

SECTION 1: LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

**MINISTER PROMISES PROGRESS
ON IMPEMENTATION OF
CHILDREN ACT, 2001**

The Children Act, 2001 provides a new framework for the development of juvenile justice with an emphasis away from residential and custodial care, to care in the community. The Minister for State with Special Responsibility for Children, Mr Brian Lenihan TD announced that he had convened a Working Group with high level representation from the National Children's Office (NCO), Departments of Health and Children; Justice, Equality and Law Reform and Education and Science, to drive its implementation at the IASW Seminar - The Children Act, 2001: Implications for Children's Services for the Future on 30 April.

The NCO has commissioned a guide to the Children Act, 2001, aimed at making it accessible to a wide range of users, including health board officials, Garda Síochána, probation and welfare officers, prison officers, social workers, special school teachers, court service officials, journalists, academics and law students. The NCO has also established a Communications Sub-Group to promote awareness of the Act and its implications through publication of the guide, the development of an information pack and the hosting of a series of regional inter-agency seminars.

The Minister went on to say that progress has been made since the passing of the legislation and it is envisaged that 11 out of the 13 parts of the Act will be commenced by the end of 2003. In order to implement the Act, the Government has approved:

- The recruitment of 30 additional Probation and Welfare Officers and
- The appointment of 12 staff to facilitate the establishment of Special Residential Services Board (SRSB), to ensure the appropriate and efficient use of detention schools and special care units.

For further information contact:

Adult Educational Guidance & Information Service
No. 2 Meehan Court
Portlaoise, Co. Laois
Tel: 0502 72963
Email: laoisaeigis@eircom.net

SECTION 2: POLICY DEVELOPMENT

**WHITE PAPER ON SUPPORTING
VOLUNTARY ACTIVITY
PROGRESS REPORT**

The Implementation and Advisory Group (IAG) for the paper has had two formal meetings (31 March & 28 April) and one all-day facilitated planning meeting on 11 April. The next meeting is scheduled for 26 May. The Community and Voluntary Sector members (CV12) who sit on this committee have also had two meetings (18 March & 28 April). The next meeting is on 19 May. The following is a summary of recent developments:

Networks and Federations Grant Scheme

Scheme closed on 11 April with over 130 applications received. A Request for tender has been sent by the Department to several companies with a view to selected one to undertake the assessment of the applications. It is planned by the Department to be in a position to announce the awards in July 2003. The sum of money available under this scheme for 2003 has been further reduced to €1.827 million. (The original amount was supposed to be €2.54 million).

The Training and Support Services Grant Scheme

Consultants have been appointed to assess the 540+ applications. It is planned by the Department to be in a position to announce the awards in June 2003. The sum of money available under this scheme for 2003 has been further reduced to €600,000. (The original amount was supposed to be €2.54 million).

Legislation and Regulatory Reform

A new three-person Unit headed up by Principal Office, Rády Redmond, has been established in the Department of Community Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs to manage the introduction of legislation that will reform the existing "charities legislation". The plans are to have a consultation document prepared by summer 2003 with draft legislation completed by end 2003. There will be an intensive consultation programme with the Sector.

Communication with the Community and Voluntary Sector

The CV12 group to develop a web site (funded by the Department of Community Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs). It can be found at: www.cv12.info and contains the latest updates as well as background information and contact details for the CV12 members.

Planning Workshop Outcomes

A planning and workshop day involving the IAG, CV12 and Department officials was held on 11 April 11th. The primary purpose was to agree tangible outcomes for the remainder of this year. The following outcomes were agreed and committed to by the Department of Community Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs:

NYF Member Youth Services Current Awareness Update

- Delivery of the grant schemes as outlined above.
- Report detailing how many Voluntary Activity Units (VAUs) have been set up in which departments (4 are planned for 2003), who are the contact points, how can they be contacted and what the Sector can expect from them, i.e. a 'blueprint' for the VAUs
- Response to and follow-up actions related to report *Tipping the Balance* prepared by the National Committee on Volunteering in October 2002.
- User-friendly guide to how the Best Practice Principles in the White Paper Appendices can be applied to both Community & Voluntary organisations and statutory ones.
- Consultation document by summer 2003 on proposed reform of legislation & regulation for charities - draft legislation commenced by end 2003.
- National conference at which progress can be reported and feedback can be received, tentatively scheduled to take place during the Autumn of 2003.

For more information about the White Paper, contact: Deirdre Garvey (deirdre@wheel.ie) in The Wheel office.

NEW HANDBOOK & WEBSITE FOR ADULT EDUCATIONAL GUIDANCE & INFORMATION SERVICE

On 7 March, 2003 the Minister of State at the Department of Education and Science, Sile de Valera T.D., launched the *Handbook and Website for the Adult Educational Guidance and Information Service* at Co. Laois VEC in Portlaoise. The Adult Educational Guidance Initiative was launched to provide a guidance service for participants on adult literacy, VTOS and adult and community education programmes and this service based in Portlaoise, is one of the eight projects selected for Phase Two of the initiative approved in 2001.

