Everyday Child Care in Daycare Centers: An Ethnographic Study

Cuidado Infantil no Cotidiano da Creche: Um Estudo Etnográfico

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Introduction

In this chapter, we seek to contribute to the theoretical discussion of childcare in daycare centers, based on analysis of the results of ethnographic research. We start our study with a historical contextualization of the emergence of daycare and the political discussion that accompanied the process.

Daycare first appeared in Europe in the first half of the 19th century. Freitas and Shelton (2005) reported that kindergartens first appeared in 1883. Kindergartens were private institutions to which only wealthy families had access, with a purpose to educate. By contrast, the institutions known as 'creches' were places where working-class children received daycare. Rosemberg (2002) shows that the social inequalities present since the creation of these institutions offering care for children remain in place in Brazil today. She argues that, despite attempts to increase access, quality remains low in Brazilian daycare centers or 'creches', reinforcing processes of exclusion from school.

In a report on everyday practices in early childhood education published by the Ministry of Education (Brasil 2009) there is a reminder that, since the 1996

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approval of the "Law of Guidelines and Bases for Education", preschooling is considered the first stage of basic education. For this reason, the report continues, it is necessary to give its specific contours due consideration. In this sense:

> In order to demarcate the "identity" of the *crèche*,[1] its place in public policy and in Brazilian Basic Education, to dissociate it from social work and to distance the pre-school from "preparation for school education", it was necessary to emphasize and to insist on the inseparability of education/care, as a political strategy to bring the two together, [thus] reshaping children's education (Brazil 2009, p. 66).

The importance of the daycare center as an educational space and as an option for families unable to spend all day with their child is related to the increase in the supply of this service, even if supply still does not meet demand. This growing importance is also expressed in the considerable body of new research on such daycare. Our review of this literature shows that particular attention is paid to the topic of 'care' in this research, especially in areas such as nursing, education, and psychology.

Several studies focus on educators' thinking about the function of the daycare center, care, and the children's families (Verissimo and Fonseca 2003a, b; Maranhão and Sarti 2008; Bógus et al. 2007). Others investigate families' or mothers' thinking about the care offered by the centers (Delgado 2005; Maranhão and Sarti 2007). The authors of these studies make clear their concern by providing recommendations on how to improve practice, drawing attention to the need to improve caregiver training and to the complexity of the relationship between the "family" and preschool care professionals. However, all the cited studies discuss the topic of care without clarifying how they understand this concept.

The low value of care in relation to education is discussed in several papers. For example, Verissimo and Fonseca (2003a) explored notions of care among workers in a daycare center attached to the University of São Paulo, comparing coordinators' points-of-view with those of teachers. According to the authors, although seen as an area of increasing importance for child development, there is still uncertainty about the mission of daycare centers, which has oscillated from the purely paternalistic mission of the centers of old to the present emphasis on their educational functions. In practice, they note, there is a marked lack of regard for the care aspects of work at the center and a relatively high value given to the educational dimension.

Against the practical difficulties in the political and pedagogical discussion of early childhood education, there is a clear emphasis on the "inseparability of educating and caring," which is considered to be one of the five educational principles aimed at achieving the Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education. In the report on these guidelines, some well-consolidated conceptions concerning the duo of education and care are outlined and a number of disputes and problems are presented. There is a consensus that:

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[1]TN (Translator's Note) daycare center.

> The act of caring goes beyond mere protection and care of physical needs such as food, sleep, hygiene, comfort and pain prevention. Caring requires listening to needs, desires and concerns, encouraging or restraining collective actions, supporting children as individuals who dreams and face challenges, recognizing their unique achievements within the group and also accepting their own forms of reasoning as expressed in their choices and attempts to explore movements in the world (Brazil 2009, p. 66).

The report also criticizes usage of the twinned concepts of education and care. Use of the two terms suggests that "these actions are separate, to be undertaken by two different kinds of professionals, thus legitimizing the existence of a teacher and an assistant" (Brazil 2009, p. 67). Yet there is dispute concerning which of the terms is hegemonic:

> The ascendancy of the term care over the term education derives mainly from philosophical debates, where it is argued that all relationships and interactions among individuals pre-suppose care. Care, as a specific modality of relations between humans, is necessary for survival. In this line of reasoning, all daily practices are care (primary care, care for the collective, physical, natural and social environments). On the other hand, some authors argue that educational processes always involve the dimension of care. This debate is just beginning and the arguments on both sides are relevant and consistent (Brazil 2009, pp. 67–68).

