

*Dé Máirt, 20 Samhain, 2007
Tuesday, 20th November, 2007*

2.30 p.m.

**GNÓ COMHALTAÍ PRÍOBHÁIDEACHA
PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

Fógra i dtaobh leasú ar Thairscint : Notice of Amendment to Motion

20. “That Dáil Éireann;

- recognising the lengthy waiting lists for psychological assessment in primary and secondary schools;
- noting an increase of just 7 additional psychologists to the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) to date this year;
- given the Government commitment in January to appoint 31 additional psychologists to the NEPS in 2007;
- acknowledging that a large proportion of schools remain excluded from the NEPS system eight years after its establishment;
- noting that a reported 23 school-going children died by suicide in the last school year;
- recognising that many parents and charitable organisations are forced to pay for private assessments for children due to a lack of NEPS resources; and
- considering that there is currently no dedicated speech and language service available within the school system;

calls on the Government to:

- immediately increase the number of NEPS psychologists to meet Government commitments for 2007;
- streamline the organisations involved in delivering psychological assessments to schools to encourage a more efficient level of service;
- extend NEPS services to all schools across the country without further delay; and
- create a speech therapy service within the education system to cater exclusively for children and young people in need of this service.” — *Brian Hayes, Enda Kenny, Bernard Allen, James Bannon, Seán Barrett, Pat Breen, Richard Bruton, Ulick Burke, Catherine Byrne, Joe Carey, Deirdre Clune, Paul Connaughton, Noel J. Coonan, Simon Coveney, Seymour Crawford, Michael Creed, Lucinda Creighton, Michael D'Arcy, John Deasy, Jimmy Deenihan, Andrew Doyle, Bernard J. Durkan, Damien English, Olwyn Enright, Frank Feighan, Charles Flanagan, Terence Flanagan, Tom Hayes, Phil Hogan, Paul Kehoe, Pádraic McCormack, Shane McEntee, Dinny McGinley, Joe McHugh, Olivia*

Mitchell, Denis Naughten, Dan Neville, Michael Noonan, Kieran O'Donnell, Fergus O'Dowd, Jim O'Keeffe, John O'Mahony, John Perry, James Reilly, Michael Ring, Alan Shatter, Tom Sheahan, P. J. Sheehan, David Stanton, Billy Timmins, Leo Varadkar.

Leasú:

Amendment:

1. To delete all words after “Dáil Éireann” and substitute the following:

“notes:

- all schools have access to psychological assessments for their students, either directly through the National Educational Psychological Service or through the Scheme for Commissioning Private Assessments;
- the number of NEPS psychologists has trebled since the service was established to 134 at present; and
- in the 2006/07 school year, NEPS paid for some 4,400 private assessments;

welcomes:

- the Government’s commitment to increase the number of NEPS psychologists to 200 by 2009;

acknowledges:

- while the recruitment process for the 2007 vacancies has taken longer than expected, it is underway with a view to filling the remaining positions as soon as possible;

further notes:

- the enhancements in speech and language services being planned by the Government and the commitments in the Programme for Government in that regard; and

supports:

- the Government’s determination to promote positive mental health for children and young people through a range of initiatives, including through education, health, sport and community services; and
- the Government’s commitment to implementing the recommendations of the National Strategy for Action on Suicide Prevention with a view to reducing suicide rates.” — *An tAire Oideachais agus Eolaíochta.*