The National Centre For Youth Mental Health

Inaugural Annual Report

07

headstrong
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It is with great pleasure that Headstrong presents our Annual Report for 2007.

2007 was the first full year of operation of Headstrong and it has been an exciting and rewarding year for the Board, the staff and our local partners.

Mental health is the primary health concern of young people. Research shows that at any one time 20% of our young people are experiencing significant mental health problems, the majority of whom are not in contact with any helping agency. It is our belief, supported by international research, that if young people have access to timely and appropriate supports when they first experience mental health problems, the majority will not go on to develop serious mental health issues.

One of the major barriers to obtaining mental health supports in Ireland today is the stigma that is associated with mental health issues. Headstrong want to change the way Ireland views and responds to young people’s mental health needs. Together with young people, Headstrong will work to reduce this stigma so that the normal experience for a young person encountering problems with their mental health will be that they can speak openly about how they feel and get the support they need when and where they need it.

In establishing Headstrong, significant research was undertaken into international models of best practice in youth mental health and wellbeing and Headstrong has established its approach to service development based on best thinking in Australia, the USA and the UK.

Young people have been centrally involved in driving Headstrong’s work from its inception. A dedicated and passionate Youth Advisory Panel (YAP) was established in 2006 and has been the cornerstone of Headstrong’s work to date. The YAP ensures Headstrong remains connected to and advised by the voice of young people. However, we are also concerned with tapping into the broader voice of young people in Ireland. In comparison to other countries, there is very little published research on youth mental health in Ireland. In 2007 Headstrong commenced the design of a comprehensive study into the risks and protective factors for young people regarding their mental health. This study will collect data for approximately 15,000 young people and will provide really valuable information on the experience of young people in Ireland today. In addition to designing this study, considerable research on youth mental health and wellbeing and the current services and supports in Ireland was undertaken in 2007. Headstrong will publish the foundation document “Somewhere to turn to, someone to talk to”, outlining the reasons for the establishment of Headstrong and Headstrong’s approach to youth mental health and wellbeing in 2008.

My sincere thanks go to the Founding Director, Dr Tony Bates, our Youth Advisory Panel, the staff of Headstrong and to my colleagues on the Board for their dedication to the work that Headstrong has undertaken. Their experience and support has contributed greatly to its success and development.

I would also like to thank our Donors in particular the One Foundation and the Dormant Accounts Fund for their support and commitment to Headstrong. I believe that the work we are doing is of great importance in supporting young people on their journey into adulthood.

Deirdre Mortell
Chairperson
In recent times the mental health and wellbeing of the young people of Ireland is not something which would make great dinner conversation.

However, with the high levels of suicide amongst young people and with increasing numbers experiencing significant emotional distress, it is time for the country to listen to what young people have to say. Listening to young people has been at the forefront of the work of Headstrong since it was established in 2006.

Internationally and in Ireland young people have been clear in their articulation of what works best for them and why traditionally services have not been able to meet their needs. Young people have told us that they want someone to turn to and someone to talk to, someone who will listen without judging them and who will respect their views and opinions. It is time to put the needs of young people first rather than developing services only based on the views of those professionals who provide the services.

Headstrong’s work is based on understanding what works best for young people which, in turn, stems from significant community consultations and a review of international best practice. It also advocates a vision for a more collaborative and integrated system of care.

Headstrong’s brief is to work with communities to ensure that services are available at the earliest possible point when problems emerge for young people, whilst at the same time enhancing the community’s understanding of mental health and reducing the associated stigma. For many young people we know that we cannot stop the pain that they experience, but we can create networks of support right across the community that enable us to respond more effectively to their needs. This means that every person concerned with the welfare of young people needs a greater awareness of what their world is really like and of the many different kinds of support they need in their journey to adulthood.

In the last 12 months Headstrong has begun to take shape and realise its dream of supporting communities to provide better supports for their young people. To date we have undertaken significant work in Galway to help shape a new service which will transform the way young people can access support. Also during that time we have begun to work with communities in Roscommon, Ballymun, Meath, Kerry and Dublin 17. A significant amount of work has been achieved in this time and this, the first of our annual reports, aims to highlight the work of Headstrong to date.

Research and advocacy are critical components in the work of Headstrong and we have begun to lay the foundations for a national survey of young people which will provide critical data relating to young people’s mental health and wellbeing.

Headstrong brings together some of the best minds both in Ireland and internationally to help realise its vision, at a Board level, amongst its staff and with partner organisations. It also has a fantastic resource in its Youth Advisory Panel who play a critical role in keeping us on track with what young people want.

