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Supporting and Highlighting Voluntary Activity

by Tony Murphy, Chief Executive, NYF

Given the size and significance of the Community and voluntary Sector it is amazing that no analysis or commentary on the achievements of 1997 could be found in the annual review of the Sunday papers 29 December last. Much was written in the same paper about the Celtic Tiger which symbolises one economic principle - the survival of the fittest. Nothing startling about this reality.

Voluntary organisations are extremely active, driven by priorities and particular funding circumstances, and yet fail to convey the social impact of the sector's collective endeavours without which the State could not survive. Agencies such as the National Economic and Social Forum, Community Platform, Combat Poverty, the National Anti-Poverty Strategy Unit among others are well placed to comment on social change and development within Irish Society.

In 1992 Faughnan and Kelleher following a study of 42 Voluntary Organisations commented:

"These organisations, however, were in an ambiguous and precarious relationship with the State. While encouraged to respond to intractable social problems and to major issues of development, they lack a clear commitment and recognition from Government agencies. For the Voluntary Sector to fulfil its role of promoting a more democratic, pluralist society and representing as well as responding to vulnerable and social excluded groups, a comprehensive policy for the Voluntary Sector is urgently required".

The voluntary sector is not committed to dialogue and social partnership purely based on a moral claim to be recognised by the State. More importantly it is based on a belief in the partnership approach being fundamental to successfully addressing long-term concerns such as social exclusion, unemployment and disproportionate opportunities for certain groups regarding wealth and education.

The point is well made in relation to early school leavers: do we merely say that the system cannot cope with them or they are unsuitable to the system? Alternatively, do we widen the net in order to ensure that their flights of learning and fancy can be accommodated and supported towards a useful and participative role within pathway of life-long learning?

As a partner among partners nevertheless the sector requires agreed measures for quality assurance and appropriate validation systems which allows it to stand over work in its own right but also, to present work in ways which can be recognised by other sectors.

The Green Paper on Supporting Voluntary Activity (via the Combat Poverty Agency Conference 23/24 February) provides an ideal opportunity for considering the establishment of a single representative voice for the sector which reflects diversity in unity. Equality of participation and access, of opportunities to influence and agree potential outcomes should be the hallmarks of how the actors within the sector engage with each other and in so doing promote the immense significance of the sector's contribution to social change within our wider society. We represent a different set of principles and values to the 'Tiger' in planning for and evaluating progress. A huge challenge presents itself and part of the response is to say 'Move over Mr Tiger!'.

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£30 Million - Young People's Facilities and Services Fund - How it was Won/How it will be Used

by John Adams

Introduction

On 21 January, 1998 the Taoiseach, Mr. Bertie Ahern T.D., announced that the government would allocate £30m over three years to a "Young People's Facilities and Services Fund." This Fund will support a variety of capital and non-capital projects in disadvantaged areas with at least £20m going to areas hardest hit by heroin.¹

Minister of State Chris Flood, who has responsibility for the National Drugs Strategy Team, outlined his belief that it would be crucial for the Fund to attract and engage "at risk" young people into activities. This would be done through building "state of the art" facilities and appointing trained youth workers. The government hopes to fully coordinate all activities by involving the statutory, voluntary and community sectors in developing a focused strategy.²

Background

How did it all happen?... Like all things in life, the £30m Fund did not come easy. In fact, it started out as the £20m "Youth Development Fund" and was an integral part of the "Second Ministerial Task Force Report on Measures to Reduce the Demand for Drugs." (May 1997). This second report, which focused on the problems associated with non-opiates and possible prevention initiatives for young people, was unique because of the breadth of its Key Recommendations. These recommendations, drawn from the input of over 70 groups and individuals, called for a wide-range of measures to combat drug misuse including: the establishment of local sports forums; research into the effects and trends of drug causes. information/media campaigns; pilot projects in urban areas; and the contribution of £20m from the exchequer to establish a Youth Development Fund.3

However, by December 1997, it appeared that all of these measures for combating drug misuse would remain merely aspirational or in another words - unfunded. On December 16th 1997, Mr. Dermot Ahern, T.D., in a Dáil question session referred to the £20m Fund as a "mirage,"4 thus signalling the beginning of a well co-ordinated community campaign to restore the Fund. Led by groups like the City-Wide Drugs Crisis Campaign and the Ballymun Youth Action Project, an orchestrated effort was begun (including a planned protest outside Dáil Eireann) to exert pressure on the government to live up to its pre-election promise to "upgrade the physical environment and social and recreational amenities in disadvantaged areas."5 After much work and buoyed by newspaper headlines like "Funding Blow Wrecks Youth Band Project," 6 "Outrage at Youth Fund Cut,"7 and "Campaign to Challenge Drugs Decision,"8 a new Young People's Facilities and Services Fund of £30m was eventually established by the Taoiseach on 21 January, 1998. The much anticipated "Day of Action" in front of the Dáil was subsequently called off (much to the Samba Band's chagrin!)

The Next Step

Communities are now looking at ways to invest £30m in the future of young people. Again, it is imperative that communities working in areas of high deprivation come together to best determine their local priorities. The same effort and commitment which it took to plan the protest

needs to be employed to co-ordinate a multiagency approach. As the First Ministerial Task Force reported, if programmes are to be delivered in an effective, efficient manner, "it is absolutely essential that practical and workable arrangements be put in place to ensure a coherent, co-ordinated approach." 9

Ballymun Youth Action Project

The Ballymun Youth Action Project or YAP, as it is better known locally, has been leading the way in blending Community Development Principles and Drugs Work. YAP has been successful in

designing strategies "which consult with and actively encourage the involvement of local people..." ¹⁰ YAP believes "local groups and individuals have a very valuable contribution to make to the development of national policy and can bring to the decision table a depth of local experience... some of these local groups have been involved in tackling the drugs problem in their respective areas over a number of years and, during that time, have built up considerable valuable experience which should be tapped as a resource". 11

In Ballymun, YAP has been involved in efforts to include all agencies in planning an effective strategy to reduce the demand for drugs by our young people. A blueprint for Ballymun has been drawn up which, if funded, would provide a much needed "Youth Centre," a "Special Diversion Through Sports Scheme," and set the foundation for an "Alternative School" 12 for our area (a need that people working with our young people have highlighted for decades!)

Conclusion

At this important time in the development of services for young people, it is imperative that lessons learned in each community are shared in order to better equip communities to make their dreams become realities. If there is one lesson to be learned from the Youth Development Fund fight, it is that progress can be made when communities come together.

