Early Childhood Education in Five Nordic Countries
Perspectives on the Transition from Preschool to School

This book published in 2002 describes early childhood education and preschool-to-school transition practices in five Nordic countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden. Authors examine the impact of history, politics, philosophy and tradition upon contemporary child welfare and education, revealing a great deal about Nordic culture, values and themes, such as egalitarianism, cooperation, and requirements for "a good childhood life."

Contributing authors are all respected scholars and child advocates with vast research and teaching experience in their home countries, as well as considerable experience in cross-cultural study and collaboration.

The Nordic transition story is, at once, as big as the five countries represented in the book and as small as a single child marching off to "real school" for the first time in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, or elsewhere in the modern world.

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Early childhood education (ECE) provision is becoming a growing priority, and has received increased policy attention, in many countries during the past years. Equitable access to quality early childhood education is increasingly viewed by policy makers as a way of strengthening the foundations of lifelong learning for all children and supporting the educational and social needs of families. While the contribution of ECE towards broader social, economic and education goals is being recognised (OECD 2009b: 9), the sector remains under-developed in a number of countries (gaps in provision and inadequate quality in services), due in part to a lack of investments, as well as the diversity of bodies and actors involved in its organisation and.