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CHILD CARE AND EARLY EDUCATION IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

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INTRODUCTION

The following report offers a general profile of some aspects of the care and education of children of preschool age in the Federal Republic of Germany. The report focuses primarily on 3- to 6-year-olds. For this age group, Germany has a distinct, historical tradition of institutionalized preschool education, namely, kindergarten. Compared to other areas of care and education for young children, kindergarten is the most regulated in terms of legal provisions; it is also in the kindergarten area that the most research has been done and the most elaborate educational models have been developed. Kindergarten for 3- to 6-year-olds has been looked upon for close to 20 years as the elementary level of the general educational system, and there is a broad consensus that every child in this age group should have the opportunity to attend kindergarten (this is not the case, however, due to greatly differing regional rates of supply). Nevertheless, it is becoming clear in political and educational debates that tasks and problems currently taking shape regarding the care and education of young children can only be partly resolved within the framework of today's kindergarten.

Increasingly, questions relating to the whole age group from birth to school entry are being raised. And, in addition to the educational aspect, which dominates in the kindergarten's self-image, the child care as-

pect—both at kindergarten age and below—is increasingly becoming the subject of public debate. For this reason the age group of under-3-year-olds will also be considered in this report, despite the fact that the database is smaller; the literature, more limited; and the educational models, less well developed.

This profile covers historical aspects of the development of preschool care and education, documents some aspects of the present situation (as far as it is reflected in available statistics), and outlines the complete spectrum of public assistance provided for the care and education of young children in the Federal Republic of Germany. This is followed by a description of the chief child care options, in which legal, administrative, and educational angles, among others, are differentiated. In a further section, aspects and problems of the national research scene in the field of preschool education are roughly sketched. A final chapter addresses important points of departure that are emerging in today's discussions about the further development of a differentiated system of care and education for young children.

The profile does not attempt to discuss in detail the development of educational theories and concepts or of pedagogical models; it contains, in this respect, only rough sketches. Instead, a macroscopic, policy-oriented point of view is set forth, which takes into account the historical developments, the present state of affairs and its problems, and the points of departure for further development of the systems of early childhood care and education in keeping with Germany's changing social circumstances.

HISTORICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVES

Early childhood education and care, as a more or less clearly articulated and consciously employed educational concept, has been developing in Germany and other central European countries over the past two centuries. Its origins must be seen against the background of the formation of the bourgeois notion of the family, which came into being during the second half of the 18th century. This notion, which has generally been distinguished by an increase in warmth in the climate of family bonds, assigns a central role to the mother-child relationship (cf. Shorter, 1975). Accordingly, woman "discovers" within the family her "natural" vocation as wife and mother. Hence, the previously prevalent attitude of a certain degree of indifference towards children was replaced by one charac-

terized by constant concern for and attention paid to children's upbringing. As a result of this cultural-historical development, childhood began to be perceived as a separate state of being (cf. Ariès, 1962), a state needing to be observed, interpreted, and subjected to deliberate molding. Educational theorists, particularly those of the circle of Philanthropism (Basedow, Wolke, Salzmann, Campe, among others), drew attention to the great importance to adulthood of the earliest phase of human life and expounded on what was pedagogically appropriate for the child (cf. Heiland, 1987).

However, members of a large number of social strata lacked the material means necessary to attain such a bourgeois family ideal. This discrepancy was further aggravated by growth of the proletarian population due to industrialization. Because of the poverty of the lower classes, all capable family members, mothers as well as older children, were obliged to work to obtain the means of subsistence. The mother's employment was ranked as more important than the care and upbringing of her small children, who represented a burden on the household and, indirectly, a further source of additional poverty. While their mothers were at work, many children, who often lacked supervision from a very early age, were left to their own resources. They were confined to their accommodations and were in some cases even given sedatives or alcohol to keep them quiet. Accidents among children were common, and a considerable number were in danger of complete dereliction (Barow-Bernstorff, Günther, Krecker, & Schuffenhauer, 1986, pp. 123 ff.; Erning, 1987a; Reyer, 1985, pp. 65 ff.). As a consequence of such a cluster of developments, various local establishments for the care and education of young children came into being. In most cases, their founding was initiated by members of the bourgeois class and the aristocracy, and the cost was borne by private societies (cf. Krecker, 1983; Reyer, 1985, pp. 133 ff.). Reyer (1987b, pp. 252 ff.) speaks of the dual motivation of publicly organized child care and education inasmuch as the objectives were to enable the mother's employment (and with this to stabilize socially and economically lower-class households) *and* to educate their small children according to bourgeois principles. In practical terms, the aims were to preclude the physical and psychological dereliction of children, to instill in them morals appropriate to the circumstances of their class, to relieve the burden on public relief funds, and to free the emerging school system from looking after young children, a task it had begun to adopt (cf. Erning, 1987a). Governmental authorities swiftly recognized the stabilizing effects such institutions had on the status quo of society and

advocated their dissemination, without providing funds for their support, however.

An important role in the propagation of early childhood education was played by the writing of the Englishman Samuel Wilderspin, which was translated into German in 1826. Wilderspin propounded the importance of education for young impoverished children between the ages of 1½ and 7. About the middle of the century, parochial preschools, which had goals similar to Wilderspin's and were run according to methods described by the Protestant minister Theodor Fliedner (1800–1864), gained wide acceptance. As early as 1836, Fliedner founded in the Rhineland an establishment providing extended courses that trained women to care for and teach small children. Such trained women were then employed in the parochial preschools (cf. Erning, 1987a; Krecker, 1983). Similar efforts on the part of the established churches were made in many regions, and they formed a starting point from which, during the second half of the 19th century, the Protestant and Roman Catholic churches gained decisive influence on early childhood education and care in Germany. However, judged against the bourgeois family ideal, the institutionalized forms of early childhood care and education could offer only a poor substitute. Nevertheless, it seemed justified in a situation in which social conditions prevented the achievement of the desired quality of the mother-child relationship. The goals of such institutions were not exclusively devoted to the care and education needs of the young child outside the context of the family.

This is also true, at least partly, of the philosophy of Friedrich Froebel (1782–1852). His *Kindergarten* was not primarily intended to be a new institution. He conceived it as a pedagogical principle, with the aim of providing a new basis for the education of children *within* the family itself (cf. Heiland, 1987). Froebel's intention was to aid and instruct mothers to provide a better early education for their children by means of didactical toys and games. Froebel's conception of early childhood care and education did not intentionally relate to bourgeois children, but in fact it did so. Working-class mothers did not, for instance, have at their disposal enough leisure time to engage in the intensive preoccupation with the child that Froebel proposed.

Nevertheless, it was not the kindergarten in the form of a pedagogical model for mothers but rather the kindergarten as a pedagogical institution utilizing play and games educationally that made its reputation and created its enduring influence both in Germany and far beyond its borders. It is a mark of this influence that the term *kindergarten* as

the label for preschool education has been adopted either in this form or in translated form in so many languages. Froebel's concept of the kindergarten also included intensive personnel training, the details of which he himself designed.

Froebel's conception of early childhood education and care played an important role in the aspirations and efforts to create a national plan for education during the bourgeois revolution of 1848. Together with the teachers' associations, many politically progressive individuals demanded the recognition of the kindergarten as an integral element and the very basis of a uniform national system of education. This inclusion of the kindergarten in the proposed democratic national system of education was one of the reasons for the prohibition of the kindergarten in Prussia for 10 years, from 1851 to 1861, after the failure of the bourgeois revolution (cf. Barow-Bernstorff, Günther, Kreckler, & Schuffenhauer, 1986, p. 197).

A continual increase in the number of preschool institutions characterizes developments in the second half of the 19th century. Existing side by side were a number of differing types of institutions: There was the Froebel kindergarten, for instance, which emphasized educational goals. Kindertgärten were generally open for only a few hours a day and attended largely by middle-class children. There were also the preschools for the poor, in which social welfare functions were emphasized. The physical environment of the preschools was not conducive to education; children often spent the whole day there. When an attempt was made to incorporate the pedagogical methods of the Froebel kindergarten into the conceptual framework of the institutions with a largely welfare character, this resulted in the establishment of the conceptual framework of the *Volkskindergarten* (people's kindergarten). Thus began a process of drawing together the various conceptions of the differing institutions.

The German Froebel Society—a union of various regional Froebel initiatives founded in 1873—and the “Pestalozzi-Froebel House,” founded in 1874, played a part in the dissemination and further development of early childhood education. The Pestalozzi-Froebel House maintained a model kindergarten under the direction of Henriette Schrader-Breymann, a former pupil of Friedrich Froebel, and also trained kindergarten teachers (cf. Kreckler, 1983, pp. 184 ff.). Despite the dissemination of center-based early childhood education and its gradual adoption in bourgeois strata, the idealized mother-child relationship lost, at first, little of its normative force. Women active in such institutions were

guided by the spirit of motherhood, even though the children were not their own. It was because of such notions that public early childhood education developed into an exclusively female profession. Froebel himself had intended that men should also take up the profession and he had even trained some to do so (cf. von Derschau, 1985, 1987).

According to Reyer (1987c), it has been since about the turn of the last century that child-oriented motives have been advanced as a justification for center-based preschool education. At least part of the 3- to 6-year-old age group was offered a socialization that was independent of and supplementary to family upbringing. The process of becoming recognized as a system independent of specific family conditions was attended by a growing state regulation of kindergarten teacher training. In the 1908 revision of regulations governing girls' higher-school education, the Prussian board of education included kindergarten teachers' training in the curriculum of girls' schools. In 1911, standards for the examination of women completing this course were set (cf. von Derschau, 1985, 1987; Tietze, 1987). These enactments represented the beginning of an increasing commitment on the part of the state towards kindergarten education.

