BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS, SUPPORTING JOURNEYS

ENHANCING OUTCOMES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT IN EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION OR TRAINING IN COUNTY WATERFORD







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FOREWORD

I am delighted to present 'Building Relationships Supporting Journeys, Enhancing Outcomes for Young People who are not in Employment, Education or Training in Co. Waterford'.

This research, which focuses on improving outcomes for young people who are not in employment, education, or training, is a core work focus for Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board (WWETB). In pursuit of this area of work, WWETB has supported several youth employability initiatives since 2016 with funding from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY). Linking the services of WWETB to these initiatives is a key aspiration as is creating synergy between their work and those of other agencies working with 'Not in Employment, Education or Training' (NEETS) young people.

The research was informed by a wide-ranging methodology, which included focus groups, one to one interviews with young people and professionals across formal education, non-formal education and other sectors who work to support them. I would like to thank all who participated in the research process. The contribution of young people in this research is of paramount importance and special thanks to them for giving their time and sharing their experience.

This research is timely, coming as it does as we exit the Covid 19 pandemic and bearing in mind the huge impact the pandemic has had on all sectors of society and in particular on young people. It is envisaged that this research and its findings, will further strengthen and enhance interagency collaboration which is a priority action in the WWETB Strategic Statement 2018-2022.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the considerable contribution of all the stakeholders involved, express my gratitude to all those who assisted in bringing this research to completion and special thanks to our staff in WWETB who showed exceptional commitment in this regard.

We in WWETB are pleased to have supported this research financially with the support of the (DCEDIY) and a particular thank you to the researcher, Sinéad Doody, for her commitment and diligence in producing this report.

Kevin Lewis,

Chief Executive,

Waterford Wexford ETB



WHY PRODUCE THIS REPORT?

A 2017 report by Pobal¹ showed that Waterford has one of the highest rates of young people in Ireland who are Not in Employment, Education and Training (NEET). While there are a range of risk factors associated with this rate, these young people are not a homogenous group; in fact, there are numerous complex issues and circumstances contributing to young people falling into, and remaining in, the NEET situation.

Organisations and agencies that work to support young people who are in a NEET situation often experience persistent challenges in engaging meaningfully with them. The nature of the NEET experience, combined with service-delivery constraints (relating to areas such as national policy, resource capacity and organisational remit) can impact the ability of the statutory, community and voluntary sectors to identify, reach out to and successfully engage with this particularly vulnerable cohort. As a result, once young people fall into a NEET situation, they often become increasingly distant as time goes by from both the labour market and state services.

In 2021, in recognition of these challenges, WWETB Youth Work Affairs commissioned research with a view to identifying measures across education and training provision, including non-formal / youth work education, which would improve outcomes for NEETs young people. WWETB sought to develop a better understanding of the needs and circumstances of NEETs young people in County Waterford in order to enhance supports and services to them.

The research primarily focuses on the role of further education and training provision, including non-formal education (i.e. youth work), in supporting young people who are in a NEET situation. This reflects that the NEET measurement rate inextricably links youth unemployment with participation in education and training. The research aims to reinforce the work of local agencies and organisations in their ongoing efforts to support young people to re-engage in learning, personal development and skills development, towards the long-term objective of achieving employment or other meaningful outcomes.

METHODOLOGY

This report is underpinned by the findings of primary and secondary research undertaken in 2021. Qualitative data was collected using a number of different methods and from a variety of sources.

PRIMARY RESEARCH

The primary data collection process involved direct engagement with young people and local service providers. The process sought to create a picture of the circumstances and realities faced by young people who are in a NEET situation in Waterford. It also sought to develop an understanding of services available to the young people, and challenges and opportunities in the service environment.

Input was garnered using focus groups, semi-structured interviews and a qualitative online survey.

a) <u>Focus Groups / Semi-Structured Interviews</u>: On-line focus groups and semi-structured interviews were held with service-providers and young people. In total, 20 people participated: 17 staff from service-providers, 3 young people.

b) <u>Local Service Provider Survey</u>: A survey was undertaken of relevant community and statutory service providers in Waterford to build a picture of the services provided and the challenges of reaching young people who are in a NEET situation. The survey was circulated through WWETB and the Skills Sub-Committee of the Local Community Development Committee Waterford. 5 organisations completed a survey.

SECONDARY RESEARCH

a) <u>Literature Review</u>: A review of relevant local, national and international literature and information sources was undertaken to collect information on the following:

- services available to young people in Waterford who are in a NEET situation
- emerging issues and needs of young people who are in a NEET situation
- existing strategies/plans relevant to the needs of young people in these areas

b) <u>Demographic Analysis</u>: Using Census 2016 and Pobal deprivation data, an analysis of Waterford was undertaken to identify key demographic characteristics of young people aged 16 – 25 years and their families. Three settlements were included in this analysis, as follows:

c) <u>Service Mapping</u>: A service mapping process was undertaken, primarily to capture further education and training (FET) provision and youth work services in Co. Waterford. To a lesser extent, the mapping process also captured community, youth and family services which complement and/or overlap with FET and youth work services at local level.

SETTLEMENTS
Waterford
Tramore
Dungarvan

Table 1: Settlements included in the research

REPORT

This report aims to provide practical and accessible information for organisations working with young people in Waterford. It offers contextual information on the factors contributing to young people falling into the NEET experience and outlines the different subsets of young people who are NEET. It sets out the wide range of FET, youth work and other services available in Waterford. It builds on the good practice evident in Waterford and offers a suggested model for improving collaboration between service-providers.

NEET TERMINOLOGY

While the term "NEET" is widely used in the national policy and local service context, it can be viewed as pejorative and as reinforcing the negative labelling of young people. In the absence of an alternative term that is extensively recognised across the statutory, community and voluntary sector, this report has adopted the term as shorthand for young people aged 16 - 24 years who are not in employment, education or training for more than six months.



SECTION 1

Understanding Young People who are Not in Employment, Education or Training

FACT BOX: Defining "NEET" – Not in Employment Education or Training

• NEET is the term used to describe a young person who is "Not in Education, Employment, or Training".

• The definition of a "young person" can vary depending on the study or country. The OECD defines a young person as someone between 15 and 29 years of age².

• A young person is classified as being in a 'NEET' situation as long as they were neither enrolled in formal education or training nor in paid employment (for at least one hour per week) during the relevant reference period.

• In most cases, a young person in a NEET situation is defined as someone between the ages of 15 and 24. Occasionally a broader age cohort is utilized to include young people up to the age of 30 years.

• For the purpose of this study, young people who are in a NEET situation are defined as young people aged 16- 24 years who have been out of employment or training for more than 6 months.

WHO ARE YOUNG PEOPLE IN A NEET SITUATION?

The term "NEET" refers to a broad category of young people encompassing a diverse population. In order to better understand their different characteristics and needs, it is necessary to disentangle the subsets within the broad overarching term of "NEET". In 2016 Eurofund³ categorised young people who are NEET into seven separate sub-sets, as depicted in table 2:

Re-entrants

Young people who will soon re-enter employment, education or training and will soon begin or resume accumulation of human capital through formal channels. They are people who have already been hired or enrolled in education or training.

Long-term Unemployed

Young people who are unemployed, seeking work and available to start within two weeks, and have been unemployed for more than one year. People in this category are at high risk of disengagement and social exclusion.

Family Responsibilities

Young People who are unavailable for work due to caring responsibilities. These are a mix of the vulnerable and non-vulnerable; some are unable to participate in the labour market due to the cost of care for a child or adult family members. Others voluntarily withdraw from the labour market or education to take up family responsibilities.

Short-term Unemployed

Young people who are unemployed, seeking work and available to start within two weeks, and have been unemployed for less than a year. A short period of unemployment during the transition from school to work can be considered normal, and the level of vulnerability among people in this category is often moderate.

Illness, Disability

Young people who are not seeking employment or are not available to start a job within two weeks due to illness or disability. This group includes those who need social support because illness or disability means they cannot do paid work.

Discouraged

Young people who have stopped looking for work because they believe that there are no job opportunities for them. They are mostly vulnerable young people at high risk of social exclusion. They are very likely to experience poor employment outcomes over the course of their working lives and are at high risk of lifelong disengagement.

Other Neets

This group contains all young people whose reasons for being in a NEET situation do not fall into any of the previous six categories.

Table 2: Sub-sets of young people who are in a NEET situation

RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Planet Youth (Growing Up in the West)⁴ describes the risk and protective factors associated with a young person's life in the following way:

"Risk factors are characteristics at the biological, psychological, family, community, or cultural level that are associated with a higher likelihood of negative outcomes. Protective factors are associated with a lower likelihood of negative outcomes or reduce a risk factor's impact. Protective factors may be seen as positive countering events. We are all exposed to both risk and protective factors. While they can be complex, they represent conditions found in everyday life......Risk and protective factors interact continually; while some factors cannot be changed, their impact can be lessened or strengthened."

Within the Planet Youth approach (see page 66), risk and protective factors are defined within four major domains of intervention: parents and family, leisure time and local community, peer group and school. These domains are encompassed by the overall social environment and further influenced by regional and national context and policies.



