



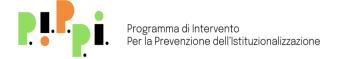
## Breaking Silos, Building Futures: Policy Innovations for Integrated Family and Child Support

25-26 September 2025 Brussels, Belgium

# STREAM 3. PREVENTION THROUGH CROSS-SECTORAL COLLABORATION



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## The P.I.P.P.I. approach in preventing the impact of family vulnerability on children's development



Pippi LONGSTOCKING'S

RESILIENCE









## P.I.P.P.I.

#### Programma di Intervento Per la Prevenzione dell'Istituzionalizzazione



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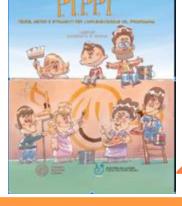






#### **Innovation**

Implementation Science Method



## **Practice**

Research
Scientific Evidence



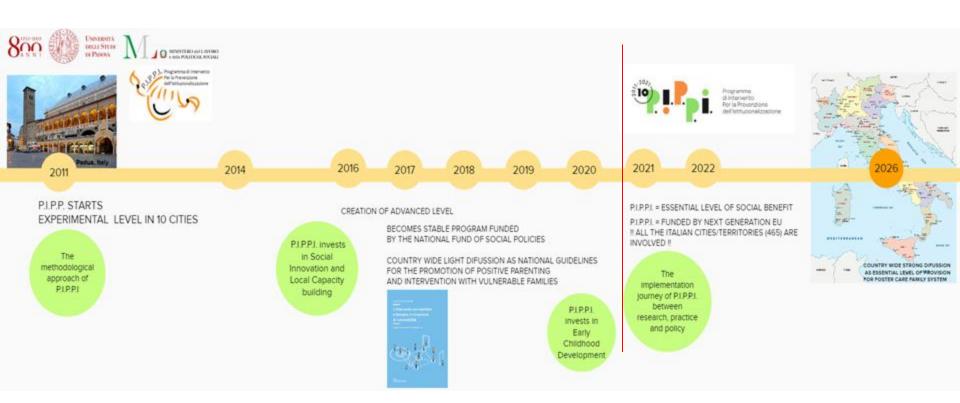
HOW to build the relationship between research-innovation proposals and practice for the emancipation of practice?

HOW to break the silos between research evidence and practice?









The LEPS promotes the ability to make a right enforceable, through:



## Purpose of the LEPS P.I.P.P.I

To respond to the need of every child to grow up in a stable, safe, protective and "nurturing" environment, actively countering the onset of situations that favour social inequalities, school drop-out, inappropriate separations of children from their family of origin, through the identification of 'appropriate actions of a preventive nature aimed at accompanying not just the child but the entire family unit in a situation of vulnerability, insofar as they enable the exercise of positive and responsible parenting and the construction of a social response to the developmental needs of children as a whole







# Neglect and family vulnerability are a space of special opportunity to deploy prevention-oriented interventions



#### **REC 2006/19/UE**:

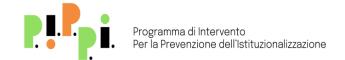
positive parenting

## REC 2013/112/UE:

breaking the cicle of sociale disadvantage

#### Agenda 2030

Sustainable Development (Unesco, 2015)



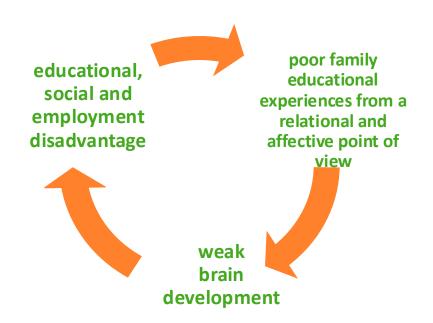




## From an individualistic notion of vulnerability to an ecological and ontological notion

All human beings are vulnerable, BUT there are inequalities in the condition of interdependence: for some people it is particularly difficult to establish links with their entourage resulting in an optimal response to their needs.

Vulnerability is not a condition that depends on individuals, it is the response that characterises the relationship between the person and his or her environment that fails to build itself, it is when the interdependence falters, that vulnerability is generated: vulnerability not as a state of individual weakness, but as an ambiguous condition that may give rise to precariousness, but which nevertheless opens up different possibilities in the composition of our life and development (Gilson, 2014).



Poverty impairs a child's development psychologically (e.g. weakens self-esteem), cognitively (e.g. hinders the attainment of school skills) and socially (e.g. limits the ability to be in a group), and thus is a cause of school drop-outs and human capital

#### The aim

#### to break the cycle of social disadvantage

Children who grow up in adverse environments show over time greater difficulties in behaviour, learning and social integration, more likelihood of school failure, weak inclusion in the world of work: psycho-social and educational poverty experienced in the socio-familial environment in the early years of life is a strong predictor of social inequalities and economic poverty







P.I.P.P.I.: 2 year Programme

**Target**: family with children 0-17 y.o.

(Rec. For 0-6y.o.)

