



Minister Zappone at the launch of the LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy

image provided by Maxwell Photography

1. World's First LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy launched to ensure that all LGBTI+ young people are visible, valued and included

Dr Katherine Zappone, Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, launched the [LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy 2018-2020](#) on Friday 29th June, during Pride Week, in Meeting House Square, Dublin. The development of the Strategy is a key commitment for DCYA as part of the 2016 Programme for Partnership Government and has been developed in the context of the overall BOBF Framework.

The Strategy, the first of its kind in Ireland and in the world, is informed by the views of thousands of young people and by those who work with them and on their behalf. The launch was attended by approximately 250 people, including representatives of youth organisations, members of the Strategy's Oversight Committee and Youth Advisory Group, Government Ministers and officials, and, most importantly, a strong contingent of young people. The sun helped to contribute to the joyful atmosphere on the day as the result of many months of hard work was presented and celebrated.

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For further information/full reports on the above, please see: www.dcy.gov.ie

World's First LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy launched (*continued*)

Members of the Youth Advisory Group, which consisted of 14 committed young people who contributed to the development of the Strategy, did a wonderful job of moderating the event and presenting the content of the Strategy. Una Mullally, Chair of the Oversight Committee, explained the strategic development process before Minister Zappone officially launched the *LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy 2018-2020*. A video summary of the Strategy's key points, which was created by the Youth Advisory Group, was also shown to participants.



Minister Zappone was keen to stress that the Strategy is strongly action-oriented and its Mission is to ensure that all LGBTI+ young people are visible, valued and included. While it is clear that the legislative context of LGBTI+ rights has advanced considerably in recent years and Ireland is far more inclusive than it once was for LGBTI+ people, there are still issues that need to be addressed and the actions in this Strategy go a long way in doing that. It guarantees a cross-governmental approach to put additional measures in place to further enhance the lives of LGBTI+ young people and tackle some of the key challenges they may face in their day-to-day lives.

The *LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy 2018-2020* revolves around three main goals:

1. Create a Safe, Supportive and Inclusive Environment for LGBTI+ young people
2. Improve the Mental, Physical and Sexual Health and Wellbeing of the Entire LGBTI+ Community
3. Develop the Research and Data Environment to Better Understand the Lives of LGBTI+ Young People

15 objectives and 59 actions are contained within these goals, with the vast majority of Government Departments responsible for leading or assisting in delivering actions within the Strategy.

Actions cover a wide variety of areas such as schools, higher education institutions, health and social services, workplaces, youth services and the wider community.

World's First LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy launched (*continued*)

Implementation of the *LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy 2018-2020* will be driven through the comprehensive structures which have been established as part of the BOBF Framework, in the same way that implementation of other constituent strategies, such as the *National Youth Strategy 2015-2020*, feed into BOBF structures. The following additional measures are intended to also support implementation of the LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy:

1. Leadership and coordination of implementation for the Strategy will come from DCYA. Timelines and Key Performance Indicators will be established and agreed for each of the actions included in the implementation plan.
2. An annual implementation forum will be held to review progress in implementation in June of each year.
3. A representative of the current Oversight Committee will be nominated to the Advisory Council with a specific remit to represent the relevant issues from the Strategy in the broader BOBF context.
4. A Youth Forum, to ensure the voice of young people remains central to the Strategy implementation process, will be put in place.

Launching the Strategy, Minister Zappone confirmed that the Department of Children and Youth Affairs will lead the way and confirmed an annual fund of €400,000 to improve youth services and make them more aware of LGBTI+ issues. The Department of Justice and Equality is also currently in the process of developing a National LGBTI+ Strategy. Together, both strategies should lay the foundations for a more inclusive Ireland for LGBTI+ people into the future.

2. Update on Children and Young People's Policy Consortium

Two meetings of the Children and Young People's Policy Consortium have been held so far in 2018. The Consortium is the main body responsible for driving implementation and monitoring progress of *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures* across Government.

Dr. Tony Bates and Prof. Dymphna Devine provided input on stress and other factors which impact on the lives and wellbeing of young people. The DCYA report, *'So, How was School Today?'* informed some of the presentation as well as the Jigsaw 'My World' study. The report furthered involved the circulation of a survey to children and young people and their experiences of teaching and learning. Teacher's views also informed the report. It was agreed by teachers and young people that exams are the biggest source of stress among young people with girls noting feelings of greater stress than boys.

