

SECTION 1: LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

YOUTH WORK BILL FINALLY BECOMES LAW

The Youth Work Act, 2001 has now been published and copies are available from Government publications in Molesworth Street at a cost of €3.81.

It can also be downloaded from the following location: www.gov.ie/bills28/acts/2001

SECTION 2: POLICY DEVELOPMENT

NEW STRATEGY LAUNCHED TO COMBAT EDUCATIONAL DISADVANTAGE

On 13 December, 2001 the Minister for Education and Science, Dr. Michael Woods, T.D., announced the implementation of a new strategy to tackle educational disadvantage across all levels of education.

The strategy will involve three major new initiatives: the establishment of a statutory **Educational Disadvantage Committee**, the convening of a **Forum to Address Educational Disadvantage** and the appointment of a **Director of Programmes** who will have oversight of initiatives and programmes catering for educational disadvantage.

Minister Woods has established the Educational Disadvantage Committee with immediate effect. Provided for under Section 32 of the Education Act 1998, this committee will advise the Minister on policies and strategies to be adopted to identify and correct educational disadvantage including:

- The creation, co-ordination and implementation of new and existing initiatives
- The identification and commissioning of research and evaluation
- In-career development for teachers and other personnel serving the needs of those experiencing educational disadvantage
- The development of inter-departmental and inter-agency links with a view to ensuring greater cohesion among the initiatives catering for educational disadvantage.

Professor Áine Hyland, Vice-President and Professor of Education at UCC, has been appointed to chair the Committee.

The **Forum to Address Educational Disadvantage** will have a broad representation, meet at least twice a year and will have a vital role in advising on issues relating to educational disadvantage and exclusion from the full benefits of education. The term of office of the Forum will coincide with the term of office of the Educational Disadvantage Committee. Professor Hyland will also chair the Forum.

A Director of Programmes will also be appointed, seconded and based in Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, who will have oversight of initiatives and programmes catering for educational disadvantage and who will act as a liaison between these programmes and the Educational Disadvantage Committee. The Director of Programmes will operate on the basis of the policy and strategic direction set by the Minister following advice from the Educational Disadvantage Committee. This post has since been advertised.

An experienced professional support team consisting of ten people with knowledge and experience of issues relating to educational disadvantage will also be recruited. The Minister will make final decisions about the deployment of this support team following advice from the Educational Disadvantage Committee. The team will help teachers involved in the new programme - Giving Children an Even Break by Tackling Disadvantage - to develop teaching styles suitable for smaller classes.

Educational Disadvantage Committee

Professor Áine Hyland, Chairperson	
Mr. Pat Ryan	Ms. Valerie Duffy
Sr. Teresa McCormack	Ms. Bernie Brady
Dr. Tom Kelleghan	Dr. Tony Crooks
Ms. Maura Grant	Mr. Aidan Savage
Ms. Concepta Conaty	Mr. Paul Kelly
Ms. Catherine Hazlett	Ms. Carmel Curran
Dr. Ann Louise Gilligan	Ms. Noreen Flynn
Mr. Thomas Monaghan	Mr. Seán Ó Floinn
Ms. Inez Bailey	Dr. Peadar Cremin
Mr. Éamon Ó hAllmhuráin	Ms. Rita Conway

NEW INITIATIVES IN ADULT EDUCATION PROVISION

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On 16 January, 2002, the Minister of State for Adult Education, Mr. Willie O'Dea T.D., announced a number of new initiatives in adult education:

