Childcare

Challenges of Early Childhood Education
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Dear Readers,

There is no doubt about it: intergenerational ties matter. They are at the heart of family life but they also matter in institutional settings of childcare and education. They are an important dimension of neighbourhoods, communities, and societies. They are essential for bringing up the next generation and caring for the elderly. They provide the foundation for first attachments in early childhood, for teaching and learning, and for passing on cultural traditions. And they can go wrong.

This perspective provides the broad framework for the different contributions published in this volume. A wide range of issues is covered, but they all relate to intergenerational relations. This holds most clearly for the contribution by Thomas Olk which focuses on changes in intergenerational relationships in Germany. Much of the recent public discussion in the media has addressed the likely costs of the demographic change. Public discourse articulates worries about the future of our pension and health care systems as well as concerns about the political visibility and power of the younger generation, given their decreasing share in the population eligible for voting. And much of this has been framed as paving the path for intergenerational conflict.

Fortunately, the story to be told about intergenerational relations within families is quite positive overall. Empirical evidence from large surveys – including the integrated survey »AID:A« of the German Youth Institute – points to considerable solidarity between generations. Yet, as pointed out, we must also be aware of the larger context of generational relations at the macro-level as framed and shaped by policy. This issue is picked up by two further contributions in this volume. Thomas Rauschenbach highlights the strong increase in public investments in young children, most notably seen in the expansion of childcare for children below the age of three. As he points out, estimates of demand for early childcare had to be corrected up, yielding higher percentages. Yet, it is still unclear how the ambitious aims in policy can be reached, given the high demand for trained personnel in early childcare.

What public childcare may look like in the domain of language and music training for young children, is nicely illustrated by Anne Zehnbauer and Petra Best. They focus on the role of singing, rhymes, and rhythm in the everyday learning and practicing of important competences. Furthermore, they discuss children’s use of photography in trying to capture their experiences and views.

Finally, two contributions discuss issues of prevention. Heinz Kindler foregrounds a prominent issue in current debates: the options for preventing sexual abuse of children. As he points out, current approaches principally address children directly, seeking to strengthen their awareness of risky situations and their ability to defend themselves against possible abuse. Also therapeutic approaches have been developed to work with those who are, themselves, at risk for committing abuse. Some of these approaches particularly target adolescents – a long overlooked group of possible perpetrators in sexual violence. Most likely, neither of these approaches can stand alone, but at present we still need much better evidence from evaluation research of whether, how, and for whom these approaches work.

Finally, Bernd Holthusen and colleagues raise more general issues of prevention, highlighting the challenging demands involved: defining the proper target of prevention, arriving at solid predictions for future trajectories in individual development, and knowing and mastering appropriate and promising strategies for avoiding the unwanted. None of this can be achieved without solid knowledge about developmental trajectories and their underlying »mechanisms«, based in the interplay of multiple developmental contexts and individual self-regulation. This requires high-quality research which is often still lacking. But it also requires a reflective discussion about what aims to pursue. And the authors make a second point: Targeting increasingly early age groups for primary prevention goes along with a stronger emphasis on universal approaches, seeking to strengthen children’s competences more generally. It may seem arbitrary whether we label such approaches preventive or educational, since in fact they are both. Still, the more positive perspective on personal development captured in an educational view has clear advantages: Not only does it help avoid stigmatization of the mostly young and still developing participants. It also seems to reflect more appropriately what these programs provide: developing participants. It also seems to reflect more appropriately what these programs seek to achieve: long-term, positive development which capitalizes on resourcefulness. Making wise, sustainable investments in this aim is clearly an ambitious but compelling collective responsibility for the next generation’s well-being. Enjoy reading!

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Research Director of the German Youth Institute

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Between Conflict and Solidarity

On the Transformation of Generational Relationships in Modern Society

By Thomas Olk
The relationships between the generations have changed fundamentally in Germany. The demographic development in our society is characterized by the quantitative shift between the population groups of the »young« and the »old«: the population is aging. This feeds a fear of an impending war between the generations. This article shows that at the interpersonal level, the relationships between people of different generations are not so negative. However, at the societal level the situation is more problematic. The growing number of older people appears to support the redistribution of resources at the expense of the younger generation. This is especially true for the area of welfare state benefits. While the older generation is relatively secure financially (especially for their retirement), younger generations must resign themselves to significantly lower retirement benefits. How do the chances really look for the current generation of children and youth? What kind of interdependence exists between the implied societal contract between generations (which has thus far received the most attention), the area of family support relationships, and the implied private contract between generations?

Understanding the Concept of »Generations«

The concept of generations plays an important role in different social science disciplines. Indeed, there have been significant changes in the relationships between minors and adults, such as the increased importance given to the role of children and youth as well as the relativization of the higher knowledge advantage of adults. Nonetheless, the concept of generations has been and remains a central basis of theory development and research in pedagogy (Liegle 2011). Education always takes place between the generations. There is a process of institutionalization of childhood and youth as a period of education and socialization. Also the transmission of cultural heritage takes place in the succession of generations.

Generation is a basic concept in sociology as well (Kohli 2009). The fundamental fact of biological development and decline begs the central question for the reproduction of society: How can continuity be ensured for the succession of generations? How can cultural traditions be transmitted? How does the succession of generations affect societal change? How do different generations distinguish themselves from one another? In order to be able to answer these central questions of the sociology of generations, two levels of analysis must be differentiated (Kaufmann 1993): On the macro-level (societal level) the focus is on generational relationships, that is, the relationships between large groups of society which belong to different generations. On the micro-level the focus is on the configuration of relationships between members of different generations, for instance, the relationships between parents and children, pupils and teachers.

Good Relationships between Children, Parents and Grandparents

An important area of generational relationships centres upon the family relationships between children, parents, and grandparents. Despite the transformation of inner-familial relationships, there is little evidence for the mentioned war of generations. Most people have close contact with different generations of their family and find that they give dependable support. In addition, the increased life expectancy enables more overlapping time alive. This increases also the potential of intergenerational life together. As the German Center of Gerontology's Ageing Survey shows, today four out of five people between the ages of 40 and 85 have children, 40 per cent have grandchildren (Motel-Klingelbiel et al. 2010).

The relationships between parents and their children these days are usually very positive. They can be described as cooperative and relaxed (Shell Deutschland Holding 2010). The proportion of those youths, who say that they would like to raise their children exactly as or similarly to how they, themselves, were raised, rose between 1985 and 2010 from 53 to 73 per cent. This shows that there is a high level of agreement between parents and children in their basic values and norms for parenting.

If one asks about the relationship to one's parents, however, one can observe class-specific differences. While still 67 per cent of the youth from the lower middle-class state that they get along very well with their parents, only 40 per cent of youth
from the lower class say this (Shell Deutschland Holding 2010). One can assume that the youth hold their parents responsible to a certain degree for their difficult material situation.

Despite More Difficult Basic Conditions, the Level of Inner-familial Support is Still Very High

The basic conditions for the relationships between generations have significantly changed in the last years. The distances between their places of residence have increased due to job-related mobility. As the findings of the German Youth Institute’s Survey AID:A indicate, 24.8 per cent of all grandparents live in the same household as their grandchildren or in their immediate neighbourhood. 53.7 per cent live up to an hour’s drive away, 21.5 per cent even further. The residential distances depend strongly upon the educational level of the people surveyed. A higher education correlates with a higher probability that the adult children would move further away from their parents. For instance, of those adult children with a university degree, only 16.5 per cent live in the immediate neighbourhood of their parents. Of those with only a basic certificate of secondary education, 33.7 per cent do.

Living further away does not, however, worsen the quality of the relationships between grandparents, parents, and children. The German Ageing Survey indicates a continued high frequency of contact and relationship intensity between adult children and their parents. Most parents have contact with their adult children at least one time per week. Also being a grandparent has a high subjective significance; most find it important to be a grandparent (Motel-Klingelbiel et al. 2010).

The German Ageing Survey and the DJI-Survey AID:A strikingly illustrate that the members of different generations support each other in the family context (DJI 2010). They differentiate between the support with money and with personal help. If one looks at the support relationships between the grandparent generation and other generations, it appears that
grandparents support their adult children primarily with money. Also grandchildren increasingly receive financial gifts (Motel-Klingelbiel et al. 2010). These financial flows move in the opposite direction of the societal generational contracts, where-in the financial means of the middle generation (the employed) are redistributed to the older one (retired people). The personal (instrumental) support is different. It is especially the younger family members and especially women who help their parents or grandparents with housekeeping or physical care. However, due to the spatial distance and increased employment of women and older people, this kind of support is becoming increasingly difficult and therefore also less common.

Grandparents are also still involved in the care of their grandchildren. The Survey AID:A shows that more than a third of the children of care-relevant age were taken care of by their grandparents in the last weeks before the questionnaire, whereby the main focus was on children under three years old (DJI 2010). However, the German Ageing Survey indicates that since 1996 the proportion of grandparents that take care of their grandchildren sank from about a third to a fourth (Motel-Klingelbiel et al. 2010). This is due to increasing living distances from one another, the expansion of public childcare, as well as the ever-growing tendency of the grandparent-generation to stay employed for a longer period of time.

