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# WELCOME & INTRODUCTION TO THE GLOBAL YOUTH MENTORING NETWORK

United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

uniTwin

NUI Galway  
OÉ Gaillimh

- UNESCO Chair in  
• Children, Youth and Civic Engagement  
• Ireland
- **CHILD AND FAMILY RESEARCH CENTRE**



# OVERVIEW

Youth mentoring: What and Why?

Global Youth Mentoring Network: Background and rationale

Aims, activities and structures

# WHAT IS YOUTH MENTORING?



A relationship between a young person 'mentee' and an unrelated older person 'mentor'

The mentor offers friendship and support to facilitate the growth and development of the mentee

Can be 'informal' or 'formal'

Formal programmes provide support to young people in many contexts, including:

- *young people at risk in the community*
- *children in care & leaving care*
- *School transition*
- *Youth justice*
- *Refugees & asylum seekers*

# WHY YOUTH MENTORING?

Young people value & benefit from authentic informal social relationships (Spencer, 2010; Rhodes, 2002)

Complementary to more formal social services

A flexible, youth centred form of provision

Proven outcomes in terms of perceived support, well-being, education and risk behaviour (Dolan et al, 2011; DuBois et al, 2011, 2002)

**Research shows that adherence to best practice is critical to achieve 'quality outcomes'** (Rhodes, 2010; DuBois et al, 2011, 2002)



# HISTORY & CONTEXT OF THE GLOBAL YOUTH MENTORING NETWORK

## UNESCO Child & Family Research Centre

- Research programme with Foróige Big Brothers Big Sisters since 2005
- Collaboration with ISPCC & Charles University, Prague

## Queens University Belfast

- Collaboration with SCUT, Romania and SA-YES, South Africa on mentoring for children in care

## International seminar on youth mentoring - November 2014

- Agreed to form a network

# RATIONALE



- Mentoring practice and research very well established in north America
- Many innovative mentoring models & approaches in Europe & internationally but no forum for networking in relation to research & practice
- Opportunity to affiliate to the Global Network of UNESCO Chairs on Children, Youth and Community

# AIMS OF THE GLOBAL YOUTH MENTORING NETWORK (GYMN)

... to facilitate the sharing of research and practice in relation to youth mentoring, with a particular emphasis on sharing knowledge among mentoring organisations and researchers outside of the USA, where research and practice remains fragmented.

The network consists of dedicated partners who are actively involved in youth mentoring **research** or **practice**.



# KEY OBJECTIVES



- To facilitate networking between mentoring practitioners and researchers at international level
  - Annual conference hosted by a steering group member
- To create mechanisms for the sharing of research findings, models & approaches
  - website
  - research & policy briefings
- To facilitate collaborative actions in the areas of mentoring research, theory and practice
  - Joint funding proposals, publications, capacity building actions, etc.



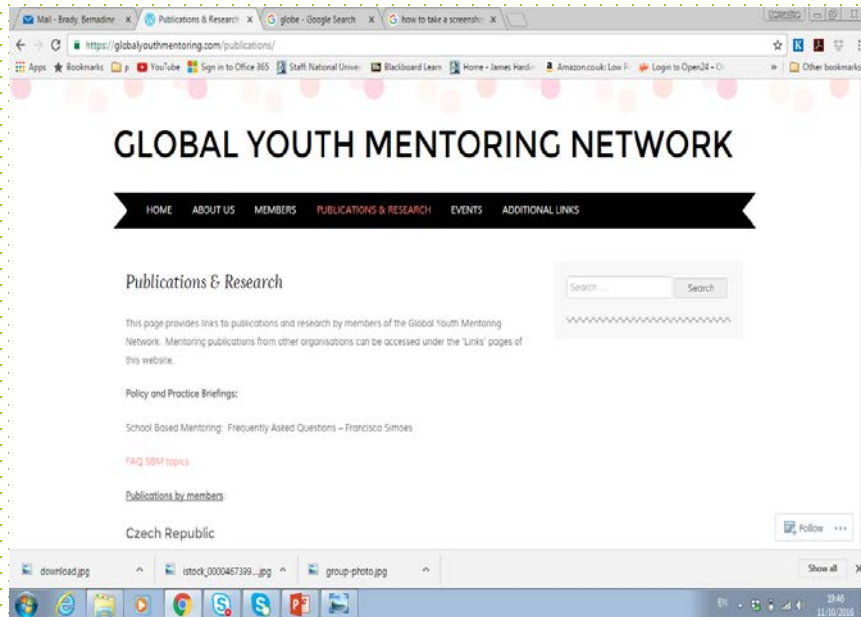
# ACTIVITIES TO DATE..

Seed funding provided by UCFRC  
Website

<https://globalyouthmentoring.com>

Policy briefings & FAQs underway

First annual conference



# NETWORK STRUCTURE

Steering Group

General Membership

Co-ordinator(s)

Current members from...

- Czech Republic
- England
- Ireland
- Northern Ireland
- Portugal
- Romania
- Scotland
- USA
- South Africa
- Spain

# CONCLUSION



We declare the *Global Youth Mentoring Network* officially launched!

Warmest thanks to the ISPCC for hosting our first annual conference

If you would like to become a member, please contact me on [Bernadine.brady@nuigalway.ie](mailto:Bernadine.brady@nuigalway.ie)