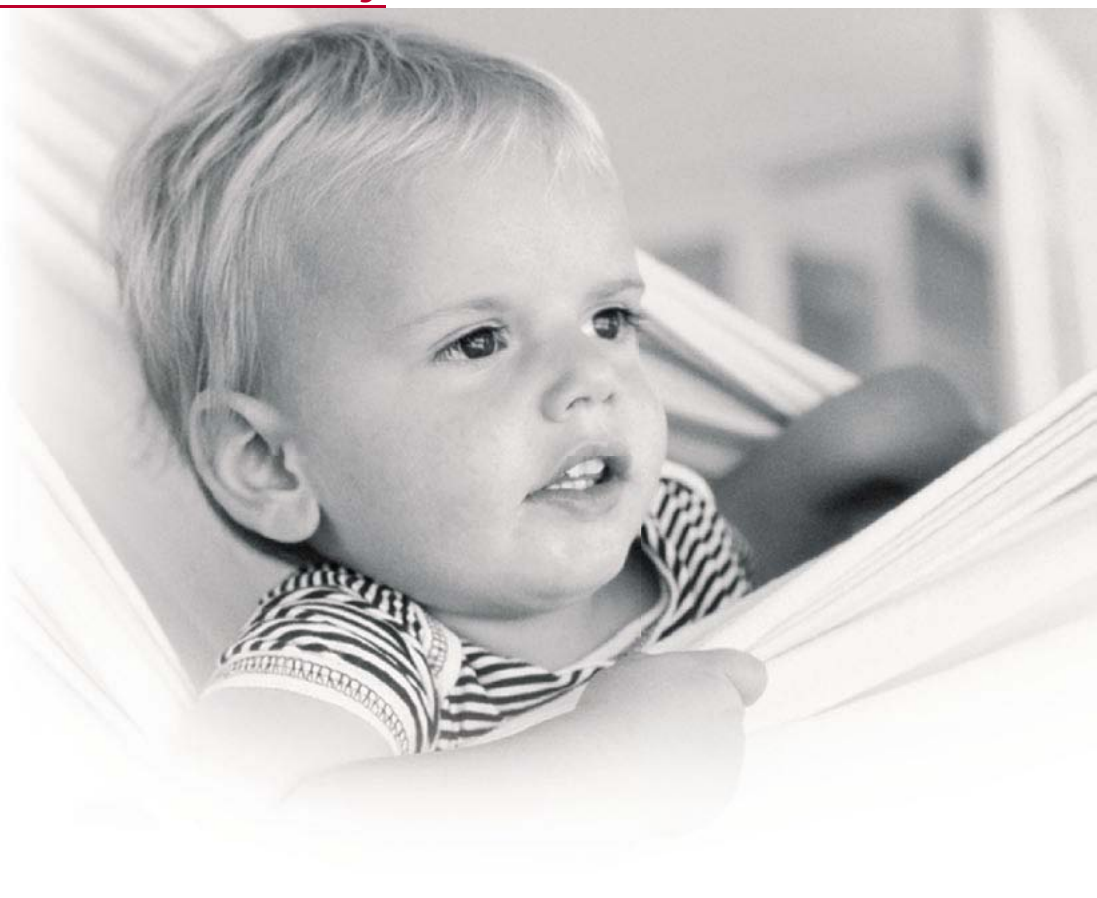


Germany



Care Work with Children

Oberstufenzentrum Elbe-Elster



Lifelong Learning Programme

Education and Culture DG

This Handbook for Students has been produced within Leonardo da Vinci -programme as a pilot project "Learning Materials for Social and Health Care Students' Foreign Placements / ETM II" (FI-06-B-P-PP-160 704) during 2006–2008. This publication has been funded by the European Commission. The Commission accepts no responsibility for the contents of the publication.

Content

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Why Do Children Learn?
- 1.2 Children's Rights and Social Policy in the EU
- 1.3 Some Information about Brandenburg
- 1.4 Children in Brandenburg – Some Facts
- 1.5 An Overview on Content

3

4

4

5

6

6

2. A Visit to Nursery School

7

3. The Aims of Educational Care Work

- 3.1 Children up to Their Entry into School
- 3.2 Legislation

10

10

11

4. Childcare Policy and Practice

- 4.1 Childcare in Brandenburg
- 4.2 Fundamentals of Educational and Upbringing Work
- 4.3 General Family Policy Goals
- 4.4 Providers of Services
- 4.5 Structure of Childcare Services
- 4.6 Benefits for Families

13

13

14

15

16

17

19

5. The Professional Childcare Worker

- 5.1 Occupational Profiles
- 5.2 Activity Descriptions (Specially Selected Facilities)

22

22

23

6. Developments in Childcare

6.1 The Past

6.2 The Presence

6.3 Future Plans

27

27

28

28

7. Education and Childcare Training

7.1 Curriculum for State-registered Teacher's Course

30

31

Bibliography

34

1. Introduction

Dear student

◆ *Welcome to Brandenburg. We are very pleased that you are doing your practical study period here, and hope it proves to be a productive and pleasant experience for you.*

You are here in Brandenburg, one of the sixteen states of the Federal Republic of Germany. Brandenburg is situated in the eastern part of Germany with borders to Poland and the Czech Republic. The FRG in its present area has been coming up in 1991 after the reunification of the former Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic. Brandenburg was part of the GDR.

The purpose of this handbook is to give you an overall view of the development of the healthcare and social welfare services for children and their families in Brandenburg.

This handbook gives an overview of childcare and family assistance. It shows the possibilities offered to families with children in the area of social welfare. It also gives an overview of educationalists' tasks that relate to childcare.

A lot of information is packed into this handbook. You will get the most out of it by using it as both a reference and as a guidebook. Please read the table of contents carefully in order to find the material relevant to different situations that may arise.

We believe you will find this book a useful resource in becoming familiar with the Brandenburg social and healthcare system.

We wish you all the best for your time in Brandenburg. – learn and enjoy!

The following text was written with a view to explaining the importance of being aware of the influence which moulds a child's development. These influences come from parents and family, childcare workers and teachers.

1.1 Why Do Children Learn?

- ◆ Children learn because their desires, ideas, goals and hobbies are followed up
- ◆ Children learn because it's exciting
- ◆ Children learn because they can relax
- ◆ Children learn because they are without fear and are uninhibited
- ◆ Children learn because success drives them onwards
- ◆ Children learn if they feel that they are held in esteem
- ◆ Children learn when grown-ups radiate patience and calm

1.2 Children's Rights and Social Policy in the EU

◆ The European Economic Community (EEC) came into being with the signing of the Treaty of Rome in 1957. Following its formation a series of targets was set to establish some common policies. The European Community initially only comprised 6 member states but this grew to 10 by 1981 and in 1995 this increased to 15 with the joining of Austria, Sweden and Finland. After November 1993, following the Treaty of Maastricht, the European Community changed its name to the European Union.

The Community Charter of the Fundamental Social Rights of Workers (European Commission 1990) explicitly recognizes the need to link equality, economic and social policies through the promotion of full participation in working life. The Charter suggests that 'measures should be developed enabling men and women to reconcile their occupational and family responsibilities.'