In sum, the societal generational contract is a basic condition making possible that private financial flows can move from the older generation to the next, younger generation. If retirement pensions are reduced, then the private generational contract is also affected. This especially affects those that have a low retirement pension; they will have to be the first to limit transferring money to their families.

The Generation Policies of the Welfare State

Ever since Karl Mannheim (1928) published his fundamental works on the concept of generations, it is known that particular economic, political and cultural structures can constitute generations. As such, people speak of the »Economic Wonder Generation«, the »War Generation«, or the »Sceptical Generations«. With the expansion of the welfare system, the state can identify the following »welfare state generations« (Leisering 2010). These financial flows move in the opposite direction of the societal generational contracts, where-in the financial means of the middle generation (the employed) are redistributed to the older one (retired people). The personal (instrumental) support is different. It is especially the younger family members and especially women who help their parents or grandparents with housekeeping or physical care. However, due to the spatial distance and increased employment of women and older people, this kind of support is becoming increasingly difficult and therefore also less common.

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The Development of the Population

The illustration shows the development of the population in Germany. The proportion of people over 65 (green line) is increasing, while the proportion of young people is decreasing.

The welfare state constitutes three generational groups: the generation of children, of employed adults, and of retired people. The boundaries between these three groups can be shifted, configuring new generational units. For example, raising the retirement age is a strategy to change the proportion- al sizes of the generations, in order to keep the societal generational contract financially feasible. The same aims are being supported with the shortening of education phases through measures such as G8 (the shortening of grammar school from nine to eight years) or consecutive academic degree courses. All of these measures have the goal of enlarging the group of employed adults in comparison to the »economically inactive« groups.

If one analyses the effect of the welfare state on the generational structure from a historical perspective, then one can identify the following »welfare state generations« (Leisering under Otto von Bismarck. Adenauer’s so-called dynamic retirement system adapted the level of the otherwise income-based state pension to the overall wage changes in the population. The responsibility for the well-being of the old was collectiv-ized, while the responsibility for the well-being of children and youth was designated to the parents, thereby privatizing it. Ac- cordingly, the social reports of the national government show that the lion’s share of the social benefits are concentrated on those for the retirement- and health system, which is being in- creasingly used by the older generation. The amount of bene- fits for children and youth has been comparably low, at least up until now.

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In the 1960s the »Prosperity- and Economic Wonder Generation« in Germany came into being under conditions of economic growth and an expanding welfare state. In the 1970s the »Classic Welfare State Generation« emerged. In the 1980s and 1990s the »Defensive Welfare State Generation« developed which already had to fight against social welfare reductions. Finally, in the transition to the 21st century the »Welfare State Loser Generation« was constituted, which still has to contribute at a high level to finance the social welfare system, but which can only expect little from this welfare state in return. Considering the demographic scarcity of the following generation, there are currently first indications that we may be in a transition from a »Dispensable«- or »Lost«-Generation to a »Winner«-Generation, at least with regards to a part of the young people.

The »Loser Generation«: Isolated and Overextended

In their transition into their employment phase, the young generation of the 21st century’s first decade was confronted with chronically high unemployment rates, reduced growth rates, as well as an over-supply of applicants on the training and employment market. The »good«, secure jobs were already taken by the members of the baby-boomer generation of the 1950s. The prerequisites for the individual to overcome this difficult transition, are increasing. Ever higher educational degrees are becoming essential, though these are no longer a guarantee that one can enter respective job positions. At the same time, the entrance into the job market has become unstable. For an increasing number of youth the entrance into the employment system comes with precarious or atypical employment relations, such as mini-jobs, labour leasing, temporary and low-wage employment. For example, the proportion of 15- to 25-year-olds, which begin their career in atypical employment relationships, at 39.2 per cent (Statistisches Bundesamt 2008).

As such, the transition into the employment market has not only become more complicated and individualized. The risk of temporary and insecure employment relationships has been left to the coming youth generations, while the members of the older generations usually have secure jobs as part of permanent staff. The burdens of globalised employment markets have been redistributed onto the backs of the young generation. This also becomes apparent in the poverty rates. It is the 11- to 30-year-olds who have the highest poverty rates in comparison to other age groups, whereby the highest rates are to be found for 20- to 25-year-olds (see illustration). In the course of the intense debates on child poverty the group that has been most affected by poverty – youths and young adults – have received only marginal attention.

How Poverty is Distributed

This illustration shows the poverty rate according to age groups in Germany. The highest poverty rates are for people between 11 and 30 years of age.

Meanwhile, the demographic transformation is already impacting the employment and training markets. There is already an increasing number of training and employment offers, and there are fewer applicants for them; open positions cannot always be filled immediately. At the same time, in the last ten years the welfare state benefits for children and families have been raised. With the introduction of new family-oriented benefits (for instance, parental leave benefits, increased benefits
The generational contract must be constructed in a way that develops benefits that enable an independent life for the older as well as for the following generations.«

for children) and the expansion of childcare for toddlers, the public responsibility for the well-being of children has been expanded. No area of the German welfare state has developed as much in the last years as the expansion of benefits for children and families. This is, however, limited to small children. The young people between the ages of 18 and 29 have mostly been left empty-handed. This is an investment gap for young people, which could harden into a desideratum of equality. The situation will become generally better on the training and employment markets, but the polarisation of chances is still intensifying. While the demand for highly-qualified workers increases, the demand for apparently less-qualified applicants is not growing. Not all applicants with a lower-level school certificate can get a training position. A relevant proportion of these young people are still relegated to the so-called transition system (BMBF 2011), which prepares them for a training position and is supposed to increase their chances of gaining employment. The general improvement of chances for the new youth generation will not necessarily come with the dissolution of opportunity inequality within this generation.

In sum, the following conclusions can be made. First, the private generational contract, that is, the solidarity relationships between children, adults and grandparents, continues to be vital and is even gaining in importance. Second, this vitality depends upon the private generational contract being complemented by the societal one. This has thus far been largely reduced to the system of retirement benefits, which is related to the tradition of social political thought in Germany. This understanding of the societal generational contract must, however, be significantly broadened. The expanding educational and care benefits for children as well as the still un-expanded public support of young people in their transition into training and into the employment world must be viewed as essential elements of the societal generational contract. This must be constructed in a way that develops benefits that enable an independent life for the older as well as for following generations. This will only be possible if the forms of welfare production become more pluralised, that is, when not only the market and the state are integrated into this process, but also civil society. For the establishment of social welfare, all societal actors and institutions will be needed.

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Early childhood education and pedagogy have become the shooting stars of medial, political and expert debates regarding education issues. Populist headlines such as »The Wasted Childhood«, »The Over-promoted Child« and »Education Starts at the Beginning of Life« are indicators of a new interest in childhood, especially in early childhood. This interest is also visible in politics. In no other time was the political significance of childhood and families, of early childhood education so apparent as in the last ten years. One hears of financial aid during parental leave (»Elterngeld«) or for staying at home with the child (»Betreuungsgeld«) and children’s financial aid (»Kinder geld«) on the one hand – and child protection, children’s rights, expansion of crèches (»Krippen«) as well the broad, public discussion on sexual violence against children on the other hand. These discourses give striking evidence of the new significance of childhood in politics and the public sphere.

Only when we consider this context can we really explain the dynamic behind the expansion of child day care for children under three years old. The consequences, challenges and side effects of this development are the focus of this paper. This focus allows us to analyse what childhood means these days in the German political sphere.

By Thomas Rauschenbach
Between 2004 and 2008 parliaments passed several laws regarding the expansion of child day care, and in doing so, triggered a remarkable and unexpected dynamic. This eclipsed everything that one could previously observe in this field in Germany. Six years ago, in 2006, there were about 138,000 places for children under three in western Germany (and a similar number in eastern Germany). In March 2011, when the most recent calculations were made, there were already 326,000 children under three in nursery care in the West. That is, in only five years the number of places for children under three in western Germany had more than doubled (BMFSFJ 2012). Considering the decades of resistance in this area and the ideological reservations associated with it, this is a dramatic change, bringing tremendous challenges for everyone involved.

Day of Truth: From August 1, 2013, Parents have a Legal Right to a Place in a Childcare Centre

Despite this immense growth in the last years, this development is still not at an end. The ominous date, similar to the Day of Truth, is August 1, 2013. From this point on, all parents with a one- or two-year-old child have a legal right to a place in a childcare centre.

According to political discourse, by this point – depending on one’s interpretation and focus – at least 780,000 places should be available for children under three in Germany (590,000 places in the West alone). This would correspond to about 39 per cent of all children under three-years-old (including those under one-year-old) in Germany. In the West this would make up 37 per cent and in the East, 51 per cent. Converted into nursery places, this means that in the West between March 2011 and August 2013 another 260,000 places need to be created if the interim goal is to be reached.

This difference shows the speed in which this project needs to be pushed in order to meet the goals given by politics. This would mean tripling the expansion speed of the two years before, such that the record expansion would need to accelerate to a sprint in the last leg of the race.

