

IN THIS ISSUE: News and Developments | Early Childhood Care and Education | Barnardos Publications, Training and Library

Welcome to the latest issue of Childcare eNews

In this issue of Childcare eNews we bring you the welcome news that the Children First Bill 2014 has been published. This essential piece of legislation will ensure a more rigorous and consistent approach to child protection concerns.

We also bring information on a new mental health initiative for young people, details of 'Better Outcomes Brighter Futures: the National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014 – 2020' and announcements regarding the childcare capital programme.

As always we bring you up to date on Barnardos new publications, upcoming training events and library resources.

Best wishes
Sinead Lawton

News and Developments

Children First Bill 2014

Barnardos, as part of the Saving Childhood group, has welcomed the newly published [Children First Bill 2014](#) by Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Frances Fitzgerald, TD. This long overdue piece of legislation is essential to ensuring a more consistent and robust approach to the reporting and responding to child protection and welfare concerns. The following provisions are specifically welcome:



- The statement of the best interests of the child as the paramount consideration

- The requirement of all organisations providing services to children to have a child safeguarding statement which outlines policy and procedures in relation to child protection
- The establishment of a Children First Inter-Departmental Implementation Group on a legislative basis whose purpose will be to promote compliance and monitor implementation by various Departments.
- The requirement on the authorised person within the Child and Family Agency to respond in writing to all reports made.

While welcoming the principles of the Bill and acknowledging the high quality work undertaken by the Minister and her Department, Barnardos has some concerns around certain aspects of the legislation:

- Mandated professionals should also include those working in organisations focused on child protection/welfare/rights services.
- There are no sanctions in place for those who fail to comply with the requirements set out in the Bill.
- There is no reference in the Bill to retrospective allegations.
- The level of resources required to ensure that all stakeholders in particular parents are informed of and can act in an informed way is not outlined.

[More information is available on the Bill here.](#)

[Click here to access the Children First Bill 2014.](#)

‘Better Outcomes Brighter Futures: the National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014 – 2020’

Frances Fitzgerald TD, Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, was joined by An Taoiseach Enda Kenny TD and An Tánaiste Eamon Gilmore TD to launch [‘Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: the National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014 -2020’](#) in April. ‘Better Outcomes: Brighter Futures’ is the first overarching national policy framework for children and young people aged from birth to 24 years and will be implemented by the Department of Children and Young Affairs in collaboration with all Government departments and key State agencies.

The vision of the Framework is to work towards achieving five outcomes identified as most important for children and young people in Ireland. The Government has committed to working towards these through a series of actions, described as key transformational goals. These goals will underpin the implementation of the Framework

and will be a key element of its success. The Minister noted that the Framework included over 160 commitments in total, including:

- Focusing on early interventions and quality services to promote best outcomes for children, particularly in the vitally important early years.
- Working better together to protect young people who are marginalised, at-risk or who demonstrate challenging or high-risk behaviour.
- Setting a target of lifting 70,000 children out of poverty by 2020.
- Improving childhood health and wellbeing in line with goals of 'Healthy Ireland'.
- Enhancing job opportunities for young people.
- Delivering better supports for families and parenting.

[Download the report here.](#)

SpunOut.ie Rolls Out Novel Mental Health Initiative



Ditch The Monkey
Our new animated short series

[Watch now](#)

SpunOut SURVIVAL GUIDE to life [Order now](#)

Ditch the monkey! [Watch now](#)

Miyo Our brand new app! [Pre-order now](#)

Youth website SpunOut.ie has launched a new book, animation series and app to promote positive youth mental health. With suicide rates among young people in Ireland the highest in Europe, it is hoped the HSE-funded projects will encourage maintenance of positive mental health among the website's users. For more information see www.spunout.ie

Children's Rights Alliance Report Card

The Children's Rights Alliance has published its sixth Annual Report Card scrutinising the Government on its key commitments to children in the Programme for Government. Graded by an independent panel of experts, the Government receives an overall C this year, reflecting improvements in the areas of children's constitutional rights, education and protection from abuse and neglect. However serious problems still remain in health, the right to adequate standard of living and protection from discrimination, leaving many children behind. On early care and education, the Report Card gives the Government a C+, slightly lower than last year's B- grade, and down further on the B grade in 2012.

[Read more here](#)

[Read the full report here.](#)



Barnardos Big Toddle

The Cow & Gate Big Toddle for Barnardos is a fun sponsored walk for toddlers where children themselves have the opportunity to help create positive change for disadvantaged children in Ireland. Whether you're a crèche, a parent or a childminder, you can organise your own Toddle any time. [See our website for more details.](#)



Early Years Care and Education

Aistear in Action – Report

Since 2011, Early Childhood Ireland and the NCCA (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment) have been collaborating on a joint initiative to promote the implementation of the Aistear curriculum framework. [The final report](#) on the first round of the initiative was recently made available online.

