Chapter 5 - Parents and Families
Caibidil 5 - Tuismitheoirí agus Teaghlaigh

Considerable economic, social and cultural changes have occurred in Ireland since our Constitution was enshrined, impacting on family life and consequently, on early childhood care and education (DSCFA, 1998). The advent of the 'Tiger Economy' in the 1990s catalysed the entry and retention of a large number of mothers in the workforce (DJELR, 1999c). The Report of the Expert Working Group on Childcare (DJELR, 1999c: 12) revealed that mothers often have to rely on extended family care or avail of costly early childhood care and education services. It outlined that 38% of parents with children aged 0 to 4 years and 18% with children aged 5 to 9 years availed of paid services. The Report predicted that this percentage would continue to rise. Thus, much early education of and care for children, which was once provided within the home, is now a service provided externally by early childhood care and education practitioners.

Article 42.1 of the Irish Constitution recognises the rights and responsibilities of parents as the primary carers and educators of their children;

"The State acknowledges that the primary and natural educator of the child is the family and guarantee to respect the inalienable right and duty of parents to provide, according to their means, for the religious and moral, intellectual, physical and social education of their children." [4] .

This pivotal role is reiterated by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by Ireland in 1992. The duty of the state arises in its support and assistance for the central role afforded to parents.

The Equal Opportunities Childcare programme has €437 million to spend between 2000 and 2006 in the expansion of early childhood care and education places, with a primary view of facilitating the entry of mothers to the workforce (DES, 2002f). While there is a value in the fact that the labour market motivates the provision of early childhood care and education places, it should not be the sole motivator. Increased parental involvement in the work place must be complemented with work-friendly practices and external supports for parents, in order to allow them to fulfil these dual roles e.g. parental leave, paternity leave, provision of quality, affordable early childhood care and education services (DJELR, 1999c; DHC, 2002a). A number of reports, for example, Fisher (2000), Coughlan (2000) and Fine-Davis, Clarke and Berry (2002) have proposed greater flexibility in working arrangements for parents.

Such supports in the Irish context have been rather piecemeal and languid in international terms with

Tharla cuid mhór athruithe eacnamaíocha, sóisialacha agus cultúrtha in Éirinn ó cuireadh ár mBunreacht i bhfeidhm a bhfuil tionchar acu ar an saol teaghlaigh, agus ag éirí as sin, ar chúram agus ar oideachas Luath-Óige (DSCFA, 1998). Bhí teacht an 'Gheilleagar Tíogair' sna 1990idí déanacha mar chatalaíoch ar líon mór máithreacha ag teacht isteach agus ag fanacht sa líon lucht oibre (DJELR, 1999c). Nocht Tuairisc an Ghrúpa Oibre Shainiúil ar Chúram Leanaí (DJELR, 1999c: 12) gur minic a bhíonn ar mháithreacha brath ar chúram curtha ar fáil ag baill teaghlaigh, nó úsáid a bhaint as seirbhísí costasacha chúram agus oideachas Luath-Óige. Chuir sé in iúl go mbaineann 38% de thuismitheoirí a bhfuil leanaí idir náid agus ceithre bliana d'aois acu agus 18% dóibh siúd a bhfuil leanaí idir cúig agus naoi mbliana d'aois acu úsáid as seirbhísí íoctha. Thuar an Tuairisc go leanfaí leis an méadú ar an gcéatadán sin. Mar sin de, cuid mhaith den luath-oideachas agus cúram do leanaí a bhíodh soláthraithe sa bhaile tráth, is seirbhís anois í a sholáthraíonn cleachtóirí cúram agus oideachas Luath-Óige go heachtrach.

Aithníonn Airteagal 42.1 de Bhunreacht na hÉireann cearta agus freagrachtaí tuismitheoirí mar phríomhfheighlithe agus mar phríomhoideachasóirí a gcuid leanaí mar aon le ceart an teaghlaigh;

"Admhaíonn an Stát gurb é an Teaghlach is múinteoir príomha dúchasach don leanbh, agus ráthaíonn gan cur isteach ar cheart doshannta ná ar dhualgas doshannta tuistí chun oideachas de réir a n-acmhainne a chur ar fáil dá glclainn i gcúrsaí creidimh, moráltachta, intleachta, coirp agus comhdhaonnachta." [4] .

Tá an ról lárnach seo athluaite ag Coinbhinsiún na Náisiún Aontaithe um Chearta Leanaí, a dhaingnigh Éire sa bhliain 1992. Tagann dualgas an Stáit chun cinn sa tacaíocht agus sa chúnamh a thugann sé maidir leis an ról lárnach a bhronntar ar thuismitheoirí.

