



Parenting Support Policy

An exploration of First 5 Implementation
Plan in relation to ...

PARENTING SUPPORT POLICY

- Mary Daly – All Island Symposium – Towards a Parenting Strategy 2013
- Still new policy field – growing over last 15 years
- Like with like - the diversity of international policy including **definitions, terminology.....**
'parent education'; 'family/parent training' 'family/parent support'.
- Tangled webs of support for parents and families - the **interconnectedness of a country's policies** impact on their approach to parenting support policy. Supports versus Parenting Supports e.g. benefits, maternity/paternity/parental leave, childcare, healthcare, education etc.
- No blank canvases : what vehicles are driving delivery – the **pre-existing structures (structural differences across countries)** in each country impacts on both policy development and implementation. Unique Irish context which has impacted on the design of Parenting Support Policy to date.
- Sure Start UK - Local Authority structures who are also responsible for education and social services gives the delivery of this parenting support a unique context.

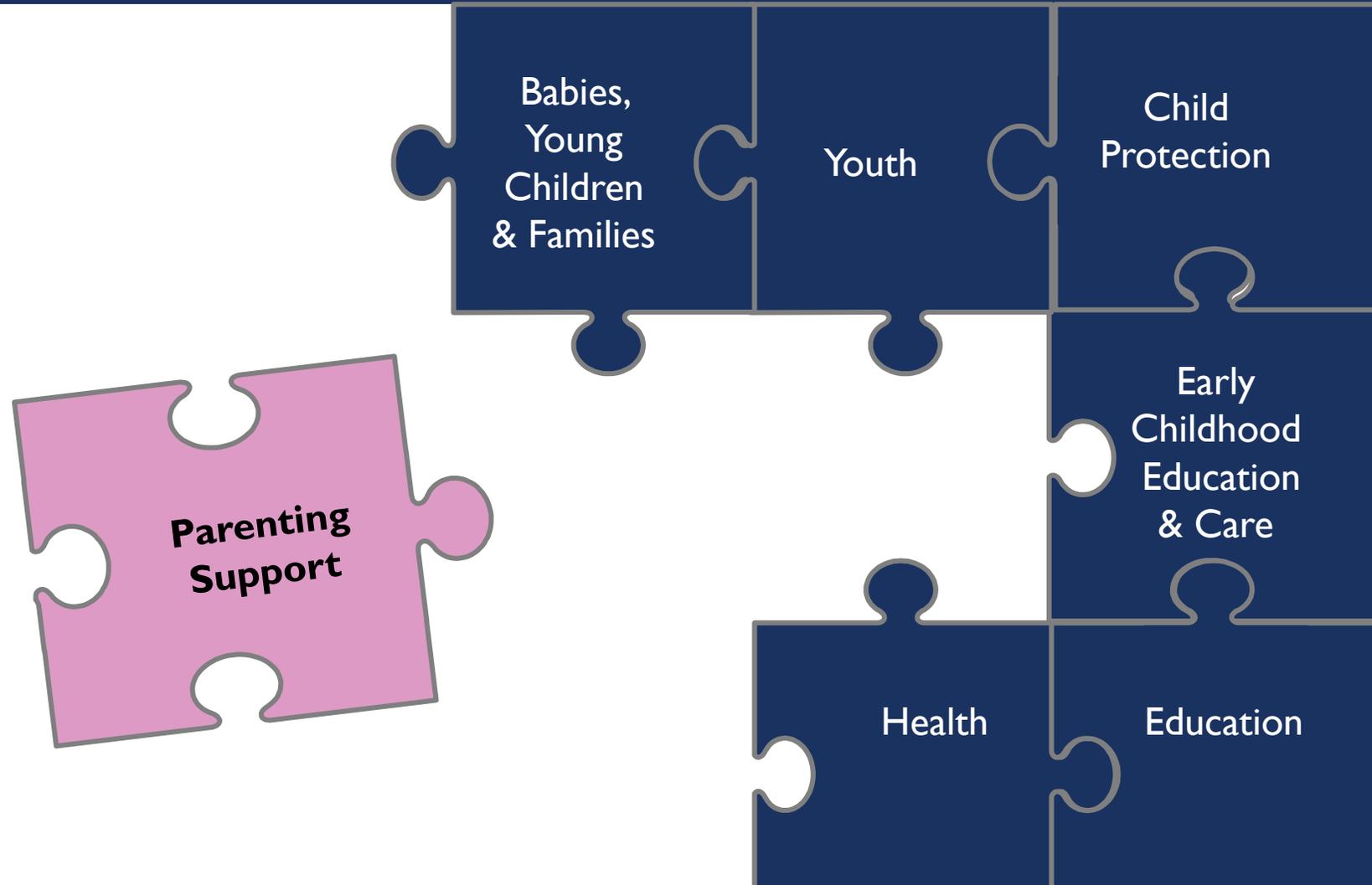
PARENTING SUPPORT DEFINED :THE PARENTING NETWORK

“ Parenting Support refers to a range of information, support, education, training and counselling. There are also other measures or services that focus on influencing how parents understand and carry out their parenting role”

