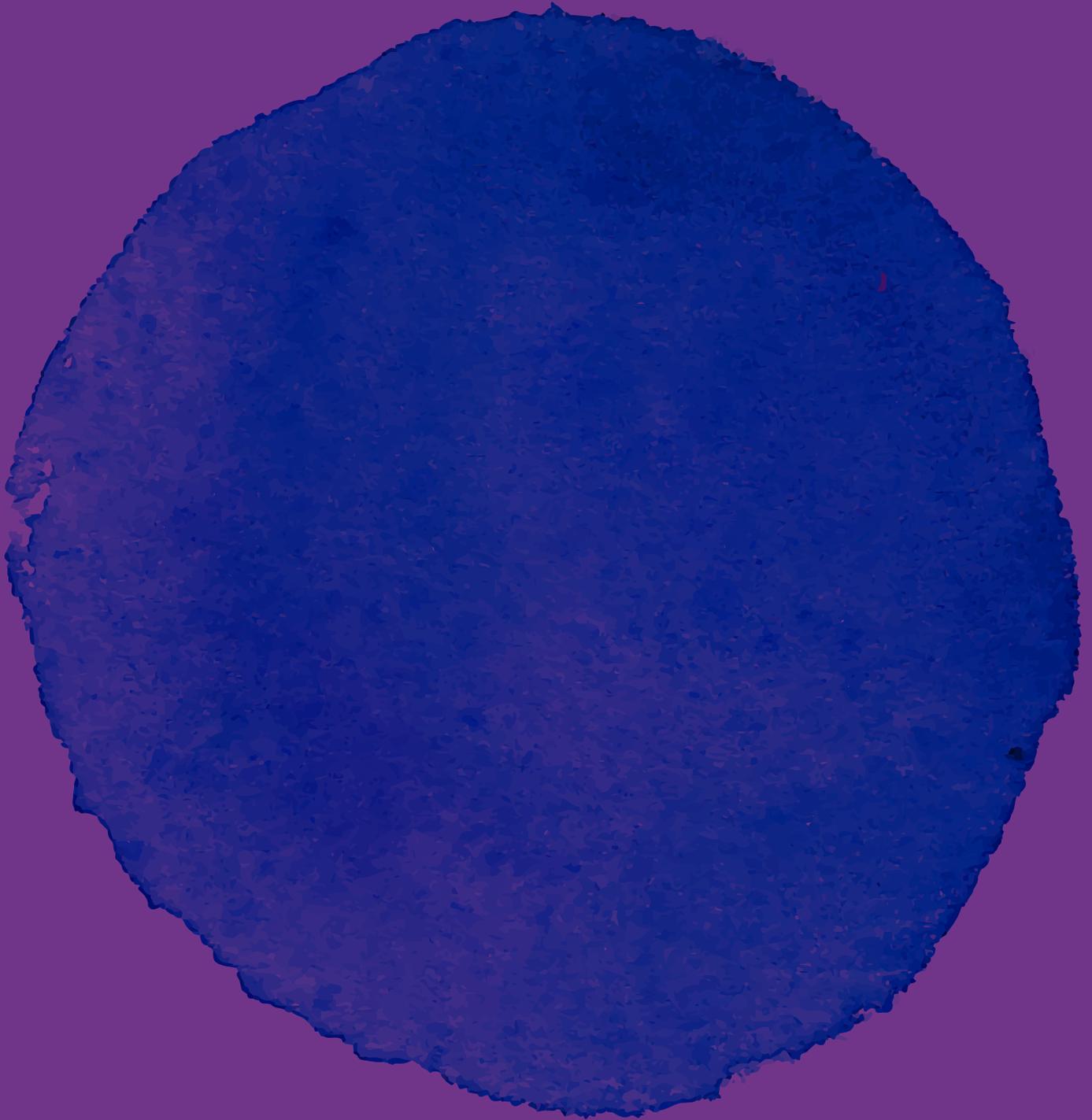




An Introduction to Young Knocknaheeny

Getting every child's life off to the best possible start
Prevention and Early Intervention for Early Childhood
Development, Relationships and Environments



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Glossary of Terms

ABC	Area Based Childhood Programme
CCC	Cork City Council
CES	Centre for Effective Services
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
DCYA	Department of Children and Youth Affairs
EU	European Union
HSE	Health Service Executive
IMH	Infant Mental Health
IPS	Infant Parent Support
IY	Incredible Years
NICHE	Northside Community Health Initiative (Cork) Ltd.
PEII	Prevention and Early Intervention Initiative
PEIP	Prevention and Early Intervention Programme
RAPID	Revitalising Areas through Planning, Investment and Development
SLT	Speech and Language Therapy
TUSLA	Child and Family Support Agency
UCC	University College Cork
WHO	World Health Organisation
YK	Young Knocknaheeny

YOUNG KNOCKNAHEENY
Let's Grow Together...





Background

'Virtually every aspect of early human development, from the brain's evolving circuitry to the child's capacity for empathy, is affected by the environments and experiences that are encountered in a cumulative fashion, beginning early in the prenatal period and extending throughout the early childhood years'

(Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000)

Young Knocknaheeny is an area based prevention and early intervention programme.

It is addressing child poverty by supporting childrens' earliest development to get their lives off to the best possible start.

