



IRFU Youth Council

Background:

- In November 2017 the IRFU formed a Youth Council consisting of 13 members from across each of the 4 provinces
- The Council decided to focus on dropout and retention in Youth Rugby – to establish reasons as to why youths dropout and possible solutions to keep players involved with their rugby club in a playing and/or volunteering capacity
- To establish some of the issues in youth rugby, the council created a questionnaire that was added to the 4 Nations survey released in November 2018. The ESRI also formulated internal research on participation in rugby in Ireland that the Youth Council referenced to identify reasons as to why youths dropout of rugby



Collection of Information:

- The Youth Council will host youth consultations, in co-ordination with the 4 spirit officers, with clubs and schools around the country in order to gather their thoughts, concerns, issues, etc. in relation to youth rugby. These will be based on issues raised in the 4 Nations Survey and ESRI report. These consultations will run from April 2019 – January 2020
- The Youth Council and Spirit Officers have been trained, based on the guidelines from Sport Ireland and The Department of Children and Youth Affairs on consulting with youths in order to maximize the impact of these consultations



- These consultations provide a safe and inclusive environment where youths can express their opinion without the pressure of being judged by coaches or the fear of repercussions e.g. being dropped. These consultations also provide a unique and effective way of gaining insights on the opinions of young people without the bias that other methodologies have, which are often used by adult figures
- The youth consultations provides opportunities for the Youth Council and Spirit Officers to train CWO's to host these forums within their own clubs in the future using techniques such as walking debates to establish youth opinions on various topics on youth rugby within their own club
- These consultations encourage discussion around important topics affecting youth rugby rather than just answers

Outcome

- The end goal of this Youth Council project is to create a resource booklet for clubs on positive ways to keep youths involved in rugby in a playing and/or volunteering capacity. The booklet will contain 3 common issues that were identified from the research/survey and consultations, as well as solutions to these issues
- The booklet will be distributed to clubs & schools around the country as well as being added to the Irish Rugby website