

Integration for a change: How can integration of services for kindergarten-aged children be achieved? ^[1]

Discussion paper

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AVAILABILITY

Paper in pdf ^[2]

Excerpts from the discussion paper:

The Integration Network Project was established to address one of the critical issues in the development of Early Childhood Education and Care in Canada today: the abrupt division for kindergarten-age children between "care" programs in child care centres and "education" in public kindergarten. The Project's focus is on seeking effective solutions to the problems and issues facing parents of kindergarten-age children.

It is recognized that any model for care and education of young children must take into account the need to link with BOTH an early learning and care system for children from 0 to 6 as well as to the compulsory education system. Any restructuring of programs for kindergarten-age children must occur within the context of improvements to the entire system.

This paper explores some of the policy solutions to overcome the complex problems of disruption and inconsistency inhibiting the healthy development of children; the insecurity, inconvenience and stress for parents; the problems of status and salary differentials for teachers and caregivers; and the problems of duplication, policy inconsistency and inappropriate resource allocation for governments. It will review the context within which the problems exist. It will then review selected characteristics of program models in other OECD countries. The paper will then focus on proposing a vision and some policy options to achieve change.

The kinds of questions to think about include:

- What does a Seamless Day mean to you? What types of services would be available for kindergarten-age children in a seamless day model?
- How should integrated programs be financed? Who should pay? In what proportions?
- Should an integrated program retain the staff:child ratios of the Education System, the child care system, or should new staff:ratios be introduced? Are there other regulations that need to be addressed in an integrated system?
- What would an integrated system mean for the curriculum or program guidelines?
- Should the workforce be integrated or continue to be divided? If integrated, who will be the 'core' profession. (for example, a teacher, an early childhood educator or a new profession embodying teaching and early childhood education?)
- Should there be different levels of professionals (e.g. early education teacher and assistant early educator)?
- What kind of qualifications and training should professionals working in integrated programs have? Degrees? Diplomas? A mixture?
- What kind of research would be appropriate to conduct in relation to "integration" systems? - Which Ministry/Department should have overall responsibility in an integrated system? What safeguards would you suggest?

Region: Canada ^[3]

Tags: kindergarten ^[4]

staff ^[5]

integration ^[6]

school system ^[7]

curricula and pedagogy ^[8]

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Links

^[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/05/07/integration-change-how-can-integration-services> ^[2]

http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/atkinson/UserFiles/File/Resources_Topics/Resources_Topics_SeamlessDay/IntegrationColley06.pdf ^[3]

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