

# Western Traveller & Intercultural Development

Community Resource & Youth Service Provider



## Annual Report 2021

*Tuam women among first Traveller students to complete  
NUI Galway access project*



## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Primary Health Care .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Youth Work.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>STAR Tuam.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Tuam Community Childcare Centre .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Agency collaboration .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Our Funders .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Organisations &amp; Clubs based in our premises .....</b>	<b>36</b>

## Introduction

Although COVID-19 was still very much a part of all our lives in 2021, here at Western Traveller and Intercultural Development (WTID) we began a careful and evaluated return to our normal working practices, containing with our mission to help all in the community of Tuam, with both the ongoing challenges of COVID-19 and the everyday problems and difficulty faced by the Traveller Community in Tuam and its surrounding area.

The following report sets out the many ways in which all members of staff worked in an integrated way on many projects and initiatives to help assist and facilitate the people of Tuam and the surrounding area. As always, a notable characteristic of WTID is a teamwork approach.

All members of the staff work in a combined way on many projects and initiatives, some of which may be additional to their direct roles. This team approach adds value to the work of a small organisation where different skills are maximised for the benefit of the community. WTID maintains a focus on the needs of the community as its primary motivation for action. The organisation has developed and cultivated a range of mutually beneficial relationships with a variety of service providers that has ensured the continuing of funding and a partnership approach to work.

This year's Annual Report is design in a slightly different way, but still set out the accomplishments of the organisation in 2021.

Caroline Connor  
Chairperson

## Primary Health Care



Health as an area of work is one of the most significant for WTID. The overall aim of WTID's Primary Healthcare Programme (PHC) is to improve the health status and quality of life for Travellers in Tuam and its environs by identifying the community's specific health requirements and the necessary health service provision. WTID implements one of the most successful PHC Programmes in the country and currently employs seven Community Health Workers (CHW's) on a part time basis.

At the start of April 2021, the PHC team was joined by its new PHC Co-ordinator Charlotte Riviere, although Charlotte arrived at a testing time she has fitted in seamlessly.

### COVID-19

The PHC team has continue on with its excellent work of 2020 helping all members of the community on behalf of WTID regarding COVID-19 and other health matters.



Registered Company No: 267495

Charitable Registration No. 20026431

## Care packs for the over 50's

PHC and Childcare staff worked on a Galway County Council grant application to get funding for care packs for the over 50's in the community. The PHC team identified all eligible people from the community and packed a total of 60 bags, which included food items, cleaning products and magazines. Health promotion literature around gentle physical activity and Age Action programmes were also added, along with Covid-19 related information. The packs were delivered by the CHWs.



Registered Company No: 267495

Charitable Registration No. 20026431



## 'About Me' Project

This project involved the development of a youth advisory committee, and the creation of an art booklet exploring and reflecting on Travellers' culture, identity and experience in contemporary Ireland.

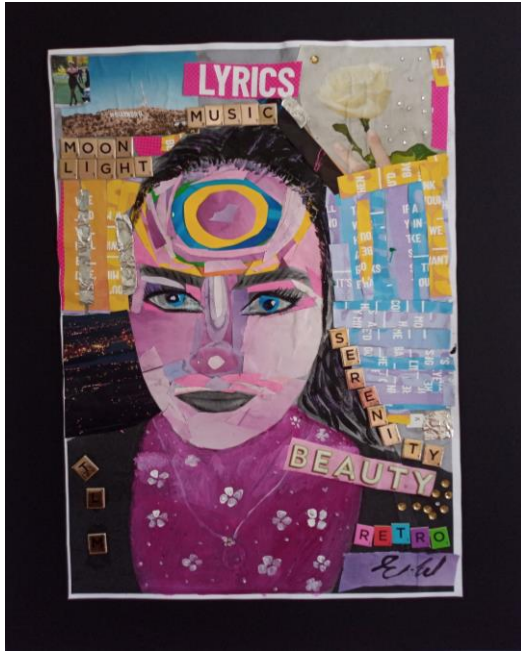
The role of the committee evolves around advocacy for young Travellers on the issues that impact their life opportunities and health, including but not limited to education and discrimination.

