



# CSMT ANNUAL REPORT 2019

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**Project Promoter Code: MW40**

**Clondalkin Addiction Support Programme**  
Ballyowen Meadows, Fonthill Road, Dublin 22

**Community Substance Misuse Team**  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Arthurs Quay House, Arthurs Quay Limerick

**Contact Details:**

**Project Manager: Maria Finn**

Telephone Number: 061 317 688

Fax Number: 01 616 6755

**Team Leader: David McPhillips**

Telephone Number: 086 4141897

E-mail: [dmcphillips@csmt.ie](mailto:dmcphillips@csmt.ie)

**President/Chairperson: Eddie D'Arcy**

Address: C/O CASP, Ballyowen Meadows  
Fonthill road, Clondalkin, Dublin 22

**Secretary/Treasurer: Frank Schnittger**

Address: C/o CASP, Ballyowen Meadows,  
Fonthill Road, Clondalkin, Dublin 22



**COMMUNITY SUBSTANCE  
MISUSE TEAM**



**MID WEST REGIONAL  
DRUGS & ALCOHOL FORUM**  
Clare · Limerick · N Tipperary

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## Foreword

In 2019 CASP/CSMT continued its service in the mid-west region of delivering support to under eighteens and their families who are affected by substance misuse. The team continued the values of community development, collaboration and inter-agency work aiming to advance the quality of life for the young people and their families in the service.

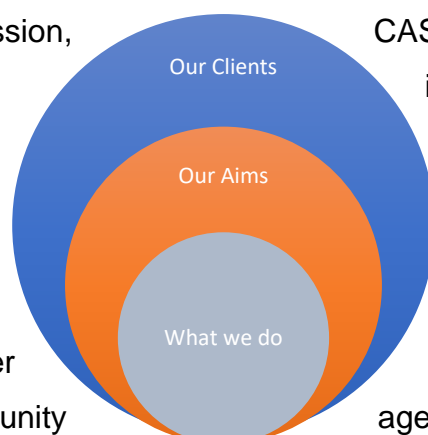
Since CASP/CSMT began operating in the Midwest in 2012 we have seen a referral increase of over 175%. With our recent move to our new premises at Arthurs Quay House in the centre of Limerick City, we will continue to develop the services that are offered to our present and new service users.

We understand the hard work and dedication that our staff and volunteers do in their work, supporting and helping the service users navigate this particular part of their lives that have come through our doors looking for assistance. Our Strengthening Families Programme has been a huge success in 2019. It assisted in improving parental skills, improving how family's function; it has benefited families in learning better communication, coping with anger and criticism and help prevent substance abuse.

## Our Mission

CASP/CSMT provides a holistic, integrated, ethically based, community-focused drug addiction treatment service. Our focus is the physical, psychological, social, and emotional needs of drug users and their families in the community who are living with the impact that addiction has on their lives.

To fulfil our Mission, integrated make best use of resources, planning and groups, finance, with the broader and community



CASP/CSMT aims to provide interventions that engage with and both internal and external including staff, referral agencies, development forums, community etc. This partnership approach community of statutory, voluntary agencies ensures that all stakeholders

are included in both the development and implementation of all actions that can positively impact our target group.

**What we do?**

CASP/CSMT provides a free service to under 18's and their families who are affected by substance misuse in the Mid- West region. The CASP/CSMT team is a multi-disciplinary team & works on the principles of community development, collaboration and inter-agency work aiming to improve the quality of life for young people and families in the service.

**Plans for the Future**

In the upcoming year we expect to provide up to 900 one to ones with young and concerned persons. Offer support and advocacy for young people and families that are impacted by substance misuse. CASP/CSMT will deliver three 5 step programmes in the Mid-West region and a Parent support group. We will continue with the Strengthening Families Programme in North Tipperary. Throughout 2020 we as a service that support young people and family members that are living with the impact of substance misuse.

**Aims of the Organisation:**

The aim of CASP/CSMT is the provision of supports and related educational and practical interventions to support and facilitate a range of on-going services, targeted at supporting the parents, family members, partners and young people living with impact of substance misuse.

To provide the most effective support to young people and their families CASP/CSMT places special value on the following process: using the ACRA (Adolescent Community Reinforcement Approach) and the 5-step model of work.

**About our staff:**

- **All staff ACRA accredited**
- **One ACRA Trainer**
- **5 staff 5-step Accredited**
- **SFP trained and One SFP Trainer**
- **All staff Motivational Interviewing trained and expertise**

**CASP/CSMT aspires to:**

CASP/CSMT works with adolescents to improve their quality of life. We do this by working with adolescents collaboratively, building relationships and trust and looking at reducing negative behaviours in their life.

**What to expect as a young person?**

- Professional expertise
- Support/ listening/ empathy
- Direction to improve life
- Trusting relationship
- Improve coping style
- Skills to manage drug or alcohol use
- Awareness of own drug and alcohol use and consequences of such

**What to expect as a parent/ guardian?**

- Support and skills to deal with your adolescent
- Promoting Self-care and well-being
- Emotional and psychological support
- Knowledge and understanding of youth drug and alcohol use.

CASP/CSMT believes change comes from within, this process involves identifying the problem, exploring it and reaching a decision to make some changes in your life.

We are aware at a young age young people may experiment with drugs and alcohol amongst other things– it is our job to help them find their way through this period of their life.

**CASP/CSMT in the Mid-West**

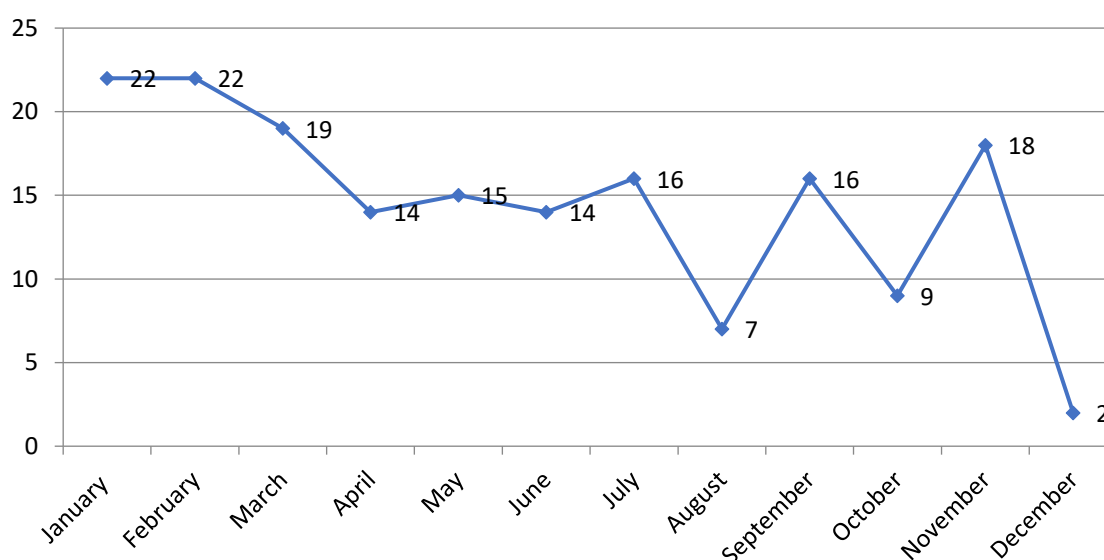
CASP/CSMT is based in Arthurs Quay and provides support to young people and families from this central location. Accessible outreach is also part of our organisation's strategy for engagement and within this CASP/CSMT continues to operate several drop-in centres localised in the Mid-West region to provide support and accessibility to CASP/CSMT in the community. In Limerick County there are

centres open in Newcastle West, Caherconlish and Hospital; in Clare County: Kiltrush, Shannon, Ennistymon and Ennis and in Tipperary North: Roscrea, Templemore, Thurles and Nenagh.