Prevention and Early Intervention was discussed by members of the Consortium as a key deliverable in supporting youth mental health. The earliest intervention possible is necessary when helping a young person suffering from mental health problems. It was discussed that there needs to be a greater focus on student's holistic wellbeing and to encourage positivity in schools.

Update on Children and Young People's Policy Consortium (*continued*)



Sarah O'Brien (HSE) and Dr. Aileen Mac Ghloin (Safefood) presented on START which is a public health awareness campaign to promote a healthy weight for children. The five year plan was launched in November by Minister Simon Harris and Minister for State Catherine Byrne. The campaign aims to build a society-wide movement that will inspire and support parents to start building and persisting with healthy lifestyle habits. The campaign seeks to help families in taking that first step and on-going steps for their children's health by starting with one daily win, and encouraging them to persist no matter how often life and the environment intervenes to derail their efforts. ([link to youtube video](#))

The implementation team in DCYA undertook a Mid-Term Review of *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures*. As part of the process, the implementation team asked young people in Swan Youth Service based in the North East Inner City for their views based on the survey and the five national outcomes in *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures*. The young people produced a video that was presented at the Consortium. The video and the follow up discussion was well received by members of the Consortium

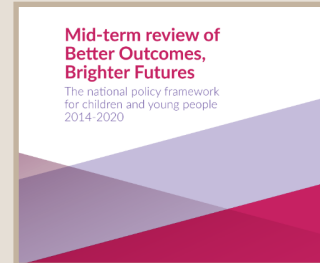


who commended the young people's honesty and openness to discussing issues that affect them and their community. The young people discussed what they believe should be prioritised in 2018 and going forward; youth mental health, child poverty, homelessness, education and supports within the education system such as guidance counsellors and the voice of the child in policies/programmes that affect them.

3. Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures Mid-Term Review

The [mid-term review of Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures](#) serves as a general progress and process check on the implementation of the first national children and young people's Policy Framework and is directly informed by the views and perspectives of key groupings in this area. The main aim was the delivery of a mid-term review that focuses on the status of the framework and the progress made on its implementation, while offering learning to inform the next phase of the implementation process. This included a focus on the following:

- A review of the process and implementation structure.
- A review of awareness and visibility amongst stakeholders.
- A review of engagement amongst stakeholders.
- A review of outcomes to date.
- An identification of learning and innovative practices.
- The need to determine the content and course of action for Phase 2 of implementation 2018 – 2020.



It also considers progress in terms of the development and implementation of the three constituent strategies of *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures*:

- National Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in Decision Making 2015 –2020.
- National Youth Strategy 2015 – 2020.
- National Early Years Strategy (forthcoming).

The review contains 23 recommendations and corresponding actions. The review has been approved by the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs and has been also approved by the Children and Young People's Policy Consortium.

4. Healthy Ireland

In July 2016, the Government approved the creation of the Healthy Ireland Fund. An initial allocation of €5 million was approved in Budget 2017 to establish the Fund and to support the implementation of Healthy Ireland programmes and projects in a variety of settings. The primary aim of the Fund is to support innovative, cross-sectoral, evidence-based projects and initiatives that support the implementation of key national policies in areas such as obesity, smoking, alcohol, physical activity and sexual health. *Healthy Ireland, A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013-2025* is the national framework for action to improve the health and wellbeing of Ireland over the coming generation. The framework adopts a 'whole of government' and 'whole of society' approach to improving health and well-being.

The overarching goals of Healthy Ireland are to:

- Increase the proportion of people who are healthy at all stages of life;
- Reduce health inequalities;
- Protect the public from threats to health and wellbeing;
- Create an environment where every individual and sector of society can play their part in achieving a healthy Ireland.



Healthy Ireland (*continued*)

A joint targeted funding scheme between the Department of Health and DCYA, totalling €1m for Strand 1 of the scheme was launched in 2017 aimed at Children and Young People's Services Committees (CYPSC) 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 and the national 'Active and Healthy' goal under *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures the National Policy Framework for Children and Young People (2014 – 2020)*.

