Conclusions and Recommendations
Conclúidí agus Moltaí

Overview of the Audit

The audit of research has gathered together a significant body of research by the early childhood care and education sector over the past 13 years. A total of 1,082 references have been recorded, classified under 12 different research themes, with categories and sub-categories.

The research themes that emerged give us an insight into the areas of interest for the sector and at times, reflect policy agendas and the changing economic and social environment in Ireland. Themes such as the developing child, the role of parents and families in early childhood care and education, and the place of childhood in society have all received substantial research attention. While this conveys our recognition of the importance of children's development and learning during the early years and our desire to understand it better, it also highlights our awareness of the impact that relationships and wider societal influences have on children's lives. The emergence of the research theme of Irish language education is suggestive of the growing awareness of the Irish language as a part of our culture and heritage and of our awareness of the early years as an optimum period for language acquisition. Other themes such as early childhood services, curricula and methodologies, staffing, training and qualifications have also been the focus of considerable research. This is perhaps indicative of the fact that the increasing number of children in day-care has heightened concerns about the content of children's experiences in these settings. The vast number of research articles, most notably evaluations, relating to service provision may have been instigated by virtue of the fact that European Union grant-aid stipulated evaluation as an integral part of the funding process. In line with this, a greater emphasis is being placed on the importance of quality early experiences for children. As we have seen, the theme of quality and in particular, the assessment of quality within services is beginning to receive research attention. We can also witness correlations of research at certain times to policy initiatives or issues receiving much attention in national debate, such as those of children's rights, cultural diversity, special needs and educational disadvantage.

The presentation of the references in chronological order in each theme facilitates observing the evolution of research over the past 13 years. We can see that there was little research prior to 1995 and this correlates with the coming on stream of degree courses for early childhood care and education students in the mid 1990s. This has subsequently led to the wider availability of postgraduate degree programmes and this has had a beneficial impact on the research pool for the sector. This also corresponds

Forléargas ar an Iniúchadh

Tá corpas suntasach taighde ag an earnáil oideachais agus cúraim Luath-Óige sna 13 bliana seo caite tugtha le chéile ag an iniúchadh ar thaighde. Rinneadh 1,082 tagairt san iomlán a thaifeadadh, rinneadh iad a aicmiú faoi 12 théama éagsúla mar aon le catagóirí agus fochatagóirí.

Tugann na téamaí taighde atá tagtha chun cinn léargas dúinn ar na réimsí spéise don earnáil agus uaireanta, léiríonn siad cláir oibre beartais agus an timpeallacht eacnamaíoch agus shóisialta in Éirinn, timpeallacht atá ag athrú. Tá aird shuntasach ó thaobh taighde de tugtha ar théamaí cosúil leis an leanbh i mbéal forbartha, ról tuismitheoirí agus teaghlach i gcúram agus oideachas Luath-Óige, agus seasamh na hóige sa tsochaí. Cé go léiríonn sé sin go n-aithnímid an tábhacht a bhaineann le forbairt agus foghlaim leanaí i rith na luathbhlianta agus an mian atá againn iad sin a thuiscint níos fearr, leagann sé béim freisin ar a mhéad is a thuigimid an tionchar a bhíonn ag gaolmhaireachtaí agus ag tionchair níos leithne na sochaí ar shaol leanaí. Tugann an téama taighde a bhaineann le hoideachas trí Ghaeilge le fios go bhfuil feasacht ag ardú faoin nGaeilge a bheith mar chuid dár gcultúr agus dár n-oidhreacht agus go n-aithnímid na luathbhlianta mar thréimhse optamach do shealbhú teanga. Díríodh go leor taighde freisin ar théamaí eile cosúil le seirbhísí Luath-Óige, curaclam agus modheolaíocht, an fhoireann, oiliúint agus cáilíochtaí. Léiríonn sé sin, b'fhéidir, maidir leis an líon leanaí atá ag fáil cúraim lae, líon atá ag méadú, go bhfuil imní daoine faoi inneachar eispéireas leanaí sna timpeallachtaí sin méadaithe. Maidir leis an líon mór alt taighde, go háirithe meastóireachtaí, a bhaineann le soláthar seirbhíse, d'fhéadfadh gur cuireadh tús leo de bharr gur thug an tAontas Eorpach cúnamh deontais do mheastóireacht mar chuid lárnach den phróiseas maoiniúcháin. Ag teacht leis sin, táthar ag leagan béime níos mó ar an tábhacht a bhaineann le heispéiris luatha ar ardchaighdeán do leanaí. Faoi mar atá feicthe againn, táthar ag déanamh níos mó taighde ar théama an ardchaighdeáin agus go háirithe ar mheastóireacht an ardchaighdeáin laistigh de na seirbhísí. Is féidir linn freisin nasc a fheiceáil idir taighde ag amanna áirithe agus tionscnaimh bheartais nó saincheisteanna a mbíonn aird nach beag orthu i bplé náisiúnta, cosúil le cearta leanaí, éagsúlacht chultúir, riachtanais speisialta agus míbhuntáiste oideachasúil.