The artwork created for the booklet included self-portraits and a wire sculpture, facilitated by artist Martina Passman. The portraits were displayed in Tuam Town Hall and Galway City library and received much coverage both in local newspapers (Tuam Herald and the Galway Advertiser) and on social media. The booklet also included work made as part as different projects delivered by the STAR team, such as photos exploring the themes of school and discrimination, and texts written by children talking about themselves.



Registered Company No: 267495

Charitable Registration No. 20026431



 Pavée Point Retweeted

 **Dr Sindy Joyce** @SindyLJoyce · Oct 2

Grace Ward and Ella Ward had their artwork displayed in the 'About Me' exhibition in Tuam Town Hall this evening. The artwork was created by members of the Bru Bhríde Youth Group [#TravellerPrideWeek](#)  
Photos by Mercy Tuam



 8     29     325    

## Traveller Wellbeing Competition - Mental Health Ireland

Children from the STAR project took part in an art competition run by Mental Health Ireland, the longest established mental health charity in Ireland, whose work involves promoting positive mental health.

The competition was based on the Five Ways to Well-Being, which are things we can do every day to mind ourselves and keep well. These are: Connect, Be Active, Take Notice, Keep Learning and Give.

The children learned about and discussed the Five Ways to Well-Being before producing some beautiful artwork based on one of the themes.

Charlie Ward, Michael Martin Ward, Katie Sweeney, Crystal Sweeney, Rosaleen Ward, Ella Ward, Brianna Ward and Megan Ward were some of the winners of this Traveller Well-Being competition, and received a one-for-all voucher as well as their art printed into postcards.



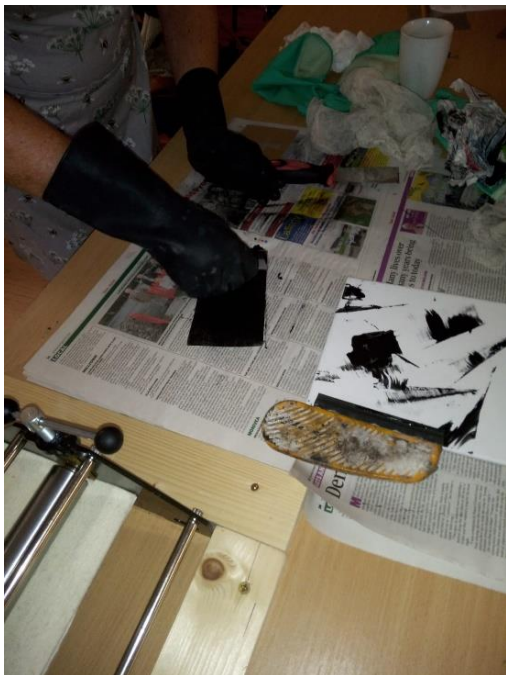
Registered Company No: 267495

Charitable Registration No. 20026431



## Etching Workshop

The PHC team organised 2 etching workshops around the theme of Traveller culture, which was facilitated by artist Martina Passman. During these workshops, a group of women learned how to print a design by incising lines into a metal plate and passing it through an ink press. The group's artwork was displayed in Tuam City Hall during the month of July.



## Vaccine clinics

The PHC Programme successfully facilitated 3 Covid-19 vaccination clinics in Bru Bhríde's facilities, in partnership with the HSE. A total of 207 vaccine shots were given throughout these clinics.



## PPE delivery

The CHWs delivered 267 PPE packs ahead of the Christmas break, which included masks and hand sanitizers provided by the HSE.



