

Count Us In

Tackling early school leaving in South West
Inner City Dublin: An integrated response

Report commissioned by:

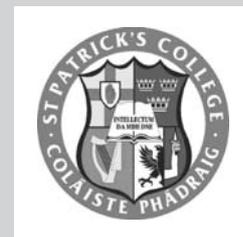
The South Inner City Community Development Association (SICCDA)
with the support of funding by the South Inner City Local Drugs Task Force

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SOUTH INNER CITY LOCAL DRUGS TASK FORCE



Executive Summary

Terms of reference:

This report aims to identify those individual and environmental factors, which militate against school completion by young people in the catchment area of the South West Inner City. It identifies key issues for appropriate interventions with regard to school completion.

Methodology:

Adopting a solution-focused, child-centred approach, the research is the largest survey to-date of children and young people in the local area. 5th and 6th class pupils, 1st, 2nd and 5th year students, attending schools in the local area, were surveyed. Other key stakeholders locally, including early school leavers, family support services and schools, were also interviewed in order to develop the central parts of a strategic plan for overcoming early school leaving in the area.

Key findings:

Willingness to complete secondary school:

100% of pupils in some local primary schools stated that they want to stay on at school until Leaving Certificate, in contrast to a different local school where 29% of 5th and 6th class pupils do not want to stay on until Leaving Certificate. There is a sharp increase in the percentage of secondary students, from 4.5% in 1st year to 12% in 2nd year, who indicated that they do not want to complete secondary school.

Hunger in school:

Differences between primary schools in the local area ranged from 6% to 33% of pupils who stated that they were either often, very often or everyday, too hungry to do their work in school. Hunger was also an issue for secondary school students with a conservative estimate of at least 17% of 1st year students in one secondary school who stated that they were either often, very often or every day, too hungry to do their work in school.

Lack of sleep affecting academic performance:

In at least 4 local primary schools there were more than 15% of pupils who regularly sleep less than 9 hours per night. According to international research this is going to weaken their academic performance in school. Many cannot sleep for anxiety-related reasons.

Substance abuse:

Almost 50% of fifth year students stated that they have used illegal drugs; this is a sharp 35% increase from the figure of 15% for the same questions asked to the 2nd year students in the same schools. Almost 10 % of 5th year students have taken cocaine in the last month or year.

Suicide risk:

A direct link between suicide of young people and owing money for drugs was raised by a number of older focus group respondents and is a matter of extreme concern.

Relations with teachers:

There was a sharp decrease in student perceptions of being treated fairly by teachers from 5th and 6th class at primary level (75%) to first year secondary (59%), though there were big differences between the secondary schools on this issue. Perceptions of being treated unfairly by teachers were exceptionally high at 50% of student responses in the fifth year group of one school, with 29% of this group who stated that they were treated fairly by teachers being an exceptionally low figure. Teachers were perceived as being unapproachable regarding an academic problem by at least 33% of pupils in one school and 25% of pupils in another school.

Beyond suspensions:

It is a concern that suspension appears to be used as a strategy in at least one primary school. There is a need to resource alternative strategies to suspension from school, including a supervised time out area in every school for children and young people with disruptive behaviour.

The danger of those most marginalised falling through the gaps with local services:

There is a range of innovative strategies developed in local schools which can serve as models of good practice for schools nationally. However, it is clear that the current school completion programme (SCP) structures and funding for Synge St. SCP and Dublin 8 SCP are imbalanced and need immediate reform for 2007-2008. A distinctive feature of the local area is that many children attend schools outside their immediate locality; there is a need for afterschool projects and transfer programmes to adopt a more targeted approach to profile those students most at risk of early school leaving to ensure that they do not fall through the gaps – gaps many are currently falling through on current evidence. There is a lack of “neutral” public spaces in the area where 14-18 year olds from all parts of the South West Inner City area could feel belongs to them rather than being associated as the territory of “others”; this lack is made worse by the limited availability of drop-in centres.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that an area wide strategic vision for integrating young people’s health and education needs be put in place throughout the quite fragmented parts of South West Inner City. This strategic vision needs to include a range of strategies that focus on:

- a) intervention for health issues relevant to school completion,
- b) further developing relationships in school to support school completion,
- c) preventing children, young people and their families falling through the net of local support services,
- d) a local strategy for the arts and emotional expression,
- e) a community development strategy for children and young people in the catchment area to promote school completion,
- f) promotion of children and young people’s mental health needs through a community based psychological support service.

Among key local family support services, there is a consensus regarding their interest in being involved in preventative approaches with local schools for children at risk of early school leaving. A community based psychological support service for the area is recommended that involves early intervention, mental health promotion, and system level interventions to create a more supportive school social climate in some schools. There is a need for an integrated outreach strategy so that family support services target agreed areas to ensure that no area is excluded and to make sure that young people and their families are reached throughout the local area. It is recommended that a community trust fund be established for students from the local area as part of this medium term strategy for development of young community leaders. The close proximity of the Irish Museum for Modern Art, the National College of Art and Design, as well as the location of the Digital Hub within the area, means that the South West Inner City area is in a key position to become an area serving as a centre for the arts and emotional expression involving young people, as part of a strategy for school completion.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	i
Acknowledgments	3
Glossary of Abbreviations	4
Terms of Reference	5
The Catchment Area	6
Methodology	8
Size of Sample	10
SECTION 1	11
1.1 Profiles of local pupils' and students' willingness to stay on at school until Leaving Certificate	12
1.2 Key Conclusions	17
SECTION 2 Health issues which militate against school completion	19
2.1 Hunger in school	20
2.2 Problematic sleep patterns among pupils	24
2.3 Substance abuse	27
2.4 Inadequate sex and relationship education	31
2.5 Suicide risk	35
2.6 Key Conclusions	37
SECTION 3 Relationships in school	39
3.1 Pupil/student perceptions of being treated fairly in school	40
3.2 Fear of failure: Pupil/student willingness to talk to teacher about academic problems	45
3.3 Teacher/student relations	51
3.4 Pupil/student willingness to talk to an adult working in the school about personal problems	55
3.5 Voices from early school leavers and those in alternative forms of education on the need for changes to student-teacher interaction in the formal system	57
3.6 Behaviour issues: Beyond suspensions	61
3.7 Bullying in school	64
3.8 Key Conclusions	66
SECTION 4 The Risk of falling through the net: Key findings	69
4.1 Profiles of those most at risk of early school leaving:	70
- Primary School: 5th and 6th class	
- 1st year secondary	
- 2nd year secondary	
- 5th year secondary	

¹⁴ St. Audeon's participated in the research through an extended interview with the school principal and a questionnaire response from one teacher. However, it chose not to allow questionnaires or focus groups for the pupils. Scoil Treasa Naofa was not included within the terms of reference of the study outlined by SICCCA, though it is arguable that this school would be included in any such future study given the large numbers of pupils from St. Teresa's Gardens who attend this school

¹⁵ Loreto Crumlin are outside the School Completion Programme and Local Drug Task Force Area and thus were not within the terms of the reference for the study outlined by SICCCA. It is arguable that this school would be included in any such future study given the large numbers of pupils from St. Teresa's Gardens who attend this school

4.2.	The need for a more transparent and integrated referral system for afterschool projects	76
4.3	The need for continuity within afterschool projects from primary to secondary	77
4.4	The need for review of the composition of the local school completion programmes	78
4.5	The need for increased integration of family support services	79
4.6	Beyond programmed time: The need for “Drop-in Centres for 14-18 year olds”	80
4.7	Dissemination of existing good practice throughout local schools	82
4.8	Structured transition programmes	84
4.9	The need for increased numbers of education welfare officers and NEPS psychologists in the area	85
4.10	Key Conclusions	85
SECTION 5 Family support and community development issues to promote school completion		89
5.1	Building on existing family support services and a strong tradition of community development approaches in the South West Inner City area	90
5.2	An early intervention strategy to focus on developing speech and language: Good practice strategies for literacy	96
5.3	Strategies for development of community leaders	98
5.4	The need for an area wide local strategy from primary school onwards for access to third level institutions	101
5.5	The need to develop “neutral” shared spaces in the local area	102
5.6	Community wide identification: “Make the school the focal point of community education”	104
5.7	Sport as a vehicle for community wide identification	106
5.8	Building on the arts for emotional expression and conflict resolution	107
5.9	Key Conclusions	108
SECTION 6 Key recommendations		111
	Strategy A: Recommendations to intervene for health issues relevant to school completion	112
	Strategy B: Recommendations to further develop relationships in school to support school completion	113
	Strategy C: Recommendations to prevent the risk of children, young people and their families falling through the net	115
	Strategy D: A local strategy for the arts and emotional expression	117
	Strategy E: Recommendations for a community development strategy for children and young people in the catchment area to promote school completion	118
	Strategy F: Promotion of children and young people’s mental health needs	120
	<i>- A community based psychological support service for South West Inner City: Early intervention, mental health promotion, systemic level interventions in the school and family support.</i>	
References		131
Appendices		138

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We would also like to acknowledge the work of Mr. Fran Cassidy in conducting a number of the focus groups for this research.

Glossary of Abbreviations

ADM	Area Development Management
APPLE	Area Partnership for Language Enrichment
CBS	Christian Brothers School
CDI	Childhood Development Initiative
CDP	Community Development Project
CE	Community Employment
DEIS	Delivering Equality of Education in Schools
DEN	Donore Education Network
DES	Department of Education and Science
DICP	Dublin Inner City Partnership
ESL	Early School Leaving/Leaver
ESPAD	European School Survey Project on Alcohol and other Drugs
ESRI	Economic and Social Research Institute
EWO	Education Welfare Officer
FÁS	Fóras Aiseanna Saothair – National Training and Employment Authority
FETAC	Further Education and Training Awards Council
HSCL	Home, School, Community Liaison
HSE	Health Service Executive
IEP	Individual Education Plan
IMMA	Irish Museum of Modern Art
ISSHR	Irish Study of Sexual Health and Relationships
JEDI	Joint Education Development Initiative
JNS	Junior National School
NAPS	National Anti-Poverty Strategy
NEPS	National Educational Psychological Service
NEWB	National Education Welfare Board
NCCA	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
NS	National School
PESL	Potential Early School Leavers
QDOSS	Quality Development of Out of School Services
RAPID	Revitalising Areas by Planning Investment and Development Programme
RSE	Relationship and Sexuality Education
SCP	School Completion Programme
SNS	Senior National School
SPHE	Social, Personal and Health Education
SICCDA	South Inner City Community Development Association
SNA	Special Needs Assistant
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infections
SWICN	South West Inner City Network
TCD	Trinity College Dublin
VEC	Vocational Education Committee

Terms of Reference

The aim of the research is to identify those individual and environmental factors, which militate against school completion by young people in the catchment areas covered by the Dublin 8 School Completion Programme and the Synge Street School Completion Programme.

8 primary schools are included within the scope of the study: James's St. Primary CBS, Basin Lane; Presentation Primary, Warrenmount; Francis St. CBS.; St. Enda's Whitefriar St.; Santa Maria Primary, Synge St.; St. Brigid's, The Coombe; Mater Dei, Basin Lane¹; St. Audeon's NS, Cook St..

3 post primary schools² are included within the scope of the study: James's St. Secondary CBS., Presentation Secondary, Warrenmount and Synge St. CBS.

Adopting a solution-focused approach, the research is targeted at the factors contributing to early school leaving as opposed to the early school leaving itself. It is expected that the research will adopt a 'child-centred' as well as a 'client-centred' focus with active participation of the target groups at key stages in order to:

- Provide a greater understanding of the underlying factors contributing to early school leaving in the Dublin 8 area
- Identify strategies, which will assist existing initiatives in providing effective local responses to the issue.
- Analyse quantitative data on the factors contributing to early school leaving within the catchment area
- Examine the current range of interventions in the catchment area with a particular focus on family support services
- Identify key issues and recommendations for appropriate interventions with regard to school completion
- Outline a strategic plan for implementation of these interventions

It will engage in interviews with other key stakeholders including early school leavers, teaching staff, local parents, relevant professional bodies, local services, home school liaison officers, etc.

¹ Although Mater Dei, Basin Lane, was not part of the local School Completion Programmes, at the outset it was decided by the SICCCA Advisory Group for the study that this local primary school would be included within the terms of reference of participating schools

² In discussion between Liberties College and the SICCCA Advisory Group, it was decided that Liberties College would not be included within the study, as they are due to close as a post primary school in the near future.

The Catchment Area

The South West Inner City RAPID Base Line Plan (2002) acknowledges that the South West Inner City is a 'relatively fragmented area made up of many different communities each with their own identity' and is an area 'traditionally associated' with the Arthur Guinness Brewery which has seen a 90% reduction in its work force since the early 1970s.

The scope of this study includes schools and services for children and young people from the four RAPID area clusters. These communities are:

- Cluster 1. St. Teresa's Gardens/Weavers Court/Chamber Court
- Cluster 2. Audeon's/Oliver Bond/Island St.-Bridgefoot St./Emmet Buildings
- Cluster 3. School St./Marrowbone Lane/Pimlico/Braithwaite St.
- Cluster 4. Mary Aiken Head/Basin St./Westcourt

The study also includes the Donore area, Whitefriar St., the Liberties and James St..

- It is recognised that the catchment area has been given a wide range of names and that discussion of an area wide strategy for school completion needs sensitivity to the strong identities of local communities and flat complexes:
 - as an electoral area and for the national census it is part of Dublin South Central, (together with Crumlin, Kimmage and Ballyfermot) and is also part of Dublin South East³,
 - it is one of four quadrants within the Dublin Inner City Area Partnership,
 - it is viewed as the South West Inner City by SWICN (the South West Inner City Network),
 - it embraces the area covered by SICCDA (the South Inner City Community Development Association),
 - as a local Drugs Task Force area, it is within the South Inner City Local Drugs Task Force,
 - as a Social Inclusion Task Force area, the South West Inner City is part of Dublin South Central⁴,
 - it includes different local parishes such as Meath St., Francis St., High St., Donore and James St.,
 - it includes but is wider than Dublin 8,
 - it includes but is wider than the Liberties and the Coombe; these areas are included by Dublin City Council within a common overall area strategy for regeneration as part of the Liberties/Coombe Integrated Area Plan,
 - its local schools are within either the Dublin 8 School Completion Programme or the Synge St. School Completion Programme.
- There is no universally agreed name for the catchment area. As part of the need for an area-wide school completion strategy, in discussion with the SICCDA Advisory Group for the study, it was decided that the catchment area would be termed the South West Inner City.

It is recognised that extensive community consultation processes regarding priority needs have already taken place in parts of the local area, for example by:

- Robert Emmet CDP (Brudell 2005),
- in St. Teresa's Gardens (O'Connor 2002; Brudell & Murphy 1998),
- across the four RAPID clusters (Keeley 2002),

³ Kavanagh (2002) notes that following the 1998 Boundary Commission, 64% of the SWICN (South West Inner City Network) population is located in Dublin South Central and 36% in Dublin South East

⁴ Cf. Nolan (2005)

- by the South West Inner City Network (SWICN) regarding the concept of community gain in relation to the regeneration process (Brudell 1999), as well as on an ongoing basis by SWICN⁵,
- as part of the process of establishing the Digital Hub in the area (Digital Hub Advisory Committee 2001),
- the South Inner City Community Development Association (SICCCA) (Mernagh 1996) through questionnaires with students in some of the local schools in the Liberties.

A further issue with regard to development of an area wide strategy for school completion is the need to recognise that this is a rapidly changing area undergoing a significant regeneration process. The vision of the Liberties/Coombe Integrated Area Plan, created in 1998, after consultation with the local community, is: 'To reinstate the dignity of the Liberties/Coombe as a living, working locality fully participating in Dublin's entry into the next millenium'

Some of the changes to the catchment area which have occurred from the implementation of the regeneration plan include:

- a state of the art community sports facility of St. Catherine's Sports Centre,
- a new multi-purpose centre, Donore Youth and Community Centre,
- provision of new and high quality modern childcare facility at School St.⁶
- reopening of the new refurbished Mercy Family Centre in August 2004,⁷
- complete regeneration of the Bridgefoot St. area,
- provision of more than 500 new apartments in the South West Inner City,
- the redevelopment of Cork Street,⁸
- 'St. Teresa's Gardens, Dolphin House and Chamber/Weaver Court flats complexes pre-regeneration consultation processes underway',⁹
- completion of an all weather pitch and children's playground in St. Teresa's Gardens , installation of a playground in Pimlico and in Oliver Bond House¹¹.

The need for a regeneration process is evident from the fact that half of the electoral wards in the South West Inner City area are ranked by analysts as among the most disadvantaged ten per cent in the state¹². Moreover, only 6% of the area is composed of public open space¹³.

⁵ See also concerns of SWICN with the quality of the consultation process between Dublin Corporation and local communities in the area (SWICN 2000; 2002) regarding the local regeneration plan

⁶ Liberties/Coombe Integrated Area Plan 2006

⁷ Liberties/Coombe Integrated Area Plan: Annual Report 2004

⁸ Liberties/Coombe Integrated Area Plan 2003

⁹ Liberties/Coombe Integrated Area Plan 2006

¹⁰ Liberties/Coombe Integrated Area Plan: Annual Report 2001-2002

¹¹ Liberties/Coombe Integrated Area Plan: Annual Report 2004

¹² i.e., ranked at 10 on the Haase Index of Relative Affluence and Deprivation, cf. South West Inner City RAPID Base Line Plan (Keeley 2002); Robert Emmet CDP (2005)

¹³ Robert Emmet CDP (2005)

Methodology

School sample

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by Ireland, highlights that children and young people have a right to be consulted and to have their voices heard in matters related to their own welfare (see also the National Conjoint Child Health Committee Report 2000 on direct consultation with young people).

- Young people's direct input into the consultation process was obtained through questionnaires given to *all* 5th and 6th classes in the 7 participating primary schools¹⁴ (St. James, Warrenmount, St Francis, St. Enda's Whitefriar St., Synge St., St. Brigid's, Mater Dei) and *all* 1st year, 2nd year and 5th year classes in the 3 participating post primary schools¹⁵ (Warrenmount, Synge St., St. James). All pupils and students attending school on the day of distribution of the questionnaires responded.
- Due to the limitations of questionnaire responses for pupils and students at risk of early school leaving due to literacy problems, focus groups also took place with samples of pupils and students across all participating schools. Pupils and students were selected for these focus groups on the basis of two sampling approaches:
 - 'Logic of maximum variation': to ensure a variety of perspectives were to be heard,
 - 'Criterion': to ensure fulfilment of the criterion that young people most alienated from the school system and most at risk of early school leaving were to be consulted.

It is recognised from the outset that early school leaving is a multidimensional problem involving a wide range of interacting factors rather than simply one or two causal factors viewed in isolation from everything else (see also Rutter 1985; Zimmerman & Maton 1992).

Inclusion of 6th class and 1st year respondents recognised the difficulties of transfer from primary to post primary raised previous Irish research (e.g., O'Brien 2004). Inclusion of both 1st and 2nd year students in the sample acknowledged previous research undertaken in the area by Donore Avenue Social Analysis Group (1997) emphasizing how difficulties with transition affected willingness to stay on at school. Some of the questions were drawn from previous research questionnaires (Downes 2004, 2004a, O'Brien 2004, Morgan 2000).

Themes regarding drug use and sex and relationship education were included in the post primary questionnaires This followed on from the local research of Brudell & Murphy (1998) which observed the view of local professionals that the educational curriculum was being delivered without reference to the realities, issues or culture of the area: "A curriculum which does not address teenage pregnancy and drug use does not have an agenda in the area". The specific questions regarding drug use for 2nd and 5th year students were drawn directly from the European Schools Survey Project on Alcohol and other Drugs (ESPAD 2003. Informed consent for student participation in the study was obtained by a letter to parents from the local schools.

Each questionnaire stated that:

- the answers given are private,
- they do not go to the police, school, family or friends,
- there is no right or wrong answer to any of the questions,

¹⁴ St. Audeon's participated in the research through an extended interview with the school principal and a questionnaire response from one teacher. However, it chose not to allow questionnaires or focus groups for the pupils. Scoil Treasa Naofa was not included within the terms of reference of the study outlined by SICCCA, though it is arguable that this school would be included in any such future study given the large numbers of pupils from St. Teresa's Gardens who attend this school

¹⁵ Loreto Crumlin are outside the School Completion Programme and Local Drug Task Force Area and thus were not within the terms of the reference for the study outlined by SICCCA. It is arguable that this school would be included in any such future study given the large numbers of pupils from St. Teresa's Gardens who attend this school

- students are not being judged on the basis of their answers.

The questionnaires were answered in the classroom in the presence of members of the research team. The questionnaire responses were returned into a sealed envelope.

Pre-Pilot: Emancipatory Research Methodology

Focus groups of early school leavers and of those in alternative forms of education were consulted for their views on relevant questions/themes for the research questionnaires. Previous research questionnaire responses by students in the Liberties area (Mernagh 1996) were consulted to examine themes that emerged from this earlier consultation of students regarding their experience of school.

Representatives from the Community and School Sector on SICCCA's consultation committee were consulted regarding the themes explored and wording to be used in the questionnaires for students, local services and schools. This consultation process consisted of a series of meetings, as well as opportunity for written submissions.

Pre-pilot consultation meetings regarding the content and format of the student, teacher and principal questionnaires were also held with a number of school personnel including Home School Community Liaison teachers and school principals.

A key element of the questionnaires was that most of the questions were open questions which allowed for a range of answers so that the students could set the agenda for their main concerns. Closed questions requiring yes/no answers were sometimes included to find quantitative results on specific issues. The qualitative approach adopted in the questionnaire sought to examine issues in more detail - and to give more voice to individual responses rather than simply a focus on the average response.

Size of Sample

Primary Total: 242 questionnaires

16 Focus Groups

5th and 6th Classes across 7 primary schools: James's St. Primary CBS, Basin Lane; Presentation Primary, Warrenmount; Francis St. C.B.S.; St. Enda's Whitefriar St.; Santa Maria Primary, Synge St.; St. Brigid's, The Coombe; Mater Dei, Basin Lane

Post primary Total: 342 questionnaires,

7 Focus Groups

1st yr, 2nd yr, and 5th yr across 3 post primary schools: James's St. Secondary CBS., Presentation Secondary, Warrenmount and Synge St. CBS.

Overall Total: 584 questionnaires, 23 Focus Groups, of pupils/students in the schools

Consultation with Members of the Local Community and Local Community Services

As previous attempts to consult local parents through questionnaires resulted in a very low response rate from surveyed parents (approx. 15%) (Mernagh 1996), informal and semi-structured interviews, as well as focus groups, were the approaches adopted for local parents, early school leavers and those in alternative forms of education in the local area. Such interview approaches echoed those used by Fingleton (2004) in her research with early school leavers in the Canal Communities Area. The following local residents and project participants were interviewed:

- Basin Lane Youthreach Project: 3 Focus Groups (15 people in total), plus interview with the Co-ordinator,
- SICCCA Young Mothers Project: Focus Group (8 people),
- Pleasant Street Youthreach Focus Group and/or interviews (20 people),
- Basin Lane Primary School Interview, 1 person (mother),
- Aylward Green Sheltered Housing Interview, 2 people (mother and son),
- Thomas Street Interview, 2 people,
- Marrowbone Lane Flats (8 people: 4 males early 20s, 3 left school early, 1 mother, 2 girls 14/15 years old, 1 boy 15 years, still at school),
- St. Teresa's Gardens Flats (7 people: 3 mothers, 2 fathers aged 20-30, 2 girls 16 early school leavers),
- Oliver Bond Flats (12 people: 3 fathers, 3 mothers, 3 males in 40s, 1 male aged 26, 2 Females aged 20),
- St. Catherine's Sports Centre Interview, 1 person (mother),
- SICCCA Good Counsel Training Centre: 3 Focus Groups (20 people in total, aged 16-18), plus focus group with staff working at the centre.

A range of local community service providers were interviewed, as well as the local Education Welfare Officer and a local NEPS psychologist.

Consultation with Local Schools

Specifically designed questionnaires were given to all the participating School Principals and to the Home School Community Liaison Teachers. All 5th, 6th class and 1st year, 2nd year, 5th year teachers in the participating schools were asked to respond to a questionnaire on their needs as teachers and the needs of their pupils (see Appendix for the semi-structured interview questionnaires).

Section 1

Profiles of local pupils' and students' willingness to stay on at school until Leaving Certificate

This section profiles the attitudes of pupils and students throughout the South West Inner City area regarding staying on at school until the Leaving Certificate. It locates their responses in historical context concerning previous research on early school leaving in the local area. This is the largest survey to date in the area on children and young people's attitudes to school. Focus for the purposes of this section is on the whole student group across later primary, early secondary and later secondary classes. As all the participating schools are designated as disadvantaged and as there is not such a long tradition of completing secondary school in the area, the whole student group are viewed as being to some degree, potentially at risk of early school leaving. Later sections of this report profile a subgroup of responses where pupils and students are of higher risk of early school leaving as they state that they do not intend or have no firm intention to stay on at school.

1.1 Profiles of local pupils' and students' willingness to stay on at school until Leaving Certificate

The dangers of school failure and alienation from the school system have been recognised by research on the strong correlation between early school leaving and drug misuse (National Drugs Strategy 2001–2008; Morgan 2001; Downes 2003).

The Combat Poverty Agency policy submission (2003) set a target to reduce the proportion of early school leavers nationally to 10% by 2005. Their annual report (2004) noted that the targets to reduce early school leavers to 85% by 2003 and to 90% by 2006 were “unlikely” to be met in both the National Anti Poverty Strategy and the National Action Plan against Poverty and Social Exclusion.

Over twenty years ago, the SICCDA Liberties Youth Survey (Dillon 1986) found that over 82% of 18–25 year olds in the area had left school at 16 or younger, with over a third of the 346 respondents leaving school before they were 16 years old. Furthermore, the household questionnaire revealed that 5.1% of 295 adult respondents obtained their Leaving Certificate and ‘only 2 people out of the total survey population had any form of third level qualification’, i.e., 0.7%.

Over ten years ago, SICCDA’s survey (Mernagh 1996) of 217 secondary level students in local schools¹⁶ (1st years, 3rd years, 5th years) found that 58% of first year students had significant literacy and numeracy difficulties and on average 10% of students drop out of school at or about 15 years of age without any formal educational qualifications. It was found that:

- 18% of first years stated that they did not think they would do the Leaving Certificate,
- 5% of first years stated that they did not expect to do their Junior Certificate,
- 7% of third years stated that they did not expect to do their Leaving Certificate,
- 6% of fifth years stated that they did not expect to do their Leaving Certificate.

In 1997, Donore Avenue Social Analysis Group concluded that:

The schools were clear that children drop out of the system between first year and third year, particularly between the ages of 13 and 15. The transition from the primary school to secondary schools system puts enormous strain on the child, the family and the school staff

In 2002, O’Connor’s research found that a “miniscule” number finish secondary school in St. Teresa’s Gardens:

Of the 32 young people aged 16–18 only 1 completed the Leaving Cert. 6 still studying and 25 have left school. 82.5% school leaving rate compared to 19% nationally. Similar percentage leave school as stay in school nationally!

Nolan’s (2005) analysis of the Social Inclusion Task Force area of Dublin South Central, which includes the South West Inner City, highlighted that:

A higher proportion of persons in Dublin South Central (28.8%) left full-time education [at or before 15 years of age] with a primary or no formal education (29.2%) than in either Dublin City (21.4%) or the State (21.1%)

The current research is the largest sample of primary and secondary students that has taken place to date, with 583 questionnaire responses in total, 242 from primary pupils, 342 from secondary students.

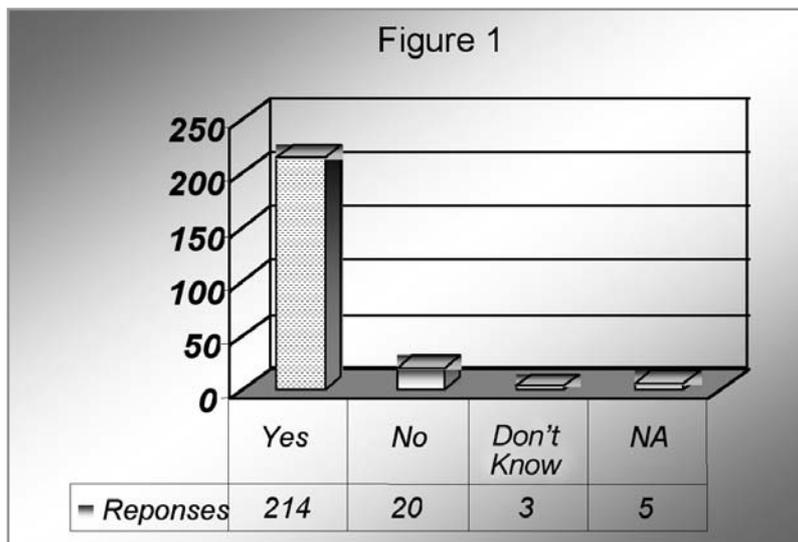
¹⁶ The participating secondary level schools were Presentation College Warrenmount and Liberties Vocational College

Primary Schools

Across the range of primary schools in the South West Inner City area responses from 5th and 6th class pupils to the question, "Do you think you want to stay on at school until the Leaving Certificate?" were as follows:

	YES	NO	D/K	N/A
School A	29	3		
School B	26	9	2	2
School C	32	0		
School D	50	1	1	
School E	24	4		3
School F	25	0		
School G	28	3		
TOTAL:	214 (88%)	20 (8%)	3 (1%)	5

Figure 1. Willingness to stay on until Leaving Cert



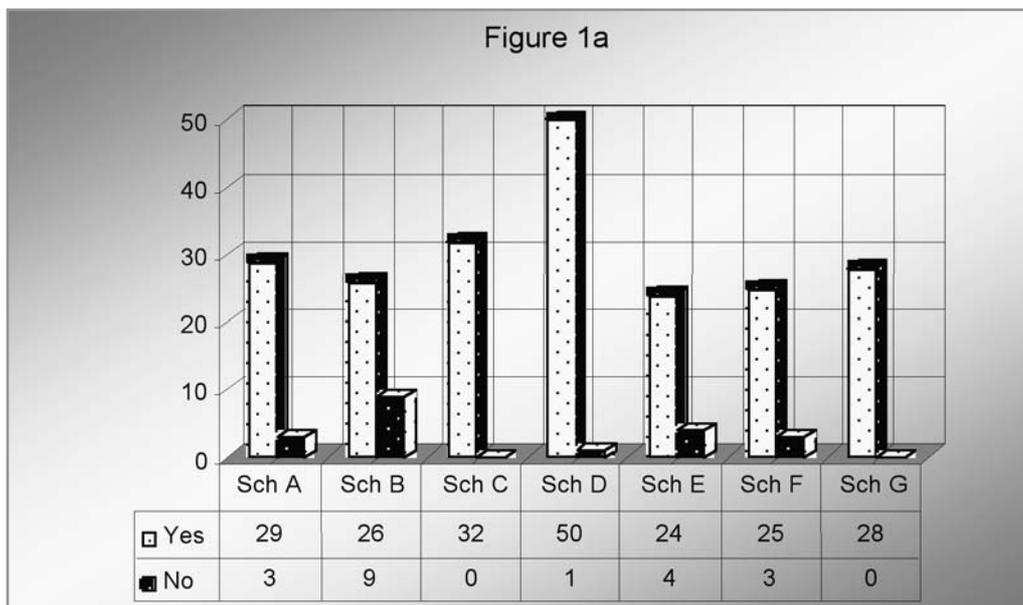
- It is notable that two primary schools had a 100% response rate from its pupils indicating that they want to stay on at school until Leaving Certificate.
- Of the 20 pupils overall who indicated that they do not intend to stay on at school until Leaving Certificate 16 are male and 4 female.
- These figures regarding intention at primary level to stay on until Leaving Certificate illustrate that it is clearly the norm for pupils to aspire to do their Leaving Certificate in the South West Inner City area.
- These figures are 2% higher than Ballyfermot and Blanchardstown respectively regarding intention to stay on until Leaving Certificate, and also 2% lower regarding intention not to stay on.

¹⁷ Dublin South Central is one of five Social Inclusion Task Force areas set up in Dublin City, and includes the South West Inner City, Crumlin/Kimmage and Ballyfermot. The figures relied upon by Nolan (2005) were from the State Census 2002. The figures regarding leaving of full-time education from the 2006 Census were not available nationally, nor for the Dublin South Central area, at the time of writing of the report. The full 2006 Census will be available between April and December 2007.

In other designated disadvantaged primary schools in Dublin, responses to the question: "Do you think you want to stay on at school until the Leaving Certificate?" were as follows:

- 5th and 6th classes in Ballyfermot (Downes 2004): 86% YES, 10% NO
- 6th classes in Blanchardstown (Downes, Maunsell & Ivers 2006): 85% YES, 10% NO
- These figures are very encouraging when contrasted with O'Connor's (2002) research findings in St. Teresa's Gardens¹⁸ of 82.5% school leaving rate compared to 19% nationally.
- An issue of concern is the stark gender difference already at primary level. 4 times more boys than girls stated that they did not intend to stay on until Leaving Certificate; it is also noticeable that the two schools with 100% of pupils who stated that they intend to stay on at school until Leaving Certificate were girls primary schools.
- It needs to be recognised that even at an aspirational level of 88% wanting to stay on until Leaving Certificate, the National Anti-Poverty Strategy (NAPS) target for 2006 of 90% completing Leaving Certificate is not being met even if this group follow through on their intentions to complete their Leaving Certificate in 2012 or so.
- There is noticeable variation across local schools regarding percentage of pupils who want or do not want to stay on at school until Leaving Certificate. It is a concern that in one school in particular 29% of those who responded to this question stated that they did not want or did not know if they wanted to stay on at school until Leaving Certificate; this contrasts with other schools in the area where 100% of pupils stated that they wanted to stay on until Leaving Certificate.

Figure 1a. Pupil responses across primary schools to the question: 'Do you think you want to stay on in school until the Leaving Cert ?'



¹⁸ Nevertheless, it needs to be acknowledged that a large number of young people from St. Teresa's Gardens attend schools outside the scope of this study

While the positive attitude of a large majority to the idea of staying on until the Leaving Certificate is a key strength to be built upon, there is a need to recognise:

- the frequent contrast between attitudes and behaviour,
- the time-scale over which such attitudes need to remain fairly stable,
- the fact that this is a sample of those currently attending school rather than being regularly absent,
- higher risk of substance abuse as students get older, with consequent risks for academic performance,
- it is prior in time to other risk factors for early school leaving such as teenage pregnancy.

Secondary Schools

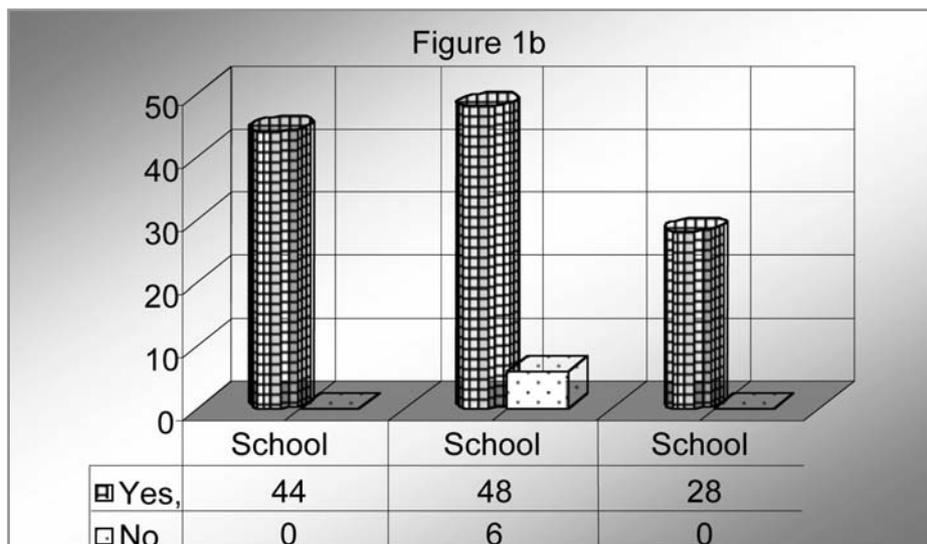
Student responses to staying on at school until Leaving Certificate were as follows for 1st years, 2nd years and 5th years:

1st Year: "Do you think you want to stay on at school until the Leaving Certificate?" were as follows:

	YES	NO	D/K	N/A
School A	44	0	4	--
School B	48	6	1	--
School C	28	0	2	1
TOTAL:	120 (90%)	6 (4.5%)	7 (5%)	1 (.5%)

Thus, of those 1st year students who provided either a yes/no response – just under 5% indicated that they did not want to stay on until their Leaving Certificate, with 90% indicating their willingness to remain in school.