In this last leg of the race, there are three additional uncertainties. First, politicians planned the expansion project such that 70 per cent of the new childcare places were to be in nursery care facilities and 30 per cent with childminders. However, no one can say how this expansion will really develop, especially since it is unclear which form of childcare parents would choose, having a free decision. By 2011, care with childminders made up 18 per cent of all places – with no recognisable ten-
dency to grow further. This brings up the question of whether the aims for the proportions of different kinds of childcare are reachable, because this would require childcare with childminders to undergo tremendous growth. If this does not take place, the consequence would be that every place not established with childminders would have to be compensated by an additional nursery school place.

The Big Unknown: How Many Places will Parents Want?

A further unknown results from the fact that politicians agreed in 2007 on an expansion aim of 750,000 places, respectively – based on DJI’s calculations – places for 35 per cent or, more recently, 39 per cent of children under three by 2013 (this would correspond to about 780,000 places). That was an appropriate goal, because these numbers were important and necessary markers, without which reasonable political planning and organisation would not have been possible. However, on August 1, 2013, these numbers will be invalid; after this, they will have no legally binding function. Instead, the suppliers (municipalities and private facilities) will no longer decide how many places are necessary; only the demand will decide, that is the parents of one- and two-year-old children (Meysen 2012). And in light of the legal right to such a place, there could be significantly more or significantly less demand than the estimated amount.

Because of this legal right and the right of parents to decide, estimated averages for all of Germany cannot help a municipality fulfil its planning responsibility. This kind of decision is not made at the national level, but rather locally. In other words, starting 2013 the expansion is no longer a top-down-, but rather a bottom-up-project. Every municipality, more precisely every district, every single, small community has to deal independently with the local demand in its micro-level, social space.

The third unknown is personnel. It is unclear if there will be a shortage of trained personnel to accommodate the expansion of places for children under three and if so, to which extent. According to the calculated estimates of the Research Consortium German Youth Institute/TU Dortmund University on the demand for childcare personnel in August 2013, if the districts and municipalities reach the quota of 37 per cent, there will probably be a shortage of 15,000 to 20,000 trained personnel in western Germany (Schilling 2012). That would mean that the number of personnel would almost be higher than that of students who began their vocational training as educators in the year 2006/2007 – that is a significant amount. At the same time, it is known that there are already 300,000 educators employed in childcare centres. Considering the ratio of about 20,000 to more than 300,000 employees, the catastrophic scenario »childcare centres with children, but without personnel« is not really realistic. However, there will be very diverse effects in different regions. In some regions – especially in eastern Germany – the childcare centres will hardly be affected by such a shortage. In other regions, especially in metropolitan areas, the employers will be facing a difficult situation (Begemann/Schilling 2011).

**LEXICON**

Betreuungsgeld: Financial aid (100 Euros per month, later 150 Euros per month) which the national government is planning to provide to parents who care for their one- and two-year-old children themselves, instead of sending them to a day care centre or state-funded childminders.

Elterngeld: The German state reimburses 65 per cent of a parent’s net earnings (minimum 300 Euros per month, maximum 1,800 Euros per month) if the mother or father stays up to twelve months with his or her newly born child instead of working at his or her place of employment. If the second parent takes at least two months off work, then the reimbursement for both parents together may last for up to fourteen months.

Kindergeld: The German state pays a sum of money to parents for each child up until that child’s 18th birthday or until he or she has finished his or her university or vocational training, up until his or her 25th birthday. Per child parents currently receive 184 Euros per month (for the third child 190 Euros, for every further child 215 Euros).

Kindertageseinrichtung: Childcare facilities (outside of the child’s home) where children spend part of their day. Kinderkrippen (crèches) are facilities for children under three years of age. Kindergartens are traditionally facilities for children from three-years-old until they start with school. However, some kindergartens are now open for two-year-olds and for age-mixed groups.

The Right to Publicly Supported Childcare: Since 1996 German parents have a right to a place in a kindergarten (for children 3-years-old and older). Starting August 2013 they also have this right for their children who are one- and two-years-old.
Apart from these three unknowns, the expansion of care for children under three illustrates a fundamental change in German society. One can observe an irrevocably advancing growth in public responsibility for the socialisation and education of children to complement the private responsibility of parents. German politics – with the broad support of the public sphere – has experienced a paradigm change, which also becomes apparent in the all-day services for children in childcare centres as well as in the expansion of all-day services for school-aged children. This paradigm change seems to be accepted in principle. However, on occasion its consequences are still viewed critically.

Re-Play of Old Ideological Battles

A typical expression of this scepticism is the recent political debate about financial aid for parents who stay at home with their children (»Betreuungsgeld«, see lexicon on p. 12). These current debates and media dramatizations re-play old ideological battles from the former West German Republic. These discourses often revive the old dichotomy between the sheltering family, which is always positive and for which there is no alternative, on the one hand – and the ominous state, which robs children of their childhood, on the other hand.

This sharp dichotomy promotes the image of the family as always central and very important, but also as an over-idealised and unrivalled sanctuary for a good childhood. This stands in contrast to the image of a state structure (childcare centres) that is insensitive to children's needs, harms them, makes them sick and aggressive, and robs them of important educational experiences – just to name the worst fears. These images do not do justice to the reality of childcare. It is highly inaccurate to refer to this childcare centre landscape as state-centred when in fact two thirds of these facilities are run by non-governmental, civil-society, or religious institutions.

However those speaking for the expansion of publicly supported childcare for children under three years should clarify the order of their arguments. The needs of children must be placed above those of adults. The primary goal is meeting the emotional and educational needs of children; the secondary goal is the improved balance between family and career. Pre-school education and emotional needs of children must always be central and very important, but also as an over-idealised and unrivalled sanctuary for a good childhood. This stands in contrast to the reality of childcare. It is highly inaccurate to refer to this childcare centre landscape as state-centred when in fact two thirds of these facilities are run by non-governmental, civil-society, or religious institutions.

In sum, despite current uncertainties and occasional controversies regarding the expansion of publicly supported care for children under three, one should not lose sight of the significance of the whole project. In effect, this reflects a fundamental transformation of the (West-) German welfare state. For decades, there was the principle in West Germany that politics was to interfere in the family sphere as little as possible. From this kind of traditional and family-centred perspective, mothers and grandparents take care of their small children (and do not need crèches), fathers earn money (and do no household work), and daughters take care of old and sick relatives (and do not place them in nursing homes). However, this kind of life course has its price. In this life-course model, women have much lower chances of benefitting economically from their own education and qualifications or of using these to develop themselves personally in a career. Taking the sole responsibility for their children strongly limits how actively they can work on their career. Under these conditions, society's high investment in women's education and qualifications can only bear a fraction of its potential fruit. As the demographic change continues, this would have grave societal consequences.

The expansion of childcare for children under three will not solve this problem in a few months. However, it can make a contribution to its solution. Even if this project to modernise the welfare state does not take place without difficulties, this does not reduce its significance.

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Unlikely adults learning a foreign language, children do not learn languages just for the sake of learning a language. Children learn language, because it is important and useful for dealing with their everyday lives: in order to play with other children or assure themselves the proximity of a caregiver, in order to exchange secrets with a friend or negotiate whose turn it is to ride the scooter.

From the beginning, children use language in diverse and individual ways. For instance, they express their wishes and needs with all the verbal and non-verbal tools available to them. They accompany themselves with imaginative sound or sentence constructions, and they give words their very individual meaning.

To create an effect with language, to understand and be understood, to make new knowledge available to oneself, to intervene and to participate – all of this encourages a child to tap into a language with its forms of expression and rules, its possibilities, and its subtleties.

Language development and promotion in a childcare centre is thus most successful when it is integrated into what children do and what interests them. In addition to a child’s individual characteristics, also his or her age-appropriate abilities and knowledge provide a basis for how he or she takes possession of the language. For younger children this is still an important aspect of their many, everyday situations, for example, while eating, dressing themselves or testing their own bodies and their physical environment. For older kindergarten children language gains an increasingly important function for their social relationships and for connecting their cognitive processes.

Anchoring language promotion in the educational everyday life of childcare centres opens the chance to encourage children to develop their language abilities in diverse situations. It motivates them to connect language with their activities and actions to use language in differentiated ways. Two examples of early childhood educational areas that offer interesting starting points to encourage this are music and active media work.
The Language Potential of Musical Activities

Children love to make music. The younger they are, the more unencumbered they find access to the world of music. To make music as well as to sing and make music with others is a pleasurable experience that incorporates the whole body. With their voices children make noises, they clap their hands or stomp their feet, hop, jump, and dance through the room. They excitedly look for objects with which they can make sounds and play notes.

Musical activities are not exclusively for especially gifted children. Music is available to all children as an independent means of expression, and it is closely connected to language. Language and musical development progress parallel to one another and can support each other mutually. The fundamental development of the voice and its physical preconditions (such as breathing, hearing, and speech organs) is equally important for language and music. Music and language both exhibit melodic and rhythmic characteristics such as vocal tones and sounds, notes and melodies, rhythm and accents, which are also important for learning a language.

Sounds and Rhythms Connect Music and Language

For language training and promotion in childcare centres, play methods with musical possibilities offer many elements, which children may use according to their individual experience and development level. In addition to verses and songs, there are also many musical stimuli that are not purposefully structured in any particular form, but rather deepen the understanding of different aspects of music and language. For instance, exposure to varied sounds and notes trains one’s hearing. This is a good precondition for the perception of language (for example, for the differentiation among sounds). In diversified play with the voice, as in yelling, whispering, making razz sounds, syllable-chanting or melodic babbling, the effects of one’s own vocal expression are explored.

