



Early Childhood Development

Conference Presentation

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Presentation Overview

- I. The Importance of Childhood and Young Children*
- II. New Research on the Importance of the Early Years*
- III. What Makes Programs High Quality?*
- IV. Going Global and Quality Early Childhood Education*



*Part I:
The Importance of
Childhood
and Young Children*



The Importance of Childhood and Young Children

Throughout time,
throughout the world,
no matter what country,
We all value children,
especially young children.



The Importance of Childhood and Young Children

In part, we value young children because
they are adorable!



In part, we value them because
they are joyously curious.

In part, we value young children because
they continue the traditions we hold dear.

And, in part, we value them because
they are our future!





The Importance of Childhood and Young Children

Those who study and care for young children also realize that *early childhood is a very special period of life.*

It is the time when *the human organism grows most rapidly.*

It is the time when *the human organism is most malleable and amenable to change.*



And, it is the time when *what we as parents and as societies do for children has the most impact on children's long term development.*



The Importance of Childhood and Young Children

The early years matter and they matter a great deal to children, to families, and to society.





The Importance of Childhood and Young Children

***THE WORLD KNOWS
AND
RECOGNIZES THIS!***





The Importance of Childhood and Young Children

It is why every country on the planet, except two, has endorsed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.



The Importance of Childhood and Young Children

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is composed of 54 articles that safeguard children's:
 - Health Rights
 - Civil Rights
 - Humanitarian Rights
 - Family Rights
 - Optional Protocols (2000): Children in Armed Conflict, Child Prostitution and Pornography





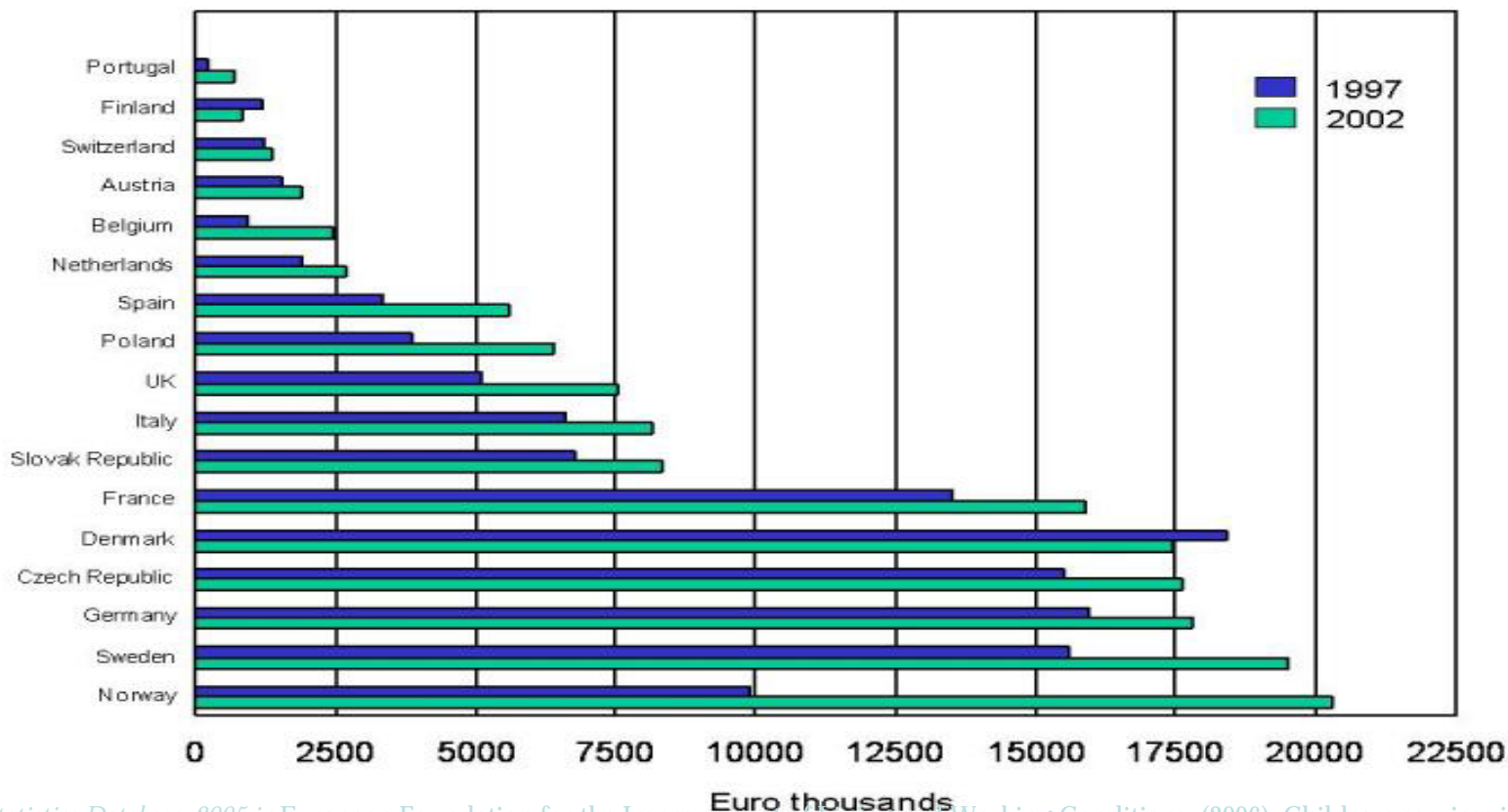
The Importance of Childhood and Young Children

