



## 1. Advisory Council for *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures* roundtable event on Child Poverty, 22nd June

In 2014, as part of *Better Outcomes Brighter Futures: the National Policy Framework for Children and Young People*, the Government set an ambitious and challenging child poverty target: to achieve by 2020 a reduction of at least two thirds on the 2011 baseline level of child poverty.

The Advisory Council, in collaboration with DCYA and the Department of Social Protection (DSP) hosted a roundtable event on child poverty on 22nd June, 2017. The purpose of the event was to align and advance the approaches to addressing child poverty which are outlined in the DSP Departmental paper 'Whole of Government Approach to tackling Child Poverty' and the paper on Child Poverty prepared by members of the Advisory Council entitled 'NGO Submission on Actions to Achieve the Child Poverty Reduction Target'. The Advisory Council formally launched their paper at this event.

Child Poverty is a key cross sectoral priority under *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures* with the Department of Social Protection being the lead Department. Reducing child poverty is a priority for the Government, and the event provided an opportunity to bring together all the relevant stakeholders which included Government Departments, the Advisory Council, Non Governmental Organisations, Academia, Tusla, Social Justice and Human Rights Organisations, the Ombudsman for Children amongst other representatives.

### Table of contents

1. Advisory Council Child Poverty roundtable
2. Advisory Council: NGO Submission on Actions to Achieve the Child Poverty Reduction Target
3. Young Voices - youth check conference
4. CYPSC Coordinator event
5. North East Inner City—Launch of report
6. Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures Outcomes Indicators
7. Upcoming events

For further information/full reports on the above, please see:

[www.dcy.gov.ie](http://www.dcy.gov.ie)

## Advisory Council for *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures* roundtable event on Child Poverty, 22nd June (continued)

The event was facilitated by Ms. Patricia Prenderville and Dr. Fergal Lynch, Secretary General of DCYA provided the opening remarks. Professor Hugh Frazer, NUIM, gave his perspectives on child poverty and Owen Keenan, Chair of the National Advisory Council for Children and Young People, launched the Council paper 'Recommendations for Reducing Child Poverty. Niall Egan from the Department of Social Protection gave a brief overview of the Whole of Government Response to tackling child poverty.

A very productive dialogue followed between all participants and some of the main discussions points included the importance of:

- Evaluation of existing practices, learning from evaluations, acting on results of evaluation and communicating results and implications of evaluations;
- Coordination of strategies, work programmes, engagements – within Departments, between Departments, and between NGO organisations ;
- Collaborative models of working - learning what has worked well to date, cross fertilisation between NGOs and Departments and between Departments;
- Data – using the Growing Up in Ireland data sets, collecting relevant data on impacts and in particular using some further comparative data from the EU;
- Accessing existing expertise across various intersecting issues such as poverty programmes and approaches, linking child poverty and adult poverty reduction approaches;
- Addressing communication gaps in the processes/system/structures.



## 2. Advisory Council: NGO Submission on Actions to Achieve the Child Poverty Reduction Target

In April 2014, the Government set a national child poverty reduction target and committed to adopt a multidimensional approach to tackle child poverty. This pledge forms part of Ireland's commitment to radically reduce poverty by 2020 under the European Commission Europe 2020 strategy. From its outset, the National Advisory Council on Children and Young People identified child poverty as the single biggest concern that impacts across all aspects of children's lives, and limits their life chances in many ways. In October 2015, a child poverty subgroup was established under the auspices of the Advisory Council under *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures*. The subgroup comprises both statutory and non-governmental (NGO) representatives and is co-convened by the Department of Social Protection and the Children's Rights Alliance.

The NGO representatives on this subgroup – Barnardos, the Children's Rights Alliance, the National Youth Council of Ireland, One Family and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul – have developed this paper to inform the whole of Government approach to tackling the number of children in consistent poverty. This paper follows the key approaches outlined in the EU Recommendation on Investing in Children. And its development was informed through engagement with Government Departments. The paper was drafted in advance of the announcement of Budget 2017 on 11 October 2016. A number of changes were announced in Budget 2017 which relate to the recommendations made in this paper. The paper was up-to-date when circulated to the National Advisory Council on 25 October 2016, and was launched in June 2017. The full paper [can be read here](#).

