The Atlantic Philanthropies' Children and Youth Programme in Ireland and Northern Ireland:

2011

Programme Evaluation Findings Final Report

October 19, 2012

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CONTENTS

The Strategic Learning and Evaluation Executive of Atlantic Philanthropies (AP) asked Mathematica Policy Research to evaluate progress made by its Children and Youth (CY) programme in the Republic of Ireland (ROI) and Northern Ireland (NI) towards achieving its two core objectives: (1) promote prevention and early intervention; and (2) advance children's rights (Box 1). Building upon an evaluation conducted in 2008, the Mathematica research team examined the extent to which CY programme activities are influencing government policy, provider practice and children's rights advocacy efforts for children and youth in ROI and NI. Data sources included interviews with CY programme staff, grantee staff, and government officials and reviews of programme and policy documents. This report describes Mathematica's findings from the 2011 follow-up evaluation and suggests potential next steps for making further progress toward the CY programme objectives. Appendix Tables A.1 and B.1 provide summaries of CY programme investments for Objective 1 and Objective 2, respectively.

Box 1. CY Programme: Objectives in 2011

Objective 1: **Promote Prevention and Early Intervention**

- Demonstrate effective practice leading to policy reform.

- Inform and influence policy and practice.

- Develop capacity and infrastructure for the sector.

Objective 2: **Advance Children's Rights**

- Build a strong body of core children's rights organisations to strengthen the field.

- Develop the voice and leadership capacity of communities, families, and children and young people.

- Support key campaigns.

Source: Atlantic Philanthropies' Children & Youth Programme, 2011.

Political and Economic Contexts for the CY Programme

AP's focus on promoting evidence-based prevention and early intervention programmes is consistent with international trends toward increasing emphasis on prevention strategies to cost-effectively address social problems early in a problem cycle, as well as an increased use of programmes and practices with scientific evidence of effectiveness. Within the UK, the government's Programme for Scotland 2011-2012 cites evidence of the cost-effectiveness of prevention strategies and describes a shift in public spending toward prevention in early years, justice, health, and social care (Scottish government, 2012). Other examples include the designation of Nottingham as an 'early intervention city' and the children's strategy developed by Birmingham City Council, which emphasises the use of evidence-based approaches to achieve target outcomes (Birmingham City Council, 2012; Nottingham City Council, 2012). In the US, the Obama administration has funded a range of initiatives that require the use of evidence-based strategies in areas such as teen pregnancy prevention, early childhood home visiting, education and workforce innovation (Goesling 2011; Haskins and Baron 2011; and Paulsell et al. 2011). In the field of international development, focus has also intensified on the importance of early intervention to prevent exposure to biological and psychosocial risk factors,

and the need for evidence-based interventions (Walker, Wachs, Grantham-McGregor et al. 2011).

Additionally, significant changes in the political and economic contexts of ROI and NI have occurred since the 2008 evaluation, which could potentially affect the CY programme and AP's ability to achieve its programme objectives. In both countries, new governments have been elected, and precarious economic conditions have required them to reduce spending. As a result, the children's services sector must operate with less money, which potentially limits opportunities for new government investments in services and programmes.

Despite the recent budget cuts, it appears that many policymakers and politicians in both countries have maintained their interest in evidence-based prevention and early intervention programmes and practices, especially in their potential to increase efficiency and improve outcomes for children and families. In addition, the new governments in both countries are in the process of reforming services for children and families, due to political changes, budget pressures and growing interest in prevention approaches, and have established new departments, agencies and policies to do so.

Cross-Cutting Themes

Five major themes from the CY programme evaluation span the full range of its activities in ROI and NI. Because the CY programme has a broader grant portfolio and a longer history of grant making in Objective 1, many of the themes have emerged most strongly from AP's prevention and early intervention agenda, but are applicable to Objective 2 activities and investments as well.

Stakeholders Across Sectors Are Increasingly Attuned to the Value of Evidence from Evaluation and Research

Promoting the use of evaluation evidence has been at the centre of the CY programme's efforts to improve services for children and youth. A number of policymakers and politicians have identified a move toward evidence-based prevention as a policy priority and speak regularly about the importance of using evidence to reform services. For AP grantees, participation in rigorous evaluation has stimulated organisational change and growth, and motivated grantees to put evaluation evidence at the centre of programme development and improvement efforts. As more evaluation results become available, grantees are poised to disseminate findings and share learning about replicating evidence-based programmes in a larger scale-up effort.

Although rigorous evaluation has not been as central a component of Objective 2 activities, lessons about the potential transformative power of using research evidence to strengthen programmes could be applied to strengthen work in that area. Although some grantees have conducted surveys and carried out descriptive evaluation activities, greater emphasis could be placed on developing a thorough description of need among specific target populations through epidemiological studies and needs assessments, rigorously evaluating Objective 2 activities that build the capacity of youth, and employing advocacy evaluation tools to help grantees assess their own effectiveness and identify strategies for improving their advocacy efforts.

Stakeholders Agree on the Importance of Assessing the Fit of Services with Local Needs, Contexts and Target Populations

Both policymakers and AP grantees stress the importance of fitting prevention strategies to local needs, community priorities and values, and the local service delivery system. The CY programme is well equipped to address these issues: grantees have experience planning and conducting needs assessments, engaging community stakeholders in service redesign processes and adapting international models for an Irish context. As results of relevant evaluations become available, AP and its partners can communicate the value of assessing fit and share their expertise about how to do so.

Some Objective 2 grantees have also focused on assessing the fit of their strategies to particular advocacy issues. They could benefit from greater focus in this area, such as tailoring roles for youth to their interests and strengths, adapting advocacy campaigns to the specific government departments they seek to influence, and recommending action-oriented solutions that take the current context of limited resources into account.

Applying Tools from Implementation Science Will Be Critical for Future Work as Stakeholders Consider Options for Mainstreaming, Replicating and Scaling-Up Evidence Based Approaches

As evaluation results are released and government service redesign initiatives move forward, the policy discussion is likely to shift from a focus on evidence about "what works" to a discussion of how to make prevention approaches work on a larger scale in the Irish social services delivery system. Expertise and tools to support replication in an Irish context, mainstreaming into the statutory sector and scale-up will be essential to achieving real gains for children and families. Efforts are under way to bring these tools to bear and make them broadly available, such as grantee efforts to "manualise" programmes and create training curricula, fidelity standards and tools to support replication, and a Centre for Effective Services (CES) implementation-science learning initiative. Expertise developed among CY programme grantees can be harnessed to provide additional hands-on support if government decides to mainstream evidence-based prevention programmes.

Stakeholders Across Sectors Recognise the Necessity of Partnering, Networking and Collaborating to Move the Prevention Agenda Forward

Stakeholders stressed the importance of coordinating across sectors to promote the adoption of evidence-based prevention and early intervention approaches. Indeed, a number of AP-sponsored coordination efforts are underway that bring stakeholders together from across different sectors for learning and discussion. Many interview participants stressed the need to align messages and strategies as much as feasible for clarity and maximum impact. Stakeholders also recommended that AP work more closely with government departments in future funding efforts rather than fund services and activities that operate in parallel with the statutory sector.

Objective 2 grantees participate in AP grantee networks but may benefit from exposure to other advocacy networks and partners within other AP programme areas (for example, human rights), as well as more access to international experts who could provide guidance and support for their work and development.

Sustainability Goals and Strategies Will Take on Increasing Importance in the Next Phase of the Work

As AP moves towards making its final round of investments, the goals and strategies for sustaining the achievements of the CY programme will take on increasing importance. To prepare for the final years of grant making, it might be useful for AP to make strategic decisions about which aspects of the CY programme portfolio it most wants to sustain, and the strategies and resources needed to do so. AP should consider the relative importance of working to mainstream prevention programmes into statutory services versus sustaining all or a subset of funded organisations. In addition, AP should consider the infrastructure needed to sustain focus on prevention and the local expertise needed to continue using evaluation evidence for service design and ongoing programme improvement. For Objective 2, AP should consider what advocacy capacities are most critical to ensuring a strong advocacy sector to protect children's rights into the future.

In addition to strategic decisions, supports and resources are likely to be needed to prepare for sustainability. Together, AP and the One Foundation, which will spend down its funds by 2013, make up roughly 85 percent of philanthropic giving in ROI. Organisations that rely on these two foundations for funding will need support in the coming years to develop new sources of support in the corporate sector, government and from private donors if they are to be sustained. Organisations might also need capacity-building support to develop their fundraising capabilities and, in some cases, to redesign their organisations to fit a more limited resource base.

Potential Next Steps

This section summarises potential next steps the CY programme might consider to further its objectives.

Objective 1

- Develop a strategic and focused approach to dissemination of CY programme evaluation findings that can be implemented in the next six to 18 months. Consider creating a high-level series of themed roundtable events and a summary document of effective interventions to support decision-making and selection of interventions, and explore possibilities for commissioning value-for-money analyses.

- Take steps to refine the CY programme's advocacy strategy by clarifying advocacy goals, clarifying roles for various dissemination groups and identifying a high-level champion for prevention and early intervention.

- Draw on grantee expertise to create models, such as for local needs assessment and planning in highly disadvantaged areas, and technical assistance supports to help shape service redesign efforts within statutory services.

Objective 2

- Determine sustainability goals for Objective 2 and provide resources to achieve those goals.

- Provide resources aimed at improving grantees' organisational capacity for advocacy.

- Increase investment in rigorous evaluation of Objective 2 programme services and advocacy models.

- Provide resources to help grantees sharpen their advocacy messages by customising them to particular government departments or agencies, and offering actionable, solution-oriented recommendations.

I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Strategic Learning and Evaluation Executive of Atlantic Philanthropies (AP) asked Mathematica Policy Research to evaluate progress made by its Children and Youth (CY) programme in the Republic of Ireland (ROI) and Northern Ireland (NI) towards achieving its two core objectives: (1) promote prevention and early intervention; and (2) advance children's rights. In response, Mathematica built upon an earlier evaluation, conducted in 2008, to examine the extent to which CY programme activities are influencing government policy, provider practice and children's rights advocacy efforts for children and youth in ROI and NI. This report describes Mathematica's findings from the 2011 follow-up evaluation and suggests potential next steps for making further progress toward CY programme objectives.

This introductory chapter begins with a brief summary of findings from the 2008 Mathematica evaluation, discusses the rationale for conducting the 2011 evaluation, notes important government and foundation changes since the 2008 evaluation, and describes the evaluation design. The final section of this chapter provides a layout for the rest of the report.

A. Summary of 2008 Evaluation Findings

To achieve its overall goal of keeping children engaged in learning and living healthy lives, the CY programme sought to transform the service delivery system for children and youth in ROI and NI. CY developed a theory of change with three key objectives: (1) improve provider standards and practices; (2) strengthen the child- and youth-serving field; and (3) give voice to children's needs (Box I.1).

To achieve these objectives, AP funded a comprehensive set of activities. For Objective 1, AP funded 17 grantees to design, implement and rigorously evaluate evidence-based prevention

and early intervention programmes. To make progress on Objective 2, AP invested in three university-based research centres to provide service design support, evaluation services, and policy research: (1) the Dartington Social Research Unit UK; (2) the Children and Family Research Centre (CFRC) at NUI Galway; and (3) the Centre for Effective Education (CEE) at Queens University. In addition, AP was preparing to launch the Centre for Effective Services (CES) to provide support on service design, research and evaluation, and organisational capacity to organisations serving children and youth. AP made three investments in support of Objective 3: the Children's Rights Alliance in ROI, the Children's Law Centre in NI and the Dartington Social Research Unit's Prevention Action website.

In 2008, the research team found evidence of substantial progress towards these objectives. Despite some challenges, the CY programme served as a catalyst for change in encouraging government investment in evidence-based prevention and early intervention programmes, promoting evidence-based practice among service providers, and engaging the academic sector in policy-oriented research. Moreover, the research team found little evidence that these changes would have occurred without AP's investments and support. Four main findings emerged from the evaluation:

1. Government and local service providers reported an increased focus on prevention and early intervention. By investing funds for services in these areas, when government viewed such a shift as risky, the CY programme generated enthusiasm for the approach in communities in which its grantees operated and had the potential to demonstrate the effectiveness of the programmes by supporting rigorous evaluations.

2. By supporting the Objective 1 grantees' use of

Box I.1. Children and Youth Programme: Objectives and Target Outcomes in 2008

Objective 1: Improve Provider Standards and Practices

- Stronger organisational capacity of grantees and sustainability of community-based initiatives

- Demonstrated efficacy and clear cost-benefit of programmes

- Replication of initiatives or demonstrated impact on government policy and funding

Objective 2: Strengthen the Child- and Youth-Serving Field

- Greater organisational capacity and sustainability of intermediaries

- Higher quality standards and practices established and disseminated

- More youth-serving organisations receiving support and technical assistance to implement best practices

- High-quality applied policy research

- Better coordination and networking among youth-serving organisations

Objective 3: Give Voice to Children's Needs

- Focus by non-governmental organisations on prevention and early intervention, and on influencing government policy and public opinion

- More sustainable advocacy organisations

- More consistent implementation of children's rights and benefits

Source: Paulsell, Del Grosso, and Dynarski 2009.

a systematic and evidence-based approach to service design, the CY programme introduced a new way of thinking among providers with regard to identifying needs, designing services and approaching continuous service improvement. Government and local service providers worked with university-based research centres and the Dartington Social Research Unit to identify service needs based on evidence, identify programmes with evidence of effectiveness to meet those needs, and implement and rigorously evaluate the programmes in an Irish context.

3. New approaches to integrating services were emerging in local communities. Lead service providers were working with other providers and government agencies to bring coherence and alignment to service delivery. The integration efforts were receiving strong support from communities.

4. The academic sector was developing capacity to support service deliverers to plan services and study effectiveness. The academic sector also was positioned to partner with the newly emerging CES and expand its ability to draw on a wide range of research expertise.

The findings pointed to five potential strategies the CY programme could consider to further its objectives:

1. Plan for the release of evaluation findings.

2. Support grantees to promote successful implementation.

3. Promote service integration.

4   Advocate for the widespread adoption of evidence-based prevention and early intervention strategies.

5. Build infrastructure to support sustained, evidence-based prevention-focused approaches into the future.

B. Changes in Context Since 2008

As part of its programme evaluation strategy, AP asked Mathematica to conduct a follow-up evaluation to assess progress since 2008, identify new barriers that may have arisen and identify potential course corrections and next steps. Since 2008, several important changes in context have occurred that affect the evaluation, both within the foundation and in NI and ROI. AP has restructured its grant-making process to focus on a countrywide rather than a programme approach. The country context in which CY operates has also changed significantly as a result of shifts in government and the global economic downturn. In addition, emphasis on prevention and evidence-based practices has increased internationally.

Changes in AP Structure and CY Programme Objectives

At the time of the 2008 evaluation, AP focused its grant making on four global programme areas: (1) ageing; (2) children and youth; (3) population health; and (4) reconciliation and human rights. Since that time, AP has restructured to focus on cross-programme work within specific geographic areas. Under this strategy, the AP programmes within a geographic area—for example, Children and Youth, Ageing, and Reconciliation and Human Rights—work together to achieve common goals and outcomes for disadvantaged populations. Taking the approach one step further, ROI and NI have elected to embrace an all-island approach. Although there are political and economic differences between the countries, there is potential for AP to systematically influence the direction of policy and implementation throughout the island of Ireland with a focused approach.

In addition, the CY programme in ROI and NI has continued to evolve and adapt to changes in context. AP has refined its theory of change from three objectives to two: (1) promote prevention and early intervention; and (2) advance children's rights (Figure I.1).

Changes in Political and Economic Contexts

Significant changes in the political and economic contexts of ROI and NI have occurred since the 2008 evaluation, which may potentially impact the CY programme and AP's ability to achieve programme objectives. In both countries, new governments have

Figure I.1. CY Programme Objectives

Source: Atlantic Philanthropies' Children & Youth Programme 2011.

been elected, and precarious economic conditions have required them to reduce spending. As a result, the children's services sector must operate with less money than it had in 2008, which potentially limits opportunities for new government investments in services and programmes.

Despite the recent budget cuts, policymakers and politicians in both countries have maintained their interest in evidence-based prevention and early intervention programmes and practices, especially in their potential to increase efficiency and improve outcomes for children and families. In addition, new governments in both countries are in the process of reforming services for children and families (due to political changes, budget pressures and growing interest in prevention approaches) and have established new departments, agencies and policies to do so.

Northern Ireland. The 2011 general election in NI led to the appointment of new ministers in each of the 11 ministries. The Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) develops the programme for government, which sets the strategic context and budget for departments in NI. Individual ministers, however, exert their influence over the direction of their ministry. Currently, two different political parties control the four ministries that work most closely on issues relating to children and young people, occasionally leading to conflicting priorities.

OFMDFM is currently finalising its action plan for the next phase of the 10-year strategy for children and young people in NI. The 10-year strategy was developed in 2005 to focus the work of the government on children and young people from 2006-2016 (OFMDFM, 2005). As part of this strategy, the government develops action plans that serve as living documents to help guide the 11 NI government departments in meeting the strategy's goals. The first action plan supported work from 2008 to 2011.

As a result of a recent review of public administration services in NI, the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) (within the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety) reorganised its delivery of services into six Health and Social Service Trusts and created the Public Health Agency (PHA) (formerly called the Health Promotion Agency). The PHA, created in April 2009, has a renewed focused on promoting public health and wellbeing, reducing inequalities in service, providing services through best practices and evidence-based practices, and promoting research and development.

In addition, the HSCB is chairing the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP), the statutory entity charged with integrated planning and commissioning across agencies and sectors for all services for children and young people in NI. The CYPSP consists of the leadership of statutory agencies concerned with children's lives, the health and social care trusts, and various community and voluntary sector organisations. In August 2011, the first draft of the Northern Ireland Children and Young People's Plan was developed for review and consultation by the partnership (HSCB 2011).

Republic of Ireland. In ROI, general elections were also held in 2011. The new government created new departments and ministry positions, including the position of Minister for Children and Youth Affairs. The Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) was established in June 2011 to support the work of the minister. DCYA's goal is to lead the development of policy and integrated service delivery for children and young people in Ireland across a range of sectors, including health, education,

youth justice, and arts and culture (DCYA 2011). Many agencies that were associated with the former Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs make up the new DCYA. In autumn 2011, DCYA was defining its structure and conducting a review of services and programmes to better align policy, mobilise resources and prioritise particular children's outcomes. Goals and strategies that developed as a result of this review are to be presented in the next iteration of the National Children and Youth Strategy, which has an anticipated release date of 2012.

In the wake of recent scandals related to child welfare and the release of several reports critical of the child welfare system, the Health Service Executive (HSE) recently underwent a departmental review. As a result, in autumn 2011, the HSE was undergoing various reforms, including the development of a new child and family support agency that will be an agency of the DCYA beginning in January 2013.

A referendum on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is also planned for 2012 in ROI. Although the UN Convention was ratified in ROI in 1992, a positive vote on the referendum would mean that children's rights are protected in the Irish constitution and by the Irish courts, rather than just recognised through the development of the National Children and Youth Strategy.

International Context

AP's focus on promoting evidence-based prevention and early intervention programmes is consistent with international trends toward increasing emphasis on prevention strategies to cost-effectively address social problems early in a problem cycle, as well as an increased use of programmes and practices with scientific evidence of effectiveness. Within the UK, the government's Programme for Scotland 2011-2012 cites evidence of the cost-effectiveness of prevention strategies and describes a shift in public spending towards prevention in early years, justice, health, and social care (Scottish government, 2012). Other examples include the designation of Nottingham as an "early intervention city" and the children's strategy developed by Birmingham City Council, which emphasises the use of evidence-based approaches to achieve target outcomes (Birmingham City Council 2012; Nottingham City Council 2012). In the US, the Obama administration has funded a range of initiatives that require the use of evidence-based strategies in areas such as teen pregnancy prevention, early childhood home visiting, education and workforce innovation (Goesling 2011; Haskins and Baron 2011; and Paulsell et al. 2011). In the field of international development, focus has also intensified on the importance of early intervention to prevent exposure to biological and psychosocial risk factors, and the need for evidence-based interventions (Walker, Wachs, Grantham-McGregor et al. 2011).

C. Evaluation Design

Research Questions

To review the progress made on the CY programme objectives since the 2008 evaluation, Mathematica's 2011 evaluation addressed five research questions:

- What progress has been made since July 2008[1] toward achieving the CY programme's objectives and proposed strategies for future direction?

- To what extent have funded programme activities influenced

government policy, provider practice and advocacy efforts for children and youth since July 2008? How durable are perceived gains?

- Are the CY programme's activities appropriate to achieve its objectives? What gaps in these activities must be filled?

- Since July 2008, what barriers or hurdles have arisen?

- What are the next steps in working toward the CY programme objectives? Are course corrections warranted?

Design

To design the follow-up evaluation, the Mathematica team began by reviewing indicators developed for the 2008 evaluation, changes in the CY programme objectives and strategies since that time, and a range of CY programme and policy documents to better understand current programme activities and changes in the policy context. The team used that information, in consultation with AP's Strategic Learning and Evaluation Executive and the island of Ireland's CY programme team, to identify a diverse set of stakeholders to participate in semi-structured interviews for the evaluation. Interview participants included AP staff, government officials in ROI and NI, grantee staff and other funders. The evaluation team developed semi-structured interview protocols and a structured coding scheme to systematically collect and analyse data for the evaluation.

Data Sources[2]

In parallel to the 2008 evaluation, primary data were collected through interviews with government, voluntary and foundation sector stakeholders. In August and September 2011, Mathematica staff conducted semi-structured interviews with more than 50 interview participants (Table I.1; interview protocols are in Appendix C).

Table I.1. Interview Participants by Type

Respondent Type	Number
AP Programme Staff	6
Objective 1 Programme Directors and Programme Staff	19
Objective 2 Programme Directors	12
Government Officials	16
Other Funders	1
Total Number of Participants	54

AP = Atlantic Philanthropies.

In addition, the evaluation team reviewed more than 75 CY programme and government policy documents, such as:

- Summary information from AP, grantee strategy documents and progress reports reviewed for the 2008 evaluation

- AP strategy documents developed since the 2008 evaluation

- Government policy reports published since 2008

- Results from the CY Programme's April 2011 ROI and NI Programmes online survey

- Implementation plans, analyses and research reports from CY programme grantees

- Meeting minutes and discussion documents from meetings of the Dissemination Initiative for Prevention and Early Intervention (DIPEI) and the AP grantee networks in each country government press releases and announcements, such as the Alliance Oireachtas Monitor Newsletters

- Newsletters, reports and documents developed by CES

Analytic Methods

To ensure consistent analysis of the interview notes and documents, Mathematica developed interview protocols and a coding scheme for analysing the data. The coding scheme was organised according to key outcomes, strategies and research questions. The scheme also categorised data by the type of informant or source of the document.

To ensure consistent analysis, Mathematica used an iterative process. The first step was to develop the coding scheme (Appendix D) that was applied to relevant supporting documents, such as policy papers, reports and meeting minutes provided by AP, project directors and government officials. The scheme was organised according to key outcomes and performance indicators; it also categorised data by type of respondent and source of document. Because of the large number of supporting documents received throughout the evaluation process, Mathematica used a qualitative analysis software package, Atlas. ti, to facilitate organising and synthesising the qualitative data.

The next step was to prepare interview field notes. Research team members reviewed the field notes to ensure that they were consistent and complete. Two project team members then coded all the field notes. When all field notes and supporting documents were coded, the research team retrieved the relevant data on specific topics and assessed the consistency and quality of information across respondents.

For the 2008 report, Mathematica and AP staff created a set of indicators for measuring progress towards target outcomes identified in the theory of change. Because the theory of change has evolved since 2008 (see Figure I.1), the follow-up evaluation was not designed to measure progress on those indicators. Instead, the Mathematica team assessed the extent to which AP has progressed toward performance indicators in the updated theory of change, based on the following five categories:

- **Achieved:** CY has met achieved the performance indicator.

- **Nearly achieved:** CY has completed all but a few steps toward the performance indicator and is on track to complete those steps.

- **Progressing:** CY has made substantial progress toward the performance indicator.

- **Emerging:** CY has made some initial progress toward the performance indicator.

- **Premature:** It is too early in the programme cycle to judge progress on the indicator, or activities supporting the indicator have not yet begun.

D. Layout of the Report

As described in subsequent sections of this report, the CY programme has made substantial progress toward its two objectives. Chapters II and III provide evaluation findings for Objectives 1 and 2, respectively, including main findings, barriers and hurdles for future progress, and potential next steps. The final chapter highlights cross-cutting themes gleaned from the analysis of progress on both objectives; these themes may provide additional ideas about future direction and next steps.