Young Knocknaheeny has been developed and driven by a Consortium of local services, who, in 2013, applied for funding and is now, along with 12 other areas, part of the Area Based Childhood Programme (ABC) currently joint funded by Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) and Atlantic Philanthropies (AP).

'A key factor in facilitating behaviour change is the relationship that staff are able to establish with the participating families. Such relationships need to be based on a partnership model of working that is supportive, guiding, motivating, strengths based and consistent'

(Public Health England, 2015)

There is a long history of organisations across the northwest sector of Cork City working together in an integrated way and in collaboration with the community, and a long history of good working relationships between workers in health, education, social services and the local authority.

'Tackle child poverty and social exclusion through integrated strategies that go beyond ensuring children's material security and promote equal opportunities so that all children can realise their full potential'

(EU Commission, 2013)

On the part of those working in the area, there has long been an understanding and admiration of the powerful commitment of parents to the best possible care and development of their children, often in difficult circumstances; an understanding of the very damaging impact of adversity in a child's earliest years; and an acceptance that many parents who have experienced adversity themselves benefit from collaborative, respectful, practical support in their care of their children. Every service and relationship a child has, impacts on their development. So the quality of the services and environment with the capacity of workers, as well as parents, all matters.

Policy

The Young Knocknaheeny Area Based Childhood Programme (YKABC) is a strategic partnership programme investing in the development of babies, children, families and the communities in Cork City.

Children who grow up in disadvantage and experience adversity in their early years are at much greater risk than their peers of lifelong poor outcomes in their physical and mental health, and their social, educational, and economic achievement, etc.

The psychological and neurodevelopmental mechanisms through which early experience of adversity impacts on the developing brain are well understood. How best to respond to prevent and ameliorate these impacts is also well understood.

In Ireland, the case for and the kinds of practice required has been demonstrated through the excellent work of Prevention and Early Intervention Initiative & Programme (PEII/ PEIP). The ABC programme, established and supported jointly by the State and Atlantic Philanthropies (AP) explores, develops, and evaluates different models and approaches to prevention and early intervention with a view to a practical mainstreaming of what are likely to be workable, potentially successful strategies.

The State accepts the need to reduce the level of risk to which children are exposed through preventive and early intervention responses; there is a powerful economic argument to do so. Ireland has very well-informed policy commitments to do so.

'Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures': The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014-2020 (BOBF) makes explicit, the commitment to investment in prevention and early intervention with a clear focus on investment in the early years as a mechanism for reducing intergenerational disadvantage (DCYA, 2014).

The work of YK ABC is a practical implementation of the 6 crosscutting transformational goals in BOBF to deliver 5 national outcomes for children (see image across page).

'There is an increasing evidence base that demonstrates the extent to which effective interventions early in life can produce measurable benefits in later educational achievement, economic productivity and responsible citizenship'

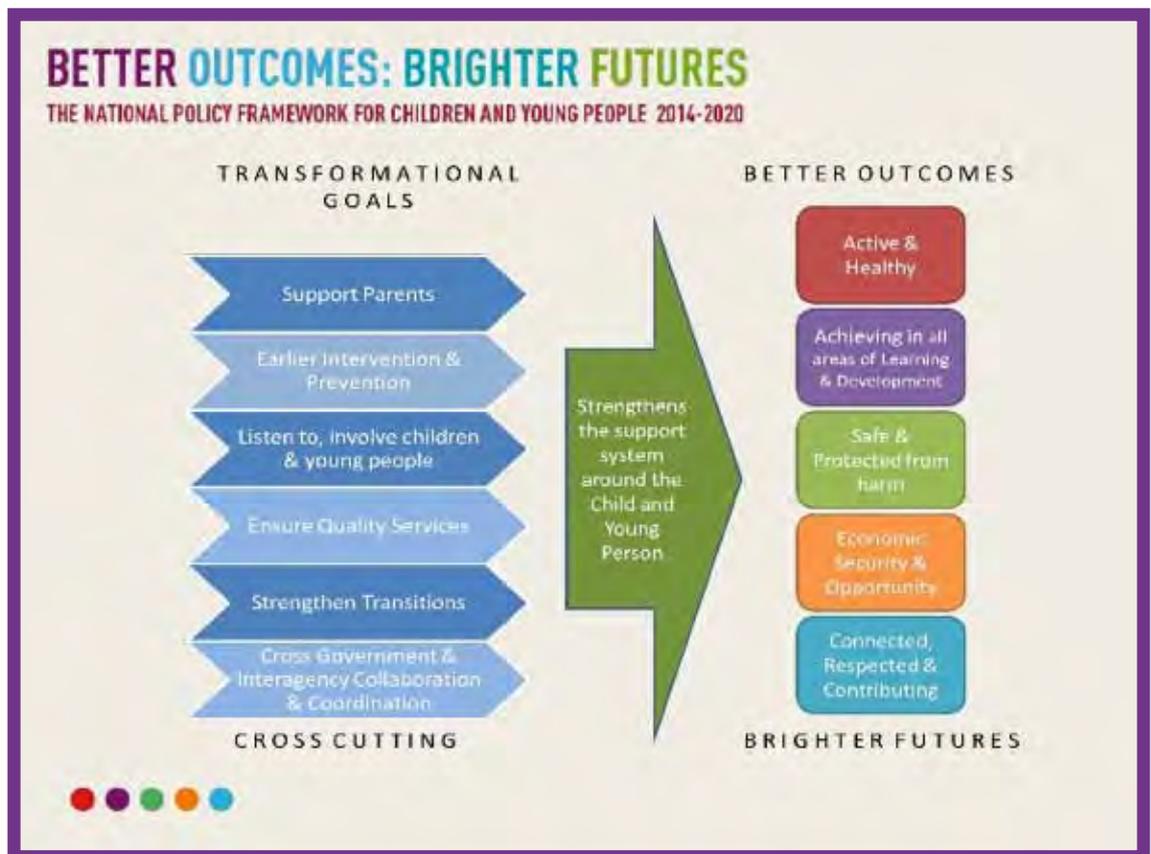
(Heckman, 2006; Shonkoff, Boyce & McEwen, 2009)

