

# Young Children are Everybody's Business



BvLF

is created with shares from the Royal Package Industries van Leer

- 1949 - Bernard van Leer, owner of Royal Packing Industries van Leer, sets up a philanthropic foundation in Lucerne, Switzerland. It has broad humanitarian goals and focuses initially on the physically handicapped.
- 1958 - Death of Bernard van Leer. His son, Oscar van Leer, takes charge of the foundation.



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Bernard van Leer  Foundation

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60 Years Investing in Young Children

## Innovations Based on Science

In the deprived Rutland Street area of Dublin, BvLF funds a pioneering intervention inspired by Piaget's research on children's development. Later studies confirm its long-term impact.



Oscar van Leer becomes interested in the emerging science of children's development. - 1963

The foundation establishes its base in The Hague, The Netherlands, and starts its first international youth-oriented project in Kingston, Jamaica. - 1966

## 1990s

### National Services are Established

Increasingly, countries in which BvLF has been working for decades are now establishing nationwide state services for young children – including in Africa, Europe, Latin America and the Middle East.

1990 - The Bernard van Leer Foundation establishes joint ventures with other privately endowed foundations and multilateral institutions to invest in young children.

1992 - The Bernard van Leer Foundation begins to evaluate and disseminate its impact on early childhood development.

1996 - The foundation's trustees float Royal Packaging Industries Van Leer on the stock exchange.



## Involving Communities in the Classroom

BvLF encourages active learning and community involvement in working class areas of Amsterdam, a model that spreads across the Netherlands and influences today's "Brede School" movement.



Bernard van Leer Foundation starts publishing newsletters to share knowledge about the latest developments in research on children's development. - 1970

The Bernard van Leer Foundation is formally incorporated in The Netherlands. - 1976

## 2000s

### Young Children Rise Up the Agenda

With cutting-edge neuroscience proving the importance of the early years, BvLF supports the United Nations in publishing authoritative guidance on how children's rights should be applied to very young children.



2001 - After the sale of Royal Packaging Industries Van Leer, Bernard van Leer Foundation endowment is invested in a diverse portfolio.

2009 - As it marks its 60th anniversary, the Bernard van Leer Foundation's investments reach 1.1 million children.

## In the Vanguard of Children's Rights

The Foundation's work in Venezuela contributes to one of the world's first national laws on children's rights, boosting the movement that gets the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child passed in 1989.



By now the foundation is investing in 150 projects spread across 41 countries. - 1980

Oscar van Leer decides to consolidate investments on children aged from 0 to 8. - 1981

## The future

### A Fair Start for all Children

In a changing world, children face new challenges. BvLF is responding by forging new partnerships and encouraging new advocates for children. Young children are everybody's business.