With these and other musical activities, which can take place in a group or in dialogue with a caregiver, it is not only possible to encourage a child’s individual approach to language melody and language structures. He or she also gains a further means of expression, which sometimes needs words and sometimes manages without words. However, music in the childcare centre is not only available through activities guided by pedagogic practitioners. Children are also active musicians independent of adult instruction. Children often accompany their play activities with spontaneous or narrative songs. In his or her absent-minded, monologue sing-song, a child connects sounds, syllables, words or text fragments with made-up melodies and rhythms, which are primarily directed at her- or himself. Sometimes children borrow song lines and melodies from known children’s songs.

Lukas’ Lantern

Lukas recites this song such that the first letters of all words are replaced with the letter »n«:

Naneerngne, Nonne, Nond und Ne-erne, auf nein Nicht, aber nur neine niebe Naner ne nich.

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The three-year-old Lukas sings his lantern song. He sings his own version of the song—in melody as well as in text. He varies speed, dynamic, and pauses completely according to his own whim (for instance, he sings the last line faster than the first three). He sings the whole song with a powerful voice. He sings every line of the song but skips repetitions or single words. He plays with the beginning sounds of the words. He accompanies his song with movements of his whole body. He kicks his feet into the air, lets himself fall backwards onto his play mattress, rolls back and forth, and pauses in the text when he makes boisterous movements. A small performance emerges.

For children under three (and well into kindergarten age) this form of singing and improvising with language is an important form of self-expression, which pedagogic practitioners can observe carefully. Children train quite a bit in the process, such as articulation, memory, and the rhythm of speech and music. For this spontaneous singing children are often inspired by what they see or hear in their environment, for example, car sounds, the dripping of water from a tap, or a doorknob. Last but not least, there is a rich repertoire of verses, finger games, songs, and song-games offering children a great deal of material which they can process independently.

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For older kindergarten children making music offers many other language practice opportunities. It may be important in the children’s group to negotiate the arrangement of songs, musical movement games, and one’s own role in this. Making music together is a complex undertaking. It requires working out agreements on what one wants to play, on who plays which instrument, or also on how a song or the accompanying dance should be performed. Children have to make several learning steps until everything fits together, and language is always present.

Language Potential in Active Media Work

Kindergarten-age children have fun playing around with media, taking photos, hearing and playing with their own voice. In media projects especially the older kindergarten children can play with their voice in contexts they find fascinating, by all means challenging, but always filled with purpose. They can play with fiction and reality and bring out the expressiveness of their narrating ego. They can create their own media products and express their ideas, aesthetic taste and perspectives. They experience themselves as effective agents, and this stimulates their language activities. They plan and comment on their actions. They make suggestions and come to agreement on what they do. They express what they are feeling and what they want to say. In sum, with media projects it is possible to encourage a rich, incidental learning of language—in comprehending it and in speaking it.

On the Move with the Camera—Capturing Perceptions in Words

When children look at their environment in detail through a camera’s viewfinder, they hold on to their perceptive experiences of the moment. They build their inner images and enrich their mental imaginativeness. Perception demands verbal expression. When children create and appraise their works, they repeatedly find opportunities to express and differentiate their language abilities. They present and describe what they want to photograph or what they have photographed, and they make comparisons between images and reality.

While taking photos children also solidify and expand their perception of words. While they are acting, they experience and utilise, for instance, prepositions (at, on, next to, between, in front of, below, above) and adverbs (on top of, below), in order to grasp special perspectives with the camera. It makes a difference if the plush pig is photographed from below or above. Working in a group in this way, multilingual children find the opportunity to learn about the pitfalls of German grammar.

Consciously Perceiving and Utilising Language by Integrating Sound

Language is more consciously articulated in media production than it is in everyday activities. Ultimately, it is important to use language as clearly as possible, so that the audience accurately understands what is being said. This is exactly what children practice when they speak into a microphone in a concentrated way. This helps them refine their repertoire of sounds and their ability to articulate themselves.

»Today I bake, tomorrow I brew...«

Four-year-old Dennis plays the part of Rumpelstiltskin for a digital fairy tale riddle. Whispering and emphasising each word, Dennis transforms his Rumpelstiltskin into a listening experience. The listeners can really imagine the imp Rumpelstiltskin rubbing his hands with anticipation, »the day after tomorrow I’ll fetch the young queen’s child.« They can tell how much Dennis is really concentrating on how he speaks.
It is fun for children to play with their voices with a microphone, intoning a text quietly or loudly, squeakily, growlingly, mysteriously, happily or threateningly. Doing so also allows them to sense and experience language melody in its creative potential: to express nonverbal feelings and to characterise situations, people, and other figures. Speaking into the microphone can also help multilingual children become accustomed to the patterns of intonation in German and secure these language abilities, for instance, by verbalising questions and answers.

If children consciously use their voice and language while recording their work, they perceive their verbal and sound utterances with more awareness. This offers a chance to encourage children to use language while planning and reciting their texts. It is also an opportunity to offer suggestions for how to formulate what they want to express and for how to vary their vocabulary (for example, the wolf growls and bares his teeth, the rain patters, the fire crackles).

Media projects constitute teamwork, and teamwork begins with dialogue. In media projects children can become accustomed to verbally cooperating and learning with other children. They learn to listen attentively to what has been said and to hear where they can draw upon what other children have said. Media projects not only promote a child’s language competence, but also the ability to decipher how utterances fit together and how to solve problems.

And finally, depending on which issues and topics are being pursued, language is utilised in diverse ways. It describes and reports, it spins fairy tales, and it gracefully plays with syllables and sounds. Getting to know and deal with various narration forms supports children to develop their comprehension and production of texts. Language promotion can also consciously steer a child’s attention towards particular speech elements. For instance, if verses, rhymes, poems, and sayings are part of the script, children are challenged to pay attention to the structure of sounds in language, discover new words, onomatopoeically interpret them, distort them, and use them for themselves.

Robbie’s Toast

»The leopard likes to devour meat. Watch out, or you will eat. Enjoy your meal!«

This toast was made up by the five-year-old Robbie, while he compiled known toasts with other five- and six-year-old children for their audio pieces. The children were encouraged to create their own rhymes.

Language Education and Promotion as a Task in All Educational Areas

Discovering and using the language potential in the early childhood educational areas of music and media work is a promising path for language promotion which one can integrate well into the everyday life of a childcare centre. This illustrates how language education and promotion is a task which pedagogic practitioners can incorporate into all educational areas, but it should be well deliberated first. Activity-oriented, language promotion is characterised by working out linguistic focuses and specific intersections of the educational area and language promotion, such that they profit from one another. Educators need well-founded training, which includes not only the specific educational area knowledge, but also pedagogic-didactic know-how for the spectrum of age groups in the childcare centre. It is also necessary to purposefully and continuously observe children’s language activities on the basis of a theoretically founded knowledge of children’s language development. And last but not least, pedagogic practitioners need manageable groups of children and methods which make it possible to give individual attention to children and their holistic ways of expressing themselves.

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The title of this article »Today I bake, tomorrow I brew« is taken from the tale »Rumpelstilzskin« which was first published in 1812 by the Brothers Grimm.
Preventing Sexual Abuse Against Children

On the Prevention of Sexual Violence Against Boys and Girls:
Findings and Suggestions from the Research Field

By Heinz Kindler
The efforts to prevent sexual abuse against children began as a grassroots movement, activated by the women’s movement and the movement against cruelty towards children. In the last decades, however, several practitioners have built bridges with the research field, and in turn some researchers have discovered this field of prevention as an issue. For this reason there are now some findings on the effectiveness of efforts to prevent sexual abuse against boys and girls. This text summarises these findings (for an overview of this research see Kindler/Schmidt-Ndasi 2011).

Working with Children on Prevention

So far the majority of prevention efforts are addressed to children. The main aims include informing children on sexual abuse and discussing with them the possibilities of recognizing, avoiding and possibly ending dangerous situations. Children are also encouraged to inform responsible adults until they are heard and receive support. Some newer prevention concepts also pursue the goal of helping children develop a general sense of self-confidence and a positive, self-determined sense of their body.

The methods used in prevention work with children are diverse. For instance, theatre pieces for children are used to illustrate the grooming process leading to abuse and sometimes also the consequences of abusive situations. The possibilities of defending oneself and finding help are discussed as well (for example, Krahe/Knappert 2009). Also self-defence classes are offered as one element in a wider prevention strategy with the goal of strengthening children’s self-confidence and sense of their body.

A review of the evaluation studies reveals that prevention efforts reach children emotionally, but rarely profoundly unsettle them. After participating in these classes, children report that they know more about sexual abuse and feel that they can protect themselves better or find help more easily (for a meta-analysis see Zwi et al. 2009; Topping/Barron 2009). Positive effects were stronger when children were actively involved and when programmes included several meetings (Davis/Gidyycz 2000).

