



toddler

Towards Opportunities for Disadvantaged and Diverse Learners on the Early childhood Road

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OUTSPRING

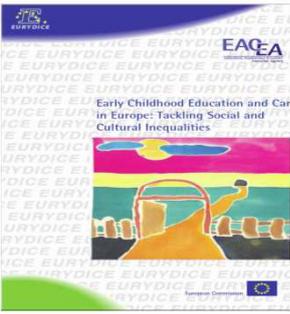
Challenges for the coming years:

- To give more attention to 0-3 years old children, and to remove the split between childcare and early childhood education
- To reduce child poverty and discrimination against children from low income and diverse families
- To provide more active support to families, and in particular to women
- Preserve the traditions of kindergarten pedagogy

(John Bennett, EECERA –conference 2008)



EACEA 2009:



Starting Point 1

A range of socioeconomic factors can have a significant negative impact on children's psychological development and chances of success in school. These includes:

- poverty
- belonging to disadvantaged social classes
- functional illiteracy and low level of education attainment of parents
- migrant families

(Eurydice 2009, p.11).



Starting Point 2

Early stimulation and learning is an important basis for children's opportunities in life:

- “It is both more efficient and more equitable to invest in **education very early**: correcting failure later on is not merely inequitable, but highly inefficient in comparison. This is not only because pre-primary education **facilitates later learning**, but also because a substantial body of evidence shows that, especially for **disadvantage children**, it can produce large socio-economic returns”.

(Jàn Figel, EU-Commissioner. Eurydice 2009, p. 3).



TODDLER: a child who has recently learned to walk



The overall aims of the TODDLER-project

To reduce the number of drop outs from school by offering

- toddlers from disadvantaged backgrounds an enriched learning environment in ECEC settings
- better support to the parents

To ensure a competent personnel to meet the educational needs of these toddlers

- develop high quality education of staff (EYP) and teachers

Objectives

1. We want to show the educational potential of high quality education and care in centre-based settings for toddlers, in particular for those from low education/low income/migrant families.
2. We want to raise awareness towards the educational benefits of high quality ECEC for toddlers at risk and improve curriculum and teaching strategies of teacher education/in-service training.
3. We will contribute to a shift in the way provision for children under 3 is perceived.

Content

- **State of the Art:** Comparing and analysing ECEC for toddlers in participating countries (posters)
- **Promoting language learning in multilingual and multicultural setting** (workshop)
- **Promoting wellbeing** (workshop)
- **Promoting parental involvement** (workshop)
- **Promoting reflective thinking through reflective sessions**

Target Groups

1. Teachers in ECEC-settings for toddlers/Early years Practitioners (EYPs)
2. Teacher educators
3. Student teachers
4. Policy makers/school authorities

Outcome:

Course and curriculum development

- A one week European in-service training course for staff working with toddlers (Comenius – Grundtvig Training Database)
- A course module (5ECTS) to be used in initial teacher training in the 9 universities involved in TODDLER
- www.toddlerineurope.eu
- Forthcoming: A two weeks European course for student teachers and teacher trainers (Comenius Intensive Programme)

ECEC a field in change

Project period November 2010 - October 2013
3 years of developing the course materials
3 years of change in ECEC policies in 8 countries

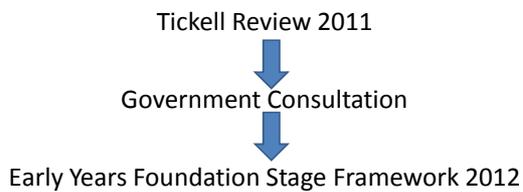
An example from England

The current situation in England

TODDLER PROJECT
Helen Sutherland
Jan Styman
Kingston University

Changes in the Early Years' field in England since the TODDLER Project began.....

Changes to the Early Years Curriculum Framework



Changes to Early Years Provision and Qualifications



The following table shows our proposed new nursery ratios compared to the current rule in England and in other countries:

Figure 1 Nursery ratios summary

| Provider | Nurseries | | | |
|--|-----------|------|-------------|-------------|
| | Under 1 | 1 | 2 | 3+ |
| England (current ratios) | 1:3 | 1:3 | 1:4 | 1:8 or 1:13 |
| England (proposed ratios where there are high quality staff) | 1:4 | 1:4 | 1:6 | 1:8 or 1:13 |
| Netherlands | 1:4 | 1:5 | 1:6 | 1:8 |
| France | 1:5 | 1:8 | 1:8 or 1:12 | 1:8 or 1:26 |
| Ireland | 1:3 | 1:5 | 1:6 or 1:11 | 1:8 or 1:11 |
| Denmark | None | None | None | None |
| Germany | None | None | None | None |
| Sweden | None | None | None | None |

