

## EDUCATING CHILDREN UP TO THREE YEARS OF AGE IN THE NARRATIONS OF TODAY'S PARENTS

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**Abstract:** The paper presents the results of a long-term qualitative examination of early childhood educating and childcare (ECEC). It is ten years of targeted research, with the KEGA grant scheme no. 070UK-4/2016 which enables to reveal different levels of educational practice, and the fact that educational practice needs to be supported by pedagogical science. The research sample consisted of more than 110 subjects - parents, educators (caregivers) and children. Research tools applied, were focus group, interview and observation, via which massive research material was analyzed. The most important finding of research is the need for scientific support in this area, because the caregiver has no support in the current literature. Love, boundaries, consistency, and time prove to be important critical points in the process of bringing up (educating) a child in an early childhood education and childcare facility, providing care up to 3 years of the child's age, and educating in the family.

**Keywords:** educating, children up to the age of 3, parenting, „The Act of day nursery care centres“, qualitative research

### 1 Introduction

Children up to the age of 3 are thinking, moving, sentient and interactive human beings. At present, we still have little understanding of the child's mental development in the early years. However, one of the domains of current pedagogy should be to focus on optimum upbringing and early childhood education, taking into account the whole spectrum of their development, so that they can later fully integrate into society.

The changing conception of the world has set in motion a change in our understanding of what knowledge is, and how we get to know. Science no longer acts as an island of objectivity in the sea of cultural relativity. Multiplicity of opinions is a newer phenomenon in our cultural space and one of the new roles of the scientist is to find and interpret the unifying features in the intersubjective thinking subjects, as co-creators of contemporary worlds (D. Kostrub 2016). We present the results of the research in which we decided to apply a purely qualitative methodology, because we realize that there is no universal model of a parent's or caregiver's behavior and we fully accept, that every parent and caregiver has a distinctive mental model, that is also applied in early education of children. In the first part of the paper, we present a view on ECEC from the perspective of various Slovak and foreign authors, because of our theoretical definition. In the next part of the study, we focus on the main results of the long-term qualitative study of ECEC.

### 2 The role of an educator (parent, caregiver) in supporting a child's emotional and social development at an early age

From the psychology point of view, the early age of a child includes a newborn period, of up to one month, a period of infant, from one month to one year, and a toddler period, from one year to three years of age. Each of these periods is specific in terms of the child's biological, cognitive, emotional, or social development. The period of a newborn is short, in terms of the length of other developmental periods, and is also characterized as a child's adaptation period, when the child adapts to new environmental conditions. The infant's period, which lasts about one year, is characterized not only by rapid biological development, but also by changes in other areas related to the perception of external stimuli, the development of cognitive processes, or the development of speech. From the point of view of the subject matter and the topic of the study, it is of immense importance for the infant period to be a period of deepening the relationship with the closest person, the relationship with the

