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**ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM IN SPECIAL EDUCATION  
SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN FROM BIRTH TO  
SIX YEARS OLD**

**Abstract**

This study aim is to searched special education and support program for early childhood from birth to six years old. This research is a descriptive study which is to ensure that the complication of information on programs for rinsing early childhood too much in our country. Research area covered which is used in different country Reggio Emilia, Montessori, Waldorf Head Start approaches. Babies brain cells are formed before birth yet. The brain of a newborn baby is so good that 25% of the adult human brain. From birth, if appropriate environmental conditions are met, the connection between neurons (synapses) occurs and the child begins to learn so quickly. The research shows that; comes to a baby three years 90% of complete physical growth of the brain. Also childhood environment in which the brain functions as positive or negative effects experienced enough to play and have observed that very little touched in the brain development of children 20 to 30% percent less. The programs presented in this study, it increases the mental capacity and mental and learning capabilities of children with poor social environment to increase the participation of developing self-help skills that have been observed.

**Key words:** Early Intervention, Head Start, Montessori, Reggio Emilia and Waldorf Approaches.

**ALTERNATİF ÖZEL EĞİTİM PROGRAMLARI  
DOĞUMDAN ALTI YAŞA KADAR OLAN ÇOCUKLAR İÇİN ÖZEL EĞİTİM**

**Özet**

Bu çalışmanın amacı 0-6 yaş okul öncesi eğitim ve destek programlarını araştırmaktır. Araştırma betimsel bir çalışmadır ve ülkemizde çok fazla üzerinde durulamamış erken çocukluk programları hakkında bilgilerin derlenmesini sağlamaktadır. Çalışma alanı farklı ülkelerde sıklıkla kullanılan Reggio Emilia, Montessori, Waldorf okul yaklaşımı ve Head Start programlarını kapsamaktadır. Bebekler henüz doğmadan önce

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beyin hücreleri oluşur. Yeni doğan bir bebeğin beyni yetişkin bir insanın beyninin%25 i kadardır. Doğumdan itibaren uygun çevre koşulları sağlanırsa, nöronlar arası bağlantı (synapses) oluşur ve çocuk bu sayede hızlıca öğrenmeye başlar. Yapılan araştırmalar bir bebeğin üç yaşına geldiğinde beyninin fiziksel büyümesinin %90'ını tamamladığını göstermektedir. Ayrıca çocukluk döneminin yaşandığı çevre koşullarının beyin işlevlerini olumlu yada olumsuz etkilediği, yeterince oyun oynamayan ve çok az dokunulan çocuklarda beyin gelişiminin %20 ila 30 oranında az olduğu gözlemiştir. Bu çalışmada sunulan programların ise, zihinsel kapasiteyi artırdığı ve zihinsel ve öğrenme özellikleri zayıf olan çocukların kendi kendine yetebilme becerilerini geliştirerek sosyal ortama katılımını artırdığı gözlenmiştir.

**Anahtar sözcükler:** Erken Müdahale, Head Start, Montessori, Reggio Emilia, Waldorf Yaklaşımları.

## INTRODUCTION

Early intervention is the process of providing services, education and support to young children who are deemed to have an established condition, those who are evaluated and deemed to have a diagnosed physical or mental condition, an existing delay or a child who is at-risk of developing a delay or special need that may affect their development or impede their education. The purpose of early intervention is to lessen the effects of the disability or delay. Services are designed to identify and meet a child's needs in five developmental areas, including: physical development, cognitive development, communication, social or emotional development, and adaptive development. Early intervention programs and services may occur in a variety of settings, with a heavy emphasis on natural environments. These programs and/or services are proven to be most effective when started as soon as the delay or disability is identified. The early years of a child's life are very important. During the infant and toddler years, children grow quickly and have so much to learn. Brain research has demonstrated that it is imperative to provide supportive services for pregnant women and young children from birth to age three. During this period, approximately 80% of the brain is developed (Shonkoff and Phillips, 2000; Yıldırım Doğru, 2015). Most countries focus early childhood services for children from birth to age three narrowly on primary health care, and only begin to invest in preschool education at age three or four. The critical period of pregnancy to age three has been given relatively less attention. To date, most countries have not established comprehensive early childhood systems for parent education, early risk and mild conditions to severe malnutrition, developmental delays or disabilities. Research has shown that the time between birth and age 36 months is a critical developmental period in a child's life. These months offer a window of opportunity that will not be available later. Early intervention programs minimize and in some cases prevent delays in development of infants and toddlers with disabilities. They can decrease the need for special education and related services when a child enters school, and increase independence. Children whose special needs are identified and addressed during these crucial early years have a greater chance of reaching their full potential. The Early Intervention Program is a statewide program that provides many different types of early intervention services to infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. Some children and families face special challenges and need extra help. Early help does make a difference (Goffin, 2000; Yıldırım Doğru, 2015).