Tá €437 milliún le caitheamh ag an gClár Chomhdheiseanna Chúram Leanaí idir 2000 agus 2006 chun áiteanna chúram agus oideachas Luath-Óige a leathnú, chun críche go príomha, iontráil mháithreacha sa líon lucht oibre a éascú (DES, 2002f). Cé go bhfuil luach leis an spreagadh a thugann an margadh oibre do sholáthar áiteanna cúram agus oideachas Luath-Óige, ní mór nach mbeadh sé ar an aon spreagadh amháin. Má tá méadú le teacht ar pháirtíocht tuismitheoirí san áit oibre ní mór é sin a chomhlánú le cleachtais a thacaíonn le hobair agus le tacaíocht eachtrach do thuismitheoirí chun ligeann dóibh an dá ról seo a chomhlíonadh, mar shampla, saoire tuismitheoireachta, saoire aithreachais, soláthar sheirbhísí chúram agus oideachas Luath-Óige a bhfuil

[4] Bunreacht na hÉireann (1937) Dublin: The Stationery Office
Bunreacht na hÉireann (1937) Baile Átha Cliath: Oifig an tSoláthair

consequent effects on the child, family and society as a whole. Work and family life must complement rather than compete with one another and learn to accommodate their respective realities (DJELR, 1999c; Coughlan, 2000). The government has chosen to support all parents in the form of enhanced Child Benefit Allowance rather than direct subvention of early childhood care and education or the introduction of tax breaks for working parents.

Research has proven that parental involvement is crucial in settings outside the home in the best interests of the child (Kellaghan and Greaney, 1993; French, 2003). The greater involvement of external practitioners in the early childhood care and education of children has led to a new partnership between parents and early years workers. Such an alliance is of paramount importance for the child, as each adult (parent and practitioner) mediates the child's experiences in the early years (Carswell, 2002). The child on arrival in an early years setting has not existed in a societal and cultural vacuum and it is the prior experiences of the child that formulate the origins of learning in the new context (CMRS, 1992a). Likewise, the school is not an island and exists in the context of a wider community (Ryan, S., 1994, 1999). It is only through co-operation and partnership that the sharing of respective knowledge and expertise can be facilitated (Carroll, 2000). Tensions can often occur in this partnership, as each party tries to define their role and map their expertise. There is growing acknowledgement of the complementary but different role each fulfils and that together, partnership is the optimum recipe of success for the child (INTO, 1997c; Murphy, M., 2002).

Supports to parents who work fulltime in the home are also a necessity (Coolahan, 1998). Parenting can be a complex and difficult process for which there is little formative training and much learning occurs by exposure to the task (McKeown, Haase and Pratschke, 2001). The Report of the Commission on the Family outlines the changing nature of parenting in Ireland (DSCFA, 1998). Traditionally, parents of large families concentrated more on the physical well being of children whereas now, parents are more concerned with the holistic development of the child, including cognitive, emotional and social development. The Report also highlights the increased demand for parenting courses and emphasises the importance of placing the well being of the child at the centre (DSCFA, 1998).

A system of supports may be helpful for all parents in the form of parenting programmes, home visits and external supports. These services should support the parental role and not diminish it by creating dependency on extrinsic interventions (McKeown, 2002b). This is especially true in terms of parents affected by disadvantage. Parents can be aided to break the cycle of deprivation and dependency by being empowered to be active participants in their own education, share their own expertise and create networks of support (McKeown, Haase and Pratschke,

sé ar acmhainn ag daoine íoc astu (DJELR, 1999c; DHC, 2002a). Moltar i roinnt tuairiscí, mar shampla, Fisher (2000), Coughlan (2000) agus Fine-Davis, Clarke agus Berry (2002) níos mó solúbthachta a bheith ann maidir le comhshocruithe oibre do thuismitheoirí.

Tá tacaíochtaí den chineál sin sa chomhthéacs Éireannach ina bpíosaí agus lag i dtéarmaí idirnáisiúnta, agus ag éirí as sin bíonn éifeachtaí ar leanaí, ar theaghlaigh agus ar an sochaí trí chéile. Ní mór go gcomhlíonfaidh an saol oibre agus an saol teaghlaigh a chéile seachas a bheith in iomaíocht lena chéile agus ní mór go bhfreastalóidís ar réaltacht a chéile (DJELR, 1999c; Coughlan, 2000). Tá roghnaithe ag an Rialtas tacú le gach tuismitheoir i bhfoirm Liúntas Leasa Leanaí méadaithe seachas deontas díreach do chúram agus oideachas na Luath-Óige nó fuascailtí cánacha do thuismitheoirí a bhíonn ag obair.

