Queensland Office of Child Care (1999): Parent Survey

JOB NO.: NG9984 **FINAL QUESTIONNAIRE**
04/06/99 11:27

Good morning/afternoon/evening. My name is <Interviewer's Name> from ACNielsen, the national market research company. We are currently undertaking a survey on behalf of the Office of Child Care from the Queensland Government. We need to talk to guardians of children aged 12 years or under.

Q1 Are there any children aged twelve years or younger living in your household?

1 yes
2 no **END SURVEY**

Q2 Could I please speak with a person in the household responsible for arranging alternative child care for the children?

REINTRODUCE IF NECESSARY

1 yes
2 person not available **END SURVEY**

We are currently undertaking a survey on behalf of the Office of Child Care from the Queensland Government and wondered if I could take just a few minutes of your time. **The survey is confidential and only summary data will be released. I would like you to help by spending a few minutes answering the following questions.**

RE-INTRODUCE IF NECESSARY. If no usual household member 18+ available, make an appointment, others Terminate.

READ STATEMENT

The Office of Child Care is collecting information on what you think of child care services in Queensland. We are interested in information about all forms of care including baby-sitting, using a nanny, a child care centre, occasional care, adjunct care, family day care, before or after school care or vacation care, by a friend or relative, a kindergarten or pre-school. The results from this survey will be used to develop a plan for the future of child care services in Queensland.

Q3a How many primary school age children live in this household?

1 one
2 Two
3 Three
4 Four
5 Five or more
6 None

Q3b And how many pre-school age children, between 0 and five years?

1 one
2 Two
3 Three
4 Four
5 Five or more
6 None

Q4 Can you tell me which of the following types of child care you use regularly? That is at least twice a month.

READ OUT. MULTIPLE RESPONSE

1 older brother or sister
2 a friend or relative
3 a nanny, child-minding service or baby-sitter at your own home
4 child care centre
5 family day care scheme

6 care in another family home
8 before or after school care
9 school holiday care
10 a kindergarten or pre-school
11 occasional care
12 adjunct care, that is care for less than 2 hours whilst parent is at meeting/function
98 any other (please specify)
97 none **SKIP TO Q22**
99 don't know **SKIP TO D1**

FOR CODES 4-9 IN Q4

Q5 Is <INSERT FROM Q4> licensed with the Department of Family, Youth and Community Services?

1 Yes
2 No
9 Don't know

Q6 FOR EACH RESPONSE IN Q5
How do you know this service is licensed?
DO NOT READ OUT. MULTIPLE RESPONSE

1 service was accessed through the Family Day Care Association]
2 service is supervised by a co-ordinator]
3 service has less than 8 children in the group] SKIP BACK TO Q5 REPEAT FOR
8 other (please specify)] OTHER CODES AT Q4
9 don't know]

Q7 What are the main reasons you use child care services?
DO NOT READ OUT. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. PROBE FULLY ANY OTHER

1 work related
2 study related
3 social/recreational activities
4 family activities
5 respite
6 education/development of the child
8 other (please specify)
9 don't know
7 refused

Q8 FOR EACH SERVICE MENTIONED AT Q4.
Which services do you regularly pay for?
READ OUT SERVICES MENTIONED AT Q4
MULTIPLE RESPONSE AND INDICATE ONLY THOSE WHERE A PAYMENT IS MADE

1. older brother or sister
2. a friend or relative
3. a nanny, child-minding service or baby-sitter at your own home
4. child care centre
5. family day care scheme
6. care in another family home
7. before or after school care
8. school holiday care
9. a kindergarten or pre-school
10. occasional care
11. adjunct care, that is care for less than 2 hours whilst parent is at meeting/function

98 any other (please specify)
97 none
99 don't know

Q9 What times do you mostly need child care?
DO NOT READ OUT. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. PROBE FULLY.

1 when my child is sick
2 all day (specify times)
3 early mornings
4 afternoons
5 school holidays
6 weekends
7 evenings
8 irregular/shift work hours
9 when I cannot give prior notice
10 church meetings
11 Community meetings
98 other (please specify)
99 don't know
12 refused

Q10 On the following scale please rate how important the following issues are to you when you choose who will provide care for your children.

1 Not at all important
2 Not at all important
3 Neither
4 Somewhat important
5 Very important
9 Don't know

	Not at all Important important	Not very important	Neither	Somewhat important	Very	Don't know
A) Cost	1	2	3	4	5	9
B) Location of service/carer	1	2	3	4	5	9
C) Time service/carer available	1	2	3	4	5	9
D) Surroundings of service/carer	1	2	3	4	5	9
E) Organisation/structure of care	1	2	3	4	5	9
F) Aspects of the carer	1	2	3	4	5	9
G) Activities or programs available	1	2	3	4	5	9
H) Promotion of Child's learning and development	1	2	3	4	5	9
I) Services offered to assist parents	1	2	3	4	5	9

Q11 Now thinking again about those issues - I will read them to you again. Which would be the most important?
Q11b The next most important
Q11c And the next

	Most important	Second most important	Third most important
A) Cost	1	1	1
B) Location of service/carer	2	2	2
C) Time service/carer available	3	3	3
D) Surroundings of service/carer	4	4	4
E) Organisation/structure of care	5	5	5
F) Aspects of the carer	6	6	6
G) Activities or programs available	7	7	7
H) Promotion of Child's learning and development	8	8	8
I) Services offered to assist parents	9	9	9

FOR THE TOP THREE ASK- FOR EACH, DO NOT READ OUT. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. PROBE FULLY. RECORD FIRST MENTION, THEN OTHER MENTIONS.

Q12 When you think about cost of child care, what things are very important to you?
DO NOT READ OUT. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. PROBE FULLY.

1 hourly fee available
2 flexible payment options
3 cheapest service available
4 only paying for services used
5 can claim childcare rebate
6 can claim childcare assistance
7 value for money
98 other (please specify)
99 don't know
7 refused

Q13 When you think about location of child care, what things are very important to you?
DO NOT READ OUT. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. PROBE FULLY.

1 near work
2 near home
3 near place of study
4 at my home during day
5 at my home at night
6 near school
7 provides services for all ages in one location
98 other (please specify)
99 don't know
8 refused

Q14 When you think about times the service or carer is available, what things are very important to you?

DO NOT READ OUT. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. PROBE FULLY.

1 service/carer is available outside work hours
2 service/carer is available during work hours
3 service/carer is available on the weekends
4 service/carer is available in the evenings
8 other (specify)
9 Don't know

Q15 When you think about surroundings, what things are very important to you?
DO NOT READ OUT. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. PROBE FULLY.

1 child is in familiar surroundings
2 child is in own home
3 child is in a home environment
4 grounds are spacious
5 equipment and grounds are clean and safe
6 equipment and grounds are interesting and encourage learning
98 other (please specify)
99 don't know
7 refused

Q16 When you think about how child care is organised or structured, what things are very important to you?

DO NOT READ OUT. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. PROBE FULLY.

1	there are groups of mixed aged children
2	children are grouped by similar age
3	child is able to maintain a routine
4	child can be with friends
5	child is able to maintain same routine as at home
6	a number of different service types are offered
7	child is in a small group
8	child can mix with another sibling
98	other (please specify)
99	don't know
9	refused

Q17 What characteristics of the person taking care of the child are very important to you?

DO NOT READ OUT. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. PROBE FULLY.

1	child knows the carer
2	you know the carer
3	carer is a relative
4	carer has understanding of child development
5	carer has a suitable qualification
6	carer is experienced in caring for age group
7	carer is a qualified teacher
8	carer has a very positive relationship with child
9	carer understands my cultural needs
10	carer has been screened to ensure they are fit and proper
11	carer is trustworthy
98	other (please specify)
99	don't know
12	refused

Q18 What characteristics of the activities/program are important to you?

DO NOT READ OUT. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. PROBE FULLY.

1	my child enjoys the activities
2	my child has a lot of choice
3	activities are culturally appropriate
4	standards are monitored by the government
5	activities are suitable for the age of my child
6	program caters for children with special needs (eg. disabled)
7	specialist programs are offered (eg. computers, drama)
98	other (please specify)
99	don't know
8	refused

Q19 When thinking of how your child's learning and development are catered for in child care what things are most important to you?

DO NOT READ OUT. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. PROBE FULLY.

1	helps my child's knowledge development
2	helps my child's social development
3	helps my child's physical development
4	good learning opportunities provided
5	prepares my child for school
6	child is taught to read and write
7	children learn to behave appropriately
8	homework is completed under supervision
98	other (please specify)
99	don't know
9	refused

Q20 What services offered by your carer, designed to assist parents are very important to you?

DO NOT READ OUT. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. PROBE FULLY.

1	I can contribute to how the service is run
2	there is open communication between parents and the carer
3	meals are offered
4	a nappy service is offered
5	escort/transport is offered
6	I am made to feel welcome
7	parenting skill sessions are offered7
8	information is provided about the activities/program
98	other (please specify)
99	don't know
10	refused

Q21 What most concerns to you about the child care service/carer you use?

DO NOT READ OUT. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. PROBE FULLY.

1	cost
2	when it is available times (please specify)
3	standard of the care (please specify)
4	the location (please specify)
6	inflexible rules (please specify)
7	transport
8	flexible payment (pay by the hour)
9	Nothing
98	other (please specify)
99	don't know
10	refused

ASK IF CODE 97 AT Q4

Q22 Why don't you use any form of child care?
MULTIPLE RESPONSE. PROBE FULLY.

1 Don't want to
2 No services are available
3 Access to child care is difficult (please specify)
4 Can't afford it
5 Services available do not meet my needs
6 No need, one parent always at home
7 family does it
8 Other (please specify)
9 Don't know
10 Refused

Q23 Which child care services do you think should be prioritised by the State government?
RECORD VERBATIM. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. PROBE FULLY.

Now I have a few questions for statistical purposes, so we can be sure we have a good cross section of the community.