A wide range of measures were recommended which include:

- ◆ Services providing childcare to be increased
- ◆ Better leave arrangements for employed parents
- ◆ Greater flexibility in the environment, structure and organization of work or workplace
- ◆ Encouraging the increased participation of men in the care of children

In 1991 all of the member states of the EU agreed on a statement of policy covering the provision of:

- ◆ Services for children
- ◆ Leave arrangement for parents
- ◆ A more responsive work environment which takes into account the needs of parents
- ◆ Acknowledgement of parenting as a shared responsibility between man and woman

The EU set up the Childcare Network to look into the need for improvement in the level and quality of childcare services through Europe. The daily issues identified were:

- ◆ The service for children under 3 years of age and school age (5 years of age) children
- ◆ The problems experienced in rural areas and the poor access across the services
- ◆ The needs of ethnic groups
- ◆ The difference between education and care
- ◆ The poor pay and conditions of childcare workers
- ◆ The assistance that parents need in balancing work and family circumstances

The Network also highlighted the variation in the levels of childcare services and provision between the member states, together with the expansion of privately funded services. Although the range of services on offer is very broad in that it encompasses a variety of terms and approaches, to combat social disadvantage or exclusion the EU has the aim of presenting a greater ‘corporate’ identity of what is offered to the young, i.e. better integration.

On November 20 1989, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted. The Convention contains over 54 separate articles, but these can be broadly summarized under three headings. Children have the right to:

- ◆ Protection from ill-treatment and harm
- ◆ Participation in decisions affecting them
- ◆ Provision of services to meet their needs

The Government of Germany has signed this Convention only in respect of its legal obligations concerning other nationalities.

1.3 Some Information about Brandenburg

◆ Life in Brandenburg is organized according to the Basic Constitutional Law of the Federal Republic of Germany. Additionally, Brandenburg has its own Constitution. Here the position of families in society as well as the rights and duties of parents and children are defined. For example, children and youths have to be prevented from physical and psychological neglecting and abuse. Furthermore it is guaranteed that they can claim their right for upbringing, education and care in a day care center. The constitution defines the basic principles of upbringing and education.

The school system is under the observance of the State of Brandenburg. It is obligatory to attend school.

The State of Brandenburg is liable to ensure the right of social security in cases of illness, accident, invalidity, disability and need of care. Social security is supposed to enable a life in dignity. People in need, who cannot lead an autonomous life in dignity have the right to claim social benefits

The general principle is that all people are equal and entitled to the same services regardless of economic and social status.

1.4 Children in Brandenburg – Some Facts

◆ There are around 113,000 children under six years of age (2005)

Since only 2.8% of the population of Brandenburg is not of German origin, the number of non-German origin children is not very high

20.3% of children in Brandenburg receive social support since their parents are unemployed, they are thus living on the edge of poverty (Glossary)

Living at or below the poverty level is currently leading to problems, particularly in the fields of education, health and development of the children.

1.5 An Overview of the Content

Chapter 1: A general overview of the rights of children and the responsibility of government. It also includes a very brief introduction to providers of childcare in Germany.

Chapter 2: Focuses on one type of provision offered in Germany, namely a typical day in a nursery school.

Chapter 3: Expands further on the type of childcare available to parents as well as focusing more fully on the curriculum.

Chapter 4: Is an insight into welfare policy and the benefits available to families.

Chapter 5: Contains a selection of occupational profiles and job descriptions, as well as offering guidelines for best practice within the childcare field.

Chapter 6: Is a brief historical view of childcare development in Brandenburg and plans for the future.

Chapter 7: Explains the educational system in Brandenburg, as well as focusing on the type of training a student must undertake to become a childcare worker.

2. A Visit to a Nursery School

◆ The Brandenburg Law of Pre-School and Nursery Education defines Day Care Centres as family supporting pedagogical institutions in which children with and without a disability are supported, educated and cared for according to their age group.

Nursery schools perform autonomous care, education, upbringing and support tasks in line with age and development. The educational work of nursery schools supports the natural curiosity of the child, makes demands on the own educational process, addresses and expands the child's issues.

It supplements and supports upbringing in the family and supplies the child with experiences that go beyond the family circle

Children up to the age of three are attended on in crèches, from three years till school entrance in kindergartens and school children in day-nurseries. Sometimes children of all age groups are in the same institution.

The following describes a day in a nursery school.

Since many nursery schools work with differing concepts, this can only be seen as an example. There may be differences, for example, in opening times, how working with the children is set up or the composition of groups.

In some nursery schools children are split into groups according to age (same ages) or there are groups of mixed ages. This is laid down in the nursery school concept.

Most nursery schools open at 6 am. Closing time is between 4.30 and 6 p.m. The children are looked after for the whole day.

A head teacher is responsible for all problems in the facility. The numbers of teachers depends on what is stipulated in the nursery school regulations (see 3.2).

Most teachers work part-time, generally 30 hours a week. This means that the children are looked after by more than one teacher during the day.

Some nursery schools have a kitchen that prepares a midday meal for the children; others have meals delivered from a central kitchen.

Food for breakfast, which is taken together, and for an afternoon coffee break, is mostly brought from home by the children.

The group rooms are designed for use by children, having various play areas and also quiet zones.

A day in a nursery school could be as follows:

6 am – The nursery school opens

The children can play freely. There is generally a teacher present who takes charge of the children.

8 – 8.30 am – The children have breakfast in their groups, together with the teacher.

The children help, depending on their capabilities, to lay the table, clear away, etc.

The teacher helps the children if it is necessary.

The teacher takes care for a well laying and afterwards cleaning of the tables.

8.30 – 9 am – The children go to the washroom (wash themselves, brush teeth) or to the toilet.

The teacher helps the children if it is necessary.

9 – 10 am – Activities

The children carry out an activity in accordance with the weekly plan. This can be handicrafts, painting, singing, sports, directed nature observation, etc.

It is the educator's task to support and assist the children in developing their concentration and independent learning

according to their individual skills and abilities. The children are, for example, supposed to explore their surroundings actively.

10 – 11 am – Free playing or going for a walk

Depending on the weather, the children play in a room or in the playground, or go together for a walk, for example in the park.

Playing outdoors is of great value, since this best satisfies the children's urge to be active.

During outdoor activities the educator is responsible for the children's safety. She must take care that the children stick to traffic rules and avoid accidents on the playground.

11 am – Washing and midday meal, preparation for midday sleep

The children are again involved in the activities connected with the midday meal.

They then go to the washroom and to the toilet and then prepare for a midday sleep.

Children that only stay in the nursery school until midday are collected at this point.

Again the educator assists and supports the children. She helps preparing the

beds for midday sleep. Depending on the childrens' age she assists them getting dressed and undressed.

Noon – 1.45 p.m. – Midday sleep

One of the educators team is reading a story to the children and stays with them in the sleeping room. The others are having a break themselves.

2 – 2.30 p.m. – Coffee is taken together.

2.30 p.m. on – The children are collected.

There are no fixed times for collecting the children. The children can play freely until they are collected.