Figure 1b. 1st Year response to the question: "Do you think you want to stay on at school until the Leaving Certificate?" (Excluding don't know and no answers)



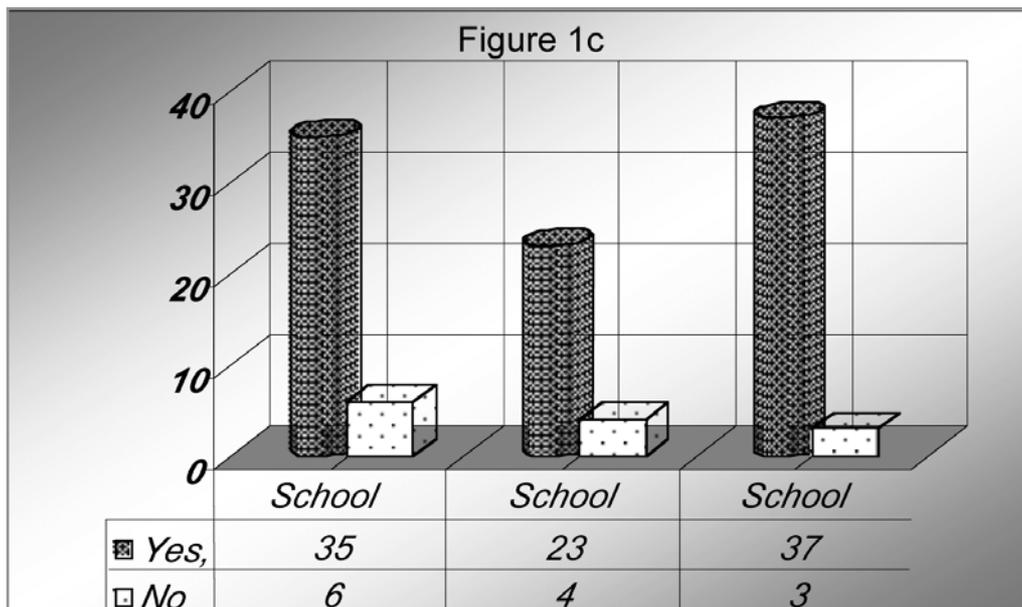
As may be seen from the graph above, all 6 first year students who responded in the negative to the question of willingness to stay until the Leaving Certificate were attending one post-primary school.

2nd Year: "Do you think you want to stay on at school until the Leaving Certificate?" were as follows:

	YES	NO	D/K	N/A
School A	35	6	--	--
School B	23	4	--	1
School C	37	3	--	
TOTAL:	95 (86%)	13 (12%)	-	1 (1%)

This data indicates that 12% of students in the sample of second years who responded either yes/no to this item indicated that they did not want to remain in school until the Leaving Certificate Examinations.

Figure 1c. 2nd Year response to the question: "Do you think you want to stay on at school until the Leaving Certificate?" (Excluding don't know and no answers)

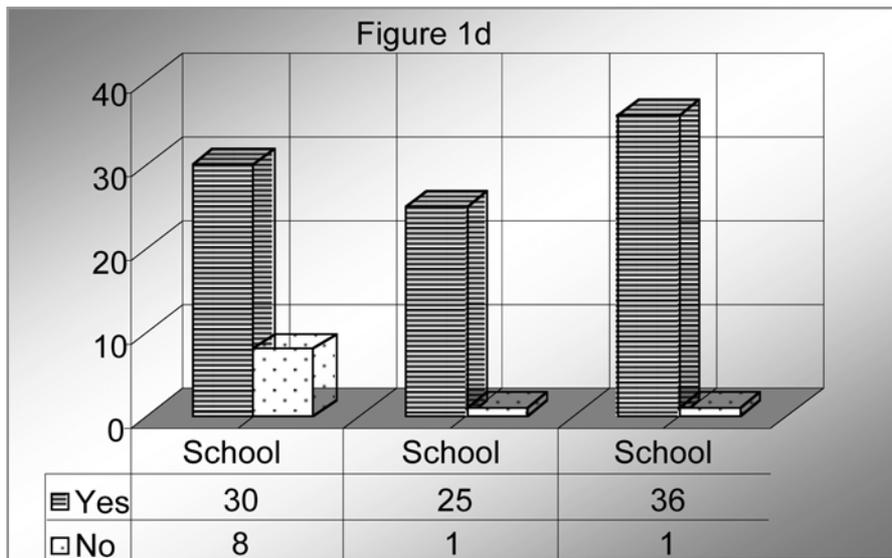


5th Year: "Do you think you want to stay on at school until the Leaving Certificate?" were as follows:

	YES	NO	D/K	N/A
School A	30	8	--	--
School B	25	1	--	--
School C	36	1	--	--
TOTAL:	91 (90%)	10 (10%)	-	-

For 5th year students, the percentage who responded that they did not want to stay on in school until the Leaving Certificate was 10%.

Figure 1d. 5th Year response to the question: "Do you think you want to stay on at school until the Leaving Certificate?" (Excluding don't know and no answers)



- Of particular note is the sharp increase in the percentage of students from 4.5% in 1st year to 12% in 2nd year who indicated that they did not want to remain in school until the Leaving Certificate Exam.
- It is also important to note that the respondents were the children and young people currently in school and not those who have already left school early.
- It is of concern that a high proportion of 5th year students in one school in particular thought that they did not want to stay on at school until the Leaving Certificate.

1.2 Key Conclusions: Willingness to stay on at school until Leaving Certificate

Primary

- There is noticeable variation across local schools regarding percentage of pupils who want or do not want to stay on at school until Leaving Certificate. It is a concern that in one school in particular 29% of those 5th and 6th class pupils who responded to this question stated that they did not want or did not know if they wanted to stay on at school until Leaving Certificate; this contrasts with other schools in the area where 100% of pupils stated that they wanted to stay on until Leaving Certificate.
- There is a clear gender difference already at primary level with 4 times more boys than girls stating they do not intend to stay on until Leaving Certificate; it is also noticeable that the two schools with 100% pupil responses intending to stay on at school until Leaving Certificate were girls primary schools.
- It needs to be recognised that even at an aspirational level of 88% wanting to stay on until Leaving Certificate, the NAPS target for 2006 of 90% completing Leaving Certificate is not being met even if this group follow through on their intentions to complete their Leaving Certificate in 2012 or so.

Secondary

- There is a sharp increase in the percentage of secondary students from 4.5% in 1st year to 12% in 2nd year indicating that they did not want to remain in school until the Leaving Certificate.
- It is of concern that a high proportion of 5th year students in one school in particular think that they do not want to stay on at school until the Leaving Certificate.

Section 2

Health issues which militate against school completion

This section adopts a focus on a range of health related issues connected with education and socio-economic disadvantage, issues which have tended to be neglected in previous research in Ireland. It is important to take an integrated approach to children and young people's needs as their physical health, mental health and educational needs influence each other and cannot be compartmentalised. Examining these issues in a holistic fashion emerged as part of the consultation process with the children and young people themselves in the local area. A developmental focus is adopted as certain issues are of more relevance to a younger age group (e.g., nutrition), and others to an older age group (e.g., substance abuse, suicide).

2. Health issues which militate against school completion

2.1 Hunger in school

Primary Schools

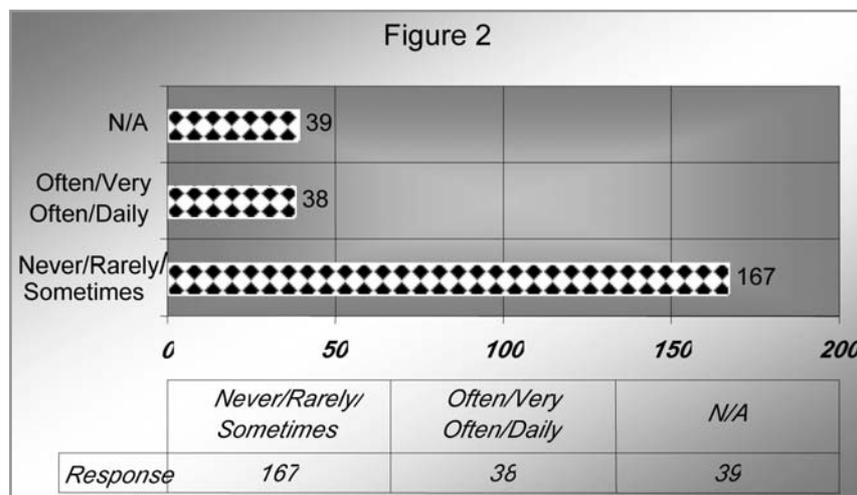
The pupil responses from 5th and 6th class in all the participating schools revealed extremely high levels of variation across schools (from 6% to 33%) regarding pupil hunger in school affecting their learning. In two schools, there was an exceptionally high level of pupils (33%) who stated that they were either often, very often or every day too hungry to do their work in school.

It is important to realise that these figures may represent an underestimation of the problem as there was a very high proportion of non-responses to questions on this page of the questionnaire. For example, in one school where 52% gave no answers to this page of the questionnaire, there were nevertheless still 33% of pupils within the category of often, very often or everyday too hungry to do their work in school

Table 1. 'How often do you feel too hungry to do your work in school?'

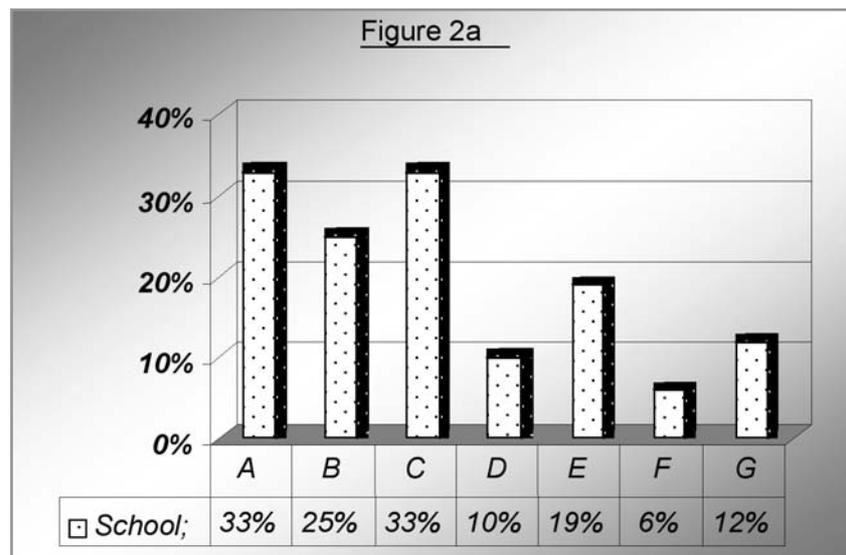
	Never/Rarely/Sometimes	Often/Very Often/Everyday	N/A
School A	10	5 (33%)	17
School B	23	8 (25%)	8
School C	20	10 (33%)	2
School D	45	5 (10%)	2
School E	17	4 (19%)	10
School F	25	2 (6%)	---
School G	27	4 (12%)	---
TOTAL	167	38	39
Average % Excluding N/As	82%	18%	

Figure 2. 'How often do you feel too hungry to do your schoolwork?'



The majority (82%) of pupils who responded to the question indicated that they were never, rarely or sometimes hungry. Nevertheless a significant minority (18%) of pupils, translating to 1 in every 5 children on average in a classroom, reported that they were hungry often, very often or on a daily basis.

Figure 2a. Responses of students who often/very often /every day feel too hungry to do their schoolwork



Nutrition needs of 6th class pupils have been highlighted in the RAPID area schools in Blanchardstown (Downes, Maunsell & Ivers 2006) where an average of 18% of pupils across 4 primary schools stated they were either often, very often or every day too hungry to do their work in school.

- The average percentage response of 18% across South West Inner City schools is the same as in Blanchardstown RAPID area primary schools
- A significant contrast between pupil responses in the South West Inner City schools and those in Blanchardstown is the extreme differences between schools in South West Inner City ranging from 6% to 33% of pupils who stated they were either often, very often or everyday too hungry to do their work in school; the range in the four Blanchardstown RAPID area primary schools was from 11% to 25%
- It is notable that the nutrition needs of pupils was not raised as a major issue by most schools in the South West Inner City area.
- Some responses from schools which related to this theme were as follows:
 - *"Integrated school meals and library service in school - a structured-funded healthy lunch club could help with nutrition needs",*
 - *"A breakfast club for physical needs",*

- *"A breakfast club is run from 8.10am and serves about 80-90 children each day",*
- *"Physiological: High dependence on overly processed food with a higher sugar content",*
- *Seek "Canteen - hot dinners".*

Nicholas of Myra run a breakfast club "every day" for 40 kids in total with on average 30 kids attending each day. Some of the interviewed early school leavers spoke positively of food being available in schools:

- *"Free food in schools is great; saves parents money so you want to go to school"*
- *"Base rooms for lunches is a good idea"*

Some pupils also noted that in their school:

- *"They give you sandwiches and milk"*
- *"Free sandwiches and milk"*
- The vast differences between schools regarding hunger levels of their pupils needs to be addressed in a systematic fashion by the School Completion Programmes across all the primary schools in the area.
- Information from one of the local School Completion Programmes observes that:
 - St Audoen's NS, James' Primary and St Enda's have their own Breakfast Club,
 - St Brigids, Francis St, and Presentation Primary use St Nicholas of Myra Breakfast Club,
 - Mater Dei use Fountain Resource Centre for a breakfast club,
 - Scoil Treasa use Donore Community Centre for a breakfast club.

Explanations from those who stated that they were often, very often or every day too hungry to do their work in school included the following:

Breakfast related:

- *"I don't normely have breakfast"*
- *"No and I don't eat my breakfast"*
- *"Because I missed breakfast"*
- *"Sometimes I forget my breadfeast when my mam makes it."*
- *"Because I don't like eating in the morning."*
- *"I don't have a breakfast."*
- *"I don't like breakfast or little lunch"*

Lunch/lunch money related:

- *"I don't bring in enough lunch"*
- *"Because I don't bring a noof lunch"*

- "Because I don't bring a lunch to school"
- "I forget my lunch"

Schoolwork/Breaktimes related:

- "Because we get no food for 3 hours"
- "Because work makes me hungry"
- "Because we only get to lunch breaks in 5 hours"

Health/Diet related:

- "No often I get cramps"
- "Because im on a diet"
- "I have asma and sometimes it makes me very hungry."

Other:

- "Cause I am"
- "I don't know"
- "I don't know"
- "Cause I don't like the bars we get"
- "How am I sopose to know"

First Year: Nutrition

Table 2. Q 51. How often do you feel too hungry to do your work in school?

	Never/Rarely/Sometimes	Often/Very Often/Every Day	N/A
School A	53%	6%	41%
School B	53%	17%	30%
School C	42%	9%	55%

In one school, 17% were often, very often, or every day, too hungry to do their work in school. This figure is of particular concern given that there was a high proportion of non-responses to this question. Similarly across the other schools the high percentages of non-responses need to be taken into account in recognising that hunger in school is a serious ongoing problem for a substantial minority of students.

Some reasons given by first and second year students for hunger in school were as follows:

Breakfast Related:

- "Because i don't get a breakfast I go straight to school" {who stated they feel hungry very often in Q. 51}
- "Cause i don't eat before i go to school) {who stated they feel hungry very often in Q. 51}
- "Didn't have time for breakfast"

- *"If you don't eat breakfast"*
- *"Didn't eat a breakfast or didn't eat anything all day"*
- *"I don't eat breakfast I never have time school starts too early"*
- *"Cause I haven't had a proper breakfast"*
- *"Because I don't have time to eat breakfast"*
- *"Because I probably didn't get breakfast because I have to leave my house at 7.30am"*
- *"Because people sometimes don't have breakfast"*
- *"Because I don't have a breakfast"*
- *"Not eating breakfast. I don't really like eating in the morning"*

Other

- *"Because I don't make lunch or bring any money" {who stated they feel hungry everyday in Q. 51}*
 - *"Because I don't eat"*
 - *"Being bored"*
 - *"I don't know cause I get breakfast every single morning"*
 - *"I am always hungry even at home. I don't know why. I like food."*
 - *"Just am, I eat breakfast but I still do be hungry"*
 - *"Because there is not enough time to eat and there are no breaks between lessons."*
- It is evident that one key reason for hunger in school is food poverty. Friel & Conlon (2004) note that *"food poverty"* can be defined as *"the inability to access a nutritionally adequate diet and the related impacts on health, culture and social participation"*
 - They observe that *"food insecurity and inadequate diet are central to the experience of poverty. Yet these issues have been largely neglected in policy debates about poverty in Ireland"*.

Friel & Conlon (2004) continue: "At a policy level, food poverty per se has not received much attention and explicit efforts to alleviate the adverse implications of food poverty are sparse"

2.2 Problematic sleep patterns among pupils

"Some kids now out all night at twelve and thirteen"
SICCDA young mother

Though there was no direct evidence from pupil and student responses to support the above claim by a local mother, Taras & Potts-Datema (2005) note that most children need at least 9 hours of restful sleep each night and conclude that:

The preponderance of literature that recognises the detrimental effects of sleep disorders is astounding and perhaps not fully appreciated among many primary care providers, school health professionals and educators.

Other research has shown that adolescents require at least 8.5 hours of sleep per night and more appropriately 9.25 hours of sleep (Carskadon et al., 1980). A review by Blunden et al (2001) of 13 articles demonstrated that reduced attention, memory, intelligence and increased problematic behaviour resulted from sleep-related obstructive breathing. Other international studies have shown a relationship between insufficient sleep and lowered academic performance (Allen, 1992; Kowalski & Allen, 1995; Schuller, 1994; Wolfson & Carskadon, 1996, 1998).

Fallone's (2005) research monitored 74 healthy, academically successful children between the ages of 6 and 12 for a three-week long period. During the first week of the study, they slept their normal amount. For the second two weeks, they went to bed a little earlier one week and much later than normal the other. Their teachers rated their academic performance and behaviour at the end of each week. Results showed significantly lower ratings for academic performance and attention during the week that they slept fewer hours, despite the fact that teachers were not told which sleep schedule the kids were on. However, Fallone et al (2002) reviewed a number of studies and concluded that varying definitions of "good" versus "poor" sleep limit the ability to compare studies.

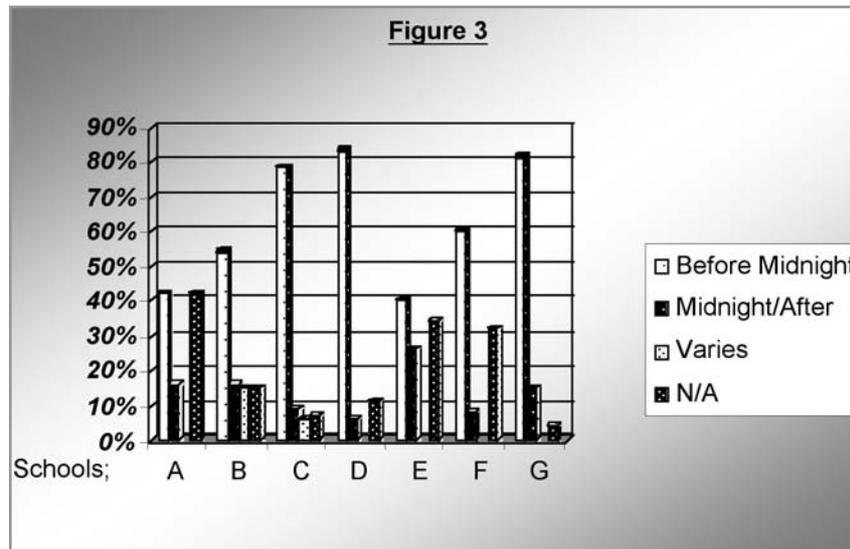
On the assumption that children at primary school need at least 8.5 hours of sleep the results from our survey of pupil responses were divided into those who usually go to sleep *before* midnight and *after* midnight.

Table 3: *What time do you usually go to sleep at on a weekday? Primary Schools*

	Before Midnight	Midnight or After Midnight	Varies	N/A
School A %	42%	16%	---	42%
School B %	54%	16%	15%	15%
School C %	78%	9%	6%	7%
School D %	83%	6%	---	11%
School E %	40%	26%	---	34%
School F %	60%	8%	---	32%
School G %	81%	15%	---	4%

The percentage of pupils who responded that on a school/weekday night they usually go to sleep at midnight or after varied across primary schools: 6% of pupils in one primary school were in this category while over a quarter of pupils (26%) attending another school reported that they were basically at risk of lowered academic performance as a result of fewer sleep hours.

Figure 3. What time do you usually go to sleep at on a weekday? Excluding no answers



Taras & Potts-Datema (2005) note that:

Some school districts have pushed back school start times for adolescents and the issue of school starting times is widely debated among parents of adolescents and school administrators. Unfortunately, published peer-reviewed studies that investigate the benefits of such modifications are virtually absent in the literature.

Some of the pupil/student responses from those who reported they had problems sleeping were as follows:

Thinking related:

- "Sometimes, because I think a lot of something."
- "Because you are thinking about something."
- "Always because I'm always thinking about things"
- "I do sometimes if there is something on my mind like people in hospital. Or people who have passed away"
- "Thinking about school"

Worry/Stress/Fear related:

- "After a scary film or if I'm worried."
- "I do be afraid sometimes cause there is a door after my next door neighbours everyone says it is haunted no one lives there and I don't tell my family."
- "Sometimes I have problems sleeping because I am worried..."
- "All my stress"

Bereavement related:

- "My uncle died 8 months ago and he was my best friend ever and any time I go to sleep I have bad dreams, but I'm OK now and I hate Freddie Kruger but I still watch scary films."

- *"My nanny died and I am upset."*
- *"... sometimes its cause I think about my nanny who is in heaven"*
- *"I do sometimes if there is something on my mind like people in hospital. Or people who have passed away"*

Physical:

- *"I wake up during the not {night} a lot probably because I'm not tired enough."*
- *"Yes because I'm hungry."*
- *"Yes I sleep walk and my Mam get very worried."*
- *"Sometimes I have insomnia and can't sleep till 2 o clock. I hardly do any exercise and all my energy is stored in my body and thus I am unable to sleep."*
- *"Yes I do I suffer from insomnia"*
- *"Yes cause I'm not tired"*

Other:

- *"Yes a dream about a person in a film"*
- *"because I think the is someone in the house"*
- *"I can never get to sleep! Ever!"*
- *"All the time"*

2.3 Substance abuse

- It is well recognised that a vital feature of drug use prevention is the development of social and emotional skills (Morgan 2001)
- It is evident from the figures below that binge drinking is already a serious issue for a minority of 2nd year students, as it is for 3rd year students nationally (Hibell et al 2004)

Second Year overall results

Table 4: Question 54: *How many times have you had 5 or more drinks in a row over the last 30 days?*

	No Ans	None	1	2	3-5	6-9	10 or more
School A	9	24	3	2	1	2	-
School B	6	17	1	3	1	0	-
School C	3	17	5	2	6	6	1
Total	18	58	9	7	8	8	1

Table 5: *Have you ever used illegal drugs?* Responses of 2nd year students across the 3 schools

	Yes	No	No Ans
Total	13	74	23

Excluding those who did not answer this question, approximately 15% of second year students stated that they had experienced illegal drugs within their lifetime.

It may be argued that the high level of non-respondents to this question could indicate a still higher percentage of students who use illegal drugs. However, the questions on drugs came at the end of a long questionnaire and a vast majority of non-responses did not answer any questions on the last pages. This does not suggest that non-responses may be biased towards increased numbers of students using illegal drugs.

Table 6: *Have you ever used any of the following?* 2nd year responses across the 3 schools

Question	Drug	Profile of Drugs Taken by Those Second Year Students who State that They have taken Illicit Drugs ¹⁹
A	Tranquillisers or sedatives	1 (during last year)
B	Amphetamines	none
C	LSD/hallucinogens	none
D	Crack	2 (In last year)
E	Cocaine	none
F	Relevin ²⁰	----
G	Heroin	none
H	Ecstasy	1 (In last year)
I	Magic mushrooms	none
J	GHB	none
K	Drugs by injection with a needle	none
L	Alcohol together with pills	none
M	Alcohol and marijuana at the same time?	5 (Last 30 days), 5 (In last year), 1 (In lifetime)
N	Anabolic steroids	1

- It is evident that marijuana/hashish was overwhelmingly the first illicit drug used by those students who have engaged in illicit drug use

Fifth Year overall results

Table 7: *Have you ever used illegal drugs?* Responses of 5th year students across the 3 schools

	Yes	No	No Ans
Total	39	40	19

¹⁹ Note that some students gave responses in more than one category of drugs

²⁰ Relevin is used in the ESPAD studies (1995;1999;2003) as a 'dummy drug' to control for students exaggerating their drug use

Excluding those who did not answer this question, almost 50% of fifth year students stated that they experienced illegal drugs within their lifetime. This is a sharp increase from the figure of 15% for comparable questions to the 2nd year students in the same schools. In other words, there is an approximate increase by 35% in experience of illicit drugs between 2nd year students and the 5th year group who are two years older.

Table 8: *Have you ever used any of the following?* 5th year responses across the 3 schools

Question	Drug	Profile of Drugs Taken by Those Fifth Year Students who State that They have taken Illicit Drugs ²¹
A	Tranquillisers or sedatives	4 (during last 30 days), 3 (In lifetime)
B	Amphetamines	none
C	LSD/hallucinogens	1 (In last year), 1 (In lifetime)
D	Crack	1 (during last 30 days)
E	Cocaine	3 (during last 30 days), 4 (In last year), 1 (In lifetime)
F	Relevin ²²	-----
G	Heroin	1 (In last year)
H	Ecstasy	1 (during last 30 days), 1 (In last year), 2 (In lifetime)
I	Magic mushrooms	4 (In last year), 1 (In lifetime)
J	GHB	none
K	Drugs by injection with a needle	none
L	Alcohol together with pills	4 (during last 30 days), 2 (In last year), 1 (In lifetime)
M	Alcohol and marijuana at the same time?	17 (Last 30 days), 10 (In last year), 5 (In lifetime)
N	Anabolic steroids	1

- Excluding non-responses at least 34% of 5th year students have taken alcohol and marijuana at the same time in the last month or year
- Excluding non-responses almost 10% of 5th year students have taken cocaine in the last month or year

The figures must be treated as conservative estimates for illicit drug use among this age group in the local area as this was a school-based study where:

- those most at risk of early school leaving may not have been attending school on the day the questionnaire was administered,
- the vast majority of students stated that they would not talk with someone in school about personal issues and therefore may not have been willing to honestly disclose their drug use within the school environment.

While some student questionnaire responses referred to projects regarding drug prevention taking place in school, interviews with young people and other members of the local community noted the following points:

- *"talks on stress in schools, fella who was on drugs came in and did a talk and it was good"*
- *"do a lot of projects on drugs" in school*

²¹ Note that some students gave responses in more than one category of drugs

²² Relevin is used in the ESPAD studies (1995;1999;2003) as a 'dummy drug' to control for students exaggerating their drug use

- *"I know a lot of people my age [age 15 Female] taking drugs, cocaine, ecstasy"*
- *"drink is the biggest problem here"*
- *"heroin creeping back in, it will be worse than before, everyone has more money"*
- *"some people start coke at 14, hash at any age"*
- *"In the 80s only strung out on heroin, now on everything"*
- *"no crackdown on heroin"*
- *"coke, heroin all over the place"*
- *"not one weekend I'm not offered coke"*
- *"huge number on drugs, starts with alcohol some drinking in primary school, dealing in Thomas St., the Coombe, Meath St., caused by Merchant's Quay, the sellers hang around Thomas St."*
- *"You just have to be sensitive about the children's backgrounds when discussing families and drugs"*
- *"if dropped out in 3rd year and be a waster smoking hash on the corner"*

'Gillying', 'Being a gilly'

According to some 17-18 year olds in alternative forms of education there are some young people in early secondary school who are engaged in 'gillying' for older drug dealers. In other words they are keeping drugs in their possession for future selling by the dealers; the word 'gilly' comes from the Irish 'giolla' meaning servant and suggests an element of coercion in this process.

- *"at 13 to 14 be a gilly, someone who keeps stuff for you"*
- *"at 17 to 18 start selling"*
- *"have people they're gillying for, younger than 15 to 16 if have an older fella"*
- *"foreigners being forced into selling drugs to protect their families"*

While the scale of this is uncertain in the South West Inner City area, there are obviously serious implications for young people's attendance at school if they are getting forced into illegal employment as 'gillies'.

A number of service providers questioned the quality of drug prevention approaches in the schools:

- *"spoken down to rather than spoken with, students awareness of drug problem is not taken into account, don't think it's adequate"*
- *drug prevention "difficult in the school setting", "guards doing it"*
- *"nonrecognition of the issues, volume of drugs that has crept back in, staff have no specific training regarding cocaine users"*
- *quality of drug use prevention in schools "not sufficient, children still getting involved"*
- *"people working in schools don't know about drugs [issues]"*
- *"problems at home so people might take drugs"*
- *Drug prevention "nothing on that, used to have CE workers in schools"*

- Community Response have established a pilot project involving 5th year students at James St. CBS which includes projects regarding drug prevention and development of peer support (likewise with sex and relationship education).
- One person in an alternative form of education project recalled that in school *"the play, stay cool, say no to drugs was very good"*. Another stated that *"should bring people in from Coolmine and recovering people, got this in 5th/6th year, they should come into the school earlier"*.
- Drug prevention strategies need to work from the realities of where the young people are at. They also need to be extended to work on role play situations and on highlighting availability of emotional support services in order to help young people resist the role of "being a gilly".

2.4 Inadequate sex and relationship education

Little research to date has been undertaken in Ireland in relation to young people's understanding of sex and sexual relationships. Current perspectives in health and sex education emphasise empowering young people by helping them to meet their own needs in these areas (Hyde, Howlett, Drennan and Brady, 2005). However, little is known as to actual needs of young people regarding this important part of their lives.

Relationship and sex education (RSE) forms part of the national curriculum at both primary and junior cycle secondary level with negotiations currently underway for RSE to be introduced at senior cycle secondary level. A recent investigation of the extent to which the RSE programme is implemented in Irish schools has been undertaken on behalf of the Crisis Pregnancy Agency but the data is as yet unpublished.

The first national study of adult sexual health and relationships was completed in 2006 by the Royal College of Surgeons (RCSI) and the ESRI. The study of almost 7,500 Irish adults reported that close to 90% in the 18-to-24 age group indicated that they had received some school-based sex education (RCSI & ESRI 2006). Respondents noted receiving basic biological information on sexual intercourse, with little if any education about sexual feelings, relationships and emotions. Furthermore, only one-third of those surveyed received sex education regarding contraception, safer sex and sexually transmitted infections.

The RCSI & ESRI (2006) study also reported that men and women with lower levels of education are less likely to have received sex education, are less likely to use contraception and more likely to have become sexually active before the age of 17. While nine in every ten adults surveyed in the study said sex education should be provided at school, little focus is on those who are disengaged from school and/or those who have left school early.

Furthermore, little if any information is available regarding education about the positive aspects of sex and relationships including the emotional benefits for the individual.

Primary schools:

Focus groups of primary school pupils identified the following themes:

- Issues around body image: These were raised by a number of pupils who were mainly female. The pupils indicated that they rely strongly on peers for information on 'what is normal'. There seemed to be a general lack of

awareness in relation to the physical and secondary sexual changes occurring at puberty.

- Issues concerning relationships and sex were not seen by pupils as a high priority currently for them – the tendency was for pupils to identify boys/girls as their 'mates' at present.

Secondary schools:

- **Attitude to sex:**

Secondary students' questionnaire responses across the age groups (1st, 2nd & 5th years) indicate gender differences in attitude to sex. With few exceptions, both male and female students responded that, they perceived boys to have a greater interest in sex and having sex than girls.

Sample responses to the question: 'Do you think that guys and girls have the same attitude to sex?' included:

- 'no cause some boys push you to have sex' (12F)
- 'No, girls are more excited about it.' (12M)
- 'no they are much different' (13F)
- 'boys want al the time but they dont ave ta pay 4 it we get it al like being pregnant' (13F)
- 'No guy are more arouzed by it than girls' (14F)
- 'no most fellas are only with girls for sex' (14F)
- 'no girls can wait for the rite time but boys will hop into bed wiv anyone' (14F)
- 'No because some boys pressure girl to do it' (13F)
- 'Some boys are just sex on the brain' (13F)
- 'No. boys are more confident than girls' (14F)
- 'No boys probably do more' (14F)
- 'depends really on the person themselves' (14F)
- 'No. Boys would do anything to get a girl in bed.' (14, F)
- 'No boys are always talking more about it than girls' (14F)
- 'No boys like it more.' (13M)
- 'No boys want sex more than girls.' (14M)
- 'young fella's want it more' (16F)
- 'no boys want it more' (15F)
- 'No most boys are only with girls for one thing and thats sex' (16F)
- 'No some boys only go out with girls for sex' (16F)

- **Social/Peer pressure**

Though the general view was that boys and girls had different attitudes to sex, nonetheless, a small number of students indicated that there were few differences in the attitudes of girls and boys to sex. Instead social expectations and peer pressure on both boys and girls to have or not have sex were emphasised:

- 'yes girls want it as well as boys but they would not say it' (13F)
- 'some girls do but every boy does think of sex sex sex' (13F)
- 'Guys are more straightforward when it comes to sex and girls are more shy' (13M)
- 'some do, some don't. Not all are the same. Some want to be big in front of their mates' (14F)

- **Emotional dimensions to sex and sexual relationships**

Most responses tended to focus on the physical act of sexual intercourse. A small number of students also placed emphasis on emotional intimacy. As may be seen from the following responses, some students perceived a gender difference in the emotions and meaning attached to sexual relationships:

'some wait till they find their true love I guess' (14F)

'cuz girls want someone to hug and boys just want to have sex' (12F)

'No. Girls have a deeper meaning to it. Where boys just dont care.' (13F)

'No. Boys just want it. Girls want it to be special.' (15F)

'no, some guys just use girls for sex and girls are getting hurt and being foolish and getting pregnant' (15F)

'Girls want it to feel important in a relationship. fellas use us, and do it to be cool!!!.' (16F)

Young people's views on the worst things that can happen in a relationship.

Students indicated a range of issues which, for them, were the worst things that can happen in a relationship. Namely:

unwanted/crisis pregnancy:

'Getting a girl preganant.' (13M)

'They have a baby that is not wanted.' (13M)

'Forcing the girl to have a baby and then the baby gets left alone.' (13M)

'Unwanted pregnancy' (13M)

'They can have a baby and the man can run off.' (13M)

'That the girls get pregnant.' (14M)

'If your young and you have a baby.' (15M)

relationship break-up:

'You break up with your boyfriend.' (13F)

'Yes they fall apart.' (13M)

'No they don't think, feel or act the same. Divorse.' (13M)

"One of them can commit suicide because they broke up." (12M)

rape/sexual violence:

'Maybe rape or something like that' (13M)

verbal/physical violence:

'The boy hets {hits} the girl.' (12M)

'Arguments.' (14M)

What young people feel they need to learn about love and sex.

Students responses in relation to the 3 most important things young people need to need to learn about love and sex fell into the following categories:

Sex education/Safe sex

'Get your sex education; think about it; always talk about it.' (12M)

'Have safe sex.' (12M)

'Use safety at most times;' (13M)

'Always wear a condom; have safe sex; and take it one step at a time.' (12M)

'You can get AIDs; it can hurt your feelings; you can get diases.' (13M)

'Don't have a baby; use a condom; think before having sex.' (13M)

'Protection; Not to rape; be careful.' (13M)

'Use safety' (13M)

'Don't tell lies; Use a condom.' (14M)

'Don't take advantage of the girl if she is drunk.' (14M)

'Always use a condom and don't have a baby; don't have sex with a girl with Aids; don't have sex with a prostitute.' (14M)

Age to have sex

'to no what age to have sex at.' (14M)

'Whent {wait} untell your 21' (12M)

'Don't do it at a young age.' (12M)

'Don't have sex until your older' (13M)

'It is not everything; take your education first then love and sex; they should not have sex.' 15M

Love/Respect/Emotional Dimensions

'Love someone forever.' (13M)

'Don't disrespect a girl.' (13M)

'Don't break somebody's heart.' (13M)

'Only have sex if you like the girl' (13M)

Other

'Not for fun; take it cearious {serious}' (13M)

In general the sex and relationship questions were poorly answered by first and second years. Those that did respond provided responses that were brief while some skipped these items completely. The general view from the responses given was that sex and relationship education was at a poor level in the early secondary school stage. By fifth year, students were, in general, providing more mature and elaborated responses with a number emphasising the emotional dimensions of sexual relationships citing the importance of love and trust in a relationship.

In interviews with 16-18 year olds in alternative forms of education the following points emerged:

- "we didn't get any sex education"
- "primary school gave more sex education than secondary"
- "everyone learns about it from the street"
- "In secondary SPHE was a doss class"
- "girls sleeping around to hurt themselves".

School personnel and service providers' responses on this topic included:

- sex education a "huge gap"
 - "schools can be quite moralistic, need harm reduction approach"
 - "girls do not have information but there is a link between drink with sex, as young as 12"
 - "based on the high number of young girls pregnant it needs improvement".
- Young people, school personnel and local service providers all perceived a need for increased availability of a more holistic approach to sex education in local schools including:
 - empowering students with strategies to cope with social and peer pressure,
 - addressing the emotional and intimacy aspects of sex and sexual relationships alongside the physical/biological elements,
 - developing students' critical thinking and decision-making skills.
 - It is also evident that school-based sex and relationship education cannot fully meet the needs of those at risk of early school leaving as these young people will have left school before such education starts. Locating sex and relationship education programmes exclusively in school settings means that those most at risk (as identified in the ISSHR study) will not be reached. It is thus recommended that programmes on sex and relationship education should be designed and delivered in out of school, community-based settings. Community-based programmes have been documented as effective and as having potential to provide feedback into the design and implementation of school-based programmes for relationship and sex education (Rogow and Haberland, 2005).
 - Pupils at primary school level tend to rely strongly on peers for information on 'what is normal' and many students stated that they would not talk with someone in school about personal issues. UK studies have also noted that the young person's peers are important educators about sex and relationships for young people (Avert, 2006; UK Department of Health, 2003). Therefore it is recommended that a strategy which facilitates 'Peer Advice Structures' in the area of Sex and Relationship Education should be developed and would further empower the young person both as peer-advisor and learner in this area.

2.5 Suicide risk

- There is an urgent need for increased provision of emotional support services locally which target young people.

