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OMBUDSMAN WARNING OVER MAJOR FAILURES IN CHILDREN'S HEALTHCARE

Mark Ward TD has said a letter sent to the HSE by the Children's Ombudsman warning of major failures in upholding the rights of children to access healthcare deserves an urgent and credible response.

The Dublin Mid-West TD said "The letter that the Children's Ombudsman Niall Muldoon sent to the HSE is yet another damning indictment on how health services are provided to some of the most vulnerable children in the state. "We have got to the stage where successive Governments have not provided the appropriate and timely health care to our children.

"We have a situation where there are over 4,500 children waiting on a first-time appointment with the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). "When this Government was formed in 2020 there was just over

2,000 children on the waiting list for CAMHS. This equates to a staggering 109% increase under this Government's watch.

"The Ombudsman rightly points out that there were too many children waiting beyond six months for an initial appointment. In fact, information I received states that we now have over 700 children waiting over a year for this initial appointment". "CAMHS is only for a small percentage of the children's population, for those with moderate to acute mental health problems. However, if children do not get the early intervention they need, they are going to need the more acute services.

"The Government has allowed a situation to develop that has led to over 19,000 children waiting on an appointment for primary care psychology with over 6,000 of these

children waiting over a year.

"Information I received in response to a Parliamentary Question stated that Mental Health National Clinical Programmes did not receive any funding for new posts to expand clinical programme services in 2023. "There is no urgency, ability or understanding by this Government to fix the problems they created in children's mental health care.

"Sinn Fein have proposed several solutions which the Government have ignored. "Now you have the Children's Ombudsman joining the calls from parents and opposition parties about the dereliction of duty to Children by the State. This letter is shocking and deserves an urgent, credible and serious response outlining how these unsustainable situation will be resolved.

POPULAR CORKAGH PARK URBAN MARKET RETURNS



Pictured Cllr Gilligan & daughter Chloe at the Urban Market Corkagh Park

Cllr Gilligan has expressed delight at the return of the Urban market in Corkagh Park, he said "There will be live music, family entertainment as well as authentic international cuisine. Residents have been asking for weeks about this, technically summer is over, but I am hopeful we have a few more weeks of sunshine left. The dates run from 27 Aug, 11am-5pm Sundays to 15 Oct. Trader application forms are also open for submission. SDCC have chosen Vintage Flair to operate the Urban Picnic as in previous years. Both SDCC & Vintage Flair have worked hard and put a lot of time and effort into this and I wish them every success in the coming weeks."

FINE GAEL ★

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OUTDOOR MARKETS IN CORKAGH PARK

AUGUST TO OCTOBER 2023

South Dublin County Council is delighted to announce that outdoor food and craft markets will return to Corkagh Park for 2023. The offerings available include street food, crafts, artisan produce and live entertainment, providing all the ingredients for a fun-filled family day out.

After a popular run in 2022, Urban Picnic is returning to Corkagh Park in Clondalkin on Sunday the 27th August, and will operate from 11am to 5pm each Sunday up to

15th October. Urban Picnic will be located near the playground in the park, visible from the car park at St. John's Entrance.

This year's markets will launch with an Intercultural Food and Craft event on Sunday 27th August. This event will have a wide variety of global food, craft, entertainment, and family activities. South Dublin County Council and Urban Picnic are delighted to be able to build on the success of last year's markets, with

such an exciting event to launch the 2023 programme.

Mayor of South Dublin County Council, Cllr Alan Edge said "This is great news for the community of Clondalkin and the surrounding areas. It is fantastic to be able to provide such a valuable service to residents and visitors to our County. Corkagh Park is a beautiful location, and the markets add a vibrancy and dynamic that has been highly regarded in previous years. I encourage the local communities to come along to support and experience all these markets have to offer."

The live entertainment at Corkagh Park markets is being supported through the South Dublin Live programme, a South Dublin County Arts Office initiative. Orla Scannell, Arts Officer said "The scheme is supporting both seasoned and emerging acts to bring live performance

directly to the community in indoor and outdoor spaces throughout the county. It's a great opportunity for performers and audiences alike to enjoy the wonderful talent on offer in South Dublin." Intercultural Food and Craft event is being supported by South Dublin County Council's Community Department. Joe Lumumba, Administrative Officer said, "The Outdoor Markets provide communities the opportunity to enjoy food and craft in a relaxed environment in our parks. The Intercultural Food and Craft event will afford members of the local community the prospect of sampling food from various cultures".

The markets will promote local enterprise and develop a sense of community by utilising where possible local producers and crafts people, including Local Enterprise Office South Dublin (LEO) start-up clients. "LEO

South Dublin is delighted to collaborate with Dublin's Outdoors and offer our new food producers the opportunity to sell and meet with our visitors at these markets. The feedback to their food products is greatly valued by the producers many of whom will go on to grow their businesses with the support from their Local Enterprise Office." said Tom Rooney, Head of Enterprise at Local

Enterprise Office South Dublin.

Outdoor markets support the promotion of the local community, enhance the attraction of our parks as valuable amenities, and improve the tourism offering in the County, which is why South Dublin County Council and Dublin's Outdoors are excited to welcome you back to Corkagh Park markets for 2023.