4 p.m. on – The children are again brought together (as in the morning) and looked after by a teacher.

The students on placement support the educators, assist the children and carry out activities with the children independently.

3. The Aims of Educational Care Work

3.1 Children up until Their Entry into School

◆ Children in Brandenburg are required to attend school if they are over seven years old by September 30. Children who become seven between July 2 and December 31 can be accepted into the school upon application by the parents. In the State of Brandenburg, particularly gifted children can enroll in school even earlier.

Before children enter the school, they must undergo both a medical examination and an acceptance talk. This talk is used to determine whether the child is sufficiently developed for his or her age or requires special support, or whether school enrolment must be postponed for a year to help him stabilize skills that are not so well developed. This applies especially to problems in speech development, motor functions or working through simple mental tasks.

The medical examination is carried out by a doctor, the acceptance talk by a specially trained and skilled teacher of the primary school the child is going to attend. The results are summed up and, if necessary,

the parents are informed about offers for special assistance and help.

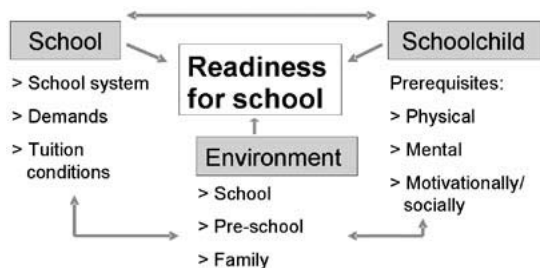
It is not obligatory that a child attends a kindergarten or pre-school to be prepared for school entrance.

To be able to recognize whether the child is capable of attending elementary school, the following criteria must be met:

- ◆ Willingness and ability to take on tasks
- ◆ Ability to differentiate between work and play
- ◆ Fitting into the school class as a workgroup
- ◆ A certain determined and persevering way of working
- ◆ Independence from continual family care
- ◆ A suitable degree of intellectual development

The interaction of school, pupil and environment can be represented by the following illustration:

Interactivity model of readiness for primary school (Nickel, 1990):



The responsibility of the nursery school particularly increases in the last year before enrolling in elementary school. They are authorized, and it is their duty, to run speech development courses if necessary. They shall help to improve the use of the mother tongue. Deficiencies can be seen in the maturity tests. It is the duty of communal facilities to provide this also for children who have no connection with a nursery school.

Many elementary schools cooperate intensively with nursery schools and let nursery schoolchildren visit the school at regular intervals to receive an impression of the school's daily routine.

For children who cannot meet the demands of an elementary school, there are special support schools for those with learning difficulties. They are taught according to their capabilities in smaller classes with specially trained teachers and according to special plans. The care of children in these schools is also ensured by teaching staff in the afternoon, after school closes.

More and more children with learning difficulties are, however, staying at elementary school and are being supported there with special individually drawn up plans and, currently, individual tuition.

For children and youth who are mentally disabled and therefore are

unable to attend these support schools for children with learning difficulties, there is a support school for children with mental disabilities. Here the children learn, as far as is practical, to take care of everyday things themselves in order to be able to handle part of everyday life independently.

These schools are specialised on all kinds of mental disabilities. The children are supported individually according to the degree of their disability.

3.2 Legislation

◆ The fundamental principle for work in nursery schools is the Nursery School Law.

This contains, for example, a statement as to how many children can be assigned to one teacher. The number of children to be cared for in one group is related to the age.

For childcare facilities which offer to look after children for more than six hours a day (generally the case), this means

- ◆ One teacher for each seven children up to the end of their third year of life
- ◆ One teacher for each 13 children from the end of their third year of life up to enrolling in elementary school
- ◆ 0.8 of a teacher for each 15 children of elementary school age (after-school care club)

In addition, this law specifies the responsibilities of nursery schools. These are:

1. Supporting development of the child through all-inclusive educational, upbringing, care and support programs.
2. Imparting possibilities of gaining experiences and the ability to deal with and recognize those issues that result from needs arising from their social environment
3. Promotion of the child's own sense of responsibility and capabilities in a group, including participation in facility decisions depending on age and state of development
4. Development of the physical, mental and speech capabilities of the child, as well as support of the psychic, musical and creative power, regularly checking the child's development status and imparting basic knowledge about the child's own body
5. Take into account differing living circumstances, cultural and ideological backgrounds as well as needs of the boys and girls arising from age and state of development; for example, the language and cultural needs of Sorbian and Wendian children (Sorbs and Wends being Slavic peoples whose ancestral enclaves are located in the East of Germany)
6. Equal, social and democratic cooperation in partnership, as well as the ability of children with and without disabilities to live together
7. Ensuring of a healthy diet and adequate attention
8. Imparting how to deal with the environment and providing a learning location set up according to ecological perspectives.

4. Childcare Policy and Practice

4.1 Childcare in Brandenburg

◆ In Germany, the number of places available in childcare nurseries or play schools varies from federal state to federal state. Brandenburg has a very high number of places compared to other federal states. Almost half of all children under three years of age can obtain a place in a day nursery school. There is even legislation that parents can use as a basis for bringing a legal action: Every child who is three years of age or older has the right to a full-time place in a facility for children. This right is further maintained when enrolling in school: Four hours of afternoon care in the first four classes are legally guaranteed in Brandenburg.

In spite of this, the number of places in municipal childcare facilities is often insufficient.

There are therefore nursery schools run by independent support organizations such as welfare associations operating on the sharing principle, societies or parent initiative groups.

In general, the local authorities are responsible for the facilities. This applies to both the necessary equipment and the personnel.

Mandatory legal principles that only apply to the Federal State of Brandenburg are enacted by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport. The most important law in this regard is the Nursery School Law. This includes the definition of rights and the participatory rights of parents, the aims of childcare facilities and the laying down of how many children may be looked after by one teacher.

The childcare facilities have their own profiles that promote, for example, the closeness of the child to Nature, lay particular stress on healthy upbringing or whet the child's appetite for discovery in the field of science.

Parents can choose the childcare facility which they want their child to attend.

The children are generally looked after by trained teachers. These may have a vocational college or even a university education. Several childcare facilities are integrated play schools. In these, children with physical or mental disabilities are integrated into the group and receive additional care and assistance.

County Youth Welfare Offices are responsible for youth assistance services. These include:

- ◆ **Promotion of youth work**
- ◆ **Promotion of upbringing within the family**

- ◆ **Promotion of children in day schools and day care facilities.**

The services also include help in upbringing supplied upon request by the Youth Welfare Office to the legal custodians of the child, should this form of aid be suitable and necessary.

The Youth Welfare Office gives advice on bringing up children, on adoption, on child support costs disputes and on care and contact questions.

4.2 Fundamentals of Educational and Upbringing Work

Nursery School Law of Brandenburg (current 2007 issue)

This law has already been referred to several times. It sets out the right to a place in the nursery school, the tasks, the facilities and equipment and everything required to administer these facilities.

Fundamentals of elementary education

These principles create a framework for educational work in nursery schools. The principles of elementary education to determine the nature of the different fields of education which have the principles of elementary education as

their basis. They create a framework for the teaching concept of the facility, give orientation to planning, and an assessment raster for observation and reflection.

