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do leanaí
for children

Making Children's Rights Real with and for Young Carers

**Edy-Care Final Dissemination Event,
Brussels, 19 February 2020**

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What actions can we take to enable young carers to reach their goals and to thrive?



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Ombudsman for Children's Office (OCO)

Independent statutory organisation

Ombudsman for Children Act 2002

Two overall roles:

- promote children's rights and welfare
- investigate complaints made by or for children



Niall Muldoon is Ombudsman for Children in Ireland since 2015

Ombudsman for Children appointed by President of Ireland and accountable to Ireland's parliament

Find out more at www.oco.ie

OCO is a member of the **European Network of Ombudspersons for Children**



ENOC

- Association of independent children's rights institutions
- Membership open to institutions in Council of Europe Member States
- 43 institutions in 34 countries
- Supports the promotion and protection of children's rights, as set out in the UNCRC
 - work on specific children's rights issues (e.g. 2018 – mental health – young carers)
- Find out more at enoc.eu



OCO's Work

Issues

health
education
housing
child protection
family and care
youth justice
online safety

Children and Young People

... seeking asylum
... in the care of the State
... with disabilities
... in detention
... experiencing homelessness
... with mental health difficulties
... in hospital

Developments

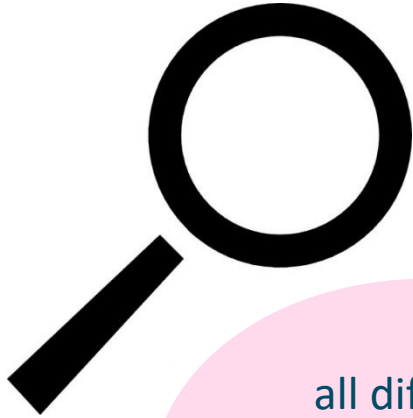
law
public policy
procedures
standards
inspection
services
practices

OCO's Lens

As a national children's rights institution with a statutory mandate to promote children's rights and welfare, our lens is **children** and their **rights**, with a particular focus on the actions of **State actors**.



Young Carers in Ireland



all different
(circumstances,
needs,
perspectives)

+ and -

- education
- health & wellbeing
- rest & recreation
- social inclusion

Census 2016

- 6108 young carers under 17
- 3,800 young carers under 15

Estimated

- 55,000+ young carers

... who are relatively **invisible** in law
and public policy in Ireland

Rights of Young Carers

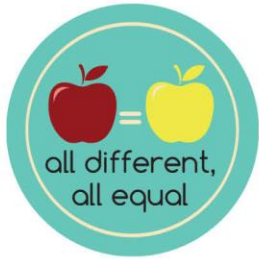
Young carers
under 18 are
'children'

Children under
18 have rights

Children's rights
are set out under
Irish, European
and international
law, including
the UNCRC

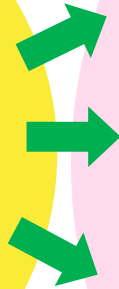
United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

- every child under 18
- inalienable, interdependent, indivisible



Responsibilities for making rights real

Under international human rights standards, **States** are the **primary** duty bearers



Duty to Respect

refrain from interfering directly or indirectly with children's enjoyment of their rights

Duty to Protect

prevent third parties (e.g. companies) from interfering with children's enjoyment of their rights

Duty to Fulfil

adopt the necessary measures to make children's rights real in children's lives

Measures to make rights real

**UN Committee
on the Rights of the Child**

General Comment No.5 (2003)

**General measures
for implementing the
UN Convention
on the Rights of the Child**

law

national policy and strategy

coordination

resources (financial, human, technical)

data

awareness, education and training

monitoring

remedies and redress

What OCO can do

In our role to promote children's rights and welfare, we can:

- advise on developments in law and public policy
- encourage public organisations to work in ways that promote children's rights
- collect and disseminate information
- raise awareness of children's rights
- consult children and highlight their views and concerns
- undertake, promote or publish research



Questions

**What do
young carers think?**



experiences,
perspectives,
priorities?

**What key actions need
to be taken by the
State and its actors?**

e.g. law, policy,
coordination, data,
resources, awareness
raising?

**What could
OCO do?**

raise awareness,
commission research,
hear and highlight
young carers'
perspectives?

Thank you



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