November Newsletter

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1. Further Restorative Practice Primary Schools Launched
Two Primary Schools in Tallaght, St. Mark’s Junior and St. Mark’s Senior in Springfield, have been launched as ‘Restorative Practice Schools’.

The announcement follows three other Tallaght Primary Schools Scoil Cnoc Mhuire Junior and Senior and Scoil Chaitlín Maude which were launched as ‘Restorative Practice Schools’ earlier this year. This brings the benefit of this progressive approach to over 70 teachers and school staff and to 1,150 school children in Tallaght.

The Mayor of South Dublin County Fintan Warfield launched two flags to celebrate St. Mark’s Junior and St. Mark’s Senior’s achievements.

The Principal of St. Mark’s Senior National School Richie Walsh described what was involved in becoming an RP school: “All of our teachers have been specifically trained to work with the children to improve their interpersonal skills at dealing with conflict and building better relationships.”

The Principal of St. Mark’s Junior School Ann Ryan said that once trained “the teachers work formally and informally to equip the children to talk about and solve disputes, rather than running to teachers or parents. This increases children’s capacity for empathy.”

Both schools have been working in partnership with the Childhood Development Initiative. More information on Restorative Practices here.

2. Area Based Childhood (ABC) Programme Workshops

The Centre for Effective Services (CES) in partnership with the original Prevention and Early Intervention sites (PEIP), the Childhood Development Initiative, Young Ballymun and Preparing for Life have been running a series of implementation workshops to support the 13 Area Based Childhood Programme sites.

The ABC Programme’s objective is: ‘Breaking the cycle of child poverty within areas where it is most deeply entrenched and where children are most disadvantaged, through integrated and effective services and interventions in the following areas: child development, child well being and parenting and educational disadvantage’.

The objectives of the workshops held were to:

- Develop a common understanding of implementation, its stages and drivers
• Share learning and expertise on implementation
• Explore and assess the implementation readiness in the ABC areas
• Identify actions to support implementation in the ABC areas.

CDI would like to thank all of those who attended the Tallaght session in October.

3. CDI Receives European Education Award in Malta

By Foluke Oladosu, Community Representative CDI Board

As a CDI Board member I was delighted to collect a European award on behalf of CDI in Malta.

The award was to recognise ‘Educational Innovation in Addressing Early School Leaving’, presented by the ESSE Observatory.

What thrilled me most was the moment the award in the Prevention Category was presented to CDI. I gave a brief speech and presented a short video of CDI’s Prevention and Intervention Programmes called, The Story So Far.

The willingness to share learning and ideas among the participating countries showed that we have a common problem and a common goal, which is to reduce the number of early school leavers.

My learning from the experience is that preventing early school leaving is always best, but if a child drops outside of the mainstream education system, there is still hope. There are second chance education programmes that work on children’s strengths.

Many thanks to the ESSE Project Manager Louise Cole and her colleagues and also to the Board and staff of CDI.

4. Joining up Research and Policy

By Professor Noirín Hayes, Early Years specialist

Researchers know the language of research, however there is no guarantee they know the language of either practice or policy making.

For an introduction on how best to break through communication barriers — I encourage you to access the presentations from the recent conference Realising Real-World Research: Research and Evaluation
in Challenging Times at [http://www.twcdi.ie//resources-information-centre/detail/repp-crnini-conference](http://www.twcdi.ie//resources-information-centre/detail/repp-crnini-conference)

In an era where much child, family and community research and evaluation is funded with the expectation that it will provide evidence to inform policy and practice, it is timely to consider these challenges more thoroughly.

Hosted by REPP (the Research, Evaluation, Policy and Practice group) and CRNINI (the Children's Research Network for Ireland and Northern Ireland), and supported by CDI, the conference heard three experienced researchers share the platform with three representatives from funding, policy and practice.

Read Professor Hayes's full Blog [here](http://www.twcdi.ie//resources-information-centre/detail/repp-crnini-conference)

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5. Fact Finding Trip to Prison in Wales

In early October CDI, along with the Governors of Limerick and St. Patrick's Prisons and Bedford Row (a community organisation, based in Limerick) went to visit Parc Prison in Wales.

The purpose of this visit was to see the Family Intervention programme that is running there. As you will be aware, CDI is working with the Irish Prison Service and Dr. John Sharry (from the Parents Plus Charity) in a new initiative called the Family Imprisonment Parenting Programme.

This programme aims to support prisoners to have a positive relationship with their family, including a prison wide ethos of promoting and supporting positive parenting.

The Family Intervention programme at Parc has been running for seven years with great success. Prisoners are invited to participate in this holistic programme and as a result receive incentivised visits and time with their family.

Activities carried out include baby bathing, homework clubs (carried out afterschool) and teacher and parent meetings. Inmates look to develop goals in relation to what they want to achieve. There is a dedicated wing of the prison where those participating in the programme stay, thereby compounding the learning and motivation.

The visit really inspired us all and provided lots of food for thought.

The first training to all ‘front of house' staff in Limerick Prison will commence in November, with the delivery of the Parents Plus course to the prisoners, and their partners on the outside, in February. University of Limerick was successful in their tender to evaluate the programme. We are very excited about the potential of this programme and will keep you updated.

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6. ATTI Holds its First Steering Group Meeting
ATTI (antenatal to three) held its first steering group meeting in September. Members of the steering group include: Public Health Nursing, GP Practice Nurses, the Coombe, TUSLA, Meitheal, Barnados, South Dublin County Childcare Committee and An Cosan.

A project workplan has been agreed until 2016. The next steps include carrying out an audit of interagency work for services working with antenatal to three’s. There will also be a Speed Networking event in January 2015.

More about CDI’s ATTI programme [here](http://www.twcdi.ie).

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### 7. Irish Times Feature on Child Poverty

Click on the link below to read the recent *Irish Times* feature on Child Poverty in which CDI CEO Marian Quinn is quoted.


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