There are different approaches in early intervention program. Contemporary educational

approaches that have been proposed since 19th century are based on the following fundamental principles: children are fit and ready for improvement from birth; they are creatures on their own merit rather than miniature copies of grown-ups; their developments and societies should be respected; educational activities should be designed according to children's interests and needs; education must be the life itself, not a preparation for it (Chatelain, 1964). Alternative educational approaches that are developed based on these principals propose a learner centered, freedom based point of view that emphasizes interaction with social environment, improvement of critical skills and psychological development. They also have a holistic understanding of development (Loftin, 2003; Miller, 2004). These alternative approaches differ from other educational approaches because they offer students and teachers choices, they are suitable for every student profile and they provide many alternative methods for learning. In this study it will be discussed only some. There are four of best –known and used approaches in early intervention program. These are Head Start, Waldorf, Reggio Emilia and Montessori. All of these approaches represent different model of learning tool and environment. The article concludes with a discussion of the methods that researchers apply to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of each approach. Also, this article provides an overview and comparison of the four approaches, to introduce them to readers and highlight key points of similarity and differences (Goffin, 2000). Montessori, Steiner and Malaguzzi believed in the intrinsic abilities and capabilities of children. Their approaches, philosophies and methods had a single, common purpose: to produce a better society in which human beings would respect each other and live in harmony and peace. Head Start approach is some different from the other program. The Head Start Program is a program of the United States Department of Health and Human Services that provides comprehensive early childhood education, health, nutrition, and parent involvement services to low-income children and their families. The program's services and resources are designed to foster stable family relationships, enhance children's physical and emotional well-being, and establish an environment to develop strong cognitive skills (Edwards, 2002). All of these program are the transition from preschool to elementary school imposes diverse developmental challenges that include requiring the children to engage successfully with their peers outside of the family network, adjust to the space of a classroom, and meet the expectations the school setting provides (Unicef, 2006).

### **Montessori Method**

Maria Montessori began to develop her philosophy and methods in 1897, attending courses in pedagogy at the University of Rome and reading the educational theory of the previous two hundred years (Kramer, 1976). In 1907, she opened her first classroom, the Casa dei Bambini, or Children's House, in a tenement building in Rome (Montessori, 1994). From the beginning, Montessori based her work on her observations of children and experimentation with the environment, materials, and lessons available to them. She frequently referred to her work as "scientific pedagogy". Montessori continued to extend her work during her lifetime, developing a comprehensive model of psychological development from birth to age 24, as well as educational approaches for children ages 0 to 3, 3 to 6, and 6 to 12. She wrote and lectured about ages 12 to 18 and beyond, but these programs were not developed during her lifetime. Montessori education also spread to India when Maria Montessori spent time there during World War II. There is some debate about the exact list, but the following are clearly identified (Montessori, 1994; Çakıroğlu Wilbrandt, 2008); (*Abstraction, Activity, Communication, Exactness, Exploration, Manipulation (of the environment), Order, Orientation, Repetition,*

*Self-Perfection, Work (also described as "purposeful activity")*). In the Montessori approach, these human tendencies are seen as driving behavior in every stage of development, and education should respond to and facilitate their expression. Montessori's education method called for free activity within a "prepared environment", meaning an educational environment tailored to basic human characteristics, to the specific characteristics of children at different ages, and to the individual personalities of each child. The function of the environment is to help and allow the child to develop independence in all areas according to his or her inner psychological directives. In addition to offering access to the Montessori materials appropriate to the age of the children, the environment should exhibit the following characteristics.

- An arrangement that facilitates movement and activity,
- Beauty and harmony, cleanliness of environment,
- Construction in proportion to the child and her/his needs,
- Limitation of materials, so that only material that supports the child's development is included,
- Order,
- Nature in the classroom and outside of the classroom.

#### ***Education and Program***

Montessori observed four distinct periods, or "planes", in human development, extending from birth to six years, from six to 12, from 12 to 18, and from 18 to 24. She saw different characteristics, learning modes, and developmental imperatives active in each of these planes, and called for educational approaches specific to each period (Grazzini, 1988; Lopata, Wallace, Finn and Kristin, 2005). The first plane extends from birth to around six years of age. During this period, Montessori observed that the child undergoes striking physical and psychological development. The first-plane child is seen as a concrete, sensorial explorer and learner engaged in the developmental work of psychological self-construction and building functional independence. Montessori introduced several concepts to explain this work, including the absorbent mind, sensitive periods, and normalization.

*Absorbent mind:* Montessori described the young child's behavior of effortlessly assimilating the sensorial stimuli of his or her environment, including information from the senses, language, culture, and the development of concepts with the term "absorbent mind". She believed that this is a power unique to the first plane, and that it fades as the child approached age six (Montessori 1967, Montessori 1994).

*Sensitive periods:* Montessori also observed and discovered periods of special sensitivity to particular stimuli during this time which she called the "sensitive periods". In Montessori education, the classroom environment responds to these periods by making appropriate materials and activities available while (Montessori, 1967; Montessori, 1994; Çakıroğlu Wilbrandt, 2008).

- Acquisition of language—from birth to around 6 years old
- Interest in small objects—from around 18 months to 3 years old
- Order—from around 1 to 3 years old
- Sensory refinement—from birth to around 4 years old
- Social behaviour—from around 2½ to 4 years old