mother. As stated by M. Mahler (in M. Vágnerová, 2000), the period between 3 and 6 months is also called the symbiotic phase, which means a close connection between the child and the mother. The mother is accepted as a significant source of the child's satisfaction. Later, at the age of 6 and 9 months, the child begins to differentiate familiar and unfamiliar people, where fear of strangers and unfamiliar situations also emerges. This is understood as separation anxiety. As reported by S. Nolen-Hoeksema, B.L. Fredrickson, G.R. Loftus and W.A. Wagenaar (2012), another period of separation anxiety reaches a peak between the 14th and 18th month, and then gradually fades away. Among the professional public, in the context described above, there is a fairly often discussed theory of child attachment to the mother, which is definitely related to the early childhood period of the child. Most child attachment theories are based on the original study of psychoanalyst J. Bowlby (1973, in S. Nolen-Hoeksema, B. L. Fredrickson, GR Loftus, WA Wagenaar, 2012), which was implemented on the basis of the behavior of babies and young children separated from mothers during weekly ECEC centres, or in hospital. Based on his research, J. Bowlby concludes that failure to establish a strong attachment to one or more primary persons in early childhood, is related to the inability to establish close personal relationships in adulthood. J. Bowlby's work was followed by his co-worker M. Ainsworth, who has developed a theory of child attachment styles at about 12 to 18 months of age. Based on the behavior of the children, she divided them into three groups - securely attached, insecurely attached and avoidant, insecurely attached and ambivalent (M. D. Ainsworth, M. C. Blehar, E. Waters, S. Wall, 1978, more in S. Nolen-Hoeksem, B. L. Fredrickson, G. R. Loftus, W.A. Wagenaar, 2012). A more recent study by K. Howard, A. Martin, L. J. Berlin and J. Brooks-Gunn (2011), examined associations between early mother-child separation and subsequent maternal parenting behaviors and children's outcomes in a sample of 2080 families who participated in the Early Head Start Research and Evaluation Project, the vast majority of whom were poor. Multiple regression models revealed that, controlling for baseline family and maternal characteristics and indicators of family instability, the occurrence of a mother-child separation of a week or longer within the first two years of life was related to higher levels of child negativity (at age 3) and aggression (at ages 3 and 5). The effect of separation on child aggression at age 5 was mediated by aggression at age 3, suggesting that the effects of separation on children's aggressive behavior are early and persistent. According to J. Langmeier and D. Krejčířová (2006), the belief that a child at an early age must have the opportunity to establish a lasting, uninterrupted relationship with its mother during this period, if its personal and social development is to continue as satisfactory, is based on the assumption called the critical or sensitive period of the child. However, there are current psychologists who reject such an absolute definition of critical period and believe that the first year of life is important, but at the same time, there is no reason to believe that later relationships are not possible, or that further child development is necessarily irreparably damaged.

R. Winston and R. Chicot (2016) report that, during the first two years of the child's age, children undergo huge brain development, growth and neuron pruning. The brain development of infants (as well as their social, emotional and cognitive development) depends on a loving bond or attachment relationship with a primary caregiver, usually a parent. There is increasing evidence from the fields of development psychology, neurobiology and animal epigenetic studies that neglect, parental inconsistency and a lack of love can lead to long-term mental health problems, as well as to reduced overall potential and happiness. In this paper, the authors consider the evidence for this claim across several disciplines and conclude that, the support of babies and their parents in the first two years of life, to be a crucial aim of public health groups in the community.

S. Nolen-Hoeksema, B. L. Fredrickson, G. R. Loftus and W. A. Wagenaar (2012) report that, even with regard to the child's autonomy and independence on the parent (caregiver), there are significant differences between children of about 1 year of age which are still dependent adult care, but a two-year-old or three-year-old child can already take a meal plate or bring a toy out of the shelf. This all, reduces the child's dependence on the caregiver in general and on the family caregiver particularly; the presence of parents is no longer so urgent for a child. S. Nolen-Hoeksema, B. L. Fredrickson, G. R. Loftus and W. A. Wagenaar (2012) further argue that, a child of three years of age, when children usually feel well enough in the absence of their parents, is already able to spend time with other children or adults. It follows from the above mentioned that, there is no clear opinion on the separation of the mother (nearest person) from the child at an early age, among psychological and pedagogical experts.

### **2.1 The role of an educator (parent, caregiver) in educating a child up to three years of age**

Demanding requirements have always been (and continue to be) present in education of children of an early age. In the past, the educating of children was influenced, to some extent, by factors other than the present, due to the ongoing changes affecting current families. In the past, the mother, but also in the case of multi-generation cohabitation, grandparents were involved in the educating of children. At present, due to the decline of multi-generational cohabitation, as well as an increase in the early return of the mother back to work, perspectives on educating children up to three years of age have changed. J. Derková (2018) states that, being a good parent in today's chaotic and rapidly changing world is difficult. Many are wondering how they can, and whether they can, convey their values to children, if the world is changing so quickly. Certainly there are unchanging, permanent, humanly valid values that need not be imposed on children, because it is better to educate them by example.

