In this presentation....

1. Explore Youth Civic Engagement in Ireland Historical (brief and light touch!)

2. Defining Describing and Valuing in Civic Engagement

3. Some theoretical Underpinnings: (Social Support and Resilience)

4. Models - What Young people and those who work with them can do

5. What Government can and should do!

......But we will have some fun on the way!!!
Starting Point

- There is the prospect that with support, children can and do overcome adversity
- Core to the mission of Ireland, UNESCO, as well as the wider United Nations family
- Recognise Youth as Strength and as a resource - their civic activation gives this expression
- Parent rear young people for themselves as families but also for the benefit of community and civic society
But to start...

Some of us wish to get more Engagement than Others!!!
Irish Historical Context on parenting

- Primarily Catholic - Large Family
- Close Near by Ties in Rural and Urban Contexts
- Child to Adulthood roles and responsibilities
  - Short to long trousers!
- Now a major change in Irish Demographics Youth and Citizenship
  - So A massive learning curve and change in Ireland!
Youth as Seen and not heard in ‘Short Trousers’ contexts!
Early recognition of Children/Youth as Valued Citizens by Pioneering Women of the Irish State

“The Countess” et al!

“Children’s Patriot Treat”
Assembled 30,000 children in Dublin 1900 (Dolan 2010)
Lessons From the Past – Youth as Civic Activists!!!

Charles Dickens
(1812 – 1870)
1. Young Pip!
2. The Urania Project
3. The Ragged Schools
   • Led by Children and Youth Participants
   • Early Mentoring
(Hartley, 2008)
Connecting Civic Engagement

• Valuing Young People today - not just into future
• Children’s proven capacity to be civically active in communities
• Examples: Tsunami - 9/11
• Should not take extreme events to see this
• So by being supportive to others young people benefit themselves,
• This is particularly the case in respect of Disadvantaged Youth
• Not Seeing youth as MAD BAD or SAD!!
### Why Civic Engagement of Youth is Critical?

**For Youth & Families**
- Better outcomes for children
- Preventing Problems

**For Communities**
- Effective Family Functioning
- Healthy Communities

**For Society**
- Promoting Social Inclusion
- Effective Use of Resources
- Productive, well-educated workforce
- Reduction of inequalities
- Promoting Active Citizenship
- Developing Human and Social Capital
### The Parenting of Youth
All passed on as ‘social currency’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Task</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Give physical care</td>
<td>Feeding, shelter, rest, health, protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give affection</td>
<td>Overt physical and verbal warmth and comfort</td>
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<tr>
<td>Give positive regard</td>
<td>Give approval, sensitivity to signals, responsiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide emotional security</td>
<td>Consistent and predictable warmth, sensitivity and comfort</td>
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<tr>
<td>Set boundaries</td>
<td>Clear statements on what is acceptable, good supervision</td>
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<tr>
<td>Allow room to develop</td>
<td>Provide and allow challenges within the child’s capability</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teach social behaviour</td>
<td>Model reliability, reasonableness, and assertiveness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Help develop skills</td>
<td>Encourage learning and exploration, be responsive in play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help cognitive development</td>
<td>Reading, constructive play, monitor schooling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitate social activity</td>
<td>Facilitate peer contact and provide new experiences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
UNICEF/UNESCO WELLBEING INDICATORS FOR YOUTH

• Material well-being
• Health and Safety
• Educational Well-being
• Family and Peer Relationships
• Behaviours and Risks
• Subjective well-being

(UNICEF, 2009)
Types of Civic Engagement for Youth:
Political - Social Justice – Cause Based
Social – Altruism - Need Based

- Youth Civic Engagement in Home
  “Young Carers”
- Youth Civic Engagement in School
  “Peer Educators or Mentors”
- Youth Civic Engagement in Community
  Club or Social Project Leaders
Key Descriptors of Youth Civic Engagement

