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A New Science is Born – Early Childhood Neuropedagogy. *An Early Childhood Neuropedagogy International Research Group has been established by Laszlo Varga, PhD at the Benedek Elek Faculty of Pedagogy in Sopron, Hungary*

The latest national and international researches emphasize childhood as a key factor in the course of life of the individual. In recent years, research on young children's early brain (head) and emotional development (heart) have underscored its importance for later development. Integrating this 'Brain-Based, Heart-Felt' research into classroom practice, however, will require meaningful dialogue between educators and brain scientists to inform both research and ECE institutions. Our group aims to bring educators and scientists together through the development of joint research projects to improve the understanding of how children learn and develop. Linking brain and EQ research to ECE is extremely valuable to our understanding of children development and learning. The research will provide

educational sciences with lots of new information and data whereas it will also modify and complement the content of nursery school teacher and early childhood educator trainings as well as the innovation of early childhood educational and research facilities.

The human brain is a mysterious organ that offers serious learning challenges to scientists and child educators. At birth, the brain is remarkably unfinished. The period up to eight years is considered to be the peak time for brain development. Brain grows at an amazing speed, by the age of three there will be more than a thousand trillion connections between different neurons. The type of care that the child

receives in his/her early life will decide the formation of neuron network. From birth to about the age of eight the brain is a super-sponge. This is the brain's most absorbent stage, where it actively learns from its environment.

“Windows of opportunity” are sensitive periods in children’s lives when specific types of learning take place. Information flows easily into the brain through 'windows' that are open for only a short duration. Then the 'windows' close, and much of the fundamental architecture of the brain is completed and probably not going to change very much more. Interpretation and understanding the first years of human life, early childhood and childhood have undergone paradigmatic changes in the last few years. Developing and educating children is crucial for the progress of a nation and the development of the economy, since only happy, well-balanced, talented children are able to build a prospering and sustainable society.

Looking at our children from a wide perspective we can say that they are the citizens, workers, parents of tomorrow, the

founders of the society of the future and the basis of the development of the economy. It is a central question what to give and what not to give to our children in their first years. Intelligent investment is a kind of key in establishing a happy life, so there is an unlimited chance and extreme responsibility on our shoulders, since early years last forever.

Scientists are continually learning more about how young children’s brains develop. At the same time, teachers are looking for effective strategies to help children use their brains to their fullest capacity. This research group also contributes to this dialogue by summarizing what we already know about the learning process in the brain and suggests how it might form the teaching and learning process in the classroom.

If you would like to join the research group, please contact:

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