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CANADIAN CHILDREN



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Journal of
The Canadian Association
for Young Children

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pour les jeunes enfants

Fall/Automne 1990

Vol. 15, No. 2

The Canadian Association for Young Children

What is the CAYC?

The Canadian Association for Young Children (CAYC) grew out of the Council for Childhood Education and became officially recognized in 1974 by the granting of a Federal Charter. It is the only national association specifically concerned with the well-being of children birth through age nine. Members of the Association are from Canada, the U.S.A. and elsewhere. They include parents, teachers, caregivers, administrators, students and other interested persons from a variety of professional disciplines who wish to share ideas and participate in activities related to the education and welfare of young children.

The Aims of the CAYC

1. To work for the development and well-being of children.
2. To foster desirable conditions, programs and practices to meet the needs of children.
3. To encourage continuous professional growth in accordance with knowledge of child development.
4. To bring into active cooperation all groups concerned with children and child development.
5. To disseminate information on child development.
6. To promote the coordination of all organizations in Canada concerned with young children.

Implementing the Aims of the CAYC

1. *The National Conference*

The National Conference is a highlight of the CAYC. The program includes lectures by internationally renowned authorities on children, workshops, discussion groups, displays, demonstrations, school visits and tours.

2. *Provincial and Regional Events*

The organization of members at the local and provincial level is encouraged to plan events to deal with the issues and concerns pertaining to young children. These events may take the form of lectures, seminars or a local conference.

3. *The Journal*

An outstanding multidisciplinary journal is published twice yearly. Articles by nationally and internationally known experts in early childhood education and child rearing are presented in the Journal of the CAYC.

4. *The Newsletter*

Topics of local, provincial or national interest are featured in the CAYC Newsletter.

Membership fees are payable on application and renewable annually on an evergreen basis. To be considered a voting member, fees must be paid no later than 60 days prior to the Annual General Meeting.

Subscriptions and Membership: Institutional subscribers receive the journal only (\$50 per annum for two issues). Members of CAYC, in addition, receive newsletters and special rates for national and regional conferences (per annum: \$40—General; \$25—Student; \$75—Associations). Please direct all subscription and membership correspondence to: CAYC, Publishing and Printing Services, 36 Bessemer Court, Unit 3, Concord, Ontario, Canada, L4K 3C9.

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Fall/Automne 1990

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Cover Artwork

The drawing on the cover of this issue was done by Thien'nhu Nguyen who is five years old and attends the French kindergarten program at the Pierre Laporte School in Laval, Quebec. Thien'nhu brings new drawings to school every day to show the class. Her teacher, Reine Goodrow, loves collecting them.

From the Editors/Mot des rédacteurs

Giving Children a Voice

IN RECENT MONTHS, television news reports have shown us extraordinary events taking place in Eastern Europe. All of a sudden, it seems, the old repressive systems of government have been swept away by an overwhelming desire for democracy, by people's need to be heard and become responsible for their own lives, and their need to have hope for the future.

Watching these news reports, I have been thinking about children in this country. Without a vote, even a proxy vote, how well does democracy work for them? If their needs are not adequately met, can we guarantee that the system will change to serve them better? And how well are their needs understood?

In Canada, I believe, we are becoming more sensitive to the importance of children's early years, but old attitudes are hard to erase and too many children are still not given sufficient support. Do the officials who make crucial decisions concerning children actually take the time to talk to them?

Even in our schools, there is no standard routine for administrators to listen to children — or to parents speaking on their behalf — and be directly accountable to them. Nevertheless, educators are beginning to appreciate the necessity of communicating regularly with students and their parents. And the role of parents in helping to identify individual needs of children, particularly young children, is being more carefully considered as a key element in designing effective programs.

As we see in the discussions on parent involvement included in this issue, schools and families are finding new ways of working together to benefit students. Through increased mutual understanding, we should be in a better position to provide a responsive system of education in which children can, in effect, influence decisions made on their behalf. After all, in a democratic society like ours, don't children have the right to be heard?

Glen Dixon
Co-Editor

Avoir une bonne tête

PENDANT UN VOYAGE en France au printemps, j'ai eu la chance de participer à une journée pédagogique pour les professeurs de CLIN (classe d'initiation) dans une banlieue parisienne. Ces classes ont le même but que nos classes d'accueil au Québec, c'est-à-dire l'intégration des enfants qui arrivent chez nous sans parler la langue de la communauté. J'ai été impressionnée par la qualité du travail que faisaient ces professeurs, par le niveau de leurs connaissances professionnelles et leur compréhension du sort de leurs élèves, y compris les cultures diverses et les problèmes d'apprentissage chez ces enfants.

Le multiculturalisme n'est peut-être pas un nouveau concept au Canada, mais nous apprenons de jour en jour ce que cela veut vraiment dire et comment cela nous touche dans la vie quotidienne. À la garderie, nous recevons des enfants pour qui nos coutumes sont étrangères, nos chansons et nos jeux inconnus. À l'école, ces enfants doivent apprendre à s'exprimer dans une langue que souvent ne connaissent pas leurs parents, et comprendre ce qu'on leur dit et ce qu'on leur demande d'étudier. Ils doivent se préparer à vivre dans un monde qui n'est familier ni à eux ni à leur famille.

Sommes-nous prêts pour relever ce défi? Nous avons besoin autant de la compassion que de la tête pour accueillir ces nouveaux venus. Les connaissances peuvent être acquises si l'on est de bon cœur.

Florence Stevens

Corédactrice

Parent Involvement: Changing Perspectives from 1965 to 1990

Arlene Kasting

PARENT INVOLVEMENT is widely supported within the field of early childhood education. In the 1970s and 1980s we saw a vast number of books and articles defining and questioning parent involvement in the schools. Michael Fullan (1982) in his book "The Meaning of Change" notes that:

Emerging from this research is a message which is remarkable in its consistency: the closer the parent is to the education of the child, the greater the impact on child development and educational achievement.

Underlying the questions and issues relating to parent involvement are theories and assumptions about the roles of parents and teachers as educators. This review of literature describes changes in perspectives from 1965 to the present. The following discussion traces the development of views that emerged during this time period in an attempt to uncover the theories inherent in the alternative perspectives. In particular, early views present a deficit model of parent involvement, whereas later views suggest the importance of a collaborative or complementary model. Finally, the principles which guide a successful parent involvement program are reviewed.

The Deficit Model

Prior to 1965, it was a commonly held belief that a child's most significant learning began when he or she entered school. Socialization was recognized as the family's function and education the school's responsibility. However, changing views emerged in the mid-1960s because research findings confirmed the learning risks for children raised in environments characterized by poverty and low parental education (Heber, Denver and Conry, 1968). Other studies reported that differences in children's intellectual performance, even before they entered school, were related to the family's socioeconomic status (Bayley and Schaefer, 1960; Kagan, 1968; Moss et al., 1969). It was argued that if differences in children's achievement exist before children enter school, the reason must be in the home

environment (see Zigler and Kagan [1982] for review). Accordingly, children came to school with perceived achievement deficits.

Such findings, in conjunction with the war on poverty and the civil rights movement in the U.S.A., resulted in the establishment of Project Head Start, federally funded early education programs for young children from low income families. The general goal of Head Start programs was to "break the cycle of poverty." As President Johnson stated in 1965, "these programs will rescue these children from the poverty which will otherwise pursue them all their lives" (cited in Hebbler, 1985). The project was designed to put them on an even footing with their classmates as they entered school (Zigler and Valentine, 1979).

A great variety of intervention preschool programs, aimed at enhancing children's learning opportunities and chances for school success, were based on different early childhood curricula. However, some of the earliest programs paid little attention to the influence of "the hidden curriculum of the home" (Stodtbeck, 1965). Studies of these programs revealed the significant importance of the parents' involvement in children's early learning and showed that minimal parent involvement resulted in failure to maintain I.Q. and language gains. The pattern was persistent and occurred although programs were well organized, run by trained staff, and covered a range of child learning theories (Bereiter and Englemann, 1966; Caldwell and Richmond, 1968; Schaefer and Aaronson, 1977).

An awareness of the major role of the parent as educator emerged and the focus on preschool intervention programs changed to parent-training programs. For example, the argument put forth was that "every child has a right to a trained parent" (Bell, 1975). In his review, Powell (1984) notes that:

Rheingold (1972) proposed a new profession, "scientists of rearing". To her, the need for these scientists was obvious: Parents-to-be must be certified as to their competence, and a practical examination is better than a paper one. We must take an examination to obtain a license to drive a car. The child deserves no less; the good country demands much more.

Compensatory early-childhood programs expanded to include a parent involvement component. Although the training programs varied in content, structure and approach, the major focus was for professionals to provide parents with information and skills for preparing their own children in school-relevant skills (Bronfenbrenner, 1974; Goodson and Hess, 1976).

An extensive body of literature outlines the short- and long-term effects of parent-training programs on mothers and children. All programs were effective in improving the intellectual performance of children as measured by standardized intelligence test scores (Gordon et al. 1977; Lally and Honig, 1977; Goodson and Hess, 1976; Lasater et al., 1975). Gains in children's language ability, when measured separately from I.Q., were also observed (Lally and Honig, 1977; Lasater et al., 1975), as was improvement in children's general school behaviours (Levenstein, 1977; Weikart, 1973).

Lazar et al. (1982) reviewed the long-term effects of 12 programs and documented significant effects on the student's school competence, attitudes about self and school, and effects upon families. The Bronfenbrenner (1974) review of Head Start programs also reported the involvement of parents as crucial.

Effects of parent training programs on mothers are less well known than child outcomes, but positive changes were noted. Across all projects, the mothers of program graduates were more satisfied with their children's school performance and had higher occupational aspirations for their children than did the control families (Lazar et al., 1982). Another analysis of these data by Varpopva and Royce (cited in Stallings and Stipeck, 1982) indicated that programs with parent involvement, particularly those with home-visit components, were more effective in improving parental attitudes toward the school, themselves, and their children, than were programs without such components. The results of these studies suggest that as parents gain confidence in their ability to parent, they are able to relate more effectively to their child, which in turn allows them to be pleased with their child's performance and a reciprocal interaction process begins.

The evidence from the parent-training research substantiates the importance of parental influence on the child's early learning and development. Program analysis further reveals that key factors in children's academic success are the degree to which parents are recognized as the primary educator of their children and are included in their child's education.

Preschool intervention programs offering compensatory education to such children saw the involvement of parents as crucial. However, the basis of compensatory programs such as Head Start was the assumption that the cultures of lower-class and minority-group children failed to provide them with the concrete skills they required for educational achievement. The goal of such programs was to provide such skills to children at an early age to

compensate for this failure. Implicit in this interventionist perspective was the belief that minority groups and lower-class cultures were inferior because they failed to provide the skills teachers expected.

Challenging the Deficit Model

In the late 1970s, researchers began to question the model on which these intervention parent programs were developed. Referred to as the "deficit model," the literature questions the goals of programs which seek to impart middle-class parenting styles and values to lower-class parents (Cochran and Woolever, 1983; Dokecki and Moroney, 1983). Criticisms are raised regarding the middle-class bias reported in the interpretations of mother-child interaction research (Lightfoot, 1980). Specifically, the research suggested that low-income home environments were "culturally disadvantaged," that the culture of the lower class was inferior to that of the middle class. The intervention programs were intended to provide poor children with learning experiences supposedly lacking in their impoverished environments (Zigler and Kagan, 1982). The focus of the investigations was on what individuals could not do, on identifying their deficiencies rather than their abilities.

Bernstein (1977) in his paper "Education cannot compensate for society" suggests why the notion of compensatory education appealed so strongly to educators. He states:

The concept, 'compensatory education', serves to direct attention away from the internal organization and educational context of the school, and focus attention on families and children . . . [It implies] . . . that something is lacking in the family and so in the child . . . [such children] are looked at as deficit system. If only the parents were interested in the products we offer, if only they were like middle-class parents, then we could do our job.

Also challenged were the assumptions which underlie the deficit model. As Clarke-Stewart (1978) points out, the assumptions underlying most programs were "that the mother's goals for herself and her child are the same as the program designer's — or would be if the mother knew better."

Or as Powell (1984) states, the assumptions "that the professional has something to say which the parent should believe." Dokecki, Roberts, and Moroney (1979) suggest:

that this view of professionals as knowledge-givers and parents as knowledge-receivers is an inappropriate view because it typically assumes that parents are less competent adults with limited experiential knowledge of children and little basic child-rearing information.

Implicit in such assumptions is a view of the professional-parent relationship from a traditional stance: the professional as the expert transmits knowledge and delivers services to the parent, a passive recipient with deficiencies to be remedied.

An in-depth study of parent involvement in England revealed that this professional-as-expert view was held by the teachers who participated in a three-year study. Tizard, Mortimore, and Burchell (1983) point out that "there is a discrepancy between the approval in principle of parent involvement in early education and the extent to which it is realized in practice . . . the most enthusiastic advocates seem to be furthest from the coalface." All teachers and assistants except one (13/14) implicitly held a one-way model of parent involvement based on their professional view of education. Because of their education and training, teachers have knowledge and skills which parents are lacking and need in order to promote their children's intellectual development. The teachers believed this could best happen by having the parents come into the school classroom. For example, one teacher is quoted as saying: "If they see and value what we are doing they might go and do it themselves." Conversely, the parents saw their educational role as important and influential particularly in the area of values, manners, discipline, and the 3 Rs. Most parents were critical of the nursery school program and the children "just playing around." The parents did not understand the teacher's aims and methods. For example, they did not see reading out loud and playing as educational activities; instead they wanted their children to be learning to read and write.

Beyond the Deficit Model: Collaboration

Although the deficit model has been challenged, the concept of parent involvement was not similarly under attack. The literature presents information upholding the view that a collaborative sharing of information between parents and professionals is needed in our complex, changing world (Schaefer, 1983; Wandersman and Wandersman, 1980; Powell, 1983). Current literature presents the argument that parents no longer have the

family support systems of past generations and parent educators must work with parents to identify and achieve the goals which parents ascertain as important. Reviewing the issues and concerns of parents in the 1980s, Pugh and De'Ath (1984) note:

pressure is put on parents through increasing knowledge of how children develop and through society's high expectations of the part that they should play in this development. The tendency of professionals to undermine parents' self-confidence with their 'expertise' and the isolation felt by many bringing up young children is also contributing to the difficulties experienced by many parents. . . . The tasks and skills of parenting that are important are adequate social and economic conditions in which to bring up children, the parents' need for knowledge, for social and practical skills, for self awareness and for an understanding of how their values affect the way they bring up their children.

These views support the traditional notion that information from child development research and theory is relevant to parents. However, perceptions of the parent-professional relationship have altered. Several authors support the development of a partnership or collaborative relationship between parents and professionals (Cochrane, 1986; Zigler and Kagan, 1982; Powell, 1983; Lombana, 1983; Pringle, 1980; Pugh and De'Ath, 1984; Schaefer, 1983; Wandersman and Wandersman, 1980). The position taken regarding useful child-rearing knowledge is that professional knowledge is different from the knowledge of parents; it is not superior, but complementary (Powell, 1984). Professionals have general information about children as a group and their expected developmental patterns, whereas parents have specific information about their child as an individual and have an in-depth understanding of his or her unique characteristics and patterns of development. Both knowledge bases, if creatively combined, are useful in enhancing the development of children (Dokecki et al., 1979). However, as Powell (1984) notes:

Collaboration is a promising concept which appears to be favored among a growing number of parent education programs. Unfortunately little is known about the ways in which the idea is operationalized. Exactly how do parents and professionals identify and resolve differences of opinion? What types of negotiation process occurs? Is there in fact a genuine collaboration, or do some programs merely use the label because it is in the vogue?

Despite the increasing commitment on the part of many preschool teachers to involve parents more fully in the services they provide, the tendency is still for professionals to invite parents to join them on their terms (Lombana, 1983). Yet a true partnership suggests an acceptance of each individual's skills and expertise, of an open-minded sharing of knowledge, skills and experience, and a sense that each partner brings something different but of equal value to the relationship. Pugh and De'Ath (1984) suggest that "the tendency to treat parents as deficient in some way and in need of treatment or advice, has perhaps obscured the fact that most parents are well able to contribute to, as well as to receive, services." As Britain's Warnock Report recognized, in a partnership the relationship is one of equality: "Parents can be effective partners only if professionals take notice of what they say and how they express their needs, and treat their contributions as intrinsically important" (cited in Pugh and De'Ath, 1984).

In translating a policy of active partnership into practice, perhaps the greatest challenge is to change the emphasis in the role and attitudes of professional educators. Rather than always providing the services they think most suitable, professionals may need to rethink their roles and perhaps act as catalysts, enablers or supporters rather than teachers, healers or fixers of problems (Cochrane, 1986). A redefinition of professionalism from the traditional model of an authoritative, knowledgeable and skilled expert whose role is to teach, diagnose or treat, doing things to and for rather than with the student or client, will not be easy (Pringle, 1980). Many professionals find it difficult to admit to not knowing the answer or to sharing their skills with the layperson. As the study of Tizard et al. (1983) found, teachers needed to uphold their status by creating social distance. Parents did not see parent involvement as a way to challenge the teacher's authority which most teachers had suggested was a potential problem. Typically, the teachers stated: "You must be firm. Otherwise, if you give them half a chance, they'd take over the place." For parents, a belief in professionalism actually prevented many from supporting parent involvement.

