




INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS PLAN 2010-2012



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Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs
Department of Health and Children
Hawkins House
Hawkins Street
Dublin 2
Tel: +353 (0)1 635 4000
Fax: +353 (0)1 674 3223
E-mail: omc@health.gov.ie
Web: www.omcya.ie

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INTRODUCTION

This communications plan outlines the way the *Working Together for Children* initiative will communicate key messages to internal stakeholders over the next two years.

The *Working Together for Children* Initiative is led by the Office of the Minister for children and Youth Affairs and driven by the National Children's Strategy Implementation Group (NCSIG) at national level and the Children's Services Committees (CSCs) at local level.

Working Together for Children is the slogan and brand, developed in co-operation with the NCSIG and the first four CSCs to secure better developmental outcomes for children through more effective integration of policies and services. The brand promotes work led by:

- The National Children's Strategy Implementation Group
- Children's Services Committees
- The Children's Services Committee Steering Group (soon to be established)

The aim of the communications plan is to improve communication between national and local level in the *Working Together for Children* Initiative. The plan outlines how those involved in the National Children's Strategy Implementation Group and Children's Services Committees can develop a better understanding of each other in driving forward this important national initiative.

The plan emanates from, and is an integral part of the *Strategic Plan for the Development and Implementation of the CSC Initiative* (OMCYA, 2010) and a response to *Learning from experience to inform the future – Findings emerging from the initial phase of the Children's Services Committees* (Centre for Effective Services, 2010).

The plan outlines the key messages of the *Working Together for Children* Initiative and specific messages for each group of internal stakeholders. It also identifies the forms of communication to be used and contains a detailed schedule of events, publications, meetings and actions for each group of stakeholders.

The plan is divided into five parts, outlining the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders, as follows:

1. Communications between OMCYA and NCSIG members
2. Communications between NCSIG members and their own organisations or departments
3. Communications between OMCYA and CSCs
4. Communications between the CSC Steering Group and the NCSIG
5. Communications between the CSC Steering Group and CSCs

All communications from the above groups and committees will carry the *Working Together for Children* brand. As part of this communications strategy, a CD will be produced for each CSC containing an individually branded *Working Together for Children* logo and brand guidelines for use on all publications, websites and other forms of communication.

Each CSC is encouraged to review this plan to identify forms of communication to be developed and implemented at local CSC level.

This plan does not address communications with the media and other external stakeholders. During the period of implementation of this communications plan, the *Working Together for Children* Initiative will expand and develop. Accompanying enhanced internal communications and external communications plans will be developed.

KEY MESSAGES OF THE *WORKING TOGETHER FOR CHILDREN* INITIATIVE

KEY MESSAGES

- When we work together we can make a positive difference to the lives of our children and young people.
- Working together in a sustained way is challenging, takes time and requires continuous learning; but it's worth it.
- We are doing this through Children's Services Committees and the NCSIG.

1 Communications between OMCYA and NCSIG members

1.1 Outcomes from communication between OMCYA and NCSIG members

- Members are supported to drive forward the development of CSCs within their own organisations
- The establishment of 20 + CSCs by 2012 is promoted
- Members are supported to embed interdepartmental, cross-agency and multidisciplinary ways of working within their own organisations
- The long-term vision of working effectively to improve outcomes for all children is promoted and influenced
- The role of the NCSIG is continuously reinforced
- Mechanisms are provided for members to influence Government, senior policy makers and services providers in relation to all of the above

1.2 Audiences/publics/stakeholders

- Department of Health and Children
- Department of Education and Skills
- Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government
- Department of Social Protection
- Department of Justice and Law Reform (Irish Youth Justice Service)
- Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs
- Department of Tourism, Culture and Sports
- An Garda Síochána
- Health Service Executive
- Local Authorities
- Probation Service
- Irish Youth Justice Service
- National Education Welfare Board
- Irish Sports Council
- Pobal
- Children Acts Advisory Board
- Family Support Agency
- Limerick Regeneration Agency

1.3 Messages

Key message

- When we *work together* we can make a positive difference to the lives of our children and young people.
- Working together in a sustained way is challenging, takes time and requires continuous learning but it's worth it.
- We are doing this through children's services committees and the NCSIG.

