



What is the JLICED and what does it aim to do?

The Joint Learning Initiative on Children and Ethnic Diversity (JLICED) is a global network of leading researchers, policy-makers and practitioners that aims to reduce racial and ethnic divisions and conflicts and build socially inclusive and respectful communities through the promotion of effective early childhood programs.

How will the JLICED achieve its aims?

The JLICED will do this by:

- **Research** – undertaking research to increase understanding of the ways in which racial and ethnic divisions and conflict impact upon the lives of young children and their families and communities
- **Community Development** – supporting local early childhood organizations, communities and researchers to work in partnership to develop new and innovative early childhood programs aimed at addressing the negative effects of racial and ethnic divisions and conflict
- **Evaluation** – evaluating the effectiveness of early childhood programs in order to contribute to the development of an international evidence base of what types of programs have been found to work for particular children and communities in specific contexts.
- **Dissemination** – providing an international platform for the sharing and disseminating of existing research and practice with regard to racial and ethnic diversity and young children

What are the values underpinning the work of the JLICED?

The work of the JLICED will be underpinned by three core values:

- **Children's rights based** – a commitment in all that is done to understand, respect and honor the rights of young children. In practice this will include: focusing on the experiences and perspectives of the children themselves; encouraging their active participation in all aspects of the design, delivery and evaluation of early childhood programs; and ensuring that all programs are fully compliant with recognized children's rights standards.

- **Outcomes focused** – a commitment to the development of early childhood programs that can lead to demonstrable improvements in the lives of young children and their parents and communities. In practice this will include: being explicit about what it is that early childhood programs aim to achieve; setting clearly defined program outcomes for children and their parents and communities that are measurable or in some other way verifiable; approaching the development of early childhood programs clearly and logically with the aim of devising the most effective ways of achieving the outcomes specified; and being committed to evaluating the effectiveness of the programs developed specifically in terms of whether it has achieved their specific outcomes.
- **Evidence informed** – a commitment to ensuring that the design and delivery of early childhood programs are informed by the best available evidence. In practice this will include: promoting indepth qualitative research that can help understand the complex ways in which ethnic divisions and conflict impact upon the lives, experiences and perspectives of young children and their families and communities; promoting larger-scale survey research to help understand the extent to which ethnic divisions and conflict tend to impact upon the lives of young children and how that varies between differing groups of children; and undertaking evaluations of early childhood programs using randomized controlled trials and quasi-experimental designs alongside qualitative case studies to assess whether particular programs have actually been effective in improving outcomes for young children and, if so, why.

What will the JLICED actually do over the coming years?

With the generous support of the Bernard van Leer Foundation and Atlantic Philanthropies, the JLICED currently has funding for a three year program of work that seeks to achieve the following key outputs:

- The establishment and maintenance of a **website** for the JLICED that will: provide up-to-date news and information on the work of the JLICED; contain open and fully-searchable databases of existing research and practice; and make available all of the reports and other resources produced by the JLICED.
- The production of a series of **guides and resources** to help local organizations and researchers design, deliver and evaluate early childhood programs that include a focus on racial and ethnic diversity.
- The development of **strategic partnerships** with local early childhood organizations and researchers in a number of regions characterized by racial or ethnic divisions and/or conflict and the securing of sufficient additional funding to enable work to begin on designing, delivering and evaluating new and innovative early childhood programs aimed at promoting socially inclusive and respectful communities.
- Towards the end of the three year period, to organize an **international conference** with the aim of: disseminating the work of the JLICED to date; drawing together and beginning to build supportive networks between the key organizations and researchers to be involved in the development of new programs; and launching this next phase of the JLICED's work.

These first three years therefore represent the **development phase** of the JLICED. Beyond this, the longer-term goal of the JLICED is to reach the position beyond year three where it can begin to work directly with local organizations and researchers to promote and support the development, delivery and evaluation of new early childhood programs.

How will the JLICED be organized?