[1] *Data for the 2008 Mathematica evaluation were collected in July 2008.*

[2] *The Strategic Learning and Evaluation Executive is also in the process of compiling quantitative information from all Objective 1 and 2 grantees about numbers of children and parents served that will contribute to a programme costing study that was approved at AP's December board meeting and is now underway. All data will be compiled by the end of summer 2012 and the costing study will be available to AP in 2013.*

II. OBJECTIVE 1: PROMOTING PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION

The first objective of AP's CY programme focuses on promoting prevention and early intervention, specifically to "build and sustain capacity for prevention and early intervention that promotes optimal outcomes for low-income children and youth, and increases their chances to be productive contributors to their communities and society at large" (Children and Youth Programme 2009). Within this objective, AP has articulated three main goals: (1) demonstrate effective practice leading to policy reform; (2) inform and influence policy and practice; and (3) develop capacity and infrastructure for the sector (Figure II.1). This chapter provides an overview of Objective 1 investments and activities, presents findings on the progress toward the performance indicators for Objective 1 goals since 2008, identifies barriers or hurdles that could impede future progress, and suggests potential next steps that AP and its partners could take to make additional progress.

A. Overview of Grantees and Activities

The CY programme has invested in a broad range of prevention and early intervention strategies that target a wide age-span of children and youth as well as parents, teachers and other service providers. In addition, AP has funded a number of technical assistance and dissemination partners. Appendix Table A.1 provides a summary of CY programme investments for Objective 1, including programme name, service type, setting for programme delivery, key activities, developmental stage, target of the intervention, funding period and anticipated evaluation completion date.

B. Main Findings

This section describes the Mathematica team's main findings on Objective 1 goals and assesses AP's progress toward achieving each of the performance indicators (see Figure II.1)

Goal 1: Demonstration Effective Practice Leading to Policy Reform

Since 2008, AP has made substantial progress towards building a strong body of well-evidenced programmes and practices, the performance indicator for goal 1. Grantees selected and adapted existing programmes or designed new ones based on thorough needs assessment and planning processes. They have developed and refined programme manuals to document implementation procedures and many are in the process of refining or creating fidelity standards and measurement tools to support programme improvement. With support from AP and evaluation experts, grantees tendered for rigorous effectiveness evaluations as well as process studies to learn about and document implementation processes. Some evaluations have been completed, some are close to completion, and others are still in the data collection and analysis stage. While not all evaluation results will show strong effects, some completed evaluations have shown quite positive results and early results from other studies are promising. Regardless of the findings, all of the evaluations will contribute toward building a body of evidence about the effectiveness of prevention strategies in Ireland, as well as strategies for replicating and scaling them up in the Irish context Therefore, the Mathematica team rated goal 1 as **Nearly Achieved**.

Figure II.1. Objective 1: Promote Prevention and Early Intervention

	Demonstrate effective practice leading to policy reform	Inform and influence policy and practice	Demonstrate capacity and infrastructure for the sector
Goals	Demonstrate effective practice leading to policy reform	Inform and influence policy and practice	Demonstrate capacity and infrastructure for the sector
Performance Indicators	A strong body of well-evidenced programmes and practices has been developed	Evaluation evidence has been disseminated and strong networks established	The research, evaluation and data collection capacity of NGOs and universities has been developed
Mathamatica's Assessment	Nearly Achieved	Progressing	Progressing

Source: Atlantic Philanthropies' Children & Youth Programme 2011.

> ### Maintaining Fidelity
>
> "Adherence to the curriculum …is essential. We need to make sure that our staff do not get sidetracked, because our families are experts at bringing up their own issues. We train staff to do some small talk but quickly move on to the curriculum."
>
> — Grantee

- AP's investment has led to significant changes in grantees' organisational capacity.

Grantees have gained substantial experience implementing evidence-based prevention and early intervention programmes in real-world settings and an in-depth understanding of what it takes to achieve high-fidelity implementation. Through development and use of detailed programme manuals to guide implementation, many grantees reported a fuller understanding of programme development, the use of evidence to inform service design, and the importance of collecting data to monitor implementation quality and fidelity. Grantees described the steps they took to ensure adherence to curricula and the importance of providing the full curricula, rather than selected pieces, to all participants. Staff from three of the 12 Objective-1 grantees that participated in interviews described the importance of databases and other systems they have developed to collect data on programme implementation and service delivery, monitor levels of dosage and service receipt, and make programme improvements when problems are identified[3]. Two of the 12 described using data systems to monitor uptake of services for specific target populations and to track participant outcomes.

> ### Evaluation Experiences
>
> "The evaluation has enabled providers [we work with] to reflect, in depth, on their practice, and to tighten the standardisation of the programme."
>
> — Grantee
>
> "Our involvement in the [evaluation] and that high level of thinking about impact has changed the way the organisation thinks…. Senior management are absolutely committed to making sure we can measure the impact of everything we do."
>
> — Grantee

Participation in rigorous evaluations also stimulated growth in grantees' organisational capacity. Grantee staff said that the evaluation process required a "steep learning curve" as they gained knowledge about research designs and methods and new terminology, as well as investment of significant time and effort, often substantially more than they had anticipated. Nevertheless, almost all described the process as worthwhile for learning about the evaluation process, understanding and interpreting research evidence, and reflecting on their own practice. For example, grantees learned valuable lessons about how to work collaboratively with researchers. They gained experience in how to carry out research in community settings and resolve problems that arose. These activities included educating parents and community stakeholders about the evaluation and the value of

what could be learned from it, recruiting participants, collecting implementation and outcome data, working with schools and other community service providers, providing feedback on evaluation findings to different kinds of stakeholders, and developing plans for disseminating evaluation results. Grantees also gained insights from the process studies about how to improve programme operations, but some expressed disappointment that process studies did not receive the same level of focus by contracted evaluators and expert advisers as the impact studies. Several saw the lack of focus as a missed opportunity to gain more insight about core programme components and processes. Overall, these evaluation experiences and activities helped grantees develop new insights and skills for thinking critically about how they deliver services, ensure fidelity and monitor outcomes, as well as underscoring the value of working in partnership with the community.

Many grantees reported that the evaluation process was a catalyst for stimulating organisational change and a move toward evidence-based practice, even before results were known. The process of thinking about what implementation processes and outcomes should be examined, as well as involvement in collecting data about service delivery, prompted grantee staff to examine their operations in new ways. With CY support, Objective 1 grantees established expert advisory committees (EACs) made up of evaluation experts to support grantees in developing and implementing evaluation designs. Grantees have been receptive to the expert advice received; many said they viewed the support from EAC members as invaluable for developing staff expertise on evaluation and evidence-based practice. In addition to consulting on the evaluation designs, EAC members provided advice about implementing the evaluation, developing programme designs, monitoring implementation and refining fidelity standards. They also participated in policy seminars, reviewed and commented on draft evaluation reports, and worked one-on-one with grantee staff to help them understand evaluation issues.

These experiences have motivated a number of grantees to begin applying new knowledge and tools to making significant changes to their organisations. For example, grantees described how they have used a logic model approach to reexamine and refine other existing programmes and services. In addition, some are reviewing research literature to ensure their programmes are based on the best evidence available and making refinements as needed. Some are developing new data systems for tracking service delivery and participant outcomes to facilitate fidelity monitoring and benchmarking of participant outcomes against evaluation results.

> ### Reorienting Staff
>
> "We want staff to understand that this way of working is good for children and families. Having measures was a really good thing, because at the end of the day they had the data to show that we did really well on this bit and could do better on other things. It is a massive mindset change."
>
> — Grantee

Larger grantee organisations are developing strategies for reorienting their staff toward evidence-based programmes. Based on their participation in the CY programme, leaders in these organisations believe that building staff capacity and readiness to implement evidence-based programmes will improve service delivery and, thus, outcomes for children and families.

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For some organisations, this shift is substantially different from practice as usual and will take time to achieve. According to grantees, the process is likely to require staff training, repeated exposure to evidence-based programmes and their benefits, and development over time of a comfort level with collecting and using data for programme improvement. Several grantees stressed the importance of communicating to staff the benefits of evidence-based programmes for the children and families they serve.

- Grantee plans for sustaining and scaling-up effective programmes have the potential to shift the focus of services for children and families toward prevention and early intervention strategies.

During interviews, grantees described a range of strategies for sustaining the work they have done as part of the CY programme. Grantees range from small local organisations established to carry out the CY grant programme to large multiservice organisations of national scope whose AP grant represents only a small proportion of their overall funding. This variation influenced, to some extent, grantees' visions for the future and strategies for sustaining CY programme activities. Overall, grantees described three strategies to sustainability and scale-up: (1) obtain government funds to continue delivering or to scale-up the programme; (2) support mainstreaming of the programme within statutory services, perhaps as a replacement or new approach to existing services that are not as effective; and (3) develop plans and tools for scaling up and replicating the programme on the island of Ireland and internationally. Despite varied approaches, all of the strategies support a vision of increased emphasis on prevention and early intervention to improve the wellbeing of children and families.

One group of grantees aims to obtain government funds to continue delivering or to scale-up their programmes. Some grantees expressed a desire to advocate for government funding for their programme if evaluation results are positive. In some cases, programmes and services have been designed as supplements to existing statutory services rather than as stand-alone programmes. As such, they would require additional funds, as money could not be redirected from existing services. In other cases, programmes may provide parallel services to those offered by statutory services, but grantees are skeptical that statutory services can make the cultural shift and other changes needed to implement the evidence-based prevention programme with fidelity. Therefore, the grantees aim to continue providing the services and perhaps to replicate them in a limited number of additional communities.

Some grantees view their role as supporting mainstreaming of programmes into the statutory services rather than continuing to operate them directly. One programme, Longford-Westmeath Parenting Partnership, is already mainstreamed into the statutory sector, with staff reassigned from other positions within the HSE delivering the services in partnership with voluntary sector organisations. Staff are optimistic it will continue after AP grant funding ends. In other cases, staff envision a period of perhaps two to three years to train and support statutory sector staff to deliver the programme. After that, the organisation will have fulfilled its mission. These grantees would also like to invest in refining their manuals based on evaluation findings and developing tools for training, mentoring and supervising staff as they learn to implement the programme. Some have already begun developing these tools.

Mainstreaming the Work

"I'm not interested in setting up a new organisation. We're a change strategy; we're here to facilitate that process, it would then be over to government. The change will then be embedded in the system."

— Grantee

A third group of grantees aims to scale-up and replicate their interventions developed and tested locally by disseminating them on the island of Ireland and internationally. Similar to grantees that aim to mainstream their programmes, these grantees seek to develop materials and supports for replication, but they envision an ongoing role for their organisations in providing training, accreditation, fidelity monitoring and quality assurance. Some cited Archways' support for Incredible Years as a model for how to carry out replication and scale-up work. Grantees hope to replicate the programmes they have developed within the island of Ireland, other parts of the UK and beyond. For example, Barnardos in NI has obtained licenses necessary to replicate and support Together 4 All and will consider doing so on a UK-wide basis. All these organisations described their motivation for ongoing involvement as a strong desire to ensure high-fidelity delivery of services and high quality of the services provided.

Models for Local Planning

"You must develop a whole community plan for children and families that is based on research on local needs, local issues that are impacting negatively on children and families. You must build a plan with your partners—health services, families, schools, and teachers. You must develop a clear implementation map. Who will do what, and how are they going to be trained? What kind of mentoring and reflective practice strategies will be in place? How are quality and integrity of practices going to be supported and monitored?"

— Grantee

- Efforts to promote local planning and service integration as a strategy to address needs in disadvantaged areas have yielded mixed results, but promising models are being tested.

The governments of ROI and NI have undertaken several initiatives to promote local planning and coordination as a strategy for addressing the needs of disadvantaged communities. For example, in ROI, DCYA established Children's Services Committees in selected counties to promote integrated planning and service delivery for children. During interviews, participants with knowledge of these committees expressed mixed views about their results. They reported positive results in the area of interagency collaboration and operational issues, such as establishing local referral and communication systems across agencies. At the same time, interview participants noted that the committees have not done strategic planning based on assessment of local needs. Such planning, for example, might have examined the need to realign resources, bring in new programming and services, and decommission services that are not producing results or for which there is an excess supply. Some interview participants reported

that the committees, by design, have received little direction from DCYA on their roles and expectations, in part to provide an opportunity for the committees themselves to shape their work. At this stage, however, participants agreed that the committees could benefit from more direction.

AP grantees are testing several promising models that have been developed for this type of community planning and coordination, and could inform future efforts undertaken in the statutory or voluntary sector. These models involve assessing community needs, developing a comprehensive community plan based on those needs, involving community stakeholders in the planning process, and developing a clear and detailed implementation plan. For example, youngballymun implemented a strategy for working with a disadvantaged community to redesign services for children with a stronger focus on evidence-based prevention and early intervention. The Longford-Westmeath Parenting Partnership, while somewhat different in that it focuses exclusively on parenting, also provides a promising model for bringing together the statutory and voluntary sectors to implement an evidence-based prevention strategy. In NI, the Colin Early Intervention Community is in the early stages of an evidence-based planning process. With support from CES, it is developing a logic model with target outcomes to guide development of programmes and services.

Goal 2: Inform and Influence Policy and Practice

AP has progressed in its efforts to disseminate evidence and evaluations and build strong networks, the performance indicator for goal 2 (see Figure II.1). At the time of the 2008 evaluation, AP and its partners did not yet have a dissemination plan for the evaluations or functioning grantee networks. Since that time, AP has funded a dissemination initiative led by independent chairs who work with a network of statutory sector stakeholders in each country, as well as a network of AP grantees in each country. By autumn 2011, the dissemination initiative in NI had engaged more statutory sector members than in ROI, and the ROI grantee network was more active than the network in NI, but both activities were well underway and progressing in each country. Therefore, the Mathematica team rated goal 2 as **progressing**.

- **Grantees' increased strategic focus on dissemination of evaluation findings has the potential to inform policy reforms that emphasise prevention and early intervention.**

By autumn 2011, evaluation results had been released for several grant projects, with many more expected in 2012 and 2013 (Appendix A). To prepare for the large volume of evaluation results that will become available and maximise their potential to inform ongoing policy discussions about prevention and early intervention, AP and its partners have begun several activities to plan for their dissemination. These include the Dissemination Initiative for Prevention and Early Intervention (DIPEI), a grantee network in each country, CES's Capturing the Learning project and individual grantee dissemination plans.

Dissemination Initiative for Prevention and Early Intervention. AP has funded, in each country, a DIPEI group consisting of an independent chairperson to chair and coordinate meetings, representatives from two CY grantees, at least one staff member from the CES and policymakers from the statutory sector. In ROI, the statutory representatives came from the DCYA, with efforts under way to recruit others[4]. Statutory representatives in NI included the PHA; the OFMDFM; the Department of Justice; the

Department of Education; the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety; and the Department for Social Development.

Interview participants described the purpose of these groups as forums to share information from the evaluations about evidence of effectiveness and best practices, and to provide opportunities for statutory representatives to exchange ideas, ask questions and discuss potential connections in their agendas and portfolios. DIPEI will also provide participants with advance notice about the release of evaluation findings and discuss strategies for getting the information to intended audiences when it is released. In short, DIPEI provides a channel for delivering information from the CY evaluations directly to stakeholders involved in policy reforms. The intention of the groups is to provide a forum for disseminating and examining information about evidence and best practices to inform policy decisions.

Grantee networks. AP has also funded grantee networks in each country to provide a learning community for grantees, as well as a forum for discussing dissemination issues. To become a member, an organisation must receive grant funds from AP's CY programme. In ROI, the group has about 25 members and has been meeting over the past year to establish the network, agree on terms of reference, develop a structure and craft a work plan. The network also hired an independent facilitator to work with the group on developing its structure and work plan. Grantees reported that the level of engagement in the network is high overall. In NI, the network structure is less formal and is focused primarily on sharing information about what each grantee is doing. Nevertheless, grantees in NI are eager to learn from each other and look for opportunities to collaborate.

Perceived Value of the PEI Grantee Network

"The Atlantic Philanthropies network are doing [evidence-based practice], not citing research they've read about but research findings that were collected here by local organisations, so they're bringing a very real lived experience to it."

— Grantee

In ROI, many network members discussed the need to develop a set of shared messages about evidence-based prevention and early intervention work that can be used to support dissemination of evaluation findings and guide discussions with policymakers and politicians. Some felt strongly that the group should work collectively to promote the use of prevention and early intervention strategies rather than advocate for particular programmes to be funded. Others felt it was important to advocate individually for their own programmes.

In NI, some grantees reported that the network may be perceived as "elitist" because membership is open only to AP grantees. Others felt strongly that the network membership and agenda is appropriately focused on evidencebased prevention and early intervention work. Furthermore, they felt that AP grantees are in the strongest position to advocate for an evidence-based prevention approach because they have direct experience carrying out the work. Other networks and groups may seek to address the specific needs and views of their constituents, which may not be consistent with a focus on evidence-based prevention programmes.

II. OBJECTIVE 1: PROMOTING PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION

Capturing the Learning. In parallel with other dissemination initiatives, the CES is working on a synthesis project called Capturing the Learning to glean and disseminate findings and lessons from CY grantees' activities and experiences. Information from this project will feed into the DIPEI groups as it becomes available. CES has planned three components of Capturing the Learning:

1. Disseminating information from epidemiological and baseline studies conducted at the start of the CY programme and making the data available for future use

2. Examining grantees' organisational learning about implementing evidence-based prevention and early intervention programmes and disseminating this learning to support future scale-up efforts

3. Synthesising the outcomes and learning about best practices from the CY evaluation reports to inform policy decisions and strengthen services for children and families

As of autumn 2011, CES planned to complete the first two components of the project by early 2012, as those components are not contingent upon completion of specific evaluation reports.

For the third component, CES plans to examine outcomes in six domains: (1) child health and development; (2) child literacy and numeracy; (3) school engagement and aspirations for the future; (4) child social behavior and attitudes toward inclusivity; (5) problematic child behavior; and (6) parent-child relationships. In each domain, CES will describe the existing international literature on effective strategies for addressing the area, discuss alignment between CY evaluation findings and existing literature as well as how CY findings add to the literature, and describe the adaptations of effective strategies required to fit within local service systems. As noted at the beginning of this chapter, expected completion dates of grantee evaluations vary widely, with some evaluation reports not expected until 2015. CES staff reported that they plan to complete and release the analysis for each domain after all of the evaluation reports for that domain are completed. To make findings available sooner, an alternative to this approach would be to create a living, "in process" document for each domain. Available findings could be linked to international evidence, with information from new evaluation reports added as the reports are released.

Despite expectations by some stakeholders, the third component of Capturing the Learning will not make comparisons across CY programmes or judgments about which programmes in a given domain should be prioritised for future funding. CES staff feel that differences in evaluation designs, outcome measures, and samples of children and families make such comparisons impractical. Moreover, the intention of Capturing the Learning is to provide information on a range of effective practices in each domain, with the understanding that specific interventions must be selected based on fit with local need, existing service delivery systems, target populations and other factors.

Individual grantee plans for dissemination of evaluation results. During interviews, several grantees described their own detailed plans for releasing and disseminating findings from evaluation reports as they become available. Plans include strategies and forums for releasing the results to different audiences, such as parents and community members, schools and other community stakeholders, practitioners, third-level academics, and policymakers and politicians. Overall, grantees plan to focus on themes related to best practices, stimulate discussion about how the findings can

be used, and provide information targeted appropriately to each audience—such as a focus on improving practice for a practitioner audience and a policy focus for policy audiences. Grantee plans include community meetings, themed conferences and high-level policy roundtable events. It is possible that some policymakers and politicians, including those participating in DIPEI, will receive invitations to many such events over the next two years. Some interview participants raised concerns about oversaturation of key officials.

> **Grantee Dissemination Plans**
>
> "Our dissemination strategy will be to link ages and stages and themes, not to focus on stand-alone issues like behavior or parenting. We want to weave them together in an integrated and holistic understanding about what it takes to support child learning and wellbeing in a socially and economically disadvantaged community."
>
> — Grantee

- **Stakeholders believe there is potential to effectively advocate for mainstreaming of evidence-based prevention and early intervention services, but the next six to 18 months are critical.**

Throughout the island of Ireland, stakeholders reported that change initiatives underway in government provide important and timely opportunities to advocate for adoption and mainstreaming of evidence-based prevention and early intervention services and programmes. In ROI, stakeholders reported significant political capital for improving children's services at the current time. The new government established DCYA, along with a Minister of Children and Youth Affairs. Moreover, the formation of a Child and Family Support Agency provides an opportunity to orient children's services more toward prevention and early intervention and evidence-based approaches as the new agency's structure and priorities take shape. Looming budget reductions also provide an opportunity for advocacy, as government officials seek to spend limited resources as efficiently as possible on services that are most likely to yield positive outcomes for children and families. According to interview participants, the six- to nine-month period from roughly October 2011 through June 2012 is a critical window in which the infrastructure for the new agency will be put into place. During that time, core children's services will be redesigned to improve quality, accountability, consistency and transparency, as well as to align services with new fiscal realities. DCYA has also announced plans to develop, in 2012, ROI's first national early years strategy for children aged up to six. More broadly, over the next 18 months to two years, the direction of the new department will be established.

> **Policy Context**
>
> "It's quite an exciting time, because we are doing complete service design, and because of financial reality, we have no choice other than complete service redesign."
>
> — Policymaker

In NI, a recent review of public administration resulted in the establishment of the Public Health Agency, with a mission to promote health and wellbeing and reduce inequalities, in part by

promoting best practices and approaches that have evidence of effectiveness. Within government, several fast-moving initiatives are under way to promote prevention and early intervention strategies, coordinate agendas and activities across departments, and promote evidence-based practice. For example, a child-development programme board chaired by the director of public health has funded trials of two evidence-based prevention interventions, Family Nurse Partnership and Roots of Empathy. The Department of Social Development aims to increase proportion of urban renewal funds for early intervention to as much as 25 percent. The Department of Justice's review of the youth justice system includes a commitment to supporting prevention and early intervention. Multiple statutory agencies joined with AP to fund a portfolio of early intervention strategies in the Colin community. Moreover, several conferences featuring researchers and officials from elsewhere in the UK have provided important information about the value of prevention and early intervention as well as strategies for shifting government agendas in that direction. Budget limitations are also an issue in the north, which increases the importance of providing cost-effective services.

Goal 3: Develop Capacity and Infrastructure in the Sector

Since 2008, AP has moved forward in developing the research, evaluation and data collection capacity of NGOs and universities, the performance indicator for goal 3. Researchers from universities on the island of Ireland are developing expertise in evaluation of prevention interventions through their work with AP grantees and interaction with EAC members. Some have begun publishing results in international scholarly journals, further establishing their expertise in the field. At the same time, the Centre for Effective Services (CES) is operating on an all-island basis, providing of supports for policymakers, practitioners and researchers that involve translating research to practice and promoting closer collaboration. Therefore, the Mathematica team rated goal 3 as **Progressing**.

- The capacity of universities in ROI and NI to collect data and conduct rigorous programme evaluation activities has increased, as demonstrated by evaluations conducted for AP grantees.

The 2008 evaluation report discussed two investments made by the AP in university-based research centres—the Children and Family Research Centre (CFRC), National University of Ireland Galway (NUIG) in ROI and the Centre for Effective Education (CEE), Queen's University Belfast in NI—to increase capacity to provide service design support and evaluation services on the island of Ireland. At that time, both centres were providing service design support and beginning to conduct programme evaluations for CY grantees. In addition, both centres were training young researchers in rigorous methods; increasing their interaction with and support to service providers in the voluntary sector; working to expand university curricula to include evidence-based prevention and early intervention approaches; and seeking to engage statutory services in training and support.

By 2011, these universities and others, such as NUI Maynooth and the Geary Institute at University College Dublin (UCD), were continuing to conduct rigorous evaluations for AP grantees. For example, CEE, Queen's University, conducted evaluations for Business in the Community, Early Years, Playboard and Tallaght West. NUI Maynooth conducted an evaluation of Incredible Years for Archways and UCD Geary Institute conducted an evaluation for Northside Partnership. Researchers at these institutions have developed valuable expertise through their experiences working with the grantees, conducting the evaluations and receiving feedback and support from the evaluation experts that serve on the EACs for these grantees. Moreover, researchers at these institutions are beginning to publish evaluation results in scholarly journals, further establishing themselves as experts in the field of prevention research. For example, in 2011, evaluation results for Incredible Years were published in *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry* and *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology. Research* on the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of Incredible Years was also included in the Cochrane reviews of evidence on parenting programmes.

- CES is operating on an all-island basis with a focus on translating research to practice.

