



Children's Rights Alliance

The Children's Rights Alliance is a coalition of over 80 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working to secure the rights and needs of children in Ireland, by campaigning for the full implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. It aims to improve the lives of all children under 18, through securing the necessary changes in Ireland's laws, policies and services.

Vision

The Alliance's vision is one whose sentiment it shares with many of its member organisations that:

Ireland will be one of the best places in the world to be a child

Mission

To realise the rights of children in Ireland through securing the full implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Alliance will have succeeded in its Mission, when there is:

An Ireland that has given full effect to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which will mean that children's rights are:



- Integrated into our mindsets
- Protected by our laws
- Reflected in our policies
- Evidenced in wider society

Background

- Set up in 1993 following Ireland's ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Funded by the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, the Atlantic Philanthropies and the ONE Foundation
- Established as the NGO voice to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child
- Recognised Social Partner with Government
- Over 80 member organisations (many working directly with children on a daily basis)
- Publishes a range of reports, research findings and policy submissions
- Co-founded the End Child Poverty Coalition; the CADIC Coalition; the Irish Youth Justice Alliance; ASBO Watch (formerly known as the Coalition against ASBOs); and Action for Separated Children in Ireland

Context

In Ireland, there is a widely held view that, as a nation, we value *all* children. However, the evidence would suggest otherwise. While childhood is a happy and secure reality for most children, for many it is not. The evidence for this is compelling and provides the Alliance with a strong case for securing key reforms:

- Over 110,000 children (one in nine) live in consistent poverty; 240,000 (nearly one in four) are at risk of poverty (relative poverty)
- Child Protection – there are no statutory guidelines on reporting child abuse
- In Ireland, 12.3% of persons aged 18-24 are early school leavers (Junior Cert). 4% of school-leavers in 2006 left with no formal qualification (no Junior Cert)
- Children have no entitlement to be heard in their own right in court and administrative hearings that directly affect them
- There are just under 36,000 children in households on the social housing waiting – and, by implication, are currently in overcrowded or inappropriate or emergency accommodation
- In early childhood services, there is no statutory requirement for staff to have any qualification
- On the 23rd of May 2007 there were 199 detained in St Patrick's, 67 of who were children.
- 140 children were admitted to or detained in adult psychiatric units between November 2006 and July 2007.
- Of 4371 Traveller households, 1221 households live in temporary housing units.
- From the period 2000-2007, 5369 separated children were referred to the HSE. 2536 were placed in care, 441 went missing from care. 388 are still unaccounted for.

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