## STATISTICAL SUMMARY

In this section of the report we give a statistical summary of 2019 at CSMT, examining several of the more important aspects of the service.

### Referrals through 2019



The chart above shows new referrals received throughout 2019. Two of the dips seen in the chart are down to summer/Christmas holiday times. These referrals came through the following organisations.

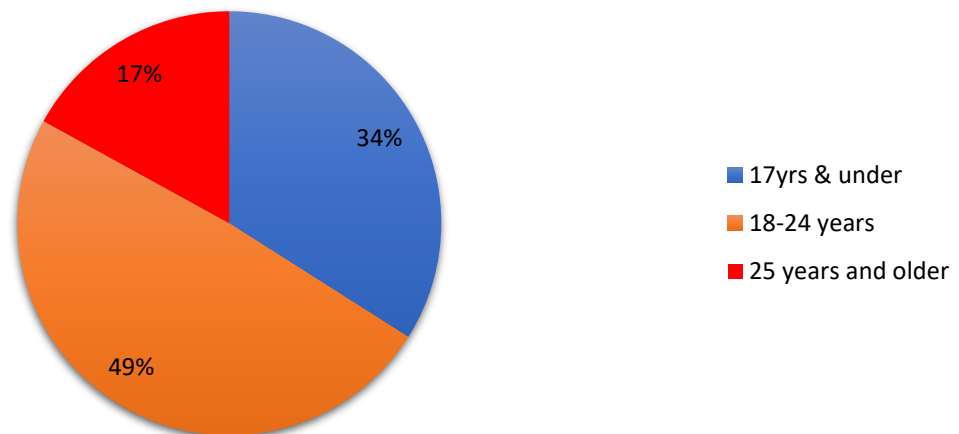
- Self and Family (majority)
- Probation Service
- TULSA
- HSE
- CAHMS
- Youth Service
- Social Workers

- Foroige
- Family Resource Centres
- GP
- Jigsaw



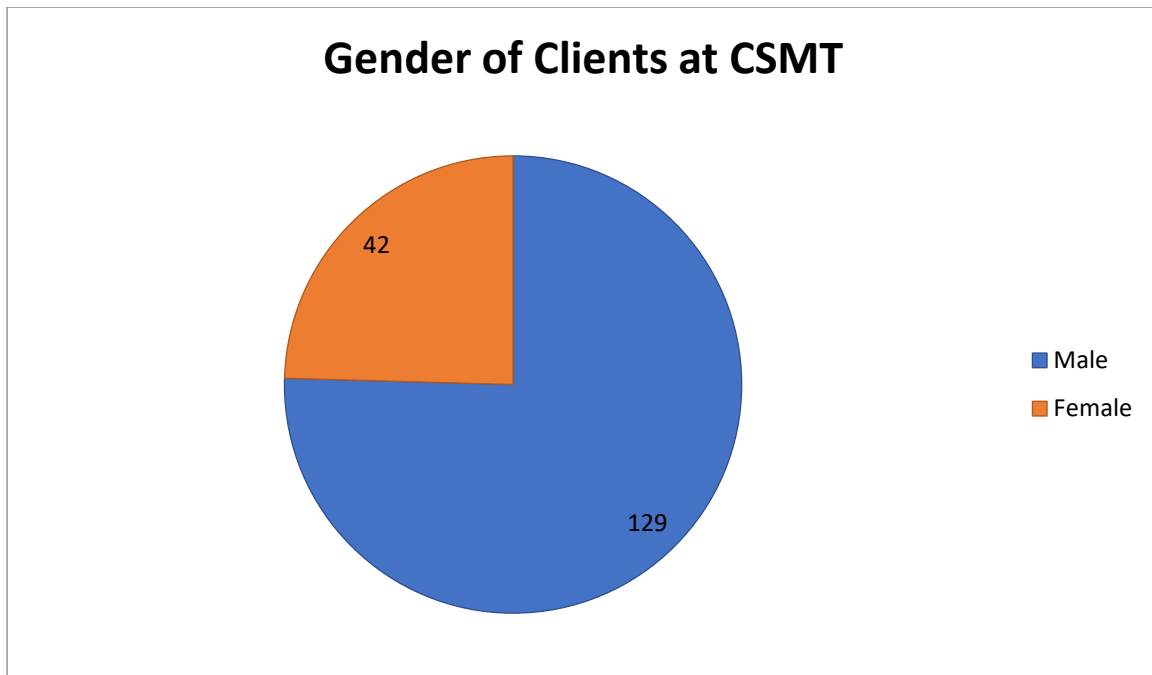
In this chart we see the referrals broken down to show the two main age groups, of 17 years and under and 18 to 24 years. We also have 25 and older, this group contains concerned persons and clients that were on our psychoeducation group, details of this group can be found on page 14.

