

Introduction

LLP Projekt ECI2.0

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This module includes materials a) how to foster the development of children (age 0-3) in a family-oriented way and how to accompany parents and b) guidelines for professionals



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Introduction to this manual

Prof. Dr. Manfred Pretis

The material presented here has been created by the European project ECI 2.0 and can be used by both parents and professionals. Parents will find helpful support and suggestions for activities, which can easily be transferred to the home context. Please remember to be aware of your child's individual developmental pace and adapt any support sensitively. You will read about certain developmental milestones that children reach at particular periods of their life. This usually refers to the child's developmental age, however in some cases it is not equal to the child's age. For example, the gestational age of children born prematurely may seem higher than their developmental age.

This also applies to children with developmental delays, where the child's age might not always correspond with their developmental age. Nevertheless, it is recognized that most children follow a similar development trajectory and this is presented in the following material.

Of course, every area of development is strongly (inter)connected with other developmental domains (e.g. mind, motion, speech or self-sufficiency), and this is particularly so during early childhood. However, in the material that follows, we categorize areas of child development into specific developmental domains to make it easier, especially for parents, to provide more effective play.

What you need to know

The rate at which a child's development takes place may differ from child to child and there can also be differences within the child, with each developmental domain developing differently. For example, if a child's motor skills seem to be improving, other domains may appear to "rest", or progress more slowly.

Therefore, it may be important for parents to receive support or ideas for play that are tailored to the child's current needs. Your child may not like certain games or developmental domains. If this is the case, feel free to provide different activities. These materials are not supposed to force you into a certain play situation, but rather give you suggestions that can be adapted to your liking.

Each support or play situation should be exciting for you and your child. You should first and foremost create a pleasant experience with your child and this will enable you to promote his development at the same time.

Professionals may find this manual useful for developing training materials and training scenarios, which can be used in different support units for individual families. This approach is theoretically based upon models of responsive and empathetic training. You are provided with an approach which views the child as actively exploring and influencing its environment. Parents should be responsive and sensitive partners and receive guidance on how to use this material to identify, interpret and react promptly to the learning needs of their child.

This manual is not intended to be used to monitor your child's development or predict their developmental age. Procedures of developmental psychology are far more useful for this. Instead, this manual may be used by professionals to discuss and explain play and support scenarios with parents and explain the theoretical background appropriately. Therefore, there is a dual-purpose here: on the one hand, our ideas can be used as guidelines and support for parents; on the other hand, they can initiate discussion for both parents and professionals.

Target groups

Families and professionals involved in Early Intervention

Families and professionals involved in Early Support

Families in Nursery and Kindergarten settings

Professionals in Children's Centres

Professionals in Developmental Psychology Information Centers.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact: Prof. Dr. Manfred Pretis
(manfred.pretis@medicalschoo-hamburg.de OR office@sinn-evaluation.at)