

# This Week in Childcare Weekly Bulletin



**Issue 1:2026** Week: 5<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> January 2026

Dear Colleagues

We would like to wish you all a very happy and peaceful New Year. These are the announcements for the week 5<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> January 2026.

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

### New Action Plans for the Early Learning and Care and School-Age Childcare Sector

Two new action plans for the early learning and care and school-age childcare sector have been published by Minister Foley.

The [‘Shaping the Future: Early Years Action Plan’](#) commits to actions in 2026 to make services more affordable, accessible and improve quality.

The [‘Simplify and Support: Action Plan for Simplification’](#) will streamline administration and regulation, helping providers, educators, practitioners and parents navigate the system more easily.



### Closures & Changes

Pobal has updated the online process for reporting changes of circumstance, including changes of address, changes of ownership, changes of legal structure & exit from one or more programmes.

Both Service Provider closure and Organisation closure can also be reported online.

More information can be found in the links below:

[Webinar recording](#)

[Early Years Hive resources](#)



### Content and Language Integrated Learning in Early Learning and Care Settings

Better Start have organised an online webinar for Early Years Educators who are interested in introducing Irish as part of their daily routine with children.



Further details and registration for the webinar can be accessed [here](#)



**Content and Language Integrated Learning in Early Learning and Care Settings (CLIL)**

Are you interested in introducing Irish as part of your daily routine with children?

Join us to learn more about the Content and Language Integrated Learning programme in Early Learning and Care settings.

Online: MS Teams

Tuesday 20th January

7 - 8 pm

This webinar will be presented by Dr Máire Mhic Mhathúna and Gráinne Mulligan (Better Start).

An Roinn Leanaí, Míchumais agus Comhionannais  
Department of Children, Disability and Equality

First 5

---

## Marino Institute of Education Research

Marino Institute of Education are inviting educators/managers to take part in a research study examining the experiences of migrant early years educators and managers working in Ireland, with a view to understanding educators and managers professional journey in the Irish early years education system.

For further information on this research or to take part in the research, please see attached information sheet.

---

## Happy Talk Calendar

Please see attached and below the Happy Talk Calendar for January 2026.

The Theme of this month's calendar is Tune in, Turn Off.

# Happy Talk



**Hum 'Til You're Happy Mindful Moment**

Get comfortable, and relax your body. Close your eyes, close your lips and hum! Take a big deep breath and see how long you can hum using your out breath. Breathe in, and hum! Breathe in, and hum! Put a hand gently on your chest or throat and notice the vibration of your humming. Breathe in, and hum! Let the humming calm your body, and bring some happiness to your body. Breathe in, and hum! One more quiet hum! Breathe in, and hum!

**Rhyme Old Mac Donald**

**Rhyme Time Voices and Games**

**What is Good Listening?**  
When we are listening to songs and rhymes, does it have to be face to face? Do we have to 'look with our eyes' or 'keep our hands still'?

There are lots of things that can help us listen and pay attention. In Happy Talk the Listening Tools include our whole body. Good listening however, can look different for everybody as we all use our bodies differently.

When you are singing to me or telling me a rhyme...  
While I might look with my eyes, I might also look away, look at something interesting, or even close my eyes... and still listen really well!

While I might keep my mouth closed, I might also make sounds or repeat words. This can help me understand what you are saying... and still listen really well!

While I might keep my hands and feet still, I might also move my body, hold or fidget with something, walk around, turn on the spot... and still listen really well!

Listening is different for everybody! Practicing listening helps everybody too!

Look with your eyes  
Listen with your ears  
Mouth is closed  
Hands are still  
Feet on the floor




**January 2026**

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

● 1 Jan - New Year's Day

For further information visit: [www.hse.ie/happytalk](http://www.hse.ie/happytalk)

# Happy Talk

**January 2026**  
**Language Activity: Tune In, Turn Off**

**Well Grown Ups, what should we do about screen time? TV, tablets, smart phones, computers and game consoles are here to stay. There's no avoiding screens is there? So, we need to find the balance.**

**Finding the Balance with Screen Time. Always:**  
Spend time chatting with your child every day away from screens. Tell them about you, ask them about their day, see how they are feeling, talk about the highs and lows of every day family life.  
Value your child's communication skills: listen to them, read a book with them, sing songs and say rhymes with them. Use technology to help you have fun together: find new rhymes and songs online, talk about what you are watching together.  
Always, always, always know what your child is watching and playing with on screens. Remember, you are the boss of what your child sees make sure it's suitable for their age.