After the end of World War I and the transition from empire to republic, a fundamental revision of the educational system was undertaken. However, those who wished to include kindergarten in the educational system and to make it the bedplate of a uniform educational system for all children failed to achieve their objective. The regulations laid down in the 1922 Youth Welfare Act are even today still valid in principle. The law acknowledged the right of every child to an education, which the public authorities were obliged to provide indirectly or directly—if the family itself was unable to do so. The law gave priority in the founding and running of kindergartens to organizing bodies of independent social welfare organizations. This meant that kindergartens sponsored by public authorities were only established if the need for such institutions was not met by the churches or other philanthropic organizations (the principle of subsidiarity). Youth welfare offices established to operate at the level of town or county administration were to provide a public means of supplying a sufficient number of places in kindergartens, of maintaining standards of teaching and care, and of supervising all private and public institutions (cf. Reyer, 1987a). As a result of the economic crises in Germany in the 1920s and also of the growing power of politically reactionary forces, the planned system could not be fully realized. Compared with the level achieved prior to

World War I (see Table 1), there were in fact slightly fewer kindergarten places. Early childhood education was nevertheless seen from that period onwards as a peremptory public duty to be furthered and regulated by the state.

In the so-called Third Reich, kindergarten was, like all other educational institutions, placed in the service of National Socialist ideology and its desire for power (cf. Berger, 1986). The extension of National Socialist influence into the kindergarten system, which up to that time had been pluralistic in its structure, was achieved by various means. In some cases the organizing bodies were brought into line with National

Table 1

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF THE GROWTH OF KINDERGARTENS^a

Territory	Year	Number of Institutions	Number of Children	Supply Ratio ^b
Kingdom of Prussia	ca. 1850	400	26,000	1.0%
City of Berlin	ca. 1850	33	3,800	7.5
German Empire	ca. 1910	7,300	559,000	13.0
	1930	7,300	422,000	13.0
	ca. 1940	20,000	1,123,000	31.0
Federal Republic of Germany	1950	8,600	605,000	32.3
	1960	12,300	817,000	32.8
	1965	14,100	953,000	32.7
	1970	17,500	1,161,000	38.4
	1975	23,100	1,479,000	65.5
	1980	24,000	1,394,000	78.8
	1985	24,500 ^c	1,465,000	80.0

Note. From Bundesminister für Bildung und Wissenschaft, 1987; Erning, 1987b; Reyer, 1985, 1987a; Neumann, 1987; Statistisches Bundesamt, 1988b; Statistisches Bundesamt (oral communication); partly authors' calculation.

^aAll data should be regarded as approximate. The values have been rounded off by the present authors.

^bThe supply ratio has in most cases been calculated by comparing the total number of kindergarten places with the number of all children between the ages of 3 and 6. However, because there are some kindergarten places occupied by children *under* 3 and *over* 6 years of age, the ratio should not be misinterpreted as the ratio for children *between* ages 3 and 6. For example, this table's 1985 figure of 80 percent can be compared to a figure of only 66 percent for the age group of *exactly* 3- to 6-year-olds.

^cData for 1986.

Socialist ideology; in others, the church kindergartens were taken over by the National Socialist welfare organization *Nationalsozialistische Volkswohlfahrt* (NSV), although in many instances the NSV founded its own institutions. Kindergarten teachers' professional organizations were treated in the same manner. For instance, the Froebel association, with its long tradition, was forced to disband (cf. Reyer, 1987a). Particularly as a result of the exigencies of the war economy—women and mothers having to replace men in factory work—the number of kindergarten places was greatly increased (see Table 1).

After the end of World War II and the collapse of the structures of National Socialism, the prevailing function of the kindergarten was the one that characterized it at the time of the origin of the institution in the 19th century: Kindergartens became again institutions whose task was to save children from the threat of dereliction. The problems were, however, so great that kindergartens could only contribute partially to their resolution. A considerable number of children were orphans; many fathers had fallen at the front or were prisoners of war, so women and mothers formed the primary source of labor potential for securing their families' bare existence. The fact that many buildings—whether factories, offices, or dwellings—had been destroyed in the bombing and the fact that several million refugees and displaced persons from former German territories in the eastern part of the country had arrived in the Western Zones exacerbated the problems.

Different paths were taken in the reestablishment of the kindergarten system in East Germany (the future German Democratic Republic) and in West Germany (subsequently the Federal Republic of Germany). In East Germany the inclusion of a kindergarten level in the system of education was planned as early as 1946 and was later confirmed in law. Thus kindergarten came to be defined as an educational institution; correspondingly, it is free of charge. In contrast, the path of restoration was chosen in West Germany. As in the case of the school system, the kindergarten system turned to the example of the Weimar Republic. Kindergarten remained the administrative responsibility of the youth welfare service, and its function was limited to that of supplementing family upbringing where needed. In essence, the regulations of the 1922 act were adopted (cf. Barow-Bernstorff, Günther, Kreckler, & Schuffenhauer, 1986, pp. 415 ff.; Neumann, 1987).

The state's contribution to the setting up and further development of the kindergarten system in the Federal Republic of Germany was trifling

up to the second half of the 1960s. Social policy and the concomitant public debate largely reflected a return to the traditional image of the family (cf. Neumann, 1987). A widespread summary critique, although it was somewhat exaggerated, contained more than a grain of truth when it suggested that women and mothers should perceive their tasks in the triple K of "*Kinder, Küche, Kirche*" (children, kitchen, church). This family image implied a lack of a general need for an additional system of preschool education beyond that of the family. Such a system of care and education outside the confines of the family served its purpose only in cases in which family adversities made it unavoidable.

There was, in addition, a widespread belief that preschool education in kindergarten might even pose a threat to the family inasmuch as the institution enabled mothers to take on jobs outside the family circle. This attitude is expressed in remarks of the Minister for Social Affairs in 1957, which were made in response to the suggestion that the number of kindergartens be expanded: "We must consider very carefully to what extent the family, although protected on the outside by the creation of such social institutions, exhausts itself internally as a result" (cited in Grossmann, 1974, p. 97).

No coordinated plan existed for the extension of the kindergarten system, 80 percent of which lay in the hands of the churches. In terms of absolute numbers of institutions and of places for children within those institutions, there were increases between 1950 and 1965. However, because the birthrate rose considerably at the same time, the relative availability of places for children in kindergarten was, by the mid-1960s, the same as in 1950 (see Table 1). The program of the kindergarten at this time, corresponding with the social welfare theme that was reflected in the public attitudes towards kindergarten, was primarily concerned with the protection and custody of the child.

Embedded in conceptions of developmental psychology, according to which the child's development is effected as an internally controlled process of maturation (cf. Schmalohr, 1970), kindergarten pedagogy considered its most significant task to be providing the child with a protective environment—an environment that would secure an undisturbed development of children's talents and abilities and that would shield children both from overwhelming stimuli and from their own precocity. Regarding kindergarten, one of the most distinguished educational theorists of the period remarked: "We counteract the hothouse atmosphere of the modern world, which forces the child into a premature discrimina-

tion of its holistic response to the sensations of its environment . . . we are convinced that it is essential to offer pedagogical resistance to the precocity set in motion by our time" (Hoffmann, 1968, p. 347).

This situation changed dramatically in the mid-1960s, when a remarkable phase of expansion and reform in West Germany's education system took place. Kindergarten, although not an element in the education system, was rapidly caught up in the reform process. Indeed, early childhood education was even accorded a key role.

The immediate postwar restoration of the education system, which had been oriented towards older models, no longer seemed adequate to meet the demands of a developed industrialized nation. The conviction that the German education system was heading towards a catastrophe (cf. Picht, 1964) was widespread. As a result, the debate on education became the dominant theme in social policy during the second half of the 1960s. As an expression of a general consensus regarding the need for improving the education system, the German Council on Education, a committee consisting of scientists, members of the government, and representatives of important social groupings, was established in 1965. Its task was to make recommendations for a fundamental reform of the entire education system. Particular attention was paid to early childhood education in the hope that it would be capable of making a special contribution to the main goal of educational reform. Early childhood education would supposedly draw on the "educational reserve." It was assumed that the deficits of underprivileged children could be adjusted by compensatory early childhood education prior to school entry, thus providing equal opportunity for all children in the general school system. It was furthermore assumed that by a systematic utilization of the potential of early childhood learning, the general standard of education among all children would be raised (cf. Deutscher Bildungsrat, 1970). As a consequence, these goals caused great uncertainty in the traditional kindergarten system and led to a dramatic reorientation of its pedagogy. Kindergarten education had previously set as its task the furthering of play and games and of the child's innate developmental potential. These earlier postulates were now regarded, at least polemically, as "passive spectator" pedagogy, and the kindergartens were decried as institutions in which children were artificially kept stupid (Lückert, 1967).

Excessive enthusiasm for the imagined potentialities of early childhood education was not infrequently expressed in rather simplistic conceptions of what constitutes educational furtherance of the small child. Drill-like training of separate functions, such as cognition, language, or

thinking, was introduced into kindergarten and into many families. "Games for learning" and "didactical toys" were thrown onto the market on a scale previously unknown. Irredeemable expectations were placed in particular on early literacy (cf. Schmalohr, 1973). In addition, vehement controversies about an adequate early childhood education were provoked by the concept of an antiauthoritarian education for preschool children, which arose out of the student revolt in 1968 (cf. Breiteneicher, Mauff, & Triebe, 1971; Rabe-Kleberg, 1985). Its advocates conceived antiauthoritarian education as the direct opposite of education that furthers accommodation and boosts performance in serving the interests of others. A general consensus on a suitable curriculum for kindergarten in the form of the so-called situation-oriented approach (explained in a later section) was reached only in the 1970s.

The great importance ascribed to early childhood education, regardless of the various controversies, was expressed in a new assessment of the kindergarten as an educational instrument as well as in a massive expansion of the number of kindergartens. To a much greater degree than before, kindergarten was given an educational task independent of the state of affairs in the family; it was perceived as a distinct and fundamental stage in the total system of education. The German Council on Education (Deutscher Bildungsrat, 1970) coined the term *Elementarbereich* (elementary level) for this new stage, which was to precede the primary (ages 6–9) level of education. Although kindergarten attendance would not be compulsory, it was assumed that all children would be reached by provision of an ample supply of kindergarten places that were to be filled voluntarily.

