



Member Update

30 April 2020

Dear Members and Friends,

Following meetings and conversations with many of you, we have decided to send out a weekly email of resources, announcements and information about our own advocacy on the Covid 19 pandemic and how it is impacting on children and young people. This will cover just some of the issues being discussed with members on an ongoing basis.

We are putting together a section on our website where all resources will be collated. If you would like to add resources you think may be of interest to other members, please email us. We will be holding regular meetings with members on the most pressing issues brought by Covid 19 and the related restrictions and endeavour to keep you informed in a timely manner. If you would like to raise an issue or be added to member meetings, please contact our Membership Officer Edel.

Issues raised in the last meeting

Food Poverty

A key concern raised by members on the call was how families that rely on breakfast clubs/ school meals etc will be able to access food in this new context. Food poverty is an issue that impacts almost 1 in 10 families in Ireland. Due to Covid19 restrictions, access to essential services like breakfast clubs or the school meals programme has changed for families. With more people out of work, there is also a concern that families simply cannot afford the food they need. This issue was raised as a priority in a [letter](#) the Children's Rights Alliance submitted to the Government. Following this, and through the support of Community Foundation of Ireland and Bank of Ireland funding, the Children's Rights Alliance established a Food Provision Scheme in collaboration with the Children and Young People's Services Committees that aims to reach young children who do not have access to other supports. The details of the Scheme can be found [here](#).

One Parent Families

Another issue raised by members during our meeting was concern for lone parent families during this time. In particular, members raised stories about parents being denied access to supermarkets

with children. With respect to social distancing, the Children's Rights Alliance members recognised the need to include lone parents as a vulnerable group in order to facilitate access to necessary outlets with their children. The Children's Rights Alliance, along with Free Legal Advice Clinics (FLAC) Ireland, National Women's Council of Ireland, One Family, SPARK Ireland and Society of St Vincent de Paul, wrote an [open letter](#) on the issue and possible solutions. This letter was also sent to the Department of Health and the Chief Medical Officer for further guidance on the issue. It was great to see this acknowledged in subsequent Government [briefings](#) on the issue.

An emerging issue in the last week was the updates on the child maintenance payment. This news is a worry for many of our members working with one parent families who are already low on income who rely on supports like this to keep their heads above water.

Children in Direct Provision

The Alliance and several members expressed concern about the particular issues faced by children living in Direct Provision as well as children in emergency accommodation, domestic violence situations, households where there are addiction issues and other vulnerable children. The difficulties adhering to social distancing and access to additional supports were some of the issues raised. Members also discussed potential solutions to some of these problems.

The Children's Rights Alliance raised this meeting with the Department of Justice and Equality, including development in the Education sector that would impact students living in direct provision who do not have the same access to the technological supports needed for the education during this time. The Alliance received very positive news this week from the Department that the Reception and Integration Agency will carry out a needs-assessment for children and young people living in direct provision that goes beyond technical needs to educational and welfare needs. The Alliance will keep members informed with any further updates. We are also working with members on a newsletter designed for children and young people living in direct provision.

Covid19 Member Resources

Many of you have updated your contact information and service details in light of the public health crisis. Others have issued their own resources. We have linked these below.

[Ag Eisteacht](#)

[Alcohol Action Ireland](#)

[AsIAM](#)

[Barnardos](#)

[Barretstown](#)

[Bedford Row Family Project](#)

[BelongTo](#)

[Cope Galway](#)

[Cork Life Centre](#)



For more information visit hse.ie/coronavirus

[CyberSafe Ireland](#)

[Down Syndrome Ireland](#)

[Dublin Rape Crisis Centre](#)

[Early Childhood Ireland](#)

[EPIC](#)

[Immigrant Council of Ireland](#)

[Inclusion Ireland](#)

[Irish Association of Social Workers](#)

[Irish Foster Care Association](#)

[Irish Heart Foundation](#)

[Irish Penal Reform Trust](#)

[Irish Primary Principles Network](#)

[Irish Refugee Council](#)

[ISPCC](#)

[Irish Traveller Movement](#)

[Jack and Jill Foundation](#)

[Jigsaw](#)

[Mercy Law](#)

[Migrant Rights Centre](#)

[MyMind](#)

[National Youth Council of Ireland](#)

[Novas](#)

[One Family](#)

[Private Hospitals Association of Ireland](#)

[Rainbows Ireland](#)

[Rape Crisis Network Ireland](#)

[Respond Housing](#)

[Safe Ireland](#)

[Sexual Violence Centre Cork](#)

[Society of St Vincent de Paul](#)

[SpunOut.ie](#)

[St. Patrick's Mental Health Services](#)

[The Ark](#)



For more information visit hse.ie/coronavirus

The Disability Federation of Ireland

Treoir

Youth Work Ireland

Latest Department Notices

Department of Children and Youth Affairs

- [Information on Covid19](#)
- [Information on Covid19 Measures for providers and staff of Early Learning and Care and School Age Childcare Services](#)
- [Joint Statement by Minister for Children and Youth Affairs and Minister for Public Expenditure/Finance on measures for Childcare Sector](#)
- [Note to Sector on Residential Centre Staffing](#)
- [Practitioners CPD webpage](#)

Department of Education and Skills

- [Revised arrangements for Junior Certificate](#)
- [Press Release on Postponement of State Examinations](#)
- [Briefing on Covid19 responses in the Education and Training Sector](#)

Department of Health

- For the latest resources, click [here](#).
- [Mental Health Resources](#)
- [Downloadables](#)

Department of Justice and Equality

- [Further supports for Direct Provision residents](#)
- [Increase in Direct Provision accommodation](#)
- [Campaign for Victims of Domestic Abuse](#)

We would like to thank all of our members who are engaging with us on the issues this public health crisis is causing for children, young people and their families. We would like to thank you all for your incredible work during this time. If you wish to raise additional issues, find out more about our member meetings or would like to include something in these updates to our members and friends, please contact our Membership Officer Edel at edel.mcdevitt@childrensrights.ie



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