

EURLYAID NEWSLETTER 2 - OCTOBER 2014

Dear Eurlyaaid members,

The Eurlyaaid board would like to inform you about the last conference which was organized by our Turkish colleagues in cooperation with Eurlyaaid members:

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON EARLY CHILDHOOD INTERVENTION (ICECI 2014)

Between April 3 and 6, 2014, an international conference took place near Antalya/Turkey with the topic

“Bridging Research & Practice in Early Childhood Intervention”

The Turkish association on Early Intervention EÇOMDER was the organizer with the participation of EURLYAID. - This very well organized conference presented some peculiarities, which will be reported here in brief.

1. The conference took place at a large holiday resort.
2. In the beginning, contributions of Anglo-American origin dominated.
3. A highly active Turkish community presented their engagement in early intervention.
4. The view of the Turkish organizers was cosmopolitically influenced.

1. The official venue was Antalya, but the place where the conference took place was the



Akka Antedon Hotel in Kemer, 25 km south of Antalya. This, in itself, would not be that important, except for the fact that this framework enhanced the pleasant atmosphere considerably. This huge, luxurious and self-contained vacation resort was not yet – in pre-season – filled with tourists, and, thus, offered the ca. 350 participants of 30 countries the chance for frequent informal encounters, to get to know each other, exchange experiences and discuss the presentations.

Prof. Ana Maria Serrano (Portugal)
President of EURLYAID
At the opening ceremony

2. The exchange between colleagues did not only take place during informal meetings but different examples of existing cooperation were formally presented. Anglo-American and Turkish universities work together in a variety of ways similar to the manner in which European colleagues and those of Portugal and Croatia cooperated, as was already mentioned at previous conferences. In addition to presentations on fundamental research and programs in the area of early childhood education, parallel workshops on this subject were held by American and Turkish colleagues.

One of several examples is briefly singled out here: *“Providing Services in the Home: A Focus on Parent-Child Relationship and Practitioner Behavior”*. It shows the cooperation between Mark Innocenti and coworkers (Utah State University) and Ibrahim Diken (Anadolu University, Eskisehir). The common goal is to enhance the parent-child-interaction (“parenting”) especially with very young children in their natural environment at home. Innocenti and co-workers developed the PICCOLO program, based on the analysis of videos of 2000 families. Four kinds of “developmental parenting” that support child development are assessed: “Affection” “Responsiveness” “Encouragement” “Teaching”. The assessment consists of 29 items in subdivisions. The starting point for the work of the experts is the situation between the child and its caregivers where interactions are well developed. Innocenti stressed that they always found at least one item with a positive response. (“Why not start with what they are already doing?”)

Long-term studies have shown that the concentration on one specific developmental area has less of an impact than the consideration of the whole breadth of the afore-mentioned areas of interaction. Therefore, professionals who accompany parents should encourage them to involve their child more and more in an emotionally warm atmosphere, characterized by responsiveness and encouragement.

This is one example among many others from the workshops, which concerned themselves with the diverse approaches to the work with parents, more often, however, with the cooperation with parents.

3. In Turkey as in various other countries, therapists and pedagogues are educated at universities. This was obvious from the quality of the many contributions to the conference. Turkish colleagues discuss similar problems in the contentual development of ECI systems, as do their colleagues in other countries.

Talks, presentations, workshops and posters presented a broad spectrum of topics.



Noor van Loen
(Netherland) Board member
of EURLYAID
Presenting her workshop
“Your Right to your Life”

Unusual to colleagues working in early intervention were topics concerning the furthering of older children beyond 6 years of age, and, in several meetings, the support for gifted children. - It is remarkable that many presentations focused on children with ASD – Autism Spectrum Disorder. Parent’s organizations presented their own programs, some together with their children.



Children and their parents

Representatives from different countries discussed the problems of working in an inclusive setting. Which knowledge must be part of the studies, or further education, to enable experts to work in inclusive groups of children?

4.

Disturbances in child development obviously exist all over the world. Everywhere experts are searching for better solutions for the support of children with disabilities and their parents. This conference in Antalya demonstrated the open mind of the Turkish organizers who are looking at many countries outside their borders. There were not only professionals from 30 countries but at the same time speakers from all over the globe, from South Africa to India, Iran, Arabic countries, east, central and west European countries, and the USA.

On the other hand, specific problems were the topics of talks about “burnout among caregivers” (Oman, Turkey, and USA) or “child development within two languages” (Turkey, Germany, and Estonia). Turkish and Iranian colleagues presented remarkably often the issue of “Autism Spectrum Disorder”.

The question of how professionals should be qualified working in the field of ECI and how inclusion should be translated into action, is universal. People from all over the world were able to discuss these issues in a stimulating, open atmosphere. Last, but not least, various members of EURLYAID contributed to this excellent conference.

Prof. Juergen Kuehl M.D., Pediatrician and Board Member of EURLYAID (Germany), wrote this report assisted by critical observations by *Nasfi Nas*, M.A. Linguist and Speech Therapist (Germany). The report is published in German (*Frühförderung interdisziplinär*, 4/2014, pp 243-245).

An EURLYAID board meeting...



...and a meeting of the project “ICF-Train” took place one day before the opening of the conference.

Monica Ingemarsson (Norway)
and Jürgen Kühl (Germany)
Working together
on board issues

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