

m,n vv

## Interim Impact Report Contact hours 2022

Active Connections CLG  
July 2022



Mid Year Impact Report - On Track

---

## Context

As part of the Active Connections outputs and impacts are measured; this is carried out to ensure that the programmes are effective for the participants, their support networks and our referring partners. This process helps us to highlight areas of strength, areas for development and to help guide programme development for our participants.

The organisation has seen consistent growth inline with planned expansion.

- The Ember Camps have seen a 5.6% growth vs the same period in 2021 whilst the
- New Trails service (including breakaways and respond) a 10.2% growth.

In total the Active Connections team have carried out **9897.5** contact hours in Q1 and Q2 of 2022

Q1 saw the rollout of the 'Respond' programme in Waterford in February and Kerry in March. These programmes were commissioned by Tusla the child and families agency to meet their need for a weekend based support service. This is a truly innovative programme that aims to help young people and their families during the 'out of hours' (5pm Fri - 9 am Mon) when no other services are available.

Tusla Waterford/Wexford sought a day time support service (Friday evening, Saturday and Sundays 09.00-18.00) whilst Tusla Kerry sought an overnight full 24 hours service over weekends. These initial findings are showing that these programmes are appearing to have a very positive impact for the participants and families involved. This appears to be backed up in Waterford with a demonstration of  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the section 12s (young people removed from their home by the Garda) in Q1 compared to the same period last year. Participants and their families report that the service was timely and supportive. Referrers stated that they feel supported and have seen that families have avoided crisis by having this out of hours support.



A full review is being conducted on both these programmes and will be available by August.

The weekly Embers camp has continued in Kilkenny, Carlow, Wexford, Waterford and South Tipperary.

The summer programming for the Ember Camp has begun with greater capacity being sought on 80% of camp and will be ahead of targeted contact hours.

Additionally in Q3 we will roll out an additional adult Ember Camp for participants in Kilkenny, following the success of the adult camp in Carlow.

Covid continues to have an effect on camp particularly in Q1 we saw that participants were affected across all programmes. That has plateaued but all indications are that Ireland is facing another wave of infections.



---

**The Active Connections Embers programme** is an outdoor education programme aimed at young people living with an additional challenge like a physical disability, an intellectual disability or a neurodiverse diagnosis like autism.

Beginning in 2019, the programme has supported over 600 children, adults and families allowing for access and inclusion in outdoor activities. For some, additional challenges may present as barriers to engaging the outdoors in a safe, supported and positive way.

At the Embers programme, we aim to remove these barriers by meeting our clients where they are at ability and engagement wise and working with them in a 1:1 supported, non-judgmental, environment.

Currently, Embers runs in two different formats.

1. Throughout the year the Embers programme runs weekly, this provides a consistent option of support to the participants and families.
2. During school holidays we run longer camps lasting 4 days, these longer camps give families an extra boost of support when school is on down time. The camp allows for exploration, expressing of emotions and the opportunity to expand the horizons of the participants.

### **Parameter of this report**

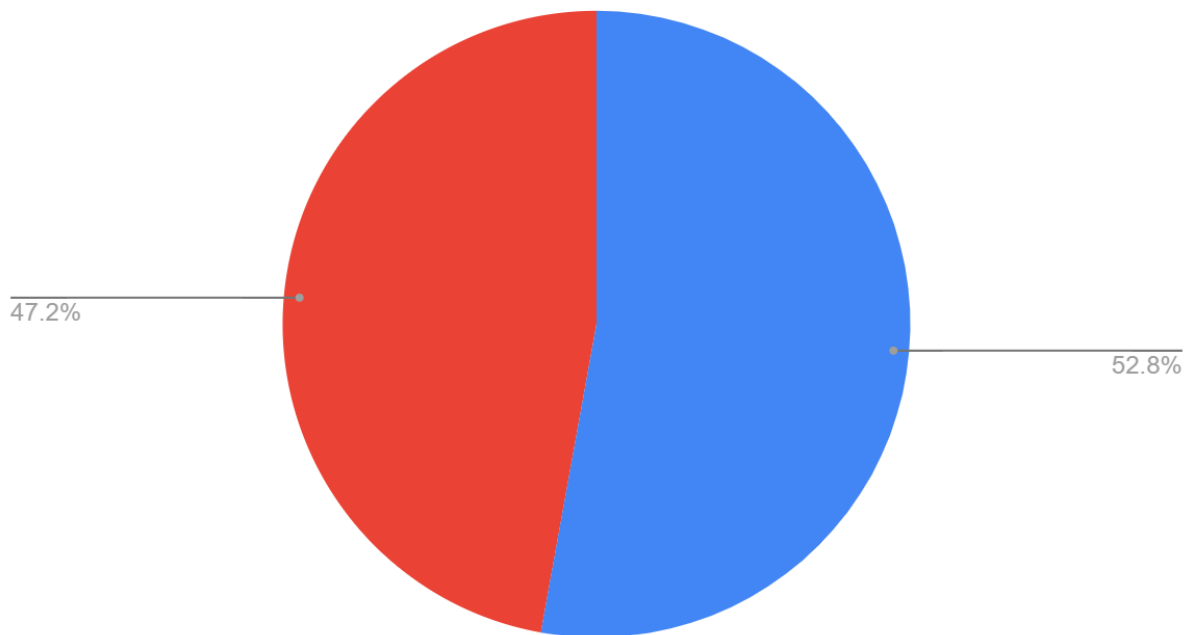
This report shows a direct comparison of contact/impact hours achieved by the crew of Active Connections. (contact hours are the hours directly carried out with participants)

