during our Friday sports programme), helping in the garden at Candle and going on an Adventure Journey. During 2022, 8 young people achieved their Bronze Award, with another 12 young people working towards their Bronze and Silver Awards.



Looking Forward

Some of the developments we are planning for 2023 include further developing our delivery of Communications and IT skills, continuing to support young people with their digital literacy and online safety by hosting an online safety week at Candle. We will continue to support the young people to take part in the Gaisce Award and receive their bronze and silver awards. We are developing a music programme into the timetable, and exploring in more depth our understanding of trauma informed pedagogy. In 2023 we will also for the first time have young people participating in an Erasmus volunteering project abroad, with some of our Level 5 participants travelling to Malta.

Progression 2022

- 2- progressed to further education.
- 1- progressed to other training.
- 1-offered a place on an access to apprenticeship programme in the TU Dublin
- 4- progressed internally from Level 4 programme to Level 5 programme in Candle.
- 2- progressed internally from Level 3 programme to Level 4 programme in Candle.
- 5- progressed from Level 4 to employment.

"Candle is one of our keys to a bright and good future".

"Candle is helping me a lot in life. It helps me to get a job. The people and teachers are lovely".

*Voice of the
Young People*

"Candle is a great place. I love the building. I like to meet people I know and play pool and Candle helps to keep me out of trouble".

"I like Candle because of the respect they show to me".

"I like Candle because of how welcome they make you feel".

"Candle is like a second home. I always feel like I can be myself around both students and teachers. They have helped me in stuff I have going on, my confidence and education".

Youth Employability Programme



The Youth Employability Support Initiative, which ran from April 2022 to December 2022, aimed to offer a range of evidence-based interventions to support young people to develop the confidence, knowledge, and skills to transition into the labour market and/or access further education and training opportunities. This programme was made possible through a successful funding application to CDYSB.

The programme targeted young people aged 15-24 from Ballyfermot or wider area, who were experiencing economic disadvantage, marginalisation or are isolated in their communities and not engaging in education/training/employment.

The main objectives of the initiative were:

- To increase young people's personal development, motivation, self-esteem, social skills and confidence
- To assist young people in the development of progression pathways that best fulfil their needs and aspirations
- To equip young people with soft skills and other marketable skills that will prove their competence to prospective employers
- To assist young people's journeys into further education
- To expose young people to a supportive environment that fosters their emotional, intellectual, professional development
- To direct young people towards work placement opportunities that can enhance their future career development

Group workshops were held to foster the development of soft skills and key competencies necessary to access employment, training or education. One-to-one support, mentoring and coaching focusing on; identification of strengths, exploring progression options and outlining a personal progression plan. Hands-on, practical support with job seeking process was offered. Young people took part in team building and confidence building trips and activities. Young people were provided with access to external facilitated trainings: Barista Training, Manual Handling, Safe Pass, Driver Education and First Aid. Young people were supported to access and take part in work experience placements.

Youth Employability Programme

During the 9 months of the Youth Employability Programme, a total of 47 young people availed of the programme. 98 one to one sessions were held with young people and 21 groups sessions/ workshops were facilitated.



participants



one to one sessions held



group sessions held

Through the Youth Employability Programme; 12 young people took part in Employability Skills workshops, 4 young people completed First Aid Responder training, 11 young people received Manual Handling certificates and 2 young people completed Safe Pass training.

9 young people took part in the Driver Education programme, 6 young people attended Barista training and 10 young people took part in Graffiti Art workshops.

11 young people took part in a college awareness programme, including visiting colleges and meeting with a college guidance counsellor. 27 young people attended trips out focused on team work skills and building resilience.

17 young people were provided with one to one support with job seeking- CV and cover letter preparation, job applications and interview preparation. 5 young people were supported to source work experience placements.

These activities supported the young people to explore their education and employment options, learn new skills and grow in confidence.



The Connect Project

The Connect Project provides a space for young people to begin to re-engage with their formal education. It is a stepping-stone to gaining QQI level accreditation. For many of these young people, we facilitate a re-integration into an educational setting. The programme takes into account that many of these young people have had negative experiences in mainstream school, have experienced trauma or have been involved in offending behaviour. The approach, therefore, allows for a holistic approach which aims to meet the needs of young people through tailor-made programmes including developmental, educational, and therapeutic aspects.

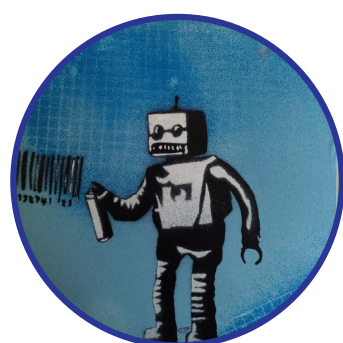
The main priority of the Connect Project is to fully understand the young person and their life experiences, to create a sense of belonging and build relationships. The programme is sensitive to the complex needs of participants and aims to support and motivate young people to positively participate in an educational setting. There is a specific focus on providing interventions and supports which actively encourage young people to make healthier life choices and engage in positive, pro-social behaviour. As with all Candle Programmes, our practice is informed by the Empowerment Model, the Restorative Model and the Trauma Recovery Model. The Connect Project works closely with Young Person's Probation, the Probation Service, TUSLA, local agencies and families, all of which can refer to the service.