'All of the domains of a child's development (cognitive, social and emotional, language and literacy, physical) are interrelated and interdependent'

(French, 2013)

'The things that matter most are a healthy pregnancy; good maternal mental health; secure bonding with the child; love and responsiveness of parents along with clear boundaries, as well as opportunities for a child's cognitive, language and social and emotional development. Good services matter too...'

(Field, 2010).



YK is aligned with TUSLA Prevention, Partnership & Family Support strategy (2015), the National Maternity Strategy (2016) and Nurture HSE Infant Health and Wellbeing Strategy (Nurture, 2016), Healthy Ireland, (DoH, 2013), and implementing the EU Commission recommendations set out in Investing in children: Breaking the cycle of disadvantage (EU Commission, 2013), and the WHO recommendations in the European Report on Preventing Child Maltreatment (WHO, 2013).

The approach of Young Knocknaheeny is informed by the following principles:

1. Pre-birth and the first three years of a child's life is critical to their brain development.
2. Early relationships are key to a child's social and emotional development.
3. Financial investment in the early years leads to long term savings.
4. Integrated, community based service delivery model, designed around the child and family experience are important.
5. Evidence-based respectful practices with fidelity works.
6. Continuous upskilling of caregivers through coaching and mentoring facilitates change.
7. Building workforce capacity and environments of continuous learning with reflective practice supervision embeds long term professional development.
8. Strengths based early intervention and prevention of the highest quality can improve outcomes for children who experience disadvantage.

The Young Knocknaheeny Programme

Aims and Objectives

Built on a strong foundation of local interagency collaboration, which contributes to the design, planning, resourcing and management, Young Knocknaheeny (YK) is a community prevention and early intervention programme working on the Northside of Cork City (Churchfield, Gurrabraher, Hollyhill, Knocknaheeny, parts of Faranree; and relocated families within City Northwest Regeneration). YK aims to measurably improve the lives of all children (pre-birth to age six) and their families. It does this by building on the work of many partners across services and disciplines through a whole community approach.

To get every child's life off to the best possible start YK aims to:

- **Respectfully enhance early childhood development knowledge and skills of all parents and practitioners**
- **Strengthen and enhance all relationships and environments that are important to every child's early development**
- **Embed systems and community change to support early childhood development and address childhood poverty**

The YK Programme is underpinned by an innovative Infant Mental Health (IMH) Framework and draws on best international evidence and practice. This means YK works first through a relationship-based model directly with families, informed by an IMH Interdisciplinary framework complemented by the delivery of evidence-based parenting programmes and groups.

Second, it supports the development of quality skills and environments using coaching mentoring with continuous professional development of practitioners working with children aged pre-birth to 6 and their parents.

The YK Programme is located within a service model along a continuum from progressive universal to targeted, that is evidence based; built on local infrastructure and skills to develop quality systems and services for all children and families; implementing capacity building measures, interdisciplinary practice and integrated service provision.

