

## What parents can do ...



**Share your skills—play an instrument, tell a story, share your cultural traditions.**

- Make an appointment to discuss your child. Childcare staff are happy to discuss your child, but pick-up and drop-off times are often the busiest times for staff.
- Communicate with staff any big changes in your child's life; changes in family circumstances, moving house, death of grandparent etc.

### Donate and recycle materials for arts and crafts.



- Help with outings if you can—this is a good way share experiences with your child.
- Try to attend whatever celebrations, open-evenings, fundraisers etc. that are organised throughout the year.
- Be part of the management committee. Get involved in developing policies and procedures for your child-care service.



**Offer to repair toys or books at home.**

## The benefits of parental involvement ...

Greater sharing of information between parents and childcare workers.

Parents spending more time in the childcare setting—becoming more involved in their child's world.



**Parents improve their knowledge of child development.**

Family values and beliefs being understood and taken into account by the childcare provider.

Childcare services can act as a link for parents to access other services, such as speech and language, psychological services, Public Health Nurse.

**Parents will feel more confident about negotiating their child's later education.**



Transforming Ireland



Funded by the Irish Government

# Practical ideas for promoting parental involvement in childcare

A guide for practitioners and parents.



Longford County Childcare Committee

Templemichael,  
Ballinalee Road,  
Longford

Ph: 043 42505

[www.longfordchildcare.ie](http://www.longfordchildcare.ie)

## Why involve parents?

Article 42.1 of the Constitution enshrines the role of the family as “the natural and primary educator of the child”. As such parents have the right to active participation in their child’s education.

The level of involvement of parents within settings is seen as a factor in the quality of the service provided.

Parents should be well informed about the general operation of the service and welcomed as contributors to the service.

Parental involvement is one way of ensuring that the home culture is reflected in the childcare setting.



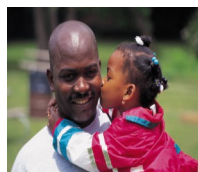
Family values and beliefs will be understood and taken into account by the childcare provider.

See also:

[www.siolta.ie](http://www.siolta.ie)

## Encouraging parental involvement

- Have clear signs around the premises so parents new parents know where to go.
- Put a welcome mat or welcome sign at the entrance to the childcare facility.



**Be mindful to include both parents in discussions about their child.**

- Maintain an open door policy. Encourage parents to drop in and observe the activities.
- Display photographs of staff with names written clearly underneath .
- Provide information about the activities of the children in the service (photo essays and learning stories are a very visual way of doing this).
- Share positive feedback about the child’s play and behaviour—without making reference to other children.

**Parents are often rushing when collecting children, a note is a good way to communicate with parents in their own time.**



- Compile a parents handbook. Translate it into the first language of parents attending the service.

- When parents are being shown around the service ensure they are met with smiles—even if the staff are too busy to speak with them.



**Have a suggestion box for parents.**

- Give all parents a copy of the parents handbook at registration and make arrangements for feedback to clarify any issues parents may have.
- Support for parents should be provided. Information about parenting courses, extra-curricular activities for children, local events, support groups etc. could be displayed where it is easily accessible for parents.



**Put an adult sized chair in the baby / toddler room to allow parents to sit while taking off child’s coat.**

- Use simple language when speaking to parents about their child—try to avoid professional jargon.