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Title

Promoting Quality of Early Childhood Care and Education and “Freedom of Practice in Early Childhood Care and Education” – Deepening “the Best Interests of the Child”

Abstract

“Freedom of early childhood care and education (ECCE)” in terms of practice and management is the essential issue from teachers’ and directors’ point of view in Japan. “Freedom of ECCE” in the context of practice is considered as teachers’ reflection on daily practice as resource for the next day’s practice. In other words, teachers reexamine their practice from children’s ways of growing and developing. The teachers redesign curriculum from the existed pre-fixed/ designed one. Moreover, the teachers keep on learning and share issues with each other. Thus, “freedom of ECCE” allows teachers to rethink their intentions for making decisions for practice by listening to the children. For directors, being as responsible leaders, they pursue for refining the environment of practice from the examination of philosophy, policy, and objectives. “Freedom of ECCE” is the process of creative practice interweaving knowledgeable and skillful teachers and responsible directors. This allows teachers and directors to renew philosophy, policy, and objectives of their own ECCE facilities. “Freedom of ECCE” should be universal and sustainable processes. However, there are many ECEC facilities facing difficulties to have the freedom not only in Japan, but also throughout the world. In my keynote lecture, I would like to raise the following three points inviting you to join for working for the children in the world;

- 1) Current situations and issues of practice and management of ECCE in Japan and the world
- 2) Elements and Visions for promoting high-quality ECCE
- 3) Deepening understanding of Article 3 of the UN convention on the Rights of the Child” – the best interests of the child