

LATEST FROM THE WORLD OF ECCE

FROM THE DESK OF VICE CHANCELLOR, AMBEDKAR UNIVERSITY DELHI

Centre for Early Childhood Education and Development (CECED) was the first Centre to be established in 2009 as a part of Ambedkar University, Delhi. It gives me a great sense of pride to mention CECED's unfaltering progress over the past 6 years in pursuit of the objectives and the goals it had set for itself, on the basis of sound research evidence.

CECED has continued its efforts to intensify its evidence based advocacy and networking activities with regard to Early Childhood Care and Education. I am happy to inaugurate its latest endeavour, i.e. the quarterly newsletter, Early Scope, that commits to updating all stakeholders on the most recent developments in ECCE, both within and outside India. I congratulate the CECED team on this important initiative. I do expect and hope that this newsletter will be able to create a sense of community engagement, and also serve as a sharing platform for exchange of news between CECED and other organisations. I would encourage readers to revert to CECED with constructive and critical feedback on the newsletter which will contribute to its improvement and quality.

Prof. Shyam Menon, VC, Ambedkar University Delhi



NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

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UPCOMING EVENTS

- ▶ Lancet Early Childhood Development Series Launch Event
Oct 5 2016; To know more, write to LancetECD@gmmb.com
- ▶ Ensuring Foundation, Enhancing Learning : National Conference on School Readiness, Oct 20-21, 2016;
For more details, write to cecedconference@gmail.com



ECE: Why is it important? **Prof. Venita Kaul**

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) is important for overall development of the child and for school readiness. Specifically, the first six years of life are very 'critical' in a child's lifespan since the rate of development in these years is more rapid than at any other stage of development. Several critical periods for development of some important competencies in children are located in the first few years of life. For a child to develop to his/her full potential, a 'stimulating environment' is necessary during these critical years, which provides a child exposure and opportunities to experiment with a variety of experiences, objects and places and which serves as a foundation for their later learning and development.

It is unfortunate that a large percentage of our children are in school today in India, but they are not learning to read and write. Our research shows that a major factor is low levels of school readiness at five years due to lack of a conducive environment in the early years of life, which would enable them to develop necessary attitudes, behaviour and competencies that are known to prepare children for school.

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) can thus be a very important instrument for bridging the social equity gap. However, a good quality ECCE programme is an indispensable requirement as it must present stimulating experiences to the children that foster cognitive, language, physical, social and emotional development and provide a sound foundation for life long learning.

CECED's researches have elicited robust evidence of the impact of good quality ECCE and identified indicators of quality in this context that should be non-negotiable in any ECCE programme. India's **National Policy on ECCE (2013)** provides a National Curriculum framework and a set of Quality standards which provides a useful reference.

Our newsletter, '**EarlyScope**', provides a forum for ECCE professionals, practitioners and students to come together virtually and share and learn about this critical stage of human development since "*the first few years of life last a lifetime*" (Source: Anonymous).

Lets ensure we reach every child when it matters most!

Prof. Venita Kaul is the Director of CECED, Ambedkar University Delhi. She may be reached at: vkaul54@gmail.com

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GOVT. REAFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION POLICY

Government has reaffirmed its commitment to promote early childhood care and education by formulating and notifying National Early Childhood Care and Education policy.

The Government has notified the national 'Early Childhood Care and Education' (ECCE) policy which aims to achieve holistic development of children below six years of age, including those from the Muslim community. Union Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi made the statement while replying to a query about the Centre's reaction to a 2013-14 UNICEF Rapid Survey on Children (RSOC) that indicated 34 per cent and 25.6 per cent of Muslim and Christian children (below six years) respectively, do not attend pre-school.

"The government has reaffirmed its commitment to promote early childhood care and education by formulating and notifying National Early Childhood Care and Education policy," the Minister of State for Minority Affairs (Independent Charge) said.

"The vision of the national ECCE policy is to achieve holistic development and active learning capacity of all children below 6 years of age by promoting free, universal, inclusive, equitable, joyful and contextualized opportunities for laying foundation and attaining full potential," he said.

The ECCE is one of the six free services provided through Anganwadi centres located across the country under the Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS) scheme of Ministry of Women and Child Development. The ICDS is a universal self-selecting scheme available to all the beneficiaries who enrol at the Anganwadi centres irrespective of caste and religion, Naqvi said.

Source: BUSINESS STANDARD

TRIBES TO LEARN IN NATIVE TONGUE

In a move that would help plug loopholes in tribal education across the State, the Kerala State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (KSCPCR) has directed the Scheduled Tribes and Social Welfare Departments to strictly ensure imparting of learning process at anganwadis under the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme in respective tribal languages.