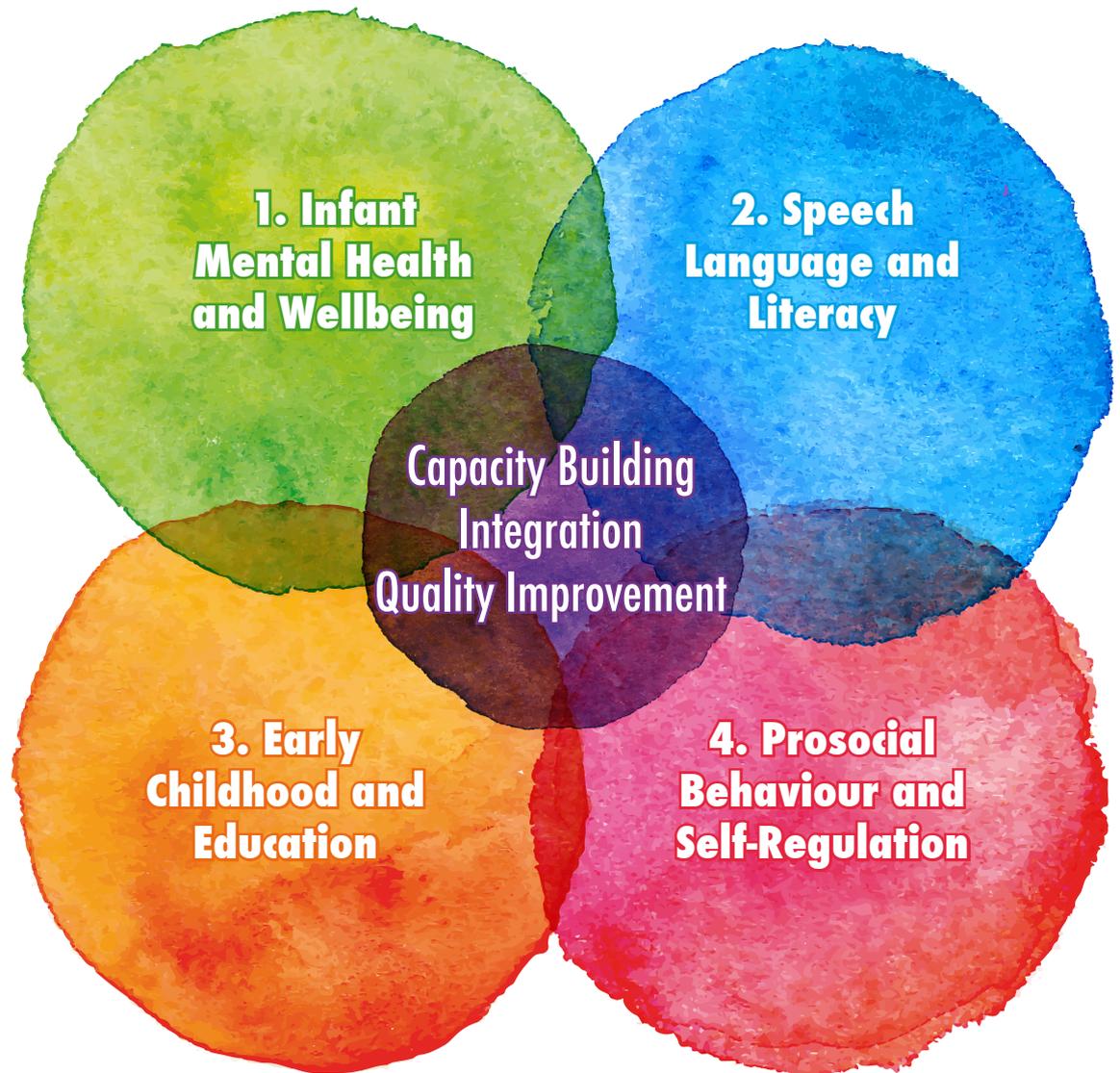
Over a two year period, YK programme has engaged with 2,500 children, 450 parents, 310 practitioners and 40 services.



'Preventing the transmission of disadvantage across generations is a crucial investment in Europe's future as well as a direct contribution to the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth'
(EU Commission, 2013)

The 4 Interconnected Strategies

The YK Programme consists of 4 interconnected strategies supported by an integrated research and evaluation process. The strategies are connected by their common approaches of capacity building, integration and quality improvement to get every child's life off to the best possible start.



Underpinned by Interdisciplinary Infant Mental Health Framework

Supported by an integrated Research and Evaluation for systems / community change

1. Infant Mental Health and Wellbeing

To develop knowledge, skills, practice and services for the pre-birth to 3 years period of development



Infant mental health is defined as the developing capacity of the infant (from birth to 3 years of age) to experience, express, and regulate emotions; form close and secure relationships; and explore the environment and learn—all in the context of cultural expectations

(Zero to Three, 2012)

Pre-birth to 3 years interdisciplinary home visiting programme

informed by Michigan IMH Home Visitation Model with external consultation provided by Michigan Association of IMH



Pre-birth to 3 years invitation to all parents to register with Young Knocknaheeny (YK) Programme

Pre-Birth Home screen: Incorporated psychological assessment of preparation for parenthood



IMH reflective practice supervision (YK Staff)

Environments of continuous learning: IMH 2 day masterclasses in communities and in-service training, followed by sustainable monthly interdisciplinary CPD Network Groups



IMH consultations available to practitioners and services

Development of
a universal psychological
transition to parenthood
programme

Partnership with
Kidscope Community
Child Development
Assessment Clinic: registration
of families to YK; Clinic
Administration; data
analysis, promotion.

Education
and training modules
to undergraduate and
postgraduate health and social
sciences programmes

PEEPS Learning
Together Programme
Leader Training and Facilitators
network; co-facilitated Parent
and Child 0-4years



Elklan Lets Talk
with your Baby Group
3-12 months
and
baby massage

Spotlight:

An underpinning part of Young Knocknaheeny's work in the pre-birth to 3yrs period of development is to firstly offer a foundational knowledge of the growing brain, and what impacts in its development as well as the social and emotional tasks of early childhood development. Secondly to provide a framework for supporting an infants' mental health through its earliest relationships.

A 2 day Masterclass training is provided to practitioners from the health, social, education, community and family support services. The Masterclass is followed by an invitation to join an IMH Network of CPD. For 1.5 hours per month, practitioners meet to study, build IMH competencies to support them in their work with young children and their caregivers. The Networks are supported to become self-sustaining. Building up a broad base of practitioners with IMH knowledge and competencies, facilitates a common understanding and language that interdisciplinary practitioners can connect to support improved outcomes for children. Masterclasses and Networks have been taken up by practitioners in from HSE such as Midwifery, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Health, Public Health Nursing; and from Tusla family support, social work and educational support services; community childcare; and from academia.

