

# OMEF WORLD PROJECT ON EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

## OMEF Ireland

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### Interviews conducted by:

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OMEF has appointed Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) as the major project for the coming years. Ireland was represented at the OMEF World Assembly in Lagos in August 2009 when the project of interviewing children about the OMEF 2010 Congress Logo was introduced.

OMEF Ireland holds its annual general meeting in September each year and as part of this meeting in 2009 a presentation was made informing members about the project and inviting them to participate. Information Packs had been compiled giving full details of the project and were available. The Project Poster was also well displayed.

A similar presentation was also made to third year students studying for a B.A. (Honours) Degree in Early Childhood Studies at University College Cork in September 2009.

### Participation:

Seven female adults agreed to carry out the interviews at seven different locations. The age range of the children interviewed was three to six years. Twenty Five girls and thirty two boys were engaged in the interviews. Accepted national standards for research with children, including institutional approval,

parent and child consent and confidentiality were strictly adhered to.

The interviews were carried out with individual children, in pairs and also in groups. Three preschools, two public schools and two private homes were used for the interviews. Interviews were conducted in different parts of the region incorporating city and rural areas. The institutions referred to are the public school system in Ireland where children can start formal school from the age of four. Two of the interviews were conducted in the Junior and Senior Infant classes - the first two years in formal school. Children in these classes were aged between four and six.

One of the group interviewers used a scanner to scan the OMEP 2010 Logo on the computer and onto the White Electronic Board in the classroom so that it was enlarged for the children to clearly see and observe the poster. Others enlarged and laminated the poster.

After a group interview one of the interviewers read a very interesting and appropriate book to the group called "Dinosaurs and all that rubbish" by Michael Foreman. She said that "This book is a colourful vibrant book in relation to environmental issues that we face in our world today. It is about a man going up to the stars in his rocket and while he is there strange things happen on earth".

**Reference: Foreman, Michael (1993) 'Dinosaurs and all that rubbish', Puffin Books, U.K.**

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**Question A: What is going on? What can you see in this picture?**

**A1: All together now let's clean up the planet**

They are scrubbing it

Boys and girls. A big boy cleaning

I think they are cleaning the circle

Children cleaning the planet

Cleaning the planet up and down

Cleaning the planet with a jug

A girl washing

A cloth and brushes

The children are washing the world to keep it clean

A little girl toughening the planet

People and a planet

They are looking at that thing, planet earth. They are oiling it, washing it.

A boy helping to clean the planet, it must be dirty

### **A2: Some water needed**

The children are watering the world

A bucket with water

A boy with a watering can

### **A3: There's more to this than a planet**

There is a world in it

They are making the world

The boys and girls are making the world

Children were painting the world

I see children putting stuff on stuff. No they are painting

I think they are eating the moon and painting it

**A4: We don't all see things in the same way**

A plate

A football

A map ball

Ball

A man painting with a bucket and a bowl

A big ball and a girl with blond hair she helping man. Cleaning with sponge we have a sponge and a towel like them

Boy with a cup

A pot, using a pot

I see a bowl of carrots

Do not know, there's loads of children

I see a girl I see a blue top I see a flower I see girl with blond hair girl with orange trousers painting a ball a huge ball.

**Question B: Why are they doing this?**

**B1: Let's clean up the dirt**

Because it might not turn, to make it shine

They are cleaning the earth

Because it is dirty

A girl is cleaning because she wants to

To clean the planet

Because it is a dirty planet

It needs cleaning

### **B2: More water needed**

The children are washing the world to keep it clean

Tidying it up with water

To keep it watered

A boy is pouring water on map ball because he likes it

The children are washing the world to keep it clean

### **B3: Let's get artistic!**

To make it all nice. They have buckets of paint

Because they are hungry and they want to paint at the same time

They want to paint the ball they passing paint, the boxes of paint

The ball will be clean the man and his friends paint it, they all cleaning the ball together.

I think they paint all the ball it be nice and new, my daddy paint the door blue the boy has a blue tee shirt the girl has orange jeans and she black hair she helping to paint too.

Why they standing on top they paint top as well? I think they make handprints on ball no that sponge they cleaning off dirty paint with sponge then they have clean hands.