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Children At Risk: Better Training Coupled With Checks Needed to Prevent Similar Cases

by Niall McElwee

Introduction

The jailing of the convicted paedophile David Murray in December of last year for ten years marks yet a new departure for childcare in Ireland. What is shocking about this case is that Murray held a formal childcare qualification and thus let all of us involved in the training and education of childcare workers down terribly. The damage done to the children in his care is inestimable but we have some idea of the devastation caused from the comments of his victims in the Dublin Circuit Criminal Court. One said he was robbed of his childhood and another victim stated that his marriage had broken up because of the sexual abuse. What is unforgivable is this sorry mess is that Murray was able to work in a number of childcare centres around the country choosing his children over a period of decades. He should have been thoroughly checked and more importantly tracked in the childcare system.

High Burnout Rate

As a course director in Social Care at the Waterford Institute of Technology I am very aware of the responsibility I have in consistently and rigorously assessing the suitability of my students for their future careers in childcare. They will have enormous responsibilities in their work with vulnerable and disturbed children. It is not surprising that there are high burnout rates for childcare workers, and residential care is particularly problematic. Having said this, there is wonderful work being done on a daily basis by childcare workers and we should not lose sight of this in the furore over Murray.

We live in a culture of risk and childcare has been criticised and radicalised by the media over the past two decades. It is the experience of the third level training colleges that very few males are coming into childcare now. In year one of the Social Care course in Waterford out of fifty students only four are male. Many male friends of mine that are working as professional childcare workers are fearful of being in a room alone with a child in case and allegation of abuse is made.

This has important ramifications for the potential role models for children in care as many have had very negative experiences of adult males who will give them positive experiences. This is why Murray has let us all down. As a childcare worker, an adult, a male and a person in a position of trust he has added significantly to the misery of the children in his care. This is the worst thing a childcare worker can do. What needs to be done? We still do not have a system of national registration for childcare workers, despite repeated calls form such organisations as the *Irish Association of Careworkers*. This association has just

published a revised code of ethics which specifically addresses sanctioning childcare workers and this is certainly to be welcomed. Childcare workers should be registered with a state body and any childcare worker that has been found to abuse his or her clients should be struck off the register and his or her name circulated to the appropriate people in every childcare centre in this country.

Proper Supervision

There is also the thorny issue of qualification routes into childcare. There is no doubt that the 1991 Childcare Act is a very significant piece of legislation and marks a move towards a much more child centred approach than we had here in Ireland. But we have a long way to go yet in adequately protecting vulnerable children and adolescents. There are in my opinion too many routes into childcare varying from six-week courses to four-year programmes. Yet it has been my experience to meet people working in care calling themselves childcare workers when they hold no formal qualifications at all.

Conclusion

Finally, there are few studies done on the psychological make-up of childcare workers and there are many childcare centres that still do not provide weekly supervision for their staff as they do not have the resources or it is not policy. If we are to learn anything from the case of the paedophile careworker David Murray it must be that children deserve better. Irish society should demand that people working in childcare are trained, monitored, supervised and assessed to a level of standard. Of course the children have little voice in all of this. The victims that Murray abused will have to try to put their lives back together again. Childcare services will require independent evaluation if they are to move forward into the next millennium. (Reproduced from Irish Independent, 18 December, 1997 with permission of author)

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DYSLEXIA -Its Nothing New

By Anne Hughes

Introduction

"Dyslexia - that's a new thing isn't it, you hear a lot about it these days. It wasn't around in my day." This was a comment I received recently when I mentioned that I worked with dyslexic people. The speaker was an older person, but it is a commonly held view, and a totally erroneous one. Dyslexia has been around for a very long time, Take Charlemagne now - King of the Franks, Holy Roman Emperor (742 - 814 A.D.). He was a lover of learning, a patron of scholars, founder of several universities, a military man who was also a brilliant administrator and statesman. He had the best tutors in Europe (well he would, wouldn't he). He had a lifelong devotion to education, but he never learned to read or write. It was not for the want of trying, the history books tell us. He simply could not master the art of written language.

Charlemagne, if he lived now, would probably be diagnosed as having a specific learning difficulty, commonly known as dyslexia. Dyslexia is a difficulty in learning to process written language. It is not caused by lack of intelligence or lack of schooling, nor by any physical difficulty, and certainly not by laziness or general cussedness on the part of the student. International studies indicate that it affects up to eight percent of the population. Half of this number would probably require specialised help in order to learn to read, write and spell properly. An easy rule of thumb is that in most school classes one could expect to find one or two students with specific learning difficulties.

Recognition

Specific Learning Difficulty (SLD) is genetic in origin, i.e. one is likely to be born with it. It runs in families. It affects males more than females and it is found in all areas of the country and in all socio-economic groups. A common myth is that people with dyslexia are all very clever, or brilliant at maths or very creative. Unfortunately this is not so. Dyslexia can accompany any level of intelligence and any degree of creativity. True, many gifted people from Einstein to W.B. Yeats were dyslexic, but unfortunately being dyslexic does not give one any special talents. It just means that one has to work so much harder to achieve average levels of literacy.

Charlemagne's tutors could be excused for not having diagnosed his difficulty. However, no such excuse exists for today's teachers. Dyslexia has

inadequate reading, bizarre spelling particularly phonetic spelling, reversals and
omissions of parts of words, uneven profile
of abilities (i.e. good oral abilities coupled
with very poor written presentations),
confusion between left and right, difficulties following
directions, poor short-term memory and difficulties
remembering facts in sequence have all been noted.
A teacher or youth leader who comes into contact
with a young person who seems to be intelligent,
articulate, and keen to succeed but who is
nevertheless not doing well at school, should
certainly investigate the possibility that a specific
learning difficulty may be present.

been documented since the end of the last century. The indicators are delayed and

Responding

If a learning difficulty is suspected it is very important to act immediately. The consequences for a young lad or girl who just cannot cope with school work because of a reading difficulty are very serious. Self-esteem suffers. The student may opt out, partially or totally. He or she may become truculent, aggressive and hard to handle. Conversely he or she may withdraw, become passive or depressed and feel that there is no use in trying.

What can one do to help? The first step always is to have a psycho-educational assessment carried out by a suitably trained psychologist. This will let the student know precisely what the difficulty is. It is often very reassuring for a young person to be told that he or she is not stupid, but rather has a well known and recognised difficulty which can be helped. Dyslexia does not go away. It is part of the person and it gives each one his/her own unique learning style. Each dyslexic person needs to be taught by the method which suits him or her best. That is the whole key to success. As. Dr. Harry Chasty of the British Dyslexia Institute says "if a child doesn't learn the way we teach, then we must teach the way the child learns".

Service Provision

So now we say - have a psycho-educational assessment and get appropriate teaching and everything will be fine. Yes, but who is going to pay for all this. It would have been fine for Charlemagne. Money was no object to him, but what about your average Irish family. Well the truth is that having a dyslexic child in the family can be extremely expensive. It is possible to have a psychoeducational assessment done through the Schools' Psychological Service though it does take time. This service is very limited so many parents opt to arrange assessment privately and this can be done by contacting the Association for Children and Adults

with Learning Disabilities at 01-6790276 or by contacting a psychologist in private practice. In either case assessment will cost about £I50.00, although the ACLD does have a subsidy system.

