



CDI Annual Report 2016:

Chairperson's Foreword:



There was a strong sense of consolidation for CDI in 2016, with much of our work being well established, and supported by experienced, knowledgeable staff. Indeed, we understand that access to our Doodle Den and Chit Chat services is being actively sought out by parents who have heard about their efficacy from other families.

It was regrettable that our Doodle Den delivery was unable to continue in Limerick in the academic year commencing September 2016, whilst another local school was unable to take on delivery, due to the lateness of funding confirmation. Along with the other ABC areas, CDI has worked closely with our funders to highlight the importance of effective timelines and decision-making processes.

There were considerable staff changes during the year, which inevitably impacts on the demands on staff. As always however, the Board of CDI is impressed by the flexibility, good humour and hard work of the staff. They not only adapt and respond to changing circumstances, but do so with style and laughter!

This is also an opportunity to thank our wonderful Board of Management, who continue to advise, guide and support, always giving generously of their time and expertise. Our work would not be possible without the continued funding from the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, and The Atlantic Philanthropies, to whom we are very grateful along with their commissioned supports through Pobal and the CES. Our thanks also to the many organisations with whom we work both formally and informally, and of course the children and families who remain our focus.

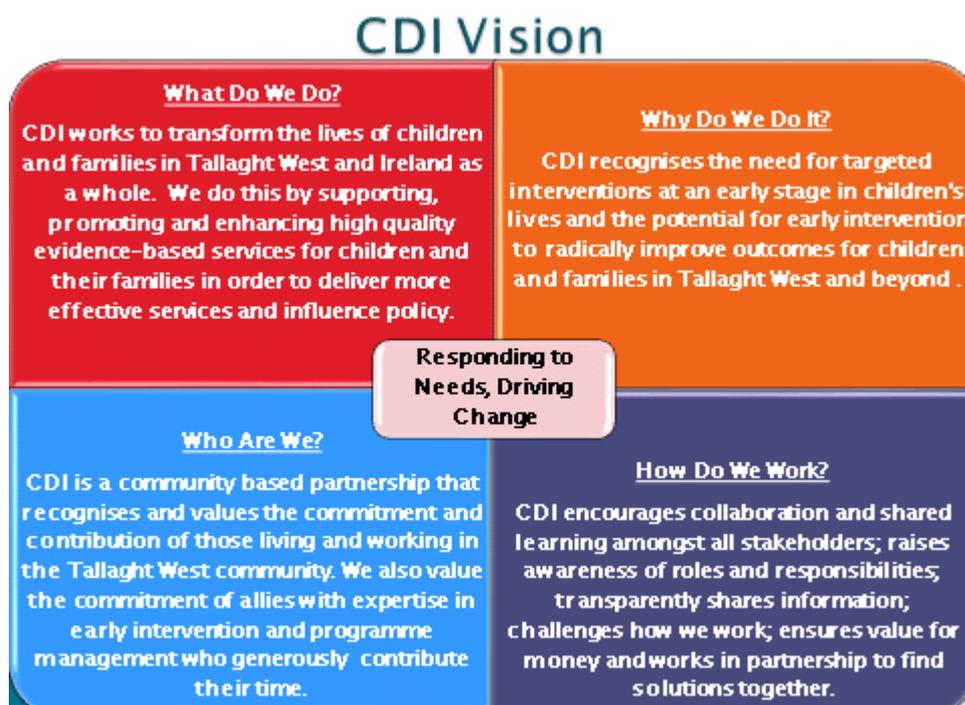
Finally, we are pleased to be part of a “new community”, in the guise of the 13 ABC areas. We welcome this national initiative, and the resources it brings, and also acknowledge the collegiality and openness of our colleagues in the other areas. This has offered us new opportunities to share and learn together, as well as a renewed energy and divergence of approaches, which is extremely positive.

We are proud of our work, and excited about our future.

Dr. Suzanne Guerin,
Chair
CDI Board.

CDI Vision:

In February 2016, the Board of Management and CDI team reviewed and revised the vision statement. The following was agreed:



Governance:

CDI takes great pride in our governance arrangements as they give us and our funders' reassurance that our approaches, spending and strategy maximise the investment in our work.

