



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND CHILDREN
AN ROIÑN SLÁINTE AGUS LEANAÍ

State of the Nation's Children Summary



Ireland 2008

**State of the Nation's Children
Ireland 2008**

Summary

Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs

Copyright © Minister for Health and Children, 2008

Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs

Department of Health and Children

Hawkins House

Hawkins Street

Dublin 2

Tel: +353 (0)1 635 4000

Fax: +353 (0)1 674 3223

E-mail: omc@health.gov.ie

Web: www.omc.gov.ie

Published by The Stationery Office, Dublin

ISBN 978-1-4064-2223-8

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission in writing of the copyright holder.

For rights of translation or reproduction, applications should be made to the Head of Communications, Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Hawkins House, Hawkins Street, Dublin 2, Ireland.

Contents

FOREWORD	4
AUTHORS	5
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	5
PART 1: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHICS	6
PART 2: CHILDREN'S RELATIONSHIPS	10
PART 3: CHILDREN'S OUTCOMES	14
PART 4: FORMAL AND INFORMAL SUPPORTS	24

FOREWORD

As Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, it is my great pleasure to launch the report *State of the Nation's Children: Ireland 2008*. This is the second in a biennial series of reports prepared by the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, in association with the Central Statistics Office and the Health Promotion Research Centre of the National University of Ireland, Galway. It fulfils a commitment made in the National Children's Strategy to publish key indicators of children's well-being on a regular basis.

As with the first report in 2006, readers will find an accessible compendium of indicators illustrative of childhood in Ireland today, using data drawn from the most recent and most reliable administrative, survey and Census sources.

This 2008 report presents key indicators on important aspects of children's lives, including outcomes on their education, health and social, emotional and behavioural well-being; their relationships with their parents and their friends; and the services available to and accessed by them. The report also presents data on contextual indicators, describing changes in the demographic characteristics of the population, as well as in children's family settings and living arrangements.

Information is updated and, while maintaining comparability with the 2006 report, incorporates several improvements. Most notably, improvements have been made to strengthen some indicators and to close critical data gaps, particularly in the middle childhood period. In addition, the indicators reporting on educational attainment, which were included as a special feature of the 2006 report, are now incorporated as regular indicators in this and future reports.

The *State of the Nation's Children: Ireland 2008* report is an important resource for all those who seek to understand the experience of childhood in Ireland. As such, it will help us in our task of making Ireland a better place for children.

Barry Andrews, TD

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs

December 2008

AUTHORS

The main authors of this *State of the Nation's Children* report are:

- Sinéad Hanafin, Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs
- Anne-Marie Brooks, Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs
- Alan Macken, Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs
- Gerry Brady, Central Statistics Office
- Reamonn McKeever, Central Statistics Office
- Carol Judge, Central Statistics Office
- Bernie Ryan, Central Statistics Office
- Saoirse Nic Gabhainn, Health Promotion Research Centre,
National University of Ireland, Galway
- Aoife Gavin, Health Promotion Research Centre,
National University of Ireland, Galway

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank all the people and organisations who provided data for this 2008 report, especially: Aisling Mulligan, Economic and Social Research Institute (Hospital In-Patient Enquiry System); Antoinette Daly, Health Research Board (National Psychiatric In-Patient Reporting System); Census Enquiries, Central Statistics Office; Crime and Criminal Justice Statistics, Central Statistics Office; Eileen Connolly, Department of Health and Children (Childcare Interim Dataset); EU-SILC Division, Central Statistics Office; Garda National Juvenile Office (crime statistics); Fionnola Kelly and Caraiosa Kelly, Health Research Board (National Intellectual Disability Database); Gerry Shiel, Education Research Centre (PISA); Gillian Golden and Nicola Tickner, Department of Education and Science (statistics on education expenditure and school attendance); Gráinne Cosgrove and Hugh Magee, Department of Health and Children (Hospital In-Patient Enquiry System); Jason Sibley and Anna Lloyd, National Treatment Purchase Fund (Patient Treatment Register); John Nolan, John McCusker, Barry McGinn and Aidan Waterstone, Health Service Executive (Childcare Interim Dataset); Mary Ann O'Donovan, Health Research Board (National Physical and Sensory Disability Database); Michal Molcho and Colette Kelly, Health Promotion Research Centre, National University of Ireland, Galway (HBSC); Sheelagh Bonham, Economic and Social Research Institute (National Perinatal Reporting System); Suzanne Cotter, Health Protection Surveillance Centre (Immunisation Uptake Statistics); and Vital Statistics, Central Statistics Office.

We are also very grateful to all the people who provided feedback on individual indicators.

