

## **2021 NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE**

As we welcome in a new year, we do so full of optimism and hope. 2020 was a particularly difficult year for many families, individuals and organisations. The covid-19 pandemic presented significant economic, social and personal challenges. Our thoughts, in particular, go out to all those families who lost loved ones during 2020 and also all those whose health, economic circumstances or personal well-being have been adversely impacted during this on-going pandemic.

Our hearts go out to all our members who have had to sacrifice so much in terms of education, social activity and personal development. We know and feel your frustration and upset. You and your families have played a significant role in fighting against the scourge that is Covid-19 by your compliance and behaviours. We are at a critical juncture now and we ask you all to do your very best to comply with the guidelines now and going forward. By us all doing our bit we will protect ourselves, our families and our communities. Please be particularly mindful of the most vulnerable, the considerable pressure on our health service and the knowledge that by working together we will hopefully soon return to some form of normality.

Throughout 2020 our board, staff and volunteers worked tirelessly to provide the best possible supports and services to all our members, families and the wider community. We ,at times, had to be imaginative and creative in our thinking and actions.

2021 unfortunately has begun with significant but necessary restrictions on our service provision. Programmes and activities must be for the most part on-line. We hope this will only affect our service for a short period and we will keep all our members updated through social media and calls. We want all our members to know that our staff and volunteers will continue to provide remote supports and other activities online. Significantly, we want all our members and families to know that our staff AND premises are available for one to one supports and crisis interventions. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you feel you or a family member needs support, advice or just for a chat. Contact us by private message through Facebook, WhatsApp, general messaging or through our other social media platforms. We can also be contacted by phone on 051-855036 during office hours or 087-251033 or email [info@childrensgrouplink.ie](mailto:info@childrensgrouplink.ie) .We would also like to make families aware that our organisation (Children's Group Link, Waterford Traveller Youth Support Project & Waterford Youth Transport Service), our staff, facilities and vehicles continue to provide supports through the WCCC led Community Call initiative and we are working closely with a number of agencies and organisations including Waterford Food Bank , School Completion Programme and WIT.

Hopefully it won't be too long before we are back to normal...or near normal onsite activities. For now - hang tight, stay positive and stay safe.

Brendan Halligan CEO

On behalf of the board.