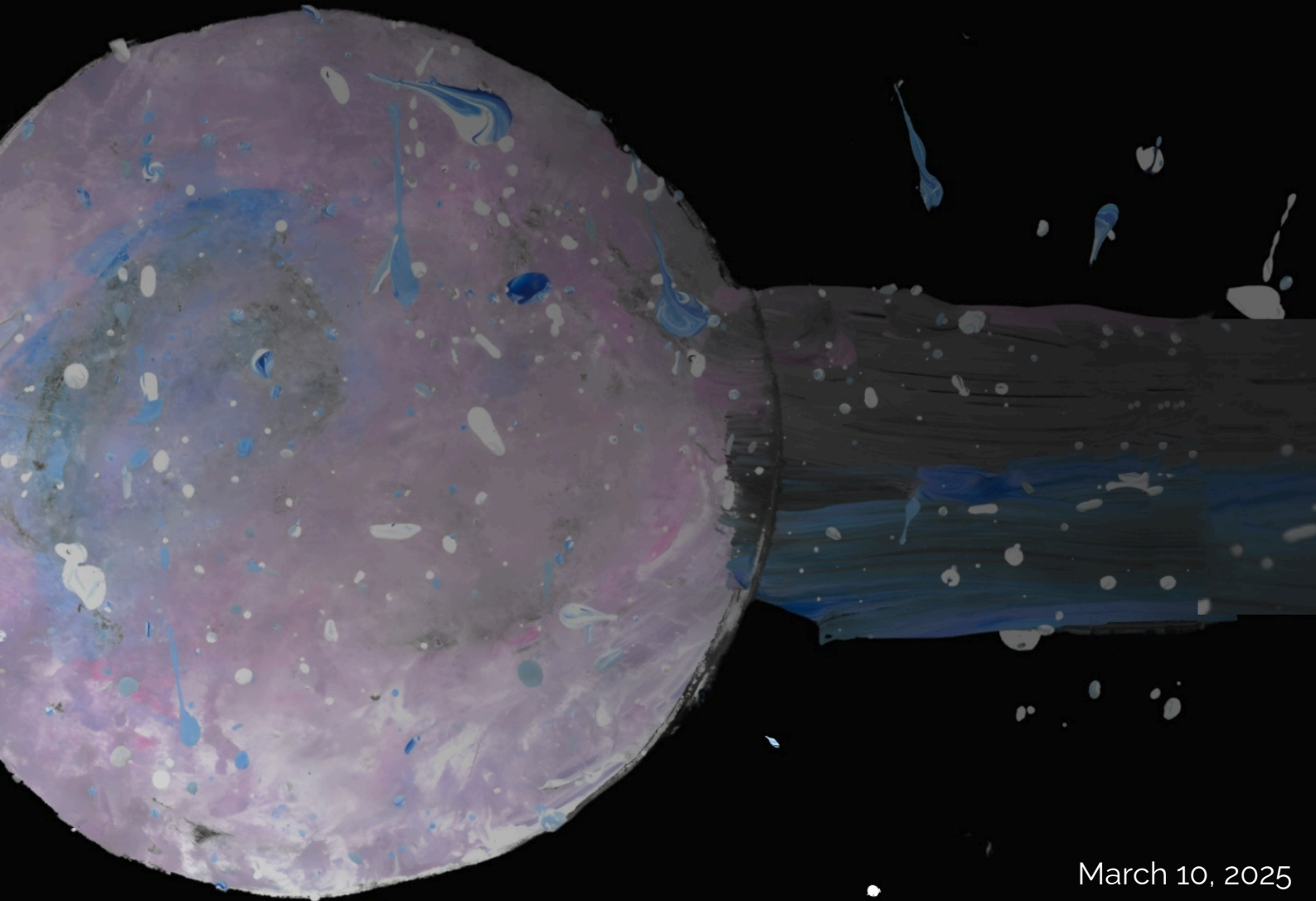


Co-Production of the Design of Traveller Youth Mental Health Service

Exchange House Ireland National Traveller Service



March 10, 2025



EXCHANGE HOUSE IRELAND
National Travellers Service

RTÉ
ToyShow
Appeal 

Acknowledgements

Co-Production of the Design of a Traveller Youth Mental Health Service was a RTE Toy Show Appeal Community Foundation Ireland funded project led by Exchange House Ireland National Traveller Service. Over 20 months a dedicated team engaged with young Travellers across Ireland to develop a model for a national service aimed at supporting and promoting the well-being of those aged between 10-20 years.



This report is available at: <https://www.exchangehouse.ie/publications.php>

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The art work included in this report were pictures and designs created by the young people who participated in the programme and who kindly donated it to Exchange House Ireland staff to include in this final report.

Table of Contents

Figures	2
Executive Summary	3
Our Approach	
Key Findings	
Recommendations	
01 Introduction and Context	7
1.1 Background Information	
1.2 Methodological Overview	
1.3 Supporting Young Travellers' Mental Health	
02 Methodology	15
2.1 Project Approach	
2.2 Programme Structure	
2.3 Data Collection and Analysis	
03 Challenges to Traveller Youth's Mental Health	21
3.1 Exposure to Suicide and Mental Health Challenges Among Young Travellers	
3.2 Barriers to Mental Well-being	
3.3 Understanding Help Seeking Activities	
3.4 The Importance of Co-Development	
04 Recommendations	43
4.1 Help-Seeking	
4.2 Confidence Building	
4.3 Hope for the Future	
05 Conclusion	47
06 References	51
Appendices	55
Appendix 1: Help Seeking Intentions Questionnaire	
Appendix 2: Suicidal Ideation Questionnaire	

Figures

Figure 1: Traveller youth's comments on mental health	23
Figure 2: Practical Guide for Interpreting CORE-10 Scores With Scores For Whole Group and Individual Sub Groups Displayed	25
Figure 3: Responses from Suicidal Behaviours Questionnaire (n=34)	26
Figure 4: Students' descriptions of their experiences with discrimination	27
Figure 5: Young Traveller and Roma students in UCD listening to one Traveller woman's experience in education	29
Figure 6: Resources respondents were likely to use when experiencing emotional distress or suicidal thoughts	35
Figure 7: If you were feeling down, how likely would you be to use the following places?	36
Figure 8: If you were experiencing suicidal ideation, how likely would you be to use the following places?	37

Executive Summary

The mental health and well-being of the Traveller community in Ireland have long been a significant concern. Recognised as a priority group in national mental health strategies such as Sharing the Vision and the National Suicide Prevention Strategy Connecting for Life, Travellers experience disproportionately high levels of mental health difficulties and suicide rates. Despite this, there remains a critical lack of comprehensive data and targeted interventions, particularly for young Travellers.

To address this gap, **Exchange House Ireland** was awarded funding in 2021 from the **Community Foundation/Toy Show** Fund to co-produce a design for a National Traveller Youth Mental Health Service (NTYMHS).

Over 20 months, a dedicated team engaged with young Travellers across Ireland to develop a model for a national service aimed at supporting and promoting the well-being of those aged between 10 and 20 years.

This report presents the findings of this initiative, including an overview of the challenges young Travellers face, the gaps in existing mental health service provision, and recommendations for a culturally appropriate, community-led response.

Our Approach

A socio-ecological approach was used to explore Traveller youth mental health across five geographic locations—Dublin, Longford, Mayo, Limerick, and Wicklow. A six-week, evidence-based programme was delivered to young Travellers aged 10-18, fostering discussions on mental health, trauma, racism, suicidal ideation, and help-seeking behaviours.

Additionally, adult listening sessions gathered insights from parents and community members regarding the key mental health challenges facing young Travellers and potential community-led solutions. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative data from focus groups and quantitative data from surveys to provide a comprehensive analysis of the mental health needs of young Travellers.

Key Findings

The research identified several key challenges impacting the mental well-being of young Travellers:

- **Exposure to Suicide:** The Traveller community has alarmingly high exposure to suicide, with many young people personally affected by the loss of peers and family members.
- **Barriers to Help-Seeking:** Young Travellers predominantly seek support from family and friends rather than formal mental health services, often due to mistrust in mainstream institutions, experiences of discrimination, and a lack of culturally sensitive services.
- **Racism and Discrimination:** Traveller youth face systemic discrimination in education, employment, and healthcare, which negatively impacts their mental health and self-esteem.
- **Education and Early School Leaving:** Many young Travellers experience exclusion and low academic expectations, contributing to disengagement from education and reduced future opportunities.
- **Shame and Social Pressure:** Cultural norms, particularly around gender roles, reputation, and identity, create significant stressors that impact mental health.
- **Employment and Future Prospects:** A widespread perception that employment opportunities are limited due to discrimination contributes to feelings of hopelessness and low self-worth among young Travellers.

Recommendations

To address these challenges and improve Traveller youth mental health, the report proposes recommendations in three key areas:

Help-Seeking

- Establish a National Traveller Youth Mental Health Service led by trained Traveller mental health workers.
- Integrate cultural competency training into mainstream mental health services.
- Develop peer-led mental health training for parents and youth workers to support early intervention.

Confidence Building

- Expand educational supports, scholarships, and mentorship programs for Traveller youth.
- Implement suicide prevention and resilience workshops within Traveller communities.
- Enforce anti-racism and cultural awareness training across education, healthcare, and employment sectors.

Hope for the Future

- Develop targeted employment initiatives to combat workplace discrimination and create career pathways.
- Strengthen legal protections against discrimination in education, employment, and healthcare.
- Launch public awareness campaigns to challenge stereotypes and highlight Traveller contributions to society.

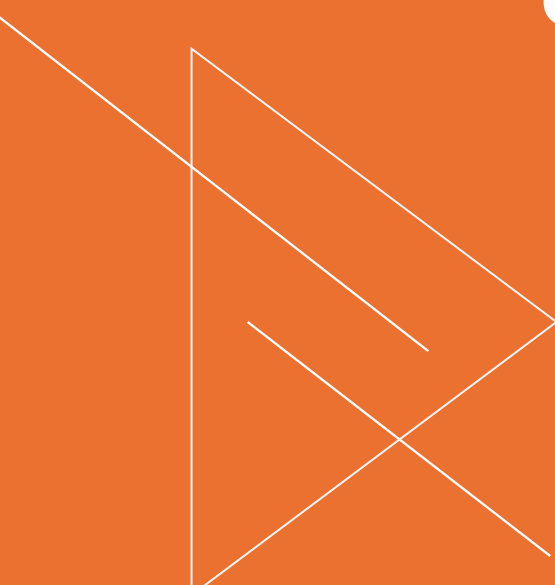
This report underscores the urgent need for a National Traveller Youth Mental Health Service that is culturally competent, community-led, and sustainable. Addressing the mental health crisis among young Travellers requires a holistic approach that tackles discrimination, improves educational outcomes, and expands employment opportunities. By centring Traveller voices in service design and implementation, we can create a more inclusive, supportive system that empowers Traveller youth to thrive.



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01

Introduction and Context





Tereiana Stokes 2022

1.

Introduction and context

In 2021, **Exchange House Ireland** received funding from the Community Foundation/Toy Show Fund to co-develop a framework for a National Traveller Youth Mental Health Service. To lead this initiative, a dedicated team was assembled, consisting of a full-time and a part-time Family Support Worker, specialising in addiction, community development, and social care, under the supervision of the Manager of the National Traveller Mental Health Service. Over a 24-month period, the team engaged directly with young Travellers across Ireland to collaboratively design a national service model aimed at supporting and enhancing the mental well-being of Travellers aged 10 to 20 years.

