

centre stage

the place of youth theatre in Ireland 1997-1998

a report of a review and research project
conducted by the
national association for youth drama



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**A Report of a Review and Research Project Conducted by
The National Association for Youth Drama**

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The National Association for Youth Drama (NAYD) is proud to launch this important document. As an association, NAYD will be twenty years old in 2000. The mere fact of undertaking this study and, indeed, its important findings represent the major advances made by NAYD since 1980. From an *ad hoc* group to a fully constituted and democratic organisation with committed membership, the record speaks for itself.

The 1990s have seen both expansion and consolidation of the role of NAYD. The findings confirm and validate this fact and present us with the challenges that NAYD must meet. The findings of the research and the outcomes of the review process leave us in no doubt as to the scale of the challenges. The organisation must cope with the need for a clearer emphasis on areas designated as disadvantaged, it must continue to insist on quality in every aspect of the work, it must look to a more regional focus and it must begin to establish Ireland as a significant country internationally in the field of youth drama, to name some of those challenges.

NAYD will rise to the challenges presented with the help and support of the funding agencies in the field of youth and the arts. Those agencies can be certain of a positive and productive approach by NAYD as exemplified by the rigour of this research.

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Paddy O'Dwyer,
Chair,
National Association for Youth Drama.

SUMMARY

Youth Theatre in Ireland - Overview

- The National Association for Youth Drama comes of age with this report on the status of youth theatre in Ireland. For the first time, a comprehensive, nation-wide profile of the youth theatre movement has been formulated, the result of a census commissioned in NAYD in 1997. This census gained an insight into youth theatre structures, founders, members and the leaders who constantly maintain and develop the philosophy of youth theatre in this country. (1.1)
- Based on the information gathered from the overall research and review process, NAYD has drawn up a youth theatre policy document, which will inform the development of youth theatre practice in future. The NAYD mandate focuses on all aspects of youth theatre practice. (6.2)
- The census week was the last phase of the review and research programme for NAYD. It was held during the last week of November 1997. Census week questionnaire packs were sent to 50 youth theatres throughout Ireland.(1.2)
- There was a 66% response rate from youth theatres (i.e. 33 out of a total of 50 youth theatres), with a 63% personal response rate from members (i.e. 969 members out of a reported total of 1530 members in 33 youth theatres). (1.2)
- Eighty-nine key youth theatre leaders completed questionnaires about their own involvement in youth theatre. (1.2)
- The census traces the history of youth theatres over the last twenty years. It offers an insight into the identity of youth theatres, their establishment and their evolution over two decades. (1.3)
- The first Irish youth theatre was set up in 1977. Most youth theatres had small, *ad hoc* beginnings and were usually the vision of just one person. Some developed quite rapidly from small-scale projects, some drifted from project to project, and others remained small and intimate but steady over many years. Most developed in partnership with support agencies in their communities and many are now significant local resources for youth and community arts. (1.3)
- The adult-to-young-person ratio is exceptionally low and can be presumed to contribute positively to the quality of members' learning and personal development. (2.1)
- Workshops and rehearsals form the core activities of the youth theatre programme. Many youth theatre members take part in several activities throughout the week. (2.1)
- Over half of the participating youth theatre members had travelled with their youth theatre, mostly within Ireland. (2.1)
- Thirty-nine of all youth theatre productions were devised from members' improvisational work. Thirteen plays had been scripted by young people. (2.2)

- Most youth theatre activities were in places which were not designated arts or youth arts centres. (2.2)
- Between them, 33 youth theatres reported a membership of 1530 young people, an average of 46 each. (4.1)
- Youth theatre members can experience all aspects of drama and theatre within their first year of membership. However, activities in the first year of membership focus predominately on drama workshops, performance and theatre visits. (4.2)
- One third of the groups had members' committees. A total of 111 young people were involved in these committees. (4.2)
- More established, high-profile youth theatres included a higher proportion of members with a family background in the arts. Two thirds (i.e. 66% of members) reported having at least one family member who was actively involved in or supportive of the arts. (4.2)

Youth Theatre Practice and Programmes

- A typical week in the life of an Irish youth theatre goes something as follows:
At least one drama workshop is held and is probably run on Saturday. Two in-house leaders facilitate the workshop and about 23 members take part. It lasts about two hours. If the group is not preparing for a production, this might be the only activity of the week apart from perhaps a trip to the theatre or a social event. These will probably take place on Friday or Saturday. If rehearsals for a production are in progress, the youth theatre will hold activities most days of the week. These will be co-ordinated and led by a small group of leaders who put in marathon hours over several weeks. In fact, Sunday activities are only scheduled when preparing for a production. Small groups of people with a low adult-to-young-person ratio will be busy preparing costumes, set etc. (2.1)
- Nearly half (45%) of all youth theatre productions were devised from members' improvisational work and were directed by adult leaders from the professional theatre sector as well as by voluntary leaders. Performances mostly took place in a variety of spaces including professional theatre venues and local centres. (2.2)
- The majority of youth theatres rent or lease premises. Youth theatres rent and lease space from a variety of sources including arts centres and local community centres. In general, most youth theatres were content with the spaces even though they were not purpose built. An audit of premises/spaces used by youth theatres is recommended. (2.3)

Funding and Resources

- Most youth theatres currently exist in partnership with other organisations. Funding sources are often the original partner, e.g. local authority, VEC or youth service. Benefit-in-kind support is an important type of assistance and usually relates to use of premises and administrative support. (3.1)

- Salaries and fees account for the largest area of expenditure. However, voluntary support accounts for much of the work conducted in youth theatres in every area of operation. The workshop programme accounts for the smallest area of expenditure. (3.2)
- The annual expenditure on salaries and fees for almost two-thirds of youth theatres in Ireland totals approximately £184,000. (3.2)
- Including NAYD's expenditure on salaries and artistic fees, it can be concluded that at least 187 people earned money as a result of their contribution to youth theatre activity in Ireland. (3.2)
- Of the figures offered, salaries, wages, and fees accounted for 68% of annual youth theatre expenditure (3.2)
- Most of the money spent in renting or leasing spaces for youth theatre activity went to the non-arts and non-youth-work sectors. (3.2)

Participants in Youth Theatre in Ireland

Profile of Youth Theatre Leaders

- The typical youth theatre leader is a woman aged 26 or over. She lives locally and plans to be involved with her youth theatre on a long-term basis. She is an experienced drama practitioner and probably also has some experience in the teaching, caring or youth work areas. Her most likely role is as workshop facilitator with 50:50 odds that she also directs theatre productions. She has probably completed formal training in a relevant area. There is a one in four chance that she was

herself a member of a youth theatre or that she has contributed as a leader to other youth theatres or youth theatre events. She enjoys working with young people and believes that drama can contribute significantly to their growth, development and empowerment. (4.1)

- The female to male ratio of leaders was 2:1. (4.1)
- Leaders indicated a background in at least one area of the arts or of the caring, education or youth-work fields. (4.1)
- Leaders have learned their skills from a combination of formal training and practical experience. The value of experience within the theatre sector both on a professional and amateur basis was cited most frequently. (4.1)
- According to the census there was a total of 273 adults involved in youth theatre activity during census week, an average of between nine/ten per youth theatre. The greatest proportion of adult involvement came from the voluntary sector. 5% of the leaders were full-time employees as artistic director, administrator or outreach worker. Some had jobs that included their work for the youth theatre among other duties for a parent organisation. (4.1)
- The skills used by leaders in their youth theatres draw mainly on their training and experience in theatre practice. But the young person's growth, development and empowerment are their focus and reasons for continuing. (4.1)
- Most leaders indicated that they carry out multiple roles within their youth theatres. Three-quarters of them regarded themselves as 'in-house' leaders. (4.1)
- Leaders may be attracted into youth theatre work because of financial or career development needs. However the satisfaction of being involved with a group of young people while they grow and develop through drama work becomes their reason for staying and pledging significant future personal commitment. At a personal level, they value opportunities to develop their own creativity, to learn from the youth members and to belong to a creative community. (4.1)

Profile of Youth Theatre Members

- The typical youth theatre member is female, aged between 13 and 17 and has been a member for between one and two years. Chances are that members of her family are active in the arts, although she does not aspire to a career in theatre or the arts. In her youth theatre, she has participated in drama workshops, performed in plays, attended theatre productions and she has tried other areas of theatre and the arts. She has made good friends, feels happier and more confident and is perhaps more aware of her own rights and those of others. Her interest in theatre and the arts has increased substantially. (4.2)

- The ratio of female to male members was 2:1. (4.2)
- Although small in number (71), the over-18s represented a highly motivated and dedicated subset of youth theatre members. (4.2)
- About 30% of the older members aspired to a career in the theatre with about 13% expressing an interest in an arts career. (4.2)
- Even for those members with previous experience of active drama involvement, the census shows that membership of their youth theatre had introduced them to new areas of interest in drama and/or had increased their interest in the subject. This result strongly affirms the role youth theatres play in developing members' interest and involvement in theatre. (4.2)
- More than one in four young men (27%) and more than one in eight young women (14%) had developed an interest in writing since joining their youth theatre. (4.2)
- About 80% of youth theatre members had been actively involved in the arts prior to joining their youth theatre. The most popular previous involvement was in activities relevant to the performing arts. There was a bias among about half the membership to structured involvement in the arts before joining. (5.1)
- The most notable area of increased interest since joining a youth theatre was active involvement in drama, with more than 90% indicating a change in this area. (5.1)
- Participation and involvement in youth theatre can be a catalyst in stimulating and engaging young people in cultural activities. Overall, 78% of members reported becoming interested in something new as a result of joining their youth theatre. (5.1)
- More than 40% indicated an increased interest in active involvement in other art forms, an increased interest in dance being the most salient at 50% for over-13s and 56% for over-18s. (The level of interest in dance among male members had increased by 25% since joining their youth theatre). This result affirms the role youth theatres play in developing the involvement of their members in other areas of the performing arts and the arts generally. (5.1)
- More than one in four members (26%), regardless of gender, had developed an interest in the visual arts since joining their youth theatre. (5.1)

Cultural & Social Impact of Participation in Youth Theatre

- Some information sought in the census was designed to generate results that could be compared with those of Francois Matarasso's 1997 UK study *Use or Ornament – The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts*. The range of social benefits and the proportions with which they were reported by Irish youth theatre members were markedly similar to those described in Matarasso's study. The results of the census indicate that almost all youth theatre members experienced positive social benefits from their first involvement with youth theatre. More than two thirds of members who responded indicated that they felt happier and more confident, had tried something new and had developed new skills. The frequencies with which each area of social benefit was reported increased with length of membership. (5.2)

- Over three-quarters of members reported gaining a new interest and developing skills as a result of their being a member of a youth theatre. The census showed that youth theatres offer all aspects of drama and theatre experience to their members. The most commonly reported experience was participation in drama workshops; the second most commonly reported experience was performing in plays. Visits to the theatre also featured highly with more than half of all members stating that they had attended youth theatre productions with their own youth theatre. (5.1)

- Membership of youth theatres:
 - Reduces isolation by helping people to make friends
 - Increases people's confidence and sense of self worth
 - Has a positive impact on how people feel
 - Helps to build new skills
 - Can promote tolerance by providing a forum for intercultural understanding and friendship
 - Promotes intercultural contact and communication
 - Can provide a forum to explore personal rights and responsibilities

Outcomes and Recommendations

- In addition to this report, the outcomes of the review and research process included the articulation of agreed definitions and a policy statement on youth theatre, and key stages in a youth theatre's development. (6.1)
 1. To survive the early stages of development, a youth theatre needs at least one adult leader who lives locally and has the necessary skills, vision and commitment. It is equally important that a youth theatre, in its early stages of development, has the encouragement and support from at least one of the following local resources: youth service, professional or amateur drama community, local authority.

 2. The next critical stage of a youth theatre's development involves an increasing level of independent identity. Milestones in this process include: moving from borrowed or shared

space to having one's own address, as well as accessing increased funding and assuming responsibility for one's own budget.

3. Financial and accommodation independence allows the youth theatre to bridge this significant moment in its development, which is characterised by the expansion of its programme and the ability to employ professional support.
- An established youth theatre is a focus and resource for the development of youth and community arts in its locality in which older and former members assume leadership and artistic roles.
 - A number of areas emerged that require either further study or action to be taken. Recommendations have been made under the following headings: Structure of NAYD, Standards, Regional Development, Training, Youth Theatre Premises, Children's Theatre and International. (6.2)

YOUTH THEATRE MEMBERS' INTEREST AND INVOLVEMENT IN ARTS ACTIVITIES

Writing

- 40% Increased interest and involvement
- 1 in 4 Young Men: New interest
- 1 in 8 Young Women: New interest



Dance

- 50%+ Increased interest and involvement
- 25% of male members developed a new interest. 1 in 4 young men: new interest



Chapter 1: Youth Theatre in Ireland – Overview

1.1 The National Association for Youth Drama

The National Association for Youth Drama (NAYD) is the umbrella body for youth drama and youth theatre in Ireland. Established in 1980 to increase young people's involvement in drama and the arts, its membership is made up of over 50 youth theatre groups throughout the country, individual members and related youth organisations. It is publicly funded by The Arts Council and the Department of Education and Science.

NAYD provides information, advice and support to youth theatre groups and individuals involved in drama work with young people. It organises a programme of events for youth theatres and for youth leaders and teachers involved or interested in drama and theatre, and publishes two magazines, **Youth Drama Ireland** (annually), **The Big Mouth** (quarterly), and an occasional newsletter, **Intermission**.

NAYD events and activities include:

- National Festival of Youth Theatres
- National Youth Theatre
- Regional Youth Drama Festivals
- *REACH OUT* (Deaf Youth Theatre Project)
- *STAGE IT!* (Young Writers Project)
- Drama-in-Education Conference
- Educational Drama Forum
- Participation in the EUROPEAN YOUTH THEATRE ENCOUNTER
- Training (workshops/courses/seminars for youth theatre directors/leaders, and teachers).

Through its work, the NAYD aims to demonstrate the potential of drama as a medium for learning and a means of expression for young people. It aims to advance the personal, social and aesthetic development of young people through drama and performance-related skills and media. NAYD aims to promote the development of youth theatres in Ireland and to establish drama as an integral part of youth work.

NAYD policy includes working closely with government agencies and other organisations that promote youth drama and theatre in Ireland. It is affiliated to the National Youth Council of Ireland. It was represented on the drama advisory committee of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment and the National Youth Arts Committee (which published the Youth Arts Report, *Making Youth Arts Work* in April 1993). NAYD contributed to The Arts Council *Review of Theatre in Ireland* in 1995. At international level, NAYD is affiliated to the IATA/AITA (International Amateur Theatre Association), and to EDERED (European Drama Encounters/Rencontres Europeans de Drama). NAYD helps affiliated groups organise exchanges and study visits through Leargas and the EU Youth for Europe programme.

1.2 Development of Youth Theatre in Ireland

NAYD started as an *ad hoc* group of people from various backgrounds, mainly in education and in theatre, both professional and amateur. Some would have been aware of developments in the UK in drama-in-education and in youth theatre. What brought them together was interest in young people and a belief in the value of drama and theatre experience to a young person's development be it personal, social, educational, aesthetic.

The climate in 1980 was very different from now. There were only two youth theatre groups in the country, no drama in schools except where there was the tradition of the school play, and no third-level training. Initially, this *ad hoc* group ran summer drama courses for young people and for adults. They had no funding or professional help.

The next strategy focused on raising the profile of youth theatre and creating a platform for theatre by young people. For the next six years (1984–1989) a National Youth Theatre production was the major event each year. Funding from a number of sources contributed to achieving this:

- The Arts Council first in 1984 (£1,500 in the first two years towards professional fees – rising to £10,000 in 1989);
- Gulbenkian Foundation (ACE Project 1984-85) for a part-time administrator;
- Department of Education (Youth Affairs Section): £15,000 in 1986 towards a part-time administrator and office accommodation.

By 1990, a new strategy emerged in keeping with the changing climate. There were now a number of third level drama or theatre studies courses available to young people interested in a career in theatre and, more significantly for NAYD, the number of new youth theatres established throughout the country had grown to about 20. Demands were being made from the grass roots for greater participation by youth theatres in NAYD events and for training for leaders.

NAYD was by now receiving almost equal funding from The Arts Council and the then Department of Education. This enabled the organisation to develop its programme to include:

- National Festival of Youth Theatres (10-12 youth theatres coming together, each bringing a production, participating in a week of workshops with a professional team of tutors, and ending with an outdoor street event).
- Summer School (a week-long residential training course for experienced and potential youth theatre leaders).
- Publication of FIRST ACT (a magazine devoted to youth theatre and drama, published twice annually 1990-1997).

Other significant developments in the last decade include:

- First full-time director appointed in 1991;
- Incorporation as a limited company with charitable status (1992);
- Creation of Development Officer post in 1993 (jointly funded by The Arts Council and the Youth Affairs Section of the Department of Education);
- Young playwrights project, *Stage It!* in 1995 (first project in collaboration with the Abbey Theatre with funding from the Gulbenkian Foundation);
- The Arts Council's Theatre Review (*Views of Theatre in Ireland 1995: A Doing of Life*) devotes a chapter to youth drama/theatre;
- Revival of the National Youth Theatre in 1996 (in collaboration with the Abbey Theatre and now cast solely from youth theatre members);

- Development of regional networks (most of the 50+ affiliated youth theatres are linked on a regional basis).

1.3 A Year of Research and Review

The National Association for Youth Drama was seventeen years old in 1997. The youth theatre movement, the funding climate and the socio-cultural climate has all changed dramatically since the organisation's inception. In the last ten years, there has been a particular upsurge both in youth theatre activity and in the number of groups calling themselves youth theatres.