### **Ember Camps**

The below chart shows the overall difference of hours carried out in Q1, 2 2021 to Q1, 2 in 2022.

Demonstrated is an increase of 5.6% increase in hours carried out with participants. This number was impacted heavily in Q1 by a changeable covid situation post Christmas

## Ember 2021vs 2022



The below chart is a breakdown of hours completed in each of the Ember Camp divided in the locations. The breakdown is generally evenly distributed. Tipperary is a smaller proportion as this camp currently operates fortnightly.

Embers	Hours carried out with Participants
Waterford	556.5
Wex	577.5
Kil	868
Car	563.5
Tip	245
Dub	357

### Testimonial from one mom

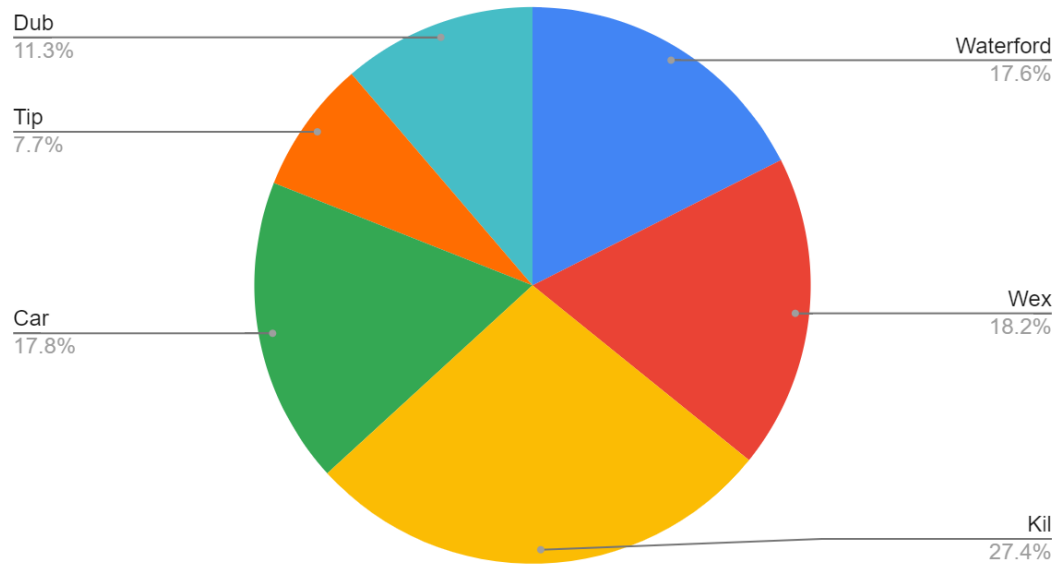
*Mary (not her real name) has been on a high the entire time with excitement at what she had to look forward to each afternoon. Mary's memory is pretty poor but she kept asking me when her water camp was happening as she remembered it from last year so vividly.*

*With all her sensory issues, she would normally struggle with fear of doing any of those activities but she embraced them once she had Jane by her side!. Whatever you do and however you guys do it, it's MAGIC. I try hard to get Mary to do some of those activities with me but I obviously don't have Jane's powers of persuasion!*

*I hope you guys know the difference you make to the lives of our kids and indeed to our lives as their parents and siblings. It is really exceptional.*

---

## Ember 2022 Breakdown





### *Testimonial*

*At first I pushed away, they pushed with me. Things were very dark, they were the lighthouse showing me the way back. I tried new things, I started to push myself. They showed me how. I found a better path, they walked it with me. Simply I would not be here anymore without them [Active Connections] SP*

Active Connections New Trails Ireland most impactful; activity based intervention service New trails supports the participants and their families. We use a range of adventure activities in combination with brief solution focused coaching to help our participants identify and action their solutions to their difficulties.

