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Welcome to the latest issue of Childcare eNews

In this issue of Childcare eNews we look at developments in the area of children's rights, which include a new app from the Ombudsman for Children's Office and the publication of a report by the Irish Council for Civil Liberties. We also include information on the planned inspections on the quality of educational provision in Ireland's early years settings and the latest reports from Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, on the current preschool inspections.



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

We wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.

Regards

Sinéad

News and Developments

Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People (2014-2020)

The Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Dr. James Reilly TD, has announced the establishment of the Advisory Council set up under Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People (2014-2020).

[The Advisory Council](#) will advise the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs and the high level Children and Young People's Policy Consortium on the implementation of Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures and its constituent strategies. It will also have a role in generating support for change among stakeholders, and provide a forum to support implementation and address challenges in a positive, solution focused manner. The Advisory Council consists of 16 members, which include representatives from Early Childhood Ireland, Start Strong, Barnardos, the Children's Rights Alliance, ISPC, One Family, BeLonG To, Scouting Ireland and NYCI.

High Quality State Subsidised Childcare Needed

Barnardos welcomes Minister for Children and Youth Affairs James Reilly's commitment not to introduce tax breaks as a way to make childcare more affordable for parents.

June Tinsley, Head of Advocacy, Barnardos, said: 'Barnardos welcomes the pledge by Minister Reilly not to introduce a tax credit scheme for childcare, which would unfairly benefit high earners. It would do nothing to help those parents trying to get back to



work. The level of investment in this sector is insufficient, with fees among the highest in the world. Sadly, the high costs do not necessarily mean high quality of care. Given the proven benefits to young children in participating in quality childcare, the focus of attention must be on developing a subsidised system that guarantees quality while also allowing parents to take up employment.'

The Government has made some investment to improve the quality of care, but if Minister Reilly is to continue this work he must be supported with real investment from the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) recommends countries spend 1% of their GDP on childcare services. Ireland spends 0.2% of GDP. The family life of thousands of parents and children depend on this investment.

Know Your Rights – The Rights of Children and Young People

[‘Know Your Rights – The Rights of Children and Young People’](#) is the latest in the Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL) Know Your Rights public information series. Produced jointly by the ICCL and the Children’s Rights Alliance, it is the first guide of its kind which seeks to comprehensively and accessibly outline the rights of children and young people in Ireland.



New App on Children’s Rights

The Ombudsman for Children’s Office have been running the It’s Your Right project throughout 2014. They have been speaking to children and young people from around the country and listening to their views and opinions on children’s rights. Their new app has audio pieces, videos, poems, songs and much more to help children learn about their rights. [Find out more about the app here.](#)

New Booklet for Parents Available - Outdoor Play Matters

This booklet from Barnardos is for parents of young children up to the age of six, although most of the information applies to children of all ages. It highlights the benefits of outdoor play and shows how playing outside supports a child’s development.

[Download this booklet now](#) or for a hard copies email us on resources@barnardos.ie



Encouraging Inclusion: Free Activities for Use in AfterSchools

Along with other EU countries, Ireland has participated in the [CAREM project \[Collaborative Art-making for Reducing Marginalisation\]](#) to encourage inclusion. The project focused on the development of educational activities, material and related pedagogical strategies of collaborative art-making that strengthen intercultural education and inclusion practices, reduce social and academic marginalisation and increase the participation of marginalised children in the curricula, cultures and societies of schools. In Ireland the materials were piloted in afterschools, primary school settings and teacher-training colleges. The activities are linked to the curriculum in each country that took part and draw upon the various elements of the curriculum such as drama, SPHE and music, and especially art.



Dublin South West Inner City NEYAI Consortium Reports

The Dublin South West Inner City NEYAI Consortium has published a number of reports focusing on Integrated Service Delivery in the early years and guidance booklets on the delivery of a Parent Child Hub model. The full suite of publications is available to borrow from [Barnardos library service](#) or you can obtain copies by contacting 01 4734746.