The year ahead will see us working in more communities across the country and expanding our work in research and advocacy. It is my hope that throughout the year the health and wellbeing of our young people will be the content of dinner party conversations around the country.

Tony Bates
Founding Director
Headstrong has set a ten year goal that by 2016 the normal experience for a young person experiencing problems with their mental health will be that they can speak openly about how they feel and get the support they need when they need it. In order to achieve this two fundamental shifts are required: to strengthen and improve the support system available to young people and to reduce the stigma associated with mental health and help seeking.

Headstrong is working with existing service systems and a broad range of relevant youth and community organisations to examine ways in which services can be re-engineered to better meet the mental health and wellbeing needs of young people. This is a process which takes a significant investment over time to ensure that the health sector and service providers are ready to think differently about how they provide services to young people. Services for young people have traditionally been tailored to the perspective of the practitioner or worker with little emphasis on the needs or the views of the young person.

Headstrong is about achieving a significant shift in the way service providers think about supporting young people by placing the young person’s needs at the centre of service design and delivery. It will require both professionals and the community to think outside the box with regards to how young people access support. This will involve increasing young people’s access to information and support through the internet and mobile phone technology, something which will challenge our traditional concepts of how best to support young people.

While recognising the vital role of health providers and broader youth services in supporting young people’s mental health, Headstrong also seeks to harness and strengthen ‘informal’ supports within the community (e.g. peers, family, teachers, sports coaches, youth workers and other people in the community). While health services can do their best to intervene when mental health problems emerge, the majority of mental health promotion and prevention work takes place at a community-level. People operating outside of the health system are often well placed to build coping skills and confidence in young people as well as to identify and support young people who may be at risk of developing a mental health problem. As such, they play a vital role in prevention and early intervention, a role which should be nurtured. Headstrong aims to support these people to respond to young people’s needs themselves where appropriate, and to encourage and assist them in accessing professional support for young people when necessary.

In order for young people to think more positively about seeking assistance when they need it, they will need to feel comfortable with the notion of ‘help seeking’. As it currently stands most young people are reluctant to seek support due to stigma and concerns around confidentiality.

Headstrong is aiming for a paradigm shift in the way young people and the broader community think about and respond to young people’s mental health needs. In order to achieve this, a sustained campaign of promoting positive mental health and wellbeing in the community is required. Evidence suggests that in other countries where this has occurred there has been an increase in young people’s understanding of mental health and a willingness to access supports appropriate to their needs. In some instances there has also been a change in the way traditional services have been provided which are more focussed on the needs of young people.

Headstrong aims to bring about fundamental systems change in how the country thinks about and responds to young people’s mental health needs. This change will take time but through a model which ensures that young people, local service providers and the wider community have input and ultimately control over the process, Headstrong will ensure that these changes happen and that they are sustainable over time. This is the cornerstone for Headstrong being able to achieve its long term goal of ensuring youth mental health is something we as a community are comfortable talking about and that young people are able to access the support they need when they need it.
About Us

Organisational Development
Why Headstrong Was Established

Funded by a feasibility grant from the One Foundation in February 2006, Headstrong spent six months investigating the feasibility of solving the problem that in Ireland a young person experiencing mental health problems is unlikely to get the support they need when they need it. This involved conducting a significant review of international literature on youth mental health, visiting international centres of excellence and establishing a Youth Advisory Panel.

As part of this process, Headstrong consulted widely through open public meetings and through multi-disciplinary meetings, which included representatives from young people, psychiatry, psychology, primary care, social work, school counsellors, nursing, the youth sector and the HSE.

The clear message from this feasibility study was: the current system of care in Ireland is not meeting young people’s mental health and wellbeing needs. It is possible to solve this problem through fundamental systems change. Headstrong aims, through partnerships, to mobilise the resources, expertise and passion of thousands of stakeholders to achieve this goal and by so doing, most of the 160,000 young people (aged 12-25) in Ireland today experiencing significant mental health difficulties will benefit in some way. In addition to supporting young people in distress, through its work in mental health promotion and prevention, Headstrong aims to work with all young people to better develop their understanding of positive mental health and wellbeing and how they can look after their mental health.

