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EBS research gives insight into children's savings habits

**THE AVERAGE COMMUNION GIFT IS NOW €37 VERSUS €50 LAST YEAR
SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN AMOUNT OF CHILDREN LIKELY TO SAVE SOME OR ALL OF THEIR
COMMUNION MONEY**

With approximately 60,000 children around the country making their first communion in the coming weeks, EBS Building Society has released research which gives details on Irish adults' attitudes towards communion spending. The research considers how the recession is impacting on the tradition of giving children money for their communion and looks at what children are likely to do with the money that they receive.

EBS has been helping Irish families save for their futures for the past 75 years. Some of the key findings from the research include:

- The average amount perceived as being appropriate to give a child making their first communion has fallen significantly in the past 12 months. It is currently estimated to be €37 as opposed to €50 last year.
- This gap is most pronounced in males - last year the average male deemed € 62 an appropriate amount to give a child making their communion. This year that figure is € 38.
- 63% of those polled believe that children will save most of the money that they receive, up from 42% last year.
- It is estimated that a child will receive (on average) more than €300 when they make their first communion.
- 3 in every 10 adults asked do not agree with the idea of giving children money for their communion. Within that group about half give them money anyway as it is a tradition, the other half do not give children any money. The vast majority of those interviewed (63%) said that they agreed with giving children money for their communion, but within reason.
- When it comes to total spend on a communion, to include dress, any entertaining afterwards and gifts, 33% of adults estimate the spend on Communion celebrations to be in excess of €601. 26% expect it to be between €601 and €1000 with the remaining 7% felt it could cost from €1001 upwards.

As well as asking families about their communion spending habits, EBS also asked a number of questions in relation to how adults feel the current recession is impacting on their children.

Almost 3 in 4 people said that the current economic climate would impact negatively on their children's futures. This has actually fallen slightly in the last year, when it was the view of 4 in every 5 people that children would be negatively impacted.

In a further demonstration of consolidation, 57% said that they felt that they would not be able to afford important things for their children, a decrease of 5% in the past 12 months. One of the positive effects of the recession, according to those polled is that their children's attitude towards money: 69% of parents encourage their children to save/start saving for their future due to the current economic climate.

Dara Deering, Director of Membership Business, EBS Building Society said: "The 50% increase in the number of children likely to save most of their communion money is significant. We are seeing families adapting to the recession in various ways such as encouraging their children to learn how to save some money. It was this renewed focus on family savings that lead to our re-launch of a dedicated children's savings account. There have been over 6,400 children's savings account opened in EBS since we launched the product two years ago.

"EBS has been helping Irish families save for 75 years, and we would encourage members and non-member alike to call into one of our offices around the country in order to find a savings account that suits their needs, such as our EBS Family Saver Account offers 4% gross P.A./A.E.R.."

For further information call into your local EBS office or phone 1850 20 36 36.

Other findings include

- The vast majority of parents (89%) feel it is appropriate to give €50 or less to a child making their communion (up from 79% in 2009). 8% stated that between €51-€100 was appropriate with the remaining 3% stating that €100+ would be an appropriate amount of money to be given to a child making their communion.
- 19% believe that toys are the most popular purchases made by children with their communion money. Clothes are also popular purchases for children to make with their communion money with 15% believing this is what the money is spent on, followed by video games, mobile phones/credit and sports and hobbies.