In this study, we work with a concept that is the product of a thesis on childcare. In Bustamante and McCallum (2010), we summarized our approach to care as follows.

> Care can be thought of as *the construction of projects of the person which is expressed in everyday practices and which occurs in a framework of power relations between agents who occupy different social positions*. We show, through ethnographic analysis, that for the subjects, care necessarily involves work focusing on the person, as Thomas (1993) argues. Our conceptualization of work as taking the form of the construction of projects in everyday practice may both be connected to Ayres' perspective and also held to be distinct from it. While Ayres restricts himself to examining care in a sphere delimited by restricted inter-subjectivity, in our research we show that it is in fact constructed culturally and socially within structured relations of power (…)

> Projects of the person may be related to the multiple interests of caregivers occupying different positions within a social field, in the sense, with respect to this latter concept, ascribed by Bourdieu (1996, 1989). Such projects are not reducible just to a concern for practical success. Following Rabelo's (1999) concept of project, which derives from Schutz and Merleau-Ponty, we argue that projects involve more than simple discursive or mental constructions. Indeed, projects can have corporeal expression without necessarily having passed through a level of mental representations; what is more, several projects may coexist in the same situation. Based on Rabelo's contributions and upon anthropological discussion about the social construction of the person (see Bustamante 2009), we argue that care (and with it the person) is always being built and rebuilt in this form – that is, as projects that indeed might not be spelled out discursively, in so many words. (p. 609)

After several years of contact with residents of a poor neighborhood of Salvador and caregivers in various spaces, we grouped the people who care for children in three categories: internal, external, and intermediate caregivers (Bustamante 2009). The internal caregivers are blood relatives or relatives by "consideration," some of whom live with the child in the same household or in houses belonging to the same

"configuration" of houses.[2] Other caregivers perhaps do not cohabit but maintain frequent contact. By external caregivers, we refer to professionals with high school or higher education, who mostly do not live in the neighborhood. Intermediate caregivers are people working with children, usually women with little formal training enduring poor working conditions, who often live in the neighborhood. These caregivers sometimes identify with the internal caregivers, sometimes with the external.

External and intermediate caregivers are subject to the demands of institutions, where "planning" is central. This term is an expression of the presence and power of the state in the caregiver's day-to-day. It condenses institutional demands powerfully. These demands relate to the policies and programs, protocols, and productivity criteria proposed and established by public agencies, especially federal, state-level, and municipal ministries and secretariats of health and education. To plan as a function of institutional demands—and to put plans into practice—is seen as a good indicator of job performance.

The notion of "planning" allows us to understand how the various types of caregivers construe and construct their positions. Intermediate caregivers, such as the people who work in the daycare center, find themselves in a conflicted position. On the one hand, they have a kin-like relationship with the child, for they think of the children through the lens of their own experiences as internal caregivers. On the other hand, they are in the position of professionals who enjoy superior knowledge, who are able to give "guidance" and to make demands on families, for these attitudes are central to consolidating themselves in the workplace.

The concept advocated here involves a critique of the tendency to universalize the meaning of care and, at the same time, a proposal to extend this notion by showing that, in fact, care is built daily through a diversity of interactions and not just out of a concern with happiness or well-being. In the discussion that follows, we show that care is carried out on a daily basis, through both words and actions, at daycare centers. Thus, we seek to contribute to a conceptual discussion that is in a wide-ranging dialogue with practice.

Methodology

This analysis is part of an ethnography about childcare in a low-income neighborhood of Salvador (Bustamante 2009). Like Jackson (1996), we consider that ethnography is more than a type of writing: Indeed, it is best understood as a good

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[2]We adopt the term 'consideration' to translate the Portuguese term *consideração* which, when used to denote kinship connections, implies bonds of relatedness built up progressively over time that may take preeminence over those generated in the first instance by what Bahians call 'ties of blood'. For a discussion of the constitution of relatedness as kinship within the symbolic domain of houses and configurations of houses in this region of Brazil, see Marcelin (1999), McCallum and Bustamante (2012).

way to understand and to demonstrate how people from different groups live and how they relate to each other.