Although it is not the subject of this study to write about the relatively rapid changes that take place in contemporary families, it is not possible to neglect them in the context of early childhood education, as they also influence the development of the child's personality, in conjunction with other aspects. Changes in current families, such as the increase in divorce rates, the increase in out-of-wedlock children, the increase in single mothers, changes in parental roles, the increased work involvement of mothers and the filling of parents' off-work and family time, are the subject of many scientific studies in sociology, psychology and education. New phenomena, such as the change in the acceptance of the father's role in the family, the father's maternity and parental leave, and the education of children from the perspective of a gay couple, are also being researched. The above-described changes in the functioning of the family, such as the father's maternity and parental leave, should be key in scientific research constituting new knowledge regarding the educating of children, as well as the (male) caregiver's influence on the child's development up to three years of age.

Despite the above-mentioned changes concerning the current families, and with regard to the aspects described above concerning the development of children up to the age of three, certain rules in education do not change. We note that this is a sensitive period of early childhood development, in which the optimum impact of education, taking into account the specific needs of the child at this age, is of immense importance. J. Langmeier and D. Krejčířová (2006) state that, of course, sufficient environment stimulation, as well as clarity and stable structuring, are a prerequisite for the rapid and complex development of the child at an early age. There should be a person who guarantees the continuity of gentle, loving and sensitive care. This is a guarantee of a sense of safety, a prerequisite for a healthy psychological development in the years to come. The development of the child, according to the authors, is optimal, where the mother or several persons familiar to it are concerned. The danger lies in the frequent substitution of the

social environment, separation from the family, the care of several less known people and the exposure of the child to any kind of unfavorable condition.

From the point of view of important milestones in connection with the early age of the child, we consider it important to devote to the period of rebellion (defiance), the so-called. self-assertion period. The period of defiance usually occurs between the 2nd and 3rd year of life of the child, sometimes beyond the age of three, and continues into the next development period. The aforementioned period refers to many parents (caregivers) as quite demanding, as children tend to react by self-asserting their own will, displaying defiance to their parents, aggression, in „normal/standard“ situations. P. Řičan (2014) emphasizes that, this period is the period of "rage in the sake of rage" when the child acts stubbornly, i.e., it self-asserts its will, not because it has a certain need, or something bothers it. It is just for the sake of it. D. Miell and S. Ding (2005, in S. Ding, K. Littleton, 2005) state that, in this development period the self-awareness of the little child is most pronounced. Expressions of self-awareness in the young child can be seen in the displays of rage and aggression, which are most common in Western societies, from 18 months to 3 years of age, when the infant is already displaying an increasing awareness of the self, through the use of the words 'me' and, particularly in this context, 'mine'. J. Překopová (2014) states that, the period of defiance is of paramount importance in the awareness and manifestation of conflicting emotions, as well as in their own boundaries, and the boundaries of others. The author further states that, the evolving ego becomes detrimental whenever we stop the anger, divert attention from it, and comfort the child as if it were a baby. The ability of a two-to three-year-old child to experience defiance, that is to say, the boundaries and the power of itself and power of another, that is, to experience the relationship between ME and YOU, should not be punished. P. Řičan (2014) states that, if it is not necessary, the parent should give up any attempt to force the child to do what he / she refuses to do. The author further states that, the solution to the crisis is the adoption of order, i.e., in sharp collisions with the environment, the child will eventually realize that the constraints his parents give him/her are part of a solid educational guide, that protects him/her from the dangers of the outside environment and also from the dangers coming from within, i. e., from the unbridled spontaneity of its own interior.

### **2.2 Education in a family vs. out-of-home environment of a child at an early age**

A number of expert discussions are currently being conducted on the educating of children, under the age of three, in family and non-family settings. Pedagogy or psychology experts can not agree on when it is appropriate or "safe" to care for a child of this age outside the family environment via its placement in the facility. Obviously, at an early age of a child, i.e., a child from birth to three years of age, optimum care is provided by the parents, first necessarily by the mother, and immediately followed by the father. However, given the current economic situation in current families in Slovakia, it is not always possible for one of the parents to care for a child in their home environment. Mostly mothers are "forced" to return to work, because of the family's financial situation, or to keep their jobs. Experts in the field of developmental psychology and pedagogy confirm, and scientific studies show, that the early return of a mother to work is not favorable for the child. J. Langmeier and D. Krejčířová (2006) argue that, placing a child in an institution, (hospital, infant institution) under the age of 1, brings an increased risk for the child at this age, which is difficult to compensate for/by the nursing staff's focused care. The placement of a child at this age in the nursery should be seen as a less appropriate alternative to family educating, although some children adapt to the nursery quite well. A child of about one year can not yet establish a relationship with other children, they become only "objects" of momentary interest to it, and they cannot satisfy their needs. The authors further argue that, the fact that a child is about to be actively interested in interacting with other children, from about two years of age, and that he / she