This conception of the kindergarten for 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds as the basic stage in the total system of education necessitated a vast extension of the number of kindergarten places available at the time. The German Council on Education (Deutscher Bildungsrat, 1970) scheduled a doubling of available places by 1980. Within this period, an enormous improvement in the provision of kindergarten places was achieved in West Germany (cf. Table 1) as well as in numerous other countries (cf. Tietze & Ufermann, 1989). The strong growth in the supply ratio (percent of children served), which by 1977 had already passed the 75 percent mark, was also partly due to a substantial reduction in the birthrate during the same period.

The new conception of kindergarten as the basic level in the educational system led to the question of how best to link the two levels, the elementary stage and the primary stage. Various models for a linkage

between the largely play-oriented learning in kindergarten and the school-oriented learning in primary school were developed and tested (cf. Deutscher Bildungsrat, 1975). One model provided for a 2-year school-entrance stage in primary schools (comparable to the British infants' school), into which the 5-year-olds were supposed to be admitted to be steered from play-oriented to school-oriented learning in a gradual process over the 2 years. This model involved lowering the compulsory school-entrance age from 6 years to 5 years. Another model favored a year-long preparatory class for 5-year-olds, which was latched onto the unaltered traditional first year of primary school. These preparatory classes were also located in the primary schools. The advocates of kindergarten insisted that 5-year-olds would best be served in kindergarten's mixed-age groups and that a removal of 5-year-olds from kindergarten would have a detrimental effect on the development of the 3- and 4-year-olds.

Superficially, the "contest for the 5-year-olds" was conducted with pedagogically inspired arguments, and numerous models were tested to provide an answer to the question of which institution should serve the 5-year-olds (cf. Bund-Länder-Kommission für Bildungsplanung, 1976).

Politically, however, it was a matter of whether the traditional organizing bodies, in particular the churches, should retain their influence on the education of 5-year-olds or the state should take over responsibility for the education of this age group. In the power struggle in society, the advocates of kindergarten prevailed. Compulsory school-entrance age remained fixed at 6, and in most cases, the 5-year-olds were placed in kindergarten. As a present-day remnant of the model testing, however, a small portion of the 5-year-olds take part in a preparatory phase within primary schools.

As early as the second half of the 1970s, as a result of a generalized exhaustion of educational reform efforts, kindergarten lost its position in political priorities and in public attention. Except for insignificant fluctuations, the supply ratio of kindergarten places has remained what it was in the late 1970s. Some of the reform goals put into force in the 1970s have since been revoked. For example, the goal of the annulment of kindergarten attendance fees, which was to take effect in 1982 in North Rhine-Westphalia, the largest state (*Bundesland*) in the Federal Republic of Germany, was rescinded. In other instances, there have been exceptional rulings making standards (such as the required number of teaching personnel in institutions, the required size of kindergarten groups) less binding.

Most recently, kindergarten has again been brought to public notice. Changes in the structure of the family, the increase in single-parent families, the improvement in the standard of education of young mothers and their desire for employment outside the family, as well as the remaking of woman's image that has resulted from the feminist movement, all appear to be causes for the appeal for institutions that are more capable of responding to the changing needs and lifestyles of families and children (cf. Tietze, 1987). The demands are directed at the inadequate supply of kindergarten places that, despite a relatively high average quota, exists in many residential areas. Other demands concern a greater flexibility of attendance hours—wanting them to be coordinated with family needs, for example, or wanting an increased supply of full-time kindergarten places.

One central demand relates to the improvement of care for children under age 3 years, who have not generally been counted among kindergarten clients. *Krippen*, which are institutions specializing in the care of children younger than 3 years, came into being later than the kindergartens did and have not received the same educational approval up to now (cf. Reyer, 1985). They are to be found largely in major urban centers. With some 30,000 places, they cannot serve even 2 percent of the birth-to-3 age group. In the last few years a series of mixed-age kindergartens have been established in which children from birth up to age 6 are cared for according to certain standards (cf. Siebenmorgen, 1982).

DEMOGRAPHICS

Data relating to the care and education of young children in the official statistics of the Federal Republic of Germany prove to be generally rather unsatisfactory. It is true that there are various regularly conducted statistical surveys. However, apart from the fact that in some cases the reliability regarding at least some of the survey details is doubtful, the various surveys can only be related to one another in a limited way. For example, different surveys may employ different categories and definitions; different surveys may cover different key dates within a year; and some surveys only collect data from communities larger than a given size. Many times data about characteristics that are needed to obtain a differentiated picture are not gathered. In the following, reference is chiefly made to two sets of statistics, both of which are collected by the Federal Office of Statistics. The first consists of the official statistics on

youth welfare, which include records of the places available in various forms of early childhood provision. Since 1982 these statistics have only been collected once every 4 years. The second set of statistics is the annual microcensus, which is collected from a 1 percent random sample of all households. These statistics indicate the numbers of children not yet in compulsory schooling who attend an early childhood provision. The most recently available data of the two sets of statistics relate to the year 1986. The data from these statistics have been supplemented with certain selected aspects of the demographic trends in West Germany.

Table 2 compares the numbers of places in Krippen (day-care centers for children under the age of 3 years), in kindergartens (for children from age 3 to age of school entry), and in licensed family day care homes with the "under-3" and "3 to under-6" populations. The data offer a characteristic image of the Federal Republic of Germany: A relatively large supply of places in kindergarten for children from 3 years of age to school entry contrasts with a very small supply of Krippen places for children under the age of 3. Even when we consider the places in licensed family day care homes, it appears that publicly authorized places of care, center-based or not, are available for only a very small portion of the children under 3 years of age. A comparative study of the 12 member-states of the European Economic Community shows that the Federal Republic of Germany must be classed with those countries having the lowest supply of care for this age group (cf. Moss, 1988).

A breakdown by states (*Bundesländer*) of the number of Krippen places tells us little because of the small number of cases. The small number of Krippen places that exist are mostly concentrated in a few of the largest cities. Over one third of all Krippen places exist in West Berlin (with 1.86 million inhabitants), which as a result achieves a good 20 percent supply ratio for care of children under 3 years of age. If we add the other two cities with populations exceeding a million, Hamburg and Munich, the three cities are responsible for more than half of all Krippen places (cf. *Vergleichende Städtestatistik*, 1987).

The statistics cover only family day care homes licensed by the youth welfare offices. This number, it is safe to assume, represents a considerable underestimation of the actual proportions of day care. Estimations assume that for each licensed family day care home, there are four nonlicensed family day care homes (cf. Martin & Pettinger, 1985, p. 239).

The 1986 statistics identify 1.47 million places in kindergarten and similar institutions. If this figure is related to the total number of all 3-to under-6-year-olds—the ratio that the Federal Republic generally uses

Table 2

**PLACES IN KRIPPEN, KINDERGARTENS, AND LICENSED FAMILY DAY
CARE COMPARED WITH RELEVANT CHILD-POPULATIONS IN THE
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, 1986**

State	Number of Children (thousands)		Places in Krippen		Places in Kindergartens		Places in Licensed Family Day Care Homes	
	Aged Under 3	Aged 3 to Under-6	Total	As % of Age Group (Under- 3)	Total	As % of Age Group (3 to Under-6)	Total	As % of Age Group (Under- 3)
Baden- Württem- berg	289	293	3,442	1.2	309,410	105.6 ^a		
Bavaria	321	344	3,004	0.9	238,963	69.5		
Berlin	52	49	10,814	20.8	35,864	73.2	no data	
Bremen	22	18	142	0.6	14,542	80.8	available	
Hamburg	34	37	4,130	12.1	21,119	57.1		
Hessia	147	163	2,240	1.5	146,652	90.0		
Lower Saxony	189	200	1,841	1.0	140,448	70.2		
North Rhine- Westphalia	482	478	1,816	0.4	380,338	79.6		
Rhineland- Palatinate	108	114	408	0.4	111,007	97.4		
The Saar	32	32	115	0.4	29,261	91.4		
Schleswig- Holstein	64	66	401	0.6	45,215	68.5		
Federal Republic	1,740	1,792 ^b	28,353	1.6	1,472,819	82.2	25,735 ^c	0.7

Note. Data are from Statistisches Bundesamt, 1988a, 1988b.

^aA percentage above 100 percent indicates that the number of available kindergarten places exceeds the number of children from 3 to under 6 years of age. However, kindergarten places are also occupied by children above or below the age for kindergarten.

^bThe populations for the individual states do not add up to the total of 1,792 for the Federal Republic because of the rounding used in estimating the state populations.

^cPlaces for all children under 16 years of age. Experience shows that approximately half the places are claimed for children under the age of 3. The percentage value for all states is calculated in accordance with this experience.

in planning—the result is an 82.2 percent supply ratio. There are considerable differences at the state level in the supply ratios. Generally, the data reflect a historically determined north/south gradient (cf. Erning, 1987b, p. 30). In contrast to this, a comparison of supply ratios according to community size reveals less well-defined differences. Kindergarten supply in rural communities seems to be directly comparable to that in urban communities (no table).

While Krippen for children under 3 years of age are full-day institutions, this is true of only a small portion of kindergartens. Unfortunately the statistics on youth welfare do not differentiate between full-day and part-day programs. According to another set of statistics—which, however, were gathered using a similar mode of computation—in 1985 there were, across the Federal Republic, all-day kindergarten places for 11.9 percent of the 3- to 6-year-olds (“all-day” meaning with care extending over and beyond midday; Bund-Länder-Kommission für Bildungsplanung, 1987, p. 44). According to this information, there is a high degree of full-day provision only in the cities of Berlin (98.9 percent), Hamburg (58 percent), and Bremen (about 42 percent).

The supply ratio of 82.2 percent for the 3- to under-6-year-olds (Table 2) represents a considerable overestimate of the real state of affairs (as do all ratios formed as these are). The actual supply ratio turns out to be distinctly lower for this age group, while the actual ratio for children under 3 years of age is somewhat higher than that reported in Table 2. This is because kindergarten places are occupied by a large number of 6-year-olds and by a small number of under-3-year-olds. Thus, of the 3- to under-6-year-olds, 64.9 percent attend a provision, and of the under-3-year-olds, 4.2 percent attend a provision (cf. Table 3).