A large majority of the two focus groups who raised the issue of suicide prevention had personal acquaintance with people aged 16-18 who had committed suicide. Only 2 out of 14 people between ages 16-18 knew no one who had committed suicide:

- *"Why do you think some people are dying ? Because there is no one to talk to"*
- *"fellas wouldn't tell about their problems, wouldn't use counsellors"*
- *"we should do more personal development"*
- *"girls slit their wrists"*
- *"girls take tablets and slice their wrists"*

- *"girls sleeping around to hurt themselves, other ways instead of slitting wrists"*
- *"6 committed suicide one summer coming up to the Leaving Cert results, 1 owed money for drugs, 1 wanted by 1 other fella, 2 of the 6 were girls"*
- *"about 7 my age or younger [killed themselves]"*
- *"about 2 committed suicide, a dozen who've threatened to"*
- *"know a couple on the verge of doing it"*
- *"In Clondalkin 40 people hung themselves, mostly fellas"*
- *"because of depressions and being on your own feel like no one pays attention and if no feeling inside you and you can feel pain you're going to do it"*
- *"know 6, all girls, tablets and slitting wrists, 1 fella who hung himself"*
- *"3 close friends and a guy who hung himself".*
- An explicit link between suicide of young people and owing money for drugs was raised by a number of respondents and is a matter of extreme concern:
 - *"a couple of my friends killed themselves because they were in debt to drugs"*
 - *"drug related 2 or 3, mainly owing money"*
 - *"they kill themselves because they owe money for drugs".*
- The need for clearer information locally about emotional support services for young people is evident:
 - *"suicide support not made public enough, only know the Samaritans"*
 - *"no information about counselling services"*
 - *"would go if they were encouraged to use them".*

2.6 Key conclusions: Health issues which militate against school completion

Hunger in school

- The pupil responses from 5th and 6th class in all the participating schools in South West Inner City revealed extremely high levels of variation across schools regarding pupil hunger in school affecting their learning – as well as exceptionally high levels of responses in two schools (33%) stating that they were either often, very often or every day too hungry to do their work in school.
- These differences between primary schools in South West Inner City ranged from 6% to 33% of pupils stating they were either often, very often or everyday too hungry to do their work in school.
- It is evident that concerns regarding hunger are enduring into secondary school, with a conservative estimate of at least 17% of students in one secondary school stating that they were either often, very often or every day too hungry to do their work in school.

Problematic sleep patterns among pupils at primary

- It is evident that in at least 4 primary schools there are more than 15% of pupils regularly receiving a duration of sleep that is less than 9 hours per night and which is according to international research going to weaken their academic performance in school. A number of pupil responses indicate that their lack of sleep is due to anxiety. There is a clear need for consistent emotional support to be available for children to create a climate where they can express their anxiety.

Substance abuse

- Approximately 15% of second year students stated that they have had lifetime experience of illegal drugs. This is significantly lower than the national average of 39% for the older age group of 15-16 year olds responses to the same question in the European Schools Survey Project on Alcohol and other Drugs 2003.
- Excluding those who did not answer this question, almost 50% of fifth year students stated that they have had lifetime experience of illegal drugs. This is significantly higher than the national average of 39% for 15-16 year olds responses to the same question. It is also a sharp increase from the figure of 15% for comparable questions to the 2nd year students in the same schools. In other words, there is an approximate increase by 35% in lifetime experience of illicit drugs between 2nd year students and two years older, 5th year students.
- It is a concern that (excluding non-responses) almost 10 % of 5th year students have taken cocaine in the last month or year.
- It is evident that binge drinking is already a serious issue for a minority of 2nd year students, as it is for 3rd year students nationally.
- A number of service providers questioned the quality of drug prevention approaches in the schools and at present there is a pilot project for drug prevention in one local secondary school, commencing in 5th year. This is clearly an inadequate level of response to issues regarding drug prevention across local schools.
- The contrasting levels of drug use between 2nd year and 5th year respondents illustrates that drug prevention programmes must start at least by 2nd year and arguably at primary level in a developmentally appropriate fashion.

Inadequate sex and relationship education

- Young people, school personnel and local service providers all perceived a need for increased availability of a more holistic approach to sex education in local schools including; empowering students with strategies to mediate social and peer pressure, addressing the emotional and intimacy aspects of sex and sexual relationships alongside the physical/biological elements; developing students' critical thinking and decision-making skills.
- It is also evident that school-based sex and relationship education cannot fully meet the needs of those at risk of early school leaving as these young people in essence will have left school before such education effectively commences. Thus, locating sex and relationship education programmes exclusively in school settings means that those most at risk will not be reached. Community-based programmes have been documented as effective and having potential to feedback positively into the design and implementation of school-based programmes in the domain of relationship and sex education.

Suicide risk among older peers

- There is an urgent need for increased provision of emotional support services locally which target young people in order to minimise risk of suicide among young people.
- An explicit link between suicide of young people and owing money for drugs was raised by a number of respondents and is a matter of extreme concern.
- Clearer information locally about emotional support services for young people needs to be provided as part of a strategy for prevention of suicide among young people.

Section 3

Relationships in school

This section once again relies on the voices of the local children and young people themselves, examining their views on key relationships in schools – with teachers and with their peers. The atmosphere or ‘social climate’ of the schools is examined in detail as these dimensions are central to children and young people’s motivations to learn and motivations to attend school. Freiberg (1999) states in the US context that ‘In practice, few [school social] climate measures tap students as a source of feedback’ (p.209). In contrast, this research places students views at the centre. A key challenge for the educational system in general is to create positive relations within schools in order to maximise pupils’ and students’ range of potentials.

3. Relationships in school

3.1 Pupil/Student perceptions of being treated fairly in school

The perceptions of school as a personally supportive community is critical to school completion and satisfaction (Fine 1986; Kagan 1990). US adolescents cite a sense of isolation and lack of personally meaningful relationships at school as equal contributors to academic failure and to their decisions to drop out of school (Institute for Education and Transformation 1992; Wehlage & Rutter 1986). Meier (1992) mentions personalised, caring relationships with teachers as a key priority for high school-level reform. Using primarily populations deemed to be “at risk”, research in the US has shown that the students’ sense of belonging influences the acceptance of educational values, motivation and commitment to school (Goodenow & Grady 1992; Wehlage et al 1989).

Teacher-student relations have also been a major theme in designated disadvantaged schools across a number of different areas of Dublin. Fingleton’s (2003) interviews with eleven early school leavers in the Canal Communities Area of Dublin highlight their alienation from the school system – in particular their dislike of being embarrassed by the teacher in front of the rest of the class - as well as the desire of many for further paths to education though not through traditional routes. Forkan (2005) touches on the theme of teacher-student relations in the conclusion of his report in Blanchardstown: “treat all young people with respect, as this will be reciprocated”. Casby’s (1997) interviews with early school leavers in Ballyfermot also noted that:

More attention must be paid to the process by which a young person comes to leave school early. Early school leavers attribute most significance to factors related to school: relationships with teachers, suspensions and difficulties with curricula (p.6)

Primary Schools

Table 9. Responses to the question: ‘Are you fairly treated by teachers in school? Why/Why not?’ were as follows for the primary schools in the South West Inner City area:

	Yes	No	Sometimes	Don’t Know
School A	30 (93%)	0 (0%)	2	-
School B	25 (72%)	8 (20%)	4	2
School C	25 (78%)	4 (12%)	3	-
School D	38 (71%)	5 (9%)	10	-
School E	18 (58%)	7 (22%)	3	3
School F	23 (92%)	0 (0%)	1	1
School G	24 (75%)	1 (3%)	7	
Total	183 (75%)	25 (10%)	30 (12%)	6 (2%)

As may be seen from this Table, on average, the majority (75%) of primary school pupils responded that they are treated fairly by their teachers in school. Nonetheless, some 22% of pupils on average, representing more than one in

every five pupils in a classroom setting report that they are not or are sometimes not treated fairly by teachers. Variation in responses across schools is evident with approximately one-third of the pupils in two of the seven primary schools responding in the negative to the question of being treated fairly by teachers.

Figure 4. Are You Treated Fairly In School?

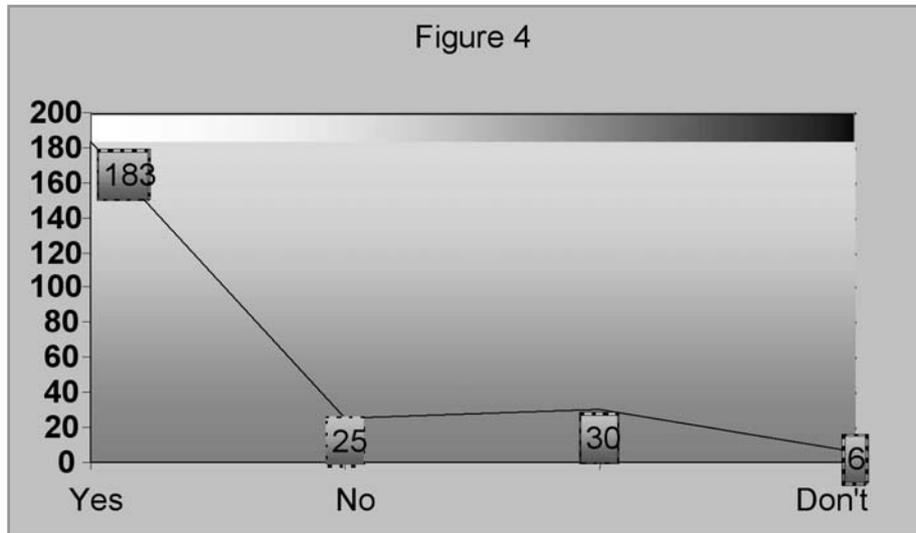
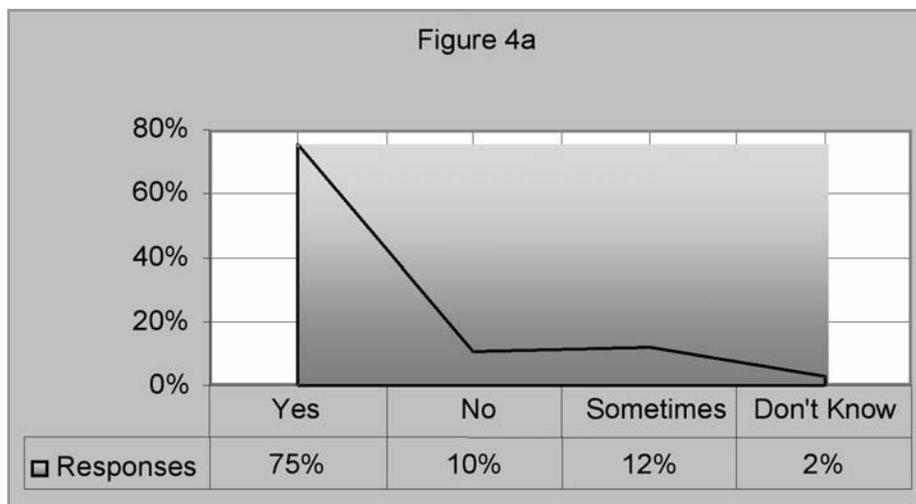
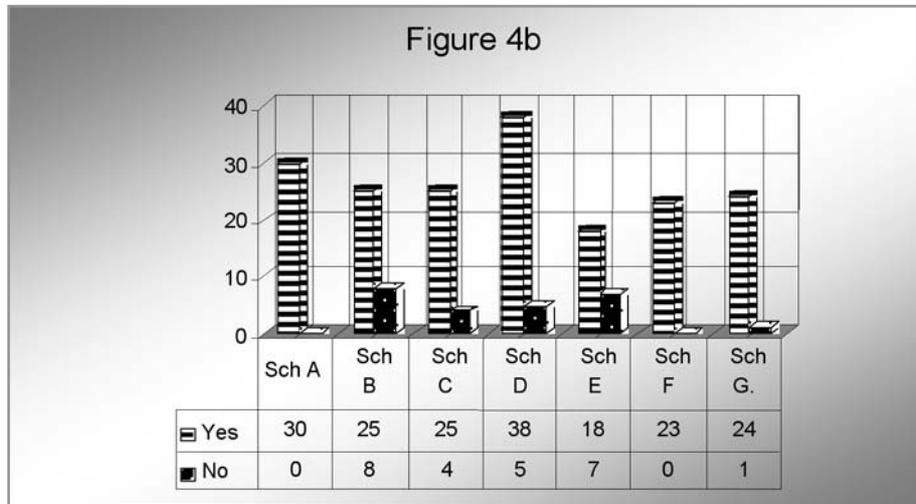


Figure 4a. Percentage Breakdown of Responses to 'Are You Treated Fairly In School?'



- These findings compare with 74% of 6th class pupils responding: Yes, they are treated fairly in 4 primary schools in RAPID areas of Blanchardstown (Downes, Maunsell & Ivers 2006).
- This compares with 15% of 6th class pupils responding: No, they are not treated fairly in 4 primary schools in RAPID areas of Blanchardstown (Downes, Maunsell & Ivers 2006).

Figure 4 b. Breakdown By Primary School of Response to 'Are You Treated Fairly In School?'

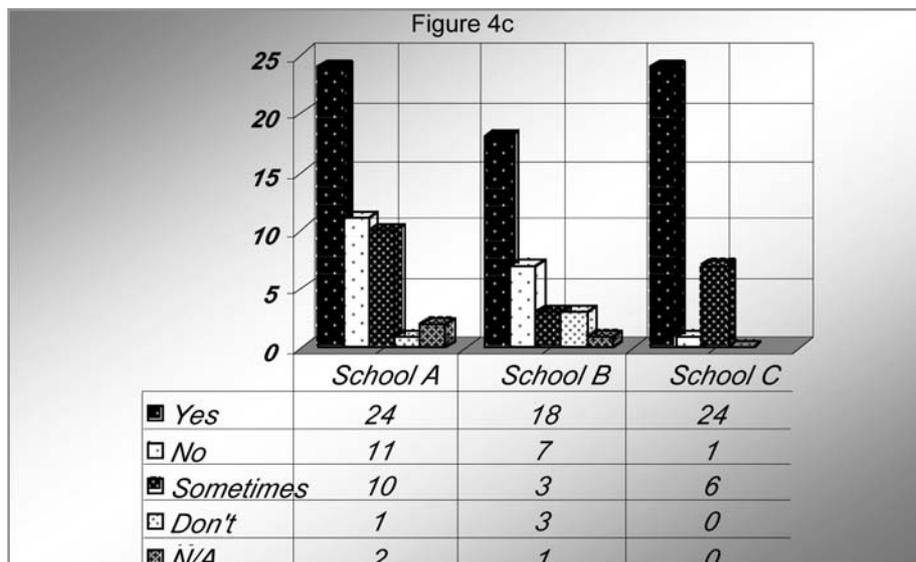


Secondary Schools

Table 10: First Years: Q 16. Are you treated fairly by teachers in school? Why/Why not?

	Yes	No	Sometimes	Don't Know	N/A
School A	24 (50%)	11 (24%)	10	1	2
School B	18 (56%)	7	3	3	1
School C	24 (75%)	1 (3%)	7	-	-
Total	66 (59%)	19 (17%)	20	4	3

Figure 4 c. 1st Year response to the question: Are you treated fairly by teachers in school? Why/Why not?



- It is evident that there is significant variation across schools in student perceptions of being treated fairly by teachers, for example, between School A (50% Yes, 24% No) and School C (75% Yes, 3% No).
- In total, 59% of first year students stated that they were treated fairly by teachers, 17% stated that they were not treated fairly by teachers.
- This is at first sight very comparable to responses of first year students across two RAPID area secondary schools in Blanchardstown, where 55% stated they were treated fairly and 15% stated they were not treated fairly by teachers (Downes, Maunsell & Ivers 2006). However, there was much less variation across schools in Blanchardstown than in the South West Inner City area in student responses to this question.
- It is of concern that there is such a sharp decrease in student perceptions of being treated fairly by teachers from 5th and 6th class at primary level (75%) to first year secondary (59%) in at least some of the local secondary schools.
- It is of concern that there is such a sharp increase in student perceptions of not being treated fairly by teachers from 5th and 6th class at primary level (10%) to first year secondary (17%) in at least some of the local secondary schools.

Table 11. Second Years: Are you treated fairly by teachers in school? Why/Why not?

	Yes	No	Sometimes	Don't Know	N/A
School A	26	8	7		
School B	21	4	3	-	-
School C	19	12	9	-	-
Total	66 (60%)	24 (22%)	19		

Figure 4d. 2nd Year response to the question: Are you treated fairly by teachers in school? Why/Why not? (Excluding don't know and no answers)

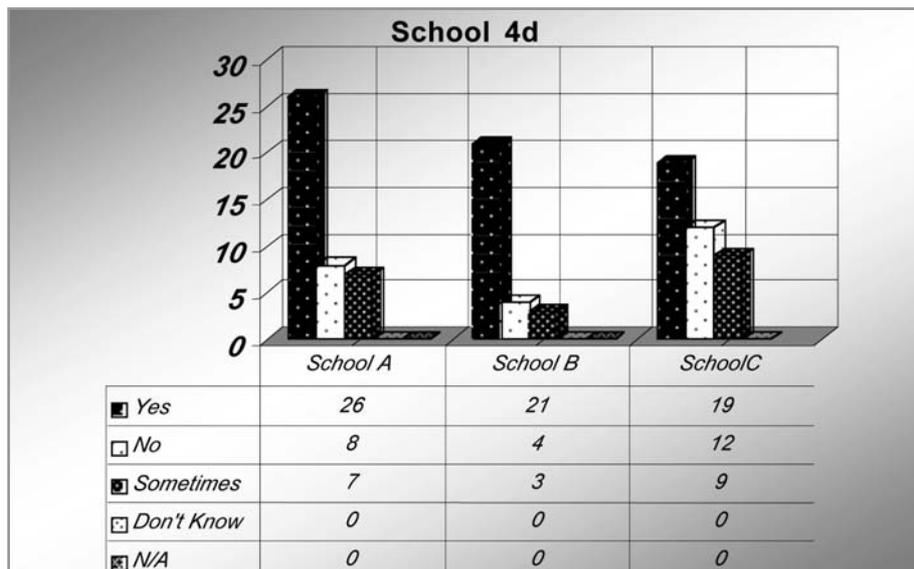
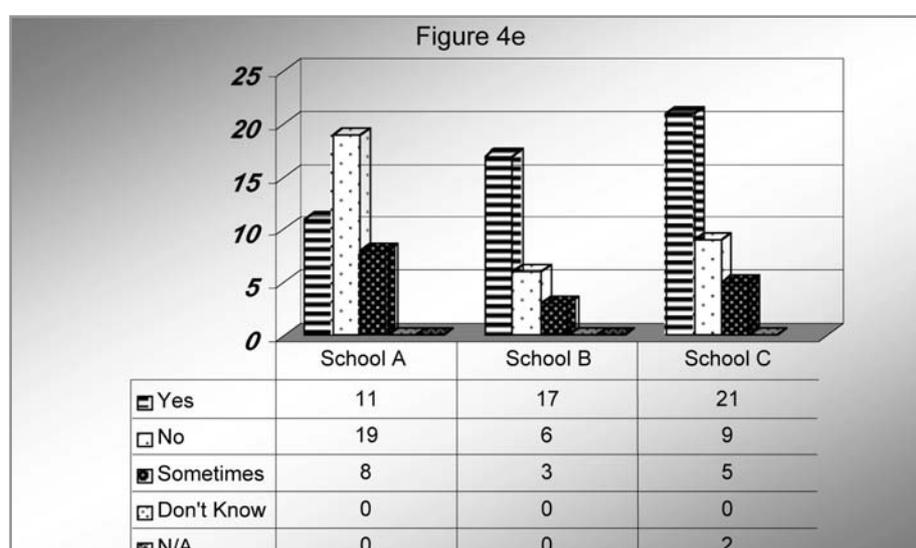


Table 12. Fifth Years: Are you treated fairly by teachers in school? Why/Why not?

	Yes	No	Sometimes	Don't Know	N/A
School A	11 (29%)	19 (50%)	8 (21%)		
School B	17 (65%)	6 (23%)	3 (12%)		
School C	21 (60%)	9 (25%)	5 (15%)		2
Total	49	34	16		2

Figure 4 e. 5th Year percentage response to the question: Are you treated fairly by teachers in school? Why/Why not? (Excluding don't know and no answers)



Responses from students who perceived that they were not treated fairly by teachers include the following:

- "No some think they own the school"
- "The students aren't treated fairly, I don't know why, they just don't and it's very clear"
- "No they pick on certain students"
- "Fairly by some but teachers that hated another family member they think you're like them when you're not"
- "Most of them are very, very nice but there is just 1 or 2 that I don't like one bit"
- "Mainly yes but 1 or 2 can be discouraging towards me. I am a good student and do my work mostly so they shouldn't have a reason to be unfair"
- "No some teachers would talk to you rashly & then act so sweet in front of your parents"
- "No they pick on certain students"
- "No cause some teachers are bullies towards the students"
- "I'm leaving after the Junior because I hate it"

- *Would change "the way the teachers treat the students"*
- *"I can't wait to leave, I would leave tomorrow if I had the choice because I get picked on by a teacher"*
- Perceptions of being treated unfairly by teachers were exceptionally high at 50% of student responses in the fifth year group of one school, with 29% who stated that they were treated fairly by teachers being an exceptionally low figure. This is clearly a matter of concern and there is a need to move to a less authoritarian school climate in that school. The finding, in the US, of Maclver et al (1991) is relevant in this context, namely, that external pressure did bring increased motivation among middle school students but not among high school students.
- Perceptions of being treated unfairly by teachers were particularly high in the school which was observed in an earlier section to have a particularly high proportion of 5th year students who stated that they did not want to stay on at school until the Leaving Certificate. It is clear that this problem needs to be addressed as part of a holistic strategy for school completion until Leaving Certificate.

3.2 Fear of failure: Pupil/Student willingness to talk to teacher about academic problems

As one local teacher states regarding self-esteem:

- *"If children have no belief in their own worth, they quickly develop the 'I can't' syndrome, which is very difficult to change."*

Rourke (1995) highlights the positive effects of an afterschool project with regard to the benefit of helping students overcome fear of failure or being ridiculed. Nolan et al (2003) refer to the danger of "*fatalism*" at a community level within Corduff, Blanchardstown that "*nothing can be done*". Fear of failure is an example of fatalism at the level of the student's experience of school (see also international research on fatalism and risk behaviour, Kalichmann et al 2000, Downes 2003).

As part of an approach that builds up the pupils' and students' self-esteem through highlighting their strengths, there is a need for school to recognise multiple forms of intelligence (e.g., Gardner 1993, see also McDermott et al 2001 on differences between verbal and non-verbal learning).

The recent ESRI (McCoy et al 2007) survey of second level students noted that:

From the student perspective, good teachers are ones who explain lessons clearly, are approachable and do not go too quickly or too slowly with the class. Traditional "chalk and talk" approaches are generally less popular with students indicating the need for teachers to adopt a greater variety of teaching methods in junior cycle classrooms.

Primary Schools

Table 13. Responses from 5th and 6th classes across the participating primary schools to the question: 'If you had a problem with your schoolwork would you tell your teacher about it?' were as follows:

Primary	Yes	No	Don't Know	N/A
School A	23 (74%)	8 (25%)		1
School B	28 (80%)	5 (14%)	2	4
School C	29 (90%)	2 (6%)	1	
School D	45 (87%)	7 (12%)	-	-
School E	16 (66%)	8 (33%)	-	7
School F	24 (96%)	1 (4%)	-	-
School G	28 (90%)	3 (10%)	-	-
Total Primary	193 [81%]	34 [10%]	3	12

- It is evident that there is extreme variation across schools in relation to pupil responses to this question ranging from 96% willingness to talk to a teacher about an academic problem in one school to 66% in another school
- This average figure of 81% in the South West Inner City schools compares with 91% willing to talk to teacher about academic problems across 4 primary schools in RAPID area of Blanchardstown (Downes, Maunsell & Ivers 2006)
- It is of concern that the average figure of 81% is 10% lower than in the RAPID area schools in Blanchardstown
- It is of concern that in individual classes in schools that teachers were perceived as being unapproachable regarding an academic problem by at least 33% of pupils in one school and 25% of pupils in another school

Figure 5. If you had a problem with your schoolwork would you tell your teacher?

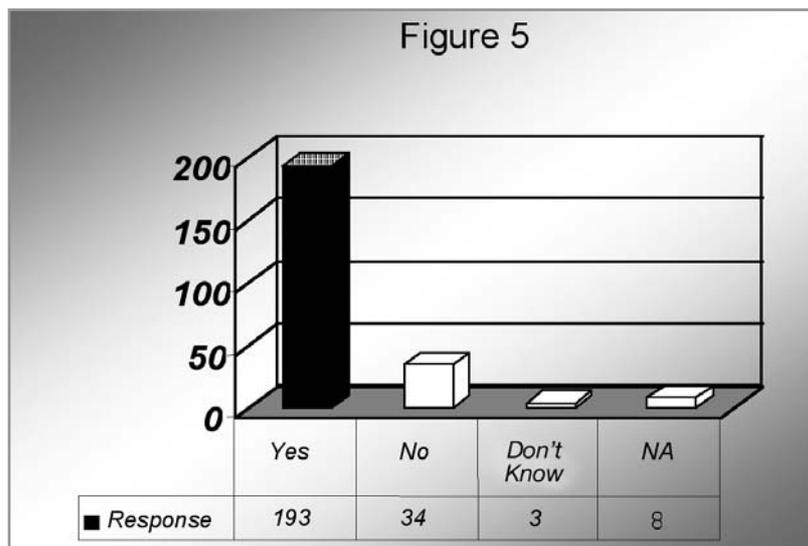


Figure 5 a. Breakdown by School of Pupils Responses to 'If you had a problem with your schoolwork would you tell your teacher?'

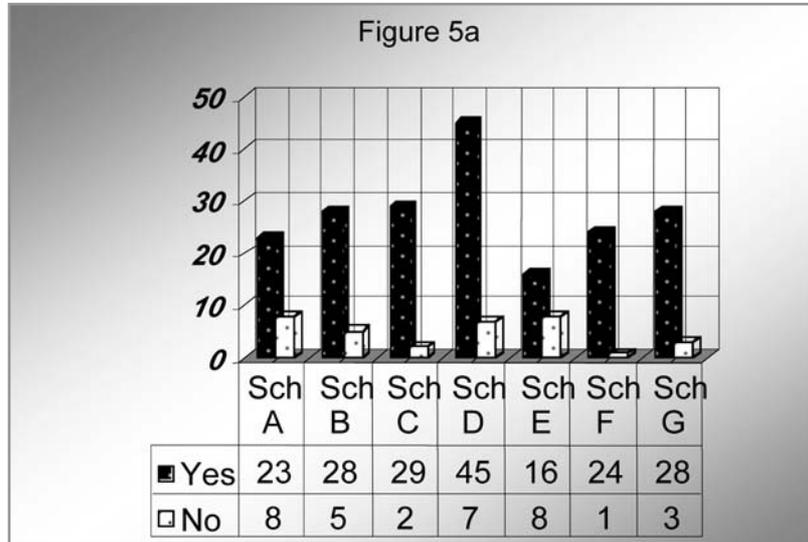
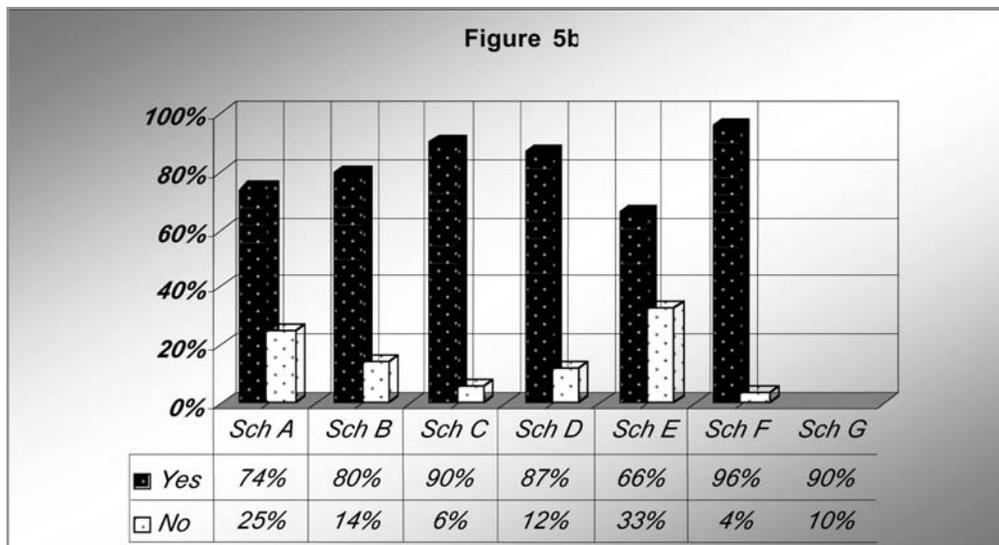


Figure 5 b. Percentage breakdown by school of pupils response to 'If you had a problem with your schoolwork would you tell your teacher?'



Secondary Schools

Table 14. Responses from secondary school students to the question: 'If you had a problem with your schoolwork would you tell your teacher?' were as follows:

Secondary	Yes	No	Sometimes
1st Yr School A	26	10	1
1st Yr School B	43	10	1
1st Yr School C	28	1	-
2nd Yr School A	31	8	1
2nd Yr School B	22	8	-
2nd Yr School C	31	9	-
5th Yr School A	22	14	2
5th Yr School B	18	5	3
5th Yr School C	31	4	1
Total Secondary	252 [76%]	69 [20%]	9

Here again while the majority (76%) of secondary students responded positively in relation to telling their teacher if they had a problem at school, nevertheless, a sizeable minority (20%) stated that they would not.

Figure 5c. 1st Year responses to the question: 'If you had a problem with your schoolwork would you tell your teacher?'

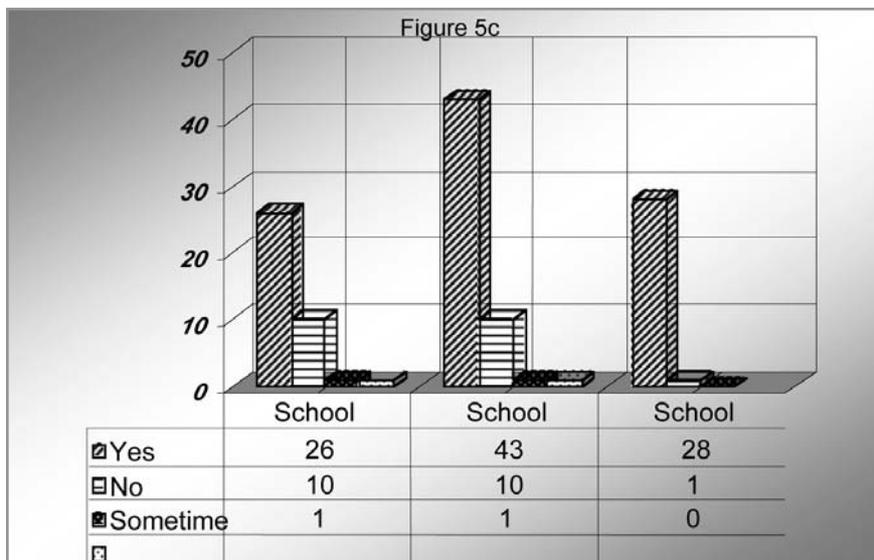


Figure 5d. 2nd Year responses to the question: 'If you had a problem with your schoolwork would you tell your teacher?'

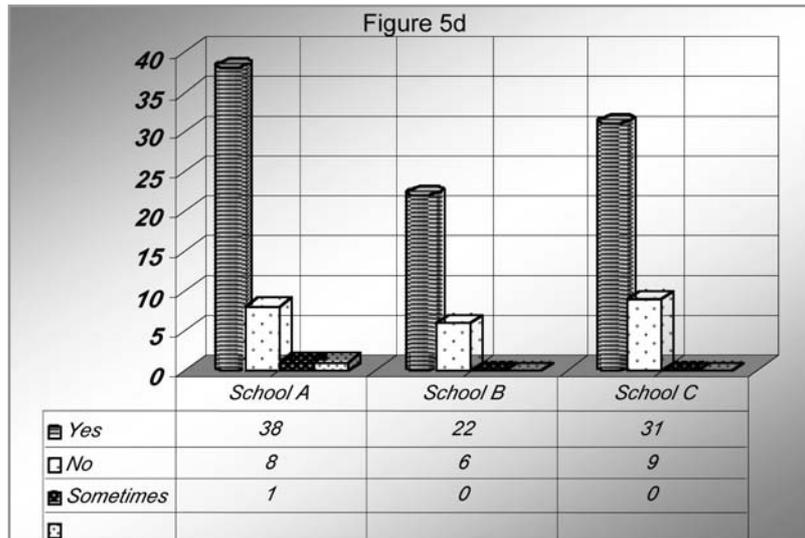
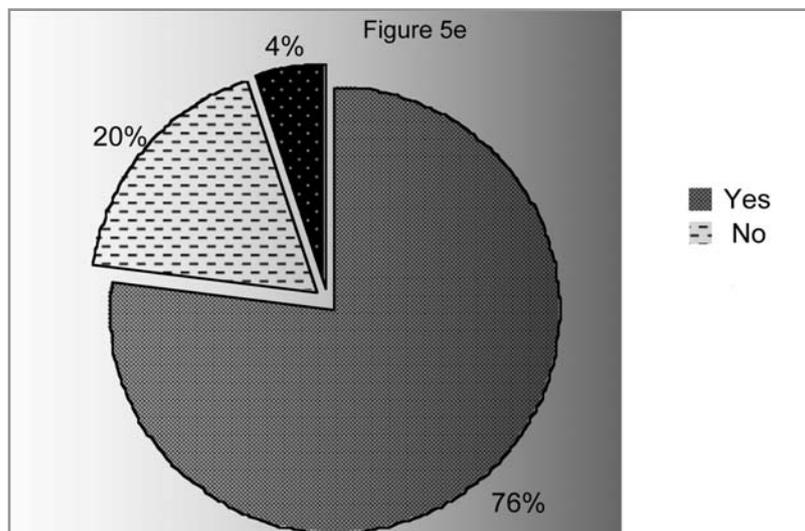


Figure 5e. Total Secondary School responses to the question: 'If you had a problem with your schoolwork would you tell your teacher?'



- The figure of 76% compares with 75% willing to talk to teacher about academic problem across 2 secondary schools in RAPID area of Blanchardstown (Downes, Maunsell & Ivers 2006)

If You had a problem with your schoolwork would you tell your teacher?

Sample positive responses:

- *"Yes because I want to know how to do the work."*
- *"Yes because they help me to understand."*
- *"Yes because they are a big help to us."*
- *"Yes, some teachers you can confide in."*
- *"Yes, because if you don't tell them your problem and you would not be able to do it and you would get into trouble."*

Sample negative responses:

- *"No, I don't like talking to teachers"*
- *"No because they would give out to ya and make a show of ya, I'd just say I know how to do it" (15F)*
- *"No because they bite your head off"*
- *"No I don't think I would. I'd try figure it out by myself first and then maybe I'd tell"*
- *"No cause they don't really care they just say were you not listening in class then they just wreck your head"*
- *"No. Couldn't be bothered really"*
- *"No because it's my business"*
- *"No cos I feel they just go and tell all the other teachers and make a laugh of me"*
- *"No I wouldn't because they don't understand"*
- *"No. Because of them bite your head off and say you don't listen"*
- *"No because we don't have a say in the matter and {if} I did nothing would happen and nothing would change"*
- *"No because they just shout at you and tell you they already explained"*
- *"No cause they tell you it's your own problem and then they start to talk about schools in Foxrock and all. Saying that you wouldn't get students saying that out there"*
- *"No, because I wouldn't give them an excuse to do more shouting and moaning"*
- *"Yes but they don't help you."*
- *"Because I don't care about school."*
- *"No! Cause the way it is students can't cause they will just give out."*
- *"No because they do not help you much."*
- *"Yes but they don't help us. They don't care."*

3.3 Teacher/Student relations

A recent ESRI study (2006) emphasises that some schools can be successful in maintaining positive attitudes and an engagement in learning among students:

The informal climate, that is, the quality of interaction between teachers and students, emerges as a key factor in maintaining positive attitudes to school among second level students. Students who have experienced praise or positive feedback from their teachers are more positive about school life and themselves as learners, and are less likely to feel isolated or anxious within school...Positive relations between teachers and students also emerge as key in student learning.

