



# STATEMENT OF STRATEGY 2020-2024



HERE FOR **YOUTH**

# WELCOME

Waterford & South Tipperary Community Youth Service provides an Integrated Community Youth Service response to support and enhance the lives of children and young people in the context of their own community. The catchment of the region served by the organisation includes Waterford City and County as well as part of south Tipperary extending as far as Cahir and environs. W.S.T.C.Y.S. serves to respond to the complex needs of young people as a priority, and in addition, to adults in their community who require specific supports, such as those affected by substance misuse. Where possible our approach is to build a community based response in partnership with local people. Following extensive consultation and engagement with its stakeholders, the Board of W.S.T.C.Y.S. has prepared this Statement of Strategy 2020 – 2024, identifying its priorities for the next five years.

## ABOUT W.S.T.C.Y.S.

Waterford & South Tipperary Community Youth Service was established in 1969 and finds its original roots in Youth Club Work. How the organisation approached its work as the then Waterford Federation of Youth Clubs, set an important foundation in place that has guided the organisation's approach to community based youth work through the decades since. Staying true to its core – the social and personal development of young people and the belief that the local community is best placed to respond to the needs of young people and adult service users, Waterford & South Tipperary Community Youth Service has in the ensuing years developed an Integrated Community Youth Service Response that caters for young people and adult service users in the context of their community. The principle of volunteerism and the commitment to supporting local people as partners to respond to young people and adult service users in their own unique community is central.

Over what is now half a century since its inception, W.S.T.C.Y.S. has continued to invest in local communities throughout the region by developing purpose built youth and community facilities where possible, and by securing facilities from partners where necessary, to ensure opportunities for young people in their local area. Additionally, the range of services provided by W.S.T.C.Y.S. with the assistance of many community and statutory partners has been vastly extended and reaches young people, their families and their communities.

Waterford & South Tipperary Community Youth Service has successfully responded to ever changing social and political influences affecting the lives of young people throughout its development and has maintained its relevance and effectiveness.





## OUR ETHOS

We believe in young people and value their association with each other for its rich potential to create meaningful and worthwhile learning experiences.

By supporting the process of young peoples' voluntary participation and critical social education, we seek to **harness young peoples' growth, creativity, autonomy and build their connections to community**. We consider the contribution and partnership of caring and interested local people as integral to our process and approach to working with young people.

## OUR MISSION

Waterford and South Tipperary Community Youth Service exists **to respond to the needs of young people**, and particularly those experiencing marginalisation, disadvantage and social exclusion; **to enable young people to become free active human beings** who take responsibility for their lives and who participate fully in the development of their community, environment and society; **to empower young people to recognise inequalities** in society and to work together to effect change.

## OUR VISION

OUR VISION IS FOR A MORE EQUITABLE SOCIETY IN WHICH YOUNG PEOPLE ARE **VALUED, RESPECTED, EMBRACED** IN COMMUNITY AND ACTIVELY CONTRIBUTING TO SOCIAL CHANGE.



# OUR VALUES

## KNOWING WHO WE HELP:

Young people are at the centre of everything we do.

## DEVELOPING POTENTIAL:

We value and appreciate the enormous potential of young people.

## VALUING PEOPLE:

The young person's social context is respected and valued.

## EDUCATING:

The educative power of young people playing their part in a group or association is fully appreciated.

## RESPECT:

Participation is voluntary and young people's choice is respected.

## BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS:

While informal in nature – the critical relationship established in youth work is clearly informed by good practice boundaries and is characterised by openness, honesty, integrity, respect, justice, equality, inclusiveness and unconditional acceptance of the young person.

## WORKING TOGETHER:

Young people and adults work in partnership with one another.

## PARTICIPATION:

Open and active involvement and participation is encouraged.

## PARTICIPATION:

Volunteers are at the heart of our organisation.

# THEMES THAT ARE A PRIORITY FOR WSTCYS 2020 - 2024

Through this planning process the following priority themes affecting the lives of children, young people and their families, have been identified by all stakeholders:

### **Wellbeing in holistic terms;**

Personal safety/security, tackling substance misuse/awareness about drugs and vaping, family, friends, recreation, positive physical, emotional and mental health.

### **Progression;**

Employability & mobility, supporting educational attainment & career development.

### **Social media and the cyber world;**

Developing digital youth work tools, optimising the potential of social media as both a working method and a promotional platform for our work, building young people's resilience in and ability to positively navigate their online lives.

### **Diversity, Social Inclusion & Participation;**

Being part of a community; strengthening the visibility, participation and representation of marginalised young people including disabled children and young people, young migrants and young Travellers.