1.3.1 Questions to be Asked

To instigate the process, a series of questions were drawn up under the following headings:

Policy

What, if anything, do the current member youth theatres have in common regarding core beliefs, aims, objectives, practices, group identity, structure and organisation?

Members

Who are the young people who vote with their feet for youth theatre every week throughout Ireland? What, if anything, do they have in common? Does their experience of youth theatre membership differ from group to group or are there some fundamental experiences that seem to be offered by most member youth theatres to their members?

Leaders

Who leads the youth theatres? How do they describe the roles they play? What experiences have led, shaped and helped them to play their roles in youth theatre development? What level of commitment do they offer and what are their reasons for continuing their involvement? What is the nature of their relationship with youth theatre members? What opportunities do they need to further their skills in the interest of their youth theatres?

Drama Practice and Activities

What kind of drama practice prevails in youth theatres? What is the relationship between process and product? What happens in youth theatre drama workshops? What role do workshops play in the lives of youth theatre groups? What is involved in youth theatre productions? What role do productions play in the lives of youth theatre groups?

Links to Other Art Forms

Which other art forms are practised, encouraged and developed within youth theatres? Does involvement in youth theatre encourage an interest/involvement in other art forms? What non-arts activities do youth theatres characteristically engage in?

Implications for NAYD

And, if these questions can be answered in any kind of satisfactory way, what are the implications for NAYD? In search of answers to the above, NAYD undertook a period of focused research and review during 1997-98. One of the main objectives of this programme of research and review was to enable member youth theatres to give a clear mandate and sense of direction to NAYD for the future.

1.3.2 A Five-Phase Approach

A five-phase approach was developed as follows:

Phase One – extensive discussion at national executive level leading to a mission statement and discussion document for presentation to the general membership. A policy document was produced and approved by the membership at the AGM in September 1998 (see Chapter 6).

Phase Two – exploratory questionnaire sent to all youth theatres, seeking nominations of leaders and groups whose drama work they considered exemplary, with an indication of the extent to which these nominees had influenced their own work or that of their group. Four youth theatres emerged as examples of exemplary practice and these were interviewed in-depth in Phase Three. Also, a core group of seminal leaders emerged who have been instrumental in the development of youth theatre throughout the country, both in their own groups and in other youth theatres through course tutorage.

Phase Three – examples of youth theatres were identified from phase two questionnaire through responses and in-depth study of their practices. The objectives were to identify features of practice and of members' experiences in these youth theatres, which would inform the later phases. A questionnaire for the census was also piloted. The key factors that emerged related to: accommodation (problems of regular access to, suitability of and/or leasing of working space); high quality of leadership and their good relationships with members.

Phase Four – a symposium was organised in October 1997 which focused on leader experience and needs. The symposium offered the opportunity to pursue a more focused and detailed evaluation of leaders' experiences and commitment to youth theatre. Issues discussed included: the need for guidelines of practice in drama and in child protection; identifying shared values within diverse practice; long-term and short-term training needs; the role of NAYD as a support organisation. An absolute respect for young people, the placing of young people at the centre and a shared sense of purpose/ownership of NAYD and its direction as an organisation were among the agreed outcomes of the Symposium.

Phase Five – stocktaking/census week: every member and leader participating in youth theatre activity in a given week was asked to complete a detailed questionnaire. Also, a key leader in each youth theatre was asked to audit all activities undertaken that week and to give information about the group's history and structure. The information yielded by that census is presented in this document. It offers a

broad-sheet view of the make up of youth theatres in Ireland and stands as a point of reference for decisions about youth theatre for the future.

1.4 Youth Theatre Census 1997

1.4.1 Who Took Part In The Census Week?

Census week questionnaire packs were sent to 50 youth theatres throughout Ireland. Each pack contained four sets of questionnaires targeted at three categories of respondent.

Key leaders supplied information about their group's history, structure, supports and programme. Log sheets were included in this set and leaders recorded every activity during census week. Youth theatre members were given personal forms for completion. There were two types of forms to accommodate younger and older members. Members aged over thirteen completed solo forms while the majority of the under-12s age group responded through a group interview process.

Individual youth theatre leaders were also requested to complete a personal form detailing their background and involvement in youth theatre.

1.4.2 How Well Did The Census Returns Represent NAYD's Affiliated Youth Theatres?

Thirty-three youth theatres returned information yielding a very satisfactory 66% return rate. Twenty-eight youth theatres (56%) returned adequately completed questionnaires for each aspect of the census.¹

By and large, the distribution of census returns satisfactorily reflected the distribution of youth theatres throughout Ireland by NAYD regional network groupings. The Southeast was slightly over-represented and the greater Dublin area under-represented. In particular, youth theatres from Dublin's designated areas of disadvantage were poorly represented.

1.4.3 How Well Did The Members' Returns Represent NAYD's Youth Theatre Membership?

Thirty-three youth theatres reported a total annual membership of 1530. About 75% of these members (n=1124) took part in at least one youth theatre activity during census week. 969 of these young people returned personal information during census week.

¹ A return was deemed to be inadequate if one or more questionnaires were not returned or incompletely returned or if less than 50% of the group's members had returned personal information.

Some youth theatres were more successful than others in maximising the number of returned census forms from members. In any event, no youth theatre returned a number of forms, which was less than 10% of their membership. Most youth theatres returned information from the 80% or so of their members who were active that week.

Therefore, the information gleaned from members' census questionnaires can be deemed to reliably represent the experience of members of youth theatre groups individually, regionally and across Ireland.

Two-thirds of all youth theatre members were aged 13-24 (all groups but one had members in this age range). About one-third of all youth theatre members who returned census information were aged 12 or under. ² The distribution of returns is representative of the participating youth theatre groups.

1.5 How Did Youth Theatres Develop?

All youth theatres reported an evolution from small-scale projects. Twenty-year-old Dublin Youth Theatre began with eight members, eight-year-old Dry Rain with ten. Waterford Youth Drama has grown from the voluntary efforts of two individuals (1985) to become a fully structured youth arts organisation with full-time and part-time staff. Six years ago, Galway Youth Theatre began as a six-month pilot project. In the same year, Derry's First Call began on a basis of weekly workshops for twenty-five weeks but has grown to be a year-round project. Donegal's Youthways, in its first year of existence, reported that it had changed from a short-term project to hopefully having a long-term indefinite time scale.

Some youth theatres reported that they evolved from sporadic local youth theatre projects. In its thirteenth year, Navan Youth Theatre had generally worked from project to project but recently had begun workshops on a regular basis. Four years after setting up, Tallaght Youth Theatre reported that while at first it was very sporadic in its activity, it was "now involved in a development plan...committed to quality productions and commissions and very involved in local arts activities and collaborations". Similarly, in the Laois area, youth theatre activity was organised sporadically for years – however, with "a structured three year plan the youth theatre has become very popular and enjoys public demand for its retention".

An increase in membership, a broader catchment area for members and an increase in leaders were commonly cited changes over the years. More established youth theatres observed the contribution that more experienced members make as young leaders, writers and directors. Kilkenny Youth Theatre noted how increased access to other people, new material and experiences feeds into ongoing work and development.

² About one-third of participating youth theatres catered for this age group: mostly in the Southeast, Dublin and Northern Ireland regions. One group catered solely for members in this age group. In all other cases, members in this age category were in a junior group associated with a larger youth theatre that also catered for older members.

With an increase in membership comes a need for more space. More established groups noted moves from small rooms to halls and from halls to owned/leased premises as landmarks in their development.

Some youth theatres had not changed much from their early origins. For others, the acquisition of a space to call one's own (whether owned, leased or rented) and increased access to funding opened new opportunities. The ability to employ full-time, part-time and FAS paid staff to commission writers and directors has enabled youth theatres to provide more extensive workshop programmes, to increase the quality and amount of productions and to broaden the range of arts activities on offer to members. Older and former members have often assumed leadership roles or developed new interests in writing, workshop facilitation and directing. This phenomenon was noted as a particular source of creative renewal and satisfaction for youth theatre groups.

Most youth theatres emerged from small, *ad hoc* beginnings and were usually the vision of just one person. Their initial growth appeared to have been at a pace that was comfortable for that founder leader. Some developed quite rapidly from small-scale projects, some drifted from project to project and others remained small and intimate but steady over many years. Most developed in partnership with supportive agencies in their communities and some are now significant local resources for youth and community arts.

Chapter 2: Youth Theatre Practice and Programming

2.1 Youth Theatre Review

2.1.1 How Old Are Irish Youth Theatres?

Youth theatres range in age from just a few months to twenty years. The average age of an Irish youth theatre is a little over six years. There is a notable diversity in youth theatre foundations.

2.1.2 How Were Youth Theatres Started?

The founding parents of youth theatres in Ireland were people with vision and commitment.

Individuals

One individual or a group of two or more founded more than two-thirds of the youth theatres in the survey on their own. Twelve individual men founded youth theatres. Seven were founded by individual women and five by women in partnership with others.

Local Agencies

Nine youth theatres had no main founder or group of founders. Eight of these were established within the last four years. Local youth theatre activity led by an individual had predated at least five of them.

Youth Services

Three youth services were active in establishing youth theatres. One youth service established a youth theatre without involvement of any other agency in 1995. In the same year, another youth service founded a youth theatre in partnership with the local authority arts office. The previous year, another youth service had founded a youth theatre in partnership with a FAS/Local Authority Community Arts Scheme.

Local Authority Arts Officers

Eleven years ago, a Local Authority Arts Officer first established a youth theatre. In doing this, she was essentially taking up a banner that had been flown by a group of individuals for a number of years in that town. In the last three years, three more local authorities have been instrumental in establishing youth theatres in their areas. One of these did so in partnership with the local youth service. The other two had their primary impetus from within the Local Authority Arts Office.

Arts Centres/Theatre Companies

Six years ago, a founding mother established a youth theatre in partnership with her local arts centre. Three years later, an established theatre-in-education company established a youth theatre. Last year, one theatre company and one local arts centre has each set up a youth theatre.

2.2 Activities during Census Week

Workshops and rehearsals form the core activities of the youth theatre programme. Many youth theatre members take part in several activities throughout the week. This may be a combination of drama workshops and a planning meeting or set design session and rehearsal. The programme of activities indicates a varied and busy week. Levels of programme activity are detailed in Appendix A.

An activities programme, once in place, confirms the permanency or intended permanency of the youth theatre. What starts out as a short-term project soon develops into a season of workshops. During the last week of November 1997, thirty-two youth theatres logged all their official activities. Two factors need to be considered when examining the information yielded from this survey:

- The Monday of that week was a bank holiday so it is possible that the level of activity on that day was affected. Regular activities may have been cancelled or extra rehearsals or workshops scheduled.
- Although 12 of the participating youth theatres were in rehearsal for a show, none of them had a public performance during census week. Therefore, indication of the levels of participation and time commitment during such a period in the life of a youth theatre is absent from the results.

Consideration of programme costs is detailed in Chapter Three: Youth Theatre Finance.

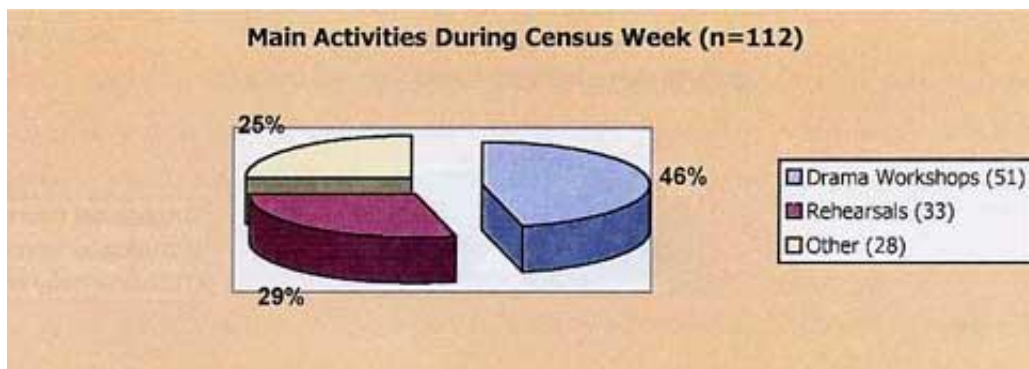
2.2.1 Range of Activities Logged

A total of 112 activities were detailed on forms, yielding an average of three to four per youth theatre for one week alone. These activities were broadly defined as workshops and rehearsals.

Drama workshops accounted for most of the activities during census week, while rehearsals accounted for almost one-third of youth theatre time that week. 'Other' activities accounted for 25%. These

included a wide range of activities including dance, auditions; 'site meeting'; planning meetings and even a visit by President Mary Robinson. The range and frequency of these activities is shown in Appendix A. It should also be noted that a number of 'other' logged activities related directly to preparation for public performance: auditions, costuming, dance/choreography, bringing cast to see performance space. Fig 2.2.1 indicates the percentage representation of all activities that week.

Fig. 2.2.1 Percentage Representation of Main Activities Logged during Census Week



2.2.2 Time Spent in Programme Activities

Overview

Two hundred and seventy-seven hours were spent in logged youth theatre activity during census week. This was equivalent to eleven and a half 24-hour periods or 35 full working days or 7 full working weeks. The average number of activity hours during this week was eight per youth theatre. The least length of time spent doing any one activity was 40 minutes.³ The longest single activity that took place during census week lasted for 9 hours.⁴

On Saturday, the number of hours spent in youth theatre activity was 89 (the equivalent of about twelve working days). Every other day, members spent between 23 and 38 hours in youth theatre activity. The least number of hours of activity was on Friday and Sunday.

Specific

³ This figure corresponds to a workshop that took place in secondary school class time for a school-based youth theatre.

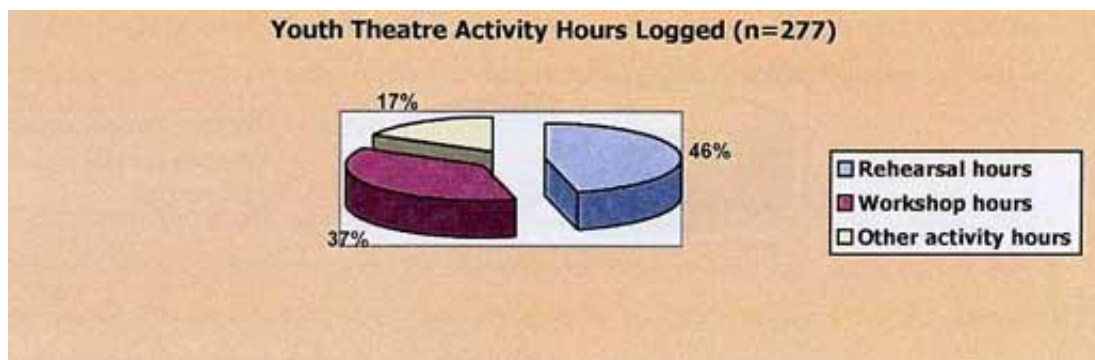
⁴ The longest activity recorded during census week was a rehearsal.

During census week, 103 hours were spent in 51 workshops while 127 hours were spent in 33 rehearsals. This means that, while overall workshops accounted for 46% of activities, the statistics show that 46% of the time was spent in rehearsals.

The average length of time spent per rehearsal was 3 hours and 50 minutes. The shortest logged rehearsal was 75 minutes and the longest was 9 hours.

The average length of time spent per workshop was a little over two hours. The least length of time was 40 minutes, the longest workshop logged was 7 hours. (Fig. 2.2.2)

Fig. 2.2.2 Percentage Representation of General Youth Theatre Activity Hours



2.2.3 Levels of Participation in Youth Theatre Activities

During census week, an average of 23 members took part in each workshop, the fewest being nine and the most being 60. Saturday was the most active day with the highest levels of participation recorded. 502 members and 56 leaders were active on this day in the participating youth theatres. This represents more than half of the people who completed personal census questionnaires and one-third of all youth theatre members. Monday and Thursday were the second most popular days for youth theatre activities. These peak days of participation corresponded to the most popular days for holding workshops.

The average member-to-leader ratio was 9:1. This ratio was even lower for rehearsals and 'other' activities. This exceptionally low member-to-leader ratio can be presumed to contribute positively to the quality of members' learning and personal development in their youth theatres.

2.2.4 Programme and Schedule

Workshops

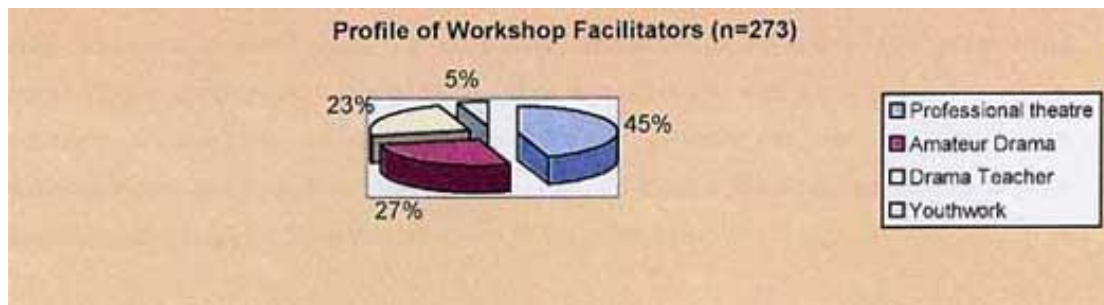
At least 668 young people with 81 leaders took part in drama workshops during census week. A further 75 young people took part in at least one other youth theatre activity, having already taken part in a drama workshop. Most workshops involved one or two leaders; the highest number involved was seven.

The 33 groups provide more than 1600 drama workshops per year. Almost half of all workshops are facilitated by theatre professionals (Fig. 2.2.3). Most are facilitated by drama teachers, adults with an amateur drama background or youth-workers. Workshops engage participants in a wide range of themes, skills and issues. They mostly focus on the many aspects of theatre, performance and stagecraft using improvisation methods. Related arts activity workshops include writing, rhythm, mask making, movement and dance. A number of groups use workshops to explore issues that are relevant to the lives of their members. Examples cited include cross-community issues, family, exclusion, disability, pollution and drugs.