### Clients 2019

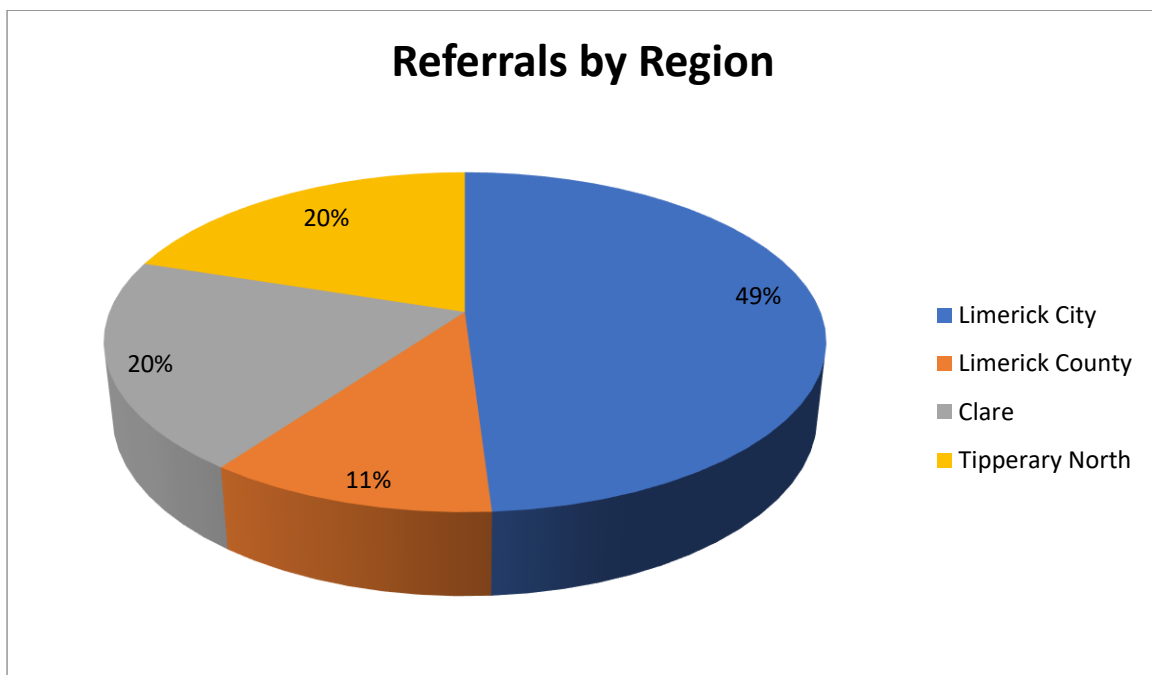


The chart below shows a client breakdown in gender of those who attended CSMT in 2019. The data is in line with the averages of persons seeking help for substance misuse in Ireland, that being 75% for males to 25% females. The Health Research Board states, however, that this proportion can vary depending on the primary drug and the treatment programme.



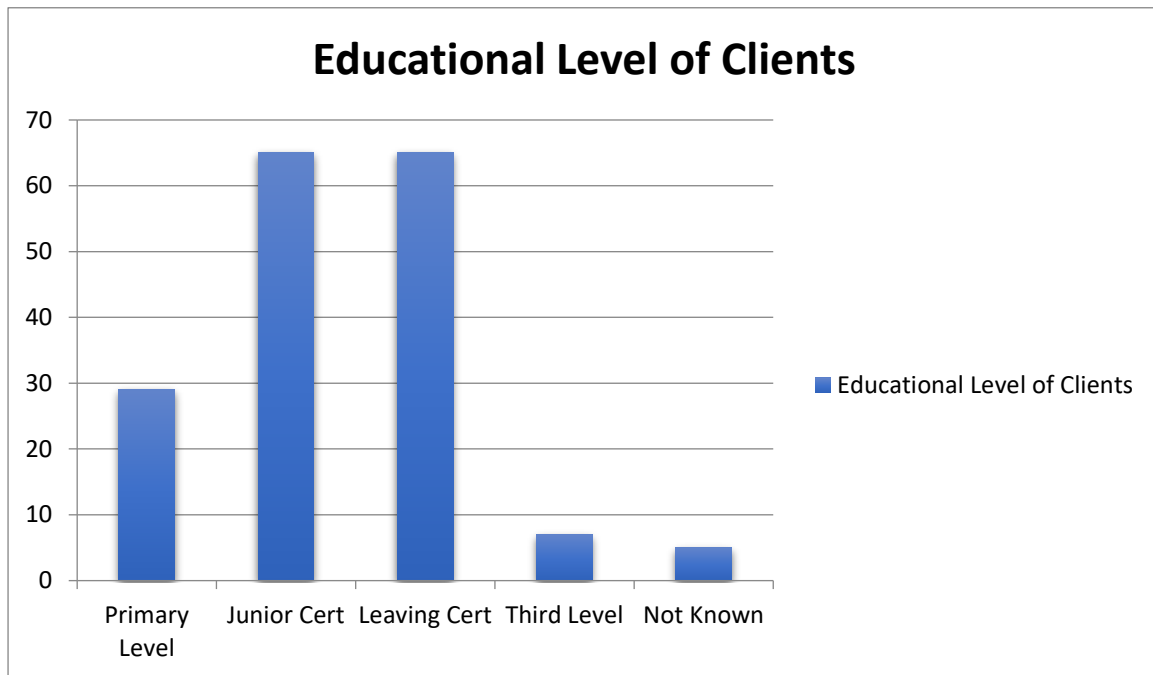


In this next chart we see referrals by region covered by CSMT in the mid-west region. Just under half of referrals are found within the Limerick city area, with the county at 11%. Clare and North Tipperary equally divide the remaining referrals.

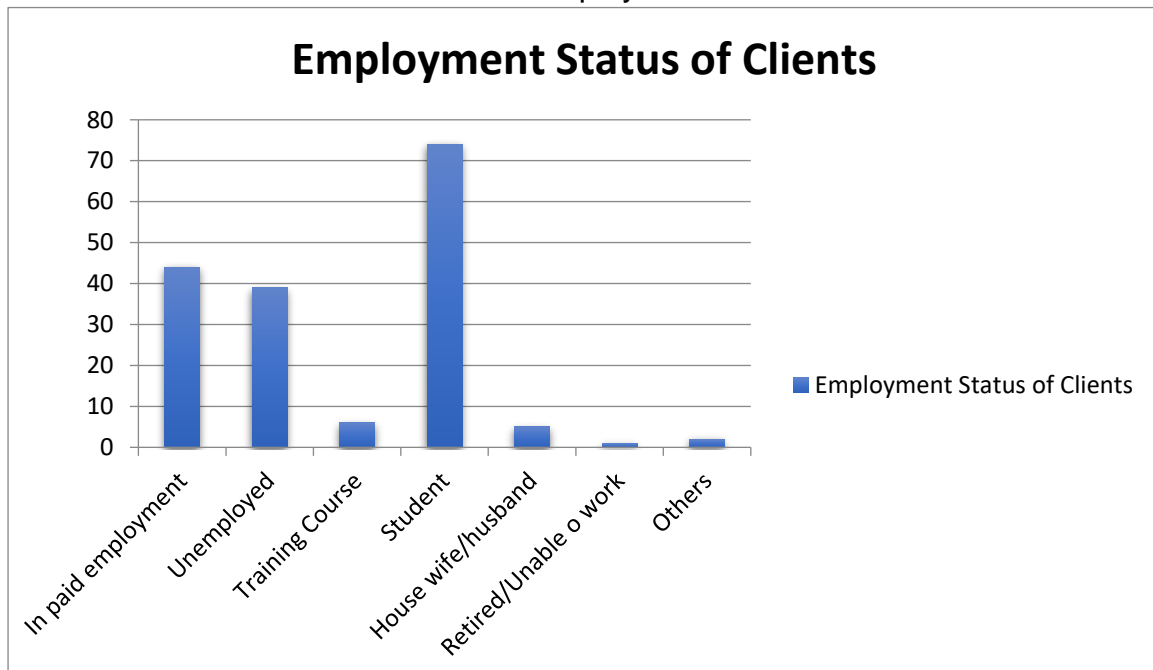


This graph shows information on the educational level accomplished by the clients that attended CSMT in 2019. Education can play a role on all four dimensions; it can improve social capital by opening up opportunities to develop new networks of friends outside the confines of formal treatment and self-help groups, it can improve physical capital by improving career options and job opportunities which can improve

living standards and it can improve cultural capital by exposing people to new values, beliefs and attitudes and instilling a revised work ethic grounded in the demands of educational pursuits.