Connect prepares 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. It is a space for young people to develop their self-confidence and re-engage with education at a pace that is in line with their needs. We help young people to engage in a structured, routine-based setting to provide alternatives to activities that may have led to offending behaviour. 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.



Connect works with a diverse group of young people from different parts of the community. For the first time a young person from COMP (Candle Outreach Mentoring Programme) joined Connect, highlighting the way in which our programmes work together and build the foundations for further progression. One young person attended Connect from a Direct Provision Centre and went on to engage in further education. Some of our young people are in the care of the State and as such we work closely with Tusla, Residential Homes and the people acting in loco parentis in order to achieve best outcomes for the young person while attending our service. In addition, Connect staff also visit the Children's Detention Campus in order to maintain and build relationships with young people who have attended or hope to re-engage with Candle on their release.

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. As part of our work to create routine and stability, the programme is offered to all young people 5 days per week with 8 sessions offered within that time. Individualised one to one programmes can also be facilitated where specific referrals are made. The specialised programmes are tailored to suit the individual needs and requirements. Participants engage in taster programmes in order to get a sense of the work that they will be engaged in when they progress to the Training Programme. These modules include Communications, Application of Number, Health & Fitness, Computer Literacy, Career Preparation, Personal Effectiveness, Art, and Woodwork. The programme is facilitated through small daily group sessions which focus on relationship building, education, developmental, socialisation skills and therapeutic interventions.



Connect Youth Programme

During 2022 we continued to offer the Connect Youth Programme in an afternoon slot three days per week. This programme was originally 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. It is part of a pathway for young people within Candle with the overall goal of engaging them in a fulltime educational programme at a pace that is tailored to their needs.

Outreach

Some of the young people who are referred to the Connect Programme, could be termed 'hard to reach'. They often find a classroom setting difficult to attend and we have found that their needs are more suited to a Community Outreach approach. Candle staff are available to meet the young people in the Community in a more informal and familiar setting. It is hoped that this intervention will build relationships and trust so that the young person can begin to identify what it is that they need in terms of educational, developmental, and therapeutic supports.

As part of the Connect Project, regular outreach visits to the Children's Detention Campus were also carried out with 3 young people during the year. These visits support young people whilst in Oberstown and maintaining those relationships, is an important aspect of the Connect project. As part of the transitional programme, young people are sometimes given the opportunity to attend Candle prior to their release from Oberstown. This is on a case-by-case basis. One young person successfully transitioned back to Candle following their time in detention and it is hoped others will do so in the early part of 2023.

Community Service

The Community Service Programme is a direct response to the increased number of young people who have been given a Community Service Order as opposed to juvenile detention. Candle's model and existing restorative approach gives those young people not only the opportunity to complete the practical work that is involved with the traditional model of Community Service but also the opportunity to engage with a trauma-informed developmental programme whereby young people are asked to reflect on the circumstances that led to their offending behaviour. It is hoped that through these interventions, we will empower young people to make more pro-social choices. The foundation of our Community Service Programme includes three elements that we consider fundamental to its success; restoration, reparation, and developmental work. Restoration is the process that involves young people redressing the harm caused to the victim while holding themselves accountable for their actions. Our aim is to facilitate regular restorative meetings when deemed necessary to address their offending behaviour in a reflective way. Reparation is the process that involves the young people giving back to the community where they have committed the crime. They partake in work that they would not usually do, such as, woodwork projects, gardening and maintenance work. And finally, through developmental work, the young people learn key life skills to use in their everyday lives. These skills also aim to prevent them from re-engaging in offending behaviour and help them gain valuable work experience.



Personal & Social Developmental Programmes

Through all aspects of Connect, personal and social developmental programmes are a key piece of work carried out with all participants. We are mindful to respond to emerging needs in the implementation of developmental programmes. In 2022, there was a strong focus on Positive Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol Awareness and Crime Awareness. During the Summer Programme, a Relationship and Sexuality Programme ran for a number of weeks. Young people also completed activities for Mental Health Week and One World Week. 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. We also focused on enabling them to engage in pro-social behaviour which will benefit themselves, their families, and the wider community. Another emphasis was also put on young people managing themselves within negative peer groups, their role in criminality, and the impact of this on not only themselves but others in their lives. We believe young people gained insight into their actions and this is further explored through key working support.

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.

