

Istanbul Parenting Class

MULTICULTURAL AND EXPATRIATE
FAMILY SERVICES

WHO WE ARE

Graduated with a bachelor`s degree in Psychology from Boğaziçi University and State University of New York, Binghamton in 2002 and completed a master`s degree in Developmental Psychology at Koç University in 2006. During her master`s studies, conducted a research project in Germany with collaboration of Ruhr University, Bochum and wrote a thesis titled 'Parenting Practices and Pre-schoolers` Cognitive Skills in Turkish Immigrant and German Families'. After observational studies in USA and UK investigating early childhood and parenting programs, completed cultural adaptation of two evidence-based parent education curricula to Turkish setting designed by Centre on Infant Mental Health at University of Washington.

Founded Istanbul Parenting Class (IPC) in 2007 to deliver those programs to families. Her work at IPC pragmatically combines the knowledge on child development with a psychologically supportive approach and provides parents with a science-based counselling on various aspects of child-rearing. Has seen over 5.000 families in her practice at IPC since 2007 and published two books on parenting titled 'Hello Baby' and 'Mother`s Guide' in 2010 and 2012, respectively reaching over 30.000 parents. Has a column on Hürriyet newspaper where she publishes online articles on child development and parenting, regularly. Member of European Association for Developmental Psychology and International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development. Married, with a 8-year-old daughter Pera.



Sinem Olcay
Developmental Psychologist

AIMS OF IPC EXPATRIATE SERVICES

1. To provide educational and psychological support programs to young multicultural or expat families living abroad, based on the milestones of child development followed by National Curriculum of the host country and contexts that promote children's development of those expected skills.
2. While doing this, to benefit from IPC's 15-year-long experience on child development tracking and parent counselling, and the knowledge on establishing balance between child-rearing values of individualist vs. collectivist-oriented cultures.



AIMS OF IPC EXPATRIATE SERVICES (cont`d)

Therefore;

- To help children be successful in host country`s system of national education by supporting them to realize their full potential in intellectual, language, and socio-emotional development.
- To promote higher quality of life for the families by decreasing parenting stress.
- To help families benefit from the opportunities of host country at the highest level even at the first generation.



IMPORTANCE OF EARLY YEARS IN EUROPEAN AND ANGLOSAXON NATIONAL CURRICULA

In most of the European and Anglosaxon countries where evidence-based social science is used to make policies, systems of national education;

- Emphasizes the importance of child development in early years and implement special programs of early childhood education (i.e., Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in UK, Beleid Voor- en Vroegschoolse Educatie (VVE) in Netherlands)
- Claims that the quality of parent-child interactions at home and early childhood education at institutions are the primary factors to make a good start at life and to realize children`s developmental potential at the highest degree.



LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN NATIONAL CURRICULA OF EUROPEAN AND ANGLOSAXON COUNTRIES

Learning and development goals that are expected to be achieved when the child starts primary school and the ways that should be followed both at the school and home to achieve these goals are clearly declared and practiced within the national systems of education in these countries.

For example, In UK among total of 7 goals, 3 specific areas whose development intrinsically depends on the parent-child relationship in early years are declared to be the Prime Areas and these areas are the ones that IPC tracks and supports the development from the pregnancy onward.

1. Communication and Language

- Listening and attention
- Understanding
- Speaking

2. Physical Development

- Moving and handling
- Health and self-care

3. Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Self-confidence and Self-awareness
- Managing feelings and behaviour
- Building healthy relationships



There are also 4 more areas of development that are required as the precursors of application and strengthening of 3 prime areas.

4. **Literacy**

- Reading
- Writing

5. **Mathematics**

- Numbers
- Shape, space and measures

6. **Understanding the World**

- People and Communities
- The World
- Technology

7. **Expressive Arts and Design**

- Exploring and using media and materials
- Being imaginative



THE IMPORTANCE OF SUPPORT FOR PARENTS IN EUROPEAN AND ANGLOSAXON COUNTRIES

'**Good parenting** and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.' *



*As an example from UK, this statement takes place in the Department for Education`s official booklet of standards for early education. Because of its interrelations to child developmental outcomes, the role of `parenting` is emphasized within such documents. This also represents multicultural parents` probable need for support in various aspects of child rearing in order to adapt and raise happy and successful children within such systems.

