



€7 MILLION FOR COUNSELLING SERVICES - MINISTER COUGHLAN

The Minister for Social and Family Affairs Mary Coughlan announced today that she is making €7 million available in funding for once-off grants to voluntary organisations providing marriage, child and bereavement counselling services. The newly established Family Support Agency will be administering the grant applications.

Minister Coughlan said: "I am delighted to provide money for counselling. The administration of the funding is one of the many functions of the Family Support Agency".

"Last year my Department provided €6.6 million to 466 organisations countrywide under this scheme of grants. It is an indication of this Government's Family First Policy that the allocation for 2003 has been increased to just over €7million," added Minister Coughlan.

When announcing the funding Minister Coughlan spoke of the findings of recent research undertaken through her Department's Families Research Programme, "Unhappy Marriages: Does Counselling Help?"

"The conclusion of this research is that Counselling does work. It can greatly help families, parents and children with the difficulties they experience in their relationships. It is most encouraging to learn that the research found that counselling works in 7 out of 10 cases; that it works equally well for men and women and that it can help people in widely different relationships and circumstances", said Minister Coughlan. The report was commissioned by ACCORD and is the work of Kieran McKeown and his team.

The Family Support Agency was established in late 2002. Its main task is to support families, promote the continuity of stability in family life, prevent marital breakdown and foster

a supportive community environment for families at a local level. It does so by providing a family mediation service, by developing marriage and relationship counselling, undertaking research and by advising the Minister on its functions and family issues.

Application forms for the grants are available from the Family Support Agency on 01 704 3072. The closing date for receipt of the applications is Friday 28th



February 2003. A schedule of the funds distributed under the scheme in 2002 is attached.

ENDS 31st January, 2003

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Note for News Editors

Grants for Marriage, Child and Bereavement Counselling for 2002

County	EURO	Number of Groups
DUBLIN	2,747,729	173
KILDARE	993,270	17
CORK	544,250	26
LOUTH	277,750	16
GALWAY	240,750	25
KERRY	193,500	15
ROSCOMMON	193,450	7
TIPPERARY	183,650	20
MAYO	167,950	11
WATERFORD	156,285	10
LIMERICK	152,450	16
DONEGAL	104,000	8
MEATH	90,350	19
WESTMEATH	72,600	9
SLIGO	64,600	5
WEXFORD	63,200	6
WICKLOW	61,750	17
CLARE	61,720	15
KILKENNY	57,900	9
MONAGHAN	57,000	11
CARLOW	48,050	5
CAVAN	44,050	6
OFFALY	36,300	5
LONGFORD	24,800	3
LAOIS	20,695	9
LEITRIM	4,950	3
Total	6,662,999	466