CES launched in 2009 with funding from AP and two government departments in the south: DCYA and Environment, Community and Local Government. The mission of CES is to promote evidence-based and evidence-informed practice on the island of Ireland to improve outcomes for children, families and communities. Within this broad mission, CES has undertaken a range of projects and activities (in addition to its dissemination project, Capturing the Learning) that involve translating research evidence into policymaking and practice and promoting closer collaboration among research, policymakers and practitioners on issues related to this translation work. In 2010, CES opened an office in Belfast and has been working to strengthen its all-island focus by expanding activities in NI.

> **Strengths of the CES**
>
> "We have seen the CES as a very important organisat ion in terms of supporting our ongoing learning and development. It was really useful that CES had a full day workshop on logic model frameworks and opportunities for those with more experience to share their learning and also learn from others. CES should be able to play an important brokerage role in issues around evidence to implementation."
>
> — Grantee

Expectations have been high for CES since its launch. Stakeholders from government departments and the voluntary sector who have interacted directly with CES perceive it to be an organisation with highly skilled staff who are making important and unique contributions by promoting evidence-based service design and supporting service providers to improve outcomes for children and families. For example, stakeholders spoke favourably about CES's What Works process, a tool to facilitate a review of services against a logic model framework and promote evidence-based redesign. They also discussed the value of other CES activities, including conferences, training on the use of logic models, and support for multi-sector, all-island participation in the Global Implementation Conference with follow-up activities to bring policymakers and practitioners together around implementation science. A few stakeholders reported that CES had a slow startup and took perhaps too much time to define its mission; however, most felt that the organisation was moving in a positive direction.

Stakeholders with less direct experience of CES—especially in NI—expressed confusion about its mission, and some perceived it to be duplicating existing efforts. Some viewed the CES's mission as broad organisational consulting and believed that other

consultancy firms could provide a similar service. Others said that CES duplicated the services of academic institutions and organisations (such as the Social Care Institute for Excellence and the National Children's Bureau) that conduct literature reviews, disseminate information about best practices and carry out evaluations. These stakeholders were not aware of CES's focus on translating research evidence into practice rather than generating research by conducting evaluations.

C. Barriers and Hurdles That Could Impede Progress

While there are important opportunities for promoting a shift to evidence-based prevention and early intervention, a number of significant barriers could impede progress. This section reviews the main barriers identified by the Mathematica team, organised by goal.

Goal 1: Demonstrate Effective Practice Leading to Policy Reform

The research team did not identify significant barriers to achieving goal 1, as long as ongoing evaluations are completed as planned, and high-quality reports on the results are produced.

Goal 2: Inform and Influence Policy and Practice

- **The structure of government departments and the election cycle create difficulties for making significant shifts toward prevention and early intervention.** Government departments are organised as self-contained units oriented toward supporting the goals of the department and the minister. This structure tends to discourage engaging in collaborative initiatives that require funding from multiple departments, and for which accountability and ownership may not be clear. For example, local planning initiatives that involve assessing needs, redesigning services and realigning funds may be difficult to carry out because they require multiple departments to agree on common goals and budgets, perhaps with no single department having lead ownership. Moreover, the political realities of the election cycle put pressure on ministries to show measurable progress within a short time, whereas investment in prevention and early intervention is a longer-term strategy that might not yield all expected results in the short-term.

- **Current budget realities mean that new services and programmes cannot be commissioned without decommissioning others.** Although government departments commission a substantial amount of services from the voluntary sector, funding patterns may not match the patterns of current need among children and families, and funded services may not be as effective as evidence-based alternatives. Stakeholders reported that many government-funding commitments are based on historical patterns that have been in place for long periods of time. Governments might, therefore, find it difficult to alter those funding patterns, as doing so might negatively affect long-term partners.

- **Value-for-money analyses specific to the island of Ireland may be needed to justify dedication of significant resources to prevention and early intervention strategies.** Stakeholders reported that international evidence about the cost-effectiveness of prevention and early intervention has been helpful for educating policymakers and politicians about their value. In the current context of overall budget reductions, however, many interview participants stated that rigorous value-for-money evidence specific to the Irish context may be needed to persuade finance ministers to approve funding for new programmes and services. Some noted that analyses comparing the cost-effectiveness of potential new programmes to current investments would also be helpful.

- **Some government officials expressed reluctance to adopt proprietary evidence-based programmes that require licensing and oversight by a programme purveyor.** Several interview participants objected to implementing proprietary programmes in the statutory service sector for several reasons: they object to purchasing a license; they believe that proprietary programmes are not a good fit for the Irish context and service delivery system; and they want to focus on improving "services" rather than implementing "programmes." Stakeholders frequently mentioned Family Nurse Partnership as the key example of a proprietary programme that is too expensive and not appropriate for the island of Ireland since it already has public health nursing, even though no AP grantees have implemented it. Moreover, AP grantees have developed and tested a number of programmes locally and successfully adapted others to fit the Irish context.

- **Misconceptions about the nature of early intervention and prevention programmes pose potential barriers to further progress.** A number of interview participants expressed concern about their perception that many policymakers equate early intervention with early years services. The term "early intervention" is intended to denote an intervention that takes place early in a problem cycle and can occur at any stage of life. This perception is especially problematic for services that target youth, because some stakeholders believe that, by their very nature, youth services are not prevention programmes. Another misconception mentioned by interview participants is that prevention services do not yield benefits for participations until far into the future. This view makes prevention programmes less attractive to policymakers who face pressure to provide short-term solutions to societal problems. In reality, many prevention programmes have been shown to have both short- and long-term benefits (Bilukha et al. 2005; Olds et al. 1998; Olds et al. 2004; Olds et al. 2007: Sweet and Appelbaum 2004; Prinz et al. 2004; Sanders et al. 2008; Wolfe 2004).

- **Especially in ROI, competition exists among grantees vying for the same government funding; some grantees perceive that others are attempting to gain an advantage by not operating transparently.** Some grantees believe that others are not committed to a coordinated dissemination strategy and, as a result, are not sharing information about their plans and timelines for launches and other events. Some also insist that the ROI grantee network should focus on advocating collectively for adoption of prevention and early intervention approaches rather than for specific programmes. Others, however, are advocating for funding of their own programmes and not coordinating with the network. Several grantees expressed concern about the potential fracturing of working relationships if some grantees do not share information or collaborate to the same degree as others, as well as concern that this situation could harm the collective advocacy effort.

- **Oversaturation of evaluation launch events targeted to the same set of statutory officials and insufficient coordination across themes and grantees poses a danger to programme success.** As noted earlier, grantees are developing detailed plans for disseminating their evaluation findings that involve high-level forums and roundtables targeting key policymakers in a handful of ministries. Stakeholders expressed concern that targeting policymakers with a steady stream of such invitations will overwhelm them, and policymakers might react negatively as they are likely to feel pressured to fund multiple programmes. Moreover, while government officials are interested in the evaluation findings, most are not sophisticated consumers of research and will have limited time to devote to the task.

- **There is a lack of clarity among key stakeholders about the roles of CES, the grantee networks and DIPEI.** Interview participants, including government officials and AP grantees, expressed a wide range of views about the roles of CES, the grantee networks and DIPEI. Many stakeholders, including some who are directly involved in these efforts, perceived overlap in the missions of each entity and expressed confusion about what each is aiming to accomplish.

- **Some government officials and grantees perceive AP to be insufficiently engaged with governments.** Some interview participants expressed the view that AP could engage more directly with government on issues related to evidenced-based prevention and early intervention.[5] A few government officials reported that they discovered the CY programme only through their own efforts to learn more about prevention strategies and could not understand why AP had not approached them earlier as potential partners. Other officials noted that AP has limited almost all its partnerships to the voluntary sector, although it aims to influence the statutory sector. A few officials expressed concern that government may be expected to take over funding of these voluntary-sector initiatives even though it was not involved in initial planning decisions. Another concern was that a lack of engagement resulted in AP funding efforts that duplicate work government is already doing; in these cases, they felt that a partnership would have been more effective. These officials said that a more fruitful approach would have been to engage government as a partner up front, identify mutual interests and goals, and then fund efforts in these areas of mutual interest. In NI, some cited the Colin Early Intervention Community as a positive example of an effective way to engage with government in a joint effort that addresses mutual goals of government and AP.

Goal 3: Develop Capacity and Infrastructure for the Sector

- **Intensive supports will be required to make the organisational culture changes needed to implement evidence-based programmes within statutory services.** Interview participants, including government officials and AP grantees, expressed concern about whether adequate resources and supports would be available to support the statutory service sector in making the organisational culture changes needed to implement evidence-based programmes. Examples of such changes include using a manual to guide service delivery, tracking service delivery and outcomes, and using data for programme improvement. Some speculated that government officials might not have a good understanding of the steps and supports required. Several AP grantees have

demonstrated that these changes can be made, however, with adequate training, coaching, supervision and ongoing support.

D. Potential Next Steps

The economic downturn and resulting budget reductions have increased government focus on value-for-money and the need to reform statutory services. There may be a critical window of opportunity to influence government and shift funding toward evidence-based prevention and early intervention if focused efforts are made to partner with government to support this change. In both countries, many government officials endorsed a shift toward prevention and early intervention and expressed willingness to fund such programmes on a small scale or in pilot form. Many, however, seem uncertain about how to make this shift on a larger scale. In particular, stakeholders inside and outside government expressed concern about whether sufficient political momentum exists to make significant shifts in historical commissioning patterns and the traditional approach taken by statutory agencies to service delivery. This section cites several potential next steps that could be taken in an advocacy strategy for promoting the adoption of evidence-based prevention and early intervention strategies, organised by goal.

Goal 1: Demonstrate Effective Practice Leading to Policy Reform

- **Explore possibilities for commissioning value-for-money analyses of programmes with positive evaluation results.[6]**

Many stakeholders across sectors emphasised the importance of value-for-money analyses for persuading policymakers to adopt prevention and early intervention approaches. Many interview participants noted that international evidence on the cost-effectiveness of prevention and early intervention was compelling and had helped convince many policymakers of the potential value of moving in this direction. At the same time, persuading finance ministers to stop funding an existing service to fund a new prevention programme might require more specific cost-benefit information developed in the island of Ireland. Several stakeholders noted that, to be viewed as credible, the evidence has to be robust and must be generated by a third party.

> **Communicating the Cost-Benefit of Prevention**
>
> "They say, 'Prevention is expensive and for the future.' We say, 'Prevention is cheap and starts working the minute you deliver it.'"
>
> — Grantee

Grantees have not typically included cost-benefit studies in their evaluation plans, but they have documented their costs. One exception is Archways, which included cost-benefit information as part of its evaluation of Incredible Years. Some grantees discussed ways in which they have attempted to demonstrate the value of their programmes relative to others. Some noted, for example, that preventing a small number of high-cost incidents—such as child maltreatment cases—would pay for the cost of the programme. In the absence of cost-benefit studies, others recommended using a combination of international evidence, programme-cost

II. OBJECTIVE 1: PROMOTING PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION

data and national statistics about the cost of the problem being addressed by the intervention to communicate cost-benefit. For example, to communicate the value of its Respecting Differences programme, Early Years in NI reported comparing the cost of the programme and the cost per family of going to scale with the costs of sectarianism, such as the cost of imprisonment for sectarian or racist crimes.

Goal 2: Inform and Influence Policy and Practice

• Develop a strategic and focused approach to dissemination of CY Programme evaluation findings.

As noted earlier, government officials are concerned about being overwhelmed by the number of (1) invitations to launches and other events as evaluation reports are released, and (2) prevention programmes they may be lobbied to fund. Some officials expressed the belief that there are more than 30 similar AP-funded prevention programmes that might seek funding. As busy people who are not experts in interpreting research, they worry about how to make good decisions about whether or not to adopt these initiatives and, if so, how to distinguish among them. Several potential steps could be taken by the DIPEI groups in each country to shape a dissemination strategy that addresses these concerns.

Create a high-level series of themed roundtable events. To help officials sort through the evaluation findings, and to efficiently supply the information they need at a limited number of events, DIPEI could consider launching a series of high-level briefings or targeted conferences that are organised by theme (for example, literacy, parenting, early years, youth development and so on). Each theme would include findings from evaluations of related initiatives and focus on critical findings across the evaluations, rather than advocate for particular programmes. This strategy would not preclude grantees from holding their own launch events but would be responsive to policymakers' concerns and be respectful of their time.

Focus on Themes

"It would be useful to think about having a special roundtable series with policymakers around key themes rather than 'you should do this or that programme.' People will just close their ears, because we are not in that place. These [evaluations] have big policy implications, and that's how they need to be pitched and branded, and not [with] a scattergun approach."

— Policymaker

Some interview participants suggested that it would be helpful to do preparatory work with key officials through DIPEI meetings or by contacting them in advance to describe the series and proposed themes, the evaluations that would be included and the kind of information that would be provided. In addition, this would provide an opportunity to solicit input on the format and information that would be most helpful to policymakers. The series could be branded as a research series that will focus on key findings and policy implications across the evaluations.

Create a document for broad dissemination that categorises AP-funded prevention and early intervention programmes with evidence of effectiveness in a format designed to support decision-making and selection of interventions. Policymakers need help to distinguish between

the many prevention programmes that are being evaluated and to determine the fit of different initiatives with local context and need. CES's Capturing the Learning initiative could potentially serve this purpose, but CES's proposed timeline for the project will not provide information within the timeframe that critical policy decisions are being made in ROI and NI. Moreover, the six outcome areas into which CES plans to sort the evaluations—(1) child health and development, (2) child literacy and numeracy, (3) school engagement and aspirations for the future, (4) child social behavior and attitudes toward inclusivity, (5) problematic child behavior and (6) parent-child relationships—may not provide enough detail to optimally support decision-making and selection of initiatives.

A supplemental or alternative document designed to support policy decisions and intervention selection may be needed in the short term. Such a document would be designed to be user-friendly for non-researchers and to help readers quickly grasp important distinctions among the many interventions AP has funded. The document could include a brief description of each intervention, a statement about international evidence of effectiveness and a summary of Irish evaluation evidence or the expected evaluation report release date. In addition, users should be able to sort the interventions by characteristics that would facilitate decisions about how to make use of them in the statutory sector (Table II.1). For example, it may be useful to sort them by:

• **Service type:** parenting, early childhood care and education, classroom behaviour, literacy support, social and economic interventions, mentoring programmes, school-based training and awareness raising, adolescent mental health, other

• **Target of intervention:** child, teacher, manager, community, parent, practitioner

• **The setting and format of delivery:** community-based programme, online, in-school, centre-based programme, after-school programme, home

• **Developmental stage:** early years, primary school age, youth, young adult, adult

• **Fit within the larger service delivery system:** stand-alone programme, service designed to complement an existing statutory service, community-wide systems-change initiative, community-wide quality enhancement

In addition, AP or one of its partners could provide more information about each intervention available on a website by creating standardised intervention profiles that provide more details about the intervention model, prerequisites for implementation, staffing and training, materials, costs and information for both Irish and international contacts that can provide more information.[7]

Table II.1. Objective 1 Grantees, by Developmental Stage

Service Name Programme, Country	Target(s) of the Intervention	Setting(s) for Programme Delivery	Developmental Stage(s)[a]	Fit(s) within Service Delivery System
Parenting				
Home Visitation				
Lifestart Parenting Programme Lifestart Foundation Ltd., NI	Child, age birth to 5	Home	Early Years	Stand-alone programme
Preparing for Life Northside Partnership[b] ROI	Child, Neonatal to age 5	Home	Early Years	Stand-alone programme
Ready, Steady, Grow Ballymun Partnership (Youngballymun)[b] ROI	Child, Neonatal to age 3	Centre-based Home	Early Years	Stand-alone programme
Centre/Community Based Care				
Incredible Years – Parenting Archways (Clondalkin Behavioral Initiative Ltd. T/A), ROI AND Ballymun Partnership (Youngballymun)[b] ROI	Parent	Community-based	Primary School	Stand-alone programme
Advocacy and Parenting Teens Programme Parenting NI, NI	Parent[e]	Centre-based	Youth	Stand-alone programme
Triple P Parenting Programme Longford & Westmeath Parenting Partnership, ROI	Parent	Community-based	Early Years Primary School Youth	Stand-alone programme
Partnership with Parents Barnardos[d] ROI	Parent	Community-based	Early Years Primary School Youth	Stand-alone programme
Incredible Years – For Children Experiencing Hyperkinetic Disorder (ADHD) Archways (Clondalkin Behavioral Initiative Ltd. T/A), ROI	Parent	Community-based	Early Years	Stand-alone programme
Early Childhood Care and Education				
3, 4, 5 Learning Years Ballymun Partnership (Youngballymun)[b] ROI	Managers Teachers	Centre-based	Early Years	Stand-alone programme
Eager and Able to Learn Early Years (The Organisation for Young Children),[c] NI	Child, ages 2 and 3	Centre-based	Early Years	Stand-alone programme
Early Childhood Care and Education Tallaght West Childhood Development Initiative (CDI),[b] ROI	Child, ages 3 and 4	Centre-based	Early Years	Stand-alone programme
Tús Maith Barnardos[d], ROI	Child, ages 3 to 5	Centre-based	Early Years	Stand-alone programme
National Early Years Access Initiative Pobal, ROI	Child Practitioners	Centre-based	Early Years	Community-wide quality enhancement initiative
Classroom Behaviour				
Incredible Years – Classroom Management Archways (Clondalkin Behavioral Initiative Ltd. T/A), ROI AND Ballymun Partnership (Youngballymun),[b] ROI	Teacher	In-school	Primary School	Complement to an existing statutory service
Incredible Years – Classroom Management & Classroom Dina Ballymun Partnership (Youngballymun),[b] ROI	Child Teacher	In-school	Primary School	Complement to an existing statutory service
Literacy Support				
Doodle Den Tallaght West Childhood Development Initiative (CDI),[b] ROI	Child, ages 5 and 6	After-school	Primary School	Stand-alone programme
Ready to Learn Barnardos, NI	Child	After-school	Primary School	Stand-alone programme
Rialto Learning Community Rialto Development Association (formerly Fatima Regeneration Board), ROI	Child, ages 11 to 14	In-school	Primary School Youth	Complement to an existing statutory service
		After-school		Stand-alone programme
Time to Read Business in the Community, NI	Child, ages 8 and 9	In-school	Primary School	Complement to an existing statutory service
Wizards of Words Barnardos, ROI[d]	Child, ages 6 and 7	In-school	Primary School	Complement to an existing statutory service
Write Minded Ballymun Partnership (Youngballymun),[b] ROI	Child Teacher	In-school	Primary School Youth	Complement to an existing statutory service
Literacivic Ballymun Partnership (Youngballymun),[b] ROI	Community	Community-based	Youth Young Adult Adult	Stand-alone programme

Service Name Programme, Country	Target(s) of the Intervention	Setting(s) for Programme Delivery	Developmental Stage(s)[a]	Fit(s) within Service Delivery System
Social and Emotional Interventions				
Friendship Group Barnardos[d], ROI	Child, ages 8 and 9	Centre-based	Primary School	Stand-alone programme
Functional Family Therapy Clondalkin Partnership, ROI	Child Parent	Community-based	Youth	Stand-alone programme
Mate Tricks Tallaght West Childhood Development Initiative (CDI),[b] ROI	Child, ages 9 and 10	After-school	Primary School	Stand-alone programme
Media Initiative for Children: Respecting Differences Programme Early Years (The Organisation for Young Children),[c] NI	Child, ages 3 and 4	In-school	Early Years	Complement to an existing statutory service
		Centre-based		Stand-alone programme
PATHS (formerly Together 4 All Limited[b]) Barnardos, NI	Child, ages 6 to 12	In-school	Primary School	Complement to an existing statutory service
Step Belong BELONG (South Tyrone Empowerment Programme), NI	Child	In-school Centre-based	Primary School Youth	Stand-alone programme
Incredible Years – For Children Experiencing Hyperkinetic Disorder (ADHD) – Child Training Archways (Clondalkin Behavioral Initiative Ltd. T/A), ROI	Child	Community-based	Early Years	Stand-alone programme
Mentoring Programmes				
Big Brothers Big Sisters Ireland – Community Foróige, ROI	Child, ages 10 to 18	Community-based	Primary School Youth	Stand-alone programme
Big Brothers Big Sisters Ireland – Schools Foróige, ROI	Child, ages 10 to 18	In-school	Primary School Youth	Stand-alone programme
School-based Training and Awareness Raising				
Mayo Consortium Children's Initiative Society of St. Vincent De Paul, ROI	Child, ages 8 to 17	In-school Community-based	Primary School Youth	Stand-alone programme
Healthy Schools Programme Tallaght West Childhood Development Initiative (CDI),[b] ROI	Child, junior and senior	In-school	Primary School	Stand-alone programme
Adolescent Mental Health				
Jigsaw Ballymun Partnership (Youngballymun),[b] ROI AND Headstrong, ROI	Child, ages 12 to 25	Community-based	Youth Young Adult	Stand-alone programme
Reachout.com in Ireland Inspire Ireland Foundation, ROI	Child, ages 12 to 25	Online	Youth Young Adult	Stand-alone programme
Other				
Community Safety Initiative Tallaght West Childhood Development Initiative (CDI)[b], ROI	Community	Community-based	Primary School Youth Young Adult Adult	Community-wide systems-change initiative
Renewal and Regeneration across the Lifecourse in Limerick City University of Limerick Foundation[d], ROI	Child	Community-based	Early Years Primary School Youth Young Adult Adult	Community-wide systems-change initiative
Sexual Health Clinics in Belfast and Coleraine Brook Belfast, NI	Child	Centre-based	Youth Young Adults	Stand-alone programme

[a] Developmental stages are defined as early years (ages 0-4); primary school (ages 5-12); youth (ages 13-17); young adult (ages 18-25); and adult (ages 26 and up).

[b] Community Engagement Site (collaboration between government department and Atlantic Philanthropies).

[c] Both an Objective 1 and Objective 2 grantee.

[d] Grantee for both the Children and Youth Programme and the Reconciliation and Human Rights Programme and/or Ageing Programme.

[e] Offered as a group programme

NI = Northern Ireland ROI = Republic of Ireland

These kinds of distinctions can help policymakers better understand and narrow their choices and options. A short summary document of this nature can help policymakers and others involved in selecting programmes at the community level quickly identify the small set of potential programme models that best meet their needs. For example, instead of 30 interventions, there might be only a handful of literacy initiatives to consider, and fewer still that are implemented in schools. It might also be useful to include information about whether the intervention was locally developed on the island of Ireland, developed internationally but adapted for an Irish context, or replicated without specific adaptations.

- Take steps to refine the strategic approach to advocacy for prevention and early intervention.

Clarify the strategic goal for advocacy to focus future efforts. Grantees and other stakeholders articulated a range of strategic goals for advocacy efforts to promote prevention and early intervention. Most interview participants acknowledged their belief that not all AP-funded programmes will be sustained with long-term funding. Some thought AP and its partners should select six to eight of the most promising interventions and advocate for government to fund them. Others felt that advocacy efforts should be focused on mainstreaming evidence-based prevention and early intervention programmes into statutory services, rather than on advocating for specific interventions. Some stakeholders feel that prevention services should be universally provided, while others prefer an alignment of interventions to community needs in a local area. These differences in strategic priorities can confuse advocacy efforts and result in potentially contradictory messages.

While grantees might pursue a diverse set of advocacy goals, it may be helpful for AP to define its own goals and communicate them clearly to all partners. For example, is the goal of the CY programme to mainstream evidence-based prevention and early intervention programmes into statutory services, to obtain government funds for delivery through the voluntary sector, or both? How important is an evidence-based needs assessment and planning process for redesigning services in areas of high disadvantage?

Interview participants in both countries expressed a strong view that more opportunities exist for mainstreaming evidence-based prevention programmes into statutory services than for new or redirected funding to support programmes in the voluntary sector.

Mainstreaming could be accomplished in large part by reassigning statutory sector staff to new duties, rather than by obtaining new funds for a new programme. Other potential advantages include providing needed training and professional development opportunities to statutory sector staff.

Clarify roles for CES, DIPEI and the grantee networks. As discussed earlier, stakeholders expressed a wide range of views and some confusion about the roles of CES, DIPEI and the grantee networks in each country. Stakeholders also noted perceived duplication of effort among these three entities, as well as with other existing organisations in both NI and ROI. To some extent, perceptions about duplication are due to lack of understanding about roles. For example, even though CES does not conduct primary research, some interview participants felt it might be carrying out activities that duplicate activities that academic institutions on the island of Ireland are doing or could be doing in this area. Some members of the grantee network believe that DIPEI will provide opportunities to advocate for specific programmes to be funded.

To address confusion and help align activities across the three groups, AP should clarify the role of each group and disseminate that information both within and across the groups. Such clarification might provide opportunities to eliminate duplication among AP partners and enhance strategic coordination as CES, DIPEI and the grantee networks are able to work together more efficiently.