De bhrí go gcuirtear na tagairtí i láthair in ord cróineolaíoch in gach téama, is féidir forás an taighde le 13 bliana anuas a fheiceáil níos éasca. Is féidir linn a fheiceáil gur beag taighde a rinneadh roimh 1995 agus tagann sé sin le cúrsaí céime do mhic léinn oideachais agus cúraim Luath-Óige a bheith á mbunú i lár na 1990idí. Dá thoradh sin, tá cláir iarchéime ar fáil níos fairsinge agus tá tionchar dearfach aige sin ar

with the increased status of early childhood care and education on the political agenda in the late 1990s. There are an increasing number of fora for the presentation of research findings to the research community and wider early childhood care and education sector. The revival of the OMEP (Ireland) conference in 2002 is a welcomed step bringing the research community together. There is need for such public platforms to present and publish research and to debate issues relating to research, policy and practice.

This history of research provides a useful mirror to the evolution of the early childhood care and education sector. The collection of this research is of value to the sector as a whole including practitioners, parents, researchers, academics, policy makers, students and ultimately to children, the primary focus of all stakeholders in the sector. Indeed, there is scope for further analysis of the research included in this audit, for example analyses of the design or the methodologies employed or the development of particular research themes over time. However, the range and depth of research evident here is a source of pride for all involved in the care and education of young children and provides a solid basis for current practice and future innovation.

Gaps in the Research

A number of themes contain an extensive number of references, such as early childhood services, parents and families, educational disadvantage, special needs, Irish language education and cultural diversity. As is evident, the personal interests and agendas of individuals and organisations drive a majority of the research and this explains the increased prevalence of research in certain themes. However, there are gaps within certain aspects of these themes that still warrant further attention.

Children's Rights / Voices:

While there have been a lot of publications in relation to the rights and voices of children in the teenage years in preparation for citizenship, the question of consultation with and empowerment of children in the early years is largely underdeveloped.

Transitions:

While there is a wealth of research available in relation to early childhood care and education, there is a general absence of publications regarding the transition from early childhood care and education to the formal education system.

Quality:

Surprisingly, there has been little research in the area of Quality in the Irish context, both in relation to quality indicators or the evaluation of the more subtle and intangible aspects of quality.

an líon taighde atáthar á dhéanamh san earnáil. Tagann sé sin freisin le stádas níos fearr a bheith ag oideachas agus cúram Luath-Óige ar an gclár oibre polaitiúil ag deireadh na 1990idí. Tá líon níos mó fóram ann chun conclúidí taighde a chur i láthair don phobal taighde agus don earnáil níos leithne oideachais agus cúraim Luath-Óige. Rinneadh comhdháil OMEP (Éire) a athbheochan in 2002 agus fáiltítear roimhe sin maidir leis an bpobal taighde a thabhairt le chéile. Tá gá le hardáin phoiblí den chineál sin chun taighde a chur i láthair agus a fhoilsiú agus chun plé a dhéanamh ar shaincheisteanna a bhaineann le taighde, beartas agus cleachtas.

