Comprehensive Review of Expenditure

Vote 43

Report of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs

11 November 2011

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Chapter 1 - Introduction & Overview

Establishment of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs
The decision of the Government to establish a Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) indicates a clear commitment to improving the lives of children and young people. The Department was established with effect from 3 June 2011 and unites a number of important areas of policy and provision for children and young people which include the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (OMCYA), the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB) and the Family Support Agency (FSA).

From January 2012, responsibility for detention schools and remand places, under the Irish Youth Justice Service (IYJS), will transfer to DCYA from the Department of Justice and Equality (DJE). In addition, from November 2011, responsibility for the Family Mediation Service, previously administered by the Family Support Agency, transferred from DCYA to DJE. When the proposed Child and Family Support Agency (CFSA) is established under DCYA, funding relating to children and family support services will transfer from the HSE Vote to DCYA.

The establishment of the DCYA provides opportunities for streamlining services and the achievement of greater efficiencies in terms of programmes and agencies. The areas which have been brought together into DCYA have been selected with this in mind so that agencies and programmes relevant to children and families can be streamlined into more effective delivery mechanisms.

The areas of which the Department is composed, previously resided in four departments: Health; Education and Skills; Justice and Equality; and Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs. The transfer of staff and non-pay provision from these departments has taken place on an actual cost basis – no historical or unattributed funding is contained in the Vote provision as might be the case in other departments' budgets, due to vacancies or an established pattern of under-spending on certain sub-heads against budget provision. As an entirely new department the immediate challenge is to develop an efficient corporate infrastructure (e.g. Finance, HR, press & parliamentary), where none previously existed. This is being done on a least cost basis through the use of shared services. However, there are certain unavoidable establishment and ongoing resource requirements if the operational functioning of the Department is not to be compromised.

More broadly the enhanced priority and mandate for children's services, which underpins the Government's decision to establish a dedicated department, needs to inform the Comprehensive Review of Expenditure (CRE) process. DCYA welcomes the potential of the CRE process to examine relative priorities and requirements in the context of the Programme for Government rather than applying crude average across the board reductions over diverse areas of Government activity.

Vision
DCYA has been given an ambitious mandate and set of Programme for Government priorities, full achievement of which will represent a significant contribution to public service reform.

Firstly, the integration of complementary functions into a cohesive policy and administrative framework which delivers for children has begun and will be a critical success factor for the Department. Secondly, DCYA's inter-sectoral role in influencing other departments and stakeholders, to adopt child centred approaches, is also a key priority. Thirdly, the reform agenda commenced at policy level will be extended into the operational sphere with the integration of service delivery at national and local level. The setting up of the CFSA, as provided for in the Programme for Government, will be the vehicle for achieving much of this integration. Extending the usage of Children's Service Committees at county level will also be used to enhance integration of children's services beyond those directly under the control of the Department.

The key areas of achievement over the next five years have been identified as follows:

1. implementation of the Department's Strategic Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2012-2017;

2. improved child welfare and protection services with consistent standards for vulnerable children and families including through the implementation of Children First and its incorporation into statute;

3. establishment of the Child and Family Support Agency as an integrated structure for the delivery of key children's services;

4. holding a Constitutional referendum on children's rights;

5. integration of policies and services implemented by the Irish Youth Justice Service within the broader remit of the Department;

6. provision of high quality early childhood care and education, including embedding the free pre-school year as an essential building block of early education;

7. provision of a broad range of universal and targeted services for young people which support their social and educational well-being;

8. facilitation of children and young people's participation in decisions that affect their lives and implementation of research and information on children and young people's lives;

9. improved physical and emotional health of children and young people, and reduced inequalities in their lives.

Programme for Government

The establishment of a dedicated department for children and young people is a manifestation of the priority attached by Government to improving the effectiveness of children's services. In addition the Programme for Government contains a range of commitments in areas relevant to the DCYA including:

- the fundamental reform the delivery of child protection services by removing child welfare and protection services from the HSE and creating a dedicated Child Welfare and Protection Agency;
- implementing the recommendations of the Ryan Report including putting the Children First Guidelines on a statutory footing and legislating for the use of "soft information";
- a referendum to amend the Constitution to ensure that children's rights are strengthened, along the lines recommended by the All-Party Oireachtas committee;
- maintaining the free pre-school year in Early Childhood Care and Education to promote the best outcomes for children and families;
- improving the quality of the pre-school year by implementing standards and reviewing training options;
- as resources allow, invest in a targeted early childhood education programme for disadvantaged children, building on existing targeted pre-school supports for families most in need of assistance such as the young ballymun project;
- consider the recommendations of the review of the DEIS programme and use it as platform for new initiatives to deliver better outcomes for students in disadvantaged areas;
- examine how to make existing expenditure on educational disadvantage more effective, and consider innovative ways in which teenagers at risk of leaving the school system can stay connected, for example through use of ICT-based distance learning and projects such as iScoil;
- end the practice of sending children to St. Patrick's Institution;
- give special emphasis to alternative programmes for juvenile offenders through extensions to the Juvenile Liaison Officer Scheme and the Garda Juvenile Diversion Programme and the extended use of Restorative Justice where appropriate; examine outcomes-based contracts with community organisations to help reduce reoffending by young people, based on the social impact bond model in the U.K;
- develop a new approach to break the cycle of child poverty where it is most deeply entrenched, adopting a new area based approach to child poverty, which draws on best international practice and existing services to tackle every aspect of child poverty.

The above recognises that there are critical weaknesses in services which are central to the development and support of children and families, particularly vulnerable children. The response to the publication of the Cloyne Commission Report has underscored the public commitment to ensuring that the State provides for safe and holistic child development as an absolute priority. The Programme for Government includes, as its overall approach, the quote: *"Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow."* Arguably there is no area where this approach is more relevant that in making children's services more effective and child centred.

Approach to Comprehensive Review of Expenditure

DCYA has identified savings which build upon the reductions in expenditure achieved during 2009-2011 and reach the NRP target. The Programme for Government commits to maintaining the ECCE programme and indeed developing early childhood care and education as resources allow. The fact that the ECCE pre-school year accounts for approximately 40% of total DCYA expenditure means that the total quantum of savings achievable is severely limited and, without some recognition of this in the CRE process, reductions which would be disproportionate to those applying generally across public expenditure programmes, would have to be applied to all other areas of DCYA's expenditure.

The programmes for which DCYA is now responsible cover diverse but sometimes overlapping areas. The fact that they are now located in one Department will provide opportunities to streamline and improve their effectiveness and/or economy. As this will require detailed consideration over the coming months, full year savings are unlikely to be made from 2012. In carrying out the CRE, the Department has used the process to inform its new structures and priorities based on streamlined and effective use of limited resources which maximise policy outcomes and service delivery.

Children and Family Support services are currently delivered by the Health Service Executive (HSE) and review of the HSE's budget is being undertaken by the Department of Health (DH). However, an initial outline of the proposed CFSA and the resources it will require, has been included in Chapter 9 of this Report. Detailed work on this will be required over the coming months before a definitive structure is determined. Similarly, reference to the Irish Youth Justice Service (IYJS) is made in Appendix 1 to this Report although review of the service is being undertaken by the Department of Justice and Equality (DJE). In both cases, it is important that DCYA would be consulted on any decisions regarding their future provision.

Structure of the Report

The Report is closely aligned with the various Subheads in Vote 43. Chapters 2 to 8 outline each area of programme and other expenditure together with options for further savings. Chapter 9 provides an outline of the children and family services currently provided by the HSE. Appendix 1 provides a brief outline of the IYJS given that some of its services will transfer to DCYA from January 2012 and the remaining areas will be co-located with this Department. Appendix 2 outlines some of the programme savings achieved in 2008-2011.

Agencies

As outlined above, the Department is responsible for the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB) and the Family Support Agency (FSA) and proposes to consider their future structures in the context of the establishment of the CFSA. It is intended that the CFSA, while drawing heavily on the HSE's child welfare and protection services, will also have responsibility for a broader range of services to reflect the continuum of interventions and supports which should be available to support the development and protection of children's welfare. It will take time to put any new, streamlined arrangements in place. DCYA also has responsibility for the Office of the Ombudsman for Children and the Adoption Authority of Ireland and, until its dissolution in September 2011, the Children's Acts Advisory Board.

It is intended that DCYA will be a model for public service reform and integrated policy and service delivery and the existing integration of policy/administrative responsibilities together with proposals for the consolidation of agencies under its remit will be used to drive new, innovative models providing better outcomes.

Options for Savings 2012-2014

Options which would achieve gross cumulative savings in current funding of **€41.825m** over 2012-2014, are set out in detail in the following Chapters and summarised in the table below. In line with the request to all Departments, DCYA is setting out these options on the basis that this will allow for further exploration in advance of final decisions by Government.

Summary of saving options 2012-2014

	2012	2013	2014	Cumulative
Community Childcare Subvention (CCS) & Childcare Education and Training Support (CETS) – Subhead B2	**€1.600m**	**€3.650m**	**€0**	**€5.250m**
PEIP / Youth Cafes – Subhead B3	**€2.774m**	**€0.800m**	**€0.800m**	**€4.374m**
Children's Services Committees - Subhead C	**€0.006m**	**€0.006m**	**€0.006m**	**€0.018m**
Centre for Effective Services – Subhead C	**- €0.325**	**€0.365m**	**€0.360m**	**€0.400m**
Longitudinal Study – Subhead C	**€4.361m**	**€1.554m**	**€1.005m**	**€6.920m**
Other research / Voice of the Child (Subhead C)	**€0.270m**	**€0**	**€0**	**€0.270m**
Schemes for Local Staff-led youth provision (Subheads C and D)	**€2.211m**	**€4.188m**	**€1.885m**	**€8.284m**
Other Youth Programmes (Subhead D)	**€1.317m**	**€1.195m**	**€1.083m**	**€3.595m**
School Completion Programme (Subhead E)	**€2.000m**	**€1.800m**	**€1.700m**	**€5.500m**
Family Support Agency (Subhead I)	**€0.091m**	**€0.409m**	**€0.091m**	**€0.591m**
Family Resource Centres (Subhead I)	**€0.795m**	**€0.795m**	**€0.795m**	**€2.385m**
Counselling grants (Subhead I)	**€1.265m**	**€1.266m**	**€1.266**	**€3.797m**
Family Mediation Service (Subhead I)	**€0.147m**	**€0.147m**	**€0.147m**	**€0.441m**
Cumulative Total: €41.825m	**€16.512m**	**€16.175m**	**€9.138m**	**€41.825m**

Areas where additional funding will be required 2012-2014

Demographic Costs

Without changes to the ECCE programme, demographic pressures in 2012-2014 will give rise to an additional requirement by 2013, of €14m, made up of €12m in 2012 and a further €2m in 2013. The demographic pressures until 2014 were clearly indicated when sanction for the ECCE programme was given. While the impact of the increased birth rates has been greatly moderated by net emigration, the number of children participating in the ECCE programme in 2012-2014 is still expected to rise as follows:

ECCE Participants:

2010:	63,000;	2011:	66,000;		
2012	67,000;	2013:	68,000;	2014:	68,000.