The Therapeutic Space

All of the young people who attend Connect are offered the opportunity to try Acupuncture, Counselling and Yoga in the therapeutic space at Candle. For many, this is their first exposure to such services, but little by little, acupuncture appointments and walks in the Therapeutic Garden with a counsellor become normalised. These services are particularly important for those who have experienced trauma.



Socialisation

In addition to the more formal educational dimension, the programme also emphasises the importance of building social skills. The process of teamwork enables young people 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 spend time together in an informal fun way. The team building programme usually involves weekly onsite and off-site activities, for example, 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 of the young people.



Other programme areas such as the Sports Programme, Horticulture and Cooking highlight the importance of healthy eating and fitness. Participants enjoyed time in the garden learning about the various plants and vegetables, cooking a variety of different meals to eat and share with their classmates and sports like badminton, squash, football and gym continued throughout the year both on-site at Candle or in the gym in Ballyfermot. We also had a graffiti workshop in November where the young people got to try out different techniques and designs with a graffiti artist. Some of our Connect participants also engaged with additional courses such as Manual Handling, the Safe Pass and the Driver Theory Test. These courses are valued accreditation that will help them when they go on to seek employment.

Trips

Outings on the Connect Programme run continually throughout the year and young people are offered the opportunity to attend various excursions throughout the school holidays including Easter, Summer, Halloween, and Winter. The young people enjoyed trips to Go Quest, IMMA, The Zoo, Botanical Gardens, Pitch and Putt and Go Karting. During the Summer period, the young people in Connect were invited to join different classes and trips to Bay Sports, Causey Farm and Stand-Up Paddle Boarding and High Ropes in Carlingford. They enjoyed being out in nature and learned about the environment. They experienced a mix of recreational and educational summertime activities. They relaxed spending time in the garden and engaged in Copper Work in the Woodwork Room.

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 had a summer BBQ with the training programme and a games day which they loved. During wintertime, trips were based indoors attending rock-climbing, Go-Karting, and Bowling. We also participated in Christmas festivities, like Christmas Dinner and a Quiz to bring 2022 to a close.

Open Day

Some of the young people from Connect attended the Official Open Day of the newly redeveloped Candle building. The day was different from our usual programming with many more people in the building and speeches from different members of the Community, including contributions from the young people attending Candle. The young people showed some of the guests the Connect room and some of the activities they engage in while attending the service. They managed themselves with great composure and dignity and enjoyed the atmosphere on the day.



Progression

The Connect Project is a valued part of the Candle Community and is often just the beginning of a renewed opportunity at educational achievement as well as exposure to developmental and therapeutic intervention that can have a positive effect on their growth and future outcomes. Many of the young people who started in Connect in 2022 progressed to the training programme and have completed or are in the process of completing QQI Awards. All the staff have enjoyed working with the young people and getting to know them. We have learned much from them and value their contribution to the community. It has been particularly rewarding to see the young people grow and develop as they move on to the Training Programme and find their place not only in Candle but also in their wider communities. Re-engaging in education can be a daunting prospect for young people. As a staff, we are hugely impressed by their strength and resilience in making this first step.



Youth Service

Over the year the Youth Service met each young person 'where they were at', striving to meet the needs of all young people who access the service and working with challenging behaviour in a restorative and trauma informed way. The primary focus of our work over the year was to build good working relationships with the young people which served as the foundation for all work with young people. Using a relationship framework, we continuously aim to support young people to build positive relationships not just with themselves, but with their peers, their wider network, and their communities. The Youth Service received a number of referrals over the year from other Candle services (COMP, Therapeutic Space), but all young people attended the service on a voluntary basis.

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. Informal education allows our Youth Work Team 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. Our work with young people is dynamic and a complex process, starting where the young person is at and learning to work together in partnership, without a pre-defined end point. Our aim with the young people is to build relationships and trust using a strength-based approach, supporting them to develop a positive internal working model, instil hope and belief and increasing their sense of agency. The Youth Work environment in Candle strives to ensure that every young person is seen, valued and given the opportunity to express and be themselves.



The Youth Service worked with Young People from the following target groups:

- Target 1: 80% of service delivery to be provided to disadvantaged young people in the Ballyfermot/ Cherry Orchard geographic area aged 10-24.
- Target 2: Youth Mental Health, emotional wellbeing, dealing with anxiety and social isolation. Provision should focus on mental wellbeing support of young people in the area.
- Target 3: Young People not in education, employment or training.

Primary Outcomes that we continuously work towards achieving for each group:

- Target Group 1: Improve the confidence & agency of the young people and develop opportunities for young people to develop skills of creativity and Imagination.
- Target Group 2: Support young people to build healthy relationships within the Youth Service with the Youth Work Team and their peers. Developing the young person's communication skills, emotional intelligence, resilience & determination. Create links within the service between the Youth Service and Therapeutic Space to provide a wrap-around model of care to young people most in need.
- Target Group 3: Engage & build relationships with young people and continuously work towards addressing barriers they face in relation to engaging in education, employment or training.