- It is why since the passage of the UNCRC, children have been accorded international priority in:
 - 1990: World Summit for Children
 - 1990-2000: UNESCO Education For All Goals
 - 2000: Millennium Development Goals
 - 2002: U.N. World Fit for Children Goals



The Importance of Childhood and Young Children

- It is why world wide, investments in early childhood education are rising.





The Importance of Childhood and Young Children

Yet, despite all this attention,
young children in our world are
not faring very well.



The Importance of Childhood and Young Children

- *Survival:*
 - 10.5 million children die before their fifth birthday = 30,000 children a day.
- *Exposure to poverty:*
 - 1 billion children – more than half the children in developing countries – suffer from one form or more of severe deprivation.
- *Disabilities:*
 - 10% of the world's children are categorized as disabled; 90% of those children are excluded from schools and learning opportunities.



The Importance of Childhood and Young Children

■ HIV/AIDS:

- 2.3 million are children under age 15. More than three million people died of AIDS-related illnesses in 2005; of these, more than 500,000 were children.

■ Protection:

- The 3rd largest global income is from child prostitution and trafficking.



The Importance of Childhood and Young Children

These facts are particularly
startling in light of new research
findings.

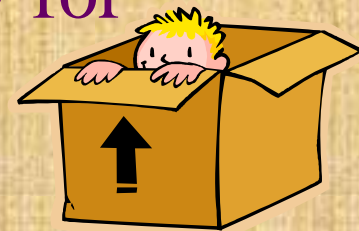


*Part II:
New Research on the
Importance of the
Early Years*



Different Kinds of New Research

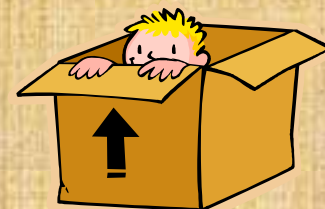
- *From neuro-scientific research*, we have learned a great deal about brain development.
- *From program evaluation research*, we have learned about the long term impact of high quality early childhood education for children and families.
- *From economic research*, we have learned that investments in young children save money for governments and society.





Neuro-Scientific Research

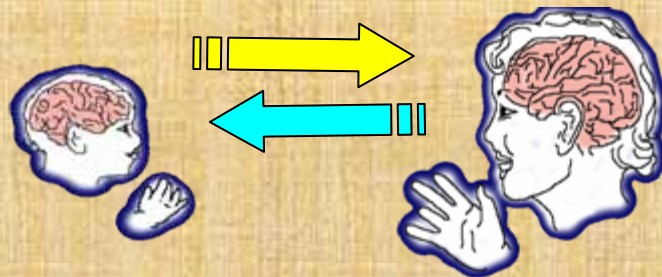
- From neuro-scientific and molecular biological research, we now know that:
 - The early years are *the* formative period of development, with the human brain growing to 80% of adult size by age 3, and 90% by age 5.
 - Brains develop through stimulation: early and positive stimulation completes brain development.
 - Positive experience “sculpts” brain connections and development.





Neuro-Scientific Research

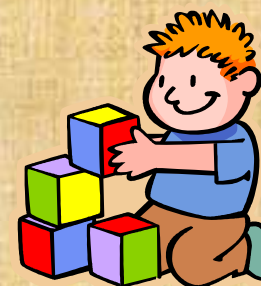
- Research says our brains neurons must be stimulated early in life or they will not develop optimally. Learning ability diminishes with age!
 - To stimulate brain development, young children must be in nurturing settings-including nurturing families and early education and care settings.





Neuro-Scientific Research

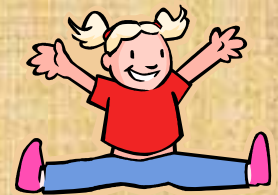
Because children develop in the environment of relationships, early parental interactions with children and high quality early childhood programs stimulate brain development. Without these nutrients, the brain can not thrive.





Program Evaluation Research

- Children in high-quality early childhood programs have been found to:
 - Form closer and more secure attachments with teachers
 - Show more positive interactions with peers
 - Have larger vocabularies
 - Show better pre-reading and pre-math skills
- These benefits for cognitive and socio-emotional development continue well into the elementary school years.



