

Autumn/Winter 2023/24

ECHO

Information for the youth of today

Letterkenny Youth Information Centre

16 - 18 Port Road, Letterkenny

074 91 29630



WEEKLY PLAN - WINTER



ELEVATE 55 - POWERED BY THE LOFT 

MONDAY

International mentors

2pm-4pm

Our Group-

6pm-8pm

TUESDAY

Junior Art group -5pm-6pm

Art Group- 6pm-8pm

WEDNESDAY

Fit for life 4.30pm-5.30.pm

World Wide Voices

6pm-8pm

Irish Youth Music Award 6-8pm

THURSDAY

Gaming Night -

6pm-8pm

FRIDAY

Healthy Hacks 2pm-5pm

Drop in 5pm-9pm

SATURDAY

Drop in 2pm-6pm

EVENTS

Young Carers social

DDS social

Monthly quiz night-

last Thursday of the month

Gig Night-

Last Friday of the month

COMING SOON

Christmas Party

Friday 22nd December

IYMAS live selections

Feb 2024



CONTACT -DONEGAL YOUTH SERVICE 0749129630

OR DROP US A MESSAGE ON OUR SOCIAL MEDIA



Contents

Erasmus+ Youth Exchange	Page 4
Time To Move 2023	Page 6-7
Media Group.....	Page 8
Employment Rights: Upcoming Changes	Page 10-11
Spotting Phone and Email Scams.....	Page 12-13
New Year's Resolutions.....	Page 14-16
Celebration event	Page 18-19

Eolos Don Ógra



YOUTH
INFORMATION

Erasmus+ Youth Exchange



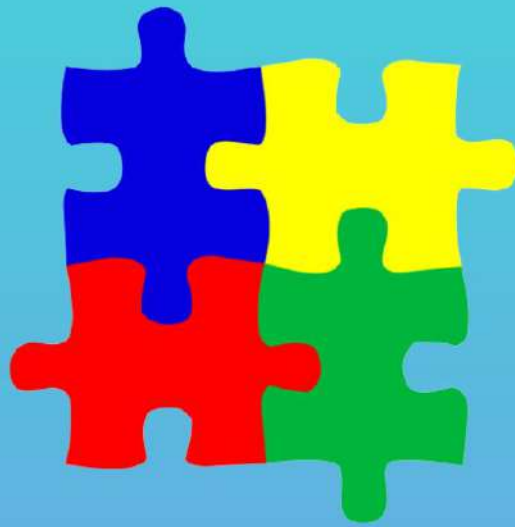
Interested? Contact Kasia, Youth Information Officer for more information:

Katarzyna.kurzeja@donegalyouthservice.ie or 0749129630

Erasmus+ offers opportunities to organise projects for the mobility of young people and youth workers. Youth Exchanges allow groups of young people from different countries to meet and live together for up to 21 days to carry out a series of activities focusing on a theme that is relevant for them. The exchanges are open to young people aged 13-30 and last from 5 to 21 days. They can take place in a Member State or outside the EU.

As part of our European youth work we are always committed to create international opportunities for local young people. Recently, we took part in the Erasmus+ youth exchange with our Polish partner-Fundacja EBU from Minsk Mazowiecki. A group of young people from Donegal and Inishowen area spent 1 week in Poland. They had a chance to meet local peers, take part in a cultural exchange and visits, taste Polish food and learn Polish language. In return, the Polish group will be visiting Ireland in February 2024 for another week full of international fun, cultural visits and unforgettable memories. And it is all for free!





OUR GROUP

Monday 6 - 8pm
The Loft Letterkenny

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT
PAURIC ON 074 9129630**

Time to Move 2023



eurodesk
TIME TO MOVE
timetomove.info



Your skills, your future, your Europe.

Time to Move 2023

Under the slogan “Europe within easy reach”, the Eurodesk campaign Time to Move ran in October 2023, all over Europe with hundreds of events and activities to connect young people to international mobility opportunities throughout Europe.

The annual campaign aims to connect young people to the 3000 Eurodesk information points available across Europe through non-formal activities.

“Not many young people know that there are thousands of programmes available for them to learn, volunteer or work abroad. Time to Move is a way to reach them and tell them that programmes, such as the Erasmus+ or the European Solidarity Corps are also for them” said Audrey Frith, Eurodesk Director.