ACTORS: social services, ECEC, schools, NGOs, Local Health Authority, Courts referring to the municipalities involved

Steering Committee: UniPD, Ministry of Welfare, Regions, a new paradigm of public

governance

To experiment innovative social and community-based actions to guarantee children and families' social inclusion and participation











## P.I.P.P.I. 1-13 The subjects in 13 implementations

Edizione	Anni	Famiglie	Bambini	Città/Ambiti Territoriali		Operatori	Coach	Referenti Regionali	Referenti Territoriali
				FNPS	PNRR			Regionali	Tomtonan
P.I.P.P.I.1	2011-12	89	122	10	/	160	20	/	10
P.I.P.P.I.2	2013-14	144	198	9	/	630	32	/	9
P.I.P.P.I.3	2014-15	453	600	47	/	1.490	104	17	47
P.I.P.P.I.4	2015-16	434	473	46	/	1.169	116	18	62
P.I.P.P.I.5	2016-17	508	541	50	/	1.387	126	18	56
P.I.P.P.I.6	2017-18	600	613	54	/	1.532	129	19	64
P.I.P.P.I.7	2018-20	700	726	67	/	1.847	200	16	109
P.I.P.P.I.8	2019-21	664	680	60	/	1.645	136	46	71
P.I.P.P.I.9	2020-22	775	865	79	/	1.966	190	51	84
P.I.P.P.I.10	2021-23	612	664	76	/	1.550	164	35	92
P.I.P.P.I.11	2022-24	5.272	4.735	76	400	14.342	1.702	52	740
P.I.P.P.I.12	2023-25	3.531	3.029	81	400				
P.I.P.P.I.13	2024-26	-		72	400				

In 14 years: more than 19,600 families with children 0-17 years 9,200 trained operators more than 500 out of 600 ATSs (supra-municipal administrative aggregations providing social services and in some cases health services)





## How does P.I.P.P.I. works?

A project for every child and his family: An Evaluation method and a set of 4 strategies

Participative and Transformative Evaluation

The multidimentional model *The world of the child*: a theoretical model and a shared tool to assess, plan and evaluate

Multidisciplinary Team (Family IN!!!) + coach + Territorial Group A set of 4 intervention strategies is available at the same time / intensively















#### P.I.P.P.I. CORE:

- Integrated and shared assessment and care plan
- Ecological and Multidimensional approach = sharing responsibilities
- Multidisciplinary team

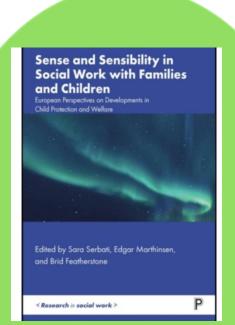
The set of 4 interventions is framed in this theoretical framework and it is set up start from here

#### MAIN FEATURES of INTERVENTIONS:

- Intensive
- Multipurpose/multidimensional
- Integrated
- Flexible
- Sustainable
- Relational

**SENSE AND SENSIBILTY!** 

They are based on family participation and on social context involvement









## Participative and Transformative Evaluation -PTE (micro-system level)











## **Multidisciplinary Team**

assume primary responsibility for implementing tailored Framework Projects with participating families.

Composition depend on the need of the family:

- Parents
- Child
- Professionals (social workers, social educator, psychologist, etc.)
- School Teachers
- Informal helpers
- Other people relevant for the child



The team around the child



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## British Assessement Framework (2000)

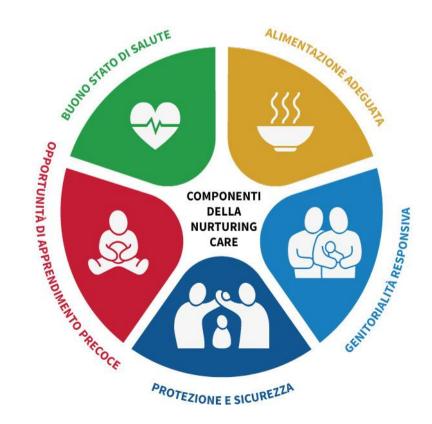
adapted by researchers at the University of Montreal within the AIDES programme (Chamberland et al. 2012) and by LabRIEF under the name "World of the Child" (MdB) within the P.I.P.P.I.(2011)

Overcome post code lottery





#### **COMPONENTI DELLA NURTURING CARE**



#### The latest scientific evidence

Children's needs - for health, nutrition, education, social protection, responsive parenting - are closely interlinked, and responding to them requires an integrated systemic approach across different services and sectors