Identify a high-level champion for evidence-based prevention and early intervention who does not have a direct stake in the outcome. Many stakeholders praised the DIPEI groups as important forums for disseminating information from the AP programme evaluations, identifying key lessons from the evaluations and considering steps for moving forward with a prevention and early intervention agenda. At the same time, some noted that, while the policymakers participating in DIPEI are engaged and committed, additional work may be needed at more senior ministerial levels to convince them of the importance of the prevention and early intervention agenda. While the independent evaluations and DIPEI are important, a high-level champion who is viewed as having no stake in the outcome could help to elevate the consideration of prevention to more senior levels. International experts are helpful, but most are too specialised in their fields to address the agenda as whole.

Goal 3: Develop Capacity and Infrastructure for the Sector

- Create models and supports to help shape service redesign efforts within statutory services.

Develop models for system change including options for local needs assessment and planning in highly disadvantaged areas, universal services and reforming the commissioning process to move toward evidence-based programmes. Interview participants expressed a range

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of views about the value of universal versus targeted services, whether some programmes should be implemented nationwide to ensure equitable access and the value of local needs assessment and planning efforts to tailor the mix of services and programmes to community needs. AP grantees have developed promising models that can address the range of strategies under consideration.

Using grantee experiences as a starting point, AP should consider developing models and options for consideration by government to support the various change programmes and reform efforts under way. For example, youngballymun and the Colin Early Intervention Community provide promising models for systems change in local areas of disadvantage that involve assessing needs and using the assessment to build a plan; involving community service providers, families, and other partners in the planning process; and developing a clear implementation plan that incorporates regular assessment and refinement. The Longford-Westmeath Parenting Partnership offers a promising model for providing a universal service and for working in partnership across the statutory and voluntary sectors.

Shifting from Evidence-Based Practice to Evidence-Based Programmes

"It was really hard to move from an approach where we were learning from principles of best practice, pushing a quality agenda, but not really seeing improvement in outcomes. . . . It was only when we become intentional about a programme and fidelity and dosage and evaluation that we could say this is working. I think that's very powerful."

— Grantee

"We had a long history of promoting evidence-based practice and invested a lot of resources and training into helping staff set realistic outcome goals and measuring outcomes. Our services would have been familiar with that way of working, but within their culture of social welfare and a more organic approach. Now we are moving toward that next level. There's a difference between evidence-based practice and implementing an evidence-based programme."

— Grantee

Interview participants also discussed the commissioning process as a potential tool for shifting the focus of services toward the use of evidence-based prevention approaches. Participants reported that government spends a large amount of funds commissioning services in the voluntary sector; however, most of the programmes are not evidence-based and many are funded on a historical basis. A number of stakeholders suggested models for reforming the commissioning process by gradually strengthening award criteria and standards. For example, departments could impose new criteria for evaluating funding proposals, require applicants either to use evidence-based programmes or to report in a specific set of outputs and outcomes, or require interagency work or partnering as a condition of funding. Many also felt that requests for funding proposals from the voluntary sector should be based increasingly on national policy and local need rather than historical funding patterns. Finally, several suggested that funding should be provided in multiyear cycles to allow time for substantial staff training and redirection toward evidence-based prevention.

Educate stakeholders about the value of implementing evidence-based programmes and service delivery models and the potential for adaptation to fit the local context. As noted earlier, statutory sector interview participants expressed reluctance to adopt proprietary programmes that require licensing and oversight by a programme purveyor, for three main reasons: (1) concerns about fit with the local context; (2) the cost of licensing; and (3) a belief that they could successfully adapt existing services without fully implementing tested models. AP could consider addressing each of these concerns through its DIPEI or other advocacy and education efforts related to prevention and early intervention. In particular, the experience of grantees can provide compelling evidence of the importance of adopting evidence-based programmes and taking the steps needed to implement them with fidelity.

AP and its partners could stress that evidence-based programmes must be selected based on community needs and fit. In addition to assessing needs of a community to inform selection of interventions, prevention programmes should fit with the values of the community and within the existing service delivery structure. AP grantees can provide concrete examples of how this process has worked on the island of Ireland. Most grantees did needs assessments prior to selecting their interventions, and many involved community stakeholders in reviewing the results and selecting appropriate interventions to address identified needs. Moreover, two grantees—youngballymun and Longford-Westmeath Parenting Partnership—have demonstrated the feasibility of accomplishing these tasks within the statutory sector (see Box II.1 for descriptions of these initiatives).

During interviews, some stakeholders maintained that proprietary programmes have been developed in countries with social services delivery systems very different from those on the island of Ireland and, thus, would be unsuitable in an Irish context. AP grantees, however, have successfully developed and evaluated evidence-based prevention programmes specifically for ROI and NI and carefully adapted international models to fit the Irish context. For example, in NI, Early Years developed the Respecting Differences programme to address problems related to prejudice and sectarian views that children develop at an early age. Barnardos developed Ready to Learn, an after-school programme to support literacy development, and the Parents Advice Centre developed Parenting Your Teen. Grantees have also adapted, replicated, and tested international models in ROI and NI. Foróige tested Big Brothers, Big Sisters; Archways replicated Incredible Years; and several grantees replicated Triple P. In NI, the US-developed Providing Alternative Thinking Strategies programme, a social-emotional intervention, was adapted and successfully implemented as Together 4 All. Careful adaptation work was done in consultation with the developer, even modifying facial expressions depicted in programme materials to appear more European.

Stakeholders were also uncomfortable with paying for licenses and implementing purveyor requirements in the statutory sector. For example, one interview participant said, "I have a hard time getting my head around government buying a license to work in a particular way. . . . It doesn't gel with me. If something is good practice, we introduce it as good practice. You can't really 'own' a practice idea in that way." AP and its partners can educate policymakers about why there is a cost associated with working with a programme purveyor to implement an evidence-based intervention. The government would not be buying a practice idea;

Box II.1. Examples of Systems Change Initiatives for Highly Disadvantaged Areas

youngballymun is an integrated systems change strategy working from pre-birth through young adulthood to improve learning and well-being outcomes for children and young people in Ballymun community in Dublin. The strategy is being implemented alongside the regeneration of Ballymun's built environment. The strategy has its origins in the Ballymun Development Group for Children and Young People, which reviewed existing community services, assessed needs, consulted widely with community members to develop a comprehensive 10-year plan of action for children and young people. Jointly funded by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and Atlantic Philanthropies to carry out the first five years of the plan, youngballymun is implementing and evaluating a series of interventions that are embedded in mainstream service delivery settings and systems such as preschools, school classrooms, health services, and youth and community projects. Staff implementing the interventions are supported through a learning community. The interventions include: Ready Steady Grown, a prenatal, infant, and toddler parent support service; 3,4,5 Learning Years to improve quality in early childhood care and education; Incredible Years, which takes a whole school approach to supporting positive behavior in children ages 5 to 12; Write Minded, a literacy and oral language support service for ages 4 to 18+; Jigsaw, a youth mental health intervention for ages 12 to 22, and Literacivic, an intervention to develop civic literacy.

Colin Early Intervention Community (CEIC) aims to improve the outcomes of children and young people living in the Colin area of west Belfast. Established by the Colin Neighborhood Partnership, CEIC engaged in a community consultation process to assess needs, identify target outcomes, and identify programmes and project that build on existing work in the Colin area to deliver the outcomes. With support from the Centre for Effective Services, by December 2011 the consultation process yielded an initial implementation plan calling for a focus on early interventions that are evidence-based, integrated, and locally led and include services targeted to highly disadvantaged population, universal services, and practice supports. The plan also calls for robust performance measurement and evaluation. An initial implementation phase, which commenced in September 2011, focused on expanding and developing programmes for early and primary years. Partners include the South Eastern Trust, the Department for Social Development, the Department of Justice, the Department of Education, the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools, the South Eastern Education and Library Board, the Health and Social Care Board, the Public Health Agency, the Lisbun City Council, local schools, and Atlantic Philanthropies.

rather, it is paying for the training and ongoing supports needed to implement the practices with high fidelity to the model and to sustain fidelity over time, with the ultimate goal of achieving better outcomes for children and families.

Scaling-Up

"We have developed a programme, and we have the evidence to show it is effective. If we really want every child on the island of Ireland to [benefit from] this programme, we are going to have to rely on the statutory sector to deliver the programme with fidelity to the way it has been developed. We're at the stage of thinking about licensing and credentialing. It's not driven by a profit agenda, it is driven by an agenda of ensuring fidelity to the programme to deliver those outcomes."

— Grantee

Replicating and scaling-up an evidence-based programme requires training on curricula and service delivery approaches, monitoring and careful supervision to ensure fidelity, collecting outcome data and using it for continuous programme improvement, and other related activities. In principle, a statutory service could develop these systems on its own, but such an effort would require substantial resources and would be untested without an evaluation. The value of proprietary evidence-based programmes is that all the materials and processes have been developed and tested, and training and supports to ensure high-fidelity implementation are provided by a purveyor.

It may be useful to caution statutory stakeholders about the efficacy of attempting to mainstream only selected practices of evidence-based programmes into existing systems, because this approach is unlikely to yield improved outcomes for children and families. Research in the field of implementation science shows

that new practices typically do not fare well when implemented in existing organisational structures and systems unless intentional efforts are made to achieve and sustain fidelity to the programme model as designed (Halle and Metz 2011). Instead, innovative practices are often changed to fit the system, instead of systems being changed to support the innovation. Adoption of evidence-based programmes can serve as a catalyst to drive organisation change in the direction of the evidence-based decision-making that stakeholders think is needed within the statutory sector. AP grantees have experienced this process firsthand and can describe the important lessons they have learned about making these changes within their own organisations.

Replicating Evidence-Based Programmes

"There is a critical issue of how managers in organisations understand what is required of them to sustain evidence-based programmes with fidelity and quality. Training managers to do quality assurance, site visits, fidelity checks, facilitate communities of practice—all the things we have learned are required to ensure that services are delivered as intended—that's going to take a fair bit of capacity building. Our concern is that a lot of organisations don't see that. They say, 'You found out it worked, just give us the manual.'"

— Grantee

Consider funding local implementation experts, such as selected grantees or CES staff, to play a role alongside government in facilitating service redesign and supporting implementation of evidence-based programmes. Research on implementation science indicates that full implementation of an evidence-based programme can take two to four years—

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from the first stage of exploring the fit with identified needs and existing service systems to full implementation (Fixen and Blasé 2009). Moreover, as noted earlier, interview participants expressed concern about whether statutory services could make the shift to evidence-based programmes without considerable support.

Grantees have developed substantial expertise in all aspects of adoption, replication and adaptation of evidence-based programmes and are well positioned to provide such support. Several reported that they are refining their manuals and training materials and developing the tools needed to replicate the programmes they implemented and evaluated as part of the CY programme. Selected grantees would be well positioned to provide training and support to the statutory sector to prepare for and replicate the programmes they developed or adapted. CES staff have also developed tools and expertise, especially for supporting needs assessment and service redesign. For example, the What Works Process developed by CES would be useful for that purpose, as well as training modules on the use of logic models.

AP could also consider establishing a centre, perhaps housed within CES or an academic institution, whose mission is to support the adoption, replication and adaptation of evidence-based prevention and early intervention programmes. Several models exist for such a centre. In the US, the National Implementation Research Network (NIRN) provides support to state and local agencies on implementation of evidence-based programmes and has developed a set of tools for doing so (NIRN, 2011). The Connecticut Center for Effective Practices focuses on supporting implementation of effective practices for improving mental health services for children across the state (Child Health and Development Institute of Connecticut, 2011). In ROI, Archways' work to support replication of evidenced-based programmes provides another model.

Consider focusing future funding on joint initiatives with government rather than parallel services in the voluntary sector. During interviews, statutory participants uniformly made two recommendations about future AP initiatives. First, they suggested that in light of current budget pressures, there is much more scope for mainstreaming evidence-based prevention programmes into the statutory sector than for funding new programmes and services in the voluntary sector. Mainstreaming can be much less costly, since statutory staff would be reassigned to new duties. The resulting training and professional development opportunities for these staff would be an added benefit. Second, they recommended that AP focus future funding on joint initiatives with government, rather than on stand-alone services in the voluntary sector. Current examples of both mainstreaming and jointly funded initiatives are the Colin Early Intervention Community and the Longford-Westmeath Parenting Partnership.

NIRN also recommends the use of implementation teams to support replication of evidence-based programmes, which may include both external experts and internal champions for the intervention, to support implementation of evidence-based programmes. The teams focus on moving the intervention through the stages of implementation by: supporting "buy in" and organisational readiness to implement; ensuring that core implementation components for hiring, training and supporting staff as well as administrative supports are in place; monitoring fidelity and outcomes; problem solving; and supporting sustainability (Halle and Metz 2011). Funding implementation teams made up of statutory and AP-grantee members would be another joint initiative with government that could move mainstreaming of prevention programmes forward.

[3] *The number of grantees using data systems for monitoring and programme improvement is likely higher. The Mathematica team did not interview all Objective 1 grantees. Furthermore, grantees discussed these systems in response to open-ended questions. Other grantees that participated in interviews may be using databases but did not discuss them.*

[4] *By the end of 2011 the HSE and the National Education Welfare Board had also begun participating in DIPEI.*

[5] *As noted in Mathematica's previous evaluation and in this report, AP has interacted with a range of government officials throughout the initiative. Views of government officials cited here point to the possible value of a higher level of engagement.*

[6] *Since the data were collected for this report, AP has funded a grant to support cost data collection and conduct cost effectiveness and cost-benefit analyses. Therefore, the work recommended here is currently underway.*

[7] *One example of this approach is the Home Visiting Evidence of Effectiveness systematic review, which provides detailed profiles of all programme models included in the review at http://homvee. acf.hhs.gov/implementations.aspx.*

Supporting Implementation

"It's about doing better training, training on evidence-based practices, organising your practice differently, but you can't change massive systems just by saying, 'Do it differently.' You've got to coach, mentor, assist, support, and struggle through that change process with people. It's a messy, difficult process. You need people who are up for that and understand what is involved."

— Grantee

III. OBJECTIVE 2: ADVANCE CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

The second objective of AP's CY programme focuses on advancing children's rights. In pursuit of this objective, CY centred its activities on three goals: (1) consolidation and networking of existing and new advocacy grantees to better achieve the goals of a children's rights agenda as stated in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; (2) investing in core advocacy competencies of selected organisations; and (3) convening and supporting grantees to become better networked and to develop collaborative advocacy efforts (Children and Youth Programme 2009). At the time of the 2008 evaluation, the CY programme had invested in three Objective 2 grantees: (1) the Children's Law Centre, (2) the Dartington Social Research Unit's Prevention Action website, and (3) the Children's Rights Alliance.

Since the 2008 evaluation, the CY programme has significantly expanded its grantmaking for Objective 2 to 18 grantees and revised the goals for this objective: (1) build core advocacy capacity; (2) develop the voice and leadership capacity of communities, families, and children and young people; and (3) support key campaigns (Figure III.1). This chapter provides an overview of Objective 2 investments and activities; presents findings on progress toward Objective 2 goals since 2008; identifies barriers and hurdles that could impede future progress; and suggests potential next steps that AP and its partners could take to make additional progress.
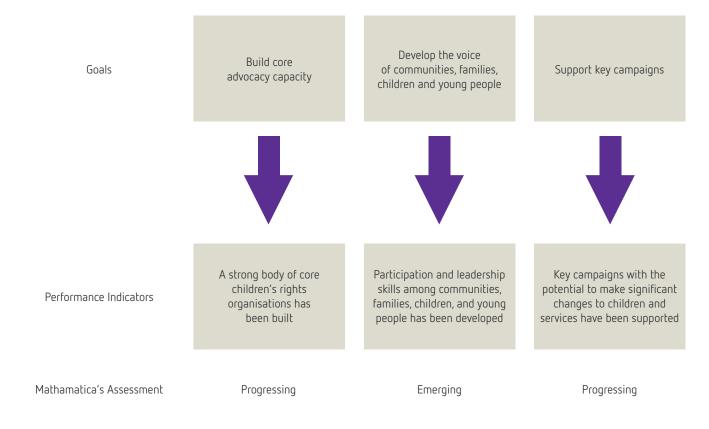
A. Overview of Grantees and Activities

CY's significant investment in children's rights advocacy work since 2008 greatly expanded the number of Objective 2 grantees across the island of Ireland. There are now eight Objective 2 grantees in Northern Ireland (NI) and 10 in the Republic of Ireland (ROI) (Appendix B). Although these grantees are similar in their mission of advocating for children's rights, their approaches to advocacy work vary. A few grantees provide both social services and training in advocacy to children and youth, others advocate on behalf of children and youth, and still others provide a combination of the two approaches.

Some Objective 2 grantees provide social services (services to address young people's emotional, physical and financial needs) and training in advocacy to youth. Social Entrepreneurs Ireland (SEI), for example, invests in and supports young social entrepreneurs who have a vision or idea for social change. With SEI's support, these young people can develop and implement advocacy campaigns. Most often, young people's advocacy campaigns for social change relate to youth issues, including children's rights.

Other grantees provide direct advocacy on behalf of youth but not social services or training in advocacy. The National Children's Bureau in Northern Ireland (NCB NI), for example, coordinates a Children and Young People as Researchers Network, promoting the use of evidence and evaluation among practitioners and researchers; organises the Diversity in Action in Northern Ireland network, which brings together research, policy and practice

Figure III.1. Objective 2: Advance Children's Rights

	Build core advocacy capacity	Develop the voice of communities, families, children and young people	Support key campaigns
Goals			
Performance Indicators	A strong body of core children's rights organisations has been built	Participation and leadership skills among communities, families, children, and young people has been developed	Key campaigns with the potential to make significant changes to children and services have been supported
Mathamatica's Assessment	Progressing	Emerging	Progressing

Source: Atlantic Philanthropies' Children & Youth Programme 2011.

relating to children from ethnically diverse backgrounds; supports Young NCB, which has more than 150 young people serving in an advisory capacity to help guide NCB NI's future activities; and seeks to influence policy by working directly with government boards and agencies to implement change (NCB NI 2011).

Still other grantees offer a combination of the two approaches: they provide social services and training in advocacy to youth and actively engage in children's rights advocacy. An example is Voices of Young People in Care (VOYPIC), which offers social services to young people through its Participation Project and mentoring programmes. The Participation Project facilitates and supports the growth and development of young people in care (aged 0-25 years) by encouraging their personal and social development through group and individual work (VOYPIC 2011). The project offers a variety of activities, including workshops (on topics such as music, dance, drama and career management), and the Personalised Development and Active Citizenship programme, which aims to build young people's social and interpersonal skills. At the same time, VOYPIC directly advocates for children's rights. Through the Policy Project, VOYPIC staff ensure that the views and experiences of children and young people are brought to the attention of decision-makers within social services. To accomplish this, staff continually remind government officials and service providers to be cognisant of the rights and needs of children in care and participate in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of policy and practice initiatives and legislative developments (VOYPIC 2011).

B. Main Findings

This section describes the Mathematica team's main findings on each Objective 2 goal and assesses AP's programme toward achieving each of the performance indicators (see Figure III.1).

Goal 1: Build Core Advocacy Capacity

Since 2008, AP has substantially increased its investment in Objective 2, from three to 20 grantees, to build a strong body of core children's rights organisations to strengthen the field, the performance indicator for goal 1. AP's investment has given grantees new leverage to influence policy and supported grantees in strengthening their organisational capacity and ability to network with other advocacy organisations on the island of Ireland. More work is needed to further strengthen the advocacy capacities of these grantees. Therefore, the Mathematica team rated goal 1 as **Progressing**.

- **AP funding has given grantees new leverage to influence policy.**

AP funding has provided Objective 2 grantees the autonomy to critique government programmes and policies, increased their credibility with government officials and facilitated the development of new relationships with policymakers. Through these efforts, grantees are better able to advance the children's rights agenda, especially with regard to the rights stated in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Grantees expressed appreciation for AP's independent funding. Grantees felt more comfortable providing critiques of current government practices because AP funding reduced the concern about offending funding departments and agencies by providing critical analysis of government programmes and policies. Independence from government is essential for advocacy grantees, as they seek to make policymakers and government officials aware of problems within the current system. When policymakers and government officials become aware of these problems, advocacy organisations can suggest ways to address them and better serve the needs of children and youth.

Funding Raises Grantees' Profile

"Having AP for the last two years has certainly raised our profile, giving us credibility within the sector as well [as] within government."

— Grantee

"When [we] would go and say, 'Oh, we're funded by Atlantic,' . . . it was seen as very positive, and also helped get the door open a bit further, so that then you could build up the trust and respect in your own right. But the fact that [government officials] knew that you'd gone through a process to get that funding, it helped the credibility and the respectability piece of our work, while we were establishing our own credentials."

— Grantee

A number of Objective 2 grantees felt that AP's funding brought a new degree of credibility to their organisation. As a foundation, AP has a reputation for making investments in quality organisations that will address important societal challenges to better the lives of children, families, and the elderly. Grantees that receive AP funds, then, are viewed by government officials, service providers, and other stakeholders as quality organisations with important missions. It is possible that even when AP funding ends, the status of having been an AP-funded grantee may remain. AP therefore leaves a legacy that their funding process has helped strengthen the children's rights advocacy and youth-serving field through increased credibility of the grantees' missions and goals.

This increased credibility has provided grantees with new opportunities to influence policy, such as increased exposure to policymakers; the ability to develop positive, lasting relationships with government officials and departments; and invitations to provide briefings and guidance on specific topics.

- **AP's investment strengthened grantees' organisational capacities to advocate for children's rights and network with similar advocacy organisations.**

Staffing and Staff Development

"AP's funding has provided resources for much-needed staffing."

— Grantee

"We have been able to recruit and retain good staff. . . . The training and all that we've done—I would have been challenged to be able to find the resources to actually do it without [AP's funding]."

— Grantee

The investment from AP enabled Objective 2 grantees to improve their organisational and core advocacy capacities by increasing staffing, providing staff development opportunities, expanding

III. OBJECTIVE 2: ADVANCE CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

the scope of their work and developing coalitions and strategic alliances with other AP-funded organisations.

A majority of Objective 2 grantees interviewed for this evaluation reported that the funding from AP enabled them to hire new staff. These staff usually filled newly created positions within the organisation, focusing on research, evaluation or new areas of work (e.g. mental health). In addition, the grants provided existing staff with professional development opportunities, such as attending conferences and seminars, to expand their networks and develop skills for strengthening their programmes.

> ### Supportive Funding
>
> "So in many ways the AP funding was a dream come true for us because they encourage . . . you to think big, to be ambitious in terms of your ideas, and we have a lot of ambition."
>
> — Grantee

Some organisations were able to pilot new advocacy strategies either because AP funded the new strategy or because increased staff capacity made resources available to try new approaches and consider new ways of involving youth. With AP funding, the Children's Law Centre has been able to expand their focus of work to new areas, such as mental health. Similarly, AP funding has enabled SEI and Youth Action to develop or expand upon programmes designed to strengthen the leadership capabilities of young people through advocacy campaigns or apprenticeships. Grantees expressed appreciation for AP's flexibility and willingness to allow grantees to test new ideas and alter plans based on lessons learned midway through the funding period. The flexibility enabled grantees to react more easily and respond better to the needs of children and youth, ensuring that approaches were as timely and beneficial to young people as possible.

> ### Networking with Other Advocacy Grantees
>
> We meet a couple times a year, and I find that very useful, because there's no point in reinventing [the] wheel and going back. So you can learn from somebody else who's been there ahead of you.
>
> — Grantee

Objective 2 grantees have also had opportunities to network with other AP-funded advocacy organisations. Networking enabled grantees to share a variety of experiences and resources, such as conducting successful campaigns, recruiting new funders and developing technical support structures. These experiences and resources increased staff knowledge and organisational capacity. CY staff provided one-on-one connections between grantees and also encouraged grantees to participate in the grantee networks in each country. In the north, for example, VOYPIC is a well-established organisation that has been advocating for the rights of children in the care system since 1993. In the south, the Irish Association of Young People in Care (now called Empowering People in Care [EPIC]) is a newer organisation that also focuses on the rights of youth in care. By connecting these organisations, EPIC has learned from the experiences of VOYPIC. For example, the north, through UK legislation, has a better-developed legislative service for young people leaving care. EPIC finds it useful to

consider the legislation underpinning the services to better craft their strategies for lobbying efforts and campaigning work in the south. It is important to note, however, that although Objective 2 grantees were invited to participate in the grantee networks in both ROI and NI, a number of Objective 2 grantees indicated that network discussions and activities, with its primary focus on Objective 1 issues, often had only limited relevance to their work. Objective 2 grantees may benefit more from exposure to other advocacy-focused networks and partners with a greater depth of experience regarding advocacy strategies and conducting campaigns. Examples of potential networks and partners include the Children's Rights Council, a US-based organisation with international affiliates; First Focus in the United States; and the Children's Rights Project in South Africa, part of the Community Law Centre at the University of Western Cape.

