PLAY (FOR CREATIVITY): IMPLICATIONS FOR QUALITY PRACTICE

PROF HB EBRAHIM
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FARM INN PRETORIA
STRUCTURE

• **Play – the home for creativity**
• **Play and creative learning**
• Modes of play
• NCF as a map for play pedagogy
• Way forward and initiative
PLAY IS THE HOME FOR CREATIVITY

• Allows for exploration and discovery – finding out the characteristics of objects and the environment
• Motivates inventiveness through imaginary thinking – make something novel
• Builds playfulness – spontaneity, openness, communication, emotional expressiveness, curiosity, joyfulness
• Encourages self-regulation – controls thoughts, emotions and the behaviour

(Sluss 2005, Palaiologou 2010)
PLAY AND CREATIVE LEARNING

DOING PHASE OF CREATIVE LEARNING
(Cutler 2005)

- Identifying problems
- Refinement – practice, repetition and fine tuning
- Divergent thinking
- Co-learning with peers and adults
- Skills and intellectual and emotional stretch
- Risk taking
- Fascination

ECD Knowledge Building Seminar 25 -26 November 2015 (© Author(s) of this presentation)
MODES OF PLAY TO ENHANCE DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

• **MODE A** – Child-initiated free play (Child dictates the learning agenda and adults respond)

• **MODE B** – Adult-guided (Practitioners sensitive to playful learning in structured play environments)

• **MODE C** - Technicist - Curriculum Generated Educational Play (Prescribed Aims/Goals/Outcomes become a focus) (Woods 2013, Johnson 2013)

Main issue here is how to integrate children’s agendas for their learning with practitioners aims for their learning. CREATE OVERLAPS
NCF AS A MAP FOR PLAY PEDAGOGY

• Play is reformulated within a policy-driven tool for practice for birth to four.
• Play features as a key principle for practice. The child’s voice is foregrounded in the introduction to all the ELDAs.
• Play must be linked to (23) aims of the ELDAs.
• Details in the ELDAs will tell you what kind of learning is needed.
• Practitioners will be required to plan integrated learning through play and assessment with aims of the ELDAs in mind.
NCF AND CHALLENGES FOR PLAY IN PRACTICE

• More policy compliance – highly likely to have more shift from child-initiated play to formal adult-initiated activities.

• There is a risk of thinking that children need to play less and develop more skills to be school ready – subject focused = early literacy and mathematics.

• Children’s free play agendas will be sidelined if they are not in keeping with aims of the ELDAs – creative development is likely to be stifled.

( Brooker et al. 2013, Woods 2013)
WAY FORWARD

Teacher education for an un-underqualified workforce for birth to four must focus on:

• Developing a **content-base** about play for high quality practice.

• Helping practitioners (through child development studies) to adjust their image of the child – not as an object of the NCF aims but a **playing learning child with vulnerabilities** in the South African context (Pramling 2006, 2012)

• Developing play pedagogies for **not only school readiness but for lifelong learning** - must take into account children’s prior knowledge, interests, enquires and experiences in adult-guided ways.
INITIATIVE FOR CHANGING PRACTICE
UNISAs NEW SHORT COURSE ON EARLY LEARNING SUPPORT (ELS) – BIRTH TO FIVE

2 Modules

Module 1 - Understanding child development and barriers to learning

Module 2 - Supporting early care and education

• 6 months
• Level 5
• Begins January 2016