Figure 1: Risk and protective factors associated with a young person's life

PARENTS AND FAMILY

- Parental support
- Parental monitoring
- Time spent with parents
- Parental social capital knowing your child's friends and their parents
- Perceived parental reactions to alcohol and drug use
- Parent's own alcohol and drug use

LEISURE TIME AND LOCAL COMMUNITY

- Unorganised, unsupervised leisure time
- Access to, and participation in hobbies, recreation & sport
- Staying out late
- Unsupervised parties
- Access and availability of alcohol and drugs
- Location where alcohol and drug use takes place
- Community attachment and cohesion
- Young people's sense of safety in their community

SCHOOL / EDUCATION

- Supportive adults at school
- Motivation to learn and grow
- Attitude to school and studies
- Absenteeism
- Young people's sense of safety and attachment to school
- School's role in organised extracurricular activities

PEERS

- Pro-social and supportive peers
- Peer alcohol and drug use
- Perceived peer respect for alcohol and drug use

Table 3: Planet Youth risk and protective factors

There are a range of risk factors which contribute to a young person falling into a NEET situation. These include:

- lack of self-esteem/confidence
- mental health issues
- disability
- motivational factors
- disadvantaged social environment
- chaotic family environments
- poor educational experience.

In the past decade, young people constitute one of the groups most deeply affected by the banking crises in 2009 and, currently, the Covid-19 crises. Eurofund⁵ sets out seven risk factors for falling into a NEET situation, as depicted in figure 2.



Figure 2: Risk Factors for falling into a NEET situation

The circumstances of young people's lives mean that the impact of risk factors and the influence of protective factors can vary considerably. Table 4 sets out some of the key circumstances which impact and influence young people's outcomes.



Young people with a physical, mental or learning disabilities

Young people who are members of the Traveller or Roma community

Young people with experience of the care system

Young people who are homeless

Young women / young people with caring responsibilities

Young people who had a negative experience of the education system or who had poor school attendance

Young people who have experienced drug or alcohol abuse

Young people who have committed a crime

Young people who have experienced family conflict or unstable home life

Young people who have a lack of ambition or drive

Table 4: Factors which influence young people's outcomes

FACT BOX: Gender Risk Factors⁶

• Young Women: The NEET risk among young women is associated with early school leaving, childcare responsibilities for children under the age of three, health-related impairments, and preliminary unemployment experiences. Early school leaving has the strongest effect because it has a direct influence on the NEET risk, as well as an indirect effect via care responsibilities and unemployment experiences

• Young Men: The NEET risk factors for young men are early school leaving, health-related impairments, and preliminary unemployment experiences

THE IMPACTS OF BEING IN A NEET SITUATION

Long-term disengagement damages young people's employability, their human capital and their future employment outcomes; in some cases, the damage will last the rest of their lives (Eurofund 2016 Exploring)

The impacts of being in a NEET situation are significant for both the individual and for society as a whole. Young people who are in a NEET situation have a much higher risk of remaining unemployed, experiencing poverty and being socially excluded in the future⁷. According to the OECD⁸, the concept of NEET undermines young people's ability to achieve self-sufficiency, with the impacts intensifying the longer a young person remains NEET.

⁸ OECD: Youth Neither in Employment, Education nor Training (NEETs), in: Society at a Glance 2014: OECD Social Indicators, 2014, OECD Publishing.

⁶ https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Statistics_ on_young_people_neither_in_employment_nor_in_education_or_ training#Young_women_are_more_likely_to_neither_be_in_employment_ nor_in_education_or_training_than_young_men

⁷ European Commission: On EU indicators in the field of youth, Commission staff working document, Brussels 2011.

A 2017 study by Pobal⁹ describes the impacts in the following way:



Figure 3: Impacts of being in a NEET situation

a) <u>Poorer well-being</u>: Being in a NEET situation correlates with poorer general health, emotional strain, low self-esteem and confidence. As physical and emotional wellbeing are critical for engaging in employment and education, their lack can have significant impacts on families, deepen exclusion, deprivation and limit capacity to progress.

b) <u>Increased risk behaviour</u>: Young people who are in a NEET situation face exclusion and are at risk of increased substance misuse, early or lone parenthood. Also, youth offending has been highly correlated to disengagement from school and employment, which creates a cycle of social exclusion.

c) <u>Earning potential</u>: Unemployment, particularly for young people, has significant long-term effect on lifetime earning potential.

d) <u>Reduced employability</u>: By being outside of education, training or employment, youth are less likely to develop 'soft skills', such as resilience, time management, communication, and motivation skills that make them more likely to gain and maintain employment.

e) <u>Public expenditure</u>: Young people in a NEET situation have a significant economic impact on society in terms of additional welfare payments, increased healthcare costs and lost revenue from taxes. In the UK,

the estimated cost of NEETs aged 16-18 to public finances is between £12bn and £32bn.

f) <u>Disengaged citizens:</u> There are far reaching societal costs of young people's lost trust in public institutions, with lack of political engagement and decreased social participation as significant challenges.

By age 21, young people who have been in a NEET situation for six months or more are more likely than their peers to be unemployed, earn less, receive no training, have a criminal record, suffer from poor health and depression.

(UK Social Exclusion Unit, 1999, Gardner et al 2017, Sissons & Jones, 2012). (NDA)

FACT BOX: EU and Global Data on Young People in a NEET Situation

• The global youth unemployment rate stands at 13%, which is three times higher than the figure for adults, which is 4.3%.

• In 2018, 16.5 % of the 20 to 34-year-olds in the EU were in a NEET situation (approx. 15 million young people).

• Rural areas have more youth in a NEET situation compared to urban areas. In 2018, the share of young people in the EU who were in a NEET situation was lowest in cities (15.1 %) and highest in rural areas (18.3 %), with towns and suburbs reporting a NEET rate (17.3 %).

• Since 2011, young people aged of 15 - 29 years who are in a NEET situation have been the highest priority in EU youth employment policy.

• Map 1¹⁰ depicts NEET rates in the EU in 2015, with Ireland one of the countries with a "high rate" of between 14% and 17%.



Map 1: NEET rate, 15–24 years, EU28, 2015 (%) Source: Eurostat

SECTION 2

Building a Picture of Young People in County Waterford who are Not in Employment, Education or Training



Context: Overview of County Waterford¹¹

• In 2016, the population of Waterford City and County was 116, 176, an increase of 0.03% in 2011.

• The total number of people aged 0-24 years in Waterford City and County was 38,417 (33% of the county population and similar to the national percentage).

• Waterford has a high young dependency ratio, with 33% of its population under the age of 14.

• Waterford has the highest proportion of lone parents (4.4% in the country, ranking the area 1st of 31 local authority areas (national average is 3.7%))

• 517 (0.5%) of the usually resident population of Waterford identified as White Irish Traveller. Over half of these are aged 0 - 24 years.

• Waterford's figures for primary education only were on par with national figures (13%). Waterford County was slightly below (12.7%) and Waterford City was slightly above (14.6%).

• Waterford's early school-leaving rate was 11.3%, compared to 9.4% nationally.

• The unemployment rate in Waterford County was 14% for men and 11.1% for women. National rates were 14.1 for men and 12.2 for women.

• The Pobal HP Index classifies Waterford City and Waterford County as 'Marginally below Average' on the Relative Index Score (-2.35).

• 9¹² of Ireland's 79 "Unemployment Blackspots" are in Waterford, the second highest rate in the country after Limerick¹³.

¹¹ Census 2016. CSO.ie

¹² Waterford Blackspots (2016): Larchville, Morrison's Road, Newport's Square, Lisduggan, Ballybeg North, The Glen, Roanmore, Mount Sion, Kingsmeadow

POPULATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN WATERFORD

In 2016, the population of 16-24 years olds in Waterford was over 12,200, or 10.5% of Waterford's population. This is slightly lower than the national rate of 10.91%. The projected rate of 16 – 24 years olds in 2021 is 14,244 estimating an increase of 24% in the five years since the last census.

Population 2016 Census (Actual and Projected)					
Waterford Total Pop 2016	116,176				
Population aged 16 - 24 years in 2016	12,216 (10.5%)				
Projected Population 16 -24-year-olds in 2021	14,244				

Table 5: Population of 16 – 24 year olds in Waterford, 2016 Census and projected in 2021

Table 6 sets out the total population of Waterford's three main settlements. It also provides the population of young people aged 16 - 24 years in 2016 and the projected population in 2021.

	Total Population 2016	Population 16 - 24-year-olds in 2016	Projected Population 16 – 24-year-olds in 2021
WATERFORD CITY	53,504	6,139	6,276
TRAMORE	9,227	1,026	1,464
DUNGARVAN	10,381	887	1,052

Table 6: Population of Waterford's three largest settlements, 16–24 year olds,2016 and projected in 2021

Table 7 sets out the 20 most deprived small areas in Waterford (urban and rural). Table 8 sets out the 15 most deprived rural areas. Both tables show the number of young people aged 16 – 24 years in 2016 actual and in 2021 (projected). The data is based on the 2016 Pobal HP Deprivation Index which shows the level of overall affluence and deprivation in small areas. Those areas with a score of -20 to -30 are labelled as "very disadvantaged".

