SUSTAINABILITY AS THE CENTREPIECE OF HIGH QUALITY PRESCHOOL

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Only when the last tree has been cut down, the last fish been caught, and the last stream poisoned, will we realize we cannot eat money.
ESD

Society

Economy

Environment
Brain development

Research in neuroscience shows that the brain sensitivity of highly important developmental areas – such as language and numeracy, social skills and emotional control – peaks in the first three years of life (Naudeau et al., 2011). Strong foundations in the early years increase the chances of positive outcomes, while weak foundations are more likely to lead to struggles.

‘Sensitive periods’ in early brain development

Difficult to repair: what has been lost

Importance of the development of emotional and social skills before school age

Graph developed by Council for Early Child Development (ref: Nash, 1997; Early Years Study, 1999, Scottish, 2000.)
Heckman’s curve
REASONS FOR MAKING UNIVERSAL ECE A GLOBAL PRIORITY

• QUALITY PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION SETS A STRONG FOUNDATION FOR LEARNING

• UNIVERSAL PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION HELPS MAKE EDUCATION SYSTEM MORE EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE

• EQUITABLE PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION IS AN AFFECTIVE STRATEGY FOR PROMOTING GROWTH

• THE EVIDENCE ARE THEIR IN RESEARCH FROM VARIOUS FIELDS
GOAL 4. ENSURE INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE QUALITY EDUCATION AND PROMOTE LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

• 4.2 BY 2030, ENSURE THAT ALL GIRLS AND BOYS HAVE ACCESS TO QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT, CARE AND PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION SO THAT THEY ARE READY FOR PRIMARY EDUCATION

• 4.7 BY 2030 ENSURE ALL LEARNERS ACQUIRE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS NEEDED TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING AMONG OTHERS THROUGH EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLES, HUMAN RIGHTS, GENDER EQUALITY, PROMOTION OF A CULTURE OF PEACE AND NON-VIOLENCE, GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP, AND APPRECIATION OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND OF CULTURE’S CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
THE CONTENT IS THERE IN SDG 4.7 – GOALS FROM THE SWEDISH PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM

• THE PRESCHOOL SHOULD GIVE EACH CHILD THE CONDITIONS TO DEVELOP:
  • A GROWING RESPONSIBILITY AND INTEREST IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND TO ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN SOCIETY
  • TAKE CARE OF THEIR HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
  • UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF HEALTHY LIFESTYLE
  • CULTURAL IDENTITY, KNOWLEDGE ABOUT AND INTEREST IN DIFFERENT CULTURES, UNDERSTANDING OF LIVING IN A DIVERSE SOCIETY, INTEREST IN LOCAL CULTURAL LIFE
HIGH QUALITY ESD IN ECE

• CHILDREN’S SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT IS SUPPORTED

• CHILDREN LEARN ABOUT AND ARE INVOLVED IN ACTIVITIES ABOUT SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

• CHILDREN LEARN ABOUT VALUES AND ATTITUDES RELATED TO SUSTAINABILITY (HUMAN & NATURE) – DEMOCRACY – ALL HUMAN’S RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES.
Values about children and for children

• **ABOUT:**
  • RESPECT EACH CHILD’S RIGHTS, EXPERIENCE, COMPETENCE AND WILLINGNESS TO LEARN – USE THEIR EXPERIENCES TO BUILD ON

• **FOR CHILDREN:**
  • TO BECAME AWARE OF AND LEARN TO RESPECT; ALL PEOPLE, ANIMALS AND GROWING PLATS – GLOBALLY AND LOCALLY
  • TO LEARN ABOUT ETHICS AND CONSEQUENCES OF ACTING
  • TO BECAME ENGAGED IN ESD AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP AS A HABIT IN EVERY-DAY LIFE
TO SHARE IS FAIR

- ECOLOGY
- SOCIAL/CULTURAL
- ECONOMY
WHAT DO WE MAKE VISIBLE TO CHILDREN?
THE TEACHING – WHAT SHOULD IT BE LIKE?

- Teaching should be viewed as interaction and shared experience.
- A curriculum that is open and gives space for thinking, reflecting and inventing – be allowed to be creative – do not separate play and learning.
- Points out a direction to work towards.
- It is built on children’s experiences (and how these are experienced by the child).
- Interaction, communication and relationships.
- Children’s meaning-making and participation – integrated with their emotions.
- Use everyday life as the curriculum.
- Emphasizes play responsive teaching.
- Challenging children.
PLAY-RESPONSIVE TEACHING MEANS

• TEACHING IS COMMON - BY CHILDREN AND PRESCHOOL TEACHERS - ESTABLISHED ACTIVITIES

• PARTICIPANTS SHIFT BETWEEN AND RELATE AS IF (IMAGINATION) AND AS IS (ACCEPTED, CULTURALLY ESTABLISHED KNOWLEDGE) WITHOUT THE PLAY BEING INTERRUPTED

• TEACHERS BECOME PARTICIPANTS AND CO-CREATORS IN PLAY WHEN THEY INTRODUCE CULTURAL RESOURCES (WHAT IS: KNOWLEDGE) OR SUGGEST ADDITIONAL FANTASIES (AS IF) THAT CAN HELP CHILDREN EXPAND THE PLAY OR DEVELOP IT IN NEW DIRECTIONS.

• CHILDREN’S AGENCY IS PROMOTED SO THEY CAN BECOME GENUINE ACTORS IN THEIR LIFE AND LEARNING (RATHER THAN PASSIVE RECIPIENTS OF INSTRUCTIONS)
THE QUALITY OF TEACHING IN EARLY YEARS

- WE CAN NOT CAUSE LEARNING – BUT POINT SOMETHING OUT TO CHILDREN

- DUAL RESPONSIVENESS - RESPOND TO EACH OTHER’S RESPONSES AND COORDINATE THE LEARNING OBJECT (CONTENT) FOCUSED IN COMMUNICATION - TEACHING AS INTERACTION

- TO CONSTRUCT TEACHING CAN NOT BE ATTRIBUTED TO ONLY ONE PARTY (PRESCHOOL TEACHER), BUT ALL PARTICIPANTS CONTRIBUTE TO JOINTLY CREATING THIS ACTIVITY

- A TASK FOR THE PRESCHOOL TEACHER IS THEREFORE TO ENGAGE CHILDREN IN JOINT ACTIVITIES IN WHICH YOU GO BETWEEN AND RELATE TO THE CHILDREN’S VIEWS AND REALITY

- AND SUPPORT CHILDREN’S AGENCY
WHY BEGIN EARLY?

• RELATED TO THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE OF LEARNING, TEACHING AND PLAY

• TO RECOGNISE THAT VALUES, ATTITUDES, SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE ARE FOSTERED FROM VERY EARLY IN LIFE

• SUSTAINABILITY QUESTIONS ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT KNOWLEDGE FOR CHILDREN’S OWN FUTURE

• IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IT IS A QUESTION ABOUT BOTH CONTENT AND DIDACTICS/PEDAGOGY
TEACHING/LEARNING FOR THE FUTURE – RELEVANCE AND QUALITY

• ADVANCING POLICY
• LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
• EDUCATORS
• YOUTH
• COMMUNITY