



Media release

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With photos sent to picture desks by Tommy Clancy

Irish Girl Guides awarded Gold Health Quality Mark

- National Youth Council of Ireland award recognises high standard of health promotion –

Irish Girl Guides was awarded its 6th Gold Standard Health Quality Mark (HQM) by the National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI) in recognition of their work on health promotion for young people, at a special event held in the Irish Girl Guides (IGG) National Office at 27 Pembroke Park, Dublin 4, yesterday [Saturday 18 May 2019].

Presenting the award at the meeting of IGG's National Programme and Training Committee, Lisa Harold from the NYCI National Youth Health Programme, said, "This award is a testament to the hard work and dedication of all at Irish Girl Guides. They are committed to the highest quality standards in health promotion and it is clear that ensuring a healthy and safe place for young people and staff is a key priority here."

IGG's wide-ranging programme for girls and young women aged 5-30 includes a number of health-promoting activities and badges, including Active Body, Healthy Mind, Healthy Friendship, Drug Awareness, Personal Safety and a Good Health and Well-being badge based on the third Sustainable Development Goal. These badges and activities incorporate such topics as healthy eating, physical health, relationships, self-esteem, bullying and stress management. Guides aged 10+ can also earn Skin Care and Independent Living Skills badges.

IGG members regularly take part in a variety of indoor and outdoor challenges, which help them develop teamwork and leadership skills, resilience and self-confidence – all of which contribute to a healthy body and mind. A five-week body confidence programme called *Free Being Me* also helps girls develop body confidence from an early age.

Ms Harold added: "Congratulations are in order to the staff, volunteers and young people of the service, especially those who have guided the organisation through the process to ensure that their work is in line with national and international best practice in the area of youth health promotion. The great work carried out here supports the national Healthy Ireland campaign, which is about increasing our focus on prevention and supporting young people to improve their own health and well-being."

IGG National Programme and Training Commissioner, Jenny Gannon, said she was delighted that the organisation's ongoing health-promoting work was being recognised in this way. "We take great pride in the high quality youth work our 12,000 members are involved in across the country and welcome this acknowledgement of that work," she said.

“Irish Girl Guides has successfully maintained the Gold Standard in Health Promotion since the award was launched in 2001. We continue to incorporate health-focused approaches in our programmes, events and weekly meetings because we believe that they form the basis of good quality youth work relevant to today's young people. This involves training for leaders, staff, support and resources for our youth members in fun, participative and educational ways.”

ENDS

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Notes to Editors:

National Youth Council of Ireland

The National Youth Council of Ireland is a membership-led umbrella organisation that represents and supports the interests of Irish voluntary youth organisations and uses its collective experience to act on issues that impact on young people. www.youth.ie

National Youth Health Programme

The National Youth Health Programme is a partnership between [NYCI](#), the [Health Service Executive](#) and the [Department of Children and Youth Affairs](#).

Health Quality Mark

The Health Quality Mark (HQM) is the recognised quality assurance mark for health promotion in youth work in Ireland. It is a health promotion initiative developed by the National Youth Health Programme (NYHP) to enhance best practice and a high standard of quality in all youth organisations.

Irish Girl Guides

Guiding started in Ireland in 1911 and operates throughout the 26 counties with 1,800 volunteer Leaders providing an informal educational programme of fun and challenging activities that foster confidence and leadership skills in girls and young women, enabling them to develop to their full potential and to become responsible citizens. Girls from age 5+ can choose to earn a wide range of badges, including Healthy Body, Healthy Mind, Community Action, Cultural Diversity, Disability Awareness, Drug Awareness, Online Surfer, Science Investigator, Engineering, Aviation, STEM, Climate Action and Global Traveller. www.irishgirlguides.ie