Tuition can be had from a school based remedial teacher. This is a more viable option at primary level than at second level where there are considerably fewer remedial teachers. Again, not all remedial teachers are trained to provide appropriate tuition to dyslexic pupils. In the Dublin area there are three excellent schools at primary level, run by the Department of Education, which cater for students with severe reading delays. Nothing comparable exists at second level. Facilities outside of Dublin are very sparse. Time and again parents and young adults are forced to seek private tuition. This can cost up to £15.00 per hour.

There is no state provision for adults or young people who are out of school. Even if unemployed or on a medical card they must pay for their own assessment and tuition. The various adult literacy agencies offer invaluable help to those whose literacy problems are caused by not having attended school regularly, or who simply missed out on those vital skills in their early school years. People who have dyslexic-type difficulties require specialised help, geared to individual needs and delivered by a teacher who is trained and experienced in the area.

Association for Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities

It was the lack of state provision which caused the Association for Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities (ACLD, commonly known as the Dyslexia Association) to establish its own service network. ACLD is a voluntary organisation whose aims are to increase awareness of the problems of dyslexia, lobby for appropriate services through the education system and offer support to people with dyslexia. ACLD has twenty two branches around the country and has lists of trained tutors who are prepared to give individual tuition to people who have been assessed by a psychologist. Group classes for children, Summer Schools and special examination preparation classes are offered in various locations in Dublin and the country.

Courses for trained teachers have been offered by the Association for over fifteen years. This year funding from the European Union under a Horizon Programme will allow ACLD to offer a Training for Trainers. This will be a series of lectures and workshops for those who work in the provision of training for adults and young people in vocational areas such as FÁS, Rehab and the Partnership Schemes. ACLD will also be running a course for unemployed adults (over 18) who

are dyslexic and who have found difficulty in getting a job. This will be a six month course which will include four weeks of work experience. The course will provide a base in business training and use of computer technology. The usual training allowances will be paid.

Conclusion

This project will be a great breakthrough for adults with dyslexia as they are a sector of the population who have been ignored for too long. It is argued that the costs of providing appropriate education and training for dyslexic people is too high. Has anyone considered the costs of not providing people with the necessary skills so that they can achieve their potential, live full and useful lives with dignity and self-respect. British studies have shown that men with untreated reading difficulties form a disproportionately high percentage of the prison population there. Similar studies have not been done in this country yet, but there is no reason to believe that the findings would be any different.

Charlemagne achieved great things despite his inability to read or write. But Charlemagne was an emperor. There are not too many emperors wandering our city streets but one thing you can be sure of, there are many people with specific learning difficulties on our streets. We need to be aware of that and to demand that our education system take this need on board. Charlemagne so admired the scholarship of the monks at Clonmacnoise that he sent them a valuable gift. What might he have done for those people who shared a difficulty with him, had he known about it. What a pity he isn't around today. He would surely have been a champion of those with specific learning disabilities. Lord knows we could do with him.

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Project Profile: Tus Nua, Cork YMCA

by Geoff Dickson • An understanding of groups & structures in

Background

Tus Nua (formerly Mothers Alone) of Cork YMCA has been providing much needed support and personal training opportunities for approximately six years for young women with infants who felt themselves to be isolated or The programme was introduced to Cork YMCA from a concept developed by the YWCA in Wellington, New Zealand. After a small start with a weekly support group & occasional breast feeding counselling a comprehensive service was built up over a number of years consisting of:

- breast-feeding counselling
- ante and post natal support and counselling
- workshops on health and childcare issues
- a regular support group and training (in conjunction with the Child Development Project in Cork) for "community mothers" i.e. women trained to act in a support capacity to young mothers In their own community

The overall aim with Tus Nua, as with many similar groups, is to reduce the stress and isolation frequently accompanying lone parenthood. Over time however, self help and the empowerment of members became a major issue in the group and subsequently a focus in grant applications. Funding was secured from the Combat Poverty Agency to run a social awareness/training for transformation type course.

Social Awareness Training

After exploring a number of options, a programme was agreed with South West Community Training, a group of trainers based in West Cork. The course consisted of a total of seven, two and a half hour sessions, including a final evaluation. In general terms the course dealt with:

- Conflict Management
- Leadership
- Power (individuals, personal relationships, society),
- Gender (being female in Ireland: work, family, education, law, health and violence),
- Group dynamics
- Planning Skills

Course Outcomes for the Mothers

- Optimism & enthusiasm for the future
- An understanding of the group's history &
- A clear idea of changes needed for the group's future
- Learning about funding arrangements, and consequent input into the year's funding applications.

The group subsequently applied for and received funding to purchase a mobile home to be used for low cost breaks & holidays for members. This has proved to be a successful venture with members involved in decision making as well as enjoying the e delights of Owenshincha!

Cork YMCA and Empowerment

To put this piece of work in the context of the sponsoring organisation, Cork YMCA, it has allowed Tus Nua to be more confident in developing Its own identity within the organisation and attaining a degree of autonomy perhaps not enjoyed by other projects! In addition it will be seen as having stimulated a debate about the nature of some of our other work with young people. As a direct result of this work with Tus Nua, sessions on social awareness were developed for the next STEP group. STEP stands for Support, Training & Enterprise Programme. It is a prevocational training programme for those over 18 and long term unemployed This form of social awareness training was not an entirely satisfactory experience because participation was poor and it was difficult, using this approach to find a way into social issues that were 'live' for young people. Since the YMCA was committed to developing more of a social awareness focus the next approach was to experiment with *Forum Theatre in the curriculum of the next STEP group: this worked much better as young people generally participated well and real social issues arising out of their own experiences were dealt with in the drama sessions.

*Forum Theatre

Forum Theatre was devised By Aogosto Boal (inspired by the approach & methodology of Paolo Freire) and basically involves groups working on real issues in their own lives and presenting alternative ways of dealing with these issues in a series of dramatic tableaux. These enactments would normally be played in front of an audience; the audience can involve Itself by proposing & enacting their own solutions individually usually casting themselves as the main protagonist.

For further information on this project and its methodology contact: Geoff Dickson, City of Cork YMCA, 12 Marlborough Street, Cork. Tel: (021) 271087 Fax: (021) 274726

UN Committee on the Rights of the Child Issue Recommendations for Ireland

by The Children's Rights Alliance

Background

On Friday 23 January, 1998 the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child issued its concluding observations and recommendations on the state of children's rights in Ireland. The recommendations were made following a two-day hearing in Geneva earlier this month with an Irish government delegation, led by Ms. Liz O'Donnell T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Foreign Affairs. One of the observations made by the Committee was the lack of sufficient steps taken by the government to promote awareness understanding of the principles and provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Article 42 of the Convention obliges States Parties to undertake "to make the principles and provisions of the Convention widely known, by appropriate and active means, to parents and children alike". However, five years after Ireland's ratification of the Convention, adults and children in Ireland are generally unaware of its existence much less its contents.

