

Information Statement



Information Sheet For Parents/Guardians

Title: Pathways to Nature

Thank you for considering your child's participation in this transdisciplinary and cross-cultural project funded by Léargas and Erasmus +. This project connects 4 European countries: Ireland, Spain, Armenia and Finland. The 4 partner youth centres are:

- 1) Waterford and South Tipperary Community Youth Service (WSTCYS) (Ireland)
- 2) InMotion Armenia Youth NGO (Armenia)
- 3) Nuorisokeskus Metsäkartano (Finland)
- 4) Asociación Región de Murcia Limpia (Spain)

The purpose of this document is to explain to you what the work is about and what participation would involve, so as to enable you to make an informed choice.

As the study involves children under the age of 18, participation is possible only if written consent is provided by one of the child's parents or legal guardians, and provided that the child gives their assent to take part.

The **purpose of this study** is to explore young people's relationship to nature and how it relates to their wellbeing and feelings of environmental stewardship.

The study is open to any members of the partner organisations (youth centres) who are aged 13 to 26 years.

Should your child choose to participate in the Pathways to Nature Project, they will attend a Pathways to Nature training course at their youth centre/organisation. During the training course they will develop a Nature-Based Initiative with their peers. These Nature-Based Initiatives will be focused on connection with the Natural World and fostering a sense of pro-environmental behaviour. The project will run for a year and at the end all of the young people, from each country, will present their Nature-Based Initiatives at a (voluntary) International Conference. Léargas and Erasmus + will provide funding for the development of the Nature-based Initiative.

At the beginning of the Pathways to Nature Project your child will be asked to complete a short online survey (less than 10 minutes to complete). The survey includes also a few basic demographic questions to help us profile our participants. At the end of the project they will again be asked to complete a short survey and be asked to partake in a (voluntary) focus group with youth workers from their centre and PhD research student (Topaz Shrestha) from University College Cork, Ireland. The focus group will be with some of their peers from the youth centre who have also participated in Pathways to Nature. It will be conducted in person and audio-recorded. The focus group will have a duration of 1 hour. The questions will explore the young people's experience of the Pathways to Nature Project, exploring the impact it had on their wellbeing and sense of environmental stewardship.

The whole purpose of this project is to amplify the voices of young people in relation to human-nature connection and the importance of this relationship

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. There is no obligation to participate, and should your child choose to do so, they can refuse to answer specific questions or decide to withdraw from the project at any point.

Confidentiality - All information they provide will be protected and kept confidential throughout the study and will be available only to research student (Topaz Shrestha) and research supervisors (Dr. Zelda Di Blasi, Dr. Sarah Foley and Dr. Marica Cassarino, School of Applied Psychology, University College Cork). Any identifying information included in your child's responses will be removed. Your child's contact details, name or addresses will not be collected in the interview at any point, meaning the data you provide cannot be traced back to your child. We will ask for your permission to use anonymised extracts of the survey responses for the reporting of this project.

Your child maintains the **right to withdraw from the study** at any stage of the project and up to two weeks after completion of the one year project. Your child will be assigned a unique alphanumeric code prior to completing the survey and focus group, and this will be used to identify them throughout the research process. A key to your code and contact details will be kept in a password-protected file for the duration of the project and safely disposed of at the end of the study.

The data collected in the survey will be stored on the University College Cork OneDrive system and subsequently on the UCC server. The data will be stored for a minimum of ten years. The information your child provides will inform and evidence-based report for developing nature-based interventions to support personal and planetary wellbeing. Additionally, the information will contribute to the primary researcher's PhD thesis, research publications, conference presentations, and news outlets.

This study will contribute to our knowledge/understanding of nature-based interventions can strengthen young people's connection to the Natural World and how this relationship to nature can impact their wellbeing and promote environmental stewardship. This is hoped to lead to positive implications for this population's mental wellbeing and the sustained restoration and protection of our natural environments.

