Professional Issues in Work with Babies and Toddlers
Edited by Pamela Oberhuemer, Liz Brooker, Rod Parker-Rees

Early childhood provision for babies and toddlers is in a critical phase. While governments are pushing for fast-paced expansion, mainly to support the return of mothers to the labour market, early childhood experts are deeply concerned about the quality of provision on offer for children up to age three. Research has consistently demonstrated that well-qualified educators are a crucial component towards ensuring a climate of sensitivity and responsiveness to individual children – and thus a central ingredient of high quality provision. However, national policy choices regarding required professional education/training and required resources for supporting the well-being and learning opportunities of very young children are highly variable.

The chapters in this book approach the topic of professional work with very young children in diverse ways, employing varying theoretical frameworks, research foci and research methodologies. They illustrate starkly divergent policy contexts, in this case predominantly European, with research located in Belgium, France, Finland, Italy, Sweden and the UK, but also in South Africa and the USA.

This book will be of interest to those conducting research into provision for infants and toddlers, both at the micro-level of relationships and settings and at the macro-level of policy paradigms. Potential readers also include practitioners and prospective managers and leaders of early childhood centres, as well as those offering initial and postgraduate early years teacher education and continuing professional development courses.

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