

## **IFCA WELCOMES THE PUBLICATION OF THE REPORT FROM THE JOINT OIREACHTAS COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & YOUTH AFFAIRS INTO FOSTER CARE IN IRELAND**

IFCA welcomes the publication of the report from the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Children & Youth Affairs into foster care in Ireland, published today, Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> November. IFCA met with the Committee in May this year and made a number of recommendations to the Committee including the need to recruit more social workers, the need for emergency out of hours service and the need for access to services for children in care when they need them.

Speaking at the launch of the report Catherine Bond, CEO, IFCA said “IFCA welcomes the report today from the Committee on Children and Youth Affairs. We are pleased that the Committee recognised the need to put a lens over foster care in Ireland as foster care is the backbone of the care system in Ireland with 92% of children in care placed in foster care.

“We particularly welcome their recognition that there is an urgent need for the recruitment of more social workers into the area and IFCA understands that Tusla is currently active in this area. We are also pleased to see the recognition that emergency out of hours service should be available country wide as a matter of urgency.”

IFCA calls for a wide range of supports to be available to foster carers to ensure retention of both existing foster carers and to attract new foster carers to ensure sufficient placements for children in need of foster care. This was also noted by the ex-chair of the committee, Jim Daly TD and Minister of State at the Department of Health with special responsibility for Mental Health and Older People, and Anne Rabbitte TD and FF spokesperson on Children & Youth Affairs at the launch this morning.

The majority of children in the care of the state live with foster carers. At the end of February 2017, there were 6309 children in care, of which 5822 (92%) were placed in foster care; (27% of those in foster care being placed in relative foster care)

**Ends**

**For further information please contact:**

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[www.ifca.ie](http://www.ifca.ie)

### **Further information on the Irish Foster Care Association**

The Irish Foster Care Association is the representative body for foster care in Ireland. Child-centred and rights-based, IFCA promotes excellence in foster care so that children have the best chances in life. We aim to accomplish this by providing information, support, and learning opportunities for all those involved in foster care through our direct work in Advocacy, Branch Development, Support, and Learning and Development. We are an independent, membership informed organisation. IFCA’s National Support Helpline runs every week day from 11.00am - 3.00pm and can be contacted at 01 458 5123

