



## **Minister Cullen launches One Family Annual Report**

### **Compliments One Family on commencing largest study ever into lives of lone parents**

**“Through improved employment prospects the risk of poverty and social exclusion of lone parents can be radically reduced”**

The Minister for Social and Family Affairs, **Martin Cullen TD**, this afternoon (Wednesday 5 September 2007) launched the **2006 Annual Report of One Family**, a key national organisation for one-parent families. Progressing the work of Cherish, which was established in 1972, One Family works with all members of one-parent families, respecting the realities of family life, to affect positive change and achieve equality and social inclusion for all one-parent families in Ireland.

At today’s Annual Report launch, Minister Cullen complimented One Family on commencing the largest study ever into the lives of lone parents in receipt of the One-Parent Family Payment. Over 8,000 lone parents are shortly to be invited by One Family to participate in this study, also supported by the Combat Poverty Agency, which aims to achieve an understanding of the issues lone parents on the Payment, and their families face, particularly in going out to work and accessing employment.

The Minister said: “I note that One Family has stated that the results of this research will be used to support ongoing lobbying and to make recommendations to Government on how best to support lone parents. I welcome this and indeed my Department is supporting this research initiative for that very reason. It is my hope that the results of this study will also help my Department improve its supports to people parenting alone”.

Also acknowledging the contribution One Family has made to the Government’s recent discussion paper on lone parents\*, the Minister said: “Although I believe that it is only through improved employment prospects that the risk of poverty and social exclusion of lone parents can be



## **Department of Social and Family Affairs**

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radically reduced, I also accept as do Government that activation measures without ancillary supports - such as education, training and childcare, - are not likely to succeed”.

The Minister said that a process to test new lone parent proposals in both an urban and rural setting is due to commence this month.

Complimenting Chairperson Dr Fergus Ryan and Director Karen Kieran for the many years of service One Family has provided to one-parent families, Minister Cullen said: “Much has changed for one-parent families since the inception of Cherish 35 years ago. The voice for single mothers which sought that all children would be cherished equally has evolved into an important national resource for all members of one-parent families”.

### **Editor’s note:**

Supports and services offered by One Family include childcare, parenting supports and training (including parent mentoring and wellbeing programmes), information on a wide range of family issues and free confidential counselling.

The One-Parent Family Payment mentioned above is a means tested payment offered by the Department of Social and Family Affairs and it is for men and women who are bringing up a child or children without the support of a partner. There were 83,000 One-Parent Family Payment weekly recipients in 2006 totalling €835 million worth of payments. In 2007, currently, there are 84,000 One-Parent Family Payment recipients.

\*The discussion paper on lone parents is called the *Government Discussion Paper: Proposals for Supporting Lone Parents* and can be accessed on [www.welfare.ie/publications/prop\\_lp.pdf](http://www.welfare.ie/publications/prop_lp.pdf)

### **Issued by:**

*Michelle Hoctor, 087 8563070*

*Oonagh Duffy, 087 2549683*

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