**B4: What caused this in the first place?**

Because there is a dinosaur that splashed on the mud

Because there is a goo-monster

They are putting their hands on it

Don't know

A mucky punching

**Question C: Anything more?**

**C1: We can do this**

Well, there's a toothbrush in the bowl, to make the world clean

It can be clean

The kids are cleaning the world

They are all helping to clean it up

It must be dirty that's why there is lots of water

A boy is using a watering can to clean

One girl is scrubbing the planet

A girl is washing

**C2: There's more to this than cleaning you know**

They are protecting the world

The world is dying and they are saving it from dying

How come is the world dying

Because t-rexus is going to stick his claws on the world

**C3: More paint needed**

They have lots of buckets of paint. I don't like the colours

No

They look really hungry because they are using the paint buckets to break it up.

**C4: No need to get our socks wet**

One boy's socks are wet from all the water

A girl has no shoes and her socks are all wet

**Question D: Anything else?**

**D1: Who's really behind all this dirt?**

The children they probably want to clean all over the world, to make the world nice and clean and shiny. They are trying to keep the government clean. The government means that, they are like the presidents but different.

It is like the world is a bit dirty and they need to clean all the world.

It probably got all muddy and it was raining.

**D2: Littering is a serious business**

They are trying to keep the world clean, cause em everyone is throwing litter around the place.

I know why they are cleaning the world, because they are trying to show you to stop littering, because if you litter your destroying your country.

I think they are trying to get litter off the world by throwing all the rubbish around the floor.

Then the world could get too much litter.  
Everybody might slip over it and get hurt.

### **D3: More paint**

I think they are, a person is, it looks like he is painting it, maybe because they just made it and they want to make it cleaner. They are painting it green and blue, cause it looks like the earth.

### **D4: More water**

A girl is putting water on the grass to help it grow for the horses  
They are all wet from the water

There's one woman and she is pouring water over the world, I think the water is going into the world and planting all flowers.

### **D5: Just wet socks this time**

I can see that they are in their socks. I can see that the world is in mud. Because if they are in their socks, the socks can get muddy instead of their shoes, maybe their mother and Dad don't want their shoes to be getting dirty.

There is a boy with his shoes off. There is a girl clearing the grass. She has no shoes on her and her socks are all wet

### **D6: A World Family**

I can see they are helping each other, it means they are being friendly to one another. Being nice, the world is like a family.

The people would be friendly with the world, and other people would be friendly with people in the world.

A toothbrush more flowers they passing a bucket I see boy kneeling he painting too is he good boy cos helping?

All good all painting together are they friends?

### **D7: A Green School Committee**

We have a green school committee working in the school

There is two in here; me and (mentions name of other child) are the youngest in it.

We talk about (in the Green Committee) all the litter and what to do for Christmas.

We did posters of litter, we wrote down something, and me and (names other child) were chosen from this class.

If there was litter around the place, this person cleaned it up, and then it wouldn't be fair if that person threw the litter.

When you are littering in (mentions home town) and it is Christmas and it would be unfair to litter at Christmas.

Christmas is really special for Jesus and God, and you can't be littering, and you are upsetting God.

### **D8: Other Perspectives**

I think they got a big picture through the world and they now, like, are pretending it's the real world then cleaning it.

We need it round like a ball, because there is two children behind it. It looks like they are really busy.

I can see Cork

Boys and girls

Water

Nope, no

When is lunch? I'm hungry now.

### **Question E: What do the children say 'Sustainable Development' means?**

#### **E1: The wisdom of the young child**

I think it might mean, like, to save the world for later

Stop littering

Well, I think, it's kind of hard to explain but I do know what it means, sustainable would be like if the world was toxic, it wouldn't be sustainable, but if it wasn't toxic

it would be sustainable.

I heard it off my Dad, off the discovery channel

I want to be on TV

**Finally** - an artistic impression from a three year old:

- We asked a three year old boy to look at the picture:

1. *What do you see?* - A rocket, a spaceship.

2. *What is going on?* - It is a big rock and the girl is poking at the rock.

and to make a drawing of it. Please see drawing on last page



