Overview of Presentation

- Background & Rationale of Programme
- Overview of Training programme
- Aim of Evaluation
- Overview of Research Methodology
- Key Findings
- Key Learning & Legacies
Background to the Programme

To develop a comprehensive, accredited, professional education and training programme which would focus on the implementation of the An Cosan / Fledglings Manual.
Rationale for the programme

- Professionalise and upskill the ECCE workforce using current frameworks
- Better prepared, skilled and competent workforce improves the quality of centre based early childhood experiences for children (Vandenbroeck, 2011)
- Services located in areas of disadvantage
- Young children experiencing poverty are more likely to benefit from the provision of high quality ECCE (Starting Strong II Report, OECD 2006)
Aim and Objectives of the Evaluation

To investigate the implementation of the Quality through Professionalisation programme to trainers and early years educators.

Objectives:
1. Conduct a profile analysis of the preschools involved in the programme
2. Assess the quality of provision within services post-training delivery
3. Ascertain the perceived impact on early years educators knowledge, skills and competencies
4. Investigate the experiences of the managers/trainers who participated in the programme
5. Conduct a process evaluation investigating the reach, effectiveness, adoption, implementation and maintenance of the training programme
The Training Programme

Two phases of training associated with the Quality through Professionalisation programme:

1. Training of Trainers
2. Training of Early Years Educators

Programme resources to support the implementation of both programmes included:

1. The An Cosan/ Fledgling's Early Years Manual
2. The Train the Trainer Manual
3. QQI Level 6 Module Descriptor
4. Fledgling's Brochure
5. Special Purpose Award QQI Level 7 Additional Needs.
## Programme Resources

### Appendix 2: The aims of Aistear’s themes linked to HighScope’s Pre-school KDIs & COR

**Theme: Well-being**

**Aim 1: Children will be strong psychologically and socially**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Goals</th>
<th>KDIs</th>
<th>HighScope Pre-school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In partnership with the adult, children will:</td>
<td>Planning: Children make plans and follow through on their own.</td>
<td>Planning: Children make plans and follow through on their own.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. make strong attachments</td>
<td>Problem solving: Children solve problems encountered in a play setting.</td>
<td>Problem solving: Children solve problems encountered in a play setting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. be able to find and use the adult’s help when they have problems</td>
<td>Initiative: Children demonstrate initiative as they explore their world.</td>
<td>Initiative: Children demonstrate initiative as they explore their world.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. handle transitions and changes well</td>
<td>Engagement: Children take initiatives that extend them.</td>
<td>Engagement: Children take initiatives that extend them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. be confident and well-balanced</td>
<td>Reflection: Children reflect on their experiences.</td>
<td>Reflection: Children reflect on their experiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. make decisions and choices about their own learning and development</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
A variety of training methods were utilised throughout the delivery of the training with an emphasis on ‘active training’. Active training is recognised as a suitable and effective approach within an adult learning environment where the participants do most of the work, in order to acquire knowledge and skills as opposed to receiving them (Silberman and Auerbach, 2011). Some of the training delivery methods promoted within the Quality through Professionalisation programme include:

- Workshops
- Small group work
- Large group work
- Discussions
- Practical demonstrations
## Overview of Research Methodology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Framework</th>
<th>RE-AIM (Glasgow et al. 1999)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research design</td>
<td>(1) Cross-sectional</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2) Process evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tools</td>
<td>Preschool Quality Assessment (PQA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rating scales</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Direct observation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interviews</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Focus groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>Data analysis</td>
<td><em>Qualitative data:</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Content analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Quantitative data:</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Descriptive statistics</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cross-tabulations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Correlations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RE-AIM Framework
(Glasgow et al. 1999)

Reach
Effectiveness
Adoption
Implementation
Maintenance
Timeline of Evaluation

- **April ‘14**
  - Direct Observation Training Cohort 1
- **May ‘14**
  - Direct Observation Training Cohort 2
- **June ‘14**
  - Interviews (Trainers/managers and co-ordinator)
- **June ‘14**
  - Focus groups (Early Years Educators)
- **July ‘14**
  - Preschool Quality Assessments (Preschools)

Programme Delivery (Jan-May 14) and Post-Programme Delivery
Demographical Statistics
Demographical Statistics

THE POPULATION OF TALLAGHT

72,251
Demographical Statistics

- Population of Tallaght: 72,251
- Unemployment rate ranged from 14% to 54%
Demographical Statistics

The population of Tallaght: 72,251

Unemployment rate ranged from 14% to 54%

Third level qualification ranged from 10% to 46%
Demographical Statistics

2 preschools were located in areas of ‘disadvantage’

The population of Tallaght: 72,251

Unemployment rate ranged from 14 – 54%

Third level qualification ranged from 10 – 46%
Demographical Statistics

- The population of Tallaght: 72,251
- Unemployment rate: 14% – 54%
- The number of lone parents: 4% – 71%
- Third level qualification: 10% – 46%

2 preschools were located in areas of ‘disadvantage’.
The Programme Participants (p.39)