Other outcomes for the young people: Emotional Intelligence, Communication Skills, Confidence, Planning & Problem Solving, Creativity and Imagination, Relationships & Resilience and Determination.



Service Delivery to Young People 2022

Young People 10-14yrs	Young People 15-17yrs	Young People 18-21yrs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Afterschool's clubs• 1 Boys Group• First Year Group• 2/3rd Year Youth Café• Direct Provision Youth Café• Girls Group• Residential Trips/ Saturday Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thursday Youth Café• Drivers Theory Test Group• Direct Provision• Youth Café• Young Leaders Group• Residential Trips/ Saturday work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Key-working• Detached Youth Work• Young Volunteers

Highlights of the Year

Reach Fund: The Youth Service engaged with a local Direct Provision centre and provided a drop-in in the centre for young people. The young people did not have any access to safe recreational spaces in which they could be separate from their families in their transition from childhood to adulthood. Funding was received through the REACH fund to support these young people to meet their needs and provide them with a Youth Service. They availed of a range of programmes, outings and developmental opportunities and became part of the community in Candle Community Trust, creating a sense of belonging and supporting integration.

LGBTI Community Services Fund: Young People who were involved in the Bród Group, were provided with programmes tailored to their needs and interests. They learned through facilitated group work and developed new skills, confidence and agency. Through this a culture of inclusion and safety was strengthened and services for LGBTIQ+ young people were enhanced. 15 Young People from the Youth Service attended the Pride event in June and they celebrated equality, respect and inclusion.



Acupuncture : Throughout the year all young people who accessed the Youth Service were offered Acupuncture sessions. The young people really enjoyed finding a sense of calm and learned tools for enhancing overall well-being.

Dublin Youth Theatre & Gaiety Drama sessions: Throughout the year Young People participated in facilitated Drama Workshops. 15 Young People took part in sessions to improve the dynamic's within a group and learn teamwork skills. 10 engaged in the Bród Programme (LGBTIQ+ Group) took part in workshops which explored the concept of power and tools which supported the groups members to develop agency.

Martial Arts Programme: During the summer months the Youth Service targeted 8 young men who were in need of additional support over the summer months. 6 young men participated in the Mixed Martial Arts Programme, this resulted in the young men learning a new skill, developing in confidence and learning about self- control and boundaries.

Weekly Outdoor adventure Programme: Young People took part in a 6 week outdoor adventure programme. This aimed to bring the Young People outside of the community and enjoy the benefits of nature on mental health.

Halloween: The Youth Work Team worked in collaboration with other community agencies in planning and delivering the Ballyfermot/ Cherry Orchard Halloween event, which was a great success and had a positive impact on the community. 15 Young People participated in workshops run by Dublin Circus Project and created a lantern exhibition for the Ballyfermot Halloween event in October. The Young People worked together and showed commitment and enthusiasm in this project. They attended on Halloween Day and helped to set up the lantern display and also to help with set up for other events that were on in the venue. This activity supported the Young People to become active citizens and provided opportunity for them to be involved in their community.



Swimming: Young People participated in a fun recreational programme, gained a new skill and engaged in an experiential learning process with their peers. The swimming programme removed barriers for Young People who were unable to swim and allowed for them to participate in other opportunities such as kayaking and paddle-boarding.

Graffiti Art: Throughout the Year young people took part in graffiti workshops. They learned new skills and used imagination and creativity in the process.

Programme of Activities/ Outings for February Mid-Term, Easter Break, Summer & Christmas. Residentials & Saturday work.

Youth Employability: 5 young men from the Youth Service engaged in the Youth Employability Programme and were given the opportunity to participate in a 6-week drivers Theory Test Programme and sat their driver's theory test on completion. 5 young people also took part in a Barista Training in which they received a certificate on completion.

Detached Youth Work: Throughout the year the Youth Service took part in 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. Detached Youth Work allows our time to connect with young people who are 'harder to reach' and provides a structure in which the power is in the young person's favour, supporting the process of voluntary participation and engaging the young people where they are at. The relationship building abilities of the staff team are the key component in the success of the Detached Youth Work Process and engaging young people who do not engage with existing service provision.



Programme Plans for 2023

- Consultation with Young People and delivery of programmes to each group on one of the following topics: Sexual Health, Drugs & Alcohol, Healthy Eating & Well-being.
- Young Person's Committee for this year's Halloween Event
- Leadership Programme
- Facilitators to provide new opportunities to Young People and allow them to develop new skills: Graffiti Art, Dance, Music, Swimming, Arts, Photography, Mixed Martial Arts.
- Continued engagement of harder to reach Young People. Use of reflective practice and innovative thinking to provide a service to these Young People that is flexible and is meeting them where they are at.
- Continued engagement of Young People in Direct Provision. Working with all Young People to challenge racism & hate speech. To work with all Young People and remove barriers, providing opportunities for integration.