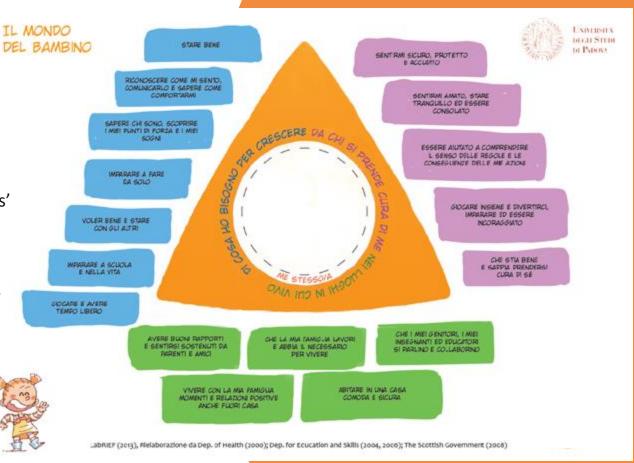
https://nurturing-care.org



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The AF puts three axes of dimensions in tension:

- one representing the child's developmental needs,
- one representing the parents' responses to these needs
- one representing the set of resources available, the risk and protective factors of the family ecosystem













#### THEORIES UNDERPINNING THE AF

Development needs and children's rights

Child neglect

First 1000 days: holistic to the ECD, nurturing care

Ecology of human development

**Participation** 



Neurosciences, resiliency, risk and protective factors, ACE

Human Capital and investment in childhood

Capabilities empowerment

Parenting responsivity and skills

Vulnerability and child poverty

Parenting support

## Professionals

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DI PAL

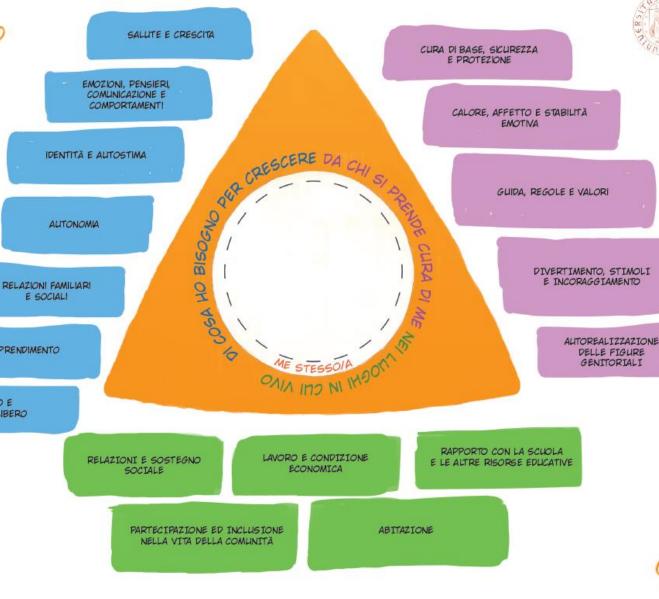


The approach is grounded in several key principles:

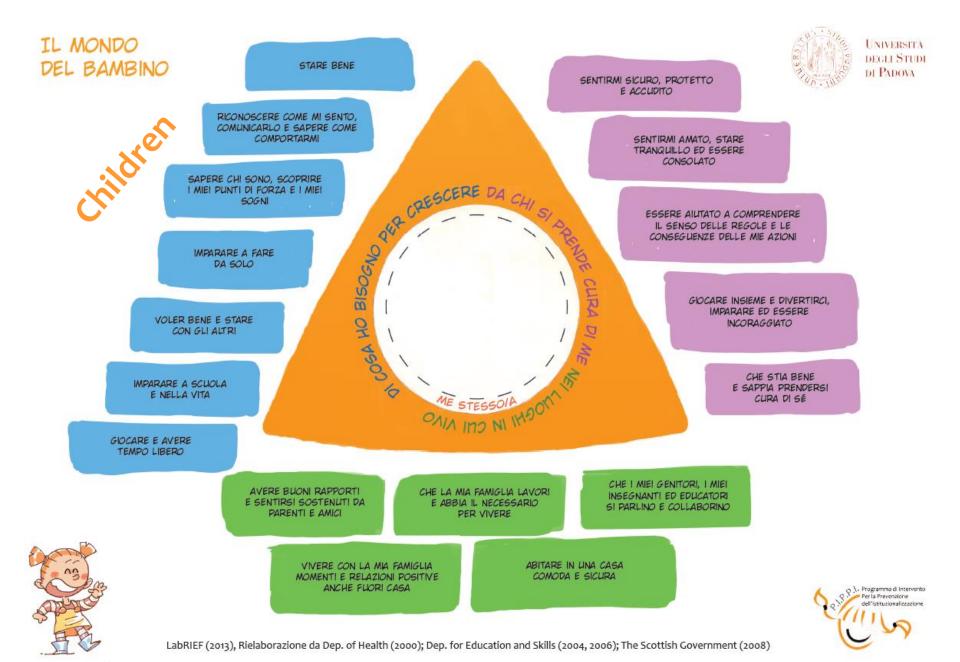
- Recognizing and valuing families' lived contexts
- •Focusing on empowering each parent's educational potential
- •Acknowledging parents as individuals entitled to a central role
- •Ensuring all parents
  receive respect and support
  regardless of circumstances