Benefits To Young People

The benefits to young people will include:
• Earlier help-seeking
• Enhanced coping skills
• Increased rates of social and vocational recovery
• Decreased rates of relapse
• Less hospitalisation
• Less reliance on medication
• Lower rates of problematic substance use
• Less likelihood of self-harm and suicide

Headstrong will play a critical role as an independent, non-profit, expert partner for those working to improve mental health and wellbeing supports to young people. Headstrong works in partnership with existing services and supports in a community to enhance the quality and accessibility of the support they offer, ensuring it has greater resonance and produces more sustainable outcomes for young people. By providing expertise and support to communities, Headstrong will act as a catalyst for change. Currently, existing services are fragmented and Headstrong will support the redesign of services and supports into an integrated, accessible, appropriate and effective service system which better meets the needs of young people.

Charity Status

Headstrong was established in 2006 as a company limited by guarantee. Headstrong applied for and was granted Charitable Status from the Revenue Commissioners in 2007. This means the Revenue Commissioners recognises that Headstrong is established for charitable purposes only, is exempt from certain taxes and more importantly that tax can be reclaimed, on gifts and donations made, thereby increasing the value of any donation that individuals make to Headstrong.
Fundraising

Headstrong receives support from the One Foundation. This includes grant aid, to invest in building the core capacity of Headstrong, and also includes support and expertise. The grant aid is given as a challenge grant; Headstrong is required to raise other funding and work towards financial independence from the One Foundation.

Headstrong was approved grant aid from the Government of €1m over 2 years for service development through the Dormant Accounts Fund, as a project that addresses matters of major public concern/offers new interventions to tackle headline policy issues.

Headstrong also received donations from individuals in 2007.

The financial support from the One Foundation, from the Dormant Accounts Fund and from individual donors is greatly appreciated and we would also like to acknowledge the generosity of individuals and companies who offered their expertise on a pro bono basis.
Our People
Our Partners

We would like to thank all of our partner organisations for their support in 2007 and their ongoing commitment to supporting Headstrong’s work. Our relationships with our partner organisations have been instrumental in shaping the direction that Headstrong has taken from its inception, and they continue to inform our development now and into the future (see Appendix A for a brief description of our partners).
Our Board

Headstrong’s Board’s responsibilities include providing strategic direction, ensuring Headstrong acts legally and ethically, approving annual budgets, ensuring funds entrusted to Headstrong are managed appropriately, raising funds and organisational awareness.

Declarations

Declan Ryan (Chair 2006-2007)
Declan Ryan acted as the Board’s Chairperson from Headstrong’s establishment in 2006 until December 2007, when he resigned as Chair. Declan continues as a Board member. Declan is MD of Irelandia Investments and was a director of Ryanair for 18 years up to 2004. He has held several senior management positions in Ryanair including CEO. He is Co-Founder of the One Foundation. Declan is a Board member of a number of companies and of Barnardos Ireland and Integrating Ireland.

Deirdre Mortell (Chair 2008)
Deirdre Mortell is Co-Founder of the One Foundation. Prior to this, Deirdre worked in senior fundraising and communications roles in the Irish NGO sector for 11 years, with Barnardos Ireland, Oxfam Ireland and as Chair of the Irish Charities Tax Reform Group. Deirdre has a Degree in Business from University College Cork and a Masters Degree in Women’s Studies from Trinity College Dublin.

Pat Brosnan
Patrick Brosnan is Director for Mental Health within the Health Service Executive (HSE) Mid-West. His clinical experience in mental health extends over thirty years, working initially as a staff nurse in a variety of clinical settings and later filling a clinical management role. He is a Registered Psychiatric Nurse and is also on the Register of General Nurses kept by An Bord Altranais. He holds a Certificate in Behaviour Therapy, a Diploma in Professional Studies and a BSc. (Hons) Nursing Studies, awarded by University College Cork. He has participated in a variety of courses organised by the Institute of Public Administration in the areas of Industrial Relations and Management Development. He is particularly interested in quality and in promoting continuous quality improvement in health services.

Angela Greatley
Angela Greatley is Chief Executive of the Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health (SCMH). Angela joined SCMH in 2003 as Director of Policy & Research. Prior to joining SCMH Angela was Fellow in Mental Health at the King’s Fund from 1997. Angela has also worked as a manager and a commissioner in the NHS in north and east London. She is a non-executive director of a mental health NHS trust and sits on the Boards of two mental health organisations. SCMH is an independent charity working to improve the quality of life for people with mental health problems. It carries out research, development and training programmes to influence policy and practice. Its priority programmes are focused on employment for people with mental health problems and on mental health care in the criminal justice system.

