

Young Knocknaheeny

Prevention and Early Intervention Programme



Background

In the 2011 Programme for Government, the Government signaled their intention to fund a targeted Early Childhood Programme; building on existing projects. Seeing this, a small group of people working in services in Knocknaheeny began to look at some of the Early Childhood Projects across the Country to see what was involved and what benefit this approach could have for Knocknaheeny. A number of these existing projects were visited.

These discussions led to the holding of a Prevention and Early Intervention Seminar in Knocknaheeny in March 2012. Over 50 delegates attended the seminar with the aim of exploring models of prevention and early intervention in child and family development. The seminar included a presentation on the model which had been successfully piloted by Young Ballymun.

At that meeting, volunteers from a range of agencies agreed to form the Young Knocknaheeny Steering Group with the intention of learning from those existing models and progressing an early intervention programme for Knocknaheeny, including securing funding where appropriate.

In 2012 the budget made reference to a new targeted early childhood programme, which was then officially launched in April 2013. The Young Knocknaheeny Consortium decided to apply to the programme and was approved to be part of the project in November 2013.

What will we do?

The aim of the Young Knocknaheeny Programme is to improve outcomes for all children and their families from pre-birth to the age of 6. We plan to create a more integrated, area-based approach to service planning and delivery in the early years, focusing on: -

- Health and well-being
- Speech, language and literacy
- Pre-school and early education

Who is involved?

At the seminar held in March 2012, a consortium was formed from those individuals who volunteered, they include: -

- *Katherine Harford*; NICHE
- *Ger Phillips*, Springboard
- *Jenna Russell*; Barnardos
- *Dermot Casey*, Springboard
- *Ingrid O’Riordan*; School Completion Programme
- *Ger O’Donovan*; St Mary’s on the Hill School
- *Ken Foley*; Padre Pio School
- *Angela Kalaitzake*; The Family Centre
- *June Hamill*; Before 5 Family Centre
- *Aileen Malone*; Kidscope
- *Eileen Kearney*; HSE
- *Margret Curtin*; UCC
- *Nuala Stewart*; RAPID / Regeneration Programme
- Independent Chair; *Pat Corbett*
- Independent Volunteer; *Eugene O’Connor*

NICHE agreed to act as the lead agency in any funding applications and to undertake some administrative and financial tasks on behalf of the group.

Where will it cover?

The geographical areas covered by Young Knocknaheeny are – Knocknaheeny – Holyhill – Churchfield – Gurranabraher.

As the programme develops, it is hoped to include adjacent areas such as Farranree and Fairhill.

Want to know more?

If you want to find out more about the Young Knocknaheeny Programme, contact any member of the steering group.

Progress to date

Learning from others

Following the initial seminar, strong links have been developed with Young Ballymun in order to learn from their experience. A practice visit took place in late 2012 and this helped the Young Knocknaheeny consortium to define an overall programme of work.

A small amount of funding was provided by Cork City Council in 2013 to enable the consortium to develop its ideas further.

A seminar was held in Terence MacSwiney School in October 2013 on infant mental health. The purpose of the seminar was to share the model which is currently being delivered in North Cork and to explore how that model might apply in Knocknaheeny.

The ABC programme

In May 2013 the steering group submitted an application for funding to the Government's Area Based Childhood Programme (ABC programme).

The ABC programme aims to improve outcomes for children and young people through evidence-based interventions and a particular emphasis on improving the alignment and effectiveness of services.

Over 50 proposals were submitted from consortiums across the country and 12 consortiums, including the one from Knocknaheeny have been invited onto the next stage of the programme.

Whilst **no final approval of funding** has been agreed at this stage, the proposal has been approved to move to the next stage. This next stage will include more detailed development and design work which will set out exactly what the Young Knocknaheeny Steering Group will deliver over the following three years.

The deadline for submitting this more detailed proposal is June 2014. But, we hope to try and fast-track this application so that it can be submitted to the Government for formal approval earlier.

In order to do this design work, we have set up 4 design groups; these groups will engage with a broad range of partners and stakeholders to inform and shape the specific interventions and activities.

In 10 years time...

We would like to see an integrated, child and family centered, area-based system of service delivery to children and families which leads to significant improvements in outcomes for children and their families.

We plan to do this by developing four strands: -

- Strand 1: will focus on children 0-3 and their parents; encompassing ante and post-natal care, infant health and well being and infant mental health.
- Strand 2: will focus on early learning; encompassing local crèches, pre-schools and early starts to improve children's emotional well being and readiness for school.
- Strand 3: will focus on pro-social behavior and self-regulation for children 3-6 years.
- Strand 4: will focus on oral language and literacy; building teachers' expertise and parents' capacity to foster their child's language and literacy development.

Each strand will focus on improvements in service delivery and planning, and capacity building for children and parents, and the staff who work with them.

We will also have an evaluation group. This group will be responsible for measuring the impact and outcomes of all of the activities which are delivered as part of the Young Knocknaheeny Programme to ensure that we are achieving the desired outcomes and to share our experiences and practice.