

# Early Learning Initiative

National College of Ireland



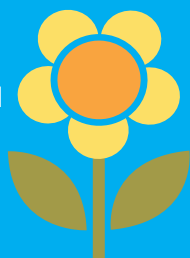
Volume 1. Issue 8, May 2012

## Docklands' Early Numeracy Project: working and learning together

In our exciting new project funded by the National Early Years Access Initiative (NEYAI), we are all working and learning together to develop and support children's ability to enjoy and use mathematics effectively in their lives - at home, at school, crèche or pre-school and in our community.

A group of local Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) practitioners and teachers have been working together since June 2011 to plan the 'Early Numeracy Activity Week' that takes place each term. During this week, lots of fun, play-based activities and events take place on themes such as positional language, shape, space and size. The next week of activities is from the 14th-18th May. Workshops for parents on how to support their child's early numeracy development at home will take place from 30th April- 4th May. At the end of June, there will also be storytelling sessions in the local ECCE centres on the book 'The Big Red Bath'.

For further information on events and activities for parents, staff and children, look out for notices and posters in your local centre or school or contact Aoife O'Gorman on 01 4498635 or Catriona Flood on 01 4498544.



Above: Brothers Preston and Lucas Coughlan from 1st class in City Quay NS proudly display their pictures at the *Zoom Ahead with Books* Exhibition at NCI. *Zoom Ahead with Books* is a 4 week family reading project to promote young children's enjoyment of books. Each night the child and their 'book buddy' take home a book, read and discuss the book together and draw pictures to represent their time together.

Over 300 families from five schools in Docklands were involved in the project again this year and an exhibition of artwork was held at NCI and across the schools in March.

Congratulations to all of the children and their book buddies for their enthusiasm and hard work!

Left: Robert Barrett enjoying the Docklands NEYAI Early Numeracy Activity Week in March



## Old School Games

by Michelle Moore

Remember when you were young and playing outside with your friends from the area, only venturing home when your parents called or you were hungry! We kept ourselves quite occupied without any of today's modern technologies and best of all we used our imagination while learning about our environment. Playing Piggy (Hopscotch), Kick the Can, Marbles, Simon Says, Hand Clapping Games and Chasing to name but a few! Little did we realise that while playing these games we were also developing our early numeracy and literacy skills.

Ask yourself a question, does your child play those games now? Do they spend sufficient time outside having fun and exploring the world around them?

IF the answer is NO, then maybe it's time to try doing something about it! We know it's not always easy, but GO outside and show them how it's done. Share your experiences of your childhood and see the delight on their faces as you play ball against the wall or skip as they turn the rope.

With the nice summer weather coming around, round up your kids and their friends and play those games that you loved so much. Don't forget they're great fun and a brilliant form of exercise as well!

**Michelle Moore is a Coordinator with the Parent Child Home Programme (PCHP), a home based learning through play experience for children aged 18 months upwards. It encourages and develops children's literacy, language and numeracy skills. If you would like to enquire about a place on the programme in September 2012, please contact us on 01 4498604. Please note that places are limited and there may be a waiting list.**



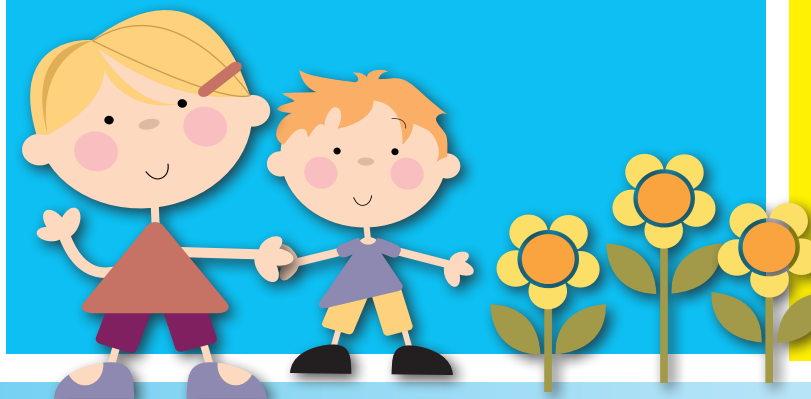
Above: Pre-schooler from Docklands enjoys a game of hopscotch at a play session at NCI



