

Using Childlink as a teaching and study aid for Foundation Degree in Early Years.

Why should I use Childlink?

- **Childlink** is an innovative online database focusing on Legislation, Policies and Practices regarding children, young people and families who live in the United Kingdom and on the island of Ireland.
- Updated daily **Childlink** while being current also has an archive of over 2 million pages of information. Students are able to print pages from Childlink to include in their work without any copyright restrictions.
- **Childlink** provides information on Education, Welfare, Lifestyle, Justice, Benefit Issues, Youth Affairs, Health and Employment. Childlink can help save students and teachers research time as all the information has been gathered from various sources which can now be found easily in one single source.
- **Childlink** is tailored to provide information to those who work in a Child Care setting and who have a substantial degree of autonomy, covering a wide range of complex activities and be responsible for managing, training and/or supervising others.

What is the purpose of this guide?

- This is a short guide for those who have a high level of responsibility for child development. The role could also include those working on the policy and practice governing early years settings.
- The sample questions in this guide are based upon the structure for the Foundation Degree in Early Years. However they illustrate how **Childlink** can be used in the teaching of this subject regardless of syllabus.

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When should I use the Search Facility of Childlink?

With over two million pages online the Early Years examples below illustrate just how easy it is to use the search facility to quickly and accurately find a wide variety of information.

Example 1

There are many definitions of “Early Years” but our preferred one for this guide is taken from The Edinburgh Council’s Education Service Improvement Plan.

You can access this definition by following the simple steps below.

- Enter **early years** into the search box at the top of the screen and select **Papers** from the **Categories** menu. Then press the **go** button.
- On the search results page click on the entry entitled **‘Definition of Early Years’**. This will enable you to view the definition.

Example 2

When undertaking a Foundation Degree in Early Years it is important that students have a substantial knowledge of the legislative context in which they operate.

These include:

- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 (ratified by UK 1992)
- Children Act 1989 (primary legislation)
- Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998
- Children Act 2004 and subsequent legislation
- Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000
- Special Education Needs and Disability Act 2001
- Education Act 2005

You can find legislation by following the example below.

- Enter **UN Convention** into the search box at the top of the screen, select **Legislation** from the **Categories** menu and **UK** from the **Regions** menu. Then press the **go** button.
- On the search results page select the entry **“UN Convention on the Rights of the Child”** to view the UN Convention.

Example 3

Understanding of Child Development in all its aspects are crucial when undertaking this Foundation Degree. There are many key documents covering a wide range of Child Development issues. The following documents are a sample of related papers which can be accessed on Childlink.

- Full Day Care - National Standards for under 8 day care and childminding (2003)
- All about... Anti Discriminatory Practice (2004)
- Choice for parents, the best start for children: a ten year strategy for childcare (2004)
- Every Child Matters: Change for Children (2004) and subsequent updates
- Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners (2004)
- Principles for early years education (2004)
- Choice for parents, the best start for children: making it happen (2006)
- Practice Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2007)

You can find documents by following the example below.

- Enter **principles of early years education** into the search box at the top of the screen and select **Papers** from the **Categories** Menu. Then press the **go** button.
- On the search results page select the first entry **‘Principles for early years education’** to view the relevant document.

Example 4

Understanding communication, language, literacy and numeracy is crucial when undertaking this Foundation Degree. There are many key documents covering these issues. The following documents are a sample of related papers which can be accessed on Childlink.

- Promoting Speech and Language Development - guidance for Sure Start programmes (2001)
- The national literacy and numeracy strategies and the primary curriculum (2003)
- What Works for Children with Difficulties in Mathematics? (2004)
- The national literacy and numeracy strategies and the primary curriculum (2005)
- Every language matters: An evaluation of the extent and impact of initial training to teach a wider range of world languages (2008)
- Review of services for Children and Young People (0-19) with Speech, Language and Communication Needs (2008)

You can find documents by following the example below.

- Enter **what works for children with difficulties in mathematics** into the search box at the top of the screen and select **Papers** from the **Categories** Menu. Then press the **go** button.
- On the search results page select the first entry '**What Works for Children with Difficulties in Mathematics?**' to view the relevant document.

Example 5

Understanding physical and creative development is crucial when undertaking this Foundation Degree. There are many key documents covering these issues. The following documents are a sample of related papers which can be accessed on Childlink.

- Time for Play - Encouraging greater play opportunities for children and young people (2006)
- Confident, capable and creative: supporting boys' achievements (2007)
- Creative Partnerships and the Curriculum (2007)

You can find documents by following the example below.

- Enter **creative partnerships and the curriculum** into the search box at the top of the screen and select **Papers** from the **Categories** Menu. Then press the **go** button.
- On the search results page select the first entry '**Creative Partnerships and the Curriculum**' to view the relevant document.

Search Tips

Childlink has over two million pages and has extensive information on all major topics relating to children and families. To maximise the use of this service we provide the following search tips.

- The searches in **Childlink** are not case sensitive so entering **EARLY YEARS** or **early years** will get the same results.
- By default **Childlink's** search engine tries to locate items which have exact matches for all of the words entered in your search query. If that fails, it then tries to locate items which contain any words in your search query.
- **Childlink** sorts the results of a search in order of relevance.
- If you are unable to find the information you require online you may revert to our online request service where we endeavour to source such information within 24 hours.

Browsing the Childlink site

Childlink's strength is that it is easy to navigate the relevant archives relating to many topics in Family and Child Care. The Archives have been organised into six categories. They are:

- Welfare
- Education
- Health
- Justice
- Youth
- Employment

Each category has been set out in the same standardised format ensuring consistency and quick retrieval of appropriate information. **Childlink** operates a three click approach which ensures that students only need three clicks at any time to access the required information.

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