PART 1: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHICS



Notes:

- Percentage differences are presented for descriptive purposes only and may not reflect a statistically significant finding.
- Technical notes are provided in the main *State of the Nation's Children* report for each indicator presented (report available at: www.childrensdatabase.ie OR www.omc.gov.ie). These technical notes should be referred to when interpreting the data since they provide details about the data source and identify key limitations arising.

PART 1: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHICS

Indicator: CHILD POPULATION

Measure: The number of children under 18.

Description and comparison:

- According to Population Estimates 2007, there were 1,056,947 children under the age of 18 in Ireland. This represents an increase of 20,913 since Census 2006.
- Ireland has a higher percentage of children under 18 than any other EU Member State. 24.4% of the population in Ireland are under 18 years. This compares with an EU27 average of 19.4%.

Date source: Census of the Population; Population Estimates (www.cso.ie) – 2007

Indicator: INFANT MORTALITY

Measure: The number of deaths among infants.

Description and comparison:

- According to Vital Statistics 2006, the death rate of infants (under 1 year) has dropped from 56 per 10,000 infants in 2002 to 39 per 10,000 infants in 2006.
- Luxembourg has the lowest infant death rate (25 per 10,000 infants) and Romania has the highest infant death rate (139 per 10,000 infants).

Date source: Eurostat; Vital Statistics (www.cso.ie) – 2006

Indicator: CHILD MORTALITY

Measure: The proportion of deaths among children under 18.

Description and comparison:

- According to Vital Statistics 2006, child mortality rates have fallen from 5.1 deaths per 10,000 children in 2002 to 3.8 deaths per 10,000 children in 2006.
- The death rates are consistently higher for boys than for girls. In 2006, the death rate for boys was 4.4 per 10,000 compared to the death rate for girls of 3.1 per 10,000.

Date source: Eurostat; Vital Statistics (www.cso.ie) – 2006

Indicator: ETHNICITY

Measure: The percentage of children by ethnicity or cultural background.

Description and comparison:

- According to Census 2006, 93.2% of children usually resident in the State are defined as having a 'White' background.
- 78.9% of those children with a 'White' background live in households that are owner-occupied. This falls to 46.8% of children from an 'Asian or Asian Irish' background and to 18.1% of those with a 'Black or Black Irish' background.

Date source: Census of the Population (www.cso.ie) – 2006

Indicator: NON-IRISH NATIONAL CHILDREN

Measure: The number of non-Irish national children.

Description and comparison:

- According to Census 2006, there were 62,800 non-Irish national children in Ireland. 28.3% of these children were living in Dublin.
- The number of non-Irish national children has increased by 57.6%, from 39,838 in 2002 to 62,800 in 2006. Polish was the second most common nationality (8.2% of the total) after British and Northern Irish (31.9%).

Date source: Census of the Population (www.cso.ie) – 2006

Indicator: FAMILY STRUCTURE

Measure: The number and percentage of children under 18 who live in family household units with only one parent or primary care-giver resident.

Description and comparison:

- According to Census 2006, 17.8% of children live with a lone parent or guardian.
- One in 3 children (33.7%) in lone-parent families is resident in Dublin.

Date source: Census of the Population (www.cso.ie) – 2006

Indicator: PARENTAL EDUCATION LEVEL

Measure: The percentage of children under 18 whose mother has attained (a) primary, (b) lower secondary, (c) upper secondary or (d) third-level education.

Description and comparison:

- According to Census 2006, 6.3% of children live in families where the mother has either no formal education or primary education only, while 30.6% of children live in families where the mother has a third-level degree or higher educational qualification.
- A higher percentage of mothers with children aged 0-4 (38.7%) had a third-level degree or higher educational qualification when compared with mothers with children aged 15-17 (22.8%).

Date source: Census of the Population (www.cso.ie) – 2006

Indicator: TRAVELLER CHILDREN

Measure: The number of Traveller children.

Description and comparison:

- According to Census 2006, there were 10,929 Traveller children in Ireland. This accounts for 1.1% of the total child population and 48.7% of the total Traveller population.
- More Traveller children lived in Dublin and Galway than in any other county. The counties with the highest proportion of Travellers compared to the total population were Longford (3.2%) and Galway (2.8%).

Date source: Census of the Population (www.cso.ie) – 2006

Indicator: SEPARATED CHILDREN SEEKING ASYLUM

Measure: The number of separated children seeking asylum.

Description and comparison:

- In 2006, there were 569 separated children seeking asylum. Approximately one in 3 (34.6%) separated children seeking asylum were less than 10 years of age.
- 57.6% of separated children seeking asylum were re-united with their families.

