



Department of Social and Family Affairs

Minister Marks International Day Of Families

The Minister For Social Affairs, Séamus Brennan T. D., Today Marked The 15th Of May As The United Nations International Day Of Families By Reaffirming The Government's Commitment To Improving Services To Support Families.

"Sunday, 15th Of May Is The Day When We Celebrate The Most Important Thing In Our Lives - Our Family. Family Life Provides Individuals With Supports At Various Stages Of Their Lives, Especially In Childhood And Youth, Which Are Essential For Their Well Being, Development And Happiness," Said Minister Brennan.

The Minister Highlighted The Key Role Played By The Family Support Agency In Providing Important Supports To Families Throughout The Country. Specifically, The Statutory Agency, Established In 2003, Is Responsible For:

- The Ongoing Development And Support For The Family Counselling Sector.
- The Promotion And Development Of The Family And Community Service Resource Centre (FRC) Programme.
- The Provision Of A National Family Mediation Service For Couples Who Have Decided To Separate, Helping Them To Reach Agreement On Issues Such As The Family Home, Financial Arrangements And Ongoing Parenting Arrangements So That Children Retain Close Bonds With Both Parents Where Possible.

The Agency Also Has A Key Information Role For Families On A Range Of Issues Including Parenting, Relationships, Marriage Preparation Programmes And The Benefits Of Mediation In Times Of Family Breakdown.

Families Make A Major Contribution To Economic Development Through Their Support Of Family Members In The Workforce, Their Contribution To The Nurture And Education Of The Next Generation And Their Care Of Other Dependent Family Members.

"The Fact That The Budget Of The Family Support Agency Has Been Increased To Almost €25 Million In 2005 - Up By 41% Over The Last Two Years Confirms This Government's Commitment To Supporting All Irish Families," Said Minister Brennan.

Minister Brennan Also Confirmed That The Family Support Agency Website, **Fsa.Ie**, Will Be Operational Within The Next Month And Would Provide Detailed Information For Families On The Services Provided By The Agency As Well As Making Available A Large Number Of Key Research Projects Funded By The Government In Recent Years.

Press Release Ends 15/05/05