Voice of the Young People

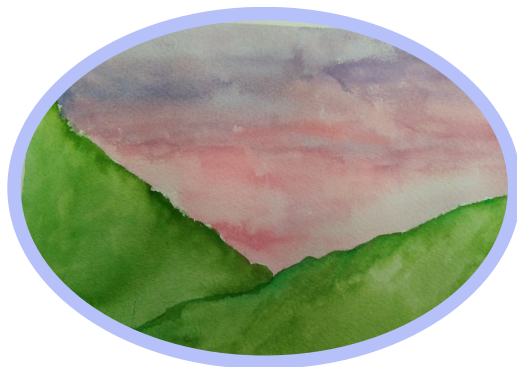
What I like about Candle	Favourite Activity from last year	What I want from Candle in 2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chilling with the crew • The stuff that we get the chance to do • Socialising • How fun Candle is and how the workers are always there when you need them. • Getting on with everyone • Friendly environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When we played games • When we cooked • Carlingford • Cavan • Spray Painting • The Lights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get more of our friends to join • Go Camping • New Experiences • Trips • Trips • Trips



Therapeutic Space

Since 2014 the Therapeutic Space service has been responding effectively to significant emotional stresses and trauma affecting our client group; some of whom are presenting with poor self-esteem, anxiety, depression, and grief. Candle is often a second chance in both their educational and personal development. Most of the young people who attend Candle have experienced marginalization and disadvantage in aspects of their lives. Therefore, we constantly seek to create an environment which is conducive to personal growth and integration for all.

The effects of lockdown and the on-going pandemic have proved detrimental to some young people's mental health, emotional well-being, and relationships. 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. We are continuously striving to meet the presenting complex needs of young people with innovative responses through our therapeutic and developmental services.



Candle recognizes the significant impact of trauma and toxic stress on a young person and how physical and psychological wellbeing and development are hugely affected by it. Our practice is informed by international research which in turn validates our work. More than ever, we are aware that if young people are to achieve the educational and developmental goals of our programming the issue of trauma and its effects must be addressed as a matter of urgency.

Therapeutic services are open to all young people who attend Candle, namely the Training programme, Connect Project, Youth Service, the Outreach Mentoring programmes and Family Support programme. Working in an integrated way with all our service provision and underpinned by the key methodologies of the Trauma Recovery Model, Restorative Practice and Empowerment Model, we strive to enable recovery from trauma and facilitate healthy growth and development of the young person. The Therapeutic Space provides therapies on site at Candle specifically weekly psychotherapy, acupuncture, yoga, relaxation, and mindfulness sessions as part of the overall programming which young people engage in.

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.

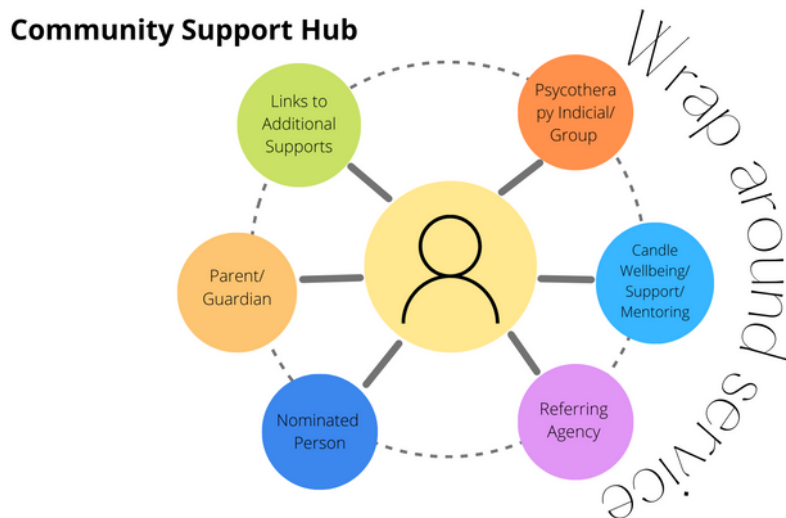
Candle Community Support Hub

In August 2020 the Community Support Hub was proposed as a 5-month initiative to respond 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 Space. Referrals are open to the 4 local secondary schools, Ballyfermot Youth Service and Familibase. Each service can refer 2 clients every 12 weeks of individual psychotherapy with a continuous intake. Candle has developed an innovative wrap around model of practice for attending therapeutic services. 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. TUSLA and HSE funding for the Therapeutic Space has been critical for its evolution and success.