Date source: Childcare Interim Dataset (www.hse.ie) – 2006

PART 2: CHILDREN'S RELATIONSHIPS

COVERING RELATIONSHIPS WITH PARENTS

AND RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEERS



PART 2: CHILDREN'S RELATIONSHIPS

RELATIONSHIPS WITH PARENTS

Indicator: RELATIONSHIP WITH MOTHERS

Measure: The percentage of children aged 9-17 who report that they find it easy to talk with their mother when something is really bothering them.

Description and comparison:

- In 2006, 78.0% of children reported that they find it easy to talk with their mother when something is really bothering them.
- Using the ages of 11, 13 and 15 only to draw international comparisons with the 40 countries and regions that used this HBSC item, 79.5% of Irish children reported that they found it easy to talk with their mother when something was really bothering them. This is lower than the HBSC average of 81.5% and ranks Irish children 26th.

Date source: HBSC Survey (www.nuig.ie) – 2006

Indicator: RELATIONSHIP WITH FATHERS

Measure: The percentage of children aged 9-17 who report that they find it easy to talk with their father when something is really bothering them.

Description and comparison:

- In 2006, 59.8% of children reported that they find it easy to talk with their father when something is really bothering them.
- Using the ages of 11, 13 and 15 only to draw international comparisons with the 40 countries and regions that used this HBSC item, 62.9% of Irish children reported that they found it easy to talk with their father when something was really bothering them. This is higher than the HBSC average of 61.7% and ranks Irish children 18th.

Date source: HBSC Survey (www.nuig.ie) – 2006

Indicator: TALKING TO PARENTS

Measure: The percentage of children aged 15 who report that their parents spend time just talking with them more than once a week.

Description and comparison:

- In 2006, 64.7% of children reported that their parents spend time just talking with them more than once a week.
- Girls (73.4%) were more likely than boys (55.6%) to report that their parents spend time just talking with them more than once a week.

Date source: PISA Survey (www.erc.ie) – 2006

Indicator: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLING

Measure: The percentage of children aged 15 who report that their parents discuss with them how well they are doing at school more than once a week.

Description and comparison:

- In 2006, 48% of children reported that their parents discuss with them how well they are doing at school more than once a week.
- Girls (51.6%) were somewhat more likely than boys (44.1%) to report that their parents discussed their progress at school with them more than once a week.

Date source: PISA Survey (www.erc.ie) – 2006

Indicator: EATING A MAIN MEAL TOGETHER

Measure: The percentage of children aged 15 who report that their parents eat a main meal with them around a table more than once a week.

Description and comparison:

- In 2006, 74.5% of children reported that their parents eat a main meal with them around a table more than once a week.
- Children from the highest (78.2%) and medium (75.2%) social class categories were most likely to report that their parents eat a main meal with them around a table more than once a week, compared to children from the lowest social class category (70.7%).

Date source: PISA Survey (www.erc.ie) – 2006

RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEERS

Indicator: FRIENDSHIPS

Measure: The percentage of children aged 9-17 who report to have 3 or more friends of the same gender.

Description and comparison:

- In 2006, 89.5% of children reported to have 3 or more friends of the same gender.
- Using the ages of 11, 13 and 15 only to draw international comparisons with the 41 countries and regions that used this HBSC item, 86.4% of Irish children reported having 3 or more friends of the same gender. This is higher than the HBSC average of 79% and ranks Irish children 7th.

Date source: HBSC Survey (www.nuig.ie) – 2006

Indicator: PETS AND ANIMALS

Measure: The percentage of children aged 9-17 who report having a pet of their own or a pet in their family.

Description and comparison:

- In 2006, 73.8% of children reported having a pet of their own or a pet in their family.
- Children in the Mid-West region are more likely (80.2%) to report having a pet of their own or a pet in their family, while children in the Dublin region are least likely (62.8%) to report this.

Date source: HBSC Survey (www.nuig.ie) – 2006

Indicator: BULLYING

Measure: The percentage of children aged 9-17 who report to have been bullied at school.

Description and comparison:

- In 2006, 24.5% of children reported to have been bullied at school in the last couple of months.
- Using the ages of 11, 13 and 15 only to draw international comparisons with the 39 countries and regions that used this HBSC item, 25.9% of Irish children reported to have been bullied at school in the last couple of months. This is lower than the HBSC average of 32% and ranks Irish children 26th.

Date source: HBSC Survey (www.nuig.ie) – 2006

PART 3: CHILDREN'S OUTCOMES

COVERING EDUCATION, HEALTH AND
SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIOURAL OUTCOMES



PART 3: CHILDREN'S OUTCOMES

EDUCATION OUTCOMES

Indicator: ENROLMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION

Measure: The percentage of children under 13 in various early childhood care and education arrangements.