It is imperative that these unavoidable costs are addressed and, indeed, that beyond 2014 the importance of demographic change for the costs of the programme are captured on an ongoing basis. The Programme for Government commitment to the programme and its universal nature means it is not possible to address the additional costs from within the programme. It is essential that objective and previously indicated demographic costs attaching to the ECCE programme are not overlooked just because the DCYA has only recently been set up and its baseline multi annual provision has not been previously considered at Government.

The issue of demographic pressures also relates to facilities and infrastructure, particularly early years and youth facilities. It is noted that the capital provision over the period is being addressed separately under the Capital Review process and these issues can be further considered in this context.

Pressures on Children and Family Services

Expenditure on children and family services, which are currently provided by the HSE on behalf of DCYA, has been subject to significant upward pressure in 2011, due to the increasing number of children in care and the various Programme for Government commitments in relation to Child Welfare and Protection services and implementation of the Ryan Report. It is understood that the HSE anticipates an overrun in this area of over €70m in 2011 and that this level of expenditure requirement will continue to be required in 2012. While this funding is currently located in Vote 40 (HSE), it is being signalled in this Report given that the commitment to establish the CFSA.

In addition to the HSE's anticipated overrun of over €70m, additional funding of €2m will be required to meet the commitments to provide 10 additional social workers, further development of the out of hours social work service and implementation of the Children First Guidelines (including their incorporation into law), €1m to meet transitional start up costs for the CSFA and €0.050m to establish a helpline for missing children. It is important that during this interim period there is transparency and performance accountability as between Government reform priorities in the form of strong commitment to child welfare and protection services and the resourcing of these services within the HSE. DCYA also understands that the re-prioritisation of expenditure within the existing allocation for the HSE and the generation of operational efficiencies through service reform, will be required to contribute to service improvement over time.

It will be important for the DPER, DCYA and DH to co-operate closely to ensure that the introduction of new, dedicated organisational arrangements to drive the Government's reform priorities in this area do not have to contend from the outset with historic budgetary overruns and base funding issues.

Summary of additional funding requirements in 2012-2014

	2012	**2013**	**2014**
Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) (demographic increase in number of children, offset in part by changes proposed in Chapt. 2)	€9.8m	-€0.8m	0
Helpline for Missing Children	€0.05m	0	0
Additional Child Welfare and Protection costs	€70m	0	0
Ryan Report Implementation Plan	€2m	0	0
Establishment of the new Child and Family Support Agency	€1m	0	0
TOTAL:	**€82.85m**	**-€0.8m**	**0**

Total cumulative savings proposed 2012-2014: **<u>€41.825m</u>**

Provision is required for an increase of €14m in the funding requirement for the ECCE programme to meet additional, demographically driven costs, to be met from the 2012-2014 additional demographic funding and for an increase of €73.05m in the funding requirements for children and family support services.

Net cumulative funding required 2012-2014: **<u>€41.025m</u>**

Chapter 2

Subhead B (B.1, B.2 & B.4): ECS, ECCE and NCIP programmes

Early Childhood Care & Education makes up for a significant proportion of DCYA expenditure and is a priority area for DCYA given the significant benefits of early years programmes in delivering improved educational and developmental outcomes for children.

This Chapter details the funding allocations provided for the now terminated Early Childcare Payment (B.1), the National Childcare Investment Programme (B.2) and the ECCE Pre-School Year Programme (B.4). Since 2008, savings totalling **€495.8m** have been made under these programmes (see Appendix 2).

B.1 - Early childcare payment

The Early Childcare Supplement (ECS) was introduced in April 2006 and withdrawn at the end of 2009. The ECS was a universal payment to parents of children under 6 years of age to assist them with the costs associated with caring for pre-school children. It was originally paid at the rate of €1,000 p.a., was increased in 2008 to €1,100 p.a. and then decreased on 3 occasions during 2009 before being abolished from the end of that year. The total cost of the ECS in 2006-2011 was €1.422 billion. DSP managed ECS payments on behalf of DCYA and a further amount of almost €1m in late payments is being paid in 2011.

It is proposed to provide for a nominal amount in 2012 to cover any outstanding ECS payments, giving rise to an anticipated savings in that year of €1m. The ECS is notable for the purposes of this review in that its reduction and abolition, from a high point spend of €480m, yielded savings in Vote 41 of €255m in 2009. These allowed the introduction in 2010 of the ECCE programme (see B.4 below) at a cost of €154m, a further €77m less than the 2009 cost of the ECS of €231m.

B.2 - National Childcare Investment Programme

The National Childcare Investment Programme (NCIP) was introduced in 2006 with a capital allocation of €358m and a current allocation of €218m. From mid 2008, the Department ceased to approve capital grants resulting in savings of €58m in 2009 and €81m in 2010.

In 2011, the NCIP has an allocation of €10m to meet outstanding capital grant commitments. The NCIP current allocation is €76.278m in 2011 and is used to implement the Community Childcare Subvention (CCS) and Childcare Education and Training Support (CETS) programmes. Both programmes support low income parents with childcare costs to assist them to access education, training and employment. In response to the McCarthy Report (2009), which recommended NCIP current savings of €10m, the CCS programme was amended in September 2010. The savings achieved amounted to €2.7m in 2010 and €10.1m in 2011.

It should be noted that the NCIP current allocation in 2011 includes €8.7m in funding which transferred from earlier FAS and VEC schemes to provide for the introduction of the CETS programme (see below). Without this funding, the NCIP 2011 allocation would be €67.5m, a reduction of €10.1m from the 2009 allocation of €77.6m. Therefore, the €10.1m savings have been achieved while introducing the enhanced CETS provision for FAS and the VECs and enhancing the CCS programme's provision for low income working parents.

CCS

Under the CCS, parents qualify for subvention payments of up to €100 per week for full day-care if they have a social welfare entitlement or are in receipt of Family Income Supplement. Parents holding a GP or medical visit card qualify for up to €70 per week for full day-care. Parents in receipt of Job Seekers' Benefit or Allowance are restricted to a subvention payment for part-time day care i.e. up to €50 per week. The funding is paid to the services and is passed on to parents in the form of reduced childcare fees. Up to 30,000 parents avail of childcare under the CCS. The programme supports labour market activation and the Jobs Initiative policy, quality childcare for families, and safeguards the capital investment into childcare services of €500m. This programme provides vital supports to parents in low income employment. It also supports parents returning to work under the Jobs Initiative. The subvention rates mean that parents are contributing, on average, €60 per week for a full-time childcare place.

Any significant reductions to the subvention rates should take account of any other cuts in State support to parents e.g. to social welfare rates, FIS, child benefit, etc. as these would impact on parents' ability to pay for childcare. In 2011, it is estimated that the CCS will cost in the region of €45m.

CETS

The CETS programme was introduced in September 2010, replacing earlier childcare support schemes operated by FAS and the VECs. The schemes operated by FAS and the VECs, prior to CETS, contributed €63.50 p.w. to qualifying FAS and VEC students and trainees. Where parents did not avail of centre-based childcare, it was difficult to confirm how the payments were used. There was also inequity between parents availing of childcare in a community service, where they could also qualify for a CCS subvention, and those using a commercial service, where they could not. In addition, parents were still required to pay the balance of the childcare cost which many could not. The CETS programme provides qualifying FAS and VEC students with free childcare places for the duration of their course. In 2011, it is estimated that the provision of all available CETS places will cost over €20m. Like the CCS, the CETS programme supports labour activation and the Jobs Initiative policy. While the programme is confined to qualifying FÁS/VEC trainees, it has the potential to be extended to other target groups for labour activation.

CCCs, VCOs and Pobal

The 33 City and County Childcare Committees (CCCs), established as limited companies, together with 8 Voluntary Childcare Organisations (VCOs) and Pobal, assist DCYA in delivering the CCS, CETS and ECCE programmes. The CCCs are an essential administrative support in dealing with almost 1,000 CCS services, 1,600 CETS services, and 4,300 ECCE services. The VCOs play an important role in quality support particularly for the ECCE programme as well as facilitating Garda Vetting of childcare personnel. Pobal oversee and manage the overall process including financial controls for the programmes as well as managing the capital grant payments which will continue until end 2012. Pobal also provide an essential support for the programmes by monitoring services' compliance through annual visits and checks. The CCCs also provide quality supports, advice and training to service providers and also assist in the monitoring of services' compliance.

In 2011, a total of €5.270m will be paid to Pobal, €11.200m to the CCCs and €2.750m to the VCOs. Pobal's funding was cut in 2010 and the CCCs and VCOs funding in respect of pay costs allocation was cut by 8% in 2011.

Options for savings from NCIP current funding

The option of a 5% reduction to the Band A CCS subvention rate would see a reduction from €100 p.w. for a full-time childcare place to €95 p.w. It is recommended that no reduction is made to the Band B rate which should remain at €50 p.w. This change could be introduced from September 2012, the start of the next contractual period. This would yield savings of €0.600m in 2012 and €2m in 2013, the first full year. Any such change would need to be mindful of any proposed changes to the eligibility criteria of the medical card and GP visit card schemes.

The only category of parents who currently pay no contribution to the cost of their childcare requirements, aside from pre-school places under the ECCE programme, are those availing of CETS places. On this basis, an option for savings would be to introduce a requirement for a weekly parental contribution of up to €25 p.w. (per fulltime childcare place with pro-rata reductions for shorter hours). This change could be introduced from September 2012, the start of the next contractual period. This would allow a reduction to be made to the capitation rate paid to services and would achieve savings of €1m in 2012 and €3.250m in 2013, the first full year.

Such a change to the CETS programme would need to be considered in a whole of Government context having regard to the Jobs Initiative and broader policy developments. The financial incentives for individuals associated with labour market activation would be channelled towards the maintenance of virtually free childcare provision to those engaged in FAS and VEC courses.

B.4 - ECCE Pre-School Year Programme

The free Pre-School Year in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme was introduced in January 2010, at a time when most programme expenditure was being severely cut, as a progressive measure for early education to provide all children with an entitlement to a year of pre-school, prior to commencing primary school. The social and economic benefits from investment in early childhood learning have been widely researched and proven. The Literacy and Numeracy Strategy 2011-2020 takes the ECCE programme as its main starting-point for early learning and early intervention. The ECCE programme cost €153.5m in 2010 and is expected to cost €166m in 2011.

The key aspects of the ECCE programme are that it is universal and free of charge to parents and children. The 94% take-up is a direct result of this approach. DCYA would advise against significant reduction in the annual capitation rates paid to services to provide the free Pre-School Year. The standard annual capitation is currently €2,450 (€64.50 per week over 38 weeks) while the higher rate, paid to services with more highly qualified staff, is €2,850 (€75 per week over 38 weeks). Any change to the "free" aspect of the year would undermine its fundamental benefit which is that all children have free and equal access to pre-school education, as well as potentially leading to price escalation within the sector.

