

Early Learning Initiative Newsletter



Early Learning Initiative
National College of Ireland

Working in partnership: Supporting educational journeys and achievements

Volume 2 Issue 4

New Directions through the Area Based Childhood (ABC) Programme

November 27th was D-Day for the Docklands. Everyone (children, Home Visitors, parents, early years services, schools, after-school services, community organisations, public health nurses and our local TDs) were waiting anxiously to hear if our ABC application was successful.

A sigh of relief and a big cheer went up when the Tánaiste, Eamonn Gilmore and the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Frances Fitzgerald, who launched the ABC Programme here in NCI, announced that the Docklands was one of the areas chosen.

Forty-eight organisations, North and South of the Liffey, are committed to working together through the ABC Programme. Our goal is for children and young people in the Docklands to perform to international norms in language, literacy and numeracy with the whole community supporting these children and young people as they progress through the education system and on to employment in the corporate organisations in the Docklands.

Being part of the ABC Programme will enhance the work already being done in the area and allow us to develop it further.

At present, we are developing plans for:

- Continuing the Parent Child Home Programme (PCHP) in Ringsend, East Wall, North Wall and City Quay as well as extending it beyond the North Strand Road to Summerhill, Mountjoy Square and Ballybough
- Providing more supports for parents with small children (0-6 years)
- Sustaining the Docklands Early Numeracy Programme
- Supporting the early years, primary schools and after schools services in implementing Síolta and Aistear, the Irish early years quality and curriculum frameworks
- Extending the ELI's Educational Guidance Programme to other schools, both primary and second level, as well as after-school and community organisations.
- Furthering cooperation between agencies and organisations in the area to ensure a coordinated, effective and person-centred service for children, young people and their families

Once again, a big thank you to all involved in the ABC application. It was a great achievement and an acknowledgement of the great work being done through the ELI network of public health nurses, early years and after school services, schools, community, statutory and corporate organisations. We look forward to working on the ABC Programme with you over the next three years.



Above: Tánaiste Eamon Gilmore, Minister Frances Fitzgerald, Kevin Humphreys TD, Aodhain O'Riordain TD and Councillor Ray McAdams, at the ABC programme announcement in NCI's Cloud Competency Centre.



If you would like to get the latest ELI news, like and share our Facebook Page!

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Parent Child Home Programme (PCHP)

Our Home Visitors are currently working with preschool children in the homes of eighty families in the Docklands. Parents and Home Visitors are talking, reading and playing with the children while they are getting ready for imminent success in school.

The completion of the two year programme is marked with a graduation ceremony in the NCI for families. Like all big occasions, it is a time of happiness and sadness. There is a huge sense of achievement for families and their Home Visitors for the journey they have made with the children, yet it also means the end of the home visits which have become so much a part of their routine. At our first graduation we had 16 families taking part, this year we hope to have 37 families graduating and with the support of ABC funding, we plan to welcome more families to the programme.



Chloe Lawless with her proud mum Elaine and their Home Visitor Eimer, at the PCHP Graduation June 2013

PCHP Graduation Class of 2014 will graduate from the PCHP programme on 6th June 2014 in the National College of Ireland. We look forward to welcoming the graduating children, their parents and grandparents to their child's first graduation from college!

Parent Child Home Programme children are doing well...

ELI has been conducting interviews with the first cohort of parents and guardians who enrolled in the programme. 15 people were interviewed. Everyone thought the programme had a positive effect on their child's general behaviour. Themes from the research include changing approaches to learning and increasing bonds between child and parent.

Thanks to all families who helped with the research, and we look forward to checking in with you again as you and your children continue on their educational journey.



Above: PCHP Easter Event 2014

'Graduation Day' 18th June 2009

All the children here today
Are a credit to every mum and dad
And such a source of pride and joy
To every tutor that they had

This really is how good it gets
The children with their nice rosettes
At this stage in their education
Attending for their graduation

This programme has to carry on
Twould be a shame if it was gone
So thanks to all the girls and Beth
They've done their best since first we met

If Jack and Josie should have a baby
Nearly impossible, but who knows maybe
We'd ring up Beth and ask if she is able
To find if Pamela is available

Then put us down on Pamela's list
For after Molly, she'll be sadly missed
To have her call would be a pleasure
That Josie and baby would surely treasure

Poem by Jack Byrne, proud grandfather to Molly and husband to Josie, which was given to the PCHP team, including Beth Fagan (National PCHP Coordinator) and Pamela Martin (the family's Home Visitor), at the 2009 PCHP graduation.