- **Rigorous advocacy evaluations are not a strong focus for Objective 2.**

AP's CY programme has invested significant resources in developing an evidence base for prevention and early intervention in ROI and NI. Such investment and focus has been noted by many respondents as a hallmark of AP's involvement on the island of Ireland. This investment has enabled Objective 1 grantees to conduct rigorous programme evaluations to determine programme effectiveness (herein referenced as programme evaluations). Typically, these programme evaluations are either randomised controlled trials (RCT) or quasi-experimental (QED) designs and involved the AP grantee working closely with an Expert Advisory Committee (EAC) and professional evaluators. Through these rigorous designs, grantees are able to determine the relative effectiveness of their programme compared to services as usual or receiving no services.

AP's CY programme has also invested resources in Objective 1 and Objective 2 grantees to conduct descriptive evaluations of the work completed in a particular timeframe. Descriptive evaluations often assess *outputs*, such as the number of people served, and may also report *outcomes*, such as the activities and behaviors of young people after receiving services (e.g. greater community involvement). Unlike programme evaluations, however, descriptive evaluations cannot make claims about what would have occurred in the absence of the intervention because there is no control or comparison condition.

A third type of evaluation that would be appropriate for Objective 2 grantees are advocacy evaluations. Advocacy evaluations generally focus on three areas – advocacy capacity, progress towards policy goals and results of advocacy efforts. Generally, it is straightforward to measure if the goals of advocacy campaigns are met; particular policies are either changed or enacted or not. Measuring advocacy capacity, or the strategies, systems and skills organisations need to implement and sustain effective advocacy work, is more challenging because multiple factors need to be considered. Whereas a descriptive evaluation might list the different coalitions and alliances a grantee has developed, the advocacy evaluation would assess and quantify how such coalitions and alliances support the mission of the grantee and lead to effective policy change. Advocacy evaluations can help inform organisations about their capacity needs, which strategies are making progress, and where midcourse corrections might be needed (Easton and Hoechstetter 2006; Guthrie et al. 2005; Sabatier and Weible 2007; Weiss 2007). The Children's Rights Alliance's Constitutional Amendment Case Study is an example of an advocacy evaluation.

Organisational leaders of a number of Objective 2 grantees expressed interest in learning how to commission programme and/or advocacy evaluations because they believe the results of such evaluations would put them in a strong position within the sector, help raise awareness of issues and lend integrity to their work. For a variety of reasons, however, some grantees do not believe they can conduct such evaluations. The reasons primarily include funding limitations and the belief that rigorous evaluation designs do not appropriately match the activities and services of advocacy grantees. While it is true that rigorous evaluation designs used for a programme evaluation may not be appropriate for an advocacy evaluation, there are mixed-method evaluation designs that can provide rigorous evaluations of advocacy capacity and progress toward policy goals.

Goal 2: Develop the Voice and Leadership Capacity of Communities, Families, and Children and Young People

Objective 2 grantees have developed strategies and models for developing participation and leadership skills among communities, families, and children and young people, the performance indicator for goal 2. In particular, grantees have developed models for engaging youth and young adults in developing advocacy skills by developing their own campaigns, providing opportunities to build advocacy and basic skills, and offering apprenticeship opportunities. For most grantees, these strategies are in the early stages of implementation, testing and refinement. Therefore, the Mathematica team rated goal 2 as **Emerging**.

- **Youth involvement is prevalent in Objective 2 grantees' work.**

Youth involvement is critical for the success of Objective 2 grantees, as young people can provide a unique, often first-hand, perspective of children's needs. Such perspective can help grantees shape their future direction, sharpen their advocacy focus and refine the social services and advocacy training activities they provide. Many Objective 2 grantees recognise the importance of giving youth a voice in their organisations; it can encourage youth to articulate their beliefs in a supportive environment, advocate for their rights to a larger audience and provide an outlet for positive involvement in their local community. Additionally, most grantees involve young people in an advisory capacity, such as by having them participate in director boards and youth committees or review promotional materials and website content targeting young people. Young people, therefore, participate in Objective 2 grantees' programme and service development in many ways.

Creativity and Ideas of Youth

"There are young people out there who have great ideas for the country and for social change based on their own experiences... When you're in that age group ... there [are] a lot less... barriers to your thinking. ... I think there is huge potential when you have people who are ... so energetic and creative and have these ideas, and you want to try them."

— Grantee

Grantees with articulated goals to involve young people or target youth involvement have been successful in developing models of youth engagement and encouraging young people to serve as volunteers or participate in the organisation's services. These grantees enthusiastically support the creativity of young people and are excited to help them explore the ways they can positively impact their community. Particularly for young people who are no longer in formal education and do not have full-time work, active participation in programmes such as Youth Action's youth worker apprenticeship programme, can lead to a sense of purpose and positive engagement experiences with other youth, community leaders and policymakers (see Box III.1 for a description of this initiative).

Grantees have also found that young people can be particularly effective advocates with government officials. With training and support, young people can clearly articulate their concerns, share personal testimonials and provide a face to the issue they are discussing. Government officials are also generally more willing to meet with young people than with programme executives of advocacy organisations. Some grantees believe this is the case because young people are considered "low threat." That is, government officials believe that they will talk only about the issue and are advocating simply to help other young people; adult advocates can be self-serving in advocating simultaneously for the needs of youth and the needs of their organisation and associated programmes.

Youth Impact on Policymakers

"I was at a dinner with one of the politicians a month [after one of our youth-led programmes], and his reference point for young people was that event. He kept saying, 'Young people ... said this and that.'"

— Grantee

Grantees find that young people are eager to engage in policy advocacy once they are given training in advocacy and leadership skills. Such skills empower young people to promote their cause and articulate the change they wish to see. One grantee, Public Achievement, supports a programme called *Where Is My Public Servant?* (WIMPS). Through this programme, young people create multimedia messages on topics they are passionate about (such as providing homeless shelters, improving transportation and supporting school-to-work transitions). WIMPS provides the training and resources to help young people share their thoughts, talk with both local and national politicians and start campaigns to advocate for change. Another grantee pointed to an example of a youth project where one youth was passionate about providing access to education for young people in foster care from disadvantaged backgrounds. This person is running an advocacy campaign to raise awareness about foster care and access to education. His message is that young people, regardless of their background, can do well, but they must be provided with the opportunities that come from access to education. He is currently talking with different education and rights groups for support and engaging government officials to discuss policy change.

Empowering Youth

"This is about empowering [youth] and helping them be in a space they want to be in and speak for themselves or other groups that haven't got a voice."

— Grantee

"This isn't about 100% success. It's actually about building an environment where people can try [ideas], and then for those ideas that really do have potential, they can take off.... I think that you can build a lot of confidence and skills."

— Grantee

III. OBJECTIVE 2: ADVANCE CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

Box III.1. Example of Youth Involvement in Objective 2 Grantees' Work

Youth Action is a youth apprenticeship and community leadership programme targeting young people ages 14 to 25. The organisation seeks to involve youth in non-formal education programmes that are designed to maximise their skills and qualifications for professional work and community involvement. Youth Action particularly targets young people who are from disadvantaged communities that might not otherwise have the opportunity to develop such skills.

Through this programme, young people work in their local communities to deliver needed services. They learn how to identify a need in the community, plan a programme, deliver the programme and evaluate it. To prepare for this work, young people participate in a number of training sessions covering topics such as adolescent development, research techniques, ethics of research and group work.

When provided with the right training and engagement opportunities, young people can learn how to advocate for themselves and other young people. Youth Action encourages its participants to engage in such advocacy. One advocacy model, called "Let's Talk", encourages young people to work together and come up with themes and questions of particular concern to them in their local area (e.g. transportation or education). Youth Action apprentices then to coordinate a panel of politicians to respond to their questions in the format of a television programme. After participating in these events, they are encouraged by the sense that they can engage with politicians and try to change things for themselves and other young people, leading to an increased interest in civic engagement.

Goal 3: Support Key Campaigns

Through its grant to Children's Right Alliance and Stand Up for Children, AP has supported advocacy for the advancement of children's rights in Ireland that are in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. A referendum to enshrine children's rights in the Constitution is planned for 2012 in ROI, and, at the time of data collection, grantees felt the prospects were strong for its passage. Passage of the referendum has the potential to make significant changes to children and services, the performance indicator for goal 3. Therefore, the Mathematica team rated goal 3 at **Progressing**.

- **AP funding has supported a key campaign for children's rights.**

Although the UN Convention was ratified in ROI in 1992, a positive vote on the referendum to enshrine children's rights in the Constitution would mean that children's rights are protected in the Irish Constitution and by the Irish courts, rather than only recognised through the National Children's Strategy. Through supporting organisations such as the Children's Rights Alliance, Stand Up for Children and Barnardos, the CY programme has supported efforts to encourage citizens to support children's rights. The Children's Rights Alliance, for example, has advocated for the referendum through policy papers, briefings and extensive media coverage, and has conducted extensive outreach to their membership to encourage support for holding the referendum. Additionally, Stand Up for Children works with a range of sectors to build broad-based understanding and support about children's rights. This group engages in a wide range of advocacy strategies, including providing public education about children's rights issues, garnering grassroots support and encouraging government officials to develop and support policies that protect children's rights.

C. Barriers and Hurdles That Could Impede Progress

Opportunities exist for promoting advocacy of children's rights in ROI and NI, but a number of barriers could impede progress for each of the target objectives. The section reports potential barriers identified by the research team, organised by goal.

Goal 1: Build Core Advocacy Capacity

- **Government views some advocacy organisations as self-serving, without an appreciation for government's constraints.** During interviews, some government officials in ROI and NI equated lobbying to advocacy and expressed concern that advocacy organisations not only advocate for young people and provide youth services, but also advocate for funding for their organisations. These respondents viewed such organisations as self-serving and believe they should not have influence over government programmes and policies. It is important, however, to note the distinctions between advocacy and lobbying. Advocacy, unlike lobbying, is focused on a topic (e.g. prevention and early intervention or children's rights) and does not support a specific piece of legislation or particular candidate. Advocacy is focused on educating and informing government officials and influencing the policy debate through such activities.

  Additionally, some government officials feel that advocacy organisations do not give due credit to existing services and policies that are serving and advocating for children's needs. These officials also feel that advocacy organisations do not acknowledge the existing structural and economic constraints within which government departments and agencies must operate.

Advocacy and Policy

"Many of these organisations are influential in ways that were never intended ... and without having any regard to what the [government] provision was already for that [policy].... It is for the representatives of government to determine what the policy should be. Anybody else can lobby for it. But there is a wide gap between making policy and lobbying for it... and this is appropriate."

— Policymaker

- **Duplication in advocacy work generates wasteful competition among organisations.** Duplication leads to (1) more organisations providing the same or similar advocacy campaigns and initiatives, (2) funders' limited resources being spread across a number of organisations, and (3) increased

competition among organisations. Increased competition can discourage collaboration among service providers and advocacy organisations for the overall good of children's rights and services; instead, organisations are focused on their own survival and sustainability.

- **Sources for funding for advocacy work are limited.** Many Objective 2 grantees find it difficult to conduct fundraising campaigns and attract sufficient financial support when they do not provide social services, but rather advocate for rights or social services on behalf of young people.

> **Funding Strategic Work**
>
> "If you're funding a children's hospice, ... in terms of the benefit for those children, it's just immediate and you just can't argue with it. But [our work] is much longer term, it's much more strategic. Ultimately, it should improve the lives of all children and young people and sustain that improvement. But ... sometimes it's harder to see [outcomes] if funders ... are looking for a quick return."
>
> — Grantee

- **Private funding is preferred over government funding, but it comes with challenges.** Private funding is the most logical support base for advocacy grantees; such grantees might need to openly criticise government programmes and policies, and private funders can provide advocacy organisations with the latitude to think independently, innovate and comment on government policies. However, grantees indicated that some private funders, other than AP, like to point to particular outputs or outcomes that occurred as a result of their funding, and as a condition of providing future funding. Advocacy organisations struggle to provide this information. Additionally, grantees find that most funders prefer to support a particular activity or service rather than general advocacy or strategic work. Grantees, then, may not have the flexibility they need to change a funded activity to better keep pace with children and youth's needs and concerns if the change conflicts with the intent of the funding to support the activity; conditions of funding usually require that they provide the funded service. The One Foundation and AP are unique as funders in that they support core capacity building and encourage grantees to innovate and constructively criticise convention.

- **Grantees advocate on behalf of disadvantaged populations that are perceived negatively by the general public.** There is often little popular support for some marginalised populations with high levels of need (for example, youth in the care of justice departments for committing crimes). Objective 2 grantees strive to represent these populations at a national level and advocate for the services and supports they need. However, without popular backing, grantees find such advocacy difficult, because politicians and policymakers are concerned primarily about their constituents' priorities. Without popular support, grantees worry that these disadvantaged populations will see a reduction in services as policymakers and politicians favour the services desired by their more vocal constituents.

- Grantees are vulnerable to anticipated across-the-board budget cuts to government departments and agencies.

For Objective 2 grantees that currently receive government funding to provide social services, the current economic environment indicates that government departments and agencies will not be able to continue support services at current levels, and funding will likely decrease in coming years. An overall decrease in funding could jeopardise the stability and sustainability of some grantees and thus negatively impact advocate capacity.

- **Political priorities are constantly in flux. Grantees find it difficult to determine which advocacy initiatives government might support because of changing political priorities.** In NI, for example, funding decisions rest with the executive and ministers, and can change with elections and ministerial preferences. As a result, stakeholders feel that the best-connected organisations, rather than the most effective ones, receive funds.

Goal 2: Develop the Voice and Leadership Capacity of Communities, Families, and Children and Young People

- **Some grantees struggled to engage young people in meaningful ways.** Some Objective 2 grantees reported that young people often viewed participation on advisory boards as uninteresting or intimidating, and providing feedback on promotional materials and website content and design did not promote their continued engagement. These grantees conceded that they do not know how best to involve youth in moving forward. One grantee noted that young people are often consulted for their opinions—through surveys, focus groups and one-on-one discussions—by a number of organisations, but little is done to demonstrate how their concerns are actually addressed beyond the consultation process. That is, while young people are asked to provide input, they are rarely included in the process of determining how to address concerns and positively change services or advocacy efforts in response.

Goal 3: Support Key Campaigns

At this time, there are no apparent hurdles to supporting key campaigns that have the potential to make significant changes to children's rights and services. Numerous organisations are working together to campaign for a positive outcome for the referendum in ROI, but it is pre-mature to speculate on the outcome of that work.

D. Potential Next Steps

With support from AP, each Objective 2 grantee is developing, or has developed, a strategic plan to guide their organisation's development and sustainability. While these strategic plans will reflect the unique concerns and needs of the organisations, there are some overarching next steps that the CY programme could consider to better meet its target outcomes. This section suggests several potential next steps that AP could take in working with Objective 2 grantees to support the advancement of children's rights, organised by goal.

Goal 1: Build Core Advocacy Capacity

- Determine Sustainability Goals for the Grantees Funded Under this Objective and Provide Resources to Achieve Those Goals.[8]

III. OBJECTIVE 2: ADVANCE CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

AP should consider what advocacy capacities, for individual organisations and the sector as a whole, are critical to ensure an effective advocacy sector to protect children's rights into the future. Once these capacities are identified, AP can use them as the basis for creating sustainability goals for Objective 2, giving particular consideration to the capacities that need to be developed and sustained within the sector. AP could then consider the resources and supports that may be needed to ensure the sustainability of these capacities into the future. Potential sustainability strategies include:

- **Consider consolidation to limit duplication and promote consistent messaging.**

To avoid duplication in the field of children's rights advocacy, and to develop a cohesive message focused on both prevention and early intervention, and supporting children's rights, AP could consider promoting the consolidation of grantee organisations. Although this suggested effort is currently articulated by AP as a strategy for Objective 2, much work remains to be done in this area, and is an important consideration for moving forward with sustainability efforts. Some grantees could combine with similar advocacy organisations to achieve desired results, or combine portions of their work with the work of another organisation to pool resources and expertise. Alternatively, grantees that conduct only advocacy activities could combine with service providers to better incorporate the language of children's rights advocacy into the overall mission and objective of providing prevention and early intervention services to children, youth and their families. Any such consolidation activities would require AP involvement in discussions with other stakeholders. Collaboration among funders and other stakeholders may lead to a better understanding of the depth and breadth of services funded across departments, agencies and foundations in each county and country.

> **Discussing Services**
>
> "And one thing AP has, because they're funding different people, is a helicopter view, and it's important that they share that view and bring the necessary people together, who need to be brought together within that [constant dialogue and conversation about services]."
>
> — Grantee

- **Provide grantees with resources and supports to conduct fundraising campaigns that involve identifying potential funders and/or creating new revenue streams.**

While one grantee is beginning to see success in reaching out to new potential funders, such as business leaders and corporations, many grantees are looking to AP to provide additional support and guidance. AP could consider providing professional development and training programmes aimed at helping organisations conduct successful fundraising campaigns. AP can also provide organisations with suggestions of other funders, both local and international, that might be supportive of the grantees' work. Providing grantees with fundraising resources can help increase their organisational capacity and promote sustainability, if such fundraising campaigns are effective.

- **Provide Resources Aimed at Improving Grantees' Organisational Capacity for Advocacy.**

To remain competitive in an increasingly challenging funding environment, and to improve their ability to protect children's rights, Objective 2 grantees need to improve their organisational capacities for advocacy. The One Foundation is currently funding capacity building for a number of its grantees, some of which are also funded by AP, in areas such as using data to support decision-making, actively engaging young people and participating in advocacy networks. AP could consider working with the One Foundation to provide guidance and support to help grantees develop their advocacy capacities.

- **Identify specific organisational and advocacy capacities necessary to build and sustain a strong advocacy sector.**

AP could commission a literature review of existing advocacy evaluations to determine core capacities that are necessary, both within an organisation and the sector as a whole, to ensure sustainability of a strong advocacy presence across the island of Ireland. Such core capacities may include assessing needs within a population, developing coalitions and strategic alliances, implementing successful advocacy campaigns, garnering popular support for a cause, conducting policy analysis and generating resources from diverse sources to sustain efforts. AP could then use this information to assess the performance of Objective 2 grantees and better articulate sustainability goals, and strategies for achieving these goals, for Objective 2.

- **Provide opportunities for engagement in national and international advocacy networks.**

Objective 2 grantees would benefit from linking more closely with other advocacy-focused organisations in ROI, NI, the UK and other countries around the world. Creating strong, supportive networks enable grantees to share experiences and resources through meetings and conferences, think and act creatively in their approaches to addressing children's rights issues, and develop technical support structures. Many grantees are looking to AP to provide these connections; they view AP as a globally-connected organisation that would have access to such resources and like-minded organisations and would be well positioned to facilitate such connections. Although Objective 2 grantees have been afforded the opportunity to participate in the NI and ROI grantee networks, a number of Objective 2 grantees indicated they were not getting much from their limited participation in these networks because the networks focused heavily on evidence related to promoting prevention and early intervention, not advancing children's rights. Objective 2 grantees do not yet have a rigorous evidence base to support their advocacy work and felt the networks were not meeting their needs to collaborate with similar organisations and experts.

- **Collaborate with other stakeholders to provide organisational capacity resources.**

Other organisations, such as CES and the One Foundation, have developed resources to help grantees build their organisational capacity. AP could work with these and other organisations to provide resources for grantees, as improved organisational capacities can better enable grantees advocate for children's rights. Resources could include workshops, seminars and working

documents. Topics could include conducting self-evaluations, using data to make organisational decisions, leadership, financial systems, management information systems and marketing.

- **Invest in rigorous evaluations of programme services.**

In a competitive funding environment, Objective 2 grantees that provide social services and training in advocacy may be at a disadvantage because they lack an evidence base to support their work. AP could support rigorous programme evaluations for these grantees, much as they did for Objective 1 grantees.

- **Invest in evaluations of advocacy methods.**

Advocacy evaluations can help grantees better determine the effectiveness of their advocacy strategies and improve their capacity in ways that research shows can lead to effective campaigns. Evaluations could examine grantees' coalition building and strategic alliances, grassroots support, campaign implementation, the design and implementation of media and communication strategies, and their ability to generate resources from diverse sources to sustain efforts.

- **If they are to conduct or commission advocacy evaluations, Objective 2 grantees would benefit from better understanding the field of advocacy evaluation and should therefore consider the work of another AP-funded organisation, the US-based Center for Evaluation Innovation.**

The Center does a significant amount of advocacy evaluation work, including conducting original research, providing trainings on advocacy evaluation, and convening experts to discuss changes and challenges in the field of advocacy evaluation. AP should continue to share the Center's resources with Objective 2 grantees and encourage them to reach out to the Center to learn more about how to evaluate their own advocacy methods.

- **Grantees that commission or conduct advocacy evaluations could also benefit from an expert advisory committee.**

These committees, which were generally well received by Objective 1 grantees, provide an opportunity for grantees to have mentors throughout the evaluation process and learn about international considerations that come from varied expertise in the fields of evaluation and advocacy.

Goal 2: Develop the Voice and Leadership Capacity of Communities, Families, and Children and Young People

- **Encourage grantees to share ideas for actively engaging youth in programme design, development and activities.**

Youth participation is a key element for youth advocacy organisations, and engaging young people in meaningful ways can help support the sustainability of the organisation. A number of Objective 2 grantees are involving young people in creative ways that encourage engagement and continued participation (for example, Youth Action has a community leadership programme that trains young people to become effective leaders and advocates). AP could provide opportunities for grantees who are successfully engaging young people in a variety of capacities to educate and assist those grantees who could improve in this area, as well as encourage grantees to use networks and reach out to international youth advocacy organisations to learn new practices.

- **Provide resources to help grantees craft clear messages that are customised to each government department or agency.**

Clear, customised messages demonstrate that grantees have invested in working closely with the department or agency. These messages can also help grantees counter criticism from government officials that advocacy organisations do not understand the constraints within which government must operate, and articulate how their services and efforts relate to the needs and goals of the department or agency. AP could provide opportunities for grantees to connect with organisations that are skilled in message development and could assist with this process.

- **Provide action-oriented, solutions-oriented advocacy recommendations.**

Objective 2 grantees, as advocates for children's rights, should criticise government programmes and policies that do not support children and youth. However, criticism of government policies and programmes alone does not encourage positive change. AP can provide financial resources and connections to organisations that can help grantees develop solutions that are action-oriented, within government resources, and support government-articulated goals. In this way, grantees could serve as a critical friend with positive solutions and can better position themselves to develop long-term, lasting relationships with government officials and civil servants.

Goal 3: Support Key Campaigns

- **Collaborate with other child-focused organisations.**

To effectively campaign for changes in government policy or the constitution, organisations dedicated to serving children and advocating for children's rights could work together. While some organisations that primarily provide services for children and their families might not feel comfortable actively engaging in advocacy, they could provide educational materials to their membership and key supporters on behalf of the children's campaigns they support. Utilising the networks of multiple like-minded organisations can support the progress of campaigns.

[8] *Since the data were collected for this report in autumn 2011, the AP CY programme has refined its strategic plan. Part of the strategic plan includes shifting the designation of funding for some of the Objective 2 grantees that provide social services to Objective 1.*

IV. CROSS–CUTTING THEMES

This chapter highlights major themes from the CY programme evaluation that span the full range of its activities in ROI and NI. Because the CY programme has a broader grant portfolio and a longer history of grantmaking in Objective 1, many of the themes have emerged most strongly from AP's prevention and early intervention agenda. Nevertheless, all the themes are applicable to Objective 2 activities and investments as well. Indeed, lessons learned from investments in Objective 1 can be used to strengthen activities in Objective 2. These themes also take into account the views of all stakeholders, including grantees, government officials and foundation staff.

A. Stakeholders Across Sectors Are Increasingly Attuned to the Value of Evidence from Evaluation and Research

Promoting the use of evaluation evidence has been at the centre of CY programme efforts to improve services for children and youth. Since the 2008 evaluation, stakeholders in all sectors have become much more familiar with international evidence about the effectiveness of prevention and early intervention programmes. In particular, a number of policymakers and politicians have identified a move toward evidence-based prevention as a policy priority and speak regularly about the importance of using evidence to reform services. Exposure to experts from Scotland and elsewhere in the UK has been helpful in this regard, especially in NI. For AP grantees, participation in rigorous evaluation has stimulated organisational change and growth, and motivated grantees to put evaluation evidence at the centre of programme development and ongoing efforts to monitor and improve existing services. As many evaluations reach their conclusion and more results become available in the coming year, grantees are poised to disseminate findings and share what they learned about replicating evidence-based programmes in a larger scale-up effort.

