

## NYF Member Youth Services Current Awareness Update

### SECTION 1: LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

#### NEW MINISTER FOR YOUTH AFFAIRS APPOINTED

On Tuesday 18 June, the Taoiseach Bertie Ahern made the announcement of the new Junior Ministers to the Cabinet. Of particular interest and relevance to those in the youth sector is the appointment of **Ms Sile De Valera** as the new Junior Minister attached to the Department of Education & Science **with responsibility for Adult Education, Youth Affairs and Educational Disadvantage**. Other junior appointments that will be of relevance to the youth sector include:

- **Mr. Brian Lenihan T.D.**, attached to the Departments of Education, Health and Justice **with responsibility for children**
- **Mr. Noel Ahern T.D.**, attached to Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs **with responsibility for the National Drugs Strategy and community affairs** and to the Department of Environment and Local Government **with responsibility for housing and urban renewal**
- **Mr. Willie O'Dea T.D.**, attached to Department of Justice **with responsibility for equality issues including disability issues**

#### NEW NYWAC COMMITTEE CONVENES

The incoming NYWAC committee under the chairpersonship of Mr Pat Forde, Director of North Connaught Youth Service had its first meeting at the end of April. The make up of the new committee is as follows:

##### NYCI Representatives

- Ms Olive Good, Girls Brigade
- Ms Joyce Furlong, National Forum of Local Voluntary Youth Councils
- Ms Joan McKeivitt, Scouting Ireland SAI
- Mr. Tony Murphy, NYF
- Mr. James Doorley, NYCI President
- Mr. Eddie Darcy, CYC
- Mr. Ray Devlin, Foróige
- Mr. Declan O'Leary, Ógra Chorcaí
- Ms. Mary Cunningham, NYCI Director
- Mr. Martin Brady, Youth Science Ireland

##### IVEA Representatives

- Mr. David Treacy, CDYSB
- Mr. Pat Ryan, Galway City VEC

- Ms. Fiona Hartley, County Dublin VEC

##### Government Department Representatives

- Mr. Michael Smith, Health & Children
- Mr. Brian Ó'Tiomáin, Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht
- Ms. Fiona Ward, Social, Community & Family Affairs
- Ms. Betty Moriarty, Environment & Local Government
- Mr. Brian Hamilton, Justice, Equality & Law Reform

##### Other Organisational Representatives

- Ms. Helen Raftery, Irish Sports Council
- Mr. Guss O'Connell, FÁS

##### Other Ministerial Nominees

- Mr. Malcolm Byrne
- Mr. Bob Quinn, National College of Ireland
- Superintendent Tony Killen, Garda Síochána

##### Youth Affairs Staff

- Mr P.J. Breen, Principal Officer
- Ms. Máire Ní Flaithbheartaigh, Asst. Principal Officer
- Ms. Andrea Lennon, Asst. Principal Officer

The second and third meetings took place on 5 June and 10 July with the new Minister of State Ms Sile De Valera present at the July meeting. The Current Awareness Update will provide updates on any significant developments at future meetings of NYWAC.

### SECTION 2: POLICY DEVELOPMENT

#### FORUM TO ADDRESS EDUCATIONAL DISADVANTAGE MEETS FOR THE FIRST TIME

The new Minister for Education & Science, Mr. Noel Dempsey, T.D. opened the first meeting of the Forum to Address Educational Disadvantage set up as part of the **Educational Disadvantage Strategy** in December 2001.

The event entitled "**National Forum on Primary Education: Ending Disadvantage**" was held in St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra from 1-5 July 2002. The Forum comprised five thematic workshops as follows:

- Diversity and Difference in Education,
- Parents and the Wider Community,
- Models of Best Practice in the Curriculum,
- Multiple Perspectives on Teaching and Learning
- Education and the Arts

In his address, the Minister acknowledged that educational disadvantage was a complex and multi-faceted matter, which called for an imaginative, co-ordinated approach from Government.

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Minister Dempsey also drew attention to the fact, that taken in conjunction with the input from the keynote addresses at the Forum, the outcomes from the workshops and discussion groups would inform and advance efforts in relation to two key education targets of **the National Anti-Poverty Strategy**, namely the reduction of the number of pupils with serious literacy problems and the retention of a greater percentage of pupils to the end of second level education.

For further information on the Forum contact:

**Department of Education & Science**  
**Marlborough Street, Dublin 1**  
**Tel: 01 8734700 Fax: 01 8892150**  
Website: [www.irish.gov.ie/educ](http://www.irish.gov.ie/educ)

### **NEW REPORT CITES DRAMATIC INCREASE IN ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION**

Ireland has had the highest increase in alcohol consumption among EU countries, according to the [Interim Report of the Strategic Task Force on Alcohol](#), published on 28 May 2002. Between 1989 and 1999, alcohol consumption per capita in Ireland increased by 41%, while ten of the EU Member States showed a decrease during the same period. In 2000, alcohol consumption per adult in Ireland was 14.2 litres, compared to the EU average of only 9.1 litres.

The Task Force, established by the Minister for Health and Children described the increase in alcohol consumption as 'dramatic' and that the increase was directly related to a continuum of current problems, ranging from accidents and unprotected sex to chronic illness.

