



Espoo strategy includes

- inhabitants participate actively in the planning of the services
- client feedback system
- children and young people have opportunity of a well-balanced development
- segregation decrease

Emphasis of today:

Children's and young people's welfare get better by supporting responsibility of parenthood in every field

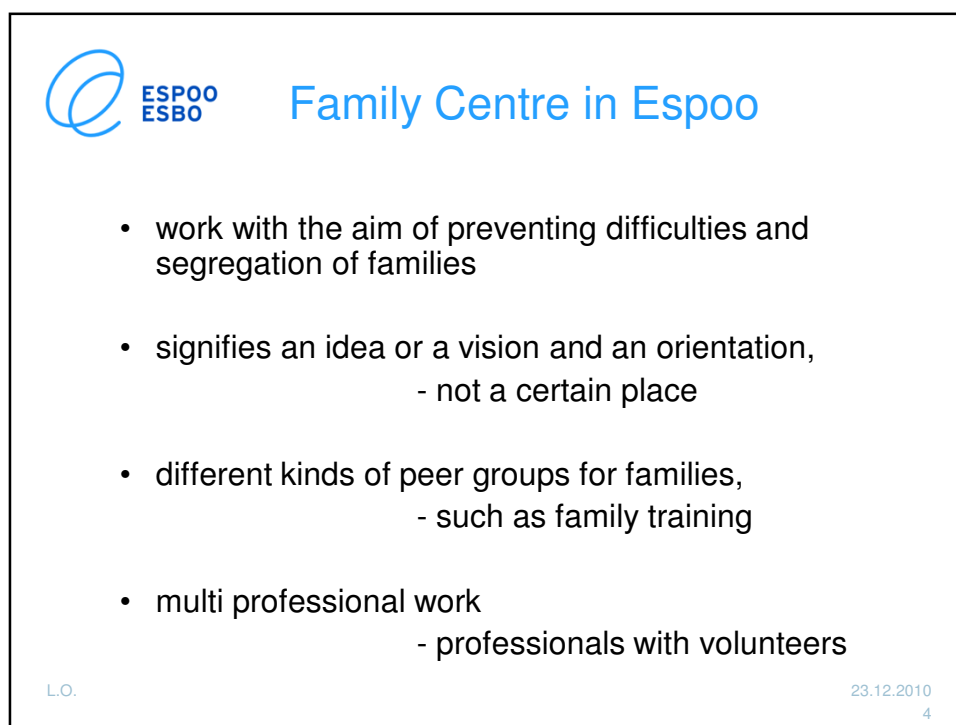
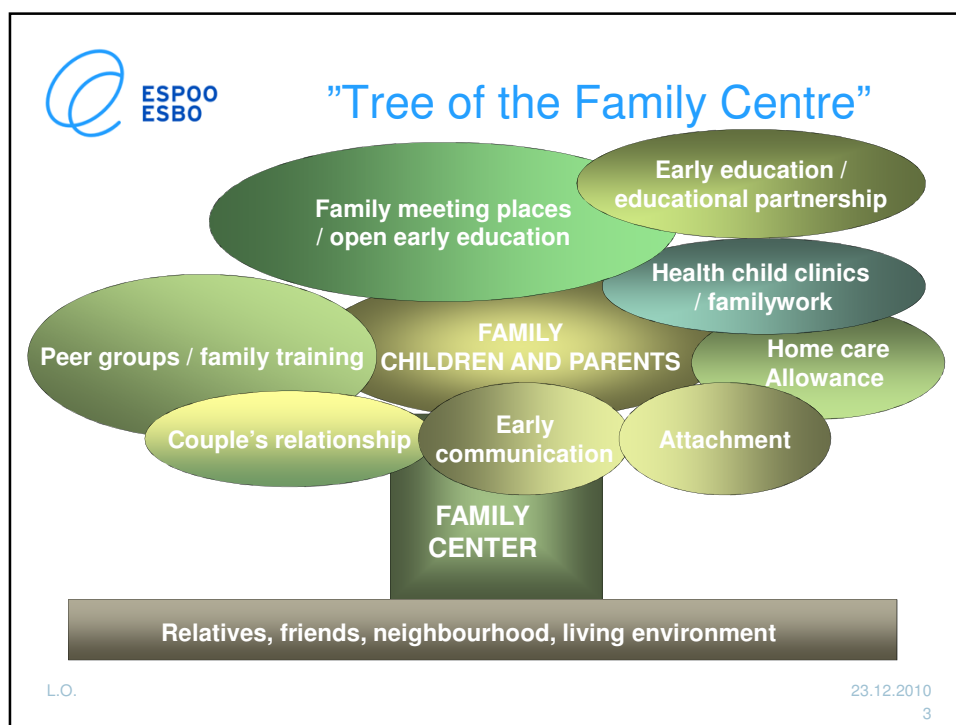
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Open day care – Children's House Family meeting places

- for this purpose, we have the open early educational services, which provide a free arena for families to be together in their own way
- there are approximately 20 open day-care places in Espoo: open day-care places and residential parks
- these are part of our regional services

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- in these places, professionals are working with families to help them in many different ways, when necessary
- entire families can go there freely every working day, usually from 8 am to 4 pm, and occasionally also later
- families can also meet there in the evenings and weekends on their own but still in a controlled fashion

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For families who take care of their children at home

Espoo pays the so-called “municipal allowance” of Child Home Care Allowance (KELA) to families with children under 3 years of age, if families don't use the day care services

There are also groups for children, where they can come to play with other children without their parents. Those Children's Clubs are subject to a small fee and places need to be reserved in advance.