Pat McGorry
Professor Patrick McGorry is the Executive Director of ORYGEN Research Centre, Melbourne, Australia. He is a world-leading researcher in the area of early intervention and youth mental health. His work has played an integral role in the development of safe, effective treatments and innovative research involving the needs of young people with emerging mental disorders. Professor McGorry is currently the President of the International Early Psychosis Association, and Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Melbourne. He was awarded the Founders Medal of the Australian Society for Psychiatric Research at the 2001 ASPR Annual Scientific Meeting, and the Centenary Medal from the Australian Government in 2003.

Ian Simington
Ian Simington is Group Development Director of NTR, a developer of renewable energy and sustainable waste management businesses. Ian is a former management consultant and a former builder. He has Degrees in Management from MIT and Engineering from UCD.

Chris Underhill
Chris Underhill’s working life has been devoted to assisting marginalised people either in the UK or overseas. He has started up or managed charities specialising in championing new ideas and innovations. He has founded three charities; Thrive, Action on Disability and Development (ADD); and Basic Needs. Chris graduated from the University of London and later in life achieved an MSc in Policy.
During his working career he has been a Trustee of many other charities including Action Health 2000, Friends of ADD, International Disability Education and Awareness and Oxfam, he served on several Oxfam sub-committees including, Africa Grants Committee, Staffing Committee, Trustee Role and Council Structure. In 1999 he was awarded an MBE for his work in disability.

Our Governance

Headstrong's Board meets approximately five times each year. Headstrong operates a number of subcommittees, each chaired by a Board member. The Founding Director convenes the meeting and other members of staff may be in attendance.

a) The Site Selection Subcommittee
Members: Chris Underhill (Chair), Deirdre Mortell and Pat Brosnan.

The site selection subcommittee deals with:
- Developing the processes for site selection for service
development support
- Assessing expressions of interest and allocating planning grants
- Reviewing business plans, for implementation of re-designed
  system of care and making recommendations to the Board.
- Review progress of Headstrong engagement with local communities
  and progress of the service development in local areas

In 2007 the site-selection subcommittee awarded planning grants
to Galway City and County, Ballymun and County Meath.

b) The Executive Subcommittee
Members: Declan Ryan (Chair), Deirdre Mortell. The executive subcommittee
deals with financial issues, HR policy and agreeing operational procedures.
The executive subcommittee met several times in 2007 to develop policies
and procedures for Headstrong and to review operational progress.

Our Youth Advisors

Headstrong is strongly committed to youth participation and ensuring
that young people have a significant voice in the work of the organisation. We have established a youth advisory panel (YAP) who have been
excellent advocates on behalf of young people across all aspects of our
organisation's development. This is also seen as a critical function of the
communities with whom we work, and as a consequence, we advise on
the establishment of local YAPs with the communities we work with.

The YAP is a group of young people between the ages of 17 to 27 who act in
an advisory capacity to Headstrong. This group of young people give of their
time and experiences, playing a key role in the establishment of Headstrong
and in helping to make our programmes effective.

Our Team (at 31st December 2007)

Tony Bates ..........Founding Director
Aislinn Amory..........Administration Assistant
Louize Carroll.........Programme Development Officer – Jigsaw
Blanaid Cleary.........Director of Finance and Operations (from September 2007)
Barbara Dooley.........Director of Research
Karen Galligan.......Senior Research Officer (from October 2007)
Matt Hamilton.........Director of Operations and Public Affairs (to August 2007)
Bob Illback............Director of Planning and Evaluation
Conor McPartlin.......Research Assistant (to August 2007)
Anja Riber Skydt.......Officer Manager
Faye Scanlan..........Programme Development Officer
Nuala Smith..........Youth Participation Officer

Craig Hodges was recruited as Director of Service Development in 2007
and joined the team at Headstrong in January 2008.

Tony Bates - Founding Director
Tony has 30 years experience of working in mental health. Prior to founding
Headstrong in March 2006, Tony worked as Principal Clinical Psychologist
at St James’s Hospital. Tony had previously worked and trained in the USA
alongside some of the leading international innovators in mental health and
also established Trinity College Dublin’s Masters in Cognitive Behavioural
Therapy. Tony is a regular contributor to national print and broadcast debate
about mental health, including a fortnightly column in the Irish Times. Tony was
editor and full time writer of A Vision for Change, the new ten year Government
policy on mental health service reform.
Headstrong’s Learning Tour

As part of an international learning tour, Tony Bates (Founding Director) and Faye Scanlan (Programme Development Officer) visited centres of excellence in Youth Mental Health in Australia, the UK and Ghana. Australia has in many ways set the gold standard for the rest of the world when it comes to ways of working innovatively with young people around their mental health needs. With this in mind, Tony and Faye spent two weeks visiting a wide variety of organisations in both Melbourne and Sydney to see what they are doing, how they are doing it, and ultimately, how Headstrong can learn from their experience.

