



## Early Learning Initiative

National College of Ireland

# Review of DEIS: Poverty and Social Inclusion in Education A community-based approach to addressing educational disadvantage

5<sup>th</sup> December 2015

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*Supporting parents, communities and schools  
in the education of children*

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# Agenda

- Introduction
- Educational Disadvantage
- Early Learning Initiative
- Community Action Research
- Parent Child Home Programme
- Early Numeracy Programme
- Educational Guidance Programme



The Education Act (1998 32 [9]) refers to educational disadvantage as *...the impediments to education arising from social or economic disadvantage which prevent students from deriving appropriate benefit from education in schools.*

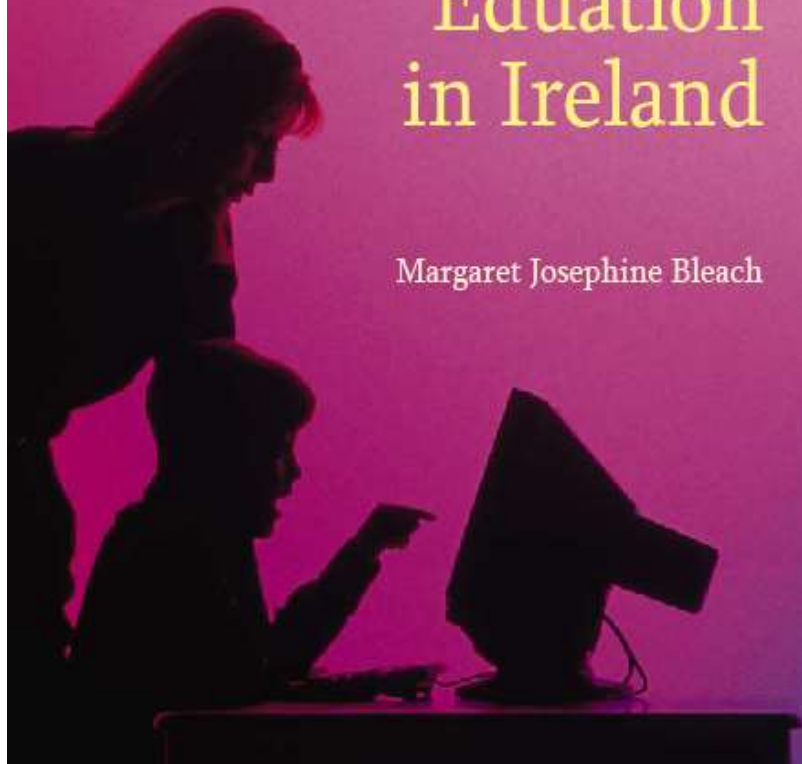
Closely linked to the issue of poverty with a substantial volume of research, both national and international, indicating that individuals from poorer socio-economic backgrounds and communities are more likely to underachieve in the education system than their peers from higher income backgrounds

(UNICEF 2002; Combat Poverty Agency 2003; Oireachtas Report 2010, Growing Up in Ireland 2012).



