



## Community Childcare Subvention (CCS) Scheme

The Community Childcare Subvention (CCS) Scheme is a scheme for community based childcare services to provide quality childcare at reduced rates to disadvantaged parents.

The changes to the scheme that came into effect from September 2012 have impacted in a loss of revenue and further challenges for some community services.

A number of our members have outlined the following as a result of the changes:

- **Financial sustainability** - is the greatest challenge for Community Services who were surveyed due to **loss of income**: Community services are down a significant amount of money from the scheme -some services have only half of what they had last year (-50%), others are down from €3,000 up to €60,000 (for one service) because of the changes to the scheme.
- **Sustainability of these Community services is at risk** - many are running at a loss and in deficit at the end of the year. Quite a few services take the hit in the loss of funding because the parents can't afford to pay the increase.
- **Parents can't afford the service** - The change in bands (ie from A to B) means many parents can't afford childcare, and are taking their children out of the service altogether. Sometimes only one child is eligible but they may have 2 or 3 brothers/sisters.
- **Staff hours or wages have been cut** - a knock on effect from loss of €5 and loss of income from parents as they can no longer afford it. Many services have to let staff go over the summer or reduce wages and/or hours.
- **Families cannot access places** after allocations are given - due to the **inflexibility of the scheme**- ie after September. This is unrealistic and some services are covering the cost of the extra children themselves. Some said that the scheme is not fair and equitable, and should be more like the ECCE scheme where transfers etc can occur. Children in the after schools need more hours of care during the school holidays.
- **Increased administration and paperwork** - other Government departments haven't caught up with changes, hence appeals have been made.
- **Scheme does not incentivise people to take up transient employment - ie seasonal or short term employment** - parents are not taking up the opportunity of transient employment because it's not worth their while when they have to pay for childcare.