

# ISSA – Quality Care and Education for Young Children



**A**s emphasized at *Early Matters*, the 2008 European Symposium on Improving Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) organized by the DG-EAC, investing in quality ECEC is crucial, as this is the stage in which the foundations are laid for subsequent learning, well-being and achievements. This investment is shown to contribute to breaking the cycle of disadvantage and developing social cohesion.

The **International Step by Step Association (ISSA)** believes that every child has the right to reach his/her full potential. ISSA's goal is to support professional communities and develop a strong civil society that influences and assists decision makers to:

- provide high quality services for all children from birth through primary school
- ensure participation of family and community in children's development and learning
- ensure respect for diversity and social inclusion

To this end, ISSA provides expertise, resources, and support for programs which provide a comprehensive set of educational services and advocacy tools, with a special emphasis on:

- professionalism and quality of pedagogical process
- education for social justice
- inclusive education
- community based programs for young children

Since establishment in 1999, building upon OSI's investment and success in the region, ISSA has become a vibrant network of professionals and organizations working in ECEC, representing the voices of its members from 28 countries Central/Eastern Europe and Central Asia:

- EU Member Countries
- Accession Countries
- EU neighbors

One of ISSA's EU-funded projects has been recently selected by the European Commission to be included in the brochure "*Creativity and Innovation – best practice from EU programmes*" [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education\\_culture/valorisation/docs/bp-euprogrammes\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/valorisation/docs/bp-euprogrammes_en.pdf)



## Seeds of Change

Effective Investments in Early Childhood for Enduring Social Progress

### 10<sup>th</sup> ISSA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Join us as we celebrate ISSA's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!  
14–17 October, 2009 — Bucharest, Romania



There are many challenges in ensuring that every young child receives high quality care and education, especially when resources are scarce in times of a global financial downturn. ISSA will address this in its 2009 Annual Conference **Seeds of Change**, organized under the patronage of the President of Romania, H. E. Traian Băsescu, featuring distinguished keynote speaker Prof. James J. Heckman, Nobel Prize Laureate in Economics. On 14 October, ISSA and the Romanian Ministry of Education and Research will host a roundtable on **Investing in Early Childhood: the most effective use of a nation's resources**, organized in partnership with UNICEF, the Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development and OSI.

Participants will discuss how to maximize the benefits of public sector investments in ECDE through building partnerships among the private, public and civil society sectors. Discussions will result in a set of concrete recommendations to inform and support the work of policy makers and practitioners.

To learn more about the conference/roundtable,  
visit <http://www.issa.nl/events>.

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