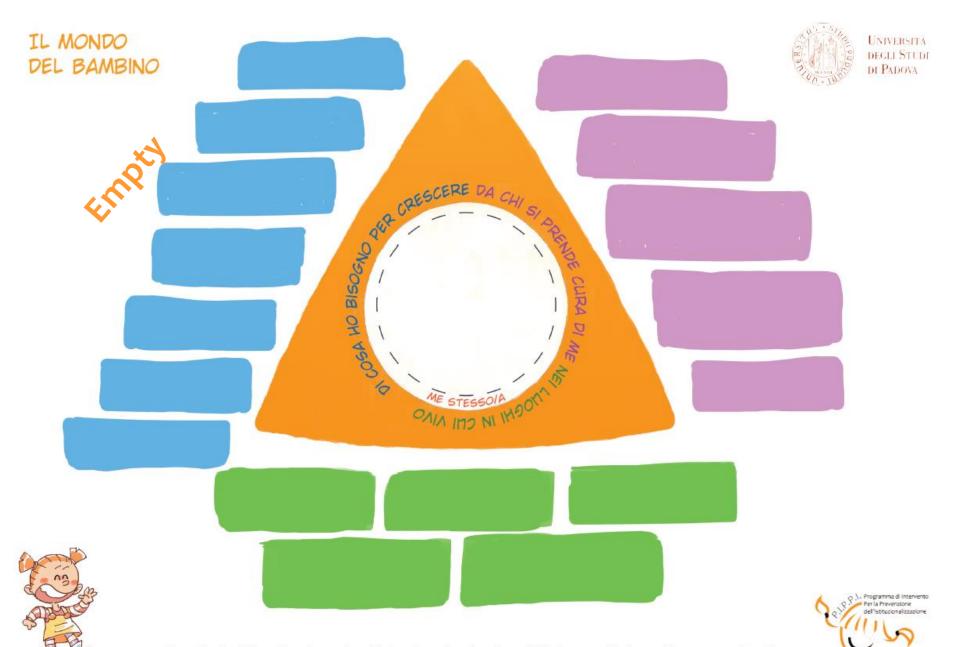
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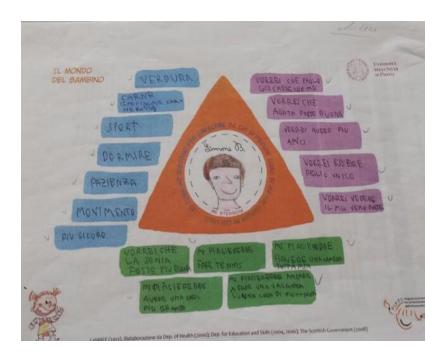
# Make visible what, without you, could perhaps never be seen R. Bresson































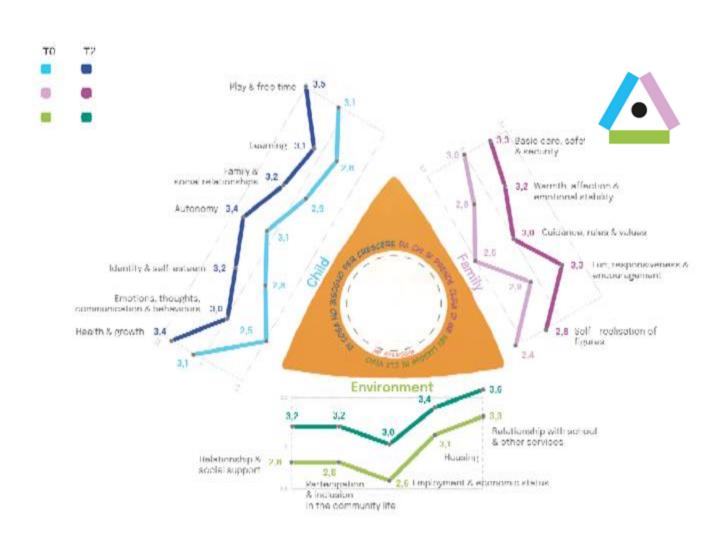








## P.I.P.P.I. results: the outcomes





Home based family

support

Parents' and children's

Groups





Community care perspective.

identified in the community

to parents and children in

vulnerable situation

offers support in the daily life

A family/natural helper

## **P.I.P.P.I.'s four core intervention strategies**. Specifically designed to counteract Italy's persistent service fragmentation

provides intensive an support at home to parents and children to improve positive parenting in social context

> CHILD'S AND FAMILY'S NEEDS **AND RESOURCES**



**Informal Social Support** 



Family, ECEC, Schools, Services **Partnership** 

promote mutual support between families to improve their parenting skills

promote a positive cooperation between schools, familie and social services and the involvement of teachers in supporting families and children







# The INTENSITY CONSISTENCY DURATION



of professional and paraprofessional support offered to children and parental figures are important predictors of successful development of neglected children.