Some of the organisations visited were:
- Inspire (Sydney) – Inspire’s flagship programme is ReachOut!
- ORYGEN Youth Health (Melbourne)
- The Centre for Adolescent Health (Melbourne)
- Headspace (Melbourne)

Tony went on to visit Ghana to learn more about Basic Needs, an organisation working to meet the needs of people suffering from severe mental illness in developing countries where resources are practically non-existent. Tony’s time in Ghana has had a profound effect on Headstrong’s strategy. It left one resounding message – community empowerment is a vital ingredient for change.

Headstrong was also influenced by work going on closer to home, having visited several innovative organisations in the UK. These included:
- The Zone – Plymouth
- The Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health – London
- Young Minds – London
- Mental Health Foundation – London
- The Junction – Colchester
- The Scottish Development Centre – Edinburgh

Headstrong has learnt a huge amount from other countries’ experiences of reforming youth mental health services. In many ways, we are standing on the shoulders of giants; we have had the opportunity to learn from their experience, their advice and the challenges they encountered.

However, each country, and indeed, each community, has its own unique needs, and no model will work in all situations. As well as researching international best-practice, Headstrong has been working, and continues to work, to further our understanding of best practice in youth mental health in Ireland. This attention to the local environment is vital in creating a model of youth mental health reform which will fit the Irish context.

The international learning tour allowed Headstrong to develop a broad framework of current best-practice internationally from which we could begin to develop and create an Irish model of Youth Mental Health Services and Supports.

We have created an organisation and a model of service development (Jigsaw) both of which are unique to Ireland.
JIGSAW: A model for an enhanced youth mental health support system

What is Jigsaw?
Jigsaw has been developed by Headstrong as a programme which aims to promote change in Ireland at both the local and national level in relation to the delivery and accessibility of mental health services and supports to young people (aged 12 to 25). The Jigsaw programme works with communities in a systematic way to identify the needs of their young people and to coordinate existing services and supports in a way that makes them accessible and appropriate to the diverse needs of young people. This programme is based on international best practice in youth mental health and defines the change process required to coordinate multiple agencies and supports that are relevant to young people and concerned with their welfare.

Implementing Jigsaw involves building the capacity of all those concerned with the welfare of young people to better support those with emerging mental health problems, in any given community.

The aim of Jigsaw is that whatever their level of need, young people should be able to access quality support, when they need it, in settings where they feel safe, comfortable and respected. This means providing services for young people in places where they already congregate and in ways that are acceptable and appropriate to them, ensuring that every young person has someone to talk to and somewhere to turn to when they need it.
Our Plan to Pilot the Jigsaw Programme in Five Communities in Ireland

2007 saw Headstrong embark on piloting Headstrong’s Jigsaw programme in five different communities around the country.

A key feature of the Jigsaw Pilot Programme is to see it developed in five different and diverse communities. We know that all communities are different and have many different strengths and weaknesses which contribute to their understanding of how to best support young people. Jigsaw is not a ‘one-size fits all’ approach. While adhering to Headstrong’s core values and principles, each community will adapt Jigsaw in such a way that it achieves the best-fit with local needs and makes the best use of existing resources. Through developing the Jigsaw Programme in five different communities we will have a greater understanding of the different models and their capacity to be replicated in other similar communities.

A comprehensive evaluation will be part of the Jigsaw process in each of the communities we work with. In the long term, we hope that what is learned will inform efforts in other communities, and provide assurance about the ability of a community initiative to promote both significant and lasting change.

In 2007 Headstrong worked most intensively with Galway City and County. Headstrong also engaged with Ballymun through youngballymun, Co. Meath through the HSE, Co. Roscommon through the Roscommon Partnership and County Kerry through North Kerry Together. These communities represent a diverse mix of communities with whom Headstrong has begun to engage.

How Headstrong Works with Local Communities through the Jigsaw Programme

Headstrong works with a community to develop a Jigsaw Programme on a phased approach:

**Phase One: Readiness Building & Site Selection**

Headstrong’s engagement with a given community begins with building and assessing ‘Community Readiness’. ‘Community Readiness’ refers to the point at which an identified community is ready to make an application for a planning grant, and upon Board approval, to enter Jigsaw planning, the second phase of the Jigsaw Programme.

