

## PROFILE OF INCLUSION FINDS.....

57% of Respondents had previously included a disabled child, while 43% said they had not.

21% of Respondents said they have previously turned away a disabled child. The main reasons given were:

Accessibility  
Inability to meet needs  
Lack of training

Services who have received some form of training were three times more likely to have included a disabled child

Services who are linked to an external support agency are four times more likely to have included a disabled child

The main supports identified by Respondents as assisting them to be more inclusive were:

- Practical training for Staff
- Access to the right Information
- Being able to operate from an accessible building

# 'In The Loop'

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DESSA

DISABILITY EQUALITY  
SPECIALIST SUPPORT AGENCY

## CIP One Year on.....

The Childcare Inclusion Programme (CIP) celebrated it's first birthday on the 8th of May this year and it has certainly been a busy and exciting year for the Project! Through CIP, DESSA has attempted to place the inclusion of disabled children at the centre of quality practice in childcare and play. We hope to have achieved this through extensive consultation and research, the delivery of inclusive play training and the provision of a platform for inclusion through our Policy Seminars and presentations, involving a variety of groups



Childcare  
Inclusion  
Programme

and organisations. CIP will endeavor to continue this momentum throughout the remainder of 2007. This year will see the development of an Inclusion Network, the publication of a Manual of Best Practice and the provision of a 2-day workshop for parents of disabled children. We are planning an event in October, to launch our reports and highlight the outcomes of the Project. While our current funding is set to end on December 31st 2007, we are actively exploring possible avenues for further funding and we are anxious to use the learning from the Childcare Inclusion Programme to influence policy and practice throughout the childcare sector.

## INCLUSIVE PLAY IS THE ONLY WAY!

By the end of June 2007, a total of five Inclusive Play training courses will have been delivered through CIP, involving over 70 childcare and play workers. The training has been evaluated and participants have overwhelmingly reported that the course provided them with new found energy, enthusiasm and a 'can do attitude'. They felt that the training was very practical and offered simple solutions to address barriers to including disabled children.



Pat Bennett, CEO of the Family Support Agency, presented CIP training participants with their certificates in Collins Barracks on 15th January 2007

When asked what was different about the CIP training compared to other training courses, many commented that while other training courses were based on the medical model of disability, "this one is definitely based on the social model". On the 15th of January training participants attended an Evaluation Workshop in Collin's Barracks, followed by a celebratory lunch and a presentation of certificates. Thanks to all those who attended what was a really enjoyable and worthwhile event.

## Policy in Practice

Two one-day action consultancy seminars took place in February & May called 'Why Inclusion?'. The seminars were attended by Policy Makers and Managers from a range of childcare facilities and organisations. The questions addressed were: What exactly do we mean by inclusion? and What are our responsibilities as policy makers and managers to ensure that we are delivering inclusive services? Possible barriers were identified and workable solutions examined by participants. One of the key learning points emphasised by Facilitator, Alison John was the importance of ensuring that all policies within a service are inclusive, working documents, rather than having a separate policy statement on inclusion. She also highlighted the need for all stakeholders, including children themselves, to be involved in the development of policies and procedures.

### NEW DESSA WEBSITE GOES LIVE!

The updated DESSA website can now be viewed at [www.dessa.ie](http://www.dessa.ie)

The website contains information on all of DESSA's programmes, training & activities. To read about CIP, click on the programmes section on the Home page. You can now contact us directly from the website using our online contact form!

## TRAINING UPDATE

At this stage in the Project, we had hoped to be ready to train some of the people who have undertaken courses in inclusive play, to deliver the training themselves. However, a number of factors, including the lack of any formal structure in Ireland around inclusion, would make it very difficult to put a trainers course in place at this stage.

We are continuing to examine ways of accrediting the training and we are actively trying to influence the content of existing courses in this area, to change their focus towards inclusion and the social model of disability.

**WATCH THIS SPACE FOR MORE NEWS.....**

## Profile Of Inclusion

Over 120 childcare services were involved in completing Questionnaires for CIP's *Profile of Inclusion* and the results will now be used by DESSA in mainstreaming the learning from the Childcare Inclusion Programme. CIP would like to express our heartfelt thanks to all those services who took part in developing the *Profile*, copies of which will be made generally available later in the year.

*(See the key findings on page 1)*

## Workshop for Parents

We will be holding a two-day workshop for parents of disabled children on Tuesday 25th and Wednesday 26th of September (venue to be confirmed). We are delighted that this will be facilitated by Alison John and Di Murray, who delivered our training in Inclusive Play. If you know of any families who would like to attend, or if you are a parent of a disabled child and you want to come along yourself, we would love to see you there! Please contact us directly for further details.

## The Inclusive Play Network

Three meetings are taking place in June at different locations in Dublin, involving those who have undertaken the Inclusive Play training and attended the Policy Seminars. The Network aims to act as a mechanism of support for practitioners and a means of influencing policy from an inclusion perspective. The June meetings will focus on defining the structure and objectives of the Network and one joint platform meeting will be held in September to finalise how the Network will operate and agree actions for the future. Anyone who can't make the meetings but would like to be involved should contact the CIP team.

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