

# Early Intervention in the Community for preschool children and their families

THEOTOKOS FOUNDATION  
EARLY INTERVENTION DEPARTMENT

MARIE ANGE WIDDERSHOVEN, Psychologist Drs- Psychoanalytic Psychotherapist

MIRELLA GIANNAKOPOULOU, MSc Special Educator



REHABILITATION CENTER FOR CHILDREN AND  
YOUNG ADULTS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES  
AND AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS

# THEOTOKOS FOUNDATION



Πηγή: Ίδρυμα «Σταύρος»

# Prevention and Intervention Research Program



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## Three- Tiered Levels of Prevention

- **Primary Prevention level:** raising awareness in the community
- **Secondary Prevention level:** early identification in the kindergartens
- **Tertiary Prevention level:** intervention services for preschoolers aged 2 to 6 years old and their families at ECI department of Theotokos Foundation

# ECI program for preschool children and their families in the community



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- This program is a cooperation of Theotokos Foundation and Municipality of Ilion and Kamatero, which started in 2015
- The program is aimed at children aged 2- 5 and their families, in 12 kindergartens of the Municipality of Ilion, while in 2019 8 kindergartens of the Municipality of Kamatero joined the program
- 1605 children and families have received assessment and counseling services from specialized therapists
- The ECI in the community was funded from 2017-2019 by the Region of Attica



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# Objectives of the program

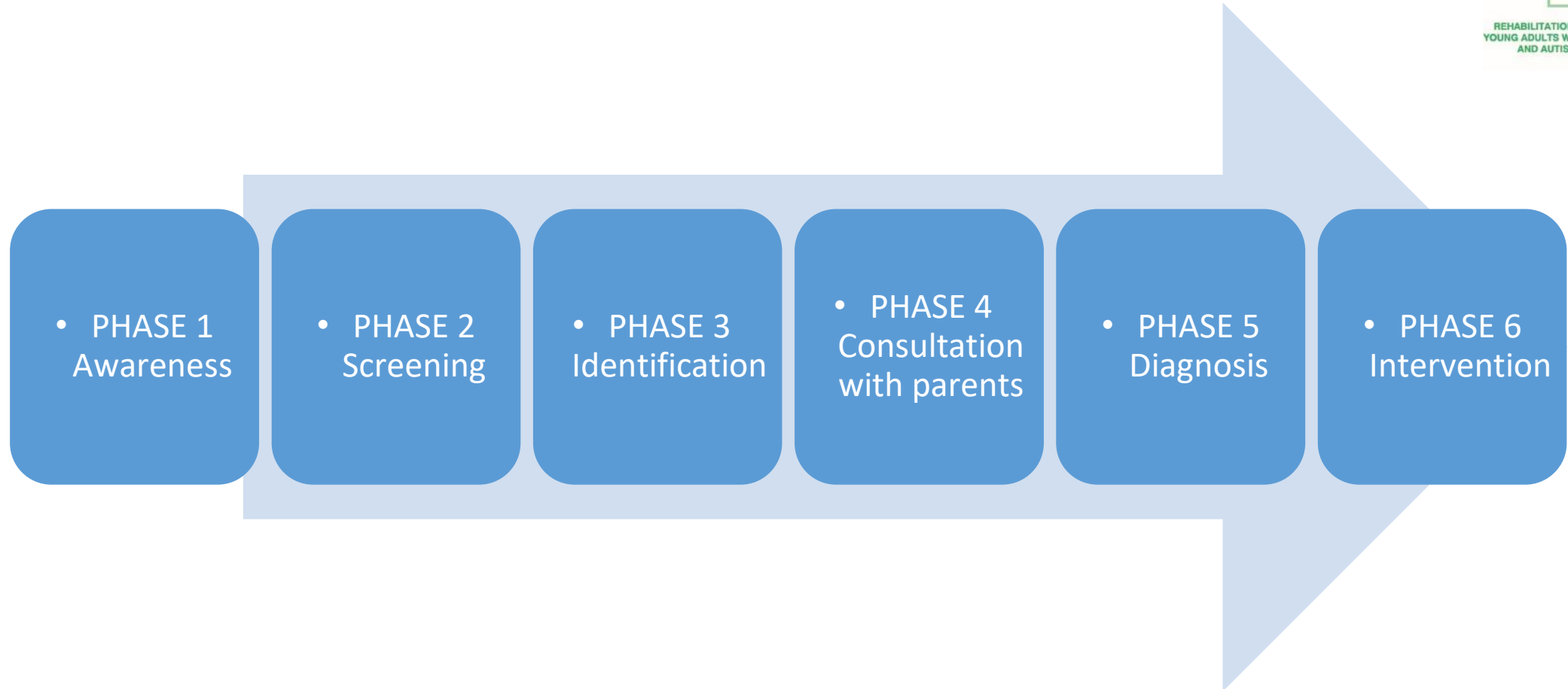
**Early detection and intervention in the community for preschool children and their families in order to:**