# Parental Involvement in Primary Education in Ireland

Margaret Josephine Bleach

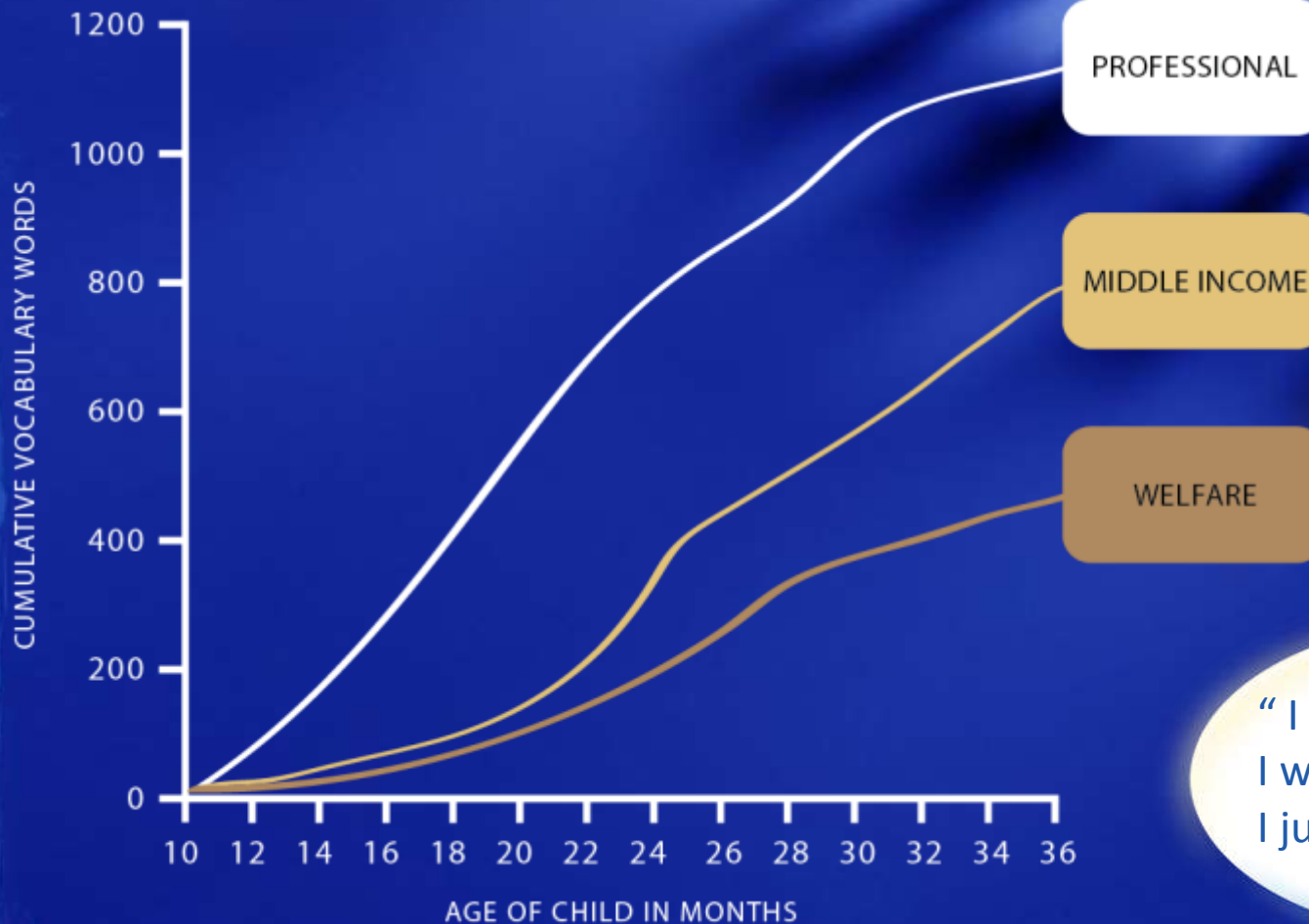


Available from  
[www.liffeypress.ie](http://www.liffeypress.ie)



Middle Class	Disadvantaged
Financial capital to supplement the work of the school and to develop their own skills as educators through privately funded parenting and other relevant courses.	May not have the financial and/or educational capital to supplement the work of the school or to develop their own skills
More educational and intellectual capital which they can use to guide their children's journey through the system and support their children's learning at home.	Not having had a career or gone through the second and third level systems, they have no real experience of what is required.
Access to 'teacher' and other professional friends who can advise and support them, when needed.	If nobody within their social network has gone to third level or is even employed, there is nobody they can turn to informally or discretely for information or support.
Have the confidence to talk to teachers as equals – Sense of entitlement re: education	Don't have the confidence and/or the formal 'school' language to speak to teachers
Literacy and IT skills to negotiate websites of interest as well as reading parenting books etc.	Low levels of literacy and IT skills may make it difficult for them to access information on-line.
Involve their children in structured activities, particularly the sort of cultural activities that are likely to equip them with the kinds of knowledge and competencies that advantage them within the educational system	Children more likely to be involved in 'fun' activities through Youth Clubs etc. Less likely to take their children to Museums, Plays or cultural events

Research proves educational support is critical from an early age



"I love my children,  
I want them to do well,  
I just don't know how"



It's during the first three years of life that thinking structures are being built into the brain.					
Child Hears	Typical Interaction	Open Questions Equal Discussion (WHY?) Pretend Play	Books in the Home	Time spent reading to the child	Child Speaks
10m words	One word direction with non-verbal signal— <i>'bathroom'</i>	Stop children from exploring language or their world twice for every one time they encourage them	1	25 hrs	500 words
30m words	Identify stimulus — <i>'Your hands are dirty'</i> Provide the meaning — <i>'We're going to eat'</i> Suggest a strategy — <i>'So go wash your hands'</i>	Encourage children to explore language and their world five times more than they stop it.	54	1,700 hrs	1,200 words

Home is the place where  
language,  
social skills,  
moral values and  
citizenship  
are taught

(Macbeth 1994; Wolfendale 2000)



The Home Learning Environment  
is a powerful influence on  
children's educational and social  
development

(Melhuish 2011; 2015)



# Parental Involvement in their Children's Education

## Open, Caring, Respectful Relationships

Collaboration with community organisations including networking by families

Parental Involvement in the Home Curriculum	Parental Involvement in Services/Schools	Home-School Communication
<p>The basic responsibilities of families, including creating a positive home learning environment</p> <p>Parental involvement in learning activities at home</p>	<p>Parental involvement particularly as volunteers and audiences</p> <p>Parental involvement in decision-making, governance and advocacy</p>	<p>The basic responsibilities of services towards families which primarily revolve around home-school communications. These include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>☑ Children's learning and progress</li><li>☑ Events and activities</li><li>☑ Policies and Procedures</li></ul>

# Questions?





## Early Learning Initiative

National College of Ireland

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.

