

## **Background Information:**

The purpose of the STATUS Toolkit is to provide a Quality Assurance (QA) Framework whereby youth work organisations can engage in a process of self-evaluation and agree a Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) to support their youth work practices to be more inclusive of members of the Traveller community. This will help to achieve the best possible outcomes for the engagement, participation and retention of young people from the Traveller community in their projects and activities

## **Context:**

After decades of marginalisation and discrimination, a significant number of the Traveller community still experience racism, discrimination, marginalisation, internalised oppression and a lack of real opportunities to progress personally, socially, emotionally and economically with their settled counterparts. This often results in low self-esteem and low self-confidence when operating outside the safety of their community and environment. For example, the 'All Ireland Traveller Health Study' (2010) found that Travellers are six times more likely to die by suicide than non-Travellers; and 56% of Travellers said that poor physical and mental health restricted their normal daily activities compared to 24% of the GMS population.

From the current life experiences of the Traveller community, organisations and individuals working with the Traveller community will need to take extra and repetitive steps to create the conditions for societal change and organisational excellence in this area. Travellers themselves will require additional supports as they are not a homogenous group but rather broad and diverse with tailored needs and issues.

## **Benefits & Outcomes of Using the STATUS Toolkit**

By endeavouring to create a welcoming and empowering social environment for young people from the Traveller Community, organisations will create the

conditions so as young Travellers will participate fully and advance with confidence and ready to engage fully in society. By utilising the STATUS Toolkit and agreeing actions, a youth organisation is taking strategic steps within their services which will ensure better outcomes for Travellers in their personal life and in society at large. The step-by-step guide will facilitate and create an organisational best practice approach in the engagement, participation and retention of Traveller young people in mainstream youth services. The engagement, participation and retention of Young Travellers lie firmly with the service provider. Having an open-door policy or treating everybody equally is not enough to create equality, this requires proactive and deliberate planning to ensure better equality of outcomes for young Travellers. The STATUS Toolkit Quality Assurance Framework reflects the models used within the youth sector for self-assessment and continuous improvement across the island of Ireland.