Strategic Plan
2017 - 2020
Mission Statement

To promote high quality, shared, evidence informed early childhood services for children, their families and communities.

Our Vision

Children are strong, competent and visible in their communities
Children are physically and emotionally healthy
Children are eager and able to learn
Children are respectful of difference
Children grow up in a peaceful, prosperous and shared region

Our Values

We believe in:

• Childhood - in its own right
• Listening to children - and those who care for them
• A strong voice for children
• Play, fun and creativity

• Parents as first educators
• Participation of children and families
• Community involvement and development
• Partnership
• Inclusion and diversity

• Excellence and evidence-based innovation
• Effective stewardship and governance
• A professional, committed and recognised workforce
• Valuing staff, members and their commitment
The strategy is underpinned by the Child Rights Ecology Model which demonstrates how the child contributes to his or her social environment while simultaneously being affected and served by it; thus highlighting the inter-connectivity of child development and societal well-being.

Research indicates that stronger links between each of the above circles result in children having healthier connections through positive relationships with their environment. However, if these support mechanisms are removed or become unstable through social or political breakdown, children’s developmental outcomes will be negatively impacted (Jessor, 1993; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000; Werner & Smith, 1982).
Deliver outcomes focused evidence informed early childhood services that are implemented to fidelity and robustly evaluated.

Communicate and disseminate a robust knowledge transfer strategy.

Develop the research capacity across the organisation and the early years sector.

Build, develop and sustain at least 3 centres of innovation and excellence in early childhood development.

Effective leadership and stewardship to ensure the provision of high quality value for money services to customers and stakeholders.
| Advocate, mobilise and influence early childhood policy developments that are rights based, evidence informed and appropriately resourced. |
| All staff embrace the principles and approaches of a social pedagogue model within a socio-ecological framework |
| Ensure financial governance and environmental robustness and sustainability. |
| Convene engage and be active participants in local national and international partnerships aimed at improving outcomes and advancing the rights of young children. |
| Implement human talent recruitment and development process that supports the appropriate selection, coaching, training and mentoring of Early Years staff and membership. |
| Maintain key support from funders through the provision of high quality outcomes based services that provide value for money. |
| Convene members through a vibrant Early Years Branch structure to support their advocacy to influence policies and practice for the delivery of excellent services for young children. |
| The development of early years Participatory Evaluation Pedagogy and practice to provide greater visibility for the work of Early Years and its members locally and nationally. |
| Develop a social franchising model and licence a number of services in a range of local and international markets. |
| Develop a strong evidence based policy that leads thinking in the development of early years services in Northern Ireland and beyond. |
| To invest in and support people to create change for young children through appropriate training and leadership programs for early years staff and those working in the early years sector. |
| Grow financial support through grant support tendering activities and revenue generating activities |
| Advocate for continuing and increasing levels of investment in the provision of effective outcomes based services for young children and their families. |
| Retention of the Gold Investors in People and achievement of the European Quality Mark. |
| Sustain and grow the financial sources available to support the work of the organisation and the early years sector. |
## Organisational Outcomes

### Inputs and Resources
- Early Years financial resources
- Atlantic Philanthropies financial resources
- EU and other financial resources
- DE financial resources to include SureStart
- International Advisory Group
- Staffing and staff development
- Programmatic content and resources
- Technical and ICT input
- Capital developments

### Activities
- Translation of evidence into a format that is useful to policy makers, service developers, change agents, trainers and parents
- Opportunities for evidence informed innovation and design of buildings for children are utilised
- Use of the developing evidence base to support early years specialists translate evidence into good practice on the ground in NI and beyond
- Examples of high quality evidence informed services for children available across NI
- Implementation of a strong evidence based policy capacity that leads thinking in development of early years in Ireland and beyond

### Early Outcomes
- Evidence based advice and information are available and accessible to parents and providers
- Parents are advocates for their children
- Parents value play
- Commissioning of and investment in services for young children is based on evidence
- Early Childhood services are seen as exemplars in respecting difference and sharing nationally and internationally
- Parents have an opportunity to be involved in their local early childhood services
- Early Childhood services are inclusive and shared
- The NI Executive implements integrated holistic evidence informed outcomes focused policies for young children
- Campaigns and policies promote children’s rights and needs
- Early Childhood workforce have access to training, support and professional development based on evidence
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Intermediate Outcomes</strong></th>
<th><strong>Penultimate Outcomes</strong></th>
<th><strong>Long Term Outcomes</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents have access to appropriate information about how young children learn and develop and their role in supporting this</td>
<td>Informed and engaged parents</td>
<td>Children in NI are strong, competent and visible in their communities</td>
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<td>Parents are supported to be advocates for their children</td>
<td>Access to high quality integrated early years services</td>
<td>Children in NI are physically and emotionally healthy</td>
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<td>High quality evidence informed services are available for all children</td>
<td>Early Childhood services contribute to a peaceful society</td>
<td>Children in NI respect difference</td>
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<td>Appropriate curriculum and inspection frameworks in place</td>
<td>Integrated, regulated commissioning framework</td>
<td>Children in NI are eager and able to learn</td>
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<td>A number of exemplars of physical environments for care, education and play are available</td>
<td>Active participation by parents and children in communities where they live</td>
<td>Children in NI grow up in a peaceful region</td>
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<tr>
<td>A highly skilled workforce in the field of early years care and education supported by highly skilled EYSs</td>
<td>Integrated, early education, childcare and play policies implemented</td>
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<td>Integrated early intervention and health</td>
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<td>Communities are actively involved in supporting young children’s development</td>
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<td>Diversity, respect for difference and sharing is evident in local communities</td>
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<td>Strong governance and leadership arrangements are in place that support the delivery of high quality services for young children</td>
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<td>Children are recognised and valued by their local communities</td>
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<td>Services are based on the rights of the child</td>
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Organisational Model

Better Outcomes For Children

Policy Influence and Change

Communications

Evidence Based Policy

Evidence Based Practice

Research

Practice Influence and Change

Evaluation

Existing Early Years Services

Knowledge and Translation

Better Outcomes For Communities