D1 Which if any of the following groups does your child identify themselves with?
READ OUT. MULTIPLE RESPONSE

1 Aboriginal origin
2 non-English speaking background
3 Torres Strait Islander origin
4 parent of a child or children with a disability
7 none of the above
8 other (specify)

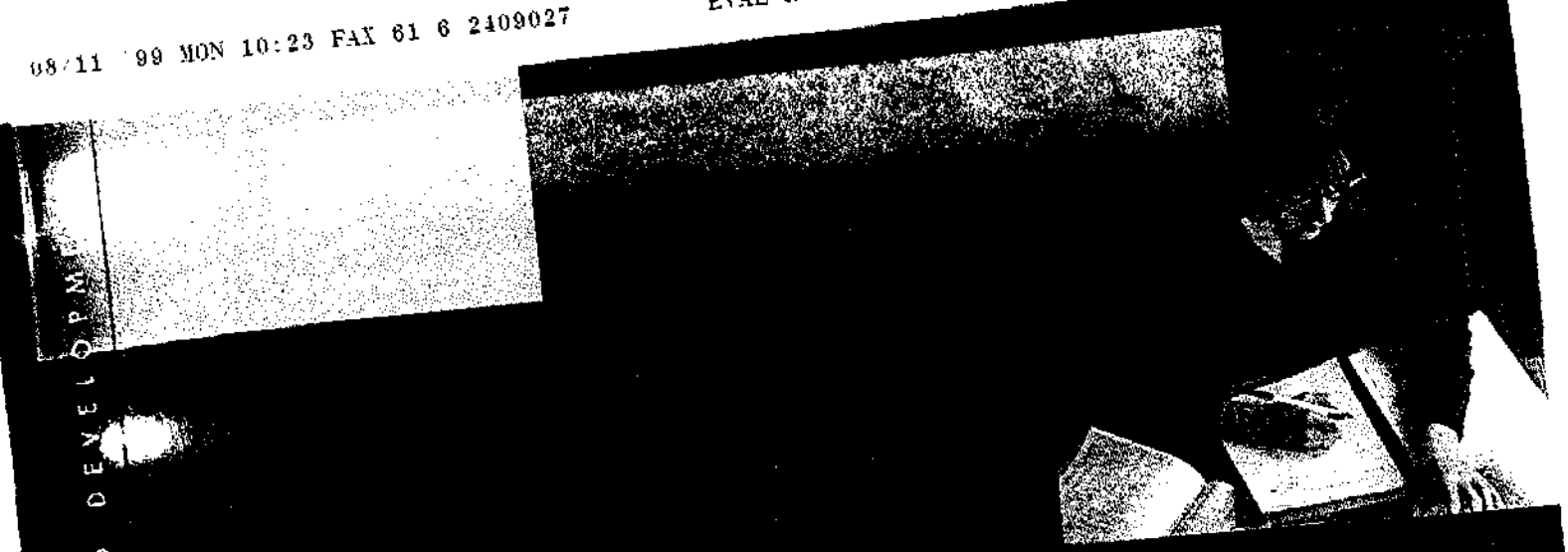
D2 What is the postcode of your usual residence?

_____
9 don't know

D3 Could you give a broad estimate of your total household annual income before tax including pensions, income from investments and family allowances? Would it be-

1 Zero
2 $1- $16,000
3 $16,001 - $30,000
4 $30,001 - $50,000
5 $50,001 - $100,000
6 More than $100,000
9 don't know
8 refused

D4 Interviewer Record Sex
1 Male
2 Female



ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT

CENTRE FOR
EDUCATIONAL
RESEARCH
AND INNOVATION

EDUCATION POLICY ANALYSIS 1999

RESOURCES FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE

TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION

TERTIARY EDUCATION

OECD

CHAPTER 2

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE: Getting the most from the investment

Summary

OECD countries are becoming convinced of the importance of provision for young children, both as a first investment in lifelong learning and as a support to the wider economic and social needs of families. Yet participation in early childhood education and care (ECEC) varies in different countries. In developing such services, countries are looking not just at the general case for ECEC but at how to organise and deliver it to get the best results.

Overall benefits remain imperfectly understood. Research shows a strong initial effect, for example on school readiness, particularly for disadvantaged children. But direct gains, for example in IQ, appear to fade. Yet some durable improvements in general traits such as self-confidence can in turn feed back into cognitive as well as social benefits. There are also discernible advantages for family relationships.

Claims about very long-term benefits to society and to individuals derive from relatively few studies of particular programmes, and such gains may depend on specific programme features. But this underscores a general conclusion that results do vary with programme quality. ECEC investment is not homogeneous, yielding a constant return.

In shaping ECEC investment, countries face a spectrum of policy choices, and have developed a wide range of systems that vary along several dimensions:

- Countries provide wider or narrower *access*, according to whether they regard ECEC as a general right or as a targeted, compensatory measure. So in some countries access is universal by age 3; in others the majority do not participate until 5 or 6. For children under 3, access is far more limited everywhere.
- The *quality* of ECEC is hard to measure, but is linked to the intensity and focus of programmes and to the qualifications of staff. The training and professionalism of those working with young children varies widely across countries and sectors.
- *Who pays* for ECEC varies from mainly public funding in EU countries to mainly private in Canada and the United States. It is generally accepted, however, that funding should be mixed: the state has at least a duty to ensure access for the most needy, while the role of private resources to enhance provision cannot be neglected.
- Arrangements for *administering* ECEC vary from a traditional split between education and health/social authorities to more unified arrangements being adopted in several countries.
- The degree to which governments help families to *reconcile work and childcare* is not just a matter of out-of-home care provision, but also of helping parents look after their own children, for example through leave arrangements. In Europe, these two types of support are coming to be seen as complementary.

The OECD thematic review of early childhood education and care is currently looking into how policies in this field can not only improve young children's social development and learning but also better link to family, labour market, social integration and lifelong learning policies.

"It can be argued that the comparative neglect of this important subject (investing in early childhood) may be, to a great extent, the result of taking a limited – and rather ad hoc – view of the quality and implications of childhood."

Amartya Sen, Nobel Prize winner in economics in 1998.

1. INTRODUCTION

The education and care of young children has received growing policy attention in OECD countries in this decade. Interest has been fuelled by research showing the importance of positive early experiences for the child's subsequent development and learning. In addition, new labour market conditions, with women participating in the labour market in far higher numbers than ever before, has led to an increased demand for early childhood services. There is growing consensus that sound provision for young children is essential to meeting the changing social, economic and educational needs of today's families. The emphasis of the policy debate is no longer on whether to invest in early childhood education and care (ECEC), but how best to organise and deliver high-quality ECEC services.

Despite the consensus about the need, investment in education and care programmes for young children remains highly uneven among OECD countries. Figure 2.1 illustrates the wide level of variation with respect to one indicator: the average amount of time spent in educational programmes by the age of 6.[1] Children in some countries can expect to have spent four years in centre-based pre-school or in primary education by this age; in others the average is only one year.[2] These differences relate partly to the importance of education within programmes, and partly to variations in overall resources devoted to them.

This chapter presents, first, evidence on the benefits of early childhood education and care and second, the ways in which policy is developing in this area. A central message is that early childhood education covers a broad range of provision (see Box 2.1). As defined for this chapter, early childhood education and care includes all organised provision for children below compulsory school age, whether education- or care-oriented, part-day or full-day, centre-based or home-based. The chapter also refers to the role of informal education and care by families, relatives and others. Both in analysing evidence of benefits and in shaping future policy, distinctions need to be made between different types of provision and different ways in which it can be organised.

2. WHAT DOES RESEARCH TELL US ABOUT THE CASE FOR EARLY INTERVENTION?

International research has produced a consensus over the immediate benefits of early childhood education and care (ECEC) for children. Evidence of wider-reaching benefits to young people – in the long term, to their families and to society is highly suggestive, but less clear-cut. Rather than assuming that all ECEC investment brings equal benefits, policy makers need to evaluate the impact of different types of programmes.

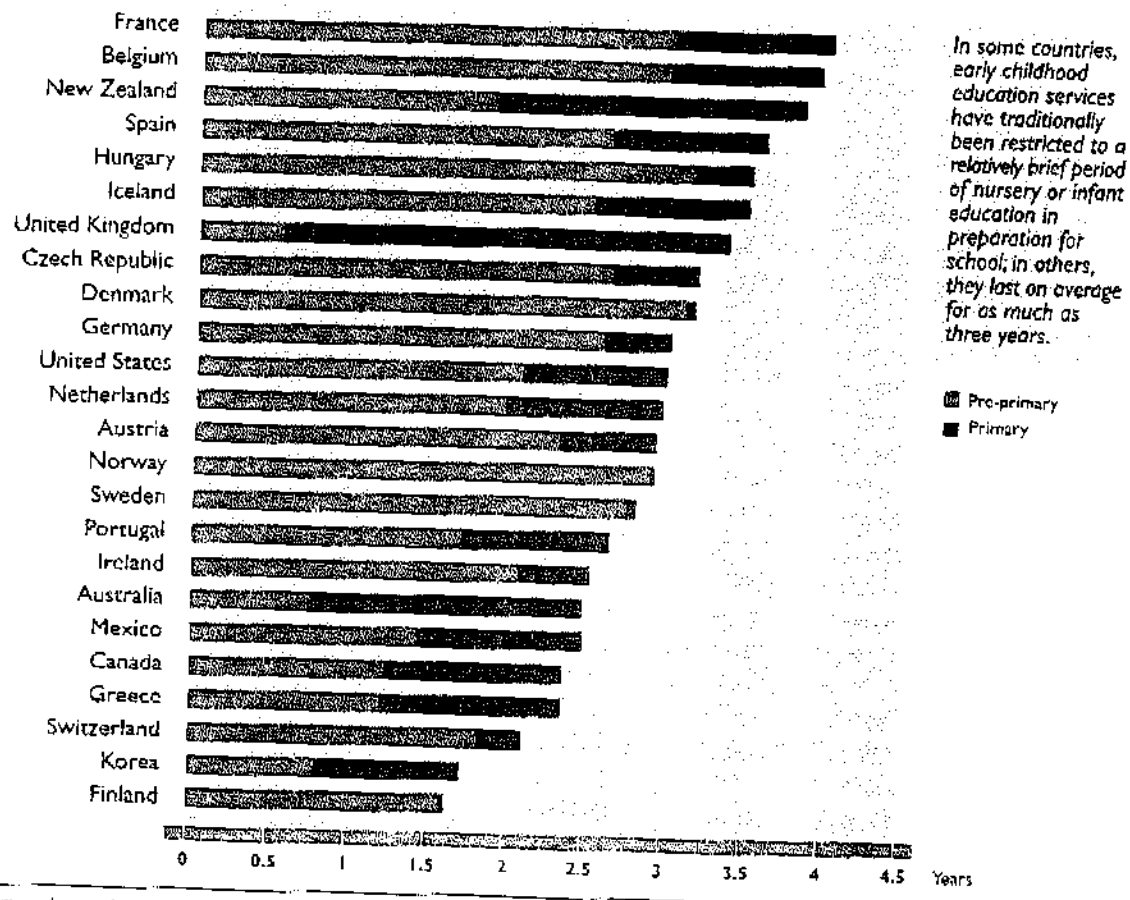
The research base is substantial, but not without weaknesses in methodology and coverage of both the range of provision and the comparative experience.[3] The studies identified here are based on experimental research designs or make comparisons between ECEC participants and non-participants with similar backgrounds. They provide an indication of the range of findings and conclusions.

