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Welcome to the latest issue of Early Years eNews

As we await the outcome of General Election 2016, Barnardos is asking politicians to make children their priority and calling for concrete action in five areas of a child's life: first year of life, early years, education, health and housing. We are demanding change that will have an immediate and real impact on lives as part of a broader strategy to end societal inequality that unfairly affects children.

In this issue of Early Years eNews we bring you details of a report outlining the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child's verdict on Ireland and the results are clear: we could do much better. There is also information about the report on Affordable and Quality Childcare from the Joint Committee on Health and Children and a new children's participation hub database.

We also include news and updates about Barnardos' Learning and Development Service's publications, training and library.

Regards

Sinéad

News and Developments

Rise Up for Children

Barnardos is continuing our [Rise Up campaign](#) to fight child inequality in Ireland today. Child poverty and deprivation rates are indefensibly high and we are asking politicians to make children a priority in General Election 2016. In order to effectively tackle inequality we must forgo the short-term approach of tax cuts many politicians have proposed and instead invest in essential services to build a fairer Ireland for all our children. Below are the key questions we need to ask candidates.

QUESTIONS:

1 How will you/your party reduce child inequality if elected?

Rise Up: Children are bearing the brunt of rising inequality in Ireland today. Tax cuts are not the answer. Greater investment in services such as health, social housing, education and childcare would give all children the best start in life.

2 How will you/your party support families needing help and reduce the number of child welfare and protection cases arising?

Rise Up: There are more than 40,000 child protection and welfare cases in Ireland each year. Barnardos wants the next government to invest in supporting families early instead of intervening late when problems arise.

3 How will you/your party invest in childcare to make it more affordable and of high quality?

Rise Up: Ireland desperately needs investment in early childhood education and care, but tax credits for parents do nothing to reduce inflating prices or guarantee quality care.

4 Will you/your party make Ireland's primary school system genuinely free by investing an extra €103m?

Rise Up: It would cost just €103 million to give every child in Ireland a free primary education, including free school books, doing away with voluntary contributions and restoring funding to schools cut since 2010.

5 How will you/your party improve access to community based health services?

Rise Up: More community healthcare supports are needed to cut waiting lists and make sure children get the treatment they need when they need it.

6 How do you/your party plan to tackle the housing crisis?

Rise Up: The housing crisis has left many children living in unsuitable, overcrowded and precarious homes, many others are homeless. Rent control - such as linking rent increases to the Consumer Price Index - and an increase in rent supplement rates are needed in the short term. In the long term the State must create more social housing.

#RiseUp4Children

Ireland's Children's Rights Record Found Wanting by the UN

In its [latest report on Ireland](#), the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) has criticised the State for slow implementation of many laws and policies which could make a positive difference for children. They explicitly stressed the unacceptable fact that children living in poverty had poorer access to adequate healthcare services and housing. They were also clear on the solutions; more social housing must be built and emergency housing support must be suitable for children and subject to adequate safeguards. In relation to health, the Committee called on the Government to address structural inequalities which affect poorer children's access to healthcare



services and ensure all children enjoy the same access to and quality of care. In addition, there was a comprehensive analysis of the most acute child rights issues in the country, including the rights of Traveller and Roma children, children living in direct provision, children in care and detention, those experiencing mental health difficulties and access to non-denominational education. Overall, [the UN report contains 81 recommendations for change](#).

Report on Affordable and Quality Childcare

In January, The Joint Committee on Health and Children published its [Report on Affordable and Quality Childcare](#). The Report is the result of hearings held by the Committee, which allowed various stakeholders to address the Committee on developing an affordable and quality childcare system in Ireland. Some of the recommendations include:

- There should be no separation, as far as possible, between treatment of private and community services in delivery of childcare services. All services are governed by the same legislation and same standards, with similar staffing pay scales.
- The process of publication of Tulsa Inspection Reports should be standardised and accelerated.
- Adequate resources are needed to ensure the extension of free childcare year benefits the estimated 127,000 additional children in its first year of operation.
- The National Childcare Co-ordination Committee should be re-established.

Committee Chair, Jerry Buttimer TD says: “We are very conscious of the changing landscape of childcare provision in Ireland and the challenges faced by families and by the childcare sector itself... High quality child care and education not only benefits children, it is also

good for the economy and society as a whole. The Report also address the issues of paid maternity and paternity leave, as well as the issues faced by the families of children with special needs.”

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

Children's Participation Hub Database

The National Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-making (2015-2020) has committed to the establishment of a Children and Young People's Participation Hub by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. The Hub will become the national centre for excellence on children and young people's participation in decision-making and will be fully functioning by the end of 2016. It will support implementation of the strategy through the provision of information, training and advice for Government departments and agencies and the non-statutory sector. [Find out more information here.](#)



Start Strong Early Years #GE16

On 20th January 2016, Start Strong launched its Early Years #GE16 Campaign to ensure affordable, accessible, quality early years services and to strengthen family leave. Their Promise to Children calls on all parties and candidates in the forthcoming General Election 2016 to promise that, if elected, they will:



- Make early years a priority by increasing investment to ensure affordable, accessible, quality early years services and by continuing to strengthen family leave.
- Increase investment to the OECD average (0.8% GDP) within the lifetime of the next government, moving to the UNICEF benchmark of 1% of GDP within 10 years.

For more information on the Early Years #GE16 Campaign, follow #EarlyYears #GE16 on social media and [visit the StartStrong website.](#)

Be Brave for Barnardos

If you feel like taking on an exciting sporting challenge in 2016 we would love you to [Be Brave for Barnardos](#). By choosing to Be Brave for Barnardos you'll change the lives of vulnerable children across Ireland, making a real difference. Choose your challenge today and our fundraising team will support you all the way!