Most youth theatres have at least one weekly workshop especially during academic term times. Saturday was the most popular day for holding workshops with more than one-third of all workshops held during census week held on that day. Monday and Thursday were the next most popular days for holding drama workshops. While Friday was the least popular day for drama activities, it was one of the more popular days for 'other' activities.

Some groups offer workshops only when not rehearsing for a production and some offer them only as part of the rehearsal process. Coinciding with academic term times, workshop activity is least likely during summer months, especially during August.

Fig. 2.2.3 Profile of Workshop Facilitators



Rehearsals

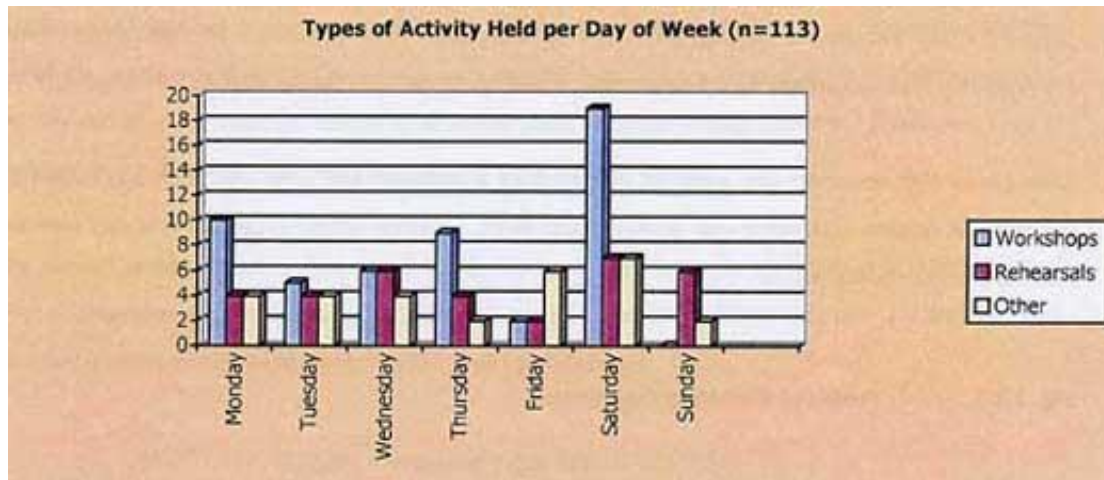
According to the census, weekends were the busiest times for rehearsal with Saturday proving to be the most popular day. Sunday and Wednesday were equally popular rehearsal days. 'Other' activities detailed in the census and held on Sunday related to preparations for a public performance. A few youth theatres held long rehearsals almost every day of the week – these youth theatres were preparing for Christmas performances.

During census week, 228 young people took part in one rehearsal and no other activity during the week. Most of the young people who took part in rehearsals had already taken part in another activity that week.⁵ There was an average of two leaders per rehearsal, the minimum being one and the maximum being seven.

The census figures indicate that most of the young people, who took part in rehearsals, had already been active that week in other youth theatre activities, e.g. a drama workshop or choreography workshop or attendance at a show (Fig. 2.2.4).

Fig. 2.2.4 Comparison Of Levels Of Activity Per Day During Census Week

⁵ There was an average of twelve young people per rehearsal who had taken part in at least one other youth theatre activity that week.



2.2.5 Youth Theatre Travel

Travel within Ireland

Over half of the participating youth theatres had travelled, mostly within Ireland. Over half of the youth theatres had taken part in an NAYD regional youth theatre event. One-quarter of the groups had taken part in a national festival of youth theatres. A little over one-third of the participating youth theatres were participants in a national youth theatre forum.

Travel to Outside Ireland

Most exchanges with non-Irish groups were with UK youth theatres. Most youth theatres had not travelled further. Some of the more established groups have travelled to several countries by taking part in exchanges or festivals in other European countries. Most exchanges were supported by the European Union Youth for Europe Programme through Leargas, The Exchange Bureau. Two groups had visited Russia. Two Northern Ireland based groups had been to America and one had also been to Jordan.

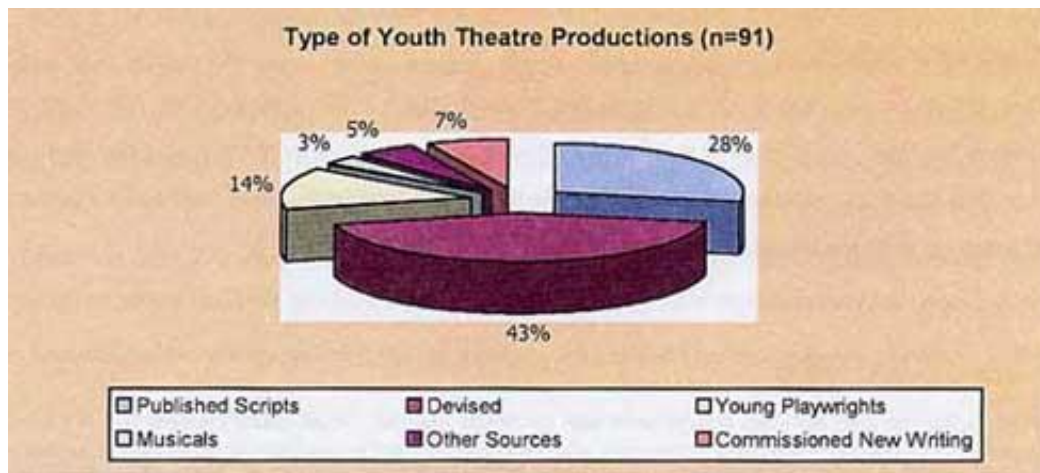
2.2.6 Productions

None of 33 respondents actually had any public performances during census week, although some of them were in rehearsal for one. Using figures from 1996, however it was possible to get a general estimate of their production output. During the previous year, the 33 participating youth theatres staged

91 productions. The highest number of productions for one youth theatre was eleven. Most youth theatres had staged at least two productions.

Sources of material for youth theatre productions were diverse and offer an encouraging and exciting range. Thirty-nine of all youth theatre productions were devised from members' improvisational work. Thirteen were performances of plays scripted by young people. More than one-quarter were based on published scripts, including three classic plays. Six were specially commissioned new writing and three were musicals. Five derived from other sources such as a poem or story. Fig. 2.2.5 shows a percentage representation of youth theatre productions reported during the census week for the previous year.

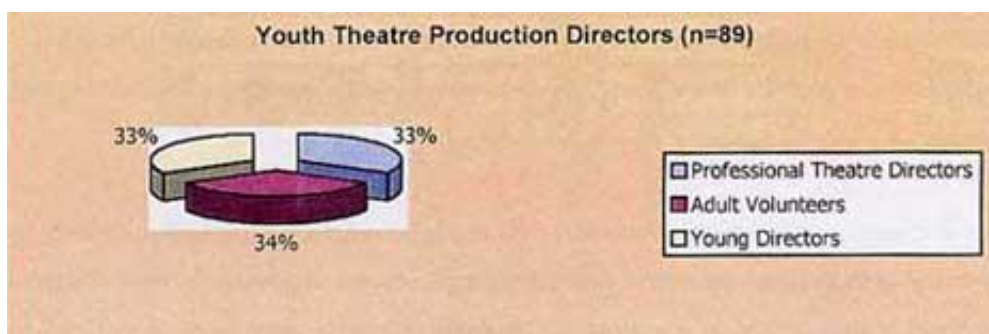
Fig. 2.2.5 Percentage Representation of Youth Theatre Productions



2.2.7 Production Directors

Professional theatre directors, young directors and adult volunteers directed productions in almost equal proportions (Fig. 2.2.6).

Fig. 2.2.6 Percentage Representation of Youth Theatre Production Directors



2.3 Youth Theatre Premises

2.3.1 Venues Used For Youth Theatre Activity

More than three-quarters of all activities were considered to have taken place in suitable venues. Activities took place most commonly in spaces rented by youth theatres or in arts centres – a little less than 20% for each. The next most commonly used premises were: in a youth service, in the youth theatre's own space, in a parish/community hall or in a space rented in partnership with others. Those premises least commonly used were those owned by a local authority or a space owned in partnership with others. Only five activities took place in the former and just one in the latter. Rehearsals mostly took place in spaces owned or rented by the youth theatre.

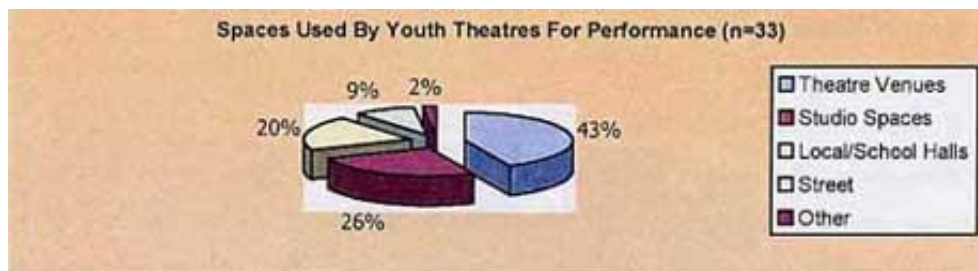
Most of the activities were in places which were not designated arts or youth arts centres. (Dublin Youth Theatre is the only group that owns its own premises – a Victorian house that is in poor repair and is too small for most of the group's activities. Consequently, even this group reported having to resort to hiring venues for rehearsal and workshops on a regular basis). The landlords/lessors of three of the larger youth theatres comprise an athletic club, a church body and a machinery and plant hire company. It appears that most of the money spent in renting or leasing spaces for youth theatre activity went to the non-arts and non-youthwork sectors. The most commonly noted constraints on use of venues was that they must be left as found, could only be used at certain times and had to keep noise levels down.

It is recommended that a full audit of youth theatre premises and venues be conducted at a later stage to ascertain the situation regarding youth theatre ownership and access of venues.

2.3.2 Venues Used by Youth Theatres for Performances/Productions

Performances mostly took place in theatre venues, small studio spaces or local/school halls. Performances also took place in the street. Others happened in conference or leisure centres, youth clubs, schools and a church (Fig. 2.3.1).

Fig. 2.3.1 Percentage Representation of Premises used by Youth Theatres



Chapter 3: Funding and Resources

3.1 Funding Support Overview

An individual or a group of two people set up more than two-thirds of the youth theatres surveyed. The history of youth theatres indicates that many youth theatres commenced activities on a project-to-project basis. Although most youth theatres were set up by individuals, nearly all described a network of support contacts. Only one youth theatre had no contact of any form with a support agency. This was a recently established group that had just completed its tenth workshop. Most commonly, combinations of arts resources, youth services/VEC's and local authorities supported youth theatres. Twenty youth theatres reported support from at least one of these sources. All three sources supported nine groups in total. Where an agency had been instrumental in founding a youth theatre, it was likely to maintain continued formal links and to provide ongoing funding and benefit-in-kind. A number of youth theatres had received project funding from agencies like the AIB Better Ireland Awards, the Gulbenkian Foundation, Peace and Reconciliation Funds, Beyond Borders- Cross Border Youth Scheme, the Ireland Funds, and Children in Need as well as from their own fundraising initiatives.

No statistical relationship was established between the age of the youth theatre and the extent of support. That is to say, some well established youth theatres had few support contacts and no funding sources while some recently established youth theatres had an extensive range and forms of supports.

3.1.1 Benefit-In-Kind

All but seven youth theatres identified sources of benefit-in-kind. These benefits include the use of space – for general activities, functions, storage and the associated costs of heat and lighting. Just as frequent were administrative benefits: advice and assistance from skilled personnel was also a key benefit, as was use of equipment and materials belonging to local amateur and professional companies

from the arts and non-arts sectors. Benefit-in-kind is a vital but often hidden income source. As with volunteer personnel, it is almost impossible to calculate in economic terms the enormous benefit provided by such assistance. It nonetheless represents a large element of income resources for youth theatres throughout Ireland. Skilled personnel offering workshops, advice and practical assistance during productions were available from arts centres, theatre companies, youth services, amateur drama groups and local authority arts officers. Professional theatre companies, amateur drama groups and commercial businesses gave access to materials for costumes, props and sets. Transport subsidies, reduced-price admission tickets, loan of special equipment and advertising facilities were also often given. Appendix A lists all youth theatres that responded to the census and their relevant funding sources.

3.2 Youth Theatre Expenditure Overview

A complete assessment of the expenditure costs of every youth theatre was beyond the remit of this particular study. However, some of the questions demanded reference to costs- many youth theatres contributed information in relation to funding support. The figures below offer a general overview of annual expenditure for youth theatres. It is important to note that not all youth theatres returned information in this category. Some youth theatres indicated that they were unable to estimate category amounts accurately. As a result, many sections of the questionnaire were left blank.

3.2.1 Wages & Fees

An assessment of the figures suggests that the annual expenditure on salaries and fees for almost two-thirds of youth theatres in Ireland totals almost £184,000. This total includes wages, salaries and fees for artistic directors, administration staff and leaders. The largest expenditures by individual youth theatres in this area were £54,000 and £34,000. In each case, these amounts covered two full-time salaries and £8,000 for session fees. Neither of these youth theatres included voluntary workshop facilitators or directors in their programmes. The next largest amounts ranged from £10,000 to £22,000. Each of these youth theatres employed one full-time person. All but one of these four included voluntary personnel as key deliverers of their workshop and production programmes.

NAYD employs 4 full-time staff, 15 people in a FAS Community Employment scheme and various artists on a fee basis each year. Including NAYD's own expenditure on salaries and artistic fees, it can be concluded that at least 187 people earned money as a result of their contribution to youth theatre activity in Ireland. 18 are employed full-time, at least 143 are employed on a part-time or sessional basis and 26 are employed through FAS schemes. *Of the figures offered (from almost two-thirds of all youth theatres) salaries/wages/fees accounted for 68% of annual youth theatre expenditure.* Funding sources, including FAS, Local Authority or other grant aid agencies, are detailed in Appendix A.

3.2.2 Rent

Only one youth theatre in the country actually owns its premises. Most youth theatres rent or lease a space locally. Thirty-three youth theatres detailed costs of premises for youth theatre- eight youth theatres indicated that they did not pay any rent. The remainder returned information about costs of either renting or leasing spaces. The amounts they paid totalled over £40,000 per annum: an average of £1,965 per youth theatre. The least amount paid was £100 per annum while the most was £7,400. The three youth theatres that spent the most on wages and fees also spent some of the higher amounts on rent.

3.2.3 Workshop Programme Costs

Twenty-nine youth theatres detailed annual costs of their workshop programmes. They paid over £37,700 between them: an average of more than £2,350 per youth theatre. Some of this money was probably spent on session fees and so was already accounted for in figures for wages and fees. It was, therefore, not possible to accurately calculate costs here. (Some youth theatres that indicated expenditure on fees did not break these costs down into workshop or production costs and so they have been excluded from this part of the analysis). It may be estimated generally that the least amount of money noted to have been spent was £60, while the greatest amount of money spent was £8,500.

3.2.4 Production Costs

While it is impossible to accurately assess specific production spend, it is possible to identify average costs for production. In the previous year, production costs for 28 youth theatres totalled £76,600: excluding the 'nils' there was an average of more than £4,700 spent per youth theatre. The lowest amounts noted were between £100 and £600. The highest amounts were between £10,000 and £16,500 and were spent by the three youth theatres which also showed the highest levels of expenditure on wages and fees.

3.2.5 Travel

No breakdown of costs was offered for travel expenses. The EU Youth for Europe programme, co-ordinated by Leargas, contributed significantly to the funding of most youth theatre European travel. However, it was noted that one trip to the USA, by a Northern Ireland based group, had cost in the region of £25,000. It is most likely that the cost of travel where it occurred was incorporated into the overall programming costs.

Chapter 4: Youth Theatre Participants

The key youth theatre players are leaders and members. This chapter examines the profile of individual key leaders and members.

4.1 Youth Theatre Leaders

A total of 273 adults were active in youth theatres during census week – an average of 9-10 per youth theatre. The least number of adults involved in a youth theatre was two and the highest number was thirty.

Volunteers

The greatest proportion of adult involvement came from the voluntary sector. 116 (42%) were volunteers who, between them, contributed to every aspect of their youth theatres. 43 (15%) were workshop facilitators and 25 (9%) directed plays. Eight voluntary facilitators were given nominal fees or expenses. Six youth theatres reported no voluntary involvement.

Part-time/Sessional Employees

Over half of the facilitators were part-time or sessional employees. 21% were employed on a part-time basis and 30% on a sessional basis. 10 of them were FAS employees. 39% of this category were employed in this way as workshop facilitators. 31 (11%) directed plays while the remainder worked mainly in production-related roles, artistic direction or administration.

Full-time Employees

Fourteen (5%) of the total were full-time employees. Six were employed as artistic directors, including five who were resident workshop facilitators. Three people had jobs that included their work for their youth theatre among other duties for a parent organisation. There were four full-time administrators/co-ordinators and one outreach worker.