Although rigorous evaluation has not been as central a component to Objective 2 activities, lessons about the potential transformative power of research evidence could be applied to strengthen work in that area. Greater emphasis could be placed on developing a thorough description of need among specific target populations through epidemiological studies and needs assessment, and subsequent use of that information in advocacy efforts. AP could also fund rigorous evaluation of Objective 2 activities that build the capacity of youth—such as apprenticeships and other initiatives to develop their advocacy and communication skills. Besides facilitating youth advocacy campaigns, these initiatives may have other important benefits for young people (especially those not in work or school) such as increased access to third-level education and employment opportunities.

B. Stakeholders Agree on the Importance of Assessing the Fit of Services with Local Needs, Context and Target Populations

During interviews, both policymakers and AP grantees stressed the importance of fitting prevention strategies to local needs, community priorities and values, and the local service delivery system. Statutory sector interview participants voiced widely-held concerns that adoption of propriety evidence-based programmes developed in other contexts would not fit with local service delivery systems and thus not produce results in the island of Ireland. AP grantees, based on their experience in the CY programme, stressed the importance of collecting and analysing data on local needs

as the starting point for any effort to plan or redesign services. Furthermore, they stressed the need to involve community stakeholders in those efforts to ensure fit with community priorities and values.

The CY programme is well equipped to address all these issues. Grantees have experience with planning and conducting needs assessments, engaging community stakeholders in planning processes for service redesign and selection of interventions, and adapting international models for an Irish context. As results of relevant evaluations become available, AP and its partners can communicate the value of assessing fit of interventions with the needs and values of communities where they will be implemented and share their expertise about how to do so.

Some Objective 2 grantees have also focused on assessing the fit of their strategies to particular advocacy issues, but Objective 2 grantees might benefit from more focus in this area. While some youth advocacy grantees have identified meaningful and interesting roles for youth to play in campaigns, others have struggled to create roles tailored to the interests and strengths of youth. Other interview participants discussed the importance of tailoring advocacy campaigns to the specific government department they seek to influence, as well as the current context of limited resources and other constraints on government. Interview participants suggested that action-oriented solutions that take context into account could increase effectiveness.

C. Applying Tools from Implementation Science Will Be Critical for Future Work as Stakeholders Consider Options for Mainstreaming, Replicating and Scaling-Up Evidence-Based Approaches

As evaluation results are released in the coming year and as government service redesign initiatives move forward, the policy discussion is likely to shift from a focus on evidence about "what works" to a discussion of how to make prevention approaches work on a larger scale in the Irish and Northern Irish social services delivery systems. In this context, implementation science will take on increasing importance. Expertise and tools to support replication in an Irish context, mainstreaming into the statutory sector, and scale-up will be essential to achieving real gains for children and families.

A range of efforts are underway to bring these tools to bear and make them broadly available. Objective 1 grantees are manualising programmes and creating training curricula, fidelity standards and other tools to support replication. In addition, CES has launched a cross-sector, all-island implementation science learning initiative. Expertise developed among CY programme grantees can be harnessed to provide additional hands-on support if government decides to mainstream evidence-based prevention programmes.

Objective 2 grantees that provide services directly to youth can also benefit from applying tools from implementation science to their own work. If AP decides to fund effectiveness evaluations of these initiatives, they should be manualised to support future replication.

D. Stakeholders Across Sectors Recognise the Necessity of Partnering, Networking and Collaborating to Move the Prevention Agenda Forward

During interviews, virtually all participants stressed the importance of coordinating across sectors to promote the adoption of evidence-based prevention and early intervention approaches. Indeed, a number of coordination efforts are under way, including DIPEI, the grantee networks in each country, and numerous CES initiatives that bring stakeholders together from across different sectors for learning and discussion. At this stage in the process, many interview participants stressed the need to align messages and strategies as much as feasible for clarity and maximum impact. Interview participants from government also recommended that AP work more closely with government departments in its future funding efforts rather than fund services and activities that operate in parallel with the statutory sector.

Objective 2 grantees have been invited to join the grantee networks in each country, and many have done so. However, while relevant to their work, the agenda is focused much more on issues of concern for Objective 1 grantees, such as evaluation launches, advocating for adoption of programmes, preparing for replication and the like. As a result, participation in grantee networks may not be as useful for Objective 2 grantees. They may benefit more from exposure to other advocacy networks and partners within other AP programme areas (for example, human rights) and internationally. Although they have received expert advice on evaluation issues, Objective 2 grantees have not been as engaged as Objective 1 grantees with EACs and other processes that facilitate ongoing consultation with international experts who could provide guidance and support for their work and development.

E. Sustainability Goals and Strategies Will Take on Increasing Importance in the Next Phase of the Work

As AP moves toward making its final round of investments in 2016, goals and strategies for sustaining the achievements of the CY programme will take on increasing importance. To prepare for the final five years of grantmaking, it may be useful for AP to make strategic decisions about what aspects of the Objective 1 portfolio it most wants to sustain and the strategies and resources needed to do so. Most interview participants acknowledged that, in light of the current economic climate, it is unlikely that all programmes funded under Objective 1 can be sustained after AP funding ends. AP should consider the relative importance of working to mainstream prevention programmes into statutory services versus sustaining all or a subset of funded organisations. In addition, AP should consider the infrastructure needed to sustain the focus on prevention and the local expertise needed to continue using evaluation evidence for service design and ongoing programme improvement. For Objective 2, AP should consider which advocacy capacities and organisations are critical to ensuring a strong advocacy sector to protect children's rights into the future.

In addition to strategic decisions, supports and resources are likely needed to prepare for sustainability. Together, AP and the One Foundation, which will spend down its funds by 2013, make up roughly 85 percent of philanthropic giving in ROI. Organisations that rely on these two foundations for funding will need support over the next five years to develop new sources of support in the corporate sector, government and from private donors if they are to be sustained. Organisations may also need capacity-building support to develop their fundraising capabilities and, in some cases, to redesign their organisations to fit a more limited resource base.

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APPENDIX A
OBJECTIVE 1 GRANTEES

(FOR FUNDING PERIODS ENDING AFTER OCTOBER 2009)

Table A.1. Objective 1 Grantees (for Funding Periods Ending After October 2009)

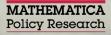| Programme Service Name	Service Type	Setting for Programme Delivery Key Activities	Developmental Stage Target of the Intervention[a]	Funding Period	Anticipated Evaluation Completion Date
Northern Ireland					
Barnardos, Northern Ireland PATHS (formerly Together 4 All Limited[c])	Social Emotional Intervention	In-School Mentoring programmes focused on supporting children's social, emotional and pro-social development	Primary School Child, ages 6 to 12 in Primary 1 through Primary 7	January 2008 – June 2014	April 2012
Ready to Learn	Literacy Support	After-school Supporting literacy	Primary School Child	September 2007 – September 2013	October 2013
BELONG (South Tyrone Empowerment Programme) Step Belong	Social Emotional Intervention	In-school, Centre-based Supporting children's social, emotional, and pro-social development	Primary School Youth Child	January 2009 – November 2012	March 2013
Brook Belfast Sexual Health Clinics in Belfast and Coleraine	Other	Centre-based Health clinics offering services intended to improve sexual health, sexual relationships, and increase awareness of sexual health and relationships	Youth Young Adults Child	January 2005 – September 2014	December 2013
Business in the Community Time to Read (Trial 2)	Literacy Support	In-school Mentoring programmes focused on supporting literacy	Primary School Child, ages 8 and 9	January 2006 – August 2010	Completed (September 2011)
Time to Read (Trial 1)					Completed (May 2009)
Early Years (The Organisation for Young Children)[b] Media Initiative for Children: Respecting Differences Programme	Social Emotional Intervention	In-school, Centre-based Training programme focused on supporting children's social, emotional and pro-social development	Early Years Child, ages 3 and 4	March 2006 – March 2012	Completed (October 2010)
Eager and Able to Learn	Early Childhood Care and Education	Centre-based Comprehensive early care and education programmes	Early Years Child, ages 2 and 3		Summer 2012
Lifestart Foundation Ltd. Lifestart Parenting Programme	Early Intervention Home Visitation	Home Parent-directed, child-centred	Early Years Child, age birth to 5	December 2007 – June 2012	December 2014
Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister Peace Building at Interfaces	Other	Community-based Community engagement programme	Youth Young Adult Adult Community	September 2010 – July 2014	December 2015
Parents Advice Centre (PAC) Advocacy and Parenting Teens Programme	Parenting	Centre-based Parenting programmes focused on supporting children's social, emotional and pro-social development	Youth Parent	January 2007 – June 2012	December 2014
The Queen's University of Belfast Foundation Improving Children's Lives: An Interdisciplinary Research Initiative at Queen's University Belfast	Other	n.a.	Early Years Primary School Youth Child	April 2008 – March 2013	n.a.
UNA (formerly Joint Learning Initiative on Children and Ethnic Diversity)	Other	n.a. Research initiative designed to explore the impact of early childhood programmes on the reduction of ethnic divisions and conflict	Early Years Community	January 2008 – March 2013	Completed (February 2012)
Suffolk Lenadoon Interface Group (Area-Based Peace Building) Area-Based Peace Building in Suffolk and Lenadoon	Other	Centre-based Community engagement programme	Primary School Youth Young Adult Adult Community	July 2009 – June 2012	June 2012

Programme Service Name	Service Type	Setting for Programme Delivery Key Activities	Developmental Stage Target of the Intervention[a]	Funding Period	Anticipated Evaluation Completion Date
Republic of Ireland					
Archways (Clondalkin Behavioral Initiative Ltd. T/A) Incredible Years – Parenting	Parenting	**Community-based** Parenting programmes focused on supporting children's social, emotional, and pro-social development	**Primary School** Parent	January 2007 – December 2013	Completed (August 2009)
Incredible Years – Classroom Management	Classroom Management	**In-school** Teacher training and support programme	**Primary School** Teacher		Completed (May 2010)
Incredible Years – For Children Experiencing Hyperkinetic Disorder (ADHD)	Parenting Child Training	**Community-based** Parent and child training and support programme for children with ADHD	**Early Years** Parent Child		May 2012
Ballymun Partnership (Youngballymun)[c] Ready, Steady, Grow	Early Intervention Home Visitation	**Home,** Centre-based Ante- and post-natal support service	**Early Years** Child, Neonatal to age 3		May 2013
Incredible Years – Parenting	Parenting	**Community-based** Parenting programmes focused on supporting children's social, emotional and pro-social development	**Primary School** Parent		April 2012
Incredible Years – Classroom Management	Classroom Management & Classroom Dina	**In-school** Teacher and child training and support programme	**Primary School** **Teacher** Child		April 2012
3, 4, 5 Learning Years	Early Childhood Care and Education	**Centre-based** Supporting quality practice in early care and education programmes	**Early Years** **Managers** Staff	January 2005 – April 2013	May 2012
Write Minded	Literacy Support	**In-school** Whole school literacy strategy	**Primary School** **Youth** Child		April 2012
Literacivic	Other	**Community-based** Promotion of creativity, communications and awareness-raising for civic literacy	**Youth** **Young Adult** **Adult** Community		July 2012
Jigsaw	Adolescent Mental Health	**Community-based** Adolescent mental health and awareness services for youth	**Youth** **Young Adult** Child, ages 12 to 25		May 2012
Barnardos, Ireland[d] Friendship Group	Social Emotional Intervention	**Centre-based** Supporting children's social, emotional and pro-social development	**Primary School** Child, ages 8 and 9 with peer relationships and social skills difficulties	January 2005 – December 2013	May 2013
Partnership with Parents	Parenting	**Community-based** Supporting children with complex needs	**Early Years** **Primary School** **Youth** Parent		June 2013
Tús Maith	Early Childhood Care and Education	**Centre-based** Comprehensive early care and education programme	**Early Years** Child, ages 3 to 5		June 2013
Wizards of Words	Literacy Support	**In-school** Supporting literacy	**Primary School** Child, ages 6 and 7 with reading skills one year below		March 2013
Clondalkin Partnership Functional Family Therapy	Social Emotional Intervention	**Community-based** Supporting children's social, emotional and pro-social development	**Youth** Child	June 2005 – July 2011	March 2013

Programme Service Name	Service Type	Setting for Programme Delivery Key Activities	Developmental Stage Target of the Intervention[a]	Funding Period	Anticipated Evaluation Completion Date
Foróige Big Brothers Big Sisters Ireland – Community Evaluation	Mentoring Programmes	**Community-based** Mentoring programme		January 2007 – December 2011	Completed (September 2011)
Big Brothers Big Sisters Ireland – Schools Evaluation		**In-school** Mentoring programme	**Primary School Youth** Child, ages 10 to 18		Completed (September 2011)
Volunteer-led Youth Clubs (Best Practices Unit)	Other	**Centre-based** Youth development programme			Completed (November 2011)
Youth Citizenship Programme (Best Practices Unit)	Other	**Centre-based** Community engagement programme			Completed (December 2011)
Headstrong Jigsaw	Adolescent mental Health	**Community-based** Develop national model for adolescent mental health and awareness services	**Youth Young Adult** Child, ages 12 to 25	December 2009 – November 2012	n.a.
Inspire Ireland Foundation Reachout.com in Ireland	Adolescent mental Health	**Online** Adolescent mental health and awareness services	**Youth Young Adult** Child, ages 12 to 25	December 2009 – November 2012	n.a.
Longford & Westmeath Parenting Partnership Triple P Parenting Programme	Parenting	**Community-based** Supporting children's social, emotional and pro-social development	**Early Years Primary School Youth** Parent	January 2010 – December 2012	September 2013
Northside Partnership[c] Preparing for Life	Early Intervention Home Visitation	**Home** Home visitation programme that includes Triple P Parenting Programme	**Early Years** Child, Neonatal to age 5	January 2006 – December 2011	April 2016
Community-wide Quality Enhancement Initiative National Early Years Access Initiative	Other	**Centre-based** Promoting improved access to quality early years services	**Early Years** Child Practitioners	December 2009 – November 2013	June 2013
Rialto Development Association (formerly Fatima Regeneration Board) Rialto Learning Community Evaluation	Literacy Support	**In-school, After-school** Supporting literacy	**Primary School Youth** Child, ages 11 to 14	July 2006 – September 2012	December 2012
Society of St. Vincent De Paul Mayo Consortium Children's Initiative	Other	**In-school, Community-based** Intervention for children experiencing domestic violence and negative family conflict	**Primary School Youth** Child, ages 8 to 17	April 2005 – March 2013	March 2012
Tallaght West Childhood Development Initiative (CDI)[c] Early Childhood Care and Education	Early Childhood Care and Education	**Centre-based** Comprehensive early care and education programme with outreach to parents and speech and language therapy components	**Early Years** Child, ages 3 and 4		May 2012
Doodle Den	Literacy Support	**After-school** Supporting literacy	**Primary School** Child, ages 5 and 6		April 2012
Mate Tricks	Social Emotional Intervention	**After-school** Mentoring programmes focused on supporting children's social, emotional and pro-social development	**Primary School** Child, ages 9 and 10	January 2007 – December 2011	May 2012
Healthy Schools Programme	Other	**In-school** Programme designed to integrate health and schools	**Primary School** Child, junior and senior		Completed (March 2012)
Community Safety Initiative	Other	**Community-based** Community engagement programme and restorative practice training	**Primary School Youth Young Adult Adult** Community		July 2012

Programme Service Name	Service Type	Setting for Programme Delivery Key Activities	Developmental Stage Target of the Intervention[a]	Funding Period	Anticipated Evaluation Completion Date
University of Limerick Foundation[d] Renewal and Regeneration across the Lifecourse in Limerick City	Other	**Community -based** Support embedding of new service delivery models across the life course	**Primary School Youth Young Adult Adult** Child	October 2009 – December 2013	n.a.
Technical Assistance and Dissemination					
Centre for Effective Services Centre for Effective Services – All Island	Other	**n.a.** Intermediary organisation connecting scientific evidence of what works to policy and practice	n.a.	January 2008 – December 2012	n.a.
Irish Youth Foundation Out of School Time Services – Republic of Ireland	Other	**After-school** Promotion of quality practice in out of school time services		October 2008 – December 2010	n.a.
National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG) University Foundation The Child & Family Research and Policy Unit and the Lifecycle Institute	Other	**n.a.** Research, education, and training in family support and youth development	n.a.	October 2006 – December 2012	n.a.
Northside Partnership[c] Grantee Network – All Island	Other	**n.a.** Supporting networking across grantees in the CY programme	n.a.	January 2010 – December 2012	n.a.
Prospectus Dissemination Initiative on Prevention and Early Intervention (DIPEI) – All Island	Other	**n.a.** Supporting networking across stakeholders in favour of prevention and early intervention based on findings and learning from investments	n.a.	September 2010 – December 2012	n.a.

No programmes have been removed from this table

[a] *Developmental stages are defined as early years (ages 0-4); primary school (ages 5-12); youth (ages 13-17); young adult (ages 18-25); and adult (ages 26 and up).*

[b] *Both an Objective 1 and Objective 2 grantee.*

[c] *Community Engagement Site (collaboration between government department and Atlantic Philanthropies).*

[d] *Grantee for both the Children and Youth Programme and the Reconciliation and Human Rights Programme and/or Ageing programme.*

n.a. = not applicable

APPENDIX B
OBJECTIVE 2 GRANTEES

Table B.1. Objective 2 Grantees

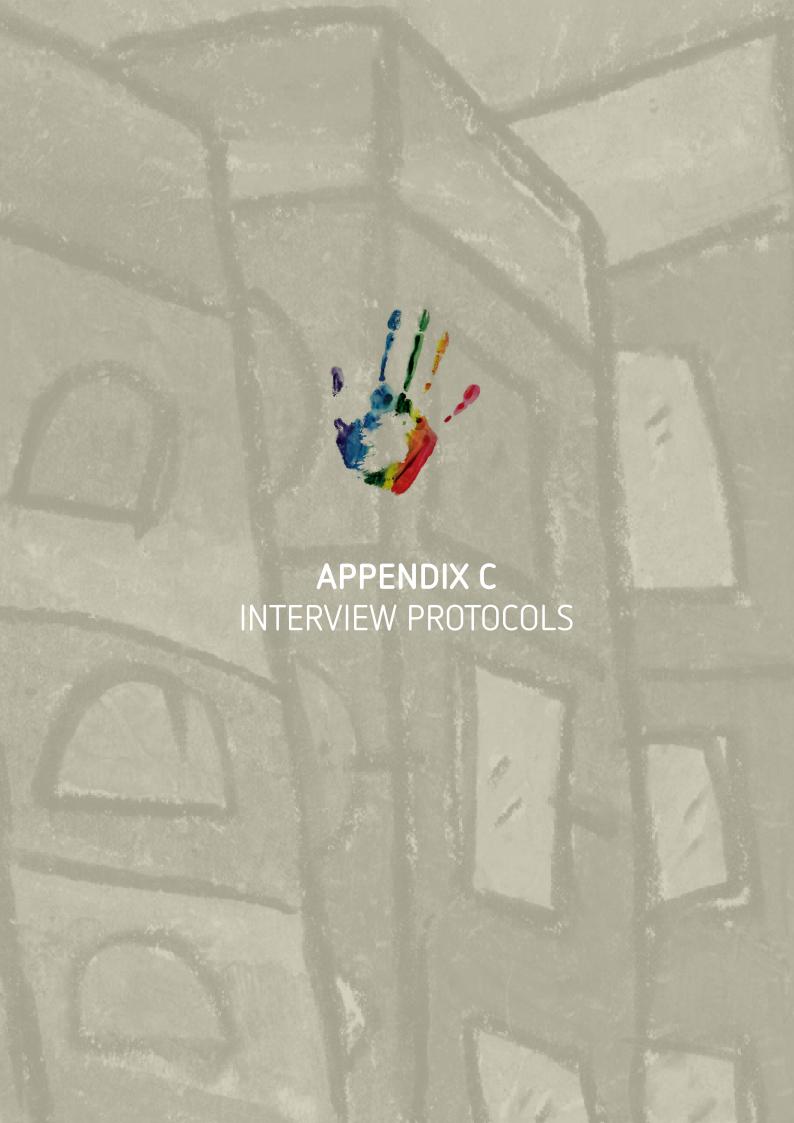| Programme Service	Service Type	Setting for Programme Delivery Key Activities	Funding Period
Northern Ireland			
Children's Law Centre	Advocacy	To promote, protect and bring to full realisation children and young people's rights by providing legal support and guidance	April 2005 – March 2014
Early Years (The Organisation for Young Children)[a]	Advocacy	To strengthen advocacy capacity by developing a branch network and member organisation	March 2006 – March 2012
Include Youth	Advocacy	To promote the rights and best interests of and best practice with young people at risk; work directly with young people to support them to be engaged with policy decision-making processes and to improve their employability	January 2010 – January 2013
National Children's Bureau (NCB)[a]	Advocacy	To enhance the outcomes of children through support to children and young people and to those who work with or for them; provide practice development; direct participation with children and young people; research and evaluation projects; dissemination activity through publications, resources, and events	July 2009 – March 2014
PlayBoard Play Advocacy Programme	Advocacy	To promote and support the importance of play in the lives of children and young people and work for appropriate policy developments	October 2009 – September 2012
Public Achievement Where Is My Public Servant (WIMPS)	Advocacy, Youth Leadership	Increasing young people's political and social engagement through the use of new media and video technology	September 2010 – August 2013
The University of Ulster Foundation	Advocacy	Provide data and analysis on the social and economic well-being of children and young people on the island of Ireland	April 2010 – September 2012
Voices of Young People in Care (VOYPIC)	Advocacy	To empower and enable children and young people with an experience of care to participate fully in decisions affecting their lives, and to improve children's life chances through working in partnership with children, young people, staff, managers, agencies and government	July 2010 – June 2014
Youth Action Northern Ireland	Advocacy, Youth Leadership	To develop leadership, civic action and youth participation among young people in the Fermanagh area by supporting a youth work apprentice programme	September 2010 – May 2012
Republic of Ireland			
Barnardos, Ireland[a]	Advocacy	To strengthen the voice of children and young people on issues affecting them by developing and demonstrating models of effective participation	January 2011 – December 2013
Children's Rights Alliance	Advocacy	A coalition of non-governmental organisations working to secure the rights and needs of children in Ireland by campaigning for the full implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child	March 2005 – March 2012
Community Creations SpunOut.ie	Advocacy, Youth Leadership	Youth-powered charity organisation working to empower young people to create personal and social change through community organising, advocacy, and public education	December 2009 – November 2012
EPIC formerly IAYPIC [Irish Association of Young People in Care]	Advocacy	An independent association that strives to give a voice to young people currently living in care or who have had an experience of living in care; explain the rights of young people in care; give information, advice, and support to young people in care; and advocate for policy and practice change	January 2009 – June 2012
Irish Penal Reform Trust[b] Advocacy of Prevention, Early Intervention and Penal Reform	Advocacy	Campaigns for rights in the penal system and the progressive reform of Irish penal policy in favour of prevention and early intervention approaches	January 2009 – December 2013
The Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Volunteer and Advocacy Network	Advocacy	To develop a national grassroots and volunteer-based advocacy platform to advocate for policy change for children and young people	December 2009 – December 2015

Programme Service	Service Type	Setting for Programme Delivery Key Activities	Funding Period
National Women's Council of Ireland Promotion of Gender Equality	Advocacy, Youth Leadership	To promote the activation of young women and young men on gender equality issues and to support a campaign that highlights the invisibility of women in public discourse in Ireland	July 2011 — June 2013
Northside Partnership	Advocacy, Youth Leadership	To support the implementation of a model of youth leadership in the Northside Partnership Area	January 2010 — December 2012
Social Entrepreneurs Ireland Youth Civic Action Initiative	Advocacy, Youth Leadership	Identify, invest in and support innovative youth leadership models	January 2011 — June 2014
Stand Up for Children Public Education Programme	Advocacy Campaign	To advance awareness, research and public understanding of children's rights in advance of a Constitutional Referendum	January 2011 — December 2011
Start Strong	Advocacy Campaign	Advocacy work focused on advancing high-quality care and education as a right for all young children in Ireland	September 2008 — December 2011

[a] *Both an Objective 1 and Objective 2 grantee.*
[b] *Grantee for both the Children and Youth Programme and the Reconciliation and Human Rights Programme.*

APPENDIX C
INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

Discussion Guide for CY Team

Organisation Information

- Since the 2008 Mathematica report, the Foundation has shifted to a country-focused organisational structure.

  - How has this changed the goals of the Children and Youth (CY) programme in Ireland and Northern Ireland?

  - Have you had more interaction with other programmes, such as aging? Please describe these interactions.

- How does a shift to a country focus possibly affect the ability to meet the 2019 goals? What gaps need to be filled?

