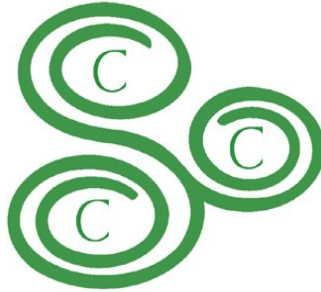


SLIGO COUNTY CHILD-CARE COMMITTEE WINTER NEWSLETTE



On behalf of Sligo County Childcare Committee I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued commitment to the families & children that you all work with every day.

This year you have really pulled all the stops out with your own professional development we have seen unprecedented numbers of educators attending the training that you told us you needed. I know things have been challenging this year & we do appreciate the time & effort that you all put in.

2015 will see the full implementation of the PIP system & we hope this will make the paper work a little easier.

Wishing you your families & the children a safe & happy Christmas and a prosperous new year

Sharon

2014



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Aistear 2014 in Sligo

As 2014 draws to a close we thought we would take this opportunity to reflect on the rollout of Aistear in Sligo during the year. We have put together a collage of photos from some of the activities from Stage 1 and Stage 2 which captures the essence of how Aistear in Practice rolled out in Sligo.



Five Stage 1 Programmes were delivered by the SCCC Development team throughout the year and 118 staff from 26 services attended the training in where we followed the themes of Aistear into an area of practice in childcare services:

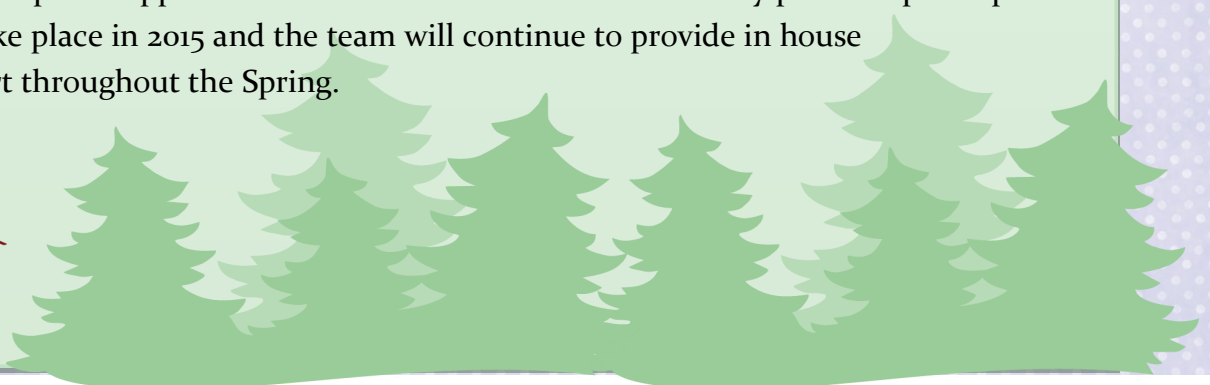
Theme:	Focus on Practice
Communication	Storytelling
Exploring and Thinking	Enriching Outdoor Play
Wellbeing	Documenting the Curriculum
Identity and Belonging	Environments

For those who attended the training in the Spring, there was an option to attend Stage 2 in the Autumn and this was also fully attended with 22 people attending from eight different services. Stage 2 reflected more in depth theoretical perspectives on the different topics but crucially it linked into practice.

Staff from different services also provided new dimensions and insights through input into the session being delivered. Stage 2 also saw some interesting guest speakers and included a visit to Little Buddies in Riverstown and we appreciated the hospitality throughout extended to everyone on this visit very much.

For 2015, we will once again deliver Stage 1 and Stage 2 and the dates for this training will be included in our Spring Training Calendar which will issue in the second week of January.

Workshops to support identified areas of need as identified by previous participants will take place in 2015 and the team will continue to provide in house support throughout the Spring.





Registration 2014

Promoting Positive Behaviour
25th January 2014



Literacy and Numeracy Training
7th May 2014

Seminar for Well Being
18th October 2014



Child Protection Training
&
Aistear Stage 1



Aistear Stage 2
1st November 2014



Seminars

During the year SCCC hosted four seminars in total.