Rourke's (1995) evaluation of the Potential Early School Leavers (PESL now Oasis) Programme also highlighted the importance of developing the quality of interaction between teachers and young people, as well as parents:

The PESL programme can only be truly effective if it also impacts on the quality of interaction between the parents/teachers and the young people. Hence the importance of involving parents and engaging the active support of teachers. Unless this happens the programme is unlikely to achieve more than providing the young people with some diversion and alternative activities for a couple of hours each week... [Need for] a wider package or approach, involving teachers and parents

Appreciation of positive teacher-student relations is evident from a large number of responses including the following:

- *"Our class teacher is the best, she helps you with your work, doesn't roar at you"*
- *"Miss X is the best, if you're fighting she'll talk to you"*
- *"She explains the answer, Miss Z just calls the answer out"*
- *"She just tells you the answer, Miss B works through the answer and says not to spoon feed you"*
- *"There are two counsellors in school that are very good"*
- *"Miss B asks does anyone not understand, she's the best teacher you can get, she tells you not to be afraid"*
- *"Our teacher made up rules with us... we got yellow card, red cards... we made the decisions... you know if you're not doing it right that it's your own fault because you made the rules"*
- *"They give you examples if you're stuck, they help you, so you know what to do"*
- *"Have jokes with you, teach you music"*
- *"Give you a nice smile in the morning"*
- *"She'd give you time, she lets you sit down and talk about own business"*
- *"Some listen to you, help you"*
- *"Something you can like about her, her personality"*
- *"You have to be a good personality to be a teacher"*
- *"She just listens and understands, just relax and calm down"*
- *"She has a laugh with you"*
- *"It's a privilege to be in this school"*
- *"A good teacher, they can take a joke and all"*

Negative teacher-student interaction is evident from a range of responses including the following:

Authoritarian teaching:

- *"Most of the people are leaving [school] because teachers are too hard, too rough on them"*
- *"Because teachers are too hard, get down to the office"*
- *"Got put outside classroom for coughing"*
- *"Sick of getting into trouble in this school"*
- *"It's very hard being a student, you can't say anything"*
- *"Not to be as strict, pointing in your face and all"*
- *"Y tells you to go home if you forget your tie"*
- *"I'd love to stick a video-camera, you would be able to see what the teachers are like"*

Being publicly embarrassed by individual teachers:

- *"Calls you a clown and curses at you"*
- *"Every day he calls you a clown"*
- *"I can't wait to leave, I would leave tomorrow if I had the choice because I get picked on by a teacher."*
- *"Y, hate her, she picks on ya for everything"*
- *"She told him he can scrub the floors for the rest of the day"*
- *"Teacher calls us eejits and says we're incapable of working, tells us we should all be expelled, feel offended over that, all the other teachers say we're not the stupid class, she puts us down and hurts our feelings"*

Request to be listened to:

- *"Once a week, like to be asked how are you coping with your teachers, if little kids have difficulties should have someone if teacher is giving them a hard time"*
- *"I get the blame for everything in school"*
- *"I'm sick of getting blamed for everything"*
- *"In college you have the decision to make for yourself and finally you are your own person"*
- *"You always get the blame if you get in trouble once"*

Perceived snobbery of individual teachers:

- *"Snobby teachers in secondary"*
- *"Teachers so snobby"*
- *"Teacher hates the JCSP class, she says we are all incapable of being able to learn, she is a little snob, she walks past us on the corridor"*

Hostile relations with individual teachers:

- *"They're all little moans"*
- *"We absolutely hate her, Mr. Y is deadly, he helps you read, has a laugh with you, he does reading, if you get his back up he's still fair"*
- *"Before Miss X left I was being good"*

- *"Too moany, pick on ya for nothing"*
- *"One teacher we all hate"*
- *"No I don't think so, I hate school and I hate the teachers"*
- *"Cranky teachers"*
- *"They think they own ya"*
- *"She's after stopping about 20 of us from going on tour, this school used to be deadly before her"*
- *"We want her to leave, seriously we despise her"*
- *"One thing I hate about school... You're here to learn but if you get something wrong or don't know they roar at you... You're here to learn though"*
- *"its disgraceful teachers forget your name"*
- *"You get lines straight away if you talk"*
- *"All the teachers hate me"*

6th class responses indicating negative interactions with a small minority of teachers include the following:

Authoritarian teaching:

- *"The only bullying problem is the teacher"*
- *"If you make a mistake she starts roaring at you"*
- *"She made X cry"*

Hostile relations with individual teachers:

- *"She must take evil tablets in the morning, she roars in your face"*
- *"She takes her phone out, we're missing out on school work"*
- *"She ignores you completely"*
- *"Expel the teacher"*
- *"The teachers need to be nicer to us"*

Request to be listened to:

- *"You're entitled to ask why if given out to"*
- *"She won't give you a minute once she gets angry"*
- *"She tells lies"*

- There is evidence from the accounts of pupils and students that there are isolated teachers who contribute to an extremely negative experience of school for them – a negative experience that constitutes a risk factor for their early school leaving. Across a range of focus groups there was consensus among the groups praising almost all teachers in their schools and consensus regarding a small minority of individual teachers being overly authoritarian.
- It is clear that schools need mechanisms:
 - to provide support for these isolated teachers who need more help in changing from a highly authoritarian

- teaching style and in adopting a strengths based focus in their interaction with the children and young people,
- to provide an outlet for pupil and student perceptions of being treated unfairly, both for minor complaints and more serious ones.
 - The issue of perceptions of being treated fairly or otherwise in school needs to move beyond an focus on the individual teacher or student to a systems level analysis (see also Hyland 2003 on the need to focus on change to schools rather than individual teachers).
 - It is a systems level problem and improvement of this problem requires a systems level type of intervention, for example, at a national level with regard to teachers of working on their conflict resolution strategies and awareness of educational disadvantage at pre-service and in-service levels (see also Barnardos 2006). In the words of one service provider: *"there is a need for training for schools in behaviour management, while primary has 3 years training, the H.Dip. for secondary is so short"*. Another states that *"at 2nd level there isn't enough training on professional development, teaching conflict resolution", "you do see different teaching styles at second level"*.
 - The focus needs to move beyond attributing 'blame' to teachers or students and to move to examining the systems level problem. There is a need to bring improvements at a systemic level that will support an increase in skills to facilitate better communication and cooperation between teachers and students at secondary level in particular.
 - The need for increased confidentiality within school emerged from questionnaires and focus groups with secondary students in Ballyfermot (Downes 2004). Similarly some focus groups of secondary school students in the South West Inner City area raised concerns around privacy and confidentiality:
 - *"They want to know your business, where were you"*
 - *"Ask questions about our personal life, it is our business"*
 - *"They want to know everything that happens at home, what's your ma doing at home, is your da living with you? Where are you living now?"*
 - *"Why do you always stay at your nanny, the police wouldn't ask you that question?"*
 - The need for a more individually tailored approach to learning is recognised by the formal school system through development of Individual Education Plans. The suggestion was made for a key worker who students *"could say anything to"*. If such a key worker were available in schools, this would be a very valuable mediating voice with regard to perceptions of injustice within the school system and for improved communication between teachers and students, where needed.

3.4 Pupil/Student willingness to talk to an adult working in the school about personal problems

- A noticeable feature of pupil and student responses across almost all schools, primary and secondary, is the lack of willingness of a majority of pupils and students to talk to an adult working in the school about personal problems. Those most alienated from the school system and most at risk of early school leaving may be least likely to talk about personal problems in a school-based setting.
- The main reasons given for not talking to an adult in school based setting were that pupils/students preferred to talk to a family member or were concerned about confidentiality issues.
- There is a clear need for community based emotional support services for children and young people so that such services would not be exclusively school based.

Table 15. Q 37 *Would you talk to an adult working in the school about your problems?*

Primary	Yes	No	Don't Know	Maybe/Depends	N/A
School A	6	12	-	-	14
School B	11	18	-	3	7
School C	16	14	-	1	1
School D	21	25	-	3	3
School E	11	10	-	-	10
School F	11	7	-	-	7
School G	8	18	-	1	4
Total Primary	84	104	-	8	46

Table 16.

Secondary	Yes	No	Don't Know	Maybe/Depends	N/A
1st Yr---	18	28	1	-	8
1st Yr ---	13	31	-	4	-
1st Yr ---	5	15	1	-	10
2nd Yr ---	8	17	-	1	2
2nd Yr ---	11	27	-	3	-
2nd Yr ---	9	24	1	1	5
5th Yr ---	5	18	-	2	1
5th Yr---	7	30	-	-	1
5th Yr---	7	22	1	4	3
Total Secondary	83	212	4	15	30

Sample answers at secondary level to the question: *Would you talk to an adult working in the school about your problems?* included:

- *"No cause I already find them very nosy they always seem to be interfering in your business"*
 - *"No, because it would end up all around the staff room"*
 - *"Not really 'cos I know they talk among themselves 'cos something my friend told a teacher got back to her"*
 - *"No, because they say to each other in the staff room and I know that for a fact"*
 - *"No!!!! They gossip about us in the staff room"*
- The high levels of reluctance of students to talk to any member of the school staff about personal problems, in part due to issues of trust and confidentiality, highlights the need for every school to develop a confidentiality protocol which is also communicated to students.
The need to develop the resources of the social support network regarding emotional support.
 - Pupil and student responses indicate that the large majority of young people in the area have someone to talk to in order to provide social and emotional support.
 - Nevertheless a significant minority state that they have nobody to talk with if they feel sad and this places them at risk for mental health problems. As one secondary student stated: *"There is nobody interested in our problems"*.
 - It is a concern that not only does this significant minority not have anyone in their family or peer group to provide social and emotional support – but they are not accessing such support from other services, whether therapeutic supports, afterschool clubs or in the school itself.

Table 17. Q 4 Do you have anyone to talk to if you feel sad?

Primary	Yes	No	N/A
School A	31	1	---
School B	31	8	
School C	32	0	---
School D	48	4	---
School E	26	3	2
School F	25	0	-
School G	24	6	1
Total Primary	217	22	3

Secondary	Yes	No	N/A
1st Yr ---	47	6	2
1st Yr ---	44	3	1
1st Yr ---	26	4	1
2nd Yr ---	23	4	1
2nd Yr ---	41	-	-
2nd Yr ---	32	7	1
5th Yr ---	24	2	
5th Yr ---	37	1	-
5th Yr ---	34	3	-
Total Secondary	308	30	6

3.5 Voices from early school leavers and those in alternative forms of education on the need for changes to student-teacher interaction in the formal system

Perspectives of early school leavers and those in alternative forms of education in the area on teacher-student interactions included the following:

Reponses of those in alternative education:

Positive relations with teachers and/or tutors:

- *"Always at least one good teacher you could have a laugh with"*
- *"Treat you like an adult or proper person"*
- *"They talk to you here not like in school"*
- *"Respect for each other teachers and pupils would make big difference"*
- *"Youthreach more personal they treat us as equals"*
- *"can ask him about anything"*
- *"have a laugh and a bit of slagging"*
- *"you can talk to them"*
- *"don't have to stay in one spot all the time"*
- *"he'd know how to handle it if from the area"*
- *"all depends on the teachers attitude"*

Being publicly embarrassed by individual teachers:

- *"Make a show of you"*
- *"Traveller child in Crumlin teased about features by teacher"*
- *"Teacher in School Y used to call pupils "dopey cunt""*

- *"School Z [named] teacher told child "go have a wash"; very hurtful way it was said."*
- *"Children humiliated re head lice. School X mentioned"*
- *"Teachers put you on the spot and embarrass you, make a show of you by asking you questions they know you don't know the answer to"*
- *"School A they say you're stupid in front of the class"*
- *"Mr. Y in School Z gave me the finger"*
- *"Say things to you in class that embarrass you"*
- *"Teacher called me fat pig"*

Perceived snobbery of individual teachers:

- *"Teachers posh, we're common...you feel that"*
- *"Teachers need to come down off their high horse"*
- *"Need more Dublin teachers, teachers from the area, they would have a totally different attitude"*
- *"Snobby teachers in secondary, ask them a question and they ignore you"*
- *"Am leaving after 3rd year cos don't like school, need more things to do in school, teachers so snobby, plan to go to Youthreach cos teachers have more time for you"*
- *"they all think they're stuck up and better than you"*

Negative labeling of family members by individual teachers:

- *"Brother there before they didn't like him and we get blamed for that"*
- *"Teacher told me "you'll end up like your sister with a baby and no life"*

Request to be listened to:

- *"A good counsellor listens. Doesn't talk at you"*
- *"They would shout at me before I'd finished because of my stutter"*
- *"They make you out to be a liar if you argue with them"*
- *"Blame you straight away if anything happens"*
- *"Teacher always believe each other and back each other up"*
- *"even when you were right you were wrong"*

Perceptions of favouritism:

- *"If you're good at their subjects is fine, if not no it's no good"*
- *"Teachers are geeks and give geeks preferential treatment"*

Hostile relations with individual teachers:

- *"Teachers bother you, always on your back"*
- *"Teachers picking on people"*
- *"Make life difficult if you're not good at schoolwork"*

Overly permissive teachers:

- *"The teachers are scared of the students and don't want to confront them"*
- *"a teacher let us play cards as long as we kept quiet"*
- *"played cards and read the newspaper in 5th and 6th year"*

Reponses Drawn from Focus groups of Early School Leavers in the area:

Teacher-student relations were also the dominant theme emerging from accounts of early school leavers.

Positive features of teachers and/or tutors:

- *"If teachers like you it is easy to go to school"*
- *"They should slow down and make sure you know stuff. One great teacher would come to your desk and help you"*
- *"Would never make a show of you but walk over and discuss it"*
- *"Have a conversation about stuff not just talk down to you"*
- *"Some teachers have a laugh; they're the best"*
- *"Art, home economics and business studies all enjoyable"*
- *"Patience makes a huge difference and getting a laugh out of them"*
- *"Tutors are like friends here, not like teachers"*

Request to be listened to and for confidentiality:

- *"Would be great if there were people in schools you could talk to who weren't part of the school e.g. keyworker type of people that you could say anything to"*
- *"Hate people telling me what to do without ever discussing it"*
- *"In some schools, counsellors are nuns; ask loads of questions about home and things but don't understand our lives"*
- *"There is no confidentiality with counsellors and teachers"*
- *"People leave when pregnant because made feel uncomfortable"*
- *"Can be subtle...nuns' school in particular..."*
- *"Tell someone in confidence that you're pregnant and all the teachers start treating you differently; some nicer, some not."*

Positive relations with tutors:

- *"You need someone you can trust and get stuff off chest to"*
- *"Youthreach more laid back; you can talk to your mates; they bring you out; teachers are more patient"*
- *"You can have a waffle while doing work with teacher"*
- *"In Youthreach treated like adults; you can say what you want; smoke; not told what to do all the time"*

Being publicly embarrassed by individual teachers:

- *"Teachers would humiliate us on purpose...ask me to read out stuff knowing I can't read"*

Perceived snobbery of individual teachers:

- *"Teachers stuck up, look down on us, treat us like dirt"*
- *"Teachers put selves above us"*

Authoritarian teaching:

- *"Teachers tell me "you're no good""*
- *"Some teachers just give out"*
- *"Too long in job and burnt out"*
- *"have to wear a skirt in the freezing cold"*

Reponses of Local Service Providers

Some local service providers emphasised the need for more choice within the formal school system and to recognise that one size does not fit all:

- *"Biggest problem is one size fits all system, can you imagine sending every adult into the same system ?"*
- *"Steiner, Montessori doesn't suit everybody but ok if have a choice"*
- *"Need adult education principles for kids"*
- *"Teachers' unions have vested interest in maintaining the status quo, need more choices available, particularly for those very vulnerable"*
- *"Keep resourcing the same system"*
- *"There are many studies about early school leaving that focus on "deficits" among those who leave school early, families and their communities. In my opinion one of the main reasons for early school leaving in the inner city is that schools are operating a "one size fits all" system which was designed by middle class people with middle class students in mind. They are middle class organisations which working class young people are forced to go to. When there is seen not to be a fit, the blame has been placed on the working class people: they are "not interested in education"... "the parents don't understand the importance of reading" etc. Without going to the other extreme and blaming schools, I think it is important to look at the system within which schools operate and identify what it is about it that does not meet the needs of so many working class students, especially boys"*

A 15 year old early school leaver gave the following account:

- *"Get the teachers out of it, they're too strict, only bleedin' school that's not allowed crisps and all that, hated it everything, too strict on ya, expect ya to have everything done, some of them are alright...I left over the teachers, they always roared at me, picked on me for anything, didn't get to do the Junior [Cert], the teachers always had me crying...about 4 teachers got me in a room and were startin' at me". Was "never suspended before that". "I'm in FAS now, it's different, not strict on ya, I'm doin' my Junior Cert there...ya can do hairdressing and metalwork. Most people are afraid of going to school over the principal...terrified, the way X goes on you'd think X was going to hit ya, can't talk to X, more left this year than any other year...most people are afraid of the principal, not even allowed whisper. X has no patience to be a teacher, can't handle that amount of people"*

3.6 Behaviour issues: Beyond suspensions

- It is a matter of concern that pupils suggest that suspension is being used as a strategy in one primary school in the area:

Some 6th class responses on this theme are as follows:

- *"If you swing on a chair that's enough for a suspension"*
- *"She suspended 7 boys"*
- *"I was one of the boys who got suspended, cos being very cheeky"*
- *"Need suspension only for serious things"*
- *"About 8 out of 17 suspended, she suspended 7 people in one day"*
- *Worst thing about school "getting suspended"*
- *"He says if you do that boy you'll be out of the school in a second and you'll never come back"*
- *"He threatens you, I'll suspend you, I'll expel you and you'll never come back"*
- *"Get suspended for taking a sup of water"*

It must be noted that these comments are the subjective perceptions of pupils though with strong internal consistency in their responses²³. This issue merits further investigation by the Education Welfare Officer and the local School Completion Programme Committee.

Interviewed early school leavers also raised the issue of the need for alternatives to suspension at second level:

- *"Suspension is stupid, just gives them a break"*
- *"getting sent home for 3 days isn't punishment"*
- *"sit outside the door for hours"*
- *"Teachers leave you in corridor"*
- *"Suspended for phone ringing in class and for talking"*
- *"Suspended for not doing homework"*
- *"Three bookings and then detention, bookings for very little i.e. talking or being a minute late"*
- *"Suspended for 3 days if you don't do detention"*
- *"3 suspended, 2 for fighting, the other for being late, messing"*

One service provider suggests that: *"suspension used a lot, need to put something in place if suspended, not much endeavour to keep them in school"*.

Priority needs of some of the schools emphasised:

- *"Individual discipline programme for disruptive boys"*
- *"Teacher to work with children with challenging behaviour in small groups above quota"*
- *"Permanent in-school counselling service"*

²³ It was not possible to confirm the truth of these claims with the school without breaking the commitment given to the pupils that every effort would be made to ensure they would not be identifiable as individuals from their responses

The need for a supervised time out area for children with disruptive behaviour also emerges from the following comments by schools:

- *"There is a learning support teacher and behavioural support teacher, but due to " a lot of demand for the teacher she is not available all the time"*
- *"There is simply not enough support for children with behavioural needs, much more is needed"*
- *"Those with behavioural problems are helped by a visiting family therapist and a resource teacher."*
- *"There does not seem to be anything specifically for psychological/emotional needs, the behavioural support teacher deals with these needs too."*
- *"There is a private counsellor who certainly helps the children they see, and links with James St Child Guidance Clinic and Barnardos"*
- *"There is a visiting family therapist and resource teacher. There is also play therapy for younger children and a rainbow room for younger children."*
- *Biggest problems "Children who have serious issues troubling them outside of school may manifest a range of erratic and unpredictable behaviours."*
- *"Behaviour difficulties, absenteeism and low levels of achievement."*
- *"Behavioural/ Physical needs: Child guidance – long waiting lists. Too many do not attend appointments. Follow up not consistent."*
- *"Behavioural/physical needs: None...counsellors needed for problem pupils."*

Any such supervised time out area requires support from counsellors, whether this is school or community based. Schools made the following comments regarding the priority need for more counsellors:

- *"Counselling service for parents/children/families"*
- *"Family counselling"*
- *"Advantages: onsite, non-threatening; easy access; quick response to referrals, can work with groups and classes as well as with individuals. (on site can do group work)"*
- *"Lack of facilities (i.e. consulting rooms) and a lack of willingness on the part of counsellors to work in schools are obstacles."*
- *"School has plenty of interruptions and to-ing and fro-ing. Personally I feel it should be based outside of school", "there would be no long waiting lists. Often the parents would benefit from counselling with the children as the problems are not of the child's making"*
- *"The advantage of having an in-school counselling service is that attendance does not rely on parents to bring them."*
- *"Pupils find it easier to open up to someone other than a teacher."*
- *"The queues are too long as is the waiting list, not every child gets counselling if needed".*
- *"Family therapist provides a limited service, informal counselling provided by the special class teacher, this could be made formal as there is a huge need for such a service"*
- *"Full time school counsellor who does excellent work with the students, some of whom come from disadvantaged or dysfunctional backgrounds. It is on site, home visits are regular and it continues through the summer. Pupils can refer themselves. The obstacles are that it is subject to budget, there are difficulties in coordination (who is seeing who) and some students take advantage of the service and use it to skip classes".*
- *Priority request for a "Social worker dedicated to school plus full time counsellor"*

- *"Community Care (preventative) in area"*
- *"Family Therapy Centres working with the school – without long waiting lists"*
- *"Rialto Family Centre. Three months waiting lists and confined to catchment area (excellent service)."*
- *"I think counselling should take place in a community building as opposed to school to avoid stigma issues and privacy of those attending."*
- *"Psychological needs: Counselling is done with exceptional cases; the school pays professional counsellors."*

The issue of supports and strategies for working with children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) was mentioned by a large number of schools:

- "Those with ADHD have a classroom assistant assigned to them."
 - "Pupils with ADHD sometimes have a classroom assistant assigned to them but first there must be a report from a clinical psychologist diagnosing ADHD and the waiting list for this can be up to three years."
 - "There are no supports available to children with ADHD."
 - "There is no support for behavioural/physical needs and no support for those with ADHD."
 - "Those with ADHD can be placed in special class and also receive help from resource teachers and SNA hours. There is also a quiet room where they can have some time out. But this is still not enough."
 - "We really need other help for these children as even with S.N.A and resource hour for 1 hr a day they can still disrupt the class for a good part of the day."
 - "Not enough therapeutic services"
- Cognitive-Behavioural strategies for working with children with ADHD are well recognised strategies and there is a need for support for teachers in implementing these strategies. It has also been recognised that group work to develop self-esteem in children and young people is very suited to children with ADHD and does not need to single them out (Downes 2004).
 - Hickey's (1994) report in the South West Inner City area emphasised the need for common strategies for intervention regarding discipline across schools, parents and the community:

A partnership between schools, community groups, individual community activists and parents should design a policy on discipline in schools at local level, with a view to tackling the problem from within the community itself.

- A School Completion Programme report (2005) cites as an example of good practice from the Dublin North Region a social and personal development programme that includes a garden for time out for disruptive students during school time, as well as being available during lunchtime and afterschool. If schools were supported financially to develop gardens where plants and vegetables could grow within fenced off areas, there would be an opportunity for at risk pupils to develop practical skills and a sense of responsibility and control within the school environment (see also Glasser 1986; Downes 2004).
- Potential concerns from schools may be that a time-out room is "worthless" as "if students are merely removed, a situation very rapidly develops where some students will deliberately misbehave, so that they can join their friends in the "sin-bin" (O'Brien 2006). However, if the students are positively engaged in the time-out room and are involved in individual behavioural contracts with a range of sanctions, as well as incentives and emotional supports, the above objection can be overcome. The time-out room is not to do nothing, as a 'sin-bin' implies.

3.7 Bullying in school

In Tallaght, it was reported that 33% of children have been bullied at school, with 8% of these being bullied several times a week within the previous term (CDI 2004). Child centred research across primary schools in Ballyfermot highlighted that pupils perceived bullying to be a major problem and frequently raised this issue in questionnaires even when not directly asked about bullying itself (Downes 2004). A notable minority of pupils drew an explicit link between not attending school and this being due to being bullied (Downes 2004).

- The South West Inner City schools consistently stated that they engage in proactive strategies to prevent bullying:
 - *"There is a bullying program in class and parents are contacted straight away"*
 - *"I deal with pupils with behavioural difficulties and pupils who suffer from a lack of self esteem".*
 - *"There is a whole school policy and bullying."*
 - *"There is a specific policy – all incidents thoroughly investigated."*
 - *"Dealt with "very firmly" in accordance with code of behaviour when it arises and –"a lot of work is done on promoting positive relationships"*
 - *"Teachers are vigilant and consistently delivering the message that it is not acceptable and that victims must tell."*
 - *"Strengths: Proactive School Approaches to Prevention of and Intervention with ----Bullying"*
 - *"Bullying is not a major problem and there are a lot of people that the children can speak to:*
 - *5th years in the 5 + 1 programme*
 - *Prefects*
 - *Class tutors*
 - *Year heads*
 - *Counsellors"*
 - *"Not a big problem. Very strong anti-bullying policy with good follow up with parents."*
 - *"Antibullying posters everywhere"*
 - *"Vice Principal in charge of bullying"*
- Nevertheless a key theme which emerged from pupil and student responses in a number of schools at both primary and secondary level is bullying *between* years:
 - *"Bullying a big problem"*
 - *"5th/6th years push you around, it's called 1st year baiting"*
 - *"All the years pick on us, gang wars"*
 - *"Big problem, robbing your phone"*
 - *"I told my family and they said it to the school"*
 - *"Bullied by 6th class, they slag you"*
 - *"I get bullied every day"*

- There was notable variation across primary schools in levels of bullying reported by pupils. Some schools had significant numbers of pupils report that all pupils, 5-10 pupils and over 10 pupils were bullied in their class, while other schools had no pupils report bullying at such levels.
- Very high levels of reported bullying are of concern in one primary school in particular where only three out of thirty nine 5th and 6th class pupils in a given school revealed that no bullying at all was taking place. Other 5th and 6th class pupils in the same school indicated high levels of bullying. Sample answers included: 'loads of people', 'all of us!!!!!!', 'all 24', '23 most of us', '19 including me'. It is significant that this was also the school noted earlier as having exceptionally high numbers of pupils who stated that they did not wish to stay on at school until Leaving Certificate, namely, 29% of those who responded to this question in that school stated that they did not want or did not know if they wanted to stay on at school until Leaving Certificate. A proactive anti-bullying strategy is clearly needed in that school as the effects of bullying are already impacting on attitudes to stay on at school until Leaving Certificate.
- In a number of the primary schools there was notable variation *between* classes in the *same* school with regard to levels of bullying. It is evident that some teachers are having significant success in almost eliminating bullying but that successful classroom bullying prevention strategies are not being disseminated throughout the school.
- The following tables for levels of reported bullying in 1st and 2nd years at secondary level also illustrates a significant level of variation in levels of bullying *across* schools.

Table 19. Bullying: First year

	None	1-2	Less than 5	5-10	More than 10	All	Don't Know	N/A
School A	27	7	1	1	-	-	8	4
School B	6	14	5	1	-	1	5	-
School C	5	11	6	1	-	-	6	2

Table 20. Bullying: Second year

	None	1-2	Less than 5	5-10	More than 10	All	Don't Know	N/A
School A	22	3	3	-	-	-	12	1
School B	2	3	8	5	-	1	8	1
School C	12	5	8	1	1	3	10	-

- From these figures it is evident that as with the local primary schools, some local secondary schools are having significant success in eliminating and minimising bullying whereas others are having less success in this regard. It is clear that a sharing of anti-bullying strategies across schools, through the School Completion Programme, is needed
- The good practice example in one local school of having peer mediation, as well as a range of people for children to talk to, is a helpful model that could be adopted by other schools:

“There are a lot of people that the children can speak to:

- *5th years in the 5 + 1 programme*
 - *Prefects*
 - *Class tutors*
 - *Year heads*
 - *Counsellors”*
- To facilitate this dissemination of strategies of good practice for prevention and elimination of bullying *within* the school, it is recommended that a staff member coordinate such a dissemination strategy in each school and act as a support/mentor for other teachers in the school. While this staff member would liaise with the school Principal in implementing the whole school anti-bullying policy, (s)he would also serve as an intermediary between the class teacher and the principal. The class teacher may be more likely to approach another colleague – in this role as coordinator - for informal advice on intervention for bullying. It is evident that such practice is already in place in some participating schools, such as through having a class tutor and year head system.
 - The key role of the class teacher regarding bullying was observed in a study in a primary school in Ballyfermot (Downes 2004a) where the class teacher employed strategies such as an anonymous problem box, role play and circle time to eliminate a bullying problem that had existed in the class the previous year when there were a number of substitute teachers.

3.8 Key conclusions: Relationships in school

Pupil perceptions of being treated fairly by their teachers: Primary

- It is evident that some local primary schools have succeeded in creating a school climate where almost all pupils perceive that they are being treated fairly. This contrasts with the high figures for two of the participating primary schools where at least 20% of pupils perceive that they are not being treated fairly.

Student perceptions of being treated fairly by their teachers: Secondary

- It is evident that there is significant variation across schools in first year student perceptions of being treated fairly by teachers, for example, between School A (50% Yes, 24% No) and School C (75% Yes, 3% No).
- It is of concern that there is such a sharp decrease in student perceptions of being treated fairly by teachers from 5th and 6th class at primary level (75%) to first year secondary (59%) in at least some of the local secondary schools.
- It is of concern that there is such a sharp increase in student perceptions of not being treated fairly by teachers from 5th and 6th class at primary level (10%) to first year secondary (17%) in at least some of the local secondary schools.

- Perceptions of being treated unfairly by teachers are exceptionally high at 50% of student responses in the fifth year group of one school, with 29% stating that they are treated fairly by teachers being an exceptionally low figure. This is clearly a matter of concern and there is a need to move to a less authoritarian school climate in that school.
- Perceptions of being treated unfairly by teachers are particularly high in the school which was observed to have a particularly high proportion of 5th year students stating that they think that they do not want to stay on at school until the Leaving Certificate. It is clear that this problem needs to be addressed as part of a holistic strategy for school completion until Leaving Certificate.

Fear of failure: Primary school pupils' willingness to talk to the teacher about academic problems

- It is evident that there is extreme variation across local primary schools in relation to pupil willingness to talk to a teacher about an academic problem ranging from 96% in one school to 66% in another school.
- It is of concern that in individual classes in schools that teachers are being perceived as unapproachable regarding an academic problem by at least 33% of pupils in one school and 25% of pupils in another school.

Fear of failure: Secondary school students' willingness to talk to the teacher about academic problems

- First years and Fifth years from one local school in particular had notably high numbers of student responses indicating a lack of willingness to talk to their teachers about academic problems.

Teacher-Student relations

- There is evidence from the accounts of pupils and students that there are isolated teachers who contribute to an extremely negative experience of school for them – a negative experience that constitutes a risk factor for their early school leaving. Across a range of focus groups there was consensus among the groups praising almost all teachers in their schools and consensus regarding a small minority of individual teachers being overly authoritarian.
- Teacher-student relations were also the dominant theme emerging from accounts of early school leavers regarding factors for leaving school early.

Willingness to talk with an adult in school about personal problems

- A noticeable feature of pupil and student responses across almost all schools, primary and secondary, is the lack of willingness of a majority of pupils and students to talk to an adult working in the school about personal problems. Those most alienated from the school system and most at risk of early school leaving may be least likely to talk about personal problems in a school-based setting.
- The main reasons given for not talking to an adult in school based setting were that pupils/students preferred to talk to a family member or were concerned about confidentiality issues.

- There is a clear need for community based emotional support services for children and young people so that such services would not be exclusively school based.

Behaviour issues: Beyond suspensions through supervised time out area for pupils/students with disruptive behaviour

- It is a matter of concern that suspension is being used as a strategy in at least one primary school in the area.
- There is a need for a supervised time out area in every school for children with disruptive behaviour and to resource alternative strategies to suspension from school.

The need to develop the resources of the social support network regarding emotional support

- Pupil and student responses indicate the large majority of young people in the South West Inner City area have someone to talk to in order to provide social and emotional support.
- Nevertheless a significant minority state that they have nobody to talk with if they feel sad and this places them at risk for mental health problems. It is a concern that not only does this significant minority not have anyone in their family or peer group to provide social and emotional support – but they are not accessing such support from other services, whether therapeutic supports, afterschool clubs or in the school itself.

Bullying in school

- The South West Inner City schools consistently stated that they engage in proactive preventive strategies with regard to bullying.
- Nevertheless a key theme which emerged from pupil and student responses in a number of schools at both primary and secondary level is bullying *between* years.
- There was notable variation *across* primary schools in levels of bullying reported by pupils. Very high levels of reported bullying are of concern in one primary school in particular. It is significant that this was also the school with exceptionally high numbers of pupils stating that they do not wish to stay on at school until Leaving Certificate, namely, 29% of those who responded to this question in that school stated that they did not want or did not know if they wanted to stay on at school until Leaving Certificate. A proactive and preventive anti-bullying strategy is clearly needed in that school as the effects of bullying are already impacting on attitudes to stay on at school until Leaving Certificate.
- In a number of the primary schools there was notable variation *between* classes in the *same* school with regard to levels of bullying. It is evident that some teachers are having significant success in almost eliminating bullying but that successful classroom bullying prevention strategies are not being disseminated throughout the school.
- It is evident that as with the local primary schools, some local secondary schools are having significant success in eliminating and minimising bullying whereas others are having less success in this regard. It is clear that a sharing of anti-bullying strategies across schools, through the School Completion Programme, is needed.

Section 4

The risk of falling through the net

This section focuses on identifying gaps within the system, where those children, young people and their families may be most at risk of falling through the net of local support services. There are different degrees and kinds of risk for young people to drop out of school, even within those who do leave school early. While there is no doubt that recent years has brought an increase in local services potentially available to support children and young people at risk of early school leaving, there is still the issue of whether those most marginalised are actually accessing the relevant support services. The question also arises regarding whether the relevant support services are consistently available to children and young people most at risk of early school leaving.

4 The risk of falling through the net

4.1 Profiles of those most at risk of early school leaving:

- Primary School: 5th and 6th class
- 1st Year Secondary
- 2nd Year Secondary
- 5th Year Secondary

The young people considered most at risk of early school leaving were those who stated in their questionnaire responses that they did not want to or did not know if they want to stay on at school until their Leaving Certificate.

The responses from this significant minority of pupils/students without a firm intention to stay on until Leaving Certificate were analysed in more detail to examine the presence or absence of supports that would enable them to stay on at school. These potential supports included trust and communication with one significant other person, positive relations with teachers, and participation in activities after school hours.

It is well recognised that trust and communication with just one significant other (Levitt 1991; Antonucci 1990) is key for positive mental health for those at risk of socio-economic disadvantage. The National Drugs Strategy 2001-2008 notes the importance of 'seek[ing] to strengthen resilience amongst young people in or out of school by fostering positive stable relationships with family or key community figures especially in the early years'.

A range of international research highlights the key role extracurricular activities can play in preventing children and young people at risk of early school drop out from leaving the school system. Participation in even one extracurricular school activity is associated with a reduction in rates of early school dropout, particularly for high-risk youth (Mahoney & Cairns 1997). Mahoney (2000) defines participation as one or more years of involvement in the extracurricular activity and states:

The participant is attracted to the activity and is likely competent in that area or may even excel. Unlike preventive interventions that attempt to correct academic or social deficits by remedial work, extracurricular activities may foster a positive connection between the individual and school based on the student's interests and motivations. The specific activity pursued may be less important than the act of participation itself (p.503)

Morgan (1998) cites a study by Beacham (1980), which found that over 60% of high school drop-outs were not involved in any extracurricular activities during their high school years – a level which is significantly higher than any estimates of the overall number not participating in such activities. This study arguably has much relevance also to the primary school context.

Primary School: 5th and 6th class – Profile of the Subgroup Most at Risk of Early School Leaving

It is noticeable that from this subgroup that:

- a large majority state that they communicate well with at least one parent (18 Yes, 4 No),

- a large majority state that they are treated fairly in school (15 Yes, 3 No, 3 Sometimes/Don't Know),
 - some schools are succeeding more than others in getting these pupils involved in extracurricular activities (10 Yes, 10 No) or afterschool clubs (7 Yes, 11 No),
 - some schools have succeeded in creating a school climate where these pupils would be willing to talk to someone about their problems.
- This profile offers significant hope that members of this subgroup of pupils most at risk of early school leaving can be persuaded to remain on at school until Leaving Certificate as:
 - there is a key dimension of stability for most of them in their family environment, namely, open pathways for communication with at least one parent,
 - alienation from the school system is at an early stage of development as most stated that they were treated fairly in school and a notable proportion of this subgroup were willing to talk to someone in school about a personal problem.
 - Given that a high number of pupils in this subgroup stated that they trust at least one parent and are treated fairly by their teacher in school, there is an opportunity to build on these positive relations to encourage these pupils to stay on until Leaving Certificate. A focused strategy involving the parent, teacher, Home-School Liaison teacher and these pupils most at risk of early school leaving needs to engage in dialogue with these pupils. This dialogue would ask them specifically about their reasons for why they do not want to stay on at school with a view to establishing supports to help change these pupils wishes to leave school early.
 - There is a need for all schools in the area to target pupils most at risk of early school leaving for participation in extracurricular and afterschool activities. It is evident from the responses of this subgroup that some schools are already doing so.

Table 21. Those without firm intention to stay on at school until the Leaving Cert: 5th/6th class primary school

Age/Sex	Trust Parents	Extracurricular Activities	Treated Fairly in School	Afterschool	Willing to talk to someone in school
12F	Yes	Irish dancing	Yes	No	"Yes if I know him/her But I like talking with my mum"
12F	Yes	None	Sometimes	No	Yes
11M,	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
10M,	No	Yes (Choir)	Dont know	Yes	Yes
11M,	Yes	Yes (Arts & crafts)	No	Yes	No
10M,	Yes	Yes (Football)	Yes	Yes	No
11M,	Yes	Yes (Choir)	Yes	No	No (not if they are personal)
12M,	Yes	Yes (Football)	Yes	Yes	No
11M,	Yes	Yes	Yes	No Answer	No answer
11M,	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
12M,	No	No	No	No	No
11M,	Yes	Yes (Hurling)	Sometimes	Yes	I don't mind
11M,	Yes	Yes (Choir)	Yes	Yes	No
12 M,	No	(no answer)	Yes	Yes	(no answer)
11,M,	Yes	Yes (I go to Decos and YMCA)	Yes	(no answer)	(no answer)
13M,	No	No	Yes	No	Yes (I did but it stopped and I'm glad it did)
12M *	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
12M *	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
12M *	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
M12	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
M13	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
M13	Yes	No	Yes	N/A	N/A
M12 *	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	18Y/4N	10Y/10N	15Y/3N/3/3	7/11	9/7

* Foreign National

First Year Results – Profile of the Subgroup Most at Risk of Early School Leaving

It is noticeable that from this subgroup that:

- a large majority stated that they communicate well with at least one parent (9 Yes, 3 No),
- in contrast to the primary school responses a majority stated that they were not treated fairly in school (3 Yes, 6 No, 3 Sometimes/Don't Know),
- very few were involved in extracurricular activities (3 Yes, 10 No) which is much less than the comparable subgroup at primary level and most were not involved in afterschool clubs (5 Yes, 7 No),
- the overwhelming majority would not talk to an adult working in the school about their problems (1 Yes, 9 No, 1 Don't Know).

