

Quality Early Childhood Care, Education and Development: A Case for Accreditation

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ABSTRACT The present study was undertaken to analyse the quality of childcare services. The study aimed to formulate standards/guidelines of quality care and development of children within the age group of six months to four years. Study also aimed to develop a regulatory system to ensure quality control through accreditation. The accreditation criteria was developed on the basis of present study after reviewing 36 childcare centres i.e. Day Care Centres and Nursery Schools of Ludhiana city for the period of two years. The results of the study revealed that quality of childcare services in Ludhiana (Punjab) was not of high order. Only 20 per cent centers fell in the category of good and 80 percent were average and poor centres. The physical environment and staff children interactions were found to be satisfactory in good centres. Health care, safety measures, nutrition and food services was better in Day Care Centres. Majority of the Nursery Schools followed a curriculum but it was mainly academic in nature. Majority of the schools admitted children at an early age. Children of good centres scored much higher in all the developmental out comes than their counterparts. The results have been reviewed in the light of information collected from USA, Australia, New Zealand, England, Mexico, Canada and India. The accreditation criteria include ten component quality indicators of group programs for young children.