



2025

ANNUAL REPORT

NORTHSIDE
FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE

Supporting Children, Families & Community With
Dignity, Respect and Care

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

2025 was the final year of our 2021–2025 Strategic Plan, and it was a year that truly reflected the strength, resilience, and compassion of our community. Families continued to face rising living costs, housing pressures, and increasing complexity of need, yet the Centre continued to deliver a broad range of high impact services, programmes, and supports despite the challenges facing the sector.

Across every area, Early Years, Youth Work, Family Support, Community Development, Counselling, Adult Education, and Services to Older People, our staff and volunteers worked with dedication and heart. Their commitment ensured that children had safe places to learn and play, families had someone to turn to in times of crisis, the community were afforded a wide variety of social opportunities and older people remained connected and supported.

Throughout the year, the Centre responded to the realities of daily life in Ballynanty and surrounding areas: food poverty, housing instability and mental health pressures. Yet 2025 was also a year of growth, innovation, and hope. New programmes were launched, new staff joined the team, and major developments in governance and infrastructure strengthened the organisation for the years ahead.

The Centre continued to be a vital anchor for the community.



RAY MULCAHY
CHAIRPERSON



Ava Cahill and Maddison O'Callaghan enjoying
Oíche na hÓige 2025



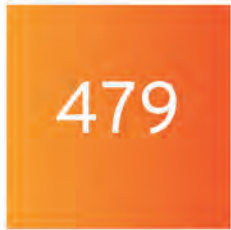
Family support sessions delivered



Hot dinners delivered to Older People in their homes



Children in preschool programmes



Children and young people attending Out of School Camps



Young people engaged in youth work



Children and adults supported through food initiatives



Counselling, play & creative therapy sessions



Capital funding secured for Riverside expansion



Adult learners engaging in education programmes

2025 AT A GLANCE

A year of growth, resilience and community strength

SUPPORTING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILIES

Family Support & Community Wellbeing

Family support remained at the heart of our work. 432 adults and 169 children received one-to-one support, often during moments of significant stress. Staff described “a significant rise in complex needs”, including mental health challenges, food and fuel poverty, and child protection concerns. Our Family Case Management Group continued to coordinate responses for families with the highest levels of need, ensuring that no one faced these challenges alone.

Top presenting needs:





AUTISM SPECIFIC

OUTDOOR PARENT & TODDLER GROUP

Every Thursday from 11-12pm in our outdoor garden

Open to children with a diagnosis or suspected diagnosis of ASD (**no diagnosis required**) and their parents/caregivers. Relaxed and safe environment. 3 euro donation required if possible.

- ✓ Refreshments provided
- ✓ Messy play
- ✓ Meet other parents and children

For further information

(061) 326 623



SUPPORTING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILIES

Early Years & Afterschool Services

2025 was a milestone year for our Early Years services. The first cohort of Early Years Trainees received their qualifications in ELC, and seven were welcomed into our staff team – a powerful example of community-based workforce development. Riverside expanded its morning places from 54 to 74, enabling more children to access high-quality early learning.

A new Early Intervention Worker strengthened our capacity to support children with additional needs, while programmes such as Talk Boost and Bringing Stories to Life enriched children’s communication and literacy.

Investment in sensory and outdoor environments continued, creating spaces where children could explore, play, and thrive.

No. of Early Years Trainees who completed their qualifications and were directly employed



No. of early years places increased in Riverside Early Childhood Centre



No. of children registered with Early Years and Afterschool Services.



Youth Work

Youth work flourished throughout the year. Oíche na nÓg became an annual highlight, and seasonal events such as the Halloween Haunted House and Santa’s Grotto brought creativity and joy to the Centre. New groups – including a gardening group and a Friday night girls’ group – offered young people opportunities to connect, learn, and express themselves. Engagement from young people with migrant backgrounds continued to grow, reflecting our commitment to inclusion and belonging.