Cruthaíonn taighde go bhfuil páirtíocht tuismitheoirí de mhórthábhacht i suímh taobh amuigh den bhaile maidir leis an leas is fearr don leanbh (Kellaghan agus Greaney, 1993; French, 2003). Mar thoradh ar pháirtíocht níos mó a bheith ag cleachtóirí eachtracha i gcúram agus oideachas Luath-Óige leanaí tá comhpháirtíocht nua ann idir tuismitheoirí agus oibrithe Luath-Óige. Tá comhghuaillíocht den chineál sin ríthábhachtach don leanbh, mar bíonn gach duine fásta (tuismitheoir agus cleachtóir) ag idirghabháil eispéireas leanaí sna luathbhlianta (Carswell, 2002). Nuair a shroicheann leanbh suíomh Luath-Óige, ní hé go raibh sé nó sí ag maireachtáil i bhfolús sochaí agus cultúrtha, agus is iad na heispéiris a bhí ag an leanbh roimhe sin a mhúnlaíonn bunús le haghaidh foghlama sa chomhthéacs nua (CMRS, 1992a). Ar an dóigh chéanna, níl an scoil scoite amach léi féin agus maireann sí i gcomhthéacs an phobail mhóir (Ryan, S., 1994, 1999). Is trí chomhoibriú agus trí chomhpháirtíocht amháin ar féidir comhroinnt eolais agus sainiúlachta a éascú (Carroll, 2000). Is féidir go dtarlódh aighneas sa chomhpháirtíocht sin, de réir mar a dhéanann gach páirtí iarracht a ról a shainmhíniú agus a shainiúlacht a chur in iúl. Tá feasacht níos mó ann maidir leis an ról comhlánaithe ach difriúil a chomhlíonann gach páirtí, agus gurb é le chéile is í an chomhpháirtíocht an cur chuige is fearr chun go n-éireoidh leis an leanbh (INTO, 1997c; Murphy, M., 2002).

Tá tacaíochtaí do thuismitheoirí a oibríonn go lán-aimseartha sa bhaile riachtanach freisin (Coolahan, 1998). Is próiseas casta í an tuismitheoireacht agus níl mórán oiliúna múnlaithí ar fáil di agus tarlaíonn cuid mhaith foghlama de réir mar a bhíonn an tasc á dhéanamh (McKeown, Haase agus Pratschke, 2001). Déanann Tuairisc an Choimisiúin Teaghlaigh imlíne ar an dóigh a bhfuil nádúr na tuismitheoireachta in Éirinn ag athrú (DSCFA, 1998). Go traidisiúnta, dhírigh tuismitheoirí le clanna móra níos mó ar leas fisiceach na leanaí ach anois, bíonn tuismitheoirí níos buartha faoi fhorbairt iomlánaíoch an linbh, lena n-áirítear forbairt chognaíoch, mhaoithneach agus shóisialach. Léiríonn an Tuairisc an t-éileamh

2001). The value of parenting courses for all parents must be recognised and not be solely associated with parents experiencing difficulty. Parenting can also be highly rewarding and a forum to share collective experiences is a valuable support. It is essential to remember that parents are not a homogeneous group in society and cannot be treated as such. They come from a variety of backgrounds and experiences and their needs are dynamic and change with circumstances and time. Supports and training must change in conjunction with these needs (Coolahan, 1998).

Parental support must be reinforced by supports to the wider family, an area that needs further development in Ireland (McKeown, Haase and Pratschke, 2001). Such interventions can often prevent or alleviate the effects of family dysfunction and help foster healthier relationships within families. Family supports include a diverse range of professional, social services and community development agencies, depending on the target group and the programme of activities. This interdisciplinary approach is advocated by a number of initiatives and reports including the Springboard initiative, launched in 1998 (McKeown, 1999). The Commission on the Family (DSCFA, 1998: 16) proposes the following vision of family support services that involves the;

"empowering of individuals, builds on family strengths, enhances self-esteem and engenders a sense of being able to influence events in one's life, has significant potential as a primary preventative strategy for all families facing the ordinary challenges of day-to-day living, and has a particular relevance in communities that are coping in a stressful environment."

The following **categories** emerged in the analysis and examination of the research data for Parents and Families:

5.1 Family Supports
5.2 Government Publications
5.3 International Perspectives
5.4 Parental Education and Training
5.5 Parental Involvement in Infant Classes
5.6 Partnership and Participation

These are then analysed under the aforementioned **sub-categories** of:

- Description/Analysis
- Evaluation
- Guidelines
- Policy

méadaithe ar chúrsaí tuismitheoireachta agus cuireann sí béim ar an tábhacht a bhaineann le leas an linbh a bheith mar chroílár (DSCFA, 1998).

Is féidir go mbeadh córas tacaíochtaí cabhrach ag gach tuismitheoir i bhfoirm cláir thuistithe, cuairteanna baile agus tacaíochtaí eachtracha. Ní mór go dtacódh na seirbhísí seo leis an ról tuismitheoireachta agus nach laghdóidís é trí spleáchas a chruthú ar idirghabhálacha eachtracha (McKeown, 2002b). Tá an méid sin fíor go háirithe i dtéarmaí tuismitheoirí atá faoi mhíbhuntáiste. Is féidir cuidiú le tuismitheoirí an ré bhochtaineachta agus spleáchais a bhriseadh trí chur ar a gcumas a bheith mar rannpháirtithe gníomhacha ina gcuid oideachais féin, a gcuid sainiúlachta a chomhroinnt agus gréasáin tacaíochta a chruthú (McKeown, Haase agus Pratschke, 2001). Ní mór luach chúrsaí tuismitheoireachta do gach tuismitheoir a aithint agus ná beidís bainteach le tuismitheoirí a mbíonn deacrachtaí acu amháin. Is féidir go mbaintear an-sásamh ar fad as an tuismitheoireacht agus tá fóram ina bhféadfaí eispéiris choitianta a chomhroinnt mar thacaíocht luachmhar. Tá sé riachtanach cuimhneamh nach grúpa aonchineálach sa tsochaí iad na tuismitheoirí agus nach féidir caitheamh leo ar an mbealach sin. Baineann siad le héagsúlacht cúlra agus tá a gcuid riachtanas dinimiciúil agus athraíonn siad leis an am agus le himthosca. Ní mór go n-athródh tacaíochtaí agus oiliúint i gcomhar leis na riachtanais sin (Coolahan, 1998).