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

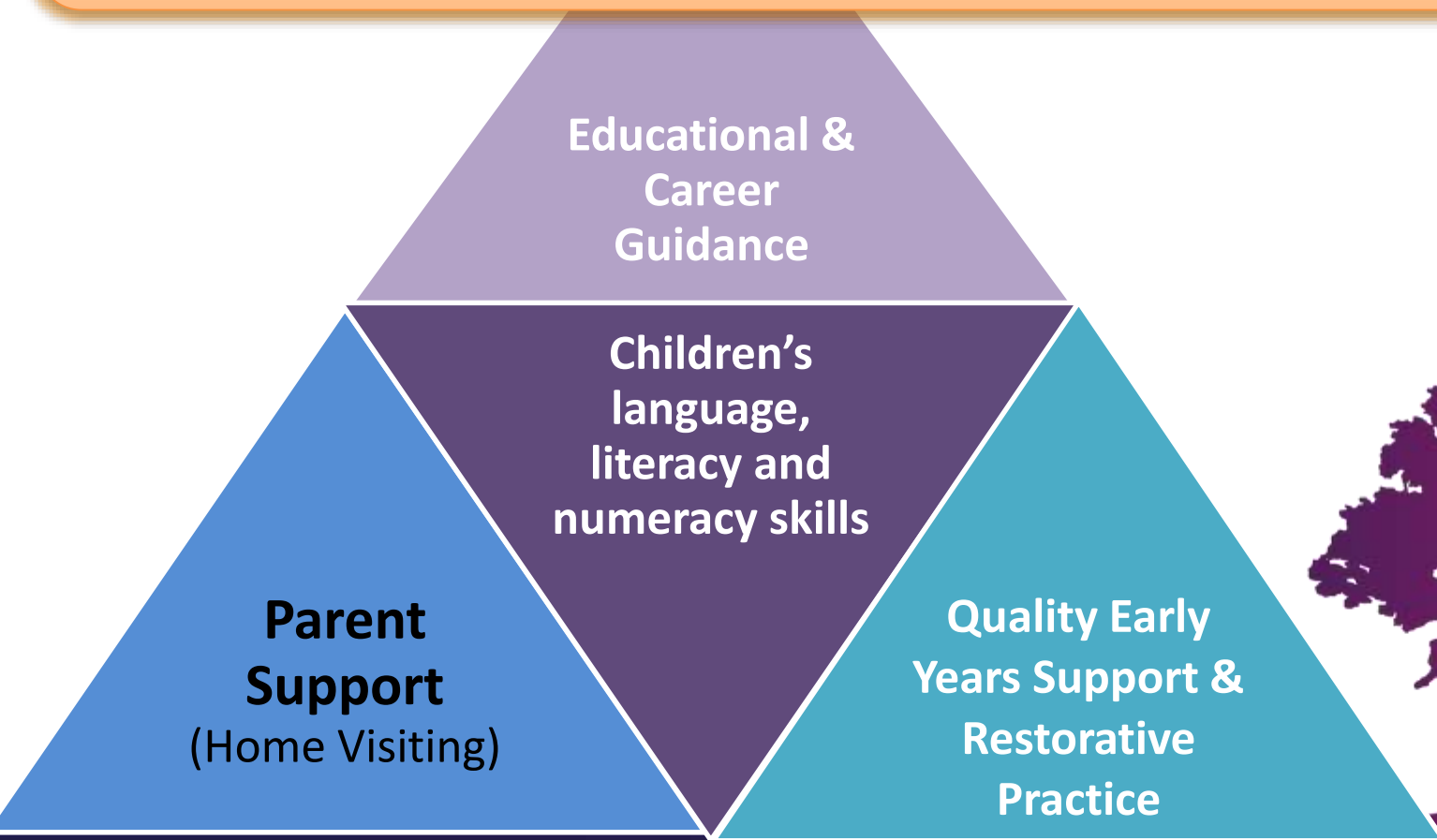
Address educational disadvantage and its impact on personal and career development

Provide a range of innovative support programmes for children and their parents from early years to third level

Uses community action research (Plan, Do, Review) to implement national policy and programmes



Children, young people and their families aspire to and  
achieve higher  
**EDUCATIONAL, CAREER AND LIFE GOALS**



# Partnering with Corporate Leaders

The success of the ELI is underpinned by corporate support – financially and more importantly through management engagement and employee involvement.

The ELI is rooted in the Docklands community and requires the interest, commitment and participation of neighbouring corporate leaders



# Impact

The ELI is helping to create a high-achieving, supportive and cohesive Docklands community. In 2007-2008, 448 people in the Docklands area took part in our programmes. **By 2015, we have increased this to 6,784**

Children involved in ELI's early years programmes are performing at levels expected of their age **unlike** children in similar disadvantaged areas

Educational **attainment** in English and Maths has **risen**. Students are scoring **above** the norms of other schools in similarly disadvantaged communities

Educational **aspirations** have **increased** with students aged 11-12 years of age scoring **above** the national norms

Parents are more engaged in their children's development

Learning is being perceived by children, young people and their extended families as enjoyable and something to be shared





