



LIGHT THE FIRE WITHIN

How to Foster Creativity in Pre-schoolers?

MADO auditorium, 21 Sept. 2009, 11.30-14.30

Creativity is neither spontaneous nor inevitable. It cannot be guaranteed, decreed or imposed, but it can be made more likely through effective policies and practices, including in early childhood education.

There is a common perception that existing education and training systems more often **kill** learners' creativity than nurture it. Traditional schooling is seen to be obsessed with preparation for working life, and with the teaching and assessment of established blocks of knowledge and ways of thinking, communicating, doing and behaving, and to neglect imagination, intuition, emotions and wonderment – qualities of mind that are vital for innovation and creativity and for economic and social progress.

Enhancing innovation and creativity at all levels of education and training is identified as a key long-term strategic challenge in the Commission's "Updated strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training".

Professors **Carla Rinaldi** from Reggio Children (Italy) and **Ferre Laevers** from Leuven University will discuss:

- *How is creativity treated in early childhood education?*
- *How to foster creativity in the early years in order to maximise each child's creative potential for the next stage of compulsory education?*
- *What sort of pedagogies and other conditions help develop children's creativity at this stage and how best to organise the relevant services?*

11.30-12.45

Creativity as a quality of thought

Prof. Carla Rinaldi, Reggio Children and Modena-Reggio University

12.45-13.15

Lunch break

13.15-14.30

The essence of creativity and implications for education policy and practice

Prof. Ferre Laevers, University of Leuven



DG Education & Culture

A DG EAC/NESSE seminar for Commission staff



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Carla Rinaldi is President of Reggio Children and Professor at the Modena-Reggio University, Faculty of Education. She has served as consultant in different Commissions of the Italian Ministry of Education. Carla studied Philosophy and Pedagogy at the University of Bologna. In 1971, she started working as a *pedagogista* in the Municipal Infant-toddler Centres and Preschools of Reggio Emilia. She was the pedagogical director and director of the Centres and Preschools until 1999. Carla has been working as pedagogical/scientific consultant for Reggio Children since 1994 and has been involved in research projects in collaboration with Harvard University, the University of New Hampshire and the University of Milan. She is involved in ongoing professional development initiatives and research projects with Northern European countries. Carla was vice-president of the Gruppo Nazionale Nidi-Infanzia (National Early Childhood Association) and a member of the Reggio Emilia City Council. She has been a speaker at numerous seminars and conferences in Italy and internationally. She is co-author of several books on the Reggio Emilia municipal infant-toddler centres and preschools. She has coordinated the publication of the book "Making Learning Visible", published by Reggio Children and Harvard University Project Zero. She has written several articles published both in Italy and abroad in books and education magazines.



Ferre Laevers is director of the Research Centre for Experiential Education based at the Department of educational sciences, Leuven University. Most of his work is linked to the innovative project *Experiential Education* of which he was the founding father, more than 30 years ago. Both at the conceptual level and at the level of practice this project generated a framework for quality assessment and quality improvement, suitable for a wide range of settings: from babies and toddlers in childcare, over primary and secondary education, up to higher education and professional development in in-service training.

Ferre was a co-founder of the European Early Childhood Education Research Association (EECERA), its elected president in 2005-2008 and a member of the Board of Trustees until 2008. He has been a member of the editorial board of the *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*. He is the author of the 1999 background report for Flanders in the context of the OECD-Review on the "Policy on early childhood education and care". He was (in 2000) a member of the OECD-Review team on the policy on early childhood education and care in the UK (in 2000) and in France (in 2003). He is the author of numerous publications.

