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# **Squaring the Circle:**

## ***Preventing Early School Leaving in Dublin***

**Report of the Conference of the Dublin Employment Pact**

**28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> March 2001**

## ***Conference Outcomes and Policy Recommendations***



The DEP is funded under the National Development Plan. It is registered in Dublin No. 340167

# *Squaring the Circle*

*Preventing early school leaving in Dublin*  
*Conference, CityWest Hotel, 28-29<sup>th</sup> March 2001*

*Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> – Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2001*

**Day 1: Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2001**

**Theme: Innovative practice in Dublin**

09.00 **Coffee and Registration**

09.30 *Introduction*

**Catherine Durkin, Dublin Employment Pact**

09.45 *Integrated responses to preventing early school leaving*

**Dr Ted Fleming, National University of Ireland, Maynooth**

10.10 *The National Children's Strategy: "The Whole Child perspective"*

**Íde Mulcahy, National Childrens Office**

10.30 **Panel Discussion**

11.00 *Conference Launch by Mary McAleese, Uachtarán na hÉireann*

11.15 Coffee

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11.45-13.15

## ***PARALLEL WORKSHOPS:***

### **Reducing Educational Disadvantage at the Local Level**

(Each workshop will consist of two short presentations on projects and initiatives currently being implemented in Dublin, followed by a discussion on the themes selected)

#### **Workshop 1**

**Theme: Supports to children and young people**

##### **Aisling Project, Ballymun**

The Aisling Centre provides a structured and highly supportive environment for 20 children aged 8-12 years who attend local schools. The Aisling concept aims to develop the abilities and personalities of the children in an integrated manner

*Sr Malen De Valle I.J., Aisling Project Co-ordinator*

**Anne Cummins, Home School Community Liaison, St Joseph's NS., Ballymun**

##### **CARA (Clondalkin Area Response to Absenteeism)**

Cara is a network of schools, parents and voluntary, statutory and community organizations which seeks to tackle the problem of absenteeism across 9 local schools. A coordinated area based response has been developed and - in school and out- of -school supports are offered to 150 children and young people.

**Grainne Looney, Co-ordinator, CARA**

## **Workshop 2**

***THEME: Interventions at second level***

### **The Stay in School Retention Initiative (SSRI), Ballyfermot**

The Department of Education and Science introduced the SSRI in order to reduce the number of students leaving school early. Caritas College who are presenting today believe that in practice it has allowed them the time and resources to invest in those most at risk in the school

*Catherine Turley, SSRI Coordinator, Caritas College, Ballyfermot.*

### **Youth Work and Schools Working in Partnership in Blanchardstown**

Blanchardstown Youth Service (Foroige) works in partnership with two-second level school in developing and implementing programmes to prevent early school leaving. Both teachers and youth workers staff initiatives. Two other community-based projects work in partnership with one of the schools and a brief description will also be given of these

**John Cahill, Section Manager, Blanchardstown Youth Service**

## **Workshop 3**

### ***THEME: Integrated services approaches***

#### **Integrated Services Process, Jobstown**

The ISP in Jobstown is one of four pilot initiatives set up by the government to ensure a more coordinated and focused response by the statutory agencies to the needs of communities suffering the highest level of disadvantage. In Jobstown early school leaving, youth, family support were among the priority themes identified and addressed

**Catherine Morley, Development and Monitoring Officer, ISP, Jobstown**

#### *DUBLIN 17 8-15 School Leaver Initiative*

*This Department of Education and Science funded initiative supports 100 children in 5 primary and one-second level school in Bonnybrook, Priorswood and Darndale parishes. The project uses a multi-agency approach and intervenes where appropriate to support the young person and the family*

**Noel Kelly, Coordinator Dublin 17 Early School Leaver Initiative**

### **Workshop 4**

**Theme: Promoting Participation and Progression**

*TESO (Traveler Education and Support Options), Finglas*

**The TESO project is a multi agency initiative, which seeks to facilitate and support improved access and participation in education for travelers. It supports children from 3-18 years and over three years has developed close links with schools and families**

*Midge Nolan, Coordinator, TESO, Traveler Education and Support Options*

*Winnie McDonagh education and development worker (TESO)*

*Liberties Community Training Agency*

**65 young early school-leavers participate in an innovative training and education programme. The initiative has strong local involvement and delivers office skills, catering, woodwork, sport, literacy, numeracy and lifeskills programmes.**

*Pater Hannon, Manager, Liberties Community Training Agency*

### **Workshop 5**

**THEME: Supporting Early Learning and Education**

#### **The Primary School Initiative**

A network of 10 inner city primary schools was formed as a response to the educational needs of the area. Parental involvement is at the core of the initiative, which also includes a high level of teacher involvement as well as extra-curricular activities for pupils.

*Ashling Kavanagh, Education Co-Ordinator, Dublin Inner City Partnership*

#### **High Scope**

*High Scope is an approach to early learning derived from developmental principles, firmly rooted in practice. It helps children become independent decision makers and problem solvers. Children and families benefit through improved success in school and the general quality of their lives into adulthood.*

*Margaret Caul, Development Officer, Childcare Bureau, Kilbarrack*

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- 1.15 LUNCH
- 2.15 *Reducing Disadvantage--Providing a supportive environment*  
*John Fitzgerald, Dublin City Manager*
- 2.45 *Fixing Humpty Dumpty*  
**A performance looking at traditional approaches to the re-integration of early school-leavers.** Theatre Studies Class, VTOS, Newbridge.
- 3.15 *Personal experiences of early school-leaving*  
**Two people recount their experiences, introduced by Scott Boldt, Researcher, Marino College of Education.**
- 3.45 Coffee
- 4.00 **Launch of exhibition:**  
*Initiatives, services and programmes involved with early school-leavers in Dublin* (followed by reception)

### **Programme for Day 2, 29<sup>th</sup> March 2001**

*Chaired by Margaret Maher, Education Co-ordinator, Clondalkin Partnership*

- 09.00 Coffee
- 09.15 **Introduction**  
*Brian Fleming, Principal, Collinstown Park Community College*
- 09.30 **The RAPID programme: A boost for education in disadvantaged areas**  
*Dr. Tony Crooks, Chief Executive, ADM Ltd.*
- 09.50 **The Education Welfare Bill – An overview**  
*Michael Doyle, Senior Attendance Officer, School Attendance Service*
- 10.20 **New strategies to address disadvantage**  
*Colm Ó Maoláin, Asst. Chief Inspector, Dept. Education and Science*
- 10.50 **PANEL DISCUSSION**
- 11.10 Coffee
- 11.30 **THEMATIC WORKSHOPS:**  
*Each workshop will involve a 10 minute opening presentation by a key speaker and is mandated to produce two focused recommendations for policy action.*

**WORKSHOP 1: *Can we early school leaver proof the school? – a challenge for educationalists***

Speaker: Catherine Joyce, Co-ordinator, Irish Traveller Movement

Chair: Patricick McDermott, Principal, Ladyswell NS

**WORKSHOP 2: *Staying in School – Critical supports and services***

Speaker: Damien Fee, Principal, St Kevins College, Clogher Rd.

