

Daily Digest

The Daily Digest is a compilation of articles gathered from the online editions of major Irish and international newspapers. The articles cover social, economic and policy matters as they relate to children and families. [Sign up here.](#)

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Welcome to the latest issue of Childcare eNews

In this issue we bring you the welcome news of the announcement that a Referendum on Children's Rights will finally be held in the autumn of this year. This is timely in light of the recent report on Child Death Reviews, which looked into the deaths of 196 children and young people involved in the care system.



We also bring news of the expert Advisory Group established by the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs as part of the preparation of the National Early Years Strategy as well as a nationwide consultation process in place to inform the development of all key policies and strategies within the Department of Children and Youth Affairs over the next five years. We give details on the changes to the ECCE scheme from September of this year as well as information on developments in the similar scheme in the UK that entitles disadvantaged 2 year olds to free education.

As always we bring you other information on new publications, training courses and events and library resources available.

We hope you enjoy reading.

Barnardos Training and Resource Service

News and Developments

Children's Rights Referendum

Barnardos has welcomed Tánaiste Eamon Gilmore's confirmation that a Referendum on Children's Rights will be held this autumn. The announcement is a significant testimony to the urgency needed to redress the failure of our society to put children first and enshrine their Constitutional right to be protected. The Constitutional amendment on children must reflect the cultural change that is now happening as a result of our ongoing inability to protect children. [The Referendum is once in a lifetime opportunity to finally get things right for children.](#)

Child Deaths Review



Barnardos' CEO, Fergus Finlay, has extended his deepest sympathies to the families, friends, foster families and professionals who knew and worked with the 196 children and young people involved in the care system whose deaths were investigated by the Independent Child Death Review Group. Mr. Finlay said that the publication of

the Group's report, written by Norah Gibbons, director of advocacy with Barnardos, and Geoffrey Shannon, a solicitor and specialist in child law, highlights the systemic failure of the child welfare and protection system to adequately meet the needs of the children it had a duty to protect.

Mr Finlay commented 'We need a system that is accountable, where everyone is responsible and where clear management structures support the very difficult work that social workers do. The most vulnerable children and young people in our society have been too far down our list of priorities for too long.'

[Read Barnardos' full response to the publication of the](#)

[report.](#)

Minister announces expert advisory group

As part of the preparation of the National Early Years Strategy, Frances Fitzgerald TD, the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, has announced the establishment of an Expert Advisory Group, to be chaired by Dr Eilis Hennessy of the School of Psychology in UCD. Barnardos are delighted to be part of this group inputting into the strategy. [Read the press release from the Dept of Children and Youth Affairs](#)

You can help improve the lives of children

On the 11th June Frances Fitzgerald TD, Minister for Department of Children and Youth Affairs launched a nationwide consultation process. The consultation will inform the development of all key policies and strategies within the Department of Children and Youth Affairs over the next five years. For the first time, one Government department is responsible for all policy on the well-being of children and young people. To register for the nationwide consultation please visit www.dcy.gov.ie.



International review of parental leave

The 2011 International Review of Leave Policies shows that the length of maternity leave in Ireland is relatively long by international standards, but that statutory maternity pay in

Ireland is at a low level and is accompanied by quite limited provision of paternity and parental leave. Ireland falls well short of the one year of paid leave that is recommended by international organisations such as UNICEF. The evidence in the report also suggests that the take-up of leave by fathers is likely to remain very low in Ireland until it is paid.

[You can read the full review here.](#)

Immediate steps must be taken to ensure missing children's safety

Barnardos has welcomed the establishment of [the Child Rescue Ireland Alert \(CRI Alert\) system](#) launched by An Garda Síochana and the Minister for Justice and Equality. The system will enable the Gardaí to seek the assistance of the public through media and information broadcasters when a child is abducted and deemed to be at risk. It is a positive development that reinforces the collective responsibility all of us share to ensure the protection and safeguarding of children in our society.



Barnardos' School Costs Survey 2012

The past year has seen much progress in the continuing bid to move towards lower costs for parents in sending children to school. As a result of our School Cost Survey and lobbying from both Barnardos and others, the Minister for Education and Skills, Ruairi Quinn, has been looking at options for reducing the cost of school books for parents. The Minister has also heard the need to address the high

costs of school uniforms and we are continuing to work with the Department and others to drive this forward.

All of this means that the Minister and publishers are listening to parents. We'd like this to continue, so as we do at this time of year every year, we're launching our Barnardos School Cost Survey to give parents a chance to tell it like it really is in relation to the high price parents pay for their children's education. The survey will run from 9th – 25th July 2012. We will then analyse the findings and put them together with recommendations to Government on how costs could be lowered for parents. Keep an eye on our website and please fill in the survey from 9th July and share it with anyone you think has had enough of paying over the odds for Ireland's "free" education system.