We do not anticipate any negative outcomes from participating in this study. Should you or your child have any concerns arising from participating in the research, or should it raise

any issues for you, the contact details for support services provided here may be of assistance:

Mental Health Ireland: Freephone *1800 80 48 48*

Jigsaw.ie: Freephone 0504 60023

HSE Mental Health Line: Freephone *1800 742 444*.

Shine.ie: Freephone (01) 541 3715

(Will be adapted for each country ^)

This study has obtained ethical approval from the UCC Social Research Ethics Committee (SREC).

If you have any queries about this research, you can contact the primary researcher, Topaz Shrestha, phone number +353 871754089, email: 115441352@umail.ucc.ie University College Cork the Data Controller for this study.

If you have a concern about how we have handled your personal data, you are entitled to this raise this with the Data Protection Commission.

<https://www.dataprotection.ie/>

SHOULD YOU BECOME AWARE OF A BREACH OF THE PERSONAL DATA OF PARTICIPANT(S), YOU MUST REPORT THIS TO THE DATA CONTROLLER.

“A personal data breach occurs when the data is accessed, disclosed, altered, lost or destroyed in contravention of an organisation’s obligation to keep personal data in its possession safe and secure”

<https://www.dataprotection.ie/>

UCC'S Data Protection Officer (DPO) is Catriona O'Sullivan, Information Compliance Manager, University College Cork, 4 Carrigside, College Road, Cork, Ireland.
Telephone: +353 (0)21 4903949* Email: gdpr@ucc.ie

If you agree for your child to take part in this study, please sign the consent form overleaf.

Appendix 2b: Parent/Guardian consent form

Consent Form



Parent/Guardian Consent Form

I (legal guardian's full name)..... give permission for my child (child's full name) _____ to participate in the Pathways to Nature Project.

Please tick the statements below related to your written consent:

The purpose and nature of the project has been explained to me in writing.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I confirm that I am a legal decision-maker for the child listed above	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that my child will fill out a short survey and partake in a focus group. I understand that this focus group will be audio-recorded and that my child will be participating voluntarily.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that my child can withdraw from the study, without repercussions, at any time, whether before it starts or while they are participating.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that my child can withdraw permission to use their data up to two weeks after completion of the one year project, in which case the material will be deleted.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that anonymity will be ensured in the write-up by disguising any identifiable information.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that anonymised extracts from my child's answers may be quoted in the evidence report and PhD thesis and any subsequent publications if I give permission below (please select your choice):	
I agree to quotation/publication of anonymised extracts from my child's interview	<input type="checkbox"/>
I do not agree to quotation/publication of anonymised extracts from my child's interview	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signed:

Date:

PRINT NAME:

Appendix 3a: Child information sheet

Title: Pathways to Nature

Thank you for considering participation in this transdisciplinary and cross-cultural project funded by Léargas and Erasmus +. This project partners 4 European countries: Ireland, Spain, Armenia and Finland. The 4 partner youth centres are:

- 1) Waterford and South Tipperary Community Youth Service (WSTCYS) (Ireland)
- 2) InMotion Armenia Youth NGO (Armenia)
- 3) Nuorisokeskus Metsäkartano (Finland)
- 4) Asociación Región de Murcia Limpia (Spain)

The purpose of this document is to explain to you what the project is about and what participation would involve, so as to enable you to make an informed choice.

Purpose of the Study: To explore young people's relationship to nature and how it relates to their wellbeing and feelings of environmental stewardship.

The study is open to any members of the partner organisations (youth centres) who are aged 13 to 26 years.

What will the study involve? If you agree to participate in Pathways to Nature, you will attend a Pathways to Nature training course at your youth centre. In this training course you will develop a Nature-Based Initiative with your peers. These Nature-Based Initiatives will be focused on connection with the Natural World and creating a sense of pro-environmental behaviour. The project will run for a year and at the end of the project all of the young people, from each country, will present their Nature-Based Initiatives at an International Conference. Léargas and Erasmus + will provide funding for the development of the Nature-based Initiative.