The fields of education are:

- ◆ Body, movement and health
Balancing – jumping – climbing – relaxing
- ◆ Language, communication and the written word
Speaking – writing – reading
- ◆ Music
Listening – playing – singing – dancing
- ◆ Picturing and creating
100 languages (ways) of understanding the world
- ◆ Mathematics and science
Being curious – exploring – examining
- ◆ Life in society
The self and others – the two sides of one coin

The teaching program in nursery school facilities is heavily influenced by the principle of all-inclusive encouragement. Holistic learning is the centerpiece. The various areas of education must therefore not be seen in isolation, but in relation to one another.

Working on projects is especially suitable for holistic learning. It is recommended that learning content is taken directly from the lives of the children, is linked to their interests, encourages learning driven by the

children themselves, leaves open enough space for their own creativity, encourages teamwork and allows the children to explore and try things out freely.

Within this framework, every childcare facility can work out its own concept and thus develop an own profile.

Code of Social Law (SGB) Book 8 (VIII) Child and Youth Welfare (last modified 2007)

This law, valid nationally, regulates all aspects of the upbringing of children and youths. It therefore contains statements on the responsibilities of parents, on aids to upbringing, on working with youth and cooperation with voluntary associations and institutions.

This law stipulates that in any rule concerning children or youth, the wellbeing of the child is of prime importance and must be taken into account in all decisions affecting the child.

There are special child and youth facilities which provide the upbringing help specified by this law.

These are, for example, child and youth residential hostels, but youth leisure facilities and sports clubs also contribute.

4.3 General Family Policy Goals

◆ The family is the place where children grow up, are brought up and prepared to deal with life.

For this reason the role of the family is of particular importance. For each child, parents receive monthly financial assistance (State child allowance) amounting to 154 Euro (taxfree).

Families who have problems with their children can, if they so desire, receive support in upbringing. This support is free of charge. Family helpers, additional support for the children, temporary acceptance into foster families and other aids are offered to the parents.

The parents must bring their children to a pediatrician at regular intervals to allow observation of development and offer help if there are delays in development. Specially trained pediatric psychologists are also available for advice and treatment. Therefore the parents don't have to pay.

Parents have the possibility to influence the care of the child in the childcare facility. They can participate in, and influence, major decisions of the facility.

Even in this case the well-being of the child and a good relationship between parents and teachers has top priority.

Children who have been newly accepted into a childcare facility have the right to a familiarization period. The child should slowly get used to the strange environment and build up contact to the carers without having the feeling of having been left behind by the parents. This possibility is very often used by parents. The appearance simultaneously have the possibility of seeking whether the daily routine corresponds to what they expect and whether they can set their minds at rest about giving their child into the custody of the teachers.

Since the birth rate for all of Germany is following, the government does everything it can to motivate families to have more children.

Currently, the fall in the birth rate has been stopped.

4.4 Providers of Services

◆ In Brandenburg there are many ways of ensuring good care and preschool education before the child enrolls in elementary school.

There are therefore even infant groups and playgroups for babies, in which they come into contact with other children, mostly of the same age, at the very early stage.

Care in a day nursery is also possible at an early stage, but many childcare facilities offer this possibility only after the child is one year old.

There are a large number of providers of services who offer childcare facilities.

Several of these are listed here:

Community facilities

Day nurseries, nursery schools and after-school care clubs are often run by the municipality. Trained teachers are present throughout the day for the children.

Facilities run by the Evangelical or Catholic Church

These are generally nursery schools. There are however also schools under the sponsorship of the Church. In these facilities, the children are brought up according to the values of the religion in question.

Facilities run by the Free Central Welfare Associations

To name just a few examples: At the German Red Cross has responsibility for a nursery school, or the Workers' Welfare Association runs a residential youth hostel.

Facilities run by parent initiatives or voluntary associations

There are nursery schools and elementary schools which have been founded by these initiatives and associations which operate in a healthy

fashion due to immense commitment, particularly of the parents. There are also trained teachers who take care of the children.

Private daily care

Child minders who look after several children in their own homes.

The opening times of childcare facilities are determined by those running them. In all cases, the parents must pay for the childcare. The amount is set by those responsible for the facility and depends, amongst other things, on the parents' income and the number of brothers and sisters.

During the vacation period, elementary schoolchildren can participate in the school's after-school club or in sports club vacation trips, spend their time in leisure facilities or take part in events organized by the Youth Welfare Office.

In addition, there are youth clubs or other leisure facilities in which children and youths can spend time together in the afternoons, evenings or at the weekends.

Youth clubs, particularly in the villages, are run by the young people themselves. A social worker employed by the town council looks after several of these facilities. The young people determine the rules for their club themselves, make sure these are respected and organize club life. Informal meetings to chat, play with

each other or listen to music are just as much a part of club life as are sports activities. In general, the necessary premises are made available by the town councils.

In the cities, there are currently youth leisure facilities in which children and young people can follow various leisure interests such as dancing, sewing, cooking, playing billiards, computer courses, etc. Participation in these events is generally free. Care and supervision is mostly carried out by teaching staff.

For special events like going to an indoor swimming-pool, to the cinema or going on trips the parents have to pay extra money.

4.5 Structure of Childcare Services

◆ In Germany, the care and checkups for children that relate to physical and mental development are well structured.

Only the experienced pediatrician can tell whether the development of a child is progressing normally. For this reason, children in Germany have a right to have a total of nine examinations, by a time shortly after their sixth birthday, for illnesses that could endanger normal physical and mental development.

Illnesses or development problems can thus be recognized and treated at an early stage.

The parents do not need to bear the costs of these preventative examinations. If they keep to the schedules, the costs are carried by the health insurances.

Of these nine examinations, five are within the first six months of life and the others at the end of the first or the second year of life, in the fourth year and after completion of the sixth year of life before the child enters school. As well as the examinations concerning the state of health of the child, special screenings on the general state of development are also carried out.

These include, for example checking of hearing ability and inborn reflexes in the fourth to sixth week of life, ability to move and react in the third to fourth month, bodily control and deliberate grabbing of objects in the sixth month, speech development and general behavior at the end of the first year of life.

The following examinations concentrate on mental and speech development. The ninth examination is important since it primarily concerns posture and orthopedic aspects as well as mental, psychic and social development. The pediatrician assesses the speaking ability and social behavior as well as the intelligence of the child. If the child shows slowness in development,

the pediatrician explains therapeutic support measures to the parents. He also states when the child can be expected to commence elementary school.

There is one more preventative examination for young people in the age of 12 to 15 years. Of this there is, amongst other things, concerned with the recognition of eating disorders, problems of sexuality, contraception, drugs and smoking.

The children are generally examined by a pediatrician.

For children with noticeable problems, special child psychologists and speech therapists are available. The parents don't have to pay any money for the therapy. Everything is paid by the health insurance.

Children of pre-school age requiring special support have available specially trained teachers who specifically work with these children to compensate for deficits. This can be carried out at home or in the childcare facility by means of individual care. Therefore there are written individual plans for each child.