Redefining roles also implies a rethinking of attitudes because, as the literature indicates, most programs still involve parents on terms that the professionals define. Educators are often anxious to influence parents in how they bring up their children, but rather less happy about having parents infringe on their domain. If parents are to be viewed as active partners they must be valued for the skill and experience they bring to the situation and

educators will need to listen to, accept and respect parents. Treating parents as partners rather than clients will also, as Pringle (1980) suggests, mean accepting that parents are able to contribute as well as receive services. In a reciprocal relationship both partners share the responsibility and are mutually accountable.

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Parents' Talk in Parent Cooperative Groups: Old Words, New Meanings

Elizabeth Savard Muir

MY RESEARCH EXAMINED the present state of parent cooperative childcare in Canada, the United States, England and New Zealand. I was interested in the qualities of leadership and organization required for the successful operation of parent cooperative education; I discovered, quite unexpectedly, that mothers of young children in all four countries, particularly England and New Zealand, were quietly developing childcare programs among themselves (i.e., without "male leadership" or educational "experts"). What I found was a new Western socio-cultural invention with the following important aspects:

1. The consequences of this woman-woman involvement has been the formation of thousands of cooperative childcare groups in the four countries.
2. The expressed emphasis of this "movement" is on providing opportunities and contexts for parents, in most instances mothers, to experience each other and their parenting.
3. There is no formal, hierarchical organization. There is, instead, an egalitarian network held together by a universal, shared concern for the parent's place in parenting and early education.
4. There are significant implications for parents, young children and education generally, as yet scarcely recognized by the educational establishment.

Although my research was concerned with early childhood and parent education, the findings led to a much larger domain of enquiry: the unique social and cultural values found in the new forms of interaction and organization coming into the world from women.

Four interrelated concerns were addressed: social change, childcare for young children, the cooperative mode of organization, and the participation

of parents in cooperative childcare programs. Each of these concerns took on meaning only in relation to the other three. This research was as much about women as it was about cooperation, education, or parenting. Even though fathers were participating to some degree in these cooperative childcare programs, it was significant that parent cooperative groups were initiated and managed primarily by mothers in the four countries I visited. What was most unusual about my findings was that even though these women were miles apart and had different historical and social backgrounds, they were creating remarkably similar arrangements. It was not that one form of organization was superior to another, it was clear that these mothers had created in their own environment what was "right" for them within existing social constraints. In so doing, they were redefining their families, themselves and education.

I began my research with common-sense approaches: questions about leadership, cooperation, school organization, parents and teacher-parent relations. I carried an awareness of the words and meanings that defined my research and my predispositions for asking questions and recording data. My ears were open to hearing and seeing the unexpected and unfamiliar shapes of the events and relationships I encountered in the four countries.

From data collecting, I moved toward inferences about refreshingly new meanings of leadership, cooperation and women who, in my data, are not only giving birth to children but to new forms of organization, childcare and cooperation. These new ideas were, to me, important aspects of the larger matter of social change. This article presents one aspect of my research findings: the analysis of participants' talk as evidence of new thinking and organization related to the education and care of young children. Significance was found not only in what was said but also in what was not said by participating parents.

... ethnographic investigation is primarily a linguistic event in which the investigator arrives with a certain language to deal with a situation. He begins by talking to the participants using this language. Then hopefully he becomes somewhat competent in the various languages the participants use in their response to him. Finally he reports on this language (Varenne, 1983).

My data came from talking with participating mothers in playcentres (New Zealand), playgroups (England) and parent cooperatives (Canada and United States). Interviews were transcribed from recordings into a com-

puter, which was used to search through the transcripts for clues to find the "greater pattern that is independent of the content of conversations" (Varenne, 1983). At the beginning I took a general look at the language which participants were using to talk about their experiences in these parent cooperative, mother-organized contexts. Then I made inferences from this talk to broader concerns such as social change, education and parenting.

My first discovery was that the mothers in my study were using a language rooted in the experiences they were having in their cooperative groups. Their conversations revealed the world as it was happening to them.

I found that the obvious was not so obvious. Rather than applying meaning from my own experience and society, I tried to become aware of what was behind the words they used. As Varenne has written:

People reveal the organization of their semiotic environment more through the distinctions and identifications they make than through the literal statements which they seem to be making. (Varenne, 1983)

Some Examples of Familiar Words with New Meanings

A few familiar words, when used by these mothers, suggested new meaning. The following examples occurred during the interviews.

1. "Grow people onto committees": defined as training.

"We grow people onto committees, they are the governors of schools, the brownie and scouts organizers, because they are used to committees . . .

. . . You find out a little information and you get a chance to share that by running a workshop. Or someone thinks you are good at something and you build up your self-esteem — we grow leaders at playcentre — that's obvious when you see where playcentre people end up."

2. "They employ us": defined as a reversal of the usual employment arrangement.

"If you are run by a committee of parents they employ us (supervisors or play leaders), here we are a group of moms just a couple of years older than

they are. The committee has employed us, because they are the moms of those kids."

3. "Beady eye": defined awareness of leadership potential.

"We are very emergent-leadership conscious and don't let anybody sit around in the same place too long. They move on and let somebody else take over.

Well, you would never stay, even at centre level. You don't hold a position if there is someone wanting to do it and able — it's called the 'beady eye'. We are looking around for likely people all the time. For instance, this person who has jacked up this media — I can see her taking over our public relations when that person finishes except we won't tell her that yet. We will be very nice to her for a whole year — she's been earmarked."

Re-ordering of Ideas about Education and Parenting

These mothers were reinventing new ways of talking about education, thus adding ideas which may become the dominant ones with time. The fact that some of the word usages are not clear and could be understood in two ways, allows change to happen around these words. Their vocabulary had a different sense and varied images. Their talk was nonhierarchical. Because so much of what was going on was a reverse of the ordinary, there was a blurring of the distinctions between employer, employee, teacher, parents and children. Their talk reflected this. It was not in grammatical sentences. Often pieces were put together; ideas were brought up to float. Nobody was being told. It was not a "how to" language, and was sometimes difficult to approach with an academic orientation. It was a whole other thing. For instance when I asked a supervisor of a parent cooperative nursery school: "When you go to executive meetings . . . ?," she answered in nonhierarchical terms: "I am a resource." My status word "executive" was hierarchical and her "resource" was contributory and had to do with people.

Even the choice of labels like playcentre, playgroup, parent cooperative, supervisor, and play leader is an attempt to redirect one's thinking about education. In these examples, language is used for persuasion. "A text is

persuasive only to the extent that it manipulates us into adopting its point of view" (Varenne, 1983). We are forced to rethink our ideas about how education works and to imagine with these mothers how it might be different.

The revolutionary thing here was that the social reorganization was not coming from professionals as we know them, but from the bearers of children. For instance, to these mothers a meeting was not understood in terms of agenda, board room, furniture and chairs but as "putting the kettle on" in England and as "coming over for a coffee" in Canada. So "putting the kettle on" is not just any image, it has the culture in it, and everyone in that society automatically relates to it. Because these actions are at a formative stage, they inferred how people in that society did it.

The switch is from schooling to parenting without "experts," instead there are parenting or mothering procedures. For example, a parent education book published in 1989 by the New Zealand Playcentre Federation is titled "Hugs and Hassles." This title says in a few words clearly what parenting is all about, in a language parents can relate to. Expert is redefined as one who has experience. We see in this pattern of organization, be it a playground, playcentre or parent cooperative, why there are no experts in the traditional sense. Because there is no "parenting expert" to relate to, the idea of expert becomes irrelevant.

Another interesting finding was that these mothers, especially in England and New Zealand, were careful to keep "experts" out. It was not that there was anything wrong with experts, it was that this was not a field of expertise, it was a field of relationships. What was happening in these mother-organized groups allowed change to take place around old ideas about education and parenting. Their language was steeped in a sense of relationships and people and supported parents in their childcare responsibilities.

At first, the questions I had prepared did not elicit the expected answers. Respondents would often rephrase my enquiries to describe relationships. For example, my formal question "How do co-ops work?" met with interesting responses. Mothers would acknowledge my query and then turn it around to what they wanted to say, revealing their thoughts and ideas about parenting and education. They handled my requests, as if they were playing a tennis match, anticipating what I wanted, and then responding in ways which would maintain what they were doing. For instance when I asked a supervisor in British Columbia, "What makes a co-op work?," she

answered: "Generally? Our group has a great mix of people. . . ." I had asked about an abstraction (co-op) she responded with "Our group" and shifted the focus to people. Participants consistently answered with talk rooted in a concern for people and how relationships were working.

When parents talked about experience of personal growth in their groups, they seemed to be in a constant state of emergence. As one mother in New Zealand said:

I think playcentre is a growing thing for me. I've grown at playcentre. The first time I came I had no friends. The second time I came I got to know everybody and found it such a caring and happy place.

Their language was an enabling one, void of right and wrong, good or bad, or failure, words we often hear in public schools. They talked about participation, interaction, and what it was like to be part of something. They seemed to talk in terms of harmony and sharing.

It was speech which sought to empower, grounded in its curriculum, which is play. Play is something which happens among people, just as co-operation emerges as a relating experience between people. Often when I asked the question "What is cooperation?," the question came back: "Between whom?" implying people, that a relationship was involved.

Mothers were not always clear about what they were doing but knew it was good for them and their children. Perhaps it was because of this uncertainty that they could not put into traditional language what was happening in their groups. Their talk was not always in standard English; it was a process. The language became part of that process and began to reveal a picture of how that process was unfolding. Phrases were dropped in, like "They are learning to be a parent," which may not be significant at all by themselves, but everybody in North America would agree with what was said. It was when there was talk about parents "muddling" as a way of learning, that I realized something different was happening. "Muddling" meant not telling them how, but letting them learn by themselves.

Some of the key themes emerging from the talk were: relationships, parents being in on education, and cooperation as something which happens between people. The talk was diverse, going beyond "school" and "education," and I had a glimpse of a new social order about people getting together, accepting one another, growing together, and working toward more human contexts for parenting and schooling. No one was talking

curriculum. No one was telling anyone how to make anything happen. It had more to do with how to grow in relationships, thereby creating a community.

Because they perceived their situation differently than I did, it became clear that mothers in England and New Zealand were using variant words. They were projecting onto their groups their vision of how education could be, not so much in the words they chose, but in the absence of certain words, which are often used in North American talk about education. Words such as "school," "teacher," "executive," "president," "program," "teaching," "right," and "wrong" were absent! The word "education" was almost always used in connection with another term like parent education, adult education, and was often replaced with "training." "Parent" was perhaps the only word used in all countries with consistent meaning. How parents were involved varied from country to country, but the recognition given to parents was common in all contexts.

Universality of the Talk

It is significant that the talk found in these parent cooperative groups was so widespread among mothers without much awareness of each other's existence.

The network is the institution of our time: an open system, a dissipative structure so richly coherent that it is in constant flux, poised for reordering, capable of endless transformation.

This organic mode of social organization is more biologically adaptive, more efficient, and more 'conscious' than the hierarchical structures of modern civilization. The network is plastic, flexible. In effect, each member is the center of the network.

Networks are cooperative, not competitive. They are true grass roots: self-generating, self-organizing, sometimes even self-destructing. They represent a process, a journey, not a frozen structure. (Ferguson, 1980)

What I found was not just new thoughts on old ideas about the organization of education and parenting, but a discourse reflecting something which was happening in different parts of the world. It became clear that these networking parents, without verbalizing it, were reordering their societies in new and exciting ways.

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What Matters in Daycare Centres? The Implications of Auspice and Location

Barbara Kaiser and Judy Sklar Rasminsky

WHEN PARENTS BEGIN to think about daycare for the first time, they encounter a whole new world with its own strange terminology. The language sounds so much like ordinary English that it's sometimes hard to recognize. But terms like "profit" and "non-profit," "community," "workplace," "lab school," and "college" have important implications when they are applied to daycare.

At least two of these terms describe every single daycare centre in Canada. It is essential for parents who are looking for a place for their child in a quality daycare centre to know what the terms mean.

Profit versus Non-Profit

Let us begin with the question of profit versus non-profit, known in daycare parlance as "auspice."

Who can run a daycare centre? Is a daycare centre a business, operated for profit by a private owner or a company, or is it a non-profit organization, under the auspices of parents, a church, or a group like the YMCA, with the single goal of serving the children?

Non-profit centres. Boards of directors, usually composed of parents, run non-profit daycare centres, sometimes with the help of staff, community members, or sponsoring agencies like universities, hospitals, community and church organizations. Where parents sit on the board of directors, they are in effect the boss, and the director and staff of the daycare are their employees. They make major decisions about philosophy and policy, hiring and firing, salaries, fees, expansion, purchase of new equipment, and renovations to the physical plant. Because the centre is directly accountable to the parents, it will respond to their needs.

In most provinces, only non-profit centres qualify for government aid in the form of start-up, renovation, and operating grants, and this help can make a big difference in a tight budget. The extra money from the government goes into improving the quality of the care and keeping parents' fees affordable.

In 1989, the National Child-Care Staffing Study, a major survey of 227

child-care centres in five metropolitan areas in the United States, found that "non-profit centres . . . provided better quality care than for-profit centres" (Whitebook, Howes, and Phillips, 1989). Non-profit centres rated consistently higher on many of the elements that childcare experts identify as crucial to high-quality care: on teachers' education, specialized training, and experience; on staff-child ratio; on the number of teachers in the classroom; on the amount of developmentally appropriate activity; and on the amount of appropriate caregiving. Non-profit centres paid higher wages and more benefits to their staff and spent a larger proportion of their budgets on their staff; and as a result, they experienced much less staff turnover than profit centres. All of this, the researchers concluded, directly affects the children: "Children attending lower-quality centres and centres with more staff turnover were less competent in language and social development . . . Auspice (meaning whether the center was non-profit or profit) was the strongest predictor of quality."

In a study for the House of Commons Special Committee on Child Care (SPR Associates, 1986), daycare consultants rated about 1,000 Canadian daycare centres in 10 provinces and two territories and found that "non-profit care is likely to be higher in quality than for-profit care, and this superiority seems to hold up on virtually all measures." Even the incidence of diarrhea and upper-respiratory infection is lower in non-profit centres according to a surveillance program of 33 Montreal daycare centres conducted by a public health team in 1986-87 (Soto).

Profit centres. "The business of young children is growth and development, and the business of corporations is making money. If you mix the two, can the needs of both be satisfied?" Alice Lake asks in *The Day Care Book* (quoted in Galinsky and Hooks, 1977). Many educators passionately believe that no one should make a profit at the expense of children.

In most provinces, private, commercial daycare for profit — that is, daycare that is operated as a business by an individual, a company, or a chain like Mini-Skool — is not eligible for government grants. Although the government may supply funds in the form of subsidies to low-income families, most of the revenue of a profit centre comes directly from the parents' fees.

In order to meet expenses — salaries, equipment, meals and snacks, rent, heat, electricity, telephone, etc. — and squeeze any profit from the budget, profit centres must cut costs. They may pay lower wages, hire fewer and less qualified staff, and fail to replace teachers who are sick. Low pay and

difficult working conditions make their staff turnover very high. Their meals may not be as nutritious and appetizing as one would like. In some cities, zoning laws are forcing them into heavy traffic areas with little green-space because they are commercial enterprises. Under these conditions, high-quality child care becomes a difficult goal to achieve.

When the owner is a sort of absentee landlord who does not actually work full-time at the centre but skims a salary off the top, these problems can be exacerbated. Either the owner must pay an extra person, or the centre must function without a proper director. Sometimes the owner of several daycare centres plays checkers with the staff, switching them from centre to centre to fill holes or trouble-shoot — a disconcerting practice for children, parents, and educators alike.

The owner makes the decisions at a for-profit daycare centre. Although there may be a parent committee, there is no parent board of directors, and parents really do not have any say in the running of the centre. If they disagree with daycare policy, virtually their only recourse is to withdraw their child. If the owner chooses, he can make a profit by selling the centre to the highest bidder — leaving children, staff, and parents to cope with a new owner and the possibility of very different conditions, which may or may not fill their childcare needs.

Researchers for the House of Commons Special Committee on Child Care found that for-profit centres were less likely to meet government standards than non-profit centres, a finding confirmed when the *Toronto Globe and Mail* reviewed 1,600 inspection reports of Ontario daycare centres in 1989 (McIntosh and Rauhala, 1989). The Special Committee's daycare consultants rated 25 percent of small for-profit centres — a frightening number — as poor or very poor, and the *Globe and Mail* found that 11 percent of profit centres lack basic toys or equipment (Feb. 3, 1989). Chain centres tend to provide exactly as much quality as the provincial legislation demands — 85 percent met minimum provincial standards, but not a single one ranked as excellent (or as very poor). Small for-profit centres, on the other hand, varied widely in quality, from very poor to excellent. But just 32 percent were better than adequate.

Community versus Workplace

Where do you want your daycare centre to be — near your home or near your work? Which is better? Can you choose a workplace daycare centre if your employer doesn't have one?

