Learning to Participate from an Early Age: The Semillitas Early Childhood Centre Experience

Semillitas Early Childhood Centre • Buin, Chile • Work began in 2012 • Testimonial from November 2026

In November 2026, Silvia Carrasco Tapia, an early childhood educator and the director and proprietor of Jardín Infantil Semillitas in Buin, reflected on her centre's experience with the Langford Method since 2012. With more than 35 years of experience in early childhood education, she described changes in how her team observed children, organised routines and recognised their participation.

Her account is significant because it focuses not only on children's progress but also on how the adults reconsidered their approach to supporting them. This is an account of an educational setting's experience, not an experimental evaluation of the program's outcomes.

A different way of looking at learning

According to Silvia, one of the most important changes was moving beyond simply observing whether a child could complete an activity. The team began paying closer attention to effort, willingness to try, perseverance and each child's small steps forward.

"We stopped looking only at the result and began to value the process, perseverance, willingness, determination and personal growth."

This shift does not mean that learning outcomes are unimportant. It means recognising that children with different starting points can progress in different ways, and that an emerging capability deserves attention even before it is fully developed.

Habits in everyday life

The director describes children aged two to five taking part in familiar routines, listening to instructions, waiting their turn, helping with small responsibilities and carrying out some activities with growing independence. She also highlights everyday experiences of living and learning together: sharing, respecting classmates and recognising that everyone belongs to the community.

Routines are central to her account. When children can anticipate what comes next and understand what is expected of them, they have clear points of reference for participating without needing a fresh instruction from an adult at every step.

"Routines do not limit children; they give them a sense of security."

Silvia does not treat play and routines as opposites. At the centre, playing, exploring and discovering can go hand in hand with clear instructions, age-appropriate responsibilities and shared expectations for living and learning together.

The adults changed too

An especially important part of the testimonial concerns the educational team. Silvia explains that the experience prompted them to give consistent instructions, maintain routines, teach and model behaviours, offer opportunities for children to act and avoid immediately solving every difficulty on their behalf.

"It is not enough to ask children to behave in a certain way: we must teach them, model the behaviours, be consistent, and maintain a calm, warm and coherent approach."

The director reports that these adjustments changed how the adults supported children and recognised their progress. Adults continued to guide and assist, while making space for children to try and do for themselves what they were learning to do.

What the director observed

In her letter, Silvia describes perceived improvements in attention, concentration, following instructions, participation, waiting for turns and independence. She also reports that children take pride in achieving something they previously found difficult or completing an activity on their own.

These are observations made through everyday work with successive groups of children, not results from a standardised assessment. The letter does not provide before-and-after measurements, comparable individual records or data that would allow us to quantify changes in each capability or attribute them solely to the program.

What this experience contributes

The Semillitas experience draws attention to two dimensions of early learning: the capabilities children develop and the conditions adults create for children to use them. The testimonial suggests that routines, clear instructions, modelling and opportunities for increasingly independent action can become part of everyday educational practice.

Its main value lies in documenting a sustained process of reflection on teaching practices. The account does not establish that other early childhood centres would achieve the same outcomes. Nor can it establish clinical effects: the director's observation that children at her centre had not received attention-deficit diagnoses does not constitute evidence that the Langford Method prevents or treats ADHD.

The question this case leaves open is how adults' everyday practices may contribute to the development of habits, capabilities and independent participation during the early years.

Source and scope

Based on the written testimonial of Silvia Carrasco Tapia, early childhood educator, Bachelor of Education, psychopedagogue, and director and proprietor of Jardín Infantil Semillitas (Buin), dated 10 November 2026. The account covers work with the Langford Method beginning in 2012. Quotations have been translated from the original Spanish. This is a retrospective testimonial, without a comparison group, independent evaluation or documented quantitative follow-up in the letter.