**Belonging**
- A positive relationship with a caring adult
- An inclusive environment

**Mastery**
- Engagement in learning
- Opportunity for mastery

**Independence**
- Opportunity for self-determination
- To see oneself as a future active participant

**Generosity**
- Opportunity to offer service to others – altruism

Adapted from the 4-H programmes Prepared by Cathann A. Kress, Director, Youth Development, National 4-H Headquarters, CSREES, USDA. September 2004.
The Ingredient of Self-compassion

• Issues of Social Presentation and Emotional Literacy (UNGGER 2006)

Buddha -“All that we are is the result of what we have thought."
Better Wellbeing

Responsive Social Support
Strong Resilience
Self-Compassion

Social & Political Civic Engagement

All Youth with Normative and Non-Normative Development
Types of Civic Engagement
A current Example from Zambia
(McArdle in paper)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Civic</th>
<th>Economic</th>
<th>Social</th>
<th>Political</th>
<th>Cultural</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>School:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Male activities:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Community:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Youth:</strong></td>
<td><strong>School:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A member of: Children’s council or student council</td>
<td>Street vending</td>
<td>Peer groups</td>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>Culture club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefect or monitor</td>
<td>Farming and labouring.</td>
<td>Caring for others</td>
<td>pressure</td>
<td>Drama club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’ Rights Club</td>
<td>Crushing stone</td>
<td>National Independence Day</td>
<td>groups</td>
<td>Poetry club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debate Club</td>
<td></td>
<td>celebrations</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dancing club</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Female activities in public:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sport/school activities:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Mainly Adults:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Community:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member of youth activities, clubs, scouts/girl guides, red cross, Youth Alive,</td>
<td>Markets, maids, farming and prostitution</td>
<td>Football, netball, volleyball, basketball, baseball, athletics, rugby, tennis and swimming</td>
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<td>Initiation ceremonies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Language</td>
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<td>Traditional values</td>
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<td>National Youth Association</td>
<td><strong>Female activities in the home:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Home-based games:</strong></td>
<td>Advocacy by churches</td>
<td><strong>Spirituality/faith:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s press bureau</td>
<td>Household chores, caring for siblings.</td>
<td>Hide and seek, snakes and ladders, Icienga, Nsolo,, sigi, padda padda and riding bicycles</td>
<td></td>
<td>Churches of different faiths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport for Action</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Youth choirs. Salvation Army</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural development programmes</td>
<td><strong>School:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Evangelism, outreach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Anti-AIDs club, Road and transport agency – road safety. Science club, self-evaluation club</td>
<td></td>
<td>Scripture Unions, YWCA</td>
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Social Support Theory
And the Civic Engagement of Young People via Leadership
TEA as Types of Social Support for Young People

Tangible 
Emotional 
Advice

Balance and Buoyancy

Dolan. 2008
CARDS as Qualities of Social Support and Attainable for Young People through Youth Leadership and CE Programmes

- Close
- Admonish Positively
- Reciprocal
- Durable

Dolan. 2008
**CARDS** as Qualities of Social Support and Attainable for Young People through Youth Leadership and CE Programmes

- **Close**: Relationships from Involvement in community programmes
- **Reciprocal**: Scouts becoming Scout Leaders
- **Admonish Positively**: Consultation on Policies that affect Young People
- **Durable**: Persisting with Social Projects or Social Justice Causes

Dolan. 2008
Resilience V Despair
And Familial Civic Engagement

• Resilient in Hiding

• Despair post Sister’s Death in Captivity
Defining Social Support

“Responsive acts of assistance between human beings” Tracy and Whittaker (1994)

Its Proven Buffer to Stress role/One of the few proven areas of Social Science (From medical research)
Key issues in Social Support for Youth and for their Civic Engagement

