

CHILDLINKS

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Appropriate advertisements will be included for a charge.



EDITORIAL

There have been several interesting developments in relation to the National Children's Resource Centre since the first issue of Childlinks. The first anniversary of the Centre was celebrated with the publication of the 'Child and Family Directory'. Computerisation of the Information and Library Service is contributing enormously to the efficiency with which queries can be answered and literature searches completed. Work has begun in association with the Department of Health on a project entitled 'A Study of Parenting Programmes in Ireland' which is due to be completed in August 1994. The piloting phase of an evaluation system for nurseries and creches is well underway. The Centre is also represented on the steering committee of a new group entitled 'The Children's Rights Alliance - Republic of Ireland' which is working to establish a Children's Rights Unit to promote awareness of the UN Convention on Children's Rights.

The development and piloting of a Training Needs Analysis Schedule by Norah Gibbons, Team Leader, based on the Child Care Act has yielded interesting results. There is no doubt that the current legislation is providing an opportunity for many professional staff to identify their training needs. It is to be hoped that developments in child care services will not concentrate solely on buildings and staff appointments to the exclusion of ensuring that personnel have the requisite skills and feel as confident as possible in dealing with the difficult and often traumatic situations in which they work. These developments within the National Children's Resource Centre reflect movements in the child care area in general.

The sense of possibility and opportunity combines with the challenge of difficult tasks ahead to make 1994 a very interesting year in child care.

MADELEINE CLARKE

THE INFORMATION AND LIBRARY SERVICE

PROTECTING CHILDREN

A new training pack *Protecting Children* is now available. It was produced by Michelle Elliott and published by HMSO in the U.K. It gives teachers, childminders, health visitors, nurses, foster parents or anyone working in a non-therapeutic way with children the essential practical skills to help deal with child abuse. The pack consists of a manual and a video tape. The manual contains exercises, handouts and discussion cases covering:

- * recognising child abuse;
- * teaching children self protection;
- * helping children and carers to deal with their feelings;
- * helpful resources for working with children.

Protecting Children is designed in such a way that it can be used as a one, two, three or four day course. The exercises in protecting children will help participants feel more confident about working with children who have suffered abuse. This pack is available in the N.C.R.C.

MEMORY STORE

When children are separated from their parents through illness, death or marriage break-up it can be difficult for them to piece together their family history and to be clear about past events. At times of crisis children sometimes get moved around from one relative to another or in and out of foster care and it is all too easy to break the thread of the family's history. The MEMORY STORE has been created for parents who are facing a crisis in their lives, to help them store up information and memories which will be vital to their children in years to come.

The MEMORY STORE provides space to save precious belongings (maybe a video of the family, recordings of favourite music, small toys etc). The MEMORY STORE provides loose leaf sheets to write down the facts about the life of the parents or children. There is a space for historical facts, memories and family jokes. There is a family tree, a map and space to write names and addresses which may be useful for a child to make contact within the future.

This pack gives clear and detailed guidance to parents on how to create the memory store and memory book for their child. Everything that is stored or written down will help the child to understand the past and face the future.

The memory store and memory book have been created by Roy O'Brine and Carol Lindsay-Smith. The pack was published by Barnardo's U.K. It has been acquired for the N.C.R.C. and is already very popular with our users.

COMPUTERISATION



We are delighted to inform you that the computerisation of the Information & Library Service is well and truly underway using *Inmagic* Software. The library catalogue is almost complete giving us the capacity to undertake detailed searches on a very wide range of topics. The system ensures rapid and accurate retrieval of information by Author, Title, Publisher, Subject and Keywords. Clear resource lists can be supplied to meet your enquiry.

Introducing ChildData

To further enhance service to our users *ChildData* will be available in the NCRC in the coming weeks. *Child Data* provides three important reference databases from the National Children's Bureau in London. It includes:

Reference: details of over 25,000 books and journal articles since June 1989 held in the Reference Library of the National Children's Bureau - the largest information resource in Britain concerned with children.

Children & Parliament - over 5,400 indexed items dating from October 1990, from the National Children's Bureau's fortnightly publication *Children & Parliament*. This information service collates abstracts from Hansard on all matters relating to children including Questions, Motions and Debates from the Commons and Lords, the passage of Bills and Regulations.

Organisations - detailed information on over 3,600 national and international organisations working with or for children and young people.

