

THE GLOBAL “BLUEPRINT” FOR CHILD & FAMILY POLICY
SPONSORED BY THE OECD – UNESCO - WORLD BANK

Comments on and quotes from the “state of the art” “blue print” paper :

**“INTEGRATED POLICIES FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE:
CHALLENGES, PITFALLS AND POSSIBILITIES”**

This paper is written by Dr. Lenira Haddad of Brazil. She is apparently the ‘philosopher queen’ of the **state-run** lobby for institutional child care internationally.

Her first version in June 2001 was a speech sponsored by a collaboration of OECD and UNESCO and presented in Sweden at a daycare conference jointly put on by the OECD and the Swedish gov’t. “The World Bank is the main funder” of such projects, Haddad states.

The presentation was later published in Jan 2002 as **“An integrated approach to early childhood education and care: a preliminary study.”**

It was published by and widely circulated in Canada and internationally by Martha Friendly’s Childcare Resource and Research Unit, fully paid for with tax payers’ money.

Find it at

<http://www.childcarecanada.org/pubs/op16/index.htm>

A later longer version –called a **“state of the art paper”** and **“blue print”** - was published by UNESCO in 2002 as **“An Integrated Approach to Early Childhood Education and Care.”**

Find it at

<http://www.ctc-health.org.cn/file/20080527005.pdf>.

In 2006 another version was published: **“INTEGRATED POLICIES FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE: CHALLENGES, PITFALLS AND POSSIBILITIES”**

Find it at:

http://www.scielo.br/scielo.php?pid=S0100-15742006000300002&script=sci_arttext&tlng=en

The version here is from 2006, though many quotes and all the ideas are found in all 3 versions.

Haddad’s very ideologically oriented work is routinely included as “evidence” for policy such as expansion of daycare and kindergarten.

A FEW KEY QUOTES

“Integration” means a “paradigm shift” so child rearing is to be a “shared responsibility between state and family”

“avoid the tendency to revive the idea of family primacy over early childhood.”

“An integrated approach requires a unified model and a coordinated or single management of services” that is one government Ministry – preferably the Ministry of Education.”

12 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE IDEOLOGY INHERENT IN “INTEGRATED ECEC”

*1-**Statist, undemocratic** thinking, praise for totalitarian regimes and military dictatorships well-known for causing the death of millions of their citizens simply because they had an “integrated approach” and “state responsibility” for child rearing. Totalitarian regimes’ daycare systems in China, Vietnam, Cambodia, and the USSR are cited positively with no criticism or mention of any negative effects for children. (Haddad does not mention the daycare/youth education system of Nazi Germany)

*2-**screening the research:** no mention of any evidence showing any negative effects of institutional care to children

*3- **mothers in full-time jobs** is an undisputed good regardless of mothers' preference which is never even mentioned. Fathers' are assumed to be there already.

*4- **family and community seen as inferior**: a vision of the state as the only thing capable of facilitating children's learning and socialization

*5- **a very narrow view of feminism** and women's equality that fails to acknowledge any diversity at all in feminism or in women's preferences.

*6- **anti-choice: women's and parents' preferences ignored**: no acknowledgement of the fact that most mothers/parent prefer to look after manage the care of their own children

*7- **"work" narrowly defined as jobs under employers**: no acknowledgement that child care work is work for parents too, and not just daycare staff

*8 - **policy based on Utopian fantasy**: a vague utterly unrealistic never-achieved Utopian vision of daycare reality

*9- **data-free**: no costs, numbers, hard facts of any sort

*10- **historical revisionism**: a bizarre rendition of modern history full of factual errors and omissions regarding family policy

*11- no critique of and thus **acceptance of the child-harming conditions of modern life** that are assumed to make daycare necessary

*12 - **no critique of the 'help' from the World Bank** and corporate sector – as if this was neutral

Below are quotes for the 2006 paper that show the extremity of this position and its profoundly hostile stance toward parents, family, and democracy

QUOTES FROM THE PAPER AND COMMENTARY

For a summary read only BOLD and HIGHLIGHTED quotes. Comments are included in [...].

From ABSTRACT (summary)

P1

The present article is a synthesis of a research project commissioned by OECD and UNESCO in 2001, on the development and implementation of integrated and coordinated services for early childhood education and care – ECEC – in a systemic perspective.

This model resulted in a paradigm shift related to responsibility for the care and education of the young children, which shifted from an exclusive attribution of the family to a task to be shared with society at large.