1. Prevent developmental delays and emotional difficulties
2. Enhance children's overall development
3. Empower their families
4. Support teachers into kindergarten schools
5. Achieve inclusion into the school and in other social environments

# Methodology



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# PHASE 1: Awareness

- Meetings with the Municipalities
- Meetings with Municipality Scientific Staff (child- psychologists, speech and occupational therapists, social workers and pediatricians)
- Meetings with the educational staff of kindergartens
- Conducting presentations to parents and kindergarten school teachers in order to
  - increase awareness about the usefulness of the program
  - provide training on how to implement the questionnaires



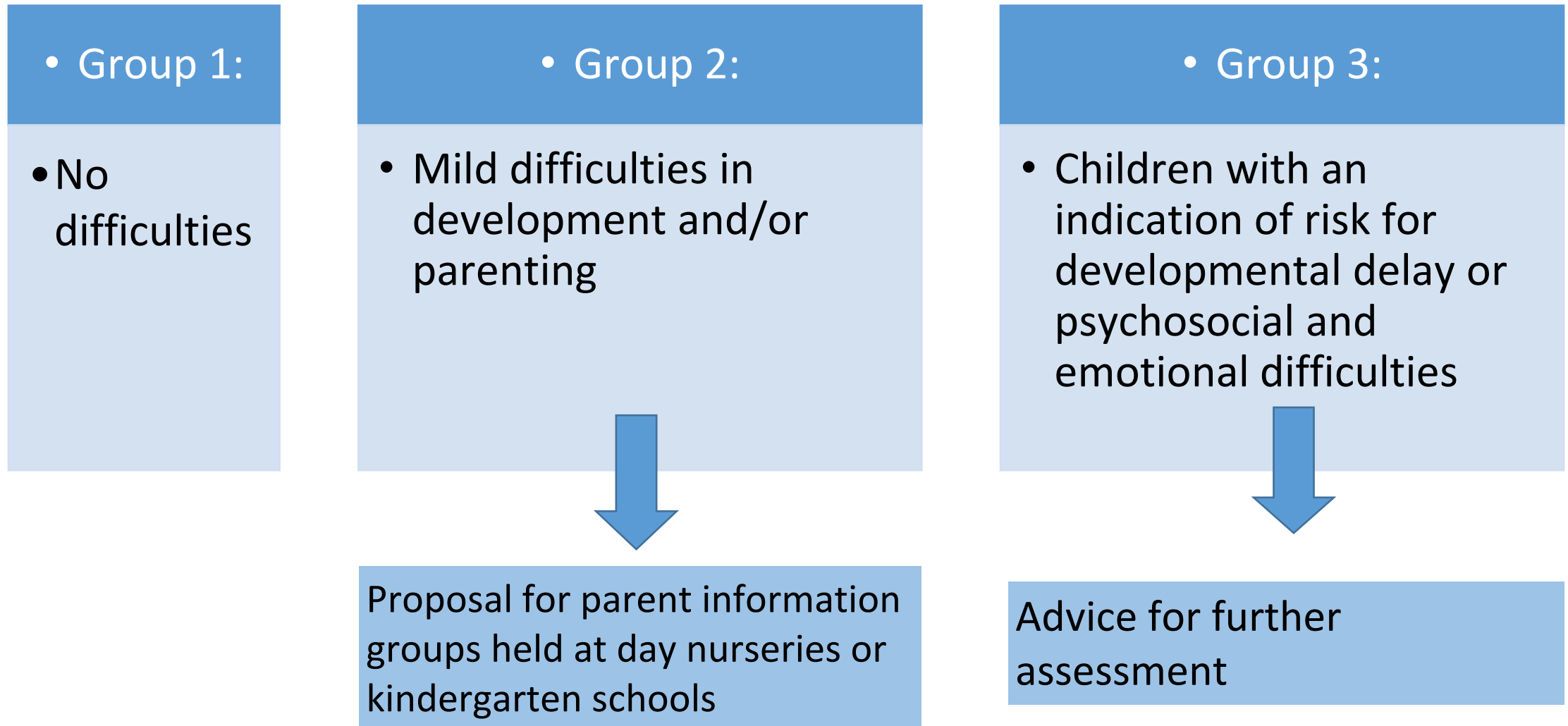
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# PHASE 2: Screening

- **Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist (parents and childcare teachers)**
- **Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers (M-CHAT)**
- **Speech Development Questionnaire**



# Categories following questionnaire analysis





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# PHASE 3: Identification at school environment

- Denver Developmental Screening Test
- AnOmiLo4 Speech & Language Screening Test
- Clinical Examination by Psychologist/SLT/ OT
- Classroom Observation
- Cooperation with educational staff



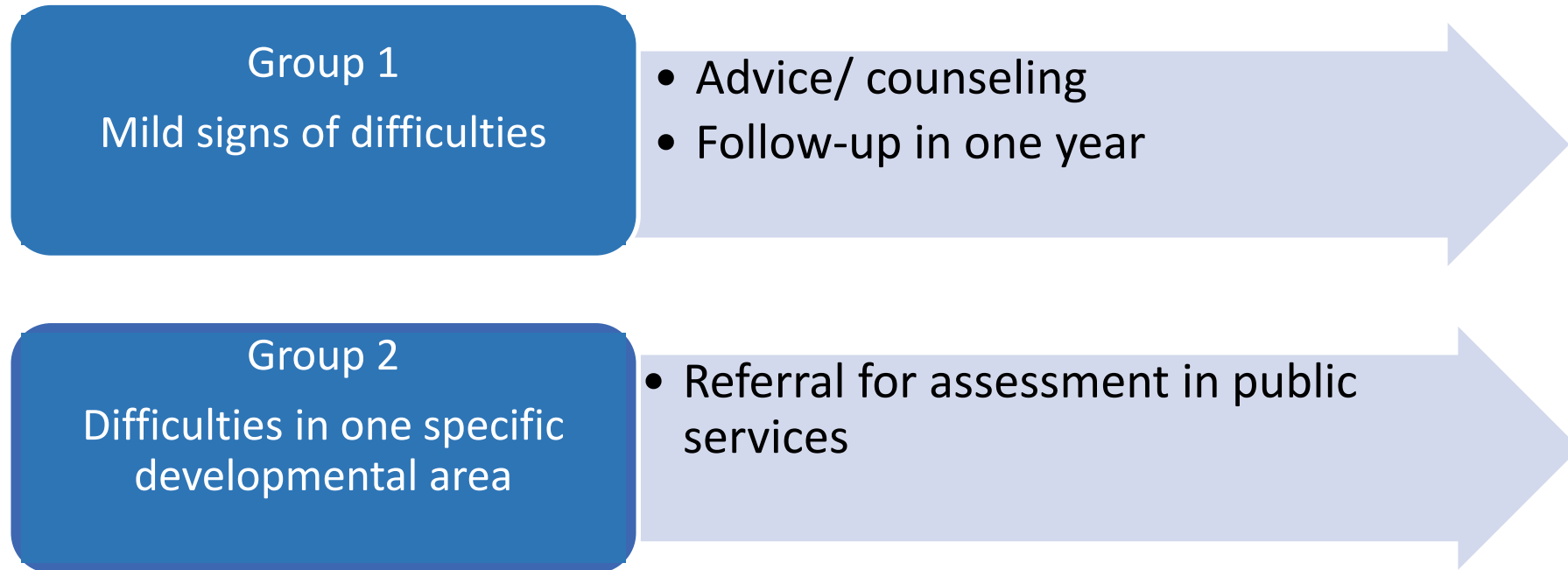
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# PHASE 4: Consultation with parents

- Family History
  1. Feedback about the child development and their level of functionality
  2. Information about infant parent interaction and communication at home environment
  3. Mental health history in the family
- Verbal report on child's level of performance during the assessment at the nursery
- Advice child for further assessment only if at risk



# Referral Proposals after consultation with parents



# Referral Proposals



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## Group 3

Difficulties in more than one  
developmental area

- Diagnosis through public system
- Diagnosis by the scientific team of Theotokos Foundation

## Group 4

Signs of psychosocial and  
emotional difficulties

- Referral for Infant-Parent Psychotherapy by Theotokos experts
- Referral to public services



