PHYSIKIDS PROGRAMME REPORT

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Background

"Children want to play. Children play everywhere – in their homes, neighbourhood and schools. Even in very difficult circumstances – in poverty, in war zones, children can be seen playing. We all know it and the research supports it – children are happiest and at their most vital and energetic when they play"

www.earlychildhoodireland.ie

Physical activity for young children is shown to be important for their health and in developing a long term pattern of physical activity. Physical activity can be influenced by a wide range of factors. In the early years, children have little independence and rely on adults to make decisions for them.

Síolta, the national quality framework from the Dept. of Education, emphasises the importance of play in the home and in early education settings. "Play" forms a central part of the national early childhood curriculum framework "Aistear which was devised by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment.

Better Outcomes Brighter Futures the national framework policy for children and young people 2014 to 2020 aims to ensure that children and young people are active and healthy, with positive physical and mental wellbeing.

Healthy Ireland is the national framework for action to improve the health and wellbeing of people living in Ireland. The Physikids programme ties in with Healthy Ireland's National Physical Activity Plan Action 14:

"To include physical activity in the development plans of Children and Young People's Services Committees"

Everyone has an important role to play in order to help children increase their physical activity levels. From this idea the Physikids programme was born; it was felt that early year's service's staff, childminders and parents could play a positive role in impacting the physical activity levels of young children if they were provided with tools such as training and equipment.

INTRODUCTION

The Physikids programme is a partner programme between Healthy Ireland, the Kerry Young People and Children's Services Committee and Kerry County Childcare Committee.

The Physikids programme consisted of three individually designed workshops with a primary focus on physical activity through play, along with individual equipment packs for each group outlined below:

- Childminders
- Early Years Services Providers
- Parent & Toddler Groups

Training was supported by a resource pack of games, physical activity equipment, books and music CD's.

Aims of Physikids programme

- To enhance the capacity of early years providers, childminders and Parent & Toddler groups in County Kerry to provide enhanced physical activity opportunities for children aged 0-5 years within their settings
- To furnish adults with skills, games and equipment to enable children to lead a physically active lifestyle
- To influence in children a positive attitude to physical activity

The ultimate goal of the programme was to provide opportunities for children to be more active in their communities and to meet the National Guidelines on Physical Activity for Ireland which recommends at least 60 minutes per day for children aged 2 years and over.

Programme Delivery

There were a total of 8 workshops delivered which catered for participants from a wide variety of geographical locations around County Kerry. The combined 8 workshops delivered around County Kerry have provided training for a total of 93 adults who now have the skills, increased confidence and ideas to provide opportunities for 735 children aged 12 month- 5 years to be physically active.

Physikids Key Programme Statistics

Childminders

- 1 workshop
- 9 childminders/1 early years services (toddler room)
- 95 children impacted

