The concept of care in an educare model and the toddlers in the Nordic ECEC

Early Childhood Education and Care
The Nordic Way
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New Management

Family policy $\rightarrow$ part of the education system

$\rightarrow$ New concepts: (re)defined mission?
Learning and development

• Holistic approach
• Integrates caring, fostering, playing and creativity
• The starting point: the curriculum goals ...
  ... with a teaching approach
• Care is of particular importance
• Requires a presence of trained preschool teachers
The concepts of education and teaching have been criticized

- Teaching: “to stimulate and support children's learning and development in a certain direction based on the curriculum goals”
- Alienating from care and play?
The Nordic educare model

• Smaller groups of children
• Work team, led by teachers
• Problems in keeping a good standard of staff (Sweden)
• Sickness leave and mental illness are increasing sharply (Sweden)
Research on the quality

- One third of the preschools are of high quality
- One third of good quality
- One third of low quality

- 20 % “insufficient quality” in inspected toddler units
To be analyzed further

• The relationship between:
  – the pedagogical goals described in the curriculum
  – the actual conditions for those who are to realize the ambitions

*Our responsibility: to enable preschools, which can be places for care, play and education for all children, respected by and helpful to the families involved.*
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