It is still unclear, however, if prevention programmes really increase children’s ability to avoid sexual violence. On the one hand, in simulated risk situations children became more wary towards strangers who could possibly abuse them after participating in a prevention programme. Also young adults recalling prevention efforts during their childhood reported less often that they experienced sexual abuse, at least in one of two studies (Gibson/Leitenberg 2000). In addition, those children who were already victims of sexual assault sometimes took the opportunity offered through prevention programmes to confide in a practitioner. On the other hand, there is no evidence that prevention efforts can enable children to more effectively defend themselves against an assault as it actually takes place. There are also no studies following children over a long period of time showing that participation in prevention efforts correlates with lower rates of experienced sexual abuse.

In sum leading experts (Finkelhor 2007) view programmes working with children which explicitly and pedagogically address sexual abuse, as a necessary and promising element in a wider prevention strategy. It is much more difficult to evaluate the contribution of programmes aiming to support the self-confidence and body awareness of children. There is a lack of findings on the degree to which the encouragement of self-confidence and body awareness alone – without addressing sexual abuse – would enable children to perceive sexual assault earlier and search out help more quickly. For Germany it is important to underline this point, because the preliminary report of the round table »Sexual Abuse of Children« (>Sexuelle Kindesmissbrauch< 2010, p. 13), initiated by the federal government, places the promotion of self-confidence and body awareness in the centre of prevention strategies with children. It is also uncertain to which degree such prevention messages reach children when these recommendations do not correspond with children’s everyday experiences in school and family. For instance, if a child is not allowed some influence and not shown respect in school and family settings, it may be difficult to teach this child that she or he may refuse to allow others to touch her or him and may seek help if others ignore this wish.

The Necessity of Involving Adults

It is uncontroversial that the prevention of sexual violence towards girls and boys cannot be limited to programmes working with children. For this consensus the following arguments are decisive:

The ways abuse situations may emerge are very diverse (for example, Krischer 2002). They range from completely surprising attacks by authority figures to sexual actions which are plausibly explained to children as necessary for medical or care purposes – to assaults which are prepared by the development of a »special relationship« and its gradual sexualisation (for example, as part of grooming). It is not realistic to try to prepare children for the entire range of possible abuse situations. Even if this were possible, some abusers will still be able to bring children into inescapable situations through their physical strength and a better overview of situations. Indeed a sig-
significant number of convicted abusers retrospectively described the willingness to use force if necessary (for example, Elliot et al. 1995).

Even if prevention programmes may increase children’s willingness to disclose experienced abuse to parents or other caregivers, this remains difficult due to fear, shame, forced promises to remain silent and limited abilities to express oneself. For this reason, a large percentage of all assaults experienced by children remains unknown to adults, that is, to parents or practitioners (see, for example, Hébert et al. 2009). As a result it is imperative to enable parents and caregivers to respond to nonverbal or ambiguous signs of sexual abuse and to discuss these with children in an empathetic but clarifying way.

Prevention programmes working with children cannot reach all children equally. People who are motivated to commit sexual assault may resort to attacking younger or less protected children.

Many significant factors in processes that may lead to sexual abuse are completely out of the control of children, for example, opportunity structures for abuse in institutions, availability of support for affected children, and programmes for children and adolescents already exhibiting sexually offensive behaviour. Only adults can assume responsibility in these cases.

Many prevention approaches with children integrate parents, other caregivers and practitioners. Some programmes are even geared mainly or exclusively to adults. Usually there is no limitation to a specific form of sexual abuse, for instance, only by strangers or only institutional abuse. However, the examples actually discussed during a programme often cover just a fraction of the possible forms of abuse. Lacking is an overview of didactic methods used; however, presentations and group discussions dominate in those examples which have been published. Regarding parents, evaluations show that usually only a minority of them are reached; however, participating parents felt afterwards that they were more informed and capable of dealing with relevant situations. In addition, evaluation studies have reported that after participating in prevention programmes, a large number of families discussed sexual abuse for the first time or several times. It is unclear, however, which prevention messages children really take on for themselves and if prevention programmes with parents really have an effect on children’s risk of experiencing sexual violence.

Evaluations of trainings for practitioners have focussed on dealing with suspicious cases (for example, Carter et al. 2006). The existing effectiveness studies deal with a wide spectrum of practice fields, including, for example, work with the disabled, paediatrician’s practices, the educational field, and child and youth services. These studies showed positive effects on practitioners’ self-reported and observed willingness to intervene and on their self-assurance in being able to act appropriately. Less is known about the quality and adequateness of protective actions. A recent representative study of schools and residential homes by the German Youth Institute (DJI) on the ways institutions dealt with suspicious cases (Helming et al. 2011) showed that the training of practitioners corresponded with a higher number of discovered sexual abuse cases, but not a higher proportion of false accusations. Lacking in the available research is evidence on which support is needed by practitioners in the fields of education, youth welfare, and services for disabled children in order to ensure good prevention work against the sexual abuse of children.

Therapeutic services for people who fear that they may sexually abuse a child are being increasingly discussed.
Children or youth who show sexually offensive behaviour represent a second risk group, for whom therapeutic efforts may make sexual assaults less likely later. Some therapeutic approaches were developed for this purpose during the last years (Friedrich 2007), and there have been initial findings indicating moderate positive effectiveness (Amand et al. 2008). However, with the exception of a notable study from Nowara and Pierschke (2008) there is a lack of studies on the availability of such measures in Germany as well as a lack of high-quality, longitudinal effectiveness studies.

Protection for High-Risk Youth

Longitudinal studies show that children are at higher risk to experience (further) sexual violence if they have witnessed partner violence, experienced emotional neglect, have a disability, have already been sexually abused or belong to a strongly patriarchal culture. Prevention programmes for these groups of children, for instance, as a part of family support or family preservation services, could make a real difference.

Especially regarding better protection against sexual violence in institutions, diverse measures are being discussed currently in Germany (for an overview: Bundschuh 2010). These measures often integrate several aspects of the institution, including for instance, information for children on their rights, guidelines for practitioners on adequate ways of handling closeness and distance towards children, and mandatory background checks in sex offender registries. Until now there is no evidence that the recommended approaches really make institutional sexual abuse less likely or lead more reliably to the detection of abuse. There is a significant need to do more research in this area in the next years.

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Prevention is an alluring concept when the capacity to act in dealing with something undesirable is supposed to be demonstrated. The promise of prevention markets security, independent of whether or not new insecurities are created or successes are or can be proven. At the same time, the term prevention is used in different areas of practice and not just in social work. This practice diversity comes with a wide spectrum of variations of the prevention idea. A consistent, standard definition or even one that applies to many practice fields, does not exist.

For this reason, the following text will present deliberations on this issue – in the sense of an open list with no claim of being complete – with the goal of putting up for discussion the ambivalences and challenges that are unavoidably tied to a pre-
vention logic. We will also encourage critical reflection of professional practices. Despite the first impression many have with the term prevention, it is important to emphasize that it is by no means an easy concept, but rather a very complex and demanding one.

When one understands prevention as the early avoidance of undesirable events, developments and states, then it is assumed that these and their effects were already defined beforehand as undesirable. However, standards, criteria and values are very variable and are subject to development processes. In modern, pluralistic societies, the definition of the undesirable depends upon who defines something as such and can bindingly enforce this definition among others. It also depends upon the perspective and knowledge base upon which this definition is founded.

Because there are no clearly defined criteria for the definition of risks and threats, the objects of preventative action are in principle infinite in number. »And since there exists nothing which cannot be perceived as a threat or declared a threat, everything can become the target of preventative efforts. Dental cavities or heart attacks, drug consumption or youth violence, physical deformations or mental illness, terror attacks, or development of weapons of mass destruction: risks are lurking everywhere, crises are impending and necessitate prevention« (Bröckling 2008, p. 39).

The openness of the idea of prevention impels us to take a closer look at the respective definitions of problems or of the undesired as well as the criteria marking them as such.

Who Defines the Undesired?

It is not seldom that the actors who are themselves responsible for prevention measures create »their« object. It is experts, who – often without democratic legitimation – take on the role of »problem definer« and (indirectly) set norms for this.

It is a weakness of the prevention discourse that these circumstances are rarely considered. The problem that should be avoided is often already assumed to exist. It is often neglected to be cognizant of which societal construction processes and power relations are responsible for influencing and enforcing what is defined as desired and undesired in the respective practice fields. Because prevention always also presents an (often publically arranged) encroachment on the lives of the effected people, this actually calls for stronger justification and legitimation – especially in view of the possible side effects.

Constitutive for prevention is its focus on the future. One addresses (variously defined) future undesired states, developments, events, or the likely consequences if nothing would be done to prevent them. Prevention orients itself on future possibilities and attempts to gain at least partial control of the unavoidable uncertainties of modern existence. This is why prevention ideas become attractive. At the same time, danger and risk prognoses do not offer any guarantee that the undesired will definitely occur or definitely be avoided through prevention. This turns every prevention effort into a fragile undertaking with a significant risk of failure, considering the high expectations for it. If prevention is then not successful, the result is often not the questioning of the concept, itself, but rather of the intensity or the timing, suggesting that efforts just need to be implemented earlier or more vigourously.

In addition, there is a further facet to this problem which is closely connected to the prevention idea: Since the aim of avoiding the undesired applies for the unlimited future, there is, strictly speaking, no point in time when these aims will be achieved. In this way prevention becomes, so to speak, a never-ending task.