Early Years Services Providers

- 2 workshops
- 35 staff trained
- 568 number of children impacted

Parent & Toddler Groups

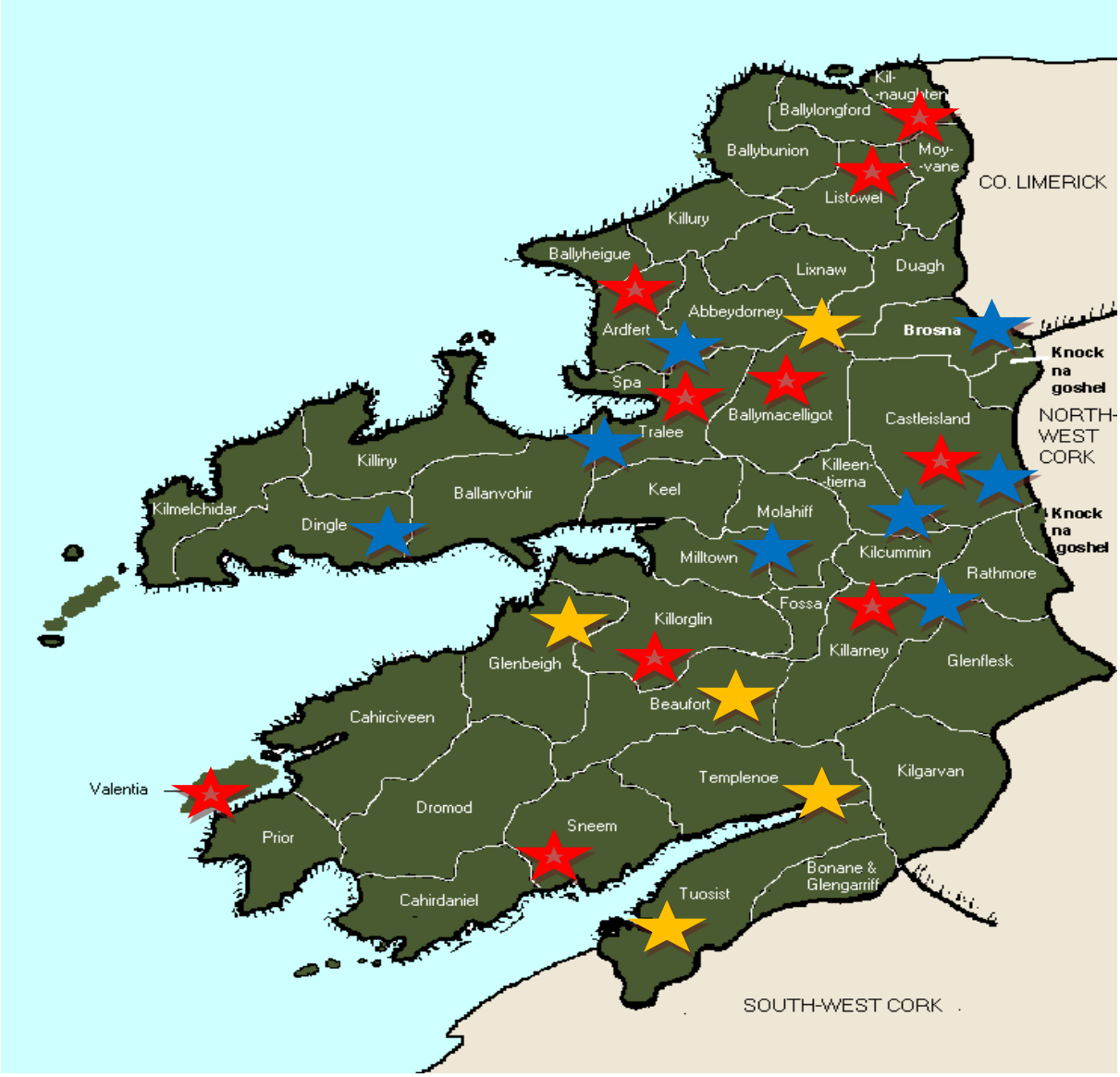
- 5 workshops
- 48 parents attended the training
- A minimum of 72 children impacted * additional children who participate in groups who didnt attend training are not accounted for

OVERALL IMPACT

735 + CHILDREN

93 ADULTS

Geographical location of all workshop participants



Parent and Toddler Workshops

Childminders Workshops

Early Years Services Workshops

PHYSIKIDS WORKSHOP FOR EARLY YEARS SERVICES

Early Years' Service Providers Workshop Overview

This workshop was delivered to childcare workers from early years settings and activities were designed with 3 – 5 year old children in mind. The workshop included activities such as dance, music and movement.

Other activities included ball skills, parachute activities and games that can help develop fundamental movement skills such as throwing, catching, balance and both gross/fine motor skills.

