



The Impact of ‘The Troubles’ on Young Children’s Attitudes and Identities in Northern Ireland

- **Outline of the Research Studies**
- **The Emergence of Ethnic Attitudes in the Early Years**
- **The Consolidation and Development of Ethnic Attitudes in the Middle Years**
- **Implications of the Findings**



Outline of the Research Studies

- **Large-Scale Quantitative Study of 352 3-6 year olds chosen randomly across Northern Ireland**
- **Indepth Qualitative Study of 3-4, 7-8 and 10-11 year olds in two 'peaceline' areas in Belfast**



The Emergence of Ethnic Attitudes in the Early Years

Four levels of analysis:

- Ethnic Preferences
- Ethnic Awareness
- Ethnic Identification
- Ethnic Prejudice



The Consolidation and Development of Ethnic Attitudes in the Middle Years

- **Children developing greater awareness through relationships at school and play outside**
- **Developing identification with and support for paramilitaries**
- **Understanding increasing throughout the middle years**
- **Negative attitudes less rigid and fixed**



Implications of the Findings

- **Need to begin promoting understanding and respect for diversity from the age of 3 onwards**
- **From the ages of 5-6, need to develop strategies to encourage children to begin to reflect upon their prejudices and identities**
- **Need to work in partnership with parents and local communities**