Tugann an stair taighde sin léargas úsáideach ar fhorás na hearnála oideachais agus cúraim Luath-Óige. Baineann luach le bailiú an taighde sin don earnáil ina hiomláine lena n-áirítear cleachtóirí, tuismitheoirí, taighdeoirí, acadóirí, lucht déanta beartais, mic léinn agus ar deireadh leanaí, príomhfhócas gach lucht leasa san earnáil. Go cinnte, tá scóip ann le haghaidh níos mó anailíse ar an taighde atá áirithe leis an iniúchadh seo, mar shampla, anailísí ar an dearadh nó ar mhodheolaíocht a bhaintear úsáid as nó ar fhorbairt théamaí áirithe taighde thar thréimhse ama. Is díol bróid é réimse agus méad na taighde do gach a bhfuil baint acu le cúram agus oideachas daoine óga agus soláthraíonn sé bunús láidir do chleachtas reatha agus do nuálaíocht amach anseo.

Bearnaí sa Taighde

Tá líon suntasach tagairtí i gcuid de na téamaí, cosúil le seirbhísí Luath-Óige, tuismitheoirí agus teaghlaigh, míbhuntáiste oideachasúil, riachtanais speisialta, oideachas trí Ghaeilge agus éagsúlacht chultúir. Faoi mar is léir, is iad spéiseanna pearsanta agus cláir oibre daoine aonair agus grúpaí an bunús don chuid is mó den taighde agus míníonn sé sin taighde a bheith níos líonmhaire i dtéamaí áirithe. Tá bearnaí, áfach, i ngnéithe áirithe de na téamaí sin agus ní mór aird a thabhairt orthu sin.

Cearta/Guthaíocht Leanaí:

Cé go bhfuil roinnt mhaith foilsithe faoi chearta agus guthaíocht leanaí agus iad ina ndéagóirí ag ullmhú do shaoránacht, tá an cheist a bhaineann le dul i gcomhairle le leanaí agus iad a chumhachtú sna luathbhlianta tearcfhorbartha den chuid is mó.

Gluaiseacht ar aghaidh:

Cé go bhfuil an-chuid taighde le fáil faoi oideachas agus cúram Luath-Óige, ní ann, den chuid is mó, d'fhoilseacháin a phléann an ghluaiseacht ar aghaidh ó oideachas agus cúram Luath-Óige go dtí an córas foirmiúil oideachais.

Cáilíocht:

Is díol suntais é gur beag taighde atá déanta faoi chaighdeán i gcomhthéacs na hÉireann, maidir le táscairí caighdeáin nó measúnú a dhéanamh ar ghnéithe níos doláimhsithe nó níos dinimiciúla an chaighdeáin.

Parents and Families:
Recent years have witnessed a welcome focus on supporting the wider family in relation to parenthood. However, there appears to be no direct government policy in relation to parental involvement, although many government policies, such as the Report of the Commission on the Family (DSCFA, 1998) make indirect reference to this.

Educational Disadvantage:
Much research has been completed in the area of disadvantage, yet there is a dearth of publications that focus specifically on the importance of an integrated approach to tackling educational disadvantage.

Special Needs:
There is a need for further examination of the issue of effective intervention for children with special needs. In particular, there is a need for critical examination of the process of inclusion and integration of children with special needs in mainstream settings.

Staffing, Training and Qualifications:
There is little research in the Irish context relating to the impact of training and qualifications on the quality of services provided in settings.

Cultural Diversity:
The question of the education of foreign national minority groups is relatively new in the Irish context. A considerable amount of research has been conducted in a relatively short period of time. However, there is little research available in relation to the language needs of minority groups in the Irish context.

International Perspectives:
While international perspectives featured as a category in all of the chapters, there is a lack of research that compares Ireland with other jurisdictions.

Longitudinal Research:
The vast majority of the research is one-off, short-term evaluations of initiatives. This does not take into account long-term effects of projects, which is of vital importance.