- The establishment of a **National Adult Learning Council (NALC)** as an executive agency of the Department of Education and Science. It will represent education, training, social partner, community and voluntary sector and learner interests to ensure a co-ordinated strategy in the provision of adult learning. The Council will advise on policy, promote co-ordination and liaison, engage in research and staff development, and support international co-operation. It will also have a specific remit to progress such issues as workplace learning, community education, an equality strategy, and to establish an advisory group on the integration of people with physical and learning disabilities into adult education
- The implementation of a **Back to Education Initiative**, providing some 4000 extra part-time places under PLC, Youthreach, Traveller, and VTOS programmes, including part time senior cycle or equivalent options, principally aimed at young people and adults in the population with less than upper secondary education. There will be a further 2000 places from September/October. Information packs on the initiative will be issued at an early date to all interested parties. 10% of all expansion will be earmarked exclusively for community education providers and the scheme will be adapted to cater for this sector. An Adult ICT Skills programme will be implemented as part of the measure. The initiative will be expanded with a view to having 20,000 extra part time places per annum in place by 2006.
- The appointment of **35 Community Education Facilitators** throughout the country. These posts will be based in the VECs, and their work programme will be determined initially by the ad hoc Adult Education Boards, and in future years by the Local Adult Learning Boards when they are established. The facilitators will support the development of new community-based learning groups, network providers and help them access funding, share good practice and monitor quality, and promote the development of partnerships with the statutory sector, particularly in relation to outreach and referral.
- An increase of €2.92 million for adult literacy funding up to €16.47m. in 2002. This will enable

the service to continue to expand, building on the existing initiatives, such as the TV series *'Read Write Now'* and extending family learning and work place literacy provision, special needs provision and programmes for those for whom English is not the mother tongue.

- The further extension of the **Adult Educational Guidance Service**, supporting students in literacy, VTOS and adult and community education programmes (currently operational in 19 areas). Advertisements have been placed seeking proposals for an expansion to further areas in 2002 aimed at having a comprehensive national service in place by 2006. A feasibility study is under way to develop a publicly accessible database of adult learning options, integrated with a national telephone helpline.
- The appointment of 2 **Co-ordinators of Further Education Development** -- Ms. Mary Kett and Ms. Bernie Judge to help progress the White Paper agenda in adult education.
- A feasibility study on the development of a computerised Further Education Management Information System, which will enable the progress of specific groups to be monitored over time as part of an equality strategy.

For further information about the new strategy to tackle educational disadvantage and/or the above adult education initiatives please contact:

Department of Education & Science
Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
Tel: 01 8734700 Fax: 01 8787932
Website: www.irlgov.ie/educ

SECTION 3: ROUND-UP

NACD PRODUCES ITS FIRST MAJOR REPORT

On 7 December, 2001, Eoin Ryan TD, Minister of State with special responsibility for the National Drugs Strategy launched the first NACD Report *"Drug Use Prevention: an overview of research"*.

The NACD (National Advisory Committee on Drugs) is made up of a range of academic, community, voluntary and statutory interests who are currently overseeing a three year programme

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of research and evaluation on the extent, nature, causes and effects of drug misuse in Ireland. The Report is the first piece of research produced by NACD and summarises the main findings of research in Ireland and abroad on drug use prevention.

It identifies the main risk factors for drug use and examines approaches/strategies for preventing use. It highlights the fact that there is no single drug problem; there are a variety of different problems each of which requires a different response. The most serious drug problem involves opiates and is particularly likely to occur where other factors such as social and educational disadvantage and deprivation are involved. It recommends:

- Targeted initiatives tackling social origins of drugs problems that are comprehensive, involve inter-agency co-operation and community involvement.
- Use of broad based programmes focussing on experimental drug use among young people.
- Use of measures to prevent early school leaving.
- New ways to use the role (limited to date) played by the mass media in prevention be explored
- Further research e.g. examine implementation level of existing school programmes/strategies.
- Evaluation of some Task Force funded prevention programmes, now being mainstreamed.

The Minister also launched the NACD Website and drew attention to:

- Two school-based substance misuse prevention programmes the **"Walk Tall"** and **"On My Own Two Feet"** Programmes, which will be implemented in all Local Drugs Task Force areas during the academic year 2001/02.
- The launching of an on-going National Awareness Campaign, highlighting the dangers of drug misuse, in the early part of 2002.