sometimes engages vividly in such interaction, points out to that he / she is more likely to be able to benefit from such interaction, from the point of development, and therefore, is better prepared at least for a short play in the group. Some children handle the inclusion in nurseries well and it may not necessarily be endangering or even harmful to them, as it is sometimes unilaterally emphasized. Others, however, are very immature for such experience. This apparently depends on the temperament dispositions, on the previous experience with strangers so far, dependence on mother, cognitive maturity, but also on the way of nursery education, etc. L. Markham (2015) argues that, if a child spends more than twenty hours a week in the facility, this environment will certainly affect it. The influence is according to the author, largely positive, as the child learns behavior in a group of peers and has many opportunities to explore and learn. However, according to the author, small children are to be in close contact with one primary adult. The author further notes that, for example, paid parental leave is not ensured in the US, so about half of the children in this country spend most of their active time ( when not sleeping), during the first two years of their lives, without parents. It is a critical development period, when the center of emotion develops in the brain. L. Murray (2016) argues that, one of the biggest studies dealing with the impact of non-parental care on early aged children found that the general impact of this care is negligible. However, the study emphasized that, the nature of this care is important. The author further emphasizes that, one of the key issues raised in research into nursery care is the importance of quality. Sufficient staff in relation to the number of children, well-trained staff and better salaries ensure more satisfaction for the caregivers, a greater sense of professionalism and a low turnover rate.

Currently, in accordance with the above mentioned, the ensuring of a quality environment and a professional approach by carers in facilities for children at an early age, is a relatively frequently discussed topic in Slovakia, i.e. "The act of the day nursery care centres", Social Services Act no. 448/2008 Coll. Based on the wording of Act 32b, it is possible to place a child in a childcare facility providing care up to the age of three in Slovakia, where a "service to promote reconciliation of family life and working life, by providing childcare under three years of age", is provided if the parent, or a person who has a child entrusted to a personal care by court decision, prepares for a vocational education in a secondary school or college, prepares for the labor market or performs entry or return activities, and/or is employed. ECEC facilities for children under the age of 3 provide: routine childcare, nutrition, education. '

Since its inception, the wording of the act, and its adaptation, has been the subject of many criticisms, also due to the tightening of the conditions for the operation of such facility, such as the provision of barrier-free access, which many operators of existing facilities can not provide. The issue of discrimination against some groups of parents and children was also criticized (e.g. non-working parents, disabled parents), as well as restrictions on the provision of care, in relation to the child's age (i.e. up to 3 years). The change in form of the act has also brought the view that many of the existing private facilities will cease to exist, because they will not meet the stringent conditions for their operation. There are not enough of state-run facilities for children in Slovakia, so parents and children are paying for the current situation. However, in the context described above, we express a skeptical view, because there is little debate about ensuring the quality of education in these facilities. At the end of this part of the article, we agree with the comments of foreign authors P. Broadhead, J. Johnston, C. Tobbell and R. Wolley (2010), who argue that professionals from different areas of early childhood education and care should work together and learn from each other. Social or health care providers, as well as education professionals, can "benefit" from an integrated approach and thus provide more effective measures. The authors further emphasize that, even within one discipline, professionals can support each other to provide more effective care. An important part of this integrated work is partnership or teamwork, so that different knowledge of professionals, who are professionally engaged in ECEC, is

appreciated, respected, shared with each other. It is always important to consider the reason for this integration; an individual - a child who should be at the center of everything that is needed to be done and what is done.