The increased birth rate from 2008 was taken into account at the time of approval for the programme and its cost would be expected to rise to €180m in 2012 before stabilising at €181m in 2013. In September 2010, the first full year of the programme, 94% of eligible children (63,000) were participating in the programme. Some 4,300 pre-school services (95% of all pre-school services) are participating. Some 4,300 services are participating. These demographic pressures, due to the increased birth rate since 2007, were recognised from the outset and will impose an additional funding requirement on DCYA in 2012-2014 of **€14m**.

This would represent a very significant portion of the savings DCYA is being asked to achieve and it is essential that this demographic cost is taken into account in DCYA's allocated Vote in these years.

Options for savings

In line with the Programme for Government, DCYA remains steadfastly committed to preserving the universality of the free pre-school year as a matter of priority, in particular given its importance in delivering improved educational and developmental outcomes for children. DCYA would be absolutely opposed to any proposal to limit the universality of the free pre-school year

However, in the context of the need to identify all possible savings and optimise the Department's overall resource allocation in 2012-2014, it is considered that a small reduction in the capitation rates could be considered. Any such change to the programme could not be effected before September 2012.

It is proposed to increase the maximum staff to child ratios permitted for the programme from 1 staff member : 10 children to 1 staff member : 11 children. DCYA considers that such an increase would not impact on the quality of the pre-school year programme which is targeted at children in the year before they commence primary school. The increase would give pre-school services more flexibility to manage a modest reduction in the capitation rates. The amendments to the terms and conditions for the programme would not apply to other pre-school service provision and changes to the Child Care (Pre-School Services) (No.2) Regulations 2006 to accommodate the change would not apply to services generally.

As indicated above, DCYA strongly recommends against any reduction in the capitation rates in excess of 3% (€2 per week). Clearly a more significant reduction, for example a reduction in the standard rate of approximately 7% or €4.50 per week, would achieve greater savings and assist in meeting the additional funding requirement as a result of demographic pressures, costs. However, DCYA would have serious concerns for the programme if a reduction of 7% were to be adopted.

A reduction in the region of 3% would see the standard weekly capitation rate, of €64.50 (€2,450 p.a.), reduce to €62.50 (€2,374 p.a.) and the higher weekly capitation rate, of €75 (€2,850 p.a.), reduce to €73 (€2,774 p.a.). A pre-school service with 2 staff catering for 20 children in receipt of the standard capitation rate, currently qualifies for an annual payment of €49,000 under the programme for the provision of 3 hours pre-school per day over 38 weeks in the year. If the service continues to cater for 20 children, the reduced rate would result in a reduction of €1,500 in its annual payment, down from €49,000 to €47,500 (approx. 3%). If the service catered for an additional 2 children, the service's annual payment would increase to €52,250.

Introduction of these changes would result in a funding requirement for the ECCE in 2012 of €175.8m and €175m in both 2013 and 2014.

Future introduction of a 2nd Pre-School Year

The Minister for Children and Youth Affairs is continuing to explore the future introduction of a second free pre-school year under the ECCE programme. A second free pre-school year would be of benefit to child development and educational outcomes, in particular to improving the communication and oral-language competence of young children and their readiness to develop early mathematical language and ideas, in line with the objectives of the Government's new National Strategy to improve literacy and numeracy. Initial costings indicate that a universal approach would cost in the region of €60m in the first full year, although costs would vary depending on the way any such proposal might be implemented.

The Minister is also considering issues specific to children with special needs. It is the Minster's intention to work with colleagues to develop the most reaslistic approach to enhancing the ECCE programme as resources allow.

Chapter 3

Subhead B.3: Early Intervention programme for children (part funded by the Dormant Accounts Fund)

Subhead C: National Children's Strategy (NCS) - National Longitudinal Study and other programmes

This Chapter details the funding allocations for early intervention programmes as well as a range of programmes grouped under the National Children's Strategy.

Pilot Early Intervention Programmes (PEIP) – Subhead B.3
The PEIP is a joint initiative between DCYA and Atlantic Philanthropies (AP) which funds 3 projects in Dublin with the objective of testing innovative ways of delivering services and early interventions for children and young people, including the wider family and community settings. The programmes' delivery and outcomes are closely monitored and evaluated on an on-going basis as the learning which will be gained from the individual sites will be the critical outcome.

The total cost of the programme over five years is €36m. Of this, €18m is being provided by DCYA and €18m by AP. The five year pilot programmes are due to conclude in 2012/2013. DCYA will evaluate the learning from the programmes to inform any decision to implement all or part of the programme elements on a more widespread basis. In particular the learning for mainstream service provision under programmes such as the ECCE scheme and the national literacy and numeracy strategy will be the subject of careful examination. As a result, it is expected that high value/low cost elements of the projects will be prioritised for mainstream delivery and elements of the programmes which would necessitate significant funding will be deferred to post 2014.

In line with existing commitments in 2011 expenditure will amount to €3m and this will reduce to €1.6m in 2012 and €0.8m in 2013. The savings to be realised from not providing further funding beyond existing commitments is <u>€1.400m</u> in 2012, <u>€0.800m</u> in 2013 and <u>€0.800m</u> in 2014.

Youth Cafés – Subhead B.3
The youth café funding scheme was launched in April 2010 with total funding allocated of €1.500m. Under the scheme 16 new cafés will be funded with a further 50 existing sites receiving funds to upgrade facilities. €0.126m was spent in 2010 and €1.374m is expected to be spent in 2011. It is intended that funding of youth cafes will be addressed under the review of local staff-led provision of youth services set out in the next chapter, and in the context of the capital review. In this context, current savings of <u>€1.374m</u> would be possible in 2012.

Working Together for Children Initiative – Subhead C
The Programme for Government makes an explicit commitment to implementing the recommendations of the Implementation Plan for the Report of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse 2009 (Ryan Report), which cited Children's Services

Committees (CSCs) as an example of good practice for interagency action at local level. The CSCs are being established at local level to bring organisations and agencies delivering services for children and young people at local level together to deliver more effective services through the facilitation of joint planning and inter-agency collaboration. The CSCs are led by the National Children's Strategy Implementation Group (NCSIG) which includes representatives of the following Departments and agencies: DCYA, DES, DECLG, DH, DSP, Donegal and South Dublin County Councils, Dublin and Limerick City Councils, an Garda Síochána, the Probation Service, Limerick Regeneration board, the FSA, HSE, IYJS, NEWB, Irish Sports Council, Pobal and the CES.

The intended outcomes from this approach include streamlined services, avoidance of duplication and identification of gaps, earlier intervention, resulting in programme savings and greater value for money and improved outcome. Four CSCs were established in 2007 in Dublin City, South Dublin, Donegal and Limerick City**.** In 2009, a further six CSCs have been established in Kildare, Carlow, Fingal, Kerry, Longford/Westmeath and Louth**.** Extension to remaining parts of the country is envisaged over the period of the CRE. Each CSC appoints a Co-ordinator from within existing resources. However, if a co-ordinator is not available from within existing resources, the agencies represented on the CSC have each pooled a small amount of money to fund a co-ordinator post. DCYA has contributed €20,000 on 3 occasions in recent years. The total cost to DCYA in 2011 of the *Working Together for Children* initiative is approximately <u>€0.120m</u> which will be spent on hosting an information and dissemination event, providing change management facilitation services to individual CSCs and also contributing small amounts to individual CSCs on a per case basis. A 5% cut in each of the years 2012-2014 would yield savings of <u>€0.006m</u> p.a.

Centre for Effective Services (CES)

The Centre for Effective Services was established in 2008 and is 50% funded by Government (25% each from DCYA and DECLG) and 50% by AP. The intention is to provide publicly funded services with access to relevant expertise on a timely and supportive basis. Funding departments and AP can access CES advice and DCYA has a work plan in place which provides for key aims of promoting and applying an evidence informed approach promoting collaborative joined up working (CSCs) and building capacity (skill transfers etc). The Centre employs 16 non-public service staff who provide technical and organisational expertise to support the design, implementation and on-going review and development of evidence-informed services for children, youth and families. This total staffing has responsibilities in servicing the priorities of all funders. The Memorandum of Understanding commits the Departments and AP to provide €10.4m over a 5 year period from 2008. In 2011, both Departments are providing funding of €0.400m and are each committed to €0.725 each in 2012 and €0.360m in 2013. From 2014, the CES would be expected to rely on funding based on a "charge out" business model. As a result, DCYA would achieve savings of <u>€0.365m</u> in 2013 and savings of <u>€0.360m</u> in 2014. Cumulatively, given the increased cost in 2012, the savings would amount to <u>€0.400m</u>

National Longitudinal Study – Subhead C

As part of the National Children's Strategy 2000-2010, a National Longitudinal Study of Children in Ireland is being undertaken by the ESRI and Trinity College University on behalf of the Government. The purpose is to study the factors that contribute to or undermine the well-being of children in contemporary Irish families and, through this, to contribute to the setting of effective and responsive policies relating to children and to the design of services for children and families.

During 2008-2011, a total of €17m will have been spent on the Study and the ESRI and Trinity are contracted up to 2013 to complete the Study's first phase. The contractual commitment for Phase 1 of the Study will conclude at the end of 2013, with the 2011 allocation reducing from €7.920m to zero by 2014. The costs due to be paid in 2012-2014 will amount to €3.559 in 2012, €2.005m in 2013 with no currently contracted costs in 2014. Carrying out of additional waves of data collection would maximise the gains which can be made from the investment to date. It is proposed to provide funding of €1m in 2014 to assist in providing for a Phase 2 of the Study. However, as this level of funding is unlikely to be sufficient in itself to provide for Phase 2, DCYA will look at a range of options to identify the most cost effective way of proceeding with this proposal, including the potential for reducing costs, other funding sources and partnership arrangements. As a result, the savings which have been identified amount €4.361m in 2012, €1.554m in 2013 and €1.005m in 2014, a cumulative total of €6.920m.

A number of other research programmes are implemented directly by the Department, including the publication and implementation of a National Data & Research Strategy on Children's Lives, a Capacity Building Research Programme, and the biennial publication of the State of Nation's Children Report. €0.450m has been allocated to these programmes in 2011 and it is proposed to apply a 15% cut from 2012, reducing the cost to €0.382m and realising savings of €0.068m.

Voice of the Child and Young People's Participation – Subhead C

One of the three national goals under the National Children's Strategy 2000-2010 is to ensure that children and young people have a voice in the design, delivery and monitoring of services and policies that affect their lives at national and local level.+
This programme oversees the development and improvement of structures that promote and enable participation by children and young people including cross-cutting participation initiatives with other departments, agencies and organisations, and effective engagement with children and young people. The cost to the DCYA in 2011 is €1.202m.

