

## **PAPER 8**

### ***Efforts and Effects in Day-care Centres for Socially Endangered Children – a review***

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#### **Abstract**

This paper is the eight in the series of fourteen electronic publications about the Danish research project “Action competences in pedagogical work with socially endangered children and youths – effort and effect” (The ASP-project).

The review of previous research concerning ‘What works’ in early day-care interventions has been produced in order to build a knowledge foundation for the ASP-project to work from in the development of the specific intervention. Thus, it looks into studies of pedagogical intervention efforts for socially endangered children in day-care centres. By collecting and reviewing results from Danish and international studies, this review documents knowledge about which types of efforts contribute to the improvement of socially endangered children’s life chances through participation in day-care in the early years of childhood before school. Overall the review notes four types of interventions directed at pedagogical change in the institution. The change may concern intervention in 1) children’s cognitive and learning competences, 2) children’s social behaviour and competences, 3) the relation between parents and children and 4) the pedagogical practice, i.e. the initiation of learning programmes that contribute to renewal and improvements for the socially endangered children.

The studies included in this review are based on research methods that are characterized by quasi-experimental or randomized controlled trial (RCT) research designs, as these types of designs render it possible to measure the effect of a given pedagogical effort on selected indicators. The studies included in this overview are thus divided in two overall groups: 1) studies that investigate and compare different types of day-care centres and have accumulated significant findings about socially endangered children’s potential for development and 2) studies with carefully planned intervention programmes for socially endangered children and which observe the children throughout their school years and youth in order to capture the effect of the early pedagogical effort.

In all, the studies in this research review show that day-care as an early pedagogical effort targeting socially endangered children does have an effect on these children’s well-being and development potential – not only in the early years of childhood but also in relation to their possibilities and ability to master life in school and in their youth. In all, the studies show that high-quality day-care achieve positive effects. By high-quality, the author means good relations between child and adult, high level of professional competence and education among the employees and pedagogical work that is established on the basis of systematic and well-organized curricula.