Training Delivery

Two training clusters were held; one in Killarney and one in Tralee. A total of 35 staff from 19 services attended from the geographical areas below:

Killarney Cluster:

- Sneem (1)
- Valentia Island (1)
- Killarney (5)
- Killorglin (1)
- Listry (1)
- Kenmare (1)

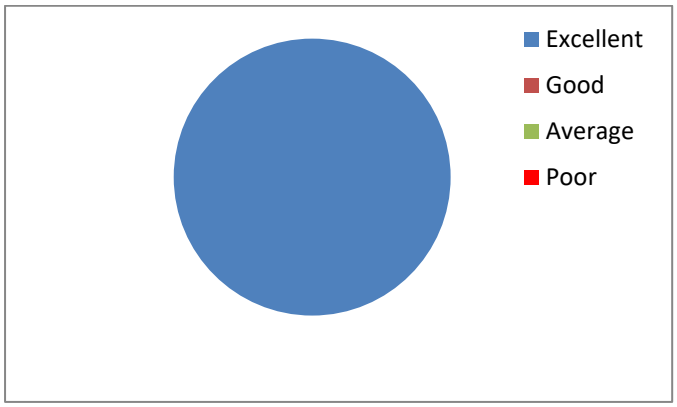
Tralee Cluster:

- Castleisland (1)
- Tralee (2)
- Listowel (3)
- Tarbert (1)
- Ardfert (1)
- Ballymacelligott (1)
- Killorglin (1)

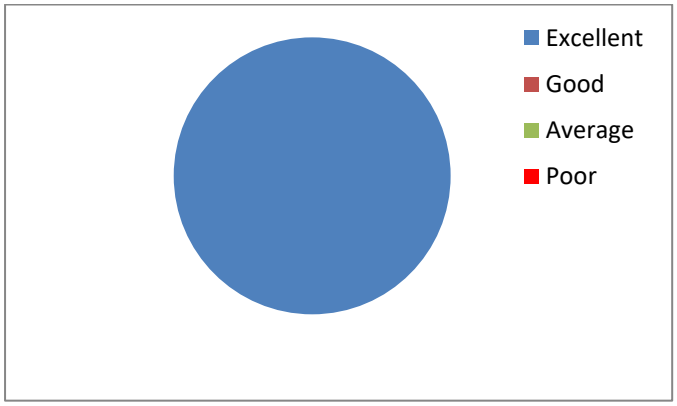
Summary of Feedback from participants

Participants completed an evaluation survey at the end of each workshop. Below is a summary of participant feedback from all 2 workshops. Surveys were completed by 35 participants.

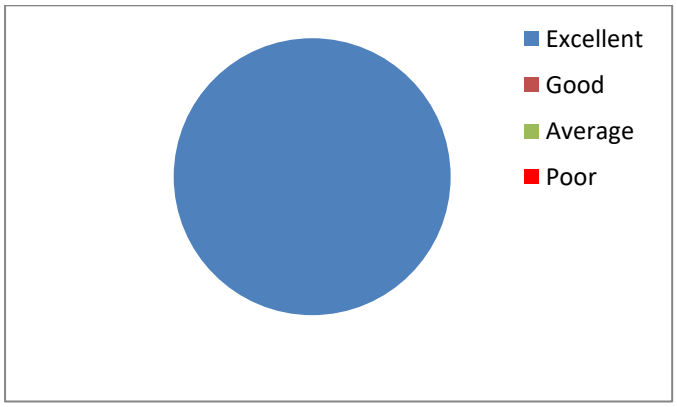
The Knowledge presented was rated: [35 excellent]



Training methods used were rated: [35 excellent]



The amount of interaction encouraged was: [35 excellent]



Outline the skills /learning achieved and how you will transfer them into your practice?

- *"I hope to implement more organised games and dance routines, and to make more use of all equipment"*
- *"Great ideas that are so simple, I tend to overthink activities"*
- *"Only simple materials are needed or even no equipment"*
- *"Use of props and new ideas for games, lovely movement ideas"*
- "*How to show a child how to use a skipping rope"*
- *"Awareness of activities, children will get involved when shown how to do things right"*
- *"Better knowledge of physical activity, skipping and balance, songs, poems and dance"*

What change in your attitude (if any) has taken place as a result of this course?

