



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

## Report

# Promoting the Wellbeing of Toddlers within Europe

**Compiled by:** Helen Sutherland and Jan Styman  
Kingston University, England

**Contribution from:** Annelies Depuydt and Veerle Martens  
University College Arteveldehogeschool, Belgium

Julie David  
Haute Ecole Libre Mosane and ENCBW, Belgium

Ove Steiner Rasmussen  
University College South Denmark, Denmark

Helen Sutherland and Jan Styman  
Kingston University, England

Alexandra Hackel, Timo Meister and Euline Cutrim Schmid  
University of Education Schwäbisch Gmünd, Germany

Monika Rothle and Elisabeth Ianke Morkeseth  
University of Stavanger, Norway

Maria João Cardona  
Instituto Politécnico de Santarém, Portugal

Mona Vintila  
West University of Timisoara, Romania

Carme Flores, Angels Geis and Cristina Corcoll  
Universitat Ramon Lull, Spain

## Introduction to the Report

The TODDLER Project focuses on one of the EU Commission's priority themes for 2009-2010 identified in EURYDICE (2009), by supporting early years' practitioners, teachers and students in their understanding of how to promote development of toddlers (aged 18 to 36 months) from diverse and disadvantaged backgrounds.

“The policy challenge, therefore, is to (re)build (current) systems of early childhood care and education that meet crucial design features as outlined above, that provide high quality care and education for all children, that are integrated, attractive and affordable to all families regardless social class or minority status, yet that is sensitive to differing educational needs and to compensate early educational disadvantages” (EURYDICE, 2009:39)

The aim of the TODDLER Project is to develop reflective practitioners who can promote and improve practice to provide effective early years care and education for diverse and disadvantaged toddlers in reaching their full potential.

This report has been compiled using experiences and expertise from each partner country exploring the different contexts and perspectives of wellbeing that influences practice. These materials have been left verbatim, as far as possible, to maintain the context and originality of each country.

Each partner has been asked to provide a definition of wellbeing and to identify their country's underpinning legislation and research on wellbeing. This information has been compiled into a report/handbook which can be used as teaching materials in conjunction with the PowerPoint.

Contents include:

- Definitions of wellbeing
- Theoretical backgrounds
- Literature Reviews
  - Curriculum documents
  - Piece of National Research
  - Recommended Reading

These materials are photocopyable for teaching purposes.



## Belgium – French

### Definitions of wellbeing

The wellbeing is a pleasant result of meeting the needs of the body and calm. When we talk about wellness in children, the most common dimensions in the research and literature are:

- Quality of life
- Physical and psychological health
- Self-confidence

In the specific literature in the French Community of Belgium, the Centre for Children, Youth and Youth Welfare has identified five indicators of well-being in children:

1. Availability positive. This is the opportunity to live a life as a child adapted to the stage of development in which the child is, due to the fact that no material or moral factor (fear or anxiety) will destroy the possibility that a subjective child to enjoy his rights under the Declaration of the Rights of the Child.
2. Well-being "received". Welfare receipt is the well-being that comes alone without the child should be anything for the cause.
3. The cultural well-being and social development. It requires both a framework and approach of the child. This dimension relates to finding a place (a role, status) within a social group more or less structured.
4. The psychological and moral well-being concerns the fact of feeling good about oneself, to be comfortable (or pleased) with what we are and what we want to become
5. The right to express his own vision and claim what is estimated to be eligible. In other words, the right to have an impact not only on hardware but also the rules established, or even on the principles of legitimacy of the established rules.



## Belgium – French

### Theoretical background to children's wellbeing

Pirard F. (2010) *Pour une évaluation participative de la qualité effective de l'accueil, in collectif sous la direction de Marie-Paule Thollon-Behar : La qualité de l'accueil : quel défi aujourd'hui?* .

(For a participatory evaluation of the actual quality of reception, in the collective under the direction of Marie-Paule Thollon-Behar: The quality of the home: what a challenge today?)

In the rapidly changing landscape of childcare from early childhood, the main purpose of government is to extend the offer to host, often a loss, at lower cost. Faced with this research to optimize the amount, what about quality? What about values that are defended by the services and associations that offer their facilities to smaller, while the clock is ticking, the pressure exerted on the attendance and organization of the service? Must we choose between cost and quality or would it be possible to find a compromise between the two? The key word of this book is "participatory approach", involving all partners, teams, coordinators, parents, policy makers, managers, trainers, but also in mobilizing to provide all children an environment conducive to their well-being and their emotional, intellectual, social

Environments in early childhood are still heavily influenced by an author called Françoise Dolto. Two books seem well represented the views of children and their influence on the choices made in welcome organizations for Toddler.

