



Youth Work Ireland

Press Release

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“Dail needs to follow anti-social behaviour motion with equivalent support for grassroots youth work” says leading Youth Organisation

The Dáil should give greater prominence to supporting youth work and key grassroots projects for young people in its efforts to deal with anti-social behaviour according to Youth Work Ireland. The organisation whose members work with approximately 100,000 young people around the country was reacting to a resolution recently passed by the Dail which it said made limited reference to youth work or the need to invest in communities and sought to loosen criteria relating to ASBOs and other measures which have generally been discredited. The group believes that proper community-based policing with adequate resources along with restoring cuts made to local youth services down the years should be central to dealing with this problem and has urged TDs to consider another resolution given the same prominence to these solutions and involving youth organisations and young people. The youth organisation, whose members run a large number of Garda Diversion Projects, believe a greater emphasis is needed on earmarking more Gardai as Juvenile Liaison Officers. The group has also called for young people to be consulted on these issues given the negative images often created about them in these debates.

“Anti-social behaviour is clearly an issue in communities, but it needs a multilayered community-based response. Policing is of course at the heart of this. We have seen many communities feeling there are not sufficient Gardai present locally to ensure rapid responses. Policing also has to be community based and we need to ensure good relations between Gardai, the local community, and young people. Juvenile Liaison Officers, Community Gardai and properly funded youth work all play a role in addressing anti-social behaviour. However, most of these approaches have been deprioritized in recent years. Short term and knee jerk reactions do not provide long term solutions. There is only a brief mention of these aspects in the Dail’s resolution” said Michael Mc Loughlin from Youth Work Ireland

“ASBOs were introduced with some fanfare a number of years ago yet only a handful have been issued and less to young people. This obviously shows the limited impact of these measures. It seems also to indicate that Gardai have not been totally comfortable with the ASBO and the whole process surrounding it. There remains a lot of legal

uncertainty about ASBOs and there seems very little to distinguish them from other legal instruments such as public order legislation apart from the stronger due process in other measures. We would hope that a relative new Dail would be looking for more effective solutions than this” Mr Mc Loughlin added.

ENDS

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