

GETTING READY TO LEARN (GrtL)

The Getting Ready to Learn Project aims to support pre-school education settings with DE-funded places to encourage and develop parental involvement in children's early learning to ensure maximum parental contribution at a crucial time in children's early brain development.

The Getting Ready to Learn Project is part of Workstream 1 of the Early Intervention Transformation Programme (EITP), a Northern Ireland Executive/Atlantic Philanthropies Delivering Social Change Signature Programme, funded jointly by the Delivering Social Change fund, the Department of Health, Department of Education, Department of Justice, Department for Communities, Department for the Economy and The Atlantic Philanthropies. EITP aims to improve outcomes for children and young people across Northern Ireland through embedding early intervention approaches. A key transformational element is the collaborative working across agencies and services; vital to bringing about genuine improvement.

EITP workstream 1 focuses on the provision of a universal service which seeks to equip, support and empower parents to provide their children with the best start in life. There are three elements within workstream 1:

Getting Ready for Baby: focused on transforming maternal care, both hospital and community based, from the initial GP appointment to delivery (Co-ordinated by the Public Health Agency)

Getting Ready for Toddler: focused on embedding early intervention in core health visiting, with a focus on improving the social and emotional development of children attending pre-school (Co-ordinated by the Public Health Agency)

Getting Ready to Learn: focused on improving outcomes for children in pre-school by engaging and empowering parents to help them create and sustain positive home learning environments (Co-ordinated by Education Authority on behalf of DE)

Within *Getting Ready to Learn*, four key thematic approaches have been identified as particularly relevant to parents of pre-school children:

1. Big Bedtime Read
2. Education Works in Pre-school
3. Happy Healthy Kids
4. Ages & Stages, 3-4

Currently, over 350 pre-school settings are participating; holding workshops for parents to help them understand:

- how children develop, including attachment and brain development;
- the importance of parent-child relationships for the child's development and behaviour;
- the importance of childhood education and learning; and
- the importance of healthy lifestyles and diet.

Parents are given advice on how to support their child's development at home; enriching language and engaging in quality play. There is an emphasis on developing relationships, establishing

positive behaviour and consistent routines. Where there are specific needs, practitioners liaise with relevant health professionals and other agencies, sign-posting to available services.

It is anticipated that settings will aim to strengthen links with local family hubs to raise awareness for families of what support is available and how this can be accessed, as needs arise.

All settings delivering the NI Pre-School Education Curriculum are eligible to participate.

The next call for applications will open in March and close at the end of April 2017. For further information please go to the following website: www.eani.org.uk/schools/getting-ready-to-learn or contact:

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Children from Ballycrogan Playgroup (Bangor) enjoying their Big Bedtime Read.



Playaway (Larne) Parent Session for Ages and Stages using everyday objects to support learning.