This article will provide a brief overview of the principles and provisions of the Convention and outline its monitoring and reporting process before finally focusing on the observations and recommendations of the UN Committee for Ireland.

What is the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child?

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is a human rights treaty which protects the child's civil and political rights as well as the child's economic, social and cultural rights, and humanitarian rights. The Convention provides an internationally agreed framework of minimum standards necessary for the well-being of every child. A child is defined in the Convention as a person under the age of 18 years. There are four main sections to the Convention:

- the preamble, which sets out the major underlying principles of the Convention and provides a context for it
- the substantive articles, which set out the rights of all children and the obligations of State Parties (Articles 1-41)
- the implementation provisions which define how compliance with the Convention is to be monitored and fostered (Articles 42-45)
- the conditions under which the Convention comes into force (Articles 46-54).

Special emphasis has been given to four articles in the Convention which are often identified as 'general principles' as they are basic to the implementation of all rights enshrined in it. They are: that all the rights

guaranteed by the Convention must be available to all children without discrimination of any kind (Article 2); that the best interests of the child must be a primary consideration in all actions concerning children (Article 3); that every child has the right to life, survival and development (Article 6); and, that the child's view must be considered and taken into account in all matters affecting him/her (Article 12). The articles of the Convention are sometimes grouped together under the themes of survival, development, protection and participation:

Survival rights cover a child's right to life and the needs that are most basic to existence; these include an adequate living standard, shelter, nutrition and access to medical services.

Development rights include those things that children require in order to reach their fullest potential. Examples are the right to education, play, leisure, cultural activities, access to information, and freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

Protection rights require that children be safeguarded against all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation. They cover issues such as special care for refugee children; safeguards for children in the criminal justice system; protection for children in employment; protection and rehabilitation for children who have suffered sexual exploitation or abuse of any kind.

Participation rights encapsulate the right of children and young people to take an active role in their communities and nations. These encompass the freedom to express opinions, to have a say in matters affecting their own lives and to join associations.

The Monitoring and Reporting Process

Like every other binding treaty, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child has a built-in implementation mechanism designed to monitor the progress of State Parties in fulfilling their obligations. In the case of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the mechanism adopted to monitor compliance with the Convention is the submission of national reports which describe progress towards implementation. States Parties must submit a national report two years after ratification and thereafter every five years. Examination of national reports is undertaken by a committee of ten experts on children's rights from around the world - the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. The Committee does not make its assessment of each country solely on the basis of the government report and submissions are accepted from NGOs concerned with children's rights and welfare.

Examination of national reports takes place during a plenary hearing. Preparatory meetings or pre-sessional meeting are held in advance of plenary hearings. National NGOs and international organisations such as UNICEF, ILO, WHO and UNHCR participate in the pre-sessional meeting and following this a draft 'list of issues' is forwarded to the government in order to obtain additional information. The list of issues indicates the preliminary priorities of the Committee for discussion with the government in the plenary hearing. Following the plenary hearing with the State Party, the Committee issues its 'Concluding Observations and Recommendations' - a statement of its findings and recommendations for action.

Ireland and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Ireland signed the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on 30 September 1990 and ratified it without reservation on 21 September 1992. The Convention then entered into force in Ireland on 21st October 1992. Despite ratifying the Convention in September 1992 Ireland did not submit its First National Report on the implementation of the Convention until April 1996. In May 1997 the Children's Rights Alliance, an umbrella group of over sixty organisations concerned with children's rights and welfare, forwarded a submission, Small Voices: Vital Rights, to the UN Committee. This report sets out the Alliance's view on the extent to which Irish laws, policies and practices comply with the principles and articles of the Convention; identifies key issues for children in Ireland in the context of the Convention; and, makes recommendations regarding the changes necessary in order to comply.

In October 1997 members of the UN Committee assembled for a pre-sessional working meeting to prepare the discussion for Ireland's plenary hearing. The Children's Rights Alliance participated in the pre-sessional working meeting, its presentation based on the information contained in Small Voices: Vital Rights. Ireland's plenary hearing with the UN Committee took place on the 12 and 13 January 1998. During nine hours of discussion and questioning the Committee touched on a very broad range of issues relating to the rights and welfare of children and young people in Ireland, including many of the issues drawn to the attention of the Committee by the Children's Rights Alliance and other NGOs. The government delegation, led by Minister of State Liz O'Donnell, included officials from the Departments of Health and Children, Education and Science, Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Foreign Affairs and the Attorney General's Office. The plenary hearing which is a public event, was covered by the Irish media, and attended by representatives of Irish NGOs including the Children's Rights Alliance.

UN Committee's Observations

In its 'Concluding Observations and Recommendations' following the examination of the Irish government report the UN Committee expressed concern about the lack of a comprehensive national policy for children which fully incorporates the principles and provision of the Convention. The Committee also expressed concern about:

- the lack of adequate co-ordination among various government bodies responsible for children, at national and local level;
- the lack of an independent monitoring mechanism to promote and protect children's rights, such as an Ombudsman for Children;
- the lack of emphasis on measures of a preventative nature:
- the lacunae in statistical and other information relating to children;
- the insufficient steps taken to promote widespread awareness of the Convention
- and the lack of systematic training on the principles and provision of the Convention, for professional groups working for and with children.

The Committee were also concerned about:

- the existence of child abuse and violence with the family and the lack of a mandatory reporting mechanism for child abuse:
- the disadvantaged situation of children born from unmarried parents due to the lack of appropriate procedures to include the identify of the father in the birth registration of the child;
- the incidence of teenage suicide;
- the lack of a national policy to ensure the rights of the child with disabilities;
- the incidence of child poverty and homelessness;
- and the low age of criminal responsibility and treatment of children deprived of their liberty.

UN Committee's Recommendations

Among the 18 comprehensive recommendations made by the UN Committee to the Irish government are the following: the Committee recommend that further steps are taken to ensure that the Convention is fully incorporated as part of Irish domestic law; that the recommendations of the Constitutional Review Group to strengthen the recognition of children's rights in the Constitution be implemented; that the government adopt a comprehensive national strategy for children, incorporating the principles and provisions of the Convention, in a systematic manner, in the design of all its policies and programmes; that an independent monitoring body, such as an Ombudsman for Children, be established; that a systematic information campaign on children's rights be developed for both children and adults; that there is increased co-ordination among different government bodies, with a single body mandated to co-ordinate and make appropriate decisions to protect the rights of the child; and that a system of data collection and indicators be developed incorporating all areas covered by the Convention; that immediate steps to tackle the problem of child poverty and all possible efforts to ensure that all families have adequate resources and facilities.

