

COMMUNICATION SUPPORT IN PRESCHOOL BY READING ALOUD

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The mission of the Swedish preschools is to stimulate children's learning and development in a holistic way. The goal areas in preschool are language and communication, mathematics, nature science and technology (Lpfö98 rev 2010). There is no other period in life that contains so much learning as the first five years (Renblad and Brodin, 2012; Brodin and Renblad, 2013). A majority of all children (1-5 years) in Sweden attend preschool, thus it plays a key role in children's language development. Reading aloud and storytelling is one way to support children's language development. The project Let's read a book is a part of a three year long cooperation between a municipality in Jönköping's county and the School of Education and Communication (HLK), Jönköping University. The preschool staff and the special pedagogues in the municipality have experienced that there was a number of children who have a poorer language development than earlier. That was the starting point for a common work with literacy development at the preschools. The goal of the initiative was to raise awareness of communication, reading aloud and storytelling impact on children's language development among staff and parents, and to promote the development of the physical environment at each preschool. The purpose here is to present the results of the evaluation and assessment while the development continued. The study is carried out by surveys before and after the project of preschool physical environment and self-evaluation of all teams at the preschools. The target group is eleven municipal preschools, serving 573 children between one and five years of age, and divided into 23 child units. The results show how they use reading aloud. Based on the assessment, reflection on communication of reading and storytelling impacted children's language development and raised the quality at the preschools. All children appreciate reading aloud and storytelling. Their interests in signs, symbols, pictures and letters have increased. The children have improved their vocabulary, their understanding of language, and their phonological consciousness. From the comments of the staff it appears that the children are today better prepared for reading and writing and have developed their fantasy. A majority of the units have routines for reading aloud and storytelling.

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