Community daycare. Although people do not yet select their housing according to the reputation of the daycare in the neighbourhood, that day is probably not far off. Canadian families prefer daycare in their own neighbourhood, surveys show (Rothman Beach Associates, 1986). If you are about to move, enquire about nearby daycare centres as you would about schools or public transportation. It will make your life much easier if you live near a good daycare.

Community daycare has all the advantages of a community. Located where you live, it connects your child with other children in the area and gives him/her the opportunity to make friends that may be sustained well into the elementary school years. If the community is stable, the daycare population will be stable, too.

Encounters at the playground, swimming pool, skating rink, supermarket, and eventually elementary school constantly reinforce friendships, giving children the sense that they belong. Because preschoolers don't go anywhere alone, a community daycare even helps make parents, both single and married, feel part of the community. As you watch your child dig in the sand alongside Lauren from the daycare, you will meet Lauren's parents and find yourself looking for them the next time you go to the park. When the children get older and want to see one another on a weekend, it's very simple to arrange visits, which may include a cup of coffee for the adults. When they play with neighbourhood friends, children aren't separated from their older brothers and sisters who gather in the neighbourhood park and library as well.

In Canada, where half the year is winter in most regions, having a daycare centre near at hand is a considerable advantage. Travelling with a tired, hungry, cranky child bundled in a snowsuit in a traffic jam or a crowded bus can hardly be called "quality time."

Parents also like to have some time to themselves before and after work — in the morning to shift from family gear into work gear, and in the evening to wind down and compose themselves before picking up their child. Community daycare offers them breathing space.

Workplace daycare. Workplace daycare has its supporters, too, and parents do not necessarily have to work for the workplace employer to use such a centre. A majority of employer-sponsored daycares are open to families living and working nearby (Rothman Beach Associates, 1986). Parents should not automatically eliminate the option of a workplace daycare just because their employer does not provide the service.

In 1964, Riverdale Hospital in Toronto became the first employer in Canada to establish a workplace daycare centre for its employees. Not including university and college-operated daycares, there are now about 100 employers — mostly public organizations and mostly in Quebec and Ontario — who have workplace daycare programs, providing three to four percent of the licensed centre care in the country (Mayfield, 1990).

Research has turned up a long list of benefits to employers. Employer-sponsored daycare helps with recruitment, public relations, absenteeism, tardiness, staff turnover, productivity, morale, work satisfaction, commitment, and motivation (Mayfield, 1985). But we are mainly interested in the benefits to parents.

Especially for parents with infants, workplace or on-site daycare can be a lifesaver. For one thing, employers, responding to the needs of their employees, are providing more than their fair share of the infant and toddler care in daycare centres in Canada (Rothman Beach Associates, 1986). If you are looking for a daycare centre place for a baby, you are more likely to find it if your employer operates a workplace daycare centre. Secondly, on-site daycare means you can continue to nurse your baby at lunch and on breaks, and if an emergency develops or your child becomes ill, you can be there to help within moments.

Although you still have to fight rush-hour traffic, workplace daycare reduces travel time. You have just one place to go — you and your child go to work; you and your child go home.

Like community daycare, on-site daycare can create a community, a work-place support system. In Montreal's McGill Community Family Centre, where parents are required to feed their infants at lunchtime, friendship among families blossoms as they share the glories and agonies of new parenthood. It is good for the soul to discover new friends who are going through exactly the same trials that you are. A daycare centre gives the employer a more human face. At the same time, it gives the employees the advantage of integrating part of their family life into their work life.

Workplace daycare centres face strong pressure to provide high-quality care. Being in a fishbowl — under surveillance at all times — they are very accountable. The employer wants the daycare centre to be an asset, not a liability. In fact, a survey of Canadian workplace daycare centres showed that many of them exceed provincial minimum staffing requirements, many pay their staff higher salaries than other daycare centres in their area, and many have a high degree of parental involvement — all indicators of quality care (Rothman Beach Associates, 1986).

Even though the employer often contributes to the cost of running the centre, usually by waiving or paying the rent, utilities, and maintenance, the cost to the parents is about the same at workplace daycare as it is in community daycare because high-quality care is expensive (Rothman Beach Associates, 1986). Fees are used toward higher salaries, more and better equipment, special trips, and so forth.

Theoretically, one of the great advantages of workplace daycare is that it can accommodate the odd working hours and shifts that the employer demands. In fact, few workplace daycares open very early in the morning, stay open very late at night, or care for children overnight or on weekends. The cost is simply too high (Rothman Beach Associates, 1986). However, an employer that needs its employees over a holiday period is not likely to close the daycare for two weeks as might occur in some community or school-based centres.

Nevertheless, employer-sponsored daycare has pitfalls. On weekends you may end up travelling halfway across the city so that best friends can play together and your child may be a stranger among the children who may know one another from being together in community daycares or pre-schools. Not every parent is willing to give up precious time with a child to counteract this effect, but those who might could consider enrolling a son or daughter in activities at the local YMCA, library or community centre to encourage neighborhood friends.

Although the daycare centre is usually run by an independent parent board of directors, not by the employer, the parents on the board may experience a paralyzing conflict of interest. If you and your boss are both board members, you may not feel free to speak your mind, especially if you disagree. As a result, even a well-meaning member of management may wield an inordinate and inappropriate amount of power. This situation could compromise the work of the daycare director and staff, and at the same time the care of the children.

Perhaps the biggest drawback of employer-sponsored daycare is the dilemma some parents face when they change employment. If your child will no longer be able to attend the centre, you may find yourself in an awkward situation. However, because the majority of workplace daycare centres accept children from the community at large, your child may be allowed to remain even if you no longer work with the company. When you look at a workplace daycare centre, be sure to ask the director about the policy for non-employees and former employees.

Although your employer may not provide on-site daycare, there may be other solutions to the daycare problem. A professional consultant or the organization's personnel office may have an information and referral service to help you locate suitable daycare. The employer may reserve spaces in a daycare centre in the neighbourhood. The Metro Toronto YMCA gives its employees a monthly cash payment to help defray the high cost of quality care (Rothman Beach Associates, 1986).

Lab Schools or College-sponsored Daycare Centres

A university or college-sponsored daycare centre is a special kind of workplace daycare. Some 90 universities and colleges in Canada operate centres to accommodate their own staff and student population who are also young parents and to provide a training ground for students in early childhood education (Rothman Beach Associates, 1986). Because they serve as model teaching programs for students, university and college daycare centres (or lab schools, as they are often called) are usually of very high quality, and well funded. They offer the same advantages that other workplace daycares do: membership in a community within a community and wonderfully easy access to your child, at about the same cost as any other daycare.

But high-quality college or university daycares may serve such a large clientele that they may be next to impossible to get into. Parents who hesitate to enroll their child soon after birth may not even secure a space. For an older child the squeeze is slightly less severe, partly because most centres have more places for older children and partly because the student population, by its very nature, tends to be transient. But this lack of stability has a down side too: it is very hard on the children who are enrolled when a cherished friend moves halfway across the country because his mother has finished her degree.

With student-teachers on staff, the adult/child ratio of a lab school daycare can be very favourable indeed. Students may also help to contribute fresh ideas to the program. With an open, receptive staff, this can lead to an exciting and dynamic learning environment.

But even these advantages can lose their glow unless they are handled well. Students are young and less skilled than the educators on staff who are already professionals. They should be used to *augment* the required adult/child ratio, not to fulfil it. For the sake of the children, who need to see the

same caregivers regularly, there should be no more than one student per group. Their rotation through the centre should last at least an entire semester; and the student-teachers should be at the centre at least three times a week.

Although student-parents are full of ideas and enthusiasm, many of them have not yet had much administrative experience, and a board of directors composed of young and well-intentioned parents can on occasion cause problems, one of which may be a rapid turnover in parent directors. These problems can be solved if members of the university personnel office or education faculty sit on the board to lend useful experience, knowledge, and consistency to the proceedings.

So which kind of daycare is best? It is largely a matter of personal preference. Now that you know the pros and cons of each kind of daycare, you will know where to look for what you want. Non-profit centres usually provide better care, but there are no guarantees. A non-profit centre can be awful, and a profit centre can be very fine indeed. In some parts of the country, like Alberta, where non-profit centres are few and far between, there may not be the opportunity to choose a non-profit centre. High- and low-quality centres exist in both the private and the public sectors, in the community and in the workplace. In the end you must inform yourself about high-quality daycare and then rely on your own powers of observation to choose the best centre possible regardless of where it is or who runs it.

Editors' Note

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Parent Participation in Programs for Special-Needs Preschool Children

Eliana R. Tobias

SPECIAL EDUCATION IS CONCERNED with children who differ from the average child. The term emphasizes the importance of viewing children as individuals whose development follows the same basic principles of behaviour as those of regular children. Special-needs children require modifications to their learning environment in order to facilitate their development and acquisition of skills. While the belief that young children with handicaps should have equal opportunities to play and learn is widely accepted today, special-needs children have traditionally attended programs geared to meet their needs in segregated settings. In the last decade, the philosophy of normalization has influenced community members and programs, and facilities have interpreted integration in a variety of ways (Wolfensberger, 1972, 1984). Educators are concerned with minimizing handicapping conditions by promoting a child's total development in the least restrictive environment. Integration has come to connote a normal and desirable environment with opportunities for higher levels of social development and complex communication patterns. Preschool children with handicapping conditions are served in a variety of centre-based and home-based programs where the focus on the child's total development considers the importance of normal developmental patterns of motor, language, cognitive and psycho-social behaviour through a child-centred approach (Neisworth and Bagnato, 1987).

Parents play an important part in the educational experiences of preschool children. Researchers have documented that a child's development is influenced by caretaking experiences and homelife factors, and that parental involvement in the child's educational setting helps children learn more effectively (Meier, 1978; Tamey, 1985; Schaefer, 1972; White, 1985; Werner and Smith, 1982). Educators aware of the benefits of parent participation in early childhood programs are including parents in their programs.

Parents of special-needs children are expected to become involved in the education process through a variety of activities available to them in the preschool centres. Educators see parental involvement as a basic element in

early childhood education since the research in the last 20 years has consistently reported that family involvement plays an important role in sustaining gains made in the preschool programs (Blancher and Turnbull, 1982; Karnes and Lee, 1978; D'Alonzo, 1982; Lazar and Darlington, 1982). A number of techniques for working with parents have been reported in the literature: parents have been encouraged to participate in a range of services from the planning of a program, to counselling; from establishing networks for social and professional assistance, to teaching and learning skills which foster intellectual, motor and social development in their children (Baker and Heifetz, 1976, 1980; Becker, Bender and Kawabe, 1980; Karnes and Teska, 1980; Shearer and Shearer, 1976; Winton and Turnbull, 1981).

Parents are responsible for making decisions about the placement of their child in a preschool program. Different centre-based types of programs are available to parents of three- to five-year-old special-needs children, namely: segregated programs, those which serve only handicapped children; reversed mainstreamed or integrated facilities where 50 percent or more of the youngsters enrolled are exceptional, but non-handicapped children attend as well; traditional daycare and nursery school programs that serve the community at large and which recently have opened their doors to serve a few special-needs children.

Currently there is a concern that families of handicapped children need support, but that their needs can change and that consequently their attitude towards the parent activities offered to them by the early childhood programs can change as well (Bricker, 1982; Bailey and Simeonsson, 1984; Cadman, Goldsmith and Bashim, 1984; Gallagher, 1983; Winton and Turnbull, 1981). Educators must consider that some parents may not be seeking personal involvement when engaged in early intervention programs for their children. It is therefore important that this involvement fit the individual needs of every parent (Bailey and Simeonsson, 1984; Dunst, 1983, 1984, 1985).

Parent Involvement in the Educational Experiences of Young Special-Needs Children

This study described how early childhood programs for special-needs children define the role of parents and determine the kind of expectations that exist for parental involvement. It was expected that parents of special-needs children in segregated programs had higher expectations to become involved in a range of activities than those in mainstreamed programs.

Twenty preschool programs in Greater Vancouver, British Columbia which serve developmentally delayed three- to five-year-old children were selected to participate. An equal number (five) of segregated, reversed mainstreamed and regular daycare centres and nursery school classrooms were randomly chosen. Three parents and one teacher from each setting took part in the study. Therefore, 60 parents of special-needs students were interviewed in order to obtain information regarding parental levels of involvement, satisfaction and perceptions about the preschool program their child attended. Twenty teachers were interviewed in order to obtain information on the parental involvement activities available in these centres and the type and amount of parent participation in the classrooms. Parents were asked to complete the Family Resource Scale (Dunst and Leet, 1985) and the Family Support Scale (Dunst, Jenkins and Trivette, 1984) in order to determine the adequacy of resources, personal well-being and sources of support available to the parents who participated in the study.

Parents were queried about their awareness of 17 different possible parental involvement activities which could have been offered in the program their child attended. A participation index was obtained to reflect the degree of parent participation (effort/opportunity). Their responses (yes/no) were computed by comparing them to the teacher response indicating whether the activity was offered in the program. An analysis of variance was conducted on this index to test significant differences of parent participation in the different types of programs.

Results and Discussion

The data from the Family Support Scale and Family Resource Scale revealed no significant differences among the families of children attending segregated, reversed mainstreamed, daycare centres and nursery schools on the adequacy of support and resources available to them. Thus we can state that all four groups of parents were demographically similar.

The data revealed no significant differences between types of centres and the awareness parents had of activities offered to them by the programs. (See Table 1 for composite frequency of activities which parents were aware of.)

Table 1
Frequencies of Awareness of Parental Involvement Activities

Parent Involvement Activities	n	%*
Informal contacts	59	98
Parent-teacher conferences	52	87
Educational suggestions for the home	49	82
Contact with other parents	47	78
Observing in the classroom	44	73
Participating in developing program goals	43	72
Regular telephone exchanges	36	60
Attending parent parties	35	58
Attending parent-education events	34	57
Participating in classroom activities	34	57
Having the teacher conduct a home visit	33	55
Attending counselling sessions	33	55
Attending parent-training sessions	32	53
Belonging to a parent organization	28	47
Belonging to a parent-advisory board	23	38
Making program supplies	16	26
Putting out a newsletter	14	23

*n = 60 parents

The data showed a significant difference between daycare centres ($X = 9.0$, S.D. = 2.0) and segregated centres ($X = 14.0$, S.D. = 1.00) and reversed mainstreamed centres ($X = 14.6$, S.D. = 1.36) on the number of parental involvement activities available to parents. (See Table 2.)

Table 2
Parental Activities Available to Parents

Type of Centre	Mean	S.D.
Segregated	14.0*	1.00
Reversed mainstreamed	14.6*	1.36
Daycare	9.0	2.00
Nursery school	12.0	2.55

* $p < .0007$ (Segregated, Reversed mainstreamed > Daycare)

The study found that both segregated and reversed mainstreamed types of programs differed significantly from the daycare centres on the number of parent-involvement activities available to the family. This is attributed to the fact that program philosophies and goals possibly differed according to types of programs. Segregated and reversed mainstreamed programs have been developed with the exceptional child's needs as the main focus. The staff in these settings appear to make efforts to implement procedures and practices which have been supported by the literature and shown to have contributed toward the stimulation of development and the remediation of problems. These programs advocate a strong parent involvement component. They acknowledge the fact that children's handicaps add stresses to the family dynamics and these issues need to be addressed. Administrators and teachers view one of their roles as providing support to the parents.

The daycare centres, on the other hand, followed guidelines emanating from a governing board which licenses them and focussed mainly on the health and safety of the children. Educational goals are not a requirement and are therefore not articulated in the majority of programs. Thus we note that fewer opportunities for involvement were available to parents in the daycare centres. This may be attributed to several factors: the long operating hours which make it impossible for the teachers to spend time away from the children; the lack of financial resources to hire a parent worker do not allow for a substitute to free the teacher to work with the parent; and the fact that the daycare teachers may feel they cannot ask for greater involvement, given that they are serving the working parent who may not have the time or energy for this commitment. There seems to be a lack of awareness by the daycare

teachers of the benefits parent participation and parent-teacher communication provide to both. Information exchange between parents and caregivers in daycare centres has been seen to be very superficial (Powell, 1980).

Correlations between the importance ratings of parental involvement activities by teachers and parents ratings of activities were high in all four types of programs. (Table 3.)

Table 3

Correlations between Parent (n = 60) and Teacher (n = 20). Importance Ratings of Parental Involvement Activities in Four Types of Programs

Type of Program	r	p
Segregated	.630	.003
Reversed mainstreamed	.743	.000
Daycare	.683	.001
Nursery school	.606	.005

Parents in all types of programs seem to be satisfied with the program offerings. Parents were pleased with the staff's positive attitude towards their family. They commended the teachers' professional commitment, encouragement, openness, honesty, and dedication, all qualities which enhanced their child's progress. The sense of support which parents felt from the professionals in the field is also reflected in the high ratings parents gave items in the Family Support Scale regarding the help available to them. Parents of children in segregated and reversed mainstreamed settings commented on how pleased they were with the progress children had made. Parents of children in daycare centres and nursery schools recognized the value of having their children cared for in a normal setting while participating in activities with regular peers and receiving special services (such as a childcare worker assigned to the child, or a few hours of speech therapy a month).