Finally, the UN Committee recommend that the Irish government widely distribute and publicise the 'Concluding Observation and Recommendations' and that they form the basis for discussions on how to improve the enforcement of the provisions of the Convention in Ireland. So far our government has been very quiet on this matter!

(The full list of 'Concluding Observations and Recommendations' of the UN Committee is available from the Children's Rights Alliance.)

The Children's Rights Alliance is an umbrella group of over sixty organisations including a wide range of child welfare agencies; youth representative groups; national parents organisations; unions and professional groups representing teachers, social workers, psychologists and child care workers; and others with an interest in children's rights. The purpose of the Alliance is to promote awareness of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in the Republic of Ireland, and to seek the implementation of the Convention through the reform and improvement of legislation, policies and services.

For further information please contact: Anne Shaw,
Development Officer, The Children's Rights Alliance, 4
Christchurch Square, Dublin 8 Tel: 453 0355 E-mail:
cra@iol.ie

Minister Launches Final Report of Task Force on Suicide

Mr Brian Cowen T.D., Minister for Health and Children launched the **Final Report of the National Task Force on Suicide** on 27 January. The publication of the report represents a significant milestone towards addressing the growing problem of suicide and attempted suicide in this country and follows the publication of the Interim Report of the Task Force in August 1996.

The Minister welcomed the national suicide prevention / reduction strategy prepared by the Task Force which will greatly facilitate the relevant services in dealing with this difficult problem. The Task Force embarked on a comprehensive consultative process, before outlining in detail in its Final Report the various measures which need to be adopted in order to address the high incidence of suicide in this country particularly among recognised risk groups such as young males between fifteen and twenty four years of age.

It should be noted that the report specifically recommended the use of the NYF Guidelines for Dealing With Suicide for Youth Workers in working on youth suicide, attempted suicide and parasuicide.

The Task Force recommends a comprehensive approach to tackle the circumstances that can result in persons taking their own lives. The key components of the overall strategy include:

- The implementation of measures aimed at high risk groups;
- Provision of information and training on suicide prevention to relevant professionals and organisations;
- The improvement of services which would benefit those at risk of suicide and those who attempt suicide.

The key recommendations of the Task Force are outlined below under the headings as outlined in the report.

Key Components of the National Suicide Reduction/Prevention Strategy

- Identification of the persons and bodies whose working lives impinge on the recognition and care of persons at risk of suicide and attempted suicide including those outside the health sector.
- Improvement in general suicide prevention and education programmes through greater collaboration in schools between staff, pupils, parents associations and the local health board to promote positive mental health;
- national alcohol consumption levels to be stabilised and preferably reduced;
- the introduction by the Department of Education and Science of a broad based social and personal health education programme in primary and secondary schools to be implemented

- throughout the school cycle. Such programmes should deal with issues such as depression awareness, coping skills and anger control;
- The Department of Health and Children to work with <u>youth services</u> to develop a social and personal health education programme for the young out of school sector;
- the media to establish a code of good practice applicable to reporting matters relating to suicide;
- special attention for vulnerable groups at risk of suicide - e.g. the mentally ill, the young and older people.
- Mental health services should be reviewed to ensure greater accessibility for these groups;
- improved psychological and counselling services need to be provided particularly for young people;
- reducing the availability and means of suicide. In particular all applications for firearms licences be carefully scrutinised and the availability of medicines harmful in overdose to be restricted.

Attempted Suicide

- persons who attempt suicide are more likely to come from urban areas of high unemployment. The Task Force endorses the aim and objectives of the Government strategy on the labour market as incorporated in the strategy paper titled "Growing and Sharing Employment".
- health boards to establish a range of comprehensive support services including social work services for vulnerable families or families experiencing difficulties.
- all individuals who attempt suicide should be encouraged to seek professional help;
- and that each community based psychiatric team nominate a health professional to oversee the management of the person and that the person's general practitioner be kept informed of every step of the management of the person by the psychiatric team.

Aftermath and Aftercare in Suicide

- relevant professionals, whether nurse or doctor, garda, prison officer or priest, should be given special training in confronting and responding to traumatic situations;
- relevant professionals to be made aware of what are the appropriate steps for distraught relatives to take should they feel they cannot cope;
- when professionals themselves have been traumatised, counselling should be made available for them by the relevant professional organisation.
- where relevant, and with his or her permission, the individual be put in touch with appropriate self help or other support groups.
- the social and psychological, as well as the medical (both physical and psychiatric) needs of parasuicidal patients to be catered for.

Research and Evaluation

- a Suicide Research Group be established by the Chief Executive Officers of the health boards, comprising Psychiatrists, Directors of Public Health and relevant researchers, to review ongoing trends in suicide and parasuicide and to co-ordinate research into suicide.
- Particular attention needs to be given to research into <u>young peoples suicides</u> with a view to understanding the reasons why they occur so that appropriate action can be taken.
- current collection of data by the Garda Siochana in relation to cases of suicide at inquests be expanded to include improved information in relation to the medical and social circumstances of the individual. The proposed Suicide Research Group to have access to this information.
- the Chief Executive Officers of each health board to nominate a resource officer(s) with responsibilities in the broad field of suicide prevention;
- the resource officer(s) to act as a contact point with voluntary groups and facilitate research into all aspects of suicidal and parasuicidal behaviour and their consequences in the health board area.

Copies of the report are available through Government Publications at a cost of £5.00. Copies of the NYF Guidelines are available through the Irish YouthWork Centre.

New Research Report on the Needs of Rural Youth

A Sense of Belonging, the report from Youth Action's Rural Research Project was launched before Christmas in Loughry College, Cookstown, by Tony Worthington, Minister for Education. Local presentations of the report were also made by Youth Action Northern Ireland in the Glens, the South Mournes and the Castlederg areas - the three areas in which the research took place. The research project was a partnership involving voluntary and statutory bodies from the Education, Health and Agricultural sectors as well as local community groups.

The report is the culmination of two years work by Youth Action in these three rural areas of Northern Ireland. The research explores rural young people's needs, hopes and aspirations. It also has a particular focus on young people's relationship with rural development. The research highlights the potential of young people in the regeneration of rural areas.

A key feature of the report is the making heard of young people's voices. This is reflected in the title, "A Sense of Belonging" which came from the young people themselves and summarises their desires and aspirations for the future.

As a result of this research project Youth Action Northern Ireland are now establishing a **Rural Development Unit** to support work with young people in rural areas. Further details about the unit and copies of the report are available from:

Teresa Geraghty, Youth Action Northern Ireland, Hampton, Glenmachan Park, Belfast. Tel: (0801232) 760067.

