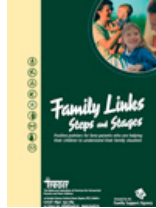


September/October 2008

Family Links Steps and Stages - Positive pointers for lone parents who are helping their children to understand their family situation



This 3rd edition of Family Links was funded by the Family Support Agency and launched by its CEO Mr. Pat Bennett in October 2008. Among the issues dealt with in Family Links are the following:

- how to talk to children about their family situation
- how to manage the parenting at a practical level where two parents are living apart
- how this might affect the children
- what place do both parents have in the lives of their children
- how, or if, both parents should stay in touch with their children
- what is the role of a new partner in the lives of the children.

The publication may be viewed on www.treoir.ie or ordered from Treoir on 01-6700120.



Eilis Walsh, Chairwoman of Treoir, Pat Bennett CEO FSA, Mary Lloyd Assistant Principal FSA, Margot Doherty Assistant CEO of Treoir and Author

Members@Treoir

A very successful members meeting was held on 2nd October at which Dara Breathnach from the Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform gave an input on the Partnership Bill 2008. The presentation was most lucid and informative and many questions regarding the Bill were answered.

The next Members @ Treoir meeting will be held on 26th November on Budget 2009 changes. Refreshments will be served at 3.30 with the meeting starting at 4pm. RSVP info@treoir.ie. All members welcome.

If members have any topic that they would like to be discussed at future members' meetings please do not hesitate to contact Margaret Dromey, CEO.

Christmas Bonus

Social Welfare recipients will receive a bonus payment in early December. The bonus is equivalent to 100% of the normal weekly payment. In other words a lone parent with one child in receipt of the maximum rate of one parent family payment will receive an additional €221.80 in December.



CSO Statistics - Yearly Summary 2007

There were 70,620 births registered in 2007. There were 23,170 births registered as outside marriage in 2007. This accounted for 32.8% of all births, a decrease of 0.4% on 2006. The highest percentage of births outside marriage occurred in Limerick City at 55%, while the lowest percentage was in Galway County at 21%. A total of 2,251 unmarried teenagers had babies in 2007. This accounted for 9.7% of all births outside marriage in 2007.

Births registered as outside marriage, by age of mother for the year 2007

Age of Mother	Births Reg	Same Address	% at same Address
Under 20	2251	402	18
20-24	6764	2860	42
25-29	6960	4099	59
30-34	4348	2744	63
35-39	2302	1474	64
*40 and over	545	348	65
TOTAL	23170	11932	51

*includes 9 where age not stated

BUDGET 2009

Child Benefit

From January 2009 Child Benefit for 18 year olds will be €83. Payment of Child Benefit for 18 years olds will cease altogether from 2010.

Special alleviating measures are being introduced to compensate for this. Families on Social Welfare payments will receive an additional €15 per week in the Qualified Child Payment for children aged 18. Compensatory measures will also be applied, where appropriate, to Family Income Supplement and the Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance Scheme in respect of 18 year olds. These arrangements will apply until 2011.

There will be no increase in Child Benefit in 2009.

1 child	€166
2 children	€332
3 children	€535

One-Parent Family Payment (OFP)

In January 2009 the weekly personal rate of OFP increases by €6.50 to €204.30. The weekly qualified child rate increases by €2 to €26. The maximum rate of OFP for a parent with one child will be €230.30 per week.

As outlined above there will be a special increase in the case of a qualifying child of 18 years of age. The total rate for a qualified child of 18 will come to €41(€26+€15) per week which includes the special payment of €15 in lieu of the reduction in Child Benefit.

In January 2011 this increased rate will cease to apply.

Family Income Supplement (FIS)

From January 2009 the Family Income Supplement weekly income threshold will increase by €10 per week per child.

Family Size Income Limit

1 child	€500
2 children	€590
3 children	€685

An additional payment of €15 per week will be paid where appropriate in respect of an 18 year old child to a family who qualifies for FIS. This arrangement will apply until January 2011.

Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance

From June 2009 the additional income disregard to qualify for the Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance will be increased by €50 per week from €100 to €150

The Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance will be increased by €215 to €520 per annum for a qualified child aged 18 from June 2009.