1.1 Background Information

The mental health of the Travelling community has long been a significant concern. National strategies, including Sharing the Vision¹, Connecting for Life,² and HSE Child and Youth Mental Health Office Action Plan 2024 - 2027 recognise Travellers as a priority group. The All Ireland Traveller Health Study (2010) highlighted their heightened vulnerability to mental health issues and suicide. Despite this, significant gaps remain in understanding the full extent of these challenges. This "knowledge vacuum," as described by Tanner & Doherty (2021), is particularly noticeable when it comes to understanding the mental health of young and adolescent Travellers.³

Young Travellers, especially young women, face severe mental health risks. Traveller women are over three times more likely than non-Traveller women to report poor mental health (62.7% vs. 19.9%). They are also twice as likely as Traveller men to experience mental health difficulties.⁴ An additional study analysing the National Clinical Programme for Self Harm and for Suicide-Related Ideation finds similarly distressing trends. When compared to white Irish women, Traveller women have 3 times higher rates of suicide-related ideation and 3.85 times higher rates of self harm. Traveller men have 4.5 times higher rates of suicide-related ideation and 5.4 times higher rates of self harm than white Irish men.⁵ In a further analysis of this data, discussions with a group of Traveller women revealed that they often feel isolated and struggle to seek support within their own community due to perceived stigma and a reluctance to burden others.⁶

The suicide crisis among young Travellers is particularly alarming, with a number of possible deaths by suicide of young Travellers in recent years. Members of the Irish Traveller community die by suicide at a rate six-times higher than the general population.⁷ In our work with young Travellers, we supported a group mourning the loss of a 12-year-old friend who had died by suicide. Over the course of the programme, they spoke of three other peers who had also taken their own lives. Over the past 2 years Exchange House Ireland has recorded 5 possible deaths by suicide by teenagers from the Traveller community.⁸

This crisis unfolds against a broader backdrop of rising suicidal behaviour among young people in Ireland. Given that 82% of Traveller adults report knowing someone who has died by suicide, it is reasonable to assume that young Travellers face an even greater risk. Their vulnerability is further compounded by high exposure to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), which are strongly linked to poor mental health and wellbeing outcomes.

Efforts to assess the extent of these challenges are hindered by the absence of ethnic identifiers in mental health service records. Many service providers could not share data due to confidentiality concerns, as the number of Traveller participants was too low to report.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that while mental health services express a willingness to engage with young Travellers, they often consider the community "hard to reach."

Barriers to engagement are well-documented and include discrimination, racism, lack of institutional trust, and insufficient cultural awareness. There have been repeated calls for mandatory cultural competency training for public services, particularly mental health providers, to address these barriers and ensure more inclusive, effective engagement.⁹

In response to such concerns, the Joint Oireachtas Committee made the following recommendations in November 2021:¹⁰

- **Prioritise funding** to examine the distinct needs of young members of the Traveller community who are vulnerable to suicide and develop initiatives to train peer support outreach workers within the community.

- **Resource Traveller organisations** to develop new, effective community mental health programs targeting specific groups (e.g., children, young people, older people, women, men, LGBTQI+ community members), fostering community resilience and empowerment. Local Traveller projects should receive support to identify and research the unique mental health needs and causes of difficulties within the community. Funding should be provided to these local groups to develop and support tailored mental health initiatives, addressing local needs, including improving access to services.

1. Government of Ireland, *Sharing the Vision: A Mental Health Policy for Everyone* (Dublin: Health Service Executive, 2020), <https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/mentalhealth/sharing-the-vision/>.
2. Health Service Executive, "Connecting for Life", Accessed February 18, 2025, <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/connecting-for-life/>.
3. John Lyne, "Irish Journal of Psychological Medicine," *Irish Journal of Psychological Medicine* 41, no. 4 (2024). <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/irish-journal-of-psychological-medicine>
4. Eimear O'Neill, Nabihah Abdul-Razak, Zulijana Anastasova, and Catherine O'Callaghan, "Case Series: Psychosocial Challenges of Female Youth within the Irish Travelling Community," *International Journal of Social Psychiatry* 68, no. 3 (2022): 681-685, <https://doi.org/10.1177/00207640211057795>
5. Katerina Kavalidou et al., "Presentations of Self-Harm and Suicide-Related Ideation among the Irish Traveller Indigenous Population to Hospital Emergency Departments: Evidence from the National Clinical Programme for Self-Harm," *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology* 58, no. 6 (February 17, 2023): 883–891, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00127-023-02439-7>.
6. Katerina Kavalidou, "Understanding the needs of Irish Traveller women when presenting to ED in a suicidal crisis," YouTube video, 2:49, September 10, 2024, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TIL30TpeXfs>.
7. Kitty Holland, "Discrimination Key Factor in Traveller Suicides, Study Finds," *The Irish Times*, February 22, 2023, <https://www.irishtimes.com/ireland/social-affairs/2023/02/22/relentless-racism-discrimination-is-primary-cause-of-suicide-in-traveller-community-report/>.
8. Exchange House Ireland. "Traveller Deaths by Suspected Suicide System," (2025).
9. Joint Committee on Key Issues Affecting the Traveller Community. *Final Report of the Joint Committee on Key Issues Affecting the Traveller Community*. (Dublin: Houses of the Oireachtas, 2021). https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/33/joint_committee_on_key_issues_affecting_the_traveller_community/reports/2021/2021-12-01_final-report-of-the-joint-committee-on-key-issues-affecting-the-traveller-community_en.pdf
10. Joint Committee on Key Issues Affecting the Traveller Community. *Final Report of the Joint Committee on Key Issues Affecting the Traveller Community*. (Dublin: Houses of the Oireachtas, 2021). https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/33/joint_committee_on_key_issues_affecting_the_traveller_community/reports/2021/2021-12-01_final-report-of-the-joint-committee-on-key-issues-affecting-the-traveller-community_en.pdf

1.2 Methodological Overview

The research aimed to explore Traveller youth mental health through a structured, socio-ecological approach. Five geographic locations were selected—Dublin, Longford, Mayo, Limerick, and Wicklow—where a six-week evidence-based programme was delivered to over 40 young Travellers aged 10-18. The programme encouraged discussion on mental health, covering topics such as wellbeing, trauma, anxiety, racism, and suicidal ideation along with a social “fun” based outing at the end of the programme. In the third week, participants completed a Help Seeking Questionnaire to assess where they would turn for support in times of emotional distress or suicidal thoughts. Additionally, adult listening sessions gathered perspectives from parents and community members on key mental health challenges for young Travellers and the community in general as well as potential solutions.

A mixed-methods approach was used to analyse the findings, combining qualitative insights from focus groups with quantitative data from anonymous surveys. This provided a comprehensive understanding of the mental health challenges faced by young Travellers and the types of support they need. The study culminated in a report summarising their perspectives and recommendations for improving mental health services and accessibility.

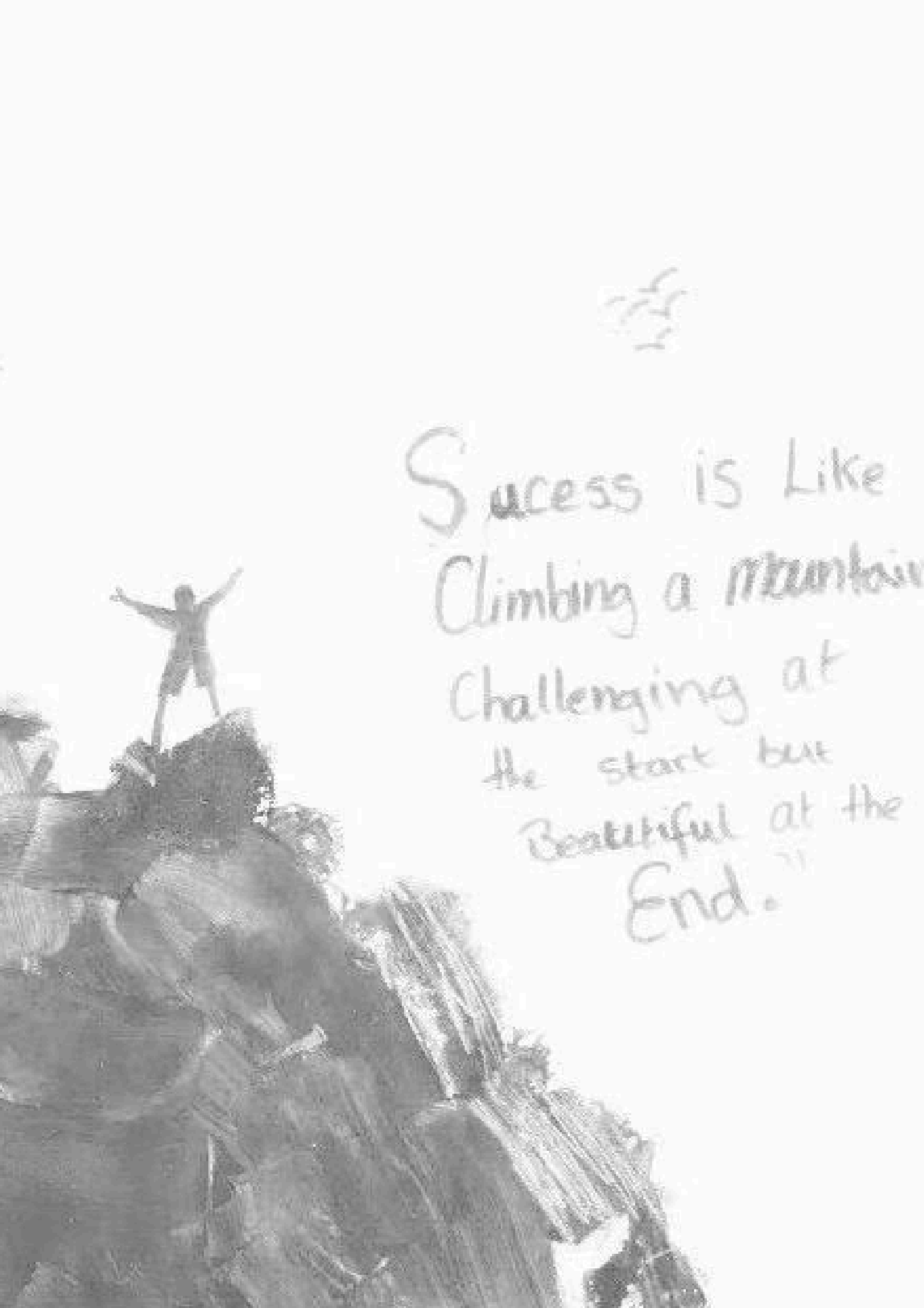
1.3 Supporting Young Travellers' Mental Health

The mental health crisis among young Travellers is not just an issue of service provision; it is deeply rooted in historical inequalities, cultural barriers, and systemic discrimination. While the challenges are significant, this report seeks to highlight not only the issues but also the strengths within the Traveller community—resilience, strong familial bonds, and a deep sense of identity—that can be harnessed to create meaningful change.

Through a combination of qualitative and quantitative research, this study provides a comprehensive overview of the mental health experiences of young Travellers, their attitudes toward help-seeking, and the barriers they face in accessing support. The findings emphasise the need for a culturally competent, community-led mental health service designed in collaboration with young Travellers themselves.

The following chapters will explore the key challenges impacting Traveller youth mental health, present insights gathered from engagement with young people and their families, and outline recommendations aimed at addressing the critical gaps in service provision.