Chair: *Rita Clifford, Deputy Principal,  
Ballyfermot College of Further Education*

**WORKSHOP 3: *The Potential for a ‘whole community response’ – Community interventions, youth services, special projects.***

Speaker: Joe Donoghoe, Community Youth Worker, Rialto Youth Project

Chair: Bernie Judge, *National Education Co-ordinator, ADM*

**WORKSHOP 4: *Myths surrounding school attendance and school exclusion***

Speaker: Shay Fulham, *Team Leader, National Assessment and Remand Unit, Finglas West*

Chair: Guss O’Connell, *Programme Officer, FAS*

**WORKSHOP 5: *Family Supports and Services – Preventing Early School Leaving***

Speaker: Catherine Bond, *Regional Manager, BARNARDOS, Dublin North*

Chair: Fiona Hartley, *Education Officer, County Dublin VEC*

**13.00 CLOSING ADDRESS**

**Eoin Ryan T.D., Minister for Local Development and the National Drugs Strategy**

## Opening Address by

### Mary McAleese Uachtaran na hEireann

President McAleese referred to her deep personal commitment throughout her working life to education. She recalled the challenges of schooling in her own youth, as she grew up in Belfast in modest circumstances, and the great value her family and her community had always placed on education as the key to a better and fuller life. She highlighted the irony that, in today's booming economy with employment easier to access than ever before, this very success meant that we faced the new danger of students being enticed away from their studies too soon. *"It is today's problem but it affects tomorrow,"* she said. She contrasted the lives of the many young people who can *"access opportunities both in Ireland and abroad which enable them to live their dreams"* with those who are prevented from reaching their true potential. She highlighted the personal cost and the cost to the civic health of the nation which this involved.

The President continued:

*"This is indeed an exciting time to be young and in Ireland. We have been witnesses to the radical transformation of our country and we know that a vital key to that transformation was unlocking the potential of our people, widening access to education, opening up the valves which allowed the freeflow of our own genius. Our experience has already taught us that every life that is only half-lived, every talent that goes unused, every human being whose potential is wasted is a huge loss to the individual, his or her family, his or her community, his or her country. That loss is not just economic; it goes to the very heart of civic life, for we are civically healthy when our young people are getting the very most they can from the options and opportunities education offers them.*

*"Our strength is in our people, our future success is in our people. Human capital, human equity - these will drive our economy, our culture, our civic life. The more people we help or guide to their fullest potential the more we contribute to the national human energy grid and to the resilience of civic life. The more people whose talents lie unlocked, whose lives are wasted in underachievement, the more the individual and society both are operating below par."*

She spoke of the young people who *"find the gates of opportunity firmly shut or who lack the insight, the support or the maturity of judgment to recognise and commit to the education and training which is on offer at this crucial stage in their lives"*. Their true potential may never be realised.

Acknowledging the *"distance travelled in providing practical and imaginative solutions to encourage young people to enjoy their time in school and to remain within the education system,"* she encouraged those working with young people to continue. Concluding, she paid a tribute to the work of the wide range of educationalists assembled at the conference:

*"It can often be hard for young people to believe that they matter, that they truly count. Yet everyone of you knows that when you build a bridge to that young person, when he or she begins to invest in self-belief, when they begin to stretch and test themselves, building up character, resolve, determination, the prize is a life turned around, the most rewarding prize of all. And so often it is through your work, your contact, that those bridges are built to a very different kind of future"*.

## Keynote presentation:

### Effective integrated responses to early school-leaving

**Dr. Ted Fleming** National University of Ireland Maynooth  
& **Dr. Mark Murphy** University of Stirling, Scotland

*(text approved by presenter)*

#### Introduction

Firstly some stark figures that speak for themselves. Forty five per cent of adults in the Dublin region left school at or before 15 years of age, compared to 35 per cent nationally. In some of the more affluent areas of Dublin this figure drops to below 7 per cent but in the poorest areas it can rise to 70 per cent. Designated disadvantaged areas in Dublin have serious levels of early school-leaving. It must be remembered that 43 of the 100 most disadvantaged District Electoral Divisions (DEDs) in the country are in Dublin, and of the 223 DEDs in the Partnership Areas in Dublin, 54 (25 per cent) are among the poorest 10 per cent of all DEDs nationally.

#### Listening to Early School Leavers

A recent study (Fleming & Kenny) indicates that young people do not experience early school-leaving in the way that the system-world imagines. Young people are more likely to see early school-leaving as a positive decision made in a situation where they have very few choices, a positive move towards adulthood and earning a living, a decision not to engage with institutions that do not address their needs or problems. Decisions about preventive measures must be more careful to hear these voices. They do exist. They are articulate, insightful and clear about what they want and need.

#### Towards a model of best practice

Though many people link early school-leaving with certain geographic areas and with certain schools, it is linked primarily with socio-economic background. Rich people do not leave school early. Thus schools are unlikely to be able to make a significant impact on the situation, as its root is poverty.

The following elements of a model of best practice for preventive education are based on a comprehensive review of written documents, evaluations, reviews and case studies of preventive education measures in the Dublin Region carried out for the Dublin Employment Pact (Fleming & Murphy, 2000). These can be divided into four categories – material and human resources, internal and external organisation:

##### *Human Resources*

- *Staff Sensitivity* has a major influence on retention rates. Staff need to be aware of socio-cultural differences and develop innovative measures for discipline and reward; children pick up negative or low expectations that teachers may have of them; teacher training and staff development in this area is vital.
- *Staff Commitment and Expertise*: The pivotal role of teachers is self-explanatory.
- *Full-time Co-ordination of Projects* is an issue stressed by those involved in special programmes.

##### *Material Resources*

- *Early Intervention* is critical. It helps retention and transfer between primary and post-primary. Pre-school interventions are also very important: the earlier the intervention the more effective.

