



MINISTER CULLEN LAUNCHES LOUTH DISABILITY BOOKLET

Minister for Social and Family Affairs **Martin Cullen** TD today (4 October 2007) visited Dundalk and launched the **County Louth Citizens Information Service (CIS)** new booklet entitled '*Information for Parents of Children with a Disability*'.

This 42-page publication is a single reference document, which aims to bring together in a clear and accessible way, a wide range of relevant information and supports available to parents of children with a disability. This booklet contains information on areas such as social welfare, transport, housing, tax, health and education.

Speaking this morning, Minister Cullen said: "When a child is first diagnosed with a disability, parents can find it difficult to access comprehensive information in relation to supports and entitlements that may be available to them. With the emotional stress of dealing with a diagnosis of ill health or a disability, the search for information can be especially difficult. This new publication provided by County Louth Citizens Information Service should prove to be a very practical resource for parents and guardians of children with disabilities".

Congratulating the Service on their publication, Minister Cullen said: "Every citizen is entitled to information about rights and entitlements to social and civil services. This booklet acknowledges this right in terms of the parents of children with disabilities. It also serves to empower parents in making choices that affect both themselves and their children. The Government's National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2016 places particular emphasis on improving the lives of children. This new publication aims to support the achievement of this goal."

Minister Cullen also commended the County Louth Citizens Information Service on their work in meeting the information, advice and advocacy needs of a growing and diverse local population. He said: "Last year alone the County Louth CIS dealt with almost 20,000 queries from over 17,000 callers to its Service. The work of this CIS is a testament to the spirit of cooperation and partnership that exists among the various statutory, community and voluntary agencies based here in County Louth."

ENDS

Issued by:

Michelle Hctor, 087 8563070
Oonagh Duffy, 087 2547232



Department of Social and Family Affairs

Editor's Note:

The Citizens Information Board (and its Offices/Services across the country) is responsible for supporting the provision of information, advice and advocacy relating to social services and entitlements. As a state agency, the Citizens Information Board comes under the remit of the Department of Social and Family Affairs. The Board has a statutory remit to assist and support people, especially those with disabilities, in identifying and understanding their needs and options in terms of social services and entitlements.

Three channels of information advice and advocacy services are supported:

- the Citizens Information Website (www.citizensinformation.ie)
- the Citizens Information Phone Service , which operates Mon-Fri 9am to 9pm, (Locall-1890 777121), and
- the national network of Citizens Information Services (CIS)

The County Louth Citizens Information Service (CIS) works to integrate and manage citizen's information services throughout the entire county. There are Citizens Information offices in Dundalk (at Long Walk) and in Drogheda (at 1, Mayoralty Street). The centres are staffed by a combination of paid and volunteer workers.

Copies of the booklet "*Information for Parents of Children with a Disability*" will be distributed to all Citizens Information offices around the country.

They are also available directly from:
County Louth Citizens Information Service
Adelphi House
Long Walk
Dundalk
County Louth
Tel: 042-9329149 Fax: 042-9352332
e-mail: dundalk.cic@citizensinformation.ie

Press Release Ends