The Department of Children and Youth Affairs worked alongside the Department of Health in the rollout of Strand 1 and approximately €37,000 was allocated to each of the 27 CYPSC around the country. 11 of the CYPSC undertook joint Healthy Ireland initiatives with their Local Community and Development Committees. (LCDC).

The Initiative has received a very positive response from CYPSC and many different projects were undertaken during 2017 and into the first quarter of 2018. Such projects included:

- Conferences, events, course and programmes in the area of health and well being
- Nutrition cooking and weight management
- Physical activity focussed: swimming cycling, walking, play, kick boxing
- Targeted geographical actions: homeless, travellers, disadvantaged families and children, men and women, and young people

The roll out of Strand 2 is currently on going with similar levels of funding to that of 2017. The Department of Children and Youth Affairs looks forward to continued collaboration with partners on this valuable initiative, in promoting positive healthy outcomes among children and young people through collaboration between statutory and voluntary sector organisations and direct service delivery to children and young people.

5. Minister Zappone at the North East Inner City

The North East Inner City Initiative (NEIC) arose from the Kieran Mulvey Report published in February 2017. The Report identifies four priority areas: tackling crime and drugs, maximising educational/training opportunities and creating local employment, creating an integrated system of social services and improving the physical landscape in the area. The NEIC Initiative outlines the actions that should be taken to aid with the regeneration of the area.

Minister Zappone attended a meeting of Subgroup 3 'Creating an Integrated System of Social Services' on 21 March 2018 to discuss emerging issues in relation to children, families and youth affairs. The Subgroup is tasked with advancing a range of actions in the Mulvey Report. This Subgroup has aimed to ensure alignment of existing initiatives, as well as the development of other responses to add value to these actions so as to achieve maximum impact in terms of integrated service delivery relating to children, young people and their families.

Minister Zappone at the North East Inner City (*continued*)

Minister Zappone asked members of the group to highlight key issues relating to social services in the NEIC. While acknowledging that a significant range of issues are being addressed through the NEIC initiative, the Minister sought key priority items that need to be reemphasised and that could be brought to the attention of relevant Cabinet colleagues.

(It should be noted that the issues raised at this meeting are the opinions of the subgroup and may not represent the views of the NEIC board or other groups in this initiative)

The following issues were discussed with the Minister:

1. Education:

Greater coordination and integration is required in and between primary and secondary schools. Schools require supports such as guidance counsellors, speech and language therapists and transition supports to encourage and educate young people to develop a positive mental and physical wellbeing.

2. Mental health and wellbeing:

Shorter waiting lists and more efficient and responsive referral pathways are required.

3. Addiction:

There is a significant overlap between addiction and mental issues, yet services are in the main separate and struggling with capacity. Greater coordination of community addiction programmes that serve young people is required.

4. Services for children:

Services for children aged 0-12, and more specifically 0-3 years in relation to childcare services, costs and availability need further focus. In addition, improvements in after school programmes need to be examined.

5. Early Intervention:

Targeting early intervention is key in addressing issues before they become more severe. Central to this is the need for services collaborating and using all available resources to target the onset of problems.

6. Longer term focus and pilot innovations:

While there is a need to address urgent needs in the community such as providing emergency accommodation for families there needs to be a longer term sustainable structure put in place to continue the work of the NEIC. A collaborative approach must be taken when ensuring the regeneration of the NEIC.

Where there is an absence of provision or where responses are not working, pilot initiatives could be considered and if proven to be successful act as the models for consolidation and reorientation.

7. Community Empowerment and Renewal:

Empowering the NEIC and the community, in creating a new narrative, indicating resilience, social capital and the positive role models is crucial.

Minster Zappone at North East Inner City (*continued*)

8. Community Employment:

Community Employment (CE) placements in services has proven to be a useful activation measure as well as ensuring that the local community are part of service responses. The opportunity provided by the NEIC in providing pilot innovations in this area should be considered.

9. Integration and collaboration of services:

This is crucial in addressing the issues in the NEIC. There is a need for a flexible and sustainable service framework for the North East Inner City. The integrated service delivery framework being developed by the Subgroup, wherein all services will be required to engage and deliver in an aligned way, with clear and differentiated target groups, structured referral paths, staggered opening hours, greater and deeper geographic coverage, more out-reach and out of hours work is regarded as key in achieving greater service integration and impact.

