



An Buidéal Leanaí, Coimisiún na
Míchumais, Lámhárnaíochta agus Óige
Department of Children, Equality,
Disability, Integration and Youth



PATH Programme in County Wexford

Showcase 10 Feb 2026



My Name is Kieran Donohoe

I am Chief Executive FDYS

I am here to present the PATH Evaluation:

- Findings
- Recommendations and
- Learning

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FDYS Mission Statement

To work with young people and adults in Co. Wexford, to enable them to gain for themselves, the knowledge, feelings and skills to realise their full potential and, in so far as possible, to empower them to take control of their own lives.

An Evaluation of the
Pre-Adolescent
Traveller and Roma
Holistic
Programme (PATH)



Doodly Facilitation and Consulting Ltd
January 2025



The PATH Programme is an innovative, tailored, early intervention life skills and personal development programme, initially targeting young people from the Traveller community. Due to the success of its first year, it was expanded to include young people from the Roma community in its second year.

PATH was conceived by Ferns Diocesan Youth Service as a collaborative project between its Traveller Inclusion Programme and Youth Diversion Project.

During Covid we found that there were a cohort of young people who didn't want to engage in football and handball programmes. So ourselves (the Traveller Inclusion Project) and the Youth Diversion Project came up with this idea of broadening it out to include equine, creative arts and even things like baking and cookery.

(FDYS Youth Worker)



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In its first year, Sept 2022 to May 2023, the Programme engaged ten young Traveller boys, aged 8 - 10 years in Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford.

In its second year, September 2023 - June 2024, the project expanded significantly to engage over 100 young people from both the Traveller and Roma communities. It also expanded its geographic remit to include all of County Wexford.

PATH is funded through the CYPSC Healthy Ireland Fund.

2

Years

106

Young People

5

Locations



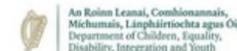
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POLICY CONTEXT

PATH aligns with broader national and local policy objectives aimed at improving the well-being of children and young people. Specifically, it contributes to the following:

- Outcome 1 of **Better Outcomes Brighter Futures (2014 - 2020)** emphasises the importance of children being active and healthy, with positive physical and mental well-being, and highlights the need for initiatives that promote healthy lifestyles and positive mental health.
- The objective of the **Healthy Ireland Fund 2023-2025** is to improve the health and wellbeing of people of all ages and abilities living in Ireland through the implementation of the Healthy Ireland Strategic Action Plan 2021-2025.
- **Wexford Children & Young People's Plan 2020-2023** identifies physical health, mental health, nutrition and overall well-being as key priorities for children and young people in the county.
- The **National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy (1 and 11)** seeks to generate transformative impacts for Travellers and Roma in the long term, giving continuity and deepening the key areas for social inclusion: education, employment, housing and healthcare.



PRINCIPLES

- Youth Work Approaches: Youth Work methods are used to build relationships with young people through planned and structured engagement
- Participation: Young people are involved in all stages of the project from design, through to implementation and evaluation
- Integrated Framework: The integrated service model ensures that the project collaborates closely with other services within FDYS and with relevant external stakeholders (see page 17 for more)
- Social Inclusion: FDYS is a universal youth service, however takes proactive steps to include marginalised communities



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PROPOSED OUTCOMES

The programme aimed to achieve the following short, medium and long-term outcomes:

Young People's Health and Wellbeing

- Improved self-perceived health
- Improved awareness of health and decision-making relating to healthy choices
- Enhanced positive mental health and well-being (self-reported)
- Enhanced links between young people and health services, where required

Engagement and Participation of Young People

- Engagement of young people in enjoyable, healthy activities
- Enhanced participation of seldom-heard young people in decisions that affect them

Family and Community

- Stronger relationships with parents/guardians
- Promotion of healthy lifestyles within the target family units



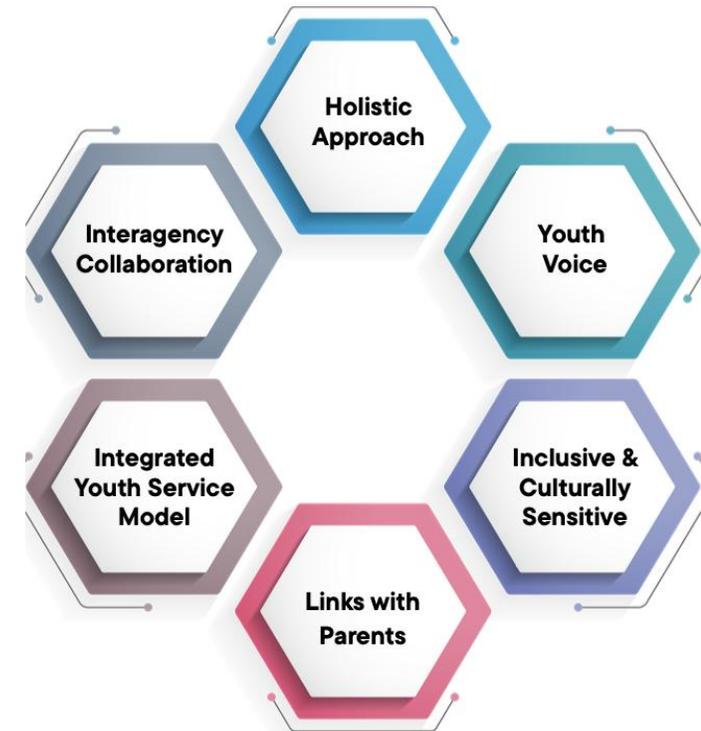
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PROGRAMME STRENGTHS

This review demonstrates that the PATH Programme effectively met its objectives, contributing towards improved health outcomes and well-being for targeted Traveller and Roma young people in County Wexford. Its success is attributed to six interconnected features, detailed below, that work synergistically to facilitate these positive outcomes.



PROGRAMME OUTCOMES

This review report explores the design and delivery of the PATH Programme, and considers its impact on the targeted group of young Traveller and Roma people who took part.

The findings show that the PATH initiatives, such as Equine Therapy, Health and Fitness, Therapeutic Creative Arts, have made a positive contribution to the lives of these young people in a range of ways. This includes improved health and well-being, increased educational attendance, enhanced pride in their culture, confidence building, teamwork, participation, empowerment, and personal development.

This section summarises the findings of the primary and secondary research, extracting key outcomes under the following headings:

- Life and Employability Skills
- Cultural Engagement and Pride
- School Engagement
- Healthy Eating and Nutrition
- Physical Fitness
- Empowerment
- Community Contribution
- Leadership and Peer Support
- Positive Behavioural Transformation
- Trust and Relationship Building





FDYS
Your Local Voluntary Youth Service
Thank You

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