The first seminar was held in January when Brid Hickey from CanavanByrne delivered a very practical and knowledgeable seminar on **Promoting Positive Behaviour**. Such was the interest and demand for this seminar that SCCC invited Brid back to deliver the seminar again in April.

During the seminar Brid drew on her own experiences both as a parent and as a practitioner. Brid linked different aspects of promoting positive behaviour with the cognitive theorists and different leadership styles and gave many examples different theories to practice. This was followed by Brid speaking further about working in partnership with parents and suggestions of different practical strategies which can be used in Early Years services. Brid's presentation concluded with her outlining the content of relevant policies for promoting positive behaviour.

Comments from attendees included:

'I gained lots of practical knowledge'

'Excellent, will be taking on board the information and taking it back to my workplace for all.'

'Very practical and we can all apply this in our work'

We hosted our second seminar: Literacy and Numeracy with Dr. Geraldine French in May 2015 at the Glass House Hotel, Sligo. Dr. French focused on the development of Literacy and Numeracy in the early years and drew particular attention to the stages of development between the ages of 0 - 3.



Dr. French explained literacy and numeracy theory, studies and research developments in the area. This seminar also included focusing on ways in which the Child-care Practitioner can enhance early literacy and early numeracy - for example phonological awareness, alphabetic code, supporting number recognition and use of patterns. Access: <https://www.pobal.ie/Publications/Documents/LET%20THEM%20TALK.pdf> to view Dr. French's latest publication as part of the National Early Years Access Initiative.

The last seminar hosted by SCCC this year was a very thought provoking '*Minding Me*'. Presenters on the day were Mary Skillington from Early Childhood Ireland and Shane Martin Registered Psychologist. Overall this seminar covered emotional wellbeing for both children and adults.



In her presentation Mary spoke about the importance of Self-Regulation in terms of emotional development and wellbeing. Mary outlined in detail the need to support young children with their emotional development and shared detailed information on the brain development of young children and the parts of the brain that are used in different situations.. Using personal experiences and video clips Mary gave examples of strategies that can be employed to support children in this area.

The second part of this seminar was presented by Shane Martin Registered Psychologist who delivered a humorous presentation on 'Harnessing Strengths during Challenging Times'. This presentation covered ten tips for a better quality of life which is scientifically validated for enhancing health and happiness.

Everybody left this seminar upbeat with very positive feelings about themselves and strategies towards our own happiness which cost nothing in monetary value but is priceless to our own emotional wellbeing.

Comments from attendees included:

'Very easy to listen to, Mary experience is evident and I would love to hear more'

'Very insightful and clear way of teaching and working with children'

Very motivated speaker, teaching us things we should be practicing every day'

'...real eye opener to what is important in life'



Nicola Visits Norway

Every year the Leonardo Mobility Programme through Early Childhood Ireland fund a Leargas study visit to promote the knowledge and practice in Early Childhood Education. This year Nicola along with 24 of her colleagues from the sector received the opportunity to visit Trondheim, Norway. The study visit involved a series of lectures from Early Childhood Professionals and visits to local Barnehage (Kindergartens) in conjunction with Queen Maud University the main college of education for Early Childhood Educators in Norway. The group spent one week in Norway.

• **Facts about Norwegian Childcare**

- There are private, community and family day cares in Norway.
- All services receive the same funding.
- All children over 1 are entitled to a childcare place.
- Places in childcare services are centrally administered: parents usually received their first or second preference.
- The first Barnehage in Norway was established in 1880's.
- Each Childcare service had no less than 3 units of children.
- 1 unit of children will have 9 babies and toddlers or 18 pre-school aged children.
- Ratios: There are 3 adults to each unit, one of which will be educated to degree level.
- An Early Childhood Educator with a Degree qualification is called a Pedagogue.
- Early Childhood Educators are paid for 11 months of the year.
- Retaining trained Pedagogues in the sector is difficult.
- Parents fees are capped at 20% for everyone.
- In some services parents have the option to avail of a varied and rich nutritional menu for their children, for this they pay an extra fee.
- Almost 20% of workers in the sector are men.
- Maternity and paternity leave is generous, most families can receive almost 50 weeks of leave at full pay.
- Outdoor play is highly valued, this is reflected in the curriculum framework.
- Almost 1 in 10 Norwegian Kindergartens are outdoors: nature kindergartens.



