



News Release

8 April 2008

**Minister Cullen launches One Family Strategic Summary and
New Futures Project**

The Minister for Social and Family Affairs, **Martin Cullen TD**, this evening (**Tuesday 8 April 2008**) launched One Family's *Strategic Summary* and the final report of their *New Futures Project*. One Family – a key national organisation for one-parent families – works to provide a range of supports and services to affect positive change and achieve equality and social inclusion for all one-parent families in Ireland.

Speaking today, **Minister Martin Cullen TD** said: "One Family knows that every family is unique and you work in a family-centred way with the aim of bringing about better lives for parents and their children." The Minister added: " It is clear that attitudes towards lone parents have changed significantly in this country over the last 30 years. However, there is still room for improvement in acceptance of all forms of family diversity. Your *Strategic Summary* outlines the progress One Family aims to achieve in this and in other areas by 2009. "

Minister Cullen commended the organisation on their parent mentoring service, family communications course, career counselling facility and expanded website saying: "All these measures in my view can only support parents in the development of a meaningful career and in providing the best future for their family."

The Minister added: "Your particular customer service focus is of great benefit, as it empowers your clients to create their own positive futures through your innovative family support services."



One Family's *New Futures Project* has aimed to develop an integrated model of support for lone parents, dealing particularly with the personal barriers that exist for lone parents in progressing from welfare dependency to employment. The project, funded under the Government's Equality for Women Measure (under the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform) brought together the expertise of service providers to develop a model of provision to progress lone parents into sustainable employment.

Referring to the *New Futures Project*, which One Family now hope to further develop under their overall organisational strategy, Minister Cullen said: "This initiative is in line with the Government's view that it is only through improved employment prospects that the risk of poverty and social exclusion of lone parents can be radically reduced. A project that endeavours to ensure people have the skills they need to take on a new path to employment at a time when they find themselves unemployed – for whatever reason - is extremely positive and should be encouraged."

Minister Cullen TD also acknowledged the contribution of One Family to his Department's new proposals for supporting Lone Parents. He said: "The testing phase of the non-income measures contained in the Discussion Paper has ended and the outcome is currently being considered by officials in the Department of Social and Family Affairs. This, together with a number of other issues, is being examined and I hope to bring the matter to the Cabinet Committee on Social Inclusion shortly."

Minister Cullen concluded by thanking One Family for their on-going commitment to supporting lone parents and on providing informed research to his Department to help with the formation of future policy in the area of lone parenthood.



Editor's Note:

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

www.onefamily.ie

Issued by:

Michelle Hctor, 087 8563070

Oonagh Duffy, 087 254 9683