Policy:
All sections are quite weak on policy that does not emanate from government. There are a few organisations such as the Combat Poverty Agency, Irish National Teachers' Organisation, Pavee Point, Irish Travellers Movement and Barnardos, as well as certain individuals, that produce policy papers, but the majority of the research is categorised as descriptive/analysis. Research needs to be undertaken to inform new policy development and to generate debate and discussion on policy issues.

Tuismitheoirí agus Teaghlaigh:
Le blianta beaga anuas táthar ag leagan béime ar thacú leis an teaghlach níos leithne ó thaobh tuismíochta de, agus fáiltítear roimhe sin. Is cosúil nach bhfuil aon bheartas díreach rialtais ann, áfach, maidir le rannpháirtíocht tuismitheoirí, cé go dtagraíonn go leor beartas rialtais, cosúil le Tuarascáil an Choimisiúin um an Teaghlach (DSCFA, 1998), go hindíreach dó sin.

Míbhuntáiste Oideachasúil:
Tá roinnt mhaith taighde déanta i réimse an mhíbhuntáiste, ach tá ganntanas foilseachán ann a dhíríonn go sonrach ar an tábhacht a bhaineann le cur chuige chomhtháite a ghlacadh chun dul i ngleic le míbhuntáiste oideachasúil.

Riachtanais Speisialta:
Is gá scrúdú breise a dhéanamh ar idirghabhálacha éifeachtacha do leanaí a bhfuil riachtanais speisialta acu. Is gá, go háirithe, scrúdú criticiúil a dhéanamh ar an bpróiseas a bhaineann le leanaí a bhfuil riachtanais speisialta acu a thabhairt isteach agus a chomhtháthú i dtimpeallachtaí príomhshrutha.

An Fhoireann, Oiliúint agus Cáilíochtaí:
Is beag taighde atá déanta, i gcomhthéacs na hÉireann, faoin tionchar a bhíonn ag oiliúint agus cáilíochtaí ar chaighdeán na seirbhísí a chuirtear ar fáil i dtimpeallachtaí áirithe.

Éagsúlacht Chultúir:
Tá an cheist a bhaineann le hoideachas do mhionghrúpaí náisiúnach coigríche sách nua i gcomhthéacs na hÉireann. Tá roinnt mhaith taighde déanta in achar gearr ama. Is beag taighde atá ar fáil, áfach, ar riachtanais teanga mionghrúpaí i gcomhthéacs na hÉireann.

Peirspictíochtaí Idirnáisiúnta:
Cé go raibh peirspictíochtaí idirnáisiúnta ina gcatagóir in gach ceann de na caibidlí, beagnach, tá ganntanas taighde ann a dhéanann comparáid idir Éirinn agus dlínsí eile.

Taighde Fadtréimhseach:
Maidir le formhór an taighde, is measúnú aonuaine, gearrthréimhseach ar thionscnaimh a bhíonn ann. Ní ghlactar san áireamh tionchair fhadtréimhseacha tionscadail, rud a mbaineann an-tábhacht leis.

Beartas:
Tá gach cuid sách lag i dtaobh beartais nach dtagann ón rialtas. Tá roinnt eagraíochtaí ann, cosúil leis an nGníomhaireacht Chomhrac in aghaidh na Bochtaine, Cumann Múinteoirí Éireann, Gluaiseacht Lucht Siúil na hÉireann agus Barnardos, mar aon le daoine aonair áirithe, a fhoilsíonn páipéar beartais, ach meastar formhór an taighde a bheith tuairisciúil/anailísiúil. Ní mór tabhairt faoi thaighde chun treoir a thabhairt d'fhorbairt beartais nua agus chun díospóireacht agus plé a chruthú faoi shaincheisteanna beartais.

There are a number of themes in which it is surprising to find gaps. For example, the theme of quality, which has received so much attention and debate in the Irish context, is largely unsubstantiated by indigenous research. Such research is a prerequisite in order to inform, ground and substantiate our arguments regarding quality. While Children's Rights is a topical issue, there is little research in relation to promoting the rights and voices of young children in Ireland. The existence of gaps does not necessarily mean that students, researchers or academics were not interested in these particular themes, rather, that these areas were not a focus of policy at that time or that funding was not forthcoming to investigate that precise aspect. We hope that this audit will serve as a stimulus for researchers, practitioners and policy makers to address the gaps identified here.

