



UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

14.8.2025

INFORMATION ABOUT THE RESEARCH

Dear early childhood education professional!

You are invited to participate ***SITES – social inclusion and diversity in early childhood education and care*** in a study examining:

- Building social inclusion, equality, and belonging in linguistically and culturally diverse early childhood education groups
- The activities of groups of children and interaction between children and adults, as well as among children
- Transitions in early childhood education
- Cooperation between early childhood education staff and guardians in education, and guardian involvement
- Early childhood education service guidance for guardians

Approximately 70 children and their guardians, and 30 early childhood education professionals, will be asked to participate in the study in 2025–2026.

This research notification describes the study and participation in it. You can read the study's privacy notice here: <https://www.jyu.fi/en/projects/sites-social-inclusion-and-diversity-in-early-childhood-education-and-care>

The privacy notice explains how personal data will be processed.

1. *SITES – social inclusion and diversity in early childhood education and care* and a request to participate in research

You are invited to participate in the ***SITES study – social inclusion and diversity in early childhood education and care***, which examines social inclusion in early childhood education from a broad perspective. The study focuses on factors that promote and challenge social inclusion. Of particular interest are everyday interactions and transitions in early childhood education, the experiences of inclusion and belonging that are built in them, children's early childhood education paths, the cultural diversity and multilingualism of children and families,

and different cultural backgrounds. In addition, we study educational cooperation and the guidance and support offered to families in the early childhood education service system.

The study collects research data:

- by observation (recording observations, video recording, audio recording) of everyday life in early childhood education in groups of children
- by interviewing children participating in the study, their guardians, and early childhood education professionals
- by recording discussions about early childhood education plans
- by recording children's early childhood education plans and other early childhood education documents

Approximately 70 children, their parents, and educators from four different early childhood education groups will be invited to participate in the study in 2025–2026. Two of these groups are for children under the age of three and two are for children aged 3–6. All of the children's groups are linguistically and culturally diverse.

This is a follow-up study. You will be contacted later if you do not withdraw your consent to participate in the study.

2. Voluntary participation

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate in the study, discontinue your participation, or withdraw your consent at any time during the study without giving a reason. You may also refuse to participate in a specific part of the study, even if you have already given your consent to participate in the study. This will not result in any negative consequences for you.

If you discontinue your participation in the study or withdraw your consent, the personal data and other information collected about you up to that point will be used as part of the research material when necessary to verify the research results.

3. The course of the study

The SITES study will be conducted in 2025–2026 in a total of two early childhood education centers, with four early childhood education groups participating in the study. A total of four groups from early childhood education centers, comprising approximately 12 employees, 70 children, and their guardians, will participate in the study. In addition, professionals (4–6 people) from the municipality's early childhood education service guidance and management will participate in the study.

The course of the research from your perspective

- We kindly ask you to fill out a questionnaire about your background information. You can return the questionnaire to the researcher at the early childhood education center.
- The study involves interviewing early childhood education staff on a voluntary basis. The interviews are conducted either at the interviewee's workplace, at the university, or remotely, depending on the interviewee's preference. Videos from the early childhood education center may be viewed during the interviews. The interviews last 1–1½ hours each. The interviews will cover cooperation with families from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, practices of participation and inclusion, the everyday life and pedagogy of early childhood education for children from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, multidisciplinary cooperation, and peer relationships among children.

- The project collects observation, audio recording, and video material on children and early childhood education staff in everyday early childhood education. Notes are taken on the observations, and video recordings are also made during the observations. The observations are carried out for approximately 20–25 days per group. Staff are asked to compile network maps illustrating the peer relationships between children.
- Discussions between parents and staff regarding the child's early childhood education plan are recorded either on video or audio, and these recordings, along with the early childhood education plans and other early childhood education documents, are used as research material.
- Various staff meetings and discussions are recorded as research material.

4. Potential benefits of the study

By participating in this study, you will be contributing to the production of important new information about social inclusion and diversity in everyday early childhood education. Your own experiences and views will be heard. The research results will help to develop early childhood education practices both locally and nationally. The practical goal of the study is to support and strengthen the social inclusion and sense of belonging of children and families in early childhood education and to prevent inequality and exclusion. The research contributes to strengthening the position of people with an immigrant background as part of Finnish early childhood education and society. The research raises awareness of the importance of taking diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds into account and preventing inequality.

5. Potential risks, disadvantages, and discomforts associated with the study and how to prepare for them

The interview will take between 1 and 1½ hours. Participating in the study does not involve any risks, disadvantages, or discomfort for you. However, if participating in the study brings up unpleasant feelings, it is a good idea to discuss them with occupational health care or a trusted person. You can also contact the researchers at any time to ask for more information about the study or for contact details for experts. The report will aim to keep individuals anonymous, but it is possible that individuals may recognize themselves in the report.

6. Research costs and compensation for research subjects, as well as research funding

No remuneration will be paid for participating in the study.

7. Communication of research results and research results

The research will result in scientific and popular publications, theses, and conference and seminar presentations. The aim is to disseminate the results in order to develop early childhood education practices and training. All reporting and communication will be carried out in such a way that outsiders will not be able to identify the research subjects from the research results or publications.

8. Insurance coverage of the subjects

The activities and researchers of the University of Jyväskylä are insured.

The University of Jyväskylä's insurance policies only cover damage related directly to the assigned research task and occurring during the actual instructed research task in remote research. The insurance does not cover damage occurring during breaks.

The University of Jyväskylä's insurance policies are not valid for remote studies if the student's home municipality is not in Finland.

The insurance includes patient insurance, liability insurance, and voluntary accident insurance. The subjects (test persons) participating in the studies are insured against accidents, injuries, and damage caused by external factors during the study. Accident insurance is valid during measurements and trips directly related to them.

9. Contact details of the person providing additional information

Niina Rutanen, research director, +358408054654, niina.a.rutanen@jyu.fi

Eija Sevón, research director, +358408053650, eija.sevon@jyu.fi