Ní mór tacaíocht do thuismitheoirí a threisiú trí thacaíochtaí a chur ar fáil don teaghlach mór, réimse a dteastaíonn níos mó forbartha uaidh in Éirinn (McKeown, Haase agus Pratschke, 2001). Go minic is féidir le hidirghabhálacha den chineál sin éifeachtaí neamhfheidhme teaghlaigh a chosc nó a mhaolú agus cuidiú chun caidrimh níos sláintiúla taobh istigh de theaghlaigh a chothú. Áirítear le tacaíochtaí teaghlaigh réimse leathan seirbhísí proifisiúnta agus sóisialacha agus gníomhaireacht fhorbairt phobail, ag brath ar an spriocghrúpa agus ar an gclár imeachtaí. Molann roinnt tionscnamh agus tuairiscí an cur chuige idirdhisciplíneach seo, tionscnamh Springboard ina measc, a seoladh sa bhliain 1988 (McKeown, 1999). Molann an Coimisiún Teaghlaigh (DSCFA, 1998: 16) an íomhá seo a leanas maidir le seirbhísí tacaíochta teaghlaigh a bhfuil sé seo a leanas páirteach iontu;

"empowering of individuals, builds on family strengths, enhances self-esteem and engenders a sense of being able to influence events in one's life, has significant potential as a primary preventative strategy for all families facing the ordinary challenges of day-to-day living, and has a particular relevance in communities that are coping in a stressful environment."

Tháinig na **catagóirí** seo a leanas chun cinn le linn anailíse agus scrúdaithe ar na sonraí taighde do Thuismitheoirí agus Teaghlaigh:

5.1 Tacaíochtaí Teaghlaigh

5.2 Foilseacháin Rialtais
5.3 Peirspictíochtaí Idirnáisiúnta
5.4 Oideachas agus Oiliúint do Thuismitheoirí
5.5 Páirtíocht Tuismitheoirí i Ranganna Naíonán
5.6 Comhpháirtíocht agus Rannpháirtíocht

Déantar anailís orthu siúd faoi na **fochatagóirí** seo a leanas atá thuasluaite:

- Tuairisciúil/Anailísiúil
- Meastóireacht
- Treoirlínte
- Beartas

5.1 FAMILY SUPPORTS

It has been recognised in recent years that the development of family services is a necessity in supporting parents in their complex role (McKeown, Haase and Pratschke, 2000). With recent social and demographic advancements, many parents and families feel a sense of isolation, living far from extended family and friends (DSCFA, 1998). The changing economic context has also put greater pressures on parents, especially many mothers, who now endeavour to accomplish the dual role of parenting and participation in the workforce (Coughlan, 2000; Humphries, Fleming and O'Donnell, 2000; Fine-Davis, Clarke and Berry 2002). Families come in many shapes and sizes, with the traditional nuclear family no longer the norm, and there are an increasing number of single-parent families (DJELR, 1999c). In certain instances, especially for those affected by disadvantage, a wide support from a myriad of agencies and sources is needed to help parents in their role (McKeown, 2000; Hanafin and Lynch, 2002; Molloy, 2002).

5.1 TACAÍOCHTAÍ TEAGHLAIGH

Aithníodh le blianta beaga anuas gur riachtanas é forbairt seirbhísí teaghlaigh chun tacú le tuismitheoirí ina ról casta (McKeown, Haase agus Pratschke, 2000). Mar gheall ar dhul chun cinn sóisialach agus déimeagrafach le déanaí, mothaíonn go leor tuismitheoirí agus teaghlaigh go bhfuil siad scoilte amach, iad ina gcónaí i bhfad ar shiúl óna muintir agus a gcairde (DSCFA, 1998). Tá níos mó brú curtha ag an gcomhthéacs eacnamaíochta atá ag athrú ar thuismitheoirí, cuid mhór máithreacha go háirithe, atá ag iarraidh anois dhá ról na tuismitheoireachta agus rannpháirtíocht sa líon lucht oibre a chur i gcrích (Coughlan, 2000; Humphries, Fleming agus O'Donnell, 2000; Fine-Davis, Clarke agus Berry 2002). Tá múnlú agus méid difriúil ar gach teaghlach, agus ní hé an teaghlach núicléach an múnlú is coitianta níos mó, agus tá méadú tagtha ar líon na dteaghlach le haon tuismitheoir amháin (DJELR, 1999c). I gcásanna áirithe, go háirithe dóibh siúd atá faoi mhíbhuntáiste, tá tacaíocht láidir ó iliomad gníomhaireacht agus foinsí ag teastáil chun chuidiú le tuismitheoirí ina ról (McKeown, 2000; Hanafin agus Lynch, 2002; Molloy, 2002).