Comhairlí na nÓg have been set up in the 34 City and County Development Boards (CDBs) to give children and young people aged 12-18 years a voice in the development of local services and policies. The Comhairlí are administered locally by the CDBs and each receives an annual payment of up to €0.020m from DCYA as well as funding from local authorities, occasional Peace monies and HSE funding. Comhairlí members elect annual delegates to Dáil na nÓg, the national parliament for young people. The National Youth Council of Ireland is contracted to manage the organisation of the annual Dáil na nÓg, at a cost of €0.180m in 2011. Foróige and Youth Work Ireland are contracted, until March 2012, to provide support and training for the Comhairlí and Dáil na nÓg, at a cost of €0.175m in 2011 and the same in 2012. This funding also provides for support of other children and young people's participation initiatives as required. Comhairle na nÓg and organisations representing seldom heard children and young people nominate delegates aged 12-18 years to a

DCYA Children and Young People's Forum (CYPF). The CYPF is comprised of 35 young people from 12-18 years and acts as a reference panel for the Department and the Minister, as well as undertaking projects or activities at their behest. The total budget allocation for Comhairlí na nÓg, Dáil na nÓg, the National Youth Council, Foróige, Youth Work, the Forum and Pobal, amounts to €1.064m in 2011.

It is proposed to reduce this to €0.950m in 2012 to achieve savings of €0.114m.

Together with DES, DCYA provides funding for a Student Council Support Service, which engages with some 320 schools through over 330 teachers and over 275 students. DES funds a Student Co-ordinator post. In 2011, the Department has an allocation of €0.028m for non-pay costs to support this service and contributes €0.050m p.a. to the Young Social Innovators Awards, which supports young 15-16 year olds to become social actors in improving their communities and schools. In 2011, 300 projects were undertaken by 5,500 young people. It is proposed to discontinue this funding from 2012 to achieve savings of €0.078m.

DCYA provides opportunities for children and young people to contribute their views on issues of national and personal importance, and has conducted consultations /dialogues with children and young people on a range of issues. The Report of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (2009) recommended that *children in care should be able to communicate without fear*. In order to ensure that children currently living in State care are provided with opportunities to communicate without fear and are effectively listened to, a consultation process with children and young people in State care was conducted by the OMCYA during 2010. In 2011, €0.060m is allocated to the completion of the process of consulting with children in the care of the State, including the production and launch of the final report, including a child/youth-friendly version of the report. In 2012, the required consultations will need funding of €0.050m giving savings in 2012 of €0.010m.

As a result the total Voice of the Child/Participation costs in 2012 will be reduced to €1m achieving savings of €0.202m.

Other Programmes

A further allocation of €0.990m provides for a range of actions which include the Children First Guidelines, the new National Children’s Strategy, the National Children’s Advisory Council, Play and Recreation, Child One Europe, Child Protection rapporteurs, child protection vetting services and UNCRC reporting requirements. Given the priority attached to child welfare and protection services, it is not proposed to reduce funding for these services.

Young People's Facilities and Services Fund (YPFSF) Round 2 – Subhead C

This programme is dealt with in the next chapter, Chapter 4, due to its relevance to other youth funding programmes contained in Subhead D.

Chapter 4 – Youth Provision

Subhead C: Young People's Facilities and Services Fund Round 2 (YPFSF2)

Subhead D: Grant-in-Aid for general expenses of youth organisations and other expenditure in relation to youth activities (part funded by the National Lottery).

DCYA remains committed to supporting the development of quality, front-line youth work projects and services which address to the needs of young people and communities.

This Chapter details the various youth programmes provided for under Subhead D, which were originally established under a number of departments before being transferred to the OMCYA and now DCYA. The total allocation to this subhead in 2011 is €44.592m. This chapter also details the Young People's Facilities and Services Fund Round 2 (YPFSF2) which is provided for under Subhead C and in 2011 has a capital allocation of €0.8m and a current allocation of €15.562m. Since 2008, savings totalling €13.7m have been made under these programmes (see Appendix 2).

DCYA is undertaking a review of the youth service programmes in the context of the new Youth Policy Framework (see below). This review is expected to result in a restructuring of the current structure and delivery models for the various programmes. It is also proposed to move from grant-in-aid to grant only programmes under one subhead of the Vote. The intention is to establish a more cohesive and effective set of programmes by 2013. It is considered that this approach will provide the best vehicle for achieving savings while maintaining effective youth programme which maximise outcomes. Due to the lead-in time required for this process, options for interim savings in 2012 are set out below.

The overall aim of the existing eight major Youth Services programmes provided for under this Subhead is to support and promote non-formal education and developmental opportunities for young people through which they can enhance their personal and social skills and competencies. Particular regard is had to the youth work needs of young people between the ages of 10 and 21, and to those who are socially or economically disadvantaged. Specifically the work includes:

- developing youth policies and strategies that enable and enhance young people's personal and social development;
- supporting the youth sector in providing effective youth work and associated opportunities for young people and consolidating and enhancing existing provision of youth services and initiatives;
- monitoring and assessing the youth work structures, supports and services so as to ensure both quality of service and value-for-money;
- supporting the alignment of youth policies and services with other DCYA policies and services and the broader policy and services field to help ensure an integrated and coordinated approach to the needs of young people;
- liaising with the EU/Council of Europe on youth policy and the implementation of EU programmes for youth.

Youth Policy Framework and Quality Standards

DCYA is currently developing a new over-arching Youth Policy Framework as part of new National Children's and Youth Strategies. The aim is to provide a clear policy framework which articulates the objectives of DCYA and Government in relation to youth policy - to enhance the development, participation and support of young people. This strategy will provide a framework for co-ordination and coherence across departments and services and most importantly will lay down the priorities, rationale and criteria for future funding programmes for youth provision. A National Quality Standards Framework for youth work (NQSF) was introduced in January 2011 as a support, development and assessment tool to assist services and organisations to articulate their youth work practice. The implementation of the NQSF will result in an improvement in good practice and better value-for-money. It should also assist the youth organisations and services to address the developmental needs of young people to a greater extent and in a more cost effective manner. Standards for local voluntary youth clubs will be implemented in 2012.

Reforming to meet young people's needs

DCYA remains committed to supporting the development of quality, front-line youth work projects and services which address the needs of young people and communities. In light of the changing needs of contemporary youth and the financial constraints currently faced, it is imperative that youth work funding streams are reformed such that they allow for flexibility to youth service providers and VEC's to respond to local needs.

EXISTING SCHEMES FOR LOCAL STAFF-LED YOUTH PROVISION:

Young People's Facilities and Services Fund (YPFSF) Round 1

The Young Peoples Facilities and Services Fund provides services and facilities to divert 'at risk' young people in disadvantaged areas from the dangers of substance misuse. In the past a number of projects were mainstreamed and transferred from the DCRAGA to DES and subsequently to OMCYA and now DCYA. In 2011, the YPFSF Round 1 has a current allocation of €7.192m which supports 104 projects used by 105,000 young people. €5.76m of the 2010 funding was used to fund the pay costs of 129 staff who are employed by the 104 projects. 257 CE and sessional staff are also employed. The remaining €2.01m of 2010 funding was used to meet programme/overhead costs. A 5% cut in funding in 2012 would achieve savings of €0.360m.

Young People's Facilities and Services Fund (YPFSF) Round 2 – Subhead C

The Young People's Facilities and Services Fund (YPFSF) Round 2, was established in 1998 to assist in the development of preventative strategies/initiatives in a targeted manner through the development of youth facilities, (including sport and recreational facilities) and services in disadvantaged areas where a significant drug problem exists or has the potential to develop, The YPFSF was assigned to DCRAGA in 2002 and subsequently to the OMCYA in 2008. In 2011, the YPFSF Round 2 has a capital allocation of €0.8m and a current allocation of €15.562m which supports 178 community centres, youth facilities and sports clubs which are used by 535,000 young people. Approximately €11.2 million of the 2010 funding was used to fund the costs of 276 staff who are employed by the 178 projects. 397 CE and sessional staff are also employed. The remaining €5.49 million of current funding is used to meet overhead costs. Applications for funding under the YPFSF Round 2 are made through the relevant 22 Local Development Groups. Applications are assessed by a National Assessment Committee (NAC) chaired by the Department and then submitted as appropriate for Ministerial approval. Funding for Round 2 projects is distributed through 12 VECs, 4 Local Authorities and 5 national organisations. The fit of the YPFSF Round 2 programme with the Programme for Government is set out in Chapter 4 in relation to youth services/programmes. A 5% cut to YPFSF Round 2 in 2012 would yield savings of <u>€0.778m</u>.

Local Drugs Task Force Projects - €1.433m in 2011
In January 2011 responsibility for 21 Local Drugs Task Force projects was transferred from the Department of Education and Skills to the Youth Affairs Unit of the OMCYA. These projects, through a variety of programmes and activities, seek to encourage young people not to engage in drug-taking. 7,000 young people in the 10-14 age range participate in the 21 projects. €1.228m of the 2010 funding was used to fund the pay costs of 25.5 staff who are employed by the projects. €0.266m of the 2010 funding was used for non-pay costs to meet project overheads. Each project must apply annually for funding. Funding is distributed to the projects through 3 VECs. A review of the Local Drugs Task Force projects is being undertaken by the Assessor of Youth Work in the DCYA and the Youth Policy Framework is expected to be completed in 2013. A 5% cut in funding in 2012 would achieve savings of <u>€0.072m</u>

Special Projects for Youth Scheme - €18.156m in 2011
This programme was established in the mid 1980s to support "special" out of school projects, in non-formal education settings, for disadvantaged young people. The programme supports 181 projects which are used by 103,000 young people. €14.998m of the 2010 funding was used to fund the pay costs of more than 400 staff employed by the projects. In addition, some 460 other staff are funded through funding received from other agencies/sources. €4.478m of the 2010 funding was used for non-pay programme costs. Funding is distributed to the projects through 19 VECs and 4 national youth work organisations. The programme provides support to projects which provide a service to 103,000 young people, particularly those with fewer opportunities. These young people are assisted in their personal and social development thereby increasing their life chances and increasing social cohesion. Progress reports indicate improved outcomes for young people engaged in these projects including improved self-worth, resilience and coping skills, increased social inclusion and social integration and improved school attendance and re-engagement with formal education process. A 5% cut in funding in 2012 would achieve savings of <u>€0.908m</u>

Youth Information Centres - €1.862m in 2011
This programme was established in mid-1980s to provide information and advice to young people. The programme funds 31 centres which are used by c 175,000 young people in the 15-17 age range. The majority of the centres also act as relays for a European Information Service, Eurodesk. €1.38m of 2010 allocation was used to fund the pay costs of some 34 staff who are employed by the centres as well as 30 other CE/sessional workers. €0.626m of the 2010 allocation was used for non-pay costs of the centres. Funding is distributed to the projects through 18 VECs. The

information provided to young people is on matters relevant to their personal, social and vocational development with a view to enabling them to disseminate it in a format and style which they can understand, and in settings that they find comfortable and easy to use, using all available forms of media and all forms of contact to reach different groups of young people. A 5% cut in funding in 2012 would achieve savings of €0.093m. Furthermore , it is envisaged that from 2013, in the context of the wider rationalisation of youth schemes referred to in the next paragraph, the objectives of this scheme would be mainstreamed into core youth service activities and innovative approaches to information provision explored to achieve significant cost reductions.

