

SEND Eco-System Collapse in Early Childhood



Diverse
Pathways
FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD

A monoculture emerges when all children are expected to comply to one-size-fits all education.

Universal Milestones are prioritised as signs of "normal" development

Narrow developmental norms →
pathologising difference →
interventions focused on
normalisation → reduced
acceptance of diversity →
narrower norms again.

**SPECIAL
NEEDS**

Language is limiting and
stigmatising for example the
Special Needs to Gifted and
Talented Continuum

Neurodivergent and
disabled children
may feel the
impacts first, but it
impacts everyone.

Assessment frameworks
define worth

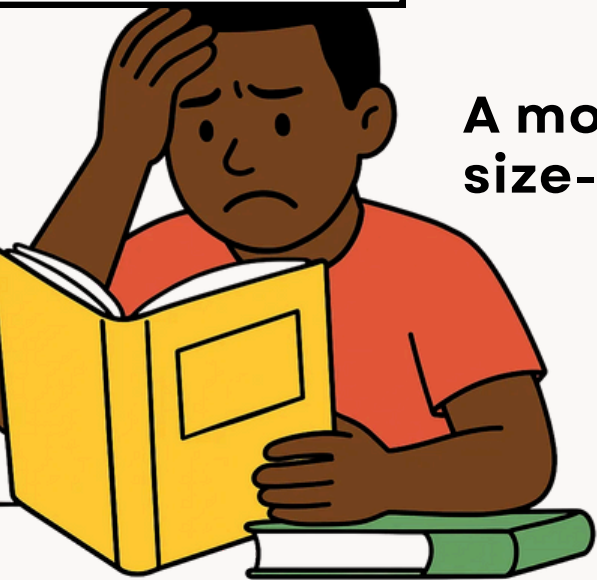
Functional or appropriate play
narratives including children
must be learning through play
for it be viewed as play.

**INTERVENTION
GROUP**

Interventions are based on
normalisation and
compliance, not wellbeing,
joy, pleasure and affirmation.

Monoculture emerges

Educator feels stifled
having to navigate
deficit systems or
narrow descriptions of
development



Children all comply to the neuronormative rules
and expectations without recognition of
variation. Contradictions are overlooked i.e.
expecting quiet compliance while encouraging
talk.



Standardised assessments
lead to deficit-based terms
used to describe children, for
example, "Red Flags" or
"Alarm Bells".

Bias becomes compounded
by other forms of
discrimination such as racism,
classism and adultism

Children mask, assimilate and
camouflage to fit in.

Children's play, learning, development and
behaviours are pathologised if they do not fit into
concepts such as "typically developing" or
normal.

All children are expected to
learn in the same way
resulting in plateau of
pedagogy

Regardless of starting point,
all children must compete to
reach a Good Level of
Development



FINISH

