

The Eighth Child Science Exchange Program in East Asia

Child Science of Play and Learning

◆September 22- 23, 2012

◆National Taipei University of Education, Taipei



Speakers and Presenters:

Noboru Kobayashi (Director, CRN; Professor Emeritus, The University of Tokyo)

Jiaxiong Zhu (Professor Emeritus, East China Normal University)

Yoichi Sakakihara (Deputy Director, CRN; Professor, Graduate School, Ochanomizu University)

Haug-Tsung Kuo (Division Chief of Developmental and Behavior Pediatrics of China Medical University Hospital)

Lee-Fong Wong (Professor, National Taipei University of Education)

Chihiro Tada (Director, Art Education Institute)

Shih-Tsung Chang (Professor, National Taipei University of Education)

Ping-Lin Fan (Professor, National Taipei University of Education)

* In order of presentation; titles and affiliations as of September 2012

The Eighth Child Science Exchange Program in East Asia took up the theme “Child Science of Play and Learning.” Over a period of two days, researchers and professionals discussed the relationship between child development and play and the role of toys in play from viewpoints that included medicine, developmental psychology, education, engineering, and architecture. A symposium on child care was held for parents, and questions and answers were exchanged between researchers and parents to address the pressing issues of child care today.

Day 1

On Child Science: An Approach to Preventing and Resolving Children’s Issues

Noboru Kobayashi

Dr. Kobayashi explained that Child Science - a comprehensive, interdisciplinary approach to children’s issues - is what we need today.

Experiencing the joy of play is important for the physical and psychological development of children, a concept that also received much attention in the Taiwanese media.

Do Children Play or Do We Make Them Play?

Jiaxiong Zhu

How should we incorporate “play” in early childhood education? Dr. Zhu introduced new perspectives on this important question of common interest throughout Asia.

Thematic session 1

Doctors Look at Child Development and Toys

This session featured two doctors from Japan and Taiwan: Dr. Yoichi Sakakihara on “Child Development and Toys” and Dr. Haug-Tsung Kuo on “Parent-Child Play and Child Development.” This was followed by a lively discussion inspired by the results of experiments and clinical practice.

Teaching, Learning and Playing in Kindergarten in Taiwan and Japan: A Comparative Study

Lee-Fong Wong

Can differences in kindergarten education between Taiwan and Japan be attributed to different views on how to raise children? With scenes of kindergartens and lively children in Taiwan and Japan, this presentation was based on a comparative analysis.





Day 2

Thematic session 2 Toys and Child Development

Mr. Chihiro Tada gave an exciting workshop-style presentation on “Children’s Toys and Play,” using actual toys. Dr. Shih-Tsung Chang spoke on “From Toy to Learning Tool; From Education to Edu-tainment - New Directions in Play Research and Application” and explained how in a society with a declining birthrate, “play” and “toys” become socially significant from the perspective of “daily prevention over rehabilitation.” He defined “learning tool” as an object or media combining both educational effect and freedom of play.

Using Multimode Interactive Design in Education Ping-Lin Fan

Dr. Fan proposed possibilities for the application of digital technology in early childhood education.



Public Symposium on Child-rearing

At the public symposium for parents held in the afternoon, presenters on both days summarized their lectures and answered questions. Questions from the nearly 100 parents in attendance reflected concerns of the digital age: how to discipline children, how to choose toys that are good for children, and whether an iPad or computer game was better for children than traditional toys, etc.

The short two-day conference was an invaluable experience, bringing together specialists from Japan, mainland China, and Taiwan, child-care professionals, teachers, and students, and parents. We learned that, as neighboring countries in East Asia, we face social issues that are both similar and different.

Once again, we realized the important role of the Program in stimulating and helping us to see the issues clearly and find ways to resolve them based on discussions with specialists, teachers, and parents.