- **Informal Support** (Ghate and Hazel 2002)
- **Hidden** Support as most effective (Cutrona et al 2010)
- **Levitt’s Convoy Model of Support** (Levitt, 1998)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNICEF Indicator of Wellbeing in Youth</th>
<th>Social Support Factor</th>
<th>Civic Activity Engagement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Material well-being</td>
<td>Concrete Support</td>
<td>Environmental Community Clean up Schemes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Safety</td>
<td>Concrete and Advice Support</td>
<td>Youth participation in personal/community Safety projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Well-being</td>
<td>Advice/ Esteem Support from Durable Relations</td>
<td>Communal In-School Educational &amp; Social Assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family and Peer Relationships</td>
<td>Closeness and Reciprocity of Support</td>
<td>Intergenerational Projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behaviours and Risks</td>
<td>Mitigated by a Positive Social Network membership</td>
<td>Peer Mentoring Projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective well-being</td>
<td>Perceived Social Support</td>
<td>Activities where youth fundraise for others in need</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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The Power of Perception in Social Support
A key Ingredient in how we perceive Youth as contributors to Society?
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A key Ingredient in how we perceive Youth as contributors to Society?
Outside of Parents and Family
-the Role of Friendships in adolescence and as Influence in CE (Webster-Stratton 2007)
For Teenage Parents
Hidden and Durable Support
Particularly from Parents
Perceived Support –
Key how they viewed help on offer.
Convoyed Networks
Enabling them to Access Education/Services
(Riordan 2005)

Social Provisions Scale (Dolan, Cutrona and Russell 2010)
Measures Social Support in Children/Parents
for Quantity and Quality of support
What I have learned

• From my own Youth
• work experience and from my research

• For those in adversity, civic engagement can lead to significant improvement - and help rebuild key relationships

• The Case of John and Hillwalking!!!
Respect for Children and Youth

- Underpinning Rights as part of Civic Engagement
- Social Justice in Children and Youth (Honneth 1995) – “Recognition”
- Hypothesis: If children and youth are valued, they will be civically engaged (political and social)
Youth Cafés as a Model/Project for Social Civic Engagement of Youth

• Youth Led Community Service – with full Youth Governance
• Universal Support programme for youth drugs and alcohol free
• Targeted Support Programmes e.g. Gay and Lesbian Youth
• Social Civic Engagement e.g. base for support to homeless adults “soup runs”

See OMCYA.ie
Youth Parliament as a Model/Project for Political Civic Engagement of Youth

• Youth Participation – voice of youth on policy
• Dail no Nog operates as a parliament
• Venue to express concerns on issues that affect youth e.g. forthcoming Irish referendum on the rights of children and youth
• Town planning
• Service for youth planning consultation

See OMCYA.ie
Resilience

“Doing Better than expected”
“Bouncing Back”
“overcoming the Odds” (Masten 2004)

Weighing Scale - Protective Factors outweighing Risk Factors (Gilligan 2009)

How can this be built through Civic Engagement?
Civic Engagement of Youth as Compensatory

Civic Activity can create Space from self and problems; in-depth understanding; belief from ‘engaging and doing’ that you can succeed - (Rutter et al, 1984)

Can also Foster Self-Compassion & Restoration

How can this be built through Civic Engagement?
Civic Engagement & Child/Youth Rights Internationally

• Bound by issues such as religion, class and gender

Examples of Issues in:

• Republic of Ireland
• Countries in transition
• Sub-Saharan Countries

Reciprocal learning

Need for Cultural Competence (Husain, 2006)
In Conclusion....

• So Where does this leave us..
Development & Quality Testing of Youth Civic Engagement

Activities
- International Youth Leadership Programmes
- Civic Engagement Models – Post Conflict Countries
- Reflective Practice Methods

Products
- Practice Programmes Assessments
- Tool Kits
- Programme & Policy Alerts

Targeted Funding Sources?
Key Partners / Contributors?

Quality Assured Packages

International Youth Leadership Programmes

Reflective Practice Methods
Civic Engagement Activation

For C & Y (universal)

Enlisted Social Support

Enabled Resilience

For C & Y In Adversity

Rights and Respect for Children/Youth
Instilling predictable hope in others that they can continue to grow and will overcome the odds.

-Agenda for Youth and CE

-(But hidden)
Go Raibh Maith Agat!!!