The young people who drop-in to the Chill Zone



The Work

- Our newly built drop-in youth space, *The Chill Zone*, provided a safe, welcoming, low-pressure space where young people can be themselves and build trust with youth workers. No membership is required and young people can come and go freely. It is an unstructured environment where the space is available for socialising, games, snacks and chatting with youth workers. There were 90 drop-in sessions in 2025.
- Our Youth Clubs offer recreational, developmental, and social activities in a consistent, supportive environment. Young people become members and there is a mix of structured and unstructured activities. There were 117 youth club sessions in 2025.
- Youth groups are more developmental youth work with specific outcomes, skills, and support needs in mind. Many themes were covered in 2025 including wellbeing and resilience, healthy relationships and leadership across 186 sessions.



 The Golden Girls Friday Group enjoying an evening out and about



Debra McNamara receiving NFRC's Community Hero Award from Ciara Kane, CEO for outstanding achievement in Education



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & WELLBEING

Community Development & Social Inclusion Counselling & Therapeutic Supports

The Centre's community development work responded directly to the needs of local families. Food poverty remained a significant issue, and our food bank and cloud initiatives supported many households throughout the year. Older people continued to rely on Meals on Wheels, with more than thirteen thousand meals delivered by our dedicated team and volunteers.

Community education programmes saw increased demand, offering adults opportunities to build skills, confidence, and connection. Integration supports expanded in response to increased migration, ensuring new communities felt welcomed and supported.

The need for emotional and therapeutic support continued to rise. Children and adults accessed counselling, play therapy, and creative therapy to help them cope with trauma, anxiety, behavioural challenges, and family stress.

Current funding does not fully meet the level of demand, and this remains a key concern for the year ahead. Despite these pressures, our therapists provided consistent, high-quality support, creating safe spaces for healing and growth.

STRENGTHENING OUR ORGANISATION

Governance & Compliance

2025 was a year of significant organisational strengthening. A new Compliance and Audit Readiness Team was established, and several key policies were updated or introduced, including Finance, Conflicts of Interest and ICT. Digital systems such as SharePoint, HireHive, Adobe, and Pleo were increasingly integrated into daily operations, improving efficiency and record-keeping.

Health & Safety and POBAL NCS inspections were completed with positive outcomes, reflecting the Centre's commitment to high standards and accountability.

Infrastructure, IT & Facilities

Investment in infrastructure continued throughout the year. IT systems were upgraded, new hardware was purchased, and several facilities received improvements – from Riverside's outdoor preschool garden to new equipment such as a dishwasher, washing machine, and heating upgrades. The completion of the Sensory Room and the opening of new youth space - the Chill Zone- added to the Centre's capacity to deliver high-quality, child-centred services.

A major milestone was the approval of €500,000 in Building Blocks funding and planning permission for the expansion of Riverside Early Childhood Centre – a development that will significantly increase childcare capacity in the years ahead.



Challenges and Our Response

THE YEAR BROUGHT SIGNIFICANT PRESSURES:

- high levels of complex family need
- long waiting lists for early years places
- staff recruitment delays
- rising operational costs
- the relationship with Limerick City and County Council regarding developments in Kings Island
- the loss of International Protection Integration Funding

Despite these pressures, the organisation responded with resilience and creativity. The traineeship pipeline strengthened staffing capacity, interagency collaboration deepened, digital systems streamlined administrative work, and communication with families remained clear and transparent.



Youth group writing, directing, producing and starring in their own movie.



Partnerships & Collaboration

Our work is strengthened by the many organisations with whom we collaborate. Throughout 2025, we worked closely with National and Regional FRC Fora, TUSLA, ABC Start Right, POBAL, LCETB, local schools, Limerick City Childcare Committee, Limerick City Partnership, health services, Mary Immaculate College, TUS, An Garda Síochána, TUS, and local community organisations. These partnerships ensure that families receive integrated, high-quality supports.

Looking Ahead to 2026

As we move into 2026, our priorities are clear: progress Riverside’s expansion project, strengthen internal communication, increase Meals on Wheels provision, secure additional funding for counselling and family support, and continue building organisational resilience. We also aim to achieve planning permission for an intergenerational hub – a project that reflects our long-term vision for a connected, inclusive community.

Northside Family Resource Centre remains deeply committed to supporting children, families, and the wider community with dignity, respect, and care.



Gardaí from the Mayorstone Community policing unit hanging with members of the youth club in the Chill Zone.



Thank you!