A total of 89 individual leaders from 33 youth theatres returned personally completed forms detailing information about their employment status, skills and training experience and personal details on their

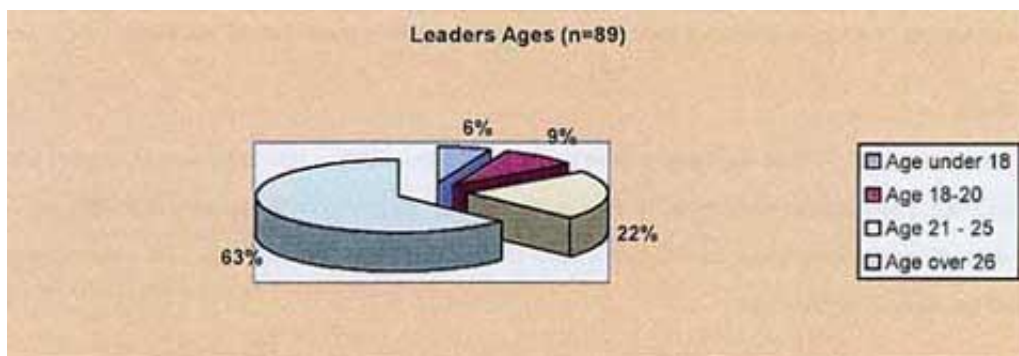
participation in youth theatre activities. The information has been collated using qualitative and quantitative assessment to draw up a current profile of youth theatre leaders.

4.1.1 General Characteristics of Youth Theatre Leaders

Ages of Youth Theatre Leaders

Most youth theatre leaders were aged over 26, while almost all of the remainder were young adults (aged 18-26). Only 6% were aged under 18 (Fig. 4.1.1).

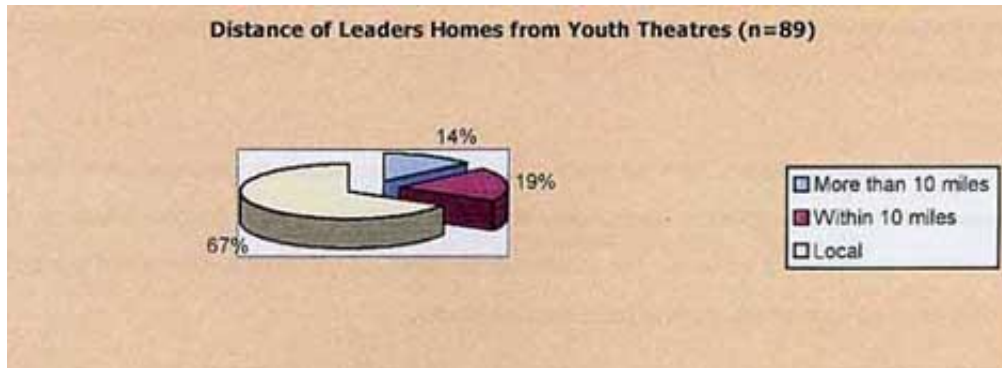
Fig. 4.1.1 Percentage Representation of Youth Theatre Leaders Age Brackets



Distances of Leaders' Homes from Their Youth Theatres

Most youth theatre leaders live in the area local to their youth theatre or within 10 miles of it. About one in eight live more than 10 miles away (4.1.2).

Fig. 4.1.2 Percentage Representation of Distance of Leaders homes from Youth Theatre Base

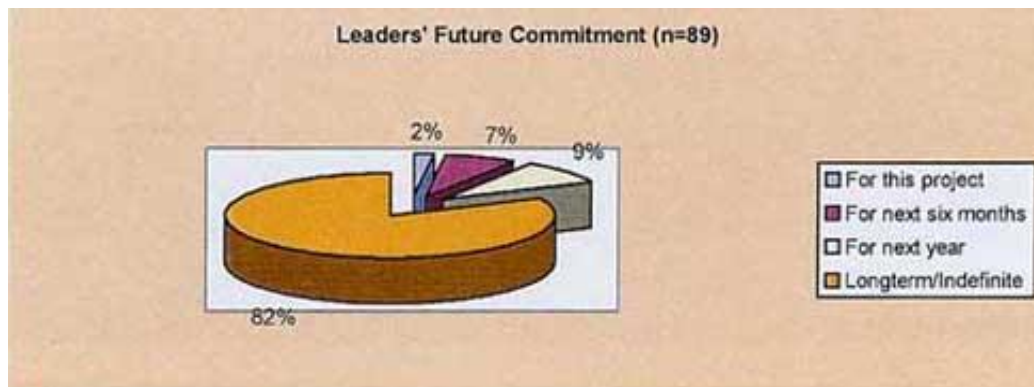


Leaders' Future Commitment to Their Youth Theatres

Of the 89 leaders who returned questionnaires, 82% indicated that they expect to remain committed to their youth theatre on a long-term or indefinite basis. Only two indicated that they expected to be involved in one project only. 7% indicated that they will remain for between six months to one year. This indicates a very high level of commitment, mostly on a voluntary basis, to youth theatres (Fig. 4.1.3).

All of these factors combined confirm a stable, mature, committed core leadership for youth theatre.

Fig. 4.1.3 Percentage Representation of Leaders' Future Commitment to the Youth Theatre



Reasons for Leaders' Continued Involvement in Youth Theatre

All of the information presented so far confirms that leaders are strongly interested in and committed to their youth theatre. The census sought to assess the reasons for continued commitment and involvement. A set of ten statements were offered to leaders and they were asked to tick, in order of preference, the reasons why they were (and continued to be) involved in youth theatre. They were also free to add their own reasons and include these in the ranking exercise.

Commitment to and interest in young people was rated by almost all of the leaders as their number one reason for continuing their involvement with youth theatre. The three statements below ranked equally for first choice. A keen interest in young people and their theatrical, aesthetic, personal and social development was clearly the primary motivation for the majority of youth theatre leaders.

- I find being involved with the theatrical/aesthetic development of young people very satisfying
- I enjoy working with young people
- I find being involved with the personal and social development of young people very satisfying

The ranking of this next statement was almost as high as the first three, suggesting that it is strongly linked to leaders' interest in young people and their development. It also reflects leaders' interest in and commitment to the wider community beyond that of youth theatre.

- I believe that involvement in youth theatre empowers young people to participate more fully in society

Some leaders elaborated on such reasons with comments:

"I love the way drama affects and develops positively the development of young people..."

"I find it builds their self confidence..."

"...Providing access to drama experience for those who don't have easy access i.e. rural students, students not supported by parents for practical or other reasons..."

The following two statements ranked equally in third position and reflected the personal benefits which youth leaders gained from their involvement.

- I find I work more creatively with youth theatres
- I like the strong sense of community in the youth theatre

Leaders were attracted by the opportunity to develop their own creativity and to feel they belonged to a creative community. Additional comments from some leaders emphasised these reasons:

“The members keep my interests and senses in check. I have to question myself and my ideas. I think that it’s healthy...”

“I find the work challenging, educational and satisfying...”

“I enjoy the social outing with my group and the other leaders...”

The statements which focused mostly on the potential benefits to leaders’ careers ranked lowest, with many leaders opting not to rank them at all.

- **I get valuable experience that helps build my chosen career**
- **I enjoy the company of other youth theatre leaders**
- **I make contacts with people who can help me improve my work/career opportunities**
- **It’s work – I need the money**

One leader wrote:

“This is where I started ‘It’s work I need the money’ (not ranked) but this is where I am now: I find being involved with the personal and social development of young people very satisfying – I find being involved with the theatrical /aesthetic development of young people very satisfying.”

Clearly her initial motivation was related to personal career development. Her experience of working with her group led to her motivation for remaining involved, becoming more focused on the personal satisfaction she found from working through drama with this age group.

Leaders’ responses to this section of the census questionnaire indicated a resounding altruistic basis to their commitment to working with their youth theatres. Most had already indicated that they had made

significant personal sacrifices because of this commitment. Most leaders had also noted that they plan to maintain their commitment on an indefinite, long-term basis.

What Sustains Such Levels of Commitment?

Where do leaders get their energy? What sustains their interest and commitment? The leaders have answered this question almost unanimously:

- their enjoyment of working with young people
- a strongly held belief that working through drama can contribute significantly to young people's development and empowerment
- the personal satisfaction gained from being involved in that work.

"Any commitment I make is because I love the work and I don't consider it a sacrifice..."

"I feel I have a sense of obligation to give back some of what others gave to me..."

The skills used by leaders in their youth theatres draw mainly on their training and experience in theatre practice. But the young person's growth, development and empowerment are their focus and reasons for continuing.

Leaders may be attracted into youth theatre work because of financial or career development needs. However, the satisfaction of being involved with a group of young people while they grow and develop through drama work becomes their reason for staying and pledging significant future personal commitment. At a personal level, they value opportunities to develop their own creativity, to learn from the youth theatre members and to belong to a creative community.

Gender Balance of Youth Theatre Leaders

As with youth theatre members the female-to-male ratio of leaders was 2:1.

4.1.2 Leaders' Backgrounds

All but three leaders indicated a background in at least one area of the arts or of the caring, education or youthwork fields. While most leaders indicated relevant experience in both the fields, leaders generally reported a wider range of background experience in the arts than in the caring/education fields. The majority (91%) indicated a background in at least one area of the arts, while 69% indicated a background in at least one caring, education or youthwork area. The most commonly reported relevant backgrounds were amateur actor, drama teacher, amateur director, voluntary youthwork, and professional actor. This information is grouped in different ways in Figs. 4.1.4 – 4.1.6 showing leaders' backgrounds. In addition to indicating their backgrounds by ticking the given categories, many leaders volunteered further information. Roles were listed across the spectrum including theatre technician, performance poet, professional writer, musician, family therapist, nurse, welfare officer, pastoral care, teacher and solicitor. This feedback is listed in Appendix A.

Fig 4.1.4 Leaders' Professional / Work Backgrounds



Fig. 4.1.5 Leaders' Arts Backgrounds

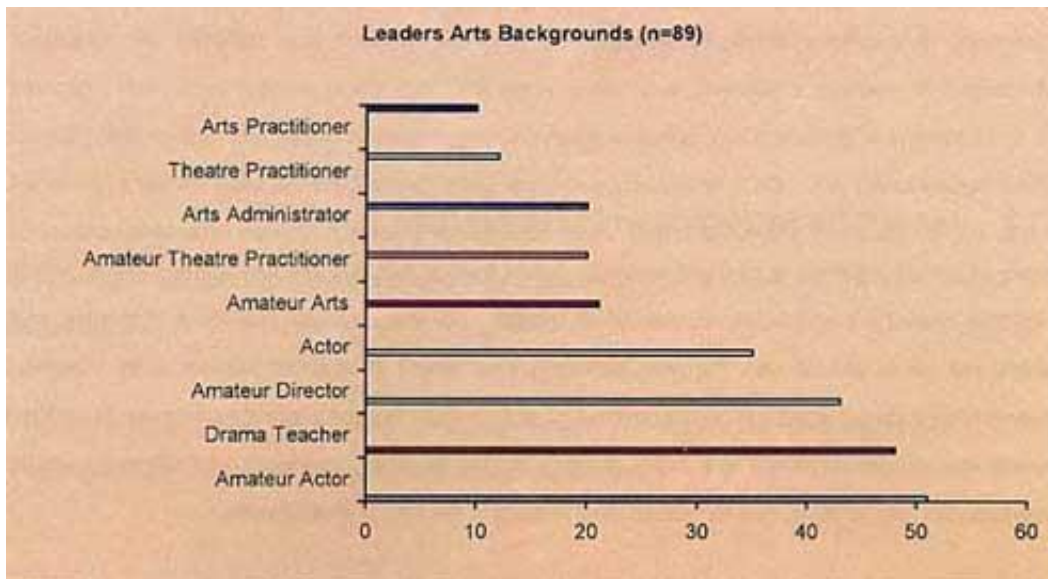
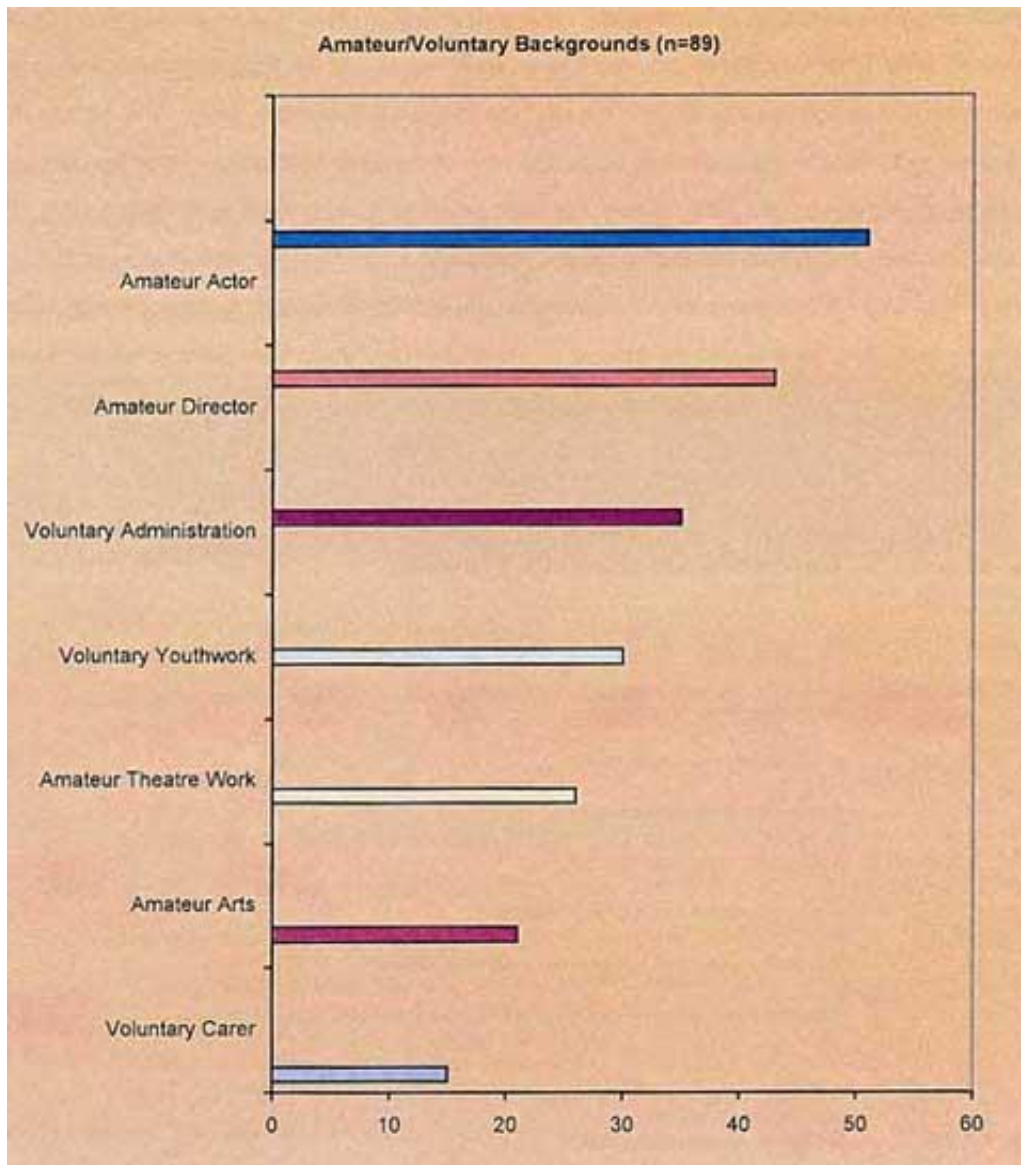


Fig.4.1.6 Leaders Amateur / Voluntary Backgrounds0



4.1.3 Leaders' Training/Acquisition of Relevant Skills

Almost all leaders identified at least one course or formal training that they felt had helped them acquire the skills they needed for contributing to their youth theatre. However, practical experience in theatre, youth theatre and life in general were the most commonly cited means of acquiring relevant skills. Overall, it appeared that leaders had learned from a combination of formal training and practical experience. While formal training was considered relevant in a variety of areas (drama, education, youthwork, youth theatre), practical experience/learning by doing, was considered most relevant to the area of youth theatre.

The value of experience within the youth theatre sector, both on a professional and amateur basis was cited most frequently. This included direct reference to professional TIE experience, amateur drama experience, community drama work and a variety of other levels of involvement in theatre e.g. student drama, fringe theatre, general theatre experience. Practical experience in youth theatre practice had

assisted many in their roles as leaders. Six specifically noted the relevance of having been a youth theatre member themselves. Many others had received structured leadership training within their own youth theatre.

General life experience or personal endeavour was listed as the second most relevant skill when working in youth theatre. Other responses included observation of and working with other drama facilitators, private study and reading, and practical processes of trial and error. One leader had learned most from their students. 14 leaders, out of a total of 89, had completed formal actor training courses ranging from one to four years. 12 leaders had attained either associate or licentiate diplomas in speech and drama.

Teaching was the most common caring profession cited with 19 leaders identifying themselves in this category. Training in clinical psychology, clinical family therapy, nurse management and social care were also listed by others.

Formal university training at diploma, degree and postgraduate levels were seen as relevant by almost one-quarter. 14 leaders said they had acquired their relevant skills through following university degree courses. Some courses specifically related to theatre, educational drama or the creative arts. It is important to note, however, that these figures do not reflect the number of leaders with university degrees. Few teachers, for example, specifically listed their university training as relevant to their youth theatre although they did identify being a teacher as being relevant. Six people had completed university diploma courses: four in theatre and drama studies, one in youthwork and one in drama therapy. 20% said that participation in once-off courses, most of which were run by NAYD had helped them.

Youthwork was identified as relevant work experience (11 respondents referred specifically to youth service training). Professional training in the other arts areas ranked quite low with a minimum of leaders having trained professionally. Six leaders listed professional training in dance, dance teaching or choreography. One leader was a trained musician, one a trained singer and one a graduate of NCAD. Only 5% of leaders identified relevant administrative training at diploma or certificate level. One of these was a graduate of the UCD arts administration course. Four people identified their training and work experience in the wider arts as having helped them.

Twenty-five leaders noted the benefit of their participation in training without specifying its type or duration. Five of them specified 'drama' courses without further elaboration.

Fig. 4.1.7 shows the percentage breakdown of leaders' training/acquisition of skills. Despite the relatively small size of this group (89), the statistics indicate a very high level of practical experience, professional qualifications and skills. Youth theatre leaders are a dedicated, highly skilled workforce with a diverse and wide breadth of experience.