- *Adequate Funding*: ensuring adequate funding for a project is a major energy and time-consuming activity faced by all programmes.
- *Adequate Time* in terms of the length of interventions (pilot and one-year programmes) is a critical issue. With high staff turnover, ensuring the adequate duration of a project is even more crucial.

### ***Internal Organization***

- *Adaptable and Flexible Organisation* is particularly important in interagency work and represents a litmus test for the effectiveness of integrated provision.
- *Good Working Relationships* with schools, between schools and with community groups is a key factor. Parity of esteem between parties and partners is a precondition for a successful integrated approach.
- *Clear Lines of Communication* and good management structures are key success indicators in local initiatives that worked well.
- *Co-ordination and Integration of Services and Support* (e.g. ‘whole community’ approach, ‘multiple approaches’, etc. - the Integrated Services Process) is a key factor, now accepted by Government.

### ***External Organisation***

- *Local Approaches*, i.e. capacity building at local level, developing local ownership, community-based and community-led is often a preferred option. It means genuine community involvement in all aspects of the project and it raises interesting and challenging opportunities for system providers.
- *Involvement of Pupils and Parents* in all aspects of the project enhances its sustainability. Home support and developmental work with parents is vital for retention. Consultation with parents is at present quite minimal. The ideal is to maximize this involvement in both the planning and delivery of programmes.
- *Disseminating Information* is crucial and its absence is a deterrent to the development of best practice. Promising developments need to be taken on board and reinforced by policy makers. High quality policy initiatives need to be sensitively transferred to other areas. Exchange of information should be horizontal, vertical, and continuous.

As a result of this overview, we developed an abstract model for best practice in preventive education. The model, though tentative, establishes what we call a *capital context*.

### **The “capital context” of Early School-Leaving**

Different projects represent the reasons for early school-leaving in different ways: a combination of the causes involving the individual, parents, local community, schools, or society, is therefore needed. Sproule *et al* (1999) argue that all identified factors are equally valid. While the four elements of best practice outlined above each have their own role to play in ensuring the effectiveness of interventions, we suggest that capital – *personal, cultural, social and economic capital* – plays the key role in deciding whether or not a child stays at school. Just as the four elements – human and material resources, internal and external organization – need to be integrated in order to avoid fragmentation of service delivery, so do these four forms of capital need to be taken into account in order to avoid a fragmentation of the wider context for the pupil.

***Material capital*** refers to financial and material resources including schools, teachers, and buildings. ***Personal capital*** is the self-esteem, self-confidence and developmental stage of the young person. ***Social capital*** refers to the resources the family and community bring to the young person at school by supporting and valuing education. It also refers to the ability of the family and community to model behaviors and career choices consistent with finishing school. ***Cultural capital*** refers to linguistic and social competences and know-how, as well as aspirations and perceptions of the objective chances of success. According to Bourdieu, the function of the school is to transmit ‘habitus’, to equip individuals to understand the principles of their culture and to think, act and work within it. Habitus refers to habits of thought, perceptions, dispositions and concepts in thought and communication. Children need habitus, cultural capital, to handle the demands of schooling.



## **Integration and Early School Leaving**

The integration of services is the most discussed aspect of programmes in both policy literature and reviews of on-the-ground measures. A great deal of the rationale for the development of integrated initiatives makes sense, and it would be unwise to ignore issues of duplication and fragmentation in programme delivery. Whether or not integrated approaches are more successful in reducing early school-leaving remains to be seen, but they certainly appear to generate a great deal of goodwill. We suggest that the current widely used definition of integration – as integration of the service providers – is too narrow and restricted. Programmes do not currently systematically address all four kinds of capital. Integration needs to become a process of de-fragmentation, combining not only delivery mechanisms and service provision, but also putting back together the broader capital context in which early school-leaving develops. A truly integrated initiative would then involve all factors, in a way that valued each and recognised the fact that, without any one of them, a programme is much less likely to be effective. Each factor is dependent on the other.

While clear lines of communication are vital in programmes, this will be enhanced if parents and pupils are involved in the process. There is little point increasing teacher sensitivity to the needs of ‘disadvantaged’ children, if there is not enough time or money for them to function as part of the initiative. Good internal working relationships are more effective when relationships are developed with local initiatives and organisations.

There is a strong correlation between social class and early school-leaving, and an integrated approach should address this. But currently this is not the case. Whether this is because of too much attachment to recent notions of ‘social exclusion’ and ‘marginalisation’, or because there are too many ideological connotations attached to the concept of class, cannot be said for certain. The majority of early school-leaving interventions in Dublin are based in the post-1960s public housing estates that surround Dublin. These form a vague geographical circle around the city, and include the estates of Tallaght, Clondalkin, Blanchardstown, Finglas/Cabra and Ballymun. Many of these were developed without adequate economic and community facilities. Many of the families were removed from Inner City areas that previously provided a sense of community and a network of family and friends. You could argue that these large housing estates resulted in social fragmentation, in which a form of life that previously existed in an integrated fashion had effectively disintegrated.

We suggest that the impetus behind the integrated approach to early school-leaving should involve an attempt to *de-fragment* these communities, to provide them with adequate personal, cultural, social and economic capital and ensure a stable base for their children’s education. It is difficult to find many preventive education measures in more affluent, middle-class areas of Dublin. They are overwhelmingly concentrated in these disadvantaged areas. This stark fact indicates that middle-class areas may already have an integrated approach to preventive education, in which personal, cultural, social and economic capital are all available to the pupil.

## **Conclusions**

Most reports and reviews on early school-leaving programmes describe and evaluate interventions from the point of view of one or other of the participants. Most reports give little or no information on the amount, the source of funding or how the money is spent in any detail. Hidden costs, such as support from a local partnership, are usually not included as a funding resource, though it is a costly support and one incurred by the project. All projects seem to jump from a description of their project and how positive the experience is in terms of building up self-esteem and confidence to the proposal that it be funded, or that funding be expanded. As a result it is not possible to make any general statements about the cost of projects or their cost effectiveness. Programme evaluation/review processes should require attention to funding, costing of the entire intervention and its cost effectiveness.

Finally, little work has been carried out on whether intervention measures have been successful in reducing early school-leaving in their target areas. This is a major limitation of current research on early school-leaving. There is a tendency to focus on the processes involved in preventive education, rather than the outcomes. This may be because most projects and measures are at an early stage of development, and it may be difficult to examine their impact on rates of early school-leaving. Research is mainly based on the perceived benefits of measures to children, or on their impacts on organisational and structural issues such as co-ordination of services, communication between parents and school.

