



First I would like to congratulate all students who sat their Leaving Cert and Junior Cert examinations over the summer and wish them the best of luck in their future education and careers. Last year has been a very busy year for the National Parents Council post primary with 20 sessions of training delivered, our newsletters and the introduction of MOVING UP, a new illustrated book for parents of children transferring to second-level schools. We are at the moment working on NPCpp Conference 2011. We have a packed agenda for the conference which will start at 7.15pm on the Friday and launched by Minister for Education & Skills Ruairí Quinn. Read on for details.

We also have our training finalised and it will be on our website at [www.npcpp.ie](http://www.npcpp.ie) NPCpp training is available to all parents and not just parents associations/ councils. It is free of charge, just turn up on the night.

**Tommy Walshe**  
President NPCpp

### Engineers Ireland Free Maths Grinds For Leaving Cert & Junior Cert Students

Engineers Ireland are offering free maths grinds which kick off on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September in their Headquarters – 22 Clyde Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4. This year they are covering both Leaving Certificate and Junior Certificate Higher Level Maths.

The grinds will run Saturday until 12<sup>th</sup> May 2012 – not including bank holiday weekends, Christmas & Easter Holidays Students/parents interested in attending can register here - <http://bit.ly/qsS9dH> The lecturer is Chartered Engineer Tim Joyce who has been providing leaving cert maths grinds for the last 20 years.

Students who are unable to attend their free grinds can watch online at [www.steps.ie](http://www.steps.ie)

### Suicide or Survive (SOS)

Suicide or Survive (SOS) was established in 2005 by Caroline McGuigan, CEO, and she and her team work tirelessly to raise awareness of mental health issues in Ireland. SOS is dedicated to working towards the eradication of death by suicide, devoted to educating all generations in matters related to mental health wellness, committed to being a living and caring contact point where people who are at their most vulnerable will feel cherished and listened to, and passionate about removing the stigma associated with mental health challenges.

SOS is an active partner of **See Change** - Ireland's national partnership to reduce stigma and challenge discrimination associated with mental health problems. See Change is an alliance of organisations including the Health Service Executive, Government Departments, non-statutory agencies, service users and carers and other stakeholders – all working together through the National Stigma Reduction Partnership to bring about positive change in public attitudes and behaviour towards people with mental health problems.

In June 2010, SOS ran a pilot programme of 'Wellness Workshops'. These workshops were developed by drawing on the organisation's unique experience and expertise in the corporate, community and voluntary sectors. Each one-day workshop offers participants an array of practical tools, understandable theory and workable solutions to help them maintain their mental wellness in both their personal and professional lives.

The success of the "Wellness Workshops" led to the Vodafone Ireland Foundation joining with SOS as a strategic partner. Places at the "Wellness Workshop" are normally €200 per delegate but they are being offered **free of charge** thanks to the support of Vodafone Ireland Foundation and a full programme has been rolling out across the nation since November, 2010. To date, SOS have held over 22 workshops across the nation, with an average attendance of 30 people at each event. This has created almost 500

Ambassadors for the work that SOS is doing to break down the stigma of mental health issues and the workshops themselves are actively up-skilling our community during these challenging times.

The success of the "Wellness Workshops" has led to interest by other community groups. SOS has come together with a variety of organisations including the Samaritans, Sli Eile, Navan Lions Club, Kildare Bereavement Support Group and Darndale Belcamp Village Centre to host additional events. The cost of each event is shared with the community groups and together they can continue to offer free places at the workshop to their community.

Caroline McGuigan, CEO, SOS said, "Being able to offer help and support to people throughout Ireland with these workshops can make a real difference. They help to raise awareness of mental health issues right across the country. The difficult economic climate of the past two years has put enormous pressure on everyone and unfortunately some people find it more difficult to cope than others. We are keen to work with community groups or parent's councils or groups in any part of the country to bring the **Wellness Workshop** into their community so that we can educate and empower our nation – to put them in a position to be able to provide support to anyone who feels that they struggling."

Reaching out and providing a safe space to those who have attempted suicide or have had suicidal thought, SOS offers a longer, more intensive course called the 'Eden Programme'. It provides a supportive group environment over a 6 month period (via weekly groups) in which up to 8/10 participants per programme become more aware of their own mental health states and can develop independence in terms of confidence and communication skills, and an understanding of their options, both therapeutic and personal. Anyone seeking more information in relation to the programme should contact SOS directly.

SOS is interested in working with any group (community, parent, etc) who would like to run a "Wellness Workshop" in their area. Organisations are invited to contact Louise at SOS - 1890 577 577 or visit [www.suicideorsurvive.ie](http://www.suicideorsurvive.ie).



## The National Parents Council Post Primary

Cordially invites

**All** Parents of Pupils attending Post Primary Schools to attend the National Parents' Council Post Primary

Annual Conference 2011

'The Three Step Challenge' – An Initiative for Parents

14th – 15th October 2011, Sheraton Hotel, Athlone, Co Westmeath

This year for the very first time the National Parents' Council Post Primary member organisations (**COMPASS + CSPA + FEDCBS + NPAVSCC + PACCS = NPCpp**) have come together to host a joint conference for all parents of students in second level schools.

The conference promises to be informative, interesting and will cover a broad range of topics that affect your teenager's years in second level and on to third level. Our keynote speaker is Senator Ronan Mullen who will speak on all aspects of parental involvement in school life. There will be workshops on bullying, study skills, choice of study paths and on the many challenges pupils face. We will have representatives from various different organisations such as Frances Shearer National Co-ordinator, RSE. Support Service, Department of Education and Skills who will speak on the new Child Protection Guidelines, and the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) will give a presentation on future developments within the education system. Dr. Amanda Fitzgerald Postdoctoral Researcher in the Youth Mental Health School of Psychology and Dr. Barbara Dooley, PhD Senior Lecturer School of Psychology at University College Dublin in conjunction with Headstrong will present the findings of the first national study of youth mental health in Ireland. The conference will be opened on Friday evening by the Minister for Education and Skills Mr. Ruairí Quinn. He will address issues relevant to parents in the current economic climate. Another first to Ireland and NPCpp is the European Parents' Association (EPA) President Mr. Johannes Theiner who will speak on European schools and general aspects of European parents' participation in schools. MOVING UP, a new illustrated book for parents of children transferring to second-level schools will be officially launched at the Conference. The book's author is John Stevenson, a former Principal and the book has been endorsed and supported by the National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals (NAPD) and National Parents' Council Post-Primary.

The National Parents' Council Post Primary extends an invitation to **all** parents who have children in second level. We feel that in attending the conference, parents will benefit in many different ways from the information gleaned over the weekend. It is a forum for gathering information but also for sharing. We would encourage you and other parents of children at second level to join us for this weekend.

### Saturday Package A

Conference  
2x Tea/Coffee and Scones  
Lunch

**€22.50 per person**  
including conference material

### Saturday Package B

Conference,  
2x Tea/Coffee and Scones  
Lunch,  
Gala Dinner  
1 B&B

**€149 per person**  
including conference material

### Friday/Saturday Package C

Conference,  
2x Tea/Coffee and Scones  
Lunch,  
Dinner (Fri)  
Gala Dinner  
2 B&B

**€199 per person**  
including conference material

To register or for further information please contact Sandra at 01 8302740 or email [sandraboylan@npcpp.ie](mailto:sandraboylan@npcpp.ie) or checkout our website at [www.npcpp.ie](http://www.npcpp.ie).

# Conference Agenda

## Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2011

6.30pm	7.15pm	Registration, Tea & Coffee, Finger Food
7.15pm	8pm	Opening of Conference 2011 by Minister for Education & Skills Mr. Ruairi Quinn
8pm	8.30pm	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) Presentation
8.30		Dinner

## Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2011

9am	9.45am	Registration, Tea & Coffee
9.45am	9.55am	Open of Conference by Vice President of NPCpp Mr. David Hegarty.
9.55am	10.15am	Frances Shearer, National Co-ordinator, RSE. Support Service – New Child Protection Guidelines
10.15am	10.35am	Launch of “Moving Up” From Primary to Secondary A Parents’ Roadmap – a new book to assist parents in their teenagers move from primary to second level.
10.35am	10.50am	Tea / Coffee
11am	11.30am	Keynote Address: Senator Ronan Mullen - will speak on Parent involvement in school life, attendance, codes of behaviour, transition from primary to post primary and on to third level
11.30	12pm	European Parents’ Association (EPA) President Mr. Johannes Theiner will speak on assessment, evaluation, school quality and rankings in European schools and general aspects of European parents' participation in schools.
12.am	1pm	Workshops: Monica Monahan M.Ed Aggression Studies - Trinity College, will host workshops on the problem of, and how to tackle bullying in our schools.  Eileen Keary will host workshops on Study Skills for your teenagers  Catherine O'Connor MA (Ed) Education Consultant will host workshops on your teenager’s choice of study paths and the many challenges facing them within the second and third level education systems.
1pm	2pm	Lunch
2pm	3pm	Repeat of Workshops
3pm	3.20pm	Dr Amanda Fitzgerald and Dr. Barbara Dooley of University College Dublin present findings of the first national study on youth mental health.
3.20pm	4pm	Reports of workshops followed by Q&A to workshop presenters
4pm		Close of Conference by President of NPCpp, Mr. Tommy Walshe
8pm		Gala Dinner