- *"Excellent equipment I can't wait to transfer skills in the pre-school"*
- *"There is a lot more to exercise than just running and jumping, it can actually be quite fun!"*
- *"Activity and play are the best way for children to succeed"*
- *"More ideas, new enthusiasm"*
- *"To be brave and try games with the kids"*
- *"Positive, as I have new ideas"*

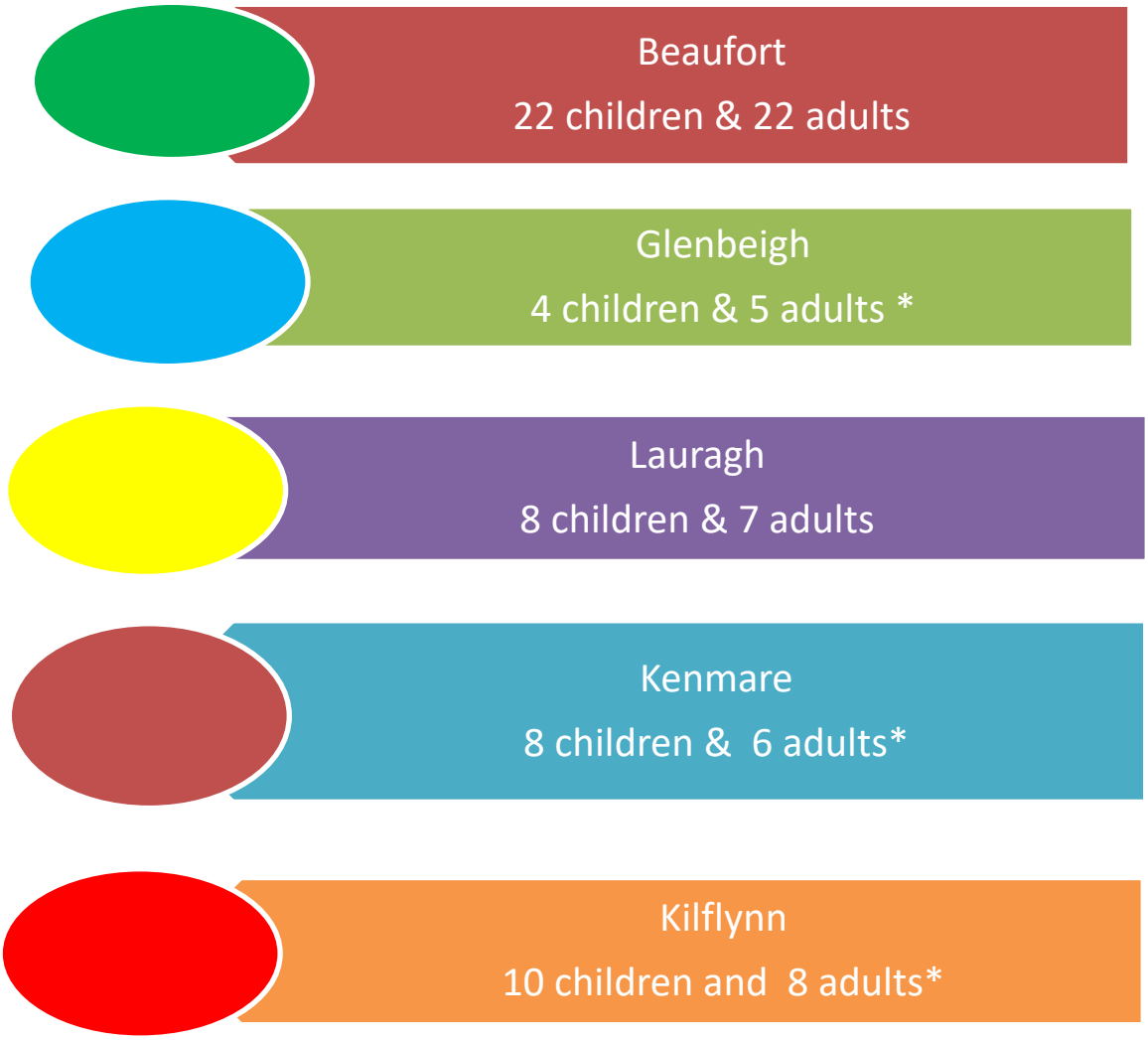
PHYSIKIDS PARENT AND TODDLER WORKSHOP

Parent and Toddler Workshop Overview

This workshop was delivered to parents and children and activities were designed for children primarily aged 12 months- 36 months. The aim of the workshop was to provide parents with easy access to props and materials to provide lots of opportunities for their child to be physically active on a daily basis. The training focused on the development of gross motor skills such as jumping, skipping, hopping, throwing and rolling and the development of fine motor skills through activities with scarves, bean bags and balls. Parachute activities were used to promote social interaction, rhythm using songs and language development, sensory development and hand/eye co-ordination.

Training Delivery

Below is a breakdown of the workshops delivered to Parent and Toddler groups

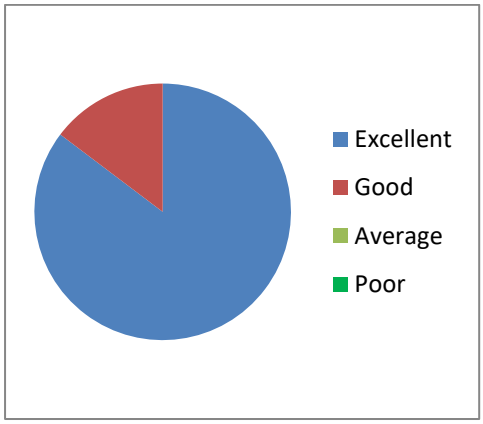


