

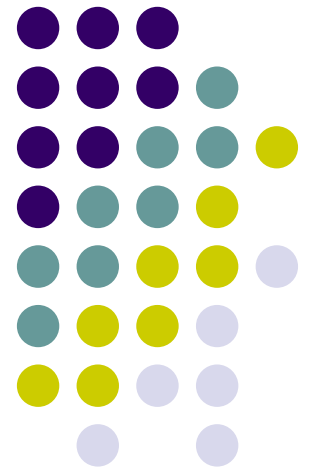
# Policy Matters: Reevaluating the Meaning of Inclusion and Equity

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Moving Beyond Quality

Jane Beach

Halifax 2007



# Moving beyond quality



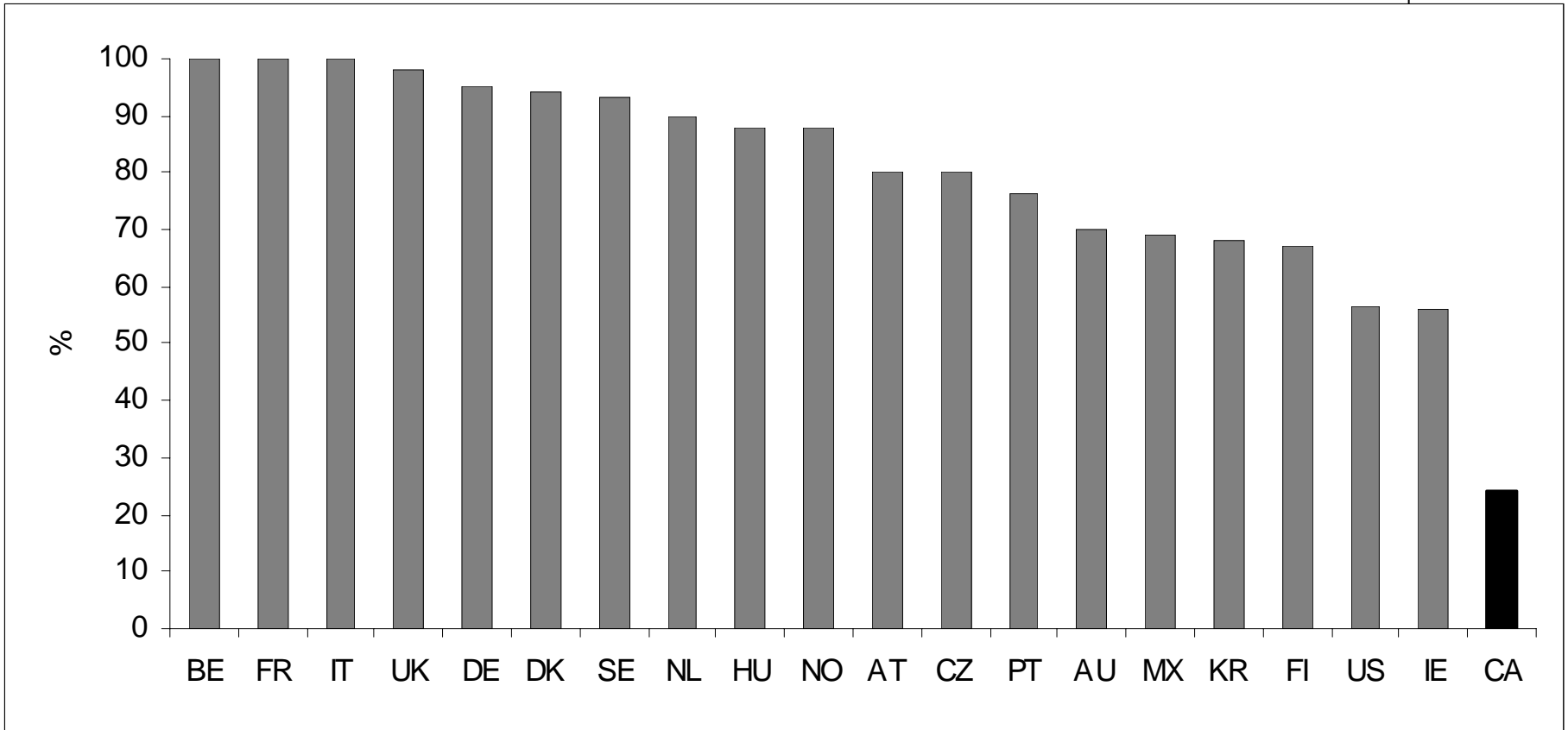
- Can you move beyond quality when there is little experience of it?
- If quality is defined broadly to include diversity of ideas/values and democratic participation, is it a useful construct?
- Can there be inclusion and equity without quality?
- Can there be quality within a market and privatized system?
- Is “not quality” a useful concept?

