



**European Expert Group Meeting
“Confronting family poverty and social exclusion;
ensuring work-family balance;
advancing social integration and intergenerational solidarity
in Europe”**

Convened as part of preparations for the
Twentieth Anniversary of the International Year of the Family, 2014
(Cfr. Report of the Secretary-General ,
Preparations for and observance of the twentieth anniversary of the
International Year of the Family in 2014,
A/67/61-E/2012/3)

6-8 June 2011

6. Parler Bambin

Official name of the Organization

Centre Communal d'Action Sociale (CCAS) de la ville de Grenoble (France).

Website of the Organization

<http://www.grenoble.fr/8-solidarites.htm>.

Name of the practice

Parler Bambin (speaking toddlers): enhance early conversation with toddlers to improve future learnings.

Aim of the practice

In the program, the early childhood educators are trained to develop the language skills for toddlers and use all means to incite all day long an interactive conversation with each child to stimulate them. When a child arrives in the day-care, the educators and the parents evaluate the level of his language development thanks to a questionnaire. If he is identified as a 'late talker', the educator invites him twice a week to small workshops with 2 other children.

Target group of the practice

All the children from 0 to 3 years-old welcomed in day-care facilities and especially the children identified as "late talkers" (test based on a scientific scale of language development). Around 3.000 children from 0 to 3 welcomed by year in the 27 day-care facilities of the city of Grenoble.

Name of the person who will make the presentation

Marie-Automne Thepot.

Position in the Organization

Deputy Director of the CCAS, in charge of social innovation.

Parler bambin in Grenoble (France)

« *Little talkers* »

Developping the language skills for children under 3

Contribution to the European Expert group Meeting

Committee of the Regions

Brussels, 5-8 th june 2012



Context of Grenoble

- **157 000 inhabitants**
- **24 600 people living under the poverty line**

Centre Communal d'action sociale (CCAS)

(city office of social development)

- **1347 civil servants**
- **an ambitious political program for fragile families**

*> 3.800 children welcomed in the
30 day-care facilities each year*

38% admitted for social purpose



3 opportunities

The program was born because of :

A researcher initiative...

...connected to a strong political will to support new solutions for disadvantaged children...

... and the financial support of a national incentive for social experimentation



The « Parler bambin » Program

Observation : Educators are not enough aware of the necessary stimulation of language during the earlier cognitive development (0 to 3 year-old)

Educators are trained to turn their usual way of taking care of the children into constant interactive conversation during the activities and they pay a special attention to the late talkers by individual workshops.

They support the parents in their parenthood by involving them in the language stimulation.



The social experimentation method

- A pilot project (2008)
- A robust evaluation made by a team of scientists to measure the impact (2009) : comparison between 2 groups of 40 similar children
 - > one experiments the program, the other doesn't
 - > *The results were really impressive and made us change the shape of the program (workshops only for late talkers)*
- Roll-out to 5 facilities, then 10 more facilities, towards a total achievement (30 day-care facilities) in 2012

How do it work?

The art of conversation with toddlers

STEP 1 language workshops for late talkers :

- **A special time and area away with 2 or 3 children detected as « late talkers**
- **Encouraging speech from picture books**
- **Techniques to capture the attention and gradually introduce words**
- **20 minutes by workshops, ideally 3 times per week**



How do it work?

The art of conversation with toddlers

STEP 2 everyday language interactions with all children

- **constant language interaction even for the non-speakers (babies), all along the day and whatever the activities**
- **Use strategies to help the children put into words their will and desire to communicate**

Lessons of experience (1)

- **The exchange between research in social sciences and the policy-makers is a positive experience if both side**
> *But it takes time to co-create a project satisfactory for local governments and researchers.*
- **When the evaluation is achieved by an external team with a strong method, the robust results of the impact can't be denied.**
> *It is very usefull to convince the stakeholders to roll out the program and the political authority to turn the experimentation into full public policy*

Lessons of experience (2)

- **The impact evaluation with randomization method is complicated to organize and expensive** : *we could achieve it thanks to a national financial incentive for experimentation that covered 100% of the evaluation costs.*
- **It is particularly difficult to make an analysis of the cost avoided by early prevention** *and when it's possible, we need to convince the political authorities to finance a policy which consequences benefits to another institution.*

Contact project

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