

DVD/film: Parental Involvement

Guidelines for instructors

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Disclaimer:

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Introduction

This DVD/film is made in connection to the guideline book about “Parental Involvement in Toddler’s Education”. The concepts and the importance of parental involvement are presented there.

The DVD/film is meant to show an example of good practice in this field. The setting is a so-called Open Kindergarten, where caregivers come together with their child to take part in the pedagogical environment of an ECE-setting. The caregiver can be parents on parental-leave (in Norway, the mothers and fathers has to share this one year leave), grandparents, au-pairs etc. There are similar settings in other countries for instance in Great Britain called Family Centres, and in Australia called Supervised Playgroups. This kind of ECEC might recruit parents and children who often are described as “families hard to reach”. Several reasons could lie behind. Some parents are not fond of leaving their child to other caregivers, some do not know what ECE can offer, some do not think that early education matters and some cannot afford the costs.

Our intention in the TODDLER-project is to inspire professionals to create a rich learning environment for children from diverse backgrounds. Because of that, it is interesting to have a closer look at the Open Kindergarten to explore how they manage to reach out to a diverse group of families.

In this Open Kindergarten you will find children from many nationalities with different languages and cultures. The children’s language learning is a central topic in this ECE. Norwegian is used as the main language, but caregivers are encouraged to use their mother tongue. This DVD/film may also be a learning material about bilingual language learning for the young child. Therefore it can also be used when working with the module “Promoting and Supporting Language Development in Multilingual and Multicultural Early Childhood Settings”.

The overall aim of the TODDLER-project is to show the educational potential of high quality education and care for toddlers and in particular for those from low education/low income/migrant families. This DVD/film illustrates how to work with a mix of migrant families and local families. All children will benefit from a high quality parental involvement. This course offers students and early years’ practitioners the opportunity to identify important elements in such kind of parent-staff relation.

This film is made by the University of Stavanger, and contains situations from daily life in the Open Kindergarten as well as interviews with parents and the preschool teacher. Written and informed consent for participation from parents and staff has been obtained in relation to the roles and legislations in Norway. The film is made according to the same rules. The script is based on observations and dialogues with staff and parents. We would like to thank the staff and parents in the Open Kindergarten for their kindly collaboration.



1. Goals

1. Participants gain a deeper understanding of the importance of supporting parents/ caregivers in the upbringing of their children, and its impact especially for disadvantaged children.
2. Participants learn to identify elements that contribute to a good parent-staff relationship.
3. Participants learn to analyse and value significant moments in practice from different viewpoints, both the situations on the film and situations in their own practice.



2. Content, activities and teaching materials

The content is a DVD/film (22 minutes).

Key elements illustrated on the DVD/film are:

Staff and parents/caregivers working together with children in various situations; play, meals, circle-time, baby song etc.

Parents` voices

Discussion circle with parents/caregiver and staff (formal guidance)

Informal guidance of parents/caregiver in day-to day situations in ECE

International Child Development Programme (ICDP)

Bilingual language support

Establishing network between parents

Atmosphere

Children` and parents` wellbeing

Activities

a. Activate participants prior knowledge.

- ask participants to write down individually what they think are important elements in a good parent-staff relation

- summarize in plenary the elements the participant bring up. Write down.

b. Show the DVD/film.

c. Reflections and discussion afterwards.

Possible questions:

- was there anything in the film that surprised you?
- was there anything you disagreed with?
- could you observe some of the elements written down in the first part of the session when you saw the film?



- did you discover other elements that contribute to a qualitative good parental involvement?
(This can be done in pairs or small groups, and discussed in plenary).

Comment to teacher:

For some students some episodes or working stiles shown in the film can be strange, compared to their experience. If that is the case in your group it is better to talk about it (1. and 2. question) before you continue to the other questions. Otherwise this can create a zone of disturbance.

After or during the discussion you may also introduce the 7 objectives in the International Child Development Programme (as the work in this open kindergarten is based on ICDP), and use them to enrich the further discussion.

1. To influence the caregiver's experience of the child in a positive way, so that the caregiver can identify with and 'feel with the child', sense the child's state and needs and adjust her/his caring actions to the child's needs and initiatives.
2. To strengthen self-confidence in the caregiver.
3. To give children the opportunity to be heard, listened to and responded to by opening up a space for meaningful dialogues with adults.
4. To give children opportunities to follow their own initiatives giving them support when needed, but without taking over the control of the situation from the children.
5. To promote a sensitive emotional-expressive communication between caregiver and child that may lead to a positive emotional and developmental relationship between the two.
6. To promote an enriching, stimulating interaction between caregiver and child that expands and guides the child's experiences and actions in relation to the surrounding world.
7. To reactivate indigenous child-rearing practices and values, including the child culture of play, games, songs and co-operative activities.

You may also use the guideline book "Parental Involvement in toddler`s education" or other concepts/theories and principles about parent involvement to enrich the discussion.

Suming up:



Is there anything we can learn from this film?
Implications for your own practice?

Teaching Materials

DVD/film (22 minutes)

Guideline book: Parental involvement in toddler`s education.

Student Materials

Guideline book Parental involvement in toddler`s education.

3. Timing

3 hours

4. Assessment requirements

The assessment should be embedded in the other modules of the course.

5. References

International Child Development Programme: <http://www.icdp.info/>



Jackson, D. (2013): Creating a place to “be”: unpacking the facilitation role in three supported playgroups in Australia. In *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, 2013, Vol. 21, No. 1, 77-93. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1350293X.2012.760345>