Option for rationalisations and savings in 2013 & 2014:
As part of the review of the youth service programmes to be completed in 2012, DCYA proposes to examine the feasibility of amalgamating the 5 schemes referred to above into a new, rationalised scheme for local staff-led youth provision, commencing from 2013. It is considered that this would result in a more cohesive and effective funding programme. DCYA will also examine the current funding allocation system and will consider whether it would be more beneficial to move to a system based on local funding envelopes, possibly dispersed by the VEC's to individual projects and services in line with locally-decided plans and objectives. Reforms in this area, would also allow for flexibility to youth service providers and VEC's to respond to local needs through reprioritising or reconfiguring local front-line provision as appropriate. In addition, this rationalisation process could allow for further savings across these 5 schemes of 10% in 2013 and 5% in 2014 achieving savings of €6.073m and a cumulative saving over the three years of €8.284m. Any changes to youth work funding would need to be considered in a whole-of-Government context having regard to priorities and broader policy developments in the areas of young person's development, youth justice, etc.

OTHER SCHEMES:

Youth Service Grant Scheme - €11.444m in 2011
This (universal) scheme was established in the mid 1980s following publication of the Costello Report (1984) and the resultant National Youth Policy. €9.052m of the 2010 annual YSGS Grant-in-Aid allocation, was made up of pay costs for some 228 staff employed by the organisations and €3.275m was non-pay. Funding is distributed to the organisations directly and supports 228 core head-quarter posts of 31 national voluntary youth organisations. In the context of the review of youth service programmes it is intended to explore the scope for greater administrative efficiencies through greater sharing of resources and expertise amongst organisations, use of shared services and other efficiencies. A 10% cut per annum in funding under the scheme would achieve savings of €3.101m over 2012-2014. Any changes to youth work funding to national organisations would need to be considered in a whole-of-Government context having regard to priorities and broader policy developments in the areas of young person's development, youth justice, etc.

Local Youth Clubs Grant Scheme - €1.035m in 2011
This universal scheme was established in 1999 and revised in 2008. It supports voluntary youth club activities for young people with priority being given to young people between the ages of 10 and 21. There are 1,600 clubs supported which are used by 89,000 young people. The maximum grant is €3,000 per club per annum.

Staff-led projects funded under other youth programmes cannot apply for funding under this scheme. As these are volunteer-led clubs, all funding is used for programme delivery and is non-pay related. Funding is distributed to the clubs through 31 VECs.

<u>DCYA strongly recommends against any cuts to this scheme given the importance attached by DCYA to supporting community-based voluntary activity in the youth work sector.</u>

EU Youth in Action Programme - €0.527 in 2011
The EU Youth in Action Programme 2007-2013 is implemented in Ireland by Léargas, the Exchange Bureau. Léargas is a body set up to operate EU exchange programmes in Ireland on behalf of DES, the HEA and DCYA. DCYA is the National Authority for this programme and provides €2m in annual Grant in Aid funding to meet the operational costs of the organisation including the costs of 6.86 Leargas staff. The EU pays for the programme costs which are distributed by Leargas. In 2010, 132 projects involving almost 1,300 young people were funded. Other Léargas programmes have separate State funding sources. The programme is operated under an agreement between DCYA and the EU Commission and is scheduled to run until 2013. A consultation process for the successor to this programme is already under way. A 5% per annum cut in funding under the programme would achieve savings of <u>€0.075m</u> over 2012-2014.

Gaisce, the President's Award - €0.737m in 2011
This programme was established in 1985 under the patronage of the President to encourage young people to set and achieve a challenge in a non-competitive environment. Over 17,000 young people registered for the award in 2010. €0.670m of the 2010 allocation was used to fund the pay costs of 9 staff (7.5 FTEs) who are employed by Gaisce. €0.15m of the 2010 allocation was used to meet project overheads. A 5% per annum cut in funding under the programme would achieve savings of <u>€0.105m</u> over 2012-2014.

Other programmes and services - €2.205m in 2011
There are a range of other programmes and services relating to North/ South and British/Irish cooperation, cross departmental cooperation in the arts, health and child protection and development for the new youth policy framework. It is proposed to assess these as part of the rationalisation process for this area. A 5% cut per annum in funding under the programme will achieve savings of <u>€0.314m</u> over 2012-2014.

This cumulative savings outlined in the options above, would amount to **€3.595m** over 201202014 and are shown in the table below.

Scheme	Reductions	2012	2013	2014
Youth Service Grant Scheme	10% each year	10.300	9.270	8.343
Local Youth Clubs Grant scheme	No reductions	1.035	1.035	1.035
EU Youth in Action Programme	5% each year	0.501	0.476	0.452
Gaisce	5% each year	0.700	0.665	0.632
Other	5% each year	2.095	1.990	1.891
Total		14.631	13.436	12.353
Saving		1.317	1.195	1.083

Reduction in Non Exchequer funding sources
The youth sector has benefited in recent years from external funding from philanthropy and other sources. For example, Foroige is a leading youth organisation funded through programmes under this Subhead. In recent years it has benefited from funding from Atlantic Philanthropy and the One Foundation for programmes which were not co-funded by this Department e.g. "Big Brother Big Sister". It is understood that this funding is likely to come to an end from 2012. While DCYA has until recently had no involvement with the Big Brother Big Sister programme it is in dialogue with Foroige on the consequences for the programme of the funding situation.

In the context of the wider financial outlook for the Department generally, including its youth programmes, it seems unlikely that additional Exchequer resources will be available to address gaps emerging from the withdrawal of philanthropy resources. Consequently the Department is seeking to engage with Foroige on its priorities across the total funding resources it is in receipt of which are of the order of €19m per annum; €6m of which comes from the DCYA and the remainder from other public bodies and private sources. More generally this points to the financial challenges to service provision arising from the expiry of philanthropy commitments. These were set out in Chapter 3 in relation to the Pilot Early Intervention Programmes and can be expected to be an additional challenge for the sector over and above the reduction in Exchequer resources likely to be required on foot of this Review.

Total savings:
The cumulative savings from the options set out in this Chapter from Subhead D & YPFSF 2 for 2012-2014 total **€11.879m.**

Chapter 5

Subhead E: School Completion Programme

Subhead F: Visiting Teacher Service for Travellers

Subhead I: National Educational Welfare Board

This Chapter details the funding provided under Subhead E for the School Completion Programme (SCP) and under Subhead I for the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB), both of which were previously under the Department of Education and Skills. Subhead F which provided for administrative costs associated with the Visiting Teacher Service for Travellers, which ceased from September of this year, is also referred to in this Chapter.

National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB)

The NEWB was established in 2002 under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 as the statutory agency with responsibility to ensure that every child attends school regularly, or otherwise receives a certain minimum education, and provides a service to the most disadvantaged areas and the most at-risk children and young people. It has a statutory responsibility to ensure that every child attends school regularly, or otherwise receives a certain minimum education. The NEWB's responsibility for the Education Welfare Service (EWS) was expanded in 2009, as part of the Integration of Educational Services, to include responsibility for administration of the Home School Community Liaison (HSCL) Programme, the School Completion Programme (SCP) and the Visiting Teachers Service for Travellers (VTST). With the cessation of the VTST in September 2011, at risk Traveller children are now supported through the general DEIS programme. The NEWB is directly involved in meeting both Constitutional and statutory rights to education. It is proposed to look at the future delivery of the functions and services for which the NEWB is responsible in the context of the wider consideration of agencies under the new Department.

NEWB functions include:

- Following-up non-attendance at school to ensure that children's right to a minimum education is upheld.
- Assessing the provision for and register of children in receipt of education outside of recognised schools to ensure a certain minimum education is provided.
- Maintaining a register of 16-17 year olds who leave school to take up employment and develop education and training plans for their continued education.
- Monitoring school attendance levels and providing baseline data to determine trends and monitor outcomes for interventions to combat poor attendance.
- Researching the underlying causes of non-attendance, preventative strategies and programmes and dissemination of findings to support schools to develop Codes of Behaviour and Attendance Strategies.
- Ensuring protocols are in place between the NEWB and the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) to facilitate a co-ordinated approach on school

admissions and appeals and engaging with the HSE and IYJS to ensure coordination where services overlap.

Efficiencies achieved through adoption of shared services/delivery of services

The NEWB has installed new information and financial management systems to reduce costs through shared-services, cost effective procurement and maintenance opportunities, shared hosting services in the LGCSB and Revenue's Data Centre and is part of the Educational Agencies Shared Services Group which procures printing and auditing services and avails of government framework agreements to purchase IT, telephony and stationary items. The 2009 integration of services under the Board has achieved savings over €0.500m as well as facilitating a more strategic direction at local, regional and national level to improve targeting and measurement of educational outcomes for children at risk.

The services are concentrated towards the most disadvantaged areas and the most at-risk groups, in particular schools participating in the DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools) Programme. This is in keeping with the DES policy to retain, where possible, key resources in the schools targeted under the DEIS initiative including HSCL and SCP. An evaluation of DEIS for DES is expected to indicate positive outcomes and improvements at all grade levels in English reading and mathematics and will be used to inform future policy on educational disadvantage, early school leaving and integrated school support services. In addition, a national composite report on the effectiveness of DEIS planning in primary schools and a report on post-primary schools are expected shortly.

In 2011, the NEWB's allocation amounts to €9.731m, including the education welfare service and administration costs for the National Co-ordination teams of the HSCL and SCP programmes. Over €6m of the NEWB's funding is in respect of pay-related costs. Non-pay costs comprise some €1.060m for office rent and service charges across the country, €0.380m for legal fees including District Judges requiring Education Welfare Officers to have legal representation in court, and €1.060m for ICT/Telecommunications, Travel and Subsistence, Professional Development and Home Education Assessment.

Critical Vacancies in the NEWB

There are a number of critical vacancies in the NEWB which will need to be filled to protect front-line services as well as providing an adequate managerial structure at local and national level for the newly integrated services for which the NEWB is responsible. The additional posts which are sought would keep within the ECF ceiling for the NEWB which will apply in 2014 and would appear to be reasonable in these circumstances. This issue has already been the subject of consideration by DES and DPER and is now being addressed by DCYA and the NEWB as a matter of urgency. As a result, as the pay costs for these posts would absorb and available efficiencies within the NEWB pay and non-pay budget and it is not proposed, therefore, to recommend that savings are made from this area.

School Completion Programme

The School Completion Programme (SCP) was launched in 2002 following on from 2 previous early school leaving initiatives. The SCP discriminates positively for children and young people aged between 4 and 18 years who are at risk of early school leaving. Its objective is to retain children and young people in the formal education system to completion of senior cycle or equivalent and improve their quality of participation and educational attainment. The SCP’s 2011 allocation, in Subhead E, is €30.256m and supports 124 projects across the State, which link with 224 second level and 473 primary schools, targeting 38,000 pupils who are at specific risk of early school leaving as well as whole classes and, in some instances, whole schools to avoid stigmatisation of the targeted group. The majority although not all of such schools are designated DEIS schools. The SCP uses local management committees to develop a collaborative programme of in- school, after school and holiday time interventions that support and meet the needs of local children and young people at risk of early school leaving.