Through the Irish Association of Infant Mental Health, North Cork Infant Mental Health Network, Young Ballymun and others, practitioners engaged in the YK IMH training and CPD join a growing number of practitioners across mainstream and community service settings, around the country with knowledge, a framework and competencies in the field of IMH. Young Knocknaheeny continues to build further on this foundational approach by implementing a direct IMH home visitation model for parents and infants 0-3.

2. Speech, Language and Literacy

Strategies that support and strengthen emerging oral language development



'The ABC programme presents an important opportunity to make explicit the understandings about the central role of language in early development, to develop universal services which make use of research evidence about how to prevent problems in speech and language from developing and to design and implement interventions which recognise and integrate the specialist skills and knowledge of all the adult resources in the child's life.'
(Rafferty, 2014)

Contributing to 0-3 interdisciplinary IMH home visitation model and Kidscope Interdisciplinary referrals



Babbling Babies universal communication session with parents and 9-month baby in conjunction with Public Health Nurse Development Check Up Clinics



Whole community Junior Infant Speech & Language Assessments in all primary schools with follow up co-ordinated with HSE North Lee SLT Department.

Delivering Junior Infant teacher Hanen "ABC and beyond" Programme

Delivering Early Years staff Hanen 'Learning Language & Loving It' programme



Provision of oral language development training to YK team members & supporting implementation of Elklan Let's Talk with your Baby group



Training and Education modules to undergraduate and post-graduate health and social science programmes



Cross-service implementation groups



Oral Language Community/Service Consultations and parental guidance

Spotlight:

Role of Speech and Language Therapist in a Prevention and Early Intervention Programme

"In my experience the traditional SLT's role in Ireland is through an impairment approach. If a child is considered to be possibly presenting with a communication need they will attend the SLT for assessment and possible intervention around a communication difficulty. As Oral Language Development Officers, we now have an opportunity to work in a more preventative, relationship based model of working. It allows us to link in with families a lot earlier and hopefully in a majority of times before any obvious communication difficulties have arisen. We can provide accessible information and model strategies to families around how they themselves can support and scaffold their child's communication development.

We also have the opportunity to work with an Interdisciplinary team and the focus of our team is working in an Infant Mental Health framework, so pregnancy to 3 is our age range. Comparing this to my more traditional SLT roles which have been in a slightly older age group - in this model, we are able to work at that early level and at that early stage. We've access to reflective supervision with the Infant Mental Health Specialist and the whole set up of our Interdisciplinary Team allows lots of different viewpoints. Because we are working at a preventative and universal level my experience of having worked on teams it's more problem based, it's targeted, there are identified difficulties that a team is working to address.

Capacity building for Teachers and Early Years Educators is another vital area to ensure optimal language learning environments in settings where children grow and learn, and spend a lot of time during their early years of development. We have a unique opportunity in YK to deliver the Hanen 'Learning Language & Loving It' and 'ABC & Beyond' training and coaching programmes with the support of Early Years Centre Managers, Principals, Teachers and Early Years Educators. These programmes require significant commitment from participants and facilitators and again focus on prevention and a more universal support base to embed communication skills within everyday settings."

YK Senior Oral Language Officer

3. Early Childhood Care and Education

Ongoing quality improvement strategy across all community based services



'Services and supports for young children and their families must be of high quality if children's early care and education is to have the positive impact - for children, the economy and society - that research on child development has demonstrated. All children can gain long-term benefits from early care and education services, but only where the services are of sufficient quality.' (Start Strong 2010)

Children 18 months to 5 years benefiting from a local Early Care and Education setting involved in ongoing whole community quality improvement strategy

Hightscope curriculum training for Crèche and Preschool Staff

Montessori Masterclasses

Early Years ECERS and ITERS assessments and reports for all rooms pre and post YK quality improvement strategy

On Site specialist implementation mentoring within National Framework Standards



Skills development for staff supervision

Environmental enhancement supports



Developing and sustaining an Early Years Co-ordinators Forum

Local promotion of Early Years Centres in their contribution to children's early education and development

Developing co-ordinated strategies for greater parental involvement



Integrate a standardised transition tool for children entering preschool and primary cycle.



Supporting management and co-ordinators to implement strategy



Co-ordinated by Barnardos Brighter Future Centre, supported by EY Co-ordinators Forum group and Cork City Childcare Company.



Spotlight:

Early Years Care and Education settings have such an important contribution to make in all areas of early childhood development. YK brings together and includes all the community based childcare settings in the area, into an ongoing quality improvement strategy, building on their different curriculums and strengths. They are collectively engaged in variety of evidenced based training and are supported by a mentor to implement change in environments and practice. The Centres co-ordinate the strategy themselves. The changes being made are being set against internationally validated measures and national curriculum standards.

"The benefits for us directly would be the training that's available. It as been an opportunity for the team to train together. It is very difficult for a child care centre to have a whole team approach otherwise. The Hanen Language programme come directly to the practitioners so that's been really helpful, because even though a child might not have difficulties, their emerging language skills are being picked up on so now the staff have a programme to support that."