	Deprivation Score	Total Population 2016	Population 16 – 24 year-olds 2016	Projected Pop. 16 – 24 year-olds 2021
LARCHVILLE	-28.64	233	38	37
LISDUGGAN	-28.21	174	24	23
LISDUGGAN	-28.02	189	21	31
LARCHVILLE	-27.29	256	39	57
LISDUGGAN	-26.18	195	12	13
BALLYTRUCKLE	-24.87	135	22	27
MORRISSON'S ROAD	-24.76	122	4	7
BALLYBEG NORTH	-24.73	323	35	34
LISDUGGAN	-24.39	200	22	17
KINGSMEADOW	-23.90	191	15	17
DUNGARVAN NO. 1 URBAN	-23.85	166	15	9
LARCHVILLE	-23.57	234	29	19
DUNGARVAN NO. 1 URBAN	-23.41	296	50	40
KINGSMEADOW	-23.19	137	13	16
DUNGARVAN NO. 1 URBAN	-23.12	329	45	52
LARCHVILLE	-23.09	221	22	19
GRANGE SOUTH	-23.00	178	23	32
BALLYBEG NORTH	-22.25	370	48	54
GRANGE NORTH	-22.23	222	12	33
DUNGARVAN NO. 1 URBAN	-21.84	398	35	24

 Table 7: Waterford's 20 most deprived small areas, by deprivation score, total population and population of 16 – 24 year olds, 2016 and project in 2021

	Deprivation Score	Total Population 2016	Population 16 – 24 year-olds 2016	Projected Pop. 16 – 24 year-olds 2021
TALLOW	-17.14	185	15	10
KILMACTHOMAS	-16.31	229	25	21
KILMACTHOMAS	-14.35	215	32	43
PORTLAW	-13.67	282	27	28
ARDMORE	-13.48	264	33	36
PORTLAW	-13.00	199	26	14
BALLYHEENY	-12.83	252	26	34
RATHMOYLAN	-12.51	222	29	49
CAPPOQUIN	-11.91	185	16	15
CAPPOQUIN	-11.51	162	20	16
KILMACTHOMAS	-11.34	238	25	33
KILMEADAN	-11.00	370	44	50
TALLOW	-10.56	275	26	32
COMERAGH	-10.33	244	21	30
KILMACOMMA	-10.04	191	14	19

Table 8: Waterford's 15 most deprived rural small areas, by deprivation score,total population and population of 16 - 24 year olds, 2016 and project in 2021

FACT BOX: Measuring Youth Unemployment

Measuring youth unemployment is inherently complex, with different measures used to calculate the number of young people out of employment. One of these measures is the NEET rate which measures those both not employed and not in education or training. As such, the rate inextricably links youth unemployment with participation in education and training. This is considered a broader and better measure of youth unemployment as it measures the following:

- the total number of unemployed youth (i.e. not in employment)

- plus those youth that have not received any formal/non-formal education or training in the 4 weeks prior to data collection (i.e. not in education or training)

- as a proportion of the much broader population of economically active (in the labour force either employed or unemployed)

- and inactive youth (not in the labour force).

The usefulness of the NEET measure is recognised by the United Nations and it is included as one of the key indicators to measure progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) under Goal 8 (Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all). This goal describes the measure in the following way:

"The share of youth not in employment, education or training (youth NEET rate) provides a measure of youth who are outside the educational system, not in training and not in employment, and thus serves as a broader measure of potential youth labour market entrants than youth unemployment. [The NEET measure] includes discouraged worker youth as well as those who are outside the labour force due to disability and engagement in household chores, among other reasons".

NEET RATES IN WATERFORD

In 2020 the OECD published a series of rates relating to young people who are in a NEET situation in Ireland, as set out in table 9.

NEET Rate Males	NEET Rate Females
Males 15 – 19 years: 7.1%	Females 15 – 19 years: 5.6%
Males 20 -24 years: 13.3%	Females 20 – 24 year: 12.6 %

 Table 9: NEETS rate by age group and gender

Research undertaken by WWETB in 2021 provides an estimate of the number of young people who are in a NEET situation in Waterford and Wexford by applying these OECD rates to projected population rates for 2021. This estimates that there are 3,473 such young people in the two counties, with 1,515 in Waterford and 1,958 in Wexford. Table 10 provides a breakdown of the figures for Waterford.

Waterford	Total
Male 15 - 19	295
Female 15 - 19	226
Total 15 - 19	521
Male 20 - 24	531
Female 20 - 24	464
Total 20 - 24	995
TOTAL 15 – 24 YEAR OLDS	1,516

Table 10: Estimated number of young people in Waterford who are in a NEET situation

The WWETB research sets out the following findings:

• Census projections for 2021 suggest the state, Waterford and Wexford are experiencing continuing growth in 15 - 24-year olds.

• In 2019 the OECD suggested that the rate of NEETS is in decline however, because of the Covid-19 pandemic, a hitherto downward trend in unemployment (Live Register, CSO, 2020) has been reversed and there were currently 125 more young people on the Live Register in October 2020 than there were in October 2019.

• The effect of the pandemic on youth unemployment which cannot have been predicted will mean the declining NEET rate will have slowed.

• The increase in the youth population will mean despite a declining NEET rate the number of actual NEETs may freeze or increase.

Estimated Rates in Waterford Settlements

By applying the OECD rates to the projected population, a broad estimate can be achieved of the number of young people who are in NEET situation in Waterford's three main settlements, as set out in table 11. However, these figures are broad indicators only and should be viewed in context of unemployment rates on a settlement basis.

	Population 2016	Population 16-24 year-olds 2016	Projected Pop. 16 – 24 year-olds 2021	Projected NEETs Population 2021
WATERFORD CITY	53,504	6,139	6,276	606
TRAMORE	9,227	1,026	1,464	144
DUNGARVAN	10,381	887	1,052	102

 Table 11: Estimated number of young people who are in a NEET situation in

 Waterford's 8 largest settlements

SECTION 3

Services for Young People who are in a NEET Situation in County Waterford



This section provides an overview of the services and supports available to young people in County Waterford who are in a NEET situation. In the context of the scope of the report, it relates to the following services:

- WWETB Further Education and Training Provision
- WWETB Youth Work Services
- Youth Work Provision
- Intreo Services
- Other Related Supports and Services for Young People

WWETB FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVISION

https://www.wwetb.ie/

WWETB's further education and training (FET) provision can be grouped under four headings, as described in the National FET Strategy¹⁴:

• Courses focused on foundation or transversal skills, such as Community Education, Adult Literacy, ESOL or ITABE

• Programmes which facilitate pathways to other education or training (ET) and which bridge gap between foundational learning and vocational ET (such as Youthreach, BTEI, Skills for Work)

• Post-Leaving Cert courses which focus on both facilitating progression to Higher Education and employment outcomes

• Programmes focused on work-based learning and which lead directly to jobs (traineeships, apprenticeships, specific skills training)

FET is delivered on a full-time or part-time basis, as set out below.

Full-Time Courses

Post Leaving Certificate (PLC)

Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme

Youthreach

Bridging/Foundation Courses

Specific Skills Training (SST)

Traineeship

Community Training Centres (CTCs)

Specialist Training Providers (STPs)

Local Training Initiatives (LTI)

Apprenticeship

Part-Time Courses

Back To Education Initiative

Adult Literacy

English for Speakers of Other Languages

Skills for Work

Evening Courses

Blended Learning Courses

Community Education

These programmes are delivered across Waterford and Wexford in a range of venues, including:

- Adult Education Centres
- Youthreach Centres
- Community Training Centres
- Training Centres
- Outdoor Education and Training Centres
- Community and Voluntary Sector Venues

Map 2 provides a visual depiction of WWETBs schools and FET in Waterford and Wexford.



Map 2: WWETB schools and FET centres in Waterford and Wexford

Source: WWETB Annual Report 2019

SUMMARY OF WWETB FET PROVISION

• <u>Adult Literacy</u>: provided to people inside and outside of the labour force who want to improve their communication skills, i.e. reading, writing, numeracy and information technology. Programmes are typically delivered for 2-4 hours per week during the academic year.

• <u>Back to Education Initiative (BTEI)</u>: offers part-time education options for people aged 16 or over, mostly at Levels 3, 4 and 5. It gives individuals the opportunity to combine a return to learning with family, work and other responsibilities. Classes are offered throughout the year in the morning, afternoons, evenings, or weekends.

• <u>Blended Learning Courses</u>: can last up to 6 months and utilise the mix of classroom, lab, practical, on-line training and tutor support to suit the need of individuals requiring a more flexible way to meet their training needs. Courses are delivered all year round and lead to accreditation at NFQ Levels 4-6 or certification from recognised non-statutory accredited body.

• <u>Bridging/Foundation courses</u>: may be of short or long duration and generally lead to accreditation at NFQ Levels 3 and 4. They are aimed at those who have been out of employment for at least a year and who wish to return to employment, education and training

• <u>Community Education</u>: offers a learner-centred approach involving personal supports and tuition leading to positive personal, social, and economic outcomes. Programmes are developed with local community projects including courses leading to accreditation from NFQ Level 3 – 8, informal and non-formal courses which are not accredited.

• <u>Community Training Centres (CTCs)</u>: are independent community-based organisations, providing training and education for early school leavers, primarily aged between 16 and 21. All programmes offer personal and social skills development. Courses are generally one year in duration and are full-time and lead to major awards on the NFQ at levels 3 and 4.

• <u>English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)</u>: are provided across the country to meet the needs of learners who may be highly educated with professional and skilled backgrounds who are attending classes to learn English or improve their English.