The SCP also supports the Teenage Parenting Support Programme for the education element of the Teenage Parenting Support Programme (TPSP), implemented by the Crisis Pregnancy Agency/HSE, which assists over 500 teen parents to stay in formal education. In addition, the SCP supports the Schools Business Partnership (SBP) to facilitate mutually beneficial links between schools and local businesses and 160 SCP second level schools are matched with companies in the local community. The funding covers the pay costs of a programme coordinator and operational costs.

Option for Savings

The NEWB is undertaking a review of the SCP to improve its effectiveness and operation. Savings of 6.5% per annum would generate savings of €2m in 2012, a further €1.8m in 2013 and €1.7m in 2014. Due to the support which the SCP provides for the DEIS Action Plan it will be necessary for the impact of these reductions to be considered in consultation with DES. In addition, the scope for improved operational efficiencies between the SCP and HSLP will be explored.

Chapter 6

Subhead I: The Family Support Agency

DCYA is committed to supporting families and providing quality, integrated services to support families, in particular those families facing specific welfare needs. In light of changing demands on family services and the financial constraints currently faced, DCYA is committed to the redesign and development of Child & Family Services.

This Chapter details funding relevant to the Family Support Agency (FSA) which is provided for under Subhead I. The 2011 allocation amounts to €31.7m, including funding of €2.949m for the Family Mediation Service (FMS) which is expected to transfer to DJE later this year. Since 2008, savings totalling €7.679m have been made (see Appendix 2).

The Agency's 2011 allocation breaks down as follows;

FSA Budget 2011		
	(€m)	%
Counselling Grants	10.678	33.7
FRC Programme	15.897	50.1
Family Mediation Service	2.949	9.3
Research & Information	0.318	1
FSA HQ Administration	1.858	5.9
Total	**31,700**	**100.0**

DCYA is considering the best options for the future location of the FSA in the context of the proposed CFSA will review the FSA's network of 107 Family Resource Centres (FRC) as part of this process. The aim will be to assess their on-going contribution and potential to fit within the structure of the new agency and deliver local community and family supports. The outcome should be to improve service delivery and achieve savings where possible in accommodation and administrative costs as well as rationalisation of funding schemes. Any savings arising from this process will not be evident before 2013.

Family Support Agency (FSA)

The FSA was established under DSFA in 2003 under the Family Support Agency Act 2001. It transferred to DCEGA in 2010 and to DCYA in 2011. All non-contract staff are public servants except for two civil servants who are seconded to the Agency. Its total allocation in 2011 is €31.700m of which €1.858m is used to meet the operational costs of the FSA. A 15% reduction applied over 2012-2014 would achieve savings of €0.091m in each year and overall savings of €0.273m. A merger of the FSA with the proposed new agency would be expected to achieve further savings of 10% by 2014. As these are uncertain, they are not included in the savings identified.

The Family Support Agency has a statutory remit to conduct or commission research into matters related to the Agency's functions or such other matters as the Minister may request and to promote and disseminate information in relation to marriage and relationships, family mediation, parenting and related matters. The Agency has allocated €0.318m of its 2011 allocation to meet research and information commitments in 2011. When existing contractual commitments cease in 2012, it is proposed to streamline these functions into the Department's Research Unit and/or any research unit within the new agency. This will achieve savings of €0.318m in 2013.

The remaining €29.524m of the FSA's allocation provides for the following 3 areas.

The Family Resource Centres (FRCs) programme

The FRCs are centres where families and groups can access information and advice, support, education and training, childcare services and after-school clubs. People from marginalised groups and areas of disadvantage are involved at all levels of the 107 FRCs, serving on Voluntary Management Committees and/or contributing to activities and programmes. 258.5 staff are employed. Of the FRC's 2011 allocation of €15.897m, approximately €14m relates to pay costs. The balance covers operational overheads including €0.700m paid to 2 contracted regional support agencies, €0.521m paid to 5 specialist support agencies ((Pavee Point, DESSA, Women's aid, Family Support Network (Drugs) and Blue Drum (community development through the arts)), and €0.315m for supports including data systems, a national forum, Garda vetting and family support training for staff and volunteers.

FRCs provide a range of interventions funded through a variety of programmes, many of which are now contained within Vote 43, and work closely with local schools. These include initiatives to retain children and young people in school, breakfast clubs, homework clubs, youth cafés, community based youth work, facilities and services for young people and work on issues of particular concern/risk to young people e.g. alcohol and drugs prevention. Many FRCS are located in premises leased from local authorities, the HSE or local parishes/community councils for nominal rents**.** Fewer than 10% are owned by the FRCs. A reduction of 5% p.a, over 2012-2014 would achieve savings of €2.385m in total or €0.795m in each year. This would include examination of the funding provision for specialist support agencies. Any changes to the funding of FRCs would need to be considered in a whole-of-Government context having regard to priorities and broader policy developments in the areas of Child & Family Services and community development.

Counselling Grants Scheme

The FSA provides funding to voluntary and community organisations providing marriage, relationship, child and bereavement counselling services. The scheme was established in 1994 to assist marriage guidance and counselling services and was extended to include child counselling in parental separation and bereavement. The 2011 funding allocation is €10.678m. €7.002m of this is paid on a multi-annual basis to just 28 organisations, with 2011 the last year of the cycle, and the balance is paid to a further 580 organisations. A funding reduction of 12% p.a. over 2012-2014 would achieve savings of €3.797m in total with €1.265m secured in 2012 and €1.266m in each of the years 2013 and 2014. Any changes to this funding scheme would need to be considered in a whole-of-Government context having regard to broader policy developments in the area of Child & Family Services.

Family Mediation Service (FMS)

The FSA is currently responsible for the Family Mediation Service (FMS) which provides a free, professional service to couples who have decided to separate to assist them to negotiate the terms of their separation or divorce through the help of a trained mediator. The 2011 FMS allocation of €2.949m consists of €1.361m for staff costs, €0.865m for accommodation and €0.722m for general administration. A reduction of 5% p.a. over 3 years would result in savings of €0.147m in each of the years 2012-2014, achieving total savings of €0.441m.

The options for savings in 2012-2014 proposed under this Subhead, amount to €7.214m.

Chapter 7

Subhead H: Statutory and non-statutory enquiries & miscellaneous legal fees and settlements

Subhead I: Developmental, consultative, supervisory, regulatory & advisory boards - the Adoption Authority of Ireland, the Office of the Ombudsman for Children & the Children's Act Advisory Board

Subhead J: Cost in connection with the holding of a Constitutional Referendum on Children's Rights

Statutory and non-statutory enquiries, miscellaneous legal fees. – Subhead H

This is a notional allocation of €1m to cover legal costs. Such costs are difficult to predict and demand driven. The provision is based upon historical analysis of relevant expenditure in previous years in the DoHC Vote.

Bodies under the aegis of DCYA - Subhead I

Adoption Authority of Ireland

The Authority is responsible for implementing the Adoption Act 2010, public policy relating to adoption and Ireland's adherence to the Hague Convention in relation to inter-country adoption. The 2011 allocation for the Authority is €3.500m.

Office of the Ombudsman for Children

This Office, which was established under the Ombudsman for Children Act 2002, is responsible for the safeguarding and promotion of the rights and interests of children and young people under the age of eighteen years including the investigation of complaints and carrying out research and inquiries. The 2011 allocation is €2.112m.

Children's Acts Advisory Board (CAAB)

The CAAB was established to advise the Ministers for Health and Children and Education and Skills on the remand and detention of children charged or convicted of offences and the detention of non-offending children in special secure units. It was dissolved in September 2011 and its functions have transferred to DCYA. The 2011 allocation of €0.450m provides for pay costs of staff now transferring to DCYA.

Family Support Agency and National Educational Welfare Board

These agencies are dealt with separately in Chapters 5 and 6, respectively, of this Report.

Constitutional Referendum on Children's Rights

Subhead J provides for an allocation of €3m to provide for the cost of holding a Constitutional Referendum on Children's Rights. It is anticipated that this will be held in 2012. No savings are proposed.

Chapter 8

Subhead A: Administration

Subhead G: Grants to community organisations (part funded by The National Lottery)

Subhead K: Appropriations-in-Aid

This Chapter details the funding provision in place under Subhead A for administrative costs of the Department, Subhead G to provide for National Lottery grants and Subhead K to provide for the Appropriations-in-Aid receipts expected into Vote 43 in 2011.

Subhead A - Administration
Funding at this subhead has been established through the transfer of administrative funding, relevant to the numbers of staff being transferred to DCYA, from the Votes of DES (Vote 26); DCEGA (Vote 27); DH&C (Vote 39); and OMCYA (Vote 41). The June-December 2011 allocation in Vote 43 amounts to €7.415m. This allocation will increase at the end of 2011 when administrative funding to provide for IYJS staff transferring to DCYA from DJE will be effected.

Subhead G - Grants to community organisations.
The full-year allocation of €0.500m, transferred from DH to provide for National Lottery grants for individuals and organisations involved with children and young people.

Subhead K - Appropriations-in-Aid

	2010 Outturn	**2010 Estimate Allocation**	**Full 2011 Estimate Allocation**	**2011 Vote 43 Estimate Allocation**
	€000	**€000**	**€000**	**€000**
EU Receipts EOCP	-	-	3,699	3,699
Dormant Accounts	-	-	3,000	3,000
Superannuation NEWB	362	362	350	350
EU Receipts SCP	-	-	1	1
Miscellaneous (from Vote 39)	6	6	-	-
Receipts - Pension related	787	787	778	778
Total	**1,155**	**1,155**	**7,828**	**7,828**

EU receipts - EOCP
These EU receipts stem from the operation of the Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme 2000-2006 (EOCP) which was co-funded by the EU through the Structural Funds and the Community Support Framework for Ireland. While the Programme ended in December 2007, EU payments are made in arrears on the basis of expenditure certified by grant beneficiaries and subsequently verified by the Department.

Provision is also made for a small amount of EU receipts under the School Completion Programme.

Dormant Accounts Funding

The receipts come from the Dormant Accounts Fund and meet expenditure made in 2011 under Subhead B of Vote 41 in relation to Early Intervention Programme.

Superannuation Scheme relating to National Education Welfare Board

This funding relates to receipts expected in relation to the superannuation scheme in place for NEWB staff transferring under the aegis of DCYA.

Receipts from Pension-related Deduction on Public Service Remuneration

This funding relates to receipts expected in relation to pension-related deductions of staff transferring into DCYA from the various departmental areas.