Childcare Co-ordinator

4. Pro-Social Behaviour and Self-Regulation

Implementing The Incredible Years suite of programmes through a whole community approach



'...evidence-based programmes and materials that develop positive parent-teacher-child relationships and assist in preventing and treating behavior problems and promoting social, emotional, and academic competence before a child becomes an adult.'
(incredible years.com 2016)

Whole community approach to the delivery of Incredible Years Programmes

Incredible Years Basic Parent Leader Programme Training for practitioners across organisations



Incredible Years Teacher Classroom Management Training across all primary schools



Incredible Years Basic Parent Programme 2-4 years and 5-8 available to all parents in catchment area

Incredible Years Whole Classroom Dina Programme Training across all primary schools



Co-ordinated by the local School Completion Programme



IY Parent Leader Facilitators Peer Group: Supporting roll out of parent programme, promotion, referrals, preparation of participations, and logistics

Working toward facilitator accreditation, mentoring for sustainable training delivery model.

Training and mentoring provided by Archways



Spotlight:

“The Incredible Years suite of trainings, programmes and supports has been really important for the schools in terms our relationship with parents and the wider community. That saying “It takes a whole village to raise a child.” is true and now we have the whole wider community working together using the same strategies to support childrens development, especially socially and emotionally. Children themselves are being supported at school, at home and in the community to express their emotions, understand consequence, and interact with each other. The trust, communication, co-operation and support for children that has been the real benefit.”

School Principal

“I loved every minute of the 14 weeks...my boys are all grown up, when I look back, I wish I had this. I'm so happy to help mothers starting out, that was the huge thing for me. I was able to make your life a little bit easier than my life was. It was simple, practical, that was the key to it.”

IY Parent Programme Facilitator

“My house is definitely a lot calmer, I have one who is really hyper, his only way of acting out is with anger, but we're naming it and now at home, -look we know you're angry- we use our calm voice, if he shouts nothing is gonna get done, so now he already starts speaking down to get what-ever it is. So I think he is regulating his emotions a lot more.”

Parent who participated on the IY Parent Programme

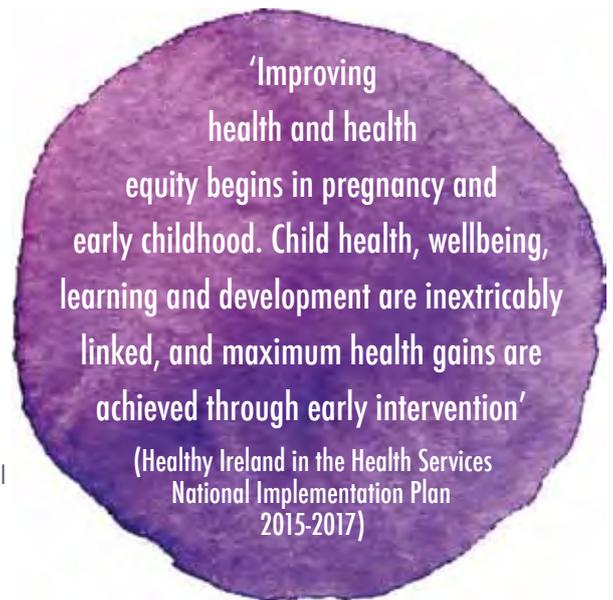
The Young Knocknaheeny Programme

Indicators and outcomes:

During the programme design of Young Knocknaheeny, early indicators of effective implementation were identified.

They are briefly summarised as follows:

- Expectant/new parents engaging with services that support and prepare them for their role as primary caregivers
- Enhanced parental capacity to build strong healthy relationships with their babies and children
- Enhanced parental capacity to support their child's social and emotional, cognitive and language development
- Increasing parental involvement in their children's education and engagement with early childhood education services and schools
- Recognising and including parents considered vulnerable in the period of a child's early development
- Inclusion of parents in service delivery and design
- Evidence based, but locally and culturally appropriate, models of practice emerging that are improving children's emotional and social development and key developmental milestones
- From home, services, and community, children experiencing high quality consistent supports for their emerging development
- Children experiencing relationships and environments that support their emerging development
- Practitioners are enhancing their skills through continuous professional development in children's earliest development and learning
- Data collection is incorporated into practice
- Adoption of evidence based programmes is being prioritised
- Services have a clear pathway, supports and training for achieving a high quality integrated programme delivery models
- Services are open to and participating YK training approaches and programme delivery
- Key services are being delivered through capacity building and partnership processes
- Referral/ transition/ engagement systems are in integrated across services



Integrated Research and Evaluation

YK Local Evaluation Framework

YK is implementing evidence based or evidence informed practices through multiple interconnected strategies.