Parents and teachers of special-needs preschool children considered that informal contacts between them, developing program goals together for the children, holding parent-teacher conferences, and having parents observe in the classroom, are four of the most important ways parents can involve themselves in their child's program.

While parents included "educational suggestions, worksheets, checklists to be carried out at home" in their list of the top five activities, teachers rated opportunity for parents to attend parent-training sessions as one of their top choices. In other words, parents wanted teachers to show them how they could get involved with their children in educational activities at home, and teachers felt that before they could give them homework and educational suggestions, parents should attend parent-training sessions. Parents and teachers seemed to be in agreement that parents can provide for stimulation at home if they understand their child's educational and therapeutic needs.

Conclusion

When the 60 parents were asked to identify sources of support in their everyday life and the degree to which these sources have been helpful to them in raising a young developmentally delayed child, the highest scores were obtained by sources outside of their immediate family or social circle. Parents felt that they obtained the most support from the early childhood program their child attended and from professional helpers such as therapists, social workers and physicians. This study showed that parents of exceptional children feel responsible for their children's well-being and seem to be aware of the importance of their involvement in their children's developmental process. Parents felt that, although their concerns about having an exceptional child might always be present, the staff in the early childhood program provided them with the greatest support to overcome the stresses associated with having a special-needs child. Teachers in these programs helped parents find solutions to immediate problems related to services for the family and the child. Most parents also felt that it was the teacher who helped them obtain a more realistic understanding of their child's competencies. They felt that their parenting role was strengthened by the professional in the early childhood programs.

Therefore, consideration must be given to the fact that early childhood programs are perceived as very strong establishments. It is important to recognize that the early childhood setting is a key institution for families with young special-needs children. Here parents can obtain support, information, education and a link with important and comprehensive resources that may be available to the family in the community. It is through the professional in these settings that parents can understand their own needs,

voice their perspectives and concerns, and receive and give social and emotional support. Early childhood centres assume a considerable social and educational responsibility and should be considered as ideal locations for the delivery of a number of interventions to families in need. It is important that teachers be prepared to work with families in a collaborative venture towards fulfilling children's educational potential.

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Les services de garde en milieu scolaire du Québec: état du réseau

Lise Baillargeon

AU QUÉBEC, les enjeux sociaux et économiques liés au travail extérieur des mères et la faible reconnaissance des bienfaits que retire l'enfant de la fréquentation d'un service de garde contribuèrent au lent développement de ces services. Ainsi, malgré les besoins réels qui existent dès 1970, les nombreuses recommandations en vue d'offrir des services de garde aux enfants d'âge scolaire furent, longtemps, totalement ignorées.

Aujourd'hui, environ 10 années se sont écoulées depuis l'implantation des premiers services de garde en milieu scolaire. Bien que leur développement soit rapide comparativement aux autres types de modes de garde, il reste que ces services sont loin de répondre à tous les besoins (15 %). De plus, les problèmes demeurent nombreux: financement insuffisant, absence de normes assurant la qualité du service, non-reconnaissance du rôle éducatif de ces services et du statut d'éducateurs et d'éducatrices de ce personnel de garde, faible participation de certains intervenants.

Les études, mémoires et recommandations se multiplient, mais la volonté sociale et politique concernant le développement d'un réseau accessible à tous demeure timide. Pourra-t-on compter sur les nouvelles mesures annoncées dans le Plan d'action en matière de politique familiale 1989-1991 du gouvernement du Québec?

L'engagement de la société québécoise

Il faut se rappeler qu'en 1977 on annonçait officiellement au Québec la formation d'un comité interministériel sur les services d'accueil à la petite enfance. Ce comité est composé de représentants des ministères des Affaires sociales, de l'Éducation et du Conseil du statut de la femme. Le rapport de ce comité maintient que la fonction de garde est et restera, au Québec, la responsabilité des parents. Cette orientation donne à l'État le rôle de soutien, d'animation et de redistribution des ressources (Québec, 1978). Le modèle proposé et retenu est celui de la répartition des responsabilités gouvernementales selon l'âge des enfants. Ainsi, le ministère de l'Éducation (MEQ) assume le développement des politiques de garde pour les enfants à partir de

la maternelle (5 ans) jusqu'à la fin du cours primaire (12 ans), alors que le ministère des Affaires sociales se charge des services d'éducation et de garde des enfants de moins de 5 ans.

L'élaboration de la «politique Lazure»

Le 13 mai 1978, le ministre des Affaires sociales Denis Lazure et son service de garderies appuient la recommandation du Comité interministériel à l'effet d'insérer le système de garde dans le projet de décentralisation du gouvernement québécois et d'en faire un dossier vedette (D. Lazure, entretien).

Il faut noter qu'à ce moment il existe de plus en plus de services de garde pour les enfants de 5 à 12 ans organisés par des corporations ou des coopératives de parents et dans certains cas soutenus par des commissions scolaires et des municipalités.

Pour la première fois une aide directe allouée au développement des services de garde para-scolaires permet à 13 commissions scolaires d'implanter ces services. Cette forme d'aide directe se fait par le biais d'une subvention de démarrage de 2 500 \$ pour un groupe de 20 à 25 enfants dans 37 écoles. Par ailleurs, on évalue à 180 000 les enfants d'âge scolaire ayant alors besoin d'être gardés.

Cette «politique Lazure» comporte donc des augmentations de subventions pour les garderies d'enfants de moins de cinq ans, de nouvelles subventions aux services de garde en milieu scolaire, de l'aide financière aux familles défavorisées ayant des enfants de moins de cinq ans en garderies ainsi que l'annonce de l'élaboration d'un projet de loi. Mais cette nouvelle politique des services de garde à l'enfance n'est pas complétée; il faudra maintenant légiférer. Le Service des garderies du ministère des Affaires sociales attendra donc la nouvelle loi pour émettre des normes concernant les services de garde.

L'application de la Loi (1980-1990)

Un avant-projet de loi crée un office des services de garde à l'enfance dont les privilèges dépassent de loin ceux du Service des garderies et obligent les commissions scolaires à dispenser des services de garde dans leurs écoles. Toutefois, dès la première lecture du projet de loi n° 77, à

l'Assemblée nationale du Québec, plusieurs commissions scolaires s'opposent fortement à cette obligation, si bien qu'on la leur retire. Enfin, il est admis que l'aide financière apportée aux parents sera également accessible aux utilisateurs de services de garde en milieu scolaire.

Le 21 décembre 1979, le Conseil des ministres sanctionne le projet de loi sur les services de garde à l'enfance quelques jours avant la fin de l'Année internationale de l'enfant. Le décret du 13 mars 1980 légalise la garde en milieu scolaire et institue l'Office des services de garde à l'enfance (OSGE).

La garde en milieu scolaire est maintenant prévue par un article de loi: «Un service de garde fourni par une commission scolaire aux enfants à qui sont dispensés dans ses écoles les cours et services éducatifs du niveau de la maternelle et du primaire» (chap. 1, art. 1).

Les services de garde en garderie s'adressant aux enfants de 0 à 5 ans et qui sont alors au nombre de 381 ne sont plus les seuls à préoccuper le gouvernement: il doit maintenant considérer les services de garde en milieu scolaire. En effet, au cours de l'année 1979-1980, une somme de 235 000 \$ est allouée par le ministère de l'Éducation aux commissions scolaires pour l'implantation de ceux-ci.

Cette loi consacre également de nouveaux droits aux enfants québécois, dont celui de recevoir un service de garde fourni par la commission scolaire où ils sont inscrits. Un article de cette loi en établit ainsi le principe: «Un enfant a droit de recevoir, jusqu'à la fin du niveau primaire, des services de garde de qualité, avec continuité et de façon personnalisée, compte tenu de l'organisation et des ressources des organismes et des personnes qui fournissent ces services» (chap. 1, art. 2).

Par contre, dans le champ particulier de la garde en milieu scolaire, le Québec établit par cette loi ses positions:

«Une commission scolaire peut fournir des services de garde en milieu scolaire aux enfants à qui sont dispensés dans ses écoles les cours et services éducatifs du niveau de la maternelle et du primaire.

Ces services sont dispensés, de façon régulière, durant les périodes fixées par règlement, les jours de classe en dehors des heures d'enseignement.»

Retenons que les commissions scolaires ne sont ni mandatées pour prendre l'initiative d'implanter ces services de garde dans leurs écoles ni contraintes de le faire, même si des demandes de parents leur sont présentées. Dans les faits, c'est aux parents qu'incombe l'initiative de demander à leur commission scolaire la mise sur pied d'un service de garde.

Aussi, un partage imprécis des compétences entre l'Office des services de garde à l'enfance relevant du ministère d'État à la condition féminine, le ministère de l'Éducation et les commissions scolaires n'est pas sans entraîner de nombreux problèmes de communication et de cohérence dans les interventions puisque personne ne veut en prendre l'entière responsabilité.

En 1983, la participation du ministère de l'Éducation à l'implantation de ces services de garde correspond à la mission éducative et communautaire de l'école, et rejoint le Livre vert sur la famille, qui souligne que «l'on reconnaît de plus en plus les services de garde comme un instrument collectif de développement global de l'enfant et pas seulement comme un service pour parents sur le marché du travail» (Gouvernement du Québec, 1984a). Par la suite, le Livre blanc, *L'école québécoise, une école communautaire et responsable*, mentionne en maints endroits et de façon explicite les services éducatifs et sociocommunautaires que l'école est appelée à offrir, en particulier, dans le domaine de la garde des enfants.

L'avènement de la «politique Gagnon-Tremblay»

Le 3 décembre 1986, le Conseil des ministres décide qu'un comité consultatif sur les services de garde à l'enfance sera formé. Le mandat de ce comité est d'évaluer l'organisation, le fonctionnement, le développement et le financement du système de garde du Québec ainsi que les principes et les orientations qui le sous-tendent.

Le Comité estime que les services de garde doivent répondre aux besoins de l'ensemble des familles et s'adresser au développement harmonieux de l'enfant tant sur les plans physique, intellectuel et affectif que social et moral.

Le Comité accorde la priorité à la consolidation des services de garde existants, sans pour autant nier la nécessité du développement de nouvelles places. Il favorise un réseau axé sur la qualité, qui ne peut se baser uniquement sur les ressources du milieu. L'État doit donc apporter son soutien pour l'implantation, l'organisation et le fonctionnement de ces services. Le Comité est également d'avis qu'un réseau de qualité est beaucoup trop coûteux pour que les utilisateurs en supportent tous les frais; un financement mixte, par les parents et par l'État, lui apparaît nécessaire.

Le Comité considère que l'accès aux services de garde doit constituer un droit universel. Ce droit d'accès ne doit toutefois pas être confondu avec la

gratuité de ces services. Il faut noter que, tel que le stipule la Loi sur les services de garde à l'enfance, les parents doivent supporter une part des frais de garde.

Le contrôle des services de garde par les parents est l'un des principes jugé fondamental par le Comité. Il est favorisé par les politiques de l'OSGE, qui n'attribue ses subventions qu'aux garderies (pour enfants de 0 à 5 ans) contrôlées par les parents. Par contre, rien sur le plan de la Loi ni de la réglementation n'est mentionné quant à la participation des parents aux services de garde en milieu scolaire. Ceux-ci ne sont soumis qu'à quelques normes du MEQ et leur qualité d'un milieu à l'autre peut être très variable.

Selon le Comité, les compétences en matière de services de garde au Québec devraient être confiées à un seul organisme, en l'occurrence l'OSGE. Cette orientation vise à préciser le rôle de «leader» de l'Office en ce qui a trait à la collaboration et à la concertation à établir entre les différents partenaires.

Cependant, la Loi stipule que les commissions scolaires n'ont pas à obtenir un permis de l'Office afin d'implanter des services de garde dans leurs écoles, pour les enfants qui y sont inscrits. Même si les commissions scolaires ne bénéficient d'aucun soutien technique et professionnel de la part de l'Office pour l'implantation, le fonctionnement et le financement de ces services, le Comité recommande tout de même que celles-ci conservent la responsabilité de la garde en milieu scolaire.

Pour faire suite à ce comité d'étude, le 24 novembre 1988, Monique Gagnon-Tremblay, ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine, dépose à l'Assemblée nationale du Québec un projet d'énoncé de politique sur les services de garde à l'enfance: «Pour un meilleur équilibre.»

Après les auditions publiques, tenues par la Commission des affaires sociales, où 108 mémoires ont été déposés, le gouvernement entend renforcer les objectifs de la Loi sur les services de garde à l'enfance. Concernant la garde en milieu scolaire, les axes d'intervention sont les suivants:

- accélérer le développement;
- poursuivre la définition des besoins liés à ces services de garde auprès des commissions scolaires afin de les consolider;
- autoriser les commissions scolaires à prévoir dans leurs plans et devis, lors de la construction ou du réaménagement majeur d'écoles, un local pour le service de garde;

- favoriser l'utilisation de locaux déjà en place dans les écoles pour l'implantation de services de garde;
- réviser, s'il y a lieu, après une enquête déjà entreprise auprès des commissions scolaires, les modalités de financement de l'implantation de nouveaux services de garde ainsi que du fonctionnement de ces services;
- favoriser des ententes exceptionnelles entre le ministère de l'Éducation et l'Office des services de garde à l'enfance de façon à répondre à des cas particuliers de garde d'enfants d'âge scolaire lorsque l'école ne peut le faire;
- permettre aux commissions scolaires, dans la mesure où les ressources financières le permettront, d'élargir l'offre de ces services de garde aux congés durant l'année scolaire et au cours des vacances estivales;
- mettre sur pied, en collaboration avec les milieux scolaires, les municipalités, les organismes de loisirs et les autres intervenants du milieu, un plan d'intervention apte à répondre aux besoins particuliers de garde des enfants du 2^e cycle du primaire;
- poursuivre l'élaboration du matériel susceptible de soutenir les activités du personnel des services de garde en milieu scolaire auprès des enfants;
- poursuivre l'élaboration des instruments de soutien sous forme de guides à l'intention des commissions scolaires.

L'Association des services de garde en milieu scolaire du Québec

Parmi ces mémoires déposés en commission parlementaire, on retrouve celui de l'Association des services de garde en milieu scolaire du Québec (ASGEMSQ). Lors d'un premier colloque provincial sur la garde en milieu scolaire tenu en mai 1985, des parents, des directeurs d'école, des représentants du MEQ, des formateurs et chercheurs des établissements offrant les programmes d'études destinés au personnel de garde se regroupent et élaborent des recommandations afin d'améliorer le réseau. Celle qui retient le plus l'attention des participants est la mise sur pied d'un regroupement sous forme d'association. Celle-ci a, dès sa fondation, comme objectif premier d'améliorer l'accessibilité et la qualité des services dispensés aux enfants.

Il faut se rappeler que ces services n'étant pas réglementés par l'OSGE

il en résulte une diversité de modèles difficiles à évaluer pour ce qui est de la qualité. Pour cette raison, l'Association a travaillé très fort à définir les causes de facteurs nuisibles à la qualité de vie des enfants et du personnel de garde:

- l'exiguïté des locaux, le bruit et la mauvaise qualité de l'air;
- les ratios éducateurs-éducatrices/enfants trop élevés;
- la non-reconnaissance de la fonction éducative du service de garde et du statut de ce personnel de garde;
- les mauvaises conditions de travail et la formation inégale de ce personnel de garde;
- un programme d'activités mal adapté aux besoins et aux intérêts des enfants de 9 à 12 ans.

L'ASGEMSQ s'attaque également à un certain nombre de malaises qui freinent le développement de ces services:

- le manque d'espace dans certaines écoles;
- le manque d'information et de soutien aux parents qui veulent implanter le service dans l'école de leur quartier;
- l'absence de collaboration de la part de certaines directions d'école;
- l'insuffisance de l'aide financière aux parents.

État du développement Rapports synthèses provinciaux de 1983 à 1990

	1983-1984	1985-1986	1987-1988	1989-1990
Écoles ayant des services de garde	278	368	484	637
Enfants gardés	11 438	18 546	30 500	46 719

L'intervention gouvernementale auprès de la famille et les services de garde

Au moment où le gouvernement entérine une politique de la famille en mettant en œuvre de nouvelles orientations en matière de services de garde,

la Direction de la recherche du ministère de l'Éducation produit un rapport qu'il publie en mars 1989 (Ministère de l'Éducation, 1989).

Celui-ci dresse un état de la situation des services de garde en milieu scolaire en regard du financement de la gestion et des services offerts. Ces données permettront au ministère d'évaluer les acquis devant être consolidés et les situations à rajuster et à améliorer. Par exemple, le mode de financement, qui a souvent été dénoncé par les commissions scolaires, constitue l'objet principal de cette recherche.

Depuis décembre 1987, le gouvernement du Québec a adopté un énoncé de politique familiale visant les trois objectifs suivants: reconnaître la famille comme valeur collective fondamentale; contribuer à la cohésion et à la stabilité de la famille en tenant compte des diverses réalités familiales; et soutenir les parents à titre de premiers responsables de la prise en charge des enfants. À cet effet, on reconnaît que les besoins des parents québécois en matière de services de garde sont importants et diversifiés. De plus en plus d'enfants y vivent quotidiennement des périodes plus ou moins longues. Le service de garde doit donc être, pour l'enfant qui le fréquente, un lieu de développement, de socialisation et d'intégration favorisant son plein épanouissement.

