



l'Organisation Mondiale pour l'Éducation Préscolaire

OMEP: World Organisation for Early Childhood Education

OMEP Éireann: An Eagraíocht um Oideachas agus Chúram Luath-Óige

Organización Mundial para la Educación Preescolar

Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework: Dr. Mary Daly, NCCA

AISTEAR is the curriculum framework in Ireland for all children from birth to six years and is available at www.ncca.ie/earlylearning. *Aistear* sets out broad aims and goals for children's learning and development and gives practical information, ideas and suggestions to help adults provide fun, motivating, and challenging experiences for children. *Aistear* can be used by parents and practitioners in the range of early childhood settings in Ireland including homes, childminding settings, full and part-time daycare settings, sessional settings and junior and senior infant classes in primary schools.

Aistear has four components:

- ✦ *Principles and Themes* describes children's learning and development.
- ✦ *Guidelines for Good Practice* discusses partnerships with parents, interactions, play, and assessment.
- ✦ *User Guide* gives practical information about using *Aistear* and includes sample plans and answers to some frequently asked questions.

Key Messages summarises important points from the research used in developing *Aistear*

Aistear presents children's learning and development through four interconnected, colour-coded themes. These are:

- Well-being
- Identity and Belonging
- Communicating
- Exploring and Thinking.

Guidelines offer support in using *Aistear*'s principles and themes. These describe good practice in building partnerships between parents and practitioners
learning and developing through interactions
learning and developing through play
supporting learning and development through assessment.

An online *Aistear Toolkit* provides a variety of resources to help practitioners use *Aistear*. These are available at www.ncca.ie/aistear toolkit.



Registered Childminders are Quality Childminders!

National Childminding Week, 20th – 26th, March, 2010/Survey **Results**

On Monday 22nd March at 10am in Buswell's Hotel, Dublin, Minister for Children & Youth Affairs, Mr. Barry Andrews TD, officially launched **National Childminding Week**, March 20th – 26th. The theme for National Childminding Week is "**Kidz Just want to have Fun – Lets go out to Play**". Patricia Murray, the CEO of *Childminding Ireland* launched the results of the **National Childminding Survey** undertaken by *Childminding Ireland* annually to assess the social and economic experiences of Childminders in Ireland.

Results from the National Survey of Registered Childminders show that Childminding is by far the most popular form of non-parental childcare in Ireland. Over 55 % of pre-school children are minded by a Childminder, while 85% of after-school care of Children is provided by a Childminder. The National Survey of Registered Childminders reveals an emphasis on Quality and Career Focus with 59% of respondents having a nationally accredited childcare qualification and 64% citing training and on-going development in the field as important to them. It is also clear from the survey that Registered Childminders strive to excel within their chosen career and the stats for training show this, with 86% with First Aid training, 59% of the respondents having FETAC Nationally accredited Childcare Qualification and 72% having completed the Quality Awareness Programme for Childminding and 56 % with a non childcare third level qualification. The majority of respondents have been childminding for between 2 – 5 years (37%) with a further 37% Childminding for longer than 5 years. 11% took up Childminding in the past year. Childminders on average have three children in their care with 93% of parents having a contract in place with parents and 86% reported being valued by parents as the most important issue for them. The Survey shows that 16% of the Childminders surveyed do not have children while 84% have Childcare responsibilities.

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