Detailed messages for NCSIG members

As a member of the NCSIG, your role is to:

- Represent your organisation on the NCSIG
- Represent the NCSIG in your organisation and in other fora
- Work collaboratively with other members of the NCSIG to lead this national initiative
- Commit to driving forward the development of CSCs in your organisation as appropriate
- Encourage the establishment of 20 + CSCs by 2012
- Embed interdepartmental, cross-agency and multidisciplinary ways of working within your organisation
- Promote and influence a long-term vision of working effectively to improve outcomes for children
- Influence Government, senior policy makers and services providers in relation to all of the above

1.4 Forms of communication

- NCSIG meetings to become more focused and engaging, with clear inputs required and outputs achieved, to enhance communication
- Reports/Policy papers and other materials from OMCYA/NCSIG/CSC as appropriate
- Bilateral meetings
- Seminars on key implementation and good practice issues, in which organisations involved in CSCs give short presentations on local initiatives.
- Annual *Away Day* for all members of NCSIG to complement the timing of the annual CSC networking event.
- Annual information and networking event for CSCs
- Leaflet on the role of members of the NCSIG and their role in the implementation of the strategic plan
- Achievements and next steps briefs
- OMCYA *Working Together for Children* micro site and intranet
- *Working Together for Children* leaflet
- *Working Together for Children* Newsletter
- Papers/Reports from CSCs: templates for work-plans and reporting to be developed
- Email communications
- Telephone

1.5 Proposed events, publications, meetings and actions

Events

NCSIG meeting	September 2010
NCSIG meeting	November 2010
NCSIG meeting	January 2011
Annual NCSIG <i>Away Day</i>	March 2011
NCSIG meeting	April 2011
Annual information and networking event for CSCs	September 2011
NCSIG meeting	June 2011
NCSIG meeting	September 2011
Seminar on key implementation and good practice issues	October 2011
NCSIG meeting	November 2011
NCSIG meeting	January 2012
NCSIG meeting	April 2012
NCSIG meeting	June 2012
Annual NCSIG <i>Away Day</i>	2012 date to be decided
Bilateral meetings	As required

Publications

<i>Working Together for Children</i> leaflet	Already available
Reports/Policy documents and materials from OMCYA/NCSIG/CSC*	As available
<i>Working Together for Children</i> Newsletter	July 2010
Achievements and next steps briefs	December 2010
Leaflet on role of members of the NCSIG	November 2010
<i>Working Together for Children</i> Newsletter	December 2010
<i>Working Together for Children</i> Newsletter	April 2011
<i>Working Together for Children</i> Newsletter	October 2011
Achievements and next steps briefs	December 2011
<i>Working Together for Children</i> Newsletter	April 2012
<i>Working Together for Children</i> Newsletter	October 2012

Other communications activities

OMCYA <i>Working Together for Children</i> micro site and intranet	Mid 2011
Email communications	As required
Telephone communications	As required

* A list of key publications is in Appendix A

2 Communications between NCSIG members and their own organisations or departments

2.1 Outcomes from communication between NCSIG members and their own organisations or departments

- Staff and colleagues are encouraged to engage with and participate in the development of CSCs
- Interdepartmental, cross-agency and multidisciplinary ways of working are embedded within their own organisations
- The long-term vision of working effectively to improve outcomes for all children is promoted and influenced
- The role of the NCSIG and the CSC initiative is continuously reinforced
- Government, senior policy makers and services providers are influenced in relation to all of the above

2.2 Audiences/publics/stakeholders?

- Management Team
- Staff
- Organisations they work with or fund, which have responsibility for children

2.3 Messages

Key message

- When we *work together* we can make a positive difference to the lives of our children and young people.
- Working together in a sustained way is challenging, takes time and requires continuous learning; but it's worth it.
- We are doing this through children's services committees and the NCSIG.

Detailed messages for staff members of organisations represented on the NCSIG

As a staff member of an organisation represented on the NCSIG you should:

- Support your NCSIG representative
- Work collaboratively with other organisations to support this national initiative
- Embed interdepartmental, cross-agency and multidisciplinary ways of working in your position and organisation
- Promote and influence a long-term vision of working effectively to improve outcomes for all children
- Influence Government, senior policy makers and services providers in relation to all of the above

2.4 Forms of communication

- Senior management and staff meetings
- Business/Corporate/Strategic Plans
- Features in existing organisational newsletters/intranet
- Websites
- Dedicated meetings and seminars (with other staff sitting on CSCs)
- OMCYA *Working Together for Children* micro site and intranet
- *Working Together for Children* leaflet
- *Working Together for Children* Newsletter
- Toolkit for the Development of a CSC
- Reports/Policy papers and other materials made available by OMCYA/NCSIG/CSC as appropriate
- Telephone, email contact with OMCYA

