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 Scene 

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Where To From Here?

Tony Murphy

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The Consultation Conference which took place in Dublin Castle last January with regard to the proposed National Youth Work Development Plan was a very positive event. Congratulations are due both to the staff of the Youth Affairs Section (DES) and the Children's Research Centre for organising a slick and professional event. Though the atmosphere was akin to conversations within a pleasant tea-party, it was obvious to all that little in-depth discussion was taking place on the core issues that might move us on. Imaginative possibilities were proposed during the two day event but more hard nosed negotiations and discussions will be required if we are to move beyond the impasse which arose in 1993. And move beyond it we must in the interest of those we serve namely young people, volunteers and staff.

Four of the emerging possibilities for the future were named as: a Professional Association of Youth Workers; an Employer's Body within the Sector; a Network of Regional Youth Services; and a Validation Body for Training and Accreditation. The creativity required to consider the above structural tweaking should not be minimised to what is already in existence. The National Youth Work Advisory Committee though charged with the responsibility of ensuring that a draft plan is presented to the Minister of State for approval on or before the summer may fail to consult more widely in the interest of larger buy-in to the final plan. A letter of comfort from the Minister of State to the National Youth Council of Ireland confirming that it will be named as the single representative body may limit more collective representation throughout the sector. Capacities and expertise that are already present could allow for a multiplicity of representative agencies who, in establishing a national alliance, would be informed by the agreed vision and the sectoral consent arising from the National Youth Work Development Plan 2002-2006.

And yet imaginative proposals require lateral thinking. If all energies are loaded into the plan we may find ourselves missing some current opportunities. The inter-agency group known as the Youth Work Certification and Training Forum could advance the work undertaken by Youthcert based on some formal recognition and funding both from the Youth Affairs Section (DES) and the NYWAC Sub-Committee responsible for the Development Plan. Similarly, it would not take much to bring together heads of organisations to agree benchmark salary and funding levels which could be also informed by the wealth of factual information already available on grant application forms sitting within the Youth Affairs Section.

Debate and negotiation will have to take place across the sector before finalising the plan. It may be prudent to host a smaller consultative process with those prescribed organisations already in receipt of funding from the Department of Education and Science and representatives from the various Government Department currently putting money into youth initiatives. The ultimate goal of the Development Plan should be the establishment of a National Youth Service throughout the country in every location where young people gather. It follows that maintaining the status quo will prove insufficient for the future we desire.

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NOTE: THERE IS NO NOTICEBOARD SECTION IN THIS EDITION DUE TO UNCERTAINTY OF DATES RELATING TO FOOT & MOUTH DISEASE.

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Abuse, Harassment and Violence — Hidden Life of Irish Teens

by Women's Aid

Introduction

Irish teenagers have high levels of contact with violence, abuse and harassment according to "Teenage Tolerance", research launched on 14 February by Minister of State in the Department of Education and Science, Willie O'Dea TD, in Dublin Castle on behalf of Women's Aid.

A poster campaign entitled "Tell Someone" was also launched today by B*Witched to encourage young people to contact Women's Aid or the Rape Crisis Helplines. The poster will hang in schools and youth clubs.

The research was conducted with over 300 young men and women between the ages of 14 and 19, in four Dublin schools and one senior college. The research was conducted through questionnaires and focus groups by Women's Aid and the Child and Women Abuse Studies Unit, London University. Women's Aid is a voluntary organisation which, for over 25 years, has provided services to women and their children who are experiencing violence in the home. Women's Aid has delivered preventative education work in the education and youth sector for the last seven years. This study was funded by the European Commission and the Department of Education and Science.

95% of young women and 84% of young men reported knowing someone who had experienced abuse, violence and harassment ranging from followed, to being forced to have sex, to being hit by a partner. The persons known were mainly young women.

1 in 4 young women knew someone who was forced to have sex, with over 76% of those known being friends. The research also indicates that young people are not reporting their experiences to parents, teachers or other adults, but instead are just telling their friends.

According to Denise Charlton, Director of Women's Aid:

"The findings of this research are not just alarming, they also indicate how, as a society, we are failing

our young people. With limited sex and lifeskills education, and few support systems for young people, we are leaving young people to cope with these issues alone or with each other."

The report also highlights confusion amongst young people about the meaning of rape, violence, and consent. 19% of young women and 34% of young men did not think being forced to have sex is rape.

The report also indicated that there is a high level of exposure to pornography, particularly amongst young men. Of the 94% of young men, who had contact with pornography, 3 out of 4 accessed pornography on the Internet, mainly on home computers or friends' computers.

The report also indicates that while both young men and women are sexually active, a double standard still exists in relation to sexual activity, with reputation clearly affecting young women in a negative way, whilst young men's reputation is enhanced amongst their peers by sexual activity.

Both young men and young women fear physical attack in public places such as the street, nightclubs and bars, however young women also fear sexual assault and being drug raped.

Research Findings

Teenage Tolerance - Women's Aid Defining Rape

- There is an alarming degree of confusion amongst young people. Whilst the vast majority of young people viewed being forced to have sex as rape, 19% of young women and 34% of young men did not. For some young people, force alone was not enough, it must be force plus - plus additional violence, plus being held down - It appears that young people are distinguishing between types of rape

Contact with and Attitudes to Pornography

- 94% of young men and 68% of young women had

seen pornography.