Description and comparison:

- In 2005, the main type of childcare arrangement was by parent/guardian for pre-school children (59.7%) and primary school children (78.5%).
- There has been no update of the Quarterly National Household Survey module since the previous *State of the Nation's Children* report (2006).

Date source: Quarterly National Household Survey (www.cso.ie) – 2005

Indicator: ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL

Measure: The percentage of children who are absent from school for 20 days or more in the school year.

Description and comparison:

- In 2005, 10.0% of primary school students were absent for 20 days or more in the school year. The percentage of primary school students with this level of absenteeism was, on average, lower in rural schools (7.8%) than in urban schools (14.9%).
- 18.8% of post-primary school students were absent for 20 days or more in the school year. The percentage of post-primary students with this level of absenteeism was lowest in secondary schools (15.1%) and highest in vocational schools (24.9%).
- There has been no update of the National Educational Welfare Board statistics since the previous *State of the Nation's Children* report (2006).

Date source: National Educational Welfare Board statistics (www.newb.ie) – 2005

Indicator: TRANSFER TO SECOND-LEVEL EDUCATION

Measure: The percentage of children leaving national school, by destination.

Description and comparison:

- In 2006, 95.5% of children leaving national school were known to have progressed to another form of schooling, either at first or second level.
- Boys are more likely than girls to leave national school and not attend any other school.

Date source: Department of Education and Science statistics (www.education.ie) – 2006

Indicator: READING LITERACY

Measure: The mean scores of children aged 15 based on the OECD-PISA Reading Literacy Scale.

Description and comparison:

- In 2006, children in Ireland achieved a mean score of 517.3 on the Reading Literacy Scale. This was higher than the OECD country mean of 492. Girls in Ireland achieved a higher mean score (534.0) than boys (500.2).
- Irish children ranked 5th out of 29 OECD countries that took part in the PISA Survey. Children in higher social classes achieved higher mean scores than children in lower social classes.

Date source: PISA Survey (www.erc.ie) – 2006

Indicator: MATHEMATICS

Measure: The mean scores of children aged 15 based on the OECD-PISA Mathematics Literacy Scale.

Description and comparison:

- In 2006, children in Ireland achieved a mean score of 501.5 on the Mathematics Literacy Scale. This was similar to the OECD country mean of 498. Boys in Ireland achieved a higher mean score (507.3) than girls (495.8).
- Irish children ranked 16th out of 30 OECD countries that took part in the PISA Survey. Children in higher social classes achieved higher mean scores than children in lower social classes.

Date source: PISA Survey (www.erc.ie) – 2006

Indicator: SCIENCE

Measure: The mean scores of children aged 15 based on the OECD-PISA Combined Scientific Literacy Scale.

Description and comparison:

- In 2006, children in Ireland achieved a mean score of 508.3 on the Scientific Literacy Scale. This was marginally higher than the OECD country mean of 500.
- Irish children ranked 14th out of 30 OECD countries that took part in the PISA Survey. Children in higher social classes achieved higher mean scores than children in lower social classes.

Date source: PISA Survey (www.erc.ie) – 2006

HEALTH OUTCOMES

Indicator: LOW BIRTH WEIGHT

Measure: The percentage of babies born weighing less than 2,500 grams (live and still births).

Description and comparison:

- In 2005, 5.3% of babies were born at low birth weight (weighing less than 2,500 grams).
- On average, 7.3% of babies in the EU27 are born at low birth weight. This figure takes account of live births only. Using live births only, in 2005, 5.7% of Irish babies were born at low birth weight.

Date source: National Perinatal Reporting System (www.esri.ie) – 2005

Indicator: BREASTFEEDING PRACTICE

Measure: The percentage of newborn babies who are (a) exclusively breastfed and (b) partially breastfed on discharge from hospital.

Description and comparison:

- In 2005, the breastfeeding rate on discharge from hospital was 47.5%. 43.5% of babies were exclusively breastfed, while 3.7% were fed using a combination of bottle and breastfeeding.
- A higher percentage of mothers in higher professional groups (70.9%) breastfed their babies.
- Although Ireland still compares unfavourably with other EU Member States, there has been an increase in the breastfeeding rate since 2001, when it was 41.3%, to 47.5% in 2005.

Date source: National Perinatal Reporting System (www.esri.ie) – 2005

Indicator: CHRONIC HEALTH AND HOSPITALISATION

Measure: The principal conditions resulting in hospitalisation among children.