2.5 Proposed events, publications, meetings and actions

Events	
Senior management meetings Dedicated meetings and seminars	Already initiated NCSIG members to initiate and advise OMCYA
Publications	
Business/Corporate/Strategic Plans	NCSIG members to initiate and advise OMCYA
<i>Working Together for Children</i> leaflet	Already available
Strategic Plan for the Development and Implementation of the CSC Initiative (2010)	Already available
Learning from experience to inform the future – Findings emerging from the initial phase of the Children's Services Committees (Centre for Effective Services, 2010)	Already available
Toolkit for the Development of a CSC	Already available
Reports/Policy documents and materials from OMCYA/NCSIG/CSC*	As available
<i>Working Together for Children</i> Newsletter	July 2010
<i>Working Together for Children</i> Newsletter	December 2010
<i>Working Together for Children</i> Newsletter	April 2011
<i>Working Together for Children</i> Newsletter	October 2011
<i>Working Together for Children</i> Newsletter	April 2012
<i>Working Together for Children</i> Newsletter	October 2012
Other communications activities	
Email communications	As required
Telephone communications	As required
OMCYA <i>Working Together for Children</i> site and intranet	Mid 2011
Organisational or departmental websites	NCSIG members to initiate and advise OMCYA

3 Communications between OMCYA and CSCs

3.1 Outcomes from communication between OMCYA and CSCs

- CSCs know that they are part of a national initiative
- The support and engagement of CSCs is obtained and maintained
- CSCs are kept informed about national policies and strategies being developed and implemented which are relevant to the CSCs
- Information is provided on best practice to facilitate and guide the development of CSCs
- Feedback is provided to CSCs on emerging issues and trends being raised by them
- Sharing of information between CSCs is promoted
- Duplication of effort is avoided
- The establishment of new CSCs is encouraged

3.2 Audiences/public/stakeholders

- Chairs and Deputy Chairs of CSCs
- CSC Coordinators
- CSC members
- All local statutory partners, in particular, the HSE and Local Authority leads, in emerging CSC areas

3.3 Messages

Key message

- When we *work together* we can make a positive difference to the lives of our children and young people.
- Working together in a sustained way is challenging, takes time and requires continuous learning; but it's worth it.
- We are doing this through children's services committees and the NCSIG.

Detailed messages for CSCs

As the Chair and Deputy Chair of your CSC, your role is to:

- Provide leadership and direction for your CSC
- Ensure appropriate interaction between your CSC, the CSC Steering Group and external stakeholders
- Represent your CSC on the CSC Steering group
- Promote your CSC at local and national level
- Report on your CSC's achievements, challenges, obstacles and emerging trends
- Identify needs and seek requisite supports
- Contribute to learning for CSCs at local level and for the national initiative
- Ensure the CSC delivers on its plan/work programme
- Embed interdepartmental, cross-agency and multidisciplinary ways of working within your organisation
- Promote and influence a long-term vision of working effectively to improve outcomes for all children
- Influence government, senior policy makers and service providers in relation to all of the above.

As the Coordinator of your CSC, your role is to:

- Support and co-ordinate the work of your CSC and the Chair
- Promote your CSC at local and national level
- Support good communication between national and local levels and at local level

As a senior manager in the HSE or local authority, who is the designated lead for your CSC at pre-implementation stage, your role is to:

- Develop relationships of key stakeholders
- Convene meetings of key stakeholders
- Secure HSE and OMCYA support

3.4 Forms of communication

- CSC Steering Group meetings (structure and format of meetings to be decided)
- Special briefing meeting for CSC chairs, deputy chairs and co-ordinators in 2010
- Periodic bi-lateral meetings between OMCYA and individual CSCs (Chairs, coordinators and other key stakeholders)
- Annual information and networking event for CSCs
- Annual networking meeting for CSC co-ordinators, facilitated by CES
- *Working Together for Children* CD individually branded for each CSC
- OMCYA *Working Together for Children* micro site and intranet
- *Working Together for Children* leaflet
- *Working Together for Children* Newsletter
- Toolkit for the Development of a CSC
- Reports/Policy papers and other materials made available by OMCYA/NCSIG/CSC as appropriate
- Telephone, email contact with OMCYA

