

*Simon Chapple*

**From conception to early childhood education: The “under three package” in a life cycle context in OECD countries**

This paper surveys the different institutional approaches that OECD countries take to child development and child well-being, covering the very earliest part of the life cycle. It commences from the conception of the child and considers the various country approaches up until to the introduction of the child to some form of early childhood education, or the compulsory schooling system.

The paper outlines the major dimensions of how the systems work in terms of governmental interventions. It also presents, insofar as relevant data is available, the related evolution of various risk factors and outcomes for children over the earliest part of the life cycle.

Particular attention is paid to disadvantage and risk in terms of identifying both universal aspects of the system which may protect against the risks of perpetuating inter-generational disadvantage and specific programmes which are directed at particular vectors through which inter-generational disadvantage may emerge.

The structure is based on three categorical early life cycle stages – prenatal, birth, and post-natal up to (very roughly) about three years of age. Systemic dimensions are compared across countries by the three broad periods in the life cycle.

*Simon Chapple*

*Child wellbeing project, DELSA, OECD*

e-mail: [Simon.CHAPPLE@oecd.org](mailto:Simon.CHAPPLE@oecd.org)