**Phase Two: Planning**

If a Planning Grant is approved, a Project Coordinator is appointed and a Project Team is established. This grant includes up to €50,000 grant aid plus the allocation of Headstrong staff resources to work through the community-based planning phase. The planning phase begins with a thorough needs and resource assessment within the community. Following analyses of the findings of the needs and resource assessment, the Project Team works together to identify what kinds of prevention and intervention activities are most likely to work for their community. The outcome of this process is that the Project Team (with broad stakeholder buy-in) collaboratively develops a three-year business plan to submit to Headstrong for consideration of investment for the implementation of Headstrong’s Jigsaw Programme in their community.

**Phase Three: Implementation**

If the Board approves an implementation investment in the three-year business plan, Headstrong awards a 3-year grant as well as dedicating the allocation of Headstrong’s staff resources to support the Project team in the implementation of the business plan. The grant aid is awarded to the Project team as a whole, with a nominated lead agency taking responsibility for the grant. Headstrong works with the Project Team to put in place the necessary structures and processes to operationalise and evaluate the Jigsaw programme – e.g. establishing governance structures, developing clinical governance procedures, recruitment, and training.
Phase Four: Evaluation

Headstrong is committed to rigorously evaluating the impact of the Jigsaw programme on young people, communities and local services. Headstrong will support local Jigsaw project teams to carefully monitor and assess the programme to find out what’s working, what’s not working and how we can make it work better. Young people will be centrally involved in all stages of this process.

Headstrong’s work with Communities in 2007

Jigsaw Galway

Headstrong ended 2007 with the announcement of implementation investment in Jigsaw in Galway City and County, which will be the first pilot project for Jigsaw nationally. Headstrong have partnered with Galway Primary and Community Continuing Care (PCCC) to provide investment to support the development of Jigsaw in Galway. The PCCC have also made a significant financial investment in both staffing and infrastructure for Jigsaw Galway.

The model proposed by the Project Team in Galway will see the establishment of a new ‘one stop shop’ service for young people aged 15-25 in Galway city with outreach to rural areas of the county.

The primary location for the service will be in Galway City at 18 Mary Street. A core purpose of this centralised location is to provide a base of operations, or a ‘hub’, for the team to coordinate a network of supports and services for young people throughout Co. Galway. In addition to accommodating a multi-disciplinary staff group, Mary Street will serve as a drop-in and referral centre where young people will feel comfortable, respected and able to talk with someone.

Jigsaw Ballymun

Headstrong began working in partnership with youngballymun in September 2006 on the design of Jigsaw Ballymun. This project aims to improve the mental health and wellbeing of young people (aged 12-22) in Ballymun. Headstrong’s Service Planning Team, led by Prof. Bob Illback, worked intensively with a local Project Team to determine the needs and resources of their community which was completed in September 2007.

Throughout the planning process Headstrong and youngballymun worked closely together with local partners to ensure that Jigsaw Ballymun was designed around the unique needs and resources of the Ballymun community. Members of the local community and, most importantly, young people themselves are working with youth workers, mental health professionals, community service providers and schools to design a range of supports that will work for young people in Ballymun.

Other Communities enter the Community Readiness Phase

In December 2007, Headstrong were pleased to award a planning grant to Co. Meath. Also during the year Headstrong made several visits to Co. Roscommon under the invitation of the Roscommon Partnership with a view to building community readiness locally. There was also engagement with Dublin 17 around their local development needs for young people.

In November 2007 Headstrong had a preliminary meeting with North Kerry Together to discuss how they might be able to begin building community readiness with a view to applying for a Headstrong planning grant in the future.
Advocacy

Advocacy is a key area of work for Headstrong and it overlaps with our work in both Service Development and Research. Headstrong aims to be the key national authority for youth mental health in Ireland in the coming years. As a new and emerging area of interest it is critical to build up a level of knowledge and expertise to assist in developing the policy agenda, and ensuring that both our policies and practice reflect the best thinking and practice internationally. In 2007 our key area of focus was the development of the Youth Advisory Panel and ensuring their voice in the Irish landscape of mental health.

Who Are the Youth Advisory Panel?

Headstrong’s Youth Advisors are a group of young people between the ages of 17 to 27 who have a passion for making change happen for young people in Ireland. As youth advisors they meet with Headstrong to discuss our work and our role for young people in Ireland, while also advising us on issues such as our web design, recruitment and publications. As campaigners they represent the voice of young people at public events, conferences and through the media.

