



Department of Social and Family Affairs

429 Local Groups To Celebrate Nationwide 'Family Fun' Days – Mary Coughlan Minister For Social And Family Affairs.

Mary Coughlan, Minister for Social and Family Affairs, has today approved funding for 429 local community groups to celebrate nationwide family-fun days marking the 10th anniversary of the United Nations International Year of the Family.

"The events supported by this funding will enable us all to celebrate our families and in our own neighbourhoods and communities," said Minister Coughlan.

"With our ever-busier lives it can be difficult to step back and appreciate what the family means to us – on a personal, local and national level. These family-fun days will provide an enjoyable platform for such an appreciation and no doubt will provide a great day out," said Minister Coughlan.

"Earlier this year I invited family support organisations and family groups to apply for awards totalling €1 million to mark the 10th anniversary of the UN International Year of the Family. There has been a marvellous response with up to 1,000 groups – national, community and parish based – applying for funding," said Minister Coughlan.

"Some 429 groups will shortly receive funding of up to €650, totaling nearly €270,000, to host family celebration days. Further applications for funding up to €2,000 are being finalised. These represent the bulk of applications with local voluntary groups being funded to facilitate projects or events to strengthen families in their area. These include facilitated discussions on family issues, workshops and local neighbourhood events.

"Other applications from larger regional or national groups for once off events or projects focusing on families and family life in today's Ireland are currently being evaluated. These include national conferences, seminars, workshops, and education and training into relevant family topics as well as the provision of information focusing on the family, family well being and family supports," said Minister Coughlan.

Applications are being evaluated based on their ability to increase the awareness of family issues at local level taking account of the themes identified following the national family consultation process undertaken in 2003 by the Minister. These issues include parenting and childhood, balancing work and family life, relationships, family caring responsibilities and community supports for families as well as the strengthening of local family networks and supports.

Ends July 20th 2004