

Child-centred early years planning, provision and practice with Suzanne Zeedyk

January 2019

Summary and reflections for delegates





Introduction

By Sally Cavers, Head of Inclusion, Children in Scotland

This seminar came about following discussion between the Association of Directors of Education Scotland (ADES) and Children in Scotland (CiS) about the impact on children of the expansion of early learning and childcare.

Discussion included expressions of the respective organisations' support for the programme to expand the entitlement to early learning and childcare. There was also consensus that the experience for the child and impact on the child must be at the forefront of all activity.

Dr Suzanne Zeedyk was asked to be the keynote speaker given her extensive research experience in this area. As Suzanne's core aspiration is strengthening awareness of the decisions we take about caring for our children it was felt her voice was critical to supporting this conversation.

Delegates mainly came from local authorities and the third sector. There was a real appetite in the room to explore views on whether it is felt that planning, provision and practice is truly child-centred.

The first discussion group considered the following question after hearing from Suzanne about the voice of the child and the importance of child wellbeing and development in planning early years provision.

Delegates were asked to consider a setting or example they were familiar with demonstrating good practice in child-centred planning in the early years. They were then asked to share the key components in relation to relationships, attachment needs, learning and childcare.

Read about the issues raised over the following pages, and browse Suzanne's slides from the day.

Thanks to everyone for attending the seminar.

You can follow ongoing discussion about this topic through our communications channels and professional development programme.

We look forward to continuing the dialogue with you and sharing best practice.

Sally

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Overview of discussion

Key points are underlined

Delegates' views on the core components of child-centred practice:

Leadership and staffing core

- Strong leadership that gives leadership at all levels and values and respects practitioners
- Inclusive
- Shared and consistent approach from all staff in the setting
- Mindsets of all staff who connect with parents – office to nursery
- Ethos and values
- Culture of nurture among staff – offering children what they need emotionally
- Nurture approach and culture
- Good robust induction process – learning and feeling part of the team

Learning and childcare core

- Really valuing and putting observations at the heart of all activity
- Staff supporting/mentoring one another – challenging one another to ensure quality using key documentation
- High priority training around connecting with families for all staff, including janitor, admin etc
- Need to be more explicit about why we do the things we do
- Learning: innovative, responsive, encouraging
- Going outside to learn
- Robust quality transition programme (under three to three-and-a-half, room to room etc)
- Noticing and observing
- All [staff] understanding child development
- Flexibility and individual
- Staff knowing why we need to do it
- Creating quality play opportunities and seeing the 'learning' happen as a result
- Family-centred childcare – build resilience of family
- Sensory-based experience to build choice and relationships
- Health and wellbeing approaches to allow growth in other areas.

Attachment needs

- Settling in that includes the family
- Listening to the children – what they want to do
- Showing families what is available in the area
- Getting to know families in a non-threatening way
- Families getting to know other families
- More focus on attachment in training
- Not a 'them' and 'us'
- Play in the home
- Finding balance between 'settled' or 'emotional' trauma
- More family support services!

Relationships

- Attitude of teams – accepting, empathic, equal, authentic, relationships with families
- Support for families – absolutely crucial! If we are to get it right for children, we need to get it right for families. Provision for vulnerable twos must involve parents, stay and play etc.
- Showing respect for parents and listening to what parents want
- Respecting the child
- Building positive relationships with families that includes trust
- Smaller numbers – allowing attuned relationships
- Building a connection
- Home visits that are established and routine
- Democracy in the application process
- Getting to know families as early as possible – look at opportunities for families to get together
- Parent and child together
- Partnerships with health and social work and education
- Whole staff family/child nurture approach
- Lunch times are VALUED as important social experience for children
- Community events
- Adults as role models.

What solutions are needed to assist services in facing the challenges of keeping child wellbeing at the centre of early years expansion?