Source: Burchinal, M. R., Roberts, J. E., Nabors, L. A., & Bryant, D. (1996). Quality of center child care and infant cognition and language development. Child Development, 67, 606-620; Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes Study Team. (1995). Cost, quality, and child outcomes in child care centers. Denver: Economics Department, University of Colorado. Hestenes, L. L., Kontos, S., & Bryan, Y. (1993). Children's emotional expression in child care centers varying in quality. Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 8, 295-307; Howes, C., Phillips, D. A., & Whitebook, M. (1992). Thresholds of quality: Implications for the social development of children in center-based child care. Child Development, 63, 449-460. Peisner-Feinberg et al. (2001). The relation of preschool child-care quality to children's cognitive and social developmental trajectories through second grade. Child Development, 72(5), 1534-1553.



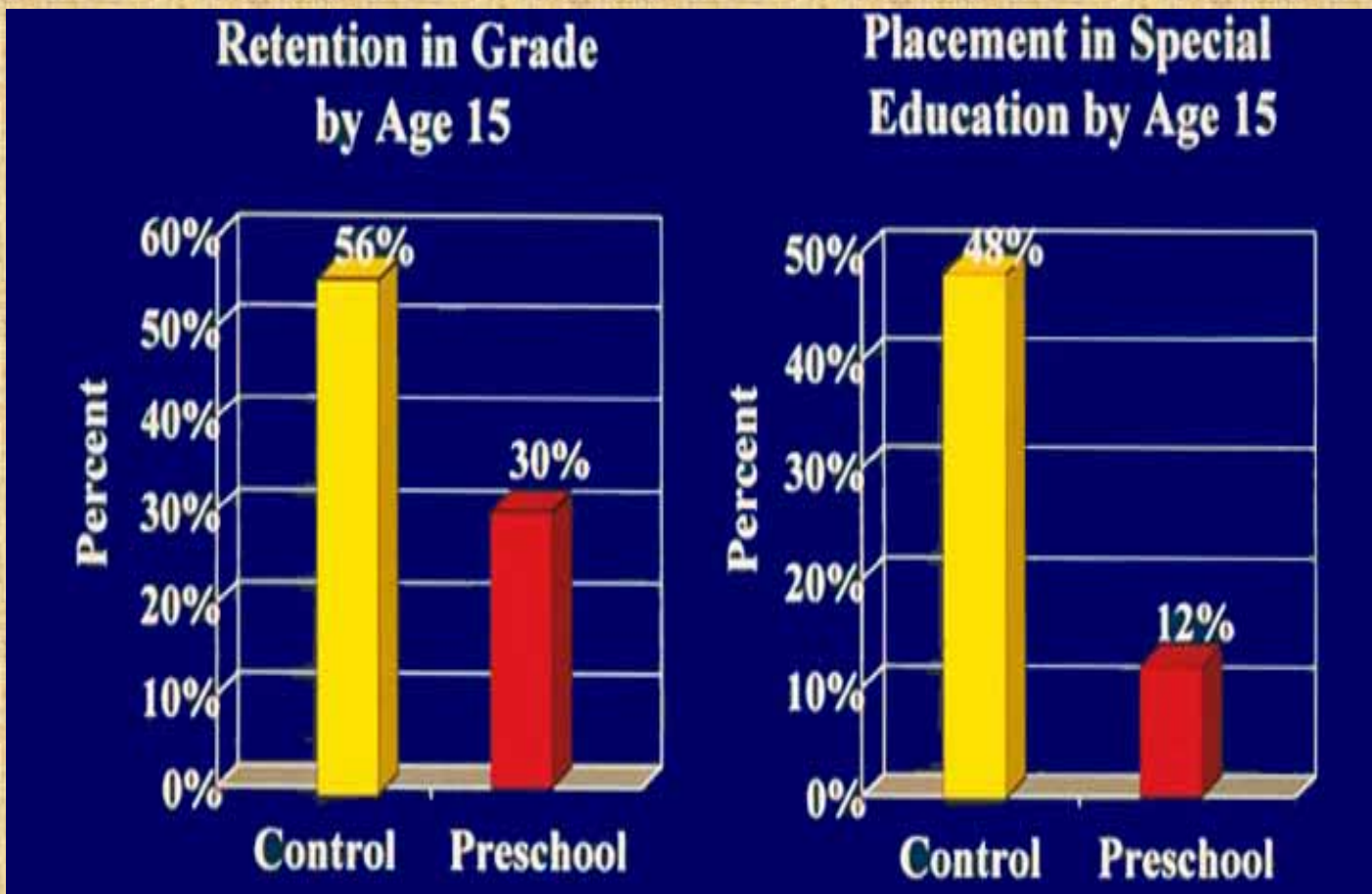
Program Evaluation Research

Young children who have attended high quality preschool programs:

- Are more prepared for school entry
- Have lower rates of remedial education
- Are retained about half as often
- Have higher high school graduation rates



Program Evaluation Research





Economic Research

- Young children who have attended high quality preschool programs save society money because they have:
 - Lower rates of crime and incarceration
 - Higher rates of employment and higher lifetime earnings
 - Greater tax revenue
 - Higher rates of homeownership
 - Reduced welfare and social service costs



New Research on the Cost Effectiveness of ECE

*High quality early childhood programs
are a very good financial investment.*



For every \$1 invested in high-quality
early childhood education, \$7-8 are
returned to society.