Table 22. Those without firm intention to stay on at school until the Leaving Cert: First year students' responses

Age/Sex	Trust Parents	Extra-curricular Activities	Treated Fairly in School	Afterschool	Willing to talk to someone in school
12, M	Yes	None	No - too many hard tests and too much homework	No	na
12, M	na	na	na	No	na
12, M	No	None	No, always picked on by the teachers	No	No they would just say go to the principal and he would not do anything
13F	No	None (there isn't anything to do)	No	Yes (dancing)	No I just wouldn't
12F	Yes	None (but there is some)	Sometimes	No	No. Because I would be scarlet
13F	Yes	No	Sometimes	No	No because they don't care
14F	No	No	No (that's why I want to move schools)	No	No
M, 14	"No because we're not that close"	None	No answer	No	"No can't trust them"
M, 12	Yes	Yes. Homework club	"No one of those give me extra homework nearly every night"	Homework club	No
M, 13	Yes	Yes. Play football	DK	Computer club on Monday and Thursdays	DK
M, 13	Yes	Yes. Homework club	No	Homework club	No
M, 13	Yes	None	Yes	"Yes we do a lot of activities"	No
13M	"Yes because I respect them very much."	"None at the moment"	"Yes because no teacher treats any other student differently."	No	"Yes because they know what it's like."
13M	"Yes because they understand."	N/A	Yes	N/A	N/A

Second year results – Profile of the subgroup of most at risk of early school leaving

It is noticeable that from this subgroup that:

- while a small majority stated that they communicate well with at least one parent (7 Yes, 6 No) this is less than primary, 1st year or 5th year,
- a small majority stated that they are treated fairly in school (7 Yes, 6 No),
- the overwhelming majority are not involved in extracurricular activities (1 Yes, 12 No) nor in afterschool clubs (2 Yes, 11 No),
- no respondent would talk to an adult working in the school about their problems (0 Yes, 13 No).

Table 23. Those without firm intention to stay on at school until the Leaving Cert: Second year students' responses

Age/Sex	Trust Parents	Extra-curricular Activities	Treated Fairly in School	Afterschool	Willing to talk to someone in school
14, M	Yes	None	No, because some people get away with things	No	No
14, M	"No just don't get on with them"	None	No	No	No
15, M	Yes	None	No	No	No
M, 14	Yes	None	No	Yes, I just started it	"No because they would only ask you what you would do"
M, 14	No	None	"No, they give you too much work"	No	"No, there is no-one you can trust"
M, 14	"Not really because there's some things I can't tell them"	None	"Yes, most of them"	No	No
M, 14	Yes	None	Yes	No	No
13F	Yes	No	Yes	No	No (I wouldn't because it would be personal)
14F	No (I don't talk to anybody because i fell like its stupid what I'm saying)	None	Yes (I get treated like everyone else)	No	No (because I wouldn't want them knowing me business)
14F	No (I don't really have conversations with my family. I don't get along with them)	No	No (all the teachers have favourites)	No	No (I don't tell anyone my business)
13F	Yes	Yes (We do sports Drama Shows)	Yes	Yes (I go to the olv club in New St., it is great socialising with my mates)	Don't no Id rather talk to one of my family members
14F	No (We don't get on)	No	Yes (if you're good and do your work there's no problem)	No	No (embarrassed)
13F	Yes (cause I know I can trust them and they can rely on me and trust me)	No (I don't)	Yes (because each and every one of us are the same)	No	No (I would talk to my family cause I can trust them more)

With regard to both first and second year students from this subgroup of respondents across the three secondary schools:

- It is of concern that those most at risk of early school leaving are not involved in extracurricular activities, with very few involved in afterschool clubs. It is clear that a more concerted and targeted approach is needed to engage this subgroup through the arts, sports or practical activities,
- It is evident that there is little emotional trust on the part of this subgroup to open up onsite in school regarding emotional issues. Therefore availability of emotional support services to target this group needs to be in a community based setting though in dialogue with the school regarding referrals.

Fifth year results – Profile of the subgroup most at risk of early school leaving

It is noticeable that from this subgroup that:

- all stated that they communicate well with at least one parent (8 Yes, 0 No). This echoes the high levels of trust stated between the comparable subgroup of pupils at primary level and students in first year, and contrasts with the relatively higher levels of difficulty of communication with parents in the comparable subgroup of second year students. This suggests that second years in particular need targeting with services for emotional support,
- a small majority state that they are treated fairly in school, (4 Yes, 3 No, 1 Sometimes),
- very few were involved in extracurricular activities (2 Yes, 6 No),
- the majority would *not* talk to an adult working in the school about their problems, (2 Yes, 6 No),
- the large majority were female (8 females to 2 males).

Table 24. Those without firm intention to stay on until the Leaving Certificate.: Fifth year student responses

	Trust Parent	Extracurricular Activities	Treated Fairly in School	Talk to school member about problem
15F	Yes	Yes (an art project)	Sometimes	No (they tell everything in the staff room)
16F	Yes	No	Yes	No
16F	Yes	No	No ("no, we never get a word in edgeways")	No (don't trust them)
16F	Yes	No	Yes (most teachers, but one just picks on me)	No (the whole lot of the teachers would no your business)
16F	Yes	No	No (some think they own the school)	No (because it would end up all around the staff room)
15F	Yes	No	No (most of them hate me)	Yes (to get it of my guest {chest})
17F 16F	Yes Yes	Yes (basketball & tennis) No	Yes (I love them) Yes (I am by one teacher the most I don't know why)	Yes No (I just wouldn't feel comfortable)

4.2 Need for a more transparent and integrated referral system for afterschool projects

- The questionnaire results of the school based survey strongly support the view that a very large proportion of those pupils and students who are most at risk of early school leaving²⁴ are not participating in extracurricular and afterschool activities designed to help protect against early school leaving. This is particularly evident for local secondary school students.
- A feature of a number of local afterschool projects is that they are community more than school based (e.g., DEN, Nicholas of Myra, Fountain Resource Centre)²⁵. As pupils and students go to a range of different schools in the area, the pupils and students attending these afterschool projects tend to be drawn more from the area they come from than the school they go to.
- It is of concern that at present some schools tend to 'contract out' (Tett et al 2001)²⁶ afterschool project work rather than closely collaborate with afterschool projects. There is a clear need for collaboration rather than a simply contracting out in order to implement a strategic approach to school completion across schools, afterschool projects and other local services.
- There is a need for increased coordination between afterschool projects in the area (for example, Nicholas of Myra and DEN do not have regular modes of contact with each other). This coordination is not simply to ensure pupils and students in need of afterschool support do not fall through the gaps. It is also to ensure that:
 - a more strategic approach occurs so that for example, pupils and students in need of therapeutic support in addition to afterschool support can be referred to the appropriate service,
 - local good practice can be disseminated across afterschool projects.
- The obvious paths for this increased coordination, as part of a more strategic collaboration between schools and afterschool projects, are the School Completion Programme Committees, supported also by Dublin Inner City Partnership and the Local Drugs Task Force.
- It is also important for local services and schools to collaborate with each other to ensure that:
 - young people at risk of early school leaving are being catered for by some afterschool project,
 - a profile of young people at risk of early school leaving distinguishes those who also need therapeutic/counselling support and not only afterschool support,
 - projects that could be developed in afterschool services, such as antibullying approaches, local citizenship building and awareness of the wider community, can feed into work also being done across the schools,
 - afterschool projects and local schools come together to implement a shared vision of a strategy for young people to identify with and have pride in their wider community,
 - a coherent approach to drug prevention issues can emerge between afterschool projects and local schools,
 - benefits from afterschool services can feed back into the school social climate (see also QDOSS in Downes 2006),
 - these community based services are directly represented on the School Completion Programme committees.

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²⁴ The need for more integrated services to target those most at risk of early school leaving was previously noted in the local area by Hickey (1994): "Each school and workshop should agree to target and specialise in one or two categories of early school leavers, and the other schools and workshops should divide up their areas of interests accordingly"

²⁵ Similarly many pupils and students attending schools in the South West Inner City area come from outside the area and attend community based afterschool projects in their local area rather than in their school

²⁶ Tett et al's (2001) discussion of collaboration between schools and community agencies in tackling social exclusion contrasts collaboration with simply 'contracting out' interventions and describes collaboration in terms of 'develop, manage, deliver, fund and evaluate' activities.

- It is evident that strategies are needed to improve communication and collaboration between schools and services, while respecting the professional boundaries of each. Allen (2005) observes four elements of 'council climate' linked to successful collaboration in community coordinating councils in previous research internationally: a) effective conflict resolution, b) the presence of a shared mission, c) shared decision-making and d) task oriented and inclusive leadership.
- The need for a wider referral process for afterschool services recognises:
 - that the current process is not reaching a key target group of students who state that they do not want to stay on at school until Leaving Certificate,
 - the need to target at risk, withdrawn children. Doll (1996) highlights the danger that the needs of students with internalising problems, e.g., depression, anxiety disorders, somatic disorders, will be underidentified by adults and be overlooked by teachers (see also Downes 2004).
- Some service providers observed, as a priority for expansion, the need to reach more marginalised children through afterschool projects:
 - *"developing out of schools programmes for more marginalised kids, need youth club funding, our kids can't access this building as only for parents returning to work or going back to education can use new building, there is a huge gap for children of parents on drugs, out of school kids have to pay"*
 - *"huge gap for most at risk, no afterschool for these kids, more could be done"*

4.3 The need for continuity within afterschool projects from primary to secondary

The Educational Disadvantage Subcommittee (2003) has recommended that School Plans address "key areas" such as:

- extracurricular programmes and connection to youth service provision within the local area,
- transition from primary to secondary.

It has been argued that these two elements need to be firmly connected to each other so that a plan would exist for continuity between those extracurricular activities at primary level and at secondary level (Downes 2004a).

Some afterschool projects in the local area, such as Nicholas of Myra Centre, Fountain Resource Centre, Donore Education Network (DEN), provide this key feature of continuity within the project as the student moves from primary school to post primary.

- Whether the afterschool projects are school or community based there is a need for afterschool projects to develop medium term strategies in order to offer developmentally appropriate activities for young people, and to provide continuous social supports for young people during the potentially stressful time of transition to a new school.

- In order to bring continuity to afterschool projects and to project staff, there is a need to provide medium term strategic planning and for afterschool projects to be supported beyond simply year-to-year funding. Afterschool projects need at least a 3-year funding cycle. This extended time for strategic planning and budgets would allow afterschool projects to operate between primary and secondary school children i.e., more students could stay in the same afterschool project after transferring from primary to secondary.

4.4 The need for review of the composition of the local school completion programmes

It is evident that the School Completion Programmes (SCP) are funding key interventions such as 'literacy programmes, after school clubs, counselling services' and they 'organise practical activities for children including cookery, art, computers to develop life skills'. In the words of one school principal, the school completion programme is "highly effective".

- One School Completion Programme "currently has two Project Workers who work in a different school each day. Their work is flexible and based around the needs of the school and the children therefore SCP work very closely with teachers, principals and HSL. They mostly work with the entire class therefore reaching the entire school however in some cases they would work with smaller groups or provide 1:1 emotional support (target children) Some programmes currently in place include:
 - Copping On - a crime prevention groupwork
 - 2nd Step - Anger Management Course. This is a year long course looking specifically at empathy training, conflict resolution and anger management.
 - Transition Programmes for all 6th Classes in all schools. This has been ongoing for the last 3 years.
 - Summer Supports - our own summer programme in June (2 weeks) for James's Secondary and Warrenmount. This has been ongoing for the last 3 years and is usually focused around water sports.
 - Counselling + Pathways (groupwork) by Coordinator in Presentation Secondary Schools".
- There is also: "an Out-of-School Subcommittee to help deal with the issue of out of school children and/or those with high absenteeism. This sub-committee meets every 6 weeks and consists of principals, HSL, JLO and NEWB. It attempts to deal with the most marginalised children and those who find it difficult to engage with services. At present, we are organising an 'art programme' to take place once a week with children who are NOT attending any services at present. This will take place in the Digital Hub".
- There is recognition of the need for the "SCP to integrate more with Family Centres, Services etc.."
- In Dublin 8 SCP there are ten schools, eight primary, two secondary; in Synges St. SCP there are two schools, one primary, one secondary.
- For 2005-6 the budget for the Dublin 8 SCP was Euro 352,269, for the same year the Synges St. SCP budget was Euro 161,345.
- For the year 2006-2007, the budget for Dublin 8 SCP is Euro 366,080.
- In other words, the funding being given to two schools (in Synges St. SCP) is almost half that given to the funding being given to ten schools (in Dublin 8 SCP).
- A frequently expressed view from schools and local services was criticism of the structure of the local School Completion Programmes. As one interviewee stated: "it's crazy, totally unbalanced".

- The government DEIS programme is restructuring the designation of disadvantaged schools into different levels/scales of disadvantage. Both on an equity basis and on a priority level for those schools experiencing highest levels of socio-economic disadvantage, it is clear that the current SCP structures and funding for Synge St. SCP and Dublin 8 SCP need reform for 2007-2008.
- A further goal of the SCP is dissemination of good practice across schools and the composition of the Synge St. SCP – of only one primary and one post primary school – undermines this goal.
- It is important that local services are given sufficient representation on the SCP committees, including family support services. There is a danger that children at risk of early school leaving who are more withdrawn (i.e. exhibiting internalising rather than externalising behaviours) will be missed by schools in the referral process.
- Representation on the Dublin 8 SCP includes school (vice) principals, home-school liaison teachers, Dublin Inner City Partnership (DICP), Dán, Local Drugs Task Force, South Western Area Health Board, and a Juvenile Liaison Officer.
- Representation on the Synge St. SCP includes School Staff, a parent, DICP, and a Juvenile Liaison Officer.
- It is abundantly clear that the funding and structures of the Synge St. SCP and the Dublin 8 SCP need immediate reform to maximise their external effectiveness²⁷ for children at risk of early school leaving in the South West Inner City area.

4.5 The need for increased integration of family support services

The following responses from a range of local services indicated that there was agreement regarding the need for more integration of family support services in the local area:

- 'How could family support services be further assisted in helping families of children at risk of early school leaving/nonattendance?': *"Re-structure Family Support Brief to have clearer links"*,
- 'How in your opinion can local schools better accommodate the needs of at risk pupils/students?': *"Clearer links and referrals ensure that the client does not fall through the loop"*,
- *"Very much interested"* in working with schools to prevent problems arising, need *"personnel resources, psychotherapist"*, need *"more focus on integration, need some work done on targeting and outreach"*,
- 'How could family support services be further assisted in helping families of children at risk of early school leaving/non-attendance?': *"Early referral to allow preventative work to take place"*.
- Others suggested that those most marginalised may still be falling through the net of services: *"Some children we work with are much worse off than 10 years ago, used to have grandmothers minding them, not now"...* *"More marginalised still there"*
- There was consensus from School Street 'Early Days' Centre, Rialto Family Centre and Mercy Family Centre, all of which offer family support, regarding their interest in being involved in preventative approaches with local schools for children at risk of early school leaving. Fountain Resource Centre stated that they were not in a position to expand into more preventive work with schools. Nevertheless, they already have close links with schools in the James St. area regarding prevention and targeting of children most at risk of early school leaving and in need of further supports.

²⁷ Allen (2005) distinguishes between "internal effectiveness of councils (i.e., the extent to which council members function effectively as a group or facilitate relationships among stakeholders)" versus "the external effectiveness of councils (i.e., the extent to which they produce needed community change)".

- Strong levels of cooperation currently exist between Fountain Resource Centre and School Street Centre for family support. However, in order to develop an area wide integrated strategy there is a need for an increased coordinated strategy for referrals to be developed between Mercy Family Centre, School Street²⁸, Fountain Resource Centre and Rialto Family Centre.
- There is a need for an integrated outreach strategy so that family support services target agreed areas to ensure that no area is excluded and that young people and their families are reached across the South West Inner City area.
- There is a need to agree common protocols across family support agencies regarding exchange of information within the limit of confidentiality²⁹. This requires overcoming competition for resources. If budgets operated over 3 year planning cycles rather than being based on year-to-year funding, this competition would be at least partially alleviated. Traditional conceptions of territoriality and assumptions of separation within different parts of the area also need to be overcome.
- For integration of family support services, specific target groups (who may not be being reached by current services) need to be identified, such as foreign nationals.
- Mercy Family Centre has had some success in engaging local men; School Street Centre noted that the overwhelming majority of the people they work with are mothers.

4.6 Beyond programmed time: The need for a “Drop-in Centre for 14-18 year olds”

A large variety of responses from members of the community across a range of places in the South West Inner City area pinpointed the age group from 14-18 years as especially lacking facilities and being particularly in need:

- *“14-18 only two choices and 90% of them make the wrong choice.”*
- *“Main gap 14 to 18.”*
- *“The gap is for 14-18 year olds, standing around is a way of growing up”*
- *“10-21 year olds need somewhere that they can call their own and can feel comfortable”*
- *“Nothing for them to do”*
- *“If not in a club or part of a group, have to pay into Catherine’s [Sports Centre]”*
- *“Digital Hub has been a revelation for teen boys not into sports, what they have done in the last 5 years will have a lasting effect”*
- *“13-19 years at most risk”*
- *“Nothing for us, just sit there on the wall”*
- *“All there is is a slide”*
- *“Nothing for us on the streets, tennis court they only open in the summer”*
- *“need a pool hall”*
- *“Catherine’s sports centre, they won’t let us in, the gym, they won’t let us in”*
- *“Everyone hangs around the corners, mothers hanging around the corners with the kids”*
- *“People from the flats don’t use the centre, need for classes for young fellas, snooker and that”*
- *“Always up in the flats, nothing else to do for us, standing on corners”*

²⁸ SICDDA is in the process of establishing a project which will strengthen links between Mercy Family Centre in the Donore area and School St. ‘Early Days’ Centre.

²⁹ O’Connor’s (2002) research in St. Teresa’s Gardens has previously highlighted the need for guidelines for sharing information within limits of a code of confidentiality, to locate services in the heart of the community, and for a men’s support group

- "No summer clubs, nearest swimming pool is in Crumlin" (Marrowbone Lane)
 - "Catherine's Sports club is the only facility in the area"
 - "Marrowbone lane residents association is closed"
 - "nothing to do at night"
 - "St. Catherine's Sports club is 5 euro a session, it became semiprivate"
 - "Have to be 18 to go to its gym"
 - "Not much from this area would use Catherine's"
 - "Nothing at all in summer"
 - "Newmarket square community centre closed 2 years ago, got us off the street, people appreciated it"
 - "Nothing else to do but drink"
 - "People are bored"
- This focus on the gaps for 14-18 year olds strongly echoes the findings of Brudell's (2005) conclusions in the context of the community consultation in the area of the Robert Emmet CDP: 'Youth activities are the clear priority of respondents and are ranked by the largest number (37%) as the most important category of activities to be catered for within the community centre'.
 - The profiles of the subgroup of those most at risk of early school leaving, namely, those who stated in the questionnaire responses that they did not want to or did not know if they want to stay on at school until Leaving Certificate, have already been seen to reveal a lack of engagement in activities by the first and second year students. This finding is consistent with the views from the community respondents above outlining the 14-18 years age group as particularly lacking facilities.
 - Brudell's (2005) comments have relevance for beyond the Robert Emmet CDP area:
 'It is significant to note that the vast majority of activities [for teenagers] are taking place outside of the immediate area – a clear reflection of the paucity of amenities and facilities within the area itself. The comments of those consulted convey something of the young people's experience:
"...there is nothing for us to do but to hang about the stairwells and everyone moves us from there...we can go into town and play pool but would like to be able to hang out and play pool and Playstation somewhere...I just want somewhere to go where I am not told to move on from."

Professor Roger Hart (2006) has recently observed: *"it's more important than ever that there are spaces where children can come together with other children in an open and free way, rather than in a programmed way"*. He argues that too much of children's time is *"programmed"* whether spent in crèches, music lessons or sports classes *"they're not playing with their peers out on the street and therefore not building a democratic culture"*³⁰

The expanded range of facilities as part of the local area regeneration process is impressive and offers much hope for the future. These facilities serve as a highly valuable resource for the different communities in the South West Inner City area.

- Nevertheless the concern remains that the most marginalised young people, including those most at risk of early school leaving and substance abuse, may not necessarily be the ones accessing some of these services. For example, many buildings hosting a range of services (for example, Donore Youth and Community Centre, St. Catherine's Sports Centre³¹) need young people to book or arrange times in advance before they can use the services due to reasons of insurance, space and the need to have an adequate ratio of workers to young people.

³⁰ Roger Hart was speaking at the annual lecture of the Children's Research Centre, Trinity College Dublin 26th October 2006 Professor Hart is the Co-Director of the Children's Environments Research Group, Center for Human Environments and the Environmental Psychology Program, City University of New York.

³¹ Nicholas of Myra Centre run a range of services for teenagers in the area: "Majorettes ages 3-20, Monday and Wednesday 100 teenagers, 80-100 do Irish dancing on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Had martial arts for boys and girls, will start this again. Majorettes are self-financing, 2 euro per night. Ballet for 8/9 up to 17 year olds"

As those most at risk of early school leaving may lead particularly unstructured lives, there is a need for services that provide not simply “programmed space” and “programmed” time (Hart 2006). This need for more “drop-in” spaces is even greater due to the distinct lack of public space available for people in local area³². This is a public planning issue, namely, to increase the range of public space available in the area, for example, for a shopping centre, bowling alley, and cinema – in other words space that local youth can access without significant planning in advance.

4.7 Dissemination of existing good practice throughout local schools

There is a range of innovative strategies existing in local schools that deserves full implementation across all schools in the area with the help of the local School Completion Programme Committees.

Many of these strategies can serve as models of good practice for schools nationally.

These innovative strategies include:

- the establishment of a student council at primary level,
- the development of a multisensory room based in the school to facilitate pupils’ emotional expression,
- pupil responsibility for pets such as hens within the school,
- a garden project introduced this year,
- a sensory garden and a recycling programme as part of a Green School Project,
- murals in the school yard and assembly hall,
- a buddy/paired reading system for improving literacy and keeping the children interested in reading,
- *“Special attention is given to children who come from troubled backgrounds and who may be behind in class for example every member of staff will be encouraged to greet the child by name on the corridor”,*
- *“The reading club is good for making sure boys read at home”,*
- *“L.U.L Project (learning using laptops) - children learn literacy and numeracy skills. They have the opportunity to bring laptops home and show parents what they have learnt”,*
- entering the Larkin College Arts Scholarship Competition,
- *“In sixth class each child grows a sunflower each year as part of Science/Nature study. They take them home at year’s end.”,*
- *“School choir and a huge emphasis on displaying children’s art work”,*
- a “challenge to change” integration project with 4th-6th classes this year. Older pupils taught younger ones yard games to help them integrate and join in the fun at break time,
- *“Awards for being a good student, student of the month, reader of the month, maths wizard, good phone call home”,*
- strong examples of coordination such as “The Links” Committee, including representatives from Mater Dei, James St., primary and secondary schools and two of Fountain Resource Centre Directors. *“Already have in place”* preventative approaches in partnership with schools to target at risk pupils and they have put in a joint application for an all weather pitch,
- visible public antibullying statements on the walls of the secondary school: *“It’s become a part of their routine to*

³² Only 6% of the South West Inner City area is composed of public open space (Brudell 2005).

take his money and make him scream to twist his arm and bash his head, if you tell sir that's it! You're dead! However this is not the case!",

- "Digital Hub engages all the schools",
- "JCSP awards mornings at Christmas and summer",
- bi-annual newsletter "parents make a difference",
- informal meetings with parents, e.g. in local coffee shops "has the effect of reducing anxiety and definitely reduces conflict".

Other local views on schools included the following:

- "We've been blessed over the years with some very nice principals",
 - The schools are "all amenable" "teachers doing an excellent job, well in tune with what kids need",
 - "Home School Liaison doing a very good job, see that by the amount of parents who called to the school each day",
 - Mother of 9 year old "a super school, my daughter loves it, praises it down to the ground...a great school, everything is based on the kids, camogie, football, homework club, breakfast club",
 - "Schools, brilliant people, teachers absolutely brilliant",
 - For the mother, "school was alright, uniforms were the worst thing about it" whereas now she recognises that her children "they love school",
 - "Schools are great",
 - "Schools fairly friendly",
 - "Teachers grand, though more youth culture needed in schools"
- The School Completion Programme Committees are obvious vehicles for dissemination of this variety of good practice in a systematic way throughout all the local schools.
 - Pupils and students accessing the valuable facilities and innovative projects (for example, a multisensory room and taking care of hens in the school) in local schools is also an important issue for schools to consider. Access is a distinct issue from their simply being available in the school. In other words, it is important that all pupils and students can get regular access to the innovative facilities; by all students this includes but does not exclusively include those viewed as more at risk of early school leaving. So, for example, it is important that future student councils in schools allow for a committee in each class and not simply one or two elected people, and that the committee can rotate so that a much higher range of pupils and students can participate.

4.8 Structured transition programmes

Transition between primary and secondary schools is well-recognised as a time of particular stress for the student and is a phase of increased risk of disconnection from school leading to early school leaving (see e.g., O'Brien 1997; Downes, Maunsell & Ivers 2006).

A decade ago, Mernagh (1996) research in the local SICCCA area highlighted that:
 "Links between the primary feeder schools and the secondary institutions is generally weak".

Since this time progress has been made between at least some local primary and secondary schools with regard to structured transition programmes. For example, 'The Links' Committee has been established, including representatives from Mater Dei, James St., primary and secondary schools and two of Fountain Resource Centre Directors, as well as others. They "already have in place" preventative approaches in partnership with schools to target at risk pupils.

Responses from other schools regarding transition issues include the following:

- *"Isn't that link, not automatically moving into another school"*
 - *"No children leave this school early. This occurs in Secondary schools. All children are transferred to Secondary schools, visits take place during school time and reports are prepared where requested."*
 - *"Home visits"*
 - *"Adult education and link with Warrenmount centre"*
 - *"Transfer pack for new students and parents"*
 - *"Visits to the school principal and tour of the school"*
- A distinctive feature of the South West Inner City area is the relative lack of correspondence between a child living in a particular part of the area and his/her attendance at a local school. In other words, many children attend schools outside their immediate locality and children outside the local area of the school attend many of the local schools. This places a particular onus on schools and on School Completion Programmes to build on existing good practice to further develop structured transition programmes from primary to post-primary schools.
 - Structured transition programmes need to encompass a targeted approach to profile those students most at risk of early school leaving to ensure that they do not fall through the gaps³³.
 - Recent research regarding transition (Maunsell, Barrett & Candon 2007) highlights the fears of students with special needs in designated disadvantaged schools in relation to transition to post primary. Those students with special needs in local primary schools need to be targeted for supports in relation to transition; this can include mentoring support from older students at post primary. Such support can start already in 6th class at primary level.

³³ Hickey (1994) observed the "inadequate provisions for those who fall behind" in primary school and at Junior Cert. in the local area.

4.9 Need for increased numbers of education welfare officers and NEPS psychologists in the Area

- There was a consensus among local schools about the need for expansion of the services provided by the Education Welfare Officer and also by the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS).
- There is one Education Welfare Officer in the area serving 19 schools in total. This contrasts with the previous situation where there were 2 school attendance officers for the same area. This is clearly an inadequate situation.
- The Education Welfare Service is *"very underresourced", "only so much they can do"*. One teacher referred to *"the perception among teachers that the National Education Welfare Board is not working as well as the old attendance officers did...The NEWB is under-resourced and understaffed."*
- A further concern was that *"the law only covers you from the age of 6 and the pattern of non-attendance is established from Junior Infants. The Education Welfare Officer cannot intervene realistically until First Class"*.
- Concern was raised by some schools about the lack of prosecutions taking place of parents for non-attendance of their children at school over a sustained period. It is apparent that *"prosecutions are slow to get off the ground"* though they are *"starting now in Dublin City"*.
- There are 2 NEPS psychologists serving the Dublin 8 area, together with the Canal Communities area.
- It is evident that there is a *"need for more psychologists"*, they are *"so thinly spread"*.

4.10 Key conclusions: The risk of falling through the net

Profiles of potential early school leavers.

- Profiles were developed of those pupils and students who stated that they think that they do not want to stay on at school until Leaving Certificate, or at least have no firm intention to do so.
- This profile of 5th and 6th class pupils offers significant hope that members of this subgroup of pupils most at risk of early school leaving can be persuaded to remain on at school until Leaving Certificate as:
 - there is a key dimension of stability for most of them in their family environment, namely, open pathways for communication with at least one parent,
 - alienation from the school system is at an early stage of development as most state that they are treated fairly in school and a notable proportion of this subgroup are willing to talk to someone in school about a personal problem.

- A high number of pupils in this subgroup state that they trust at least one parent and are treated fairly by their teacher in school. Therefore, there is an opportunity to build on these positive relations to bring the retention of these pupils in the school system until Leaving Certificate. A focused strategy involving the parent, teacher, Home-School Liaison teacher and these pupils most at risk of early school leaving needs to engage in dialogue with these pupils specifically about their reasons for why they do not want to stay on at school with a view to establishing supports to help change these pupils wishes to leave school early.
- There is a need for all schools in the area to target pupils most at risk of early school leaving for participation in extracurricular and afterschool activities. It is evident from the responses of this subgroup that some schools are already doing so.

With regard to both first, second and fifth year students from this subgroup of respondents across the three secondary schools:

- It is of concern that those most at risk of early school leaving are not involved in extracurricular activities, with very few involved in afterschool clubs. It is clear that a more concerted and targeted approach is needed to develop activities, whether linked to the arts or sports or practical activities, which will engage this subgroup.
- It is evident that there is little emotional trust on the part of this subgroup to open up onsite in school regarding emotional issues and that availability of emotional support services to target this group needs to be in a community based setting though in dialogue with the school regarding referrals.

The need to maximise the role of afterschool projects as a protective factor against early school leaving.

- A feature of a number of afterschool projects in the South West Inner City area is that they are community more than school based. As pupils and students go to a range of different schools in the area, the pupils and students attending these afterschool projects tend to be drawn more from the area they come from than the school they go to.
- It is of concern that at present some schools tend to 'contract out' afterschool project work rather than closely collaborate with afterschool projects. There is a clear need for collaboration rather than a simply contracting out in order to implement a strategic approach to school completion across schools, afterschool projects and other local services.
- The 'contracting out' of breakfast clubs may be a factor in the large variation across schools in numbers of children stating that they are either often, very often or every day too hungry to do their work in schools.
- There is a lack of coordination between afterschool projects in the area. This need for coordination is not simply to ensure pupils and students in need of afterschool support do not fall through the gaps. It is also to ensure that:
 - a more strategic approach occurs so that for example, pupils and students in need of therapeutic support in addition to afterschool support can be referred to the appropriate service,

- local good practice can be disseminated across afterschool projects.
- The obvious fora for this increased coordination as part of a more strategic collaboration between schools and afterschool projects are the School Completion Programme Committees, supported also by Dublin Inner City Partnership and the Local Drugs Task Force.
- There is a need for a wider referral process for afterschool services. This recognises:
 - that the current process is not reaching a key target group of students who state that they do not want to stay on at school until Leaving Certificate,
 - the need to target at withdrawn children who are at risk of early school leaving.
- It is also important for local services and schools to collaborate with each other to ensure that:
 - young people at risk of early school leaving are being catered for by some afterschool project,
 - a profile of young people at risk of early school leaving distinguishes those who also need therapeutic/counselling support and not only afterschool support,
 - a coherent approach to drug prevention issues can emerge between afterschool projects and local schools,
 - a coherent strategy is developed to ensure no child is too hungry to do their work in school,
 - benefits from afterschool services can feed back into the school climate,
 - these community based services are directly represented on the School Completion Programme committees.

Reform to the structure of the local School Completion Programmes.

- A frequently expressed view from schools and local services was criticism of the structure of the local School Completion Programmes. As one interviewee stated: *"it's crazy, totally unbalanced"*.
- The government DEIS programme is restructuring the designation of disadvantaged schools into different levels/scales of disadvantage. Both on an equity basis and on a priority level for those schools experiencing highest levels of socio-economic disadvantage, it is clear that the current SCP structures and funding for Synge St. SCP and Dublin 8 SCP need reform for 2007-2008.
- A further goal of the SCP is dissemination of good practice across schools and the composition of the Synge St. SCP – of only one primary and one post primary school – undermines this goal.
- It is important that local services are given sufficient representation on the SCP committees, including family support services. There is a danger that children at risk of early school leaving who are more withdrawn (i.e. exhibiting internalising rather than externalising behaviours) will be missed by schools in the referral process.
- It is abundantly clear that the funding and structures of the Synge St. SCP and the Dublin 8 SCP need immediate reform to maximise their external effectiveness for children at risk of early school leaving in the South West Inner City area.

Innovative strategies across local primary and secondary schools

- There is a range of innovative strategies existing in local primary and secondary schools that deserve full implementation across all schools in the area with the help of the local School Completion Programme Committees³⁴.
- Many of these strategies can serve as models of good practice for schools nationally.
- The School Completion Programme Committees are obvious vehicles for dissemination of this variety of good practice in a systematic way throughout all the local schools.
- Pupils and students accessing the valuable facilities and innovative projects is itself an important issue. Access is a distinct issue from their simply being available in the school. In other words, it is important that all pupils and students can get regular access to the innovative facilities – by all students this includes but does not exclusively include those viewed as more at risk of early school leaving.

Structured transition programmes

- A distinctive feature of the South West Inner City area is the relative lack of correspondence between a child living in a particular part of the area and his/her attendance at a local school. In other words, many children attend schools outside their immediate locality and children outside the local area of the school attend many of the local schools. This places a particular onus on schools and on School Completion Programmes to build on existing good practice to further develop structured transition programmes from primary to post-primary schools.
- Structured transition programmes need to encompass a targeted approach to profile those students most at risk of early school leaving to ensure that they do not fall through the gaps.
- Those students with special needs in local primary schools need to be targeted for supports in relation to transition; this can include mentoring support from older students at post primary. Such support can be initiated already in 6th class at primary level.

³⁴ For example, a student council at primary level, the development of a multisensory room based in the school to facilitate pupils' emotional expression, pupil responsibility for pets such as hens within the school, a sensory garden and a recycling programme as part of a Green School Project etc

Section 5

Family support and community development issues to promote school completion

This section acknowledges the extreme importance of family and community dimensions to supporting children and young people to stay on at school and to maximize their educational potential. Family issues are obviously central to children and young people's health related issues already explored in section two of this report. A community development perspective, where local people are centrally involved in developing and implementing activities which affect them, is a key theme underlying this section. It is evident that the South West Inner City area has a particularly strong tradition of community development which offers a strong base to be built upon for future generations of local people.

5. Family support and community development issues to promote school completion

5.1 Building on existing family support services and a strong tradition of community development approaches in the South West Inner City area

The SICCDA Advisory Group identified four services available to people in the local area with a specific focus on family support³⁵ which were to be reviewed in particular detail. These four services are:

- School Street/Thomas Court Bawn Family Resource Centre,
- Mercy Family Centre,³⁶
- Rialto Family Centre,
- Fountain Resource Centre.

Representatives from other local service providers with potential links to development of family support services in the future were also interviewed (for example, Vista CDP, Nicholas of Myra Centre, Casadh).

- Nicholas of Myra Centre provides services from 7.30am to 9.30pm³⁷. Although they currently provide “no family support or therapy, could do it in future, open to it if got funding”
- Vista CDP run a “play club for children in Chamber Court, 3-5 year olds” and “would be open” to expanding “community leadership and development work, including family support”.
- Casadh regard one of their priority needs as being to “expand their family support team”. Their family support worker is “only three months so far here”.

Other family support available in the local area, such as adult education services, also need to be recognised. These include the FETAC accredited courses in Francis St., Warrenmount Adult Education Centre and FAS.

³⁵ The Family Resource Centre, Fatima Group United was viewed by the SICCDA Advisory Committee as being outside the scope of the study. It also needs to be recognised that family support takes place as part of the addiction services in the area, such as with Casadh.

³⁶ O'Connor (2002) noted that The Mercy Family Resource Centre provides childcare to 46 children or 31% of children from St. Teresa's Gardens.

³⁷ Nicholas of Myra Centre had 250 children and young people involved in their summer project, aged 4-17 but “ran out of money”. They “concentrate on taking them out of the area, to farms, adventure centres. We were involved in the first summer Project in Ireland ‘The Liberties Summer Project’ over 30 years ago”.