Description and comparison:

- In 2007, there were 144,703 hospital discharges among children aged 0-17.
- Of the 2007 hospital discharges:
 - 21.7% (31,412) were aged less than 1 year; 29.5% (42,618) were in the age group 1-4; 19.5% (28,177) were in the age group 5-9; 15.8% (22,816) were in the age group 10-14; and 13.6% (19,680) were in the age group 15-17.
 - 42.1% (60,977) in total were accounted for by diseases of the respiratory (13.7%) and digestive systems (8.9%); injury and poisoning (10.4%); and certain infectious and parasitic diseases (9.1%).
- The total number of hospital discharges among children aged 0-17 increased by 8,733 between 2003 and 2007.

Date source: Hospital In-Patient Enquiry System (www.esri.ie) – 2007

Indicator: INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

Measure: The number and percentage of children under 18 registered as having an intellectual disability.

Description and comparison:

- In 2007, the number of children under 18 registered as having an intellectual disability was 7,802.
- 36.8% of children registered as having an intellectual disability were identified as having a mild disability; 27.4% as having a moderate disability; 9.5% as having a severe disability; and 1.9% as having a profound disability.
- 13.7% (1,071) of children registered as having an intellectual disability were aged 0-4; 31.6% (2,468) were aged 5-9; 32.3% (2,519) were aged 10-14; and 22.4% (1,744) were aged 15-17.

Date source: National Intellectual Disability Database (approx. 95% national coverage, www.hrb.ie) – 2007

Indicator: PHYSICAL AND/OR SENSORY DISABILITY

Measure: The number and percentage of children under 18 registered as having a physical and/or sensory disability.

Description and comparison:

- In 2007, the number of children registered as having a physical and/or sensory disability was 8,373.
- 62.3% (5,213) of children under 18 registered as having a physical and/or sensory disability were boys and 37.7% (3,160) were girls.
- 8.3% (697) of children under 18 registered as having a physical and/or sensory disability were aged 0-4; 36.8% (3,081) were aged 5-9; 38.1% (3,189) were aged 10-14; and 16.8% (1,406) were aged 15-17.

Date source: National Physical and Sensory Disability Database (approx. 65% national coverage, www.hrb.ie) – 2007

Indicator: ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Measure: The number of children who had an initial assessment for child welfare and protection concerns.

Description and comparison:

- In 2006, the number of children who, following a report to the Social Work Department in the Health Service Executive (HSE), had an initial assessment for a child welfare and protection concern was 12,520. This equates to an overall rate of 120.8 children per 10,000.
- The highest number of reported cases that went to initial assessment for child welfare and protection concerns was for welfare cases (6,221) and the lowest number was for cases of emotional abuse (1,100).

Date source: Childcare Interim Dataset (www.hse.ie) – 2006

SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIOURAL OUTCOMES

Indicator: PARTICIPATION IN MAKING THE SCHOOL RULES

Measure: The percentage of children aged 9-17 who report students at their school participate in making the school rules.

Description and comparison:

- In 2006, 22.5% of children reported that students at their school participate in making the school rules.
- Using the ages of 11, 13 and 15 only to draw international comparisons with the 7 countries and regions that used this HBSC item, 24.9% of Irish children reported that students at their school participate in making the school rules. This is lower than the HBSC average of 33.8% and ranks Irish children 7th (last).

Date source: HBSC Survey (www.nuig.ie) – 2006

Indicator: READING AS A LEISURE ACTIVITY

Measure: The percentage of children aged 15 who report that reading is one of their favourite hobbies.

Description and comparison:

- In 2006, 42.6% of children reported that reading was one of their favourite hobbies.
- Girls (52%) were more likely than boys (32.7%) to report that reading was one of their favourite hobbies.

Date source: PISA Survey (www.erc.ie) – 2006

Indicator: DAILY SMOKING

Measure: The percentage of children aged 9-17 who report smoking cigarettes every day.

Description and comparison:

- In 2006, 8.5% of children reported smoking cigarettes every day. This was higher among older children (15.6% of 15-17 year-olds).
- Using the ages of 11, 13 and 15 only to draw international comparisons with the 40 countries and regions that used this HBSC item, 6.5% of Irish children reported smoking cigarettes every day. This is higher than the HBSC average of 5.8% and ranks Irish children 17th.

Date source: HBSC Survey (www.nuig.ie) – 2006

Indicator: WEEKLY SMOKING

Measure: The percentage of children aged 9-17 who report smoking cigarettes every week.

Description and comparison:

- In 2006, 11.7% of children reported smoking cigarettes every week. This was higher among older children (20.1% of 15-17 year-olds).
- Using the ages of 11, 13 and 15 only to draw international comparisons with the 40 countries and regions that used this HBSC item, 9.2% of Irish children reported smoking cigarettes every week. This is higher than the HBSC average of 8.1% and ranks Irish children 17th.