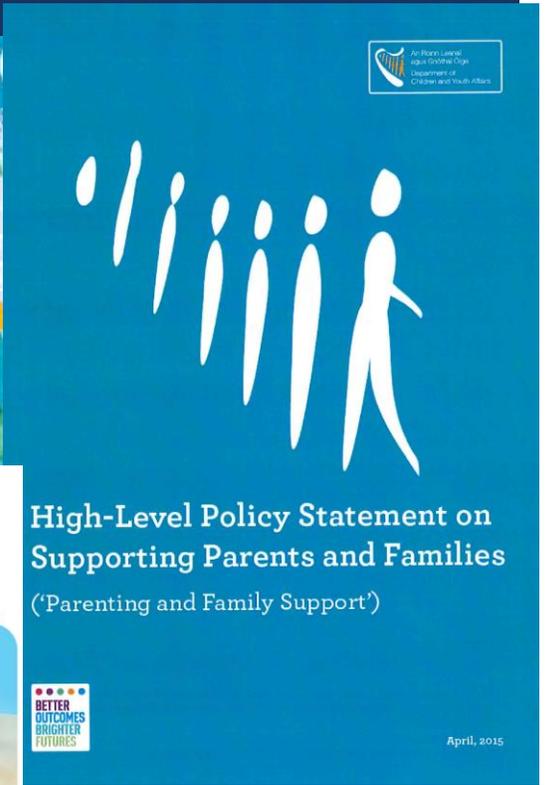
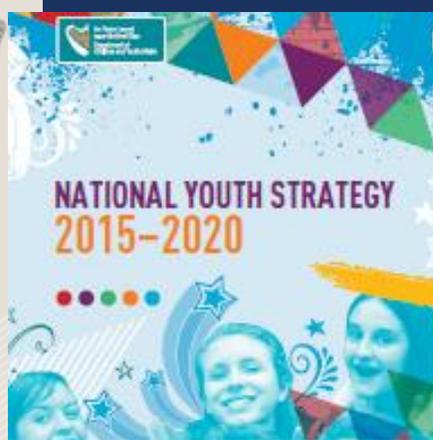
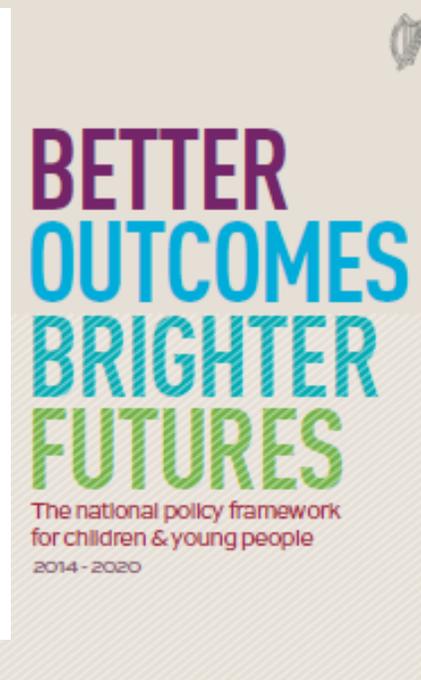
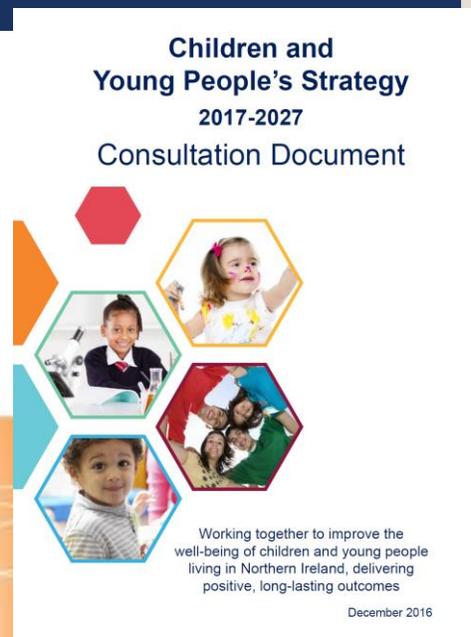
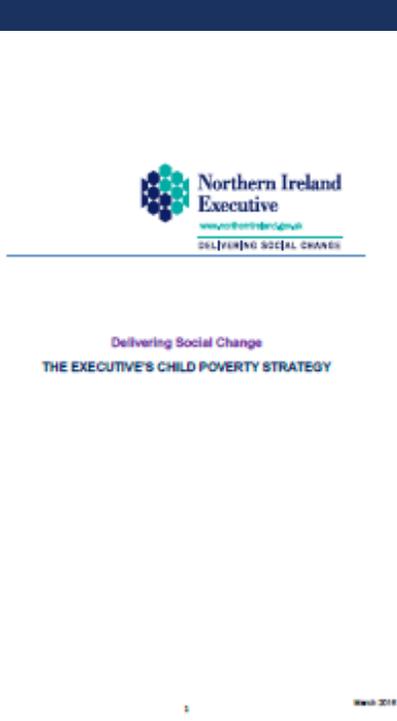
PARENTING SUPPORT

- **information and awareness raising** – advice and information services such as (leaflets and information provided in websites), information campaigns, telephone helplines, web-based and other parenting courses and programmes;
- **education and skills development** – targeted parenting programmes, intensive interventions including case work to change beliefs, attitudes and self-perceptions;
- **provision of social support** – relationship and network building through social services, social work and other one-to-one aid, mentoring and befriending
- Mary Daly, 2015