The main target groups for the campaign included young people from non-city environments who may not have access to or knowledge about learning mobility projects, as well as NEETs (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) who could benefit from participating in a learning mobility project to improve their situation.

This year's campaign had thematic focuses on various topics, including the European Elections 2024, the European Year of Skills, Green Mobility and the DiscoverEU initiative, Mental health and Traveling abroad, and Volunteering and Solidarity. Your skills, your future, your Europe. Time to Move

in Letterkenny was a chance to explore different ways of gaining transferable skills in Europe with Donegal Youth Service and Europe Direct Letterkenny. Central Library Letterkenny and Donegal Youth Service hosted a set of talks under the theme of the European Year of Skills on Monday 23rd October.

Young people had a chance to talk to our experts and get free and non-judgmental information on mobility opportunities available to you.

Working, studying, training or volunteering in Europe can be especially beneficial to young people struggling to find their place in society. Often this information doesn't reach the people who need it most. The Time to Move campaign from Eurodesk, the Europe-wide information network for young people, aims to put this right.

Media Group

Media group has been a long running staple of the Youth information centre and has had some interesting projects over the last few months. We turned a book used by the Illumin8 project to teach kids about the brain into an audio book of sorts. We have created a series of tips videos for students that

were used on our social media and we recently captured the festivities of the DYS celebration event amongst other things. If you would like more information or to join media group contact Gareth Gibson on 074 91 29630.



ELEVATE 55
POWERED BY THE LOFT

Art Group

Tuesdays
5-6pm 8yrs+
6-8pm 12yr+

Get creative and
meet new people.

Contact Laura for more info
laura.byrne@donegalyouthservice.ie

Donegal Youth Service-0749129630

Employment Rights: Upcoming Changes

The job market can be fickle and stressful to deal with and for many folks going into new jobs and perhaps their first jobs it is reasonable for them to not have a full working knowledge of what Rights and Employee has.

So here is a brief summary of the more important Rights that may be of concern to Young People who are New Employees and especially First Time Employees.



Wages:

As an employee you are entitled to the minimum wage in Ireland. Currently set at €12.70 per hour as of January 1st 2024.

If you are 20 years or older you are entitled to this payment and should not accept anything less even if you have agreed to it. It is illegal to hire an adult in the Republic of Ireland and pay them less than €12.70 an hour.

However, if you are under the age of 20 years you may be legally paid less but other standards may apply.

Working time and breaks:

The Average working week comes usually to between 30 – 40 hours a week full time but this has an upper limit. This limit is 48 hours. It is not calculated week to week but instead over 4 months your average working week should never be more than 48 hours.

Inside that there are certain limitations employees should know for example you are legally entitled to at least 11 hours rest period every 24 hours. For example, you are not allowed to be asked or told that your shift ends at 11pm and starts at 7am the next day there should be at least 11 hours between them so you should be starting your shift at 10am at the earliest.

You are also entitled to a weekly gap between work of at least 24 hours. That's a solid block between shifts that should not be interrupted.



Getting smaller if you work over 6 hours in one shift you are entitled to at least a half hour break and if you are working 4 hours you are entitled to 15 minutes.



Disconnecting:

When you are outside of working hours you are entitled to disconnect from your work. This means you are under no obligation to reply to work related emails or messages unless you wish to but even then, it is recommended that you take some time to distance yourself from

your work for mental health reasons when you are on leave or during breaks.

Annual Leave:

If you are a fulltime employee you are entitled to 10 Public Holidays each year. These ten holidays are:

New Year's Day (1 January)

First Monday in February, or 1 February if the date falls on a Friday

Saint Patrick's Day (17 March)



Easter Monday

First Monday in May

First Monday in June

First Monday in August

Last Monday in October

Christmas Day (25 December)

Saint Stephen's Day (26 December)



Sick Leave:

The legal minimum sick pay any employee may have in the Republic is 5 days. That's 5 days of paid sick leave which is paid by your Employer at 70% or a maximum of €110 per day.