NEYAI Docklands Early Numeracy Project

‘Symbols in the environment’

The next Docklands Early Numeracy Week will take place from 12th-16th May and it will focus on ‘Symbols in the Environment’. Signs and symbols are everywhere and children start to understand what they mean from a very young age, for example children know what the local toy shop is before they can read! Or you might see a baby/toddler putting a building brick to their ear as if it is a phone. The brick symbolises a phone and they understand what the phone is for. Numbers and letters are symbols too so when children start to recognise signs and symbols this is helping their literacy and numeracy development. Don't forget to join in with the numeracy activities during the Numeracy week in May!

Here are a few activities you could do with your children:

Tips & Hints for Parents

- Point out signs when you are out walking and say what they mean - stop sign, bus stop, traffic lights etc.
- Help your child to write a letter to themselves using writing and pictures and bring them to the post office to post it.
- With small babies and toddlers, pretend items are something else e.g. a brick is a phone.
- Simple Charades - act out an activity and get the children to guess what it is e.g. mixing the food.



Life Post Primary School

The National College of Ireland welcomed 5th & 6th class students from the Docklands for the Primary Education Guidance Exhibition on Wednesday 26th February. Fifth class students based their projects on particular careers and the qualifications you might need while sixth class developed their own project on a topic relating to second level school.

The aim of the project is to raise educational and career aspirations while encouraging the local community to have a better knowledge of the education system. From choices made at the end of primary school to subject options in second level, students learn how these decisions can impact their future in terms of accessing further education and career opportunities.

We were also pleased to have so many corporate volunteers from our partner organisations acting as judges for the event to provide valuable feedback on the children's presentations. Congratulations to all the students and teachers who took part in the exhibition.



Above: St Patrick's Girls NS students from Ringsend, speaking to Judge Cian O'Daly from McCann FitzGerald

NEYAI

Celebration Event

For the past three years the Docklands Early Numeracy Project has been funded under the National Early Years Access Initiative (NEYAI). This funding will finish in June and to mark the hard work the early years services and schools have done with your children, we will be holding a Celebration Event on 17th June 2014. The Docklands Early Numeracy Project will continue for the next three years under the new Area Based Childhood Initiative.

Dublin Port

Preparing for the Future

As Ireland's largest and busiest port, over €35 billion worth of trade annually comes through us here in Dublin Port. This supports some 4,000 jobs locally to make sure that you get your breakfast cereal, electrical goods, books and even the shoes you walk in! We also send medicine, beef and dairy products abroad to other countries.

Like everyone else in the Docklands, we in Dublin Port need to plan for the future. We need to be ready to meet Ireland's future trading needs along with the growing number of cruise liners that visit Dublin each year. The Alexandra Basin Redevelopment project will help us ensure that we can continue to welcome modern freight, container and cruise ships into Dublin.

A wide range of residents, community groups and businesses helped us develop our Master Plan. Thanks to their ideas, we hope to be able to continue to serve the local community, the city of Dublin and the national economy well in the future. We are looking forward to working with everyone on these exciting developments.

Find out more about our Masterplan and the launch of our Alexandra Basin Redevelopment project by visiting our website on www.dublinportabr.ie and you can follow us on our facebook page for regular updates at <https://www.facebook.com/DublinPortCompany>.



Corporate and individual support is fundamental to our success. We wish to thank all of our socially minded corporate and individual supporters, including Dermot Desmond, who play such an active role in the advancement of the ELI.



Planning Ahead

It is tough out there for new graduates looking for their first job. Competition is fierce and a first class degree does not necessarily guarantee employment these days.

There is a growing emphasis by



Above: Maria Ging, BlackRock

employers on the need for graduates to demonstrate a range of competences which will benefit themselves, the company, the community and the economy. Our volunteers from BlackRock, Deloitte and McCann FitzGerald have been mentoring the students and offering their valuable first-hand knowledge of the working world. As part of the ELI Mentoring Programme, we held a workshop to encourage students to think about the key skills employers want and how they could develop these skills. Maria Ging, one of our BlackRock mentors, has provided some very useful "Do's and Don'ts" to help graduates gain future employment and success in their chosen occupations.

Do

- Put thought into your CV/application to ensure you demonstrate the skills the employer seeks
- Research the industry, company, role and interviewer – it shows interest and will help you answer interview questions
- Prepare answers in advance to frequently asked interview questions

Don't

- Be late for interviews
- Undersell yourself – e.g. a shop-assistant role shows communication, cash management and customer service skills
- Worry about lack of technical knowledge, enthusiasm and willingness to learn are more important