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The Residential Home

P.D. Brennan M.Ed

Good afternoon, and once again, a very hearty welcome to Ireland. It is my honour and my task to deliver a paper to you on behalf of the Child Care Workers of Ireland. I represent a small and very young nation. A nation that has only just grown out of its infancy and is now struggling out of its adolescence with the usual dynamic turbulence. Like all adolescence it involves some fear, some regression to its childhood, some aggression. It also has some well founded hopes and an idealism that with political skill and social wisdom could come to maturity. It is a period when the heart and soul is searched, and identity discerned, and the foundations of the future are laid.

Ireland is a beautiful country with a rich spirit. There is more to it than rain, shamrock and guinness, Becoming more urbanised its roots and culture are still very much of the land. There you will find a warmth, concern and sharing and a deep regard for birth, life and death. It is a land whose culture expressed in song, music, dance, language and poetry truly belongs to the people and not to esoteric groups or to the top twenty records. There are still many places where time seems to have stood still, and nearly everywhere there is plenty of time. Trains may now run to time, but the people are not necessarily on time for the trains !

My paper has as its focus The Residential Home. Inevitably it is based on the resources I have tapped - there may be others which might present a different picture. Be that as it may, the sources I am calling on are eight years of an annual intake of twenty Residential Care Workers from Residential Homes to the Training Course of which I am the Director; visits to the major