Chapter 9

Child Welfare and Protection Services in the HSE – Children and Families Support Agency

Introduction

Under the Child Care Act, 1991 the HSE is required to promote the welfare of children who are not receiving adequate care and protection. The legislation also obliges the HSE to ensure that every child in care has an allocated social worker and a written care plan. The State has an additional international obligation, under Article 3 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, to ensure that all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies are undertaken in the best interests of the child. In particular, Article 3(3) of the UN Convention provides that:

> '*States Parties shall ensure that the institutions, services and facilities responsible for the care or protection of children shall conform with the standards established by competent authorities, particularly in the areas of safety, health, in the number and suitability of their staff, as well as competent supervision'*

The publication in recent years of a number of high profile reports into both past and contemporary cases of abuse has brought children and families services into sharp focus in recent years. These include:

- Report of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (Ryan Report);
- Recent controversies relating to the Review of Deaths of Children in Care and, in particular, the validation by the HSE of accurate data;
- Report of the Ombudsman for Children arising from her investigation into the implementation of Children First;
- Significant deficits identified by HIQA in respect of foster care and child protection services in Dublin North West and North Central.
- Report to the HSE of the independent review of the Roscommon family child protection case; and
- Report of the Commission of Investigation into the Diocese of Cloyne.
- High Court proceedings regarding suitable placements and treatment of children with highly challenging behaviour.

Rationale, objectives and continuing relevance

The overall aim of the Children and Families Support programme is to promote and protect the health and wellbeing of children and families, particularly those who are at risk of abuse and neglect. The HSE, through the National Service Plan, sets out annually the level of services to be provided on behalf of the State. Child welfare and protection services are primarily delivered by the HSE, with support from the non-Governmental sector. The delivery of services requires a considerable degree of interface with a range of other programmes / care groups, including primary and secondary care, mental health, addiction and homeless services. There is also a strong interface with other bodies and agencies which have a responsibility to deliver statutory services to children such as DES, DECLG, DSP, the NEWB, IYJS, an Garda Siochana, the Court Service and the Probation Service. Bringing certain of these services together as part of the DCYA should provide the opportunity to create better synergies and more streamlined services.

The programme is consistent with Government policy as articulated most recently in the new Programme for Government and previously in the national strategy document 'Agenda for Children's Service' and the Implementation Plan prepared following the publication of the Report of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse. The establishment of the DCYA and the reform of child welfare and protection services and their transfer from the HSE to a dedicated agency under the DCYA, reflect the priority attached to this area by Government.

Effectiveness of Child Welfare and Protection Services

The delivery of child welfare and protection services has seen some improvement in recent years, as evidenced by mainly positive findings in HIQA inspection reports, but still needs fundamental re-organisation and reform. This reform programme has commenced under the new National Director and will need to be supported by key structural reforms at operational level. The immediate priorities for the reform programme are to meet the statutory requirements, regulations and standards for the sector which include:

- delivering statutory services, including foster care, special care, after care, youth homelessness, and adoption services;
- maintaining and developing family support services and ensuring that provision of aftercare services is strengthened;
- strengthening the organisational management and accountability framework in respect of the delivery of children and family services;
- implementing the actions of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (Ryan Report);
- implementing recommendations of internal and external audits of services e.g. HIQA's recommendations for children in care and child protection, and the HSE's National Audit of Foster Care; and
- implementing the Revised Children First National Guidance, including the provision of training and advice and the introduction of legislation to ensure compliance with the Guidance across all organisations working with children.

There is evidence that the number of children requiring care has increased over recent years. This continuing increase is reflected in the latest figures for the total number of children in the care of the State. A number of factors are contributing to this increase including the general rise in population, the growing awareness of the impact of long term neglect and the impact on vulnerable parents of the economic downturn. The table below shows the upward trend in the number of children in the care. These figures reached 6,175 at end of June 2011. They show a 16% increase over 3.5 years and a 4% increase for the most recent 6 month period.

Trend in Number of Children in Care 2007-2011

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011 (June)
5,322	5,347	5,689	5,964	6,175

The HSE National Service Plan, 2011 commits to delivering on the statutory requirement that every child in care should have a written care plan and an allocated social worker. While progress is being made, the HSE is still some way short of this requirement. Of the 6,175 in care at the end of June 2011, 5,613 (90.8%) had a written care plan in place and 93.4% had an allocated social worker. This compares to figures of 82% and 86.5%, respectively, in mid-2010.

Number of children in care with a written care plan in place:

•Residential Care:	94.2%
•Foster Care:	91.8%
•Foster Care with Relatives:	88.7%
•Other Care Types (e.g. at home under care order):	85.2%

Number of children in care with an allocated social worker:

•Residential Care:	99.6%
•Foster Care:	93.8%
•Foster Care with Relatives:	90.7%
•Other Care Types (e.g. at home under care order):	94.4%

Efficiencies and Savings

The Children and Families Services area of the HSE is expected to contribute to the overall achievement of efficiencies and savings within that body. The 2011 budget attributed to this area in the HSE's 2011 National Service Plan amounts to €587m, a reduction of €14m over 2010. As indicated, however, the number of children in care is increasing and giving rise to significant cost pressures in 2011 and the HSE has statutory obligations in this regard. A number of key improvements and efficiencies are being progressed by the HSE, including:

- Introduction of flexible working hours to provide a more comprehensive service and allow cases to be dealt with more efficiently.
- Better deployment of staff with appropriate skills to ensure adequate resources to meet assessed need.
- Implementation of reformed management structures in Children and Family Services.
- Development of clear lines of accountability, quick decision making and organisation of resources through regular management meetings with the regional representatives' clinicians and national office staff.
- Improved monitoring of performance through monthly exception reports.

The HSE is also progressing the development of a National Child Care Information System to assist front line service delivery and the provision of management information. This is an area which requires particular attention and improvement. Given the specialised nature of the services provided, and the importance of continuity of care and carers, it is considered that where possible services should be provided in-house. While external providers are used on occasion the HSE is seeking to manage the use of high cost private and agency services through the establishment of a national resource management structure.

A number of areas have been identified as having the potential to provide for efficiencies / income generation. These include:

- a reduction in the number of private and foster care placements;
- a reduction in the use of agency social worker and social care staff;

- a restructuring of the Guardian Ad Litem service;
- the introduction of a national Social Work Assessment and Response Model to fully utilise and co-ordinate family resource and social work staff; and
- the introduction of a charge for HSE adoption assessments.

Under the Child Care Act 1991, Guardians Ad Litem are appointed by Judges to assist them when considering all the circumstances surrounding care order applications. They do so by the provision of a report or reports during the course of the proceedings. Often such Guardians are social workers but this is not necessarily so. The legislative framework for Guardians currently allows for the appointment of a solicitor, junior counsel and in some cases a senior counsel to the Guardian. The HSE pays the costs of the Guardian and their legal representatives. Consideration might be given to amending the relevant legislation to eliminate the legal costs whilst continuing to provide independent expertise to the Courts and an independent voice for the child. This could be accomplished by appointing Guardians as officers of the Court. Progress on this matter would need the cooperation of the Department of Justice and the Courts Service to overseeing of the revised arrangements.

In 2010 the HSE incurred expenditure of €100m in respect of foster care payments. These payments were not reduced in Budget 2011 and a decision could be made to reduce the payment rate in 2012. However, in considering this issue a lot of care would need to be taken to avoid reduction in the rate of payment resulting in fewer numbers of foster carers which could give rise to an additional demand for residential care at much higher cost.

Key Outputs developed for 2011 - Children and Families Care Group

The Department has developed, in conjunction with the HSE, a comprehensive and significantly improved set of key performance indicators for reporting in 2011. This suite of indicators include measures to improve the measurement of service delivery, such as the number of children in care in formal education, the use of single placements and assessments of foster carers. Additionally, new PIs are in place to measure the number of referrals to the child protection system and to map their way through the screening and assessment system. The following key outputs were developed for 2011:

No	Outputs	2011 Output Target
1	Allocation of social workers to children in care	All children in care to have an allocated social worker
2	Multidisciplinary Assessment Services	Multidisciplinary team for children in care and detention established and operating
3	Children's residential centres and foster care	Activity to be maintained at broadly similar levels as 2010, although these figures have risen in 2011:ising: Children supported in residential care: 419 Children supported in foster care (including foster care with relatives): 5387 Children supported in other care placements: 179
4	Care Planning	All children in care to have a written care plan
5	Standardised Care	Standardised Care Plan rolled out and audit of compliance

No	Outputs	2011 Output Target
	Plan	commissioned and completed
6	Standardised business processes	(i) Referral, Initial Assessment and Further Assessment processes rolled out in all LHO areas (ii) Roll out of Child Protection, Child Welfare, Children in Care and Family Welfare processes commenced.
7	National Child Care Information System	Tendering, evaluation and selection of system complete
8	Restructuring of HSE services for Children/Families	Initial testing completed in selected regions and roll out expanded to other areas
9	Aftercare	National Policy on Aftercare implemented and services delivered in compliance with S. 45 Child Care Act 1991
10	Special Care and High Support	Capacity review of special care and high support completed.
11	Youth Homelessness	Care needs of children under 18 who are homeless met by HSE, precise levels dependent on demand
12	Children First Guidelines	Implementation framework in place to support revised Children First National Guidelines
13	Church Audit	(i) National audit of child protection policies, practices and procedures in Catholic Church Dioceses completed; (ii) National audit of child protection policies, practices and procedures in Religious Orders completed; and reports submitted to the Minister
14	Differential Response Model	Model piloted and preliminary evaluation completed
15	Treatment services for people exhibiting sexually harmful behaviour	Recommendations of the 2007 Report on *Treatment Services for People Who Have Exhibited Sexually Harmful Behaviour* implemented
16	Out of Hours Social Work Services	Two pilot sites operational and evaluated
17	CSCs	8 additional Children's Services Committees established

Additional Demands

(i) Children in Care- unavoidable costs

As indicated, the increase in the number of children in care is giving rise to significant cost pressures within the HSE. The HSE recently projected a year end deficit of up to €<u>70m</u> for the children and families programme. Since the HSE has a statutory requirement to address child protection and welfare in an affirmative manner, including through the assignment of social workers and developing care plans, an increase in child protection problems within the community has unavoidable resource implications. A further increase in 2012 in the overall number of children in care will give rise to additional cost pressures. Following commencement of the Child Care Amendment Act 2011, the HSE anticipates a requirement for additional specialist placements for children in their teens who have a combination of criminal charges and care needs. Placements of this type are generally expensive.

(ii) Ryan Implementation Plan
Funding for the recruitment of the final tranche of 10 Ryan related social workers in 2012, further development of the out of hours social work service, and the implementation of the Children First Guidelines, will give rise to costs estimated at €2m from that year. The placing of Children First on a statutory basis and the increased profile and awareness of child protection issues may contribute to growing pressure on social work services and additional referrals. It is intended that revised notification and assessment procedures will be implemented on a consistent basis across the country to improve effectiveness and manage workloads. Nevertheless, in addition to the final 10 Ryan posts it will be necessary to review social work resources on an ongoing basis to ensure referrals are appropriately managed and statutory obligations met. It will also be important, pending the establishment of the CSFA, to ensure that Ryan Implementation Plan development resources are tied to performance delivery within the HSE and the achievement and maintenance of the additional social work staffing levels.

(iii) Establishment of the new Child and Family Support Agency (CFSA)
The establishment of the proposed CSFA on a statutory basis, will give rise to transitional and start up costs. Given the importance for child protection and welfare outcomes, there is a need for a robust management capability to be in place before transfer of legal and operational powers. This requires early commencement, on a shadow basis, of the key elements of the CSFA at an estimated cost in 2012 of €1m.