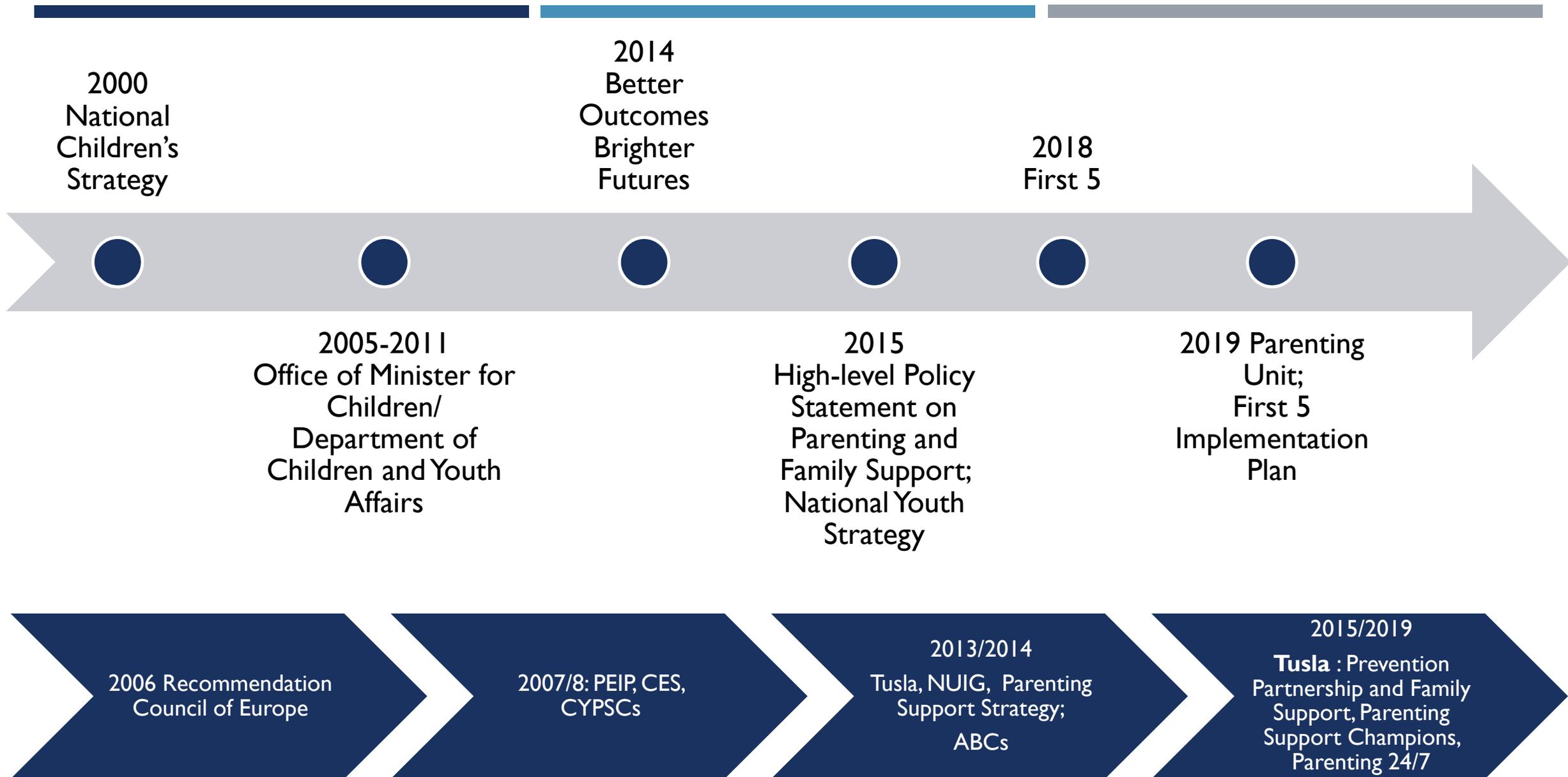
RARELY STANDALONE POLICY



CHILD, FAMILY AND EMERGING PARENTING SUPPORT POLICY IRELAND & NORTHERN IRELAND



Family & Parent Support
Strategy NI - in development



FIRST FIVE : TICKING IMPLEMENTATION BOXES

- ✓ Whole-of-Government Strategy
- ✓ Not starting from scratch : 'Right from the Start' + evidence + voice of children
- ✓ Consultation : Young children + 2 open policy debates
- ✓ Inter-Departmental Group + bilateral engagement across Departments and State Agencies
- ✓ Specific actions re implementation, governance and public engagement mechanisms
- ✓ An Implementation Plan...

Goals

A

Strong and supportive families and communities

B

Optimum physical and mental health

C

Positive play-based early learning

Objectives

1. Balance working and caring

2. Information, services and supports for parents

3. Practical and material resources

4. Positive health behaviours

5. High-quality health services

6. Positive mental health

7. Positive home learning environment

8. Affordable, high-quality Early Learning and Care

9. Supported transitions

Strategic Actions

1.1	Parental care for children particularly during the first year	1.2	Family-friendly flexible working		
2.1	Information and resources for parents	2.2	Tiered model of parenting support		
3.1	Measures to address family income and early childhood poverty	3.2	Suitable accommodation for families with children	3.3	Child-friendly communities
4.1	Positive health behaviours in families	4.2	Health behaviour supports in child-serving settings and communities	4.3	Child safety and injury prevention
5.1	Develop National Healthy Childhood Programme	5.2	Therapeutic and medical care for babies and children		
6.1	Early identification of mental health issues	6.2	Access to mental health supports		
7.1	Playful home learning environments	7.2	Parental engagement in children's early learning	7.3	Participation in out-of-home learning
8.1	Affordable high-quality ELC	8.2	Availability of subsidised high-quality ELC	8.3	ELC that promotes participation, social inclusion and diversity
9.1	Information exchange to support transitions	9.2	Continuity between ELC and primary settings	9.3	Supports to sustain learning during transitions

D

An effective early childhood system

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Building Block 1: Leadership, governance, collaboration

Strategic Actions

- 1.A Implementation and governance
- 1.B Early childhood system leadership
- 1.C Collaborative projects



Building Block 2: Regulation, inspection, quality assurance

Strategic Actions

- 2.A Develop, enhance, implement standards
- 2.B Reform regulation and inspection



Building Block 3: Skilled and sustainable workforce

Strategic Actions

- 3.A Identify and address staff requirements
- 3.B Improve initial training and CPD for all early childhood staff
- 3.C Professionalise ELC; support employers to attract and retain high-quality workforce



Building Block 4: Research, data, monitoring and evaluation

Strategic Actions

- 4.A Support early childhood research
- 4.B Develop administrative and outcomes data
- 4.C Robust monitoring



Building Block 5: Strategic investment

Strategic Actions

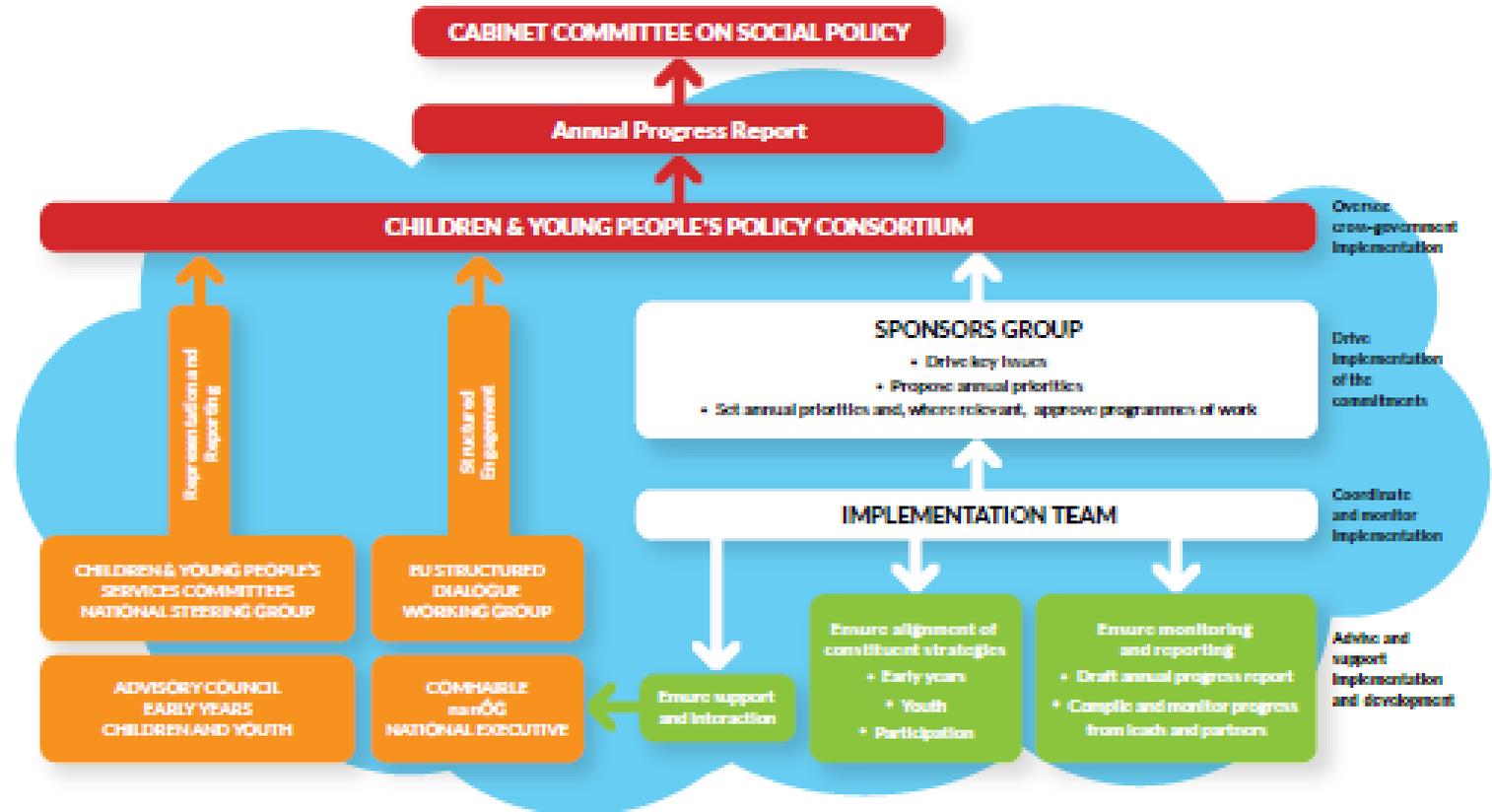
- 5.A Public funding
- 5.B Strategic investment
- 5.C Tracking progress