*Normalization:* Montessori observed in children from three to six years old a psychological state she termed "normalization". Normalization arises from concentration and focus on activity which serves the child's developmental needs, and is characterized by the ability to concentrate as well as "spontaneous discipline, continuous and happy work, social sentiments of help and sympathy for others." The second plane of development extends from around six years to twelve years old. During this period, Montessori observed physical and psychological changes in children, and developed a classroom environment, lessons, and materials, to respond to these new characteristics. Physically, she observed the loss of baby teeth and the lengthening of the legs and torso at the beginning of the plane, and a period of uniform growth following. Psychologically, she observed the "herd instinct", or the tendency to work and socialize in groups, as well as the powers of reason and imagination. Developmentally, she believed the work of the second plane child is the formation of intellectual independence, of moral sense, and of social organization (Montessori, 1994; Kayılı and Arı, 2011; Kayılı, 2016). The third plane of development extends from around twelve years to around eighteen years of age, encompassing the period of adolescence. Montessori characterized the third plane by the physical changes of puberty and adolescence, but also psychological changes. She emphasized the psychological instability and difficulties in concentration of this age, as well as the creative tendencies and the development of "a sense of justice and a sense of personal dignity." She used the term "valorization" to describe the adolescents' drive for an externally derived evaluation of their worth. Developmentally, Montessori believed that the work of the third plane child is the construction of the adult self in society. The fourth plane of development extends from around eighteen years to around twenty-four years old. Montessori wrote comparatively little about this period and did not develop an educational program for the age. She envisioned young adults prepared by their experiences in Montessori education at the lower levels ready to fully embrace the study of culture and the sciences in order to influence and lead civilization. She believed that economic independence in the form of work for money was critical for this age, and felt that an arbitrary limit to the number of years in university level study was unnecessary, as the study of culture could go on throughout a person's life (Montessori, 1967; Dohrmann, Nishida, Gartner, Lipsky and Grimm, 2007; Çakıroğlu Wilbrandt, 2008; Kayılı and Kuşcu, 2012). Accounting for the full range of developmental issues, schools can expect between 25% and 30% of their early childhood students to make it to the first step of the process. A well-functioning early intervention process works like a funnel, with the largest number of student issues addressed through Step 1 modifications, leading progressively through more intensive interventions toward the final step of referral for special education services. As a practical matter, early intervention means catching difficulties before they turn into insurmountable obstacles. Infant, Toddler, and Early Childhood teachers serve as the child's first prepared adult. In order to follow every child, these adults must mobilize their skills at observation, environment design, and flexible lesson presentation so that atypical behaviors are noted early, followed meticulously, and addressed within the first 6 months. In a well-functioning system, first-plane teachers will have the largest and most fluid caseload, and most of those cases will involve children between the ages of 3 and 5 (Gresham, 2002).

### **Reggio Emilia Approach**

Malaguzzi's method was known and appreciated by many educators especially thanks to the first exhibit opened in Sweden at the Modern Museet in Stockholm at 1970. Meanwhile, in

Italy the National Group for Work and Study on Infant Toddler Centers was formed. In 1994, the non-profit organization Friends of Reggio Children International Association was founded to promote the work of Loris Malaguzzi and organize professional development and cultural events (Hewitt, 2001). In 2003 the municipality of Reggio Emilia chose to manage the system and the network of school services and toddler centers by forming a sort of association: *Istituzione Scuole e Nidi d'Infanzia*. In this way, municipal schools and preschools can have their independent programs and activities, but they are supported by the public sector of the government. In 2006, the Loris Malaguzzi International Centre opened. It is a dedicated meeting place in Reggio Emilia, Italy, for professional development and research of the philosophy. The non-profit Reggio Children-Malaguzzi Centre Foundation was officially established on 2011 at the Malaguzzi International Centre of Reggio Emilia with the aim of “Education and research to improve the lives of people and communities, in Reggio Emilia and in the world”. The city Reggio Emilia in Italy is recognized worldwide for its innovative approach to education: its name comes from the city itself. The keyword of this method is foster education, from the tender age, promoting the best possible integration among children’s languages which, as Malaguzzi said, are a hundred or more. In this approach, there is a belief that children have rights and should be given opportunities to develop their potential. Children are believed “knowledge bearers”, so they are encouraged to share their thoughts and ideas about everything they could meet or do during the day (FRCIA, 2013).

The Reggio Emilia philosophy is based upon the following set of principles:

- Children must have some control over the direction of their learning;
- Children must be able to learn through experiences of touching, moving, listening, and observing;
- Children have a relationship with other children and with material items in the world that children must be allowed to explore;
- Children must have endless ways and opportunities to express themselves.

### ***Education and Program***

The Reggio Emilia approach to teaching young children puts the natural development of children as well as the close relationships that they share with their environment at the center of its philosophy. The foundation of the Reggio Emilia approach lies in its unique view of the child. In this approach, there is a belief that children have rights and should be given opportunities to develop their potential. “Influenced by this belief, the child is beheld as beautiful, powerful, competent, creative, curious, and full of potential and ambitious desires”(Hewitt, 2001). The child is also viewed as being an active constructor of knowledge. Rather than being seen as the target of instruction, children are seen as having the active role of an apprentice (Katz, 1993). This role also extends to that of a researcher. Much of the instruction at Reggio Emilia schools takes place in the form of projects where they have opportunities to explore, observe, hypothesize, question, and discuss to clarify their understanding. Children are also viewed as social beings and a focus is made on the child in relation to other children, the family, the teachers, and the community rather than on each child in isolation (Forman, 1996). Educators have to make children aware that respect for their similarities is important because everyone is a “legal subject” and part of a group. Reggio

