

Designing a year of ups and downs

Annual reports don't have to be dry, boring affairs. For 2003, Children's Express Belfast members have taken charge to make sure of it.

Is it possible for a bunch of young people to write, organise and design a sixteen-page annual report in two months, only in their free time? Yep, but not without blood, sweat and well, not tears, fun. With the financial backing of the Irish Youth Foundation, a team within Children's Express has produced not only a written but also an audio version of a year in the life of the Bureau.

Siobhan Quinn explains all:

I was determined to make the annual report the best and 'in your face', and that's exactly what it is!

"The first time I heard about the annual report, I thought it sounded interesting, but when I looked at reports compiled by other bureaux within Children's Express my mind suddenly changed.

"I was determined to make the Belfast Bureau's annual report the best and 'in your face', and that's exactly what it is!

"After signing up and doing all the boring stuff, like typing out what we wanted to include in the report, came the fun part. We got to design it the way we wanted it and get that special 'in your face' effect.

"Every organisation needs an annual report because it is a legal requirement. In the report it shows how much income we generate and what we spend our money on. It also includes details of projects we have done over the last year and young people's opinions on these projects.

"I really enjoyed doing the annual report because it was fun all the way. We picked really funky colours and each time we got it back from the designers it looked better.

"I think the most boring thing of the annual report was typing it out because I was interested more in the design aspect.

"We had an art day where people could paint, draw or do whatever they wanted. Their artwork was then used as backdrops for the pages. We also had a photography workshop and again photos were used on the pages. This meant that everyone had a chance to be involved."

The Children's Express Belfast bureau annual report will shortly be available on the Children's Express website.

About the team

This story was produced by Michael Leathem, aged 16, and was published in art.ie, the Northern Ireland arts magazine.

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