1. Pre-school programmes for which data are available in the OECD education database cover a part, if a growing part, of organised ECEC. But ECEC participation and provision encompasses a much wider field. In the Netherlands, for example, around half of all 3-year-olds attend playgroups for at least two mornings or afternoons each week, and children at this age or younger increasingly are in daycare programmes. The numbers engaged in these activities or programmes are not included in the comparative data. At the same time, the distinction between early childhood education and primary schooling is less clear: Dutch policy has brought provision for 4-year-olds into the basic school, which now covers ages 4 to 12. Dutch policy favours such diversity in provision. See Box 2.1.

2. The available data do not yet reflect more recent rapid growth in provision and participation. In Portugal, for example, the participation of 3 to 5-year-olds increased by 25% in three years ending in 1997 (and the participation rate by nearly 9%). The overall participation now represents over 60% of the age group. See *Ministério da Educação* (1999).

3. For example, many studies do not use control groups with family background and cognitive characteristics comparable to those of the programme or experiment participants. This applies both to studies which find positive effects as well as to those which find weak or no effects.

Figure 2.1
Educational expectancy of children aged 3 to 6, 1996
Average number in years in pre-primary[1] and primary education (based on headcounts)



In some countries, early childhood education services have traditionally been restricted to a relatively brief period of nursery or infant education in preparation for school; in others, they last on average for as much as three years.

1. The data refer to pre-primary education, which is limited to organized centre-based instruction programmes primarily covering children aged 3 to compulsory school age. Programmes organised as daycare, play groups and home-based structured and developmental activities are not included in these data and programmes organised through health or social welfare ministries or privately are not, in all countries, reported (see text).

Source: OECD Education Database.
Data for Figure 2.1, page 59.

Benefits to children

The importance of early development: Neuroscientists and psychologists in OECD countries agree that the first years of life are critical for cognitive, physical, social and emotional development.[4] Children's brains have a remarkable ability to change (and compensate for problems) in the first few years of life (Carnegie Task Force on Meeting the Needs of Young Children, 1994; Education Commission of the States, 1996; Shore, 1997). It is during the earliest years that future capacity to participate positively in learning and adult life is relatively "hard-wired" (Lambert, 1996; Lindsey, 1998). If opportunities to promote children's development and learning are missed in this period, later remediation is more expensive and less effective (Shore, 1997).

4. Findings of studies carried out in countries outside the OECD area are broadly similar. Early childhood programming has been shown to improve survival chances and healthy development of young children in such countries as Bolivia, Brazil, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Malawi and Thailand. See van der Gaag and Tan (1996).

BOX 2.1 EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE: EVOLUTION AND DEFINITION

Traditionally, ECEC has been seen as the relatively brief period of nursery or infant school, immediately before entry into primary school, sometimes with a more specific focus on disadvantaged children. In the more affluent parts of society, children up to the age of 4 or 5 remained with the family. This choice suited a widespread model of family organisation, in which married women stayed at home to raise infants and young children. Extended family and neighbours provided, when necessary, alternative informal care arrangements. At the age of 4 or 5, children were sent to part-day nursery or infant classes, either privately run or joined to the local elementary school.

Two factors caused a move away from providing early childhood education and care either along the lines of the primary school or with a focus on disadvantaged children. One was changing social and economic conditions and a rise in women's employment rates, which increased the demand for extra-familial care of children from the very early years for a much wider share of families. The other was research showing that the "academic" approach of the traditional pre-school – with child/teacher ratios approaching, sometimes exceeding those of primary school – was too narrow in range and unsuited to the broader developmental and social needs of many young children and their families.

As a result, a number of countries began to establish integrated care and education systems, which included infants and toddlers and aimed at broader social and developmental goals. Settings in these systems offered a safe, secure and health-promoting environment for the youngest children and organised learning activities to prepare older children for entry into primary school. School-type pedagogy was avoided, with more emphasis placed on interaction, play and creative activities for children. The early centres became also places for socialisation, parent participation and community orientation.

The evolving influences, trends and developments have combined to give rise to a wide array of activities aimed at young children, organised outside the family but sometimes with parents very much involved. Excluding family and informal care, ECEC under varying definitions may cover: *daycare* which primarily looks after children during normal working hours, through centre-based nurseries, both public and private; *childminders/ family daycare*, who look after young and older children, before and after school, under official or private auspices at the childminder's or the child's home; *playgroups*, usually for children of age 2 or 3; *parenting and home-instruction programmes* which are organised regularly and intensively, with educational and development aims in mind; *centre-based pre-school*, either kindergarten or nursery education classes organised either during the school year or (less frequently) over the entire year, in separate sites or attached to primary schools. Children often participate in more than one type of ECEC programme during the course of the same week or day.

Although this breadth of provision conveys the reality of ECEC in most OECD countries, the data collected for international comparisons refer primarily only to pre-primary education, defined as participation in organised, centre-based programmes designed to foster learning and emotional and social development in children from 3 years to compulsory school age. The comparative data presented in this chapter therefore provide only a partial picture of ECEC as they do not include all forms of such services or coverage for very young children.

Policy attention is now directed in greater measure to more intensive and purposeful types of ECEC, that is, to programmes organised with sufficient regularity in centres and homes with clear developmental and educational aims in view. These types of ECEC, extending beyond pre-primary education, are considered in the research and policy choices analysed in this chapter.

Table 2.1 reviews the results of some of the major research that has looked for positive benefits of early childhood education and care to young people. It is clear from a range of studies that discernible benefits do exist.

A consensus over short-term benefits of ECEC. ECEC programmes produce important immediate and short-term impacts, which affect children's school readiness and other outcomes in the year or two (or more) after they leave the programmes. One of the clearest illustrations comes from France, where children's chance of having to repeat the first grade of elementary school is reduced with each year of attendance of the *école maternelle*, from one to three years. This result applies for all children but is particularly strong for those from disadvantaged homes (Jarousse, Mingat and Richard 1992).

Mixed evidence on longer-term benefits. Less clear is the extent to which ECEC programmes produce long-term effects – usually measured three years after leaving the programme – on cognitive development, socialisation and school success. Some studies appear to show that benefits fade over time. For example, participants in America's Head Start programme appear to lose some cognitive advantages by the end of the second year of school, and social and motivational ones by the end of the third year (McKey *et al.*, 1985). Yet while most studies do not provide evidence that participation in Head Start raises IQ significantly for long periods of time, longitudinal evaluations have shown sustained improvements in other performance measures such as reading ability and retention in grade (Lazar *et al.*, 1982; Gomby *et al.*, 1995). Moreover, research on school failure shows that early gains can be more widely translated into improved school performance in subsequent years when young people in primary and secondary schools encounter programmes, teaching and environments which are of high quality and responsive to their individual circumstances and needs (OECD, 1995, 1998c; UNESCO, 1998).[5]

Further, a recent U.S. review of 36 studies supports earlier findings that ECEC can produce long-term cognitive and academic benefits for children from disadvantaged backgrounds (Barnett, 1995). These benefits were found in a wide range of different types of programme and across a number of different groups of children. In most cases, those cognitive gains during the early childhood years were sustained until school entry, and there was some evidence of persistence into adolescence. The evidence that participation in ECEC is linked to high school graduation and lower delinquency rates is strong, but it is based on the relatively small number of studies that have tracked young people for a sufficiently long period (*op. cit.*). An even longer-term effect is identified by a study of the Perry Pre-school Project, which followed participants over three decades. At the age of 27, the children from disadvantaged homes who had taken part were found to have completed a significantly higher level of schooling, produced fewer non-marital births and had higher average earnings when compared to the experiences of similarly disadvantaged children who had not participated in the programme (Schweinhart *et al.*, 1993).

The importance of programme quality. Although different ECEC programmes produce different outcomes, studies uniformly show that the quality of provision has an important impact on children's development from the earliest stages: young children who receive high quality care, attention and stimulation in the first three years of life are likely to demonstrate better cognitive and language abilities and experience more positive mother-child and social interactions than children in arrangements of lower quality (NICHD, 1997). Children in low quality programmes are likely to have difficulties with language, social and behavioural development (Whitebook, Howes and Phillips, 1989). Moreover, benefits for children are less likely to "fade out" in well-designed, intensive forms of early childhood education and care than those designed merely for "custodial" purposes (Barnett, 1995).

5. This research partly explains the apparent anomaly of relatively high failure and youth unemployment rates in some countries where early childhood education and care provision is extensive. Ineffective educational practices beyond the early years affect the scale and nature of the longer term learning gains arising from participation in ECEC. These practices and their educational consequences, along with labour market conditions and features which make the transition from initial education to work more difficult for young people, may be more important in accounting for high youth unemployment in these countries.