3.5 Proposed events, publications, meetings and actions

Events	
CSC Steering Group meeting	March 2011
Special briefing meeting for CSC chairs, deputy chairs and co-ordinators in 2010	December 2010
Annual networking meeting for CSC co-ordinators, facilitated by CES	Q4 2010
CSC Steering Group meeting	February 2011
Annual information and networking event for CSCs	September 2011
CSC Steering Group meeting	May 2011
CSC Steering Group meeting	October 2011
Annual networking meeting for CSC co-ordinators, facilitated by CES	Q4 2011
CSC Steering Group meeting	December 2011
CSC Steering Group meeting	February 2012
CSC Steering Group meeting	May 2012
CSC Steering Group meeting	October 2012
Annual networking meeting for CSC co-ordinators, facilitated by CES	Q4 2012
Annual information and networking event for CSCs	2012 date to be decided
Bi-lateral meetings between OMCYA and individual CSCs (Chairs, co-ordinators and other key stakeholders)	As required
Publications	
<i>Working Together for Children</i> leaflet	Already available
<i>Working Together for Children</i> Newsletter	July 2010
Strategic Plan for the Development and Implementation of the CSC Initiative (2010)	Already available
Learning from experience to inform the future – Findings emerging from the initial phase of the Children's Services Committees (Centre for Effective Services, 2010)	Already available
Toolkit for the Development of a CSC	Already available
Reports/Policy documents and materials from OMCYA/NCSIG/CSC	As available
<i>Working Together for Children</i> Newsletter	December 2010
<i>Working Together for Children</i> Newsletter	April 2011
<i>Working Together for Children</i> Newsletter	October 2011
<i>Working Together for Children</i> Newsletter	April 2012
<i>Working Together for Children</i> Newsletter	October 2012
Other communications activities	
OMCYA <i>Working Together for Children</i> site and intranet	Mid 2011
Email and telephone communication with OMCYA	As required

4 Communications between the CSC Steering Group and the NCSIG

4.1 Outcomes from communication between the CSC Steering Group and the NCSIG

- Your CSC's achievements, challenges, obstacles and emerging trends is reported on
- Needs are identified and requisite supports are sought
- Learning for CSCs at local level and for the national initiative is improved
- Advice and information on policy issues and strategies relevant to CSCs is sought

4.2 Audiences/publics/stakeholders

NCSIG members

4.3 Messages

Key message

- When we *work together* we can make a positive difference to the lives of our children and young people.
- Working together in a sustained way is challenging, takes time and requires continuous learning but it's worth it.
- We are doing this through children's services committees and the NCSIG.

Detailed messages for members of the CSC Steering Group

As a member of the CSC Steering Group your role is to:

- Operationalise the CSC initiative
- Provide leadership and direction for the CSC initiative at national and local level
- Ensure appropriate interaction between your CSC, the CSC Steering Group and NCSIG
- Represent your CSC on the CSC Steering group
- Promote your CSC at national level
- Promote and influence a long-term vision of working effectively to improve outcomes for all children
- Influence government, senior policy makers and service providers in relation to the development and driving forward of the CSC initiative
- Report on your CSC's achievements, challenges, obstacles and emerging trends
- Identify needs and seek requisite supports
- Contribute to learning for CSCs at local level and for the national initiative
- Mediate and manage information sharing between the CSCs, CSC Steering Group and the NCSIG

4.4 Forms of communication

- Reports to NCSIG via OMCYA (formal work-plan and reporting template to be developed)
- CSC Steering Group Work plan
- NCSIG meetings
- CSC Steering Group meetings (chaired by the OMCYA)
- Dedicated meeting for CSC chairs, co-chairs and co-ordinators
- Annual information and networking event for CSCs
- OMCYA *Working Together for Children* micro site and intranet
- *Working Together for Children* Newsletter
- Websites
- Email and telephone

4.5 Proposed events, publications, meetings and actions

Events	
CSC Steering Group meeting	March 2011
Annual information and networking event for CSCs	September 2011
CSC Steering Group meeting	September 2011
CSC Steering Group meeting	October 2011
Annual networking meeting for CSC co-ordinators, facilitated by CES	Q4 2011
CSC Steering Group meeting	December 2011
CSC Steering Group meeting	February 2012
CSC Steering Group meeting	May 2012
CSC Steering Group meeting	October 2012
Annual information and networking event for CSCs	2012 date to be decided
Annual networking meeting for CSC co-ordinators, facilitated by CES	Q4 2012
Publications	
<i>Working Together for Children</i> Newsletter	July 2010
<i>Working Together for Children</i> Newsletter	December 2010
<i>Working Together for Children</i> Newsletter	April 2011
<i>Working Together for Children</i> Newsletter	October 2011
<i>Working Together for Children</i> Newsletter	April 2012
<i>Working Together for Children</i> Newsletter	October 2012
Other communications activities	
OMCYA <i>Working Together for Children</i> site and intranet	Mid 2011
Email and telephone communication with OMCYA	As required