PROFILES OF THE FOUR IDENTIFIED FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES

School Street/Thomas Court Bawn Family Resource Centre

Sources of funding: Family Support Agency under the Department of Social and Family Affairs, FAS, Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Local Drugs Task Force, ADM (now Pobal)), Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme. All core funding. Capital funding for childcare but not for counselling

Staff: 46 staff, project coordinator, administrator, childcare and counselling, community capacity building, 24 from FAS

Service users annually: 450

Age profile of client group: 9 months, preschool to 50 years,

Gender profile of clients and target group: 99% female, lone parents

Ethnicity of service users: No Traveller or foreign national service users, though a member of the Travelling community is working on the staff

Type of work service engages in: Individual, group, family, and community work

Outreach strategies: Designated outreach workers, affiliated to local SWICN network and cluster group of 3 CDPs

Procedures to facilitate ownership of service by the local community:

"Directors are all local people with the exception of the project coordinator, advertise locally, try to prioritise local people, professional childcare workers are usually local people who have done a basic course in childcare. Prioritised under the strategic goal of local capacity building".

Obstacles, if any, to increased partnership between your service and local schools: Human resources, more shared goals than contracting out

Referrals from local schools: Yes, through Home-School Liaison Officer

Availability of services after 8pm, at weekends or during the summer months:

"Yes, in Summer services after 8 and at weekend, not during term time"

Waiting list: "No waiting list for youth service, yes for childcare programmes and counselling service".

Procedures governing giving priority to particular clients: "Priority to local area (School St., Marrowbone Lane, Thomas St.), look to marginalized in particular"

Incentives provided for engaging people in adult education services:

"Parenting courses, provision of childcare, men working under CE schemes, building maintenance [courses]"

The 5 priority needs/problems of your clients:

"Childcare, alcohol, isolation/transient relationships, physical/emotional abuse, self development"

How could family support services be further assisted in helping families of children at risk of early school leaving/nonattendance?

"Huge gap for kids most at risk, we know the parents, have contracts with parents, we have, no contact with the Education Welfare Officer, schools could notify us more could be done for the most marginalised"

Priority needs for expansion of your service?

"no afterschool for kids most at risk because the EOCP is funded only for workers" "expand present out of school services for more marginalized kids, need youth club funds, our kids can't access this building as it is for parents returning to work or going back to education who can use the new building", "out of school kids have to pay", "huge gap for parents on drugs", "only 2 days a week counselling service"

Mercy Family Centre**Sources of funding:** "Drugs Task Force – Family Support Worker

H.S.E. for family centre and ADM staffing other grants as apply for grant and capital and fundraising. FAS" "We fall into all three categories" of core funding, programme funding and community strand funding

Staff: "FAS C.E. staff 43 – childcare, cleaning, reception and supervision. Drugs Task Force - 1 Family Support Worker HSE/ ADM - General Manager, Adult Education Coordinator, Childcare Manager (Full Time), 13 Childcare Staff (Full time/ Part Time), 1 administration staff (Part time)"

Service users annually: 120 Families weekly for Childcare service plus 50% clients from direct community or referral systems

Age profile of client group: From "3 months – elderly group – 75 plus"

Gender profile of clients and target group: Mainly Female 80% and Male 20%

Ethnicity of service users: "10% from Traveller backgrounds but not current travelers, 30% foreign nationals"

Type of work service engages in: Individual, group, family, and community work

Outreach strategies: "Use schools, local project, leaflet drop, open days, all H.S.E. services, information services, FAS, advertising etc".

Procedures to facilitate ownership of service by the local community: Representation on "Board of Directors" and "policy integration structure"

Obstacles, if any, to increased partnership between your service and local schools: "None apart from more space to fill demand"

Referrals from local schools: Yes

Availability of services after 8pm, at weekends or during the summer months: Yes

Waiting list: Yes

Procedures governing giving priority to particular clients:

- 1) Referrals
- 2) First in from the local area
- 3) Broader area

Incentives provided for engaging people in adult education services: "Groups, open days, registered members"

The 5 priority needs/problems of your clients:

"Childcare
Parenting
Education
Addiction
Health/ information"

How could family support services be further assisted in helping families of children at risk of early school leaving/nonattendance?

"Re-structure Family Support Brief to have clearer links"

Priority needs for expansion of your service?

"2006 focus on adults"

Rialto Family Centre

Sources of funding: Health Service Executive, Local Drugs Task Force. Core funding from the Health Service Executive

Staff: 1 project Leader. 2 Child and Family Workers

Service users annually: Approx 25 families

Age profile of client group: 0-10 years

Gender profile of clients and target group: "There currently exists a balance between male and female referrals".

Ethnicity of service users: "The service is available to all children and families in the catchment area".

Type of work service engages in: "Individual therapeutic work with children. Parenting support individually or group. Children's loss/bereavement and social skills groups. Liaising with other services in the area around child's needs".

Outreach strategies:

Home visits to service users. Presentation of the work to local agencies, Information leaflets to services.

Procedures to facilitate ownership of service by the local community:

"The Rialto Family Centre was set up in partnership between the local community and the Health Service Executive. Local community member part of the management committee".

Referrals from local schools: Yes

Availability of services after 8pm, at weekends or during the summer months:

Service is open throughout the summer. Closed after 8pm and at the weekends.

Waiting list: Yes

Procedures governing giving priority to particular clients:

"Priority is given to children in the catchment area, and depending on the level of need for the child/family".

Priority needs for expansion of service: "Funding, staffing, premises".

Incentives provided for engaging people in adult education services: "None"

Obstacles, if any, to increased partnership between your service and local schools? "Under staffing" "The service has developed a good dialogue/partnership with a number of local schools in the area. The service aims in the longer term to build stronger links with all the schools in our catchment area".

5 priority needs/problems of clients:

"The service offers individual therapeutic support to children 0-10 based on their identified needs. Parenting support is offered to parents around supporting them with their child. Loss/bereavement support groups to children".

How could family support services be further assisted in helping families of children at risk of early school leaving/non-attendance? "Early referral to allow preventative work to take place"

Fountain Resource Centre

Sources of funding: FAS, Local Drugs Task Force, City of Dublin Youth Services Board. Majority of positions are programme funding based, contract positions. Mainstream funding has been approved for a limited number of positions

Staff: 48, 11 full-time workers. Work with childcare (crèche and playgroup), youth club (CE youth workers), going to have full-time youth workers. 80% placement rate for CE workers

Service users annually: 127 family units, with crèche, playgroups or youthwork. Information services, 500-600 people as an estimate.

Age profile of client group: 3 months, 3 years, 3-5 years, 5 and up to youthclub, all ages

Gender profile of clients and target group: Primarily females, large amount of one parent families

Type of work service engages in: Individual, group, family, and community work

Outreach strategies: Catchment area of St. James's parish, extends westward. A lot might feel intimidated going locally to counselling, by Christmas 2006 hope to have one counsellor for the 10-21 age bracket

Procedures to facilitate ownership of service by the local community:

"All locals at management level, no outsiders".

Referrals from local schools: Yes

Availability of services after 8pm, at weekends or during the summer months:

Will be, not at the moment

Waiting list: Creche yes, a huge demand and for playgroup

Incentives provided for engaging people in adult education services:

Was a return to education programme until funding cut by VEC and FAS, its drop-out rate was very minimal

Priority needs for expansion of your service?

Person giving counselling also has to be monitored, high insurance fee base, slow but hope it will grow bit by bit. Expansion not immediately. FETAC quality assurance, we need a process of evaluation, enough CE staff at present

- Increased levels of cooperation between local family support services can also involve exchange of good practice, for example, the success of Mercy Family Centre in engaging with young men, the strong levels of community development principles underpinning School St. and Fountain Resource Centre.
- It is notable that School Street/Thomas Court Bawn Family Resource Centre, Mercy Family Centre and Rialto Family Centre all responded positively to the question regarding whether their service would be interested in engaging in preventative approaches in partnership with schools to target pupils at risk of early school leaving and in need of family support.
- Fountain Resource Centre stated that they were not in a position to do so as their main focus is on consolidation after a period of expansion of their services.
- Some local services have particularly well developed commitment to implementing community development principles. For example, the management committee of School St. Family Resource Centre is composed almost entirely of local people and they have a commitment to a local labour clause to facilitate employment of local people³⁸. SICCCA's Good Counsel Training Centre was "set up by the community and supported by the community" and is "a community operation designed by the community".

5.2 An early intervention strategy to focus on developing speech and language: Good practice strategies for literacy

Speech and language development needs of local children was a consistent theme emphasised by a range of teachers as a priority across the different schools:

- *"Language Service – there are long waiting lists" for the speech/language needs clinic but an "on site speech/language service would solve this problem",*
- *"A speech therapist to cover a few schools and call in blocks of 4-6 weeks",*
- *"Speech and language therapy",*
- *"For language and language needs there is a visiting teacher for the deaf and intercultural teachers",*
- *"Help for children with speech difficulties in the school would be very desirable",*
- *"Speech and language",*
- *"Speech/language needs: Long waiting lists (6 months priority.). Many do not attend appointment in Lord Edward Street – should come to the school",*
- *"Language development: Due to a lack of verbal interaction and stimulation at pre-school level children often present at school with a very limited vocabulary.",*
- *"Speech and Language and Child Guidance Clinics: These services have long waiting lists and have not the resources to offer each child what they need."*

Central concerns were long waiting lists for speech and language therapists, the need for maximising parental involvement in children's reading, and expansion of literacy/reading programmes:

³⁸ Other key community development features within South West Inner City include the new community centre built in Bridgefoot St., while the Vista Community Development Project (CDP) Work Plan for 2005-06 (February 2005) has as its goal to "maximise local involvement in the decision making processes of the CDP.". The Vista CDP received funding of 4,500 euro from the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs to run a training programme in "Effective participation at local level" "by promoting and supporting local participation in other committees in the area, the CDP will be increasing the pool of local activists who are available to join the management committee of the CDP itself.". There are a high percentage of local residents on the CDP Management Committee (5 out of 7 in February 2005).

- *"Reading Recovery available to more children",*
- *"A lack of reading skills among some parents and no books in the home. There is also a lack of value for education and in extreme cases there is also a drug and alcohol programme",*
- *"The reading club is good for making sure boys read at home",*
- *"Try to be sympathetic to the parents point of view rather than "imposing school solutions""",*
- *"Supports are available if the parents would attend",*
- *"Reluctance to engage with the school and poor literacy levels",*
- *"Constant contact with the HSCL and intermittent visits by the principal "just to see how things are""",*
- *"Working with children whose parents, who for one reason or another do not value education i.e. bad attendance, no interest in progress, homework, and behaviour. Parents who are interested in these things are now often working and therefore unable to offer the support needed",*
- *"There is more support needed for children with learning difficulties and for all children with literacy and numeracy, as these are two areas where parental follow-up is needed which does not always happen".*

One teacher suggested having a literacy programme exclusively for parents. Many teachers mentioned that it is hard for parents to help their children with literacy if their reading and writing skills are poor.

Speech and language development issues, as well as literacy issues, were also raised by two local secondary schools:

- *"There are no speech or language needs available. Literacy and numeracy needs are met with resource and learning support staff",*
- *"Much more literacy and numeracy support is needed, as is specific behavioural/physical support".*

This theme was also echoed by a local service provider:

- *"low literacy levels make school really stressful for you at secondary level, boys especially. There is a need for more professional development on the best ways of teaching literacy, not enough time is spent on it".*
- There is a need to develop parent to parent supports throughout the local area with regard to speech and language interventions for their children
- Parent to parent support for speech and language intervention has been endorsed recently by Barnardos (2006). Previous programmes in Clondalkin (e.g., A.P.P.L.E³⁹, April 1997-July 1999) involved parents in the treatment of their children, and developed a role for four parent co-workers regarding speech and language interventions (McSkeane 1999). Similarly, according to Mary Fanning, Principal Speech & Language therapist in the Ballymun clinic and Mater child guidance centre (Downes 2004), the view of the parent as co-therapist is a central feature of their intervention models.
- In Britain, parental involvement in early intervention programmes for children with developmental difficulties is now in widespread practice (Guralnick 1997). In the words of Glogowska & Campbell (2000):

Speech and language therapists working with children routinely deliver treatments using parents and carers, transferring skills and knowledge to equip them to deliver therapy at home (p.391-2)

³⁹ Area Partnership Programme for Language Enrichment

Citing Ward (1994) and Gibbard (1998), they observe that some speech and language therapy services in Britain are now specifically targeting their resources at teaching parents the language facilitation techniques to implement with their children. Similar developments have also occurred in the US where a movement has occurred from an individualised, isolated service delivery model in the clinic or treatment room to client-based intervention taking place in a wider variety of settings involving not only the clinician and the child but others in the child's environment or social system, i.e., family members and other professionals (Andrews & Andrews 1986).

- In the words of Kelly (1995) in the US context:

The impetus for this change has come, at least in part, from our realization and acceptance that others are impacted by and have impact on the child's development. The desired changes in speech, language and fluency behaviours are best served by expanding our treatment teams beyond the clinician-client partnership (p.101)

The following issues concerning good practice in literacy teaching have been highlighted in recent Irish research and are important points for local schools to consider:

- A literacy programme Phonographix provides promising evidence of gains for pupils (Mullan 2007) and is a programme that local schools could seek to engage in. Phonographix is based on the simple insight that letters are pictures of sounds, has been found not only to be a powerful remedial device, but also a preventative classroom technique. Decoding or word-knowledge is an essential skill that children with reading difficulties need to be taught. By the same token the skill of teaching decoding is one that needs to be learned by teachers. There is a need for dissemination of the Phonographix approach to schools (Mullan 2007).
- The possibility of integrating literacy learning and the arts needs to be further explored by local schools, given that it is a notable feature in designated disadvantaged schools in Cork under the Bridging the Gap programme.
- Quinn (2007) has noted the high numbers of magazines rather than books read by parents in North Inner City Dublin and suggests that this is a resource for reading that teachers can work with, rather than focusing on the absence of books in the home. Quinn (2007) argues that getting children to identify the reading done by members of their extended family as well as getting children to articulate their personally experienced benefits from reading a book can improve motivation to read.

5.3 Strategies for development of community leaders

A distinctive feature of the South West Inner City area is its strong grassroots community based projects. There is a need to develop a medium and long-term strategy throughout the area to ensure that this extremely valuable tradition of local community leadership is continued and developed.

A number of local service providers raised a concern about young community leaders coming through:

- *"Very few people coming up within the community, huge question to be asked regarding community development"*
- *"Need for picking out leaders, accredited training, negotiate with NCI, Liberties College"*
- *"Put citizenship on the school curriculum"*
- *"CE scheme linked to drop in volunteers, a division between pure volunteer and CE workers"*

- *"No dialogue on adult education strategies"⁴⁰*
- *"20-25 years ago people raised their eyebrows if there was no local community awareness week, now people raise their eyebrows if there is one"*
- There is a need for an area wide strategy to develop new leaders in the community. Accredited community leadership training courses need to be accessed, though the site of these courses does not necessarily have to be within the South West Inner City area itself.
- Increased development of students' councils among the local primary and secondary schools can facilitate future community leaders among local youth

Some local secondary schools have already established a student council and commented as follows:

- *"We have an excellent student council who work hard for and with students and teachers and are involved in many projects".*
- *"Important for students to work on real, meaningful tasks and not just pay lip service to the idea"*
- *"Benefits: Gives them a voice and a sense of ownership. Obstacles: Who does the organising? Teachers are overloaded as it is."*
- *"UN Charter – Child's right to be heard"*
- *"Develops self worth and confidence"*
- *"Positive experience in working with adults"*

One primary school in the area has taken the innovative step of establishing a student council. Teachers in this school stated that:

"It encourages children to take responsibility...works very, very well here. Has achieved a lot in its first year...effectiveness in getting the children involved, making them responsible for their own behaviour and giving them a sense of ownership...not obstacles to setting it up and the benefits are huge as it gives a sense of responsibility and achievement".

Student councils at primary and secondary level give effect to Hickey's (1994) recommendation in a previous local report: *"Locally designed courses on citizenship should be introduced into the local schools with emphasis on citizenship at local level, accountability, responsibility and self-motivation"*

Some teachers in other schools had reservations regarding workload associated with a student council: *"However, it would take time to establish and run, and teachers are already over-worked"*.

- It is important to emphasise that establishment of a student council at primary level can be an integral part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum, fostering social skills such as democratic class communication, decision-making, group work, turn taking etc. Viewed as part of the SPHE curriculum, a student council need not add significant amounts to teacher workload.
- It is a concern that some teachers viewed the SPHE curriculum as being of lesser priority than other aspects of

⁴⁰ However, Nicholas of Myra Centre links in with Francis St Education Centre with CE workers

the new revised curriculum. Some school responses to the implementation of SPHE were as follows:

- *"Lack of interest of teachers and pressure to do more formal subjects".*
 - *"Lack of interest of teachers".*
 - *"In the learning support class there is so much time spent on improving basic literacy and numeracy skills that there is not much time to implement the program".*
 - *"As the children see so many things at home, its hard to sometimes get across how bad it is to do certain things etc."*
- A key potential of the establishment of student councils across all local schools is that such councils can contribute to a greater sense of community wide identification of young people with the broader area as part of a long-term strategy of fostering the next generations of local community leaders.
 - O'Connor (2002) notes that identification with the school and wider area may be more difficult in the Liberties/Donore area as students tend to attend a wide variety of primary and secondary schools:

"The large number of schools attended may create some problems in the socialisation of the children in the area. Enabling children to identify with each other, their school and their area and thereby building up their self-esteem and confidence is difficult if as in St. Teresa's Gardens, children attend a large number of schools outside of the area".

- There is scope for development of communication between primary schools in the area through the student councils in order to help develop a level of community wide identification. This could include joint projects across local schools, to be put on public display (as with the Youth Achievement Awards held by SWICN and Gardai at Kevin St.).
- A logical expansion of the student councils across schools will be representation of students on the local School Completion Programme committees. If confidential information is to be discussed regarding young people in local schools this could be placed as the last items on the agenda so that their fellow students would not be present for those parts of the agenda.
- A large number of local projects in the South West Inner City area have been established by leaders in the community and in many ways are strongly associated with those individuals' charismatic authority.

In the words of sociologist Max Weber, charismatic authority is

power legitimized on the basis of a leader's exceptional personal qualities or the demonstration of extraordinary insight and accomplishment, which inspire loyalty and obedience from followers.

As such, it rests almost entirely on the leader; the absence of that leader for any reason can lead to the authority's power dissolving (see also Avramov 2002 on concerns with charismatic authority in the context of institutions helping with homelessness). Weber contrasts such charismatic authority with 'rational-legal' authority.

- There is a clear need for development of a process of increase of rational-legal authority to replace the frequent reliance on charismatic authority among a number of projects in the area. Rational-legal authority requires increased commitment to democratic principles of decision making and structures facilitating such decision-making so that projects become less reliant on specific individuals. With rational-legal authority there can be an increased sense of shared ownership and commitment.

5.4 The need for an area wide local strategy from primary school onwards for access to third level institutions

"Need more teachers from the area"
"More respect, would relate more if teachers from the area"

A medium and long-term strategy of developing future community leaders needs to include a local area-wide strategy for access to third level institutions, as well as being linked to adult and community education strategies.

Some teachers noted that they encourage children to develop particular talents and to think about their futures: *"I speak to them about college and getting a nice job for themselves when they get older"*, there is a need to *"identify gifts/talents and develop and encourage these, present education as a value for now/future"*.

- The bridge to third level starts through developing pathways from primary school.
- There is a strategic need to identify the interests of pupils in fifth/sixth class, as part of long-term strategy to involve local people as teachers, guards, youth workers, childcare workers, psychologists and lawyers. This strategy would involve:
 - information about the jobs themselves through arranging meetings with people working in those areas,
 - visits to the relevant institutions providing these courses, though visits alone are insufficient as the pupils need to meet people whom they can identify with and sense an "assumed connection" (Gilligan 1982) with, such as college students from broadly similar backgrounds to themselves,
 - involvement of parents in these meetings and visits where possible,
 - clarification of the necessary subjects at Leaving Certificate to gain access to the third level courses and examination of the availability of such subjects in the secondary school e.g., whether honours Irish is available as an option at second level as it is necessary for entry to the Colleges of Education. Some of the information relevant for such careers could also be made part of projects in the school as part of what could be called, for example, a "follow your dreams project".
- Even if pupils change their views over time regarding specific careers, the opportunity to reflect on the costs and benefits of varying careers as well as clarification of important features of careers (e.g., opportunity to help others, chance for choice and initiative in the workplace, variety within the work, salary levels, opportunity for travel) could help student motivation in the future.
- A long-term strategy needs to be adopted to facilitate access for young people from the local area to third level – with particular strategic priority to be given to the areas of teaching, law, social policy, social work, youth work, childcare, sociology, psychology. Implementation of such a strategy would facilitate increased participation of local people in leadership roles in their own community.

- This strategy would build on current third level access initiatives for schools in the area which provide reserved places for designated disadvantaged schools outside the Leaving Certificate points requirement (though with a minimum requirement). This strategy would involve fostering of close links with individual departments at third level institutions (e.g., in faculties of education, law, social policy etc). This would be to bring closer ties between local schools and not simply third level institutions but key strategic departments within these institutions.
- It is recommended that a community trust fund be established for students from the local area as part of this medium term strategy for development of young community leaders. In the words of McCue (2000) at the SWICN Environment Group Seminar report: "The real key to Community Gain is the control of the levy funds by the community in the form of a 'Community Chest' to be applied to socially useful projects on the communities' terms by way of the quadrant networks".

5.5 The need to develop "neutral" shared spaces in the local area

With regard to St. Teresa's Gardens, O'Connor (2002) notes that *"The layout of the complex encourages exclusion from all the surrounding area"*. She cites the words of a Dublin Corporation report which refers to *"The segregation of these flats and estates from their surrounding areas"*. She also highlights that children attend a large variety of schools in the local area and there is not an obvious connection between area of residence and the school children attend.

Brudell (2005) also highlights the extremely limited percentage of public open space in the area:

While the southwest inner city does contain two recently constructed community facilities – Donore Avenue Hall and St. Catherine's Sports Centre – it should be noted that the provision of such facilities takes place within a quarter of the city, which contains a miniscule amount (5.6%) of public open space. Such a finding must be of concern to all those concerned with the health and well-being of adults and young people living in one of the most densely populated areas in the state.

This theme of fragmentation across different parts of South West Inner City was noted by a large number of people interviewed:

- *"Fragmentation is a disaster"*
- *"Thomas St. is a dividing road"*
- *"Liberties festival too focused on Meath St. and Thomas St."*
- *"Used to be 7 a sides across the different communities, Donore, Teresa's, Fatima, Oliver Bond, James St., Francis St., in the late 80s and early 90s, held on the football pitch in Basin Lane"*
- *"Very territorial, break down insular views"*
- *"Everything in this area is political with a small 'p'"*
- *"Chronic divisiveness, in local community, small things that happen in the community can be blown up"*
- *"Ghetto mentality, unsafe if go outside, no big public space, lacking in town planning, very little parks, greenery"*
- *"Utterly different Partnership model" from other Local Area Partnerships,*
- *"DICP partnership has 4 sections/quadrants, more balanced if 4 groups dealing with the inner city, make it 2 areas, ideally 1, or at least the same way as the Drugs Taskforce which has 2 areas, north and south, much better if we had our own partnership area, some of the quadrants gain more than other quadrants"*

- *"Cork St., Maryland wouldn't dream of coming up here" to Donore Community Centre, "youth from Cork St. wouldn't dream of crossing the street"*
 - *"The Liberties is a series of villages, for people in the Liberties 100 yards is a great distance, even streets that might be adjacent are a distance away"*
 - *"Communities don't interfere with each other, there was an unwritten agreement about who was running them"*
 - *James's – "two main communities go there and then they start fighting and all..."*
 - *"I wouldn't move outta here"*
 - *"Even in pubs today there would be a crew from that place, that place and this place"*
 - *"It's jealousy...which flats are better and which flats are harder."*
 - *"They come from all different places, the kids here don't go up there"*
- It is evident that there is a real lack of "neutral" public spaces in the area where young people from all parts of the area could feel it belongs to them and is not associated with being the territory of "others" in the area.
 - Other "neutral" private spaces such as a shopping centre is also lacking for adults and young people in the area:
 - *"Never had a shopping centre, potentially a huge shopping centre at St. Teresa's",*
 - *"Most people go shopping in Crumlin, older women around still use Meath St.",*
 - *Basic shops, no swimming pool, no Dunnes or Tescos",*
 - *"Traditional shopping place, Meath St., Francis St. but bad drugs problem".*
 - There is a lack of a shopping centre, cinema, bowling alley, pool hall, etc that could serve as a shared space for young people in the area. While there are many buildings called "centres" in the area there is no centre designed for the area which would be a shared public space. The individual centres usually require prearranged visits, with limited opportunity for "drop in" spaces, especially for youth between 14-18. There are good reasons for this due to the need to have adequate ratios between adult staff and young people in a given centre. Nevertheless, shared spaces in the community, such as a shopping centre, cinema etc., would offer the virtue of allowing young people to visit and spend time in places without significant levels of planning in advance.
 - According to local service providers and young people, the Digital Hub does seem to be one neutral space where young people from throughout the different parts of the area feel comfortable in visiting.
 - According to the words of one service provider: *"from all areas, schools should be more open to afterschool activity, they are one of the neutral spaces in the community that could be fostering rather than festering adults"*.
 - Others interviewed agree that schools are a neutral⁴¹ space in the area, at least potentially, as children from different parts of the area attend them.
 - Nicholas of Myra serves as a community centre and was previously a primary school. It is somewhat ironic that the school building needed to close as a school before it became used as a community centre. Supports need to be put in place to maximise the use of school buildings in the area as shared public spaces belonging to the community⁴². This point amounts to a reiteration of the findings in SICCCA reports as far back as 1982 and 1986 'many of the school buildings are closed from early afternoon and are not normally available for other community purposes' (SICCCA submission to An Taoiseach 1982; Dillon 1986).

⁴¹ "Neutral" in the sense of being accessed by people across more than one part of the South West Inner City area, though obviously not necessarily neutral in relation to barriers concerning some parents with negative experiences of school from their own schooldays. Some service providers highlight that many local parents would be slow to attend adult education classes in local school sites and would prefer community based settings.

⁴² See also the Statutory Committee on Educational Disadvantage (2005): "make the school a focal point of community education" and also the QDOSS (Quality Development of Out of School Services) network document on this (Downes 2006).

Brudell (2005) recommends that:

the Robert Emmet CDP attend to the importance which the issue of 'accessibility' assumes in all discussions about the location and delivery of services and facilities within a low income community. This report directs attention to the importance attached to the issue of service accessibility and location in a research project carried out in a south inner city flat complex in recent years.⁴³ The report in question identified "location" as "the most explicit obstacle" and proposed that "such an obstacle will be overcome by decentralising services into the community."⁴⁴

- There is an obvious need to develop a strategy for use of services across traditional clusters in the South West Inner City area.

Some local people and service providers emphasised the effects of the recent changes to the physical environment due to the current regeneration process taking place in the area:

- *"Physical environment changed beyond all recognition, a lot more infrastructure than 5-6 years ago"*
- *"Huge progress, no comparison, 10 years ago like a different landscape, government has put in money, people materially better off"*
- *"With the refurbishment, people are staying"*
- *"Different type of responsibility now they are a flat owner, they're damaging your property not Dublin City Council's"*
- *"Economic progress, more resources in the area"*
- *"Fear communities will be broken up too much, hope won't be too few social housing left in the locality and they need to be of good quality"*
- A clear opportunity now exists for the regeneration projects in the South West Inner City area to help overcome fragmentation in the area through development of a strategic plan for "neutral" shared spaces for children and young people throughout the area.

5.6 Community wide identification: "Make the school the focal point of community education"

One of the key actions recommended by the Statutory Committee on Educational Disadvantage (2005) is to "make the school a focal point of community education":

The Educational Disadvantage Committee recognises that the problem of educational disadvantage cannot be solved in mainstream school-based educational programmes alone...the committee proposes a new strategy that places the solutions to educational disadvantage within an inclusive lifelong learning framework

⁴³ See Brudell, P & Murphy, K, (1998) *St. Teresa's Gardens Integrated Services Project*, p106, "A criticism levelled at current service provisions by one management figure is that services are being provided without reference to the culture of the south inner city. While this report can profile the panoply of services which are technically available to all residents of the city, the reality is rather more different. In real terms a large number of services are identified to be beyond the knowledge and reach of the residents of [Named Flat Complex]. This view is offered by a professional who describes her own work as providing a point of initial contact between residents and statutory services. Obstacles are both real and perceived; lack of information and knowledge; location; criteria for availing of services; perceptions; fears of particular services and agencies; a history of being "intimidated and browbeaten" by services; fear of travelling outside of the areas; expense involved in travelling outside of the area..."

⁴⁴ *ibid*, p107.

Mernagh (1996) emphasised that:

- *"schools are not always open to people in the community – much needed classroom spaces are not...available for community purposes",*
- *"schools see themselves and are seen as part of a hierarchical structure and not as an integral part of the local community",*
- *"relationship between schools and local neighbourhood organisations is not strong".*

Francis St. Adult Education Programme and Warrenmount Adult Education Programme offer substantial progress in the direction of schools as a resource for community education.

- An important point noted by a local school representative was as follows:
"[regarding] schools being available for community activities I think another point that needs to be made is that Home School Liaison Coordinators only work school hours and never at night, which is when parents are at home. It won't make me popular to say this, but it reduces the effectiveness of the scheme".

This is a key issue for consideration at national level in relation to the Home School Community Liaison Scheme.

Other views expressed by local services include the following:

- *"schools insular, have fixed ways of operating, fixed ways of working"*
 - *"VECs pulling out of secondary schools, e.g., Liberties College, a concern that range of choice has gone"*
 - *"Bull Alley closing down, the TEC in Inchicore only does adult education now, kids from flats went there previously, their options are narrowing in terms of educational provision"*
 - *"a lot of young girls go to Loreto Crumlin from this area"*
 - *"the school is there, the community is here, Home School Teachers are great"*
 - *"schools need to link in with community groups a bit more"*
 - *there is "a learning centre within the Hub"*
 - *"greater need for schools to reach out to the community and to develop contracts regarding shared goals"*
 - *"I experiment with different ways of operating my service, 2-5 better for some kids, very vulnerable children and families with little structure, an interesting pilot project for a school to have a different timetable"*
- Improved crèche facilities are needed to free up parents to take up empowering courses e.g. parenting or literacy etc.

Other teachers made the following points regarding parental involvement in local schools:

- *"We have great backing of parents in the school, from parents on the Board of Management, to a very hard working parents council. They follow on all school work, exercises and recommendations from the school journal.",*
- *"Work pressures/parents own history of education/negative experiences",*
- *"Many parents available for voluntary work in schools are now working. A group of parents are drug dependent and hard to engage with.",*
- *"Parents often have reading problems themselves. They have little confidence in their abilities. Some are difficult to motivate."*

5.7 Sport as a vehicle for community wide identification

"Need a local soccer team"

Morgan (1998) refers to McNeal's (1995) attempt to specify whether certain types of extracurricular activities were more influential than others in preventing dropping out. From a database of over 20,000 high-school students, it was found that participation in activities such as sports and fine arts significantly reduced the risk of dropping out, whereas participation in academic or vocational clubs seemed to have less effect.

In the past there were soccer competitions held in the area that brought young people together more:

"not as many football teams as some years ago". "The Liberties soccer team ran for 20 years, was in the Dublin Inner City games and the community games, ran from 1974-1994". "Other soccer teams in the surrounding area are Lourdes Celtic (Sundrive Park), Iveagh Celtic, St. Teresa's and Aungier Celtic (Whitefriar St.)"

There is a need for this to be re-established across the different parts of the local area. Both Vista Community Development Project and St. Catherine's Sports Centre have been recently involved in organising soccer competitions:

"Since mid-2000 the [Vista] CDP has employed the Sports/Soccer Organiser for the Donore area, a position fully funded by Dublin City Council. The role of the Organiser is to co-ordinate and organise sports activities in St. Teresa's Gardens and the surrounding area. Since his arrival, St. Teresa's Football Club has gone from strength to strength, from one struggling boys' soccer team to a total of eight very successful teams, six boys' and two girls', all assisted by a voluntary committee of team coaches, 120 children involved in the football club though they lost their sports organiser in 2005

Donore Youth and Community Service hold a *"mini world cup, under 10, under 13, under 18, boys and girls"*, a *"junior world cup for kids"*.

St. Catherine's Sports Club has a Sports Development Officer and has started up an indoor soccer competition for 16-21 year olds on Friday nights. While soccer teams may represent different parts of the local area in the competitions, such competitions also represent an opportunity for more mixing among young people across different parts of the area in order to help break down the fragmentation observed above earlier. There is a strong level of communication between the Sports Development Officers in Donore Youth and Community Service and St. Catherine's Sports Club

- In order for local football and sports competitions to help foster an area wide sense of community identification, it is important that teams are created which are not simply based on which flats a young person lives in. Teams need to be created which can allow opportunity for cooperation (and not simply competition) between young people across the different flat complexes and areas within the local area.
- To help break down some of the traditional barriers between different parts of the local area, there is a need for local sports coordinators to further develop a strategy across local community projects to encourage young people to engage in sports as a way of fostering a wider sense of community identification⁴⁵.

⁴⁵ The all weather pitch being built in Oliver Bond flats ("The Oliver Bond Games Court"), the all weather pitch being applied for by "The Links" committee of Mater Dei, James St., primary and secondary, and Fountain Resource Centre, are two potential locations for outdoor football competitions across the South West Inner City areas. While focus groups in the Teresa's Gardens area recognised that St. Catherine's Sports centre is "deadly", they did raise a concern about "building on the football pitch" behind Teresa's Gardens and referred to the need to "stop building apartments everywhere they have land"

5.8 Building on the arts for emotional expression and conflict resolution

All schools referred to engagement to some degree with the arts, though many recognised the scope for expansion of this area. For example, one school principal stated: *“Drama is limited and I have encouraged the English teachers to put on class performances of plays (reading though action)”*.

Local Youth Achievement Awards are promoted by SWICN and Kevin St. Gardai in the areas of music, drama and art, as well as sport and community work.

- It is important to recognise that the Arts can play a key role in emotional development and expression, as well as regarding themes such as conflict resolution (see also Barnardos 2006).
- The close proximity of the Irish Museum for Modern Art, the National College of Art and Design, as well as the location of the Digital Hub within the area, means that the South West Inner City area is in a key position to become an area serving as a centre for the arts and emotional expression involving young people. The location of current artists near Meath St. is another potential resource to be developed in implementing this strategy throughout the area.
- A strategy for developing the arts and emotional expression for young people can be linked strongly with a strategy for community wide identification and for future leaders in the community.
- Drama, as well as other artistic media, can also be part of an integrated approach to developing literacy skills as part of the play or musical⁴⁶. Drama helps both with employing culturally relevant materials to improve literacy and with an emphasis on personal expression to overcome fear of failure often associated with literacy issues.

⁴⁶ See also the Bridging the Gap Project in Cork (Connolly 2007)

5.9 Key conclusions: Family support and community development issues to promote school completion

Cooperation between local family support services: The need for a preventive focus in conjunction with schools

- There was consensus from School Street 'Early Days' Centre, Rialto Family Centre and Mercy Family Centre, all of which offer family support, regarding their interest in being involved in preventive approaches with local schools for children at risk of early school leaving. Fountain Resource Centre stated that they are not in a position to expand into more preventive work with schools. Nevertheless, they already have close links with schools in the James St. area regarding prevention and targeting of children most at risk of early school leaving and in need of further supports.

Priority need for speech and language services

- Speech and language development needs of local children was a consistent theme emphasised by a range of teachers as a priority across the different schools.
- Long waiting lists for Speech and Language Therapists, the need for maximising parental involvement in children's reading, and expansion of literacy/reading programmes are central concerns.

Building on the arts for emotional expression and conflict resolution

- All schools referred to engagement to some degree with the Arts, though many recognised that there is scope for expansion of this area.
- It is important to recognise that the Arts can play a key role in emotional development and expression, as well as regarding themes such as conflict resolution.

The lack of 'neutral' public spaces in the South West Inner City area

- There is a real lack of "neutral" public spaces in the area where young people from all parts of the South West Inner City area could feel belongs to them and is not associated with being the territory of "others" in the area.
- There is a lack of a shopping centre, cinema, bowling alley etc that could serve as a shared space for young people in the area. While there are many buildings called "centres" in the area there is no centre designed for the area which would be a shared public space. The individual centres usually require prearranged visits, with limited opportunity for "drop in" spaces, especially for youth between 14-18. While there are good reasons for this due to the need to have adequate ratios between adult staff and young people in a given centre, shared spaces in the community of Dublin 8, such as a shopping centre, cinema etc would offer the virtue of allowing young people to visit and spend time in places without significant levels of planning in advance.
- The Digital Hub does seem to be one neutral space where young people from throughout the different parts of Dublin 8 feel comfortable in visiting.
- Schools are a neutral space in the area, at least potentially, as children from different parts of the area attend them. Supports need to be put in place to maximise the use of school buildings in the area as shared public spaces belonging to the community.

- A clear opportunity now exists for the regeneration projects in the South West Inner City area to help overcome fragmentation in the area through development of a strategic plan for “neutral” shared spaces for children and young people throughout the area.

Gaps for the 14-18 age group

- A large variety of responses from members of the community across a range of places in the Donore/Liberties/James St. area pinpointed the age group from 14-18 years as being particularly lacking in facilities and being particularly in need.
- The range of expansion of local facilities as part of the regeneration process in the area is impressive and offers much hope for the future in the area. They serve as a highly valuable resource for the different communities in the South West Inner City area.
- Nevertheless the concern remains that the most marginalised young people including those most at risk of early school leaving and substance abuse may not necessarily be the ones accessing some of these services. For example, many buildings hosting a range of services (for example, Donore Youth and Community Centre, St. Catherine’s Sports Centre) need young people to book or arrange times in advance before they can use the services due to reasons of insurance, space and the need to have an adequate ratio of workers to young people.
- As those most at risk of early school leaving may lead particularly unstructured lives, there is a need for services that provide not simply “programmed space” and “programmed” time. This need for more “drop-in” spaces is even greater due to the distinct lack of public space available for people in the South West Inner City area. This is a public planning issue, namely, to increase the range of public space available in the area, for example, for a shopping centre, bowling alley, and cinema – in other words space that local youth can access without significant planning in advance.