The report documents the process as well as key outcomes and learning from the Aistear in Action initiative. At a policy level, the report emphasises the importance of the type of in-depth and sustained mentoring support provided in the project.

[Read the *Aistear in Action initiative: Final report* here.](#)



Tusla and Early Years

Early Years Inspection Services are now part of Tusla, the Child and Family Agency. Significant legislative change is contained within the Child and Family Agency Act, 2013 and Part VII of the Child Care Act 1991, which prescribes the powers of supervision and inspection of early years services, has been amended. This legislative change introduces a pre-approval registration model with the emphasis on quality assurance. It comprehensively reforms the enforcement options available to the Agency.

Inspections will be based on a newly developed set of national standards. These standards will focus on the experiences and outcomes for children attending early years services. They are intended to strengthen the management, governance and supervision of services. They will provide a comprehensive framework for the regulation and quality assurance of all early years services.

Early childhood care and education is one of the 16 priorities listed in the Child and Family Agency's 2014 business plan. The business plan states that in 2014, the focus in the Early Years Inspection Service will be on quality assurance, workforce development and outcomes for children. The Early Years Inspection Service will operate on a national rather than on a local or regional basis. This is to ensure that resources are deployed to maximum effect and that a consistent service is provided.

<http://www.tusla.ie/services/family-community-support/pre-school-services/>.

Minister Fitzgerald announces €3 million Childcare Capital programme

Frances Fitzgerald TD, Minister for Children & Youth Affairs has announced the launch of capital funding totalling €3 million for community childcare services, parent and toddler groups and childminders. The Minister announced that €2.5 million was being made available for the repair, maintenance and upgrade of community and not-for-profit childcare services.



The Minister stated: "I am committed to securing the sustainability of community and not for profit childcare services, particularly in disadvantaged areas."

Applications for these strands can be made from the Pobal website and queries sent to a dedicated email address eyc2014@pobal.ie

In addition, the Minister announced that she would be allocating €0.25 million to support Parent and Toddler Groups and a further €0.25 million to the Childminding Development Grant Scheme, which is an important part of our support to the many childminders who look after children. The Minister indicated that this funding will be allocated through the City and County Childcare Committees.

Barnardos Publications

Spaces to be Me: Quality Environments in Early Years Services

Spaces to Be Me supports early years educators with the ideas, knowledge and resources needed to provide quality environments for the children with whom they work. The book looks at the impact of environments on children – how poor environments can stifle learning and creativity while rich, challenging and stimulating environments can enhance all aspects of the child's experience. It examines structure and design features, role of the adult, types of play, resources required and, above all, the interplay between each child and the environment, which is dynamic and ever-changing. It encourages reflection on all aspects of the environment, both indoors and outdoors, natural and man-made, and includes the hard

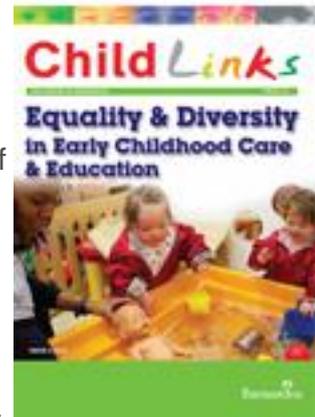


and soft features, the interactions, the equipment and resources that educators should provide to make their environments as stimulating, rich and nurturing in response to children's needs as they can.

This publication will be launched on Thursday 5th June. Keep an eye on www.barnardos.ie for further details coming soon.

ChildLinks (Issue 3, 2013) Equality and Diversity in Early Childhood Care and Education

This issue of ChildLinks includes articles from Colette Murray, EDeNn; Clare County Childcare Committee; Louise Derman Sparks; Barnardos Early Intervention Service in Finglas; Mary immaculate College, Limerick; and Marian Quinn, Cork Institute of Technology, among others.



[You can buy this issue here for €3 + p&p.](#)

Subscription to ChildLinks, issued three times per year, is included in the annual membership fee of Barnardos' Library.

For non-members there is a charge of €3 per issue (plus postage) or an annual subscription of €12 inclusive of postage. If you are not a member and would like to take out a subscription please [contact us](#).

The next issue of ChildLinks on Children's Physical Health will be out soon.

Barnardos Training and Consultancy

Our training events have been designed based on a combination of current thinking and evidence-based practice. All training is delivered by knowledgeable and highly experienced trainers. In order to provide effective learning experiences for participants, our training events are engaging and interactive. We provide a space to deepen existing knowledge, explore new ideas and strengthen practice skills. A full list of our public events for May is given below.