### 3 Methodology, methodics and organization of research

At present, the child's education at an early age is not systematically addressed in Slovakia. Similarly, it is also abroad. There are few research studies on early childhood education and care. They are overshadowed by the research of preschool and elementary age children, but issues of toddler and infant education are rarely addressed. There are few state-run institutions in Slovakia which aim to educate children of early age. Such education takes place in facilities until the third year of the child's age. Based on period-conditioned, domestic and inspirational foreign programs, in line with the socio-cultural conditions of the present world, ECEC proves necessary not only for the development of a child in rapidly changing conditions, but also for parents, who are rapidly returning to their profession. Parents also have difficulty in choosing parenting strategies, at a time of rapid information boom and absent pedagogical counseling, including the absence of educational programs for children. The main goal of our long-term research is to conceptualize early childhood education and care for children up to 3 years of age.

Our intention is to identify the educational aspects of institutionalized care provided in ECEC facilities up to the 3rd year of the child's age. To present and analyze the essence of subjective testimonies of caregivers and early childhood education and childcare professionals, related to the research problem identified. To conceptualize the methodological-content form of ECEC, by identifying educational issues and educational needs, considered by caregivers, parents, and ECEC professionals. Research questions are defined as follows: What are the specifics of early childhood educating in the family and childcare facilities up to the 3rd. year of the child's age? What are the positives, negatives of contemporary education in ECEC facilities up to the 3rd year of the child's age? What early childhood educating constructs can be identified, based on mental and social representations of parents, caregivers and other early childhood educators?

We exclusively used qualitative methodology (M. C. Wittrock). Our intention is to understand how the subjects of our research view the studied phenomenon, postpone our view, and describe the system of relationships, how they (the subjects) connect them to a network and determine each other. In our research we exclusively use qualitative research methods and research tools to gather data, as well as to elaborate them: Focus group (C. McNamara; J. Plichtová), narrative and discourse interview, direct and indirect, participative and non-participative observation (P. Gavora ) and analysis: open coding method (A. Strauss, J. Corbin), constant comparative method (W.J. Creswell, M. Kolb), selective coding method (A. Strauss, J. Corbin).

The target group of our research project were caregivers in ECEC, providing care up to the third year of the child's age, and specialists in early childhood education, together with parents. Research terrain was represented by state-run ECEC facilities and maternity centers in Bratislava. At the end of the research project, we managed to implement a workshop in one of the ECEC facilities, where we presented some of our findings. The results of the research raised questions - the space for discussion of the concerned. The participants were: child-educating professionals (educators, psychologists, healthcare professionals, politicians and ministerial employees).

In the qualitative research, we have carried out, we applied validation and reliability methods (D. Kostrub 2016 and L. M. Ferrer, Jimenez, M. J. Mayan): Triangulation as a combined application of different research tools, methods, groups of research subjects, local and time spaces, and various theoretical

perspectives, aimed at gaining the phenomenon. Constant Comparative Method (CCM) - application of systematic comparison of codifications and classifications.

The degree of generalization - the creation of a terrain-based structure. Presentation of the process - imaginary transfer of the audience to the research field. Process evaluation and quality control - implemented through reliability and credibility. The presentation of the research results consists in designing research findings (emerging questions) and discussions, (*questions on the substance of the text, what to do to support the development of educational principles in the education of children and others*) by constructing consensus in dialogue (discourse) and intersubjectivity.