Table 2.1
Studies that have looked for benefits from ECEC

Author	Country	What the study looked at: Type of programme	What the study looked at: Purpose of study	Key findings
Programmes for disadvantaged children				✓ benefit ✗ no or weak measurable benefit
Braithewaite (1983)	Australia	One year of pre-school (different models) for children in low income public housing	To assess impact of pre-school on performance in 1st grade.	✓ Performed better than control groups on entry into 1st grade. ✗ No measurable effects by end of 1st grade
McKey *et al* (1985)	USA	Meta-analysis of Head-Start studies. Head-Start offers comprehensive development services for low-income, 4-year-olds to meet their educational, health, nutritional and psychological needs. Community and parent participation are emphasised.	To assess long-term effects of Head-Start	✗ Cognitive gains and school achievement faded by the end of the second year of school. ✗ Initial positive effects on self-esteem motivation, and social behaviour were no longer apparent by the end of the third year in school
Kellaghan and Greaney (1992)	Ireland	Two years of half-day pre-school for ninety children aged 3 from an impoverished area of Dublin, with home visits to parents by teachers and social workers. Study began in 1969	To measure school achievement and parental involvement at ages 5, 8 and 16 years	✓ Significant improvements on standardised tests at age 5, especially among the least able children ✗ Cognitive gains were not maintained at age 8. ✓ But at 16 years, the pre-school children were two to three times more likely to have taken examinations leading to further education ✗ Few impacts on employment or crime
Lazar *et al* (1982)	USA	Eleven pre-school programmes	To measure school achievement	✓ Less retention in grade. ✓ Fewer special placements
Berrueta-Clement *et al* (1984)	USA	High quality education for low-income African-American children aged 3-6 years (Perry Pre-school).	Educational and social effects at age 19.	✓ Improved school performance ✓ Greater labour market entry. ✓ Less trouble with police. ✓ Less teenage pregnancy.
Schweinhart *et al* (1993)	USA	High quality education for low-income African-American children aged 3-6 (Perry Pre-school)	Educational and social effects at age 27	✓ Greater social responsibility. ✓ Higher earnings, economic status. ✓ Greater commitment to marriage.
Programmes for all children				
Jarousse *et al* (1992)	France	Participation in *école maternelle* (French pre-school) for one, two or three years. Children aged 3 to 5 years	To assess effects on primary school performance.	✓ Children who attended the *école maternelle* were much less likely to have to repeat 1st grade ✓ School performance better for every extra year of pre-school
Osborn and Millbank (1987)	UK	Any early childhood programme compared to none.	To measure effects on educational and social outcomes at ages 5 and 10	✓ Improved cognitive and school achievement at both ages, especially of disadvantaged children ✗ No measured impact on socio-emotional development
Programmes for children and mothers				
Kagitcibasi *et al.* (1986 and 1991)	Turkey	Home visiting and group programme aiming at the education of mothers with young children in low income families	To measure subsequent development and school achievement of young children.	✓ Mothers more verbal, less punitive, more supportive of the education of their children ✓ Children improved IQ, social, and personality development.

All studies, except McKey *et al.* (1985), follow an experimental research design that includes control groups. See Barnett (1995)

The importance of family influences: The benefits to be gained from quality provision outside the home need to be seen in tandem with the continuing importance of experiences within it. In the British Child Health and Education Study, no other factor including socio-economic status influenced school outcomes as consistently as having a stable, developmental home life supported by participation in a high quality pre-school programme. An evaluation of a home-visiting programme in Turkey, aimed at assisting mothers rear and support the development of their children, confirms these findings. Young children coming under the programme scored higher on experimental tests administered in the early years and demonstrated improved performance in primary schooling (Kagitcibasi and Sekman, 1991).

Overall, the findings of the studies show that young children who participate in a quality ECEC environment are likely to develop reasoning and problem-solving skills, to be more co-operative and considerate of others, and to develop greater self-esteem. Even if their IQ advantage fades, many of these positive effects may linger and contribute to children's positive classroom learning behaviour, motivation, and academic achievement. Such positive effects have been found both in countries like France where the early childhood education and care system is quite uniform (for children over 3) and in countries such as Germany and Britain where early childhood interventions are more varied. So, in partnership with parents and quality primary and secondary schooling, ECEC has the potential to maximise children's motivation and preparation as they begin a lifetime of learning (OECD, 1996*a*).

Benefits to families

Recent demographic and labour market changes have created a situation in which there is growing need and demand for the care of young children whose parents are working. The demand has been further driven in some countries by welfare-to-work programmes that try to make more single parents economically self-sufficient. The relationship between working patterns and childcare opportunities may work from the supply side, too. A cross-national analysis (Gustafsson and Stafford, 1995) shows that provision of ECEC promotes maternal employment by making it easier for mothers to find and hold jobs. In general, quality ECEC arrangements that are reliable and accommodating of varied employment schedules have been found to facilitate worker attendance and performance (Shinn, Galinsky and Gulcur, 1990).[6]

Early childhood education and care services can also promote lifelong learning and other positive outcomes for parents and family members. Research in New Zealand has found that benefits of ECEC for parents include enhanced relationships with their children, alleviation of maternal stress, upgrading of education or training credentials, and improved employment status (Wylie, 1994). Early childhood settings can provide links to parenting education, continuing education and adult literacy and other services to meet the needs of parents who may resume their own education or develop new creative or social interests (OECD, 1996*b*, 1998*a*). In addition, in neighbourhoods with few community or extended family supports or in labour markets with a high degree of worker mobility, ECEC programmes can provide parents and families with opportunities to develop social support networks and ties with other families (OECD, 1995).[7]

6. Notwithstanding the demonstrated positive effects for mother and child alike, uneven and limited access to affordable, high quality, organised ECEC provision which is responsive to the varied work arrangements available means that many parents face poor second-best choices, forego working, choose jobs which allow family responsibilities to be met but do not allow full use of their skills and knowledge or rely on poor quality ECEC programmes and informal arrangements. See Bertelsen (1991), Kloprogge (1998), Galinsky *et al.* (1994), NICHD (1997), Leibowitz *et al.* (1992).

7. In studies of experiences in countries outside the OECD area, early childhood initiatives have been found to set in motion follow-up programmes for children in primary schools as well as adult literacy programmes for women and community health projects. See van der Gaag and Tan (1996).

Benefits to society

The research reviewed above shows that ECEC can help children perform better at school, can make them more likely to grow up to be more responsible citizens and can give their parents greater opportunities to participate in the labour market. All these benefits are socially desirable in themselves. High quality, flexible and affordable ECEC influences tax contributions and welfare payments in the near term by enabling parents to become and to remain employed. It can motivate a wide variety of community members – women's associations, fathers, teachers, volunteers, fund-raisers – to work together with the goal of meeting the needs of young children and their families. It can also provide parallel services to community members or act as a hub for referrals. In such ways, ECEC can strengthen social cohesion and social support.

Social gains require, however, an investment of resources, both public and private. The limited data available suggest great variation in the scale of that investment. Resources allocated to centre-based early childhood (pre-primary) education activities range from 0.1% of GDP or less in Korea, Portugal, Turkey and the United Kingdom to more than 0.6% of GDP in Denmark, Finland, France, the Czech Republic and Hungary. The differences are mainly attributable to the scale of participation. Country differences in spending for ECEC may also be explained by the levels of private resources made available for such activities and the types of expenditures included. In Australia, for example, an estimated 0.1% of GDP is spent on pre-schools. If centre-based childcare is included, expenditures represent an estimated 0.3% of GDP.

Studies that evaluate the benefits against the investment costs are limited.[8] Even though there are relatively few analyses which provide evidence in financial terms of the extent to which the benefits recoup investment costs, the research reviewed above confirms the scale and nature of those benefits and suggests the kinds of complementary initiatives which can sustain and enhance them. Most specifically, social as well as private benefits for the children concerned depend to a great extent on programme quality and complementary initiatives that build up parental and community support for the social development and learning of children in the early years. Likewise, sustained educational gains depend on active, organised, supportive learning opportunities and environments in primary and secondary schools.

3. WHAT ARE THE MAJOR POLICY DIMENSIONS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE?

Because governments in all OECD countries play a more active role in organising or encouraging the provision of early childhood education and care, they face decisions about how best to implement policy and practice. These decisions are not easy, given the complexity and changing nature of relationships between families, children and their development and learning, and the state.

An underlying issue is the demarcation between public and private responsibility for looking after and meeting the needs of young children. The recent acceptance in most countries of the need for a more direct state concern for young children owes much to the changing role of women in the workforce and to the recognition of the benefits of ECEC to children and society described in the above research review. ECEC has also been recognised as a key tool for social justice and equality of opportunity: it is widely agreed that young children should not be obliged to suffer

8. Verry (1995) sets out the economic dimensions of early childhood education and care. For assessments of benefits evaluated in monetary terms and costs of ECEC programmes, see, e.g., Barrueta-Clement *et al.* (1984), including the commentary by Gramlich; see also Schweinhart (1993). These studies rely primarily on information collected from specific programmes or, on the other hand, embrace a wide variety of programme arrangements and qualities, so the findings are either not easily generalised or not as useful in identifying the most effective and efficient ways to organise ECEC. Studies tend to focus on a sub-set of benefits which more or less correspond to the principal objectives of types of ECEC provision under review, e.g. associated gains in achievement, health, citizenship, educational attainment and employment (sometimes reduced social welfare costs) or associated differences in labour force participation of mothers (and the related financial consequences on public accounts and in family budgets), e.g. Ribar (1995), Leibowitz *et al.* (1992), Gustafsson and Stafford (1995), but not the full range of benefits.

the consequences of early disadvantage. Whether they interpret the principle of equity as meaning that programmes should be targeted on disadvantaged groups, or seek rather to provide a common standard of early childhood learning for all, most countries now see ECEC as a national responsibility and an essential part of the social infrastructure.

Where countries differ, however, is in their interpretation of the respective roles of families, government, employers, private and voluntary bodies in initiating, funding, organising and monitoring such programmes. Neither state neglect of the young child sector nor state monopoly of service provision is seen today as an ideal solution in terms of child development, financing, social participation and outreach. Further, early childhood services are seen not as substituting for families, but as partners with them. This is true, in particular, of care for the under-threes which in general is based on family care, supported by fiscal benefits and by paid and job-protected parent leave following child-birth.

However, there is no dominant ECEC "model" in OECD countries, in terms of who has access to what, who pays for it, how it is administered and how it interacts with parents' commitments to family and to work. Each of these aspects represents a dimension of early childhood education and care policy which is analysed below.

a) Access for whom? Access to what?