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# The National Children’s Strategy: ‘The Whole Child Perspective’

by Ide Mulcahy

National Children’s Office

## The National Children’s Strategy

The National Children’s Strategy was devised on the basis that children matter and have rights. (‘Children’ denotes all those under eighteen years of age.) They represent 29% of the population and are major users of public services. Children’s rights are identified in the *Irish Constitution*, the *U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child*, and the *European Convention on Human Rights*. All children should enjoy a fulfilling and safe childhood and be well prepared for adult life. However, current structures are not delivering effectively for all children and are not responsive to the pace of social change and the growing diversity in families.

The vision for the Strategy is:

*“An Ireland where children are respected as young citizens with a valued contribution to make and a voice of their own; where all children are cherished and supported by family and the wider society; where they enjoy a fulfilling childhood and realise their potential”.*

The process of devising the strategy was an inclusive one, involving nine Government departments, the voluntary and community sector, children and the general public.

Six principles ground the Strategy and will guide its implementation. Programmes must be:

- Child-centred
- Family-oriented
- Equitable
- Inclusive
- Action-Oriented
- Integrated

The ‘Whole Child Perspective’ is intended as a way of auditing the comprehensiveness of policies and services under the Strategy. The perspective draws together a more complete understanding of how children live their lives, and how their environment - social and physical - impacts on them. There are three fundamental aspects to this perspective:

1. Recognising and supporting children’s own capacities and abilities and their active participation in life, their willingness to be involved, and their right to contribute to decisions which affect them.
2. The mix of formal and informal supports that children rely on.
3. The interlinked dimensions of children’s development. Each dimension must be addressed if children are to enjoy their childhood and make a successful transition to adulthood.

## Three National Goals for the Children’s Strategy

- ◆ *Children will have a voice in matters which affect them, and their views will be given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity.*
- ◆ *Children and their lives will be better understood; their lives will benefit from evaluation, research and information on their needs, rights and the effectiveness of services.*

◆ *Children will receive quality supports and services to promote all aspects of their development.*

### ***1. Children's Voice***

Citizenship should be a 'real-life' experience for children. The achievement of this goal requires a cultural shift, new mechanisms, and a commitment to include children as stakeholders in our work. We need better strategies for listening to children, encouraging their participation and building their sense of responsibility. They are to be given a voice at local level in education, health, local government and community organisations. Advice, training and guidelines will be developed to assist agencies and their staff in listening to children. Children with special needs will receive additional supports to encourage their participation. An Ombudsman for Children will be appointed.

### ***2. Research and Information***

This strand aims to increase understanding of children's development and needs, to develop an evidence-based approach to decision making at all levels, and to improve the evaluation and monitoring of children's services. Measures to achieve this goal include a National Longitudinal Study of a sample of children, a Children's Research Programme and a Research Dissemination Unit.

### ***3. Improving the quality of supports and services***

The aim is to ensure that responses are positive, holistic, comprehensive and proactive. There will be an expansion of preventative and early intervention services. Local communities will be assisted in identifying the range of services needed in their areas, and in developing their own plans to respond to these needs. Closer working relationships will be fostered between agencies providing special child welfare services.

## **Workshops on Practical Experiences: Reducing Educational Disadvantage at the Local Level**

At these workshops, held on the first day of the conference, a variety of practical initiatives implemented at the local level were presented and discussed by the workshop participants. These discussions were highly animated and the workshops served as a useful vehicle for spreading knowledge among practitioners in Dublin. Nearly 150 people attended the five workshops and in a concluding general discussion several key issues emerged. Below is an outline of the initiatives presented at the workshops, the people who presented them and the key issues which emerged in the concluding discussion.

### ***Workshop 1: Supports to Children and Young People***

#### **Aisling Project, Ballymun**

**Sr Malen de Valle, I.J., Project Co-ordinator**

**Anne Cummins, Home School Community Liaison, St Joseph's NS, Ballymun**

The Aisling Centre is an after-school project which provides an integrated development programme for sixty children aged 8-12 years at risk of leaving school early. The project aims to build relationships, foster social skills and give children contact with positive role models. Children attend the project from 2.45pm to 6pm. During this time they receive a hot meal, do their homework, and take part in activities such as gardening, swimming, drama, art and reading. Parental involvement is encouraged.

#### **Clondalkin Area Response to Absenteeism (CARA)**

**Grainne Looney, Co-ordinator, CARA**

CARA is a network of schools, parents, and voluntary, statutory and community organisations which seeks to tackle the problem of absenteeism in nine local schools. In-school and out-of-school supports are offered to one hundred and fifty children and young people who are guided through the final year in primary school and the transition to secondary. Participating students are chosen on the basis of school attendance, sibling participation and learning difficulties. Students are offered breakfast, support during school, and a meal and support after school. Parents are given training to work with the students in partnership with a teacher.

### ***Workshop 2: Interventions at Second Level***

#### **The Stay in School Retention Initiative (SSRI), Ballyfermot**

**Catherine Turley, SSRI Co-ordinator, Caritas College, Ballyfermot**

The SSRI initiative aims to promote academic improvement, self-development and a positive experience of school for students considered to be at risk of leaving early. The programme provides "a more rounded educational experience", including art therapy, homework clubs and revision programmes.

#### **Youth Work and Schools Working in Partnership in Blanchardstown**

**John Cahill, Section Manager, Blanchardstown Youth Service**

Blanchardstown Youth Service works in partnership with schools in developing and implementing programmes to prevent early school leaving. Teachers and youth workers together staff the initiatives.

The Prevention of Early School Leaving (*'Pearly school-leaving'*) and the Blakestown Area Stay in School (BASIS) programmes operate in both primary and second-level schools and target students from Fifth Class to Third Year. The Blakestown/Mountview Neighbourhood Youth Project aims to empower young people between 14-18 years and their families by working closely with parents and school staff.

### ***Workshop 3: Integrated Service Approaches***

#### **Integrated Services Process (ISP), Jobstown**

**Catherine Morley, Development and Monitoring Officer, ISP Jobstown**

ISP aims to develop a framework for the co-ordinated and focussed delivery of a range of statutory services to disadvantaged urban communities. The Jobstown programme is one of four pilot initiatives. Early School Leaving and Youth and Family Support are priority issues on the ISP agenda.