Le gouvernement du Québec manifeste sa détermination à poursuivre l'essentiel des orientations contenues dans l'Énoncé de politique sur les services de garde par le biais de son plan d'action 1989-1991 en matière de politique familiale: «Famille en tête». Malgré la décision du gouvernement fédéral de reporter à une date ultérieure son programme national de garderies, le Québec a comme objectif principal de créer 60 000 nouvelles places au cours des prochaines années, dont 3 095 places en milieu scolaire cette année. Ainsi, la contribution financière du gouvernement est portée de 104 millions en 1988-1989 à 132 millions en 1989-1990, soit une hausse de 27 %.

Les services de garde en milieu scolaire agissent directement sur la structure et sur le fonctionnement des familles qui les utilisent, car ils permettent de diminuer les contraintes de la prise en charge des enfants que rencontrent les parents et qui peut souvent être ressenties davantage comme une pénalité sociale que comme une contribution sociale. Les services de garde en milieu scolaire peuvent également jouer un rôle primordial de prévention des difficultés d'apprentissage ainsi que de dépistage et d'aide

en matière de santé physique et mentale infantile. Souhaitons qu'au Québec et partout ailleurs au Canada nous cessions, un jour, de voir des enfants errer, après les heures de classe, la clé de la maison pendue au cou. Il ne s'agit plus de savoir si nous avons les moyens d'offrir des services de garde de qualité, mais bien de savoir si nous pouvons nous permettre de ne pas le faire.

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Profoundly Premature Preschoolers: What Parents Can Do

Michael Luther, June Edmonds and Dan Fitzgerald

RECENTLY, DUE TO TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES in the treatment of premature infants, even the extremely low birthweight (ELBW) "prem" has a very good chance of surviving; these babies range from 500 grams to 1 kilo and are often born just under 27 weeks of gestation. ELBW-prems are now appearing in the preschools and kindergartens across Canada in ever-increasing numbers. Parents and early childhood educators are presently at a loss as to what to do for these children who are truly at-risk for further learning difficulties (Silva, McGee and Williams, 1984). This article addresses this important issue by looking at some of the existing literature on the ELBW-prem, their so-called "hidden disabilities," and ways of intervening to give this child a "head start."

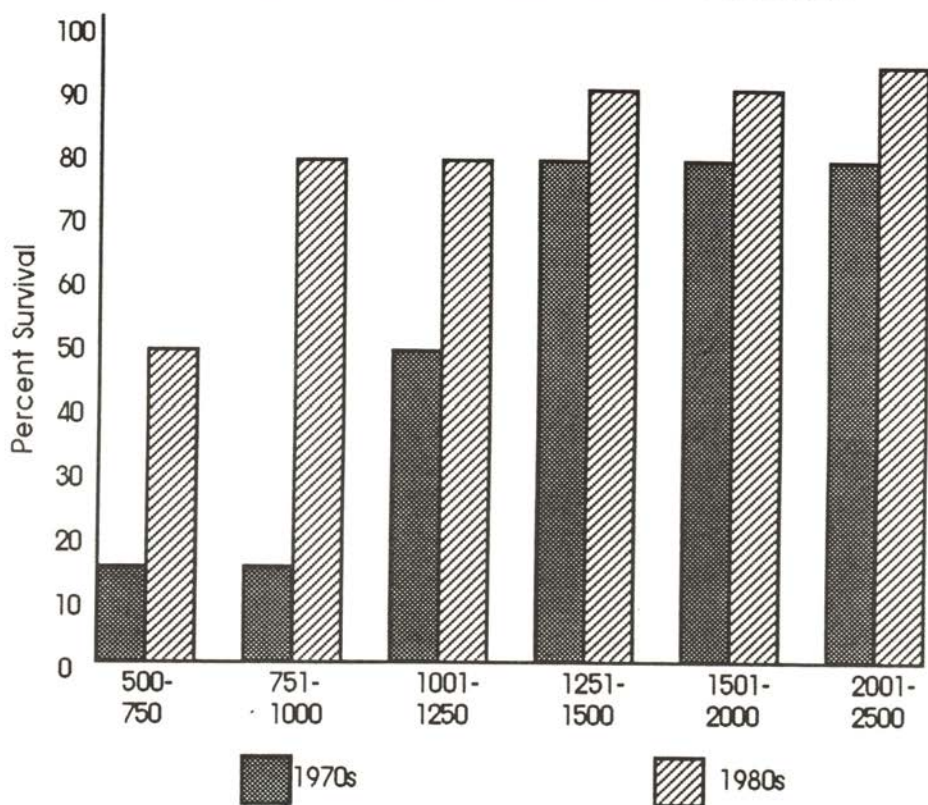
Background

The new technology in hospitals' neonatal units that reduced the handicapping disabilities in prems also increased the survival rates for the smallest birthweights. However, these babies were not just smaller but many of them needed extreme measures for their survival. They are the babies who are likely to spend up to three months in hospital before going home, having experienced neonatal diseases due to their extreme immaturity (e.g., immature lungs and digestive organs and fragile central nervous systems). Silva et al. (1984), write: "preterm infants may no longer be a high-risk group but SGA (Small for Gestational Age) children are at a risk of moderate impairment. . . ." Figure 1 indicates how much the survival rate has improved in the 1980s for low-birthweight infants. General improvement in survival is apparent across all birthweights, but is most marked for the two smallest birthweight groups where survival rates have more than tripled since the 1970s. Approximately 50 percent of the tiniest babies (i.e., under 750 grams) are surviving, while approximately 90 percent of the slightly larger babies are surviving. Over time there has been improvement in terms of a reduction in the major handicaps, and an improvement in the average levels of intelligence (i.e., within the normal range). Along with this improvement on overall survival rate is an increase in the number of the

smallest and sickest babies surviving. New and improved neonatal technology and care have obviously made an enormous difference for the pre-term infant, particularly in increasing survival in this smallest birthweight group.

Figure 1

Survival Rate of Pre-term Infants in the 1970s and 1980s*



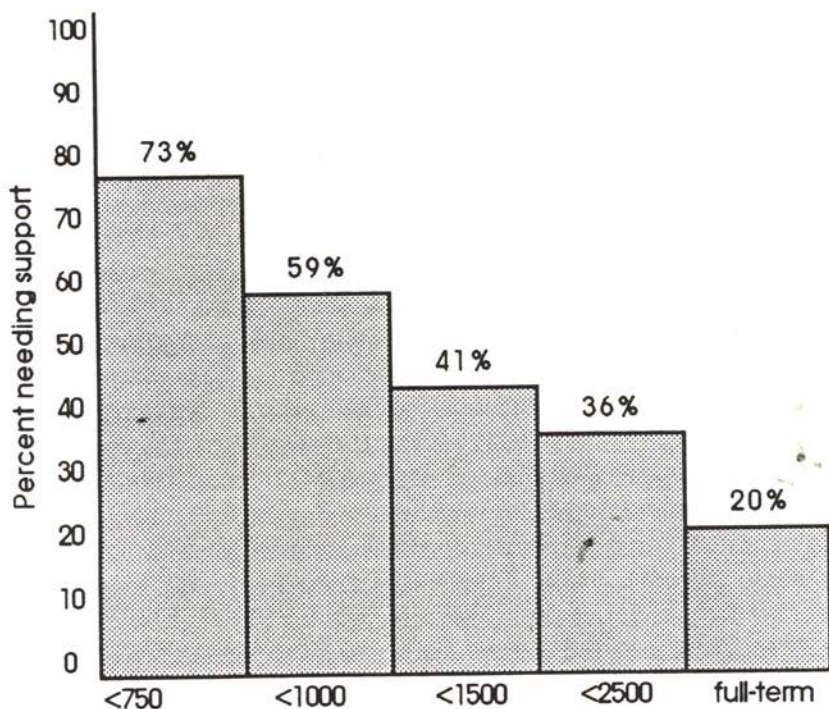
* Data from the 1970s adapted from Bennett (1980) and the Women's College Hospital NICU. Data from the 1980s from Ohlsson et al. (1987).

There has been an increasing concern with the outcome for the so-called "normals"—those prems who do not show neurological problems or whose deviations (i.e., transient neurological signs) in early development appear to go away during the second year. There is an increasing number of reports

on these "normal prem" on outcome at later ages, and particularly at early school age. Such reports now indicate problems in early school grades, after a relatively normal-looking preschool period (Silva et al., 1984; Rickards et al., 1989). Many reports indicate that prem have IQs that fall within the average range. When looked at in terms of repeated grades and need for special education resources, school outcomes, however, indicate that prem do not do as well in school as would be expected from their average levels of intelligence.

In Figure 2 it can readily be seen that there is an increasing percentage of school problems (described in 18 studies) with decreasing birthweight. Bennett (1989) refers to this situation as "The New Morbidity"; however, "The Hidden Disabilities" of the prem would seem to be a more accurate description.

Figure 2
Estimate of Percentage of Pre-term Infants Requiring Special Education Support in Schools as Reported in Recent Studies



Outcome Studies for Three Representative Birthweight Groups

The study by Holmes et al. (1987) exemplifies the outcome for the largest prem, in the LOW BIRTHWEIGHT (i.e., under 2,500 grams) group. These prem were in the upper socio-economic range and their mean IQs were in the High Average Range. In spite of this, they were doing less well in kindergarten than their controls, and less well on tests of mathematics, spelling and general information. In fact, they did less well on 15 out of the 18 tests given. The area of particular weakness was visual-spatial (e.g., drawing designs from a model, tracing mazes, reproducing block designs, etc.). They also scored lower on motor-skills tasks.

The study by Klein et al. (1989) characterizes the outcome for the VERY LOW BIRTHWEIGHT (i.e., under 1,500 grams) group. This study reports on children at five years and again at nine years of age (together with their controls). In school it is apparent that the prem repeated markedly more grades (40 percent) than their controls (11 percent), but unexpectedly these prem did not receive more special education. This, though, is not typical of other studies, where special education placement can reach as high as 56 percent. This discrepancy may reflect a particular school board's policy with respect to special education and repeating of grades. These prem also had lower scores on the achievement battery, most notably in mathematics. Problem areas noted were those that are mediated visually (e.g., visual matching, spatial relations, drawing designs, etc.). Fine-motor skills were weak too.

There are very few studies (Hirata et al., 1983; Edmonds, 1989) on the EXTREMELY LOW BIRTHWEIGHT (i.e., under 1,000 grams) group to date, and these reported a greater variability in test scores here. Language, IQ, and motor scores, though, were below that of the controls. Boys appeared to be at greater risk for problems than girls. IQ was average for these prem in the two studies, yet about 70 percent required some sort of special help in school. Noteworthy, Edmonds (1989) found that these ELBW-prem did poorly on a test (Beery) of visual-motor integration; the smallest prem had the most difficulty and the lowest scores on the Beery. This test was also found to be a rather good predictor of school performance/placement by Grade 3; i.e., low scorers were more likely to be in special education. Visual-motor integration has been cited elsewhere as being a significant weakness in the premature population (Hunt, 1981; Hunt et al., 1988; Klein

et al., 1989; Rose, 1981; Schulte et al., 1977). Interestingly, smaller prems were reported to have behaviour problems related to poor attention, a lack of focussing, less social maturity, and greater "temperamental intensity."

Summary

Overall, the pre-terms do less well in school than their full-term controls. The studies suggest the areas in which these children have particular problems are visually mediated (perceptual and motor) activities, math, language, social/emotional behaviour, and motor skills. Declining birth-weight of prems correlates highly with increased school difficulties. In writing about ELBW-prems Sell (1986) noted: "Outcome for tiny infants can be anticipated to be normal in 50-81% in the preschool years but only 32-36% in the school years." Thus, these children are likely to encounter more than the expected difficulties in school (i.e., repeated grades, special education, tutoring, remediation, etc.). A noted neonatologist, Michael Whitfield, pessimistically states: "I am afraid that society isn't going to make the support they need available" (Banks, 1989).

The Early Years

In light of the above information on the risks of being an extremely low birthweight premature infant, a parent has to gear up early, so-to-speak, to provide the best conditions possible for the developing prem-child. The research on intervention in this area is quite scant due to the recency of technological advances that have allowed such ELBW-prems to survive; thus there has not been time to test out different methods of "mediation" (i.e., teaching) with ELBW-prems. In light of the above research findings one has to make the assumption that the ELBW prem has a high probability (about 70 percent) of having some type of learning disability (LD) and therefore, should be closely monitored "from the cradle," as it were.

This, though, tends to run counter to prevailing neo-Piagetian philosophy that calls for a spontaneous, self-discovery approach to early childhood learning. Early mediation also sounds much like heresy to those who have heeded the call of child advocate David Elkind (1988). In his book *The Hurried Child*, he argues against pushing children through their childhoods too fast. Still, the ELBW-prem is not necessarily the "normal child" that

Elkind is defending, but a child who may have some degree of brain damage and/or dysfunction. Again, this notion of Learning Disability (LD) goes against the current spirit of "holism" in education (Poplin, 1985; Smith, 1989) and might, at first sight, seem to be reminiscent of the days (of the medical and psychological processing models) when "word blindness" and "perceptual problems," were the common diagnoses of children with learning problems. Unfortunately, ELBW prematurity can and does lead to the sort of minimal brain dysfunction that critics of the LD movement have long been denying (i.e., in full-term children). While the holists may largely be correct in their anti-LD contentions vis-à-vis full-term children who do poorly in schools, they may be dangerously wrong to ignore this condition in ELBW-prems. Setting aside philosophical and political differences, one must remember that a high incidence of cerebral palsy, deafness, blindness, retardation, and other physical problems are often the legacy of being born too soon and too small. Even lesser physical damage would logically lead to the sort of brain-related LD problems that interfere with academic success. Therefore, apprised parents would be wise to start early to stimulate or even remediate in order to give their ELBW-prem a fighting chance at succeeding in school. Unfortunately, there are no definitive studies to date on specific strategies for the ELBW-prem. Thus, the following offers parents some educated guesses for the optimal rearing and treatment of prems in home, daycare, nursery, and kindergarten settings.

Home

Parents are advised to keep in constant communication with their hospital's neonatal follow-up clinic. Many parents avail themselves of such services — sadly, others do not. It is crucial that parents ask questions, write down diagnoses, recommendations, and request copies of reports involving all aspects of the prem's hospital care. These are invaluable documents for private therapists, for school board decision-makers, and, ultimately for the prems, teachers. One should, within reason, strive to carry out recommendations made by the hospital. Private practitioners (e.g., speech therapists, occupational/pediatric therapists, psychologists, optometrists, pediatricians, etc.) tend to advocate for the child and are in touch with a network of services that the ELBW-prem may require; insurance policies usually pay for much, if not most, of these services.

In urban areas follow-up clinics at hospitals usually offer pediatric (OT/PT) therapy. In more rural areas there are often itinerant services; occupational therapists, physical therapists, and early childhood educators may visit the home and local daycare centres to work with such pre-toddlers. It is important to seek out and to exploit these services. More controversial therapies such as "Motor Patterning" and "Sensory Integration" (SI) are more accessible within cities and large towns. One should consult with one's pediatrician and/or follow-up clinics on such radical departures from conventional therapy. Incidentally, SI, which involves using all the senses to do OT/PT training with young at-risk children, has met with some degree of success, according to preliminary findings at Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children (Orenstein, 1990). Studies, however, on the efficacy of Doman-Delacado's "Motor Patterning" to date are inconclusive. Apparently, there are some short-term studies showing no benefits (Luther, 1988) and there are almost no known long-term studies. There is, though, much anecdotal, testimonial information from parents that tends to be favourable to this technique. In Ontario the Ministry of Health has allowed for some short-term, experimental funding for this method, and numerous community groups have sprouted up, where volunteers come into the home to work with all types of handicapped children. More conventional pediatric therapy services can be secured on a private basis and are quite easy to find.

Parents would do well to join a parents' support group like the Association for Children with Learning Disabilities (ACLD) if a diagnosis of LD has been made by a registered psychologist. ACLD provides good support and helps educate parents on their rights vis-à-vis school boards and social and health services. This organization has a list of preferred practitioners and settings in order to help the LD child.

Generally, at home, parents should strive to provide the best conditions possible for emotional, physical, and cognitive growth. Regarding the lattermost factor, cognitive development needs to be fostered in ELBW-prems. Neo-Piagetian methods of laissez-faire play are merely a "starting point." However, LD youngsters may require extra doses of deliberate "mediated learning experience" (MLE) of the sort described by early Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky and contemporary Israeli psychologist Reuven Feuerstein. Both see the necessity of an adult selecting and interpreting the world of stimuli to the child in order to activate higher level thinking processes. For instance, young children learn colours, numbers,

letters, legends, myths, songs, prayers, mechanical skills, sports, etc., largely by this process of MLE. It is powerful and may account for the rather enriched child-rearing patterns and the resulting successful adaptation of some ethno-cultural groups and, conversely, the deprivation and resulting failure in adaptation of other groups. A recent Ontario Ministry of Education "Handbook for Teachers of Students with Learning Disabilities" (1986) argues in favour of the MLE approach over self-discovery in working specifically with LD children. It is a common observation that LD children do not tend to learn well "incidentally," rather they require much deliberate structure and organization. Even with non-LD children, play should be balanced with many and varied mediated learning experiences. Again, the home should include opportunities for both free play and much adult interaction for the ELBW-prem.