Why Are the YAP Important?

Listening to and involving young people in the design and implementation of their own services are key principles at Headstrong. By working with young people we can develop responses that will engage and empower them in finding their own solutions.

As one member of the YAP commented “young people encounter very different problems than those of previous generations, so we need a mental health service that responds to the unique experiences we face today. The best way to create the most appropriate service for today’s young people is to involve young people in all aspects of the planning and implementation of those services.” (Headstrong Youth Advisor)

Key activities of the YAP in 2007

Youth Advisors and Headstrong staff presented keynote papers at:

- The Fianna Fáil Parliamentary Party Annual Conference in Druids Glen
- The UCD Equality Society and Amnesty International Public Meeting on Youth Mental Health and Human Rights in UCD
- The Cork Mental Health Alliances public forum on Youth Mental Health
- The Samaritan’s Annual conference
- Grow’s National Youth Day
- Na Calai CDP Suicide Prevention Conference in Portumna
- The PPR Project Rights in Action Conference, Belfast

Publications by youth advisors:

- Emma and Sarah each had an article on youth mental health published in the Irish Times
- Tim’s article on Headstrong was published in Hotpress

Training:

- Several Youth Advisors took part in Headstrong’s Community Animation Training
- Youth Advisor delivered a full-day ‘Train the Trainers’ workshop to GPs on youth mental health alongside Headstrong staff

Other Activities:

- Several YAP members were invited by President McAleese to attend Aras an Uachtaráin to hear the former Latvian President, Vaira Vike-Freiberg speak on her experiences of growing up in a war torn Europe.

Thank You!

Headstrong would like to thank all of the young people who were involved in the YAP in 2007. We would also like to thank the young people around the country who have supported Headstrong’s work by taking part in focus groups and research. Their participation has ensured that young people’s voices are central to driving Headstrong’s strategy and programmes.
Headstrong’s research programme will focus on the interface between epidemiology and surveillance, information systems and programme evaluation. As part of its research programme, Headstrong will:

- Conduct a ten year study of the mental health of young people in Ireland
- Assess needs, resources and readiness of communities to enhance supports for local young people
- Rigorously evaluate service innovations in young people’s mental health for effectiveness and efficiency
- Measure movements in public understanding of and attitudes towards young people’s mental health issues

This year, research has focused on the development of the My World Questionnaire as outlined below.

My World – National Youth Mental Health and Wellbeing Survey

A fundamental strategy for supporting young people is to deepen our understanding of their experience of living in Ireland today. Headstrong’s strategy is to conduct a national survey of a large sample (15,000 young people) to provide us with some insights into key aspects of their mental health and wellbeing, e.g. risk and protective factors, resilience, optimism, social connectedness etc. Currently there is no database in Ireland that can provide this information.

The research team, for this phase, headed by Barbara Dooley, who is the Head of Psychology in UCD, has been working to design, pilot, and subsequently carry out a national research survey that would capture contemporary experiences of young people in Ireland today.

Several months of extensive literature review has identified key domains that are required to adequately profile the mental health status of Irish adolescents. These domains include both negative and positive aspects of functioning in daily life. Questionnaires were carefully selected for inclusion in our overall survey on the basis of their psychometric properties (i.e. validity and reliability), and their age suitability. To date 14 significant domains have been identified from the literature. Based on the review carried out, no study to date has published a comprehensive profile of youth mental health across such a wide range of functioning in terms of positive and protective factors, negative factors, behavioural factors and intentional factors.

The survey will initially be piloted on a sample of adolescents in the Second Level system of education. This sample will be drawn from catchment areas such as South Dublin, North Wicklow, Waterford, Galway, Meath and Cork. These areas represent both urban and rural areas, and the targeted sample is 800 young people.

Upon addressing any issues and question arising from the pilot phase, the national survey will then be carried out.

Key Research Presentations/ Conferences in 2007

The International Youth Mental Health Conference in Tallaght

Headstrong presented at the International Youth Mental Health Conference organised by the Dublin Mid-Leinster CAMHS and NHC Tallaght. The entire day was devoted to addressing youth mental health. Dr. Tony Bates (Founding Director, Headstrong) and Prof. Pat McGorry (Executive Director of ORYGEN Youth Health, Melbourne and Board Member of Headstrong) presented keynote papers.
Symposium on Youth Mental Health at the Annual Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI) Conference

Headstrong presented three papers based on research projects carried out in 2007:

- A public perspective on youth mental health
- A survey on guidance counsellors’ views on their and the schools’ role in youth mental health
- Listening to what young people have to say: interviews and focus groups

The International Symposium on Youth Mental Health at the International Union for Health Promotion and Education (IUHPE) World Conference in Vancouver

The symposium positioned Headstrong within its wider context of an international reform movement in youth mental health. It was a collaborative undertaking to develop a platform to share knowledge from the experience of efforts to reform the youth mental health system in Australia (ORYGEN and Headspace), Ireland (Headstrong) and America (REACH of Louisville, Kentucky).