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O'CONNOR CALLS FOR PROGRESS ON SPRINGFIELD HOUSING

Local Councillor, Charlie O'Connor, has called on the Council to ensure that progress continues to be made on the Age Friendly Housing Projects in Springfield Estate. As a long-time campaigner for housing in the area, he is most

anxious that these projects, first proposed in 2018, would be completed and allocated.

He recently raised the matter again with senior Council Management and was given the following detailed report "The construction of

this development is being managed by Clúid Housing. Upon completion the new age friendly homes will be allocated to persons on the Council's housing/transfer lists.

It was originally programmed that Maplewood would complete before Fernwood. At present, we have been advised that Fernwood will be completed by November 2023. For Maplewood, whilst it was programmed to deliver this month, due to issues affected by utility connections, it is now estimated that Maplewood will be completed in September. Clúid are working closely with utility providers and the contractor to ensure insofar as possible that this is achieved.

The project was originally tendered in 2019. Since then, construction costs have significantly increased due to Covid-19, Brexit, supply chain issues, rising interest rates and inflation exacerbated by the Ukraine war. Cost monitoring is ongoing in respect of this project taking into account any unexpected conditions

arising on site. Clúid have also had the additional complication arising from the requirement to terminate the original contract and to re-tender the construction completion works with the associated resultant increase in price.

The Council have been advised that it is now expected that Maplewood will deliver in September;

the buildings will be complete at the end of August and utilities will be connected in September at which time they can be made available to the new residents. Fernwood is expected to be completed in November as previously indicated."

According to Charlie O'Connor, there is huge interest in both

developments and he is now regularly contacted by those who have applied for the housing and are anxious that the allocations process would be completed.

He has added that he will raise the matter formally again at the Tallaght Area Committee meeting in September and will seek assurances that there will be no further delays.

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A QUICK BUZZ COULD BE YOUR LAST

Cllr Francis Timmons is warning parents to watch out for extremely dangerous nitrous oxide canisters that are being widely used by young people seeking a quick buzz.

He said "Abuse of nitrous oxide by young people and teenagers is common across many parts of our area. 'Silver bullets', small steel capsules that contain the gas, are often found by local clean up groups".

Clondalkin Councillor Francis Timmons continued "These gas canisters are being sniffed around locally a lot lately - they are extremely dangerous and can lead to death just like lighter gas, tipex and glue before.

Now that school is out for the Summer, the risk of young people getting into situations where nitrous oxide is being used increases, my worry is that some young person will die or/and others could be left with serious health issues, All parents should be talking to their children about drug use and the dangers'

Cllr Timmons concluded "It will be too late when something serious happens, I ask all parents and young people to educate themselves on the dangers of nitrous oxide. Make sure you know what your kids are doing when out and warn them of the huge danger involved for a quick buzz."

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NURSING HOME RESIDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN NATIONAL MUSIC PERFORMANCE

Nursing Home residents will participate in a special national music performance to mark Nursing Homes Week 2023. The Music Speaks broadcast, to take place on the 21st of August,

will encompass performances from over 100 nursing home residents from over 30 nursing homes. Featuring from a local nursing home will be Marymount Care Centre, Lucan - Rita

Lyons will sing Boys from the County Armagh and Madeline McQuillan will sing the Fields of Athenry. Nursing homes across the country will be hosting music-themed celebrations Monday 21st to Sunday 27th August to mark Nursing Homes Week 2023.

residents to mark Nursing Homes Week 2023 and our Music Speaks festival. Nursing homes are home to truly very special people, who are tremendous characters and have a rich legacy in song and music.



Pictured Niamh Kavanagh and the Mobile Music Machine perform at Asgard Lodge Nursing Home in Arklow. Pic credit; Julien Behal Photography

The Music Speaks performance will be broadcast to over 400 nursing homes with 25,000 residents across the country and available for the broader public to watch via NHI.ie. It features renditions of classics such as Danny Boy, Molly Malone, When Irish Eyes Are Smiling, Can't Help Falling in Love, You Are My Sunshine, Que Sera, Sera, intertwined with performances by residents of different instruments, including piano, accordion, bodhrán. The Music Speaks performance is a highlight of the broader online Music Speaks festival which will mark the national celebration of nursing home care.

Our Music Speaks performance encompasses one resident who is 100 years of age playing accordion, a 98-year-old delivering an excellent piano solo, a 95-year old singing Boys from the County Armagh. Residents love to sing and perform and the Music Speaks extravaganza honours the talents of the very special people in our society who are nursing home residents.

The Music Speaks festival will include performances from Mobile Music Machine with Niamh Kavanagh, Sive, Ross Scanlon performs John McCormack, John Spillane. Further, performances from the Irish Traditional Music Archive will be opened up to nursing home residents and an online discussion will be hosted discussing the impact of music on nursing home residents.

“Music fulfils an absolutely integral role in nursing home care, providing comfort to residents, stimulating memories, bringing them together, and it gives great joy and happiness. The festival we have created is truly unique, bringing residents together for a very special range of performances and events over the course of a week.

