

Children's Rights Now

CHILDREN'S
RIGHTS
ALLIANCE
Uniting Voices For Children

NEWSLETTER 2022 ISSUE 4



Dear Members and Alliance friends,

I am sure many of you experienced equally busy summer months given the issues dominating July and August. The cost-of-living crisis combined with a rapidly deteriorating housing crisis and the pressures felt by the healthcare system in particular are creating a perfect storm for children and young people. In July, the Alliance published our first [Child Poverty Monitor](#) – a new annual publication which aims to place a spotlight on the multi-faceted issue of child poverty, the impact it has on the youngest generation of citizens and importantly, what can be done about it. It was one of our most successful launches to date, with extensive media coverage on the issues documented in the report. Child poverty remains our core focus in the lead up to Budget 2023 and we hope you will join us for Ireland's first End Child Poverty Week this September which aims to amplify calls for Government action in this area.

At the point of writing this issue of our newsletter, Ireland has now welcomed almost 50,000 children and families from Ukraine. The safety, wellbeing and integration of these children and families is of key concern to us at the Alliance and continues to take a leading role in the community and voluntary response, harnessing the collective expertise of our membership to work with the State to ensure a co-ordinated and effective response that provides these children, young people and families with the support and care they need. In July we continued our series of member information meetings on the ongoing crisis in Ukraine and the needs of those arriving here. The Alliance also sits on the Ukraine Civil Society Emergency Response and in the coming weeks, we will be particularly focused on the educational needs of children and young people arriving in Ireland, with the publication of a new research report, and continued advocacy on the need for more appropriate accommodation provision.

The team has been busy the past few weeks firming up details for [End Child Poverty Week](#) – the first of its kind in Ireland. The Week runs from Monday 12 September to Friday 16 September and will place a specific focus on child poverty through events and media activities. You can find more information about the week and how to register for the events on our website [here](#). We really hope you will join in the conversation which will be an important call to action for the government ahead of Budget Day.

Watch this space!

Over the next two months, the Alliance will be coordinating consultations on the next iteration of Better Outcomes Brighter Futures. I encourage members and friends to join the thematic consultations to help shape the political priorities for children and young people over the next 10 years.

Save the date - October 12, 2022

Under our new Strategic Plan, we want to continue to build a national movement for children and young people. We will be sending out an invitation to our members to join us for an in-person event to hear from the team on our key objectives under the new plan. More details to come!

Thank you, as always, for your continued and greatly valued support.



Tanya Ward
Chief Executive



Fostering Children's Rights

UNCRC

The Committee on the Rights of the Child will review Ireland's implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in September. The Alliance, in consultation with members, compiled a comprehensive [Alternative Report](#) in response to the State Report. In August, the Alliance submitted its civil society alternative report in response to the Fifth and Sixth Combined Reports under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Report highlighted the urgent issues on the ground for children and young people in Ireland and put forward key recommendations across a variety of areas. Many thanks to all members who took the time to participate in the drafting process and to offer valuable insights on earlier drafts of the Report. Sincere thanks also to the UNCRC advisory group for their time and commitment.

Know Your Rights

With the support of Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, the Alliance has translated our [Know Your Rights guide](#) into Ukrainian and Russian. The guides will be disseminated in the coming weeks and will be available on the Alliance website.

Budget 2023

Alongside our child poverty work, we have been engaging with individual departments and Ministers to highlight what changes are needed in Budget 2023. In July we attended the Department of Social Protection's pre-Budget Forum at Farmleigh. You can read about our priority recommendations in our [submission](#) to the Department. At the end of August, the Alliance along with our colleagues on the Community and Voluntary Pillar met with the Ministers for Finance and Public Expenditure and Reform and the team met with Minister for State Joe O'Brien on child poverty on 1 September.

Children's Rights in Law, Policies and Practice

Early Years

The Children's Rights Alliance is part of a campaign co-led by [Eurochild](#) on Early Childhood Development. The campaign advocates for the prioritisation of early childhood development in public policies, with a particular focus on families and children who are at greater risk of discrimination and exclusion. A particular focus of the campaign is on ensuring young children aged zero to six have equal opportunities to safe, healthy and optimal development.

As part of our work on the campaign, we are commissioning two pieces of research. The first will look at the development of a dedicated public health nurse service for children. The second will explore the development of a public early years model of childcare. Both of these research projects will provide an important evidence base on policy and service provision for children in their earliest years. Further details and the request for tender can be found on our website here. For more information on this work, contact [Naomi](#).

Poverty and Social Exclusion

Child Poverty Monitoring

In July we published the first edition of our Annual [Child Poverty Monitor](#), which documents, analyses and reports on child poverty in Ireland. The Monitor will track Government progress on reducing the number of children trapped in poverty, showcase best practice solutions and spotlight key areas of concern across issues including food poverty, income adequacy, education inequality and the high cost of living. In the first edition we highlight best practice examples in relation to access to play, early years and how child poverty can be addressed at a local level. The Monitor secured extensive media coverage. Listen back to Tanya on Morning Ireland [here](#).

Ukraine Briefings

On July 25, the Alliance organised a briefing with Tomás Ó Ruairc, Assistant Secretary, Department of Education on the Department's response to the educational needs of recently arrived Ukrainian children and young people. Tomás was joined by Clíodhna O'Neill, Head of Communications, Grainne Cullen, Principal Officer leading the Public Sector Reform Team and Anne Murray, Principal Officer leading the Central Policy Unit. Slides from the information briefing were made available to attendees. If you would like to receive a copy of the slides, please email members@childrensrights.ie.