Early Years Professional Status



Funding for Childcare

Early Years Entitlement for 3-4 year olds

15 hours per week for 38 weeks of the year
for all 3-4 year olds

Early Education for 2 year olds

20% of 2 year olds are eligible for 570 hours per year for children
whose family meet the criteria (2013)

From 2014, the criteria has widened to include more children

Early Years Provision in England



Picture Slideshow Advantage Day Nursery (Privately Funded)



Childs Play Nursery (Privately Funded)

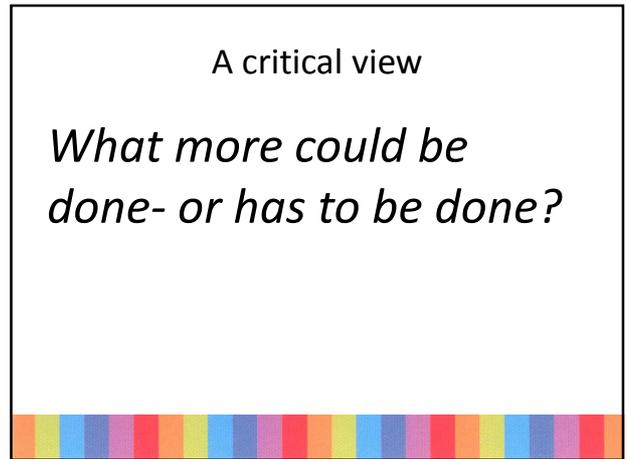
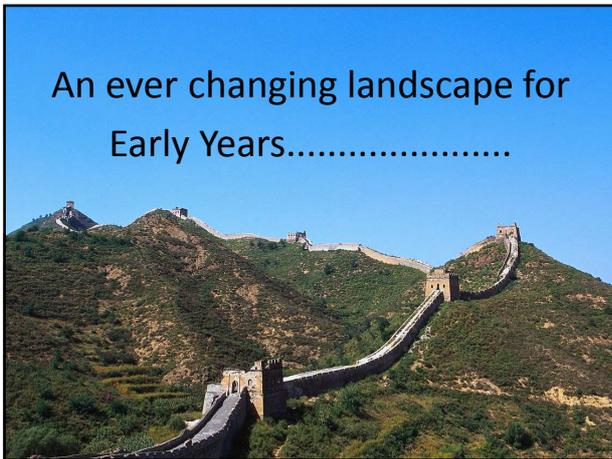


Kingston Hill Children's Centre (Government Funded)



The Grange Children's Centre (Government Funded)





Research: Toddlers' peer culture in play

A "toddling style of play" characterized by movement, playfulness and repetition. Toddlers create play routines together (e.g "corridor tours"). Toddlers understand each other's purpose and meaning in the common game, mostly through their bodily actions.

This kind of group play is ascribed existential value, as toddlers' make experiences of togetherness.

(Løkken, 2008)

Research: Growing friendships

Friendships between toddlers are built up over time through encounters in play and several experiences of a common «we». Toddlers create meaning together by using humour and bodily actions. They show the desire to protect their friendships. The encounters may be random, but most often children seek out for each other deliberately.

(Greve 2008)

Research: Interactions in play between children of ethnic minority and ethnic majority backgrounds

- PhD-research
- One ECEC-setting
- Children aged 2.5- 5.5
- 10 children of ethnic minority background, 24 children of ethnic majority background
- 2.5 months field study

(Zachrisen, 2013)

4 positions in interethnic play

A leading position: The child has influence on the content, form and development of the play. Good opportunities for self- and co-determination.

A position as follower: The child has influence, some self-determination, no co-determination. Little responsibility for organising and maintaining the play.

4 positions in interethnic play

Equal positions: The children have about the same kind of influence and self-determination, opportunities for control and to share experiences with others.

A potential actor: The child is in the background or in the border area. Observe and gather knowledge about the play. Participate on invitation.

Findings

Mostly leading positions: Children of ethnic majority background

Mostly followers positions: Children of ethnic minority background

Findings

All situations in which children of ethnic minority background have a

- leading position,
 - equal position or
 - manage to come into the play from a position as a potential actor
- are based on physical play.

Question

Given this is the situation in ECEC-settings in Europe (age 3-5);

How can we promote toddlers' play to improve children's opportunities for development and a better life in a pluralistic Europe?

European added value

- By looking at other ways of working, we are learning about ourselves and our work.
- Differences in contexts and conditions
- Many shared ideas of «good practice»
- New questions to reflect on and re-think
- New knowledge and other ways of working
- Improved understanding between Europeans

Let's share, learn and inspire each other!

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