It will feature outstanding performers who supported nursing home residents during Covid19, a trip down memory lane for residents via the Irish Traditional Music Archive, and a discussion on the impact of music in our nursing homes. We wish residents and staff a very happy Nursing Homes Week 2023.”

Tadhg Daly, Nursing Homes Ireland CEO states: “We are thrilled to have brought together a very special performance of nursing home

Visit NHI.ie for further information.

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DESPAIR OVER DELAY OF STATION OPENING

A Dublin Mid-West Councillor has expressed both disappointment and concern being conveyed by residents in Lucan, at news recently that Kishogue Train Station will not open as expected by the end of the year. Cllr Derren Ó Brádaigh was speaking following a response he received from the National Transport Authority regarding an update on the planned opening of the already delayed station.

Cllr Ó Brádaigh said “The news received on Monday last week is not the response anyone wanted to hear. This particularly applies to the large swathe of commuters already experiencing real difficulties getting to work on time and depending on an over-strained peak hour bus service to make vitally important transport connections for hospital appointments, getting to school and college and arriving at other important daily destinations”.

“Fifteen years have now passed since the station was initially built, with the original cost of construction €6.35m. Anxious commuters and the public generally that live in a rapidly developing Lucan landscape, were told

last year that the station would have to undergo upgrades, including a lift replacement, internal and external wall works, renewing all mechanical, electrical and telecom cables, up to date signage, paths and paving - the further projected cost of these works being in the region of €3.8m.

In 2021 I received detail stating that ‘assessments’ were taking place with a series of inspections, conditions surveys / studies and stakeholders were being consulted on the requirements for bringing the station into service. Works were needed by Iarnród Éireann in the interim before opening.

Adding further, Cllr Ó Brádaigh said “The explanation provided this week states that Iarnród Éireann has undertaken a tender process to appoint contractors to complete the works required to open the station. This involves discussions with the Council and relevant landowners to discuss the temporary and permanent access arrangements to the station, with anticipated tenders still to be awarded. It is now expected that the works at

the station will take 6 more months to complete and therefore we won’t see the station open until Spring 2024.

Cllr Ó Brádaigh also said “My colleague Mark Ward TD has also been raising the need for Kishogue Train Station to open its doors as a matter of urgency, and has submitted parliamentary questions seeking clarification on any cost overruns in light of this news.

Cllr Ó Brádaigh concluded “The population of Lucan has increased dramatically, continues to grow and is expected to rise significantly in the immediate to longer term. This is a vital piece of infrastructure and residents in Lucan were told that the delays to date were as a result of strategic planning. It was stated that the station, forming part of the Kildare Route Project, would be delivered in tandem with the Clonburris SDZ and housing development. The construction of Clonburris Phase One situated closest to this very facility off the R136 is due to commence very shortly and it is now an imperative that this hugely important transport facility opens ahead of the completion of these homes.”

TWENTY-FIVE IRISH SPORTS CLUBS TO BENEFIT FROM €125,000 FUNDING INITIATIVE

Names have been announced of the 25 sports clubs chosen to receive funding under this year’s Texaco Support for Sport initiative. In its third year, the scheme is hosted and organised by Valero Energy (Ireland) Limited, the company that markets fuel in Ireland under the Texaco brand, with the judging process overseen by former Irish rugby international and well-known broadcaster, Donncha O’Callaghan.

Of the clubs receiving funding this year, €50,000 will be divided amongst six clubs devoted to GAA sports and four soccer clubs. In addition, a further €25,000 is shared equally amongst three basketball clubs and two tennis clubs. Further disbursements will see €50,000 being divided amongst 10 additional clubs whose disciplines include archery, athletics, bowls, cricket, handball, hockey, gymnastics, kayaking, rugby and sub-aqua - all receiving €5,000 each.

This year, regrettably, no qualifying entry

was received in County Carlow and for that reason, it was not possible to disperse the €5,000 award that would have been presented to a club in that county.

Congratulating the winners, James Twohig, Director of Ireland Operations, Valero Energy (Ireland) Limited referred to what he called ‘the important contribution’ that sports clubs make within their communities and throughout Irish society as a whole. “Our initiative provides vital funding to clubs that have an important place in, and seek to enhance their contribution to, their local communities. Since its inception, we’ve distributed almost €400,000 to a wide variety of sports clubs throughout the country which has greatly helped them to continue to play an essential and positive role in their communities, something of which we are very proud,” Mr. Twohig added.

Entries for the 2024 Texaco Support for Sport initiative will open in the Autumn.

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CIRCLE K ANNOUNCES NEW 'BRICKS FOR CARE' FUNDRAISING INITIATIVE

Circle K has recently announced that a new 'Bricks for Care' creative fundraising initiative will run at 22 participating sites nationwide.

From 2nd August - 31st October inclusive, customers can donate and recycle pre-loved LEGO at participating Circle K stores nationwide, including three in Dublin, which campaign partners, DPD, will bring to Jack and Jill boutiques so that they can be re-sold, generating much-needed funds for the charity. The Jack and Jill Children's Foundation is an Irish children's charity that funds and delivers vital in-home nursing, respite support, and end-of-life care for children from birth to six years of age who have highly complex and life-limiting medical conditions.

