Sustaining practitioners and teachers in developing inclusive transitions

PEDAGOŠKI INŠTITUT

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Erasmus+

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PRACTITIONERS /TEACHERS

- Are the most important '**go to person**' according to parents, to discuss transitions of children

- Have a **key role** in making schools more open and **welcoming** for children / parents

- Have a key role in **developing relationships** with children and parents in transitions

PRACTITIONERS /TEACHERS

"*But there is still the bit around early years and children having plenty of time to explore, experiment, discover, learn for themselves . But then schools do want children to comply and follow things…***transition is not just about children, it's about parents too***…*

*For parents it can take 6 to 8 weeks to find their way, not knowing who you can go to and probably thinking "'I'm not being neurotic, I'm not being awkward'". "I just want somebody to go to **help me as a parent to make those relationships**. I think they are really important things" (Primary school teacher, UK)*

CHALLENGING INSTITUTIONAL SPLITS BY

- **Raising awareness on the socio-historic construction of 'ECEC'** , splits and primary school

- Stimulating thinking from **'children's and parent's needs**' instead of solely institutional, historically grown logic

- Supporting professionals in **democratic approach** of pedagogical quality

- **Facilitate collaboration** with other practitioners and increase a **shared responsibility** in transition

- Feeling sure enough **to experiment and think out of the box**
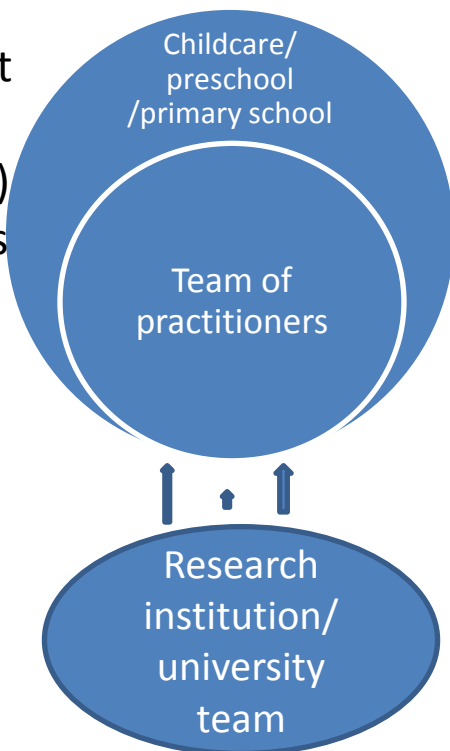
PARTICIPATORY ACTION-RESEARCH

- Builds on
  - well-established European traditions (Formosinho & Formosinho,2012; Bove,2009)
  - international research evidence on professional development (Peeters et al.,2015)

- Showing that long-term training initiatives that are integrated into practitioners' everyday practice are the most effective in enhancing the quality of educational settings through increased reflectivity

OBJECTIVES

- Shared understanding
  - importance of developing trustful relationship/ partnership with parents among different profiles of practitioners and teachers, as assurance for sustainability of project ideas/innovation.

- Developing a supportive/ competent system
  - in which individual professionals are supported in implementing ideas, innovations

BUILDING SUPPORTIVE SYSTEMS

National project team= team of practitioners (6) and researchers (2)

Childcare/ preschool /primary school

Team of practitioners

Research institution/ university team

WHAT WAS IMPLEMENTED SO FAR?

- Analysis of local needs

- International training on participatory action research (Pen Green Centre)

- Developing national action plans

- Transfer into practice- experimentation and documentation of innovative transition practices

Example 1: Italy – focus group (practitioners and researchers)

PRACTITIONERS SHARED THE NEED TO FOSTER:

• MOTIVATION(question making, active listening, rewarding attitude)

• AUTONOMY (routines, cognitive autonomy, space organization, time management)

• COGNITIVE CHALLENGE (trust full attitude towards childrens' potentials)

• APPROACH CONTINUITY(preparation of activities and structured material, DIVERSIFYING, ANTICIPATING ACTIVITIES (stimulate learning styles), METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES (to foster

children' s self consciousness, Scaffolding)

Analysis of local needs

Example 2: Slovenia

- Questionnaires for preschool, primary school teachers and Roma assistants on importance of transitions for Roma children

- Developing partnership with Romani parents and strategies on doing so, outreach programmes

- Great differences in understanding and great differences in valuing them

PEN GREEN RESEARCH CENTRE, CENTRE FOR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN-Corby-UK

Transfer into practice/ in national contexts- experimentation and documentation of innovative transition practices

National project team (project team of practitioners and researchers)

Introduction/sharing with pre/primary school teachers team

Immediate experimentation with practices which contribute to sustaining transition

Developing culture of professional dialogue/professional learning communities
Developing shared understanding of the meaning on importance of developing trustful relationship/ partnership

BELGIUM

- **START critical learning community with all stakeholders involved**-preschool teachers, childcare workers, directors and people of advocay group for families living in poverty.

- **Monthly meetings on** developing vision, action and evaluation.

- **Staff meetings in each organisation to raise awareness** and increase shared responsibility

- this project start is **changing the vision and attitudes of preschool teachers towards parents**. But also **renewed and strengthened the 'settling down' policy for welcoming children and parents**. Since everybody thought this was well-established, but it wasn't in a systemic manner.

SLOVENIA

- The national project team and director of the primary school co-decided, to organize a **series of workshops to discuss these topics in order to create a common understanding and start to build culture of professional dialogue and reflection among teachers.**

- **the team of practitioners started implementing activities in the Roma settlement**, which contribute to the softer transition of children to preschool and school.

- **Change of leadership in primary school**, reduced support of the project idea by the management

- In the coming school year challenge: **to create a supporting system** within the institution that will enable the implementation of activities that will contribute to the soft transition of children.

ITALY

PEER OBSERVATIONS between practitioners (March/April 2017)

MEMORY BOOKS-CIRCLE TIME-ROUTINES-2 ACTIVITIES AT THE SAME TIME,   SELF-LEARNING ACTIVITIES

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

- **Document successes as milestones** so that the changes lead to success

- Developing **professional learning community** (PLC) within and across different institutions as supportive system for professionals.

- Without PLC, developing **culture of dialogue**, no innovation is sustainable

- Critical **role of the directors**