Daycare

Daycare is a necessity for many Canadian families today. For the ELBW-prem, especially, quality daycare is paramount, if the child cannot be with a primary caregiver at home. Ideally, the ELBW-prem requires an extended period to develop and to bond emotionally with a parent; the home for any child under two years of age is usually the best place for this to occur (Weininger, 1989). For the "at-risk" or handicapped child, close interactions with a significant adult are even more beneficial, it would seem. Only a special sort of daycare (e.g., daycare home, kibbutz-style, cooperative, etc.) can even hope to approximate an "ideal" home situation. Given that many young children in this country, though, cannot stay at home every day, all day, the following are some suggestions that may address good daycare in general. The daycare setting, at a minimum, should be clean, safe, and well-equipped. Quality daycare should:

- have much one-to-one staff/child interaction
- have adults who can "read" children's needs and respond promptly to their signals/communications
- have adults who verbally communicate well with young children
- include opportunities for social development
- be licensed (even in a home setting)

- include opportunities for gross- and fine-motor play
- discourage parents from leaving a young child for prolonged periods (i.e., from dawn to dusk) at the daycare

For the ELBW-prem who is at this “sensory-motor stage” of development, *daycare should never be used merely as an expedience, but should be* utilized to foster “normal” development in many areas. Thus, physical manipulation of materials should be encouraged. Also, arrangements with grandparents, other relatives, close friends, etc., could be explored to provide (for part of the day) a setting that will ensure lots of one-to-one caregiving in a comfortable emotional climate for the very young child.

Nursery preschool

When the ELBW-prem is at least two years of age, or at the “preoperational stage,” parents should seek out some preschool programming (i.e., for part of the day) in order to promote social and cognitive development. Again, a balance between free play and MLE should be struck within the nursery program. Weininger and Fitzgerald (1988), for instance, claim that symbolic play contributes to “interhemispheric integration” in the brains of young children. They argue that play is essential to normal brain development and functioning in all children. They cite studies that show that play relaxes the child’s nervous system and contributes to cognitive growth; play even leads to gains in academic-skill areas. On the other hand, too much symbolic play may preclude the sort of adult MLE that is recommended by Vygotsky and Feuerstein. Lack of such mediation could possibly lead to “cultural deprivation” (Feuerstein, 1979) and thus further debilitate an LD-prem. Therefore, opportunities for both kinds of learning would seem to be crucial in the nursery or through “play groups” where parents participate.

Not every nursery school is equipped, though, to foster the two kinds of learning for the ELBW-prem. A parent might have to be quite selective in choosing the best setting. For instance, if free play can be done at home, perhaps more structured learning could be provided at a nursery, or vice versa. An example of a more structured sort of nursery is a typical Montessori School. In contrast, the Waldorf School would provide more opportunities for symbolic and creative play. The latter setting, though, might have more of a balance between the two kinds of learning models. Where

behaviour/emotionality is an issue, the Adlerian (Dreikurs) nursery may be an option, as well. In any event, a nursery should have certain high standards that are regulated by community and social services and by local municipalities. Staff should be experienced, knowledgeable, and be graduates of accredited ECE programs. In response to a perceived "shoving down" of the academic curriculum into the kindergarten, some parents are opting to keep their immature (November/December-born) children home an extra year before kindergarten. James Uphoff (cited by Brophy, 1989) found that children who begin kindergarten before five and a half years of age "are more likely to flunk a grade," need tutoring, special education, counselling, etc. It is hypothesized that the current "rigorous kindergartens" are stressing and burning-out immature kindergarten pupils. Uphoff recommends an additional year at home or in a nursery school for such children. Evidence shows that children who start kindergarten closer to six years of age tend to receive higher grades and scores on standardized tests than do children who start at five years of age (Mittenthal, 1986). This would be especially pertinent for premature children who start kindergarten early, regardless of month of birth. For instance, a child who is born in November and is three months premature would likely be one year younger than most of his/her peers. Similarly, Marner (1986) in a North York study found that boys who were relatively younger entering Grade 1 were more likely to repeat a grade or need special help later on than were older boys or girls. This finding led to a board-wide policy of "age-appropriate placement" in the elementary panel. A Nebraska study, by James Uphoff and cited by Mittenthal (1986) showed that early-entry kindergarten children accounted for 75 percent of pupils who later had to repeat a grade in elementary school, whereas "delay-entry" pupils virtually never had to repeat a grade! Mittenthal (1986) concluded that immature children in kindergarten "may be at a disadvantage . . . when it comes to physical, emotional, social and intellectual development." Uphoff maintains that being "bright" and being "ready" to enter school may not be synonymous. David Elkind (1988) writes: "The result of this educational hurrying is that from 10 to 20 percent of kindergarten children are being 'retained' or put in 'transition' classes to prepare them for the rigors of first grade!" The ELBW-prem would seem to be an ideal candidate for "academic redshirting" (i.e., an additional year at home or in nursery); the case here would even be stronger than that for full-term November/December children entering kindergarten a year later. Still, that

extra year should be a stimulating one for the prem. Holmes (1987) argues that "well-intentioned" and "competent parents" serve to minimize long-term risks for their preschool prems.

Now, once the ELBW-prem has entered kindergarten, a continuation of a nursery-style curriculum should be maintained wherever possible. The kindergarten should not be an academic precursor to Grade 1, but an additional year for both active play and MLE of key concepts and attributes. Characteristics of a good nursery school should be embodied in a 'half-day' Junior Kindergarten setting, and further extended and elaborated to maintain a high level of challenge to prevent stimulus-boredom. Later, a half-day of playful Senior Kindergarten would be adequate. However, it might be wise to schedule even another half-day to a more structured type of programming. Parents would have to monitor this sort of "double-programming" (in Senior Kindergarten) very closely to see how well their ELBW-prems adapted, and to watch for signs of fatigue and/or "cognitive overload."

The Senior Kindergarten curriculum should be geared to the "preoperational" child, where overt, shared language, symbol-learning, elementary reasoning (i.e., of classes, categories, etc.) is fostered and where a sense of "autonomy" (Erikson) is engendered through positive hands-on-learning experiences (by the child) and communication (from the teacher). Elkind (1988) writes: "Young children need. . . to explore and investigate in a responsive environment if they are to acquire a sense of initiative. . . ." If this is blocked early, the child may have a negative emotional reaction, and will not be motivated to continue to learn. Blatz (1944) believed that a child's positive emotional response to his/her teacher was a prerequisite for learning to occur. Therefore, the ELBW-prems need a warm, nurturant kindergarten teacher to prepare them emotionally for Grade 1. Incidentally, Grade 1 too should not be a time when play is set aside for formal study. Ontario Ministry of Education (1975) documents such as "The Formative Years" and such local school board documents as "Observing Children," "Look, Hear," etc., are quite specific in recommending that the primary/junior division be one where child-centred learning occurs and where academic subjects are introduced in fun and meaningful (context-rich) ways.

The LD-Prem

The only valid exception to this kind of holistic approach would be in cases where the prems have been found early to be bona fide LD children. In these cases, the curriculum may have to be broken down into more manageable units depending on the nature of the disability and the child's "compensating style" of learning. For instance, an Oxford study (Bradley and Bryant, 1983) demonstrated some measure of success in teaching dyslexic Grade 1 boys to read using a phonetic approach; normally children do not require such a fragmentation of the reading process (Smith, 1973). Prems, as a high-risk group for LD problems, may need early special education interventions. They may be heir to a variety of learning disabilities which result in frustration in school. It may be that prems do not fall neatly into the normal patterns of learning disabilities found in the general school population but may constitute a separate group.

Levine and Cooper (1990), in working at their Canadian Heritage School in Toronto with "high-risk" prems, claim to have obtained two clinical results: "(1) less frustration in approach to learning; and (2) faster internalization of skill level." Also, they write: "Since we have begun remediation with some of the high-risk youngsters before their entry into a formal school program, we are finding that receptivity and therefore speed of rehabilitation is greater." The above findings, though, are not based on any experimental research.

Well over a decade ago Early Identification (EI) was in vogue and has recently petered out largely due to the disproportionate number of resulting Special Education referrals and placements. Unfortunately, the early enthusiasm for EI has waned, but it may be needed now more than ever where LD prems are concerned. A reinstituting of EI procedures shortly after kindergarten registration (using the public health nurse, psycho-educational consultant, special education consultant, etc.) may need to occur when high-risk prems are enrolled. This should be done as a preventive measure rather than as a search for even younger special education candidates. Still, many ELBW-prems may require earlier interventions and placements than the system has hitherto been used to. This raises all sorts of important issues that cannot be properly dealt with in this article.

Conclusions

The ELBW-prem provides the educational system with many new challenges. It potentially pits diametrically opposed philosophies and practices in education against each other in a way that perhaps no other condition has. This "hidden disability" may test the viability of current notions of "holism" in education (Smith, 1989) and may even necessitate a resurrection of state-of-the-art aspects of the "medical model" (Geschwind and Galaburda, 1984). It may be fair to assume that no simplistic model will be able to accommodate the needs of the LD-prem, whether it be in the home or in the school setting. One can only speculate that LD-prems, at different points in their development, will need doses of both kinds of learning in differing proportions. For instance, the LD-prem may benefit from more "holistic" approaches earlier, and more reductionistic ones later. Each LD-prem will require unique combinations and even permutations of these throughout his/her life. Parents will need to attend IPRC (Identification, Placement and Review Committee) meetings, help with classroom assignments, give reassurance, take the child to clinics, to tutors and to outside professionals, purchase necessary equipment (i.e., computers, etc.), and always be on the lookout for strengths or other "intelligences" (Gardner, 1983) that the child can capitalize on. The LD-prems will not be able to make it on their own. The parents will have to move heaven and earth, as it were, to make school work for the child and vice versa. Banks (1989) cites a rather apt, sobering quote by neonatologist Michael Whitfield: "We're creating a new species of human being and don't yet know what their outcome will be. It's not enough just to wave goodbye and wish them well when they leave the nursery. We have an obligation to these children because we kept them alive."

Editors' note

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Integration of a Blind Preschooler into a Typical Early-Childhood Setting

Susan Fisher and Lorna Ruelle

OVER THE LAST DECADE with the adoption of mainstreaming in many public schools, preschool teachers are confronted on a more regular basis with the request to admit children with special-needs into their programs. Although teachers may accept in theory the idea of mainstreaming or integration, the reality of a special-needs child in their classroom can be disconcerting and somewhat unnerving. Often the teachers have had little, if any, training in special education and they are unsure of the resources available to them.

In 1987-1988 the Child Study Centre at the University of British Columbia had an opportunity to integrate a young blind child into one of its regular preschool programs. This was a new venture for the Child Study Centre staff who had not previously worked with visually impaired children. This article focusses on some of the issues that have been of concern to us as a teaching staff as well as on some of the practices we have discovered in our work with a blind child over the course of one year. Our purpose in writing this article is to try and pass on useful information to other preschool teachers who might be considering enrolling a visually impaired child into their program. The areas to be discussed include staffing, team preparation, physical environment, integration, and play and its implications for the preschool teacher.

Staffing

At the Child Study Centre, a head teacher and an assistant teacher are assigned to each group of children. When the blind child was accepted into our three-year-old group, we reduced our enrollment from 15 to 14 and initiated planning for integration. A major concern was the hiring of a special-needs assistant who would function as a third member of the teaching team.

In our hiring we felt it was important that the special-needs assistant understand what normal development for the young preschool child was in order to put the special-needs of the visually impaired child into perspective. Often the behaviours and the skill level in certain developmental areas are within the normal range for the visually impaired child, whereas in other areas they can be delayed. A special-needs assistant must have this devel-

opmental knowledge to be able to work with sensitivity and understanding with the child, family and other team members. An assistant who does not have the necessary early childhood competencies will be unable to perform as an integrated member of the team and can easily be isolated. Such isolation would have a detrimental effect upon the progress of the special-needs child as well as on the overall program.

Moreover, the teacher must be particularly conscientious as there are many meetings concerning the special-needs child outside of the time the child is in attendance at school. Meetings involving the parents, professionals and other agencies must be part of the program. Presently, salaried time allotted for staff conferences of program development specifically related to the special-needs child is not standard but must be applied for by the hiring supervisor. We recommend that the salaries offered through the Ministry of Social Services and Housing reflect, at least, the current local or regional salaries as well as take into consideration educational qualifications and experience. We also recommend the establishment of a central registry from which to obtain names of people who have both training and interest in this area. In addition, we suggest that a monitoring system be put in place to make sure that progress with the child is ongoing and the staff is working together as a team to insure quality care.

In summary, we believe a most critical issue surrounding integration of special-needs children into a typical preschool setting is in the area of staffing. Without qualified personnel the child will make minimal progress or might even regress.

Team Preparation

As soon as the staff is in place the team must gather together as much information as possible about visually impaired children and contact resource people to set up information meetings. In meeting to discuss program plans, concerns and objectives for the preschool year the staff also needs to discuss individual long-term and short-term educational goals for the blind child. The program should be specifically aimed at developing skills which have been identified by the parents, teachers and other professionals.

As teachers we found the Oregon Project useful. It is an assessment tool for visually impaired children from birth to age six. It gave us a framework to define target skills and to determine progress in all the developmental areas.

By concentrating on the child's specific needs and strengths we made the greatest possible use of the capabilities he/she had to establish a balance for reasonable expectations. We believe that "to expect too much is to risk frustration and failure, whereas to expect too little can result in failure to attain one's full potential" (B.C. Kindergarten Curriculum Guide).

In addition, it is essential that all the staff participate in an orientation mobility workshop. Preferably, the workshop should be conducted by a trained instructor who has had experience with preschool children. If an instructor is not available, the staff should organize "blindfold" sessions for one another, to be able to really feel what it is like to be visually impaired or blind, even for a short period. They need to experience the uncertainty of the unknown, the noise level of the classroom, the meaninglessness of some activities, as well as the many frustrations with which young children with visual impairments are constantly dealing.

Physical Environment

In planning the classroom environment keep in mind that having a well-planned early childhood environment should be the first consideration. When examining the classroom try to determine how to maintain that environment and at the same time meet the specific needs of the blind preschooler. Placement of the learning centres is a major consideration, as there should be little to no major change in the room arrangement during the year.

The physical layout of the classroom should allow for easy accessibility to the learning centres and to other areas of the classroom. For example, it is important to determine the placement of the visually impaired child's cubby or coat cupboard so that it allows for easy accessibility to the classroom. Strategic landmarks need to be planned to aid the child in special orientation.

Low-level landmarks can include variations in flooring such as wood, linoleum, tile, and rugs of differing textures. Mid-level landmarks can include tables of varying configurations, large metal wastebaskets, fuzzy stickers and braille labels, and auditory stimuli such as a noisy clock or a tinkling mobile.

After setting up the physical environment, it is important for the staff to decide upon consistent terminology to identify learning centres, furnishings

and materials to ensure that the child is not confused by interchangeable use of terms such as housekeeping corner, pretend centre or dramatic-play corner. It is also important to decide upon verbal directions that will be used to guide the child from one area to another. Verbal direction must be relevant to the child's competency and comprehension and can be individualized by referring to knee, waist or head height.

Integration

The Home Visit. Initially a teacher must prepare for the integration of a blind child by making a home visit to establish rapport with the child and the parents. This visit gives the teacher an opportunity to gain insight into the history of the visually impaired child and his/her special-needs, strengths and interests. As well, the teacher should initiate discussion regarding the parents' expectations and concerns and establish an open line of communication. The parents will probably already have been working with a team of professionals and must be treated by the teaching staff as valuable team members.

It is essential that there be a mutual sharing of information related to current interests of the visually impaired child. Themes at school can be extended learning activities at home and events at home can be used to foster play at school. Keep in mind that the visually impaired child learns in fragmented pieces and in order to understand the concepts there must be a linkage between home and school.

Gaining Rapport. As with any preschool child, gaining rapport and a sense of trust are most important. For the child who is visually impaired, gaining confidence, trust and an ability to function in the world are important things for the teacher to foster. Some of the things we learned about gaining rapport are:

1. *Always identify yourself by name when you greet the child.* "Hi, D. This is Sue." Don't assume after a few months that he/she knows your name or your voice. All through the year continue to let the child know who is speaking. It is far too exhausting and frustrating for the child to be constantly playing a guessing game with regard to who is talking. It is equally important to let the child know when you are leaving.
2. *Talk to the child and make it pleasurable.* Keep a listening ear and pick

up on the child's interests and questions. Our child had excellent language skills and enjoyed rhyming words and playing with language. Often he would start a conversation with a silly rhyme such as "fox in socks" or "tapes in the toilet." Remember that often these sayings are the child's way of making contact, getting your attention and starting a conversation. It is important to laugh with and not at the child.

