

25th May 2010.

Dear Madam,

Following RTE One's Prime Time programme on Tuesday the 25th of May, social workers demand allocated social workers for every child in need, the full resourcing of children and families social work teams and early intervention and support for families.

The Prime Time Programme on RTE One and recent media reporting has highlighted the needs of children in care. Social workers remain concerned at the continuing failure of the HSE to allocate social workers to every child in care and to offer social work support to all families in need when difficulties begin to arise. HSE figures last year indicated that 20% of children in care do not have an allocated social worker. Yet research demonstrates that early intervention by social work and other support services with families in need keeps families together and makes it most likely that more entrenched problems will not emerge.

The Irish Association of Social Workers welcomes the recent focusing of public attention on the difficulties faced by children with complex difficulties in difficult circumstances. The Association would also like to draw attention to the fact that many social workers work together with families and with other professionals to ensure good outcomes for many children and families.

One of the clear implications of the Prime Time programme is that the lack of an allocated social worker and the lack of early intervention services for every single child in care. The Irish Association of Social Workers calls on the government and the HSE to act immediately to allocate a social worker to every child in care and to provide the appropriate support services for children in need.

Yours sincerely
Declan Coogan,
Communications Co-ordinator,
Irish Association of Social Workers (IASW),
087 6554781