# Community Action Research

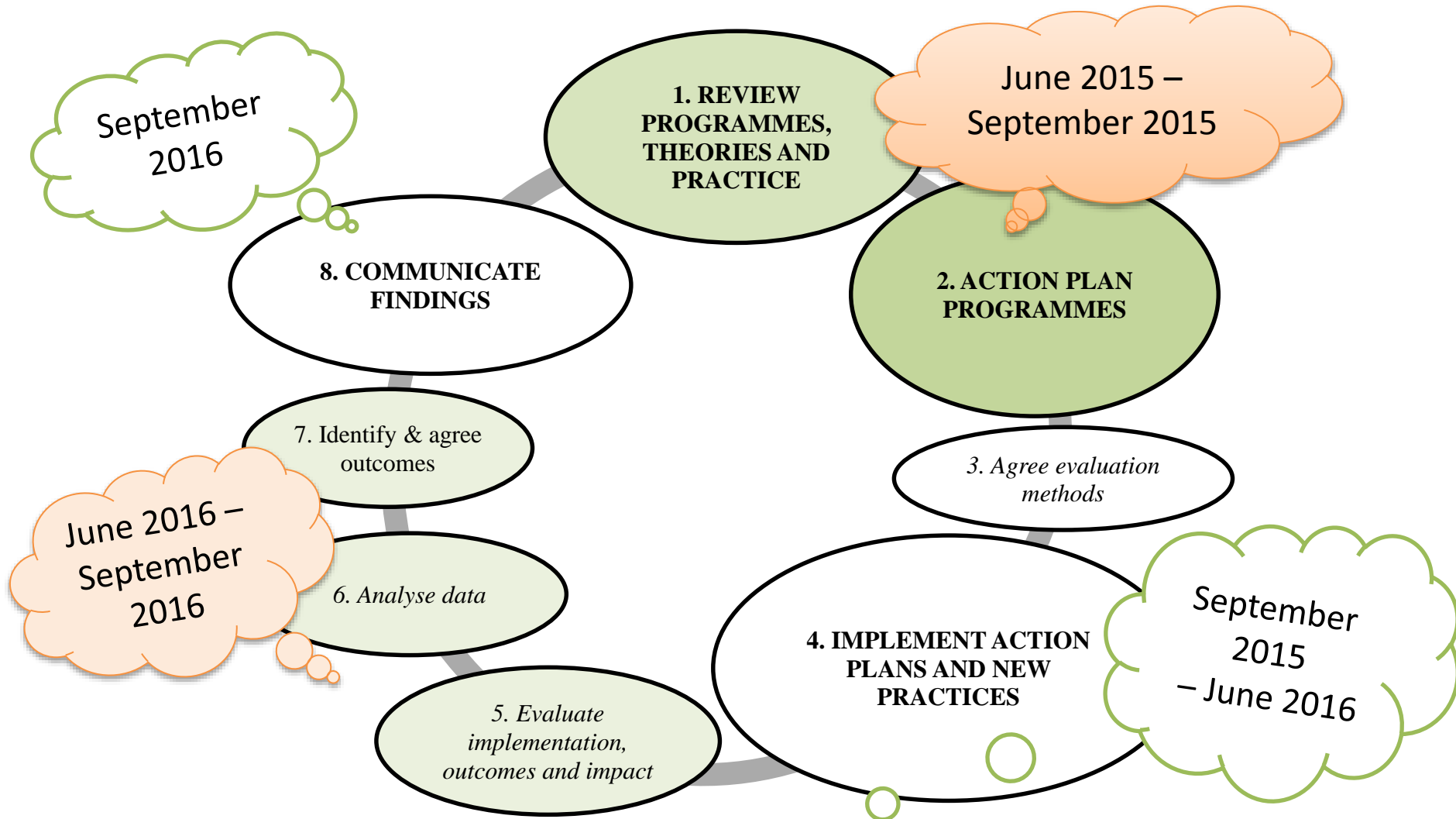
Create a learning community that works together to ‘nurture and sustain a knowledge-creating system’, based on valuing equally each other and the following three interacting domains of activity:

- ✓ **Research:** a discipline approach to discovery and understanding, with a commitment to share what is learned.
- ✓ **Capacity-building:** enhancing people’s awareness and capabilities, individually and collectively, to produce results they truly care about.
- ✓ **Practice:** people working together to achieve practical outcomes.

(Senge and Scharmer 2001, 240)



# Community Action Research Process



# Partnership

(NCCA 2009 -Aistear)

Partnership involves parents, families and professionals **working together** to benefit children.

Each **recognises, respects and values** what the other does and says.

Partnership involves **responsibility on both sides**



# Review ABC/ELI Programmes

What are we happy with?

What could we do better?

What do we want to do in 2015-16?

Consider the following:

- Overall Project
- Structure and process
- Activities
- Participation
- Communication



Programmes	Ready for	Parents & Children	Funding
Third Level Student Support (17+ yrs)	Employment	10	ELI
Discover University (14-17 yrs)		91	
Tuition Support Programme (15-18 yrs)	Third Level	20	
<b>Educational Guidance (10-13 yrs)</b>		209	
Financial Maths (8-10 yrs)	Second Level	126	
Achievement Awards (7-10 yrs)		272	
Literacy & Numeracy Challenges (7-11 yrs)		534	
Restorative Practice (6-18 years) - managing conflict		new	ABC & ELI
Doodle Den (4-5 years) - literacy		634	
Zoom Ahead with Books (4-7 yrs)		492	
<b>Early Numeracy Project (0-6 yrs)</b>		4762	
Early Years Professional Development	Primary School	257	
Storytelling sessions		84	
Parents Together Community Course		14	
<b>Parent Child Home Programme (PCHP) (18 mths - 3 yrs)</b>	Pre-school	180	
ABC 0-2 Years Programme		22	

# Questions?







Parent Child Home Programme

# Parent Child Home Programme .....

- Two year literacy and parenting programme that strengthens families and prepares children to succeed academically
- Twice weekly visits (46 visits per year), where the trained Home Visitors model oral language, reading and play for families and children in their twice weekly visits.
- The books and toys are gifts to the families to enable them to continue the activities in their own time and at their own pace.
- Between visits, Parents/Guardians are encouraged to spend time talking, reading and playing with their children each day
- Only one PCHP child per family as parents have learnt the skills to interact with all their children.



