



## **Pavee Point Travellers' Centre**

46 North Great Charles St.  
Dublin 1, Ireland  
Tel: 353 1 878 0255  
Fax: 353 1 874 2626  
E-mail: pavee@iol.ie



*"The reason why I'm proud to be a Traveller is that because over all the things that have happened over the years, between discrimination and all that, we stuck together, we stood together. I'm proud to be a Traveller. What's so good about being a settled person?... At the end of the day we're all human beings!"*

*Martin Collins,  
aged 12.*

# **Traveller Youth**

According to Census 2002, two out of every five Travellers are under 15 years of age, compared with one out of five among the general population.

A higher birth rate (3.5 children compared to 1.5 among majority population) and higher mortality rates account for this young population.

Like all Travellers, young Travellers are not a homogenous group. They have different needs according to their living circumstances and lifestyles. So, both formal and informal responses to their needs should take their cultural and varying needs into consideration.

## **Youth Work**

Youth work, as an educational process, is expected to play a key role in enabling young people to analyse society. It is also expected to help them to develop the skills and capabilities they need to become involved in affecting change. Due to the gaps in education provision and the low uptake in the formal education sector, it is important that young Travellers have access to youth work services. Census 2002 states that two thirds of Travellers who indicated at what age they left school did so before they were 15 years. This is compared to 15% of the majority population.

## **Issues Facing Young Travellers**

Some of the issues that face young Travellers include:

- Lack of access to youth work services
- Discrimination when trying to access commercial recreational services
- An increase in drug misuse in the community
- The need to reinforce cultural identity
- Increased participation in decisions that effect their lives

## **Task Force Recommendations**

The Task Force Report on the Travelling Community (1995) said youth work with Travellers should: "Assist in the development of individual and collective self-esteem through services which are based on standards of excellence, are non-judgemental, accepting, culturally appropriate, encouraging and yet challenging".

The Task Force Report further recommends the development of an equality mechanism, which would identify, track and monitor Traveller involvement in mainstream youth provision.

**Visit our web-site at [www.paveepoint.ie](http://www.paveepoint.ie)**