Founded assumptions about future developments are only possible if based upon substantiated knowledge of the threatening events, the causal factors and the respective starting-points for counter-strategies. Only with this triad of information does worthwhile preventative action become possible. Hence, looming future problems cannot become the objects of preventative action if the relevant knowledge is lacking or if there is no adequate, practical »lever« for affecting change and thereby no starting point for action. By far not all efforts that carry the prevention label fulfil these requirements.

Prevention is dependent upon promising strategies. This applies especially to the prevention approaches of social work, which are usually standardized to a lesser degree. It depends upon implementable strategies of action, which plausibly tie the measures to the avoidance of that which is undesired in the future. This is the case despite the contingencies which constitute any social action and the insight that there cannot be any prevention-effective technology in the area of pedagogic practice (also Helsper/Hörster/Kade 2003).

Primary Prevention – a Difficult Construction

One common distinction in many fields of practice is that between primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention. Primary, or also unspecific and general prevention, describes concepts which are not oriented towards special risk-situations or -groups, but rather follow a logic which is only initially convincing, calling for widespread intervention as early as possible. This earlier application of prevention approaches in the last two dec-
Prevention as a Task for the Individual

Recent studies on the changing of the welfare state show that prevention is increasingly a task for everyone and no longer defined as the responsibility of the state. In this context, one speaks of a shift from a prevention state to an »activating state« which »releases its citizens out of the captivity of publicly supported care into the freedom of self-care, handing individuals the responsibility to manage their life risks independently. Prevention is as vital as ever, but it increasingly becomes the task of individuals, who are expected to economically rule themselves« (Bröckling 2004, p. 214). Prevention therefore becomes a strategy of creating the »entrepreneurial self« (Bröckling 2007), which corresponds to the idea of changing from the social state to an activating, investing state (for more details, see Lessenich 2008). In the figure of the preventative self this change finds its ultimate expression (Lengwiler/Madarász 2010).

Demanding Evidence of Effectiveness

With the proliferation and establishment of preventative concepts, the demands increase that these concepts should not only present their good intentions, but more importantly prove their effectiveness. However, reliable impact analyses are not available for all fields of action. While the medical field has for many years successfully and systematically viewed causes and side effects and critically weighed these, the situation is different in the pedagogic field. In the latter case, questions of evaluation are still in their early stages and are lacking in many ways.

There are also methodological difficulties of proving effectiveness. One central and difficult methodological problem is accounting for observed phenomena: These may only be understood as effects of measures if it is possible to plausibly demonstrate their causal relationship to particular moments of practice. It is also imperative to address the question of transferenceability. For this, at least three levels have to be distinguished from one another: the transfer of model-tested results into the ades leads to the problem that there is only a very abstract relationship between these efforts and that which should be avoided. The concepts which often fall under the label primary prevention could actually be described more accurately as early education, early support or health promotion. By using the term prevention, the affected person is accused per se of a possible negative development. For this reason we think that primary prevention works with an unjustified general suspicion.

To give an example: Primary violence prevention is a term used on various occasions for programmes that support the development of social competences as early as kindergarten. It is possible that these programmes may sooner or later lead to violence prevention effects. The central aim is, however, to develop social competences in kindergarten groups. If these measures are referred to as violence prevention, this implies, in the sense of general suspicion, that all the children in this group are at least potential, violent aggressors. This case illustrates the importance of only discussing prevention when the connection between measures and the problem to be avoided are plausibly drawn and when dealing with this problem is central to the measure. Strictly speaking, one is then dealing with measures in the area of secondary prevention, because specific problem areas have been focused.

Prevention is based on the logic of suspicion. This contradicts the principle of assumed innocence, and from a pedagogic perspective it focuses on the deficiencies of people rather than on their capabilities. With a suspicion logic there is a significant risk that people become stigmatised. On the basis of (societal) ascription and selection, particular population groups are examined and labelled as, for instance, at-risk for health problems, criminal, etcetera. This stigmatisation and the corresponding reaction to this can lead people to take on this undesired role (self-fulfilling prophecy). It is, therefore, imperative to consider the process of defining and the underlying norms when determining the object of prevention measures. There needs to be a critical balance between usefulness and risks.
project practice, the transfer of project-like, organised prevention into standard practice (this is especially relevant for the area of child and youth services) and the transfer of established practice (strategies) in other contexts. A blind spot in the whole discussion – except for in the health area – is that of unintended (side) effects of prevention. Difficulties in observing and accounting for side effects are similar to those for the intended effects and are possibly more difficult to grasp methodologically. However, if there is to be an evaluation of a preventative approach, it is necessary to examine and critically weigh all effects (intended and unintended).

Prevention – a Complex and Challenging Task

Modern societies are risk societies (Beck 1986). In this context, prevention, the early avoidance of the undesired and the reduction of risks, proves to be an indispensable idea for these societies (Ewald 1993). To accept dangers and risks as unavoidable, contradicts the self-conception of modern societies where the future is considered mouldable. This view is especially prominent in pedagogic fields. Prevention presents a highly demanding and ambivalent undertaking. Critical reflection and analysis should precede and provide the basis for prevention efforts. There are indicators that especially pedagogic contexts do not (and cannot) fulfil the standards outlined above – and that promises of prevention nevertheless continue to be made.

Meanwhile, there has been multi-faceted critique on prevention ideas, such as that formulated in the 13th Child and Youth Report of the German national government (Deutscher Bundestag 2009). This critique refers, for instance, to the unavoidable, inherent but seldom reflected normativity, the dominance of experts in defining the problem, or the uncertainty of prognoses. This critique appears, unfortunately, to not find enough attention.

However, if there is no alternative, there still remains the need for reflection. Research and awareness-raising as well as an increased consciousness about one’s responsibility in using the prevention idea are absolutely necessary.

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The project »Prevent and Combat Child Abuse: What works?« (duration: 1st of January 2011 – 31st of December 2012) compares approaches to tackling child abuse and neglect in five European countries. It also addresses the experiences of parents with child protection services as well as the perspective of practitioners. The project has financial support from the Daphne III Programme of the European Commission.

The aim of this exchange and research project is to generate relevant knowledge about current strategies for prevention and intervention at the regional, national and European levels, and to identify successes.

The end product of this project will be a manual describing what works in preventing and combating child abuse, looking at the whole range from prevention to treatment. In the final phase the focus will be on the distribution of all these results within the partner countries.

The Netherlands Youth Institute is coordinating this project. The Verwey-Jonker Institute (also from the Netherlands) is the second partner in the project and the coordinator of research with parents and practitioners. The other partners are the Family Child Youth Association (FCYA) in Hungary, the Örebro Regional Development Council in Sweden, and CESIS – Centro de Estudos para a Intervenção Social in Portugal.

Project websites:
- www.dji.de/prevent-child-abuse
- www.youthpolicy.nl/yp/Youth-Policy/Youth-Policy-subjects/Youth-policy-Youth-Policy-Child-abuse/International-project-Daphne

»Center for International Early Childhood Education and Care«
In Focus: Early Childhood Education

The question of how children can be supported in their development, occupies both science and politics. On the international level and in Germany early childhood education systems have increasingly become the focus of political debate and regulations. There have been very diverse developments and approaches with regard to access, quality, resources, conceptualization and regulations. This diversity comes with a substantial need for orientation, exchange and a policy that is based on empirical and scientific findings.

On the international level, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) as well as the European Union (EU) are promoting the cooperation among member states concerning issues of early childhood education and childcare (ECEC). In the German Youth Institute’s Children and Childcare Department, a working and research group »Center for International Early Childhood Education and Care« was established in early summer 2012 to accompany the international ECEC processes. Its aim is to support the National Ministry for Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) and to strengthen Germany’s commitment in international networks and working groups. Simultaneously, international debates, experiences and research findings shall be made easily accessible and beneficial for the German context.

To pursue this aim, the working and research group cooperates with national and state administrations, scientific experts and associations in the field of ECEC.

With the establishment of the working and research group the ministry aspires to promote quality and innovation in German ECEC through knowledge- and policy-transfer.

For more information please contact Birgit Riedel, acting head of the Children and Childcare Department: riedel@dji.de
Encouraging the Right to Play

Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child articulates the right of every child and youth to have rest and leisure time, to engage in play and sports, and to participate in cultural activities.

The project Re-Play (duration: 1st of March 2011 – 28th of February 2013) would like to contribute to the realisation of these rights by spreading awareness of the importance of playful activities as well as improving the available programmes and local infrastructure for play, so that Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child can be put into action. Within the framework of the project, a European-level comparative study is being conducted with eight partner countries: Germany, Italy, France, Great Britain, Ireland, Poland, Romania and Belgium.

In the first part of the study, local-level models of good practice have been identified. In the second part, diverse target groups have been interviewed, including children and parents. A third component of the project is the founding of a three-city, pilot network (Liverpool, Parma, Warsaw). In the municipal offices a contact point has been set up under the name «Office 31», which is supposed to recommend strategic measures to promote the implementation of the right to play.

Project website: www.dji.de/replay

Evaluation of the Implementation of the EU Youth Strategy in Germany

In November 2009, the EU Council of Youth Ministers adopted a resolution on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field. It was based on the European Commission’s communication »An EU Strategy for Youth: Investing and Empowering« of April 2009.