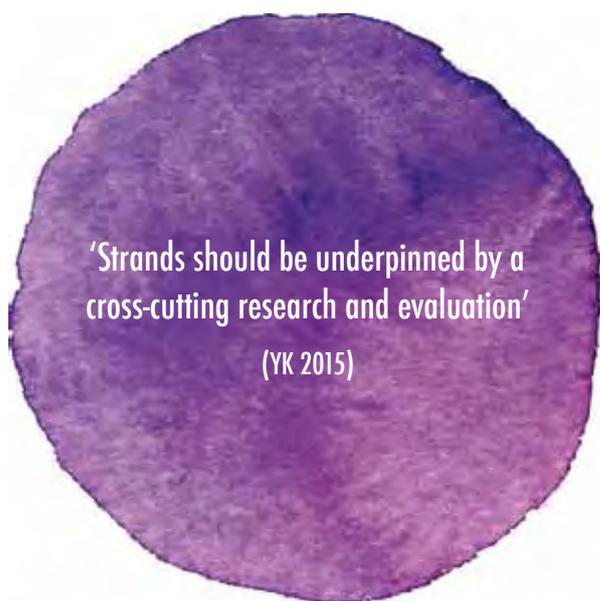
The three connecting themes of all practices are:

1. **Capacity building**
2. **Integration**
3. **Quality improvement**

The implementation of YK practices and programmes, including the socio-economic and organisational context, will be addressed.

The evaluation is a mixed method qualitative and quantitative approach combining process with outcomes of YK's four interconnected strategies.

The evaluation examines:



Strategy 1: Home Visiting Programme and IMH Networks

Strategy 2: Babbling Babies and Hanen Training Programmes at Early Years Centres and Primary Schools

Strategy 3: Highscope Training Program, Mentoring Programme and Environmental Enhancement at Early Years Centres

Strategy 4: IY Classroom Management Programme and IY Parenting Programme

Child Focused Profile

In the context of the overall YK Programme Evaluation a child focused profile of the geographical area has been developed. Key baseline data is collected as part of the programme, together with wider data about children and families in YK's catchment areas, to be collated and descriptively analysed.

Database

A YK programme-wide database serves an administration function, allowing staff to track and record families' and practitioners' participation with YK. The database also has an evaluation function and is used to understand the reach of the YK programme and to establish sampling frames for some components of the local YK Evaluation.

Evaluation Report

A final YK Programme evaluation, drawing together the child focused profile, the administrative data and evaluation of the 4 strategies, representing the interconnected strategic approach to child development, will be completed at the end of the programme.

Research and Evaluation Group

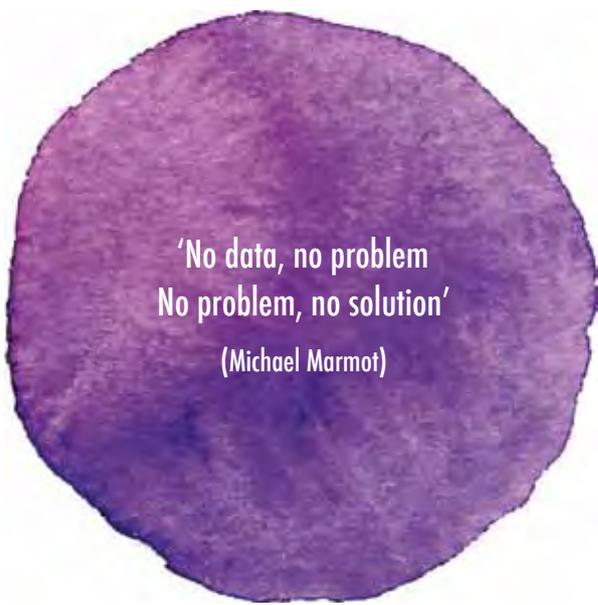
An advisory group chaired by Dr. Margaret Curtin at the UCC Dept. of Nursing and Midwifery and provides ongoing input, advice and support for the planning and implementation of the YK local evaluation and participation in the National evaluation. Meetings are held between wider YK stakeholders as required.

National Evaluation

CES national evaluation will examine the outcomes, implementation and cost of the ABC Programme at a national level. A key objective of the evaluation of the ABC Programme is to build capacity and embed a culture of using data to inform decision-making within ABC areas. (<http://www.effectiveservices.org/work/article/area-based-childhood-programme>)

Young Knocknaheeny undertakes data collection and data-entry on behalf of and for the national evaluation this includes outcomes measurements: Santa Barbara School Readiness Scale (SBSRS); PIANTA Questionnaire; Strengths and Difficulties (SDQ) Questionnaire.

Other data collected is Demographic information; 0-3 sub-study outcome and implementation measures; Programme implementation measures including practitioner and consortium surveys, interviews and focus groups.



'No data, no problem
No problem, no solution'
(Michael Marmot)



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Further Information

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- Dr. Louise Gibson UCC Dept of Medicine and Child Health/ Kidscope
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- Mr. Ger Donovan St Mary on the Hill National School
- Mr. Ger Philips Tusla Springboard*
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- Ms. Ingrid O' Riordan Tusla Le Cheile School Completion Programme*
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Contractors

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- Ingrid O' Riordan Consortium Member Incredible Years Strategy Co-ordinator
- Lucy Connelly Independent Early Years Quality Improvement Mentor
- A Plus Education The Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale & The Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale
- Archways Incredible Years training and mentoring

