17th October 2013.

*Slap in the face for parents trying their best*

Budget 2014 contains just one change in relation to tax credits and it is an outrageous one.

Treoir, the National Information Service for unmarried parents, is extremely concerned at the removal of the One-Parent Family Tax Credit from parents (usually fathers) who are sharing the parenting of their children and who are not the child's primary carer.  This tax credit has up to now been available to both parents who do not live together but who share the parenting of their children. As a result of the change these parents will have less money in their pockets and ultimately it is the children who will suffer.

This blanket approach from the Government will apply to all fathers regardless of their level of involvement in the lives of their children.  Some fathers share parenting on a 50/50 basis and must pay a higher rent in order to have an extra bedroom for their child, as do the fathers who have their children 2 nights a week or less.

Treoir has long been advocating co-parenting as it is widely recognised that it is best for children to grow up with the involvement of both parents in their lives, as long as this is safe, practical and in the best interest of the child.

This measure is a slap in the face to parents who are doing their best for their children and reveals a complete lack of awareness of the challenges involved in co-parenting.  Shared parenting is good for children and this change (which will result in an increase in fathers paying at least €30 or more in tax per week) is a gross disincentive.

Treoir calls on the Government to reverse this unjust and unduly harsh measure of Budget 2014.