Registered Company No: 267495

Charitable Registration No. 20026431

## Mental Health First Aid – Mental Health First Aid Ireland

CHWs Bridget Ward and Mary Ward, PHC Coordinator Charlotte Riviere and Youth Worker Adrienne Lynch successfully completed the Mental Health First Aid training delivered by Mental Health First Aid Ireland.



## Traveller Christmas Creativity competition – Mental Health Ireland

CHW Bridget Ward entered the Traveller Christmas Creativity competition organised by Mental Health Ireland supporting Traveller Arts and Crafts as part of a creative wellbeing session, and used her amazing skills in making traditional paper flowers to create a beautiful artwork.

Bridget won first prize under the adult craft category.



Registered Company No: 267495

Charitable Registration No. 20026431

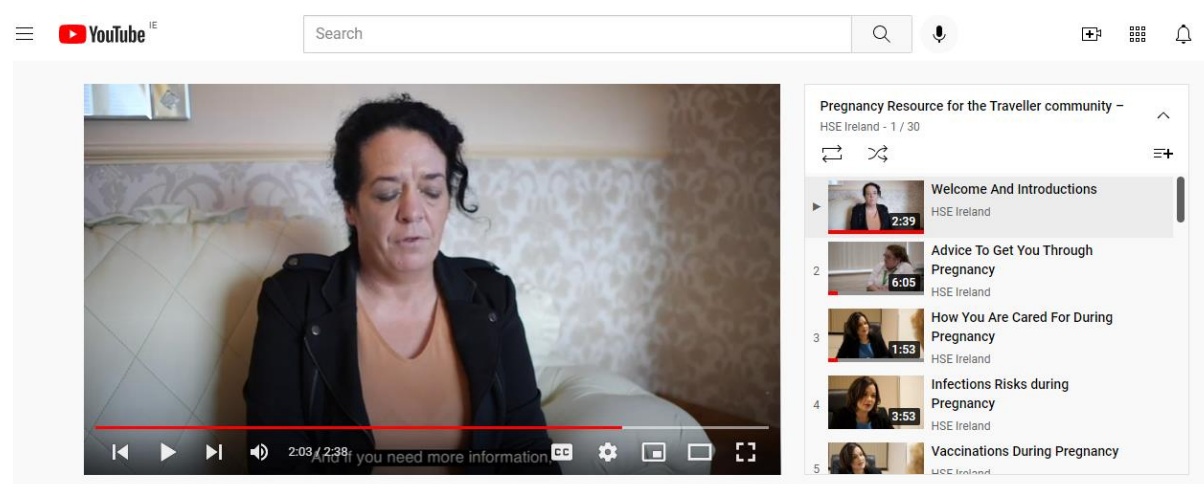
## Traveller Midwifery and Gynea Group

The Traveller Midwifery and Gynea Group continued to meet over 2021. The purpose of this group is to build links, share resources and information to improve the health outcomes for Traveller mothers and their babies using the Maternity service at UHG.

## Traveller Pregnancy Resource

CHW Kathleen Ward took part in the development of a Traveller Pregnancy Resource – Beoir/Feen /n Goyla (Woman, Mother/ Man, Father /Baby) launched by the THU Community Healthcare West to help address possible literacy issues when trying to access information on pregnancy.

Thirty short videos have been developed by members of the Traveller community, Community Health Workers, Traveller Health Projects and health care professionals in Community Healthcare West. Each video clip details a different stage of pregnancy.



## Courses

The PHC project hosted a number of courses delivered by GRD, including 1st aid Responder and Door Security. The project provided support in terms of access to laptops and internet to participants where necessary.

## Health Promotion

The main focus of the PHC programme work continues to be health promotion and signposting to relevant service and agencies around health screening, support and intervention. The work of the PHC team in 2021 also involved outreach work related to cervical check, breast check, mental health, diabetes and cardiovascular health, to name but a few.