The typical age of entry for kindergarten lies around the age of 4 (cf. Table 3). Of the 3-year-olds, 38.2 percent attend kindergarten; for 4-year-olds, the percentage rises to 71.4 percent. About 15 percent of all 5- and 6-year-olds not yet in compulsory schooling do not attend a kindergarten. If one assumes that they neither have already attended kindergarten nor will attend such an institution before entering school, this implies that nearly 1 out of 6 children enters school without kindergarten experience. Such an interpretation must be regarded with some caution, however, since no longitudinal data can be obtained. The trend suggested is supported by research undertaken by the present authors at the beginning of this decade. A sample survey of class teachers in 458 school-entry classes representative of North Rhine-Westphalia showed that a good 20 percent of children in the first school year had not attended kindergarten.

Table 3

**1986 PRESCHOOL PROVISION RATES (KRIPPE, KINDERGARTEN)
FOR VARIOUS CATEGORIES OF CHILDREN NOT YET IN COMPULSORY
SCHOOLING (INCLUDING CATEGORIES RELATING TO FAMILY TYPE)**

Category	Age Group								
	Under 1 yr	1 yr	2 yr	3 yr	4 yr	5 yr	6 yr and Up	Under 3 yr	3 to Under- 6 yr
Total children (thousands)	591	565	576	592	594	598	460	1,732	1,784
Children in preschool provisions (thousands)	9	17	47	226	424	507	391	73	1,157
Children in preschool provisions as % of total children	1.5	3.0	8.2	38.2	71.4	84.8	85.0	4.2	64.9
German children in preschool provisions as % of all German children	— ^b	—	—	38.4	72.8	87.3	94.5	—	66.1
Foreign children in preschool provisions as % of foreign children	—	—	—	37.7	63.3	68.7	67.8	—	57.3
Children in single- parent families as % of total children	8.0	8.5	8.7	10.0	10.0	9.9	10.4	8.4	9.9
Children of employed mothers ^a as % of total children	32.0	30.6	33.7	34.8	34.7	36.6	37.0	32.2	35.1

Note. Data are from Statistisches Bundesamt, 1988a, and authors' calculations.

^aIncludes children with single employed fathers.

^bCannot be calculated from microcensus data.

Table 3 also demonstrates that German children attend kindergarten more frequently than their foreign contemporaries do. (According to official data [Statistisches Bundesamt, 1988a, pp. 139 ff.], foreign children make up 11.1 percent of all under-3-year-olds and 12.5 percent of all 3- to under-6-year-olds in Germany). However, kindergarten attendance proportions of the two populations have drawn closer during the last few years. While in 1978 the kindergarten attendance rate for German children was more than twice as high as that for foreign children (cf. Bundesländer-Kommission für Bildungsplanung, 1987, pp. 34 ff.), the 1986

attendance rates of 66.1 percent for German and 57.3 percent for foreign 3- to under-6-year-olds demonstrate a clear reduction in the disparity between the two populations.

The rate of kindergarten attendance is dependent not only on the child's nationality but also on parental income, as shown in Table 4: As family income grows, the likelihood of kindergarten attendance increases. That this pattern does not hold for the two lower-income groups may be due first of all to the fact that in these income groups, the proportions of children with single mothers are significantly larger than in other income groups; because of their gainful employment, these single mothers are dependent on the child care of a kindergarten. Secondly, in the case of such low incomes, no family fees are charged, so this possible barrier to kindergarten attendance is eliminated.

The children of single-parent families and children with employed mothers belong to the group of children who are especially in need of care outside the family. According to the data of the microcensus of 1986, around 10 percent of all children under school age belong to single-parent families (cf. Table 3), which usually means families headed by single mothers. The proportion of these children has nearly doubled during the past 10 years and according to most prognoses is continuing to grow. In contrast the percentage of employed mothers with preschool children has altered only minimally during the past 10 years. For under-3-year-olds, the figure is 32.2 percent, and for preschool children aged 3 and older, it is 35.1 percent.

Table 4

RATE OF KINDERGARTEN ATTENDANCE FOR 3- TO UNDER-6-YEAR-OLDS, ACCORDING TO HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Category	Net Monthly Household Income (DM)							
	Under 1000 ^a	1000–1400	1400–1800	1800–2500	2500–3000	3000–5000	5000 or more	Over-all
Children in kindergarten as % of all 3- to under-6-year-olds	60.7	64.9	57.9	62.5	66.7	68.8	75.0	64.9

Note. Data are from Statistisches Bundesamt, 1988a; authors' calculations.

^aDM 2 corresponds to approximately \$1 U.S. (March 1989).

Table 5

**PERCENT OF CHILDREN OF VARIOUS AGES ATTENDING
KRIPPE/KINDERGARTEN, ACCORDING TO STATUS OF MOTHER**

Status of Mother	Percent of Children by Child's Age							
	0 to Under 6 yr	Under 1 yr	1 yr	2 yr	3 yr	4 yr	5 yr	6 yr and More
Married	40.2	— ^a	2.7	7.4	37.1	70.8	85.2	85.2
Married and in gainful employment	45.2	—	5.2	11.0	43.8	76.1	88.4	88.2
Married but without gainful employment	37.7	—	1.6	5.9	33.9	68.2	83.4	83.6
Single	46.6	—	—	17.0	47.3	75.5	81.8	79.1
Single and in gainful employment	54.8	—	—	—	50.0	83.3	91.0	85.7
Single but without gainful employment	40.4	—	—	—	44.8	69.0	76.7	72.7

Note. Data are from Statistisches Bundesamt, 1988a; authors' calculation.

^aCannot be calculated from microcensus data.

Table 5 demonstrates that in all age groups, children with employed married mothers are placed in an early childhood institution more frequently than those with nonemployed married mothers are. However, the differences are essentially relevant for only the younger age groups; in the cases of 5-year-olds and older children, the differences hardly count. Similarly, the greater child care demands of families headed by mothers is reflected in the statistics; this is especially evident in the case of the employed single mother. It is striking, however, that the 5-year-olds and older children of nonemployed single mothers attend kindergarten comparatively rarely, with respective rates of 76.7 percent and 72.7 percent. These attendance rates are not very much higher than that of foreign children, and the question must be raised concerning whether these statistics reflect another marginalized group.

An increased demand for care outside the family is especially apparent in the case of the mother in full gainful employment. According to

the microcensus of 1986, 37.4 percent of employed mothers with children aged 3 years to under-6 years work 40 or more hours per week. In the case of employed mothers with children under 3 years of age, the figure was 43.6 percent (no table). This is possibly explained by the fact that for economic reasons, young families in particular are frequently dependent on the full employment of the mother.

If the available all-day places are compared only with the number of children having fully employed mothers, it can be shown that all-day places are available only for every 2nd child of those aged 3 to under-6 in this group; in the case of the under-3-year-olds in this group, there are places only for every 10th child (authors' approximate calculation). Other means that may be employed to satisfy the extrafamilial care needs of these (and other children) are not indicated by these statistics. According to regionally limited investigations, the grandparents (generally the mothers' mothers) in such cases assume the care duties (cf. Martin & Pettinger, 1985, p. 239; Schindler, Born, & Schablow, 1985, p. 28; Statistisches Landesamt Baden-Württemberg, 1985, pp. 96 ff.). Grandparent care is used more frequently by mothers with lower socioeconomic status than by mothers with higher status and more prestigious professions. The capacity of grandparents to care for children appears in many cases to be limited, which necessitates adopting further arrangements for care. Thus, children in grandparent care may also be subjected to multiple care arrangements. Relatively few peer contacts for the child and a certain dissatisfaction on the part of the mother, despite low costs, appear to be common characteristics of grandparent care (cf. Schindler, Born, & Schablow, 1985).

During the past few years the debate over the kind of care and education for young children has become more pressing. In the case of children under 3 years of age, the question of a sustained increase in the number of places in public institutions has come to the fore. In the case of the older preschool children, an increase in the number of kindergarten places in the less well-provided regions of the country is a major topic of discussion. Furthermore, there is the problem of organizing the available places in such a manner that the hours of institutional operation can better correspond with the requirements and the routines of family life.

In this debate, the epochal changes in the demography and the structure of the family that have occurred in the Federal Republic of Germany are increasingly being taken into account. With the Republic's extremely low birthrate, children have almost become "scarce goods."

Since 1970 the population's proportion of children under 6 years of age has been nearly halved (cf. Statistisches Bundesamt, 1985a, p. 585). During the past two decades, the birthrate has declined from 2,600 to 1,300 children per 1,000 women in the 15–49 age group (Statistisches Bundesamt, 1985b, p. 730). A birthrate of 2,300 per 1,000 women is regarded as a prerequisite for maintaining the level of population. The patterns of living together have also changed: The proportion of households with five or more persons has been nearly halved since 1970, and the same is true of the proportion of three-generation households. The proportion of families with four or more children has also been halved since 1970, and the number of families with three children is distinctly reduced. One- and two-child families have increased in number so that they now account for respectively 51 percent and 36 percent of all families with children (cf. Statistisches Bundesamt, 1988a, pp. 186, 189, 205). The stability of the social institution "marriage" has diminished. Among marriages contracted or to be contracted since 1970, the divorce rate is or will be about twice as high as among marriages contracted during the 1950s (cf. Schwarz, 1984). We noted earlier a doubling trend since the 1970s in the number of single mothers with children under 6 years of age. However, the proportion of employed mothers with children under 6 years of age has only increased by a few percentage points, to 35.5 percent, since the beginning of the 1970s, and compared with that of other countries, it is relatively low (cf. Statistisches Bundesamt, 1988a, pp. 228, 230). Nevertheless, a fundamental change in mothers' attitudes towards gainful employment can be detected (cf. Sommerkorn, 1988), and the traditional three-phase model of gainful employment among women (employment prior to marriage, retirement at the birth of the first child, and contingent reentry into the work force at a much later age) is losing its normative effects in favor of a parallelization of employment and motherhood for women.