### 3. Young Voices - youth check

A Conference to discuss 'Youth Check' was held in Pearse St. Library on Tuesday May 23rd. The Young Voices group along with the Policy Innovation Unit of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs joined international partners from Belgium-Flanders, Austria and France to present their experiences of Youth Check to a diverse group of interested participants as well as decision makers such as Senators Alice Mary Higgins and Fintan Warfield, Policy Officer in Leargas Pia Janning, Deirdre Twomey IHREC and TD Jim Daly who is Chair of the Oireachtas committee on Children and Youth Affairs.

The following day, on May 24th, a delegation from Young Voices along with their international partners attended a meeting in the Department of Children and Youth Affairs to follow up the learning from the Conference and move towards considering a formal proposal for Youth Check in Ireland.

The group will be presenting to the Children and Young People's Policy Consortium at their September meeting.



Young voices is part of European Structured Dialogue. Structured Dialogue brings together young people, youth organisations, youth representatives and policy-makers across the EU to jointly discuss issues affecting young people and feed into youth policy at national and European level. Structured dialogue is a key part of the *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures* implementation infrastructure and, is one of the primary mechanisms for the voices of children and young people to inform implementation.

The Young Voices group are at present working to develop "Youth Check": an impact analysis tool to examine the impacts of a proposed piece of policy or legislation on young people, along the five national outcomes in *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures*. They have been working with the DCYA Policy Innovation Unit to develop and refine this concept, and presented an early draft at the Consortium meeting in September 2016. Work has been ongoing since then, and it is intended to propose a final product at the Consortium in September 2017.

## 4. Children and Young People's Services Committees Coordinator event

On 27th July, 2017 DCYA and Tusla held an information meeting for local CYPSC Co-ordinators which was held in DCYA. The meeting was arranged to welcome the local CYPSC Co-Ordinators who are in post now, and to update them on certain initiatives and other matters relating to the work of DCYA.

Minister Zappone attended the meeting and met with the Co-ordinators and expressed her gratitude for the valuable work that they undertake in improving outcomes for children and young people nationwide.

DCYA and the Department of Health updated the Co-ordinators on the new funding available to CYPSC through the Healthy Ireland Initiative. This initiative is co funded by both DCYA and Healthy Ireland.



The aim of the Healthy Ireland Fund will be to support innovative, cross-sectorial, evidence based projects, programmes and initiatives that implement key national policies including: the National Physical Activity Plan for Ireland, A Healthy Weight for Ireland Obesity Policy and Action Plan, National Sexual Health Strategy and Tobacco Free Ireland. The Healthy Ireland Fund will look to support projects and programmes aimed at children and young people and their families, and communities and vulnerable groups who are at most risk of experiencing health inequalities. This aligns with Outcome 1 of *Better Outcomes Brighter Futures* (Active & healthy) as well as the objectives of Healthy Ireland. It is expected the initiative will be rolled out in September, 2017.

The meeting also gave the CYPSC an opportunity to discuss funding, CYPSC day-to-day work and other emerging issues. Looking forward, there is huge potential for advancing cross sectoral work and further engagement across local CYPSC. Under the renewed direction and resourcing from DCYA, CYPSC have been identified as a vehicle for progressing a range of initiatives, activities, policies and strategies and this work continues with the support of DCYA, Tusla and the CYPSC National Steering Group.

2017 is the first year that CYPSC have full national coverage with 27 CYPSC now in place around the country. Some counties share a CYPSC Co-ordinator and there are 5 CYPSC established in the Dublin region. There are 26 local CYPSC Co-ordinators in total.