Registered Company No: 267495

Charitable Registration No. 20026431



## Youth Work



**Bru Bhride**

Western Traveller Intercultural Development

*Working with Travellers and Connecting Communities*

Youth Project currently employ one staff member with the support of 2 CE scheme workers and 2 TÚS who started in October. There are a small group of Volunteers which consists of 6 people.

Even with COVID-19 still on going the youth work team continue to be there for the young people of Tuam, adapting to the situation while following the COVID-19 guideline by using a variety of online platforms, technology and when permitted they began to run youth clubs and group activities. Packs were drop of to young people who were unable to attend the programs.

They continued to update Facebook/Instagram/Twitter on a regular bases with videos and information on the impacts of COVID-19, helpline and online activities.

As well as the ongoing youth groups and events, there were youth clubs for differed age groups, music lessons, art classes, dance classes, and walking groups.

Youth work linked with both the STAR project and NUIG on various projects. They were successful in getting a part-time education out reach worker with the Mincéirs Misl'd in Education Project in NUIG.

Youth work were very involved in the "About Me" project, working with groups of Saturdays, arranging the display in the Town Hall and the self-portraits.

Registered Company No: 267495

Charitable Registration No. 20026431

## Summer program

This year a summer program was run over July/August. The first of the programmes started at the Glebe from Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> July from 12 noon -3 pm. Then a boy's group aged 14yrs to 17yrs met every Thursday during the month of July from 2pm - 4 pm. Soccer was held every Mondays for young men.



Registered Company No: 267495

Charitable Registration No. 20026431

## Hockey

On the 13th July, 22 young people took part in some hockey games.



Registered Company No: 267495

Charitable Registration No. 20026431



## National arts competition.



Registered Company No: 267495

Charitable Registration No. 20026431



## Tree planting

The youth group planted 60 trees at the allotments Parkmore. The trees that were planted are Oak, Birch, Hazel, copper beech, blackthorn, Holly, Irish Yew, mountain ash. The trees were supplies by Murphy Garden Centre and supported by the social inclusion unit Galway County Council.



Registered Company No: 267495

Charitable Registration No. 20026431

## Mental Health Art Completion

Some young people won an arts competition in relation to youth mental health, they received a €100 voucher and 100 cards printed of their drawings.



Registered Company No: 267495

Charitable Registration No. 20026431

## STAR Tuam



The NTRIS Tuam pilot project is a joint initiative of the Department of Education and Skills, the Department of Justice and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. This pilot project is one of many initiatives that has developed from the National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy (NTRIS) 2017 - 2021. The overarching objective of the project is to improve the attendance, participation and retention of Traveller children and young people in the Tuam area. The Tuam pilot project is made up of four staff members. Bridget Ward and Martin Ward are Education Workers, Erin Conway is a Home School Community Liaison Coordinator and Deirdre Swords is an Educational Welfare Officer. The pilot has 3 key goals. The pilot team are currently consulting with key stakeholders around these 3 goals and this survey forms part of that consultation.

### Supporting Travellers and Roma

The Pilot has 3 Overarching Goals that in turn direct the team

#### **Goal 1**

Students – To improve the learning experience and outcomes for Traveller and Roma students in schools in the pilot areas.

#### **Goal 2**

Parents and Guardians – To improve parental/guardian engagement with the school community and foster an appreciation of the value of education among Traveller and Roma communities.

#### **Goal 3**

Schools – To improve attendance, participation and retention with the aim of improving the educational outcomes of Traveller and Roma Students.

## About Me Project

This project was a joint one with PHC and Youth Work it has been funded by Tusla. It involved working with a group of young people from the Traveller Community aged between 11yrs and 18yrs of age.

At the start a discussion was held with the young people about what the About Me Project would mean to each of them. During these discussions the young people spoke about the challenges they face in society today as members of the Traveller Community, their dreams and aspirations, the decline of their culture, their plans for college education, careers, family and more. Lots of ideas and thoughts surfaced and the young people decided they would like to do some kind of portraiture, as this would make the project more personal and unique to each of them. This cumulated in a public exhibition of their work being shown in Tuam Town hall and Galway City Library. The young people then move on to an etching workshop which gave them a new artistic skill, they later when on to make Christmas Cards using this skill. The final part of the project was Proud To Be Me stories.



