

Early Years

Founded in 1965, Early Years provides childhood services that promote positive outcomes for children, families and communities. Currently it is the largest voluntary-sector provider of early childhood services across Northern Ireland, with more than 1,200 affiliated member groups. The organisation has 240 direct employees and provides support for more than 30,000 children and families on a daily basis.

The Early Years organisation is also responsible for various Sure Start projects in communities across the province. It also has a growing international presence and provides early childhood support services and consultancy in Eastern Europe, South America, the Middle East, Turkey, Nepal, South Africa, the United States and Southeast Asia.



Impacts and Successes

Early Years has lobbied the Dept of Education about the importance of the **0-3 age group** and the need for an **integrated childcare strategy for NI**

Early Years is looking to develop existing projects such as the **Traveller Toybox**, which has been successful in improving the **educational performance** of Traveller children in NI

The Early Years **Media Initiative** has improved young children's **socio-emotional development** as well as their awareness and **tolerance of cultural differences**

The **Media Initiative** adds value to pre-school environments and is being implemented in more than **600** pre-schools and primary schools across NI

Sustainable Practices

Centre for excellence

Early Years is looking to develop a centre for excellence and innovation in early childhood education, care and development. The aim is to share the building with other early year's services, including a local Sure Start project, a pre-school playgroup, a local parent and toddler group, and full daycare service.

Licensing

Early Years has established a licensing model for the Media Initiative for Children programme, which is now available as a franchise. This supports the wider delivery of the programme and ensures any income generated is used to sustain any future developments of the programme.

Global Practice

Early Years currently leads the International Network on Peace Building with Young Children, a network of early childhood organisations, teachers, specialists, practitioners and academics from conflict and post-conflict regions throughout the World.

Since 2006, Atlantic has invested £4,024,870 into Early Years. This funding and expertise has increased the capacity of the organisation to gather evidence and deliver programmes that influence policy and social change

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