ICECI2026

"Current Approaches in Early Childhood Intervention"

3. International Congress on Early Childhood Intervention

16 - 18 APRIL 2026



ABSTRACTS BOOK

ANADOLU ÜNİVERSİTESİ

EÇOM DER

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ICECI2026

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3rd International Congress on Early Childhood Intervention

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CONTENTS

HAKKINDA ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
KURULLAR ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
KEYNOTE 10
PANELLER 17
ÖZEL OTURUMLAR ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
SÖZLÜ BİLDİRİLER 20
POSTER BİLDİRİLER 36
SPONSORLAR 39
DESTEKLEYENLER ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

ANADOLU ÜNİVERSİTESİ

ICECI2026

ABOUT

THE PURPOSE

Purposes of ICECI2026

The 3rd International Congress on Early Childhood Intervention (ICECI2026) is designed to achieve the following goals:

- **Establish a common language** among Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) professionals from diverse disciplines and countries with long-standing experience in the field.
- **Promote international exchange of practices** by enabling participants to become familiar with ECI approaches implemented in different countries through the contributions of distinguished international speakers.
- **Provide a scientific platform** for international ECI professionals to share research, evidence-based practices, and innovations.
- **Foster international collaboration** by building strong scientific and professional networks among ECI experts worldwide.
- **Translate scientific knowledge into practice** by transmitting current research findings and professional experiences to parents, practitioners, and stakeholders through presentations and discussions.

THE SCOPE

Disciplines Covered at ICECI2026

The **3rd International Congress on Early Childhood Intervention (ICECI2026)** will bring together professionals working with young children with special needs (ages 0–6/8) and their families. The congress warmly welcomes **oral and poster presentations** from a wide range of disciplines, including but not limited to:

- **Child Development**
- **Child Neurology**
- **Child Psychiatry**
- **Developmental Pediatrics**
- **Preschool Education**
- **Psychology**
- **Psychological Counseling and Guidance**
- **Physiotherapy**
- **Social Work**
- **Special Education**
- **Speech and Language Therapy**

PARTICIPANTS

ICECI2026 warmly welcomes a diverse group of participants, including **professionals from the aforementioned disciplines, as well as teachers, parents, students, policymakers, officials, and other stakeholders engaged in the field of early childhood intervention**. This inclusive participation will enrich the congress by ensuring that perspectives from research, practice, policy, and family experience are all represented.

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TOPICS

The **3rd International Congress on Early Childhood Intervention (ICECI2026)** invites abstracts addressing young children **(0–6/8 years of age)** with special needs and their parents/families. Submissions are welcomed on (but not limited to) the following topics:

- Prevention
- **Assessment Processes** (Child Find, Screening, Diagnosis, Eligibility and Placement, Program Assessment)
- **Evidence-Based Interventions and Practices**
- **Emerging Interventions and Practices**
- **Early Childhood Inclusion**
- **Families and Family-Centred Interventions and Practices**
- **Cultural and Linguistic persity and Sensitivity**
- **Transition** (e.g., early childhood to preschool, preschool to primary school)
- **Professional Development**

ICECI2026 encourages contributions that reflect perse disciplinary perspectives, innovative practices, and international experiences in the field of early childhood intervention.

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The 3rd International Congress on Early Childhood Intervention was organized with the support of the Turkish Association on Early Childhood Intervention, Anadolu University, International Society on Early Intervention, and Eurlyaid - The European Association on Early Childhood Intervention.

KEYNOTE

Keynote 1

16 NİSAN 2026	
Saat: 09:30-10:30	Salon A

Dist. Prof. Connie KASARI

Current Trends in Helping Parent Address Developmental Concerns of Their Infants and Toddlers

Keynote 2

16 NİSAN 2026	
Saat: 18:30 - 19:30	Salon A

Prof. Mary Beth BRUDER

Reviewing Inclusion in Early Childhood Intervention: Building a Culture to Support the Variables that Matter

Keynote 3

17 NİSAN 2026	
Saat: 09:00 - 10:00	Salon A

Prof. Dr. Ahmet KONROT

Erken Müdahaleye Aforizmik Bakış: Klinik Gerçekler ve Temel İlkeler

Keynote 4

17 NİSAN 2026	
Saat: 13:30 - 14:30	Salon A

Prof. Ana Maria SERRANO

Building Strong Foundations: How Early Childhood Intervention Unlocks Early Potential for a Sustainable and Inclusive Development