NATIONAL CHILD CARE POLICY

A series of differing kinds of social-policy measures support and provide aid for parents and children. They relate to such differing areas as preventative medical checkups, regulations in industrial legislation, financial compensation, assistance for care and education provided by various agencies—largely the state, the social security services, and the independent welfare organizations (which receive state support). A brief syn-

opsis of the existing provisions, particularly those for younger children or for families with children, was published by the Federal Minister for Families, Youth and Health (Bundesminister für Jugend, Familie und Gesundheit, 1980, pp. 181 ff.). We describe here only a selection of the essential measures.

With regard to the preventative medical checkups, regular checkups for pregnant women and for small children play an important role. Pregnant women are invited to attend medical checkups regularly—about every 4 weeks. Checkup results are entered into a booklet carried by the mother-to-be (“mother’s passport”). From birth to 4 years of age, children can undergo eight medical checkups monitoring their health development; checkup costs are borne by the health insurance plans (legal basis: Reichsversicherungsordnung). A medical checkup in connection with school entry is obligatory (Schulpflichtgesetz). Furthermore, medical and dental serial examinations are undertaken in kindergarten and school.

A pregnant working woman can claim a 6-week paid vacation prior to giving birth. Although this is not obligatory, in most cases such claims are made. After confinement, resumption of gainful employment is forbidden for a period of 8 weeks; in the cases of premature or multiple births, this period is extended to 12 weeks. Wages and salaries are borne during this period by the employer and the health insurance. From the beginning of pregnancy to 4 months after confinement, a mother cannot be dismissed by her employer (Mutterschutzgesetz). Following the 8-week postconfinement period, the mother or the father of a child can take a 10-month parental leave, during which period the parent cannot be dismissed. The intention behind this legislation is to enable a parent to devote full time to the care of the child during its first year of life. During this parental leave, the parent concerned receives a monthly sum of DM 600 (*Erziehungsgeld*—payment for child care and education; DM 2 is equivalent to about \$1 U.S. at the time of writing). Furthermore, any mother or father whether previously employed or not can obtain this child care and education payment if that parent undertakes care of the child between the 1st and the 12th months of the child’s life. The child care and education benefit may also be paid to a parent who is employed less than 18 hours per week (less than half-time). During the first 6 months of the child’s life, the amount of the child care and education payment is determined without regard to income; from the child’s 7th month on, the benefit may be reduced on a sliding-scale basis, according to parental income (Bundeserziehungsgeldgesetz). The scale

is set so that about 40 percent of parents continue to receive the full benefit beyond the 7th month, another 40 percent receive less than the DM 600, and 20 percent receive no benefit at all for child care and education.

The parental leave and the child care and education benefit represent relatively new regulations in the Federal Republic of Germany. The precursors were introduced in the 1970s but were limited to benefits for employed mothers. The present legislation was introduced in 1986, but with a limitation at the child's 10th month of life; the limit was extended to 12 months in 1988 and to 15 months in 1989; an extension to 18 months is planned for 1990. Another mode of recognition of a mother's efforts to provide for her child's education is incorporated in calculating the mother's future old-age pension. At present, she receives 1 year (per child) of credit towards old-age pension for the time she has spent away from employment, caring for the child (and thus not making the usual compulsory social security payments). Her later pension is consequently calculated as if she had been in gainful employment during this period.

In addition to other purpose-bound benefits, such as income-based payments to ensure adequate living space for the family and the children (*Wohngeldgesetz*), the state provides, by means of tax concessions and direct children's allowances, other benefits that are not purpose-bound. In the case of tax concessions, families with high incomes benefit more than families with low incomes do. Direct children's allowances are the same for all parents, regardless of income. Direct children's allowances are at present DM 50 for the first child, DM 100 for the second, DM 220 for the third, and DM 240 for each successive child (*Bundeskindergeldgesetz*). This indirect and direct support is provided at least up to each child's 16th birthday, and after that, as long as the education or vocational training of the child continues, with the maximum termination on the 27th birthday.

We have already remarked that direct public assistance in the form of *Krippen* for the care and education of children under 3 years of age is rare. The grounds for establishing such institutions are laid down in the youth welfare enactment and are governed by the local youth offices. Places for young children are also scarce in instances in which they are cared for in so-called mixed-aged groups (with children between 0 and 6 years of age) in kindergarten, as is the rule in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia. The placement of a child in an out-of-home provision entails a regular monetary contribution by the parents, which in cases of low parental incomes, can be assumed in part or entirely by the youth office.

Besides provisions for group care, there are also family day care homes. Attendance at these is also arranged by the youth office, and in cases of need, the costs can also be borne by the youth office. As a result of the small amount of publicly supervised care available for small children, a "grey market" of private arrangements for child care in groups and in other families has come into being. The full extent of such arrangements, many of which are strictly speaking illegal, is unknown.

In recent years there have been forms of public assistance that are intended to strengthen the educational competence of parents themselves. These include information made available to young parents in the form of periodic "letters to parents," as well as informative events and courses for parents in evening classes, in community colleges, in parent-education institutions, and in other supplementary educational institutions (cf. Ufermann, in press). In addition, there are various other informal groups for parents and small children, groups with names like "miniclub," "play-group," and "children's corner." Such groups, whose members only come together for a few hours on a week-day afternoon and whose setting is often a parental educational institution, are not so much care institutions as they are opportunities for parents to exchange information, for children and their parents to experience playing together, and for children to benefit from group interaction (cf. Tietze, in press).

For children from age 3 up to age of school entry, kindergarten is offered as a public institution. It is regarded as the first stage (the elementary level) of the general system of education, although administratively it is assigned to the youth assistance service rather than to the school system. In contrast with the free attendance in school and university, kindergarten attendance is tied to a monetary contribution on the part of the parents. Some kindergartens (for example, Waldorf and Montessori kindergartens) operate according to a particular pedagogical program. This is also true of many of the parent-initiated groups that can be placed on a legally equal footing with kindergarten (cf. Tietze, 1989). For handicapped children, special kindergartens exist—ones organized according to the type and degree of handicap—although the past few years have seen a trend to integrate handicapped children into normal institutions.

General compulsory schooling begins at age 6. For children who have reached the age of school entry but have not yet attained the requisite maturity, most states of the Federal Republic provide an opportunity to attend the *Schulkindergarten* (school kindergarten), which is a

matter of retention classes that are attached to the primary school. The primary school, also designated as the primary level of the general educational system, comprises the first four grades. For a proportion of the children of primary school age, there is an additional care institution, the *Kinderhort* (day home for children; cf. Hemmer, 1985). Day home groups are usually attached to all-day kindergarten and are attended by children of working parents after school closing, into the late afternoon. With the exception of the few comprehensive schools and some model schools, there are no all-day schools. Schools in the Federal Republic usually operate from 8:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., 5 or 6 days per week. The number of class periods (45-minute lessons) per week varies from approximately 20 to 35, depending on the grade level. The regular schools do not provide for any school meal.

At the end of the 4th grade, parents decide, with the assistance of the school, which school their child should attend in Secondary Stage I (5th to 10th grade). The choice lies among the *Hauptschule* (a base-level secondary school that extends to the 9th or 10th grade), the *Realschule* (an intermediate-level secondary school comprising grades 5 to 10), and the *Gymnasium* (which is preparatory to university and comprises grades 5 to 10, Secondary Stage I, and grades 11 to 13, Secondary Stage II). Although secondary school education is selective, there are opportunities for students to transfer from one type of secondary school to another. There are also comprehensive schools, but these are relatively few in number. In these schools, students may choose any of three completion options. School attendance is compulsory up to age 18 in the Federal Republic of Germany. Those who receive on-the-job industrial or craft training attend concomitantly a technical school, which is conducted generally for 1 or 2 days a week.

The tertiary education beyond the compulsory schooling comprises university education and different forms of university-oriented education.

OPTIONS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE

OPTIONS FOR CHILDREN UNDER 3 YEARS OF AGE

We have already noted that the opportunities for extrafamilial care of children under age 3 are few in number. All told, two types can be differentiated: care in a *Krippe* (day care center), which in some cases

means grouping together the under-3-year-olds with older children in "mixed-age" groups, and care in a family day care home. The legal authority for both types of care is set out in the youth welfare enactment.

Care in Krippen

In the youth welfare enactment the priority of education in the family, particularly for very young children, is underscored. Public assistance is offered according to the principle of subsidiarity, that is, only if the family is unable wholly or in part to do justice to its task of care and education. Krippen are thus social service institutions providing emergency assistance. In contrast with kindergartens, they are not conceded an autonomous educational assignment.

There are neither governmental plans nor requirements regarding the rate of supply for Krippen places. Demand-supply analysis and establishment of Krippen is left to the initiative of communities and independent agencies. The church agencies, which sponsor 57.1 percent of all kindergarten institutions, remain reticent about establishing Krippen, and the reticence seems to be based on ideological grounds. Only 12.4 percent of Krippen are operated by agencies of church parishes or church welfare organizations (cf. Table 6). The demand for places greatly exceeds the present supply, and there are long waiting lists in almost all institutions. Corresponding to the philosophy of emergency assistance, social grounds are decisive for the admission of a child to the Krippe. Priority is given to children of single parents and to children from families in which both parents are employed out of economic necessity (cf. Frauenknecht, 1980, pp. 40 ff.).

Table 6

KRIPPEN AND KINDERGARTENS ACCORDING TO OPERATING AGENCIES

Institution	Public Agencies	Nonpublic Agencies		
	Communities and Higher Authorities	Churches and Church Welfare Organizations	Other Welfare Organizations	Commercial Agencies
Krippen (N = 1,028)	62.5%	12.4%	22.7%	2.5%
Kindergartens (N = 25,890)	31.2	57.1	10.8	0.9

Note. Data are from Statistisches Bundesamt, 1988b, pp. 12 ff.; authors' calculation.

The federal youth welfare enactment represents only a skeletal law; direct federal responsibility regarding Krippen is minimal. The day-to-day operation of Krippen is regulated by guiding principles laid down by the states, principles that largely contain rules about hygienic, medical, and spatial arrangements and about group-size and personnel requirements. Except in West Berlin, no standards for pedagogical planning are contained in the guiding principles.

