

02/08/2025 National Youth Health Programme 2025

ADDRESSING CONSENT AND PORNOGRAPHY WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Dates: 26th June 2025

Venue: University of Galway- HP Conference

Facilitators: Kevin O'Driscoll and Louise Monaghan



NYCI National
Youth
Council
of Ireland

National Youth Council of Ireland

NYCI is the representative body for voluntary youth organisations in Ireland.

Vision: An Ireland where young people in every community are empowered through excellent youth work to realise their potential and actively participate in an inclusive society.

Membership

1,400+ Staff

support

40,000+ Volunteers

to work with over

380,000 Young People



NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL OF IRELAND

ROLE OF THE ORGANISATION

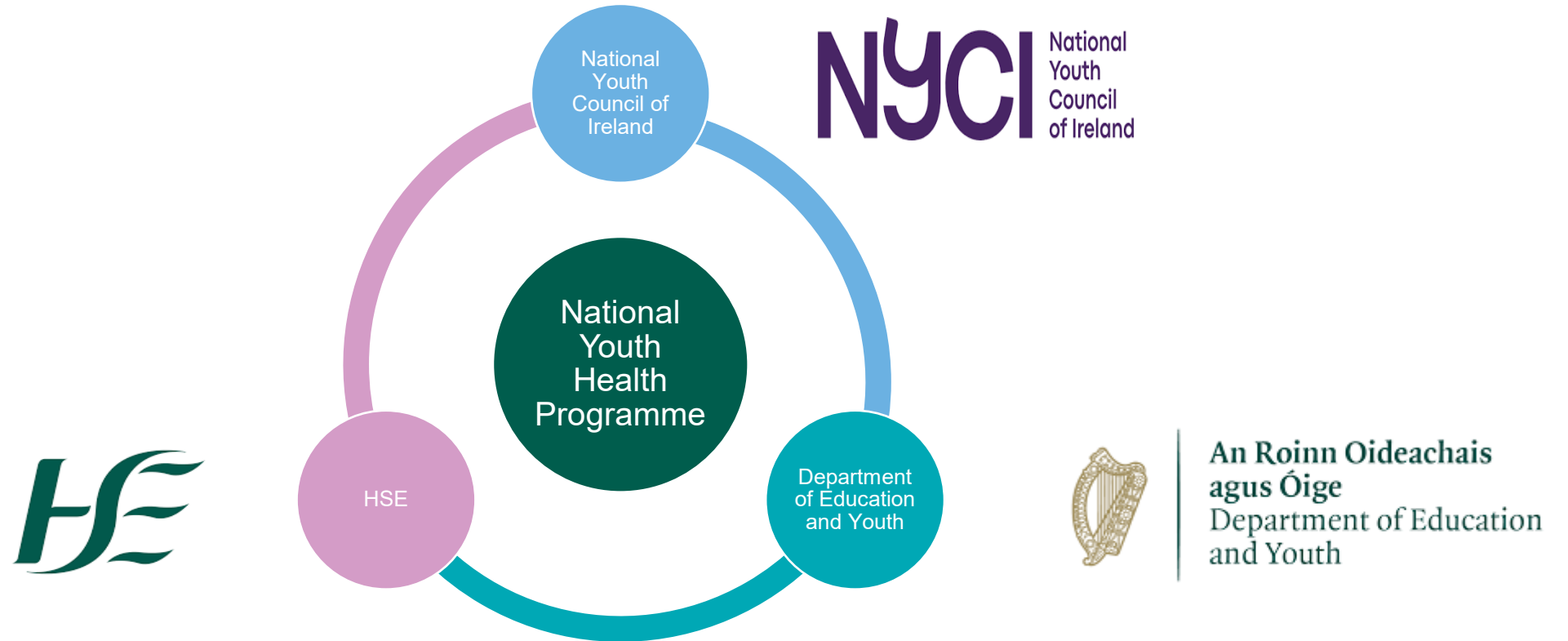
NYCI is a membership organisation that represents the shared interests of voluntary youth organisations and uses our collective expertise to act on issues that impact on young people. We do this by:

- Representing the shared interests of voluntary youth organisations.
- Building solidarity among our members.
- Advocating on issues that impact on the lives of young people.
- Promoting the development of evidence informed high quality specialist youth work practice.
- Capacity building and professional development.



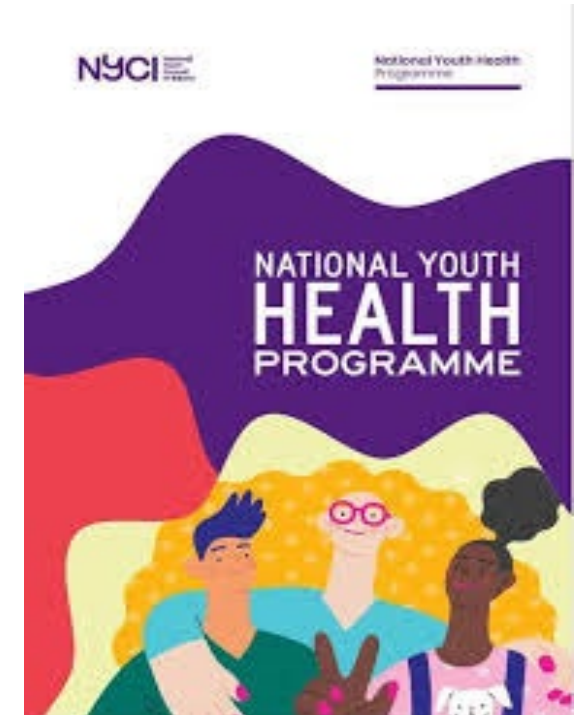
NATIONAL YOUTH HEALTH PROGRAMME

“To build the health promotion capacity and sustainability of health promotion in the youth sector”