Keynote 5

17 NİSAN 2026	
Saat: 18:00 - 19:00	Salon A

Dr. Elena SOUKAKOU

Inclusion in Early Childhood Education and Care: What Does It Look in Practice

Keynote 6

18 NİSAN 2026	
Saat: 09:00 - 10:00	Salon A

Prof. Ann KAISER

Improving Early Communication Outcomes: Caregiver Training, Dosage, and Fidelity in Intervention

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PANELS

Panel 1

17.04.2026	
Time: 11:30 - 12:30	Saloon F

Prof. Dr. Ayşegül Şükran ÖZ, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sinan KALKAN, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Esmehan ÖZER

PANEL-1: ***New Approaches in Early Childhood Developmental Assessment: AI-Powered Diagnosis and Early Intervention***

Nörogelişimsel bozukluklar, gelişen beynin statik yapılardan ziyade dinamik, zamana duyarlı ve etkileşimsel ağ organizasyonu üzerinden anlaşılmasını gerektiren klinik ve eğitsel durumlardır. Güncel ağ nörobilimi yaklaşımları; bilişsel, duyusal ve davranışsal işlevlerin, izole beyin bölgelerinden çok fonksiyonel beyin ağları ve bu ağların gelişimsel dinamikleri üzerinden organize olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Bu perspektif, değerlendirme, müdahale planlaması ve izlem süreçlerinde daha bütüncül ve bireyselleştirilmiş yaklaşımları zorunlu kılmaktadır. Bu panelde, nörogelişimsel bozukluklarda gelişen beynin ağ dinamikleri, erken dönemde risk belirleme, tanısal karar süreçlerine destek, transdiyagnostik müdahale hedeflerinin oluşturulması ve izlem bağlamında ele alınacaktır. Bu çerçevede, beyin işlevlerinin zamansal ve frekans temelli organizasyonunu görünür kılabilen QEEG ve beyin haritalama yaklaşımları, bir tanı koyma aracı olarak değil; ağ temelli işlevsel profillemeyi destekleyen bir değerlendirme ve izleme aracı olarak konumlandırılacaktır. QEEG'nin, gelişimsel süreçte ortaya çıkan atipik ağ örüntülerini, risk profillerini ve müdahale hedeflerini anlamadaki potansiyel katkıları; güncel bilimsel kanıtlar ve yöntemsel sınırlılıklar eşliğinde tartışılacaktır. Panel; eğitimsel nörobilim, özel eğitim ve terapi perspektiflerini bir araya getirerek, nörogelişimsel bozukluklarda beyin temelli dinamik bilginin sahaya nasıl çevrilebileceğini örneklemeyi ve katılımcılara beyin bilgisini doğru bağlamda kullanma yönünde disiplinler arası bir bakış kazandırmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Panel 2

17.04.2026	
Time: 17:00 - 18:00	Salon D

Dr. Sachly DUMAN, Dilek OKKALI SANALMIŞ, Burcu AYHAN

PANEL-2: *Establishment of the Early Childhood Intervention Model in Türkiye: Evidence, Equity, and System-Level Implications*

Early childhood intervention (ECI) plays a critical role in shaping developmental trajectories for young children, particularly those experiencing developmental delays, disabilities, or social and environmental risk factors. This proposed panel presents the establishment of the National Early Childhood Intervention Model in Türkiye, with a focus on its conceptual framework, implementation processes, and system-level implications. The development of the National ECI Model was initiated in 2020 through a partnership between the Presidency of Strategy and Budgets, Ministry of Family and Social Services, Ministry of Health, Ministry of National Education and UNICEF Türkiye. Pilot implementation initiated in 2025 with the launch of four ECI centers located in Ankara, Bursa, Kahramanmaraş, and Mersin. The proposed panel consists of three thematically integrated presentations. The first presentation provides UNICEF's approach to ECI, including key concepts and principles such as family-centered practice, inter-sectoral collaboration, natural environments, and the transdisciplinary nature of ECI. It also presents a system-level approach in ECI models, as well as the regional trends on children with developmental difficulties, the current status of ECI services, and the ongoing work in many countries with support from UNICEF. The second presentation focuses on the status of ECI services in Türkiye with an examination of the design and implementation of the national ECI model. It addresses national cross-sectoral governance and coordination mechanisms, as well as future steps for nationwide implementation. Key system-level challenges and the sustainability of the ECI model are explored, drawing on insights from the design and piloting process, including preliminary findings from the National Early Childhood Intervention Model in Türkiye. The third presentation presents the MOFSS experience in leading the ECI modeling and experiences of the service providers working in national ECI centers, on challenges and lessons learned through an implementation lens, including strategies to ensure equitable access to ECI services. Panelists will engage in a critical discussion of the evidence on ECI models, implementation challenges, and opportunities for scalability and innovation. By integrating evidence with practice-based perspectives, the panel aims to contribute to the advancement of a comprehensive, equitable, and sustainable early childhood intervention system in Türkiye.

