



Newsletter

CENTRE OF EXPERTISE, RESEARCH AND INNOVATION (CERI)

From the beginning, ELI hoped to become a Centre of Excellence from which others could learn how to improve educational outcomes for children, young people and their families. Over the years, many people from across the globe have visited ELI or read about the work we do. Last year, for the first time, there were more children in our ParentChild+ Programme in other parts of Dublin, Galway, Limerick and Louth than locally.

In January 2020, as part of ELI's 2020-25 Strategic Plan, a Centre for Expertise, Research and Innovation (CERI) was established within ELI. Operating alongside and learning from our existing Docklands programmes, CERI will help us differentiate between local and national projects; advance Early Years Home Visiting in Ireland; capture and communicate new learning; and remain innovative and responsive.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to ELI's development over the years. Our hope is that CERI will enable us to change more lives through education.

VISION

Our long-term vision is that ELI will lead the way in providing first class educational support programmes within local communities, thereby enabling children, young people and their families to develop the dispositions, skills and knowledge needed to achieve their educational, career and life goals.

MISSION

Working in partnership with Government and local communities to support educational journeys and achievements



THANK YOU

Corporate, government and individual support is fundamental to our success. We wish to thank all of our socially minded supporters who play an active role in the advancement of ELI and give us confidence in these challenging times.



NEW PATHWAYS

If 2020 taught ELI anything, it is that the children, young people and families we work with are strong, resilient and eager to learn! With everything that has happened in the last 12 months, we can look back, reflect and pave the road ahead with a clearer picture of how we can continue to support educational journeys in this new virtual world.

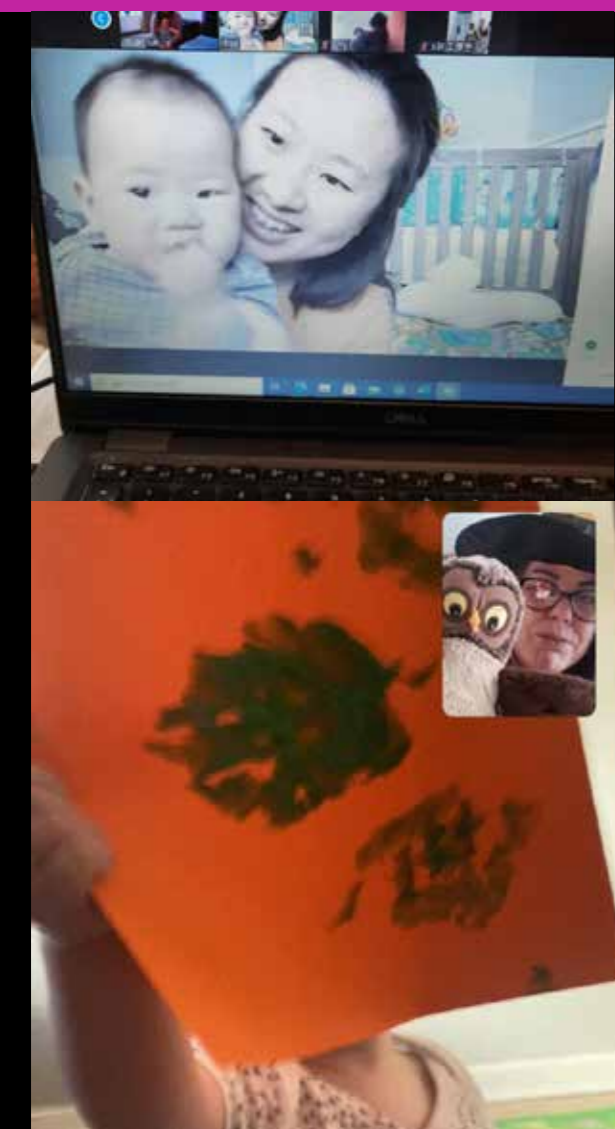
This time last year who could have foreseen so many changes to how we learn and interact with one another? We are so proud of our partners' flexibility and commitment to ensuring that no child is left behind. Children and young people will remember how the community showed up for them to provide support throughout the pandemic, virtually, through telephone calls, and by maintaining social distance. Phones, tablets and laptops have shown that relationships can be enhanced and learning can be strengthened through these new ways of working.