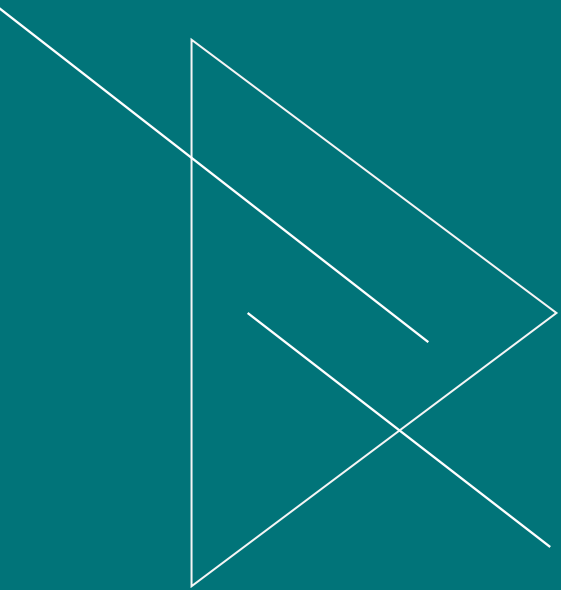
By centring the voices of young Travellers, this report aims to provide a roadmap for the development of a National Traveller Youth Mental Health Service that is both responsive and inclusive.



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02

Methodology





Terriann Stokes 2022

2.

Methodology

This study used a socio-ecological approach to explore the mental health experiences of Traveller youth across five geographic locations—Dublin, Longford, Mayo, Limerick, and Wicklow. A six-week evidence-based programme was delivered to young Travellers, aged 10-18, to encourage discussion on mental health issues, build understanding, and explore help-seeking behaviours. Adult listening sessions were also conducted to gain insights from parents and community members on the broader challenges and potential support mechanisms. A mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative data from focus groups and quantitative data from surveys, was employed to provide a comprehensive analysis of the mental health challenges faced by Traveller youth and inform recommendations for improved service delivery.

2.1 Project Approach

- **Research:** Understand the landscape of Traveller youth mental health using socio-ecological models
- **Select locations:** 5 geographic locations were identified and mapped in terms of services and Traveller population
- **Prepare 6 week programme:** A 6 week evidence-based programme was devised to encourage discussion and educate young people on mental health
- **Deliver programme:** Programme was delivered to 5 groups of youths aged 10-18 in Dublin, Longford, Mayo, Limerick, and Wicklow
- **Report:** Report on what young people view as the challenges to mental health and what kind of support they want

2.2 Programme Structure

The research team engaged with over 40 young Travellers in five regions through a structured six-week programme in collaboration with existing youth services, community groups and organisations:

Mayo: 8 girls
in collaboration
with Involve
Traveller Youth
Service

Dublin: 10 boys
in collaboration
with Exchange
House Ireland
Children & Young
People Service

Midlands: mixed
group of 12
young people in
collaboration
with Longford
Westmeath ETB
Youth Reach
Longford Town.

Limerick: 10 girls from 3
different sites in collaboration
with Limerick Traveller
Network

Wicklow: 6 boys
who attend Wicklow
Travellers Youth
Programme in
collaboration with
Ceart – Wicklow
Travellers Group,
HSE Mental Health
Coordinator and St
Patrick's Hurling
Club Wicklow



A 6-week programme was delivered to each group of young people, meeting once a week for 2 hours. The programme focussed on encouraging participation and sharing of views and on giving the young people a vocabulary around mental health. The final week of the programme was a “fun” social outing for the group with an activity of their choosing. The programme topics covered:

- **Mental health and wellbeing:** what is it and what does it mean to be well
- **Help seeking** – where do we go for help? How can we help?
- **Trauma** and how it affects us
- **Depression and Anxiety**
- **Conflict & Feuding** and how it affects mental health
- **Racism & discrimination** and how it affects mental health
- **Self-harm**, suicidal thoughts and suicide

In week 3 of the 6-week programme, we analysed where young people would seek help in emotional distress or suicidal ideation. Each participant completed a Help Seeking Questionnaire with two questions:

1. How likely would you be to use the following places if feeling down, worried, or stressed?
2. How likely would you be to use the following places if experiencing suicidal thoughts?

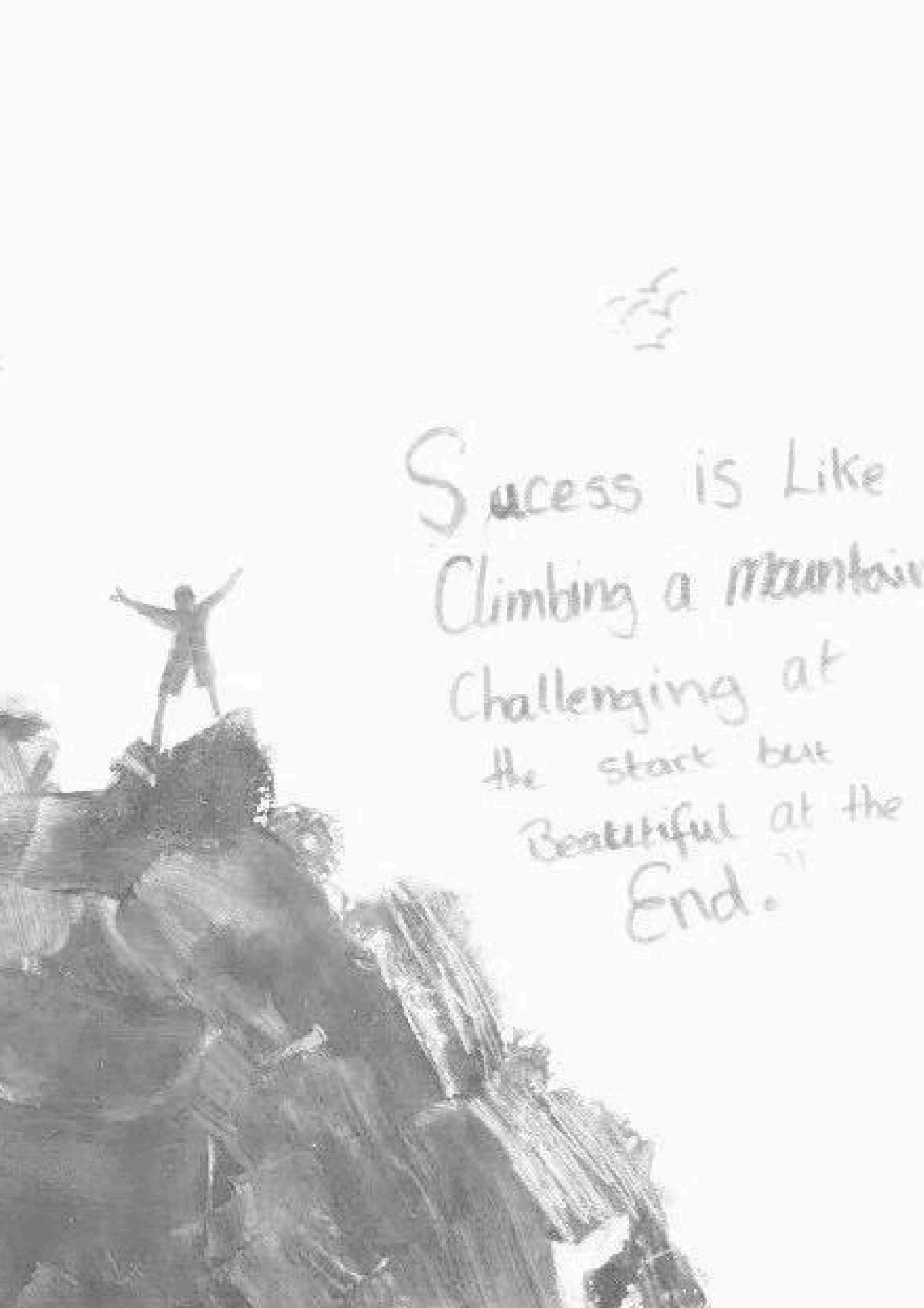
Each question included 11 options, with five response choices ranging from Very Likely to Very Unlikely. Respondents selected one option per item.

Additionally, adult listening sessions involving 46 participants were conducted to gather insights from parents and community members. The Adult listening groups focussed on two questions:

- What are the challenges to young Travellers mental health?
- How can we support young Travellers mental health?

2.3 Data Collection and Analysis

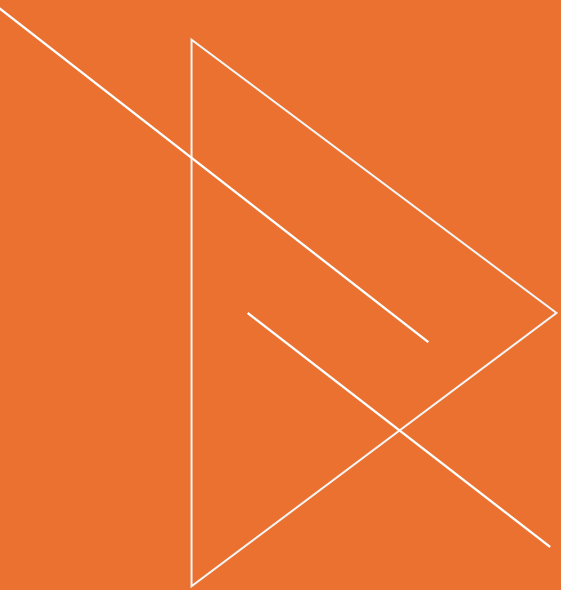
A mixed-methods approach was employed, combining qualitative insights from focus groups and quantitative data from anonymous surveys. This allowed for a comprehensive analysis of young Travellers' experiences, perceptions of mental health, and barriers to accessing services.



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03

Challenges





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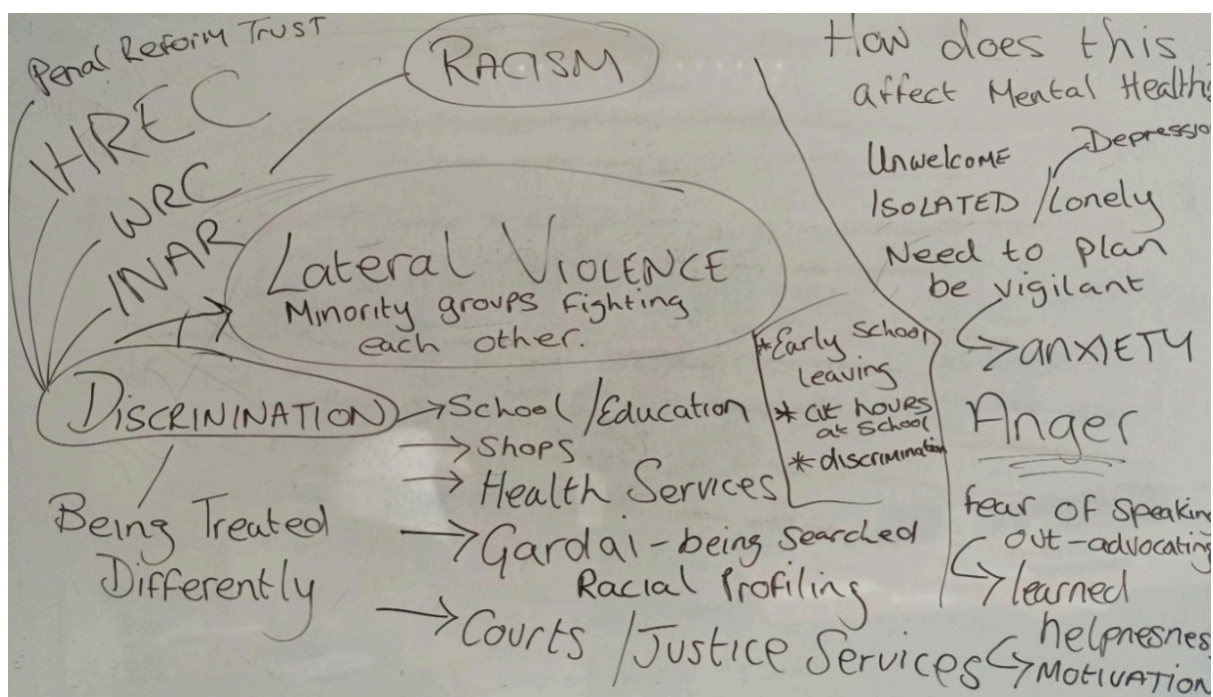
3. Challenges to Traveller Youth's Mental Health

Young Travellers in Ireland face significant mental health challenges, shaped by both historical inequalities and contemporary social pressures. Research consistently highlights alarming disparities in mental health outcomes, with Traveller communities experiencing disproportionately high rates of suicide, distress, and systemic barriers to well-being.