There are currently over 400 children under the care of the Jack and Jill Children's Foundation in communities right across the country and the charity's mission is to empower parents to care for their child at home by funding and delivering nursing, respite and advocacy support, because there is no care like home care for a Jack and Jill child.

Commenting on the initiative, Gillian McGowran, Director of Market Development at Circle K Ireland said "Following our last fundraising initiative for the Jack and Jill Children's Foundation, 'When you fill,

support Jack and Jill', which raised €105,000 for the charity in June, I'm delighted to announce our latest fundraising campaign 'Bricks for Care' today. By donating and recycling any pre-loved LEGO at a Circle K, not only will the LEGO go a worthy new home, but all funds raised will support local Jack and Jill families in the community.

We look forward to seeing customers arriving to stores with bags full of old LEGO to support Jack and Jill!"

Carmel Doyle, CEO of the Jack and Jill Children's Foundation added "We have a mammoth fundraising hill to climb every year, with only 25% of our €6.8M annual budget coming from the HSE. We are overwhelmed by the incredible €105,000 boost to our summer fundraising calendar through the brilliant Circle K 'When you fill, support Jack and Jill' campaign. All of Team Jack and Jill hugely appreciate and value the energy and innovation the team in Circle K have put into our partnership to date, and this Bricks for Care LEGO recycling initiative will no doubt be a winner with parents, grandparents, aunties, uncles and creche owners who are only too happy to dig under sofas and route out toy boxes to donate as many LEGO bricks as possible!

Huge thanks too, to our friends in DPD who will safely transfer the LEGO kindly

donated by the public from each of the 22 participating Circle K stores, eventually making it to one of our 14 Jack and Jill charity boutiques where it will be sold for €10 per kilo. We invite families, preschools, schools and businesses across the country to donate their pre-loved LEGO® to Jack and Jill, because every €18 raised through this LEGO recycling drive will fund one hour of home nursing care for a local family under our care. A win:win for all involved!"

Circle K ambassador, soccer star and broadcaster Stephanie Roche was at Circle K Stillorgan Road to officially launch the Bricks for Care campaign. Stephanie concluded

"The Jack and Jill Children's Foundation is very close to my heart, and I am delighted to support this brilliant initiative that makes it so easy for the public to support the charity's important work. From now until the end of October, by simply donating pre-loved LEGO at any of the 22 participating Circle K sites nationwide, you will be supporting the Jack and Jill Children's Foundation's work in providing care for families all across Ireland when they need it the most."

For terms and conditions, and a full list of participating sites in the 'Bricks for Care' recycling initiative, please visit www.circlek.ie.



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INTERIORS

RED C TRANSPORT SURVEY DATA SHOWS NEED FOR MAJOR GOVERNMENT INVESTMENT IN FREE, FREQUENT AND GREEN PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Gino Kenny TD said “The Department of Transport shows that the public are way ahead of the Government in understanding the need for an improved public transport if we are serious about

reducing emissions. This survey shows very clearly if reliable and frequent public transport was available, people would switch from car to bus or train.

The Government needs to get serious about tackling emissions, they have a public who want to avail of public transport, but there are no plans by the Government to make these necessary changes.

Since 2008 investment into public transport was reduced significantly by the previous and current Government, despite knowing back in 2008 that Ireland had the lowest subsidies for public transport in Europe. Dublin Bus has less buses than it did back in 2009, and instead of increasing the fleet of buses the NTA privatised some of the routes to Go Ahead. Dublin Bus made a cheaper offer for the now privatised bus routes, but profit for businesses was put ahead of the public interest”.

The Local TD continued “In my own constituency,

Lucan is one the areas that has been up and running with the NTA Bus Connects plans for quite some time. Although some bus services were welcome, linking Lucan to parts of Dublin not previously connected, the overall plan was a reduced bus service. At the time of public consultation, submissions, and a petition to stop the cutting of the 25-bus service was ignored. No plans should have ever cut a community from their bus service.

Since the Bus Connects plans have been implemented, feedback from the public falls on deaf ears. My office has written to the NTA numerous times with examples from constituents left waiting long periods for a bus and many on the C routes find the bus is full by the time it gets to them. Requests to increase the frequency of the P29 route

are also ignored. If the NTA are serious about improving a service, feedback on Bus Connects plans already implemented need to be taken seriously to resolve problems with poor service”.

Mark Kerins Lucan PBP representative commented “Bus Connects is spun as an improved bus service, but a plan that privatises routes, cuts some communities from their bus service, and expects people especially elderly and disabled persons to transfer buses to get to a destination is not an improved service.

With a public who want to switch from a car for public transport the Government needs to make the radical changes required for the public interest and environment. There is an opportunity with Budget 2024 for the Government to invest in free reliable and green transport”.