- Empower staff. Staff generally know what is 'right', but other stuff gets in the way
- Scrap the 2020 expansion and invest in family support! We are running out of time and about to get it VERY wrong for our children
- Modelling excellent engagement for parents (with their children)
- Strong leadership including all – children/families/staff/community
- Distributed leadership opportunities
- Resources compromise
- Shared approach to inspection? Worries about what will be required
- Giving the correct message from the very initial stages
- Providing guidance and reality to potential students (DYW @ High School/Primary School)
- Recruitment that provides/involves intensive/robust probationer support (similar to teaching) – rather than having to hit the ground running
- SHIFTS? How does/will this look? See? Feel?
- Get health and wellbeing right – attainment/understanding and being responsive (relationships).

Read slides from Suzanne Zeedyk's presentation over the following pages.

The voice of the child:
The importance of child wellbeing
in planning early years provision

Dr. Suzanne Zeedyk
Univ of Dundee & *connected baby*

ADES & CIS Event
29 January 2019



Today

1. Quality provision
2. Our challenges to quality provision

But first...

...A bit of Scottish history

A century ago



1905ish – Patrick Geddes – Town Planner

<http://www.greenyondertours.com/documents/NaturePlayNotes.pdf>

A century ago



1906 – Dundee – Mary Lily Walker

Scotland: #BestPlacetoGrowUp

Making a difference through Quality Improvement



A BLUEPRINT FOR 2020: THE EXPANSION OF EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE IN SCOTLAND

A SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION

INDEPENDENT

Nicola Sturgeon vows to put education 'front and centre' as she launches SNP election campaign

First Minister will express hope that next four months will involve a 'thriving debate' on the future of Scotland

Chris Green, Scotland Editor (@drgreen)



Click to follow
@drgreen



5 January
2016

5 January 2016

"Our most transformational infrastructure investment in the next parliament will not be in a bridge or a road," Sturgeon will say. "It will be our investment to transform childcare provision, providing parents with 30 hours a week of government funded childcare, enabling them to return to work, to pursue their careers and to know that their children are being well cared for, well educated and given the best start of life."

"And, as I have made clear already, as we extend childcare, we will focus just as much on quality as on quantity, with investment in teaching skills – especially in our most deprived areas – as well as in bricks and mortar."



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£2 billion deal struck on free childcare expansion

Ministers have pledged to increase paid-for nursery places from the current 600 hours to 1,140 for three and four-year-olds, and eligible two-year-olds, by August 2020



28 April 2018

SNP council warns childcare 'revolution' in doubt over staff shortfall

1 August 2018

"The report demonstrated that Edinburgh is facing a shortfall of more than 3,000 places. Delivering the required infrastructure and the ability to recruit the number of staff within the required timeframe will provide significant challenges in the council's ability to deliver the expansion from 2020. The timescales for the new infrastructure was 'extremely tight' and represented 'a significant risk' to the delivery of the childcare commitment. The report warned: 'Parent expectations around choice of provision, flexibility and accessibility may not be operationally sustainable.'"

Last week



SECTION 1: SECURING A HIGH QUALITY EXPERIENCE FOR ALL CHILDREN

SECTION 2: CREATING THE CAPACITY AND SUPPORTING STRUCTURES FOR 1140 HOURS

<https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/publication/2017/03/blueprint-2020-expansion-early-learning-childcare-scotland-2017-18-action/documents/00515637-pdf/00515637-pdf/govscot%3Adocument>

"There has been a substantial amount of research on the quality of early years provision and the potential benefits of attending a high quality provider for child development. A number of studies have shown that accessing early childhood education and care, in good quality provision in particular, can have a positive effect on the educational, cognitive, behavioural and social outcomes of children, both in the short and long term. Some evidence suggests that the positive impact is greatest on children from the most disadvantaged backgrounds. This suggests that early childhood education and care has the potential to make a key contribution to narrowing the gap in development between groups of children."¹

Page 5

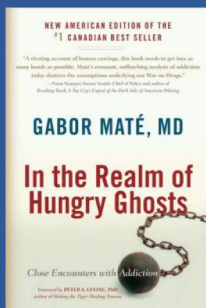
Keys to quality provision: Research

1. Relationships
2. Help with self-regulation
3. Play

The biology of connection



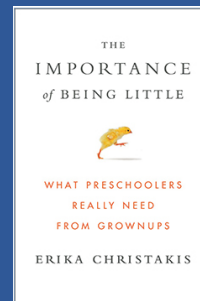
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6czxW4R9w2g>



2010

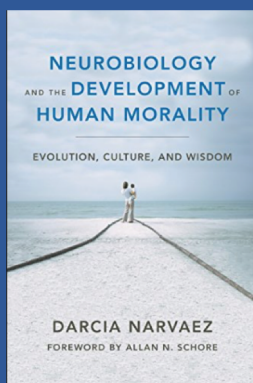
“The three environmental conditions absolutely essential to optimal human brain development are: nutrition, physical security, and consistent emotional nurturing. ...