All three databases are extensively indexed and cover all aspects of children's and young people's welfare: child abuse, child health, children's rights, disability and illness, drug and solvent misuse, early childhood, fostering and adoption, HIV/AIDS, residential care, sex education, special education, young offenders and much more.....

We hope that before the close of 1994 the following will be available on the NCRC Computer System:

The Library Catalogue including books, video tapes, resource packs and journal articles.

ChildData from the National Children's Bureau.

The National Directory of Organisations for Children and Families.

Career Data - A national listing of child care courses.

Parent Base - a national listing of parenting courses.

ANGELA CANAVAN - Information Officer

A STUDY OF PARENTING PROGRAMMES IN IRELAND **- Current Provision and Exploration of Needs.**

A nationwide study of parenting programmes in Ireland is being conducted by Barnardo's and the Department of Health. The particular sections involved are the National Children's Resource Centre of Barnardo's, with the Health Promotion Unit and the Child Care Policy Unit of the Department of Health.

The aim of the study is to ascertain the need for training courses and training materials for parents, which will enable them to promote the healthy development of their children.

This information will be of considerable interest and value to professionals working with parents in a wide variety of contexts. It will help to inform their decision making in relation to planning training and in the development of appropriate materials. It will serve to facilitate a further sharing of information and will also help to avoid the risk of duplication.

The overall aim includes establishing a database of information on parenting courses available throughout the country, which will give a broad overview of current provision. This information will be obtained through a questionnaire sent direct to courses. The primary aim, i.e. the analysis of needs for courses and materials will be conducted through semi-structured interviews with a sample of professionals, and also with a sample of parents.

These interviews will be conducted by the co-ordinator and research assistants.

Obviously the more input and support that is available from both statutory and voluntary organisations the more comprehensive the study will be, so we gladly welcome opinions and ideas from those interested.

To ensure an efficient system of bringing together information and to further promote involvement, an advisory panel has been established, consisting of two nominees from each Health Board area, (one representing the statutory bodies and the other representing voluntary organisations). The function of the panel members is to discuss and advise on key issues, the questionnaire and interview design, and to identify organisations involved in parenting programmes, and the availability of such courses in their Health Board area.

Informal contact with a number of professionals with an interest in this area, including child care development officers (or equivalent), social workers, psychologists, health education officers, home liaison officers, etc., has generated a very favourable reaction to the study, with all agreeing this information will be both of interest and value to both parents and professionals.

For further details please contact Jennifer who is co-ordinating the study:

Jennifer Rylands
Clinical Psychologist - Training Officer
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FOSTERING RESOURCES



The pending implementation of the Child Care Act has created a demand on the Information Service for resources in a number of areas. One of these areas is **FOSTERING**. Enquiries from social workers in health boards throughout the country continue to increase on a weekly basis.

The nature of the enquiries vary from those looking for information on Aftercare to those seeking training resources for new foster parents. To meet and indeed to encourage this demand we are establishing an extensive collection of relevant materials. What follows is a small selection of what is available to members.

ADCOCK, Margaret & WHITE, Richard (1983) **Good-Enough Parenting: A Framework for Assessment**. London: British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering. ISBN 0903634576. *Keywords: Fostering, Adoption, Parenting, Assessment.* [TYPE: Book/ LOCATION: BAAF/PR 12]

BARNARDO'S U.K. **It's Like a Bereavement**. England: Barnardo's U.K. *Parents whose children in long term foster care tell their side of the story, describing their attitude to the social services.* (42 mins) [TYPE: Video/ LOCATION: 11]

BATTY, Daphne (1991) **Sexually Abused Children**. London: BAAF. ISBN 0903534940. *Keywords: Fostering, Sexual Abuse.* [TYPE: Book/ LOCATION: BAAF/PR 3]

BEHAL, Nina, CLAYDEN, Jasmine, STEIN, Mike & VADE, Jim (1992) **Prepared for Living? A Survey of Young People Leaving the Care of Three Local Authorities**. London: National Children's Bureau. ISBN 074579008. *Keywords: Fostering, After Care, Leaving Care, Children in Care.* [TYPE: Book]