Pre-school children with physical or mental disabilities can be looked after together with adequately developed children in normal childcare facilities. Special educational and support programs are available for these children like for example physiotherapy,

ergotherapy or logopedists. Thus the children have the possibility to spend their day with adequately developed children and get all necessary therapeutical measures.

During the school days, school psychologists are on hand to advise parents.

4.6 Benefits for Families

◆ Marriage and the family are protected in their basic rights in Article 6 of the German Federal Republic constitution. According to Paragraph 1, care and upbringing are the natural right of parents and their prime duty. But children also have rights: Their human dignity must be protected and free development of the personality must be ensured. If parents are not in a position to provide this, they receive State support in their task of upbringing.

To make use of child and youth assistance does not imply any limitation of their parental upbringing rights. Children, young people and parents do not first receive help when the upbringing in the family is in grave danger, but when the first signs of deficits in the upbringing become apparent. The law makes support by means of competent professional advice available. The right of custody is only withdrawn when the child's welfare is endangered and the parents are not

prepared to, or are unable to, avert this danger.

Both the State and free youth and welfare organizations work in partnership with the institutions offering help. Those receiving help have a right of choice regarding the support organization providing such help.

Services supporting upbringing in the family are particularly:

- ◆ Advice on general questions of upbringing
- ◆ Family leisure and recreation services, particularly for people who receive State support or social assistance
- ◆ Advice for parents in questions of partnership, separation and divorce
- ◆ Advice and support of single-parent families when caring for others, particularly concerning maintenance or maintenance claims for the child or young person
- ◆ Mothers or fathers who are caring for a child under six should be looked after in a communal form of living if they need this kind of care and upbringing support This is mostly the case if they are minors, still at school, and receiving no support from relatives.
- ◆ If the person who is caring for them drops out due to health or job reasons etc, the children are looked after by professionals in the parents' home or in a childcare institute.
- ◆ From the third year of life of the child, earlier if necessary, and up until he or she moves to the fifth class, it

is possible to have the child cared for in a day school Day schools are child nurseries, after-school play clubs, playgroups, all-day schools or others.

When it cannot be guaranteed that an upbringing commensurate with the welfare of the child or young person can be given, an application can be made to the Youth Welfare Office for help in upbringing. The need for help in the upbringing is mostly present when upbringing deficits in the form of absences from school, committing of offences etc, are observed.

Assistance is only provided when this is suitable and necessary for the development of the child or young person. The persons providing the assistance are specially trained , usually having an academic education.

The following types of assistance are available:

- ◆ **Upbringing advice:** For explaining and coping with individual and family-related problems, advice is given by a qualified professional (including addiction advisers) In free individual advice sessions, the professional determines the reasons for the misbehavior or upbringing difficulties and proposes specific therapeutic measures
- ◆ **Social group work:** For older children and young people, in practice often for young people who

have committed crimes, upbringing courses, social training courses, experience of teaching, etc, are offered. Group experiences help to overcome development difficulties and behavioral problems

- ◆ **For upbringing help or for young people who have committed an offence, a carer is assigned:** Over a period of six to 12 months, and for around two to eight hours a week depending on authorization, a professional carer attempts to overcome the development problems, taking the social environment into account
- ◆ **Social education assistance for families:** This is the most intensive form of ambulatory help For a period of between one and three years, and for about six to 20 hours a week, a family carer supports the parents or single parent in carrying out upbringing tasks, personal hygiene, health care, nutrition, dealing with authorities, running a household, contact with the school and handling other problems. In the same way as for other forms of help with upbringing, this form of assistance is also a help to self-help
- ◆ **Upbringing in a daily group** (partly as an inpatient): This form of help is supplied to children between the ages of six and 14 The upbringing takes place after school and up until the evening hours in small groups

Social learning helps to cope with the development problems and ensure that the family remains together

- ◆ **Full-time care:** This form of help can be short- or long-term. The children are cared for and brought up in foster families until the situation in the family they came from changes or improves
- ◆ **Care home and other forms of home:** The children and young people are encouraged in their development by suitable means in an inpatient institute. The aim is to return them to the family
- ◆ **Rehabilitation assistance** for psychically disabled children from the Youth Welfare Office and for severely psychically or mentally disabled children from the Social Welfare Office. Rehabilitation assistance can be, for example, early intervention programs, assistance with training at school for a suitable occupation, training and work in workshops for disabled persons and many other measures that allow disabled people to participate in the community's life.

If the children stay in a **care home**, an attended form living or a foster family the parents must contribute to the costs. The amount depends on the parents' income.

Single parents who don't get alimony from the other parent receive a

maintenance allowance for a maximum of six years, up until the child's 12th birthday from the Youth Welfare Office

The maintenance allowance for children under six years is 125 Euro and from 6 – 12 years 168 Euro. The money has to be paid back by the parent who is obliged to pay alimony.

Social support If the parents are unemployed and can't find a job, they get unemployment benefit. It depends on their age how long they get it, mostly for one year.

After that they get a benefit that is called "Hartz IV". An example can show you how much it is. There is a family with two children (9 years and 15 years) and both parents can't find a job. So they get per month:

- 347 € for the father
- 311 € for the mother
- 207 € for the 9-year-old child
- 278 € for the 15-year-old child

So they have together 1143 € per month.

Sometimes they can get some more benefit for the rent of the flat.

Brandenburg started a model 'Healthy Children Network' project in May 2006. Both voluntary and trained godparents attend to the needs of young families. They visit at intervals of several weeks, having announced this beforehand. They indirectly give advice and support without this appearing to be educational.

5. The Professional Childcare Worker

5.1 Occupational Profiles

◆ **Carers** who work in nursery schools, after-school clubs or day nurseries are generally trained teachers.

Nursery Nurses

They work in differing childcare facilities or after-school clubs or belonging to schools. They have a vocational college or university education. They may also work in homes for children and young people. They look after the children and help them in performing daily tasks (washing, eating, etc, depending on the age of the child) teach them and help them do their homework in the after-school club.

Social workers

They work with young people, particularly during their leisure hours. They are, for example, contact persons for members of youth clubs and other leisure time facilities.

They offer help and support and assist young people in coping with their problems.

Many schools have a school social worker. They are responsible for the school attendees, are their daily contact persons and particularly advise on problems with the school or at home.

In doing so, close cooperation with the teachers is necessary.

Social workers have a vocational college or university education.

Remedial teachers

Remedial teachers are trained as educationalists or as healthcare support workers. After they have worked in their profession for at least a year, a further two years of study at a vocational college enables them to qualify as a remedial teacher. Remedial teachers offer help in education, monitoring, assistance, advising and integration to people whose conditions of life have kept them back, for example, people with disabilities, behavioral and developmental problems. In the field of assistance to young and disabled persons, remedial teachers have the task of supporting children, young people, adults and old people with personal and social integration with regard to self-determination regarding their life.

Auxiliary teachers

These mostly work in special support schools for children and young people with mental disabilities and support the special needs teachers. They do not need a vocational college education.