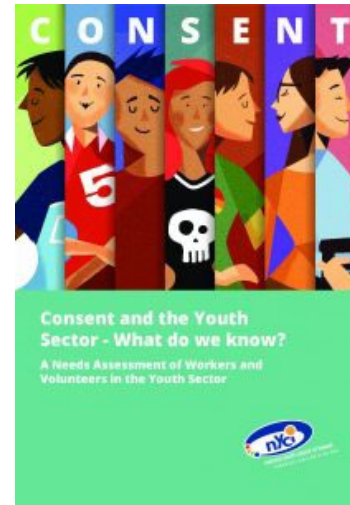
National Youth Health Programme

- Building capacity within the sector through the provision of training and evidence-based resources for groups and youth workers using both a topic and settings approach
- Developing and promoting a culture within the youth sector which focuses on health and wellbeing
- Advocating on those issues that affect the health and well-being of young people



NATIONAL YOUTH HEALTH PROGRAMME

SEXUAL HEALTH PROMOTION RESOURCES



WHO IS THE TRAINING DESIGNED FOR

TARGET AUDIENCE AND PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

- Youth Worker Sector
- Social Care Workers
- Intellectual Disability Services
- Neurodiversity Services
- Residential Care Services
- Informal Education Settings
- Counselling and Psychotherapy
- Women's Refuge and Domestic Abuse Services
- HSE staff
- Sexual Health and Sexual Violence services
- An Garda Siochana

SINCE THE BEGINNING OF 2023, OVER 400 PROFESSIONALS SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE ATTENDED NYHP TRAINING AROUND CONSENT AND PORNOGRAPHY

YOUTH WORK AND SEXUAL HEALTH PROMOTION

WHY IT IS WELL POSITIONED TO DELIVER RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION

1. Trusted Relationships

- Youth workers build voluntary, non-judgmental relationships
- Young people often feel more comfortable opening up

2. Holistic, Person-Centred Approach

- Focus on personal development and emotional wellbeing
- RSE is delivered in a way that resonates with real-life experiences

3. Inclusive and Non-Formal Settings

- More flexible than classroom-based learning
- Safe spaces that embrace diversity, including LGBTQ+ identities

4. Responsive and Adaptive

- Can tailor content to local needs and emerging issues
- More room for dialogue, reflection, and peer learning

5. Strong Track Record

- Proven history of effective health, wellbeing, and rights-based education
- Experienced in facilitating sensitive conversations



ADDRESSING CONSENT AND PORNOGRAPHY WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

TRAINING OBJECTIVES

- Develop a comprehensive understanding of pornography, including its definition, media influence, and the reasons young people engage with it.
- Explore the impact of pornography on young people's emotional, psychological, and social development.
- Understand why young people engage in explicit image sharing and how to support them around the issue.
- Clarify the concept of consent and its importance in fostering healthy relationships.
- Examine the key issues relating to consent, including legal, social, and cultural considerations.
- Equip participants with practical strategies to guide young people in addressing and understanding pornography and consent in their lives.



WHAT IS COVERED IN THE TRAINING?

The training is designed to be participatory and engaging for those attending. It is constantly evaluated and adapted according to the needs and feedback of the participants attending the training.

The content of the training includes-

- Relevant definitions and information on the wider topic of sexual health and sexual health promotion
- Relevant definitions and legislation concerning consent, pornography, image sharing, gender based violence and coercive control.
- Relevant research around the topics above
- Providing a space for professionals to network and share practice ideas about the topic
- Introducing a range of engaging and interactive activities to be used when working with young people about sexual health
- Dealing with disclosure and creating a supportive and trusting environment

ISSUES AND CONCERNS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

IN RELATION TO CONSENT AND PORNOGRAPHY

This information was collected directly from those attending the training over the past number of years

- Lack of Comprehensive Sex Education-** Many young people report gaps in understanding consent and healthy relationships.
- Influence of Online Pornography-** Unrealistic expectations and distorted views of sex, relationships, and consent.
- Consent Confusion-** Unclear boundaries and pressure among peers; consent often misunderstood as a one-time or non-verbal act.
- Early Exposure to Pornography-** Average age of first exposure is decreasing; often accidental and unregulated.
- Gendered Expectations & Harm-** Porn can reinforce harmful stereotypes and contribute to coercive behaviour.
- Digital Sharing & Sexting-** Risks around non-consensual image sharing and legal implications under Irish law
- Coercive Control-** Emotional manipulation, isolation, monitoring, and digital control increasingly reported.

THANK YOU