# Moving beyond quality



- Within the Canadian context of a weak ECEC system, how do we bridge the need for meaningful dialogue on ideas and values for children, and for early childhood provision with the need for a “material framework?”

# The Canadian context: rate of access to ECEC programs for 3-6 year olds



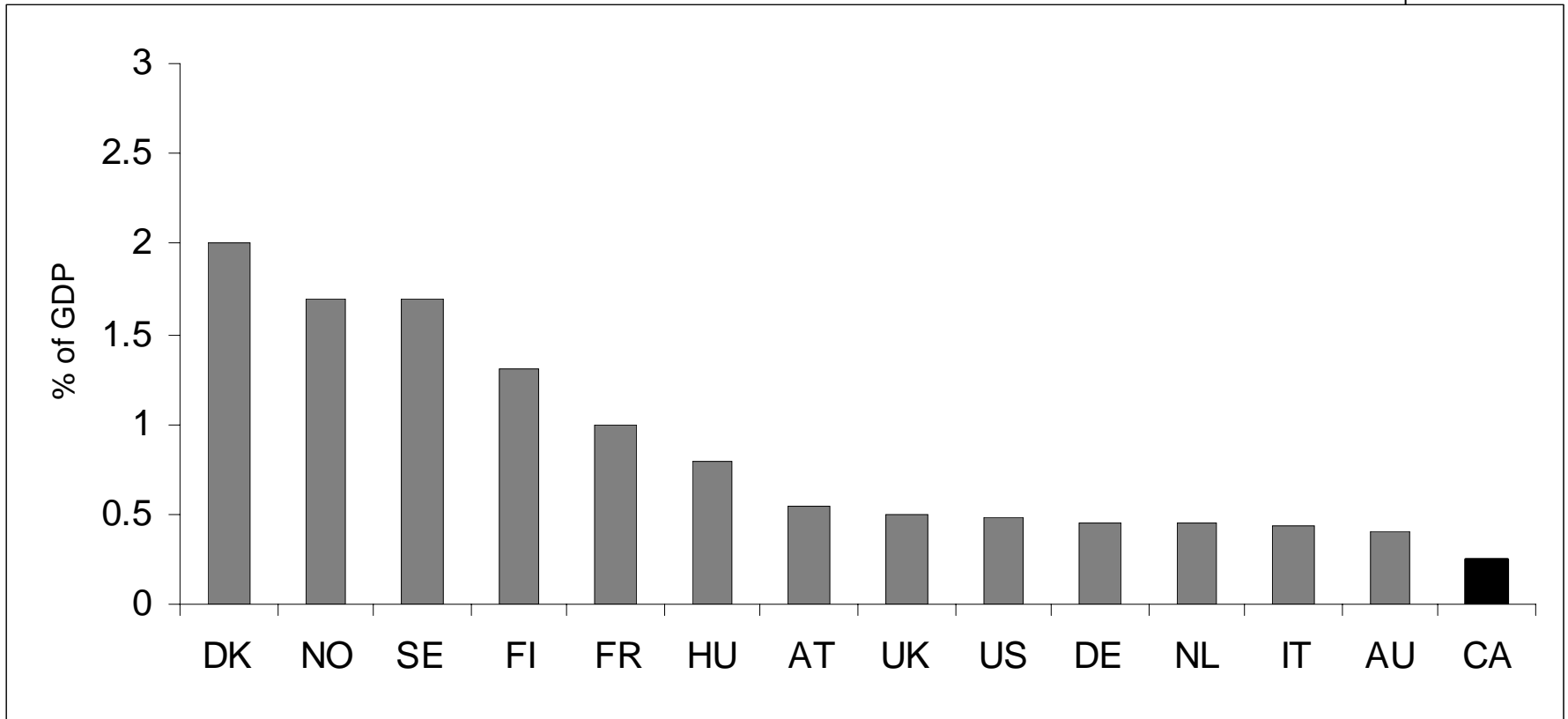
Data source: OECD. (2006). *Starting Strong II: Early Childhood Education and Care. Country Profiles.*

AU, CZ, FI, HU, NL, UK – Estimated (averaged across ages 3-6)

DE – Estimated (averaged across ABL and NBL)

CA – Children 0-6 in child care including regulated family day care

# Spending on ELCC programs: How does Canada compare?



Data source: OECD. (2006). *Starting Strong II: Early Childhood Education and Care*. Annex C, pg. 246.