This model was built on the **legitimation of out-of-home child socialization**, making the **upbringing process to become both a public and a private concern.**

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In June 2001, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), together with the Swedish Ministry of Science and Education, announced at the International Conference on Early Childhood Education and Care, held in Stockholm, the findings of the research carried out by the OECD, which title was Starting Strong: Early Childhood Education and Care (OECD, 2001). This is the most comprehensive study ever carried out by this organization in the area of early childhood education and care,... The document highlights **original strategies** to promote the well-being of

children and their families and it points out **eight key elements for a successful early childhood education and care policy:**

- □ systemic and **integrated approach** to policy development and implementation;
- □ strong and equal **partnership with the education system;**
- □ **universal access** to early childhood education and care, with particular attention to children with special needs;
- □ substantial **public investments** in services and infrastructure;
- □ participatory approach to quality improvement and assurance;
- □ appropriate training and work conditions for staff in all forms of provision;
- □ systematic attention to monitoring and **data collection;** [SEE Kids First data collection info]
- □ stable framework and long-term agenda for research and evaluation” (OECD, 2001, p. 11)

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The present article is a synthesis of this research and is focused on the definition of an integrated approach to early childhood education and care and its implications in the development and implementation of policies and practices.

The existing picture of inconsistencies, incoherence, parallelisms and discontinuity in early childhood education and care services in most of the developed and developing countries studied, and the need for **a pro-integration approach to achieve coherence, consistency and coordination in policies and practices are the starting point of this research.**

[We hear daycare lobbyists complain about “patchwork” and “incoherent” services and the need for a “seamless” and “wraparound” system as if diversity were a problem as per Haddad’s advise.]

However, the OECD report warns that these mechanisms are not enough sufficient to ensure integration and affirms that the development of a coherent and integrated system depends on how society sees these services.

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[DEFINING ‘INTEGRATION’]

The report recommends an approach to the development and implementation of early childhood education and care – ECEC – policies with the following characteristics:

- □ a clear vision of childhood from 0 to 8 years old, which underlies policy development for ECEC;

...

- □ **integrated administrative responsibilities at both national and local levels, in which preferably all services for young children be subordinated to one ministry;**

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”Integration” is usually viewed as a way of improving effectiveness while reducing public costs. **In the ECEC arena, the term refers to coordinated policies for children through which related sectors, such as social welfare, school system, the family, employment and health care services, work together in networks** (OCDE, 1998a, 1998b, 2001; Evans, 1997, 2000; Young, 1996). But the definition loses accuracy and takes on different meanings when it is associated to the concern of alleviating poverty and improving conditions for the early childhood development.

[Thus INTEGRATION MEANS JOINING DIFFERENT LOBBY GROUPS (SECTORS) TOGETHER INTO AN ANTI-FAMILY FORCE or “NETWORK”]

we deem necessary to question the determinants of **disintegration**

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[IDEOLOGICAL AGENDA TO CHANGE ‘ATTITUDES’]

Thus, the vision of integration in this article goes beyond the local and administrative dimensions **and highlights the changes of attitude concerning the role of government and society regarding child education, care and socialization.** These changes lead to a broader definition of early childhood

education institutions in terms of age, range of functions and diversity, and **widens the concept of education and care** including a contextualized view of child development and call attention to the transitional periods (not only in relation to the school system, but also to the period from birth to ECE).

... the natural consequence of an ever growing awareness of the profound **interdependence between family life and early childhood educational services.**

...the cultural, political and economic events that were significant for world history in particular periods and strongly influenced the adoption of relatively integrated approaches to early childhood education and care. These events are, namely, the Cold War, the cultural revolution of the 1960s and 1970s in the West and globalization.

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education models conceived by prominent educators, such as Oberlin (salles d'asile), Robert Owen (infant school), Froebel (kindergarten) and Montessori (casa dei bambini) that were disseminated around the world. ...they were all concerned about individual needs, the concept of community, reduction of poverty and **world citizenship**

[Word citizenship is an oxymoron: democracy is based on accountability to voters in a region]

The dichotomy care/education is often associated to the shape acquired by both kinds of institutions throughout history, due to their roles and objectives. There are, however, evidences which show the **inexistence of this split** in early stages of child education and that it was a result of political-ideological factors that followed this period.