SÖZLÜ BİLDİRİLER

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Bir Adım Kala: Okul Öncesi Öğretmenliği Mezunlarının Özel Gereksinimli Çocuklarla Çalışmaya Hazırlık Durumu

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Current Perspectives on SSD Classification: Are Atypical Errors a Distinct Subtype or a Marker of Severity?

Rationale: Speech Sound Disorders (SSD) are heterogeneous, prompting ongoing debate over classification. Some frameworks conceptualize SSD along a severity continuum, whereas differential diagnosis models distinguish between typical and atypical error patterns. However, error type is often overlooked in clinical practice, and it remains unclear whether atypical errors constitute a distinct subtype or reflect greater severity. Objective: This paper evaluates the diagnostic validity of atypical errors within SSD classification by synthesizing findings from a comprehensive scoping review. It clarifies the linguistic and cognitive profiles of atypical versus typical errors. These insights help guide clinical subtyping and intervention planning. Method: Based on a scoping review of 27 peer-reviewed studies (1985–2023), a conceptual synthesis compared developmental profiles of children with typical versus atypical errors across literacy, executive functions, and motor skills. Results: Atypical errors are not merely markers of severity but are associated with a distinct profile marked by persistent speech errors, reduced phonological awareness, and executive function weaknesses, while motor skills and novel word learning remain relatively preserved, indicating domain-specific vulnerability. Conclusion: Current evidence supports classifying atypical errors as a distinct SSD subtype rather than a variation of severity. Assessment must explicitly differentiate error types. Children with atypical patterns necessitate specialized interventions. These approaches should prioritize phonological representations and awareness, rather than standard articulation therapies. Limitations and Suggestions: Findings are constrained by heterogeneous diagnostic criteria and assessment methods. Future studies should standardize definitions of atypical errors and examine subtype-specific developmental trajectories. Keywords: speech sound disorders, classification, typical errors, atypical errors, differential diagnosis

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Untangling the Trio: Distinguishing Phonological Delay, Consistent, and Inconsistent Phonological Disorders

Rationale: Speech sound disorders (SSDs) constitute a heterogeneous group primarily classified as phonological delay, consistent phonological disorder (CPD), and inconsistent phonological disorder (IPD). Effective differential diagnosis and personalized intervention depend on distinguishing these subtypes based on their underlying cognitive-linguistic deficits rather than solely on surface-level error patterns. Objective: This study aims to examine the differential diagnosis of SSD subtypes. Beyond analyzing surface-level error patterns, this review seeks to elucidate the role of underlying proximal deficits, particularly cognitive flexibility and phonological planning processes, in distinguishing these clinical profiles and informing subtype-specific intervention strategies. Method: This study is based on a focused synthesis of recent research on SSD subtype classification to examine patterns of phonological processing, phonological planning and executive functioning across subtypes and their relationships with surface speech characteristics. Results: Phonological delay was characterized by persistent typical developmental error patterns with largely preserved rule abstraction skills, suggesting a favourable response to traditional phonological intervention. In contrast, CPD was associated with stable atypical errors and reduced cognitive flexibility, indicating the need for interventions targeting both phonological rule learning and adaptive processing. IPD was distinguished by marked intra-word inconsistency and deficits in phonological planning and sequencing, often accompanied by reduced phonological memory, highlighting the importance of therapy methods focusing on stabilising speech output and strengthening planning. Conclusion: Literature indicate that SSD subtypes differ clearly in their underlying processing mechanisms. Clinicians should attend to cognitive flexibility and phonological planning abilities in differential diagnosis to guide the selection of subtype-specific intervention approaches. Keywords: speech sound disorders, phonological delay, phonological disorder, differential diagnosis, literature review

