

# Building a firm foundation for lifelong learning: The importance of early childhood education and care <sup>[1]</sup>

Childcare Resource and Research Unit


6 Feb 2002

2pp

In the 21st century, new technologies, rapid globalization, a shift away from traditional employment patterns and recognition that ongoing renewal of knowledge and skills is essential have contributed to a new emphasis on "lifelong learning". There is general agreement that strategies for lifelong learning should incorporate a "cradle to grave" or life-cycle approach so that a continuum of learning encompasses early childhood through youth, the working years and the senior years.

This BRIEFing NOTE shows why early childhood education and care (ECEC) is vital to any successful strategy for lifelong learning and highlights the characteristics that are needed in ECEC to contribute to lifelong learning.

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