***NPCpp – Working towards a better education system for all***

***“The object of education is to prepare the young to educate themselves throughout their lives.”***

**Robert M. Hutchins  
1899 - 1977**

### **Schools sign up to Young Social Innovators!**

by Rachel Collier, Co-founder & CEO,  
Young Social Innovator

**Does your teenager’s school participate in Young Social Innovators (YSI)?** If so, he/she has a unique chance to be one of over 6,000 young people each year who undertake substantial civic action projects in their communities. Some 350 schools take part in YSI and it is open to all second level schools in Ireland.

YSI is promoting essential learning for life and work. It encourages young people to be innovative around social issues and need. Teenagers aged between 15-18 yrs can take part in its Social Innovation programme over the course of the year. This involves working in a team, exploring a social issue of concern, coming up with an innovative action in response to this and attending the regional YSI Speak Out forum and the national Showcase. There are also opportunities to get help through the YSI Den and other initiatives. There is a small participation fee but no one is excluded if unable to pay. (YSI is a not for profit company with charitable status).

**Why is YSI relevant?** YSI is ten years old this year and has given us plenty of reason to reflect on its relevance and importance in Ireland. Over 35,000 teenagers have taken part. YSI helps young people to take part in their community in meaningful ways and in so doing, find their own identity and strengths. Personally, I think when young people say after doing their YSI project, as many do, that they feel they have made a difference, that this is the real measure of YSI’s success. Knowing that I make a difference and that my life can make a difference to others is the great learning and is why YSI is so important to young people and also why they enjoy it so much.

There is a lot of focus today on how we educate young people to be innovative and creative thinkers and doers and on educating for life as well as work. YSI demonstrates how this can be done with the common good in mind.

If your school wants to take part, it just needs to apply. Resources, training and support are given to schools as part of the programme.

YSI are currently accepting applications at; [educate@youngsocialinnovators.ie](mailto:educate@youngsocialinnovators.ie) ; phone: 01-6458030; fax: 01-6458031; YSI, 2 Dawson Street, Dublin 2  
For more information:  
[www.youngsocialinnovators.ie](http://www.youngsocialinnovators.ie)

### **SmartClass Competition**

SmartClass is a collaborative national competition being run for the first time this year by Intel, Steljes and the Educational Company of Ireland giving post-primary schools the opportunity to win a complete technology package for their entire first year students. The technology package includes;

- a fizzbook laptop for every student with Smart software
- full digital curriculum content for an entire junior cycle
- wireless LAN fit-out for the school environment
- relevant teacher training facilitation



### **DESIGN A POSTER FOR THE ALL IRELAND SCHOLARSHIPS AND BE IN WITH A CHANCE TO WIN €3000 WITH RUNNER-UP CASH PRIZES!**

The All Ireland Scholarships Poster Competition is a nationwide competition inviting students to design a poster to promote awareness of the All Ireland Scholarship Scheme. The competition is open to all second and third level students throughout the 32 counties of Ireland. The entrants must aim to demonstrate their understanding of the financial benefits associated with winning a scholarship and the all inclusive

‘All Ireland’ aspect to the scheme. Simply design a poster for the All Ireland Scholarships and not only could you be in with a chance of winning €3000 (1st

prize), €1250 (2nd) or €750 (3rd) but also have your poster displayed in hundreds of schools/colleges throughout the country.

The competition is aimed at two separate categories – second and third level students. The prize fund is €5000 for each category and closing date for entries is Friday 14th October.

To enter you must be resident on the island of Ireland and you must attend secondary school or a third level institution.

See our website for all details of the scholarship scheme, entry forms for the competition and any further information.

[www.allirelandscholarships.com](http://www.allirelandscholarships.com) Find us on Facebook

[www.facebook.com/AllIrelandScholarship](http://www.facebook.com/AllIrelandScholarship) and Twitter @irelandscholar.



At this National Parents’ Council Post Primary Leaving Cert Helpline 2011

L – R Julie Kilroy NPCpp, Tommy Walshe President NPCpp, Rose Tully Helpline Coordinator, Joe Kennedy NPCpp, Secretary General Department of Education & Skills Brigid McManus, Don Myers NPCpp and Jackie O’Callaghan PRO NPCpp. Photo by Damien Eagers at Damien Eagers Photography

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Charitable Status No:

CHY 12800

Open: Monday – Friday,  
10.00 a.m. - 4.30 p.m.