5 Communications between the CSC Steering Group and CSCs

5.1 Outcomes from communication between the CSC Steering Group and CSCs

- Achievements, challenges, obstacles and emerging trends across all CSC's are reported on
- The learning for CSCs at local level is improved
- CSCs know they are part of a national initiative
- CSCs are kept informed about national and local policies and strategies being developed and implemented which are of relevance to the CSCs
- Sharing of information between CSCs is promoted
- Feedback is provided on decisions taken at CSC Steering group and NCSIG level

5.2 Audiences/publics/stakeholders

- All CSC members, including HSE and Local Authority Leads
- All local statutory partners in emerging CSCs

5.3 Messages

Key message

- When we *work together* we can make a positive difference to the lives of our children and young people.
- Working together in a sustained way is challenging, takes time and requires continuous learning but it's worth it.
- We are doing this through children's services committees and the NCSIG.

Detailed messages for members of CSCs

As a member of a CSC, your role is to:

- Ensure your organisation/department/agency is represented on the CSC, contributes to its work and meets its commitments in the CSC plan
- Promote your CSC at local and national level, and within your own organisation
- Drive forward the work of your CSC
- Embed interdepartmental cross-agency and multidisciplinary ways of working within your organisation
- Promote and influence a long-term vision of working effectively to improve outcomes for all children
- Influence government, policy makers and service providers in relation to all of the above

5.4 Forms of communication

- Update emails sent from the CSC Steering Group to all CSC members, after each CSC Steering Group meeting
- Reports from CSC Steering Group which will be discussed at CSC meeting level
- Annual information and networking event for CSCs
- Reports/Policy documents and other materials made available by OMCYA/NCSIG/CSC as and when appropriate
- OMCYA *Working Together for Children* micro site and intranet
- *Working Together for Children* Newsletter
- Websites
- Email
- Telephone

5.5 Proposed events, publications, meetings and actions

Events	
Update emails from CSC Steering Group meeting	March 2011
Annual information and networking event for CSCs	September 2011
Update emails from CSC Steering Group meeting	May 2011
Update emails from CSC Steering Group meeting	October 2011
Update emails from CSC Steering Group meeting	December 2011
Update emails from CSC Steering Group meeting	February 2012
Update emails from CSC Steering Group meeting	May 2012
Update emails from CSC Steering Group meeting	October 2012
Annual information and networking event for CSCs	2012 date to be decided
Publications	
<i>Working Together for Children</i> Newsletter	July 2010
<i>Working Together for Children</i> Newsletter	December 2010
<i>Working Together for Children</i> Newsletter	April 2011
<i>Working Together for Children</i> Newsletter	October 2011
<i>Working Together for Children</i> Newsletter	April 2012
<i>Working Together for Children</i> Newsletter	October 2012
Update emails from CSC Steering Group meeting	February 2012
Other communications activities	
OMCYA <i>Working Together for Children</i> site and intranet	Mid 2011
Email and telephone communication with OMCYA	As required
Reports from CSC Steering Group which will be discussed at CSC meeting level	After each CSC Steering Cttee Mtg

APPENDIX A

List of key publications

1. *National Children's Strategy – Our Children – Their Lives*, Department of Health and Children (2000)
2. *The Agenda for Children's Services: A Policy Handbook*, Office of the Minister for Children (2007)
3. *Towards 2016: Ten Year Framework Social Partnership Agreement 2006 – 2015*, Department of the Taoiseach (2006)
4. *Toolkit for the Development of a Committee: Children Services Committees*,
Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (2009)
5. *Working Together for Children leaflet*, Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (2009)
7. *Strategic Plan for the Development and Implementation of the CSC initiative*,
Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (2010)
9. *Learning from experience to inform the future - Findings emerging from the initial phase of the Children's Services Committees*, Centre for Effective Services (2010)
10. *Renewed Programme for Government*, Department of the Taoiseach (2009)
11. *Key Terms Document*, Centre for Effective Services (2010)



Oifig an Aire Leanaí
agus Gnóthaí Óige
Office of the Minister for
Children and Youth Affairs

Office of the Minister for Children
Department of Health and Children
Hawkins House
Hawkins Street
Dublin 2

Tel: +353 (0)1 635 4000
Fax: +353 (0)1 674 3223
E-mail: omc@health.gov.ie
Web: www.omcya.ie