***Learning is perceived as enjoyable and something to be shared***

# Working *with* and *for* Children

## Docklands (2007):

484 children and their families have taken part in PCHP - over 20,000 home visits have taken place.  
70-80 families per year **(funded by Ireland Funds, Dublin Port, McCann FitzGerald, Central Bank, Arthur Cox, Facebook, DCYA and other donors).**

## Canal Communities - Bluebell (2009):

75 children and their families have taken part in PCHP - over 6,000 home visits have taken place.  
10 families per year. **(funded by Canal Communities Partnership; Katherine Howard Foundation and HSE)**

## Pavee Point - Traveller Community in Finglas (2014):

10-15 children and their families - 360 home visits this year **(funded by Katherine Howard Foundation and Ireland Funds)**

## North Inner City (2015):

60 additional children and their families **(funded by DCYA, AP, ABC Programme; DIT/Daughters of Charity; basis.point)**

## Limerick (2015):

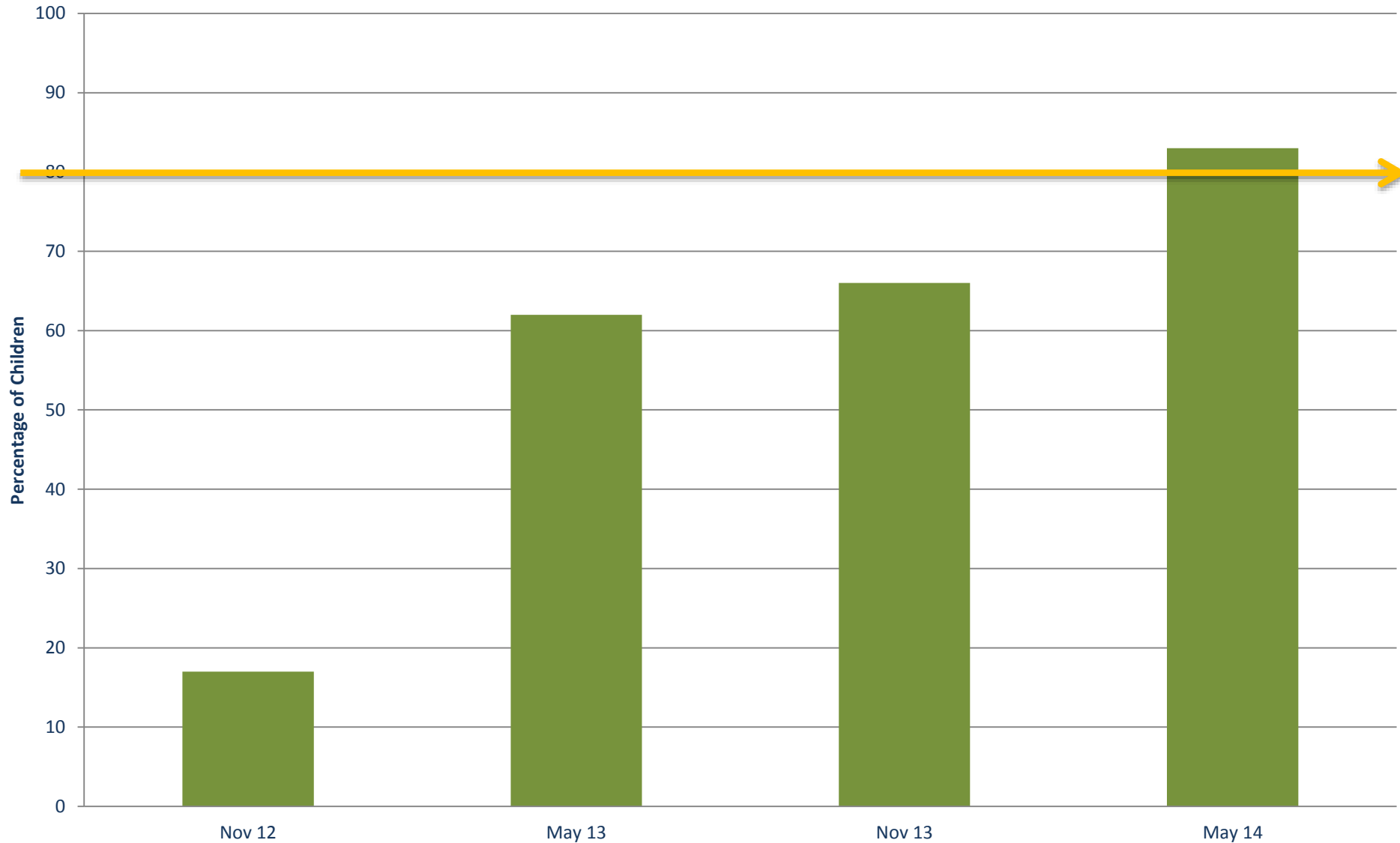
10-15 children and their families **(funded by Northern Trust)**

## Galway (2015):

10-15 children and their families **(funded by Galway Educational Centre; Sisters of Mercy; ESB)**

