Organización Mundial para la Educación Preescolar
World Organization for Early Childhood Education
Organization Mondiale Pour L´Education Préscolaire

OMEP

WEBINAR:

HOW TO DEAL WITH COVID-19 IN ECEC?

IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON EARLY CHILDHOOD PHYSICAL AND MENTAL WELLBEING (IN ENGLISH)

FRIDAY, JULY 24TH, 2020

9:00 AM TO 10:00 BUENOS AIRES / 8:00 AM TO 9:00 AM NEW YORK / 8:00 PM TO 9:00 PM SEOUL

BACKGROUND

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused major changes to the daily lives of young children and their families. This has affected them, in different ways, due to the vast inequalities and diversities in experiencing childhood. All over the world, sanitary policies have imposed closing schools as well as other services linked with the protection of young children. ECEC closures have critical consequences, and present risks over children wellbeing and development. ECEC develops broad functions: it offers learning opportunities to children, but it also provides a space for strengthening bonds with peers, and significant adults and caregivers, assuring nutrition, and protective environments, as well as psychosocial support for their families.

Unfortunately, all children are affected. Yet, those that have their human rights vulnerated are the most damaged: children in poverty, marginalized, living with hunger and other difficult conditions, e.g. armed conflicts, migrant and displaced children living in camps, separated from their families, sometimes even in prisons. Children are also affected by climate change, pollution, environmental degradation, and increased frequency of natural disasters. Some are victims of racism, xenophobia, gender discrimination, and suffering from sexual and labor exploitation.

For young children, every single day is of vital importance for their physical, emotional, and mental health. The risks are visible and invisible over integral health and development as well as the fulfillment of many human rights: to health, food, education, play, participation, access to culture, to water and sanitation, among other relevant rights.

DISCUSSION

Regarding this situation, the OMEP World Executive Committee decided to facilitate this Webinar to address the situation of childhood physical and emotional health and wellbeing during Covid-19 virus times. The proposal is to analyze perspectives and experiences to find useful criteria, and strategies directed to governments, school boards, educators, families and other caregivers, to:

- protect early childhood human rights (to health, education, development, and wellbeing, etc.) and citizenship;

- help to continue guiding and accompanying families in the care and education of young children at home and in communities;

- collaborate in planning of appropriate proposals for the reopening of the ECEC, considering the special characteristics, needs and rights of this fundamental stage.

The Webinar will include keynote presentations from two specialists who have medical, psychological, and pedagogical expertise on children: **Raúl Mercer MD MSc** and **Jessica N. Essary, PhD** and it will be coordinated by **Mercedes Mayol Lassalle, OMEP World President**.

Dr. Mercer will discuss the concerns of the world of social pediatrics regarding the consequences of COVID-19 on children's health and wellbeing. He will point out three aspects to be taken in mind: a) The place of childhood in the pandemic; b) The effects of the current pandemic on the rights of children, and c) The modalities of response from the field of social pediatrics.

Dr. Essary will consider routines that children maintained before Covid-19 that suddenly changed when the pandemic hit the world. She will present some categories related to the ideas and representations of young children about the pandemic and the explanations that they obtain from adults. She will also propose strategies to protect children's rights while maintaining their socio-emotional health, analyzing how to deal with physical distancing with early childhood, the uses of technology and the efforts for learning continuity, taking into account stressor factors for children and adults.

Mercedes Mayol Lassalle will share the main ideas of the recent **OMEP Position Paper** (https://worldomep.org/index.php?page=view&pg=1&idx=417&hCode=BOARD&bo_idx=1&sfl=&stx=&cate=) and its relation with the key messages of the panelists.

AGENDA

1- Webinar and speaker's presentations by Mercedes Mayol Lassalle (5 minutes)

2- Presentation by Raul Mercer (20 minutes)

3- Presentation by Jessica Essary (20 minutes)

4- Questions (5 minutes)

5- Closing by Mercedes Mayol Lassalle (10 minutes)

6- Final message (1 minute each)

INFORMATION

Jessica N. Essary, PhD is an Associate Professor of Education and the Inclusive Education Program Director at Cazenovia College. Proud to be part of the 'CAZ family' she joined this small, historic institution in Cazenovia, New York for its emphasis on individualized

education. As an international teacher educator, Dr. Essary was an expat for several years in Dubai, and has presented at OMEP conferences in many countries, including Prague, Shanghai, and Panama. Prior to higher education, Jess taught 1st & 4th grade in a community with a high poverty rate, and was a lead teacher in the SUNY, UB Early Childhood Research Center. Among other activities, Essary is currently a member of the editorial board of the Journal of Formative Design in Learning, and the author of many early childhood education publications.

Raúl Mercer is a pediatrician, with a Master's degree in Epidemiology from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, US. He held positions in the healthcare system, was hospital director, coordinator of the Maternal and Child Program of the Province of Buenos Aires and of the National State. Researcher on issues related to health and development of childhood with a life course focus. Coordinator of the FLACSO Social Sciences and Health Program, Argentina. Member of ISSOP (International Society of Social Pediatrics). Member of the Lancet-WHO-UNICEF Commission on: A future for the world's children.

Mercedes Mayol Lassalle is OMEP World President since January 1, 2020. Degree in Primary Education, Graduated in Educational Sciences, University of Buenos Aires. Ex-Director of the Early Childhood Education Area of the City of Buenos Aires. Ex-senior consultant for the United Nations Development Program. Nowadays she is Professor in the Master Early Childhood Education at the University of Buenos Aires and in the Regional Training Program in Educational Policy Planning and Management, IIPE-UNESCO Buenos Aires, Office for Latin America. Elected member of the Coordination Group of the Collective Consultation of NGOs on EDUCATION 2030 - CCNGO/ED 2030.

LOGISTIC

The webinar will be held in **English and broadcasted by**

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https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCezVyAEkqdbJ5ipoGSSqf7g?view_as=subscriber

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