- Of those who had seen pornography, 3 out of 4 young men had accessed Internet porn, compared to 1 in 3 young women. Home computers are the most common access point, with almost half (48%) using their own and a third (33%) using friends.
- 49% of young men and 31% of young women reported that pornography made them feel better about sex as they learnt about it and it helped their performance. However, 1 in 5 (20%) reported negative impacts and felt it was degrading and exploitative.

Safe and Unsafe Sex

- 1 in 5 young people (19%) admitted having sex when drunk (drugged, and focus group discussion showed that there is a sexual culture where drink and drugs are seen both as an excuse to have sex, as well as to eschew responsibility for oneself and others. Getting /being drunk clearly interfered with young men and young women's clarity about the meaning of consent.
- Having sex when drunk/drugged left the largest group of young men feeling that it was ok and normal whereas the largest group of young women reported feeling dirty/horrible, something no young men reported feeling.
- 17% of young people reported that they had had unprotected sex.

Double Standards

- 50% of young people believe there is still a double standard between boys and girls regarding sex, with 56% of young people saying that girls are called sluts or thought less of, if they have multiple partners, and 55% saying that boys get respect for multiple partners.

Personal Safety and Place

- 55% expressed concerns about safety in the street - of this group, 37% concerned about physical attack 29% about street crime, and 25% about sexual attack (this group comprised almost completely of females). Being stalked kidnapped and followed were also concerns articulated by young women.
- 46% had concerns for safety in discos/clubs/pubs. Here, fear of physical attack and fear of rape as a result of being drugged, and of sexual assault in general stood out. The fear of physical attack was shared by both groups, although felt somewhat more strongly by young men, but fears about sexual assaults were overwhelmingly expressed by young women.
- Almost 1 in 5 (19%) reported concerns about their

safety in relationships, with 1 in 4 young women expressing concern, and 1 in 8 young men. Gender differences are further amplified when the precise concerns are examined. For young men, it is primarily sexually transmitted diseases and pregnancy, whilst young women also fear pregnancy, but twice as many feared being used/abused, and a few explicitly referred to fears of rape.

- Young women expressed more concerns for their personal safety, and much of their anxiety revolved around forms of interpersonal abuse: a significant minority were explicit about their fears of rape and sexual assault, harassment or being abused within relationships.

Knowledge of Abuse of Others

- Being followed, flashed at, subjected to nasty sexual comments, pressured to have sex, forced to have sex, being sexually assaulted, hit by a partner, injured by a partner, being in fear of a partner, being controlled by a partner.
- 95% of young women and 84% of young men reported knowing someone who had experienced one of the specific forms of harassment. 68% of women and 47% of men reported knowing someone in at least 4 categories, while 5% of females reported they knew someone who had experienced all 10 experiences. The person known was overwhelmingly female.
- 1 in 4 young women reported knowing someone who was forced to have sex, with the majority reporting that it had happened to a peer.
- 46% reported knowing someone who was hit by a partner (56% of females, 31% of males) whilst half were peers, 8% reported their parents being hit by a parent. The perpetrator was overwhelmingly male (92%).
- 53% of young people reported that they had been told of this experience by another (65% of young women, 36% young men). Very few young people reported either seeking assistance from others (3%) or confronting the perpetrator (1%).
- All of the young people found providing support difficult, with the most common problems being hearing upsetting accounts and uncertainty about what action to take.

Young People's Own Experiences Of Abuse

- Being followed, flashed at, subjected to nasty sexual comments, pressured to have sex, being forced to have sex, being sexually assaulted, hit by a partner, injured by a partner, being in fear of a partner.
- 81% of young women and 54% of young men

reported having experienced at least one of the specific forms of harassment/abuse, 2 out of 3 young women and 2 out of every 5 young men reported having had more than one experience.

- 1 in 3 young people had been followed flashed at and/or had nasty sexual comments directed at them. Most of these incidents had occurred during adolescence with the majority of perpetrators being male.

- Being pressured to have sex was reported by 15% of the young people, whilst being forced to have sex (5%) and being sexually assaulted (6%) was reported by a minority.

- Young women reported far more incidents of adolescent non-consensual sex and sexual assault. The majority of perpetrators were over 18 and known to them

- 7% of young people reported being hit by a partner (8% of young women, 6% of young men), but 1 in 8 young women reported being controlled by a partner compared to 1 in 20 young men.

- Overwhelmingly, when young people told someone about their experience, it was a friend that they told.

- Violence and Abuse are a large part of young people's lives, either through personal experience or knowing someone. Vast majority support each other and do not look outside themselves for help.

Support Needs of Young People

- 60% of young people would use "adult" support services as they see them as being confidential and a way of accessing advice and information.

- 78% of young people want issues covered by this research discussed in schools, although over half want this done by outsiders.

- Young people are an important source of support to each other, however many expressed concern at the limits on them to do anything which required more than this.

Summary of Findings

1 Young people have high levels of contact with harassment, abuse and violence - many young people know of someone in their family/friendships/community groups who has suffered harassment, abuse or violence.

2. Young people demonstrated a lack of clarity about definitions of rape, assault and harassment.

3. Young men and women demonstrated differing views about double standards consent and how to yes and no to sex.

4. Young people had high levels of exposure to pornography and a majority of young women having some contact with pornography.