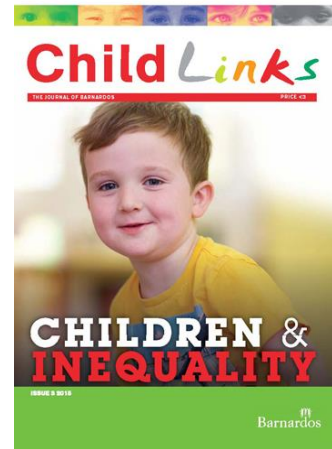


Barnardos Publications

ChildLinks - Children and Inequality

The latest issue of the Barnardos journal Childlinks is now available. This edition looks at the issue of Inequality in Ireland.

[Order now from our online shop.](#)



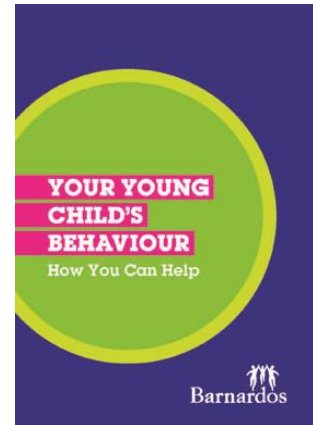
Coming Soon - Supporting Young Children's Behaviour Skills

The early years is a critical period for all learning, in particular social-emotional learning, and early years educators play a central role coaching and supporting children to develop the skills required to understand and manage their emotions and be accepted by and play well with their peers. In April, Barnardos will launch a book for early years educators that gives guidance on how best to support young children's social and emotional learning and behaviour skills. [Keep an eye on our website for more information.](#)

Free Booklets for Parents

Barnardos has a range of free publications to support parents with issues such as behaviour, bereavement, and child development. All of these booklets are available as [ebooks on our website](#).

- [Outdoor Play Matters](#)
- [Your Young Child's Behaviour](#)
- [Young Children Grieve Too](#)
- [Our Children First](#)
- [Learning Together](#)
- [Partners in Learning](#)



If you would like to order hard copies to give to parents in your service please [contact us](#).

Barnardos Library and Information Service

Spring Sale

We are currently offering a special deal on membership of [Barnardos' Library and Information Service](#). Sign up for annual membership before the end of March and get the publication below for half price.



What's New? Supporting Children through Transitions in their Early Years

- This book and accompanying CD aims 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.

This deal is available on all membership packages:

- [Student Membership €35 + Half Price book](#) – Total €47.50 + PP
- [Individual Membership €60 + Half Price book](#) – Total €72.50 + PP
- [Corporate Membership \(teams of 3\) €150 + Half Price book](#) – Total €162.50 + PP

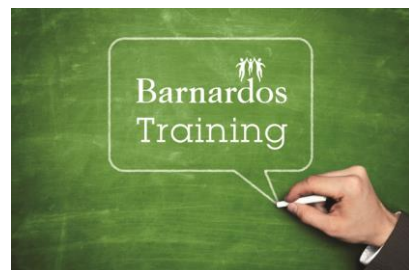
Membership includes access to an extensive range of resources relating to children and families including:

- Books, ebooks, reports, academic journals and databases and official publications.
- Online access to eBooks, databases and journals.
- Monthly eUpdate of the latest resources and research.
- Free subscription to Childlinks Barnardos Journal.
- Personal research support.
- 10% discount on all Barnardos' publications and selected training events.
- Information Service - Drop-in, Call or [Email](#) – if you have a query.

Barnardos Training and Consultancy

Last year, Barnardos Learning and Development Service delivered 75 training courses to 950 participants between tailored training and public events. The average satisfaction rate for participants was 90%

across all training and we want to build on these very positive experiences during 2016 by offering a variety of training courses to a range of participants in the community, voluntary, statutory and private



sectors. If you are interested in tailored training for your organisation please contact training@barnardos.ie .

“We chose Barnardos Children First, Child Protection Training because it fully met our specific needs in working with vulnerable witnesses, in particular children. Our members found this training to be an excellent and worthwhile experience. It gave our members increased knowledge and confidence in working in this area dealing with under-aged and vulnerable witnesses.”

(Richard Kelly: Training for Video Link Assistants, Court Services)

We have also just launched some public training events for March which you can now book online:

Children First, Child Protection Training (€125 includes Barnardos Protecting Children Resource)

- [5th March: 10-4.30pm in The Prince of Wales Hotel, Athlone, Co. Westmeath](#)
- [12th March: 10-4.30pm in The Montenotte Hotel, Montenotte, Co. Cork](#)



Giving Evidence in Family Law Proceedings (€110)

- [8th March: 10-4pm in Wisdom Centre, Sophia Housing, 25 Cork Street, Dublin 8](#)

Designated Liaison Person Training (€125)

- [15th March: 9.30-5pm in Wisdom Centre, Sophia Housing, 25 Cork Street, Dublin 8](#)
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Upcoming Events

Early Childhood Ireland Research and Practice Seminar: Play is FUNdamental

Date: 15th and 16th April

Venue: Croke Park Conference Centre, Dublin

The Research and Practice seminar provides a great opportunity for researchers, practitioners and educators to share their work with the early childhood community. The keynote presentation will be delivered by Dr Orla Doyle from the Geary Institute in UCD who will discuss the importance of research in the world of early childhood care and education. [Check out the website for more information.](#)

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