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Service Delivery Partners

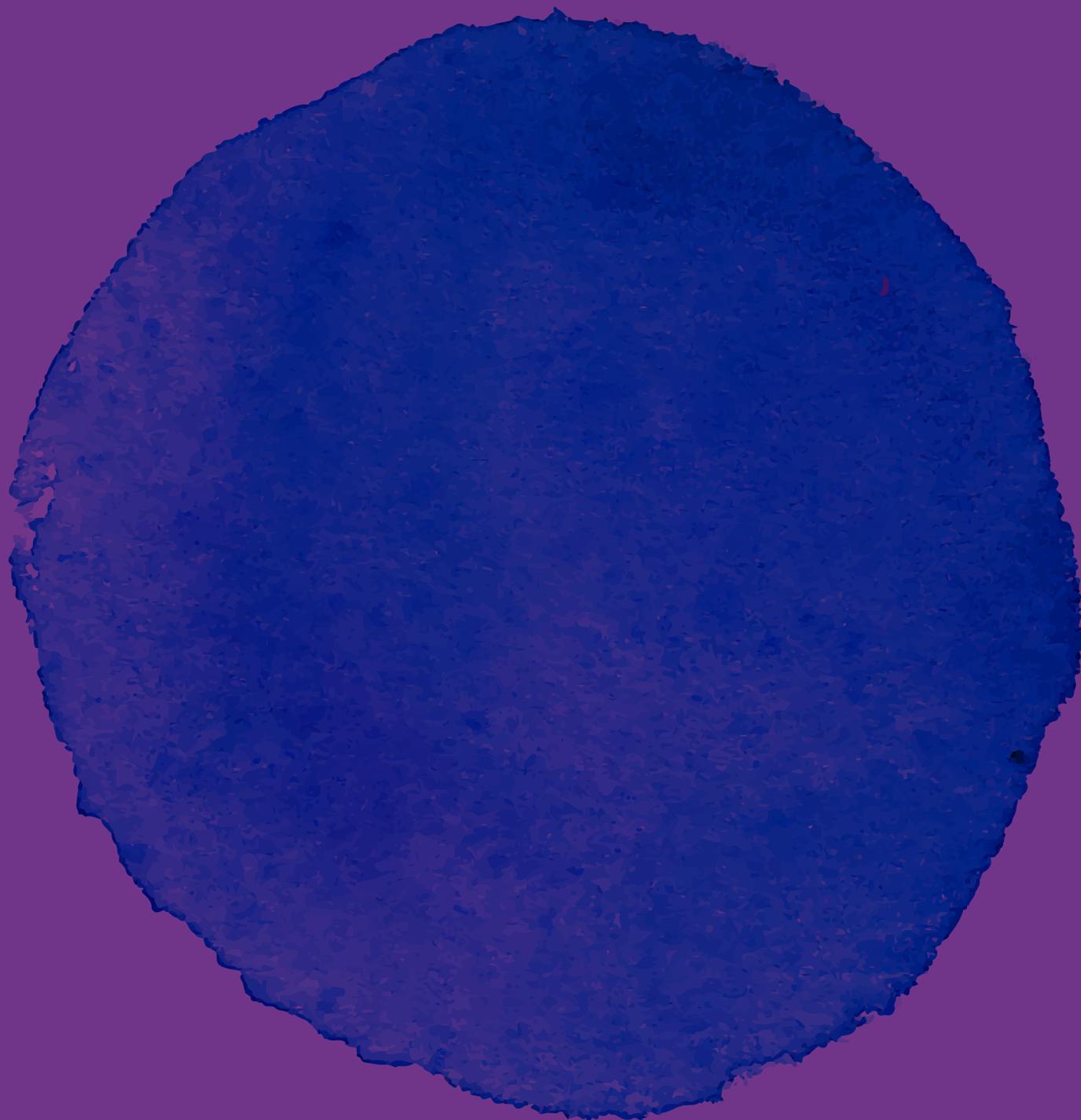
NICHE Tusla/ Springboard	HSE Cork North Speech and Language Dept	HSE Sector 4 Public Health Nursing
ABC Programme	ABC Managers	ABC Evaluation
Tusla/ North Lee Social Work Department	Tusla /School Completion Programme	HSE Cork North Community Work Dept
Northside GP's	Cork City Council /City Northwest Regeneration	Kidscope
Hollyhill Library	A Plus Education	Archways
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UCC Department of Applied Social Studies	UCC Department of Medicine and Child Health	UCC Department of Psychology
UCC Department of Nursing and Midwifery	Barnardos; Brighter Futures Centre	Before 5 Family Centre
Padre Pio Early Start	Hollyhill Knocknaheeny Family Centre	St Marys on the Hill Playlands Crèche
Paisti @ no. 3 Preschool and Crèche	Cork City Childcare Company	Sundays Well Girls National School
St Mary on the Hill National School	Sundays Well Boys National School	Scoil Padre Pio
North Cork Infant Mental Health Network	HSE Primary Care, Child Adolescent and Family Psychology.	

Northside Community Health Initiative (Ltd) - NICHE - is the lead agency for Young Knocknaheeny.

Young Knocknaheeny is currently part of the Area Based Childhood Programme funded by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and Atlantic Philanthropies. Pobal and Centre for Effective Services are the Programme Managers for the Area Based Childhood Programme.

Notes

Notes



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YOUNG KNOCKNAHEENY Area Based Childhood Programme

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managed by:



lead agency:



consortium members:

