Developing Early Childhood Intervention Programs as a Way to Overcome "Defectology" and Create "Inclusive Society" - Experiences from Russia.

Content:
The project will combine academic knowledge in brain research and young child development and the author’s 25 years of practical experience of attempting to develop early intervention programs for infants and young children in Russia, a country with strong "defectological" traditions of dividing children into "educable" and "uneducable" according to medical diagnosis and traditions of institutionalization of "uneducable"/"low potential of development" children and children from "bad" families. Ways to overcome "defectology", to change attitudes and understanding the needs and child and family by the professional community will be discussed. Experiences in developing programmes for children from 'migrant'/refugee families during "war"(2 Chechenya) and "peaceful" periods in modern Russian history will be presented briefly. Questions whether the experiences from Russia could be useful for modern Germany/EU will be discussed with students.

Methods:
Lectures, seminars, watching and discussing video-films from Russia, reading and discussing "Against Separation. Experience in early intervention for young children with disabilities in Russia and Belarus(2014), presentations of personal experiences by students and discussing them.

Competences and skills to be acquired:
Students will get basic knowledge about early experience and brain development, sensitive periods, brain plasticity (e.g. early intervention programmes for infants with severe brain damage), early relationships and attachment theory (e.g. damage caused by early institutionalization on infants in baby homes), about the infant as a self-actor vs. passive object of care. They will acquire basic skills in overcoming prejudices towards "uneducable" children and "bad" families and obtain knowledge about the importance of personal involvement and personal qualities in developing early childhood intervention programmes, especially in "not very friendly" environments.

Prerequisites:

Language of instruction: English

Recommended for: Social Studies