

Friday, September 1, 2023 at 10:53:35 Irish Standard Time

Subject: Kilkenny Youth Theatre Festival 2023

Date: Friday 7 July 2023 at 21:07:21 Irish Standard Time

From: [REDACTED]

To: Eoghan Doyle

Hi Eoghan

My name is [REDACTED] - I am mam to [REDACTED] who has just returned from the Kilkenny Youth Theatre Festival.

I am just tuning in with you to commend the work of your child protection and wellbeing officer Cathal Thornton, who dealt with (among many others no doubt) a situation involving my 16 year old [REDACTED] who was attending as part of the [REDACTED] Group. [REDACTED] has cystic fibrosis and I had previously tuned in with Cathal regarding this. In a situation where he had done everything perfectly, [REDACTED] was in a dorm with three other girls who consistently vaped in the dorm, knowing she had cf. Not wanting to draw undue attention to herself she managed the situation herself, but casually mentioned it in passing to her leader one morning. It was immediately a situation where [REDACTED] felt validated and cared for and Cathal was called into the mix straight away.

Apart from sending you the email I have already sent to Cathal himself, I just wanted to add that from the get go Cathal was involved, aware and kind. He rang me on thursday with details of the incident and for one of less than a handful of times in my 16.5 years of having a child with cf, I felt comfortable and reassured enough to say ' You've got this covered, I trust you completely, manage this whatever way you see fit.' As a parent of a (growing!) child with additional needs, this is the ultimate accolade. I can say no more, only let you see what I have said to Cathal personally in an email sent just now; and thank you and the Youth Theatre Ireland team for such a fabulous experience.

With best wishes

Louise

Hi Cathal,

This is [REDACTED] mam.

I just wanted to tune in with you to personally thank you again, from the bottom of my heart, for your kindness and care towards [REDACTED] the past few days. Your reassurance and validity of her and her unique needs, plus your sensitivity in handling an awkward situation have made what could have been a raw wound, into a real moment of growth for her.

It's really hard sometimes as a parent of a child with extra needs - especially as she grows up- to stand back and think of her in those situations after all she has been through already. But people like you make it easier for a parent like me to learn to let go. I was the roots. But you are part of the new wings - and I send you a heartfelt thanks for being there for her in your own unique and genuine way.

Much love.