During the two hours a day, the child spends in the club, parents can run errands or engage in their hobbies, thus making the everyday life of the family easier and parents can also take better care of their child at home.

First and second graders (7–9-year-olds) are also welcome to these residential parks after school days and they can get a snack too.

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Family Calendar

In open day care places both parents, usually mothers, and children can meet peers and discuss everything and anything they want. There is plenty to do, like playing, singing, talking, socialising or just enjoying parenthood

There are many kinds of planned programmes, too
The calendar includes the regional municipal services and also all the programmes planned with families, including the programmes of the Mannerheim League for Child Welfare (MLL), the Church and other voluntary organisations.

The calendar is planned in cooperation by all these parties twice a year in order to avoid offering same kind of programme by several parties. It is available in the Internet, www.espoo.fi and families can easily find the programme of every open day-care centre or residential park

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Open early educational services have been very popular, however, mothers tend to return to work quite soon, when the child is about one year old

- of course, this is not the case for everybody

There is usually a day-care place in the neighbourhood or in the same building

- so open day care and the Children's Clubs are like a bridge to the normal day care

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Multi professional Family training intended for families who are expecting their first baby

- the training was prepared in cooperation with the staff of the Social and Health Services, with the Finnish Educational and Cultural Services and with the voluntary sector, e.g., the Church, the Mannerheim League for Child Welfare (MLL) and the Family Federation
- the family meetings are organised by a multi-professional team, which includes psychologists, nursery school teachers of the open day care and child clinic nurses
- family Evening Meetings: In the open day-care places and residential parks, there are also two meetings a year in the evening for families with children under school age so that working fathers can also participate in the family evening meetings

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- at the beginning of September 2010 we had to cut down the family training meetings (from 5+5 to 4+2 times)
Now families meet together four times before pregnancy and group sizes are bigger
- the earlier part of the therapy programme included in the family training is now held in the open day care in the mornings.
These themed meetings are also very popular now. The meetings are mainly intended for families who are expecting their first child, but all families, who happen to be there at the time, are very welcome to listen to the presentation given by a therapist or child psychologist

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Fathers in focus

- in these family training groups, we focus on fathers
- the trainings are held in the evenings after working days
- the training groups include sometimes separate groups for mothers and fathers. Fathers have male group coaches
- as a coach: also volunteers, “real-life” fathers, employees of the Church and the third sector.


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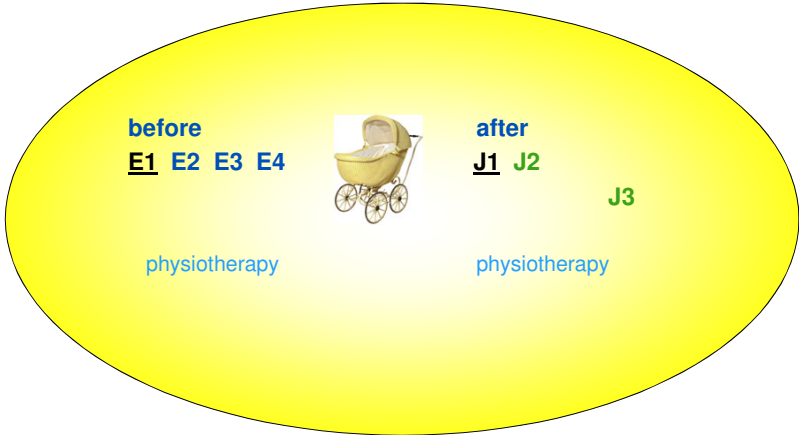
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 **Family training (2003-2010)**



before
E1 E2 E3 E4
physiotherapy

after
J1 J2
J3
physiotherapy

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- the family trainings are held in open day-care places or residential parks

- family training - like a bridge to the open day care and peer groups

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The role of companies

- the family training programme includes also the relationship counselling services provided by the Church and the Family Federation (Väestöliitto)
- we have also had weekend programmes with the theme of empowering a couple's relationship, "With will and skill" by the Family Federation
- staff courses provided by the Diak polytechnic: methods for coaching family groups so that it empowers families to help themselves and members of the family and to participate on their own to the peer groups without guidance. Those courses includes for example programmes of The group builders and The Group leader's ABC
- the multicultural family training with Kotipuu -project of the Family Federation

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The same orientation in early education, pre-primary education, school and afternoon activities

- it works with the Finnish Educational and Cultural Services (Kaste) for the same purpose and goals but targets families with day-care and school-aged children
- educational partnership
- to increase parent's role and involvement in the child's development surroundings in child health clinics, early education, pre-primary education, school and afternoon activities

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New plans

- The objectives of the Social and Health Services in Espoo:
To get houses for the Family Centre, where families could get help and support but also meet other families freely when they wanted or needed to.
- To get places where professionals provide services meeting the needs of families. These places could provide family guidance, services of social workers, psychologists and consultative workers, family cafes etc. The four centres being planned will be ready in 2014 at the earliest.
- Online services: transfer of the Social and Health Services' system to the Internet, where inhabitants can find help to their problems on their own

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