BRITISH AGENCIES FOR ADOPTION AND FOSTERING (1991) **Introduction to FosterCare**. London: British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering. *This video will be invaluable at an early stage in information meetings for prospective foster carers. It is divided into five sections: about fostering generally; the children and their families; aspects of foster care; being part of a team; and some final thoughts, each of which can be shown individually and followed by discussion.* (26 mins) [TYPE: Video]

BRITISH AGENCIES FOR ADOPTION AND FOSTERING (BAAF) **Care Proceedings**. London: BAAF. *Keywords: Fostering, Children in Care, Risk Assessment, Court, Guardian ad Litem.* [TYPE: Book/ LOCATION: BAAF DIS 1]

UNNIFFE, Rosemary (1983) **Recruiting Foster Parents: Study of an Innovation in the Eastern Health Board**. Dublin: University College Dublin. *Keywords: Fostering, Foster Parents, Recruitment, Eastern Health Board.* [TYPE: Report/ LOCATION: Box Fostering 8]

DAVIS, Edna, KIDD, Liz & PRINGLE, Keith **Child Sexual Abuse Training Programme for Foster Parents with Teenage Placements**. England: Barnardo's U.K. *Keywords: Fostering, Family Placement, Sexual Abuse, Abuse, Training Aid, Teenagers, Investigation, Law.* [TYPE: Report/ LOCATION: Box Fostering 22]

GARNETT, Louise (1992) **Leaving Care and After**. London: NCB. ISBN 090281799X. *Keywords: Fostering, After Care, Moving, Disruption, Leaving Care, Children in Care.* [TYPE: Report]

HUNTER, Susan & SWIFT, Alan (1987) **Special Families Project Edinburgh: A Professional Fostering Scheme - Interim Foster Care Placements, What they offer to Children and Foster Families**. England: Barnardo's U.K. *Keywords: Fostering, Short-term Fostering, Family Placement, Foster Parents.* [TYPE: Report/ LOCATION: Box Fostering 5]

MCCARTT HESS, Peg & OHMAN PROCH, Kathleen (1993) **Managing Visits to Children Looked After Away From Home**. London: BAAF. *Keywords: Fostering, Children in Care, Parental Access, Visits.* [TYPE: Book/ LOCATION: BAAF 2]

NATIONAL FOSTER CARE ASSOCIATION **Life Books for Children in Care**. England: National Foster Care Association. *Keywords: Fostering, Life Story Books.* [TYPE: Book]

ROWE, Jane, HUNDLEBY, Marion and GARNETT, Louise (1989) **Child Care Now: A Survey of Placement Patterns**. London: BAAF. ISBN 0903534851. *Keywords: Fostering, Adoption, Children in Care, Residential Care.* [TYPE: Book/ LOCATION: BAAF/RE6]

WINNICOTT, Clare (1977) **Working with Children Who Are Joining New Families**. London: BAAF. *Keywords: Fostering, Life Story Books, Record Keeping, Emotional Development, Child Development, Preparing for placement, Training aid, Case histories, Planning, Separation, Bereavement, Moving, Disruption, Stability.* [TYPE: Training Manual/ LOCATION: Box Fostering 21]

REVIEW

REPORT TO THE MINISTER FOR EQUALITY AND LAW REFORM REGARDING CHILD CARE FACILITIES FOR WORKING PARENTS February 1994

This is yet another report on child care facilities for working parents. This working group identified a range of child care facilities for working parents mainly family day care, ie childminders and private creche facilities. There are a small number of workplace creches but these are only economically viable for large organisations who, in the main, provide some ongoing funding. The authors consider that the private and voluntary child care sector in Ireland could be substantially improved and comment on the need for a more comprehensive legislative framework and increased funding for advice and support structures.

The issue of tax benefits for parents and providers of services is also addressed. Examples of services in other European countries and information on developments through European funding makes interesting reading.

A number of recommendations have been made to employers, individually and collectively, whereby they could facilitate staff regarding child care arrangements. One very interesting recommendation is that planning approval for new shopping and housing developments should be made conditional on the provision of a site and building for a children's centre.

Hopefully this report will play a useful role in the development of policy concerning child care facilities for working parents.