• <u>Evening Courses</u>: provide short up-skilling modules for both unemployed and employed persons, typically 30 hours' duration over 10 weeks. Courses generally lead to accreditation at NFQ Levels 4-6 NFQ or from recognised non-statutory accredited body.

• <u>Local Training Initiatives (LTI)</u>: a full-time project-based training and work experience programme run by community organisations. It is designed for people who are unemployed, primarily those aged 18 – 35 years who are experiencing difficulty gaining entry to the labour market. Some projects are targeted at specific groups in society. Training leads to accreditation at levels on the NFQ at levels 3, 4 and 5.

• <u>Post Leaving Certificate (PLC)</u>: provides a combination of general studies, vocational skills and work experience so participants can enter or re-enter immediate skilled jobs in the labour market. Courses are usually full-time, over one academic year and generally lead to major awards at NFQ Levels 5 and 6.

• <u>Skills for Work</u>: provides opportunities to help employees deal with basic skill demands of the workplace. Programmes are 35 hours' duration and are flexibly designed to meet the needs of employer and employees.

• <u>Specific Skills Training (SST)</u>: are designed to provide learners with a range of employability skills and formal vocational qualifications to facilitate first-time entry to the labour market or acquisition of new skills. Courses are typically full-time and lead to QQI Awards at levels 3, 4, 5 and 6 and/or to industry recognised accreditation. Course duration can vary from 6 to 40 weeks

• <u>Specialist Training Providers (STPs)</u>: Specialist vocational training are contracted to deliver training programmes to people with disabilities, courses provide additional training durations, adapted equipment; transport arrangements, and enhanced programme content. Courses are generally one to two years in duration and lead to accreditation at levels 1-6 on the NFQ.

• <u>Traineeships</u>: are aimed at new labour market entrants and unemployed people. They are occupational specific and industry endorsed training programmes leading to QQI Major Awards, mostly at Levels 5 and 6, and/or industry recognised certification providing access to specific occupations. They are targeted at occupations which are not designated as apprenticeships but entail significant skill requirements.

• <u>Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS)</u>: provides a range of courses to meet the education and training needs of people who are unemployed, over the age of 21 and in receipt of a qualifying social welfare payment for 156 days (6 months) or more. A VTOS allowance is paid at a rate equivalent to Jobseekers Benefit/ Allowance payment. Courses are usually full-time and delivered over two academic years. The courses lead to a range of awards across NFQ levels.

• <u>Youthreach</u>: is a full-time programme, usually over two years, for young people aged 16 - 20 years who have left school early and are not in employment. The programme typically leads to major awards at levels 3 and 4 on the NFQ. Learners are facilitated in developing their own individual learning plan aimed at increasing their self-esteem, skills and knowledge and ability to get a job. The programme aims to enable young people to participate fully in society and to progress to further education and training.
Table 12 provides a breakdown of the 1,625 young people under the age of 25 years old who started in fulltime FET programmes in WWETB in 2020. In that year, 242 young people started in Youthreach in Waterford and Wexford.

PROGRAMME	15 Yrs Old	16 Yrs Old	17 Yrs Old	18 Yrs Old	19 Yrs Old	20 Yrs Old	21 Yrs Old	22 Yrs Old	23 Yrs Old	24 Yrs Old	TOTAL
Blended Training				2	1	1	2	1		2	9
Bridging & Foundation Training			2	9	6	1	2	1		2	23
Community Training Centres	1	8	17	15	6	14	4	4	2	2	73
Evening Training		6		14	20	16	13	14	13	16	112
Local Training Initiatives		3	10	40	17	20	17	14	8	4	133
Post Leaving Cert (PLCs)		1	112	298	247	112	80	39	52	14	955
Skills for Work				1	1	3	2	1	2		10
Skills to Advance				1	6	8	8	5	14	10	52
Specialist Training Providers		2	3	6	6	11	12	11	14	3	68
Specific Skills Training			9	19	16	9	8	4	6	8	79
Traineeship Training		1	3	7	10	5	3	8		2	39
VTOS Core					1	2	12	19	20	18	72
TOTAL	1	21	156	412	337	202	163	131	141	81	1625

 Table 12: Young people starting in full-time FET programmes in Waterford and

 Wexford in 2020, by age

WWETB YOUTH WORK AFFAIRS

https://www.wwetb.ie/youth-music-outdoor/youth-services/

The Youth Work function of Education and Training Boards is defined under Section 10 (j) of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013 as being "to support the provision, coordination, administration and assessment of Youth Work services in its functional areas and provide such information as may be requested by the Minister."

WWETB organises its youth work function through a Youth Work Committee (YWC) which comprises key stakeholders from the statutory and community and voluntary sectors. The YWC's Youth Work Plan 2017 – 2020 sets out WWETB's key goals and objectives for the development of youth work in Waterford and Wexford, as follows:

o Provide oversight, quality assurance and best practice in the provision of Youth Work service

- o Add value to the work being undertaken by those engaged in Youth Work
- o Support voluntary and NGOs to provide Youth Work service

o Assist linkages between ETB services, Youth Work services, statutory agencies and Government Departments

o Develop intellectual and physical resources and infrastructure for the Youth Work sector

Through its Youth Work function, WWETB provides funding of over €3 million to 34 staffed youth projects across Waterford and Wexford: 31 UBU projects and 3 Youth Information Centres. In addition, it provides an annual grant to approximately 90 volunteer-run youth clubs/groups including youth clubs, guides, and scouts. It is also responsible for supporting the projects and clubs to implement the National Quality Standards Frameworks. WWETB's Youth Work Affairs Team play a crucial role in supporting, developing and monitoring youth work organisations across Waterford and Wexford.

UBU Your Place Your Space

UBU is an amalgamation of three funding schemes which was launched in July 2020 by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. It targets young people aged 10 - 24 years old who are:

- experiencing economic, social, and cultural disadvantages
- experiencing marginalisation
- vulnerable or at risk of not flourishing



Map 3: UBU Your Place Your Space youth projects in Waterford and Wexford

UBU Your Place Your Space youth projects are primarily delivered by voluntary youth work organisations which are affiliated to a national youth work organisation. WWETB also funds UBU thematic projects which engage targeted young people through the medium of arts, drama or sport.

The Figures below provides a breakdown of UBU projects by location in Waterford and Wexford and the UBU projects by affiliated organisation. The Table in the subsequent page sets out all the UBU projects in Waterford.



YOUTH WORK PROVISION IN WATERFORD

Defining Youth Work

Youth Work is primarily focused on young people aged 10 to 24 years, although there is also a significant level of activity with under 10-year-olds. It achieves a range of outcomes for young people, including communication skills, confidence and building relationships, through activities combining enjoyment, challenge and learning. In practice, youth work can include organisations which have volunteer-led youth groups and/or professional youth workers.

It is important to note that all work with young people is not Youth Work, which is defined in the Youth Act 2001 and the Education and Training Board Act 2013 as "a planned programme of education designed for the purpose of aiding and enhancing the personal and social development of young people through their voluntary participation, and which (a) is complementary to their formal, academic or vocational education and training, and (b) in Ireland is provided primarily by voluntary youth work organisations". The National Youth Strategy 2015 – 2020 describes Youth Work as "a diverse range of activities, topics and measures provided by a range of actors in assorted fields and settings".¹⁶

Youth Work is non-formal education based on a set of core principles.¹⁷



A 2014 EU report on youth work found that successful youth work outcomes are reached through a combination of behaviours, attitudes and methods¹⁸. The study identifies the following as characteristics of youth work:

Youth work offers young people meaningful activities based on their needs and interests.				
Non-formal and formal learning	Participatory and experiential pedagogy	Relationship-based activities (learning as a social activity)		Mentoring and / or peer support
Youth work ain	ns at young persons'	personal deve	elopme	nt, leading to:
Self-determination	Self-confidence	Self-esteem		Socialisation
	Personal development should lead to:			
Empowerment	Emancipation	Tolerance		Responsibilities
In turn, these should result in:				
Paticipation in democ societies	ratic Prevention of	risk behaviour Socia		inclusion and cohesion

UBU YOUTH PROJECTS IN WATERFORD

Table 13 set out the UBU Your Place Your Space projects in Waterford.