As Toren (1997) observes, participant observation is the method that is most characteristic of the ethnographic approach. It involves being both a participant and an observer who questions his or her own and others' participation in ordinary events, in such a way that nothing that is said is treated as irrelevant. According to the author, ethnographic analysis is not intended to be based on representative samples. Rather, the challenge is to know as much as possible about the people whose behaviors and representations are under scrutiny. For this reason, it is important to do in-depth interviews with a number of informants.

Our research on childcare involved ethnographic explorations over several years of the neighborhood in various contexts: seven residential units, a family health center, a public school, a private school, a Pentecostal church, a Candomblé temple, and a daycare center run by a neighborhood resident's association. This daycare center run by one of Prainha's residents' associations was chosen because it is attended by several children known to us. Another reason for the choice was because the association's leader, Clovis, had played an important role in the neighborhood's history. During this part of our study, we conducted two visits a week over a period of four months.[3]

We observed the day-to-day activities of the daycare center, marking presence in different classrooms and watching the routines of arrival, departure, feeding, and hygiene of the institution. We kept up an ongoing dialogue with several people who worked in the daycare center: Clovis and his relatives who worked in the center as administrators, the educational coordinator, teachers, helpers, children, and the latter's relatives. After the first months of participant observation, we had some taped interviews with some employees and teachers. The criterion for selection was the availability of the interviewees and their importance in the everyday life of the daycare center.

Analysis was ongoing throughout the research alongside the writing process (Becker 1994). Interviews and field notes were transcribed, read, and organized by date in folders. A preliminary general reading of the material was followed by a second type of reading, involving the identification of important themes, the selection of related excerpts, and the creation of new files. New readings of selected material—and sometimes a return to the original material—followed as we built the arguments of the study. Thus, a profounder understanding of the material emerged from this process. Some important findings emerged after new readings of the same notes.

We organized the results around the themes that emerged as the most important in daily work in the childcare center: a contextualization of the place of this institution within the district, the dispute between the pedagogical work and feeding

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[3]Research assistant Lorena Oliveira did most of the fieldwork, supplemented with a few visits by Bustamante, the principal author of the present chapter.

routines; tensions over the work of teachers; and different perspectives on children who attend the center.[4]

Results and Discussion

On the Neighborhood and the Daycare Center

Prainha has similar characteristics to other low-income neighborhoods: inadequate services, poor urban infrastructure, some unpaved streets, lack of green spaces and recreational facilities, presence of homes "under construction," among others. Residents have a low educational level and income.

"Seu Clovis's Daycare Center," as it is dubbed in Prainha, is a *creche-escola* (daycare center and nursery school) that belongs to one of the neighborhood resident's associations, which he founded and directs.[5] This institution serves children from one to six years old. In each room, there are between 25 and 30 children and two caregivers, one of whom works as a teacher and the other as an auxiliary. This number far surpasses the recommendations of the Ministry of Health (Brazil 1989): six children per educator, for babies aged 0–11 months, and eight children per educator for infants between one year and one year and 11 months.

The caregivers are women in the community, most without formal training, with a long history of contact with children in the neighborhood, both as mothers and as relatives or teachers or school support people who are paid to "take care" of children at home. These women sought the position because they needed a source of income.

The institution has characteristics similar to those noted in several studies of childcare centers in Brazil which demonstrate that, although the purpose of supporting such creches is as a means of promoting improvements to early childhood education, public policies encouraging low-cost early childhood education services lead to institutions where children spend the day with women who earn low wages and have limited training in wholly inadequate physical surroundings (Rosemberg 2002; Rossetti-Ferreira et al. 2002).

Care in the Daycare Center: Between Nourishment and Planning

Below we highlight some aspects of the day-to-day at the daycare center, which we link to different ways of constructing care—at times more centered on the

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[4]The research project which gave rise to this article was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Institute of Collective Health of UFBA, the Federal University of Bahia.

[5]"Seu" is an honorific in Portuguese denoting "Mr.", used before first names. It's feminine equivalente is "Dona" (T.N.).

perception of children as "in need" and at others more on the pedagogical work, which is opposed routine activities (especially feeding). The difference between what a daycare center and nursery school offer is explained by Liana, an administrative assistant, as follows:

> Because the child that is in a daycare center (creche) …, she is mostly there to be cared for - cared for there, because the mother has nowhere to leave her. And the child who goes to school (escola), she goes to study. So her development is quite different from that of the child who was in daycare. (Excerpt from interview).