For copies of the report or further information on the work of the NACD contact:

NACD

3rd Floor, Shelbourne House
Shelbourne Road, Dublin 4

Tel: 01 6670760 Fax: 01 6670828

E-mail: info@nacd.ie www.nacd.ie

**NEW DRUG & ALCOHOL
EDUCATION WEBSITES
LAUNCHED**

The Cider Industry Council has recently launched a new website aimed at helping parents to deal with underage drinking. The website forms part of a wider €120,000 anti-underage drinking campaign and was developed under the supervision of Dr. Mark Morgan, a social psychologist who has written extensively on underage drinking in Ireland. The web address is: www.ciderindustrycouncil.com

Dun Laoghaire Youth Information Centre, funded by the Young Persons' Facilities and Services Fund has developed a new drug information website. It includes a survival guide for parents, resources for those working with young people, basic facts and information on drug and alcohol use and contact details and information links in relation to education, treatment and rehabilitation. The website address is: www.drugquest.ie

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR IRISH ISP'S AND CHILD PORNOGRAPHY HOTLINE REPORT LAUNCHED

On 5 February 2002, a new Code of Practice and Ethics for Irish Internet Service Providers (ISP's) and the First Report of Child Pornography Hotline were launched by Minister Mary Hanafin.

The hotline was established in November, 2000 for the reporting of child pornography on the Web. The report shows that on average a complaint a day is made about child pornography on the net. In welcoming the establishment of a code of practice, Minister Hanafin said "The launch of the new codes of practice and ethics is one of the significant milestones set by the Government Review Group on the illegal and harmful use of the Internet in the path to self regulation. For further information go to: www.hotline.ie

**Copies of all publications and
documentation highlighted in this edition
are available for reference or loan
purposes from the
Irish YouthWork Centre**

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About the Irish YouthWork Centre

The Irish YouthWork Centre is an initiative of the National Youth Federation (NYF). It acts as a one-stop research and documentation centre which has been developed to respond to the varied information, research and training support needs of youth & community workers, researchers and students, and anyone who works with young people. Its' services include:

Enquiry Services on:

- ◆ Trainers, consultants and specialists on youth & community work and related topics
- ◆ Venues suitable for hosting youth events and conferences
- ◆ Courses in Youth & Community Work and related fields
- ◆ Where to find youth & community work resources and training materials from other agencies
- ◆ Connecting people to projects doing exciting and innovative work within their field of interest

Sharing Good Practice

The Irish YouthWork Centre is constantly engaged in researching and documenting innovative approaches to work with young people in areas of special interest. This information is available to youth workers through hard copy resources, database information and ongoing independent research being both undertaken and commissioned by the Centre and published by the ***Irish Youth Work Press***. Publications include quantitative & qualitative research, training manuals, policy documents and issue-based guidelines for youth workers.

Good Practice and Policy Development Seminars

The Centre regularly organises theme based, seminars and workshops. All the seminars are supported with; up to date analysis of the issue and what's happening on the ground in the form of information and/or research packs; the issues that youth workers are likely to meet; success stories, innovative projects, good practice; and sources of further information.

Library

- ◆ Lending service for youth & community work related books, videos and training materials.
- ◆ Photocopy and reference services for reports, statistics and hard-to-find articles on youth work.
- ◆ Newspaper cuttings, Dáil Debates, Government Bills/ Acts and youth related Statistical Updates.
- ◆ Profiles on over 200 organisations in the youth, community, social & voluntary sectors.
- ◆ Retention of over 80 youth work and youth work related periodicals/journals.
- ◆ On-line database facilities of all information stocked in the library.
- ◆ On-site study facility.

Publications and Resources

Low cost resources and training materials for sale (*the IWYC acts as an official sales agent for a number of agencies including the National Youth Council of Ireland, Combat Poverty Agency, Russell House Publishing, Nightshift Publications and the Directory of Social Change*). The Centre also offers an extensive range of research, guidelines, policy documents and programme packs for sale published by Irish Youth Work Press, the publishing arm of the NYF.

A complete Publications For Sale Brochure is available (see address below)

Free quarterly magazine (Irish YouthWork Scene) to members of the Centre.

**For further information on the services of the IRISH YOUTHWORk CENTRE, why not write, call in, telephone, or email us: Fran Bissett/Michelle Drumm, Irish YouthWork Centre, National Youth Federation, 20 Lower Dominick Street, Dublin 1. Tel: +353 1 8729933 Fax: +353 1 8724183
E-Mail addresses: fbissett@nyf.ie mdrumm@nyf.ie Web site: www.iol.ie/~nyf**