	UBU YOUR PLACE YOUR SPACE PROJECTS
	Waterford and South Tipperary Community Youth Service
WSTCYS Axis Project	The Axis Community Youth Project is located in the Ballybeg Youth Resource Centre. The Project caters for young people between the ages of 10 and 24 from Thursday to Saturday. Staff and volunteers work alongside young people to deliver planned Youth Work programmes of informal education that are designed to meet the young people's interest and needs. The Project creates young person centred, safe spaces, where young people can make friends and form positive relationships. The young people's ideas are central to the work we do.
WSTCYS Ballybeg Community CYP	Ballybeg Community Youth Project works with young people age 10 - 24 years. It aims to build the capacity of young people to enhance their lives and future prospects, through the development of personal, social and practical skills. Programmes focus on addressing the seven social & personal development outcomes and include weekly core developmental groups and social and recreational programmes. Additional activities include; special interest groups such as STEAM programme, science club, fretwork, arts and crafts and drama, as well as seasonal programmes during school breaks throughout the year.
WSTCYS Dungarvan CYP	The Dungarvan Community Youth Project works with young people aged 10 to 24yrs. The project is young person centred, strengths based and needs led and delivers a wide range of Youth Work groups and programmes. These include weekly developmental core groups, two education support groups, 2 drop in's, which includes an LGBTI+ drop in. The work is supported by local volunteers from the community.
WSTCYS Dungarvan and West Waterford CYP	The Dungarvan & West Waterford Community Youth Project works with young people aged 10 to 24yrs in Dungarvan and surrounding areas in West Waterford. It believes in the potential of young people and values their contribution and active participation. As part of WSTCYS the project benefits from working as part of an Integrated Service Model and is affiliated to Youth Work Ireland. The project is young person centred, strengths based and needs led and delivers a wide range of Youth Work Groups and Programmes. The project supports young people to identify their needs and interests and puts appropriate responses in place. These include weekly developmental core groups, education supports, drop in's, LGBTI+ specific group and one to one supports. In addition, a range of seasonal events take place as well as residentials and weekend work on a needs basis. The work is supported by local volunteers from the community.
WSTCYS Farran Park	The Farronshoneen Community Youth Project works with young people aged 10-24 years living in Farran Park, St. Catherine's Grange, Kilcarragh, Williamstown Road and adjoining communities. In partnership with local volunteers the project runs core developmental youth work groups, peer support programmes, one to one work, after school support and a late night drop in on Friday nights. There is a wide range of groups and programmes on offer based on needs and interests of young people involved.
WSTCYS Farronshoneen	The Farronshoneen Centre Project engages young people age 10 to 24 years, living within the Dunmore Road area. Programmes on offer include weekly core developmental groups, social and recreational programmes, all Irish speaking youth group, and special interest programmes. In addition, a range of seasonal events take place as well as residentials and weekend work on a need's basis. The centre also supports and facilitates a wide range of Special Interest Programmes for young people from the local community.
WSTCYS Frontline Drugs Project	Frontline Community Based Drugs project offers support to young people between the ages of 10 and 24 years who are involved in high-risk substance use living in Waterford City & Ferrybank. The project uses Youth Work practices and methodologies to engage young people in a range of developmental processes to support and facilitate better outcomes in young people's lives.

WSTCYS Inner City Community YP	The Inner City CYP works with young people aged 10 to 24 years. It delivers weekly developmental groups, seasonal programmes, weekend programmes, residential overnights and one-to-one work. The project provides a safe space where young people can meet in their community and build positive relationships. Members usually have one main group that they come to every week, based on age and interests, and they can also come to drop-ins and special interest groups. Young people are facilitated to plan their own.
WSTCYS Manor Street Youth	The Manor Street Community Youth Project engages young people aged 10 – 24 years living in Waterford's Inner City. The Centre has a diverse and participatory programme of core work with young people, including weekly Developmental Group Work and a range of Special Interest, Social and Recreational and Seasonal Programmes, enhanced by innovative engagement with particular communities of interest of young people e.g. Chill OUT LGBTI+ work, Youth Bank, Manor Street Music, Gaming Communities (Yugi-oh, Dungeons and Dragons and MTG). The Manor Youth Café and the XLc Project. The Centre is open 7 days a week.
WSTCYS Millennium Project	Millennium CYP is a community-based youth project with a catchment area that covers Lisduggan, Larchville and the Manor St. John housing estates. Programmes provide increased self-esteem, self-confidence and lead to better outcomes in the lives of young people. The project works with young people aged 10-24 years of age to meet their needs and interests on a daily basis from Monday through to Friday primarily and at weekends through residential programmes on a needs basis. Volunteers play a key role in the delivery and facilitation of the groups. A range of Youth Work practices are used to facilitate and support the involvement of young people in co-created groups and programmes weekly.
WSTCYS North Suburbs	The North Suburbs Community Youth Project works with young people aged 10-24 years living in the Gracedieu, Hill View and Logloss areas of Waterford City. The community house at 64 Gracedieu offers a range of groups and learning opportunities for young people including recreational, educational and developmental programmes. It provides a safe space for young people to meet in their community. Using a Youth Work approach, it works in partnership with young people building their resilience and offer programmes including cooking, art and crafts, sport and fitness, team building, issue based work, informal drop in, and seasonal programmes for Easter, Summer and Halloween, special interest groups, employment support, residentials and weekend work on a needs/interest basis.
WSTCYS SHY Project	The SHY Project engages young people aged between 10 and 24 years from the Sacred Heart Community. The main aim of the SHY Project is to equip young people with the information, skills and self awareness necessary to cope with life's many challenges while also providing a safe space to develop their personal and social skills. The project works with young people to identify their needs and interests, and in response provides them with access to a wide range of Youth Work programmes. These include weekly developmental core groups, two education support groups, and social and recreational opportunities in our games room and youth cafe. During Mid-terms, Halloween, Easter and Summer holidays we also offer a range of special interest and seasonal programmes
WSTCYS Woodstown Residential	 Woodstown Residential and Activity Centre (WRAC) provides a secure, safe environment of natural beauty, located on Woodstown Strand, which helps young people achieve a range of personal and social developmental outcomes through the methodologies of residential group work. The unique opportunities afforded by this special type of youth work have led WRAC to have a special place in the hearts and minds of young people within the WSTCYS. As well as offering quality facilities to Groups who want to utilise residential group work methodologies, Woodstown also carries out a range of other activities that add value to the core work of Groups, such as: Self-care and Team building days Outdoor Education days Youth Employability Programmes Erasmus+ Youth Exchanges and Training Courses.

	Foroige	
Foroige Ferrybank Drug Prevention Project	The Foróige Ferrybank Drug Prevention Project aims to provide young people aged between 10 and 24 with a safe space within their community where they can engage in enjoyable activities that help progress their personal development. As a result, they will enhance their decision making & social skills and will also be less likely to participate in substance misuse or antisocial behaviour.	
Foroige Ferrybank YDP	The Ferrybank Youth Development Project works with 10-24 year olds in the Ferrybank area. It provides young people with a safe space in their community to take part in a range of direct youth work activities. It is youth led and young people are involved at all levels. Activities range from a Drop In Youth café to a Youth Participation Structure.	
	Manor St. John	
Manor St John YP	Manor St. John Youth Services is a progressive all-inclusive youth service providing opportunities and programmes to the youth in a catchment area of Waterford city of all genders between the ages of 10 to 24 years old. Its mission is to provide quality youth development, educational and recreational programmes and school support. It aims to provide these programmes in a safe and professional environment and offer easy access to all youth exclusively. It offers varied programmes to encourage youth with diverse interests, age and ability.	
	Children's Group Link	
Children's Group Link	Children's Group Link is a leading youth service offering wide ranging, diverse & inclusive programmes, activities, supports & advocacy for young people in Waterford City from ages 10-24yrs. It is committed to promoting and facilitating the full participation of young people in programmes, activities and events. It has created a positive, safe, welcoming and supportive environment where young people can express themselves and have a say at all levels within the organisation. It supports and empowers young people to help them transition on their life journey.	
	Little Red Kettle (LRK)	
Little Red Kettle Waterford	LRK wishes to give young people a fun experience in a safe, positive, and creative environment, as well as encouraging self-awareness and self-confidence through the process of arts-based drama activities. This provides young people with opportunities to develop communication, concentration, and teamwork skills through participation. Young people are encouraged to engage their imagination through the invention of characters, sounds, creatures, and stories based on their own ideas. LRK strives to continue to involve the participants in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the projects. Its mission is to create vital, vigorous, and exciting theatre with and for children from all backgrounds.	
FAI Waterford		
FAI Waterford	The FAI Development Officer (DO) works closely with the football clubs in the marginalised / disadvantaged areas to increase and train the local volunteer base. Through Youth Groups, Garda Diversion Groups, and local schools the DO links with marginalised young people to the clubs. It runs a "couch-to -coach" programme which entails a full day education course once per week for eight weeks. The DO is also in regular contact with all relevant agencies via personal visits to centres and activity.	

	Waterford Travellers Youth Support Project		
Waterford Travellers YSP	Waterford Traveller Youth Support Project designs specific programmes of support on a needs led basis for young Travellers ages 10 -24yrs. The overall aim of the project is to support, respect and promote the unique traditions, symbols and values in the Travelling community by supporting young Travellers in developing life-long skills and to encourage participation and integration into the wider community. WTYSP in its objectives aims to respect Traveller people's culture in a way in which ethnic identity is expressed. WTYSP understands the aspects of Traveller culture and to know what constitutes the cultural distinctiveness of this minority social group and that the young Travellers cannot be viewed in isolation from their life or traditions of the Traveller culture.		
	Waterford Youth Transport		
Waterford Youth Transport	Waterford Youth Transport Service aims to deliver an affordable transport initiative for young people involved with youth organisations working in Waterford City and supports projects receiving UBU funding on a wider ETB basis. It provides a comprehensive transport service by utilising and maintaining a 29-seater bus as a service to be used by youth organisations. It supports organisations catering specifically for disadvantaged and marginalised young people. Priority is given to youth groups working in those communities who support young people due to social isolation, barriers to participation, cultural backgrounds and intergenerational poverty continue. The service operates on a year-round basis and has no limit on hours of operation.		
	Waterford Sports Partnership		
Waterford Sports Partnership	The Youth Sports Development Officer (YSDO) role is to engage young people in Waterford into sport/physical activity with a particular emphasis on youth at risk. The YSDO supports relevant youth organisations, community and voluntary groups and statutory agencies in developing, planning, and delivering activity programmes. Positive outcomes are achieved by liaising with agencies such as the HSE, Probation Services, and educational support services such as DEIS Schools, Early School Leaver Projects and LTI Projects, Youth Traveller Projects, Community Gardaí and other projects that support disadvantaged marginalized young people. The project takes a multi collaborative approach and provides a service to all youth groups and youth agencies across Waterford City & County.		
	Waterford Youth Arts		
Waterford Youth Arts	WYA is one of the largest and longest established youth arts orgs in Ireland, dedicated to the creativity of young people. It has 35 years' experience working with and for young people across a range of art forms; theatre, dance, literature, visual art, music and filmmaking. WYA is committed to youth-led creativity and creating opportunities for young people to collaborate with professional artists and practitioners. WYA is the home of The LIT Festival, Europe's first and only youth-run festival of literature. A central and defining feature of WYA is open-door policy, anyone can participate regardless of background, ability, or experience.		