Child minders

Child minding is not yet a recognized profession. Anyone can therefore be

a child minder. The Youth Welfare Office grants a care authorization. Both personal qualifications and special conditions are checked.

As preparation for the job of child minder, courses must be attended, concluding with a final discussion and a certificate. These courses are on the basics of development psychology, guidance on how to occupy children meaningfully, and also the legal framework of the activity.

5.2 Activity Descriptions (Specially Selected Facilities)

◆ The activities of the educator in the various fields of child and youth work can best be carried out by describing the various facilities for children and young people.

1. Rainbow' child and young persons' leisure center

Facility:

- ◆ The city is responsible for the facility.
- ◆ Children and young people pass their leisure time in this facility.
- ◆ Children and young people between the ages of six and 27 are looked after. The activities available to young people in their leisure hours include in-house activities such as table tennis, a kids club, fitness and working with computers.

Outside in the grounds there is a large meadow for games and football tournaments as well as a basketball and a volleyball court.

The tasks of the carer:

- ◆ Set an example for the children and young people
- ◆ Educate them such that they are prepared to take responsibility and organize themselves
- ◆ Specific social education assistance to allow them to cope with life and problems
- ◆ Support young people in finding out their own identity
- ◆ Give them help to self-help
- ◆ Offer development aids for children and young people and improve their quality of life
- ◆ Animate and empower young people to take their share of social responsibility
- ◆ Carry out their child and young person's work openly

Special activities:

During vacations, a holiday camp is available. In addition, special sports events are organized and there is an 'I can be strong' project.

Students on placement are like the educators contact persons for the children and youths. They control the rules of the institution and organise activities.

2. 'White Rose' Youth Help Association – residential home for young mothers with children

Facility:

- ◆ The Volkssolidarität Landesverband Brandenburg e. V. (People's State Association of Brandenburg) is responsible for the facility.
- ◆ The facility is open around the clock.
- ◆ There are three living zones, each inhabited by several young women and their children.
- ◆ As well as the sleeping quarters, there are several kitchens and baths, a living room, a child's room and a fitness room.
- ◆ Outside there is a terrace as well as a large garden with a playground.

The tasks of the teacher:

- ◆ Help the young mothers to come to terms with the needs of children
- ◆ Be a guide, a companion, a provider of help and an example
- ◆ Offer support and help on a one-to-one basis
- ◆ Prepare young people for an independent life with their children
- ◆ Work in a forward-looking fashion

Special activities:

A group hour is held every week. A joint meal is prepared, or the children play. Everybody living in the home can participate.

Students on placement support the educators. They help the young

mothers to cope with the daily routine tasks- They assist at meals and organise activities with the youths.

3. 'Discovery Land' ('Entdeckerland) day care facility

Facility:

- ◆ The BIK e. V. is responsible for the facility.
- ◆ The facility is open Monday to Friday between 6 a.m. and 5 p.m.
- ◆ Children of pre-school age are looked after.
- ◆ There are both groups of the same age and groups of differing ages.
- ◆ As well as group rooms there are theme rooms (e.g. building room, painting room, experimenting room, fairytale room) which can be used by the children on their own.

The tasks of the teacher:

- ◆ To be a companion for the children
- ◆ To feel themselves as a contact person, as someone who can be trusted, and as an adviser
- ◆ To support the children in their activities in the theme rooms
- ◆ To give them help and support for anything they need in daily life
- ◆ To prepare the older children for elementary school

Special activities:

- ◆ Music tuition in the Music School
- ◆ Early encouragement for children with development problems
- ◆ Computers can be used

The students on placement support the educators and carry out activities with the children independently.

4. After-school play club of the Finsterwalde general support school

Facility:

- ◆ The County of Elbe-Elster is responsible for the facility.
- ◆ The facility forms part of the support schools for children with learning disabilities.
- ◆ Children are looked after from the first class to the sixth class. If beneficial to the welfare and development of the child, schoolchildren from the seventh and eighth classes can also be looked after.
- ◆ There are play club rooms (currently doubling as club room and classroom), a quiet room, a kitchen and a handicrafts room.
- ◆ Outside there is a playground, and in the immediate vicinity a skating park and a zoo.

The tasks of the teacher:

- ◆ Care of the children during supervised and free play
- ◆ Occupying the children's time (with, for example, handicrafts, cooking, talking to each other)
- ◆ Noting needs and addressing these if necessary
- ◆ Working with the parents

Special activities:

- ◆ Work groups, e.g. gardening, dancing,

choir, English, swimming

- ◆ Cooking and baking with the children
- ◆ Preparing and enjoying parties together

The students on placement help the children with their homework. They give support whenever needed and organise leisure activities for the pupils.

5. Hort Kinderland (Child's World play club)

Facility:

- ◆ The city of Doberlug-Kirchhain is responsible for the facility.
- ◆ Schoolchildren from the first to the sixth class of an elementary school are looked after here both before and after classes.
- ◆ The play club is open Monday to Friday between 6 and 8 a.m. and 9.30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- ◆ The rooms are not in the school grounds.
- ◆ There are various function rooms (play, building, handicrafts, movement, computer and puppet rooms). In addition, there is a creative area, a kitchen and a homework room.
- ◆ Outside there is a playground and a 'construction site' for children, with squared timber, boundary posts, sticks, twigs, etc.
- ◆ The children are looked after according to the open play club principle, i.e. in the afternoons, the groups (same age or different ages) are abolished.

The tasks of the teacher:

- ◆ Be a companion, supporting observer and organizer
- ◆ Follow what is happening in the group from the periphery, giving specific impulses and incitements
- ◆ Only get involved when help is necessary or requested

Special activities:

Interest groups such as experimenting, sports games, cooking and baking, monthly high points such as a dragon party, Christmas party, carnival, etc.

The students on placement help the children with their homework. Together they are involved in preparing highlights.

6. Developments in Childcare

6.1 The Past

◆ In earlier times (around 1900) children normally grew up at home in large families. Several generations lived under one roof, and particularly in country regions, families usually had several children. The children were brought up at home and nursery schools were not usual.

Brandenburg lies in the eastern part of Germany and until reunification, was part of the German Democratic Republic (GDR). In the GDR, most women worked. Due to this, almost all children went to the day nursery, then later to the nursery school and the after-school play club.

Every child had a right to a place in a nursery school. Day nursery places (for children less than three years old) were not immediately available for every child. There were waiting periods, and one did not always get a place in the facility that one wanted.

A day in a nursery school was clearly structured. Every day, the children had an 'instruction unit' which included, for example, handicrafts, singing, gymnastics or acquainting them with numbers and sets. The children were in this way optimally prepared for elementary school. There was a curriculum which

defined what each age group had to occupy itself with.

Due to the social system, political education in the nursery school was not forgotten.

The importance of social highpoints such as May Day or the Day of the Republic was taught to the children even in the nursery school.

Children who did not go to the nursery school visited a preparatory preliminary school before enrolling in the elementary school.

Normally, the children spent the whole day in the nursery school. Food for breakfast (some children already arrived by 6 a.m.) and for the afternoon meal was brought from home. The midday meal was cooked in the nursery school for all the children.