This section explores the key factors contributing to these challenges, drawing from both research and direct engagement with Traveller youth. It examines the devastating impact of suicide exposure, the effects of racism and discrimination, the impact of interfamily conflict and violence, and the role of education in shaping mental well-being. Additionally, it considers the influence of shame, grief, and employment prospects on mental health, emphasising the need for culturally responsive interventions.

Through lived experiences and data-driven insights, this chapter underscores the urgency of addressing mental health inequalities among Traveller youth, ensuring that they have access to the support and resources necessary to thrive.

Figure 1: Traveller youth's comments on mental health



3.1 Exposure to Suicide and Mental Health Challenges Among Young Travellers

Suicide has had a devastating impact on the Traveller community. Research shows that **82%** of Travellers have been affected by suicide, with **26%** having lost an immediate family member.¹¹ Among the young people we engaged with, most could name someone within the community who had died by suicide, and every adult we spoke to had experienced such a loss.

Even amongst adult members of the Traveller community, the scale of the crisis is troubling to comprehend:

“*The biggest [lesson] for me working as a professional in my own community was the scale of the crisis we are facing in terms of mental health. With so many lost to suicide both young and old alike. I had my own battles with mental health but I had not realized that we as a community are losing so many people to suicide. Of course, I had heard of people dying by suicide but just not on the scale. It seemed everywhere we went we would hear the effects of discrimination the lack of employment for young people and the scarcity of Traveller accommodation, and how this was all contributing to the high suicide rate among the Traveller community.*”

Many adults expressed deep concern about the possibility of young people dying by suicide. While some felt uncomfortable discussing mental health and suicide, their participation in this project—and their willingness to allow their children to take part—was largely driven by this fear. Tragically, during the course of our research, a 12-year-old known to one of the groups died by suicide. News of his death spread rapidly throughout the Traveller community, reaching young people in different regions who had no direct connection to his family.

Social media plays a major role in how news of suicide circulates among Travellers. While it can foster solidarity and shared grief, it also raises concerns about suicide contagion, a well-documented phenomenon in which exposure to suicide increases the risk of further suicides, particularly among young people. Addressing these challenges requires a proactive and culturally sensitive approach to suicide prevention, ensuring that young Travellers have access to support while also minimising the risks associated with exposure to suicide.

11. John O'Mahony, National Traveller Community Survey 2017, (Dublin: Exchange House Ireland National Travellers Service, 2017). https://exchangehouse.ie/userfiles/file/reports/research/National_Traveller_Community_Survey_2017_07.pdf.

3.1.1 Assessing Mental Health Distress and Suicide Risk

To better understand the mental health challenges faced by young Travellers, participants in each study area were screened for distress and suicidal ideation using validated clinical tools. These included an adapted version of the Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation (CORE-10) to measure general mental distress and a Suicidal Behaviours Questionnaire from Columbia University to assess suicidal ideation.

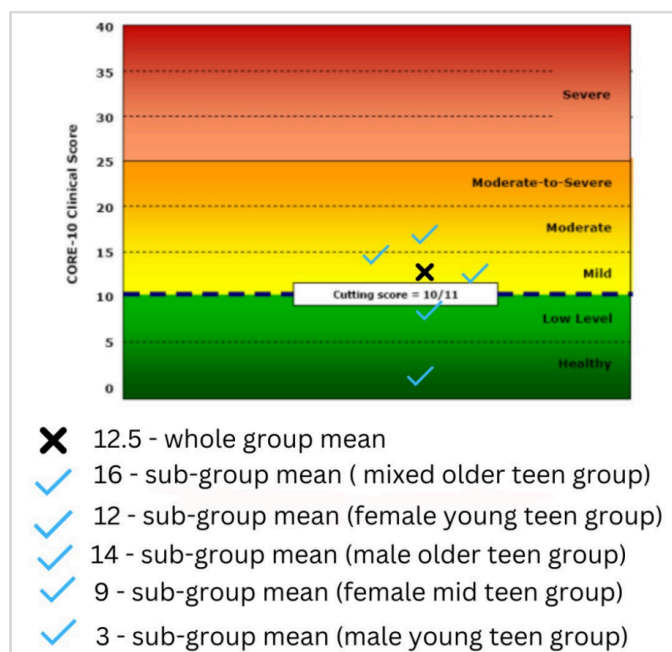
The CORE-10 is a widely used screening tool in the UK and Ireland, commonly employed by counsellors and psychological therapists to track mental health outcomes. It consists of 10 items covering key aspects of mental well-being, including anxiety, depression, trauma, relationships, and self-harm risk. While not a diagnostic tool, it helps identify individuals experiencing distress. Scores of 11 or higher indicate clinical levels of mental health concern.

Findings on Mental Distress

Of the 35 participants who returned valid responses, the average CORE-10 score was **12.5**, placing the group in the mild clinical range for mental distress. However, key differences emerged between subgroups:

- The highest scores were recorded among the oldest age group (16–18 years), which was also the only mixed-gender group in the study.
- The lowest scores were among the youngest participants (11–14 years, all male).

Figure 2: Practical Guide for Interpreting CORE-10 Scores With Scores For Whole Group and Individual Sub Groups Displayed



Suicidal Ideation Assessment

The Suicidal Behaviours Questionnaire, originally a seven-item tool, was adapted for this study, with three key questions retained due to design limitations. The responses from these questions are presented in Figure 2, offering further insight into participants' exposure to suicidal thoughts and behaviours.

Figure 3: Responses from Suicidal Behaviours Questionnaire (n=34)



These findings reinforce concerns about mental health inequalities among Traveller youth. Exposure to suicide—both within local communities and through social media—compounds existing distress, underscoring the need for targeted interventions that are culturally responsive, trauma-informed, and community-driven. Without such support, Traveller youth remain at heightened risk, not only for mental health challenges but for the devastating cycle of suicide exposure and loss.

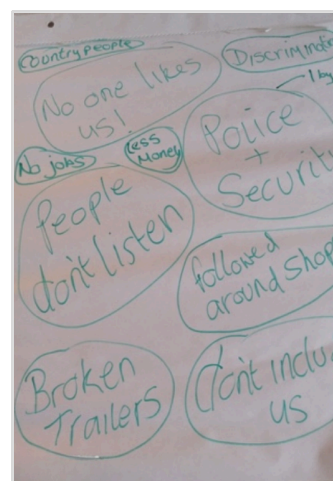
3.2 Barriers to Mental Well-being

3.2.1 Racism and Discrimination

Racism is recognised as an Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) and has been linked to toxic stress and trauma.¹³ For Irish Travellers, the experience of racism is widespread. According to a 2017 Behaviour & Attitudes study, 90% of Travellers reported experiencing racism, with 70% saying they had faced it in the past year. The impact of this discrimination extends beyond individual incidents—systemic exclusion and prejudice have been shown to contribute to poor mental health outcomes for Travellers.¹⁴

During our discussions, every group we spoke with highlighted racism and discrimination as a serious threat to their mental well-being. Children as young as ten years old described being followed around shops by security guards. “They think we’re going to rob stuff,” one 10-year-old told us. Others shared how they were refused entry to stores. One child, speaking to a non-Traveller facilitator, observed, “They wouldn’t follow you around, but they’d follow me.” Every Traveller child we spoke to had experienced this kind of treatment.

Figure 4: Students' descriptions of their experiences with discrimination



Discrimination also extends into the classroom. Some children reported feeling singled out, describing how they were treated differently from their peers. “We just get to colour,” said one child, while another added, “I’m taken out of class because I’m slow.” Many also spoke about social exclusion, explaining that non-Traveller students often avoided them, leading them to stick together in the schoolyard.

For adults, the cumulative impact of racism is equally profound. One father shared how painful it was to be turned away from a restaurant in front of his children. “It is so embarrassing, mortifying. You’d want to hide, but you’d also feel angry,” he said.

13. Donte L. Bernard, Qiana Smith, and Paul Lanier, “Racial Discrimination and Other Adverse Childhood Experiences as Risk Factors for Internalizing Mental Health Concerns among Black Youth,” *Journal of Traumatic Stress* 35, no. 2 (2021): 473-483. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jts.22760>.

14. Eimear O’Neill, Nabihah Abdul-Razak, Zulijana Anastasova, and Catherine O’Callaghan, “Case Series: Psychosocial Challenges of Female Youth within the Irish Travelling Community,” *International Journal of Social Psychiatry* 68, no. 3 (2022): 681-685. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00207640211057795>

Others described how discrimination affected their livelihoods. One group told us about an unofficial list of Traveller surnames held by a recruitment service in their town. “If your surname is on that list, you won’t be getting work in any of the local factories,” one man explained.

From childhood through adulthood, racism and discrimination shape the lived experiences of Travellers, affecting their mental health, education, and economic opportunities.

3.2.2 Education and Early School Leaving

For many adolescents, school is a source of stress. In fact, 70% of Irish adolescents in the general population report school as a stressor.¹⁵ Young Travellers we spoke with also identified school as a significant risk factor for their mental health.

The Traveller Education Change Project (TECP)¹⁶ highlights how systemic barriers—such as discrimination, low expectations, and cultural exclusion—lead to alienation, low self-esteem, and anxiety among Traveller youth. Educational disengagement results in limited career prospects, reinforcing cycles of marginalization that negatively impact mental health. Unlike their non-Traveller peers, much of the stress young Travellers experience stems from isolation within the school environment. Many described teachers having low or no expectations for them academically, with reports of students receiving colouring pages instead of lessons, being placed on reduced timetables, or sensing that teachers did not want them in the classroom. These experiences fuel disengagement and contribute to a belief that school is not a place for them.

For some, school was seen as something to endure until they turned 16, with one girl questioning, “What self-respecting Traveller would go to school?” This sentiment reflects the deep-rooted educational disengagement caused by negative school experiences and the broader perception that Travellers are inherently less intelligent than their non-Traveller peers—a damaging belief likely shaped by systemic discrimination. Interestingly, none of the young Travellers we spoke to cited exams as a source of stress. One teenage boy remarked, “I wouldn’t care about that.”

15. Barbara Dooley et al., *My World Survey 2: The National Study of Youth Mental Health in Ireland* (Dublin: Jigsaw, the National Centre for Youth Mental Health, and University College Dublin School of Psychology, (2019), p. 21. <http://www.myworldsurvey.ie/full-report>.

