

ISSUE 3 | OCTOBER 2021

E-NEWSLETTER



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 - KIRKINRIOLA EARLY YEARS PLAYGROUP
 - THE ARK DAY NURSERY
 - LA PETITE ECOLE MONTESSORI
- GOOD RELATIONS EVENT
- RRDp CLOSURE EVENT

Early Years, in partnership with the National Childhood Network, implement the **Rural Respecting Difference Programme (RRDP)**, which is based on the **Media Initiative for Children (MIFC) Respecting Difference Programme**.

RRDP is specifically aimed at rural pre-school, daycare and after-school settings across Northern Ireland and the six border counties of Ireland targeting children 2-12 years old, their parents, teachers and leaders to increase awareness of diversity and develop respect for difference.

This project is supported by the European Union's PEACE IV Programme, managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).



Kirkinriola Early Years Playgroup, Ballymena

Introducing Tom—Coming to playgroup after having Covid-19

Kirkinriola Early Years playgroup is situated in the grounds of Kirkinriola primary school, in a rural area of Ballymena, Co. Antrim.

The staff team have recently trained in the MIFC Respecting Difference Programme and the Leader, Jayne Glass, remarked on how the children's attitudes towards each other have changed since the programme has been implemented. The children are more aware of the need to include others in their play and they love to point out the similarities between themselves and the persona dolls.

At Kirkinriola Early Years we were so pleased when our playgroup got to take part in the RRDP during 2021. We have found this programme very informative and the children enjoyed learning about different messages through the personas and other resources. With the current Covid-19 pandemic happening we have decided this year, to introduce our first persona, Tom, as coming to playgroup after having to stay at home and isolate

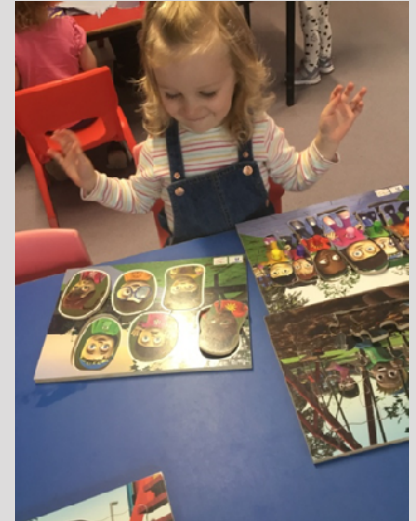
Through this Media Initiative for Children Programme, we benefitted from many resources such as a TV, a laptop, and internet connection. These resources have been so beneficial as we now can help children connect and learn through the internet, show the media messages on the TV and connect with other groups through different media forums. We are really looking forward to exploring all aspects of the Media Initiative for Children Programme during the preschool year.



For more information on the Rural Respecting Difference Programme contact:
Programmes Manager
Noletta Smyth
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The Ark Day Nursery, Portadown MIFC Puppets - Focusing on feelings and emotions

The Ark Day Nursery are situated in Portadown, Co. Armagh. They completed their training in January 2021, and began implementing the programme with the 2-3 year old children in the Toddler room. With this age group the main focus is on Feelings and Emotions.



"The boys and girls in The Ark Day Nursery have been having fun with the resources from the Media Initiative for Children (MIFC). They have been completing jigsaws and celebrating birthdays with their favourite persona dolls. The programme has been very successful in helping our toddlers recognize emotions through the media messages. The short simple stories are now very familiar to the children, and they often join in with simple phrases, e.g., 'It's a happy day'." - Róisín Meehan

La Petite Ecole Montessori, Sligo Learning about the importance of inclusion

The pre-school children in La Petite Ecole Montessori, located on the outskirts of the town of Sligo, have been learning about the importance of inclusion and have ensured that the RRDP persona dolls haven't felt left out of their play. Some of the children, on hearing that Kim had lost her kite, enlisted the help of Jim and Bukola to look for the kite using magnifiers, while one little girl drew all her Respecting Difference friends so that she could introduce them to her Mummy.



Our Project Partner - The National Childhood Network

National Childhood Network (NCN) (ROI) works together with Early Years, The Organisation for Young Children, to help build peace and reconciliation across the Island of Ireland. One of the cross border projects we are currently involved with is the Rural Respecting Difference Programme.

NCN aims to provide a forum for a range of stakeholders to work together in a collaborative and inclusive way to advance the achievement of national quality standards in Early Childhood and School Age Childcare services.

Other aims and objectives of NCN include:

- The advancement of children's rights and promotion of their health, well-being, learning and development in all childhood services.
- The empowerment and enrichment of the Early Childhood and After School Workforce.
- Interagency/cross-sectoral collaboration and partnership work leading to more effective integrated support to service providers that will secure best outcomes for children and families
- The development and delivery of high-quality training for all involved in the development, delivery and support of services
- Support for parents in the care and education of their children
- Integrated, strategic, needs led planning and evaluation
- On-going research at all levels to inform the development of services

Further information on NCN is available at: <https://www.ncn.ie>



Project delivery support - Rural Action

Rural Action supports Early Years in delivering the Good Relations elements of the RRDP. Rural Action is a not-for-profit social purpose company established in 2019 to meet an identified need for a regional rural body with a focus on project and programme design, development and implementation.

Rural Action seeks to inspire action and make a positive contribution to the everyday lives of rural people. They believe passionately about engaging people to build a better future. They work to support living, working, sustainable and shared communities. More specifically, they:

- Seek to shape ideas into practical actions working within the team and with communities, partners and stakeholders to identify needs leading to the design and development of projects and programmes
- Want to spark creative ideas and answers to local issues through piloting and testing solutions and through the sharing and exchange of information

Rural Action has an experienced staff team involved in rural development, project design, management and delivery of programmes including good relations training and mentoring.



Good Relations Event

Race, racism, anti-racism and empowerment - Laura Henry Allain MBE

The Rural Respecting Difference Programme recently had the pleasure of hosting a webinar entitled 'Race, Racism, Anti-racism and Empowerment'. The keynote speaker was award winning international writer, consultant and creator of the well-loved CBeebies characters JoJo and Gran Gran—Laura Henry Allain MBE. This webinar provided us with useful tips and research to support children with the skills and knowledge to help them become anti-racist.



RRDP Closure Event

An event to celebrate the success of the RRPD Programme

Early Years - The organisation for young children are partnering with the National Childhood Network to host a Rural Respecting Difference Programme closing event.

Please register for our closure event using Eventbrite, via the link below:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/rural-respecting-difference-programme-closure-event-tickets-198943524437>

Wednesday 8 December 2021

2:00pm to 4:00pm



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