**Date: Friday 7th October 2022**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Ballyboden GAA senior hurler Karl Reddy (23) is raising awareness of Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) for international #DLDday on Friday 14th October 2022.

Karl was diagnosed with Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) when he was six years old. DLD is a hidden but common disability that affects 1 in 14 people. DLD causes difficulties understanding and using language for no known reason. Later in life, without help, those with DLD can struggle with their mental health and in gaining employment. Karl wants everyone to learn about DLD so that those who have the condition will get the help they need. When asked about growing with DLD, Karl said:

*“Growing up with DLD was hard during my early school years, during my time in primary school my blissful ignorance to my condition didn't faze me at all even if I had difficulty communicating with friends, teachers, and pupils alike. However, going into secondary school, I came to the harsh reality that I wasn't like everyone else, I wasn't as academic or fast as a learner. To make things worse my friends started to drift away from me and move on with their lives and make new friends with ease, for me I struggled to advance on. I couldn't quite explain to people what it was I was going through as I couldn't figure out how to say it. This not only took a toll on my academic learning but on my mental health as well. In 4th year I was set up in my social media class and was tasked within my group to come up with and inspirational idea for a video. Although a lot of ideas sprung to mind my mam suggested I should put myself out there and talk about my story with DLD. The group loved the idea of it and so we began filming. I was so nervous about putting myself out there as I feared it would only make my life worse and make me look like an attention seeker. However, this was far from the case and ended being one of the best decisions I made in my life”*

Developmental Language Disorder Day (#DLDday), now in its sixth year, is celebrated annually around the world with more than 40 countries involved. This year’s campaign theme for DLD Day is ‘*Growing with DLD’*, highlighting that DLD is a lifelong, permanent disability. People do not grow out of DLD but with individualised support that can include regular speech-language therapy and educational adjustments they can thrive. It’s about growing with DLD.

Karl, when asked what advice he would give his younger self about growing with DLD said: *“Talk to your friends, get it out there to your teachers, pupils, coaches etc. talk talk, talk. It doesn't have to be done through a big grandiose video, you just need to get it out there and express yourself and show who you really are. It will be hard to explain it to someone what you’re going through but if they are willing to listen and help understand your situation it lifts a massive weight off your shoulder. I wish I had done it sooner [then his video in 4th year] but I was glad I did as it gave everyone around me a perspective of how life is for someone like me and how difficult it can be, and that no matter what your struggles are even if we can see it or not we should do everything we can to help each other and encourage people to live the life they deserve rather than alienating them for their differences.”*

Raising Awareness of Developmental Language Disorder- Ireland (RADLD-I) is a multi-stakeholder group of campaigners that co-ordinate events nationally for the international awareness day every year. This year, many landmarks around the world including Ireland are set to light up in purple and yellow on or around Friday, 14th October 2022. The 3 Arena Dublin, Kylemore Abbey, Dublin Castle, Cork City Hall, the Rock of Cashel, Kildare County Council, City Hall Limerick, Kilkenny Castle and several Universities are just some of the national landmarks lighting up around the country.

Please join us in our mission to raise awareness of DLD and to advocate for services and supports for those living with this hidden but common condition.

**~END~**

**Notes:**

**Contacts:** Karl Reddy is available for interview – you can contact him on 087-1615705 or email reddykarl2@gmail.com. We also have several parents and children who are happy to share their story with you, please contact Brenda Mockler on 087-7934817 or Sinéad Finn on 087-9265770. Researchers in DLD are also available to be contacted, please email Aoife Gallagher aoife.gallagher@ul.ie with any queries. Link to Karl Reddy’s video he released for a 4th year project when he was 16 years old:<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ips63DwNpa4>. Photos attached, captions are in file info

 **About RADLD-I:** We are a national voluntary group of parents, people with DLD, academics, speech and language therapists (SLT) and SLT students who strive to raise greater awareness and understanding of Developmental Language Disorder.

 **About IASLT:** IASLT is the recognised professional body for speech and language therapists in Ireland. It establishes and maintains professional standards and represents Speech and Language Therapists at national and international levels. Membership sits at over 1000 speech and language therapists.

**Confirmed 42 Irish landmarks that will light up for DLD Day include:**  Áras Contae an Chláir, Clare;  Cork City Hall, Cork (8 – 9pm); University College Cork, Cork; County House, Lifford, Donegal; Cardonagh Public Services Centre, Donegal; Milford Public Services Centre, Donegal; Letterkenny Public Services Centre, Donegal; Dungloe Public Services Centre, Donegal; Donegal Town Public Services Centre, Donegal; 3Arena, Dublin; Citywest Business Campus, Dublin; Dublin Castle, Dublin; Red Cow Moran Hotel, Dublin; Phoenix Column, The Phoenix Park, Dublin; St. Maelruain’s Church of Ireland, Dublin; The Convention Centre, Dublin; The Mansion House, Dublin; Kylemore Abbey, Galway; National University of Ireland, Galway; Ashe Memorial Hall, Tralee, Kerry; County Buildings, Tralee, Kerry; Killarney Town Hall, Kerry; Princes Quay, Tralee, Kerry; Áras Chill Dara, Naas, Kildare; Kildare County Council Building, Naas, Kildare; Kilkenny Castle, Kilkenny; Áras an Chontae, Portlaoise, Laois; City Hall Merchants Quay, Limerick; Mall Bridge, Westport, Mayo; Buvinda House, Meath County Council, Meath; Tower of Lloyd, Meath; O'Connor Square, Tullamore, Offaly; Tullamore Municipal District, Town Hall, Offaly; City Hall, Quay Street, Sligo; Rock of Cashel, Tipperary; Carrick on Suir Town Hall, Tipperary; Civic Offices, Clonmel, Tipperary; Clonmel Fire Station, Tipperary; 35 The Mall, Waterford; City Hall, Theatre Royal, Waterford; Athlone Railway Bridge, Westmeath; 19 Arches Bridge, Wicklow.

**Learn more about #DLDday, DLD & RADLD at:**

* WEBSITE: [www.radld.org](http://www.radld.org/)
* FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/radld.page
* TWITTER:<https://twitter.com/RADLDcam>
* YOUTUBE: [www.youtube.com/user/RALLIcampaign](https://www.youtube.com/user/RALLIcampaign)
* INSTAGRAM: [www.instagram.com/radldcam/](http://www.instagram.com/radldcam/)