## 5. North East Inner City—Launch of report

The report '[Building Hope for Brighter Futures](#)' was launched on 1st June 2017 in National College of Ireland. NCI and the [Early Learning Initiative](#) collaborated with the Department to publish this report to highlight the use of restorative practice to reduce conflicts and develop emotional literacy among children and young people in the North East Inner City. Among the attendees at the launch were Minister Katherine Zappone, Minister Paschal Donohoe, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, Gina Quinn, President of NCI, Josephine Bleach, Director of the Early Learning Initiative in NCI, and children and young people from the North East Inner City who were there to voice their unique views on their community and its future which is contained in the report. The report sets out the key findings from working with children and young people in the North East Inner City, encouraging them to become active participants in their communities and to voice their opinions and ideas about their future.



The report uses a restorative practice approach with children and young people in the area to discuss what they want to see developed in their community and their ideas for the future. Minister Zappone stated in the report “Listening to young voices is vital so that we can build strong, happy communities and manage conflict or tensions in the community, by actively developing good relationships.” The report drew from the opinions of 285 children aged 4 to 12, and 110 young people aged 12 and above from the North East Inner City. The children and young people discussed what they liked and disliked about their communities. Examples of their likes were “*Community spirit*”, “*Youth projects, Youthreach and FAS centres*” and “*When something bad happens, people come together*” which relates to the gangland violence that erupted in the area last year. On the list of negative aspects of the community were “*Homelessness*”, “*Violence and drugs*” and a desire for a “*Cleaner community*”. The children and young people in the community want their voices heard locally and nationally by the ‘important people’ who can activate change.

Dr Derick Wilson, University of Ulster, has experience in using restorative practice and community relations research. The aim of this report was to strengthen emotional literacy and develop empathetic abilities in children through the use of restorative practice. Drug problems and crime were identified as two of the main problems in the area by 83% of young people, and a lack of space for children and young people to play in was a theme that emerged from the report. The Brighter Futures Initiative was designed to empower children and give them an opportunity to voice their opinions and ideas about their communities and what they want for the future.



## 6. Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures Outcomes Indicators

The *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures* Indicator Set (arising from a review of national indicator sets on children's lives) has been developed by the Research and Evaluation Unit DCYA to track the progress of children and young people aged 0-24 across the five outcomes outlined in *Better Outcomes Brighter Futures*, the whole of government policy on children and young people. A report on the indicator set, containing over 110 indicators and related aggregate data, will be published in Autumn 2017. The development of a disaggregated data set for each indicator is also underway and will be published subsequently. The indicator set will track progress for children and young people aged 0-24 across the five national outcomes outlined in BOBF. While these indicators will not explain how or whether a particular action or commitment in the policy framework caused a particular outcome, they are important because they:

- Help track progress towards improving outcomes for children;
- Assist in identifying changes and/or trends;
- Contribute to priority setting or resetting;
- Inform policy formulation and service provision; and
- Provide for international comparisons where possible.

The outcome indicator set represents a significant resource to support the policy framework and the work of Government Departments and others. It provides a broad picture of:

- How children and young people in Ireland are faring in terms of how active and healthy they are;
- The extent to which they are achieving their full potential in learning and development,;
- How safe and protected from harm they are,;
- How economically secure they are; and
- How connected, respected and engaged they are in society.

A report on the methodology used which will outline the activities and processes used to develop this indicator set, will also be published by the end of the year.



Also in progress is the detailed reporting of the indicators broken down where possible by different sub-groups in the population, for example, by age, gender, social class or membership of the Travelling community. This disaggregation of the data will provide more information about variations in outcomes for different groups of children and young people.

## 7. Upcoming Events

**Advisory Council:** Wednesday 13th and Thursday 14th September

**CYPSC NSG:** Tuesday 26th September

**Children and Young People's Policy Consortium:** Thursday 28th September



### Policy Innovation Unit

Department of Children and Youth Affairs  
43-49 Mespil Road  
Dublin 4  
D04 YP52



An Roinn Leanaí  
agus Gnóthaí Óige  
Department of  
Children and Youth Affairs

[policyinnovation@dca.gov.ie](mailto:policyinnovation@dca.gov.ie) ✉