Both Norway and Ireland have two very different systems of Childcare but many similar qualities are evident. What works for Norway is that the system and its values suit Norwegian culture as both appreciate the importance of spending time outdoors and the robust and agile child. Norwegians are confident and proud of the type of care they provide and hold it up for the world to see.

Many of the positive qualities of the Norwegian system can be seen in Irish services like the high quality responsive interactions that children deserve and large, open, interesting spaces for independent exploration. Though very different, Irish Childcare and Norwegian childcare in many instances are not that far apart. We need to be confident about our provision, value play for play, hold on to our core values like quality interactions and define what kind of childhood we want for Irish children using our knowledge of other systems from around the world. Aistear focuses on the confident and competent child by embracing the framework whole heartedly we empower and trust our children to independently guide their own learning with our support.



Outdoor play space in Norwegian Nature Barnehage



Healthy Happy Lifestyles – Parent and Toddler Sessions

10 local parent and toddler groups have engaged with the Healthy *Happy Lifestyles Initiative* since March 2014. Thank you to everyone who participated! Parents contributed to promoting healthy habits within their group by sharing their own tips and knowledge within the group as well as participating in activities provided for the children and adults. See *Safe Foods 6* top tips for healthy lifestyles.



REPLACING SUGARY DRINKS

Give water instead of sugary



MAKE BEING ACTIVE FUN

Being active doesn't have to be all at once and it doesn't have to be



Reducing Portion Sizes

They're children, give them child sized portions.



LESS SCREEN-TIME

Aim for less than 2hrs of screen time (TV + Computer) a day



ENCOURAGING MORE SLEEP

Children need sleep to grow and develop.



MANAGING TREAT FOODS

Keep treats exactly that - treats!



With thanks to

KHF Katharine Howard Foundation



ECCE Payments

The latest ECCE payment should have reached Childcare Practitioners bank accounts by Friday 5th December.

This payment will cover services up to Sunday 25th January 2015. The payment is based on the number of children registered and approved in your service.

Payment will only be made to services who:

- Are in contract for the ECCE programme and
- have provided an up to date tax clearance certificate.

For services that:

- Submitted a tax clearance certificates after the 27th of November
- Registered additional children after the 27th of November
- Were approved for Higher Capitation after the 27th of November

Payment will reach your bank accounts by: the 12th or the 23rd of December 2014.

Services that still need to submit their up to date tax clearance certificate, must do so by Tuesday 16th of December, send it to: Pobal at pipdocuments@pobal.

PIP-ECCE programme

Service Providers are now requested to submit ECCE changes to Child Registrations on PIP.

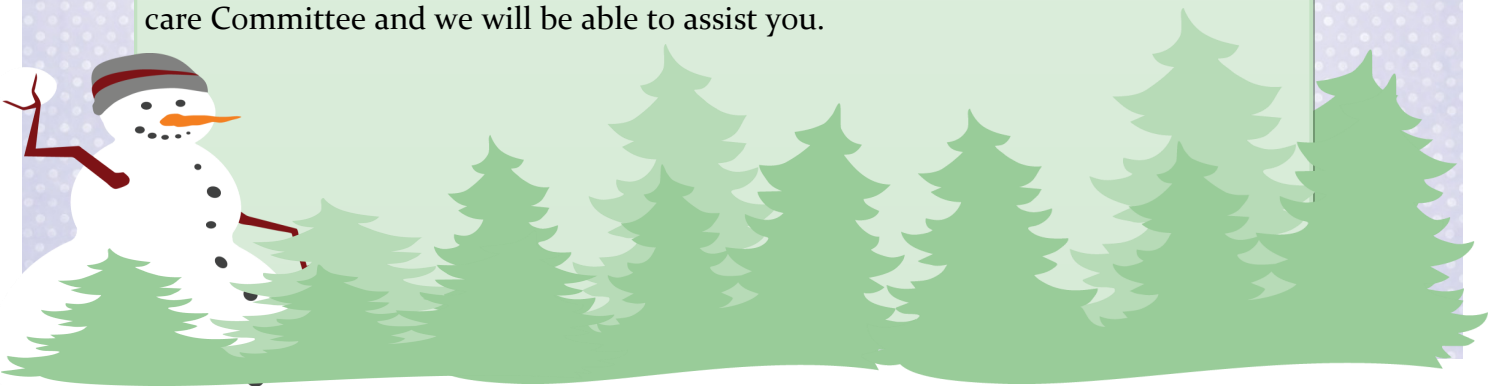
The PIP 'How To' Guide has been updated and provides instructions on how to do this. You can find the guide on the PIP Portal. Service Providers can now edit a registration for example:

1. Change in Level of Service
2. Leaver (Child Leaving ECCE Programme/Service)
3. Deferral

PIP Parent Declaration Forms: For each 'Registration Edit' completed on

PIP, a PIP Parent Declaration must be printed and signed by the parent and the service provider. You will need to keep this on file for compliance purposes.

Where a Service Provider can no longer ask the parent to sign the new edited PIP Declaration Form, the Service Provider must contact Roscommon County Child-care Committee and we will be able to assist you.



CCS Programme

The registration for CCS is now open on PIP until Friday 19th December. Please ensure all children in attendance during snapshot week (20th -24th October) are included.

PIP will manage TEC to CCS transfers (TEC Exemptions) at the point in which the child is due to transfer on to CCS (but before the 10th April 2015). Only children enrolled in a TEC place during CCS snapshot week that otherwise would have been eligible for CCS, can avail of the TEC to CCS transfer.

Childminder Development Grants 2014

SCCC processed 6 child-minder development grants (CMDG) in 2014. All of these applications were successful.

Parent & Toddler Groups

Parent & Toddler Groups receive funding to support their work within communities at local level.

SCCC, in collaboration with the Department of Children & Youth Affairs and Pobal were delighted to announce that € 3,752 in funding has been allocated to 8 Parent & Toddler groups in County Sligo.

SCCC would like to congratulate these Parent & Toddler groups, and acknowledge the effort that went in to preparing the applications. SCCC will be following up with all groups who received the funding to further support them in their Parent & Toddler groups.



The TEC Programmes are:

*Sligo County Childcare
Committee Christmas party
at the Radisson Hotel on the
12th December 2014*



Childcare Education and Training Support programme (CETS)

The CETS Programme formerly catered for FAS and VEC training course participants and now provides childcare on behalf of the Local Education and Training Boards.

After-School Child Care programme (ASCC)

The ASCC is administered on behalf of the Department of Social Protection (DSP) and provides afterschool care for primary school children for certain categories of working parents and parents on DSP employment programmes (not including Community Employment).

Community Employment Childcare programme (CEC)

The CEC is administered on behalf of the Department of Social Protection (DSP) and provides childcare for children of parents who are participating on Community Employment schemes.

For further information on the programmes, please consult TEC Programme Guide on dcya website.



National Child Protection and Welfare Training

Sligo County Childcare have continued to roll out the new Early Years Child Protection & welfare Training to early years educators in Sligo – this has been a very busy year for all of us, one of the most important training programmes that we can deliver to you is child protection & welfare. We are delighted to report that 121 Early Years Educators have attended this training throughout 2014.

We will be announcing the training schedule for 2015 in January and a further 6 programmes will be rolled out.

We are also delighted to announce that Viola Craig has completed the trainer programme & will be delivering training to you from January.

Learner Fund

We are delighted that the department of children & youth affairs through Pobal have opened a second round of the learner fund; In Sligo we will have 22 people working towards attaining both level 5 and level 6 early years training next year.

If you require any support with your studies we have a good library in the office with some FETAC books and resources – why not call in & take a look.