The core work and activities associated with the JLICED will take place through six Learning Groups:

- **Program Development (Racial and Ethnic Divisions) Learning Group** – this group will focus on sharing and disseminating knowledge and expertise in relation to the development and delivery of early childhood programs in regions characterized by racial and/or ethnic divisions.
- **Program Development (Racial and Ethnic Conflict) Learning Group** – this group will also be concerned with sharing and disseminating knowledge and expertise in relation to the development and delivery of early childhood programs but with a particular focus on the specific challenges and problems that arise from doing this in regions that are either experiencing significant armed conflict and/or emerging out of armed conflict.
- **Children, Race and Ethnicity Learning Group** – this group will focus on developing understanding of the ways in which racial and ethnic divisions and/or conflict impact upon young children and their families and communities through promoting and supporting the development of innovative approaches to in-depth and situated qualitative research.
- **Survey and Evaluation Learning Group** – this group will focus on: developing understanding of the wider incidence of racial and ethnic attitudes and identities among young children and their families and communities, and also the factors that tend to be associated with these, through large-scale surveys; and also on the evaluation of early childhood programs through the development and use of randomized controlled trials, quasi-experimental research designs and other research designs as appropriate.
- **Children's Rights and Advocacy Learning Group** – this group will focus on developing approaches to the application of a children's rights framework to the design, delivery and evaluation of early childhood programs as well as in relation to being effective advocates for children and their families and communities.
- **Social Inclusion and Early Childhood Programs Learning Group** – this group will focus on developing our understanding of the wider social, political and economic contexts of early childhood services internationally, particularly with the aim of developing wider strategies to engage governments and other national and international organizations to promote and support the design and delivery of early childhood programs aimed at addressing racial and ethnic divisions and conflicts.

The activities and outputs of each of these Learning Groups will be overseen and coordinated by a **Steering Committee** made up of the Co-Chairs of each of the Learning Groups and led by the Co-Directors of the JLICED, Prof. Paul Connolly and Prof. Tony Gallagher (Queen's University Belfast). The Co-Directors of the JLICED will, in turn, be supported by a small secretariat based at Queen's University Belfast, comprising a part-time Project Manager (40%) and Project Administrator (50%).

The membership of the Steering Committee is as overleaf:

Co-Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof. Paul Connolly, Queen’s University Belfast, Northern Ireland • Prof. Tony Gallagher, Queen’s University Belfast, Northern Ireland
Program Development (Racial and Ethnic Divisions) Learning Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Michel Vandebroek, University of Ghent, Belgium • Dra. Ileana Seda-Santana, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México
Program Development (Racial and Ethnic Conflict) Learning Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Siobhan Fitzpatrick, CEO, Early Years – The Organization for Young Children (Northern Ireland) • Marta Arango, Executive Director, CINDE - International Centre for Education and Human Development (Colombia)
Children, Race and Ethnicity Learning Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof. Glenda MacNaughton, University of Melbourne (Australia) • Sri Marpinjun, Executive Director, LSPPA (Indonesia)
Survey and Evaluation Learning Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof. Frances Aboud, McGill University (Canada) • Prof. Colin Tredoux, Cape Town University (South Africa)
Children’s Rights and Advocacy Learning Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mercy Musomi, Executive Director, Girl Child Network (Kenya) • Prof. Beth Blue Swadener, Arizona State University (USA)
Social Inclusion and Early Childhood Programs Learning Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr Jacqueline Hayden, Bernard van Leer Foundation (The Netherlands) • tba

What will happen next?

An inaugural meeting of the Steering Committee for the JLICED will take place On 8-9 April 2008 at which time a detailed three year Business Plan for the JLICED will be considered and agreed; a website for the JLICED will be developed and agreed; and Learning Group Co-Chairs will begin developing detailed action plans for their respective Groups. A detailed schedule of work is already set out for the Steering Committee and its associated Learning Groups for the next three years.

Where can I find out further information about the JLICED?

For further information please contact Prof. Paul Connolly, Co-Director of the JLICED, at: paul.connolly@qub.ac.uk or soon at: www.jliced.org