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IMPLEMENTATION PLAN : SUPPORTING STRUCTURES

Effective Early Childhood System:
Put in place effective
implementation and governance
structures and public engagement
mechanisms for First 5

- First 5 Implementation Office
- BOBF Implementation Structures (**Advisory Council & Sponsors Group**)



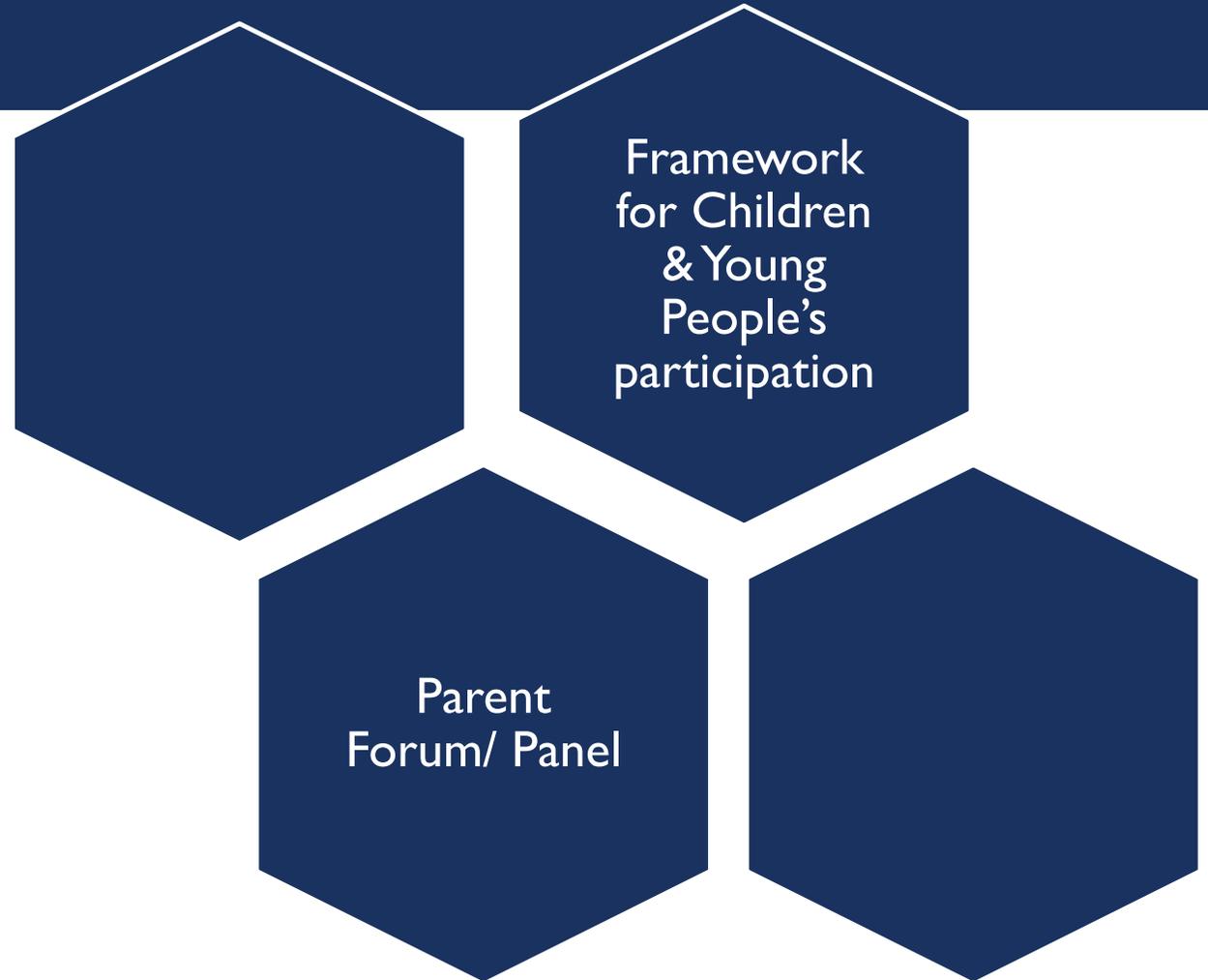
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- Wide spread engagement will be key feature – even if not stated within each action
- Representative groups or bespoke groups/consultation approaches or engagement mechanisms