## PCHP Assessments: Year 2

Children developing normally i.e. scoring either a 3(often) or 4 (always)



# Impact

- ✓ At the 3 year developmental check, **Public Health Nurses** notice the gains made by children who have had PCHP and those who have not.
- ✓ **Speech therapists** see the improvement in the PCHP children on their waiting lists (2.5 yrs. wait) - the great majority of whom no longer need speech therapy.
- ✓ **Social workers** have asked for PCHP for their own children, having seen its impact on the children they are involved with.
- ✓ **Primary teachers** see PCHP children, often the **first of three generations**, enter primary school ready to succeed.
- ✓ Children are performing at levels expected of their age **unlike** children in similar disadvantaged areas.
- ✓ **Six years on** families are continuing to use the skills they learnt through PCHP. They and their children continue to read for fun - using the books and toys with their PCHP and subsequent children.





# What do the Parents say:

*'It's a winner. He takes out them books. The wife would read to him most nights. I have seen the improvement'*

*'I now spend more time reading and interacting with my children. I never read to my older child and all he is interested in is his D.S. but my PCHP child loves his books'*

*'Watching my child reading and exploring colours, shapes, looking so happy, she wants us to read more to her. I never had that as a child. I have actually learnt myself from the books. I enjoy it too. I hope to get involved with the college when she goes to primary school'*

*'My reading has come on better and I am calm. I am a lot more relaxed and my child is the same with me. I love reading to him and we enjoy playing together. The Home Visitor is great in giving me tips and looks at all the different sides. I have said it to my family, friends and the intervention team'*





# Questions?





## Docklands Early Numeracy Week



# NEYAI Numeracy Curriculum Objectives

(Taken from *Aistear*)

	Babies (0-18 months)	Toddlers (12 months – 3 years)	Young Children (2½ -6 years)
<b>Communication</b>	Watches, listens and responds to adults when they use Mathematical language	Responds to and understands Mathematical language in everyday situations (p. 38)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop basic counting skills (1-10)</li> <li>• Develop an understanding of the meaning and use of numbers in their environment</li> <li>• Understands and uses positional language such as up, down, out, behind</li> </ul>
<b>Exploring and Thinking</b>	<p>Experience and begin to understand simple cause and effect</p> <p>Develop the concept of object permanence</p>	<p>Compare, sort, categorise and order things</p> <p>Develop a sense of time, shape, size, space and place</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classify, sequence, sort, match, look for and create patterns and shapes</li> <li>• Develop an understanding of concepts like measures (weight, height, volume, money, time)</li> <li>• Use mathematical symbols to give and record information, to describe and make sense of their own and others experience</li> <li>• Develop higher-order thinking skills such as problem-solving, predicting, analysing, questioning and justifying</li> </ul>

# Themes for 2014-2017

	Year 1 2014-2015	Year 2 2015-2016	Year 3 2016-2017
Term 1	Positional Language	Sequence and Pattern	Money
Term 2	Counting	Time	Number
Term 3	Shapes	Measurement	Symbols in the Environment



# Early Numeracy Working Group

- Chosen for your interest in the project and in early numeracy as well as your ability to lead the project in their setting.
- Meet 4 times a year approx. (June, September and December 2011)
- Communicating between services and working group (open, honest, critical, responsible)
- Responsible for developing, planning and implementing the programme at front-line service delivery level using the community action research process





# Role of the Working Group

- Bring and share early numeracy expertise and experience from working with various age-groups
- Network with other settings
- Input re. Theme/ Focus of Curriculum Priority Week
- Input re. Resources, Activities etc.
- Communicate info. to their staff team
- Involve wider community



**Co-ordinate curriculum priority week & related events in school/setting e.g. awareness of existing resources to complement c.p. wk activities**



















# Docklands Early Numeracy Activity Week- Young Children- Pre-schoolers/Reception/Junior Infants

Words to use: Up, down, front, back, in, out, on top, over, under, beside, behind, In front of, next to, fit, inside, outside, between, around, on, off, into, out of, far, near, close to, forward, backward, across, left and right.

Child's Name:

## Positional / Directional Language

Using positional / directional language when playing, singing and talking with your child, will help them to learn these important early numeracy concepts. Try these activities each day with your child and don't forget the rhymes at the back of the card.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
				
Parent's Signature				
Play the games with your child, and talk about what you are both doing using the positional/ directional language	<b>Hide and Seek</b> Play Hide and Seek with your child hiding first and you looking for them.  Talk through what you are doing, "where's Lily gone, is she behind the curtain, under the table, beside the couch?  Swap over and let your child find you.	<b>Treasure Hunt</b> Choose an item to hide (e.g. child's favourite toy) and give your child hints to find it, using the positional language listed at top of card.  Swap over and get your child to hide the item and give you directions to find it.	<b>I spy</b> Play the game 'I spy' and give your child clues about the item using positional language, e.g. It is Next To the mirror, Under the bed, Inside the shed.  Swap over and let your child give you clues and practice their positional language.	<b>Obstacle Course</b> Set up a small obstacle course in the house, using cushions, chair, stool, table, blanket and anything else you can think of.  Give your child directions, "Jump over the cushion, Go under the table, Go around the chair"  If you are brave enough, swap over and let your child guide you!
Do you think your child enjoyed each activity? Please tick a smiley face.	<input type="radio"/>  <input type="radio"/>  <input type="radio"/> 	<input type="radio"/>  <input type="radio"/>  <input type="radio"/> 	<input type="radio"/>  <input type="radio"/>  <input type="radio"/> 	<input type="radio"/>  <input type="radio"/>  <input type="radio"/> 
	<b>Friday</b>			
	Teacher, can I please have a sticker?			