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Prevalence of Speech and Language Disorders in Turkish-Speaking Children: An Interim Report

Aim: This study aims to identify the prevalence of primary school children in Turkish public schools who are reported to be at risk for a communication disorder by teacher report. Method: A 10-item communication skills questionnaire was used to identify which of their students teachers believed may present with a communication disorder. Nineteen public schools in the Etimesgut Municipality of Ankara, Turkiye participated in the survey. All Kindergarten through 4th grade teachers filled out the questionnaire for their students. The final sample size consisted of 5,483 children between the ages of 4-9. Results: Difficulties in at least one aspect of communication was present in 643 children (11.72%). The most common problems reported were in speech-sound production and expressive language. Problems with voice, fluency, and receptive language were less common. Out of the total sample, 215 children (3.92%) were reported by their teachers to be suspected of having a communication disorder. One hundred twelve children (2.04%) were reported to certainly have a communication disorder. Males were more likely than females to have a communication problem. Conclusion: Teacher reports reveal a large number of children at risk for communication disorders. Routine implementation of a simple communication skills questionnaire may be a cost-effective way to screen children and raise awareness of communication disorders in public schools. Keywords: childhood, speech, language, communication, schools screenings.

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Supporting Involvement of Parents of Preschoolers with Hearing Loss: An Action Research Study

Supporting qualified parent involvement is vital to the development of children with diagnoses and those at risk. Parent involvement is especially critical for the academic and social growth of children with hearing loss, beginning with language development in early childhood. Parents should participate in their children's education during the preschool years, not only during early intervention but also as children enter formal schooling. This study, conducted as action research, aimed to enhance family involvement for three preschool-aged children, ages 3 to 6, using the Kid-Ged Listening, Language, and Communication-Focused Early Intervention Program. Data were gathered through observations, interviews, documents, checklists, scales, and reflective diaries, and were systematically analyzed using both inductive and descriptive approaches. Throughout the study, parent participation in educational activities was encouraged at all phases—assessment, planning, and intervention. The program was adjusted as needed in response to emerging requirements during implementation. By the end of the intervention, positive changes in various forms of parent participation in their children's education were observed. Key words: Parent involvement, children with hearing loss, preschool, action research

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Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) in Europe – The Role of Stakeholders in Policies and Practices

Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) places families at the centre of the intervention, while prioritising the importance of supporting children's learning within their natural environments and daily routines. These principles are the basis of the recommended practices. However, translating these principles into practice remains complex, requiring sustained effort, coordination, and careful planning across multiple levels of service delivery. This study aims to analyse and describe ECI practices across five European countries—Portugal, Spain, Germany, Serbia, and Greece—with a particular focus on the role and perspectives of key stakeholders. Employing a qualitative research design, data were collected through semi-structured interviews with stakeholders directly involved in ECI systems and services. Preliminary findings reveal how stakeholders interpret and implement recommended practices, as well as the challenges they face in aligning policy and practice. Moreover, the study highlights stakeholders' contributions to shaping ECI policies and influencing the overall quality and accessibility of services. By analysing and comparing different perspectives in each country, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of how stakeholder engagement affects the implementation of effective ECI practices.

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A Simulation Model for Financing Workforce and Professional Development in Early Childhood Intervention System Expansion