Following the Council’s resolution, the German Ministry of Youth and the German federal states started a process of cooperation. The aim has been to implement the EU Youth Strategy in Germany with a focus on youth participation, non-formal and informal learning, and the transition from school to vocational training and work. This implementation process is being evaluated by the German Youth Institute. The evaluation focuses on the governance structures used to regulate and coordinate the German implementation process. Questions to be dealt with include the influence and effects of the European dimension on German youth work as well as the peer-learning process in a European context.

For more information please contact Barbara Rink, senior researcher in the Youth and Youth Services Department: rink@dji.de

Project website: www.dji.de/eu-jugendstrategie

CLICK TIP

Mol@m – Enhancing Labour Mobility in Europe

The German Youth Institute (DJI) has worked together with project partners in the EU-project Mol@m to develop an online platform on the topic »Employment in Europe«. Mol@m strives to inform careers guidance professionals about the European labour market, so that they, in turn, can support particular lower-skilled jobseekers in their search for a job.

The new online-platform includes:
- an information guide on topics related to mobility (for instance, working abroad, labour rights, and education),
- first-hand accounts from people who moved to another EU country for labour purposes and from their careers advisors,
- a list of first contacts for support in the destination countries, and
- a checklist of what to prepare before departure.

The platform consists of six sections specific to particular countries, written in the respective official languages of these countries.

To access the platform:
www.spi.pt/molamtool

For more information on the project:
www.spi.pt/molam
www.dji.de/mol@m
2011 November 2011

- A Japanese delegation visits the DJI. They participate in the German-Japanese study programme for practitioners in youth work on the topic »Strengthening Children and Youth: How Non-formal Learning Contributes to Strengthening Young People« (supported by the German Federal Ministry for Family, Seniors, Women, and Youth, implemented by the International Youth Service of the Federal Republic of Germany). During this visit Heinz-Jürgen Stolz, a senior researcher in the Centre for Child and Youth Policy, gives a speech on the topic »Cooperation between School and Non-formal Education Professionals. Current Agenda and Challenges.«

- At the German-Japanese Conference »Strengthening Children and Youth: How Non-formal Learning Contributes to Strengthening Young People« in Berlin, Susanne Johansson (Youth and Youth Services Department) and Ingrid Fink (City Administration of Delmenhorst, Department for Youth, Family, Seniors and Social Issues) give a presentation together on the topic »The Advantage of Non-formal Learning in Youth Work.«

- Wolfgang Gaiser, a senior researcher in the Youth and Youth Services Department, supports Wilhelm Hofmeister, the director of the regional office of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in Singapore and Co-Editor of the Journal »Panorama. Insights into Asian and European Affairs«, with the conceptualisation of the European section of the January 2012 special issue »Youth – Future Agents of Change or Guardians of Establishment?«

- At the IMISCOE Network & Migremus Workshop »Spatial Mobility, Family Lives and Living Arrangements« in Bremen, Michaela Schier, head of the Schumpeter Research Group »Multi-local families«, funded by the Volkswagen Foundation and hosted by the German Youth Institute (DJI), holds a speech on »Circular Spatial Mobility – a Central Element of Multi-local Post-separation Family Life.«

- Christian Alt, acting head of the Social Monitoring and Methodology Department, delivers a lecture at the University of Luxembourg at the conference »Conceptual and Methodological Challenges for Reporting on Youth«. The topic of his speech is »Survey Research as the Basis for Reporting on Social Issues: Challenges and Problems.«

- Martina Gille, a senior researcher in the Social Monitoring and Methodology Department, discusses »Developing Indicators with Specific Hazard Rates for Exit from Non-kinship Family Foster Care.« The specific hazard rates are presented in the context of the DJI IMPULSE 2011 – Special English Edition.

2011 December 2011

- The DJI receives a visit from a delegation of 19 practitioners from the public education sector in Central America. The visit takes place during the programme »Innovative Didactic Methods in Occupational Training for Socially Disadvantaged Youth«, funded by the Society for International Cooperation (»Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, GIZ«). Tilly Lex and Nora Gaupp from the Research Group »Youth Transitions« give speeches on the topics »Developments in the Occupational Youth Services in Germany« and »School Support of Disadvantaged Youth – a practical example.«

- Birgit Reißig, head of the Research Group »Youth Transitions«, delivers a speech at the 14th Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research on Adolescence (SRA) in Vancouver, Canada. She addresses the topic »The Influence of Ascribed and Achieved Characteristics.«

- Walter Bien, head of the Social Monitoring and Methodology Department, gives a speech at the College for Civil Engineering in Munich during the Eurocities-Conference »WG Education and Inclusion. Peer Review: ‘Early childhood education and care (ECCE)’.« In his speech, he talks about the »Effects of the Economic Crisis on the Well-Being of Children (Focus on Childcare, Education and Social Policy).«

- Birgit Reißig, head of the Research Group »Youth Transitions«, delivers a talk at the 14th Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research on Adolescence (SRA) in Vancouver, Canada. She addresses the topic »Transitions from School to Vocational Training for Low-qualified Pupils. Results from the DJI Transition Panel.« Tabea Schlimmbach, a senior researcher in this Research Group, holds the chair of the symposium »Transitions from High School up to Employment: The Influence of Ascribed and Achieved Characteristics.«

2012 January 2012

- Diane Nimmo of the Schumpeter Research Group »Multi-local families« delivers a talk at the third meeting of the AHRC-Network on »Post-separation Families and Shared Residence: Setting the Interdisciplinary Research Agenda for the Future.« The topic of the speech is »Everyday Practices of Multi-local Post-separation Families in Germany.«

- Eric van Santen, acting head of the Department Youth and Youth Services, holds a speech at the 16th Annual Conference »Research that Makes a Difference: Advancing Practice and Shaping Public Policy« in Washington D.C., USA. In his talk, he addresses the topic »Age-specific Hazard Rates for Exit from Non-kinship Family Foster Care.« The conference is organised by the Society of Social Work and Research.

- Maruta Herding of the Youth and Youth Services Department successfully completes her doctoral studies in sociology at the University of Cambridge. The title of her dissertation is »Inventing the Muslim Cool: Islamic Youth Culture in Western Europe.«

2012 March 2012

- Walter Bien, head of the Social Monitoring and Methodology Department, gives a speech at the College for Civil Engineering in Munich during the Eurocities-Conference »WG Education and Inclusion. Peer Review: ‘Early childhood education and care (ECCE)’.« In his speech, he talks about the »Effects of the Economic Crisis on the Well-Being of Children (Focus on Childcare, Education and Social Policy).«

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- Herwig Reiter, a senior researcher in the Social Monitoring and Methodology Department, becomes a member of the »Youth Policy Advisory Group« of the two German sub-projects within the EU 7th framework project »Memory, Youth, Political Legacy, and Civic Engagement« – as well as a member of the editorial board of the International Journal of Social Research Methodology.

- Research Professor Claus Tully gives a class during the winter semester 2011/2012 on the topic »Social Inequality and Social Change« at the Free University in Bolzano, Italy.
Anna von Behr, a senior researcher in the project »Advancing Further Education for Practitioners of Early Childhood Education« in the Children and Childcare Department, acts as a German delegate in a European exchange of expertise during the EU-project »IMPAECT – Intercultural education by Means of Partners working with ECvet Transfer in Nikosia, Northern Cyprus« (led and coordinated by the University of Munich, LMU Munich). The focus is on »Intercultural Socio-education during Childhood.«

Michaela Schier, head of the Schumpeter Research Group »Multi-local families«, participates at the international workshop »Special Issue ‘Multi-locality Studies’« at the ETH Zurich in Switzerland. The aim of the workshop is to prepare the special issue on »Multi-locality Studies«. During the session on methodology, methods and empirical work, Schier gives a talk on »Methodological Approaches to the Everyday Life of Multi-local Families«. She also holds a speech called »Multiple Homes and Often On-The-Move… Multi-locality of Families after Separation and Divorce – New Challenges for Establishing Families and Spatial Planning« during the public symposium »Here today, there tomorrow – Causes and Consequences of Multi-local Living«, organised by the ETH Wohnforum and the Network Multi-locality at the ETH Zurich.

Schier also delivers the keynote address at the fourth meeting of the international research network »Post-separation Families and Shared Residence: Setting the Inter-disciplinary Research Agenda for the Future« at the University of Birmingham, Great Britain. The meeting is funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. She talks about »Challenges and Opportunities of Multi-local Post-separation Family Life for Parents and Children in Germany.«

Two senior researchers of the DJI participate in the 2nd European Conference for Social Work Research »Social Work Research in the International Context: the Challenges of Comparison and Generalisation« in Basel, Switzerland. Christine Gerber and Heinz Kindler, both members of the Families and Family Policy Department, lead a workshop in cooperation with Sheila Fish from Great Britain and Rene Van Vianen from Holland. Their topic is »Learning from Child Abuse Tragedies. Can a Systems Approach to Case Reviews Transcend Context? Reflections from England, Germany, and Holland.« Heinz Kindler also holds a talk on the child protection system in Germany during the symposium »Child Protection Systems: An International Comparison of Good Practice.«

April 2012

Research professor Claus Tully of the Youth and Youth Services Department leads a class on »Pedagogic Sociology« during the summer semester 2012 at the Free University in Bolzano, Italy.