Conclusions, Savings and Reform
The key to safe child protection services is the quality of assessment, decision making and relationship based interventions, as delivered by social work and social care staff and their direct line managers. This needs to be combined with the standardisation of processes and effective information systems. Central to the provision of good child protection services is an accountable management structure using information effectively, able professional staff to provide high quality services in the field and robust external monitoring systems.

The requirement to provide services in this programme area is underpinned by statutory requirements under the Child Care Act 1991. With the establishment of DCYA and the proposed new agency, the Government has signalled that services for children and families services are a particular priority. Recent reports point to a need to significantly enhance child welfare and protection services and address existing deficits. Any erosion in the resources available to this programme area will materially diminish the capacity to improve performance to meet these requirements.

The projected overspend of over €70m in 2011 is attributed to increased pressure on the system and is reflected in a significant increase in the number of children in care. DCYA, in conjunction with DH, is seeking greater clarity from the HSE on the detail of the projected overspend and the measures to be put in place to address the projected deficit. It will be important for the initial operation of the new CSFA that it does not inherit base funding issues and that the delivery of Government commitments to the improvement of child protection and welfare services are sustained in parallel with the setting up of the agency.

Children and Families services account for less than 3% of the HSE workforce and 4.4% of its overall budget. In this context it should be possible to address the allocation of funding to these services in a way that reflects the importance attached by Government to resolving historic weaknesses in these services and meets priority policy objectives. While all possible efficiencies will be pursued, based on current and anticipated demand it will be necessary to retain all savings achieved to address service needs and to meet compliance with statutory obligations.

The Public Service Agreement provides a framework for delivering change across the public service. In the case of children and families services this will be achieved primarily through restructuring the organisation and delivery of services nationally. Such re-organisation will be designed to facilitate greater efficiency and productivity, reduce cost and improve quality. The appointment of a National Director for these services is helping to accelerate the change process, including the introduction of a standardised national model of early intervention designed to ensure that less serious cases of child welfare are referred to family support services at an earlier stage. This will allow the social work service to concentrate on the assessment and management of cases of identified significant risk and result in a more efficient, effective and consistent model of service delivery. This is particularly important in the context of the proposed legal requirement to report child protection concerns.

<u>Key Savings:</u>

- The Child Welfare & Protection Programme accounts for 4.4% of the overall HSE budget. While the programme is and will be subject to unavoidable additional costs and demands, the following efficiency and income generating measures are under consideration:
    - a reduction in the number of private care places;
    - a reduction in the use of agency social workers and social care staff;
    - a restructuring of the Guardian ad Litem Service;
    - introducing a Differential Response Model for early interventions;
    - introducing a charge for adoption assessments.

<u>Key Reforms:</u>

- Flexible working hours will be introduced to reduce overtime spend and contribute to the provision of more cohesive services.
- Better deployment of staff with appropriate skills to ensure adequate resources to meet assessed need.
- The National Director is leading a programme of structured reform across the Children and Family Services programme.
- Clearer lines of accountability, decision making and a re-organisation of resources will be delivered.
- Monitoring of performance will be improved through monthly exception reports will be improved.
- The introduction of a National Child Care Information System will be fundamental to the reform programme and will assist both front line service delivery and the provision of management information.

Appendix 1

Irish Youth Justice Service (IYJS)

The IYJS is an executive office of the DJE and is being reviewed in that Department's CRE Report. From January 2012, the IYJS functions in relation to children's detention and remand centres will transfer to DCYA and the remaining areas of IYJS, which will stay under the aegis of DJE, will be co-located with DCYA. As a result, this Appendix provides a brief outline of IYJS services. However, it should be noted that projected savings / additional cost pressures associated with the IYFS will be formally reported as part of DJE's CRE Report.

The IYJS was established in 2006 to lead and drive reform in the area of youth justice guided by the principles of the Children Act 2001. In addition to managing and developing children's detention facilities, it funds organisations and projects providing services, including Garda and Probation Projects, to young people aged less than 18 years who find themselves in conflict with the law. These children may be involved with An Garda Síochána, the Probation Service and the Courts Service

The IYJS aims to improve the delivery of youth justice services and reduce youth offending by focusing on diversion and rehabilitation programmes, which involve greater use of community-based interventions, and promoting initiatives for young people who offend. Providing a safe and secure environment for detained children and supporting their early re-integration back into the community are also a key function.

The high-level objectives of the IYJS are to:

- · provide leadership and build public confidence in the youth justice system;
- · work to reduce offending by diverting young people from offending behaviour;
- · promote the greater use of community sanctions and initiatives to deal with young people who offend; and
- · provide a safe and secure environment for detained children that will assist their early re-integration into the community.

Centres for Young Offenders:

Children's detention centres provide residential care for children remanded or sentenced to detention by the Courts. It is a principle of the Children Act 2001 that detention should be a last resort and for as short a time as possible. The objective of the detention centres is to provide for the care and educational needs of the children and address offending behaviour in order to prepare them for return to the community as quickly as possible. In addition to specialised education programmes, the centres provide individual care programmes tailored to each child's needs and risks. Staff in the centres come from multidisciplinary backgrounds and include care staff, night supervisors, teachers, nurses, administrative and ancillary staff. Psychological and medical services are provided when necessary.

Funding for the children's detention centres will transfer to Vote 43 from January 2012. In 2011, the funding allocation amounts to €17.100m (€19.086m in 2010) of which €15m is pay-related and €2.100m is in respect of non pay costs. Significant savings of <u>€4.200m</u> have been achieved from 2008 (see Appendix 2) and it is understood that significant further savings, as a result of expected staff retirements, are expected over the next 3 years. However, it is also understood that additional staff costs would be expected to arise from 2014 if the proposed new facility in Oberstown (see below) is proceeded with.

Programme for Government – Oberstown Capital project
The Programme for Government includes a commitment to ending the practice of sending 16/17 year old boys to St. Patrick's Institution and the Government has given a commitment to develop National Children Detention facilities on the campus at Oberstown. This commitment, if met, would give rise to a significant capital funding requirement as well as additional staff costs from 2014.

Note: As stated above, the projected payroll savings as a result of staff retirements as well as projected staff costs arising from the proposed new facility at Oberstown are being reported on in DJE's CRE Report and are not included in the savings and additional costs relevant to DCYA, as summarised in Chapter 1 of this Report.

The following areas of IYJS are not transferring to DCYA although IYJS staff working in these areas will be co-located with DCYA

Garda Youth Diversion Projects (YDP)
The YDP programme tackles anti-social behaviour, builds on community policing and supports partnerships between local communities and local Gardaí. It provides alternative programmes for juvenile offenders through the juvenile liaison scheme and Garda Juvenile Diversion Programme and restorative programmes.

Young Persons Probation Projects (YPP)
The YPP programme supports the use of community sanctions, such as community service orders as an alternative to detention, to rehabilitate young offenders and keep them from further involvement in the criminal justice system.

Appendix 2

Programme savings achieved in 2008-2011

<u>Subhead B</u>

2008-2011 Savings under the ECS/ECCE and NCIP programmes

	ECS/ECCE	NCIP Capital	NCIP Current
2009	-€255m	-€58m	Zero
2010	-€77m	-€81m	-€2.7m
2011	+€12m	Zero	-€10.1m
Total	**-€344m**	**-€139m**	**-€12.8m**

<u>Subheads C & D</u>

2008-2011 Savings under the Youth Programmes

Programme	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**Savings**	**% Saving**
SPY	€21.381m	€19.976m	€19.476m	€18.156m	€3.225m	15.08%
YICs	€2.167m	€2.046m	€2.005m	€1.862m	€0.305m	14.07%
YSGS	€13.465m	€12,.432m	€12.186m	€11.313m	€2.152m	15.98%
LYCGS	€1.8m	€1,150m	€1.3m	€1.035m	€0.765m	42.5%
Gaisce	€0.956m	€0.883m	€0.819m	€0.738m	€0.218m	22.8%
Léargas	€0.639m	€0.597m	€0.585m	0.527m	€0.112m	17.53%
Other programmes	€3.167	€2.259	€2.227	€2.205	€.962m	30.38%
Sub-Total	**€43.575**	**€39.343**	**€38.6m**	**€35.836**	**€7.739**	**18%**
YPFSF 1	€8.512	€8.631	€7.859	€7.193	€1.319	15.49%
LDTF				€1.433		
3 orgs	€0.137	€0.141	€0.141	€0.131	€0.006	4.38%
Sub-Total	**€8.65**	**€8.772**	**€8m**	**€8.756***	**€1.456**	**16.83%****
YPFSF 2						
Current	€15.95	€17.36	€17.405	€15.562	€0.388	2.43%
Capital	€4.92	€2.509	€1.6	€0.8	€4.12	83.74%
Sub Total – Subhead C	**€20.87**	**€19.87**	**€19.005**	**€16.362**	**€4.508**	**21.60%**
Grand Total	**€73.095**	**€67.985**	**€65.605**	**€60.954**	**€13.703**	**18.74%**

**Includes transfer of €1.562m from DES for LDTFs*

Subhead I

2008-2011 Savings under the Family Support Agency

	2008	2009	2010	2011	Savings
	€ (m)	€ (m)	€ (m)	€ (m)	€ (m)
FRC	21.436	18.047	16.047	15.897	5.539
Counselling Grants	11.033	11.864	11.864	10.678	0.355
FMS	4.136	3.305	3.158	2.949	1.187
Research	0.397	0.428	0.428	0.268	0.129
Information	0.185	0.132	0.132	0.050	0.135
Special Projects	0.230	0	0	0	0.230
FSA Pay /Admin.	1.962	1.931	1.88	1.858	0.104
Total	39.379	35.707	33.509	31.700	7.679

HSE - Children and Families Care Group

2008-2011 Expenditure

	2008	**2009**	**2010**	**2011 - budget**
Total	€570m	€575m	€601m	€587m
Source	09 service plan	10 service plan	11 service plan	11 service plan

2010-2011 WTE Staff Numbers

Date Data relates to*	Total WTE excl Career Break
End December 2010	3,159.10
End April 2011	3,133.47

*Comparisons for earlier years are difficult due to a change in the methodology used in the DH's employment census.

2010-2011 Administration Costs

2010	**2011**
€27.725m*	€27.596m*

**source HSE*

IYJS - Children Detention Centres Staff Numbers 2008-2011

Year	**Staff Numbers**	**Annual pay costs**
2008	339.5	€19.000m
2009	317.5	€17.800m
2010	313.0	€16.718m
2011	226.4	€14.800m (estimate)

The Finglas Child & Adolescent Centre closed on 31 March, 2010 with the transfer of children, staff and services to the Oberstown campus. Closure of the centre resulted in an administrative saving in 2011 of €0.700m. Voluntary redundancies of 34.5 permanent staff from the centre resulted in full year saving of €1.550m. Further staff savings of €1.480m in a full year arose from the non-renewal of 36.5 fixed term contracts and the secondment or incentivised early retirement of employees. Overall staff numbers have decreased by 74 with an ongoing payroll saving from 2011 in the region of €3m.