



Summary to date on the Case Study Impact Report

<http://www.toddlerswellbeing.eu/>

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The aims of the Case Study Impact Report are to:

The Case Study Impact Report will explore the impact that the ToWe Project has had upon the Early Years Practitioners in relation to their practice in supporting disadvantaged toddlers.

The Case Study Impact Report concentrates on specific instances, situations and identifies the interactive processes at work during the project. The impact assessment addresses the following:

- How has the project supported Early Years Practitioners' knowledge and understanding of disadvantaged toddlers?
- How has the project equipped Early Years Practitioners with a range of tools to identify strategies to enhance toddlers' wellbeing?
- How have the Continuing Professional Development opportunities (training and job shadowing), focus group and discussion forum been effective in sharing practice and enhancing Early Years Practitioners' skills?
- How has the project impacted and influenced the Early Years Practitioners' provision and practice in supporting the wellbeing of disadvantaged toddlers?



Why is the impact important?

- It is about providing a positive vision for early years practitioners.
- Looking forward develop future provision in support toddlers' wellbeing.
- Through reflection, engagement, empathy and encouragement and a shared approach.

'The foundations for virtually every aspect of human development – physical, intellectual and emotional – are laid in early childhood. What happens during these early years (starting in the womb) has lifelong effects on many aspects of health and well-being– from obesity, heart disease and mental health, to educational achievement and economic status'

(Marmot, 2010:16).

Methodology

The ToWe project followed an interpretative qualitative paradigm with early years' practitioners applying an action research model of observe, reflect, act, evaluate; to modify, investigate, explore and evaluate their own practice and development of solutions and strategies to support and improve provision for disadvantaged toddlers.

Qualitative and Quantitative Data gathered through:

- Questionnaires
- 3 Focus Group Interviews
- Online reflective discussion fora
- Group reflective sessions

Case Study Impact Report uses a case study methodology complementing the action research of the early years practitioners enabling investigation of the impact of the project by the Universities on early years practitioners provision and practice.

Focus Groups

3 focus groups interviews were held with each countries early years practitioners in:

- May 2016
- November 2016
- July 2017

- Recognition of good practice and areas for improvement
- Introduction of new resources to support toddlers independence at mealtimes
- Good feedback from colleagues to recommend changes to other settings

Key themes were identified within each focus group and the strategies introduced and the impact they had on Toddlers, Practitioners and Parents.

Example of the Impact

England:

An example of the impact of the project was the development and changes made to the snack time routine at the Children's Centres. Child friendly serrated knives were purchased so that the toddlers could individually cut up their own fruit safely. Early years' practitioners and teachers noted that the toddlers' really enjoyed the snack time, as it promoted independence skills and learning opportunities.



Example of the Impact



Norway:

An example of the impact of the project was that it was noted by the pre-school early years' practitioners and teachers that the toddlers moving up to the pre-school room were demonstrating good independence skills and confidence, as the children were asking where to dispose of the food waste after meal times. So much so, the pre-school staff started to call these children the 'ToWe children' 'because of the skills they had learned, the positive interaction between them and the wellbeing that the staff saw'

Example of the Impact

Spain:

An example of the impact of the project was that through continuous reflection, entrenched practice and 'poor' habits were identified and discussed recognising these attitudes and developing strategies to improve practice.



Job Shadowing and the Shared Experience

This involved two early years' practitioners from each partner country, spending 5 days in each other's settings. The programme included:

- a taught session, from each university partner, on their country's educational system and curriculum
- observing each other's practice to gain a better understanding of the role of the early years' practitioners in relation to the country's educational system, curriculum and provision
- gaining a better knowledge and understanding of how the early years' practitioners are supporting toddlers' wellbeing through the different materials, tools and strategies in relation to the ToWe Projects Intellectual Outputs.



Job Shadowing and the Shared Experience



England:

When the children transition from inside to outside in England, there is often a rush to get shoes and coats on, and the practitioners and parents will often step in to help. In Norway I saw that extra time is factored in to the routine, so children can get ready independently. Some are able to dress themselves from a very young age and I saw a 14 month old girl put on her waterproof overalls all by herself. When I got back to my setting I made sure that I shared this experience with the parents, and tried to convey the value of giving children time to do things independently.



Norway:

At the “Little explorer session” there were families that were invited. We thought that the practitioners role in this session was challenging because there were so many disadvantaged children with parents that needed much guidance. We observed that the practitioner and the volunteer were being good role models for how the parents could interact with their children in a supporting and developing way during the session. The snack time was prepared and arranged in a way that guided the parents on how to support and encourage their child's independence during meal times, they used ToWe-strategies.