**Demonstrate good screen time habits yourself: put your phone away when listening to your child, turn off (or mute) the TV when they are trying to tell you something, try to have some screen free time every day.**

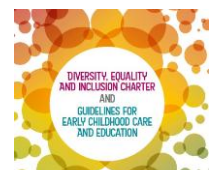
**Try to:**  
Reduce screen time gradually and have some basic rules for your home, for example:  
No screens at mealtimes. You might find you like talking to each other! Try to enjoy this family time together.  
Play non-screen based games together like board games and cards. Spend time teaching your child some games from your childhood - X's and O's, Eye Spy, Connect-4, What Time is it Mr Wolf, Tip the Can, Red Rover, Rounders.  
Be the boss of the screens in your home! Keep remotes, consoles and tablets out of sight - this ensures that the adult controls the 'when', 'what' and 'how long' when it comes to screen time.  
Be consistent and keep going! Even though reducing screen time can be tricky at the start, children soon get used to the changes!





## Review of Diversity, Equality & Inclusion Charter, Guidelines and Training

Collette Murray & Sharon Skehill of Technological University Dublin are leading a revision of the Diversity Equality & Inclusion Charter and Guidelines and DEI training. They are inviting educators who have participated on the training to attend an online session to share their views on the revision of the Charter, Guidelines and workshop.



They hope to have an on-line consultation on the week of the 12<sup>th</sup> of January for approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes. If you are interested in participating on this on-line consultation and sharing your views, please contact [sharon.skehill@tudublin.ie](mailto:sharon.skehill@tudublin.ie) by January 9<sup>th</sup>.

## Tusla Update – Policy Guidance Documents



Tusla have updated Policy Guidance Documents for the Early Years Sector on their website. The documents can be access from [Early Years Provider Resources](#) page or directly on the new [Policy Guidance Documents for the Early Years Sector](#) page. There is an updated and revised [A Practical Guide to Developing Policies, Procedures and Statements in Early Years Services](#)

Tusla have advised that:

- Anyone making a new application should consult the updated documentation before they make their application to register and ensure their policies align with this guidance.
- There is no expectation for existing services to redevelop policies immediately- services may decide to gradually review and update each policy over time or to make a plan to review and update all when they are considering their policies on next annual review.
- Existing registered providers should familiarise themselves with guidance notes as they look and read differently, even if same core requirements as per the Quality & Regulatory Framework.

New Policy Guidance Documents	Helpful Hints
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ We are pleased to advise that updated Policy Guidance Documents for the Early Years Sector have now been published on our website.</li> <li>➤ You can access them from the <a href="#">Early Years Provider Resources</a> page or directly on the new <a href="#">Policy Guidance Documents for the Early Years Sector</a> page</li> <li>➤ There is an updated and revised <a href="#">A Practical Guide to Developing Policies, Procedures and Statements in Early Years Services</a></li> <li>➤ The policy guidance documents are each listed alphabetically</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anyone <b>making a new application</b> should consult the updated documentation before they make their application to register, and ensure their policies align with this guidance.</li> <li>• There is no expectation for <b>existing services</b> to redevelop policies immediately- services may decide to gradually review and update each policy over time or to make a plan to review and update all when they are considering their policies on next annual review.</li> <li>• <b>Existing registered providers</b> should familiarise themselves with guidance notes as they look and read differently, even if same core requirements as per the Quality &amp; Regulatory Framework.</li> </ul>

---

## Childminders Network Meeting



The next meeting of the Kerry Childminders Network will take place on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2026 @ 19.30 in the Kerry County Childcare Committee office (V92 DA22).

The meeting is open to all childminders.

To book your place please contact Amy: [amy@kerrycountychildcare.com](mailto:amy@kerrycountychildcare.com) / 087 7885114

---

## Kerry County Childcare Committee Website and Facebook Page



We invite you to visit our website [here](#) and like and follow our Facebook page [here](#) for lots of updates and relevant information.

**Kind Regards,**

**Kerry County Childcare Committee**