SO, It Is Not Surprising That..

- Nobel Laureate James Heckman has said:

“The real question is how to use the available funds wisely. The best evidence supports the policy prescription: *invest in the very young.*”

Skill remediation programs for adults with severe educational disadvantages are much less efficient compared to early intervention programs. So are training programs for more mature displaced workers. *At current levels of investment, cost-effective returns are highest for the young.*”

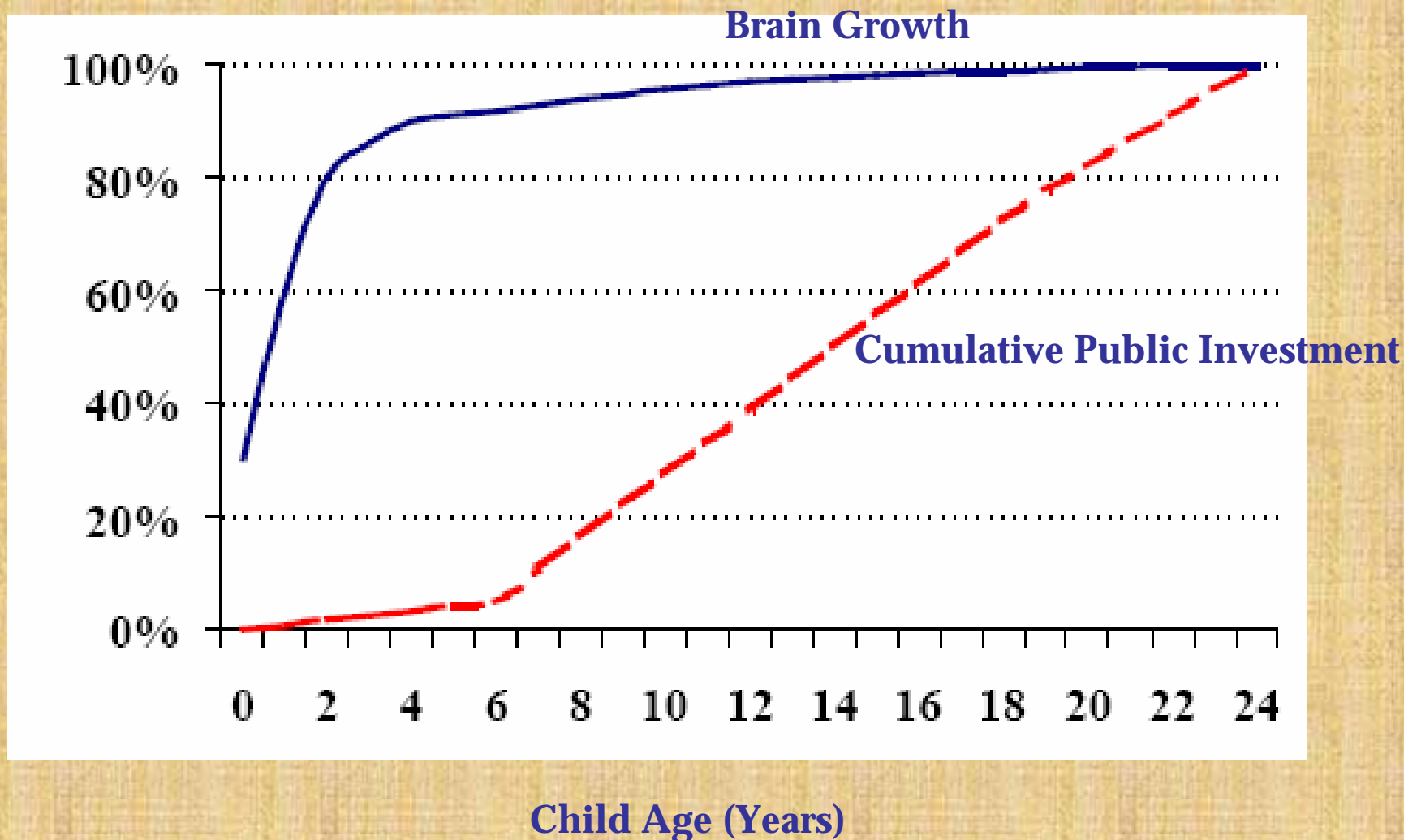


Clearly, New Research Shows

- Brain activity is most receptive to stimulation in the early years, and if the brain is not stimulated appropriately, children can not live up to their potential.
- High quality early childhood education makes a difference in students' lives and in their effectiveness in school.
- High quality early childhood education saves money in the long run.



But Our Investments Don't Reflect These Findings





AND...

***WE ONLY GET THESE RESULTS
WHEN THE PROGRAMS ARE
HIGH QUALITY.***

Mediocre or poor quality early childhood education simply *will not produce these results.*



Part III:
What Makes Programs
High Quality?