Spain:

I took the decision to travel to Norway and the UK, and what surprised me the most was to



find out that such different countries followed the same standards. I mean that in all the services you could feel the **WELL-BEING** of children, **RESPECT**, care during the **MEALS**, the observation and importance of the **PLAY**, **ACCEPTANCE AND WORK WITH DIFFERENT LANGUAGES**. But I think what was most clear was the willingness to **IMPROVE OUR PRACTICE** giving priority to the children's **WELFARE**, offering them the best environment for their development with their individual needs.

What Next?

Schools and Settings developing:

- An open dialogue of reflective sharing of experiences and expertise.
- Knowledge and understanding of wellbeing, to inform and improve own and others practice and provision.
- Relationships with parents to support their understanding of how to engage with their toddler.

Every high income country invests in its children: healthy, educated children are better able to fulfil their potential and contribute to society. By contrast, problems of child development often carry through into adulthood, with the resulting social costs accruing to the next generation (UNICEF, 2017: 4).

How can you use the manuals, audit tools and strategies from the ToWe Project to support early years practitioners in enabling them to be reflective, inspired and innovative in their practice and provision of supporting toddlers' wellbeing?

Reflections from:

Sílvia Turmo from Petita Escola, Barcelona, Cataluña.

Rachel Lazarides from Kew, Mortlake, Barnes and East Sheen Children's Centres, Achieving for Children, Kingston and Richmond Children's Services



Sílvia Turmo



Rachel Lazarides

Reflections from a manager's perspective: Strategies

- Giving practitioners increased **opportunities to shadow and observe** the practice of others and themselves. CPD
- Ensuring that **concrete examples of good practice** and understanding are **highlighted and celebrated** so that staff are feeling confident and positive when analysing their own practice.
- Using the '**mantle of the expert**' to engage staff in self-reflection...and showing them that as a manager 'I' value this.



Reflections from a manager's perspective:

Impact on the toddlers:

- **Consistency** is essential to wellbeing for young children. To achieve consistency between adults in a toddler's life is inherently beneficial to their wellbeing. *Improvement across all dimensions*
- Therefore **all adults in and connected to the setting need to be involved in reflection** on the impact of our practice for toddlers WB.



Reflections from a manager's perspective impact on parents

In contrast to nurseries parents stay with their children when attending the Children's Centre, therefore there is scope to **involve them as practitioners**, and encourage them to reflect on how they support their child's wellbeing. This has the **potential to impact long term**. Parenting courses provide an environment in which parents are encouraged to **reflect on their practice, and share useful tools**. The team can consider ways to extend this and create a similar safe opportunities for sharing and reflection within Stay and Play sessions, perhaps evaluating sessions collectively, or 1:1 when updating a child's learning journey.



Reflections from a manager's perspective impact on staff

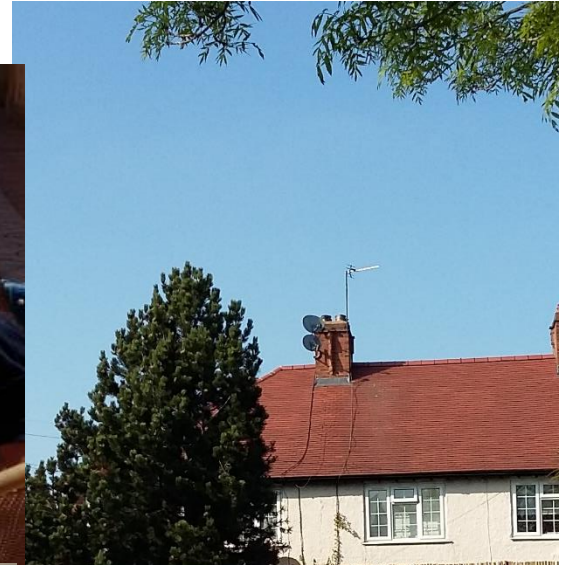
The experience of job shadowing highlighted the importance of time for reflection, but also the value of having the opportunity to do this formally and informally. **Audits and recording tools help to promote** and give status to the process, however there needs to be capacity for individuals to have other informal and more frequent opportunities alongside these: **simply sharing ideas over lunch, or going for a walk to think, so that reflection becomes embedded, intrinsic to everyday delivery.**



Learn



Reflect... and learn more



Why?



To develop we need what the children
need



**SAFE
SPACE**



Reciprocal reflection



**El primer síntoma de que estem
matant els nostres somnis és la
falta de temps**

(Coelho)



References

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?Questions to the Partners?



Thank you for attending today

I hope that today has inspired you to reflect and consider how you can use the materials and strategies that have been developed by the ToWe Project partners to encourage early years practitioners in supporting and developing toddlers wellbeing.