***not all parents & children were in attendance on the day of workshop**

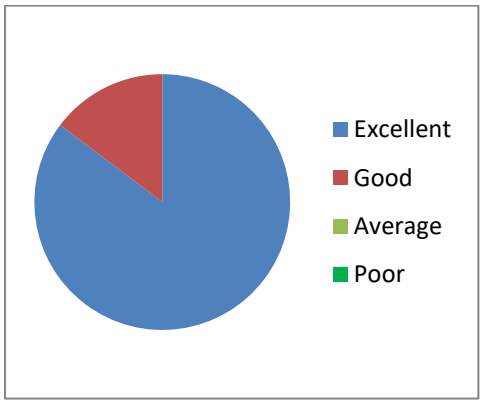
Summary of Feedback from participants

Participants completed an evaluation survey at the end of each workshop. Below is a summary of participant feedback from all 5 Parent & Toddler Groups workshops:

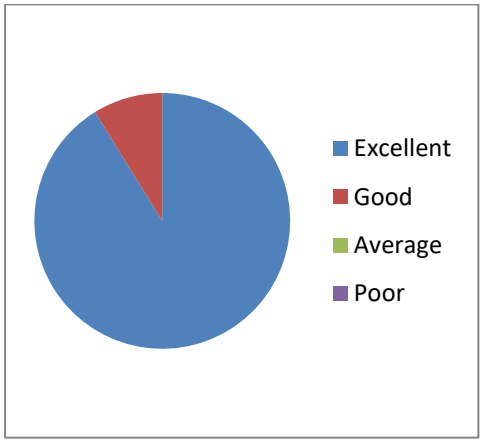
The Knowledge presented was rated: [4 good, 35 excellent]



Training methods used were rated: [4 good, 35 excellent]



The amount of interaction encouraged was: [2 good, 37 excellent]



Participants were asked questions detailed below, a sample of responses from participants is outlined:

Q. Outline the skills /learning achieved and how you will transfer them into your practice?

- *"Using simple colourful tools you can do lots of different activities and have fun"*
- *"How to capture the attention and play with children in a fun way"*
- *"I learnt how to incorporate exercise and activity in a simple way for kids"*
- *"I now have knowledge of how to incorporate physical activity into the day in a fun way"*
- *"To combine music movement and colours to get our children enthused"*
- *"New ways to be active with the group with new songs with movement and actions, scarf activities, play time and ball skills"*