Emilia's tradition of community support for families with young children expands on a view, more strongly held in Emilia Romagna and Tuscany, of children as the collective responsibility of the local community. In Reggio Emilia, the infant/toddler and pre-primary program is a vital part of the community, as reflected in the high level of financial support. Community involvement is also apparent in citizen membership in *La Consulta*, a school committee that exerts significant influence over local government policy (Katz, 1993; Gandini, 1993; Forman, 1996). Parents are a vital component to the Reggio Emilia philosophy. Parents are viewed as partners, collaborators and advocates for their children. Teachers respect parents as each child's first teacher and involve parents in every aspect of the curriculum. It is not uncommon to see parents volunteering within Reggio Emilia classrooms throughout the school. This philosophy does not end when the child leaves the classroom. Some parents who choose to send their children to a Reggio Emilia program incorporate many of the principles within their parenting and home life. Even with this bridge between school and home, many people wonder what happens to Reggio children when they make the transition from this style of education to a non Reggio Emilia school. The answer is that there is some adjustment that must take place or parents should be aware of pros and cons of different approaches (Wien, 2011). In some school environments, intellectual curiosity is rewarded, so students continue to reap the benefits of Reggio after they've left the program. The parents' role mirrors the community's, at both the school-wide and the classroom level. Parents are expected to take part in discussions about school policy, child development concerns, and curriculum planning and evaluation. Because a majority of parents are employed, meetings are held in the evenings so that all who wish to participate can do so. In the Reggio approach, the teacher is considered a co-learner and collaborator with the child and not just an instructor. Teachers are encouraged to facilitate the child's learning by planning activities and lessons based on the child's interests, asking questions to further understanding, and actively engaging in the activities alongside the child, instead of sitting back and observing the child learning. "As partner to the child, the teacher is inside the learning situation" (Hewett, 2001; Renaldi, 2012). Some implementations of the Reggio Emilia approach self-consciously juxtapose their conception of the teacher as autonomous co-learner with other approaches. The organization of the physical environment is crucial to Reggio Emilia's early childhood program, and is often referred to as the child's "third teacher". Major aims in the planning of new spaces and the re-modeling of old ones include the integration of each classroom with the rest of the school, and the school with the surrounding community. The importance of the environment lies in the belief that children can best create meaning and make sense of their world through environments which support "complex, varied, sustained, and changing relationships between people, the world of experience, ideas and the many ways of expressing ideas (Edwards, Gandini and Forman, 2012; Soncinni, 2012).

The preschools are generally filled with indoor plants and vines, and awash with natural light. Classrooms open to a center piazza, kitchens are open to view, and access to the surrounding community is assured through wall-size windows, courtyards, and doors to the outside in each classroom. Entries capture the attention of both children and adults through the use of mirrors (on the walls, floors, and ceilings), photographs, and children's work accompanied by transcriptions of their discussions. These same features characterize classroom interiors, where displays of project work are interspersed with arrays of found objects and classroom materials. In each case, the environment informs and engages the viewer. Other supportive elements of the environment include ample space for supplies, frequently rearranged

to draw attention to their aesthetic features. In each classroom there are studio spaces in the form of a large, centrally located atelier and a smaller mini-atelier, and clearly designated spaces for large- and small-group activities. Throughout the school, there is an effort to create opportunities for children to interact. Thus, the single dress-up area is in the center piazza; classrooms are connected with telephones, passageways or windows; and lunchrooms and bathrooms are designed to encourage community. Groups of children will stay with one particular teacher for a three-year period, creating consistency and an environment where there are no added pressures from having to form new relationships (Edwards, Gandini and Forman, 2012; Tarr, 2001; Edwards and Kutaka, 2015). The Reggio Emilia approach uses many similar methods as the Applied Behavior Approach, which is used for children with disability. If Reggio Emilia were more frequently used in public education systems then it would likely provide the highest benefit to students with special needs and students without special needs, especially when classrooms have been integrated. For example, both the Reggio Emilia approach and Applied Behavior Approach require documentation of the students and the classroom. As stated above, documentation for disabled students assists teachers “in tracking a student’s progress over time, which allows for adjustment in the Reggio Emilia similarly uses documentation to revisit learning experiences and improve teaching methods and would provide the students with the ultimate classroom experience because the teachers would be documenting for the exceptional children needs and to improve the needs of classroom experience for the classroom as a whole (Hertzog, 2001).

### **Waldorf Approach**

Rudolf Steiner, the founder of Waldorf education, was a private tutor and a lecturer on history for the Berlin *Arbeiter bildungs schule* an educational initiative for working class adults (Gidseg, 2008; Paull, 2011). Soon thereafter, he began to articulate his ideas on education in public lectures, culminating in a 1907 essay on *The Education of the Child*. His conception of education was influenced by the Herbartian pedagogy prominent in Europe during the late nineteenth century (Vasagard, 2012). Though Steiner criticized Herbart for not sufficiently recognizing the importance of educating the will and feelings as well as the intellect. The first school based upon Steiner's ideas was opened in 1919 in response to a request by Emil Molt, the owner and managing director of the Waldorf-Astoria Cigarette Company in Stuttgart, Germany, to serve the children of employees of the factory. This is the source of the name *Waldorf*, which is now trademarked in some countries in association with the method. The Stuttgart school grew rapidly and soon the majority of pupils were from families not connected directly with the company. The co-educational school was the first comprehensive school in Germany, serving children from all social classes, abilities, and interests (Paull, 2011). The affected schools were reopened after the Second World War (Stevens, 2003; Vasagard, 2012; Conor, 2012).

### ***Education and Program***

The structure of Waldorf education follows Steiner's theory of child development, which divides childhood into three developmental stages and describes learning strategies appropriate to each stage. These stages, each of which lasts approximately seven years, are broadly similar to those described by Piaget. Steiner's educational ideas closely follow modern "common sense" educational theory, as this has developed since Comenius and Pestalozzi. The stated purpose of this approach is to awaken the “physical, behavioral, emotional, cognitive, social, and spiritual” aspects of each individual (Armstrong, 2012). Fostering creative as well as



analytic thinking. A 2005 review found that Waldorf schools successfully develop “creative, social and other capabilities important in the holistic growth of the person”. The early childhood curriculum therefore centers on experiential education, allowing children to learn by example, and opportunities for imaginative play. The overall goal of the curriculum is to “imbue the child with a sense that the world is good”. Waldorf preschools employ a regular daily routine that includes free play, artistic work (e.g. drawing, painting or modeling), circle time (songs, games, and stories), outdoor recess, and practical tasks (e.g. cooking, cleaning, and gardening), with rhythmic variations. Periods of outdoor recess are also usually included. The classroom is intended to resemble a home, with tools and toys usually sourced from simple, natural materials that lend themselves to imaginative play, The use of natural materials has been widely praised as fulfilling children's aesthetic needs, encouraging their imagination, and reinforcing their identification with nature, though one pair of reviewers questioned whether the preference for natural, non-manufactured materials is "a reaction against the dehumanizing aspects of nineteenth-century industrialization" rather than a "reasoned assessment of twenty-first century children's needs". Pre-school and kindergarten programs generally include seasonal festivals drawn from a variety of traditions, with attention placed on the traditions brought forth from the community.