The service aims to work with the most vulnerable in community and those experiencing marginalization. We strive to engage the most difficult to reach young people and their families. Working in collaboration with the referring agencies, support is given particularly to early school leavers or those struggling with attendance to address the issues that have disrupted their education and support them in their educational attainment. The Community Support Hub is contributing to promoting positive mental health in the wider community, normalising the idea of seeking help and in turn having an impact on reducing suicide and self-harm. **Through this initiative a total of 65 young people from the wider community attended of 458 sessions of psychotherapy in Candle in 2022.**



Young people and their families have reported on the positive 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.



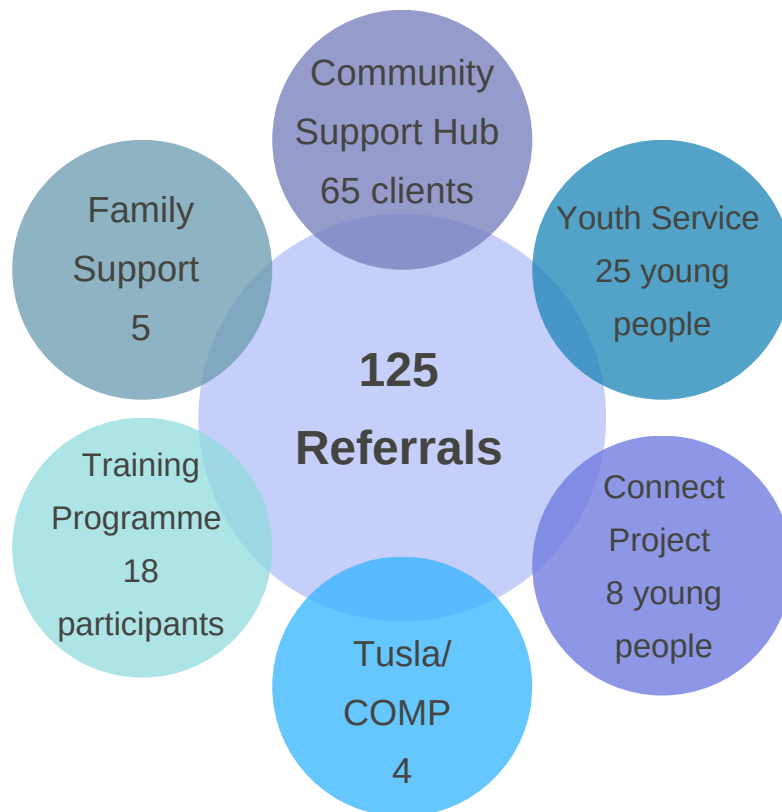
Inter-agency Dimension

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.

Therapeutic Services 2022:

ACUPUNCTURE	YOGA	Psychotherapy & Drama therapy
<p>One full day of treatments offering 14 sessions per day.</p> <p>Calming of the nervous system to treat stress, anxiety, and insomnia.</p> <p>Reduction of pain and inflammation for aches pains and headaches.</p> <p>44 young people received 559 treatments this year</p>	<p>4 classes of yoga every Tuesday. Developing an awareness and being ‘in the present’ in body and mind</p> <p>Building of physical strength and flexibility.</p> <p>13 young people engaged 138 classes</p>	<p>3 therapists delivering 24 sessions per week.</p> <p>A way to process trauma and adverse experiences, helping people with a broad variety of mental illnesses and emotional difficulties.</p> <p>95 young people attended 832 individual sessions in 2022</p>

Referrals made to Therapeutic Space:



Outcomes

Numerous and positive outcomes are observed and reported by families, teachers, youth workers and project workers due to a young person's engagement in the Therapeutic Space.

- 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.
- Development of important life skills and supports which help to reduce anxiety and address depression.
- Greater ability to focus and participate in education resulting in higher levels of accreditation being achieved.
- Building of healthy social networks/relationships
- Children and young people helped to emotionally self-regulate.
- Building of internal psychological safety and containment.
- Improved attitude to drug and alcohol use.
- 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.

Family Outreach

Family Outreach, formally the Candle Home Liaison Programme (CHLP), aims to engage the families and guardians of some of the most 'hard-to-reach' young people in the Community. Through this engagement, it is hoped that the parents and guardians are in a stronger position to support the young peoples' 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 Family Outreach 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 Family Outreach in 2022 has focused on six key approaches (all underpinned by the three methodologies used at Candle: Trauma Recovery Model, Empowerment Model and Restorative Practices). The key approaches used are: Communication and Information, Contact and Support, (responding to) Referrals, Events & Community, Parents Groups and utilising the Candle Therapeutic Space. This work is informed by: work with the young people who attend Candle, communication with other services within Candle (wrap around services), evidence based approaches to parenting and family support and a commitment to social justice and advocacy.

