

Workshop B: Wellbeing for the Youngest Children in Early Childhood Education and Care

1. Toddler's transition to early childhood education and care

Presenter: May Britt Drugli

Research shows that young children spend a full 4-5 months getting used to being in kindergarten and this period can be very challenging for children. Both parents and ECEC staff should therefore aim to do their utmost to ensure a good kindergarten start. This talk will focus on how to promote wellbeing and reduce distress among toddlers during the transition to kindergarten. Research is presented on how parents and caregivers can support a positive transition period and examples for supporting routines and strategies will be discussed.

2. Quality Inclusive Early Childhood Education and Care for Children under 2 Years of Age: Shaping the development of children, families, and society

Presenter: Nichole Leigh Mosty

In terms of human development, the importance of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) cannot be overstated. Research has demonstrated that quality ECEC at this very early age has lasting benefits for infants and their families - especially those from diverse backgrounds or disadvantaged sectors across society. Nichole Leigh Mosty will discuss the importance of providing quality ECEC for children under 2 with emphasis on the importance of ECEC providers adapting to the needs of young children and families. This is done through maintaining optimum ratios of adults to infants, ongoing training, including in the specialist area of infant pedagogy, and developing inclusive environments which facilitate low levels of stress. Research has shown these variables to be of particular importance in ECEC for infants under two.

3. The Child's Plan in Finnish Early Childhood Education and Care

Presenter: Noora Heiskanen

In the Finnish ECEC system, each child gets an individual plan, a „child's plan“, which is a pedagogical document aiming to support the child's overall development and learning. It is drawn up in collaboration with the child and parents and should be reviewed annually. In this talk, Noora Heiskanen describes the practice of preparing and applying the child's plan from the perspective of toddlers. With a case example, she illustrates how the child's plan works as a pedagogical tool to support children's individual needs, strengths and interests as well as to plan pedagogical activities in ECEC relating to an individual child as well as a larger group of children.