Wolfgang Gaiser, a senior researcher at the DJI, takes part in the »BarCamp 2012 – Je vote, donc je suis « (organised by the Franco-Brazilian Youth Office) as an expert on the topic of participation.

Diana Willems, a senior researcher at the Centre for the Prevention of Youth Crime in the Youth and Youth Services Department, takes part in the steering-group meeting of the EU-project »Touch – Tackling Violence through Street Based Youth Work« in London, Great Britain.

May 2012

Herwig Reiter of the Social Monitoring and Methodology Department gives a talk at the »Colloquium of the Department of Developmental Psychology« at the Friedrich Schiller University in Jena, Germany. The topic of the speech is »Youth and Uncertainty in Post-Socialism: Between Acceleration and Alienation.«

Michaela Schier, head of the Schumpeter Research Group »Multi-local families«, participates as an expert in the workshop »Geographies of Family Life and Intimacy« at the University of Jena. The workshop takes place during the first event of the Jena Lecture Series on Human Geography with the topic »New Geographies of Excess: Rethinking Consumption and Behavioural Change.«

June 2012

Birgit Riedel, acting head of the Children and Childcare Department, takes part in the second meeting of the EU-working group on early childhood education and childcare in Brussels, Belgium. Research professor Bernhard Kalicki, head of the Children and Childcare Department, participates in the eleventh meeting of the Network on Early Childhood Education and Care (Paris, France) with the focus »Data Collection and Monitoring.«

Ulrich Pötter of the Social Monitoring and Methodology Department visits the European Population Conference 2012 in Stockholm and delivers a speech together with Ingrid H. Schockaert of the Vrije University Brussels on the topic »A Life Course and Spatial Perspective on Internal Migration« as part of the session »Internal Migration, Regional and Urban Issues.«

Vicki Täubig, a senior researcher in the Youth and Youth Services Department, holds a speech at the 12th International Conference »Migration and Democracy« in Dudelange, Luxemburg. During the workshop on refugees she speaks on the topic »Civil Death and Underlife in Migration.«

Anne Bergruber of the Social Monitoring and Methodology Department takes part in the 4th Joint Austrian – German – Macedonian – Polish Seminar »Crakow – Linz – Nuremberg – Skopje 2012 – International Research Seminar in Sociology, Research Methods and Criminology« at the Johannes Kepler University in Linz, Austria. She gives a speech on the topic »Leaving the Parental Home as One Step to Adulthood. Does Self-Conception as an Adult among Young Individuals Differ by their Living Situation?«

Mike Seckinger, a senior researcher in the Youth and Youth Services Department, delivers a talk on »Youth Clubs. A Place of Inclusion of Handicapped Young People?« at the 4th International Conference of Community Psychology 2012: »Community and Politics in a World in Crisis. Rethinking Community Action in the New Century« in Barcelona, Spain.

July 2012

Edmilson Leite Paixão visits the DJI. He was a guest researcher at the Ca’ Foscari University of Venice in Italy and works on a Brazilian research project at the National University of Minas Gerais on the topic of transitional phases during youth. While at the DJI, Paixão acquaints himself with its activities and structures and participates in an expert exchange with Nora Gaupp from the Research Group »Youth Transitions« and Barbara Rink, responsible for international relations at the DJI.

Nora Gaupp also participates in the annual conference of the Swiss Society for Education Research (SGBF) on »Educational Inequality and Justice – Scientific and Societal Challenges« in Bern, Switzerland. While there, she and Sandra Hupka-Brunner, a researcher from TREE (Transitions from Education to Employment) of the Sociological Institute at the University of Basel, Switzerland, give a presentation on the topic »Chances for Educationally Disadvantaged Young Adults in Switzerland and Germany: (Not) Overcoming the Second Hurdle.«
July 2012


Martina Gille, a senior researcher in the Social Monitoring and Methodology Department, and Frank Tillmann from the Research Group »Youth Transitions« participate in the workshop »Youth and the Great Recession« at the University of Bremen. The workshop is a meeting of the international research association »Youth and the Great Recession«, initiated by Walter Heinz (BIGSSS, University of Bremen), John Bynner (Institute of Education, London, UK) and Glen Elder (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, USA). The workshop serves to prepare a common project application for a »large ESRC (Economic and Social Research Council) grant.«

Alexandra Langmeyer, personal assistant of the DJI’s research director Sabine Walper, gives a talk at the 30th International Congress of Psychology in Cape Town, South Africa. The focus of the talk is »Grandchild-Grandparent Relationships in Different Family Types: the Children’s View.« The speech takes place during the symposium organised by Sabine Walper on »Intergenerational Relationships in Diverse Family Settings.« Sabine Walper also leads the concluding discussion.

READING SUGGESTION

Andreas Witzel, Herwig Reiter
The Problem-Centred Interview. Principles and Practice.

Interviewing is among the most commonly used methods in qualitative research. It is a pragmatic and reliable tool for collecting information and can be adapted to diverse situations and purposes. The discursive-dialogic reconstruction of relevant issues in the perspective of the interview partner is one of these purposes – it is at the core of the programme of the technique of the problem-centered interview (PCI).

Andreas Witzel and Herwig Reiter present the first English book about this popular and widely recognized method and introduce it to the international research community. The comprehensive and hands-on introduction to methodology, principles and practice of this particular technique is organized along the logical steps of preparing, doing and processing PCIs. The authors use many practical examples from their own problem-centered research to illustrate each stage as well as common interviewing pitfalls and errors. The book also demonstrates how to work with sensitizing prior knowledge in the context of interview research. Novice and experienced interview researchers across the social, educational and health sciences will find this an invaluable guide.
READING SUGGESTION

Carmen Leccardi, Carles Feixa, Siyka Kovacheva, Herwig Reiter, Tatjana Sekulic (eds.)

1989 – Young People and Social Change after the Fall of the Berlin Wall
Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing 2012

PAPERS BY DJI AUTHORS

Joris Dewispelaere, Gaby Jennes, Lucia Schuhegger, Barbara Thiessen

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Singapore (ed.)
- Panorama. Insights into Asian and European Affairs, Issue No. 1, 2012 (Youth – Future Agents of Change or Guardians of Establishment?) (including articles by Johann de Rijke, Martina Gille and Liane Pluto, Mike Seckinger)

Michaela Kreyenfeld, Valerie Martin

Metka Kuhar, Herwig Reiter

Valerie Martin, Céline Le Bourdais, Évelyne Lapiere-Adamczyk

Herwig Reiter
- Catching up with the West? An Insider’s Perspective from Lithuania / In: Aareland-Tart, Aili / Bennich-Björkman, Li (eds.): Baltic Biographies at Historical Crossroads. London 2012, pp. 146–162

Herwig Reiter, Benedikt Rogge, Nadine M. Schöneck (eds.)

Andrea Sens

Jan Skrobanek, Birgit Reißig, Matthias Müller

Peter Ullrich, Gina Rosa Wollinger

Matthias Wengis, Herwig Reiter

The GERMAN YOUTH INSTITUTE (DJI) is an independent social science research institute. Its focus is on basic and applied research on issues related to children, youth, and families. The Institute initiates and scientifically consults model projects carried out by youth and family welfare services and offers social science services. The German Youth Institute works in the interface between policy, practice, science and the public.

The task of the Institute is twofold: On the one hand, it ensures that scientific knowledge is transferred to practical social work and political consultation. On the other hand, it incorporates the experiences gained in practical work back into research.

The German Youth Institute was founded in 1963 as a non-profit association made up of members from institutions and associations specialising in youth services, politics and research. The majority of the DJI’s institutional budget comes from the German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ); to a lesser extent, funding is provided by the German states (Laender). Project funding is also provided by different institutions, such as the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), various foundations, the European Commission and institutions specialising in the promotion of research. Its Board of Trustees comprises representatives of the Federal and Laender levels, of the DJI’s non-profit association, and of the scientific staff working at the Institute.

At present, the German Youth Institute has the following research departments: Children and Childcare, Youth and Youth Services, Family and Family Policies, Social Monitoring and Methodology and the Research Unit »Youth Transitions«. The Institute has a branch in Halle (Salle) in eastern Germany.

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Download (pdf) and html version: www.dji.de/impulse
In Germany, there exists a diverse range of support services which provide child-raising support for families with infants and small children in difficult circumstances and thus contribute to preventing neglect and abuse. The Nationales Zentrum Frühe Hilfen (NZFH) presents practical examples and the accompanying research in a compact form in this brochure. This includes cross-project results according to quality dimensions of early prevention. The NZFH hopes to stimulate debate between experts and practitioners on early prevention and to support professional practice with these results.

Ilona Renner, Viola Heimeshoff

Pilot projects in the German Federal States

Summary of Results
Cologne: Nationales Zentrum Frühe Hilfen (NZFH) 2011
English-language issue | ISBN 978-3-9242816-0-9
Available online free of charge at the Federal Centre for Health Education: www.bzga.de/informaterialien/fruehehilfen (Accessed 17th of July 2012)