Recommendations

The early childhood care and education sector should take great pride in the substantial amount of Irish research produced since 1990. It is hoped that the research audit will be of great benefit as a resource that draws together in excess of a decade of hard work and dedication within the early childhood care and education sector. It has given rise to a number of recommendations.

1. **The research capacity of the early childhood sector needs to be strengthened and enhanced**. The Centre will complete certain research projects, while various aspects of the work programme will be commissioned out to external agencies. We hope that this will build the research capacity of the early childhood care and education sector and help to raise its professional status. We will be disseminating research findings to the sector on an ongoing basis and we anticipate that we will be able to use the research findings to promote and facilitate commentary and debate on issues and to further knowledge and understanding of what is best for children in early years settings in Ireland today. The Centre has also developed links to other agencies conducting research such as the National Children's Office and the Children' Research Centre, TCD, to ensure co-ordination and efficiency in our work.

2. **The gaps highlighted should provide a basis and focus for further research projects** in the future for the Centre and for individuals and organisations within the sector. These research gaps formed the basis for our Research Strategy (CECDE, 2003), which is a 3-year strategy examining overarching issues such as how young children develop and learn in the Irish context. This focuses on the whole area of quality, for example, good practices in teaching methodologies and parental involvement. It also concentrates on particular themes such as the transition for children from pre-school to formal

Tá roinnt téamaí ann a bhfuil bearnaí iontu agus is díol suntais é sin. Mar shampla, maidir le téama an chaighdeáin, tá aird nach beag tugtha air agus plé déanta air i gcomhthéacs na hÉireann agus den chuid is mó níl taighde dúchais ann chun tacú leis sin. Is réamhriachtanas é taighde den chineál sin chun tacú lenár gcuid argóintí faoi chaighdeán, chun bunús a thabhairt dóibh agus chun treoir a thabhairt dóibh. Cé gur saincheist í Cearta Leanaí atá i mbéal an phobail i láthair na huaire, is beag taighde atá déanta maidir le cearta agus guthaíocht leanaí óga in Éirinn a chothú. Tá bearnaí ann ach ní gá go gciallaíonn sé sin nár chuir mic léinn, taighdeoirí ná acadóirí spéis sna téamaí áirithe sin, ach nár dhírigh beartas ag an am sin ar na réimsí sin nó nach raibh maoiniú le fáil chun scrúdú a dhéanamh ar an ngné áirithe sin. Tá súil againn go spreagfaidh an t-iniúchadh seo taighdeoirí, cleachtóirí agus lucht déanta beartais chun aghaidh a thabhairt ar na bearnaí a aithnítear anseo.

Moltaí

Ba chóir go mbeadh an earnáil cúraim agus oideachais Luath-Óige bródúil as an líon suntasach taighde a foilsíodh ó 1990 i leith. Táthar ag súil go mbeidh an t-iniúchadh taighde ina thairbhe mór mar acmhainn a thugann le chéile an obair dhian agus an dúthracht a bhain leis an earnáil oideachais agus cúraim Luath-Óige le deich mbliana anuas. Tá roinnt moltaí a eascraíonn as.

1. **Ní mór acmhainn taighde na hearnála Luath-Óige a láidriú agus a fheabhsú**. Tabharfaidh an tIonad tionscadail áirithe taighde chun críche, agus déanfar gnéithe áirithe den obair a choimisiúnú ó ghníomhaireachtaí seachtracha. Tá súil againn go dtógfaidh sé sin acmhainn taighde na hearnála cúraim agus oideachais Luath-Óige agus go gcuideoidh sé lena stádas gairmiúil a ardú. Beimid ag scaipeadh conclúidí taighde ar an earnáil ar bhonn leanúnach agus tá súil againn go mbeidh ar ár gcumas na conclúidí taighde a úsáid chun plé agus díospóireacht faoi shaincheisteanna a chothú agus a éascú agus chun eolas agus tuiscint a fheabhsú maidir leis an ní is fearr do leanaí i dtimpeallachtaí luathbhlianta in Éirinn an lae inniu. Tá naisc forbartha ag an Ionad le gníomhaireachtaí eile a dhéanannn taighde cosúil leis an Oifig Náisiúnta Leanaí agus an Children' Research Centre, TCD, d'fhonn comhordú agus éifeachtacht a chinntiú inár gcuid oibre.