*Mary Cotter - Barnardo's Senior Adviser -
Advisory Service for Nurseries and Creches*

Other Reports

- 1980 Task Force on Child Care Services
- 1983 Working Party on Child Care Facilities for Working Parents
- 1985 Committee on Minimum Legal Requirements and Standards for Day Care Services
- 1985 Working Party on Women's Affairs and Family Law Reform

CHILD AND FAMILY DIRECTORY

Recently published by the N.C.R.C. this directory lists the many national organisations and services concerned with children and their families in Ireland. It has been published as part of the National Children's Resource Centre's contribution to the International Year of the Family.

The directory is an essential reference book for child care personnel, social workers, other professional workers and parents.

It has over 300 entries and each entry describes the services of the organisation and lists nationwide branches or contacts. It's alphabetical layout makes it very easy to use.

The Child and Family Directory makes available information which is otherwise scattered and difficult to obtain.

The directory costs £4.95 plus £1.00 postage per copy and is available from:

*National Children's Resource Centre
Barnardo's
Christchurch Square
Dublin 8*

AN IMPORTANT NEW IRISH PUBLICATION

Surviving Childhood Adversity is edited by Trinity College social studies lecturers Harry Ferguson, Robbie Gilligan and Ruth Torode. "It is a book for anyone seeking to understand the hardships faced by many children and the merits and demerits of the ways in which we react to these hardships." Padraig O'Morain. Irish Times 15 March 1994

TRAINING EVENTS

EXPANDING KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE

A series of training events on issues relating to child protection have been hosted by the N.C.R.C. The impetus for these events came from training requests to the N.C.R.C. and an awareness of practice issues.

The aim of the training was to further develop knowledge, skills and policies in the child protection area. Attendance was drawn from a wide group of professionals working in the child protection area.

Four events organised so far have proven very successful. The series started with two workshops led by John Fitzgerald, Director of the Bridge Child Care Consultancy Service, London. In the first workshop the concept of dangerousness and children living within a culture of violence were considered. In the second workshop the process and management of the case conference was examined as a means towards positive interdisciplinary practice.

The focus of the second event was on Child Protection and Risk Assessment. David Carson, Senior Lecturer in Law at the University of South Hampton led the workshop and focused on the nature of risk-taking and how the approach to risk affects professional practice.

Developing Witness Skills also presented by David Carson proved a very challenging topic for participants. This is an increasingly important practice issue. The workshop sought to show witnesses how to organise and present their evidence in an authoritative way and how to use effective answering techniques.

Carol Diffen and Deirdre McCambridge, workers from a specialist social work team focusing on child sexual abuse co-led the workshop on Child Sexual Abuse within the Family. The day focused on understanding the theoretical framework of child sexual abuse and exploring the practice issues for workers in intrafamilial abuse.

Each of the events were evaluated by the participants using an evaluation form designed by the staff of the N.C.R.C. The feedback indicates that these events have met a training need for workers from many professional backgrounds and work settings. The consistent request was for more of the same particularly arising from the child sexual abuse workshop. The opportunity to train in a multi-disciplinary group was found to be helpful in developing networks and as an aid to inter-agency co-operation.

The staff at the N.C.R.C. are committed to providing on-going training opportunities for professionals in the Child Care field and will be pleased to discuss any suggestions or requests with you.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND FAMILIES: A TRAINING NEEDS ANALYSIS

The implementation of the Child Care Act 1991 is an opportunity to reflect on the training needs of staff who have responsibilities in child and family work.

A training needs analysis is a first tool to help identify training needs for individuals and groups of workers. Training needs common to all workers can also be identified. Needs can then be prioritised and a systematic training programme put in place.

The staff of the National Children's Resource Centre has developed a training needs analysis schedule based on the Child Care Act 1991. This schedule allows for familiarisation with the Act to occur as training needs are discussed. Moreover it allows for training needs to be listed and prioritised based on practice and policy issues and provides an opportunity, within the framework of the Act, for staff to identify other training needs which are relevant to their particular work settings.

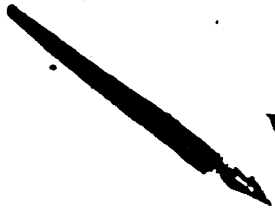
The areas covered by the schedule include recording, report writing, court procedures, witness skills, interagency co-operation and acting as an advocate for children.

The schedule can be administered by a staff member of the National Children's Resource Centre with individuals and with groups of staff and takes approximately 1 - 2 hours depending on the size of the group.