In Liana's interview, she uses the word "care" in the sense of "to mind" or "to take care of" (Bustamante 2009; Bustamante and McCallum, 2011). This involves spending time with children, offering nourishment, hygiene, and the means to avoid injuries—something that could also be done at home and that is different from what is done in school: studying. The differentiation between "caring" and "educating" is discussed in other studies of schools (Carvalho 1999) and daycare centers (Verissimo and Fonseca 2003a, b). It is noted by Freitas and Shelton (2005) as a reality that needs to be rethought if the goal is to offer a higher quality service to children. Moreover, Liana speaks of the daycare center as a place for "mothers who do not have anywhere to leave their child"—that is, as a place for children "in need," an understanding that has been documented in other studies conducted in Brazilian daycare centers (Bogus et al. 2007; Maranhão 2000).

Thinking of the daycare center as a place that serves children in need is linked to the great importance attributed to Dona Dora, who is in charge of the kitchen in the organization of the institution's routines. Dona Dora is the director`s sister—something that, although everyone in the daycare knows, he prefers not to be spoken about openly. According to the teachers and helpers, Dona Dora interferes with their work, giving opinions or making criticisms, and does not accept any comments or criticisms regarding the frequent delays in meals, something that alters the routines of the teachers, which are organized around mealtimes.

The director Clovis personally hired Gina, the new educational coordinator. She is the only professional at the daycare center with a university education. On her first day at work, Gina had already formed some ideas about the teachers and on what she proposed to do as part of her job:

> Gina said that there was a need to change some things in the daycare center, mostly in teaching. She said no teacher had undergone training, and that some had not even completed high school. She said that the philosophy of the daycare center is very paternalistic and that this damages children's learning because there is no proper lesson planning: "Here the teachers do not plan lessons; they do not have a defined goal. In fact, they told me that they do not know how to plan! My work here would be help them, give them some suggestion, but I'll have to start from scratch, teaching how to do planning (field notes).

Throughout the months of participant observation in the daycare center, Gina had little success in teaching the teachers to do planning and to apply it in the way she saw fit. According to Gina, only Cristina, a teacher who had done teacher training, could do it on her own.

Teachers Who Are 'mothers'

In the daycare center we studied, there is constant reference to idealized mother-hood—where the mother is a woman dedicated to meeting the needs of the child—taken as a model of how caretakers working in childcare centers should be. During the interview, Cristina said at various times that to be a good teacher you must be a mother. Initially, she linked the experience of motherhood with the ability to treat children with the affection they need, especially at the times when they need comfort. At another point, Cristina said that to work in the center one should be a teacher and a mother, due to the situation of children:

> Teacher and mother, because here there are many very needy children. Not just a teacher! I am a daycare teacher? No, I am a teacher and I am a mother, because here, my daughter, one has to be a mother. There are so very many needy cases.

By tracking the day-to-day of the center, we can see that affectionate references to motherhood as a parameter of the teacher's role coexist with distance and dif-ficulties in the relationship with the children. We interviewed Alice, the teacher most criticized in the center, and she also made reference to her experience as a mother when discussing her work. Like other colleagues, Alice started "minding" children at home, entered the daycare center as an assistant, and is now a teacher. When asked what it was to be a teacher in her view, Alice said: "*Being a teacher is also being a child, right? You must rejoice, play, do everything that a child likes, right? […] Learn to discipline, learn to create.*" However, the work in the class-room does not reflect the concerns she put into words:

> Alice was sitting all the time doing the "planning" for classes. She only spoke when the children were too noisy, to ask them not to talk and to sit in their seats. Around ten o'clock Alice set a task, and called each child one at a time to do it at her desk. It was to join points forming the letters A and U, which she had written in each child's notebook. While a child was doing this at her desk, another would sit waiting their turn to do it as well. During the rest of the morning the children had to watch TV. The kids were not allowed to get up because Alice – who had now returned to planning lessons – would complain and order them to sit down again.

> That day there was a new student, who spent most of the time alone crying; I think she did not attract much attention because she was crying quietly. The only person to approach her was the teacher's assistant who always told her not to cry, that she would go home soon, but at no time proposed to her interaction with other children. (field notes)

In contrast to the position she expressed in interview, Alice shows no concern for students' emotional states. Also during this morning, there were no periods dedicated to "playing with and doing what the child likes." To keep a distance through "planning" could also be a way to protect oneself from the intense feelings generated by daily contact with one's charges. Here it seems that planning is less a material reality—it was impossible to see what Alice was writing—and more a strategy to avoid contact with the children, which is accepted by the daycare center because it involves the purported performance of a highly valued activity.