This transitional payment will cease in January 2011.

Early Childcare Supplement

From 2009 the Early Childcare Supplement will be paid for children up to the age of five and a half. It will no longer be payable up to the age of six.

This will become a monthly payment (€92 per eligible child) instead of quarterly.

Maternity Benefit

The minimum rate of Maternity Benefit will be increased by €8.50 per week to €230.30 per week from January 2009.

Fuel Allowance

The Fuel Allowance will increase by €2 to €20 per week from April 2009. The number of weeks covered by the fuel allowance is to be extended by 2 weeks to 32 weeks from April next year.

Rent /Mortgage Interest Supplement

From January 2009 the minimum contribution for people in receipt of Rent Supplement or Mortgage Interest Supplement will increase from €13 to €18 per week.

Income Tax

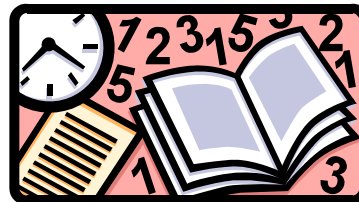
The Standard Single Rate Tax Band will increase by €1,000 for a single person to €36,400. There will be no changes in Tax Credits.

Income Levy

There will be a new income levy effective from 1 January 2009. The levy will apply at the rate of 1% to gross income up to €100,000 per year. This levy will not apply to incomes up to the level of the national minimum wage.

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WEBSITES/PUBLICATIONS



www.affordablehome.ie, this website is the first online initiative for affordable home ownership with information on the availability of affordable homes nationwide. It was created in collaboration between the Affordable Homes Partnership and all local authorities.

www.studentfinance.ie, this website is an initiative of the Higher Education Authority(HEA) and is a user friendly source of information on financial support

for further and higher education. It provides information on course fees and details on eligibility requirements for free fees. In addition, you will find out all you need to know about other sources of assistance for students, such as the Fund for Students with Disabilities, the Back to Education Allowance, the Student Assistance Fund and the Millennium Partnership Fund.

Civil Legal Aid in Ireland – Information for the Profession

This information booklet by the Law Society's Legal Aid Taskforce was launched in September 2008. In producing this book, the Task Force worked collaboratively with other bodies that have, for many years, worked tirelessly on access to justice issues, including the Legal Aid Board and the Community Law Centres. The publication brings together practical details about existing schemes of legal aid and assistance so that those entitled to the benefit of the schemes can avail of them. The information in the publication will be of interest to members of the legal profession, community activists, NGOs and members of the public. To obtain a copy contact the Law Society on 01-6724800 or download at www.lawsociety.ie.

LIFE's Crisis Pregnancy Counselling Service in Tullamore has closed.

Meeting the Needs of One Parent Families in Limerick City

A report to inform the development of integrated responses to lone parent needs.

In this research, with the involvement of the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Pobal, OPEN, Family Support Agency, Paul Partnership Limerick, South and Mid West Community Development Support Agency Ltd., the emerging themes were Social Welfare, Health and Well Being, Meeting diverse Needs, Childcare, Housing, Community and Environment, Training and Education, work, Information, Supports and Attitudes within Services. The Report highlights the key policy issues that emerged and makes recommendations for future action. For further information contact Pobal on 012400700, www.pobal.ie

Barnardos National Database of Parenting Programmes 2009

This Database provides information for parents who wish to attend a Parenting Course in their area, including details on course content, resources available, contact details for course facilitators, times and venues. When the update is complete the Database will be available to search on Barnardos website. If you deliver a Parenting Programme and would like your details to be included on the database, contact Martina Dumpleton of Barnardos Training and Resource Service on 01-4530355 Ext 413 or

martina.dumpleton@barnardos.ie

Courts Service Annual Report 2007

Guardianship

	Applications Dealt With	Granted	Refused	Withdrawn/ Struck Out
2007	1962	1258	51	653
2006	1742	1268	42	432

Maintenance

	Applications Dealt With	Granted	Refused	Withdrawn/ Struck Out
2007	2831	1981	56	794
2006	2652	1860	42	750