The next chart shows the employment status of clients in 2019



There were 2316 appointments made for clients in 2019. Of those appointments 1746 were attended or 75%, there was 208 (9%) no shows by clients and 278 (12%) were cancelled by the clients. Staff cancelled 18(1%) of appointments that had been made for clients throughout the calendar year.



#### Outcomes for these sessions included:

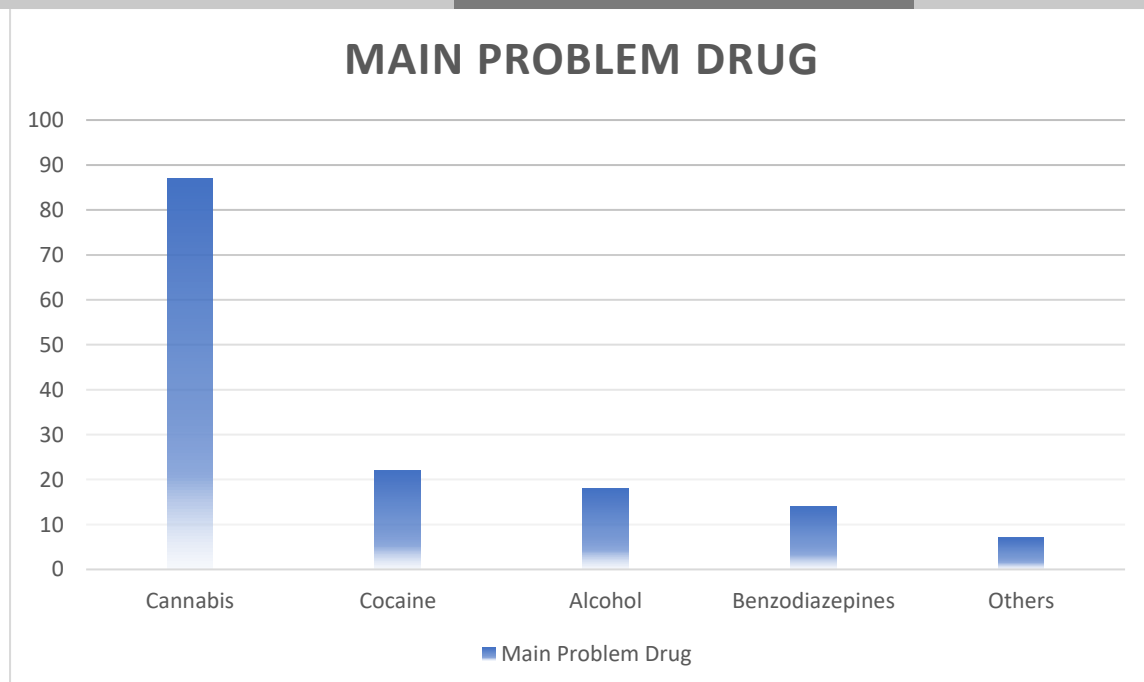
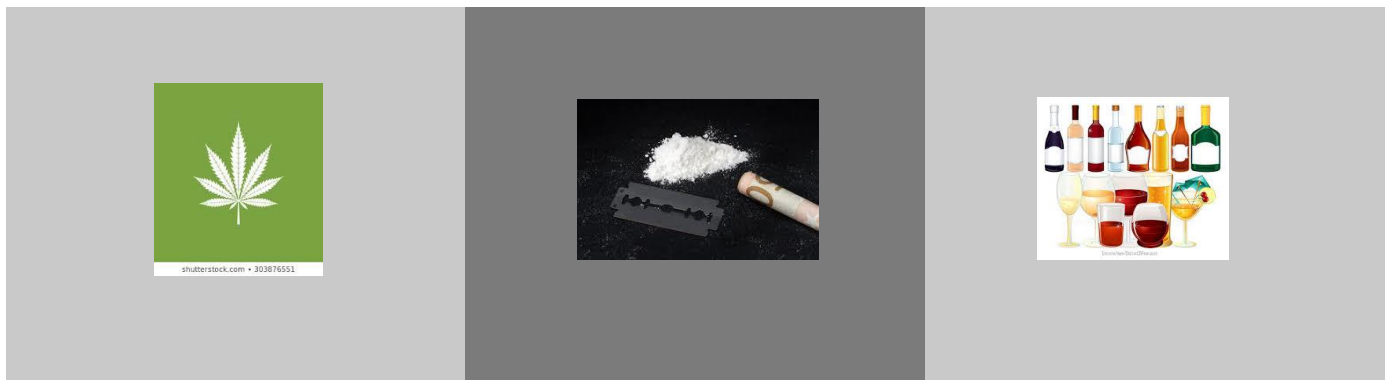
- ACRA programme- Functional analysis raising awareness of triggers for substance misuse
- Increased pro-social behaviour
- CRAFT model of work with concerned persons
- 5 Step Programme
- Solution focused intervention through a collaborative approach
- Reduction of drug & alcohol use
- Raised awareness of effects of substance misuse, poly drug use
- Lessened the impact of substance misuse on the family unit
- Provided a safe place to discuss issues
- Supporting young people affected by a parental addiction, this includes providing emotional support; education around the nature of addiction and increasing knowledge of various substances. These young people may be particularly vulnerable to substance misuse themselves and this work is seen as preventative
- Improved communication in the family by practising communication skills with the young people.
- Assisted and advocated for young people to achieve goals on their action plan, e.g. looking for courses and activities that the young person may be interested in.
- Education and awareness around substances so that informed choices can be made by the young person.

- Referrals to other agencies where appropriate, e.g. SICAP, Bushypark, Aislinn residential
- Provision of acupuncture/relaxation morning to concerned persons
- Equine therapy
- Assessments carried out for Aislinn residential and pre and post treatment support provided
- Improved well-being including mental and physical health
- Improved understanding of opportunities available and support