Night Courses in Human Rights and Development Education

Comhlámh, the Irish association of returned development workers, plans to hold two night courses in its Dublin offices in Spring 1998. The first, 'Human Rights in Ireland & Worldwide' will explore key issues in human rights in the context of the 50th anniversary of the United Nations Declaration as well as the current state of human rights in Ireland and world-wide. Course sessions will include Travellers' issues, food, women, disabilities, refugees, sexuality, censorship and discrimination.

The second course, entitled 'Skills in Development Education' will provide training in development education methods relevant to working with schools, youth and adult groups. With and emphasis on practical skills such as campaign planning, the use of photographs and images, media skills and groupwork and facilitation, the course aims to help people plan and design appropriate development education programmes.

Both courses are fairly informal in structure and will be delivered one evening per week over a 10 week period.

For further details on both courses, contact:

Suzanne MacManus, Meabh McMahon or Louise
Keating in Comhlámh's Dublin office. Tel: (01) 478
3490 Fax: (01) 478 3738 or E-mail:
comhlamh@iol.ie

Combat Poverty Agency Fellowship Awards Scheme

The Combat Poverty Agency has been operating a Fellowship Awards Scheme for doctoral research into poverty and related matters since 1994. The aim of the Fellowship Scheme is to enhance the infrastructure for poverty research in Ireland.

Proposals are now invited for research in the key areas of interest to the Agency: tackling long term unemployment addressing educational disadvantage empowering the excluded, addressing the spatial dimensions of poverty, supporting the peace process, improving the social welfare system, promoting tax reform and redistribution, and influencing wider policy and civil society.

Fellowships will be valued at £5,000 per annum for up to three years. The research programmes will be carried out in recognised third-level institutions.

CHILD PROTECTION

Child Protection Guidelines by North Eastern Health Board

The NEHB has produced these guidelines in response to the implementation of the Child Care Act 1991, which places a statutory duty on each Health Board to promote the welfare of children in its area who are not receiving adequate care and protection. The guidelines are an integral part of a comprehensive five year child care services plan developed for the region.

This manual is intended as a guide to persons working in this field to help promote good practice, by ensuring that child care professionals are provided with standardised guidelines on the detection and inter-agency management of situations where the abuse or neglect of children is evident or suspected. The contents include:

- Section 1: Introduction
- Section 2: Recognising Child Abuse and Neglect
- Section 3: Responding to Allegations of Child Abuse and Neglect
- Section 4: Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect
- Section 5: The Investigative Process
- Section 6: Planning in Child Protection
- Section 7: Prevention and Treatment of Child Abuse and Neglect
- Section 8: Supervision and Training

EVALUATING TRAINING

Evaluating Training Programmes: Guidelines for Voluntary Sector Training Organisers by Pauline Evans, Diane Burridge, Advice Development Team, NCVO

Demands for greater accountability have already affected the way many voluntary organisations manage their work. Training providers are no exception. They are increasingly expected to produce reports evaluating their training programmes for those who have a vested interest in its quality, appropriateness and 'value for money'. This booklet has been designed to help clarify what information might be needed and which methods could be used to collect it. Its aim is to provide a detailed step-by-step guide to conducting an evaluation.

For training organisers new to evaluation, the guide in Part One is intended to explain where to start. It will have succeeded if it shows them how to pull together and organise the information which they currently have available. The Case Studies and Checklists contained in part Two provide examples of how different programme organisers have answered the question 'How are we doing?'

The more experienced evaluator should find that this guide helps them build on their strengths. It should also offer an opportunity to re-examine current practices with the result that new ways might be discovered in which to approach old problems. Evaluation does not need to be intensive and

difficult. It does, however, require planning, discipline in

measuring and recording, and knowledge of simple techniques. Having worked through this booklet users will be able to:

- describe what evaluation is and how it works
- identify those people one might wish to invite to advise and help one conduct an evaluation
- specify those aspects of a training programme that one wishes to evaluate
- start all over again by evaluating the effectiveness of one's evaluation process and changing in accordingly!

HOUSING

Compiling a Tenants Resource by Focus Point Ireland

This is one of a series of guidelines issued by Focus Point Ireland which offer advice based on our own experience. They are intended as a source of ideas, structures, information and suggestions for voluntary and other groups, rather than as a definitive set of solutions to problems. This booklet, the first in the series, is intended to help voluntary groups, non-profit housing associations or housing co-operatives who are setting up and running a housing scheme offering emergency, short-term or long-term accommodation or a combination of these accommodation types.

Tenants need to know something about the housing scheme and the area; they need information about the facilities that are on offer, how and when to pay their rent, whom they can turn to in a crisis, what the procedures are with regard to safety and security and what basic ground rules of good neighbourliness apply within the scheme. They may also need a place to keep the documents that relate to their tenancy and to any personal development programme they may be participating in as part of the tenancy arrangement. In order to meet all these needs, groups running voluntary housing schemes usually find it useful to provide a handbook or pack of some sort for their tenants.

This booklet aims to provide groups with a working framework, adaptable to their own needs, that will help them to draw up such a tenants' resource. Groups may draw up their books or packs in consultation with their tenants or the tenants themselves may write or be involved in the writing of the resource pack.

LONE PARENTS

Working Families: a comparative study of economic activity amongst lone parents in Ireland and Finland by Lorna Ryan

Study commissioned by the 'Making the Future Work' Transnational Partnership between Parent Alone Resource Centre and North Karelia Polytechnic, Joensuu, Finland. Both organisations are promoting projects under the EU Employment Initiative targeted at unemployed lone parents. A

Applicants should have a primary degree in a related discipline. applicants with work experience in related areas are encouraged to apply.

The closing date for applications **Friday**, **17 April**, **1998**. For further details and an application form, please contact:

David Silke, Combat Poverty Agency, Bridgewater Centre, Conyngham Road, Islandbridge, Dublin 8.

Residential Facility for Disadvantaged and Marginalised Groups

The Cavan Centre is a Residential Centre for Education and Community Development, a voluntary organisation, run by a Management Board made up of youth and community workers from Dublin. The Cavan Centre is a registered charity and pursues

"a positive policy of discrimination in favour of disadvantaged and marginalised individuals and communities".

The Cavan Centre has a full time Professional Staff, and is funded by The Management Board, the Department of Education and Science and Dublin Corporation. It provides two Residential Programmes:

- A Residential Community/Training Holiday and Outdoor Pursuits Programme.
- Identification and Organisation of Training Programmes in a wide range of Leadership Skills to empower the Individual and the Community.

The Centre is used extensively by many groups including

- · Youth Clubs,
- Youthreach Centres,
- School Groups,
- · Clubs.
- Scouts & Guides,
- · Retreat Groups,
- Families.
- Senior Citizens Groups,
- Women's Groups,
- CE Schemes & Community Training Workshops, Child Care Homes and Rehab Centres.