Access to early childhood services is wider or narrower across countries according to whether it is considered a right or a privilege. In general, the Western European continental countries view early childhood education for the age group 3-6 years as the right of every child. They see the opportunity to benefit from early education as a matter of equality of opportunity. In many OECD European countries, the trend is to provide free, universal coverage for children within the public school system for a substantial period prior to compulsory education (for as long as three years in Belgium and France). By age 5, by far the majority of the age cohort is enrolled in either pre-school or primary education in many countries, as shown in Figure 2.2. These data should be read with caution, they do not cover non-educational or informal forms of ECEC.

Other countries, usually those which consider ECEC to be compensatory or need-based rather than a universal right or standard, take a more targeted approach.[9] In the United States, for example, much publicly-provided ECEC for 0 to 5-year-olds limits eligibility to low-income or at-risk children and families. However, even for these groups, access is not universal, coverage is often part-day and the quality of services is often mediocre or poor. Further, where public provision is only for those at-risk, two-tiered systems have tended to develop in which better off children experience high-quality provision, while at-risk

9. The question of eligibility of children with special needs is also an important issue. Some countries view children with disabilities as best served through separate and focused specialised help, while others have sought to integrate children with disabilities in all services. The Nordic countries and Italy have pursued a policy of fully including such children in all branches of education. Children with special needs who are able to benefit from education alongside other children enjoy the same access to learning opportunities as any other child, and in certain circumstances they may benefit also from affirmative action. See OECD (1995 and 1998d).

Who is eligible for publicly-provided ECEC programmes?

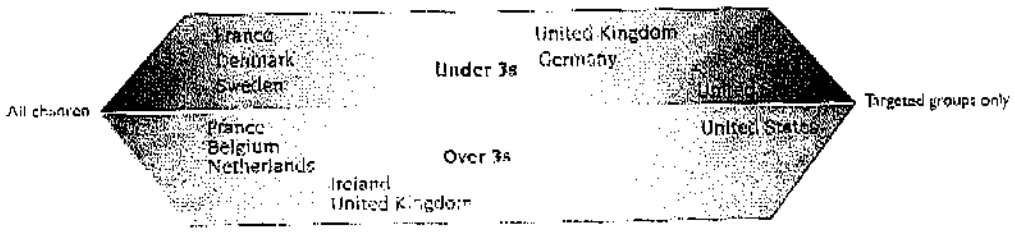
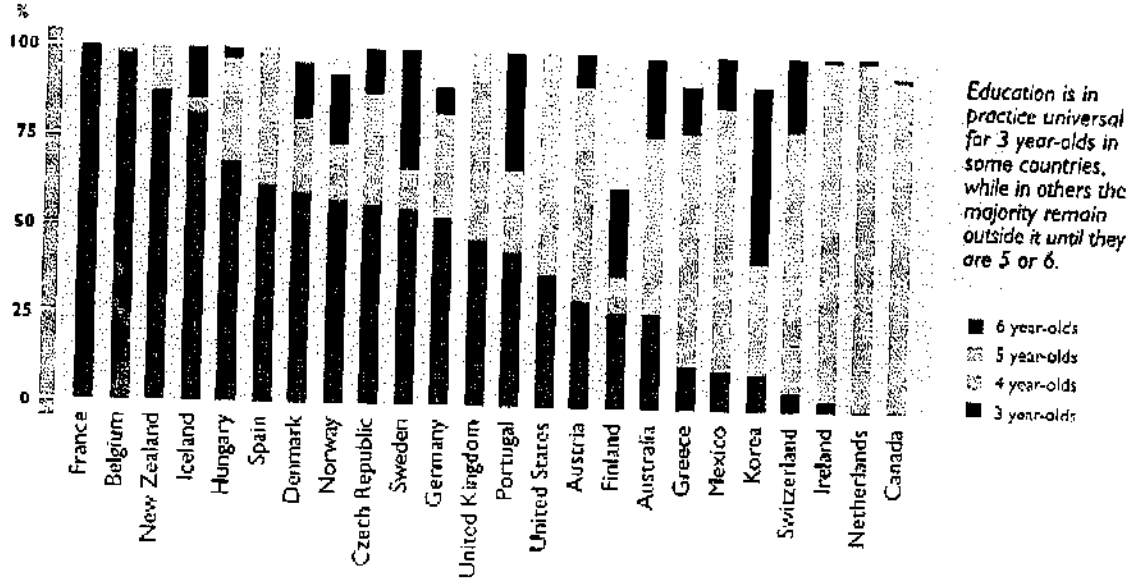


Figure 2.2
Participation by age for children aged 3 to 6, 1996
Net enrolment rates by single year of age in pre-primary[1] and primary education



1. The data refer to pre-primary education, which is limited to organised centre-based instruction programmes primarily covering children aged 3 to compulsory school age. Programmes organised as daycare, play groups and home-based structured and developmental activities are not included in these data and programmes organised through health or social welfare ministries or privately are not in all countries, reported (see text).

Source: OECD Education Database
Data for Figure 2.2 page 89.

children are less likely to receive the full range of child development, health, and family services that are needed to optimise school readiness (Bush and Phillips, 1996; US GAO, 1995).

In nearly all OECD countries, the eligibility of the younger age group, 0-3 years, is much weaker than for older children. Most countries have no entitlement for infants, and places are provided only under certain conditions (age of child, special need, income of parents, their working situation, etc.). Of the OECD European countries, only seven – Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Iceland, Norway and Sweden – currently provide publicly-funded places for over 20% of the under-three population; several of these countries (Denmark and Sweden, for example) have about half in some form of publicly-supported programmes. In countries where caring for very young children outside the home is still considered to be a private matter, primarily serving to accommodate the needs of working parents rather than benefiting young children, public provision for infants and toddlers is much lower still – according to Oberhuemer and Ulich (1997), around 3%. Faced with these circumstances, working parents with very young children must seek solutions in the private market, where ability to pay determines accessibility, or rely on informal arrangements.

The access criteria and participation data, however, reveal little about the content and quality of the education and care opportunities provided. On these dimensions, there are wide differences among programmes, across and within countries.

Programme content in ECEC ranges on a continuum from custodial care that provides a safe environment for children while their parents

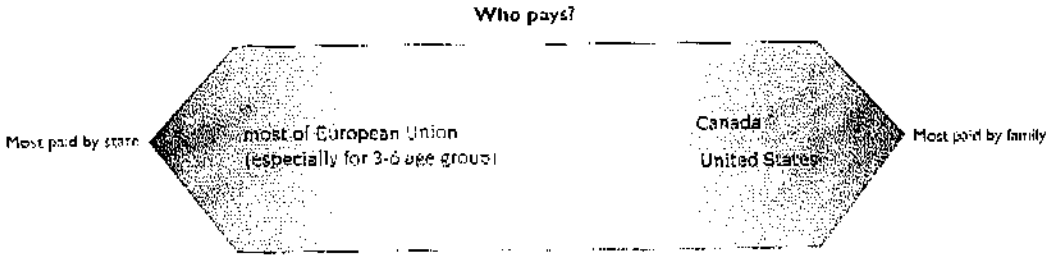
are working, to programmes designed to be developmentally and educationally stimulating (Cochran, 1993). While programmes for children aged 3 to 6 are more likely than earlier-age programmes to share characteristics with primary schools, this varies considerably from one country to another. In some cases there is a child-centred, developmentally-based model; in others pre-school is treated as a downward extension of formal schooling, introducing children to literacy and numeracy activities as early as possible. In Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Spain, a primary objective of ECEC for 3 to 6-year-olds is to introduce learning skills and familiarise children with early schooling alongside broader social development (EURYDICE, 1994). With the objective of ensuring curricular continuity, France and parts of Belgium have introduced learning cycles that extend over the whole period of pre-primary and primary schooling, while Finland has developed "learning modules" for 5 and 6-year-olds in daycare centres and schools (Oberhuemer and Ulich, 1997).

In contrast, some countries separate early childhood from primary education and take a more holistic approach towards learning. Their programmes emphasise the importance of play and creativity, parental participation, family and community orientation, and informal, decentralised services that respond to local variation and needs. Public ECEC programmes in Norway and Sweden, for example, seek to promote children's multi-dimensional development, and purposely de-emphasise school-oriented pedagogy. This does not seem to cause difficulty in the development of reading or numerical ability among Scandinavian children. They perform well in international tests by the 8th grade although, in general, they have one year less of formal schooling than their counterparts in other countries (IEA, 1992; IEA/TIMSS, 1996). A possible reason for this result is that from an early age, the great majority of children in these countries participate in play-oriented early childhood programmes where structured activities enable them to develop literacy and numeracy skills.

ECEC programmes also differ in quality. Quality is a value-based concept, interpreted differently in different places according to the priorities of different stakeholders, the cultural and educational contexts and the relative weight given in individual programmes to education, care and other aims (Phillips, 1995; Moss and Pence 1994, Woodhead, 1998). Yet, early studies showed that programme quality – gauged in terms of measurable outcomes, broadly defined – is associated with intensity and focus: a minimum of three hours a day for four or five days a week, extending over two years, and conducted in small groups by well-trained professionals (Royce *et al.*, 1983). To a greater or lesser extent, ECEC programmes differ within and among countries in quality through such factors as adequate inputs and sound processes. In this respect, a key policy target is the preparation and responsibilities of ECEC staff (Box 2.2).

b) Who pays?

Closely linked to access is the question of who pays for early childhood education and care: government, municipality, employers or parents. In what proportion should each contribute in an equitable system? Government subsidy, whether through direct expenditure on programmes or indirect support through tax breaks to families, enterprises or sponsors, has a clear role. Experience suggests that unless there is stable and well-targeted investment by the state, the children of low-income parents are denied equal access to good quality



BOX 2.2 WHO WORKS WITH CHILDREN IN ECEC PROGRAMMES?

The profiles of staff working with children in ECEC programmes vary greatly across countries, as well as from one programme to another within countries, particularly where there is an administrative and cultural split between welfare and education sectors. These variations reflect different priorities about what ECEC is expected to achieve and different views of its workers.

Some key points of difference among countries include:

Orientation of training and professional identity to an educational curriculum or a wider role. Countries such as Belgium, Greece and Spain orient pre-school education to the transmission of knowledge and cultural traditions, and prepare staff accordingly. The Nordic countries aim to provide broad social and family support, and "pedagogues" tend to view their roles not so much as early childhood specialists or teachers but as social network experts.