The Board of CDI is chaired by Dr. Suzanne Guerin. In 2016 there were on average 12 Board members and nine meetings of the Board. The CDI Board members are all extremely experienced, knowledgeable and bring valuable contributions to the work of CDI. For more detailed information on our board members and for board functions see <http://www.twcdi.ie/what-we-offer/board/>

There are established and efficient governance and sub committee structures supporting CDIs compliance with regulations and the Charities Governance Code. For more information on CDI Governance see <http://www.twcdi.ie/about-us/governance-structure/>.

CDI has signed up to the Governance Code and Standards and had an annual audit conducted by Pobal in June 2016.

We were delighted to welcome a new member to the Board in 2016: Brendan Cremen who is a Director of Enterprise and Commercialisation for Nova, UCD. CDI looks forward to working with Brendan and is appreciative of the considerable expertise he brings with him.

The CDI team consists of 13 staff with a range of backgrounds and disciplines; all are hard working, professional and work collaboratively to achieve the organisational goals. In 2016 we expressed fond farewells to Mary Dolan who was our Development Officer for the ATTI Programme; Suzanne Cowhey who was our Limerick Quality Specialist and Bernadette Rock, our Research and Evaluation Officer. We also welcomed Linda Mullally who provides administration support for the CDI team, Deirdre Kennedy the ATTI Development Officer and also Angelena Murphy the Family Links Co-ordinator. Grainne Smith, Michelle Butler and Michelle Quinn all took leave during the year and we look forward to them re-joining us in 2017. For a full list of the CDI team see <http://www.twcdi.ie/what-we-offer/the-team/>

CDI Intervention Developments 2016:

In 2016, CDI coordinated seven interventions, five in Tallaght and three in Limerick, the latter being Doodle Den, Doodle Families and Family Links. Six of the programmes were funded under the ABC programme, whilst Family Links was initially funded through the Katherine Howard Foundation and the Community Foundation of Ireland and more recently by the Irish Prison Service.

- **Antenatal to Three Initiative (ATTI) 0-3 Programme:**

The Inter-agency Steering Group overseeing ATTI continued to develop in focus and clarity during 2016. Seven meetings were held, with an average attendance of eight members. A number of events were coordinated in order to draw attention to the needs of families expecting babies or with young children, and to support improved connections between services. These included:

- A speed networking event, attended by 33 participants;
- Maternity Strategy Seminar;
- Infant Mental Health Masterclasses;
- Training on managing Challenging Behaviours in Preschool Settings.

A significant development towards the end of 2016 was the delivery of the Infant Mental Health Masterclasses. With the support of colleagues from the Youngknocknaheeny ABC Programme, almost 30 practitioners from a range of disciplines and sectors took part in what proved to be highly motivating and extremely practical training.

It is anticipated that the year ahead will see the establishment of an Infant Mental Health Network for Tallaght, which will support practitioners in mainstreaming a focus on the key attachment and developmental processes for this age group.

- **Parental Support in Early Years**

Our nine Parent-Carer Facilitators continued to work closely with early year's staff, parents, and a range of services throughout the year. The PCFs offer a mix of formal and informal supports to parents. Examples of the informal support are: coffee mornings; nutrition courses; personal development courses; family days; play initiatives; information; support on school transitions and a range of one to one supports to parents on a wide range of issues. They also deliver a range of Parents Plus Programmes to parents, including the Early Years Programme and Parenting When Separated, with 22 courses completed and 56 parents completing courses. The PCFs worked with almost 600 families in Tallaght West, 250 adults and 195 children being referred to various agencies for support. There were ten home visits made to support families. Seven services ran parent and toddler groups attended by 95 children and 70 adults. To view a video on CDI's Early Years study and its evaluation findings please click on the following link - <http://vimeo.com/81506829>.

- **Chit Chat Speech and Language Therapy Service:**

The SLT service offers therapeutic support to children, and also works with parents, teachers and early year's practitioners to maximise their development. In 2016, Chit Chat was delivered in Tallaght West by two CDI Speech and Language Therapists. There were 94 children seen for direct intervention and in total 448 therapy sessions were attended. Eleven coffee mornings took place this year which were attended by 68 parents.