Insufficient, fragmented,
discontinuous services are
excellent predictors of
maintaining or even increasing
the difficulties observed in
vulnerable families

Intersectoral Partnerships in P.I.P.P.I. between Daycares/Schools/ Families Social Services

operates through three interconnected dimensions, aligned with the triangular "World of the Child" framework:



## **Child-centred Interventions**

focus on developing cognitive, social and emotional-affective skills through structured educational activities. Educators assume specialized roles as "resilience tutors", implementing tailored developmental support within group settings.



Community integration

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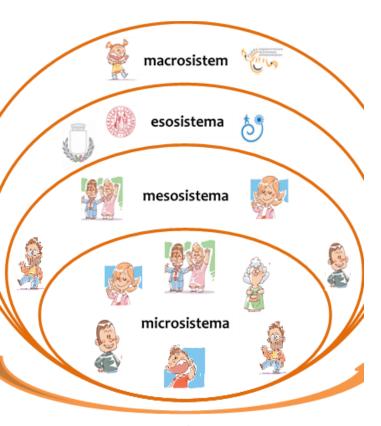


# Intersectoral Partnerships in P.I.P.P.I.: Daycare/Schools/ Families/Social Services

### To Promote

- the ECEC as a community of learning and positive relationships for children and their families;
- promote educational coherence between the child's care plan and school activities, through educators'participation in MT: a project for and with each child

## THE BARRIERS



cronosistema

#### INTER-PROFESSIONAL LEVEL

Insufficient knowledge about the functioning of other services

Mutual representations and prejudices

Different languages and theoretical frameworks while these social services districts (ATS) facilitate coordinated service delivery, Pedagogical Coordination Group operates through regional zones with local authority governance. Notably, alignment between ATS boundaries and pedagogical coordination zones varies significantly across regions.

Professional isolation and institutional distrust: Practitioners from both social services and educational settings frequently operate in organizational silos, fostering mutual pessimism about cross-sector collaboration.

Educator Apprehension Regarding Family Engagement: Early childhood educators often demonstrate reluctance to involve social services due to concerns about potential negative reactions from families.

#### INTER-ISTITUTIONAL LEVEL

School and social and social-health services are two different systems with traditionally clear-cut and well-established organisational, administrative and political distinctions.



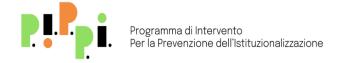
P.I.P.P.I.'s collaborative work with **Pedagogical Territorial Coordination Groups** ['Coordinamenti Pedagogici Territoriali'] introduced by Legislative Decree 65/2017.

The decree's nationwide implementation of these coordination groups pursued two primary objectives:

- ensuring vertical continuity in children's educational trajectories from daycare to preschool,
- fostering horizontal continuity among various educational services within the same geographic area through a unified, coherent training framework (Balduzzi, Lazzari, 2024).

P.I.P.P.I. extends this foundational structure by pursuing an even more ambitious integration - promoting continuity not merely within the educational sector, but across multiple service domains including: educational services, social welfare systems, socio-medical programs, socio-educational initiatives.

This comprehensive approach to intersectoral collaboration constitutes the innovative core of P.I.P.P.I.'s intervention model.

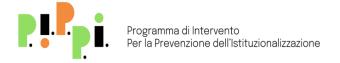






# P.I.P.P.I. employs two primary action streams to achieve its dual objectives of fostering intersectoral collaboration and ensuring continuity in children's developmental pathways:

- (1) establishing connections with local entities
- (2) building professional-family partnerships.







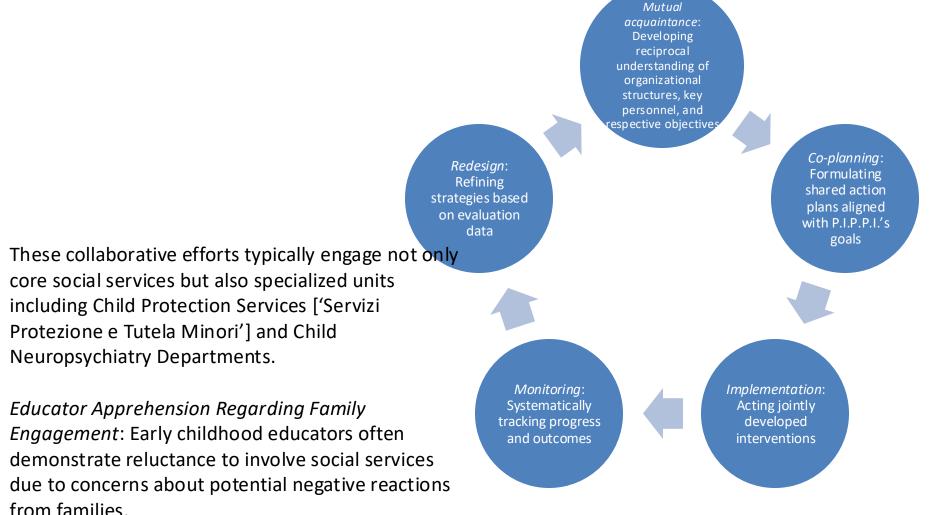
## Establishing connections with local entities