Funding Decisions

- How do you decide which programmes to fund as the Foundation nears its last round of funding in 2016? What factors will help make these decisions?

- Since 2008, are there any instances in which a funded programme or grantee lost its funding? If so, why was this decision made?

CY Strategy

We've listed two main objectives for CY: (1) to promote prevention and early intervention; and (2) to advance children's rights. In 2008, the objectives were (1) to improve provider standards and practices; (2) to strengthen the child- and youth-serving field; and (3) to give voice to children's needs.

- Why did these objectives change?

- Please briefly describe in your own words the intent/meaning of each objective.

- Are these objectives equally relevant to Ireland and Northern Ireland?

- In your opinion, should any changes be made to the objectives? If so, what changes and why?

Now let's look at the goals under each objective, based on the 2008 evaluation framework. The goals we came up with are (1) stronger organisational capacity; (2) commitment to providing and sustaining initiatives; (3) better coordination and networking among organisations; and (4) demonstrated impact on government policy and funding.

- Are there other goals related to each objective?

- How much progress do you think can be realistically made towards these goals? Is this different for Objective 1 or Objective 2?

- Are you more confident or optimistic about achieving some goals than you are about others? If so, which ones and why?

- What is CY doing to support these goals? Are the supports different for Objective 1 and Objective 2 grantees?

- Overall, how well do you think you are doing in making progress towards these goals? How do you monitor your progress?

Regarding the first three goals, what progress do you think grantees have made since 2008?

- Is the progress different for Objective 1 and Objective 2 grantees?

- What are your expectations of how grantees monitor their progress towards these goals? Are these expectations different for Objective 1 and Objective 2 grantees?

- What should be grantees' next steps in working towards these goals?

- For grantees that have an evaluation component linked to their grant:

  - Overall, what were the evaluations' strengths?

  - Overall, what were the evaluations' weaknesses?

  - What have you learned from the evaluation process? (e.g. tendering, working with researchers)

  - What have you learned from the study results?

  - What do you do/plan to do with the study results?

  - Have you been able to judge the effectiveness of services in the way you originally anticipated? If not, why not?
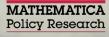
Regarding the fourth goal:

- What types of changes in government policy relating to prevention and early intervention services does CY hope to see by 2019? (e.g. shift in funding)

- What types of changes in government policy relating to advancing children's rights does CY hope to see by 2019? (e.g. shift in funding)

- Overall, what progress do you think grantees have made since 2008 towards this goal? Is the progress different for Objective 1 and Objective 2 grantees?

- What should be grantees' next steps in working towards this goal?

- How would you measure successful achievement of this goal?

Progress on Suggested Strategies from the 2009 Mathematica Report

The 2009 Mathematica report suggested five strategies CY might consider to further its objectives: (1) plan for the release of evaluation findings; (2) promote successful implementation; (3) promote service integration; (4) advocate for the widespread adoption of evidence-based practices; and (5) build infrastructure to support sustained evidence-based, prevention focused approaches. In your opinion, which of these suggested strategies was the most useful? Why?

- Regarding the plan for the release of evaluation findings:

  - We recognise that the Centre for Effective Services (CES) has been involved in helping plan release events with grantees, and that conferences have been held regarding what's working for children. What other activities have been undertaken since 2008?

  - What barriers or hurdles have arisen? How were they handled? What lessons were learned?

  - Are the programme activities and organisational capacities of grantees and CES, such as staffing and leadership, appropriate to help carry out this suggested strategy? What gaps in programme activities and organisational capacity need to be filled?

- What are the next steps in working towards this strategy?

- Regarding the promotion of successful implementation:

  - We recognise that a number of grantees have developed manuals detailing the implementation process, and some grantees attended the recent Global Implementation Conference. What other progress has been made since July 2008? What activities were undertaken?

  - What barriers or hurdles have arisen? How were they handled? What lessons were learned?

  - Are the programme activities and organisational capacities of grantees and CES, such as staffing and leadership, appropriate to help carry out this suggested strategy? What gaps in programme activities and organisational capacity need to be filled?

  - What are the next steps in working towards this strategy?

- Regarding the promotion of service integration:

  - What progress has been made since July 2008? What activities were undertaken?

  - What barriers or hurdles have arisen? How were they handled? What lessons were learned?

  - Are the programme activities and organisational capacities of grantees and CES, such as staffing and leadership, appropriate to help carry out this suggested strategy? What gaps in programme activities and organisational capacity need to be filled?

  - What are the next steps in working towards this strategy? Are course corrections needed?

- Regarding advocating the widespread adoption of evidence-based practices:

  - We recognise that CES's efforts with the Dissemination Initiative for Prevention and Early Intervention (DIPEI) networks and release events have helped advocate for evidence-based practices. What other progress has been made since July 2008? What activities were undertaken?

  - What barriers or hurdles have arisen? How were they handled? What lessons were learned?

  - Are the programme activities and organisational capacities of grantees and CES, such as staffing and leadership, appropriate to help carry out this suggested strategy? What gaps in programme activities and organisational capacity need to be filled?

  - What are the next steps in working towards this strategy?

- Regarding building infrastructure to support sustained evidence-based, prevention-focused approaches:

  - We recognise that CES's efforts, particularly with regard to the DIPEI networks, have helped begin to build an infrastructure to support evidence-based practices. What other progress has been made since July 2008? What activities were undertaken?

  - What barriers or hurdles have arisen? How were they handled? What lessons were learned?

  - Are the programme activities and organisational capacities

of grantees and CES, such as staffing and leadership, appropriate to help carry out this suggested strategy? What gaps in programme activities and organisational capacity need to be filled?

  - What are the next steps in working towards this strategy? Are course corrections needed?

Supporting Grantees

- How does CY plan to support grantees in the final years of the grants programme?

- What other kinds of supports do you think are needed?

- Do grantees ask you for additional types of support? If so, please describe.

Centre for Effective Services (CES)

- In your opinion, what are CES's goals? Should these goals be different in any way? Should there be additional goals?

- Has CES turned out as intended?

- Has it fulfilled its purpose as intended?

- Where has it fallen short?

- In your opinion, what are CES's greatest organisational and activity strengths? Weaknesses?

- What barriers or hurdles have arisen? How were they handled? What lessons were learned?

- Are the programme activities and organisational aspects, such as staffing and leadership, appropriate to help CES achieve its future goals? What gaps in programme activities and organisation need to be filled?

- Since 2008, to what extent have CES's activities influenced:

  - Government policy?

  - Provider practice?

  - Advocacy efforts for children and youth?

- How do you measure CES's influence in these areas?

- How durable are perceived gains made by CES with regard to government policy, provider practice, and advocacy efforts for children and youth in light of the current economic and political climate?

- In your opinion, what are the next steps for CES? Are course corrections needed?

Government

- In your opinion, to what extent have CY's activities influenced:

  - Government policy?

  - Provider practice?

  - Advocacy efforts for children and youth?

- How do you measure CY's influence in these areas?

- How durable are perceived gains made by CY with regard to government policy, provider practice, and advocacy efforts for children and youth in light of the current economic and political climate?
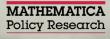
Sustainability

- What aspects of CY do you think will be sustainable after 2019?

- What steps have you taken to promote sustainability?

- How will the programmes, services, and centres supported by the Foundation become sustainable? What steps do they need to take?

- What types of funding do you expect to replace the Foundation?

Next Steps

- In your opinion, are there gaps in the types of services and/or activities that are funded under the CY initiative?

- What do you hope to learn from our 2011 review of the CY?

  - What information would be most helpful to you?

  - How do you plan to use the information?

Lessons Learned, Successes and Challenges

- Overall, what have been the greatest successes of CY's programme in Ireland and Northern Ireland?

- What challenges have you experienced? What have you done to address these challenges?

- What lessons have you learned? How do you plan to apply these lessons in the future?

Discussion Guide for Objective 1 Grantees

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. My name is _____ and I work for Mathematica Policy Research, a US-based research firm. As you may know, the Atlantic Philanthropies asked us to take an independent look at the Children and Youth Programme's strategies in Ireland and Northern Ireland.

I would like to tape-record our discussion. I am taping our discussion so I can listen to it later when I write up my notes. No one besides our research team will listen to the tape. If you want to say anything that you don't want taped, please let me know and I will be glad to pause the tape recorder.

Everything you tell me is confidential. I would like you to feel comfortable giving your opinions and impressions. The information we gather will be used to write a report for the Atlantic Philanthropies' Strategic Learning and Evaluation group about the Children and Youth Programme (CY), including successes, challenges, lessons learned, and next steps. Our report will describe the experiences and viewpoints expressed by respondents, but specific comments will not be attributed to specific individuals or programmes. No individual will be quoted by name.

Do you have any questions before I begin?

Respondent and Organisation Information

Please tell me:

- Your first name
- The name of your organisation
- Your role

Organisation Capacity

- Since 2008, what changes in your organisational capacity have come about (e.g. leadership, staffing)? Why were these changes made? (e.g. based on grants or prior experiences)

Providing and Sustaining Evidence-Based Initiatives

We'd like to learn more about the services your organisations offer. We are interested in the services that are supported by the Atlantic Philanthropies and related to prevention and early intervention.

- How do you select, develop, monitor, and/or adjust the services you offer?
  - What role does research play in this process?
  - Has this process changed in the last three years?
  - What have you learned from this process?
- Did you receive any support to assist you with the process of selecting, developing, monitoring, and adjusting the services you offer? If so, from whom? (e.g. the Atlantic Philanthropies, CES, the government, other grantees)
  - What type of support did you receive? (e.g. information, resources)
  - Was it helpful?
  - What other types of support, information, or resources would have helped you?
- What aspects of the process were successful?

- What aspects of the process were challenging? How did you address those challenges?
- What do you plan to do in the future with regard to selecting, developing, monitoring and adjusting the services you offer?
  - Is this different from your current process? If so, why?
  - What additional resources or information would assist you in the process?
- Will the process of selecting, developing, monitoring and adjusting the services you offer change the way your organisation operates beyond 2016?

Coordination and Networking Among PEI Organisations

- Tell me about how prevention and early intervention organisations work together.
  - Who is included in these partnerships?
  - What kinds of activities take place? For example, do you have meetings, participate in joint advocacy efforts, share resources or have joint trainings?
- We are aware that there have been some events and conferences—such as What's Working for Children—designed to bring together service providers. Can you describe other networking events designed to bring together service providers?
  - Who is included in these events? Academics? Government officials?
  - Have any of your organisations participated in or planned these events?
  - What events, if any, do you think would be beneficial for the future?
- What has been done by your organisations, the Atlantic Philanthropies, the government, or others to promote service integration across grantees?
  - Who is involved in these efforts? Academics? Government officials?
  - How well have these efforts worked?
  - What would be beneficial for the future?

Evaluation Experiences

Let's take some time to discuss the experiences you've had with the evaluation process.

- What have you learned from the evaluation process?
  - What has been successful?
  - What has been challenging?
  - If you were to start the evaluation process over, what additional resources or information would you have requested?
  - Are there any changes you anticipate making to your organisation, based on lessons learned from this experience?
- What have you learned about the evaluation process from other organisations?

- How did you learn this information? (e.g. networking event, release of findings event, personal communication and collaboration)

- What did you do with the information you learned?

- What do you anticipate learning from the findings of your evaluation? Or, for organisations with analysis complete: What have you learned from the findings?

  - For organisations with analysis complete: Were the findings what you expected?

  - How do you plan to use the findings?

  - Who will you share the findings with?

  - Do you plan to hold an event related to the release of these findings?

- Will the findings change anything about how your programme operates? If so, what? (e.g. targeting services, outreach, staff training). If not, why not?

- Do you plan to conduct additional independent evaluations of your services in the future? Why or why not?

Funding Base

Let's talk about funding sources, particularly regarding changes since 2008.

- Have the types of funders or their funding priorities changed since 2008? If priorities have changed, how have they changed and why do think this has happened?

- What are your plans for sustaining services after CY funding ends?

- What do you think are the biggest challenges regarding funding for the future?

  - How does your organisation plan to address these challenges?

  - What could other organisations (e.g. government, the Foundation) do to assist with these challenges?

Impact on Government Policy and Funding

I would like to discuss your impressions of the impact your programme has had on government policies and funding, at both the local and national levels.
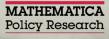
- What supports, either fiscal or non-fiscal, has your organisation received from local or national government officials and organisations?

- Have you met with government officials, either at local or national levels, to discuss your organisation and its services? If so, please describe these meetings and discussions. Where were they held? Who was involved? Was it just your organisation, or were other, similar organisations in the meeting as well?

- Please describe any changes in government or statutory policy and practice that your organisation has helped make possible, or that you are currently attempting to bring about.

- What areas of policy for children and youth do you believe are in need of more development or consideration? How do you think these areas could be improved? (e.g. funding, capacity building, provider training)

- To what extent do you think the Atlantic Philanthropies' Children and Youth Programme has influenced how government addresses the needs of disadvantaged children and youth?

- How durable are perceived gains made by the Atlantic Philanthropies with regard to government policy for children and youth, in light of the current economic and political climate? That is, do you think the approach will influence how needs are addressed moving forward? Please explain.

Lessons Learned and Next Steps

I'd like to wrap up by asking for your thoughts on lessons learned and future plans.

- Tell me the advantages and disadvantages of the relationship with the Atlantic Philanthropies. What could the Atlantic Philanthropies do to help improve this partnership?

- What help or support do you need moving forward? Where do you think this support should or could come from? (e.g. the Atlantic Philanthropies, networking with other organisations, the government, other funders)

- How has the Children and Youth Programme influenced how service providers in Ireland/Northern Ireland address the needs of disadvantaged children and youth?

- In your opinion, are there gaps in the types of services and/or activities that are funded under the Children and Youth Programme initiative?

- How do you think the Atlantic Philanthropies can most effectively contribute to the development of the children and youth area in the next five years?

Discussion Guide for Objective 2 Grantees

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. My name is _____ and I work for Mathematica Policy Research, a US-based research firm. As you may know, the Atlantic Philanthropies asked us to take an independent look at the Children and Youth Programme's strategies in Ireland and Northern Ireland.

I would like to tape-record our discussion. I am taping our discussion so I can listen to it later when I write up my notes. No one besides our research team will listen to the tape. If you want to say anything that you don't want taped, please let me know and I will be glad to pause the tape recorder.

Everything you tell me is confidential. I would like you to feel comfortable giving your opinions and impressions. The information we gather will be used to write a report for the Atlantic Philanthropies' Strategic Learning and Evaluation group about the Children and Youth Programme (CY), including successes, challenges, lessons learned, and next steps. Our report will describe the experiences and viewpoints expressed by respondents, but specific comments will not be attributed to specific individuals or programmes. No individual will be quoted by name.

Do you have any questions before I begin?

Respondent and Organisation Information

Please tell me:

- Your first name
- The name of your organisation
- Your role

Organisation Capacity

Now I'd like to learn about your organisations and their missions.

- When was your organisation established?
- What is the mission of your organisation?
- What is your target audience?
- What approaches do you use to reach out to the public, practitioners, government, and other stakeholders?
- How do you assess if you are reaching your target audience?

Providing and Sustaining Evidence-Based Initiatives

We'd like to learn more about the services your organisations offer. We are interested in the services that are supported by the Atlantic Philanthropies and related to children's rights.

- What types of activities do you carry out? (Activities may include disseminating information to government, providers, researchers, others; funding public awareness campaigns; legal advice to children and/or their families about their rights; making written and oral submissions to government departments; convening meetings and/or working groups with government officials, children- and youth-serving organisations, and others; hosting conferences, seminars, and/or other events for government officials, and others; conducting or disseminating research; and/or producing policy reports.)
- What are the intended outcomes of these activities?
- Have the activities changed since 2008? If so, how?

- How do you measure how well you are doing? If grantees evaluate their efforts:
  - Do you receive any support to assist you with the process of evaluating the effectiveness of your advocacy efforts?
    - If so, from whom?
    - What type of information do you receive?
    - Is it helpful?
    - What other types of support, information, or resources would have helped you?
  - What was challenging about evaluating the effectiveness of your advocacy efforts?
  - What was successful?
- In what ways do you involve youth in planning, developing, selecting or adjusting your activities? Do youth participate in carrying out advocacy activities, and if so, what roles do they play?
- What are your plans with regard to the activities you intend to carry out?
  - Is this different from your current activities? If so, why?
  - How will you measure the effectiveness of these activities?

Coordination and Networking Among Children's Rights Advocacy Organisations

Let's spend some time talking about coordination and networking with other children's rights advocacy organisations and stakeholders, such as government agencies.

- What partnerships exist between organisations that advocate for children's rights?
  - How were they formed?
  - Who is involved in these partnerships? Academics? Government officials? Do you participate?
  - What kinds of activities take place? For example, do you have meetings, participate in joint advocacy efforts, share resources, or have joint trainings?
- Since 2008, have there been any networking events designed to bring together children's rights advocacy organisations?
  - If so, can you describe these events?
  - Who is included in these events? Academics? Government officials? Do you participate?
  - Has your organisation planned any of these events?
  - What events, if any, do you think would be beneficial for the future?
- Overall, would you say your interactions with other advocacy organisations, government agencies and academics have increased since 2008?
  - If so, is this increased interaction helpful?
  - Are there ways this interaction could be improved? If so, how?

Funding Base

Let's talk about funding sources, particularly regarding changes since 2008.

- Who are the main funders of advocacy efforts for advancing children's rights in Ireland/Northern Ireland? (e.g. government, private donations, fundraising campaigns, foundations)

- Have the types of funders or their funding priorities changed since 2008? If priorities have changed, how have they changed and why do you think this has happened?

- Describe the fundraising campaigns you conduct.

  - How often are they held?

  - Who do you target?

  - What are your goals for these campaigns?

  - How well have you done?

- What are your plans for sustaining advocacy efforts after CY funding ends?

- What do you think are the biggest challenges regarding funding for the future?

  - How does your organisation plan to address these challenges?

  - What could other organisations (e.g. government, the Foundation) do to assist with these challenges?
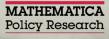
Impact on Government Policy and Funding

I would like to discuss your impressions of the impact your programme has had on government policies and funding, at both the local and national levels.

- What supports, either fiscal or non-fiscal, has your organisation received from local or national government officials and organisations?

- Have you met with government officials, either at the local or national level, to discuss your organisation and its services? If so, please describe these meetings and discussions. Where were they held? Who was involved? Was it just your organisation, or were other, similar organisations in the meeting as well?

- Please describe any changes in government or statutory policy and practice that your organisation has helped make possible, or that you are currently attempting to bring about.

- What areas of policy for children and youth do you believe are in need of more development or consideration? How do you think these areas could be improved? (e.g. funding, capacity building, provider training)

- To what extent do you think the Atlantic Philanthropies' Children and Youth Programme has influenced how government addresses the needs of disadvantaged children and youth?

- How durable are perceived gains made by the Atlantic Philanthropies with regard to government policy for children and youth, in light of the current economic and political climate? That is, do you think the approach will influence how needs are addressed moving forward? Please explain.

Lessons Learned and Next Steps

I'd like to wrap up by asking for your thoughts on lessons learned and future plans.

- Tell me the advantages and disadvantages of the relationship with the Atlantic Philanthropies. What could the Atlantic Philanthropies do to help improve this partnership?

- What are your plans for advancing children's rights in the next five years?

- What help or support do you need moving forward? Where do you think this support should or could come from? (e.g. the Atlantic Philanthropies, networking with other organisations, the government, other funders)

- How has the Children and Youth Programme influenced how service providers in Ireland/Northern Ireland address children's rights?

- In your opinion, are there gaps in the types of services and/or activities that are funded under the Children and Youth Programme initiative?

- How do you think the Atlantic Philanthropies can most effectively contribute to the area of children's rights in the next five years?

Discussion Guide for Republic of Ireland Government Officials

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. My name is _____ and I work for Mathematica Policy Research, a US-based research firm. As you may know, the Atlantic Philanthropies asked us to take an independent look at the Children and Youth Programme's strategies in Ireland and Northern Ireland.

I would like to tape-record our discussion. I am taping our discussion so I can listen to it later when I write up my notes. No one besides our research team will listen to the tape. If you want to say anything that you don't want taped, please let me know and I will be glad to pause the tape recorder.

Everything you tell me is confidential. I would like you to feel comfortable giving your opinions and impressions. The information we gather will be used to write a report for the Atlantic Philanthropies' Strategic Learning and Evaluation group about the Children and Youth Programme (CY), including successes, challenges, lessons learned, and next steps. Our report will describe the experiences and viewpoints expressed by respondents, but specific comments will not be attributed to specific individuals or programmes. No individual will be quoted by name.

Do you have any questions before I begin?

Respondent Information

Please tell me:

- Your first name
- The name of your department or agency
- Your role

Department Information

Only for the Department of Children and Youth

- I would like to learn more about the Department of Children and Youth (DCY). I understand that it was formed in June 2011. Is this correct?
- What is the mission of the department?
- How is DCY funded? How is the budget determined?
- In what ways does DCY interact with other departments and ministries?

Department Priorities

I would like to spend some time talking about the priorities of your department, particularly with regard to how these priorities have changed since 2008.

- In your own words, what are your department's main policy goals?
    - Have these goals changed since 2008? If so, how and why?
    - What activities do you engage in to reach these goals?
    - How do you measure success in reaching these goals?
    - Roughly what proportion of funding is for prevention and early intervention services?
    - Has this changed since 2008? If so, how and why?

- How has your department responded to the National Children's Strategy?
    - How much progress have you made since 2008?
    - How do you measure your progress?
    - What are your department's next steps?
- Roughly what proportion of funding is for children's rights?
    - Has this changed since 2008? If so, how and why?
- How does your department address children's rights, including the UN Convention on Children's Rights?
    - How much progress have you made since 2008?
    - How do you measure your progress?
    - What are your department's next steps?

Supporting Service Providers and Organisations – Fiscal

I would like to talk about how your department supports service providers and advocacy organisations through funding.

- What services or organisations are you currently funding relating to prevention and early intervention and/or children's rights?
    - How do you make your funding decisions? What factors contribute to the decision to fund an organisation or service provider? For example, do services have to be evidence-based?
        - How has this changed since 2008?
    - Do you collaborate with other organisations to provide funding?
        - If so, which ones?
        - Why did you decide to collaborate?
        - In your opinion, would your department fund these organisations without collaboration?
        - What have been the main successes of this collaboration?
        - What have been the main challenges? How have you overcome these challenges?
    - What factors might affect the current funding situation?
        - If you are collaborating with another organisation on funding, do you plan to continue funding the organisation even if your collaborator no longer does so? Why or why not?
        - Is there support within government for continued funding of these services?
        - What processes are in place to secure ongoing funding?
    - What are the main challenges of providing funding?
    - What will be future challenges for providing funding?
        - How should service providers plan to address these challenges?
        - What could other organisations, such as private foundations, do to assist with these challenges?

Supporting Service Providers and Organisations – Non-Fiscal

I would like to talk about how your department supports service providers and advocacy organisations through ways other than funding.

- What non-fiscal supports do you offer service providers and children's rights advocacy organisations? (e.g. participate in meetings, attend events, provide advice)

    - How long do you plan to continue supporting these organisations?

    - What processes are in place to secure ongoing support?

    - What have been the main challenges of providing support?

    - What do you think will be the future challenges of providing support?

- Since 2008, what kinds of activities have you supported or carried out related to promoting integration of services in Ireland?

    - What barriers or hurdles have arisen? How were they handled? What lessons were learned?

    - How do you measure progress?

    - What are the next steps? Are course corrections needed?

- Since 2008, have you done any kinds of activities based on evidence to support intervention approaches in Ireland?

    - What barriers or hurdles have arisen? How were they handled? What lessons were learned?

    - How do you measure progress?

    - What are the next steps? Are course corrections needed?

Collaboration and Networking

Let's talk about how your department collaborates with service providers, advocacy organisations, and other local and national government departments.

- I would first like to ask about your involvement in the Dissemination Initiative for Prevention and Early Intervention (DIPEI) Network.

    - In your own words, what are the goals of the DIPEI group in Ireland?

    - What do you think is the greatest potential benefit of convening this group?

- Please describe other collaboration and networking-based interactions with prevention and early intervention service providers, advocacy organisations, and other government agencies since 2008 (e.g. events, conferences).

    - Are these interactions helpful?

    - Are there ways these interactions could be improved? If so, how?

- Do you collaborate with similar departments in Ireland/ Northern Ireland? Outside of Ireland and Northern Ireland?

    - What is the purpose of the collaboration?

- What information/resources do you share?
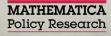
Centre for Effective Services

Now I would like to learn more about your interactions with the Centre for Effective Services (CES), and its activities and services since 2008. Are you familiar with CES? If yes:

- Are you involved with CES activities and events, such as discussion groups and networking meetings?