D.I.A.6. & pg.149

Lead: DCYA & Hub na Nóg

Partners: Relevant Early Years Sectoral Partners **



LOCAL DELIVERY INFRASTRUCTURES

CYPSCs

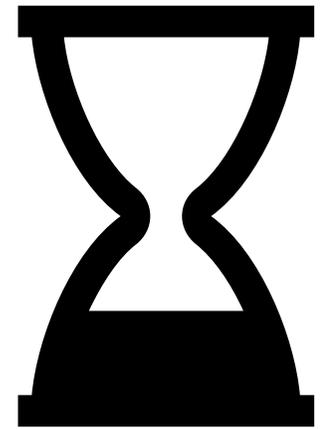
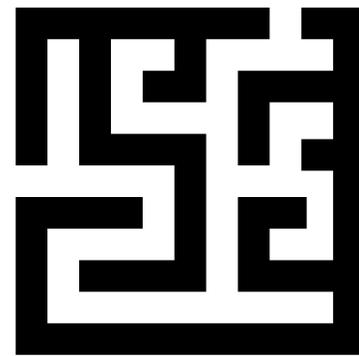
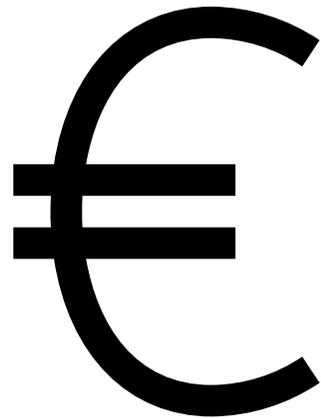
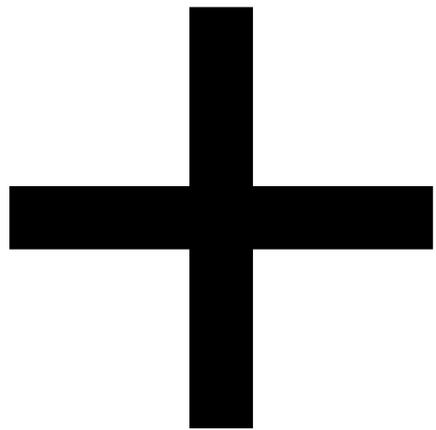


LCDCs



ELC
infrastructure

IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES PREDICTED



GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION : GOAL D – BUILDING BLOCKS

■ GOAL D:

Many of the actions in Goal D reflect the key foundational elements required to be in place for successful implementation

- Governance, leadership and collaboration
- Regulation, inspection and quality assurance – specifically standardisation and consistency
- Skilled and sustainable workforce
- Research, data, monitoring and evaluation
- Strategic investment

Many of these Building Blocks are necessary to deliver on a range of other actions.

AN EFFECTIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEM : SPECIFIC PARENTING SUPPORT ACTIONS

Put in place effective implementation and governance structures and public engagement mechanisms for First 5

Communications plan – greater awareness among stakeholders & public of First 5 + importance of early childhood and early learning. **D.I.A.7.**

Establish Parenting Support Policy Unit **D.I.B.I.**

ELC settings as ‘hub’ for collaborative work with families – research & policy proposals. **D.I.C.I**

. Pilot the development of Family and Early Childhood Centres – range of services to support parents and children. Research & policy proposals (2020/2021). **D.I.C.2**

AN EFFECTIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEM : SPECIFIC PARENTING SUPPORT ACTIONS

Develop, enhance and implement national standards for early childhood supports and services

Develop & publish quality standards for publicly funded parenting supports & services (2020 background; 2021 plan, working group, stakeholder engagement; quality standards) D.2.A.1.

Guidance, support and consolidation of FRC Programme D.2.A.2.

Standardised framework for antenatal education for parents D.2.A.4

'No wrong door' – through CYPSC and CFNs - Policy Platform in place connecting structures & local integrated service delivery frameworks D.2.A.7.

Progressively reform the ELC (and SAC) regulatory and inspection systems and strengthen quality assurance with a renewed emphasis on self-evaluation

Develop and use appropriate methods to take account of the views of children and parents in the inspection of ELC and SAC D.2.B.4.

AN EFFECTIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEM : RELEVANT TO PARENTING SUPPORT ACTIONS

An appropriately skilled and sustainable professional workforce that is supported and valued and reflects the diversity of babies, young children and their families.

Dedicated child health workforce – model of practice to underpin, implement and evaluate dedicated child health workforce (in line with principles set out in Sláintecare – a population based approach focussed initially in areas of high density and disadvantage + additional resources). Pilot & estimates by 2021. **D3.A.1.**

Early Childhood Workforce Initiative, including all health, social care, ELC, teachers and other staff. Pre-service training & in service training key issues relevant to all children and their families + collaborative working. In 2020-Steering Group; commence mapping of publicly available training in all topics relevant to the development of babies and young children. 2021 – Report and recommendations. **D3.B.5.**

AN EFFECTIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEM : RELEVANT TO PARENTING SUPPORT ACTIONS

A strong national infrastructure for research and data that is used to inform policy and practice alongside an ongoing programme of monitoring and evaluation – Goal D Building Block 4

- What Works – online initiative and enhanced capacity to those working in an early intervention and prevention method with children.
- First 5 research observatory to collect, manage and make accessible research on lives of babies, young children and their families – 2021 – operational
- Develop a First 5 research and evaluation programme to support strategy implementation and build evidence around innovative and integrated service delivery – research evaluation plan; framework and partnership
- Data systems :
- Develop and roll out administrative data systems across child health, welfare and protection, and ELC services, including **Maternal and Newborn Clinical Management System (MN-CMS)** – primary, community and secondary care - **post natal service delivery**
- National Immunisation Information System (NIIS) (Phase 1) and a National Child Health Information System (Phase 2) to support the delivery and integration of child health services across community, primary care and hospital services. - **accessible by parents**
- National Childcare Information System (NCCIS) in Tusla child welfare and protection services – digital move
- Outcomes for Children National Data Hub – consultation forum and public launch
- Explore Inter-Governmental data collection on babies, young children – harmonisation; data sharing; markers
- Develop rigorous approaches to capturing outcomes data of babies and young children at key development stages across child health and early learning systems.

AN EFFECTIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEM : RELEVANT TO PARENTING SUPPORT ACTIONS

Additional public funding that is strategically invested to achieve the best outcomes for babies, young children and their families.

- In the context of a new model of parenting supports, adopt quality standards to underpin public funding of parenting supports in order to put in place a more strategic, consistent and sustainable basis for this work with a transparent framework for allocating resources. **D.5.B.1.**
- Indicator set to measure and monitor public investment in early childhood in place D.5.C.1.
- Continue to undertake Social Impact Assessments of investment in early childhood D.5.C.2.