The work carried out in 2022 has included:

- Home Visits
- Offsite meetings
- Parents and family members visiting Candle
- Supporting engagement with the Therapeutic Space
- Advocacy
- Parents Group



Solihull Approach Parents Group

The Solihull Approach is a methodology for disseminating useful concepts of child development and attachment informed practice. Rather than telling parents what to do, it introduces key messages from research and concepts that help to illuminate how we develop and live in the world, with a focus on relationships (relationships that underpin development, attachment and emotional wellbeing across the life trajectory). Parents are then enabled to find their own solution that suits them and their circumstances.

Following the successful funding application to the HSE, Candle set up a Solihull Approach Parents Group in Term 3, 2021. We ran a parenting course 'Understanding your child' using the Solihull Approach for the parents and guardians of young people who attend Candle Community Trust. This group was a collaboration between Family Outreach and COMP- Candle Outreach Mentoring Programme. 'Understanding your child' is a group for parents and carers of children and young people aged 6 months to 18 years and can be tailored to suit the age group involved. The group has a relationship-based approach, aiming to develop a framework for thinking about parent/child relationships, promoting communication, exploring feelings and effective behaviour management.

5 parents engaged with the group. The group requested additional sessions which were delivered in early 2022. The group was followed by ongoing contact and support to the participants and individual acupuncture appointments for participants January- March 2022.

The Therapeutic Space

Candle recognises an increase in complex needs and significant emotional stress due to the level of trauma experienced by young people and their families. Research indicates that those who suffer trauma are greatly impaired educationally, developmentally and socially. In order to meaningfully address this level of complexity and trauma Candle established the Therapeutic Space. The Therapeutic Space, working in an integrated way with all our service provision seeks to enable recovery from trauma and facilitate healthy growth and development.

Through Family Outreach parents and family members are invited and supported to attend acupuncture and counselling appointments.

During 2022, 9 parents have engaged in acupuncture and 2 have attended counselling.

Tusla

Through the Family Outreach programme, staff worked closely with other professionals who are caring for young people placed in the Care of the State. We worked with staff of residential houses on a daily basis in order to support and encourage the young person's attendance and engagement; we worked with Foster Carers in the same way as well as Social Workers and After Care Workers, in order to assist the young person to achieve their goals while attending Candle. Where family members are involved in the young person's life, we do involve them in the process also.

Candle Community Trust

Communicating With Your Child

A group for parents and carers

Would you like to:

- Know more about how to communicate with your child or teen?
- Meet other parents
- Learn some relaxation techniques

We will look at:

- Having fun together
- Developmental needs
- Communication
- Parenting styles

Wednesday 6-8pm
Beginning 3rd November
for 6 weeks

For more info please contact
Clare or Michael on 01-6269111



Candle Outreach Mentoring Programme

The Candle Outreach Mentoring Programme (C.O.M.P.) was established in April of 2021, 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. This is done on a one to one basis with the relational model at the core of the work. The first port of call is to actively build positive working relationships before exploration on their life choices, plans for the future and behaviours; with a more in-depth developmental intervention then undertaken. Once the trust and working relationship is established, there is a secure base from which the young person's feelings can be validated, for them as individuals to be valued and for them to open-up about their world in which they inhabit.

The C.O.M.P. service has held the privileged and eminent role of sharing in these “worlds” and being positioned to care, support, advocate and elevate the young people engaged in the service. It has had the fluidity of structure to be able to create developmental opportunities in both a formal and informal way, while ensuring that the young people under consideration are met at their own comfort & capability level. This has led to a variety of formats, styles and landscapes being utilised; and has created a very open and exciting environment to work within. It is in this tailored environment that the young people have been given the time and space to reflect on their life experiences and how they have impacted on their current self. The following is a list of the most prevalent issues that have arisen for the young people referred to the service. This list is not exhaustive but highlights a number of challenging issues that the young people need defined support in addressing:



- Complex mental health needs including suicide pacts, self-harm, self-imposed isolation, debilitating social anxiety
- Residential and Foster Placement Breakdowns leading to sudden and temporary emergency placements.
- Behavioural outbursts & violent incidents in home and residential settings
- Young person displaying violence in the home
- Risky behaviour in terms of social vulnerability, both online and physically.
- Absconding/risk taking behaviour/drug use
- Involvement in criminality
- Fragile sense of Identity and Self worth
- Child Protection Disclosures
- Emergence of information relating to individual disorders and subsequent difficulties in processing (autism and foetal alcohol syndrome)