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# PHASE 5: Diagnosis in Theotokos Foundation

- Developmental Pediatrician
- Child- Psychiatrist
- Clinical Psychologist/ Developmental Psychologist
- Speech and Language Therapist
- Occupational Therapist
- Social Worker

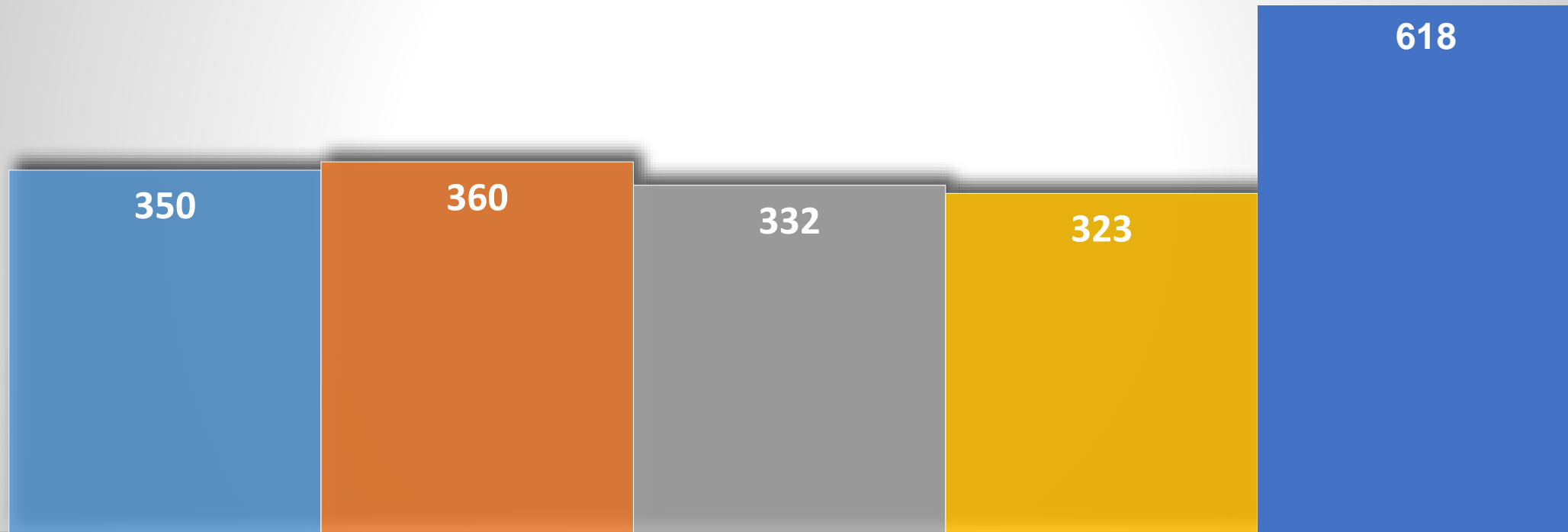


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# PHASE 6: Intervention

- Speech and/or Occupational Therapy and inclusion in mainstream school setting
- Infant- Parent Psychotherapy
- Enrollment in Early Intervention Department at Theotokos Foundation