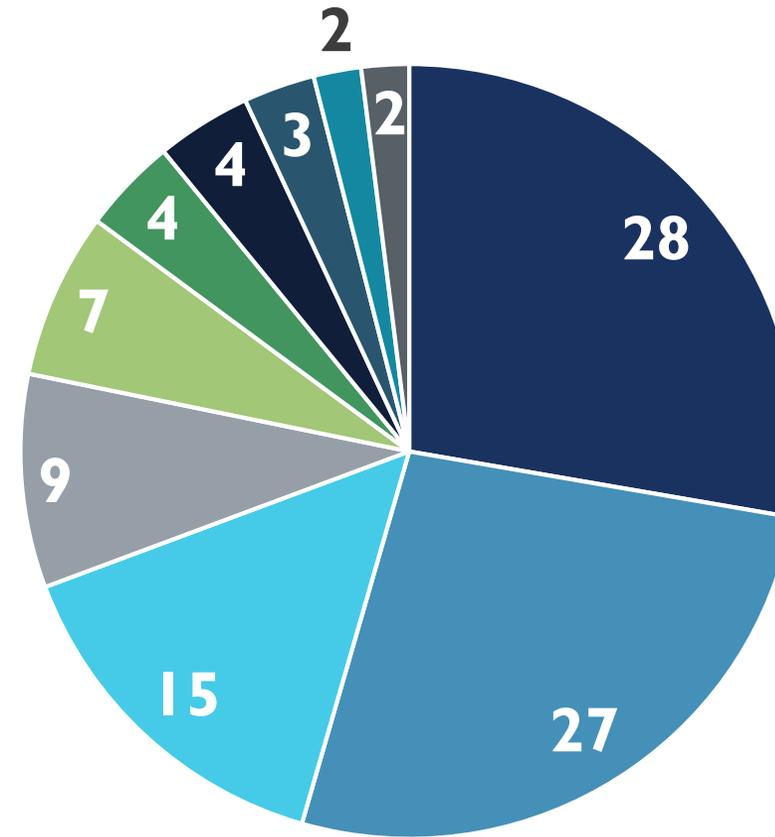
KEY STAKEHOLDERS LEADING ACTIONS

■ GOAL A, B, C LEADS mentioned – 109 times

Additional Leads mentioned once

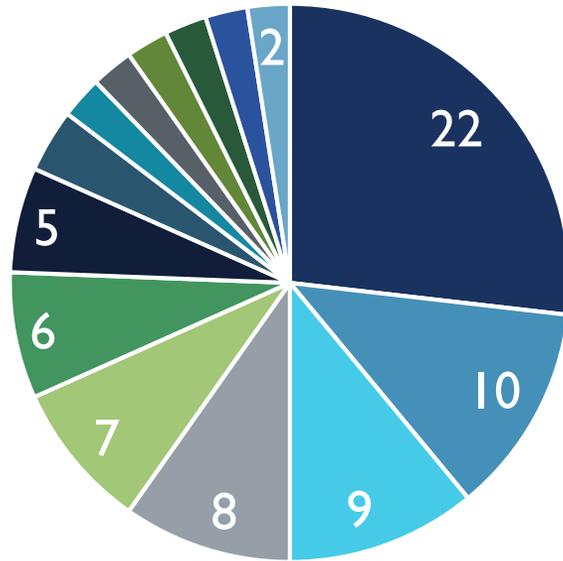
- DRCD
- DAFM
- Cycling Ireland
- DCCAE
- DoF
- DCYA/DHPLG – joint lead
- DCHG
- DES/DCYA – joint lead

Frequency of Lead



- | | | | |
|---------|---------|-----------|------------|
| ■ HSE | ■ DCYA | ■ DoH | ■ DES |
| ■ DJE | ■ DHPLG | ■ DoH/HSE | ■ DCYA/DES |
| ■ DEASP | ■ Tusla | | |

Frequency of Partners



- DoH
- HSE
- DCYA
- TBD
- Pobal
- Tusla
- DES
- CCCs
- DEASP
- Local Authorities
- DBEI
- Safefood
- NCSE
- NCCA

GOAL A, B, C
PARTNERS
LISTED 105 TIMES

National Cancer Control Programme
Stakeholder Implementation Group (Cancer Control Programme)
National Childhood Network
Voluntary sector
To be determined
National Dairy Council
Members of the Cross Sectoral Implementation Group for AIM
NEPS
Libraries Development
TUSLA
LGMA (Local Government Management Agency)
Office of revenue commissioner
CSO
ESRI
Údarás na Gaeltachta, Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge (NUIG),
Muintearas Teo
DHPLG
National Disability Authority
Early Childhood Ireland
Trinity Haus
All Government Departments
DJE
Government Information Service
National Parents Council

PARTNERS
MENTIONED
ONCE



Actions
specific to
Parenting
Support

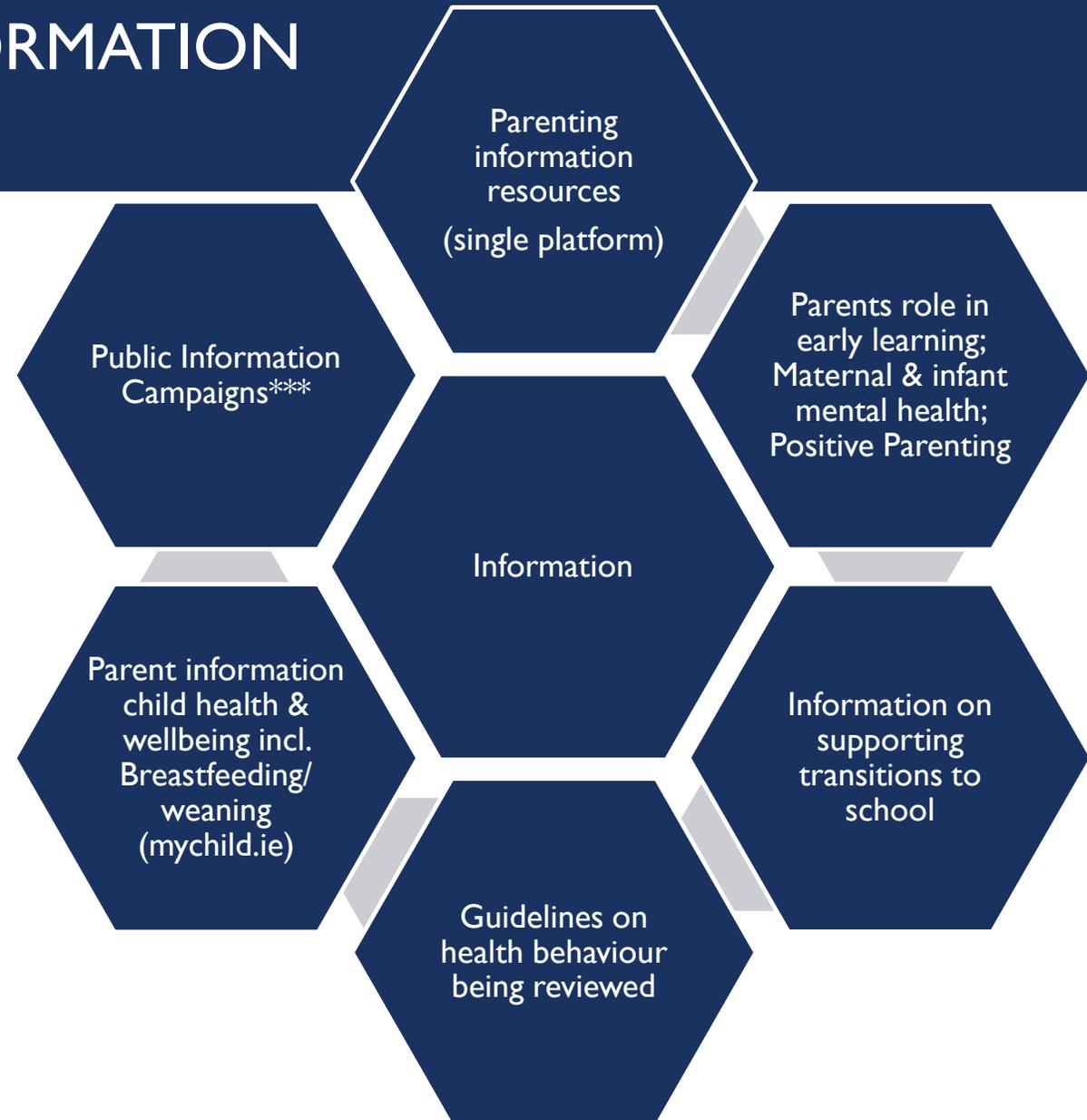
Actions which
support
parents in a
wider sense
e.g. work;
finance;
housing; health