3. *Touch and cuddle gently as the child gets to know you.* Engage in close games such as finger plays at circle, songs, and a story in the rocking chair.
4. *Use children's names constantly and encourage children to talk to the visually impaired child.* For example, "Tell D. to move off the slide." "D. I am coming down the slide!" It is not necessary to change your natural vocabulary when you speak to a visually impaired child. Use words such as "see" and "look" and use colour names as well. Blind children should know what colour their clothes are, what colour their car is, etc.
5. *Express pleasure at the smallest achievement.* Use your voice dramatically to show pleasure and touch frequently in the beginning. Let the mother and child know you enjoy them. Give feedback on a daily basis. Accentuate the positive. Let the mother know about all the things the child has done during the morning. If you do not see the mother on a regular basis, then telephone conversations are essential. A communication book could also be established where teachers and parents can keep each other informed of concerns, questions and progress.
6. *Remember to offer help only when necessary.* Back off. DO NOT HOVER! There is a tendency in the early days to be too close and to assume a certain helplessness. The goal each day is to teach independence in a meaningful way; the child does not need to be busy and involved at all times, but needs time to relax and enjoy a quiet moment.

Classroom Orientation. The visually impaired child's orientation to school should take place just prior to the preschool gradual entry process so that the staff can:

- focus their attention entirely on the special-needs child;
- observe interactions between the child and the parent;
- begin orientation to the physical environment without the distraction of other children.

The integration of the blind child into the physical setting will progress through three orientation stages: perimeter, crossroom and specific centre. A key to the success of orientation at all the stages is to always begin and end a period of play by returning to the entry point. This "point of reference" must remain constant and should be a key landmark, such as the child's cubby or the entry door to the classroom.

1. *Perimeter Orientation* Perimeter orientation focuses on learning the configuration of the whole classroom. The child is "talked through" the peripheral boundaries of the classroom, allowing as much time as possible for exploration of key furnishings in each area. It is important to plan how many and which materials will be placed in each centre so the centres are identifiable without distracting from the specific purpose of the orientation. Not all visually impaired children will need or respond to the orientation process in the same way. Therefore, the teacher chosen to lead the orientation must:

- be sensitive to the needs of the child;
- be flexible;
- be prepared to end the orientation before completion if necessary.

Since blind children need to explore with their bodies to really know a piece of equipment, they may need to climb into, on or under it. They may even try to smell or taste it.

The orientation process is very tiring for the young child. If you attempt to orient for longer than 10 to 15 minutes, you may find that the child is unable to concentrate. "Acting out" signs such as dumping materials, "silly behaviour" or an unwillingness to continue will indicate that the orientation needs to end, and additional sessions need to be scheduled. For us, it worked to have the child come to preschool 15 minutes early so that short orientation periods, without other children, could be carried out as long as was needed. Remember to keep the orientation short and fun as not only is this the child's first preschool experience but it may also be the child's first experience with a new environment outside of the home.

2. *Crossroom Orientation.* Crossroom orientation focusses on learning to move from one centre to another by always beginning from the pre-determined point of reference and can be introduced by giving limited choices. Crossroom orientation should be initiated at a pace that will allow

the child to feel comfortable. One of the tenets of early childhood education is that children should have choices of where they want to play and who they want to play with, but we soon learned that with our visually impaired child we needed to be more directive and limit choices. For example, "Do you want to play with the blocks or play in the pretend centre?" The crossroom orientation also requires a detailed "talk through" as you progress to the area chosen. For example, "First comes the teacher's counter and then you will be next to the garbage can." Tap the table or clap hands to give another auditory cue. It is important to remind the child to use his/her hands to trail all mid-level landmarks as they are approached and to verbally initiate awareness of low-level landmarks as they are reached. Keep in mind that a moving voice is difficult for the blind child to follow. Don't give a direction and keep moving away from the child at the same time. Be specific with directions. Instead of "Come this way," or "It's over there!" say "Turn to your right; then walk straight ahead."

Generally, young children will not come to preschool with a well-developed sense of left and right. For the visually impaired child this is an essential part of mobility training and the corresponding growth in independence. Therefore reinforcement of this acquired skill must occur frequently. For example, have the child wear a bracelet on the right hand and use it as a cue when giving directions.

Crossroom orientation is made more meaningful when the environment and the sequence, or chain of the day, remains the same and thereby predictable. This "chaining" allows the child to predict what will happen and thereby gain a sense of security and independence. Chaining can also be extended to include such routines as placement and marking of the child's place for circle time and the child's chair and table at snack.

3. Specific Centre Orientation. Specific centre orientation focusses on learning where furnishings are located in relation to one another in a specific centre and in learning where specific materials are kept in the centre. Usually specific centre orientation will have to take place when other children are in the area. Therefore, it is important to tell the visually impaired child who else is present and to describe what each child is doing. Entry into play is not easy for the blind child so be prepared to initiate and sustain play. Modelling a running commentary will encourage the children present to do the same. For example, "I am stacking all the wooden blocks.

Tom is laughing at your joke. Here comes Sara. She has a book she is going to show us."

It is important not to hurry but rather to individualize the pace of the orientation process to meet the needs of the child, and at the same time be prepared to move the child along at a pace that will create challenge and eliminate the possibility of the child lingering too long in one area.

Play and Implications for the Preschool Teacher

One of the basic underlying premises of early childhood education is the belief in the value of play and exploration as vehicles by which children learn. Nursery school educators have long supported the idea that play is an inherent right of the young child and is the natural language of the child. Play is considered a serious and highly absorbing activity and it is believed that through experimentation and exploration the child will truly learn about and find a place in the world. The play of the young child is indeed the child's work and through play children develop socially, emotionally, physically and mentally. It is further believed that children need the opportunity to stretch their imaginations, explore, experiment and learn by doing. We know that children learn best through their senses — by feeling, smelling, tasting, hearing and seeing — and it is important that teachers understand this and capitalize on it by providing an enriched environment with a wide variety of play materials, uninterrupted time and plenty of space.

For the visually impaired or blind child the overwhelming need for play opportunities is critical. Because their important visual sense is either non-existent or impaired, they need to rely on their other senses to make sense of their world. They are also extremely dependent on adults in their play. The teacher must interest and guide the child in play activities. Teaching the child actually how to play and explore materials in appropriate and meaningful ways is essential and involves careful orientation and direction.

Teachers must provide enriched play environments which encourage sensory exploration as well as sensory sensitivity. We found that teachers had to make a conscious effort to become aware of the array of sounds, smells and tastes in the classroom, so they in turn can help the visually impaired child make interpretations. For example, when teachers hear noises they can explain what is happening and what is causing the noise, and

at the same time elicit responses from the child and together attempt to problem-solve what is happening. "I hear some children going downstairs. Do you remember when they went down yesterday? I wonder where the children are going?"

In an attempt to facilitate play we recommend that behavioural expectations between sighted and visually impaired children, for the most part, be the same. For example, if there is a limit about not throwing toys or screaming too loudly then this limit should apply to all children. But as well as being consistent, we also feel that teachers must be flexible. We found that our visually impaired child explored his environment in a different way from typical three-year-olds. For example, he would remove all the blocks from the block shelf and physically get himself on the shelf so that he could really know it with his body. In a very real sense he was getting important information about its length, depth, height that an ordinary three-year-old would not necessarily need to gain in this way.

One of the real benefits of preschool education is the opportunity for social interaction. Not unlike the play of many three-year-olds, we found most of the play that we observed with our visually impaired child was at the solitary or parallel stage. The movement toward more cooperative social play is often delayed with blind children and because of that delay we felt it was very important to foster social interaction between the blind child and preschool classmates. To help foster social interaction we felt it was important to:

1. Encourage short play times for the visually impaired child outside of school time with class friends so that he/she begins to recognize voices and begins to develop friendships.
2. Encourage activities at school that involve other children, such as play in the pretend centre with blocks or on the tire swings, rather than more solitary activities.
3. Encourage the child to verbalize his or her needs. We found that throwing equipment, e.g., blocks or sand, often indicated that the child had had enough in a certain area and needed to change activity. When setting limits, treat the visually impaired child as you would any other child in the class, especially in safety situations.

We also discovered that transitions and routines took much longer. Be

prepared to wait and move more slowly. Do not try to pressure or hurry the process, especially in the beginning. As we got to know our visually impaired child we found he was intentionally slow so that he could have one-to-one contact with the teacher. Encouragement to speed up was given gradually.

Questions about blindness should be answered naturally and simply as they arise. Our experience with young three-year-olds is that they don't verbalize their questions about the visually impaired child as easily in the classroom situation as do four-year-olds. On the other hand, many questions did arise at home. We encouraged parents to share these questions with us so that we could support and help the seeing-child understand the disability.

Adaptations of Play Materials

For our visually impaired child there were special considerations that helped to initiate, stimulate, or sustain play in specific learning centres. Following is a brief outline of some of the adaptations of play materials that we discovered through our reading, through consultation with the parents and other visually impaired experts and through trial and error.

For Books

1. Pre-plan which books are to be read each week and have the child's parents pre-read them at home as a preview to story time at school.
2. Plan a one-on-one story time with books that encourage participation through repetition or acting out.
3. If possible, give the visually impaired child a story-related tactile object to manipulate during story time; e.g., when "Corduroy" was read, the child was given a tiny bear.
4. Introduce story books that have clear plastic overlap pages with braille. These books, known as "touch/see books" are available from the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) and many local libraries.

For Art Activities

1. Define paper boundaries by:
 - a) taping various shaped picture frames onto the paper to indicate the boundary of the paper.
 - b) gluing wool, string, jute, or textured paper around the edge of the paper.

2. Place the paper on top of a piece of screen mesh so that when the child colours, the mesh produces a picture that can be felt.
3. Use a paper plate to present a limited number of collage materials.
4. Discourage tactile defensiveness by providing the child with a damp washcloth while gluing.
5. Add textures and odors to paint and playdough. Try shaving cream as a change from regular finger paint.

For Gross Motor Activities

1. For safety reasons, assign a teacher to the visually impaired child while playing outside.
2. Take an active role in gross motor activities by going down the slide with the child, running while holding hands and pumping from the back of a tricycle.

For Music

1. Teach the child to use the tape recorder and label tapes with braille or fuzzy stickers so the child can be independent when choosing.
2. Introduce singing games, finger plays and rhythm-band instruments in small groups during free play.
3. Take time to let the child feel the finger patterns made for finger plays and simple action songs and help the child to imitate them.
4. Send finger-play sheets and props home so parents can reinforce the activity.

For Pretend Play

1. Create play situations involving whole-body activities such as using a large box or a laundry basket as a car, boat, or train.
2. Initially encourage fantasy play through familiar family activities such as talking on the telephone, eating and going to bed so that the child does not tune out or display other blind mannerisms; e.g., eye pressing or rocking.

For Blocks

1. Initially allow time for the child to explore the surroundings by climbing onto the shelves.
2. Offer a variety of blocks such as wooden-unit blocks, foam and cardboard.

3. Plan a "play theme" using props and have the child build accessories such as a pen for pigs, a garage for trucks or laying track for a train.

Conclusion

In this article we have attempted to summarize some of the issues, concerns and practices that evolved as the result of integrating a blind three-year-old into our regular preschool program. We believe the time has come when the integration of special-needs children into typical preschool settings should be encouraged and fostered. Parents with children who have special-needs should have the same access as any other family to enriched early childhood programs which attempt to meet the needs of all children, regardless of their ability or disability. We found that the experience of having a visually impaired child in our class enriched all of us — parents, children and teachers.

Authors' note

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Books in Review

FOUR CHILDREN'S BOOKS ARE REVIEWED in this issue, along with a new book which explores the world of the fast-track parent and is of particular interest to parents and teachers.

We are interested in publishing book reviews in every issue of *Canadian Children*. Those who wish to contribute reviews of both children's and professional books should write to me for specific guidelines: Martha Pauls, 26 Selby Crescent, Regina, Saskatchewan S4T 6W1.

For Children

Sometimes the oldest stories are the best fairy and folk tales, legends and myths which have been retold and enjoyed by countless generations. Several new versions of old tales have been recently published for children.

Reviewed by Claire Isaac, Regina Public Library.

Little Fingerling, by Monica Hughes. Illustrated by Brenda Clark.

Kids Can Press, 1989, 29 pages, \$12.95.

ISBN: 0-9211-0378-6

(Grades 1-4)

Little Fingerling, a Japanese folktale, retold by Monica Hughes, presents a hero who is only a few inches tall. By the time he is 15, Issun Boshi is "the height of his father's longest finger." Tired of his secure life at home, Issun Boshi sets out to seek his fortune with one of his mother's needles as a sword, a rice bowl for a boat, and a pair of chopsticks. After several adventures, he meets and falls in love with the beautiful young lady Plum Blossom. Yet Issun Boshi must prove his courage and worthiness before he may express his love.

Issun Boshi is a very appealing character. Undaunted by his small stature, he shows that bravery and resourcefulness are not limited by physical size. Children will thrill to his adventures, and the surprise ending will bring a smile of satisfaction.

Monica Hughes, an Alberta writer, has written many outstanding books for children. *Little Fingerling* is her first picture book. Brenda Clark, best known for *Big Sarah's Little Boots* and the *Franklin Turtle* books, is the

illustrator. Her clear, warm pictures are reminiscent of old Japanese prints, but always convey the emotions and thoughts of the individual characters. Although a tiny figure, Issun Boshi is never portrayed as a puppet or thing of fun. He is shown with the dignity and respect his heroic qualities deserve. Together, Hughes and Clark have produced a wonderful picture book sure to be enjoyed by many children.

The Fisherman and His Wife, by John Warren Stewig. Illustrated by Margot Tomes.

Holiday House, 1988, 32 pages, \$21.95.

ISBN: 0-8234-0714-4

(Grades k-3)

A MORE SOMBRE MOOD marks a retelling of *The Fisherman and His Wife* by John Warren Stewig. The Brothers Grimm story of a discontented woman, grasping for more and more, is complemented by illustrations by Margot Tomes. Muted blues, browns and greys show the tired, care-worn fisherman, the peevish wife, and the restless, angry sea. A patch or scrap of scarlet appears on every page, as bright as the streak of blood the enchanted fish trails behind him when he is freed from the fisherman's hook. The spare, smooth text is highlighted by the repetition of rhymes directing the fisherman to go again to the sea, and to summon the magic fish. This story is one to savour slowly.

Iduna and the Magic Apples, by Marianna Mayer. Illustrated by Laszlo Gal. Macmillan, 1988, 40 pages, \$16.95.

ISBN: 0-02-76120-7

(Grades k-4)

In *Iduna and the Magic Apples*, Marianna Mayer presents an ancient Norse myth. The goddess Iduna's golden apples are the source of the gods' youth and immortality. The evil giant Thiassi covets Iduna's magic apples and draws her from the safety of her garden. With Iduna gone, the garden dies, and the gods begin to weaken and grow old. This elegant and timeless tale is matched by the glowing illustrations of Canadian Laszlo Gal. The monstrous Thiassi and the graceful, dignified Iduna are shown against the back-

drops of a lush enchanted garden and towering ice cliffs. The two ravens of Odin, the father of the gods, are found in the serpentine borders of each page. Named Hugin and Munin, "Thought" and "Memory," the ravens are fitting emblems for the unfolding of this captivating tale.

In the Beginning, by Virginia Hamilton. Illustrated by Barry Morse.
Harcourt Brace Jovanich, 1988, 157 pages, \$22.75.
ISBN: 0-15-238740-4
(Grades 4 and up)

MYTHS OF CREATION are the subject of *In the Beginning* by award-winning writer Virginia Hamilton. Twenty-five myths from different peoples and cultures describe many ideas of the creation of the cosmos, the Earth and humankind. Familiar myths from ancient Greece are contrasted with little-known stories from Babylon, Polynesia and the Mayan peoples, all celebrating the wonder and diversity of creation. Dramatic full-colour paintings by Barry Morse match the haunting, powerful text. The author's commentary after each myth places it in the context of its particular culture. An afterword compares the common themes and elements of these ancient stories. Sources and a bibliography are included.

For Adults

Children of Fast-Track Parents, by Andrée Aelion Brooks.
Viking, 1989, 271 pages.

Reviewed by Mary Cronin, Regina.

Child Rearing in Eden, or "Chiffies" with an Iffy Future

EDEN IS THE MATERIALLY PRIVILEGED WORLD of corporate and professional America investigated by Andrée Brooks in *Children of Fast-Track Parents*. It has a Dallas-like aura and is inhabited exclusively by lawyers, corporate executives, doctors, dentists, stock brokers, and independent business people. The typical denizen is good-looking, high-achieving and talented, with a tanned, lithe body (absolutely mandatory if you intend to pass as Superwoman). "Chiffies" is Brooks' modified acronym for "children of the fast-track," the privileged offspring who have been shamelessly bred to feel that they should have it all: nannies and live-in help, designer clothes, ski holidays, a car at 16, Ivy League education, and perhaps a deposit for a condo on leaving home.

This new breed of parents and children has been produced by the explosion of new wealth created during the eighties. But like any self-respecting nouveaux-riches, the parents are not secure in their newly acquired status and are compelled to surround themselves with the right trappings; their children automatically become part of their security package and continue this escalation into the next generation. On our whirlwind tour through Eden, we glimpse what it is like to live in the fast-track with parents who back only winners and are always oh! ever so busy.

