



**Press Statement  
24 June 2020**

**College of Psychiatrists Concerned over Lack of Assurance of a Minister for Children on Cabinet and a Potentially Watered-Down Department for Children and Youth Affairs and Believe this Would be a Backward Step and Detrimental to Placing Children’s Needs Prominently in New Government Plans**

Following a media interview (23 June) on the programme for government the future of the Department for Children and Youth Affairs and maintaining a Minister for Children seems further in doubt.

As children make up 25% of our population the College believe a ministry that puts the needs of the ‘whole child’ centre stage was the right move and needs to continue. Such a position and department can bridge all areas significant to the rights of a child, ensure their important place in Irish Society and as our future generation.

Ensuring all of our children are afforded the best possible opportunities to develop and realise their potential, are provided with appropriate supports at appropriate times, as well as necessary protection as early as possible, when needed, are vital. A department and Ministerial post devoted to children enables these areas to be addressed more successfully and efficiently and keeps the focus on the ‘whole ‘child.

“How we treat our children will predict the well-being of our society including, but not exclusively, in economic terms. Pushing them back into the shadows where they ‘are seen and not heard’ makes no sense and would be a retrograde step” said Dr Maeve Doyle Consultant Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist and Director Communication and Public Education.