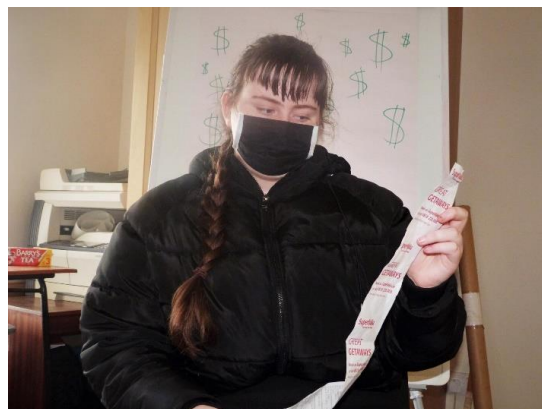
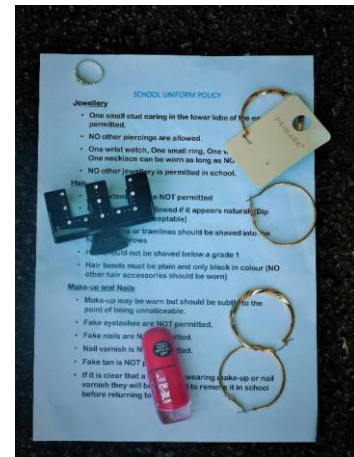
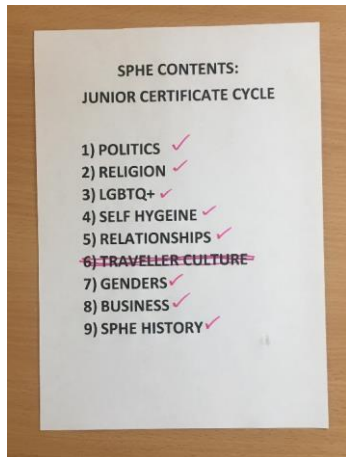
Registered Company No: 267495

Charitable Registration No. 20026431



## Proud2bme Photography Project

This was a four week photography project where a group of young Traveller girls showcased the barriers they experience in education and the workforce. The girls completely led this project, and came up with all of their own ideas, which empowered them and promoted their leadership qualities and group cohesion. This project was a great success with 6 young Traveller girls participating.



Registered Company No: 267495

Charitable Registration No. 20026431

## Cyanotype Printing Project

This 4-week project was facilitated by local artist Martina Passman. The Tusla Youth funded this project. This project was led by education workers Eimile Gavin and Bridget-Marie Ward. This was an enjoyable project where a group of youths gained new photography skills and also the unique opportunity to engage in cyanotype printing.

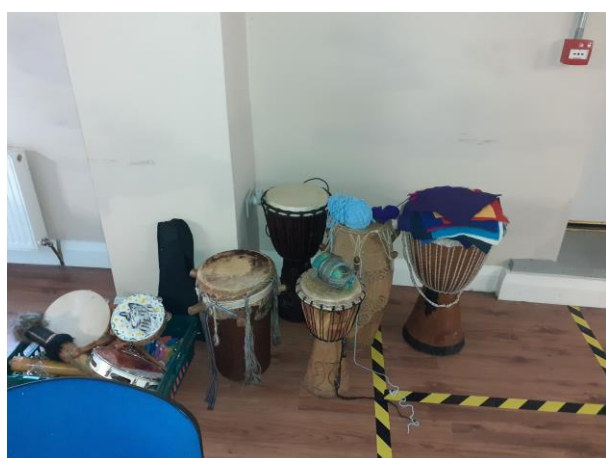


Registered Company No: 267495

Charitable Registration No. 20026431

## Labyrinth Project

This project ran for 8 weeks. It focused on the physical and mental wellbeing of the participants, it did this by using a holistic approach. Through the medium of various art forms, the participants were encouraged to express their feelings. This was accomplished by using workshops, performances and discussions to help reduce stigma and break down silences surrounding mental health. There were 6 participants in total on the programme.