16. Amanda McCarthy et al., *Traveller Education Change Project Final Report 2025* (Dublin: Limerick Traveller Network & Exchange House Ireland National Travellers Service, 2025). https://www.exchangehouse.ie/userfiles/file/reports/research/TECP_FinalReport_2025_01.pdf.

Despite these challenges, not all experiences were negative. Some young Travellers expressed enthusiasm for learning when provided with the right support. For instance, two 10-year-old girls spontaneously delivered an oral presentation on the River Moy, showcasing their academic engagement. Meanwhile, an older group attending Youthreach—a second-chance education programme—spoke about their aspirations for further study. As part of this project, they attended an open day at University College Dublin (UCD), hosted by the UCD Access Programme, which introduced them to potential pathways into higher education. These moments of engagement highlight the potential impact of inclusive and culturally affirming educational approaches.

Figure 5: Young Traveller and Roma students at UCD hearing a Traveller woman's education journey



The impact of early school leaving extends into adulthood. Many adults we interviewed had left school early and struggled with literacy. While they valued education in principle, they questioned its benefits when discrimination often prevented Travellers from securing employment, regardless of their qualifications. Additionally, those who pursued education often faced dual stigma—exclusion from non-Travellers at school and criticism from within their own community. This feeling of being caught between two worlds was echoed by young people as well.

One parent shared her mixed emotions about her son studying for a law degree. She felt immense pride in his achievements but also deep concern about how he might be treated because of his Traveller identity. This reflects the broader anxiety within the community about whether education truly provides a path to opportunity or merely exposes young Travellers to further discrimination.

To address these challenges, adults emphasized the need for schools to integrate Traveller culture into the curriculum and for teachers to receive cultural competency and anti-racism training. They identified these steps as critical in creating a more inclusive and supportive educational environment for Traveller students. The TECP report aligns with these findings, advocating for culturally inclusive early education, targeted support systems, and increased Traveller representation in schools. Systemic reform and community-led initiatives must work together to ensure Traveller youth can access education in a way that fosters identity, resilience, and mental well-being.

3.2.3 Shame and Social Pressure

Shame and the fear of being shamed were central themes in our discussions with both young people and adults. Many described shame as a significant risk factor for mental health struggles, including suicidal ideation.

A 2020 survey of Irish Travellers, Gypsies, and Roma found that 70% of respondents had experienced shaming or scandalizing.¹⁷ This issue was particularly prominent in our conversations, especially among girls and young women.

For Traveller girls, reputation and adherence to cultural values hold immense importance. Many spoke about the intense scrutiny they face regarding relationships and sexuality. Having a boyfriend or engaging in any form of sexual behaviour before marriage was seen as a cause for scandal, leading to social consequences and mental distress. Some girls openly admitted to shaming others for breaking cultural norms, illustrating how these pressures are reinforced within the community. Research has linked such experiences to poor mental health outcomes for Traveller women, as highlighted in a case study published in the *International Journal of Social Psychiatry*.¹⁸

"I'm so afraid I'm bringing shame on my family because I'm 17 and still not married," a young Traveller woman told us.

17.Christina Kerrigan, *Under the Magnifying Glass: A Report on Shaming within the Gypsy and Traveller Communities* (London: The Traveller Movement, 2022), citing a 2020 survey conducted among Irish Travellers, Gypsies, and Roma. <https://women.travellermovement.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/%E2%80%98Under-the-Magnifying-Glass-A-report-on-shaming-within-the-Gypsy-and-Traveller-communities-.pdf>.

18.Eimear O'Neill, Nabihah Abdul-Razak, Zulijana Anastasova, and Catherine O'Callaghan, "Case Series: Psychosocial Challenges of Female Youth within the Irish Travelling Community," *International Journal of Social Psychiatry* 68, no. 3 (2022): 681-685. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00207640211057795>.

Traveller boys, on the other hand, discussed shame in terms of strength and family honour. Being perceived as weak or failing to uphold one's family's reputation was seen as deeply shameful, often acting as a trigger for violence and conflict within the community. "If you are called out, you would have to retaliate or you'd bring shame on the family," said one young Traveller boy.

Shame also played a critical role in preventing young people from seeking help. Many feared that admitting to struggles—whether mental health issues or personal difficulties—would result in being scandalized or ostracized.

Adults, too, acknowledged the heavy burden of shame in their lives, particularly when discussing racism. They reflected on the pressures young people face to conform to cultural norms and the specific expectation to marry young. Many recognized how these societal pressures could negatively impact mental health and overall well-being.

By addressing the role of shame within Traveller communities and creating spaces where young people feel safe to seek help, it may be possible to mitigate some of its most damaging effects.

3.2.4 Experiences of Death, Grief, and Loss

Health inequalities mean that many Travellers die young, making death, grief, and loss a constant presence in the community. Given the deep importance of family in Traveller culture, deaths are met with rich rituals and customs that emphasize respect for the deceased and their loved ones.

Young people are acutely aware of death within their community, often speaking about it as if it were an everyday occurrence. This was particularly evident when a participant's family experienced pregnancy loss. The girls in the group spoke about it openly and without visible emotion, quickly naming other instances of infant or pregnancy loss they had encountered. Some researchers have described this as "abnormal grief and loss" within the Traveller community.¹⁹

Every group of young people we worked with shared stories of relatives who were ill or had passed away. During our time with them, there was always at least one participant coping with the illness or death of a family member.

19. Eimear O'Neill, Nabihah Abdul-Razak, Zulijana Anastasova, and Catherine O'Callaghan, "Case Series: Psychosocial Challenges of Female Youth within the Irish Travelling Community," *International Journal of Social Psychiatry* 68, no. 3 (2022): 681-685. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00207640211057795>.

Adults also reflected on how the rituals surrounding death have evolved. One woman described how, in her youth, mourning was strictly sombre—black clothing was worn, and televisions and radios were turned off. She contrasted this with modern funerals, where vibrant displays, such as balloons and t-shirts featuring the deceased's picture, are common. “Sometimes the funerals look like weddings,” she said.

Social media plays a growing role in shaping young people's awareness of death and loss. Funerals are frequently recorded and shared on platforms like TikTok, further reinforcing the visibility of grief within the community.

Addressing loss and bereavement in Traveller communities requires a sensitive approach that acknowledges these cultural traditions while ensuring that young people have access to emotional support.

3.2.5 Limited Employment Prospects

A sense of hopelessness about future employment was widespread among the young people we worked with. The dominant belief was that Travellers in Ireland are unable to secure jobs simply because of their ethnicity. While there were some signs of improvement—particularly in Wicklow Town—this perception remained strong across most groups.

Many young people felt that school and further education were pointless, as they believed they would not lead to jobs. One young adult described handing out CVs to every business in her local town without receiving a single call back. She was convinced this rejection was due to her Traveller background. Even young people enrolled in Youthreach—where they received employment-focused education, training, and work experience—expressed little hope about securing a job.

For those who pursued education beyond the Junior Certificate, or even attended third-level institutions, discrimination was a double-edged sword. They faced shaming both at home and within the education system—criticized by other Travellers for staying in school and marginalized by the wider society for being Travellers. Many also struggled to access clear information on educational and financial supports. One young woman who wanted to continue her studies beyond the Leaving Certificate said she would only do so if she had a peer to go with her, as she didn't want to feel isolated.

The adults involved in this project confirmed that discrimination was a barrier both when seeking employment and within the workplace itself. However, some also shared success stories.

A common concern was that Travellers are often “pigeonholed” into manual labour, outdoor jobs, or roles within Traveller organisations. The groups we spoke with discussed the importance of young Travellers seeing themselves as capable of pursuing a broader range of careers. However, they also acknowledged that cultural shaming was a significant barrier to this.

Despite this, we also heard positive stories of young Travellers who had gained employment and were working successfully. Overcoming these challenges requires targeted support, anti-discrimination policies, and greater access to career opportunities that empower young Travellers to break these cycles of exclusion.

3.2.6 Limits to Acceptance and Inclusion

Sexuality and LGBT+ status emerged as significant barriers to mental health for many of the adults we collaborated with, but surprisingly, these issues were not raised by the youth groups during discussions about their mental health challenges.

When we introduced the topic of sexuality within the Traveller community, all of the adult groups agreed that coming out and living openly as a gay Traveller would be extremely difficult. One adult expressed a stark view: “I know it's terrible, but you'd rather them dead than gay.”

Adults also reflected on the difficulty of being the parent of a gay Traveller. One parent shared, “You'd be torn because you love your child no matter what. But there would be a lot of shame and conflict from others in the community.”

When we prompted the young people to discuss LGBT+ issues, their responses varied. One young boy expressed a sense of inclusion, saying, “It doesn't matter if you're gay.” Another asked the facilitator, “Would you support the gays?” When the facilitator confirmed her support, the young person responded, “I would too, but I wouldn't want to ever be gay. You would be scandalised.”

Recent research by the National Action Group for LGBTI+ Traveller & Roma Rights highlights the profound mental health impact on LGBT+ Travellers and Roma. The study found that 40% had been physically attacked because of their sexual orientation, and 72% reported that their family and friends negatively impacted their ability to seek support.²⁰

20. Sartori, “Unveiling Inequality - Experiences of LGBTI+ Travellers and Roma,” 2022

These insights underscore the need for greater acceptance and inclusion within the Traveller community, especially for LGBT+ individuals who face unique challenges related to their identity. Addressing these barriers will require a combination of cultural awareness, community dialogue, and support systems that promote safety and mental well-being for all.

3.3 Understanding Help Seeking Activities

Knowledge of mental health services and supports was generally limited among both the adults and young people we spoke to. The exception was in Mayo, where a small local youth mental health service, MindSpace, was well known to both young people and adults. This organisation had previously engaged with the youth service the participants attended.