A Simulation Model for Financing Workforce and Professional Development in Early Childhood Intervention System Expansion Natalia Kakabadze, MA, Macroeconomics Senior Fellow, The RISE Institute National early childhood intervention (ECI) systems are essential to ensuring that children and their caregivers can access equitable, high-quality services. However, many countries face persistent challenges in translating inclusive policy visions into costed operational plans and sustainable financing frameworks, particularly when scaling ECI services from pilot initiatives to nationwide coverage. This presentation draws on the participatory development of Montenegro's National Costed ECI Operational Plan and Roadmap, completed in 2025 under the auspices of the UNICEF Country Office for Montenegro with technical support from the RISE Institute. The work was informed by the Research for the Implementation of Montenegro's Family-Centred and Transdisciplinary ECI Programme, prepared by RISE and published by UNICEF Montenegro in January 2026, which was developed at the beginning of the operational planning and costing process. A key challenge identified was the achievement sustainable financing and staffing of transdisciplinary ECI teams at the municipal level. At the time, Montenegro had three pilot ECI teams, one in each municipality, with a limited number of professionals, many of whom delivered services on a part-time basis, mainly outside regular working hours. Issues of sustainability, workforce capacity, adequate salary support, and the quality-of-service provision needed to be addressed, all underpinned by the fundamental question of long-term financial viability. To address these issues, a caseload-based costing approach was applied, using annual benchmarks for individual caseloads. Three alternative scenarios of team composition were developed, varying the number and mix of professionals and paraprofessionals, alongside detailed salary cost estimates. Building on this analysis, the RISE Institute developed a scaling matrix and simulations to project the gradual expansion of ECI teams across municipalities, linking workforce planning, training needs, and sustainable salary financing. The experience from Montenegro demonstrates the importance of integrating service standards, workforce planning, training, and realistic budgeting within national ECI systems. The findings provide practical guidance for policymakers, practitioners, and international partners seeking to design costed ECI operational plans that support sustainable scale-up and ensure equitable access to high-quality services for all children and their caregivers.

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Availability and Development of Early Intervention Services in the Local Community: Experiences from the Stančić Rehabilitation Center

Early intervention is a crucial element in supporting children with developmental difficulties and their families; however, access to such services in Croatia remains uneven. Systemic challenges include insufficient intersectoral coordination, a shortage of specialized professionals, and pronounced geographical disparities, with services largely concentrated in urban areas. These barriers often result in long waiting lists and limited support for families in smaller communities. The Stančić Rehabilitation Center has developed a transdisciplinary model of early intervention that places the child and family at its core, emphasizing accessibility and active inclusion within the local community. This approach illustrates how local contexts can serve as a foundation for building responsive and inclusive support systems. This paper presents a descriptive analysis of the transdisciplinary model implemented at the Stančić Rehabilitation Center. Data were collected through institutional documentation, professional reports, and examples of community-based practice, focusing on service organization, intersectoral collaboration, and family involvement. The model demonstrates improved accessibility of services, stronger cooperation between the health, education, and social sectors, and increased parental engagement. Community-based delivery contributed to reduced waiting times and enhanced continuity of support, particularly for families in underserved or rural areas. The findings highlight the importance of locally grounded, transdisciplinary approaches in reducing inequalities in service availability. Strengthening professional capacities and sustainable community networks contributes to more inclusive and responsive systems of care. Early engagement in intervention remains essential due to the sensitivity of early developmental stages and their long-term impact on children's development and quality of life.

Keywords: early intervention; intersectoral cooperation; local community

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Assessment of Executive Functions in Early Childhood: Comparison of Performance-Based and Ecological Approaches

Rationale: Executive functions (EF) are central to learning, behavioral regulation, and social adaptation in early childhood. Clinically, they are assessed using performance-based neuropsychological tests and ecological rating scales based on parent and teacher reports. However, the degree to which these approaches capture the same construct and inform clinical decision-making remains a topic of debate. Objective: This paper aims to compare performance-based and ecological assessment approaches used to evaluate EF in early childhood, in light of theoretical frameworks and empirical findings, and to discuss their implications for clinical assessment and intervention planning. Method: A narrative review and conceptual synthesis of empirical studies examining the relationship between performance-based EF tasks and ecological rating scales in preschool-aged children was conducted. Findings were evaluated with respect to construct representation, contextual sensitivity, and clinical utility. Results: Studies consistently report low correlations between performance-based and ecological measures, indicating that they capture partly distinct aspects of executive functioning. Performance-based tasks primarily assess cognitive processing efficiency under structured conditions. Ecological scales, in contrast, provide information on the regulation of goal-directed behavior in everyday contexts. Tasks with high face validity do not necessarily better predict everyday functioning, underscoring the limits of single-method assessment in early childhood. Conclusion: Performance-based tests and ecological rating scales should be considered complementary rather than interchangeable tools in the assessment of EF in early childhood. A multi-source, multi-method assessment framework may enable more accurate clinical profiling and support more targeted and effective intervention planning. Keywords: executive functions, early childhood, performance-based assessment, ecological assessment, clinical decision-making

