

An examination of the role and responsibilities of kindergarten in multidisciplinary collaboration on behalf of children with severe disabilities ^[1]

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Source: Journal of Research in Childhood Education

Format: Article

Publication Date: 15 Jun 2014

AVAILABILITY

Full article available upon request ^[2]

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the role and responsibilities of Norwegian kindergarten (i.e., preschool for ages 0-6 years) from the perspective of participants involved in multidisciplinary collaboration on behalf of children with severe disabilities and their families. The authors employed a multiple-case study approach comprising 26 interviews across six cases. Findings suggest that kindergarten is considered an important partner for families and a major contributor to the provision of services. Kindergartens were valued for their (1) close relationships and intimate knowledge of children as individuals, (2) the sense of security and relief of stress that they provided to parents, and (3) for acting as a "driving force" in multidisciplinary collaboration. Findings are discussed in relation to two contrasting views of the kindergarten professional as an early childhood expert and as a compassionate caregiver who, in many ways, functions as an extension of the parental role. The authors conclude that it is the latter of these two perspectives that dominates perceptions of kindergarten professionals among participants.

Region: Europe ^[3]

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