

EDUARDO DE CAMPOS QUEIROZ

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Brian A. GALLAGHER

Eduardo, Juliette was tying early childhood development to education and even early education to middle years and beyond. In your view, in Latin America specifically but even beyond, what is the state of early childhood development and education right now? What do you see that is working and important for us to embrace? Even tie it to where it takes us in terms of workforce development, etc.

Eduardo de CAMPOS QUEIROZ

One thing, Brian, the states in Brazil and Latin America when we realised, we did a survey in Brazil, but I am pretty sure this is in Latin America, Africa and many of your countries, people in general do not have the knowledge that was just mentioned about the importance of early childhood development. People know intuitively that they have to take care of children, but they do not know the impact if they do not have an attachment, if they do not read with and for the children. This is a huge impact that we do not take care of these children, especially the vulnerable ones. We were talking about migration in the last panel. We are talking now about many children, many young people not working and not in school and scientists show that without is not a concrete basis, this child is going to leave school and is not going to have good jobs. This is pretty much happening in Brazil, Latin America in general, Africa and many other countries around the world. We have been able to do some good work in Latin America in the Foundation where I was working and also United Way in Brazil, where I am also a volunteer Board member, trying to build, sensitise, build capacity and mobilise public, private and social leaders in a way that Congress in Brazil, for example, passed a law in 2016 for early childhood development that was signed by the President. We are not just talking about early education between brackets, we are also talking about the development that happens in the family, in the community, which is really important. Normally, when we think about children and when people ask me what I do, I tell them that I work with early childhood development and they think I work in early education, childcare. I tell them no, it is much more than this, it is the educational system, but also trying to help and build policies for families in their homes and communities, like a home visiting programme, a centre-based programme that is inter-sectorial. Health, education and social development must work together to help the families, especially the vulnerable ones.

Brian A. GALLAGHER

How do you convince a business leader or a national politician that holding a baby on your lap, reading to it and affectionately touching this young child, matters to that politician or CEO? Why should they care?

Eduardo de CAMPOS QUEIROZ

In a forum like this we can mention a study of Heckman, who has a Nobel Prize in economics, from the University of Chicago. He has been studying early childhood development and showing that if you invest until three, four years old in a good quality early childhood programme, there is going to be less use of drugs, fewer school dropouts, salaries at 40 years old that are 36% higher. You talk with numbers. It is funny, when we started this panel a lot of people left because we were going to talk about people now, not numbers, but we can also talk about numbers. If we do not invest in that field, the country and the society are going to pay with migration, with dropouts, use of drugs and many other things.