Community development: Moving from charismatic leadership to rational-legal leadership in local projects

- A large number of local projects in the South West Inner City area have been established by leaders in the community and in many ways are strongly associated with those individuals’ charismatic authority.
- There is a clear need for development of a process of an increase of rational-legal authority to replace the frequent reliance on charismatic authority among a number of projects in the area. Rational-legal authority requires increased commitment to democratic principles of decision making and structures facilitating such decision-making so that projects become less reliant on specific individuals.

Section 6

Key Recommendations

It is recommended that an area wide strategic vision for integrating young people's health and education needs be implemented throughout the quite fragmented parts of South West Inner City. This strategic vision needs to include a range of strategies that focus on:

- a) intervention for health issues relevant to school completion,
- b) further developing relationships in school to support school completion,
- c) preventing children, young people and their families falling through the net of local support services,
- d) a local strategy for the arts and emotional expression,
- e) a community development strategy for children and young people in the catchment area to promote school completion,
- f) promotion of children and young people's mental health needs through a community based psychological support service.

Strategy A: Recommendations to intervene for health issues relevant to school completion: 1-5

1. Addressing hunger in school

- The vast differences between schools regarding hunger levels of their pupils needs to be addressed in a systematic fashion by the School Completion Programmes across all the primary schools in the area.

2. Lack of sleep, lowered academic performance and anxiety

- An intervention is needed in at least the 4 local primary schools where there are more than 15% of pupils regularly receiving a duration of sleep that is less than 9 hours per night and which is, according to international research, going to weaken their academic performance in school. Many pupils cannot sleep for stress-related reasons. This intervention needs to be conducted by the proposed community based psychological support service, together with the School Completion Programmes.

3. Substance abuse

- Drug prevention strategies need to work from the realities of where the young people are at and also need to be extended to work on role play situations and on highlighting availability of emotional support services in order to help young people resist the role of "being a gilly" i.e., holding drugs for older youths.

4. Sex and relationship education

- There is a need for increased availability of a more holistic approach to sex education in local schools including:
 - empowering students with strategies to mediate social and peer pressure,
 - addressing the emotional and intimacy aspects of sex and sexual relationships alongside the physical/biological elements,
 - developing students' critical thinking and decision-making skills.
- School-based sex and relationship education cannot fully meet the needs of those at risk of early school leaving as these young people will have left school before such education starts. Locating sex and relationship education programmes exclusively in school settings means that those most at risk will not be reached. It is thus recommended that programmes on sex and relationship education should be designed and delivered in out of school, community-based settings.
- It is recommended that a strategy which facilitates 'Peer Advice Structures' in the area of Sex and Relationship Education should be developed and would further empower the young person both as peer-advisor and learner in this area.

5. Suicide risk

- There is an urgent need for increased provision of emotional support services locally which target young people.
- The need for clearer information locally about emotional support services for young people is evident.
- The proposed community based psychological support service can play a key role in suicide prevention for young people in the local area

Strategy B: Recommendations to further develop relationships in school to support school completion: 1-3

1. Processes to support positive relationships in school

- It is clear that schools need mechanisms:
 - to provide support for isolated teachers who need more support in changing from a highly authoritarian teaching style and in adopting a strengths based focus in their interaction with the children and young people,
 - to provide an outlet for pupil and student perceptions of being treated unfairly, both for minor complaints and more serious ones.
- The issue of perceptions of being treated fairly or otherwise in school needs to move beyond an individualised focus on the individual teacher or student to a systems' level analysis. It is a systems' level problem and improvement of this problem requires a systems' level type of intervention, for example, at a national level with regard to teachers of working on their conflict resolution strategies and awareness of educational disadvantage at pre-service and in-service levels.
- The focus needs to move beyond attributing 'blame' to teachers or students and to move to examining the systems' level problem. There is a need to support improvements at a systemic level that will support an increase in skills to facilitate better communication and cooperation between teachers and students at secondary level in particular. The proposed community based psychological support service for the area can play a key role in developing conflict resolution skills for system level change at secondary level in particular.
- It is recommended that a key worker be available in secondary schools who students "*could say anything to*". If such a key worker were available in schools, this would be a very valuable mediating voice with regard to perceptions of injustice within the school system and for improved communication between teachers and students, where needed.
- As those most alienated from the school system and most at risk of early school leaving may be least likely to talk about personal problems in a school-based setting, there is a clear need for community based emotional support services for children and young people so that such services would not be exclusively school based.
- The high levels of reluctance of students to talk to any member of the school staff about personal problems, in part due to issues of trust and confidentiality, highlights the need for every school to develop a confidentiality protocol which is also communicated to students.

2. Beyond suspensions

- Pupils' suggestion that suspension is being used as a strategy in one primary school in the area merits further investigation by the Education Welfare Officer and the local School Completion Programme Committee, in order to develop other strategies.
- There is a need for a supervised time out area for children and young people with disruptive behaviour
- Any such supervised time out area requires support from counsellors, whether this is school or community based.
- A School Completion Programme report (2005) cites as an example of good practice from the Dublin North Region a social and personal development programme that includes a garden for time out for disruptive students during school time, as well as being available during lunchtime and afterschool. There is a need to support schools financially to develop gardens where plants and vegetables could grow within fenced off areas, where there would be an opportunity for at risk pupils to develop practical skills and a sense of responsibility and control within the school environment

3. Prevention of bullying

- It is evident that some teachers are having significant success in almost eliminating bullying. These successful classroom bullying prevention strategies need to be further disseminated throughout all classes and schools.
- It is recommended that a staff member coordinate such a dissemination strategy in each school and act as a support/mentor for other teachers in the school. While this staff member would liaise with the school Principal in implementing the whole school anti-bullying policy, (s)he would also serve as an intermediary between the class teacher and the principal. This is already taking place in some schools locally.

Strategy C: Recommendations to prevent the risk of children, young people and their families falling through the net: 1-8

- 1. -The need for a more transparent and integrated referral system for afterschool projects**
 - There is a need for increased coordination between afterschool projects in the area. This coordination is not simply to ensure pupils and students in need of afterschool support do not fall through the gaps. It is also to ensure that:
 - a more strategic approach occurs so that for example, pupils and students in need of therapeutic support in addition to afterschool support can be referred to the appropriate service,
 - local good practice can be disseminated across afterschool projects.
- 2. The need for continuity within afterschool projects from primary to secondary**
 - In order to bring continuity to afterschool projects and to project staff, there is a need to provide medium term strategic planning and for afterschool projects to be supported beyond simply year-to-year funding. Afterschool projects need at least a 3-year funding cycle. This extended time for strategic planning and budgets would allow afterschool projects to operate between primary and secondary school children i.e., more students could stay in the same afterschool project after transferring from primary to secondary.
- 3. The need for review of the composition of the local school completion programmes**
 - Both on an equity basis and on a priority level for those schools experiencing highest levels of socio-economic disadvantage, it is clear that the current SCP structures and funding for Synge St. SCP and Dublin 8 SCP need reform for 2007-2008.
- 4. The need for increased integration of family support services**
 - There is a need for an integrated outreach strategy so that family support services target agreed areas to ensure that no area is excluded and that young people and their families are reached across the South West Inner City area.
 - There is a need to agree common protocols across family support agencies regarding exchange of information within the limit of confidentiality⁴⁷. This requires overcoming competition for resources. If budgets operated over 3 year planning cycles rather than being based on year-to-year funding, this competition would be at least partially alleviated. Traditional conceptions of territoriality and assumptions of separation within different parts of the area also need to be overcome.
 - For integration of family support services, specific target groups (who may not be being reached by current services) need to be identified, such as foreign nationals.
- 5. Beyond programmed time: The need for 'Drop-in Centres' and public space for 14-18 year olds**
 - As those most at risk of early school leaving may lead particularly unstructured lives, there is a need for services that provide not simply "programmed space" and "programmed" time. This need for more "drop-in" spaces is even greater due to the distinct lack of public space available for people in the local area. This is a public planning issue, namely, to increase the range of public space available in the area, for example, for a shopping centre, bowling alley, and cinema – in other words space that local youth can access without significant planning in advance.

⁴⁷ O'Connor's (2002) research in St. Teresa's Gardens has previously highlighted the need for guidelines for sharing information within limits of a code of confidentiality, to locate services in the heart of the community, and for a men's support group

6. Dissemination of existing good practice throughout local schools

- There is a range of innovative strategies existing in local schools that deserves full implementation across all schools in the area with the help of the local School Completion Programme Committees. Many of these strategies, such as a student council at primary, a multisensory room for personal expression, and a green school project, can serve as models of good practice for schools nationally.
- The School Completion Programme Committees are obvious vehicles for dissemination of this variety of good practice in a systematic way throughout all the local schools.
- Schools need to ensure that a wide range of pupils and students can access the valuable facilities and innovative projects.

7. Structured transition programmes

- Structured transition programmes need to encompass a targeted approach to profile those students most at risk of early school leaving to ensure that they do not fall through the gaps.
- Those students with special needs in local primary schools need to be targeted for supports in relation to transition; this can include mentoring support from older students at post primary. Such support can start already in 6th class at primary level.

8. Need for increased numbers of Education Welfare Officers and NEPS psychologists in the Area

- There is one Education Welfare Officer in the area serving 19 schools in total. This contrasts with the previous situation where there were 2 school attendance officers for the same area. This is clearly an inadequate situation which requires increased numbers of Education Welfare Officers for the area.
- There are 2 NEPS psychologists serving the Dublin 8 area, together with the Canal Communities area. There is an evident need for more NEPS psychologists in the local area.

Strategy D: A Strategy for the Arts and Emotional Expression

- **It is recommended that an integrated community arts' strategy and community arts' centre be established for the South West Inner City area. This centre would collaborate with local schools for the arts, contributing to engagement with the arts as processes of emotional expression and conflict resolution.**
- Many schools referred to engagement to some degree with the arts. It is important to recognise that the Arts can play a key role in emotional development and expression, as well as regarding themes such as conflict resolution.
- The close proximity of the Irish Museum for Modern Art, the National College of Art and Design, as well as the location of the Digital Hub within the area, means that the South West Inner City area is in a key position to become an area serving as a centre for the arts and emotional expression involving young people . The location of current artists near Meath St. is another potential resource to be developed in implementing this strategy throughout the area.
- A strategy for developing the arts and emotional expression for young people can be linked strongly with a strategy for community wide identification and for future leaders in the community.
- Drama, as well as other artistic media, can also be part of an integrated approach to developing literacy skills as part of the play/musical etc. Drama helps both with employing culturally relevant materials to improve literacy and with an emphasis on personal expression to overcome fear of failure often associated with literacy issues
- The possibility of integrating literacy learning and the arts needs to be further explored by local schools, given that it is a notable feature in designated disadvantaged schools in Cork under the Bridging the Gap programme.

Strategy E: Recommendations for a community development strategy for children and young people in the catchment area to promote school completion: 1-7

1. An early intervention strategy to focus on developing speech and language

- There is a need to develop parent to parent supports throughout the local area with regard to speech and language interventions for their children.
- There is a need for dissemination of the Phonographix approach to schools on a pilot project basis.
- The possibility of integrating literacy learning and the arts needs to be further explored by local schools, in conjunction with local services.

2. Strategies for development of community leaders

- A distinctive feature of the South West Inner City area is its strong grassroots community based projects. There is a need to develop a medium and long-term strategy throughout the area to ensure that this extremely valuable tradition of local community leadership is continued and developed.
- There is a need for an area wide strategy to develop new leaders in the community. Accredited community leadership training courses need to be accessed, though the site of these courses does not necessarily have to be within the local area itself.
- Increased development of students' councils among the local primary and secondary schools can facilitate future community leaders among local youth.
- There is a need for establishment of student councils at primary level to be viewed as an integral part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum, fostering social skills such as democratic class communication, decision-making, group work, turn taking etc. Viewed as part of the SPHE curriculum, a student council need not add significant amounts to teacher workload.
- A key potential of the establishment of student councils across all local schools is that such councils can contribute to a greater sense of community wide identification of young people with the broader area as part of a long-term strategy of fostering the next generations of local community leaders.
- There is scope for development of communication *between* primary schools in the area through the student councils in order to help develop a level of community wide identification. This could include joint projects across local schools, to be put on public display.

3. The need for an area wide local strategy from primary school onwards for access to third level institutions

- A medium and long-term strategy of developing future community leaders needs to include a local area-wide strategy for access to third level institutions, as well as being linked to adult and community education strategies.
- There is a strategic need to identify the interests of pupils in fifth/sixth class, as part of a long-term strategy to involve local people such as teachers, guards, youth workers, childcare workers, psychologists and lawyers.
- A long-term strategy needs to be adopted to facilitate access for young people from the local area to third level – with particular strategic priority to be given to the areas of teaching, law, social policy, social work, youth work, childcare, sociology and psychology. Implementation of such a strategy would facilitate increased participation of local people in leadership roles in their own community.

- This strategy would build on current third level access initiatives for schools in the area which provide reserved places for designated disadvantaged schools outside the Leaving Certificate points requirement (though with a minimum requirement). This strategy would involve fostering of close links with individual departments at third level institutions (e.g., in faculties of education, law, social policy etc). This would be to bring closer ties between local schools and not simply third level institutions but key strategic departments within these institutions.
 - It is recommended that a community trust fund be established for students from the local area as part of this medium term strategy for development of young community leaders.
- 4. The need to develop the “neutral” shared spaces in the South Inner City (‘Old Dublin’) area**
- A clear opportunity now exists for the local regeneration projects to help overcome fragmentation in the area through development of a strategic plan for “neutral” shared spaces for children and young people throughout the area.
- 5. Make the school the focal point of community education**
- Home School Liaison Coordinators only work school hours and not at night, which is when parents are at home. It reduces the effectiveness of the scheme.
 - This is a key issue for consideration at national level in relation to the Home School Community Liaison Scheme.
 - Improved crèche facilities are needed to free up parents to take up empowering courses e.g. parenting or literacy etc.
- 6. Sport as a vehicle for community wide identification**
- In the past there were soccer competitions held in the area that brought young people together more. There is a need for this to be re-established across the different parts of the local area.
 - In order for local football and sports competitions to help foster an area wide sense of community identification, it is important that teams are created which are not simply based on which flats a young person lives in. Teams need to be created which can allow opportunity for cooperation (and not simply competition) between young people across the different flat complexes and areas within the local area.
 - To help break down some of the traditional barriers between different parts of the local area, there is a need for local sports coordinators to be assisted to further develop a strategy across local community projects to encourage young people to engage in sports as a way of fostering a wider sense of community identification.

Strategy F: Promotion of children and young people's mental health needs

It is recommended that a community based psychological support service, providing early intervention, mental health promotion, system level interventions in the school and family support, be established in the local area.

- There was consensus among the local family support services from School Street 'Early Days' Centre, Rialto Family Centre and Mercy Family Centre, regarding their interest in being involved in preventative approaches with local schools for children at risk of early school leaving.
- Building on this consensus, a range of themes have emerged which are relevant to the development of a community based psychological support service for South West Inner City with a special focus on prevention and early intervention. It must be emphasised that most of these issues are strongly interconnected and that there is a need for joined up thinking between them.
- These issues are as follows:
 - evidence that some of the pupils and students that are most at risk of early school leaving are falling through the gaps and not accessing existing afterschool services,
 - the high levels of pupils experiencing problematic sleep patterns potentially affecting their academic performance and linked in some responses to levels of anxiety affecting their sleep,
 - a notable minority of pupils and students who stated that they have no one to talk with about their problems,
 - a large majority of children and young people who stated that they would not trust an adult with their emotional problems in a school-based setting,
 - the limited availability of drug prevention programmes in local schools,
 - the need for increased availability of sex and relationship education programmes in local schools,
 - an explicit link between suicide of some young people and owing money for drugs,
 - the need for clearer information locally about emotional support services for young people,
 - accounts from some teachers of lesser priority being given to the SPHE curriculum,
 - the scope for increased adoption of the arts as a vehicle for emotional expression and conflict resolution strategies,
 - the need for increased coordination regarding referrals of children and young people at risk of early school leaving, whether between schools and afterschool projects, across afterschool projects, between local family support services, between afterschool projects and family support services,
 - the need for system level work with schools to develop teachers' conflict resolution strategies and to improve school social climate in some schools in particular,
 - the need for system level work with parents, for example, regarding early intervention strategies for their children's literacy and speech and language development,
 - the need for alternative strategies to suspensions,
 - the need for early referrals,
 - the need for early intervention regarding speech and language development, and therapeutic emotional intervention.

It is recommended that a community based Psychological Support Service for South West Inner City be developed to focus on early intervention, mental health promotion, systemic level interventions in the school and family support, including parent peer support.

- Collaboration for such a service needs to include School Street/Thomas Court Bawn Family Resource Centre, Mercy Family Centre, Rialto Family Centre, the Local Drugs Task Force, the School Completion Programmes, school personnel, Dublin Inner City Partnership and SICCCA – as well as building on good practice in discussion with other local services working with the most marginalized children and youth, including other services providing family support services such as Community Response and the Fountain Resource Centre.
- There is a need to establish an implementation committee for this prevention, early intervention and mental health promotion psychological service. This would be with a view to engaging in a process of debate as to whether this service would be a new one under the direction of the different family support services, or an expansion of one of these local services. Developing the implementation plan for this needs' led, community based service needs to build on existing practices developed by services in the area. This would also include the possibility of remodeling some practices of services so that they can become part of this proposed service.

This strategic recommendation proposes a psychological support service for the area that is community based; it is a service that adopts a focus on:

- early intervention,
- family support,
- mental health promotion.

It involves:

- school site based work with students at risk of suspension and/or with emotional and behavioural problems,
- systemic work at the level of the school with regard to developing teachers' conflict resolution strategies at secondary school in particular (see also Barnardos 2006 on the need for teachers to develop conflict resolution strategies),
- other systems level interventions with regard to developing parent to parent mentoring, for example, with regard to facilitating parenting strategies for at risk youth and for speech and language development of younger children.

This model is to face up to a range of the identified key issues (above) in a holistic way so that an integrated and systemic level intervention occurs. The interventions at a systemic level with regard to teachers and parents is part of a preventative strategy with regard to problems, so that the service adopts a model of both intervention (as treatment) and prevention, as well as mental health promotion.

It needs to be recognised that:

- intensive therapeutic work with a child/young person,
- family therapy level interventions,

are usually to take place outside the school site and in a community based setting. The experience of the Suaimhneas project in South Inner City Dublin observed the difficulty with therapeutic intervention onsite in the school, namely, that pupils could be upset going back into class after raising issues with the counsellor

(Morgan & 2005). This difficulty could be overcome if more of the school site based work took place after school hours. However, issues of privacy and also that many students alienated from the school system may not wish to open up in a school-based setting also need to be recognised (Downes 2004). In the psychological service proposed for Ballyfermot (Downes 2004), it was recommended that students be given a choice as to whether they feel more comfortable dealing with issues in a school based or community based context with regard to counselling.

A US nationwide survey of school-based service models and school-linked models involving 90 programmes suggested that the two models are not that different from each other (Shaw et al 1996). In the words of Reeder et al (1997):

In general, the survey results suggest that the physical location of school health services is of minor importance with regard to the range of services provided and the types of health professionals affiliated with the program...Physical proximity of the clinic to educators does not guarantee that the more traditional educational functions of the school will be integrated with the enhanced health services offered by the clinic

For some, the school could be a pathway for access to psychological help but not its site for help. For others the site of the help could be in the school itself. Some local schools have access to counsellors onsite. However, they are not part of a team nor part of a coordinated strategy across schools to reach those most in need of provision of emotional support. *The debate between school-based or school-linked community services needs to move beyond simply either/or models to a both/and model accommodating the individual needs of the student.*

Themes to be addressed by the psychological service and local schools

- The need for a more individually tailored approach to learning is recognised by the formal school system through development of Individual Education Plans. The suggestion of a key worker that students “could say anything to” that could be available in schools would be a very valuable mediating voice with regard to perceptions of injustice within the school system and improved communication between teachers and students, where needed.
- Any supervised time out area requires support from counsellors, whether this is school or community based, or both.
- Cognitive-Behavioural strategies for working with children with ADHD are well recognised strategies and there is a need for support for teachers in implementing these strategies. Group work to develop self-esteem in children and young people is very suited to children with ADHD and does not need to single them out.
- The high levels of reluctance of students to talk to any member of the school staff about personal problems, in part due to issues of trust and confidentiality, highlights the need for:
 - every school to develop a confidentiality protocol which is also communicated to students,
 - systemic level interventions to provide supports for schools in further developing a supportive school climate.
- The good practice example in one local school of having in effect peer mediation, as well as a range of people for children to talk to, is a helpful model that could be adopted by other schools.

- Some students at risk of suspension at secondary school and displaying disruptive behaviour may *not* need counselling support and therapeutic intervention. The focus of the service with these students will be on facilitating improved communication between the student and the classroom teacher, together with a systemic level focus on developing the teacher's conflict resolution skills. The service will play a role as mediator between student and teacher. Some students may need more support with for example, literacy issues or other academic needs which may be contributing to their inattention and disruptive behaviour.
- The concern noted earlier that a 'time-out' room for students displaying disruptive behaviour will become an easy option for students to leave the classroom to be with their friends can be allayed by the involvement of students leaving the classroom in an individual behavioural contract with specific targets – and with a range of consequences, including sanctions - and in a mediation process with the psychology team. If a behavioural contract approach is not sufficient to improve the situation as there are a number of deep underlying issues in the student's life, it may be at this stage that referral to the community based team for more intensive counselling support, with the consent of the student, is desirable⁴⁹. This is one option among a menu of options after members of the psychological service team have examined the individual needs of the student. Another option could be for example, involvement of the at risk student in expression of conflict resolution skills through drama, if this resource was available from afterschool projects.
- Genuine collaboration needs to recognise Tett et al's (2001) distinction between simply 'contracting out' interventions in contrast to collaboration as to 'develop, manage, deliver, fund and evaluate' activities. It is extremely important that the services and schools share a common understanding of goals in relation to the proposed psychological service, and that the service is not simply 'contracted out' by the schools to deal with the students displaying disruptive behaviour.
- A real strength in the area is the close involvement already of so many local projects with local parents, for example, the existing family support centres, local residence committees, as well as Warrenmount and Francis St. Adult Education Centres – and these close links can serve as a key resource in further developing a systemic level focus on working with parents.
- Power et al's (2006) review of mental health care across a range of contexts in the U.S noted, "there is no dispute that schools are a major player in service provision for children with mental health problems". The proposed psychological support service can work together with schools to develop mechanisms:
 - to provide support to the isolated teachers who need more help in changing from a highly authoritarian teaching style and in adopting a strengths based focus in their interaction with the children and young people,
 - to provide an outlet for pupil and student perceptions of being treated unfairly, both for minor complaints and more serious ones.
- The focus of the intervention of the psychological service in the school would not be to attribute 'blame' to teachers or students but rather to move to examining the systems level problem and to bring improvements at a systemic level that will support an increase in skills to facilitate better communication and cooperation between teachers and students at secondary level in particular.

⁴⁹ It must also be noted by the psychological service that just because a prior situation exists of emotional stresses/issues in the student's life, and a subsequent situation exists of disruptive behaviour in class, that this does not necessarily mean that the prior situation issues 'caused' the later disruptive behaviours. The relation may in some students with emotionally difficult past experiences be simply correlation rather than cause.

A Key Worker for youth at risk of early school leaving: The need to develop alternative strategies to suspension

There is evidence from the accounts of pupils and students that there are isolated teachers who contribute to an extremely negative experience of school for them. Teacher-student relations were the dominant theme emerging from accounts of early school leavers. Across a range of focus groups there was consensus among the groups praising almost all teachers in their schools and consensus regarding a small minority of individual teachers being overly authoritarian. It is clear that schools need mechanisms:

- to provide support to these isolated teachers who need more support in changing from a highly authoritarian teaching style,
- to provide an outlet for pupil and student perceptions of being treated unfairly, both for minor complaints and more serious ones.

The benefits for mental health in having even only one person to confide in is well recognised. (Levitt 1991; Antonucci 1990). An important aspect of drug prevention programmes in the National Drugs Strategy 2001-2008 is to 'seek to strengthen resilience amongst young people in or out of school by fostering positive stable relationships with family or key community figures especially in the early years...' (p.98). A keyworker for young people most at risk of early school leaving can help:

- develop alternative strategies to suspension of the young person, in conjunction with the school,
- play a key role in the implementation of the Individual Education Plan and career strategy for the young person,
- discuss student perceptions of being treated unfairly in school, act as a mediator between student and the school, including challenging the young person's perceptions of being treated unfairly, where necessary,
- provide support to the student if (s)he falls behind the class or misses school and then feels it is too difficult to catch up,
- facilitate the most at risk young people in accessing the range of local services and facilities,
- provide a protective role to prevent young people getting involved in the role of 'being a gilly', i.e., storing drugs for dealers,
- play a key role in minimising substance abuse by the young person,
- offer social, emotional and instrumental approach to the young person.

It is envisaged that such key workers become part of the proposed multidisciplinary team as part of the proposed community based Psychological Service focusing on prevention and early intervention.

The key workers, in collaboration with the schools, need to set clear targets:

- to eliminate suspension from school as a strategy at primary school level,
- to phase out suspension from school as a strategy at secondary school level.

This attempt at developing an individual plan for the student at second level:

- seeks to remedy the situation (noted by Forkan 2005) that some students do not realise the consequences of early school leaving,

- can incorporate issues of the effect of part-time work on the students' study habits and school performance within part of this career plan.

The key worker can also have a potential role in informal discussions with pupils at later primary level of their future career plans and dreams. Even if pupils change their views over time regarding specific careers, the opportunity to reflect on the costs and benefits of varying careers as well as clarification of important features of careers e.g., opportunity to help others, chance for choice and initiative in the workplace, variety within the work, salary levels, contribution to the local community and opportunity for travel, could help student motivation in the future and resonates with the State's Lifelong Learning Strategy (2000).

- Guiding principles for the proposed community based Psychological Service include the following:
 - the debate between school-based versus school-linked or community based models is viewed not as either/or but both/and depending on the specific contextual needs of the child and parent. A complementary community and school based team is provided,
 - the Head of the project team is community based,
 - the school and community based team are to work in a relation of collaboration with the schools. Nevertheless issues of confidentiality would require that access to files on individual children and their families be kept separate from the schools,⁵⁰
 - the school is viewed as a mental health system,
 - a complementary rather than duplicative role with NEPS,
 - developing resilience and strength within the community and local student body in order to improve the quality of life of children in the area,
 - emotional and social support interventions are developmental and sustained rather than being once-off events,
 - the community based psychological service can provide a referral role for at risk pupils and students to afterschool projects,
 - facilitating parent to parent support regarding development of speech and language skills for at risk children can build on the strengths of onsite adult education courses already in the local area.

⁵⁰ Unless consent is provided by the parents to authorise specific individuals from the school to have access to the files

- Overall aims of the recommended model include:
 - targeting at risk children in early years of primary school for speech and language support,
 - targeting identified at risk children/youth for emotional and social support,
 - providing broader emotional and social support for other children/youth at a group level,
 - targeting specific families for therapeutic and practical support,
 - facilitating increased coordination between the network of local services and schools,

A key underlying goal of the project is to upgrade the skills of the community and those working in the community, whether at the levels of :

- a) parental intervention skills for speech and language or for behavioural problems,
- b) teachers' (including learning support/resource/Home-School Liaison teachers') skills in applying and facilitating interventions for speech and language, and for students displaying disruptive behaviour,
- c) interventions with teachers for developing conflict resolution skills,⁵¹
- d) peer support among the students and developing local youth as mentors.

⁵¹ In the U.S, assessment of teachers' satisfaction with psychological consultation regarding teachers' interaction with children with emotional/behavioural problems has tended to focus on emotional support and overlook the need of teachers for practical problem-solving suggestions (Athanasίου et al 2002)

- Outline of the recommended model

A COMMUNITY BASED TEAM AND A SCHOOL BASED TEAM –
TWO SUB-SECTIONS OF AN OVERALL JOINT TEAM

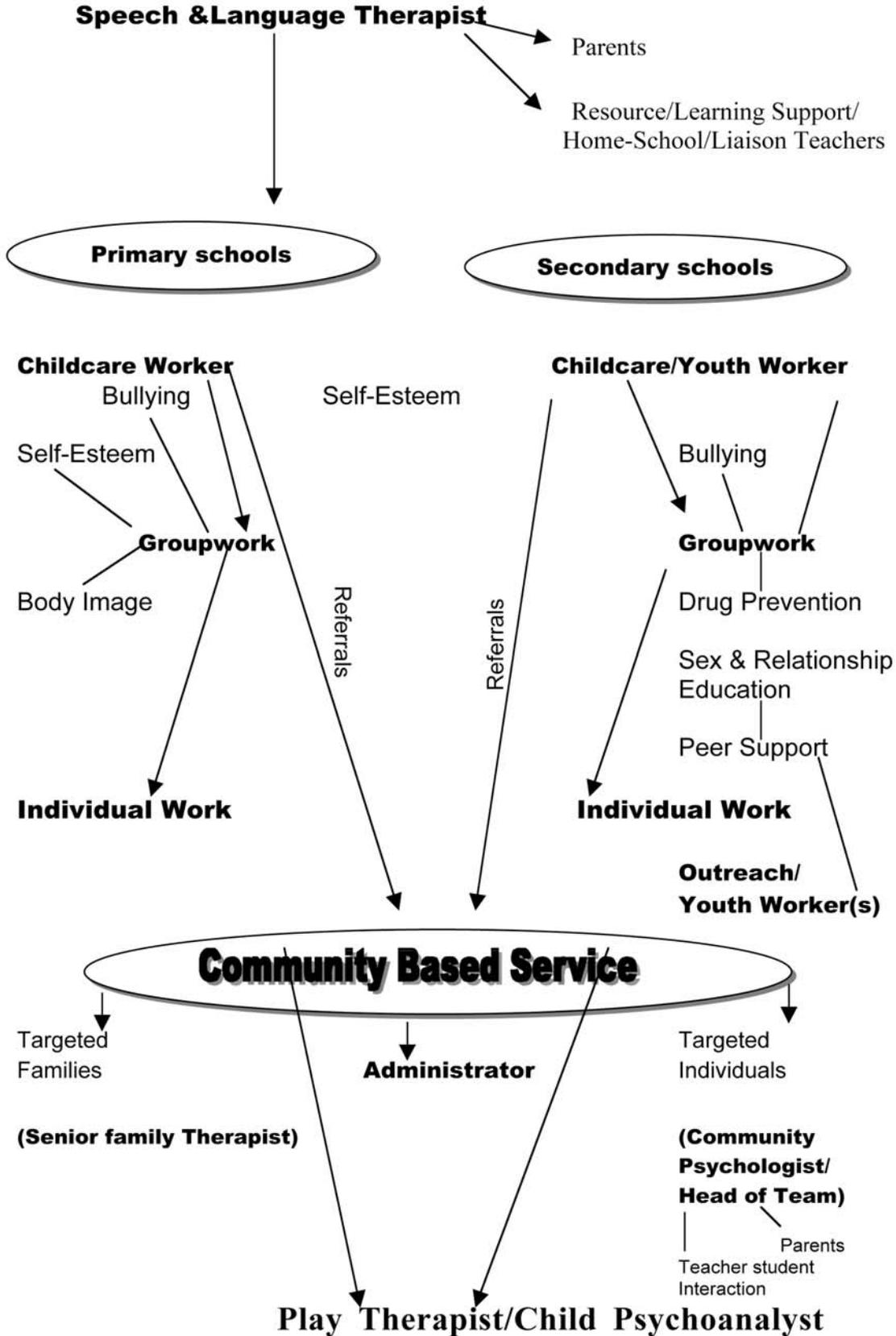
School-based team

- A) Childcare workers (qualification in social care) onsite in primary schools
- B) Childcare workers (preferably with experience of working with adolescents) or youth workers onsite in secondary schools
- C) On-site speech and language therapists

Community based team

- D) Family Therapists (ideally systemically trained)
- E) Community Psychologists (with either counselling or clinical psychology background, with experience at working at community level)
- F) Outreach youth workers
- G) Play/Music/Art therapists/child psychotherapist
- H) An administrator

**THE PROPOSED MODEL OF A COMMUNITY BASED PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICE:
AN INTEGRATED SERVICE WITH THE COMMUNITY AT ITS HEART**



Key points regarding the model

- The group work from the childcare/youth workers would serve as a basis for referral of more problematic issues (with parental consent) to the community based team for therapeutic intervention.
- Similarly, children/youth with persistent conduct problems would be referred by teachers/principals (with parental consent). However the child/youth could choose whether to have individual counselling on-site or outside the school setting. This element of choice for the child/youth is a vital aspect of the project rather than being an incidental one. The community psychologist (with background in either counselling or clinical psychology) would be engaged in this 1 to 1 counselling whether community or school based.
- The flexibility of the complementary model between community and school based interventions takes into account the need to accommodate pupil/student choice, particularly for those most alienated from the school system.
- A similar flexibility exists regarding therapeutic support for the child being predominantly an individual focused intervention or a family level intervention. The appropriateness of the level of intervention for a particular case would be a judgement made by the team.
- The team's work with parents will obviously need to recognise that many parents are working so that the hours of availability of services would need to include weekends as much as weekdays, evenings as much as mornings (see also Dale 1996 on the contradiction between changing work patterns and the assumption that parents, particularly mothers, are available to meet professionals during working hours).
- As the team plans intervention at both primary and secondary level, this offers the opportunity of long term support, and support with transition from primary to secondary school for identified at-risk students.
- The team will need to engage in a process with school representatives to develop an agreed template regarding the necessary continuum of supports for young people attending school according to levels of need. This process will involve an agreed methodology or mechanism for assessing types, intensity, range of supports and different categories of need. Some young people may need only short or longer term minimal supports. The team will develop agreed evaluation/monitoring templates and strategies against which actions and interventions can be judged.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

5th and 6th Class Primary School Student Questionnaire

- a) The answers you give are private; no one knows who wrote them. They do not go to your school, your family, your friends or the police.
- b) There is no right or wrong answer. We are not trying to judge you.

The LifeStart Research Project

Commissioned by: South Inner City Community Development Association (S.I.C.C.D.A) with the support of the South Inner City Drugs Task Force

Age: _____

Male / Female (please circle)

- 1) Where are you from ?
- 2) Do you like living where you are living ? Why/Why not ?
- 3) If you had a younger sister or brother, what would be the 3 most important pieces of advice/help you would give to her/him?
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
- 4) Do you have anyone you can talk to if you feel sad?
- 5) Do you trust and talk well with your parents or brothers/sisters? Why/Why Not ?
- 6) What do you like about yourself most ?
- 7) Do you think anybody understands you? Who ?
- 8) In what areas of your life do you feel you are in control, that you have the power?
- 9) Do you usually feel happy or unhappy ? Why ?
- 10) Do you like reading books ? Why/Why not ?

- 11) Do you think you want to stay on at school until the Leaving Certificate ? Why/Why not ?
- 12) If you had the power, what would you change in your school ?
- 13) What would you really like to learn in school that you don't already learn ?
- 14) When you do your best, how is this noticed at school ?
- 15) If you had a problem with your schoolwork would you tell your teacher(s) about it ? Why/Why not ?
- 16) Are you treated fairly by teachers in school ? Why/Why not ?
- 17) If you had the possibility not to go to school, would you? Why?
- 18) If you have ever been absent from school without telling your family, what were your reasons for this ?
- 19) What would make you want to go to school more often ?
- 20) Are there times when you would stay at home from school with the permission of your family ? If yes, for what reasons ?
- 21) What activities do you do in the school building after school is over ?
- 22) What activities would you like to do after school if it was possible ?
- 23) Do you take part in a student council ? Why/Why not ?
- 24) How many in your class, if any, have been bullied ?
- 25) Is there any school rule which you feel is the most unfair ? Why ?
- 26) Does anyone help you with your homework ? Who ?
- 27) Do you go to an afterschool club ? If yes, where and how helpful is it ?
- 28) What are the biggest problems people your age have ? How can they be helped ?
- 29) Is there a room in your school where anyone can go if they just want some peace and quiet, some time to think? Do you think it would be a good idea if there was a room like this ?

- 30) Would you talk to an adult working in the school about your problems ? Why/Why not ?
- 31) Do you wish or think you will have the same friends in 5 years?
- 32) What do you usually do after 8 O'clock in the evenings ?
- 33) Describe how you spend your free time most weekends...
- 34) What time do you usually go to sleep at on a weekday ?
- 35) Until what time would you usually watch television during the week ?
- 36) How often if ever do you have problems sleeping ? Why do you think you have problems sleeping ?
- 37) How often do you feel too hungry to do your work in school ?
Please circle one of these answers.
NEVER
RARELY
SOMETIMES
OFTEN
VERY OFTEN
EVERY DAY
- 38) If you do feel too hungry to do your work in school, why are you so hungry ?
- 39) What do you like and dislike most about your body/appearance ?
I like.....
I don't like....
- 40) What do you think are the biggest difficulties facing a teacher in your school?

Thank you for your help.

Appendix 2

1st Year Secondary School Student Questionnaire

- c) The answers you give are private; no one knows who wrote them. They do not go to your school, your family, your friends or the police.
- d) There is no right or wrong answer. We are not trying to judge you.