It provides the following programme options:

- Holidays
- Adventure Sports.
- Water Sports.
- · Coaching Courses (Sports).
- Youth & Community Training.
- Retreats.
- Seminars.
- Outdoor Education.
- Family Holidays.
- Conferences.
- Leadership Training.
- Team Building Facilitation.

• Personal Development.

For further information, please contact:

Pat Carthy, Director Residential Programmes, The Cavan Centre, Ballyjamesduff, Co. Cavan. Tel/Fax: (049) 44436

New Enterprise Pack from Department of Education and Science

A new enterprise teaching pack titled **The Enterprise Encounter Pack** has been developed

based on the findings of a survey undertaken by a group of students who interviewed nearly 60 successful entrepreneurs and business people in the Dún Laoighaire-Rathdown area and asked them about their formative influences and their success. The students involved came from 10 schools in South County Dublin and were drawn from various senior course levels i.e. Transition Year, Leaving Cert. Business, Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA), Leaving Certificate Vocational Preparation (LCVP) and Post Leaving Certificate (PLC).

The pack is intended as a teaching resource and includes profiles, interview notes, teamwork, brainstorming, creative thinking and a start-me-up-section.

The pack was co-funded by the Department of Education and Science, Venturepoint and the Dún Laoighaire-Rathdown County Enterprise Board and is available at a cost of £5.00 from:

Blackrock Education Centre. Tel: (01) 2300977

participation rates in general. Qualitative and quantitative data from the participants from both projects is presented to forge a link between policies and the everyday reality of lone parents. The study also signals the direction of current policies which impact on lone parents in Ireland and Finland and concludes wit ha series of recommendations.

PROFILING LOCAL NEEDS

Profiling the Needs of Young People in Local Areas

by Focus Ireland

Another in the series of guidelines issued by Focus Ireland which are intended as a source of ideas, structures, information and suggestions for voluntary and other groups who are working to combat homelessness and related social problems.

This set of guidelines were drawn up as a response to requests from local community and youth groups and Local Area Partnerships for information on how to undertake a profile of youth needs in a local area. Drawing on the experience of two locally based research studies undertaken by Focus Ireland in the Dublin area, these guidelines are designed to help local groups to identify youth needs and to develop strategic plans to bring about change.

The guidelines are not a blueprint for undertaking a profile of the needs of young people. Rather, they outline the stages that are involved in such a study. They provide information on processes and useful sources of information that can help to integrate such a project into local planning and hopefully help to make the research process and findings and the follow-up work more accessible.

VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

Managing Volunteers: A Good Practice Guide by NSSB

Handbook which has been produced for the side range of voluntary and statutory agencies in the Republic of Ireland which use volunteers. The materials included in the guide should be adapted to individual organisations to help them develop volunteer policies which are tailor-made to their respective needs.

Beginning with some guidelines on how to design the most appropriate volunteer policy, the guide works through the various stages necessary for the recruitment, training and overall support of volunteers. Sections covered include:

- The Volunteer Policy
- Management of Volunteers
- Recruitment (including contracts)
- Training & Support
- Expenses
- Insurance
- Legal Structures
- Management Committees.

WORKING WITH LESBIAN, GAY AND BISEXUAL YOUTH

Pride & Prejudice: working with lesbian, gay and bisexual youth

Edited by Margaret S. Schneider

Comprehensive resource produced by Central Toronto Youth Services which provides a through course in lesbian, gay and bisexual youth issues as well a practical guide about how to help. Issues covered include: prejudice; violence; group counselling; relationships; identity; HIV/AIDS; homelessness; service provision through school, welfare services and youth services amongst others

YOUTH PROJECTS

Equal to the Future: Northern Ireland Voluntary Trust Unattached Youth Programme by Kenneth Shanks and Camilla Galli Da Bino

NIVT's Unattached Youth Programme exists to establish ways in which activities aimed at young people can be truly relevant to the needs of young people. At the programme's heart is a desire to see if projects run, organised and controlled by young people offer lessons for those funding youth initiatives and shaping youth policy who are prepared to learn from emergent lessons and insights. The programme consists of seven such projects each of which differs not only in terms of their objectives, geographical patch and extent of ambitions, but also in relation to both their attitudes to involving adults in their work and the experience they have had in attempting to develop resultant relationships in their own terms. This publication is the result of commissioning two researchers to something of the essence of projects' beginnings and early days.

The aim is to put into the public domain the first piece in what is intended to be a mosaic of views; opinions, evidence and chronicle. The material presented is couched in a singular style from a particular perspective. Much has happened within each of the seven projects since the time of writing. Readers interested in events subsequent to those outlined here and to other perspectives on the beginnings of projects should contact the Unattached Youth Programme office for details of other offerings. The Unattached Youth Programme will not provide all the answers to vexed questions of power, control and making it possible for many young people to come in from the margins. Nevertheless, it provides amplification for young people's voices and provides the means for young people to act in their own interests as they see them.

All of these titles and others on related topics are available on loan (NOT SALE) from the IYWC, the official sales agent in the Republic of Ireland for Youth Clubs UK and the National Youth Agency.

Further Information: Fran Bissett & Bríd Horan, Irish YouthWork Centre, 20 Lr Dominick St., Dublin 1.

Tel: 8729933 Fax: 8724183 Email: NYF@iol.ie

IRELAND

Violence Against Women Workshop

Venue: Hesed House, 74 Tyrconnell Road,

Inchicore

Date: Friday 27 & Saturday 28 February, 1998 Weekend workshop for practitioners to develop skills and acquire knowledge where violence against is an issues in their work.

Cost: £55.00

Further Details: Sharon Newman, Hesed House, 74 Tyrconnell Road, Inchicore, Dublin 8.

Tel: 01 4549474

Texts and Transformation: Drama, Theatre and Active Learning

Venue: University College Cork.

Date: Friday 3 April to Tuesday 7 April, 1998 Conference jointly organised by the National Association for Youth Drama and U.C.C. which will include contributions from the Graffiti Theatre Company, Abbey Theatre Outreach and the Drama Studies Department T.C.D. There will also be a range of international speakers from Australia, Canada and U.S.A.

Further Details: Edie Demas, Conference Coordinator, NAYD, 34 Upper Gardiner Street,

Dublin 1.

Tel: 01 8781301 Fax: 01 8781302 Email:

nayd@indigo.ie

Confidence, Composure & Competence for working women

Venue: Jury's Hotel, Pembroke Road,

Ballsbridge, Dublin

Date: Friday 20 March, 1998

One-day seminar which aims to supply participants with new ways to: keep calm when pressurised; find inner strength in the midst of chaos; stand one's ground with overbearing people; and give in gracefully when deemed appropriate. The seminar will cover a range of curriculum topics including:

- 7 Habits of the Self-Confident Woman
- Secrets of the Self-Composed Woman
- Self-Management Skills of the Competent Woman
- Moving Forward to Greater Confidence, Composure & Competence

The structure of the seminar will incorporate information presentations, exercises and group discussions and participants will receive a comprehensive workbook to take away with them to monitor their progress.