The original project of **Montessori** in Rome, the plans of **Robert Owen** in Scotland and the ideas of the MacMillan sisters are **all perfect examples of the integration of social and educational objectives and models.**

The Cold War and the Split between “Care” and “Education”

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The split between child care and early childhood education services was exacerbated in capitalist-oriented countries during the period of cold war as a movement away from the principles underlying **the “collective care” of communist countries, as the expansion of this type of early collective education was seen as a threat to the capitalist political system, which was grounded on the primacy of the family.** In communist societies, services for young children were seen as an **important component for revolution strategies**, since it reduced the burden of work in the home and child-care responsibilities and enhanced their political and social status.

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By **1945 in China**, **a complex system of public early childhood education and care** was implemented, creating a network of nursery schools, public crèches and kindergartens with different operating models (boarding programs, day nurseries running by children's mother; breast-feeding rooms and preschool classes attached to primary schools). The system expanded greatly thanks to the **victorious struggle** of the Women's Federation and trade unions for the establishment of **day-care centres for its workers** (Zhengao, 1993). According to Lee (1992), child care in China was important because it permitted mothers to participate in political, cultural and technical studies related to the **building of the new China, which produced great changes in traditional family life.**

The **1945 Revolution in Vietnam**, ... introduced **deep changes in family life, the status of women, and child care and education practices.** The Constitution of 1946 gave women the same rights as men in political, economic, cultural and social matters and in family life. The Vietnam Women's Union,

founded in the same year, contributed greatly to enhance the political status of women. The Vietnamese national policy supporting the development of day-care centres and nursery schools was clearly built on **the principle of joint responsibility, shared by the family, state and society** (Trong et al., 1993, p. 587). In **former Czechoslovakia**, the official ideology of the state supported the equality of genders roles and making it possible for mothers to work outside of home, and the goals for the **preschool system included the interests of ideologically influencing new generations.**

In contrast, the West favoured mechanisms underlining the importance of the family and the ideals of maternity as the only way to guarantee the child's mental and psychological health. Resulting from this period are **the well-known studies that found that maternal separation and the institutionalization of the young child caused profound and irreversible harm to early development**, particularly in children under three.

[These 'mechanisms' were regulations limiting child and maternal labour, and hours and days of work, the 'breadwinner wage' for fathers, low cost housing, welfare, unemployment and injury insurance for workers, and direct cash and tax benefits to families with dependent children.]

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The United States and Britain were in the forefront of the campaign which advocated that child care is a private matter. In addition to **refusing to adopt measures to support families with young children**, these countries also influenced the direction of early childhood policies in developing countries.

[This is simply false. Maternalist policies provided tax and cash benefits for families with dependent children and welfare benefits, and "bread winner wage" policies ensured that wages of breadwinners were higher than those of non-breadwinners. Legal restrictions on hours of work, child labour, etc were also fought for by massive women's and labour groups and were intended to support child rearing. **The 'campaign' against supporting families was led by capitalist interests seeking a limitless supply of limitlessly exploitable labour.]**

[1960s]

In Scandinavian countries, there was a **complete reorientation of early childhood care** and education in the mid-1960s which was characterized by a revision of **out-of-home socialization and care**, and by a significant public investment in this area.

The increasing number of women entering the workforce partially explains this reorientation, but the most important determining factor was the pressure from feminist organizations struggling for gender equality. **No other government has gone so far as to stipulate that men and women are equally responsible for economic support, care and supervision of children**

[This is a false very misleadingly rosy picture of Sweden. There, it is woman who work in the daycare centers and mothers who take time off jobs, and women who are concentrated in low wage public-sector jobs as higher paying private companies avoid hiring women, Despite 'equity' theory, domestic violence against women is rising in Sweden.]

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By the end of the 1970s, **in the midst of the military dictatorship, Brazil** saw several social movements that resulted in a political opening. The Movement of Fight for Crèches (MFC) defended a new concept of **day-care services as a matter of legal right**, as opposed to the custodial, charitable tradition.

the women's movement had an important role in **unveiling new possibilities of extraparental child socialization**, which opened up a **new concept of child-care**
– as an educational, non-philanthropic service seen as a **right of children, women and families**
– to **meet the far-reaching transformations of values, attitudes, practices and roles that**

permeated the following decades... precursor to the modern model of out-of-home socialization with **professional and educational components**, capable of meeting **both the child's needs for care and education as well as the social, occupational and family needs of women.**

The creation of the **European Commission Network on Childcare in 1986** reflects the great importance given to childcare in all that relates to work, gender equality and the family responsibilities of men and women (EC Childcare Network, 1992). The qualitative leap in this period was the recognition of the functions of ECEC,... the promotion of child's development in all aspects – physical, affective, moral, spiritual and intellectual; the well-being of children and their right to a safe, pleasant, joyful and stimulating atmosphere, as well as to new opportunities for relationships with other children and adults; the possibility for parents to combine professional and family activities, the promotion of equality between men and women, and the optimization of the parents' ability to fulfil their parental roles.