Links with primary education. In more educationally-oriented systems – including France, Italy, the UK and Ireland – pre-primary staff share training arrangements and qualifications with some or all primary school teachers.

Educational level required. In most Western European countries and Japan, centre-based staff need to be university graduates. In the United States, staff have lower status and are poorly paid, and few college graduates are attracted. In most countries, people working in the welfare service and with younger children (i.e. the under 3's) tend to have had less education and training. But where services have been integrated, notably in the Nordic countries, there tends to be more consistency, with high training levels established across ECEC.

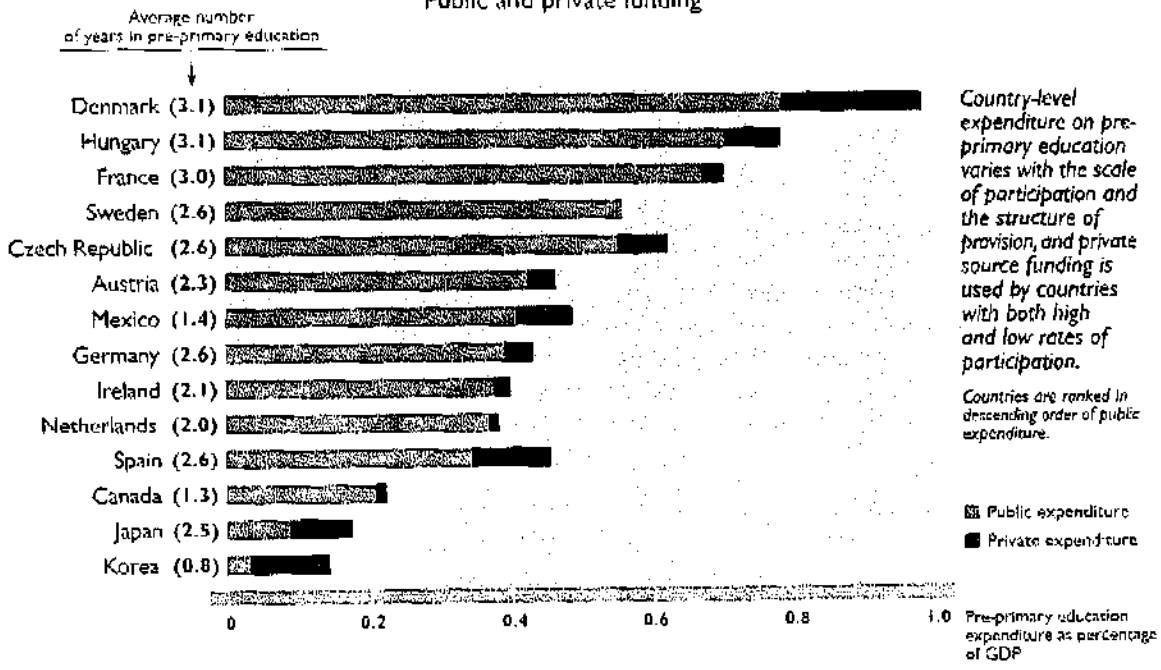
Home-based vs. centred based. In many countries, there are no training or education requirements for family childcare providers. However, in countries where family care providers are publicly-organised or funded (as is the case for nearly all such provision in the Nordic countries), training and education requirements have been established. Only France requires education and training for all family childcare providers, both private and publicly employed.

The degree to which staff are trained for specific age groups or tasks. Belgium, Greece and Luxembourg consider a high degree of specialisation to be necessary for service quality. Denmark however trains its *paedagoger* for all childhood services, out-of-school provision and services for people with special needs. Italy and Germany are moving towards such a generalist ethos.

The degree to which ECEC *is a woman's domain.* Traditionally it has been heavily so, but some countries seek to change this in order to provide role models of both sexes to young children. Denmark has enjoyed relative success in this, with 25% of those in pre-service training for *paedagoger* posts now male.

Expansion of provision across a wide range of ECEC programmes, a strengthened policy interest in programme quality, the broader decentralisation in the administration and governance of education and care services, and policies which make it easier for mothers with very young children to stay at home (e.g. paid leave) are now combining to alter the responsibilities and desired profiles of early childhood education and care staff as well as to influence the choices of those who may consider entering or remaining in such posts (Christopherson, 1997).

Figure 2.3
Financing pre-primary education[1], 1995
Public and private funding



1. The data refer to pre-primary education which is limited to organised centre-based instruction programmes primarily covering children aged 3 to compulsory school age. Programmes organised as daycare, play groups and home-based structured and developmental activities are not included in these data and programmes organised through health or social welfare ministries or privately are not, in all countries, reported (see text).

Source: OECD Education Database
Data for Figure 2.3, page 89.

early care and education services (Siegel and Loman, 1991). But in order to maximise the effectiveness of constrained public resources, the cost of providing ECEC is usually shared among national/local government, business, and parents. In all countries, the financial burden on parents, especially for children 0-3, is higher than for 3 to 6-year-olds.

Figure 2.3 shows levels of spending on centre-based early childhood (pre-primary) education, expressed as a percentage of GDP. There is no apparent link across countries between the scale of participation in such programmes and modes of financing. In two countries in which very young children spend three or more years in pre-primary education, for example, private sources account for 20% or more of expenditure in Denmark but less than 10% in France. Differences in overall spending on pre-primary education also reflect differences in the ways provision is organised, which lead to substantial differences in spending per child. Japan and Austria have similar rates of participation, but spend on a per child basis different amounts: respectively, US$2 476 and US$4 907. Note that these figures and comparisons refer to pre-primary education, as one part of a wider range of ECEC services.[10]

In some countries, public investment in ECEC is large and, for non-governmental providers, profit as incentive is discouraged and parents pay fees on a sliding scale according to their family income. Finland and Norway allow private companies to develop employee ECEC programmes with some

10. Data for selected countries are shown in Statistical Annex, page 89.

state subsidies. In a number of countries, parents may cover one-quarter to one-third of operating service costs. Other countries allow for a greater public-private mix and rely to a greater extent on the profit incentive to open up and make responsive the supply of ECEC. Looked at from another angle, most U.S. parents purchase ECEC in the private market and bear most of the costs. For example, one four-state study found that parents cover up to 80% of ECEC costs (COCO Study Team, 1995), and fees and related costs can take up as much as one-quarter of the income of poor working families. In most European countries, fees for infant and toddler programmes amount to 10% or less of the families' average income, and programmes for 3 to 5-year-olds are free in several countries (Kamerman and Kahn, 1994).

c) Administrative responsibility

The public administration of ECEC systems follows broadly three models. The prevailing model in OECD countries is a "split" or dual system, in which the education authorities are responsible for pre-school education, and the health or social affairs authorities supervise care, generally for younger infants and toddlers. A second model, unified administrative arrangements, has been adopted by New Zealand, Sweden, Norway and Spain. A third model has been adopted in Japan, Korea, the United Kingdom and the United States, in which both education, health and social affairs ministries run parallel systems for young children.

The merits of unifying systems are evident. Split systems have different funding streams, objectives and service mechanisms for each sub-system, despite a growing overlap in underlying goals and types of family served. The unified system generally ensures a more rational use of resources and the implementation of care and education not as separate activities for different age groups but as essential components of all programmes for young children. In addition, placing ECEC under the auspices of one department allows clear objectives, policies and budgets for early childhood to be formulated and proposed (OECD, 1998a).

Over the past decade, there has been a move in OECD countries toward decentralisation of early childhood services. In certain instances, this movement would seem to undermine policy coherence: central authorities can find it difficult to maintain co-ordination between educational, welfare and health aspects with increasing decentralisation, deregulation, and privatisation. But since decentralisation responds to a desire to bring policy and funding decisions closer to the populations being served, the challenge is for central government to permit this shift while retaining the authority and capacity to monitor fair access to ECEC and maintain high quality services across regions and forms of provision.

There is a role for national governments in ensuring that local or regional authorities secure the resources to implement their policies. It is worth noting that in some countries, e.g. in the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden, decentralisation has enabled local authorities to combine funding streams and develop municipal departments for early childhood provision – integrated across age groups and sectors. Potentially, integration can be more feasible in the delivery of locally run services than it has been at national policy level. Partnerships with providers from other sectors can also help: the Dutch central government and municipalities contract the non-profit,

Degree to which administration of ECEC is unified

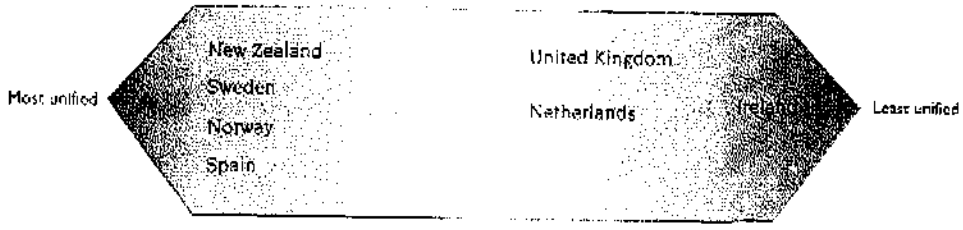
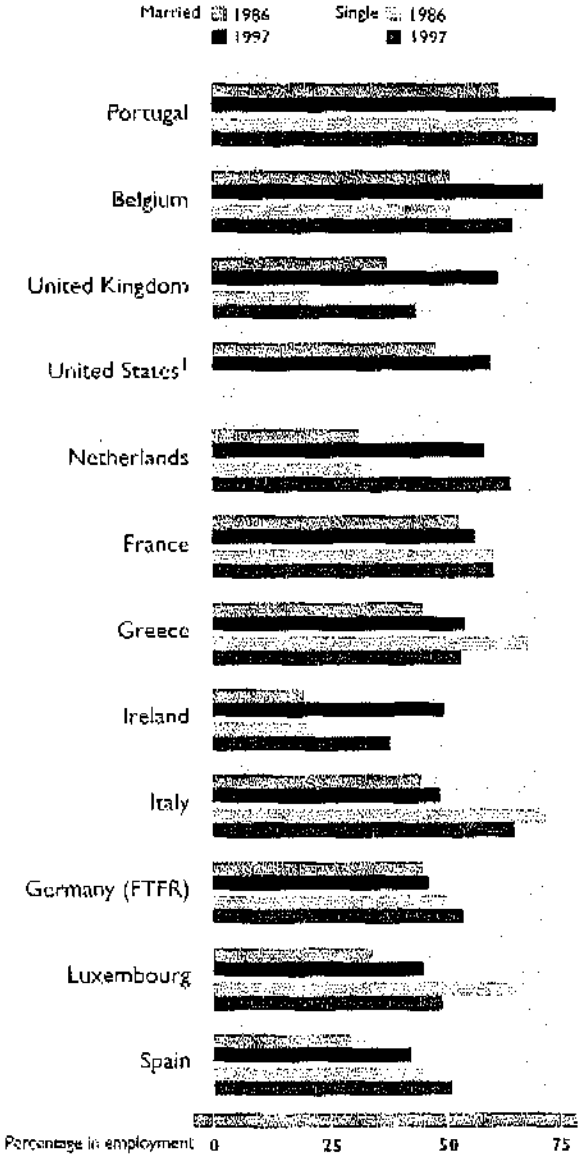


Figure 2.4
Percentage of mothers aged 30 to 39 who work when their children are under 5, 1986 and 1997



In nearly all countries, married and single women with very young children are now more likely to be working.