Dolto française, *La cause des enfants*, 1985 "The cause of children" Never, perhaps, had they spoken in a way as beautiful and fair to the child, of its truth, of his desire. Faced with a collective investigation of multiple subjects: the representation of children in history, its place in society, hospitality at birth, school, Dolto, through his own past, experience as a psychoanalyst of children, mother, too, reacts. In his usual way, stating truths sometimes difficult to hear, through defending the course of education for children against pervers on the side of protection, against the cult of the single standard, the submission to the fashions of the day, the imposition parental model. All their answers are guided by one idea: by respecting the child, we respect the human being.

Dolto française, "Tout est langage" 1989 "Everything is language", Dolto appears as an author who addressed not only to specialists but also to a wide audience. This book contains the contents of a lecture addressed to psychologists, doctors, and social workers. Dolto highlights in this book the importance of speaking the truth to children. In his book, Dolto deals in particular the following questions: how far can we tell the truth to children and are there limits? How can we make certain truths and avoid taboos?

Map document:

I. Biography

II. Psychosomatic effect

III. The child does not meet the desire of its parents in its development

III. The difference between need and desire in the education of children

IV. The importance of truth to children

V. The green houses: a transitional place to live



## Belgium - French

### Literature Review

#### Curriculum Documents

Eurochild (2010) *Annual Report*. Eurochild : avenue des Arts, 1-2B à 1220 Bruxelles (Belgium), available at: [www.eurochild.org](http://www.eurochild.org) (improving the quality of life of children and young people).

Further information is available at:

decet.org: Diversity in early childhood education and training, Available at: [www.one.be](http://www.one.be)

#### National Research

OMS (2004) *Les déterminants sociaux de la Santé*, (Social determinants of health)

Houtman F. (2002) *Accueillir les tout-petits, Oser la qualité, un référentiel psychopédagogique pour des milieux d'accueil de qualité*. ONE.  
(Caring for young children, monitor the quality, a repository for community psychology quality reception)

The process of developing this standard, based in the reality of the French Community of Belgium, is based on the crossroads of different looks, theoretical approaches and experiences, to better understand and transform the reception of toddlers in variety of contexts. The author's objective is to provide a set of knowledge considered relevant to improve the reception of early childhood.

- Need to work on the relationship between family and children (joint-link separation, separation and preparation of the accompanying separation). This requires a partnership between parents and professionals. This position requires a particular professional;
- Accompany the child on the way to strive for self-socialization of the child and the initiative (this can be encouraged during times of personal care, during meals, when toilet training). Also, the practices of cultural awakening that seem indispensable to self efficacy.
- The free activity is essential to the welfare of the child: to act is to understand, to express and to exist.

Observatoire de l'enfance, de la jeunesse et de l'aide à la jeunesse (communauté française, wallonie, Bruxelles cfwb)-indicateurs de bien-être de l'enfant (Observatory

on Children, Youth and Youth Welfare (French Community, Walloon, Brussels CFWB))

1. Availability positive.
2. Well-being "received".
3. The cultural well-being and social development. The psychological and moral well-being
4. The right to express his own vision and claim what is estimated to be eligible

O.N.E., Pedagogical file

*Say, when I go to school?*

Pedagogical file is produced as part of the campaign "Serve the entrance to kindergarten" for professionals to facilitate the approach of this theme in a dialogue with parents. This file is divided into chapters ranging from the preparation, separation, at the start and adaptation to the new environment.

### **Recommended Reading**

OCDE (2009), *assurer le bien-être des enfants* (provide the wellbeing of the children)

Laffont R. (1985) *La cause des enfants*. Pocket (On behalf of children)

*Lorsque l'enfant paraît*, t. I, II et III, Seuil, 1977, 1978, 1979; coll. « Points », 1999 (When the child appears)

*Parler juste aux enfants*, (1977 - 1981), entretiens avec Danielle Marie Lévy, Mercure de France, coll. « Le Petit Mercure », 2002 (talk just to children)

Welcome in the spirit of Dolto can be reduced to "put words" situations, emotions, and the feelings of children and the risk of mistakes because there is nothing worse than the unsaid.

Throughout his work, Dolto shows us that the child understands many things. The human being, even infants, has this ability to develop this understanding. It is first intuitive and emotional and then become more complex with the emotional and intellectual dimensions. We are far from the image conveyed long a "small animal", it is sufficient to monitor in order to satisfy their basic needs. The child must first find the base consists of security and love in forming his personality.

It starts with the best possible experience separation from mother and father, and also implies the respect of his emotions and the value of its initiatives with an appropriate word.

Thus, self-confidence will grow.

"Putting words on 'does not mean' tell all " to the child ... It would not be good for the child!

But with words appropriate to his age, and what concerns and the child is not an adult to best help the child to be structured, it is necessary, in addition to verbalizations, it set limits, to designate the rules and prohibitions: the name and explain the meaning.

When the child feels it is important to us, when the adult takes care of him by structuring its environment: he can grow.