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Globalization and the Return to Compensatory [ie education-focused] Programs

The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe; the disintegration of the Soviet Union and **the decline of the socialist model which placed emphasis on providing an institutionalized childcare system;** and the shift towards open market economies, imposing neo-liberal rules on developing and former communist countries (privatization of public companies, emphasis on consumption, cuts in spending on education and social programs) – all this has led to a complete reorientation of early childhood education and care services and to an **overturn in many achievements** in the welfare area including women's rights.

In socialist or former communist countries, such as China, Vietnam, Cambodia and the Czech Republic, where childcare was basically the state's responsibility, the shift to an open market economy has led to a dramatic reduction in services for children under three.

[She is claiming that children and women were better off in the communist daycare systems and that women's right were better protected. She is blaming globalization and consumerism, but the OECD which promotes her work, says its purpose is to "enable globalization"]

...

To lessen the impact of globalization in developing countries, governments and international organizations have begun to support "compensatory" programs designed for the care, education and development of small children

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Two kinds of policies for the early years for developing countries are proposed: the first promotes the universalization of services for older children (older than three years of age) in preschools or classes attached to primary school, mainly on part-time base, focused on future educational success; and the second promotes alternative **programs for children under three organized by mothers and community agents**. In many countries today, it is possible to see a growing tendency to insure the admission of six-year-old children in primary school and remove the zero-to-three age group from the funding system.

[She sees mother-organization as a problem yet she claims she seeks greater equality for women]

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THE PARADIGM SHIFT

The integrated approach to ECEC systems proposed in this research is based on a third Model built by removing the inconsistencies of previous models of "child care services" and "preschool education", recognizing their qualities and adding a new element that lends a dynamic and evolutionary meaning to the whole. **This new element – the legitimation of outof-**

home child socialization – serves as a bond between care and education and, at the same time, changes their meaning. The idea, based on a previous study (Haddad, 1997), is that the **absence of this legitimation causes a rupture** to the whole, resulting in parallel systems and discontinuity among services. This rupture brings about changes in the meaning of care and education by linking education to schooling (favouring older children) and care to custody, focusing on at-risk children or families or children with special needs. The consequence is the **obfuscation of the broader concept of education.**

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The integrated approach to ECEC systems stems from a paradigm shift, in which **the responsibility for the care and socialization of young child is no longer the family alone, but of society as a whole, shifting from a deficit model to a model based on human rights. It results that a significant portion of the upbringing process has become a public matter,** therefore falling within the realm of human rights arena, with enormous implications for the development of ECEC policies and programs. **The paradigm shift requires:**

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□ □ **a redefinition of public (state) and private (family) relationships concerning children's affairs;**

□ □ **the recognition of the rights of the child to be cared and socialized in a wider social context than that of the family;**

□ □ **the recognition of the family's right to share the care and education of the child with society;**

□ □ **the recognition that childcare is a professional task** which, along with education in a broader sense, constitutes a new way of promoting the child's full development.

Policy Implementation

State responsibility

An integrated approach presupposes a **more active role of the state in providing services for the 0-to-6 age group** and focusing on the whole development of the child. However, **in many countries, the government still hesitates in intervening in the family domain, particularly when it means investing in children under 3 and providing full-time programs.**

[The problems of democratic states' reluctance to takeover childrearing from birth is a "challenge" to be overcome by using the strategies she describes for "policy implementation"]

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Paradoxically, as a reflection of globalization, **a tendency for privatization and/or cooperation with the private sector** has also been observed among former communist countries, such as the Czech Republic and Cambodia, and countries that have retained a socialist orientation, such as China and Vietnam.

[It is perhaps NOT a paradox that **undemocratic regimes have embraced "cooperating" with the private sector** over funding families themselves: corporations can find it much easier to work with non-democratic regimes to get labour supply expansion and increased consumerism.]