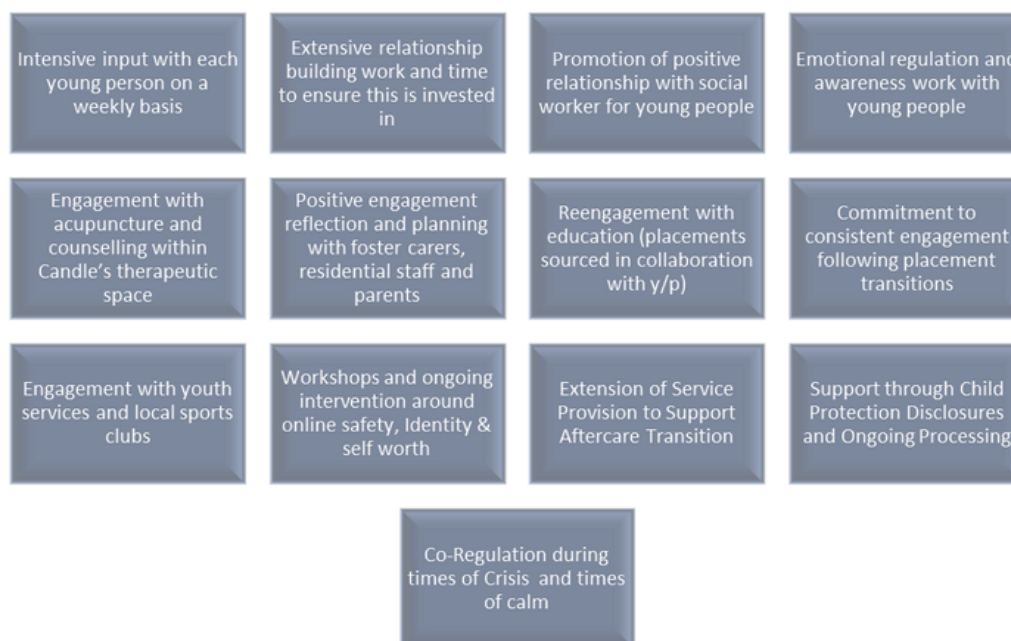


The C.O.M.P service has grown in its impact and integrated itself in the wider state care provision for marginalised young people, since its inception in 2021. An independent and external evaluation was conducted on the service in late 2021, with the findings being published in April 2022, which were very encouraging and highlighted the effectiveness of work undertaken, both in what was being achieved but also the manner in how it was being achieved.

“the outcomes that have been achieved from all perspectives are very promising. Among the many successes of the programme in the eyes of service providers, guardians, referrers and this researcher, the most significant success for the young people, as outlined in the outcomes above, can be found in their experiences of contributing to their own lives, their experiences of being respected, and their experiences of learning as a positive experience.”

(Carroll, 2022, pg.29)

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. Over the report period these working relationships have been established and cemented in ongoing reflective practices and trauma informed perspectives, with consideration given to not only the immediate need of the young people but also the ongoing interaction of the professionals involved to bring about successful engagement and outcomes. **A number of these outcomes for the annual report year can be seen in the diagram below:**



The following are some quotations garnered from this evaluation from the young people, carers and social workers interviewed as part of the external evaluation:

"We work together – he doesn't do the work for me. It's on my pace. I like how I get my choice and voice and it's not all structured."

Young person

"It seems to suit his (young person's) needs, as if it was made for him."

Guardian

"It's the person that makes the place. He's willing to expand his comfort zone to support. He fights my corner, helps me to accept myself, empathises with me."

Young Person

"100%, I wish I could refer half the kids I work with." Social Worker

"He has inspired me to be the person I am. Tells me to keep going, little steps, to fight for what I have." Young Person

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Acknowledgements

I wish to record my thanks and gratitude to all those people who contributed so richly and generously to Candle during 2022.

My first thanks are to the young people. While the young people engage in educational, developmental and therapeutic programming at Candle, each person brings much life, enthusiasm and generosity to the community living. I thank them for participating in Candle programmes and for trusting us to share something of their journey through the teenage years.

Thank you to Seamus Taaffe, Chairperson of the Board, for his untiring work for Candle during the year. He gives an enormous amount of time to furthering the vision and aims of the organization and he passionately believes in the benefits of the work for young people.

The Board of Management, who give of their time freely, bring a rich experience from various backgrounds to the project. I thank each for their willingness to place this experience at the service of Candle.

The staff at Candle deserves great credit for their total commitment to their work as educators and trainers of young people. Our staff are highly motivated and work as professionals with great integrity and generosity. I thank them for their innovative and enlightened work during the year.

I wish to particularly acknowledge two staff members who retired during 2022, namely Harry Shannon and Andy Doyle. Harry and Andy have been with the organisation for many years, giving unstinting service and dedicating much of their working lives to Candle, particularly the educational programme. On behalf of the Board, staff and young people I take the opportunity to record our thanks and appreciation for a job so well done. We wish them both every happiness in the years ahead.



Acknowledgements

At Candle we are fortunate to have a number of volunteers who give freely of their time and effort to Candle and its participants. We are so 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; Cecilia Munroe, Ballyfermot College of Further Education (CDETB); John Meehan, National Office for Suicide Prevention.

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A considerable 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
Director

Our Funders



An tSeirbhís Phromhaidh
The Probation Service





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

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