A large focus this year was working closely with teachers to support speech and language development in the classroom. Language Land, an in-class programme aimed at improving the speech and language skills of children in Early Years and Primary Education was completed by Early Years staff and primary school teachers. Eight early years services and two primary schools took part in the Language Land training, involving 59 Early Years staff with 502 children being reached by the programme. Also in 2016, 16 Early Years Practitioners completed the Elklan 3-5's Training Programme which was delivered by the CDI Speech and Language Therapists. Early Years staff successfully completed portfolios and gained accreditation with Ascents Awarding Organisation in the UK. For more information see <http://www.twcdi.ie/what-we-offer/chit-chat/>

- **Doodle Den**

2016 was another busy year for Doodle Den. In the 2015/2016 academic year 345 children participated in Doodle Den through 23 groups in Tallaght, Dublin City Centre and Limerick. This included six new groups in Dublin 1, Dublin 3 and Dublin 7 which were delivered through the Docklands and Grangegorman ABC Programmes. The Doodle Den assessments for the 2015/2016 academic year reported average gains of 18% in phonics, 52% in their writing skills and 58% in sight vocabulary. In September 2016, 255 children in 17 groups commenced delivery of Doodle Den in schools and community centres located in Tallaght, Carlow and Dublin City Centre.

- **Doodle Families**

2016 saw the completion of the evaluation of Doodle Families, which was delivered in three Limerick primary schools. Subsequently, we continued to develop the programme manual in order to reflect the evaluation findings, and gained valuable insights into the complexities of planning and delivering a family-focused literacy intervention.

- **Restorative Practices Programme:**



Restorative practices are an evidence-based approach that help us develop and sustain strong and happy organisations and communities by actively developing good relationships, preventing the escalation of conflict and handling conflict in a creative and healthy manner. 2016 was another interesting and productive year for our Restorative Practices (RP) Programme.

RP Training:

CDI delivered RP training to a total of 388 people during 2016. Trainees came to CDI from near and far and from all walks of life and our RP Trainers were out in various parts of the country bringing the training to networks and organisations. We collated the results of our training evaluations which are completed by each participant and our 2016 results showed high levels of satisfaction among our RP Training Course participants:

- 96% of participants reported being satisfied or highly satisfied with our “Getting Started With RP” courses;
- 87% of participants in our “Getting Started With RP” courses said that they were pretty likely or definitely going to use the RP skills that they had been trained in;
- Satisfaction with our RP Upskilling Courses was even higher – with 100% of participants reported being satisfied or highly satisfied;
- 91% of participants said that our RP Upskilling training had improved their relationship building skills a lot;
- 88% of participants said that our RP Upskilling training had improved their problem solving skills a lot; and
- 96% of participants said that our RP Upskilling training had improved their conflict resolution skills a lot.

Our RP Summer Courses for teachers continued to develop in 2016, with CDI providing three courses to a total of forty one participants and one Training of RP Trainers for Schools course for eleven participants. 98% of participants in our RP Summer Courses for Teachers reported that the courses were of good quality and that they were professionally enabling and relevant to the work of schools. The feedback from the RP Summer courses was very positive and a testament to the commitment to quality and skills of our RP Trainers. One participant put it very succinctly by saying:

“This course was one of the best courses I have ever done. I didn’t know anything about R.P. before this course but now I see the benefits of it in all aspects of life home and school. Go raibh mile maith agaibh.”

Restorative Practices Ireland:

CDI continued to coordinate and support Restorative Practices Ireland (RPI) throughout 2016. RPI is an all-island forum with a focus on the strategic development, promotion and integration of restorative approaches across the life cycle. It was a busy year including work to progress QQI accreditation options and co-hosting an all-Ireland conference with the Restorative Justice Forum (NI).



The conference, “Restorative Connections: From Parlour to Parliament”, was held in Dundalk in May and attracted more than one hundred delegates from all across the country. Feedback from participants was very positive in terms of both the formal and informal conference content and the full report can

be accessed here: <http://www.restorativepracticesireland.ie/restorative-connections-conference-report-now-available/>

In terms of options for accreditation of RP Training, we agreed with the City of Dublin Education and Training Board that they would work with CDI and RPI to submit RP training modules to QQI for validation. Three modules at QQI Levels 4, 5 and 6 were submitted to QQI in August 2016 and they are being considered as part of an overall review of standards that QQI is undertaking.

In the second half of the year, CDI recruited a consultant to support RPI in establishing the organisation as an independent legal entity with a five-year business plan aimed at making RPI sustainable into the future. Work got underway to consult with RPI members and affiliates on the potential for a national RP organisation, and this will progress in the year ahead.