Fig.4.1.7 Percentage Representation of Leaders Training/Acquisition of Skills



4.1.4 Leaders' Involvement with Other Youth Theatres

One-quarter of leaders reported that they had once been members of youth theatres themselves. These were mostly the youth theatres in which they were now leaders or other youth theatres (past and present) within their own region. This result affirms the role that youth theatres play in their own renewal and development and in the development of theatre activities in a region or locality. Over one-quarter of leaders from 16 youth theatres said that they had contributed as leaders to the activities of other youth theatres or youth theatre events.

4.1.5 Leaders' Roles in Youth Theatres

Most leaders indicated that they carry out multiple roles within their youth theatres. Three-quarters of them regarded themselves as 'in-house' leaders. A little less than a quarter were youth theatre employees of whom two described themselves as also being 'in-house'. Just four leaders described themselves as being a guest or sessional leader.

Youth theatre leaders played three major roles during census week: workshop leader, theatre director and administrator. Workshop leader roles involved facilitation and tutoring skills, while theatre direction related to performance and production.

Administration functions included accounts, organising, co-ordination, programming, and secretarial duties. House manager and office manager were role titles used by two leaders. 12 leaders described various duties arising from their membership of the management committee or team. These were

secretary, treasurer, fundraiser, chair or leader/director. Technical/design/production roles described included costume design and costume maker, set design and set construction.

Other roles were mentioned including dance tutor, writer, choreographer. Other role titles offered were teacher, trainer, tutor, group/general leader, helper to the drama tutor, youth worker and trainer. Fig. 4.1.8 indicates the percentage breakdown for the main roles described.

Fig 4.1.8 Percentage Representation of Leaders Roles in Youth Theatre

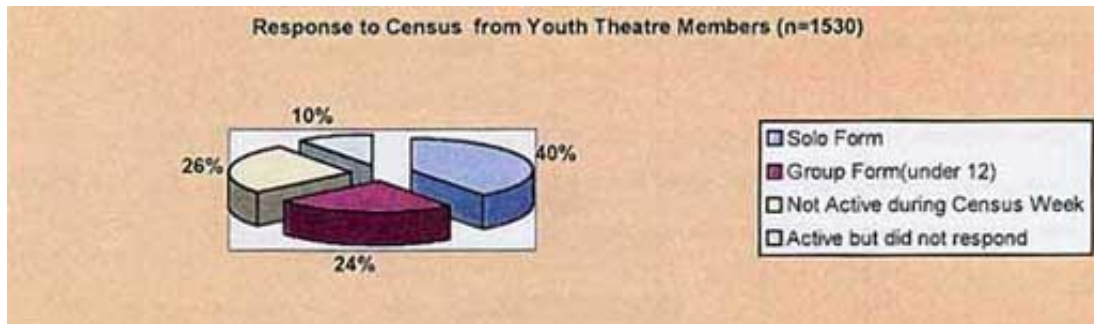


4.2 Youth Theatre Members

4.2.1 How Many Members Are Involved In Irish Youth Theatres?

Thirty-three youth theatres reported a total membership of 1530 (983 females; 547 males). Of the 33 youth theatres that responded, the smallest membership was 10 while the largest youth theatre membership indicated was 210. Most youth theatres do not keep waiting lists. However, among those who do, 307 young people were on waiting lists for youth theatres.

Fig. 4.2.1 Percentage Representation of Members' Response to Census



4.2.2 General Characteristics of Youth Theatre members

Ages of Youth Theatre Members

The overall average age was 15.3 years. Almost two-thirds of respondents were aged 13 to 17 inclusive (n=534). The census information presented below was derived mostly from the feedback of members in this age category. The youngest member that responded during census week was 5 years old and the oldest was 25. According to the census, in all activities, members were generally grouped according to age. The most common age groupings were 9 to 11, 12 to 14 and 15 to 25. Fig. 4.2.2 shows the percentage breakdown of the ages of the members.

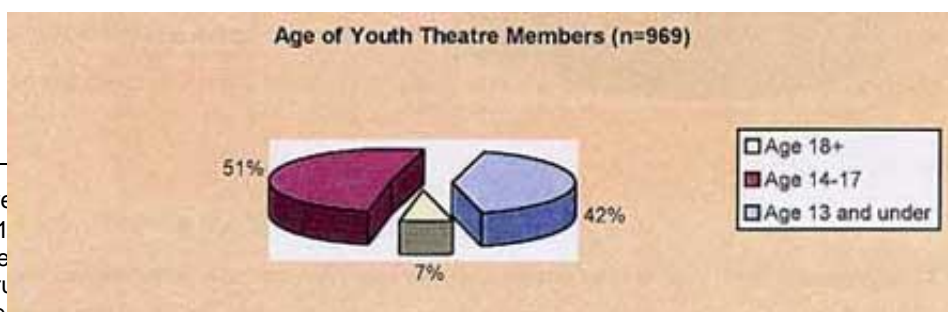
Members Aged 13 And Under:

About one-third of youth theatre members who returned personal information during census week were aged 13 or under (n=402). Most of them (306) gave information in a group interview with one of their leaders using the questionnaire form shown in Appendix A. This was a shorter and simpler form than the questionnaire completed individually by older members. The information derived from it was, correspondingly, simpler.⁶ Younger groups were most prevalent in the Southeast and Dublin/Wicklow regions. The youngest recorded participant was 5 years old but most of the younger age group was aged 9 to 12.

Members Aged 14 to 17:

Just over half of youth theatre members fell into the 14-17 age category (n=496). 26% of the total respondents were aged 14 or 15 and 25% were aged 16 or 17. Among this group, the average age of young men was 16 - six months older than the average age of female members.

Fig. 4.2.2 Percentage Representation of Ages of Youth Theatre Members



⁶ Eleven three 1 younger were n theatre

ase the her the groups e youth

Members Aged 18 and Over:

7% were aged 18 or over (n=71). The average age of those members in this category who took part in census week activities was 18.6 years. This suggests that the ages of older members cluster nearer to age 18 than to the age of the oldest recorded participant who was 25 years old. Members in this category came from 19 youth theatres. In all instances, they were the older members of groups which included mostly younger members. Three youth theatres had at least six or more members in this age category while seven more youth theatres had at least three. The greatest number of members in this age group in one youth theatre was 14.

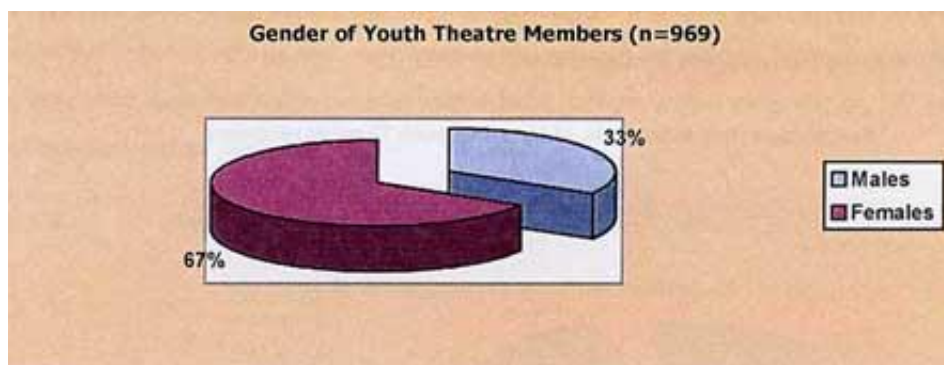
Among member's aged 18 and over, four out of five were from youth theatres based in or near large cities. The greatest number was from the Dublin/Wicklow region (26) with 14 and 12 being from the West and Southeast respectively.

Gender of Youth Theatre Members

The ratio of female to male members was 2:1 (Fig. 4.2.3). By and large this ratio was sustained regardless of how the data was categorised (by age, length of membership, region). Boys were proportionately represented in slightly larger numbers (40%) among members who were under 13. The proportion of young women to young men was highest among member's aged 13 to 17 (70%) and among those who had been youth theatre members for four years or more (71%).

Generally, there was little, if any, difference in the proportions of responses offered by males and females. Where differences have been observed, they have been highlighted.

Fig. 4.2.3 Percentage Representation of Gender of Youth Theatre Members



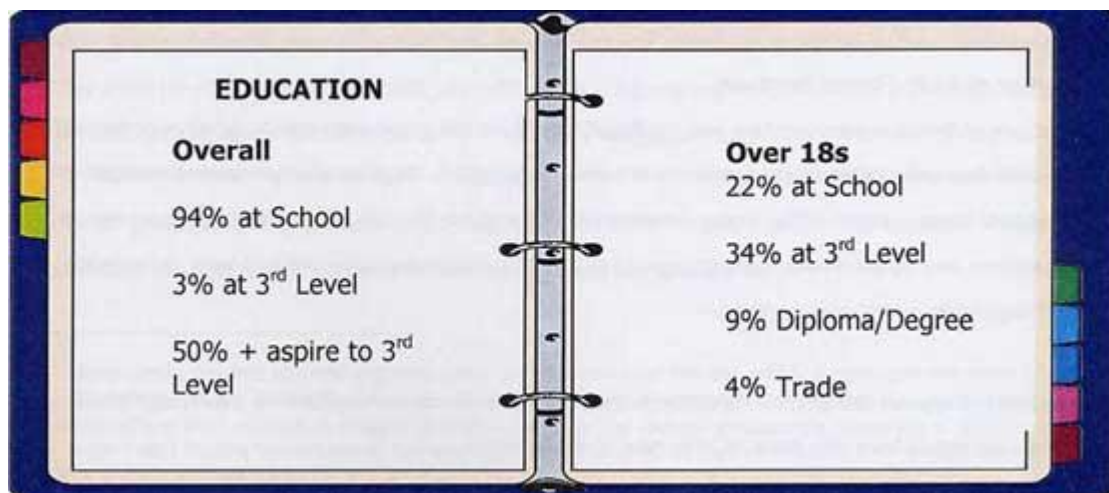
4.2.3 Educational Backgrounds

Almost all youth theatre members were in full time education: 94% were still at school while 3% were in third-level education. Three members (0.3%) were in Youthreach programmes. 40% of respondents had sat Junior Certificate exams and 6% had sat Leaving Certificate exams.

Of those aged 13 or more (n=605), 60% said that they planned to pursue a diploma or degree, while 5.1% stated that they planned to pursue a trade.

Of those aged 18 or over (n=71), 64% had sat Leaving Certificate exams and 22% said that they planned to sit them. One-third of this age group said they were at third level. Two had degrees, five had diplomas, three had trades and two were serving apprenticeships.

Education Status of Youth Theatre Members



4.2.4 Work Experience & Career Aspirations

Of the over-13s, 83% reported having occasional work and 17% had part-time work. Of members over eighteen, 96% reported earning from occasional or part-time work. Six members were unemployed, 11 were in full-time employment and 11 were employed on FAS schemes. It was common for people in these latter categories to retain occasional or part-time employment such as babysitting or pub and restaurant work.

About 30% of the older members aspired to a career in the theatre⁷, with about 13% expressing an interest in an arts career (music and film being the most commonly cited). These figures were not mutually exclusive.

4.2.5 Joining the Youth Theatre

Just over half of all members had joined the youth theatre on their own. 30% of those aged 12 and under had joined alone. Young men were a little more likely to have joined on their own: 60%⁸ of males indicated that they had done so, while 50% of females indicated they joined alone. Most of the over-18s had been members for a number of years and they were also more likely to have joined on their own. It can be concluded that, although small in number (71), the over-18s represented a highly motivated and dedicated subset of youth theatre members.

4.2.6 Length of Membership

Only members aged 13 or over recorded information in this area. Percentages and averages are based on the total number of questionnaire respondents in this age category (n=605). Overall, the average length of membership was 19 months, the shortest being one day and the longest being 9 years (Fig. 4.2.4). There was little gender difference in membership levels – the male average was 21 months and the female average was 18 months.

46% of the respondents were in their first year of membership, their average length of membership being 4.9 months. Their average age was 15 and 71% were female. A number of youth theatres stated that they actively recruit new members during early autumn and this was reflected in these figures.

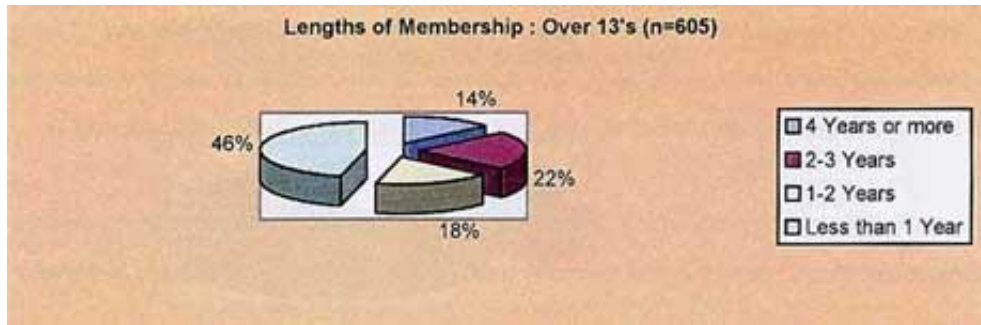
Just over 40% had been members for two or three years. Their average age was 16 and 65% were female.

13% were members for four years or more, their average length of membership being over five years. Their average age was 16 and 71% were female.

Fig. 4.2.4 Percentage Representation of Lengths of Membership among Over 13's

⁷ 26% of members over-thirteen and 32% of those over 18 aspired to a career in theatre.

⁸ This figure rose to 66% for members aged 18 or more.



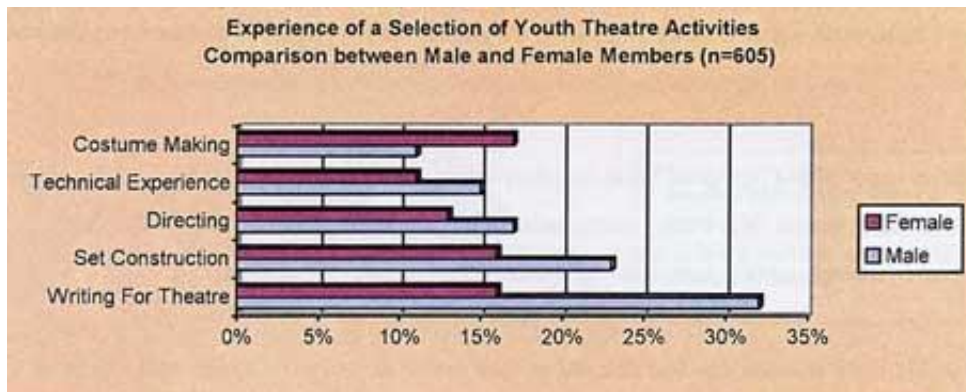
4.2.7 Experience in Youth Theatres

The study shows that youth theatre members can experience all aspects of drama and theatre within their first year of membership. About 720 members take part regularly in workshops. 21 young people had directed youth theatre plays during the previous year (1996) and 13 plays scripted by young people were performed. The majority (89%) of members aged 13+ participated in drama workshops within their first year of membership. This figure rose to 95% for those with four years of membership or more. More than half of this age group (58%) performed in a play within their first year. This rose to 91% for those with four years of membership or more.

It would seem that activities in the first year of membership focus predominantly on drama workshops, performance and theatre visits. Members who had pursued other areas of interest were most likely to do so during their second year of membership. The likelihood of gaining the experience of directing a play seemed to increase with length of membership.

There were no significant gender differences in the levels of reported participation in most areas. For the most part, male and female youth theatre members had participated in equal measure in all areas of drama. There were a few areas in which young men were represented in proportionately higher amounts. The most salient of these was writing. A male member was twice as likely to have had experience of writing for theatre. There were marginally higher representations of young men reporting experiences of set design, directing and technical experience. This trend was reversed in the area of costume making. These percentages are represented in Fig 4.2.5.

Fig. 4.2.5 Gender Comparison of Experience of Youth Theatre Activities



4.2.8 Members' Committees

A third of the groups had members' committees, involving 111 young people in all. The largest committee involved 48 young people and functioned as a large group forum. Two youth theatres were in the process of setting one up. Six youth theatres described regular open forum discussions for members. Others described small groups of two to four members, elected by their peers or nominated by leaders, who represented the views of the membership at general committee level or who liaise between leaders and members. Three members' committees took responsibility for organising social events. Most reported regular fortnightly or monthly meetings.

4.2.9 Family Backgrounds

Information about family background and interest in the arts was relevant in assessing whether a history of family involvement encouraged and influenced participation in arts activities. Members were invited to indicate if any members of their families were actively involved in the arts as an amateur, professional or as a regular spectator. Because some members might have been sensitive about being asked for information about their families, it was decided to ask open-ended questions. Respondents were also given the option of not completing this section. They were asked to list the 'kinds of jobs' people in their families had worked at and to volunteer any comments that members of their family had made about their involvement in the youth theatre.

Needless to say, some members contributed three generations of their family trees for each question! Others volunteered sparse, if any, information. Also, the information returned in the questionnaires was the young person's version of the interests and employment of members of their family and not an accurate account given by the adults concerned. Consequently, analysis of the results of this section relied a great deal on interpretation which, along with potential errors in reporting by the young people, has diminished the accuracy of the outcome. The results are, therefore, presented in broad categories. In reading them, one must be mindful of the wide margins of error that apply.

Family Work Background

Family work background was determined by grouping the job descriptions offered by members into three broad categories:

- middle to upper income (e.g. professions, business owners, management)
- lower to middle income (e.g. trades, clerical workers, skilled operatives)
- low paid or unemployed (e.g. manual workers, factory floor workers, unemployed)

If a respondent listed different jobs that spanned at least two of the above categories both categories were recorded. Thus the percentages recorded are not mutually exclusive.