However, to qualify you do need to meet certain criteria

1. You must be employed
2. You must have a prior uninterrupted 13 weeks before the leave is taken
3. You must be cleared as sick by your GP

To be cleared by your GP you need to provide a physical note signed by your GP's office stating the dates you were sick to your workplace HR department or equivalent (manager, supervisor etc)

It is important to remember that in the Republic of Ireland this time off and these regulations are the minimum and that no matter what work you undertake in this country you are entitled to these breaks and times of absence in full.

Spotting Phone and Email scams



Be careful this Christmas time. Unfortunately scam calls and Emails are all too common. It is part of the price of having such an accessible world through media technology. Smartphones and round the clock internet have given us wonders but it is always wise to be cautious and critical of unexpected contact from unknown or suspicious sources.

Phone related scams

Many scams that come through phones are automated but some are still conducted by actual human beings. They typically come in 3 types.

1. A call from a person claiming to represent a service provider or public office. Typically, an internet provider or office of the social welfare but could claim to be from any number of organizations including streaming services.

2. An automated call (call from a robot). Typically, these have a very telling automated voice. These like the above calls will almost always claim to be from an official organization and will urge you to reply or contact them as soon as possible.
3. A text message informing you of an immediate charge or discontinuing of service urging you to follow a link or contact them quickly.

Some scams can look very official so it is very important to follow some basic safety guidelines.

Never click any links from text messages. Always go directly to the associated website and contact the service provider through the information given there.

Refuse to give any personal information to any

unsolicited calls or texts made to you. Personal information may include name, marital status, citizenship, address, email etc.

Politely tell them if you are suspicious of scams and that you are not comfortable giving out the information. If they are genuine then they should direct you towards a verifiable method of continuing the conversation or they will provide some proof of their authenticity via security questions or other methods.

Any official organisation will never ask that you give out bank or building society details (such as pin or account number) over the phone.

Some scammers may have access to some information about you. Be wary even if they know your address or name. Don't be afraid to ask them to verify themselves in some way. If you have a security question with the organization then ask for that first if you have any suspicions.

Report and block all numbers from suspect sources. If the message is genuine and you really are needed to be contacted then the organization will contact you another way. Typically, through post or verified email.



Email scams

Email scams are nothing new. They typically come in 4 varieties.

1. An organization is claiming to contact you under the pretence of you winning some prize or contest.
2. A person is contacting you claiming to be able to give you some manner of inheritance.
3. Someone is contacting you under the false pretence of needing a loan of money or an investment that they claim will reap big rewards.
4. A company or service is contacting you claiming that urgent action is needed to prevent cancelation of service or an extra charge.

Never reply to any message like this no matter how authentic it may seem. Most of the genuine messages of this mark themselves as "no reply" in order to keep people from doing just that.

Remember always that your official provider or service have no interest in fooling you as they want you to remain their customer so they have a real interest in keeping you feeling secure in their service. Use this interest to your advantage and do not engage until you are satisfied with who you are communicating with. As above, contact the service provider or organization through any official channel you can to verify their authenticity.

It might seem paranoid or overly cautious but the risk is real and more frequent than you may think. Scammers are out there and there are folk who have been very hurt by these types of scams so don't feel bad about protecting yourself.

If you are concern about the message you received or the fact you send your personal info back, contact your bank and Gardai as soon as possible.

New Year's Resolutions

This idea of New Year's Resolution is not a very modern idea. It has been tracked back to 4,000 years ago, with the Babylonians practicing it. But it has been popularised in the modern social media era. Social Media influencers and people all over the internet come together in forums and groups to make resolutions for the upcoming year. This influx of people creating resolutions for the beginning of the year can cause pressure and embarrassment on people. This embarrassment and pressure stem from a feeling of a lack of achievement. This is absolutely not the case for everybody who makes New Year's Resolutions, but this is a factor for some people who make resolutions. This can encourage people to take on very difficult challenges which are borderline impossible to achieve. The making up of resolutions and announcing them gives a feeling of pleasure and satisfaction almost as if you have achieved the said resolutions. This along with the millions of people making the same resolutions with you, fills you with hope. The lack of proper planning and the pressure to achieve the resolutions can stop a person in their track during the earlier stages. One such example would be the resolution to get fitter. Most people won't have an idea of how to get to start so it is important to seek out some information on how to get started beforehand.