### 3.1 Interpretation of research results

Institutional education for early childhood in Slovakia, takes place in ECEC facilities. We solved the project of our research at the time when the so-called "Act of the day nursery centres" of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs was being solved, and met with senior executives of the Department of Labor, Social Affairs and Family in Bratislava, to whom we wanted to presented our project. We did not agree on cooperation, but we met with them at the last discussion seminar. The research was conducted in ECEC centers and state-run facilities, providing care up to the third year of the child's age in Bratislava. These are family-type facilities with permanent staff. Caring for the child is of the responsibility of the caregiver. We have identified that, in the state facilities the majority of employees have the qualification of a nurse (currently the study program is disabled). Graduates of this program have knowledge at the level of the school-leaving exam in psychology, paediatrics and are prepared for the work with children. They have many years of experience and many have been in the facility for over 30 years, where they carry out their work at a high professional level. Their professional activity is not supported by methodological manuals; they draw on the literature written before 1999. We conclude that good, well-proven elements of the past in the process of education, persist until now. However, some of the caregivers said that in addition to not being supported in methodological manuals, speech therapists, psychologists and paediatricians do not come to their facilities, as they had in the past. They consider current state nurseries to be of a high standard. They even see the way how nurseries used to work in the past as an amateur approach. They consider it unsuitable for a child to have a precisely defined educational component at the exact time of day. It is desirable for the caregiver to have thoughtful and planned activities, together with bearing in mind that the educating should take place throughout the whole day. The approach of the caregiver should be individual and the caregiver should respond to the current physical and psychological disposition of the child (for example, it may be teething). We identified targeted educational activities in a set of activities, implemented almost throughout the whole child's stay in the facility. The child's cultural literacy is developed by education. Based on research data, we identified 7 areas of education: communication culture, safety and care culture, culture of getting to know (cognitive), culture of coexistence, behavioral culture - emotions, attitudes and their balance, culture of interpretation - art.

Educational activities for children are prepared by the caregivers. It is an artistic, movement, intellectual, musical field of education, and self-help skills activities. The day of the child in the institution has a well-defined timetable and precise rules are set for all participants, to determine the direction of the facility (D. Kostrub et al. 2018).

Significant critical points in the process of educating a child in a ECEC facility for children up to 3 years of age, and educating in the family are: promoting independence, love, and cooperation between family and institution.

It is important to point out the individual dimension in promoting the child's autonomy and competence done by the

parents. There are parents supporting independence and on the contrary, parents leaving the development of independence to the child itself. "Let him be, he'll learn". Caregivers respect the reservations and needs of parents. It's as if there were two poles, because on the one hand, the caregiver knows what to do with this particular child, but the parent is the one who refuses. Caregivers are also encouraged to communicate with a parent who is not interested in how the child thrives during the day. The stay in the facility is considered by the parents to be essential in the educating and support of the child in self-management, whereas in the home environment the child is just sent to bed. On the contrary, there are parents who want to teach the child everything themselves, and parents who cooperate. A significant breakthrough for successful cooperation seems to lie in the success of the child.

Independence, competence, gives the child freedom. This way it is happy because it becomes independent in its actions, independent of adult help. It doesn't have to be in a dirty diaper anymore, it doesn't have to be dirty, it doesn't have to wait for someone to wash it, because it can do it by itself. We think communication with the child is beneficial. The child has to get used to self-help skills activities, gradually. It should gradually learn and be given time to try to dress, wash, eat with a spoon, etc. We note that children in ECEC facilities have enough opportunities to progressively improve their autonomy. Caregivers consider the development of autonomy and competence a priority.

The basic and immediate phenomenon we have identified in ECEC centres, as well as in the family, is love. Love has different forms in the family. We identify that love is the foundation of education and we conclude that how parents understand and apply it in education, has a definite impact on parents' constructs in education. Rejecting an authoritarian approach to education, and seeking for respect for the child, is a phenomenon on which parents clearly agree. Their opinions differ in what behaviour they still respect from the child and what they can not, or in no case, will.

We assume that, parents' opinions differ in the following: Whether a child should be raised/educated within the boundaries of set rules, or not. Whether, or not, the child should respect the specified rules. Whether only the child should respect these rules, or the same goes for the parent too. Whether a parent has enough will and energy to be consistent. Whether he/she tries to evaluate - to "guard" the behavior of the child, or is able and willing to be attentive to him/herself (in the role of parent and human being). Whether he / she can identify errors only in the child's behaviour, or also in his / her own. Whether he/she can admit the mistakes and stand up to them, as an opportunity to rectify (behaviour) or failure (M. Tománková, D. Kostrub 2018).

