



**NEWS RELEASE**

**June 30 2008**

**School may be out but uniforms are in the shops**

**Hanafin announces €46 million funding to help parents with back to school costs**

With the school holidays only just beginning, it might seem like a strange time to be thinking of back to school, but Minister for Social and Family Affairs Mary Hanafin T.D., is advising parents to spread costs over the summer months and to apply now for the Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance.

Over €46 million has been allocated to support parents with the cost of school clothing and footwear, which this year will benefit some 190,000 primary and post primary pupils.

Minister Hanafin said the funding available **“helps to ease some of the financial pressures which families on low incomes experience at back-to-school time. Funding for the Back to School Clothing and Footwear scheme has been increased by over €6 million or 15% since last year and will benefit over 88,000 families in the coming months.”**

The payments for back to school costs are funded by the Department of Social and Family Affairs. **Parents receive €200 for each eligible child aged between 2 and 11 years and €305 for each child aged between 12 and 22 years.** Parents can apply to their local HSE office for funding under the Scheme from now right until the end of September.

The Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance helps people who are in receipt of certain social welfare and Health Service Executive (HSE) payments



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with the cost of children's school clothing and footwear. It is also available to people on low incomes who are getting Family Income Supplement or who are taking part in approved employment schemes or training courses.

Minister Hanafin went on to say **“planning for and making a timely application for this financial assistance now can help parents as they arrange for their child’s return to school. The back to school clothing and footwear funding is just one of the measures being implemented by the Government to ensure that all children are given every opportunity to participate fully in society. ”**

In 2007, over 113,000 primary school pupils and almost 67,000 post-primary students benefited from this scheme.

Minister Hanafin concluded by urging families who may be entitled to the Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance to contact the Community Welfare Officer at their local office of the Health Service Executive for more information on the scheme.

**ENDS**

**30<sup>th</sup> June 2008**



**Note for Editors:**

A person may qualify for the Back to School Clothing and Footwear scheme if they are:

- getting a Social Welfare payment (including Family Income Supplement) or a Health Service Executive (HSE) payment

**or**

- taking part in one of the following approved employment schemes or training courses:
  - Back to Work Allowance (Employees) (BTWA),
  - Back to Work Enterprise Allowance (BTWEA),
  - Community Employment,
  - Revenue Job Assist,
  - Community Services Programme (formerly Social Economy Programme (Grant Aided Employees),
  - Job Initiative,
  - Workplace,
  - Youthreach,
  - Back to Education Allowance,
  - Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS),
  - Area Partnership Scheme,
  - FÁS, Fáilte Ireland or LES training scheme or Rural Social Scheme.

**and**

- getting a Qualified Child Increase with their social welfare payment

**and**



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- their household income is within the limits in either of the tables below.

Household income includes:

- the person's main social welfare or Health Service Executive payment and
- other income including earnings before tax, but excluding PRSI.

Couple with:	Income limit	Lone parent with:	Income limit
1 child	€496.10	1 child	€347.30
2 children	€520.10	2 children	€371.30
3 children	€544.10	3 children	€395.30
4 children	€568.10	4 children	€419.30
	*		*
* limit is increased by €24 for each additional child		* limit is increased by €24 for each additional child	

Further information on social welfare services is available:

- at [www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie),
- from all Social Welfare Offices,
- at LoCall **1890 66 22 44** (from the Republic of Ireland only) 9.30 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. Monday To Friday.