High Quality ECE Programs: The Old View

- Used to think that program quality was the result of only three things:
 - Teacher/child ratios;
 - Group size; and
 - Teacher training and experience.
- Determined this because numerous studies linked positive child outcomes to these three factors.



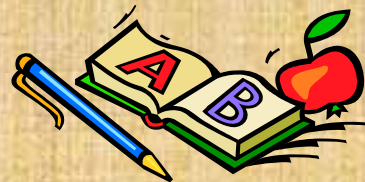
High Quality ECE Programs: Rich Content and Curriculum

- To day, we know that high quality programs must have rich content and curriculum. They must be:
 - Child Centered;
 - Culturally sensitive;
 - Inclusive of *all* children; and
 - Aligned with learning expectations and assessments.



High Quality ECE Programs: Effective Pedagogy

- Today, research indicates that high quality programs demonstrate effective pedagogy. They:
 - Engage children actively in diverse learning opportunities;
 - Understand that play is the way young children learn; and
 - Are characterized by inquiry, reflection, and curiosity.





High Quality ECE Programs: Teacher Quality

- High quality programs have high quality teachers who:
 - Balance the demands of all the domains of young children's development.
 - Weigh the needs of a group of children while supporting individual learners and balancing the interests of children, families, and communities.
 - Balance children's different learning styles, using a variety of instructional strategies to connect with children who learn in different ways.





High Quality Programs Value Families

- High Quality Programs Understand that families are children's first teachers:
 - Fulfill physical and emotional needs
 - Promote curiosity and facilitate children's early explorations
 - Model learning behaviors
 - Make possible school attendance
 - Set expectations for children and help them succeed





High Quality Programs Value Good Content

- High Quality Programs Respect All Areas of Children's Development:
 - Physical and Motor Development
 - Social and Emotional Development
 - Cognitive Development
 - Language and Communication s Development
 - Creative and Inquiry Development



High Quality ECE Programs: Early Learning and Development Standards

AND

High Quality Programs all have
*Early Learning and Development
Standards*

That reflect all areas of development.

Also known as Standards, Expectations, Desired Results.

**Early Learning
&
Development
Standards**



High Quality ECE Programs: Early Learning and Development Standards

Early Learning and Development Standards

Are

*Statements of expectation for
“what children should know and
be able to do.”*

Also known as Standards, Expectations, Desired Results.





High Quality ECE Programs: Early Learning and Development Standards

Early Learning and Development Standards respect the dignity of *all* children regardless of nationality, race, color, gender, language, religion, opinions, origins, wealth, birth status or ability.

They also respect the heritage, values, and cultures of each nation.



Early Learning and Development Standards

- Early Learning and Development expectations stem from the Rights of the Children to promote:
 - The right to survival and to develop to their fullest potential;
 - The right to protection from harmful influences, abuses, and exploitation; and
 - The right to participate fully in family, cultural, and social life.