From a rigorous analysis of research data, we have found a clear match between the interpretations of caregivers and other professionals which tells us that the basic feature of a good caregiver is to love children, have a positive attitude towards them. The caregivers simply said, they like children, have the will to make a child happy, as well as a parent in the question of raising/educating a child. A parent understands love differently, compared to a caregiver. The caregiver makes the child happy through educational activities during the day, by teaching it to be relatively independent. "The child is then proud and in fact, the educator this way manifests love". A parent can only understand love towards the child from that emotional side, and on this basis, he/she forms educational implications, or (sometimes) not at all.

We identify that communication is an essential critical phenomenon in family and facility collaboration until the third year of the child's age. Parents approach the collaboration differently. Some are interested in how their child thrived during their time in the facility, others not as much. But still, caregivers' superiors require active communication and collaboration with parents. The most effective strategy is to highlight the success of the child. Parents are surprised how come the child is doing

things “right” in the facility and not at home. Importance lies in the fact that, the child spends a substantial part of the day in the facility, where the caregiver actively engages the child, perhaps more than the parent. We assume that, the fundamental phenomenon, complicating the educating in the family, is consistency in parenting and the time enabling the parents to be consistent. Caregivers are consistent in their work and have a child-only time. Parents know how it should be theoretically, they are interested in the subject matter, they talk to friends about it, they do study various materials on the Internet, but still, the problem is consistency. Research shows us that they do not have the time to be consistent in education. We note that for more serious problems, such as child aggression, family and facility cooperation is of high importance. The parent often finds it very difficult to accept that something is wrong especially, when the child behaves differently at home. It happens that the parent does not take the words/advice of the caregivers seriously, and hardly ever believes them. The parent often refuses the recommendations of a professional and only when a more serious problem arises, he/she will seek the help of a psychologist, etc. The caregiver should protect the other children in the group. When a child gets sick or has health problems, and the morning filter confirms it, the child cannot remain in the group until he / she has a proof of his / her health condition from the pediatrician. When an aggressive child threatens other children in the group, he / she may, in extreme cases, be excluded from the group. It depends on the operating rules, that the parents are obliged to sign and accept. However, we note that the staff is in every case, trying to work with parents and solve the problem. Trust is important. The parent voluntarily chooses the facility. He/she chooses a facility he trusts (D. Kostrub et al. 2018).

The following table summarizes the most important findings from the research presented:

Tab. Parallels of educating in an ECEC facility, providing care up to the third year of the child's age and in family

	FAMILY	ECEC FACILITIES PROVIDING CARE UP TO THE THIRD YEAR OF THE CHILD'S AGE	PARALLELS OF EDUCATING IN ECEC FACILITIES AND FAMILY
Love	Love is the foundation of education and we conclude that, as parents understand it and apply it in education, it has a clear influence on parents' constructs in education.	A positive relationship with the child, understanding and interest, is a vital phenomenon in education, and the basis for accompanying the child in all its phases.	The caregiver defines and understands love in a completely different way than a parent. The means of the educator is targeted professional activity, educational activity (play). Independence and rules are the means of caregiver, to make a child happy in a facility. It is a caregiver's interest in the child. We note that, a parent understands love more on the emotional level.
Boundaries	Parents' views differ in the importance of setting boundaries and their consistent observance. The setting / non-setting of boundaries in education in the family is often minimized to positive patterns/rolemodels. The child is the "mirror" of the parent and also mimics the negative patterns/rolemodels.	The „demarcated“ boundaries represent a safe space in which the child operates independently. The child becomes independent and less dependent on adults. The phenomenon of educating, or non-educating parents clearly manifests itself in the will of the child to respect the boundaries of the facility, if the child does not need specialist care and the caregiver does not suspect a diagnosis	It is important to communicate and cooperate with the parent and in the event of a problem, to cooperate with other professionals, especially the psychologist. A healthy child is taught by a caregiver to respect boundaries, if the family works with the facility and can receive expert advice and assistance. The means is not a ban, but a distraction in form of other activities. The