Early Years Care and Education

New Early Childhood Education Inspectors

The Minister for Children and Youth Affairs and the Minister for Education and Skills have asked the Inspectorate of the Department of Education and Skills to lead and organise focussed inspections on the quality of educational provision in early childhood education settings participating in the Free Pre-school Year programme.



The inspections carried out by the Inspectorate of the Department of Education and Skills will focus on the improvement of educational provision for pre-

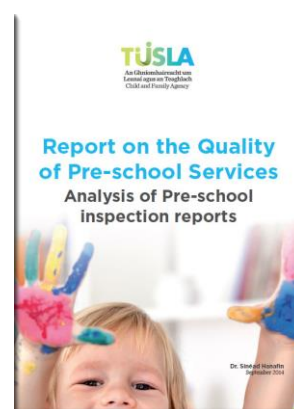
school children who are aged 3 years or more in early childhood education settings participating in the Free Pre-school Year programme. This will be an additional programme of inspections but will complement fully the regulatory inspections by the TUSLA Early Years' Inspectorate. Reports from these education-focussed inspections will also be published and will provide valuable information to parents and others, and advice for practitioners and those involved in the initial and continuing education of pre-school staff.

[Find out more information here.](#)

Tusla Publish Reports on Pre-school Inspections

Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, has published two reports based on an analysis of inspection reports from 2012-2013. The reports were commissioned in the wake of the May 2013 Prime Time documentary, A Breach of Trust.

The first of these, [Report on the Quality of Pre-school Services - Analysis of Pre-school inspection reports](#) presents findings arising in respect of the quality of pre-school services as documented in pre-school inspection reports. There are a number of issues emerging from this report that need to be considered in light of the findings identified. These include, among others:



- The number of regulations, with their various sections and sub-sections, provide an extensive framework for examining all aspects of pre-school services. While this is very helpful in identifying areas for assessment, it does mean that the potential for non-compliance is very high across multiple regulations. Some consideration may need to be given to how differentiation in respect of compliance and non-compliance takes place.
- There is an urgent need to address the issues relating to Garda vetting, children's safety and the volume, content and extent of the records required.
- The higher levels of non-compliance in respect of drop-in services, regional variation and follow-up inspections require further and more in-depth examination.
- Some consideration needs to be given to extending the breadth and range of Sanctions that can be applied where a service is found to be non-compliant so that the level of non-compliance on follow-up inspections can be reduced.

- There is a need for improvements in the information technology system underpinning the inspection process.

The second publication [Report on the Process of Pre-school Inspection Practices as documented in inspection reports](#) focuses on key issues arising in respect of the process and technical aspects of pre-school inspection practices. Some of the issues emerging from this report that need to be considered in light of the findings identified include:

- Some consideration needs to be given to the extent to which regulations are individually assessed as compliant/non-compliant.
- A more harmonised approach to the process of reporting needs to be considered. This includes the extent and clarity of the information, as well as the type of commentary provided.
- There was less variation around the threshold of compliance and non-compliance than might have been expected and for some regulations the determination was very straightforward, with almost no variation. The findings from this report can be used as a basis for professional development across this area and can be of assistance in making thresholds explicit.
- While the reports provide a comprehensive and detailed insight into the early childcare and education services provided, some consideration should be given to including the voice of additional stakeholders, including providers, children and their families, in the overall process.
- Consideration should be given to the development of a strategic research and data programme to support the provision and inspection of early childcare and education.

'Childcare': Business or Profession?

Start Strong - a coalition of organisations and individuals seeking to advance children's early care and education in Ireland - have published a report entitled ['Childcare': Business or Profession](#), which looks at the quality of provision of early childhood education and care in Ireland.

'Currently, early years services are run on a market model with services expected to operate as businesses. This is not in the best interests of children, as the quality of services is very variable. And



it results in fees that are unaffordable to parents' says Ciairín de Buis, Director of Start Strong.