The third one – **emotional nurturance** – is the one **most likely to be disrupted** in Western society.”



2016

“Christakis argues that **most of today's youngest children are spending their critical early-learning years in environments that ignore or misunderstand their needs....** The kind of respectful observation that children need -- of what they can (and can't) do -- is **rare in early childhood settings.**”



2014



“Boys are more vulnerable to neuropsychiatric disorders that appear in the early years of life. Early disorders have been increasing in recent years. Notably, more babies have also been put into daycare settings in recent years, **nearly all of which provide inadequate care for babies.**”

Children's hospitals in 1950s



Robertson: A 2 Year Old Goes to Hospital (1952)

www.robertsonfilms.info

"This film classic, made in 1952, drew attention to the plight of young patients at a time when **visiting by parents was severely restricted.**"

"A study of the typical **emotional deterioration** in an unaccompanied young patient, and of the subtle ways in which she shows or conceals deep feelings of distress."



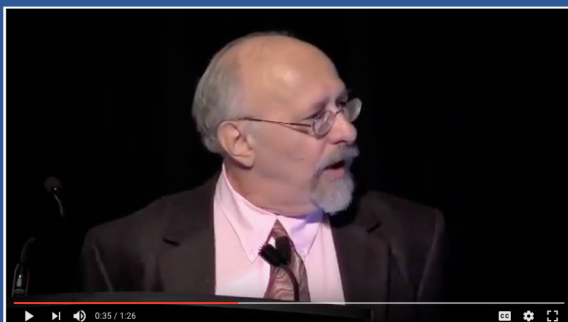
"Now, when I try to remember and reimagine that stay in hospital (as a 4-year-old), I can clearly see my sister through the glass window, with us only able to 'touch hands', and I can still feel my distress at waking to find her gone. That's more than 60 years ago and it still hurts me. It is really powerful, what happens for children."

From a 65-year-old man



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Dr. Allan Schore - The Regulation of Emotion

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z7udo9CpUgo>

AUGUST 12, 2015 Fact Checked

Researchers studied kindergarteners' behavior and followed up 19 years later. Here are the findings.

Turns out, sharing really is caring.



Upworthy.com

August 2015

Social skills of 800 kindergarteners were measured.

At age 25:

- For every one-point **increase** in a child's social skill score in kindergarten, a child would be 54% more likely to *finish secondary school*, twice as likely to graduate from *university*, and 46% more likely to have a *stable, full-time job* at age 25.
- For every one-point **decrease** in scores, a child had a 67% higher chance of having been *arrested* in early adulthood, a 52% higher rate of *binge drinking* and an 82% higher chance of being in *public housing*.

Conclusion:

"The bottom line? We need to do more than just teach kids information. We need to invest in teaching them how to relate to others and **how to handle the things they're feeling inside**.

Ignoring social skills in our curricula could have huge ramifications for our kids down the road."

Sabre Tooth Tigers & Teddy Bears

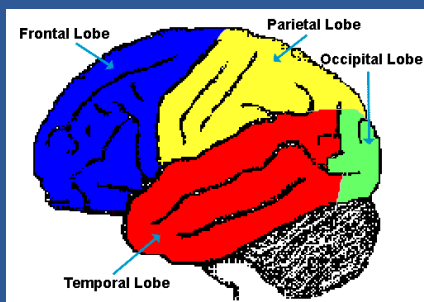
The connected baby guide to understanding attachment



