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FinlandWay[®]
BETTER BEGINNINGS



A Voyage to development of early childhood education in the cultural context of Finland, Brazil, and Morocco

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Abstract

In Finnish early childhood education system learning is understood to be holistic and education aims to nurture the development of **the whole child**, the biological, motoric, emotional, cognitive, psychological, artistic and social dimensions of it. In global perspective children are forced to learn only through cognitive approach and focusing on academic skills earlier than before.

The **lack of play and playful in learning** don't make the learning easier,

The **pressure to start teaching academic skills** at a progressively younger age at the expense of traditional early childhood activities is happening, because teachers don't know **the alternative way**. The traditional learning styles are taught in Universities and repeated in classrooms when young teachers try to mimic the teaching styles of their mentors.

Concepts of play, playful learning and play-based teaching cannot be copied from theory books. **To implement play-based pedagogy** teachers need reflection skills and critical thinking skills. They need a **community of teachers** to learn and reflect together.

In FinlandWay Preschool Systems the play-based pedagogy is implement and development following the Finnish playful learning traditions. However the adaptation process to the local education culture, classroom practices and curriculum traditions needs to be considered carefully. **The method is based on the research about participatory & play-based pedagogy by Dr. Kangas.**

The aim of FinlandWay program is not teach nor show. The focus of the program is **support, to scaffold and to walk with the teachers, work with them side by side focusing on the wellbeing of children**. Teachers are not learning to memorize nor copy, but considerer critically different ways of teaching and interacting with children.

The overall approach behind of FinlandWay is **to walk the pathway of learning**: Pedagogy means originally to guide, to walk side-by-side, to show way. Also in a teacher education it is essential to follow these guidelines and join in **the voyage with teachers**.

In this presentation the theoretical and reflective pedagogical frameworks founded through the research in Finnish early childhood education are put in practice in different cultural contexts **through adaptation and professional reflection**. As a researcher and teacher trainer, I have learned to aim to shared meaning-making and understanding. To create trust and belonging in very different countries and education traditions. **The FinlandWay solutions are aimed to create Better Beginnings for children, for teachers and for families.**