Q. What change in your attitude (if any) has taken place as a result of this course?

- *"I now know how manageable it is to do activities with children in a fun interactive way"*
- *"It's easy to keep children active with these activities"*
- *"I need to make more time to do the skills one to one with my child"*
- *"I will be more mindful of trying to keep my child active and to vary the day"*
- *"It's not all about running"*
- *"Interaction with others is invaluable"*
- *"As a teacher I will definitely be using some of these ideas at home with my toddler and in the classroom"*

PHYSIKIDS FOR CHILDMINDERS WORKSHOP

Physikids for Childminders Overview

This workshop was designed to be used in a home setting by childminders with a small number of children aged 2- 10 years. Activities included using themes to be active, parachute activities, skipping, ball activities, active story-telling using equipment and large movements,

Breakdown of participants

9 different childminders and 1 early years' service (toddler room) from the following areas attended the workshop:

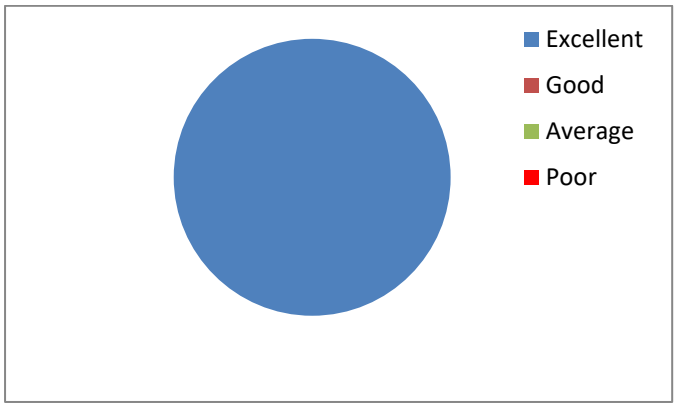
- Anascaul
- Headford
- Ardfert
- Scartaglen
- Firies
- Brosna
- Tralee

A total of 95 children were impacted by this training.

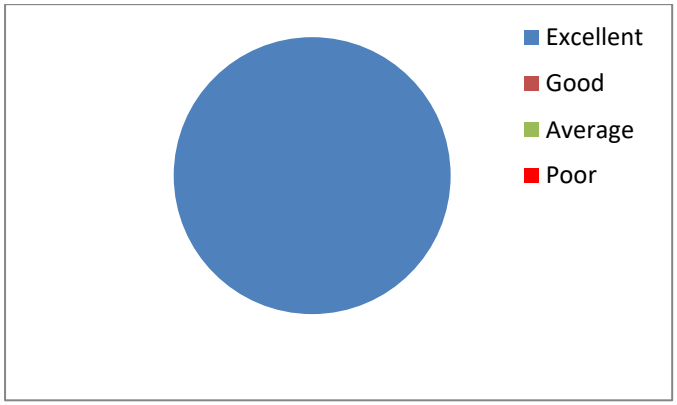
Summary of Feedback from participants

Participants completed an evaluation survey at the end of each course. Below is a summary of participant feedback the workshop.

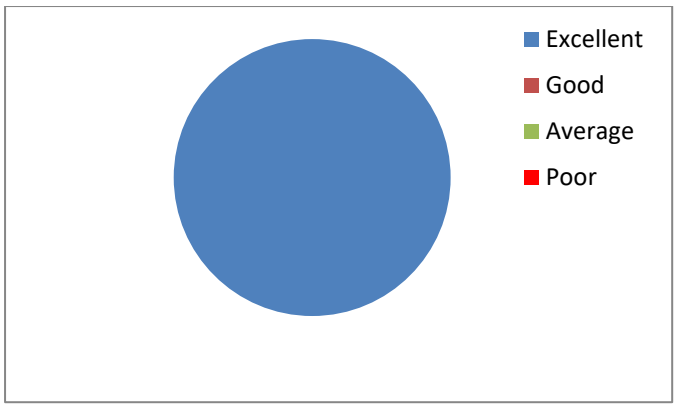
The Knowledge presented was rated: [10 excellent]



Training methods used were rated: [10 excellent]



The amount of interaction encouraged was: [10 excellent]



Outline the skills /learning achieved and how you will transfer them into your practice?