Though most Waldorf schools are autonomous institutions not required to follow a prescribed curriculum, there are widely agreed upon guidelines for the Waldorf curriculum, supported by the schools' common principles. The schools offer a wide curriculum "governed by close observation and recording of what content motivates children at different ages" and including within it. The main academic subjects are introduced through up to two-hour morning lesson blocks that last for several weeks. These lesson blocks are horizontally integrated at each grade level in that the topic of the block will be infused into many of the activities of the classroom and vertically integrated in that each subject will be revisited over the course of the education with increasing complexity as students develop their skills, reasoning capacities and individual sense of self. This has been described as a spiral curriculum. Teacher education programs provide training in the principles of child development, including pedagogical texts and other works by Steiner and in the methods of Waldorf pedagogy. Particularly for early childhood and elementary school teachers, the training includes considerable artistic work in storytelling, movement, painting, music, and handwork, as well as academic and practical studies to enable future teachers to work across all areas of the unusually broad curriculum. Waldorf-inspired home schools typically obtain their program information through informal parent groups, online, or by purchasing a curriculum. Waldorf homeschooling groups are not affiliated with the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA), which represents independent schools and it is unknown how many home schools use a Waldorf-inspired curriculum. Educationalist Chistolini suggests that parents offer their children Waldorf-inspired homeschooling because "the frustration and boredom some children feel in school are eliminated and replaced with constant attention to the needs of childhood and connections between content and the real world. Ashley described seven principal ways Waldorf education differed from mainstream approaches: its method of working from the whole to the parts, its attentiveness to child development, its goal of freedom, the deep relationships of teachers to students, the emphasis on experiencing oral traditions, the role of ritual and routine (e.g. welcoming students with a handshake, the use of opening and closing verses, and yearly festivals), the role arts and creativity play, and the Goetheanistic approach to science. While a

significant amount of general research has been undertaken, there are still relatively few books or articles on ADHD and other disabilities that specifically address the school environment and in particular the role of creating a holistic, creative approach. In the Waldorf movement, virtually no research exists documenting in detail its approach or success, despite the fact that Waldorf schools have developed over many decades a reputation for positively dealing with this problem. The proposed project would remedy this need. The study would aim to improve understanding of the therapies that seems to be so effective for ADHD children in Waldorf schools and to find a common language that can be used in Waldorf education and the wider educational community in which so much work on ADHD issues is currently underway (Payne, Zajonc and Hadley, 1999).

### **Head Start Program**

The program was led by Cooke, a pediatrician at Johns Hopkins University, and Zigler, a professor of psychology and director of the Yale Child Study Center. They designed a comprehensive child development program intended to help communities meet the needs of disadvantaged preschool children. The following year it was authorized by Congress as a year-round program. In 1968, Head Start began funding a television series that would eventually be called *Sesame Street*, operated by the Carnegie Corporation Preschool. In 1969, Head Start was transferred to the Office of Child Development in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (later the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) by the Nixon Administration. Today it is a program within the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) in DHHS. In 1994, the Early Head Start program was established to serve children from birth to age three, in an effort to capitalize on research evidence that these years are critical to children's long-term development. Programs are administered by local nonprofit organizations and education agencies such as school systems (Barnett and Hustedt, 2005; McWayne, Cheung, Wright, Hahs-Vaughn and Thomas, 2012; Naecy, 2014). The Head Start policy council makes up part of the Head Start governing body. Policy council consists of parents or grandparents of children participating in the program. One policy council representative is elected from among the parents of his or her classroom during a parent meeting. The policy council is required to meet once each month. The term follows the federal government fiscal year, running November - November. Service on the policy council board is limited to three consecutive years per lifetime. The meetings are conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules. The meeting day and time is agreed upon during the first meeting of the term year and may be adjusted as needed. The policy council approval is needed to any new hires to the program, as well as for the budget and spending. The council can serve the program in ways that the others in the program cannot, as it is the only body as part of Head Start that can do fundraising. In addition to monthly meetings, policy council may at times need to hold special or emergency meetings or have a phone vote. Policy council representatives are required to attend classroom meetings and report back to the policy council with issues and needs of the classroom. They may also be asked to sit in on interviews as Head Start requires that a policy council rep be present for all interviews. The officers of policy council include chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary, and vice-secretary. Classrooms are also able to elect alternate policy council reps in case the main rep is unable to attend the meetings (Deming, 2009; Naecy 2014).

### ***Education and programs***

Head Start serves over 1 million children and their families each year in urban and rural

areas in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. territories. Related health services include pre-school education health screenings, health check-ups and dental check-ups. Family advocates assist parents in accessing community resources. All services are specific to each family's culture and experience. Targets include cognitive, social, and emotional development.(Naecy, 2014). A brief summary of the key findings from the short-term studies follows, since our primary interest is in Head Start's long- term benefits. Evidence of short-term benefits of preschool programs including Head Start has been thoroughly reviewed elsewhere (Barnett, 2004; McKey et al. 1985; Nelson, Westhues and MacLeod, 2003; Ramey, Bryant and Suarez, 1985; White and Casto, 1985). Studies have generally shown that programs for children at risk, including Head Start, result in increases of 0.5 standard deviations in IQ and achievement. Estimated impacts on measures of social behavior, self-esteem, and academic motivation typically are slightly smaller.