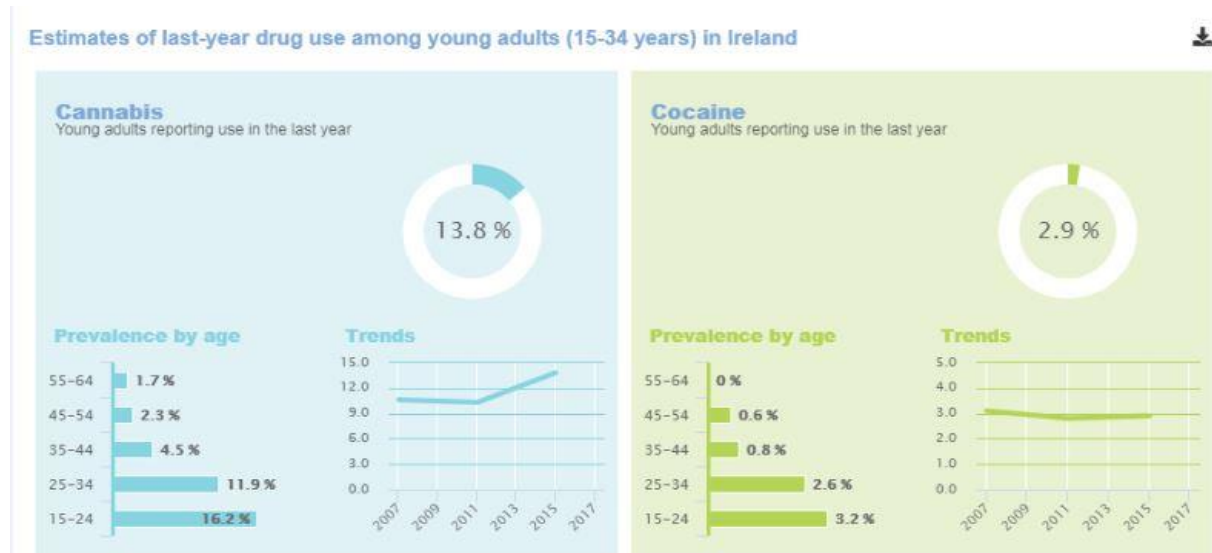
## Main Drugs Presenting In 2019

### Three main drugs

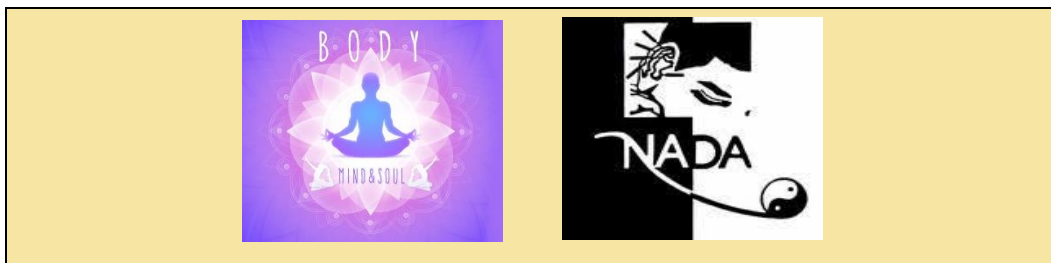
Cannabis (weed), cocaine and alcohol are the three main substance being misused by client that are presenting themselves to CSMT in 2019.



The chart below from the European Monitoring Center for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) is in line with our own statistics showing the two main drugs being taken in Ireland by 15-34-year old's.



## Holistic Therapy



According to Nada Ireland 'the Nada Protocol is used in treatment settings throughout Ireland. 1987, Bullock, Culliton and Olander published research proving the effectiveness of Acudetox in treating addiction. Acudetox rapidly evolved and is now used effectively for acute and prolonged withdrawals, relapse prevention and long-term recovery. In August 2000 Yale University published research showing Acudetox as effective for heroin, cocaine, and methadone. The five points cover withdrawal and cravings from; alcohol, cocaine, heroin, nicotine, cannabis, amphetamine, methadone, and benzos.

Nada states that 'decreased cravings decreased intensity of withdrawal symptoms, improved sleep and mood and increased sense of calm and wellbeing are among the benefits reported by service users receiving regular Acudetox treatments.'

CSMT had identified not only the need to use acupuncture with young people, either reducing or coming off of substances but also the need to offer the treatment to CPS in an attempt to reduce their stress, improve their mood and enhance their sleep. It was felt that treatments may be beneficial as a follow on from the 5 Step model.

There were also 245 acupuncture treatments carried out in 2019, this number incorporates an acupuncture group that was held weekly in the office and acupuncture that was carried out on individual clients over a period.

## **Psychoeducation Group**

CSMT has received forty-five referral for young people aging from 18 and up through the courts for psycho-educational groups. Thirty-five clients have completed the education programme. Most clients came from the Limerick City area. Thirty-two were male and 3 were female.

CSMT has responded to this need and met with the court to discuss the possible programme in moving forward and developing the course in conjunction with the courts here in Limerick. The programme consists of evidence-based practices including, assessment, functional analysis of use, happiness scales and identifying pro-social outlets. Additionally, CSMT has linked with volunteer coordinator to support young people around court needs and a follow on to link with adult services for appropriate referrals.

### **Course Description**

The course was organised in 4 sessions, one each taking place weekly. Four courses were run between September 2018 and March 2019. All the courses were held in Limerick City. Motivational Interviewing techniques were used throughout the course. This is a collaborative method of communication with emphasis on the language of change.

Courses followed the format outlined below:

### **Session 1**

- *Introductions, Group Contract & Course Outline*
- *Functional Analysis of Substance: Use* explores the antecedents and positive and negative consequences of a client's substance use.
- *Happiness Scale*: is intended to estimate the current happiness of each client in specific areas of life.

## Session 2

- Discussion on the *Physical and Psychological Effects of Drugs*.
- Completion of the *Dudit Tool* which is a screening instrument to assess the severity of substance users' drug use.

## Session 3

- *The Legal Implications of a Conviction* particularly regarding employment prospects, travel and Garda vetting.
- *The Wheel of Change*: This tool was used to help clients understand why addiction can be so difficult to change, and the stages they go through in the process of changing their behaviour.

## Session 4

- *Alternative Relaxation Techniques*: Auricular acupuncture was used which involved placing needles or beads on the client's outer ear.
- *Evaluations*: Clients provide feedback by filling a simple questionnaire.