5. Young people had difficulty disclosing their experience of violence, harassment and abuse due to lack of appropriate support structures and services including life skills education.

Recommendations

Women's Aid as a result of the information gained through their provision of services and research study recommend the following:

Services

- Funding for design and production of specifically targeted and appropriate promotional materials which will encourage young people to consider existing helplines.

- The development of further support services targeted at young people, e.g. protection and intervention services, one-to-one and outreach services.

Awareness and Training

- A public awareness campaign providing information and awareness materials and media activity in relation to violence and abuse directed specifically at young people.

- A public awareness campaign in relation to the accessibility and impact of pornography, in particular in the home, via the Internet.

- Training for teachers, youth workers and service providers in relation to disclosure and referral in the case of violence and abuse.

Prevention

- A mainstreamed prevention education programme delivered by appropriate services. The programme is a response to the necessity for education work, in relation to violence and abuse and should include sessions on lifeskills, awareness, strategies to change and challenge and to provide support and information. External service providers in response to young people's requests as voices in this research would deliver the programme.

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Women's Aid**

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Policing the Will of the Gardai to Implement Garda Clearance

by C. Niall McElwee

Introduction

This article seeks to explore the issue of students on third level Social Care courses (Child and Youth Care) attempting to obtain clearance from the Irish police (Garda Siochana) to work with vulnerable children and young people. It argues that the Gardai will need to be more proactive than has been the case heretofore and that Social Care students and practitioners must continue to politicise this issue if it is to be resolved. It appears as if the issue of third-level student police clearance just will not go away.

At present, the Gardai are not obliged to provide students of Social Care with clearance whilst they are studying for their Certificates, Diplomas and Degrees. This has led to an unhappy situation between the third level providers of education and training and some social care agencies where students might ordinarily locate practicum experience.

The Irish Association of Social Care Educators is collectively pursuing the issue of obtaining Garda clearance.◇ Mildred Fox, TD for Wicklow, made representations to the Minister for Justice in April 2000 after a formal communication on the matter by the aforementioned IASCE.²

The New Landscape of Social Care Provision

The 1991 Child Care Act in this country has created a new working landscape for child protection and welfare and the police have been given a central role as advocates in the arena of child protection and welfare in addition to their more traditional role of law enforcers. The public is now more enlightened with regard to child abuse and neglect and child protection and welfare and is less willing than in the past to simply allow the situation to remain unchanged.

The practice organisations (Irish Association of Care Workers and Resident Managers' Association) have also lobbied the relevant government departments

for change across a number of areas such as training, qualifications, registration and professional status (McElwee, 2000).

The Director of one prominent residential social care agency providing care for young offenders has recently written to the Heads of Courses in the Institute of Technology sector advising them of his concerns in an era of increasing understanding of child sexual abuse.³ Specifically, he has raised the issue of 'unsuitable' people gaining access to vulnerable children. In his circular to the Heads of Social Studies, the Director comments:

As you are aware, paedophiles and other perpetrators of sexual, physical and emotional abuse on children are often extremely articulate and plausible individuals who are often exceptionally difficult to identify even with a full criminal record check' (Keating, 2000).

Of course, Keating is not the first professional to raise such concerns. One has only to remember back to the influential Kennedy Report (1970) and the later Task Force on Child Care Services (1980) to witness such concerns in the field. Nonetheless, this is an important and timely topic for consideration as Keating is the first Director of a social care centre to formally pursue this matter with the Irish Association of Social Care Educators. I anticipate many more joining in the call in the near future.

The (Initial) Response of the Police

The Irish Association of Social Care Educators contacted Garda Headquarters in Dublin in January 2000 outlining its concerns as educators of social care practitioners.

The Association was informed that:

(a) Garda clearance is only processed for prospective full time health care workers of the health boards.

(b) The matter was being discussed with the Garda Commissioner with a view to responding to the increasing number of applications made to the Gardai from a wide variety of agencies.

(c) A concern was expressed that some agencies might place too much emphasis on the Garda clearance as a means of vetting employers. References might not be chased up adequately.

(d) A further concern expressed was that an individual could actually use Garda clearance to masquerade his/her past.

(e) The Commissioner foresees the establishment of new office with the express responsibility of processing Garda clearance requests (IASCE, 2000).³

What is the Current Situation for the Police in the Irish Republic?

From 1994, the police were obliged to carry out background checks 'in respect of full-time prospective employees in the health care area who would have substantial access to children or vulnerable young people' (O' Donaghue, 2000). This leaves students of social care courses in no-man's land until either they graduate, or their student status is recognised in itself. A number of potential legal problems remain unresolved for students, colleges and employers such as what happens if a college discovers that a student has a criminal prosecution in year two of a three year course or should the colleges differentiate between prosecutions?

Some colleagues feel that a drink driving offence should not count against a student's progress, whereas other colleagues feel that it should be taken most seriously by a course board, as it might be an indication of weak moral character! The examples one could provide are endless.

A comprehensive review of police 'clearance' arrangements has now been undertaken and an internal Working Group was established by the Gardai to look into an effective response from the Police that would prove mutually acceptable to all in social care. The Garda Commissioner has also established an 'implementation group'. The latest situation is that Garda Headquarters has recommended the establishment of a central vetting unit to process applications for Garda clearance, but it is unclear if applications by students going on placement will be considered (McHugh, 2000).