IPC`S MISSION AND VISION

- IPC is a family counselling centre established in 2007 with an innovative approach to Psychological services that evidence-based child development and parent support programs of the world* were adapted to home culture (mostly high-educated, young Turkish families living in big cities as well as expat families of Istanbul), with the mission of ensuring children`s realization of their full potential in intellectual, language and socio-emotional development.
- IPC aims to help today`s multi-tasking, modern parents to find their own unique way to raise up happy and successful children through individual counselling services and programs focusing on age-related developmental needs of children.



*Keys to Caregiving and Promoting First Relationships designed by Centre on Infant Mental Health, University of Washington.

IPC`S MISSION AND VISION (cont`d)

- IPC`s advise for parents come from up-to-date scientific findings in the areas of Education, Child Rearing and Child Development and are based on thorough observation and evaluation of your child`s psychological and behavioural development.
- While producing parenting advise on the bases of children`s developmental needs, IPC primarily takes into consideration the advantages and disadvantages of individualist vs. collectivist child-rearing values practiced in the family.*



*Sinem Kademođlu, Master`s Thesis (2006): Parenting Practices and Pre-schoolers` Cognitive Skills in Turkish Immigrant and German Families

IPC`S SUPPORT PROGRAMS FOR MULTICULTURAL AND EXPATRIATE FAMILIES

1. **Developmental Evaluation and Follow-Up:**

Your child's development in cognitive, language, motor, social and emotional areas are evaluated and followed-up through 2 one-to-one sessions in every 6 months and 3 more online sessions during the year. One-to-one sessions involve of administration of child development tests and observation of parent-child interaction in free play setting. Results of the evaluation are explained and development-fostering advise for parents produced accordingly are given at the end of the session, while parents` own questions about the child and parenting processes are also answered. After evaluation sessions, a descriptive report about child's level of development and parenting strategies promoting development is sent to family through e-mail. Those families who attended this program can contact IPC freely for day-to-day developmental questions through phone calls and WhatsApp texting. Families are registered to Developmental Evaluation and Follow-Up Program on a yearly basis.



IPC`S SUPPORT PROGRAMS FOR MULTICULTURAL AND EXPATRIATE FAMILIES (cont`d)

2. Sleep-Training Program: This program is developed to teach parents the methodology of sleeping through the night by supporting self-soothing abilities in their babies. This methodology basically depends on 'controlled crying' combined with gradual extinction strategies which is a unique, effective and secure method of good night`s sleep in babies according to research of institutions like Harvard Medical School and Australian Department for Health. IPC`s sleep training program involves of a one-hour-long online session with parents in which sleep habits and patterns of the child are discussed and a plan to solve the sleep problem is put forward and, also 10 to 12 days of follow-up with the family through daily phone calls and/or WhatsApp texting. After sleep-training of the baby is completed, an e-mail is sent to family to explain how to sustain good day and night`s sleep in the following months and years. In cases family has questions regarding sleep in the following months, they can contact IPC freely.



3. **Topic-Specific Counselling Services:** IPC`s topic-specific counselling services include following stages and require 4 sessions with the family

- Parent interview
- Child assessment (Development inventories, developmental tests, time budget inventory, observation of parent-child interaction in free play settings)
- Provision of an intervention plan prepared according to child`s personal and developmental needs (This plan may be referring to different contexts influencing the child such as parent-child relationship, parental conflict, or peer interactions etc.)
- Follow-up for execution of the plan (Through phone calls and/or texting)
- Final assessment and reporting (By e-mail)

Topics of individual counselling services might be:

- Issues of parent-child bonding
- Mother`s transition to work
- Child`s transition to day care or starting school
- Concerns about language development and cognitive skills
- Social adjustment difficulty
- Problems in peer relations
- Sibling rivalry
- Toilet training
- Disciplining/limit setting
- Tantrums and other emotional difficulties
- Temperament based behavioural problems like hyperactivity or shyness
- Problems regarding technology use
- Separation problems caused by moving, travels or divorce



IPC`S SUPPORT PROGRAMS FOR MULTICULTURAL AND EXPATRIATE FAMILIES (cont`d)

4. **Single Session:** This is for consultation in any developmental topic needed for once.