- "New games and songs to help children on a daily basis about colours, movements and storytelling"
- "Not only is it great exercise but it is important to get kids to use their imagination too so this is fantastic!"
- "How to adapt activities to suit all ages"
- "Play activities, physical movement and fun experiences for the children I mind"
- "You can use the smallest of equipment to make games out of learning experiences"
- "Teaching skills e.g. ball skills and skipping; breaking them down into small steps"
- "How to find more uses for objects and how easy it is to incorporate physical activity"

What change in your attitude (if any) has taken place as a result of this course?

- “It’s great to have new ideas”
- “Having new and improved activities has given me more enthusiasm”
- To think outside the box more often”
- “How important fun and physical activity is for learning and health”
- “Revived enthusiasm when playing these games with children”

CONCLUSION

The combined 8 workshops delivered around County Kerry have provided training for a total of 93 adults who now have the skills, increased confidence and ideas to provide opportunities for 735+ children aged 12 month- 5 years to be physically active.

Workshops were well received

- Extremely positive feedback was received from participants both on the workshop content and also the equipment pack that provided.
- A large number of Early Years Services have expressed an interest in the development of a specific Physikids workshop for 0-3 years in the future.
- Based on anecdotal evidence from groups we believe there would be interest in also developing a Physikids workshop for services who deliver after-school services in their settings.

Need to target key groups who can influence physical activity levels of children

- Traditionally childminders and parents and toddler groups aren't usually targeted for this type of training but they can play a key role in increasing the physical activity levels of young children.
- Parent & Toddler groups represent the only community structure where parents and children 0-3 years meet in an informal manner, they too can play a role in increasing a child's physical activity levels by being a positive role model and also providing the opportunities for a physically active environment,
- Early Years Service's providers are working with a large number of children and childcare workers can impact on a large number of children for a relatively small investment in training such as this.

Demand for training

Expressions of interest were sent to groups initially and the demand to take part in the workshops far exceeded the availability of places. We now have a waiting list for groups who want to take part in training if available.

Groups on the waiting list include:

- Childminders
- Early Years Services
- Parent and Toddler Groups

APPENDICES

Physikids Early Years Services Equipment List

Equipment	Quantity per pack
Bean Bag	10
Large balls & mesh ball sack	10
Small balls	9
Spots	10
Hands & Feet	20 (10 hands/10 feet)
Parachute	1
Skipping Rope	6
Quoits	3
Hula Hoops	10
Dance batons/Ribbon Wands	Dependant on number of children in the service
Scarves	10
Intro skills bats	10
KCCC Lets Have Fun Book	1
Little Book of Dance Book	1
Little Book of Dance CD	1
The Rainbow Fish Book	1
Parachute Book	1
Softy Rugby Ball	1
Balance Board	1
Equipment Storage Bag	1

Physikids Parent and Toddler Equipment List

Equipment	Quantity per pack
Bean Bag	10
Large balls	5
Small balls	10
Intro skills bat	10
Spots	10
Hoops	5
Skittles	1
Scarves	6
Hands & Feet	20 (10 hands/10 feet)
Bend and Stretch CD	1
KCCC Lets Have Fun Book	1
Parachute	1
Hoops	5
Storage Bag	1

Childminder Equipment List

Equipment	Quantity per pack
Bean Bag	6
Large balls	4
Small balls	4
Spots	4
Hands & Feet	10 (5 hands/5 feet)
Parachute	1
Skipping Rope	1
Quoits	3
Hula Hoops	4
Scarves	3
Equipment Storage Bag	1
Lets Have Fun Book	1
Bizzy Breaks CD & handout	1
Bend & Stretch CD	1