What Has Been Done?

As with so many things in Irish life, an interim working solution has been found. Students are being advised to apply for Garda clearance through the

DATA Protection Act (1988) under section four. They are to give their full names, current address, date of birth and a request fee of £5. In this manner, we can overcome the issue for the moment.

The response from the D/Superintendent for Assistant Commissioner of the Gardai is interesting as seen from the following typical correspondence returned to a student at the Waterford Institute of Technology where it is clearly stated that the confirmation is not a letter of Garda Clearance.

**General Office, Security and Intelligence
Branch, Phoenix Park, Dublin 8.**

**Strictly Private and Confidential
This document should not be construed as a
Police Certificate of Character, a Garda
Reference or Garda Clearance.**

**Ms XXXXXX
Address.**

**Re: Request under Section 4 Data Protection
Act, 1988.**

I wish to refer to your request in the above matter and to inform you that a search of the Garda Criminal Records Database reveals no personal data on you.

The searches were carried out on the basis of the identification particulars supplied to this office as per your correspondence.

I wish to acknowledge receipt of £5 request fee.

Yours sincerely,

D/Superintendent for Assistant Commissioner.

Should Police Clearance be the Role of the Police?

As with most organisations, the Gardai are overstretched and under-resourced. This is also a new area for the Gardai to consider and moves them away from their more traditional duties and obligations. Perhaps the vetting process could better be done with trained civil servants based in a Garda

office than by active Gardai themselves. Perhaps an entirely separate agency should be created with a specific remit in this area.

These are not unreasonable views. But, it seems to me, that the Gardai are ideally positioned to undertake this task as they are now to the forefront in child protection and welfare and are accumulating increasingly sophisticated ways of working with vulnerable populations.

Conclusion

All of us involved in the field of child and youth care must continue to exert pressure on politicians, relevant personnel in the Government Departments and the police to ensure that this issue does not fall to the bottom of an admittedly overworked agenda. Students must be rigorously assessed and, as with graduate practitioners, monitored by the police and the colleges to ensure that they do not obtain a criminal record that would make them unsuitable for work with vulnerable populations.

In the meantime, the Irish Association of Social Care Educators has insisted that each of our CYC students obtain some form of Garda clearance by the end of term one 2000 to protect both them, and us, (as educators) should an issue arise around their legal status to practice in social care. It is unfortunate that we have moved into the new Millennium without having obtained such basic protection for vulnerable populations.

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About the Author

C. Niall McElwee has been lecturing and researching in the field of social care for a decade. He is Director of Social Care Programmes at the Waterford Institute of Technology, Academic Co-ordinator of the Centre for Social Care Research at that college, founder and Editor of the Irish Journal of Applied Social Studies and is currently President of the Irish Association of Social Care Educators. He is the author of *Children At Risk* (1996) and *To Travel Hopefully. Views from the Managers of Residential Child Care Units in Ireland* (2000).

He is also co-author of a number of books including *Prostitution in Waterford City: A Contemporary Analysis* (1997), *Irish Society: A Reader in Applied Social Studies* (1997), *Worthy Not Worthwhile: Choosing Careers in Caring Occupations* (2000).

His forthcoming textbook is titled *Five Scenarios and Solutions for the Social Care Practitioner* (2001). He is also a frequent media commentator in the area of social issues and has a consultancy practice based in County Kilkenny.

Footnotes

- 1 The Irish Association of Social Care Educators was established to advocate on behalf of educators, students and graduates in the field of child and youth care.
- 2 A TD is a member of Dail Eireann, the Irish House of Parliament.
- 3 Seven Institutes of Technology (and St. Patrick's College Carlow) provide third level training and education of social care practitioners/child and youth care workers from Certificate to Diploma to Degree level (with the exception of Carlow which ceases programmes at Diploma level).

A Picture of Ballinasloe

By John Langan

Introduction

The Idea of running a photography course arose in April 2000 while planning the summer programme for young people in Ballinasloe. The count had two broad aims, one to give young people a practical skill and secondly to introduce them to the use of photography as a tool to explore people's lives.

In July 2000. Galway Youth Federation secured funding for the project from The Arts Council through the Artist-in-Community Scheme. Eileen O'Leary of Kerry, Diocesan Youth Service, who has extensive experience of documentary photography, was contacted and agreed to run the project.

The project ran for one week culminating in an exhibition, which was held in the local library. Four young men took part in the project. The commitment they made was enormous, attending each day and working together for 7 hours daily. In order to have work to exhibit, the young men worked in pairs along with a staff member of Galway Youth Federation and the local Department of Justice Project. The staff took photographs of the young people completing their assignments.

Project Week

Over the course of the week the young people documented life in Ballinasloe. The group also went to Athlone to take some photographs of services available to young people so that we could make a comparison between both towns. As one participant said "The second day (of the project) we went to Athlone and we took pictures of the leisure complex and the swimming pool. There is nothing like this in our town. If there were facilities like this in Ballinasloe there would be a lot less trouble in the town".

Each day the young people shot an average of six rolls of film each. At the start of each day the young people selected their three favourite images from each roll. These were put in a scrapbook along with

a caption for each shot. The image number and caption were recorded for later reference. In addition to learning how to edit their work each day, the young people were encouraged to critique their work and suggest where they could improve the quality of the images.

