

## ICDI's Early Years Team

ICDI's Early Years Team delivers training, offers consultancies, designs and implements projects, and does research in the field of early childhood development (0-8 years). The overall goal of our work is **to support initiatives that provide rich, safe and nurturing environments for young children**, especially for those who are most vulnerable.

Healthy development in the early years of a child's life forms the essential foundation for future, positive outcomes. This has been proven time and time again through international scientific research, and has led to a worldwide increase in support for early childhood programmes. However, most early childhood initiatives have quite a narrow focus on improving academic skills and preparation for school (whilst international research actually indicates that such a narrow focus is far less effective). ICDI's Early Years Team therefore aims to stimulate training, research and policies in other, more so called "informal" domains to support young children.

We specialize in three focal areas:

**Working with families and communities** to establish or strengthen safe and nurturing childrearing environments, including the promotion of intergenerational relationships. A current example is the **TOY Programme**, which promotes intergenerational learning between young children and senior citizens at community level across Europe.

**Psychosocial development of young children** ICDI has developed innovative tools such as **the UPSI-5** and **the ECD-QUAT** to measure young children's psychosocial wellbeing and to support practitioners and communities to improve quality of early childhood services. As a key contributor to psychosocial well-being of young children we stimulate children's interaction with their environment, including attention to play, culture and access to nature, both, as an essential child's right and as a 'means' to support young children's healthy development.

**Equity and diversity** to highlight the importance of social inclusion of all children. Attention is paid to gender, language, socio-economic background, ability/disability, and ethnicity. Recently, ICDI has been providing consultancy services to the **Roma Education Fund** to ensure that young Roma children have access to good quality early childhood services.

For more information please contact Dr. Margaret Kernan, Team Leader Early Years ([margaret@icdi.nl](mailto:margaret@icdi.nl)).