Table 13: UBU Your Place Your Space Waterford

VOLUNTEER LED YOUTH CLUBS

WWETB's Local Youth Club Grant Scheme supports voluntary youth club/group activities for young people, with priority given to clubs/groups catering for young people aged 10–21. The primary focus of the scheme is to assist local, volunteer-led youth clubs/groups that provide a programme of youth work activities for young people. In addition, other clubs/groups that work with young people, but are not specifically providing youth work, are also entitled to apply for funding under the Scheme. In 2021 the scheme supported 84 Youth Clubs/Groups, with the total amount of funding available of $\leq 115,974.15$. The maximum amount that can be awarded to one club is $\leq 3,000$. Table 14 sets out a list of the volunteer youth clubs in Waterford.

VOLUNTEER LED	
Blackberry Brownies	15th / 25th Waterford Sacred Heart Scout Group
Tramore Catholic Guides of Ireland	18th 26th Ferrybank Scout Group
Ballymacarbry Foroige Club	19th / 29th St Marys Scout Group Ballygunner
Clashmore/Kinsalebeg Foroige Teenager & Junior Club	1st Port of Waterford Sea Scouts
Foroige Tech Space Lismore	26th Ballymacarbary Scout Group
Lismore Foroige Club	27th Butlerstown Scout Den
Make a Difference Foroige	2nd Port Waterford Dunmore East Sea Scouts
Manor St John Youth Services: Foroige	31st Waterford Scout Group Faithlegg and Crooke
Mount Sion Foroige	36th Waterford Tramore Bay Scouts
Outrage Foroige Club	4th Waterford Abbeyside
35th Waterford Coppercoast Scout Group	8th Tramore Scout Group
Ursuline Foroige Club	De La Salle Scout Group
Warriors Junior Foroige Club	Scouting Ireland Pipe Band
Whitestrand Foroige Club	St Pauls Scout Group Waterford
Rise and Shine Youth Club	Activ8
Waterford Junior RDAI Group	Carbally Clowns
Dungarvan No Name Club	Fusion Youth Club
10th Portlaw Scout Group	Ignite Youth Group
11th Waterford Dungarvan Scouts	The Wolfpack Youth Group

Table 14: List of Volunteer-led youth clubs in Waterford

INTREO, THE PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

Intreo, the Public Employment Service, is a single point of contact for all employment and income supports. Designed to provide a streamlined approach, Intreo offers practical, tailored employment services and supports for jobseekers and employers in Intro Centre throughout Ireland.



Intreo services for jobseekers include:

- support to prepare for and find work
- supports and services to help with change career, upskill or retrain
- identify suitable training opportunities
- supports to set up a business
- connect jobseekers with employers who are actively looking to hire people

Intreo is supported in its role by:

- Local Employment Service
- Jobs Club
- Employability
- Job Path

OTHER ORGANISATIONS IN WATERFORD WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Other Organisations in Waterford Working with Young People		
School Completion Programmes (SCP)	Dungarvan / An Rinn SCP Waterford SCP	
Family Support Services	Brill Family Resource Centre Sacred Heart Family Resource Centre St. Brigids Family and Community Centre Barnardos Centre Dungarvan Barnardos Family Support, Ballybeg, Waterford Barnardos Waterford Student Mothers Group West Waterford Community and Family Hub (Cappoquin)	
Youth Justice	BALL Youth Diversion Project, Ballybeg DAY Youth Diversion Project, Dungarvan PACT Youth Diversion Project, Ferrybank SWAY Youth Diversion Project, Waterford City TYRE Youth Diversion Project, Tramore	
Other	Waterford Area Partnership Waterford Leader Partnership	

Table 15: Other organisations in Waterford working with young people

Building Relationships, Supporting Journeys

SECTION 4

Challenges in Responding to the Needs of Young People in a NEET Situation in County Waterford This section sets out some of the key challenges experienced by service-providers in meeting the needs of vulnerable young people who are in a NEET situation in Waterford.

These challenges were identified through the secondary research and corroborated in the primary research by service-providers that participated in the stakeholder engagement process.

CHALLENGES RELATING TO FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

A 2017 EU study¹⁹ highlighted three key challenges relating to Further Education and Training that impact on the capacity of ETBs to respond effectively to the needs to NEETs young people:

a) <u>The attractiveness of FET</u>: despite the range of FET options and progression routes available, the number of FET learners in Ireland has been small, which is due in part to the fact that the preference for many learners on leaving compulsory education is for higher education. While major policy documents (e.g. National Skills Strategy 2025 and the Further Education and Training Strategy), outline ambitions to address and increase the standing of FET in Ireland, such changes take time to implement as they often involve shifts in culture and values.

b) <u>Increased Number of Young People</u>: The cohort of those aged 5 - 19 increased from 2012 to 2017 due mainly to an increase in the number of births in recent years. It is likely that the increase in this cohort will impact on the number of young people entering the FET system, with an increased demand for places.

c) <u>Participation in lifelong learning</u>: although improving, the lifelong learning rate in Ireland (at 13%) remains lower than the EU 2020 target of 15%. Particular challenges, which are not unique to Ireland, include encouraging participation among older workers and those with low education attainment. Those with lower secondary education attainment or below, had a lifelong learning participation rate of 4%, compared to 26% for those with postgraduate qualifications.

KEY CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED BY WATERFORD STAKEHOLDERS

Services providers in Waterford reported that they face a wide range of challenges in their efforts to adequately support young people who are in a NEET situation. These are summarised in the table below and discussed in more detail underneath.

WHO AND WHERE	 Identifying NEETs young people - who are they and where are they? Availability of data and information on the young person's needs, background and circumstances Sharing data and information between stakeholders
SERVICES AND SPACES	 Insufficient services and resources to ensure engagement with young people in a timely and effective manner Lack of staff knowledge of the service landscape: the services available to meet needs (universal and targeted) - their remit, criteria, referral processes Lack of clear and streamlined signposting, referral and coordination between services
TRANSPORT AND ACCESSIBILITY	 Accessibility of services, particularly in rural areas Lack of transport to enable young people to reach services Lack of online service delivery infrastructures (hardware, broadband, staff training)
TOOLS AND TRAINING	 Lack of dedicated programmes / tools to support staff to motivate, engage, support and retain young people Limited opportunities to share best practice between services at a local and national level
WRAP- AROUND SUPPORTS	 Inadequate wrap-around services to support young people's engagement and retention (childcare services, mental health supports, substance use services, etc)
MONITORING AND OUTCOMES	 Lack of tracking and monitoring systems between services - how are young people monitored and supported when a programme / service ends

Table 16: Key challenges identified by Waterford stakeholders

a) <u>Gap between early school leaving and FET</u>: ETBs, as the providers of FET, recognise that there is a need for alternative learning programmes for young people where primary/post primary education is not an appropriate or effective learning environment. However, fundamental national policy positions and investment is needed to respond to the significant number of early school-leavers. The gap between leaving school early and engaging in FET presents significant challenges for ETBs and other services in their efforts to reengage with this very vulnerable and often isolated cohort. These gaps can have a significant impact on a young person from the perspective of loss of routines, poor habits, loss of confidence, low self-esteem and social isolation.

b) <u>The "Cinderella of FET"</u>: the profile of FET which is targeted at early school leavers – Youthreach and Community Training Centres – is relatively low. It is often referred to as "alternative" or "second-chance" education. In this study, young people themselves identified that these options are often seen as being suitable for young people who were "disruptive" in "mainstream" school (see quotes below). A reimagining and rebranding of these services as a "smart choice" for young people, and as a valuable component of "mainstream education" would enable meaningful and supported pathways for young people where the more structured and academic approach of secondary level education is not suitable.

c) <u>Absence of Referral and Signposting Processes</u>: there is excellent cooperation and coordination between many services that support young people who are in a NEET situation in Waterford. However, these are broadly informal in nature. There is an absence of integrated protocols and signposting between essential services including; post primary schools, ETB FET programmes, youth work services, and Intreo services. Referrals and signposting between these services is often ad-hoc, based generally on professional relationships and individual experience. While these relationships are crucial and beneficial, an integrated system would provide a more streamlined support process for young people and help reduce the number of those "falling through the cracks".