The overall results indicated that about seven out of ten respondents reported that at least one family member was employed in a middle-to-upper-income job. A little less than 50% said that at least one family member was employed in a lower-to-middle-income job. One in five members said that a family member was in a low-paid job or was unemployed. Accepting all the precautions regarding error, it can still be concluded that most members of Irish youth theatres who participated in the census week were from middle-income families.

The evidence that almost all respondents were in full-time education and almost two-thirds aspired to third-level study corroborated this conclusion. It should, however, be remembered that youth theatres operating in Dublin's designated areas of disadvantage were inadequately represented in the census.

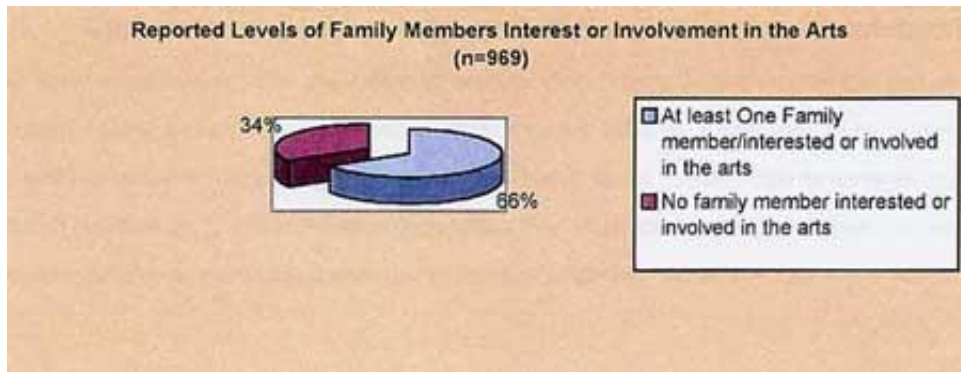
Family Involvement in the Arts

Overall, the chances of a youth theatre member having a family member who was active in amateur arts was about 50:50. The chances of a family member being a regular arts spectator were a little less than one in three. The odds of having a family member who worked professionally in the arts were almost one in five.

The frequencies with which members reported these various types of arts backgrounds varied from region to region. This, perhaps, reflected the differing regional levels of opportunity and participation in the arts. It would appear, however, that the longer-established, higher-profile youth theatres included a higher proportion of members with a family background in the arts. In any case, two-thirds (i.e. 66%) of members reported having at least one family member who was actively involved in or supportive of the arts. Members were requested to indicate the level of family arts involvement. The response was as follows⁹ (Fig.4.2.6):

Fig 4.2.6: Percentage Representation of Specific Level of Involvement of Family Members in the Arts.

⁹ Unless otherwise indicated, percentages in this section are based on regional groupings and not the total census numbers.



Amateur Arts:

48% of all members reported that at least one family member was involved in amateur arts activities. This type of family background was most likely to be reported by members in the Southwest region (63%), in the Southeast (54%) and in Northern Ireland (56%). Ulster members from south of the border were least likely to report family involvement in amateur arts activities (36%).

Regular Spectators:

27% of all members reported that at least one family member was a regular arts spectator. Members from Northern Ireland (37%) were the most likely to report this type of arts background.

Professional Arts/Education Workers:

Almost one-third of respondents indicated that at least one member of their family worked professionally in the arts and/or education. About one in five reported that there was a teacher in the family, while one in six reported a family member who worked professionally in the arts.

Members of youth theatres in the regions of the Southwest (28%), Dublin (25%) and Northern Ireland (25%) reported the highest proportions of professional arts backgrounds. Members from the Northeast (11%) and Ulster – south of the border (7%) were least likely to report a professional arts worker in the family.

Family Response to Members Involvement in Youth Theatre

Almost all of those who indicated a family view about their membership of a youth theatre were positive and encouraging (86% of all respondents). 8% were negative, with most negative comments relating to the amount of time the young person was spending in the youth theatre – away from family, studies and other responsibilities.

Chapter 5: Impact of Participation in Youth Theatre

5.1 Cultural and Aesthetic Impact of Youth Theatre Membership

This study sought to establish the extent (if any) to which youth theatre membership had impacted on members' cultural and aesthetic development. Members were asked to indicate their levels of participation in areas of arts and sports activities before joining their youth theatres. These acted as

baselines against which reported development of newer interests since joining their youth theatres was contrasted. In addition, they detailed specific theatre and performance related activities which they had experienced in their youth theatres.

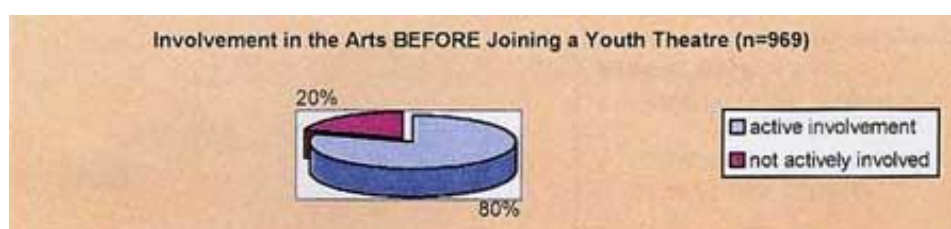
5.1.1 Members' Interests Before Joining A Youth Theatre

Four out of five over-13s indicated a previous active involvement in at least one art form and more than one in eight indicated a previous active involvement in four or five art forms. Overall, 56% indicated that they had been actively involved in drama before joining their youth theatre. 11% of those aged 13 or more (n=534) and 14% of those aged 18 or more (n=71) had been members of other youth theatres before joining their current one (Fig. 5.1.1).

The performing arts were highly represented across age, gender and region groupings as hobbies in which members were actively involved before joining their youth theatres. Even among the under-12s, about one-third of respondents indicated that they had been actively involved in music, dance or drama before joining. More than half the over-13s said that they had been actively involved in music and/or drama, with 42% saying they had been actively involved in dance. Similar amounts of over-13s noted that they were consumers of several art forms, particularly the performing arts, before joining their youth theatres.

In all, about 80% of youth theatre members had been actively involved in the arts prior to joining their youth theatres. The most popular previous involvement was in activities relevant to the performing arts. As with arts activities, about four out of five over-13s indicated a previous active involvement in a sports activity. More than one in eight indicated a previous active involvement in four or five aspects of sport. Youth theatre members were more likely to be involved in sport for fun rather than being involved in sport in a more formal or organised way.

Fig. 5.1.1 Percentage Representation of Involvement in the Arts **BEFORE** Joining A Youth Theatre.



The results suggest a bias among about half the membership to structured involvement in the arts before joining. It is possible that many youth theatre members have had prior experience of formal, structured or organised arts activities. Their experience of participation in other leisure activities has been of a less formal or structured nature, consequently, demanding less commitment.

This bias was most evident in the over-18 age group. This was the only member grouping which reported higher levels of participation in arts activities than in any form of sports activity before joining. This observation further supports the view that this subset of members represents a group which is particularly motivated and dedicated to youth theatre and related activity.

5.1.2 Reported Involvement in Activities Since Joining A Youth Theatre

Reported increases in involvement in all areas of the arts substantially exceeded the reported increases in involvement in sports activities. The arts activity with the lowest reported level of increased involvement for over-13s was visual arts at 40%. The sports activity with the highest reported level of increased involvement for the same group was sport for fun at 11%.

The most notable area of increased interest for the over-13s was active involvement in drama with more than 90% indicating a change in this area. Although more than half had already expressed an active interest in drama before joining, almost all members said that that interest had increased since joining their youth theatre. Thus, even for those with previous experience of active drama involvement, membership of their youth theatre had introduced them to new areas of interest in drama and/or had increased their interest in the subject. This result strongly affirms the role youth theatres play in developing members' interest and involvement in theatre.

More than 40% indicated an increased interest in active involvement in other art forms, with an increased interest in dance being the most salient at 50% for over-13s and 56% for over-18s. This affirms that youth theatres play a role, firstly, in increasing their members' involvement in other areas of the performing arts and, secondly, in increasing their participation in the arts generally.

It can also be concluded that involvement in youth theatre did not significantly reduce previous levels of participation in a range of activities, including sport. These results also offer no basis to presume that youth theatres 'poach' their members from other areas of organised activity.

YOUTH THEATRE MEMBERS' INTEREST AND INVOLVEMENT IN ARTS ACTIVITIES

Writing

- 40% Increased interest and involvement
- 1 in 4 Young Men: new interest
- 1 in 8 Young Women: new Interest





Dance

- 50%+ Increased interest and involvement
- 25% of male members developed a new interest. 1 in 4 young men: new interest

Drama

- 90%+ : Increased interest and involvement
- 40% acquired interest in youth theatre
2 in 5 : new interest



Visual Arts

- 40% Increased interest and involvement
- 25% acquired interest in youth theatre
1 in 4 : new interest

5.1.3 Art Forms with Increased Levels of Reported Interest

After drama, involvement in the visual arts and writing were the most frequently reported areas of increased interest or experience. Proportionately higher numbers of young men indicated an increased level of involvement in writing and dance.

46% of males and 40% of females indicated increased involvement in writing since joining their youth theatres. This suggests that more than one in four young men (27%) and more than one in eight young women (14%) had developed this interest since joining their youth theatre.

42% of males and 40% of females indicated increased involvement in the visual arts since joining their youth theatres. This suggests that more than one in four members (26%), regardless of gender, had developed this interest since joining their youth theatre.

18% of male members indicated that they were actively involved in dance prior to being members of their youth theatres and 16% of them said that they would have attended dance performances regularly. In contrast, the female percentages for these responses were quite high at 53% and 31% respectively. There was little change in the proportion of young women expressing continued active involvement in dance since joining. However, 42% of male members said that they had increased their level of interest in dance. In other words, the level of interest in dance among male members had increased by 25% since joining the youth theatre.

5.1.4 Stimulating Interest and Confidence in the Arts

Participation and involvement in youth theatre can be a catalyst in stimulating and engaging young people in cultural activities. The census showed that involvement in youth theatre has motivated interest and activity in other areas of young people's lives.

Overall, 78% of members reported becoming interested in something new as a result of joining their youth theatre. As with other areas, those with a longer period of membership were a little more likely to report this (85%). The most commonly cited areas of new interests related to theatre activities. Acting in plays was listed most often along with street theatre, improvisation, workshops and theatre of cruelty/issue based drama.

Some members indicated that they had brought their drama interest beyond the youth theatre to participate in their school play or musical or to join other drama groups. Two members had organised arts events in their schools and two had set up their own drama groups. A few members noted that participation in youth theatre had sparked an interest in pursuing a life in theatre or had encouraged them to audition for main parts.

A few respondents had decided to take exams in speech and drama or to develop skills in teaching drama and leading workshops. Other new areas of theatre interest included technical work, lighting, stage management, stage construction, production, directing and design.

"I am more aware of the arts, more confident, outgoing, outspoken, made lots of good friends" – Member, Gaiety School of Acting

"I am more aware of social issues and life. The value of literature" – Member, Corca Bascainn

Dance, movement, mime and physical theatre were the most commonly cited new interests in the related arts. Some indicated particular types of dance such as jazz or samba. One person had developed an interest in puppeteering. Writing was also listed: for theatre and for other forms, especially poetry. One had developed an interest in reading poetry.

Some members of youth theatres that offered experience in film, photography and video listed these activities as new interests. The same was true of youth theatres that had included music and percussion in their work. A few members said they had developed an interest in singing, with one saying she had decided to get her voice trained professionally. One person had decided to perform in a band and one had developed a special interest in samba music.

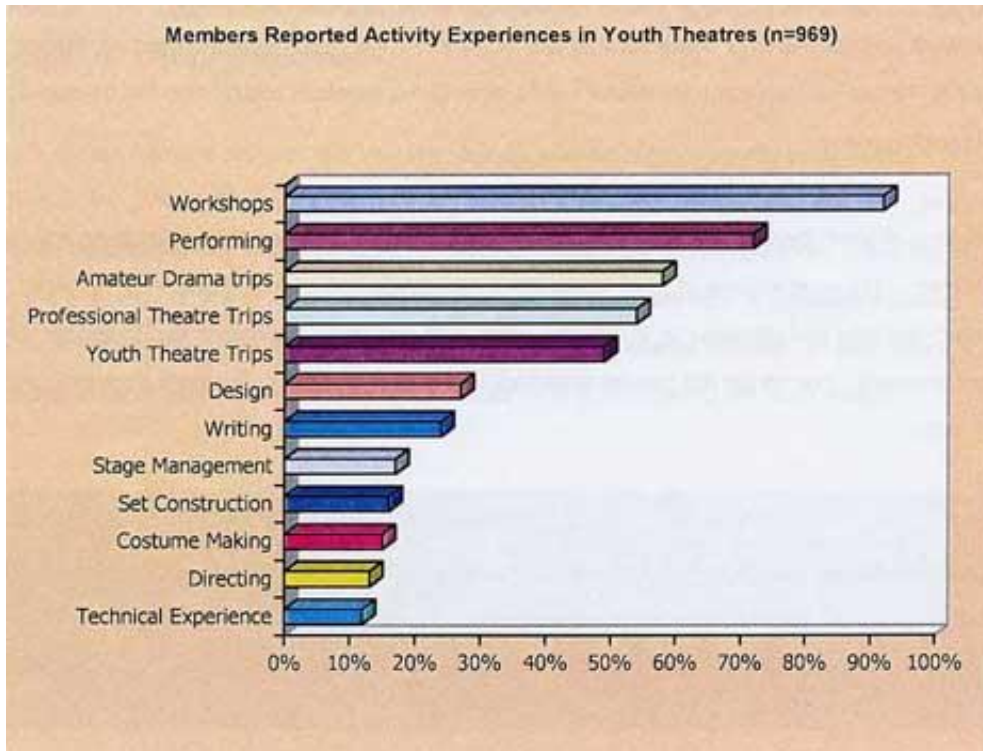
"I am able to understand literature better. This helps with school" – Member, Waterford Youth Theatre

"I understand and appreciate the art more and I enjoy it" – Member, Dublin Youth Theatre

5.1.5 Building New Skills In The Arts

Of the 75% of members who reported developing new skills since joining their youth theatre, most referred to theatre related skills. The most commonly mentioned were acting, improvisation, and drama, singing/voice skills, movement/mime and dance. A number focused on specific aspects of performance such as 'acting with feeling', clowning, character development or methods of learning lines. Directing, technical skills and stage make up were also listed. Skills acquired in the related arts were most commonly writing, samba and playing musical instruments, especially percussion (Fig. 5.1.2).

Fig. 5.1.2 **Members Reported Activity Experiences in Youth Theatres**



5.2 Social Impact of Participation in Youth Theatre

Some information sought in the census was designed to generate results that could be compared with those of Francois Matarasso's 1997 UK study '*Use or Ornament – The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts*'. The range of social benefits and the extent to which they were reported by Irish youth theatre members were markedly similar to those described in Matarasso's study. From a sample of 243 adults and 270 children, he concluded that participation in community arts projects had had a significant social impact in many areas. For example, he showed that at least four out of five people made new friends, developed new interests and became more confident as a result of participation in community arts projects. A summary of his findings is reproduced in Appendix B.

The results of our study indicated that almost all youth theatre members experienced positive social benefits from their first involvement with youth theatre. More than two-thirds of them indicated that they felt happier and more confident, had tried something new and had developed new skills.

The frequencies with which each area of social benefit was reported increased with length of membership. This could be interpreted in two ways. Firstly, it might indicate that the longer one stayed in a youth theatre, the more social benefits one enjoyed. On the other hand, it might suggest that those who experienced social benefits during their early period of membership were more likely to remain involved in their youth theatre. The study cannot confirm which of these interpretations is more likely.

Results are presented below under headings that correspond with those used by Matarasso. They show that membership of youth theatres:

- Reduces isolation by helping people to make friends
- Increases people's confidence and sense of self worth
- Has a positive impact on how people feel
- Helps to build new skills
- Can promote tolerance by providing a forum for intercultural understanding and friendship
- Promotes intercultural contact and communication
- Can provide a forum to explore personal rights and responsibilities

Social Benefits to Participation in Youth Theatre

- **Made Friends**

- **More Confident**

- **Felt Better**

- **New Skills**
 - **Better Communicator**
- **More Tolerant of Difference**
- **More Aware of Rights**

5.2.1 Reported Social Benefits

Reducing Isolation by Helping People to Make Friends

Almost all census respondents (96%) indicated that they had made new friends in their youth theatres. As previously noted, the making of new friends was experienced at this high level from within the first month of membership. In Matarasso's study, 92% of respondents indicated 'yes' to this question.

"I've made good, close friends, realised my ability and potential (it) has made me really outgoing and open minded" – Member, Cabinteely Youth Theatre

"I've met some of my closest friends here" – Member, Dublin Youth Theatre

"They're like another family to me now" – Member, Waterford Youth Drama

“More adults to confide in” – Member, Monaghan Youth Theatre

“Gave me another family and home to go to” – Member, Dry Rain Youth Theatre

Many comments elaborated on this process of friendship-making. The examples offered below suggest that members believed that they had developed skills through drama which are essential for the making and deepening of all kinds of human relationships.

“I’m a lot more interested in other people’s opinions and communicate to people through more varied mediums” – Member, Galway Youth Theatre

“You understand people better” – Member, Corca Bascainn

“I can relate to people a lot better and have become happier” – Member, Brewery Lane Youth Theatre

“More aware, conscious of people’s feelings and attitudes” – Member, Kilkenny Youth Theatre

Increasing People’s Confidence and Sense of Self Worth

85% of our respondents indicated that they felt more confident as a result of joining their youth theatres. This compared with 80% of the participants in Matarasso’s study.

