



Pre-budget Submission 2017

Childhood Development Initiative
September 14, 2016

The Childhood Development Initiative would like to make a *Pre-budget Submission* to Government in relation to Budget 2017.

Context

From 2007 to 2013 the Tallaght West based Childhood Development Initiative (CDI) was one of three Prevention and Early Intervention Programme (PEIP) sites established in Dublin to develop and rigorously evaluate a prevention and early intervention programme, to improve outcomes for children and families in communities most in need of social supports.

The PEIP was match-funded by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) and the Atlantic Philanthropies and €17m was invested in Tallaght West over eight years.

In 2013 CDI became one of 13 areas nationwide funded under the Area Based Childhood (ABC) Programme (match-funded by DCYA and AP). Under the ABC Programme CDI received €4.1m to coordinate six prevention and early intervention programmes in Tallaght West and to support other communities to use their experience and initiatives.

In May of this year CDI received a €400,000 allocation, (again match funded by DCYA and AP) to extend its ABC work until August 2017. To operate within this reduced allocation some services are being curtailed, but core elements of CDI's delivery are in situ until September 2017.

Evaluated and Proven

The major CDI Programmes currently funded under the ABC Programme were rigorously evaluated under the PEIP and have been proven to be effective. These programmes are:

- Doodle Den (children's literacy and numeracy programme)
- Chit Chat Speech and Language Therapy Service
- Early Years Parental Support
- Restorative Practices.

New programmes Doodle Families and the Antenatal to Three Initiative (ATTI) have been developed based upon community need and are currently being evaluated. CDI has also been funded by the Irish Prison Service to develop supports for parents in prison in a programme called Family Links.

Funding extension to end of 2017 and earmarking for 2018

This submission is calling for additional funding in Budget 2017 to extend CDI's proven programmes beyond September 2017.

The allocation of funds beyond the current commitments should be made in line with the overall agreed plans for

the future of the ABC Programme which will be informed by an ABC Programme Evaluation Report, due to be launched in October, and by the data and evidence which CDI continues to collate.

Greater Government Funding from 2018

From 2018 onwards, CDI is calling for a significant increase in overall Government investment in prevention and early intervention in Ireland.

An annual Government allocation of (approximately) €5 million per annum is being made in 2013–2017 to the ABC Programme, together with matched-funding from the Atlantic Philanthropies. However, AP is winding down its funding of the children and families sector and this will no longer be available from late 2017. Planning and provision therefore needs to be made to meet this deficit and the government contribution will need to be doubled from 2018 to maintain current levels of service delivery.

However, given the weight of evidence on the impact and effectiveness of prevention and early intervention to improve outcomes for children and families, and also to reduce economic and social costs for the State, CDI is calling for a planned approach starting in budget 2017 to move towards an annual State budget level of €20m for Prevention and Early Intervention Programmes. CDI supports the Pre-budget Submission of The Prevention and Early Intervention Network (PEIN), of which CDI is a founding member.

Research in Ireland has suggested that every €1 invested in targeted prevention and early intervention saves the State €4 in the long term (research in Ballymun). The National Economic and Social Forum has stated a return on investment of 1:4-7 in Ireland. International evidence has rated this return to be £9 for every £1 invested (UK) and even up \$18 for every \$1 (USA). This research is widely available and CDI can supply it on request.

Achievements of CDI

From September 2007 – August 2016 CDI has supported: 12,500 children, families and staff (4,200 children, 6,500 parents and 1,800 staff. Its outputs include:

- €21m investment in Tallaght West
- 1,440 children have participated in the *Doodle Den* literacy and numeracy programme
- 4,500 families have received *Early Years Parental Support*
- 195 children have received the *Early Years Programme*
- 2,188 adults and young people have received Restorative Practices (RP) training
- 821 children have received *Chit Chat* Speech and Language therapy
- 443 staff and 686 parents trained in Speech and Language supports
- 1,100 children took part in the *Healthy Schools Initiative*
- 900 households involved in the *Community Safety Initiative*
- 244 staff participating in Antenatal to Three Initiative (ATTI) network
- 327 parents and staff have attended ATTI information and training events
- 43 Prison Officers, Teachers, Community workers, prisoners and partners trained through *Family Links*.
- 400 parents, residents and staff working in local services have taken part in supported formal education, including 15 at Masters level
- 186 adults have completed *Quality Services Better Outcomes* training
- 13 Evaluation Reports and 14 Policy Briefs published with a significant dissemination programme to maximise the impact of the learning.

This proposal seeks to maximise the investment to date, and build on the expertise, skills and “know-how” developed.

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The Area Based Childhood Programme 2013–2017