Early Childhood Care and Education

Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme



From September 2012 there will be a number of changes to the ECCE scheme including a 'settling in period', capitation rate changes and new staff ratios. A 'Settling-In Period' is allowed at the beginning of each contract period. During this period a parent may remove his/her child from a service and either defer the place to the following year or transfer the child to a different service provider. The Settling-In Period covers the first four weeks of the September term only. For the year 2012-2013 the Settling-In Period finishes on Friday 28th September 2012.

Children will normally receive the pre-school year sessions for 3 hours a day, 5 days a week, over 38 weeks (September to June). The weekly capitation fee for these

sessions is €62.50. If you choose to enrol your child for fewer than 5 days per week, the capitation fee payable to the provider will be reduced on a pro-rata basis. The higher capitation rate will be paid at €73 a week over 38 weeks of the year.

From September 2012, new staff ratios will apply in respect of the pre-school session element of services for service providers participating in the ECCE Programme. This will also affect the space ratios and sanitary accommodation requirements. For more info see www.dcy.gov.ie.

The National Pre-school Nutrition Survey

Almost a quarter of pre-school children are overweight or obese but are within the normal weight ranges by four years of age, new research has found. [The National Pre-school Nutrition Survey](#) studied 500 children aged one to four years and found a higher incidence of overweight or obesity in children aged two (27 per cent) and three (32 per cent). Some 8 per cent of four-year-olds were overweight or obese.

“Such fluctuations reflect the rapid changes in BMI that occur during normal growth and development, and indicate that by four years of age, most Irish children were within the normal weight ranges,” the authors write.

Some 77 per cent of two- to four-year-olds were within the normal weight range as classified using UK-World Health Organisation criteria. The research, funded by the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine, was carried out by the Irish Universities Nutrition Alliance, which includes UCC, UCD, Trinity College Dublin and the University of Ulster, Coleraine.

Free education for disadvantaged 2 year olds in the UK



Ireland's Free Pre-School Year - which offers free early education for 3-4 year olds - was modelled on similar schemes in the UK. In England, free pre-school provision is now expanding the entitlement to free education to disadvantaged 2-year-olds. C4EO - the Centre for Excellence and Outcomes in Children and Young People's Services - has recently published

a [review](#) of an initial "trial" of the new scheme in 18 local authorities across England.

Qualifications in the early years workforce

Professor Cathy Nutbrown's [independent Review of Early Education and Childcare Qualifications](#) (Foundations for Quality), has now been published in the UK. Professor Nutbrown was commissioned by the UK Government to lead an independent review to consider how best to strengthen qualifications and career pathways in the foundation years.

Professor Nutbrown has set out 19 recommendations in her review to improve the quality of the early years sector and ensure all young children receive a high standard of care and education. The review looked at qualifications and training – both for young people who are new to the early education and childcare sector, and for those already employed there. It also considered how to promote progression through an early years career and into leadership roles.

A large-scale public consultation was conducted to gather evidence. The report of this call for evidence was released alongside an interim report in March 2012. Government will now consider Professor Nutbrown's report Foundations for Quality in detail, working with the sector and others, before responding later in the year.

BTRS Publications



What's New? Supporting Children through Transitions in their Early Years (COMING OUT JULY 2012)

The aim of this book is to support educators in early years services in making children's new experiences as smooth as possible and helping them to learn to cope well with

change, now and in the future. The guide gives an overview of the research and theories underpinning the topic of transitions, suggest sound foundations for good practice and give suggestions, ideas and resources for managing many types of transitions.

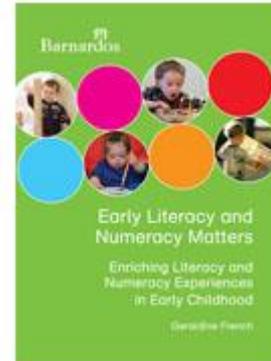
Can We Help? A Guide to Supporting Children and Families in Early Years Services

The role of early years services in supporting families centres on the early learning and development needs of children. Early years services need to work in partnership with parents, using an approach that supports parent-child relationships and strengthens the capacity of parents to respond effectively to their child's learning and development needs. Where families need additional support, early years services are in a unique position to empower parents through information and social support, and also to act as a bridge between families and other services in the community. The aim of [this publication](#) is to assist those working in early years to increase their knowledge and understanding of the range of challenges and stresses facing children and families today and what they can do to

support families effectively.

Early Literacy and Numeracy Matters: Enriching Literacy and Numeracy Experiences in Early Childhood

[Early Literacy and Numeracy Matters](#) provides up-to-date theory and research on the critical importance of the development of both literacy and numeracy in early childhood and outlines the links with national documents such as Síolta, Aistear and The Literacy and Numeracy Strategy. It explores the relationship between the development of language, early literacy and early numeracy and the importance of sharing information on children's learning in these areas with families. It also gives practical guidance to early childhood educators on how they can enrich young children's literacy and numeracy.