Krippen are as a rule small institutions. Of the 1,028 Krippen existing in the Federal Republic in 1986, there were 516 with no more than 20 places each. Only 161 Krippen (15.7 percent) had at their disposal more than 40 places (cf. Statistisches Bundesamt, 1988b, p. 14). The various regulations proceed on the assumption of spatial requirements of 2.5 to 4.5 square meters (about 27 to 48 square feet) per child. In addition, there must be room for children to rest. Group size varies from 6 to 15, depending on the regulations of each state. Frequently children are grouped by age (under 1 year, 1–2 years, 2–3 years of age). The guiding principles usually schedule 2 adults for each group (cf. Bundesminister für Jugend, Familie, Frauen und Gesundheit, 1988a). Statistics indicate that in 1986, there were 4,572 full-time and 1,360 part-time personnel responsible for the care of 28,252 children in Krippen. Thus there is an average of 1 caregiver for every 5 or 6 children. Staff (about 1,000 in number), whose main duties lie in technical and economic fields or in the administration, management, and organization of the Krippen, are not taken into account in this ratio of caregivers to children (cf. Statistisches Bundesamt, 1988b, pp. 58, 61, 80, 82; authors' own calculations).

Of the Krippen personnel (about 98 percent of whom are female) directly concerned with the care of the children, 2 percent had received a college or university education, 37.2 percent were trained as *Erzieherin* (preschool teachers, who receive in fact the normal training for kindergarten teachers), 27.6 percent had been trained as *Kind-erpflegerin* (care assistants, persons with shorter, less exacting, and less pedagogical training than preschool teachers), 20 percent were trained as hospital nurses or had a similar profession in nursing care, and 10 percent had no completed training or were currently in training (cf. Statistisches Bundesamt, 1988b, pp. 68 ff.). Compared with previous years, the proportion of persons with pedagogical training has increased (cf. Frauenknecht, 1978, pp. 22 ff.). This trend corresponds with efforts to shift the focus in Krippen from a predominant concern with care towards a more educational approach. Significant impulses have come from model projects carried out initially in West Berlin and now in other large cities (cf. Beller, 1987).

Krippen are open roughly from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Most children in Krippen spend 9 or more hours a day there. Sample data on parent monetary contributions for the child are not available, but according to some evidence, the monthly parent contribution lies between DM 100 and DM 350 and is scaled according to parental income. In the case of low incomes, the parental contribution can be assumed by the youth office. During recent years some efforts have been made to place small children not in Krippen but in "mixed-age" kindergarten groups. Such groups contain 15 children, of whom at most 7 may be younger than 3 years of age and at most 2 or 3 may be infants.

Family day care

As in the case of care in Krippen, care in family day care homes is regulated by the youth welfare enactment. All regularly occurring kinds of care for children and youths (up to 16 years of age) outside the parental home are accordingly subject to the authority of the local youth office. Exceptions are made in the case of care by close (up to third-degree) relatives. The youth office grants permission for the child to be placed in care, is responsible for supervision, is supposed to advise and support the caregiver, and can terminate a care arrangement if it considers the child to be in danger. Supraregional standards for the actions of the youth offices do not seem to exist. The costs of family day care are borne by the parents, although in cases of need, they can be assumed by the youth office. The sum charged depends on the hours of care and the age of the child, as well as on regional fluctuation. Average rates are not available. In some family day care homes, several children are cared for. The upper limit is generally 5 children.

Compared with the institutional types of child care, family day care for under-3-year-olds is regarded as possessing various advantages: Family day care homes can be established in rural areas, in which the demand for the establishment of larger institutions is not great enough. Day care homes are usually close to the child's home, can be highly flexible, and harmonize well with the family situation. Many youth offices give preference to family day care rather than to care in Krippen. This is the result of not only ideological preference (for family-type care) but also concern with cost.

Suggestions for the pedagogical structuring of family day care are infrequent, and there is little pedagogical guidance and support on the part of youth offices. In many research reports, complaints are made about the youth offices' neglect of family day care as a field of responsibility (cf. Frauenknecht, 1980, p. 29).

In the course of the debate on the pedagogical quality of family day care for small children, a nationwide model project called "day care mothers" was carried out during the second half of the 1970s. In this model project, conditions for high-quality family day care were implemented. Among other stipulations, the number of the children cared for (including the day care mother's own children) was not allowed to exceed four children under 10 years of age. The day care mothers received preparatory practical training, and an educational advisor was at hand. Rules governing substitution as well as ones relating to a certain level of social security for the day care mothers were established, and great importance was attached to cooperation between the day care mother and the child's mother. Despite good experience with the model (cf. Martin & Pettinger, 1985), it appears to have had little impact on the general circumstances of family day care in the Federal Republic of Germany.

Illegal care arrangements and parental self-help

The limited supply of extrafamilial opportunities for very young children has led to the establishment of a "grey market" particularly for this age group. Very little is known about the extent of this market, but some estimates suggest that for every registered family day care home, there are several unregistered ones. It is probably also true that many parents and family day care mothers are not even aware of existing legal stipulations. Underground forms of group care for small children are particularly prevalent in large cities. One significant reason is that it is generally very expensive to meet the spatial and personnel standards stipulated for such groups by the youth office.

In principle, it is possible for parents to legally establish and operate parental cooperatives as children's groups. In the course of the development of the self-help movement and the concomitant reduction of cost to public authority, the establishment of such initiatives has been encouraged (cf. Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung, 1983). But inasmuch as such initiatives do not succeed in obtaining public assistance, there is a danger of instability, and because of the high parental contributions, they introduce an unwelcome note of social selectivity.

OPTIONS FOR CHILDREN FROM AGE 3 TO SCHOOL ENTRY

Administrative rulings and agencies

Although **kindergarten** was able to establish itself as the elementary level of the general system of education during the 1970s, it belongs neither legally nor organizationally to the school system. It is part of the

field of youth welfare and thus lies within the jurisdiction of the youth welfare enactment. The federal government possesses little jurisdiction in this field. Its task largely consists of formulating proposals and distributing information. Federal responsibilities also include developing model projects and presenting the report on youth in each legislative period. The establishment and operation of kindergarten is regulated by acts put forth at the state level, which represent the implementation of the federal youth welfare enactment. Most states have passed special kindergarten laws (cf. Herzberg & Lülfi, 1985), but these deal only with the framework of finance, supply planning, equipment, parent participation, responsibilities, and so forth.

It is the duty of the local youth offices in their capacity as community authorities to encourage and promote the creation of preschool institutions according to regional needs. Following the principle of subsidiarity, precedence is accorded to the so-called independent agencies, which means primarily to parishes and church welfare organizations. Only when these agencies fail to provide the necessary institutions is the youth office (the community) obliged to act as the providing agency (public authority).

The legal precedence of the independent agencies according to the principle of subsidiarity entails most kindergartens (57.1 percent) being operated by church agencies, as can be seen in Table 6. Nevertheless the proportion of kindergartens operated by public authority has risen from 21 percent to 31 percent between 1965 and 1986. In addition to the parishes and the church and other welfare organizations, other associations serving the public interest and other legal entities can, as agencies, operate kindergartens.

The agencies act for the most part autonomously, determining their own educational philosophies and goals. Furthermore, they provide for the operation of the preschool institution, employ its personnel, supervise its running, and are responsible for pedagogical advice and inservice training of personnel.

Financing

Financing for the operation of a kindergarten comes from four sources: the respective agency, parental contributions, community subsidies, and state (Bundesland) subsidies. The proportions from these four sources vary from state to state. Parent contributions are set individually according to income and are further reduced in cases in which two or more children of the same family attend the same kindergarten. In some

states, unsuccessful attempts were made at the end of the 1970s to abolish parent contributions.

As an example of the operating costs, we draw on the situation in North Rhine-Westphalia, the state with the largest population in the Federal Republic of Germany. Depending on their income, parents pay a monthly contribution of DM 35, DM 60, or DM 100. When there are two or more children of the same family, the parents' contribution is reduced by half for the second child, and there is no charge for further children. After the deduction of parent contributions, 36 percent of the remaining operating costs are carried by the agency, 32 percent by the community, and 32 percent by the state. Parent contributions generally cover between 10 percent and 15 percent of operating costs. In the case of "poor" agencies, for instance, if the parents themselves form a parent initiative to organize an agency, the share of the state can rise to 55 percent.

Size of institutions, group composition, and equipment

Kindergartens are supposed to be close to the children's homes and not too large in size. According to 1986 youth welfare statistics, 49 percent of kindergartens contained up to 50 places, 35 percent contained 51 to 80 places, and 16 percent contained more than 80 places (cf. Statistisches Bundesamt, 1988b, p. 14). The children are grouped together so that there is a maximum, depending on the state, of 20 to 30 children in a group (cf. Bundesminister für Jugend, Familie, Frauen und Gesundheit, 1988a). As a rule, no more than 25 children are included in a kindergarten group. In the case of all-day care, the group size is smaller (about 15 children). In arranging the group, care is taken to assure an age-mix, meaning children from age 3 to age of school entry are placed together in a single group. There is a principal (head) preschool teacher for each group. At best, a second person is allotted to each group. In many instances, two children's groups share the second person. According to the youth welfare statistics, the relationship in 1986 was 13 children to each fully employed preschool teacher (cf. Statistisches Bundesamt, 1988b, pp. 78 ff.).

The regulations of various states differ with regard to spatial and material provisions. Usually for each group there is a large room, which is subdivided into various functional areas. The minimal requirements in the guidelines of the states vary between 1.5 and 2.5 square meters (about 16 to 27 square feet) per child. In more fortunate instances, there is a second, smaller room that can be used to conduct special activities or

to divide the group. Larger institutions also possess a gymnasium or an all-purpose room. Buildings must be equipped with sanitary arrangements suitable for children, and as a rule there is a kitchen and a separate common room for personnel. Each kindergarten should have access to an open-air play area. The guidelines for its size specify from 6 to 10 square meters (about 65 to 107 square feet) per child. All kindergartens possess a rich and multifarious supply of materials for play and games, hobby materials, various colored materials, construction games, board games, picture books, dolls and doll accessories.