In a world filled with considerable parental and peer pressure, our programme helps youths, teens and young adults connect their desire for more freedom and independence with the reality that they must take on the responsibility that comes with that freedom.

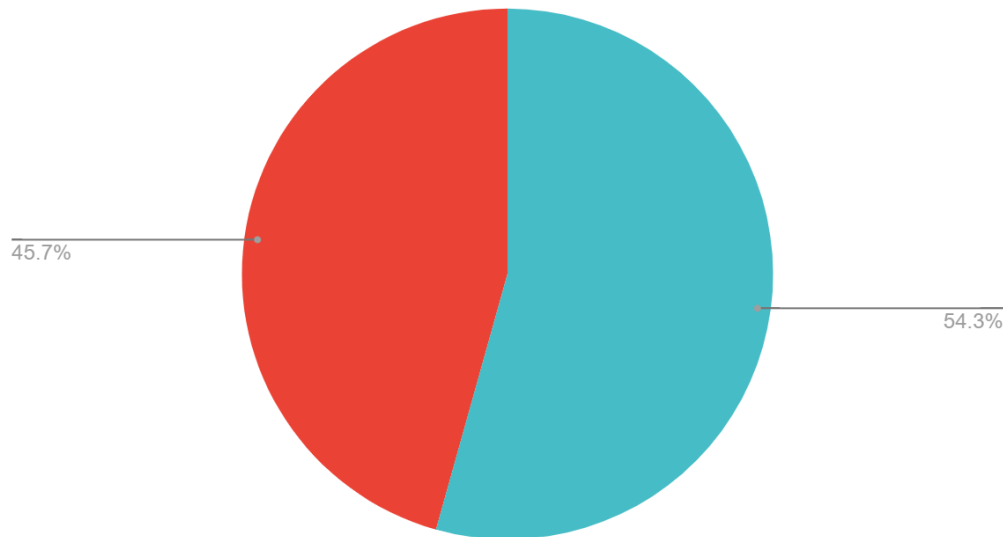
New trails is built on three principles

1. The Experience one gets whilst on session
2. The Reflection how these experiences connect to the young person front world life and
3. The Give back, an opportunity for participants to rebuild, restore and renew

### **New Trails**

New Trails service (including Breakaways and Respond) has seen a very positive growth of 10.2%, this is remarkable as our overnight Breakaway service has seen a lower take up in the south east, this has been mitigated by the development of the 'Kerry Respond' programme in particular.

## Overall 2022 vs 2021



New Trails-Breakaway (WaWx, CKST, KY, Cork and Dublin)	
Jan	938
Feb	1046
March	678
April	582
May	556
June	590
Respond Kerry Q1 & Q2	1800
Respond WaWx Q1 & Q2	240

Waterford and Wexford have continued to maintain a very strong position with support for the creative community alternative to care programme. This is being complimented by the Respond out of hours service. Many young people who engage in Respond progress to our New Trails programme under the CCA service. There remains potential for growth in this location under this programme which we are recruiting for actively.



---

Kerry Tusla have expanded their services by 200% under the 'Respond' programme, Active Connections will work with Tusla partners to develop a complimentary New Trails and Breakaway service which is felt to give participants the best service provision possible by Active Connections. A portion of this support will be aimed at sibling access which appears to be an area of need from our Tusla partners. Active Connections feel that this profile of participants would fit well into our Breakaway and New Trails service providing participants with regular bonding opportunities.

Our relationships with Kilkenny, Carlow, South Tipp Tusla progress well meeting the same level of support as last year. This again is hampered by difficulty recruiting in this location.

Cork Tusla continues to provide areas for development which will be focused on in Q3,4 2022.

Another area for development is to support young people and young adults under the support of the HSE rather than Tusla. Currently 95% of all 1:1 services are referred by Tusla partners.

As capacity builds within the staff team, Active Connections will expand their services to groups (youth justice, victims of domestic violence, Roma/traveller groups etc.. In Q1 Active Connections has built an equipment store which is adequate to respond to the referral requests.