The number of children participating in the programme: 270

The number of staff working within the services: 55

FETAC Level 5 was the dominant qualification: 44
Quality within preschools

Trainers perspectives of programme

Programme Impact on Staff
## Results: Preschool Quality Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Learning Environments</th>
<th>Daily Routine</th>
<th>Adult Child Interactions</th>
<th>Curriculum Planning and Assessment</th>
<th>Overall Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean (SD)</strong></td>
<td>3.4 (0.4)</td>
<td>3.2 (1.0)</td>
<td>2.8 (0.4)</td>
<td>3.5 (1.0)</td>
<td>3.2 (0.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minimum</strong></td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maximum</strong></td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>p-value</strong></td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.01**</td>
<td>0.1*</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Levels of significance: *** p≤0.001 = very significant; ** p≤0.01 = moderately significant; * p≤0.05 = significant
Curriculum Planning & Assessment

- Evidence of HighScope curriculum being used to guide teaching practices

- All literature on the walls inside and outside of the rooms were derived from the HighScope curriculum model

- Staff observed maintaining records on children and families

- Staff sometimes use a team teaching model and share responsibilities for planning and implementing programme activities

- Staff use observation as a method to assess children’s developmental progress.
Adult-Child Interactions

- Increased use of open-ended questions
- Strategies to promote interactions with children whose first language was not English
- Increase anecdotal note-taking
- Using language to model and name
- Involve children in conflict resolution
- Minimise interruption of conversations
- Promote child-initiated play
Quality within preschools

Trainers perspectives of programme

Programme Impact on Staff
Interviews: Trainers Experiences

- Time is a key consideration
- Readiness for change
- Community of practice
- Annual training refresher

Delivery of training of trainers
- Expectations of training varied
- Confidence in delivering training to Early Years Educators
- By-products from participating in the training

Sustainability of the programme

Delivery of training to early years educators
- The structure and scheduling of the training programme
- Using the An Cosán / Fledglings Early Years Manual

Implementing learning within preschool settings
- All we need is time!
- Translating the learning to others
Quality within preschools

Trainers perspectives of programme

Programme Impact on Staff
## Perceived Impact on Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Before Training (Mean, SD)</th>
<th>After Training (Mean, SD)</th>
<th>Difference</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>3.09 (0.43)</td>
<td>3.86 (0.64)</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.000***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills</td>
<td>3.14 (0.35)</td>
<td>3.81 (0.61)</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.000***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competence</td>
<td>3.18 (0.50)</td>
<td>3.77 (0.53)</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.001***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Levels of significance:*** p≤0.001 = very significant; ** p≤0.01 = moderately significant; * p≤0.05 = significant
Participant Feedback after Training

“I feel more confident implementing this learning within my setting. We already have elements of all three implemented but this training has highlighted how to further develop and work with Aistear, Siolta and HighScope. The An Cosán / Fledglings Early Years Manual will help hugely with this process”.

“As the training has been completed, there is more familiarity with the required aspects of Siolta, Aistear and HighScope to fill in a Development Plan in comparison to when I began the training programme. However we need more practice and more time to cement our familiarity with the Development Plan”.

“This training has been of most benefit to me in learning about Siolta and Aistear. I know we have these in my setting but I didn’t really know much about them and always tried to avoid them but now I am way more confident in using them”.

I have enjoyed learning about Aistear and Siolta and would be grateful for more time to put it into practice as it could fizzle out quite quickly. A refresher course later down the line would be something that would benefit us as we implement all this change in our setting”.
Focus Groups: Staff Experiences

1. Knowledge of training prior to commencement
   - Inconsistency in knowledge
   - Anxiety about taking part
   - Feeling of discontent (Level 6)

2. Staff perception of quality within early years settings
   - Predictors of quality don’t work in isolation
   - Fostering an ethos of CPD
   - Child focused approach
   - The use of a well-established curriculum
   - Low staff child ratios
   - A good manager

3. Fondest memories of the training programme
   - The second half of training
   - Opening Circle activities
   - The trainers
   - Working in groups

4. Impact of the training programme on practice
   - Increased knowledge of Aistear and Siolta
   - Less daunted about frameworks
   - Working more as a team
   - Using action and development plans
   - Non-contact time required

5. Necessary ingredients for training programmes
   - Well organised and well planned
   - Clear understanding from outset
   - Good communication
   - Effective tutor
   - Scheduling of training
   - Interactive & stimulating activities

- The use of a well-established curriculum
- Low staff child ratios
- A good manager

- Predictors of quality don’t work in isolation
- Fostering an ethos of CPD
- Child focused approach
- The use of a well-established curriculum
- Low staff child ratios
- A good manager
Key Learning & Legacies

- Engaging in Change – The Importance of time and the ‘Lead-in’ phase
- Involving the Users of the Programme
- Continued Professional Development has an Impact
- Translating Learning into Practice
## Legacy of the Quality through Professionalisation Programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1.   | Link to National Frameworks to Aid Sustainability  
Utilising Aistear and Síolta within Services |
| 2.   | Building Staff Capacity  
Exit Route Via Level 6 and Level 7 Modules |
| 3.   | Sign-posting for Parents & Staff  
Production of Comprehensive Programme Resources |
Sign-posting for Policy

- Allocation of child-free hours
- Opportunities for continuing professional development
- Investment in leadership
- Support for national framework implementation
“There are so many elements that make up a high quality service; happy staff, well qualified staff, a service that promotes professional development, good communication with parents, a relaxed calm environment, low ratios, a good manager, the list goes on... but you need all of these things to be at play – there’s no use in one or two. You’ll know a high quality service as soon as you walk in the door – the children are happy, they love being there, the staff are happy and they love being there – there is a certain atmosphere and you just know”.
For Further Details on the Evaluation

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Thank you to all involved in the Tallaght NEYAI Programme