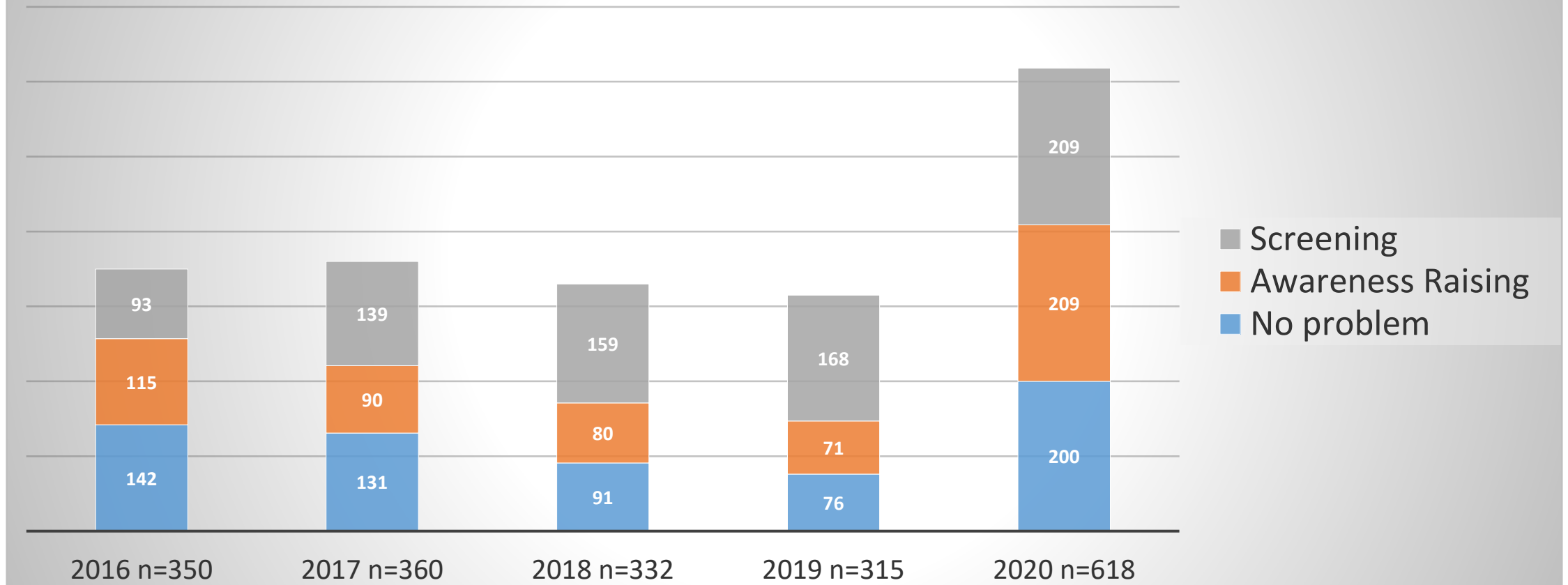
## Number of Questionnaires analysed from 12 childcare centers (20 in 2020)