5.1.1 Description/Analysis - Tuairisciúil/Anailísiúil:

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O'Riordan, S. (2001). *Supporting Parenting: A study of Parent's Support Needs.* Dublin: Centre for Social and Educational Research and Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs.

East Coast Area Health Board (2002). *Child, Youth and Family Services – Child Care Strategy 2002-2006: Building Quality and Fair Services for Children, Youth and Families.* Dublin: East Coast Area Health Board.

5.2 GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS

There has been little direct research produced by the Government in relation to parental involvement in the care and education of young children. However, the majority of publications on early childhood care and

5.2 FOILSEACHÁIN RIALTAIS

Níl mórán taighde díreach táirgthe ag an Rialtas maidir le páirtíocht tuismitheoirí i gcúram agus in oideachas leanaí óga. Tagraíonn uasmhéid na bhfoilseachán ar sheirbhísí chúram agus oideachas

education services refer directly to the importance of parental involvement for the successful development of the child at home or in settings outside the home (Coolahan, 1998; DES, 1999a; DJELR, 1999c; DHC, 2002a). There has been growing recognition of the role of the family and wider community in the care and education process and structures set in place to support and develop this asset, e.g. the Home School Community Liaison Scheme (Ryan, S., 1999; Archer and Shortt, 2003; McKeown, Haase and Pratschke, 2001). These initiatives endeavour to build on the partnership and complementary roles of the parents and practitioners involved in early childhood care and education in the best interests of the child. Legislation, including the Education Act (DES, 1998b) and the Education Welfare Act (DES, 2000a) strengthen the rights and responsibilities of parents in this regard and promote structures to facilitate such co-operation.

Luath-Óige go díreach don tábhacht a bhaineann le páirtíocht tuismitheoirí le haghaidh forbartha rathúla an linbh sa bhaile nó i suímh taobh amuigh den bhaile (Coolahan, 1998; DES, 1999a; DJELR, 1999c; DHC, 2002a). Tá ag méadú ar an aitheantas atá ar ról an teaghlaigh agus an phobail mhóir maidir leis an bpróiseas agus na struchtúir chúraim agus oideachais atá bunaithe chun tacú leis an sócmhainn seo agus chun í a fhorbairt, m.sh. an Scéim Cheangal Pobail idir an Baile agus an Scoil (Ryan, S., 1999; Archer agus Shortt, 2003; McKeown, Haase agus Pratschke, 2001). Féachann na tionscnaimh seo le tógáil ar an gcomhpháirtíocht agus ar rólanna comhlánaithe thuismitheoirí agus chleachtóirí atá páirteach i gcúram agus oideachas Luath-Óige chun leasa is fearr an linbh. Treisíonn reachtaíocht, lena n-áirítear an tAcht Oideachais (DES, 1998b) agus an tAcht Leasa Oideachais (DES, 2000a) cearta agus freagrachtaí tuismitheoirí maidir leis seo agus cuireann siad struchtúir chun cinn chun comhoibriú den chineál sin a éascú.

5.2.1 Description/Analysis - Tuairisciúil/Anailísiúil:

Coolahan, J. (Ed.) (1994). *Report of the National Education Convention Secretariat.* Dublin: National Education Convention Secretariat.

Coolahan, J. (Ed.) (1998). *Report on the National Forum for Early Childhood Education.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

5.2.2 Guidelines / Treoirlínte:

Department of Education and Science (1999c). *Primary School Curriculum – Your Child's Learning - Guidelines for Parents.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Health and Children (1999). *Children First - National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

5.2.3 Policy / Beartas:

Department of Education (1990). *Report of the Primary Education Review Body.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Conference of Major Religious Superiors (1992c). *Submission to the Department of Education on Home School Community Links Project.* Dublin: Conference of Major Religious Superiors.

Department of Education (1992a). *Green Paper on Education – Education for a Changing World.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Education (1992b). *Home School Community Liaison Scheme: Interim Report 1.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Government of Ireland (1993a). *Second Commission on the Status of Women – Report to Government.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Education (1995). *White Paper on Education – Charting Our Educational Future.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Social Welfare (1996b). *Commission on the Family - Interim Report.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Education and Science (1998b). E*ducation Act.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform (1998a). *Study of the Economics of Childcare in Ireland.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs (1998). *Strengthening Families for Life: Final Report of the Commission on the Family to the Minister for Social, Community and Family Affairs.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Education and Science (1999a). *Ready to Learn - A White Paper on Early Childhood Education.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Education and Science (1999f). *Education Welfare Bill.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform (1999c). *National Childcare Strategy, Report of the Partnership 2000 Expert Working Group on Childcare.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Education and Science (2000a). *Education Welfare Act.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Humphries, P., Fleming, S. and O'Donnell, O. (2000). *Balancing Work and Family Life: The Role of Flexible Working Arrangements.* Dublin: Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs with the Institute for Public Administration.