For more information on our Restorative Practices Programme see <http://www.twcdi.ie/what-we-offer/restorative-practice/>

7) Family Links:

This year saw the Family Links initiative expanding from Limerick prison into Wheatfield prison with 10 fathers completing the formal parenting programme and five of their partners doing so in the community. An evaluation of Family Links in Limerick prison was carried out by the University of Limerick and from the recommendations arising

from that report a bespoke programme was designed following consultation with IPS staff, the Parents Plus Charity, teachers in prison and other stakeholders. Bespoke DVDs were also developed to support the delivery of the programme to participants with unique needs. These DVDs were filmed in Wheatfield Prison and proved to be highly relevant for the participants. A visitor's information brochure on Family Links was also developed and disseminated in Wheatfield Prison.

Effective links in the community were established with Tusla co-facilitating the delivery of the programme with the partners in the community. The women's programme was delivered in St. Oliver's Training Centre situated beside Wheatfield Prison. During the course the families were allowed access to a private family room to put into practice some of the tools and guidance they were given in the weekly parenting sessions. Following the completion of the course the families were brought together for a graduation ceremony.

Staff from all of the visitor's centres were brought together for a networking event during the year to share ideas, approaches and best practice, and it is intended to maintain these links and peer support in the year ahead. The full evaluation report, which will be launched by Minister Frances Fitzgerald in early 2017, can be accessed on the website. <http://www.twcdi.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Final-Family-Links-Evaluation-Report-January-2017-1.pdf>

Research Developments:

CDI has a commitment to using research to inform our work as well as being a producer of evidence through our independent evaluations. For more information on these evaluations see <http://www.twcdi.ie/research-policy/evaluation-reports/>

With the ending of our funding under the Prevention and Early Intervention Programme (PEIP), this aspect of our work has reduced significantly. However, we continued independent evaluations in relation to ATTI and Doodle Families, whilst a substantial community survey was undertaken to follow-up on our previous studies ("How are our Kids?" (2004) and "How are our Families?" (2011)). This mixed methods research will be published in 2017.

Archiving of CDI data and sharing our social research data:

CDI currently has three datasets available for public use via the Irish Social Science Data archive <https://www.ucd.ie/issda/>, and it is hoped that others will follow. These datasets are now available for secondary research and teaching purposes by academics, researchers and post-graduate students. CDI's Archiving Toolkit explains the archiving process, and is available at http://www.twcdi.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/CDI-Sharing_Social_Research_web.pdf

These archived datasets relate to the following evaluations and can be found in the following locations:

- **Doodle Den:** Evaluation of the effectiveness of the Childhood Development Initiative's Doodle Den Literacy Programme, 2008-2011, <https://www.ucd.ie/issda/data/doodleden/>

- **Community Safety Initiative:** Evaluation of CDI's Community Safety Initiative: Community Safety Surveys, 2010 and 2011, <https://www.ucd.ie/issda/data/cdicommunitysafety/>
- **Mate Tricks:** An afterschool programme aimed at enhancing pro-social skills, Currently being uploaded to <https://www.ucd.ie/issda/data>

Communications:

CDI continued to disseminate the learning from our work in 2016 through a variety of means as detailed below.

Newsletters:

There were three newsletters developed and disseminated in 2016. To access these go to <http://www.twcdi.ie/newsletters/>

Press Releases:

We issued eight news releases in 2016. There was regular coverage in the local paper, (the Tallaght Echo) and also online on parenting and children's sites such as www.rollercoaster.ie One of the coverage items is attached (from the Tallaght Echo).

CDI Web stats:

In 2016 there were 12,102 sessions on www.twcdi.ie including 31,082 page views and 7,989 users. This level of website activity was slightly up on 2015 and 2014.