ELI families continue to participate in Home Visiting and learn through interactive screen time. They continue to play, learn and grow together in online Parent Toddler groups. Services and schools continue to engage their children and young people to participate in Doodle Den, Educational Guidance and Restorative Practice programmes. Parents continue to support themselves and each other through Restorative Parenting. Corporate volunteers and sponsors have been more innovative than ever in providing new learning opportunities for children and young people. While State agencies such as Tusla continue to provide the pillar of supports needed through the Area Based Childhood Programme to ensure that all families but particularly those that are vulnerable, thrive.

This year we will build on these strengths. ELI's focus on a collaborative community effort will be central to all of our programmes, both within the Dublin Docklands and beyond. We will work with children, young people and families, listen to their needs and ensure that all of our programmes are fit for their purpose. Whether the programmes are for newborns or for those considering 'what next?' after second level, the road ahead will be paved by the voices of our children, young people and families. We know that if we all work together we can build a brighter future for our community and future generations.



0-2 PROGRAMME AND PARENT SUPPORT



ELI continues to provide high quality learning experiences that support bonding and positive interactions between parent and child.

ELI baby massage courses, Fitness for Mams classes, Storytime and Songtime groups are continuing online for children aged 0-4 years

0-2 Home Visiting continues remotely - outdoor visits when possible

PARENTCHILD+ PROGRAMME



Despite Covid-19 restrictions, ParentChild+ families are receiving their visits through video calls, allowing us to all stay safe and continue to learn through play together!

NUMERACY PROGRAMME



November 2020 Numeracy week theme was 'Positional Directional Language'. Schools and Early Years services engaged with parents through 'Whatsapp' text groups and using the online learning platform 'seesaw'.

This blended approach to parental participation is very interactive with parents sending pictures of their children playing games at home using 'positional directional' language.

RESTORATIVE PRACTICE — UPCOMING WORKSHOPS AND TRAINING

Intermediate 'Moving Forward with Restorative Practices' — weekly online training (over 6 weeks)
January 12th, 10am-1pm

Working with Managers, Principals and Leaders in Schools and Services — restorative practice workshop to supports leaders in building capacity and developing a restorative framework, online delivery
February 5th, 11am-12.30pm

Introduction 'Getting Started with Restorative Practices'- weekly online training (over 5 weeks)
February 23rd, 3pm-5pm



PROMOTE ELI SOCIAL MEDIA

To keep in touch with us and see suggested activities, videos and tips for all ages, and access to online groups please Follow, Like & Share us on.

www.facebook.com/earlylearninginitiative
 Twitter: @ELI_Docklands
 Instagram: @earlylearninginitiative
 LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/company/early-learning-initiative

ELI'S COVID RESPONSE

As Ireland continues to respond to the challenges of COVID-19, the ELI continues to find new and innovative ways to work with children, families and services across our community. Our research team has been very busy collecting the information we need to inform us what is working well and what changes are needed as we advance our COVID-19 response.

Learning from our initial experiences of virtual delivery from March to June, we have reflected together and came up with new tools for supporting virtual engagement through our phone/video calls, storytelling and singing groups, working groups, training sessions, workshops, webinars and events.

We are delighted that our data collected so far this year has shown us that children and parents are more engaged virtually and that overall parents wellbeing has improved since the first lockdown. While we look forward to getting back to face to face programme delivery, we remain committed to adapting to the ongoing needs and challenges of our community during this time.

LIVE VIDEO CALLS AND ITS BENEFITS FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

With all our home visiting Programmes moving to live video calls, we'd like to point out the benefits to using these video calls as a tool to connect young children with their family. Although we will always acknowledge that 'in person' interactions are best, emerging evidence is telling us that young children respond very well to live interactive video calls and these quality interactions can enhance the child's language, their social skills and help develop relationships with family members. Live video calls will only benefit the child when the time is limited, and an adult is present and involved in the conversation. They can encourage the child by asking questions, giving them new words and using their facial expression to encourage communication on both sides of the screen. While technology with children should be used sparingly, these live video calls can build on the child's health and well-being and help them form an understanding of social interactions.