The children spent most of the time playing. The nursery schools were generally well equipped with toys and children's books. In addition there were playgrounds and sand boxes outside.

Sometimes the children went to the movies or visited theatrical performances.

A pediatrician visited regularly to observe the development of the children. A dentist also visited at regular intervals for checkups. Brushing of

teeth was, for example practiced with the children.

The responsibilities of the teachers also included organizing regular meetings with the parents. In these, they painted or did handicrafts, prepared parties or gave presentations on questions regarding upbringing.

The parents only had to pay for the child's meals.

In the western part of Germany it was, in contrast, normal for the mother to remain at home with the children and take care of their upbringing. Nursery schools were normally only open in the morning. The children went home for their midday meal. Some nursery schools opened again in the afternoon and the children could play there.

6.2 The Presence

◆ The German government strives to have children looked after in the family environment for as long as possible. Since January 2007, a new legal ruling exists, which guarantees all parents financial assistance for the first year of the child's life, and is based on their most recent earnings. The financial support is 67% of the last net income of the parent staying at home. The parents decide who is staying with the child. The maximum support is 1800 Euro, minimum is 300 Euro. The money is tax free and financed out of the state's

tax income. The financial support can be prolonged by 2 months if the parents change their roles in attending the child.

In Brandenburg, any parents desiring to do so can have a place in a childcare facility made available for their child. Parents can generally choose the childcare facility they want their child to attend.

Throughout Germany, attempts are being made to increase the number of day nursery places, to permit working mothers to return to work.

Parents who are seeking employment only have a limited period of care available for their children. Up until the end of the third year of life they have no right to a care place.

6.3 Future Plans

◆ It is noticeable that more and more children coming into the schools exhibit problems of varying kinds.

Currently, motor functions are not properly developed, the children have problems in the areas of movement, coordination and balance, and it is being recognized more that their speech development is not in accordance with their age.

Regions with a high degree of unemployment have in particular many

problems with the development of children.

An increase in the number of nursery schools is therefore being striven for, to guarantee the children a preschool education at a young age that is independent of their social origins.

The nursery schools make great efforts to appeal to the interests of the children by having special profiles, and imparting knowledge in a playful way. Some nursery schools deal especially with science, allowing the children to discover their environment by playing.

Other nursery schools educate the children to have a love of nature. The children are outdoors as much as possible and live out their urge to explore there.

Childcare facilities that have a special profile are very popular with parents, and the waiting time for a place in such a facility is currently very long.

As well as this extension of the childcare facilities network, the family has again been assigned special importance.

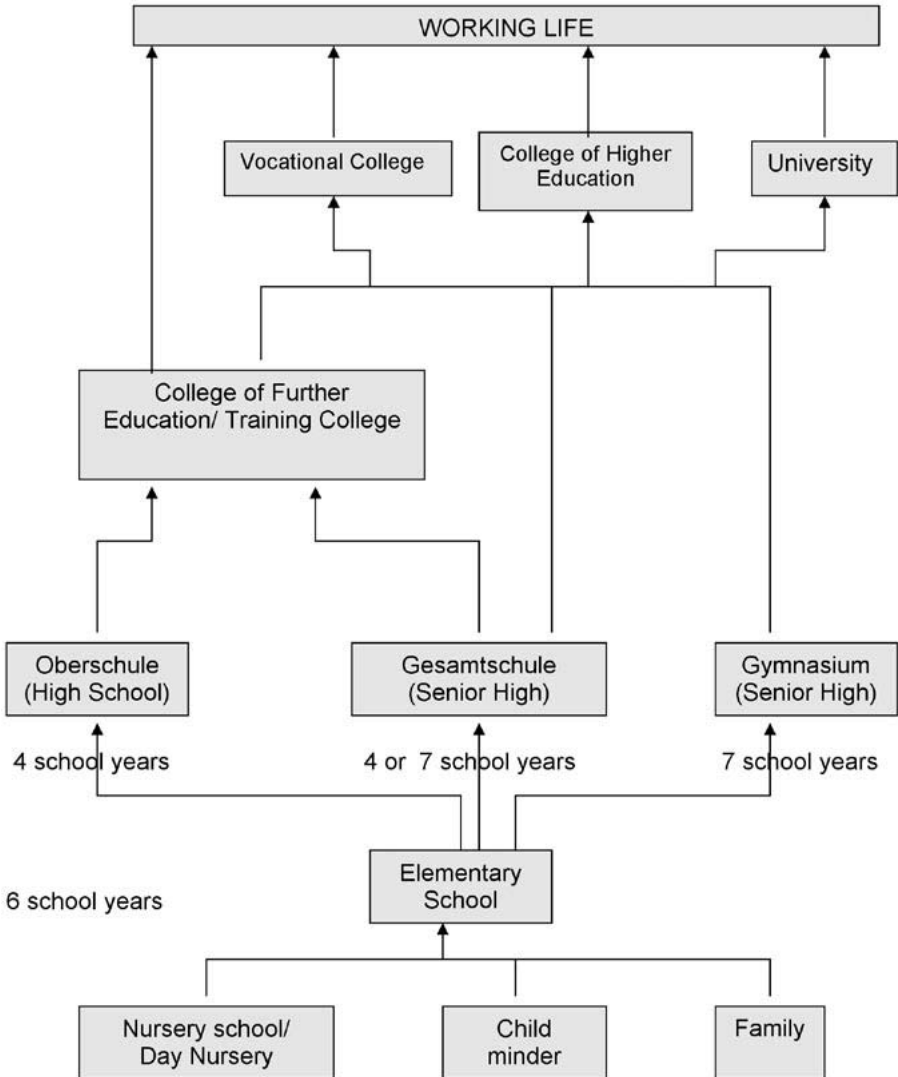
Financial support for mothers who stay at home with their child for the first year of its life has been greatly increased. The aim is also that the father can stay at home to look after the child.