Annual Conference and AGM for Guidance Counsellors

Tony Bates (Founding Director) and Bob Illback (Director of Service Planning and Evaluation) presented key note papers on the role of schools in supporting young people’s mental health.

Education/Training Activities

Community Animation Training

In May 2007, Headstrong hosted a training session introducing a technique called ‘Community Animation’ attended by Headstrong staff and representatives from the communities Headstrong works with. The training was led by two senior staff from mental health international development NGO Basic Needs - Chris Underhill MBE, Founder Director (who is also a Board member of Headstrong) and Lance Montia, Programme Manager in Ghana.

GP ‘Train the Trainers’ Workshop

Headstrong was invited by the Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP) to deliver a full-day training workshop on how young people’s mental health needs could be better supported in primary care.

Sarah (Youth Advisor) played a central role in the training, observing and providing constructive feedback on role plays. Tony Bates (Founding Director) and Faye Scanlan (Programme Development Officer) provided clinical and research input.
Summary Accounts

The following summary accounts have been extracted from the statutory financial statements of Headstrong – The National Centre for Youth Mental Health Limited for the year ended 31 December 2007. The statutory financial statements, on which the auditors, David Gillette & Co. expressed an unqualified opinion, have been filed with the Register of Companies following the Annual General Meeting.

The detailed auditor’s report and accounts can be obtained from our head office.
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITY
for the year ended December 31st, 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007 Total</th>
<th>2006 Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>€</td>
<td>€</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Incoming Resources</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Voluntary Income</td>
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<tr>
<td>Incoming Resources for Charitable Activities</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Incoming Resources</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Resources Expended</strong></td>
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<td>Charitable Activities</td>
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<td>Service Development</td>
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<td>Research</td>
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<td>Advocacy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cost of Generating Funds</td>
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<tr>
<td>Governance Costs</td>
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<td><strong>Total Resources Expended</strong></td>
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<td>Net Movement in Funds</td>
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### BALANCE SHEET
for the year ended December 31st, 2007

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007 Total €</th>
<th>2006 Total €</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ASSETS EMPLOYED</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>FIXED ASSETS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tangible Assets</td>
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<td>32,461</td>
<td>805</td>
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<td><strong>CURRENT ASSETS</strong></td>
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<td>Debtors</td>
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<td>Cash at bank and in hand</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>335,525</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CREDITORS: amounts falling due within one year</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creditors, accruals and deferred income</td>
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<td>98,043</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>34,052</td>
<td>98,043</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NET CURRENT LIABILITIES</strong></td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NET ASSETS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>FINANCED BY</strong></td>
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<td><strong>CAPITAL AND RESERVES</strong></td>
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<td>Accumulated funds - Unrestricted</td>
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<td>49,124</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>333,934</td>
<td>49,124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix A

Brief descriptions of our partner organisations:

Basic Needs
Basic Needs is an international development charity which works to build a better world for mentally ill people and their carers.

Headspace
Headspace is Australia’s National Youth Mental Health Foundation working to improve services for young people around mental health and drug and alcohol issues.

Health Service Executive
The HSE is responsible for providing Health and Personal Social Services for everyone living in the Republic of Ireland.

ORYGEN
ORYGEN is an organisation made up of a specialist youth mental health service, a research centre and a range of education, training, advocacy and health promotion activities. ORYGEN is based in Melbourne, Australia.

REACH
‘Reach’ of Louisville is an organisation founded by Headstrong’s Director of Planning and Evaluation Dr. Bob Illback, and is an organisation committed to community-based and integrated services, incorporating planning, evaluation, consultation and training. Reach is based in Kentucky, USA.

Reach Out
Reach Out! is an online mental health support and information service for young people in Australia. It was set up by Inspire, and is based in Sydney, Australia.

Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health
The Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health works to improve the quality of life for people with mental health problems by influencing policy and practice in mental health and related services.

University College Dublin
Headstrong have strong ties with UCD, particularly our research department which is supported by the School of Psychology.