The LifeStart Research Project

Commissioned by: South Inner City Community Development Association (S.I.C.C.D.A) with the support of the South Inner City Drugs Task Force

Age: _____

Male / Female (please circle)

- 1) Where are you from ?
- 2) Do you like living where you are living ? Why/Why not ?
- 3) If you had a younger sister or brother, what would be the 3 most important pieces of advice/help you would give to her/him?
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
- 4) Do you have anyone you can talk to if you feel sad?
- 5) Do you trust and talk well with your parents or brothers/sisters? Why/Why Not?
- 6) What do you like about yourself most?
- 7) Do you think anybody understands you? Who?
- 8) In what areas of your life do you feel you are in control, that you have the power?
- 9) Do you usually feel happy or unhappy? Why?
- 10) Do you like reading books? Why/Why not ?
- 11) Do you think you want to stay on at school until the Leaving Certificate? Why/Why not?

- 12) If you had the power, what would you change in your school?
- 13) What would you really like to learn in school that you don't already learn?
- 14) How many in your class have been bullied?
- 15) If you had a problem with your schoolwork would you tell your teacher(s) about it ? Why/Why not ?
- 16) Are you treated fairly by teachers in school? Why/Why not?
- 17) If you did not have to go to school would you still go ? Why/Why not ?
- 18) If you have ever been absent from school without telling your family, what were your reasons for this?
- 19) What would make you want to go to school more often?
- 20) Are there times when you would stay at home from school with the permission of your family ? If yes, for what reasons ?
- 21) What activities do you do in the school building after school is over ?
- 22) What activities would you like to do after school if it was possible ?
- 23) When you do your best, how is this noticed at school ?
- 24) What level of Maths are you taking ?

Please circle one: FOUNDATION ORDINARY HIGHER
- 25) What level of English are you taking ?

Please circle one: FOUNDATION ORDINARY HIGHER
- 26) How much advice on what subjects to take/choose have you received so far from Career Guidance ? Please explain
- 27) Is there any school rule which you feel is the most unfair ? Why ?

- 28) How do you find the schoolwork so far ? Would you say that it is:
Please circle one:
- VERY EASY EASY MANAGING HARD VERY HARD
- 29) In your view are you coping with the schoolwork: Please circle one.
- BETTER THAN PRIMARY
AS WELL AS PRIMARY
A LITTLE LESS WELL THAN PRIMARY
A LOT LESS WELL THAN PRIMARY
NEVER LIKED SCHOOL WORK
- 30) Does anyone help you with your homework ? Who ?
- 31) Do you go to an afterschool club ? If yes, where and how helpful is it ?
- 32) What would you say that you find the most difficult about the work in secondary school so far ?
- 33) What needs to be done to keep more students in school in your area ?
- 34) Do you take part in a student council ? Why/Why not ?
- 35) What are the biggest problems people your age have ? How can they be helped ?
- 36) Is there a room in your school where anyone can go if they just want some peace and quiet, some time to think?
Do you think it would be a good idea if there was a room like this ?
- 37) Would you talk to an adult working in the school about your problems ? Why/Why not ?
- 38) Do you think most people are pretending to be happy even if they are not ?
- 39) What are the advantages and disadvantages of blocking your feelings?
- 40) Do you think that true love exists?
- 41) Do you think that guys and girls have the same attitude to sex?
- 42) Are there many differences in the ways guys and girls think, feel and act? What is the worst thing that can happen in a relationship?

- 43) What are the 3 most important things young people need to learn about love and sex ?
- 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
- 44) Do you wish or think you will have the same friends in 5 years?
- 45) What do you usually do after 8 O'clock in the evenings ?
- 46) Describe how you spend your free time most weekends...
- 47) What time do you usually go to sleep at on a weekday ?
- 48) Until what time would you usually watch television during the week ?
- 49) How often if ever do you have problems sleeping ? Why do you think you have problems sleeping ?
- 50) Have you ever had a hangover in school ? If so, how often in the past two years ?
- 51) How often do you feel too hungry to do your work in school ?
Please circle one of these answers.
- NEVER
RARELY
SOMETIMES
OFTEN
VERY OFTEN
EVERY DAY
- 52) If you do feel too hungry to do your work in school, why are you so hungry?

Thank you for your help.

Appendix 3

2nd Year Secondary School Student Questionnaire

- e) The answers you give are private; no one knows who wrote them. They do not go to your school, your family, your friends or the police.
- f) There is no right or wrong answer. We are not trying to judge you.

The LifeStart Research Project

Commissioned by: South Inner City Community Development Association (S.I.C.C.D.A) with the support of the South Inner City Drugs Task Force

Age: _____

Male / Female (please circle)

- 1) Where are you from ?
- 2) Do you like living where you are living ? Why/Why not ?
- 3) If you had a younger sister or brother, what would be the 3 most important pieces of advice/help you would give to her/him?
- 4) Do you have anyone you can talk to if you feel sad ?
- 5) Do you trust and talk well with your parents or brothers/sisters? Why/Why Not ?
- 6) What do you like about yourself most ?
- 7) Do you think anybody understands you? Who ?
- 8) In what areas of your life do you feel you are in control, that you have the power?
- 9) Do you usually feel happy or unhappy ? Why ?
- 10) Do you like reading books ? Why/Why not ?
- 11) Do you think you want to stay on at school until the Leaving Certificate ? Why/Why not ?

- 12) If you had the power, what would you change in your school ?
- 13) What would you really like to learn in school that you don't already learn ?
- 14) How many in your class have been bullied ?
- 15) If you had a problem with your schoolwork would you tell your teacher(s) about it ? Why/Why not ?
- 16) Are you treated fairly by teachers in school ? Why/Why not ?
- 17) If you did not have to go to school would you still go ? Why/Why not ?
- 18) If you have ever been absent from school without telling your family, what were your reasons for this ?
- 19) What would make you want to go to school more often ?
- 20) Are there times when you would stay at home from school with the permission of your family ? If yes, for what reasons ?
- 21) What activities do you do in the school building after school is over ?
- 22) What activities would you like to do after school if it was possible ?
- 23) When you do your best, how is this noticed at school ?
- 24) What level of Maths are you taking ?
Please circle one: FOUNDATION ORDINARY HIGHER
- 25) What level of English are you taking ?
Please circle one: FOUNDATION ORDINARY HIGHER
- 26) How much advice on what subjects to take/choose have you received so far from Career Guidance ? Please explain
- 27) Is there any school rule which you feel is the most unfair ? Why ?
- 28) How do you find the schoolwork so far ? Would you say that it is:
Please circle one:
VERY EASY EASY MANAGING HARD VERY HARD

- 29) In your view are you coping with the schoolwork: Please circle one.
- BETTER THAN PRIMARY
 - AS WELL AS PRIMARY
 - A LITTLE LESS WELL THAN PRIMARY
 - A LOT LESS WELL THAN PRIMARY
 - NEVER LIKED SCHOOL WORK
- 30) Does anyone help you with your homework? Who?
- 31) Do you go to an afterschool club? If yes, where and how helpful is it ?
- 32) What would you say that you find the most difficult about the work in secondary school so far ?
- 33) What needs to be done to keep more students in school in your area ?
- 34) Do you take part in a student council ? Why/Why not ?
- 35) What are the biggest problems people your age have ? How can they be helped ?
- 36) Is there a room in your school where anyone can go if they just want some peace and quiet, some time to think?
Do you think it would be a good idea if there was a room like this ?
- 37) Would you talk to an adult working in the school about your problems ? Why/Why not ?
- 38) Do you think most people are pretending to be happy even if they are not ?
- 39) What are the advantages and disadvantages of blocking your feelings?
- 40) Do you think that true love exists?
- 41) Do you think that guys and girls have the same attitude to sex?
- 42) Are there many differences in the ways guys and girls think, feel and act? What is the worst thing that can happen in a relationship?
- 43) What are the 3 most important things young people need to learn about love and sex?
- 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.

- 44) Do you wish or think you will have the same friends in 5 years?
- 45) What do you usually do after 8 O'clock in the evenings ?
- 46) Describe how you spend your free time most weekends...
- 47) What time do you usually go to sleep at on a weekday ?
- 48) Until what time would you usually watch television during the week ?
- 49) How often if ever do you have problems sleeping ? Why do you think you have problems sleeping ?
- 50) Have you ever had a hangover in school ? If so, how often in the past two years ?
- 51) How often do you feel too hungry to do your work in school ?
Please circle one of these answers.
NEVER
RARELY
SOMETIMES
OFTEN
VERY OFTEN
EVERY DAY
- 52) If you do feel too hungry to do your work in school, why are you so hungry ?
- 53) Have you ever been made aware in school of the danger of taking drugs, including alcohol ?
- 54) Think back over the LAST 30 DAYS. How many times (if any) have you had five or more drinks in a row? (A 'drink' is a glass of wine (ca 15 cl), a bottle or can of beer (ca50 cl), a shot glass of spirits (ca 5 cl) or a mixed drink.)
Please circle one:
NONE
1
2
3-5
6-9
10 OR MORE TIMES

55) Have you ever used illegal drugs ?

If NO then stop at this question. If YES, then continue to the next page.

56) Have you ever used any of the following drugs ?

Circle one or more for each line

a)	Tranquillisers or sedatives (without a doctor's prescription)	No	Yes During Last 30 Days	Yes During Last Year	Yes In Lifetime
b)	Amphetamines	No	Yes During Last 30 Days	Yes During Last Year	Yes In Lifetime
c)	LSD or some other hallucinogens	No	Yes During Last 30 Days	Yes During Last Year	Yes In Lifetime
d)	Crack	No	Yes During Last 30 Days	Yes During Last Year	Yes In Lifetime
e)	Cocaine	No	Yes During Last 30 Days	Yes During Last Year	Yes In Lifetime
f)	Relevin	No	Yes During Last 30 Days	Yes During Last Year	Yes In Lifetime
g)	Heroin	No	Yes During Last 30 Days	Yes During Last Year	Yes In Lifetime
h)	Ecstasy	No	Yes During Last 30 Days	Yes During Last Year	Yes In Lifetime
i)	'Magic Mushrooms'	No	Yes During Last 30 Days	Yes During Last Year	Yes In Lifetime
j)	GHB	No	Yes During Last 30 Days	Yes During Last Year	Yes In Lifetime
k)	Drugs by injection with a needle (like heroin, cocaine amphetamine)	No	Yes During Last 30 Days	Yes During Last Year	Yes In Lifetime

l)	Alcohol together with pills	No	Yes During Last 30 Days	Yes During Last Year	Yes In Lifetime
m)	Alcohol and marijuana/hashish at the same time	No	Yes During Last 30 Days	Yes During Last Year	Yes In Lifetime
n)	Anabolic steroids	No	Yes During Last 30 Days	Yes During Last Year	Yes In Lifetime

57) What was the FIRST drug (if any) that you have ever tried ?

Please circle below

- 1) I have never used any of the substances listed below
- 2) Tranquilisers or sedatives without a doctor's prescription
- 3) Marijuana or hashish
- 4) SD
- 5) Amphetamines
- 6) Crack
- 7) Cocaine
- 8) Relevin
- 9) Heroin
- 10) Ecstasy
- 11) 'Magic Mushrooms'
- 12) GHB
- 13) I don't know what it was

58) How many of your friends would you estimate...

Circle one for each line

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| a) smoke cigarettes | NONE, A FEW, SOME, MOST, ALL |
| b) drink alcoholic beverages
(beer, wine, spirits) | NONE, A FEW, SOME, MOST, ALL |
| c) get drunk at least once a week | NONE, A FEW, SOME, MOST, ALL |
| d) smoke marijuana (pot, grass)
or hashish | NONE, A FEW, SOME, MOST, ALL |
| e) take LSD or some other
hallucinogen | NONE, A FEW, SOME, MOST, ALL |
| f) take amphetamines (uppers,
pep pills, bennies, speed) | NONE, A FEW, SOME, MOST, ALL |

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| g) take tranquillisers or sedatives
(without a doctor's prescription) | NONE, A FEW, SOME, MOST, ALL |
| h) take cocaine or crack | NONE, A FEW, SOME, MOST, ALL |
| i) take ecstasy | NONE, A FEW, SOME, MOST, ALL |
| j) take heroin | NONE, A FEW, SOME, MOST, ALL |
| k) take inhalants (glue etc) | NONE, A FEW, SOME, MOST, ALL |
| l) take 'magic mushrooms' | NONE, A FEW, SOME, MOST, ALL |
| m) take GHB | NONE, A FEW, SOME, MOST, ALL |
| n) take alcohol together with pills | NONE, A FEW, SOME, MOST, ALL |
| o) take anabolic steroids | NONE, A FEW, SOME, MOST, ALL |

Thank you for your help.

Appendix 4.

Home School Community Liaison Primary Teacher Questionnaire

The LifeStart Research Project

Commissioned by: South Inner City Community Development Association (S.I.C.C.D.A) with the support of the South Inner City Drugs Task Force

*We thank you for your time and assistance in completing the following questionnaire.
Please feel free to include additional information on a separate page where necessary.*

NAME OF SCHOOL:

- 1) Please rank (in descending order) the 5 most important services you would like to see established in your particular school
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.

- 2) Are you involved in the facilitation/organization of any extracurricular activities for children/young people available in your particular school? If yes, please outline.

- 3) What supports are available to your school for children in each of the following areas. Please indicate what supports you feel are needed in these areas:
 - Speech/Language Needs:
 - Intellectual/Learning Needs:
 - Literacy/Numeracy Needs:
 - Psychological/Emotional Needs:
 - Behavioural/Physical Needs:

- 4) In your role as HSCL teacher do you have any links, formal or informal, with services in the community? If yes, please indicate which ones and how you would rate the strength/quality of these links.
 - Child Services:
 - Youth Services:
 - Family Support Services:
 - Other: Please outline.

- 5) What is your view on the advantages and obstacles to school based counselling services in your school ?
- 6) Is bullying a significant problem in your school ? Why/Why not ?
- 7) What are the obstacles to and/or supports needed for the establishment of a parental programme to improve the reading levels of at risk children ?
- 8) How adequate do you find the service provided by the National Educational Psychology Service (NEPS) ? Please explain
- 9) How adequate do you find the service provided by the Education Welfare Board (EWB) ? Please explain
- 10) What are the benefits and obstacles regarding establishment of a Student's Council in later primary classes ?
- 11) Do you have any peer mentoring/support programmes operating in your school? If yes, please give details
- 12) What do you view as the main obstacles, if any, to implementation of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) programme in your school ?
- 13) What strategies do you employ to engage with more marginalized parents ?
- 14) What strategies do you employ to engage with children at risk of early school leaving generally ?
- 15) What strategies do you employ with regard to the acclimatisation of foreign national or refugee pupils' in their transition to your class ?
- 16) Are there any examples of good practice that you engage in for working with pupils who fall behind the rest of the class - models that could potentially be transferable to other schools ?
- 17) What are the biggest difficulties facing a teacher in your school ?
- 18) In what ways, if any, do you perceive the role of the HSCL teacher to have changed in recent years.
- 19) Please indicate what supports you feel are needed in relation to HSCL in your school/community.

Thank you for your help

Appendix 5

Home School Community Liaison Secondary Teacher Questionnaire

The LifeStart Research Project

Commissioned by: South Inner City Community Development Association (S.I.C.C.D.A) with the support of the South Inner City Drugs Task Force

*We thank you for your time and assistance in completing the following questionnaire.
Please feel free to include additional information on a separate page where necessary.*

NAME OF SCHOOL:

- 1) Please rank (in descending order) the 5 most important services you would like to see established in your particular school
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.

- 2) Are you involved in the facilitation/organization of any extracurricular activities for children/young people available in your particular school? If yes, please outline.

- 3) What supports are available to your school for students in each of the following areas. Please indicate what supports you feel are needed in these areas:
 - Speech/Language Needs:
 - Psychological/Emotional Needs:
 - Literacy/Numeracy Needs:
 - Intellectual/Learning Needs:
 - Behavioural/Physical Needs:
 - Other: Please outline:

- 4) In your role as HSCL teacher do you have any links, formal or informal, with services in the community? If yes, please indicate which ones and how you would rate the strength/quality of these links.
 - Child Services:
 - Youth Services:
 - Family Support Services:
 - Other: Please outline.

- 5) What is your view on the advantages and obstacles to school-based counselling services in your school ?
- 6) Is bullying a significant problem in your school ? Why/Why not ?
- 7) In your opinion, what are the advantages and/or disadvantages, if any, to the streaming of students at second-level?
- 8) What, in your opinion, are the obstacles to and/or opportunities regarding the involvement of parents in their child's secondary education??
- 9) How adequate do you find the service provided by the National Educational Psychology Service (NEPS)? Please explain
- 10) How adequate do you find the service provided by the Education Welfare Board (EWB)? Please explain
- 11) What are the benefits and obstacles regarding establishment of a Student's Council at secondary level?
- 12) Do you have any peer mentoring/support programmes operating in your school? If yes, please give details
- 13) What strategies do you employ to engage with more marginalized parents ?
- 14) What strategies do you employ to engage with children at risk of early school leaving generally?
- 15) What strategies do you employ with regard to the acclimatisation of foreign national or refugee pupils' in their transition to your class?
- 16) Are there any examples of good practice that you engage in for working with pupils who fall behind the rest of the class - models that could potentially be transferable to other schools?
- 17) What are the biggest difficulties facing a teacher in your school ?
- 18) In what ways, if any, do you perceive the role of the HSCL teacher to have changed in recent years.
- 19) Please indicate what supports you feel are needed in relation to HSCL in your school/community.

Thank you for your help.

Appendix 6

Transition / 5th Year Secondary School Student Questionnaire

- g) The answers you give are private; no one knows who wrote them. They do not go to your school, your family, your friends or the police.
- h) There is no right or wrong answer. We are not trying to judge you.

The LifeStart Research Project

Commissioned by: South Inner City Community Development Association (S.I.C.C.D.A) with the support of the South Inner City Drugs Task Force

Age: _____

Male / Female (please circle)

- 1) Where are you from?
- 2) Do you like living where you are living ? Why/Why not ?
- 3) If you had a younger sister or brother, what would be the 3 most important pieces of advice/help you would give to her/him?
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
- 4) Do you have anyone you can talk to if you feel sad ?
- 5) Do you trust and talk well with your parents or brothers/sisters? Why/Why Not ?
- 6) What do you like about yourself most ?
- 7) Do you think anybody understands you? Who ?
- 8) In what areas of your life do you feel you are in control, that you have the power?
- 9) Do you usually feel happy or unhappy? Why?

- 10) Do you like reading books? Why/Why not?
- 11) Do you think you want to stay on at school until the Leaving Certificate? Why/Why not?
- 12) If you had the power, what would you change in your school?
- 13) What would you really like to learn in school that you don't already learn ?
- 14) How many in your class have been bullied ?
- 15) If you had a problem with your schoolwork would you tell your teacher(s) about it ? Why/Why not ?
- 16) Are you treated fairly by teachers in school ? Why/Why not ?
- 17) If you did not have to go to school would you still go ? Why/Why not ?
- 18) If you have ever been absent from school without telling your family, what were your reasons for this?
- 19) What would make you want to go to school more often?
- 20) What activities do you do in the school building after school is over?
- 21) What activities would you like to do after school if it was possible ?
- 22) When you do your best, how is this noticed at school?
- 23) What level of Maths are you taking?
Please circle one: FOUNDATION ORDINARY HIGHER
- 24) What level of English are you taking?
Please circle one: FOUNDATION ORDINARY HIGHER
- 25) How much advice on what subjects to take/choose have you received so far from Career Guidance? Please explain
- 26) Is there any school rule which you feel is the most unfair? Why?
- 27) How do you find the schoolwork so far? Would you say that it is:
Please circle one:
VERY EASY EASY MANAGING HARD VERY HARD

- 28) What would you say that you find the most difficult about the work in school?
- 29) What is your opinion about transition year?
- 30) What needs to be done to keep more students in school in your area?
- 31) Do you think you want to go to college after you finish secondary school? Why/Why not?
- 32) What are the biggest problems people your age have? How can they be helped?
- 32) Is there a room in your school where anyone can go if they just want some peace and quiet, some time to think?
Do you think it would be a good idea if there was a room like this?
- 33) Would you talk to an adult working in the school about your problems? Why/Why not?
- 34) Do you think most people are pretending to be happy even if they are not?
- 35) What are the advantages and disadvantages of blocking your feelings?
- 36) Do you think that true love exists?
- 37) Do you think that guys and girls have the same attitude to sex?
- 38) Are there many differences in the ways guys and girls think, feel and act? What is the worst thing that can happen in a relationship?
- 39) What are the 3 most important things young people need to learn about love and sex ?
- 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
- 40) Do you wish or think you will have the same friends in 5 years?
- 41) What do you usually do after 8 O'clock in the evenings?
- 42) Describe how you spend your free time most weekends...
- 43) What time do you usually go to sleep at on a weekday?

- 44) Until what time would you usually watch television during the week?
- 45) How often if ever do you have problems sleeping? Why do you think you have problems sleeping?
- 46) Have you ever had a hangover in school? If so, how often in the past two years?
- 47) Since coming back to school how many hours in each week have you worked in a job during school days (Monday to Friday). Please circle your answer.
- None
- Not every week, just an occasional time
- About two hours or less each week
- About two to four hours each week
- Six to eight hours each week
- More than twelve hours each week
- 48) And how many hours have you worked since your holidays during the weekends (Saturdays and Sundays). Please circle your answer.
- None
- Not every week, just an occasional time
- About two hours or less each week
- About two to four hours each week
- Six to eight hours each week
- More than twelve hours each week
- 49) With regard to the money that you earn, please say how much of this money you spend on each of the following (tick for each one)
- | | | |
|--------------------------------|---------|--------------------------------|
| Helping my family | 1 2 3 4 | 1 = little or none of my money |
| Clothes/shoes that I like | 1 2 3 4 | 2 = Some of my money |
| Entertainment and going out | 1 2 3 4 | 3 = Quite a lot of my money |
| CDs and music | 1 2 3 4 | 4 = A lot of my money |
| Cigarettes | 1 2 3 4 | |
| Alcohol | 1 2 3 4 | |
| Saving for holidays | 1 2 3 4 | |
| Other things (please say what) | | |
- 50) Have you ever been made aware in school of the danger of taking drugs, including alcohol?

51) Think back over the LAST 30 DAYS. How many times (if any) have you had five or more drinks in a row ? (A 'drink' is a glass of wine (ca 15 cl), a bottle or can of beer (ca50 cl), a shot glass of spirits (ca 5 cl) or a mixed drink.)

NONE

1

2

3-5

6-9

10 OR MORE TIMES

52) Have you ever used illegal drugs ?

If NO then stop at this question. If YES, then continue to the next page.

53) Have you ever used any of the following drugs ?

Circle one or more for each line

a) Tranquillisers or sedatives (without a doctor's prescription)	No	Yes During Last 30 Days	Yes During Last Year	Yes In Lifetime
b) Amphetamines	No	Yes During Last 30 Days	Yes During Last Year	Yes In Lifetime
c) LSD or some other hallucinogens	No	Yes During Last 30 Days	Yes During Last Year	Yes In Lifetime
d) Crack	No	Yes During Last 30 Days	Yes During Last Year	Yes In Lifetime
e) Cocaine	No	Yes During Last 30 Days	Yes During Last Year	Yes In Lifetime
f) Relewin	No	Yes During Last 30 Days	Yes During Last Year	Yes In Lifetime
g) Heroin	No	Yes During Last 30 Days	Yes During Last Year	Yes In Lifetime
h) Ecstasy	No	Yes During Last 30 Days	Yes During Last Year	Yes In Lifetime
i) 'Magic Mushrooms'	No	Yes During Last 30 Days	Yes During Last Year	Yes In Lifetime
j) GHB	No	Yes During Last 30 Days	Yes During Last Year	Yes In Lifetime

k) Drugs by injection with a needle (like heroin, cocaine amphetamine)	No Last 30 Days	Yes During Last Year	Yes During Lifetime	Yes In Lifetime
l) Alcohol together with pills	No	Yes During Last 30 Days	Yes During Last Year	Yes In Lifetime
m) Alcohol and marijuana/hashish at the same time	No	Yes During Last 30 Days	Yes During Last Year	Yes In Lifetime
n) Anabolic steroids	No	Yes During Last 30 Days	Yes During Last Year	Yes In Lifetime

54) What was the FIRST drug (if any) that you have ever tried ?

Please circle below

- 1) I have never used any of the substances listed below
- 2) Tranquillisers or sedatives without a doctor's prescription
- 3) Marijuana or hashish
- 4) SD
- 5) Amphetamines
- 6) Crack
- 7) Cocaine
- 8) Relevin
- 9) Heroin
- 10) Ecstasy
- 11) 'Magic Mushrooms'
- 12) GHB
- 13) I don't know what it was

55) How many of your friends would you estimate...

Circle one for each line

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| a) smoke cigarettes | NONE, A FEW, SOME, MOST, ALL |
| b) drink alcoholic beverages
(beer, wine, spirits) | NONE, A FEW, SOME, MOST, ALL |
| c) get drunk at least once a week | NONE, A FEW, SOME, MOST, ALL |
| d) smoke marijuana (pot, grass)
or hashish | NONE, A FEW, SOME, MOST, ALL |
| e) take LSD or some other
hallucinogen | NONE, A FEW, SOME, MOST, ALL |
| f) take amphetamines (uppers,
pep pills, bennies, speed) | NONE, A FEW, SOME, MOST, ALL |
| g) take tranquillisers or sedatives
(without a doctor's prescription) | NONE, A FEW, SOME, MOST, ALL |

h)	take cocaine or crack	NONE, A FEW, SOME, MOST, ALL
i)	take ecstasy	NONE, A FEW, SOME, MOST, ALL
j)	take heroin	NONE, A FEW, SOME, MOST, ALL
k)	take inhalants (glue etc)	NONE, A FEW, SOME, MOST, ALL
l)	take 'magic mushrooms'	NONE, A FEW, SOME, MOST, ALL
m)	take GHB	NONE, A FEW, SOME, MOST, ALL
n)	take alcohol together with pills	NONE, A FEW, SOME, MOST, ALL
o)	take anabolic steroids	NONE, A FEW, SOME, MOST, ALL

Thank you for your help.

Appendix 7

Primary School Principal Questionnaire

The LifeStart Research Project

Commissioned by: South Inner City Community Development Association (S.I.C.C.D.A) with the support of the South Inner City Drugs Task Force

*We thank you for your time and assistance in completing the following questionnaire.
Please feel free to include additional information on a separate page where necessary.*

NAME OF SCHOOL: _____

NUMBER OF STUDENTS: _____

NUMBER OF TEACHERS: _____

- 1) Please rank (in descending order) the 5 most important services you would like to see established in your particular school
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.

- 2) What extracurricular activities are available in your school ?

- 3) Does your school have any links, formal or informal, with services in the community? If yes, please indicate which ones and how you would rate the strength/quality of these links.

Child Services:

Youth Services:

Family Support Services:

Other: Please outline.

- 4) What supports are available to your school for children in each of the following areas. Please indicate what supports you feel are needed in these areas:
Speech/Language Needs:
Intellectual/Learning Needs:
Literacy/Numeracy Needs:
Psychological/Emotional Needs:
Behavioural/Physical Needs:
- 5) How many children in your school are seen by a speech therapist each month? How many do you think need to be seen?
- 6) What is your view on the advantages and obstacles to school based counselling services in your school?
- 7) What supports are available to your school for children with Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder?
- 8) What is your whole school strategy, if any, on bullying? Is bullying a significant problem in your school? Why/Why not?
- 9) What are the obstacles to and/or supports needed for the establishment of a parental programme to improve the reading levels of at-risk children?
- 10) How adequate do you find the service provided by the National Educational Psychology Service (NEPS)? Please explain
- 11) How adequate do you find the service provided by the Education Welfare Board (EWB)? Please explain
- 12) What are the benefits and obstacles regarding establishment of a Student's Council in primary school?
- 13) Do you have any peer mentoring/support programmes? If yes, please give details.
- 14) What do you view as the main obstacles, if any, to implementation of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) programme in your school?
- 15) What strategies do you employ to engage with more marginalized parents?
- 16) What strategies do you employ to engage with children at risk of early school leaving generally?
- 17) What obstacles exist, if any, to increased partnership between your school and local services in the community for children/young people?

- 18) Is your school in the School Completion Programme? If yes, how effective is this programme in your opinion?
- 19) What obstacles exist to making use of the school premises after school hours?
- 20) What strategies do you employ with regard to pupils' transition to secondary school?
- 21) What strategies do you employ with regard to the acclimatisation of foreign national or refugee pupils' in their transition to your school?
- 22) Are there any examples of engagement with the arts in your school that could serve as good practice that is potentially transferable to other schools?
- 23) Are there any examples of your school as an 'organic school' with plants or animals that could serve as good practice that is potentially transferable to other schools?
- 24) Does your school have a school policy on confidentiality? If yes, please give details
- 25) Do you think some of the nutrition needs of pupils in your school could be met in a better way if more resources were available to your school? How?
- 26) Is your school integrated with local Adult Education approaches in any way? If yes, please give details
- 27) Are there any examples of good practice in your school for working with pupils who fall behind the rest of the class - models that could potentially be transferable to other schools?
- 28) What are the biggest difficulties facing a teacher in your school?

Thank you for your help.

Appendix 8

Primary School Teacher Questionnaire

The LifeStart Research Project

Commissioned by: South Inner City Community Development Association (S.I.C.C.D.A) with the support of the South Inner City Drugs Task Force

*We thank you for your time and assistance in completing the following questionnaire.
Please feel free to include additional information on a separate page where necessary.*

NAME OF SCHOOL: _____

CLASS: _____

NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN YOUR CLASS: _____

- 1) Please rank (in descending order) the 5 most important services you would like to see established in your particular school
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.

- 2) Are you involved in the facilitation/organization of any extracurricular activities for children/young people available in your particular school? If yes, please outline.

- 3) What supports are available to your school for children in each of the following areas. Please indicate what supports you feel are needed in these areas:
 - Speech/Language Needs:
 - Intellectual/Learning Needs:
 - Literacy/Numeracy Needs:
 - Psychological/Emotional Needs:
 - Behavioural/Physical Needs:

- 4) How many children in your class are seen by a speech therapist each month? How many do you think need to be seen?

- 5) What is your view on the advantages and obstacles to school based counselling services in your school?
- 6) What supports are available to your school for children with Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder?
- 7) Is bullying a significant problem in your class? Why/Why not?
- 8) What is your whole school strategy, if any, on bullying?
- 9) What are the obstacles to and/or supports needed for the establishment of a parental programme to improve the reading levels of at risk children in your class?
- 10) How adequate do you find the service provided by the National Educational Psychology Service (NEPS)? Please explain
- 11) How adequate do you find the service provided by the Education Welfare Board (EWB)? Please explain
- 12) What are the benefits and obstacles regarding establishment of a Student's Council in primary classes?
- 13) Do you have any peer mentoring/support programmes for children? If yes, please give details
- 14) What do you view as the main obstacles, if any, to implementation of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) programme in your class?
- 15) What strategies do you employ to engage with more marginalized parents in your class?
- 16) What strategies do you employ to engage with children at risk of early school leaving generally?
- 17) What strategies do you employ with regard to the acclimatisation of foreign national or refugee pupils' in their transition to your class?
- 18) Are there any examples of engagement with the arts in your class/school that could serve as good practice that is potentially transferable to other schools?
- 19) Are there any examples of your class/school as an 'organic school' with plants or animals that could serve as good practice that is potentially transferable to other schools?
- 20) Are there any examples of good practice in your class/school for working with pupils who fall behind the rest of the class - models that could potentially be transferable to other schools?
- 21) What are the biggest difficulties facing a teacher in your school?

Thank you for your help

Appendix 9

Secondary School Principal Questionnaire

The LifeStart Research Project

Commissioned by: South Inner City Community Development Association (S.I.C.C.D.A) with the support of the South Inner City Drugs Task Force

*We thank you for your time and assistance in completing the following questionnaire.
Please feel free to include additional information on a separate page where necessary.*

NAME OF SCHOOL: _____

NUMBER OF STUDENTS: _____

NUMBER OF TEACHERS: _____

- 1) Please rank (in descending order) the 5 most important services you would like to see established in your particular school
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.

- 2) What extracurricular activities are available in your school?

- 3) Does your school have any links, formal or informal, with services in the community? If yes, please indicate which ones and how you would rate the strength/quality of these links.

Child Services:
Youth Services:
Family Support Services:
Other: Please outline.

- 4) What supports are available to your school for children in each of the following areas. Please indicate what supports you feel are needed in these areas:
Speech/Language Needs:
Intellectual/Learning Needs:
Literacy/Numeracy Needs:
Psychological/Emotional Needs:
Behavioural/Physical Needs:
- 5) What is your view on the advantages and obstacles to school based counselling services in your school?
- 6) What supports are available to your school for children with Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder?
- 7) Is bullying a significant problem in your school? Why/Why not?
- 8) What is your whole school strategy, if any, on bullying?
- 9) What are the obstacles to and/or supports needed for the establishment of a parental programme to improve the reading levels of at risk students?
- 10) How adequate do you find the service provided by the National Educational Psychology Service (NEPS)? Please explain
- 11) How adequate do you find the service provided by the Education Welfare Board (EWB)? Please explain
- 12) What are the benefits and obstacles regarding establishment of a Student's Council in your school?
- 13) What do you view as the main obstacles, if any, to implementation of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) programme in your school?
- 14) Do you have any peer mentoring/support programmes? If yes, please give details
- 15) What strategies do you employ to engage with more marginalized parents?
- 16) What strategies do you employ to engage with children at risk of early school leaving generally?
- 17) Is your school in the School Completion Programme? If yes, how effective is this programme in your opinion?
- 18) What obstacles exist to making use of the school premises after school hours?

- 19) What strategies do you employ with regard to students' transition to secondary school?
- 20) What strategies do you employ with regard to the acclimatisation of foreign national or refugee pupils' in their transition to your school?
- 21) Are there any examples of engagement with the arts in your school that could serve as good practice that is potentially transferable to other schools?
- 22) Does your school have a school policy on confidentiality? If yes, please give details
- 23) Are there any examples of your school's practice that could serve as good practice that is potentially transferable to other schools?
- 24) Are there any examples of good practice in your school for working with pupils who fall behind the rest of the class - models that could potentially be transferable to other schools?
- 25) Is your school integrated with local Adult Education approaches in any way? If yes, please give details
- 26) What are the biggest difficulties facing a teacher in your school?
- 27) Are there any examples of good practice in your school for working with pupils who fall behind the rest of the class - models that could potentially be transferable to other schools?
- 28) What challenges/obstacles exist, if any, to increased partnership between your school and local services in the community for children and young people?
- 29) How, in your opinion, might school and non-formal education initiatives be best integrated in your community?

Thank you for your help.

Appendix 10

Secondary School Teacher Questionnaire

The LifeStart Research Project

Commissioned by: South Inner City Community Development Association (S.I.C.C.D.A) with the support of the South Inner City Drugs Task Force

*We thank you for your time and assistance in completing the following questionnaire.
Please feel free to include additional information on a separate page where necessary.*

NAME OF SCHOOL: _____

SUBJECT AREA TAUGHT: _____

NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN YOUR CLASS: _____

- 1) Please rank (in descending order) the 5 most important services/issues you would like to see established/addressed in your particular school
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.

- 2) Are you involved in the facilitation/organization of any extracurricular activities for children/young people available in your particular school? If yes, please outline.

- 3) What supports are available to your school for children in each of the following areas. Please indicate what supports you feel are needed in these areas:
 - Speech/Language Needs:
 - Psychological/Emotional Needs:
 - Literacy/Numeracy Needs:
 - Intellectual/Learning Needs:
 - Behavioural/Physical Needs:
 - Other: Please Outline:

- 4) In your opinion, what are the advantages and/or disadvantages, if any, to the streaming of students at second-level?
- 5) Is bullying a significant problem in your class? Why/Why not? What strategy on bullying, if any, do you employ in your classroom?
- 6) What, in your opinion, are the obstacles to and/or opportunities regarding the involvement of parents in their child's secondary education?
- 7) How adequate do you find the service provided by the National Educational Psychology Service (NEPS)? Please explain
- 8) How adequate do you find the service provided by the Education Welfare Board (EWB)? Please explain
- 9) What, in your opinion, are the benefits and obstacles regarding establishment of a Student's Council in your school?
- 10) Do you have any peer mentoring/support programmes operating in your class? If yes, please give details
- 11) In your opinion, what are the advantages and/or disadvantages, if any, attached to afterschool clubs for children/young people?
- 12) What strategies do you employ to engage with more marginalized parents?
- 13) What strategies do you employ to engage with children at risk of early school leaving generally?
- 14) What strategies do you employ with regard to the acclimatisation of foreign national or refugee pupils' in their transition to your class?
- 15) Are there any examples of good practice in your class/school for working with pupils who fall behind the rest of the class - models that could potentially be transferable to other schools?
- 16) Are there any examples of good practice in relation to disciplinary strategies which you employ in your class - strategies that could potentially be transferable to other classes/schools?
- 17) What are the biggest difficulties facing a teacher in your school?
- 18) What would you like to see develop in the school and local community with regard to drug use prevention and support ?

- 19) Are you involved in any referrals of students to local support services ? If yes, to which services ?
- 20) What would you have liked to have received more of in your pre-service education to become a secondary school teacher that would help you to teach in a designated disadvantaged area?
- 21) What, in your opinion, is most needed in terms of in-service support for secondary teachers working in a school serving an area designated disadvantaged?

Thank you for your help.