The move is aimed at ending the feeling of alienation among tribal children when they are initiated into the world of letters in Malayalam, which is an alien language to them. Commission member N. Babu, who acted on a petition filed by Rajendra Prasad of the Attappady-based tribal cultural organisation Thambu, has urged the State government to look into the possibilities of preferring tribal men and women as employees of ICDS centres in tribal regions.



Oral traditions

Only then would children grasp their culture at an early age apart from imbibing their agricultural and social traditions. Mr. Babu also wanted more efforts to help the tribal children preserve the oral language traditions of tribal community.

The move is in continuation of the pilot project in Attappady block last year. Titled **Early Childhood Curriculum Care and Education**, the pilot project was implemented in anganwadis in tribal areas. "Anganwadi teachers must be equipped to use languages of different tribal ethnic groups to impart pre-primary education," Mr. Babu said. "Across the State, teachers in anganwadis must be trained with the help of tribal village elders," Mr. Babu said.

Source: THE HINDU

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EVENT: Panel Discussion on "What Works in Girl's Education: Issues and Challenges"



Prof. Vimala Ramachandran

WHO SAID WHAT

"The larger educational and social climate of the country is favorable to girl's education. Girls in every corner of the country want to go to school, want to remain in school."

"Let's not make girl's education something of which only women are in-charge of, or mothers or girls are in-charge of, or the fathers are as responsible, as are the male teachers or the male principals."



Ms. Rina Ray, MHRD

"Investment in Girl's Education is the best investment because it promotes economic growth, improves wages, jobs, leads to healthier and small families, results in healthier and better educated children."



Prof. Rebecca Winthrop



Prof. Venita Kaul, CECED

"Girl's education needs to be thought about comprehensively and inter-sectorally because ECCE comes under the purview of MWCD but has implications for other sectors too being a social problem."

"No matter how great a figure we see for accessibility of schools, there are still many habitations in various parts of the country where the schools are not available even within the radius of 7km."



Mr. Dayaram



A panel discussion on the theme "What Works in Girl's Education: Issues and Challenges" was organized at the India International Center Annexe New Delhi, India on July 13, 2016 by CECED, AUD.

ISSUES ADDRESSED

The discussion began with a presentation by Prof. Rebecca Winthrop on "What Works in Girl's Education". The presentation by Prof. Winthrop was followed by discussion where Prof. Vimala Ramachandran explained that the larger educational and social climate of the country is favorable to girl's education. She told, from her experiences that girls in every corner of the country want to go to school, want to remain in school.

Prof. Venita Kaul said that under District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), there was a very effective coordination between the primary schools and Anganwadis in terms of relocation to primary schools and synchronised timings where girls could leave their younger siblings at Anganwadi centres and then go to school.

Ms. Rina Ray, Chair for the panel discussion and Additional Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy, MHRD reflected on the issues voiced by the experts. She said, "It is necessary to view the issues of boy's as well. Let's not make girl's education something of which only women are in-charge of, or mothers are in-charge of, or girls are in-charge of; the fathers are as responsible, as are the male teachers or the male principals."

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CHILD CARE ISN'T CHEAP

Clinton and Trump are both talking about child care without acknowledging that making it better takes money.

"We're going to help you balance family and work," declared Hillary Clinton in her recent speech accepting the Democratic presidential nomination. "And you know what, if fighting for affordable child care and paid family leave is playing the 'woman card,' then deal me in!" Clinton, a long-time advocate for children and families, isn't the only one talking child care, however. Introducing her father, Donald Trump, at the Republican convention, Ivanka Trump promised he would, "focus on making quality child care affordable and accessible for all."

Clinton's plan to cap the costs of child care at 10 percent of income would do much more to help families – particularly low-income families – than Trump's proposal to make child care costs tax deductible (which would do nothing for poor and working families with no federal income tax liability). Still, as someone who believes American society needs to do more to support families and children, I'm pleased to see child care getting attention from both sides of the aisle in this campaign season.

In Washington, D.C., the average cost of center-based childcare for an infant exceeds \$22,000 a year. Many middle-class families spend more on child care than they do on their mortgages. The burden on poor families is even greater, consuming more than one-third of their monthly incomes. Yet while many families struggle with child care costs, what they pay often falls short of the true costs to care for young children well. Child care providers – often small businesses and nonprofit organizations – face a knotty financial challenge. The real problem is not that child care costs too much, but that we as a society have failed to acknowledge that caring for children is demanding, labor-intensive and therefore, costly. For most of human history these costs have been hidden by the oppression of women, whether through social norms that restricted them to the home sphere and excluded them from broader economic life, or, worse, the coerced and uncompensated labor of enslaved women.

The hard reality is that giving all our children quality care that supports their development and prepares them to succeed in school requires someone – whether parents, government, or someone else – to spend much more on young children than we currently do. I'm thrilled that Clinton and Trump both want to talk about helping families pay for care. I just wish they'd also acknowledge the need to make childcare not just cheaper, but better.



Source: www.usnews.com

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