Registered Company No: 267495

Charitable Registration No. 20026431





Registered Company No: 267495

Charitable Registration No. 20026431



## Boyzone Introduction to Health and Fitness.

This was a six-week Traveller Youth Healthy Lifestyle Group targeted at Traveller males aged 14yrs to 17yrs. Topics covered - basic nutrition, what is a healthy diet, participants did practical cookery sessions and physical health sessions which involve sampling various physical activity. These sessions incorporate a wellbeing approach with each session focusing on the development of soft skills around confidence, group talk, mind your head and circle time. The course content was based on the most up-to-date healthy eating guidelines from the Department of Health (Healthy Food Made Easy Programme) and was in line with Department of Education and Skills 'Wellbeing Guidelines' that were developed for the re-opening of Schools in September 2020 with Covid in mind. The programme was delivered by local fitness instructor and motivational speaker Michael Turner. Each week Michael began each session with circle time, then he proceeded to facilitate a fitness class in Brú Bhríde, followed by a healthy eating cooking demonstrated. Up to 20 different youths attended this project over the course.



Registered Company No: 267495

Charitable Registration No. 20026431

## Girls Zone

This was a six-week targeted project with seven Traveller girls who were in first year at the Mercy secondary school in Tuam. This project was a joint initiative between the Educational Welfare Officer and the STAR project. The aims of this project were to provide a safe space for the girls to build the capacity to be able to express their views, and develop skills so they can communicate these views with self-esteem, and confidence. It also aimed to facilitate a space between them and the key people in their life – parents / Year Heads where they could express their views, be heard and taken seriously. The final session was a day trip in Galway City.



## Women's Crochet

This was a four-week beginners crochet course for women. Due to COVID it was decided that this project would be a small group of six participants. Six packs containing the necessary equipment to complete the project were delivered to the women and they sent weekly updates and a picture of the finish piece.



## Easter hampers

These were done as part of a four-week Arts and Crafts project with a group of 6 young people, the project was delivered remotely due to COVID. The STAR team delivered packs to the 6 young people and every week they sent in the finish pieces. It proved to be a great way to engage with the young people and for help with their mental wellbeing.



Registered Company No: 267495

Charitable Registration No. 20026431



## IT-Hub Painting Mural

Painting of IT-Hub Mural by STAR parents and children, with local artist Jed.



Registered Company No: 267495

Charitable Registration No. 20026431



## Tuam Community Childcare Centre



Tuam Community Childcare Centre is community-based and is currently owned and managed by WTID. The Management Committee of WTID is responsible for the overall operation of the childcare service, ensuring that the service operates in a manner that is compliant with statutory regulations and with the ethos of the childcare service and WTID.

Tuam Community Childcare Centre provides an enriching and challenging educational environment, where each child is encouraged to grow to his or her fullest potential academically, socially, and emotionally. We strive to provide a welcoming, calm, and caring environment where children can play and learn at their own pace, making discoveries and choices for themselves along the way. Our aim is to provide a childcare programme, which promotes optimal development for each child, supports parents, upholds best practices of early childhood care and education, and promotes collaborations that help all children realise their potential.

To achieve this WTID works in partnership with parents, staff, and children, by providing a secure learning environment, which enables children to be happy, confident, and independent and to have positive and productive experiences during their time with the service.

### Description of Service

Tuam Community Childcare Centre is based in Parkmore Estate, Tuam, Galway H54V663. and caters for children between the ages of 1year to 15 years. The service operates from Monday to Friday from 9a.m. to 6.30 p.m. daily.

