



Youth Work Ireland

Press Release  
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**“NCCA Process on Leaving Cert Should Involve Young People from all Backgrounds” says Leading Youth Organisation**

Youth Work Ireland today re-iterated its call for widespread reform of the Leaving Cert following a long awaited NCCA report on the future of the senior cycle. The organisation, whose members run many educational disadvantage initiatives around the country, has long called for radical overhaul of the exam particularly to combat early school leaving. The group has warned, however, that the process needs to look at the exam and syllabus in the broadest possible way and focus on the interests of young people by involving all of them in any changes.

“Now more than ever people see the need for the reform of this major element of the educational system. Many do well out of the Leaving Certificate, but the enormous build-up of pressure coupled with our persistently high dropout rates must spur on the reform process. This must be kept on the agenda; widespread reform is needed as opposed to the timing of certain papers in the past. There is a need for a much wider debate involving continuous assessment, credit systems, team working, critical thinking and industry linkage. Young people should be involved in any reform process through student councils and education centres outside the mainstream such as Youth Reach Centres and Community Training Centres” said Michael Mc Loughlin of Youth Work Ireland

“Our members work with many young people who have been failed by the formal mainstream education system. The youth service is often seen as being there to pick up the pieces from the mainstream academic system, this cannot be tolerated. Previous reforms such as the Leaving Cert Applied, Vocational and transition year have shown that mainstream schools can be adapted to serve all young people. This should be a core principle in any change or reform” He concluded

ENDS

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