

**National Youth Conference Addresses Irish Youth Suicide,  
Rated 5<sup>th</sup> Highest in Europe**

Ireland has the fifth highest rate of suicide in Europe. Latest figures show suicide is now the leading cause of death in young men aged 15 to 24 years in Ireland with an Irish suicide gender ratio of 4 male suicides to every female suicide. In response to the prevalence of suicide among Irish youth, No Name Club hosted a workshop at their National Conference in Croke Park this weekend, addressing the issues surrounding youth suicide.

"As part of our national conference this year, our adult volunteers undertook a workshop on identifying and responding to suicidal behavioural among young people" says Martin Ryan, CEO of No Name Club. "No Name Club aims to ensure volunteers are enabled to detect the signs to increase the chances of early intervention and help young people develop coping strategies to manage stresses in their lives more effectively."

The conference heard from suicide expert, Bernie Carroll, HSE Resource Officer for Suicide Prevention, who presented a workshop for No Name Club volunteers on Identifying and Responding to Suicide Behaviour. The workshop included: suicidal behaviour in Ireland; understanding suicidal risk factors and warning signs; and responding to suicidal feelings and behaviour.

The number one health issue for young people is mental health. 70% of the health problems of young people and a high proportion of the mortality rate are attributable to mental disorders and substance use.\*

No Name Club, the national voluntary organisation run by and for young people to provide a range of entertainment and developmental activities without drugs or alcohol, trains adult volunteers and youth leaders, typically aged 17 – 22, to support young people.

Two of the main pressures on young teens in today's society are peer pressure and alcohol and drugs. Responding to these issues, No Name Club allows young people to organise and enjoy events and activities without the pressures of alcohol and drugs, increasing awareness of their harmful effects and building self-confidence to help young people resist peer pressure and make informed choices when they are older.

No Name Club's National Conference 2008, focused on suicide to raise awareness of the issue and deliver training and information to recognise and respond to suicidal behaviour to help and support young teen members. Over 170 volunteers and young people attended the conference which also included workshops on 'Your Role as Health Promoters' for adult volunteers as well as leadership skills, web site development and event management for youth leaders.

**No Name Club, celebrating its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary, has been providing drug and alcohol free activities, events and training to over 500,000 young people since its inception in 1978. No Name Club is the national voluntary organisation providing alcohol and drug free activities for young people. See [www.nonameclub.ie](http://www.nonameclub.ie) or call 056-7795010.**

**ENDS**

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Editorial Note:

Statistics as per the National Office for Suicide Prevention Annual Report 2007

\*Headstrong, the National Centre for Youth Mental Health