This finding aligns with research indicating poor engagement between mainstream mental health services and adult members of the Traveller community.^{21 22}

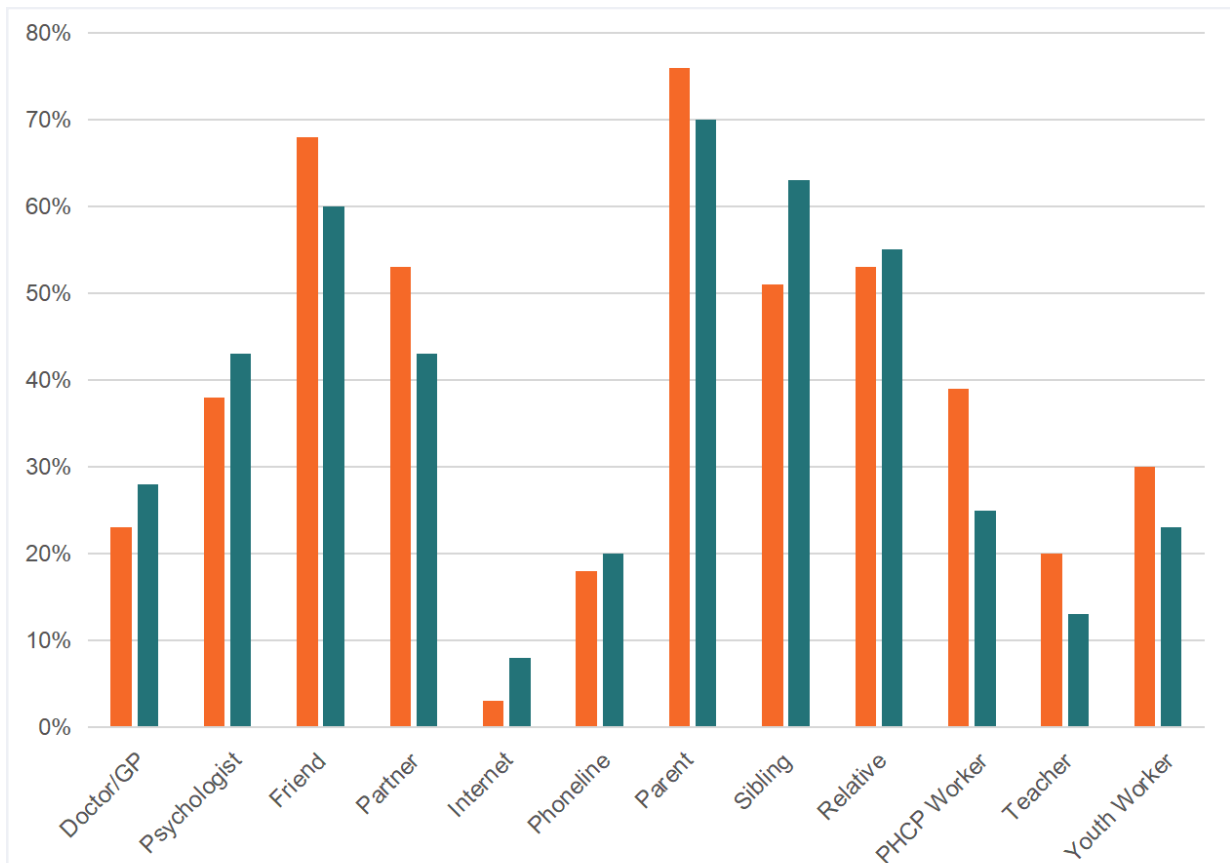
During week 3 of the 6-week program, we aimed to explore where young people would seek help in the event of emotional or personal distress, or if experiencing suicidal ideation. To gather insights, we presented each participant with a Help Seeking Questionnaire, which included two key questions:

- *If you were feeling down, worried, or stressed, how likely would you be to use the following places?*
- *If you were experiencing suicidal thoughts, how likely would you be to use the following places?*

Survey responses reveal that young Travellers overwhelmingly prefer seeking support from personal relationships rather than from professionals or institutions when dealing with emotional distress or suicidal thoughts. The findings demonstrate that family, friends, and relatives serve as primary sources of emotional support, while formal mental health services and professionals are consulted far less frequently.

21. Jacopo Villani and Margaret M. Barry, "A Qualitative Study of the Perceptions of Mental Health among the Traveller Community in Ireland," *Health Promotion International* 36, no. 5 (2021): 1450–1462, <https://doi.org/10.1093/heapro/daab009>
22. S. McKey et al., "A Rapid Review of Irish Traveller Mental Health and Suicide: A Psychosocial and Anthropological Perspective," *Irish Journal of Psychological Medicine* 39, no. 2 (2020): 223–233, <https://doi.org/10.1017/ipm.2020.108>

Figure 6: Resources respondents were likely to use when experiencing emotional distress or suicidal thoughts

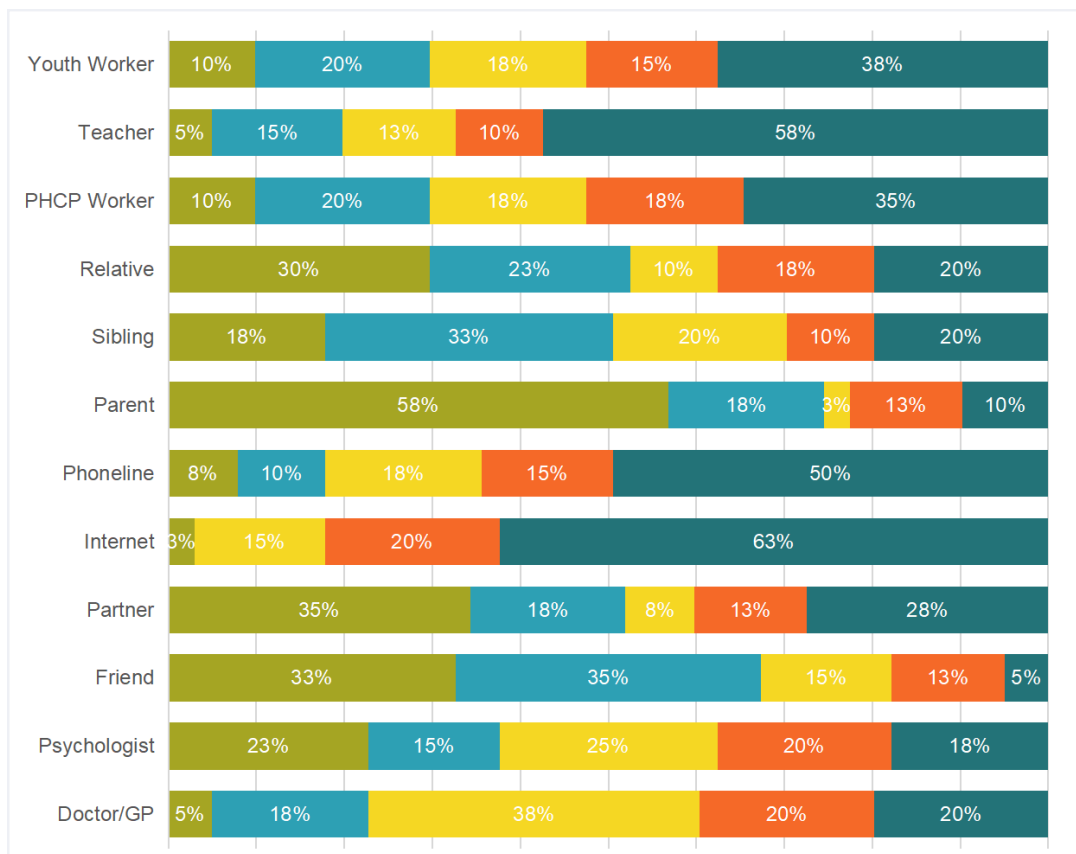


3.3.1 Seeking Support for Emotional Distress

When participants were asked where they would seek help if they were feeling down, worried, or stressed, the most commonly chosen source was parents, with 58% of respondents stating they would be "very likely" to turn to them. When those who answered "quite likely" were included, the figure increased to 76%, highlighting the strong reliance on parental support.

Beyond parents, the next most common sources of support were friends (66%) and relatives (53%), indicating that young Travellers are more likely to confide in people within their immediate social circles rather than professionals. In contrast, only 23% of respondents said they would seek help from a doctor, 20% from a teacher, and just 3% from the internet. The extremely low percentage for the internet suggests that digital mental health resources—such as online forums or helplines—are either not well known, not trusted, or not considered relevant by young Travellers.

Figure 7: If you were feeling down, how likely would you be to use the following places?



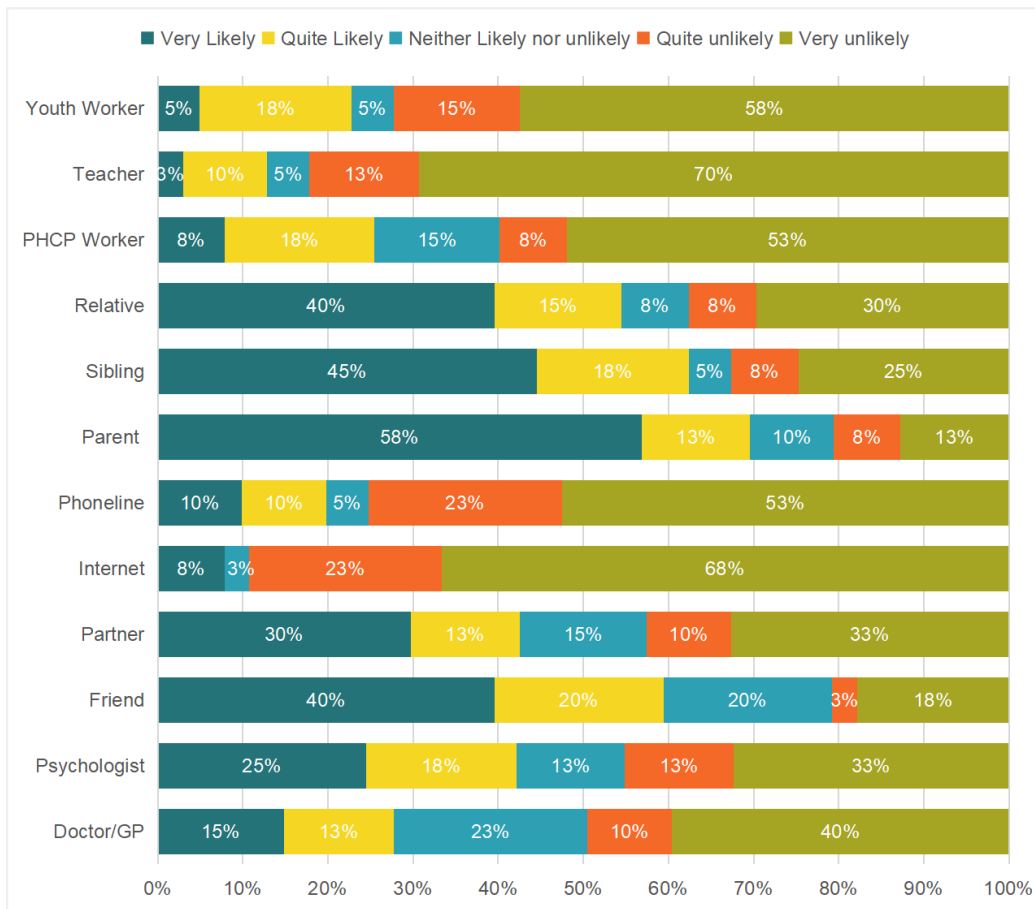
3.3.2 Seeking Support for Suicidal Thoughts

A similar trend emerged when participants were asked where they would seek help if experiencing suicidal thoughts. Parents remained the most likely source of support (58% "very likely"), with this figure rising to 71% when including "quite likely" responses. Friends (60%) and relatives (55%) also remained key sources of support, reinforcing the strong reliance on personal relationships rather than external services.

However, while doctors were still not a primary choice, their role increased slightly in the context of suicidal ideation. 15% of respondents said they were "very likely" to turn to a doctor, and 28% said they were "quite likely," giving a combined total of 28%. This suggests that while doctors are not a preferred option for general emotional distress, young Travellers may be slightly more willing to seek professional help in more severe crises.

The percentages for teachers (13%) and the internet (8%) remained very low, indicating a lack of trust or perceived relevance of these sources in a mental health crisis. Given the increasing role of online mental health resources in mainstream youth populations, this finding suggests a potential gap in digital mental health accessibility for Traveller youth.

Figure 8: If you were experiencing suicidal ideation, how likely would you be to use the following places?



3.3.3 Key Findings and Community Reflection

The findings underscore a strong preference for informal, relationship-based support over formal mental health services. Given the historical and ongoing mistrust between Travellers and mainstream institutions, these results are not surprising. However, they highlight a significant challenge: if young Travellers are not accessing professional mental health support, they may not receive adequate care for more severe mental health concerns.