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The challenge is to attain greater state participation, including provision for all child development stages from birth to entry into formal schooling, **to avoid the tendency to revive the idea of family primacy over early childhood.**

[This means that **family is NOT an equal in the "shared responsibility" partnership she proposes]**

An integrated approach requires a unified model and a coordinated or **single management of services**, as well as coherence in terms of objectives, operations, regulation, funding, admission criteria, hours of functioning and so on,

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In Sweden, early childhood care and education services were fully integrated into the educational system in 1996, when **the Ministry of Education formally took over all its early childhood services for one-to-six-year-old children, as well as the leisure-time centres** (complementary to schools for 7-to-12-year olds). The great challenge of most countries is to ensure the dual ECEC function – social and educational – in the process of defining a unified policy.

Target Population

An integrated approach to ECEC recognizes the needs of all children and families and seeks universal provision as opposed to a selective approach, which is characterized by the traditional polarization between an age group – of older children – and a segment of families deemed “at-risk”.

Full-time programs for a wider age range can only be proposed on solid basis where **ECEC has the dual purpose of supporting child development and promoting equal opportunities for men and women**. This is the case of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden, and also of China, Czech Republic and Vietnam,

[FULL TIME institutional care is the real goal.]

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Age Group

An integrated ECEC policy takes into account the entire period during which the children need adults’ protection and guidance.

The offer of publicly-subsidized services for children under 3 is larger in Denmark, Finland, and Sweden where the public ECEC system is part of a wider policy of family support and gender equality. These countries, as well as Norway, have the highest rates of social expenditure, reaching 3.5 percent of GDP in family benefits, which is well above the OECD countries average of about 2 percent.

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there is a **strong tendency to devolve public responsibility upon private enterprise in countries where education and care of young children are considered a parents’ task.**

[ie it is a mistake to consider child rearing a parents’ task]

Since 1990, there is an increasing investment in early childhood programs by organizations such as UNICEF and UNESCO, institutions such as Bernard van Leer, Aga Khan and Soros Foundation, international NGOs, the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank. Such an increase in funding is mainly due to two reasons: the Jomtien Declaration and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which required signatories to adopt a more comprehensive definition of attention to children

The World Bank is the main funder, with

\$1 billion granted to informal Early Childhood Development (ECD) projects in the 1990s.

Family day-care can be useful for the process of expansion of ECEC system towards universal provision for children and families. **But if such arrangements are considered a substitute for centre-based services, this may indicate a return to an ideology that favours family care.**

The challenge is to find diversified forms of services with unified philosophy and objectives. A more universal approach that allows for choices among a large variety of high-quality flexible provisions – full-time or part-time programs that can be either centre-based or family-based, play groups, or open preschools for children under or over 3 or, even for mixed-age groups, as well as leisure-time centres (complementary to school) – can be more effective to support parents, whether they work outside home or not.

An integrated approach conceives and plans ECEC services as an integral part of family and community life, in tune with new realities: families with a smaller number of children; more working couples; increased number of lone-parent families, generally headed by mothers; greater insertion of mothers with young children into the informal and formal labour markets; immigration, and cultural pluralism.

Even if ECEC contexts have as a long-term goal preparing children for school and for the future, they should be **above all spaces for socialization that stimulate children to live the here and now.**

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[THE UTOPIAN VISION OF FREEDOM AND RELATIONSHIPS THAT IS COMPLETELY AT ODDS WITH THE REALITY OF INSTITUTIONAL SETTINGS]

Instead of uniform and rigid institutional structures, the early childhood education and care environment must help young children to grow and develop in an atmosphere that is both familial and collective; to interact with other children and other adults and learn through these relationships; to feel good, loved and respected, and develop constructive attitudes and thinking patterns; to make choices, carry out projects, engage in enriching and involving experiences with children in their age group and mix-age groups; to communicate their actions, and participate, to some extent, in decisions that affect their lives; to move around and play freely; to take a nap when they are tired; to eat when they are hungry, be alone when they want it; to look for support and protection from adults when they feel insecure.

Programs that aim at compensating for presumed deficiencies of home environments, for fear that unprivileged children will fail at school are just as harmful as those that conform to school agenda pressures by emphasizing the teaching of specific skills to young children. In both cases, something of utmost importance is not taken into account: the individual child, with his/her power, competence, and potential.

Education should not be seen in a fragmented way or in terms of learning only.

Educating is far more encompassing and complex activity. It deals with the human being, an integrated whole that is not only cognition, health, and nutrition, but also body, mind, soul, feelings, emotions, religion, art, expression and rite; one that keeps an interdependent relationship with nature, his/her community, city, region, country, and the planet. With all this complexity, education must be awarded its due place, with its greatness and worth. Its role becomes limited and poor when only its mental and rational aspect is revealed. But such comprehensive conception of education will not prevail before adults understand that the inherent eager sensitivity of a child is the basic equipment that connects her/him to the whole; that is through the expression of their body, mind, and feelings that children communicate their needs and express their knowledge; and that there is another sense of time and space in the adult-child relationship.