## Play Opportunities on the way to the Playground

Children learn a lot through play and it is important to allow them to explore the world around them. Deborah Clarke, Play Development Officer with Dublin City Council says that play can take place anywhere and at any time and not just in playgrounds or through traditional play. She has given us some ideas on play opportunities or things you can talk to your child about on the way to the playground:

- Walk along the path and count the number of steps between each line. Suggest taking giant steps and then baby steps and compare how many steps it takes using these different methods of walking.
- Recognise landmarks and guess when they are going to appear
- Spot numbers and letters on doors
- Spot colours of doors
- Admire and identify the various flowers, trees etc. along the way
- Spot wildlife along the way (birds, cats, dogs, bugs, bees etc.)
- Look at how high different houses and buildings are
- Measure child's height alongside railings, walls, gates etc.
- Billboards, adverts etc. – identify numbers, letters and colours in a playful way
- Watch for the traffic light colours and time sequence
- Encourage interaction with other children and adults during the journey to enhance social skills, conversation, vocabulary etc.



**Above:** Presenters from 5th class in St Patrick's Girls School, Ringsend and St Laurence O'Toole's CBS, at the Primary Education Guidance Exhibition at NCI. Students from four schools in Docklands took part in the project to help them think about their own unique skills and talents, the careers that interest them and the steps they can take to help them fulfil this ambition. Representatives from local companies visited the Exhibition to speak with the students and were very impressed with the quality of the work displayed and the aspirations of the next generation in the Docklands! Congratulations to all involved.

## Upcoming Events

14th - 18th May - NEYA! Early Numeracy Activity Week

22nd May - Stretch to Learn Second Level Awards

24th May - Stretch to Learn Primary Awards

6th June - PCHP Graduation Event

25th - 29th June - Storytelling in the ECCE centres

## Discover University at NCI

This June National College of Ireland will once again hold its Discover University programme for secondary schools students from Docklands, to give them a chance to try out life in a 3rd level college.

The students take part in sample lectures from NCI's core subjects of Business Studies, HR, Marketing, Multimedia and Computing, and spend time working on a group project to solve real world problems. They also take part in fun extra-curricular activities ranging from visits to innovative companies in Docklands, to Drama workshops and Sports.

The programme will run from Thursday 21st to Wednesday 27th June 2012, excluding the weekend.

**Discover** **University** **national college of ireland**

For more information or to get an application form, please contact Brigina Crowe on

Tel: 01 4498618  
email: bcrowe@ncirl.ie.



# Focus on Good Practice in Docklands



## Ringsend Crèche Outdoor Play Programme

Hi, our names are Sharon, Olive, Dionne, Debbie and Laura. We are employees of Ringsend Crèche and have taken part in the Outdoor Play Programme since it began last summer. The programme involves staff and children venturing into the great outdoors in the nearby Dublin mountains and trekking in all kinds of weather!

We were amazed that a group of 3 year old children have the stamina to climb these mountains and while their parents were apprehensive at the start, slowly they were won over by their children's experiences.

We plan to keep this programme running as for as long as possible as our little explorers love the challenge!

We would like to encourage more centres to try this type of activity. We have linked it with Síolta and Aistear the Quality and Curriculum Frameworks for Early Years Care and Education services in Ireland, in particularly Síolta Standard 2 (Environments) and Standard 6 (Play).

**For more information, you can contact  
Ringsend Crèche on 01 2313509.**



Patrick Kobus from St Patrick's BNS at the NCI Primary Rummikub Challenge in December. These Interscholar Challenges give students in 2nd, 3rd and 4th class in Docklands the chance to compete against each other in a series of games and activities that help develop their literacy, numeracy and general knowledge skills, while still having lots of fun.

This was the first year that we played Rummikub and it was a huge success. It is a fast paced numbers game that children and adults can both enjoy and was on lots of Santa lists last Christmas following the NCI Challenge!



Left:  
Young adventurers  
from Ringsend  
Crèche enjoying  
the great outdoors  
as part of the  
centre's innovative  
programme.