Date source: HBSC Survey (www.nuig.ie) – 2006

Indicator: ALCOHOL USE

Measure: The percentage of children aged 10-17 who report to have been drunk at least once in the last 30 days.

Description and comparison:

- In 2006, 20.4% of children reported that they had been drunk at least once in the last 30 days.
- Using the age of 15 only to draw international comparisons with the 9 countries and regions that used this HBSC item, 29.0% of Irish children reported that they had been drunk at least once in the last 30 days. This is higher than the HBSC average of 21.7% and ranks Irish children 2nd highest.

Date source: HBSC Survey (www.nuig.ie) – 2006

Indicator: DRUG USE

Measure: The proportion of children aged 10-17 who report having taken cannabis at least once in their lifetime.

Description and comparison:

- In 2006, 15.7% of children aged 10-17 reported that they had used cannabis at least once in their lifetime.
- Using the age of 15 only to draw international comparisons with the 39 countries and regions that used this HBSC item, 23.5% of Irish children reported that they had used cannabis at least once in their lifetime. This is higher than the HBSC average of 18% and ranks Irish children 12th.

Date source: HBSC Survey (www.nuig.ie) – 2006

Indicator: SEXUAL HEALTH AND BEHAVIOUR

Measure: The number of births to girls aged 15-17.

Description and comparison:

- In 2006, the number of babies born to girls aged under 18 was 577 (this number includes a small number of births to girls aged 10-14).
- There has been a constant decrease from 2002, when the number of babies born to girls under 18 was 779.

Date source: Vital Statistics; Population Estimates (www.cso.ie) – 2006

Indicator: SELF-ESTEEM

Measure: The percentage of children aged 9-17 who report feeling happy 'always' or 'very often' with the way they are.

Description and comparison:

- In 2006, 58.2% of children reported feeling happy 'always' or 'very often' with the way they are.
- The percentage of children who reported that they feel happy 'always' or 'very often' with the way they are was higher among boys (62.9%, compared to 53.1% of girls) and younger children (74.8% of 9-year-olds, compared to 49.3% of 15-17 year-olds).

Date source: HBSC Survey (www.nuig.ie) – 2006

Indicator: SELF-REPORTED HAPPINESS

Measure: The percentage of children aged 9-17 who report being happy with their lives at present.

Description and comparison:

- In 2006, 90.8% of children reported that they were happy with their lives at present.
- The percentage of children who reported being happy with their lives at present was higher among younger children (95% of 9-year-olds, compared to 88.5% of 15-17 year-olds).

Date source: HBSC Survey (www.nuig.ie) – 2006

Indicator: YOUTH SUICIDE

Measure: The number and rate per 100,000 of suicide among children aged 10-17.

Description and comparison:

- In 2006, there were 14 suicides among children under the age of 18. Youth suicide accounted for 14.7% of all deaths in the 10-17 age group.
- The suicide rate for boys aged 10-17 was 11 per 100,000. This was over twice the rate for girls (5 per 100,000).

Date source: Vital Statistics (www.cso.ie) – 2006

Indicator: PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Measure: The percentage of children aged 9-17 who report being physically active for at least 60 minutes per day on more than 2 days per week and on more than 4 days per week.

Description and comparison:

- On more than 2 days per week:
 - In 2006, 90.4% of children reported that they were physically active for at least 60 minutes per day on more than 2 days per week.
 - Boys (93.6%) were more likely than girls (87%) to report that they were physically active for at least 60 minutes per day on more than 2 days per week.
 - Using the ages of 11, 13 and 15 only to draw international comparisons with the 41 countries and regions that used this HBSC item, 92.6% of Irish children reported that they were physically active for at least 60 minutes per day on more than 2 days per week. This is higher than the HBSC average of 87.3% and ranks Irish children 3rd.
- On more than 4 days per week:
 - In 2006, 54.8% of children reported that they were physically active for at least 60 minutes per day on more than 4 days per week.
 - Boys (63.4%) were more likely than girls (45.9%) to report that they were physically active for at least 60 minutes per day on more than 4 days per week.
 - Using the ages of 11, 13 and 15 only to draw international comparisons with the 41 countries and regions that used this HBSC item, 59.2% of Irish children reported that they were physically active for at least 60 minutes per day on more than 4 days per week. This is higher than the HBSC average of 42.6% and ranks Irish children 1st.

Date source: HBSC Survey (www.nuig.ie) – 2006

Indicator: YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

Measure: The number and rate per 100,000 children who appeared to the Health Service Executive (HSE) to be homeless.

Description and comparison:

- In 2006, the total number of children who appeared to the HSE to be homeless was 449. This equates to an overall rate of youth homelessness of 43.3 children per 100,000.
- 32.1% (144) of children who appeared to the HSE to be homeless were in HSE South; 30.3% (136) were in HSE Dublin North-East; 24.1% (108) were in HSE Dublin Mid-Leinster; and the remaining 13.6% (61) were in HSE West.
- 55% (247) of children who appeared to the HSE to be homeless were aged 16-17; 27.8% (125) were aged 14-15; 8% (36) were aged 12-13; and the remaining 9.1% (41) were less than 12 years-old.

Date source: Childcare Interim Dataset (www.hse.ie) – 2006

Indicator: NUTRITIONAL HABITS

Measure: The percentage of children aged 9-17 who report eating breakfast on 5 or more days per week.

Description and comparison:

- In 2006, 76% of children reported eating breakfast on 5 or more days per week.
- Boys (79.1%) were more likely than girls (72.9%) to report eating breakfast on 5 or more days per week.
- Using the ages of 11, 13 and 15 only to draw international comparisons with the 39 countries and regions that used this HBSC item, 78.2% of Irish children reported eating breakfast on 5 or more days per week. This is higher than the HBSC average of 72.2% and ranks Irish children 14th.

Date source: HBSC Survey (www.nuig.ie) – 2006

PART 4: FORMAL AND INFORMAL SUPPORTS



PART 4: FORMAL AND INFORMAL SUPPORTS

Indicator: PUBLIC EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN

Measure: Public expenditure on education.

Description and comparison:

- Public expenditure on education in Ireland decreased from 5.3% of GDP in 1996 to 4.8% of GDP in 2005. In terms of GNI, this represented a slight decrease, from a level of 5.8% in 1996 to 5.6% in 2005.
- Real non-capital public expenditure per student in Ireland increased by 105% for first-level and by 86% for second-level over the period 1997-2006 when measured in constant 2006 prices.

Date source: Eurostat; Department of Education and Science (www.education.ie) – 2005

Indicator: CONSISTENT POVERTY

Measure: The percentage of children living in households with a household income below the national 60% median, equivalised using the national equivalence scale, and experiencing basic deprivation.

Description and comparison:

- In 2006, 10.3% of children under 18 experienced consistent poverty.
- The consistent poverty rate of children under 18 living in households comprising a single adult with children was 33.9%.

Date source: EU Survey on Income and Living Conditions (www.cso.ie) – 2006

Indicator: 'AT RISK OF POVERTY'

Measure: The percentage of children living in households with a household income below the national 60% median, equivalised using the national equivalence scale.

Description and comparison:

- In 2006, 22.3% of children under 18 were considered to be 'at risk of poverty'.
- The percentage of children under 18 at risk of poverty in Ireland (22%) was higher than the EU25 average (19%).

Date source: EU Survey on Income and Living Conditions (www.cso.ie) – 2006

Indicator: AVAILABILITY OF HOUSING FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN

Measure: The number of children in families on a local authority housing waiting list.

Description and comparison:

- 22,335 households with children were identified as being in need of social housing in the 2005 assessment of housing needs.
- 61.4% of family households in need of social housing were households with one child, while 5.7% of households included 4 or more children.
- There has been no update of the Triennial Assessment of Housing Need since the previous *State of the Nation's Children* report (2006).

Date source: Triennial Assessment of Housing Needs (www.environ.ie) – 2005

Indicator: PERCEIVED SAFETY IN THE COMMUNITY

Measure: The percentage of children aged 9-17 who report feeling safe in the area where they live.

Description and comparison:

- In 2006, 90.4% of children reported that they felt safe in the area where they live.
- Using the ages of 11, 13 and 15 only to draw international comparisons with the 8 countries and regions that used this HBSC item, 91.2% of Irish children reported that they felt safe in the area where they live. This is higher than the HBSC average of 89.5% and ranks Irish children 3rd.

Date source: HBSC Survey (www.nuig.ie) – 2006

Indicator: ENVIRONMENT AND PLACES

Measure: The percentage of children aged 9-17 who report there are good places in their area to spend their free time.

Description and comparison:

- In 2006, 42.2% of children reported that there were good places in their area to spend their free time.
- Boys (45.4%) were more likely than girls (39%) to report that there were good places in their area to spend their free time.
- Using the ages of 11, 13 and 15 only to draw international comparisons with the 7 countries and regions that used this HBSC item, 45.7% of Irish children reported that there were good places in their area to spend their free time. This is lower than the HBSC average of 64.3% and ranks Irish children 7th (last).

Date source: HBSC Survey (www.nuig.ie) – 2006

Indicator: REFERRALS TO THE GARDA JUVENILE DIVERSION PROGRAMME

Measure: The number of children referred to the Garda Juvenile Diversion Programme.

