



# TRY MODEL

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# INDEX

<b>FOREWORD</b>	<b>03</b>
<b>BACKGROUND</b>	<b>04</b>
<b>SOLAS PROJECT</b>	<b>04</b>
Mission	
Vison	
Values	
<b>TRY</b>	<b>06</b>
Mission	
Team	
Who We Work With	
Intervention Model	
<b>THE BRIDGE OF COMMUNITY</b>	<b>08</b>
Bridging	
Community Outreach	
Targeted Outreach	
<b>BRIDGE OF COMMUNITY PILLARS</b>	<b>09</b>
Pillar One: Community Presence	
Pillar Two: Short Term Support	
Pillar Three: Intense Support	
Pillar Four: Peer Mentorship	
<b>CONTACT DETAILS</b>	<b>11</b>

Nobody is too far gone, everybody is worth it,  
 everyone can change, communities can improve  
 society can flourish.

# FOREWORD

Targeted Response with Youth (TRY) was established as a small pilot program in 2017 with the aim of supporting young people who were involved in drug based criminal and anti-social behavior, in a community that was undergoing significant urban regeneration. Teresa's Gardens, the flat complex of Donore Avenue, was scheduled to be demolished, people were being rehoused and change was taking place all around. There was a core group of young people who were being left behind in the regeneration and not benefiting from the idea that a rising tide lifts all boats. In addition, some of these young people were actively involved in putting up barriers to social and economic improvements for the entire community. Drug dealing and related activities were visible daily in this small community.

Our team from the outset aimed to do something about this problem, believing that these young people deserved more than the life they were currently experiencing. Seeing beyond their current reality, we believed that the young people could be happy and contributing members of their community. We also understood that community regeneration wouldn't be successful without young people having their place within it.

In TRY, we apply a never give up approach, while acknowledging a young person's involvement in negative behaviors, we concentrate on the potential of each young person. If they show even a small interest in change or making some improvements in their lives, our team will support them on their way.

We recognise that having a peer alongside them while implementing change can make all the difference. We accept that change won't always be easy, it won't always be successful the first time but we make the promise to stick by each young person throughout the journey.



TARGETED RESPONSE  
 WITH YOUTH



## BACKGROUND

The TRY Project (Target Response with Youth) was started as part of the St. Teresa's Gardens Regeneration in 2017, initially on a small pilot basis targeting a group of young men who were engaged in public drug dealing in the flat complex. The project was hosted by Donore Community Drug and Alcohol Team and overseen by a volunteer steering group.

In 2021, the geographical reach of TRY was expanded to include Oliver Bond and from 2022 TRY's key funding was moved to the Department of Justice. To facilitate this growth and change TRY joined Solas Project and now operates within Solas Project's justice team.

## SOLAS PROJECT MISSION

We recognise that, due to societal inequalities, all young people in Ireland do not have access to the same opportunities. As a result, many are prevented from reaching their full potential. We build long-term relationships with children and young people at risk of being marginalised by society, specifically through the education, employment and justice systems. We deliver a range of innovative and holistic interventions from childhood, through adolescence and into early adulthood. We seek to equip and empower young people to live life to the full and decide how they want to make a meaningful contribution to society. Alongside these supports, we advocate for societal change to tackle the inequalities that allow young people in Ireland to grow up at a disadvantage.



# VISION

**SOLAS PROJECT'S VISION IS TO SEE AN IRELAND WHERE ALL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE TRULY KNOW THEIR SELF-WORTH AND CAN TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE OF THEIR POTENTIAL.**

# KEY VALUES

## **LOVE:**

We believe every young person deserves to be loved and no one should be given up on. We are relentless in our pursuit of building long term relationships of trust. We create a restorative environment where young people are free to make mistakes and have a safe space to grow and learn. We stand with young people supporting them to develop a positive sense of self, make healthy life choices and ultimately to see them reach their full potential.

## **JUSTICE:**

We want to see a society where everyone has freedom of opportunity and can fully participate in society. We are passionate about tackling inequality to bring about social justice. We actively support young people to overcome barriers, advocating on their behalf and encouraging them to pursue a more just society where everyone can flourish.

## **HOPE:**

Recognising that societal inequalities have an impact on young people's aspirations we work to instil in each young person a hope for a brighter future. We create a culture of encouragement and challenge where young people's expectations are raised and self-worth can be realised. We call out the potential in every young person and no matter the obstacles we hold hope on behalf of those who don't yet believe it for themselves.

## **JOY:**

We choose joy and joy sustains and motivates us. We pursue opportunities for young people to experience freedom and express themselves fully. Fun and laughter are intentional parts of our work. This includes a commitment to creating safe spaces for adventure and celebration.

## TRY MISSION

TRY supports young people who, due to the societal impact of the drugs trade have had their lives negatively affected. The impact of which can be chaotic drug and alcohol use, mental health issues, and limited opportunities in educational and employment.

TRY primarily targets those aged 18 – 26, implementing a peer led approach in community settings and building relationships by acting as role models. Community, and targeted outreach as well as step by step key working is used to support young people. This model of work is centred on a youth work bridging approach which connects young people to positive community life, supporting them to pursue a more constructive and fulfilling path. TRY also progresses some of its target group into peer mentor roles to continue to expand this work with marginalised young people.

## TEAM

A critical aspect of our work is the capacity and skills of the front-line workers. We, as a team are professionals applying a youth work methodology. The intensity of the work we undertake is a reflection of our personal commitment and experience. Much of this commitment and the ability to connect with the young people is strengthened by the lived experience of the workers.

In our recruitment, we target professionals with their own lived experience to work within the project prioritising staff who: have overcome adversity in their personal lives, and who have a willingness to use this experience to drive social change.