*Part IV:
Going Global and
Quality Early Childhood
Education*

Quality ECE in Tajikistan





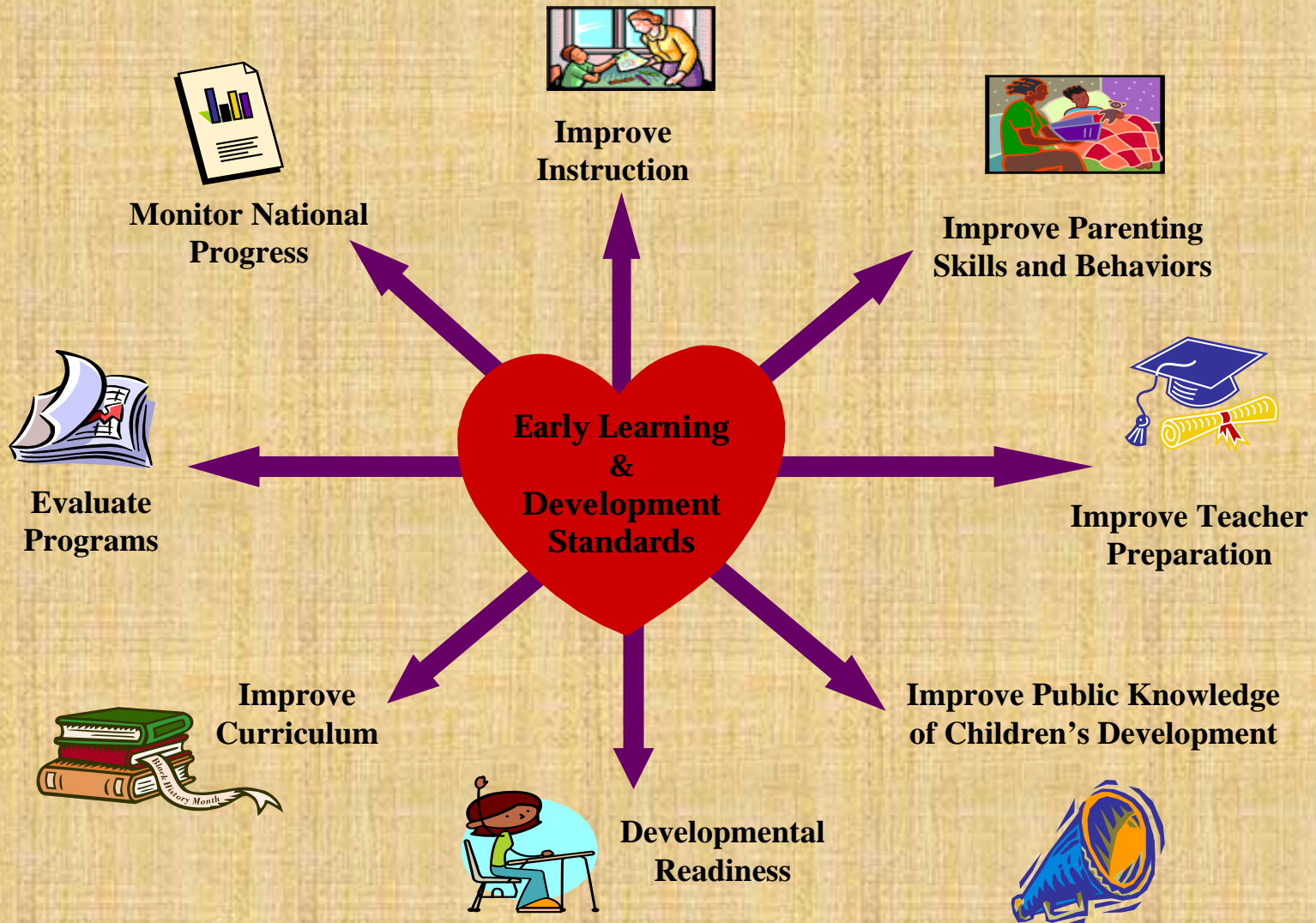
Quality ECE in Tajikistan

Time to focus on how to develop early learning standards for Tajikistan that can be the basis for much of early childhood education in the country!!!