## Course Attendees

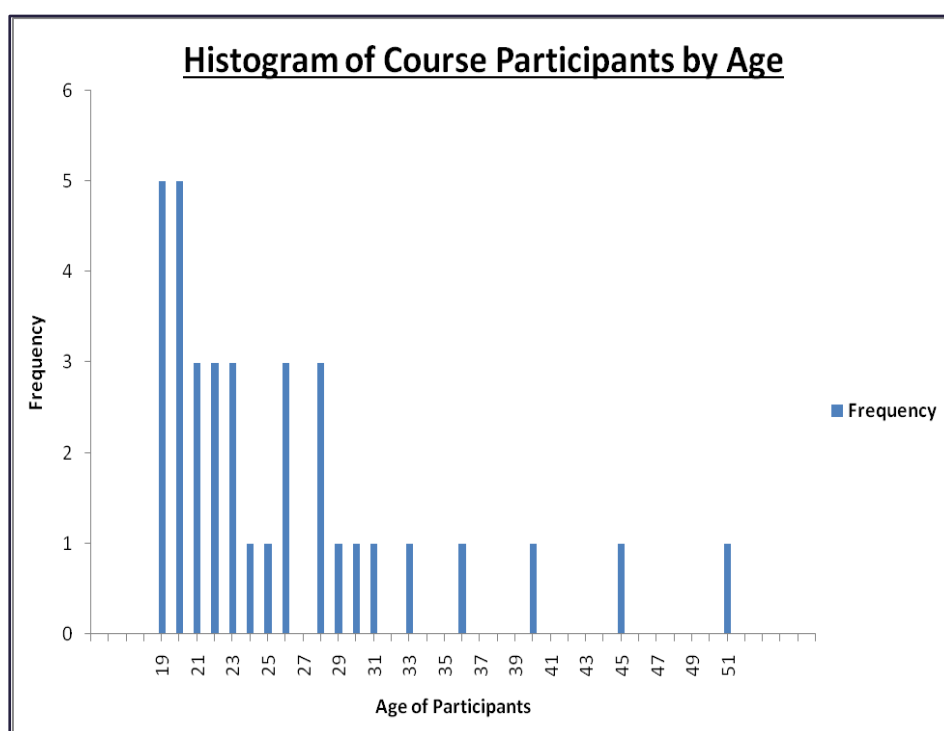
In total, 35 clients attended over the 4 courses. All the participants were referred by the court system which preferred that route to the handing down of convictions which would leave the clients with criminal records. In all cases, it was the clients first time before the courts for a drug offence, and in most cases the charges related to the possession of cannabis. One attendee was not a drug user. Some clients are employed, while some do not have employment. Some are still in education. A minority are parents.

Of 35 attendees, only 3 were female and the rest were male. For statistical purpose, the total group is considered as one. This is because of the low number of female's participants and because their data falls within the group range.

Participant ages ranged from 19 to 51 (Figure 1). (Persons younger than 18 years of age are not referred to the Drug Education Course). The average age of participants was 26. Seventy seven percent of participants are 28 years of age or younger, with only 8 ages distributed between 29 and 51. Similarly, 54% of the participants range in age from 19 to 23.

Of participants who provided data, the average age for the commencement of substance misuse was 14. The oldest start age was 18 and the youngest was 11. Only 4 individuals of age 29 or above provided data. These also had an average 'first use of drugs' age of 14 years.

The drug of choice for most participants (24) is cannabis. Five participants are poly-drug users, involving cocaine, amphetamines, or benzodiazepines.



**Figure 1 - Age Frequency of Drug Education Course Participants**

## Findings



It is an interesting point that only 9% of course participants are female. This is not reflective of the general drug using population of Limerick which is approximately X% female.

Despite starting drug use in their teenage years, several older course participants have not received any help or support with their drug use. This may be because some of them are happy with their use of substances.

Three participants expressed an interest in receiving further help around their drug use. These were referred on to Saoirse, The Community Detox Service, The Wrap Course or The Cannabis Cessation Programme.

Many of the participants have multiple, complex problems and not just a drug problem. For instance, some are early school leavers with poor literacy skills; some have a history of unemployment, early involvement with the criminal justice system or housing problems. Others have dysfunctional family backgrounds or are involved in dysfunctional interpersonal relationships. There are co-existing mental health problems in some cases.

### **Feedback**

All participants found the course useful. Topics mentioned, were the effects of drugs on body and meeting people with similar experiences. Acupuncture was found to promote relaxation and sleep, though some participants would have preferred more than one session. One participant expressed an interest in volunteering around addiction support. In general, it was found that the feedback was much more positive than the attitude at the start of the course.

## North Tipperary and East Limerick combined Strengthening Families Programme

*'Effective parenting is the most powerful way to reduce adolescent problem behaviours' (Kumpfer & Alvarado, 2003)*

The Strengthening Families Programme is one of the most powerful programmes for family change in the country, because it involves not just the parents or the children alone, but the whole family. The SFP is unique among parenting and family programme because it was developed specifically for children of alcohol and drug-abusing parents.

CSMT supported the delivery of the North Tipperary SFP in the Mid-West in 2019, where eight families consisting of twenty-one family members completed the Programme, with two families not completing the SFP. Le Cheile funded the SFP in East Limerick, with the overall strategy for SFP delivery driven by CSMT.

Action 29 under the prevention pillar of the National Drugs Strategy is to:

- provide supports for families experiencing difficulties due to drug/alcohol use
- improve parenting skills
- targeted measures focusing on the children of problem drug and/or alcohol users aimed at breaking the cycle and safeguarding the next generation (The National Drugs Strategy, 2009-16, p.100).

It is under this remit that the SFP fits into CSMT overall strategic aim to empower and upskill families to improve their overall quality of life. Skills based programme focusing on the positives and strengths of a family enable a successful outcome. Creating relationships with workers and other services is also a tangible benefit for these families participating in the SFP programme. The local family resource centres deliver the SFP through funding received by CSMT. This partnership approach underpinned by good inter-agency work is paramount for at-risk families.

### **Key outcomes:**

- Improved parental skills.
- Improved communication and understanding between the parents & children.
- Changing behaviour.

- Improving how the family functions.
- Creating new social networks for participant families.

**Benefits for Families:**

- Increased family quality time.
- Learn better communication skills
- Coping with anger and criticism
- Stress management
- Coping with peer pressure
- Helps to prevent substance abuse, conduct disorders and depressions in teens.

**In the Parents Group, parents will learn new skills to increase better behaviours in their teen through:**

- Attention
- Rewards
- Clear communication
- Substance use education
- Problem solving
- Limit setting.

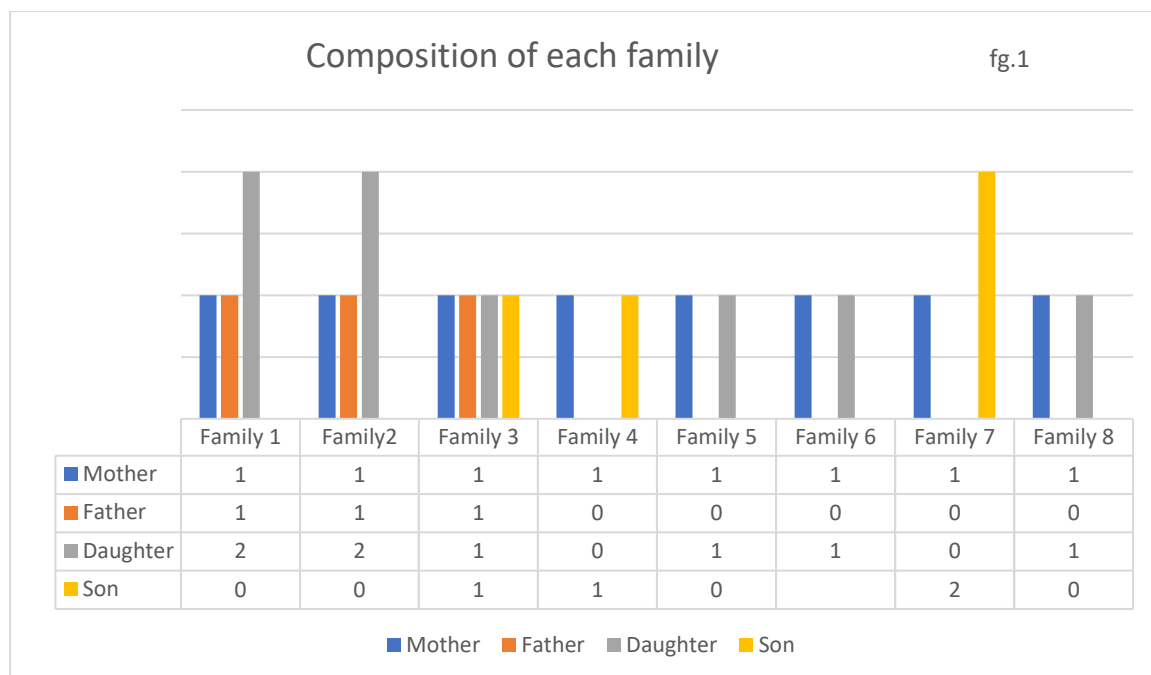
**In the Teen Group, skills are present on how to:**