d) <u>Staff Skills and Capacity</u>: it is clear that staff have huge commitment to their work and are very much focused on optimising outcomes for young people in a NEET situation. However, staff do not always have the requisites skills or knowledge to successfully engage / retain young people who are in a NEET situation, or who are at risk of falling into one. Expertise and multi-disciplinary approaches are essential in order to provide appropriate responses to the complex needs of young people. These issues include mental health issues, drug and alcohol issues, disability needs, lack of motivation and adverse childhood experiences. While many front-line staff do not have a direct role or remit in these domains, a working knowledge of potential issues at play is essential to "make every contact count". Training for frontline staff helps to ensure that they utilise appropriate principles and approaches in their engagement with young people and, crucially, that they support them to make positive decisions and help them to reach the services they need.

e) <u>Recognising Achievement</u>: "Some young people who are NEETs have had a negative experience or have very low self-esteem. Sometimes they will do short courses/programmes, such as pre-development courses which support the development of soft skills. It would help if these courses were recognised by Dept of Education & Dept of Social Protection. For example, give awards/points for turning up or for staying engaged for the whole course/programme. Gaisce Awards are good but a bit too difficult to attain for some young people. There needs to be a recognition of the difficult experiences the young people have been through and that some of them are not as resilient or as quick to bounce back as others and both the young person and their parents need nurturing, an advocate, lots of encouragement and confidence building to reengage productively in society."²⁰

A lot of resources are needed, both financial and human, to integrate every single young person in a NEET situation back into society.²¹



SECTION 5

Re-engaging and Supporting Young People who are in a NEET Situation in County Waterford

AN INTEGRATED SERVICE RESPONSE IN WATERFORD

As young people who are in a NEET situation are a diverse group with different experiences, circumstances and needs, there is no "one-size-fits-all" approach to meeting their needs. The combination of services and supports that are required varies from person to person and, so, it is essential that bespoke, integrated responses are provided at local level to improve outcomes on an individual basis.

It is recognised that many of the programmes and services outlined in Section 3 operate within the context of constrained resources, and that these constraints often impact their capacity to adequately support vulnerable young people. However, as the terms of reference for the study did not include an organisational resource analysis, this chapter does not draw conclusions on where additional resources are required. Instead, it sets out a collaborative model which can be deployed in Waterford to build on and optimise the resources currently available.

The collaborative model aims to bring front-line services together to identify, engage and support young people in a more integrated way. It focuses on harnessing the considerable resources and good practice currently available in County Waterford and, in particular, on harnessing the strengths and assets prevalent within the FET, youth work and community sectors.

Specifically, this chapter proposes an integrated service response through the creation of place-based collaborative task forces. These task forces would provide a mechanism for local organisations to work together in a structured way to put in place supported and seamless pathways for young people in the context of local services, strengths, and resources.

The collaborative model that is set out in this chapter is described under the following headings:

- A) Taking a Place-Based Approach?
- B) Essential Elements of an Integrated Service Response
- C) Learning from a Youth Work Approach
- D) Establishing Place-Based Task Forces
- E) Task Force Stakeholders
- F) Task-Force Programme of Work
- G) Aligning Task Forces with Other Interagency Structures
- H) Measuring Outcomes and Impacts

A. Taking a Place-Based Approach

Place-based working is defined as a person-centred, bottom-up, long-term approach to meeting the unique needs of people in a defined geographic location by working together to use the best available resources and collaboration to gain local knowledge and insight. Crucially, it brings together local organisations and builds strong community relationships to tackle issues.

The most effective place-based approaches involve a diverse group of stakeholders working towards shared outcomes. It recognises that localised, customised approaches are needed to respond to local circumstances. It means that all organisations and agencies focus on the outcomes of a place rather than on individual projects/services. It enables stakeholders to ensure collective responses which are based on a shared knowledge of local challenges and which draw on local assets and resources.

A place-based approach to responding to the needs of young people in a NEET situation offers stakeholders the opportunity to concentrate on the circumstances and realities of a defined "place" – for example Dungarven, Tramore, West Waterford or Ballybeg. By coming together in a place-based (local) taskforce, stakeholders can build on their local knowledge, expertise and networks to build a picture of the scope and nature of the challenge in the "place" and to design bespoke local pathways for young people to existing services and supports.

B. Essential Elements of a Place-Based Integrated Service Response in County Waterford

An integrated service response at local level should be based on the following essential elements which are synopsised in table 17 and described further in table 18:



 Table 17: Essential elements of a place-based integrated service response

Agree on shared principles and objectives

• Agree on shared youth-centred principles and approaches across agencies and organisations.

• These must go beyond words on a page and involve understanding stakeholders' differing roles, services, remits and resources.

Focus on causes not symptoms

• Focus initially on outcomes which relate to relationship-building with young people and on their personal development, rather than focussing exclusively on employment, education and training outcomes.

• Strategies should be aimed at minimising risk factors and maximising protective factors in young person's life.

• Distinguish between different NEET situations and use terminology that accurately reflects the sub-sets of young people. This will help to ensure more targeted responses.



Take an asset-based approach

• Build on strengths in the area by utilising existing resources, personnel, relationships, local knowledge, partnerships, infrastructure and data.

 Focus on building on young people's strengths and assets, recognising their innate skills and talents.



Strengthen coordination between services

• Put systems in place to facilitate structured and systematic interaction and information sharing between organisations, rather than relying on ad-hoc or informal links between personnel.

• Develop agreed ways of referring, signposting and supporting young people between FET, schools, youth services and Intreo services.

• Focus on providing seamless supports, particularly at transition points, by minimising gaps in support and by taking the "one good skilled adult" approach (as outlined in 6 below). In this regard, transitions from school are crucial and should be a key focus.

Build the skills and capacity of staff

• "Make every contact count": through training and support, build the capacity of all front-line staff to use every interaction with young people to support them to make positive decisions and to help them to reach the services they need. (see Hidden Harm model, page 65).

Recognise the importance of "one-good adult"

• "One good adult": ensure every NEET young person has an identifiable "go-to" person to support their journey (e.g. Parent, Sibling, Youth Worker, Key Worker, Teacher, Drugs Worker, Sports Leader). Make this a key plank of the integrated service approach by always asking "who is in a position to build a long-term relationship with this young person?"

• Build in ample time to facilitate meaningful relationship-building. Successful strategies require time and patience.



Meet young people where they are at

• Recognise that NEETS young people have different experiences, needs and hopes. Flexible, individualised approaches are key.

• Identify young people who are in a NEET situation (or at-risk) as early as possible - the longer young people remain in a NEET situation the poorer the outcome.

• Follow the voice of young people and ensure responses are based on meaningful engagement with them. (see appendix 1: Lundy Model of Participation).

8

Promote FET as a valuable option for young people

• Actively promote and showcase FET as a viable and valuable option for young people, with routes and options that are visable and supported. Provide taster courses and shorter programmes to attract young people.



Use data wisely and proportionately

- Strengthen data availability and data sharing between services.
- Use NEET data wisely and disaggregate data by vulnerable sub-groups, where possible.

• Do not allow a lack of specific data on NEETs rates to delay the development of strategies. Use local knowledge and relationships to create a picture of local needs.

 Table 18: Breakdown of essential elements of a place-based service response

C. Learning from the Youth Work Approach

A key tenet of this collaborative model is the application of shared youth-centred principles and approaches by all agencies and organisations involved. These principles and approaches form elements of good youth work practice but can be equally applied in other contexts. A 2015 EU report describes the "blurred borders of youth work and other policies" and asks where youth works stops and other type of activity begin. It argues that youth work is both a distinctive practice and a method that can be used in other contexts. It is characterised not so much by the nature of the activity, but rather the focus on the young person and the context, setting or method. Key approaches in youth work that can be applied across other areas include:

o Active outreach to a young person in need of support

o Flexible, accessible and adaptable interventions and supports that are designed around the young person's needs

o Learning opportunities, goal setting and recognition of achievements

o Safe, supportive environments enable a young person to experience life and to make mistakes

o Autonomy: young people driving their own development

o Partnerships/collaboration with other stakeholders

These approaches should be applied by all stakeholders in a collaborative place-based model, as depicted in figure 6.



Figure 6: Applying youth work principles and approaches in other settings

D. Establishing Place-Based Taskforces

The establishment of placed-based task forces at local level would provide a mechanism to strengthen collaboration between organisations on the ground. It would help to optimise the supports available to young people by strengthening trust, relationships and formal links between service providers on the ground.

The overall objective of the task forces would be to provide a forum for local agencies and organisations to come together in a structured setting to support improved engagement and retention of young people by using an integrated approach to communication, coordination, support, signposting and referrals.

Once established, it is not envisaged that task forces would need to meet more than quarterly. However, in their set-up stage, it would be helpful for them to meet more regularly to put terms of reference in place and to agree a programme of work. In addition, to ensure that task force meetings are efficient and effective, they should be facilitated by an external facilitator who is skilled in collaborative processes. It is also suggested that WWETB take responsibility for convening task force meetings, in recognition of their intersectional role in FET, youth work and post-primary education. To facilitate the development of good practice and the sharing of learning, it may be helpful to establish one task force in a selected town on a pilot basis in the first year, before expanding the model across the county.