On Thursday each participant selected his favourite eight Images from the week. These were then enlarged 10 by 8 and mounted on white card with a caption and the young persons name. A collage was made of the photos the staff had taken of the young people during the week and each person had a portrait taken.

On Friday members of the public attended the opening of the exhibition. A local photographer also attended to take some shots of the work. The young people were on a high. They were really proud of their hard work, which had certainly paid off.

All project participants were awarded introductory level and Intermediate level Certificates in Photography from the Northern Ireland Open College Network, One of the participants said at the end of the project, "*I had the best time ever with Geoff, John, Eileen. I will do it again next year*".

The work remained on exhibit in the library for two weeks before moving to the Bank of Ireland for a month. The work was also exhibited in the young peoples school.

Follow-Up Project

Due to the success of the summer photography project and inspired by the growing interest the young people had in photography, a follow-up project was planned. This project involved a residential shoot, which incorporated black and white photo development. Again we looked to Eileen O'Leary to progress the work she had begun in the summer with the young men.

Three of the original participants (the fourth is currently living in England), one volunteer, Rachael White and I left Ballinasloe early on Friday morning December 8th. Our destination was Tralee and more

importantly Eileen's Darkroom.

We arrived at 1.00pm and after a quick cuppa we were off to shoot some film. We went to Blennerville and Fenit where we took photographs of the windmill and boats. Then it was back to the darkroom to start developing.

Our first job was to take the film off its roll and put it on the processing reels. This was much more difficult than it sounds - we were tired and the task is tedious initially. The next step is to process the film. There are three steps involved in processing. Firstly, Developer is used, secondly Stop (which stops the development process) is used and finally Fix (which fixes the image on the negative for the future).

The film is then washed to remove any traces of the chemical, before it is hung up to dry. Unfortunately, the chemicals were somehow switched and at the end of the process only one of us had images on the negatives.

On Saturday we re-traced our stops to Blennerville and Fenit, We also went to Killarney and to Muckross House. For one member, one of the highlights was climbing 'the mountain to Torc Waterfall.

Back in the darkroom, once we had some Images on our negatives, we continued to the next stage. Firstly we made a contact sheet from which we selected an Image that we considered worth printing. This was printed to B x 10 size using Develop, Stop and Fix again. Guided by Eileen, there was some manipulation of light before we were finally happy with our selected images.

The young people were brilliant all weekend. We spent from Friday morning until Sunday night together. We went out and ate together, where we discussed a lot of issues, which the lads were concerned about. As a result, we built up a high level of trust with the lads and they felt comfortable raising some serious issues with us.

Conclusion

Our plans now are to establish a darkroom in Ballinalsoe and work toward the production of a calendar for 2002. We also have a number of other young men who are asking to be involved. The project has had an Impact on the confidence level of the young people who took part. They know that they are good at something. They have a talent for

photography and have the confidence in their own talent to recognise and say when an image they have taken is good or bad.

This was an expensive project to run but it was worth every penny. It certainly has been a boost to the young peoples -confidence. Hopefully, next June they will lead a photography project, and in this way share their skills and learn new ones.

This project would not have been possible without the financial support of the Arts Council. It also would not be possible without the participation of the young people. It is they who have made it the success that it is.

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Policy & Funding

NEW INITIATIVE LAUNCHED TO TACKLE EDUCATIONAL DISADVANTAGE

On 12 February, The Minister for Education and Science, Dr Michael Woods, TD, announced a new strategy to tackle educational disadvantage. The strategy has three main elements:

- A new, statutory Educational Disadvantage Committee,
- A larger Forum to Address Educational Disadvantage
- The appointment of acting Director of Programmes to tackle disadvantage in the country's 3,200 primary schools.

The Educational Disadvantage Committee will advise the Minister on policies and strategies to be adopted to identify and correct educational disadvantage. Professor Áine Hyland, Vice-President and Professor of Education, University College Cork will chair the new Educational Disadvantage Committee. The Committee will include in its membership a number of people from voluntary and other bodies, which have objectives or experience in the area of tackling disadvantage.

The Minister is also setting up a larger Forum to address educational disadvantage. This Forum will have a much broader representation than the Committee, will meet twice a year, and will have an important role in advising the minister and Department on broader issues relating to educational disadvantage and exclusion from the full benefits of education.

Ms. Maura Grant (currently co-ordinator of the Breaking the Cycle Pilot Project) will be acting Director of Programmes to tackle disadvantage in primary schools. She will be assisted by an experienced support team, who will aim to help teachers involved in the, Giving Children an Even Break by Tackling Disadvantage programme which aims to develop teaching styles suitable for smaller classes.

This team will pioneer facilities for pre-school

preparation and early childhood education for children in greatest need and will be responsible for forging and maintaining initiatives for a range of supports including school meals, work with parents, reading initiatives, the use of Music and Art and ensuring that all children have a fair chance of success at school.

For further information contact:
Department of Education and Science,
Hawkins House,
Hawkins Street,
Dublin 2.
Tel: 01/6354000
Fax: 01/6354001 Website: www.doh.ie

MINISTER LAUNCHES NEW ALCOHOL AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

On 15 February Minister for Health, Mr Martin launched a new National Alcohol Awareness campaign. The campaign will continue for three years, with funding to the tune of £500,000 a year, and will target three separate groups of young people; 12 - 14 year olds, 15 - 18 year olds, and 18 - 24 year olds.