Unlike Alice, Nanda expressed intense feelings in the relationship with the children: "Come with Mummy to change your diaper," she said to one of twenty children, aged from one to two years old, who were in her class. That was how she habitually spoke with them. During participant observation, the intensity of the children's demands in this room were notable. Many asked that the caregivers stay close, with some requesting drinking water, while the former had to change another child's diaper. Nanda said she was already accustomed to the pace of work in the room where she had been working a few months. According to Nanda—and other colleagues confirmed this—although initially she worked with another class, she was asked to work with this group because several other aides had failed to deal with a boy of a year and a half:

> "No teacher could care for him. He was too busy rushing around, always running, not listening when we spoke with him, and used to bite his classmates! I think he is very needy […] he improved a lot after I came to work in this room." I asked what she thought she had done to improve his behavior. "I think that it was because I began to pay more attention to him, he was always alone in the room, as the classmates did not want to be near him, they already knew that he would bite." I asked why they decided to call her to care for him. "Several teachers tried to care for him, but none had succeeded. Even the teachers ended up isolating him from the rest of the class. I did the opposite, sitting next to him and putting the other children to sit there as well. I didn't leave his side! I always talked to him when he tried to do something wrong, until he started to learn. Today he does not bite anyone anymore, and classmates can already sit near him and play with him. (field notes)

In this account and in the day-to-day contact that was observed between Nanda and the boy mentioned, one can discern an intense emotional investment on the part of the caregiver, which engenders a response from the children. There is here a stark contrast to what we observed in the case of Alice. Nanda feels comfortable in her position as an auxiliary because "an auxiliary does not have to do planning," and she gives attention to a child who behaves differently from the others, unlike Alice, who ignored the crying new girl.

Nanda treats the boy as someone who is able to relate, despite his aggressive behavior, and puts him in contact with others. In the relation with Nanda and other children, a total project of the person emerges—integrating "good" and "bad" aspects—in which this child is no longer an aggressive boy who no one tolerates but a child who wants to engage in relationships, albeit in a different way.

The bond built between Nanda and her student had some unpleasant consequences for both, for they became very close and missed each other when absent: "Nanda also said she loves to work with children and the only 'problem' with the daycare center is that she becomes very attached to the children. She added that this boy had become very attached to her too" (field notes). Just as Nanda used her own intuition to take care of a difficult student, constructing a project of the total person, she had to deal with her intense attachment to him.

The above account contrasts with the findings of other studies of daycare centers and preschools. For example, Carvalho (1999) identified no references to motherhood in the way preschool teachers spoke about their work. Veríssimo and Fonseca (2003a) described how teachers from a university daycare center insisted that this

space offered professional care, as a way to enhance the value of their work The results of our analysis of discourse in the daycare center closely resemble the findings of Delgado (2005) on the relationship between a woman who takes care of children at home and the mothers who entrust their children to them. Both the mothers and "minders" she studied understand the relationship as involving the delegation of the maternal role that mothers cannot exercise full time. This leads children to call the minders "mother" or visit their houses even when they are not under their care. In what follows, we describe and analyze the position in which children are placed in relation to the caregivers at the daycare center.

"Needy" and Autonomous Children

There are different ways of thinking about the children who attend the daycare center, and indeed multiple perspectives are important to make care at this institution viable. On the one hand, children are seen as "needy, aggressive, and with little development." This view is important as an underpinning for the idea that the center is a good place for them, because the caregivers are "motherly" women, who can meet the needs of children, even if they lack formal studies.

However, during day-to-day interactions, children show that they have their own personalities, autonomy and ability to build their own relationships. This independence is vital to facilitate work in the daycare center since, given the very high number of children in each class, there is a need for children to fend for themselves, On the other hand, their relationship with the children is the main source of recognition for caregivers, who find few opportunities to increase their economic capital in the center. Additionally, the relationship between children and caregivers of daycare can take the form of kinship.