### **Social Justice;**

Poverty, racism, gender oppression, homelessness, homophobia, climate change, supporting young people's activism.

### **Planning of W.S.T.C.Y.S. services and programmes over the coming years has been guided by these considerations:**

Aiming to increase co-operation and integration of activities; while at the same time ensuring a continuous commitment to identifying positive outcomes for and with children and young people and adult service users.



# STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1

**Aim:** Build organisational unity & identity by developing a greater sense of inter-connectedness as a whole organisation and making this visible

## APPROACHES & STRATEGIES

- A. Publicity plan to build on the imaging we have created over the last few years to make W.S.T.C.Y.S. a household name
- B. Development & implementation of W.S.T.C.Y.S. Communications Strategy
- C. Sectoral engagement with review of organisation mission, vision & ethos
- D. Commissioning of a sociodemographic mapping of W.S.T.C.Y.S. whole geographical catchment area.
- E. Review W.S.T.C.Y.S. Integrated Youth Services Model to improve consistency of structure and implementation
- F. Organising more integrated sectoral events showcasing and highlighting home grown innovative organisational practice models
- G. Develop a whole organisation strategy for work with 18 – 24 year olds

## KEY OUTCOMES

- 1. W.S.T.C.Y.S. has a strong brand and better organisational profile with key stakeholders and the wider community
- 2. Growing sense of internal cohesion and organisational identity felt and demonstrated at all operational levels of WSTCYS
- 3. Information available on priority issues affecting the whole region
- 4. Every sector is visibly captured within the organisations objectives and can identify its place within them.

## KEY INDICATORS

- 1. Cross sectoral working
- 2. Feedback from staff on improved relationships
- 3. Greater shared sense of unity and connection created
- 4. Feedback from Integrated Services review



## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

**Aim:** Look after the core of our work by protecting our ethos, by contributing to evidence based discourse and by championing Youth Work Practice

### APPROACHES & STRATEGIES

- A. W.S.T.C.Y.S. actively champions youth work by profiling our successes
- B. Lead and engage with the criteria of the UBU Your Place Your Space Youth Project Funding Scheme to ensure all Community Youth Projects transfer over to the new funding scheme without exception
- C. Develop and support the contribution of volunteer led Youth Work across the region
- D. Manage the strategic approach to representation, collaboration and innovation to enhance representation and advocacy of our work.
- E. Develop and exploit international opportunities through Erasmus+ and E.V.S. for staff, volunteers and young people

### KEY OUTCOMES

- 1. Youth Work as a professional discipline is championed and youth work process is recognised as W.S.T.C.Y.S.'s approach to working with young people
- 2. Youth Clubs Strategic Plan in place and guiding the work of the organisation
- 3. The Community Youth Work sector successfully comes through the UBU configuration
- 4. Enhanced recognition by allied services and funding agencies of the effectiveness of community-based Integrated Youth Service approach
- 5. Opportunities accessed through EU funding accelerates development of priority areas of work

### KEY INDICATORS

- 1. Sustained funding
- 2. Expansion of Youth Club Work
- 3. Service delivery range is maintained
- 4. Level of EU funding





## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

**Aim:** Ensuring the stability and sustainability of our staff and volunteers as our greatest asset by providing opportunities for capacity building at all levels

### APPROACHES & STRATEGIES

- A. Increase training and progression opportunities for staff and volunteers in all sectors
- B. Formally utilise the Sectoral Groups to consult and feed up issues, concerns & ideas to the Board
- C. Maintenance & development of existing organisational & sectoral structures & processes towards effective support & management of staff

### KEY OUTCOMES

- 1. Growing knowledge, skills and values of staff and volunteers leading to enhanced frontline service delivery
- 2. W.S.T.C.Y.S. demonstrates continuous improvement as a learning organisation
- 3. A confident, effective and motivated team of staff and volunteers who will stay with the organisation

### KEY INDICATORS

- 1. Training needs analysis, training plan implementation & participation
- 2. Retention of staff and volunteers
- 3. Communication between Board and staff including volunteers





## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4

**Aim:** Build the organisations strategic influence, encourage participation from within the organisations membership and increase engagement of those who are currently on the outside

### APPROACHES & STRATEGIES

- A. Mapping current representation, networking & interagency work
- B. Build engagement with new communities
- C. Development of LGBTI+ work across the organisation and region
- D. W.S.T.C.Y.S. to proactively advocate on priority issues affecting young people's rights, entitlements, housing, jobs & mental health.
- E. W.S.T.C.Y.S. continue to lead Waterford Comhairle na nÓg
- F. Develop and implement Intercultural training & learning opportunities for staff, volunteers and service users across the organisation