Actions which
support
children,
parents and
families in a
wider
community
based way e.g.
planning
guidelines for
child friendly
community.

PARENTING SUPPORT INFORMATION

Public Information Campaigns

- Positive Parenting
- Parents role in early learning
- Promoting and supporting positive mental health among pregnant women, young children and families.



Parent Information

2: Information Services and Supports for Parents

2.1 Parents will benefit from high quality, evidence based information and services on various aspects of parenting to support child development and positive family relationships along a continuum of need.

Develop, design and disseminate information resources to support parenting

2.1.1 a. Single coherent platform: consistent, high quality and accessible information

2.1.1 b. Develop user friendly resources across multiple platforms building on suite of existing resources

Lead: DCYA; Partners: All relevant Government Departments and Agencies

2019

- Identify state funded resources
- Engage with providers and parents
- Prepare papers

2020

- Working group established (? External reps)

2021

- Testing with parents
- Measures for monitoring

Parent Information

2: Information Services and Supports for Parents

2.1. Parents will benefit from high quality, evidence based information and services on various aspects of parenting to support child development and positive family relationships along a continuum of need

Develop, design and disseminate information resources to support parenting

2.1.2 Public Information Campaign on positive parenting

Lead: DCYA;

Partner: Government Information Service

2019/2020

- Internal work
- Development of project plan etc

2021

- Campaign strategy completed and commenced
- Network of Dep, Agency and NGO staff established to share disseminate and promote best practice

PARENT INFORMATION

4. Parents families and communities will be supported to engage in and promote positive health behaviours among babies and young children, starting from pre-conception period.

4.1.5. Develop and maintain comprehensive accessible information for parents on all aspects of their child's health and wellbeing through a new parenting and child health and wellbeing website supported by social media

Lead – HSE

Partner – DoH

2019

- Communications plan to promote mychild.ie
- New content developed and launched

2020

- New content; analytics and user feedback

2021

- As above

Parent Information

6. Babies, young children and their parents enjoy positive mental health

6.1. Improve the early identification of mental health problems among babies, young children and families

6.1.1. Provide information and guidance on promoting and supporting positive mental health among pregnant women, babies, young children and families and carry out a public information campaign to raise awareness of the importance of promoting social-emotional development, positive mental health and reducing the impact of early childhood trauma in babies and young children

2019

- Public information campaign developed
- Standardised information for healthcare professionals developed

2020

- Ongoing review and development of infant mental health messages

2021

- Ongoing review and development of infant mental health messages

Lead: HSE; Partner: DoH

Parent Information

7. Parents, families and communities are supported to provide a nurturing and stimulating environment for children's early learning, starting from birth.

7.1 Support parents and families to provide a stimulating home learning environment for babies and young children, with a particular focus on promoting play.

7.1.1. Carry out a national information campaign to build awareness of the important role that parents and families can play in supporting children's early learning with advice and information to empower parents and families in creating playful learning environments. Under this campaign, a bedtime reading campaign will be carried out. This will be supported by child- friendly events at local libraries to encourage an interest in learning from an early age, and to provide inspiration and access to age appropriate reading material.

Lead: DCYA; Partner: None listed

2019 : Schedule of campaigns agreed (see action A.2.1.2).

Phase 1 background papers prepared. & evidence reviews completed.

Communications workshop held & campaign objectives and scope agreed.

2020 : Communications advice secured.

Project plan developed and commenced.

