

Resolution for the Retirement of David Elkind

After more than a quarter century of service to Tufts and to the Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Development, David Elkind is retiring. David came to Tufts as an internationally known scholar whose research and writings had shown the utility of Piagetian theory for understanding children. From his arrival at Tufts to the present, he has become a household word – as his writings have reached far beyond the academic community. David is known for his insightful commentary on how societal changes can lead to questionable parenting and teaching practices. In the 1970's, it was changes in family life and societal values that undermined childhood as a protected time, an age of innocence – and so David gave us the concept of the “hurried child”, the child who too often has to deal with adult issues. Later, when societal changes were more about getting ahead, David gave us the concept of miseducation – pushing children to learn skills and concepts before they had developed their minds and the passion needed to sustain long-term academic learning. David Elkind has, then, stood for one thing mainly: the enduring child amidst societal change. Among David's many contributions, his most enduring may be characterized as wisdom.

In David's case, wisdom has meant giving us the forest even as we were lost amidst the trees. We may have sensed that hurried children were unhappy and that pushing academics at very young ages is wrong, but we lacked the wisdom to understand why. David Elkind has helped us all to gain that wisdom by sharing his own. Furthermore, within the Department, David has twice been chair, and for many years he has, in teaching CD 1, introduced thousands of Tufts undergraduates to the interdisciplinary world of child study. His advanced seminars in family studies and adolescence have likewise made their impact on many undergraduate and graduate students.

Throughout these last several decades, David has circled the globe giving hundreds of lectures on the needs of children, serving on editorial boards of numerous scientific journals, and providing consultation to

government agencies. He served as president of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the premier professional organization for early childhood professionals. His bibliography includes well over 400 articles and eighteen books. One of his books has sold over a half a million copies and another has sold over 200,000. In the process of all this productivity, he has seamlessly blended academic and lay scholarship, making the study of child development accessible to all. In short, David Elkind has become one of the world's most trusted experts on raising and educating children and adolescents – as well as an ambassador for Tufts and for the Department of Child Development.

For his research and wisdom, for his many contributions to the study of children and to fostering developmentally appropriate child rearing and education, and for his contributions to teaching and to Tufts, we are all very grateful. On behalf of the Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Development, I move that the record show our best wishes to David Elkind in his retirement – and our gratitude for his many contributions and wisdom.

Respectfully submitted,

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Chair, Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Development