Department of Health and Children (2001a). *Progress Report on the Statement of Strategy: Working for Health and Well-Being 1998-2001*. Dublin: The Stationery Office.

McKeown, K. Haase, T. and Pratschke, J. (2001). *Springboard: Promoting Family Well-Being through Family Support Services.* Dublin: Department of Health and Children.

Department of Health and Children (2002a). *Best Health for Children - Investing in Parenthood to Achieve Best Health for Children, The Supporting Parents Strategy.* Dublin: Department of Health and Children.

Department of Health and Children (2002f). *What do I do Now? The Parents Future Planning Group. A Book to Assist Parents upon Hearing that their Child has Special Needs.* Dublin: Health Promotion Unit.

5.3 INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

There has been little research in terms of international comparison studies regarding parental and family involvement. Many of the Irish publications cite models of involvement from other jurisdictions but do not provide comparisons (Home Start International, 2003). This is certainly an area that merits attention in any future research projects.

5.3 PEIRSPICTÍOCHTAÍ IDIRNÁISIÚNTA

Tá beagán taighde déanta i dtéarmaí staidéar comparáideach idirnáisiúnta maidir le páirtíocht tuismitheoirí agus teaghlach. Luann cuid mhaith de na foilseacháin Éireannacha múnlaí páirtíochta ó dhlínsí eile ach ní sholáthraíonn siad comparáidí (Home Start International, 2003). Is réimse é seo, go cinnte, ar fiú aird a dhíriú air i dtionscadail taighde amach anseo.

5.3.1 Description/Analysis - Tuairisciúil/Anailísiúil:

Kellaghan, T., Sloane, K., Alvarez, B. and Bloom, B. (1993). *The Home Environment and School Learning – Promoting Parental Involvement in the Education of Children.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc.

Prinsen, B. (1997). *Community Based Support Programs and Primary Prevention.* Paper presented at the ISPCAN Conference on Child Abuse, Barcelona, Spain.

European Commission (1999). *Reconciliation of Work and Family Life for Men and Women and the Quality of Care Services. Report on Existing Research in the European Union.* Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities

Home Start International (2003). *Tackling Social Exclusion in Families with Young Children.* London: Home Start International.

5.4 PARENTAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The benefits of parental education and training have been recognised for their two-fold effect – benefiting the participant directly and also impacting on the child (French, 1998, 2000a). Parent's skills and self-esteem are greatly improved and this is of great significance in the assistance afforded and attitudes conveyed to children (Ryan, S., 1999). Parenting can be a complex and sometimes onerous task that is often learned "on the job" (McKeown, Haase and Pratschke, 2000). Such preparatory training and education needs to be accepted as the norm in

5.4 OIDEACHAS AGUS OILIÚINT TUISMITHEOIRÍ

Aithníodh an leas a bhaineann le hoideachas agus oiliúint do thuismitheoirí mar gheall ar an éifeacht dhúbailte a bhíonn acu – téann siad chun leasa an rannpháirtí go díreach agus imríonn siad tionchar ar an leanbh freisin (French, 1998, 2000a). Feabhsaítear go mór scileanna agus féinmheas thuismitheoirí agus tá sé sin sonrach maidir leis an gcúnamh agus an meon a chuirtear i láthair leanaí (Ryan, S., 1999). Is féidir go mbíonn an tuismitheoireacht mar thasc casta deacair amanna agus go ndéantar foghlaim "ar an jab" (McKeown, Haase agus Pratschke, 2000). Ní mór

society, in enhancing a parent's disposition to this multifaceted role (Coolahan, 1998).

glacadh le hoiliúint agus oideachas ullmhúcháin mar ghnáthrud sa tsochaí, chun cur le meon tuismitheora i leith an róil ilghnéithigh seo (Coolahan, 1998).

5.4.1 Description/Analysis - Tuairisciúil/Anailísiúil:

Mullin, E., Oulton, K. and James, T. (1995). Skills Training with Parents of Physically Disabled Persons. *International Journal of Rehabilitation Research,* Volume 18, pp. 142-145.

Rylands, J. (1995). *A Study of Parenting Programmes in Ireland: Exploration of Needs and Current Provision.* Dublin: Barnardos and the Department of Health.

Murphy, M. (1996a). Becoming a Positive and Effective Parent – The Importance of Play for Children and Parents. *Journal of Child Centred Practice*, Volume 3, No. 1, pp. 69-79

French, G. (1998). *Enhancing our Future: A Profile of Parenting Programmes in Ireland.* Dublin: Barnardos and the Department of Health and Children.

National Parent's Council Primary (1998). *The Parent's Programme 1995-1997.* Dublin: National Parent's Council Primary.

South Eastern Health Board (2001b). *Parents Information Booklet.* Kilkenny: South Eastern Health Board.

5.4.2 Evaluation / Meastóireacht:

Mullin, E., Proudfoot, R. and Glanville, B. (1990). Group Parent Training in the Eastern Health Board: Programme Description and Evaluation. *Irish Journal of Psychology,* Volume 11, No. 4, pp. 342-353.