# Docklands Early Numeracy Activity Week - Pre-schoolers/Reception Class/Junior Infants

Words to use: sign, traffic lights, lollipop man, map, shape, stop!, straight, arrow, turn, right, left, follow, bus stop, rain, wind, sunny, toilets, chemist

Child's Name:

## Symbol hunt!

Looking for and talking about symbols around you helps children's early numeracy. Try this activity each day with your child

Monday



On your way home from school find a traffic light  
and draw it when you get home

Tuesday



On your way home from school find a cycle lane  
and draw it when you get home

Parents Signature

Teacher can I  
have a sticker?

Dear Parent:

What do you think your child has learned from this activity?

New Language ☐ starting to recognise symbols ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents Signature

Teacher can I  
have a sticker?

### The Hokey Pokey

You put your right hand in, You put your right hand out, You put your right hand in, And you shake it all about,  
You do the hokey pokey and you turn yourself around that's what it's all about. Ooooooh hokey pokey pokey,  
Ooooooh hokey pokey pokey, Oooooooooo hokey pokey pokey and that's what it's all about!- **repeat** for left  
hand, right foot, left foot, head, whole self

NEYAI is funded by Atlantic Philanthropies, Mount Street Club Trust,  
The Department of Education and Skills and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs

**NEYAI** National Early Years  
Access Initiative  
Promoting Better Outcomes for Children & Families

  
**Early Learning Initiative**  
National College of Ireland

**Docklands Early  
Numeracy Project**

## Docklands Early Numeracy Activity Week

### Money - Key Vocabulary: Buy/sell, spend, coins, cent, how much, cost, price, cheap/expensive, change, too much/too little

Infant Class Teachers - try an activity with the children every day this week, use rhymes & songs (overleaf) as well as your own ideas to support and extend the activities.

#### Exploring, Thinking and Talking Time:

- Read the books, "The Elves and the Shoemaker", "When we go Shopping" and "Rumpelstitskin" with the children. Discuss the front cover and ask them what they think will happen in the story. As you read through the story highlight the money aspects. After reading the book a number of times ask the children to guess what will happen next. What could the characters in the story use the money for? What would the children use the money for if they had it?
- Children can draw/paint/create pictures based on the stories, ask them to sequence the picture in order of when they happen (start, middle and end).
- Help children come up with their own stories that include "euro money" in them. Write down the stories and get children to draw pictures to illustrate the story.
- Have a "Monies of the world project". Choose some of the world's main currencies and make a chart about world money. Ensure that every child's country currency is included. Some examples are included.
- Use the "Shopping Snap" cards to play snap with the children.
- In pairs get the children to make up shopping lists with the price of each item beside it. After the children have made play money using the money stampers (see construction play) give each pairing an amount of money. Together they must work out how much change they will get.

#### Construction Play:

- Using the money stampers and ink pads, let the children make their own money. Once they have made the money, you can use it for a variety of activities i.e. ask the children to collect and order the money in amounts from low-high.
- Get each child to make and design money boxes using old boxes, recycled materials or lollipop sticks.
- Using recyclable materials help the toddlers to make piggy money boxes. This could be a nice activity to invite parents in to help out with.
- Get children to design their own bank notes (see template included in box).
- Give one of the wooden money boxes provided for each table of children. Set up a "Reward System" for the week where children can get "paper" money for tasks/activities they do. At the end of the week children can count their money and use it to pay for an activity/reward (have a price list of rewards for them to choose from).
- Using sand, allow the children to make roads and use blocks etc. to make toll bridges. Collect the money from the cars as the drive through.
- Using blocks/recycled cartons, get the children to make small model banks and shops. Using small world figures/dolls they can role play shop and bank.

#### Role Play:

- Before the numeracy week starts, ask children to bring in cleaned and empty product containers from home (cereal boxes, detergent cartons, egg cartons etc.) and set up a shop in the home corner.
- Role-play a variety of different situations with children that involve both time and money (See USB key for role play resources), e.g.:
  - Shop - using cash register, groceries and shopping basket from last year's resource box.
  - Restaurant - plates, cups, cutlery, food, notepads for orders, money and cash register.
  - Bank-tellers, money, withdrawal and lodgement slip etc.
- At the end of the week organise a small "jumble sale" as a school event. Ask parents to give each child one item to bring in for the jumble sale. Get the children to price the items and sell them to the other children in the school. Decide on a charity/a cause in the school to raise the money for.
- Children can role play the stories "The Elves and the Shoemaker", "When we go shopping" and "Rumpelstitskin" focusing on the "money" and "gold" in the stories.

#### Outdoor Activities:

- If possible take the children on a trip to experience one of the role play situations (train journey, shop, bank, post office etc.).
- Like pirates, go on a treasure hunt outdoors/in the school hall. At each clue, the children collect and count amount of money, to win the treasure!
- As part of the "Reward System" mentioned under construction play, have a price list for PE activities, children can earn "paper money" for each activities e.g. one hop = 1c, etc.
- Set up an obstacle course where children can earn "paper money" for activities e.g. get up a basketball hoop/bucket, every time the children get a ball into the hoop/bucket they earn 1c.

