

# Start Strong

Supporting Parents to Support their  
Children

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# Early Learning Initiative

- Provides learning support programmes, which enables positive educational change in the local community
- Works collaboratively with local educators to improve teaching and learning
- Uses community action research





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**Home is the place where  
language,  
social skills,  
moral values and  
citizenship  
are taught**

(Macbeth 1994; Wolfendale 2000)



**The Home Learning  
Environment is a powerful  
influence on children's  
educational and social  
development**

(Melhuish 2011)



## S3 Aistear - Guidelines



Partnership involves parents,  
families and practitioners  
**working together to benefit  
children.**

Each **recognises, respects and  
values** what the other does and  
says.

Partnership involves  
responsibility on both sides



# S3 Aistear - Guidelines



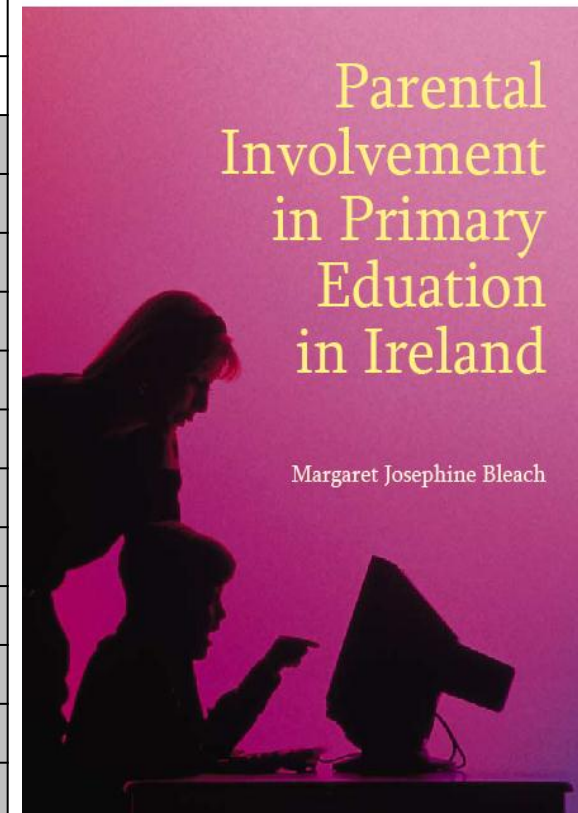
- Supporting learning and development
  - 72% - enough help (GUI)
  - 10% - not enough
  - 5 % - no help (10,500 nine month old)
- Sharing information
- Contributing
- Making decisions & advocating different approaches and courses of action



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Sources of support and advice	N	%
Family	198	78
Grandparents	170	67 (89-91% GIU)
Partner	162	64
Child's teacher	159	63
Friends	136	54
Their children	107	42
Other parents	107	42
Books	95	37
Parenting courses	65	26
School principal	58	23
Newspapers and magazines	51	20
Television	46	18
The Church	43	17
Neighbours	36	14
Public health nurse	34	13
Their doctor	31	12
Internet	23	9
Home school teachers	13	5
Social workers	11	4
Gardai	7	3
Therapist	7	3

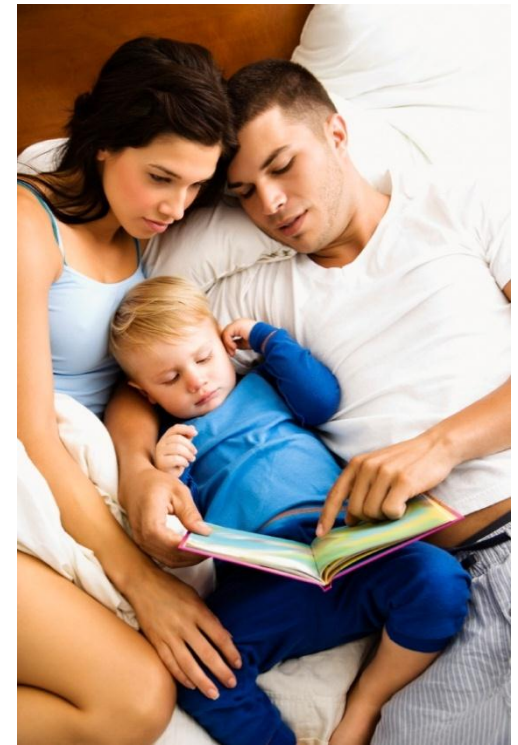




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# Parental Capital

- Financial
- Educational (GUI)
- Interpersonal/social
- Intrapersonal/emotional
- Cultural



# National Children's Strategy 2000



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## Goals:

- Strong community based response
  - Inclusive & non-stigmatising
  - Local plans
- Emphasis on prevention and early intervention
- Integrated and easily accessed supports and services
  - Closer working relationships
  - More innovative approaches



## How? - Issues

- Supports or responses
- Crash diets v lifestyle changes
- Systems or clientalism or projects
- Patriarchal familism or egalitarian individualism – gender, state
- Measurement of parents' abilities – strength/deficit
- Self-confidence & ability to deal with system & experts





# Learning Journeys

## Significant Milestones

- Womb
- Birth
- Crèche/child minding
- Pre-school
- Primary School