Cristina expressed the coexistence of different perspectives on the daycare center's children. Initially, this teacher listed their negative characteristics:

> *Interviewer*: What do you think of these children here in Prainha? What are they like?
> *Cristina*: Boy, are they pretty violent. Children … with little intellectual development … They use a lot of slang … bicker a lot, you see that they are of a much lower level.

When asked how she felt about her work, Cristina highlighted positive aspects:

> For me working with them here is turning out great, because they represent something to us. There are those that are quieter, and those who are more active. And we take it day by day. As you saw yourself in my classroom. Being a child is what you saw there, some are fierce, some quieter, others more hyper, others more … more blessed.

The closeness between children and caregivers in daycare—which is expressed in using kinship terms to address the adult, besides visiting their homes receiving gifts, or even wanting to live in their house—cannot be explained simply as a response of adults when faced with the children's needs. It is evident that children are important for caregivers at the center—just as they are for their families—as

contact with them is pleasurable and source of recognition. Teacher Luciene made this clear:

> *Interviewer*: How do you feel about working here?
> *Luciene*: Ah, I feel good. I laugh. Children always … how do you say … gives us a "Good Afternoon," a "Thank you." There's nothing better, you see, than having your work recognized, especially by children. And when they get it and point, when they understand some task, you feel really happy—it's a reward for all your efforts.

The demand for recognition—to feel important and valued by someone—was cited by Dalsgaard (2004) as a great motivator of human action. Interestingly, teachers value most the recognition coming from children and less that of their colleagues, the directorship of the center, or the families, with whom there is often conflict—as also described in other studies (Maranhão and Sarti 2007; Bógus et al. 2007). On the other hand, there are times that caregivers protect themselves by restricting the relationship with the children to the institutional environment, like Nanda and others who "get involved" as they would with relatives or neighbors. The different perspectives on the children are associated with the ability to construct different projects in relation to them.

Final Thoughts

In this study, we have sought to go beyond offering evidence of the precarious nature of working conditions and services offered in the childcare center, which has already been shown elsewhere by other authors (Barros et al. 1999; Rosemberg 2002; Rosetti-Ferreira et al. 2002). In the literature, it is unusual to find studies on daycare initiatives organized from within a community. However, some of our findings are similar to those of other studies. Our informants spoke of care both as pertaining to the child's body and also as based on the idea that is appropriate for "needy" children who can neither stay at home nor attend a private school, as Maranhão (2000) also noted. She drew attention to how educators feel that it is unacceptable that a very small child frequent a daycare center and thereby see their work justified as relief for the poor. This perspective is also present in the institution we studied.

On the other hand, we also showed how women with limited or no formal training and very poor working conditions construct their practices in environments with scarce educational materials and a high number of children in each class. Rather than evaluating them as good or bad, we understand the practices as an expression of power relations. On the one hand, there are efforts to formalize the teaching because it is a childcare center and a preschool—to have the recognition and resources the caregivers need to show that they do pedagogical work within its walls. Hence, the presence of the educational coordinator who seeks to deploy planning is needed. On the other hand, there are the practical activities that are considered to be intrinsically linked with feminine nature, such as providing

nourishment, affection, and protection for children. In addition, we show here that what sustains the work in the childcare center is neither just planning nor a loving and benevolent vision of childhood. Children actively construct their own care: they challenge the authority of adults, they are autonomous in carrying out routines, they provide recognition, and they build family relationships that support the work in the childcare center and its deep connection with the community.

Like Delgado (2005), we consider it necessary to know and appreciate the various forms of childcare outside the home. We argue that to strengthen the capacities of childcare centers to care for children in a broad sense—which necessarily includes educational practices—is not just a matter of improving infrastructure, working conditions, and worker's training but also of grasping the logic of kinship present in the childcare center. If this is accepted, then it follows that in future studies it will be necessary to expand the analysis to include a focus on how families relate to the childcare center.

We identified some theoretical, political, and practical outcomes. We need to think of care practices and education in an integrated way and also to work in the framework of intersectoral policies. One aspect that requires urgent attention—besides the already indicated precarious conditions within which early childhood education is offered, and as well as the possibilities for improvement offered by university education for caregivers (Faria 2005)—is the basic training of care professionals. We consider it essential that the training of caregivers be based on a realistic perspective, without the idealization of the term that is all too frequent. Such training should include consideration of the contradictions that are part of everyday life and should also give due value to the capabilities of different social groups, such as the ability to build bonds of kinship.

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