



Department of Social and Family Affairs

€7.5million For Marriage, Child And Bereavement Counselling Services - Mary Coughlan Minister Of Social And Family Affairs

Mary Coughlan T.D., Minister for Social and Family Affairs, today approved funding of €7.5million to over 520 voluntary and community groups nationwide providing marriage counselling, marriage preparation, child counselling in relation to parental separation and bereavement counselling support.

"This Government's families first approach is illustrated by the expansion and continued success of this scheme. This year's funding is more than six and a half times the allocation in 1997 and nearly €700,000 greater than last year. As a result, established groups will receive enhanced support and 60 more groups will receive funding," said Minister Coughlan.

"This means more counselling for more people and families in need, and in more locations, said Minister Coughlan.

"Further evidence of my commitment, and this Government's commitment, to families will come later this year, the 10th anniversary of the UN International Year of the Family, when I intend to publish an integrated strategy for the support of families and family life," added Minister Coughlan.

"Family life today faces an ever increasing amount of challenges as society becomes more complex. The speed of life, the pressures of work, the pressures of juggling time between partner and work, of raising children, of looking after ageing parents, or a sick child, or a partner who has lost a job, who can't get work or is unhappy at work - the list can go on and on which is why support is important."

"Counselling and advice can and does help resolution, growth and happiness can and often does follow, strengthening relationships and benefiting not just the couple, but the immediate and extended family and society at large," said Minister Coughlan.

The policy objectives, which inform funding allocations, are - continued investment in the established major providers of services so that they can consolidate their lead role in the provision of high quality counselling services, the provision of a regional network of accessible support by investment in significant providers of services in key catchment areas throughout the country and additional support for organisations providing services in disadvantaged communities.

Continued investment is provided in the allocation of grants for established major providers of services including: ACCORD Headquarters, Maynooth granted €1m, ACCORD Dublin, which is responsible for 10-12 centres serving the Dublin/Wicklow region, granted €570,000, MRCS, Dublin granted €460,000 and Cork Marriage Counselling Centre granted €310,000. The Family Support Agency administers the scheme of grants.

ENDS 31 May 2004

SEE FACT SHEET ATTACHED



Department of Social and Family Affairs

Notes for News Editor

2004 Scheme of Grants for Marriage, Child and Bereavement Counselling Services	
County Breakdown	
	€
CARLOW	59,360
CAVAN	54,250
CLARE	94,720
CORK	593,800
DONEGAL	114,230
DUBLIN	3,071,980
GALWAY	266,950
KERRY	253,500
KILDARE	1,080,570
KILKENNY	30,800
LAOIS	25,350
LEITRIM	12,850
LIMERICK	160,500
LONGFORD	27,950
LOUTH	288,250
MAYO	239,750
MEATH	97,150
MONAGHAN	63,160
OFFALY	45,260
ROSCOMMON	243,400
SLIGO	79,450
TIPPERARY	161,285
WATERFORD	177,785
WESTMEATH	51,200
WEXFORD	73,000
WICKLOW	64,500
Total	7,461,000



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The Family Support Agency

Minister Coughlan formally established the Family Support Agency on May 6th last year. Its main task is to protect the family, by supporting the stability of family life and addressing the effects of changing family formation.

The FSA provides a family mediation service, develops marriage and relationship counselling, undertakes research and advises the Minister on family issues and works in partnership with the community and voluntary sector. The Family Support Agency has been allocated a budget of €20.2m for 2004.

The Family Support Agency:

- Provides a family mediation service to help couples, who have decided to separate, negotiate their separation without acrimony. Over the last six years this service has expanded from two centres in Dublin and Limerick to 14 centres through out the country.
- Supports, promotes and develops the provision of marriage and relationship counselling and other family support services.
- Supports, promotes and develops the Family and Community Services Resource Centres programme. The number of centres has increased from 10 to over 85 since 1997.
- Provides and disseminates information about these services and other family issues, and
- Provides financial assistance to voluntary organisations for these purposes.
- Undertakes or commissions research into matters related to its functions.