#### **Dublin 17 Early School Leaver Initiative**

**Noel Kelly, Co-ordinator**

This DES-funded initiative supports one hundred children in five primary and one secondary school in Bonnybrook, Priorswood and Darndale parishes. It supports young people at risk of early school leaving and helps those who have dropped out to return to education. The project operates a model of interagency cooperation, with representatives from Youthreach, St Vincent de Paul, the Gardai and other agencies. Art therapy, counselling, after-school and breakfast clubs, holiday programmes and teacher support comprise the programme activities.

### ***Workshop 4: Promoting Participation and Progression***

#### **Traveler Education and Support Options (TESO), Finglas**

**Midge Nolan, Co-ordinator TESO**

**Winnie Mc Donagh, Education and Development Worker, TESO**

The TESO is a multi-agency initiative which aims to facilitate and support access to and participation in education for travelers. It supports children and young people from 3-18 years and develops close links with schools and families.

#### **Liberties Community Training Agency**

**Peter Hannon, Manager**

The Liberties Community Training Agency is one element of a broader programme of Community Development in the Liberties area. The Agency provides training and education for those who have left school early and attracts strong local involvement. Sixty students participate in a variety of training modules in subjects such as catering, woodwork, engineering, computer skills and retail skills, with the aim of helping them gain apprenticeships and full-time employment.

### ***Workshop 5: Supporting Early Learning and Education***

## **The Primary School Initiative**

**Aisling Kavanagh, Education Co-ordinator, Dublin Inner City Partnership**

The Primary School Initiative is a network of ten inner-city primary schools. It aims to respond to the educational needs of the area and improve the experience of school for pupils, and to broaden the curriculum to meet their needs and develop their talents. It also supports teachers and principals in maximising resources. Parental involvement is at the core of the initiative. The Mission Statement is “to develop schools into centres of holistic education, so that pupils in partnership with teachers and parents are empowered to express and achieve their individual potential”.

## **High Scope**

**Margaret Caul, Development Officer, Childcare Bureau, Kilbarrack**

High Scope is an approach to early learning which aims to develop decision-making, problem-solving, and social skills in children. Teachers and others working with children are offered training and support. Children and families benefit through increased success in school and improvement in quality of life.

## **Issues arising from discussion of Workshop outcomes:**

Several very clear points emerged from a general discussion following the workshops:

- The Education Welfare Act must be implemented, and be properly resourced to do so, as the basic needs of children are not being met.
- There is a need within programmes for greater focus on purpose and effects.
- Programmes suffer from high staff turnover, and year-to-year project funding effectively rules out long-term planning.
- Within schools a tracking and monitoring system should be in place.
- Increasingly teachers are becoming social workers and are frequently isolated within social inclusion programmes. Incentives are needed for teachers to work in disadvantaged areas.
- School-Community-Agency partnerships are the key to effective integrated action.
- Whole school planning will increase the involvement of teachers and has much promise.

# Reducing disadvantage – providing a supportive environment

by **John Fitzgerald**

Dublin City Manager

*(text approved by presenter)*

John Fitzgerald spoke of the “demographic revolution” which has resulted in the average size of household in Dublin dropping from 5-6 in the 1970s to 3 in 2001, with a further decrease predicted. This revolution is bringing with it a change of ethos and culture, and requires change within the local authority housing model to meet the challenges of the new context.

Dublin Corporation’s policy is to avoid the creation of housing ghettos in the future. Provisions for social housing and affordable housing are part of this strategy. Of twenty-five identified housing problem areas in the country, sixteen are in Dublin. However, there is a danger that some recent **private** buildings are becoming bad housing and have the potential to develop into ghettos. Another new trend he identified is the “buying back” of houses by Dublin Corporation from former tenants who had purchased their houses and who are now moving on as a result of the boom in house prices. This has resulted in the departure of more settled families, and new concentrations of local authority tenants in certain areas.

The move away from centralised decision-making within Dublin Corporation is evidence of change. At present, under the Integrated Area Plans (IAP) programme, eight city areas have their own local units of Dublin Corporation with the power to make decisions previously made centrally. This will gradually be increased. The aim is for every ‘village’ in the city to have its own local Corporation unit. In Ballyfermot, for example, with a small unit of 18 people, 90% of the decisions which Dublin Corporation used to make at Head Office are now made locally. The new Civic Centre in Ballyfermot and the planned Centres in other areas such as Ballymun are illustrative of the new attitude and practice.

Speaking of the availability of finance now that plans are in place, he acknowledged that investment in infrastructure is wasted unless social issues are tackled simultaneously. As regards the educational system, the Dublin Corporation *Social Inclusion Unit* has been an active partner in the provision of school meals and childcare facilities, and is a partner in the Parents in Education Programme. Social Inclusion Units are to be established in local authorities throughout the country on the basis of the Dublin model.

The ‘Local Labour Clause’ in all new Corporation building contracts has been very successful in providing employment and skills acquisition for those living in areas under reconstruction, despite some objections from builders and architects.

The move towards an integrated focus on economic, social and environmental development was reflected in the creation of the City Development Board (CDP), which recently commenced activity and is now working well. There are also the tightly targeted RAPID programmes, whose task is to ensure the front-loading of National Plan spending in the most highly disadvantaged areas. There was also a series of new initiatives in the area of social investment. There was always, of course, a danger of duplication of effort in the social inclusion area. But, calling for greater integration of effort, he said “duplication is better than nobody doing it”, as was the case previously. In a call to action, he stated that money is now not the problem. *“We must seize the opportunity now, because in five years time it may no longer exist.”* He would *“hate to have to look back at a missed opportunity”*.



# Personal Experiences of Early School Leaving

by **Scott Boldt**,  
Researcher, Marino College of Education

Scott Boldt speculated that young people stay in school because of family pressures. The school system is not relevant to those who leave early. In tackling early school leaving, the emphasis should be on making the school attractive to stay in. We must listen to the kids and see why those who leave do so. Leaving school is not necessarily bad, but we need to pay attention to systems of support for those who choose to leave. He wondered "*is family the issue?*"

Scott Boldt introduced **Dean** and **Keith**, two young 'early school leavers' who gave an account of their experiences. Dean (14 years old) was regularly "*thrown out for messin' around*" in his primary school, and remembers "*always answering back*" in class. By 9.30 he would be sent home and was suspended every second week. He left in sixth class and says he would have stayed in school if the response had not been to "*throw him out*" so often. According to Keith, school "*melted my head*" and he left in first year. He had liked some subjects but as the classes got harder he lost interest and was bored.