For further information contact:

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Training & Advisory Services
National Children's Resource Centre
Tel: 454 9699





WHAT ARE FOUR YEAR OLDS DOING IN SCHOOL?

O

Most research into primary education has focused on the compulsory period with only a passing reference to the pre-primary level. Results suggest that primary teachers support, in theory, the philosophy of child-centred education outlined in the 1971 'New Curriculum'. Practice, in so far as it has been studied, seems to be more formal than one might predict from reading the 'New Curriculum'. For example, O'Rourke and Archer (1987) found that teaching practice in the infant classes was 'to a large extent teacher-directed and traditional'. Quality practice is hampered by class size, inappropriate training and a general trend that children begin to learn reading, writing and arithmetic as soon as they enter school. In fact, O'Rourke and Archer found that most children in junior infant classes are introduced to a reader by the second term. From what we know about the thinking and learning of 4 and 5 year olds, notwithstanding a great deal of debate on the issue, we know that this is too early for many pupils and these experiences may be putting the child at risk of educational failure rather than helping him/her succeed.

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While there is some research into policy and practice in the infant classes of the primary school there is virtually no research into the policy and practices of other pre-primary services. We know from other countries, and I have found myself, that pre-schools are coming under pressure from a variety of sources to provide a more formal programme for children attending. One of the more subtle pressures is that of preschool staff trying to find a professional identity so that their status can be raised. That profession, most like a pre-school provider, is not a mother, not a nurse but a teacher and it is not unexpected that in aligning with this profession some of the practices of the profession would be incorporated into pre-school practice. This is a worrying trend as it is encroaching on the childhood of the child. It is using up valuable time in inappropriate activities; time that could be left for the important things in life such as playing, sharing, socialising, dressing up, talking, painting, building, exploring, daydreaming, questioning - being a child.

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The Department of Education provides grant support for a number of pre-schools - the most well known being the Rutland Street Pre-school. Other projects include a number of pre-schools for travellers and pre-schools developed through the Home/School Liaison Scheme. Following a commitment made in the Partnership for Government document the department is also planning to open 11 pilot pre-schools for disadvantaged children of 2 - 4 years in designated areas of disadvantage.

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There has been no recent evaluation of any of these services and no guidelines for practice or curriculum design. While welcoming the trend towards improved pre-primary provision for disadvantaged children it is surely of critical importance here, more than anywhere, that account be taken of current knowledge about how children best develop and learn. Adequate funding for training and materials must be provided. Collaboration with existing services, to improve efficiency and minimise overlap, must be achieved. Provision of carefully designed curricular aims and objectives, with built in evaluation procedures, is also necessary to ensure appropriateness of practice and to enhance staff confidence that what they are providing is what is most appropriate.

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*Noirin Hayes
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Dublin Institute of Technology*

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THE STAY SAFE PROGRAMME

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A Community and School based approach to protecting children

Confronting the problem of child abuse is a difficult task. It is a painful reality which we would rather ignore. Abuse is founded on secrecy and denial. Breaking the cycle of secrecy not only helps the victims, but can prevent abuse occurring in the first place.

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The 'Stay Safe' programme, which is currently being introduced into primary schools, aims to prevent child abuse by equipping parents and teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary to protect the children in their care. Children are then taught safety skills in the normal classroom context and these skills are reinforced through discussion with their parents. This approach increases community awareness and makes children less vulnerable to abuse of all kinds.

Background

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The project was conceived in 1987 by health care professionals as a response to the problem of child abuse and bullying. At that time there was no suitable prevention programme available for children in Irish schools and both parents and teachers were crying out for guidance and help with these issues. The Stay Safe programme was developed to fill this gap.

The programme was set up by Dr. Maria Lawlor and Deirdre MacIntyre. Dr. Lawlor is a consultant child psychiatrist with the North Eastern Health Board. She specialised in child and family problems and is currently working in the new Child and Family Centre in Drogheda. Deirdre MacIntyre is a senior psychologist with the Kildare Child Guidance service. Like many other support services in Ireland, the programme started on an entirely voluntary basis, with a lot of enthusiasm, a massive workload and very few resources.

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In devising the programme, they drew on the best available research and consulted with colleagues, with parents and teachers, with primary school management, diocesan advisers, the I.N.T.O., the National Parents' Council and also with the Departments of Health and Education. Each of these groups recognised the need for the programme and supported its development. The teaching package has been the subject of a two year evaluation study involving 1000 children, their parents and teachers. The programme's effectiveness was evaluated in terms of its impact on children, parents and teachers.