The campaign will use a mix of videos and television advertising, and include information for young people of alternatives to alcohol. In announcing the campaign attention was drawn to three new related sources of data, which reveal the extent of the problem with regard to alcohol use in Irish society.

1. A new EU Survey to be released soon, which will show Irish young people as the heaviest drinkers in Europe.
2. New figures from the Central Statistics Office reveal that spending on alcohol in Ireland has increased by almost 70 per cent since 1990. £3.2 billion was spent on alcoholic drinks in 1999, compared to £2.2 billion in 1990.

3. Accident and emergency wards are reporting a big increase in recent years in the number of injuries inflicted as a result of alcohol. Dr Peter O'Connor, who has been an A&E consultant in the Mater Hospital for over 20 years stated that as many as 50 per cent of casualty admissions are for alcohol-related injuries.

The Minister also said he would be approaching the Advertising Standards Authority of Ireland with a view to improvements in its voluntary code for advertising alcohol. These would include a ban on advertising in media where more than 25 per cent of the audience was under age, and if the voluntary code did not work, statutory measures would be explored.

For further information on the campaign contact:
Department of Health and Children,
Hawkins House,
Hawkins Street,
Dublin 2.
Tel: 01/6354000 Fax: 01/6354001
Website: www.doh.ie

NEW ANTI-RACISM AWARENESS PROGRAMME LAUNCHED

The Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Mr. John O'Donoghue has recently announced a three-year National Anti-Racism/Interculturalism Public Awareness programme. The Programme will receive Government funding of £4.5 million and will enable a Steering Group to design and implement a set of actions aimed at combating racism in society.

The programme will be based on an outline framework developed by the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism and initiatives will be taken in the areas of:

- Community and Local Development
- Media and Communications
- The Role of Statutory Authorities
- Public Education.

The Minister has just announced the composition of the Steering Group. The members selected for the steering group can be seen at the following web address:

www.gov.ie/justice/Press%20Releases/Press-

[2001/pr-0602.htm](#))

The Equality Division of the Department will provide the secretariat for the group.

For further information on the programme contact:
Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform,
72 - 76 St. Stephens Green,
Dublin 2.
Tel: 01/6028202 Fax: 01/6615461
Email: info@justice.ie

PILOT DRUGS COURT COMMENCES

In January of this year the first sitting took place of Pilot Drugs Court in Dublin. This 18-month scheme will be operated in the Dublin District Court dealing with a maximum of 100 offenders primarily from the North Dublin inner city area. It will sit twice a week for persons aged 17 years of age or over who plead guilty/have been found guilty of a drug/drug-related offence of a non-violent nature that would normally warrant imprisonment.

A court supervised treatment and/or rehabilitation programme will be made available tailored to meet the individual needs of each offender. The services/programmes will be provided by the Eastern Regional Health Authority, Probation and Welfare Service, FAS, and the Department of Education & Science with services being sought from other agencies where appropriate.

Lawyers only become involved with the possibility of the defendant's treatment services being terminated and two community Gardaí will be present to effect arrest warrants for non-appearance/refusal to adhere to the terms of the programme. Two probation officers will also be assigned, and if successful it is hoped that it will be considered for mainstreaming.

Similar systems already operate in other countries, most notably in the USA, which had up to 75% success rates in non-reoffending in some parts of the country.

For further information contact:
Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform,
72 - 76 St. Stephen's Green,
Dublin 2.
Tel: 01/6028202
Fax: 01/6615461 Email: info@justice.ie

NEW MAINSTREAMING EQUALITY WEBSITE

Mainstreaming equality between women and men is a requirement for all policies and programmes under the Irish National Development Plan 2000 to 2006. The National Development Plan Gender Equality Unit of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform has developed a website which acts as a guide to the mainstreaming of equality.

The site outlines why mainstreaming has been adopted as a strategy to improve equality of opportunity between women and men in the Irish policy context, the requirements under the NDP, and what mainstreaming involves. The website also guides policy makers and others to further sources of information to help mainstream equality and contains a databank of statistics on women and men in Ireland related particularly to NDP areas.

The address for the website is:

www.gov.ie/jsutice/Equality/Gender/NDP/Gender1.htm

NEW CHILD & ADOLESCENT CONFLICT PROGRAMME LAUNCHED

On 25 January Minister for Children, Ms. Mary Hanafin T.D. launched the Parents Plus Families and Adolescent Programmes organised by the Department of Child and Family Psychiatry at the Mater Hospital. The Minister drew attention to the fact that £3.25 million has been made available in 2001 for further developments in child and adolescent psychiatry services.