Cost: £99.00

Further Details: CareerTrack, Sunrise House, Sunrise Parkway, Linford Wood, Milton Keynes, MK14 6YA, England.

Tel: 0044 1908 354000 Fax: 0044 1908

679931

Welfare To Work

Venue: Derryvale Hotel, Dundalk

Date: Friday 24 April, 1998

One-day conference which aims to compare different approaches to labour market integration in Ireland, North and South and in Europe generally. The conference will analyse the failure of compulsory programmes to meet the real integration needs of unemployed people and will draw out positive examples of best practice.

Further Details: I.N.O.U., 6 Gardiner Row,

Dublin 1

Tel: 01 8788635 Fax: 01 8788874 Email:

inou@iol.ie

BRITAIN

Journeying Together

Venue: Scarborough

Date: Saturday 13 - Monday 15 March, 1998 Weekend training event for youth workers, trainers and tutors where participants will become equipped with the skills to produce effective work with children and young people in their local situation. Focus groups will deal with grief and loss; god talk with children and young people - practical ways of doing theology; can you hear me?- developing effective listening; and working in a multi-faith context.

Further Details: Anne Topping, Pastoral Care and Christian Education, Methodist Church, 2 Chester House, Pages Lane, Muswell Hill,

London N10 1PR.

Tel: 0044 181 444 9845

Groupwork With Girls Who Have Been Sexually Abused

Venue: Leicester

Date: Tuesday 31 March, 1998

Teenage girls who have been sexually abused often experience isolation and the feeling that no-one understands what has happened to them. They can even blame themselves. This hinders the process of survival and recovery indefinitely. Based on work carried out in East London over a three year period it is aimed at child protection professionals interested in groupwork as an effective means of working with sexual abuse. The course will:

- Examine the value of working in groups with survivors of sexual abuse
- Look at practical and organisational aspects of groupwork and young women
- Look at cultural and racial differences when working with child sexual abuse
- Develop an understanding of the methods and skills involved
- Explore issues of confidentially in groupwork
- Help find ways of maintaining the group and evaluating its work.

Cost: £80.00stg (a limited number of concessionary places for volunteer workers and service users are available at a cost of £50.00)

Further Details: Course Co-ordinator, Centre For Social Action, De Montfort University, Scraptoft Campus, Leicester, LE1 9SU.

Tel: 0044 116 2577777 Fax: 0044 116 2577778

Email: dmucsa@dmu.ac.uk

An Introduction to Counselling Adolescents

Venue: NSPCC Conference Centre, Leicester Date: Thursday 2 & Friday 3 April, 1998
Two-day workshop-based event aimed at those who wish to develop counselling skills in their work with young people. It will focus on four main topics: the nature of adolescence; introduction to counselling

the impact of the work.

Cost: £158.00stg (places limited)
Further Details: Jan Hill, Conference

Administrator, TSA, 23 new Road, Brighton, East

young people; challenges and difficulties; managing

Sussex, BN1 1WZ.

Tel: 0044 1273 693311 Fax: 0044 1273 679902

Email: tsa@pavilion.co.uk

Social Action, Youth Crime Prevention and Work with Young People 'At Risk' and in Trouble

Venue: Leicester

Date: Tuesday 21 April, 1998

Juvenile crime and justice is perpetually in the political and media spotlight. Traditionally, youth justice programmes are organised by adults and imposed upon young people. It could be argued that it is due to this that such programmes are ineffective in tackling the real problems which young people 'at risk' face. The focus of this course will start with a critical look at these conventional approaches. From this critique, an alternative approach will be developed which enables young people to identify and explore their own problems and concerns. The next step would be to help develop young people's confidence and skills in order to tackle such difficulties and, ultimately, make informed decisions in order to achieve their goals.

Cost: £80.00stg (a limited number of concessionary places for volunteer workers and service users are available at a cost of £50.00)

Further Details: Course Co-ordinator, Centre For Social Action, De Montfort University, Scraptoft Campus, Leicester, LE1 9SU.

Tel: 0044 116 2577777 Fax: 0044 116 2577778

Email: dmucsa@dmu.ac.uk

Youth Access National Training Workshops 1998

Venue: University of Bradford

Date: Friday 24 April - Saturday 25 April, 1998 Annual event aimed at workers offering information, advice and/or counselling to young people. The event offers both experienced and less experienced workers an opportunity to develop, update and acquire new knowledge and skills around working with young people. There is a choice of the following twelve workshops available:

- Young People and Threatening Behaviour
- Young People and Self Esteem
- Young People and Bullying
- Groupwork Skills
- Good Practice in Youth Advice Work
- Young People and Prostitution
- Establishing Peer Support Groups
- Young People and Sexual Health
- Working With Loss and Change
- · Young People and Addictive Behaviour
- Suicide and Self Harm
- Using Creative Techniques When Working With Young People

Further Details: Dianne Aimable-Lina, Youth Access, 1a Taylor's Yard, 67 Alderbrook Road, London SW12 8AD.

Tel: 0044 181 7729900 Fax: 0044 181 7729746

Peer Support: Key Questions For Practitioners

Venue: National Children's Bureau, London

Date: Tuesday 5 May, 1998

Conference to consider the growing interest in peer support as an effective and empowering intervention in schools, colleges and youth work settings. Topics covered include: Ethical Issues; Training & Support for Young People; Bullying; Peer Counselling; Peer Initiatives for Young People's Health.

Cost: £79.00stq

Further Details: Jan Hill, Conference

Administrator, TSA, 23 new Road, Brighton, East

Sussex, BN1 1WZ.

Tel: 0044 1273 693311 Fax: 0044 1273 679902

Email: tsa@pavilion.co.uk

Social Action With Young People and Urban Regeneration

Venue: Leicester

Date: Thursday 14 May, 1998

Workshop exploring how Social Action has been employed as a method of working with young people on housing estates. The day will involve:

- Looking at policies, principles and strategies of estate based work
- How to assess residential areas
- How to work with young people and plan a programme of change that is based on their needs and concerns.

Participants will finally develop action plans to implement this approach in their work situation.

Cost: £80.00stg (a limited number of

concessionary places for volunteer workers and service users are available at a cost of £50.00) **Further Details:** Course Co-ordinator, Centre

For Social Action, De Montfort University, Scraptoft Campus, Leicester, LE1 9SU.

Tel: 0044 116 2577777 Fax: 0044 116 2577778

Email: dmucsa@dmu.ac.uk