- Communicate positively
- Understand feelings
- Cope with criticism
- Manage stress
- Develop social skills
- Learn problem solving
- Deal with peer pressure
- Understand the consequences of substance abuse
- How short-term consequences affect long term dreams and goals.

This report is an evaluation of the Strengthening Families Programme that was organised in Templemore in Tipperary and Hospital in Limerick. The SFP in North Tipperary started with ten families and eight completed the programme and in East

Limerick six families started and five finished the programme. In the two boxes below, we can find information about the two different SFP's that were run.

North Tipperary (Templemore)				
	Family	Referral	Additional supports	Attendance
1	2 parents 2 Daughters	Social Worker	Support for anger management for both daughters. Mother and daughter availed of complimentary therapies.	95%
2	2 parents 1 Daughter	Tipperary County Council		100%
3	2 Parents (separated) 1 son & 1 daughter	Social Worker	Support for anger management for son.	90%
4	Mother 1 son	Youth Reach		100%
5	Mother 1 daughter	Social Worker		100%
6	Mother 1 daughter	NTDC	Two younger children availed of creche.	95%
7	Mother 1 daughter	Social Worker		100%
8	Mother 1 son 1 daughter	Self- referral	One younger child availed of creche. Son was remanded to Oberstown mid-way through.	85%

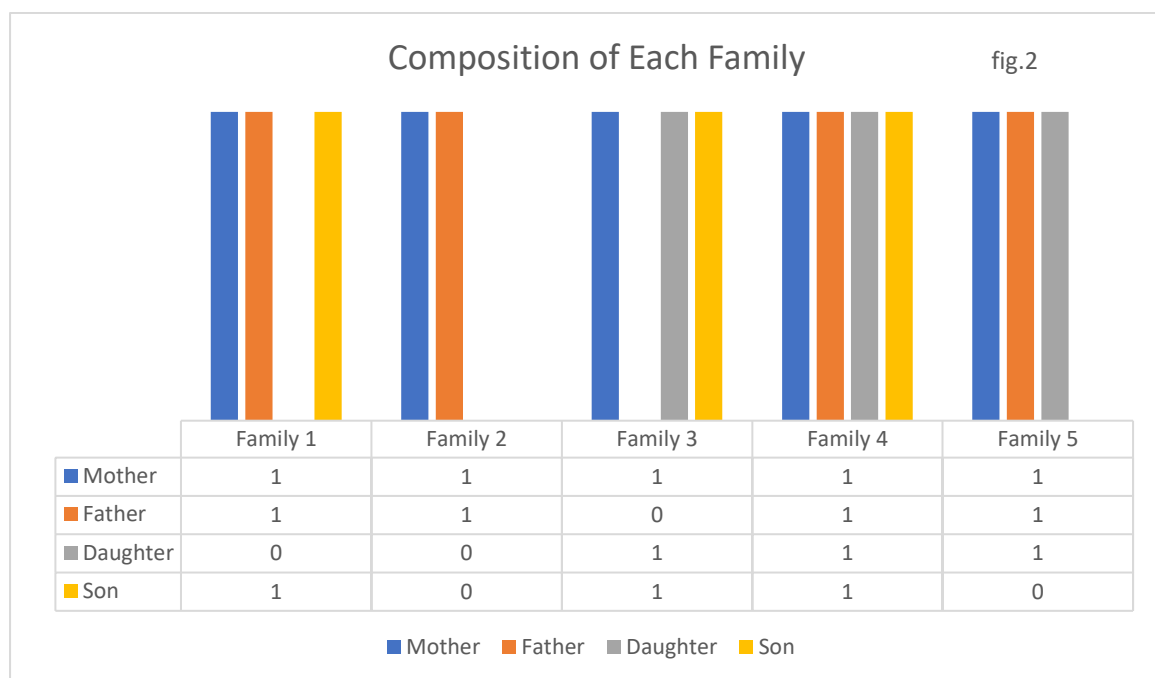


By analysing the graph above (fig.1) we can indicate that 63% of those families that attended the SFP in Templemore are lone parent attendees, with all being the mother. CSO figures tell that from the 2016 census that single parents make up 23% of the family unit in Ireland and that 23% is made of mother at 86% and fathers 14%. Single parents that have one or more children under the age of 18 had the highest deprivation rate in 2016 at 50.1%. The risk of poverty for single-parent families stands at 40.2%, this means that lone parents are almost 3.5 times as likely to be at risk of poverty compared to households with two parents. Also, from the 2016 census, we can see that 58% of single mothers are unemployed/unable to work/not in the labour force. This information shows us the importance of inter-agency work to recognise those family units that need the SFP to help them navigate some of those problems that they encounter.