Topics of single sessions might be:

- Questions regarding establishing an overall sleep routine for the baby
- Need for advise on development-fostering games and parent-child interaction quality
- How to deal with children`s daily behavioural problems like incomppliance
- Decision making for travel and holiday seasons on the bases of children`s developmental needs
- Typical peer problems at school
- And other topics presented in previous slide



IPC`S SUPPORT PROGRAMS FOR MULTICULTURAL AND EXPATRIATE FAMILIES (cont`d)

5. CAS (Cognitive Assessment System)

- ❖ CAS is a new generation, cognitive skills assessment test applicable for children at ages between 5 to 17. The reason why CAS is called as a new generation tool is for the origins of CAS come from research on Information Processing Models which became widely accepted on area of Cognitive Psychology since 2000's. CAS brings a neuropsychological perspective to cognitive/intelligence testing.
- ❖ CAS is originally created by researchers from Ohio University, USA. Validation and reliability studies of CAS as an internationally valid tool of intelligence testing are conducted later. Turkish version of CAS is available since 2018 thanks to work by a large team of researchers from Istanbul University which started in 2004.
- ❖ The main benefits of CAS are:
 - To put forward the educational needs of students in academic settings
 - To determine areas of cognitive functioning that the student is powerful and those areas that should be supported
 - Therefore, to help student to realize his/her full developmental potential at all areas of learning especially those required at school
- ❖ Metaphorically speaking, CAS is considered to be a brain tomography scan in which thorough information about cognitive functioning of student is obtained. That much of in depth knowledge about cognitive processes of the student is extremely helpful for all parties who play role on child's development like parents, teachers and counsellors.
- ❖ CAS yields scores on 12 different cognitive skills that are categorized under 4 main areas called Planning Scale, Attention Scale, Simultaneous Scale and Successive Scale. Some of the skills examined are visual and auditory memory, perceptive attention, organization of word sequences, verbal spatial relations, control of thoughts, emotions and behaviors. CAS provides information of cognitive functioning on a wide range of skills.

IPC`S SUPPORT PROGRAMS FOR MULTICULTURAL AND EXPATRIATE FAMILIES (cont`d)

5. CAS (Cognitive Assessment System) cont`d

- ❖ CAS administration takes approximately 1 to 1,5 hours depending on the student's performance. Time required for administration of CAS, preparations and need breaks are all together equal to 2 full sessions at İPC. CAS is administered by the tester on a desk and involves of stimulus books and booklets which mostly requires paper and pencil responses from the student.
- ❖ Thanks to CAS as one of the well-known, scientific and reliable cognitive assessment tools that is internationally accepted, İPC is now able to track child development beginning from infancy till college years. On the bases of CAS results, we are able to produce clear, comprehensive and to-the-point advises for parents on all sorts of children's educational needs. As CAS administration certificate is internationally approved, expat families taking CAS will benefit from the results not only on parenting decisions at home related setting but also on communication of their children's educational strengths and needs with specialists like teachers, school psychologists, coaches etc. from other settings. We are ready to get in contact with other parties contributing to your child's development whenever needed.
- ❖ CAS would be especially beneficial for those children who started elementary school, are in transitional period to secondary school or at preparational years for high school or college exams. Besides that, expat children who may naturally feel more stressed about academic success at school and more readily have social or emotional difficulties in adjustment to host culture will definitely benefit from CAS.
- ❖ İPC provides CAS for students at ages between 5 to 17, and sincerely recommends its administration to expat children for whom the school success is one of the main predictors of social-emotional adjustment in host country. We invite all families to CAS administration who are interested in getting thorough information about their children's cognitive functioning and therefore, being able to properly support learning processes and academic performance of their children.



Thank you!

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