**Assessment: Does he/she begin to understand and play with money? Does he/she begin to use the language of money (more or less, how much, cent, euro)?**

# Indicative Evidence

(Veerman and van Yperen 2007)

- ✓ 1,905 children (0-6 years) and their families involved
- ✓ Children's numeracy skills have improved and they are scoring to, if not above in some cases, national norms in Maths.

*'The children really grasped the concept, reinforced at home and in school. Maths was great fun.'*

- ✓ Parents are more involved in their children's learning (91% N=345)
- ✓ 93% (N=353) of parents would recommend the numeracy week/activities to a friend.



# Teachers' Perspectives – Numeracy Week

- The early numeracy week worked well as it involved the whole school. It was very well organised and created a communal numeracy vibe throughout the week which stimulated the children in the area of counting and naming numbers. Great to see parents enthused. It was an opportunity for parents, children & teachers to work together while having fun*
- The children enjoyed bringing the cards home every day and were delighted every morning bringing it back in to show their picture they had drawn. They enjoyed finding different amounts of objects at home and counting them for their parents*
- I enjoyed the maths priority games where the parents came in for 30 minutes and took a number station and played the activity with the small group of children. It was a celebration of the children's learning in maths for their parents to witness. The main thing was the children had fun while working with parents and teachers*





## Parents' Perspectives – Numeracy Week

*It helped me to understand simple things I can do at home with my child to help improve his numeracy skills. Helped me realize things I was not doing and wasn't aware I should be doing with my child to work on those skills*

*The three best things about the programme are: it's a great way to interact with your child, it's a good way for your child to learn, and the children enjoy learning through fun activities and games.*

*I really enjoyed being able to spend quality time with my child and watch her learning. I had forgotten about doing this type of stuff with my child.*



# Questions?



# Educational Guidance

- Raise students educational and career expectations
- Develop children's problem-solving and higher-order thinking skills
- To increase parental knowledge and involvement in their children's education



# Partnering with Corporate Leaders

The success of the ELI is underpinned by corporate support – financially and more importantly through management engagement and employee involvement.

Our partners are:

- Demonstrating corporate social responsibility and sharing their time and skills
- Serving as potential educational and career role models for local children and young people
- Expanding the minds, hopes and ambitions of this – and future – generations
- Building a high-achieving, supporting and cohesive community in the areas in which we work



## Over 256 employees from ELI's corporate partners volunteered last year.

All enjoyed their experience of volunteering and would recommend the experience to a colleague. It gave them the opportunity to make a contribution to the community and wider society, while being a rewarding, thought-provoking and interesting experience.

*Small contributions of time can make such a positive change to both those volunteering and to the community*

*First-hand knowledge that those in the corporate world are human, normal and approachable.*



*Got to meet the REAL people  
Learned more about the working world  
It has helped me want to do something important with my life.*

# Indicative Evidence

(Veerman and van Yperen 2007)

- ✓ 134 children (0-6 years) and their families involved this year
- ✓ Children's educational aspirations are improving and they are scoring above national norms.

*'It really got them thinking about third level education and what they needed to do in order to get them into the job they needed.'*

- ✓ Learnt a lot from the project (95% N=195)
- ✓ Hope to go to college (85% N=174)
- ✓ Better prepared for second level (79% N=161)



# Student Feedback

- You have to be ready for the future - you have to be more confident and prepared – you have to work hard - you have lots of choices - there are lots of different jobs to work at.
- We got to meet the REAL people (corporate judges) and learnt what other people have to say about you - I have learned how to speak in public to people we didn't know and how to work on a project and present it!
- I loved it and I'd love to do it again and I thought the judges were great.
- I learnt that you must study hard to have a good job and that anything is possible for the future
- It was one of the best days of my life.





# Corporate Feedback

*Great presentation skills - all team members greeted me with a hand shake and introduced themselves. It was very professional. Their enthusiasm was infectious and I was impressed with their use of tools such as survey monkey and google chrome. It was clear that the team put a lot of work in and wanted the opportunity to tell me about it. Well done!*

*The team had a very in-depth knowledge about their subject. They were very polite and I think they will succeed in whatever they do. They are a credit to their parents and teacher.*



# Questions?



# Conclusions/ Recommendations

- Process of **community action research** provides evidence of effective implementation as well as enabling continuous improvement
- **Aistear and the Primary School Curriculum works** as curriculum frameworks for planning, implementation & evaluation
- **Genuine community involvement** in decision process is crucial (through Working Group and Consortium Meetings).
- **Multiple methods for parents** to engage with (workshops, home based activity cards, Facebook and Curriculum Priority events in ECCE Services, Schools, through PHNs, Home Visitors, After Schools and Libraries)
- **Community wide focus** fosters multi-sectoral working, involvement of parents, curriculum planning and better outcomes for children.



# Thank You



For more information:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Early-Learning-Initiative/141642265960889>

[https://mobile.twitter.com/ELI\\_Docklands](https://mobile.twitter.com/ELI_Docklands)

<http://www.ncirl.ie/ELI>