Mullin, E., Quigley, K. and Glanville, B. (1994). A Controlled Evaluation of the Impact of a Parent Training Programme on Child Behaviour and Mother's General Well-Being. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly,* Volume 7, No. 2, pp. 167-179.

O'Flaherty, J, Fitzpatrick, A., Hayes, N. and McCarthy, B. (1994). *Evaluation of St. Audeon's Parent Preschool Health Promotion Project.* Dublin: Dublin Institute of Technology.

5.4.3 Guidelines / Treoirlínte:

Greene, K. (1992). *Brian and Deirdre: A Guide for Parents who have a Preschool Child with Down's Syndrome: Video 1, 2 and 3.* Ireland: St. Michael's House.

Sharry, J. (1999). *Bringing Up Responsible Children.* Dublin: Veritas.

Community Mothers Programme (2000). *Early Education Pack.* Dublin: Community Mothers Programme.

French, G. (2000a). *Towards Best Practice in Parenting Education.* Dublin: Department of Health and Children and Barnardos.

National Reading Initiative (2001). *Training Video for the Early Years – Read it Again: Sharing Books with Children.* Dublin: Centre for Social and Educational Research.

Ruane, M. (2002). *Growing Together: A Resource Manual for Facilitators of Parenting Groups.* Dublin: Barnardos' National Children's Resource Centre.

5.5 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN INFANT CLASSES

In the formal education system, parental involvement in the infant classes is promoted and facilitated more than in subsequent years in schooling (Murphy, M., 2002). Traditionally, there was a divide between the role of the teacher and that of the parent, often leading to a lack of co-operation and partnership (Cronin, 1996). It is commonly accepted that it is in the best interests of the child when the teacher and

5.5 PÁIRTÍOCHT TUISMITHEOIRÍ I RANGANNA NAÍONÁN

Sa chóras foirmiúil oideachais, cuirtear páirtíocht tuismitheoirí i ranganna naíonán chun cinn agus éascaítear níos mó í ná mar a dhéantar i gcás na mblianta ina dhiaidh sin sa scolaíocht (Murphy, M., 2002). Go traidisiúnta, bhí scoilt idir ról an mhúinteora agus ról an tuismitheora, agus ag éirí as sin bhí easpa comhoibrithe agus páirtíochta ann (Cronin, 1996). Glactar go coitianta leis gur chun

parent work together collaboratively, complementing their respective roles in the full and harmonious development of the child (INTO, 1997c; Conaty, 2002). Levels of co-operation vary within schools but there is certainly a more concerted effort to promote involvement, strengthened by recent legislation, primarily the Education Act (DES, 1998b). The Primary Curriculum (DES, 1999b) strongly advocates parental involvement in all aspects of the school curriculum.

leasa is fearr an linbh é nuair a oibríonn an múinteoir agus an tuismitheoir i gcomhar lena chéile, ag comhlánú na rólanna seo acu féin i bhforbairt iomlán shocair an linbh (INTO, 1997c; Conaty, 2002). Bíonn éagsúlacht leibhéal chomhoibrithe taobh istigh de scoileanna ach go cinnte tá tréan-iarracht níos mó ann, treisithe ag reachtaíocht le déanaí, go príomha an tAcht Oideachais (DES, 1998b) chun páirtíocht a chur chun cinn. Molann an Curaclam Bunscolaíochta (DES, 1999b) go láidir páirtíocht tuismitheoirí i ngach gné den churaclam scoile.

5.5.1 Description/Analysis - Tuairisciúil/Anailísiúil:

O'Carroll, E. (1994). *An Investigation into the Attitudes of Dublin Primary School Teachers to Parental Involvement in Education.* M.Ed. Thesis. Dublin: University College Dublin.

Moroney, T. (1995). *Developing a Home/School Partnership in a Deprived Area.* M.Sc. Thesis. Dublin: Trinity College Dublin.

Cronin, J. (1996). *Parents as Partners in Irish Education.* M.Ed. Thesis. Dublin: University College Dublin.

Kelley-Laine, K. (1998). Parents as Partners in Schooling: The Current State of Affairs. *Childhood Education,* Volume 74, No. 6, pp. 342-345.

Ní Dhubhlainn, M. (1998). *An Tarraingteacht atá ag Scoil Mhic Easmainn do Thuismitheoirí na Naíonán Shóisir na Bliana 1997-1998.* M.St. Thesis. Dublin: Trinity College Dublin.

Bourke, W. (1999). *Ask the Parents.* M.Ed. Thesis. Maynooth: National University of Ireland, Maynooth.

Conaty, C. (2000). The Home, School, Community, Liaison Scheme. *Institute of Guidance Counsellors Journal,* Volume 24, pp. 39-51.

Conaty, C. (2002). *Including All. Home, School and Community United in Education.* Dublin: Veritas.

5.5.2 Evaluation / Meastóireacht:

Ryan, S. (1994). *The Home School Community Liaison Scheme - Final Evaluation Report*. Dublin: Educational Research Centre.