Countries are ranked in descending order of the 1997 percentage of married mothers who work when their children are young.

1. Data refer to all women (single and married) aged 16 and older with children under 6.

Source: European Commission (1999), U.S. Bureau of Labour Statistics (1998).
Data for Figure 2.4, page 89.

private sector to provide many early childhood services, especially to include groups that are difficult to reach through mainstream service provision (Kloprogge, 1998).

d) How work and family responsibilities are reconciled

The reconciliation of work responsibilities with family commitments is a major challenge in industrial democracies. Figure 2.4 shows that in a large number of OECD countries mothers with very young children are now more likely to be working. The demand for early care and education services for infants and young children – especially from the age of 18 months to entry into nursery school – is likely to grow as more women aspire to combine motherhood with paid employment and careers. But the growth in concern about children's outcomes has made this more than a purely economic issue of finding childcare for the children, thereby allowing mothers to work.

The approaches adopted in OECD countries lie on a continuum from *laissez-faire* to direct public provision of out-of-home early childhood education and care. The tendency in several countries is to take a wider, *shared responsibility* approach in which governments do not just support out-of-home childcare but help enable parents to look after young children. This approach aims to reconcile work with family responsibilities. Such a strategy seeks to balance economic considerations (maternal care is less costly than extended public provision in the child's first year of life), labour market considerations (enabling or encouraging parents to enter and remain in work), child development considerations (ensuring that opportunities are fully available, under the right conditions) and equality of opportunity considerations (ensuring that women are not placed at a disadvantage in employment and careers). In countries where publicly funded childcare has not met demand, it has been expanded (e.g. in Germany, the Netherlands and Spain). At the same time, parents are given the option through paid maternity and parental leave to care for their young children at home. Leave at full- or partial pay ranges from 12 to 16 weeks in the majority of countries, to about a half-year in the

Table 2.2
Summary of maternity and parental leave in selected OECD countries

Country	Maternity leave	Parental leave
Australia	Some employers provide paid leave (covers 17% female workers) or unpaid leave.	12 months unpaid parental leave available for all workers
Austria	100% salary for 16 weeks, if insured	Flat rate payment with two-year parental leave, funded from unemployment insurance, for children born after 1999
Belgium	82% salary in first month, 75% salary for further 3 weeks, if insured (most are covered).	Three month leaves for father or employed mother, available until child turns 4; possible payments for loss of employment
Canada	55% salary up to max limit, for 15 weeks, under unemployment insurance scheme	
Czech Republic	69% earnings for 28 weeks, if insured.	
Denmark	90% earnings for 30 weeks, if insured.	
Finland	Earnings replacement declines with income, for 159 workdays if insured.	Parental allowance available to either parent for further 158 workdays. Unpaid care leave available until child turns 3
France	100% of earnings to max limit if insured, 16 weeks if first child, 26 weeks for subsequent child, up to 46 weeks for multiple births	
Germany	100% earnings for 16 weeks then 80% earnings for 8 weeks	Parental leave allowance is a state benefit available to either parent for first 18 months of a child's life. Parental leave available until child turns 3.
Greece	50% of reference salary for 16 weeks to working mothers. Full salary paid to civil servants. Some employers (e.g. in banking sector) supplement maternity benefit to provide full income replacement. Limited to employees (self-employed not covered).	
Hungary	100% earnings for 24 weeks, if insured	
Iceland	Flat rate for 6 months for all mothers; supplement provided to previous workers	Working fathers also eligible after first month
Ireland	70% earnings up to a ceiling; minimum payment for 26 weeks, if insured	
Italy	80% earnings for 5 months, if insured	Additional 30% salary for 6 months for either parent; can be extended to three years if child is disabled); alternatively a working parent can take time off from work in lieu of financial payment. 30 days a year paid leave until child turns 3
Japan	60% basic wage for 98 days, if insured	25% earnings during child care leave in first year.
Korea	Paid maternity leave for 60 days, if previously employed	Public employees can access leave without pay up to one year (public school teacher who has public employee status for three years) as family leave. Previously employed mothers or fathers can access unpaid child care leave (which cannot exceed one year) including paid maternity leave, after the birth

Luxembourg	100% earnings for 16 weeks, if insured; alternative flat-rate payment for 16 weeks	
Mexico	100% average earnings for 84 days, if insured	
Netherlands	100% earnings for 16 weeks, if insured	Three months unpaid leave may be paid, under specific collective bargaining agreement; law on career interruptions of public employees; self-employed receive a benefit based on loss of income
New Zealand	Means-tested sickness benefit rates, for 6 months mainly single women eligible	
Norway	100% earnings for 42 weeks or 80% earnings for 52 weeks	Fathers can use mothers unused maternity benefit; also have their own 4 weeks (within the 42/52 week limit) non-transferable to mother
Poland	100% earnings for 16 weeks for first birth, if insured; longer periods for subsequent births.	Flat rate benefit available for leave up to 24 months after maternity benefit
Portugal	100% earnings, maximum payment 30 minimum wage, for 98 days with 60 days after confinement, if insured	Father can access maternity benefit for other part of parents decide.
Slovak Republic	90% earnings, up to max amount, for 28 weeks, if insured	Father can access extended parental leave for child under 3
Spain	100% benefit base payable 16 weeks, if insured	
Sweden	Reduced earnings replacement, payable 450 days.	Maternity benefit is a shared entitlement for both parents.
Switzerland	16 cantons provide means-tested benefits to mothers; the employer is obliged to pay 3 weeks salary during the first year of service and after that there are wide disparities in practice. In some cases there may be insurance against loss of earnings.	5 cantons provide full or reduced benefits to fathers
Turkey	Employees receive 66.7% earnings for 12 weeks; active national civil servants receive 100% earnings for 9 weeks (including 6 weeks after the childbirth) and a leave of 1.5 hours per day for child-feeding	Employees receive, upon request, up to 6 months unpaid leave, if insured; active national civil servants receive, upon request, up to 12 months unpaid leave, if insured
United Kingdom	90% average earnings for 6 weeks; flat rate for further 12 weeks, if insured; lower flat-rate benefit for 18 weeks if not eligible for above	
United States	Variable earnings replacement, maximum amount; payable up to 52 weeks (unpaid), available in five states.	12 weeks unpaid leave available for specified family and medical reasons, including birth and care of newborn child; 26 hours paid leave for federal employees for child-related activities

Source: Kamerman, Kahn and Kingston (1983), and detailed responses to OECD Caring World synthesis questionnaire, and country-provided information.

Czech Republic, Hungary, Iceland and the Slovak Republic, to a year or more in Norway and Sweden. Maternity and parental leave provisions differ not only in the duration of benefits, but also in benefit levels and eligibility requirements, making country comparisons difficult (see Table 2.2). The Dutch approach, for example, follows a so-called combination scenario which takes into account dual careers, part-time work, parental care and care facilities, private financing and provision of government and employers. Nonetheless, generally more favourable provisions in European countries mean that children under one year are now less often than before seen in childcare programmes (France is an exception) while, at the same time, publicly funded care for 2 and 3-year-olds is growing (Kamerman and Kahn, 1994).

However, as the social, economic and cultural contexts of countries can differ greatly, research is needed at national level to measure the short- and long-term effects on young children of different levels and mixes of childcare provision, maternal benefits and parental leave options and the issues of costs, labour market impacts, and social and economic consequences.[11]

4. CONCLUSIONS

Early childhood education and care is now a well-established policy field within individual countries. Understanding across countries remains relatively weak, however, partly because there is no uniform system for collecting standard data and partly because dissemination of knowledge from different programmes in different countries has so far been limited. The present analysis brings together elements of what is known and offers an analytical framework, but it points to the need to strengthen the international knowledge base. Many of the issues are being examined in the OECD's thematic review of early childhood education and care policy. That work is also clarifying and beginning to address some of the more important information and data needs from a comparative perspective.

This chapter has shown that ECEC can have important benefits for children in both the short and the long term, but suggested that such benefits are not inevitable. As further research continues to interact with the development of policy, the impact of specific programme features, which vary greatly among programmes and countries, will need to be considered. One priority is to emphasise programme quality. But in addition, some important choices about the objectives and relationships underpinning ECEC programmes have been identified.

First, the relationships between programme partners vary according to whether the aim is to provide a universal service with wide access supported by state funding or whether public intervention is on a more selective basis. An important insight from recent policy development is that provision of a universal service does not necessarily undermine family responsibilities, since funding can be used to support home and family-based care as well as to provide alternatives. As the outcomes resulting from early childhood experience become clearer and knowledge of how to support families to foster child development increases, the public interest widens and grows.

Second, there is a great variation between systems in terms of the priority they give to the cognitive as opposed to the wider social development of children, especially immediately before entering school. It seems clear that both are needed to approach children's development holistically, and each country will find a balance appropriate to its own objectives. However, the relative neglect of programmes for children under 3 compared to pre-school provision, together with research showing the importance of social as well as cognitive development in children's futures, should encourage countries to look closely at whether they have achieved an appropriate balance. ■

11. In particular, it is unclear whether new provisions in work legislation, maternity leave and childcare services or support offer a sufficient margin to exercise the full range of options for work and family. In this respect the situation in European Union countries is rapidly evolving (EC Network on Childcare, 1996). Through the 1998 Employment Guidelines adopted by Ministers, EU member states have agreed to expand parental/family leave schemes and, in parallel, to expand the level of public care provision for the children under 3. From a different starting point, initiatives in a number of US states (under broad federal legislation and funding) establish new training and work requirements for social welfare beneficiaries. Increases in targeted ECEC provision are under consideration.