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The Stay Safe programme is funded by the Departments of Education and Health who have seconded a number of social workers and teachers to work on the project in each health board area.

Four Stages

The Stay Safe programme is a four stage approach to preventing child abuse, involving:

(a) *Teacher Training* : Following initial meetings with chairpersons and principals, all primary school teacher receive a training course which covers (i) background information about child abuse prevention, (ii) familiarisation with teaching package and method and (iii) information about back-up services.

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(b) *Parent Education* : Before the introduction of the programme parent meetings are held to explain the Stay Safe programme and give parents an opportunity to view and discuss its contents. The parents' role in this learning process is discussed. The meetings also aim to educate parents about child abuse and enhance their ability to protect their children.

(c) *Classroom Lessons*: Each school is given a Stay Safe pack which consists of a teachers' handbook, lesson plans for junior and senior cycles, childrens' worksheets and a video cassette.

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(d) *Community Awareness* : Liaison meetings are held with health care staff and community groups.

The Stay Safe lessons deal initially with common situations which most children will experience at some stage or other, e.g. getting lost or being at home on their own when the phone or doorbell rings. They deal with bullying; how to cope with bullies and that no child has the right to bully another. Children learn the basic rules about dealing with strangers. They are also taught that a touch should never be kept secret and if anyone touches them in a way that makes them feel 'unsafe' they should tell. Essentially the programme encourages children to tell an adult they trust if they feel threatened or unsafe.

It is not necessary to use scare tactics in order to teach children how to recognise, resist and report abuse. Children can be taught personal safety skills just as they are already taught road safety and water safety. Self-protective techniques are taught as part of a broad safety curriculum which aims to prevent various types of victimisation and enhance self esteem. This can only be done effectively in the context of training parents and teachers so that they are aware of the problems that children can encounter. Although one of the aims of this programme is to prevent physical and sexual abuse this is not a sex education programme. All that children need to know are the simple rules which help them to recognise a threatening situation and how to respond.

The C.A.P.P. team considers parental involvement to be an essential part of this programme. Parents are the most important people in childrens' lives and children are most likely to turn to them in times of stress. Parents are reminded of the importance of listening when children are trying to tell something. They are encouraged to spend time with their children to give them the opportunity to talk about their worries. It's important for children to know that they can turn to adults for help.

Each Stay Safe lesson has an accompanying worksheet on which children draw, colour or write stories. Children complete worksheets at home with their parents and in this way parents are aware of what their children learn in the Stay Safe lessons and are involved in the process.

Progress

Eastern Health Board

Following the successful outcome of a pilot study the Departments of Education and Health agreed to fund its introduction into the Eastern Health Board area during the school year 1991-1992. 3 social workers and 3 teachers were seconded by the departments to facilitate teacher training and parent education. There are 637 primary schools in the EHB employing approximately 8,500 teachers. Teacher training was completed by June 1992. 100% of schools availed of this training. To date over 85% of schools have held parent information meetings and are teaching the Stay Safe lessons.

Other Health Boards

The programme was extended to the other health board regions in September 1992. Currently 10 social workers and 11 primary school teachers are seconded to the programme. They have been assigned to the various health board regions and work in teams consisting of a teacher and a social worker. Teacher training was completed in October 1993 and parent meetings are currently on-going.

Teachers, parents and community groups have used the CAPP teams as an information resource. This is an invaluable role as community awareness is one of the cornerstones of child abuse prevention.

As a result of feedback from teachers and parents, an Irish version of the pack is at present being prepared for publication. Modifications are also being made to the pack to suit the various categories involved in special education. A parents booklet on child protection is currently being prepared and a pre-service training course is being prepared for teacher training colleges.

We feel that this community based model of child abuse prevention which is based on the education of parents, teachers, community and children, has been very successful to date. It ensures a high level of community awareness of children's needs and rights. It is supportive of families, children and communities, and takes a competency-enhancing approach towards health promotion and child protection.