■ 2016 ■ 2017 ■ 2018 ■ 2019 ■ 2020



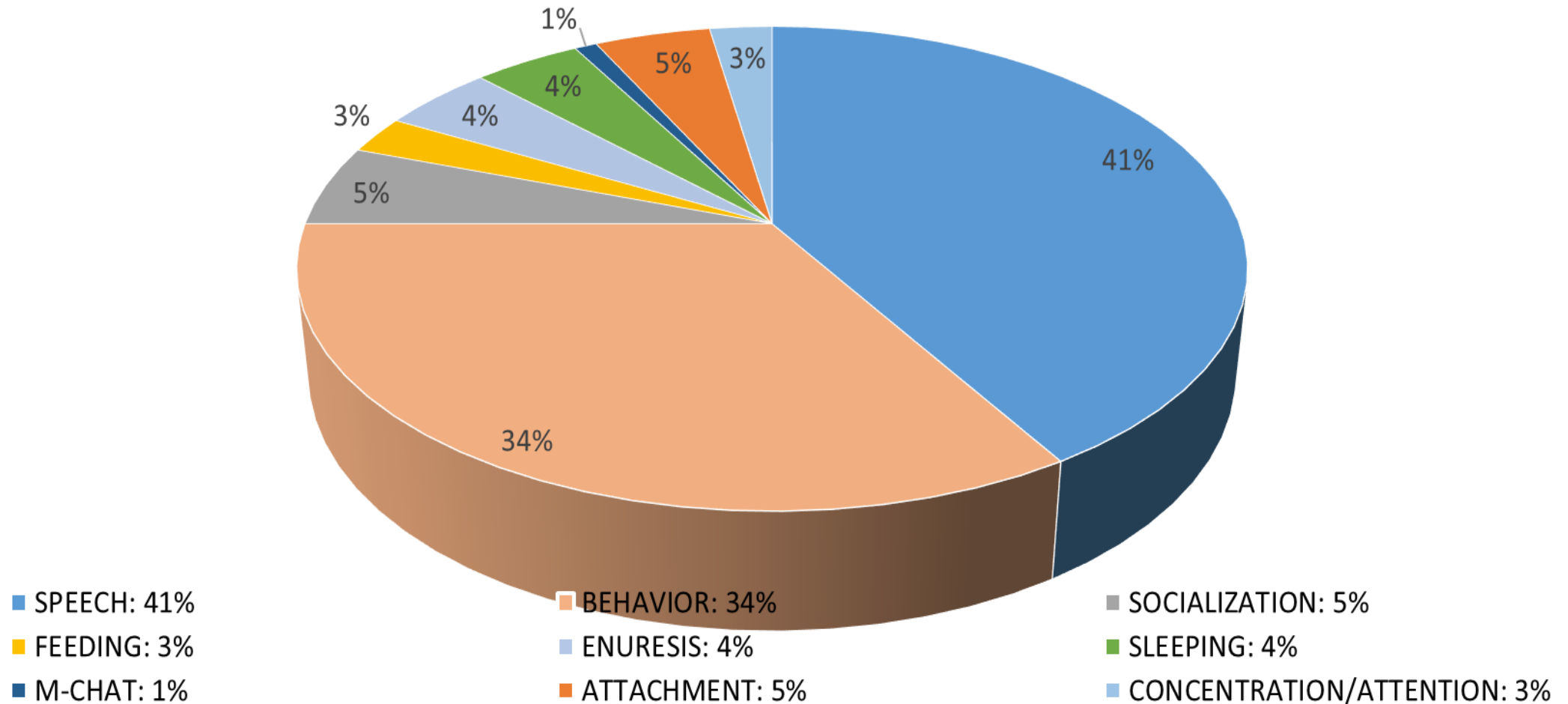
## Data analysis of the Questionnaires



Total Screened: 1609

Total children with difficulties: 768, 40% of total

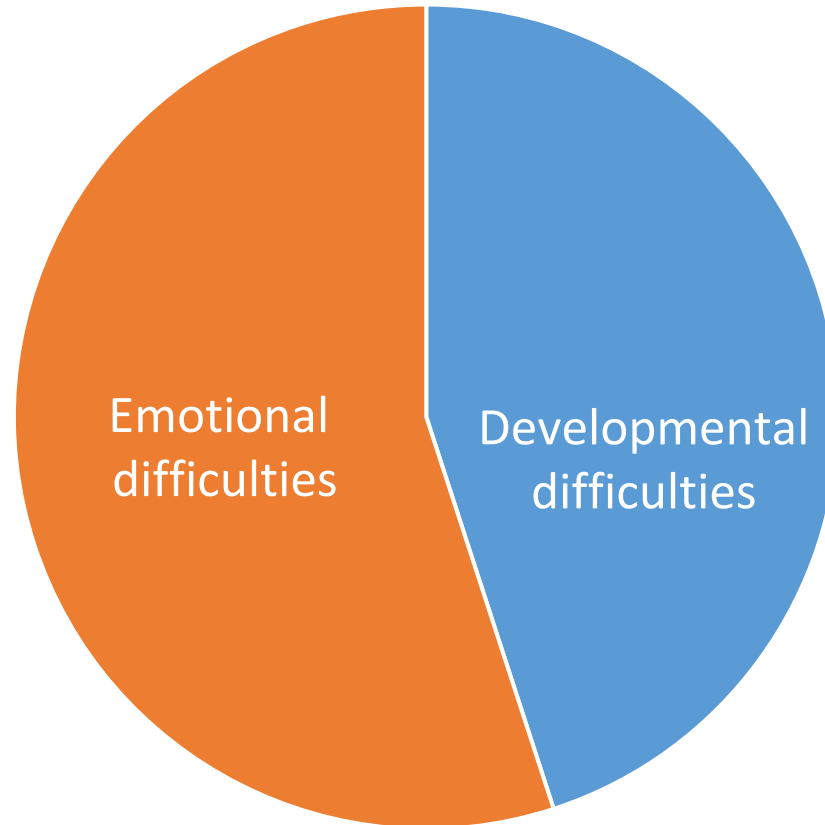
## TYPE OF DIFFICULTY



Mixed Developmental Difficulties: 45% of children examined, **7%** of total

Emotional and Behavioral Difficulties: 55% of children examined, **8%** of total

## Ratio of Developmental Difficulties/ Psychosocial and Emotional Difficulties



Developmental Difficulties were found in 7% of the total population  
Psychosocial and Emotional Difficulties were found in 8% of the total population

# Future Thoughts

- Increase community's awareness on cognitive, language, motor or sensory issues that affect children's development
- Group training for educational staff
- Handbooks on:
  - Methodology
  - Training parents
  - Training educational staff
- Implementing the program to other Municipalities in Athens (something we achieved during the covid crisis!)

# Thank you!

[mwiddershoven@theotokos.gr](mailto:mwiddershoven@theotokos.gr)

[mgiannakopoulou@theotokos.gr](mailto:mgiannakopoulou@theotokos.gr)