Personnel

The largest portion of women employed in kindergartens (men compose only 1.8 percent of such employees) have received training as *Erzieherin* (preschool teachers). Training is carried out in technical colleges for social pedagogy. The entry requirement is at least a middle-range final examination (on completion of the 10th grade) and frequently a year's practical activity in social service or in social pedagogy (cf. von Derschau, 1985, p. 174). The vocational training generally lasts 3 years (in some states, 4 years) and consists of 2 years of college training and a year's practical experience with concomitant courses in college. In contrast to the university training of primary school teachers, the training of preschool teachers is nonuniversity training, and preschool teachers receive a significantly lower salary. They are usually employed as principal (head) teachers in kindergarten groups and after several years of experience can be promoted to kindergarten principal.

A smaller portion of the personnel are trained as *Kinderpflegerin* (care assistants). Requirement for entry to care assistant training, which lasts 1 to 2 years and usually includes practical work, is completion of *Hauptschule* (9th grade). Emphasis is on care and home economics. A care assistant is usually employed as the additional person caring for a group.

Only a very small portion of kindergarten personnel have been trained in pedagogy at a college or university level. Training at this level takes 4 to 5 years and includes practical work (cf. von Derschau, 1985, pp. 175 ff.). A portion of the personnel of a kindergarten have no formal training, and an almost equal portion are in training.

In addition there are a certain number of specialized kindergarten personnel, for example, special education teachers, psychologists, speech therapists, and physical therapists. These are generally present for only a few hours at a time or in the capacity of a secondary occupation.

Table 7
PERSONS EMPLOYED IN KINDERGARTEN EDUCATION,
ACCORDING TO TRAINING

Level of Educator's Training	Percent of Persons at Level (N = 128,180)
Training at college/university level	1.9
Preschool teacher training	59.4
Care assistant training	16.0
In training	9.3
Without qualification	9.0
Others	4.4

Note. Data are from Statistisches Bundesamt, 1988b, pp. 68 ff.; authors' calculation.

Table 7 contains a distribution according to training of the 128,180 pedagogical employees in kindergarten in 1986. This number does not include the several thousand who are employed in technical and economic activities or those employed in administration. If the present situation with regard to personnel is compared with that of 10 or 20 years ago, one notices a strong trend toward pedagogical professionalization.

Parent participation

The regulations in all states of the Federal Republic of Germany provide for parent participation in the form of elected boards of parents. The boards advise on organizational and pedagogical questions as well as on the hiring of personnel and can represent parent interests to the kindergarten, the agency, and even the youth office. Above and beyond board participation, in many cases there is some informal participation of parents in the day-to-day running of the kindergarten, particularly in special activities. General participation of parents as volunteers is not part of the plan, however. The situation is different when a parent initiative has established a kindergarten. In such cases, the parents bear all the responsibilities of an agency. Among other things, they determine the educational philosophy and the hiring of personnel. Often they closely collaborate in the day-to-day affairs of the kindergarten (cf. Ungelenk, 1985).

Kindergarten hours

As a rule, kindergartens operate for 4 hours in the morning, generally from 8 a.m. to midday. In most provisions, activities are also offered for 2

or 3 hours in the afternoon, but not all children participate, and frequently such activities are not offered on every working day. Most kindergartens close at midday for 2 hours. The main aim of kindergarten is thus to offer half-day care. As has been noted earlier, only 12 percent of kindergarten children are cared for over and beyond midday. In most cases, such children attend specially adapted all-day provisions with, for example, smaller groups and rooms for the children to rest in. Due to pressure in recent years for greater flexibility, the number of conventional kindergartens that care for a few children over midday has also increased (cf. Tietze, 1987).

Curriculum

Since the assignment of a special educational task to kindergarten during the second half of the 1960s, a variety of didactical approaches and curricula have been developed and tested. It is possible to distinguish three main approaches: the **functionally oriented**, the **discipline-oriented**, and the **situation-oriented** (cf. Retter, 1978, pp. 138 ff.).

The **functionally oriented** approach focuses on the stimulation of children's psychological functions—such as perception, cognition, creativity, language—by the use of training programs and exercise materials. Such programs were deployed particularly at the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s and were aimed at preparing children for school entry. This approach soon came under attack for its overemphasis on cognitive abilities and its one-sided orientation towards schooling.

The **discipline-oriented** approach emphasizes orientation towards the structure of the discipline as a principle of teaching. This scientific approach assumes that even everyday reality comes under the laws of science. Therefore, while taking the child's stage of development into account, this approach confronts the preschool child with the elementary structures and basic concepts of science. This school of thought has developed, in particular, curricula for the child's introduction to natural science and mathematics.

The early discipline-oriented and functionally oriented approaches largely designed "closed" curricula, ones that were complete systems of teaching and learning, ready-made for application by both preschool teacher and child. In reaction to such "closed" systems, demands were raised for "open" curricula, wherein the preschool teachers and the children could participate in curriculum planning, design, and execution.

The **situation-oriented** approach (cf. Zimmer, 1985) focuses on the child's life situation and its requisite social and skill competencies. In a

holistically structured process of education, the children are supposed to be enabled to master the realities of their lives and to develop into autonomous individuals capable of cooperation with one another. Adults and children together inductively identify relevant life situations through exploration of the world around them. Pedagogical goals, instead of being imposed from without, are developed on the basis of common experiences with the children and in light of their (still-limited) capacities for action. The learning of elementary skills occurs not in isolation but in a social context and is subordinate to the social context. The situation-oriented approach advocates working with mixed-age groups to allow reciprocal stimulation among children; it also encourages the educational participation of parents and other adults to promote a form of learning that overlaps the generations. This entails opening the kindergarten into the community as well as redesigning the kindergarten to become a habitat for children.

Adopting the stance of the situation-oriented approach, the Deutsches Jugendinstitut (German Youth Institute; see Research section) has, together with preschool teachers and children, developed didactical materials for a spectrum of "exemplary" (typical) life situations (such as, "my family and me," "we are going to have a baby," "foreign children," "children and senior citizens," "television," "weekend," "the child in hospital"). Together with other didactical material, the situation-oriented approach was tested in a model program throughout the Federal Republic of Germany (cf. Krappmann, 1985).

In the situation-oriented approach, the kindergarten has found its own autonomous concept of education. The approach now forms a generally accepted frame of reference for kindergarten practice and for preschool teacher training. The latitude of interpretation that this approach permits evidently accounts for its wide appeal. However, sample studies on the curriculum approaches that are actually used in kindergarten have not been undertaken in the Federal Republic of Germany.

Linkages with other systems

Since the official recognition of kindergarten as the elementary level of the educational system, the question of how to link kindergarten with the subsequent primary school has arisen. As mentioned earlier, at the beginning of the 1970s, organizational models for the linkage (an entrance stage, preparatory classes) were debated and tested. Central to the discussion was the question of whether 5-year-olds should remain at the elementary level or be assigned to primary level. During the past 10 years, efforts have been made to bring kindergarten and primary school

closer together didactically and methodologically and to provide a greater continuity for the children by developing forms of cooperation between the two levels. The most important outcomes of these efforts are the play-oriented learning at primary school entry; the cooperative activities, meetings, and discussions held by preschool teachers and primary school teachers; and the reciprocal visiting between the levels by both teachers and children (cf. Macholdt & Thiel, 1985).

In a number of kindergartens operated by the churches, an attempt is being made to establish a linkage to the religious life of the parish. Kindergartens are designed to be in the neighborhood of the children's dwellings. They therefore also serve as a neighborly meeting place for many parents. However, a linkage of the kindergarten to the parents' places of work is rare. It is true that there are kindergartens in companies and institutions employing large numbers of women (such as hospitals), but their number is small, and because of the high level of unemployment during recent years, there is no cause for employers to provide such an incentive to recruit mothers with small children.

There is some linkage between the kindergarten and the public medical system. Certain diseases are subject to being reported. The health authorities carry out mass medical and dental examinations, although participation is voluntary. A closer linkage to the health authorities occurs in cases involving care of handicapped children.

Special types of kindergarten

In addition to the "typical" kindergarten, there are special kindergartens that are characterized by particular educational programs. Pursuing an apparent need for a holistic life-orientation and an overarching search for meanings, a number of **Waldorf kindergartens** have been founded during the past 10 years by parent initiatives. The Waldorf kindergartens are oriented according to the anthroposophy and pedagogy of Rudolf Steiner. Their number has already reached several hundred (cf. Barz, 1984). Similarly, **kindergartens based on the Montessori model** have been established. The Montessori establishments have won a firm place, especially in the integrated education of handicapped and nonhandicapped children.

There are also **special kindergartens for children with the same or similar forms of handicap**. Groups in these institutions are generally much smaller, and the staffing includes more personnel trained in special education and various therapies. Most offer all-day care and provide transportation. Such institutions are financed in a different way than

normal kindergartens are. Statistics for 1986 record 519 such institutions with approximately 21,000 places available (cf. Statistisches Bundesamt, 1988b, pp. 12, 16). This, however, includes places for older children. As a result of the efforts towards an integrated education of handicapped children in the ordinary kindergarten, the number of kindergartens for handicapped children has declined during recent years.

One aspect of the student revolt at the end of the 1960s and beginning of the 1970s was the establishment of *Kinderläden* (children stores), called so because they were frequently established in abandoned corner stores. They were founded by politically active parents who wanted their children educated in an antiauthoritarian and nonrepressive manner. The spread of this educational concept was, however, limited to a short period. Their successors, the **parent-initiative groups**, which numbered about 800 in the early 1970s and 500 ten years later (Ungelenk, 1985, pp. 22 ff.), are not committed to any particular educational concept.

Usually parent-initiative groups are organized by middle-class parents. The financial burden on parents is greater than in the case of ordinary kindergarten, since parents must assume not only their own but also the agency's portion of support. The parents, however, are free to define the educational philosophy and establish the organizational framework. They decide, for example, the hours of operation. In many cases they also work in the groups and provide such support services as cooking, cleaning, purchasing, and transportation. The focus of such parent-initiative groups has in the recent past shifted from the kindergarten level to the infant and toddler level, to serving children under 3 years of age. At this level, parental self-help is the only resource, since communities and church agencies provide few places for children under 3 years of age. Most of the parent-initiative groups for children below kindergarten level, however, receive no public assistance.