Barnardos Publications

Quality Adult-Child Interactions in Early Years Services

[This new publication](#) from Barnardos supports early childhood practitioners to explore current theory and best practice on the core role of their profession: relationships and interactions, quite simply on 'being with' young children. The book will guide practitioners in their day-to-day practice and can be used as a tool for continuing professional development.

Watch the [short video](#) below for more information.



[You can buy this book online now for 25 euro](#) or contact us at resources@barnardos.ie or phone 01 4530355

Coming Soon: ChildLinks - Digital Childhood

Available in January 2015, this issue of ChildLinks contains articles from Barnardos; University of Gothenburg, Sweden; Early Childhood Ireland; Brock University, Ontario, Canada; Institute of Technology, Sligo; and St. Nicholas Montessori College.



Subscription to ChildLinks, issued three times per year, is included in the annual membership fee of Barnardos' Library (library fees are as follows: individual - €60; student - €35; corporate - €50 per person, for teams of three members or more). 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](#).

Barnardos Training and Consultancy

Continuing Professional Development Spring 2015

[Cyberbullying and Internet Safety](#) - 5 February, Dublin

In [this workshop](#) participants will explore issues relating to Internet Safety for children and how to respond to cyberbullying. Suitable for youth practitioners, teachers, parents and volunteers, this workshop will include:

- The Virtual World 2.0 (how the internet is different today)
- Technologies that children and teenagers are using
- Cyberbullying (spotting internet bullying and taking action)
- Social media, how to use it wisely e.g. Facebook, ASK.FM etc.
- Supporting children/young people who use social media

[Children First, Child Protection Training - 7 February, Westmeath](#) / 21 March, Limerick

The overall aim of [this training](#) is to equip those who work with children with the skills and knowledge that are necessary to deal with child protection issues in line with the Children First Guidance, 2011. Suitable for anyone working or volunteering with children.

[Giving Evidence in Family Law Proceedings](#) - 12 February, Dublin

In [this training](#) participants will explore:

- Features of family law and child care proceedings
- Writing a court report
- Giving evidence and managing cross examination
- Court procedures and etiquette

This will be an interactive workshop and will include a 'live' cross examination. This workshop will be of benefit to any professional involved in child care or education who may be called to court to give evidence about work that they have done with a child or with a family. The course is run by an Guardian ad Litem with extensive experience in working with courts in Ireland and the UK, and by a solicitor with experience in family law work.

[Introduction to Children's Rights and their Practical Application](#) - 10 March, Dublin

Using an interactive approach, [this workshop](#) will provide an introduction to children's rights as outlined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. It will draw out key children's rights and demonstrate how they apply in everyday scenarios. Suitable for anyone working and volunteering with children.

[Quality Adult-Child Interactions](#) - 7 March, Dublin

In [this training](#) practitioners will explore how to promote positive adult-child relationships and practice strategies to enhance their day-to-day interactions with young children. This event is suitable for all child care practitioners and those who support them. **All participants will receive a copy of the publication *Quality Adult-Child Interactions in Early Years Services*.**

[Implementing the High/Scope Approach 2015](#) - Starting 26 March, Dublin, running for 12 Fridays throughout 2015

This [12-day training course](#) will provide participants with a working knowledge of the High/Scope approach to care and education in pre-school settings and an ability to successfully implement the High/Scope Curriculum in their pre-school settings.

For more information on these events check out www.barnardos.ie.

[Subscribe now](#) to receive Training Updates by email throughout the year.

To discuss your tailored training requirements, please contact Barnardos Training Service at training@barnardos.ie tel: 01 4530355.



Barnardos Library and Information Service

[Barnardos Library and Information Service](#) provides information and a range of resources on child and family issues including child protection, child development early childhood care and education and parenting.

[Join online](#) today or [find out more information](#).



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