



**Mary Coughlan TD, Minister for Social and Family Affairs launches
information books for lone parents**

Mary Coughlan TD Minister for Social and Family Affairs today launched three information booklets aimed at helping lone parents with social welfare, family and relationship dispute issues.

The three booklets were compiled and published by Treoir, the national federation of services for unmarried parents and children supported by Government, health board and other grants, which works with unmarried parents and their children.

Mary Coughlan TD today emphasised the need to support all family formations, including two parent families, one parent families, reconstituted families following death, separation and divorce.

”I am delighted to launch these booklets as they provide important basic information for lone parents who can face an uphill struggle, first in coming to terms with their situation, and in dealing with their circumstances and raising children. There are currently over 60,000 claimants in receipt of the current One Parent Family Payment provided by the Department of Social and Family Affairs, “said Minister Mary Coughlan..

“These has been a significant increase in one parents families in Ireland, this is due in part to the increase in births outside marriage which almost doubled to 32percent in the past ten years, and an increasing incidence of divorce and separation.

”Lone parents have to carry the double burden of being breadwinner and providing on their own for the care for their children. This contributes to less than half of lone parents being in employment and a high proportion being at risk of poverty. I hope and would expect that the provision of this information through the excellent and ongoing work of Treoir helps lone parents, “said Minister Coughlan..

ENDS

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NOTE FOR NEWS EDITORS

The three books are:

Work it Out outlines options for lone parents on taking up training, education or work opportunities and is funded by the Department of Social and Family Affairs. The booklet details the various schemes available and the effect of such schemes on social welfare payments and other benefits.

Family Links is a guide for lone parents and contains information on talking to children about both parents, helpful hints on shared parenting and looks at issues which arise in step-families. This was funded by the Lady Arabella Denny Trust fund which works specifically with un married parents.

Taking the Stand is a guide for unmarried parents in resolving disputes regarding care of their children. It sets suggests communicating with each other, mediation, and then outlines the situation where family disputes are involved. It provides a valuable insight into the workings of the court system, and is funded from within existing finances of Treoir.