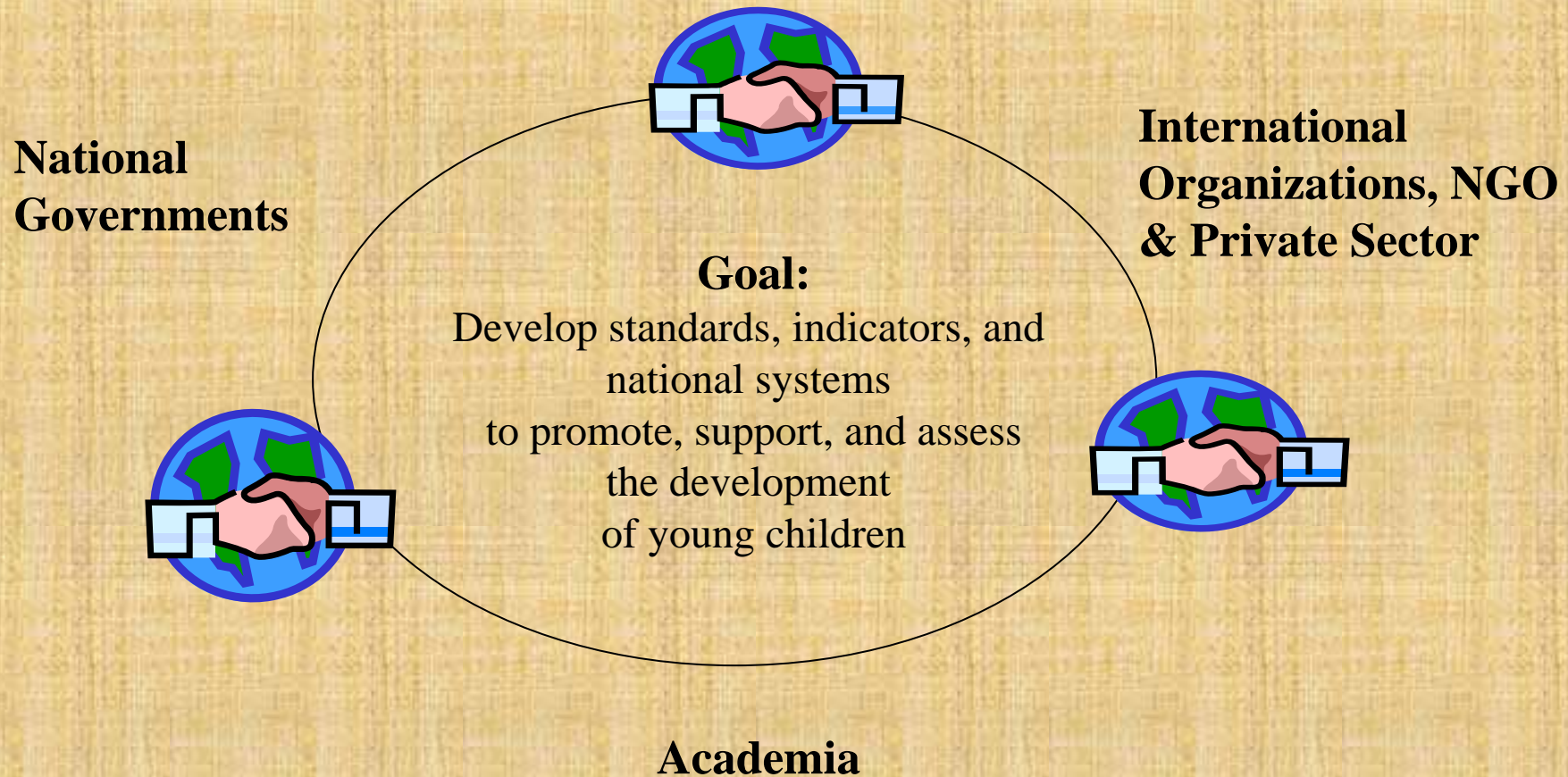


*Early Learning &
Development
Standards are the
Heart of ECD*

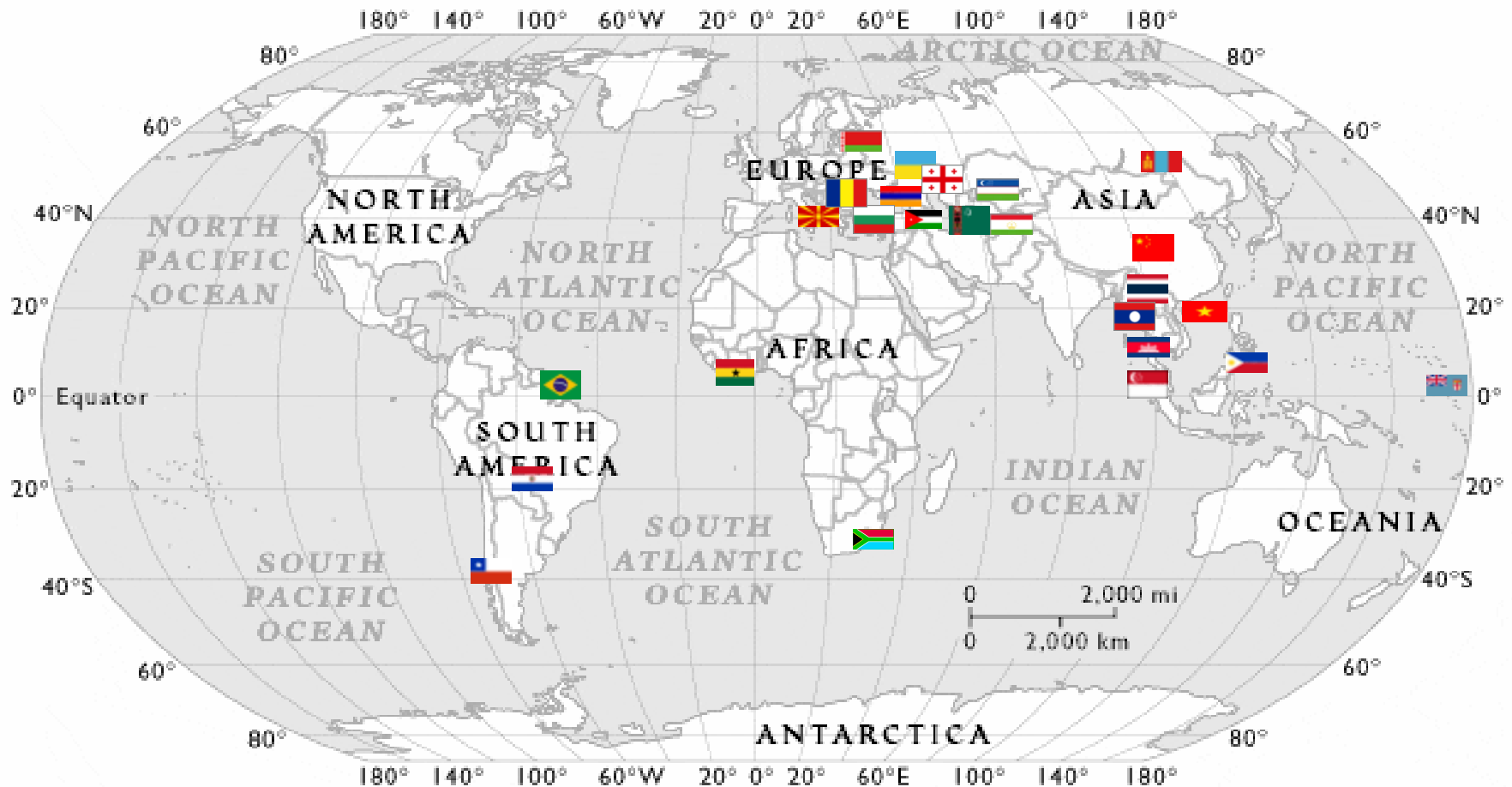
ELDS for Multiple Uses



Established ECD Partnerships



THE WORLD



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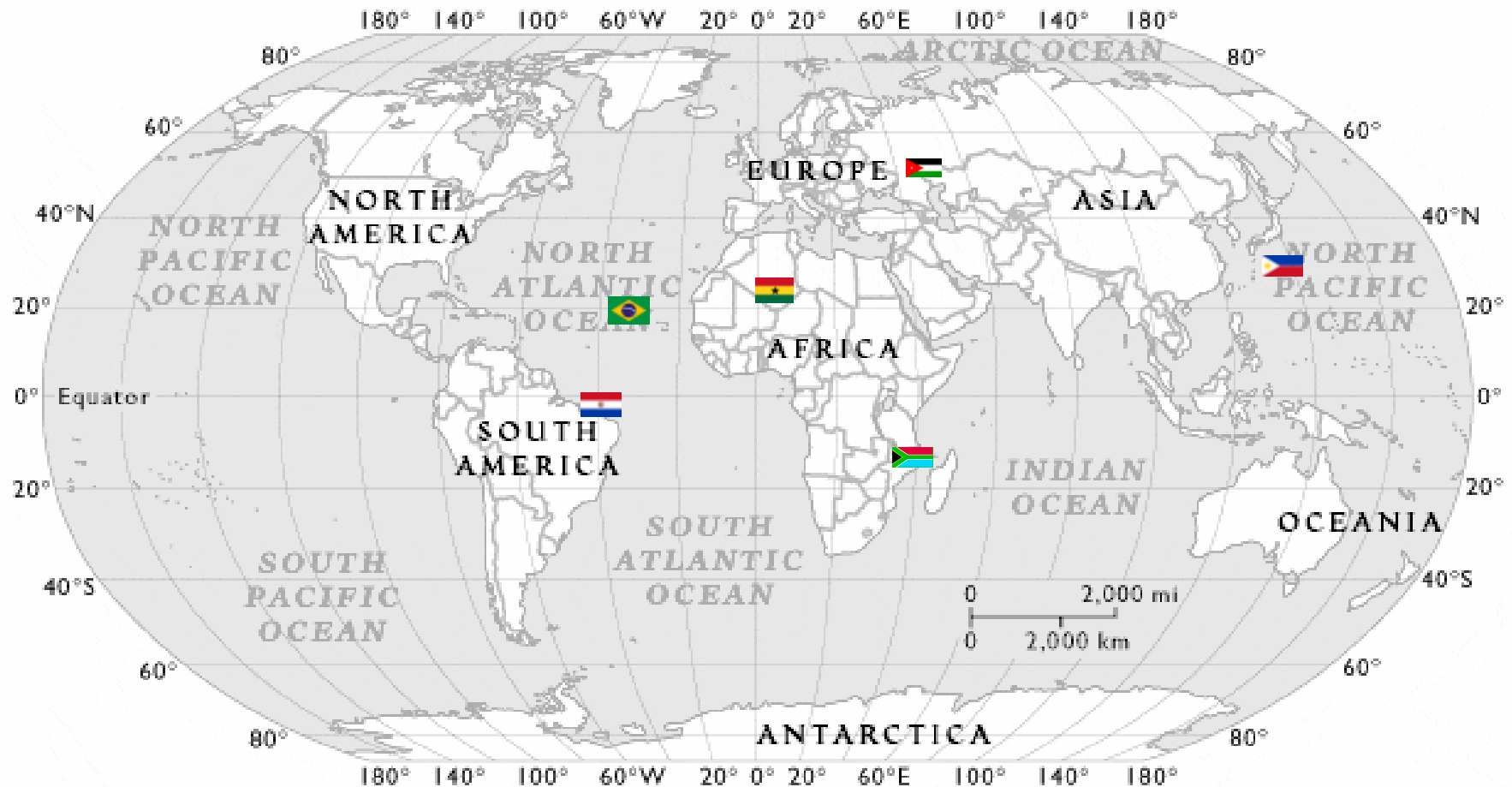
2008



ELDS on Many Continents and in Many Countries

- Brazil
- Cambodia
- Chile
- China
- Fiji
- Georgia
- Ghana
- Jordan
- Kazakhstan
- Laos
- Mongolia
- Philippines
- Romania
- Viet Nam
- South Africa
- Thailand
- Turkmenistan
- United States

THE WORLD



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Overview of Achievements: Applying the Standards

■ Parenting



- China, Jordan, Mongolia

■ Professional development and teacher training



- Cambodia, Fiji, Ghana, S. Africa

■ Revision of national ECD curriculum for children



- Cambodia, China, Fiji, Mongolia, Philippines, Thailand, S. Africa

■ National capacity building



- Ghana

■ National monitoring of the status of children



- Ghana, Jordan

■ National ECD policy

- Macedonia



GOING GLOBAL

- Going Global represents:
 - Not only a national movement, but a global one;
 - A unique opportunity to develop our national goals within the context of a global community;
 - A unique opportunity to bring the latest research to life; and
 - A unique vehicle to integrate early learning and development in our nations.

