

Food Provision Scheme

June 2020



Food Provision for Young Children during the Covid-19 pandemic

Dear Members and Friends,

We hope you are well and safe. We are delighted to announce some more detail in relation to the Children's Rights Alliance emergency food provision scheme for children under 6 years. The scheme, established on 24 April, is part of our emergency action response to feed children in the wake of Covid-19.

Emergency action to feed children

Food poverty has a serious impact on children's health, development and wellbeing. When children are hungry, they can't learn, find it difficult to concentrate, feel unloved and don't grow. Following on from closures of schools, pre-schools and other vital facilities, it became apparent that many families were seriously struggling and children were going hungry. Since March, we have been engaged in extensive consultation with our membership who told us that some children are missing out on breakfast clubs and school lunches since lockdown began. Some younger children were no longer getting the daily meals that they would normally receive in their creche or pre-school. Job losses arising from the lockdown also reduced family incomes even further compounding the problem.

Philanthropic Support

The Children's Rights Alliance, with an initial grant of €50,000 in funding from the Bank of Ireland through the Community Foundation for Ireland and €3,700 from Shared Access, established a food provision scheme to support the nutritional needs for children under 6 years experiencing poverty and deprivation during the Covid-19 crisis. Additional funding was sourced from the Oakfield Trust, the Infant Development Fund (a joint fund of the Community Foundation for Ireland and the Katharine Howard Foundation) and the One Foundation totalling an additional €94,800 for the scheme.

Children and Young People Service Committees (CYPSC)

The Children and Young People Services Committees (CYPSC) played a key role in the delivery of this initiative. The CYPSCs disseminated information on the ground and who helped organisations targeting those most in need to apply.

Oversight

An advisory committee was convened to guide decisions around the granting of monies through the Scheme involving Noelle Spring, Katharine Howard Foundation; Tom Costello, formerly Atlantic Philanthropies and Colma Niclughadha, National CYPSC Office. Emma Lane-Spollen, formerly of the Tomar Trust and One Foundation, supported the analyses and management of the funding applications.

High level of need

The initiative was launched in late April 2020. Many applicants referenced families experiencing deprivation due to loss of jobs arising from the lockdown, which is concerning. The initiative sought to fund early years' providers or community/voluntary services, targeting a household with children under 6 years and initiatives had to have the support and endorsement of local CYPSCs. The scheme focused on early years' because the Government had extended the school meals programme so that children in primary and secondary could benefit.

The fund received 41 applications from organisations and the total funding requested amounted to €424,944 – far exceeding the funding available. Applications received sought to support 3,244 children under 6 years and their families. It is estimated that this would reach over 7,000 children in total. Applicants also came from 21 of the 26 counties and fell broadly among five types of organisations. In total 20 organisations have been allocated funding to date.

The One Foundation made a special contribution to the programme and recommended three organisations for allocation of their funding of €7,800 and this went to the Saol Project, Empower CLG and Cherry Orchard Childcare.

Organisation	Children and Young People's Services Committees (CYPSC)	Overview as per project proposal	Amount awarded
Kells People's Resource Centre CLG (Coordinator)	Meath	Tailored food parcels, budgeting, recipes for county wide initiative.	€12,000
Obair Newmarket on Fergus CLG	Clare	Food parcels with recipes.	€9,100
Quarryvale Family Resource Centre	South Dublin County	Mixture of hot food and parcels. Clondalkin and Tallaght area, linking with numerous organisations.	€12,000
Kerry Travellers Health Community Development Project	Kerry	Mixture of hot meals for some and food parcels for others. Large number of under 6s.	€12,000
St Brigid's Family and Community Centre	Waterford	Food parcels to 8 families identified who are in great need due to loss of jobs etc.	€2,040
Rialto Community Network, RE: Dolphin Creche	Dublin City South	Food hampers through a community creche.	€2,520
Daughters of Charity and One Family	Dublin City North	Food hampers for one parent families.	€1,920
Focus Ireland	Dublin City North	Food hampers for homeless families.	€1,800

Donegal Family Resource Network	Donegal	Mixture of food parcels and hot meals. A network of 10 Family Resource Centres.	€12,000
Clondalkin Traveller Development Group	Dublin	Food Parcels	€10,000
Northside Family Resource Centre	Limerick City	Working with disadvantaged families in various areas of Limerick.	€6,000
Raheen Family Resource Centre	Wexford	Extend support to reach total of 250 families with food hampers	€12,000
Ballyhoura Development CLG	Limerick/ North Cork	Fresh food, recipes, and hampers.	€7,410
Aster Family Support	Fingal and North Dublin	Increase current provision from 5 to 7 days. Currently does dry food parcels, but will now add 2 hot meals/week	€4,650
Teachnadaoine Family Resource Centre	Monaghan	County working together and utilising existing resources to provide support to vulnerable families.	€9,000
Lus na Greine Family Resource Centre CLG	Longford Westmeath	Families in need already identified within the community	€3,600
Saint Ultan's Campus and FamiliBase	Dublin	4 hot meals a week (€3/meal) to 51 families with one or more children under 6.	€2,160
Cavan County Local Development Company	Cavan	Hot meals via meals on wheels to children. Utilising infrastructure put in place to provide food aid to the elderly.	€12,000
Cherry Orchard Childcare	Dublin	Food Parcels	€2,600
Saol Project	Dublin	Food Parcels	€2,600
Empower CLG	Dublin	Food Parcels	€2,600

This scheme has played an important role in addressing food poverty among families struggling to keep their heads above water during Covid19. We will be publishing a report on the impact of the scheme including any learnings later in the year.

Through well-connected and dedicated community and voluntary organisations, this scheme is addressing a real need. However, a national approach to dealing with food poverty and hunger is absolutely vital going forward. Families need a sufficient minimum income to meet their children's nutritional needs. Direct food provision such as school meals is also critical for children's survival and development. During the summer months, food poverty will be particularly acute for many families, and we are calling on the Government to build on its recent Covid19 school meals programme to address holiday hunger. There are many providers out there willing to help vulnerable families. Our national

bodies such as Tusla have also played a critical role in addressing food poverty during the lockdown. A summer programme could also build on Tusla's work in this area.

Thanks to our members, the Bank of Ireland, the Community Foundation for Ireland, the Katharine Howard Foundation, Shared Access, the One Foundation, Oakfield Trust, the CYPSCs and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs for making this initiative happen. Thanks also to Noelle Spring, Tom Costello, Colma Niclughadha, Lye Ogunsanya and Emma Lane-Spollen for their help in launching this initiative.

If you would like further information about this programme, please contact Mary Nicholson, Social Policy Analyst, email: mary@childrensrights.ie