



Spring 2017 Newsletter

Issue 1

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1. National Aistear Síolta Initiative

Better Finglas is delighted to be participating in the new National Aistear Síolta Initiative which is currently in its pilot phase. This is a new national training programme designed to support the coordinated roll-out of the Aistear Curriculum Framework and the Síolta Quality Framework. Under the initiative, Better Finglas are delivering Aistear workshops to Early Years settings in the Finglas area. This involves attending five two-hour workshops plus coaching sessions between workshops.

Workshops and coaching sessions are based on the resources and information from the Aistear Síolta Practice Guide. These Aistear workshops will be available on a much wider basis following an evaluation of the pilot.



Pictured above are participants from St Helena's Childcare Centre, Mellow Spring Childcare Centre, St Brigid's Creche, Glenhill Playgroup, Willow Tree Creche, Finglas Childcare Centre, St Oliver Plunkett's Early Start, Butterflies Playgroup, Barnardos Finglas Early Years Service and Ballygall Playgroup. Also pictured is the High Scope Ireland trainer, Marian Baker and the Better Finglas Early Years Mentor, Sharon Byrne

Better Finglas are also celebrating the recent completion of the 'Implementing the High Scope Approach' training course by 20 local Early Years Practitioners which was organised by Better Finglas. This 12 month long course provided participants with the opportunity to introduce the High Scope curriculum into their settings.

2. Wizards of Words

The Wizards of Words (WoW) Literacy Programme has had a busy term. Wizards of Words now work with 90 very committed and enthusiastic volunteers, supporting 126 children in 11 primary schools in the Finglas area.

Training and Review

Over the school term, together with volunteers and school coordinators, WoW staff conducted a review of the programme and provided further training in Programme strands: Vocabulary building, Comprehension, Fluency and Phonics. As part of the training, new resources and activities for each strand were “road tested” by the WoW volunteers prior to using these new resources with the children. Great fun!



Graduation Celebrations

We very much look forward to the Graduation celebration, held in each school, to mark the end of the Wizards of Words' year. We celebrate the great effort the children have made to improve their reading by presenting each child with a “Certificate of Achievement” and a gift of a Dictionary or Thesaurus. Attended by our volunteers, parents, school principal, school co-ordinator, some school staff and Barnardos Volunteer Recruitment Officer, this celebration is the highlight of the year!

3. Pregnancy and New Parents

Preparing for Life

The Preparing for Life Home Visiting Program continues to provide support and mentoring to new or expectant parents and their families. Since January 2017, Better Finglas has had 17 new referrals and is currently working with 46 parents and families in Finglas.

Baby Massage

Baby massage continues to be a much sought after programme in the local community. Four baby massage courses have been completed in Finglas (two each in St. Helena's Resource Centre and St. Malachy's MNS) since January with a fifth course beginning next week. Mary Callaghan, our community midwife, has been joined in running baby massage courses by Marie Kirwan who is a recently retired public health nurse. Marie is trained in delivering baby massage courses and we are very appreciative of the time and expertise she volunteers to Barnardos and Better Finglas.

Baby Stay and Play

A core group of parents (mothers and fathers) and babies attend the weekly Baby Stay and Play Group in St. Helena's Resource Centre. This has proven to be an excellent informal way of supporting parents after they have completed a course in baby massage. The group allows parents to have some distraction-free time with their babies. Talks on relevant topics such as weaning and infant mental health have been organised to provide continued education and tips to parents of new babies.

4. New Triple P Practitioners and Courses



Training

In March, Better Finglas organised Triple P Training for practitioners working in the Finglas area. This block of training combined a mixture of new practitioners and experienced practitioners who had previously trained in delivering various Triple P Positive Parenting interventions. Better Finglas are delighted practitioners have continued to add more skills and expertise to their working practice.

The new Triple P practitioners represented a broad range of statutory, community and voluntary agencies working in Finglas such as Tusla, Extern, Pavee Point, Focus Ireland, Crosscare and the Finglas Addiction Support Team. Triple P practitioners will complete their training with accreditation days at the end of April before beginning to roll out the new Triple P programmes in the community. Better Finglas have now provided training for thirty practitioners in Triple P Positive Parenting courses which will provide a strong basis for programme expansion.

New Triple P Courses

Triple P practitioners, trained by Better Finglas, can now offer six different Triple P programmes to parents or primary caregivers. The three new courses, which will be available soon, are:

1. Standard Triple P: An intensive ten week course of sessions delivered on a one-on-one setting in the home setting.
2. Group Stepping Stones: A course suitable for parents or caregivers of children with a developmental disorder (e.g., autism spectrum disorder, elevated levels of disruptive behaviour).
3. Enhanced Triple P: Addresses family factors such as parental mood and partner conflict which complicates parenting.

