

Keeper View
Monaleen Road,
Limerick.

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

Freedom to be Creative by Personal Commitment to show
cause by Reason-Decision-Action

Young people attending meetings weekly

Chaired by a well motivated person, discouraging – profit
first, euphoria, greed, pleasure or addiction, but reasoning
out matters in discussion each person taking into account
situations of his/her own concern. Arriving at viable
decisions for implementing; some plans may need to be
curtailed others improved.

Confidence, consciousness and joy, pertain
Depression is eliminated.

Personal Growth – Sound Character advanced

The wisdom of other people's ideas as expressed may be
accurately assessed.

Joe Collins

Keeper View

Monaleen Road

Limerick

2nd September 2014

Personal Growth and Sound Character

In the closing minutes of the final election debate between the three party leaders they were asked to identify the one great social justice issue on which they wanted to make an impact.

Enda Kenny said "I feel the priority should be the 300,000 people who suffer from mental illness, and the 75,000 people who attempt self harm and those who have the tragedy of suicide visit their families".

Never before had a party leader so decisively expressed his commitment to improving the lot of the mentally ill. He has now gone on to incorporate this commitment into the programme for government.

Aspirations such as "the community as partner" (and for the establishment of national user executive.)

Patricia Casey Psychiatrist 1st Sept. 2014 Independent:

"Blase attitude of our youth towards drugs is worrying". We need to convince ourselves and our young people that concern for society and for the common good is not something paternalistic and outdated. The welfare of others should outweigh my choices with regard to our own behaviour where psychoactive substances are concerned, illness, death and social mayhem will follow".

Can the true cost of the misuse of drugs be calculated, to that person himself/herself and their extended families. The cost of maintaining (stealing for) supply week after week – loss of employment or study. The cost of treatment, and care for mental illness to the HSE. The person deteriorating all the time possible death. Millions and millions of E's nation wide its costs.

Enda Kenny

Presented to Meeting of E.V. Police

Templemore

28-10-14

The Community, as a Partner

Encouraging youth to quit Drugs.
Armed Garda to seek out and confront
those supplying Drugs - giving warnings
that they are not being concerned for Society
rather causing Death and Social Mayhem.

All youth

Drug Suppliers

Teachers

The entire Community - Some Parents, and Parents
who find it difficult to control their children,
Shopkeepers, and leaders, accompanied by
HSE staff, Garda, Picta House, Consoles or
Volunteers all marching through together.
And then a Second time, ^{later} marching,
United to carry out their Responsibility by
showing their Authority and that they ~~are~~
in COMMAND.

By doing so, WEIGHT.. is placed on the
shoulders of youth to act Responsibly
under OBLIGATION. The Power of a
United Community accompanied by Services
Personnel, cannot be surpassed.

As youth decide to "quit" prompt HSE Treatment
as on delay he may change his mind.

Support required, to keep engaged in Work,
Study, Church, Community, providing CONFIDENCE
and overcome URGE towards DRUG DEPENDENCY

See Collins

Keeper View,
Monaleen Rd
Limerick
5-11-14

Dear

HSE, DUD, Paternity
Quota 50,000 Annually

Required

D.V.D Mental Health Character B's Growth
up to marriage Adulthood.
Agricultural Colleges
Secondary Schools,
Universities, 3 Level All,

Then Arriving Confident, Conscious,
Wise, Joyful, Intelligent
Elaborates all Positives
Having Happy Family Life
and Children

(Internet ???
Researching)

lasting 30 minutes
School Teachers - quitting

It is urgently sorely needed

Please let me know

Yours sincerely
Ted Collins

Keeper View,
Monaleen Rd.,
Limerick.

The "Headstrong Report" on youth states that 2 out of 3 teenagers are sound persons. That these 2 had good Role Models, and the 1 out of 3 did not have a Role Model. Not all Parents of Parents alone may be good Role Models.

The HSE has a D.V.D. Booklet explaining what happens to Boys & Girls at the encoring of Puberty and is available to all Schools. In 2011 50,000 packs were distributed.

It is most imperative that a D.V.D. Booklet also be provided for these youth 10 to 14 years of age; their parents or parent, school teachers and the public in general, to keep on the right track, lead good lives, not to be selfish and go the wrong road.

Besides being a moral issue it would be a Health issue and Social issue. - Negatives -
Mental - Masturbation; One night stands; over a period, results in Addiction, leading in loss of control of sexual urges, Pedophilia. Like scrambled ^{egg} Scrambled Minds, Depression, Violence. follow on leading to drink, drugs for a cure and possibly suicide.
In Limerick 62% of Births 2010 year was outside marriage.
The Students Union in U.C.C. boast of giving out 700 condoms to students this year. media reports of men abusing their daughters. The Ryan report etc. Single mothers. All this can begin in youth.
Psychiatrists & Psychologists deal with patients in their Rooms, and Selfish MOTIVES replaced by Spiritual motives, is widely recommended.

Spiritual Discipline
Patricia Rehill Psychologist
Patricia Casey Psychiatrist

unconcerned to conscience

John Collins

N.B.

No Internet - ~~at home~~
then

1. 6. 12

MIND & MEANING

Don't be fooled by teens who talk the talk

Patricia Casey

PSYCHIATRIST

pcasey@independent.ie



THE Law Reform Commission last week announced that minors between the ages of 16 and 18 should be presumed to have the capacity to consent to and refuse treatments in the same way that adults do. This includes surgery, contraception and mental health treatments.

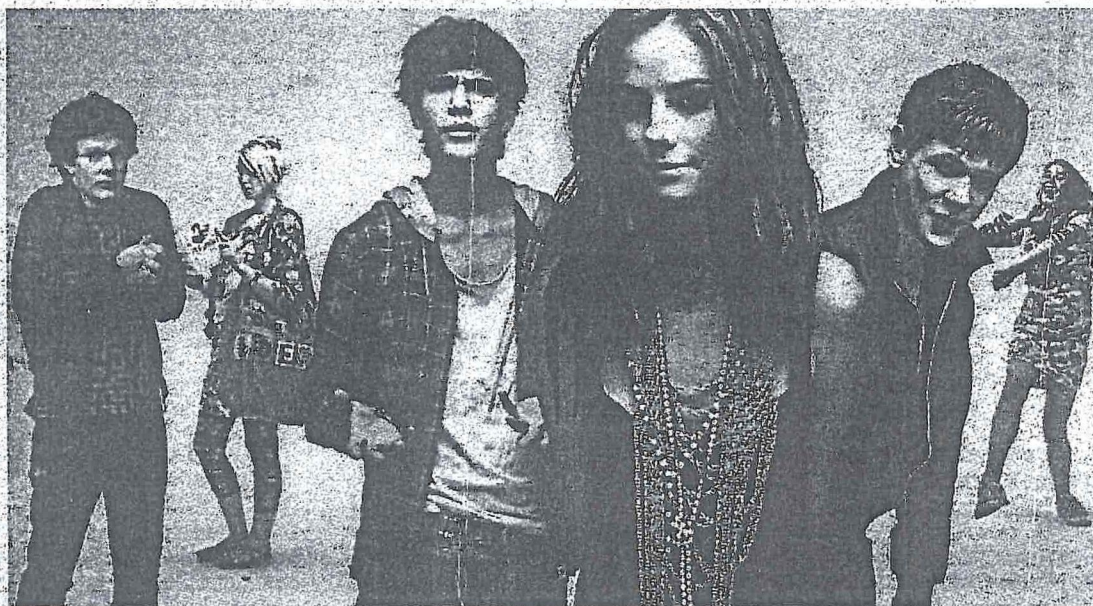
The commission goes on to say that with regard to mental health treatment the law governing this should be amended so that 16 to 18-year-olds requiring admission for psychiatric illness should be subject to the adult mental health legislation and not to court orders as presently exists.

These recommendations mean that a 17-year-old can opt for cosmetic surgery or refuse life-saving treatments for a treatable condition should they so wish.

Evidence

One wonders where the commission received its guidance from. Were the views of parent groups, general practitioners and child psychiatrists sought? Was the new groundbreaking evidence from neuropsychology drawn upon?

We live in a very complex world, as any parent who has young adult children knows. Even for adults the



Undeveloped: teens, like those seen in TV show 'Skins', don't have the mental capacity to always make the right choices

bewildering. Simply because our young people 'talk the talk' it is assumed that they have the capacity to 'walk the walk'.

It is true that our young adults have a language that suggests maturity and sophistication but they will not have the life experience to help them weigh up the risks and benefits of their actions or to evaluate the consequences.

Above and beyond questions of life experience, there is very new information from neuroscience that can inform our understanding of decision-making.

Thanks to the work of psychia-

trist Gogtay, our knowledge of the adolescent and young adult brain is much greater than it was a decade ago.

Until about 2000, it was thought that the brain ceased developing at around the age of 15 and thereafter that decisions could be made reliably and with maturity.

We now know this to be incorrect and brain-imaging studies over the past few years have demonstrated that the human brain develops well into the twenties and that this is completed about two years earlier in females than in males.

The studies also show that different parts of the brain complete this

finding that is particularly relevant since the pre-frontal cortex is the area of the brain concerned with planning, judgment, prioritising and so on.

It is also known that learning ability and knowledge acquisition is very high during teenage years, due to the rate at which myelin, the sheath around the nerves, develops, so speeding the transmissions through them.

So a young person may appear to be very bright and to absorb and retain material easily, while making poorly considered decisions.

It is this seeming disconnect

also explains why students getting straight As in their exam results do silly things such as driving recklessly or engaging in a host of risk-taking activities.

An aspect of decision-making relates to what are known as hot and cold cognitions. Cold cognitions are those thoughts that are emotionally neutral, such as working out a mathematical problem, while hot cognitions refer to thoughts that have high emotional content and generate feelings such as anger, fear, distress and so on.

Stressful

The part of the brain concerned with cold cognitions is developed by 15 but the systems processing hot cognitions continue to develop well into the twenties.

So, in the cold light of day, the young person, at around the age of 15, can give appropriate responses when asked about theoretical scenarios. But in a stressful situation a faulty or poorly considered decision may be made. Giving consent to surgical procedures or refusing vital treatments are quintessential stressful situations that generate poor decisions.

The commission has made some major recommendations that have received little media attention. It is disturbing that such a powerful body seems not to have consulted more widely nor acquainted itself with the latest research in relation to these matters.

After all, if given statutory approval, these will impact on our

Parents feel 'ill-equipped' to protect the selfie generation

Louise Hogan

PARENTS are concerned and baffled by the trend among teenagers for taking a 'selfie' photograph to put on social media websites.

And when it comes to the internet, just 40pc of families

have 'house rules' to protect youngsters online, according to a new survey.

Eight out of 10 parents are concerned about their child's online activities, but the majority do not set out rules to restrict what they can access and to protect them from

online and mobile threats. Research carried out for the Internet Service Providers Association of Ireland (ISPAI) by iReach found one of the biggest concerns for parents was the rise of the 'selfie' which involves a person taking a photograph of themselves and

often posting it online. The study, which surveyed almost 800 adults, found 46pc of children regularly take and post 'selfies'.

Yet 60pc of parents dislike their child taking part in this, while 26pc were indifferent.

Osin Byrne, chief executive of the research group iReach, pointed out many parents feel they are being left behind by the ever-changing nature of new technologies.

Generational

This study shows a generational gap emerging in the use of social media platforms with children favouring newer platforms such as Viber and Instagram, which have become significantly more popular amongst children compared to their parents, it found.

Some 40pc of children use the newer media such as Viber and picture sharing site Instagram, compared to just 26pc of

their parents, who are more inclined towards Facebook and Skype to speak to people on the web.

Mr Byrne said parents are often feeling 'ill-equipped' to protect their children stay safe online. "While child safety and online privacy are serious issues, and of enormous concern to Irish parents, this research shows that many parents feel alienated by the rapid pace of change in online activity," he said.

Six out of 10 parents would like to monitor their children's mobile and online activities. Niall Mulroney, a computer expert who delivers anti-bullying guidance lectures to students, teachers and parents agreed that many do not understand the technology and it is a "big gap to bridge".

For parents the number one step would be to get on a few social media channels themselves to figure out how to use them, he said.



Total for 2 from €89 €99
(May/June)

Hodson Bay

Galway Bay

- 1 Night B&B for Two
- Sea/Lake View Room

- House Cocktail on arrival
- 15% Off Beauty Treatments

Ireland is set to miss

TU emissions targets

Personal freedom and commitment are rarely comfortable bedfellows

40%
Week
Parents

THE average person in their 30s has had eight sexual partners in their lives to date, according to a survey of people in that age group which the *Irish Independent* and Today FM have been publicising this week.

That figure of eight hides as much as it reveals. How many of the eight were one-night stands? How many were long-term partners?

How many people regretted ever having anything to do with a previous sexual partner? How many regretted the ending of one of those relationships?

What were the differing experiences of men and women? Did the respondents who listed only a couple of sexual partners have long-term relationships with those partners, whereas the reverse was true of those with multiple sexual partners? How did they feel about that?

A study came out in America a couple of years ago called 'Lost in Transition: The Dark Side of Emerging Adulthood'. It is based on in-depth interviews with hundreds of young adults aged 18-23.

It found that the 'dark side' of young adulthood falls into five categories, namely: excessively materialistic life goals; a fuzzy sense of right and wrong; a lack of civic and political engagement; frequent intoxication; and, finally, regrettable sexual experiences.

This last is experienced mostly by women, or at least they're the ones mostly admitting to it.

The survey of people in their 30s is, as much as anything else, a survey of what the respondents did in their 20s.

People in their 20s now have a very definite 'life-script' and almost everyone in that age group conforms to it, namely that young adulthood is all about freedom, about not 'getting tied down', about exploring all sorts of different possibilities before finally settling down sometime in your 30s.

It's also about getting educated, especially if you're middle-class.

In US universities there is now a well-known phenomenon called the 'hook-up' culture. Romantic relationships are no longer on the cards, but sex is. So is drink and the two are often connected.

One young woman the 'New York Times' interviewed for a feature last year on the hook-up culture described how she arrived in her university a virgin and wanted to lose her virginity after she fell in love.

She soon discovered no one was interested in romance, so she was faced with a choice. She could lose her virginity with someone she fancied while sober and lessen her chances of regretting it afterwards, or else she could get drunk and have sex with someone she wouldn't be caught dead with sober and definitely regret it afterwards.

She went with the first choice and her friends were jealous because many of them did regret their first time - and several other times after that as well.

Is this really liberation? Not in a million years, but modern sexual mores are forcing people to make these kinds of choices.

It is unlikely to be very much different in Irish universities, or elsewhere.

This is the weird part of it. Choice is probably the number-one thing we value in our 20s, and often in later life as well, but when that girl interviewed by the 'New York Times' arrived in university she found she couldn't exercise her choice of losing her virginity to someone she loved and so was forced to opt for the next best thing in case drink really took away her choices.

As this week's survey makes clear, the vast majority of 30-somethings are interested in 'having a lasting relationship'.

HOWEVER, just 60pc of those surveyed said they were happy with their love lives. Again, you'd like to delve much deeper and find out why. Are they in a relationship they don't much care for? Or are they not in a relationship but want to be?

You'd think after all that experimentation in their 20s - when they're finding out what they like and don't like - that by the time they reach their 30s, the experimenting would be bearing fruit. But for 40pc of people, the answer is no, in their love lives at least.

So what in the world is going on? A big part of the difficulty is probably financial. They simply



Most 30-somethings say they want a lasting relationship

“ ”

Just 60pc of those surveyed were happy with their love lives

can't afford to settle down

But you also have to wonder if the problem that girl interviewed by the 'New York Times' experienced in university (and to judge from various studies there are lots of people in her shoes) carries on into later life as well.

That is, the philosophy of not wanting to get tied down, of not wanting to commit, is carried over from the 20s into the 30s, despite all the talk of wanting to be in a lasting relationship.

Putting personal freedom first is disastrous for relationships because it's disastrous for commitment. Putting our own freedom first has to explain some of the decrease in our marriage rate - which is now lower than Britain's - and a lot of the increase in the number of broken marriages in Ireland, which is up from 20,000 in 1986 to 125,000 in 2011.

In terms of our relationships, what the *Irish Independent*/Today FM survey hints at is the tension that exists between the very high value we place on our freedom and therefore singlehood on the one hand, and love and commitment on the other.

The fact that only 60pc of people in their 30s are happy with their personal lives reveals a whole lot of dissatisfaction out there.

We're going to need a follow-up survey to find out why so many people are unhappy with their love lives at exactly the point when most of them want to settle down.

The "Joys of Farming" weekly meetings that will assist in the building of character like "Flint Stone" by the use of reason on issues that arise by each person, to accommodate one's own circumstances, and arriving at viable decisions that may be put into practice when opportunity arises, and to remain steadfast should misfortune occur. Personal growth.

A good chairman will discourage euphoria profit first pleasure greed addiction but developing confidence consciousness and a more whole person. Plans of some may need to be curtailed and others encouraged to improve.

The privilege of deriving a living income from the soil is undertaken by I.F.A., I.C.M.S.A., I.C.S.A., organics. I.C.A. and upcoming Macra na Feirme. Other family members that may be emigrating to seek a livelihood, trades-professions and sound character formation will be required to withstand the culture different of other countries.

It is the experience of farmers that "cattle or suckling" as an enterprise is not profitable. Dairying which requires heavy investment is profitable. The quota system is ending and is the cause of much anxiety among investors as to the continued good price not being paid for milk, especially Macra na Feirme needing heavy borrowings "over supply"

Forestry is not a preferred option but provides some income. Tillage as an enterprise provides a small margin of profit. All our Agr. Colleges are full. Will an opportunity arise for the students to derive a reasonable farm income from land or will many need to emigrate due to the absence of opportunity.

Presently banks are closing, Garda Barracks are closed, shops are closing, presbyteries are closing, pubs are closed. Teagasc offices are closed, rural bus travel is reduced. Milk is collected, cattle are sold on internet, many government services are only concerned with the value of farm produce, beef, dairy products, sheep, timber etc. for export to meet the countries deficit which was brought about by bankers, developers and politicians.

Jan. 2014 on the 8.00am radio/news and repeated at 11.00am, an Irish community centre in London received 600 calls from young Irish emigrants stating that there was no way forward for them and that they felt sorry for their parents, that suicide was the only solution – our sons and daughters.

Climate change huge challenge, Winter and Spring 2013, 2014 10 storms already. Facebook and Internet can be a bad influence on youth. The alarm bells for rural dwellers are LOUD!

Seán Williams

2012/45637/P/PM

Keeper View,
Monaleen Road,
Limerick.

30-9-13

Mr. Simon Coveney T.D.
Minister for Agriculture
Dublin

Dear Mr. Coveney


Quote in your correspondence to me "be assured that the issues I have raised will be given appropriate consideration which is obviously bourne out of genuine interest in this issue".

Committees led by well motivated leaders will be starting up, assuring that members make sound decisions on their farm plan. Think for themselves, decide for themselves and do things for themselves, building confidence consciousness and a more whole person. Not just profit, euphoria, pleasure and addiction before responsible character building and dispelling depression and suicide.

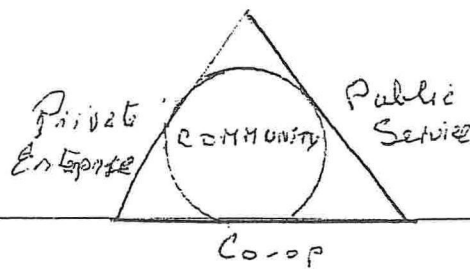
Will you please ask Jerry Boyle Teagasc Head if he could meet me at Finnigans Restaurant just off The Newport roundabout, Limerick side. He lives near Newport.

"The farmer to exercise his authority on how to work his farm". The Teagasc adviser to serve by offering agricultural science and business of farming many DVDs. Kindly forward enclosed to him and to contact by letter only. This approach is particularly appropriate to macna feirme to allow them to grapple with authority the ever advancing agricultural science and the business acumen needed to make a farm income.

Yours sincerely



Ted Collins



Mr O Kennedy as Minister for Agriculture set up Teagasc as the Authority on Agri. Research and Advice.

"The joys of Farming" ensuring Personal Growth and Sound Character, so that the macro member carries out his Farming Plan with Authority, providing a Family Farm Income and Good Mental Health

A clash occurs, Teagasc to provide a Service.
The former owner and steward of his farm, to show cause to act with Authority.

The low Farm Income from many enterprises, and none and the added uncertainty in milk price post quota is devastating to the moral of Rural Communities

The services that were removed from service in Communities can be replaced by local voluntary groups:
eg. Safety of Elderly in their homes and throughout
Sons and Daughters immigrating - to be prepared for Culture change

Parental control of Internet for Youth

That all dealing with Farming Community
to be conscious of PERSONAL GROWTH

Les Collins

Keeper View

Monaleen Road

Limerick

31st October 2013

Bring Order

A committee of agriculture, 2 members from each 7 branches, ^{Macra} monthly meetings. Problems of each which aired and discussed. Solutions arrived at if scientific knowledge was available – An Foras Taluntais or of myself. The committee members themselves to approach creameries to provide necessary machinery and contract as them out as done in Newport.

THE DECISIONS ARRIVED AT BY COMMITTEE MEMBERSTO FILTER DOWN TO EACH 7 BRANCHES BY THE 2 MEMBERS IN COMMITTEE.

Better farming advisory notes circulated to all creamery suppliers of 7 creameries also carried advice. It was then the privilege of all from the Shannon to the Milestone to engage in Better Farming to arrive at an improved Families Farm Income. Attendance in mornings at creameries to offer advice to be continued opportunities were provided to clergy throughout many of them farmer's sons to be present at macra meetings.

The entire land area was disadvantaged. The farm families were very poor. Brendan Owens Creamery Manager said it was the month of August before any cheque was received by farmers. A few cattle were sold level of education was national school 13 years old. Every endeavour to bring scientific information to the people from 7-4-57 to 1965 not questioned and found acceptable, the above was not.

God Bless

Yours sincerely

Basis of Fair Trade movement
1963-65 3rd Week

Jed Collins

Jed Collins

Thinking, caring for others; reduces stress daily (1/2 hour)
and dispels oncome of depression; gives rise for personal
growth – “A Good Feeling Well”

Teachers – Established – 50% of students emerge with a
reasonable to good knowledge of farming – 50% very little
knowledge – NONE!!

N.B in Community Discussion groups Confident
assist

Parents may be expecting !!?

weaker members

Taking part in voluntary comm. discussion groups will
ensure sound mental health from start, depression not setting
in.

A government promise to ring fence (2012-2013) €35 m for
mental health services

A Vision for Change” – quote

“Treating patients in a community setting with less
emphasis on inpatient treatment has not yet been universally
applied”

Medical Profession say TALK TALK Voluntary Discussion
groups

Help your teen to avoid the stresses that lurk online

Balance and moderation are key when it comes to children's internet use, says **David Coleman**



I AM a parent of teenagers. I work every day with teenagers and their families. I keep track of technology use, and attitudes to technology, in households as part of my involvement with the biannual Eircom Household Sentiment Survey.

Yet, I still feel like I am playing catch-up when it comes to teenagers and technology, or more particularly, teenagers and their use of social media. Just when I think I understand what it offers teenagers, and how they use it, I discover something new.

For example, I only just heard about a site, used by teenagers, called 'Omegle', which is ostensibly a social networking site in which you can keep your identity a secret and "chat" to strangers.

In fact, as I later discovered, the site is used, predominantly, for sexual interactions, either

text only or via webcams. Another site for us parents to worry about our teenagers being active on!

Even though I try to keep up to date with current research, I find that even the research is often behind the curve when it comes to the fast-moving trends in social networking and their impact on teenagers. The findings are mostly worrisome. There seems to be an overwhelmingly negative impact of social networking, with few positive outcomes.

As if to buck the trend though, a 2012 survey by Common Sense Media, of over 1,000 US teenagers, found that they perceive social networking to be a positive experience. A majority described how they feel that online social networking helps their relationships with friends and family and makes them feel less shy and more confident. But this is just their perceptions.

In fact, most research,

that uses objective measures seems to conclude that social networking actually leads to greater unhappiness, dissatisfaction and feelings of isolation. In 2010, the outcomes of 40 research studies were collated and it was found that using the internet had a small detrimental effect on overall wellbeing. Already, though, a lot of that research may be outdated, given the speed at which social networking evolves.

A more recent study by Kross and his team, in 2013,

looked at how young adults' use of Facebook influenced their wellbeing, using measures of how people feel moment-to-moment and how satisfied they are with their lives generally. He demonstrated that the more these young adults used Facebook, the less satisfied they were with their lives and the worse they felt.

As with all things scientific, other studies argue that it isn't just simply using social networking sites, like Facebook, that matters, it is how you use them that

Tips for parents

- Plan ahead and educate yourself about social networking to accurately advise and guide your teenagers.
- Be interested in, not critical of, your teenager's online life if you want to understand it better.
- Create phone- and internet-free times during the day, like mealtimes, where live conversations can occur.
- Set a phone curfew at night, even if their friends are all texting and IM'ing, it still isn't healthy for your son or daughter to have their sleep disrupted.
- Be a good role model and think carefully about the example you give and about the role that online social networks play in your life.

Mental Health

Parents

matters. Engaging passively or actively seems to make a difference.

So, those teenagers who simply skim through other people's posts, or just consume content created by other people, are at greater risk of feeling unhappy and dissatisfied than those who "like" or comment on others' posts or those who create content.

Indeed, those who engage actively in commenting, posting or even "liking" show an increase in their feelings of bonding and general social

capital, while their sense of loneliness decreases. The dilemma, however, is that evidence suggests that most young people spend far more time just scrolling passively than engaging actively in their online social networks.

We know, too, that social media use can be addictive. There is even a specific measure called the Bergen Facebook Addiction Scale, that you can use to judge your own, or your teenager's use of Facebook.

Some of the repeated and regular use of social

networking sites is explained by a fear of missing out. It has become so accepted as a specific form of anxiety that it even commands its own acronym FOMO.

Many teenagers will feel edgy and anxious if they are not connected to their online world because they perceive that "life is happening" in those fora and if they are not online then they are missing out. This creates a strong drive to stay online.

Also, the nature of positive reinforcement of the "likes" or comments that people make about our uploads or postings also draws us back time and again to social networks, for that feelgood hit of acceptance or connection that we covet.

Another difficulty with social media is that many people present an idealised version of themselves on their social networks. So the pictures that our friends upload are often edited, or carefully chosen to present a particular image.

Research suggests that this then causes envy and lots of negative comparisons. The Common Sense Media study I referred to earlier showed that teenage girls, especially, worry about the images of themselves that go online and compare themselves unfavourably to the images of their friends.

The teenage years are a particularly critical period of development of our self-identity in which we are also focused heavily on where we fit with our peers. We know that teenagers, in the real world, can be very self-critical and want, desperately, to fit in.

Teenagers online, therefore, may be especially vulnerable to comparisons with their peers and being highly critical of themselves, as they appear on their social networks. Equally, the stresses of trying to project a "likeable" image of themselves in their photos and posts can be draining.

Cyberbullying has had a

bit of a break from the media spotlight in recent months, but that doesn't mean that is has gone away. Teen are still both creators and recipients of a lot of online invective.

We know that teenagers see the screen as some kind of separator between them and the person that they are attacking. The remove that is created by the physical distance and separation, makes bullying online easier.

It is as if being online gives a licence to be more hurtful, more derogatory and more vicious when having a go at someone else.

Then there is the difficulty of how simply distracting social networking is. I hear constant criticism from parents about their teenagers' inability to focus on homework, study, sleep and even the TV because they are constantly dipping in and out of their online social networks.

Swedish researchers found,

last year, that overloading ourselves with online social networks jams up our working memory (how much information we can attend to at any one moment) and blocks our capacity to process information generally.

Other research shows that we can't focus on more than one thing at a time and so multi-tasking (or trying to be connected to several bits of media or technology) is simply a process of rapidly switching from one task to another.

This hinders our ability to process information and reduces our productivity. I have seen social networks referred to as "weapons of mass distraction"!

So there are dangers and stresses associated with online social networks. They can also be good things, but like everything in life, we must find balance. If we care about our sons and daughters we must also care about how they engage with their social networks.

Tips for teenagers

- Don't believe everything you see or read on your friends' profiles, they may be just trying to impress.
- Give yourself a break from your phone and the internet every day and fill that break with exercise.
- If you have something important to do, then switch off your phone and leave it in another room until you have completed the project.
- Make sure you engage actively in your social networks, commenting, liking and posting will make you feel more connected and more satisfied.
- Tell someone if you are feeling regularly mocked, put down or targeted online.

Yogh



The law of the land

Much of Irish history has involved struggles over land. Yet these were more commonly legal struggles, rather than military ones. The law was sometimes used to dispossess, and other times used to grant ownership to tenants long denied a secure holding.

The earliest system of Irish law was Brehon law, which gave each of the sons of a deceased landholder equal portions of his estate. Any sons born outside marriage, if recognised, could inherit on equal terms. However, disobedient sons were barred from inheriting.

Daughters had only very limited rights to inherit land, and then only if they had no brothers. Families were complex, not least as Brehon law allowed for polygamy - and concubines were also common. Clans and extended families were very important and kin often had certain rights to use their relative's land.

The Normans pushed aside the practise of Brehon law. In Norman-controlled areas, polygamy was banned and strict feudal systems were established, with the Norman lord at the top, naturally. Brehon law made a brief comeback, until the imposition of Statutes of Kilkenny in 1367. The surrender and regrant of land, saw the Brehon law system come to a final end.

Vast estates were forfeited to the crown after the Desmond rebellions. More land was redistributed to loyal Protestants under the Adventurers Act of 1642. Penal laws were then established barring Catholics from land ownership altogether. Ownership of the vast majority of land fell into the hands of a small number of families. The vast majority of the Irish population became tenants and sub-tenants.



Richard Harris in a scene from *The Field*.

For example, in 1843 there were 12,529 tenants on the Trinity College estate. However, just one per cent of were directly tenants of the college. Some 45pc were sub-tenants of the 1pc, and another almost 7,000 were sub-tenants of the sub-tenants. Such widespread sub-letting led to the creation of thousands of small and uneconomic landholdings, which contributed to the famine.

From 1778, the penal laws began to be repealed, but few Irish Catholics could afford to purchase land until prices plummeted during the famine. Also, large estates were often tied up legally so that it was very difficult to sell the freehold. Many landlords were absentees who employed unscrupulous agents to rent out their land for the maximum profit, known as rack rents. Most tenants had no security of tenure, and so had no incentive to improve their land. Plots were subdivided through the generations. A failed harvest meant eviction, starvation or emigration for many. Others survived off tiny plots which were rented for eleven months, and paid for by a mixture of labour and money. This was known as conacre, from the term 'corn-acre'.

Land agitation saw Gladstone introduce the first of the Land Acts in 1870. These gave Irish tenants greater security of tenure, and enabled some to borrow from the government over 35 years to purchase the land they were renting. These acts culminated in the Wyndham (Land Purchase) Act of 1903, which largely finished off landlordism in Ireland and facilitated the transfer of some nine million acres to Irish tenant farmers.

By 1920, the Land Acts had enabled over 316,000 tenants to buy 11.5 million acres - over half of Ireland's total land area of 20 million acres. By independence, Irish tenant farmers enjoyed more rights than tenant farmers in England, Scotland and Wales. The Free State Land Act of 1933 diverted land-purchase annuities to local development projects, and the last estates were broken up and sold to tenants. A series of legislative reforms over 150 years had accomplished a revolution in land-ownership in Ireland.

Most Irish couples regard marriage as something sacred, writes R. Fitzgerald

Marriage the norm in Ireland. The 1996 census showed 1.1 million families as couples, without children, as lone parents. There are a million such families in Ireland. Of these, about 870,000 are by married couples.

However, the latest 1996 census from Accord show a steady increase in the demand for marriage counseling services all across the country. Philip Cummins, Director of Marriage Education at Accord told *The Irish Independent*, "year on year for three years, we have seen an increase in counseling. In one sense, you can say it's terrible, but equally you could say, 'isn't it a good story that people are airing their issues, and so that services are being offered'... what's causing difficulties in relationships isn't true to most of us: it's the isolation, financial difficulties, communication difficulties. These are common in a country where the number of people coming to Accord has gone up. Stress is a major issue across the board, but making the initial phone call saying 'we need help' is itself a step forward, an itself a de-stressor."

Value

Mr Cummins says that despite all the social and economic changes in the last 20 years, "people value marriage in Ireland. Is there something fundamentally Irish about the centrality of marriage in society? I'd love to say that it is, but I can't prove it." Cummins is seeing increasing numbers of young people contacting Accord seeking marriage preparation courses. He has already noted a spike in enquiries during the last few weeks of 2013. He says, "They are deciding to marry in the Catholic Church. They are deliberately seeking out a