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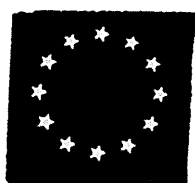
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EUROPEAN UNION FUNDING AND CHILD CARE

Funding for the establishment of child care facilities and child care-related activities is almost impossible to derive from European Union sources. The treaties, which include the Treaty of Rome (1957) and the Treaty on European Union (signed in Maastricht in 1992) form the basis for decision making in the European Union do not deal with children's needs per se. This means that children as a group do not represent an area of competence about which actions can be undertaken at a European Union level. Notwithstanding these facts a reading of the regulations governing Structural Funds and European Union Initiatives enables one to see some points of entry with regard to funding possibilities which are interesting despite the fact that they emanate from an economic labour-related as opposed to social policy perspective. For example, the 1993 reform of the Structural Fund objective is aimed at young people in search of employment, promoting the integration of persons exposed to exclusion from the labour market and promoting equal opportunities for men and women. This objective includes provision for *'the development of appropriate training, employment and support structures including the training of necessary staff and the provision of care services for dependants'* which obviously includes children.

(Council Regulation E.E.C. No. 1 2081/93)



Of particular interest in relation to child care are the European Union Initiatives which form part of Structural Fund allocations. In December 1990 the European Commission introduced regulations governing three funding programmes entitled Human Resources Initiatives. One of these Initiatives entitled N.O.W. (New Opportunities for Women) aims to co-finance projects which provide training and employment opportunities for women. Under the terms of reference of these regulations the Commission undertook to support

- *creation of child care centres especially in zones for the benefit of women in enterprises, groups of enterprises or vocational training centres;*
- *operating costs of child care centres related to vocational training centres;*
- *vocational training for the child care workers to raise their skills and, consequently, the quality of the service."*

Official Journal of the European Communities (327 Vol. 33, 29 Dec. 1990).

This infrastructure aid is limited to objective I regions which include the whole of Ireland. Approximately 100 applications for funding under the NOW programme were made in Ireland, 33 of which were approved.

A Green Paper on European Union Initiatives was launched in June 1993 which suggested that NOW and the other two Human Resources Initiatives, Horizon and Euroform, would join together to form one 'jumbo' initiative not least because of the complicated administrative procedures involved in having three operational programmes corresponding to the three Initiatives in each of twelve member states.

In February 1994 the Commissions issued a Press Release concerning European Union Initiatives in general - with regard to Human Resource and NOW in particular, the following statement was made.

“The Employment and Development of Human Resources Initiative is based on an integrated approach, drawing together various measures which are targetted directly at groups who face specific difficulties in the labour market..... The first strand (Employment - NOW) is aimed at the development of equal opportunities for women in the labour market and at ensuring access for women to jobs in growth sectors. In particular the Employment and the Development of Human Resources Initiative will build on the success of the first new programme.”

It is not clear as yet whether the regulations for the new Employment - NOW strand of the Initiative will contain the same possibility of infrastructure aid for child care in objective I regions - but hopefully this will be the case. A total of 1.4 million E.C.U.'s have been allocated for NOW and the other two strands of the Development of Human Resources Initiative which are HORIZON and a new strand entitled YOUTHSTART.

The Council for the Status of Women was appointed as the support structure for projects funded under the 1990-1994 NOW programme. Mary Donnelly is the person with responsibility for NOW in the Council for the Status of Women. Claire Tiernan is the National Co-ordinator for NOW in the Department of Employment and Enterprise.

If further information in relation to new regulations governing funding which could pertain to child care becomes available we will forward this to members of the National Children's Resource Centre.

MADELEINE CLARKE

REACHING OUT

At the Twenty Fourth Annual conference of the Psychological Society of Ireland in November 1993 Madeleine Clarke, Manager of the N.C.R.C., co-convened a symposium entitled 'Childhood in Irish Society' and presented a paper 'Challenges Facing Child Care Services in Ireland'.

In January 1994 the N.C.R.C.'s mobile unit visited Ballyvolane Shopping Centre in Cork. This was organised in partnership with the Southern Health Board. Angela Canavan, Information Officer, and Julie Kelleher, Teamworker, answered over 200 enquiries from parents and those working with children on a wide range of topics.

Madeleine Clarke joined the steering committee of the 'Children's Rights Alliance - Republic of Ireland' and attended a conference on Children's Rights in London jointly organised by the Children's Rights Development Unit (London), the National Children's Bureau, UNICEF and the N.S.P.C.C.

