



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The **Methodist** Church
in Cardiff and Caerphilly



The 18th of January 2011 was a landmark day in Wales as the National Assembly for Wales passed the proposed Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure. Wales is leading the way in the UK ; it is the first UK administration to seek to embed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) into law.

Both Ian Thomas, the Circuit Youth Worker, and the Reverend Susan McIvor, Minister for Youth Work in The Methodist Church in Cardiff and Caerphilly, attended the Plenary session at the Senedd and were very proud to see this Measure voted through unanimously.

The proposed Measure is intended to strengthen and build on the existing rights based approach of the Welsh Assembly Government towards policy for children and young people. It does this by placing a duty on Welsh Ministers to have due regard to the UNCRC.

This duty will commence from the 1st of May 2012. Between this date and the 30th of April 2014, Welsh Ministers will have to have due regard to the rights and obligations within the UNCRC when making any decision about the formulation, review or change of policies, or about proposed legislation. From the 1st of May 2014 the duty will apply when Welsh Ministers exercise any of their functions.

The proposed Measure also places a duty on Welsh Ministers to promote knowledge and understanding of the UNCRC amongst the public. This duty will commence when the proposed Measure becomes law in May 2011.

However, this work has already started in the Cardiff Circuit. In the run up to the Plenary debate on the Measure an awareness raising session for young people was held at Youth Space. This was a successful event with the participants gaining a full understanding of their rights and the responsibilities that these rights give them.

In addition to complying with the due regard duty, Ministers will be required to draft and publish a children's scheme which will set out the arrangements for ensuring that there is compliance with the due regard duty. There will be an open and transparent development process for drafting the scheme which will involve children, young people and other interested parties.

The youth workers of the circuit are particularly pleased with the government's commitment to engage children and young people in the development of policies that will effect their lives. More importantly this engagement will take place at the beginning of the process so that children and young people can play a full part in the development of these policies. The Reverend Susan McIvor said in response to this commitment:

“We are very happy and proud that the Welsh Assembly Government has made this commitment to the children and young people of Wales. Very often we hear how the young people are disengaged from politics and policies, but we are confident that this will make a positive change to the future of many of our young people. We now encourage The Methodist Church to follow the example of our government and involve children and young people in the development of policies that will effect their lives. “

The overall purpose of the proposed Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure is to embed the Welsh Assembly Government's rights-based approach and strengthen and maintain momentum towards full realisation of children and young people's rights in general.

The proposed Measure is designed not only to help the children and young people of today to enjoy better lives, better outcomes and improved wellbeing, but also provide a mechanism to ensure a better tomorrow in terms of social and economic prosperity for our communities and Wales as a whole.

Editor's Notes

Youth Space can be found in the Canton area of Cardiff, South Wales.

Youth Space, Cowbridge Road East, Canton, Cardiff, CF5 1BA

Youth Space is a part of The Methodist Church in Cardiff and Caerphilly, the group of 24 churches working together with congregations stretching across the city and into the surrounding suburbs.

The Youth Space website when printed must be preceded by http:// and does not contain a “www” within it.

<http://youthspace.cardiffmethodist.org.uk>

Rev. Susan McIvor is the Minister for Youth Work in The Methodist Church in Cardiff and Caerphilly with special responsibility for Youth Space alongside a suburban church.

Mr. Ian Thomas is the Youth Worker for The Methodist Church in Cardiff and Caerphilly with specific responsibility for Youth Space.

Full details of the content of the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure including the explanatory Memorandum can be found at

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-legislation/bus-leg-measures/business-legislation-measures-rightsofchildren.htm>

Any further queries regarding this release should be addressed to Ian Thomas

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Images

No specific images are supplied to accompany this release