



**KERRY COUNTY**  
**Community and Voluntary Forum**  
*Fóram Pobail agus Deonach Chontae Chiarraí*

## COMHAIRLE NA NÓG IN KERRY

Comhairle na nÓg is part of a year long partnership process in Kerry which is co-ordinated by the County Development Board through the office of Community and Enterprise Department. The partnership agencies are Kerry County Council, the Kerry Community and Voluntary Forum and the Kerry Diocesan Youth Service.

The primary purpose of the Comhairle is to give young people a voice in matters that affect them. It starts with the promotion of the concept of a youth forum, and it builds on this through a series of events, the highlight being the County Comhairle na nÓg. At the Comhairle, young people from all over Kerry come together at County level, to discuss issues that affect their daily lives.

Participation in Comhairle na nÓg results in the following outcomes:

- It allows young people to develop personal and social responsibility
- It engages young people more fully in their community
- It prepares young people for participation in National Democracy
- It improves the relevance of local services for young people
- It assists in improving the social and communication skills of young people
- It recognises children and young people as a valuable resource.

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## **2009 Comhairle na nÓg**

The 2009 Comhairle was held in Killarney on November 21st 2008. There were three workshops discussing the topics chosen for debate namely: - Physical Health issues, Youth Bank and a Media Workshop discussing Mental Health issues. 2008 Comhairle Youth Representatives reported back to the main group from the various workshops. Edel Ní Bhraonain, the Kerry representative at the National Council gave a presentation from a national perspective.

Following this nine young people, representing their peers at County level, went forward for election to fill the six places available for Kerry representative at Dail na nOg (National Youth Parliament) in Dublin on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2009.

The following delegates represent their peers at County level:

- Sorcha Stack, Listowel
- Emma Foley, Killorglin
- Sarah Breathnach, Dingle
- Cillian Buckley- Killarney
- Zach Buggy- Tralee
- Patrick Fitzgerald- Tralee
- Robyn Guiton- Killarney
- Siobhán O'Neill- Waterville
- Rory Sheridan- Tralee

The six selected to represent County Kerry in Dublin are : Cillian Buckley, Zach Buggy, Patrick Fitzgerald, Robyn Guiton, Siobhan O'Neill and Rory Sheridan.

The adjudicating panel on the night included Cllr. Tom Fleming MCC, Mayor of Kerry, Senator Mark Daly, Mr. John Breen, Director of Community & Enterprise and Ms. Edel Ní Bhraonain , Comhairle and National Representative, 2008, Gearoid Murphy, KDYS Volunteer and Miriam Galvin, Kerry Educational Services.

The Mayor of Kerry addressed the delegates and commended them on their excellent presentations. Together with Edel Ní Bhraonain, the Mayor announced the panels choice. The young people then had an opportunity to address the panel. The discussion focused on educational issues, particularly the cutbacks in education expenditure, and the current financial crisis.

The 2009 Comhairle na nÓg event was co-ordinated and facilitated by young people.



## Dáil na nÓg

Dáil na nÓg is an annual Youth Parliament that meets under the auspices of the Minister for Children and was one of the recommendations contained in the National Children's Strategy (2000). It provides a national forum for young people to raise and debate issues of concern. The Dáil is intended as a forum for children's and young people's opinions to be fed into the development of public policy.

The 2009 Dáil is being held on February 20<sup>th</sup> in Croke Park, Dublin where the delegates will meet with Minister Barry Andrews T.D. and other decision makers in the Government.

## **Themes for the 2009 Dáil na nÓg**

The Kerry Comhairle na nÓg delegates will discuss the following topics at the 2009 Dáil na nÓg, namely:

- **Health** (Healthy Living/Health Promotion)
- **Mental Health**

This is the second year that Mental Health has been a topic at Dáil na nÓg. Information on the 2009 Dáil na nÓg event is available on [www.dailnanog.ie](http://www.dailnanog.ie). Following the 2009 Dáil, the six delegates will feed back to the County Forum and meet public representatives and senior officials of Kerry County Council to discuss issues and possible solutions to issues raised at the 2009 Dáil na nÓg event.