# DEAR PARENT!

In several studies has been confirmed that both the parents and the children usually consider Finnish early childhood education and care as high quality. Parents and children are usually satisfied with day care. However, there are still many things that can and should be improved. The development work in early childhood education and care is a continuous process. In the project of *Progressive feedback in early childhood education and care* the purpose is first to do a comprehensive and thorough research about the early childhood education the children confront and produce daily. Secondly, based on the research results, the educators get feedback, which helps them to develop their education and care further.

In this research randomly chosen children will be observed, interviewed and their activities will be evaluated. By observing the children, we will collect information about the children’s every day experiences and activities. Accordingly, the children will not be interfered.

The observation happens in two randomly chosen days in the child’s group. Every 20 minutes the child will be observed by a research assistant for one minute. In addition to that the educators of the group and the manager of the day care unit will evaluate their own activity, children’s activity, the learning environment, and the atmosphere. By combining the observation data with the evaluation data, it is possible to analyze those elements which are connected with each other in practice, e.g. which kind of environment seems to be connected with children’s happiness or participation. When these things are reliably discovered, the educators can develop their practices in purposeful ways.

Starting from September 2017 observation data has been collected in the day care unit (kindergarten, preschool, or family day care) of your child. Each year approximately 3000 children will be randomly chosen to participate in this study at least in several Finnish municipalities. The research data are confidential. The names or other personal information are not collected or registered. Only the parents, the educators of the child, and the observing research assistant (who is a kindergarten teacher from another day care unit) know the identity of the participating children and that information will not be forwarded. During the observation situations, the educators of the group work as usual with the children taking care of their wellbeing. The observer will not contact the children.

The ethical research principles will be followed during the study. In the research data, the children are not considered individually, but large amount of data offers a possibility to analyze even the smallest development areas reliably. The data will be analyzed by using statistical methods. For further information, please visit the project web page: <http://blogs.helsinki.fi/orientate/>.

The research data will be used both in the municipalities and at the early childhood education and care research in the University of Helsinki (see the contact information below). The municipalities can access the anonymous data to analyze it, but the municipalities cannot track single day care units or children. The anonymous data will be recorded and stored digitally.

To make it possible for each child’s point of view to be considered and have an impact on the research results, we ask for parent’s / parents’ permission for their child to participate in the research project. Each child’s experiences are important and should be considered in the education and care. The results of the study will be used in developing early childhood education and care and the parents will generally be informed about the development work conducted in each municipality.

The child will not participate in the project without parent’s / parents’ permission. The participation is completely voluntary and the parents can at any time withdraw from the project without explaining the reason. The possible refusal will not cause any harm for the child or the family. The anonymous research data will be collected, stored, and analyzed by using the ethical research principles. The anonymous research data will be filed in the University of Helsinki for follow-up studies.

Please, return the permission form to the educators of your child.

**Best Regards,**

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# consent form

In the research and development project *Progressive feedback in early childhood education and care* the data will be collected by observing the children’s activities in day care, by evaluating their activities and by interviewing the children. The data will be recorded and stored digitally.

The observation data will be combined with the educator’s and the day care unit manager’s evaluations of their own work and the learning environment to be able to analyze the connections between the children’s experiences and the pedagogical approaches. This makes possible to develop early childhood education and care in a child initiative way.

The child will not participate in the project without parent’s / parents’ permission. The participation is completely voluntary and the parents can at any time withdraw from the project without explaining the reason. The possible refusal will not cause any harm for the child or the family. The anonymous research data will be collected, stored, and analyzed by using the ethical research principles. The anonymous research data will be filed in the University of Helsinki for follow-up studies.

My child\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ may participate in Progressive feedback in early childhood education and care –research in the period 2018–2019.

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Place and date

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Signature

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Printed name