



Partnership with parents: the  
role of the early years  
educator

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# Research takeaways



# Fertile ground for this research?

*We have the high-level policy*

- ✓ *First 5, evidence-informed*
- ✓ *Nurturing Skills*

*We have the curriculum framework*

*But significant shifts required*

- ✓ *Educator understandings & role*
- ✓ *System*

## First 5 vision

All babies' and young children's early years will be valued as a critical and distinct period which should be enjoyed.

**Families will be assisted and enabled to nurture babies and young children and support their development, with additional support for those who need it. Those providing services for babies, young children and their families will be equipped to contribute to their learning, development, health and wellbeing. Community contexts will help babies and young children make the most of their early years and fulfil their potential.**

# Vision for EY Educators

- An **appropriately skilled and sustainable professional workforce** that is supported and valued and reflects the diversity of babies, young children and **their families.**'  
(First 5)
- A well-qualified, skilled, diverse and valued **professional workforce** that is centred on **children's rights, needs and potential** and that provides **quality experiences for children in partnership with families, and which continues to advance its professional development within a coherent and competent system** (Nurturing Skills)

# Nurturing Skills

- Training will support staff in mentoring, coordination, empowering, leading practice with co-professionals
- Consideration to further development of roles of additional responsibility across a setting, building on the existing model of 'Inclusion Coordinator' within AIM, may include responsibility for mentoring and supporting co-professionals in the setting in an area of practice, including **family and community partnership**, leading and supporting partnership and engagement between families and the setting.

# Funding Model

- Develop a DEIS-type model for the delivery of ELC and SAC in the context of concentrated disadvantage, and to pilot the delivery of parenting programmes through ELC and SAC settings
- ELC Hub model
- Construction of parents?
- Ideas on partnership?

# Curriculum Framework

## Aistear

Creatchuraclam na Luath-Óige  
The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework

NCCA  
An Chomhairle Náisiúnaí Curáilín agus Measúnachta  
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment





# Early Years Providers and Educators

Research in UK (Cottle and Alexander, 2014) suggests that although practitioners considered parent partnership to be essential element in quality early years services, partnerships understood and enacted in very different ways.

Perceptions of the parents greatly influenced by normative policy discourses which tend to position parents as either deficient or as active agents and oversimplify highly complex relationships which are imbued with issues of class and culture (Cottle and Alexander, 2014)

Thank you!