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Phonological Loop Performance in Developmental Speech and Language Disorders: A Content Analysis

Rationale: The phonological loop is a critical cognitive component in developmental speech and language disorders (DSLD). However, Turkish literature lacks a systematic framework for its evaluation and reporting, which limits effective clinical planning and standardization of cognitive assessment practices. Objective: This study aims to systematically examine the methodological approaches, measurement instruments, and reporting practices of studies investigating phonological loop performance in children with DSLD. Method: This qualitative study used document analysis with descriptive content analysis. Studies were searched in ULAKBİM TR Index, DergiPark, and YÖK Thesis databases using three concept blocks (diagnostic categories, phonological processes, and assessment tools). Of 98 records identified, 8 studies meeting the inclusion criteria (preschool/primary age and direct phonological loop assessment) were analyzed and coded under 10 methodological categories. Results: Data were categorized into 10 thematic groups, including diagnostic profiles and measurement tools. Nonword repetition, forward digit span, and sentence repetition emerged as the primary assessment tasks. Performance reporting varied considerably, including total correct scores, standard scores, age-based norms, and correlations with disorder severity indicators. The analysis also revealed notable differences in how the phonological loop is conceptualized and clinically interpreted across studies. Conclusion: This analysis highlights substantial methodological variability in the assessment of phonological loop performance in Turkey, limiting cross-study comparability and clinical interpretability. The findings indicate a clear need for greater standardization of assessment tools and reporting practices in DSL to improve diagnostic reliability and support evidence-based intervention planning. Keywords: developmental speech and language disorders, phonological loop, phonological memory, content analysis, qualitative method.

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Speech and Language Therapy in a Public Hospital: Characteristics of the Preschool Caseload

Rationale: Early identification of speech and language disorders is crucial during the preschool years; however, data on referral age and diagnostic profiles in Turkish public hospital speech and language therapy (SLT) services remain limited, constraining effective early intervention planning. Objective: This study aimed to examine the workload characteristics and clinical profile of preschool-aged children (0–6 years) receiving SLT services in a Turkish public hospital. Method: A retrospective cross-sectional design was used, analyzing records of 1,243 patients who attended the clinic between 2023 and 2024 to describe demographic variables, diagnostic categories, referral sources, and seasonal patterns. Results: Preschool-aged children accounted for 56.8% of the total caseload. Most were aged 4–6 years (74.6%), with the highest referral rate at age 5 (34.8%). A marked male predominance was observed (72.2%). The most frequent diagnoses were speech sound disorders (SSD) (48.4%), developmental language disorders (37.5%), and fluency disorders (11.8%). Among children with comorbid conditions, intellectual disability was the most common (41.7%). Referrals peaked in autumn (34.8%), and nearly half of the patients (49.4%) were referred by pediatric specialists. Conclusion: SLT services in public hospitals are predominantly utilized by older preschool-aged boys with SSD. Referrals clustered around age five indicate delayed access to intervention and the need for stronger early identification and systematic screening. These findings suggest that caseload profiling may support more efficient service planning and improvements in the quality of care.
Keywords: speech and language therapy, public hospital, preschool, caseload, service delivery

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Increasing Implementation of Naturalistic Developmental Behavioral Interventions Throughout Africa: Collaborations, Costs and Cultural Considerations

Autism is the fastest growing neurodevelopmental condition diagnosed in children - demanding effective treatments for these children and their families. Globally, not all children have access to early intervention services. Approximately 95% of autistic individuals live in low-/middle-income countries (LAMICs) where resources are limited. By 2050, two in every five children throughout the world will live in Africa, which is primarily comprised of LAMICs, yet there are few early intervention treatments for these children who need such services due to autism or other developmental conditions. Naturalistic developmental behavioral interventions (NDBIs) are a recommended treatment model for autism where strategies are taught to caregivers to use in their everyday environments to improve children's skills. Evidence shows that NDBIs are an effective treatment for children with autism and other developmental differences. However, NDBIs have primarily been implemented in high-income countries, with few LAMICs (e.g., India, South Africa, Zambia) having implemented NDBIs. Therefore, this presentation will first discuss preliminary findings from an ongoing scoping review of NDBIs implemented in Africa. Second, this presentation will provide guidelines on how to build collaborations with stakeholders in LAMICs to effectively implement NDBIs. These guidelines are inspired by community-based research methods and derived from lessons learned from implementing Zambia's first NDBI. This presentation will discuss how culturally-suitable treatments, cost-friendly approaches and local collaborations are the recipe for success to implement NDBIs in LAMICs for children with autism and other developmental differences.
Keywords: autism, developmental differences, Africa, naturalistic developmental behavioral interventions (NDBIs), low-/middle-income countries (LAMICs)