Both boys are now attending Lifecentre, an alternative education facility where the approach adopted, which includes individual tutoring and rewards for good behaviour, has given them a new outlook on learning.

The presentation by Scott Boldt and the comments of Dean and Keith led to a lively discussion, as well as some controversial debate surrounding the issue of the early school-leaver's own perspective.

**Day 2, 29<sup>th</sup> March 2001 Theme: Achieving Policy Innovation**

***Chaired by Margaret Maher, Education Co-ordinator, Clondalkin Partnership***

09.00 Coffee

09.15 Introduction  
Brian Fleming, Principal, Collinstown Park Community College.

09.30 The RAPID programme: A boost for education in disadvantaged areas  
Dr. Tony Crooks, Chief Executive, ADM Ltd.

09.50 The Education Welfare Bill – An overview  
Michael Doyle, Senior Attendance Officer, School Attendance Service.

10.20 New strategies to address disadvantage  
Colm Ó Maoláin, Asst. Chief Inspector, Dept. Education and Science

10.50 PANEL DISCUSSION

11.10 Coffee

11.30 THEMATIC WORKSHOPS:

Each workshop will involve a 10-minute opening presentation by a key speaker and is mandated to produce two focused recommendations for policy action.

WORKSHOP 1: Can we early school leaver-proof the school? – a challenge for educationalists

Speaker: Catherine Joyce, Co-ordinator, Irish Traveller Movement

Chair: Patrick McDermott, Principal, Ladyswell NS, Mulhuddart

WORKSHOP 2: Staying in School – Critical supports and services

Speaker: Damien Fee, Principal, St Kevin's College, Clogher Rd.

Chair: Rita Clifford, Deputy Principal,  
Ballyfermot College of Further Education

WORKSHOP 3: The Potential for a 'whole community response' – Community interventions, youth services, special projects.

Speaker: Joe Donoghoe, Community Youth Worker, Rialto Youth Project

Chair: Bernie Judge, National Education Co-ordinator, ADM

WORKSHOP 4: Myths surrounding school attendance and school exclusion

Speaker: Shay Fulham, Team Leader, National Assessment and Remand Unit, Finglas West

Chair: Guss O'Connell, Programme Officer, FAS

WORKSHOP 5: Family Supports and Services – Preventing Early School Leaving

Speaker: Catherine Bond, Regional Manager, BARNARDOS, Dublin North

Chair: Jim Mc Veigh, County Youth Development Officer, County Dublin VEC

13.00 CLOSING ADDRESS Eoin Ryan T.D., Minister of State for Local Development and the National Drugs Strategy

# The RAPID Programme:

## A boost for education in disadvantaged areas

**Tony Crooks,**

Chief Executive of ADM Ltd.

*(approved by presenter – “somewhat short, but accurate”)*

Dr. Tony Crooks presented a detailed account of the principles and delivery mechanisms of the RAPID programme in the context of the links between poverty and lack of educational qualifications. The programme can be viewed as “*a boost for education in disadvantaged areas,*” he said. He outlined the three essential components and core principles of the programme as:

- Community participation and local ownership
- Coordinated provision of services
- Targeting of ‘additional’ services, investment and facilities.

The need to prioritise educational initiatives is clear because of the correlation between lack of educational qualifications, unemployment and risk of poverty.

RAPID will provide a multi-agency approach to tackling the issues of early school leaving. “*One of the lessons learned from the Integrated Services Process is that no one agency is wholly or solely responsible for tackling early school leaving.*” It was the integrated and collaborative effort of all interests and agencies which provided the only means for tackling it effectively, and local responses of this type – including RAPID – were the answer.

There are a large number of educational initiatives in the National Development Plan, and these initiatives would have to be prioritised and front-loaded in RAPID areas in response to local needs. But it was essential throughout to maintain flexibility in all initiatives.

# The Education (Welfare) Act 2000

by **Michael Doyle**,  
Senior School Attendance Officer,  
School Attendance Committees

Michael Doyle, Senior School Attendance Officer, outlined the main provisions of The Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

The minimum school leaving age will be raised from 15 to 16, or at the completion of three years of post-primary education.

A National Educational Welfare Board (N.E.W.) is being established to develop and implement a school attendance policy which aims to ensure that every child attends a recognised school or otherwise receives an appropriate education, and to foster a school environment that promotes retention.

Children receiving education outside the traditional school structure will be registered with the Board, which will assess such education on an ongoing basis.

The Board will appoint Education Welfare Officers (E.W.O.s) to work in co-operation with schools, teachers, parents and community/voluntary bodies in the development of strategies to reduce absenteeism and early school leaving. It will also carry out reviews of training and guidance for teachers on the subject of school attendance.

School principals are required to inform an Education Welfare Officer in cases of suspension of pupils and prolonged or regular absences from school. The Act also specifies procedures to be followed in the case of expulsion so that the EWO may ensure that alternative education provision is made for the young person.

School Boards of Management must submit annual reports to the EWO designated to their school and to the Parents Association. They must also consult with the EWO in the preparation of codes of behaviour for the school, attendance strategies and contacts with youth work programmes.

Parents will be required to ensure that their children attend a recognised school or otherwise receive an appropriate minimum education. The parent of a child who contravenes a school attendance notice will be deemed guilty of an offence and liable to a fine and/or imprisonment.

The Board may arrange for a child to be assessed. If parental consent is not forthcoming, the Board may apply to the Circuit Court for an order permitting such assessment.

Specific provision is made for the continuing education and training of young persons of 16 and 17 years of age who leave school early to take up employment. The N.E.W. Board will issue a certificate to a young person who has completed three years post-primary education and who has agreed to avail of educational and training opportunities. Employers of young people who do not hold such valid certificates are liable to prosecution and payment of a fine not exceeding 1500 or to imprisonment for not longer than six months.

# The Challenge of Inclusiveness: Lessons from Innovation in Scotland

by Maggi Allen,  
Executive Director, Education Resources,  
South Lanarkshire Council, Scotland  
(approved by presenter)

Due to the major outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease, Maggi Allen could not travel to attend the conference. However, she did provide a paper for the day, and in this outlined the three major elements of South Lanarkshire Council's programme to tackle Early School Leaving.

## 1. Early intervention

Early identification of young people in need of support is fundamental. A policy on promoting Education for Work and Enterprise ensures involvement of pupils from the early stages of primary schools through to secondary school in activities which promote employability skills. Supported Work Experience is offered to young people by the Council for up to a period of 10 weeks. Placements are supported by a mentor. Local employers are being encouraged to copy this initiative.