On **05 October**, we will be holding a members meeting with Professor Dymphna Divine on new research into the educational needs for children and young people in emergency situations. You will have received your invitation by email.

Listen back to Julie Ahern on RTE's This Week [here](#).

Food Provision Scheme

We have partnered with Enterprise Rent-A-Car to run a food poverty initiative. Thanks to their generous support, we are providing funding for four projects around Ireland which seek to address holiday hunger through the distribution of food hampers/meals to families for four weeks during the summer when schools were closed. We were delighted to provide this through our members Crosscare, Doras, the Cope Foundation and Good Shepherd Cork.

Educational Reform

SPHE Curriculum

In July, the Minister for Education, Norma Foley TD, published a [draft Social, Personal and Health Education \(SPHE\) curriculum](#), including Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE), for Junior Cycle in post-primary schools. The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) are now running a public consultation on the new draft curriculum which is open until 18 October 2022. You can find more information on the process [here](#).

This is a key opportunity for the curriculum to be modernised and respond to the needs of children and young people. The Children's Rights Alliance are convening a members working group to come together to make a submission to the NCCA. If you are interested in joining the working group please email julie@childrensrights.ie by **09 Sept**.

Out of School Provision

Julie Ahern, Legal, Policy and Services Director, was recently appointed to the Department of Education's Working Group on the Review of Out of School Education Provision. The Group is made up of a representative cross section of expertise from relevant Government Departments, agencies and education stakeholders and will over see the recommendations in the Department's review.

National Movement for Children and Young People

Membership

As an Alliance we are proud to use our collective voices to work together to make Ireland one of the best places in the world to be a child. We are delighted to have welcomed [Helium Arts](#), [Variety the Children's Charity of Ireland](#) and [AUsome Training](#) to our membership. We'd love to hear from you if you are interested in joining. You can read more about membership benefits, see our full list of member organisations and read more on how to apply [here](#).

Tusla Dialogue

The Fifth Dialogue between Tusla and the Children's Rights Alliance members will take place

on **17 October 10am-12pm**. The Dialogue is a valuable opportunity for members to raise issues they are seeing on the ground with Tusla senior management and engage in constructive dialogue on these issues. At the next Dialogue members will be joined by Bernard Gloster, CEO, Tusla and Kate Duggan, National Director of Services and Integration - Deputy CEO, Tusla. We will host a pre-meeting on **Wednesday 5 October 2-4pm** to consult with members to identify discussion points for the Dialogue. If you have items you would like to add to the agenda of the pre-meeting and to RSVP please email members@childrensrights.ie

Upcoming

End Child Poverty Week: 12 - 16 September

The Alliance is currently working on a national campaign focusing on child poverty. We are organising Ireland's first End Child Poverty Week (12-16 September) - five days of events, activities and discussion on child poverty across five different thematic areas. For more details and to register, see the [event page here](#).

Recent media highlights:

- Julie Ahern spoke to Morning Ireland on the recent news on the cancellation of scoliosis surgeries for children – listen back [here](#).
- Tanya Ward spoke to the [Irish Times](#) on the ongoing cost of living crisis and the impact it is having on children and families.

Children's Rights Alliance Helpline

A graphic for the Children's Rights Alliance Helpline. It features a light blue background. On the left, the text 'Children's Rights Alliance Helpline' is written in teal, followed by the phone number '01 902 0494' in large orange letters with a teal underline. Below this, the helpline hours are listed: 'Mondays 10am – 4pm', 'Wednesdays 10am – 4pm', and 'Fridays 10am – 12 noon'. On the right side, there is a cartoon illustration of a yellow clock face with black hands, a blue sign hanging from it that says 'OPEN' in white letters, and a small green circle below the sign.

Children's Rights
Alliance Helpline

01 902 0494

Mondays 10am – 4pm
Wednesdays 10am – 4pm
Fridays 10am – 12 noon

Our Helpline and Legal Advice Clinics provide legal information specifically on children's rights and **free one to one legal advice**. In addition to the contact details above, you can email the helpline team *anytime* at help@childrensrights.ie

Organisational News

New Team Members:

We are so excited to welcome two new team members to the Children's Rights Alliance! Karla Charles is joining us as our EU Programmes and Know Your Rights Manager and Margaret Gallagher is our new Legal and Policy Manager. I'm sure you will join us in welcoming both Karla and Margaret and we look forward to meeting you in person soon!

Jobs and Opportunities

Jobs

Irish Penal Reform Trust: [Project Co-ordinator, Children and Families Initiative](#)

Disability Federation of Ireland: [Membership Development Manager](#)

Youth Advocate Programmes Ireland: [Communications and Marketing Officer](#)

Bodywhys: [Office Manager](#)

Tenders

National Youth Council of Ireland: [Research Exploring ethnic diversity amongst youth workers](#)

Events

Prevention and Early Intervention Network: [Harnessing the Power of Positive Parenting](#)

Research and Resources

Non-Governmental

Society of St. Vincent de Paul Survey: [The impact of voluntary contributions in secondary schools in Ireland.](#)

National Council for the Blind of Ireland: Launch of [Equitable Education Report](#) on 22/09. Please RSVP to lorna.fitzpatrick@ncbi.ie

Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, [Submission to the UNCRC Report](#)

Council of Europe - [Tender for Consultancy Services for a Mapping Study on the developments of the Barnhaus Model](#)

Governmental

[State of Nation's Children](#) Report

[New Blueprint of the Policy Framework for Children and Young People](#)

[Early Learning and Care \(ELC\) and School Age Children Meals Survey](#)

[Ukraine Education Scheme](#)

Thank you to all of our funders, members and friends for your continued solidarity and support.

Visit us at childrensrights.ie
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