Preparing for Life

Support • Nurture • Thrive

A Northside Partnership *Initiative*

Home Visiting Programme Manual

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Acknowledgements

Welcome to the Preparing for Life Home Visiting Implementation Manual.

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Sue Cullen, Preparing for Life's Implementation and Fidelity Manager, along with Research Coordinator Louise McCulloch, meticulously examined the experiences of parents and home visitors at every stage of the implementation process. This endeavour culminated in a description of the Preparing for Life model and practice principles, which serve as guiding principles for all facets of the programme.

Sue and Louise incorporated recent research emphasising early brain development, infant mental health, trauma-informed practice and relational approaches. In crafting this manual, they translated these principles into action with a clear focus on building on strengths and working in partnership. Most importantly, they consistently centred the voices of children and parents in the planning, delivery, and evaluation of Preparing for Life.

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Niall Sexton
Programme Manager
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About This Manual

This manual details instructions on how to deliver the Preparing for Life home visiting programme. It attempts to share our learning about what we have found important when delivering the programme in the original site in Darndale, Dublin 17 and surrounding areas.

The Preparing for Life home visiting programme has noticed the importance of the work of several practice principles as outlined in Part A. Central to the programme is the capacity of the home visitor to demonstrate specific skills and competencies, i.e. to engage in reflective practice; build relationships with families; model positive interactions in relationships; believe in possibilities for families in line with their wishes; recognise parents as the experts of their children; build collaborative relationships with other services. Therefore, this manual is intended to help home visitors, team leaders, and managers (of new and more established sites) deliver the Preparing for Life home visiting programme to parents of children from pre-birth to school age.

To enable the consistent implementation of Preparing for Life and ensure that as much of the learning from the successful delivery of the programme to date is retained, the key programme components should be delivered in accordance with the manual while maintaining the essence of the practice principles as outlined in Part A. Programmes can be modified as long as they do not eliminate or contradict these key facets and this flexibility is recognised as important to ensure the ongoing responsivity of the programme to different families and communities. This manual is not an A-Z of every aspect of the programme; rather, it sets out to represent the essence of the programme, as well as outlining the key components and the learning so far about how they best fit together, leaving flexibility for professional input within a clear framework.

This manual has four parts as follows:

Part A | The Story of Preparing for Life

Part B | Guide for Home Visitors

Part C | Guide for Managers

Part D | Tools and Resources