

### **FamiliBase Submission to the Joint Committee on Children, Equality, Disability , Integration and Youth 21<sup>st</sup> of March 2023**

Thanks for the invitation and the opportunity to contribute to the direction of children and young people's services. We are here today to tell you about the experiences of young people and families we work with in the community of Ballyfermot/Cherry Orchard and suggest some solutions. It's important to say that we are not here to represent the Youth Work sector as we have not consulted with other services or youth workers, and we are not solely a Youth Service. Firstly, we'll tell you a bit about FamiliBase.


FamiliBase has three strand pillars within their service delivery, Early Years, Child & Family, and Youth & Community, we offer a continuum of programmes and services within these strands. Programme delivery in FamiliBase occurs at a range of different levels, from universal level e.g. Drop- In's, Youth Café, Arts Events and ECCE to intensive wrap around practice for those with multiple or more complex needs e.g., Intensive Family Support, Systemic Family Therapy, Case Management, Therapeutic Key working. Given the national policy landscape in relation to integrating services for children, young people, and families, FamiliBase has worked to integrate programmes and service delivery to develop a 'One Stop Shop' of services to support the children, young people and families in the Ballyfermot and Cherry Orchard Community.

Post- Covid it is our view that children and young people from our community have been disproportionately impacted from an education, mental health, and welfare point of view. This is compounded by significant challenges in statutory services for children and young people e.g. CAMHS, Primary Care Psychology etc. as well as the housing challenges and cost of living crisis. These issues have landed on top of a community already experiencing significant structural inequality and are impacting hugely on young people and their families. Youth Services are often the first port of call for families and young people when they are experiencing these challenges. We are ideally placed in the heart of communities to respond and support young people however we need the other services to work effectively if we are to properly support young people.

We would like to acknowledge all of the government departments that fund our 'One Stop Shop' of services as we believe this is a very effective and efficient way to provide services. Today we have two asks that will provide a significant improvement to the lives of children, young people and families in our community.

1. Increase resourcing to youth services who recognise, like we do, that some young people with complex needs require an intensive case management approach, this work should not take away from the targeted group work we are funded to deliver but be other to the service provision.

2. Consider models of community mental health support for young people in the context of the significant problems being experienced in CAMHS and primary care psychology and also the recognition that young people would find it easier and more accessible to receive mental health support in an environment they are comfortable, youth services are ideally placed to offer therapeutic services to young people and their families in addition to their youth work provision, if effectively resourced. The model we use in FamiliBase, is Systemic Family Therapy, working with the whole family for enhanced outcomes. We cannot meet the demand for this service due to resources.

  
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