Child Protection Awareness – Carlow, Saturday 10th May

Supporting Social & Behavioural Development: 3-6 year olds – Dublin, Wednesday 14th May

This workshop will provide a space for early years practitioners to deepen their knowledge about the emotional and social development of 3-6 year old children. This workshop will strengthen understanding of preschool children's emotional development; provide an understanding of behaviour as a communication tool; provide strategies to respond in a supportive way to this communication.

Environments: Creating Child-Centred Spaces – Mullingar, Wednesday 14th May

This workshop will explore the vital role that environments play in the wellbeing and development of the child. This workshop will provide information on the importance of a well planned and laid out environments to support learning and development; practical information on resourcing the environment on a budget; practical information on making the most out of your early years environments.

Supporting Social & Behavioural Development: Infants & Toddlers – Dublin, Wednesday 28th May

This workshop will provide a space for early years practitioners to deepen their knowledge about the emotional and social development of infants and toddlers. This workshop will strengthen understanding of infants' and toddlers' emotional development; provide an understanding of behaviour as a communication tool; provide strategies to respond in a supportive way to this communication.

You can book on www.barnardos.ie. For more information contact training@barnardos.ie

Barnardos Library

Barnardos 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.

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



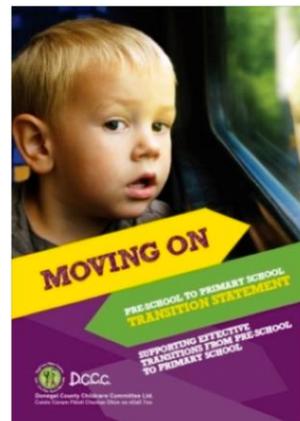
Upcoming Events

A Reflection of Learning – Donegal’s Participation on the National Early Years Access Initiative

Date: Friday 9th May 2014, 10am – 2pm

Venue: Radisson Blu, Letterkenny

Donegal County Childcare Committee Ltd (DCCC) will host A Reflection of Learning – Donegal’s Participation on the National Early Years Access Initiative (NEYAI) to mark the completion of the Professional Pedagogy Project. This event will highlight learning from the 10 early childhood services participating on the Professional Pedagogy Project and will launch a report on the findings of the PPP along with a booklet detailing each of the participating early childhood services journey on the project from start to finish. The ‘Moving On – Pre-School to Primary School Transition Statement’ and corresponding ‘Moving On – Educators Handbook’ will also be launched at the event. See <http://www.donegalchildcare.com/> for more information.



Professional Development Day for the Early Childhood Sector in the Border Counties and Meath

Border Counties Childcare Network

Date: Saturday 10th May, 10.30 - 4.00 pm

Venue: Four Seasons Hotel, Monaghan Town

This event will focus on policy and practice matters of interest to everyone working in the early childhood sector and will provide a focus on a range of issues impacting on service delivery. The event will also provide an opportunity to give recognition to the services and staff who have achieved Siolta Validation, those currently working to achieve validation and the many service providers and staff who have begun their Siolta journey through participation in the BCCN Siolta Development Programme over the last three years. Further information or to book a place, please contact BCCN on 047 72469 or email admin@bccn.ie

Supporting Children to Realise their Potential The Importance of Self-Regulation Early Years, the organisation for young children - The International Conference and AGM

Date: Thursday 5 and Friday 6 June 2014

Venue: Hilton Hotel, Templepatrick.

This conference will be valuable to parents and anyone who works with young children including local and national government officers, Early Years Specialists, managers and practitioners, SureStart Coordinators and staff, nursery and childcare providers, management committee members, health professionals, education and health and social care trust, childcare students and community partnerships. [Download the conference brochure here.](#)

Child to Parent Violence: Innovations in Practice, Policy & Research - International Conference Responding to Child to Parent Violence

Date: 12-13 June 2014

Venue: NUI Galway

This international conference will cover the emerging problem of child to parent violence (CPV) in the family home for practitioners, researchers, policy makers and families. Further details are available at www.rcpv.eu

**66th OMEP World Assembly and International Conference
Hosted by OMEP Ireland and the School of Education, University College Cork**

Dates: World Assembly - 1st and 2nd July 2014; International Conference - 2nd-5th July 2014

Venue: University College Cork

The Conference theme is Children's Cultural Worlds and the subthemes are:

1. Play and Creativity
2. Friendships, Relationship and Identities
3. Digital Childhood
4. Influences on Early Learning

- 5. Sustainable Development
- 6. Cultural Experiences and Heritage

[Get more details here.](#)

Forward this to a Friend

Copyright © 2014 Barnardos Ireland, All rights reserved.

Connect with Barnardos:

Facebook **Twitter** **Google+**

[unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)