HOUSING ADAPTATION GRANTS MUST BE INCREASED IN LINE WITH MARKET COSTS

Housing adaptation grants must be increased in line with market costs, a local TD has said. Deputy Emer Higgins, party spokesperson on equality, has called for Government to re-examine the rate at which the grants are paid to older people and people with disabilities in the run up to the Budget, to help them to make their homes more accessible.

Deputy Higgins said: “I know from my office that people who avail of these grants find them massively beneficial in terms of making their homes more accessible, suitable and comfortable. “We all know the cost of doing work has increased dramatically and what has not increased is the value of the grants towards that cost. “What’s more, different local authorities are implementing the grant scheme differently and many do not pay contractors for a number of months, which is putting

contractors off taking on these much-needed projects.

“In the lead-up to the Budget, I’m calling on my colleagues in Government to re-examine the rate at which the grants are paid to older people and people with disabilities, to ensure they have access to meaningful grants when they need them to make their homes more accessible, suitable and comfortable. “That also means talking to local authorities about how they deliver this scheme.

“Housing adaptations and aides can be the difference between someone having to move to full-time care or being able to stay in their own home and maintain their independence. “The rising cost-of-living shouldn’t be a barrier to someone being able to live comfortably in their own home”, Deputy Higgins concluded.

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QUICKTIPS IS TAKING THE LEAD IN PIONEERING CASHLESS TIPPING SOLUTIONS

South Dublin & Kildare-based QuickTips, founded by Mark Cox and Sean Kelly, is taking the lead in pioneering

cashless tipping solutions for the hospitality and service sectors.

offering a convenient way for customers to show their appreciation.

he faced. Managing his epilepsy while leading the company towards success is a testament to his resilience and determination. His commitment, supported by Co-Founder Sean Kelly, to both his health and the growth of QuickTips serves as an inspiration to us all.

benefits both service staff and customers alike. This technology-driven approach not only streamlines the tipping process but also enhances the overall service experience.



Their innovative tipping solution is becoming a top-tier solution, transforming the way tips are handled. Co-Founder Mark Cox shares his remarkable journey of turning a conversation piece into a business venture. This involved investigating what a solution might look like, raising capital, securing government investments, and taking the leap into the business full time - all while effectively managing the challenges posed by Mark's Epilepsy condition.

Mark shares the story behind the company's inception. What began as a simple conversation about improving tipping processes soon evolved into a full-fledged business venture. Along the way, QuickTips successfully secured capital investments, including support from government initiatives that recognized the potential of this transformative solution.

QuickTips, driven by the joint efforts of Mark and Sean is set to redefine the tipping landscape by providing a user-friendly, cashless tipping solution that

As QuickTips continues to make waves in the industry, we eagerly anticipate the positive impact Mark and Sean will bring to the world of hospitality and service. Keep an eye out for further updates as this remarkable journey unfolds.

QuickTips has emerged as a game-changer in the hospitality and service industries. By introducing a cutting-edge cashless tipping solution, they are addressing a critical aspect of the modern customer experience,

Mark Cox's dedication to QuickTips is even more remarkable considering the personal challenges

To follow QuickTips journey see their instagram on <https://instagram.com/quicktips.ie>

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PUBLICLY FUNDED ASSISTED HUMAN REPRODUCTION TREATMENT A SIGNIFICANT FIRST STEP

The introduction of publicly-funded Assisted Human Reproduction (AHR) treatment from September is hugely encouraging to couples trying to conceive, a local TD and Senator said, and a significant first step in State support.

“There are so many couples who are waiting to start their family and for many of them access to fertility care is just not affordable. Now,

many couples will be able to avail of access to free IVF through a State supported scheme,” said Deputy Emer Higgins.

“Eligible couples will be able to avail of this new scheme, hopefully, from September. So many constituents of mine come to me regularly seeking support and I hope this means they’ll be able to realise their dream of starting a family soon,”

continued Higgins. Eligible patients who have been referred by their GP to a Regional Fertility Hub will be entitled to 1 full IVF/ICSI Cycle, IUI Procedures - up to 3 for patients who have been clinically determined and Storage - 2 years’ storage of remaining embryos following successful completion of a cycle.

Senator Mary Seery-Kearney said “This much-needed financial support will be a relief to many couples for whom the financial burden of IVF is prohibitively expensive. I am particularly pleased that the State is covering the cost of embryo storage for two years post cycle, as one IVF cycle can result in embryos that can possibly be utilised at a future date.”

The eligibility criteria for couples wishing to avail of treatment was developed following extensive clinical consideration and expert consultation and takes into account a range of data from applicants, including Medical Indication for IVF or IUI, Age Limits, No. of Existing Children, No. of Previous IVF Cycles and BMI.

Deputy Emer Higgins said “The criteria for application to the scheme include a BMI range for the woman’s weight may be a challenge for those whose infertility is contributed to by polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS). PCOS is just as prevalent as endometriosis and one of the symptoms for some women is the propensity to put on weight easily. More research needs to be done to understand this illness and to advocate for sufferers.

“The Minister has signalled that when funding is provided in the future under the public fertility treatment plans, donor gametes will then be covered and I also welcome this. Under

this new treatment plan, opposite couples where the infertility is due to a lack of sperm or eggs and same sex female couples are excluded and I would like to see this being addressed.