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Mothers' Experiences in the Transition from Preschool Special Education to Primary School: A Phenomenological Study

The transition from preschool special education services to primary school is a critical process that yields significant developmental and educational outcomes for children with developmental disabilities and their families. During this period, not only children's academic, social, and emotional adjustment but also families' experiences, concerns, and expectations influence the quality of the transition. Mothers, as primary caregivers who actively participate in their children's education, play a key role in this process. Therefore, examining their experiences is essential for developing effective transition practices. This study aims to explore mothers' experiences, perceptions, and meanings attributed to the transition from preschool special education to primary school. The research was designed using a phenomenological approach within qualitative methods. The participants consisted of 15 mothers of children with developmental disabilities. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and analyzed using content and descriptive analysis techniques. The findings were organized under five themes: transition experiences and readiness, expectations, concerns and challenges, support needs, and home-based preparations. Most mothers reported a need for professional guidance regarding the primary school process, school selection, and ways to support their children at home. Their primary expectations focused on the development of communication skills and self-expression rather than academic achievement. Concerns about peer bullying and social exclusion were also prominent. Additionally, mothers were found to take an active role in supporting both academic and school-related skills at home. The results highlight the need for systematic transition programs, strengthened school–family collaboration, and increased guidance services to support families during this process. Keywords: Special education, transition process, preschool, mothers' perspectives, developmental disabilities

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Childwecare: An Innovative Tool for Early Childhood Developmental Delay Management in Chiang Mai, Thailand

Introduction Detecting developmental delays in early childhood is pivotal for altering the developmental trajectory for afflicted children. In Thailand, early identification, referral, and family access to services are often limited by the distance to and/or lack of resources. Digital support systems may help overcome these barriers by enabling follow-up and structured developmental support. Thus, we examined the efficacy of a parent-engaging digital tool (ChildWeCare system), with particular attention to child developmental progression. Methods We enrolled 215 children identified with developmental delays through either the Developmental Surveillance and Promotion Manual (DSPM) or the Thai Early Developmental Assessment for Intervention (TEDA4I) tools. Parents used a digital support tool : ChildWeCare innovation system that provides practical activities, reminders, and appointment scheduling for three months. Afterward, developmental improvement was reassessed in the children. Results Of the 215 children, 77 were evaluated using DSPM and 138 using TEDA4I. After 3 months, both assessments showed significant improvements across the motor, language, and social developmental domains. Group-level analysis revealed increases in the proportion of children without developmental delays (DSPM:20–40%;TEDA4I:10–18%;both $p<0.001$). Within-subject analysis confirmed measurable progress, with 57–76% of the DSPM-assessed children and 27–41% of the TEDA4I-assessed children showing improvement compared to the baseline. Discussion The ChildWeCare system effectively promotes developmental progress in children with developmental delays. These findings highlight the potential of digital interventions to strengthen early childhood developmental delay intervention services. Future studies should assess the scalability, sustainability, and integration of the tool into national child health programs.

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Prevalence of Speech and Language Disorders in Turkish-Speaking Children: An Interim Report

This study aims to identify the prevalence of primary school children in Turkish public schools who are reported to be at risk for a communication disorder by teacher report. Method: A 10-item communication skills questionnaire was used to identify which of their students teachers believed may present with a communication disorder. Nineteen public schools in the Etimesgut Municipality of Ankara, Turkiye participated in the survey. All Kindergarten through 4th grade teachers filled out the questionnaire for their students. The final sample size consisted of 5,483 children between the ages of 4-9. Results: Difficulties in at least one aspect of communication was present in 643 children (11.72%). The most common problems reported were in speech-sound production and expressive language. Problems with voice, fluency, and receptive language were less common. Out of the total sample, 215 children (3.92%) were reported by their teachers to be suspected of having a communication disorder. One hundred twelve children (2.04%) were reported to certainly have a communication disorder. Males were more likely than females to have a communication problem. Conclusion: Teacher reports reveal a large number of children at risk for communication disorders. Routine implementation of a simple communication skills questionnaire may be a cost-effective way to screen children and raise awareness of communication disorders in public schools. Keywords: childhood, speech, language, communication, schools screenings.