“It’s made me more outgoing, confident with a wider outlook on life” – Member, Cavan Youth Theatre

“I’m no longer shy” – Member, Waterford Youth Theatre

“Became more mature and self-reliant and sensible. Also, became a better person”. – Member, Monaghan Youth Theatre

The frequency with which members reported increased confidence increased slightly with length of membership. 80% of those who had been members for one year or less said they were more confident, while 89% of those who had been members for two or more years said this. There was a slight gender difference, with 79% of males and 87% of females reporting increased confidence.

Having a Positive Impact on How People Feel

Overall, increased levels of happiness were reported by slightly less than 80% of members. 73% of those who had been members for one year or less indicated 'yes' in this category while 86% of those who had been members for two or more years did so. In Matarasso's study, 77% of participants reported feeling happier as a result of participating in a community arts project.

"I am happier and I laugh and talk a lot more" – Member, Cryptic Youth Theatre

"Was a miserable bugger, now a happy camper" – Member, Cavan Youth Theatre

Almost half (48%) of those who had been members for two or more years indicated that they felt better or healthier as a result of being in their youth theatre. This was exactly the same as the outcome in this category in Matarasso's study.

Helping To Build New Skills

About three-quarters of all respondents said that they had acquired new skills as a result of their participation in youth theatre. The frequencies with which they reported this increased markedly with length of membership: from 69% of those in their first year of membership to 86% of those who had been members for two years or more. Matarasso's study yielded 79% in this category.

Most indicated that their new skills were theatre-related. More generally applicable skills which members said they had acquired included public speaking, self-expression, communication skills and clearer speech. A few had joined a debating team or taken up public speaking. They also identified concentration, self-control, confidence and assertiveness.

Some referred to skills they had attained in group work or teamwork, including the ability to make fools of themselves. Others said they had learned social skills which helped them to deal with people and get on with new people. The ability to enjoy life and be open-minded was stated. A few used these skills to

join other groups or organisations or to assume committee functions in their youth theatre. One had learned how to court!

A small number of members described increased skill and participation in physical activities: sports, tae kwon do, wall climbing and learning to relax physically.

“Helps with perseverance – when I keep practising things I get better” – Member, Eureka Youth Theatre

Providing A Forum to Explore Personal Rights and Responsibilities

Almost one in four of those who had been members for two or more years said that they had changed their ideas about their rights as a result of being in a youth theatre. They mostly referred to feeling more confident to assert their own rights, ‘to stand my ground’, ‘to take control of my life’, ‘to feel independent’.

The next most common area of changed awareness of rights related to freedom of speech and expression both for the individual and for performing groups.

“Cultural expression is vital” – Member, Kilkenny Youth Theatre

Members referred to their acquired belief in the general rights and powers of the individual:

“Take an active part make a difference” – Member, Kilkenny Youth Theatre

“Everyone has a certain talent that makes them special” – Member, Eureka Youth Theatre

Members referred to the specific rights of young people to speak out and be heard and to the power of the consumer. A number indicated that they had become more aware generally and had more opinions. Some referred to their changed attitudes regarding racism or sexuality. One member volunteered that they were no longer embarrassed about their own sexuality.

Promoting Intercultural Contact and Communication

The group that were most likely to have travelled with their youth theatre were those aged 13 or over who had been members for two years or more (n=216). 40% of these had travelled within their region with their youth theatre, 37% had travelled further within Ireland and 22% had travelled internationally.

One in five of the under-12s had travelled within their region with their youth theatre. One had travelled within Ireland and none had travelled internationally.

Those aged 18 or over were less likely to have travelled within their region (26% of 71) but a little more likely to have travelled internationally with the youth theatre (25%).

Of the 280 over-13s in their first year of membership, 62 (22%) had already travelled within their region, 43 (15%) within Ireland, and 17 (6%) internationally.

Promoting Tolerance And Providing A Forum For Intercultural Understanding And Friendship

More than half (51%) of those who had been members for two or more years reported that they had learned about other people's cultures through being in their youth theatre. This compared with 56% in Matarasso's study.

"(I have learned) that people who are different aren't stupid" – Member, Waterford Youth Drama

"(I have learned) about not judging people on how they look" – Member, Kilkenny Youth Theatre

"No matter what a person looks like on the outside they can still be sound" – Member, Dublin Youth Theatre

"How wrong stereotypes can be" – Member, Dublin Youth Theatre

Some members connected this cultural awareness with travels made with their youth theatre:

“A chance to see how other cultures approach drama” – Member, First Call Youth Theatre

“(I have) travelled more and experienced a range of cultures new to me” – Member, First Call Youth Theatre

Others associated their increased cultural awareness with experience of local cultures represented within their own youth theatre:

“Had I not joined, I would only have grown up with people who came from the same kind of background as me and my view of people from all over the country” – Member, Dublin Youth Theatre

Chapter 6: Outcomes and Recommendations

6.1 Outcomes

The review and research undertaken by the National Association for Youth Drama in 1997-1998 focused on both the history of development and the current status of youth theatre in Ireland. This report is an outcome of that process. Another important outcome of the process was the articulation of some agreed definitions and policy statements for future development of youth drama and theatre in Ireland.

Youth Theatre Definitions

Young People:

People aged between 12 and 25 years are the main focus of NAYD's work.

Youth Drama:

Drama practice which engages young people as active participants, by using group or ensemble drama approaches, and which encourages the development of the whole person by using drama methods which respond to the developmental needs of participants.

Youth Drama Project:

A youth drama event or programme of activities which targets a specific group of young people over a specific time period and/or is organised as part of a wider programme of activities by a local arts or youth organisation or youth theatre group.

Youth Drama/Theatre Group:

A drama group for young people which offers a year-round programme of activities including a regular programme of drama workshops and the staging of at least one theatre production each year. A youth drama/theatre group draws its adult leaders from the voluntary and/or professional sectors and provides for their training and development. It has at least one, but usually a core group of, 'in-house' adult leaders, who offer a stable, skilled and long-term commitment to all aspects of the group's development. A youth drama/theatre group has its own identity forged by its members through drama workshop experiences and its interface with the wider community through public performance, participation in youth drama events and links with local groups and agencies.

6.1.2 Youth Theatre Policy

The National Association for Youth Drama (NAYD) is the premier organisation for youth theatre in Ireland. NAYD advocates a way of working through drama with young people which emphasises personal and social development equally with the attainment of artistic excellence by:

- Fostering the establishment and sustained development of youth theatres;
- Promoting youth drama projects, non-competitive youth drama festivals and youth drama exchanges at local, national and international level;
- Organising a programme of events which stimulates the ongoing development of youth drama practice in Ireland;
- Offering and supporting training in youth drama practice for leaders, directors and teachers;
- Representing the unique value and needs of youth drama practice to appropriate funding and policy making agencies at local, national and international levels.

NAYD advocates the sustained development of youth theatres by encouraging youth theatre groups to:

- Offer drama workshop programmes which engage members in every aspect of theatre, the performing arts and related arts activities and which provide opportunities to explore themes that are particularly relevant to their generation;

- Stage plays which have relevance to young people's lives including work devised by members themselves from workshop materials, commissioned scripts and work which offers opportunities for ensemble playing or experimental performance style;
- Articulate long-term aims and objectives including a clear philosophy and artistic vision;
- Develop administrative structures;
- Establish relationships with funding agencies, support organisations, the private sector and their local arts and youth-work communities;
- Nurture the leadership abilities of their members.

NAYD is committed to developing:

- Guidelines for good practice in drama workshops and productions;
- Charters of rights for members and leaders;
- Guidelines for protecting members from abuse and exploitation.

6.1.3 Youth Theatre: Stages of Development

Based on the findings of the review and research, the key stages in the development of youth theatres can be summarised as follows:

1. To survive the early stages of development, a youth theatre needs at least one adult leader who lives locally and has the necessary skills, vision and commitment.

It is equally important that a youth theatre, in its early stages of development, has the encouragement and support from at least one, or a combination of, the following local resources:

- Youth Service,
 - Professional or amateur drama community,
 - Local Authority.
2. The next critical stage of a youth theatre's development involves an increasing level of independent identity. Milestones in this process include:
 - moving from borrowed or shared space to having one's own address,
as well as
 - accessing increased funding and assuming responsibility for one's own budget.

- Financial and accommodation independence allows the youth theatre to bridge this significant moment in its development, which is characterised by the expansion of its programme and the ability to employ professional support.
3. An established youth theatre is a focus and resource for the development of youth and community arts, in its locality, in which older and former members assume leadership and artistic roles.

6.2 Recommendations

Much has been achieved but much remains to be done. For the first time in its history, NAYD (and the youth theatre movement as a whole) has a well-documented body of research data and factual information as a basis for future planning and development. A number of areas have emerged that require either further study or action to be taken.

6.2.1 Structure of NAYD

It is important that the structure of NAYD continues to reflect the core values of youth theatre as highlighted in the review and research process. At the same time, it must acknowledge the multiplicity of aspirations of its core membership. It is recommended that:

- **NAYD, as the umbrella organisation for youth theatre, constantly review its own organisational structures, both at executive and administrative levels, to continue to be relevant to its ever-evolving membership.**

6.2.2 Standards

NAYD recognises the need to continue to encourage standards of excellence in all areas of youth theatre activity. It is recommended that:

- **The Arts Council and local funding agencies recognise and support those youth theatres who are clearly committed to sustained development and improving standards.**

6.2.3 Regional Development

There are now over 50 youth theatres affiliated to NAYD. Their needs and circumstances can vary between areas and between regions. The development of successful models of youth theatre practice in rural areas, for example, remains a challenge and the special needs of youth theatres operating in areas designated as disadvantaged must be addressed. The successful nature of the Development Officer post in NAYD requires further expansion. It is recommended that:

- **over a period of 5 years, regional development officer posts be established in negotiated areas.**
- **a national youth arts centre be established.**

6.2.4 Training

Lack of training is an issue long recognised by NAYD and by other arts organisations. The time has come for a sustained and focused approach, which would lead to certified and recognised qualification for youth arts personnel. The question of training for young actors and technical/production personnel is also of interest to NAYD. It is recommended that:

- **The Arts Council establishes links/partnerships with third-level institutions and set up a steering group of interested parties.**
- **the possibility of EU funding in this area be explored with the Department of Education and Science.**

6.2.5 Youth Theatre Premises

The issue of premises is a difficult and complex one, and was, therefore, impossible to adequately address in this document. However, it is clear that most youth theatres are in a precarious position and that availability and access to both rehearsal and performance space is of crucial importance. It is recommended that:

- **an audit of spaces be undertaken to include an audit of access by youth theatres.**
- **for those youth theatres already having access or ownership of space, the question of capital expenditure towards improvement be addressed.**

6.2.6 Children's Theatre

The study highlighted that about one-third of youth theatres in the country have members under the age of 13 and that these would be excluded, because of their age, from many activities and events organised by NAYD. It is recommended that:

- **NAYD carry out an investigation of youth theatres that cater for young people under 13 years of age to establish whether special training and programming is required.**

6.2.7 International

Travelling abroad to festivals and taking part in exchanges with other countries help to raise Ireland's youth profile on the international stage. NAYD acknowledges the support of Leargas in the funding of youth theatre exchanges and the Department of Foreign Affairs (Cultural Section) towards Irish participation in international youth drama festivals. Also, NAYD welcomes the establishment of the International Desk at The Arts Council as a most positive development. However, no funding mechanism exists for supporting international events in Ireland. It is recommended that:

- **NAYD seeks funding towards the organisation of an international youth theatre festival every 3 years.**

6.3 The Future

The process of review and research addressed a series of questions posed at the outset (see section 1.3 of this report). The answers obtained through the five phases of the process provide a solid basis and direction to planning for future development.

The recommendations highlight a number of strategies that would enable future development of both the National Association for Youth Drama and its member youth theatre groups.

NAYD is committed to addressing these issues and, as a first step, the current Executive has prioritised a number of tasks to be undertaken in the immediate future.

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A1

Chapter 1: Youth Theatre in Ireland - Overview

Table 1.3.1 Youth Theatres: Breakdown of census forms by NAYD regional networks-Percentage

	Southeast	Dublin	Northeast	Southwest	Non-network
Sent forms (100%)	14%	44%	12%	16%	14%
Returned forms (72%)	19%	42%	14%	14%	11%
Adequate returns (56%)	21%	36%	14%	14%	14%

Table 1.3.2 Youth Theatres: Breakdown of census forms by NAYD regional networks-Actual Numbers

	Southeast	Dublin	Northeast	Southwest	Non-network
Sent forms (n=50)	7	22	6	8	7
Returned forms (n=36)	7	15	5	5	4
Adequate forms (n=28)	6	10	4	4	4

Table 1.3.3 Youth Theatres returning census forms by NAYD regional networks

	Southeast	Dublin	Northeast	Southwest	Non-network
Adequate returns	21%	36%	14%	14%	14%
Over-13 returns	24%	39%	14%	10%	13%
Under-12 returns	35%	33%	0%	13%	18%

Chapter 2: Youth Theatre Practice and Programming

Table 2.1.1 Other Activities Cited As Part of the Weekly Activities Programme

Activity	Frequency
Dance/choreography	7
Drop in	2
Costuming	2
Theatre Visit	2
Video	2
Planning Meeting	2
Bring cast to see performance space	2
Readings/auditions	1
Visit by President Mary Robinson	1
Meet Scottish group to plan for exchange	1
Performance event for sponsors	1
Plan group's contribution to various Christmas charity events	1
Participate in World AIDS Day	1
Educational discussion	1
Members' forum	1
Outreach workers' forum	1
Total	28

Table 2.1.2 Levels of activity during the week

	Workshops	Rehearsals	Other	Total
Monday	10	4	4	18
Tuesday	5	4	4	13
Wednesday	6	6	4	16
Thursday	9	4	2	15
Friday	2	2	6	10
Saturday	19	7	7	33
Sunday	0	6	2	8
Total	51	33	29	113

Table 2.1.3 Daily Levels of Participation and Ratio Levels

	Leaders	Members	Ratio Leader: Member
Monday	29	275	1 : 9
Tuesday	20	165	1 : 8
Wednesday	16	166	1 : 10
Thursday	22	288	1 : 13
Friday	14	128	1 : 9
Saturday	56	502	1 : 9
Sunday	18	130	1 : 7

Chapter 3: Funding and Resources

B = Benefit-in-kind

F = Founded/Established by

£ = Funding

L = Links

Youth Theatres (Age of YT in Brackets)	Arts Council or Arts Centre or Professional Theatre	Youth Service / VEC	Local Authority	Amateur Drama Group	Community Agency / Resource	Commercial Sponsor
Brewery Lane Youth Theatre (20)				L / B		
Dublin Youth Theatre (20)	£ / B	L / £	£			£
St Kevin's Drama Workshop (18)		L / £ / B				
Cabinteely Youth Theatre (15)		£	£			
Navan Youth Theatre (13)					B	
Waterford Youth Drama (12)	L / £ / B	L / £ / B	L / £ / B	L / B	L / B	L / £ / B
Dundalk Youth Theatre (11)			F / L / £ / B			
Millbank Youth Theatre (9)				L / B		
Dry Rain Youth Theatre (8)	£	L / £	L / £ / B		B	
Rainbow Factory Youth Theatre (7)	L / B	L / £ / B	L / £ / B	L / B	L / £ / B	L / £ / B
Droichead Youth Theatre (6)	L / £ / B	L / £	£		£	L / £
First Call Youth Theatre (6)	L / £ / B	L / £ / B	L / B		L / B	L / B
Galway Youth Theatre (6)	F / L / £ / B	L / £	L / £		L	£
Kilkenny Youth Theatre (6)	L / £ / B	L / £ / B	L / £ / B	B	L	B
Sheriff Street Youth Drama (5)	L	L	L	L	£ / B	L
Corca Bascainn Youth Theatre (4)	£	£	£			
Tallaght Youth Theatre (4)	L / £ / B	F / L / £ / B	F / L / £ / B		L	
Wexford Youth Theatre (4)	£	L / £ / B	£ / B			£
Activate Youth Theatre (3)	F / £ / B					
Cryptic Youth Drama (3)	L	F / L / B		L	L / B	L / £ / B
Red Lemon Youth Theatre (3)	£	F / L / £ / B	F / L / £ / B			L / £
Shanakill Youth Theatre (3)	L				£	B
Youthopia Youth Theatre (3)				L / £		£
Cavan Youth Theatre (2)	£		F / L / £ / B		L / £	
Makonde Youth Theatre (2)	L / B		L / £ / B		L / B	L / B
Laois Youth Theatre (1)			F / L / £ / B		L	£ / B
Limerick Youth Theatre (1)	F / L / £ / B	L / £			L	
MDG Youth Theatre (1)						
Monaghan Youth Theatre (1)	L	L / £	L / £	L	L	L / £
Stack Youth Theatre (1)	F / L / B					

Youthways Youth Theatre (1)	£				L / £ / B	
Young Rathfarnham Theatre Group (1)				L / £		
Eureka Youth Theatre (1)		L	L			

Chapter 4: Youth Theatre Participants

Table 4.1.1 Leaders' Roles

Theatre/Drama Roles

2 professional theatre technicians
 1 amateur theatre technician
 1 parade participant
 1 professional artistic director of a theatre co
 1 performance poet
 1 devising / training experience

(Other) Arts Roles

4 professional writers
 1 community arts worker
 1 arts public relations
 1 face painter
 2 professional film/ TV/ radio experience
 1 professional musician
 3 professional dancers / choreographers
 1 professional graphics designer

Caring / Community Oriented Roles

1 professional family therapist
 1 professional youth-worker
 1 nurse
 1 professional projects officer
 1 professional chaperone
 1 social / pastoral care teacher

1 voluntary counsellor / facilitator
 1 professional psychologist
 1 voluntary welfare officer
 2 community training officer / worker
 2 professional carer for children / disabled

Other roles

1 apprentice
 1 solicitor

Chapter 5: Impact of Participation in Youth Theatre

Table 5.1.1 Members Interest in the Arts BEFORE Joining A Youth Theatre

Members' Interests <u>Before</u> Joining Their Youth Theatres	Female Members		Male Members	
	Arts	Sport	Arts	Sport
Activity with <u>lowest</u> reported level of involvement	Visual Arts 18%	Club Member 23%	Visual Arts 17%	Solo Sport 21%
Activity with <u>highest</u> reported level of involvement	Drama 59%	Sport for Fun 64%	Drama 51%	Sport for Fun 60%

Table 5.1.2 Comparison of Increase in Levels of Participation in Arts and Sports Activity SINCE Joining A Youth Theatre

Members' Interests <u>Since</u> Joining Their Youth Theatres	Female Members		Male Members	
	Arts	Sport	Arts	Sport
Activity with <u>lowest</u> reported increased level of involvement	Music 39%	Solo Sport 3%	Visual Art/Dance 42%	Club Member 2%
Activity with <u>highest</u> reported increased level of involvement	Drama 92%	Sport for Fun 13%	Drama 95%	Sport for Fun 5.5%

APPENDIX 1

Census Questionnaire for Members of Youth Theatres

A. YOU AND YOUR YOUTH THEATRE

Name of Youth Theatre []

Age []

Gender: [] Male [] Female

How Long Are You In This Youth Theatre? [] Yrs. [] Mths.