Registered Company No: 267495

Charitable Registration No. 20026431

## Inspected by

The service is affiliated with Galway City and County Childcare Committee and is a member of Early Childhood Ireland. Tuam Community Childcare Centre is inspected by Tusla, Pobal, (DES (Department of Education and Skills)) Department of Education and Skills, the (HSE) Health and Safety Authority

## Educational Methods

Tuam Community Childcare Centre follows the guidelines from the Department of Education, for the Inclusion of children through the Aistear/Siolta practices Guide (2015). Aistear, the National Curriculum Framework (2009). Siolta, the National Quality Framework (2006)



## Support Services Include

- Early Intervention Team
- Better Start Aims
- Speech & Language Therapist
- Psychologist
- Public Health Nurse
- TUSLA Family Support Workers
- Pre-School Liaison worker

Tuam Community Childcare would also work closely with Trinity Primary for the Transition of all children to the National School.

Registered Company No: 267495

Charitable Registration No. 20026431

## Facilities

- Purpose-built Childcare Centre
- Open 5 days a week. Monday – Friday
- ECCE (Early Childhood Care and Education) Scheme – 38 weeks
- CCSP Scheme – 46 weeks
- (NCS) National Childcare Scheme
- Secure entrance
- Outdoor play areas
- Full-time/part-time/sessional service
- 5 Fully equipped Pre-school rooms
- 5 Rooms for Afterschool
- Bus collection and drop off service for children attending both morning and afterschool
- Own Allotments

## Staff

All Staff are Garda Vetted and are qualified in (Level 6) Early Childhood Education, two staff are qualified as LINC Inclusion Coordinators. Four staff have SNA (Special Needs Assistance) (level 6) qualifications, Staff are trained in First Aid Response, Fire Safety, Children First, Manual Handling.

Kitchen staff are trained in Food Safety and Hygiene.

## Objectives

Tuam Community Childcare Centre aims to promote the values of Diversity, Equality and Inclusion for all children attending the setting. By providing a safe and secure environment for the children and families to feel that they are included in the setting. By having policies and procedures to follow and working in partnership with children, parents, and families for the holistic development of all children. TCCC recognizes and values that all children are unique and will develop and learn at their own rate. TCCC believes in working in partnership with outside agencies that may be involved with children and families for the best outcomes for all children in our setting.

## Mission Statement and Ethos

We at Tuam Community Childcare Centre are committed to providing excellent standards of care for the holistic development of each child. By providing a warm, friendly, safe, and caring environment, we aspire to challenge and stimulate children to develop to their full potential through play, learning, interactions, and experiences that are age and stage appropriate.

Registered Company No: 267495

Charitable Registration No. 20026431

## Afterschool's Programme

We cater for children between the ages of 4.5 years to 15 years. The service operates from Monday to Friday, from 1.30 p.m. to 6.30 p.m. we collect children by Bus at Trinity Primary School, Tuam. @ 1:30pm and 2:30pm. Children are dropped home at 5:30 pm and 6:30 pm. Homework is supervision they will get a nutritious dinner and have fully supervised access to the outdoor play areas. Our Afterschool rooms have a variety of games and activities for the children. Children from other schools are welcome, however transport must be arranged by the parents. All children must be collected by 6:30 pm



## National Play Day.

Galway County Councils National Play Day supported our project in running a kitchen garden activity. The aim of this project was to grow a food revolution from the ground up, changing the way children and their parents approach and think about food. We got children actively involved by getting their hands dirty, learning how to grow healthy harvest. The activity brought a wide range of benefits of pleasurable food education to its students, their families and the wider community. We built invaluable knowledge and understanding of food and of the integral role it plays in our physical and social well-being, planting the seeds for a lifetime of positive eating habits and enjoyment of food. The garden activity provided a real life context for learning which interweaves the theories and practices behind growing, harvesting, preparing and sharing nutritious and fresh seasonal foods. Students were given the opportunity to discover the pleasures of hands-on food education, through regular classes in a productive vegetable garden. The creation and care of the garden taught students about the natural world, its wonders and how to cultivate and care for it.

