Is the organisational culture and practice at Tusla and its partners changing such that services are more integrated, preventative, evidence informed and inclusive of children and parents? If so, is this contributing to improved outcomes for children and their families?
Research and Evaluation programme

RESEARCH AREAS

- Meitheal and Child and Family Support Networks
- Parenting Support and Parental Participation
- Commissioning
- Public Awareness
- Children’s Participation
Parenting Support and Parental Participation
Key intended outcomes for this work package

– A strategic approach to parenting support is increasingly delivering cost-effective better practice and better outcomes for parents and children, thus reducing inequalities.

– The participation of children and parents is embedded in TUSLA’s culture and operations.

Overarching Research Questions:

Is there a strategic approach to parenting in place within Tusla? Is it resulting in cost-effective better practice? Is participation by parents embedded in the structures and culture of Tusla?
## Research activity completed (2015/ 2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Parental Support and Participation Literature Review</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Mapping of Parenting Support</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Parental Participation Survey</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| ✓ Technical support | - data analysis / provision of data  
- input to PSC training, manual, learning journals etc. |
| ✓ Formative Input and Support | |
| ✓ Associated academic output; peer reviewed papers & conference presentations | |
Parenting Support & Parental Participation Literature Review

This literature review explores the concept and practice of parental participation, including what parents want from participation, what works, and the challenges and barriers to realising meaningful participation of parents in decisions affecting their families.

- Key messages:
  - Including the voice of the parent, challenges to this, working in partnership and participation in practice
Mapping of Parenting Support

- explores what works across the continuum of parenting support, the rationale, purposes and outcomes of programmes and practice,

• The Irish Policy Context
• Delivering Parenting Supports in Ireland
• Programmes and Levels of Evidence
  A brief description of the evidence available- including evaluations & the rationale behind what is evaluated and why- and the implications of this.

• Profile of Selected Areas Profiles of Selected Areas includes CYPSC area profiles of parenting support services, including direct and indirect supports. Includes the provider & nature of the service
  Profiles are based on the best available data and are not intended as exhaustive. The Profile for each area includes a demographic overview.
• Issued September 2016
• 319 respondents, including 274 Tusla employees, 28 partner organisations, 9 other.
• Nationwide response
• Social workers (33%), social care workers (21%), management (13%), FS worker (8%), other (11%) included coordinators, inspectors and trainers
• The majority of respondents (82%) are in direct contact with parents in their work
Tusla Programme of Work in Parenting Support and Parental Participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Yes (%)</th>
<th>No (%)</th>
<th>Unsure (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parental Participation Toolkit</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>33.5</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Participation Briefings</td>
<td>49.0</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Participation Seed Fund</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Support Champions Network</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Support Champions Handbook</td>
<td>56.5</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In my role I...

- Provide parents with support: 47.5% definitely true, 22% mostly true, 16% unsure, 15% mostly not true, 15% definitely not true.
- Actively seek the views of parents: 53% definitely true, 16% mostly true, 15% unsure, 24% mostly not true, 2% definitely not true.
- Support parents to work in partnership: 53.5% definitely true, 15% mostly true, 15% unsure, 24% mostly not true, 2% definitely not true.
- Ensure parents are views: 51% definitely true, 15% mostly true, 15% unsure, 24% mostly not true, 2% definitely not true.
- Provide parents with...
Challenges in parental participation...

• parental unwillingness or inability to engage (17%)
• parental resistance towards Tusla, social work and child protection (11%)
• parents having their own issues that require attention including addiction, mental health issues, homelessness/housing issues and low levels of education (8.5%).
My organisation presently...

- Provides parents with the appropriate information they need to be involved
  - Definitely true (%)*: 26.5
  - Mostly true (%)*: 35.5
  - Unsure (%)*: 0
  - Mostly not true (%)*: 4
  - Definitely not true (%)*: 8.8

- Actively seeks the views of parents
  - Definitely true (%)*: 30
  - Mostly true (%)*: 28.5
  - Unsure (%)*: 9.5
  - Mostly not true (%)*: 6
  - Definitely not true (%)*: 4

- Supports parents to express their views
  - Definitely true (%)*: 31
  - Mostly true (%)*: 27.5
  - Unsure (%)*: 10
  - Mostly not true (%)*: 4.5
  - Definitely not true (%)*: 1

- Ensures parents views are listened to
  - Definitely true (%)*: 22.5
  - Mostly true (%)*: 24.5
  - Unsure (%)*: 18.5
  - Mostly not true (%)*: 7.5
  - Definitely not true (%)*: 1

- Works in partnership with parents to reach decisions
  - Definitely true (%)*: 26
  - Mostly true (%)*: 29.5
  - Unsure (%)*: 11.5
  - Mostly not true (%)*: 5
  - Definitely not true (%)*: 2

- Provides parents with feedback explaining the reasons for decisions taken
  - Definitely true (%)*: 30
  - Mostly true (%)*: 29.5
  - Unsure (%)*: 8
  - Mostly not true (%)*: 4
  - Definitely not true (%)*: 2
Parental participation in service planning

- Identify needs/assessment: 2.5
- Work meetings: 2.5
- Parents not involved: 7.5
- Help accessing services/funding: 2.5
- Parental views/advisory committees: 2.5
- Meitheal: 20.5
- Design plans/interventions: 8
- Work consultations: 1
- Provide information/parenting: 4

Percent
Implement participation fully as policy in Tusla & partner orgs: 16.5

Parental access needs to be improved: 4.5

Need for services for vulnerable parents in particular: 4.5

Need to encourage and facilitate parental involvement and feedback: 14.5

Need for cooperation and multi-disciplinary practice: 1

Access to information online (social media): 0.5

Insufficient resources/ time and training to implement parental participation: 5

Evaluation including parents is in place: 1.5
Need for resources, management & structural support.

Need more research & evidence based programmes

Training needed for non-social workers

Specific training suggestions

Training for complex issues required

Trainers need frontline experience

Need to involve fathers

Skills and training needs identified
Future research activity....
### Research activity planned / underway (2017)

1. Experience of being a PSC
   - Survey, Interviews, learning journals

2. Output / impact of Regional Learning Groups & Parent Learning Communities

3. Follow up survey on parental participation
   - Specific focus on awareness, use of & impact of Parental Participation toolkit

4. Seed Funding awarded
   - Range of research activity to assess impact of spend (across thematic areas and Regions)

5. Tracking of parental input into Tusla website (parenting 24/7) and impact of their involvement

6. Overall view on Parenting support and participation programme
   - Interviews with practitioners, managers...
Thank you
Comments / Questions

Please complete PSC questionnaire

(hard copy in your pack/ soft copy emailed to you)