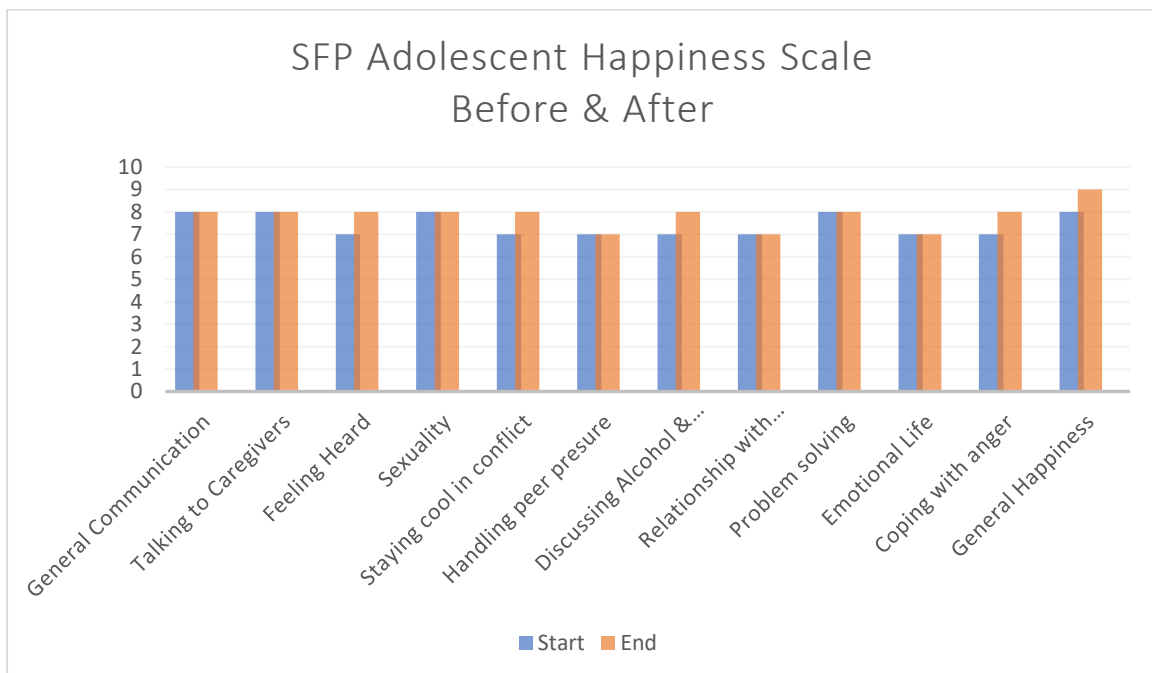
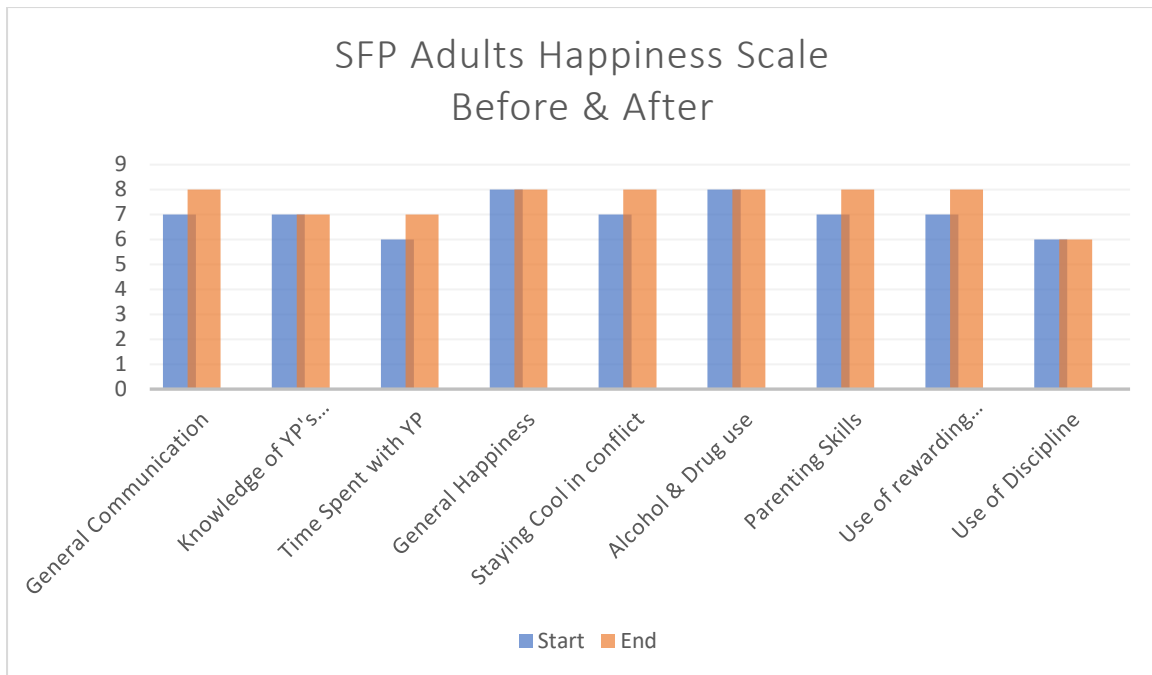
In the East limerick chart below (fig.2) we find that they had only 20% of lone parent attendees to their SFP. Though we have no evidence to show why there is such a disparity between the two, we could surmise to a wider inter-agency relationship in North Tipperary due to its larger geographical size and the need for this relationship to help obtain families to attend their SFP.

East Limerick (Hospital)				
	Family	Referral	Additional supports	Attendance
1	2 parents 1 son	Hospital FRC	Additional support given by facilitators. School kits for children	100%

2	2 parents	LSSC	Childcare support given	100%
3	Mother 1 son & 1 daughter	Secondary School	One to one support given to daughter and with follow up support. School kits for children. Linked into Hospital FRC Food Bank.	100%
4	2 parents 1 son 1 daughter	CAHMS	Follow up support from LYS. School kits for children. Linked into Hospital FRC Food Bank.	80%
5	2 parents 1 daughter	Ballyhoura Family support	One younger child availed of creche. School kits for children.	86%



The two charts below show an average score for happiness scales for both adults and adolescents at the two SFP's.



In general, we see an improvement in the majority of the different categories of the happiness scale that both parents and adolescents completed

#### Direct Quotes from Teenagers:

*"I got an understanding of how to deal with my feelings"*

*"Respect each other"*

*“From attending these sessions, I gained dealing with anger, conflict and problem solving”*

*“I gained the ability to talk to my parents more about stuff going on in school”*

*“It has made talking to my parents easier”*

*“To talk to more people”*

#### **There was an increase for parents in:**

- This was a positive programme to deliver, the parents and teenagers really engaged from the beginning and this ensure that there was great learning from the start which benefited everyone.
- There was poor between some of the parent who attended together at the start of the programme this was challenging. As the weeks went on it was clear that communication was improving for all the family at home and this was extremely rewarding for everyone involved.
- Bringing the age to 11-15 for teenagers was a challenge as some of the young people were a bit more immature, but overall, the feedback from facilitators was positive.
- Feedback from schools showing improvement with the YP engagement.
- Parents really bonded this informal support proved invaluable in how they engaged with the programme weekly.
- All the additional supports offered to parents they took on board to improve outcomes for the YP in their care.
- Parents have connected outside of the programme; informal social capital supports in place having connect positively during the programme.
- Big improvement in the overall parenting skill levels.
- Conflict within the home improved with better communication skills between parents and teenagers.

#### **There was an increase for teens in:**

- They bonded as a group and worked well together, and they really enjoyed the weekly group work and really learned a lot and build trust.
- Weekly incentives from facilitators gave positive feedback to teenagers who engaged well and showed positive leadership skills during the SFP teenager sessions.



Facilitators happy with the YP engagement and they are really enjoyed attending the programme each week, engaged in the course content, and shared positively within the group discussion

## **Support Group**

In 2019 we also started 18 -23-year olds support group. The group was started, with the rationale to support this group in becoming treatment ready. As some members of the group have already been in treatment centres it helps others understand a residential environment, what is expected of young people in this setting and to become familiar with group norms of these centres.