One of the off-shoots of the project was the sense of community that was built when students, teachers and friends of the service have a common project to work on.

Registered Company No: 267495

Charitable Registration No. 20026431





Registered Company No: 267495

Charitable Registration No. 20026431

## Agency collaboration

Western Traveller perceive collaboration as a key component of Community Development and this approach was one of the main approaches taken in the work of the organisation during such a difficult year. “Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much”.

Throughout the year Western Traveller ensured there was an up-to-date list of local organisations that support work with Travellers and the project. Western Traveller continued to work with relevant agencies throughout this time. Such agencies as:

- Health Service Executive (HSE)
- Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board (GRETB)
- Galway Rural Development Company Ltd (GRD)
- Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA)
- TUSLA (Child and Family Agency)
- Youthreach
- Dept. of Social Protection
- Galway City & Childcare Committee
- Galway County Council
- Public Participation Network (PPN)

Representation was made at other agency teleconferences:

- Traveller Health Unit
- Tusla
- Galway Co Council and Family Support Network,
- GRD
- Local Schools
- County Childcare.

Throughout the year Western Traveller engaged with Traveller families who were homeless, experienced addiction issues, living in overcrowded conditions and or living on poorly serviced halting sites and deal with issues with the relevant services such as Galway County Council.

Worked with the Galway County Council on behalf of Families who had no access/ shared access to water, sanitation or electricity.

Work with families on the Halting Site and the Galway County Council to ensure safe clean hot running water to enable regular hand-washing was available.

Supported families that experienced over-crowding and lack of space to self-isolate in their homes. Western Traveller brought these issues to the relevant services.

Western Traveller's Primary Health Care programme worked again in 2021 with the Traveller Mental Health Co-Ordinator in order to continue to responded to the potential trauma caused if members of the Traveller community passed away as a result of the COVID-19 coronavirus and/or die from unrelated COVID-19 issues due to the usual traditional funeral practice being limited by the COVID 19 Public Health restrictions.

Western Traveller continued working in collaboration with the COVID-19 Galway Council Community Response Forum if a vulnerable member of the community, those living alone or cocooning required access to or deliveries of groceries, medicine and fuels i.e., collecting medication, food shopping, social support and contact.

Collaboration with Public Health has again been a major part of the year for Western Traveller to ensure COVID-19 outbreaks in the within the Traveller Community were dealt with in a controlled manner, providing supports and keeping individuals informed.



## Our Funders

We would like to thank all our funders and volunteers with out whom this project would not be as successful as it is.

### Main Funders

HSE



**Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe**  
**Galway County Council**



**Galway Childcare Committee**  
**Coiste Cúram Leanai na Gaillimhe**



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

Registered Company No: 267495

Charitable Registration No. 20026431



## Organisations & Clubs based in our premises

Citizen Information Services (Downstairs in the main building)	Tuesday – Friday	11am – 4pm
Seetec Employment Services (Upstairs in the main building)	Monday – Friday	9am – 5pm
Narcotics Anonymous (Upstairs in the main building)	Monday and Friday	8pm – 9pm
Alcoholics Anonymous (Harmony Hall)	Mon/Wed/Fri	1pm – 2pm
The Women’s Shed Cairde Mná (Harmony Hall)	Tuesday	7pm -9pm
Gamblers Anonymous (Upstairs in the main building)	Wednesday	8pm – 9pmpm
Gibbons Farrell Spellman Academy Irish Dance (during school term times) (Harmony Hall)	Wednesday	5pm – 8:30pm

Simon Community

Parkmore Community House

Parkmore

Clients would be met on an appointment basis.

Anyone seeking an appointment should contact the following number: 0909631634.



Registered Company No: 267495

Charitable Registration No. 20026431