“It also excludes couples where one has a genetic condition that they are advised not to proceed with their own gametes in the interests of the health of the baby. I would hope that any expansion of this treatment plan would cater for these groups, as well as those pursuing surrogacy - this support must be extended to all hoping to become

parents,” she added. Senator Mary Seery-Kearney continued: “I am expecting the Minister for Health to outline the provision for the Assisted Human Reproduction Regulatory Authority shortly - the establishment of which will pave the way to additional fertility services.

“Crucially this progress is dependent on amendments to the Assisted Human Reproduction Bill, which has been paused at committee stage in the Dáil to accommodate the inclusion of future international surrogacy and provisions for

the dealing with existing family life long legal relations between parents and children born via surrogacy both domestically and internationally. I am hopeful that this second announcement is coming before the end of September.

“This news is welcome for so many couples who have been on a long and often lonely road to parenthood. This is a very significant milestone and I look forward to building on this to support the many hopeful and deserving people out there who wish to become parents.”

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just the right job for you!

Many people enter this profession when they are looking for a career change or a fresh start. Phlebotomists often work part time (mornings) but some do work full time as well as weekends and holidays. Blood samples are usually collected in the mornings and then analysed in the Path Labs in the afternoon.

"We train people from all walks of life and all ages" explains Tasmin, office manager. "We've had shop

assistants, receptionists, beauticians and dental nurses, as well as telesales staff, unemployed, school leavers and the retired" says Tasmin.

Once on the healthcare career ladder ambition often drives people to progress to working in the labs and to other specialised departments. Internal promotion is much easier once you are "on the ladder" and have some experience.

Many hundreds of Geopace trainees are now working

as phlebotomists and a few have even chosen to work abroad where there is often a shortage and growing demand for this specialised skill.

If you like the idea of a career in healthcare then this may be just the job for you! Training takes place over two full days and culminates in the award of a nationally recognised certificate, accredited at Level 5 (advanced level) in Ireland.

"We practice on artificial arms", says Tasmin. "And all our students have a lot of fun learning. We get a great deal of satisfaction when we later learn that they are working in their local hospital or medical facility". The next

course in Dublin is scheduled for Saturday 16th & Sunday 17th September 2023.

If you would like to know

more about phlebotomy as a career or to book a place visit Geopace Training's website at www.geopace.com



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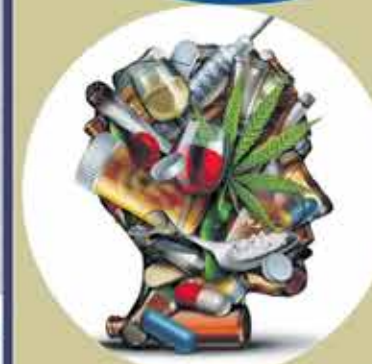


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NAVIGATE LEAVING CERT RESULTS STRESS WITH JIGSAW'S EXPERT TIPS

On Friday 25th August, young people up and down the country will be getting their Leaving Cert results. The wait beforehand can be an anxious and stressful time for many of them. Jigsaw, the youth mental health charity, is sharing helpful tips and advice gathered from their team of mental health professionals and other young people who have been there.

Sophie Kathryn, a Jigsaw youth advocate says "It can be a super stressful time waiting for exam results. Remember that whether you get the grades you hoped for or not, that it is OK. Try to recognise and celebrate what you have achieved, whether that is academically or not. You got through your exams. And that is a big deal. You deserve to be proud of that."

Katie O'Connor, a mental health clinician with Jigsaw's online team, says "At Jigsaw, the youth mental health charity, we often hear from young people about how waiting for exam results can be a particularly nervous and anxious time. Especially when there are a lots of expectations from themselves, family and friends. It is important to know it is very normal to feel this way. And that there are some things you can do to help handle those feelings. That's why we wanted to share some helpful tips and advice for anyone who might be feeling anxious about their results. You can also

visit jigsaw.ie/leaving-cert for more help and guidance. And on results day itself, you can chat with us online, either in a group or one-on-one, if you need someone to talk to."

If you, or someone you know, is feeling anxious and nervous about your results, here are Jigsaw's top tips to help: Remember to give yourself credit: No matter how your results turn out, you deserve to celebrate your hard work. And remember, your exams do not define your worth. Take your time: Moving forward is personal. Don't rush. Give yourself space to figure things out. Check in with yourself now and again about how you are feeling. If you are worried or stressed sometimes, that is OK. It is normal to feel that way. But don't be afraid to seek help if you feel you need it. Don't compare: Everyone's unique. Don't measure yourself by others' achievements. What matters is your journey, not what others are doing. Talk it out: Don't hold your worries in. Talk to friends or family. You're not alone, others will be feeling the same way. Plan for both possibilities: Exams don't always go as planned. Research what happens if things don't work out, but focus on the positives too. Remember, there's a lot of different paths to reach your destination. And the most direct one isn't always the best. Keep your routine: Stay busy to distract yourself from stress. Do an activity that you enjoy to help take your mind off the results. This could be