- In your opinion, what is the value added of CES to:

    - Government policy?

    - Provider practice?

    - Advocacy efforts for children and youth?

- Why do you believe CES has had an influence in these areas (government policy, provider practice, and advocacy efforts for children and youth)?

- In your opinion, what are the next steps for CES?

- *Only ask for the Department of Children and Youth:* Is there support within government for continued funding of these services?

Government Decision Making

Now I would like to learn more about your impression of how decisions about funding children and youth programmes are made at the national level.

- What information does your department consider when making funding decisions? (PROBE about the roles of cost-benefit information, effectiveness research, stories/narratives, intuition, ideology, personal experience)

    - How do you gather the information?

    - How do you use the information?

- What information is *most useful* when you make these decisions?

    - What information is *most influential* when you make these decisions? That is, what information carries the most weight for your decision-making process?

    - From whom do you receive advice when making these funding decisions? (e.g. colleagues, outside experts, academics)

    - Can you provide an example of a recent change in government funding in education or children's rights?

        - Why did this change occur?

        - What were some of the driving forces and influencing factors?

- What role do service providers play in shaping funding decisions?

    - Do you want information from service providers? If so, what information is most useful?

- What role do advocacy organisations play in shaping funding decisions?

    - Do you want information from advocacy organisations? If so, what information is most useful?

- What role do research centres or education institutions play in shaping funding decisions?

  - Do you want information from research centres or education institutions? If so, what information is most useful?

- Have the funding decisions of your department been implemented by other government agencies?

  - If so, what evidence do you have of this?

  - If not, why not? What do you think it will take to get these agencies to change their funding decisions?

- Do you expect changes to your department's funding decisions in the coming months or years?

  - If so, why are you expecting these changes?

  - What will be the impetus for these changes?

- In your opinion, to what extent have the Atlantic Philanthropies' Children and Youth Programme's activities influenced:

  - Overall government policy and funding decisions?

  - Your department's policies and funding decisions?

  - Other departments' policies and funding decisions?

- What evidence do you have of the extent CY has influenced these areas?

  - How durable are perceived gains made by CY with regard to government policy, provider practice and advocacy efforts for children and youth in light of the current economic and political climate?

Lessons Learned, Successes and Challenges

I'd like to wrap up by asking for your thoughts on lessons learned and next steps.

- Do you think the progress made since 2008 by service providers, advocacy organisations, and groups like CES is sustainable? Will the changes outlast the funding?

- How can programmes, services and centres supported become more sustainable? What steps do they need to take?

- What has been your department's greatest success in accomplishing your priorities?

- What have been the most challenging aspects of accomplishing your priorities? Are there resources or other supports that would have helped you address these challenges?

- What are your plans for the next five years?

- Regarding the Atlantic Philanthropies and the CY programme in Ireland:

  - What do you think have been the greatest successes?

  - Are there gaps in the types of services and/or activities that are funded?

  - How do you think the Foundation can most effectively contribute to the areas of prevention and early intervention and children's rights in the next five years?

Discussion Guide for Northern Ireland Government Officials

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. My name is _____ and I work for Mathematica Policy Research, a US-based research firm. As you may know, the Atlantic Philanthropies asked us to take an independent look at the Children and Youth Programme's strategies in Ireland and Northern Ireland.

I would like to tape-record our discussion. I am taping our discussion so I can listen to it later when I write up my notes. No one besides our research team will listen to the tape. If you want to say anything that you don't want taped, please let me know and I will be glad to pause the tape recorder.

Everything you tell me is confidential. I would like you to feel comfortable giving your opinions and impressions. The information we gather will be used to write a report for the Atlantic Philanthropies' Strategic Learning and Evaluation group about the Children and Youth Programme (CY), including successes, challenges, lessons learned and next steps. Our report will describe the experiences and viewpoints expressed by respondents, but specific comments will not be attributed to specific individuals or programmes. No individual will be quoted by name.

Do you have any questions before I begin?

Respondent Information

Please tell me:

- Your first name
- The name of your department or agency
- Your role

Department Priorities

I would like to spend some time talking about the priorities of your department, particularly with regard to how these priorities have changed since 2008.

- In your own words, what are your department's main policy goals?
  - Have these goals changed since 2008? If so, how and why?
  - What activities do you engage in to reach these goals?
  - How do you measure success in reaching these goals?
- Roughly what proportion of funding is for prevention and early intervention services? Has this changed since 2008? If so, how and why?
- How has your department responded to the Children and Young People's Strategy (2006–2016) and its related Action Plans?
  - How much progress have you made since 2008?
  - How do you measure your progress?
  - What are your department's next steps?
- Roughly what proportion of funding is for children's rights? Has this changed since 2008? If so, how and why?
- How does your department address children's rights, including the UN Convention on Children's Rights?

  - How much progress have you made since 2008?
  - How do you measure your progress?
  - What are your department's next steps?

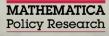### Supporting Service Providers and Organisations – Fiscal

I would like to talk about how your department supports service providers and advocacy organisations through funding. What services or organisations are you currently funding relating to prevention and early intervention and/or children's rights?

- How do you make your funding decisions? What factors contribute to the decision to fund an organisation or service provider? For example, do services have to be evidence-based? How has this changed since 2008?
- Do you collaborate with other organisations to provide funding?
  - If so, which ones?
  - Why did you decide to collaborate?
  - In your opinion, would your department fund these organisations without collaboration?
  - What have been the main successes of this collaboration?
  - What have been the main challenges? How have you overcome these challenges?
- What factors might affect the current funding situation?
  - If you are collaborating with another organisation on funding, do you plan to continue funding the service provider even if your collaborator no longer does so? Why or why not?
  - Is there support within government for continued funding of these services?
  - What processes are in place to secure ongoing funding?
- What are the main challenges of providing funding?
- What will be future challenges for providing funding?
  - How should service providers plan to address these challenges?
  - What could other organisations, such as private foundations, do to assist with these challenges?

Supporting Service Providers and Organisations –Non-Fiscal

I would like to talk about how your department supports service providers and advocacy organisations through ways other than funding.

- What non-fiscal supports do you offer service providers and children's rights advocacy organisations? (e.g. participate in meetings, attend events, provide advice)
  - How long do you plan to continue supporting these organisations?
  - What processes are in place to secure ongoing support?
  - What have been the main challenges of providing support?

- What do you think will be the future challenges of providing support?

- Since 2008, what kinds of activities have you supported or carried out related to promoting integration of services in Northern Ireland?

  - What barriers or hurdles have arisen? How were they handled? What lessons were learned?

  - How do you measure progress?

  - What are the next steps? Are course corrections needed?

- Since 2008, have you done any kinds of activities based on evidence to support intervention approaches in Northern Ireland?

  - What barriers or hurdles have arisen? How were they handled? What lessons were learned?

  - How do you measure progress?

  - What are the next steps? Are course corrections needed?

Collaboration and Networking

Let's talk about how your department collaborates with service providers, advocacy organisations, and other local and national government departments.

- I would first like to ask about your involvement in the Dissemination Initiative for Prevention and Early Intervention (DIPEI) Network.

  - In your own words, what are the goals of the DIPEI group in Northern Ireland?

  - What do you think is the greatest potential benefit of convening this group?

- Please describe other collaboration and networking-based interactions with prevention and early intervention service providers, advocacy organisations and other government agencies since 2008 (e.g. events, conferences).

  - Are these interactions helpful?

  - Are there ways these interactions could be improved? If so, how?

- Do you collaborate with similar departments in Ireland/ Northern Ireland? Outside of Ireland and Northern Ireland?

  - What is the purpose of the collaboration?

  - What information/resources do you share?

Centre for Effective Services

Now I would like to learn more about your interactions with the Centre for Effective Services (CES), and its activities and services since 2008. Are you familiar with CES? If yes:

- Are you involved with CES activities and events, such as discussion groups and networking meetings?

- In your opinion, what is the value added of CES to:

  - Government policy?

  - Provider practice?

  - Advocacy efforts for children and youth?

- Why do you believe CES has had an influence in these areas (government policy, provider practice, and advocacy efforts for children and youth)?

- In your opinion, what are the next steps for CES?

Government Decision Making

Now I would like to learn more about your impression of how decisions about funding children and youth programmes are made at the national level.

- What information does your department consider when making funding decisions? (PROBE about the roles of cost-benefit information, effectiveness research, stories/narratives, intuition, ideology, personal experience)

  - How do you gather the information?

  - How do you use the information?

- What information is most useful when you make these decisions?

- What information is most influential when you make these decisions? That is, what information carries the most weight for your decision-making process?

- From whom do you receive advice when making these funding decisions? (e.g. colleagues, outside experts, academics)

- Can you provide an example of a recent change in government funding in education or children's rights?

  - Why did this change occur?

  - What were some of the driving forces and influencing factors?

- What role do service providers play in shaping funding decisions?

  - Do you want information from service providers? If so, what information is most useful?

- What role do advocacy organisations play in shaping funding decisions?

  - Do you want information from advocacy organisations? If so, what information is most useful?

- What role do research centres or education institutions play in shaping funding decisions?

  - Do you want information from research centres or education institutions? If so, what information is most useful?

- Have the funding decisions of your department been implemented by other government agencies?

  - If so, what evidence do you have of this?

  - If not, why not? What do you think it will take to get these agencies to change their funding decisions?

- Do you expect changes to your department's funding decisions in the coming months or years?

  - If so, why are you expecting these changes?

  - What will be the impetus for these changes?

- In your opinion, to what extent have the Atlantic Philanthropies' Children and Youth Programme's activities influenced:
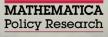
- Overall government policy and funding decisions?

- Your department's policies and funding decisions?

- Other departments' policies and funding decisions?

- What evidence do you have of the extent CY has influenced these areas?

  - How durable are perceived gains made by CY with regard to government policy, provider practice and advocacy efforts for children and youth in light of the current economic and political climate?

Lessons Learned, Successes and Challenges

I'd like to wrap up by asking for your thoughts on lessons learned and next steps.

- Do you think the progress made since 2008 by service providers, advocacy organisations and groups like CES is sustainable? Will the changes outlast the funding?

- How can programmes, services and centres supported become more sustainable? What steps do they need to take?

- What has been your department's greatest success in accomplishing your priorities?

- What have been the most challenging aspects of accomplishing your priorities? Are there resources or other supports that would have helped you address these challenges?

- What are your plans for the next five years?

- Regarding the Atlantic Philanthropies and the CY programme in Northern Ireland:

  - What do you think have been the greatest successes?

  - Are there gaps in the types of services and/or activities that are funded?

  - How do you think the Foundation can most effectively contribute to the areas of prevention and early intervention and children's rights in the next five years?

Discussion Guide for Centre for Effective Services (CES)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. My name is _____ and I work for Mathematica Policy Research, a US-based research firm. As you may know, the Atlantic Philanthropies asked us to take an independent look at the Children and Youth Programme's strategies in Ireland and Northern Ireland.

I am going to moderate the discussion. It is very important for everyone to speak up so we can have a lively and informative discussion, but we ask that you speak one at a time and respect each other's point of view. We also ask that you not repeat any of the discussion you've heard after you leave today. We have many topics to cover during the discussion. At times, I may need to move the conversation along to be sure we cover everything.

I would like to tape-record our discussion. I am taping our discussion so I can listen to it later when I write up my notes. No one besides our research team will listen to the tape. If you want to say anything that you don't want taped, please let me know and I will be glad to pause the tape recorder.

Everything you tell me is confidential. I would like you to feel comfortable giving your opinions and impressions. The information we gather will be used to write a report for the Atlantic Philanthropies' Strategic Learning and Evaluation group about the Children and Youth Programme, including successes, challenges, lessons learned and next steps. Our report will describe the experiences and viewpoints expressed by respondents, but specific comments will not be attributed to specific individuals or programmes. No individual will be quoted by name.

Do you have questions before I begin?

Respondent and Organisation Information

Please tell me:

- Your first name
- The name of your organisation
- Your role

Organisation Mission and Capacity, Services and Activities Provided

CES was founded to connect the design and delivery of services and technical knowledge of "what works" in order to improve outcomes for children, their families and their communities. Let's spend some time talking about the mission, goals, activities and services of CES.

- In your own words, what is the mission of CES and what are its primary lines of business?
- What are the main services and activities you offer?
- Are there any differences in the mission and primary lines of business, or services and activities you offer, between the north and the south?
- What is the unique value that CES adds in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland that is not provided by other organisations?
- Do you find that CES overlaps at all with other organisations in the same geographic space (e.g. universities in the north and south, National Children's Bureau in the north)?

- What do you see as your role in advocacy for prevention and early intervention?
- What do you see as your role in advocacy for children's rights?
- How do you explain the importance of early intervention and children's rights to the public, practitioners, government and other stakeholders?
- How do you measure the effectiveness of your efforts?

Specific Services Provided – Follow-up

Throughout our discussions with grantees and other stakeholders, we've heard about a number of activities and services CES offers. We'd like to ask some questions about a few of those.

- Capturing the Learning
    - What is Capturing the Learning?
    - What are the goals?
    - What is the methodology?
    - What are the products?
    - Is there a timeline associated with this piece of work?
- The "What Works" Process
    - What is the "what works" process?
    - What is the purpose and goals of this process?
    - Is this process being piloted in certain areas, or is it in full implementation?
    - Who are you marketing this process to?
    - What is the value added from CES for this process?
    - Does this process presume knowledge of prevention and early intervention?
    - What products are associated with this process?
- Change Programme in the South
    - We've heard about a Change Programme in the south. Can you help us better understand this programme?
    - What role could you play in supporting this programme?

Coordination and Networking Among Service Providers and Advocacy Organisations

Let's spend some time talking about the ways coordination and networking help achieve CES's mission.

- Regarding the Dissemination Initiative for Prevention and Early Intervention (DIPEI) Networks in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland:
    - What are the goals of the DIPEI Networks in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland?
    - What is CES's role in each of these networks?
    - In your opinion, what is the likely effectiveness of these networks?
    - What should DIPEI do next in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland?

- A number of organisations are preparing to release the results of their evaluations.

  - How do you think these evaluation results should be disseminated?

  - Are there concerns about overwhelming policymakers with numerous launch initiatives?

  - Has there been discussion about developing conferences based on the themes in the research across the organisations?

- We've learned about Children's Services Committees in the Republic of Ireland through our discussions with various grantees and stakeholders. Regarding these committees:

  - What is your understanding of the goals of these committees?

  - How effective have they been?

  - How likely are they to be incorporated into the change programme?

  - What are your thoughts about the commissioning associated with these committees?

Funding Base and Sustainability Efforts

Now I would like to ask about CES's funding sources and future sustainability.

- We understand that you receive funding from the Atlantic Philanthropies, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, and the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government. Do you receive funding from other organisations or government departments?

- What are your plans for sustaining efforts after the Atlantic Philanthropies funding ends?

- Is there a sense of who will pay for the services that CES offers once the Atlantic Philanthropies funding ends? (We understand that CES does not charge for its services at this time. Is charging for services in the future being considered? Is there a sense of the market demand for CES's services?)

Impact on Government Policy and Funding

I would like to discuss your impressions of the impact CES has had on government policies and funding, at both the local and national levels.
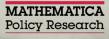
- Please describe your engagement with the new Department of Children and Youth Affairs in the Republic of Ireland.

  - What do you see as the department's needs?

  - What could you do to address or help meet its needs?

- Mainstreaming Prevention and Early Intervention. There is discussion about the need to mainstream prevention and early intervention services in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

  - What do you see are the opportunities for mainstreaming prevention and early intervention?

  - What strategies would be most effective for mainstreaming prevention and early intervention?

  - How is mainstreaming prevention and early intervention different in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland?

Lessons Learned and Next Steps

I'd like to wrap up by asking for your thoughts on lessons learned and future plans.

- What has been CES's greatest success in accomplishing its mission?

- What have been the most challenging aspects of accomplishing your mission?

- What are the advantages and disadvantages of your relationship with the Atlantic Philanthropies?

- How do you think the Atlantic Philanthropies can most effectively contribute to the areas of prevention and early intervention and children's rights in the next five years?

Discussion Guide for Other Funders

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. My name is _____ and I work for Mathematica Policy Research, a US-based research firm. As you may know, the Atlantic Philanthropies asked us to take an independent look at the Children and Youth Programme's strategies in Ireland and Northern Ireland.

I would like to tape-record our discussion. I am taping our discussion so I can listen to it later when I write up my notes. No one besides our research team will listen to the tape. If you want to say anything that you don't want taped, please let me know and I will be glad to pause the tape recorder.

Everything you tell me is confidential. I would like you to feel comfortable giving your opinions and impressions. The information we gather will be used to write a report for the Atlantic Philanthropies' Strategic Learning and Evaluation group about the Children and Youth Programme, including successes, challenges, lessons learned and next steps. Our report will describe the experiences and viewpoints expressed by respondents, but specific comments will not be attributed to specific individuals or programmes. No individual will be quoted by name.

Do you have questions before I begin?

Respondent and Organisation Information

Please tell me:

- Your first name
- The name of your organisation
- Your role

Funding Decisions

- Is it still true that the last round of grant funding will be distributed in 2013?
- How do you decide which programmes to fund as the Foundation enters its last rounds of funding?
  - Has this approach changed since 2008? If so, why?
- Have the characteristics you look for in a potential grantee changed since 2008?

Supporting Grantees

With the final grants being administered in 2013, I would like to learn more about how your organisation plans to support grantees in the final years of the grants programme.

- What types of supports do you currently provide grantees?
- How have the types of supports provided changed since 2008?
- Do grantees ask you for additional types of support? If so, please describe.

Centre for Effective Services

Now I would like to learn more about your interactions with the Centre for Effective Services (CES), and its activities and services since 2008. Are you familiar with CES? If yes:

- Are you involved with CES activities and events, such as discussion groups and networking meetings?

- In your opinion, what are the CES's greatest organisational and activity strengths? Weaknesses?
- In your opinion, what are the next steps for CES?

Impact on Government Policy and Funding

Now I would like to learn more about your interactions with government agencies and representatives since 2008.

- In your opinion, to what extent have your organisation's activities influenced:
  - Government policy?
  - Provider practice?
  - Advocacy efforts for children and youth?
- How do you measure the extent to which your organisation has influenced these areas?
- How durable are perceived gains made by your organisation with regard to government policy, provider practice and advocacy efforts for children and youth in light of the current economic and political climate?

Sustainability and Next Steps

I'd like to ask you a few questions about sustainability of efforts and grantees beyond your organisation's funding.

- Do you think the progress you have made is sustainable? What changes will outlast the funding?
- What steps have you taken to promote sustainability?
- How will the programmes, services and centres supported by your organisation become sustainable? What steps do they need to take?
- What types of funding do you expect to replace your organisation?

Lessons Learned and Next Steps

I'd like to wrap up by asking for your thoughts on lessons learned and future plans.

- Overall, what have been the greatest successes of your organisation's programme in Ireland?
- What challenges have you experienced? What have you done to address these challenges?
- What lessons have you learned? How do you plan to apply these lessons in the future?

APPENDIX D
CHILDREN AND YOUTH PROGRAMME
EVALUATION CODING SCHEME

Code Name	Code Description
Global Characteristics	
Northern Ireland	
Republic of Ireland	
Respondent Type (Interviews)	Document Type (Non-Interview)
Objective 1 (PEI) grantee	Programme implementation analyses / report
Objective 2 (advocacy) grantee	Programme research reports
Evaluator	Programme meeting minutes
Co-funder	DIPEI meeting minutes
Government	CES reports and briefs
Foundation / CY	Policy reports and briefs
CES / DIPEI	Strategy reports and briefs
Objective	
PEI (Prevention and Early Intervention)	
Advancing Rights (Advancing Children's Rights)	
Five Suggested Strategies	
(1) Plan for the release of evaluation findings	
(2) Promote successful implementation	
(3) Promote service integration	
(4) Advocate for the widespread adoption of evidence-based practice	
(5) Build infrastructure to support sustained evidence-based, prevention-focused approaches	
Successes, Challenges, and Recommendations	
Successes	
Challenges	
Recommendations	
Research Questions	
RQ(1) What progress has been made since July 2008 toward achieving the objectives / proposed strategies for future direction?	
RQ(2) Since July 2008, what barriers or hurdles have arisen in working toward the objectives / proposed strategies for future direction?	
RQ(3) Are the funded programmes appropriate to help CY achieve its objectives / proposed strategies for future direction? What gaps in programme activities and organisation need to be filled?	
RQ(4) What are the next steps in working toward the objectives / proposed strategies for future direction? Are course corrections needed?	
RQ(5) To what extent have funded programme activities influenced government policy, provider practice, and advocacy efforts for children and youth since July 2008? How durable are perceived gains?	
Organisational Capacity	
Capacity	Including staffing, funding, leadership
Focus	Strategic focus on mission (PEI or advocacy)
Management / operating processes	Operationalise strategic focus and deliver on mission
Self-assessments	Internal programme evaluations of performance, outcomes, staff, services, etc.
Service implementation	Discussion about programme implementation (PEI and / or advocacy)
Structures	Including organisation of staff, services, and activities
Sustainability and Commitment to Evidence-Based Practice	
Data management	Ability to maintain a data system and manage data for programme-based use
Data use	Continued use of data, after conclusion of evaluations (e.g. progress monitoring)
Dissemination of findings	Press releases, events, workshops, papers, briefs, coordination with CES, etc.
Evaluation process	Discussion about evaluation process, research partners, practitioner-researcher communication, appropriateness of evaluation (methodologies, design, timing, etc.)
Evidence-based decisions (programme)	Use of evidence in making programme decisions

Code Name	Code Description
Family support	Discussion about including families in programmes (PEI and/or advocacy)
Funding sources	Discussion about funding sources for programme implementation and sustainability (PEI and/or advocacy)
Innovation	Discussion about innovation in services and advocacy
Programme awareness	Disseminating information about programme services; press releases, events, workshops, papers, briefs, coordination with CES, etc.
Service design	Development of programme services, including consideration of evidence-based practices (PEI and/or advocacy)
Service history	Context in which decisions about service provisions were made
Sustaining approaches	Discussion about infrastructure to sustain approaches to evidence-based decision making, conducting rigorous evaluations
Using findings	Using evaluation findings for further programme development, funding requests, etc.
Coordination and Networking	
Collaboration locally	Discussion of collaboration/coordination with local entities and stakeholders (e.g. Garda, community agencies and organisations)
Collaboration with AP	Discussion of collaboration/coordination with the Atlantic Philanthropies, including foundation-grantee relationships that involve funding decisions
Collaboration with CES	Discussion of collaboration/coordination with the Centre for Effective Services, including release events, conferences and workshops
Collaboration with grantees	Discussion of collaboration/coordination with other grantees, including release events, sharing materials (e.g. implementation manuals), conferences and workshops
Network events	Events providing opportunities for networking, knowledge sharing between service providers and other stakeholders
Network structures	Structures to facilitate collaboration, such as planning groups
Service integration/silos	Working across systems; services existing in silos
Shared implementation knowledge	Discussion about sharing programme implementation strategies and successes with other grantees, organisations (PEI and/or advocacy)
Government Policy and Funding	
Advocacy	Discussion about programme advocacy within framework of policy
Change management	Receptivity to approach, strategy to get various actors (government, NGOs, etc.) to behave differently and feel comfortable with the new ideas
Constitution	Ireland constitution changes
Cost-benefit	Cost-benefit considerations when making funding decisions
Economics and politics	Discussion about current economic and political situation as it relates to government decision making
Evidence-based decisions (government)	Frequency of evidence-based decision-making discussions, use of evidence in making government-level policy and programme decisions, information needed by government officials to make evidence-based decisions, advocating for evidence-based decision making
Government decision making	Who makes decisions, decision-making process, criteria for decision making, etc.
Government funding	Funding process, accountability reporting, using funding, government-grantee relationships
Government support (non-funding)	Supporting programmes and services through involvement on boards, attendance at events/meetings, open discussions, etc.; statutory services engaging at the local level
International influence	Bringing international resources/interventions into the Irish context
Mainstreaming	View about adoption of CY-funded interventions and/or evidence-based interventions by statutory services
Policy changes	Government-level policy changes, desired changes in children's rights policy
Policy history	Context in which government policy decisions are being made
Rights of child	UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
Foundation Initiatives and Future Activities	
CY history/background	Context in which CY programme and policy decisions are being made
Funding programmes	Number and diversity of programmes funded, multiplicity of interventions and the possible overlap of services
Future of AP CY	Suggestions about what Foundation should focus on in the next five years; views about whether CY should focus on fewer interventions (consolidate), maintain current levels (sustain), or focus on a wider range of interventions (expand)
PRTLI	Working with universities and academia for future initiatives