Because parents want to jump through the next career hoop and keep the money flowing, they have to work, work, work; for them, "keeping your eye on winning despite the hurdles has been a way of life since childhood" (p. 14). "By the time parents get home at night even the best intentions they might have had for their children — reading a story at bedtime, helping with homework, listening to events at school, cooking a meal together — may get postponed for yet another day" (p. 8). From the start, children are initiated into this hectic game; they are enrolled into so many extra-curricular

activities that they have little unstructured time in the day for reflection or to form lasting friendships. One is reminded of the perpetual tail-chasing motion of soap operas, or of movies like *Kramer vs. Kramer*. How predictable. How boring.

The present generation of fast-trackers may succeed in maintaining a façade of coping because they once had many of the traditional supports which included a mother at home, whose main responsibility was caring for her family. In contrast, mothers and fathers in the fast lane, both exhausted, feel they have to stay working in order to maintain their upper-middle-class life style and to give their kids a good start by paying for private schools, tutors, and counsellors. Such a sacrifice, they hope, will ensure that their prize possessions get into one of the Ivy League colleges: this is simply seen as a guarantee of a higher paying job, because in these circles education per se is not the issue. Here, "status and success have become the epiphany of the epoch" (p. 17), as Mammon is the only yardstick of true fulfilment.

By the time they reach high school, many of these high-achieving chiffies are prepared to win at all costs. If they cannot succeed through the regular channels, they will cheat or manipulate the system: teachers can be bribed or calls can be made to influential contacts. Other signs of callousness also start young: for example, children in an exclusive Connecticut elementary school dubbed as "nerds" classmates who did not come up to scratch. Being a nerd means that you cannot compete: you are "not good at sports, not verbally facile, not good at grades or even socially adept" (p. 92). These are the casualties who do not have the abilities to be "A students," and so are a constant disappointment to their parents who have such high hopes for them and who now realize that they may have made a bad investment.

In her own words, Brooks set out to investigate the storm clouds which seemed to be brewing in the land of Eden; but alas, like Scott Fitzgerald she fell in love with the slim beautiful people, the exclusive subdivisions with swimming pools and well-manicured lawns, the private schools, the miscellaneous bunch of therapists and counsellors with elegant offices dispensing advice and psychological care to the casualties. A healthy dose of righteous scorn, instead of covert admiration, would have resulted in a more cogent analysis of the predicament of these yuppie families, where children are messed up because of the parents' neurotic ambition and smug affluence.

Nowhere is there a hint of an analysis which would jog the consciousness of these people and those who cater to and profit from their warped lifestyle.

Does it matter that these same ambitions which result in disturbed youngsters are directly linked to the fact that the gap between the well-to-do and the poor in America is increasing at a shocking pace? As I read this book, I asked myself whether it was simply another example of relativism run wild. Do the rich suffer as much as the poor, or should the inhabitants of Eden be reminded that a few miles from their sheltered existence other children are hungry and homeless? We need to put the problems of the wealthy in perspective and view as extremely relative the suffering of those poor rich kids who "are robbed of the warmth of favourite things" (p. 55) because their parents constantly buy new ones and dispose of the cherished old and tatty possessions. I suggest that the problems described in this book could be solved quite simply by a more equitable distribution of wealth. While we wait in the hope that this will happen, a good injection of common sense would certainly help.

Children of Fast-Track Parents does not deliver a clear message; we are never sure of its purpose or its intended audience. While Brooks tells us that her purpose is to investigate the new Eden or "haute bourgeoisie," her book is also a "how-to-do-it" manual for these elegant and ambitious parents. Because the latter are meant to read the book in order to get advice on such matters as how to choose a nanny, pick a private school or a therapist, teach their children how to use money wisely, or get into the Ivy League, they cannot be put off by hard-hitting comments on the dubious values they are transmitting to their children, can they?

Throughout the book there are a few feeble attempts at asking people to redefine success in non-materialistic terms, but no fitting attempt to call them to their senses. Is this not shocking when the most privileged and the most educated groups in society — in theory the best products of twentieth-century American enculturation — have stifled or lost the child-rearing instincts possessed by their illiterate forefathers? They have to learn that successful child-rearing takes a minimum of money, and plenty of time and selfless love.

Perhaps Brooks' style of glossy superficial writing is related to her love affair with "elegant" life styles. The descriptions of the people and their houses are hollow and replete with clichés. For example, the book opens with a visit to the highrise office of one of these paragons of efficiency, Stacy O'Donnell (a pseudonym, naturally). Stacy, a 43-year-old executive recruiter, is back in her office only ten weeks after the birth of her third child

but “she looks so spectacular she might have stepped right out of the pages of Vogue magazine. Her blond hair is swept back from her face in a neat but stylish cut She wears a dove-gray linen suit that shows none of the bulges or sags from her recent body changes” (p. 3). And, would you believe it, she is married to an “equally handsome marketing executive” (p. 3). To a person, all the successful adults and children are “beautiful people” (sic), while all those who have experienced failure tend to be on the plump side. Wake up, Ms. Brooks: “Remember that the most beautiful things in the world are the most useless; peacocks and lilies, for example” (John Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice*, 1).

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1991 CAYC NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Meaningful Connections for Young Children

March 14-17, 1991, Vancouver, British Columbia

CALL FOR PAPERS

Institute and Workshop Sessions

CAYC invites proposals from members and non-members for institutes and concurrent workshop sessions which focus on issues and practices in preschool, child care, nursery, kindergarten, primary, elementary, parent education, research, and other related areas of early childhood education. The audience at CAYC conferences is composed of teachers, care givers, administrators, parents, students, researchers, support professionals and college and university instructors.

Regular workshop or paper presentations will run for either 1 1/2 or 2 hours. Institute sessions will last all day (5 hours). The conference will include international, national, provincial, and local speakers. CAYC is particularly interested in presentations which focus on Canadian programs, practice, and research. We welcome proposals in French.

Three copies of proposals/papers, with the following information, must reach our office by September 30, 1990. No proposals will be accepted after this date. Enclose two stamped self-addressed envelopes for follow-up correspondence.

1. Name(s), address(es), phone number(s) of persons participating in session.
2. Title of session.
3. Category of subject (preschool, child care, research, etc.).
4. Principal intended audience (teachers, administrators, other researchers, etc.).
5. Brief description (200-400 words) giving purpose and scope.
6. Description of session for printing in program (25 words or less).
7. Audio-visual equipment needed.
8. Length of session preferred. If necessary, indicate preferred time or date. CAYC will try to accommodate all requests, if possible. (All institutes will be held on Thursday, March 14, 1991.)

Mail all proposals to: 1991 CAYC Conference, c/o Isabel Spears, Secretary, Child Study Centre, University of British Columbia, 2881 Acadia Road, Vancouver, B.C., V6T 1S1.

Notification of accepted proposals will be sent in late November 1990.

CONGRÈS NATIONAL DE L'ACJE 1991

Liaisons significatives pour jeunes enfants

14-17 mars 1991, Vancouver, Colombie-Britannique

APPEL DE COMMUNICATIONS

Sessions de conférences-ateliers et d'ateliers

L'ACJE sollicite auprès de tous ses membres et non-membres des projets de conférences-ateliers et d'ateliers parallèles portant sur les questions et approches concernant le préscolaire, les garderies, la maternelle, le primaire, l'élémentaire, l'éducation des parents, la recherche et autres domaines en relation avec l'éducation de la petite enfance. L'auditoire aux congrès de l'ACJE comprend des enseignants, des éducateurs, des administrateurs, des parents, des étudiants, des chercheurs, des professionnels de soutien et des chargés de cours de collèges et d'universités.

Les ateliers ou présentations d'exposés seront d'une durée de 1 h 30 min ou 2 h. Les sessions de conférences-ateliers dureront toute la journée (5 h). Le congrès invitera des conférenciers internationaux, nationaux, provinciaux et locaux. L'ACJE est particulièrement intéressée par les présentations orientées vers les programmes, approches et recherches canadiennes.

Trois exemplaires des projets de communications, avec les informations suivantes, doivent nous parvenir avant le 30 septembre 1990. Aucune proposition ne sera acceptée après cette date. Joindre deux enveloppes timbrées adressées à votre adresse pour la correspondance à suivre.

1. Nom(s), adresse(s), numéros de téléphone de la /des personne(s) participant à la session.
2. Titre de la communication.
3. Catégorie du sujet (préscolaire, garderie, recherche, etc.).
4. Type de l'auditoire concerné (enseignants, administrateurs, chercheurs, etc.).
5. Brève description (de 200 à 400 mots) exposant le but et la portée du sujet.
6. Résumé de la communication pour insertion dans le programme (25 mots ou moins).
7. Équipement audiovisuel nécessaire.
8. Durée prévue de la communication. Vous pouvez indiquer vos préférences pour la date ou l'heure: l'ACJE s'efforcera, dans la mesure du possible, de satisfaire ces demandes (toutes les conférences-ateliers se donneront le jeudi 14 mars 1991).

Envoyez vos projets de communications à: Congrès de l'ACJE 1991, a/s Isabel Spears, secrétaire, Child Study Centre, Université de Colombie-Britannique, 2881, ch. Acadia, Vancouver, C.-B., V6T 1S1

Les avis d'acceptation seront envoyés vers la fin-novembre 1990.

Guidelines for Authors

Canadian Children is the journal of the Canadian Association for Young Children (CAYC), the only national association specifically concerned with the well-being of children of preschool and elementary school age in Canada. The journal is published twice yearly and contains articles, book reviews and announcements of professional conferences.

Canadian Children is a multidisciplinary journal concerned with child development and early childhood education. Authors from across Canada, and elsewhere, are invited to submit articles and book reviews which reflect the variety and extent of both research and practice in early childhood education and child rearing.

Content: Submissions should appeal to an audience that includes parents, professionals in the field of childhood education and child services, as well as teachers and researchers. Most issues are multi-theme in nature and the editor will attempt to balance articles that are research-related with articles of a practical nature relating to programming, curriculum, classroom practice or child rearing.

Form, Length and Style: Articles may be of varying length, written in a readable style. Style should be consistent with an acceptable professional manual such as the Publication Manual (3rd edition) of the American Psychological Association. Three (3) typewritten double-spaced copies on 21.5 x 28 cm (standard 8 1/2" x 11") paper should be mailed directly to the editor at the address listed below. If appropriate, authors should send accompanying black and white glossy print photographs, tables, figures or illustrations with complete captions, each on separate pages. Authors are to obtain releases for use of photographs prior to mailing. Authors' names should appear only on the title page for the purpose of review. Please include a brief biographical sketch including the author(s) full name, title, professional affiliation, and other relevant information, such as persons assisting author, grant support or funding agency. It is expected that authors will not submit articles to more than one publisher at a time.

Review, Acceptance and Publication: The editor will acknowledge receipt of, and review all solicited and unsolicited manuscripts received, and will refer selected submissions to at least three reviewers external to the editorial committee. The final publication decision rests with the Editor, and will be communicated within three months. Manuscripts not accepted for publication will be returned only if a stamped, self-addressed envelope is included.

Please send all correspondence and completed manuscripts for publication consideration to: Dr. Glen Dixon, Editor, *Canadian Children*, Child Study Centre, The University of British Columbia, 2881 Acadia Road, Vancouver, B.C., Canada, V6T 1S1.

Guide à l'intention des auteurs

Canadian Children est la revue de l'association canadienne pour les jeunes enfants (ACJE), la seule association nationale vouée exclusivement au bien-être des enfants du préscolaire et de l'école primaire au Canada. Elle paraît deux fois l'an et regroupe des articles, comptes rendus de livres et annonces de rencontres professionnelles.

Canadian Children est une publication multidisciplinaire traitant du développement de l'enfant et de l'éducation de la petite enfance. Les auteurs du Canada et d'ailleurs sont invités à soumettre des articles et des comptes rendus de livres mettant en évidence la variété et l'étendue de la recherche et des approches en éducation de la petite enfance et en formation de l'enfant.

Contenu: Les articles visent un public de parents, de professionnels dans le domaine de l'éducation de l'enfant et des services à l'enfance, ainsi que les enseignants et les chercheurs. En général, chaque numéro comprend de multiples thèmes et le rédacteur en chef s'efforcera d'inclure à la fois des articles portant sur la recherche ainsi que d'autres de nature pratique traitant des programmes, des curriculums, des approches en salle de classe ou de la formation de l'enfant.

Format, longueur et style: Les articles peuvent être de longueur variée et doivent être rédigés dans un style accessible à tous les lecteurs. La présentation doit être conforme aux normes du *Publication Manual* (3^e édition) de l'American Psychological Association. Trois exemplaires, dactylographiés à double interligne sur du papier de 21,5 x 28 cm (8 1/2 x 11 po), devront être envoyés directement au rédacteur en chef à l'adresse indiquée ci-dessous. S'il y a lieu, les auteurs devront fournir toutes photographies accompagnant les articles tirées en noir et blanc sur papier glacé, tous les tableaux, figures ou illustrations avec leurs légendes, et nous les envoyer chacun sur une feuille séparée. Ils devront obtenir le permis de reproduction des photographies avant de les faire parvenir au rédacteur. Le nom de l'auteur ne doit figurer que sur la page-titre en vue de préserver son anonymat auprès des membres du comité de rédaction. Veuillez inclure une brève notice biographique incluant les noms au complet, titres, affiliations professionnelles et autres informations pertinentes telles que les noms des assistants, des supports financiers, des subventions. Il est entendu que les auteurs ne soumettront leurs articles qu'à une seule revue à la fois.

Révision, acceptation et publication: Le rédacteur en chef accusera réception et considérera tous les manuscrits reçus, qu'ils aient été sollicités ou non, et soumettra les textes qu'il aura retenus à au moins trois lecteurs externes au comité de rédaction. La décision finale quant à la publication est sous la responsabilité du rédacteur en chef et sera communiquée dans un délai de trois mois. Les manuscrits refusés seront retournés seulement si une enveloppe adressée et timbrée est incluse.

Veuillez adresser votre correspondance et vos manuscrits à: Dr Glen Dixon, Rédacteur en chef, *Canadian Children*, Child Study Centre, Université de Colombie-Britannique, 2881, ch. Acadia, Vancouver, C.-B., Canada, V6T 1S1.

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Parent Involvement: Changing Perspectives from 1965 to 1990

Arlene Kasting

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Parents' Talk in Parent Cooperative Groups: Old Words, New Meanings

Elizabeth Savard Muir

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What Matters in Daycare Centres? The Implications of Auspice and Location

Barbara Kaiser

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Parent Participation in Programs for Special-Needs Preschool Children

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Les services de garde en milieu scolaire du Québec: état du réseau

Lise Baillargeon

Agente de recherche pour l'Association des services de garde en milieu scolaire du Québec.

Profoundly Premature Preschoolers: What Parents Can Do

Michael Luther

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Integration of a Blind Preschooler into a Typical Early-Childhood Setting

Susan Fisher

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Association canadienne pour les jeunes enfants

Qu'est-ce que l'ACJE?

L'Association canadienne pour les jeunes enfants, issue du Council for Childhood Education, a reçu sa charte fédérale en 1974. C'est l'unique association nationale vouée exclusivement au bien-être des enfants d'âge préscolaire et de l'école primaire. Ses membres, des enseignants, des administrateurs, des parents et des étudiants, proviennent du Canada, des États-Unis et d'autres pays francophones ou anglophones.

Buts de l'ACJE

1. Travailler à l'épanouissement et au bien-être de l'enfant.
2. Améliorer les conditions, les méthodes et les programmes relatifs aux besoins de l'enfant.
3. Encourager le perfectionnement professionnel continu dans le domaine des connaissances du développement de l'enfant.
4. Susciter une collaboration active entre les groupes intéressés à l'enfance et au développement de l'enfant.
5. Disséminer l'information touchant le développement de l'enfant.
6. Promouvoir la coordination entre tous les organismes canadiens intéressés au bien-être de l'enfant.

Mise en œuvre des buts de l'ACJE

1. *Le congrès national*

Il constitue le grand événement de l'ACJE. On y entend des communications prononcées par des sommités internationales dans le domaine de l'enfance et on y participe à des ateliers et à des discussions ainsi qu'à diverses manifestations, des visites d'écoles et d'autres activités.

2. *Les événements provinciaux et locaux*

Nos membres sont invités à mettre sur pied des conférences, des séminaires ou des congrès à l'échelon local ou régional.

3. *Le journal*

Publication multidisciplinaire de premier ordre, le journal paraît deux fois l'an. Il regroupe des articles traitant de questions d'éducation et de formation des jeunes enfants et des écrits d'experts bien connus sur le plan national et international.

4. *Le bulletin*

Publié à intervalles réguliers, le bulletin traite de questions d'intérêt national et international.

Les cotisations doivent être réglées au moment de l'adhésion et renouvelées chaque année. Pour vous prévaloir de votre droit de vote, vous devez régler votre cotisation au moins 60 jours avant l'Assemblée générale annuelle.

Abonnement et cotisation de membre: Les organismes peuvent s'abonner au journal seulement (50 \$ par année pour deux parutions). Les membres de l'ACJE reçoivent en plus le bulletin de liaison et bénéficient de tarifs particuliers pour participer au congrès national et aux événements régionaux (40 \$ par année; 25 \$ pour les étudiants; 75 \$ pour les associations). Adressez toute votre correspondance à: ACJE, Service des publications, 36, Bessemer Court, Unité 3, Concord, Ontario, Canada, L4K 3C9.