E. Taskforce Stakeholders

Task force membership should comprise staff from organisations that engage with vulnerable young people in the area. Membership should be drawn from the services available locally, such as:

- ETB FET Providers (e.g. Youthreach, LTI, BTEI)
- Schools (Principals, School Completion Programme, Home School Community Liaison)
- Local Youth Work Providers
- Intreo Office
- Family Resource Centres
- Youth Justice Programmes
- Local Development Companies (SICAP)
- Other Community-Based Organisations

It is essential that task forces are actively promoted and supported by senior management across stakeholder organisations to ensure that an integrated service response to NEETs is embedded into organisational policies, strategies and practices, rather than remaining largely ad-hoc and informal.

F. Taskforce Programme of Work

Task force programmes of work should be based around the core aim of developing clear, supported and consistent pathways between agencies and organisations, bearing in mind that pathways are not necessarily linear or continuous. Table 19 sets out a suggested programme of work:

IDENTIFY	Using local knowledge and networks, work to identify young people in a NEET situation in the area
BUILD	Build a picture of the circumstances and needs of young people who are in a NEET situation in the area (within GDPR parameters)
МАР	Develop a map / database of the resources, services, supports and facilities available in the area and easily accessible outside the area
GAPS	Identify and document gaps in, and limitations to, resources, services, supports and facilities in the area.
PATHWAYS	Design supported and seamless pathways to ensure that young people are supported to reach the services that meets their needs. These pathways should be based on robust signposting, linkages, communication, referrals and coordination between stakeholders.
SKILLS	Organise training for front-line staff to improve their skills and capacity to engage effectively with young people and to "make every contact count" (e.g. trauma-informed practice, motivational interviewing)
DOCUMENT AND LEARN	Document the process, capture and share good practice between stakeholders.

Table 19: Key elements of task force programme of work

G. Alignment with Existing Structures

Place-based NEET taskforces should operate in the context of existing interagency structures and fora in Waterford. In doing so, they have the potential to act as a vehicle for realising interagency objectives relating to hard-to-reach young people. In particular, Waterford CYPSC and Waterford Local Community Development Committees (LCDC) play a key role to supporting a more joined-up approach to service delivery. At a practical level, CYPSC and LCDC strategies could support an integrated service response to the needs of young people in a NEET situation by including actions to support the work of task forces in their strategies.

Examples of other key structures are set out in figure 7.



Figure 7: Key interagency structures in Waterford

H. Understanding and Measuring Outcomes

By understanding and measuring outcomes, organisations can demonstrate their achievements, identify challenges, capture learning and improve their services. A shared approach to measuring outcomes can make it easier for organisations to share learning, optimise resources and build an evidence base on what works. The Journey to Employment (JET) Framework²³ helps organisations to understand and measure the impact they have on a young person's journey to employment. It identifies seven groups of factors that contribute to successful job outcomes for young people: personal circumstances; emotional capabilities; attitudes to work; employability skills; qualifications, education and training; experience and involvement; and career management skills. Figure 8 represents theses seven factors and provides a number of indicators under each factor.

The JET Framework places equal importance on outcomes relating to personal circumstances, emotional capabilities and attitudes, as it does to qualifications and employment. This is of critical importance to this place-based collaborative model.

JOURNEY TO EMPLOYMENT FRAMEWORK (JET)



EXTERNAL FACTOR: THE LABOUR MARKET

EMOTIONAL CAPABILITIES

- Self-esteem
- Autonomy and control
- Grit and determination
- Empathy
- Creativity

ATTITUDES

- Aspirations
- Attitudes to work

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

- Teamwork
- Communication
- Problem solving
- Self-management
- Leadership
- Business and customer awareness

PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

- Access to transpor
- Access to internet
- Access to childcare
- Access to support for young carersAccess to support for disabled
- people
- Reduced substance abuse
- Reduced offending/anti-social behaviour

QUALIFICATIONS, EDUCTAION & TRAINING

- Basic skills
- Achieving qualifications
- Attendance and behaviour
- **EXPERIENCE & INVOLVEMENT**
- Work experience
- Perception of value of work
- experience
- Networks
- Community involvement
- CAREER MANAGEMENT
- Career direction
- Job search skills
- Presentation to employers

EMPLOYMENT

- Entry into employment
- Sustaining employment
- Quality of employment
- Satisfaction with employment

Figure 8: Journey to Employment Framework

LEARNING FROM OTHER MODELS

The initiatives listed below provide examples of approaches used nationally and in other areas of the country to improve outcomes for vulnerable young people (FOLM, Foundation 4 Life, Planet Youth) or to ensure more joined-up approaches at local level (Hidden Harm). The examples are included in this report in order to prompt discussion between stakeholders in Waterford on how best to support the improved engagement and retention of young people who are in a NEET situation in their area.

FOLM: From Outdoor to Labour Market (Technical University of the Shannon)

The From Outdoors to Labour Market (FOLM) project is focused on an innovative education approach to addressing the needs of young people in a NEET situation. The concept behind the FOLM learning experience is to motivate and encourage young people into taking up studies or the labour market by participating in an outdoor learning programme. The programme is free and open to young people, aged between 18 and 29 years old, who are not in employment or education. After seven days in the wilderness, participants then begin work with a coach who helps them to return to education, training or employment. The outdoor learning model blueprint was designed by the University of Edinburgh, who with the support of the Venture Trust, have implemented the programme there for more than ten years with positive results.

https://www.folmweb.com/en/

Foundation 4 Life, Mayo www.foundation4life.ie

Foundation 4 Life (F4L) is a transformative education, life skills, and job activation programme for young people aged 18-25 who are not engaged in employment, education, or training in Co Mayo. It is run over two days a week for 14 weeks. The programme's modules impact three domains of development: confidencebuilding, life skills and job readiness. Equal importance is placed on supporting the young people to progress across all three domains. F4L ensures the sustained participation of participants on the programme with one-to-one coaching and significant social supports, including contributions to childcare and travel and the provision of nutritious meals. F4L is grounded in the core conditions of the person-centred approach including genuineness, empathy and unconditional positive regard. This approach creates a safe, inclusive, fun, transformative environment. F4L was designed by South West Mayo Development Company and Western Region Drug and Alcohol Task Force. It is supported by a partnership of local who form the programme's Steering Committee, including Mayo Local Employment Service, Mayo County Council, Mayo Sports Partnership, Mayo Sligo Leitrim Education Training Board and Irish Association for the Social Integration of Offender / Probation.

Hidden Harm

In 2019, Tusla and the HSE's published the Hidden Harm Strategic Statement and Practice Guide with the In 2019, Tusla and the HSE's published the Hidden Harm Strategic Statement and Practice Guide with the aim of creating a more joined-up approach to supporting families impacted by drug and alcohol issues. The documents provide guidance on strengthening services in a structured, strategic and evidence-based manner. They apply to all voluntary and community groups funded by Tusla and HSE, including Drug and Alcohol Task Forces and their funded projects. They are also relevant to all agencies supporting children and families

experiencing problems associated with parental alcohol and other drug use. They provide for improvements across four areas: Policy and Strategy; Procedure and Practice; Workforce Training, Development and Support. Implementing a local Hidden Harm model requires joint leadership by Tusla and the HSE with the aim of galvanising stakeholders to integrate the model into mainstream local policy, strategy and practice. It requires all agencies to commit to improving partnership working and to recognise their respective roles and responsibilities. https://www.tusla.ie/publications/hidden-harm

Planet Youth

Planet Youth is an international evidence-based programme developed by the Icelandic Centre for Social Research and Analysis (ICSRA) at Reykjavik University. It was developed as a drug and alcohol prevention programme and aims to enhance young people's relationships, lifestyles, environment and wellbeing. It is based on a primary prevention approach which means preventing problems before they arise by diverting young people away from alcohol and drug use. An evidence base is created by, firstly, understanding the contributors to drug and alcohol use and then, by reducing risk factors and strengthening protective factors in young people's lives. At its core Planet Youth is about investing in young people's health and wellbeing, increasing their engagement in structured leisure activities and cultivating healthy relationships between them and the adults in their lives.

Planet Youth is founded on partnership, collaboration and community involvement. It emphasises that all sectors of society play a role in creating an environment where young people are active, healthy, happy and can achieve their potential. Stakeholders include: Parents, Schools, Community and Voluntary Organisations, the Education and Training Board, Health Service Executive, the Local Authority, Local Government, Tusla, Children and Young People's Services Committees, An Garda Síochána, Drug and Alcohol Task Forces, Local Development Company, Sports Partnership, Sport and Recreation Groups, Third Level Institutions, Government Departments and Agencies. www.planetyouth.ie

Appendix 1: Lundy Model of Participation

A child or young person's right to have their views heard in the decision-making process is enshrined in Article 12(1) of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by Ireland in 1992. In 2019, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs adopted the Lundy Model of Participation (Lundy 2007), which is grounded in Article 12, as its preferred model of practice. Tusla has also adopted this model to underpin its approach and training in participatory practice. The term 'participation' means the involvement of children and young people in decision-making on issues that affect their lives. It provides that: Lundy (2007) developed an important model for understanding Article 12, which is intended to focus decision-makers on all four elements of the provision (see below). 'State Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.'



This model provides a way of conceptualising Article 12 of the UNCRC which is intended to focus educational decision-making on the distinct, albeit interrelated, elements of the provision. The four elements have a rational chronological order:

Space: Children must be given safe, inclusive opportunities to form and express their view.

Voice: Children must be facilitated to express their view.

Audience: Children must be listened to.

Influence: The view must be acted upon, as appropriate.



ciste na gcuntas díomhaoin the dormant accounts fund



An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais, Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth