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## **EBS and NALA help people “make cents” of financial services**

**EBS and NALA help people "make cents" of financial services by developing a guide to financial terms**

**'Making Cents' designed to help the 25% of adults who have difficulties with simple numeracy tasks**

**7th November 2007-** Details of a new guide to financial terms, *Making Cents*, were announced today by the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) and EBS.

Almost 25% of Irish adults have difficulties with simple numeracy tasks such as adding up a bill, understanding a pay slip or filling in a form. *Making Cents* aims to simplify matters for all those who find financial issues challenging and is divided into simple sections that explain common financial concepts ranging from household budgeting to the terms and procedures that financial institutions apply.

The guide has been designed as a support for tutors working in adult education who are helping to increase awareness and knowledge of financial literacy. It will also be a useful resource to adult literacy students by helping them to examine their own financial situation.

Research into the issue of financial literacy, commissioned by EBS in partnership with NALA, revealed that the problem of low financial literacy exists at all income levels. It also highlighted that financial literacy issues present a significant barrier to people fully accessing services from the financial services industry. The research found that over one third of adults from a sample population in Ireland could not recognise the correct definition for the financial term 'APR'. *Making Cents* aims to help people make informed decisions when dealing with financial institutions by equipping them with the right questions to ask and the important things to look out for when making financial decisions.

Speaking at the launch, John Stewart, NALA Director, said: "Financial services and money management is an area of difficulty for thousands of people and that is why we have partnered with the EBS to roll out a comprehensive financial literacy programme to tackle the issue. *Making Cents* is a key element of this programme as it provides people with a resource that will simplify financial jargon and help people to make sense of the variety of financial products and services that are available to them."

Aidan Power, Head of Marketing, EBS said: "As a mutual organisation with a long heritage in education, EBS is committed to working with NALA to help address the issue of financial literacy. With over 25% of Irish adults having difficulties in this area, ensuring access to and understanding of, information presents a huge challenge for all of us in the financial services industry but it is a challenge that we must all embrace and take responsibility for. We believe that 'Making Cents' will be a very useful resource for a wide variety of people and we hope it will further advance our objectives to facilitate the breaking down of the barriers that continue to exist in the area of adult literacy.'

*Making Cents* contains eight chapters covering different areas of financial literacy, including controlling and managing money, credit and borrowing, income and accounts and insurance policies. The book starts with basic financial concepts such as planning and budgeting and moves onto more areas that are typically found to be more confusing such as the difference between life insurance and life assurance. It also looks at the factors in the tax and social welfare system that affect personal finance, including PRSI deductions and three very important Ps – P60, P45 and PSS.