Other forms of child care

In addition to education in the family and in kindergarten, there are other forms of child care for children of kindergarten age, and these are similar to the forms of care we described earlier for younger children, namely, care within the social network of the parents (by grandparents, other relatives, friends, neighbors) or in family day care homes. Also, some might spend part of the day without supervision. Thus kindergarten-aged children, especially those of employed mothers, experience multiple care arrangements during the day. There are no national figures relating to such multiple-arrangement cases. The authors are presently

conducting a sample survey of the state of care for the nation's 0- to 6-year-olds, one that investigates the many different characteristics of the individual forms of care and their concurrence in the daily routine of children.

RESEARCH

In the course of the educational reform in the mid-1960s, as the question of preschool education became highly topical, there was an inadequate research infrastructure to turn to, despite the fact that there is a noteworthy tradition in early childhood education in Germany. Actually, it was the new societal interest in the question that set in motion the establishment of the topic of early childhood as a research theme both in the universities and in certain institutes outside the universities. And frequently, there were excessive expectations regarding the feasibility of short-term, scientifically substantiated solutions.

Influenced in part by the societal pressure for action and in part by a historically and philosophically oriented educational science, there evolved an action-research approach rather than an analytically and empirically aligned approach. It was primarily a matter of developing model projects involving rather "soft" scientific supervision and evaluation. State financial assistance to research, which at the beginning of the 1970s reached substantial sums, was concentrated in such model projects. On a lesser scale, empirical research, including longitudinal studies, was carried out, but it was generally regarded as of secondary importance. Some of the topics of the research and projects were

- Early furtherance of cognitive development
- Early literacy
- Feasibility of compensatory education
- Education of 5-year-olds in kindergarten or primary school
- Preschool teachers' training and further training
- Education of foreign children
- Integration of handicapped children

Research in early childhood education is given no priority at present. State financial assistance has been drastically reduced. There is interest in early childhood education research at some universities, and in most cases, linked to such research interests are training courses for students. There are also three institutes outside the universities that have an exclusive or very strong interest in early childhood education.

These are the Deutsches Jugendinstitut (German Youth Institute) in Munich, which operates on a federal scale; the Staatsinstitut für Frühpädagogik und Familienforschung (the State Institute for Early Childhood Education and Family Research) of Bavaria, in Munich; and the Sozialpädagogische Institut für Kleinkind- und außerschulische Erziehung (Social Pedagogical Institute for Early Childhood Education and Education Outside the School) of North Rhine-Westphalia, in Cologne. The latter two institutes, which were founded in connection with the reform of kindergarten, are state institutions and therefore operate only in their respective states, under the immediate charge of their respective state ministries.

In the future, it will be a matter of maintaining and consolidating the research infrastructure, which has already shrunk enormously during the past few years. From the viewpoint of educational science, it appears important to shift research from predominantly short-term and thematically fluctuating projects to the development of long-term research perspectives. From a policymaker's viewpoint, research questions relating to the imminent extension of early childhood care and education in its various forms and, in particular, to questions of the quality and cost of preschool education, will presumably come to the fore.

CHILD CARE ISSUES IN THE FUTURE

There are many indications that after the simultaneous occurrences of the late 1960s and early 1970s—the **transformation of kindergarten into part of the education system** (which has been, with regard to institutional quality, an important success) and its remarkable **quantitative expansion**—the Federal Republic of Germany is now at the beginning of a second phase of radical change in public preschool care and education. This new phase is also characterized by both qualitative and quantitative elements. Then as now, the main trends do not primarily emanate from within the care and education system; rather, they are set in motion by powerful forces from without.

Twenty years ago, the economic motive of better utilizing human capital by means of an early furtherance of the child and the constitutional motive of providing equal opportunities for children of differing social backgrounds were the fundamental driving forces. The establishment of the half-day kindergarten with the emphasis on its duties as an educational institution was, to a wide extent, an acceptable solution.

Today's emergent revisionary trends seem to draw their energy from problems confronting modern women. In contrast with the debate that led to the establishment of the half-day kindergarten as an educational institution, the present societal and political discussion points not to a single solution but to a wide spectrum of possibilities.

With the increasing participation of women (especially mothers of small children) in the work force, and the increasing participation of women in other extrafamilial activities (recreational, cultural, political), the care and education of preschool children tends to shift from being a strictly private responsibility to being a largely societal and public one. This shift to public responsibility can be perceived in the increase in external assistance offered to the family for the care and education of preschool children and in the benefits that society offers those mothers (or fathers) willing to commit their undivided attention to the care and education of their children. This constellation results in three complexes of problems, which are the object of political controversy as well as the points of crystallization for new or possible solutions regarding further development of the care and education system in its various forms. These complexes of problems are

1. **The further development of assistance in the form of extrafamilial care** by extending the supply and adapting it qualitatively to meet the needs of families and children
2. **The further development of societal benefits** as incentives for mothers (or fathers) to commit themselves for a period of time to partly or wholly abandoning gainful employment in order to care for their children
3. **The further development of regulations relating to the labor market**, allowing mothers and fathers to equate activities in the family with those in gainful employment and to make possible a smooth transition from one to the other

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE SUPPLY AND QUALITY OF EXTRAfamilial CARE

At present, it is possible to discern different national initiatives to expand extrafamilial care, both qualitatively and quantitatively—initiatives that will determine the course of the debates in the coming years. The federal government has submitted for public perusal a departmental draft of an amendment of the youth welfare enactment. The amendment would give every child from the age of 3 to school entry a

right to a place in kindergarten. The aim of the draft is that children and families should no longer be dependent on the available supply but should have a legal right to a place. Furthermore, the draft requires local youth offices to meet the demand for all-day places for children in this age group and for places of care for children under 3 years of age (cf. Bundesminister für Jugend, Familie, Frauen und Gesundheit, 1988b).

Anticipating to some extent such goals, the umbrella organizations of all kindergarten agencies have agreed on a common basis for demand-oriented opening hours (cf. Bundesvereinigung der Kommunalen Spitzenverbände & Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft der Freien Wohlfahrtspflege, 1987), with the intention of enlarging the supply to better reflect the differing lifestyles of families. This declaration of intent and recommendation should not be taken for actual change, however. In fact, the altercations concerning care institution expansion, which some see as undermining the family, have yet to reach their culmination.

With regard to the political discussion, allowance should be made for the fact that extending care institutions puts a financial burden on the states and the communities; thus any new approach can only succeed with their cooperation. Controversy will surely emerge over how much parents should bear of the operating costs of expanded care. It is because of such cost considerations and also because of prevailing liberal beliefs (wherein private initiatives hold high importance) that there is increasing political interest in and assistance for parent-initiative groups.

From an educational perspective, probably the most important point relates to the improvement and maintenance of institutional quality. If children will be attending institutions for the greater part of a day, a reform of the institutions' educational procedures is called for. Instead of reducing educational standards in favor of care requirements, institutions must offer children places in which their needs for protection, for a sheltered life, for social and emotional security, *and* for educational stimulation are simultaneously satisfied.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIETAL BENEFITS

It has been mentioned earlier that the Federal Republic of Germany—in addition to giving families tax concessions and children's allowances—has entered into a system of direct benefits for parental efforts in the education of their children, with a 1-year payment of money for the care of a child during its first year of life and the crediting of the care periods (also up to 1 year for each child) in calculating a mother's or father's future

social security pension. During the coming years, it may be expected that the debate over expanding these provisions will become more intense. In some of the states, local provisions for such an expansion already exist.

Expansion on a federal level is discussed largely from two perspectives: First, with regard to extending leave beyond the period of 18 months, and second, with regard to increasing benefit payments, that is, increasing the amount of money paid for care of a child during the first year of life or increasing the credits for calculating the social security pension. The two options—extending leave or increasing benefit payments—have differing implications. Regulations relating to a leave extension combined with relatively low payments would only be attractive for mothers (not for fathers). At the same time, leave extensions could be expected to relieve the labor market (for women). Of the options being considered, only a significant increase in the size of the benefit payments could provide an effective incentive for greater participation of fathers in the education of small children.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF LABOR MARKET REGULATIONS

Many mothers of small children (and some fathers) desire a greater compatibility between family activities and participation in gainful employment. One way to address this need is to provide extrafamilial care opportunities in public institutions or within the social network of the family. Another would be to have a greater flexibility in the organization of employment.

As possible steps towards a family-compatible rearrangement of the work world, political demands call for an increased supply of part-time jobs together with a greater flexibility in working hours and their adaptation to life rhythms. Present complaints charge that concerns about family and children are disregarded by *both* parties in collective bargaining—and this includes the unions, from whom the population expects greater concern. Due to the comparatively small degree of unionization among women, it is uncertain how much the situation will change in the foreseeable future. Under the economic system governing the Federal Republic of Germany, the state's opportunities to intervene in this regard are considered limited.

A further step towards achieving compatibility between family activities and work activities can be seen in the improved opportunities for phase-displaced combinations of both types of activity. On the basis of

the enactment concerning benefits for child care during the child's first year, it has become possible for mothers or fathers to obtain leave to give this care, during which time they are protected against unlawful dismissal. It is probable that an extension of the existing regulations will be made in one way or another. Some large-scale employers have already introduced employee regulations allowing a several-year suspension of the employment contract with guaranteed opportunity to return. Regulations going even further to facilitate children's early childhood care and education—the reduction of a full-time employment contract to part-time employment or the suspension of an employment contract for several (up to 7) years while guaranteeing reemployment—are possible in public employment.

CONCLUSION

In all probability, the emerging reformation of preschool care and education in the Federal Republic of Germany will not boil down to a single solution capable of being generalized. Because of the multiplicity of lifestyles, a variety of solutions appear necessary—solutions that give young mothers and fathers choices and allow them to assume responsibility in structuring their own lives and those of their children. Accordingly, it is not merely a matter of an institutional response with regard to the preschool children's needs in care and education. In the Federal Republic of Germany, the opinion appears to be gaining ground that a sustained improvement of care and education of young children as well as the betterment of their quality of life can only be obtained through a coordinated effort involving all the differing societal subsystems.

AUTHORS' NOTE

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