# Among OECD recommendations for Canada...



- Develop a national quality framework for early childhood services across all sectors, and the infrastructure at the provincial level to ensure effective implementation
- Link accreditation of services to structural requirements and the achievement of quality targets
- Review ECEC professional profiles, improve recruitment levels and strengthen the initial and inservice training of staff



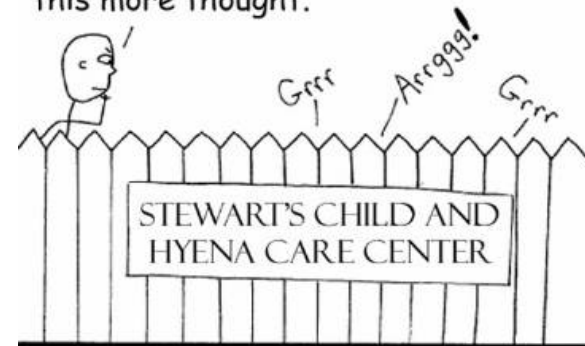
## Views of the ECEC shaped by...

- Values and history
- Social, economic and political context
- Conception of childhood -“adults-in-training” or “child as citizen”
- Ideas about purpose of ECEC
  - parental employment
  - women’s equality
  - poverty reduction
  - child development
  - school readiness, etc.

# The Current Climate: ECEC under siege



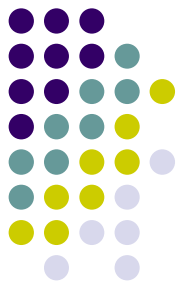
I should have given this more thought.



[www.reodorant.com](http://www.reodorant.com)

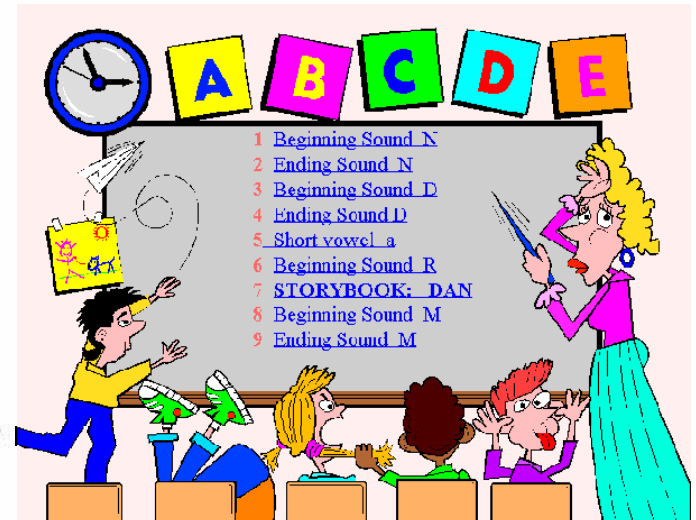
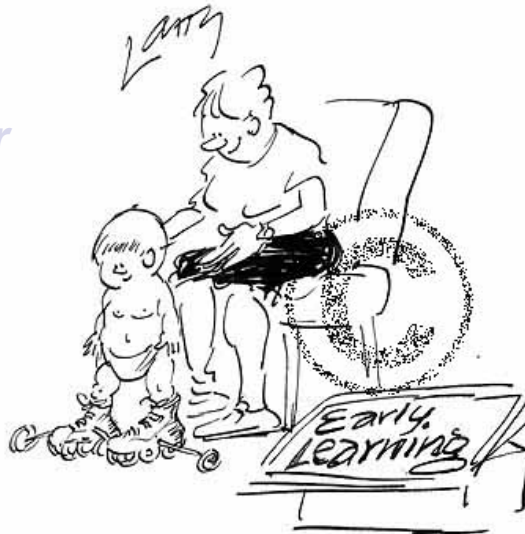


# Is there a concept of “not quality?”



*Before the ABCs:  
Promoting  
School  
Readiness  
in Infants  
and  
Toddlers*

*How to  
SUCCESSFULLY  
Potty Train your  
child in five hours or  
less - even if your  
child is resistant*



# Moving forward



- A systems approach to provision
- Goals, targets and timetables to increase access
- Support for and value of a well educated workforce
- A universal approach to provision, with additional supports that support equity
- Dependable infrastructure
- Closer links with the education system
- Integrated care, education and parenting supports

# Defining Quality is a Process



- Quality is a relative concept, based on values and beliefs;
  - Process of defining quality is important in its own right;
  - Process should be continuous and democratic
- (Balaguer, 2004)

# Quality ECEC...what do we know?



- About quality at the system level
  - International policy research and analyses
    - EU Childcare Network Quality targets
    - OECD - Thematic Review (*Starting Strong I and II*)
    - Policy researchers – Moss, Penn, Bennett
    - Barcelona targets
    - UNICEF indicators