[All of these publications are available on our website.](#)

Barnardos Training and Consultancy

Public Events Autumn 2012



8th September - FIRST AID Paediatric. Dublin 8

All staff are required to be familiar with First Aid and to ensure the Health and Safety of the children within their care. On successful completion of this one-day course, each participant will receive a childcare First Aid certificate valid for two years.

22nd September - Organising and Planning Play for Numeracy and Literacy. Dublin 8

This workshop will provide practical information and ideas for incorporating numeracy and literacy into play. Barnardos' new publication 'Early Literacy and Numeracy Matters' will be given to all participants.

4th October - What's New: Transitions for Children.

This half-day seminar will give guidance on supporting young children through transitions in their lives. By attending this event, early years staff will gain a deeper understanding and develop approaches that will support the children in their setting through the many changes their lives bring. Our new publication 'What's New? Supporting Children Through Transitions in their Early Years' will be given to all participants.

15th October - Child Protection Awareness Workshop Dublin 22

Recent changes to Children First mean that staff should update their knowledge in this area. All staff working with children must understand and have a working knowledge of Child Protection. This workshop will look at signs and symptoms of abuse; roles and responsibilities of staff; and reporting procedure. The publication 'Protecting Children' will be given to all participants.

18th October - Children and Domestic Abuse. Dublin 8

Participation in this event will give early years professionals the opportunity to learn more about the impact of Domestic Abuse on children. They will develop strategies and tools to support any child in their service who is affected in this way. Barnardos Training Resource Pack on Domestic Abuse and

Bullying will be given to all participants.

**6th November 2012 - Cyber Bullying and Children.
Dublin 7**

All forms of bullying affect a child's psychological, emotional and social development. This workshop will focus on cyberbullying, its impact, and strategies to assist adults in effectively managing this form of bullying. Barnardos Training Resource Pack on Bullying and Parenting Positively Booklets for Children, Teens and Parents will be given to all participants.

**28th November - Record Keeping – How to Keep
Records on Children, Health and Safety, Observations
etc. Dublin North**

Keeping records in an appropriate and accurate manner is vital to ensuring that an efficient working system is in place. It can also be a legal requirement and can be affected by data protection requirements. Record keeping also involves good practice in terms of observations about child development and issues of child protection.

Other Events Around the Country

Literacy Training

Dates: Friday 27th July and Friday 3rd August

Time: 10.30am – 4.30pm

Venue: Ballyfermot/Chapelizod Partnership, 4 Drumfinn Park, Ballyfermot, Dublin 10

A two day Literacy training course called 'Growing Readers' has been organised by SCLCRS. To book: contact Fiona on 01-8989166 or fhassett@ballyfermotpartnership.ie

Inspiring Quality

Date: Saturday, 20th October 2012

Venue: Croke Park, Dublin

Dublin City Childcare Committee will host a one day event dedicated to Professional Development. Confirmed contributors include Professor Tina Bruce CBE — University of Roehampton, The Ark — A Cultural Centre for Children, Mind Stretchers, UK — Multi Sensory and Real World Educational Environments, Geraldine French — Early Years Specialist,

For more details, please keep an eye on www.childcareonline.ie



Barnardos Training and Resource Service Library

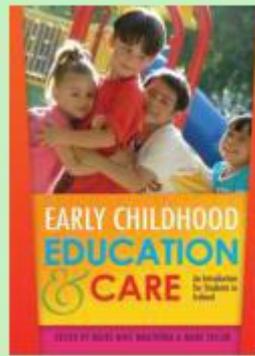
The BTRS library provides comprehensive information on a range of child related issues such as child protection, child

development, family support, bereavement, adoption, diversity, parenting, childcare and much more.

[Check out the new resources we have in stock.](#)

[Or why not have a look at our online catalogue.](#)

Now available to borrow from our library



Early Childhood Education & Care: An Introduction for Students in Ireland

By Máire Mhic Mhathúna and Mark Taylor

This book introduces the theories and concepts of Early Childhood Education and Care, highlighting the

knowledge, values and skills required to become a competent ECEC practitioner in Ireland today. Written by educators, practitioners and policy experts from across Ireland, this book is organised in four parts:

Part 1: Theoretical Underpinnings of Early Childhood Education and Care Introduces students to the key concepts and theories from a range of relevant disciplines, enabling them to make sense of a child's place in the world.

Part 2: Approaches to Early Childhood Education and Care Demonstrates the richness and breadth of pre-school learning models, describing the numerous theoretical and practical perspectives in early education and care.

Part 3: Pedagogy and Learning Explores the different types of environments and situations contributing to young children's learning and reinforces the importance of engaging with parents and the community.

Part 4: Structures and Issues Outlines the unique character of the ECEC sector in Ireland, while also highlighting the importance of ethics and the significance of diversity in ECEC practice.

'This book is a really useful resource for any student of early childhood care and education as well as anyone else looking for a good grounding in working with young children.' Anne Conroy, National Manager, Barnardos Training and Resource Service

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Our mailing address is:

Christchurch Square
Dublin 8
Ireland

Phone: 353-1-453 0355

www.barnardos.ie

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