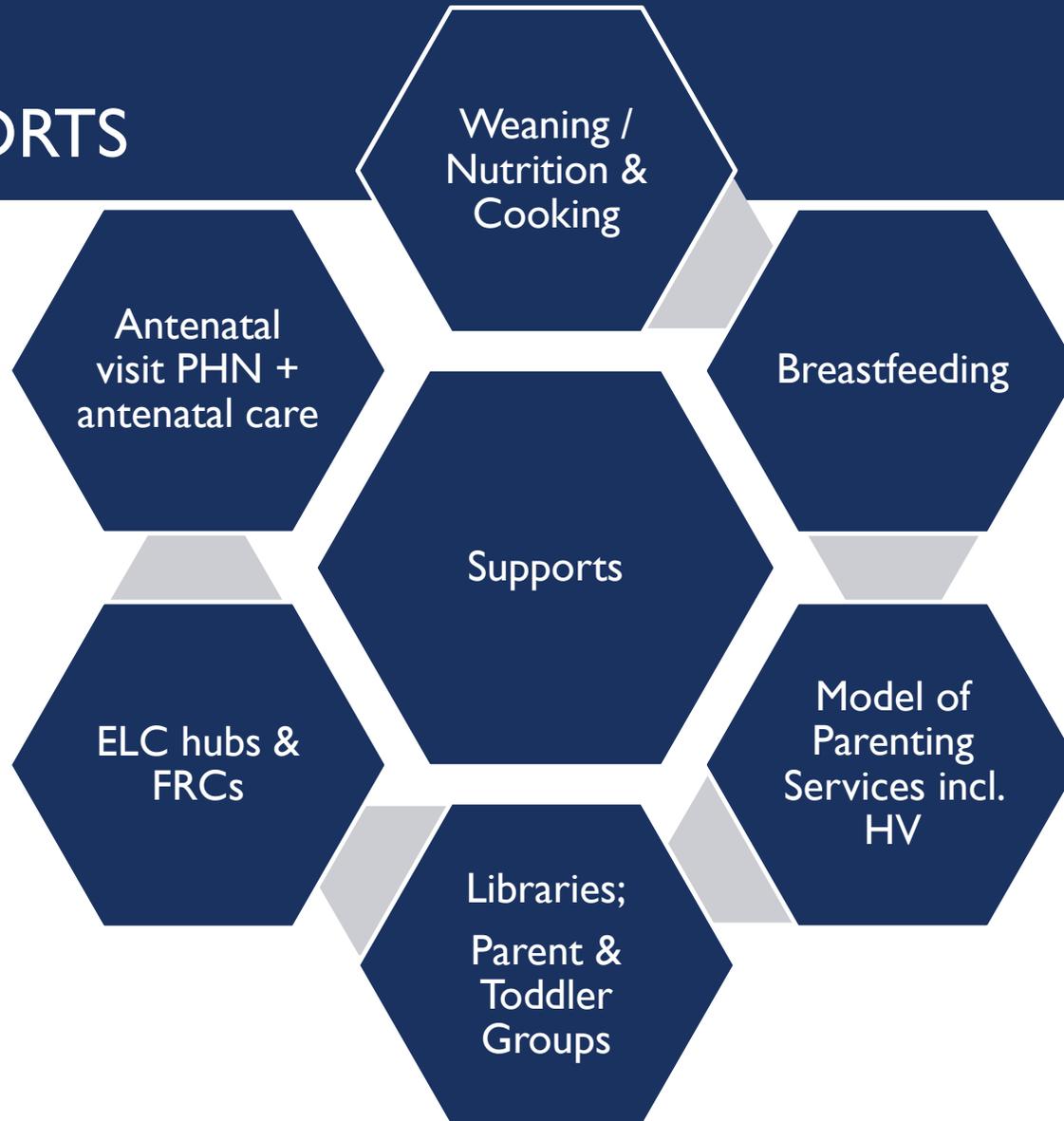
Phase 2 background papers prepared & evidence reviews completed.

2021: Information campaign strategy completed.

Network of Department, Agency and NGO staff involved with supporting early learning established to share, disseminate and promote best practice.

Public information campaign commenced.

PARENTING SUPPORTS



2: Information Services and Supports for Parents

Parents will benefit from high quality, evidence based information and services on various aspects of parenting to support child development and positive family relationships along a continuum of need

Develop a **tiered model of parenting services** building on:

- HSE National Healthy Childhood Programme
- **Development of ELC services as a delivery mechanism**

+ building on PHN home visitation a **national approach to home visiting services will be agreed**

2019

- Study on parent's perspectives and support needs commissioned
- Internal evidence reviews

2020

- Project plan
- Expert group led by DCYA to develop national model
- **Stakeholder engagement**
- Parent's perspectives and support needs study finalised
- National Healthy Childhood Programme developments
- New funding model of ELC/SAC re delivery of parenting programmes

2021

- Development of national model completed
- Government approval of parenting services incl. home visiting

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Parenting Supports

Other supports – referenced in diagram.

- B.4.1.2. Enhance **weaning** support to parents through the National Healthy Childhood Programme: Information (2019) + community based workshops (2020/21)
- B.4.1.1. Continue progress towards the breastfeeding target rate set through PHN service; standardised policies; clinical specialist posts in primary care + maternity. Range of training, policy review and clinic posts (dependent on funding) over 3 years.
- B.4.2.2. Extend the Community Based **Nutrition and Cooking Programmes**. Increased availability of community based cooking programmes.
- B.5.1.2. As resources allow, make the **antenatal visit by the Public Health Nurse** more widely available to expectant mothers in line with need.
- B.5.1.3. Increase the use of **antenatal care in the first trimester**, particularly among vulnerable groups.
- A.3.3.3. Invest in **libraries** as community hubs, across the country, with a particular focus on young children and their parents (parent and baby groups, materials for parents, development of children's sections),
- C.7.1.3. Building on existing initiatives, including the **Parent and Toddler Grant** Initiative, develop further supports to family, including grandparents, friends and neighbours who provide informal care.
- D.1.C.1. Explore the potential for joined-up and integrated service development and delivery for babies, young children and their families, through **ELC settings as a natural hub for collaborative work with families**.
- D.1.C.2. Pilot the development of **Family and Early Childhood Centres** that bring together a range of services to support parents and children in the early stages of development.
- D.2.A.2. Develop guidance and support for **Family Resource Centres (FRCs)** to enhance and consolidate the delivery of the FRC programme.

POSSIBLE ALIGNED INPUTS:

Families homes:

- Homelessness :Increased accommodation facilities appropriate for families exp. Homelessness and ensure appropriate supports are provided during process of being re-homed – NQSF for homeless accommodation ? Option of supporting parents needs through partnership
- Direct Provision: Standards to be published and ensure the delivery of services and supports for people living in direct provision – including babies, young children and their parents – high quality, appropriate and safe and effective – inspection regime/standards
- Traveller accommodation – Expert group already established, submission of report of the expert group, implement policy responses and increased delivery of traveller specific accommodation

Wider community inputs:

- Guidelines on planning for the development of child –friendly communities for LA – 2020 scoping of and considerations of policy objectives. ? An input – Parent voice?
- Mapping of current play policy, practice and provision with focus on early childhood. Starting 2020 ? An input – Parent voice?

MANY OTHER ACTIONS

- Approx. 170 actions across all 4 Goals
- All relevant to parenting on some level
- Goals A-C represented by one phrase in Word Cloud
- Majority of actions focusing on ELC services

ParentInformation
Education ParentSupport
InfantMentalHealth
ChildHealthServices
MaternalHealth ELC ChildMentalHealth
Food ChildHealth
ChidDevelopment Finances
ChildrensServices
Home Employment
MaternalMentalHealth
ParentingSupport