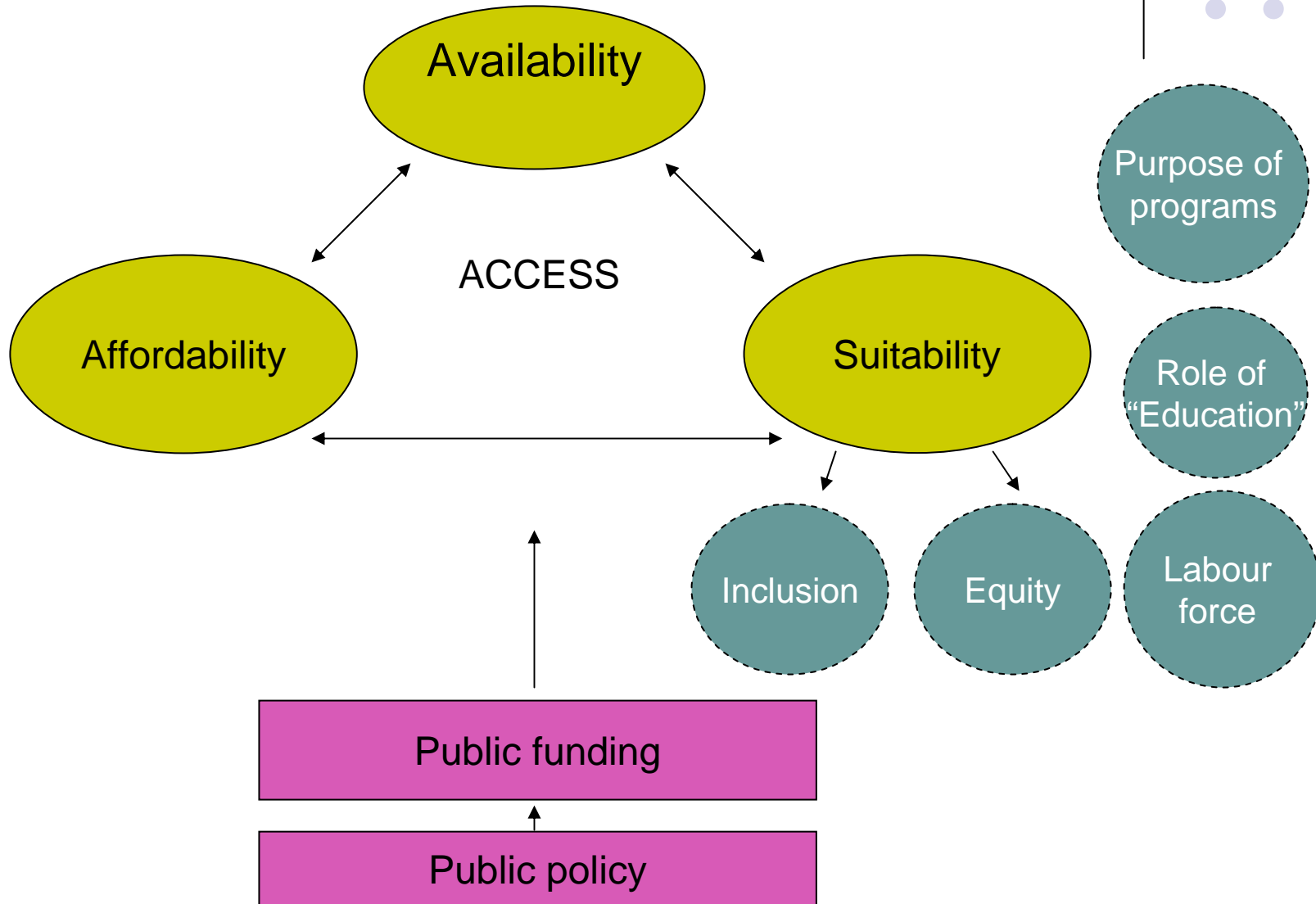


# Ideas About Quality

Ideas about quality in ELCC vary according to

- Values and beliefs
- Purposes
- Conception of childhood
- Perspectives (from whose point of view?)
- Social, economic and political context

# Can there be quality with little access?





# Quality issues

Eight elements support a quality ELCC system

- Ideas
- Governance
- Infrastructure
- Planning and policy development
- Financing
- Human resources
- Physical environment
- Research and data collection

Elements need to be taken into account together

*Quality by Design*

# Moving beyond quality



- Something to aspire to
- Our understandings of quality are shaped by our experience of what we know
- In Canada need to engage in ongoing meaningful dialogue
- We need first to:
  - raise our expectations of what is possible
  - move beyond narrow regulatory framework as a proxy for quality
  - ensure the “material framework” is a foundation upon which to build