It is also important for the future that a close-knit network of control

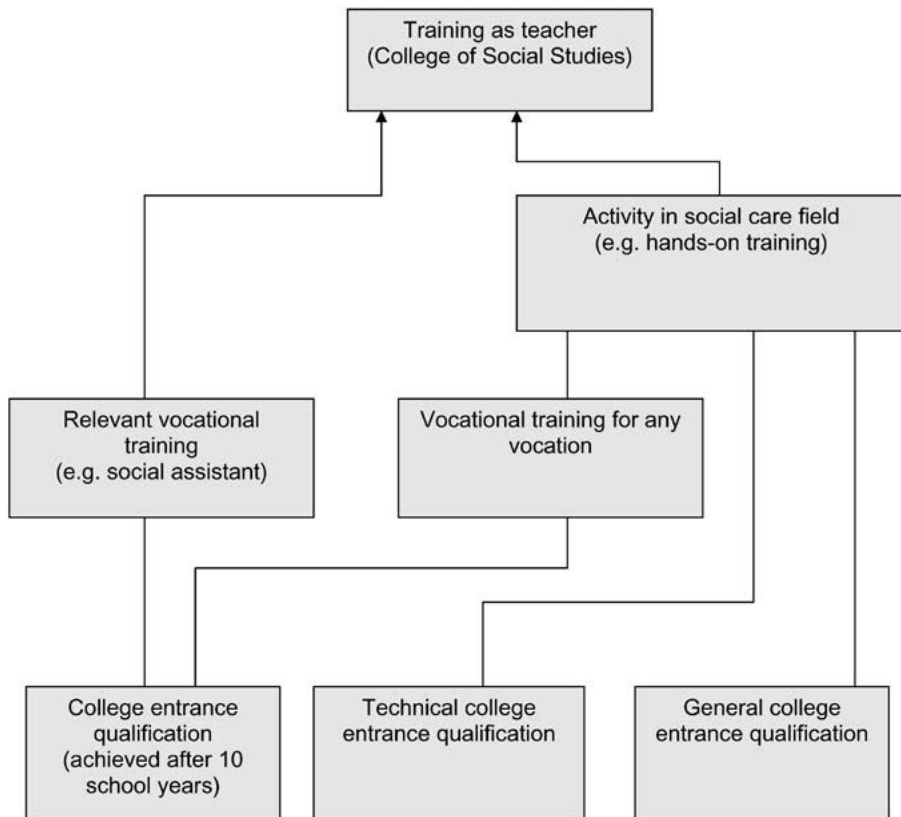
mechanisms (Youth Welfare Office, pediatricians, etc.) ensures that children who come from socially weak families have the same possibilities to develop as children from more affluent families.

7. Education and Childcare Training

◆ The following diagram gives an overview of the educational system in Brandenburg. The requirement to attend school full-time is 10 years in Brandenburg. This is followed by mandatory attendance of a vocational school.



The following overview shows the educational requirements necessary to commence training as a teacher.



7.1 Curriculum for State-registered Teacher’s Course

◆ State-registered teachers are engaged in all areas of childcare. They receive training at a vocational college, run under the auspices of the Ministry of Education of the State of Brandenburg.

The pre-requisite to being able to attend training to become a State-registered teacher is:

Either:

Possession of a vocational diploma or equivalent education and completion of a relevant occupational training course or completion of a non-relevant occupational training course and an activity related to this field of study

Or:

A technical college or general college entrance qualification and an activity related to this field of study

The curriculum for the teacher's course focuses on the following:

Cross-professional field

This is the general acquisition of knowledge in the subjects of German/Communication, English, information processing, biology and political education

Occupation-related learning field

This is the most comprehensive area of training and nine subjects are taught.

These subjects are:

1. **Gaining a professional identity and developing professional perspectives**
2. **Devising and building up relationships to children and young people and conducting group processes**
3. **Observing the behavior of children and young people and involving them in social education activities**
4. **Jointly setting up and structuring ambient environments for children and young people**
5. **Planning, carrying out and evaluating educational, upbringing and caring processes**
6. **Setting up musical-creative processes and using media for learning**
7. **Bringing up, educating and caring for children and young people in**

special living situations

8. Structuring social education work, setting up teamwork, cooperating with families

9. Creating educational concepts and ensuring quality development

The aim of this subject orientation is:

- ◆ The development of depictions of competence in the form of activities which the teacher must carry out in his or her profession
- ◆ The inclusion of learning situations into regional needs that can also take into account a specific profile of the school
- ◆ The attainment of professionalism

Optional studies

Participants have used the possibility of obtaining a technical college entrance qualification by taking an additional course in mathematics as well as in German/Communication.

Participation is voluntary and has no influence on graduation as a State-registered teacher.

The students obtain their practical experience in the course of practical instruction in social educational fields of activity such as:

- ◆ Daily childcare
- ◆ Help in upbringing
- ◆ Youth work/Youth social work
- ◆ Working with children and young people outside the children and young persons' assistance organizations

The practical phases may be held on a daily or weekly basis and take up around one-third of the total training.

The planning and organization of the training is the responsibility of the training school. The guidelines given to every school allow the achievement of the required competence through the use of internal school goals.

The primary goal of teacher training is the gaining of a comprehensive professional ability. This is split into professional, personnel, social, methodology and teaching abilities.

The training concludes after three years with a written and oral college examination providing proof of professional ability.

Bibliography

Zweites Gesetz zur Ausführung des Achten Buches des Sozialgesetzbuches - Kinder- und Jugendhilfe - Kindertagesstätten gesetz- KitaG (Second law pertaining to implementation of the Eighth Book of Social law. Child and Youth Care, Nursery School law)

In the version as announced on June 27, 2004 and most recently modified by Article 1 of the Statute of June 21, 2007.

Grundsätze elementarer Bildung in Einrichtungen der Kindertagesbetreuung im Land Brandenburg (Principles of Elementary Education in Childcare Facilities in the State of Brandenburg) – June 1, 2004 –

Sozialgesetzbuch (SGB) Achstes Buch (VIII) Kinder- und Jugendhilfe (Code of Social Law, Book 8, Child and Youth Care)
Status: Last modified in Article 2 Clause 23 G v. 19.2.2007 I 122
Verordnung über den Bildungsgang der Berufsfachschule Soziales (Vocational college social legislation) From May 20, 2004

Web Site Addresses

www.mbjs.brandenburg.de – Education, Youth

http://www.sozialgesetzbuch-bundessozialhilfegesetz.de/_buch/sgb_viii.htm

<http://www.goldader-bildung.de/leitbild.html>

<http://www.gesche.bremen.de/fastmedia/81/Kinderbetreuung.pdf>

<http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jugendamt>

<https://www.tu-chemnitz.de/phil/psych/professuren/entwpsy/lehre/SchulreifeSS072.doc>

<http://www.kinderaerzteimnetz.de/bvkj/contentkin/show.php3?id=222&nodeid=21>

Notes

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Notes

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Care Work with Children – Germany

Acknowledgements

This Handbook has been produced by Mrs. Elke Bölze, who offers grateful thanks to the following for their guidance, support, donation of appropriate materials and proof reading for accuracy of this package of information.

Mr. Lutz Anspach Head of the Social and Health Care Department –
Oberstufenzentrum Elbe-Elster

Mrs. Angelika Richter Lecturer in Child Care – Oberstufenzentrum Elbe-Elster

Mrs. Erika Boden Lecturer in Child Care – Oberstufenzentrum Elbe-Elster

Mr. Matti Remsu (co-ordination of the project)

Graphic Design Rhinoceros Ltd (layout)

All materials of the project are downloadable for free from partner colleges' websites:

www.vitaliscollege.nl

www.davinci.nl

www.ttk.ee

www.kbs-pflege.de

www.kellebeek.nl

www.hesote.edu.hel.fi/english

www.linkoping.se/birgitta

www.stevenson.ac.uk/eu-carework

www.oszee.de

www.dundeecollege.ac.uk/etm

Copyright is the property of all partnership colleges represented by Helsinki City College of Social and Health Care. Materials are free for downloading, printing, utilising and disseminating to any interested individuals and organisations. Altering of the materials is prohibited without permission from the partnership group represented by Helsinki City College of Social and Health Care, Education Department, City of Helsinki, Finland.