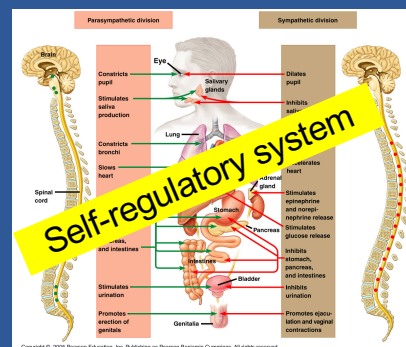
by Dr Suzanne Zeedyk



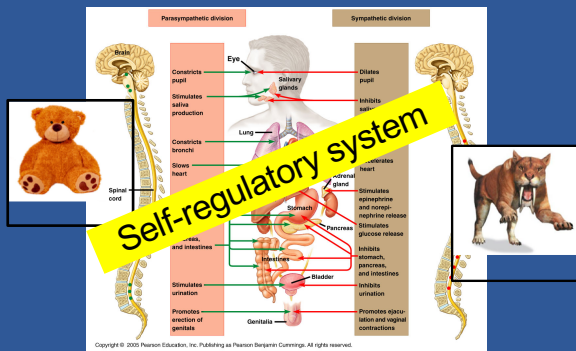
Biology



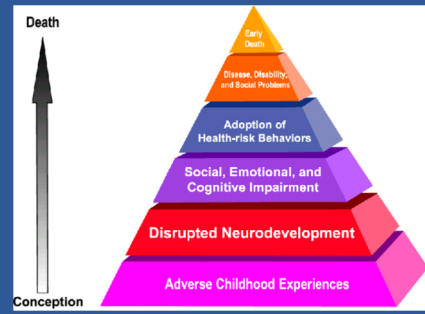
Biology



Biology



Adverse Childhood Experiences Study 1998



THE CONVERSATION



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wUpkHhPny6o>

Attachment Theory – Safe base & Play



twitter.com/anjipplay/status/1061617483558187008

Challenges to quality provision

1. Perceptions of Early Years Sector
2. Understanding of child development, children's needs & children's behavior
3. "Provision" of emotionally reliable relationships

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1. Perceptions of Early Years Sector
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The Blueprint

Guiding Principles

- Quality
- Flexibility
- Accessibility
- Affordability

Words NOT appearing

- Attachment
- Emotions
- Brain development
- Self-regulation
- Relationships

Blueprint 2020:

This Action Plan sets out the policy framework that will underpin the expansion in order to:

- Ensure a high quality experience for the child; improving outcomes for all children, especially those who will benefit most;
- Support the vision of an education system which delivers both excellence and equity for all children in Scotland;
- Provide a key contribution to our wider work to close the attainment gap;
- Support our ambitions to reduce child poverty by contributing to the delivery of our ambitious statutory targets set out in the Child Poverty (Scotland) Bill;
- Support transitions through early years settings and into school to ensure continuity and progress through the learner journey;
- Offer parents an increased choice of settings where they can access their funded ELC entitlement;
- Enable a system that is provider neutral with the focus on the settings best placed to deliver quality outcomes for children;
- Increase the flexibility of how the funded entitlement is delivered in order to support more parents to work, train or study, especially those who need routes into sustainable employment and out of poverty;
- Provide the opportunity for an enhanced role for childminders in delivering the funded entitlement;
- Help support parents to improve and enrich the home learning environment by integrating ELC with the range of family support;
- Enable payment of the Living Wage and the promotion of Fair Work practices;
- Be underpinned by a funding model which ensures the long-term sustainability of the system;
- Provide substantial new employment opportunities across all of Scotland with a range of roles across different qualification levels, supporting local economies; and
- Reduce the costs that parents and carers face in paying for childcare, with total ELC entitlement providing an estimated annual saving of £4,500 per child per year.

Blocks to reliable relationships

- Staff ratios & Staff rotas
- Children leaving settings
- Departure of staff (& whole staff teams)
- Staff who struggle to emotionally regulate
- Staff who feel undervalued
- Staff focusing on behavior, not emotions
- Knowledge & training in child development
- Paperwork

tes Tes  @tes Follow

60% of teachers say they've had no relevant training on the needs of children who have experienced trauma



Exclusive: 'Schools should be judged on how they support vulnerable pupils'
60% of teachers say they've had no relevant training on the needs of children who have experienced trauma, says new report

tes.com Report from Adoption UK

27 Jan
2019

