

# It's Big Mother

## PARENTS CHECK ON KIDS OVER INTERNET

BY CAROLINE CULLEN

**EXCLUSIVE**

**BIG MOTHER is coming to shake up Ireland's creches.**

Cameras linked to the internet are being installed to allow parents to log on at anytime to see their children.

The Big Brother system is already in use at six centres in Dublin, Kildare and Wicklow which are run by Cocoon Childcare.

Company boss Robert Buckley, *below*, explained: "The cameras are not there to watch the staff, but to involve parents. They are given a password for our Watch Me Live service so they can see their children whenever they want.

### **Secure**

"The website is strictly for parents and is as secure as internet banking.

*"The idea is to show them how much is being done for their kids.*

"For instance, if it is a child's birthday we can arrange a time to wheel out the cake so the working mum can share in the surprise.

"One family has given their password to grandparents in Australia who can now see their grandchild any

time they want."

Mr Buckley also believes the system will take away the anxiety

many parents suffer over childcare. He said: "The problem in Ireland is that the childcare industry is not regulated enough.

"There is no registration system for people running childcare facilities and this is something the government should be addressing.

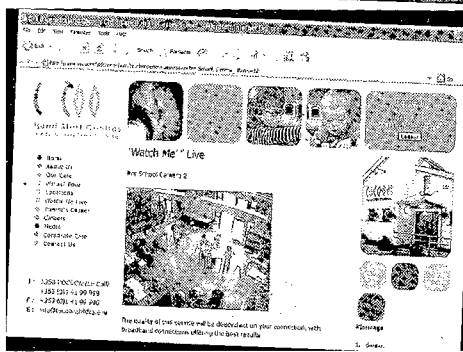
*"Instead, it falls on individual operators to vet staff themselves."*

Under the present system, the Health Services Executive offers an annual inspection of childcare services but, according to the National Children's Nurseries Association, checks "are inconsistently carried out across the country". It has called on the government

to introduce a registration system in which people offering childcare "are Garda vetted, have an acceptable level of accredited training and are offering quality care and early education".

Mr Buckley said: "The government has to come out of the dark ages and make this a properly recognised industry.

*"If a person in childcare leaves a job, there is no procedure for a new employer to access their track record."*



I'M WATCHING YOU: Mums can log on to the internet to see how their children are being looked after