#### **Key Findings**

Some of the key findings in the report were:

- In the last 6 years, the consumption of spirits increased by over 50% with a staggering increase of 100% in the consumption of cider.
- Alcohol was a factor for one in four visits to Accident & Emergency Departments in hospitals.
- Public order offences increased by 97% between 1996 and 2000, the vast majority of these being alcohol related.
- Services dealing with marriage breakdown reported that up to 34% of clients cited alcohol abuse as the main cause of their marital difficulties.
- 35% of sexually active teenagers said that alcohol was an influencing factor for them engaging in sex - during

the last decade; sexually transmitted infections have increased by 165% in Ireland.

#### **Recommendations**

The Task Force, in assessing measures taken to date to limit the damage alcohol can cause, felt that the majority of the measures had been in the area of information, education and training, while the supply side had seen few initiatives. In conclusion the report also outlined a series of recommendations aimed at lowering alcohol consumption and reducing the harm that consumption causes as follows:

1) Ireland must reduce per capita consumption by regulating availability through:

- Increasing taxes
- Health Boards intervening on Public Health issues regarding licensing

2) Ireland must drastically reduce road accidents through:

- Random breath testing
- Reducing the minimum blood alcohol level to .50 mg % (Ireland and the UK are the only EU Countries at .80mg%)

3) Ireland must limit harm in the drinking environment by:

- Enforcing the law preventing publicans from serving those already intoxicated
- Restricting sales promotions that encourage high risk drinking (promotions like happy hours and two for one deals).

4) Ireland must protect children from alcohol consumption by reducing their exposure to marketing by:

- Limiting advertising
- Controlling where ads are placed
- **Ensuring advertising content does not appeal to children**
- **Banning alcohol sponsorship of children's activities**

### **SECTION 3: ROUND-UP**

### **GUIDELINES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF STUDENT COUNCILS PUBLISHED**

On 5 June the outgoing Minister for Education & Science Dr. Michael Woods T.D. announced the publication of new Guidelines on the establishment and

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operation of Student Councils in second-level schools, entitled **Student Councils: a voice for students**. Student councils were provided for in law in the Education Act, 1998 with the role of promoting the interests of the school and the involvement of students in the affairs of the school in co-operation with the Board of Management, parents and teachers.

The guidelines outline the role and key functions of the student council, and define its relationship with the School Board of Management, School Principal, Teachers, and Parents Associations. The Guidelines also include a Practical Guide for students in setting up, starting, operating and dissolving a Student Council with a set of accompanying support materials.

For further information/copies of the guidelines contact:

**Strategic Policy Unit**  
Department of Education & Science  
Marlborough Street, Dublin 1  
Tel: 01 8734700 Fax: 01 8892150  
Website: [www.irl.gov.ie/educ](http://www.irl.gov.ie/educ)

### **UNACCOMPANIED REFUGEE AND ASYLUM SEEKING MINORS BOOKLET AVAILABLE**

A new information booklet has been published by Barnardos highlighting the rights and entitlements of Unaccompanied Refugee and Asylum Seeking Minors in Ireland and seeks to support agencies and professionals who work with unaccompanied minors.

Many minors who come to Ireland are forced to enter into independent life prematurely without the family and community supports around them that they need or are used to and have to deal with the same challenges all refugees and asylum seekers meet in Ireland without their family there to support them. The booklet was researched and written by Dervla King of the Centre for Social and Educational Research in the Dublin Institute

of Technology. The booklet is available from Barnardos National Children's Resource Centres in Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Athlone:

#### **National Children's Resource Centre 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:

**National Youth Federation    Issue No.13 July, 2002    Irish YouthWork Centre**

Christchurch Square, Dublin 8.  
Tel: 01 4549699 Fax: 01 4530300  
Email: [ncrc@barnardos.ie](mailto:ncrc@barnardos.ie)

**National Children's Resource Centre**  
River Court, Golden Island  
Athlone, Co Westmeath.  
Tel: (0902) 79584  
Fax: (0902) 79585  
Email: [ncrc@athlone.barnardos.ie](mailto:ncrc@athlone.barnardos.ie)

**National Children's Resource Centre**  
18 St Patrick's Hill, Cork  
Tel: 021 4552100 Fax: 021 4552120  
Email: [ncrc@cork.barnardos.ie](mailto:ncrc@cork.barnardos.ie)

**National Children's Resource Centre**  
10 Sarsfield Street, Limerick.  
Tel: 061 208680 Fax: 061 440214  
Email: [ncrc@midwest.barnardos.ie](mailto:ncrc@midwest.barnardos.ie)

### **NEW WEBSITE AND PARENTS LEAFLET ON INTERNET SAFETY LAUNCHED**

On 18 July, the Minister for Education & Science Mr. Noel Dempsey, T.D. launched a new leaflet for parents entitled *Be Wise on the Net* to provide them with information and advice on safe Internet use. The Minister also launched the Irish section of a website [www.fkbko.net](http://www.fkbko.net) (for kids by kids online) which aims to give children the skills to protect themselves online. For further information go to the website. For copies of the leaflet and also a recent EU funded survey on Internet use and access by Irish students please contact:

**Sharon Mc Donald, Project Officer**  
Dot.Safe & ONCE Project,  
National Centre for Technology in Education,  
Room 2, Invent Building, DCU, Glasnevin, Dublin 9.  
Tel: 01 7008871 Fax: 01 7008210  
Website: [www.ncte/intsafe.htm](http://www.ncte/intsafe.htm)

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

## **NYF Member Youth Services Current Awareness Update**

- ◆ 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 YOUTHWORKE 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](http://www.iol.ie/~nyf)**