POSTER BİLDİRİLER

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Long-term Outcomes of a Hybrid Family-Centred Coaching Intervention via Telemedicine for Infants at Risk of Motor Disorders: A 15-month Randomized Controlled Trial

Background: Early childhood is a critical window of neuroplasticity where timely intervention can significantly optimize developmental trajectories. However, traditional clinic-based rehabilitation often faces accessibility and sustainability barriers. This study evaluates the long-term efficacy of a hybrid early intervention (EI) model – combining the COPCA (Coping with and Caring for infants with special needs) program with synchronous telemedicine – compared to standard care. Methods: In this prospective randomized controlled trial, 51 infants (mean 3 months corrected age, CA) identified with abnormal general movements (GMA) were randomized into two groups 1. Hybrid Coaching (HC) Group (n=26): Received a 6-month COPCA-based intervention via home visits and 90-minute synchronous video coaching sessions focused on parental empowerment and environmental affordances . 2. Standard Care (SC) Group (n=25): Received conventional 30-minute clinic-based physiotherapy. Outcomes were assessed at baseline (T0: 3 months CA), post-intervention (T1: 9 months CA), and follow-up (T2: 18 months of age) using the Infant Motor Profile (IMP), Bayley Scales of Infant and Toddler Development (Bayley-III), Parenting Stress Index (PSI-SF), and Affordances in the Home Environment for Motor Development questionnaire (AHEMD). Results: At the immediate post-intervention assessment (T1), no statistically significant differences were observed between groups in motor or cognitive scores. However, a significant "sleeper effect" emerged at the 18-month follow-up (T2), with the HC group demonstrating superior motor quality, specifically in IMP variation and adaptability domains. No significant differences were found in Bayley-III cognitive scores at any time point. While the hybrid model ensured continuity of care during the COVID-19 pandemic, the assessment of parental stress was limited by a high "defensive response" rate in PSI-SF self-reports, suggesting that reported stress levels should be interpreted with caution. Conclusion: Hybrid family-centered coaching via telemedicine is a sustainable strategy for improving long-term motor quality in high-risk infants. The delayed emergence of significant motor benefits suggests that coaching-based interventions require an incubation period for parental empowerment and environmental modifications to manifest as measurable developmental gains. Keywords: Early Intervention, COPCA, Telemedicine, Motor Development, Hybrid Care, Sleeper Effect, Family-Centered Care.

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TRAINing Early Stimulation Program Mediated by Parents: A Multi-Phase Pilot Study

Failing to intervene during a critical period early in child development is associated with substantial long-term consequences for children, their families, and the society. In Quebec, Canada, families face systemic barriers; Approximately 75% of children receive no intervention while awaiting a formal developmental diagnosis. This study addresses this critical service gap by investigating the following research question: How does participation in an online, caregiver-mediated early stimulation program improve caregiver outcomes? This ongoing research employs a mixed-methods, multi-phase design. The project consists of three distinct stages: (a) program development, (b) intervention delivery, and (c) evaluation. Data collection involves both professionals and caregivers, utilizing a combination of validated questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and platform analytics. As a current pilot project, the study evaluates the feasibility and preliminary impact of the TRAINing program. We hypothesize that post-intervention data will demonstrate significant improvements in parental outcomes, specifically regarding caregiver attitudes, self-efficacy, and perceived stress, as well as the quality of the home learning environment. If the pilot yields positive results, the next phase will involve a randomized controlled trial (RCT) to validate the intervention's clinical efficacy. Ultimately, this research aims to establish a national preventative framework in Canada, providing accessible, evidence-based support for families of children demonstrating developmental delays in any sphere of development before a formal diagnosis is reached. Keywords: Early intervention, caregiver-mediated, developmental delay, tele-health, parental self-efficacy.

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