National
Children’s Services Committees Initiative: Responding to Youth Needs

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Children’s Services Committees

Local interagency structures to improve outcomes for children & young people


• Committees are responsible for improving the lives of children, young people and families at local and community level
• Bring together a diverse group of public and not-for-profit organisations in local county (municipality) areas
• Engage in joint planning and co-ordination of services for children and young people (do not currently fund services)
• Work through integrated planning, working and service delivery
• First four Committees established in 2007; currently in 20 counties (municipalities)
• 2014 national roll out - All counties in Ireland will have a Committee
Each Committee develops and implements an *interagency* 3 year **Children and Young People’s Plan for the County**, which is:

- Designed to improve outcomes for children and young people in their area
- Based on the **5 National Outcomes** for children and young people in Ireland

1. **Healthy**, both physically and mentally
2. **Supported in active learning**
3. **Safe** from accidental and intentional harm, and **secure** in the immediate and wider physical environment
4. **Economically** secure
5. **Part of positive networks** of family, friends, neighbours and the community, and included and **participating** in society
Similar International Initiatives

- Children and Young People’s Strategic Partnership, Northern Ireland
- High & Complex Needs Interagency Strategy, New Zealand
- National Program for Children and Youth at Risk, Israel
- Montgomery Collaboration Council & Vermont Human Services, USA
- Children’s Trusts, United Kingdom

Children’s Services Committees the vehicle for interagency work in Ireland
Children’s Services Committees

Source: Adapted from Montgomery Collaboration Council (2006) and developed by CES.
National picture of CSCs

2007-2010 Phase 1
2010-2011 Phase 2
2011-2013 Phase 3
2014 Phase 4

Work commenced
Work to be commenced

All at differing stages of development and operation
**Membership of CSCs**

**Senior managers**, representing a range of statutory, community and voluntary organisations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tusla Child &amp; Family Agency</td>
<td>An Garda Síochána (Police)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Probation Services (Justice)</td>
<td>Health Services Executive</td>
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<tr>
<td>City / County Childcare Committee</td>
<td>Education &amp; Training Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local Authority (Executive)</td>
<td>Irish Primary Principals Network (Schools)</td>
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<td>Educational Welfare Services</td>
<td>Social Inclusion Partners, e.g. Local Development Companies</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Association of Principals &amp; Deputy Principals (Schools)</td>
<td>Community &amp; Voluntary Services for children &amp; young people</td>
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Evidence informed approach

- Using emerging evidence in a structured way
- Interagency approach –
  
  *Effective interagency working acts to create the ‘permitting circumstances’ for better functioning of front-line services and front-line staff. (Ghate in Statham, 2011)*

- Learning from other structures nationally and in other jurisdictions
- Consultation with children and young people
Youth Mental Health Kerry CSC

- What should we be doing in Kerry to support Youth Mental Health?
- What are we doing to support Youth Mental Health?
- In answering these questions the Kerry CSC Youth Mental Health Working Group developed a strategy for county Kerry to address the question:

  - What can we do better to improve Youth Mental Health services in County Kerry and improve outcomes for our children and young people?
Achievements to date

• Guidelines for referrals
• Interagency protocols and practice
• Interagency critical incident response protocol & Suicide Response Plan
• Education, preventative and community level supports:
  • THINK Booklet & app
  • Youth Mental Health Conference
Consultation with children and young people has been an integral part of the development of Children and Young People’s Plans. This is manifested through cooperative work with Comhairle na nÓg (Council for children & young people) and additional activities undertaken by a CSC and its members: 19 groups in Louth.

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 12

Horizontal principle across Louth CSC

Hearing the Voice

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Sibling Support Programme

- Issue - drugs and alcohol
- Sub-group formed
- National Drugs Strategy
- National Family Support Network
- Ten week programme for siblings of drug using people – multiple partners
- Recruitment
- Funding
- Self evaluation
- Referral pathway
- Seminar – dissemination
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....

(Source: Internal Communications Plan 2010-2012)
Links

- [www.dcyagov.ie](http://www.dcyagov.ie) scroll down and click the logo
- [www.effectiveservices.org/our-work/childrens-services-committees-initiative](http://www.effectiveservices.org/our-work/childrens-services-committees-initiative)
- [www.kerrychildrensservices.com](http://www.kerrychildrensservices.com)
- [www.louth CSC.ie](http://www.louth CSC.ie)
Contact

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