*Programs include:*

- Early Head Start promotes healthy prenatal outcomes, healthy families and infant and toddler development beginning as early as birth.
- Head Start helps to create healthy development in low-income children ages three to five.
- Family and Community Partnerships offers parents opportunities and support as they identify and meet their own goals, nurture their children and advocate for communities that support children and families.
- Migrant and Seasonal services are for children of migrant and seasonal farm workers. Services target children from six months to five years. Service hours are longer and programs extend for fewer months than traditional Head Start.
- Head Start also serves indigenous Americans, with centers on reservations as well as in urban communities.
- Homeless children were included explicitly as subjects with the 2007 reauthorization. Programs must identify and provide services to homeless children of all ages within a reasonable period.

Many studies of program effectiveness have been conducted during Head Start's multi-decade history. The studies failed to produce an academic or political consensus about the program's effects. Head Start programs typically operate independently from local school districts. Most often they are administered through local social-services agencies. Classes are generally small, with fewer than ten enrollees per adult staff member. Individual programs develop their own academic and social curricula, following federal performance standards.<sup>[10]</sup> Eligibility is largely income-based, although each local program includes other eligibility criteria, such as disabilities and services needed by other family members. Families must earn less than 100% of the federal poverty level. Families may also qualify under a categorical eligibility category—receipt of TANF funds, Supplemental Security funds, or Homeless as per the McKinney-Vento Act. Up to 10% of any funded program's enrollment can be from higher income families or families experiencing emergency situations. All programs are required to provide services to children with disabilities, who must comprise 10% of their total enrollment. Per the Head Start Act (2007), programs may elect to serve families whose income is between 100-130% under certain circumstances. Programs must also complete additional reporting requirements if this is appropriate for their community. All teachers must have a bachelor's degree. Most have completed six or more courses in early-childhood education. By 2013, all

teachers were to have associate degrees in a related field and half must have bachelor's degrees (Naecy, 2014).

## RESULT

All three approaches represent an explicit idealism and turn away from violence, toward peace and reconstruction. They are built on coherent visions of how to improve human society by helping children realize their full potential as intelligent, creative, whole persons. School communities struggle continually to keep their guiding principles alive in current, meaningful ways and not to let them degrade into slogans. Only head start program is different to other approaches; because Head Start is the USA foremost fed-early funded provider of educational services to young children in poverty and head start is used with all of the other approaches. Studies of model programs typically show initial gains in children's IQ scores that fade out over time (Barnett, 2004). Studies of large scale programs have less often measured IQ, although the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test has sometimes been used as a proxy for verbal IQ, making it more difficult to evaluate whether Head Start produces persistent IQ gains. However, it is likely that initial increases in IQ scores by Head Start children also fade out over time. Findings regarding other types of benefits are more promising. All of these approaches view children as active authors of their own development, strongly influenced by natural, dynamic, self-righting forces within themselves, opening the way toward growth and learning. These approaches to early education reflects a theoretical kinship with John Dewey, Jean Piaget, Vygotsky and Jerome Bruner, among others. Much of what occurs in the class reflects a constructivist approach to early education. Reggio Emilia's approach does challenge some conceptions of teacher competence and developmentally appropriate practice. For example, teachers in Reggio Emilia assert the importance of being confused as a contributor to learning; thus a major teaching strategy is purposely to allow mistakes to happen, or to begin a project with no clear sense of where it might end. Another characteristic that is counter to the beliefs of many Western educators is the importance of the child's ability to negotiate in the peer group.

The philosophical foundation of the approaches, primary pedagogical goals: to provide an education that enables children to become free human beings, and to help children to incarnate their "unfolding spiritual identity," carried from the preceding spiritual existence, as beings of body, soul, and spirit in this lifetime. Educational researcher Martin Ashley suggests that the latter role would be problematic for secular teachers and parents in state schools and the commitment to a spiritual background both of the child and the education has been problematic for some committed to a secular perspective. As children proceed in an investigation, generating and testing their hypotheses, they are encouraged to depict their understanding through one of many symbolic languages, including drawing, sculpture, dramatic play, and writing. They work together toward the resolution of problems that arise. Teachers facilitate and then observe debates regarding the extent to which a child's drawing or other form of representation lives up to the expressed intent. Revision of drawings (and ideas) is encouraged, and teachers allow children to repeat activities and modify each other's work in the collective aim of better understanding the topic. Teachers foster children's involvement in the processes of exploration and evaluation, acknowledging the importance of their evolving products as vehicles for exchange. Formal instruction in reading, writing, and other academic disciplines are therefore not introduced until students enter the elementary school, when pupils are around seven years of age. Steiner believed that engaging young children in abstract intellectual activity too early