### KEY OUTCOMES

- 1. External representation clearly mapped and strategic gaps prioritised
- 2. Increased participation of key target groups
- 3. Increased awareness raising and inclusion across the organisation
- 4. More visible advocacy and speaking out by W.S.T.C.Y.S. as an organisation

### KEY INDICATORS

- 1. Feedback on participation levels of target groups
- 2. W.S.T.C.Y.S. representation on additional strategic forums where relevant
- 3. Feedback on W.S.T.C.Y.S. advocacy





## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5

**Aim:** Prioritising wellbeing by fostering the theme as a whole organisation in programme design, service delivery and working environment

### APPROACHES & STRATEGIES

- A. Set up opportunities to work as a whole organisation on wellbeing initiatives
- B. Monitor & enhance Staff Wellbeing Policy & practices
- C. Embed a culture of self-care across the organisation
- D. Lobby for better supports on dual diagnosis
- E. Support wellbeing and resilience in consultation with personnel
- F. Explore possibilities of establishing a W.S.T.C.Y.S. Mental Health Response for young people
- G. Development of W.S.T.C.Y.S. Sexual Health policy and practice
- H. Continue to monitor and improve W.S.T.C.Y.S. environmental impact and carbon footprint.
- I. Use Quality and Safety Committee as structural hub to drive continuous improvement in W.S.T.C.Y.S. Health and Safety infrastructure and enable meaningful staff engagement in developing a safety culture

### KEY OUTCOMES

- 1. Young people and service users are more active and healthy through their involvement with W.S.T.C.Y.S.
- 2. Improved levels of self-care and general well-being across the internal community
- 3. Organisation's strategic influence creating enhanced health and well-being opportunities, facilities and supports
- 4. W.S.T.C.Y.S. demonstrates and can evidence consistently high standards of safety, health and welfare at work with our people, places and practices

### KEY INDICATORS

- 1. Regularised events calendar
- 2. Participation and ownership by staff
- 3. New responses developed
- 4. Documentary and environmental evidence of safety compliance visible and available



# OPERATIONAL, PROGRAMME AND POLICY ENVIRONMENT

There are many challenges facing the voluntary and community sector in terms of policy and legislative developments. Planning of WSTCYS services and programmes over the coming years has been guided by these considerations: aiming to increase co-operation and integration of activities; while at the same time ensuring a continuous commitment to identifying positive outcomes for and with children and young people. Our organisation is cognisant of the following:

The Charities Regulatory Authority Governance Code

The Companies Act 2014 and the Charities Act 2009

Children First Act 2015 and Children First Guidance 2017

Better Outcomes Brighter Futures, The National Policy Framework for children and young people 2014 – 2020.

The National Youth Strategy 2015 – 2020

The National Youth Justice Strategy 2020 – 2026

The National Strategy on Children & Young Peoples Participation in Decision Making 2015 – 2020

The National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021

The National Drugs and Alcohol Strategy 2017 to 2025

Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery - A health-led response to drug and alcohol use in Ireland 2017-2025

South East Regional Drugs and Alcohol Task Force Plan (SERDATF) "Reducing Substance Misuse Strategy 2019 – 2022"

Value for Money Policy Review of Youth Programmes and the roll out of UBU

LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy 2019 – 2021

Mobility - Erasmus & EU funds

Intercultural Health Strategies, framework & policies - Intercultural Health Strategy for Roma, Refugees and People Seeking International Protection 2019 – 2022; Second National Intercultural Health Strategy 2018-2022; National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy 2017 – 2021; The Migrant Integration Strategy, A Blueprint for the Future.

## DEVELOPMENTAL FORUMS WE SHOULD BE PAYING ATTENTION TO

- ETB YOUTH WORK COMMITTEES,
- THE LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES,
- THE CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG PEOPLES SERVICES COMMITTEE STRUCTURES AND THE CHILD AND FAMILY SUPPORT NETWORKS SUPPORTED BY TUSLA.
- SERDATF



# OUR PARTNERS

W.S.T.C.Y.S. collaborates with a wide variety of partners at local, regional and national level in order to deliver appropriate services and supports and to maximise outcomes for young people, their families and communities.



Schools



An Roinn Gnóthaí Fostaíochta  
agus Coimirce Sóisialaí  
Department of Employment Affairs  
and Social Protection



DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, EQUALITY AND LAW REFORM  
AN ROINN DLÍ AGUS CIRI, COMHIÓNANNAIS AGUS ATHCHÓIRITHE DLÍ

Community  
Partners &  
NGO's





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