Bryan, J. (1997). *Parent and Teacher Evaluations of the Stay Safe Programme with Particular Reference to the Role of Parents in its Implementation.* M.Sc. Thesis. Dublin: Dublin City University.

Ryan, S. (1999). *The Home School Community Liaison Scheme. Summary Evaluation Report – Revised Edition.* Dublin: Educational Research Centre.

Murphy, M. (2002). *An Evaluation of Parental Involvement in Early Childhood Education in an Irish Primary School.* M.St. Thesis. Dublin: Trinity College Dublin.

Archer, P. and Shortt, F. (2003). *Review of the Home School Community Liaison Scheme.* Dublin: Educational Research Centre

5.5.3 Guidelines / Treoirlínte:

National Parents Council Primary (2000). *Working Effectively as a Parent Association – Guidelines for Parent Associations.* Dublin: National Parents Council Primary.

5.5.4 Policy / Beartas:

Irish National Teachers' Organisation (1997c). *Parental Involvement - Possibilities for Partnership.* Dublin: Irish National Teachers' Organisation.

5.6 PARTNERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION

Parental involvement at all levels of the education system is widely accepted as an imperative in the best interests of the child (Ryan, S., 1999). This participation is most critical in the formative years of a child's life, when the adult acts as a medium for the child (Carroll, 2000; Murphy, M. 2001). It is at this stage that the child is most dependent on outside help and the provision of appropriate experiences vital to developmental progression (Hayes, 2000). Parents and early years practitioners must collaborate in this exercise, as it is only through such partnership that the needs of the child will be met (Martin and Fitzpatrick, 2002).

5.6 COMHPHÁIRTÍOCHT AGUS RANNPHÁIRTÍOCHT

Glactar go forleathan leis go bhfuil páirtíocht tuismitheoirí ag gach leibhéal den chóras oideachais riachtanach chun leasa is fearr an linbh (Ryan, S., 1999). Tá an rannpháirtíocht sin den tábhacht is mó i mblianta múnlaitheacha shaol linbh, nuair a ghníomhaíonn an duine fásta mar idirghabhálaí don leanbh (Carroll, 2000; Murphy, M. 2001). Is ag an staid seo is mó a bhíonn an leanbh spleách ar chuidiú ón taobh amuigh agus ar sholáthar na n-eispéireas cuí atá ríthábhachtach le haghaidh dul chun cinn forbartha (Hayes, 2000). Ní mór go gcomhoibreodh tuismitheoirí agus cleachtóirí luathbhlianta maidir leis sin, mar is trí comhpháirtíocht den chineál sin amháin a chomhlíonfar riachtanais an linbh (Martin agus Fitzpatrick, 2002).

5.6.1 Description/Analysis - Tuairisciúil/Anailísiúil:

Murphy, H. (1991). *The Participation of Parents on Primary School Boards of Management in the Limerick Diocese.* M.Ed. Thesis. Galway: UCG.

Hayes, N. and McCarthy, B. (1992). St. Audeon's Parent/Child Project. *International Journal of Early Childhood Education.* Volume 24, pp. 27-34.

McNellis, C. (1993). *Parents as Teachers: Parents and Children Learn Together.* Proceedings of the First Parents as Teachers All-Ireland Conference.

Carroll, O. (2000). *Parental Involvement Makes a Difference in Early Childhood Education.* M.A. Thesis. Maynooth: National University of Ireland, Maynooth.

Murphy, M. (2001). *Parental Involvement in Early Years Education and Care in the Cork Area.* Ph.D. Thesis. Cork: University College Cork.

Hanafin, J. and Lynch, A. (2002). Peripheral Voices: Parental Involvement, Social Class and Educational Disadvantage. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, Volume 23, No. 1, pp. 35-50.

Hogan, F. (2002). "Remembering Fathers: Strengthening Men's Participation in the Early Years." pp. 106-126. (in) Horgan, M. and Douglas, F. (Eds.) (2002). *Lessons for the 21st Century – Research, Reflection, Renewal:* Proceedings of the OMEP (Ireland) Conference.

Martin, S. and Fitzpatrick, A. (2002). "Parents as Partners in Early Years Services in Ireland: An Exploratory Study." pp. 138-154. (in) Horgan, M. and Douglas, F. (Eds.) (2002). *Lessons for the 21st Century – Research, Reflection, Renewal:* Proceedings of the OMEP (Ireland) Conference.

Murphy, R. (2002). "Rethinking Parental Involvement in Early Years Education and Care." pp.127-137. (in) Horgan, M. and Douglas, F. (Eds.) (2002). *Lessons for the 21st Century – Research, Reflection, Renewal:* Proceedings of the OMEP (Ireland) Conference.

Sligo County Childcare Committee (2002b). *Working in Partnership with Parents.* Sligo: Sligo County Childcare Committee.

5.6.2 Evaluation / Meastóireacht:

Reynolds, A. (1992). Comparing Measures of Parental Involvement and Their Effects on Academic Achievement. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly,* Volume 7, pp. 441-462.