

PRESS RELEASE

Launch of Children and Young People's Plan for Co. Kildare!

The needs and issues affecting children, young people and families in Co. Kildare were highlighted at the recent launch of the new three year plan developed by Kildare Children & Young People's Services Committee (KCYPSC).

According to Chairperson, Patricia Finlay (Tusla) the plan builds on the positive inter-agency work that is already happening in Co. Kildare, while outlining areas that require further attention.

The goal is to improve the quality of life for children, young people & families in our county.

The main elements of the plan were comprehensively outlined to attendees by some of the Committee members: Peter Minnock, Kildare County Council (Vice Chair), Justin Parkes (HSE), Julie McNamara (County Childcare Committee) and Jacinta Carey (Teach Tearmainn).

Findings from the plan clearly reveal that current service levels in the county are not sufficient to meet the needs of the children, young people and families who live here.

Co. Kildare has experienced exceptional population growth in recent years, far exceeding the national rate, but this has not been matched by a growth in support services.

In fact, over the same period, services have been subjected to budget cuts, with a number of valuable supports ceasing altogether due to unavailability of funding.

The data indicates that Co. Kildare is inadequately resourced when it comes to funding from national level.

One of the aims of Kildare Children & Young People's Services Committee is to use the plan as a tool to make the case for additional funding to be allocated to our county.

In parallel with this, there is a renewed focus on getting the best from the resources we already have – both human & financial – by working together more effectively in the planning and provision of support services.

11 priority areas have been identified in the plan:

- Direct Provision
- Disability
- Domestic Violence
- Early School Leaving
- Family Support
- Homelessness
- Mental Health
- Substance Misuse
- Unemployment
- Youth Facilities & Activities
- Youth Participation

In all, over 40 actions have been agreed for the next 3 years. These include the parentingsupport.ie website, the delivery of the Strengthening Families Programme and the roll-out of the *I CAN Book* to support the transition from pre-school to Junior Infants.

The plan was formally launched by Kyle Burke, Megan McCarthy and Adam Leech, three young people from the Kildare County Panel of Comhairle na nÓg, who spoke eloquently of the work of the young people involved in Comhairle na nÓg and the importance of the voice of young people being heard by adults who plan and provide support services.

For further information and a copy of the plan please contact: Emma Berney, Coordinator, Kildare Children & Young People's Services Committee Email: emmab@countykildarelp.ie

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Background to Kildare Children & Young People's Services Committee

The Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (OMCYA), now the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, established the Children and Young People's Services Committees in 2007 with the purpose of improving outcomes for children and families at local and community level. Since then CYPSCs have increased incrementally in number and are a key structure identified by Government to plan and co-ordinate services for children and young people in every county in Ireland. CYPSCs bring together a diverse group of agencies in local county areas to engage in joint planning of services for children and young people. All major organisations and agencies working locally on behalf of children and young people are represented. These committees work to improve the lives of children, young people and families at local and community level through integrated planning and improved service delivery.

The inaugural meeting of the Kildare Children & Young People's Services Committee took place in June 2010. In March 2011, a Coordinator was appointed to support the work of the Committee. In September 2011, the Committee's first 3 –Year Plan was submitted to the Department of Children & Youth Affairs. In June 2014, the Children's Services Committee became the Children & Young People's Services Committee, reflecting policy change at national level. Planning for the second 3-Year plan commenced in 2014, with the plan submitted in early 2015.

Current membership of Kildare CYPSC:

Organisations	Representatives
Co. Kildare LEADER Partnership	Pat Leogue
An Garda Síochána	Garry Madden
HSE	Justin Parkes
	Noreen Hynes
Irish Primary Principals Network	Mary Pierce
Kildare & Wicklow Education & Training Board	Patricia O'Brien

Kildare County Childcare Committee	Julie McNamara
Kildare County Council	Peter Minnock (Vice Chair)
Kildare Youth Services	Tom Dunne
National Educational Psychological Service	Annette Corkery
National University of Ireland Maynooth	Catriona O'Toole
Probation Service	Deirdre Matthews
South West Regional Drugs & Alcohol Task Force	Lisa Baggott
Teach Tearmainn	Jacinta Carey
Tusla, Child and Family Agency	Patricia Finlay (Chair)
Tusla, Education Welfare Service	Jean Rafter

Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: the National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014 – 2020 underscores the necessity of interagency working and tasks Children and Young People's Services Committees with a key role in this regard.

Further information available on www.cypsc.ie