2. **Maidir leis na bearnaí a leagtar béim orthu, ba chóir dóibh bheith mar bhunús agus mar fhócas do thionscadail bhreise taighde** amach anseo don Ionad agus do dhaoine aonair agus d'eagraíochtaí laistigh den earnáil. Bhí na bearnaí taighde sin mar bhunús dár Straitéis Taighde (CECDE, 2003), arb é atá ann ná straitéis 3 bliana a scrúdaíonn saincheisteanna forghabhálacha cosúil leis an gcaoi a

schooling and practitioner's perspectives about play and learning in the Irish context.

3. **The research to date and all future research must be instrumental in shaping policy and practice in the Irish context**. Research is imperative to provide a solid empirical foundation for the growth of the sector as a whole. As Morris (1998: 32) notes in relation to the British Cohort Studies,

"Findings have been used for policy development and assessment at national level. They have influenced policy and practice in areas such as health and education, and have been used to supply evidence to major government enquiries." [9]

4. **The great richness of data available within early years settings relating to observations and records needs to be analysed and presented**. Research does not have to be an external evaluation of a setting by a "researcher". This would help to increase capacity for the professional development of practitioners within the early childhood care and education sector.

5. **The question of ethical guidelines for conducting research with young children requires immediate attention leading to national guidelines**.

6. Effective dissemination of research and research findings is vital for the continuing development of the Sector. **Additional fora for the presentation and debate of research, including an Irish peer reviewed early years journal, conferences and seminars have to be established**.

Some Final Words

This audit presents the fruits of labour of 13 years of hard work from a developing sector. Great strides have been made in this period of time in relation to development and co-ordination and the growing number of publications in the latter years reflects the growing strength and force of the sector. This is the story of the sector carrying out one of the most important endeavours in society, the care and formation of the next generation of adults. The 1,082 publications are a defining body of work for all stakeholders and provide a basis for current policy and practice and for further research to assist the evolution of policy and practice into the future.

The audit will also be available as a searchable on-line database on the CECDE's website (www.cecde.ie). This on-line database will be updated on an ongoing basis to take account of new and

bhfoghlaimíonn agus a bhforbraíonn leanaí i gcomhthéacs na hÉireann. Díríonn sé sin ar réimse iomlán an chaighdeáin, mar shampla, dea-chleachtais i modheolaíocht teagaisc agus rannpháirtíocht tuismitheoirí. Díríonn sé freisin ar théamaí áirithe cosúil leis an ngluaiseacht do leanaí ón réamhscoil go dtí an scolaíocht fhoirmiúil agus peirspictíochtaí cleachtóirí faoi spraoi agus foghlaim i gcomhthéacs na hÉireann.

3. **Ní mór don taighde go dtí seo agus amach anseo a bheith lárnach i múnlú beartais agus cleachtais i gcomhthéacs na hÉireann**. Tá an taighde ríthábhachtach chun bunús láidir eimpíreach a chur ar fáil d'fhás na hearnála ina hiomláine. Faoi mar a deir Morris (1998: 32) faoin British Cohort Studies,

"Findings have been used for policy development and assessment at national level. They have influenced policy and practice in areas such as health and education, and have been used to supply evidence to major government enquiries."[9]

4. **Ní mór anailís a dhéanamh ar shaibhreas na sonraí atá ar fáil laistigh de thimpeallachtaí na luathbhlianta maidir le breathnóireachtaí agus taifid agus ní mór é sin a chur i láthair**. Ní gá gur meastóireacht sheachtrach ag 'taighdeoir' ar thimpeallacht a bheadh sa taighde. Chuideodh sé sin leis an acmhainn a mhéadú d'fhorbairt ghairmiúil cleachtóirí laistigh den earnáil oideachais agus cúraim Luath-Óige.

