

# **The Mother Child Home Education Programme, MOCEP**

## **Background:**

The Mother Child Education Programme, MOCEP, initially began in Turkey over 20 years ago. It grew out of a research study carried out at Bogazi University that was designed to improve the pre-school education for poor families throughout Turkey. It has successfully been operating in Turkey and is now under the auspices of the Ministry of Education in Turkey (Bekman, 1988; Kagitcibasi, 1996).

In 1999, the MOCEP programme was copyrighted for use in the Kingdom of Bahrain under the founding directorship of Dr. Julie Hadeed. The programme was translated and adapted for application to the local Arab Bahraini population and began under the auspices of a local child organization in Bahrain. Private, public and personal contributions, support and donations made it possible to begin implementation in 2001. MOCEP, at present is being run under the auspices of the Bahrain Red Crescent Society (Hadeed, 2001).

## **Introduction: MOCEP programme:**

MOCEP is a research-based, home-intervention programme that operates over a six-month period and consists of two components:

- (1) A series of 32 weekly discussions and lectures (including planned parenthood discussions) which are given to the mothers in their regional areas
- (2) A series of 32 weeks of cognitive training materials/activities which are given to the mothers so they can teach their own children pre-readiness skills at home before they enter primary school

The two components of the programme provide educational child-rearing training for the mothers and also the necessary skills for children to perform well once they enter primary school (Hadeed, 2004). In addition, positive attitude training gives the necessary empowerment skills for mothers and their families to sustain the benefits of the programme.

## **MOCEP's aims:**

There is an estimated 24% of the local Bahraini population that live in persistent poverty with nearly 70% of the pre-school population unable to receive early childhood education or intervention (Hadeed, 2004). So far, MOCEP has served only a fraction of the families in need of educational intervention in Bahrain. Every year we are unable to serve all the families that register for the programme because of the lack of funding and support.

The continued, more immediate aims for MOCEP are:

- To increase the implementation of the programme and serve all families who annually request the programme in Bahrain
- To support via training of teachers for other countries in the surrounding region that want to implement the programme in Arabic
- To continue our longitudinal, experimental research investigation which tracks the families that have participated in the programme
- To seek annual sponsorship to achieve the above aims

The Arabic version of MOCEP is now serving Moroccan immigrants in Sweden and has recently been adapted in Jordan. Other countries in the Gulf Cooperation Council have also expressed a serious need for the programme. In 2005 MOCEP trained 10 women from Al Qaseem region in Saudi Arabia who are now implementing the programme.

### **MOCEP Research Results:**

There is an extensive longitudinally-designed research evaluation of the MOCEP programme which has been outlined in Dr. Hadeed's recent book:

***Poverty Begins at Home, The Mother Child Home Education Programme, MOCEP-Bahrain***, by Peter Lang Publishing, USA. The book is available from [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk).

The effects of the MOCEP programme on children's development and family relations drawn from measurements taken before the programme began and then at the end of programme on several child and family abilities and skills, showed significant benefits for the children and the families served.

### **Research Results of MOCEP on children's development:**

- MOCEP children had significantly higher verbal, reasoning and spatial ability measures (IQ measures)
- MOCEP children had significantly higher scores on self-concept measures. In other words they perceived themselves to be more competent, cognitively and socially, than the children who did not receive the programme.
- MOCEP children had fewer *external* behavioural problems when compared with the children in the control group. Children who received the programme were significantly less aggressive and disruptive.
- MOCEP children showed less over-dependency and conflict with relationships as a result of the intervention when compared to families that did not receive intervention.

### **Research Results of MOCEP on Mother's Child Rearing Attitudes and Behaviour:**

The research results of the MOCEP programme on the parent, family and home influences on child development were impressive. The research investigation wanted to know *how and to what degree* were parent child-rearing beliefs and child-disciplining strategies having an effect on the children's development in

their homes. Again, the results from the intervention of the parent measures showed very impressive results on families and their home environments. Some of the results were:

- Mothers were more attentive and made better, educated choices regarding child-rearing strategies with their children.
- Mothers use less harsh (authoritarian) parenting strategies with their children.
- Mothers were calmer and more supportive of their children's needs.
- Mothers of the intervention families provided significantly more stimulation for learning (materials, games, books, outings, etc); warmer, more affectionate relationships; and less physical punishment at home when compared with the homes in the control group

In sum, the research findings clearly provide the evidence that the MOCEP programme works effectively to raise child developmental skills and abilities before entry into primary school and it, furthermore, promotes positive changes in parenting skills and home environments for early learning.

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