Norah Gibbons, Team Leader of the Training and Advisory Service with the N.C.R.C. developed and piloted a Training Needs Analysis Schedule in the Western Health Board in March 1994.

Owen Keenan, Director/Secretary, attended the conference 'The Effects of Mobility on the Rights of the Child in Europe' in Athens, Greece which was organised by the European Forum for Child Welfare in April 1994.

The National Children's Resource Centre edits and produces EUROCHILD in English and French. EUROCHILD is a quarterly publication of the European Forum for Child Welfare and contains interesting information on development and events in child care in the various European countries. If you are interested in being on the mailing list for EUROCHILD and other material for the EFCW please contact Angela Canavan at the N.C.R.C. (01) 4549699.

IRISH DIARY

May 27-28 Irish Hospice Foundation - 2 day workshop on 'Issues in Providing Services for the Bereaved'
Cost: £80.00 (including light lunch and coffee). Venue: Our Lady's Hospice, as above, 9.30a.m. - 5.00p.m.
Contact: IHF, as above

May 27 - 30 "Play Therapy" - A Course for people working with Children run by The Play Therapy Trust with Ann Cattanach & Brenda Meldrum. Cost: £200 per person. Venue: The Ashling Centre, 27 Darling Street, Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh. Contact: Regina Henderson c/o The Aisling Centre (0365)325811.

June 8 NSSB one day course on *Applying for Funding*
Cost: £30.00 (including lunch). Venue: 9.30a.m. - 5.00p.m. Marino Institute of Education, as above. Contact: NSSB, as above.

June 10 "Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Nursing - Stretching the Boundaries". Cost: £5.00 Venue: The Conference Room, St. Brendan's Hospital. Contact: Colm Bracken (01) 8214245/Michele Gallagher (01) 6265676.

June 11 N.C.N.A. one day course on "Registration and Discipline in the Nursery". Cost: £15.00 Venue: 10.00am - 4.00pm Orwell Lodge, 77 Orwell Road, Dublin 6. Contact: N.C.N.A. office.

June 14 N.C.N.A. one day course on "Nurseries and the Law". Cost: £20.00 Venue: 10.00am - 4.00pm Carmichael House, North Brunswick Street, Dublin 7.

June 15 Disability Federation of Ireland - Workshop on *Child Protection Issues and Children with Disabilities*
Cost: £65.00 (including lunch). Venue: Tara Towers Hotel, Dublin. Contact: Conference Secretary, DFI, 2 Sandymount Office Pk, Dublin 18. Tel: (01) 2959344/5 Fax: (01) 2959346

INTERNATIONAL DIARY

June 10 TSA workshop on *Sexual Orientation in Adolescence* Cost: No details available. Venue: London
Contact: Wendy Morgan, TSA, 23 New Road, Brighton, East Sussex BN1 1WZ. Tel: 0044 273 693311.

June 15 Kidscape workshop on *Bullying - Practical Ways of Coping for Schools* Cost: Stg £75.00 Venue: Kidscape, as above. Contact: Kidscape.

June 16-17 NSPCC - Conference on *The Abuse of Children in Day Care Settings* Cost: Stg £140.00 (residential), Stg £100 (non-residential) or Stg £50.00 (unwaged/low waged). Venue: NSPCC National Child Protection Training Centre. Contact: NSPCC, as above at 3 Gilmour Close, Beaumont Leys, Leicester LE4 1EZ. Tel: 0533 340 804. Fax: 0533 340 464.

June 16 Kidscape workshop on *Child Sexual Abuse*
Cost: Stg £75.00. Venue: Kidscape, as above. Contact: Kidscape.

June 24 TSA workshop: *Keeping in touch when families part; in London*. Contact: see June 10 entry.

June 28 - July 2 13th Biennial Meeting - International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development; in Amsterdam, Netherlands. Contact: PAO, PO Box 325, 2300 AH Leiden, The Netherlands.

July 6 - 10 11th World Meeting, International Society for Research on Aggression; in Florida, USA. Contact: Deborah Richardson, Dept. of Psychology, Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, FL 33431, USA.

July 13 - 15 2nd International Conference, the Stress and Anxiety Research Society (formerly Society for Test Anxiety Research); in Madrid. Contact: J.J. Miguel-Tobal, Dept. de Psicología Basica, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 28023 Madrid. Fax: 34 1 394 3189.