5. **Ní mór aird a thabhairt láithreach ar an tsaincheist a bhaineann le treoirlínte eitice maidir le taighde a dhéanamh le leanaí óga agus ní mór treoirlínte náisiúnta teacht as sin**.

6. Tá scaipeadh éifeachtach an taighde agus chonclúidí an taighde riachtanach d'fhorbairt leanúnach na hEarnála. **Ní mór fóraim bhreise do chur-i-láthair agus do phlé an taighde, lena n-áirítear iris luathbhlianta faoi athbhreithniú piaraí Éireannacha, comhdhálacha agus seimineáir a bhunú.**

Roinnt Focal Scoir

Cuireann an t-iniúchadh seo toradh diansaothar 13 bliana ó earnáil atá i mbéal forbartha i láthair. Rinneadh dul chun cinn mór sa tréimhse sin maidir le forbairt agus comhordú agus léiríonn an líon foilseachán a foilsíodh sna blianta déanacha láidreacht agus fórsa na hearnála atá ag fás léi. Is éard atá anseo ná scéal na hearnála atá ag tabhairt faoin obair is tábhachtaí sa tsochaí, cúram agus foirmiú an chéad ghlúin eile de dhaoine fásta. Is corpas suntasach saothar iad an 1,082 foilseachán do gach lucht leasa agus soláthraíonn siad bunús do bheartas

[9] Morris, M. (1998). *See how they Go – The Case for a National Longitudinal Study of Childcare in Ireland.* A Report prepared by Margaret Morris on behalf of Treoir. Dublin: Treoir.

emerging research and the hard copy publication will be reviewed regularly. This will be a valuable centralised resource for the whole of the early childhood care and education sector. It is hoped that the Centre can become a clearinghouse for research in the early childhood care and education sector in the future.

The establishment of the Centre is timely in providing a focal point for the emergent strength and unity within the sector. We look forward to working with all stakeholders in the field of early childhood care and education and are committed to a process of consultation with all interested parties. We are aptly placed to make a difference in children's lives in this dynamic time in Irish society. As De Guellar (1987) notes:

"The way in which a society treats children reflects not only its qualities of compassion and protective caring, but also its sense of justice, its commitment to the future, and its urge to enhance the human condition for coming generations."[10]

agus do chleachtas reatha agus do thaighde amach anseo chun cuidiú le forás an bheartais agus an chleachtais amach anseo.

Beidh an t-iniúchadh ar fáil freisin mar bhunachar sonraí inchuardaithe ar líne nuair a bheidh láithreán gréasáin CECDE faoi lánseol. Tabharfar an bunachar sonraí ar líne cothrom le dáta ar bhonn leanúnach chun taighde nua a thabhairt san áireamh agus déanfar athbhreithniú ar an gcóip chrua den fhoilseachán go rialta. Acmhainn luachmhar lárnach a bheidh ann don earnáil oideachais agus cúraim Luath-Óige ina hiomláine. Táthar ag súil gur teach imréitigh a bheidh san Ionad do thaighde san earnáil oideachais agus cúraim Luath-Óige amach anseo.

Bunaíodh an tIonad in am tráthúil chun fócasphointe a sholáthar do láidreacht agus do chomhaontacht laistigh den earnáil. Táimid ag súil le dul i mbun oibre le gach lucht leasa i réimse an chúraim agus an oideachais Luath-Óige agus táimid tiomanta do phróiseas comhairliúcháin le gach páirtí leasmhar. Tá deis iontach againn saol leanaí a athrú sa tréimhse dhinimiciúil seo i sochaí na hÉireann. Faoi mar a deir De Guellar (1987) ;

"The way in which a society treats children reflects not only its qualities of compassion and protective caring, but also its sense of justice, its commitment to the future, and its urge to enhance the human condition for coming generations."[10]

[10] De Guellar, P. (1987). UN Secretary General (quoted in) Quin, S., Kennedy, P., O'Donnell, A. and Kiely, G. (1999). *Contemporary Irish Social Policy.* Dublin: UCD Press.