TRY also exists within the community of the wider Solas Project team, where there is a place and support service for all young people in our community from the age of 5 to 26. Operating within the broader community goals of Solas Project ensures that young people are not negatively labeled, and the TRY team can offer support from the rest of the Solas Project team supporting larger family connections.



## WHO WE WORK WITH

### **MALES:**

Young men aged 18–26, living in or who hold close connections to the Donore Avenue and Oliver Bond areas of Dublin 8 and, are involved in anti-social behaviour or activities linked to the drugs trade.

### **FEMALES:**

Young women aged 16–26 living in the southwest inner city, who are involved in anti-social behaviour or the drugs trade in the local community or have close connections to it.

## INTERVENTION MODEL

TRY champions a belief in the capacity of the young people to create more constructive lives for themselves – hence why TRY works “with” the young people. By intensively and persistently engaging the young people where they are at, and by providing consistent and competent practical supports, mostly in the form of an effective bridging approach, the young people gradually find trust in others and in themselves.

# THE BRIDGE OF COMMUNITY



**BRIDGING:** We operate from a bridging model. Bridging links young people into their communities through identifying their needs and connecting this to locally based support services and into positive community life. This includes participation and involvement in activities or events in the local community. The bridging model also supports young people into participation in education, addiction support, employment, or other relevant services.

Finally, it includes collaboration, referrals to external agencies and providing support and training internally. This approach ensures that we provide the level of support in accordance with the needs presented by each person. Bridging also allows for a young person to make progress while recognising that it may take multiple attempts for long lasting change to occur. TRY will support young people along their pathway by always providing space to try again and supporting them to take ownership of their journey.

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH:** TRY recognises that young people exist within their

community setting. While everybody has individual agency our communities can place limitation and barriers on advancement. Being connected to the young people in the community and community issues is a key component of building relationships and facilitating change. TRY will be present on the street of each area and within community life, aiming to be a familiar face to all young people involved in drug related anti-social behaviour, providing the foundation for TRY to be accessible and approachable for young people who need support.

**TARGETED OUTREACH:** We recognise that there is often a gap between the decision to change and having the skills and confidence to be able to follow through. Our targeted outreach programme brings our team to the individual young people's environment. This means that the young person knows that their youth worker will be by their side and won't give up on them. Our team will call to homes, friends and families and target identified hotspots to offer relentless support to young people.





### PILLAR ONE

TRY operate a community outreach model assuring that all young people impacted by the drugs trade are familiar with and can access support from our team. These young people will be included in community events and activities but will not be recorded as programme participants until they engage at a more consistent level. This approach means that the wider community is also familiar with the programme.

Community-based outreach will happen at least once a week in each community. This is the first level of bridging into positive community life.

**WHO:** Young people living and spending time in the local area, residents, and other key community members.

**COMPLETION:** The TRY team are known and welcome in the local community by young people, residents and other key community people. This stage is continuous.



### PILLAR TWO

There are always young people who need support with an issue or are looking for guidance towards a new path. TRY can provide this support and be the bridge towards the next step. This stage involves supporting a young person on one particular issue, such as referrals to education and employment programmes. This work is the second step along the community bridge.

**WHO:** Our target young people (as outlined above)

- Who are connected to the catchment area.
- Who have a specific need identified that TRY can support with a progression pathways.
- Who are engaged through community-based outreach and targeted outreach.

**COMPLETION:** any of the following -

1. Young person is engaging in a specialised service.
2. Young person is sustaining employment or participation in training or education.
3. Young person is no longer active / present in the community (unplanned disengagement).



### PILLAR THREE

A core piece of the work of TRY is working intensely with young people to bring about the change they want to see in their lives. At this stage of the bridge young people may be working on number of different issues and we will be a ongoing support to them while also using the expertise of other services as needed. This case work is the most intense level of the TRY model.

**WHO:** Our targeted young people:

- Who need more than one issue to be addressed at any one time.
- Who are ready to embark on a process of changes to their lives that require a deeper focus of work, e.g. addiction, homelessness or unemployment.
- Who require more than community based outreach to successfully engage in the programme.
- Who are not ready to sustain the changes without consistent support.

**COMPLETION:** any of the following -

1. Young person is no longer involved in anti-social or criminal behavior.
2. Young person is sustaining engagement in their training programme or employment.
3. Young person no longer needs the support of the youth worker to implement changes or improvements in their lives.
4. Young person is not engaging in any planned interventions and is showing no interest in trying to make positive changes (unplanned disengagement).



### PILLAR FOUR

The final pillar of the TRY community bridge concentrates on developing young people who have come through the programme or who have lived a similar experience to become community leaders and advocates for changes. This stage will only apply to a select number of young people who desire to go on to be peer mentor leaders.

Working from the concept of the greater the risk of failure, the greater the success, TRY aims to support these young people to show that transformation and the overcoming of adversity is possible and that collectively we can work together to build stronger and safer communities for those suffering the effects of marginalisation, addiction and poverty.

**CONTENT:** Five module training programme including:

1. Child Protection.
2. An Introduction to Community Development.
3. An Introduction to youth work.
4. Leadership and Change Making.
5. Pushing limits: Outdoor Adventure.

Voluntary work or CE positions:

1. Completion of 50 hours of voluntarism in an arranged placement.
2. Peer mentoring, one staff member to one participant.

# CONTACT



SOLAS PROJECT  
UNIT 1, LIBERTY VIEW  
LONGS PLACE, DUBLIN 8



01.552.0683



INFO@SOLASPROJECT.IE



[www.SolasProject.ie](http://www.SolasProject.ie) | [@SolasProject](https://www.instagram.com/SolasProject)