10. Normalisation of gangland violence:

This issue and the resulting levels of fear and anxiety for families in the NEIC needs continued monitoring. The impact of trauma in the community and in services needs to be recognised and inform the responses of services.

11. Youth engagement:

Young people's engagement with policy and issues that affect them need to be improved. Young people in the North East Inner City do not feel that their voice is being heard in central Government; however it was noted that DCYA have improved this in the last year through the lens of Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures, the national policy framework for children and young people (2014-2020)

12. Undocumented migrants:

There is an issue with undocumented migrants specifically in the North East Inner City. Undocumented young people and families are unable to participate in some youth services, seek better education or achieve employment.

For more information on the North East Inner City Initiative, see www.neic.ie

6. Appointment of new Chair of the Advisory Council

On the 10th April 2018, Minister Katherine Zappone appointed Ms. Tanya Ward as the new chairperson of the National Advisory Council. Ms. Ward, Chief Executive of the Children's Rights Alliance, has been appointed for a term of office from 4th April, 2018 to 31st December, 2020.

Minister Zappone welcomed the appointment of Ms. Ward stating:

"The appointment of Ms. Ward is an acknowledgement of her outstanding work as a true champion for children's rights and as one of Ireland's leading advocates for children and young people.

Appointment of new Chair of the Advisory Council *(continued)*

I am delighted that Tanya has agreed to take on this role. Her previous work as a member on the Council is testament to her passion to improve the lives of children and young people in Ireland. She has a very influential voice at national, regional and local level through her work as Chief Executive of the Children's Rights Alliance, Ireland's national umbrella group for children. Tanya has been behind many landmark victories for children and has a proven track record to achieve real social change.

Through her prior work on the National Advisory Council, Ms. Ward has shown that she is capable of leading change to ensure that the commitments contained in Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures are implemented, thus ensuring progress is made on the achievement of the five national outcomes for children and young people to engage, develop and achieve their full potential. Her work on putting forward solutions to end Child Poverty is of particular note.

I look forward to engaging further with Tanya through the Council on important issues such as Child Poverty, Child Homelessness, Children's Rights and Equality, Prevention and Early Intervention, Learning and Development, Brexit and its implications for children and young people and other important issues.

I would like to wish Tanya well in her role as Chairperson and she has the full support of both myself and my Department."



Ms. Ward commented on her appointment by saying:

"I'm delighted to be appointed Chairperson by the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Dr Katherine Zappone. To date the Council has been expertly chaired by Dr Owen Keenan and I am honoured to continue his excellent work. It is also a great privilege to work with my fellow colleagues on the Council who are incredibly dedicated and knowledgeable when it comes to issues affecting children and young people in Ireland today.

Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures (BOBF) is the most important national policy for children and young people in Ireland. It is a critical framework bringing together the state and non-governmental sector to deliver a better Ireland for children. Not only does it include a commitment to lift

over 100,000 children out of consistent poverty, it is also the key to tackling child homelessness, intervening early in a child's life before problems escalate and ensuring children are treated equally in society.

My time as Chairperson is timely as we are at a critical juncture – BOBF is half way through its life cycle and just two years left to make its vision a reality. There are still many challenges ahead but I look forward to working with the Council and all key players to come up with solutions that can and will truly change children's lives".

7. The Department has moved



The Department of Children and Youth Affairs has relocated.
Please note our new address:

Department of Children and Youth Affairs

Block 1

Miesian Plaza

50-58 Baggot Street Lower

Dublin 2

D02 XW14

FREEPOST F5055

8. Upcoming Events

Wednesday 12th and Thursday 13th September - Advisory Council

Tuesday 18th September - CYPSC National Steering Group

Wednesday 19th September - Sponsors Group

Thursday 27th September - Consortium

Thursday 4th October - CYPSC Conference

Wednesday 21st November - Advisory Council

Tusla Programme Development and Cross Government Framework Unit

Department of Children and Youth Affairs

Block 1, Miesian Plaza,

50-58 Baggot Street Lower,

Dublin 2,

D02 XW14



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

policyinnovation@dcya.gov.ie