going for a walk, heading to the gym, or meeting up with friends. Enjoying your usual hobbies and maintaining your routine can really help. Stay grounded: Social media can make you feel pressured. Don't get caught up in comparing results. Your success is your own, no matter what others share. Get plenty of rest: Sleep is good for you. Make sure your mind and body have plenty of time to rest and unwind. If your mind is really whirling and keeping you awake, it can help to write down some of your thoughts to get them out and work through them. Make it easy on yourself on the day: If you are going to get your results online, it can help to have logins written down somewhere that you can easily access. If you are going into school to pick them up, check what time you are supposed to arrive at. Results day will be hectic enough, so try not to add any extra stress for yourself. And Get support on the day: Steady yourself for a mix of emotions. You might be sad, overwhelmed, happy or excited all at once or throughout the day. This is totally normal, and it is helpful to acknowledge all that you're feeling. Think about how to help yourself when you're stressed. Would getting out for a walk, chatting to a friend or meditation be helpful for you?

For more advice and support in the run up to the Leaving Cert results, you can visit jigsaw.ie/leaving-cert

AN COSÁN IS THE PERFECT STARTING POINT FOR ADULTS RETURNING TO EDUCATION

An Cosán is the perfect starting point for adults returning to education. The friendly team at its community education centre in Jobstown, Tallaght, welcomes people from all backgrounds and nationalities, including early school leavers, parents and migrants.

An Cosán's Access Education courses are ideal for adults looking to upskill for their ideal job, improve their wellbeing, or progress on to further education. Many participants progress to one of An Cosán's Further or Higher Education programmes.

Anyone interested in returning to education is encouraged to attend An Cosán's Open Day on 6th September 2023 where they will have the opportunity to find out about the wide range of Access courses on offer. They're all

free of charge! As well as the ever popular ones, like Return To Learning, Personal Development, Technology for the Terrified, and English for Speakers of Other Languages, there are several exciting new courses on offer this year!

Women's Tales in the Digital Age will empower women to uncover their story and bring it to life through video, while Discover Your Path will support those seeking to return to the workplace in identifying their skills and strengths and taking positive steps to reach their goals.

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CELEBRATING YOUNG VOICES FOR INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DAY



Pictured L-R Adam Donovan, Uyi Austine, Deirdre Duffy, Sarah McElroy, Denise Harding, Leanne Donovan and Liam Quilmore as Community Foundation Ireland celebrated young voices for International Youth Day on the 12th August with partners and supporters. The Foundation supports groups working on climate with Youth Day marked with new grants of €75,000. Pic Credit Naoise Culhane.

OPEN DAYS
Monday 4th September 2023
1pm to 4pm
Wednesday 17th Jan 2024
10am to 4pm

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YOUNG PEOPLE FROM DUBLIN ATTEND YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

350 teenagers from around the world gathered in Maynooth, Co. Kildare, for Foróige's Leadership for Life Youth Conference. The conference, which happened recently on the grounds of NUI Maynooth, brings together young people from the USA, Ukraine, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, South Africa and Ireland to learn how to become leaders in their own lives. During the week-long conference the teens learn crucial life skills such as empathy, decision making, problem solving, communication skills, critical thinking and team work.

Seán Campbell, CEO of Foróige, said "The conference gives young people the chance to not just learn from the speakers and facilitators, but to learn from each other in a fun and safe environment.

This week is not only about creating new relationships and learning new skills; it's about transforming as an individual. I'm continually in awe of what young people can achieve when given the opportunity and it's weeks like these that give them that opportunity."

When opening the event Ben Dempsey (16) from Narraghmore Foróige Club, Co. Kildare, said "I'm so excited for the week ahead, it's my second year here and I learnt so much from taking part in the Foróige Leadership for Life programme last year. I'm really excited to meet all of the international delegates and learn about their experiences and lives."

As part of the week-long conference, the delegates meet inspirational guest speakers including: Ashwin

Chacko, an Indian author, illustrator and motivational speaker based in Dublin. His mission is to champion creativity and empower people to find their inner spark through his art, books, talks & workshops. Norah Patten, an Irish aeronautical engineer and an award winning STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) advocate from Ballina, County Mayo. And Jack Kavanagh, one of Ireland's leading speakers focusing on Mental & Emotional Wellbeing and DiverseAbilities.

When asked about speaking at this year's event Ashwin Chacko commented, "Curiosity and Creativity go hand in hand. Curiosity pushes us to observe the world around us and ask questions. Creativity allows us to form answers for those questions and bring

a novel perspective to the circumstance. These are essential skills for Individuals and teams to succeed."

Jack Kavanagh stated "I'm

really excited to join so many aspiring young leaders for the Foróige Leadership For Life conference. With young people coming from all corners of the country

and abroad the atmosphere is bound to be charged with energy and having seen the agenda I would love to be partaking in the whole program myself!"



Pictured: Ash Kennedy, Kye O'Brien, Alix Brady, Sam Beggs, Linda McCann, Michael McCann, Ceara O'Moore, Anna Finnegan, Grace Quinn, Ciara Conroy, Hannah Norton, Sean McCabe, Jephson Oghenetano and Aaron Curtis.