Adults who cannot perceive such dimensions are unable to reach the essence of education; to understand what learning and teaching mean; to grasp the essential value of childhood, of a child's wisdom. Such people will not be able to go beyond an adult's point of view to perceive the child's point of view.

The great challenge is to create an ECEC pedagogy without fragmentation by age, one that promotes a culture of childhood, protecting and respecting children as individuals who constitute groups and communities with their own rights, skills, forms of expression and

participation.

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Staff

An integrated approach presupposes well-paid, qualified male and female professional

The desired profile for the ECEC professional does not correspond to the elementary school teacher model, whose main function is to teach subject matter, nor that of a substitute mother model, who simply takes care of children while the parents are away. The desired profile reflects the multiple ECEC functions.

The training of those who will provide education and care for young children should not aim at accumulating information only. In addition to deep knowledge of pedagogy and child psychology, childhood sociology, and childhood culture associated with a good deal of practical experience, the initial training of ECEC professional must include the education of the body, of feelings, emotions, the speech, the arts, singing, storytelling, and the ability to enchant. A fragmented education does not arouse the child's soul.

Parental Involvement

The concept of shared responsibility between state and family implies increased recognition of parents as valuable partners, who have the right to actively participate in the whole program. Such a concept, however, is not as simple in practice as it is in theory.

Experiences show that the relationships between staff and families are often permeated by conflict, ranging from competition to jealousy, guilt and contempt.

An integrated approach presupposes solid ECEC staff-parents partnerships based on dialogue, trust, respect, sharing of knowledge and cultural traditions, as well as active and systematic participation of the family in the processes of planning, implementing and evaluating programs aimed to their children.

Deviations from the concept of parents' involvement may include actions such as asking parents to do tasks, or assume ECEC staff's responsibilities; having parents offer regular voluntary help, or considering them a source of financial resources.

The Benefits of an Integrated Approach

Concerning the children, such a system enhances their experiences and widens up their world of affective references, contributing to the construction of their identity and their understanding of the world while reinforcing their learning and communication skills, and their involvement in meaningful activities and relationships.

helping them[parents] to articulate professional activities and family responsibilities and optimizing parents' ability to play their role.

promoting social cohesion by providing underprivileged families opportunities to build support networks.

gender equality

struggle against social inequality.

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[THE STRATEGY FOR GETTING THERE]

The commitment to **building and redefinition** is the point to where all efforts must converge, once this is a **necessary condition to overcome tensions between families and society concerning the responsibility for young children....**The practical implication of this process is **ensuring an appropriate locus**, [which seems to be calling it kindergarten expansion in Canada] which will not pose a threat to the progress that has already been made.

[1] the first step should be ensuring and invigorating the conditions for the building of a specific ECEC culture and identity.

[2] The next step would be the shift to the educational system.

[3] And then face the new challenge, which is establishing a strong and equal partnership between the two systems: early childhood education and elementary school. Those were the steps taken by the Swedish government.

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Conclusion

An effectively integrated ECEC system is a collective building project based on a new concept of extra-familial care and education as a concern that is simultaneously public and private, an expression of responsibility shared between the state and the family.

In today's world, the care and education of children require shared responsibility between governments and society. Without such commitment, one side of the boat - the family and mainly the mothers - will certainly be overloaded. There are many and intense external world demands on families: rising competition, increased professional instability, reduction in labour rights, the race for technological knowledge and the constant threat of unemployment and poverty. Under these circumstances, will it be possible to prevent the boat from sinking?

[Then why not create policy to reduce these pressures on families rather than trying to downsize families' child-rearing role altogether? "Integration" actually facilitates the harmful pressures created by globalization and unrestrained economic - e GDP - 'growth']

[A STATIST UNDEMOCRATIC TOP-DOWN TOTALITARIAN APPROACH]

An ECEC integrated system **requires firm political will, state responsibility,** and a clear awareness of the comprehensiveness of the functions involved. Given these conditions, an ECEC policy should, **under government leadership, involve all society in a joint and convergent enterprise.**

[WHO IS THE 'WE'?]

The fundamental question remains: what kind of education for young children do we want and imagine?