## 2. Responding to disadvantage

In partnership with local Further Education Colleges and the Careers Service, the Council operates:

The *PartiSIPate Project* aims to help young people in designated areas overcome the barriers they face by providing an individual programme of support for obtaining and sustaining employment and training.

*On Track* is a programme run in collaboration between schools and a local Further Education college which targets young people in their last year of compulsory education who are unlikely to make a successful transition to the workplace. The programme aims to enhance employability and core skills, support young people in the transition from school to employment, training and further education, and widen pupils' horizons regarding opportunities in the labour market. Participants learn personal, social and job-seeking skills, and take part in enterprise activities, individual target setting and action planning. The programme also provides mentoring and support during the school programme and for two years after leaving school.

## 3. Future developments

In any one year the Council and Careers Service do not know where 5% of young people go on leaving school. There is concern that these young people who disappear from the system are the most disadvantaged.

The Council has recently been successful in securing funding in collaboration with the Careers Service to take forward two new developments designed to support young people at the stage of transition to employment, training or further education.

The first of these is the appointment of a number of key workers to the Careers Service who will provide support and guidance on an ongoing basis to young people, particularly at times of crisis. The keyworker will co-ordinate the range of responses to the needs of the young person, will advocate on their behalf

when necessary, organise assessment planning and review, and support placements into education, training and employment.

The second development will result in the setting up of an electronic tracking system called I-Track. It will be controlled and owned by the young person. This system will allow data about a young person to be shared between agencies and training bodies, thereby avoiding repeated form-filling. It will also provide a unified vehicle for mapping progression. The young person will carry a SMART card which will provide the authorisation to the agency to access the necessary information.

The relationship between the tracking system and the keyworker arrangements is crucial. If managed well it will ensure that young people do not disappear from the system.

# New strategies to address disadvantage

by Colm Ó Maoláin

Asst. Chief Inspector,  
Department of Education and Science

Colm Ó Maoláin outlined the range of interventions by the Department of Education and Science (DES) within the primary and secondary formal education system since the early 1990s. He stressed that educational disadvantage is one aspect of the wider issue of socio-economic disadvantage, which is multi-faceted challenge that requires multi-faceted solution, including education. The *Home School Community Liaison* programme had been a critical turning point in 1990 and has formed the cornerstone of initiatives since. The involvement of parents and community has since developed as crucial elements, and this process has been promoted under National Partnership agreements.

Programmes such as *Early Start*, the *Support Teacher Project* and *Breaking the Cycle* have now been subsumed into the *New programme for Primary Pupils from Disadvantaged Backgrounds*. The *8 to 15 Early School Leaver Initiative (ESLI)* and the “*Stay in School*” *Retention Initiative (SSRI)* are being subsumed into the “*School Completion Programme*”, which is now the main DES initiative in second-level schools. The School Completion Programme includes all ESLI and SSRI schools.

Mr. Ó Maoláin stated that in other EU countries the focus appears to be on the provision of access to education. In Ireland, we are conscious that access and availability are not sufficient for a significant minority of our population and, on the one hand, a sensitive system of outreach, development and the building of ‘readiness’ for marginalised persons is needed. On the other hand, the culture of schools and institutions that provide education and training needs to change to one of identifying and meeting the needs of people at risk rather than any expectation that they can adapt and fit in to the institution’s provision and programmes.

He highlighted the need to place the child at the centre of the process of change, with the emphasis not only on the child but on the individual child at the centre of a programme of holistic integrated services delivered to children and their families. For this to occur, support is needed for all the participants. “*Schools would also have to change in order to help the child to change.*”

The principles of intervention include identification and targeting of individual needs, positive discrimination, integrated holistic services, and parental involvement and development. Intervention components include social and personal development, delivery of services both in and out of school, school assignment (“homework”) support and sport and leisure activity. Differentiated curricula and teaching methods are fundamental to the strategy and their provision necessitates staff development. A mentoring programme will involve mentoring of younger pupils by older pupils, of pupils by teachers, and of young people by significant people in community groups and in business organisations. A holistic approach involves developing child-child, family-child and family-community relationships.

Speaking of the factors involved in change, Mr. Ó Maoláin noted that “*money helps but it’s people who effect change*”. Support and development for agents at point of change is a necessity. Structures and services must meet individual needs. ‘*Fixing*’ individuals ‘*to fit*’ organisations and structures is not on. Organisations and structures must adapt to fit individual needs.

The integration of services is the remit of various bodies and the delivery of services must be collaborative and not competitive. Changes in mindset in organisations and structures are now essential within a programme in which ALL must become responsible for all.

The national requirement for all programmes and strategies to be poverty-proofed has great potential to contribute to serious programme analysis and planning. Effective integrated approaches succeed where the child remains the centre of the programme.

## **Panel Discussion**

For the Panel Discussion, Colm Ó Maoláin was joined by Ms Bernie Judge, National Education Co-ordinator, ADM, and Ms Rita Clifford, Principle, Ballyfermot Senior College. Participants in the discussion praised the SSRI (‘Stay-in-School Retention Initiative) but highlighted the need for more resources, especially for tracking mechanisms. Mr. O’Maolain responded that the tracking system in primary schools will be developed further and that new staff are needed to progress this.

In the course of the discussion, Mr Ó Maoláin acknowledged that getting children back into mainstream education will only happen if the mainstream system is changed. He noted the importance of maintaining structures at local level which are effective and ensuring that they stay in place when the economic environment changes.

Rita Clifford noted that targeting disadvantaged children only made sense where the parents too were targeted. “Number-crunching” in project evaluations was identified as a problem by one contributor and there was general support for this. Bernie Judge urged schools to look outwards and seek links with organisations and the community. Programmes such as RAPID were not adding a new layer of structures, but sought to promote collaboration rather than competition between all local players.



# Recommendations from the Thematic Workshops

A series of six ‘thematic workshops’ were held on the second day of the conference, each concentrating on a theme highlighted in the report *Squaring the Circle – Initiatives in Dublin Schools to Prevent Early School Leaving* (DEP, 2000). Each workshop was mandated to produce two considered and focussed recommendations for policy action arising from their deliberations. Next to the shared learning and dissemination of good practice in the ‘practical workshops’ of the first day of the conference, these Recommendations form the substantial outcome of the conference.