CDI Social Media:

Twitter

We had 370 followers on Twitter in January 2016 and this increased to approximately 470 by year end meaning that CDI added approximately 100 followers during the year. CDI sent or re-tweeted approximately 60 messages during the year. <https://twitter.com/twcdi>

Facebook

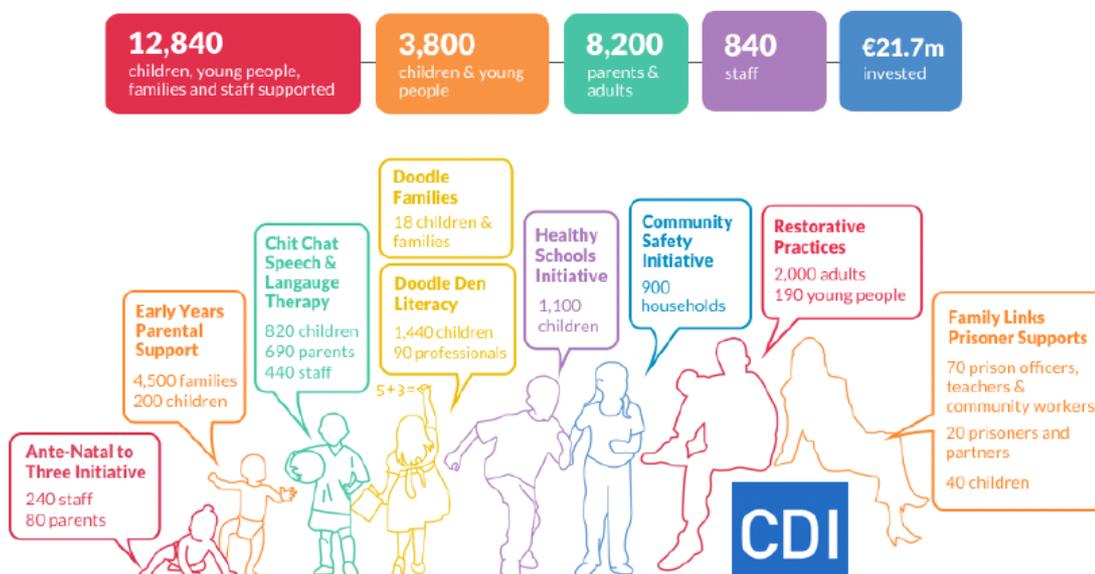
There were 24 items posted to Facebook during the year with approximately 230 likes received, bringing the total likes to 1,587 by year end.

CDI in Numbers:

An updated *CDI in Numbers* graphic telling the story of CDI's overall impact from 2007-2016 was produced in December 2016 (see below).

Childhood Development Initiative: Impacts and Outcomes

10 Years: Sept 2007 – Aug 2016



Publications: 13 Research Evaluations 14 Policy Briefs 3 Implementation Guides 3 Community Reports Quality Services Better Outcomes Workbook	Online Resources: Online Learning Videos www.doodleden.ie www.parenting24seven.ie www.restorativepracticesireland.ie	<i>Approximately 8,700 children live in Tallaght West meaning that CDI programmes have engaged with a major portion of the community and impacted on a significant amount of families in the area.</i>
--	--	--

Conferences & Presentations:

CDI presented at a number of events throughout 2016 and copies of the presentations are available on <http://www.twcdi.ie/resources/presentations/>

Interagency Collaboration:

Interagency collaboration is central to the work of CDI and to achieving the objective of improving outcomes for children and families in Tallaght West. CDI are represented on a number of committee structures locally and nationally and representatives from various organisations participate in our governance structures. Strong links are also maintained with the evaluation teams and the other ABC sites to maximise sharing the learning.

During 2016, the South Dublin Children and Young People’s Services Committee (CYPSC) was largely inactive but we look forward to this being revived in the near future. We engaged with the CYPSC to coordinate responses to the significant needs of families living in emergency accommodation, and hope to progress the delivery of practical supports in early 2017.

We were active in the Prevention and Early Intervention Network (<http://www.pein.ie/>) with our CEO continuing to chair this umbrella organisation. We also maintained close

links with a number of Tusla structures and continued to build effective working relationships with our colleagues in other ABC areas.

Financial Statements:

The 2016 audited financial statements are available on this link <http://wp.twcdi.combinedmedia.com/about-us/financial-statements/>

Conclusion:

During 2016, CDI again demonstrated its capacity to respond to changing contexts and demands, retaining an ability to problem solve, whilst holding its core values of being informed by evidence and focused on the needs of children and families. The uncertain funding for CDI specifically, and ABC generally, is obviously of concern for the Board, staff, and most of all, direct service delivery. We continue to commit significant resources to supporting and promoting the sustainability of our services, through engagement on a number of structures including the Prevention and Early Intervention Network, and through our comprehensive communications strategy. This work will continue throughout the year ahead.

The **A**rea **B**ased **C**hildhood Programme 2013–2017