would adversely affect their growth and development. Early childhood education for children with special needs is important in acquiring self-care and life skills and also in teaching social skills like sharing, mutualization, collaboration and the sense of responsibility. The development of all skills is important in the life of children with and without disabilities. The children with disabilities are less advantageous in social competence and development of all skills. To develop the skills of the people with disabilities whose development inadequacy is defined, convenient education programs need to be designed and applied. In these programs, the main point which should be implied to training all developmental skills (Yıldırım Doğru, 2015; Unicef, 2006; Temel, 2005; Goffin, 2000; Temel and Dere, 1999). One of the most challenging aspects of these approaches are the solicitation of multiple points of view regarding children's needs, interests, and abilities, and the concurrent faith in parents, teachers, and children to contribute in meaningful ways to the determination of school experiences. Teachers trust themselves to respond appropriately to children's ideas and interests, they trust children to be interested in things worth knowing about, and they trust parents to be informed and productive members of a cooperative educational team. The result is an atmosphere of community and collaboration that is developmentally appropriate for adults and children alike. The importance of educational theory, development properties, and individual differences have led to the creation of new models and approaches that affect the education system. Regio Emilia, Head Start, Waldorf and Montessori approaches are some of them. Although these are different proposals, they have the potential to create an infrastructure that will allow the children to use at the highest level. Therefore, these approaches, ' child -centered approach ' is called. Child-centered approach to children's interests, abilities, needs and expectations of the foreground area is an approach based on configuration information in their environment based on social interaction The researches results indicate that these approaches can play an important role in children's development and learning. Especially in an area when the development and pre-school learning is the fastest period of child - centered education activities are studies showing positive effects on their development and learning. This approaches interpersonal problem solving, basic literacy, child-centered approach to education, language and math skills of children are known to be more successful. They also provide the most suitable environment for children with special educational needs in the early stages of these approaches (Şahin, 2010; Anlıak and Diçer, 2005; Marcon, 1992; DeVries, Reese-Learned and Morgan, 1991). Early intervention is, above all, a collaborative process that exemplifies the power of collective deliberation in transforming data points into usable knowledge. Teachers who engage in early intervention report immense satisfaction with the process for three key reasons. First, collaborative deliberation about particular students places children at the center of the enterprise. Second, structured discussion about instructional strategies both values the collective expertise of the team and makes practice visible by unpacking the discrete moves that compose a teacher's pedagogy. Third, the systematic and precise chronicle of progress is more likely to produce successful results than the solitary trial and error that characterizes the professional life. Practitioners who share common language, practice, and goals, and who work together to create and use knowledge, are known as "communities of practice" (Brown and Duguid, 1991; Wenger, 1998). Communities of practice share some similarities with "professional learning communities" particularly when they exist in schools (DuFour, 2004).

In brief, early childhood is a process from the birth to the day of the basic education, which is based on shaping of personality, progressing change of a child, and accomplishing of

the developments of a child such as physical, mental, psychomotor, social-emotional, cognitive, and language developments. The development on these areas has a primary role on child's future life. This research focused on the Head Start, Reggio Emilia, Waldorf, and Montessori approaches as theoretical foundations, educational environment and the teacher's role is different from each other both properties in question are similar. Child-centered researchers (i.e., Piaget and Vygotsky) developed the theory that used as a teacher guide that explains an effective learning environment and provides appropriate training facilities and the development stages of this approach.. The common goal of this work is later in life regardless of the child's ability to sustain life. However, it is important to note here that all the teaching programs based on ABA (Applied Behavior Analysis) program. The learning properties of these children are a little different from other peers; they need different teaching method. The ABA is a procedure that concerned with analyzing the principles of learning theory and systematically applying this knowledge to change behavior of social significance. The ABA is an applied science, which is devoted to developing procedures that will produce measurable changes in behavior (Mace, 1994). These methods also facilitate the learning of children. In these approaches, besides other support learning in the natural environment. Therefore, the removal of the child's natural environment intervention programs must be clearly opened in stages. The rationales of different approaches on the disabled infants and children training programs, methods and techniques should be used together. These approaches use several similar methods, e.g., the Applied Behavior Approach (ABA), which is used for children with disability. If these approaches were more frequently used in American public education systems, it would probably provide the highest benefit to students with special needs and students without special needs, especially when classrooms are integrated. For example, all of the approaches and Applied Behavior Approach (ABA) require documentation of the students and the classroom. As stated above, documentation for disabled students assists teachers "in tracking a student's progress over time, which allows for adjustment in the similarly uses documentation to revisit learning experiences and improve teaching methods and would provide the students with the ultimate classroom experience because the teachers would be documenting for the exceptional children needs and to improve the needs of classroom experience for the classroom as a whole. Moreover, this approaches demand respect for the child and encourage a child to be its own protagonist, and his/her own protagonist. This way allows children working together in subjects that they might be effective for children with autism. Since disabled children mostly tend to engage with when focus on a subject they are interested in. These approaches also allow students/children for engaging in projects that languages," and disabled students, who learn visually rather than verbally are free to learn and communicate using any language that benefits them in order to fulfill their potential.