In the adult sessions, we openly discussed these anonymous findings. Adult participants expressed a strong sense of pride, relief, and reassurance that many young people turn to their own community for support during times of distress. Some comments included:

-
- “Proud our young people still look to us for support.”
 - “Reassured that so many feel they can talk to their own mommy and daddy if they need help.”
 - “Empowered to know our young people see us as valuable caregivers.”

However, these positive feelings were tempered by a prevailing concern: the community is often ill-equipped and under-informed about how to respond when a child presents in crisis. Many adults shared negative personal or second-hand experiences with mental health services, citing long waiting lists, frequent changes in doctors or consultants (particularly within CAMHS), discrimination based on ethnicity, and emergency departments that were poorly equipped to handle crises.

3.4 The Importance of Co-Development

When discussing potential solutions to improve support for emotional distress, suicide prevention, and crisis intervention, the overwhelming sentiment from the adult groups was “nothing for us without us.” This was interpreted as the need for co-production in service design, delivery, and evaluation. Additionally, participants emphasised the importance of peer support and culturally appropriate interventions delivered by members of the Traveller community.

One notable aspect of the program was the inclusion of a Traveller man, William Lawrence, as part of the facilitation team. Both children and adults repeatedly commented on the effectiveness and meaningfulness of having a Traveller present and leading the discussions and sessions. The presence of someone from within the community was seen as a significant factor in fostering trust and engagement throughout the program.



“They would make comments about how it was great to see a Traveller in this kind of role. Especially, as a Traveller man because it was rare for this to happen. The women in the adult groups would always seem to appreciate the fact a Traveller man was involved because it was usually left up to the women. They talked about their hopes that more men in the community would get more involved. Moreover, I think it created a feeling that one of their own was involved and that they trusted us. I believe it made them more comfortable to talk.”

Lawrence highlighted the benefits of having a diverse facilitation team:

“I think it also worked well having a Traveller man and a settled woman. Having the two different perspectives in terms of gender, culture, and expectation really added value to the discussions. The young people loved asking Emily questions and when her answers did not fit with their outlook on things, they would turn to me for my reaction. In turn, Emily would often throw some curveballs of questions that people were not used to being asked and there be either total silence or - more times than not - a lively conversation would start.”



Lawrence's experiences underscore the need for Traveller-led mental health services and cultural competency training for non-Traveller professionals. Many young Travellers are reluctant to engage with mainstream mental health services due to historical discrimination and a lack of cultural understanding, reinforcing the need for community-led interventions.

3.4.1 A Traveller Man's Journey into Youth Mental Health Work

The experience of a Traveller youth mental health worker offers valuable insights into both the challenges and opportunities for addressing mental health within the community.

The journey of the staff member, who transitioned from a Community Employment (CE) scheme to full-time employment in a mental health role, from initial self-doubt to gaining confidence in a professional role reflects many of the structural barriers and personal struggles outlined in this report.

Like many Travellers, the staff member faced uncertainty about their qualifications when applying for a professional role. Despite having significant life experience, he initially doubted whether he met the educational requirements.



"When I first saw the role of Youth Mental Health Worker advertised, it really appealed to me as something I have always been very interested in and passionate about. I had been on a CE scheme with Exchange House Ireland for two years and was looking to move into full-time employment. However, I was nervous about applying because I wasn't sure I had the right level of education."

However, with encouragement from mentors, he decided to apply and were ultimately offered a full-time position - a critical step in boosting his confidence and demonstrating the value of lived experience in mental health work.

Over 18 months, the staff member gained valuable insights into mental health, trauma, and the effects of discrimination on young Travellers. They also developed skills in

presenting to different age groups and facilitating discussions on difficult topics. Their experience reinforced the need for tailored, trauma-informed approaches to mental health services.

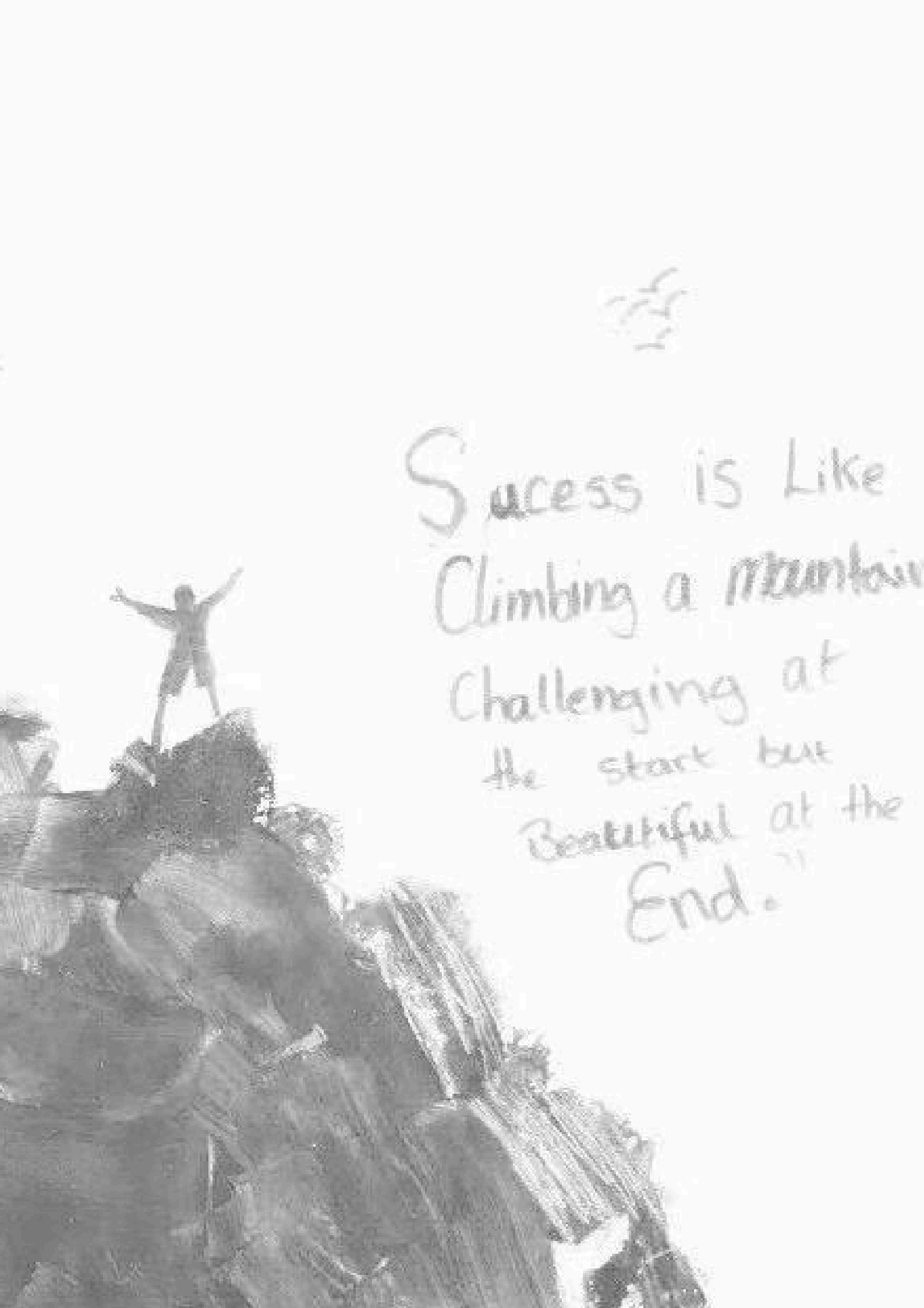


"Over the 18 months, I learned so much about the causes and effects of mental health. How trauma experienced by young people impacts his mental health and how it affects his life chances. The experience of racism in schools, shops, and on social media was damaging the young people in our community."

The staff member's reflections highlight the broader need for peer-led training programs, career pathways for Travellers in mental health roles, and a National Traveller Youth Mental Health Service. Their hope is that more Travellers will take on roles in mental health advocacy to further support young people in the community.

This case study reinforces the recommendations outlined in the report:

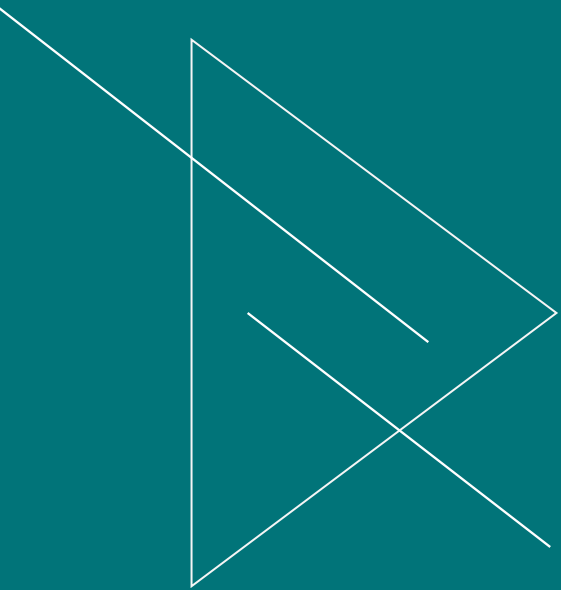
- increasing Traveller representation in mental health services
- ensuring cultural competency in mainstream interventions
- fostering confidence-building programs to empower young Travellers to seek help and pursue professional opportunities



Success is Like
Climbing a mountain
Challenging at
the start but
Beautiful at the
End."

04

Recommendations



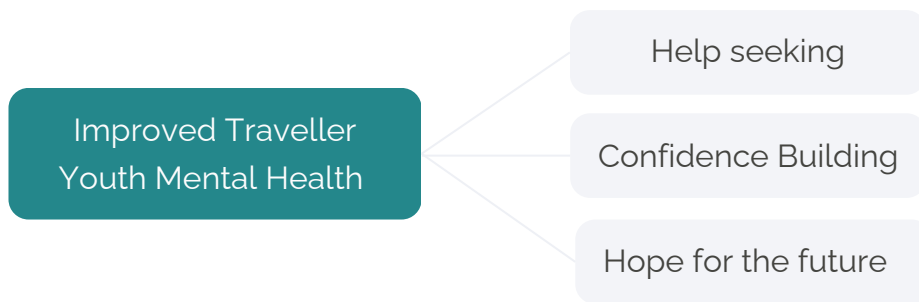


Terriann Stokes 2022

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Recommendations

Improving mental health outcomes for Traveller youth requires a holistic and community-led approach. The following recommendations focus on three interconnected pillars: Help-Seeking, Confidence Building, and Hope for the Future. Strengthening these areas will empower young Travellers to access support, build resilience, and envision a positive future for themselves and their communities.



"My hope for the future is to see a National Youth Mental Health Service specifically for young Travellers, which would create hope for young people. That would allow young Travellers a place they could go for help without judgment or prejudice."



4.1 Help-Seeking

Many Traveller youth experience stigma and structural barriers when accessing mental health support. Encouraging help-seeking behaviours requires community-led services that are culturally competent, accessible, and designed with Traveller participation.

- **Community-Led Mental Health Services:** Establish a National Traveller Youth Mental Health Service, staffed by trained Traveller mental health workers who can provide culturally relevant interventions and support.
- **Improved Access to Mental Health Supports:** Ensure mainstream services are inclusive of Travellers by integrating cultural humility training and introducing ethnic identifiers in data collection to track service engagement.
- **Capacity Building for Parents and Youth Workers:** Develop peer-led training programs that equip parents and youth workers with the tools to support mental health and recognize early warning signs of distress.