1.1. Introduction and Mutual Acquaintance Process:

P.I.P.P.I. enters the education sector through social services, specifically via Italy's Territorial Social Areas ('Ambiti Territoriali Sociali', ATS).

While these social services districts facilitate coordinated service delivery, pedagogical coordination operates through regional zones with local authority governance. Notably, alignment between ATS boundaries and pedagogical coordination zones varies significantly across regions.

## A five-stage collaboration framework:

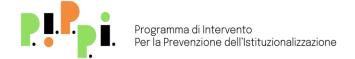




# 1.2 Formation of Interprofessional Working Groups (MT)

This preliminary phase enables the constitution of cross-sectoral working groups that integrate professionals from both educational and social service domains. These groups, formally designated as "multidisciplinary team" ['équipe multidisciplinare'], assume primary responsibility for implementing tailored Framework Projects with participating families. The team composition strategically combines education specialists, including teachers and pedagogical coordinators, with social service professionals, encompassing social workers and psychologists.







# 1.3 Adoption of Standardised Protocols

The intersectoral partnership achieves formalization at the institutional level through the development and implementation of standardized frameworks, including: common procedural protocols, evidence- based guidelines, formal inter-institutional agreements. These instruments serve three critical functions:

- Structuring reinforcement of collaborative mechanisms.
- Institutional legitimization of partnership models.
- Long-term stabilization of cooperative practices.

The Territorial Group ['Gruppo Territoriale'] assumes a pivotal governance role in this process, functioning as the coordinating body that establishes formal networks between individual practitioners and multidisciplinary teams. This group represents a strategic consortium of stakeholders operating within the same ATS, including: formal service providers (social services, educational institutions, healthcare organizations), local government entities, educational authorities, and community-based organizations



# 1.4. Interprofessional Capacity Building through Joint Training Initiatives

The multidisciplinary teams initiate joint training programs within their respective ATSs.

These capacity-building sessions feature social service professionals assuming instructional roles to enhance the skills of daycare educators and preschool teachers.

The sessions focus on three core components:

- Participatory and transformative evaluation methodologies
- •Implementation of the World of the Child framework
- •Systematic observation and documentation of children's needs

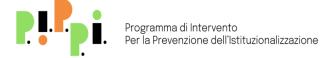


### 1.5 Developing Shared Professional Language and Perspectives

Through ongoing professional development initiatives, practitioners gradually develop a collective understanding of how language shapes professional practice and facilitates meaningful change.

### As one team member illustrated:

"The daycare centre has adopted more appropriate and useful language in conversations with families. The unexpected outcome was that discussing children's needs and parental responses to foster positive parenting led some parents to change how they communicate not only with staff but also within their families. One mother shared that she managed to talk about her concerns with her husband, and that had she not participated in this activity with us... she would never have spoken with her husband about it."







# 2. Building professionalfamily partnerships





### 2.1 Teamwork

The use of structured tools - particularly The World of the Child and Maps to Explore the 0-3 Years - enhances interdisciplinary teamwork by deepening professionals' understanding of children's needs. These resourses encourage reflective practice, prompting team members to examine their own roles and responsibilities rather than attributing challenges externally. As one educator observed:

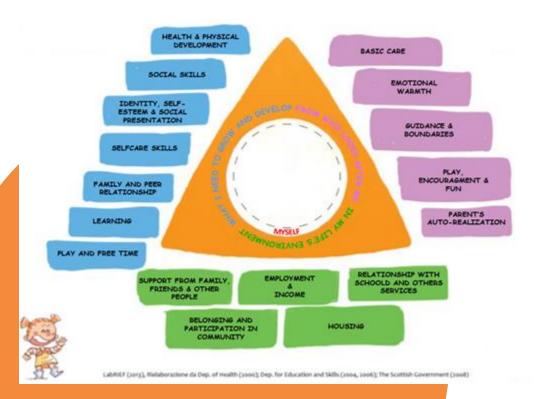


"The child and their family are truly at the center. While we had always aimed for this, we had never achieved such a comprehensive level of care. Additionally, doors that once seemed closed have now opened: a constructive dialogue has been established with social services and parents. When approached with benevolence and empathy, parents feel accepted and supported by the relationship being built. We have been intentional in using language that promotes integration among and within families, ensuring they do not feel marginalized."