References

BARNETT, W. S. (1995), "Long-term Effects of Early Childhood Programs on Cognitive and School Outcomes", *The Future of Children: Long-term Outcomes of Early Childhood Programs*, Vol. 5(3), Packard Foundation, Los Altos, California, pp. 25-50.

BERRUTA-CLEMENT, J.R. *et al.* (1984), *Changed Lives: The Effects of the Perry Pre-School Program on Youth through the Age of 19*, High Scope Press, Ypsilanti, Mi.

BERTELSEN, O. (1991), quoted in Sommer, D., "Children's Living Conditions: Secular Changes and Childhood Mythology", *Educare in Europe*, UNESCO, Paris.

BRAITHEWAITE, J. (1983), *Explorations in Early Childhood Education*, Australian Council for Educational Research, Hawthorn, Victoria.

BUSH, J. and **PHILLIPS, D.A.** (1996), "International Approaches to Defining Quality", in S. L. Kagan and N.E. Cohen (eds.), *Reinventing Early Care and Education: A Vision for a Quality System*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA, pp. 65-80.

CARNEGIE TASK FORCE ON MEETING THE NEEDS OF YOUNG CHILDREN (1994), "Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of our Youngest Children: Report of the Carnegie Task Force on Meeting the Needs of Young Children", Carnegie Corporation of New York, New York.

CHRISTOPHERSON, S. (1997), "Childcare and Elderly Care: What Occupational Opportunities for Women?", Labour Market and Social Policy Occasional Papers No. 27, OECD, Paris.

COCHRAN, M. (1993), "Public Child Care, Culture and Society: Crosscutting Themes", in M. Cochran (ed.), *International Handbook of Child Care Policies and Programs*, Greenwood Press, Westport, CT, pp. 627-658.

COST, QUALITY, AND CHILD OUTCOMES (CQCO) STUDY TEAM (1995), *Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes in Child Care Centers*, Department of Economics, University of Colorado at Denver, Denver, CO.

EC NETWORK ON CHILDCARE (1996), *A Review of Services for Young Children in the European Union*, European Commission, Brussels.

EDUCATION COMMISSION OF THE STATES (1996), "Bridging the Gap between Neuroscience and Education. Summary of a Workshop", Denver, Colorado.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION (1999), "Employment Performance in the Member States. Employment Rates Report 1998", Brussels.

EURYDICE (1994), *L'enseignement préscolaire et primaire dans l'Union européenne*, Unité Européenne d'EURYDICE, Brussels.

GALINSKY, E., HOWES, C., KONTOS, S. and **SHINN, M.** (1994), *The Study of Children in Family Child Care and Relative Care*, Families and Work Institute, New York, NY.

GOMBY, D. S., LARNER, M. B., STEVENSON, C. S., LEWIT, E. M. and **BEHRMAN, R. E.** (1995), "Long-term Outcomes of Early Childhood Programs: Analysis and Recommendations", *The Future of Children: Long-term Outcomes of Early Childhood Programs*, Vol. 5(3), pp. 6-24.

GUSTAFSSON, S.S. and **STAFFORD, F.P.** (1998), "Links between Early Childhood Programs and Maternal Employment in Three Countries", *The Future of Children: Long-term Outcomes of Early Childhood Programs*, Vol. 5(3), pp. 161-174.

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT – IEA (1992), *How in the World do Children Read?*, W.B. Elly, Grindeldruck, Hamburg.

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT/THIRD INTERNATIONAL MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE STUDY – IEA/TIMSS (1996), *Mathematics Achievement in the Middle School Years*, A. E. Beaton, Boston College, Boston.

JAROUSSE, J. P., MINGAT, A., and **RICHARD, M.** (1992), "La scolarisation maternelle à deux ans: effets pédagogiques et sociaux", *Education et Formation*, Ministère de l'Education Nationale et de la Culture, Paris, April-June.

KAGITCIBASI, C. and **BEKMAN, S.** (1991), *Cognitive Training Programme*, Yilmans Yokyf Publications, Istanbul.

KALISCH, D.W., AMAN, T. and **BUCHELE, L.A.** (1998), "Social and Health Policies in OECD Countries: A Survey of Current Programmes and Recent Developments", Labour Market and Social Policy Occasional Papers, No. 33, OECD, Paris.

KAMERMAN, S.B. and **KAHN, A.J.** (1994), *A Welcome for Every Child. Care, Education and Family Support for Infants and Toddlers in Europe*, Zero to Three, National Center for Clinical Infant Programs, Arlington, VA.

KELLAGHAN, T. and **GREANEY, B.J.** (1993), "The Educational Development of Students Following Participation in a Pre-school Programme in a Disadvantaged Area in Ireland", Studies and Evaluation Paper No. 12, Bernard van Leer Foundation, The Hague.

KLOPROGGE, J. (1998), "Background Report of the Netherlands", Doc OF5, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, Zoetermeer.

LAMBERT, J.F. (1996), "Des règles du jeu", *Educating the Young Child in Europe*, Report of the European Seminar of OMEP, UNESCO, Paris, 24-27 October.

LAZAR, I. R., DARLINGTON, R., MURRAY, H., ROYCE, J. and **SNIPPER, A.** (1982), *The Lasting Effects of Early Education: A Report from the Consortium of Longitudinal Studies*, Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development, Series No. 195, Vol. 47, pp. 2-3

LEIBOWITZ, A., KLERMAN, J.A. and **WAITE, L.J.** (1992), "Employment of New Mothers and Child Care Choice: Differences by Children's Age", *Journal of Human Resources*, Vol. 27, No. 1, pp. 112-133

LINDSEY, C. (1998), "Brain Research and Implications for Early Childhood Education", *Childhood Education*, Vol. 75(2), pp. 97-101

McKEY, R., CONDELLI, L., GANSON, H., BARRET, B., MCCONKEY, C. and **PLANTZ, M.** (1985), "The Impact of Head Start on Children, Families, and Communities", Final report of the Head Start Evaluation, Synthesis, and Utilization Project, US Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, DC

MINISTÉRO DA EDUCAÇAO (1999), *Early Childhood Education and Care in Portugal*, Departamento da Educação Básica, Lisbon

MOSS, P. and **PENCE, A.** (eds.) (1994), *Valuing Quality in Early Childhood Services: New Approaches to Defining Quality*, Paul Chapman, London

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CHILD HEALTH AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT – NICHD (1997), "Mother-Child Interaction and Cognitive Outcomes Associated with Early Child Care: Results of the NICHD Study", Society for Research in Child Development meeting symposium, Washington, D.C.

OBERHUEMER, P. and **ULICH, M.** (1997), *Working with Young Children in Europe: Provision and Staff Training*, Paul Chapman, London

OECD (1995), *Our Children at Risk*, Paris.

OECD (1996a), *Lifelong Learning for All*, Paris.

OECD (1996b), *Successful Services for our Children and Families at Risk*, Paris.

OECD (1998a), *Overcoming Failure at School*, Paris

OECD (1998b), *Co-ordinating Services for Children and Youth at Risk – A World View*, Paris

OECD (1998c), *Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators*, Paris.

OECD (1998d), "Early Childhood Education and Care Policy, Proposal for a Thematic Review" document DEELS/ED(98)2, Paris.

OSBORN, A.F. and **MILBANK, J.E.** (1987), *The Effects of Early Education: A Report from the Child Health and Education Study*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, UK

PHILLIPS, D.A. (ed.) (1993), *Child Care for Low-income Families: Summary of Two Workshops*, National Academy Press, Washington, DC

TIBAR, D.C. (1995), "A Structural Model of Child Care and the Labour Supply of Married Women", *Journal of Labour Economics*, Vol. 13 A, 3, pp. 538-597, July

ROYCE, J. et al. (1983), mentioned in *As the Twig is Bent*, Consortium for Longitudinal Studies, Erbaum and Associates, Hillsdale, NJ

SCHWEINHART L.J., BARNES, H.V. and **WEIKART, D.P.** (1993), *Significant Benefits: The High/Scope Perry Preschool Study Through Age 27*, High/Scope Educational Research Foundation, Ypsilanti, MI

SHINN, M., GALINSKY, E. and **GULCUR, L.** (1990), *The Role of Cit Care Centers in the Lives of Parents*, Department of Psychology, New York University, New York.

SHORE, R. (1997), *Rethinking the Brain: New Insights into Early Develoment*, Families and Work Institute, New York

SIEGEL, G.L. and **LOMAN, L.A.** (1991), "Child Care and AFDC Recipients in Illinois: Patterns, Problems and Needs", Prepared for the Division of Family Support Services, Department of Public Aid, Illinois, Institute of Applied Research, St. Louis, MO.

UNESCO (1998), *Early Childhood Care and Education as a Structural Approach to Integrating Children and Families at Risk*, Paris.

U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS (1998), *Employment Characteristics of Families in 1997*, Washington, D.C.

U.S. GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE (1995), *Early Childhood Centerservices to Prepare Children for School often Limited*, Washington, D.C., pp. 95-21

U.S. SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (1995), *Social Security Programs throughout the World*, Washington, D.C.

VAN DER GAAG, J. and **TAN, J.P.** (1996), *The Benefits of Early Child Hizement Programmes: An Economic Analysis*, World Bank, Washington, D.C.

WHITEBOOK, M., HOWES, C. and **PHILLIPS, D.** (1989), "Who Carechild Care Teachers and the Quality of Care in America", Final report of the National Child Care Staffing Study, Child Care Employe Project, Oakland, CA.

WOODHEAD, M. (1998), "Quality in Early Childhood Programmes – A Contextually Appropriate Approach", *International Journal of Early Years Education*, Vol. 6, pp. 5-18

WYLIE, C. (1994), *What Research on Early Candhood Education/Care Outcomes and Can't Tell Policymakers*, New Zealand Council for Educational Research, Wellington