The Parents Plus Programmes are comprehensive

video-based parenting courses aimed at managing and solving problems in children and teenagers. The programmes are based on experience gained in providing parent training courses in various settings and aimed at providing a foundation for good practice in the management of children and adolescents. The programmes are suitable for use by a wide variety of professionals working with children and can be co-facilitated by parents if they have previously completed parenting courses or relevant training. There are two distinct programmes:

The Children's Programme: A practical and positive video-based course for managing and solving discipline problems in children aged 4 - 11 (8 - 10 week course)

The Adolescent's Programme: A video-based parenting guide to handling conflict and getting on better with older children and teenagers aged 11- 15 (6 - 8 week course)

Each programme contains video footage and a leader's manual (which contains video texts, session by session guides, participant assignments and a series of handouts) and they can be purchased at a cost of £220 plus £5.00 postage from:

Parent Plus, Department of Child and Family & Psychiatry,
Mater Hospital,
North Circular Road
Dublin 7.
Tel: 01/8532426
Email: parentplus@eircom.net
Website: www.breiftherapy.ie/parentplus

For further information on the additional money being allocated to child and adolescent psychiatry services contact:

Department of Health and Children,
Hawkins House,
Hawkins Street,
Dublin 2.
Tel: 01/6354000
Fax: 01/6354001
Website: www.doh.ie

Round-Up

NEW DISTANCE LEARNING COURSES

The Centre for Youth Work Studies in Brunel University is advertising 3 distance learning programmes with intakes in September 2001:

1. **MA in Youth & Community Studies** (two years, part-time, distance learning with study blocks): aimed at experienced practitioners and managers in youth work or community organisations.
 2. **BA (Hons) Youth & Community Conversion Programme** (two years, part-time distance learning with three day study block held in Dublin or Belfast).
 3. **Accessible Routes to Qualification DipHE in Youth & Community Work**: aimed at unqualified workers. The programme combines distance learning and taught modules, and competency-based practice delivered through a local Partnership.
- For further details/ application form, contact:
Yvonne White, National Youth Federation, 20 Lower Dominick Street, Dublin 1
Tel: (00353) 1 8729933 E-mail: ywhite@nyf.ie

IPA RECEIVES NUI RECOGNITION

The Institute of Public Administration has recently received National University of Ireland (NUI) recognition. Previously the IPA had its' courses accredited through the NCEA which will be subsumed into the new National Qualifications Authority. IPA offers a wide range of courses from certificate/diploma through to post-graduate level on a part-time basis either at its' offices in Dublin or in Institutes of Technology throughout the country. Specialist areas include health management, local government, and public management.

CIDER INDUSTRY COUNCIL LAUNCHES NEW ALCOHOL AWARENESS BOOKLET

The Cider Industry Council has just produced a new information booklet entitled "Alcohol and Post-

Primary School Students: The Role of Teachers and Schools Today. It arises out of research undertaken by Dr. Mark Morgan, St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra. It has been produced in a colourful pocket sized format and contains sections on:

- Situation of Drinking amongst Post-Primary Students
- How Teachers and Parents Feel about the matter
- What Can Schools Do? General Guidelines

Copies are available from: **Cider Industry Council, 27 Sydney Parade Avenue, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4.**
Tel: 01/2830088 Fax: 01/2830119

NEW ARTS WEBSITE BEING LAUNCHED

The National Youth Arts Programme (NYAP) will launch its website in April, 2001. The website will provide comprehensive information on the Programme and its activities including:

- News, Upcoming events, Policy papers
- Good Practice Guidelines for Arts in Youth Work
- Contact list of organisations in the NYAP network
- Selected articles from its magazine in2
- And website links to other relevant websites.

The site address will be: **www.youtharts.ie** and it will be part of a broader site being developed by the National Youth Council of Ireland (**www.youth.ie**).

YOUTH INFORMATION CONFERENCE

The Irish YouthWork Centre is hosting a one-day conference in partnership with the NYF Youth Information Centres on *Thursday 26 April on **Where Next for Youth Information**, exploring the future direction/provision of youth information nationally & internationally, and profiling new innovative ways of supplying information to young people. A limited number of external places are being made available. For further details contact: **Fran Bissett, IYWC, Tel: 01 8729933 E-mail: fbissett@nyf.ie. *Foot & Mouth Disease permitting.**

Resources

COMMUNITY SUPPORT FRAMEWORK IMPACT

Investing in People: The Labour Market Impact of Human Resource Interventions Funded Under the 1994-1999 Community Support Framework in Ireland (Policy Research Series, No. 38, November 2000)

By Kevin Denny, Colm Harmon & Philip J. O'Connell

Expenditure on human resource development represents a very large and important component of public expenditure and represented about one-third of total European Union aid to Ireland under the 1994-1999 Community Support Framework (CSF). The main objectives of CSF was to boost human capital by enhancing education and skills levels and to enhance the employment prospects of unemployed people.

The Irish Department of Finance and the European Commission decided in 1998 to commission a study of the labour market impact of the education and training provisions across the CSF. The main aim envisaged for the study was to produce, as far as possible, quantified estimates of the net impact of interventions funded under the CSF on the labour market outcomes of participants and target groups.

The present study focuses exclusively on the labour market impact of human resource interventions and it should be acknowledged that such programmes may also serve other objectives in preparing citizens for full participation in the economy and society. The review of developments in the labour market during the 1990's, shows clearly the labour market conditions were transformed over the course of the 1994-1999 Community Support Framework. Over that brief period the booming economy led to a shift from mass unemployment to labour shortages.

In the new scenario human resource interventions continue to play a vital role in meeting skill needs. In initial education, continued investment is essential to prepare young people for labour market entry and to match the growing demand for skilled workers. In labour market policies targeted at the unemployed, effective programmes can both enhance the employment prospects of those experiencing difficulty in the labour market and ease skill and labour shortages in the booming economy.