	dels, possibly the negative behaviors are closely linked to the situation and the overall atmosphere of the family. If a child does not have a diagnosis that complicates education.	(e.g. autism, ADHD) complicating the child's respect of the boundaries. The facility offers a helping hand to the parents, and the facility's staff recommends working with a specialist. In extreme cases, the child is excluded from the group for security reasons and for the protection of other children.	caregiver teaches the child to think critically and talks about the child's specific educational problems at an appropriate level.
Communication /Comformity in interest of the child	We note that parents approach differently to communication with the facility and see the child's interest differently than the specialists - staff of the facility: 1. Parents leave all educational activities under the surveillance of the caregiver. They do not work actively with a child at home, or work with the facility. 2. Parents who want to teach the child everything themselves and do not respect the caregiver's opinion. 3.Cooperating parents.	Caregivers are encouraged to communicate with parents, even if they are not interested in how the child was doing in the facility. Parent and caregiver communication is cautious on the part of the facility. If the parent does not respect the caregivers, the director of the facility enters the communication and points out the child's interest in an appropriate manner.	Pointing out the success of a child is a breakthrough phenomenon in family and facility collaboration.
Independence Support / autonomy	Parents consider independence to be an essential phenomenon in education. However, consistency and time complicate and artificially prolong the child's ability to act independently within the boundaries of education. Parents are often unable to grasp the problem. They look for support in professional literature and online discussion forums. Positive is their effort to seek professional help, but many parents are afraid of being helped by a psychologist, being it understood as a stigma by them.	Caregivers are limited by parents' requirements. Often times there is a conflict between the opinions of experts and the family.	Communication and collaboration between family and facility is important. It is important that the child's independence is promoted both in the facility and in the family. In terms of pedagogical theory.
Consistency	Parental overload is a phenomenon that does not facilitate their ability and will to be consistent in education.	Consistency is unambiguously required, preferred and implemented, in the upbringing and education of the child in the facility.	The success of a child is a motivation to work closely together and trust the facility.
Time	Parents are	Caregivers have a	Parents admire and

facing a time deficit. Education and actively spent time with a child are often minimized to a basic day-to-day interaction. Educational potential of rolemodels, that are not always positive.	child-time only. They responsibly perform targeted educational activities. They are also proactive and willing to prepare for their work outside their working hours.	show sincere joy at each child's success. They are astonished and do not understand why a child will perform a particular activity and develop it just in the facility, whereas at home it refused to do it, or to understand and apply specific elements in education.
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#### 4 Conclusion

From the theories presented above and from the results of our research, it follows that, in the educating of children under the age of three, the educator (parent, caregiver, educator) should, based on the biological and psychological needs of the child at this age, aim to provide a sufficiently stimulating environment in the field of motor development, i.e., to provide enough space for movement in the interior, but also exterior, together with the area of emotional development, i.e., to fulfill the need for security, safety, and love. In the area of social development of a child, it is best to establish relationships with the primary/closest caregivers and later to gradually expand the network of relationships with peers and others. In view of the cognitive development of a child at this age, it is necessary to provide adequate stimulation, i.e., enough incentives from the outside. Intellectual stimuli are important. Given the sensitivity of the period in the initial development of speech skills, it is necessary to provide enough stimuli in the area of speech development, with the correct speech pattern, constant communication with the child, via reading, etc. At a later stage in the early childhood period, it is important to support the child in independence, i.e., teach it self-help skills activities, e.g. for personal hygiene, dining, dressing and the like. In early childhood education, parents (caregivers) should not forget to support the "base formation" for further development of the child's moral values at a later age. From the point of view of moral development (e.g. L. Kohlberg, 1976, Š. Ferková In: Prevendárová J. et al., 2017), it is not harmful if the parents support a child's moral behavior and they also show, by their own actions, what is expected, allowed and what is prohibited, etc. Parents enable the child to orient itself in the basic rules of behavior. It is important to note that, every child is in essence unique. Therefore, the approach to early childhood education should be unique. We are of the opinion that there is no single, coherent 'guide' for educating a child at this age. What is clear however, is the need to provide enough incentives in different areas of early childhood development. These should be in synergy with providing enough love, acceptance, security, safety from the parent (caregiver), because they predetermine the child's future behavior, further development, its ability to learn, create "healthy" relationships with other people, and integrate into society with full acceptance of the child's developmental potential.

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