## WORKSHOP 1:

### *Can we early school-leaver-proof the school? – a challenge for educationalists*

**Speaker:** Catherine Joyce, Co-ordinator, Irish Traveller Movement

**Chair:** Patrick McDermott, Principal, Ladyswell NS, Mulhuddart

- Rec. 1: That in-service training for dealing with disadvantage be provided for all teachers, with the priority on teachers in disadvantaged schools, in order to increase awareness and sensitivity. That similar modules be provided for all trainee primary and post-primary teachers.
- Rec. 2: That deputy principals in primary schools be granted release from teaching time to co-ordinate initiatives in the school and integrated approaches with outside agencies in order to tackle disadvantage.

## WORKSHOP 2:

### *Staying in School – Critical supports and services*

**Speaker:** Damien Fee, Principal, St Kevin’s College, Clogher Rd.

**Chair:** Rita Clifford, Dep. Principal, Ballyfermot College of Further Education

- Rec. 1: (a) Improvement in and co-ordination of the services for children provided by the Government Departments of Education, Health and Justice;  
(b) Services should have a preventative role and not only kick in when problems have already arisen.
- Rec. 2: Alternative education provision should be within the school rather than outside, and should use existing resources such as teachers, youth workers and parents. Parents should be involved at every level.
- Suppl.: All the above need to be adequately financed.

### **WORKSHOP 3:**

#### ***The Potential for a ‘whole community response’ – Community interventions, youth services, special projects.***

**Speaker:** Joe Donoghoe, Community Youth Worker, Rialto Youth Project

**Chair:** Bernie Judge, National Education Co-ordinator, ADM

- Rec. 1: The status of alternative education provision needs to be addressed in order to:
- Legitimise the work done by alternative education providers;
  - Assist the complementarity and integration of services to young people;
  - Help eliminate divisions between ‘formal’ and ‘informal’ provision;
  - Improve quality within alternative education in terms of policy and procedures.
- Rec. 2: It is essential to move to a more rights-based education system which centres on the needs of the child. Such a move will require greater accountability among all educators.

### **WORKSHOP 4:**

#### ***Myths surrounding school attendance and school exclusion***

**Speaker:** Shay Fulham, Team Leader, National Assessment and Remand Unit, Finglas West

**Chair:** Guss O’Connell, Programme Officer, FÁS

- Rec. 1: Young people who are at risk of leaving school early or of gaining little from their school experience, can best be helped if all agencies collaborate from the pre-school stage. This collaboration needs to be sustained until the young person has become fully capable of **independent living??**. The main focus in working with such young people should be on developing self-confidence, communication skills including literacy, and awareness of their own emotional ?? Support should be available to them both within and outside school and throughout holiday periods.
- Rec. 2: The co-ordinated approach should include the family, school, employers and other community-based services. All should adopt a person-to-person approach, with each young person being treated as an individual.

### **WORKSHOP 5:**

#### ***Family Supports and Services – Preventing Early School Leaving***

**Speaker:** Catherine Bond, Regional Manager, BARNARDOS, Dublin North Region

**Chair:** Jim McVeigh, County Youth Development Officer, County Dublin VEC

- Rec. 1: Funding and resources are needed for family workers who can provide training for parents in dealing with state officials and who can act as advocates for the family with state agencies. **(I don’t know if I’ve changed the point here.)**
- Rec. 2: That an information booklet on funding for schools/projects **in this area** should be produced, with particular reference to the Department of Education and Science.??? **What does this mean**

Suppl.: Other areas of concern are the lack of psychological services, the need for counsellors in schools, tracking and on-going assessment, transport costs for children attending school, high pupil-teacher ratios, and young parents. Breakfast clubs and early interventions are key to any programme. Provision should be within the school and funding should cease to be ad-hoc.

# Closing Address

**by Eoin Ryan T.D.**

Minister of State for Local Development  
and the National Drugs Strategy  
(amended and approved by presenter)

Minister Eoin Ryan identified Early School Leaving as still an enormous challenge to society, especially within the most marginalised and vulnerable communities. Tackling it effectively is one of the cornerstones of the Government's social inclusion policy. It is also the Government's aim to ensure that programmes are innovative, integrated and focussed on areas of greatest need and are properly resourced. The commitment by Government to tackling these issues is "unprecedented", with some £15 billion allocated for Social Inclusion measures under the National Plan over 2000-2006.

He acknowledged the work and commitment to preventive education initiatives by the Local Area Partnership Companies and community groups funded by ADM. From 1994 to 1999, over 64,000 children participated in such programmes, mostly since 1998-99 when Education Co-ordinators were introduced in the Partnership Areas. These activities will continue and develop under the new funding allocations.

Outlining the provisions of the RAPID Programme (Rivatalising Areas by Planning, Investment and Development), he emphasised that this is a highly focussed initiative, with the power to front-load a "significant share" of the NDP Social Inclusion money for investment in the twenty-five identified urban areas and that educational initiatives are likely to be high on this agenda.

Closer coordination and better integration in the delivery of State Services is recognised as a key component in the development of new policy initiatives to tackle social exclusion. In this regard, the Integrated Services Process, which was targeted at four pilot areas, succeeded in bringing about a model of integrated local development based on an effective working partnership between the State Agencies, Social partners and local communities.

The new RAPID Programme builds on the lessons learned from the Integrated Services Process (ISP) and goes much further. It will benefit 165,000 people in the 25 most disadvantaged urban areas. The designated areas will be prioritised for NDP investment during 2002 and 2003.

Since Early School Leaving has been identified as a precursor to drug misuse, a significant proportion of funding under the National Drugs Strategy has been directed at initiatives in the Local Drugs Task Force areas. The Minister announced the allocation of almost £2 million to implement updated action plans in the Task Force areas of Tallaght, Dublin North East and the Canal Communities, and a further £4 million in capital funding for premises for seventeen community-based projects in Task Force areas. In total, the Young People's Facilities and Services Fund has allocated £46 million to 337 projects which aim to provide sports and other facilities to attract young people into "*healthy, productive pursuits*".

The Minister concluded with a comment from a Community Garda in St Teresa's Gardens. "The saddest day in Teresa's Gardens is Leaving Cert results day when all of the other kids are going into town to celebrate. In Teresa's Gardens there are no celebrations because no one has done the Leaving Cert." It is, the Minister said, "incumbent on all of us, whether policy-makers, educationalists, or concerned parents, to ensure that these sad days are numbered and that young people from communities like Teresa's Gardens are allowed to achieve an education which will serve them well in later life."