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## GENİŞ ÖZET

Çocuğun yeteneklerinin ortaya çıkarılması, ihtiyaçlarının karşılanması, temel alışkanlıkların kazandırılması ve yaşama en iyi şekilde hazırlanması, nitelikli okul öncesi eğitimle gerçekleşebilir. Okul öncesi eğitimin en önemli amaçlarından biri çocuğu ilköğretime hazırlamaktır. Okul olgunluğu ya da okula hazır bulunuşluk olarak telaffuz edilen ilköğretime hazır bulunuşluk; çocuğun fiziksel, zihinsel ve sosyal an- lamda ilköğretimin gerekliliklerini karşılamaya hazır olması demektir. Genel olarak, okul öncesi sınıflarda okula hazırlığa görsel olgunluk, renkleri ayırt etme, görsel hafıza, göz-el koordinasyonu, işitsel ayırt etme/duyma, sosyal ve duygusal etkenler ve dikkat süresinin etkili olduğu ileri sürülmektedir. Hazır oluş ile ilgili çeşitli araştırmacılar çok sayıda faktör sıralasa da, Oktay (1999), fiziksel faktörlerin, zihinsel faktörlerin, duygusal faktörlerin, sosyal ve çevresel faktörlerin dikkat çekici olduğunu belirtmektedir. Bebekler henüz doğmadan önce beyin hücreleri oluşur. Yeni doğan bir bebeğin beyni yetişkin bir insanın beyninin%25 i kadardır. Doğumdan itibaren uygun çevre koşulları sağlanırsa, nöronlar arası bağlantı (synapses) oluşur ve çocuk bu sayede hızlıca öğrenmeye başlar. Yapılan araştırmalar bir bebeğin üç yaşına geldiğinde beyninin fiziksel büyümesinin %90'ını tamamladığını göstermektedir. Ayrıca çocukluk döneminin yaşandığı çevre koşullarının beyin işlevlerini olumlu yada olumsuz etkilediği, yeterince oyun oynamayan ve çok az dokunulan çocuklarda beyin gelişiminin %20 ila 30 oranında az olduğu gözlemiştir. Bu çalışmada sunulan programların ise, zihinsel kapasiteyi artırdığı ve zihinsel ve öğrenme özellikleri zayıf olan çocukların kendi kendine yetebilme becerilerini geliştirerek sosyal ortama katılımını artırdığı gözlenmiştir. Konu ile ilgili araştırmalar, çocuğun ilköğretime hazırlanmasında en büyük sorumluluğun ebeveynlerde ve okul öncesi eğitim kurumlarında olduğunu göstermektedir. Çocuğun okul öncesi dönemde kazandığı beceriler daha sonra kazanacakları için temel oluşturmaktadır. Sıfır-altı yaş arası dönem- de çocuğun gelişiminde doldurulamayan boşlukların, ileriki dönemde doldurulması son derece güç olmaktadır. Bu anlamda, okul öncesi eğitim kurumları ve kurumlarda uygulanan okul öncesi eğitim programları çocukları ilköğretime hazırlamada büyük bir önem taşımaktadır belirtmektedir. Günümüzde alternatif okul öncesi eğitim programları ve yaklaşımlarıyla ilgili pek çok uygulama- dan söz etmek mümkündür. Bu programların hepsinin farklı eğitim anlayışı, öğretmen yetiştirme sistemi, materyal seçimi ve sınıf düzeni vardır. Bu çalışmanın amacı; 0-6 yaş okul öncesi eğitim ve destek programlarını araştırmaktır. Araştırma betimsel bir çalışmadır ve ülkemizde çok fazla üzerinde durulamamış erken çocukluk programları hakkında bilgilerin derlenmesini sağlamaktadır. Araştırma tarama modelinde olup çalışma alanı farklı ülkelerde sıklıkla kullanılan Reggio Emilia, Montessori, Waldorf okul yaklaşımı ve Head Start programlarını kapsamaktadır.

Reggio Emilia, Montessori, Waldorf okul yaklaşımı ve Head Start programlarından yaklaşımlarında etkin öğrenme yöntemi kullanılmaktadır. Etkin öğrenme yönteminde çocuklar seyredip dinlemekle yetinmeyip bu süreci etkin olarak değiştirerek, hareket ederek ve bir şeyler yaparak katılırlar. Etkin öğrenme çocukların bağımsız olarak hareket ettiği ve araştırdığı, malzemeleri serbestçe kullanabildiği ve keşfettiği bir ortamdır. Etkin öğrenme yöntemi çocuklara seçim yapma özgürlüğü tanır. Çocuklar ne yapacağını, nasıl yapacağını, hangi

malzemeleri kullanacağına kendileri karar verir. Burada çocukların problem çözme çabalarına öğretmen ve arkadaşları ile iletişim kurmaları, yaratıcı olmalarına izin verilir. Bunun için de çocuklar teşvik edilir. Çocuklara arasında seçim yapabilecekleri malzemeler sunulur. Etkin öğrenmede çocuklar nesnelere özgür bir şekilde kullanabilirler. Etkin öğrenme yönteminde öğretmenler malzemelerle daha etkin biçimde oynamaya teşvik edecek fikirler öne sürer, etkinlik sırasında çocuklarla iletişim kurar. Eğitimci çocukların çabalarına destek olur ve onlara bazı şeyleri kendi başlarına keşfetme özgürlüğü tanır. Programlar değerler eğitimine destek sağlayıcı ayrıntıları içermektedirler. Eğitimci çocukları birbirlerine yardım etmeleri için teşvik eder. Bu yaklaşımların hepsi çocuk merkezlidir. Ayrıca programların tamamı uygulamalı davranış analizi UDA ne uyarlanarak kullanılmaktadır. Çocuklar sınıf ortamında aktifler ve sınıflarda özel öğrenme materyalleri kullanılır. Programlar konuya dayalı bilgi içermez, entegre, disiplinler arası konuları içerir.

Bu yöntemler gelişimsel farklılık gösteren çocukları gözlemlemesi ve yöntemin oluşmasında gözlemlerin önemli bir yerinin olması, yöntemi aynı zamanda bir özel eğitim yöntemi haline de getirmektedir. Özellikle Türk toplumunda çocukla daha çok annenin zaman geçiriyor olması annenin bire bir belirli kurallar çerçevesinde çocuğun seansını izlemesi ve eğitiminin yönlendirmeleri doğrultusunda çocuğuyla oyun oynaması ona “hazırlayıcı çevre” sayesinde bir şeyler öğretmesi sağlanır. Böylece bu yöntem sayesinde özgüven geliştiren sadece çocuk olmayacak anne de çocuğuyla bir şeyler paylaşmanın onu yakından tanımanın mutluluğunu ve güvenini yaşayacak ve ebeveynlerin farklı gelişen çocuklarını kabul sürecini daha rahat geçirmelerini de sağlayacaktır. Bu sayede çocuğun kabulü artacak ve eğitimden daha fazla yararlanabilecektir. Ayrıca erken yaşta ve akranları ile bir arada eğitim alan çocuklar gelişimlerinin en hızlı dönemini daha verimli geçirebileceklerdir.