Those who have no access Internet access can acquire the handbook "*U Choose*", containing all the relevant information. For further information/copies contact:

Adult Educational Guidance & Information Service
No. 2 Meehan Court
Portlaoise, Co. Laois
Tel: 0502 72963 Email: laoisaegis@eircom.net
Website: www.laoisaegis.ie

EQUALITY INITIATIVES REVIEW PUBLISHED

On 14 March, the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Mr. Michael McDowell, T. D., launched **A Review of Equality Initiatives in the Justice and Equality Sector**. This review was commissioned by the Justice and Equality Sector Steering Group, which comprises the Heads of Agencies and services associated with the Department of Justice, Equality and

Law Reform. Funding for the report was made available by the Department's Policy Planning Research Unit to the Equality Authority to oversee the project.

The report is based on the findings of a review of 16 member organisations across the Justice and Equality sector. It is the first study of its kind to apply a template that employs performance indicators and benchmarks to review progress in developing equality initiatives across all nine grounds on which discrimination is prohibited under the Employment Equality Act 1998 and Equal Status Act 2000.

The benchmarking template developed explores some of the key initiatives required for an equality-conscious organisation. The template was divided into four main areas - policy, planning, practice and positive action and concentrated on the implementation of actions and initiatives with an equality dimension. These include a capacity to assess the impact of policy decisions on groups experiencing inequality, the establishment of clear equality objectives, the implementation of equality policies and the provision of equality and diversity training. Copies of the report are available on the Department's website and from:

Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform
72-76 St. Stephens Green,
Dublin 2
Tel: 01 6028202 Fax: 01 6615461
Email: info@justice.ie

SECTION 3: ROUND-UP

NEW CRIME PREVENTION DIRECTORY LAUNCHED

On 27 March The Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Mr. Michael McDowell T.D., launched a directory of crime prevention measures, produced by the Centre for Social and Educational Research, Dublin Institute of Technology, Rathmines, to prepare a Crime Prevention Directory, which will be of interest to community groups, educational institutions, policy makers and the general public.

In recent years, investment by Government in a range of measures, which help to prevent crime, has given rise to a range of new programmes across Government Departments and State Agencies operated by both statutory and non-statutory bodies.

The Directory provides, for each crime prevention measure listed, the following information in a clear, accessible and easy-to-follow format:

- Formal name/title

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- Organisation responsible
- Full contact details
- Funding sources
- Succinct description of measure, including reference to the target group/activity
- Methodologies used
- Succinct statement of results of evaluations (if any)
- And publications (if any).

The publication, while offering a national overview of crime prevention activities, by no means provides an exhaustive description of all such projects or programmes underway in Ireland but does contain a very comprehensive range of reference material on a wide range of crime prevention activities. Copies of the Directory are available on the Department's website at www.justice.ie and from:

Crime Division
Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform
72-76, St. Stephens Green,
Dublin 2
Tel: 01 6028202
Fax: 01 6615461
Email: info@justice.ie

MINISTER LAUNCHES NEW CHILD PROTECTION BOOK

On 13 March, the Minister for Children, Mr. Brian Lenihan T.D. launched *Child Protection Work: Beyond the Rhetoric* by Dr. Helen Buckley. The Minister welcomed the book as a valuable addition to Irish research in the child protection area.

Dr. Buckley is one of Ireland's leading experts on Child Protection and Welfare. She is currently a senior lecturer in the Department of Social Studies, Trinity College where she co-ordinates the Postgraduate Diploma in Child Protection and Welfare. She is also a Senior Research Fellow in the Children's Research Centre, Trinity College. In addition, she was appointed to the Special Residential Services Board in 2001.

The book focuses on the professional practices of social workers and others employed in child protection. It explores and makes visible the practices in their 'real-

life' environment. The book attempts to challenge the assumptions inherent in the 'official' version of child protection by going beyond descriptions of child protection in the idealised sense, to show what workers actually 'do'. It argues that far from being a straightforward and easily defined operation, the work of child protection is complex, full of contradictions, ideological dilemmas and dynamic elements ass of which must be considered and addressed by practitioners and managers is their work is to be effective.

INTERCULTURALISM AND ANTI-RACISM GUIDELINES LAUNCHED

The National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI) has just produced a new resource entitled Guidelines for Developing a Whole Organisation Approach to Address Racism and to Support Interculturalism.

The aim of this publication is to provide guidelines to develop a whole organisation approach to address racism and to support interculturalism within an organisation. These guidelines are the second part of a series of publications, which began with "Guidelines on Anti-racism and Intercultural Training" and which will continue with the publication of training and resource materials for anti-racism trainers.

The Guidelines are about promoting good practice and are designed to be consistent with the equality legislation and the development of equality action plans. To obtain a copy free of charge, please contact:

National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI)
Tel: 01 478 5777
Email: nccri@eircom.net

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