A tool designed to provide professionals and families with a **theoretical and methodological guide** useful both for **observing needs** and for **designing shared action plans**.



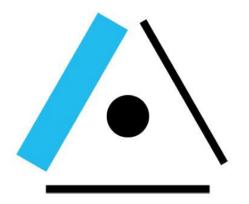


**17 Maps,** one for each subdimension of the Triangle (CW), for:

- Assessment
- microplanning

Adaptation of the Multidimensional Model of the World of the Child to 0-3 y.o. children

Mappe per esplorare lo 0-3



# I BISOGNI DI SVILUPPO DELLA BAMBINA E DEL BAMBINO

"Di che cosa ho bisogno per crescere"









### Each map is made up of two parts:

- A first page providing an overview of the contents of the sub-dimension and the role it plays in children's development;
- A variable number of observation areas.

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1. What it is?

2. Why it matters?

#### **OBSERVING**

#### **OBSERVATION AREA 1**

Observation guide (Examples of exploratory questions)

Activities and experiences that help observations

#### **OBSERVATION AREA 2**

Observation guide (Examples of exploratory questions)

Activities and experiences that help observations

#### **OBSERVATION AREA 3**

Observation guide (Examples of exploratory questions)

Activities and experiences that help observations











### MAPS for exploring each subdimension of the Triangle

#### Observing IDENTITY AND SELF ESTEEM

#### Description

Questions to guide reflexivity

Daily experiences that help observing

#### Sono io e te lo dico! [I say to you who I am]

Le bambine e i bambini di pochi mesi non sanno di essere persone differenti da chi sta loro vicino. Lo imparano un po' alla volta. Quando bambine e bambini iniziano a parlare, tra le prime parole ci sono 'io', 'me', 'mio'. Questo è un indizio del momento in cui iniziano a riconoscersi separatamente da tutti gli altri. A volte per parlare di sé usano il proprio nome. Nel secondo anno di vita, tipicamente attraversano la "fase dei no", dove sperimentano che si possono differenziare dagli altri, proprio dicendo 'no' e in questo modo affermano la loro identità. Ma anche i 'no' che vengono dagli adulti sono importanti...

#### Guida all'osservazione

In che modo la bambina o il bambino reagisce quando non vede più mamma, papà o le persone a lei/lui più care? In che modo la bambina o il bambino parla di se stesso e di quello che fa? In che modo comunica le sue preferenze? In che modo il bambino fa capire che è interessato a qualcuno o qualcosa e richiama l'attenzione su di essa (ad esempio indicando o nominando l'oggetto o la persona)?

#### Attività ed esperienze che aiutano ad osservare

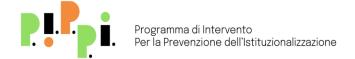
#### - SIN DAI PRIMI MESI: il gioco del cucù

Il gioco del cucù è un gioco che diverte e aiuta bambine e bambini a distinguere la propria presenza in un ambiente dalla presenza/assenza di altre persone. Quando è molto piccola/o, una bambina/o può provare ansia nel non vedere le persone di attaccamento presenti. Giocare al cucù aiuta il/la bambina/o a imparare che le persone sono presenti anche quando non si vedono. Il cucù si può fare in moltissimi modi come, ad esempio, nascondersi sotto a una coperta e all'improvviso saltare fuori, oppure usando una copertina per coprire la/il bambina/o. In questo caso sarà lei/lui stesso che un po' alla volta imparerà ad abbassare la coperta per scoprire felice di aver ritrovato chi per un attimo non si vedeva più.





Since 2023, the Special 0-3 ('Speciale 03') training pathway has incorporated Maps to Explore 0-3 Years ('Mappe per Esplorare Io 0-3') as an adjunct assessment tool to the World of the Child framework (Serbati et al., 2023). This instrument provides a robust theoretical foundation for understanding early development and methodological guidance for needs assessment, alongside customized intervention planning protocols. The tool's implementation has been accompanied by specialized training activities designed to deepen professionals' knowledge of early childhood development, build practical skills in tool application, and generate empirical data to refine both the instrument and associated interventions





# 2.2 Framework Projects: Collaborative Planning for Child Development

The Framework Project ['Progetto Quadro'] represents a core mechanism for establishing shared understanding between educators and families regarding each child's developmental needs and pathways. In the educational context, this collaborative planning tool takes institutional form through the Educational Co-Responsibility Pact, which operates across micro and meso systemic levels.