Description and comparison:

- In 2007, a total of 21,861 children aged 10-17 were referred to the Garda Juvenile Diversion Programme. There were 27,767 referrals in total. (Some of these children were referred more than once.)
- 18.9% of children referred to the Garda Juvenile Diversion Programme were female.
- Alcohol-related offences were the single highest cause of referrals to the Garda Juvenile Diversion Programme, representing 19.9% of all referrals.

Date source: An Garda Síochána (www.garda.ie) – 2007

Indicator: ANTENATAL CARE

Measure: The distribution of timing of first antenatal visit by trimester for all women delivering live or stillborn babies.

Description and comparison:

- In 2005, 72.3% of women presented for antenatal care in the 1st trimester, 19.9% in the 2nd trimester and 3.9% in the 3rd trimester.
- Antenatal visits in the 1st trimester are lowest among the lower socio-economic groups, such as the 'unemployed' (59.5%).
- Women who are primarily engaged in 'home duties' also have one of the lowest proportions of antenatal visits in the 1st trimester (65.5%).

Date source: National Perinatal Reporting System (www.esri.ie) – 2005

Indicator: CHILDHOOD IMMUNISATION

Measure: The percentage uptake of D3/P3/T3/Hib3/Polio3 and Meningococcal C3 vaccinations at (a) 12 months and (b) 24 months of age; and the percentage uptake of MMR1 vaccinations at 24 months of age.

Description and comparison:

- In 2007, the overall level of uptake of immunisation was about 87% for children aged 12 months and 92% for children aged 24 months.
- Immunisation rates have increased consistently year on year. However, Ireland continues to have one of the lowest immunisation rates in the EU.

Date source: Immunisation Uptake Statistics (www.ndsc.ie/hpsc) – 2007

Indicator: ACCESSIBILITY OF BASIC HEALTH SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

Measure: The number of children on hospital waiting lists.

Description and comparison:

- In April 2008, 2,537 children were known to be on a hospital waiting list for treatment.
- 39% of the 2,537 children awaiting treatment were on the hospital list for 3-6 months; 42% for 6-12 months; and 19% for 1 year or more.
- Of the 2,537 children who were known to be on a hospital waiting list awaiting treatment, 85% were awaiting surgical treatment and 15% were awaiting medical treatment.

Date source: Patient Treatment Register (information from 43 hospitals nationwide, compared to 19 hospitals in 2006, www.ntpf.ie) – 2008

Indicator: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

Measure: The number of children who are in the care of the Health Service Executive (HSE).

Description and comparison:

- In 2006, the number of children in the care of the HSE was 5,247. This equates to an overall rate of 50.6 children per 10,000.
- 87.6% of all children in the care of the HSE lived in foster family homes.
- 21.7% of children were in care for less than one year.

Date source: Childcare Interim Dataset (www.hse.ie) – 2006

Indicator: MENTAL HEALTH REFERRALS

Measure: The number of admissions to psychiatric hospitals among children.

Description and comparison:

- In 2006, there were 398 admissions to hospital for psychiatric care among children.
- The number of admissions to psychiatric hospitals was higher for boys (54.8%) than for girls (45.2%).
- Children aged 15-17 accounted for 83.7% of admissions to psychiatric hospitals.

Date source: National Psychiatric In-Patient Reporting System (www.hrb.ie) – 2006

Indicator: SCREENING FOR GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Measure: The percentage of mothers of newborn children visited by a Public Health Nurse within 48 hours of discharge from hospital.

Description and comparison:

- In 2007, 72.1% of infants were visited by a Public Health Nurse (PHN) within 48 hours of discharge from hospital.
- The percentage of newborn babies visited by a PHN within 48 hours of discharge from hospital varied across HSE Regions, ranging from 57.5% in HSE Dublin North-East to 85% in HSE West.

Date source: National Health Services Performance Indicators (www.hse.ie) – 2007

PUBLISHED BY THE STATIONERY OFFICE DUBLIN

To be purchased from the
GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS SALES OFFICE,
SUN ALLIANCE HOUSE,
MOLESWORTH STREET, DUBLIN 2

or by mail order from
GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS,
POSTAL TRADE SECTION,
51 ST. STEPHEN'S GREEN, DUBLIN 2
[Tel: 01 647 6834; Fax: 01 647 6843]

or through any bookseller



Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs
Department of Health and Children

Hawkins House
Hawkins Street
Dublin 2

Tel: +353 (0)1 635 4000
Fax: +353 (0)1 674 3223
E-mail: omc@health.gov.ie
Web: www.omc.gov.ie

Price: €5.00
Prn: A8/1776

ISBN 978-1-4064-2223-8

9 781406 422238