Diets

A common resolution is to start a diet, here are some common diet options. **Please consult your GP or Doctor before adopting any of these diets.**

Veganuary

- As the name suggests it only lasts until the end of January so it's not necessarily a big commitment.
- It focuses on cutting meat and animal products from your diet and creating a more ecologically friendly world.
- Has a global base and support you can access online.

Paleo

- Focuses on getting more fresh fruit and veg with a focus on cutting sweeteners and preservatives.
- Has a wide variety of recipes to keep you interested.
- Is common enough that there is information freely available and some restaurants do paleo menu's.



Exercise

Many folks try to take the new year as an opportunity to do a bit more exercise. Plenty of gyms offer new year discounts and there are lovely areas to walk in and around Letterkenny town. **As always consult your Doctor or GP before you engage in any regular exercise to make sure it's safe for you to take part.**



Walking

- Walking is a good way to include a simple regular routine that can easily benefit your health.
- There are usually local groups that help provide motivation and advise for getting started.
- The town parks have simple routes that offer easy access and are free to access. Gym
- Getting a Gym membership can help you to stay committed to the goal after all if you have already paid for the time in advance you may as well use it.
- Start slow and don't feel you have to suddenly hit certain unrealistic goals.
- Seek advice on the easiest way to transition into using a Gym. Ask someone who works there to give you a rundown of the facilities so that you can use them correctly and safely.



Quitting

One of the most famous resolutions is to give up something. It can be simple like less red meat or chocolate or something more impactful like giving up smoking or vaping.

Smoking/Vaping

- Fortunately, there are many groups and plans to help you along with giving up Smoking/Vaping. Joining these groups through a health care official like your GP can help keep you committed to the goal.
- There have never been more options to quitting than now and many people find Vaping to be an alternative, while still not 100% giving up nicotine.
- Tell people about it and keep a record of your progress. Each day can be a victory and friends and family may help encourage you when you are finding it hard to keep going.



Chocolate and sweets

- Like smoking it is no uncommon thing to try and cut down on treats whatever form they take. Go to your GP and ask them if they can recommend any healthcare specialists to assist you.
- Let people know about your resolution and don't be afraid to keep reminding them. Most people will be glad to be helpful and try to assist you.



How to start

Focus on creating small, achievable and fairly easy Weekly or Monthly tasks. For example, instead of going into the year with the resolution of getting fitter, make a weekly plan about the specific workout that you want to do. Make a resolution to stretch every day and do mobility exercises for 15 minutes. The structure of breaking down your New Year's resolutions into daily tasks gives you an idea on what you want to do every day or a week and can give you incredible amounts of motivation for you to make progress till the end of the year.

Another example would be breaking down the resolution of 'Read More' into making it Read every

day for 20 minutes or simply read 20 pages every day. This system is better than taking up a huge amount of workload onto yourselves at the beginning of the year. Another tip is to not be discouraged if you miss a single day of your said task. Giving yourself time to get to the end point is far more important and better than punishing yourself and getting discouraged every time you don't achieve your goal.

On the same note don't be discouraged if you aren't able to achieve the goal by the end of the year. It's the process that matters. Always know that you would have made the same resolution the very next year, if it weren't for you making good progress in that resolution this year.



Remember to take it easy on yourself and break it down to manageable and achievable goals for you to get to your destination.



**Are you aged from 13-16yrs
living in the Creeslough Area?**

**Looking for something to do after school?
Want to make new friends?**



FUN

**Arts & Crafts
Fun Activities
Games
Trips!**



**Every Tuesday 6-7.30pm
In the Creeslough Hub**

**Contact Jackie on 0858555803
jackie.ferry@donegalyouthservice.ie**



Celebration Event

The DYS Celebration Event was held this year at the ATU Multipurpose Centre on Saturday the 2nd of December and we would not have been able to pull it off without the dedication of our staff and especially Elaine Begley who worked hard to organize the event with all the staff.

We held events ranging from crafts and games to demonstrations of our driving simulator and a photo booth complete with costumes and props as

well as had performances of dance and live music from local acts.

We also held a ceremony to acknowledge those whose dedication to Youth Work throughout the past year has been truly exceptional.

It was a very rewarding experience to see so many fresh faces from all over Donegal come and help make the Celebration Event a roaring success.





Donegal
Youth Service
Youth Work Ireland



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