Through these Pacts, services can promote innovative forms of participation and coeducation between families and professionals. The approach aims to strengthen parents' capacity to respond to their children's developmental needs, enabling each parent to become an active resource for their children, teachers, and wider community. Importantly, this model does not seek to "educate" parents in a conventional top-down manner or simply provide support. Rather, it fosters an inclusive process of accompaniment for all parents in their educational role, consciously avoiding the imposition of standardized parenting practices.





# 2.3 Parental Engagement through Group Activities

Recognizing parents as central partners in the educational process, the program systematically implements structured **group activities** focused on parenting roles and responsibilities. These initiatives include two primary modalities of engagement: First, facilitated discussion groups create spaces for dialogue between educators and parents to develop shared approaches to co-education.

These sessions allow for the exchange of perspectives and collective problem-solving around child development and learning practices.

Second, the program incorporates various "open classroom" opportunities where parents—within the constraints of their availability—actively participate alongside their children in classroom activities.

These sessions encompass diverse educational experiences including:

- Shared reading activities
- Artistic and craft projects
- Theater workshops
- Library organization initiatives
   Science experiments
- Cooking workshops



# 2.4 Restructured Parent-educators meetings

The program reimagines traditional parent-teacher meetings by implementing a participatory framework centered on the newly developed assessment tools.

Each family is guaranteed three personalized meetings annually: at the beginning, midpoint, and conclusion of the school year. These extended sessions, lasting 30-60 minutes (significantly longer than conventional 10-minute informational meetings), are designed as interactive dialogues rather than one-directional reports.







# 2.5 Transforming Reporting Practices Through Collaborative Care

This context of proximity and partnership between educational institutions (daycare, preschools) and social services has reshaped conventional approaches to "la segnalazione" ('reporting concerns about children/families').

Formal reporting becomes one option among several potential responses to emerging difficulties, with many situations addressed through preventative collaboration rather than institutional intervention.

Educational settings now serve as hubs for supportive group meetings and relationship-building, functioning as crossroads where families, educators, and social services converge. This framework proves particularly valuable for families already involved with child welfare systems, as seen when childcare centers host supervised visits or other preventative measures.



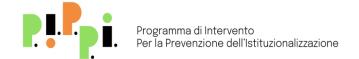


# 2.5 Transforming Reporting Practices Through Collaborative Care

The paradigm shift moves from reactive reporting to proactive support characterized by three core principles:

- •Early collaborative intervention when challenges emerge
- •Family empowerment through partnership
- Community solidarity and mutual respect

By centering care and prevention, this approach strengthens family capacity while creating more inclusive environments where children's needs are met through sustained cooperation rather than institutional escalation. The approach demonstrates how educational settings can serve as both early warning systems and primary support networks for vulnerable families.





# 2.6 Community Educational Pacts: Fostering Collaborative Ecosystems

The Educational Community Pacts ['Patti educativi di Comunità'] are a tool introduced by the Ministry of Education (\*Ministero dell'Istruzione, Piano Scuola 2020-2021\*) that enable local authorities, third-sector organizations (or NGOs), associations, and schools to enter into specific agreements. These pacts are effective not only in fostering the schoolfamily alliance but also in promoting collaboration between schools and the broader local community. In alignment with the P.I.P.P.I. approach, the Educational Community Pacts operate at both exosystemic and macrosystemic levels (Mangione et al., 2024). They foster the creation of supportive communities through innovative forms of proximity-based welfare, the activation of engagement pathways for the educational community, and community design initiatives aimed at defining collaborations centered on several key areas.



The formative and research activities conducted by LabRIEF researchers have facilitated a crucial paradigm shift—from initial relationships marked by mutual distrust to established partnerships grounded in both the principles and daily practice of authentic collaboration. This evolution is reflected in the observations of one daycare educator:

"The awareness of a positive relationship and mutual professional respect between the daycare center and social services forms the foundation for strong family engagement. We've observed that as vulnerable parents—facing multiple life challenges—develop trust in the daycare center, services, and ultimately in their own parenting capacities, their perception of the center transforms. It becomes recognized not just as an educational space for children, but as a family support hub that connects services and builds community networks."

- While implementation challenges persist, these testimonies demonstrate that is possible repositioning early childhood settings as central nodes in integrated support systems.
- The approach underscores how educational spaces can simultaneously serve children's developmental needs while strengthening family and community capacities—a dual focus essential for addressing vulnerability in all its complexity.









# Our collective intentionality

We are a moving network of public administrations, collaborating with different actors, primarily the third sector.

This expresses a great collective intentionality

- to nurture the life and human potential of each child through the strengthening of his or her family and community ties, guaranteeing qualified proximity and precision welfare to his or her family and community as a whole
- to nourish the life of the services by guaranteeing capacity-building actions: accompaniment, monitoring and training to practise an integrated, intersectoral, multidisciplinary, participatory, evaluable and effective approach



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