COLLEGE CHOICE - A DIFFERENT PATHWAY WITH BIFE

Bray Institute of Further Education (BIFE) are full steam ahead preparing for the new academic year and to prove it, they are launching their new BA (Hons) Degree in Immersive Media Production. This level 8 degree programme will be run in conjunction with the IADT, the first two years in BIFE with the final two years being run in the IADT. This exciting new degree will encompass various forms of media including virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR) and 360-degree video. No CAO points are required to do this degree course. You just simply apply to BIFE directly at www.bife.ie. BIFE will not charge any tuition fees for this degree course but do hurry as places are limited.

While in many cases students, schools and parents see the CAO as the 'be all and end all' for those seeking third-level education, nothing could be further from the truth according to Gabriel Allen, deputy principal at Bray Institute of Further Education (BIFE). "Over recent years many new avenues, like the Immersive Media Production Degree above, have opened up to students to enable them to pursue their dream career via a different route."

BIFE's Open Day on Monday 28th August from 10am to 2pm will showcase the large variety of courses they have in the College ranging from Art & Design, Media, Sport, Psychology, Body Therapies, Science, Business, Nursing, Theatre/Dance and much more. "We have over 70 full-time courses to choose from, all progressing on to Higher Education Institutes in Ireland and abroad", according to Deputy Principal Gabriel Allen.

He added, "Further Education offers a

learner, who may not have achieved the required CAO points, the opportunity to gain advanced entry onto honours degree programmes."

The huge range of courses available at BIFE offers learners fabulous opportunities, not only for those looking for additional skills or hoping to go directly into employment, but also as an alternative route on to a college course in a university or institute of technology in Ireland or abroad.

Over the past few years, graduates of BIFE have achieved honours degrees across a wide range of programmes, opening up a myriad of career opportunities from graphic design to performing arts to psychology.

This year BIFE will offer Higher National Diplomas in the following:

- Fine Art - Art Practice
- Acting
- Dance
- TV & Film production
- Music Production
- Music Performance
- Traditional Irish Music
- Graphic Design

As Gabriel Allen explained, "These eight courses will allow graduating students to proceed to the final year of an honours Degree Programme in Ireland or Britain if that is their ultimate ambition."

This year, the Institute has launched several new courses at levels 5 & 6:

- Soccer Coaching in collaboration with

Liverpool FC Level 5

- Occupational Therapy Assistant Level 5
- Dog Obedience & Training - Start Your Own Business Level 6
- Payroll & Office Administration Level 5
- Hospitality & Business Management Level 6
- English Language and IT Skills for International Students Level 5
- English Language and Business for International Students Level 5
- English Language and Healthcare Studies for International Students Level 5
- English Language and General Studies for International Students Level 5

Work Experience is a vital part of the BIFE courses and now all students in the College have the opportunity to complete a 3-week or a 3-month work placement

abroad in countries such as Spain, Portugal, Italy, Finland, Malta or Czechia under the Erasmus+ Programme which is sponsored by the European Union. This is a terrific opportunity for BIFE students, not only to gain valuable work experience in a European country but also to experience a different culture and to broaden their horizons.

Allen assured that there are many opportunities for mature students to study and progress at BIFE. "All courses have valuable certification and offer progression routes to Higher Education, yet you don't need CAO points to study at Bray Institute."

To discover more about the courses available at BIFE, prospective students are invited to attend their 'Open Day' on Monday 28th August from 10am to 2pm.

Full details of the above courses are available on our website www.bife.ie. Students can apply online on the website by clicking on the "Apply Now" button. There is no application fee.

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- HE Social Studies & Community Care

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- FH Barbering
- FD Nail Technician & Salon Administration
- FC Fashion Theatre and Media Make-Up
- FG Hairdressing - Senior Stylist

SCIENCE

- HS Forensic Science - Pre-University
- HK Science - Pre-University
- HZ Food Science with Dietetics - Pre-University
- JF Pharmacy Assistant
- JJ Pharmacy Technician
- HU Applied Ecology and Biodiversity Studies
- LJ Brewing and Distilling Technology

BUSINESS

- JA Business Management & Administration
- JC Business Management - Advanced Certificate
- JD Accounting Technician
- LD Business Tourism Advanced Certificate
- SD Legal Administration Pre-University Law
- SF Medical Administration (Mornings Only)
- SE IT & Office Administration (Mornings Only)
- EE Security & Pre-Garda
- NEW** JJ Payroll & Office Administration

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- HH Healthcare Assistant & Activity Coordinator
- HP Occupational Therapy Assistant
- JK Emergency Care Studies (Pre-paramedic, Fire & Ambulance)
- HL Applied Psychology

FILM & COMPUTER GAMING

- MA TV & Film Production
- MB TV & Film Production - Advanced
- NEW** MC MC Immersive Media Production Degree
- ME 3D Game Design
- MG Games Development

ACTING & DANCE

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- PB Acting for Stage & Screen Advanced
- PD Dance Technique, Performance and Choreography
- PE Dance Technique, Performance and Choreography - Advanced

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