4.2 Confidence Building

Building self-confidence among Traveller youth is crucial for resilience and well-being. Strengthening cultural identity, providing opportunities for skill development, and fostering supportive networks all contribute to greater self-confidence.

- **Education and Employment Pathways:** Expand Traveller-specific educational supports, scholarships, and mentorship programs. Schools should integrate Traveller history into curricula, fostering a sense of belonging.
- **Community-Based Training and Support:** Implement suicide prevention training and resilience workshops within Traveller communities, ensuring youth, parents, and youth workers have the skills to navigate mental health challenges.
- **Challenging Discrimination:** Address systemic racism by making anti-racism and cultural awareness training mandatory across education, health, and employment sectors.

4.3 Hope for the Future

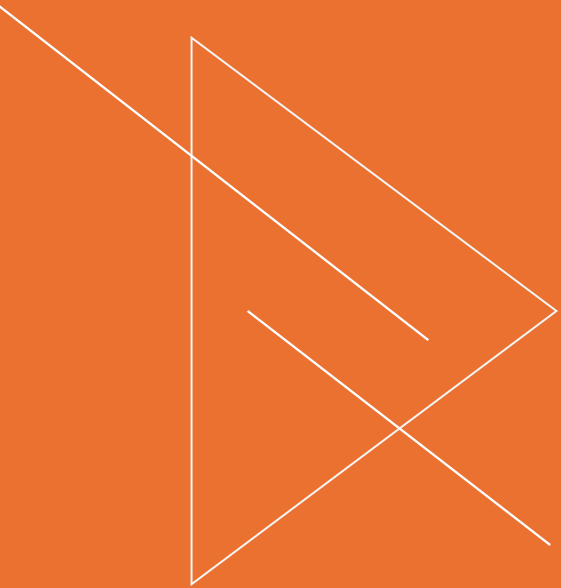
A positive outlook on the future is essential for mental well-being. Many Traveller youth face discrimination in education and employment, limiting their opportunities and affecting their sense of hope. Strengthening pathways to education, employment, and community leadership can help foster optimism and motivation for the future.

- **Targeted Employment Initiatives:** Develop employment schemes that address workplace discrimination and create opportunities for young Travellers.
- **Strengthening Legal Protections:** Improve legal frameworks to ensure stronger protections against discrimination in education, employment, and healthcare.
- **Promoting Positive Representations:** Launch public awareness campaigns that challenge stereotypes and highlight Traveller contributions to society.

By addressing Help-Seeking, Confidence Building, and Hope for the Future, these recommendations create a foundation for improving Traveller youth mental health and ensuring a more inclusive and supportive society.

05

Conclusion





Tereiana Stokes 2022

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Conclusion

The findings of this report highlight the urgent need for a culturally competent and community-led response to the mental health crisis among young Travellers. The high rates of suicide, widespread experiences of discrimination, and limited access to mental health services demonstrate that existing structures are not effectively meeting the needs of this population. Young Travellers face complex and interwoven challenges, from systemic racism and exclusion in education and employment to the deep social and cultural pressures that impact their mental well-being. Despite these challenges, the Traveller community possesses strong protective factors, including resilience, close family networks, and a deep sense of identity, which can be leveraged to support better mental health outcomes.

A key takeaway from this study is that young Travellers primarily seek help from their families and close social networks rather than mainstream mental health services. This underscores the need for community-based interventions that empower Traveller families and youth workers to provide informed support while also ensuring that professional mental health services are accessible, inclusive, and culturally safe. The establishment of a National Traveller Youth Mental Health Service, designed and led in collaboration with the community, is essential to closing the gap in service provision and fostering trust between Travellers and the healthcare system.

To create meaningful change, systemic barriers must also be addressed. Education and employment opportunities play a vital role in fostering hope for the future, yet Traveller youth continue to experience significant obstacles in these areas. Schools must actively work to create inclusive learning environments, while targeted employment initiatives can help break cycles of marginalisation. Similarly, anti-racism and cultural competency training should be made mandatory across mental health, education, and employment sectors to reduce discrimination and improve engagement with Traveller communities.

The recommendations outlined in this report focus on three core areas: help-seeking, confidence-building, and hope for the future. By prioritising these areas, policymakers, service providers, and Traveller organisations can work together to develop sustainable, community-driven solutions that support the mental well-being of young Travellers. A holistic, co-produced approach—where young Travellers and their

communities are involved in the design, implementation, and evaluation of mental health services—is not only necessary but also the most effective way to ensure meaningful and lasting change.

Addressing the mental health crisis among young Travellers is not simply a matter of service provision; it requires a commitment to equity, social justice, and systemic reform. With the right supports in place, young Travellers can build resilience, access opportunities, and envision a future where their mental health and well-being are prioritised and protected.

06

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Terriann skos 102

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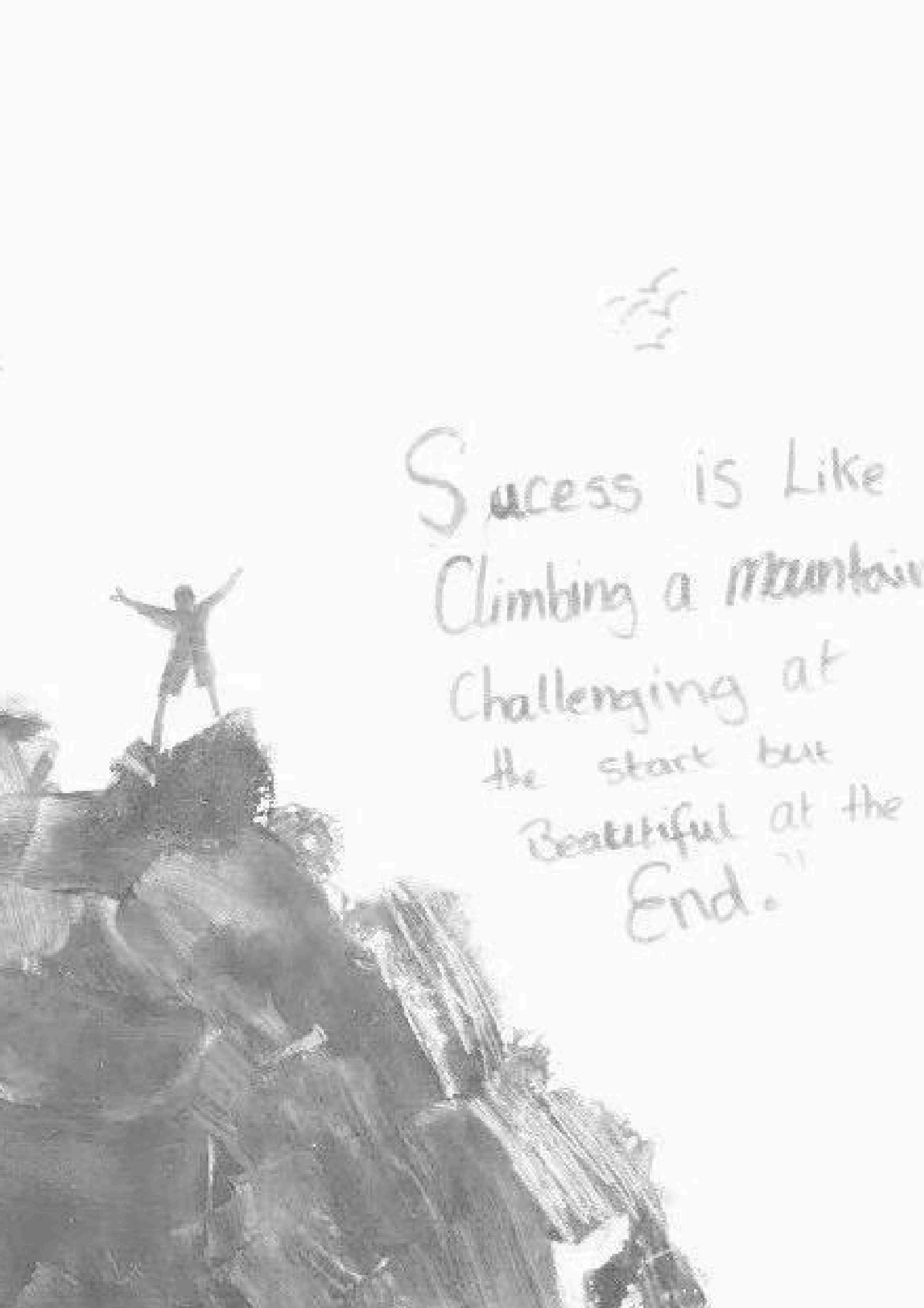
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Success is Like
Climbing a mountain
Challenging at
the start but
Beautiful at the
End."

Appendices



Appendices

Appendix 1: Help Seeking Intentions Questionnaire

This questionnaire is anonymous. If any of these questions is triggering or brings up emotions you find difficult please speak with one of team. If you would like to discuss any of the questions or if you have any concerns please do not hesitate to speak with William or Emily.

Here is a series of questions to help us understand where young people are most likely to turn to seek help if they have a problem. We would like you to tell us the source or sources you would be likely or not likely to turn to if you needed help.

There are two sections to this questionnaire. The first is who you would turn to if you had emotional or personal difficulties. The second, we would like you to highlight who you be likely or not likely to turn to if you were having thoughts about suicide.

If you were feeling down, worried or stressed, how likely would you be to use the following places?

	Very likely	Quite Likely	Neither Likely nor Unlikely	Quite Unlikely	Very Unlikely
Doctor/GP					
Psychologist/Counsellor/Therapist					
Friend					
Partner (e.g. boyfriend or girlfriend or fiancé)					
Internet					
Phone help-line					
Parent					
Sibling (e.g. brother or sister)					
Relatives (e.g. aunty, uncle or cousin)					
Primary Healthcare Project for Travellers					
Teacher					
Youth worker/Keyworker					
Other- please tell us who					

If you were experiencing suicidal thoughts, how likely would you be to use the following places?

	Very likely	Quite Likely	Neither Likely nor Unlikely	Quite Unlikely	Very Unlikely
Doctor/GP					
Psychologist/Counsellor/Therapist					
Friend					
Partner (e.g. boyfriend or girlfriend or fiancé)					
Internet					
Phone help-line					
Parent					
Sibling (e.g. brother or sister)					
Relatives (e.g. aunty, uncle or cousin)					
Primary Healthcare Project for Travellers					
Teacher					
Youth worker/Keyworker					
Other- please tell us who					

Appendix 2: Suicidal Ideation Questionnaire

This questionnaire is about suicidal thoughts and actions. If you feel worried or triggered by any of these questions please speak to Emily, William or John or the staff/youth workers.

Thank you for filling out this questionnaire.

	Yes - In the last 3 months	No - In the last 3 months	Ever
1) Have you wished you were dead or wished you could go to sleep and not wake up?			
2) Have you actually had any thoughts of killing yourself?			
If YES to 2, ask questions 3, 4, 5, and 6. If NO to 2, go directly to question 6.			
3) Have you been thinking about how you might do this?			
4) Have you had these thoughts and had some intention of acting on them?			
5) Have you started to work out or worked out the details of how to kill yourself? Did you intend to carry out this plan?			
6) Have you ever done anything, started to do anything, or prepared to do anything to end your life? Examples: Collected pills, gave away valuables, wrote a will or suicide note, took out pills but didn't swallow any, tried to hang yourself, etc.			
7) Has anyone close to you died by suicide? E.g. A friend, family member, neighbour, fellow student, teammate			

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*The art work included in this report were pictures and designs created by the young people who participated in the programme and who kindly donated it to our staff to include in this final report.