Write Here The Names Of Any Other Youth Theatres You Are Now Or Used To Be A Member Of:

Did You Join This Youth Theatre On Your Own:

[] With One Other Friend [] With A Group Of Friends

Have You Ever Travelled With Your Youth Theatre (In Ireland Or Abroad)?

[] No [] Yes (If Yes Give Details)

B. YOUR EDUCATION AND WORK BACKGROUND

I Am...

[] At School [] At Youth Reach [] At Third Level

[] An Apprentice [] Not In Education

I Have...

[] Junior Cert. [] Leaving Cert. [] A Diploma

[] A Degree [] A Trade [] No Exams

I Plan To Do...

[] Junior Cert. [] Leaving Cert. [] A Diploma

[] A Degree [] A Trade [] None Of These

C. WORK

Unemployed [] Less Than A Year [] Less Than Two Years [] More Than Two

Occasional Work [] Babysitting [] Odd Jobs [] Farm Work [] Other

Part-Time Work Pub Restaurant Shop Factory CE Scheme
 Other

Full-Time Work FAS Other (Name)

Your Long-Term Career Plan_____

D. YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN THE ARTS

Tick Appropriate Columns For Yes, Leave Blank For No.

Literature Visual Arts Dance Music Drama
(Not Homework!) *(Include Video & Photography)*

Did You Actively Participate In An Arts Activity Before Joining The Youth Theatre?

Yes No

Did You Regularly Listen To / Watch / Read An Arts Activity Before Joining The Youth Theatre?

Yes No

Has Joining The Youth Theatre Increased Your Interest In Any Arts Activities?

Yes No

Has Joining The Youth Theatre Given You The Chance To Try Out New Arts Activities?

Yes No

Have You Reduced Your Involvement In Any Arts Activities Because Of The Youth Theatre?

Yes No

YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN SPORT *(Tick The Appropriate Columns For Yes, Leave Blank For No)*

As A Club Member A Team Sport Individual Sport
 Competitively For Fun

Do You Actively Take Part in Sport?

Yes No

Do You Regularly Attend / Watch / Support A Sports Activity?

Yes No

Has Joining The Youth Theatre Increased Your Interest In Sports Activities?

Yes No

Have You Reduced Your Involvement In Any Sports Activities Because Of Joining The Youth Theatre?

Yes No

Your Experience As A Youth Theatre Member? *(Tick Those Experiences You Have Had In Your Youth Theatre)*

Participating in Drama Workshops Performing in Plays Directing In Plays
 Stage Management Design (Set/Costume/Poster/Technical)
 Technical (Light/Sound) Set Construction Making Costumes
 Participating in Street Theatre Writing For Youth Theatre

- Going To See Youth Theatre Plays Going To Amateur Drama Plays
 Going To Professional Theatre Productions Other

Go Back Over The List & Circle Any Experiences You Have Only Had In Your Youth Theatre

Tick Those Sentences Below For Which Your Answer Is Yes

Since Being Involved In The Youth Theatre I Have :

- Made New Friends
 Become More Interested In Something New
 Learned About Other Peoples' Cultures
 Tried Things I Haven't Done Before... What Things? _____
 Become More Confident About What I Can Do
 Decided To Do Some Training Courses
 Felt Better Or Healthier
 Become Keen To Help In Local Projects
 Been Happier

Has Taking Part In The Youth Theatre... (Tick If Yes)

- Had Any Bad Effects On You?...What Effects?
 Encouraged You To Try Anything Else?... What?
 Helped You Learn New Skills?... What Skills?
 Changed Your Ideas About Anything? What Ideas?
 Made You Feel Differently About Your Rights? How?

Tick The NAYD Events That You Ever Took Part In

- Regional Festival Of Youth Theatres
 National Festival Of Youth Theatres
 Stage It
 Youth Theatre Forum
 Gormanstown / Maynooth Summer School
 Other

Your Family Background

(This Part Is Not Designed To Be Nosy: We Want To Find Out If Youth Theatre Members Come From Similar Family Backgrounds Or From A Wide Variety Of Backgrounds...)

Who Else In Your Family Is Interested In The Arts? (If Nobody Write 'N')

Person's Relaton To You?

What Area Of The Arts : Spectator / Active Amateur / Professional ?

List Here Examples Of The Kind Of Jobs That Adults In Your Immediate Family Have Worked At:

What Do Your Family Say About You Being In The Youth Theatre?

Finally: What Difference Has Being In This Youth Theatre Made To Your Life?

**CENSUS: GROUP RESPONSES FOR YOUTH THEATRE MEMBERS
AGED 12 AND UNDER**

- 1 **Name Of Youth Theatre?**
- 2 **How Many:** Boys Girls
- 3 **What Ages are your youth members?**
- 4 **How Many Joined The Youth Theatre:**
 On Their Own With A Friend With A Group Of Friends
- 5 **How Many Ever Went On A Trip With The Youth Theatre? Where To?**
- 6 **Before You Joined A Youth Theatre How Many Already Did:**
 Drama Dance Music Gymnastics Scouts/Guides

 Sport A Club
- 7 **Since Joining The Youth Theatre How Many Have Taken Up:**
 Drama Dance Music Gymnastics Scouts/Guides

 Sport A Club
- 8 **How Many Have Done The Following Things In Or With Their Youth Theatre:**

 Take Part In Drama Workshops Perform In A Play

 Help Backstage With A Play Take Part In Street Theatre

 Go To A Youth Theatre Play Go In The Theatre
- 9 **What Are The Best Things About Being In This Youth Theatre?**
- 10 **What Are The Worst Things About Being In This Youth Theatre?**

LOG OF YOUTH THEATRE ACTIVITIES

A. DETAILS

DAY:

ACTIVITY:

TIME: **FROM:** _____ **TO:** _____

MEMBERS

Number Of Members Taking Part

Age Range

How Many Of These Members Have Already Taken Part In A Youth Theatre Activity This Week?

B. LEADERS

1 Names Of Adults/Leaders

2 Their Roles In This Activity

C. LOCATION OF ACTIVITY

1 **Was The Location Suitable/Not Suitable For This Activity?**

Suitable [] Not Suitable []

2 **If Not Suitable, Was It:**

[] Too Small [] Too Large [] Too Cold [] Too Hot

[] In Bad Repair [] Other

3 **Constraints On Venue Use**

[] We Can Only Use This Space At Certain Times

[] We Are Under Pressure To Keep Noise Levels Down

[] We Must Leave The Place Exactly As We Found It

[] Other Constraints

4 **Is The Building In Which The Activity Took Place:**

Owned By Your Youth Theatre

Owned In Partnership With Others

Rented/ Leased Full-Time By Your Youth Theatre

Rented/ Leased In Partnership With Others

OR

Owned/ Rented/ Leased By:

Arts Centre Youth Service Local Authority Parish/Community

Other

D. TRANSPORT

The Members Made Their Way To The Activity:

By Their Own Means

In Hired Transport

In Transport Owned/Borrowed By Youth Theatre

Other

Census Questionnaire for Leaders of Youth Theatres

A. YOU AND YOUR YOUTH THEATRE

Name Of Youth Theatre:

Age Bracket:

Under 18 19-21 22-25 Over 26

Gender Nos.:

Male Female

Do You Live:

Locally Within 10 Miles More Than 10 Miles

Write Here The Names Of Any Other Youth Theatre You Have Contributed To As A Leader:

Write Here The Names Of Any Youth Theatres You Are Now Or Used To Be A Member Of:

B. YOUR ROLE IN THIS YOUTH THEATRE

What Roles Do You Fulfil In This Youth Theatre

Workshop Facilitator Accounts Keeper Director

Do You Regard Yourself As:

An In-house Leader A Guest Leader An Employee Other

What Is Your Current Level Of Personal Commitment To This Youth Theatre

For This Session/Workshop Only For This Project Only

For Occasional Workshop/Projects

Or

On an Ongoing, Regular Basis For The Next:

6 Months 12 Months Other

I Have Made Significant Personal Sacrifices Because Of My Commitment To This Youth Theatre

Yes No

C. YOUR DRAMA AND WORK BACKGROUND

I Have Worked Professionally As:

Teacher Drama Teacher Youthworker Actor Theatre Director

Arts Administrator Theatre Professional Arts Professional

Caring Profession Other Relevant Professional Work

I Have Worked In A Voluntary/Amateur Capacity As:

Youthworker Administrator Actor Theatre Director

Caring Role Theatre Practitioner Arts Practitioner

How Did You Acquire The Skills You Now Use In This Youth Theatre?

D. YOUR EXPERIENCES AS A YOUTH THEATRE LEADER

Youth Theatre leaders describe different reasons for their continued involvement in youth theatre activity. Rank order from 1 to 10 your reasons for being involved marking [1] for the one that is most true for you, [2] for the next etc.

- I enjoy working with young people
- I find I work more creatively with youth theatres
- I get valuable experience that helps build my chosen career
- I make contacts with people who can help me improve my work/career opportunities
- I enjoy the company of other youth theatre leaders
- I find being involved with the theatrical/ aesthetic development of young people very satisfying
- I find being involved with the personal and social development of young people very satisfying
- I like the strong sense of community in the youth theatre
- Its work I need the money
- I believe that involvement in youth theatre empowers young people to participate more fully in society

What Training Opportunities Would Help You Develop Your Work With This Youth Theatre?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

ABOUT YOUR YOUTH THEATRE

A. DETAILS

NAME OF YOUTH THEATRE

YOUR NAME

CONTACT/PHONE

B. CENSUS WEEK:

In Your Opinion Was The Level Of Activity In Your Youth Theatre During Census Week

Typical More Than Usual Less Than Usual

C. YOUR YOUTH THEATRE HISTORY

When Was It Founded?

Who Founded It?

How Has The Youth Theatre Changed And Developed Since It Began?

D. MEMBERS

1 Numbers Males Female

2 Ages: From To

3 Numbers Of Subgroups:

Age Range Group 1 From To

Age Range Group 2 From To

Age Range Group 3 From To

Age Range Group 4 From To

Age Range Group 5 From To

Age Range Group 6 From To

Age Range Group 7 From To

Age Range Group 8 From To

4 How Many People Are On The Youth Theatre Membership Waiting List

None Less Than 10 10-29 30-40

50-79 80-100 100+ (How Many_____)

5 How Do You Recruit Members?

6 What Subscription (If Any) Do Members Make Towards The Cost Of Running The Youth Theatre?

E. ADULTS

1 How Many Adults Are Involved In The Youth Theatre (In An Average Year) Total

2 Please Estimate The Number Of Adults In Each Category And Describe Their Roles/Functions

- Full-time Employee
- Part-time Employee
- Occasional / Sessional Employment
- Volunteer

3 About How Much Do You Spend On Wages/Fee/Stipends Each Year? []

F. STRUCTURES AND NETWORKS

1. Is The Youth Theatre

- Formally Constituted
- Registered Charity
- Limited Company

2. Is Your Youth Theatre Managed By:

- An Individual
 - Committee
 - Board Of Directors
 -
- Other

3. Please Describe The Committee/Board

Number Of Committee/Board Members?

Number Of Youth Members On Committee?

How Do People Become Members Of The Committee?

How Often Does It Meet?

What Roles/Titles Do Committee Members Have (Chair, Treasurer etc.)

4. Does Your Youth Theatre Have A Members Committee/Forum?

How Many Are On It?

Describe How This Works?

5. Does The Youth Theatre Have Formal Established Links With?

- The Arts Council
- Youth Service
- Professional Theatre Company
- Amateur Drama Group
- Local Authority /County Arts Officer
- VEC

- Local Community Agencies
- Commercial Business

6. Does The Youth Theatre Receive Funding From:

- The Arts Council
- Youth Service
- Professional Theatre Company
- Amateur Drama Group
- Local Authority /County Arts Officer
- VEC
- Local Community Agencies
- Commercial Business
- Other

7. Does The Youth Theatre Receive Benefit-In-Kind From: (Please Indicate What The Benefit-In-Kind Is, e.g. Use Of Space, Photocopying, Book-Keeping Etc.

- The Arts Council
- Youth Service
- Professional Theatre Company
- Amateur Drama Group
- Local Authority /County Arts Officer
- VEC
- Local Community Agencies
- Commercial Business
- Other

G. PREMISES

About How Much Did Rent /Maintenance Etc. Of Premises Cost You Last Year?

Please Indicate The Types Of Venue Used By The Youth Theatre In A Typical Year

H. ACTIVITIES

1 Describe Your Workshop Programme

How Many

How Often

Which Months Of The Year

2 What Themes, Skills, Issues

Average Attendance At Workshops

3 How Many Regular Workshop Facilitators Are:

Full-time Employees

Part-time Employees

FAS Employees

Paid Session Fees

Paid Nominal Amount

Voluntary

4 How Many Regular Workshop Facilitators Are:

Professional Theatre Practitioners

Involved In Amateur Drama

Professional Youth Workers

Qualified Drama Teachers

Other Relevant Experience

5 About How Much Did Your Workshop Programme Cost You Last Year?

6 Describe Your Production Programme

7 How Many Productions Have You Staged In The Last Year?

8 About How Much Did Productions Cost Your Youth Theatre Last Year?

9 How Many Of Last Year's Productions Were:

Devised From Members Improvisation Work

Performance Of A Published Script

Performance Of A Musical

Other Source

Newly Scripted By A Young Person

Performance Of A Classic Script

A Specially Commissioned Script

10 How Many Were Directed By A Young Person

An Adult Volunteer

A Professional Theatre Director

Other

11 How Many Were Performed In

- A Theatre Venue
- The Street
- A Local Hall
- A Small Adapted Studio Space
- Other

12 Has Your Youth Theatre Ever Been Involved In Exchanges With:

- Youth Theatres In Republic Of Ireland
- Youth Theatres In Northern Ireland
- Youth Theatres In The UK
- European Groups: Which Countries
- Other Parts Of The World

13 Has Your Youth Theatre Ever Taken Part In

- Regional Youth Theatre Forum
- National Festival Of Youth Theatres
- Youth Theatre Forum
- International Festival: Where?

***Thank You For Spending The Time To Complete This Questionnaire
Feel Free To Attach More Information – Any Standard Information Sheets You Have About
Your Youth Theatre Would Be Very Helpful.***

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B1

Francois Matarasso, Comedia 1997

Use or Ornament? The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts: Summary of Findings

Participation in the arts can:

1. Increase in people's confidence and self-worth
2. Extend Involvement in social activity
3. Give people influence over how they are seen by others
4. Stimulate interest and confidence in the arts
5. Provide a forum to explore personal rights and responsibilities
6. Contribute to the education development of children
7. Encourage adults to take up education and training opportunities
8. Help build new skills and work experience
9. Contribute to people's employability
10. Help people take up or develop careers in the arts

11. Reduce isolation by helping people to make friends
 12. Develop community networks and sociability
 13. Promote tolerance and contribute to conflict resolution
 14. Provide a forum for intercultural understanding and friendship
 15. Help validate the contribution of a whole community
 16. Promote intercultural contact and co-operation
 17. Develop contact between the generations
 18. Help offenders and victims address issues of crime
 19. Provide a route to rehabilitation and integration for offenders
 20. Build community organisational capacity
 21. Encourage local self-reliance and project management
 22. Help people extend control over their own lives
 23. Be a means of gaining insight into political and social ideas
 24. Facilitate effective public consultation and participation
-
25. Help involve local people in the regeneration process
 26. Facilitate the development of partnership
 27. Build support for community projects
 28. Strengthen community co-operation and networking
 29. Develop pride in local traditions and cultures
 30. Help people feel a sense of belonging and involvement
 31. Create community traditions in new towns or neighbourhoods
 32. Involve residents in environmental improvements
 33. Provide reasons for people to develop community activities
 34. Improve perceptions of marginalised groups
 35. Help transform the image of public bodies
 36. Make people feel better about where they live
 37. Help people develop their creativity
 38. Erode the distinction between consumer and creator
 39. Allow people to explore their values, meanings and dreams
 40. Enrich the practice of professionals in the public and voluntary sectors

41. Transform the responsiveness of public service organisations
42. Encourage people to accept risk positively
43. Help community groups raise their vision beyond the immediate
44. Challenge conventional service delivery
45. Raise expectations about what is possible and desirable
46. Have a positive impact on how people feel
47. Be an effective means of health education
48. Contribute to a more relaxed atmosphere in health centres
49. Help improve the quality of life of people with poor health
50. Provide a unique and deep source of pleasure.

Appendix B2

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