Triple P Mentors

New programmes always provide a challenge in order to raise awareness of their availability and to get them embedded in the community. The delivery of Triple P will be greatly supported by the new role of Triple P Mentor which will be shared by Tracy Fox and Debbie Keogh. Tracy and Debbie work with Tusla in St. Helena's Family Resource Centre and have invaluable years of experience supporting families in Finglas. Together they will bring much enthusiasm and energy to the role.

5. Finglas Positive Wellness Week



Pictured (from left): Rebecca Moore (BF Project Leader), Sharon Byrne (BF Early Years Mentor), Tracy Fox (Tusla Triple P Mentor), Donna Cullen (BF Administrator).

On Wednesday 29th March, Better Finglas and Tusla staff attended a very successful open morning in Erin's Isle GAA Club for Positive Wellness Week. They had a stand with information on various programmes offered by Better Finglas and other agencies; Baby Stay and Play groups, Baby Massage, Preparing For Life Mentoring, and Triple P Positive Parenting courses. Interest was high in the various programmes and many parents signed up.

6. Award of Funding for Circle of Security Training



After a successful application, Better Finglas were awarded €5000 from the Dublin North West Area Partnership Social Inclusion Fund towards the provision of Circle of Security training to local professionals. Circle of Security is an early intervention parenting program for parents with children between 0 to 5 years of age. The

program can be delivered by trained professionals in an one-on-one or group setting and assists in the development of attachment and security in the relationship between child and parent/caregiver. Better Finglas plan to deliver Circle of Security training in Finglas in June and groups will commence at the beginning of the new school year in September.

7. Evaluation and Interagency Reports

Evaluation Report

As a requirement of being funded by the Area Based Childhood Programme, Better Finglas' programmes from the parenting and early years strands are evaluated by the Centre for Effective Services. As the first stage in disseminating the preliminary findings, Better Finglas has recently received a draft report of the outcomes data which outlined positive and statistically significant findings. In the Triple P parenting programme, positive differences were found in the parent-child relationship domains of closeness and conflict and for child social and emotional development domains of conduct disorder, hyperactivity, and total difficulties. In the early years programme, positive differences were found for school readiness and for child social and emotional development domains of emotional symptoms, hyperactivity, peer relationship problems and pro-social behaviour. The National Interim Report, comprising of findings in outcomes, implementation and cost analysis of the ABC Programme, will be finalised during the summer of 2017.

Interagency Report

In 2016, Better Finglas commissioned an evaluation of the interagency work of the project. This evaluation has been conducted by external researchers through a mixed methods approach using secondary desk analysis, participant observation, and interviews. Better Finglas has recently received a draft version of the evaluation report prior to receiving the final report in the latter half of 2017.

8. Upcoming Courses and Training

Pregnancy and New Parents

- 5th May 2017 - **Baby Stay and Play Group** with an information session on weaning. Cathy Monaghan, a Senior Paediatric Dietician, will provide guidance on weaning. The Baby Stay and Play Group runs every Friday in St. Helena's Family Resource Centre from 10am to 11.30am. Queries to Claire at (01) 8642941 or claire.dunne@barnardos.ie
- 29th May 2017 - **Antenatal (Preparing for Baby) Workshops**. Names are currently being taken for the next series of antenatal workshops. Queries to Mary at (01) 8642941 or mary.callaghan@barnardos.ie
- May 2017 - **Breastfeeding workshop** is being organised for expectant mothers who wish to prepare for breastfeeding. Queries to Mary at (01) 8642941 or mary.callaghan@barnardos.ie

Early Years

- 3rd May 2017 - **Hanen training** for Early Years practitioners and Junior Infant teachers This full day of training will be delivered by the local Speech and Language Therapy Team and the topic is 'Fostering Peer Interactions'. Queries to Sharon Byrne at (01) 864 2941 or sharon.byrne@barnardos.ie

Parenting

- 4th May 2017 - An eight week **Group Triple P Positive Parenting Course** is beginning in St. Helena's Resource Centre. More details can be found on the Better Finglas website.
- 15th May 2017 - A four week series of **Triple P Positive Parenting Workshops** are beginning in St. Helena's Resource Centre. More details can be found on the Better Finglas website.

The Area Based Childhood Programme 2013–2017