ESTATE-BASED WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Youthagenda: a Good Practice Guide to working with young people on their home ground.

By the Guinness Trust Group & Centre for Social Action

Youthagenda is a practical handbook to help all those who come into contact with young people. It is especially for estate managers, housing officers, tenants and residents associations (TRA's) who work with young people on their home ground. Its aim is to help direct their energy and enthusiasm towards improving specific aspects of their lives.

In running their estates, social landlords may overlook the contribution that young people can make because they are rarely involved in formal community activity. Landlords and tenants groups need to find ways of turning their contribution into positive practical action. It recognises that young people have concerns and priorities which may not necessarily coincide with those of estate managers. One cannot impose this agenda for change; it must come from young people's own choosing.

De Montfort University's Centre for Social Action has developed a proven process which involves and motivates young people by working with them. This handbook shows how the process was implemented on three estates, to what degree it worked and how one can apply the process to your own environment. The handbook offers the means for RSL's to work with young people and to help them influence the quality of life in their communities. Skills acquired through Social Action will help young people continue to be active as they become adult residents.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Information Management for Voluntary & Community Organisations

By Paul Ticher & Mike Powell

Successful organisations use information effectively to support their activities by managing it as a positive resource. Starting from basic principles, this no-nonsense guide for managers and their teams is packed with practical tools and tips to help readers:

- Review approaches to using information
- Store and retrieve the information needed
- Cut down on the information not needed
- Share & exchange information effectively
- Understand the legal aspects of information handling
- Use information technology effectively

Illustrated throughout with examples based on experience, this book will help users to see information as an asset to their organisation rather than a liability.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING

VTO Spells Success

Edited by Helen Keogh and Tony Downes

The stories in this collection are living documentaries of ordinary people undergoing an extraordinary experience of self-transformation, self-discovery and personal fulfilment through returning to formal learning as adults. In them we hear the voices of people from all over the country give vivid and often moving testimony to their individual courage, spirit, determination, good humour and optimism in the face of sometimes daunting personal histories and circumstance.

The stories affirm the exceptional contribution and effectiveness of VTOS as an education and training intervention in the lives of long-term unemployed people - confirming that for the contributors VTOS did indeed spell success. They also offer valuable insights into the importance of a well-developed, well resourced and flexible adult education and training initiative in effecting a dramatic transformation in the life opportunities of people hitherto excluded from the benefits of a buoyant economy. In addition, they highlight the determination and commitment to serious effort that unemployed people are prepared to make when given a meaningful opportunity to change their circumstances.

The idea for this volume came from the stories encountered in VTOS centres in every VEC area of the remarkable people who have participated in the scheme since its launch in 1989. Through VTOS reality has been given to a key phase of lifelong learning by putting in place a vital step in the lifelong learning pathway, via., free full-time provision for adults who wish to resume and continue their learning to post-primary level and beyond.

YOUNG PEOPLE & CARE

Left Out on Their own: Young People Leaving Care in Ireland

By Patricia Kelleher, Carmel Kelleher & Maria Corbett

Many homeless young people who had been in the care of the state came to the attention of Focus Ireland

services. It was important to find out what happens to young people on leaving care and after they leave care. Thus Focus Ireland made a decision to carry out this longitudinal study on young care leavers. The overall aim of the study was to provide baseline information on young people leaving state care. The main aims were to:

- Describe the background and recent developments in the foster care and residential care system in Ireland.
- Carry out three separate surveys of young people leaving care in order to monitor the circumstances of care-leavers six months and again two years after leaving care. The main research tool used is a Monitoring Form which was filled out by social workers and care staff.
- Undertake intensive interviews with 30 care leavers and to construct 70 case histories of young care-leavers based on information from the monitoring survey, from social workers and residential care workers, and from interviews with the young people themselves.
- Analyse leaving care policy and practice based on the monitoring survey, documentary material, focus group discussions with social workers, staff from special schools, residential child care centres and aftercare services, discussions with staff of Traveller Families Care (an organisation for Travellers in care), discussions with members of the Irish Association of Young People in Care, members of the Irish Foster Care Association and discussions with groups concerned with youth at risk in three Dublin communities.

This research now confirms that experience: one-third of the young people leaving the care of the health boards and over half of those leaving special schools for young offenders experience episodes of homelessness or spend time in detention centres at some stage during their first six months. By the time they have been two years out of care, the situation deteriorated even further: a quarter of the young people leaving health board care have been in detention centres and two-thirds of those leaving special schools have been in detention centres and a third have been homeless. This report identifies serious deficiencies in the provision for children in the care of the state in Ireland. It makes painful reading for policy makers and practitioners. The challenge for all of us is to face these hard realities and endeavour to address them.

All of these titles and others on related topics are available on loan (NOT SALE) from the IYWC, an official sales agent in the Republic of Ireland for Russell House Publishing, Nightshift Publications, Directory of Social Change, National Youth Council of Ireland, and the Combat Poverty Agency.

**Further Information from:
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Irish YouthWork Centre
National Youth Federation
20 Lower Dominick Street
Dublin 1**

**Tel: (01) 8729933 Fax: (01) 8724183
E-mail: fbissett@nyf.ie or mdrumm@nyf.ie**