At the beginning of the Pathways to Nature Project you will be asked to complete a short online survey (less than 10 minutes to complete). The survey includes also a few basic questions about your age country of residence etc. At the end of the one-year project you will again be asked to complete a short survey and be asked to partake in a (voluntary) chat about the project with the youth workers from your centre and research student (Topaz Shrestha) from University College Cork, Ireland. This is known as a 'focus group.' The focus group will be with some of your peers from the youth centre, who have also participated in Pathways to Nature. It will be carried out in person and audio-recorded. The focus group will have a duration of 1 hour. The questions will explore your experience of the Pathways to Nature Project, allowing you to share your story

The whole purpose of this project is to amplify the voices of young people in relation to human-nature connection and the importance of this relationship

Why have you been asked to take part? You have been asked because you are a member of one of the partner organisations listed above and we are interested in your opinion.

Do you have to take part? No, participation is voluntary; this means that you are entirely free to take part or not. Both your parent/guardian and you are asked to give us permission in a written form if you wish to participate. You will be asked to sign a form which explains what the study is about and what will happen to the information you provide. You can also stop participating in the study, even if you have already agreed, and you do not have to give a reason. After you have finished, you can still change your mind up to 2 weeks after we finish the project.

Will your participation in the study be kept confidential? Yes, absolutely! Your answers will be anonymised. Your name and any other identifying information about you will not be used. When you complete the chat, we ask that you avoid, if possible, mentioning names of places or other people that can identify them.

What will happen to the information you give? Your information will become part of a securely stored database with the data from your survey and focus group. The research team will use this data to make an evidence based report on the project.

What will happen to the results? The results will be presented in a report. We also hope to talk about the study's findings at conferences and publish the findings in articles, blogs, on social media and in books. You will be asked to share your experience of Pathways to Nature at a (voluntary) International Conference with young people from all of the partner countries.

What are the possible disadvantages of taking part? We don't expect any negative consequences for you in taking part. It should be an enjoyable activity for you.

What if there is a problem? However, if you have any questions, please ask your parent/guardian to contact us at any point during the research. Additionally, the following support services may be of interest:

Mental Health Ireland: Freephone 1800 80 48 48

Jigsaw.ie: Freephone 0504 60023

HSE Mental Health Line: Freephone 1800 742 444.

Shine.ie: Freephone (01) 541 3715

(Adapted for each country ^)

Who has reviewed this study? Approval has been given by UCC Social Research Ethics Committee (SREC).

Any further queries? If you need any further information, you can ask your parent/guardian to contact the researcher, Topaz Shrestha (115441352@umail.ucc.ie)

If you would like to take part in the study, please fill in the form below:

Appendix 3b: Child Assent form

I.....[name in CAPS] agree to take part in the Pathways to Nature Project.

I understand what the study is about, and it has been clearly explained to me.

I am participating voluntarily.

I understand that my responses will be recorded in an on-line survey and audio-recorded and kept anonymous and confidential.

It's fine if I drop out of the study, and I do not have to give any reasons for this.

I understand that the information collected will form an evidence-based report and for research purposes in Topaz Shrestha's UCC project. I have the right to see these data, change them, or ask that they be deleted and not used.

- I can withdraw permission to use the data from the study at any time up to 2 weeks after the focus group, in which case the material will be deleted.
- If I change my mind and want to withdraw after a report has been published, my material cannot be removed from the reports, but the research team will not use it in any future work or analysis.
- I understand that anonymised extracts from my answers may be quoted in the evidence-based report and in Topaz Shrestha's PhD thesis and any subsequent publications.

I understand that nobody will know it's me in the results or report because my name or any other identifying information will not be linked back to me. I understand that my parent(s) / legal guardian(s) must also consent before I can take part in the study.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

- **Yes, I consent** (agree) to take part in this study.
- **No, I do not consent** (agree) to take part in this study.

Thank you!