

Indigenous and International Inspirations:

Sharing De Cero A Siempre (From Zero to Forever)

Cultural responsiveness vs standardization:

Concerns about quality in ECEC have led to tensions around how to construct policies and practices which recognize cultural differences as opposed to those which hinder cultural responsiveness in local contexts and programs.

Being grounded in local knowledge:

Inter-epistemic research *and* policy development involve a dialogue among different cultures and ways of knowing and being in the world. The use of local ways to engage in research and discussion allows participants to “walk the words” and build knowledge together. This is central to parental and community involvement in the design of locally situated ECEC curriculum and public policy.

Introduction:

Dr. Luz Marina Hoyos Vivas is a community psychologist, early years educator, independent researcher and consultant who participated in cross-sectoral working groups to create the Colombian national public policy [De Cero a Siempre \(From Zero to Forever\)](#). Her [doctoral research](#) was undertaken with members of Embera-Chamí Indigenous Peoples at the Wasiruma reserve in the Valle del Cauca region.

In Colombia, the first national government ECEC programs were implemented in 1974 as more women joined the paid workforce. Early programs centred on supporting families in caring for their children and then expanded to focus more specifically on children’s development, including home-based ECEC (*community homes*) and institutional ECEC.

In her presentation, [available here](#), Hoyas Vivas shares her expertise on *De Cero A Siempre (From Zero to Forever)*, which is a comprehensive policy document that attends to Colombia’s ethnocultural, linguistic, geographical, and place-based diversity.

Overview of project:

De Cero A Siempre (From Zero to Forever) was designed with the intention of recognizing children and families as active co-constructors of programs within their specific local and cultural contexts, from a children’s rights-based perspective. The framework and its accompanying [strategic document](#) are grounded in a holistic conception of childhood and the recognition of children’s development as culturally situated. Furthermore, they acknowledge the need for articulated cross-sectoral services.

The development of this [policy framework](#) was intended to address tensions around the meaning of quality in ECEC. There is a pull between culturally responsive and culturally diverse practices, acknowledging traditional knowledges, and standardized practices that seek to measure performance and that point at better/improved outcomes.

An [evaluation](#) of the implementation of the [framework](#) indicated that in spite of the directive to integrate local, cultural knowledges, there are still cultural barriers which prevent Indigenous children and families from accessing national services.

Hoyos Vivas presents a specific example from a participatory study from a decolonized perspective with the Wasiruma community represented in Figure 1.

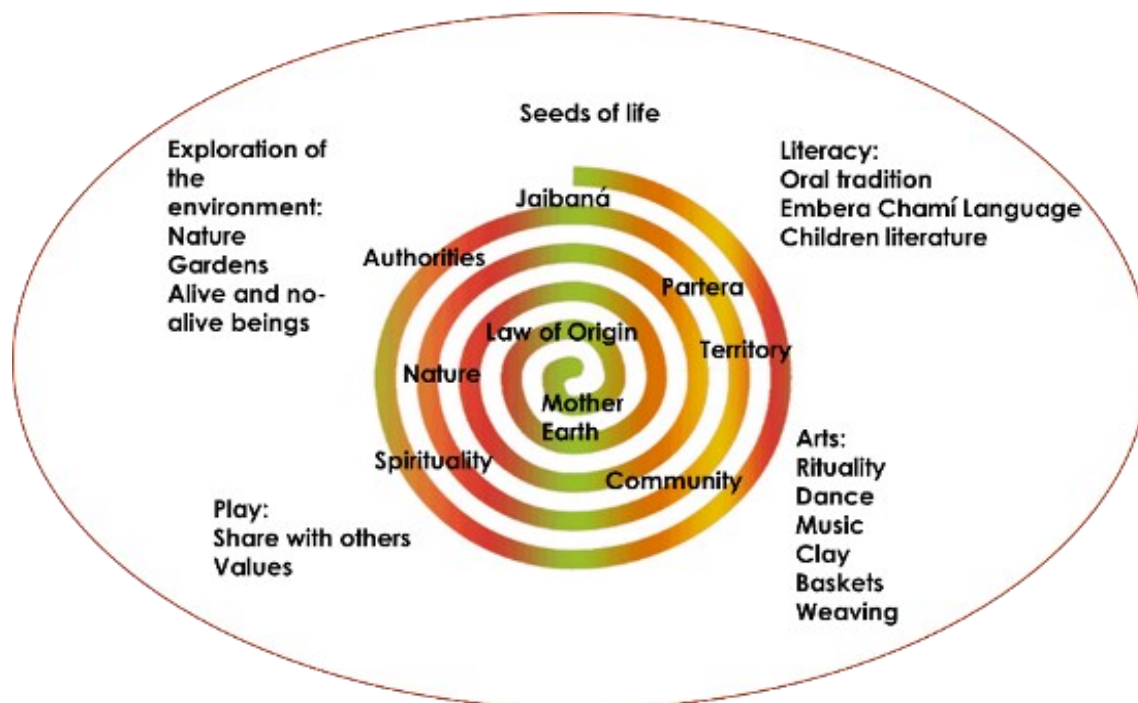


Figure 1. *Pedagogic approach to ECEC in Wasiruma*

According to the Embera-Chamí people, the lifespan is not divided into cycles, but is a continuum in community and family life. Both living and non-living beings guide people in their spiritual life which is transmitted through paintings, oral traditions, and *Mingas de Pensamiento* (traditional community discussions). Children are active participants in community life and their families prepare them to undertake valued activities. For example, children learn about the spirits of plants while planting seedlings.

Inspirations for Pan-Canadian ECEC systems:

Hoyos Vivas shares her advice for other countries seeking to construct culturally responsive programs and frameworks:

- The design of culturally responsive programs for young children requires the families' and communities' participation. In order to ensure meaningful participation, it is necessary to overcome widespread ideas of 'at-risk families' including beliefs that parents and families are not interested in their children's education.
- Educational programs should be grounded in local knowledge through the construction of new epistemological locations to produce knowledge, for example, using mural painting, oral traditions, and other non-traditional, local forms of expression. This knowledge should be elicited in varied ways in accordance with community ways of being and knowing.

[Access all references](#)

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SKETCHING NARRATIVES OF MOVEMENT TOWARDS COMPREHENSIVE AND COMPETENT EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS ACROSS CANADA.

[View presentation](#)

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